THE GREEK GOD KAIROS STANDS FOR THE OPPORTUNE MOMENT FOR MAKING DECISIONS. WE MUST SEIZE HIM AS HE RUSHES BY.

THOSE WHO GRAB HIM BY HIS FORELOCK CAN ACHIEVE GREATNESS. IN THIS MANNER, MASTERPIECES OF ART WERE CREATED. BUT HOW MANY OPPORTUNITIES WERE MISSED?

THE PROJECT “KAIROS. THE RIGHT MOMENT” ASKS WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN CREATED. GREAT MOMENTS ARE GIVEN A SECOND CHANCE AND INSPIRE NEW WORKS OF ART.
WOLFGANG BELTRACCHI
Using the artistic voices of great masters, he creates pictures unlike any other in their existing oeuvres.

MAURO FIORESE
His photographs of the storerooms in renowned museums bring to light hidden art treasures of European cultural heritage.

CHRISTIAN ZOTT
The art lover combines these two approaches in a joint exhibition with an unusual perspective.

HISTORICALLY NEW IDEAS FOR MOTIFS
What were the influences on great painters from the classical era up to the 20th century? Not everything that seems significant today was captured on canvas. Exploring these gaps is the leitmotif of the exhibition.

BRINGING ART TO LIFE
“Kairos. The Right Moment” offers a look behind the scenes of museums and art studios. Contemporary works of art give insight into how masterpieces up to 2,000 years old were produced.

STRONG IMPULSES
The way in which contemporary art is linked to art from earlier eras inspires visitors to explore the fundamental aspects of aesthetics.
In Europe's museums today we experience the Western World's art history as the history of great masterpieces: we fall in love with Botticelli’s Venus, the young ladies-in-waiting from Velázquez present us with endless riddles, we pensively follow Turner’s Temeraire on her last voyage, and Picasso’s five ladies teach us a new way of seeing even today. These and all the other masterpieces throughout art history came into being due to opportune moments (KAIROS). The major museums in the Western World are apparently where these well-ordered moments are preserved in full for posterity.

But what if these places didn’t show us everything? What if the art history of the Western World were not complete? What if in actual fact it had gaps, blanks and cracks? What if important things weren’t visible or simply never existed? In short: what if we didn’t see everything that was produced and what if the artists hadn’t produced everything we wanted to see?

The exhibition “Kairos. The Right Moment” arose from the disquiet caused by these thoughts. It explores the blind spots in our perception and the gaps in the oeuvres of the great masters. The art lover Christian Zott invited two artists to approach the subject matter from different points of view. In his prize-winning series, the photographer Mauro Fiorese visited the archives of major European museums to show us what normally remains hidden from our view. His photographs directly convey the sheer amount of artworks that are part of our cultural past and yet never enter our consciousness, but have been lost to the tides of time. With his works, an homage to the Western World’s hidden art treasures, Fiorese gives them back the KAIROS that until now has passed them by.

Journey through time: a photo by Mauro Fiorese of the archive of the National Archaeological Museum in Naples epitomises the transitions in European art through the millennia. The exhibition begins in the classical age and illuminates the eras of art up to the 20th century.
The painter Wolfgang Beltracchi is creating a series of paintings using the artistic voices of important masters from the classical era up to the middle of the 20th century that never existed in their oeuvres. As a retrospective visualization of KAIROS, his works fill gaps in art history. They expand the oeuvres of great artists with motifs that are tremendously relevant in retrospect: historical turning points, religious movements, natural phenomena, the actions and influence of historical figures whose relevance only later became clear or connections that become apparent only when looked back upon centuries later. The exhibition therefore brings the history of art to life, not only from the point of view of aesthetics, but above all through the historical and social knowledge we have gained over time.

The historically and artistically founded picture motifs are developed in dialogue between Christian Zott and Wolfgang Beltracchi. An example is the motif for a painting in the artistic voice of Lucas Cranach the Elder: the work depicts the turning point in the life of Martin Luther, when the young law student was caught in a thunderstorm on July 2, 1505 and cried out in panic, “Help, Saint Anne, I will become a monk!” This motif was never painted by Cranach although it represents a key moment that influenced his work and his era. This moment refers not only to the impending Reformation, but also to the changes in landscape painting at the time, inspired by the Danube School as a link between the late Gothic period and the Renaissance. These aspects are united by Wolfgang Beltracchi using the artistic voice of the great master, and thus brought forward into the contemporary art world.
DISCOVER ART

Visitors to the exhibition "Kairos. The Right Moment" take a unique journey through 2,000 years of European art, experiencing the progression of art history from Ancient Rome up to the middle of the last century in a compact period of time. Visitors are witness to the creation of motif ideas and paintings in the artistic voices of painters from more than 20 art eras and movements. Newly created paintings and photographs from the hidden heart of the art scene redefine central art historical declarations. Both Mauro Fiorese and Wolfgang Beltracchi succeed in creating new art through appropriation. Through their works, both artists take visitors to areas of the art world that until now have been hidden from public view. And both reveal how art is formed by the changing dynamics of time and society.

