

**PRESS RELEASE**

# STÄDEL MUSEUM EXHIBITION PROGRAM 2016

**Maniera: Pontormo, Bronzino and Medici Florence**

**24 February to 5 June 2016**

**Exhibition annex**

Jacopo Pontormo, Agnolo Bronzino, Andrea del Sarto, Rosso Fiorentino, Giorgio Vasari – in 2016, the Städel Museum will stage a major exhibition of superb works presenting the distinguished painters of Florentine Mannerism for the first time in Germany. With the aid of prominent loans, the show will acquaint the public with a key chapter in the history of Italian art in all its diversity. Spanning the period from the return of the Medici to Florence in 1512 and the initial artistic endeavours of the new generation around Pontormo and Rosso to the 1568 publication of Vasari's *Lives* – artist biographies that still bear an influence today –, “Maniera” will be devoted to Florence as the first centre of European Mannerism.

More than 120 precious loans, including paintings as well as drawings and sculptures, will provide an unprecedented overview of a stylistically formative epoch for which the art historiographer Giorgio Vasari coined the colourful term “maniera”. Elegant, cultivated and artificial, but also capricious, extravagant and sometimes even bizarre: the art of Mannerism exhibits many facets. In 1967, the art historian John Shearman summed it up in a catchy formula – “the stylish style”. Its sophisticated grace and creative tenacity make the “maniera” one of the most fascinating phenomena in the art of Italy.

One of the most exquisite works in the Städel holdings – Bronzino's famous *Portrait of a Lady in Red (Francesca Salviati?)* (ca. 1533) – formed the point of departure for this ambitious show. The project is being carried out with special support from the museums of Florence, above all the Uffizi, the Galleria dell'Accademia and the Galleria Palatina. Further key loans will come from such prominent museums as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, the Paris Louvre, the Prado and the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, the Szépművészeti Múzeum in Budapest and the Brera in Milan.

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The art-historical development of the decades from 1512 to 1568 will be presented in close relation to Florentine city history and Medici rule – themes to be investigated in both the exhibition and the accompanying catalogue.

**Curator:** Dr Bastian Eclercy

### **Sigmar Polke: Early Prints**

**2 March to 22 May 2016**

#### **Exhibition gallery of the Department of Prints and Drawings**

The printed image, circulated by the mass media or photographically staged by the artist himself, represents a fundamental principle in the work of Sigmar Polke (1941–2010). As early as 1967, towards the end of his studies at the Düsseldorf art academy, Polke published his first print: *Girlfriends*. To this end he chose offset printing, a rather unsophisticated technique in terms of craftsmanship, and trivial from the artistic point of view. It would remain his favourite printmaking medium, which he would use to transport and disseminate seemingly incidental – but nonetheless disconcerting – commentaries on art and society.

The presentation in the exhibition gallery of the Department of Prints and Drawings will feature a selection of Sigmar Polke's early prints as precious as it is concentrated, and inquire into the special quality of his work with the medium. Thanks to the Deutsche Bank Collection at the Städel Museum, the exhibits can be chosen entirely from within the Städel's own holdings.

**Curator:** Dr Jutta Schütt

### **Heaven on Display: The Altenberg Altar and Its Imagery**

**22 June to 25 September 2016**

#### **Exhibition gallery of the Department of Prints and Drawings**

Owing to fortunate circumstances, a unique ensemble of late thirteenth and early fourteenth-century liturgical and paraliturgical objects has come down to us from a former convent at Altenberg an der Lahn. Every one of these objects alone can already be considered among the absolute gems of the period. For the first time since the convent's secularization in the early nineteenth century, they will now be brought together again in the exhibition "Heaven on Display", granting visitors the opportunity to experience one of the qualitatively most superb choir ensembles of the Middle Ages.

