

PRESS RELEASE

MASTERWORKS IN DIALOGUE. EMINENT GUESTS FOR THE ANNIVERSARY

7 OCTOBER 2015 TO 24 JANUARY 2016

Press preview: Tuesday, 6 October 2015, 11 am

**Städel Museum, Old Masters, Modern Art, Contemporary Art, and Department
of Prints and Drawings Collection Presentations**

Frankfurt am Main, 6 October 2015. For its two-hundredth birthday the Städel Museum is expecting eminent guests: from 7 October 2015 to 24 January 2016, selected Städel works will host sixty-five masterpieces from the world's most renowned museums for an anniversary exhibition entitled "Masterworks in Dialogue". The outstanding Städel works will represent a cross-section of the museum's history while at the same time offering insights into a collection that has evolved over two-hundred years. Companions from far and wide will join them in temporary partnerships and long-awaited unions. Planned by all of the Städel's curators, the show will be the first ever to spread throughout the galleries of the museum's collections. Loans from the Albertina in Vienna, the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, London's Victoria and Albert Museum, the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, the National Gallery of Ireland in Dublin, the Mauritshuis in The Hague, the Tate in London, the Vatican Museums, the National Gallery of Art in Washington and elsewhere will travel to Frankfurt am Main for this special occasion. The superb "anniversary guests" will allow us to draw surprising art-historical references and to illuminate and examine the Städel holdings – spanning seven-hundred years of art – anew. "Masterworks in Dialogue: Eminent Guests for the Anniversary" will be accompanied by a series of lectures given by the Städel curators on the history of the museum; the writer Daniel Kehlmann will deliver the introductory talk at the exhibition opening.

This anniversary project is being made possible with financial support from the DZ Bank as corporate sponsor, as well as funds from the Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain gGmbH, the Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne, and the Kulturstiftung der Länder.

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“In the bicentennial year, Städel favourites are meeting with stars from all over the world! This major anniversary project is an ideal occasion both to rediscover our collection – which constitutes the Städel’s identity and core – and to experience yet another highlight in the museum’s exhibition history in the form of intriguing and art-historically unique dialogues between the masterworks. Unparalleled in quality, number and heterogeneity, the exceptional loans are also a token of international esteem for the Städel. We are especially grateful for this phenomenal support from the world’s most famous collections on the occasion of our two-hundredth birthday”, comments Städel Museum director Max Hollein.

The anniversary exhibition will spread out on all four floors and in all areas of the Städel collection. The visitor embarking on a tour of the museum will encounter, for example, prominent “anniversary guests” by such artists as Jan van Eyck, Fra Angelico, Johannes Vermeer or Nicolas Poussin bearing close relationships to works from the Städel’s Old Masters collection. Masterworks by Edgar Degas, Max Liebermann, Pablo Picasso and Franz Marc will sojourn in the Modern Art collection, and examples by Martin Kippenberger, Georg Baselitz, Thomas Struth, Daniel Richter and Corinne Wasmuht will await discovery in the collection of Contemporary Art. The Department of Prints and Drawings will present opera magna by Adam Elsheimer, Edgar Degas, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Max Beckmann and Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn side by side with Städel treasures. The thematic pairs and groups thus formed – numbering forty in all – will be displayed on specially designed coloured pedestals serving not only to explain the ensuing dialogues but also to give them special prominence within the collection presentations.

Dialogues in the Old Masters Collection

In the Old Masters gallery, for instance, the *Annunciation* (ca. 1434/36) by Jan van Eyck (1390–1441) from the National Gallery of Art in Washington will encounter the same artist’s *Lucca Madonna* (1437) from the Städel. The two paintings are among the most beautiful and, in terms of content, most complex Marian images by the most well-known Early Netherlandish artist. Works distinguished by their stunning realism of detail and elaborate spatial and temporal structures, they are still admired for their exquisite artistic rendering today, nearly six hundred years after their execution. Until 1850, both belonged to the splendid Old Masters collection of King William II of the Netherlands; now they will be on view side by side for the first time again in 165 years. Two portraits of women, one of the fifteenth and one of the nineteenth century, will come together in no less spectacular a meeting: Sandro Botticelli’s (1445–1510) *Idealized Portrait of a Lady (Portrait of Simonetta Vespucci as a Nymph)* of ca. 1480/85 from the Städel and *Fazio’s Mistress (Aurelia)* (1863) by Dante Gabriel

