

Media release
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Kunsthhaus Zürich launches 'ReCollect!' – How artists see the Kunsthhaus Collection

With the new 'ReCollect!' series, the Kunsthhaus is inviting artists to present their take on the collection in dialogue with their own works, thereby interrogating and reshaping the established canon. 'ReCollect!' begins on 1 September with Matias Faldbakken/Ida Ekblad (Norway), Daniela Ortiz (Peru), and the collective Hulda Zwingli (Switzerland), who have invited other like-minded artists to join them.

Museum collections contain not just a remarkable quantity of objects but also an abundance of (undiscovered) histories. Depending on how they are selected, works of art can give rise to various narratives and open up new perspectives on the here and now, and on the past. The history of art is also replete with talks, conversations, disputes and discussions, friendships and alliances between artists – both posthumously and during their lifetimes.

The Kunsthhaus Zürich is home to a collection of art from the Middle Ages to the present day. Until now, the task of selecting and presenting works has largely been carried out by the art historians and curators who are employed here. With the new 'ReCollect!' series, the Kunsthhaus is inviting artists to present alternative views of the collection in a range of intervention spaces. This multi-perspectival approach to the collection creates a refreshingly inspiring polyphony that is in tune with the Zeitgeist. The title 'ReCollect!' plays with the idea of restaging the collection, but also hints at recollection in the sense of memory. The idea is to (re-)discover stories and histories that have not previously been told or displayed in the museum context, and connect the past with the future.

NEW INTERPRETATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

'Artists don't just produce art: they are also key interpreters of artworks. Their unique take on art and art history reveals new and sometimes surprising perspectives that complement the way museum curators see things, enabling visitors to experience the collection in a different way', explains curator Mirjam Varadinis.

The Kunsthhaus is thus carrying on a tradition in which some European museums – chief amongst them the National Gallery in London with its 'The artist's eye'

series in the 1970s – have foregrounded the expertise of artists, their perspectives and their thoughts on art history. But this series of artist-curated collection presentations also ties in with the Kunsthaus's own history. Unlike other museums, the Kunsthaus Zürich was founded by artists and supportive collectors, and that direct link has strongly influenced the institution and its collection.

The presentations forming part of 'ReCollect!' are each scheduled to run for at least a year. The series begins with the artists Matias Faldbakken/Ida Ekblad, Daniela Ortiz, and the collective Hulda Zwingli along with artists they have invited: Alice K. Roberts, Andrea Ritter, Brigit Meier, Elisabeth Eberle, Ruth Righetti, Seline Fülcher and Ursina Roesch.

MATIAS FALDBAKKEN/IDA EKBLAD

At first glance, the works of Matias Faldbakken (b. 1973) and Ida Ekblad (b. 1980) appear very different. But the pair are united by an interest in object-based art – both its possibilities and its problems. They also share an attitude to art-historical material that is part enthusiastically affirmative, part slapdash. This approach of 'homage-cum-neglect' is a productive force in both their practices. It opens up spaces for critique, humour and experimentation. Ekblad bulldozes into the traditional male spaces of large-scale painting and bronze sculpture with her energetic and fearless output. Faldbakken counterbalances his reticent visuals – what he calls 'imaginative dissent' – with a more generous, free-wheeling fiction writing.

For 'ReCollect!', the two are working together for the first time, creating a joint installation where they interpret selected works from the Kunsthaus Collection, as seen through their own hands-on activity. Their gestures will open up new viewpoints on the ways in which museum holdings are normally exhibited.

DANIELA ORTIZ

Daniela Ortiz (b. 1985, Peru) creates visual narratives that question hegemonic power structures and the capitalist system, and critically examine concepts of nationality, social class and categorizations based on racialization. Ortiz, who created her first theatre piece with the Neumarkt ensemble in Zurich in 2023, uses her work to explore racism as well as historical and present-day forms of colonial exploitation. To distance herself formally from a Eurocentric aesthetic of conceptual art, she often uses craft techniques and works with ceramic, embroidery and, for ReCollect!, hand tufting. In her new project for the Kunsthaus Zürich, Ortiz reflects on the centuries-old and conflict-laden history of land ownership and exploitation. With the help of Hans Sebald Beham's prints from the Kunsthaus Collection, she blends past and present and draws parallels between the German Peasants' War, the history of revolutionary land reforms in the Global South, and current troubles in European agriculture.

HULDA ZWINGLI

Hulda Zwingli is an anonymous collective of female artists from Zurich which scrutinizes and denounces sexual inequality in the art world and the public space. It was founded on 14 June 2019, women's strike day, and has since published regular Instagram posts on the topic as well as staging actions in the public space. The label combines the first name of a historical Swiss art collector, Hulda Zumsteg (Kronenhalle), with the surname of the Zurich Reformer Zwingli. Ever since it was set up, Hulda Zwingli has criticized the Kunsthaus Zürich for the underrepresentation of female artists in its collection and programme. Now, the collective has delved into the stores and brought out some treasures by Alice Bailly, Amanda de Leon, Annie Stebler-Hopf, Else Thomann-Buchholz, Grandma Moses, Helen Dahm, Irmgard Micaela Burchard-Simaika, Lavinia Fontana, Margherita Osswald-Toppi, Maria Lassnig, Marianne von Werefkin, Mary Kelly and Sophie Schaeppi.

In combination with these, Hulda Zwingli is showing some snapshots of its own protest actions along with the works of like-minded contemporary artists (Alice K. Roberts, Andrea Ritter, Brigit Meier, Elisabeth Eberle, Ruth Righetti, Seline Fülcher and Ursina Roesch). A single historical loan – a work by Anne Marie Jehle (1937–2000) – complements the presentation.

FURTHER STIMULUS FROM CONTEMPORARY ART IN THE COLLECTION

Simultaneously with the new 'ReCollect!' series, other works by contemporary artists will be making an appearance in the Kunsthaus Collection.

In the Haefner Foyer, visitors will be welcomed by two works from the Polish-Romani artist Małgorzata Mirga-Tas (b. 1978). The two large-format textile works were part of her space-filling installation in the Polish pavilion of last year's Venice Biennale, and have been purchased for the Kunsthaus Collection. They were inspired by the famous 'labours of the months' in the Renaissance Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara, but with the depictions of nobles replaced by scenes from the history and everyday life of the Romani people. Exhibiting the work in the lobby of the Chipperfield building creates a platform for a history that has not previously been present in the museum context, and transforms the publicly accessible museum hall into a museum space.

Also new is the presence of the Britto Arts Trust collective with an installation entitled 'rasad' (2022), which was shown at last year's documenta 15 in Kassel and is now moving to the Kunsthaus on long-term loan. Britto Arts Trust is a non-profit artists' collective from Dhaka that attempts to understand Bangladesh's socio-political upheaval by exploring missing histories, cultures and communities. In 'rasad', Britto has recreated a small-town bazaar stocked with food items in crochet, ceramic and metal. The projects on display were produced collaboratively through workshops in Dhaka and now enter into dialogue with works from the Kunsthaus's collection of Pop Art, such as Warhol's 'Big Torn Campbell's Soup Can (Vegetable Beef)'.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz, CH-8001 Zurich

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

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

Admission to the collection: CHF 23 / CHF 18 (concessions and groups).

Admission free to visitors under the age of 17.

Advance ticket sales: www.kunsthhaus.ch

Zurich Tourism, tourist information office in Zurich main railway station, tel. +41 44 215 40 00, info@zuerich.com, www.zuerich.com.

CONTACT FOR THE MEDIA

Media releases and images to download as well as an overview of dates for further media briefings can be found at www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/medien-bereich/media-corner/.

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