



Press release

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Kunsthaus Zürich extension to open in 2017

The preliminary design project for the extension to the Kunsthaus Zürich is now complete. The design by David Chipperfield's multi-award-winning team of architects has assumed its definitive form. The timetable provides for the electorate to vote on the project in 2012, with the Kunsthaus extension opening in 2017. It will create space for a dynamic, regularly changing presentation of the collection of post-1960 art, attractive temporary exhibitions, and the new speciality of French painting and Impressionism.

The design by David Chipperfield's multi-award-winning firm of architects, which emerged as winner of the competition for the Kunsthaus extension in December 2008 and was subsequently optimized in line with the jury's recommendations, has now assumed its definitive form. During the preliminary design project, the basic architectural concept of the winning submission was refined and adapted to meet the needs of its future users. Further details were also added to the timetable and cost estimate for realization of the project.

A functionally sophisticated building that respects its surroundings

The extension is to be devoted primarily to art created since the 1960s, and can be used to present a variety of exhibits – from new media, prints and drawings and photography to pictures, installations and sculptures – which offer a fascinating contrast to the classical format of the galleries intended for the private Bührle Collection. When the latter is installed in its new home, the Kunsthaus will see its collection of classical modernism complemented by a new speciality: French painting and Impressionism. In total, 78 percent more space will be available for galleries and temporary exhibitions. One particularly attractive aspect for the population at large is the 119-percent expansion of the public space, with the central hall, art education facilities and banquet hall. There will also be a 97-percent increase in the area available for key operational functions, allowing for the integration of external stores and swift processing of incoming and outgoing artworks and goods, as well as accommodating workrooms, air conditioning and exhibition technology.



Thanks to the underground connection between the existing Moser building and the extension, the new Kunsthaus will fit seamlessly into the urban environment on both sides of Heimplatz and constitute a harmonious ensemble in its interior. In line with the recommendations made by the city's structural engineering department, the above-ground and below-ground volume of the new building has been reduced in all its dimensions and the area in front of it facing Heimplatz enlarged, so that the new construction will appear smaller in the context of the urban landscape than was originally envisaged. The underground passage is no longer to be used as a warehouse-cum-gallery. The storage facilities will instead be accommodated more securely and cheaply under the building, and this will also allow traffic flow to be maintained while the project is being realized.

400,000 visitors

With the increased attractiveness resulting from the new extension, the Kunsthaus expects the number of visitors to rise from the current average of 300,000 a year to 400,000, thanks to the dynamic, regularly changing presentation of the collection, technically innovative displays in the new temporary exhibitions area and the new speciality – French painting and Impressionism – which will make the Kunsthaus the leading address for art of this kind in Europe after the museums in Paris. To ensure that the Kunsthaus can maintain the quality of its exhibitions, offer individual assistance to visitors and provide art education services tailored to the specific needs of the public, there will also be a significant increase in the number of employees.

Cost target of CHF 178.8 million

The Einfache Gesellschaft Kunsthaus Erweiterung (EGKE) – the commissioning body comprising the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, the city of Zurich and the Stiftung Zürcher Kunsthaus – has approved both the preliminary design project and the detailed cost estimate for the planning and realization of the extension. Although it has become clear that preparation of the ground for building and the underground connection between the existing Kunsthaus and the extension will be substantially more complex than assumed during the competition, the cost target of CHF 178.8 million is only around ten percent above the original estimate of CHF 163.35 million. The reduction of the construction volume, abandonment of the underground car park idea and redesign of the underground connection have redimensioned cost-intensive elements of the project. The time taken over the preliminary design project was extended in order to ensure the necessary planning security and the greatest possible certainty regarding costs. This also enabled a higher level of detail to be achieved.



Financing from the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, city and canton

Financing is to be provided via two contributions of CHF 88 million each from the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft (ZKG) and the city of Zurich, plus CHF 30 million from the Canton of Zurich's lottery fund. The canton will also be granting the Stiftung Zürcher Kunsthaus (SZK) an interest-free right to build on the Heimplatz North plot. The combined contribution of CHF 206 million is based on the cost target of CHF 178.8 million plus reserves of 15 percent. The contributions from the ZKG and the city of Zurich include, respectively, project and construction management services they will themselves provide. To date, private sponsors, foundations and corporations have pledged a total of CHF 30 million toward the ZKG contribution.

Internal financing remains at 50 percent

The Kunsthaus will be tapping additional sources of income to cover the extra spending on staff and maintenance. It aims to meet half of the expected annual increase of approximately CHF 8.5 million from its own funds and thereby maintain the high, 50-percent level of internal financing. In its new cultural mission statement for the 2012-2015 legislative period, the city of Zurich envisages an increase in subsidies of between CHF 4 million and 5 million no earlier than 2016. The Stiftung Kunsthaus Zürich, which is responsible for property maintenance, is to receive around CHF 3 million more.

In harmony with urban development and cultural policy

For the city of Zurich, the expansion of the Kunsthaus fits perfectly within its overarching cultural policy and urban planning interests. The project is committed to the goals of the 2000 Watt Society and is one of the key areas of the city council's legislative programme, which aims to promote sustainable construction and further enhance Zurich's appeal as a city of creativity and culture.

Municipal council and electorate to vote in 2012; opening in 2017

The city council aims to approve the design plan at its last session in December 2011 and submit it to the municipal council for a decision. If the latter gives its approval and no legal objections are lodged, the design plan will enter into force at the start of 2013. Following consultations by the municipal council, the credit facility will be put before the electorate of the city of Zurich on 25 November 2012. After invitations to tender and a four-year construction period, the new Kunsthaus is scheduled to open in 2017.



Current information about the goals and status of the project can be found at www.kunsthhaus.ch. In the museum, a project information area open to the public contains models, ground plans and accompanying texts documenting the progress of the project.

New views, current ground plans and other documentation for the media can be downloaded from the media section of www.kunsthhaus.ch

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