



MAERKI BAUMANN & CO. AG

PRIVATBANK

Journal



Corporate art –
Dr Carole Schmied-Syz
on our art collection

Retirement –
Planning ahead
pays off

Dear reader,

Money is a key focus at our bank, but it's not the only one. It's worthwhile keeping your eyes open when you visit us: throughout the bank, in the reception area, lobbies and meeting rooms, you will see works by acclaimed contemporary Swiss artists.

The works were chosen with considerable expertise and dedication by Dr Carole Schmied-Syz, co-owner of our bank and Vice-Chairwoman of the Board of Directors. She has been passionately interested in contemporary art for decades. We are pleased to present the face behind our collection on page 3 onwards.

How secure is the state pension system (AHV)? Will my pension fund be able to finance my pension? Will I be able to maintain my standard of living when I retire? Those are questions many people are asking themselves. According to surveys, providing for old age is one of greatest concerns among the Swiss population.

Low interest rates and declining conversion rates are putting pressure on our pension system. Fortunately, we are not entirely powerless in this situation. Retirement is less stressful if you start planning in good time. Find out more on page 6.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Regards,



Dr Stephan A. Zwahlen
Chief Executive Officer
Maerki Baumann & Co. AG



Trust takes time.

For us, it is not short-term success but the sustainable development of the client's assets that lies at the heart of what we do. We listen with a view to properly understanding the concerns and wishes of our clients. When looking after clients, continuity and farsightedness are crucial to us. For that reason, we consciously seek to look after future generations too.

Trust has a future.

A flair for art

Under the aegis of Dr Carole Schmied-Syz, Maerki Baumann has built up a first-rate collection of contemporary Swiss art.

Dr Carole Schmied-Syz, Vice Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of private bank Maerki Baumann & Co. AG, has a passion for contemporary art. And her passion is evident throughout the bank: about a hundred pictures, sculptures and reliefs by acclaimed Swiss artists are on display.

Touching works of art is normally taboo, but at the Maerki Baumann Private Bank's collection, there are exceptions to the rule. Sometimes Carole Schmied-Syz actively encourages visitors and clients to touch one of the works. The shell-shaped sculpture by Eva Oertli in the middle of a large table in one of the bank's meeting rooms is a good example. As the curator of the collection, Carole Schmied-Syz is well aware of the surprise generated by the visual and tactile properties of this work. Made of Italian serpentine, it looks brittle but actually feels as soft as velvet.

This work by the sculptor from Glarus is one of around a hundred items on display in the bank's lobbies, meeting rooms, corridors and offices. The origins of the collection go back

to the mid-1990s, when the bank moved into its present premises in the centre of Zurich. "We wanted some art to brighten up the building," explains Carole Schmied-Syz, who has a doctorate in law as well as being an art lover. That decision was an opportunity to highlight a different aspect of the bank: art as an integral part of its identity that fosters encounters.

The themes of the collection and the works selected are a clear reflection of the family that owns the bank. Both Carole Schmied-Syz, Vice-Chairwoman of the Board of Directors, and her brother, Hans G. Syz, who is Chairman of the Board of Directors, have a very strong affinity for Switzerland, so the collection features contemporary Swiss artists and artists with strong links to the country. Rather than focusing on established names, the aim was to discover talented up-and-coming artists who had attracted attention in one way or another. The collection is therefore closely associated with the objective of nurturing talent.

Paintings, sculptures and reliefs were purchased from artists in two phases. Many of the artists turned out

Cover picture: Ursula Knobel "Bar 4" (2003) - Acrylic on canvas, 70x70 cm

“I only buy art that meets all my criteria.”

Carole Schmied-Syz on her affinity for art, her favourite museums and missing out on a Warhol.

Ms. Schmied-Syz, was there a key experience that sparked your passion for art? As a young woman, I gradually discovered art. When I was studying law at Zurich University, I came into contact with the art scene and began to go to galleries and exhibitions. I was fortunate to get to know leading representatives of the constructivist movement such as Richard Paul Lohse and Max Bill, and I was present when the Haus Konstruktiv museum was established in 1986. I found the movement fascinating.

How does your private collection differ from your business collection? The bank's collection focuses on contemporary Swiss art. Privately, I also lean towards international contemporary art. I regularly go to galleries and museums like the Tate Modern in London and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Art Basel is also a fixture for me and I never miss an exhibition at the Kunsthaus Zürich.

Who are your preferred artists? That's a difficult question: I like so many. But if I had to choose three, they would be Robert Motherwell, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Jasper Jones.

How do you approach art – emotionally or intellectually? Art can arouse positive and negative feelings, so initially I tend to rely on my gut reaction. I look at a work and see how I respond: do I like it or not?

And if you like it, do you immediately want to own it? No, for that I'm too pragmatic. From simply looking at a work to actually buying it is a long process for me. If I like a work, I analyse the key data, from the artist to how it was created and the price. I only buy art that meets all my criteria.

Have you ever thought for too long and missed out on a work? Yes, one missed opportunity still bugs me. When Andy Warhol was relatively unknown, he painted small-format animal pictures that looked as if they had been painted for children. Bruno Bischofberger, the art dealer who represented him at the time, offered me the pictures at a relatively low price. I declined. That still irks me.

