

PRESS INFORMATION

THE STÄDEL MUSEUM

700 Years of Art under a Single Roof

Experiencing art, making new discoveries, coming together, learning: The Städel Museum is a place of encounter, exchange and the exploration of our past, present and future. A private foundation from its very inception, the Städel is sustained to this day by the generous support of citizens, foundations and business enterprises of the city and region. It collects, preserves and studies works spanning 700 years of European art history and teaches the public about them. With its on-site programme and online digital offers, the Städel Museum provides unique access to art across generations, epochs and styles—quite in keeping with the vision of its founder Johann Friedrich Städel. It creates spaces that stimulate our senses and put us in touch with important questions. Who are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going? Art has inspiring answers to offer.

As stipulated by the banker and businessman Johann Friedrich Städel in his will, the Städel Museum was established in 1815 as a civil foundation. Thanks to the founder's dedication and collecting activities, the museum can today offer its visitors a virtually complete overview of 700 years of European art—from the early fourteenth century to the Renaissance, from the Baroque to Classical Modernism and the very present. On more than 15,000 square metres, visitors can take inspiration from paintings and sculptures, photographs, drawings and prints. Among the collection highlights are works by such artists as Lucas Cranach, Albrecht Dürer, Sandro Botticelli, Rembrandt van Rijn, Jan Vermeer, Maria Sibylla Merian, Claude Monet, Pablo Picasso, Max Beckmann, Lotte Laserstein, Francis Bacon, Louise Bourgeois, Gerhard Richter and Wolfgang Tillmans.

In the fulfilment of its educational mandate, the Städel also pursues a strategy in the digital realm as a way of sparking enthusiasm for engagement with art and culture in a wide variety of visitor groups. Since first launching this effort, the museum has developed numerous innovative digital offers, including the Digital Collection, the Digital@, apps, podcasts, the online course on modern art and the Café Deutschland oral history project, but also film and video series.

The Städel Museum collection and permanent exhibition

The Städel Museum's permanent exhibition takes visitors on a journey through more than 700 years of art from medieval times to the present. The **Old Masters** suite

Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie

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presents European painting from 1300 to 1800 with highlights by Sandro Botticelli, Lucas Cranach the Elder, Jan van Eyck, Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn, Hans Holbein the Younger, Titian and Johannes Vermeer. The oldest works are still deeply rooted in the Christian religious world of the Middle Ages. The Renaissance brought the real-life experience of humanist-educated people into focus. By the Baroque age, these increasingly emotional depictions had become quite complex in terms of content. In the period from 1800 to 1945, Europe's societies underwent rapid developments—and those in the visual arts were none the less breathtaking. The works on view in the **Modern Art** galleries raise questions and offer controversial answers. Should art be beautiful? Does it serve a purpose? What is religion's role? Yet however many the discourses, one thing is clear: people now granted art more space in their hearts and minds than ever before. Here the highlights include works by Max Beckmann, Edgar Degas, Lotte Laserstein, Henri Matisse, Claude Monet, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Pablo Picasso, Auguste Rodin, Otilie W. Roederstein, Milly Steger and many others. **Contemporary Art** at the Städel spans the decades from 1945 to the present. This period unites a multitude of widely different art currents that respond to one another—now in agreement, now in opposition—at ever shorter intervals. Boasting prominent examples by Francis Bacon, Georg Baselitz, Isa Genzken, Martin Kippenberger, Yves Klein, Gerhard Richter, Wolfgang Tillmanns, Jeff Wall, Andy Warhol and Corinne Wasmuht, the collection sheds light on diverse interconnections across decades, schools, isms and groupings.

Encompassing some 100,000 drawings and prints from the Late Middle Ages to the present, the Städel's **Collection of Prints and Drawings** is among the most important of its kind in Germany. It has its origins in the collection of Johann Friedrich Städel (1728–1816) and underwent significant expansion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries under such prominent connoisseurs as Johann David Passavant (1787–1861) and Georg Swarzenski (1876–1957). In addition to its excellent Old Masters holdings to 1800, its highlights include Nazarene drawings, nineteenth-century French drawings and prints, Expressionist works and examples of post-1945 American art.

