

**University of Applied Arts, Vienna**

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**13 May 2017, from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm, Central Pavilion, Sala F room - Giardini  
Art in Times of Disintegration**

The event will be conducted in English

**Carol Becker**, Professor and Dean of The School of the Arts, Columbia University, NY, USA

**Brigitte Kowanz**, Artist and Professor at the University of Applied Arts, Vienna

**Helga Nowotny**, Science researcher, formerly President European Research Council (ERC), Chair ERA Council Forum Austria; Professor emerita, ETH Zurich, CH

**Erwin Wurm**, Artist, Vienna

**Gerald Bast**, President University of Applied Arts, Vienna

Moderated by **Clarissa Stadler**, journalist and author, Vienna

Ever more people are realizing that the political and economic systems as well as individual life situations (job, family, social security) are not developing anymore as positively as during the last decades. This applies not only to the so-called "Western" world, where growth and well-being until recently increased the same, but also to emerging and developing countries. Although world-wide hunger and poverty go back, the feeling of insecurity and threat increases. Standards of human rights, democracy and freedom seem to be shaken even where they seemed to be secured.

Once digitalization and robotics lead to the foreseeable massive loss of jobs, this threatens future prospects for many people and creates existential stress, anxiety and aggression. Once artificial intelligence and genetic engineering even question the role of humans in steering the course of civilization, then scientific skepticism may become replaced by forms of hostility against education. If the so-called "alternative facts" make ignorance socially acceptable, then this creates a consciousness-helix that can end in societal destruction. What is the role of art in this scenario?