

MEDIA RELEASE

05.07. 02.11.2025**Kandinsky, Picasso, Miró et al. zurück in Luzern**

A superlative exhibition was mounted in the newly opened Kunstmuseum Luzern in 1935 featuring works by Alberto Giacometti, Joan Miró, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Alexander Calder and others. Whereas at the same time in National-Socialist Germany art by Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee or Piet Mondrian was being defamed as «degenerate», in 1935 the Kunstmuseum Luzern showed precisely these modernist positions, at the heart of an ever more totalitarian Europe.

The Kunstmuseum Luzern made its mark internationally with the historic exhibition entitled *These, Antithese, Synthese*. To this very day, the exhibition is considered as «legendary», «inimitable» and «unsurpassable». The museum branch considers the 1935 exhibition to be impossible for a medium-sized institution like the Kunstmuseum Lucerne to reconstruct due to the high calibre of the art it displayed; this belief roused the current team's ambition. So now, under the heading *Kandinsky, Picasso, Miró et al. zurück in Luzern* (Kandinsky, Picasso, Miró et al. back in Lucerne), works will be presented that were on show in Lucerne back then, or that qualify as valid alternatives to works not available on loan, for whatever reasons.

Over a period of more than five years, research was carried out on the almost one hundred works in the original 1935 exhibition. Most of them date from the 1920s and 30s and since then, by way of the art market, are owned by the world's most prestigious museums or by private collectors. Other works have been lost, however, and some have even been destroyed. What is more, the research work was hampered by the unsatisfactory source situation. Not many papers dating from 1935 documenting the historic exhibition have been preserved. In addition to the exhibition catalogue, which has few illustrations, all that exists in Lucerne's city archives is a scanty folder containing documents related to the exhibition. That it has been possible to get quite a large number of the original works on loan is all the more astonishing.

Kandinsky, Picasso, Miró et al. zurück in Luzern presents magnificent art. The celebrated works also draw attention to additional stories, as the historical context of the legendary 1935 exhibition *These, Antithese, Synthese* includes the emergence of modern art, resentment toward the avant-garde, fascism and communism. *Kandinsky, Picasso, Miró et al. zurück in Luzern* conveys the intellectual, political and cultural turmoil of the period between the world wars. This exhibition therefore stands for a critical self-reflection on the part of the institution and its history. For contrary to the 1935 exhibition's own aspiration to honour the promise of modernism and facilitate an alternative to capitalism and fascism, that exhibition clearly overlooked women or artists of non-European origins. The only presented female artist was Sophie Taeuber-Arp. Given that the three exhibition makers, Paul Hilber, Konrad Farner und Hans Erni, are known to have rejected Barbara Hepworth's work, the exhibition *Kandinsky, Picasso, Miró et al. zurück in Luzern* is including a large group of works by that artist. It is thus highlighting the history of modern art's marginalised women artists, taking Sophie Taeuber-Arp and Barbara Hepworth as examples. The exhibition heightens our sensitivity to contexts. At the same time, it offers an overwhelming art spectacle for the senses in view of the fact that the art is, plainly and simply,

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Luzern**

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inspirational. Viewers will have the special and unique opportunity to experience the brilliant works by modern art's women pioneers gathered together at the Kunstmuseum Luzern.

A comprehensive catalogue will be published to accompany the exhibition, intensifying its cultural significance and illustrating it by a large number of reproductions.

curated by Fanni Fetzner

With Hans Arp, Georges Braque, Alexander Calder, Paul Cézanne, Giorgio de Chirico, André Derain, Hans Erni, Max Ernst, Luis Fernández, Alberto Giacometti, Julio González, Juan Gris, Jean Hélion, Barbara Hepworth, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Fernand Léger, Joan Miró, Piet Mondrian, Ben Nicholson, Amédée Ozenfant, Wolfgang Paalen, Pablo Picasso, Sophie Taeuber-Arp

DATES

Media Preview

Friday, 04.07., 10.15 am

Opening

Friday, 04.07., from 6 pm

Greeting and introduction

Andi Scheitlin, President Kunstgesellschaft Luzern

Fanni Fetzner, Director Kunstmuseum Luzern

Events

All events take place in German. For more press information in English, please contact us:

caroline.glock@kunstmuseumluzern.ch or hannah.winters@kunstmuseumluzern.ch

Introduction for Teachers

Wednesday, 20.08., 5 pm

The Curator as Guide

Wednesday, 27.08., 6 pm

Wednesday, 22.10., 6 pm

Guided tour with Fanni Fetzner

A Museum Affair

Sunday, 31.08., 11 am

with Heinz Stahlhut, Hans Erni Museum

Wednesday, 24.09., 6 pm

with Kerstin Bittar, Museum Sammlung Rosengart

Guided Family Tour

Sunday, 07.09., 11 am

Guided Tour for the generation 60plus

Thursday, 18.09., 3.30 pm

Public Tours

Tue–Sat at 3 pm, So at 11 am

Further events can be found on our website from June:

www.kunstmuseumluzern.ch/besuch/agenda/

Publication

These, Antithese, Synthese – reconstructed. 1935/2025, with essays by Fanni Fetzner, Stanislaus von Moos, Beni Muhl, Bettina Steinbrügge, ed. by Kunstmuseum Luzern, Skira Edition, g/e, 336 pages, ISBN 978-88-572-5395-4

Opening Hours

Tue–Sun, 10 am–6pm

Wed, 10 am–7 pm

Mo closed

Tickets

Book tickets and tours online:

www.shop.kunstmuseumluzern.ch

Booklet

Discover a wide variety of collaborations and events in Lucerne related to the exhibition *Kandinsky, Picasso, Miró et al. zurück in Luzern*.

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The multimedia-guide gives in-depth information on the exhibition and can be heard and read on your smartphone [E/G/F/I]: kml.currit.net