Hardly had photography been invented in 1839 than the medium already made its way into the Städel Museum. Initially amassed for the educational benefit of the students at the art school affiliated with the museum, the collection featured not only reproductions of artworks from all over the world, but also cityscapes, scenes of everyday life and landscape views. Over the course of the decades, photography continued to develop—and not just technically. Photography has many faces: it is reproduction, documentation, staging, imprint, advertisement, art and much more. Initially a utilitarian medium, it gradually evolved into an art form in its own right capable of setting new aesthetic standards—then and now. It revolutionized our

visual habits and still interacts with painting to this day. The Städel Museum's **Photography Collection** mirrors this development. Its dynamically expanding holdings today encompass more than 5,000 works dating from the medium's beginnings to the present.

The Städel Museum milestones

Johann Friedrich Städel was born in Frankfurt am Main in 1728, his father Johann Daniel Städel having come here from Strasbourg to engage in trade. Johann Friedrich followed suit, selling spices and coffee but also pigments such as indigo and metals such as lead bar. As time went on, his commercial activities evolved to include the commission and banking transactions that ultimately paved his way to wealth. Johann Friedrich Städel had a keen interest in art. As far back as the 1760s, he had begun filling his house with paintings, drawings, prints and small-scale sculptures, most of which he purchased on his numerous travels. Whereas in painting he concentrated on the German and Dutch Baroque, in the area of prints and drawings he set out to amass a comprehensive overview of the history of art. Already early on, he planned to make his art holdings accessible to the public as well as to train and foster budding artists.

In his home he hosted art shows and gave private guided tours to interested persons. Johann Friedrich Städel died in Frankfurt am Main in 1816. The final version of his will, written on 15 March 1815, contains a foundation deed. This document laid the cornerstone for the Städel'sches Kunstinstitut—the original name of the museum now known the world over as the Städel Museum.

Städel's residential quarters in the building on Rossmarkt were soon full to bursting. After an interim lodging in the Thurn and Taxis Palais in Neue Mainzer Strasse, his collection received a domicile of its own—a museum building constructed on the Sachsenhausen bank of the Main according to plans by the architect Oskar Sommer. Within decades, Frankfurt's population grew fourfold; its municipal institutions and private foundations and associations likewise expanded and thrived. The Städel benefited from this public and private dedication: the Städel'scher Museums-Verein (Städel Museum Association) was founded in 1899 as an expression of communal civic art patronage and from 1907 onwards the city financed a Städtische Galerie für Moderne Kunst (Municipal Gallery of Modern Art) within the private Städel foundation.

These years of growth were followed by the National Socialist accession to power, which led to far-reaching changes in Frankfurt's cultural institutions. After the war, the order of the day at the Städel was to manage the retrieval of works from external storage locations, the return of unlawfully acquired works to their rightful owners and the reconstruction of the partially destroyed building. On 9 November 1963 the big

day finally arrived: after nearly twenty years, the people of Frankfurt had their Städel back.

Frankfurt's Museumsufer (Museum Embankment) project was realized in 1984 under the motto "culture for all". A new annex of the Städel designed by the architect Gustav Peichl now featured parts of the modern and contemporary holdings while also, for the first time, providing space for special exhibitions. Entirely in keeping with the wishes of its founder Johann Friedrich Städel, the Städel Museum continued to develop its art holdings in terms of quality and quantity alike. The Gartenhallen (Garden Halls) for the contemporary collection opened in 2012. Designed by the schneider+schumacher architectural firm, the new wing provided an additional 3,000 square metres of exhibition area, allowing the museum to double the size of its permanent exhibition. Half of the funds for the 52-million-euro project came from public sources, the other half—thanks to unparalleled support from business enterprises, foundations and countless individuals—from private contributions.

