

# KMD—Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp | The Forestay Museum of Art

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## PRESS RELEASE BOOK LAUNCH—OPENING—LECTURE

On the occasion of the first comprehensive monographic publication on the work of the American artist (with Swiss and German roots) Louis Michel Eilshemius, we are happy to present an event that is, all at once, an exhibiton, a lecture, and the presentation of a book:

### LOUIS MICHEL EILSHEMIUS (1864–1941): PEER OF POET-PAINTERS

The opening, followed by a lecture, will take place on  
**Friday, September 11, 2015, at 6:30 PM in Cully, Place d'Armes 1.**

**Exhibition: September 11 to October 4.**

**Garage: Fr–Sa 3 to 7 PM | KMD: 24/24 from Mondays to Sundays**

**The book:** Stefan Banz, *Eilshemius, Peer of Poet-Painters*: 768 pages, 529 illustrations (476 in color, 53 in black and white) from more than 70 institutions (museums, galleries, and private collections), 31 x 24 cm, hardcover, edited by KMD, published and distributed by JRP|Ringier, Zurich. (*The book will also be presented at Michael Rosenfeld Gallery in New York on September 26, 2015, and in the Eva Presenhuber Galerie in Zurich on November 20, 2015*).

**The opening:** An exhibition in a special location that includes a group of significant paintings and publications by the artist Louis Michel Eilshemius.

**The lecture:** The perception of Eilshemius's work from a contemporary point of view by Stefan Banz, author of the new book. Admission is free, though attendance should be confirmed by e-mail before September 9 at hello@akmd.ch.

## About Louis Michel Eilshemius

Louis Michel Eilshemius was a fascinating outsider of the New York art scene at the beginning of the twentieth century, an artist whose entire oeuvre had remained practically unknown to the general public. Not until Marcel Duchamp discovered him—at the age of fifty-three—in the famous first exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists at the Grand Central Palace in New York in 1917 did he attract the attention of the international art world.

Following his discovery, Duchamp and Katherine S. Dreier organized Eilshemius's first solo exhibitions in a public institution at the now legendary Société Anonyme in New York in 1920 and 1924. Eilshemius's name was suddenly on everyone's lips: some of the most prominent art critics of the time wrote about him and some of America's most influential collectors began to take an interest in his work. Eilshemius himself, exhausted and frustrated by his years of failure and having grown increasingly eccentric, and perhaps also somewhat confused by the sudden change in the reception of his art, gave up painting in 1921. His works, on the other hand, received ever-greater recognition and were exhibited in the most reputable galleries of New York. Thus it was that between 1932 and his death in 1941 there were more than thirty exhibitions of Eilshemius's work, with at one point in 1939 three shows running concurrently.

Though today many museums in the United States, such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Hirshhorn Museum, or the Phillips Collection, and collectors of international renown possess works by Eilshemius, the artist has faded into ever-greater obscurity, especially since the advent of Pop and Minimal Art. Eilshemius perfectly exemplifies—in an age of mass-oriented biennials and art fairs—the idea of the individualist who resolutely goes his own way, one of the reasons that his work appears to us today more contemporary than ever.

## Event, Friday, September 11, 2015: Opening—Exhibition—Book Launch—Lecture

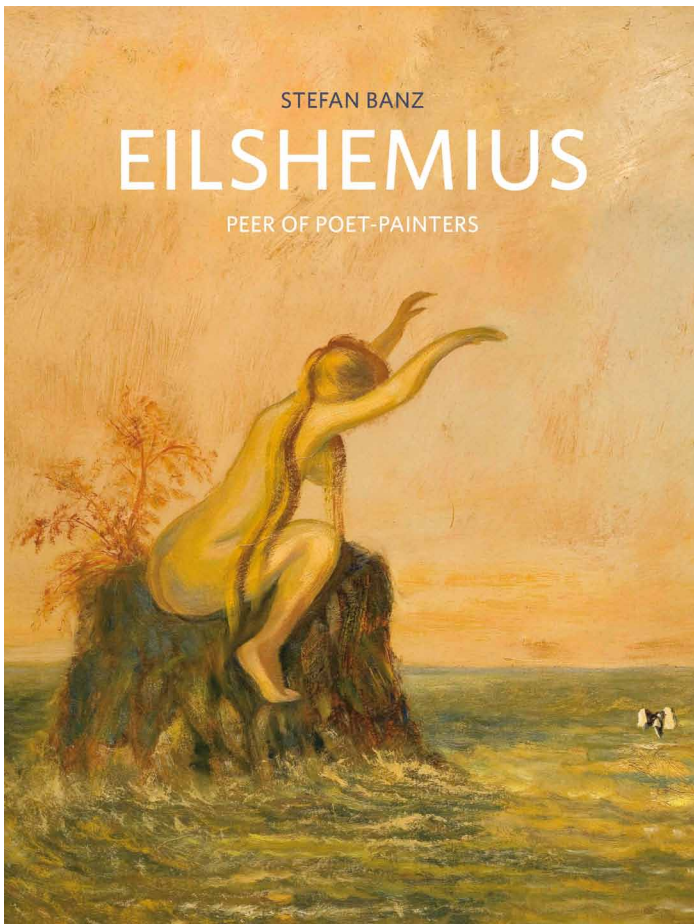
The exhibition presents a group of significant paintings that invite the public's appreciation of the original execution and unique poetic universe of Eilshemius's work. The paintings will be accompanied by the artist's publications, a series of texts and poems edited and distributed between 1895 and 1926. In his lecture, Stefan Banz will discuss Eilshemius's biography, his work, and the affinities that tie his thinking to parallel artistic movements of the avant-garde, as well as his links to Marcel Duchamp.

