

[Login / Register](#)

Search for ...

METROPOLE

VIENNA IN ENGLISH

[Magazine](#)

[Ideas
Culture](#)

[Trends](#)

[Events Calendar](#)

[Explore Vienna](#)

[Food & Drink](#)

[Subscribe](#)

**“How to live
Together” at the
Kunsthalle Wien is a
guide for better**

Delfino Sisto Legnani Studio, Courtesy
Fondazione Prada

AD

world

by [Andrew Standen-Raz](#) in Jun 2017, Art / 1.6.17

Home > Culture > Art > "How to live Together" at the Kunsthalle Wien is a guide for better world



A new group show at the Kunsthalle encourages us to shed our preconceptions and love the things that set us apart.

The tempting possibility of a Utopia, a perfect world where we all get along and behave decently towards the planet and one another, has inspired artists, writers and even fashion designers since Sir Thomas More penned a satirical book under that title in 1516. Now, 500 years later, the future as bright as ever, it seems an opportune moment for the Kunsthalle to cast a critical eye on utopian ideals with the aid of over 30 international artists and collectives in the group exhibition, "How to Live Together." As the curator Nicolaus -Schafhausen notes, "The diverse models of living together presented reveal how society is more than just the sum of its parts."

The same can be said of decent exhibitions. Fortunately, "How to Live Together" is a satisfying sum of parts, dotted around the warehouse-sized Kunsthalle in a variety of media. Themes of humanity, identity, flight, social power structures, love, fear, faith and political activism flow through the exhibition, from Goshka

*M*etropole
Survey

Sign up for our
mailing list!

Email	Subscribe
-------	------------------

RECENT ARTICLES



On Screen: Identities Queer Film Festival



Last Word | June 2017 | Gspusi



Be My Guest: Stay True

Macuga's fascinatingly empathetic philosophizing android, *To the Son of Man Who Ate the Scroll* (above), to August Sander's *Proletariermutter*, portraying a working mother and baby in the 1920s whose smile must have masked a multitude of frustrations.

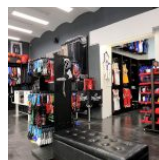
The solutions to the riddles of present-day crises are hidden in plain sight within the faces of Cana Bilir-Meier's migrant workers and Willem de Rooij's *Bouquet V* – celebrating the beauty of diversity through a simple arrangement of flowers. These various elements, in an overall design by Studio Miessen, are presented frozen in time, but we are not. The anti-Brexit campaign poster from Wolfgang Tillmans still has a powerful effect, urging us to action even as cries for European solidarity seem due for the dustbin of history.

Imperfect Worlds

Vienna is au fait with combining Art and Utopia – the Friedrichshof commune established just outside the city in the 1970s by Otto Mühl was founded in part on the notion that an idyllic, egalitarian society could evolve from stifling bourgeoisie through the power of Art.

A Wehrmacht veteran and one of the founders of Vienna Actionism, Mühl encouraged his increasingly cultlike commune to stage nightly art, music and dance performances, some devolving into scopophilic love-ins involving feces and urine. Filmed and photographed, the resultant controversial images have become staples of galleries and museums, despite the ultimate scandal-ridden failure of the pedophilic Mühl's utopian experiment in the 1990s.

To Oscar Wilde, "Progress is the realization of utopias," although the comment may have been sardonic considering the term actually means



Local finds | June 2017



Travel | Bikes, Wine and Castles in Wachau

FOLLOW US



RECENT COMMENTS

[The Best Krapfen in Vienna | American in Vienna on Metropole's Great Vienna Krapfen Taste Test](#)

[Deutsch ist lustig | Scøla Alba Ulula 雪鴉學校 on 7 German Words That Will Piss Off Austrians](#)

[ViennaResident on Melange: Ambassador to Vienna's Vacationists](#)

"nowhere." This is heartbreakingly evident in Paul Graham's *Beyond Caring*, a haunting image of a sad public waiting room – an actual nowhere. A baby in a pink romper suit, like a Teletubby baby Jesus, looks at the resigned faces of the adults as if to say "What are you waiting for? Let's get outta here!"

Similarly, Mohamed Bourouissa's *Carré Rouge* is both a journalistic document of -forgotten youth on the Paris Périphérique and a snapshot of humans who deserve as much respect, admiration and love as the comfortable faces in Tina Barney's *The Antlers* – an almost grotesque parody of how the upper one per cent lives.

Both social groups adhere to distinct codes of dress and behavior, but as individuals they have the power to break free of superficial signifiers to reveal the raw, needful, fearful, passionate humanity underneath.

A Life Less Ordinary

True freedom, as "How To Live Together" suggests, comes from embracing the beauty of our differences, "of achieving wholeness by way of diversity." Those fearful communards fleeing what they saw as a corrupted society merely heightened the oppressiveness of what they left behind. We take ourselves with us wherever we go.

The Russian artist Taus Makhacheva took herself on a hilarious journey to gate-crash as many weddings as possible in one day in the Russian province of Dagestan. The images and conversations of *19 a Day*, documenting the ultimate social celebration of love, reveal as much about the participants as about the artist herself. We become part of Makhacheva's quest to explore the astonishing feat of two often vastly different human beings (and their attached

clans) coming together in the hopeful promise of eternal unity. To gloriously defy Roland Barthes' depressing conclusion that "coexistence, in which individual rhythms are recognized, is a phantasm only to be found on a discursive level in literature."



