

**MICHAEL  
HOROWITZ**

# Exhibition Facts

Press conference	27 February 2020   11 am
Opening	27 February 2020   18.30 pm
Duration	28 February – 6 September 2020
Venue	Bastion Hall, Gallery
Curator	Dr. Anna Hanreich, ALBERTINA
Works	ca. 50

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Opening Hours  
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# Michael Horowitz

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The Viennese publisher, author, and journalist Michael Horowitz (b. 1950) turned to photography at an early age—already during his school days he supported his father, a well-known theater photographer. The exhibition focuses on Horowitz's photographs from the 1960s to the 1980s, when he worked as a freelance photographer and made portraiture his favorite discipline.

One focus of the show is on personalities from Vienna's cultural life, which plays a major role for Horowitz. He has been closely associated with the theater from his beginnings, and his friendship with Helmut Qualtinger in particular resulted in extraordinary portraits of the stage star.

As his unique photographs of the Viennese art scene impressively demonstrate, Michael Horowitz has a special talent for building trust. From the early 1960s on, the first contemporary art galleries and museums offered artists seeking access to the international art world a platform for exchange and networking. In addition, exhibitions brought the international avant-garde and art stars to Vienna, which encouraged a thorough examination of their ideas and concepts. Horowitz's personal interest in visual artists and new friendships with them spawned a series of portraits depicting important protagonists of the contemporary scene.

Another focus is on the photographs shot on the streets of Vienna or on behalf of magazines. They show the efforts of a wide variety of actors keen on breaking up the narrowness of postwar society and leaving it behind. The pictures convey an impression of the atmosphere of departure that prevailed in Vienna at the time and initiated a change toward a more cosmopolitan city.

Michael Horowitz observes his sitters closely and captures them with great empathy and a feeling for expressive moments in a clear visual language. His photographs of two decades shot in this vein provide us with pictures of famous people who are still associated with Austria today.

All photographs on display come from the artist's own collection and were printed on FineArt Baryta paper.

## Walltexts

### **Protests Following the Assassination of Ernst Kirchweger**

The year 1965 saw protests in downtown Vienna against Taras Borodajkewycz, a professor of economic history at what is now the University of Economics and Business. Borodajkewycz was known for making anti-Semitic and German nationalist statements in his lectures. When reports about his attitude reached a wider public, it triggered political unrest. Since the Minister of Education refused to suspend Borodajkewycz, left-wing student representatives and former resistance fighters organized a protest in March 1965. When the demonstrators clashed with extreme right-wing students, 67-year-old antifascist Ernst Kirchweger was so severely injured that he died two days later. The perpetrator was sentenced to ten months in prison, and Borodajkewycz was finally retired in May 1966. Michael Horowitz, who was only fifteen years old at the time, took this photograph at the rally held after Kirchweger's death. It is one of his first distinctly personal photographs.

### **Kiki Kogelnik in New York**

In 1969, aged eighteen, Michael Horowitz visited the Carinthian-born artist Kiki Kogelnik in New York, where she had lived since the early 1960s. The promising artist had soon made contact with the New York art scene around Andy Warhol and come to create independent works in which she ironically and critically dealt with social issues, the (female) body, technical progress, and new technologies. Horowitz and Kogelnik spent three days in the city, Horowitz capturing her in numerous photographs. On the roof of a Lower East Side building, he photographed the artist with plastic bombs: Kogelnik had already begun to paint discarded bomb cylinders in the early 1960s, countering their threatening aspect with such titles as "Bombs in Love." Whether on the streets of New York, at the MoMA, or privately at home, sitting next to a self-designed skeleton: Michael Horowitz succeeds in conveying an impression of her extravagant personality with these photographs.

## The Friedrichshof Commune

Otto Muehl, one of the pioneers of Viennese Actionism, founded a commune in 1970. It was initially based in Vienna before it moved to the Friedrichshof, an estate in Burgenland, in 1974. The commune had up to six hundred members at the beginning of the 1980s. Most of them lived on the Friedrichshof premises; smaller centers emerged in various European cities. Besides “free sexuality” and community property, “action analysis” was another keystone of the commune’s living together. Muehl merged elements of psychoanalysis and bodywork for his experiment. His “action analysis” later developed into “self-presentation,” which was practiced in front of the assembled group and accompanied by instruments. Otto Muehl became an authoritarian leader, former members reported on physical and emotional violence—charges were filed. In 1991, Muehl was sentenced to seven years in prison for child abuse, violations of the Narcotic Drugs Act, and witness manipulation. After that he lived in Portugal until his death in 2013. Horowitz’s photographs were commissioned in 1977 by the magazine *Der Spiegel*, for which he regularly took photographs in Austria. The photographer stayed at the Friedrichshof for two days. His photographs offer glimpses of its communal life.

## The Gugging Artists

In the early 1950s, the psychiatrist Leo Navratil began to motivate his patients in the Maria Gugging mental hospital to draw. Initially still interested in the diagnostic value of their creations, he soon recognized some of his patients’ extraordinary talent and encouraged them. The patients’ works were exhibited for the first time in the Galerie nächst St. Stephan in 1970. Artists such as Arnulf Rainer, Adolf Frohner, André Heller, or Friederike Mayröcker became interested in the artists of Gugging and began to study their works and Art brut. The first generation of Gugging artists—such as August Walla, Oswald Tschirtner, Johann Hauser, and Ernst Herbeck, whom Horowitz portrayed—achieved great fame. The *open studio gugging* and the *museum gugging* were opened on the premises of the former mental hospital in 2001 and 2006 respectively.

## Andy Warhol in Vienna

Andy Warhol visited Vienna in 1981, when the Museum of the Twentieth Century dedicated an exhibition to him. During his stay he carried out private portrait commissions, which had been arranged by the owner of his Zurich gallery. One of his clients was Hans Dichand, the editor of *Kronen Zeitung*. He had his daughter Johanna photographed by the Pop Art icon and immortalized as a silkscreen print. Dichand employed Michael Horowitz to document the photo session with Warhol. Horowitz was invited to a private villa in Vienna, where Warhol photographed Johanna Dichand with a Polaroid camera. The series shot by Horowitz shows Andy Warhol putting make-up on his subject’s lips, moving her into position for the photo, taking pictures of her, and examining the Polaroids with her.