When he wrote his will in 1815, Johann Friedrich Städel laid the groundwork for Germany's oldest museum foundation. Joined by the people of Frankfurt, the Städel Museum celebrated its bicentennial in 2015 with several superb exhibitions and projects. The anniversary also marked the beginning of the Digital Expansion: to this day, the Städel has continued to develop digital offers to enhance the museum visit in entertaining and technically innovative ways at no extra cost. The Städel Museum is thus fulfilling its educational mandate—to make art accessible to all—far beyond the boundaries of its physical premises.

A people's museum

An institution firmly anchored in the history of Frankfurt, the Städel carries its founder's vision—to make the museum accessible to one and all—into the present. Over the past years, it has realized groundbreaking exhibitions and research projects, enriched its collection with prominent new purchases, gifts and bequests, and developed an up-to-date programme of events and activities for all visitor groups.

The museum has also invested in structural measures to ensure its sustainable operability on all levels: the historical Main River façade has been restored, the Department of Prints and Drawings—complete with its Study Hall—refurbished, the Städel Garden newly landscaped and planted, and the Old Masters and Modern galleries decorated throughout with a new colour scheme and equipped with an energy-saving LED lighting system. The museum has the great dedication of private and public supporters to thank for these many enhancements. It is they who make the Städel one of Germany's most successful art museums.

Patronage

Ever since Johann Friedrich Städel bequeathed his art collection and entire fortune to the citizens of Frankfurt in 1815, the Städel Museum has been borne by its deep ties to numerous friends of art. And to the very present, it is their dedication that enables people from all over the world to come together, experience art and make new discoveries. Frankfurt society's broad-ranging dedication and fellowship are what form the foundation of the Städel Museum's innovative and successful work. The Städelverein unites people—with one another and with art.

Yet there are also myriad other forms of dedication: to this day, many citizens follow the example of the founder Johann Friedrich Städel and bequeath unique works as well as substantial funds to the museum. Every estate donation makes a contribution to the institution's continued existence and further development beyond the temporal bounds of the donor's lifetime. Städel patrons who opt for a gallery sponsorship likewise create a valuable symbol of their personal dedication to society. This form of support helps guarantee the long-term maintenance of the collection galleries and the diversification of the works on display there. The Städelkomitee 21. Jahrhundert (Städel Committee of the 21st Century) founded in 2007 is unique in Germany. With their annual subscriptions, its members enable the museum to purchase contemporary art. The StädelFreunde 1815 (Friends of the Städel 1815) brings together persons interested in art who support the Städel as an institution and would like to experience it in its unique art-historical breadth. The museum's Corporate Partners provide a decisive basis for private dedication at the Städel Museum: numerous prominent business enterprises have stood by our side, supporting our wide-ranging museum work, for many years.

The museum education programme is the heart of the work carried out at Städel. Digital and analogue educational offers make broad cultural participation possible and convey the collection as well as art- and cultural-historical questions to the public. Numerous foundations, business enterprises and private individuals contribute to ensuring the success of the Städel's museum education work.

THE STÄDEL MUSEUM

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Opening hours: Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun + holidays 10.00 am – 6.00 pm, Thu 10.00 am – 09.00 pm

Tickets: Tickets available online at shop.staedelmuseum.de/en. Regular admission: Tue–Fri, Sat, Sun + holidays €18, reduced €16; admission free for children under 12. Groups of at least 10 persons who would normally be charged the full admission fee: €16 per person. Groups are required to book in advance by contacting +49(0)69-605098-200 or info@staedelmuseum.de

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



Information: www.staedelmuseum.de

@staedelmuseum on social media: #staedel on Instagram / YouTube / TikTok / Facebook / LinkedIn /

STÄDEL STORIES: For more stories and background information on the collection and the special exhibitions, read, watch and listen to stories.staedelmuseum.de (in German)