

Media release
Zurich, 30 January 2020

Kunsthhaus Zürich presents masterpieces of Italian drawing

From 31 January to 19 July 2020 the Kunsthhaus Zürich presents 'The Poetry of Line. Masterpieces of Italian drawing', a selection from its small but prestigious collection of Italian drawings covering the period between Renaissance and Baroque, which have now been examined by students from the University of Zurich.

The cabinet exhibition displays around thirty of the most important works from the Collection of Prints and Drawings at the Kunsthhaus Zürich. From the sight of the lines skilfully drawn on the paper it is but a short intellectual leap to the genesis of an artwork.

RAPHAEL, CORREGGIO, GUERCINO

Many of the works have long been classics of the Prints and Drawings Collection: they include a preliminary drawing by Raphael for the Vatican 'stanze' and the graceful depiction of Lucretia by Palma Vecchio. Others have never even been published before, despite being the work of equally celebrated masters such as Guercino, Correggio and Carlo Maratti. The Collection of Prints and Drawings was transformed into a kind of laboratory to allow them to undergo a detailed inspection.

ENCOUNTER WITH THE ORIGINAL

As part of a collaboration with students from the University of Zurich, the drawings were subjected to a hands-on analysis – in the literal sense of the term, because an encounter with the original is crucial to professional attribution and to locating a drawing within its cultural landscape. Many well-known researchers have been involved in such encounters, as the numerous handwritten comments on the works' mountings attest. Their authors read like a who's who of international drawing research: Marco Simone Bolzoni, Chris Fischer, Catherine Goguel and Joachim Jacoby are just some of those who have contributed their assessments on individual questions of attribution. Their annotations served as a guideline for further research involving comparisons and recourse to the relevant specialist literature.

STUDY AND EXPERIENCE TRAIN THE SENSES

Often, however, specialist literature can provide only limited assistance. Art enthusiasts and the curators of prints and drawings collections need to recall comparative examples from their own memories and, not least, rely on their own sensory apparatus to appreciate, for instance, the structure of a sheet of paper, its roughness or smoothness when worked on with ink, chalk or graphite. But the sensual aura of the portraits, landscapes and mythological or Christian scenes depicted, can exert an equal if not greater attraction on visitors.

Curator Jonas Beyer is convinced that university teaching can benefit from synergies with museum practice, especially when students go on to work in fields where dealing with originals is one of the most exciting challenges.

PUBLICATION

The accompanying publication (Scheidegger & Spiess, 128 pp., around 60 ill.) in the collection volumes series, with contributions by Jonas Beyer, Michael Matile and students from the University of Zurich, is available from the Kunsthaus shop and bookstores, price CHF 24.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, CH-8001 Zurich

Tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 84, www.kunsthaus.ch

Fri-Sun/Tue 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Wed, Thu 10 a.m.–8 p.m. For public holiday opening see www.kunsthaus.ch

Admission incl. collection: CHF 16 / CHF 11 (concessions and groups).

Advance sales: Zurich Tourism, tourist information office in Zurich main railway station, tel. +41 44 215 40 00, info@zuerich.com, www.zuerich.com.

SBB RailAway combination ticket, with discount on admission when travelling by public transport: www.sbb.ch/kunsthaus-zuerich.

MEDIA CONTACT

Visual materials are available at www.kunsthaus.ch/en/medien-bereich/media-corner/.

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