

The Playground Project

February 20 – May 15, 2016

Press reception: Friday, February 19, 10am

Opening: Friday, February 19, 6pm

After showing a puppet theater, a theater project, invitation cards and bodybuilding, Kunsthalle Zürich is once again pushing the frontier in what art possibly means.

Until the 1980s—and in rare cases until today—playgrounds were places for social experiments, risky projects, and spectacular sculptures. Architects, urban planners, artists, parents, and children were invited to leave their comfort zone and to venture something new. Curated by Gabriela Burkhalter, *The Playground Project* will bring many of these exemplary, but nowadays forgotten initiatives, pioneering acts, and adventures back, and install three playgrounds for children to run, hide and climb. May our cities invent new playgrounds!

The playground is a byproduct of the industrialized city of the twentieth century. Even now, it continues to be both an ugly duckling and a coveted space. A focal point for ideas about education and childhood, about urban planning and public space, about architecture and art, about creativity and control, the playground has repeatedly resisted institutional and ideological appropriation and grown in its own sometimes quite anarchic ways. The coexistence of contradictory expectations, moments of temporary progress, and radical developments makes playgrounds so exciting. Still, as hardly anyone sees playgrounds as part of their cultural heritage, much of their history has been forgotten or can barely be understood anymore—even if all of us often have quite precise personal memories of this niche where we met our friends, took pride in new things we dared to do, braved danger without thinking about it, and learned to confront and resolve conflicts.

There have been four paradigm shifts in the development of the playground in the course of the last 150 years. First, at the beginning of the twentieth century, social reformers took children off the street and onto the playground. Then, at the beginning of the 1930s, the idea arose that children should play with natural materials rather than playground equipment. In the 1960s, the decade of autonomy and do-it-yourself, parents, children, and neighborhood groups began to take charge of playgrounds themselves. Finally, in the 1980s, with the end of social and political utopias, a crisis in playground design began. Today, a new pioneering spirit is being generated by young architects and artists, collectives and activists. These designers, who often share their experiences on the internet, are creating new play spaces with efficient means.

With Marjory Allen (Lady Allen of Hurtwood), Joseph Brown, Waldemar Cordeiro, Riccardo Dalisi, Richard Dattner, Aldo van Eyck, M. Paul Friedberg, Michael Grossert, Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, Alfred Ledermann, Bernhard Luginbühl, Yvan Pestalozzi, Group Ludic, Egon Møller-Nielsen, Palle Nielsen, Isamu Noguchi, Sreejata Roy, Niki de Saint Phalle, Josef Schagerl, Mitsuru (Man) Senda, Carl Theodor Sørensen, Alfred Trachsel and more

Press reception

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We are happy to provide additional information and digital visual material:

+41 (0)44 272 15 15 or presse@kunsthallezurich.ch

Publication

The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive catalog: *The Playground Project*, edited by Gabriela Burkhalter, with contributions by Daniel Baumann, Gabriela Burkhalter, Vincent Romagny, Sreejata Roy, and Xavier de la Salle, German / English, Kunsthalle Zürich / JRP|Ringier 2016, CHF 48

Kunsthalle
Zürich

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Theory & Programs

The place and the idea of the playground also raises questions about the relationships between different generations. The experiences, memories, and stakes of our changing lives and times do overlap at the climbing poles and sandpits: Children's games, youth folly, parenthood, grandparental bliss... The playground blends together what seems restricted to succession. Therefore, the theory and educational program of *The Playground Project* focuses on joint activity: A room full of things to design your own playground, alone, within a workshop, or during our kids' vernissage on February 21 from 3 to 5pm.s

We also offer physical excitement at our monthly yoga classes in the exhibition. And will look behind the scenes of playground production and discourse at a day-long symposium with international guests. Two artist talks extend the scope of what's on view. And three public guided tours with the exhibition curator will shed more light onto the playground's own biography.

Kids Opening

With Seline Fülcher (Art Educator)

- Sun, 21.02., 3:00-5:00pm

Workshops

With Seline Fülcher (Art Educator)

For families

- Sun, 13.03., 3:00-5:00pm
- Sun, 03.04., 3:00-5:00pm
- Sun, 15.05., 3:00-5:00pm

For school classes and other groups

- 90 min., booking on request, kids@kunsthallezurich.ch

Symposium

Free and daring! Play(grounds) as a place of identification, community, and disorder in the city

- Fri, 22.04., 9:30am-5:30pm

With Gabriela Burkhalter (Curator of the exhibition), Marion Ebert (Activist, Kinderbaustelle Biel), Tim Gill (Activist, Author, Scholar, London), Alberto Nanclares da Veiga & Mónica Gutiérrez Herrero (basurama, Artist collective, Madrid), Helle Nebelong (Landscape architect, Copenhagen), Xavier de la Salle (Group Ludic, Artist collective, France), and others

The symposium gathers activists, designers, and researchers to discuss and define the conditions for autonomous, free, and daring play within the urban space. What does the creation of places positively challenging the kids require? And what must be the contribution of the given community towards it?

Déjà-vu Artist talk

With Gabriel Sierra (Artist, Bogota)

- Thu, 04.03., 6:30-7:30pm

Guided tours

With Daniel Baumann (Director Kunsthalle Zürich) & Gabriela Burkhalter (Curator of the exhibition)

- Thu, 10.03., 6:30-7:30pm
- Thu, 14.04., 6:30-7:30pm
- Thu, 12.05., 6:30-7:30pm

We are happy to accommodate special guided tour and workshop requests, also in English: info@kunsthallezurich.ch.

Pop Up Yoga

With Deddou Burkhard

- Thu, 25.02., 8:00-9:30pm, CHF 25
- Thu, 24.03., 7:00-9:00pm, CHF 35
- Thu, 14.04., 7:30-9:00pm, CHF 25

- Thu, 28.04., 8:00-10:00pm, CHF 35

Opening Hours

Tue/Wed/Fri 11am-6pm, Thurs 11am-8pm, Sat/Sun/Public Holidays 10am-5pm, Mo closed

Public Holidays: March

Please consult the up-to-date information on our website: www.kunsthallezurich.ch

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