

Foreword and Acknowledgements from the catalogue

Matthias Frehner

Switzerland is the country with the highest density of museums. Private art collections of high professionalism and quality are in evidence as well. Its art historical scholarship is also outstanding. A commensurate number of art exhibitions are held in museums and private galleries in Switzerland. With all this interest in art, can an important Swiss artist remain unknown? The probability, one might think, would be as vanishingly small as that of finding a respectable gold nugget in a Swiss mountain stream. Our exhibition is dedicated to the Anglo-Swiss painter Samuel Hieronymus Grimm, who like Henry Fuseli made his career as a Swiss artist in England, but then fell almost entirely into oblivion in his homeland. One searches in vain for his name in Adolf Reinle's *Kunstgeschichte der Schweiz* (vol. 3, 1956) or in Oskar Bätschmann's sixth volume of the *Ars Helvetica* series in 1991. The fact that he is also missing both in more recent surveys of minor Swiss masters by Marie-Louise Schaller (1990) and Susanne Bieri (2003) and in recent exhibitions such as Christian Rümelin's *Enchantment du paysage au temps de Jean-Jacques Rousseau* at the Musée Rath in Geneva in 2012 makes our exhibition a small sensation.

Grimm was born in Burgdorf, where initially he was interested more in the art of poetry. Later, his interest turned to painting, studying first with Johann Ludwig Aberli (1723–1786). In 1765 Grimm went to Paris to continue his training with Jean-Georges Wille (1715–1808). During long excursions, he dedicated himself to landscape painting. He remained in Paris until 1768, then moved to London, where he would remain until the end of his life, working as a freelance painter. As a caricaturist, he turned his sharp wit on members of British society, on fashion, and on politics. Moreover, he made thousands of watercolors and drawings on everyday life, architecture, and landscape in Britain—a true visual encyclopedia of eighteenth-century Georgian England. In hundreds of scenes, he captured both unspoiled nature and topographical features, creating one of the largest series of works on the region of the time.

Grimm's works have been brought together from a number of collections, including the British Museum, the British Library, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Tate, the London Metropolitan Archives, the Society of Antiquaries, the National Museum of Wales, the National Library of Wales, the Victoria Art Gallery of Bath, and the Yale Center for British Art in New Haven, Connecticut. There are a few works by Grimm found in Switzerland, primarily in the Kunstmuseum Basel. The Kunstmuseum Bern owns a few early works by Grimm, dating from before he left for Paris and London.

We wish to thank Prof. William Hauptman, the profound explorer of art of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, who brought our attention to Grimm, who is almost unknown in his native land. Hauptman contributed to our institution as early as 1996, when he presented the first monographic exhibition on the draughtsman John Webber, who emigrated from Bern to England and accompanied Captain Cook on his legendary voyage of discovery. We were delighted to agree to this new project, which Hauptman has turned into a shining example of art historical scholarship. Hauptman would like to sincerely thank the following people who supported his work in crucial ways: Tudor Allen, Camden; Peter Barber, London; Tony Bak, Barborough; Bernard Barryte, Stanford, California; Dr Erin Blake, Washington, DC; Hugo Brown, The National Trust; Patrick Connor, London; Katherine Coombs, Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Julia Dudkiewicz, London; Mark Evans, London; Emma Floyd, London; Dr. Anita Haldemann, Basel; Emmeline Hallmark, London; Adrian James, London; Paul Joyner, Aberystwyth; Laura Jenkins, Canterbury; Beth McIntyre, Cardiff; Julie Milne, Laing Art Gallery; John Overholt, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Guy Peppiatt, London; Julia Sandison, Winchester; Dr. Kim Sloane, London; Philippa Smith, London;

KUNSTMUSEUM BERN
MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS DE BERNE
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS BERNE

HODLERSTRASSE 8–12 CH-3000 BERN 7
T +41 31 328 09 44 F +41 31 328 09 55
INFO@KUNSTMUSEUMBERN.CH WWW.KUNSTMUSEUMBERN.CH

MEDIEN-SERVICE
SERVICE DE PRESSE / PRESS OFFICE
T +41 31 328 09 19/44
PRESS@KUNSTMUSEUMBERN.CH

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At the Kunstmuseum Bern, William Hauptman found a scholar in Dr. Therese Bhattacharya-Stettler who was just as enthusiastically committed to Grimm, and I sincerely thank her as well. Numerous departments of the Kunstmuseum Bern helped with technical aspects, and all of them did outstanding work, in particular the registrar Franziska Vassella. They, too, are all sincerely thanked. Making this exhibition a reality required not only for great scholarly work, but also unexpectedly high expenses in bringing the loans from the United States and England. We are grateful to the lenders for their trust in us. This exhibition would have been impossible without generous financial support. We wish to thank the Burgergemeinde Bern; the Stiftung Graphica Helvetica and its President Mr. Peter Bratschi; the Galerie Kornfeld, Bern; the Susann Häusler-Foundation; the Gesellschaft zu Ober-Gerwern, and Pro Helvetia for supporting the catalogue.