

Hilti Art
Foundation

Opening Exhibition
23 May 2015 – 9 October 2016

**Beckmann, Picasso,
Giacometti & more**

50 works from the Hilti Art Foundation

**KUNSTMUSEUM
LIECHTENSTEIN**

Dear Visitors,

The Hilti Art Foundation annexe rang in a new era in the fifteenth year of Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein. The new exhibition building of the Hilti Art Foundation opened its doors to the public on 23 May 2015. For Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein this means a substantial and lasting consolidation of the previous collaboration that has been in place with the Hilti Art Foundation since its foundation in 2000. Our thanks are due in particular to Michael Hilti, one of the key figures responsible for initiating Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein. A visible symbol of this bond is reflected in the design of the new building by the Basel-based architects Morger + Dettli, who designed the upright white cube as a counterpart to the horizontal black cube of the Kunstmuseum. The accord that exists between the two buildings both inside and out lends form to the sense of both togetherness and independence.

Loans in special exhibitions, but particularly the large exhibition of the Hilti Art Foundation in 2005, gave visitors an impressive first glimpse of this private art collection comprising works from the late 19th century to the present. We very much look forward to the future permanent presence of this extraordinary collection. The emphasis of the Hilti Art Foundation collection is the ideal complement to the state collection of Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein. A long-standing wish was thus realised, that is, to showcase to the public threads of development in the history of art from the pioneers of modernism to our present day. What a gain for the Liechtenstein nation!

We look forward to working together closely with Dr. Uwe Wieczorek, Curator of the Hilti Art Foundation. We would like to thank him most warmly and to congratulate him on the opening exhibition. For realising the annexe and for their generous willingness to make the private art collection accessible to the public, our heartfelt thanks are due to the Hilti Art Foundation and to Michael Hilti in particular.

Dr. Friedemann Malsch, Director,
and the entire Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein team

Introduction

The collection of the Hilti Art Foundation has grown substantially, quantitatively, and qualitatively since first presented to the public at the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein in 2005. The holdings currently comprise some 200 paintings, sculptures, objects, and photographs from classical Modernism to the present day. After more than twenty years of thoughtfully targeted collecting, increasingly important keynotes of the collection have come to include Cubism, Futurism, Expressionism, Concrete Art, and ZERO.

It is a distinguishing feature of private collections that they reflect the specific interests and personal preferences of the collector. The collection of the Hilti Art Foundation is no exception. A deep appreciation of beauty and aesthetic values, which precludes ugliness without negating the dark side of life, has resulted in a collection of exceptionally gratifying works. At the same time, however, the collection has developed in response to the formal and conceptual changes that influenced art throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

It is the first exhibition to be organized by the Hilti Art Foundation in its own building adjoining the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein. Fifty selected paintings, sculptures, and objects will be presented on the three floors of the building, each focusing on a specific theme: “The Mystery of Humankind”, “Experiment and Existence”, “Immanence and Transcendence”.

Dr. Uwe Wieczorek

The Mystery of Humankind

The question as to what the human being is or could be is originally a philosophical one and, while it can be asked by means of language, it cannot be staged by means of images. In the image, be it a painting, sculpture or photograph, the human being always appears to us as a concrete figure that has already become, and the manner of his appearance, his physical and psychological traits, may allow us to draw conclusions as to who or what he is.

Of course, this image remains incomplete as it never depicts the human being in his entirety, but always only in details. Yet this detail, as with **Lehmbruck**, may bring the human being to life as a superpersonal unity of body, soul and mind, calmly focused on itself **(1)**, or, as with **Hodler**, depict the highly individual love-inspired face of a young woman whose gaze is directed fleetingly, yet as if eternally at a living person in front of her **(2)**. As with **Boccioni**, it may capture the moment of a human body subject to the conditions of space, time and motion **(4)**, or, as with **Giacometti**, be aimed at the human spirit gazing timelessly into infinity, leaving behind all things material **(10)**.

