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HISTORISCHES
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WIEN



**OCTOBER 20, 2015 TO
JANUARY 10, 2016**

JOSEPH CORNELL: WANDERLUST

Tracing the full arc of the artist's remarkable life and career over more than forty years, the Kunsthistorisches Museum will present Joseph Cornell: Wanderlust from 20th October, 2015 to 10th January, 2016. This landmark exhibition will include more than 80 works, from collages, films and early objects produced in the 1930s to the intricate box constructions for which the artist is best known. It will be the first survey of Joseph Cornell's work ever to be presented in Austria, and the first major exhibition in Europe for more than thirty years. The exhibition has been organised in collaboration with the Royal Academy, London.

„Joseph Cornell: Wanderlust“ follows the hugely successful exhibition dedicated to Lucian Freud in 2013, and continues the series of retrospective surveys of modern masters at the Kunsthistorisches Museum.

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With very few works on permanent display in European museums, the exhibition will provide an opportunity to see rarely lent masterpieces from important public and private collections. On display will be key works from all of the major series that Cornell produced during his career, including Museums, Aviaries, Soap Bubble Sets, Palaces, Medici Slot Machines, Hotels and Dovecotes. Several works will be travelling to Europe for the very first time; others will be publicly shown for the first time in many years. Interestingly, a number of key loans to the exhibition are, or used to be, in the private collections of artists, among them Jasper Johns, Marcel Duchamp and Dorothea Tanning.

CORNELL AND THE KUNSTKAMMER

Presented within the Kunsthistorisches Museum, the works of Joseph Cornell enter into fascinating conversations with all sorts of historical objects, from Renaissance paintings and the cabinet of coins and medals to Egyptian burial keepsakes. But it is with the museum's *Kunstkammer* and its holdings of *mirabilia*, *naturalia*, *artificialia* and *scientifica* that this dialogue is most intense.

As well as being an artist, Cornell was also among the greatest collectors of the twentieth century. His works were made using the many thousands of small objects that he found in antiquarian bookshops, flea markets, dime stores or washed up on the beaches on Long Island; from marbles, seashells, bird's nests, curtain rings, watch parts and out-of-print books to a mass of paper ephemera including postage stamps, maps, prints, guidebooks, even shipping and train timetables. Part souvenir, part relic and part specimen, Cornell's works seem record fictional expeditions around the world, playing with the language of museums and the systems of classification that underpin natural history.

Over more than forty years, he created his own, private cabinet of curiosities every bit as astonishing as those collected by the kings, emperors and aristocrats of Renaissance Europe. Like them, Cornell took pleasure in small things, and the stories that they told. Like them, he sought to capture the world in a box, in an attempt to understand its workings and our place within it. And like them, he presented special objects as gifts to special people. The only difference was their material value. Cornell was not interested in costly or extravagant objects: his was a world of simple treasures, transformed into the most marvellous and precious of creations. He was, a friend once said, „the Benvenuto Cellini of flotsam and jetsam“.

For this reason, the final part of the exhibition „Joseph Cornell: Wanderlust“ can be found within the *Kunstkammer* itself, where a

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small group of Cornell's objects are temporarily on display. To further underline and explore this affinity, visitors can follow a special path through the *Kunstkammer* to see it through Cornell's eyes. In each of the main galleries, an historical object from the museum's collection has been singled out for its special resonance with Cornell's own work. Through them we learn more about Cornell's interests, and the extent to which they have preoccupied artists and craftsmen for many hundreds of years. Cornell never made it to Vienna, because he never once left the United States: but if he had, these are the objects that we think he might have liked.

BIOGRAPHY

Joseph Cornell (born 1903 in New York, died 1972 in New York) never moved from the family home that he shared with his mother and younger brother in Flushing, New York. The street on which they lived had a wonderfully appropriate name: Utopia Parkway. He received no formal artistic training, and worked long hours as a door-to-door salesman for a textiles company in Lower Manhattan. He made his earliest works in the 1930s on the family's kitchen table; when the table was no longer big enough, he moved down to the basement. Hidden away from the spotlight of the New York artworld, he created one of the most remarkable bodies of work of the twentieth century.

