

De-Colonizing Art Institutions

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Lisl Ponger

MuKul, Museum for Foreign and Familiar Cultures

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**ONCURATING
PROJECT SPACE**

Museum Mission Statement

The MuKul, the fictitious Museum für fremde und vertraute Kulturen [Museum for Foreign and Familiar Cultures] is an institution without a home base. It makes guest appearances in various institutions and presents changing special exhibitions.

Considered spatially, the MuKul is almost always a museum in a museum or art institution and its mission statement is interpolated in different ways but almost always as a counterpoint to the pre-existing institutional framework.

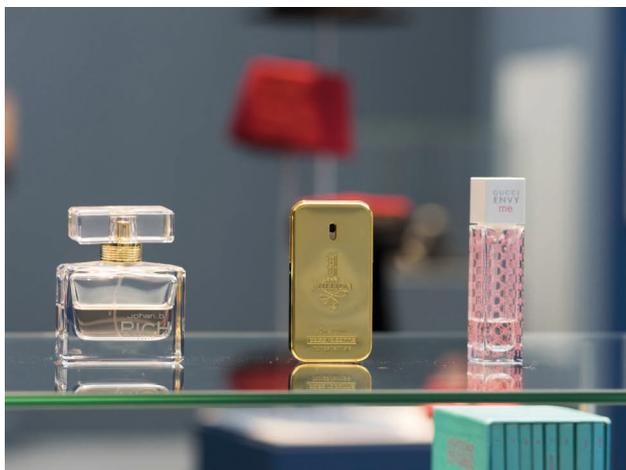
The MuKul uses intensive mediation and accompanying programmes to convey content to wide and differentiated publics. Since it only has its own small collection to fall back on, maintaining and extending international contacts with museums and art institutions as the source of loans is an important substantive focus.

Exhibition activities

Authentic objects and art works were the starting point for the first appearance of the MuKul in the Vienna Secession in 2014. Two special exhibitions were on display: *The Vanishing Middle Class* and *Wild Places*, the latter concerned with the works of Austrian artist Lisl Ponger. <https://www.secession.at/exhibition/lisl-ponger/>



Facade



Room 1, Details



Room II, Details



Room II, Dioramas



Room III, Details

The show *The Eldorado Task Force* followed in 2016 integrated into the structure of the exhibition *Erzähl mir Salzburg*, in the Salzburg Museum, is another museum in a museum. The point of departure here were gold objects from the Salzburg Museum collection that were used as the basis for a counter narrative about the Spanish Conquest of the Americas and the search for El Dorado. The exhibition will be on show till 30 April 2019. <http://www.salzburgmuseum.at/index.php?id=2054>



Exhibition view



Eldorado Task force, 2015

In October 2017 the Weltmuseum Wien, the former Vienna Museum of Ethnology, opened its doors after completion of a renovation and reorganisation. The MuKul is presenting an exhibition entitled *The Master Narrative* till autumn 2019.

www.weltmuseum.at

While in the Vienna Secession, an art institution, it was an ethnological exhibition that was on show, the Weltmuseum, a museum of ethnology, is hosting an art exhibition. It consists of six large light boxes with staged photographs dealing with issues related to ethnology and art and an eight-hour 2-channel video installation with the title *The Master Narrative* und *Don Durito*. The latter deconstructs the master narratives contained in what, till recently, has been a ubiquitous part of everyday life: postage stamps and first day covers. These quotidian celebrations of nations, empires, famous people etc. have also formed the basis for innumerable collections for all kinds of people from school children to monarchs and also parallel the collecting activity of museums.



Indian Jones II, 2010



Participant Observer, 2016

