Media release
Zurich, 19 November 2026

Masterpieces from the Kunsthaus Zürich in Seoul

The Kunsthaus Zürich is proud of its remarkable collection and delighted to make it accessible to a wide audience in Switzerland and abroad – now including Korea, where from 27 November 2026 to 18 April 2027, the National Museum in Seoul will be premiering an extensive selection from the Kunsthaus collection. 'Modern Art in Times of Change: Masterpieces from Kunsthaus Zürich' brings together 85 paintings and sculptures from two centuries and traces key developments in European art from the late 18th to the mid-20th century. The focus is on major works of Swiss art and its manifold connections to European art history.

The exhibition is the first in Korea to feature a comprehensive selection from the Kunsthaus Zürich collection. The 85 works from the years 1764 to 1958 span an arc from the Enlightenment to Classical Modernism. The selection reflects the National Museum of Korea's desire to showcase not just art history, but also a period in the history of Switzerland. Around 50 of the 85 exhibits are closely linked to Switzerland: the work of either Swiss artists such as Albert Anker, Alberto Giacometti, Ferdinand Hodler, Sophie Taeuber-Arp and Félix Vallotton, or of others who, like Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Paul Klee and Hans Richter, sought refuge in the Alpine nation at various times.
The National Museum of Korea in Seoul is one of Asia's leading museums and one of the most visited art-exhibiting institutions in the world (after the Louvre and the Vatican Museums), attracting some 6.5 million visitors annually. Its collections include art and cultural artefacts from several millennia of Korean history. In addition to presenting its own holdings, it stages international special exhibitions, offering visitors an insight into other art traditions and cultural histories.

THE KUNSTHAUS COMES TO SEOUL

The exhibition in Seoul opens with works from the second half of the 18th century, the age of Enlightenment and Neoclassicism. It gives a prominent role to Henry Fuseli, who is exceptionally well represented at Kunsthaus Zürich. This period also witnessed the creation of the predecessor to today's Kunsthaus in 1787, the so-called Künstlerhaus or Artist's House. It marked a key stage in the development of the public art scene in a city that was for centuries influenced by the Reformation.

The exhibition equally features a cluster of key works by Albert Anker, one of the most significant Swiss artists of the 19th century. Anker was a key figure in Realism, and his paintings documented social life in 19th-century Switzerland – an era shaped by major changes and the formation of the modern federal state in 1848.
Symbolism, an international art movement whose leading practitioners included Swiss artists takes up a prominent position in the exhibition. Rather than depicting visible reality as accurately as possible, the Symbolists explored dreams, myths, spirituality and inner imaginations. Works by Ferdinand Hodler, Arnold Böcklin, Giovanni Segantini and Albert Welti showcase the various manifestations of this approach.
The Kunsthaus collection is internationally renowned for its leading works of Impressionism, most notably by Claude Monet and Paul Cezanne, whose presence attests to the growing interest in international art in Zurich at the start of the 20th century, and highlights the Kunsthaus's evolution into a museum of international importance.

ONE COLLECTION, MANY HISTORIES
Ranging from Neoclassicism and Realism to Symbolism and Impressionism and on to Expressionism, Cubism, Dada and Surrealism, the exhibition offers a glimpse of the rich diversity of the Kunsthaus collection and shows just how closely the development of Swiss art is linked to the major trends in European and American art history.
'Modern Art in Times of Change: Masterpieces from Kunsthaus Zürich' is curated by Younghee Sung and her team at the National Museum of Korea. Philippe Büttner, former Senior Collection Curator at the Kunsthaus Zürich, acted as curatorial advisor on the choice of works. The collaboration with Seoul is being coordinated by the Collection and Research Department at the Kunsthaus Zürich under the leadership of Maja Wismer.
With this exhibition, the Kunsthaus Zürich is presenting important works from its collection to a wide audience in Korea for the first time. The cooperation with the National Museum of Korea underscores the Swiss collection's international importance and strengthens cultural exchange between the two nations.

GENERAL INFORMATION
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For admission prices, opening hours and events see www.kunsthaus.ch/en/besuch-planen/ and www.kunsthaus.ch/en/besuch-planen/programm/. Tickets can be obtained from the cash desk or in advance at tickets.kunsthaus.ch.

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

INFORMATION FOR THE MEDIA
Illustrations are available for download at www.kunsthaus.ch/en/medien-bereich.
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