



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 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. 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.

The exhibition is presented throughout the two spacious and expansive levels at Schaulager. The most recent acquisitions of the Emanuel Hofmann Foundation will be shown alongside large-format, time-based works. Some of them will be on public view in a museum exhibition for the first time. A diversity of paintings, drawings, sculptures, videos, films and photographs covers the work of some 25 artists.

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 a different version, *Ravel Ravel Interval* (2017). For this he created a room six meters high in which practically no sound is reflected: there are no vibrations to help locate oneself in the spatial environment. The work centers on Maurice Ravel's *Concerto pour la main gauche* (1921-1931), 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). All three works are part of "The Dante Project" (2021), an artistic collaboration with choreographer Wayne McGregor and composer Thomas Adès. These works underlie the unique stage sets and costumes Dean designed for the ballet production of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The commissioned work, a coproduction of the Royal Ballet in London and the Ballet Opera de Paris, was a triumphant success when it premiered in London, September 2021.

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 inferno 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 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 somersaulting, awkwardly and stoically, down 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 as if weightless 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 exhibitions, for instance, Monika Sosnowska, with her sculpture of a crumpled cube *Untitled* (2006) that dominates 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). It 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 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.