Press Release
Berlin, 1.1.25

Berlinische Galerie © Noshe

Berlinische Galerie

Museum of Modern Art, Photography and Architecture

The Berlinische Galerie is one of the newest museums in the capital and has an unique profile: we collect, preserve, display and investigate modern and contemporary art made in Berlin – with both a local and international focus. Ours is an interdisciplinary collection that includes painting and sculpture, prints and drawings, photography and architecture, all dating from 1870 until the present day. This makes our museum fundamentally different from other exhibition venues in the German capital. Our job is to concentrate and stimulate.

We seek to portray Berlin's art history in new and surprising ways with room for every genre and style. This sometimes reveals unexpected threads in the fabric, and international networking by the art community is part of that weave. Berlin is a city of artists, and here you can sense it. We show the classics, but we also respond quickly to the latest trends in contemporary art. Our programme is undogmatic, thought-provoking and sometimes controversial – but then so is Berlin.

A Museum for Everyone

The Berlinische Galerie is a museum for everyone in the city, residents and guests alike. It was founded in 1975 as an association for art lovers with a strong sense of civic commitment, and in 1994 the State of Berlin took it on as a public museum. Because these are our roots, we see ourselves as a citizens' assembly, and we attach great importance to creating an inspiring experience for all our visitors, whatever knowledge or interests they bring with them. We compile a packed diary of events to accompany every themed exhibition and the Presentation from Our Collection. At the Berlinische Galerie you not only encounter art but can also join a conversation. The museum as an open space for seeing, discovering and communicating – that is our team ethos.

Our Collection

Berlin, a city that is never finished – and its art has always been changing too, especially in the years from 1870 until the present, the period that produced the works that we, as Berlin's public art museum, collect, preserve, research and exhibit. Modern and contemporary art created in Berlin – that is our mission. But here you can do more than discover the art history of Berlin. Our exhibitions bring the city's own turbulent history to life: the Kaiser's era, the Weimar Republic, Nazi dictatorship, new beginnings after 1945, the Cold War in a divided city, the unification of Germany and our own day, all seen through the mirror of art.

The Berlinische Galerie is one of the youngest exhibition venues in the city and also an interdisciplinary museum. Painting, sculpture, installation and media art, prints and drawings, photography, architecture and documentary archives left behind by artists all form part of our collection. Again and again, intriguing dialogues evolve between these different art forms. Our collection is a symbol of this city and its vibrant art scene: creative, innovative and full of surprises. Modern and contemporary art from Berlin are international. The artists who have created important works in Berlin have come from all over the world. Our collection shows that too.

Fine Arts
Masterpieces famous or forgotten

The Berlinische Galerie collects art created in Berlin between the late 19th century and today. Our Fine Arts collection alone contains around 5,000 items, including many works by well-known artists from Max Beckmann via Hannah Höch and Naum Gabo to Georg Baselitz and John Bock. Many groups and movements feature in the list too for the role they played in art history. Examples are the Berlin Secession, Dada Berlin, the East European avant-garde between the two World Wars, the Neue Wilden and the art scene that was reborn when the Wall fell in 1989.

The Golden Twenties are a particular highlight in the collection. Berlin was on its way to becoming one of the most modern cities in the world and challenging Paris as a new world hub of modernist art. The Berlinische Galerie has never confined its focus to the big names. In a spirit of discovery we often unearth artists who have been unjustly buried under the rubble of turbulent times.

Prints and Drawings
Soft and subtle – loud and shrill

The graphic medium has a reputation for hushed tones. But that certainly does not apply to all the paper-based works in our collection. The radical absurdity in the photomontage by Hannah Höch, for example, probes the murky abyss of the Weimar Republic. And these days artists often opt for huge formats. Our biggest work on paper is by Nanne Meyer: it is over 10 metres long.

About 25,400 folios – prints and above all drawings – make up our collection in this field. They illustrate the splendid diversity of this genre in Berlin from the late 19th century up until the present. Major highlights are Dada Berlin, the East European avant-garde in the 1920s and New Objectivity. Other substantial subsets relate to Late Expressionism from 1914 onwards, the new dawn in art after 1945, New Figuration in the 1960s, art in East Berlin after the Wall was put up and then torn down, and – last, but not least – contemporary drawing.

Photopraphy
Berlin through the viewfinder

With some 73,000 photographs, the Berlinische Galerie boasts one of Germany's leading photography collections. Portraits, architectural views and urban photography are the principal themes, but commercial and fashion photography, photojournalism, photomontage, photograms and conceptual photography are all part of the picture. Our collection reflects the evolution of photography as an art form – and the history of the medium in Berlin.

In its early days, photography served above all to document rapid urban growth, but in the 1920s Berlin became a hotspot for the avant-garde camera. Exceptional contributions continued after 1945: from the 1970s, for instance, exponents of auteur photography turned a radically subjective gaze upon the city and its people. One distinctive hallmark of our collection is its fine art photography from the GDR, where a vibrant, creative scene emerged despite the imposition of political criteria and reprisals against those who broke the rules. We observe the development of contemporary photographers in Berlin and support them by means of extensive purchases.

