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Beyeler Museum



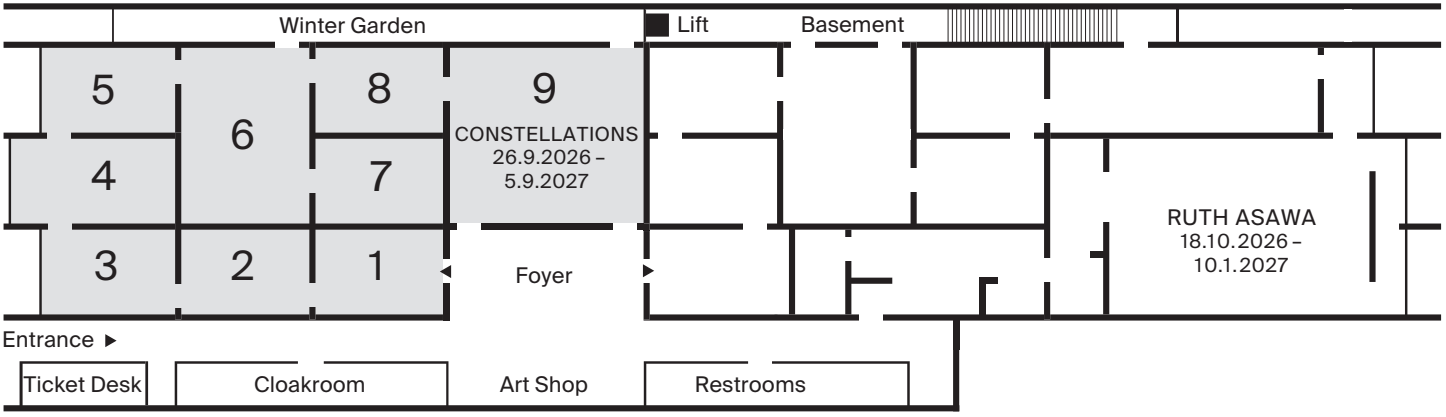
Constellations

Cover:
Edward Hopper
Cape Ann Granite, 1928 (detail)
Oil on canvas, 73.5 x 102.3 cm
Hansjörg Wyss Collection
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CONSTELLATIONS

Beyeler Museum
26 September 2026 – 5 September 2027

Beyeler Museum
Exhibition floor plan



Beyeler Museum
Introduction

The wide-ranging exhibition “Constellations” inaugurates the Fondation Beyeler’s newly expanded ensemble, unfolding across Renzo Piano’s Beyeler Museum and Peter Zumthor’s Wyss Museum as well as the full expanse of the Beyeler Park. “Constellations” features highlights of the Beyeler Collection in dialogue with masterpieces on loan from renowned private collections, notably the Hansjörg Wyss Collection as well as the Ananda Foundation, Calder Foundation, Daros Collection, The Easton Foundation, Esther Grether Family Collection, Collection Hersaint, Collection Marx, Reuben Collection, Rudolf Staechelin Collection and further lenders, all closely associated with our institution.
In “Constellations”, artworks form new relationships with one another, with the architecture and with the landscape. Over the course of the exhibition, these constellations will partly shift with the seasons, giving rise to a rich variety of artistic experiences that invite visitors to explore the museum’s newly expanded ensemble.

In the Beyeler Museum, the artworks meet with the familiar architecture that has shaped the experience of art at the Fondation Beyeler for the past 30 years. The focus is placed on artists whose work is predominantly figurative, among them many key figures within the Fondation Beyeler's collection.

