

**PRESS RELEASE**



aus der Serie | from the series: Plastic Trees,  
2014 © Eduardo Leal

**WHEN THE WIND BLOWS**

12.03. – 28.08.22

Press date: FR 11.03.22, 10:00

Opening: FR 11.03.22, 18:00

Air envelops Earth like a membrane, being vital and omnipresent—an element connecting places, a carrier of smell and sound. Humans’ relationships to the invisible elements of air, wind, and breath are complex. In the context of today’s climate crisis, air pollution and storms on the one hand and wind power as a renewable source of energy on the other play crucial roles.

Air flows into our bodies when we take our first breath, and when we die, we breathe our last. Since the Covid-19 pandemic we have feared other people’s breath and sought to protect us from an infection by wearing face masks. In the course of a human life, a person breathes in and exhales 300 million liters of air.

Austrian and international artists of different generations reflect upon the breath of life, the destructive power of wind, air pollution, and climate change. The works deal with flying and geoengineering, they use air as a (driving) force and examine scientific, experimental, and alchemical approaches to air—from light breezes to storms and hurricanes.

**Ólafur Elíasson**’s wind already blows in the stairwell in the form of his installation *Your Windy Corner* (1997). Where the air touches the bodies of visitors, it becomes an invisible sculpture. The exhibition is introduced by **Niina Vatanen**’s excerpt from her pictorial cosmos *Time Atlas* (2019/2022). The artist has installed dozens of images of air, wind, and breath in the form of a wall collage: clouds, wind-blown sheets, plants, and people, as well as satellite images of hurricanes span a wide associative spectrum on the subject of air.

Today, the most widely produced consumer product on Earth – the plastic bag – can be found in the most remote areas of the world: on the ocean floor as well as on Mount Everest or the Altiplano, a high plateau at 3,600 meters in southeastern Peru and western Bolivia. The Portuguese artist **Eduardo Leal** has documented stranded plastic bags which the wind carried over long distances and which eventually got caught in bushes. They mean death for plants and animals and disfigure the pristine landscape, as their decomposition will take centuries.

Breathing plays a principal role in **Emily Parsons-Lord**'s video work *Our Fetid Rank* (Margaret Thatcher's bottom lip and Bill Clinton's tongue) from 2015. In this three-channel video, speeches by politicians on the subject of climate change have been cut in such a way that only the moments of catching breath between the words have remained: hot air?

300 million years ago, the oxygen content in the air was almost twice as high as it is today. At the end of the Paleozoic Era around 250 million years ago, more than ninety percent of Earth's species became extinct while the carbon dioxide content in the air increased. For her interactive installation *The Confounding Leaving* (2017), **Emily Parsons-Lord** takes us along on a journey through time. The artist has had air from different eras of Earth's geological past prepared according to special recipes based on scientific calculation. "Carboniferous air," "Air of the Great Dying," and "Future Air" can be tasted in the exhibition.

In the video of the performance *Breathing In / Breathing Out* from 1977, **Ulay and Marina Abramović** exchange air through their mouths. Their noses are closed, and microphones attached to their larynxes amplify the sounds of their respirational exchange. Each exchange of air reduces the oxygen content until carbon dioxide eventually predominates in the breath, and the two performers, on the verge of fainting, let go of each other.

The south of Iran has an unmistakable landscape shaped by the wind. In *Speak the Wind* (2015–2020) by **Hoda Afshar**, the focus is on the islands in the Strait of Hormuz. According to a widespread regional belief, winds can take possession of a person and cause physical or psychological misfortune. More than one hundred winds that stand out for their different characters and effects are listed and given specific names. If someone is possessed by a wind, only a shamanic ritual can remedy the situation.

The Swedish artist duo **Bigert & Bergström** explore the idea of artificially influencing the climate. Their docufiction *The Weather War* (2012) presents different approaches to changing the weather and controlling wind and storm. Based on an idea by Russian scientist Vladimir Pudov, the artists built the *Tornado Diverter*, a hybrid between machine and sculpture, which, according to its concept, may be used to change the direction of tornadoes.

**Ulrike Königshofer** has succeeded in recording the fleeting and unique movement of natural wind and storing it in a process of translation. With the aid of a fan, her work *wind, recorded* reproduces the very wind that blew on October 27, 2015 in Vienna's Lobau nature reserve.

