

PRESS RELEASE

VIS-À-VIS. PORTRAITS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS

19 FEBRUARY TO 11 MAY 2014

Exhibition gallery of the Department of Prints and Drawings

Frankfurt am Main, 18 February 2014. From 19 February to 11 May 2014, the Städel Museum will present selected portraits and self-portraits by modern artists in the exhibition “Vis-à-vis. Portraits in the Department of Prints and Drawings”, comprising some 100 works from the holdings of the graphic arts collection. Encompassing drawings, prints and photographs, the ensemble to be placed on view will be presented for the most part in chronological order. Temporally it will range from an etched self-portrait of the late eighteenth century by the painter Francisco de Goya (1746–1828) to a portrait of the American composer Philip Glass, etched by his friend Chuck Close (b. 1940) in 1995. Well and lesser known artists – for example Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Edouard Manet, Vincent van Gogh, Edvard Munch, Käthe Kollwitz, Hans am Ende, Max Beckmann, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Albert Müller, Otto Pankok, Olaf Gulbransson, David Hockney, and Christian Boltanski – will be represented by works exploring a genre of major art-historical importance – the portrait – in fascinating and widely different ways.

“The vis-à-vis, the mirror image of the self or another person’s countenance, has been challenging artists for centuries. We are delighted to have the opportunity provided by this exhibition to present an artistically highly appealing selection of examples of this pictorial type from the Städel Museum’s Department of Prints and Drawings, whose holdings encompass more than 100,000 works”, comments Städel director Max Hollein.

“With their rigorous frontality, particularly en-face likenesses demand a one-on-one dialogue. And thus they refer their viewers to the original vis-à-vis, a situation in which an artist looks at and records the subject with all intensity. In the show, this fundamental constellation will accompany every query as to ‘who depicted whom, why, and how?’” observes Jutta Schütt, the exhibition curator and head of the Department of Prints and Drawings after 1750.

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With the aid of the wide diversity of exhibits dating from approximately two centuries, the show will also serve as a reminder of how the genre of the drawn or printed portrait underwent a major change in the nineteenth century through the emergence of photography, and how visual artists developed independent equivalent forms of artistic expression in response. Our presentation will provide insight into this development with works such as the portrait drawings by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867) who, sojourning in Rome in 1816, thus earned a bit of extra income, or the plan devised by Carl Philipp Fohr (1795–1818) for a *Group Portrait of German Artists at Café Greco* (1818). It was not long before the new medium eliminated the desire as well as the need for the portrait drawing. For many artists, photography became a working aid, for others an incentive to explore new avenues in printmaking. Among the works representing the art of the second half of the nineteenth century will be, in addition to Nadar's (1820–1910) photograph of *George Sand* (1864), two different lithographs by Edouard Manet (1832–1883), both entitled *Portrait of Berthe Morisot* (1872). The subject, who was the artist's sister-in-law, is depicted once in black; in the other example outlines retrace her contours. The revival of the etching technique in Paris is likewise to be understood in relation to the invention of photography. James Abbott McNeill Whistler's (1834–1903) portrait of *Becquet - The Fiddler* (1859) demonstrates this phenomenon, as does the painterly and dynamically etched likenesses by Anders Zorn (1860–1920). The work *L'homme à la pipe* (1890) by Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) will also be on view in "Vis-à-vis. Portraits in the Department of Prints and Drawings". The only etching in the Dutch artist's oeuvre, printed once in reddish brown and once in black, it is reminiscent of his highly renowned painting *Dr. Gachet* (1890), which was confiscated from the Städel Museum in 1937.

The juxtaposition of different types of portraits in the show will bring about unlikely-seeming alliances: the municipal gardener of Frankfurt, Sebastian Rinz, for instance, will encounter Karl Marx in a photograph (1875) and the American president William Howard Taft (1911) in an etching. There is a certain sense of humour in the way Lovis Corinth (1858–1925) looks at his son Thomas, depicting the latter's clothing and pose in such a way as to emphasize his facial expression. Olaf Gulbransson (1873–1958) and David Hockney (b. 1937) make use of bodily attitude and attire with much the same intention in their works; they will be neighbours for the duration of the show. Two widely differing likenesses of the writer Thomas Mann will likewise invite comparison: the eccentric interpretation by the Austrian Max Oppenheimer (1885–1954) and an official portrait supplied by Max Liebermann (1847–1935) in 1925 in fulfilment of a commission from the S. Fischer publishing company. The Städel's comprehensive holdings will moreover permit the joint presentation of two very

special portraits recalling not only their subjects, but also, in the year marking the hundredth anniversary of its beginning, the First World War: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's (1880–1938) woodcut for his comrade Hugo Biallowons, who died in action, and a lithograph executed by Max Beckmanns (1884–1950) in commemoration of his brother-in-law Martin Tube.

