Press release
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To media editors

Exhibition opening
Between ‘Brücke’ and ‘Blauer Reiter’.
Hanna Bekker vom Rath as a pioneer of modern art
22/11/2013—23/02/2014

Hanna Bekker vom Rath, patron saint of artists defamed as ‘degenerate’.

With Hanna Bekker vom Rath as the patron saint of art derided as ‘degenerate’, in its new exhibition the Zentrum Paul Klee has hit upon a particularly controversial topic. She was one of the few stalwarts who distanced themselves from the National Socialist regime, while art dealers like Hildebrand Gurlitt profited from the disastrous artistic policy of the Nazis. 1,406 masterpieces have been found in Gurlitt’s son’s Munich apartment, works that had been believed lost since the Nazi era.

The Munich art find has attracted global attention. The list, published last week, of the works stored in Cornelius Gurlitt’s flat, features all the names of the artists supported by Hanna Bekker vom Rath, which form the core of the new exhibition in the Zentrum Paul Klee, Between ‘Brücke’ and ‘Blauer Reiter’. Hanna Bekker vom Rath as pioneer of modern art: Max Beckmann, Erich Heckel, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Käthe Kollwitz, Otto Müller, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff – and last of all Paul Klee, whose works had also been confiscated by the National Socialists.

Hanna Bekker vom Rath (1893–1983) was a remarkable ambassador for avant-garde art. In the 1920s she was friends with the leading artists of German Expressionism. Her support, initially spontaneous, later became a lasting mission: she bought works, invited painters to her legendary Blue House in Hofheim near Wiesbaden and introduced them to collectors. With her courageous advocacy of artists during National Socialism – whether through secret exhibitions in her Berlin studio or in the Blue House – she became a dependable friend for many artists ostracised as ‘degenerate’.

During the National Socialist regime her Blue House became a refuge for persecuted and ostracised painters and graphic artists. Jewish artists and intellectuals such as Ludwig Meidner or Rosa Schapire were welcome guests. Painters like Erich Heckel and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, or the artist Ida Kerkvliet, remained close to the committed collector and gallery owner throughout their lives. For Karl Schmidt-Rottluff Hanna Bekker vom Rath had a studio built in the large garden of the Blue House.
After the end of the Second World War, in 1947 she set up the Frankfurter Kunstkabinett Hanna Bekker vom Rath. That German Expressionism reacquired its global significance after the Second World War is largely down to her passionate struggle for modern art.

The exhibition, in collaboration with Museum Wiesbaden, is presenting the former collection of Hanna Bekker vom Rath, with works by artists including Max Beckmann, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Emil Nolde, Alexej Jawlensky, Paul Klee, Kurt Schwitters, Alberto Giacometti, Käthe Kollwitz and Willi Baumeister.

The exhibition is curated by Dr Michael Baumgartner. Marian Stein-Steinfeld granddaughter and director of the Hanna Bekker vom Rath Archive will be available for media questions and interviews.

The opening will be held on 21 November 2013 at 6:00 pm. Entrance is free.

**For further information:**
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Exhibition catalogue (in German)
Hanna Bekker vom Rath, Zwischen Brücke und Blauem Reiter, Hg. Museum Wiesbaden, Essays by Roman Zieglgänsberger, Marion Bornscheuer, Vera Klewitz, Marian Stein-Steinfeld, 208 pp. with 55 colour and 24 sb/2 illustrations, 19,5 x 25 cm, linen with dust jacket.
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