Press Kit
Berlin, 16.8.23

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Stefan Moses, Ohne Titel (Hannah Höch in ihrem Haus in Berlin-Heiligensee), 1975,
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Online project

“Mapping the Studio“

A changing landcape in Berlin

BERLINISCHE
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BERLINISCHE GALERIE
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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Press Release
Berlin, 10.5.23

Stefan Moses, Ohne Titel (Hannah Höch in ihrem Haus in Berlin-Heiligensee), 1975, © Münchner Stadtmuseum, Sammlung Fotografie, archiv stefan moses

Online project “Mapping the Studio”

A changing landscape in Berlin

bg.berlin/en/mapping-the-studio

Interviewees

Carla Chan (*1989), Heiner Franzen (*1961), Andreas Greiner (*1979), Andrea Hofmann (*1969, architect, raumlaborberlin), Manfred Paul (*1942), Dr Martin Schwegmann(*1975, Berlin’s Studio Commissioner and head of kulturwerk studio unit, bbk berlin), Jorinde Voigt (*1977)

Historical studio profiles

Marta Astfalck-Vietz (1901–1994), Max Beckmann (188 –1950), Hannah Höch (1889–1978), Max Liebermann (1847–1935), Jeanne Mammen (1890–1976), Brigitte (1923–2011) and Martin Matschinsky-Denninghoff (1921–2020), Lu Märten (1879–1970), Iwan Puni (1892–1956), Emilio Vedova (1919–2006), Heinrich Zille (1858–1929)

“Mapping the Studio”, the online project by trainee curators at the Berlinische Galerie, debunks the myth that studios are mysterious hideaways. Video interviews and essays open the doors on Berlin’s ateliers past and present. They reveal how the occupants work, live, party and fight for space, highlighting artistic aspects, architecture and political issues such as studios falling prey to development. The journey begins with a map of the city pinpointing the selected studios in the urban space.

Interviews

Six video interviews with contemporary artists and studio campaigners in Berlin cast light on the situation today. They reveal where and how art is produced in Berlin and flag up the opportunities and challenges associated with these places, be they homes, shared spaces or prestigious showcases. There is talk, too, of how hard it now is to find a studio in Berlin: in a city with creeping gentrification, spaces for artists have become a political issue.

A passion for designing interiors prompted Jorinde Voigt (*1977) to team up with architect Daniel Verhülsdonk and create a spacious atelier in an old factory. These rooms in the former industrial zone of Schöneweide have given the artist a sense of home.

At the “Malzfabrik” in Schöneberg Andreas Greiner (*1979) shares space and tools with other artists. He distinguishes between the myth and reality of studio life and explains why it is important for the members of this community to stick together.

Carla Chan (*1989) came to Berlin from Hong Kong in 2015 and was bowled over by the chance to spread out after the narrow constraints of her home town. At the Lobe Block in Wedding she moved into her own studio for the first time, complete with a big terrace and plenty of space for her ideas to take shape.

Photographer Manfred Paul (*1942) has lived in his studio in Prenzlauer Berg since 1968. He remembers arriving in what was then East Berlin, lists his requirements of a studio and spells out why he cares little for outward show.

Heiner Franzen (*1961) sees his studio at the “Uferhallen” in Wedding as an external brain where his conceptual works can germinate. But today the riverside site and the artists who work there are threatened by urban development.

New spaces for artists are currently being created in the "House of Statistics" on Alexanderplatz. Martin Schwegmann (*1975, the city's Studio Commissioner and head of the kulturwerk studio unit at bbk berlin, the professional artists' association) and Andrea Hofmann (*1969, architect, raumlaborberlin) put the case for these crucial alternative locations in the battle to confront the growing shortage of studios in Berlin.

Historical studios

Nine essays around items in the museum's own collection illustrate the historical diversity of studios across the capital and their personal significance for the artists who worked there.

