



Kunstmuseum Bern and Zentrum Paul Klee – with success on the road to the future

Both Bern museums could boast a very successful 2018 with exhibitions presenting new formats and receiving a very positive echo among the public. 2019 will be taking up where 2018 left off: with a large survey of Miriam Cahn's oeuvre, with exhibitions for the Bauhaus centenary at both the Kunstmuseum and at the Zentrum Paul Klee, or an exhibition on the subject of art and ecstasy. And additionally there is our multifaceted programme featuring the fields of music and literature as well as nature in Fruchtländ.

2018 in retrospect: an overwhelming number of visitors and interest, successful collaborations

As Kunstmuseum Bern – Zentrum Paul Klee managing director, Thomas Soraperra summed up: *"We are able to look back on a very successful 2018 with almost 280,000 visitors in both museums and a strong echo in both the national and international press. We have established and intensified new collaborations with numerous institutions. This could only be achieved through the dedication of our highly motivated staff".*

The Kunstmuseum Bern began 2018 with the exhibition *Gurlitt Status Report Part 2: Nazi Art Theft and its Consequences*, focusing also on provenance research.

Both the Zentrum Paul Klee and the Kunstmuseum Bern adopted new approaches in 2018. *Touchdown* proved to be thematically truly remarkable as an exhibition by people with and without Down syndrome. In summer the Zentrum Paul Klee presented Lebanese artist Etel Adnan, a leading figure in Arab modernism. In collaboration with Dampfzentrale Bern, the Kunstmuseum proclaimed the République Géniale in August, allowing a truly unique programme to unfold. And the Kunstmuseum Bern also showcased the great Swiss painter Ferdinand Hodler in his anniversary year.

Future Kunstmuseum Bern

Jonathan Gimmel, president ad interim of the umbrella foundation Kunstmuseum Bern – Zentrum Paul Klee announced that *"The Kunstmuseum of the future is to become, for the public, the gateway for encounters and discourses with a new experience of art."*

The feasibility study undertaken by Flury und Rudolf Architekten in spring 2018 resulted in new perspectives for the Kunstmuseum Bern. Instead of extensively renovating the A5 extension building, it turns out that a new building is the more feasible alternative – not only from an artistic and operational perspective but also from an urban planning viewpoint. And the situation would be even more promising if it is possible to include in the plans the spaces in the adjacent building belonging to the police, which may soon be vacant. After the "modernization" project of autumn 2017 was rejected, Dr. h.c. Hansjörg Wyss made the feasibility study possible by renewing his offer to co-finance additional exhibition space for contemporary art.

The feasibility study shows that for convincing solutions for the future our think zone must be extended. At the same time the Hodlerstrasse situation is complex. The different conditions of ownership and usage arrangements, competencies and public interests (e.g. in regard to traffic) can only be reconciled in an open dialogue. Therefore the umbrella foundation has been having talks with the cantonal and municipal administrations as well as with partners in the past months, with due consideration also of the preservation of historic monuments and cultural heritage and architects' societies. The umbrella foundation Kunstmuseum Bern und Zentrum Paul Klee also regularly consults with Mr. Wyss and vice versa.

The initializing phase for concretizing the two variants for the objectives, meaning and framework of our museum building of the future will be concretized by summer 2019. In the process the pivotal issues will be discussed – e.g. about the demands of contemporary art, museum buildings in digital society – and include the interested public at large. Subsequently the umbrella foundation will, together with the financing partners, decide which variant will be chosen. The architecture competition that follows is to be finalized by the close of 2020.

Programme for 2019: Cahn, Ecstasy, Bauhaus, Itten

"The variety we have to offer is our great strength. In 2019 we want inspire our audience with our programmes, which will span contemporary art to Swiss 19th-century art, international Bauhaus modernism to highlights in music and literature. We are starting the exhibition year at the Zentrum Paul Klee in spring with "Ecstasy", and we want to provide our audience with ecstatic experiences throughout the year", as Nina Zimmer, the director of Kunstmuseum Bern and Zentrum Paul Klee, put it.

The exhibition year at the Kunstmuseum Bern begins in 2019 with the large comprehensive survey of Swiss artist Miriam Cahn – a leading figure in the art of her generation. Cahn succeeds, again and again, in addressing burning current issues in her work. After the show's first appearance in Bern, it will travel to the Haus der Kunst in Munich and then to the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw.

At the Zentrum Paul Klee in spring – in collaboration with the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart – the exhibition *Ecstasy* throws light on the representation of trance-like states in modern and contemporary art.



2019 is an anniversary year for the Bauhaus, and consequently Bern will become the Bauhaus Centre of Switzerland for the second half of the year. The Kunstmuseum Bern is mounting *Johannes Itten. Bauhaus Utopias and Documents of Reality*. With *bauhaus imaginista* the Zentrum Paul Klee zeroes in on the international impact of Bauhaus ideas on uniting art and life. This exhibition is a joint project of the Bauhaus in Dessau, Weimar and Berlin as well as Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin.

A variety of presentations display the breadth and diversity of the Kunstmuseum Bern Collection. A highlight is the exhibition celebrating the Verein der Freunde centenary. And in its large summer exhibition, the Zentrum Paul Klee is featuring Klee among his circle of friends with outstanding works by Kandinsky, Arp, Picasso, Marc and others.

Provenance research at the Kunstmuseum

Established in 2017, this department is being further consolidated and expanded with the generous help of private sponsors. Besides continuing the research on the Gurlitt art trove, the Kunstmuseum Bern will be conducting a research project that concentrates on its own collection. The latter is funded by the Federal Office of Culture.

Klee goes abroad – Brazil

The Zentrum Paul Klee is sending a comprehensive retrospective of Paul Klee's work to Brazil for the first time. Over 100 works will give the wider public a better insight into the artist's diverse oeuvre at three consecutive venues (São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte).

Other fields at the Zentrum Paul Klee

At the Zentrum Paul Klee the fields of music, literature and nature in Fruchtländ have an important role to play also in 2019. The high quality of the performances by soloists in the Master Concert series continues to be a hallmark of the music programme. Soloists such as the exceptional violinist Vilde Frang, the pianist Angela Hewitt as well as Jordi Savall with Ensemble Hespèrion XXI are guarantors for that. Jazz and new folk music will be expanding the music programme. In the field of literature, Lukas Bärfuss, Julia Weber and Pascale Kramer – winner of the Grand Prix Littérature 2017 – are presenting, among other literary figures, their recent publications. And even outdoors at the museum there is a lot going on and much to see at Fruchtländ. There the focus is on growing cereals and wild flowers or explaining how the butterfly population is linked to beekeeping.

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