

**Press release**

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## **“Arena for a tree” – An art intervention by Klaus Littmann**

National Museum Zurich | **extended until 01/06/2022**

**As part of the exhibition “In the forest. A cultural history”, the art intervention “Arena for a tree” by Klaus Littmann is now open for viewing in the inner courtyard of the State Museum. The installation is a monument memorialising the destruction of nature by humans, and at the same time a symbolically powerful visual call to action.**

The forest as an exhibited object: it started as an idea 30 years ago, and in 2019 Klaus Littmann finally turned his public art installation into a reality, with the project “For Forest – The Unending Attraction of Nature” seeing 299 trees transplanted into Klagenfurt’s Wörthersee Stadium. In the spring of 2021, the concept was taken up again in cooperation with the Kulturstiftung Basel H. Geiger (KBH.G) and the exhibition “Tree Connections”, along with the walk-in art intervention “Arena for a Tree” in the middle of Basel. Now, the project in the inner courtyard of the State Museum is going one step further. The focus on a single tree is continued in Zurich, but the message is delivered more bluntly this time: while the arena is the same, the artist has made a different choice for the tree in its centre. Here, the adaptable, climate-resilient ironwood tree displayed in Basel has been superseded by a dead tree – now just a material, nothing but bare wood. A monument memorialising the destruction of nature by humans, and at the same time a symbolically powerful visual appeal to all of us to stop standing by wringing our hands in despair – we must, at last, take action.

Klaus Littmann’s “Arena for a Tree” is an art intervention that is visually and physically open and accessible, both internally and externally. It offers seating for 50 people, with a view of the main actor in the centre. Twelve metres in diameter, the exhibit is in the shape of a bowl constructed of a loose wooden meshwork that protectively encloses the tree – eight meters high, extending beyond the topmost branches. The irregular shape and structure of the individual slats forming the outer meshwork is modelled on the appearance of a tree. Together with the seating that runs around the inside of the bowl, the slats symbolically replicate annual growth rings – the lifespan of a tree.

The “Arena for a Tree” can be visited at any time during the National Museum’s opening hours; combine your encounter with a tour of the exhibition “In the forest. A cultural history” if you wish.

**Please direct enquiries to:**

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