

## EXHIBITION

# Reverse Imagining Vienna

*Anthropogenic Mass and  
Its Speculative Futures*

2 May–29 May 2024

**Opening** 30 Apr 2024, 19:00

**Finissage** 29 May 2024, 18:30

Since 2020, the global stock of man-made mass has exceeded the total sum of biomass on Earth – around 90 percent of which is building materials. In the project *Reverse Imagining Vienna*, two sculptors and nine writers took a Viennese Gründerzeit building and the Prater Bridge, which crosses over the Danube, as material and speculative anchors in which to gain perspectives on sustainable relationships with inanimate matter. Referring to so-called *reverse engineering*, the two structures were deconstructed and recomposed in a historical, material-analytical, poetic and visionary way using *reverse imagining*.

Over a two year period, the project brought together national and international experts from the disciplines of geology, physics, ecology, urban morphology, transport sciences, evolutionary biology, literature and sculpture. The nine anthropogenic materials most relevant to the case studies were identified and analyzed in terms of cultural history, environmental science and social metabolism, from extraction to recycling management and emissions. Samples of material allowed conclusions to be drawn about their respective origins; the geological formation and potential futures were discussed in lectures by the participating scientists and contextualized for further speculative processing.

In this way, images of varied futures were created with a time horizon that extends from the present and spans into the geological distance.

The exhibition *Reverse Imagining Vienna* is the final presentation of the artistic research project of the same name. Sculptures, scientific analyses of the nine anthropogenic materials and the first volume of a publication containing the resulting literary contributions are on display. Four readings by the participating authors will take place as part of the exhibition.

### Reading Nights (18:30)

**8 May** with Jakob Pretterhofer, Fiston Mwanza Mujila

Performance by Nikolaus Eckhard and friends afterwards

**15 May** with Julia Grillmayr, Nika Pfeifer

**22 May** with Neslihan Yakut, Ann Cotten

**29 May** with Veronika Franz, Severin Fiala, Elias Hirsch

**Participating researchers** Angelika Psenner, Barbara Laa, Filipa L. Sousa, Fridolin Krausmann, Jan Zalasiewicz, Johannes Weber, Josepha Edbauer, Michael Wagreich, Peter Fichtinger, Sebastian Hafner, Tanja Traxler, Tess Posch

**Project management and sculpture**  
Christoph Weber, Nikolaus Eckhard

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AIL is an experimental space and a platform for projects at the intersection of art, science and artistic research, run by the University of Applied Arts Vienna. AIL is located in the Otto Wagner-Postsparkasse and home of Café Exchange:  
Mon–Fri: 10:00–18:00 (Free entry)

Exhibition opening hours: Mon–Fri: 11:00–18:00  
Open Saturday: 4 May, 10:00–18:00