

PRESS RELEASE

## STÄDEL CELEBRATES BICENTENNIAL

**“200 YEARS STÄDEL: A GIFT FOR EVERYONE” –**

**GRAND PUBLIC CELEBRATION ON 15 MARCH 2015, 10 AM TO 8 PM**

**SUBSTANTIAL DONATIONS IN HONOUR OF 200<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY –**

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL FORMATS**

**Frankfurt am Main, 13 March 2015.** This coming Sunday, the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2015; marks the two-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Städel Museum. Germany's oldest civic museum foundation is observing the historic day with a grand public celebration. Under the motto “200 Years Städel: A Gift for Everyone”, a comprehensive programme of guided tours, workshops and chamber music performed by the hr-Sinfonieorchester will await the visitor. In the time-tested tradition of Johann Friedrich Städel's foundation vision, the Frankfurt museum is sustained by broad **patronage** on all levels, and this anniversary year is no exception. On the occasion of the bicentennial, for example, citizens have made donations to the Städel amounting to several millions of euros, agreed to sponsor exhibition rooms, and started their own fundraising initiatives for the civic museum. What is more, after donations of works by Jusepe de Ribera, Guido Reni, Edgar Degas and Philip Guston, just within the past weeks the Städel has received further birthday gifts, among them prominent works by Bettina von Arnim, Eugène Carrière, Bruno Goller, Karl Hofer, Mike Kelley, Ernst Wilhelm Nay, Albert Oehlen and Moritz von Schwind, but also, not least importantly, rare photographs by the Bisson brothers, Helmar Lerski and others, as well as vintage prints by Horst P. Horst.

“A gift for everyone. That was the idea behind the Städel's founding, and we have made it our motto to celebrate our two-hundredth birthday with all citizens. Their support and the trust they place in us are the mainstays of the museum's successful work, and at the same time set the course for its future. Johann Friedrich Städel's path-breaking vision of a public museum based on the patronage of private citizens can today – two hundred years after the founding of the Städel Museum – be regarded as a model for the organization, structuring and further development of art

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museums in the future”, Städel director **Max Hollein** commented on the significance of Johann Friedrich Städel’s founding idea.

On **15 March 1815**, the Frankfurt banker and businessman signed the third and final version of his will, in which he bequeathed his entire fortune and his art collection to the foundation that was to bear his name – the “Städelsches Kunstinstitut” –, and thus laid the cornerstone for the Städel Museum and the Städelschule. Among the first well-wishers on 15 March 2015 will be Prof. Monika Grütters, Minister of State for Culture and the Media, Boris Rhein, Hessian Minister of Science and Art, and Peter Feldmann, Mayor of the City of Frankfurt am Main. Along with Prof. Dr. h.c. mult. Nikolaus Schweickart, the chairman of the administration of the Städel Museum, and Max Hollein, they will speak at the official anniversary ceremony (attendance by invitation only) about the Städel Museum, its history, and its significance for culture IN Germany today. The official part of the festivities is being made possible by generous supporters. The day will also be honoured by the release of the commemorative publication ... *zum Besten hiesiger Stadt und Bürgerschaft. 200 Jahre Städel*, published by Prestel Verlag and containing contributions by Max Hollein, Jochen Sander, Thomas Gaehtgens, Florian Illies, Martin Mosebach, Isabel Pfeiffer-Poensgen, Christoph Stölzl, Wolfgang Ullrich, and a conversation between Tim Sommer, Sylvia von Metzler, Nikolaus Schweickart and Felix Semmelroth.

“It was the vision of Frankfurt businessman Johann Friedrich Städel that formed the nucleus of our museum. On 15 March 1815, when he wrote the foundation letter that led to the establishment of the Städelsches Kunstinstitut, he was eighty-six years old. Now, exactly two hundred years later, we are in a position to observe this anniversary with unique exhibitions and education projects – a circumstance for which we are indebted above all to the many patrons, companies and foundations that dedicate their efforts to our institution”, **Nikolaus Schweickart** observed.

Likewise right on time for the anniversary, two central components of the Städel’s **Digital Extension** will go online on 15 March 2015: at [www.digitalesammlung.staedelmuseum.de](http://www.digitalesammlung.staedelmuseum.de), the Städel Digital Collection will provide a highly innovative form of access to the museum’s holdings – via targeted searches but also by way of a digital stroll through seven hundred years of art. A newly developed Städel App will moreover offer a wealth of worthwhile knowledge for a visit to the museum as well as a means of downloading detailed background information on masterworks of the collection and our current audio guides right onto a

smartphone. Designed for iOS and Android, the app will be available at all the usual app stores free of charge. In the newly established Digital Art Cabinet, visitors can moreover try out our entire range of digital museum education offers right at the Städel. Against the background of the increasing digitalization of everyday life – and with a view to the future of the institution – the expansion of its educational responsibility into the digital realm is one of the Frankfurt museum's chief concerns.

