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To the editors

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Zentrum Paul Klee: Year’s preview 2012
transcendental - magical - incomprehensible

Under the leadership of the new director Peter Fischer, the Zentrum Paul Klee (ZPK) is presenting a programme involving all departments of the institution. In the exhibition year 2012, Paul Klee will be examined from his mystical side. Klee’s spirituality will be reflected through renowned artists and placed in correlation with European art history up to the present. Also in music a wider context is being sought after: In 2012 alongside classical highlights there will also be some in jazz and in the contemporary area, for instance celebrating the 100th birthday of John Cage. Culture and encounter for everyone: After the first years of ZPK’s existence when it established itself firmly nationally and internationally, it wants to concentrate more on the public of the region. Amongst other things by reducing barriers – literally for people with a disability, and figuratively with more attractive entrance prices.

New director
Since the middle of November 2011 Peter Fischer has been director of the Zentrum Paul Klee. The board of trustees chose in him a competent public figure, equipped with a breadth of experience in artistic as well as management fields. Amongst other things Peter Fischer can draw on his experiences in Lucerne, where over ten years he established the Museum of Art situated in the KKL both for a broad public as well as for specialists as an open, lively place for art.

Lighthouse ZPK
The ZPK occupies a unique place in the museum landscape both nationally and internationally, since its activities extend far beyond those of a classical museum. Sustained by the visions of the founder families Klee and Müller and supported by the clear declaration of the voting population of the city of Berne, it distinguishes itself as a multi-discipline institution inspired by the work of one of the most important artists of the 20th century. The unmistakable architecture which Renzo Piano simultaneously created as sculpture in the landscape, contributes to the attraction, so that Berne can be proud of its ZPK. As a cultural model of the canton it is justified in being called a lighthouse.

Opening I – Families, pensioners, students, disabled all welcome
Although according to the latest survey the great majority of the Bernese consider the ZPK as an indispensable feature in their vicinity, they only make use of the ZPK occasionally. This may be due to a distorted perception or
prejudices but may also be the result of real difficulties. For this reason the ZPK is making a first effective gesture by way of an invitation and a welcome greeting to its public: The entrance prices are being reduced. The largest reduction of 35% to 65% is for families and students. But also the pensioner generation will benefit from reductions. And under the motto “Klee without barriers” the house is not only completely accessible for the disabled but offers in collaboration with the Kindermuseum Creaviva various special programmes for visitors with disabilities.

Opening II – Paul Klee as the inspiration for an unendingly varied cultural programme
The ZPK is dedicated to Paul Klee, one of the most important and influential artists of the 20th century, whose work comprises the main part of the collection and who defines and inspires – also with his manifold talent – its programme. Paul Klee does not mean a limitation. This circumstance needs to be made clearer in the future. Klee’s artistic openness permits the ZPK, as a classical cultural institution to present the visual arts, music, literature and performing arts in a broad and varied spectrum. These can be experienced in their historical as well as their present dimension, and the unique speciality of the ZPK lies in the interaction and permanent exchange between the different arts. The ZPK maintains no strict, permanent exhibition, not even of the work of Paul Klee, which is always available to be seen in a representative selection in temporary combinations and is always a new experience. Parallel to this there are temporary exhibitions with works by other distinguished artists. And there are concerts, readings, performances and art education programmes. You can visit the ZPK ten times a year and each time gain an entirely different experience to take home with you. The programming of the coming years aims to establish the ZPK as a living, contemporary producer of culture and inspire visitors and guests to continue to return.

