

**Press release
Zurich, 3 August 2015**

Kunsthhaus Zürich: construction of Switzerland's largest art museum begins

Construction work on the extension to the Kunsthhaus Zürich began on 3 August. From 2020, the light-filled structure designed by David Chipperfield Architects will create space for a dynamic, regularly changing presentation of the collection of post-1960 art, attractive temporary exhibitions, and the new specialism of French painting and Impressionism.

This is literally a groundbreaking moment for the Kunsthhaus Zürich. Following a two-year appeal against the building permit, Switzerland's oldest combined collection and exhibition institution is set to almost double its size by 2020. The extension will focus mainly on art created since the 1960s, and allow for a wide variety of exhibition formats – from new media, prints and drawings and photography to paintings, installations and sculptures – with regularly changing presentations offering an exciting contrast to the self-contained, classical galleries housing Classical Modernists and the Bührle Collection.

FOCUS ON FRENCH PAINTING WITH THE BÜHRLE COLLECTION

The arrival of this internationally renowned private foundation will create a new specialism – French painting and Impressionism – and make the Kunsthhaus the most important centre for such art in Europe outside the museums in Paris. The Kunsthhaus expects visitor numbers to rise by 30% to around 400,000 per year, thanks to new attractions including the scope for larger-scale presentations in the existing building, with more space for Swiss art and especially Alberto Giacometti, and technically innovative shows staged in the new temporary exhibition area.

MORE SPACE FOR ART AND THE PUBLIC

In total, almost 80% more space will be available for galleries and temporary exhibitions. From 2020 onwards, there will be room to display between 700 and 800 exhibits from the Kunsthhaus collection – approximately 20% of the painting and sculpture holdings – compared with around 400 at present. Visitors will also benefit from enlarged public areas (up 119%) with a central hall, spaces for art education, a banquet hall and a shop and bar, which will also be accessible outside museum opening hours. Taken together, these will transform a visit to the Kunsthhaus into a concentrated and interactive experience.

ENHANCEMENT OF THE PUBLIC SPACE

The underground passage between the representative late-Jugendstil building constructed in 1910 by architect Karl Moser and the extension by David Chipperfield – also clad in natural stone – will make the new Kunsthaus a harmonious ensemble both inside and out: two buildings – one museum. The expanded Kunsthaus will flank the square on three sides, while the art garden designed by renowned landscape architects Wirtz International, Schoten, will create an attractive open-air recreational space as well as a link to the nearby university district. Still bordered on its eastern side by the Schauspielhaus and located in the heart of Zurich within walking distance of the lake and main railway station, Heimplatz will become a gateway to the arts.

MAJOR PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION TO CHF 206 MILLION COSTS

In a vote in November 2012, a clear majority of Zurich's electorate came out in favour of the project. Funding comes from both private and public sources. The CHF 88 million raised by the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft – the association that runs the Kunsthaus Zürich, with over 21,000 members – is the largest private contribution yet made to an art museum in Switzerland. In addition to a matching contribution of CHF 88 million from the City of Zurich, CHF 30 million come from the cantonal lottery fund. The total investment, including reserves, stands at CHF 206 million. The Einfache Gesellschaft Kunsthaus Erweiterung – the commissioning body representing both private and public – is recording the progress of construction in publications including 'The New Kunsthaus. The Idea, The Form, the Content' and the 'New Kunsthaus – Construction Report' series (starting in spring 2016), which can be obtained in the Kunsthaus and from www.kunsthhaus.ch. The current status as well as the previous stages in the project are also documented online.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, CH-8001 Zurich, tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 84, Fri – Sun/Tues 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., Wed/Thurs 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Admission including audioguide from CHF 15 / CHF 10 (concessions). Children and young people up to the age of 16 free of charge.

NOTE TO MEDIA

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