The photography studio of Marta Astfalck-Vietz (1901–1994) is one example of many such businesses founded or managed by women in the 1920s. Max Beckmann (1884–1950) had three studios in Berlin, reflected in the motifs of his early work. At his premium address by the Brandenburg Gate, Max Liebermann (1847–1935) painted in bright, airy attic rooms that provoked the Kaiser's wrath with their modernity. By contrast, Ivan Puni (1892–1956), who came to the city as an exile, produced his art in a sparsely furnished one-room flat on Kleiststrasse. Jeanne Mammen (1890–1976) and Hannah Höch (1889–1978) sought refuge in their studios during the Nazi years, retreating into "inner emigration" to protect their art. Brigitte (1923–2011) and Martin Matschinsky-Denninghoff (1921–2020) not only ran workshops in Berlin and Paris, but also had a rural base in Saxony-Anhalt, where – among other things – they made their big steel sculptures.

A studio was more than a workplace. Artists would meet there for discussions and social gatherings, as Heinrich Zille (1858–1929) recorded with his camera. And as a site of artistic production it was sometimes exposed to constant change: within the space of almost 90 years, what is now Kunsthaus Dahlem evolved from a studio built to serve the Nazi regime into a zone of free art.

Trainee curators

Sophie Angelov, Pauline Behrmann, Meryem Berker, Luise Budde, Nils Philippi, Lena Schott, Paulina Weiss, Rosa Marie Wesle, Lina-Golly Wyrwa

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Press images

berlinischegalerie.de/en/press-release/online-project-mapping-the-studio/

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Website
Mapping the Studio
Berliner Ateliers im Wandel

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Website
Mapping the Studio
A changing landscape in Berlin

berlinischegalerie.de/en/mapping-the-studio

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Contemporary artists and studio campaigners in Berlin reveal where and how art is produced in the city and flag up the opportunities and challenges associated with these places, be they homes, shared spaces or prestigious showcases.

Carla Chan
Lobe Block, Berlin-Wedding
When Carla Chan (*1989) moved to Berlin she was delighted with the spatial potential of the city compared with the cramped architecture of her home town Hong Kong. In 2018 she found her first studio at the Lobe Block in Wedding with plenty of room to let her ideas fly. The brutalist tiered terracing was designed by architects Brandlhuber+ Emde, Burlon and Muck Petzet. It provides mixed use opportunities for artists, start ups and other creatives.

Heiner Franzen
Uferhallen, Berlin-Wedding
Heiner Franzen (*1961) has had his studio at the Uferhallen in Wedding since 2009. He calls it an external brain where his conceptual art can germinate. Franzen's workspace is also a public space where he invites curators along and shows his work. But now the site is going to be developed and the community of more than 60 artists based here are threatened with expulsion.

Andreas Greiner
Malzfabrik, Berlin-Tempelhof
At the Malzfabrik in Schöneberg, Andreas Greiner (*1979) has been sharing rooms and tools since 2009 with his friends and fellow artists Julius von Bismarck, Julian Charrière, Johannes Förster, Felix Kiessling and Raul Walch. Greiner talks about how studio reality differs from the myth and about the distinctive features of his studio community.

Manfred Paul,
At home, Berlin-Prenzlauer Berg
Photographer Manfred Paul (*1942) has been living in an old shop in Prenzlauer Berg since 1968. At first he occupied one room apart from a little dark room in the cellar. Over the years he expanded his premises, where he now lives and works together with his wife. In this interview Manfred Paul recalls how he arrived in East Berlin and what the art community there was like at the time. He talks about what he needs in a studio and explains why he has no interest in parading his presence

Jorinde Voigt
Reinbeckhallen, Berlin-Schöneweide
In a former manufacturing workshop in Oberschöneweide, Jorinde Voigt (*1977) has invested her passion for spatial design in creating an airy studio. Together with architect Daniel Verhülsdonk she designed an interior layout in the Reinbeckhallen with a flavour of home. Artists such as Alicja Kwade, Christian Jankowski and Olafur Eliasson have moved into studios close by.

New Studios for Berlin
Haus der Statistik, Berlin-Mitte
This 45,000 m^2 complex on Alexanderplatz in Mitte has stood empty since 2008. The campaign for the "House of Statistics" stopped the sale to investors and plans for demolition. Instead it is seeking new solutions for an affordable city where social justice prevails. A cooperative hopes to open up seven storeys of "House A" to art, culture, education and social activities by the end of 2025.
Martin Schwegmann (*1975, studio officer at the artists' association bbk berlin) and Andrea Hofmann (*1969, architect with raumlaborberlin) put an urgent case for alternative sites like this to cater for the growing shortage of studios in Berlin.

