

Press release
Zurich, 28 April 2015

Kunsthhaus Zürich extends 'Monet, Gauguin, van Gogh... Japanese Inspirations' until 25 May 2015

In response to great public interest, the Kunsthhaus Zürich is extending 'Monet, Gauguin, van Gogh... Japanese Inspirations' for a further 14 days. The exhibition, which opened on 20 February and includes more than 350 exceptional paintings, woodblock prints and artefacts by European and Japanese masters, is receiving over 1,100 visitors a day. The lenders have agreed to an extension, and the Kunsthhaus will now be presenting this exploration of a fascinating chapter in French art and Europe's view of Japan in the 19th century until Whit Monday.

Almost all the great masters of French art drew inspiration from Japanese pictorial motifs and characteristic styles. They depicted art imported from Japan in their works, reinterpreted Japanese imagery, and internalized the visual idiom of the Japanese woodblock print. The focus of the exhibition is on the period between 1860 and 1910, from the early phase to the heyday of 'Japonisme' in France. Paintings and prints by the leading artists of the period engage in dialogue with colour woodblock prints and vessels, kimonos, fans and other artefacts by Japanese masters.

COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES REINTERPRETED

Many artists – van Gogh among them – admired the vibrant and extremely nuanced colours of the woodblock prints and adopted them into their own work. It is noteworthy that the visual aesthetic of the Japanese colour woodblock print was initially applied to painting and only transferred to prints by a later generation of artists. Through their recourse to Japanese paradigms, artists such as Toulouse-Lautrec, Rivière, Cassatt and Vallotton helped to elevate the status of their printing techniques. In 1893, Monet designed his garden at Giverny to include a water lily pond and bridge modelled on Japanese colour woodblock prints. The vegetation, too, was inspired by the Far East, with irises, wisteria, azaleas and chrysanthemums. It was here, too, that he painted the water lily pictures which are among the masterpieces of early 20th-century art.

VALUABLE OBJECTS COLLECTED BY ARTISTS THEMSELVES

Some of the Japanese colour woodblock prints on display in the exhibition come from artists' collections of the 19th century. The applied arts, too, drew ideas from imported ceramics, lacquerware, fans and screens. A theme that has only recently gained the attention of European art historians is 'erotic Japonisme',

represented in this exhibition by the juxtaposition of highly erotic 'shunga' (literally 'pictures of spring') and prints by Pablo Picasso.

ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION FROM VISITORS

In a visitor survey, 90 percent of those asked said they liked the exhibition and would recommend it to others. In addition to the fascinating wealth and quality of the objects on display, they have particular praise for the educational offering, which is tailored to the differing needs of adults and children. The public guided tours are much in demand: they take place in German at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays, 3 p.m. on Fridays and 11 a.m. on Sundays.

The exhibition is a collaboration with the Museum Folkwang in Essen and was designed by Sandra Gianfreda. Supported by the Truus and Gerrit van Riemsdijk Foundation and other patrons. The catalogue (in German and English) is available from the Kunsthaus shop, price CHF 45.

ADMISSION INCLUDES AN AUDIO TOUR IN FOUR LANGUAGES

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, CH-8001 Zurich, tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 84, www.kunsthaus.ch. Fri – Sun/Tues 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., Wed/Thurs 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Public holidays: 1 May, Ascension 14 May, Whitsun 23–25 May: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Admission to the exhibition including audioguide (in English, German, French or Italian): CHF 22 / CHF 17 (concessions and groups). Combined ticket including the collection: CHF 27 / CHF 20 (concessions and groups). Children and young people up to the age of 16 free of charge.

Advance sales: 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/kunsthaus-zuerich.

Zurich Tourism: hotel room reservations and ticket sales, Tourist Service at Zurich Main Railway Station, tel. +41 44 215 40 00, information@zuerich.com, www.zuerich.com.

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

NOTE AND CONTACT FOR THE MEDIA

Visual material is available for download at www.kunsthaus.ch under Information > Press. Contact: Kunsthaus Zürich, Press & Public Relations, Kristin Steiner, kristin.steiner@kunsthaus.ch, tel.: +41 (0)44 253 84 13