

ANNUAL PROGRAM 2026

DRAIFLESSEN COLLECTION



Dear visitors,

Draiflessen's theme for the 2026 exhibition year is "Collecting Ourselves." For a museum, collecting is a key task alongside conservation, research, and education. But collecting is also a deeply human and therefore both individual and collective activity. Unconsciously, it allows us to interconnect the past, present, and future by preserving memories, sharing experiences, and thus leaving traces behind.

In 2026, we wish to use the impetus of our annual theme to follow the idea of collecting or organizing in our exhibitions and events, making connections visible.

The exhibition MIX & MATCH delves deep into our collections of art, family, and company history, placing the items in entirely new contexts and encouraging visitors to relate their own associations and memories to the objects on display.

LACE! reveals not only a carefully curated theme but also a collector's personality: each individual shapes their collection through personal selection and perspective—and thus always tells a story about themselves.

Finally, the exhibition UNFOLDING MEMORIES shows that memories, as we find them manifested in photo albums, for example, are always subjective stories told through the selection of photos and their compilation.

"Collecting Ourselves" connects the exhibitions by asking what collecting reveals about us—as an institution, as a society, and as individuals.

We look forward to seeing you!

Dr. Corinna Otto
Director, Draiflessen Collection

MAGICAL WOMEN

Magic permeates language and everyday life: we speak of the magic of certain moments or of things having an inherent magic. Occult motifs, astrology, and esoteric practices are also making a comeback in mainstream pop culture. Although often dismissed as superstition or as being incompatible with modern scientific values, mystical, spiritual, and esoteric aspects have enjoyed a long tradition in art and culture. The exhibition is dedicated to artistic positions of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that deal with magic, the occult, and spiritual practices—often from a feminist perspective. The focus is on how artists use these themes to question, break down, reinterpret, and retell social structures, identities, and gender roles.

THE DEVIL

MYTH, POWER, MYSTERY

No other figure in Christianity has inspired both terror and fascination like the devil. For centuries, believers feared that he and his demons, as God's adversaries, would try to bring disorder to the world at any moment. Natural disasters, earthquakes, and epidemics were considered the work of the devil—as were personal temptations with which he tried to lead people astray from the right path. This idea fueled the fear of the torments of hell and deeply influenced Christian belief in everyday culture.

This showcase exhibition in the Study Room highlights the changes and diversity of the image of the devil—from biblical ideas to his representation in popular culture.

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

ON THE TRAIL OF C&A IN SNEEK

Places of origin have something almost mystical about them. More than just geographical points, they represent identity and tradition. Sometimes, however, they fall into oblivion—as in the case of C&A: Where exactly was the now internationally active fashion company C&A founded in 1841? This seemingly simple question has developed into a complex search for clues, which is the subject of the exhibition. The focus is on the so-called original headquarters in Sneek (NL), which for decades was considered the company's place of origin—and most certainly is not. Historical documents, photographs, and research are used to trace the actual history of C&A's founding location. The exhibition documents this process and also makes it clear that the founding myth is not just a place—it is also a construct.

MIX & MATCH

INSIGHTS INTO A COLLECTION COSMOS

In MIX & MATCH, the archive and collection come together in four themed rooms spanning different eras and media, providing insights into the collection cosmos of the Draiflessen Collection. The exhibition invites visitors to make new, sometimes unexpected connections between objects and eras. It presents the museum's diverse holdings in an associative order. The four basic elements of fire, water, earth, and air—interpretive patterns for the world since ancient times—serve as a narrative leitmotif. Highlights from printmaking and book art are shown alongside photographs, films, and advertising from the history of C&A. Fashion joins contemporary art and archival documents. The exhibits playfully trigger associations with the elements that can reorder not only museum viewing habits but also everyday perception.

UNFOLDING MEMORIES

When we look at other people's photo albums, what do we see? As we leaf through such albums, we are following the rhythm of memory itself: fragmented, repetitive, full of associations and gaps. Even if the people or places are unknown to us, the photographs often seem familiar. The exhibition UNFOLDING MEMORIES explores this resonance between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the past and the present, memory and photography. It brings together historical photo albums from Draiflessen's own archive with works by contemporary artists and photographers, thus connecting different temporal levels and conceptual approaches. Not only do the artworks reflect the processes visible in the photo albums; they also make it clear that storytelling itself is a creative act that is shaped as much by forgetting as by remembering.

LACE!

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, lace was much more than mere decoration: it was considered an expression of luxury, fashion consciousness, and social status—and was particularly impressive when used on collars. The exhibition highlights “collar fashion” on the basis of two important portrait collections: the iconography of Anthony van Dyck (1591–1641) preserved in the Liberna Collection; and the collection of paintings and miniatures belonging to the publisher couple Frieda and Franz von Lipperheide, which is now housed in the Art Library of the National Museums in Berlin (Fashion Image Collection). Another focus is on the very rare collars and lace that have survived; their significance, beauty, and craft can be experienced through insights into the techniques of needlepoint and bobbin lace. Illustrative models, videos, and historical handcraft tools interact with contemporary lacework and Gertrud Riethmüller's sound installation *Ein Kragen – im Tanz der Verflechtungen* (A Collar – In the Dance of Interconnections) (2022–23).

MUSIC THAT CONNECTS



For over ten years, Draiflessen has been synonymous with special musical experiences thanks to its meetMUSIC concert series. Music lovers of all generations come together here to enjoy familiar tunes and discover new sounds. The unique atmosphere creates a direct connection between artists and audience—music becomes personal and immediately tangible. The program offers something for every musical taste: from classical music to jazz to singer-songwriters and family concerts.

Every August, Draiflessen Park is transformed into an open-air stage for the three-day meetMUSIC Festival. It provides a stage for up-and-coming musicians from all over the world and brings to life the diversity of music in all its facets—inspiring, lively, and intimate. Young talent is also promoted: every year, meetMUSIC gives special prizes to winners of the national competition “Jugend musiziert.”

More information at www.meetmusic.online

GUIDED TOURS AND ART EDUCATION

In addition to public and private tours, we also offer inclusive tours and creative formats that promote individual access to art, especially for children and young people, such as MuseumSpaß (Museum Fun) during the holidays. For adults and families, workshops, excursions, lectures, and panel discussions complement our diverse program.

More information at www.draiflessen.com

The cover features a watercolor by Bep van der Weijden. She worked for C&A as an advertising illustrator and fashion scout from the 1960s to the 1980s. As well as designing advertisements, she was sent on trips by C&A to seek inspiration from current fashion trends around the world. Her sketches and designs were used within the company by C&A staff, especially fashion designers and buyers. Van der Weijden also sketched and produced logos. She worked at Studio Amsterdam, where she created original designs. (Photo: © Draiflessen Collection)

Publisher

Draiflessen Collection gGmbH, represented by
Dr. Corinna Otto, Clemens Brenninkmeijer

Opening Hours



Wednesday-Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. |
Every first Thursday of the month, 11 a.m.-9 p.m.

Detailed information about events:

www.draiflessen.com

Draiflessen Collection
Georgstraße 18 • 49497 Mettingen
+49 5452 9168-3500
info@draiflessen.com

www.draiflessen.com

  @draiflessencollection

