

Press release
Zurich, 30 August 2016

Kunsthhaus Zürich presents 'Peter Wechsler – Drawings'

From 11 November 2016 to 22 January 2017 the Kunsthhaus Zürich is staging the first museum exhibition in Switzerland devoted to the artist Peter Wechsler (b. 1951), who was born in Zurich and lives in Vienna. It comprises 74 works, pencil and Indian ink brush drawings as well as etchings on paper.

Entitled 'A World of Small Parts Grows Together', the exhibition presents a cycle of impressive large-format pencil drawings created by Peter Wechsler between 1994 and 2008. The Kunsthhaus is also the first art museum to show a selection of recent, unframed Indian ink brush drawings from 2012-2016. Free of concepts and framing grids, these works, which are reminiscent of Oriental landscape paintings, deploy a power of suggestion whose underlying structure communicates itself to the viewer in a subtle manner. Together with a number of early pieces from the 1970s and 1980s, the exhibition of 74 works on paper shines a spotlight on the range of Peter Wechsler's draughtsmanship.

CREATING SPACES AND STRUCTURES. ENGAGING PERCEPTIONS

Wechsler, who was born and grew up in Zurich and has lived in Vienna since 1971, is one of a generation of abstract artists who, following on from minimal and conceptual art, have been opening up new and contemplative fields of expression for the medium of drawing as system and sensory experience. Such artists address a fundamental question: how can the deployment of the draughtsman's means – sometimes systematically constructive, sometimes spontaneously gestural – create actual spaces and structures that engage and challenge the viewer's sensory perception?

MONTHS AND YEARS IN THE MAKING

Wechsler's work reveals much about the process of its creation. The development of his intricately structured drawings, some of them on heavy watercolour cardboard primed with colour, others on white paper, necessitates a constant process of decision making in which even 'wrong decisions' are part of a considered system that continually stabilizes itself through variations. His pencil drawings take months and sometimes years to create. The works in brush and Indian ink, meanwhile, range from spontaneous acts of punctuation to structured sequences of small elements that lead out beyond the picture's edge into the surrounding space. Mental and physical preparation, as well as work in other media such as glass objects, painting and prints above and beyond the act of drawing, plays a key role.

WORKS FROM MAJOR COLLECTIONS. PUBLICATION

Bernhard von Waldkirch, curator of the Collection of Prints and Drawings at the Kunsthaus Zürich, has designed the presentation jointly with the artist. In 2008 the Kunsthaus became the first public museum in Switzerland to acquire a large drawing: 'WVZ No. XVIII'. Dating from 2004, it is one of a cycle of 23 large-format pencil drawings which is now being reconstructed in its essentials. This piece from the Kunsthaus's own holdings is being joined in Zurich by works on loan from the Albertina in Vienna and various important private collections. The exhibition is accompanied by a publication (approx. 100 pages, 50 colour illustrations, Wienand, Cologne) containing articles by Vera Hausdorff (Camille Graeser Stiftung, Zurich), Marietta Mautner Markhof, Heinz Widauer (both Albertina, Vienna) and Bernhard von Waldkirch (Kunsthaus Zürich).

Supported by Uniqa Fine Art Insurance Switzerland and the Erna and Curt Burgauer Foundation.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, CH-8001 Zurich

Tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 84, www.kunsthhaus.ch.

Fri-Sun/Tues 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., Wed, Thurs 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. For public holiday opening see www.kunsthhaus.ch.

Admission incl. collection: CHF 15 / CHF 10 (concessions and groups).

Admission free to visitors up to the age of 16.

Public guided tours of the exhibition:

Sun 27 November, 4 p.m., with Peter Wechsler and Bernhard von Waldkirch.

Sat 10 December, 4 p.m., with Bernhard von Waldkirch.

Sat 7 January 2017, 11 a.m., with art historian Maria Olsen.

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/kunsthhaus-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.

INVITATION TO THE PRESS CONFERENCE AND NOTE TO EDITORS

A press conference with Peter Wechsler and Bernhard von Waldkirch will take place at 11 a.m. on Thursday 10 November. Registration is required only for extended interviews. This press release and illustrations of works are available at www.kunsthhaus.ch > Information > Press.

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