

Press release

Frankfurt am Main, 02.06.2017

SUR/FACE: Mirrors **24 June to 1 October 2017**

Press preview: Thursday, 22 June 2017, 11 am
Exhibition opening: Friday, 23 June 2017, 7 pm

On the façades of bank towers, in boutiques, gyms and lobbies, in our homes and on our smartphones – everywhere you look, there are mirrored surfaces. Why are reflective materials so tremendously popular these days? How are mirror effects used in design, and how does art reflect on them? And what is the impact of the omnipresent experience of mirrors on us human beings?

Taking place from 24 June to 1 October 2017, the exhibition *SUR/FACE: Mirrors* at the Museum Angewandte Kunst will focus on the phenomenon of the mirrored surface in art, design and architecture of the present. On 1,200 square metres of floor space, the show will feature products by such designers as Ron Arad, Ettore Sottsass and Oskar Zieta and artworks by Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Isa Genzken, Andy Warhol and many others. More than a hundred objects made of mirrored glass, highly polished metal or reflective plastic will attract the viewer's gaze, steer it, occasionally confound it, and offer it new perspectives. Mirrored surfaces create illusory spaces, point to seeming infinity, and look straight into the eyes of the viewer looking at himself.

Mirrored images never exist independently, but come about only through their spatial surroundings, through the viewer's gaze and angle of view. *SUR/FACE: Mirrors* creates room constellations in which the visitors take centre stage as the generators of individual meaning. Mirrored surfaces allow them to enter into dialogue with the objects and the architecture. Not least of all, with his individual perceptions, the visitor is thrown back on himself again and again. In the characteristic architecture of the Richard Meier building with its views of the bank towers making up the Frankfurt skyline, the exhibition stages two spacious, abstract domestic situations reminiscent of lofts or temporary residences. In these settings, reflective design objects and furniture form different interiors based on everyday lifeworlds. The viewers thus encounter rooms of everyday "mirror moments" both familiar and somehow different: from the public setting of a mirrored lobby the route leads through rooms of a more private nature such as the living and dining room and into the bedroom and bathroom as the most intimate domestic zones. Artworks, most of them mirrored themselves, enter into relationships with the interiors and reflect on the subject of reflection.

Whereas mirrors were once a rare luxury, in the nineteenth century methods of

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manufacturing them industrially were invented. With the advent of modern architecture and design they embarked on a triumphal advance and are meanwhile an integral element of our environment. A look in the mirror serves the purpose of self-perception and self-observation, aids us in our grooming and the staging of our outward appearances and emancipates us from the critical inspection of others. We use our mirror image countless times for self-assurance and, almost unconsciously, to check up on how we look. At the same time, mirrored surfaces simulate the gaze of others. As a medium of self-awareness, the mirror is the theme of numerous philosophical and psychoanalytical studies. Sigmund Freud derived his theory of melancholy from the myth of Narcissus; according to Jacques Lacan, the human being becomes conscious of selfhood when he recognizes his own mirror image during the "mirror stage"; and Jean-Paul Sartre sees the emergence of self-awareness as founded in the "gaze of the other".

Today the mirror oscillates more than ever between medium of contemplative self-perception and pure stimulation of the senses. Mirrored surfaces are fascinating by virtue of their flawless perfection and capable of arousing desire. As pure surfaces, they show no trace of the craftsmanship that went into making them and betray nothing of their materiality. They answer every look with a look back, while at the same time, thanks to their reflective properties, almost imperceptibly incorporate themselves into their surroundings. As a visual duplication of reality, the mirror alludes to the virtual; as a popular aesthetic it points to the dematerialization tendencies in contemporary design.

The publication accompanying the exhibition delves into the mirrored surface against the backgrounds of design theory, psychoanalysis and the history of art and culture. It is conceived as a reflection of and on the curatorial concept and the process of the exhibition's development. And finally, it consolidates the curatorial team's thoughts and research on the subject of the mirror.

SUR/FACE: Mirrors is being realized with the generous sponsorship of the Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain and support from Pro Helvetia, Schweizer Kulturstiftung.

Featured artists:

John M. Armleder, Bernadette Corporation, Monica Bonvicini, Tom Burr, Keren Cytter, Latifa Echakhch, Olafur Eliasson, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Sylvie Fleury, Isa Genzken, Dan Graham, Olaf Holzapfel, Mathias Kiss, Mischa Kuball, Josephine Meckseper, Olaf Nicolai, Tobias Rehberger, Thomas Rentmeister, Katharina Sieverding, Amalia Ulman, Andy Warhol, Pae White, Claudia Wieser, Heimo Zobernig

Featured designers:

Ocp, Marco Acerbis, Alessi, Alfi, Neven Allgeier + Benedikt Fischer, Michael Anastassiades, Ron Arad, Aranda\Lasch, Arclinea, Artemide, Barber & Osgerby, Leonie Barth, BD Barcelona Design, Boffi, Ayzit Bostan, Ronan + Erwan Bouroullec, Braun, Maria Bruun, Uli Budde, Campana Brothers, Cassina, Achille Castiglioni, Karen Chekerdjian, Nina Cho, Václav Cigler, Antonio Citterio + Toan Nguyen, Claesson Koivisto Rune, Decor Walther, De Padova,

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Daft Punk + Daft Arts, Wilton C. Dinges, Tom Dixon, Doshi Levien, Beatrice Durandard, Duscholux, e15, Edra, Emeco, Jean-Baptiste Fastrez, Felicia Ferrone, Flos, FontanaArte, Enrico Franzolini, Fredrikson Stallard, Robert Lee Fritz, Naoto Fukasawa, Glas Italia, Stine Goya + John Kørner, Benjamin Graindorge, Johanna Grawunder, Halb/Halb, Makio Hasuike, Haw-lin Services, Sebastian Herkner, Ulla + Martin Kaufmann, KEF, Rodney Kinsman, Tomáš Král, Romain Lagrange, Ligne Roset, Jonas Lindstroem, Kai Linke, Ross Lovegrove, Magis, Vico Magistretti, Philipp Mainzer, Maison Margiela, Richard Meier, Roberto Menghi, mischer'traxler, Jasper Morrison, MYKILOS, MYKITA, nuuna, Paustian, PB 0110, Pulpo, Pussykrew, Karim Rashid, Rooms, Daniel Rybakken, Klaus Schmidhuber, Scholten & Baijings, Tijmen Smeulders, Soft Baroque, Ettore Sottsass, Philippe Starck, Elisa Strozyk, Sucuk und Bratwurst, Jonah Takagi, Technogym, Oswald Mathias Ungers, Maiken Walther, Reinhold Weiss, Wilkens & Söhne, Verreum, Voon Wong + Benson Saw, Oskar Zieta

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24.June – 1 October 2017

Director

Matthias Wagner K

Curators

Juliane Duft, Dr Mahret Kupka, Dr Christine Nippe, Matthias Wagner K

Curatorial assistant

Leonie Wiegand

Location

Museum Angewandte Kunst
Schaumainkai 17
60594 Frankfurt am Main

Information

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Opening hours

Tue, Thu–Sun 10 am – 6 pm, Wed 10 am – 8 pm

Admission

9 EUR, reduced 4.50 EUR; free for children, teens and students of the Goethe University Frankfurt and the Städelschule

Sponsors

Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain
Pro Helvetia, Schweizer Kulturstiftung

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Press downloads

www.museumangewandtekunst.de

Exhibition hashtag for the social media

#surfacespiegel