Beyeler Museum
Room 1

1

We are welcomed to the exhibition by two large bronze sculptures by Joan Miró (1893–1983), whose works have formed part of the Beyeler Collection from its early days. For the first time in the Fondation Beyeler's history, *Oiseau lunaire* meets its fellow creature from the Hansjörg Wyss Collection. The two birds appear surprisingly chick-like for their size. Their sturdy bodies are adorned with various cone and crescent shapes, which are also evocative of other animals.
Miró conceived these large bronze sculptures inspired by traditional Mallorcan clay whistles – brightly painted figurines also representing horned or winged hybrid creatures. His figures are the result of a long engagement with various materials and scales. Their vocabulary of forms conveys the same playful mindset and creative delight as the Spanish-Catalan artist's paintings, currently on view in the Wyss Museum.

Beyeler Museum
Room 2

2

Early 20th-century European landscape painting may be viewed as a “laboratory” of modern art: various artists experimented with formal innovations that were to later find their way into other genres such as portraiture and still life.
In this room, a series of meditative lake views by Ferdinand Hodler (1853–1918) offer a nod to nearby Swiss landscapes. *Der Brienzersee von Breitlauenen aus* features a shimmering blue-green landscape with pink and yellow contrasts. The title-giving vantage point is the alpine pasture of Breitlauenen, located at an altitude of about 1,500 metres. In 1906, the artist was able to comfortably reach it departing from Interlaken, using a mountain railway that had launched just a few years earlier. In depicting the cliff faces, pastures and boulders, Hodler used oil pastels to structure his expressive brushwork. This choice of materials attests to a quest for new means of expression in landscape painting, also characteristic of the works by Paul Gauguin, Maurice de Vlaminck and Edward Hopper on display in this room.

Beyeler Museum
Room 3

3

This large painting by Henri Rousseau (1844–1910) represents a narrative climax like a scene on a theatre stage. The lion and the antelope are set against a backdrop of lush decorative foliage, through which we can make out a dramatic sunrise or sunset as well as other animal characters. The scene is depicted with great detail and precision.
In comparison, the sculpture *Tier* by Fischli/Weiss (*1952/1946–2012) is reduced to essential features. With its plump body and stumpy legs, it seems to represent an archetypal idea of an animal rather than any concrete living creature.
Rousseau's lion flashes a set of milk teeth and his antelope is shedding a tear – the wilderness painted by the French artist is also an imagined one. Akin to a diorama, his painting is composed on the basis of greenhouse plants and taxidermy displays of wild animals Rousseau studied in Paris' botanical garden.
As for the Swiss artist duo's friendly animal, it is in fact a peep box – under the base of its tail, we can look into and through the sculpture.

Beyeler Museum
Room 4

4

A striking dialogue between Impressionist and contemporary works unfolds against the backdrop of the museum's water lily pond. Claude Monet's *Nymphéas* masterfully capture fleeting light and reflections on water. In his garden in Giverny, which the French artist (1840–1926) conceived specially for his painterly investigations, several gardeners were hired specifically to tend to the water lily ponds – attesting to the significance this motif held for Monet. Shifts in incoming daylight are also handed a key role with the massive glass cylinders *Opposites of White* by US-American artist Roni Horn (*1955), as their appearance changes depending on the weather and time of day. Like water, their surfaces reflect incident light or passing viewers. The large cast glass sculptures thereby engage in a poetic dialogue with their natural and human-made surroundings, which can be experienced in similar form on the ground floor of the Wyss Museum.

Beyeler Museum
Room 5

5

The elongated, thin figures characteristic of the work of Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966) combine apparent frailty with intense spatial presence. The artist viewed space as an integral part of his sculptures. With their extreme proportions, they draw our gaze to their surroundings and heighten the perception of our own bodies within space. The small bronze sculpture *La cage* illustrates this phenomenon at model scale. The device of the cage materialises the space in which the figure's body is situated.
The room in which we are standing has been closely linked to Giacometti since the museum's very beginnings – when the Fondation Beyeler opened in 1997, it featured sculptures by the Swiss artist.

