

PRESS RELEASE

Schaulager – a different place for art

Schaulager was established first and foremost in response to the new and existing demands of conserving works of visual art – the works of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation collection. However, Schaulager also reminds us that works of art have a life of their own behind the scenes, and uses beyond being exhibited in galleries. It is a place where art works. It has abolished the idea of the closed isolated storeroom and has become a one-off institution with its own particular characteristics and functions. From its starting point of storing the collection under optimal conservation conditions, Schaulager breaks new ground in its approach to contemporary art.

New acquisitions and other works belonging to the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation are exhibited publicly in continual alternation at the Kunstmuseum and the Museum für Gegenwartskunst in Basel. Works from the collection not currently on show are stored at Schaulager in such a way that they are always available for teaching, research and conservation purposes. Schaulager places its emphasis on academic work, on researching and promoting the collection as well as its use as an active archive. Schaulager also organizes and supports lecture series, symposia, educational events and exhibitions which promote understanding of contemporary art. These events are open to the general public and provide the opportunity to become acquainted with Schaulager and its work.

The storage areas at Schaulager are not open to the public. They are, however, accessible to museum professionals, researchers, artists and students who work with the collection. The public is addressed via events and exhibitions. There is no prescribed or obligatory exhibition programme. Events and exhibitions arise as a result of research into the collection of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation and from work carried out at Schaulager. Within Schaulager's overall work, events and exhibitions are of equal importance to other activities taking place there, barely visible to the outside world.

Since its opening in May 2003 Schaulager is and will remain an open-ended project, with strong foundations and principles, but still in the process of formation, structured to allow development in the long term. It aims always to be able to react flexibly to the constantly changing realities and challenges created – in particular – by contemporary art. Schaulager is a different place for art, as an institution as well as a building.

Schaulager works in partnership with various museums, academic and research bodies. An ongoing partnership and funding for the Laurenz Assistant Professorship for Contemporary Art at the University of Basel enables both teaching and academic project work. In 2012, a second professorship, the Schaulager Chair for Art Theory, was added, which will be filled this year. This second chair and the resulting partnership with the University of Basel comprises both the theory and realization of scientific projects. Since 2005 Schaulager has also been involved in the National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) «Iconic Criticism – The Power and Meaning of Images», based at the University of Basel.

As a partner and sponsor of university teaching and research, Schaulager is unique in bridging the gap between traditional museum work and academic study and opens up new perspectives and potential for our approach to works of visual art.

Last year, Schaulager was remodelled. The second, previously empty warehouse floor was equipped with special rooms to house sculptures and installations. In addition to this warehouse floor, the infrastructure of teaching and research was expanded as well: the size of the library was more than doubled and a reading room with workstations for students and researchers plus two new seminar rooms were added. These spatial extensions support research as a major field of study at Schaulager.

All Schaulager public activities can be accessed online.

Schaulager is founded and run by the Laurenz Foundation.