The experience of war and suffering central to the twentieth century is depicted exemplarily in the images of **Beckmann (7)** and **Richier (8)**. Beckmann's self-portrait is one of the great testimonies of human self-reassurance between despair and hope and of the unerring willingness to see and speak the truth against the background of historical events **(6)**. Despite all manner of disasters, he remained completely devoted to what he called the "mystery of Being".

In whatever form the human being appears, be it in the strict taciturnity of sculpture, as with **Duchamp-Villon (3)**, in sensual vigorous openness, as with **Picasso (5)**, or in the uncertain status between coming to be and passing away, as with **De Kooning (11)** – the human being, regardless of what he may conclude from his existence and action in the world, is and remains an inscrutable mystery and miracle. After all, regardless of the form of thinking and seeing, of word and image, he never gains comprehensive knowledge of his self or of his fellow human being. He is always *more* than what he can know of himself or of the other in the past, present and future.

1

Wilhelm Lehmbruck (1881–1919)

Torso der Grossen Stehenden, 1910

Stone cast

118 × 50 × 37 cm

2

Ferdinand Hodler (1853–1918)

Bildnis Valentine Godé-Darel (La Parisienne I), 1909

Oil on canvas

41.8 × 40.5 cm

3

Raymond Duchamp-Villon (1876–1918)

Baudelaire, 1911

Cement with terracotta patina

41 × 27 × 22 cm

4

Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)

Forme uniche della continuità nello spazio, 1913

Bronze

120 × 40 × 90 cm

5

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

Femme dans un fauteuil, 1932

Oil on canvas

92.1 × 73 cm

6

Max Beckmann (1884–1950)

Selbstbildnis mit Glaskugel, 1936

Oil on canvas

110.2 × 64.4 cm

7

Max Beckmann (1884–1950)

Mann im Dunkeln, 1934

Bronze

56.7 × 28.5 × 18 cm

The numbers correspond to those from the exhibition catalogue.

8

Germaine Richier (1902–1959)

Juin 40, 1940

Bronze

89.9 × 38 × 28 cm

9

Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966)

Diego dans un intérieur, 1949/50

Oil on canvas

74 × 44 cm

10

Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966)

Buste d'homme (Eli Lotar II), 1964/65

Bronze

57.7 × 36.5 × 25 cm

11

Willem de Kooning (1904–1997)

Cross-legged Figure, 1972

Bronze

62.2 × 42 × 42 cm

Experiment and Existence

The unbounding of knowledge in science and the arts, the unleashing of technology and the economy at least since the mid-nineteenth century led to a completely new understanding of the world and reality that challenged artists, be it in image, sculpture, photography, film, object or action, to devise radical reactions and to experiment with new forms of composition and expression.

In cubism, masterminded by Picasso and Braque, the image ceased to be a depiction of the empirical world, becoming instead, as with **Gris** and **Léger (20/21)**, an autonomous entity founded on basic stereometric forms that abandoned the laws of central perspective that had been valid for centuries past, combining space and object in a whole devoid of perspective. Futurism displayed an out-and-out enthusiastic homage to modern life, to motion, technology and the machine. With *Forme uniche* **Boccioni (4)** created an image of the human being deprived by speed of all individuality, an image that is seen as the epitome of futuristic. Sceptical about civilisation, in contrast, artists such as **Gauguin (13)**, but also **Schmidt-Rottluff** and **Kirchner (15/16/17)**, set out in search of untouched sources of inspiration in “primitive” and non-European cultures, adopting them in terms of content and style to suit their new expressional needs. As an alternative to city life, the expressionist painters of Die Brücke and Der Blaue Reiter **(18/19)** discovered unspoilt nature as a locus of creaturely existence and physical and emotional regeneration. It was in poetry and magic, in play and eroticism, but above all in the unfathomable depths of the unconscious, in turn, that surrealists such as **Miró, Magritte, Ernst** and **Tanguy (24/25/26/27)** found the origins of their art, whereas **Klee** and **Dubuffet (29/31)** derived their symbolic visual universe from both visible reality and the human power of imagination, also drawing inspiration from the creative image worlds of the mentally ill and children.

