



PRESS RELEASE

The City of Milan, GAM – Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Milan, and UBS  
present

## **DON'T SHOOT THE PAINTER. PAINTINGS FROM THE UBS ART COLLECTION JUNE 17 - OCTOBER 4, 2015**

Curated by Francesco Bonami

To coincide with the ExpoinCittà, a major exhibition celebrating contemporary art will unite more than one hundred of the most significant masterpieces of the UBS Art Collection for the first time ever at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Milan, showcasing ninety-one international artists, ranging from photographic impressions by Thomas Struth to the neo-expressionist art of Jean-Michel Basquiat.



**Thomas Struth**  
**National Gallery 1, London 1989**  
**1989**  
**C Print**  
**180 x 196 cm**  
**© Thomas Struth, 2015**  
**UBS Art Collection**



**Milan, June 15, 2015 – From June 17 to October 4, 2015, a celebration of painting and its cardinal role in art will transform the rooms of the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Milan into a peerless, spectacular treasure trove of contemporary art with the major exhibition “Don't Shoot the Painter. Paintings from the UBS Art Collection,” curated by Francesco Bonami. This exhibition is one of the key events in the ExpoinCittà calendar. It is presented by the Galleria d'Arte Moderna and the City of Milan in conjunction with UBS, as part of the three-year partnership between the bank and GAM, demonstrating exemplary collaboration between the public and private sectors.**

**The exhibits – on display to the Italian public for the first time – comprise more than 100 of the most significant works in the UBS Art Collection from the 1960s to today by 91 international artists, among them John Armleder, John Baldessari, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Max Bill, Michaël Borremans, Alice Channer, Sandro Chia, Francesco Clemente, Enzo Cucchi, Günther Förg, Gilbert & George, Katharina Grosse, Andreas Gursky, Damien Hirst, Alex Katz, Bharti Kher, Gerhard Richter, Thomas Struth, Hiroshi Sugimoto, to name just a few. A veritable exploration of painting in modern times – which investigates key forms, such as landscape, portraits, the human figure and abstract art – in order to detect and sanction the role of the latter as a point of reference in history for artists and the public.**

**Painting thus becomes a broader source of inspiration for art and the approach of artists themselves. Based on this very consideration, the exhibition opens with a celebration of painting via a famous photograph by Thomas Struth, in which the artist captures the relationship arising between the viewer and the artwork, creating a work within a work, a museum within a museum, while we ourselves view other viewers. Like Struth, many other artists at various times and places have been inspired by painting and its grand masters, using different techniques and forms, each influenced in its way by that which went before.**

**On the ground floor of the GAM, the splendid rooms of this museum, founded and fostered by a series of bequests and donations from committed, generous Milanese collectors, are playing host to one of the most extensive exhibitions ever organized, with masterpieces from the UBS Art Collection, one of the major international corporate collections. They do this by recreating a very specific kind of experience in order to give visitors the impression that they are entering a huge treasure trove of paintings. The backdrop reflects the longstanding heritage of the museum, a place where paintings acquire particular significance as soon as they are brought into dialogue with other paintings, between the past and the present. The pictures appear to be suspended in mid-air in the museum, with the walls of the exhibition rooms covered with photographs showing what the rooms of the GAM look like when they're showcasing its permanent collection. The rooms represent the history of the museum, with the UBS Art Collection adding an important new phase to that history.**



In this respect, the title “Don’t Shoot the Painter” is an ironic reference to the phrase **“don’t shoot the pianist”**, which is often heard in Western films: whenever the ideas and languages of art intermingle, making it difficult to decipher the meaning of the component parts, painting comes back into the spotlight to draw attention to what can be easily recognized and interpreted by everyone, in the same way as the pianist’s music restores order to the chaos in the saloon in Westerns. Ultimately, a painter is always a painter and face to face with a canvas. It doesn’t even matter who the artist is; we know that we’re dealing with the “archetypal space” of art. So let’s not shoot the painter. Let’s listen to his music...

“This exhibition continues the success of the three-year partnership between GAM and UBS. The bank doesn’t just support the activities of the Galleria but also proposes original exhibitions, drawing on its own art collection with meticulous curatorial attention,” explained City Counselor for Culture **Filippo Del Corno**. A project that is perfect for ExpoCittà, capable of marrying painting and art in a contemporary perspective, thus not just enhancing the attractiveness of the GAM, which already offers the public a newly prepared exhibition spanning the period from neoclassicism to modern art, but also boosting the comprehensive cultural assets of our city during the six months of Expo 2015.”

“While thinking of an exhibition on the idea of painting, we also considered how to transform the experience of the exhibition itself into a painting. That’s why we decided to hang the works one above the other, using images of the existing areas of the museum and all its collection as a backdrop. As a result, the impression is given of seeing the works floating in the air, in a uniquely surreal gallery, in which the works abandon their physical nature and become what they really are, that is symbols containing images, stories and ideas,” points out **Francesco Bonami**, the curator.

The exhibition is a product of the **three-year partnership initiated in 2013, between UBS and the GAM in Milan**, which has enabled the Galleria d’Arte Moderna to concentrate its efforts on appraising, maintaining and disseminating some key focal points with a strong identity in its own collection in the museum’s permanent exhibition. Last year, the partnership also facilitated the restoration and reopening of the Grassi and Vismara collections, as well as the room dedicated to Medardo Rosso, with a revised exhibition layout. Moreover, UBS and the GAM also collaborate on content and ideas: this gave rise to the exhibition “**YEAR AFTER YEAR. Works on paper from the UBS Art Collection**” from March to June 2014, which was a great public success.

