

Press Release

New Showrooms for **BAWAG Contemporary** at No. 3 Franz Josefs Kai in Vienna's First District

Vienna, May 6, 2010

In presenting **Mike Bouchet's** exhibition *Retreat*, BAWAG Contemporary inaugurates its new location at No. 3 Franz Josefs Kai in Vienna's first district.

Christine Kintisch, artistic director of BAWAG Contemporary, who has successfully initiated, conceived, and implemented all the activities of the BAWAG P.S.K. Group in the field of contemporary art since 1989, will be presenting her ambitious program in Vienna's first district, in the immediate vicinity of the BAWAG P.S.K. company headquarters, from now on.

"Concentrating all our activities in the field of contemporary art in this place, we will continue in our efforts to make contemporary art accessible to a broad public. The focus of our exhibition program will remain on individual presentations of young artists, some of whose oeuvres will be introduced to a wide audience for the first time," says Christine Kintisch, artistic director of BAWAG Contemporary. She is assisted by co-curator Brigitte Huck, who conceives the projects together with her, in the successful implementation of her exhibitions at BAWAG Contemporary.

Promoting art far off the mainstream

BAWAG Contemporary is committed to the artistic approaches and concepts of a younger generation and perceives itself as a venue where current developments in art production are made visible and which acts as a mediator between the art scenes of various metropolises. An appealing supporting program of concerts and events on Wednesdays is meant to contribute to making BAWAG Contemporary a popular meeting place of the Viennese art scene.

"In days when art and cultural sponsoring were not yet among the business world's primary concerns, BAWAG was one of the first companies in Austria to become

active in this field. By maintaining BAWAG Contemporary, our company consistently pursues this path once chosen and thus signalizes that art and contemporary artists will continue to play an important role in BAWAG's corporate culture," Dr. Regina Prehofer, Member of the Managing Board of the BAWAG P.S.K. Group, points out.

In times of ubiquitous mega-events and blockbuster exhibitions, BAWAG P.S.K. as a patron of contemporary art more than ever assumes a forward-looking position within the Austrian art and cultural landscape. In contrast to the growing tendency of promoting sensational cultural events and spectacles, BAWAG P.S.K. has always encouraged artistic approaches that distinguish themselves by quality and contemporary outlooks and seriously deal with current social developments.

Many young artists – such as Kutlug Ataman, Candice Breitz, Elmgreen & Dragset, Atelier van Lieshout, Lee Bull, Salla Tykkä, Jeremy Deller, and Tal R – had had their first solo exhibitions in Austria upon the initiative of Christine Kintisch, artistic director of BAWAG Contemporary, a long time before they appeared in prominent art institutions. On the other hand, long-established artists who had almost fallen into oblivion – including Richard Tuttle, Richard Jackson, Jef Geys, Susan Hiller, Öyvind Fahlström, and Franz Erhard Walther – were made to return to the limelight, their works being subsequently exhibited again in international museums. In its new showrooms, BAWAG Contemporary will be able to devote itself to its commitments even more extensively.

Arousing enthusiasm for art

It is a further goal of BAWAG Contemporary to facilitate the dialog between those creating art and those interested in it, thus attempting to bring about a widespread acceptance of contemporary art. Through its resolve to make contemporary art accessible to a broad public, BAWAG P.S.K. acts in accordance with the democratic and social responsibility of actively promoting and transmitting art. There is free admission to all the exhibitions, none of which is profit-oriented. Moreover, BAWAG Contemporary offers guided tours and educational packages for students of all age groups and school types free of charge, thus contributing considerably to spreading knowledge about contemporary art.

“The bank deliberately decided to grant free admission to BAWAG Contemporary. In this way, the bank encourages current tendencies in contemporary art and relieves people from a certain initial fear of actively approaching it. We thus contribute to increasingly familiarizing a young audience with contemporary art,” says Dr. Regina Prehofer, Member of the Managing Board of the BAWAG P.S.K. Group, points out.

BAWAG Contemporary is a place that connects the BAWAG P.S.K. Group to the young art scene and serves as a central venue for people to meet. The gallery in the former tile showroom of the Brüder Schwadron company at No. 3 Franz Josefs Kai, A-1010 Vienna, is open daily between 2:00 and 8:00 pm. Admission is free. Detailed program information is available directly at the gallery or online at www.bawagcontemporary.at.

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www.bawagcontemporary.at/presse