



Vienna, June 2, 2025

**Belvedere 21**

Arsenalstrasse 1  
1030 Vienna

Opening hours:  
Tuesday through Sunday  
11 am to 6 pm  
Extended hours:  
Thursdays 11 am to 9 pm  
Open on Mondays only  
when a public holiday

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Performance JANUS by Katrin Hornek and Karin Pauer; photo: Hanna Fasching

## **JANUS at the Belvedere 21: Katrin Hornek and Karin Pauer shed light on the ambivalences and abysses of the Atomic Age**

The site-specific performance will be presented in the main exhibition hall of the Belvedere 21 on June 20 and 21, 2025. Admission is free.

With *JANUS*, artist and researcher Katrin Hornek and choreographer and performer Karin Pauer explore the complexities of the Atomic Age, tracing its cultural and political legacies alongside its contemporary dynamics.

The performance was developed specifically for the Belvedere 21—a building of historical significance initially conceived as the Austrian Pavilion for Expo 1958 in Brussels. A key theme of this first post-World War II World's Fair was the "peaceful use of nuclear power," manifested not only in the exhibits of numerous national pavilions but also in the radical proposal to power the fair itself with an on-site nuclear reactor. Its cooling water was intended to irrigate the gardens of the so-called colonial section.

*JANUS* juxtaposes the era's exuberant optimism toward nuclear technologies with the discovery of radionuclides in Vienna—remnants of atmospheric atomic bomb tests conducted during the same period. Belvedere 21 thus transforms into a living narrator, where polyphonic, embodied knowledge intersects with geological traces and geopolitical nuclear narratives.

In this performance, celebratory, energetic, resistant, dissolving, and reassembling bodies intertwine in a condensed, multi-sensory exploration of what it means to live in the nuclear Anthropocene. Hornek

and Pauer create an immersive, physically experiential space for collective reflection on the traces of atomic science in bodies, plants, soils, and waterways. Through movement, sound, and collected voices, they negotiate the unprecedented alliance between technology, the military, and science—from the first atomic tests to the nuclear industry's renaissance unfolding today.

*JANUS* is part of an interdisciplinary research project that builds on Katrin Hornek's earlier project *The Anthropocene Surge* (2019–24, in collaboration with Michael Wagreich) and the exhibition *testing grounds* (at the Secession, March 8 – June 2, 2024, in collaboration with Karin Pauer, Sabina Holzer, and Zosia Hołubowska). The aim is to bring scientific knowledge into the public sphere and to foster interdisciplinary dialogue. As part of *JANUS*, the artists have engaged in collaborative research encounters with invited experts from various disciplines, in an effort to transcend academic boundaries and create an "embodied archive" that serves as the foundation of the performance.

#### DATES

##### ***JANUS: Performance by Katrin Hornek and Karin Pauer***

Friday, June 20, 2025, 6:30 pm and Saturday, June 21, 2025, 3 pm

*JANUS* investigates the traces of nuclear history found in bodies, landscapes, and society. Drawing inspiration from the Belvedere 21 as a historical witness, the performance weaves together movement, sound, and science to prompt a profound reflection on the nuclear Anthropocene and the enduring impacts of nuclear technologies.

##### ***JANUS: Artist talk***

Saturday, June 21, 2025, 4:30 pm

The performance *JANUS* will be contextualized in a conversation featuring visual artist Katrin Hornek, choreographer and performer Karin Pauer, geologist Michael Wagreich (University of Vienna, Anthropocene Working Group), and anti-nuclear campaigner Patricia Lorenz (GLOBAL 2000, Friends of the Earth Europe). The talk will focus on interdisciplinary perspectives on life in the nuclear Anthropocene and examine how artistic, geological, and political narratives shape our understanding of this condition. Claudia Slanar will moderate the event.

##### **Exploratory tour: VERA (Vienna Environmental Research Accelerator)**

Wednesday, May 28, 2025, 5 to 9 pm

Meeting point: Währinger Strasse 17, 1090 Wien

During this tour of the VERA laboratories at the University of Vienna, physicist and environmental researcher Karin Hain will introduce the particle accelerator and its application in highly sensitive trace analysis. This technology enables the detection of nuclear fallout from historical atomic bomb tests—for example, in the soil of Vienna. With reference to Expo 58 and the *JANUS* project by Katrin Hornek and Karin Pauer at the Belvedere 21, the tour will address the measurability and ambivalent legacies of the Atomic Age.

**Concept, artistic direction & set design:** Katrin Hornek  
**Choreography & artistic direction:** Karin Pauer  
**Performers:** Martina de Dominicis, Camilla Schielin, Karin Pauer, Gergő D. Farkas  
**Sound:** Katrin Euler  
**Scenographic advice and production:** Hektor Peljak (Studio Peljak)  
**Production:** Mollusca Productions/Nefeli Antoniadis  
**Curator:** Christiane Erharder

**Invited experts for research encounters:**

Friederike Frieß (BOKU, Institute of Safety and Risk Sciences), Gabriele Mraz (Austrian Institute for Ecology), Gabriele Schweiger (Mütter gegen Atomgefahr), Patricia Lorenz (Global 2000, Friends of the Earth Europe), Dennis Pohl (Flanders Architecture Institute), Rika Devos (Brussels Centre of Urban Studies), Elisabeth Röhrlich (Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies), Andreas Nierhaus (Wien Museum, Karl Schwanz Archive), Verena Winiwarter (BOKU), Karin Hain (University of Vienna, Isotope Physics), Michael Wagneich (Anthropocene Working Group, University of Vienna, Department of Geology), Karly Burch (Femnuke, University of Auckland), Joseph P. Masco (The University of Chicago), ÖNA (Österreichisches Netzwerk Atomkraftfrei), Parents Against Santa Susanna Field Lab, students at the GRG 1 Stubenbastei.

*JANUS is funded by the Vienna Science and Technology Fund (WWTF-NXT22-002) and supported by the University of Applied Arts Vienna (Department of Site-Specific Art) and the University of Vienna. Co-produced by Kunstverein ARGO, with support from the City of Vienna (MA7) and the Belvedere.*



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University of Applied Arts Vienna



For more information visit: [belvedere.at/en/janus-en](https://belvedere.at/en/janus-en)

Complimentary tickets are available at: [belvedere.at/programm](https://belvedere.at/programm)

High-resolution press photos are available for download [HERE](#)