

LÉVY GORVY WITH RUMBLER

LÉVY GORVY WITH RUMBLER PRESENTS
A RETROSPECTIVE OF GEORG BASELITZ
SPANNING 50 YEARS OF HIS OEUVRE

The World Upside Down: Works by Georg Baselitz 1965–2015

11 September–11 December 2020

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Kirchgasse 50, 8001 Zürich

Zürich—In uncertain times like these, as we all look for answers, it felt appropriate to turn for inspiration to a legend amongst our great living artists: Georg Baselitz. Aged 82 today, he has always stuck to his self-imposed mantra as a figurative painter, sculptor, draftsman, and printmaker. With his consistent focus on figuration, Baselitz sees himself in a long line of European artists seeking answers for the future in the here and now.

A rare etching from 1966 titled *Das Haus* that represents a lone man sitting outside his house sparked the theme of the present exhibition: *The World Upside Down*. Signed the wrong way round by Baselitz, the work invites the question of whether the artist thought about inverting his subjects already in 1966, three years before he created his first upside-down composition in oil from 1969, *Der Wald auf dem Kopf*. The drypoint etching shows the hero in front of his house, which has become too small for his massive body. He sits there with his eyes cast upward, contemplating what he is supposed to do now.

Starting with the heroes, shepherds, and poets of the 1960s, the exhibition continues with works from Baselitz's sought-after 1970s *Bäume* (Trees) and *Adler* (Eagle) series before arriving at the early 1980s with its powerful, iconic *Köpfe* (Heads), raw images reminiscent of African tribal art. This body of work culminates in the monumental oil *Rotschopf* of 1982. Not only are we reminded of the strong graphic forms of graffiti that inspired Jean Dubuffet's oeuvre from around 1950, but we are also invited to look to America and consider them in light of the expressive paintings by the young Jean-Michel Basquiat, who first emerged into the public eye in 1982.

The World Upside Down features key works from Baselitz's oeuvre in oil painting, drawing, watercolor, pastel, linocut, and etching—each one of them an equally important medium for the German artist. The exhibition is rounded up by an elegant, imposing oil: *Gertrud's Hut I* (1998), which features the artist's wife Elke, who has been a recurring subject in his work for 60 years. An example of how Baselitz has dared to take up a favorite theme of the 1960s at the beginning of the new millennium is a successful *Remix* composition in watercolor, *Hundeführer mit 2 Hunden* (2006). Here, he returns to his '60s imagery of heroes, shepherds, and dog handlers, using the spontaneous technique of watercolor to give this traditional subject a sense of vibrant freshness five decades after its original invention.

About Lévy Gorvy

Lévy Gorvy cultivates a program devoted to innovation and connoisseurship in the fields of modern, postwar, and contemporary art. Founded by Dominique Lévy and Brett Gorvy, Lévy Gorvy maintains gallery spaces at 909 Madison Avenue in New York, in Mayfair, London, and in Central, Hong Kong. The gallery fosters continued dedication to the living artists and

artists' estates that it represents and offers a robust program of exhibitions and multidisciplinary events. The gallery also produces ongoing art historical research and original scholarship, publishing exhibition catalogues, monographs, and other key publications. In Zürich, Lévy Gorvy with Rumbler offers bespoke private advisory services to collectors and institutions around the globe.

909 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10021, +1 212 772 2004
22 Old Bond Street, London W1S 4PY, +44 203 696 5910
Ground Floor, 2 Ice House Street, Central, Hong Kong, +852 2613 9568
Kirchgasse 50, 8001 Zürich, +41 44 260 44 00
www.levygorvy.com | [@levygorvy](https://www.instagram.com/levygorvy)

Press Contacts

Marta de Movellan, Lévy Gorvy, marta@levygorvy.com
Andrea Schwan, Andrea Schwan Inc., andrea@andreaschwan.com