**Julius von Bismarck** deals with a very stormy type of wind. Irma was the longest-lasting hurricane worldwide since the beginning of records. Its peak intensity of about 177 miles per hour persisted for at least 37 hours. Irma made landfall in Southwest Florida on September 10, 2017,

leaving a furrow of destruction and causing numerous floods. Millions of people had to be evacuated.

The exhibition addresses the manifold relationships of humans to the element of air, to wind, and to breath. They are shaped by their own experiences and sensations, by narratives in myths and literature, by scientific experiments, and by speculations about their emergence and composition. A comprehensive program of supporting events accompanies the exhibition.

**22 artistic positions** make the invisible phenomena of breath, air, and wind visible in diverse ways: Hoda Afshar, Bigert & Bergström, Julius von Bismarck, Olafur Eliasson, Karin Fisslthaler, Ana Grilc, Isabelle Ha Eav, Jana Hartmann, Ayumi Ishii, Sophie Jung, Sjoerd Knibbeler, Ulrike Königshofer, Eduardo Leal, Emily Parsons-Lord, Peter Piller, Werner Reiterer, Roman Signer, Lydia Simon, Ulay/Marina Abramović, Nadim Vardag, Niina Vatanen, Susan Walsh

The exhibition *When the Wind Blows* has been realized jointly with the University of Applied Arts Vienna.

**Curators:** Verena Kaspar-Eisert (KUNST HAUS WIEN) and Liddy Scheffknecht (University of Applied Arts Vienna)

Press images can be downloaded at: <https://www.kunsthau.wien.com/de/presse/>

## EXHIBITION FACTS

Venue	KUNST HAUS WIEN Untere Weißgerberstraße 13, 1030 Vienna
Curators	Verena Kaspar-Eisert and Liddy Scheffknecht
Exhibition dates	March 12 – August 28, 2022
Press talk	Fri, March 11, 2022, 10:00 am
Opening	Fri, March 11, 2022, 5:00 pm Free admission

Artist Talk

Tues, March 15, 2022, 1:00 pm  
Emily Parsons-Lord  
University of Applied Arts Vienna,  
Vordere Zollamtsstraße outpost  
in English

Mon, May 9, 2022, 6:30 pm  
Bigert & Bergström  
KUNST HAUS WIEN  
in English

Curators' tour

Thurs, April 28, 2022, 5:00 pm  
Verena Kaspar-Eisert (KUNST HAUS WIEN) in dialog with Ernst  
Strouhal (University of Applied Arts Vienna)  
KUNST HAUS WIEN

Thurs, June 9, 2022, 5:00 pm  
Liddy Scheffknecht (University of Applied Arts Vienna)  
KUNST HAUS WIEN

Lectures

Thurs, April 21, 2022, 7:00 pm  
Philipp Blom: Über moralische Gewitter. Anmerkungen zur  
Theologie der Klimakrise  
in German  
University of Applied Arts Vienna,  
Vordere Zollamtsstraße outpost

Thurs, April 28, 2022, 7:00 pm  
Alois Holzer: Wind außer Kontrolle. Tornados, Taifune, Hurrikans  
Florian Bettel: Wind unter Kontrolle. Pneumatik, bewegte Luft,  
Technikfantasien  
in German  
KUNST HAUS WIEN

Performance

Thurs, June 23, 2022, 7:00 pm  
Jakob Scheid: "Speaking without lips..."  
Talking Machines. Presentation and performance  
KUNST HAUS WIEN

Workshop	Sat & Sun, June 25/26, 2022, 15-18:00 Dusts Chambers KUNST HAUS WIEN, inner courtyard; depends on the weather. Alternative dates: Sat & Sun, July 2/3, 2022
Film program	Program on the subject of wind in film in collaboration with the Austrian Film Museum and the University of Applied Arts Vienna Dates: June 2022, see <a href="http://www.filmmuseum.at">www.filmmuseum.at</a>  Please note that current Covid-19 protective measures apply for all events and the museum!
Opening hours	10:00 am – 6:00 pm
Admission	Museum Hundertwasser € 11 When the Wind Blows € 9 Combined ticket € 12 Yearly ticket € 22 Yearly ticket for two € 42 Adolescents from 11 to 18, students & apprentices up to age 26 € 5 Free admission for children under 10 Free access to parking garage

In Collaboration with



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