



KUNSTHAUS ZÜRICH

Die Fackeln des Prometheus / Prometheus's Torches

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Prometheus's Torches

Henry Fuseli and Javier Téllez

Bernhard von Waldkirch

Mirjam Varadinis

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- Features a capital work of contemporary art
- An interesting juxtaposition of romanticist and contemporary reflections on the Prometheus myth

The mythic figure of Prometheus has inspired many poets, painters and musicians since the age of romanticism. For Goethe and Henry Fuseli, the titan who stole the fire from the gods of ancient Greece became the embodiment of mankind struggling for autonomy and self-determination.

Yet the fire has come not only to our benefit. Along with it came also menace upon mankind. This is the subject of a major work by Venezuelan artist Javier Téllez. In his film installation $\frac{1}{2}$ Rotations (Prometheus and Zwitter) of 2011, two sculptures slowly rotate before a camera: Arno Breker's (1900-91) Prometheus and Zwitter (hermaphrodite) by the German art-brut sculptor Karl Genzel (1871-1925). Both works were on display in the Nazi propaganda art shows of 1937 in Munich, Breker's in the Great German Art Exhibition and Genzel's in the coinciding defaming show Degenerate Art.

This new book juxtaposes paintings and drawings reflecting the Prometheus myth by Henry Fuseli with Javier Téllez's capital work of contemporary art. It is published to coincide with an exhibit at Kunsthau Zürich in summer 2014.

Text in English and German.

Bernhard von Waldkirch studied art history and German and Romance literature and linguistics. He has been working as a research assistant at Kunsthau Zürich 1985-98 and as the museum's curator of prints and drawings since 1998. **Mirjam Varadinis** studied art history, Italian literature, and social and economic history at the universities of Zürich and Bologna. She has been a curator at Kunsthau Zürich since 2002.