

PRESS RELEASE

EXHIBITION PREVIEW 2025 AND OUTLOOK 2026

A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY TO 19TH-CENTURY FRANKFURT, THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE RETROSPECTIVE DEVOTED TO ANNEGRET SOLTAU, THE DRAUGHTSMAN WERNER TÜBKE, ASTA GRÖTING IN THE CONTEMPORARY ART COLLECTION, A MAJOR AUTUMN EXHIBITION ON CARL SCHUCH AND FRENCH MODERNISM, MAX BECKMANN ON PAPER AND, IN THE SPRING OF 2026, MONET ON THE NORMANDY COAST. THE DISCOVERY OF ÉTRETAT

Frankfurt forever!

Photographs by Carl Friedrich Mylius

12 February – 1 June 2025

Exhibition Hall of the Department of Prints and Drawings

Press preview: Tuesday, 11 February 2025, 11.00 am

His photographs are a journey through time. Carl Friedrich Mylius (1827–1916) shaped the image of Frankfurt like no other photographer. From the Zeil, the Eschenheimer Turm, the Goethe Monument and the Römer to the banks of the Main, he captured the city's most well-known sights. In doing so, he became a pioneer of architectural photography more than 150 years ago. The Städel Museum is devoting the first major solo exhibition to Carl Friedrich Mylius, featuring some eighty works. The photographs of Carl Friedrich Mylius, a native of Frankfurt, are artistically outstanding works and at the same time important documents of the city's history: in the 19th century, Frankfurt was an important destination for travellers as a historic site of imperial coronations, as a trade fair city and because of its geographical location near the Middle Rhine. With the rise of tourism, Mylius's photographs of famous sights became popular souvenirs. Many of his views show a city in transition. At the time, Frankfurt was undergoing not only a political reorganization as a result of Prussian annexation, but also rapid economic and social development. Industrialization and urbanization led to drastic structural changes – entire streets in the old town and inner city disappeared. As a chronicler of his time, Mylius documented the historical sites of his city as well as the new buildings, industrial plants and modern infrastructure. He was also drawn to Frankfurt's surroundings—the Feldberg in the Taunus, the towns of Kronberg, Königstein and Gelnhausen—and

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he left behind the first surviving photographs of some of these places. One of the highlights of the exhibition is a 7.6-metre-long panorama of the Main, one of the oldest known examples of early German photography. In 1860 and 1861, Mylius photographed both banks of the river in thirty-one separate shots. As a photographer he was a neutral observer who captured his subjects objectively and impartially. At the same time, he used stylistic devices such as central perspective and balanced composition, demonstrating his keen sense of design. Even in these early days, photography was more than mere illustration—it was a means of capturing the city in an aesthetic dimension.

Mylius's biography is linked to the Städel Museum: in 1842–43, he interrupted his training as a lithographer to study under Jakob Becker. The professor of genre painting at the Städelschule taught him the basic rules of harmonious pictorial composition. This influence is unmistakable in Mylius's picturesque views. Mylius soon turned to photography and opened a studio in Frankfurt in 1854. He donated his photographs to the Städel Museum during his lifetime, and other photographs were added to the collection through the Prestel publishing house. In 2023, this historic collection was expanded by a private donation of 180 photographs.

Curator: Dr Kristina Lemke (Head of Photography, Städel Museum) with support from Dr Brigitte Sahler

Sponsored by: Dr. Marschner Stiftung

With additional support from: Ina Petzschke-Laueremann

Cultural Partner: hr2-kultur

Uncensored. Annegret Soltau

A Retrospective

8 May – 17 August 2025

Exhibition Annex

Press Preview: Wednesday, 7 May 2025, 11.00 am

The body is political—as the works of artist Annegret Soltau (b. 1946) impressively demonstrate. Her art has been causing a stir since the 1970s and remains as relevant as ever. Long considered an insider's tip despite her art historical significance, Soltau's work is now regarded as one of the most important positions in feminist photography and body art. Over the course of more than six decades and despite all resistance, Soltau's independent, radically feminist visual language has established her as an indispensable voice in contemporary art. The Städel Museum is dedicating the first comprehensive retrospective to her, developed in collaboration

