

The Deputy Mayor in charge of Culture  
Dr. Ina Hartwig

## **INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS**

04.03.2021

### **City's recent acquisitions budget facilitates three exceptional new purchases for Frankfurt's Weltkulturen Museum**

Thanks to the acquisition budget that Dr. Ina Hartwig, the deputy mayor in charge of culture, has reintroduced for museums in Frankfurt am Main, the Weltkulturen Museum has been able to make three purchases in connection with its research interests. All three purchases have come about through cooperation with Indigenous artists, which makes them particularly relevant with respect to the current debate on provenance.

"The Frankfurt museum scene is highly diverse, spread across various categories such as modern art, applied arts, architecture, history, archaeology and ethnology. Each institution has come up with its own strategy for collecting objects. If museums can't actively determine their own acquisitions policy, their collecting activities remain largely controlled by outsiders. This success in equipping the museums once more with an acquisitions budget is an essential and critical improvement for the museums and their work," explains deputy mayor for culture Dr. Ina Hartwig.

Acquisitions are a sensitive issue for ethnological museums in particular: the provenance of the objects and the story of how they came into being should always be transparent. The director of the Weltkulturen Museum, Dr. Eva Raabe, notes that "as far as ethnological research is concerned, conducting research into provenance is invariably of central importance. A concept

for collecting that has been developed in-house in line with modern ethnological criteria also means that the purchases undertaken as part of this scheme are always going to be documented.”

It is all the more gratifying that the most recent purchases were facilitated for three projects located within two collections (Oceania and the Americas). Not only are these pieces notable for their ethnological documentation, they also establish fascinating links to existing acquisitions and keep up contacts between the artists and the museums that in some case stretch back for many years:

Acquisitions project coordinated by Oceania curator Matthias Claudius Hofmann:

18 paintings on paper from the village of Avim, Papua New Guinea (Arafundi River, in the southern tributaries region of the Sepik), with accompanying documentation from ethnologist and co-curator Tomi Bartole. The names of the painters: Andrias Aimo, Vincent Apiak, Fidelis Apot, Peter Asikim, Eddie Katuk, Sebastian Katuk, Stanley Kayama, Christian Kmbsa, Conny Tapain, Nelson Tatambi, Justine Waipo. These works can be seen from 1 April 2021 onwards in the exhibition “Green Sky, Blue Grass: Colour Coding Worlds”.

Two acquisitions projects coordinated by Mona Suhrbier, who is responsible for both North and South America in her capacity as Americas curator:

Cedar wood dance mask made by Tom Hunt, Kwakwaka'wakw Nation, Canada.

Purchased as part of the Frankfurt Book Fair in cooperation with the host country Canada.

Commission and purchase of four large acrylic paintings, “Just Trees “ by artist Roldán Pinedo, Shipibo, Peru. The paintings will be shown in an exhibition planned for 2022.

In 2019, the deputy mayor in charge of culture Dr. Ina Hartwig introduced an acquisitions budget for Frankfurt city museums. These museums now have 1.1 million euros annually at their disposal for purchasing works of art. “Setting up this acquisitions budget sends a very clear signal about a decision we have made as a city: the state buys art. As state-owned entities, public museums are in a different position – they should be able to operate on the private art market.” The museum MMK für Moderne Kunst, the Jewish Museum and most recently the Caricatura Museum Frankfurt have already made purchases using funds from the budget.

You can find more information in the attached press release.

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