

MEDIA RELEASE

Zurich, 17 April 2008

International Symposium on Ferdinand Hodler

To mark the major Hodler retrospective at the Museum of Art in Bern, the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK), which is to bring out the first volume of its Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings by Ferdinand Hodler in autumn 2008, the Institute for Art History at Bern University and the Museum of Art will be holding an international symposium on Ferdinand Hodler. It will take place on 17 and 18 April 2008 in the Aula PROGR/Museum of Art in Bern.

The considerable literature on Hodler breaks down into two kinds: one sets out primarily to collate documents on his biography and work, while the other is essentially analytical and interpretative. The principal proponent of the first kind is the author Carl Albert Loosli, who published a "General Catalogue" of hitherto identified works in 1924.

Loosli's "General Catalogue" remains a valuable reference. However, as a simple index of uncommented works it no longer caters for the requirements of modern-day scholarship. SIK is therefore currently engaged in compiling a critical catalogue raisonné. SIK's team of writers is able to draw on the research by Jura Brüscheiler, who has been writing about various aspects of Hodler's art in numerous articles and exhibitions for almost 50 years.

Apart from individual contributions to the "archaeology", recent research has concentrated on analysing Hodler's ideas about art and on broader references on Realist and Symbolist painting in Europe. Oskar Bätschmann in particular has devoted attention to Hodler's principles of composition and his world view.

The contributions to this symposium will cast light on Hodler's work in relation to both his own biography and the context of art history. Topics will include Hodler's career strategies as an artist, his participation in numerous exhibitions and competitions, the ups and downs of market prices and contemporary art criticism. Another theme will be interdisciplinary collaboration between art scholarship and art technology. The spectrum is completed by papers on Hodler's place in the European context of art history.

Open Programme

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