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# MUSEUM LUDWIG

## PRESS RELEASE

August 10, 2023–August 31, 2025

### **On the Value of Time: New Presentation of the Collection of Contemporary Art**

Press briefing: Wednesday, August 9, 11 a.m., with preview starting at 10 a.m.

Every two years the Museum Ludwig presents a new selection of contemporary art from its collection. This edition will focus on different concepts of time and ways in which artists handle the topic in their work. Many artists draw attention to the fact that art is experienced in the present, while also questioning memory, remembrance, and historiography. The presentation is framed by “value of time” as a concept—a socially determined value on which abstract, quantifiable time is based.

The starting point is Walter Benjamin’s haunting image from 1940 of the “angel of history,” with which he described the relationship between past, present, and future. This established the concept of a critical historiography that originates from economic parameters. Various facets of this concept are reflected by the exhibited works, in which temporality takes effect, the past is reflected in its relationship to the present, and future events are anticipated.

In her installation *The Documentary: Geocentric Puncture* from 2018, Guan Xiao (b. 1983 in Chongqing, China) contrasts an internet-based perception of time, in which the past seems to be present, and a belief in constantly advancing development. The title “Geocentric Puncture” can be understood in a similar way: an obsolete worldview, according to which the sun revolves around the earth, lives on in the twenty-first-century view of humans occupying the center of the universe.

*Mountains of Encounter* from 2008, in contrast, by Haegue Yang (b. 1971 in Seoul, South Korea), takes the meeting of Korean activist Kim San and American journalist Nym Wales (alias Helen Foster Snow)—a historical event that remained secret, although it was part of global processes—as the point of departure for her room-filling installation involving visitors.

Other works investigate abstract, quantifiable time. This is what determines the value of labor and organizes social time. A number of artists address this topic, including Harun Farocki in his video installation *Gegen-Musik* from 2004. In the style of filmmakers Dziga Vertov and Walter Ruttmann, Farocki makes a portrait of the French city of Lille using a montage of found, operational images that according to Farocki depict the city in way that is “just as rationalized and ordered as a production process.” The value of time refers to the economies of time.

The presentation *On the Value of Time* presents works of contemporary art from the last twenty years. Four additional, exemplary works from the 1960s and 1980 are integrated into the presentation. The diversity of media is particularly important. Short texts provide introductions to the individual works, and the presentation is augmented by quotes from artists as well as Walter Benjamin and his contemporary, the philosopher and economist Alfred Sohn-Rethel.

Curator: Barbara Engelbach

**Featured artists:**

Thomas Bayrle, Alighiero Boetti, Frank Bowling, Miriam Cahn, Mark Dion, Maria Eichhorn, Harun Farocki, Guan Xiao, Wade Guyton, Lubaina Himid, Ull Hohn, Rebecca Horn, Anne Imhof, Boaz Kaizman, Carolyn Lazard, Jochen Lempert, Pauline M'barek, Kerry James Marshall, Park McArthur, Oscar Murillo, Füsün Onur, Asimina Paradissa, Robert Rauschenberg, Cameron Rowland, Julia Scher, Andreas Schulze, Andreas Siekmann, Diamond Stingily, Danh Vo, Lois Weinberger, Haegue Yang

The presentation is sponsored by the Gesellschaft für Moderne Kunst am Museum Ludwig e.V., the International Society Museum Ludwig and Art-Invest Real Estate.

**Website and social media**

The Museum Ludwig will use the hashtag *OnTheValueOfTime* in its posts about the exhibition on social media.