

Press Release 4, June 2017

"A declaration of love to art and the landscape"

In its twentieth year, the "Blickachsen 11" Sculpture Biennale was opened on the Bad Homburg Schmuckplatz in the presence of numerous artists, and already attracted hundreds of art lovers on its first day.

"Once again, the exhibition has turned out to be the best ever", said the Mayor of Bad Homburg **Alexander W. Hetjes** at the opening ceremony of the eleventh "Blickachsen", quoting its founder and curator, **Christian K. Scheffel**, who created this year's exhibition together with **Dr Maria Schneider**. In bright sunshine, the **80 sculptures** by **37 international artists** attracted hundreds of visitors to Bad Homburg and seven further locations in the Rhine-Main region. "Does 'Blickachsen' not constitute one of the finest declarations of love to art and to the cultural landscape of this region?" asked Minister of State **Axel Wintermayer**, representing the exhibition's patron, the Prime Minister of Hessen, Volker Bouffier. The project, now in its twentieth year, marks one of the high points of 2017 as an exceptional year for art.

Stefan Quandt, "Blickachsen" supporter and Chairman of the **Blickachsen Foundation** Board of Trustees, pointed out: "Every two years, 'Blickachsen' makes a very special contribution to the cultural richness of the Rhine-Main region in the heart of Europe. The exhibition concept deserves our best efforts to support it. It is precisely for this reason that we established the Blickachsen Foundation four years ago."

The international eleventh edition of "Blickachsen" is also distinguished by the participation of 18 artists from Austria, thanks to the collaboration with the **Museum Liaunig**. Introducing the works, **Dr Maria Schneider** declared: "'Blickachsen' offers pathways through the great themes of sculpture". In a reference to **Herbert Liaunig**, the founder of the exhibition's partner museum in Carinthia, **Florian Haug**, representing the Austrian Embassy, pointed out that what artists and entrepreneurs have in common is that they are both risk-takers, constantly facing the possibility of failure. He described Herbert Liaunig as a bridge-builder between the worlds of business and art. **Christian K. Scheffel** emphasized that: "Without our partners and supporters we would not have been able once again this year to experience art in the centre of our city and elsewhere"

"Blickachsen 11" offers a diversity of extraordinary encounters with art – to all, and free of charge. Art enthusiasts had already visited some of the exhibition sites before the opening. The great demand for private guided tours is a further indicator of the immense public interest. The eight exhibition locations invite the visitor to test out different modes of perception. For example, in **Jaume Plensa's** work: his "Isabella" in the Bad Homburg Kurpark and the smaller "Paula" in the park of the former Schloss Friedrichshof open up new perspectives on the human face. The black patinated works reveal the discernible essence of an individual, constantly confounding the viewer through their apparent alienation effect: at times abstract, at others representational. A pluralistic view of the world is also revealed in **Alicja Kwade's** installation. Her work "Big Be-Hide", created this year, confronts the viewer with one gleaming and one plain aspect. A play of reflections: a boulder on the one side and a shiny aluminium cast of it on the other generate doubles and pose questions of identity from ever new perspectives.

From now until 1 October, the "Blickachsen" locations offer visitors the opportunity to newly experience the public space. From its outset, the Biennale took up the sight lines of the landscape architecture. This has proved itself, and this year has evolved into a tension between the figurative and the abstract. For example, in the conjoined magical groups by **Joannis Avramidis**, in the fabulous narrative creatures of **Laura Ford** or in **Ulrich Rückriem's** monoliths, where the sculptural process has devolved ever more powerfully into a self-actualization of the material. The late sculptor **Karl Prantl**, whose sculptures were unstintingly composed to fit into the landscape, spoke of the "power and spirituality of stones". This energy can now be freely experienced by all.

Detailed information on "Blickachsen 11" can be found at: www.blickachsen.com.

For further enquiries please contact us

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