Press release

Zentrum Paul Klee
Bern

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Exhibition

Henry Moore
30/01—25/05/2015

Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern

Radical, experimental and avant-garde – the artist Henry Moore (1898–1986) is the centre of the first exhibition opening in the New Year with his masterpieces from the collection of the Tate. With only a few exceptions, he remained loyal to the technique of figuration – a passion he shared with Paul Klee. Both commented in a subtle manner on the happenings of their time, Moore as an official English «War artist» in the Second World War (e.g. with his famous «Shelter Drawings»). The exhibition with 28 sculptures and 42 works on paper from the collections of the Tate and the British Council gives an overview of the work of one of the most important sculptors of the 20th century, whose revival was initiated in 2010 by the large retrospective at Tate Britain.

1 Impressions from the exhibition: Henry Moore (1898 - 1986), Working Model for Three Way Piece No. 1: Points, 1964, bronze, 70 x 74 x 74 cm, Tate: Presented by the artist 1978, © Tate, London 2015, reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation
The figure of the human is the centre of Moore’s artistic interest. «In my opinion, long and intense study of the human figure is the necessary foundation for a sculptor’s schooling.» (Henry Moore, 1956). Sitting, standing and lying figures make up one of the central themes of the exhibition. Fascinated by the collection of non-European art at the British Museum, he created figures, masks and heads with minimal clear forms. Beside the human body Moore also used objects from nature such as mussels, bones or stones as models for the generally applicable principals of form and rhythm. In addition he recognised liveliness in `primitive` art as in nature to which he aspired.

Especially in the 1930’s Moore created abstract sculptures with organic forms, which brought him in touch with Surrealism. Nevertheless his artistic language remained so individual and varied, that he could not be attributed to any artistic style. Whether abstract or figurative, he never attempted to copy a complete object but strove to transmit its life and being. In this way he entered into reality – a reality which occupied Moore intensely especially during the First and Second World Wars. In the 1940’s Moore recorded the situation of the people seeking shelter in the Underground stations in numerous drawings and was thus promoted to become an official «War Artist». This work helped him to become better known and gain support from official sources. Especially after the war numerous exhibitions were shown abroad. Moore was politically active and always appealed for peaceful solutions to conflicts. Hence the commission to create a memorial to commemorate the first successful splitting of the atom left him with particularly mixed feelings.

In the 1950’s and 1960’s Moore was counted among the most sought after sculptors world wide. Born in 1898 in Castleford, Yorkshire he studied after his military service in the First World War at the Leeds School of Art and in 1921 was awarded a scholarship to continue his studies at the Royal College in London. He lived and worked in London and Kent and taught at the Royal College and at the Chelsea School of Art. In 1948 he won the international sculpture prize at the Biennale in Venice. From 1940 Moore lived in Perry Green, Much Hadham, in Hertfordshire, where he died in 1986.

A large number of exhibitions have been dedicated to him and he received many commissions for works in public spaces. Now it is time to bring the unique work of this artist back into focus, to analyse his position in the post-war years and to assess his work from today’s perspective. This will be the first exhibition dedicated to this unique sculptor in Switzerland for 25 years.

Catalogue

For the exhibition a bilingual catalogue will be published by Snoeck Edition, Cologne – with texts by Sebastiano Barassi, Acting Head of Collections and Exhibitions of the Henry Moore Foundation, Fabienne Eggelhöfer, curator Zentrum Paul Klee and Matthew Gale, Head of Display of Tate Modern.

Price: CHF 34.50
HENRY MOORE TALKS
SUN | 19/04/15 | 11am
On 19th April 2015 Richard Calvocoressi, Director of the Henry Moore Foundation will speak with Mary Moore about the life and work of her father at the Zentrum Paul Klee.

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