Architecture
Berlin, built and unbuilt

Some 300,000 drawings, 80,000 photographs, 4,000 designs for stained glass and mosaics, 3,000 models and about 800 running metres of files from posthumous papers, competitions and archives – that is the handsome tally of objects in our Architecture collection. These copious holdings are a chronicle of Berlin not only as it has been built, but also as it was never built – ideas and visions for how the city might have been. The projects and records relating to architecture and urban design in Berlin date from the years between 1900 and the present. Over this period the city has been constantly reinvented: Historicism under the Kaiser, Neues Bauen in the Weimar Republic, structural megalomania under the Nazis, reconstruction in a divided city during the Cold War and the "New Berlin" that followed German unification. Berlin is an eternal building site.

Artist's Archives
Knowledge storehouse and text-based memory

The Artists' Archives at the Berlinische Galerie are a storehouse of knowledge and a versatile memory in written form: from copious correspondence and rare printed matter via diaries and manuscripts to scattered jottings. Here documents are collected, preserved and trawled for content. They originate from individual artists, groups of artists, gallery managers and art scholars who set their stamp on the history of art and culture in Berlin. There are fonds from – among others – the Jugendstil artist Fidus, Herwarth Walden's avant-garde gallery and journal "Der Sturm", the Novembergruppe, Ferdinand Möller's gallery and the sculptors Naum Gabo, Hans Uhlmann and George Rickey, and they reach down to the recent past.

Our prolific holdings from the DADA movement in Berlin are unmatched anywhere in the world. They consist of the posthumous papers of Hannah Höch, the collage artist and the only woman among the Berlin Dadaists, and of Raoul Hausmann, documenting his activities as a "Dadasopher", dancer, photo-mechanic, sound poet, photographer and experimental engineer. Especially important is the material from artists who were threatened and persecuted by the Nazis and forced into exile, like Lotte Laserstein and Issai Kulvianski.

Permanent Exhibition
Art in Berlin 1880-1980

The collection at the Berlininsche Galerie occupies more than 1000 square metres. Waiting to be discovered among roughly 250 works on show are paintings, prints, photographs, architecture and archive materials. Walking around this exhibition is like time travel through Berlin: the Kaiser's era, the Weimar Republic, the Nazi dictatorship, the new beginnings after 1945, Cold War in the divided city, and the counter-cultures and unconventional lifestyles that evolved in East and West under the shadow of the Wall. In East Berlin, an alternative art community developed from the late 1970s. In West Berlin from the late 1970s, aggressive art by the "Neue Wilden" placed the divided city back in the international limelight.

The permanent exhibition is accessible to the blind and the vision impaired by the way of tactile objects, a tactile guiding system on the floor, and an app. Exhibition architecture and colour design are from david saik studio.

Accessible art

The Berlinische Galerie takes the right to equal participation in cultural life seriously and actively promotes progress towards becoming an accessible museum. We provide German Sign Language interpreting at opening events and for specific guided tours. In 2017, working together with the German Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted and its Berlin affiliate ABSV, the Berlinische Galerie was the first art museum in Germany to redesign its permanent exhibition around improved access for blind and visually impaired people. Inclusive workshops, touch tours and tours in plain language bring people with and without disabilities together to enjoy conversations about art – and not only art. Formats are devised and regularly implemented – with the support of the Berlinische Galerie – by representatives from a range of communities.

Art education in the museum

See the art, find out more, talk to other people, ask questions, explore your own creativity and best of all: enjoy it! Our education programme is designed to keep you company while you explore our exhibitions at the Berlinische Galerie. Berliners and travellers, adults and teenagers, children and families, pre-school groups and secondary students, people with disabilities – we have something for everyone. Modern and contemporary art from Berlin – for you. Our education programme is supported by two competent partners: Jugend im Museum e.V. and Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH.

Atelier Bunter Jakob

(Almost) anything is possible in the Atelier Bunter Jakob. It's a studio where children and teenagers can give free rein to their creativity and put their own ideas into practice: try out paints, techniques and materials, take photographs, draw, print, make a cartoon film or a sculpture – the focus is on experimenting and enjoying art.

207 m^2 – Space for action and collaboration

In the exhibition area of the Berlinische Galerie, there is a space especially for cultural education: over 200 m^2 devoted to workshops, collaborative projects and artistic activities. This welcoming platform offers a range of seating for visitors to converse or pass the time. Regular events will cater for children, families, schools and local groups. Project outputs can be displayed in exhibitions or on the projection wall. By establishing this permanent home for critical debate and artistic processes, we are opening our museum to visitors in even more ways.

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Förderverein

As a member of the Förderverein your membership fee and voluntary donations will help to realise all kinds of projects and ideas. This support is channelled into specific purchases, themed exhibitions, catalogues and innovative education activities.
We honour our members' commitment by offering them special insights into the work of the Berlinische Galerie and the world of art. That includes exclusive previews, guided tours with the curators and the Director, studio visits, excursion days, holiday trips with an art focus and many other activities.
Further information:
berlinischegalerie.de/en/friends-of-the-museum

Young Friends: Jund und Artig

Meet new people, enjoy art in company, support your favourite museum! The art community is right here. You won't find more Berlin than this.

There are great benefits for young Friends of the Berlinische Galerie to reward them for their support: guided tours with curators or the director, exclusive sneak peeks, day trips, themed art holidays, visits to private collections and art fairs, studio visits, chats with artists and plenty else.
Further information:
berlinischegalerie.de/en/berlinische-galerie/friends-of-the-museum/jung-und-artig/

Press
Berlinische Galerie

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Admission 12 €, concessions 6 €
(ticket prices may vary
for special exhibitions)
Every 1st Wednesday reduced
admission for everyone
Free admission under 18

Wed – Mon 10 am – 6 pm
Tue closed

Press images

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Online tickets

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Social Media

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