

## Moyra Davey Burn the Diaries

Museum moderner Kunst  
Stiftung Ludwig Wien  
Museumsplatz 1 | 1070 Wien

Exhibition dates  
February 21 – May 25, 2014

Opening  
February 20, 2014, 7 pm

Press conference  
February 19, 2014, 10 am



Moyra Davey, *Bio*, 2013, C-Print,  
Courtesy the artist and Murray Guy, NY

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With *Burn the Diaries*, mumok is presenting the first solo exhibition by Moyra Davey (born 1958 in Toronto) in Austria. Davey, who lives in New York, has combined a number of new works for this show, comprising a 30-minute film, an artist's book, and an installation of her photographs. Together these works address the ways in which we deal with memory and history. A point of reference here is the work of the French author Jean Genet (1910–1986).

### Working with Memory and History as an Artistic Practice

Photography, film, video, and literature are all equally important for Moyra Davey. Her concentrated and often very detailed observations usually refer to personal experiences in her own private context. Davey's works sensitively capture past and present moments and explore the relationships between time, history, and personal experience. They shed new light on the connections between image and language, and between production, communication, and reception.

A key part of Davey's artistic work are her "mailers," photographs folded as envelopes that she sends to family members, friends, and acquaintances. When they arrive in an exhibition, each of these bears traces of its journey and also identifies its recipients.

### The Exhibition

Moyra Davey uses film, photography, and literature as a repertoire of forms that interweave with and complement each other.

Her exhibition at mumok includes a new film entitled *My Saints*, which looks closely at the processes of writing and remembering. Subtly interwoven static images, fragments of plot, text montages, and depictions of friends and family members correspond with details from the life and work of the novelist Jean Genet, who was sentenced to jail several times for thefts and other felonies. At the center of *My Saints* is Genet's *The Thief's Journal*, which Moyra Davey uses to look at experiences of loss and humiliation, and of sadism.

A second element of the exhibition is a group of new mailers that show images from Davey's personal environment and of her travels, including her own apartment and books and weathered gravestones and monuments in Paris.

Davey's mailers make diverse references to her text entitled *Burn the Diaries*. This text is also the starting point for her film, and it is included in an artist's book that is the third component of the exhibition. In fragments of memory and quotations, Moyra Davey reflects on her own past and relates it to Jean Genet, whose path she also traces in literary terms. A generously illustrated publication accompanies the exhibition, also including a text by Canadian writer Alison Strayer—a close friend of Davey's since her youth, with whom she regularly exchanges ideas.

Following the presentation of *Burn the Diaries* at mumok, the exhibition will go on to the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania (September 17 to December 28, 2014).

Curated by Matthias Michalka

#### **Film Evening and Conversation with the Artist**

On April 2, 2014, at 7 pm, mumok kino will host a film evening and conversation with Moyra Davey and Alison Strayer.

#### **Short Biography Moyra Davey**

Moyra Davey is a photographer, filmmaker, and writer. Research into psychoanalysis, the history of photography, reading, writing, and literature underpins much of her production. Her work has most recently been shown in solo exhibitions at Tate Liverpool (*Hangmen of England*, 2013), Kunsthalle Basel (*Speaker Receiver*, 2010), and The Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts (*Long Life Cool White*, 2008). Davey has produced three narrative videos: *Les Goddesses*, 2011 (61:00), *My Necropolis*, 2009 (32:17), and *Fifty Minutes*, 2006 (50:00). She is the author of *Long Life Cool White* (Harvard/Yale, 2008) and *The Problem of Reading* (Documents Books, 2003), and editor of *Mother Reader: Essential Writings on Motherhood* (Seven Stories Press, 2001). Davey is a founding member of Orchard Gallery (2005–2008) in New York. With American media artist Jason Simon, she co-hosted the *Minute Film Festival* in Narrowsburg, NY (2003–2012).

#### **Works in the Exhibition**

*My Saints*, 2014

HD video with sound, 30:45

Courtesy the artist and Murray Guy, New York

*Of Jane*, 2014

C-prints, postage, tape, ink

Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist and Murray Guy, New York

*Burn the Diaries*, 2014

Artist's book with texts by Moyra Davey and Alison Strayer

German/English, c. 80 pages, with photographs by Moyra Davey

**We thank the exhibition partner Air France, the mumok's partner Dorotheum, and our media partners Der Standard, Wien live, and Ö1**

**Fact Sheet**  
**Moyra Davey**  
**Burn the Diaries**

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Opening	February 20, 2014, 7 pm
Press conference	February 19, 2014, 10 am
Venue	mumok MuseumsQuartier, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien Level -2
Curator	Matthias Michalka
Exhibition production	Sybille Kulterer
Artist's book	<i>Moyra Davey. Burn the Diaries</i> Artist's book with texts by Moyra Davey and Alison Strayer, edited by the Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna, and The Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, in association with Dancing Foxes Press, New York German/English editions, c. 80 pages with numerous color illustrations Published by Dancing Foxes Press, Brooklyn, New York German: 978-0-9853377-3-5, English: 978-0-9853377-2-8, \$ 27 / € 19,80
mumok kino	April 2, 2014, 7 pm Film evening and conversation with Moyra Davey and Alison Strayer
Opening hours	Mondays: 2-7 pm Tuesdays to Sundays: 10 am-7 pm Thursdays: 10 am-9 pm
Entrance	Normal € 10 Concessions € 8 or € 7
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