

## Zurich

**Kurt Schwitters**

GALERIE GMURZYNSKA | ZURICH

Paradeplatz 2

June 12–September 30

Putting on a commanding exhibition during Art Basel isn't easy, but this gallery has succeeded with a display of Kurt Schwitters's *Merz* to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the Dada movement, launched at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich. Featuring several dozen posthumous works by Dada's agent from Hannover, the exhibition was designed by the Pritzker Prize-winning architect Zaha Hadid—who died a few weeks before the opening—making for a perfect pairing.

Schwitters famously constructed the *Merzbau*, 1923–37—an expressionist *Gesamtkunstwerk* lost in a hail of bombs during World War II—in his family's home. Far from the artist's spatial collage with its many nooks and crannies, in Hadid's flowing installation a visitor can experience a free-form adaptation of it through bellied curves of plastic and marble, among other materials, that stretch as if to suck the capital out of the banks across the street into the gallery space. One is led to and immersed in the furthest niches and alcoves of the display, finding constructivist collages made of painted segments of wood such as *Blue*, 1923–26, and *Treble Clef*, 1923–27, or works on paper like *Mz 196*, 1921. Along with these are a great deal of what would now be designated as "mail art," including letters and postcards that were supposed to carry the artist out into the world via his 1919 poem "To Anna Flower," as documented in *Postcard to Mr. Walter Drexel, "Anna Blume,"* 1921. It's a pity that all that's gathered here will soon be scattered again, widespread and little seen, but treasured.

*Translated from German by Diana Reese.*



View of "Kurt Schwitters: Merz," 2016.

— *Max Glauner*