

BG

Press Kit
Berlin, 14.10.21

Louise Stomps, Laokoon, 1977, Inn-Eiche, H. – 170 cm, Privatbesitz,
Foto: Martin Weiland, fineartservice.de © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps

Figuring Nature
Sculptures 1928 – 1988

15.10.21–17.1.22

DAS VERBORGENE
MUSEUM
ZU GAST IN DER
BERLINISCHEN
GALERIE



Contents

**Press release
Louise Stomps**
P.3

Biography
P.5

Exhibitions texts
P.7

Exhibition catalogue
P.8

Press images
P.9

Das Verborgene Museum
P.13

Contact
P.14

Louise Stomps, Laokoon, 1977, Inn-Eiche, H.–170 cm, Privatbesitz,
Foto: Martin Weiland, fineartservice.de, © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps

Figuring Nature Sculptures 1928–1988

15.10.21 – 17.1.22

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM
is a guest at the Berlinische Galerie

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM will be the guest of the Berlinische Galerie for the first retrospective devoted to the sculptor Louise Stomps from 15 October 2021 until 17 January 2022. With about 90 sculptures on show, this exhibition will grant insights into the life's work of this exceptional artist.

The sculptor Louise Stomps (1900 – 1988) was moved all her life to lend creative expression to human suffering and defenceless animals. They were key themes in her work, spanning a career from the end of the 1920s until the late 1980s. Her sculpture evolved over the course of these six decades away from the classical figure to abstract figuration as the artist gradually developed her significant personal style.

Stomps had drawn and sculpted prolifically since 1918, but it was only ten years later, after divorcing her husband, that the mother of two daughters devoted herself full-time to her art. She refused to be disheartened by the widespread prejudice that women were more suited to the decorative arts, attending evening classes in nude drawing at the United State Schools of Free and Applied Arts in Berlin from 1928 until 1932; she also took lessons from Milly Steger (1881 – 1948), who gave a sculpture class at the Berlin Association of Women Artists.

Few of her works dating from the 1930s survived, as her studio was hit in an air raid during the Second World War. One is "The Couple", carved in oak (1937), which shows the deep bond between two lovers kneeling side by side. It still displays a realistic approach to human depictions. These early experiments with a personal style did not, however, conform to the dominant view of art under National Socialism, and as a consequence the artist withdrew into the seclusion of inner emigration.

In October 1945, soon after the Nazi were defeated, Louise Stomps joined Renée Sintenis, Hans Uhlmann, Gustav Seitz, Paul Dierkes, Karl Hartung and others to show at the first exhibition of "Sculpture and Sculptors' Drawings" at the Gerd Rosen Gallery in Berlin at Kurfürstendamm 215.

After the convulsions of the Second World War, which she had experienced first hand, it seemed to Louise Stomps, as it did to many of her colleagues at the time, that the only way forward for art lay in figural abstraction. From the 1950s, the postures adopted by her figures often suggest a threat, a rejection or a fear. Examples are "Grief" (1951), "Stranger" (1947), "Shared Lament" (1948) and, in a direct reference to political events, "Hiroshima" (1960).

BG

Wood was Stomps's material of choice for her „Figuring Nature“, no doubt prompted by a radical change in her life when, in 1960, she moved from Berlin to the Bavarian village of Rechtmehring, near Wasserburg in the valley of the River Inn, where she made her home in an old sawmill dating from the 15th century. There she drew her inspiration from nature as the source of all life, from the wood of the beech, pine, common and local oak, apple, acacia, walnut, pear and many other varieties of tree. Now she focused on developing her own formal idiom, which has been identified with figural abstraction.

In the 1960s, she began work on tall, slender figures three metres high, such as “Ascetic” (1963) and “Pilgrim” (1966). “Gilgamesh”, made in 1980 and measuring 3.20 metres, was a legendary hero one-third human and two-thirds god who set out in quest of immortality.

Catalogue

Edited by Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moortgat for DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM with contributions from Thomas Köhler, Marion Beckers, Elisabeth Moortgat, Christiane Meister, Christina Thürmer-Rohr, Annelie Lütgens, Yvette Deseyve, Arie Hartog, Julia Wallner, and personal memories from Berthold Kogut, Martin Meggle, Peter Schrader and Hans Goswin Stomps. Illustrated with new reproductions of the works; Hirmer Publishers, German/English, 224 pages, 180 colour illustrations, hardback, 39,90 € (Museum Edition 29 €), ISBN: 978-3-7774-3776-7

The exhibition and catalogue are funded by the Hauptstadtkulturfonds.