“Rabbit” by Jeff Koons was recently auctioned for a record sum of 90 million dollars. What springs to your mind when you hear such figures? In principle, I

think it is good when art gains in value. But I don't hold with such exorbitant prices. There are some excesses on the art market that are unpalatable and only serve to cultivate the self-image of dealers and collectors.

You have three grown-up children. Have they inherited your love of art? Yes, I often took them to exhibitions when they were young. Even as quite small children, they went round the art museum in Zurich. Now they often go to exhibitions on their own, without me – that shows their interest is genuine.

Dr Carole Schmied-Syz
Vice-Chairwoman
of the Board of
Directors
Maerki Baumann &
Co. AG



“We want to create a stimulating environment with works of art.”

As a collector, Carole Schmied-Syz gains inspiration and ideas at such events, as well as at exhibitions and art fairs in Switzerland and abroad. Around 20 years after the inception of the collection, she believes it is time for the collection to “move forward again.” It has been stable for some time – the intention was never to change it constantly. However, a new generation of artists has grown up since the major acquisitions were made. Carole Schmied-Syz is watching them with interest, and that could lead to one or two new acquisitions.



Andy Denzler “Triptichon” (1999) –
Acrylic on canvas, 25x75 cm



Eva Oertli “Small sculpture” (1992) –
Italian serpentine, 18x65x24 cm

to be real discoveries who have since gained national and international acclaim – for instance, Andy Denzler, Lorenz Spring, Al Meier, Mathias Spescha and Eva Oertli. Carole Schmied-Syz knows some of the artists personally and follows their careers.

“We don't think of the collection first and foremost as an investment,” she says, “but naturally any increase in its value is a welcome side-effect.” As well as purchasing the works, displaying them appropriately is an art in itself. Here, Carole Schmied-Syz takes advice from art dealers and other external specialists. For example, a sculpture by Karl Imfeld was installed on the fifth-floor terrace to create a direct link to a bronze sculpture by Franz Fischer that rises skywards on the building opposite.

Carole Schmied-Syz's commitment to art is not confined to Maerki Baumann's premises. Since the start of 2019, the bank has sponsored Kunstforum Zürich, a young discussion platform that aims to “stimulate and enrich Zurich as an art centre.” It organizes meetings and events where specialists and interested members of the public discuss issues of relevance to the art world. Clients of Maerki Baumann have been invited to attend events organized by this forum with their advisors and Carole Schmied-Syz.

Think about tomorrow today

Timely planning takes the stress out of retirement.

Our services

Maerki Baumann's retirement planning advice is not only available to established clients. We are happy to support anyone who is looking for expert, personal advice.

Financial planning

We undertake a full analysis of your present financial situation and draw up a long-term asset management plan tailored to your needs. That gives you a clear overview of the key issues and scope to plan for what you want to do after retirement.

Tax optimization

As you approach retirement, you face various decisions that have a big impact on your personal tax situation. We assess your situation, taking all aspects into account, and show you how you can optimize your tax position.

Mortgage strategy

Home owners generally want to live in their own home until the end of their life. The big question is how they can afford to do so. We discuss your personal situation with you and draw up a long-term concept on financing your own home.

Start planning for your retirement well in advance. Our experienced advisors will be happy to help you. Our advice is not a one-off service: we look forward to providing continued, long-term support and assistance.

Retirement is a big step – and one you only take once. Of course, there is uncertainty, but there is also the thrill of embarking on a new phase of your life. It is a time when many people look forward to fulfilling their dreams.

If you want to maintain your standard of living or treat yourself to something special after retirement, you need to start planning well in advance. Today's low interest rates and declining pension conversion rates can have serious consequences if you rely solely on your state and occupational pensions.

It therefore makes sense to analyse all relevant financial issues – your assets, pension provision, tax position, inheritance and home ownership – and plan for when you retire. How can you grow your capital? Finance your own home? Optimize your tax position? How do you plan to draw your pension assets? How can you provide financial security for your family?

Consulting a specialist is advisable – not least because many decisions taken with a view to retirement are irreversible. We suggest that you examine your situation about ten years before you intend to retire. After that, you should review your retirement planning every few years so you can make any necessary adjustments.

Younger people should also consider discussing retirement planning with a specialist. Today's 40-year-olds cannot count on receiving the projected level of state and occupational pension benefits, so personal provision is becoming more important.

Nils Ganz
Head of Mortgages and
Retirement Planning
Maerki Baumann & Co. AG





Take part in our seminar on “Creating your own asset management”.

To be held in German at 5.30 p.m.
on Wednesday, March 4, 2020
at Dreikönigstrasse 6, Zurich.
If you are interested, please contact
events@maerki-baumann.ch



“Entrepreneurs value
a competent partner,
especially when it comes
to innovative financing
via an ICO or STO.”

Marcel Spalinger
Head of the Crypto Desk
Maerki Baumann & Co. AG



“We actively support
good business ideas
through our flexible,
personalized service.”

Roger Sharma
Senior Client Advisor, Crypto Desk
Maerki Baumann & Co. AG

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dependent legal or tax advice concerning the suitability of such investments, since their tax treatment depends on the personal circumstances of the investor in question and is subject to change at any time.

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