Rossetti (1828–1882) from the London Tate will form companion pieces. Not only will one of the most famous works from each of these museums' collections thus be united, but the direct comparison will shed light on astonishing similarities despite the temporal distance of nearly four centuries. The complex manner in which the painting by the Pre-Raphaelite Rossetti reflects on Botticelli's *Simonetta*, compositionally speaking, has hitherto gone unrecognized and will now become strikingly evident in the joint display. Both paintings bear a relation to a literary and artistic discourse on the ideal image of female beauty that was revived by the Pre-Raphaelites in the context of studying the works of their Italian idols.

Dialogues in the Modern Art Collection

Hardly any of the Städel Museum's paintings is as well-known to the public as Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein's (1751–1829) portrait of *Goethe in the Roman Campagna* of 1787. Surrounded by testimonies to antiquity, the "prince of poets", wrapped in a travelling cloak, reposes contemplatively in an ideal Arcadian landscape. On the occasion of the show, this centrepiece of the Frankfurt collection will be presented along with several preliminary studies. What is more, works making reference to the painting will once again bear witness to the popularity of the iconic, world-famous portrait of Goethe. Tischbein began the portrait in 1786, when Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) was sharing living quarters with him and other artists in Rome during his travels in Italy. In later depictions the painting was quoted again and again – now reverently, now tongue-in-cheek – for example in a proposal by Adolf von Donndorf (1835–1916) for the Goethe monument in Berlin and in Andy Warhol's (1928–1987) silkscreen of 1982, which has been in the Städel collection since 2000.

Three closely interrelated works by the Expressionist artists Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880–1938), Max Pechstein (1881–1955) and Erich Heckel (1883–1970) will also be assembled in the Modern Art gallery. The three bathing scenes were presumably executed in 1910 during a joint excursion to the Moritzburg Ponds near Dresden. Painted in a synchronous working process, they represent a kind of contest among equals in which each of the painters had a chance to measure his own potential against that of his colleagues. Kirchner's version, later reworked, is on a canvas painted on both sides and was only discovered in 2010. Within the framework of the exhibition, the works are being shown together for the first time, thus offering a unique opportunity for what promises to be a suspenseful comparison between the protagonists of the Brücke group.

Dialogues in the Collection of Contemporary Art

By assembling the works *Sex with Dumplings* (1963) and *Big Night Down the Drain* (1962/63) (loans from private collections) with the painting *Field* (1962) from the Städel Museum holdings, the exhibition will present the early work of the painter Georg Baselitz (b. 1938) as an important window on the history of West German painting of the twentieth century. The three works to be shown within the framework of the “Masterworks in Dialogue” were all featured in Baselitz’s first solo exhibition in 1963. Owing to their radical painterly qualities they sparked a scandal that would prove legendary. The debate even took on a political dimension: works such as *Big Night Down the Drain* (1962/63) were confiscated. The ideological controversy over abstract versus representational painting in the young Federal German Republic culminated in Baselitz’s provocative compositions in which carnality took centre stage – both formally and with regard to content – and the sensitivities of the German post-war period seemed mirrored. A striking encounter with Georg Baselitz’s epoch-making early phase will here be made possible.

Another group of works to be placed on view in the Contemporary Art collection in the Städel’s anniversary year will address the topic of the museum as an institution. From the perspective of the photographer Thomas Struth (b. 1954), the museum is not just a place for the preservation of art but also one in which art is created. On the occasion of the bicentennial exhibition, the photo *Louvre 3, Paris 1989* (1989) from the Städel holdings will be joined by five further works (loans from the Atelier Thomas Struth) from his *Museum Photographs* series photographed in the National Gallery in London, the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna and the Art Institute of Chicago. The series focusses on the visitors’ behaviour and their relationship to the art on exhibit. The spectrum of scenes ranges from the indifferent attitudes of tourist groups to the meditative immersion of an individual art viewer seen, for example in *Kunsthistorisches Museum 3, Vienna* of 1989. The juxtaposition makes the works’ serial character particularly evident.