Historical Studios

The historical diversity of studios across the capital and their personal significance for the artists who worked there is illustrated around items in the museum's own collection. Inscribed in any work of art is its site of production, and these sites have always been as varied as the art itself.

Exile at Home in the Studio
Hannah Höch
An der Wildbahn 33, Berlin-Heiligensee
In 1939, just before the Second World War, Hannah Höch (1889–1978) bought a little house and garden in Heiligensee on the north-west edge of the district Berlin-Reinickendorf. At first she lived there with her husband of the time, Kurt Heinz Matthies. When their ways parted three years later, the artist lived alone on

the property of about 1000 m².

After Nazi art ideologues denounced Hannah Höch as a "cultural Bolshevik", she retreated further and further into the shadows: "In Friedenau, where I had lived for years, I was too well known; I was too conspicuous to live in safety under the Nazi regime. I knew that I was being watched and reported by zealous or malicious neighbours." She felt obliged, therefore, to leave Berlin-Friedenau and bought the house in a quiet neighbourhood on the city margins where hardly anyone recognised her. The former caretaker's house at the entrance to an airfield (Schulzendorf) used during the First World War became the setting for her "inner emigration". Hannah Höch installed her studio there as well and carried on working, even though she was banned from exhibiting. There were times when she spoke to nobody for weeks and she rarely had visitors as so many of her friends had already gone into exile abroad.

Hannah Höch's home and studio became her refuge during the Nazi years, much as they did for Jeanne Mammen. Here the artist hid not only her own art and works by friends, but also copious correspondence – material that would have "got me hanged", Höch surmised.

This big collection that slowly accumulated over the decades contained items of all kinds. They filled cupboards, tables, walls and drawers: magazines, shopping lists, draft sewing patterns, letters, little boxes and china figurines. Among them were not only items of biographical significance, but also found objects reflecting cultural history, of which some 12,000 have survived. In keeping with the Dada spirit, she used these mementoes to create a "life collage". The finds were recorded in alphabetical order in ledgers, detailing precisely where they were kept. She devised her own reference system, which built links between very disparate things, and she made no distinction between valuable and supposedly trivial objects. 'A', for example, stands for "Anleitung für Geräte" (instructions for utensils), "Autogramme und Verehrerbriefe" (autographs and fan mail) and "Aussagen Höch" (statements by Höch), while 'B' is for "Bundes-Präsidialamt" (German President's Office), "Brillenreste" (bits of spectacles) and "Bilderrähmchen" (small picture frames). However insignificant an object may have looked, it told a story that inspired her.

For Hannah Höch's 80th birthday the local council built her an annex where she worked during her final years with a view of the garden. In return she bequeathed the property to the city. It is now a listed building and is to be left more or less in its original form. The garden and studio can still be visited upon request. (Author: Luise Budde)

Squaring up to the Kaiser
Max Liebermann
Pariser Platz 7, Berlin-Mitte

"Dreadful" – the verdict of an indignant Wilhelm II still adorns one of the plans for the studio that Max Liebermann (1847–1935) commissioned for his town house by the Brandenburg Gate. Hans Grisebach designed the extension, a space of about 47m² with a roof of iron and glass. This audacious vault was to rise above Pariser Platz and ensure a clear height in the studio of almost six metres. Such a dreary construction at the noblest address in Berlin, amid architecture that took its cue from Ancient Greece, enraged the Kaiser and drove the conservation department onto the barricades. Liebermann, meanwhile, hired a lawyer. Two years later, the court handed down a judgment in true Berlin style: one more "disfigurement" of the square would "no longer make any difference". In 1899 the artist settled into his studio. The glass structure, visible from afar in Tiergarten and on Unter den Linden, was a triumph for modernism – the modernism that the Kaiser, with his reactionary fondness for pretentious art and a nationalist creed that labelled any unwanted aesthetic French, had been determined to prevent.

When Fritz Eschen photographed the painter in his studio some 30 years later, the Kaiser could no longer protest, for his throne was empty, but by then hardly anyone in Berlin was much bothered by glass roofs. Liebermann was now revered for his impressionist style and, having presided for many years over the Academy of Arts, could assert his own authority in the art world. Eschen's portrait is surprisingly intimate under the circumstances: the great man seems unaware of us as we watch him at work, almost as if we were seeing the "real" Liebermann rather than a performance. And yet the milieu matches the unpretentious flavour of the portrait. The studio is roomy, of course, and those paintings hanging on the wall (by Liebermann and colleagues such as Manet) lend it a congenial touch, but apart from the ornate mirror it seems rather unfussy, even downright functional in some respects. Its defining traits are space and light, so unlike the gloomy, cluttered interiors typical of upper-class homes during that period.