Cornell never once set foot outside his native country, and beyond his schooling and a few childhood holidays, rarely strayed far from home. And yet, his knowledge of the world, and of Europe in particular, was astounding. The exhibition and its accompanying catalogue will examine in detail Cornell's relationship with the continent of Europe, his knowledge and understanding of its culture, history and geography, and his relationship with many of its key personalities, from writers and composers to ballet dancers and stargazers. The exhibition's title, *wanderlust*, acknowledges his restless imagination and ability to travel metaphorically through both place and time. His particular interest in Austria, in Vienna, and in specific works from the *Kunsthistorisches Museum's* collections will also be revealed.

CORNELL'S INFLUENCE ON THE ART WORLD

Even while it is presented in an historical museum, the exhibition will reveal the deep and lasting influence that Cornell's work had on subsequent generations of American artists, from Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, James Rosenquist and Andy Warhol through the early practitioners of Minimalism to many still working today.

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“Joseph Cornell is one of the great surprises of art,” said Jasper Sharp, curator of the exhibition. „It never really seemed probable that he would become an artist. He lived a very different life than his contemporaries among that golden generation of American artists: Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning, Clyfford Still, Barnett Newman and Adolph Gottlieb. He could not draw, paint, or sculpt, he lived at home with his mother, he did not drink, smoke or socialise in bars, and he was too nervous to conduct any sort of meaningful relationship with women. And yet he found his own, unique voice within that field, creating a remarkable body of work that won the respect and admiration of them all, and which continues to resonate today.“ A sentence that Cornell copied down in October 1962 from an article by the American novelist John Updike says it all. “The willingness to risk excess on behalf of one’s obsessions is what distinguishes artists from entertainers and what makes some artists adventurous on behalf of us all.”

**CURATORS AND
LENDERS**

Co-curated by Jasper Sharp (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna) and Sarah Lea (Royal Academy, London), in collaboration with academic advisor Lynda Roscoe Hartigan, the exhibition has secured major loans from renowned international collections including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; the Menil Collection, Houston; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC; Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington DC; Yokohama Museum of Art; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas; Des Moines Art Center, Iowa; Osaka City Museum of Modern Art; and the Peabody Essex Museum, Massachusetts. Loans have also been secured from important private collections in the United States, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Japan.

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**EXHIBITION
PROGRAMME**

The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of talks and lectures by major cultural figures. Nobel Prize winner Orhan Pamuk, Cornell's award-winning biographer Deborah Solomon, and the Chief Art Critic of the New York Times, Roberta Smith, are among those who will speak about Cornell's life and work at the Kunsthistorisches Museum. In addition, a two-day screening of films by Cornell will take place at the Austrian Film Museum, the only public institution in Austria to own works by Cornell in its collection.

AUSTRIAN FILM MUSEUM

Two evenings with films by Joseph Cornell

Wed 11 November, 8.30pm

Joseph Cornell 1: Zeitreisen

Introduction: Naoko Kaltschmidt

Thurs 12 November, 8:30pm

Joseph Cornell 2: Attraktionen

Introduction: Jasper Sharp & Alexander Horwath

Österreichisches Filmmuseum, Albertinaplatz

Tickets and reservation:

T +43 1 533 70 54 or office@filmmuseum.at

Box office opens at 5.30pm

VIENNALE / FILM MUSEUM RETROSPECTIVE

“ANIMALS. A Small Zoology of Cinema”

Wed 4. November, 6.30pm at the Austrian Film Museum

Carousel – Animal Opera by Joseph Cornell

Tickets and reservation:

T +43 1 533 70 54 or office@filmmuseum.at

Box office opens at 5.30pm

Or at the Viennale-box offices: www.viennale.at

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LECTURES AND TALKS

Mon 2 November, 7pm, Cupola Hall
Containing Wonder: Joseph Cornell's Cabinets of Curiosity
Kirsten Hoving
In English

Attendance is free with a valid entrance ticket, no reservation.

