

Press release
Zurich, 12 January 2017

Kunsthhaus Zürich records increase in visitor numbers. 2017 programme includes Kirchner, French painting and plenty of action!

The Kunsthhaus Zürich recorded 320,000 admissions in 2016. The 2017 programme promises a fascinating combination of contemporary art exhibitions and popular historical positions. After 'Vibrant Metropolis / Idyllic Nature. Kirchner – The Berlin Years', summer is given over to action, with the finest examples of performance art for a new audience. Then it's 'cantastorie', an unknown 'total work' of Neapolitan folk art, before various styles of French painting go head to head. A Picture Ballot presentation on the theme of the Reformation completes the line-up.

In 2016, the Kunsthhaus Zürich welcomed 30,000 more visitors than the previous year. The figure of 320,000 admissions is above the long-term average. Heading the list was Pipilotti Rist, with around 1,400 visitors per day, followed by Alberto Giacometti (800) and Francis Picabia (420). Although the latter exhibition, a joint project with the Museum of Modern Art, New York, fell short of expectations, 'Dadaglobe Reconstructed' – also a collaboration with MoMA – proved far more popular than predicted, with 650 visitors passing through the doors daily.

A six-figure annual profit will allow the patron association to increase its uncommitted assets and build up a new compensation reserve. The Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft is forecasting lower profits for the next few years owing to building work linking the existing buildings to the extension by David Chipperfield, which continues until 2019. The main entrance will be closed off in mid-March 2017 and access thereafter will be via the auditorium, meaning that the Kunsthhaus will lose income from room rental amounting to some CHF 300,000 a year. The cabinet, which is used for small temporary exhibitions, and the Collection areas on the ground floor, will be out of commission for two years. However the large exhibition gallery will host four new exhibitions – Kirchner, Action, Cantastorie and French Painting – rather than the usual three. The following is an overview of the programme:

ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER – THE BERLIN YEARS. 10.2. – 7.5.17

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880–1938) is the master of Expressionism. Comprising some 150 works, 'Vibrant Metropolis / Idyllic Nature. Kirchner – The Berlin Years' examines the young artist's ground-breaking creative phase in Berlin from 1911 to 1917. It focuses on the dichotomy between his twin lives in the bustling capital city and on the tranquil Baltic Sea island of Fehmarn, where he spent the summer months from 1912 to 1914. The contrasts between these two

places of inspiration could hardly be greater; yet the works from that period bear witness to Kirchner's quest for a life remote from bourgeois norms, and for a new, primal form of expression. The outbreak of the First World War plunged Kirchner into a psychological and physical crisis in 1915 from which he only gradually emerged in 1917, when he settled in the mountains near Davos and embarked on a new phase of creativity. The exhibition is the first in Switzerland to examine this fascinating chapter in Kirchner's artistic career.

MEXICAN GRAPHIC ART 19.5. – 27.8.17

Who said the Kunsthaus only holds Swiss art? A collection of Mexican graphic art donated to the Kunsthaus Zürich comprises works by 65 artists who were born or lived in Mexico. Now, an exhibition presents selected pieces from this collection, centring on important prints produced in a variety of techniques from the late 19th century to the 1970s. Many of these works on paper are being shown for the first time in Switzerland. They touch on issues such as poverty and wealth, love and cruelty, the poetry and hardships of everyday life. In addition to prints by José Guadalupe Posada, there are characteristic Realist works by Leopoldo Méndez, Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros as well as abstracts by Rufino Tamayo and Francisco Toledo.

ACTION! 23.6. – 30.7.17

After the heyday of happenings and art actions in the 1960s and 1970s, a young generation of artists is revisiting the medium of performance and expressing an interest in ephemeral and process-oriented forms of art. 'Action!' examines this phenomenon and transforms the large exhibition gallery into an action space with live performances, works in which visitors themselves become active participants, and restagings of historical performances. 'Action!' considers the role of the museum and the history of performance, but also invites debate on pressing socio-political issues – with contributions from Francis Alÿs, Nina Beier, !Mediengruppe Bitnik, Trisha Brown, Tania Bruguera, Lucinda Childs, Valie Export, William Forsythe, Simone Forti, Guerilla Girls, Sharon Hayes, Adelita Husni-Bey, Florence Jung, Allan Kaprow, San Keller, Dieter Meier, Musée de la danse/Boris Charmatz, Otobong Nkanga, Yoko Ono, Ahmet Öğüt, Adrian Piper, Alexandra Pirici, Rimini Protokoll, Tracey Rose, Tino Sehgal, Marinella Senatore, Cally Spooner, Koki Tanaka and others.