Liebermann's previous studio on Bismarckstrasse was not unlike those of Franz von Lenbach, Franz von Stuck or Hans Makart: a platform for the

artist to style himself as a polished prince of the craft, but the space on Pariser Platz was inspired by quite a different ethos. It is an indoor room for painting en plein air, under the open sky. The glass architecture floods the studio with light and air, whose fleeting qualities were the subject of Liebermann's art. Eschen's photograph clearly captures rays of sunlight as they seemingly paint the canvas. There is undoubtedly a grandeur about Liebermann's studio, but it derives from an aesthetic attitude and not from a flaunting of status. This space, which so strikingly reflects the occupant's identity as an artist, was bound to be the site of intensive self-reflection: Liebermann produced more than 30 self-portraits here from 1902 onwards. (Author: Nils Philippi)

Studio Spaces Town and Country
Brigitte and Martin Matschinsky-Denninghoff
Grainauer Straße 19, Berlin–Wilmersdorf

Brigitte (1923–2011) and Martin Matschinsky-Denninghoff (1921–2020) began working together as artists in 1955, three years after they first met at the theatre in Darmstadt, where Martin worked as an actor and Brigitte as a set painter. Until 1969 they signed their sculptures as Brigitte Meier-Denninghoff, as Brigitte had already built up an œuvre of her own before they met. Only in 1970 did they begin signing works under their joint name.

When they received their first commission for a big sculpture to stand in a public space, following a competition in 1963, they took advantage of an industrial workshop belonging to the engineering company Borsig in Berlin-Tegel. At the time the duo were living in Paris, where they had inhabited a studio building as a home and a production base since 1961. Through Borsig they made contact with engineers who helped them to implement their work. The result was "Scientia", a large sculpture made of chromium nickel steel, which is still standing in Dahlem outside the Institute of Inorganic Chemistry at the Freie Universität (FU).

In 1969 they made another sculpture for the FU in Berlin. This "Big Cube" is now outside the Institute of Veterinary Medicine. In Berlin the two artists felt "closer to the facts of the century than anywhere else" and concluded that the city was a "good place for sculptors", as they put it in an autobiography in 1993. That might be why they decided in 1970 to shift their primary residence from Paris to Berlin. In 1971 the Matschinsky-Denninghoffs set up a workshop on Pestalozzistrasse in Berlin-Charlottenburg and, at the same time, a workspace on Grainauer Strasse, three floors below their private apartment in the rear wing of the building. These two bases enabled the couple to build sculptures in different formats while focusing individually on their drawings.

In the 1990s the two artists began hunting for a place where they could concentrate on their work within a setting that provided a home and garden. As they could not find a suitable property in Berlin, they extended their search into the rural hinterland. Finally, in 1993, they found what they wanted in the Altmark in Saxony-Anhalt. In Schönfeld they bought two four-sided farmhouses with a big orchard meadow, and in the ensuing years this evolved into a garden of sculptures. The farmstead became their summer residence and a favourite meeting-place for the arts community in Berlin and beyond.

Whether in the town or the countryside, the two artists were always eager to find studio spaces where they could create works of different formats. In turn, these places exerted an influence on their creative output. The wide open space and seasonal changes that they experienced in Schönfeld similarly had an impact on their sculptures. The closed tubular forms and technical feel of their earlier work opened out into an organic weave that reflected the surrounding landscape, where the fall of light changed over the course of the day. (Author: Pauline Behrmann)

The Photography Studio
Marta Astfalck-Vietz
Markgraf-Albrecht-Straße 10, Berlin-Halensee

Marta Astfalck-Vietz (1901-1994) poses here in her studio with relaxed assurance, dressed in shiny satin, behind her a wall hanging of painted fabric, to the left a square side table with lamp and ashtray, above these photographs and drawings in frames. The studio is at once her place of work and the theme of her picture.

