

**Press Release**  
**Zurich, 30 May 2012**

## **The Foundation E.G. Bührle Collection comes to the Kunsthaus Zürich**

**On 28 May 2012 the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft signed an agreement with the Foundation E.G. Bührle Collection setting out the terms under which some 190 paintings and sculptures are to be made available on long-term loan to the Kunsthaus Zürich. The internationally renowned collection of the industrialist Emil Bührle (1890-1956) is to be exhibited from 2017 in the extension to the Kunsthaus Zürich designed by David Chipperfield. This will enable the Kunsthaus to stage the largest assembly of French Impressionist painting in Europe, outside Paris.**

The new agreement between the Foundation E.G. Bührle Collection and the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft replaces the agreement in principle drawn up in February 2006 and sets the seal on the intent, declared by the parties at the time, to make the artworks from the Bührle Collection accessible to the public at large in the newly expanded Kunsthaus. Completion of the preliminary project in summer 2011 cleared the way for detailed arrangements to be worked out governing the cooperation between the Foundation E.G. Bührle Collection, currently housed in a private museum in Zurich with only limited public access, and the Kunsthaus, which attracts an average of 300,000 visitors a year at its location in the heart of the city.

### **190 WORKS AND A CONTINUUM OF EPOCHS**

The Kunsthaus extension is scheduled to open in 2017. The artistic concept envisages displaying the exhibits from the Bührle Collection alongside works of Classical Modernism, thereby presenting visitors with an unbroken chronological sequence of artistic epochs. Following the recent successful recovery of Paul Cézanne's 'Boy in the Red Waistcoat' and a painting by Edgar Degas, the Bührle Collection once again numbers 166 paintings and 25 sculptures. These will be placed on permanent display in a suite of rooms measuring some 1000 m<sup>2</sup> that has been specially designed for them. Skylit galleries on the second floor will provide ideal lighting conditions, especially for the Impressionist masterpieces. Bringing the collections of the Kunsthaus and the Foundation together in this way will create the most important centre of French Impressionist painting in Europe, outside Paris.

### **INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SET OUT IN BUSINESS PLAN**

The Kunsthaus undertakes to display the Bührle Collection permanently as a single unit and to make arrangements for its security. The costs of maintenance,

upkeep and art education are set out in the Kunstgesellschaft's business plan. Income from admissions and the sale of items featuring motifs from the Bührlé Collection will go the Kunsthaus.

These calculations are included in the subsidy applications which, along with the credit facility for construction investment and an advance to cover the start-up costs of the Kunsthaus extension, will be debated by Zurich's municipal council in June 2012.

### KUNSTHAUS EXTENSION IS KEY

The prestigious collection will only move to the Kunsthaus on long-term loan if Zurich's electorate approves the extension in a popular vote at the end of November. Otherwise, the Foundation would have to remain in its existing building, whose location some distance from the city centre is less than ideal for tourists passing through.

For the Kunsthaus, there is more at stake in the vote than the creation of a new specialism in French painting and Impressionism (which will account for a little under 20% of the gallery area in the expanded Kunsthaus). Equally important is the fact that it will enable 20% of the Kunsthaus's own collection to be displayed, as against just 10% at present. The primary objective is to give greater weight to art from 1960 onwards and enable a dynamic, regularly changing presentation of the collection. This is also the rationale behind the long-term cooperation agreed in April 2012 between the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft and the Fondation Hubert Looser, which will significantly strengthen the representation of Abstract Expressionism, Minimal Art and Arte Povera, making for a fascinating dialogue with the Kunsthaus collection.

More space is to be created, both within the existing building and in the extension, for artists of major historical significance (Alberto Giacometti, Cy Twombly) and Zurich-based movements of international importance (Dada, Concretists). The establishment of state-of-the-art conditions for temporary exhibitions and new forms of art education is essential if the Kunsthaus is to retain its attractiveness for international partners (museums, lenders of works, patrons) and meet the heightened expectations of an increasingly diverse public. The Kunsthaus aims to retain its ability to accommodate donated items and cooperate with those lending works on a permanent basis.