Supported by Swiss Re – Partner for contemporary art

CANTASTORIE. 25.8. – 8.10.17

The precious 'cantastorie', a fascinating and unknown accumulation of images and image cycles, were handed down from one generation to the next in two families of minstrels and puppeteers from Naples and Foggia who used them to place great cultural issues literally before an audience. In a way they were the first comics, full of beautiful princesses, valiant knights, chaotic battles and

voracious monsters. The 100 magnificently colourful masterpieces of folk art were created in the early decades of the 20th century. The 'cantastorie' are a sensuous, humorous and instructive feast for the eyes, but they also need explanation to bring their content to life. We'll therefore be setting up a stage in the middle of the exhibition, transforming the large exhibition gallery into a marketplace, a venue for lively exchange, with concerts, events and parties.

REFORMATION: HOW ART (RE)ACTS. 29.09.17 – 14.01.18

2017 marks 500 years since Martin Luther wrote the theses that sparked the Reformation. In honour of the occasion, Picture Ballot! turns its attention to the topic. 20,000 members of the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, the patron association of the Kunsthaus Zürich, have selected their favourite from six works proposed: Ferdinand Hodler, whose 'Unanimity' will be the centrepiece of the exhibition.

PRAISED AND RIDICULED. FRENCH PAINTING 1820–1880.

10.11.17 – 28.1.18

Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, 'plein air', Impressionism – these are still the main stylistic labels attached to French painting of the 19th century. The artists working in those styles – figures such as Géricault, Delacroix, Corot, Daumier, Millet, Courbet, Manet, Sisley, Monet and Renoir – turned their backs on the officially sanctioned painting of the era, with its academic and neoclassicist style. Highly controversial in their day, these artists are now hailed worldwide as the 'precursors of Modernism'. But 19th-century French painting offers a profusion of other equally important artists who, at that time, enjoyed greater recognition and the plaudits of art critics and audiences alike. Although indebted to traditional painting techniques, artists such as Delaroche, Couture, Meissonier, Cabanel, Gérôme and Bouguereau were in some cases highly innovative. For the first time in Switzerland, the exhibition brings together these various and hotly debated approaches in French painting to create a rich and diverse panorama of the era's genres.

A contribution to culture by Credit Suisse – Partner Kunsthaus Zürich

THE COLLECTION

The Kunsthaus Zürich is structured as both museum and art gallery, and offers an important collection of paintings, sculptures and site-specific installations. It includes works of Western art from the 13th century to the present day. Some 350 works from all eras are on permanent display, with a particular focus on Giacometti, Munch, French Impressionism and Swiss art.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The programme can be downloaded from www.kunsthau.ch. News of the many current events can be found on Facebook, in the electronic newsletter and in the online diary.

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Fri–Sun/Tues 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Wed, Thurs 10 a.m.–8 p.m. For public holiday opening see www.kunsthhaus.ch.

Admission to the collection including audioguide (in English, German, French or Italian): CHF 16 / CHF 11 (concessions and groups). Exhibitions: up to CHF 23 / CHF 18 (concessions and groups).

Combination tickets including the collection and exhibition CHF 26 / CHF 19.

Admission free to visitors up to the age of 16.

Free admission, discounts and other benefits with a 2017 annual membership: adults CHF 115 / couples CHF 195 / children and young people up to 25 years of age CHF 30.

Advance sales: SBB RailAway combination ticket, with discount on travel and admission: at stations and by phoning Rail Service 0900 300 300 (CHF 1.19/min. by land line), www.sbb.ch/kunsthhaus-zuerich.

Zurich Tourism: hotel room reservations and ticket sales, Tourist Service at Zurich Main Railway Station, tel. +41 44 215 40 00, information@zuerich.com, www.zuerich.com.

NOTE TO MEDIA

Press releases and visual materials for the annual programme are available at kunsthhaus.ch > Information > Press.

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