

Press release
Zurich, 11 January 2018

Kunsthhaus Zürich: new structures, themes with popular appeal and a programme of big names to deliver an upturn in 2018.

Following a decline of 90,000 in visitor numbers in 2017, the Kunsthhaus is taking steps to turn things round: the 2018 programme ranges from new works created with local participation, through manifestations of extreme fashion in the visual arts and an appreciation of naïve painting, to monograph exhibitions on the popular artists Robert Delaunay and Oskar Kokoschka. A newly created sales and services organization with representation at executive board level aims to secure a sustained improvement in income.

At 230,000 (compared with 320,000 in 2016), the number of admissions to the Kunsthhaus Zürich in 2017 was below the long-term average of 300,000. The six-figure annual loss reported in the provisional annual financial statements for 2017 is partially covered by a compensation reserve. The decline had been anticipated by the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft a year ago. It was due partly to an experimental programme, and partly to ongoing construction work to link the existing buildings to the extension by David Chipperfield. The latter is tying up resources that are urgently needed to implement a digitization strategy to enhance operational process efficiency and improve interaction with the public. Despite the challenging conditions, the Kunsthhaus is pushing ahead with realignment in key areas and is also meeting its targets: the private contribution towards the total investment for the extension has now been secured in full.

The Kunsthhaus has commissioned Lawrence Weiner to create an artwork for the passage between the existing buildings and the extension – a project that is coming to fruition thanks to private backing. An agreement has also just been reached under which an important private collection will be moving to the Kunsthhaus: 17 works by the Norwegian artist Johan Christian Dahl, the most famous Romantic artist after Caspar David Friedrich, have been donated by the businessman and patron of the arts Christen Sveaas from Oslo, who studied at the University of St. Gallen.

NEW STRUCTURES, NEW FACES

As agreed at the annual general meeting of the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, new structures were put in place in 2017. An advisory board with international membership met for the first time in November. The four-member executive board will be joined in May 2018 by Christoph Stuehn. Stuehn, who remains Director of Memoriav until the end of March, previously served as Head of Museum Operations and a member of management at the Swiss National

Museum and Deputy Commercial Director at the Schauspielhaus Zürich. As Head of Sales and Services, his remit will include the shop, as well as member and visitor services. He will also be setting up a premises rental and events organization for the Kunsthaus, as it prepares to become Switzerland's largest art museum from 2020. Jacqueline Greenspan takes over as Head of Sponsorship from Monique Spaeti, who is retiring; as is Hanspeter Marty, Head of Conservation, who will be replaced from May by Kerstin Mürer. The Kunsthaus has also recruited Jonas Beyer as new curator of the Collection of Prints and Drawings, to succeed Bernhard von Waldkirch. Beyer, who took up his new post on 1 January, was most recently a research associate in the Department of Art History at the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen and, before that, at the Hamburger Kunsthalle. The exhibition team is therefore complete once again. In 2018 the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft begins planning for a number of medium and long-term changes in key senior positions. A new Deputy Director is to be appointed in spring 2020, with the post of Director to follow after the Kunsthaus extension has opened.

EXHIBITION PROGRAMME

The 2018 exhibition programme offers a highly topical focus, a chance to rediscover less-known movements in art, and classical positions with definite popular appeal.

REFORMATION: extended until 18 February

Reflecting the central theme of transformation and renewal, works from the 16th to the 20th centuries from the Kunsthaus's own holdings have been brought together for a thematic exhibition featuring religious imagery, Counter-Reformation Baroque painting, 19th-century history paintings and the subliminally religious art of the Concretists.

Guest curator: Andreas Rüfenacht

PRAISED AND RIDICULED. FRENCH PAINTING 1820–1880

The wide-ranging panorama of 19th-century French painting is on show until 28 January. Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, plein-air painting and Impressionism: the artists working in these styles turned their backs on the officially sanctioned painting of the era, with its academic and neoclassicist style. Highly controversial in their day, they are now hailed worldwide as 'precursors of Modernism'. But 19th-century French painting offers a profusion of other equally important artists who, at the time, enjoyed greater recognition and the plaudits of art critics and audiences alike.

Curator: Sandra Gianfreda

ABRAHAM CRUZVILLEGAS. AUTORRECONSTRUCCIÓN: SOCIAL TISSUE

16.2 – 25.3.18

Receiving his first exhibition in Switzerland is the Mexican artist Abraham Cruzvillegas (b. 1968). In his works and space-filling installations, Cruzvillegas investigates sculptural forms as the expression of social conditions to create art imbued with a sense of constant becoming. Improvisation, working with found materials and interacting with local people play a key role. Cruzvillegas will be transforming the exhibition gallery into a workshop, in which new works will take shape during the exhibition and a range of events will be held. At the end, the new creations will be assembled into a complete installation, transposing the concept of dynamic process that is key to Cruzvillegas's work into the exhibition format itself.

