

VISIBLE!



Animals from the Art Depository

April 2, 2026 –
February 21, 2027



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Founded in 1933, the Cantonal Art Collection reflects the rich artistic production of the Canton of Lucerne—from the late Middle Ages to the present. With more than 3,600 works by around 720 artists, it serves as a visual memory of the region.

Since 1977, acquisitions have been overseen by a Cultural Promotion Commission appointed by the Cantonal Council. Many of these works are part of everyday public life—displayed in schools, courthouses, hospitals, and administrative buildings—while others have remained in storage, largely unseen.

In 2025, Museum Luzern assumed responsibility for the collection's curation and conservation, with a renewed commitment to increasing its visibility. In dialogue with the exhibition *Invisible? Animals in Hiding*, this presentation brings together a selection of works featuring animal motifs from the collection's storage—many of them on view for the first time.

Rather than following a chronological or stylistic order, the display is structured thematically. These groupings emerged from the selection process itself, shaped by encounters with works whose diversity reveals unexpected connections and perspectives.

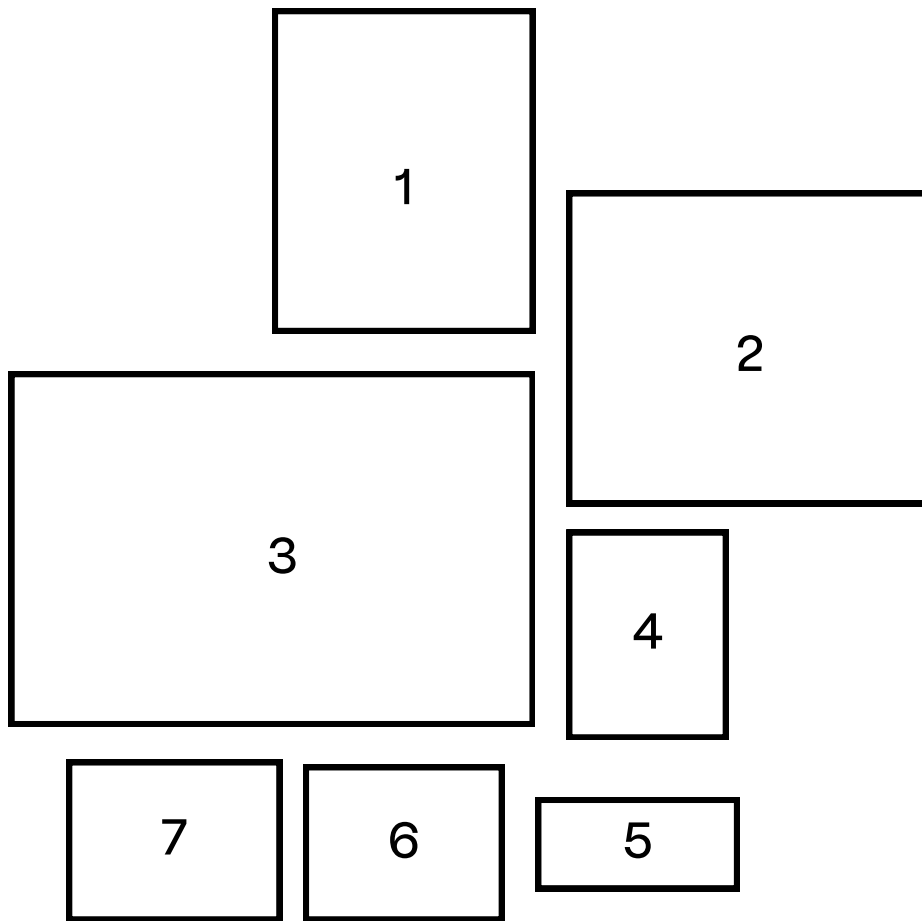
Animals, People and Landscape

Since the earliest cave paintings, animals have been central to artistic expression. They stand for food and survival, labour and prosperity, familiarity and companionship—as well as wildness, danger, and the unknown.