In the wake of the global disasters of the 1930s and 40s, the existence of humankind was profoundly shaken, both physically and morally. In the light of this experience, **Giacometti (9/10/33)** focused specifically on the human form, on that which existentially constitutes the human being in terms of appearance and substance. Whereas **Wols (32)**, finally, looking both out and in, reacted to the upheavals of the age and the instability of his own life by dispensing with the object and drawing solely on the line and colour to lend immediate material expression to his emotional impulses, as sensitively as powerfully, and deliberately in the format of small images.

12

Georges Seurat (1859–1891)

Le tas de pierres, 1882/84

Oil on canvas

33.2 × 41.3 cm

13

Paul Gauguin (1848–1903)

Entre les lys, 1889

Oil on canvas

92 × 73.5 cm

14

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

Tête de femme (Fernande), 1906

Clay

36.3 × 25 × 25 cm

15

Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (1884–1976)

Die Lesende, 1911

Oil on canvas

77 × 85 cm

16

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880–1938)

Paar unter Japanschirm, 1913

Oil on canvas

100 × 75.5 cm

17

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880–1938)

**Kniende, nach links gewandter Kopf, rechte Hand
auf der linken Brust, 1912**

Wood (Swiss stone pine)

21.6 × 9 × 6 cm

18

Franz Marc (1880–1916)

Schweine (Mutterschwein), 1912

Oil on canvas

58.5 × 84.2 cm

19

August Macke (1887–1914)

Badende Mädchen, 1913

Oil on board

23.8 × 18.7 cm

20

Juan Gris (1887–1927)

Le verre, 1914

Collage, pencil and gouache on cardboard

39.9 × 39.4 cm

21

Fernand Léger (1881–1955)

Contraste de formes, 1914

Oil on canvas

61 × 50 cm

22 (Exhibited on the third floor)

Piet Mondrian (1872–1944)

Tableau No. VIII with Yellow, Red, Black and Blue, 1925

Oil on canvas

53.2 × 46.2 cm

23

Joan Miró (1893–1983)

Ohne Titel, 1924

Pencil, oil and gouache on wood

23.5 × 19 cm

24

Hans Arp (1887–1966)

Kopf-Stabile, 1926

Painted wood

61 × 53.3 × 21 cm

25

René Magritte (1898–1967)

La chambre du devin, 1926

Oil on canvas

75 × 65 cm

26

Max Ernst (1891–1976)

Le paradis, 1927

Oil on canvas

60.2 × 92 cm

27

Yves Tanguy (1900–1955)

Titre inconnu (noyer indifférent), 1929

Oil on canvas

92.2 × 73.2 cm

28

Alexander Calder (1898–1976)

Ohne Titel, 1935

Wood and wire

102.4 × 60 × 19 cm

29

Paul Klee (1879–1940)

Clown, 1929

Oil on canvas

68 × 50.5 cm

30

Max Beckmann (1884–1950)

Traum des Soldaten, 1942/43

Oil on canvas

90 × 145 cm

31

Jean Dubuffet (1901–1985)

Paysage noir avec joueur de fifre, 1949

Oil on canvas

89.5 × 116.5 cm

32

Wols (1913–1951)

La flamme, 1946/47

Oil on canvas

41 × 33 cm

33

Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966)

Petit buste d'homme, 1950/51

Painted plaster

21 × 16 × 8.2 cm

Immanence and Transcendence

At the same time as Giacometti and Wols, **Fontana (37)** was working on a wholly different concept of art that embraced the innovations of the world of technology with similar enthusiasm as the futurists. With his *spazialismo*, he heralded a new artistic and intellectual beginning in Europe after the Second World War. The cut through a monochrome white canvas suddenly and radically drew the viewer's attention to the actuality of material, surface, space and light, thus paving the way for a treatment of the image, extended and emancipated from all tradition, from which **Klein, Manzoni, Schoonhoven, Graubner** and **Uecker** and the Zero artists (**38/39/45/43/42**) each drew highly different conclusions, be it as a direct or indirect reaction to Fontana. Immanent questions to be answered by art in connection with material, surface, space and light, but also form, colour, movement and rhythm, were raised, drawing attention, as with **Albers** and **Colombo (35/36)**, to the fundamental relativity of perception, or, as with **Fruhtrunk (46)**, addressing the experience of human existence and its intensification by means of an enhanced experience of seeing. In the concrete and constructive works of **Honegger** and **Loewensberg (47/48)** on the other hand, these questions were answered by handling the creative compositional devices in a manner that, while rational, was equally playful and without any specific purpose.