Astfalck-Vietz moved into the attic rooms at Markgraf-Albrecht-Strasse 10 in what is now Berlin-Wilmersdorf in the year 1927. Downtown west was thriving in the 1920s and many photographers opened studios in the area. According to the business telephone directory of 1929, there were over 400 photography studios in the city, and more than 100 of those were run by women. The growing number of photographers was a response to the increased demand for images to feed the magazine market and entertainment industry in the capital. Although it was easier for women turn professional with a training in photography than it was for them to study art,

founding one's own studio was nevertheless usually a middle-class privilege. Suse Byk, Frieda Riess and Yva were among those who established commercial premises in and around Kurfürstendamm. Like Astfalck-Vietz, they were just some of the many women who founded or managed a photography studio.

Marta Astfalck-Vietz had the support of her family in choosing a creative career. After graduating she opted for self-employment as a graphic designer. She financed her studio on Markgraf-Albrecht-Strasse mostly out of her contracts for decorative craftwork, such as designing silk fabrics. One "couldn't make a great living off photography", she told an interviewer in 1991 regarding her work.

In the shielded environment orf her studio, the artist was able to combine her paid jobs with experimenting. Three rooms left space for a darkroom and plenty of scope for enactments. This is where the images took shape, with the space playing its part in defining content and composition. Astfalck-Vietz used a variety of textiles, items of furniture and decorative elements to devise ever new backdrops for (self-) portraits, nudes and staged scenes.

Her studio was also a social meeting-place. The Visitors' Book, packed with texts and drawings by the guests who came and went, provides evidence of long and sociable evenings. When she married Hellmuth Astfalck in 1929, Astfalck-Vietz gave up her premises on Markgraf-Albrecht-Strasse. Instead she ran a "studio for photography: propaganda and crafts" at Rankestrasse 5 together with her husband. After the Nazis came to power in 1933, she put an end to her experimental art photography. The Visitors' Book, on the other hand, accompanied her through changing studios and homes until 1982. (Author: Lena Schott)

The Enchanted Den
Jeanne Mammen
Kurfürstendamm 29, Berlin-Charlottenburg

In 1920 Jeanne Mammen (1890–1976) moved to Berlin-Charlottenburg with her older sister Marie-Louise (1888–1956), known as Mimi. Their small apartment was on Kurfürstendamm, which was transformed in the "Golden Twenties" from a purely residential street into an entertainment strip for the new business district taking shape west of centre.

The two sisters were quite new to the city at this point. Although they were born in Berlin, they had spent most of their lives to date in Paris with their family. From 1912, after studying art in Paris, Brussels and Rome, Mimi and Jeanne Mammen had worked in a studio in the French capital. When the First World War broke out they were treated as enemy aliens, forcing their return to Berlin. As all the family wealth was confiscated, the two young women initially moved back in with their parents.

Thanks to contracts for illustrations and retouching photographs, Mimi and Jeanne Mammen could eventually afford to rent their own flat at Kurfürstendamm 29. It was customary in well-heeled Charlottenburg to include studios for artists in plans for new housing. And so, next to the bedroom, the 55-square-metre apartment had a studio space with a sash-bar window five metres tall. It also served the sisters as a living room and kitchen. The live-in studio on the fourth floor of the garden wing was furnished with nothing more than two chairs and two easels. "The landlord thought artists don't need anything. They live off air and water," Jeanne Mammen later recalled. The toilet was halfway up the attic stairs and there was no hot water.

In the 1920s Jeanne Mammen was able to earn a living from her art and took part in several exhibitions. Her success came to an abrupt end in 1933: "When the Hitler period began all the magazines I had worked for were banned or politically aligned," wrote the artist in a later CV. In 1936 her sister emigrated to Tehran with her partner. Jeanne Mammen was now living alone in the apartment. Although she had no prospect of commissions or exhibitions, she kept on working, but cast aside her New Objectivity and developed an expressive form of Cubism that took its cue from Picasso. Her studio home became a protected zone for her and her art, much as it did for Hannah Höch. She surrounded herself with her pictures, sculptures, books, objects found during her travels such as shells and pebbles, and a spiny pufferfish. She painted or built some of the furniture herself, including a table made from picture frames. The souvenirs in her "enchanted den", as she liked to call the place, served her as a source of inspiration and gave her a sense of security, especially during the war years.