The exhibition not only allows visitors to indulge in the pure enjoyment of art, but also encourages them to critically examine the aesthetics of the works. To understand how a picture is created, from the initial idea to the last brush stroke, to understand how colours and the technique of setting light and shadows determined how a master painter stroked his paintbrush, and how his style and speed of painting alone left their marks on the painting. Film and photographic documentation of the works as they are being created as well as carefully prepared background information allow visitors to immerse themselves in the eras that Fiorese’s and Beltracchi’s works refer to.

With its unique approach, the exhibition offers a new and perhaps even more primordial approach to art. In the contemporary art world, big names and originality are powerful guidelines that influence our encounters with artworks. We admire a work of art because it is by this or that artist – but what does that really tell us? The aura of high-profile master artists all too easily clouds our perception of what is really important. This exhibition divests visitors of their usual manner of viewing art. Instead, "Kairos. The Right Moment" invites visitors to directly engage with the artworks: with their creation, their formal composition and their messages.

From sketch to painting: how did the master artists produce their works? These and other questions regarding eras, artists and their works are answered by background information as well as textual and visual documentation in the exhibition.
Wolfgang Beltracchi possesses the gift, like no other artist of our time, of adopting the artistic voices of great masters so faithfully that he can paint new subjects convincingly, as if they were created by the original artists themselves. This exceptional artist will create new works of art for "Kairos. The Right Moment", including frescoes, icons and paintings using the artistic voices of genius artists such as Sandro Botticelli, Caspar David Friedrich or Edvard Munch. In further paintings showcased at the exhibition, Wolfgang Beltracchi adopts the novel approach of amalgamating the artistic voices of various painters into a single new voice, thereby highlighting the transition from one era or art movement to the next.

Wolfgang Beltracchi takes appropriation art, one of the most important movements of contemporary art, and further develops it into a completely new genre with its own aesthetic and a new perspective: he studies an artist from a given period until he has completely internalised the painter and sees things from that painter’s perspective. He does not begin his own creative process until he has fully grasped how the painter thinks, as well as acquired a thorough understanding of the artist’s knowledge of colour, texture, light and history, the way in which the artist applied the paint, the intensity and rhythm of the artist’s characteristic style, the background to the artist’s choice of motif, and the social environment in which the artist lived. Using the appropriated artistic voice of a master long since deceased, Wolfgang Beltracchi creates paintings that never before existed. From our present-day perspective and in view of our collected knowledge, these paintings can take on an art-historical relevance and rewrite history.

Wolfgang Beltracchi near his home in Montpellier. He is working on a frottage in the artistic voice of Max Ernst on a wooden walkway at the beach.
THE ARTWORKS

THE PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAURO FIORESE

The Prado, the Hermitage and the British Museum all display only around a tenth of their art treasures. The overwhelming majority of works housed in other prestigious European museums are also stored in archives hidden from the public eye. The atmosphere Mauro Fiorese found in the storerooms of leading museums was, however, anything but soulless. Instead, the Italian photographer perceived an unparalleled sense of dignity and magic in the archives and the spellbinding allure of the sacrosanct. Fiorese captured this with his camera.

He didn’t move anything to change the setting; instead, he himself moved to photograph from various perspectives. His works create the impression that he has curated his own imaginary exhibition. By printing the photographs on cotton paper and framing them under glass in wooden museum-style frames, his photographs are thematically connected to the works displayed. Thus the collection blurs the boundaries between painting and photography, and between the present and the past.
A peek into the archive of the Museo di Capodimonte in Naples. Mauro Fiorese found the atmosphere in the archives of major museums to be dignified.