with the artist. With more than eighty works, the exhibition offers a comprehensive insight into her multifaceted oeuvre, which ranges from drawings to extended photography, video and installation. Central themes in Soltau's work include feminism, body politics and the challenge of human and female identity. To this end, she has developed her own innovative techniques that transcend the boundaries of photography—photo-sewing, photo-restitching and photo-etching. The retrospective includes iconic photo-sewings from the series *Self* (1972–1976) and photo-restitchings from the generational projects *Generative* (1994–2005) and *Hybrids* (1999–2010). Seminal etchings and drawings will also be on view for the first time. The exhibition includes loans from renowned institutions such as the Sammlung Verbund in Vienna, the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebaek, the Lenbachhaus in Munich and the ZKM Karlsruhe, as well as previously unseen works from Soltau's studio.

In her self-portraits, Soltau questions female role models and sheds light on social norms by visualising complex emotional worlds, inner conflicts and states of mind. Since the 1970s, she has devoted herself to an artistic exploration of motherhood and pregnancy—themes that have been underrepresented in art for centuries and have only recently begun to receive increasing attention in both society and the art world. Her work is also a poignant expression of the ageing of the female body and questions of mortality. Soltau's work was repeatedly subjected to public censorship; her depictions deviated from established aesthetic and social norms and were perceived as provocative. The exhibition at the Städel Museum is an important corrective to this reception and a long overdue tribute to this great feminist and artist.

Curator: Svenja Grosser (Head of Contemporary Art, Städel Museum)

Sponsored by: Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne, Cultural Foundation of Hesse, Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung

With additional support from: Yoram Roth, Georg und Franziska Speyer'sche Hochschulstiftung

Werner Tübke

Metamorphoses

2 July – 28 September 2025

Exhibition Hall of the Department of Prints and Drawings

Press Preview: Tuesday, 1 July 2025, 11.00 am

Werner Tübke's (1929–2004) outstanding contribution to post-war German art was recognized early on by the West German art critic Eduard Beaucamp. He had

followed the artist's work since the late 1960s, first as an art critic for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, then as a friend and collector. In 2023, Barbara and Eduard Beaucamp donated to the Städel Museum an impressive and representative collection of forty-six drawings and watercolours by Tübke, spanning all the creative phases of the painter and graphic artist. The Städel Museum is exhibiting this special gift, tracing Tübke's metaphorical pictorial language, characterized by transformations and alienations.

"Drawing is an elementary need", Werner Tübke formulated in 1979, "everything else comes afterwards." His watercolours and drawings in graphite, pen and chalk are an essential part of his artistic oeuvre, demonstrating a great deal of creative freedom and independence: in them he collected ideas, explored formal considerations and developed a wide variety of themes. Tübke, who lived in Leipzig all his life, was one of the most important painters of the former German Democratic Republic. Along with Bernhard Heisig and Wolfgang Mattheuer, he is considered one of the main representatives of the so-called First Leipzig School and occupies a unique position in German post-war art.

In his paintings, drawings and prints, Tübke created an autonomous and consistent body of work that is dense in both form and content. It is characterized by a realistic formal language, but the messages in his images often remain unresolved. Tübke was less concerned with the concrete representation of reality than with the "interpretation of existence". In his multi-layered compositions, characterized by an imaginative and sometimes almost exuberant fantasy, he reflected the complexity of the world with its existential questions, needs and conflicts. With a keen sense of human vulnerability, he placed the individual at the centre of his art. Angels, unicorns and magicians, harlequins, veiled figures, bound, tortured and masked figures populate Tübke's works. In his "world theatre", as he called it, time is suspended and everything is imbued with memories through the creative appropriation of older art history.