Curator: Mirjam Varadinis

MAGRITTE, DIETRICH, ROUSSEAU. VISIONARY OBJECTIVITY 9.3. – 8.7.18

The emergence of abstraction was a key process in the development of modern art. Yet artists deploying the stylistic resources of representation were also a major influence – as this exhibition demonstrates through a series of masterful works from the Kunsthaus collection, some of which are rarely shown. In the late 19th century, Félix Vallotton captured the visible world with a precision worthy of the Old Masters, but also laid bare its fragility with the acuity of a psychologist. Meanwhile the 'naïve' autodidact Henri Rousseau depicted exquisitely neat, visionary worlds of the imagination. Also represented in the exhibition are the later 'naïve' artists André Bauchant, Camille Bombois, Élie Lascaux and Grandma Moses. After the First World War, representational description of the world took a different turn with 'New Objectivity' (Niklaus Stoecklin and Adolf Dietrich). And even Surrealism (René Magritte, Salvador Dalí) drew on the resources of representational art to depict the unconscious.

Curator: Philippe Büttner

FASHION DRIVE. EXTREME CLOTHING IN THE VISUAL ARTS 20.4. – 15.7.18

How did artists react to extreme phenomena such as slashed clothing, codpieces, crinolines and the dinner jacket? This exhibition looks at 500 years of vestimentary expression through the prism of art, focusing on the tipping points where fashion is extreme, vibrating, loud, disguised or prohibited. Today, globalization and homogenization are encouraging the development of 'fast fashion'. A co-production with the Festspiele Zurich, the exhibition, which is exclusive to the Kunsthaus, sets out to counter this with a critical, sensory examination of clothing in the visual arts, covering key moments in fashion history from the late Middle Ages to the present day in painting, drawing, sculpture, installation, photography and film. With 60 artists, including Joseph Beuys, Giovanni Boldini, Leigh Bowery, Daniele Buetti, Salvador Dalí, Honoré Daumier, Albrecht Dürer, Esther Eppstein, Sylvie Fleury, Emilie Flöge & Gustav

Klimt, Natalia Goncharova, K8 Hardy, Herlinde Koelbl, Peter Lindbergh, Manon, Malcolm McLaren & Vivienne Westwood, Mai-Thu Perret, Tula Roy and Christoph Wirsing, Wolfgang Tillmans, Félix Vallotton and Andy Warhol – plus a fashion ball on 5 May!

Curators: Cathérine Hug, Christoph Becker

ROBERT DELAUNAY AND THE CITY OF LIGHT 31.8. – 18.11.18

The most comprehensive exhibition of his work in Switzerland is devoted to Robert Delaunay (1885–1941), one of the foremost pioneers of early 20th-century art. This visually engaging presentation is an opportunity to experience the wide-ranging and innovative nature of Delaunay's work, focusing on his central themes: light, colour and the pictorial expression of the process of vision conceived as a deliberate activity. It will also show how, as a passionate advocate and practitioner of abstract art, he became a key figure in the Parisian avant-garde. Including some 80 paintings and works on paper, the exhibition highlights the pivotal role of Paris as stimulus for Delaunay's imagery and pictorial research. Photographs and films by contemporaries who were also inspired by the French capital will complement the display.

Guest curator: Simonetta Fraquelli

OSKAR KOKOSCHKA: A RETROSPECTIVE 14.12.18 – 10.3.19

Oskar Kokoschka (1886–1980) is today regarded as one of the most important artists of the 20th century. On a continent riven by two world wars, in which realistic art had become discredited, here was someone unashamedly arguing for the recognition of figurative art. Throughout his life, he believed in the inclusive power of art far removed from state propaganda, and this is reflected throughout his oeuvre. The retrospective covers all the techniques Kokoschka used, including oil painting, pastel, drawing, watercolour and print, as well as plays and costume designs. The last Kokoschka retrospective in Switzerland was at the Kunsthau Zürich in 1986. It is high time, therefore, to reacquaint both a younger generation and long-standing admirers with the spectacular originals of this expressionistic painter and his unmistakable brushwork.

Curator: Cathérine Hug

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 13TH TO THE 21ST CENTURIES: PRESENT AND ON THE MOVE

The Kunsthau is structured as both museum and art gallery, and is home to an important collection of paintings, sculptures and installations – works of western art from the 13th century to the present day. Of the approximately 5,000 items, at least 350 are on permanent display.

There is no better place than the Kunsthau Zürich to study the sculptures and paintings of Alberto Giacometti, which also exhibits the largest collection of paintings by Edvard Munch outside Norway. French painting culminates in the

three monumental water-lily paintings by Claude Monet. Dada – founded in Zurich – and the geometric Constructivism of the 'Zurich Concretists' Glarner, Bill and Lohse appear alongside international movements. The post-war New York School is here, as are European and American Pop Art. The expressive turn in painting of the 1980s is represented by Georg Baselitz, Anselm Kiefer and Sigmar Polke. From July 2018, this section will be temporarily joined by large installations from Bruce Nauman and others. Photographs, videos and installations by artists such as Jeff Wall, Pipilotti Rist and Peter Fischli/David Weiss lead the way into the 21st century.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The programme can be downloaded from www.kunsthhaus.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. 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). Admission to the 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 2018 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 as well as images are available at www.kunsthhaus.ch > Information > Press, where the dates and times of media briefings in 2018 can also be found.

For further information on exhibitions, contact:

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