

Press Release
Zurich, 18 March 2008

Kunsthhaus Zürich shows the Marc Rich Collection: High points in classic art photography from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century.

From 20 June until 3 August 2008 Kunsthhaus Zürich is showing photographs from the Marc Rich Collection. Predominantly vintage black-and-white prints, these images trace the development of classic art photography since the late nineteenth century.

Donated by its munificent owner to the Kunsthhaus in 1989 to mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of photography, the Marc Rich Collection forms the backbone of the museum's collection of classic art photography. It ranges from images by the early pioneers (Henry Fox Talbot, Charles Marville) through the Pictorialism of the Photo Secession (Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Steichen), Straight Photography (Paul Strand, Edward Weston, Ansel Adams), Surrealism, Constructivism and Bauhaus (Man Ray, László Moholy-Nagy) to the poetic-documentary Realism of the mid-twentieth century (Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Frank).

This cabinet exhibition is curated by Tobia Bezzola and consists mainly of vintage prints – from the same era as the original shots. At the same time, it is also a chance for the Kunsthhaus to show important examples of classic-modernist photography that have come into the collection since 1989: items such as the group of experimental works by Herbert Bayer that was donated to the Kunsthhaus thanks to the generosity of the Dr. Carlo Fleischmann Stiftung. These works reflect the two methodological directions that artists developed in the early twentieth century and continued to pursue in their determination to go beyond both the veristic, illustrative and picturesque, mimetic functions of photography.

AESTHETIC AND INTELLECTUAL PLEASURE

The spectrum of photographic motifs runs from architecture and landscapes via sculptural objects right through to aspects of human life, including social issues and psychological questions. Human psychology looms large in the portraits by artists such as Edward Steichen, Paul Strand, Baron Adolf de Meyer and the half nudes of the Japanese photographer Daido Moriyama. The range of techniques on display in this selection of over 80 works is equally representative of developments in classic art photography. Besides straightforward camera images, there are also photo-sculptures and retouched montages that encourage viewers to exercise their ability to distinguish between sense and sensory deception. The exhibition is designed to provide both aesthetic pleasure

in the medium of photography and a chance to engage on a deeper level with the intellectual, technical and craft skills of the artist-photographers.

The collection of photographs at Kunsthaus Zürich is still growing – above all in the area of contemporary photography. For reasons of conservation combined with a lack of space, only a small selection is on permanent display. Following in the wake of the presentation of large-format works from the turn of the millennium ('Wallflowers', 2002) and occasional themed exhibitions such as 'Picture Ballot! Frozen Moments' (2006), this presentation of the Marc Rich Collection keeps the spotlight on the classic art photography that has had such an important influence on subsequent generations of artists, right up to the present day.

GENERAL VISITOR INFORMATION

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, 8001 Zurich, www.kunsthhaus.ch

Opening Times: Sat/Sun/Tues 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Wed/Thurs/Fri 10 a.m.–8 p.m.

Public Holidays: 1 August, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Admission: CHF 12.–/8.– (concessions). Subject to change without notice.

Advanced Sales: Kombi-Ticket RailAway/SBB, with reduction on rail travel and admission fees, available at SBB stations and by calling Rail Service on 0900 300 300 (CHF 1.19 per min.); group tariffs also available.

Magasins Fnac, Tel. +33 1 4157 3212, www.fnac.ch

Public Guided Tours: 27 June and 18 July 2008, 6.30 p.m.

Private Guided Tours: please call +41 (0)44 253 84 06 (Mon–Fri 9 a.m.–12 noon)

For further information and visual materials, please contact

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