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Collection display: “There is only one thing I fear in life, my friend: One day, the black will swallow the red.”

25 May – 31 August 2025

To coincide with the “Vija Celmins” exhibition, the Fondation Beyeler will show a presentation of its collection focussing exclusively on painting. Rooms devoted to individual artists feature works that have left a distinct imprint on this traditional medium and opened up new perspectives. The exhibition presents works by Jean-Michel Basquiat, Mark Bradford, Marlene Dumas, Wade Guyton, Pablo Picasso, Gerhard Richter, Mark Rothko, Wilhelm Sasnal, Wolfgang Tillmans and Andy Warhol. The new display establishes striking and unprecedented connections between outstanding works of modern and contemporary art. A special highlight is the museum debut of Gerhard Richter’s digital projection *Moving Picture (946-3), Kyoto Version, 2019–2024*. This year’s Daros room at the Fondation Beyeler is devoted to Mark Bradford. The display further features Andy Warhol’s monumental painting *Sixty Last Suppers, 1986*, on loan from the Nicola Erni Collection. Another focus is placed on Pablo Picasso, with a comprehensive gathering of more than 30 paintings and sculptures.

The selection of artists shown in the exhibition is based on the Fondation Beyeler’s own collection. The notion of painting has been given a wide interpretation. Four of the artists make no use of brushes dipped in paint: Andy Warhol uses silkscreen printing techniques, Wolfgang Tillmans produces photographic images with and without a camera, Mark Bradford collages his works, and Wade Guyton creates his pictures using a computer and an inkjet printer. And yet they all expressly view themselves as working within the tradition of the medium of painting. Even Gerhard Richter, the quintessential painter, is represented here with a new digital film he developed on the basis of his abstract paintings. As the exhibition vividly captures, the history of painting is one of permanent reinvention and the medium stands as an artistic language of inexhaustible possibilities.

Pablo Picasso is the most influential artist of the 20th century and his impact on shaping the development of modern painting is second to none. With his radical formal language and his willingness to experiment, he fundamentally changed the way painting is viewed and opened up new possibilities for artistic expression. The artist plays a central role in the collection of the Fondation Beyeler. The current exhibition honours Picasso’s exceptional significance by bringing together in a unique display paintings and sculptures held in the museum’s collection – including several major long-term loans. With more than 30 works, it offers a fascinating overview of the artist’s multifaceted oeuvre and allows visitors to experience the remarkable range of his work.

One room is devoted to Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat. It centres on Warhol’s *Sixty Last Suppers, 1986*, on loan from the renowned Nicola Erni Collection, an outstanding work from the artist’s last series of paintings, which is among his most valuable and significant late works. It is shown alongside *Profit I, 1982*, by Jean-Michel Basquiat, one of the artist’s early masterpieces. The juxtaposition of these two works allows for a fascinating dialogue between Warhol’s Pop Art aesthetic and Basquiat’s expressionist approach.

The exhibition further features large-format collaged works by US-American artist Mark Bradford from the Daros Collection. As for Wolfgang Tillmans’ set of photographic works, it makes for a surprisingly painterly room. Wade Guyton is featured with a multi-part installation of digital images. Since the 2000s, Guyton has been using printers to probe the traditional boundaries of painting, exploring the very conditions of painting by questioning the process of creating images in the digital age. Gerhard Richter’s digital projection *Moving Picture (946-3), Kyoto Version*, produced over the period 2019–2024, is on view in a museum for the very first time and offers visitors a unique visual and auditory experience.

Marlene Dumas is considered one of the most important painters working today. Through her expressive visual language, she explores fundamental human themes such as vulnerability, intimacy, fear, empathy, and affection. Her works challenge common visual habits as well as societal norms. The Fondation Beyeler owns an important group of works by the artist, providing many-layered insights into her oeuvre. They include the museum's most recent acquisition *The Devil May Care, 2024*, an impressive painting typical of Dumas' ability to combine psychological depth and painterly sensitivity.

The room devoted to Mark Rothko makes for yet another highlight of the exhibition – it is a quiet, awe-inspiring space, which brings together five significant works by the artist from the collection of the Fondation Beyeler. Rothko's paintings, celebrated for their vibrant colour fields and their meditative depth, attest to his quest for spiritual experience in painting. As a key figure of Abstract Expressionism, Rothko has had a decisive influence on modern art and established a new understanding of the emotional impact of colour and form. The title of the exhibition is a quote attributed to Rothko by John Logan in his stage play *Red*: "There is only one thing I fear in life, my friend... One day the black will swallow the red." This quote is sensual and beautiful, while simultaneously powerful, almost imploring that painting is no harmless endeavour."

The exhibition is complemented by long-term loans from the Collection Marx, the Daros Collection, the Nicola Erni Collection, the Rudolf Staechelin Collection, as well as private collections. It is curated by Theodora Vischer, Chief Curator of the Fondation Beyeler.

Press images are available under www.fondationbeyeler.ch/en/media/press-images

Fondation Beyeler

The Fondation Beyeler in Riehen near Basel is internationally renowned for its high-calibre exhibitions, its significant collection of modern and contemporary art, as well as its ambitious schedule of events. The museum building was designed by Renzo Piano in the idyllic setting of a park with venerable trees and water lily ponds. It boasts a unique location in the heart of a local recreation area, looking out onto fields, pastures and vineyards close to the foothills of the Black Forest. In collaboration with Swiss architect Peter Zumthor, the Fondation Beyeler is constructing a new museum building in the adjoining park, thus further enhancing the harmonious interplay of art, architecture and nature.

Further information:

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Fondation Beyeler opening hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, Wednesday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.