

**Media release**  
**Zurich, 22 April 2021**

## **Kunsthhaus Zürich invites to its extension preview with William Forsythe**

**From 23 April to 24 May 2021, the Kunsthhaus Zürich invites to a preview of its new extension with a work by choreographer William Forsythe (b. 1949). 'The Sense of Things', conceived specially for this preview, can be experienced exclusively for four weeks in the museum's new building by architect David Chipperfield. It is the first artistic intervention in the new space. Admission will be free at Whitsun.**

Curated by Mirjam Varadinis, 'The Sense of Things' encourages the visitor to build a direct relationship with the architecture that will house some of the most important works from the Kunsthhaus Zürich and private collections.

### **BELLS AND CONFLICTS**

In Forsythe's acoustic intervention, deconsecrated church bells of different sizes, pitches and timbres will be activated in a contrapuntal composition distributed across the spaces of the new extension. Church bells are complex instruments that have widely differing and sometimes contradictory histories: in medieval times they were thought to possess magical powers and their sound was believed to have a positive impact on people's lives. During conflicts and wars they were used to warn of enemy attacks, while in the Second World War, more than 100,000 of them were melted down and used to make cannons and other weapons. As Forsythe puts it: 'These bells are like ghosts of the history of European conflicts.'

### **VISITORS TAKE CENTRE STAGE**

At the same time, the bells announce the advent of a new era for the museum and enable visitors to explore the still-unoccupied Chipperfield building individually. 'There is no map of how to visit the building,' Forsythe explains. Instead, 'The Sense of Things' emphasizes the visitor's curiosity as key to apprehending the composition, the nuances of which are shaped by each visitor's gradually unfolding, investigative relationship to the building and its acoustics.

### **THE MUSEUM AS SOUNDING BODY**

In his staging of Chipperfield's building, Forsythe views and apprehends the building itself as a kind of inner ear or eardrum – a sensory organ – with a volume

through which we can hear and feel. 'The Sense of Things' allows us to experience the museum as location in a new way and is attuned to people in all worlds of sensory experience. This is also reflected in the accompanying programme, with guided tours provided by people who have a different perception and physical sensitivity due to their very special constitution – such as blind and deaf people, but also children.

### A SENSE OF PURPOSE

With their new cooperation, the Kunsthaus Zürich and Forsythe wish to offer the broadest possible public a place where, after tremendous social disruption, community can once again be recreated. Gathering to experience the inherent sound of a building is certainly an atypical activity but also an unexpectedly gentle way to introduce the museum as a site that will be performing a significant civic role in future.

### PODCAST AND INFORMATION BROCHURE IN BRAILLE

In a further innovation, 'The Sense of Things' is accompanied by a podcast at the Kunsthaus Zürich featuring a conversation between William Forsythe, Emma McCormick-Goodhart (artist and writer) and Mirjam Varadinis (curator) on the background to the project: [www.kunsthaus.ch/forsythe-podcast](http://www.kunsthaus.ch/forsythe-podcast). Additionally, an information brochure will be provided to all visitors free of charge, containing a text on 'The Sense of Things' in German, English and Braille.

Supported by the Dr. Georg and Josi Guggenheim Foundation

### EVENTS

#### What does sound feel like?

A guided tour with Lua Leirner in sign language / with an interpreter. For hearing and hearing-impaired people. 24 April, 2 p.m.–3 p.m. In German. CHF 23 / CHF 19 concessions; CHF 3 with a valid exhibition ticket and for members.

#### Seeing with all the sense

An exploratory tour with Irene Gantenbein (blind), retired librarian, and Madeleine Witzig, art historian. 25 April and 2 May, 2 p.m.–4 p.m. In German. CHF 23 / CHF 19 concessions; CHF 3 with a valid exhibition ticket and for members.

#### From idea to exhibition

Background discussion on William Forsythe's intervention in the extension. With curator Mirjam Varadinis and Christoph Stuehn. 28 April, 6 p.m.–7 p.m. In German. CHF 10.– / CHF 8.– concessions, members CHF 4.–.

## 'Space-sound-body' workshop for children

Followed by performance tours for parents and visitors at 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. 29 April, 10 a.m.–6.30 p.m. Workshop CHF 40; tours CHF 20 / CHF 16 concessions.

## Opening your eyes

An encounter with the blind journalist, book author and theologian Yvonn Scherrer. 8 May and 16 May, 2 p.m.–6 p.m. In German. Included in the admission for the exhibition.

## Dancing architecture

Introduction to William Forsythe's intervention with ballet director Christian Spuck. 9 May, 11 a.m.–12 midday. In German. CHF 23 / CHF 19 concessions; CHF 3 with a valid exhibition ticket and for members.

## What stories do church bells tell?

A campanological tour with bell expert and tower warden R. H. Röttinger. 9 May, 2 p.m.–3 p.m. In German. CHF 23 / CHF 19 concessions; CHF 3 with a valid exhibition ticket and for members.

## Through the ringing rooms of the extension

Guided tour with blind journalist, book author and theologian Yvonn Scherrer. 19 May, 6 p.m.–8 p.m. In German. CHF 23 / CHF 19 concessions; CHF 3 with a valid exhibition ticket and for members.

## Free visit at Whitsun

Saturday to Monday, 22–24 May, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Owing to the pandemic, the weekend of viewings inside the Chipperfield building planned to mark the handover of the keys in December 2020 could not take place. Instead, the commissioning body is organizing a free viewing on the last three days of the preview phase as part of museum operations compliant with the current protective measures. Access will be via the new main entrance at Heimplatz 5 for the first time. Let your intuition guide you. Architectural tour guides will be on hand to answer any questions you may have.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Kunsthhaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, CH-8001 Zurich

Tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 84, [www.kunsthhaus.ch](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch)

Fri–Sun/Tue 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Wed, Thu 10 a.m.–8 p.m. For public holiday opening see [www.kunsthhaus.ch](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch).

Admission to 'William Forsythe' and the Kunsthhaus extension: CHF 20 / CHF 16 concessions and groups. Free to visitors under the age of 17. Information subject to change.

## KUNSTHAUS ZÜRICH

Advance sales: Kunsthaus Zürich online, with numerous additional events and products related to the exhibition: [www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/besuch-planen/tickets](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/besuch-planen/tickets). Zurich Tourism, tourist information office in Zurich main railway station, tel. +41 44 215 40 00, [info@zuerich.com](mailto:info@zuerich.com).

### NOTE TO EDITORS

Media releases and images are available for download at [www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/medien-bereich/media-corner/](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/medien-bereich/media-corner/).

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