Wolfgang Beltracchi: „Das Martyrium der Rosa Luxemburg“, 140 x 180 cm, oil on canvas.
Creative meeting in Verona (Summer 2016):
Wolfgang Beltracchi, Christian Zott and Mauro Fiorese (left to right) take a moment to cool off in a fountain during their walk through Giardini Pubblici Arsenale.
BIOGRAPHIES

CHRISTIAN ZOTT
Christian Zott was born in 1960 in southern Germany. The search for what is really essential and critical reflection on processes has shaped his life – professionally as well as personally. At the age of 27, he began his entrepreneurial career by founding mSE Solutions GmbH, today an internationally renowned company for supply chain management with offices in Munich, Lübeck, Singapore, Pittsburgh and Chicago. At the age of 50, he turned over the daily operations of the company to his management team and took some time off to hike for seven months and 5,000 kilometres across southern Europe from west to east. His aim was to take time for reflection and to develop new projects, which he is realising as patron of the arts, adventurer and restaurateur. Christian Zott has been collecting contemporary art for many years and engages with art from a philosophical point of view. In ZOTT Artspace in Singapore and Italy, he exhibits paintings, photographs, videos and sculptures, creating an unorthodox platform for artists and art enthusiasts to meet and exhibit their work.

MAURO FIORESE
Mauro Fiorese (1970 - 2016) is one of the most internationally renowned photographers of our time. His work is exhibited in locations such as the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Texas, and the Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea in Milan. The Italian began his career as a professional American footballer. However, after an injury brought his sporting career to an abrupt end, Fiorese threw himself into the world of photography. The subject of imperfection has become a recurring theme through his work. His early series “Corpolibero” focused on living with a disability and, in 1997, propelled the newcomer into the list of the top 100 photographers in the world as named by the Ernst Haas/Golden Light Award. Numerous accolades followed. For two decades, Fiorese shared his skills as an author and professor of photography, teaching in New York, Milan and Verona. In 2014, he was diagnosed with lung cancer. On his blog, the family man kept a “personal visual diary about art and illness”.

WOLFGANG BELTRACCHI
Wolfgang Beltracchi, the son of a church painter, was born Wolfgang Fischer in 1951. He assisted his father from an early age, immersing himself in his art books. This enabled him – undetected and seemingly incidentally – to develop the foundations of his understanding of art and to acquire a level of skill that would see him go on to repeatedly astound professionals and eventually deceive them. An exceptional talent, he was initially rejected by art school because his paintings were so good that nobody believed that they had actually come from his own hand. Later, after having been accepted, he left academia early because he was bored. He then lived a nomadic life for a year, traveling around as a hippie and an artist. He met Helene Beltracchi in 1992, adopting her surname after they married. The name Beltracchi stands for one of the largest worldwide art forgery scandals in history. Today, it stands first and foremost for an artist with unique talents.
In his essay "The World and the Trousers", which was published in 1945, Samuel Beckett wrote that all you ever need to know about a work of art is whether you like it (and why, if that interests you). I see myself as an art lover in Beckett's sense of the term. I like things that move me – aesthetically as well as intellectually. Mauro Fiorese’s work, for example, moves me because he has a very imaginative view of the world and possesses the talent to capture special moments and insights. His latest photographs from the archives of renowned European museums give the public the chance to look behind the scenes, where the majority of Europe’s art treasures remain hidden from the world. What fascinates me about Wolfgang Beltracchi is his extraordinary ability to internalise the artistic voices of a wide variety of influential painters to such an extent that he is then able to use them to create brand-new compositions. It occurred to me that this talent would make it possible to bridge the gap between the past and the present. It offers us the opportunity to create new pictures that were never painted by the great masters, and the chance to call attention to art history and experience it in a new way.

The works by Mauro Fiorese and Wolfgang Beltracchi both allude to gaps in art history: to works that can no longer be viewed because they are stored in archives, and to motifs that have not yet been painted. They bring to light social and aesthetic influences on European art over a period of 2,000 years. It is very interesting for example to understand how art, which was seen as craftsmanship in early eras, became emancipated from religious and secular commissioners, until finally the present-day myth of the free artist was established. Through the project "Kairos. The Right Moment" I would like to get to the bottom of these developments and trains of thought in order to shed light on the subject from a philosophical perspective: What are the aesthetic criteria of a certain era? What influence do art and history have on each other? Who plays leading roles in this game, and who melts into the background? The interplay between painting, photography, aesthetics and society is what makes this exhibition so fascinating to me. Art historical connections come to life, the history of the development of art becomes tangibly understandable. The work of art becomes the focus of attention.

Christian Zott
“Kairos. The Right Moment” is curated under the organisational umbrella of ZOTT Artspace. ZOTT Artspace is an art platform as well as an umbrella for Christian Zott’s activities in the field of art. For all questions relating to the exhibition, please contact the curator, Andreas Klement, director of ZOTT Artspace.

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