Through its partnership with the GAM, UBS has been able, for example with the two exhibitions drawn from its collection, to actively participate in the cultural growth and development of Milan. UBS’ aim is not just to showcase its own collection but also to focus attention on the topic of art collections. The act of collecting in itself was the meeting point for GAM and UBS: the Galleria d’Arte Moderna in Milan is “home” to some of the best expressions of Milanese and Lombardian collecting. Within this context, the support for culture and public collections, prompted the decision in favor of an ad hoc



project in Milan, to rediscover one of the city's most fascinating art centers.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a **catalog in Italian and English, published by Skira** and richly illustrated with images of the installation views from the specially prepared rooms and additional details.

A series of accompanying events is planned for the coming months. These include a special ***Don't Shoot the Painter bookstore***, which was set up in partnership with **Micamera** throughout the duration of the exhibition.

On Tuesday **June 23**, the **European Institute of Design**, in conjunction with the **Swiss Consulate General**, will present the third **Swiss Cross Textile Award** at the **Milano Moda Uomo 2015**. This year's award has a brand new format, which interweaves art and fashion in a fashion show with clothes created especially for the event by some of the best students on the course in Fashion Design. They drew their inspiration for their designs from 20 paintings in the UBS Art Collection on display at the GAM.

The UBS Art Collection consists of more than 30,000 objects and includes thousands of contemporary works (paintings, photographs, drawings, prints, video art and sculptures) by artists ranging from emerging talents to some of the most important artistic figures of the last fifty years. Works from the UBS Art Collection are installed in roughly 700 buildings in more than 50 countries around the world. UBS also regularly loans individual works to international museums, making the collection available for the enjoyment of the general public.

## GALLERIA D'ARTE MODERNA DI MILANO

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Galleria d'Arte Moderna is a municipal institution that protects, presents and promotes not only the paintings and sculptures exhibited but also the architecture of the Villa Reale of Milan. The Villa was built between 1790 and 1796 by Leopold Pollack (Giuseppe Piermarini's pupil) for Count Ludovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso. At the beginning of 19th century, due to political changes, the Villa became the residence of the Viceroy Eugenio di Beauharnais, Napoleon's son. Since 1921, Villa Reale has held the municipal art collections of Milan from the nineteenth century. On the first floor are paintings and sculptures dated between 1770 and 1850, with galleries dedicated to the masters of Neoclassicism, Andrea Appiani and Antonio Canova. Additional galleries include works from the 1850's to the beginning of the 20th century, and two monographic galleries dedicated to Gaetano Previati and Giovanni Segantini. The last gallery within the museum is dedicated to the symbolist production of the latter and of Pellizza da Volpedo. Galleria d'Arte Moderna also holds two private collections, which were donated to the city of Milan: the Grassi collection, with works by Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne, Toulouse-Lautrec, Boldini, De Nittis, Fattori, Balla and Boccioni and the Vismara collection, with works by Picasso, Modigliani, Sironi, Morandi.



## ARTISTS IN THE EXHIBITION

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Jumaldi Alfi, Athanasios Argianas, John M. Armleder, Christine Ay Tjoe, John Baldessari, Jennifer Bartlett, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Tilo Baumgärtel, Natvar Bhavsar, Max Bill, Reto Boller, Michaël Borremans, Guillermo Caivano, Eric Chan, Alice Channer, Sandro Chia, Francesco Clemente, Kevin Cosgrove, Holly Coulis, Michael Craig-Martin, Gregory Crewdson, Enzo Cucchi, Pascal Danz, Gianluca Di Pasquale, Ofir Dor, Milena Dragicevic, Vladimir Dubossarsky and Alexander Vinogradov, Zhang Enli, Klodin Erb, Stefan Ettlinger, Angus Fairhurst, Marc-Antoine Fehr, Kyle Field, Günther Förg, Bernard Frize, Alistair Frost, Francesca Gabbiani, Sandra Gamarra, Gilbert & George, Katharina Grosse, Wei Guangqing, Shi Guowei, Andreas Gursky, Mary Heilmann, Uwe Henneken, Christian Hidaka, Damien Hirst, Howard Hodgkin, Mitsuhiro Ikeda, Callum Innes, Martin Jacobson, Jie Du, Alex Katz, Bharti Kher, Thoralf Knobloch, Imi Knoebel, Guillermo Kuitca, Stefan Kürten, Christopher Le Brun, Noori Lee, Markus Lüpertz, Madeln Company, Brice Marden, Huang Min, Yasumasa Morimura, Caro Niederer, Gabriel Orozco, Kotscha Reist, Gerhard Richter, Thomas Ruff, Edward Ruscha, Wilhelm Sasnal, Albrecht Schneider, Theodoros Stamos, Stepanek & Maslin, John Stezaker, Thomas Struth, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Nakhee Sung, Mari Sunna, Mark Tansey, Wayne Thiebaud, Richard Tisserand, Fred Tomaselli, Luis Tomasello, Lesley Vance, Ben Vautier, Liu Weijian, Christopher Wool, Joe Zucker

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Exhibition website:

[ubs.com/thepainter](https://ubs.com/thepainter)

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