

Presseinformation

Museum am Rothenbaum

Rothenbaumchaussee 64 | 20148 Hamburg Germany | markk-hamburg.de

Of Wolves and Humans

Press event: Wed, April 10 | 11 a.m.

Exhibition opening: Thu, April 11 | 7 p.m.

Duration: Fri, April 12 to Sun, October 13, 2019



© Corinna Korth

More than 150 years after their extinction, wolves are back in Germany. Like hardly any other animal in European cultural history and other cultural regions the wolf serves as a projection surface for human longings and fears: as a cross-border nomad, dangerous predator, object of research, social pack animal or character in fairy tales and myths it is both a figure of fear and a source of meaning. The MARKK uses the great media attention and social polarization surrounding the animal as an opportunity to dedicate an exhibition to the relationship between wolves and humans. *Of Wolves and Humans* addresses current discourses in popular culture, art and science and provides insight into concepts of the wolf in various cultural and historical contexts.

Despite its systematic extermination since the 19th century, the wolf lived on in images and ideas of art and culture. These still influence our contradictory reactions to the return of the wolves. At the same time, wolves are returning to a changed world in which relationships between humans and animals are being re-evaluated. Although the number of wolves in Germany, with an estimated 70 packs, is manageable, their reappearance has sparked off social debates of our time: about the protection of species or the preservation of pasture farming, conflicts between city and country, about the dealings with the other that comes from outside, and furthermore about supremacy or equal coexistence, exclusion or integration. The wolf preoccupies the federal government and the EU, Romania even chose a jumping wolf as a logo for its EU Council Presidency at the beginning of 2019. In China and neighboring Mongolia, the novel *Wolf Totem* by writer Jiang Rong became one of the best-selling books ever.

In this exhibition, the MARKK draws on the potential of its European collections in order to relate the traces of wolves available in them to those from other cultural

Weitere Medieninformationen und Bildmaterial:

Julia Daumann | Presse- und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit | Museum am Rothenbaum
fon +49 40 428 879 – 548 | mail presse@markk-hamburg.de

MARKK
MUSEUM AM ROTHENBAUM
Kulturen und Künste der Welt

Presseinformation

Museum am Rothenbaum

Rothenbaumchaussee 64 | 20148 Hamburg Germany | markk-hamburg.de

regions, in the past and present. In this context, similarities and differences in dealing with the wolf and its significance come to light. At the same time, the exhibition draws on the latest research findings in cultural and social anthropology within the framework of the evolving human-non-human-animal studies. This interdisciplinary field of research is dedicated to the complex relationships between humans and animals with the aid of the disciplines of sociology, psychology, philosophy, educational and historical science as well as cultural studies.

On the one hand, the exhibition documents the dealings with the returned wolf, whose distribution and behavior is monitored by using various scientific methods of wolf observation such as wildlife cameras and camera traps. On the other hand, it illustrates how the wolf was imagined and represented in various geographical and temporal contexts in different media such as fairy tale books, horror films, wolf dances or political posters and in advertising. Despite being thematically anchored in Europe, the exhibition is committed to a global approach. It deals with the symbolic character of the wolf in those regions of the world in which it lived or still lives and in whose myths it plays a role, for example in North American wolf masks of the Nuu-chah-Nulth, European talismans or Japanese ornaments (netsuke) worn as part of the kimono. The project also addresses the exploitation in a political and material sense, as well as the manifestation of the subject in artistic works that expand the view of and knowledge about the animal in sometimes surprising ways. Among others there are works by Timm Ulrichs, Corinna Korth, Jazmina Cininas, Rainer Opolka, Jussi TwoSeven, Marika Swan, Hjalmer Wenstob, Marc Chagall and Lukas Cranach the Elder.

However, *Of Wolves and Humans* does not strive for an encyclopedic knowledge trail on the subject of wolves. The exhibition brings out the main points and emphasizes those aspects that can be clearly demonstrated. The everyday meets the particular, great art blends with the scientific stock, ceremonial equipment with popular culture or political iconography with fairy tale figures and thus merge to a transdisciplinary panorama of the examination of wolves.

The exhibition received many suggestions from the research project *Wolves: knowledge and practice* at the University of Zurich, whose director Prof. Dr. Bernhard Tschofen, and his project collaborators Elisa Frank and Nikolaus Heinzer participated in the exhibition as scientific advisors. Prof. Dr. Kerstin Poehls of the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Hamburg also supported the project as a member of the advisory board and, in the course of a seminar, together with her students contributed short films on current perspectives from the immediate vicinity of Hamburg to the exhibition. *Of Wolves and Humans* builds on a highly topical field of discourse and combines it with an interdisciplinary approach linked with visual culture.

The exhibition is sponsored by the Hamburg Ministry of Culture and Media and the Freunde des Museums am Rothenbaum e.V.