After Jeanne Mammen's death in 1976, close friends set up the Jeanne Mammen Society to preserve her artistic legacy. They also rescued the studio where she had lived for more than 56 years. On grounds of conservation the artworks still in situ were replaced in 2008 by facsimiles and the estate was transferred into storage. Today the reconstructed studio is managed by the Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin and can still be visited. (Author: Luise Budde)

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The Joker on Kleiststrasse
Ivan Puni
Kleiststraße 43, Berlin–Schöneberg

Ivan Puni (1892–1956) and his wife Xenia Boguslavskaya (1892–1973) arrived in Berlin on 21 October 1920. They had set off for Paris the previous winter across the frozen Baltic Sea, and they had only intended to stop over briefly in Berlin. But Ivan and Xenia stayed for three years. They lived at Kleiststrasse 43 between Nollendorfplatz and Wittenbergplatz. It was the area where most of the many émigrés to Berlin from Russia, Poland, Hungary and all over Central and Eastern Europe lived, worked, shopped and partied. The Vossische Zeitung reported in January 1923 that there were 300,000 Russians in the German capital. Whether that figure was reliable is another matter because the name Puni never cropped up in any Berlin directories. That indicates the precarious and possibly illegal status of many émigrés, whose presence in the city was never picked up by statistics. Certainly Ivan and Xenia did not rank among the "business Russians" who, the journalist claimed, had made their money by gambling. They were among the others, the great majority, "who attract less public attention".

So it is apt that the room in an anonymous photograph, labelled for posterity as Puni's studio, looks more like a ramshackle shelter. It was probably at the top of the stairs and it seems to contain just enough objects to make it habitable. Hans Richter recalls that of the "moderately sized room (…) about two metres were divided off by a curtain. Once I accidentally lifted this mysterious enclosure and was amazed to find myself facing a huge pile of old white loaves. 'White bread must be fresh,' I was told." In the meagre jumble that consists of a few randomly scattered pieces of furniture, including two easels, and some paintings leaning or hanging on the wall, both life and work had to carve out space and they probably trod on each other's toes: "On the floor, on the chairs, on the bed lay tubes of paint," recounts another of the many visitors to whom Puni sometimes opened the door in his pyjamas. His studio was a frequent meeting-place for Berlin's avant-garde and thus became one of many little hubs in east and west, all of them inside the bigger hub that was Berlin.

Puni seems to have come to terms with the spatial conditions into which he was thrust in Berlin. Leaning back in his chair, relaxed, legs crossed – the way he sits there makes this austere ambience look perfectly natural. His body hugs the surrounding chaos so close that for a moment we have to seek the painter out. This is a true bohemian, at one with his modest conditions. Not that there was anything romantic about the situation of the many exiles who came to Berlin in the 1920s in search of artistic and social freedom. Not all of them managed as Puni did to channel poverty and an improvised, unpredictable existence into creative output. Here, in this simple room, he painted some of his most important works. One was his "Synthetic Musician". When Puni left Russia, the canvas we can see against the wall behind the artist in the photograph was already in his luggage. The painting was finished in Berlin. It might be read as a cryptic self-portrait: the artist as a joker, balancing so as not to fall, juggling to keep all the balls in the air, and yet still with an ace up his sleeve. (Author: Nils Philippi)

The Painted Studio
Max Beckmann,
Eisenacher Str. 103, Berlin–Schöneberg

In the foreground of the painting "Still Life with View from the Studio in Snow" (1909) by Max Beckmann (1884–1950) we see a washstand with two loosely draped towels. A pot plant and a blue jug stand on a chair to the right. In the background our gaze is drawn past a few glass vessels and through the window to the snow-covered front garden. In this still life Beckmann describes his second Berlin studio in detail.

His workplaces and their settings found an early place in his œuvre. After moving from Paris to Berlin in autumn 1904 and taking a studio at Eisenacherstrasse 103, Beckmann frequently painted his surroundings in the Schöneberg district. Motifs included not only the "View from the Studio, Eisenacherstrasse 103" (1905) but also the "Old Botanical Gardens" (1905) nearby.

