Kunst Nachlass Stiftung Frankfurt am Main
Mendelssohnstraße 55 · 60325 Frankfurt am Main
www.kunst-nachlass-stiftung.de

Press Release

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Kunst Nachlass Stiftung acquires the artistic estate of Arthur Fauser

Around 300 oil paintings and hundreds of works on paper by the significant Frankfurt post-war artist are brought together in Frankfurt for the first time and systematically catalogued

The Kunst Nachlass Stiftung Frankfurt am Main is acquiring the artistic estate of the painter and graphic artist Arthur Fauser (1911–1990). For the first time, the entire surviving artistic œuvre of the Villa Massimo scholar and Hans-Thoma-Preis laureate will be brought together in Frankfurt. The estate comprises around 300 oil paintings as well as hundreds of watercolours, drawings and etchings. The transfer to Frankfurt is planned for June 2026.

A significant Frankfurt artist returns

Arthur Fauser ranks among the leading representatives of Frankfurt's post-war modernism. As a scholar at the Villa Massimo in Rome (1958), recipient of the Hans-Thoma-Preis für Bildende Kunst (1959) and the Kunstpreis der Stadt Darmstadt (1956), he achieved national recognition. His works are today held in distinguished collections, including the Städel Museum Frankfurt, the Deutsche Bundesbank and the Portland Museum of Art.

Fauser was deeply rooted in the Frankfurt art scene: he was a founding member of the Frankfurter Sezession (1953, together with Georg Heck and Ernst Weil) and a member of the Darmstädter Sezession. The renowned Frankfurt gallery Kunstkabinett Hanna Bekker vom Rath dedicated numerous solo exhibitions to him over several decades. In 1995, the City of Frankfurt honoured him posthumously alongside Leo Maillet, Friedrich Wilhelm Meyer and Samson Schames with the exhibition „Vier Frankfurter Künstler im Widerstand“ at the Paulskirche.

From the early 1930s, Fauser was involved in resistance against National Socialism. At the Grafikatelier Sautter, he worked alongside HAP Grieshaber during the 1930s. During the war, he lost his entire early work to bombs and looting – a loss that makes the surviving estate all the more valuable. As a self-taught artist, he created an expressionist-realist body of work with consistently autobiographical traits, giving artistic form to the experiences of two wars.

A family story with dual resonance

Arthur Fauser was the father of the writer Jörg Fauser (1944–1987), whose works „Der Schneemann“ and „Rohstoff“ enjoy cult status to this day. The connection between visual art and literature within a Frankfurt artistic family lends the project particular appeal. That Fauser, following the early death of his son in 1987, created paintings bearing witness to pain and grief makes this connection all the more moving.

Three-year project for scholarly cataloguing

The acquisition of the estate marks the beginning of a three-year project under the art-historical direction of Dr. Dr. h.c. Marion Victor, Chair of the Foundation Board. In the first phase (2026), the estate will be transferred to Frankfurt, inventoried and digitally documented. This will be followed by a scholarly catalogue raisonné (2027) and a major retrospective exhibition (2028).

The written estate of Arthur Fauser – letters, manuscripts and documents – is already held as a deposit at the Institut für Stadtgeschichte Frankfurt am Main. The parallel availability of the artistic and written estate enables, for the first time, a comprehensive scholarly treatment of the artist's life and work.

About the Kunst Nachlass Stiftung Frankfurt am Main

The Kunst Nachlass Stiftung was founded in 2024 as a charitable trust foundation to preserve, research and make publicly accessible the artistic estates of artists from Frankfurt and the surrounding region. With Arthur Fauser, the number of estates in the foundation's care grows to eight. A specialist committee comprising Philip Augustin, Christoph Schütte and Florian Siedlarek recommends the acceptance of new estates. The foundation cooperates with the Amt für multikulturelle Angelegenheiten der Stadt Frankfurt, the Institut für Kunstgeschichte of Goethe-Universität and further cultural institutions.

Press Contact

Manuel Raven, Managing Director
Tel. 0178 7459741
manuel.raven@kunst-nachlass-stiftung.de

Dr. Dr. h.c. Marion Victor, Chair of the Foundation Board
(Art-Historical Director, Arthur Fauser Project)
Tel. 0151 50713805
marionvictor@gmx.de

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PRESS IMAGES



Arthur Fauser, Stillleben mit brennender Kerze, 1948, oil on canvas

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