



**Oettinger Davidoff AG announces new Davidoff Art Initiative Residency for Caribbean artists at Atelier Mondial in Basel, in collaboration with the Institute of Art at the FHNW Academy of Art and Design in Basel, Switzerland**

**New Design for the Davidoff Lounge at Art Basel to feature an interactive window showcasing the Davidoff Art Initiative**

**Second edition in Davidoff's Masterpiece Humidor Collection, by Maitre d'Art Lison de Caunes, to be unveiled during Art Basel**

[#DavidoffArts](#)



Atelier Mondial, Basel, © Kathrin Schulthess

**Basel, Switzerland, June 1, 2015 – The Davidoff Art Initiative (DAI) will add the fourth component to its global Art Residency program – an annual residency for Caribbean artists or curators at Atelier Mondial in Basel, Switzerland, in collaboration with the Institute of Art at the FHNW Academy of Art and Design. The residencies will take place from October to December each year, starting in 2015.**

“Ever since we started the Davidoff Art Initiative, it has been our intent to have one node in our network in Switzerland,” said Hans-Kristian Hoejsgaard, CEO Oettinger Davidoff AG. “We are all the more delighted that our Swiss residency partner is right here in Basel, where both our company and our lead cultural partner, Art Basel, are headquartered. Under the expert guidance of Chus Martínez, the new residency will bring the Davidoff Art Initiative back home to us, allowing our Davidoff colleagues to interact closely with the visiting Caribbean artists.”

Atelier Mondial’s studios are located in the newly constructed building complex at Freilager-Platz in the Dreispitz area, an emerging art zone just behind the Swiss railway station. The complex is directly opposite a new FHNW high-rise, designed by the architects Morger & Dettli, and the so-called “offspaces” – a cluster of independent, non-commercial exhibition spaces. Each year, the Davidoff Art Initiative will invite one artist or curator from the Caribbean to participate in a three-month residency at Atelier Mondial.

“It is my firm belief that the Caribbean region has some of the most exciting voices in the contemporary art world today,” said Chus Martínez, Head of the Institute of Art at the FHNW Academy of Art and Design in Basel. “Yet these artists and curators are often overlooked. They demand our urgent attention. The new residency collaboration will be an important vehicle to developing a deeper and much needed cultural bridge between our respective regions.”

Earlier in 2015, DAI started a new residency for international artists visiting the Caribbean, in collaboration with the Altos de Chavón School of Design, in La Romana, Dominican Republic.

Launched in 2012, the Davidoff Art Initiative aims to support contemporary art and artists in the Caribbean, in particular the Dominican Republic, and to foster cultural engagement between the Caribbean and the rest of the world. The Initiative is motivated by a commitment to bring much-needed exposure and resources to the cultural community of the region where many employees, and much of the production of Oettinger Davidoff are located.

### **Newly Designed Davidoff Lounge**

As an Associate Partner of Art Basel for the fourth consecutive year, Davidoff will unveil the newly designed VIP hospitality lounge in the Collectors Lounge at Art Basel from June 18 – 21, 2015.

The Davidoff Lounge at Art Basel is designed by the renowned Swiss firm of Atelier Oï and will showcase the artists and activities of the Davidoff Art Initiative, and serve as a place to give expression to Oettinger Davidoff's core values: the company's respect for the natural environment, its support for the time-honored techniques of premium tobacco cultivation and cigar production, and its embrace of the cultural heritage and contemporary artistic vibrancy of the Caribbean region. As a result, the lounge will convey a feeling of warmth, luxury, and authenticity associated with the Caribbean and reflected in Davidoff's motto, *Time Beautifully Filled*.

A digital screen serving as the centerpiece of the lounge will feature interactive images from the Davidoff Art Initiative's growing network of Caribbean artists and arts organizations, and photographs by Polibio Díaz—a Dominican artist who participated in the Davidoff Art Residency program at the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) in Brooklyn, New York, in the fall of 2014.

### **Second Masterpiece Humidor Collection by Lison de Caunes**

During Art Basel, Davidoff is set to present the second edition of its humidor collection "Cave de Paille." Created in collaboration with Paris-based artist Lison de Caunes and crafted with the traditional technique of *marqueterie de paille* (straw marquetry), this three-edition humidor collection demonstrates Davidoff's respect for materials and its dedication to creativity, authenticity, and luxury.

Lison de Caunes carefully crafts pieces from straw, one of the most humble and fragile natural elements. Her inspiration for the collection was the similarity between straw and tobacco. She chose the classic dome with its rounded shape to better reveal the subtle luster of the straw. The first edition of the new collection – 'Saison I' – featured the tobacco leaf motif. This new edition, the second of the three, is an interpretation of the cigar wrapper and its infinite number of shades within the same colour palette.

Each of the three pieces in the collection captures a critical moment in the life of a Davidoff cigar, beginning with the growing tobacco leaf in the first edition. As artistic director, Lison de Caunes collaborated with Davidoff through the entire creative process, from choosing the dome shape of the humidor to tailoring the collection, and visually evoking the moments in time that capture the cigar's journey – starting with the verdant green tobacco leaves to when the rolled cigar has reached the perfect moment to be enjoyed.

'Saison II' will be available in limited quantities at Davidoff Flagship Stores in the US, Europe and Asia from June 2015. The third and final edition of the collection will be unveiled at Art Basel in Miami Beach in December 2015.

