

**Art Chamber Rau:
Animal action!
Animals and their people**

September 18, 2022 – March 26, 2023



Hahnenkampf | **Melchior Hondecoeter** | around 1670–80 | © Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck /
Collection Rau for UNICEF | Photo: Mick Vincenz

Content

Press Release	
Animal action! Animals and their people	3
General information	8
Press images	8

Animal action! Animals and their people

An Exhibition from September 18, 2022 to March 26, 2023

We encounter animals every day: not only in nature or at home, but also as farm animals whose products we consume. Over millennia, art has reflected the close coexistence of humans and animals. This is attested to by the high-caliber paintings, sculptures, and photographs in the Rau Collection for UNICEF, supplemented by a wide variety of loans from private and public sources.

»The exhibition 'Animal action!' is about our fellow creatures in the house, forest, field and meadow. The show tells of our closest companions - since the dawn of time, since the emergence of culture. The Art Chamber becomes an ark for our domestic and farm animals, whose fate we all too often lose sight of. But that is precisely what our mission should be: to create a just, respectful and peaceful coexistence between humans, nature and animals,« explains **Prof. Dr. Jürgen Hardeck, State Secretary for Culture at the Ministry for Family Affairs, Women, Culture and Integration of the State of Rhineland-Palatinate and Chairman of the Board of the Landes-Stiftung Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck.**

»The relationship between art and nature is deeply interwoven in the history of our house. The transparent architecture with its spectacular views into the Rhine panorama shows us a world in a state of constant change. The exhibition takes a historical look at this fragile interplay,« adds **Dr. Julia Wallner, director of the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck.** *»Hans Arp and Sophie Taeuber-Arp also reflected on nature and its forces of growth and creation in their works. To now direct our gaze to the animals in the Rau Collection expands this guiding theme of our museum in a contemporary perspective.«*

»Animals are part of us - part of our culture and history,« cautions **exhibition curator Dr. Susanne Blöcker.** *»Becoming aware of the animal within, accepting and respecting it, as is still common in some human communities, saves us from the de-individualization of the animal that we experience in our modern societies.«*

»In the collection of Dr. Dr. Gustav Rau, it is noticeable that it contains a decidedly large number of works of art dedicated to domestic and farm animals. A good occasion to illuminate the life and fate community of man and animal that has endured since the beginning of time in its most diverse manifestations: in hunting or animal husbandry, as companions or enemies. This millennia-old unity remains close to this day, but is also in danger - for example, due to droughts as a result of climate change, which are currently threatening millions of people in the Horn of Africa. In this way, the exhibition indirectly links back to the theme of Dr. Dr. Rau's life: his legacy of helping the poorest families in Africa,« adds **Christian Schneider, Managing Director of UNICEF Germany.**

About the exhibition

»All the creatures of the earth love, suffer and die like us, so they are equal to us - our brothers.«

Francis of Assisi (1181/82-1226)

Starting in September, the Art Chamber Rau will feature »Animal action!«: 68 exhibits ranging from Egyptian cat mummies to contemporary animal photography tell the eventful history of humans and animals. 38 works from the Rau Collection for UNICEF are complemented by a variety of museum and private treasures. Some come directly from the studios of contemporary artists. The starting point are the animal paintings and sculptures of the Rau Collection for UNICEF. Here, the focus is on chicken, dog and cattle - as farm and domestic animals or as hunting prey or as fresh catch on table and plate.

The wide range of the collection offers an overview from the Middle Ages through the Baroque period to the beginnings of modernity at the start of the 20th century. On the one hand, this is complemented by millennia-old exhibits from the Egyptian Museum in Bonn, on the other hand, the arc is drawn to the present. Photographic animal portraits by Ursula Böhmer or Walter Schels bring us to eye level with our fellow creatures, while the sculpture of two peacefully grazing blue horses by Johannes Brus reminds us of a lost paradise, far from species extinction and climate change. The works of the famous Essen sculptor are a continuation of the museum's opening 15 years ago, as his animal menagerie enlivened the rooms of the Art Chamber before the Rau Collection for UNICEF moved in. But the public is also part of this Art Chamber menagerie. Three screens make this possible. Face filters transform the viewer into a mythical animal, a photo contest shows dogs, cats, horses, and birds with their favorite humans, and last but not least, the food culture of vegetarian food bloggers is demonstrated - as a counterpoint to the meat-laden tables of the Baroque.

The exhibition is divided into four sections: »Mythical animal creatures« have been central figures in religion and popular belief since antiquity - these include the Egyptian cat goddess Bastet, the devilish dragon of late Gothic altars, the faithful donkey at the manger or Redon's flying sun horses.

In the chapter »On farm and meadow« dairy cows, sheep, horses and chickens step into the spotlight of baroque picture stages as our useful helpers. The exhibition section »Hunted and prepared« is dedicated to the untamed game as a pictorial object. It remains prey, freshly shot and retrieved by the hunting dog. On the seductively colorful kitchen pieces, it becomes increasingly fragmented, de-individualized and commodified.

