



PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

Arts and Business

Art is an attitude towards life and an investment. There are good reasons why private collectors, private banks, and industrial entrepreneurs invest their wealth in art. In the Principality of Liechtenstein, the business world promotes art for the same reasons that people stand in line for Old Masters at the Liechtenstein Museum in Vienna or for contemporary art at the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein (Museum of Fine Arts) in Vaduz. Art leads us on an infinite voyage of discovery.



Sometimes a glance is enough – and the world already appears much less chaotic. In front of the Post Office in Vaduz, the sculptor Georg Malin plays hide-and-seek with a large Z-cube. Standing in the middle of the cube, you can recognize the Z on the interior surface. With «alphabet cubes» out of chrome steel, the artist has created a memory of the world. Malin's alphabet is mathematically clear and yet mysterious.

«With 22 characters, everything can be recorded that a human being thinks, feels, expects, and has known,» the most renowned Liechtenstein artist claims. Malin's O, for instance, is a speaking mouth and a hearing ear; L grants access to landscape, life, love, and loss; S stands for spirit and transparency, but also – as a sharp, cutting sibilant – for the deepest abysses of the human condition. Z means «Zentrum» or center. The Z-cube belongs to the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein.

The insight that culture touches the deepest layers in humanity and society shapes the position and the profile of the Kunstmuseum. The curators consciously seek out themes that deal with contemporary attitudes towards life in Europe. But the regional museum also draws from the cultural magma of the Rhine Valley region, which includes Eastern Switzerland, the Austrian

province of Vorarlberg, and the Principality of Liechtenstein.

International art

A plaque with the names of the donors tells the story of the origins of the Kunstmuseum. A group of affluent friends of the arts – industrialists, banks, professional trustees, lawyers, Liechtenstein's capital Vaduz – banded together to build the museum and donated it to the State of Liechtenstein. The façade of the large monolithic building, seamlessly cast from black basalt and fine-grained Rhine gravel, is considered a milestone of art in concrete. The clarity of the architecture has an urban character.

The quality of the exhibitions in the Kunstmuseum presents itself internationally: Either programmatically with works of the great representative of abstract art, «Otto Freundlich». Or thematically, such as when two generations of artists, from the 1960's and 1990's, address the phenomenon of «Migration». Sometimes, the focus is on prominent artists such as «The Late Work» of Andy Warhol. Or also on conceptual art and Jochen Gerz's «Inverted Time». Or 100 modern masterpieces by Paul Klee. Or contemporary breakthroughs, such as Fabian Marcaccio's «From Altered Paintings to Paintants».



Centrum Bank in Vaduz

Arte Povera in Vaduz

The sculpture collection of the Kunstmuseum radiates into its surroundings. A «Sculpture Hunt» leads to great artists and special places in Liechtenstein. One masterpiece created in 1983 by Henry Moore, «Figure in a Shelter», is located near the Government Building, which was constructed in the simple style of the turn of the 20th century. The complete collection of works of the 13 artists of Arte Povera is also considered a unique contribution of the Kunstmuseum.

Anyone contemplating a work of art knows that a dialogue with art is transformed into a personal experience within us. The Ludwig Marxer Family Trust commissioned the construction of an example of this in Vaduz: The sculptural architecture of the Centrum Bank reflects a way of living, thinking, and working. Anyone entering the gray-green monolith perceives and un-

derstands seriousness, competence, and a spirit of innovation. The architecture is courageous, not merely trendy.

Architecture and art

On the exterior, the green, slightly warped cube rises up in an elegant curve. One corner of the building soars skyward, as if wanting to rival the nearby Liechtenstein mountains. The Andeer granite from neighboring Graubünden plays with its surroundings. The design was conceived by Hans Hollein, a true post-modernist and a star of the international architectural scene of the 1970's and 1980's. The contours and the materials shape the building's appearance, which is both elegant and solid. This total work of art of the Centrum Bank demonstrates commitment to the Liechtenstein financial center.

«Two Prisms of Light» are located in front of the private bank, created by the «Artist of Light» – Heinz Mack, co-founder of the ZERO artist group (1958-1966). Mack conceived his stele ensemble as an instrument for playing with light, color, and motion. Transparent in one instant, it becomes opaque in the next, reflecting its surroundings by day and by night. It makes a unique mark in Vaduz and fits in with the «Sculpture Hunt» of the Kunstmuseum.

Art collections are an executive priority

Art is a magical formula that enterprises in Liechtenstein procure and promote. The know-how of the banking, insurance, and investment fund center is growing and growing. At the same time, global players from the highly developed industrial location compete at the highest levels. In a country of entrepreneurship, the business community assumes its share of responsibility for society – without a lot of talk.

Art collections are therefore an executive priority. And so traditional private collectors still exist in Liechtenstein who – with extensive art-historical expertise – live with art. They let clients, employees, and friends participate in this attitude towards life – and sometimes also the public. Not shocking and provocative, but rather soothing and sensual.

Magical formula as a way of life

The Martin Hilti Family Trust is establishing a Collection from the Classic Modern Era to the Present, inspired by the passion of Michael Hilti, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Hilti Corporation. Paintings by Fernand Léger, Auguste Rodin, Max Bill, Piet Mondrian, Mark Rothko, Heinz Mack

and Gottfried Honegger do not reflect investment, but rather lifestyle. Even in the cafeteria of the company headquarters in Schaan, art activates the magical formula of discovery: The more high-quality art people absorb, the more precisely they learn to see and hear.

