

## MEDIA RELEASE

Zurich, 24 February 2015



Cuno Amiet (1868–1961), *In the Garden*, 1911  
 Oil on canvas, 98 x 91 cm, Museum zu Aller-  
 heiligen, Schaffhausen, Sturzenegger-Stiftung  
 Werkkatalog no. 1911.36  
 Photo: SIK-ISEA, Zurich (Philipp Hitz)

### New publications:

**Catalogue raisonné**  
**«Cuno Amiet. Die Gemälde 1883–1919»**

*and*

**Digital catalogue raisonné**  
**«Cuno Amiet. Die Gemälde 1883–1961»**

**On 4 March 2015 the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA) will present a catalogue raisonné of Cuno Amiet's paintings in two formats: the book «Cuno Amiet. Die Gemälde 1883–1919» and the digital catalogue of his works dating from 1883 right through to 1961. These publications are highly significant, as the importance attributed to Cuno Amiet in art history and his constant presence in the art market have for some time demonstrated the need for a catalogue of his paintings. Following the catalogues raisonnés devoted to Giovanni Giacometti, Félix Vallotton and Ferdinand Hodler, this is a further milestone in the research being conducted at SIK-ISEA into Swiss art around 1900. The catalogue was edited by Franz Müller and Viola Radlach with the assistance of Larissa Ullmann.**

Cuno Amiet (1868–1961) from Solothurn, a friend of Giovanni Giacometti, is a central figure in Swiss art from the mid-1890s until after the Second World War. As a friend and pupil of Gauguin in Pont-Aven, he responded earlier than his other Swiss colleagues to the art of French Post-Impressionism. Soon after the turn of the century he became a role model for those young artists in Dresden who acquired international fame by founding the Expressionist group known as «Die Brücke». His significance as one of the most influential progressive artists in Switzerland until the First World War years is undisputed. Amiet was regarded, even in his own lifetime, as the first exponent of Fauvism in Switzerland and as breaking with the “Stilkunst” personified by Hodler. When the latter died, Amiet replaced him as Switzerland's “peintre officiel”, becoming a force for cultural integration that extended much wider than the art-loving public. Oschwand, where he lived and worked, was even described in the inter-war years as the Rütli of Swiss cultural policy. His status as the artistic darling of the educated middle classes followed a shift to a more conventional idiom, although in the 1950s he renounced this again to produce an extremely subtle, colouristic late oeuvre. His stylistic flexibility – a challenge to many of his contemporaries – might be seen with the hindsight of history as pre-empting the future of art.

The two-volume printed catalogue raisonné lists all the paintings – some 1,100 of them – that are currently known to have been produced during his early period, from his first self-portrait as a fifteen-year-old in 1883 to his expressive landscapes in 1919. The reproductions, most of them in colour, are accompanied by technical data and details of provenance, along with references in the literature and inclusion in exhibitions. Work commentaries describe the characteristics of these stylistically highly diverse paintings and their iconography. They are also placed in perspective within Amiet's oeuvre and the context of art history. Pivotal groups, such as the winter landscapes and the autumn harvests, are also the subject of detailed introductory texts. The works have been ordered by year and within the chronology also by genre, facilitating profound insights into Amiet's

development as an artist, as he shifted from Neo-Impressionist Divisionism back to the subtle precision of a Dutch *fijnschilder* and on again to the latest currents in early German Expressionism championed by «Der Blaue Reiter» (Alexej Jawlensky, Wassily Kandinsky) and «Die Brücke» (Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Erich Heckel, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff).

Amiet's early period has always attracted the most interest among art critics, exhibition managers, art historians and, indeed, art dealers. Recent decades have consolidated that approach, as a review of recent Amiet exhibitions will confirm. The catalogue raisonné of Cuno Amiet's paintings reflects this tradition, as the commentary has been confined to the period until 1919. That was when the first major retrospective featuring Amiet was mounted in the Kunsthalle in Bern and the University of Bern granted him an honorary doctorate. 1919 marked a watershed for the artist, who had just completed the lengthy task of decorating the loggia at the Kunsthaus in Zurich in 1918, his first commission for a prestigious mural of this kind. The book takes particular note – after years of academic neglect – of this *Jungbrunnen* cycle in Zurich.

The two-volume catalogue raisonné offers a wealth of new insights into the art of Cuno Amiet. There are in-depth essays by Franz Müller and Viola Radlach, a well-illustrated biography, extensive lists of literature and exhibitions, and several indices. One particularly valuable and informative feature is the reproduction in full of both directories kept by Amiet in his own hand.

The paintings of 1920–1961 will be available online ([www.cuno-amiet.ch](http://www.cuno-amiet.ch)) and free of charge to anyone interested, in addition to the entire catalogue raisonné with the early paintings of 1883–1919. This dual approach has made it possible to reflect the current thinking on Amiet and to complement a complete record of his early work with at least 2,000 later paintings.

### **Catalogue raisonné in print and online**

Franz Müller and Viola Radlach, assisted by Larissa Ullmann, *Cuno Amiet. Die Gemälde 1883–1919*, Zurich: Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA), 2014 (Catalogues Raisonnés of Swiss Artists, volume 28)

2 volumes, bound. Linen with embossed spine, colour jackets, stitched, endband, ribbon bookmark, 24 x 29.5 cm, case with colour cover, total 696 pages, approx. 1500 colour and 210 b&w illustrations, ISBN 978-3-85881-433-3

Distributed by: Scheidegger & Spiess, Zurich

Subscription price until 31 March 2015: CHF 480.- / € 480.-

Standard price from 1 April 2015: CHF 640.- / € 640.-

The catalogue raisonné will be available from bookshops from 4 March 2015.

### **Order publication**

*Digital catalogue raisonné of paintings 1883–1961*: [www.cuno-amiet.ch](http://www.cuno-amiet.ch) (Catalogues Raisonnés of Swiss Artists, 28 E), accessible free of charge from 4 March 2015

### **For further details please contact**

Sandra Ruff, Head of Communications, SIK-ISEA, Zollikerstrasse 32, Postbox 1124, CH-8032 Zurich  
[www.sik-isea.ch](http://www.sik-isea.ch), [sandra.ruff@sik-isea.ch](mailto:sandra.ruff@sik-isea.ch), T +41 44 388 51 36