The last large section of the exhibition illustrates animals as our »friends and companions«. Since the 18th century, dogs, cats and horses have increasingly become our closest companions, are family members or even family substitutes.

Mythical animal creatures

Mythical animal creatures have always played a crucial role in religion and folk beliefs. Egyptian, Greek and Roman mythologies live from the multitude of divine hybrid beings, half animal half human, embodying the close bond between the two. Sometimes they appear as a spiritual ancestor, as a helping god, then as a feared demon. The exhibition opens with the oldest artifacts - mummified Egyptian cats, reminiscent of the sacred cat goddess Bastet. Followed by the jackal god Anubis, a work by Rhineland artist Johannes Brus. Devilish dragons

are defeated by heroic knights in a Renaissance painting by Friedrich Sustris. In the depiction of a birth of Christ by Jörg Lederer, donkey and ox take their place at the manger. No evangelist, no church father appeared since early Christianity without his animal assistance. Whether eagle, lion, or dove - they embodied and potentiated the strengths of the saint, let him rise above himself - so also St. Jerome in a painting by the Baroque painter Stomer. And even in the symbolist painter Odilon Redon, Apollo's legendary sun horses storm across the sky as mythical animal beings. Finally, Dieter Roth picks up the thread in his self-portrait by adopting the lion, one of the astrological signs of the zodiac, and thus revealing his personality.

On a screen, visitors can experience what it means to discover the animal in oneself: in the run-up to the exhibition, students from a sixth grade class at Are-Gymnasium in Bad Neuenahr designed animal and mythical creatures that combine with the faces of the viewers to form hybrid beings using digital face-filter technology.

On farm and meadow

Peacefully grazing hooved animals can be seen in the second room of the exhibition, among others by the Baroque painter Balthasar Ommeganck. True personalities are the cows that the contemporary photographer Ursula Böhmer portrayed throughout Europe in her series »All Ladies«. The cattle are joined by goats, sheep and chickens from the Baroque to the modern era. There is also a lot going on in the chicken yard of Melchior Hondecoeter, one of the most famous animal painters of his era. With narrative pictorial power, he ties in here with ancient animal fables that reflect all too human weaknesses in animal plumage. In contrast, the paper sculptures by Cologne artist Saskia Niehaus appear fragile but just as lively as those of their predecessor.

Hunted and prepared

This chapter is devoted to game and prey: Freshly shot, retrieved by the faithful hunting dog, Desportes, the famous French painter at the court of the Sun Kings, captures it. The focus of these hunting still lifes, which were very popular at the time, is not the animal, but rather the hunting successes of the king or his faithful hunting dogs. And in the seductively colorful kitchen pieces of the Baroque period, the animals depicted ultimately become completely commodified, faceless, de-individualized - whether in the dazzlingly colorful fish still life by the Italian Giuseppe Recco or in the image of a large ham by the Frenchman Roland de la Porte. It is an art of morbid charm that bears witness to our increasing distance from nature. This is where consumerism and alienation from our animal nature begin. As a counterpoint to this, a screen presents our contemporary food culture with vegetarian and vegan dishes by well-known food bloggers.

Friends and companions

Since the 18th century, dogs in particular have gradually become pets and lap animals. Plaes, Rigaud and other portrait painters of the Enlightenment period depict family idylls in which four-legged friends belonged as a matter of course. And this is still our reality today - also here at Rolandseck station. A photograph by Benjamin Katz shows Rosalka Rother, the faithful housekeeper of station rescuer Johannes Wasmuth, with two angora cats at her side. Photographer Walter Schels' view of the animals in front of his camera lens is equally empathetic. Even the smallest mouse becomes a star through him, because he captures it

aptly in its personality. In their direct, captivating gaze, one or the other may recognize himself like Dieter Roth in the lion. And this closes the circle to the mythical animal ancestors of the past.

In this section, too, a screen serves to involve the public in the exhibition. In a photo competition held in advance, people could immortalize themselves with their favorite animal.

The accompanying program of the exhibition offers, among other things, a large discussion round on the topic of animal welfare and animal suffering in October. Animal rescuers, animal caretakers and sanctuary operators talk about their practical experience. The »Dogman« and »Harten Hunde«, well-known from TV, report on their rescue missions at the Ahr and in the Ukraine. Employees of the Rheinperle dog sanctuary in Dormagen talk about the fate of old animals who have been deported by their owners.

What does it mean to have a pet for life? What responsibility does one take on with it? What does it mean for an animal if it is acquired for a short time and then pushed away? The mobile veterinarian Dr. Barbara von Ooyen and the Wachtberg dog school dogpoint-brs with Peter Hermann Schmoldt are available to answer questions.

A dialogue guided tour with the zoologist-theologian Dr. Simone Horstmann focuses on philosophical-religious aspects of the animal human relationship in March 2023. In ancient times, there was no question that people believed in animate nature. But in the Christian environment one meets partly until today the denial of an animal soul. This is reflected in our dealings with the animal, over which we believe we have a claim to dominion. Sometimes it is belittled, humanized, then again humiliated and beaten without being perceived as part of creation and an independent individual. What does this mean for us as humans?

