Berlin, 28 January 2013

Meret Oppenheim: Retrospective
16 August 2013 – 1 December 2013

Opening times:
Wednesday to Monday 10 a.m. – 7 p.m., closed on Tuesdays

Organizers:
Berliner Festspiele. An exhibition of Martin-Gropius-Bau Berlin and Bank Austria Kunstforum Vienna. Enabled by the Capital City Cultural Fund. With kind support of Pro Helvetia.

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Berlin is dedicating a first major retrospective to Meret Oppenheim to mark the centenary of the famous artist's birth here on 6 October 2013. Her artistic beginnings go back to Paris in 1932 where she visits regularly for five years the circle of surrealists around André Breton. There, the twenty-year-old with her rebellious and freedom-loving attitude meets like-minded people. The playful and humorous treatment of everyday materials, conveyed with artistic strategies of estrangement, combinatorics and metamorphosis in constantly new connotations, is a special feature of Oppenheim's artistic works.

This also links her to her artist friends whose company included Alberto Giacometti, Max Ernst, Francis Picabia, Leonor Fini, Dora Maar or Man Ray. The photographs in the »Erotique voilée« series (1933), in which Oppenheim posed as a nude model, are as well as her legendary »Fur Cup« the foundation of her myth. The discursive power of her surrealism could be felt in 1983 when her »Oppenheim Fountain« was inaugurated in Bern's Waisenhausplatz, a visit to which is highly recommended.

Meret Oppenheim's extremely varied œuvre, influenced by experimentation and upheavals, metamorphoses and the "dream-like", evades an art-historical classification. The artist dispensed with uniformity or recognisability in favour of experimental joyfulness which enabled her to transcend the confines of an artistic style, a genre or a linear development.
Language, myths, games and dreams served her purpose as impetus just as literary sources and the psychoanalysis of C.G. Jung. Her emancipatory, non-conformist attitude and her critical approach to social stereotyping and allotted gender roles made her a central identification figure for following generations of women artists. "Freedom isn't given to you – you have to take it", Oppenheim summed up her position in 1975.

The exhibition will show the whole spectrum of Meret Oppenheim's œuvre, which in its independence and diversity is still a pioneering force even today. Following Oppenheim's artistic method, who kept returning to specific motifs over long periods of time and subjected them to new treatment, the show runs a course through the ever-densifying themes in a cross-section of the artist's creative periods: coded descriptions of herself, erotic objects, dream scenes and myths, metamorphoses and mythical creatures, dialogue with nature, depictions of the invisible, game as artistic strategy, the ratio of picture and text. Starting out from her much appraised early work in the circle of the surrealists and proceeding to her less well-known poetic late work, the exhibition will show not only drawings, paintings, objects and collages, but also her writings and dream notations as well as her humorous and fantastical jewellery, dress and other designs. "Every idea is born with a form. You never know where the ideas come from: they bring their form with them; just as Athena sprang out of the head of Zeus, helmeted and armoured, thus do the ideas emerge with their apparel."

In 1982, Meret Oppenheim was honoured with the Art Prize of the City of Berlin. In the same year, she participated in documenta 7. Shortly before her death, she became a member of the Berlin Academy of the Arts. She died in Basel in 1985.

The retrospective is supposed to contribute to discover Meret Oppenheim’s varied œuvre. Oppenheim’s artistic position that draws the bow between the modern age and the postmodernism proves to be sovereign independent.

The retrospective is being produced in close cooperation with the artist’s family and with the Kunstmuseum Bern, home of the Meret Oppenheim Archive, which owns in the artist’s legacy the most important collection of Meret Oppenheim's works.

Catalogue:
Meret Oppenheim. Retrospective
Published by Hatje Cantz Verlag
Editors: Heike Eipeldauer, Ingried Brugger, Gereon Sievernich
312 pages, 364 images
Museums edition: 25 €
Trade edition: 39,80 €
ISBN: 978-3-7757-3511-7

Admission:
€ 10 / reduced € 7
Groups (5 persons or more): € 7 p.p.
Admission free for visitors under 16
Combitickets at a reduced price are available at the box office
Online-tickets: www.gropiusbau.de

Audio guide: 4 € (For adults and children)

Public guided tours:
Saturdays 2 p.m. (without advance booking)
€ 3 plus € 7 admission p.p.

**Booked guided tours:**
- Groups: guided tours in German language (60 min)
- Adults: € 60 plus € 7 admission p.p.
- School classes: € 45, admission free for visitors under 16
- Guided tours in other languages plus € 10

An education programme for children is accompanying the exhibition.

**Public workshops, up to the age of 5 years, no fee:**
Every Sunday at 1 p.m.: 22 September, 29 September, 13 October, 20 October, 03 November, 17 November 2013

Further information: www.gropiusbau.de/schuelerprogramm

**Advice on and booking of guided tours:**
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