In addition to portraits of other persons, the presentation will also feature self-portraits, for instance one by Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945), who from the 1890s onwards inspected and recorded her own countenance again and again in woodcuts, etchings and lithographs. Particularly the display of self-portraits side by side will bring surprising similarities in the works of different artists to light. For instance the exhibition will compare Lovis Corinth's pencil-drawn mien with more recent examples such as a singing Horst Janssen (1929–1995) and a grimacing Bruce Nauman (b. 1941). A likeness of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner will be on view, etched by his friend and pupil Albert Müller (1897–1926). The first-state proof underwent vehement corrections by the subject himself. Kirchner will also be present in the woodcut self-portrait *Melancholy of the mountains* (1929) that is so typical of his late work. His contemporary Max Beckmann, an artist of similar importance for Frankfurt and the Städel collection, will be seen in the outstanding *Self-Portrait in a Stiff Hat* (1921), of which two versions will be included. The Swiss Urs Lüthi (b. 1947) will demonstrate a game of self-interrogation and self-transformation with his series of offset prints after black-and-white photographs, a form of self-portrait characteristic of the 1970s.

Among the likenesses of the second half of the twentieth century, the show will present the drawing *Portrait de Diego* (1950) by Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966), a haunting testimony to the artist's incomparable search and struggle. We moreover have the collection's print holdings to thank for the overwhelmingly large-scale colour woodcut by Roy Lichtenstein (1923–1997) from his *Expressionist Woodcuts* series (1980). Against the background of the museum's prominent inventory of Expressionist printmaking, this Pop-Art-manner revisit of that German art current takes on special significance within the Städel collection.

In the encounter between the viewer and the subject, each portrait will tell its own individual story. At the same time, in the joint presentation of the portraits dating from two hundred years of art history, "Vis-à-vis. Portraits from the Department of Prints and Drawings" will permit comparisons and reveals similarities that effortlessly cross stylistic and temporal boundaries.

List of artists: Max Beckmann, Louis-Léopold Boilly, Christian Boltanski, Julia Margaret Cameron, Chuck Close, Lovis Corinth, Otto Dix, Johannes Kaspar Eissenhardt, Hans am Ende, Hugo Erfurth, Louis Eysen, Conrad Felixmüller, Karl Philipp Fohr, Alberto Giacometti, Vincent van Gogh, Francisco Goya, Ludwig Emil Grimm, Juan Gris, Olaf Gulbransson, David Hockney, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Horst Janssen, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Käthe Kollwitz, Carl Larsson, Marie Laurencin, Roy Lichtenstein, Max Liebermann, Urs Lüthi, Edouard Manet, Henri Matisse, John Mayall, Albert Müller, Edvard Munch, Nadar (Gaspard-Félix Tournachon), Bruce Nauman, Mopp (Max Oppenheimer), Emil Orlik, Johann Friedrich Overbeck, Otto Pankok, Odilon Redon, Auguste Renoir, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Moritz von Schwind, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Anton Josef Trčka, Andy Warhol, James Abott McNeill Whistler, Anders Zorn

VIS-À-VIS. PORTRAITS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS

Curator: Dr Jutta Schütt, head of the Department of Prints and Drawings after 1750

Venue: Städel Museum, Schaumainkai 63, 60596 Frankfurt

Exhibition dates: 19 February to 11 May 2014

Information: www.staedelmuseum.de, info@staedelmuseum.de, phone +49(0)69-605098-0, fax +49(0)69-605098-111

Städel Museum opening hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday 10 am – 6 pm; Thursday and Friday 10 am – 9 pm

Department of Prints and Drawings Study Room opening hours: Wednesday, Friday 2 – 5 pm; Thursday 2 – 7 pm

Admission: 12 EUR, reduced 10 EUR, family ticket 20 EUR; admission free for children to the age of 12; Saturdays, Sundays and holidays 14 EUR, reduced 12 EUR, family ticket 24 EUR

Advance ticket sales online at: tickets.staedelmuseum.de

General guided tours of the exhibition: Thursdays 6 pm, Saturdays 3 pm

Special guided tours upon request at: +49(0)69-605098-200, info@staedelmuseum.de

Further events and activities are listed on www.staedelmuseum.de.