

Media release, 1 April 2025

“Over the Rainbow”

The Fondation Beyeler during the ESC: a special exhibition and Nordic landscapes for music fans and art lovers

9 to 18 May 2025

On the occasion of this year’s Eurovision Song Contest (ESC), hosted in Basel, the Fondation Beyeler presents “Over the Rainbow”, a special display of its collection. Taking its name from the legendary song in the celebrated musical film *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), the exhibition is conceived as a tribute to music and to the colourfulness and diversity that characterise the ESC. Ugo Rondinone’s spectacular rainbow light sculpture *we are poems* (2011) will be installed on the museum’s roof specially for the ESC. For all visitors travelling to the region during the ESC, the exhibition “Northern Lights” further provides a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in the fascinating world of Nordic landscapes. The Fondation Beyeler offers reduced admission from 9 through 18 May 2025.

The rainbow, a fascinating natural phenomenon born of the encounter between sun and rain, provides the guiding theme of the exhibition “Over the Rainbow”, which circles the notions of light, water and the power of colours. As they enter the museum, visitors will be welcomed by Ugo Rondinone’s impressive rainbow light sculpture *we are poems* (2011), set up on the roof of the Fondation Beyeler. The rainbow sculptures are among the celebrated Swiss artist’s best-known works – he began producing them in the late 1990s, with the intention of working in public spaces with a symbol that is understood worldwide.

It was Iris, the ancient goddess of the rainbow, whom Auguste Rodin chose to elevate to a revolutionary figure of modern art. Taking this figure as its starting point, the Fondation Beyeler’s collection display unfolds as a colourful array of works by famous artists. Ranging from Claude Monet and Pablo Picasso to Andy Warhol, Marlene Dumas and Wolfgang Tillmans, the exhibition brings together masterpieces of modern and contemporary art. The paintings and sculptures by Claude Monet, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, Henri Rousseau, Pablo Picasso, Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, Max Ernst, Alberto Giacometti, Mark Rothko, Francis Bacon, Andy Warhol, Marlene Dumas, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Elizabeth Peyton and Wolfgang Tillmans featured in “Over the Rainbow” invite visitors to take a journey of discovery through the history of modern art.

In the ESC context, the Nordic countries have produced some of the contest’s most famous winners, such as ABBA (Sweden), who triumphed with their legendary song *Waterloo* (1974) and turned the ESC into a global phenomenon. Norway also excelled several times, most recently in 2009 with Alexander Rybak’s *Fairytale*. As for Finland, its singular Eurovision moment took place in 2006, when Lordi won the competition. The North is currently also given pride of place at the Fondation Beyeler.

Until 25 May 2025, the exhibition «Northern Lights» allows visitors to experience artworks that reflect the North’s distinctive light and establish a deeper connection between nature and art. The exhibition features 74 landscape paintings by artists from the Nordic Countries and Canada produced between 1888 and 1937, among them masterpieces by Hilma af Klint and Edvard Munch. These artists exhibited all share the boreal forest, the world’s largest primeval forest, as a common source of inspiration. The seemingly boundless expanses of woodland, the radiant light of endless summer days, the long winter nights, and natural phenomena such as the northern lights gave rise to a specifically Nordic form of modern painting that exerts enduring appeal and fascination.

From 9 to 18 May 2025, admission to the Fondation Beyeler is CHF 20. Admission remains free for visitors up to the age of 25.

Press images are available under www.fondationbeyeler.ch/en/media/press-images

Fondation Beyeler

The Fondation Beyeler opened in 1997 and is one of Switzerland's most popular and renowned art museums. The museum is internationally renowned for its high-calibre exhibitions, its major collection of modern and contemporary art, as well as its ambitious schedule of events, drawing visitors from all over the world. Located in Riehen near Basel, the museum is home to an impressive collection of modern and contemporary art of international standing. Masterpieces by artists such as Pablo Picasso, Vincent van Gogh, Claude Monet, Paul Cézanne, Louise Bourgeois, Andy Warhol, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Marlene Dumas, Jeff Koons and Wolfgang Tillmans are presented in a unique architectural setting designed by Renzo Piano. Large glass panes and expansive open rooms create a light-flooded spatial experience. The museum building harmoniously blends into its natural surroundings, ensuring a pleasing interplay of art, architecture and nature. Within the idyllic setting of a park with venerable trees and water lily ponds, the Fondation Beyeler offers an exceptional artistic experience as well as a haven of peace and inspiration. It boasts a unique location in the heart of a local recreation area, looking out onto fields, pastures and vineyards close to the foothills of the Black Forest. In collaboration with Swiss architect Peter Zumthor, the Fondation Beyeler is constructing a new museum building in the adjoining park, thus further enhancing the harmonious interplay of art, architecture and nature.

Planning your next visit to Basel:

Kusama blockbuster exhibition at the Fondation Beyeler from October 2025

From 12 October 2025 through 25 January 2026, the Fondation Beyeler will present the first retrospective devoted to renowned Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama (*1929, Matsumoto) in Switzerland. The exhibition will offer a comprehensive overview of Kusama's more than seven-decade career. Alongside iconic works, the show will feature early works never before seen in Europe as well as a new production and one of the artist's celebrated Infinity Mirror Rooms. One of contemporary art's superstars, Kusama has achieved cult status with her exploration of repetitive patterns and structures, notably her characteristic polka dots and mirror rooms, which carry viewers away into worlds that seem to expand without limits. The exhibition will highlight the wealth of artistic media Kusama has worked with over the years, among them painting, sculpture, installation, drawing, collage, happening, live performance, fashion and literature. The exhibition «Yayoi Kusama» is organised by the Fondation Beyeler in collaboration with the Museum Ludwig in Cologne (14 March – 2 August 2026) and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (11 September 2026 – 17 January 2027).

Further information:

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Fondation Beyeler opening hours: 10am to 6pm daily, Wednesday 10am to 8pm