#### **GIFTS IN HONOUR OF “200 YEARS STÄDEL”**

“In the name of God!” is the heading of the third and final version of the will signed by Johann Friedrich Städel on 15 March 1815. In it he enacted the establishment of the foundation which was to be named the “Städelsches Kunstinstitut” in his honour, and bequeathed to it his entire fortune (1.3 million guilders) and his art collection, comprising 476 paintings, some 4,600 drawings, approximately 10,000 prints and a number of valuable books. Since that day, many people have followed the founder's example. Taking the vision of a single citizen as their orientation, they have created a world-class museum and a collection spanning seven centuries of art.

In its anniversary year, the Städel collection once again has substantial new acquisitions to show for itself. Among the outstanding gifts are Karl Hofer's superb painting *The Blind Man and the Girl* of 1943, donated to the museum by Dr. Peter Neubronner on the occasion of the bicentennial. The canvas is a key work by the German Expressionist. He painted it immediately after his Berlin studio had been hit by a bomb during World War II, destroying a large proportion of his oeuvre. “Some one-hundred-fifty paintings”, Hofer recalled in his memoirs, “more than a thousand drawings, and everything that connected me with my former existence, everything that could have illustrated these recollections, was gone, except for the key I carried in my pocket.” In his composition, Hofer made direct reference to this momentous event by depicting himself as a blind man before the ruins of a city. The entrepreneur Claus H. Wencke of Bremen has once again – not long after his last gift – presented the Städel Museum with an important work by the French Symbolist Eugène Carrière: the *Interieur* (1894–96). Executed in muted shades, this showpiece is a perfect addition to the modern art collection since it explores the relationship between painting and (artistic) photography in ideal manner. Uta and Wilfried Wiegand and the Galerie Kicken in Berlin have likewise taken the bicentennial as an occasion to demonstrate their close ties to the museum by donating further photos by the

Bisson brothers and Helmar Lerski. The Städel has the photo specialist Menfred Heiting to thank for a further expansion of its photography holdings. In recognition of the efforts made by the museum in this area over the past years, Heiting is donating a number of rare photographs to the collection. In addition to works by François Kollar, the group also includes two of the highly coveted vintage prints by Horst P. Horst. In the area of contemporary art, the Städel is delighted to acquire the important oil painting *The Scissors* of 1968 by the German artist Bruno Goller as a gift from Michael and Karin Thoma of Frankfurt, as well as Albert Oehlen's *A German in Rio* (1986) and Mike Kelley's *Center and Peripheries #1* (1990) as donations from a private collection. The museum is moreover receiving a substantial group of works by Ernst Wilhelm Nay from the artist's widow and a private collector with special ties to Frankfurt. This gift will enable the museum to provide insights into Nay's entire artistic development from his early Expressionist style to his late abstract phase. Among the further donations made to the museum in honour of "200 Years Städel" are the *Mosaic Mirror Wallpiece* by John Armleder, presented by Paul Maenz, and a gift from Berlin artist Bettina von Arnim of two of her German Pop Art paintings. One of them is the canvas *Suspenders* (1970), which fits smoothly into the collection among works by such artists as Konrad Klapheck or Wolf Vostell. The Department of Prints and Drawings is extremely pleased about the donation of a drawing by Moritz von Schwind. The precious sheet features sketches for the artist's residential home in Frankfurt am Main (1845/46) and vignette designs for the book *Erzherzog Carl von Österreich* (1846/47). On the back is a study of the rivers Neckar and Main, a preliminary drawing for the right side of Schwind's large-scale painting *The Rhine and Its Tributaries* of 1847.

The Städelischer Museums-Verein rang in the anniversary year with two exceptional acquisitions: in January, a successful bicentennial campaign initiated by the society of friends made the purchase of Guido Reni's painting *The Assumption of the Virgin* of 1596/97 possible, and thanks to a generous donation by an individual patron, the museum moreover acquired the *Study of a Nude* (*Étude de Nu*) (ca. 1888–92) by Edgar Degas.



## **200 YEARS STÄDEL**

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

**Opening hours:** Tue, Wed, Sat and Sun 10 am – 7 pm, Thu and Fri 10 am – 9 pm

**Advance ticket sales at:** [tickets.staedelmuseum.de](http://tickets.staedelmuseum.de)

**Social media:** The Städel Museum is communicating its bicentennial on the social media with the hashtag #200jahrestaedel

**Media partners:** 3sat, ARTUS interactive, Media Frankfurt GmbH, Verkehrsgesellschaft Frankfurt am Main

**Culture partner:** hr2-kultur