



## Press Release

### SHOW 13 - Kienzle Art Foundation

Johannes Gachnang

“Nicht verblüffen, wundern will ich mich – Works from 1960 to 1973”

from 18th April to 18th July 2015

Press tour and opening: **Friday, 17th April 2015**

**Press tour** with curator Angelika Arras at **5 PM**

**Opening** to follow from **7-9 PM**

The Kienzle Art Foundation is excited to present the rarely exhibited graphic work of Johannes Gachnang (1939- 2005). Known in particular for his tenure as director of the Kunsthalle Bern and as a publisher, his artistic work has unfortunately long remained hidden. With this exhibition, curator Angelika Arras not only wishes to call attention to the Swiss artist, she would also like to give his graphic work its proper place in European art history. Gachnang's own artistic work served as an important foundation for everything that he would achieve later in his life and now, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his death, it can be discovered by the public for the first time again.

Inspired by the work of Paul Klee and WOLS, Johannes Gachnang began to produce his first etchings in 1960 in Paris. This was followed by his Berlin years as an apprentice in the studio of his teacher, the architect Hans Scharoun. In 1967, the Academy of Arts awarded him the Berlin Art Prize for his cycle of etchings “Die neue historische Architektur des J.G. frei nach Fischer von Erlach”. Further cycles would follow in Istanbul, Rome, Amsterdam and Zurich.

It was in these years that he struck up friendships with Georg Baselitz, Per Kirkeby, Jörg Immendorff, A. R. Penck, Günther Förg, Luciano Fabro, Gaston Chassaic, Meret Oppenheim and others, which would influence both his and their development. As director of the Kunsthalle Bern (1974 to 1982) and as a visionary trendsetter, he was known for his original and academic exhibitions and played a significant role fostering their careers. He was known for his original, unacademic exhibitions. His passion for art was also his focus in founding the “Gachnang & Springer” publishing house. Here the same motto applied as in the Kunsthalle: “It's not about style, it's about mood.”

The exhibition “Nicht verblüffen, wundern will ich mich” traces an arc from Gachnang's first city sketches through art historical references all the way to contemporary art and poses questions on the future development of cities. Loans made available the works by Adolf Wölfli, Georg Baselitz, A. R. Penck and Wols, “collaborations” between Johannes Zechner and Johannes Gachnang as well as Gaspare O. Melcher's “Hommage à J. G.” and Balthasar Burkhard's “Mexico City” complete the picture. As such, the exhibition also provides insight into the friendships and artistic collaborations that were so important for Gachnang as an artist. The exhibited pages from the portfolio “L'univers de la faute – Sechs Briefe an Freunde” are intended as an homage to his artist friends and treat his involvement with their work and their engagement with his own: Gachnang's etching serves here as a basis and is overlaid with a further print in the style of his artist friends. All of this adds up to a detailed look at the work of Johannes Gachnang and a celebration of his life-long involvement with the medium of printed graphic work.





The current perspective for the position and significance of printed graphic work in today's art world would please Johannes Gachnang. Indeed, his etchings were also produced out of a concern for the imminent disappearance of the craft and the loss of the historical tradition behind these techniques. It would be very gratifying if this homage to Johannes Gachnang could also serve as an inspiration to explore the potential of a fusion of this traditional artistic expression with contemporary innovative possibilities, themes and positions.

### Supporting programme:

**Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015:** Dr. Volker Hassemer, Stiftung Zukunft Berlin, statement on the future of cities, followed by a discussion.

**Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015:** Reading with author and friend of the artist Ingo Schulze.

**Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2015:** "Hans" (with Johannes Gachnang, Stephan Geene and Penelope Georgiou), a film from Viennese artist Penelope Georgiou (from the collection of Jochen Kienzle).

**Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015:** Wolfram Berger (actor, cabaret artist, word juggler, Basel/Vienna) reads from the work of the Swiss artist, composer and writer Adolf Wölfli.

*A big thanks for the financial and ideal support:*



### Kienzle Art Foundation:

Since its foundation in 2009, Kienzle Art Foundation has been committed to the public mediation of art. Based on the initiative of the collector and former gallery owner Jochen Kienzle, the Foundation has its core in his art collection, which includes works from the 1960s to contemporary conceptual tendencies. Kienzle Art Foundation presents, in close cooperation with various curators and collections exhibitions that stand out by their artistic spectrum and its frictional capability.

The stated goal of the Foundation is to rediscover marginalized and little-known positions of the 60s until today and to include their impulses - regardless of established categories - for upcoming generations of artists. In the course of which is addressed not only in their artistic but also in their social relevance. Provocation and with its forced change of perspective constitute the agenda of the founder Jochen Kienzle.

