

## EMANUEL HOFFMANN FOUNDATION

### PRESS RELEASE

The Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation was established in 1933 by Maja Hoffmann-Stehlin, later Maja Sacher (1896–1989), in order to carry on the commitment to visual art shared with her husband Emanuel Hoffmann (1896–1932) prior to his untimely death. The goal of the Foundation is to collect works by artists 'who employ new, forward-looking means of expression which are not yet universally understood by their contemporaries' and to make them 'available to the public through extended exhibition'.

From the beginning Maja Sacher devoted herself to the aims of her foundation: collecting, conserving and presenting innovative art. The Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation, which is supported by the founder's family both intellectually and financially, continues to do so today. Driven by their passion for art and their affirmation of the future, to date three generations of the foundation's family have built up a collection that is characterized by an unerring sense of quality, a responsiveness to contemporary issues and great personal commitment.

The works that entered the collection early on – such as Dalí, Delaunay, Klee, Max Ernst and the Belgian Expressionists – have long since become classics of modernism. Likewise, the works from the 1960s and 1970s – with striking groups of works by Joseph Beuys and Bruce Nauman – have long since become established in the history of art. Beginning in the 1980s, there was a growing commitment to art using new media – examples include groups of works by Cindy Sherman, Jeff Wall, Katharina Fritsch and Matthew Barney. The acquisition decisions of the Foundation's board continue to explore new terrain – for example, with works by Tacita Dean, Toba Khedoori, Paul Chan, Steve McQueen and Alexej Koschkarow – and thereby challenge the receptivity of viewers.

Since 1941 the works in the collection of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation have been made available for exhibition as loans to the Kunstmuseum Basel and since 1980 to the Museum für Gegenwartskunst. This agreement between the Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel and the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation, renewed in 1994, is unusually open in its terms. The Kunstmuseum 'is not obliged to exhibit all of the loans from the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation on a permanent basis'. Rather, it is free 'to exhibit only a fraction of the loans, based on the available space and its aesthetic preferences' and 'combine them with its own collections in a logical fashion'. This agreement is characterized by the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation's decision as lender not to require special status, its own rooms nor to impose an obligation to exhibit the works, as well as by a declaration of a long-term commitment and partnership.

After eighty years of collecting, the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation possesses paintings, groups of drawings, sculptures, installations, video projects and films by approximately 170 artists. The collection and new acquisitions are exhibited in the Museum für Gegenwartskunst Basel on a rotating basis. Since 2003 the works of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation that are not on view have been stored under optimal climatic conditions at Schaulager and thus remain always accessible for restoration, teaching and research.