In the work of the Geneva painter Jean-Philippe George, the dramatic landscape takes centre stage—most strikingly in his sweeping view from Mount Rigi over Lake Lucerne. A student of Alexandre Calame, a leading figure in late Romantic Alpine painting, George presents the mountains as a vast natural theatre. In the foreground, however, small grazing animals appear on the alpine pasture—modest in scale, yet essential.

These figures animate the scene and anchor it in lived experience, while at the same time heightening the overwhelming presence of nature. A dynamic tension unfolds between humans, animals, and landscape: the animal is both part of this expansive world and a point of connection to it.

Humans observe, explore, and attempt to master animals. They live and work alongside them, yet remain, in many ways, strangers. Animals inspire both fear and admiration; their grace, strength, and instinct make them powerful screens for human projections—of longing, of control, and of the unknown.



- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Caspar Herrmann (1885–1955)
 <i>"Meine Jagdbeute"</i>
 (My Game), 1945
 Oil on hardboard</p> | <p>5 Hans Erni (1909–2015)
 <i>"Pferde"</i> (Horses), n.d.
 Lithography</p> |
| <p>2 August Frey (1912–1998)
 <i>"Pferde im Schnee"</i>
 (Horses in the Snow), 1968
 Oil on pavatex</p> | <p>6 Rudolf Pfyffer von Altishofen
 (1914–1968)
 <i>"Knabe mit Ziege"</i> (Boy and Goat), n.d.
 Oil on hardboard</p> |
| <p>3 Jean-Philippe George (1818–1888)
 <i>"Blick vom Rigi-Kulm auf den Vierwaldstättersee und das Bergpanorama"</i> (View from Rigi-Kulm of Lake Lucerne and the mountain panorama), n.d.
 Oil on canvas</p> | <p>7 Hans Eigenheer (*1937)
 <i>"Hirschfalle (Antropomorphe Gerüstteile)"</i>
 (Deer trap, anthropomorphic scaffolding parts), 1973
 Etching</p> |
| <p>4 Godi Hofmann (1934–2011)
 <i>"Fisch und Mücke"</i> (Fish and Mosquito), 1974
 Radierung</p> | |