Dialogues in the Department of Prints and Drawings

In the gallery of the Department of Prints and Drawings, the exhibition will bring together a number of outstanding drawings, paintings and prints. Among the encounters, for example, will be two works by Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617), an engraver and draughtsman highly admired in the late sixteenth century – works that testify to the astounding development in Goltzius’s mastery of the drawing technique within just a few years. The virtuoso *Portrait of Gillis van Breen* drawn by Goltzius in coloured chalk in 1588 was already in the collection of the museum’s founder Johann Friedrich Städel. The *Portrait of Giambologna* from the Teylers Museum in Haarlem,

executed three years later, provides evidence of the amazingly painterly effect Goltzius was capable of achieving with the sparsest of means.

Two graphic works by the exceptional artist Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) will likewise enter into dialogue. The artist made reference to his eventful and productive life with depictions of his alter ego: the Minotaur, which he staged in drawings and prints. He was captivated not so much by the myth as by the figure's masculine creatureliness, which he conveyed now as brutish, libidinous, and powerful, now as tender and needy. The two prints from the *Suite Vollard* on view at the Städel will offer a superb illustration of the dichotomy between strength and weakness in Picasso's Minotaur. In the *Minotaur Caressing a Sleeping Woman* of the year 1933, on loan from a private collection, the beast kneels before a peacefully slumbering female figure, bending his muscular body over her. The threatening look of the bull's head contrasts with the disconcertingly gentle gesture with which he touches the woman's hand. This work will be placed on display with the *Blind Minotaur Being Led through the Night by a Young Girl* (1934), a print from the Städel collection which, from the point of view of technique, is one of the artist's most ambitious prints. Reminiscent of a theatre stage, the composition is borne by the contrast between light and dark.

200 Years Städel

The exhibition is one of the major events on the comprehensive anniversary programme in honour of the Städel bicentennial in 2015. On 15 March 1815, the Frankfurt banker and businessman Johann Friedrich Städel signed the final version of his will, thus bequeathing his wealth and art collection to a foundation that was to bear his name. Two-hundred years later, the Städel Museum is considered the oldest and most renowned museum foundation in Germany. The Old Masters, Modern Art and Contemporary Art collections as well as the Department of Prints and Drawings offer an overview of seven hundred years of European art from the early fourteenth century to the very present. The collection encompasses some 3,000 paintings, 600 sculptures, over 4,000 photographs and more than 100,000 drawings and prints. The Städel is celebrating its bicentennial with first-rate exhibition and research projects, major additions to its collection, and the large-scale expansion of its digital mediation programme.

LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION

Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg
Musée de Picardie, Amiens, France
Atelier Thomas Struth, Berlin
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin
Schlossmuseum, Braunschweig
Museum Ludwig, Cologne
Davids Samling, Copenhagen, Denmark
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, Dresden
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland
Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf
Freies Deutsches Hochstift / Frankfurter Goethe-Museum, Frankfurt am Main
Teylers Museum, Haarlem, Netherlands
Deichtorhallen Hamburg / Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg
Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg
Klosterkammer Hannover / Ev. Damenstift Kloster Ebstorf
Ateneum Art Museum, Finnish National Gallery (Collection von Willebrand), Helsinki, Finland
Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, Karlsruhe
Franz Marc Museum, Kochel am See
Hessische Hausstiftung, Kronberg im Taunus / Museum Schloss Fasanerie, Schloss Fasanerie
Museum der bildenden Künste Leipzig, Leipzig
Tate, London, United Kingdom
The Fine Art Society Contemporary, London, United Kingdom
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom
Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain
Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich
Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau, Munich
Museo e Gallerie Nazionali di Capodimonte, Naples, Italy
Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie Neuburg an der Donau, Neuburg an der Donau
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France
Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Sammlung Rau für UNICEF, Remagen
Vatikanische Museen, Rome, Italy
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen, France
Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden
Mauritshuis, The Hague, Netherlands
Museum Sønderjylland – Kunstmuseet i Tønder, Tønder, Denmark
Albertina, Vienna, Austria
Muntean / Rosenblum & Georg Kargl Fine Arts, Vienna, Austria
National Gallery of Art, Washington, USA
Goethe-Nationalmuseum, Klassik Stiftung Weimar, Weimar
Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Switzerland
Martin von Wagner-Museum der Universität Würzburg, Würzburg
Friedrich Christian Flick Collection
Merzbacher Kunststiftung
Sammlung Prof. Dr A.-W. Scheer
and private lenders who wish to remain anonymous



