



LAURENZ FOUNDATION

OUT OF THE BOX

20 Years Schaulager

10 June – 19 November 2023

2023 is an extraordinary year for Schaulager: 20 years ago, the house opened as a completely new institution with an innovative concept. With **OUT OF THE BOX**, Schaulager is now presenting an extensive group exhibition that brings together works by around 25 artists, including David Claerbout, Tacita Dean, Thomas Demand, Gina Fischli, Peter Fischli, Katharina Fritsch, Robert Gober, Rodney Graham, Gary Hill, Martin Honert, Klara Lidén, Dieter Roth, Thomas Ruff, Anri Sala, Jean-Frédéric Schnyder, Dayanita Singh, Monika Sosnowska, Jane & Louise Wilson and others. A special focus lies on time-based media presented in projection rooms placed throughout the exhibition.

OUT OF THE BOX - the title of the exhibition exemplifies the idea that underlies Schaulager, which was founded in 2003 with the idea of combining the storage and presentation of contemporary art. Even when the works of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation are not on view in exhibitions at Kunstmuseum Basel or in other museums all over the world, they are neither packaged nor boxed but rather installed at Schaulager. To this end, the Laurenz Foundation planned and realized an unprecedented type of building in collaboration with the internationally renowned architectural offices of Herzog & de Meuron. Not only has this visionary idea inspired many other institutions, Schaulager itself has become a well-established institution for international research, storage and exhibition space. The title of the exhibition, **OUT OF THE BOX**, points to the enduring relevance of Schaulager's founding concept.

OUT OF THE BOX also draws attention to the steadily evolving parameters of contemporary art. "Box," here interpreted as a synonym of "room," refers to a fundamental aspect of contemporary art. The room in which artists present their time-based works is crucial and incorporated into the process of making them; they cannot be shown, cannot exist, without a room; the room impacts the work even though the moving images that we see are immaterial and consist for the most part only of digital data confined to a storage device. Being intrinsic to the work, the room is carefully defined and adapted to meet the work's requirements each time it is presented. Being custom-made, such rooms are singular much like a bespoke garment. Accordingly, larger and smaller boxes are placed throughout the exhibition with areas and passages opening up between them. The display of **OUT OF THE BOX** thus affords various views of and through the largest box of all, Schaulager itself.

The exhibition presents large-format, time-based works alongside with other most recent acquisitions of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation. Some of them will be on public view in an institutional exhibition for the first time. Thus, a diversity of video, films, sculptures, paintings, drawings, and photographs will be shown throughout the two spacious and expansive levels of Schaulager.

Every work is unique and has a history of its own within the collection. The particularly noteworthy and complex audiovisual installation *Ravel Ravel* (2013) by the Albanian artist Anri Sala was acquired for the collection after it premiered at the Venice Biennale in 2013. For **OUT OF THE BOX**, Sala decided to present the adapted version *Ravel Ravel Interval* (2017), which he had already shown in 2017/18 at the Museo Tamayo in Mexico City: here, the two videos are not projected one above the other, as in Venice, but rather suspended one behind the other on two semitransparent screens, in a sound-reduced space conceived by the artist. Moving around in it means perceiving the acoustic, visual, and spatial interval between the two projections with all senses. The work centers on Maurice Ravel's *Concerto pour la main gauche* (1930),

which was commissioned by the concert pianist Paul Wittgenstein, who had lost his right arm in the First World War.

British artist Tacita Dean is represented with a large-format chalk drawing *Inferno* (2019), the overpainted photograph *Purgatory (Threshold)* (2020), and her 35mm film *Paradise* (2021). Dean was commissioned by The Royal Opera House in London to create the designs and costumes for a new ballet called *The Dante Project*. Co-produced with the Paris Opera, the ballet is inspired by Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* (1307-1321), with new music by Thomas Adès and a choreography by Wayne McGregor; it marked the 700th anniversary of the poet's death. The ballet premiered in London in October 2021 and was shown at the Palais Garnier in Paris until May 2023. For *The Dante Project*, Tacita Dean represented these three realms of Dante's journey in an in-spired odyssey through various mediums and means of representation. For OUT OF THE BOX, the three works have been coherently choreographed following the chronological sequence of the ballet.

David Claerbout confronts the public with an illusion: a forest fire that is utterly devastating despite the virtual world in which it unravels. Although a digital construct, the fire blaze can no longer be distinguished from reality. In 2017, Schaulager presented Claerbout's large-scale projection *Olympia (The real-time disintegration into ruins of the Berlin Olympic stadium over the course of a thousand years)* (start 2016). The artist's reflections on time and perception are dramatically heightened in *Wildfire (meditation on fire)* (2019-2020).

A group of works by the Swedish artist Klara Lidén is one of the most recent additions to the collection of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation. Space as such and the positioning of her own body in the context of her surroundings are important aspects of her work. In the media installation *Closer Now* (2022), Lidén shows herself stoically rolling down with somersaults on the hard asphalt of a narrow side street. Her movement is echoed in cardboard boxes suspended in the space, which rotate around their own axis. In contrast, the video *You're all places that leave me breathless* (2020) shows the artist climbing in scaffolding that looks as if it were revolving around her.

Regular visitors to previous exhibitions will encounter works by artists already presented at Schaulager in large-scale monographic shows, for instance Monika Sosnowska, with her sculpture of a crumpled cube *Untitled* (2006) that dominates the space. Another is the universalist Dieter Roth, to whom Schaulager dedicated its inaugural exhibition in 2003. It is only fitting to celebrate the 20-year anniversary in June with a new publication on Dieter Roth's *Selbstturm; Löwenturm* (1969/70-1998) in the collection of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation. The image concept for the book has been designed by the artist Peter Fischli, whose work is also on view in OUT OF THE BOX, not only from the days of the artist duo Fischli/Weiss, but also recent projects as a solo artist, including a group of kinetic sculptures made in 2023 and presented in a museum exhibition for the first time.

OUT OF THE BOX invites the public to engage with the art of our time, to enjoy it and rethink today's thought-provoking issues from a new perspective. It takes time to fully appreciate the art on display, especially the media works. To make that possible, tickets for the exhibition will be valid for three visits.

The exhibition was conceived by Heidi Naef, Senior Curator, together with Schaulager's research team. The artist's book on Dieter Roth was developed and realized by Schaulager, Peter Fischli created the image concept.