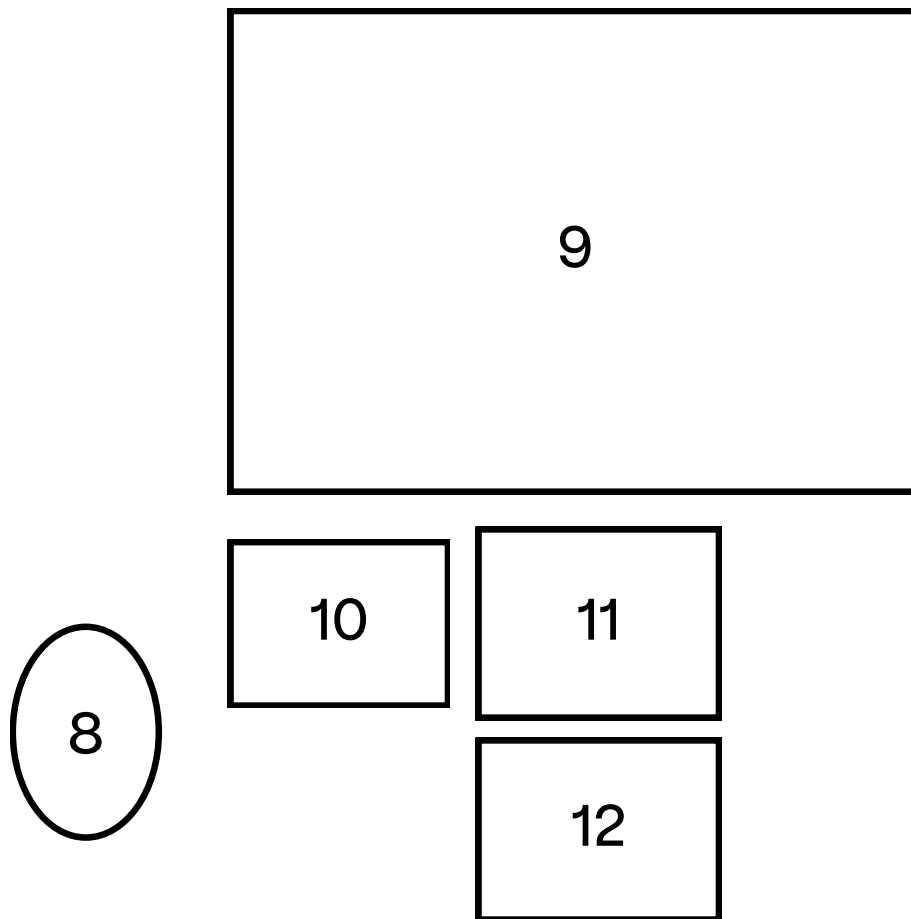
Ornament and Individuality

Joseph von Moos's glass mosaic is the only work in this exhibition not drawn from the cantonal art collection. Donated to Museum Luzern last year, it complements the museum's holdings of the artist's work.

The two fish reveal the ornamental potential of animal forms: flowing lines, rhythmic movement, and vivid contrasts lend themselves naturally to decorative design. As director of the Lucerne School of Applied Arts from 1917 to 1934, von Moos moved fluidly between art and design—from painting and printmaking to furniture, typography, and glass. His work continues to shape the city's visual identity, visible, for example, at Friedental Cemetery, St. Paul's Church, and the Moosmatt School.

In the work of Walter Linsenmaier, the animal likewise takes centre stage, though approached through close observation and scientific precision. With meticulous attention to plumage, fur, structure, and colour, he reveals the richness and diversity of the animal world.

Irma Stadelmann, by contrast, adopts a deeply personal perspective. A self-taught artist who turned to art after a new beginning in Lucerne, she became part of the city's bohemian milieu. In *White Woman with Cats*, the animals—independent and wilful—reflect the stance of the figure they accompany. Here, the animal becomes a sign of inner freedom and self-determination.



8 Joseph von Moos (1859–1939)
No Title and n.d.
Glass mosaic
Donation Edith Marfurt–Geisel,
Luzern

9 Irma Stadelmann (1932–2020)
"Weisse Frau mit Katzen"
(White Woman with Cats), 1990
Oil on canvas

10 Walter Linsenmaier (1917–2000)
"Rhinocerosvögel" (Rhino birds), n.d.
Crayon on paper

11 Andreas Achermann (1958–1987)
"Fabeltier" (mythical creature), n.d.
Pastel, dispersion, packing paper

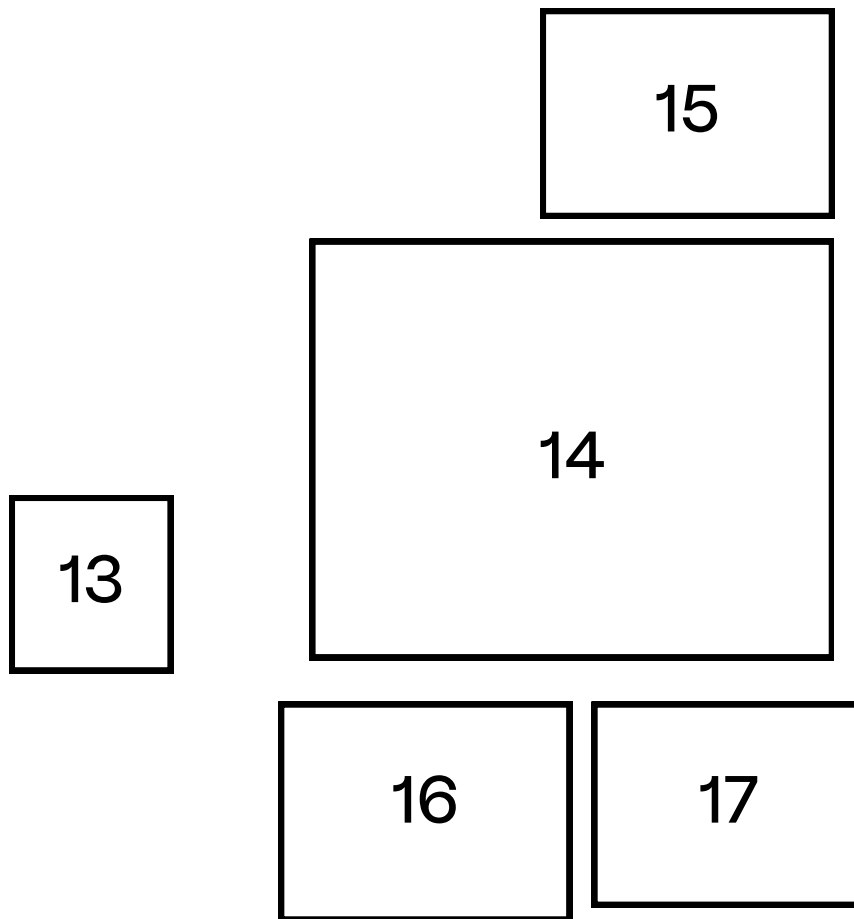
12 Andreas Achermann (1958–1987)
"Fabeltier" (mythical creature), n.d.
Pastel, dispersion, packing paper