By the time he painted "Still Life with View from the Studio in Snow" Beckmann and his wife Minna Beckmann-Tube had already been living for two years in a house with a studio at Ringstrasse 8 in Hermsdorf, just outside the city. She had designed the building herself in the International Style. Following this change of scene, Beckmann turned increasingly to landscape motifs such as "Hermsdorf Forest on a Grey Day" (1908) and "Water Tower in Hermsdorf" (1913).

But the Beckmanns never withdrew completely to the countryside. Although they stayed in Hermsdorf until 1915, they kept up an additional live-in studio at Nollendorfplatz 6 from 1910 onwards.

live-in studio at Nollendorfplatz 6 from 1910 onwards. They used it primarily in winter, as the house in Hermsdorf was difficult to heat. This is probably where "View of Nollendorfplatz" (1911) was painted.

As a base for creative activity the studio fulfilled several functions for Max Beckmann and other artists. It was a workshop, a home, a refuge, an exhibition space and a platform for projecting a public image, especially in photographs. Apart from displaying themselves during the painting process before an (empty) canvas, artists often featured the furniture, the tools of their trade and the view out of the window. The perspective from inside the studio to outside might be read here as symbolising a dialogue between the artist and the world beyond.

Studios for Social Gatherings

Wild parties and tumultuous fancy dress balls – artists have thrown open their studio doors for such delights since time immemorial. Photographs by the painter, printmaker and photographer Heinrich Zille (1858-1929) suggest that he and his esteemed fellow artists knew how to have a good time over a century ago. Zille is famous for his milieu studies of Berlin with the frills off. He focused on people, portraying life as it really was in tenements, back yards and pubs. He also recorded his own entourage of Berlin artists on camera. His pictures show colleagues at work, but also the occasionally more raucous goings-on in studios. Zille's friends would meet to draw nudes, hold parties or play skittles. He himself talks of a "kind of professional socialising. Anyone who had ever been anything at all at the Secession joined in. Corinth and Wenck and Kalkreuth and Slevogt. Paul Cassirer did not miss out either." One thing is obvious: in Zille's day the studio was an essentially male domain predominantly frequented by artists.

As the emancipation movement took hold around the turn of the century, the visibility of women artists took a great leap forward. The fruits of liberation were above all evident in the cities until the end of the 1920s. More and more women confidently showed their art and rented spaces of their own. Notable examples are Jeanne Mammen's "enchanted den" on Kurfürstendamm and Hannah Höch's studio in Friedenau.

Moreover, studios were increasingly places where male and female artists could meet socially. The widespread live-in studios, which doubled up as a home and a workplace, lent themselves especially to this purpose. One iconic event was the fancy dress party thrown in 1921 by the writer Lu Märten and her husband, the sculptor Wilhelm Repsold, at the studio they shared in Berlin-Steglitz. Among those present were cartoonist Karl Holtz and Dadaists Raoul Hausmann and Hannah Höch – a popular guest who received many invitations.

A postcard to the artist from the art critic and journalist Adolf Behne for New Year 1923/24 offers an inkling of just how colourful these studio get-togethers could be:

"Dear Hanna Höch

New Year will be celebrated at the studio of the well-known artist OsKarli Fischer Charlottenburg Schul Str. 14, attic, as a picnic etc. etc.! 8 1/2 - 9 pm. Fuels to be brought in our own interest.

Ever ever ever yours

Adolf Behne"

(Author: Paulina Weiß)

From Nazi State Studio to Free Art Zone Käuzchensteig 8, Berlin-Dahlem

It is 1965 and the Venetian painter Emilio Vedova (1919–2006), his clothes splattered with paint, is welcoming the Berlin artist Hannah Höch (1889–1978) to his temporary studio in Berlin-Dahlem. Thanks to a grant from the Ford Foundation, he was able to spend 19 months at Käuzchensteig 8 converting his impressions of the city into works of art. This private snapshot conveys a liberty and openness to the outside world that would have been inconceivable 25 years earlier when this art space was first created.

Around 1940, Adolf Hitler asked the architect Hans Freese to build a "state studio" here for the sculptor Arno Breker. Breker was one of the artists listed by the Reich Ministry for Education and Propaganda as "divinely gifted". These were artists whose work reflected official Nazi doctrine. They were allowed to publicise their work and they received financial support from the regime. While artists who had been declared "degenerate", like Hannah Höch and Jeanne Mammen, had withdrawn into the background and were hampered by restrictions, Breker was pampered with lavish facilities. The prestigious location had everything a sculptor needed in his work. The elongated brick building housed three two-storey studio spaces complete with crane, hoist and a railway line to dispatch the sculptures.

