

Media release
Zurich, 30 June 2022

Kunsthhaus Zürich presents 'Federico Fellini – From Drawing to Film'

From 1 July to 4 September 2022, the Kunsthhaus Zürich presents some 500 exhibits revealing how the legendary Italian film-maker Federico Fellini used drawings to develop the scenes and characters for his films. Many of the privately-owned sheets have not been seen on this exceptionally large scale in Switzerland for almost 40 years.

Federico Fellini (1920–1993) is one of the most important directors in cinema history. Films such as 'La strada' (1954), 'La dolce vita' (1960), 'Amarcord' (1973) and 'La città delle donne' (1980) are classics that are discussed by culture practitioners internationally and loved by the public at large. They are incisive commentaries on Italian society but also on Western values in the 20th century. Less known is the fact that Fellini had been a tireless draughtsman since his youth, initially sketching out his dreams and ideas using a felt or ball-point pen or a fineliner on paper before arranging them on the set and letting the cameras roll.

FROM DRAWINGS TO CHARACTERS IN A FILM

In addition to individual scenes and details of sets, he was chiefly interested in the characters that populate his films. Drawing was one way in which he developed his thoughts about them. These rapid sketches helped to guide him, but he also used them to explain his ideas visually to the film crew. As a consequence of his artistic leanings – he first worked as a caricaturist and creator of humorous drawings for newspapers – Fellini's film drawings show a marked tendency towards caricature, and even the grotesque. It is that specific style that makes the drawings remarkable artistic creations in their own right, independently of the films for which they were made.

IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTIONS. FILM TRAILERS AND PROPS

The presentation includes some 500 exhibits: drawings, on-set photographs and props actually used in the films. It has been conceived by Cathérine Hug, who is curating the presentation at the Kunsthhaus Zürich, in collaboration with Tobias Burg, who was responsible for its earlier showing at the Museum Folkwang in Essen. The last Fellini exhibition at the Kunsthhaus was staged in 1984 while the director was still alive, and with his personal involvement. A large proportion of the exhibits consist of drawings from the collection of Jakob and Philipp Keel.

They are complemented by a similar number of mostly black-and-white on-set photographs, costumes and props as well as expansive film trailers which, through their interplay with the drawings, shed light on Fellini's working method. The drawings and photographs attest to the close ties between Federico Fellini and the Keels. Many have not previously been published. The selection on display at the Kunsthaus Zürich includes 40 additional loans that were not on show at its cooperation partner, the Museum Folkwang in Essen, where the exhibition ran until 20 February 2022. These costumes, props, casting letters and personal effects come from the Fondation Fellini pour le cinéma in Sion, the Fellini Museum in Rimini, which opened in 2021, and the private holdings of the conductor Graziano Mandozzi.

EXHIBITION LOCATION AND PUBLICATION

The exhibition is located in the medium-sized exhibition gallery of the Kunsthaus Zürich (Chipperfield building) and extends over 600 m². Tickets include admission to the collection. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue in German published by Steidl, in cooperation with Diogenes and Edition Folkwang (215 pages, over 250 illustrations). In Zurich, it is complemented by a brochure (60 pages, more than 40 illustrations) covering the additional loans included in the presentation at the Kunsthaus. The double publication contains texts by Tobias Burg, Nora Gomringer, Cathérine Hug and Gérald Morin. It is available from the Kunsthaus shop, price CHF 42.

EVENTS

Public guided tours

Saturday 2 July at 1 p.m., Saturdays 23 July, 6 August and 20 August, 11 a.m.

'Federico Fellini – From Drawing to Film' (in German)

Meeting point: Kunsthaus Zürich, help desk, Heimplatz 5 (Chipperfield building)

Film screening

Friday 1 July, 6.15 p.m.–8.15 p.m.

'Sur les traces de Fellini' (2013), a documentary by Gérald Morin. Introduction by producer Raphaël Blanc and curator Cathérine Hug.

Location: Kunsthaus Zürich, banquet hall, Heimplatz 5 (Chipperfield building)

Film matinee at the Piccadilly Cinema, Zurich

Sunday 24 July, 12 midday

Federico Fellini's 'Roma' (1972). An introductory discussion between curator Cathérine Hug and Pia Watzenböck, an art historian specializing in film, on the various phases of Fellini's style.

With Peter Gonzales, Pia De Doses, Marne Maitland and Renato Giovannoli; music by Nino Rota; costume and set design by Danilo Donati.

Venue: Arthouse Piccadilly Cinema 1, Mühlebachstrasse 2, 8008 Zurich

Open-air cinema at the Xenix, Zurich

Wednesday 10 August, 9.15 p.m.

Federico Fellini's 'Le notti di Cabiria' (1957)

With Giulietta Masina, François Périer, Amedeo Nazzari, Franca Marzi, Aldo Silvani and Dorian Gray; music by Nino Rota.

Venue: Xenix Cinema, Kanzleistrasse 56, 8004 Zurich

Panel discussion

Friday 26 August, 6.15 p.m.–7.45 p.m.

'Sex Appeal?'. A critical debate on the problematic as well as visionary in Fellini's female and male characters, With comedy artist Patti Basler, Stefan Zweifel, curator of the exhibition 'The Exhausted Man' (Swiss National Museum, 2020), and Cathérine Hug, curator Kunsthaus Zürich. Moderated by journalist Marguerite Meyer. In German.

Location: Kunsthaus Zürich, auditorium

The exhibition is supported by the Truus and Gerrit van Riemsdijk Foundation and the Dr. Georg and Josi Guggenheim Foundation.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz, CH-8001 Zurich

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

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

Admission incl. collection: CHF 23 / CHF 18 (concessions and groups). Children and young people under the age of 17 free of charge.

Advance ticket sales: www.kunsthaus.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 media briefings can be found at www.kunsthaus.ch/en/medien-bereich/media-corner/.

For further information, contact: Kunsthaus Zürich, Kristin Steiner, kristin.steiner@kunsthaus.ch, tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 13