At its centre, the exhibition will feature a folding altarpiece measuring some 4.9 metres in width. Consisting of a shrine cabinet, a statue of the Madonna and wings, it unites works of painting, sculpture, textile art and goldsmithery in a

complex inter-referential system of altar imagery. From about 1330 onward, this retable, which forms the core of the ensemble, decorated the main altar of the convent church built between 1260 and 1270. The altarpiece wings already entered the Städel collection and its superb holdings of Early German painting in 1925. The presentation in the exhibition gallery of the Department of Prints and Drawings will allow visitors to experience first-hand the fascinating interplay between various pictorial media in an ensemble of early fourteenth-century choir furnishings. Within this context, particularly in view of the sophisticated iconography of the linen embroideries and the recently rediscovered original paintings on the sides and back of the shrine cabinet, questions arise as to the accessibility of the imagery on and around the high altar and its reception from close quarters.

In preparation for the exhibition, the Städel is hosting an international Passavant Colloquium on 13 and 14 November 2015. The latest research insights will be presented by altogether seventeen guest speakers, whose contributions will be further elaborated within the framework of the exhibition “Heaven on Display: The Altenberg Altar and Its Imagery”.

**Curator:** Prof Dr Jochen Sander

## **Georg Baselitz – The Heroes**

**30 June to 23 October 2016**

### **Exhibition annex**

Georg Baselitz (b. 1938) is without question one of the most influential painters and sculptors of our time. In 1965/66, in a virtually explosive spurt of productivity, he developed his dramatic and paradoxical *Hero* paintings. The forceful workgroup of the *Heroes* and *New Types* is today regarded worldwide as a key example of the German art of the 1960s. In the summer of 2016, in a monographic exhibition curated by Städel director Max Hollein, it will be comprehensively presented for the first time. Some seventy paintings and works on paper will be on view, distinguished by aggressively and defiantly painted monumental figures that have lost nothing of their ambiguous, portentous and vulnerable quality to this day.

In 1965, Georg Baselitz perceived the order of post-war Germany in its state of multifaceted destruction – ideologies and political systems, but also artistic styles were up for discussion. This lack of order was very much in keeping with the artist's own nature: appropriation through artistic categorization was something that remained foreign to him all his life. From the perspective of his fundamentally sceptical attitude he therefore emphasized the equivocal aspects of his time. His

monumental *Heroes* in their tattered battle dress, figures marked as much by failure as they are by resignation, possess an accordingly contradictory character. The fact that the artist – who was a mere twenty-seven years of age at the time – devoted himself to the subject of "heroes" or "types" at all was provocative per se. (Male) heroism and its onetime exponents had been called into question by the war and the post-war period. The fragile and paradoxical character of the *Heroes* with regard to content finds its equivalent in their form. The consistently frontal depiction and central placement of the clearly outlined figure contrast with the wildness of the palette and the vehemence of the painting style. Baselitz thus illustrated a reality unwelcome in the German Federal Republican success story of the economic miracle – and what is more, to do so he availed himself of figuration, a supposedly obsolete form.

Yet Baselitz was concerned here with far more than general social issues – he was also reflecting on his own position in relation to society. The result is a forceful assertion of the self and definition of identity that runs contrary to all of the currents of the period in question.

The travelling exhibition's subsequent venues will be the Moderna Museet Stockholm, the Palazzo delle Esposizioni Rom and the Museo Guggenheim Bilbao.

**Curator:** Max Hollein

**Co-curator:** Dr Eva Mongi-Vollmer

## **David Claerbout. Die reine Notwendigkeit**

**28 September to 23 October 2016**

### **Städel Garden**

From 28 September to 23 October 2016 – on the occasion of the Frankfurt Book Fair, whose guests of honour will be the Netherlands and Flanders – the Städel will present a new work by the Belgian artist David Claerbout (b. 1969) within the framework of the series "In the Städel Garden". At first sight, the sixty-minute video *Die reine Notwendigkeit* developed especially for the Städel Museum looks like a direct appropriation of the popular animated film *The Jungle Book* by Wolfgang Reithermann from 1967. For his work, Claerbout had the drawings re-created in an elaborate process – the major difference being that he eliminated the humanized character of the familiar animals the Bear, the Panther, the Snake, the Tiger etc and therefore all narrative thread. They now move through the jungle like members of their species in an animal documentary, undisturbed by humanity's stories. Rather than telling the tale of a young boy, the video culminates every hour on the hour in the final scene of the 1967 original: the

singing girl who has come to the jungle to fetch water. For Claerbout, this scene serves as the beginning and end of the loop dividing time into one-hour units on a large LED screen in the Städel Garden.