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The building had only been standing for a year when it was damaged in Allied air raids and the studio was no longer serviceable. After the Second World War, the middle tract was handed over to the guild of stonemasons in Berlin for use as a training centre. From the early sixties the film company ufa stored sets here.

When Emilio Vedova arrived in 1964, artistic life returned to the building, bringing with it a new international spirit. The airy dimensions, designed to accommodate Breker's monumental sculptures, encouraged the painter to try his own hand at larger-than-life formats. He smothered enormous canvases in paint and turned them into walk-around installations.

Inspired by several meetings with Hannah Höch, best known for the collages she made in the 1920s, Vedova worked here on a new personal technique for mixing media. Höch summed up her visit to the studio in her diary: "Vedova has filled it completely. Something even hanging nearly 10 m up the wall. V. makes huge up down sideways top bottom folding, painted, glued racks from planks, carton and hinges. The paint is left to run." In 2002 he donated a magnum opus from this period, his "Absurd Berlin Diary '64", to the Berlinische Galerie. It was made in 1964 for documenta III in Kassel and shown at the Venice Biennale in 1990.

In the early 1970s, the big studio was divided into smaller units, offering space to eight artists with bursaries from the Berlin Senate's culture department and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Today this historical site is managed as a venue by the Bernhard-Heiliger-Stiftung and Kunsthaus Dahlem for exhibitions of post-war modern German art. (Author: Sophie Angelov)

Press images

Mapping the Studio
A changing landscape in Berlin

Stefan Moses, Ohne Titel (Hannah Höch in ihrem Haus in Berlin-Heiligensee), 1975 , Berlinische Galerie,
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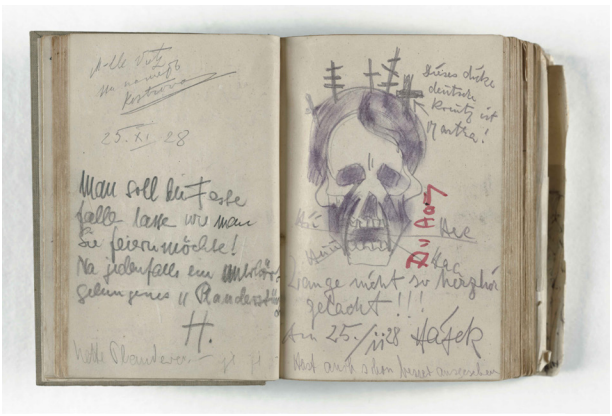
Unbekannte*r Fotograf*in: Mimi (links) stehend und Jeanne Mammen (rechts)
sitzend vor dem Bücherschrank in ihrem Berliner Atelier Kudamm 29, um 1920,
© Rechtsnachfolge unbekannt / Jeanne-Mammen-Stiftung im Stadtmuseum Berlin



Marta Astfalck-Vietz, Gästebuch, 1927-1982, Berlinische Galerie,
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Heinrich Zille, Ohne Titel (Atelierfest bei dem Maler Walter Meyer-Lüben, vorn, August Gaul, Nikolaus
Friedrich, August Heer), Winter 1899/1900, Berlinische Galerie, © Urheberrechte am Werk erloschen,
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Unbekannte*r Fotograf*in, Ohne Titel (Hannah Höch zusammen mit Emilio und
Annabianca Vedova in Vedovas Atelier am Käuzchensteig Berlin), 1965, Berlinische Galerie,
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Brigitte und Martin Matschinsky-Denninghoff im Berliner Atelier
in der Grainauer Straße, 1984, Berlinische Galerie, © Foto: Wolff-Steffen Brumm

Fritz Eschen, Ohne Titel (Max Liebermann in seinem Atelier am Pariser Platz), um 1930,
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Unbekannte*r Fotograf*in, Ohne Titel (Iwan Puni in seinem Berliner Atelier), 1921,
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Max Beckmann, Stillleben mit Aussicht aus dem Atelier im Schnee, 1909,
Ständige Leihgabe Privat-besitz, Haar, © Urheberrechte am Werk erloschen,
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until 25.5.23 for renovations.