### LONG-TERM, PRIVATE-LAW CONTRACT

The parties will not be disclosing any private-law details of the agreement. However, the contract is geared to the long term and notice periods running into a number of years will be required in the event of termination; the earliest possible date is the end of 2034.

## MODERN CONTINUATION OF A TRADITION OF PATRONAGE

The active involvement of Emil Bührle in the fortunes of the Kunsthaus has always brought benefits for Zurich and the Kunstgesellschaft. It is impossible to imagine Switzerland's oldest collecting and exhibiting institution without Bührle's gifts such as two of Claude Monet's large-format water lily paintings and Auguste Rodin's 'Gates of Hell.' By financing the exhibition wing in the 1950s, Emil Bührle also established a platform for unique events at which, to this day, art and its public are brought face to face.

## FINANCIAL INVOLVEMENT BY THE COLLECTOR'S FAMILY

The fact that the path embarked on two generations ago has led to an enduring partnership reflects the commitment not just of the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft and the Board of the Foundation E.G. Bührle Collection but also of the Bührle family who, in addition to supplying the works, are making a substantial contribution to the costs of constructing the Kunsthaus extension.

## CREATION OF THE COLLECTION AND DOCUMENTATION

Visitors were given a foretaste of the shape of future cooperation and what they can expect to see back in 2010, with the exhibition 'Van Gogh, Cézanne, Monet. The Bührle Collection Visits the Kunsthaus Zürich.' The history of the E.G. Bührle Collection was extensively documented and a discussion organized on the way ahead for the collaboration with the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft. The exhibition attracted more than 130,000 visitors, thereby confirming just how attractive this focus will be once it takes up residence in the Kunsthaus. The creation of the collection in the middle of the 20th century, the biography of the industrialist and art collector Emil Bührle (1890–1956), and his activities as an entrepreneur in Zurich and owner of the Oerlikon, Bührle & Co. machine tool factory that also produced armaments will be the subject of a documentation in the exhibition, too.

## MASTERPIECES OF EUROPEAN ART HISTORY

Sixty years after its inception the collection, largely assembled by Emil Bührle while living in Zurich after the Second World War, is still regarded as one of the most important art collections of the 20th century. It includes both Impressionist paintings and works by the Nabis, Fauves, Cubists and other exponents of the French post-1900 avant garde. Older art is represented in the form of the Dutch 'Golden Age' and Venetian masters of the 16th to 18th centuries, as well as a group of Gothic wood figures. The Foundation E.G. Bührle Collection holds world-famous works such as van Gogh's 'Sower with Setting Sun,' Renoir's 'Little Irene,' the 'Poppies near Vétheuil' by Claude Monet, 'The Boy in the Red Waistcoat' by Paul Cézanne and Picasso's 'The Italian Woman.' Other leading artists include Frans Hals, Canaletto, Ingres, Delacroix, Manet, Degas, Gauguin, Signac, Vlaminck and Braque.

## A FASCINATING NEW DEPARTURE FOR ART EDUCATION

A central theme of the collection is the emergence of a new artistic freedom as the prerequisite for modern art; its importance lies in the systematic selection process by which Emil Bührle sought to document this development via the masterpieces of leading artists. Its new proximity to the Kunsthaus collection, assembled in a museum environment and with different priorities in mind over a period of centuries, offers new insights that extend far beyond the individual works and enables visitors to compare the concepts underlying private and public collections. The result is a fascinating new departure for future art education activities in the expanded Kunsthaus Zürich.

## NOTE TO MEDIA

Visual material is available for download at [www.kunsthhaus.ch](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch) > Information > Press > Press Images. Details of the history of the E.G. Bührle Collection and the works it contains can be found at [www.buehrle.ch](http://www.buehrle.ch).

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