Whether the upper one per cent or forgotten youth on the Paris Périphérique, it's key to understand that humanity is universal.

Photo: Tina Barney, Mohamed Bourouissa

Complementing the exhibit, the Community College is a particularly promising part of "How to Live Together:" a revolving series of related talks, performances and interventions. It's the first thing you see as you walk in, immediately presenting the chance to reflect on what makes us tick, and how living together functions best in a mutual exchange of respect – and love. Not the perverted form practiced by Mühl; or More's imperfect vision of an island with slaves and subservient women, or the lip service variety every Valentine's Day, or the love buried so deeply under decades of abuse and neglect that it turns to hate, terrorism and genocide.

Future imperfect

A worthwhile criticism is the exhibition's shaky adherence to its own high-minded celebration of diversity. Female artists, solo or in collectives,

make up around 30 percent of the show, and 27 out of 32 hail from North America or various parts of Europe. If art is to save us, it needs to be a lot more inclusive, especially of those most affected by historic indignities of sexism and racism.

In the breathy words of Sade, "everybody wants to live together." There are communes that do succeed without a dictatorial leader, enforced polyamory or oppressive rules. But the impression most of us have is that even when a conscious effort is made to build a fairer, more permissive society, the end result is almost invariably a disaster.

We seem destined to repeat ourselves, rattling to some uncertain future determined by everything that holds us back – racism, capitalism, misogyny, elitism, nationalism. It is left to Art, and exhibitions such as "How to Live Together," to both document the journey and provoke a reaction that may divert us to a happier destination.

Through Oct 15, [Kunsthalle](#)

Join Andrew Standen-Raz and other METROPOLE readers on June 7th at 19:00 in the [Kunstahalle for a tour](#). If you mention METROPOLE at the door, entry is free.

The Google Maps API server rejected your request
must be over SSL. Load the API with "https://" i



Author: **Andrew Standen-Raz**

Following studies in Anthropology at UCL, Film at NYU Tisch School of the Arts, and Law at Loyola, Andrew worked for Miramax Films, 20th Century Fox Studios, and won two awards as a public relations counsel at Ruder Finn. After seeing the US political system from the inside while working for the VOA at a Democratic & a Republican political convention, Andrew returned to Europe to make documentary films, including "Vinyl: Tales from the Vienna Underground", which premiered at Karlovy Vary. He is currently curating for a film festival, developing new film projects, and

developing an organic food app

Comments **Community** 1 **Login** ▾

Recommend **Share** **Sort by Best** ▾

Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

ALSO ON METROPOLE VIENNA

Editorial: Causa Cobenzl

1 comment • 2 months ago•

Brian — Not to mention Leopoldsberg. ...

Vienna's Ultimate Swimming Pool Guide

1 comment • 10 months ago•

Noisy Pool — If you want to know what the best option of ...

Profiles: Vienna's Got Talent

1 comment • a year ago•

M. — I very much enjoyed this article because it has a ...

7 German Words That Will Piss Off Austrians

61 comments • a year ago•

Catherine M. Hooker — In my six years in Austria I think I ...

Subscribe

Add Disqus to your siteAdd DisqusAdd

Privacy

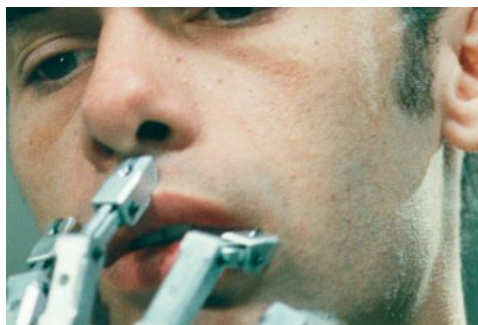
RELATED POSTS



13. January 2016

Exhibition Review: Elitist Populism

Art pressed into the service of political persuasion is rarely convincing. This exhibition proves a point. The online blurb is refreshingly honest: POLITISCHER POPULISMUS, the striking [...]



1. May 2016

On Display: The Future Has Arrived

At the Kunsthalle, The Promise of Total Automation imagines the shape of things to come An intriguing attempt to parse the possible futures headed our way, The Promise of Total [...]



5. December 2016

On Display: Sarah Morris. Falls Never Breaks

Visual artist Sarah Morris' solo exhibition focuses on her cinematographic work No stranger to the weird of the everyday, painter and filmmaker Sarah Morris is known for filming [...]

Media Information

- Media Kit /
- Mediadaten
- Ordering Classified Ads / Kleinanzeigen

About Metropole

- Mission
- Partners
- Social media
- Newsletter
- Downloads corner

Legalese

- Publishing Information (Impressum)
- Terms & Conditions
- Sweepstakes T&C
- Data Privacy
- Quoting & Linking

Service

- Subscriptions
- Where to find METROPOLE
- Classifieds
- Job Listings in English
- Accessing your digital subscription

Contact

- Advertising
- Editorial
- Jobs at METROPOLE
- Partnerships
- Subscriptions