Knoebel (44/50) reprised the question already posed by Duchamp prior to the outbreak of the First World War regarding what an artwork is and what meaning it may have in view of constantly changing ideas of reality. However, his approving reference to classical modernism, above all to Malevich and **Mondrian (22)**, combines in his work not only with geometric forms, but also with forms of expression from Informel and, beyond the boundaries of the genre, with relief, sculpture and assemblage. Oscillating between cool concept and pure sensuousness, between construction and deconstruction, between devotion and refusal, Knoebel displays a serious, if tongue-in-cheek relish in creating image-works that elude any dogma.

What all works have in common is that they not only point to the pure facticity of their existence, but also to the underlying possibility of crossing the boundary from the sensory to the extrasensory, from the material to the intellectual, with solely non-representational means.

22

Piet Mondrian (1872–1944)

Tableau No. VIII with Yellow, Red, Black and Blue, 1925

Oil on canvas

53.2 × 46.2 cm

34

Norbert Kricke (1922–1984)

Raumplastik Gelb – Weiss – Schwarz, 1952

Painted steel

44 × 52 × 45 cm

35

Josef Albers (1888–1976)

Homage to the Square, 1959

Oil on Masonite

121.5 × 121.5 cm

36

Gianni Colombo (1937–1993)

Spazio elastico, 1968

Steel, nylon, two engines

c. 82 × 82 × 100 cm

37

Lucio Fontana (1899–1968)

Concetto spaziale – Attese, 1966

Watercolour on canvas

55.6 × 46.2 cm

38

Yves Klein (1928–1962)

Monochrome (IKB 180), 1958

Pigment in Rhodopas on canvas

65 × 54.5 cm

39

Piero Manzoni (1933–1963)

Achrome, 1959/60

Kaolin, cotton

57.6 × 73 cm

40

Gerhard von Graevenitz (1934–1983)

weisse struktur, rundstab mit homogener verteilung, 1959

Wood, paint

Height: 103.5 cm, Ø 3.6 cm

41

Klaus Staudt (* 1932)

Kreisformation II (FA-RE 5), 1965

Wood, emulsion paint

Ø 60 cm

42

Günther Uecker (* 1930)

Großes Feld, 1967

Nails, paint, canvas on plywood

175.2 × 175.2 cm

43

Gotthard Graubner (1930–2013)

Lichter Körper, 1968

Foam cushion on canvas, covered with Perlon and painted

100 × 100 cm

44

Imi Knoebel (* 1940)

Ohne Titel (119 Linien/11 mm Abstand), 1968

Dispersion on linen on fibreboard

160.2 × 130.2 cm

45

Jan Schoonhoven (1914–1994)

R 72-25, 1972

Wood, pasteboard, paper, latex

155.7 × 156.2 cm

46

Günter Fruhtrunk (1923–1982)

Diagonale Progression Schwarz-Weiss (Studie II), ca. 1970

Acrylic on canvas

140 × 148.5 cm

47

Gottfried Honegger (* 1917)

Tableau-Relief (Z.825.1), 1979

Oil, acrylic, board on canvas

200 × 250 cm

48

Verena Loewensberg (1912–1986)

Ohne Titel, 1984/85

Oil on canvas

100 × 100 cm

49

Verena Loewensberg (1912–1986)

Ohne Titel, 1985

Oil on canvas

100 × 100 cm

50

Imi Knoebel (* 1940)

**Ohne Titel (Schwarzes Bild Nr. 9 [von 24], *Schlachtenbild*),
1990**

Lacquer on fibreboard

209.5 × 150 cm

Information about events at www.kunstmuseum.li
or in the trimester programme

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