

Österreichische Ludwig-Stiftung

Beside, not infinite
Research Season 2025/26
Events, Research Grant, Publication

Beside is an interesting preposition [...]; a number of elements may lie alongside one another, though not an infinity of them. [...] *Beside* comprises a wide range of desiring, identifying, representing, repelling, paralleling, differentiating, rivaling, leaning, twisting, mimicking, withdrawing, attracting, aggressing, warping, and other relations.¹

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick

“Beside, not infinite” brings together seven artworks, from the late 1960s to the present, which are part of the Austrian Ludwig Foundation Collection. Over the past ten years, the Foundation purchased these works on the suggestion of the four Austrian national museums Albertina, Belvedere, MAK, and mumok, and made them available as permanent loans to these museums’ public collections. The works by Yto Barrada, Rosemarie Castoro, Sonia Gomes, Jann Haworth, Lee Lozano, Julie Mehretu, and Ingrid Wiener, which have been chosen for this research season can be seen as material and discursive nodes, situating the collective and academic conversations that “Beside, not infinite” wishes to initiate within the context of the collection. This selection of works also aims to provide an opportunity to examine the collection in relation to the contemporary debates in which artistic practices and academic discourses are involved.

The research season draws on works from the late 1960s and 70s (Rosemarie Castoro, Jann Haworth, Lee Lozano) as well as the 2010s and 20s (Yto Barrada, Sonia Gomes, Julie Mehretu, Ingrid Wiener). These seven artists from different generations and backgrounds use a variety of media and materials in their artistic practice. Rosemarie Castoro’s (1939–2015) bodily sculpture *Land of Lashes* (1976) and her corresponding *Land of Lads* (1975), also acquired for the collection, stand within the context of American minimalism. Lee Lozano’s (1930–99) untitled abstract painting held in the collection was realized at around the same time as her well-known *Waves* series (1967–69) and just a few years prior to her conceptual *Dropout Piece* of 1970 that marked her withdrawal from the (New York) art scene.

¹ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2003, p.8.

Jann Haworth (*1942) created her soft sculptures—including the collection’s *Snake Lady* (1969–71)—within the context of British pop art. Ingrid Wiener’s (*1942) work *Norden* (2010–12) includes a twelve-part tapestry—the artistic technique that Wiener focused on since the 1970s—as well as found objects connected to the work’s production and artistic exchange. *Norden* refers specifically to the Canadian northwest, where the Austrian artist lived from 1985 to the mid-2010s. Brazilian artist Sonia Gomes (*1948) used worn and deconstructed items of clothing for her two sculptures held in the collection, transforming these into knotted and sewn fabric objects. Yto Barrada’s (*1971) film *Tree Identification for Beginners* (2017) refers to the journey to the USA that the artist’s Moroccan mother undertook in the mid-1960s within the scope of the African Youth Leadership Program financed by the American government. Barrada connects biographical stories and references to contemporary political developments with the formal language and color scheme of Montessori educational toys. For her large-format and technically complex print *Epigraph, Damascus* (2016) American painter Julie Mehretu (*1970) overlaps fragments of depictions of buildings in the Syrian capital with a dense network of abstract line drawings.

The seven artworks from the collection stand alongside—or “beside”—each other, as the quotation used in the title suggests. During the course of this research season they will engage in new connections, opening up to further works from the collection as well as other artistic practices and theoretical debates, artists, curators, and scholars, their practice and research. Specific subjects will be developed in a process of collective conversations. “Beside, not infinite” is devised as a research season for 2025/26, and will include various events, such as workshops, artist talks, and a conference, followed by a concluding publication. In addition to conversations and exchange with the four museums, the Austrian Ludwig Foundation has invited an advisory group of international academics, researchers, and writers with a focus on contemporary art and cultural practices of the 1960s and 70s who will bring ideas and impulses to the project from their own work. The Foundation also awards a travel and research grant in 2025 which will encourage to address further subjects as part of the project. “Beside, not infinite” will be accompanied by new texts commissioned from various authors on the seven works selected from the collection; these will be made freely available on the Foundation’s website in the new series of “Collection Notes” during the course of 2025.

Selected Works from the Collection

Yto Barrada, *Tree Identification for Beginners*, 2017 (mumok)

Rosemarie Castoro, *Land of Lashes*, 1976 (MAK)

Sonia Gomes, *Casa alugada (Entre Pérola e Vergalhão series)*, 2022 (MAK)

Jann Haworth, *Snake Lady*, 1969–71 (mumok)

Lee Lozano, *No Title*, 1967 (mumok)

Julie Mehretu, *Epigraph, Damascus*, 2016 (Albertina)

Ingrid Wiener, *Norden*, 2010–12 (Belvedere)

Advisory Group

Jo Applin, Walter H. Annenberg Professor in the History of Art, The Courtauld Institute of Art, London

Ana Gonçalves Magalhães, Professor of Art History; Director, Museum of Contemporary Art, University of São Paulo

Christian Lclair, former Editor-in-Chief, Texte zur Kunst, Berlin

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Mike Sperlinger, Professor of Writing & Theory, Oslo Academy of Fine Art

Alena Williams, Associate Professor of Art History and Media, Department of Visual Arts, University of California, San Diego

Concept: Bettina Brunner, Managing Director, Art and Academic Activities, Austrian Ludwig Foundation

On the History of the Austrian Ludwig Foundation:

The Austrian Ludwig Foundation was established in 1981 with the donation of 128 artworks from German collectors Peter and Irene Ludwig's private art collection, with the aim of making international contemporary art more visible in Austria. More donations from various sources and a further 100 artworks gifted by the German couple in 1991 expanded the collection, which was originally focused on American and European art of the 1960s and 1970s. Up to 2010, the Republic of Austria also provided regular financial support to the Austrian Ludwig Foundation. In order to keep up with contemporary developments in the art world, the Foundation's collection is to this day expanded by regular purchases currently based on suggestions made by the four Austrian national museums Albertina, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, MAK – Museum für Angewandte Kunst, and mumok – Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien. These new acquisitions are provided to the museums as permanent loans. At present, the Austrian Ludwig Foundation Collection comprises around a thousand artworks, about half of which are held by mumok.