

Press release  
Zurich, 9 November 2017

**Kunsthhaus Zürich presents 'Praised and Ridiculed. French Painting 1820–1880'**

**From 10 November 2017 to 28 January 2018, the Kunsthhaus Zürich exclusively presents the first exhibition in Switzerland to explore the tensions in French painting between 'academic art' and new approaches that sought liberation from its constraints. As Academism's influence waned during the 19th century, artists turned instead to the pursuit of individual impulses. Romanticism, Naturalism, Realism and Impressionism vied for the favour of audiences. Artists whose work was dismissed at the time are now seen as stars, and vice versa.**

With a little over 100 paintings, the presentation at the Kunsthhaus Zürich brings various currents of 19th-century French painting face to face, revealing not just stark contradictions but also commonalities. This more nuanced perspective on a key period in art history is an especially useful corrective to perceptions in the German-speaking world, where the reception afforded to French art has hitherto been rather one-sided.

**INNOVATIVE NEOCLASSICISTS AND TRADITIONAL AVANT-GARDISTS**

Romanticism, Naturalism, Realism and Impressionism are still the stylistic labels used to classify French painting of the 19th century. The artists working in these new styles – figures such as Géricault, Delacroix, Corot, Daumier, Millet, Courbet, Manet, Sisley, Monet and Renoir – turned their backs on the officially sanctioned painting of the era, with its academic and neoclassicist style. Despite their revolutionary approaches, however, some of them also have a traditional side. Highly controversial in their day, they are now hailed worldwide as 'forerunners of Modernism'.

Other artists who were highly regarded at the time, such as Meissonier, Cabanel, Gérôme and Bouguereau, have experienced a very different fate. Today, especially in the German-speaking world, they have been largely forgotten – unjustly so, for their work is key to understanding the artistic developments of the era. Although indebted to traditional painting techniques, they were in fact highly innovative.

**THE SALON: ARBITER OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE**

The exhibition focuses on the years between 1820 and 1880. 1822 saw Delacroix's first appearance at the Salon, the official exhibition platform for

artists, at which he issued a challenge to Ingres and his fellow neoclassicists; 1880 marked the end of the Salon as a state institution. The role of 'kingmaker' then passed to other forms of organized exhibition, the art market and the public. At the turn of the 20th century, the influence of art criticism was still every bit as great as theirs; today, it is a much less crucial determinant of artists' fortunes.

### FIRST TIME IN SWITZERLAND

For the first time in Switzerland, this exhibition brings together some 60 artists representing various movements in French painting to create a rich and diverse panorama of the era's genres. Some of the exhibits are receiving their first showing in Switzerland. They include loans from the Musée du Louvre and Musée d'Orsay in Paris, the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Art Institute, Chicago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and others.

Supported by Credit Suisse – Partner Kunsthaus Zürich as well as the Hulda and Gustav Zumsteg Foundation.

### EVENTS AND PUBLICATION

Public guided tours in German take place on various days each week: Wed and Thurs 6 p.m., Fri 3 p.m., Sun 11 a.m. There are guided tours in French at 11 a.m. on 18 November and 4 p.m. on 9 December, and in English at 4 p.m. on Saturday 25 November.

Private guided tours (60 minutes), at a cost of CHF 190 (German)/CHF 220 (other languages) plus admission (group rate for parties of 20 or more: CHF 18), can be organized on request.

These and other events are published on the exhibition website.

The exhibition catalogue (248 pp., 210 ill.), with contributions by Oskar Bätschmann, Sandra Gianfreda, Marianne Koos, Matthias Krüger, Monika Leonhardt and James H. Rubin, is published by Hirmer Verlag, Munich. In addition to a detailed introduction and brief biographies of the artists, it contains essays on the art system of the time, history painting, the reception of Chardin in still-life painting, and landscape painting. The catalogue is available in the Kunsthaus shop, price CHF 49, and from bookstores.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, CH-8001 Zurich, tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 84, [www.kunsthaus.ch](http://www.kunsthaus.ch)

## KUNSTHAUS ZÜRICH

Opening hours: Fri–Sun/Tues 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Wed, Thurs 10 a.m.–8 p.m. Public holidays: 24/26 December, 31 December 2017, 1/2 January 2018: 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Exhibition including audioguide in English, French or German: CHF 23 / CHF 18 (concessions and groups). Combined ticket including the collection: CHF 26 / CHF 19 (concessions and groups).

Visitors up to age 16 and annual members of the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft 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/kunsthhaus-zuerich](http://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](mailto:information@zuerich.com), [www.zuerich.com](http://www.zuerich.com).

### NOTE TO MEDIA

This press release as well as images are available at [www.kunsthhaus.ch](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch) > Information > Press.

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