

PRESS RELEASE

STÄDEL MUSEUM SHOWS CONTEMPORARY ART IN STÄDEL GARDEN

“SCULPTURE IN THE STÄDEL GARDEN”: A PRESENTATION WITH NEWLY ACQUIRED WORKS BY JANET CARDIFF & GEORGE BURES MILLER, OLAF NICOLAI, TOBIAS REHBERGER AND JAN SVENUNGSSON

“IN THE STÄDEL GARDEN”, A NEW SERIES OF PERFORMANCE AND INSTALLATION WORKS, TO BE LAUNCHED WITH *WATERING HOLE* BY ADRIAN WILLIAMS

OPENING AND FIRST PERFORMANCE ON 30 APRIL 2013, FROM 7 PM

Frankfurt am Main, 11 April 2013. Frankfurt's Städel Museum will open its garden season on 30 April 2013 with a big celebration: in honour of prominent new sculpture acquisitions made recently in conjunction with the expansion of the museum's contemporary art holdings, beginning in April 2013 the Städel will present its garden, along with the extensive sculpture collection displayed there, in an entirely new guise. On the grounds of the garden surrounding the museum building, a large number of fascinating artworks will offer an opportunity to make unique discoveries in the open air. Within this framework, newly acquired installations, some comprising interactive elements, by Olaf Nicolai, Tobias Rehberger and Jan Svenungsson as well as Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller will enter into dialogue with works by such artists as Fritz Wotruba or Michael Croissant which have already long been among the collection of the Städel Museum and will now be integrated into the new setting. Per Kirkeby's *Tor II* (Gate II, 1987) and Markus Lüpertz's *Hirte* (Shepherd, 1986) will likewise be represented along with works recently acquired and installed in the Städel Garden. The new arrangement of the sculpture collection presented in the museum garden will create surprising visual axes. The Städel Garden with its striking skylights – the “façade” of the Städel extension building beneath the Städel Garden – will be integrated into the overall museum ensemble with unusual lines of sight, and the back garden brought to new life. At the same time, the festive opening of “Sculpture in the Städel Garden” will form the prelude to the newly conceived series “In the Städel Garden”, which will provide a framework for the presentation of performance and installation works by various artists beginning immediately: the performance *Watering Hole* (2013; length: approx. 45 minutes) by the artist Adrian Williams, who lives in Frankfurt, will launch the series. *Watering Hole* is a complex work combining music, text and sound objects with a spatially expansive choreography for a large number of musicians and singers. The series “In the Städel Garden” is being made

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possible by the newly founded society of friends of the garden, the “Städel Gartengesellschaft”, in which private individuals have joined to provide financial support for the presentation of actions, installations and performances of contemporary art in the Städel Garden to a wide public.

“The Städel Museum's garden grounds form a unique ensemble which we would like to make more accessible than ever to all of the citizens of Frankfurt by opening it for the art of the present”, explains Max Hollein, director of the Städel Museum. “Our successively expanding sculpture collection in the garden is an on-going invitation to experience fascinating and surprising encounters with contemporary works.”

As head of the contemporary art collection Dr Martin Engler adds, “following the expansion of the Städel Museum and the exhibition space for contemporary art, it is only logical that we now also create a special setting for exceptional contemporary works which bear a direct relation to their surroundings”.

In the Städel Garden I: *Watering Hole* by Adrian Williams

The new presentation “Sculpture in the Städel Garden” will open on Tuesday, 30 April 2013 at 8:30 pm with the performance of *Watering Hole* (2013) by **Adrian Williams** (b. Portland, Oregon, USA in 1979, lives and works in Frankfurt a. M.). This performance combines text, music and sound objects with a spatially expansive choreography. For artist Williams, composer Theodor Köhler, and all of the further participants, improvisation is an important element of this spatially oriented music and sound collage. With support from the city of Frankfurt am Main, the performance will be realized in cooperation with members of the Junge Deutsche Philharmonie and the Kinderchor Frankfurt in Verbindung mit dem Hessischen Rundfunk. Adrian Williams's performance will form the prelude for regular presentations of works on the grounds surrounding the Städel Museum. The series is being made possible by the newly established “Städel Gartengesellschaft”, a society of private persons who have committed themselves to supporting the presentation of contemporary art in the Städel Garden. From now on, the newly landscaped garden will be in constant use as an exhibition space in its own right, in which a wide range of contemporary art projects and events are realized as a further enhancement to the museum's on-going exhibition programme. By these means, contemporary art is to be made freely accessible to the citizens and visitors of Frankfurt in the open air at all times. Further dates for the performance of *Watering Hole* are Wednesday, 1 May at 4:00 pm, Thursday, 2 May at 8:00 pm, and Saturday, 4 May at 8:00 and 9:30 pm within the framework of the “Night of the Museums”.

