

Man has always been fascinated with secret societies and their clandestine rites, their covert knowledge, and exclusive circle of members. The character of secret societies ranges from harmless brotherhoods to powerful associations with very special financial and political objectives. Particularly in times of crises, secret societies provide surrogate values for the prevailing political, social and technological systems of order.

The exhibition is aimed at answering the question in how far secret societies also reflect certain mechanisms of contemporary art. Drawing on a combination of works of art and historical documents such as books, weapons, and Scotland Yard files, the exhibition pursues the nature of the secret along a labyrinthine course and discloses a range of bizarre and wondrous discoveries. The show's circle of members includes such presumed artists as Enrico David, Gretchen Faust, Jenny Holzer, Joachim Koester, Terence Koh, Elad Lassry, Fabian Marti, Goldin+Senneby, Markus Schinwald, Ulla von Brandenburg, Carl Michael von Hausswolff and Michael Esposito, Cerith Wyn Evans, and Lisa Yuskavage. A certain degree of darkening will be inevitable, because the knowledge of secret societies has to remain obscure if it is to survive.

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