Curator: Dr Regina Freyberger (Head of Prints and Drawings after 1800, Städel Museum)

Sponsored by: Heinz und Gisela Friederichs Stiftung

Asta Gröting

5 September 2025 – 12 April 2026

Contemporary Art Collection

Press Preview: Friday, 5 September 2025, 9.30 am

Intimate moments and closeness characterize the multifaceted work of the artist Asta Gröting (b. 1961). Originally and still working as a sculptor, she has expanded her artistic practice to include film and video. Her art explores human and cross-species relationships that often go unnoticed in everyday life and are usually unconscious. In its Contemporary Art Collection, the Städel Museum presents a selection of her video works in which she captures or stages moments from her environment and human existence.

Gröting's deliberate manipulation of time gives her works a particular intensity. More than mere visual representations, her films open up contemplative spaces that invite us to reflect on the complexity of hidden relationships and their dynamics. By capturing intimate and moving encounters in her work, she demonstrates how art can function as a medium for human connection.

The sensitive translation of captivating moments into moving images invites the audience to explore the delicate, often hidden intermediate states of our existence and to experience anew the poetry of the moment. A highlight of the exhibition is the premiere of a new work at the Städel Museum.

Curator: Svenja Grosser (Head of Contemporary Art, Städel Museum)

Carl Schuch and France

24 September 2025 – 1 February 2026

Exhibition Annex

Press Preview: Tuesday, 23 September 2025, 11.00 am

“Leibl is revered, Trübner is highly esteemed, but Schuch is loved.” The Städel Museum is devoting an exhibition to Carl Schuch (1846–1903), the best-known “unknown” protagonist of late 19th-century painting. During his lifetime, he was hardly noticed by the public, but shortly after his death Schuch's work received great attention from critics, museums and collectors, only to be forgotten again. The Städel Museum traces the fascination of Schuch's painting and shows his multifaceted engagement with modern French art.

Carl Schuch was a cosmopolitan: educated in Vienna, he travelled throughout Europe before settling in Paris in 1882, where he experienced the most productive phase of his artistic career. Schuch transformed his sensory impressions into pure painting, characterized by subtle tonal gradations and sonorous colour harmonies. In the summer, he devoted himself to *plein air* painting. In the studio, however, still life became his main field of experimentation. He used a fixed repertoire of motifs in ever new combinations to test different colour effects. He was interested in complementary

contrasts and the way colours changed with light and shadow, as well as in colour mixtures and new colourants. Schuch repeatedly applied the extraordinary painting technique he had developed for still lifes to his landscapes.

The Städel Museum is showing Schuch's paintings alongside major works of French art from leading museums and private collections. Schuch intensively studied the paintings of his role models, including German contemporaries such as Wilhelm Trübner and Wilhelm Leibl, and above all his French contemporaries Paul Cézanne, Camille Corot, Gustave Courbet, Edouard Manet and Claude Monet. By juxtaposing his works with theirs, Schuch's autonomous painting style becomes clear. The latest art-technological research provides insights into the genesis of his paintings. The free use of colour and Schuch's unmistakable handwriting make his painting a rewarding discovery.

Curators: Alexander Eiling (Head of Modern Art, Städel Museum), Juliane Betz (Deputy Head of Modern Art, Städel Museum), Neela Struck (Associate Curator, Modern Art, Städel Museum)

In collaboration with Dr Roland Dorn (author of the Carl Schuch catalogue raisonné).

Sponsored by: Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe with Deutsche Leasing AG, Frankfurter Sparkasse & Sparkassen-Kulturfonds des Deutschen Sparkassen- & Giroverbandes, Fontana Stiftung, Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain gGmbH

Beckmann

3 December 2025 – 15 March 2026

Exhibition Hall of the Department of Prints and Drawings

Press Preview: Tuesday, 2 December 2025, 11.00 am

The Städel Museum has one of the most important Beckmann collections in the world. His works have been collected and studied for more than 100 years. The most recent acquisition of an iconic work for the museum's collection was *Self-Portrait with Champagne Glass* (1919) in 2019. Since 2021, important permanent loans from the Karin and Rüdiger Volhard Collection have been added to the museum's holdings. In the winter of 2025, the Städel Museum will turn the spotlight on Max Beckmann (1884–1950) as a draughtsman. Around eighty works—many of them on public display for the first time—will document the development of his graphic oeuvre, from early sketches to late painterly masterpieces. Drawing was of existential importance to Beckmann and accompanied him through all phases of his work. In drawing, he shaped his personal worldview, creating works with pencil, charcoal, chalk and pastel that transformed fleeting impressions into meaningful, multi-layered compositions.