Thurs 5 November, 7pm, Bassano Saal
The Enchanting Life of Joseph Cornell: An Illustrated Lecture
Deborah Solomon (biographer of Joseph Cornell)
In English

Attendance is free with a valid entrance ticket, no reservation.

Tues 15 December, 7pm, Cupola Hall
Orhan Pamuk in conversation with Philipp Blom
Novelist and recipient of the 2006 Nobel Prize for Literature
In English

Attendance is free, please register at pamuk@khm.at.

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY TALK

Mon 16 November, 7pm, Cupola Hall
Roberta Smith and Jerry Saltz in conversation with Jasper Sharp
Chief Art Critic, The New York Times, and Chief Art Critic, New York magazine
In English

Attendance is free, please register at talks@khm.at.

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CURATOR'S TOURS

Tues 2 November
Thurs 12 November
Tues 24 November
Thurs 3 December

Starting at 4pm
With Jasper Sharp / in English

Attendance is free with a valid entrance ticket, no reservation.

KUNSTKONTEXT

Tues 27 October and 17 November
3:30pm, Lecture room, KHM

Joseph Cornell: Überblick und Einblicke
With Andreas Zimmermann / in German

Attendance is free with a valid entrance ticket, no reservation.

GUIDED TOURS

Every Thurs 7pm
(except Dec. 24 and 31)

Every Sat/Sun at 11am and 3pm

Duration c. 60 min.
Meeting point: Entrance Hall
In German
Tickets: € 3

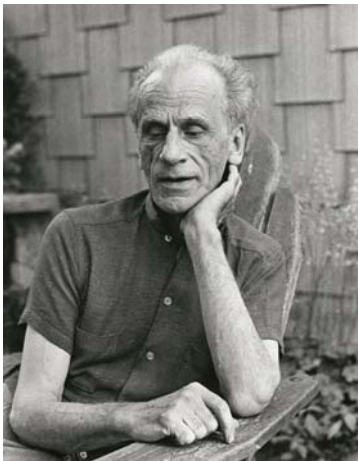
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PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

These images may be used free of charge when writing about the exhibition; to download them please go to <http://press.khm.at>.



Joseph Cornell
Untitled (Pinturicchio Boy)
1942
35,4 x 28,4 x 9,8 cm,
Potomac, Glenstone Museum
© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien,
2015



Joseph Cornell
Photograph by Hans Namuth
Courtesy Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona
© 1991 Hans Namuth Estate

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Joseph Cornell
Habitat Group for a Shooting Gallery

1943

Box construction, 39.4 x 28.3 x 10.8 cm

Purchased with funds from the Coffin Fine Arts Trust; Nathan Emory Coffin
Collection of the Des Moines Art Center, 1975.27

Photo Des Moines Art Center. Photography: Rich Sanders

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien,
2015



Joseph Cornell
Habitat Group for a Shooting Gallery

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Box construction, 39.4 x 28.3 x 10.8 cm

Purchased with funds from the Coffin Fine Arts Trust; Nathan Emory Coffin
Collection of the Des Moines Art Center, 1975.27

Photo Des Moines Art Center

Photography: Rich Sanders

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Joseph Cornell
Untitled Object (Mona Lisa)

c. 1940-42

height 3.5 cm, diameter 7.6 cm

The Collection of Marguerite and Robert Hoffman

Photo Brad Flowers

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien,
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Joseph Cornell

Untitled (Aviary with Parrot and Drawers)

c. 1949

Box construction, 43.8 x 35.6 x 8.3 cm

The Robert Lehrman Art Trust, courtesy of Aimee and Robert Lehrman

Photo The Robert Lehrman Art Trust, courtesy of Aimee and Robert Lehrman.

Photography: Quicksilver Photographers, LLC

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien, 2015



Joseph Cornell

Object (Soap Bubble Set)

1941

Box construction, 46.4 x 31.4 x 9.5 cm

The Robert Lehrman Art Trust, courtesy of Aimee and Robert Lehrman

Photo The Robert Lehrman Art Trust, courtesy of Aimee and Robert Lehrman.

