

Visitor information

Fond Greetings

6th March to 4th September 2022

The pandemic has interfered with the perceptions and habits of our society. How can museums engage with these changed circumstances in an experimental way? And what do these changes mean for the classical exhibition format? *Fond Greetings* is an interwoven process that meanders joyfully between transience and surprise, a playful activity and an exhibition. In doing so, it indirectly poses subtle questions about the mechanisms by which we evaluate art.

13 contemporary artists who have previously exhibited at the Museum Langmatt send their fond greetings in a digital form. Printed and mounted, these postcard-size greetings are placed in the gallery to mingle boldly with the Impressionist artworks from the collection. Every three months, more greetings are added, leading to a continual state of change. They sparkle like little stars in the vast heavens of the masterpieces. As a rule, they were not created for specific Impressionist works; instead, they engage in dialogue with them in various different ways, determined by the picture hanging plan. The artists were chosen to represent multiple generations, and also multiple media and forms of artistic expression. This is a renewed acquaintance with artists who have held highly-regarded solo exhibitions, such as Renée Levi or Pipilotti Rist, or who have been represented in themed exhibition by their notable artworks, such as Julia Steiner or Uwe Wittwer.

The wider public also has the opportunity to send their greetings to the Langmatt, with a selection of their greetings appearing as part of the display in the gallery. You can find more information on the writing table there. Like the greetings from the artists, greetings from the public are included quite matter-of-factly among the masterpieces. *Fond Greetings* is thus in multiple respects permeable: the strict boundaries between art and the public are thus loosened, as are the boundaries between the Impressionist masterpieces and the greetings from contemporary art, which, as small-format, unsigned digital prints, possess virtually no market value.

This shows that *Fond Greetings* is not just an enjoyable game; a second glance reveals that it is a way of questioning our habits of perception and evaluation. What makes the artwork valuable? Is it the market value? Its significance to the history of art? Or does the value derive purely and simply from whether the artwork speaks to a person, in the personal sense? The coronavirus years have done more than just change our everyday habits. They have also given us the opportunity to question our conditioning and our evaluation mechanisms in a more alert and critical way. This doesn't mean that everything is suddenly of equal importance, but hierarchies of value and patterns of interpretation have been further fragmented in recent times. It is about developing a new and expanded understanding of art and its significance, as well as how it influences us.

Fond Greetings, however, is also in some respects a "black box": as the curators of the exhibition, even we do not know how it will be changed by the greetings from the artists and members of the public. Within a firmly defined setting, there is space for the unforeseen.

Fond Greetings connects with the wealth of postcards associated with the Brown family: the cabinet exhibition *Display Window Archive – Historic Postcard Greetings*, hosted in the upper storey, features an impressive selection of these, displayed to coincide with *Fond Greetings*. They convey the nature of a very different and now almost vanished form of communication.

During the running time of *Fond Greetings*, the following artists will send multiple greetings: Norbert Bisky (* 1970), Reto Boller (* 1966), Emmanuelle Castellan (* 1976), Klodin Erb (* 1963), Florian Germann (* 1978), Martin Jakob (* 1989), Renée Levi (* 1960), Pipilotti Rist (* 1962), Nele Stecher (* 1970), Julia Steiner (* 1982), Raphael Stucky (* 1989), Christian Vetter (* 1970) and Uwe Wittwer (* 1954).

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