Two four-legged guided tours in October and March 2023 also offer the unique opportunity to visit the exhibition together with your own dog and accompanied by the curator Dr. Susanne Blöcker and Peter Hermann Schmoldt from the dog school dogpoint-brs!

Exhibition catalog

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalog in German (hardcover, 128 pages, 35 euros) with texts by Frank Förster, Simone Horstmann, Clemens Wischermann, etc. Also included are interviews with the artists Ben Beyer and Walter Schels. The catalog is edited by Susanne Blöcker and Petra Spielmann.

Artworks of the exhibition

32 paintings

26 sculptures

12 photographs

2 graphics

Represented artists in the exhibition:

Ben Beyer, Cornelis Biltius, Ursula Böhmer, Johannes Brus, Rembrandt Bugatti, Mary Cassatt, Henri-Horace Roland de la Porte, Alexandre-François Desportes, Léonard Tsuguharu Foujita, Louis Gauffier, Melchior Hondecoeter, Benjamin Katz, Johann König, Jörg Lederer, Meister der Georgslegende, Saskia Niehaus, Balthasar Paul Ommeganck, François Pompon, Barthelemy Prieur, Giuseppe Recco, Odilon Redon, John Francis Rigaud, Dieter Roth, Walter

arp museum Bahnhof Rolandseck

Schels, Jan Silberechts, Frans Snyders, Antonio Solario, Franz Carl Spitzweg, Sebastian Stoskopff, Matthias Stomer, Friedrich Sustris, Simon Troger, Abraham Hendrickz van Beyeren, Jacob Fopsen van Es, Abraham van den Tempel, David van der Plaes, Georg Wolf, Johan Zoffany and others.

We thank the partners and sponsors of the exhibition:

Partner



Sponsor



General Information

Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck
Hans-Arp-Allee 1
53424 Remagen
Tel. +49(0) 22 28 92 55-0
Fax. +49(0) 22 28 94 25 21
info@arpmuseum.org
www.arpmuseum.org

Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday and on public holidays 11 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Admission: Adults, all exhibitions: 11 Euro, reduced: 9 Euro

Our complete program: www.arpmuseum.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/arpmuseumbahnhofrolandseck

Twitter (#arpmuseum)

Instagram (#arpmuseum)

PRESS MATERIAL on the homepage of the Arp Museum via:

<https://arpmuseum.org/en/museum/about-us/press.html>

Press images

Art Chamber Rau: Animal action! Animals and their people

September 18, 2022 – March 26, 2023

Melchior Hondecoeter | Hahnenkampf | around 1670–80 |
Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |
Photo: Mick Vincenz



Ursula Böhmer | All Ladies. Kühe in Europa: Normandie, Frankreich | 2000 |
Die Photographische Collection/SK-Stiftung Kultur/Dauerleihgabe der
Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Photographischen Collection der SK
Stiftung Kultur, Köln e. V.

© und Photo: Ursula Böhmer, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022



Alexandre-François Desportes | Stilleben mit Wild | 1740 |
Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |
Photo: Peter Schälchli, Zürich



Johan Zoffany | Porträt George Steevens | um 1780 |
Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |
Photo: Horst Bernhard



Johannes Brus | Zwei blaue Pferde | 2010 |
© Johannes Brus, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022 | Photo: Mick Vincenz



Friedrich Sustris | Hl. Georg und die Prinzessin (Allegorisches Verlöbnis) |
1570–1600 | Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |
Photo: Mick Vincenz



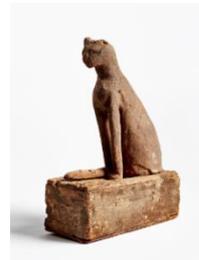
Giuseppe Recco | Stillleben mit Fischen, Früchten und Blumen |
2. Hälfte 17. Jh. | Arp Museum Bf. Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |
Photo: Mick Vincenz



Saskia Niehaus | Untitled | 2013 |
© Saskia Niehaus, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022 | Photo: Mick Vincenz



Ägypten | Hölzerne Katzenfigur mit Mumie im Sockel | 1. Jtsd.v. Chr. |
Ägyptisches Museum Bonn (Dauerleihgabe des ehemaligen
Stadtmuseums Grevenbroich) | Photo: Mick Vincenz



Odilon Redon | Der Wagen des Apollon | 1905–14 |
Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau
for UNICEF | Photo: Mick Vincenz



Walter Schels | Hunde: Papillon | 1992 |
© und Photo: Walter Schels, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022



John Francis Rigaud | Porträt Willoughby Bertie, 4th Count of Abingdon
mit seiner Familie | 1793 |
Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |
Photo: Mick Vincenz



Exhibition view »Animal action! Animals and their people«

© Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |

Photo: David Ertl



Exhibition view »Animal action! Animals and their people«

© Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |

Photo: David Ertl



Exhibition view »Animal action! Animals and their people«

© Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |

Photo: David Ertl



Exhibition view »Animal action! Animals and their people«

© Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck / Collection Rau for UNICEF |

Photo: David Ertl