In the Cage of Habit

Animals in cages or on a hamster wheel become potent images of human behaviour confined by routine and self-imposed limits. The wheel suggests restless, circular motion—activity without direction or escape. In the work of illustrator and conceptual artist Hans Rudolf Ambauen, a “meandering dog” appears, caught in an endless loop between animal and human form.

Thyl Eisenmann’s etching *Fasnacht* 1982 echoes the tradition of Hieronymus Bosch’s *Ship of Fools*. Figures—some wearing animal masks—appear as participants in a collective folly. Here, the animal becomes a sign of conformity and persistence within rigid structures, even where alternatives might exist.

The cage, too, points to both external constraint and inner boundaries. It offers protection while at the same time defining the limits of one’s world. In Heini Andermatt’s *Gorillas at the Zurich Zoo*, the animals resemble the visitors standing before the glass. They become mirrors of human behaviour—reflecting back our own habits, vulnerabilities, and contradictions.



13 **Hans-Rudolf Ambauen**
(1937–2000)
"Mäander-laufender Hund"
(Dog running in a meandering
pattern), 1984
Hand colored etching

16 **Hans-Rudolf Ambauen**
(1937–2000)
"Tiger in Tigerlandschaft"
(Tiger in a Tiger Landscape), 1974
Aquatint, 3/40

14 **Beat Scherer (*1955) und
Roger Bischofberger (*1958)**
"Sarah", 1991
Collaborative project for the
exhibition "Animal – Coats of Arms"
at the former Nature Museum
Lucerne (29.9.1994–2.1.1995)

17 **Thyl Eisenmann (1948–2015)**
"Fasnacht 1982, Hieronymus Bosch"
(Carnival 1982, Hieronymus Bosch),
1982
Radierung, 31/60

15 **Heini Andermatt (*1961)**
"Gorillas im Zürcher Zoo"
(Gorillas at the Zoo Zurich), 2008
Acrylic on canvas