Exhibition programme 2012 – Highlights ...
Corresponding to the above explained thematic ideas, the life and work of Paul Klee are not only the basis but also the inspiration for the exhibition programme 2012 to go beyond the usual borders. Klee’s often distant and ironical examination of contemporary spiritualistic tendencies at the beginning of the 20th century enriched his choice of motifs enormously. The exhibition “Uncanny – Witches, phantoms and demons in Paul Klee” shows a side of the artist which is at the same time refreshing and reflective. The art historical context to this prepares the parallels, in combination with the exhibition developed by the museums in Strasbourg “L’Europe des esprits – the magic of the intangible from the Romantic to the Modern”. This large ambitious project takes the spiritual and transcendental in the visual arts out of the shadow world with selected works by artists such as Goya, Caspar David Friedrich, Hodler, Kandinsky or Max Ernst. The leap in the other direction on the time axis takes place in the summer with the exhibition “Higher beings - Sigmar Polke und Paul Klee”. Not only the interest in occult and alchemistic phenomena links Sigmar Polke (1941–2010) with Klee, but also an inexhaustible pictorial imagination so that the integration of several large scale Polke pictures in the Klee exhibition “Uncanny” allows the work of both artists to appear in a new light. A more delicate, but still with a humorous view of the other world in Paul Klee is the theme of the exhibition “Angels”. The depiction of angels belongs to the artist’s most popular motifs, this not least due to their human characteristics. The ambivalence, inherent in Klee’s being between the worlds, is shown through films, video-works and photographs from the 1920’s up to the present in a larger art historical context and will then be condensed at the ZPK into a fascinating Christmas exhibition of a special kind.

... Research ...
Research is accorded great weight at the ZPK. This is the basis for the international reputation of the house. Research results are continuously presented to the public. So in 2012 the ZPK is presenting in the exhibition “Donation archive Bürgi” parts of the donated archive material and documents of the Bürgi family, who for many years supported Paul Klee as friends and collectors. From the beginning of August the Data Base with “Paul
Klee’s Teaching Notes on Pictorial Creation” with Paul Klee’s entire lecture notes, is being presented online to accompany the exhibition “Master Klee!” about his teaching activity at the Bauhaus in Weimar and Dessau.

... and many celebrities
Prominent guests from different art disciplines visit and animate the Zentrum Paul Klee in 2012. Füssli, Goya, Kandinsky, Polke and Co. have already been mentioned in the context of the exhibitions. In addition there are personal encounters with Swiss authors in the programme: Already in February the powerful voice of Endo Anaconda presents his new book “Walterfahren”. From life unlived, postponed and missed out on Peter Stamm tells us in March, and in April Franz Hohler is our guest with his poetically comic stories. A musical listening experience of the highest quality is also on the programme in March: Violinist Julia Fischer appears in the context of a Master concert with her customary grace and virtuosity in the Auditorium of the ZPK. Finally at the end of March in a jazz-double concert, the Argentinian Bandoneon virtuoso Dino Saluzzi will charm the audience with his Trio as well as being accompanied by Michael Zisman and Sebastian Fulgido. The “Ensemble Paul Klee” frames the exhibition “L’Europe des esprits” with the programme “Voices from Europe” and at the beginning of July the ZPK dedicates a weekend to John Cage, one of the most important composers of the 20th century. We present a varied insight into his work including a Bach/Cage programme by the promising young Luxembourg pianist Francesco Tristano. As guest curator for the “Sommerakademie” in the ZPK (August 2012) the internationally renowned curator Marta Kuzma (also member of the team of curators at the documenta 13 in Kassel) is engaged.

Events and meetings
The events department has developed satisfactorily during the past years and become an important component at the ZPK. The attractive rooms are used by outside presenters for cultural and business events. In this way the stimulating atmosphere of the building and its artistic programmes provide an advantage. Various large events take place under our own organisation such as for example the “Design-Messe”, the fair for rare and beautiful Vintage Interiors, which already takes place for the second time on the first weekend of March, or the legendary Berne Museums Night already in its tenth edition on the 16th March.

Kindermuseum Creaviva
The Kindermuseum Creaviva is ready with a large selection of programmes in 2012. Through its practical offers it appeals not only to the younger generation but also participates actively in adult education, and in particular in the area of team and leadership training is an acknowledged partner. The collaboration between the Kindermuseum Creaviva and the ZPK should be intensified in the years ahead. In this way, art education not only uses synergies and strengthens competence, but is involved in one of the central ideas of the ZPK, whereby the encounter of people with art and culture is transmitted with lasting effect into the future.

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