The Städel Garden Programme for the Summer of 2013

In June and July 2013, Adrian Williams's performance series will be followed by "In the Städel Garden II", a presentation of installations by Adolf Luther. Since the 1950s, Luther has been executing artworks which belong to a realm between light, sculpture and architecture. With his predilection for the physical and aesthetic qualities of glass, lenses and curved mirrors, he pursues the dynamic of momentariness and transience in his large-scale works. Visitors to the Städel Garden will have the opportunity to experience selected examples as the second half of the year gets underway.

Sculpture in the Städel Garden

The collection in the Städel Garden presently encompasses altogether fifteen works of German and European sculpture of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The new garden sculptures, purchased primarily with support from the "Städelskomitee 21. Jahrhundert", will invite visitors to engage in active participation and join in a game with nature and art, as well as simply to relax and linger.

The globe of *Capri Moon* (2011) by artist and Städelschule teacher **Tobias Rehberger** (b. Esslingen am Neckar in 1966) only lights up above the bench when the moon is visible over the island of Capri. It thus creates a suggestive, unreal link between two places located a great distance from one another. The plinths could be the beam of light radiated by the moon – and the installation accordingly possesses a playful, contemplative, almost mystic quality. At the same time, the rigorous geometry and its clear linearity suggest a tension between art and nature, museum and park, nearness and distance.

In a quiet corner of the garden, an unprepossessing bench – *The Bench* (2012) by **Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller** (b. Brussels, Ontario, Canada in 1957 and Vegreville, Alberta, Canada in 1960) – offers the visitor a place to sit and relax. If he accepts the invitation, however, he unexpectedly finds himself in the midst of a whispered monologue. A woman's voice reads a letter, commenting on it in the process. The visitor becomes a listener, an eavesdropper, but also the addressee, as the various levels – garden, imagination, letter, dialogue, monologue – increasingly merge. The sound installation targets only the "viewer's" sense of hearing, thus allowing subjective and associative images to emerge before his mind's eye.

Shutter's Lullaby/Ellipse for Städel (2012) by the artist **Olaf Nicolai** (b. Halle a. d. Saale in 1962; now lives in Berlin) is a pavilion made of strings of black beads. The latter describe two concentric ellipses which are transparent and opaque at once. The rigour and simplicity of the forms are reminiscent of the massive installations by Richard Serra. At the same time, the strings of beads constantly move and overlap, creating an optical illusion of the kind common in Op Art.

The Städel Garden will also feature *Erster Schornstein II* (First Chimney II, 2013) by the Swedish artist **Jan Svenungsson** (b. Lund, Sweden in 1961). The ten-metre-high sculpture, originally presented in 1992 in front of the Moderna Museet Stockholm as the first of a whole series of art chimneys, will now occupy a place in the new museum garden. Svenungsson, who lives in Berlin, has been erecting his isolated, functionless chimney sculptures since the 1990s, thus transforming a wide variety of sites into surreal (urban) landscapes in the style of Giorgio de Chirico.

EXHIBITION PROJECT “SCULPTURE IN THE STÄDEL GARDEN / SERIES “IN THE STÄDEL GARDEN”

Curator: Dr Martin Engler, Head of the Contemporary Art Collection

Project director: Viktoria Draganova

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Programme of events: In conjunction with the opening of “Sculpture in the Städel Garden”, the performance *Watering Hole* by the artist Adrian Williams (length: approx. 45 minutes) will take place on the following dates:

Tuesday, 30 April, 8:30 pm (premiere), admission free; Wednesday 1 May, 4:00 pm, admission free; Thursday, 2 May, 8:00 pm, admission free; Saturday, 4 May 8:00 and 9:30 pm, admission with ticket to the “Night of the Museums”.

With the participation of members of the Junge Deutsche Philharmonie and the Kinderchor Frankfurt in Verbindung mit dem Hessischen Rundfunk.

Location: Städel Garden, Schaumainkai 63, 60596 Frankfurt

Opening: Tuesday, 30 April, 7:00 pm

Information: www.staedelmuseum.de, info@staedelmuseum.de,

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Funding: The new acquisitions for the Städel Garden were made with support from the “Städelkomitee 21. Jahrhundert”.

The performance series in the Städel Garden will be realized with support from the “Städel Gartengesellschaft”. The performance of *Watering Hole* by Adrian Williams will be carried out with additional support from the city of Frankfurt am Main and the Städel’s corporate partner Ernst & Young GmbH Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft.