

Press release
Zurich, 13 August 2015

Kunsthaus Zürich presents photographic works, sculptures and collages by John Waters.

'How Much Can You Take?', an appreciation of the work of John Waters, runs at the Kunsthaus Zürich from 14 August to 1 November 2015.

John Waters (b. 1946), the style icon and 'enfant terrible' of American cinema, has influenced the aesthetic of independent film-making like no other: not just as director, but also as artist, actor, performer and author. As the world of film infiltrates our lives – nurturing dreams, awakening obsessions and longings – so it affects visual artists. It comes as no surprise, then, that Waters himself has a fine-art oeuvre to his credit. The Kunsthaus Zürich pays tribute to this key area of John Waters' achievement with some 40 small to large-format film storyboards and three-dimensional works that showcase this little-known facet of an exceptional film director and multi-talented artist.

AN IRONIC TAKE ON CODES OF COMMUNICATION IN THE ART SYSTEM

John Waters' works are often serial in nature. The ironic critique of 'Artistically Incorrect' (2006) confronts us with slogans such as 'No, it's not archival!' and 'All photographs fade', reminding us that the codes of communication within the art system consist largely of verbiage that, to the outsider, has little to do with the visionary and magical power customarily ascribed to art. 'Movie Star Jesus' (1996) exemplifies Waters' interest in assembling a 'typology' of still images featuring film figures and scenes that, for him, exert an irresistible visual fascination. Waters' transition from the film format to photography makes us aware that certain themes can only be formally investigated and defined artistically via the static image or frozen object.

GIFT TO THE KUNSTHAUS COLLECTION

An ironic and mordant observer, Waters skewers the Hollywood dream factory, mercilessly exposing the establishment and its foibles, as the edition 'Tragedy' (2015), created for the art magazine 'Parkett', clearly demonstrates. The object, a homage to Jayne Mansfield's death, created using acrylic, artificial hair, painted silicone and urethane, is being donated to the Kunsthaus by its owner, This Brunner, as are all the approximately 40 works by Waters in the exhibition. As a result, the museum acquires the first and most comprehensive collection by this maverick artist. In an accompanying publication (published by Scheidegger & Spiess, 96 pages, 50 illustrations), philosopher and literary critic Stefan Zweifel locates Waters' production within the artist's life's work and the art world in general. It is available from the Kunsthaus shop for CHF 24.

PERFORMANCE WITH JOHN WATERS

A live performance will take place at 6.30 p.m. on 23 September in the auditorium of the Kunsthaus, with Waters presenting his legendary 90 minute one-man show 'This Filthy World'. Tickets will be on sale for CHF 22 (members CHF 20) in the museum from 5 September.

Supported by Swiss Re – Partner for contemporary art.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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.

Admission to the exhibition incl. collection: CHF 15 / CHF 10 (concessions and groups). Children and young people up to the age of 16 free of charge.

Admission to the performance: CHF 22

Public guided tours: Sun 13 and 27 September, 11 a.m.

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 at www.kunsthaus.ch > Information > Press.

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