«Sculptures of this quality belong in the public space, should be part of our lives, and should create joy. But they should also encourage thought and reflection,» Michael Hilti writes, referring to the «Unendliche Schleife (Infinite Loop)». Max Bill pushed the envelope of the possible with this large sculpture of red Aswan granite. It is exhibited in the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein.

Loans of art by Hilti are regularly requested by international museums. In 2005, the Kunstmuseum in Vaduz

«Tre cavalli» by Nag Arnoldi



exhibited a cross-section of the young collection of the Hilti art foundation for the first time. The exhibition entitled «From Paul Gauguin to Imi Knoebel» presented 60 paintings and sculptures from the Classic Modern Era and the contemporary period – from 1889 to the present. The exhibition included true gems of art history.

The moment of scrutiny

The eye of the collector is the prerequisite for the development of a private collection. By removing the collection from the private sphere, however, the collector subjects it to curiosity, admiration, and critique. Herbert Batliner, attorney and professional trustee, has faced this moment of scrutiny by exhibiting a small portion of his private collection in rotating exhibits at the Museum am Mönchsberg in Salzburg from the autumn of 2004 to the summer of 2006. Only once before, at the Kunstforum in Vienna in 1998, did this patron of the arts officially present his first-class collection to the public, under the title «From Monet to Picasso». His art loans can be found in many large international exhibitions.

One glance suffices to enchant and awaken an infinite desire for more. In all his paintings – whether by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Raoul Dufy, Emil Nolde, Lyonel

Feininger, Marc Chagall, Amedeo Modigliani, Paul Klee, or Wassily Kandinsky – it is the luminosity of color that has incited the passion of Herbert Batliner for 40 years. The private collection ranges from the Classic Modern Era to the art of the Neo-Expressionist Georg Baselitz. The collector has recently turned his attention to the Russian avant-garde.

Art in the workplace

«Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art,» as Andy Warhol declared pointedly, has long gone without saying in the United States and Europe. Industrial enterprises, insurance companies, and banks decorate their buildings with art, usually in conjunction with high-caliber architecture. The VP Bank in Vaduz has developed a consistent concept out of this over the last 20 years. «Art in the workplace» aims to trigger impulses of thought at all levels of the hierarchy of the private bank.

Paintings and sculptures promote the quality of life of the employees and dialogue with the bank clients. In every room, an impressive collection of both international and regional art of the second half of the 20th century can be found. Works by Le Corbusier, Roy Lichtenstein, Antonio Tapiés, Henry Moore, Max Ernst, Marc Chagall, Joan



«Two Prisms of Light» by Heinz Mack

Miro, Sam Francis, Serge Poliakoff, and Robert Rauschenberg are exhibited. And anyone touched by the sculptures of Gottfried Honegger, Karl Prantl, and the Liechtenstein artist Georg Malin feels a soothing presence that awakens to new discoveries.

Rebelliousness engenders freedom

Art inspires imagination and creativity, helping to unsettle routines and norms. Only in the gaze of the viewer, however, is the picture completed and are discoveries integrated into one's own world of experience. This is particularly true of the rebelliousness in the paintings of Josef Ebnöther from the Rhine Valley, who has been exhibited from San Francisco to Frankfurt, Vienna and Zurich to Geneva and Rome, and whose work has also found a home in the Liechtensteinische Landesbank (LLB) in Vaduz. As the number one

bank in the Rhine Valley, the universal bank radiates innovative spirit, along with the freedom of new approaches and visions.

The collection of the LLB includes international names such as Hans Arp, Max Bill, Eduardo Chillida, Sam Francis, Gottfried Honegger, and Antonio Tapiés. Demonstrating its roots in the region, the bank at the same time pursues a clearly articulated goal of promoting quality art in the region. This includes artists who have already arrived, such as Martin Frommelt and Georg Malin. The collection also includes several pictures by Ferdinand Nigg. The maverick from Liechtenstein is now one of the important names of the Classic Modern Era. He enjoys a special place in the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein.

Wanderlust and the petty bourgeois

Many hearts in the Principality of Liechtenstein beat faster at the thought of the Old Masters in the world-famous Princely Collections. In March 2004, the largest European private collection returned from Vaduz Castle to the Garden Palace in the Rossau in Vienna. Reigning Prince Hans-Adam II, the monarch of Liechtenstein and the manager of the Princely assets, had the Roman palazzo of the Family of Liechtenstein expanded into the modern





«The Meeting between Emperor Francis II and Napoleon after the Battle of Austerlitz, 1805, in the Presence of Reigning Prince Johann I of Liechtenstein», oil sketch by Pierre-Paul Prud'hon

Liechtenstein Museum. Loans of the great names in the painting gallery, covering the development of painting from the Early Renaissance to Romanticism, can be seen in the museums of metropolises around the world.

The heart of the more than 400-year-old collection is the monumental Decius Mus cycle by Peter Paul Rubens, the most important Rubens cycle in the world.

Art tradition in Liechtenstein calls for a selection of exquisite works of art from the Princely Collection to be exhibited in the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein in Vaduz. Until the end of August 2006, for instance, flawless Biedermeier can be seen.

Nothing was lackluster in the Biedermeier Era, as the exhibition entitled «Biedermeier in the House of Liechtenstein» shows. It presents the most beautiful pieces of the best of this multifaceted era after Napoleon I, during which the petty bourgeois broke free of their own four walls and indulged in wanderlust, inquisitively seeking adventure in exotic worlds.

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