The exhibition shows Beckmann at his most intense and creative. Selected paintings and coloured works on paper also provide an insight into the artistic process and the interplay between different media.

The exhibition coincides with the publication of the three-volume catalogue raisonné of Beckmann's drawings compiled by Hedda Finke and Stephan von Wiese. In addition to drawings from the Städel Museum's own collection, the exhibition features loans from renowned international museums and private collections. This comprehensive special exhibition invites visitors to rediscover one of the most important artists of the 20th century through hitherto little-known facets of his work.

Curators: Hedda Finke and Stephan von Wiese (Catalogue raisonné of Max Beckmann's drawings), Dr Regina Freyberger (Head of Prints and Drawings after 1800, Städel Museum)

Sponsored by: Adolf Würth GmbH & Co. KG, Dagmar-Westberg-Stiftung

With additional support from: Franz Dieter und Michaela Kaldewei Kulturstiftung

Cultural Partner: hr2-kultur

OUTLOOK 2026

Monet on the Normandy Coast

The discovery of Étretat

19 March – 5 July 2026

Exhibition Annex

Press Preview: Wednesday, 18 March 2026, 11.00 am

A French fishing village becomes a myth. Étretat, in Normandy on the Atlantic coast, captivated many artists in the 19th century. They were particularly interested in the characteristic rocky landscape, which was perceived as both fascinatingly beautiful and threatening. Painters and writers travelled to Étretat and, through their works, made this remote place famous beyond the borders of France. With the development of tourism around 1850, Étretat became a popular seaside resort and a meeting place for artists, intellectuals and the Parisian bourgeoisie: Gustave Courbet painted his famous wave pictures here, Guy de Maupassant elevated Étretat to a place of longing in his writings, and the composer Jacques Offenbach had a lavish villa built in the small coastal town. But it was Claude Monet who was most fascinated by the unique cliffs with their three rock arches—Porte d'Amont, Porte d'Aval and Manneporte—to which he dedicated a series of paintings. It was at Étretat, under the constantly changing light and weather conditions, that Monet first began to paint

series of motifs, a working method that would later become his trademark. Étretat therefore played an important role in the birth of a new style of painting that would later be known as Impressionism.

Together with the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, the Städel Museum is presenting a major exhibition on the artistic discovery of Étretat and its influence on modern painting. In the spring of 2026, outstanding paintings, drawings, photographs and historical documents from French, German and other international museums and private collections will be on display in Frankfurt. The works of modern and contemporary artists—from Félix Vallotton and Henri Matisse to Georges Braques and Elger Esser—illustrate the enduring fascination of this place. Étretat has been a holiday resort and international tourist destination for more than 150 years. But the flow of people is threatening the cliffs, as are erosion and climate change. Examining the myth of Étretat therefore also allows us to trace the ambivalent effects of the popularization of a place and the role that art has played in it.

Curators: Alexander Eiling (Head of Modern Art, Städel Museum), Stéphane Paccoud (Chief Curator of 19th-Century Paintings and Sculptures, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon), Isolde Pludermacher (General Curator of Paintings, Musée d'Orsay, Paris)

Project Manager: Eva-Maria Höllerer (Curator, Städel Museum)

Assistant Curator: Nelly Janotka (Städel Museum)

Sponsored by: Fraport AG

Marketing and Media Partner: City of Frankfurt am Main – Department of Culture and Science

Titles and exhibition dates subject to change.