



Kurt Hüpfnér, *The Hypertelist*, 1966, Donation from a private collection, Photo: © Belvedere, Vienna

Vienna, November 17, 2016

21er Haus
Museum of
Contemporary Art

Quartier Belvedere
Arsenalstraße 1
1030 Vienna, Austria

Museum Hours:
We: 11 am – 9 pm
Th – Su: 11 am – 6 pm
open on public holidays

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KURT HÜPFNER

Out of the Unknown

November 18, 2016 to January 29, 2017

The 21er Haus honors the lifetime achievement of Austrian artist Kurt Hüpfnér (born 1930 in Vienna) with his first solo exhibition at a museum. His works will be on display from November 18, 2016 to January 29, 2017 at the museum's lower level. The exhibition *Kurt Hüpfnér – Out of the Unknown* presents a cross-section of key periods of the artist, who is still active to this day. The works shown include his graphic beginnings, his drawings, his distinctive assemblage works from the 1970s, as well as the small sculptures that characterize his work from the mid-1980s onward. Most of the works on display come from a generous donation to the Belvedere from a private collection.

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"Kurt Hüpfner has worked for a long time in obscurity. I am delighted that we will be able to honor this exceptional artist's work with his first exhibition in a museum, and my hope is that this show will contribute a new entry to the canon of Austrian art history," says Agnes Husslein-Arco, director of the Belvedere and the 21er Haus.

After his beginnings as a commercial artist and cartoonist, Kurt Hüpfner developed a complex, independent body of work from the early 1960s onward. During a sojourn in Paris in 1961, he encountered *écriture automatique*, or automatic writing. This method of writing seeks to express emotions and thoughts symbolically, without regard for grammar, punctuation, or spelling. Inspired by this discovery, Hüpfner has since then made great use of this practice. Starting in 1962, he began to teach himself the medium of sculpture, which went on to play an increasingly important role in his work. From this point forward, his drawings also began to serve as the starting point for his unusual sculptures, assemblages, and paintings.

After an influential visit to the exhibition *Pop etc.* in 1964 at the former 20er Haus, his drawings, paintings, and assemblages featured pictorial themes formally oriented toward Pop Art, while his content dealt with politics, war, and literature. In the 1970s, Hüpfner developed a completely unique style: His small-format plaster and terracotta sculptures, often painted with oils, are intricate "magical creatures," each of which tells its own story.

"The hallmark of Hüpfner's work lies in his ironic, critical handling of societal issues from the 1950s to the 1990s. These subject matters are genuinely translated in his montages and object-works. Hüpfner's body of work is one of the few examples of the reception of Pop Art in Austria, the likes of which also include André Verlon or Curt Stenvert," states Harald Krejci, head curator of the 21er Haus.

The interface between modern and contemporary art movements such as Surrealism, Dadaism, and Pop Art, as well as his own reflections on political crises, set the parameters in which Hüpfner's art was able to evolve, but his artistic work remained largely unnoticed by the public. Now the 21er Haus presents his first museum exposition of works, introduced as a new discovery within the canon of Austrian art history. His artistic work remained largely unnoticed by the public, and it was not until 2006 that he participated, for the first time, in a group exhibition. Now the 21er Haus presents his first exposition of works in a museum.



Regular Information

Exhibition Title	<i>Kurt Hüpfnér – Out of the Unknown</i>
Curator	Harald Krejci
Exhibits	49
Exhibition Dates	November 18, 2016 to January 29, 2017
Venue	21er Haus Museum of Contemporary Art Quartier Belvedere, Arsenalstraße 1, 1030 Vienna, Austria
Museum Hours	Tuesday 11 am – 6pm Wednesday 11 am– 9 pm Thursday through Sunday 11 am– 6 pm Open on Public Holidays
Tickets	General Admission 7 Euro 21er Haus Annual Ticket 21 Euro Reduced 5.50 Euro Under 18 free

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