

Gertrude Sandmann, Mira, türkis/blauweiss, l. 1972, Pastell auf Papier, 34,5 x 24,1 cm
© Berlinische Galerie, Foto: Anja Elisabeth Witte



Drawing the City Paper-based works from 1945 to the present

14.8.20–4.1.21

Berlin has been drawn by its history, by triumphs and fiascos, by feudalism, pragmatism, liberalism, democracies and dictatorships. It has also been drawn and painted by many artists. The Berlinische Galerie holds one of the biggest and most significant collections of art about the city of Berlin. The Collection of Prints and Drawings alone houses an abundant variety of about 25,000 works on numerous themes. Art from East Berlin accounts for a substantial and valuable share of the holdings. In recent years, the Collection of Prints and Drawings has benefited from many excellent new acquisitions.

A special selection will go on display from 14 August, in many cases for the first time. It will embrace more than 175 works, some as complex series, by 22 women and 47 men: mostly drawings in all formats from big to small, much in colour, much in black-and-white, in very different techniques and with a variegated bouquet of representational art, photorealism, surrealism, late Expressionism, abstract styles, illustrations and comics.

“Drawing the City” is structured in six chapters and features artists of world renown – among them Rainer Fetting, K.H. Hödicke, Tal R, Tacita Dean, Wolf Vostell – but also plenty of time and space for discoveries and rediscoveries of powerful works and powerful biographies of artists like Gabriele Basch, Thomas Bayrle, Gertrude Sandmann, Werner Heldt, Evelyn Kuwertz, Klaus Vogelgesang.

The show features 20 East German names, among them Klaus Ensikat, Dieter Goltzsche, Monika Meiser, Florian Merkel, and 40 West German contributors, including Patrizia Bach, Arved Dietrich, Pia Linz, Malte Spohr, Bernd Trasberger.

The majority – 50 artists – live in Berlin and are still creatively productive. Some works portray Berlin under an intense gaze from outside, such as those by Catherine Bührendt-Metais, Marcel van Eeden, Terry Fox, Antonio Saura, Emilio Vedova.

100 Years of Greater Berlin

This year Berlin is marking a special centenary in its history as a city with a range of events and shows, and “Drawing the City” is part of these celebrations. On 1 October 1920 seven neighbouring towns and many rural districts were integrated within new boundaries to form a single city. Overnight this made Berlin, with some 3.8 million inhabitants, a global

BG

metropolis with a strong economy and vibrant culture, and alongside Los Angeles, New York and London one of the biggest cities in the world:

<https://www.berlin.de/berlin100/>

Thomas Köhler, Director of the Berlinische Galerie:

“In these six chapters exhibition curator Annelie Lütgens probes the fascination exerted by the big city, illustrated by the works on display. After a townscape of ruins we roam through urban habitats, discover subjective topographies and conceptual responses to Berlin’s architecture. Flora and fauna in the urban space attract curatorial attention as well as the human cast on this city stage with its prima donnas, hipsters and kids. The passion for Berlin, its metropolitan bustle, the diversity of its residents and the way the city has inspired artists to explore the urban organism are among the focal themes of the Berlinische Galerie.”

Annelie Lütgens, exhibition curator and head of the Collection of Prints and Drawings:

“If we follow the history of the drawn city, it by no means tracks a straight line but more of a zigzag. Exploring this urban nature, its knotted growth, habitats, structures, architectures and its inhabitants, its reservoir of characters, by pictorial means has been an object of artistic endeavour down the years, and this exhibition, broken down into six themed clusters, tells that story. Traces of history can be detected in many works, and there are flickers of visual memory from Berlin in the Weimar Republic.”