Beyeler Museum
Room 6

6

The seminal works of modern portrait painting on view in this room allow for a comparative exploration of the stagings and self-stagings undertaken by significant artists of the 20th and 21st centuries. The self-portraits in particular offer a direct insight into the individual emotional landscapes of the artists, many of them still young when these works were created. The two works by Amedeo Modigliani (1884–1920) are among the highlights in the room: *Jeune homme assis, les mains croisées sur les genoux* and *Femme au collier* display the artist's distinctive style, which lends his sitters an almost icon-like inwardness. Like many artists of his generation in Paris at the beginning of the 20th century, Modigliani came into contact with non-Western art and prehistoric European sculpture. The stylisation of facial features and the elongated proportions reflect the influence of West African masks and Early Bronze Age European art, which also inspired the Cubist artists of Pablo Picasso's circle.

Beyeler Museum
Room 7

7

The work of artist Marlene Dumas (*1953) centres almost exclusively on portraiture. Her paintings display the influence of the pictorial traditions of European art history, the originals of which she first encountered as a young woman after moving from South Africa to the Netherlands. Her more than life-size family portrait thus follows in the lineage of Dutch 17th-century portrait painting.
As a starting point for her works, Dumas often uses found materials such as press images or film stills, as well as private photographs. Her painting process often also begins with poured or splattered paint, which she fleshes out into more concrete motifs, as was the case for *The devil may care*. While the titles of her works sometimes refer to literature or mythology, ultimately their meaning remains ambiguous. Rather than telling stories, Dumas' pictures deal with universal, timeless themes of the human condition such as love, vulnerability, pain and despair.

Beyeler Museum
Room 8

8

This room stands out as an exception in the Beyeler Museum – it is the only one devoted fully to abstract painting. In the works of Willem de Kooning (1904–1997), colour, form and movement combine to seemingly spontaneous, powerful effect. His compositions are driven by energetic, swirling brushstrokes and vibrant colours, taking up the full picture surface. De Kooning is one of the leading exponents of Abstract Expressionism, an abstract painting movement that emerged in the United States after 1945, influenced by artists who had emigrated from Europe. It combined spontaneous painterly expression with the desire to free painting of all that was deemed superfluous, returning it to its fundamental elements: pure colour and form, and the gesture of the painting hand. Further positions of Abstract Expressionism are on view in the Wyss Museum with works by Cy Twombly and Joan Mitchell.

Beyeler Museum
Room 9

9

Pablo Picasso holds a central place in the Fondation Beyeler's collection – with around 30 works, the museum houses one of the most significant Picasso collections worldwide.
This room features paintings and sculptures from more than six decades of Picasso's career, ranging from early Cubist works, to the artist's Surrealist leanings, through his expressive late work of the 1960s and 1970s. This selection illustrates the Spanish painter's enduring spirit of experimentation.
Picasso painted *Femme (Époque des «Demoiselles d'Avignon»)* at the same time as his masterpiece *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*. The expressive lines draw the body and the facial features in a highly stylised manner and break them down into distinct shapes. Only partially rendered in colour, toward its lower part the motif dissolves into a mere sketch. The painting's mode of representation, radically new around 1907, stands at the threshold to Cubism, one of the greatest revolutions in 20th-century painting.

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Information

Exhibition

The exhibition “Constellations” is curated by
Sam Keller, Director of the Fondation Beyeler,
and Theodora Vischer, Chief Curator of the
Fondation Beyeler.
Curatorial assistance: Amelie Baader,
Associate Curator Collection

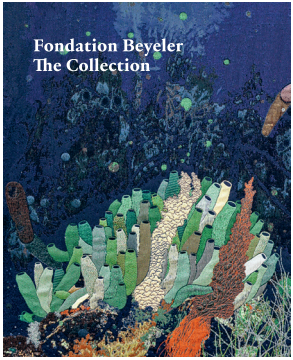
Exhibition guide

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Information

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Upcoming exhibition

Beyeler Museum
RUTH ASAWA
18 October 2026 – 10 January 2027

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Fondation Beyeler
Museum site map

