

mumok Museum moderner Kunst  
Stiftung Ludwig Wien  
Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Vienna

**Exhibition Dates**  
November 8, 2013 through  
February, 2 2014

**Opening**  
November 7, 2013, 7 pm

**Press Conference**  
November 6, 2013, 10 am

#### Press Contact

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## and Materials and Money and Crisis

*and Materials and Money and Crisis* is a group exhibition that serves as an experimental proposition toward addressing the matter of capital as it exists in the artwork. Curated by New York-based curator Richard Birkett in dialogue with artist Sam Lewitt, the exhibition brings together the work of eleven artists, including new commissions and existing artworks reconstituted for mumok. Two different meanings of matter underlie the proposition put forward in the show. On the one hand, flows of material and money—and the crisis inducing disruption of those flows—can serve as subject matter for artworks. On the other hand, on a deeper level, the exhibition asks how the physical matter from which artworks are made relates to the dissociation of capital from production as realized in a financialized global economy.

*and Materials and Money and Crisis* looks toward the work of artists who conceptualize unexpected ways in which this constellation of terms hangs together—from the conversion of a gallery space into a climatic chamber and the use of unstable materials to the creation of algorithmically determined structures. The works in this exhibition attempt to capture technical supports and organizational systems in ways that enact breakdowns, intensify internal contradictions, stage accelerations and cessations of the idealized circulatory system of exchange. This may mean acting on or within the apparatuses that determine the artwork—the “hardware” and “software” of painting’s production and circulation; the negotiation between artist and curator; or the flexibility and constraints active in ordering cultural forms, such as mumok itself. The artwork is considered as a site of material equivalence—a volatile point of contact between physical and linguistic forces—put into effect within the accelerating time of capital’s increasingly insensible flows.

The terms “materials,” “money,” and “crisis” function as markers of the historical period inaugurated by the dissolution of the gold standard in 1971, which was followed by the invention of complex financial instruments that have further intensified the abstraction of the exchange economy. Prices increasingly refer only to wagers on future prices, and monetary flows, released from the weight of external reference, have become inseparable from the seemingly inevitable spread of global turbulence.

The exhibition seeks to emphasize how contingent, changeable, and unstable the definition of “material” is in a moment of crisis linked to dematerializing processes of speculation and derivation. Contemporary artistic culture is fully immersed in an expanded field of tools, conceptual strategies, and technical processes—the allowance of “whatever, however” in the institutional definition and material structure of the artwork. As capital flows through a financial system composed of pure media,

in which the materiality of price is emancipated from any even illusory reference to physical property, how might aspects of materialization within art be read as a response to crises in the process of establishing value?

The exhibition at mumok features work by Terry Atkinson, Maria Eichhorn, Melanie Gilligan, Gareth James, Sam Lewitt, Henrik Olesen, Pratchaya Phinthong, R. H. Quaytman, Lucy Raven, Cheyney Thompson, and Emily Wardill.

### **Works in the Exhibition**

Rather than being structured through rigorous adherence to a thematic, the artworks in *and Materials and Money and Crisis* are arranged as an experimental concatenation of positions. Admitting of oblique invention and indeterminacy alike, these works are made using a range of media, exploring the relations between instrumental logics and organizational structures both internal and external to the physical presence of the artwork.

Sam Lewitt's *Weak Local Lineaments* (2013) is made from Pylalux, a flexible copper-based laminate used in electrical circuits. Strips of this material are etched with the image of a scalable matrix based on an LED array. These are positioned inside the building, in front of mumok's slatlike windows, necessitating the removal of wall panels and the opening up of auxiliary spaces. Maria Eichhorn's *Meer. Salz. Wasser. Klima. Kammer. Nebel. Wolken. Luft. Staub. Atem. Küste. Brandung. Rauch. (Sea. Salt. Water. Climate. Chamber. Fog. Clouds. Air. Dust. Breath. Coast. Surf. Smoke)* (1991) is premised, along similar lines, on an environmentally conditioned material presence. An exhibition space is filled with a salt-water fog generated by medical nebulizers, accompanied by a brochure detailing the health-giving properties of the mist. Both Lewitt's and Eichhorn's works act on the structural fabric of the museum building and at the same time throw a sideways light on the physical and symbolic regulations that organize the space of display.

Terry Atkinson's *Grease Works* are derived from drawings conceived twenty years ago by the former Art & Language member. These works also involve the deployment of an unstable material that continues to change once the work is installed. In this case the substance is axle grease, contained by floor-based troughs or thrust into the gaps within painting-like structures. R. H. Quaytman and Cheyney Thompson likewise proceed from the elemental hardware and software of painting and sculpture—traditional technical supports, materiality, production and distribution. They set in motion rigorous protocols for the production of their work. For instance, in Thompson's *Broken Volumes* (2013), the application of a "random walk" algorithm, typically used in finance to evaluate stock options, generates stochastic sculptural forms through the multiplication of a concrete cube along a prescribed path.

In *Give More Than You Take*, an ongoing project by Pratchaya Phinthong begun in 2010, a period of time the artist spent working on a berry farm in Sweden becomes the source for transpositions of value, for example in an instruction to the exhibition curator to present material in the gallery of equivalent weight to the amount of berries Phinthong picked. Gareth James and Henrik Olesen similarly make use of quotidian materials, actualizing processes of semiotic and physical exchange through contingent strategies of formalization, whereby novel material equivalences emerge. In theirs and Phinthong's work, the mechanisms of production are related to the status of both the artwork and the artistic subject as constructed through institutional, social, and economic structures.

Lucy Raven, Melanie Gilligan, and Emily Wardill work principally with the moving image, exploring the relations of production and the conventions of representation in television and cinema. Here, the process of visualizing crisis is embedded in the "dead labor" of filmic and televisual media, the adoption of documentary and narrative formats highlighting material and phenomenological processes of accumulation, quantification, and circulation. In Raven's work, research into Hollywood's outsourcing to Asia of the conversion of 2D films to 3D forensically exposes a conjunction of perceptual and economic forces employed toward the standardization of viewing experience.

*and Materials and Money and Crisis* is curated by Richard Birkett, curator at Artists Space, New York, in dialogue with artist Sam Lewitt. The first public iteration of the ideas in the exhibition took place in a symposium held at Artists Space in April 2012, featuring artists, art and architecture historians, and economic and critical theorists.

Curated by Richard Birkett.

We would like the Erste Group, partner of mumok's art education department, and our media partners Der Standard, Wien live, and Ö1.

**Fact Sheet  
and Materials and Money and Crisis**

Exhibition dates	November 8, 2013 through February 2, 2014
Opening	Thursday, November 7, 2013, 7pm
Press Conference	Wednesday, November 6, 2013, 10 am
Location	mumok Levels 2, 3, 4 MuseumsQuartier, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Vienna
Curator	Richard Birkett
Exhibition production	Claudia Dohr
Publication	<i>and Materials and Money and Crisis</i> The exhibition is accompanied by a publication bringing together newly commissioned and republished texts by Sam Lewitt, architecture theorists Craig Buckley and Reinhold Martin, art historian Sebastian Egenhofer, writer Marina Vishmidt with artist Melanie Gilligan, media theorist Joseph Vogl, and artist Terry Atkinson, with an introduction by Richard Birkett. German/English edition, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne. ISBN 978-3-86335-451-0 (German.), 978-3-86335-452-7 (English.), € 29,-.
Opening Hours	Monday: 2 pm–7 pm Tuesday to Sunday: 10 am–7 pm Thursday: 10 am–9 pm
Admission	Normal € 10,- Concessions € 8,- or € 7,-
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