Werner Heldt, Tümmel, 1947, Tuscheleder und Tuschpinsel auf Vellinpapier, 28 x 34,9 cm, © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2020, Foto: Kai-Annett Becker

Information by chapter:

1) A Dream in Ruins 11 artists, 26 works

“In 1945 Berlin, once capital of the Reich, now epitomised the Reich as rubble. The ruinous state of the former metropolis, observed for years to come as a memorial to suffering and loss, was material for artists like Werner Heldt. His modernist ink drawings, still life of buildings in Berlin, show tenements, firewalls, bomb sites and a few symbolically charged objects of daily life. The division of the inner city made Berlin a theatre of world politics, a cue for the colour lithographs of Pop Art protagonist Thomas Bayrle reflecting the visit by US President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Artists like the Venetian Emilio Vedova devoted their efforts to the division itself. The intellectual and emotional tensions and the absurdity of the historical situation are palpable in his works, non-figurative, gestural compositions that formulate his artistic challenge and protest. 20 years later the Spanish artist Antonio Saura was still reacting with expressive overpainting to the oppressive sense of mental and physical isolation on a land-locked island.”



K. H. Hödicke, Nächtlicher Himmel, 1998, Farblithographie auf Zerkall-Bütten, 55,1 x 78 cm, © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2020, Foto: Kai-Annett Becker

2) Urban Biotopes 27 artists, 63 works

“The focus on graphic documentation of one’s personal home and life environment followed similar motives in West and East Berlin alike: on the one hand artistic bohemia portrayed itself and its urban habitats, and on the other a topographical record was kept of districts where history was still preserved. Look closely and draw what is there: remnants of residential building amid open wasteland, like at

BG

Gleisdreieck or Potsdamer Platz. The scars of division were precisely noted.”

3) Subjective Topography 8 artists, 10 works

“In the very different forms their drawing takes, Franz Ackermann, Katharina Meldner, Theresa Lückenwerk, Andreas Seltzer and Pia Linz reveal their personal mind maps and note anything of relevance to what they see, experience or read, from the daily walk around the local neighbourhood to imagined recreations of foreign cities, from a systematic recording of momentary impressions to the gutting and alienation of digital aids to orientation.”

4) Architecture – Structure 9 artists, 33 works

“Structure – from the Latin *structura*: layering, assembling, ordering, in the metaphorical sense also building technique – is defined as an arrangement of parts within a whole, a fabric of interdependent components. Creating structures is the task of architecture. In construction and design they are the more or less visible framework for combining elements into a meaningful entity to provide a material basis for the city. In this sense architecture both confirms and informs the way we live as a community. Bernd Trabesberger’s works bring together phantoms of bygone ages which, with formal and historical rigour, spring from the idea of an endless continuum.”

5) Nature under Observation 7 artists, 9 works

“Amid all the ceaseless urban activity, with rare traces of what counts in our minds as untouched, the idea of nature is volubly – or sometimes softly – expressed by the production of art tapping into this experience of antithesis. Despite everything we know about the artificiality of parks, zoos, green spaces and graveyards. ‘This is not Hollywood’ is Gabriele Basch’s title for her series of cut-outs based on photographs of garden allotments, the omissions signalling tensions between an idealised view of nature and a standardised promise of happiness.”

6) City Population 13 artists, 30 works

“Apart from vistas and cartography, another major theme of ‘Drawing the City’ is the depiction of people who live and act within the urban setting. After the 1970s celebrated the social critique in the art of the Weimar years, a yearning for the glamour associated

with the wild twenties returned with a vengeance in the 1980s and identified new (old) sites in the gay and lesbian hang-outs of Schöneberg. Close to this milieu, in a small flat on Eisenacher Strasse, there once lived an artist who had already tried, in the Weimar Republic, to reconcile her art, her life and her lesbian love: Gertrude Sandmann. She was persecuted under the Nazis and survived underground. Sandmann found a new home for her art in the women’s movement of the 1970s. The vibrant, painterly style of her pastel and ink drawings transposes her urbanite imagery from the twenties to the seventies. Around the turn of the millennium, new human imagery generated by digital media found its way into fine art, hybrid creatures constructed from media visuals. With her strong hues, her simple, flat surfaces and her borrowings from Japanese comic art, Kati Barath produces a caricature-like tableau of children and teenagers whose body language declares petulant puberty.”

