

Visitor Attendance Figures for 2014 Highly Satisfactory and Our Multifaceted Exhibition Program for 2015

The Kunstmuseum Bern had the pleasure of welcoming 110,646 visitors in 2014, an increase in attendance of some 6,000 people in contrast to the previous year. Our especially popular exhibitions proved to be *Open Sesame! Masterpieces from the Foundation for Art, Culture, and History, Markus Raetz • Prints • Sculptures, and Color and I. Augusto Giacometti*. The latter will be showing until February 8. This year with Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, we are presenting as our guest a pivotal figure in modern art. For the very first time, his work will be showcased in the context of photography. The Kunstmuseum Bern 2015 is presenting an exciting and thematically richly diverse annual program, featuring the Max Gubler retrospective, a themed exhibition exploring crystal in art, and a presentation of the artist couple Silvia Gertsch and Xerxes Ach, as well as a comprehensive overview of Ricco Wassmer's art in commemoration of his 100th birthday.

On March 12 we will be having our first opening for 2015. Our guest for this show is **Max Gubler** (1898–1973), who was celebrated as the “sole genius of Swiss painting” right into the 1960s until he was committed to a psychiatric hospital. He was largely forgotten subsequently. The works he produced during the last four years of his artistic career were kept under lock and key and are only now accessible. The Kunstmuseum Bern is organizing the first real retrospective devoted to Max Gubler's oeuvre. One of the triggers behind mounting this exhibition is that a significant collection of his work, accrued by Hans-Rudolf and Ruth Kull, found its way into the Kunstmuseum's collection in 2010. The exhibition will be presenting a comprehensive overview of Gubler's expressive contributions to painting between the two world wars and afterwards.

Since romanticism at latest, crystal is a major source of inspiration for creative work—either due to its formal structure serving as a model in art or due to its symbolic value. The exhibition **Stone of Light: Crystal Visions in Art** will be opening at the end of April, enabling you to follow the trends that began exploring geometric abstraction in art through the multi-faceted lens of rock crystal and spanning romanticism to the present. Artists such as Joseph Beuys, Lyonel Feininger, Caspar David Friedrich, Adolf Hölzel, Paul Klee, Meret Oppenheim, and Bruno Taut will be represented by their work in the show.

On August 27 we have the opening for our show on **Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec** (1864–1901). Our big fall exhibition will thematically address how Toulouse-Lautrec related to photography. In fact, he never took pictures himself, but he frequently had his models and himself photographed by others. His photographic eye excelled that of most other artists of his time. The exhibition will be juxtaposing paintings, drawings, lithographs, and posters with contemporary photographs, which Toulouse-Lautrec planned to use as models from the very start.

From October 23 onwards, the Kunstmuseum Bern is devoting the first double exhibition focusing on the Bernese artist couple **Silvia Gertsch** (*1963) and **Xerxes Ach** (*1957) in **Embracing Sensation**. Silvia Gertsch's oil-behind-glass paintings depict children and teenagers playing, sunbathing, or strolling through the streets. In contrast, Xerxes Ach's abstract fields of color hone in on the micro phenomena of the effects of light when it hits different kinds of surfaces. Despite their very dissimilar vocabulary of expression, the two Bernese artists constantly address the same questions: knowledge through sensation and the transitory nature of life.

The lost paradise of our childhood, slender youths, and the yearning for far-off places are the key themes of the surreal paintings executed by the Swiss artist **Ricco Wassmer** (1915 – 1972). On the occasion of his 100th birthday, from the end of November the Kunstmuseum Bern will be showing a comprehensive retrospective of his oeuvre. With over 200 loans, many works will be on view to the public for the very first time.

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We will be mounting contemporary art throughout the year in the **exhibition space of the Kunstmuseum Bern at PROGR**. From the beginning of March, among other exhibits, we are presenting the work of the prizewinner of the **Credit Suisse Förderpreis Videokunst**, the video art incentive award that Credit Suisse and the Kunstmuseum Bern 2015 will be conferring to young artists for the fourth time.

Press conference planned for the Gurlitt legacy in March

We are planning a press conference for March on the Gurlitt legacy and further issues relevant to the Kunstmuseum Bern's immediate and more distant future. An invitation will be sent out sufficiently in advance. Those of the media interested in obtaining more information are very welcome to subscribe to our media mailing list at press@kunstmuseumbern.ch

Our media documentation with detailed information especially on the exhibition program and the press conferences taking place in 2015, on the museum attendance figures, and the new acquisitions to the collection is now available at www.kunstmuseumbern.ch

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