CREATIVE COMMONS: THE STÄDEL MUSEUM OFFERS FREE ACCESS TO MORE THAN 22,000 ARTWORKS

BY WAY OF ITS DIGITAL COLLECTION, THE STÄDEL LICENCES ARTWORKS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN UNDER CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE CC BY-SA 4.0 / OAI INTERFACE OFFERS FREE ACCESS TO METADATA UNDER LICENCE CC0 1.0

Frankfurt am Main, 21 August 2020. The Städel Museum has now made more than 22,000 works in its Digital Collection available for free downloading under the Creative Commons licence CC BY-SA 4.0. This licence enables anyone interested in art to reproduce and share the images of artworks in the public domain, as well as to use and process them for any purpose, provided the Städel Museum is identified in a credit line. Popular works in the Städel collection, for example Sandro Botticelli's *Idealized Portrait of a Lady (Portrait of Simonetta Vespucci as a Nymph)* (ca. 1480), Franz Marc's *Dog Lying in the Snow* (ca. 1911), Paula Modersohn-Becker's *Man Lying beneath a Blossoming Tree* (1903), Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait Leaning on a Stone Wall* (1639), Johannes Vermeer's *The Geographer* (1669) and many more are thus available for free downloading by way of the Digital Collection. Entirely in keeping with the wishes of the museum's founder, the aim of this new service is to make the Städel collection available to the public and further the public enjoyment of common cultural assets.

Through Creative Commons, scholars gain access to a rich fund of artworks in the public domain, enabling them to shed light on the workings of society with the aid of pictorial material, for example in research and university instruction. Artists and designers can arrive at new designs and forms of expression through the individual acquisition and creative use of art. Teachers have recourse to the artworks in the public domain not only as an aid in imparting aesthetic, cultural and historical knowledge, but also as an orientation in working with their pupils to develop creative projects of their own. The artworks can be placed in new contexts and used for individual purposes; museum visitors can download their favourite works for use in any way they like.

Both the basic metadata of the works in the public domain, for example their titles and techniques, and more in-depth information such as tags and iconographic sources are available to the public by way of an OAI (Open Archives Initiative) interface and licenced

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under CC0 1.0. This enables cross-linkage with other image databases and research platforms.

"A substantial proportion of the Städel Museum collection is now freely accessible through the Creative Commons licence and the OAI interface. This represents an important step towards the broader enjoyment of common cultural assets and the active international exchange of knowledge. By making the Städel's artworks downloadable through our Digital Collection, we have paved the way for a far-reaching and in-depth exploration of 700 years of art", Städel director Philipp Demandt commented.

The licencing of the works in the public domain under Creative Commons, and especially the offer of the metadata by way of an OAI interface, point to the future of a digital collection preservation and publication praxis that – far exceeding the creation of a simple database – will lead to the networking of knowledge. This initiative represents the logical continuation of the digital expansion initiative launched by the Städel Museum in 2015 to facilitate comprehensive knowledge dissemination. The wide spectrum of digital offers made available since that time includes the online course on modern art, the oral history project "Café Deutschland" on the Federal Republic of Germany's first art scene, and the Digital Collection, a key building block in the unrestricted access to the Städel Museum's holdings. This collection features high-resolution illustrations with a zoom function and information on artworks in a range of media such as texts, films and audio tracks, while also offering insights into connections with other works, artists and topics of relevance to society in different eras. What is more, over the past years the Digital Collection's search and filter functions have undergone continual improvement. The collection meanwhile also encompasses research content such as provenances, restoration reports and former attributions. And since 2018, an English version has enabled an international public to partake of this offer. Last year, the Digital Collection tallied up more than a million views.

About Creative Commons
Creative Commons is a non-profit organization offering persons and organizations various licences for granting the public rights to use their work/s. To the extent that the Städel Museum's works are not subject to any other image copyright restrictions, the image and metadata are freely accessible to the public for downloading under the licence CC BY-SA 4. "CC BY" indicates that the images can be processed, reproduced and shared in any format, even for commercial purposes, provided the Städel Museum is credited. The "SA" (ShareAlike) specification establishes that images may be used and shared only under the identical terms. This means that any visual online resource modified by a user must, in turn, also be made available for any of the abovementioned

uses by third parties, and that those third parties may use and share the images only on the condition that they credit the Städel Museum, name the creative user and licence the new creation. The images must be marked with the information "CC BY-SA 4.0 Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main" and linked to the licence (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en).

About the Open Archives Initiative

The Open Archives Initiative has developed OAI-PMH (OAI Protocol for Metadata Harvesting), an XML-based interface, to facilitate the interchange and synchronization of metadata. Metadata on the Städel Museum's works in the public domain is now accessible to the public via an OAI interface. The metadata is available under the CC0 1.0 licence and contains all relevant information and tags to the individual artworks. For licencing reasons, audio guides, videos and texts on the works are excluded from this offer.

The OAI interface comprises two different metadata formats: on the one hand a significantly reduced compressed image format to assist in identifying the objects with Dublin Core, and on the other hand LIDO (Lightweight Information Describing Objects) for descriptive metadata. LIDO is an XML-based metadata format and harvesting schema developed by CIDOC (International Committee for Documentation), a working group of the ICOM (International Council of Museums). Its purpose is to increase the global interoperability of museum metadata in order to standardize the sharing and harvesting of data.

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