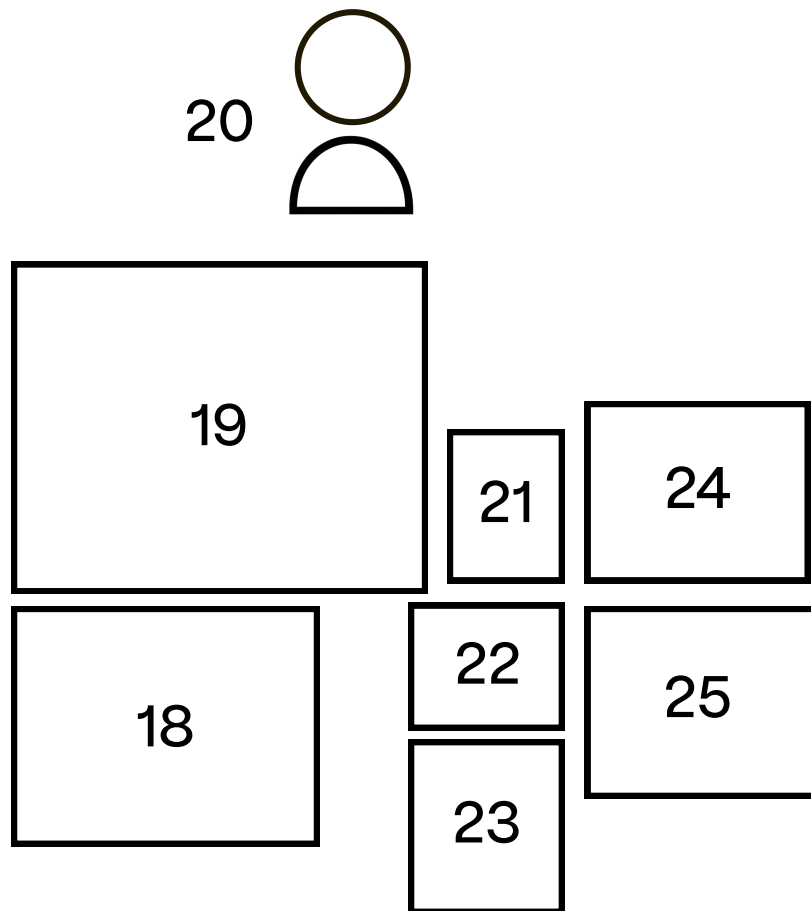
Animals and Dreams

In Peter Ryser's work, the cats dream. The animal is no longer simply the object of our gaze but is endowed with an inner life of its own. It is precisely this shift that both unsettles and captivates. Ryser's images reveal how strongly animals draw us in, even as they remain fundamentally elusive—mirroring a desire to grasp what ultimately lies beyond our reach.

Irma Ineichen, too, works within a realm shaped by memory and origin. Her imagery unfolds in a timeless, almost mythical space. In *Welteltern-Höhle*, animals lead back to an imagined beginning, recalling early cave paintings and the origins of human image-making.

In his portfolio "Mit der Seele bei den Gegenständen", Hans Eigenheer creates surreal, symbolically charged worlds. Here, animals appear as layered signs, situated between nature, culture, and history.

In this way, the animal becomes a threshold—between the conscious and the unconscious, between reality and imagination—and a mirror of the hidden spaces within ourselves.



18 **Bruno Bussmann** (*1943)
 "Seefahrt ist lernbar"(Seamanship
 can be learned), 1990
 Color aquatint, unique piece,
 variation of 2 plates

19 **Irma Ineichen** (*1929)
 "Welteltern-Höhle"
 (World parent`s cave), 1975
 Oil on canvas

20 **René Odermatt** (*1972)
 "Makramee 1" (Macramé 1), 2018
 carved oak wood

21 **Peter Ryser** (*1939)
 "Aus dem Urland"
 (From the primeval land), 2000
 Acrylic on photography

22 **Peter Ryser** (*1939)
 "Wenn Katzen träumen"
 (When cats dream), 2000
 Acrylic on photography

23 **Wada Jossen** (*1955)
 No Title, 1987
 Acrylic on photography

24 **Hans Eigenheer** (*1937)
 "Aus der Mappe: Mit der Seele bei
 den Gegenständen"
 (From the portfolio: With the soul
 among the objects), 1980
 Hand-litography, 12/20

25 **Hans Eigenheer** (*1937)
 "Aus der Mappe: Mit der Seele bei
 den Gegenständen"
 (From the portfolio: With the soul
 among the objects), 1980
 Hand-litography, 12/20

Imprint

Exhibition Curator

Tanja Warring, Director of Museum Luzern

Exhibition Design

Muriel Utinger, Head of Technology and Operations
at Museum Luzern

Research

Andrea Walker, Art Collection Curator

Jennifer Dünki, Collection Services Intern

Exhibition Brochure Design

Samantha Taha, Marketing and Communications
Employee

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