In this comprehensive book on Louis M. Eilshemius, Stefan Banz has gathered together an abundance of astonishing and hitherto unavailable and/or unknown documents, the nucleus of which are Eilshemius's countless and controversial letters to the editor that appeared in such American newspapers as the *New York Sun* and the *New York Times*. This correspondence allows us to not only to see his oeuvre in a new light but also to reappraise Eilshemius's art in all its intimacy and uniqueness. In his expansive essay, Stefan Banz is the first to explore the question of whether and to what extent Eilshemius influenced Duchamp's artistic thinking, and also whether and in what way he inspired Duchamp to open new doors for twentieth-century art, particularly in the context of his last artwork *Étant donnés*. Finally, this book brings together works from over seventy institutions and private collections, thus giving the reader a profound insight into the fascinating oeuvre of this unusual artist.

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**About KMD—Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp | The Forestay Museum of Art:** The Association Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp was founded in 2009 with the aim of organizing a symposium and an international event devoted to Marcel Duchamp and the Forestay Waterfall. The KMD was also built for this occasion, and a book edition was initiated in collaboration with the Verlag für Moderne Kunst in Nuremberg/Vienna. The KMD (Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp | The Forestay Museum of Art) is a homage to Marcel Duchamp's *Box in a Valise*. It is situated on the shore of Lake Geneva, not far from the Forestay Waterfall, which the artist photographed in 1946 as the starting point of his last masterpiece *Étant donnés: 1° la chute d'eau, 2° le gaz d'éclairage...* The KMD shows grand exhibitions of internationally acknowledged and emerging artists, and the Edition KMD publishes hardcover books in small format (artists' books, works of art theory, and exhibition catalogues). The KMD is an artistic project by Caroline Bachmann and Stefan Banz.

**About the Author:** Stefan Banz is an artist and author. He was born in Sursee and grew up in Menznau, Switzerland. From 1982 to 1991 he studied art history, German literature, and literary criticism at the University of Zurich. In 1989 he cofounded the Kunsthalle Luzern and served as its artistic director until 1993; since then he has been working as a freelance artist, participating in solo and group exhibitions in international galleries and museums. From July 1994 to December 1997 he was the artistic consultant and curator of Galerie Hauser & Wirth. In 2000 he received the Manor Art Prize, and the Recognition Award from the City of Lucerne. From 2004 to 2014 he collaborated artistically with Caroline Bachmann ([www.bxb.ch](http://www.bxb.ch)). In 2005 he was the curator for the Swiss Pavilion at the 51st Biennale in Venice. In 2009 he cofounded the association KMD, and in 2010 he co-organized the event "Marcel Duchamp and the Forestay Waterfall" in Cully, Switzerland, both with Caroline Bachmann. Since then he has been the artistic director of the KMD. His most recent publications include: *What Duchamp Abandoned for the Waterfall*, 2009 (together with Caroline Bachmann); *Marcel Duchamp and the Forestay Waterfall*, 2010 (editor); *Das Wespennest ist eine Kathedrale. Ein Gespräch mit Jean-Christophe Ammann*, 2011; *Aldo Walker: Logotyp*, 2012; *La Broyeuse de chocolat. Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp at Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt*, 2013 (editor, together with Caroline Bachmann and Ralf Beil); *Marcel Duchamp: Pharmacie*, 2013; *Jeff Wall: With the Eye of the Mind*, 2014; and *Das Schweigen der Jungesellen*, 2014 (together with Caroline Bachmann). Stefan Banz lives and works in Cully, Switzerland and Berlin. Website: [www.banz.tv](http://www.banz.tv)



PUBLICATION:  
 COLLECTED DOCUMENTS  
 A NOVEL OF FACTS  
 BY AND ABOUT  
 LOUIS M. EILSHEMIUS,  
 A STUDY OF  
 HIS INFLUENCE ON  
 MARCEL DUCHAMP,  
 AND WORKS FROM OVER  
 SEVENTY INSTITUTIONS  
 AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

EXHIBITION:  
 A GROUP OF SIGNIFICANT  
 PAINTINGS AND ARTIST BOOKS  
 BY LOUIS M. EILSHEMIUS



AMERICAN TRAGEDY: REVENGE, 1901, oil on canvas, 20 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 30 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. | 50.3 x 76.5 cm, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC, Washington, DC, Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn.



[NYMPH PICKING A FLOWER], [ca. 1916-17], oil on paperboard (mounted on fiberboard), 40 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 61 in. | 103.2 x 154.9 cm, Courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, New York.



CITY STREET IN THE MOONLIGHT, ca. 1908, oil on cardboard (mounted on masonite), 20 x 14 in. | 50.8 x 35.6 cm, Private collection.



[UNTITLED (WATERFALL)], [1911], oil on cardboard, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. | 22.2 x 44.5 cm, Caroline Bachmann and Stefan Banz Collection, Cully, Switzerland.