Photography: Quicksilver Photographers, LLC

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien, 2015



Joseph Cornell

Untitled ('Dovecote' American Gothic)

1954-56

Box construction, 45.4 x 31.1 x 7.6 cm

The Robert Lehrman Art Trust, courtesy of Aimee and Robert Lehrman

Photo The Robert Lehrman Art Trust, courtesy of Aimee and Robert Lehrman.

Photography: Quicksilver Photographers, LLC

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Joseph Cornell

Untitled (Medici Princess)

c. 1948

Box construction, 44.8 x 28.3 x 11.1 cm

Private Collection, New York

Photo courtesy Private collection, New York

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien, 2015



Joseph Cornell

Palace

1943

Box construction, 26.7 x 50.5 x 13 cm

The Menil Collection, Houston

Photo The Menil Collection, Houston. Photography: Hickey-Robertson

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien, 2015



Joseph Cornell

A Dressing Room for Gille

1939

Box construction, 38.1 x 21.9 x 14.4 cm

Richard L. Feigen

Photo Matt Flynn

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Joseph Cornell

Untitled (The Life of Ludwig II of Bavaria)

c. 1941-52

Box construction, 9.2 x 36.8 x 27.9 x cm

Philadelphia Museum of Art. Gift of The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation, 1996

Photo Philadelphia Museum of Art

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien, 2015



Joseph Cornell

Untitled (The Life of Ludwig II of Bavaria)

c. 1941-52

Box construction, 9.2 x 36.8 x 27.9 x cm

Philadelphia Museum of Art. Gift of The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation, 1996

Photo Philadelphia Museum of Art

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien, 2015



Joseph Cornell

Tilly Losch

c. 1935

Box Construction, 25.4 x 23.5 x 5.4 cm

Collection of Robert Lehrman, courtesy of Aimee and Robert Lehrman

Photo The Robert Lehrman Art Trust, courtesy of Aimee and Robert Lehrman. Photography: Quicksilver Photographers, LLC

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Joseph Cornell

Pharmacy

1943

Box construction, 38.7 x 30.5 x 7.9 cm

Collection Paul Schärer

Photo Dominique Uldry, Bern

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien, 2015



Joseph Cornell

L'Égypte de Mlle Cléo de Mérode: cours élémentaire d'histoire naturelle

1940

Box construction, 11.9 x 27.1 x 18.4 cm (closed)

The Robert Lehrman Art Trust, courtesy of Aimee and Robert Lehrman

Photo The Robert Lehrman Art Trust, courtesy of Aimee and Robert

Lehrman. Photography: Quicksilver Photographers, LLC

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Joseph Cornell

Untitled

c. 1945

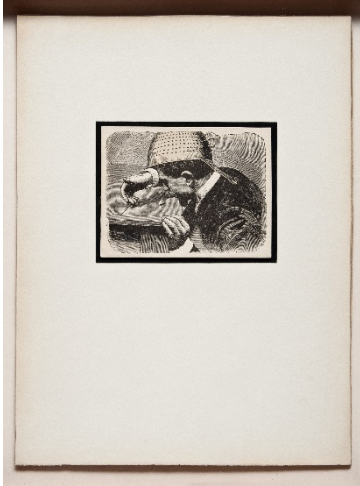
Box construction, 12.1 x 15.9 x 2.7 cm

The Collection of Marguerite and Robert Hoffman

Photo Brad Flowers

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Joseph Cornell

Untitled

1930s

Collage on paper, 7.4 x 9.6 cm

Daniel and Lauren Long, New York. Courtesy James Corcoran Gallery, Los Angeles

Photo Daniel and Lauren Long, New York, courtesy James Corcoran Gallery, Los Angeles

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien, 2015



Joseph Cornell

Soap Bubble Set

1948

Box construction, 36.8 x 52.1 x 9.8 cm

Mr. and Mrs. John Stravinsky

© The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation / Bildrecht, Wien, 2015

CATALOGUE

Joseph Cornell: Fernweh

edited by Sarah Lea, Sabine Haag and Jasper Sharp

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Thursdays until 9 p.m.

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Group ticket (p.p.)	€ 11
Guided Tour	€ 3

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