

The Museum of Modern Art

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FACT SHEET

EXHIBITION A CEZANNE TREASURE: THE BASEL SKETCHBOOKS

DATES March 10 - June 5, 1988

ORGANIZATION Bernice Rose, Curator, Department of Drawings, The Museum of Modern Art

SPONSORSHIP The exhibition and its accompanying publication were generously supported by Knoll International Holdings, Inc.

CONTENT The Basel sketchbooks comprise one of the finest single collections of Paul Cézanne's drawings, spanning virtually the artist's entire career from circa 1858 to 1900. This exhibition provides the American public with its first opportunity to see this unique treasure from the Kupferstichkabinett of the Kunstmuseum Basel, Switzerland.

Cézanne's major themes are represented in these small drawings: landscape, still life, portrait, and figure composition, including bathers. Many were drawn after sculpture and paintings in the galleries of the Louvre, where Cézanne spent a great deal of time. Some were drawn at night after the artist had returned from painting outdoors or in the studio. They often juxtapose several themes on one sheet, so that the dates of different sketches on the same sheet may vary.

The exhibition consists of 114 drawings, selected from the entire collection of 152 sheets, seventy of which have drawings on both sides. The drawings originally derived from five major sketchbooks.

In the catalog essay, Sir Lawrence Gowing writes, "The habit of dreaming and the habit of drawing were at the outset closely related in Cézanne's art--and in his life. He alone was working in his twenties (he was born in 1839) against the current of objective observation as Monet and Pissarro and their respective friends understood it." Regarding later work, he writes, "In the second half of Cézanne's work most of his drawings were of a new kind, a kind that was both observed and in another sense imagined or reimagined. It engaged, that is to say, both visual acuity and imaginative vision--the vision of another artist's vision."

PUBLICATION Paul Cézanne: The Basel Sketchbooks by Sir Lawrence Gowing. 101 plates and 26 reference illustrations printed in duotone offset. 152 pages. Published by The Museum of Modern Art. Clothbound, \$45.00; paperbound, \$18.95.

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For further information or photographic materials, contact the Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750.