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Three of Europe's most prestigious museums of modern and contemporary art – the Centre Pompidou, the Tate and the MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst – are bringing major works from their collections together to create a temporary European museum. The conceptual point of departure for this unique international museum collaboration is a vision of the future: The year is 2052. The museums are threatened with extinction, and art is disappearing from society. In this science-fiction scenario, more than eighty masterpieces from three European collections are united in a temporary transnational museum. It features works dating from the 1920s to the present by such prominent artists as Louise Bourgeois, Marcel Duchamp, Isa Genzken, On Kawara, Claes Oldenburg,

Sigmar Polke, Bridget Riley, Andy Warhol and many more.

The exhibition was inspired by Ray Bradbury's science-fiction novel *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) and its legendary film adaptation by François Truffaut (1966). Bradbury visualizes a future in which literary works have been banned from society. The only means of preserving them for later generations is to commit them to memory. In the similarly bleak future of "An Imagined Museum", the art on view from three European collections faces imminent destruction. Just as Bradbury's "book people" memorize literary works to save them from oblivion, the exhibition invites its visitors to memorize the artworks on display. The viewers thus play an active role in the presentation. The show is divided into nine thematic sections. Based on the idea of the time capsule containing art-historically important works – like Marcel Duchamp's suitcase museum *La Boîte-en-valise* – they shed light on specific qualities and processes inherent to art, for example the transformation of the everyday, the play with perception, travel through space and time and the codification of messages. Works such as Andy Warhol's *100 Campbell's Soup Cans* (1962) or Claes Oldenburg's *Soft Typewriter, Ghost Version* (1963) from the MMK collection, for example, possess the ability to transcend everyday objects. Dan Graham's video installation *Present Continuous Past(s)* (1974) from the holdings of the Centre Pompidou takes viewers on a journey through time, and Absalon's *Cell No. 1* (1992), a futuristic living unit from the collection of the Tate, poses questions on the relationship between individual self-determination and the laws of society. An homage to the enigmatic and incomprehensible aspects of art rounds out the exhibition with works by Hans Haacke, Walid Raad, Jeff Wall and many others. After it is over, the exhibition opens once again for a major closing weekend. The artworks have been removed for the most part and replaced by people who present their personal memories and interpretations of the exhibition objects and thus call them back to consciousness. The visitors have now become ambassadors, and a living museum is created. mehr

