

WUK:

It may surprise you, because the title of the presentation was titled, with KUNSTHALLE EXNERGASSE, and what you see now on the images is called WUK. The point is that I cannot explain something about the KUNSTHALLE EXNERGASSE without telling what the WUK is. Well, WUK is an acronym for the legal entity the "Werkstätten und Kulturhaus" which can be translated as an Association for the Creation of Open Culture and Workshop Houses. A 6-member board heads the association and decides the strategic direction of WUK. At the annual general assembly of the members fundamental decisions are made and every two years a new board is elected. The current 550 WUK members all have voting rights.

It is a huge building - with its 12.000 m² - one of the biggest cultural centres in Europe that directly reside in the city of Vienna. WUK is a space of culture, workshops, and social gathering.

Now it is home for four main program areas: performance space, children's theatre, 130 independent cultural groups and initiatives, and educational and advisory projects.

WUK provides a venue as well as organizational support to those interested in art, politics, and social engagement. It offers various opportunities to get involved, including the use of the venue and organization support for social, artistic, or political projects. Active participation, self-management, and grassroots democracy form the basic philosophy of WUK. Active membership in various national and international cultural networks has significantly contributed to making the WUK known all over Europe as the "flagship of the independent Austrian cultural scene" and the "window on a different Vienna".

-History

The former locomotive factory was initially built in 1855. From 1884 to 1980 it was home to the "Technological Trades Museum" (TGM), an institutional connection between research, exhibitions and training for technical professionals. In 1979/1980 the building was abandoned and in a state of decay. In addition to diverse commercial and municipal plans there was always a concrete interest in an "alternative" function.

So therefore in 1979 the WUK association was founded. In 1981 activists from the association squatted the former TGM premises. The former Mayor of this time promises the temporary use of the building to the WUK association. Official recognition is followed by the first subsidy from the City of Vienna.

And now for 30 years, the WUK has been a freespace in the city of Vienna. Successful self-management. Progressive art and culture. Education for all.

-WUK Cultural Productions

And it's cultural productions consist of four programmatic areas: WUK Theatre, WUK Culture for Kids, WUK Music and visual art namely in the Kunsthalle Exnergasse.

KUNSTHALLE EXNERGASSE:

- History

Now we leave the WUK and go directly to KUNSTHALLE EXNERGASSE - it is also located in the WUK, in the first floor. Her history indeed is similar to the WUK, but also different „same, same but different „ it was founded as an artist run gallery/ as a producer gallery in 1987. At that time these young artists tried to manage this gallery but after 2 years they gave up and they submitted the room to the organization WUK to the administration. 1989 was therefore the official founding date of KUNSTHALLE EXNERGASSE. The first director was employed and the shows started.

- Description of aims

She defines itself as an open platform and exhibition space for the presentation and realization of projects belonging to innovative, experimental and contemporary art in its most different formats and forms.

The Kunsthalle Exnergasse is not commercially oriented and has regarded itself from the beginning as a place dedicated particularly to the artist and the artists' needs.

-Space

In the bright 400 square meter exhibition space, there were hundreds of artists we worked with in the last 22 years. For further detailed information to all artists please look at our website archive:

kunsthalleexnergasse.wuk.at

2006 saw an innovation through the implementing of movable walls/space separating objects, which offered endless customizing options for the exhibition space.

The evolution of the Kunsthalle Exnergasse was a reaction to the increasing interest of international exhibitions, which require certain interiors, displays and space management. It has also been experimented the transnational projects of the local scene, which are process based group projects.

-team

Our team consists of 1 fully employed person, 2 persons for 20 hours/week for organization and media. 1 technician for 13 hours/week and 1 trainee and a few helping hands for set-up and tear-down the exhibition.

-funding

We are mainly financed through public subsidies, which mean that we get the budget for the yearly program from the federal ministry of culture and the costs for infrastructure is covered by the city of Vienna which we are getting about the WUK currently in a 2 and 3 year period subsidy. Since 2009 we got index adjusted multi-annual funding contracts.

1989 we started with a grant for the program of ca. 2.000. - Euro - it worked to 90.000.-€ in 1999. Then there came a political change and we had been reduced to 70.000. - - since last year we get 80.000.-€ for the annual running exhibition program.

So how you can notice, there is not really much budget for all this program and it wouldn't work if we are not trying to raise additional project funds.

-Philosophy/idea

At last point I try giving you a short introduction to hear more about our work.

The Kunsthalle Exnergasse sees itself obliged to an up-to-date open art discourse.

And I think it doesn't give a comparable room to the Kunsthalle Exnergasse in Vienna.

Because the KUNSTHALLE Exnergasse is one of the only few exhibition and event rooms in Vienna, where curators and people who do the program in excess of the mainstream of the cultural activity beyond that, can go into the socio-politically non-conformist, the radical and utopian.

It is also an important place of the aesthetic and the intellectually emancipatory discourse. It develops a discursive room which became an indispensable component of the Viennese presence art scene and opens in cooperation with artists and curator new production fields for art again and again.

An essential characteristic of this showroom is his contribution to articulation ways of art which pick up niche formations and discover whose relevance in visually different displays in a global economic net of the production.

The exhibitions represent the change in a field of tensions of already successful positions and such which constitute the real profile of the Kunsthalle Exnergasse, namely young artists those, whose work are often first shown in Vienna and immediately find on this the way to big exhibition houses.

-program

We have the only existing and annual Open call for Proposals especially in Vienna and in Austria. And we invite all artistic productions, all individual collectives to submit.

Corresponding exhibition programs which consists of 4 large shows the year are decided in a 2-STEP APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS upon by an Advisory Panel in cooperation with Kunsthalle Exnergasse. The deadline to submit proposals is every March 1 for the exhibition program of the then following year.

Within the program of exhibitions interdisciplinary events are held such as symposiums, lectures, readings, concerts and catalogue presentations.

As said before, we are always trying to include new tendencies or directions in contemporary art. Therefore we also have our Self-organizing and intervening new additional formats program in the exhibition-free intermediate spaces of Kunsthalle Exnergasse which is curated by the team of Kunsthalle Exnergasse itself.

For example this has been made possible by introducing new formats such as "Film ab" and "tisch im raum", which is a recurring exhibition format designed as a laboratory, a space for dialogue and a dinner table landscape. Guests who investigate diverse phenomena of the art field present an artistic position that is relevant in their work and enter into a dialogue with another invited guest. The evening closes together with the audience at a dinner table in the exhibition space.

Both are continuing in the year 2012.

A new "Artist in residence" project is starting 2012 and for the end I still would like to say that from now we are starting also as partner in the curator's network for a planned meeting in 2013 in Vienna and we are very proud on it.