### **Notes to the Editors**

#### **About Prof. Chus Martínez, Head of the Institute of Art at the FHNW Academy of Arts and Design**

Born in Spain, Chus Martínez has a background in philosophy and art history. She is the Head of the Institute of Art at the FHNW Academy of Arts and Design in Basel, Switzerland. She has previously served as the Chief Curator at El Museo Del Barrio, New York and as head of the department of artistic direction and a member of the core agent group for dOCUMENTA (13). In her former capacities as chief curator at El Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona at MACBA (2008 to 2010), director of the Frankfurter Kunstverein (2005–08) and artistic director of Sala Rekalde in Bilbao (2002–05), she has organized numerous exhibitions and publications with contemporary artists.

#### **About Dr. Alexandra Staheli, Director Atelier Mondial Basel, Switzerland**

Born in Basel, studied art history, history, German literature and philosophy in Basel and Berlin. She completed her

PhD in fine arts at University of Zurich. After teaching for more than ten years about media theory, semiotics, film history, and philosophy at the FHNW Academy of Art and Design, in Basel and Zurich, Dr. Staheli worked as a freelance journalist and editor at the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. In 2009 she joined the Christoph Merian Stiftung and is the head of Atelier Mondial - International Arts Exchange Program Basel, Mulhouse, Freiburg (former: iaab).

#### **About the Davidoff Art Initiative**

The Davidoff Art Initiative supports contemporary art and artists in the Caribbean, strengthens art organizations in the Dominican Republic, shares knowledge and expertise about contemporary art and fosters cultural engagement between the Caribbean and the rest of the world. At the core of the Art Initiative, Davidoff aims to engage closely with the arts and culture of the Dominican Republic, where much of its production and many of its employees are based, bringing opportunity and visibility to the art and culture of the Caribbean region, and extending the company's long-standing commitment to artistry, craftsmanship, community and quality. The Davidoff Art Initiative's four global program areas are: Art Residency, Art Dialogues, Art Grants, and Art Editions.

#### **About Marquetry Artist Lison de Caunes**

After studying at the Union Centrale des Arts Decoratifs, Lison de Caunes dedicated herself to the art of straw marquetry for many years, continuing her grandfather Andre Groult's tradition, and becoming a straw marquetry specialist. She reestablishes these poetic practices by restoring furniture and objects from the 17th century to the Art Deco period and by creating furniture, domestic accessories, and wall panels to order.

#### **About the History of Davidoff Humidors**

Just like fine wine, premium cigars need to be stored in the right environment in order to emerge matured and improved. It was Zino Davidoff who first invested time researching and developing optimum ways for storing the finest quality cigars. The time spent in the humidor during the aging process requires absolute control of humidity and temperature. Taking such factors into consideration, he built his first and famous cigar cellar in 1930. However, not all connoisseurs have a cigar cellar at their disposal. Therefore, he pioneered the first humidor, so that cigar-lovers might store their prized possessions on a smaller scale. Davidoff humidors have since been made by a variety of craftsmen and to set standards of aesthetic appeal equally matching those of technological efficiency. Each humidor, like each cigar, is the product of time.

#### **About Oettinger Davidoff AG**

The CHF 1.2 billion Oettinger Davidoff AG with over 3,500 employees around the world, traces its roots back to 1875 and remains family-owned to this day, with two distinctly different businesses: one focused on FMCG distribution in the Swiss market and one dedicated to the core business of producing, marketing and retailing premium branded cigars, tobacco products, and accessories. The premium branded cigar business include Davidoff, AVO, Camacho, Cusano, Griffin's, Private Stock, Zino, Zino Platinum and Winston Churchill Cigars. Oettinger Davidoff AG is anchored in a strong "crop-to-shop" philosophy, having pursued a vertical integration from the tobacco fields in the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Nicaragua, to a worldwide network of almost 70 Davidoff Flagship Stores.

#### **About Art Basel**

Art Basel stages the world's premier art shows for Modern and contemporary works, sited in Basel, Miami Beach, and Hong Kong. Defined by its host city and region, each show is unique, which is reflected in its participating galleries, artworks presented, and the content of parallel programming produced in collaboration with local institutions for each edition. In addition to ambitious stands featuring leading galleries from around the world, each show's singular exhibition sectors spotlight the latest developments in the visual arts, offering visitors new ideas, new inspiration and new contacts in the art world.

[artbasel.com](http://artbasel.com)

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#### **Media Contacts**

For further information, images, or to arrange an interview, members of the media may contact:

***For Europe and Asia:***

Sutton PR  
Elena Davidson  
[ellie@suttonpr.com](mailto:ellie@suttonpr.com)  
+44 (0)20 7183 3577

Sutton PR Asia  
Sybil Kot  
[sybil@suttonprasia.com](mailto:sybil@suttonprasia.com)

***For US:***

Blue Medium, Inc.  
Justyna Zajac, or  
Pamela Hernandez  
[justyna@bluemedium.com](mailto:justyna@bluemedium.com)  
[pamela@bluemedium.com](mailto:pamela@bluemedium.com)  
+1-212-675-1800

Oettinger Davidoff AG  
Albertine Kopp  
Manager Davidoff Art Initiative  
[media@davidoff.com](mailto:media@davidoff.com)  
[info@davidoffartinitiative.com](mailto:info@davidoffartinitiative.com)  
+41 61 279 3612