

Press release
Zürich, 29 August 2025

Kunsthhaus Zürich Appoints Hendrik Folkerts and Maja Wismer

Kunsthhaus Zürich is pleased to announce a defining new chapter in its history with the appointment of Hendrik Folkerts as Chief Curator of Programme and Maja Wismer as Head of Collection and Research.

Together with Director Ann Demeester and the team, they will in the coming years advance the museum's curatorial vision and future initiatives. This new leadership configuration affirms Kunsthhaus Zürich's commitment to presenting groundbreaking exhibitions, critically engaged programmes and research-driven projects—anchored in its panoramic collections, which span art from the 13th century to the present day.

'It gives me great pride and joy to welcome new colleagues to the Kunsthhaus, joining our energetic team of curators who with remarkable dedication, have realized exhibitions at record pace in recent years,' Ann Demeester notes. 'Our new curatorial collaborators bring not only experience from different parts of the world, but also fresh vision, original ideas, and a keen curatorial sensibility. Together, the strengthened team shares my commitment to realize the Kunsthhaus vision: a panoramic museum, transhistorical in scope, that bridges the classical and the innovative and shares art in all its forms—from aesthetic to conceptual—with curious audiences near and far.'

'Kunsthhaus Zürich is one of Switzerland's cultural gems, never failing to attract both attention and critique' Hendrik Folkerts and Maja Wismer observe. Folkerts and Wismer both have a background in contemporary art and share a commitment to art of all periods and places, championing a transhistorical approach. 'The Kunsthhaus' exhibition history has long been a source of inspiration and reflection for us both, while its collection provides an elaborate stage to test the questions of our time and, in turn, to understand how those questions shape the histories the museum holds. This is art history, always in the making, turning the museum into practice. Together with the team at Kunsthhaus Zürich, we take responsibility for caring for the programme as well as the museum's collections—both materially and conceptually—while ensuring their vivid presentation and mediation for diverse audiences, and their expansion in dialogue with the

international art world. We regard this not only as a responsibility, but as an extraordinary challenge and opportunity.'

About Hendrik Folkerts

Before joining Kunsthau Zurich, Folkerts held senior curatorial positions at Moderna Museet in Stockholm, the Art Institute of Chicago, documenta 14, and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Renowned for curatorial work of global reach, he has built a practice rooted in performance, radical hospitality, feminist and queer perspectives and the expanded field of contemporary painting.

At Moderna Museet, he realized groundbreaking exhibitions that placed artists' practices at the center of new exhibition models, including *Mike Kelley: Ghost and Spirit* (2024, organized by Tate Modern), *Vaginal Davis: Magnificent Product* (2024), and *Seven Rooms and a Garden: Rashid Johnson and Moderna Museet's Collection* (2023). He also curated *Katalin Ladik: Oooooooooo-pus* (2023) and *Every Ocean Hughes: Alive Time* (2022).

At the Art Institute of Chicago, Folkerts advanced commissioning as a strategy in contemporary curatorial practice, through such exhibitions as *Igshaan Adams: Desire Lines* (2022), *Anne Imhof: Sex* (2019, with Tate Modern and Castello di Rivoli), and the performance programme *Iterations* (2019–2022). He also organized major exhibitions such as *Malangatana: Mozambique Modern* (2020) and *Mounira Al Solh: I Strongly Believe in Our Right to Be Frivolous* (2018). In both Chicago and Stockholm, he initiated acquisitions and developed collection presentations that reflected contemporary dialogues in art and society.

Prior to this, he was part of the curatorial team of documenta 14 (2017) and curator of performance and discursive programmes at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (2010–2015).

In addition to his curatorial work, Folkerts is a prolific writer and editor. He has edited significant volumes on artists including Every Ocean Hughes, Vaginal Davis, Ulrike Rosenbach, Rashid Johnson, Katalin Ladik, Alexandra Bachzetsis, and Igshaan Adams, and contributed widely to catalogues and journals.

Folkerts will take up the role of Chief Curator of Programme at Kunsthau Zurich on 1 February 2026.

About Maja Wismer

Before joining Kunsthau Zurich, Maja Wismer led the Department of Art after 1960 and Contemporary Art at Kunstmuseum Basel from October 2020 to May 2025. As part of the curatorial team, she was responsible for the Basel iteration of Cape Town's Zeitz MOCAA's seminal exhibition *When We See Us: A Century of Pan-African Figuration* (2024). She also curated solo exhibitions of Andrea Büttner (2023) and Carrie Mae Weems (2023), and was responsible for group shows. Other projects included Ruth Buchanan's deep dive into the collection, *Heute Nacht*

geträumt (2022), and acquisitions and conservation initiatives around Hanne Darboven, Louise Lawler, and Vivian Suter. She further developed new presentations of the post-1945 art collections.

Previously, as assistant curator under Josef Helfenstein, Wismer oversaw the scholarly research and presentation of Charmion von Wiegand (2018–2023), the transhistorical exhibition *Basel Short Stories: From Erasmus to Iris von Roten* (2018), and monographic installations featuring Andreas Gursky, Anri Sala, and Kara Walker.

Before Basel, she worked on modern and contemporary art projects at Kunsthauus Glarus, the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, Liste Art Fair Basel, and Survival Kit in Riga. In 2025, she curated *Andrea Büttner: Works* for the Bechtler Foundation in Uster.

From 2012 to 2014, she was the Renke B. and Pamela M. Thye Curatorial Fellow at the Busch-Reisinger Museum, contributing to the reinstallation of the post-1960 collection for the reopening of the Harvard Art Museums. Her research on the museum's Joseph Beuys holdings and the Barbara and Peter Moore Fluxus Collection culminated in her doctoral dissertation, defended at the University of Basel in 2021, on the transition of Beuys's multiples from ephemeral objects to museum works. Wismer is editor and author of numerous project-related publications.

Since July 2025, Maja Wismer has been Head of Collection and Research at Kunsthauus Zürich.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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For admission prices, opening hours and events see www.kunsthauus.ch/en/besuch-planen/ and www.kunsthauus.ch/en/besuch-planen/programm/.

CONTACT FOR EDITORS

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