In his photographic and filmic installations, David Claerbout employs visual material ranging from found historical photographs and reconstructed images to films shot according to his instructions. He processes this material digitally in such a way that the boundary between photography and film becomes fluid. Claerbout deconstructs linear courses of time, thus inquiring into how we tell stories with images.

**Curator:** Dr Martin Engler

### **Antoine Watteau. The Draughtsman**

**19 October 2016 to 15 January 2017**

#### **Exhibition gallery of the Department of Prints and Drawings**

The French painter Antoine Watteau (1684–1721) is among the great masters of draughtsmanship. His sensitive studies in red, black and white chalk capture female and male models, observations of details and spontaneous ideas, and develop that world of cheerful companies and mutually attentive conviviality that would come to be called “*fêtes galantes*” (“courtship parties”).

In cooperation with the Teylers Museum in Haarlem, the Städel Museum is planning an exhibition of drawings by Antoine Watteau for the autumn of 2016. Both institutions have in their possession substantial holdings of works by the artist, who can be considered one of the most outstanding draughtsmen in the history of French art. His innovative style – characterized by a combination of spontaneity, ease and intimacy on the one hand and observation of the utmost precision on the other – contrasts starkly with the formal tradition of the academically oriented artists of his time. With its psychological sensitivity, the new, virtuoso art reflects the spirit of the dawning Enlightenment.

Watteau is relatively little known in Germany, despite the fact that in the eighteenth century he was one of the Frederick the Great's favourite artists. The last exhibition to be devoted here to Watteau took place in 1984. Among the works in the Städel Museum's painting collection is the earliest version of the *Embarkation for Cythera*, which – owing in part to the two further versions in the Louvre and Charlottenburg Palace – represents what is presumably the artist's most famous pictorial invention. Enhanced by a small selection of further paintings, the Städel Museum's *Embarkation for Cythera* will form the core of the presentation of approximately fifty choice drawings from the holdings of the participating institutions as well as a number of other prominent German, Dutch

and French collections. Approximately twenty drawings by such artists as François Boucher, Nicolas Lancret or Jean-Honoré Fragonard will supplement this selection, bearing testimony to Watteau's impact on later generations of artists.

Following its presentation at the Städel Museum, the exhibition will be shown at the Teylers Museum in Haarlem from 2 February to 14 May 2017.

**Curator:** Dr Martin Sonnabend

### **Battle of the Sexes: From Franz von Stuck to Frida Kahlo**

**24 November 2016 to 19 March 2017**

#### **Exhibition annex**

The exhibition "Battle of the Sexes: From Franz von Stuck to Frida Kahlo" will shed light on the artistic investigation of gender roles from the mid-nineteenth century to the end of World War II. The traditional definition of male and female as active/passive, rational/emotional, culture/nature was heavily debated in modern art: many artists presented their viewers with overstated gender characteristics and cemented stereotypical role models in their works. Others challenged established clichés and endeavoured to subvert them with strategies such as irony, exaggeration, masquerade and blending. Featuring a selection of some 150 works of painting, sculpture, graphic art, photography and film, the large-scale exhibition project aims to single out the especially concise artistic positions and open up a dialogue between them.

The show will draw from the Städel Museum holdings which – with paintings by Max Liebermann, Edvard Munch and Franz von Stuck, sculptures by Auguste Rodin and photographs by Frank Eugene, Man Ray and others – include important works on the subject. With the additional aid of important loans, the presentation will place works by well-known names in art history – for example Hannah Höch, Édouard Manet, Gustav Klimt, Otto Dix or Frida Kahlo – side by side with discoveries that expand the canon with the strong outlooks of such artists as Leonor Fini, John Collier or Gustav Adolf Mossa. Against the background of the intense discussion on the topic and the constantly evolving roles of woman and man, the project will offer insights into the complexity of gender issues and shed light on the art historical dimension of a highly relevant socio-politic subject.

**Curators:** Felicity Korn, Dr Felix Krämer

**Subject to alterations.**