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Curators: Dr Bastian Eclercy, Dr Martin Engler, Dr Felix Krämer, Prof Dr Jochen Sander, Dr Jutta Schütt, Dr Martin Sonnabend

Project supervision: Dr Eva Mongi-Vollmer, curator for special projects

Exhibition dates: 7 October 2015 to 24 January 2016

Press preview: Tuesday, 6 October 2015, 11 am

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Location: Städel Museum, Schaumainkai 63, 60596 Frankfurt am Main

Opening hours: Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun, holidays 10:00 am – 6:00 pm, Thu + Fri 10:00 am – 9:00 pm

Special opening hours: 24 Dec. 2015 closed, 25, 26 and 28 Dec. 2015 10:00 am – 6:00 pm,
31 Dec. 2015 closed, 1 Jan. 2016 11:00 am – 6:00 pm, 4 Jan. 2016 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Admission: 14 EUR, reduced 12 EUR, family ticket 24 EUR; admission free for children to the age of 12; groups (minimum 10 persons): reduced admission fee per person. Groups are required to book in advance by contacting us at +49(0)69-605098-200 or info@staedelmuseum.de

Advance ticket sales online at: tickets.staedelmuseum.de

Catalogue: The exhibition will be accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue published by Wienand Verlag and edited by Max Hollein. With a foreword by Max Hollein and texts by Jana Baumann, Bastian Eclercy, Martin Engler, Anna Helfer, Felicity Korn, Felix Krämer, Kristina Lemke, Eva Mongi-Vollmer, Maureen Ogrocki, Susanne Pollack, Almut Pollmer-Schmidt, Annabel Ruckdeschel, Jochen Sander, Jutta Schütt, Martin Sonnabend, Fabian Wolf and Daniel Zamani. In German and English, 280 pages, 34.90 EUR (museum edition)

Guide to the exhibition: An exhibition guide will be published in German, 40 pages, 7.50 EUR

Digitorial: The digitorial is being made possible by the Aventis Foundation. Design and programming: Scholz & Volkmer. Available at: meisterwerke.staedelmuseum.de

Städel App: The Städel App is supported by the FAZIT-STIFTUNG. The app has been optimized for the newest generation of Android and iOS smartphones. It offers the audio guide to the exhibition in the form of a smartphone download (0.99 EUR). Available for downloading at <http://www.staedelmuseum.de/en/offerings/staedel-app>

Audio guide: German and English version, 4 EUR, two audio guides for 7 EUR

Social Media: The Städel Museum is communicating the exhibition on the social media with the hashtags #dialogdermeisterwerke, #starstreffenstars and #200jahrestaedel

General guided tours of the exhibition: Tue 3 pm, Thu 6 pm, Fri 7 pm, Sa 4 pm, Sun 11 am, also Fri 25 Dec. 2015 and Fri 1 Jan. 2016 3 pm, Sat 2 Jan. 2016 4 pm. Tickets: 4 EUR in addition to the admission fee, available starting two hours before the tour begins (Sundays from 10 am at the Städel cashier's desk). The number of participants is limited, previous booking is not required.

Offer available online only: Admission + guided tour of the special exhibition 16 EUR (tickets.staedelmuseum.de)

Corporate Sponsor: DZ Bank

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