

PRESS RELEASE

KUNST HAUS WIEN: The Green Museum



Facade KUNST HAUS WIEN © KUNST HAUS WIEN,
Photo: Paul Bauer



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KUNST HAUS WIEN has been dedicated to ecological and socially relevant topics as a Green Museum. In 2018, it became the first museum in Austria to receive the Austrian Ecolabel.

The building itself stands out for its architecturally innovative and artistic design. It has a vertical garden greening, a flat roof with trees and more than 260 plant species that were determined as part of an exhibition project. It is the only building in Vienna designed by Friedensreich Hundertwasser that is open to visitors throughout.

Based on the forward-looking ideas of Friedensreich Hundertwasser, the museum is a place for artists who continuously deal with topics such as sustainability, climate change, recycling or biodiversity.

Sustainability plays an essential role not only in the exhibition programme, but also in operations. Processes, both in the museum and in the administration, have been and continue to be examined and optimised with regard to environmental compatibility and ecological action.

Focal points in terms of content

KUNST HAUS WIEN has committed itself to a clear programmatic orientation: Landscape, nature, and the role of man in ecological and political systems and the effects of a globalised world order are the themes that are critically and visionarily reflected upon. Artists work out socio-political contexts, supporting events contribute to stimulating discourse about them.

In this way, the house has established a unique position for itself in the cultural life of the city of Vienna and beyond. Special events, lectures, discussions and symposia as well as a variety of workshops and programmes for schoolchildren and apprentices complement the programme. KUNST HAUS WIEN has thus positioned itself as a place for critical and discursive discussion of future issues and shows strategies for dealing more consciously with environmental aspects in one's own life.

In the past years, the relevant exhibitions *After us, the Flood*, *When the wind blows* or *Visions of Nature* as well as individual presentations by Edward Burtynsky, Claudius Schulze, Claudia Märzendorfer, EOOS, Resanita, Jochen Lempert, Oliver Ressler, Iris Andraschek and many others have been shown.

KUNST HAUS WIEN has also joined the list of demands of the global movement "Museums for Future", which shows ecological and political commitment.

Structural focal points

The commitment of KUNST HAUS WIEN has been pioneering with its content-related topics in the exhibition and mediation area since 2014. Around ART Basel in 2019, questions were raised about the ecological sustainability of the cultural sector. In the same year, the Tate Modern declared a climate emergency and announced its intention to reduce its ecological footprint by 10% within the next four years.

The question of what responsibility and what social stance cultural institutions can and should take in the face of ever more rapidly advancing climate change is becoming increasingly urgent. The commitment of the exhibition house has been recognised nationally and internationally by articles in the German art magazine Monopol or on artnet.com, among others.

"Eco-labels are usually found on food packaging in supermarkets or water-efficient dishwashers. Seeing an eco-certification label on a museum is rare, but KUNST HAUS WIEN is one of the first museums in Europe to qualify for the green badge." (artnet, October 2019)

The Austrian Eco-label, which until then had been awarded mainly in the event, tourism and education sectors, was also to be awarded to museums and exhibition halls. The initial impetus for this was also obvious because Friedensreich Hundertwasser had already created the sign for the seal of quality in 1990 - Hundertwasser wanted to create a signé for those businesses that guaranteed product procurement and Tuesday performance according to the highest possible ecological standards.

Sustainability concept in detail

According to an evaluation by Global 2000, the replacement of the halogen lighting with LED lighting alone brings energy savings of more than 70%. Other measures, such as restoration with regard to the handling of chemicals or transport, storage and use of materials for the exhibition architecture required a more comprehensive treatment. In the long term, the museum's goal is to make its operations climate-neutral.

The following criteria run through all areas within the museum:

- Improving energy efficiency (lighting systems)
- Purchase of green electricity
- Sustainable handling of exhibition architecture, transport and storage in terms of choice of materials, multiple use, recycling
- Conservation and restoration: sensitive and sustainable handling of the exhibition objects, as well as minimisation of the necessary chemicals and auxiliary materials
- Changeover of materials in the office to recyclability (e.g. chlorine-free recycled paper),
- Environmental compatibility and recyclability (e.g. secondary recycling of publications)
- Environmentally friendly production of printed matter
- Balanced product mix of the museum shop (regional and resource-friendly)
- Restaurant offers vegan dishes
- Ecological waste concept
- Focus on ecology in art education and sustainable development in education work: participation, multi-perspective, cultural and social differences, problem-solving skills, variety of methods
- Further training for staff

KUNST HAUS WIEN is also committed to passing on its experience and knowledge. Since 2019, numerous workshops and information events have been held on the topic of "Green Museum". In cooperation with ICOM Austria, a practice-oriented workshop for museums was organised to facilitate entry into the certification process for obtaining the Austrian Eco-label. There is also professional exchange at European level with other museums that are committed to sustainability.

"Climate protection is usually only mentioned in museums as part of the programme - if at all. Yet there is enough to be done to reduce emissions from exhibition halls. KUNST HAUS WIEN wants to set a good example."
(monopol, October 2019)

Important past exhibitions of KUNST HAUS WIEN:

www.kunsthawien.com/de/ausstellungen/archiv/

Austrian Ecolabel / Museums:

www.umweltzeichen.at/de/tourismus/museen

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