

## A Passion for Swiss Art Treasures

The Kunstmuseum Bern is showing over 140 works of Swiss art dating from the 18th century up to modern times. They belong to the vast collection of the Foundation for Art, Culture and History, which was established in 1980 by the Winterthur patron of the arts Bruno Stefanini. Among other paintings, the exhibition is showcasing works by Cuno Amiet, Albert Anker, Arnold Böcklin, Alexandre Calame, Henry Fuseli, Giovanni and Augusto Giacometti, Ferdinand Hodler, Giovanni Segantini and Félix Vallotton. The show is structured thematically while integrating a number of historical items as well—for example the largest cluster of rock crystal ever to be found in Switzerland or the riding habit of the Empress Elizabeth of Austria and Queen of Hungary, popularly known as Sisi. The exhibition is, for the very first time, presenting a comprehensive view of the wonderful jewels tucked away in the Foundation's veritable treasure vault.

Born in 1924, the Winterthur patron of the arts Bruno Stefanini has, over a period of over fifty years, accrued the largest collection ever of Swiss art and history, comprising some 8,000 artworks and objects. In 1980 he transferred the collection to a foundation. His key interest lies in Swiss art from the 18th century to modernism. With equal passion, the collector additionally brought together all kinds of objects reflecting Switzerland's culture and history. Thus the collection can not only boast paintings, watercolors, drawings and sculptures but also rarities for the bibliophile, ceremonial arms, furniture, arts-and-crafts objects, pieces of jewellery, costumes and vintage cars. Furthermore, the Foundation owns four castles of national importance—Grandson Castle in the Canton of Neuenburg, Salenstein Castle and Luxburg Castle in Thurgau, as well as Brestenberg Castle in the Canton of Aargau—together with Switzerland's first high-rise building, the Sulzer-Hochhaus in Winterthur.

### **A keen interest in creative processes**

Even today, Bruno Stefanini sets his priorities as a collector in placing great value on understanding artistic processes and developments. This explains why he has, in the case of many artists, acquired extensive groupings of works and likewise why he is interested in unjustly forgotten artists who often stand their ground alongside the great heroes of Swiss art. Bruno Stefanini sees himself also as a protector of Swiss art and cultural heritage. Still today he is untiring in his attempts to purchase Swiss artists' works that are under threat of being sold abroad. The collection of the Foundation for Art, Culture and History is ultimately of great consequence to Swiss art and hence can be compared to the Gottfried Keller Foundation, which was founded in 1890 by Lydia Welti-Escher.

### **A theme-oriented tour of Swiss art history**

A tour of the exhibition provides manifold surprises and treats of Swiss art history, palpably illustrating the considerable contribution of Swiss male and female artists to international art. The theme-oriented presentation mirrors Bruno Stefanini's preferences too, who finds that emotional aspects are pivotal to collecting. Thus, in the medley of classical themes of landscape, still-lifes, history painting, portraits, genre and nudes, we have occasionally added "representatives" for the other parts of the collection.

### **First comprehensive view of this vast treasure vault**

Until now, the Foundation for Art, Culture and History has been granting loans within Switzerland and abroad. The current exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Bern finally makes it possible to gain a comprehensive view of this huge vault of treasures. After the monographic exhibitions on Félix Vallotton, Meret Oppenheim, Ferdinand Hodler, Giovanni Giacometti, Albert Anker, Ernest Biéler, Cuno Amiet and Otto Nebel, the Kunstmuseum Bern can yet again underscore its position as a center of competence for Swiss art.

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## The Exhibition

**Duration:** 07.03. – 24.08.2014

**Opening:** Thursday, 06.03.2014, 18h30

**Exhibition and catalogue concept:** Therese Bhattacharya-Stettler, Matthias Frehner, Valentina Locatelli, Isabelle Messerli (curator Foundation for Art, Culture and History)

**Curators:** Matthias Frehner, Valentina Locatelli

**Entrance fee:** CHF 18.00 / red. CHF 14.00

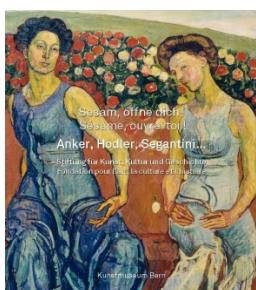
**Further venue:** Fondation Pierre Gianadda, 05.12.2014 – 14.06.2015

**The exhibition is placed under the patronage of:**

Didier Burkhalter, President of the Swiss Confederation

Michael Künzle, Mayor of Winterthur, Director of the Department for Culture and Services

## The Catalogue



**Sesam, öffne dich! Anker, Hodler,  
Segantini ... Stiftung für Kunst, Kultur und  
Geschichte /Sésame, ouvre-toi ! Anker,  
Hodler, Segantini... Fondation pour l'art, la  
culture et l'histoire**

Hrsg. Kunstmuseum Bern und Stiftung für  
Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte: Matthias Frehner,  
Valentina Locatelli und Isabelle Messerli. Mit  
Beiträgen von Therese Bhattacharya-Stettler,  
Gian Casper Bott, Matthias Frehner, Caroline  
Kesser, Valentina Locatelli, Isabelle Messerli,  
Daniel Spanke und Peter Wegmann. Mit  
Künstlerbiografien zusammengestellt von  
Yvonne Fritz. Musumeci S.p.A., 312 Seiten und  
183 Farabbildungen. CHF 49.00

## The Poster



F4  
89,5 x 128 cm  
CHF 20.00

## Special Events

**Öffentliche Führungen:** Sonntag, 11h: 9./23./30. März, 20./27. April, 11./18. Mai, 1./8./22./29. Juni, 13./27. Juli, 10./24. August und Dienstag, 19h: 18. März, 8. April, 6./27. Mai, 17. Juni, 8./22. Juli, 19. August **Führungen mit dem Direktor und Kurator Matthias Frehner:** Dienstag, 19h: 3. Juni, 12. August **Visite guidate in italiano con la curatrice Valentina Locatelli:** Martedì, ore 19.00: 25 marzo, 24 giugno **Literarische Führungen mit Michaela Wendt:** Sonntag, 13h: 23. März, 4. Mai, 17. August und Dienstag, 18h: 10. Juni **Visites commentées publiques en français** Mardi, 19h30 : 29 avril, 29 juillet et dimanche, 11h 30: 15 juin **Public guided tours in English:** Tuesday, 7:30 am: May 20 and Sunday, 11:30 am: August 24 **Einführungen für Lehrpersonen:** Dienstag, 11. März, 18h und Mittwoch, 12. März, 14h **Vortrag von Dr. phil. Claudia Steinfels (Kunstmarktexpertin und Auktionatorin): Gipfelstürmer und Holzfäller – der Wert der Schweizer Kunst:** Dienstag, 29. April, 19h **Vortrag von Michael Flepp (Strahler): Die Kluft 2000:** Dienstag, 13. Mai, 19h **Sonntagmorgen im Museum: Schatzsuche für Kinder:** Sonntag, 27. April, 18. Mai, 22. Juni, 24. August, 11h – 12h30 **Kurs in Zusammenarbeit mit der Volkshochschule:** Mittwoch, 15h – 16h: 12./19./26. März, 2. April **Generationen-Tandem:** Sonntag, 4. Mai, 14h – 16h

## With the generous support of:

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