

Press release  
Zurich, 9 October 2014

**Kunsthaus Zürich presents Egon Schiele together with Jenny Saville**

**The Kunsthaus Zürich is the first museum to exhibit the work of Egon Schiele (1890–1918) together with paintings by the contemporary British artist Jenny Saville (b. 1970). This is an encounter between two artistic positions, separated by a century, that both engage intensively with the physical. Comprising over 100 paintings and drawings, it runs from 10 October 2014 to 25 January 2015.**

While previous exhibitions have mostly placed Egon Schiele in his historical context, here the aim is to explore similarities and distinctions between his work and that of a contemporary painter. Schiele's works are presented in a loose chronological sequence within the exhibition, while Saville's paintings appear in singled out interaction and sometimes in small groups of works or motifs. Each position visibly retains its autonomy. By creating a spacious hanging with formats of vastly differing sizes and rejecting any arrangement based on explicit pairings, curator Oliver Wick sets out to challenge viewers' perceptions.

THE 'EMBODIMENT' OF PAINTING

The visitor is immediately struck by unembellished physicality, artistically illuminated with an explicitness that frequently engenders a sense of inhibition and even, on occasion, downright physical awkwardness in the viewer. Often the exaggerated corporeality – opulent flesh in Saville, gaunt affliction in Schiele – is expressed through the experience of the artist's own body and in combination with their own self-image. In an oeuvre spanning slightly less than a decade, Schiele repeatedly returns to the self-portrait, sometimes as nude. Likewise Saville, whose paintings almost always depict the female form, works with models and her own body. Yet her creative process interposes a layer of mediation. She does not paint live in front of a model, but rather from photographs made earlier, combined with numerous other sources of imagery. In the works of both artists, this structuring of the physical – further accentuated in Schiele by the pose and the expression – is characterized by the choice of extreme perspectives, in most cases a deliberately low angle, and an intentional 'placelessness'. Both demonstratively interrogate the conventions of perception. The depiction of physicality and gender is unremittingly direct. For all its apparent expressionism, what we have here is not a spontaneous act of self-externalization, but rather a meticulously planned painting that, in Schiele, expresses itself in a specific addressing of the viewer achieved through structuring of the gaze and exaggerated self-representation. Saville deploys similarly appellatory strategies; unlike Schiele, however, she primarily uses the

large format in an effort to overwhelm and enfold the viewer. Her goal is a painting in which paint behaves like flesh and the sense of the physical is translated into materiality and tactility – an embodiment of painting. Although Schiele too employs a precisely modelled, even plastic chromatic structure, for him line and contour continue to guide his artistic perception. Schiele and Saville share a hermetic self-containedness that eschews narrative content and thus emphasizes the ineluctability of the physical.

### CELEBRATED MASTERPIECES AND A NEW WORK

Jenny Saville's paintings should be understood as a process that pushes painting to its limits. As she works, she constantly reviews and reconfigures her many sources, capturing the state of becoming in a way that reaches beyond the human body to depict the essence of painting itself. A graduate of the Glasgow School of Art, Saville achieved her international breakthrough with a solo show at the Saatchi Gallery in 1994. In all, 16 of her paintings – among them a new work – and a number of large format studies that deal with texture and materiality will be exhibited alongside the Schieles. Despite their usually small format, the 35 paintings and 55 works on paper by Schiele create an impact that is every bit the equal of Saville's giant creations. Grouped together in selected themes, they reveal an artistic intensity that does not shy away from extremes.

### RARELY LOANED WORKS

The exhibition features some works that have seldom been lent out before. The Leopold Museum in Vienna has exceptionally agreed to loan Egon Schiele's 'Self-Portrait with Chinese Lantern Plant' and the 'Portrait of Wally Neuzil' – his companion for many years – which accompanies it. We are also grateful to the Belvedere, Vienna, for permitting Schiele's seminal 'Death and Maiden' to travel outside Austria for the first time in more than 25 years. The works by Saville come from private collections in Europe and the US.

### SCHIELE AND ZÜRICH

Using documents from the museum archive, the exhibition also sheds light for the first time on Egon Schiele's close ties to the Kunsthaus Zürich. In 1915, at the height of World War One, the Kunsthaus's then director Wilhelm Wartmann attempted to organize a solo show that would have been among Schiele's first museum exhibitions. Schiele profiled himself as an artist-curator dedicated to promoting the young art of his time, the 'most extreme', and whose primary aim was to 'make people see'. His preserved letters and additional source material are providing new insights into his work.

### GUIDED TOURS

A multilingual audioguide is included in the price of admission, enabling visitors to explore the topic on their own. Additionally there are public guided tours in

German, also free of charge, at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays, 3 p.m. on Fridays and 11 a.m. on Sundays. Guided tours in English will take place on Saturday, 1 November and Sunday, 23 November at 1 p.m. We will be pleased to organize private guided tours on request (tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 84, Mon–Fri 9 a.m.–midday).

### PUBLICATION

Translating the visual power of this juxtaposition of Egon Schiele and Jenny Saville into book form, the exhibition catalogue is published in an especially large format. It contains art-historical texts by Oskar Bätschmann, Maria Becker, Martin Harrison, Diethard Leopold, Helena Pereña, Franz Smola and Oliver Wick. The catalogue (176 pages, 163 illustrations) is published in German and English by Hatje Cantz. It is available from the Kunsthaus shop for CHF 59 or from bookstores (ISBN 978-3-906574-95-0).

Supported by the art insurer Nationale Suisse, other patrons and our sponsoring paint supplier Farrow & Ball.

### CONCERT

Around 1900, Vienna was a centre of the avant-garde in art, literature and music. Along with his pupils Webern and Berg, Schönberg – also a painter himself – revolutionized Western music; yet his waltzes stand within the Viennese waltz tradition. The Zurich Chamber Orchestra makes a guest appearance at the Kunsthaus at 11 a.m. on Sunday, 30 November. Tickets available from [www.zko.ch](http://www.zko.ch).

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The Kunsthaus is centrally located in Zurich, and is easily accessible by public transport: Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, CH-8001 Zurich. Tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 84, [www.kunsthaus.ch](http://www.kunsthaus.ch)

Opening hours: Tues/Fri–Sun 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., Wed, Thurs 10 a.m. – 8 p.m., closed on Mondays and on 25 December 2014. Christmas (24/26 December), New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Berchtoldstag (31 December, 1/2 January 2015) 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. See [www.kunsthaus.ch](http://www.kunsthaus.ch)

Admission including audioguide (E/D/F): CHF 22. CHF 17 per head for groups of 20 or more. Children and young people up to the age of 16 free of charge.

Advance sales: Zurich Tourism: overnight accommodation including admission ticket available from the Tourist Service at Zurich Main Railway Station, tel. +41 44 215 40 00, [information@zuerich.com](mailto:information@zuerich.com), [www.zuerich.com](http://www.zuerich.com).

## KUNSTHAUS ZÜRICH

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/en/kunsthhaus-zuerich](http://www.sbb.ch/en/kunsthhaus-zuerich).

Magasins Fnac: sales points in Switzerland: Rive, Balexert, Lausanne, Fribourg, Pathé Kino Basel, [www.fnac.ch](http://www.fnac.ch); France: Carrefour, Géant, Magasins U, 0 892 68 36 22 (EUR 0.34/min), [www.fnac.com](http://www.fnac.com); Belgium: [www.fnac.be](http://www.fnac.be).

### NOTE AND CONTACT FOR THE MEDIA

Visual material is available for download at [www.kunsthhaus.ch](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch) under Information > Press.

Contact: Kunsthaus Zürich, Press & Public Relations

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