Bertram Hasenauer, K.H. Hödicke, Mark Kubitzke, Katharina Meldner, Nanne Meyer, Robert Rehfeld are each represented in two exhibition chapters.



Tacita Dean, *Palast I-VI*, 2005, Blatt 1 von 6 Fotogravüren auf Somerset 300g.
© Tacita Dean, Foto: Kai-Annett Becker

List of artists A-Z

Franz Ackermann, Patrizia Bach, Heike Kati Barath, Volker Bartsch, Gabriele Basch, Thomas Bayrle, Norbert Behrend, Günter Blendinger, Bettina Blohm, Joachim Böttcher, KP Brehmer, Gisela Breitling, Catherine Bührendt-Métais, Tacita Dean, Arved Dietrich, Antje Dorn, Marcel van Eeden, Klaus Ensikat, Rainer Fetting, Karin Fleischer, Terry Fox, Friedrich-Wilhelm Fretwurst, Antje Fretwurst-Colberg, Lothar Gemmel, Dieter Goltzsche, Elli Graetz, Claus Haase, Sarah Haffner, Frank Hartung, Bertram Hasenauer, Eberhard Havekost, Werner



Heldt, Thomas Hermsdorf, K.H. Hödicke, Günther Horn, Jan Huber, Friederike Klotz, Mark Kubitzke, Evelyn Kuwertz, Wolfgang Leber, Rolf Lindemann, Pia Linz, Theresa Lükenwerk, Susanne Mahlmeister, Marwan, Monika Meiser, Katharina Meldner, Florian Merkel, Nanne Meyer, Gisela Neumann, Michael Otto, Tal R, Thomas Ravens, Robert Rehfeldt, Klaus Roenspieß, Alexander Roob, Jürgen Rosemann, Gertrude Sandmann, Antonio Saura, Egmont Schaefer, Eugen Schönebeck, Andreas Seltzer, Malte Spohr, Walter Stöhrer, Bernd Trasberger, Emilo Vedova, Klaus Vogelgesang, Wolf Vostell, Gerd Wessel.

The exhibition is part of the centenary year “Berlin 100” – an initiative of the City of Berlin. It has been generously supported by the Förderverein Berlinische Galerie e.V.

Exhibition catalogue

Wienand Verlag, De/En, 288 pages, 217 illustrations

Education Programme

“Markings: A Festival to Conquer the City by Drawing”
(on 3 and 4 October 2020)

Berlin makes its mark! During the exhibition “Drawing the City” the Berlinische Galerie invites Berliners to come together and draw their city. In open workshops children and adults, professionals and beginners are welcome to let their pens and pencils run free – on tables, floors, walls, paving stones and in digital space.

The education programme includes curated tours, free project days, guided tours for schools and events for families with children.

These events are carried out in partnership with Jugend im Museum e.V. and Museumsdienst Berlin.

Press images

<https://berlinischegalerie.de/en/press-release/drawing-the-city/>

Online tickets

<https://berlinischegalerie.de/en/visit/your-visit/>

Social Media

#drawingthecity
#berlinischegalerie
#berlin100

Press Berlinische Galerie

Ulrike Andres
Head of Communication and Education
Tel +49 (0)30 78 902 829
andres@berlinischegalerie.de

Kontakt:
Paula Rosenboom
Communication
Tel +49 (0)30 78 902 831
rosenboom@berlinischegalerie.de

Berlinische Galerie
Berlin’s Museum of Modern Art,
Photography and Architecture
Alte Jakobstraße 124–128
10969 Berlin
Tel +49 (0)30 78 902 600
berlinischegalerie.de

Admission 8€, concessions 5€
Wed– Mon 10 am–6 pm
Tue closed