

Media Release

Basel, August 17, 2024

Pairings

August 17, 2024 – July 27, 2025, Kunstmuseum Basel | Hauptbau

Curator: Géraldine Meyer

Certain themes and forms are taken up again and again by artists regardless of time and place. The phenomenon of epoch-spanning artistic parallels and how they stimulate the imagination is the focus of *Pairings*. The exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Basel shows some twenty juxtapositions of paintings, sculptures, and photographic works from the Museum's own collection with selected objects from the private Im Obersteg Collection.

The presentation is designed to be associative and is intended to encourage an intuitive approach to art. The mixture of works from different eras and genres may lead at times to surprising encounters, and at times to harmonious elective affinities. In *Pairings*, the works seem to engage in an interaction – for instance, when a large-format painting by contemporary Basel artist Mireille Gros encounters a small oil sketch by Paul Cezanne. Both are united by their artistic exploration of the perception of nature. In Hans Holbein the Younger's *Zwei Totenschädel in einer Fensternische* (*Two Skulls in a Window Niche*) from 1520 and Niklaus Stoecklin's *Neue Sachlichkeit* painting *Sarg-Schreinerei* (*Coffin-Maker's Shop*) from 1919, two different associations with death stand in contrast to one another.

The exhibition will remain in constant motion. During the twelve-month run, new artworks will regularly be added, while others are removed. The ever-changing configuration of the collection will thus develop its own choreography.

Selected pairs of works are accompanied by brief observations written by people in and outside the art world – the writer Ilma Rakusa, Pastor Caroline Schröder-Field, 12-year-old schoolgirl Maira Van Dam, and the provenance researcher Tessa Rosebrock, among others. From the perspective of different age groups and unequal expertise, the authors foreground different aspects of the image content. Music, too, is an integral part of *Pairings*. In a collaboration with the Foundation for Young Musicians Basel, up-and-coming musicians have recorded selected compositions to accompany certain pairs of

works. Visitors can listen to the music through headphones on benches in front of the artworks.

A separate exhibition room is also dedicated to Marc Chagall: a group of early drawings and a painting by the artist were recently added to the collection of the Kunstmuseum Basel. The juxtaposition with the well-known Chagall holdings of the Im Obersteg Collection offers new insights into the painter's early work and illustrates how the expansion of both collections continually enable new encounters with his work.

The occasion for the *Pairings* exhibition is the porcelain anniversary of the Im Obersteg Foundation and the Kunstmuseum Basel: the renowned private collection has been on deposit at the Kunstmuseum Basel for exactly 20 years.

Pairings in the second hanging:

Carl Burckhardt (1878–1923) / Suzanne Valadon (1865–1938)
Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002) / Antoni Tàpies (1932–2012)
Franziska Schiratzki (*1960) / Maurice de Vlaminck (1876–1958)
Hans Arp (1886–1966) / Aristide Maillol (1861–1944)
Hans Baldung, gen. Grien (1484/85–1545) / Otto Plattner (1886–1951)
Hans Holbein d. J. (ca. 1497/98–1543) / Niklaus Stoecklin (1896–1982)
Jean Dubuffet (1901–1985) / Jean Dubuffet (1901–1985)
Jean-Paul Riopelle (1923–2002) / Walter Bodmer (1903–1973)
Louis Soutter (1871–1942) / Bruce Nauman (*1941)
Marc Chagall (1887–1985) / Marc Chagall (1887–1985)
Mireille Gros (*1954) / Paul Cezanne (1839–1906)
Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) / Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919)
Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) / Editions Paul-Martial, Paris (1926–1986)
Raoul Dufy (1877–1953) / Raoul Dufy (1877–1953)
Robert Genin (1884–1943) / Theo Meier, called Meier aus Bali (1908–1982)
Suzanne Valadon (1865–1938) / Hans Arp (1886–1966)

In regularly scheduled re-hangings, new works by other artists will be added to the exhibition and others removed.

Images and information about the exhibition:

www.kunstmuseumbasel.ch/medien

Media contact:

Olivier Joliat, Tel. +41 61 206 62 55, olivier.joliat@bs.ch