Press images

berlinischegalerie.de/en/press-release/louise-stomps

Online tickets

bg.berlin/en/online-tickets

Social media

#LouiseStompsBG
#berlinischegalerie

Contact Berlinische Galerie

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

Berlinische Galerie
Berlin's Museum of Modern Art,
Photography and Architecture
Alte Jakobstraße 124–128
10969 Berlin
berlinischegalerie.de

Admission 12 €, concessions 9 €
Wed – Mon 10 am – 6 pm
Tue closed

Contact Press

ARTEFAKT Kulturkonzepte
Alexander Flöth
Tel +49 (0)30 440 10 688
alexander.floeth@artefakt-berlin.de
artefakt-berlin.de

Biography

Louise Stomps

1900

Adele Louise Sophie Stomps is born in Berlin on 5 October. She is the second child of Otto Stomps, an attorney, and his wife, Else Stomps, née Kempff.

1917–1918

Finishes grammar school at the Elisabeth Lyceum in the Berlin district of Lichterfelde. Creates animal sculptures. Attends a girls' boarding school in Feldafing on Lake Starnberg.

1920–1922

Marries engineer Hans Becker. Their daughter, Inge, is born in 1921, and their daughter Anne-Marie in 1922.

1927

Divorces Becker. Moves into her parents' house at 10 Teichstrasse in the Berlin district of Zehlendorf.

1928–1932

Takes lessons at the United State Schools for Fine and Applied Art in Berlin. Studies sculpture at the Association of Berlin Women Artists (VdBK) under Milly Steger.

1932

Acquires her own studio. Meets sculptor Lidy von Lüttwitz; the two are lovers for a while and remain lifelong friends.

1934

Becomes a member of the Reich Chamber of Culture to maintain work opportunities for herself as a sculptor.

1936

Stops exhibiting out of solidarity after works by Käthe Kollwitz and Ernst Barlach are removed from the anniversary exhibition of the Berlin Academy of Arts.

1937

Visits the Paris World's Fair.

1938–1939

Meets with patron and art dealer Hanna Bekker vom Rath.

1943–1945

Bombing raids completely destroy her apartment and her studio. She is denounced and taken into Russian custody for six weeks on suspicion of espionage. Participates in Galerie Rosen's third exhibition at 215 Kurfürstendamm.

1946

Participates in the "1st German Art Exhibition of the Central Administration for Popular Education in the Soviet Occupation Zone" at the Zeughaus on Unter den Linden in Berlin.

1948

The city of Berlin acquires the 1938 oak sculpture "Das Paar" (The Couple; now held at Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin).

1950

Participates in the initiative to found the Professional Association of Visual Artists in Berlin – membership card no. 3.

1950s

Buys a used 1933 BMW motorcycle with sidecar which previously belonged to the police. Travels to

Sylt and the Ruhr area. Numerous solo and group exhibitions are held in the following decades.

1951

Is awarded the 1,000-Deutschmark art prize of the City of Berlin.

1952–1953

International sculpture competition for the 'Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner' is announced by the Institute of Contemporary Art in London. She is the only woman artist among the twelve German finalists to be presented in London for final selection. She receives an honourable mention and £25 in prize money.

1955

Visits the first "documenta" exhibition in Kassel.

1957

Eremitenpresse publishes a volume of "Bildhauer-Skizzen" (Sculptor's Drawings) by Stomps.

1958

Enters the International Auschwitz Memorial Competition. Hanna Bekker vom Rath shows a solo exhibition of works by Stomps at the Frankfurter Kunstkabinett.

1960s

Leaves Berlin and moves to an old mill in Rechtmehring in Upper Bavaria, converting it into a studio and living space.

1970 and 1975

Holds solo exhibitions with Hanna Bekker vom Rath at the Frankfurter Kunstkabinett.

BG

1979

Galerie der Künstler in Munich presents an extensive one-woman sales exhibition featuring 147 sculptures in its exhibition spaces at the Bavarian State Museum of Ethnology.

1983–1984

Kunstverein Rosenheim selects her 1971 sculpture “Kleiner Wassergeist” (Small Water Spirit) for its annual members’ gift, offering the bronze in an edition of thirty.

Stomps buys a red Yamaha XS 650 motorcycle with Squire sidecar.

1988

Dies in Wasserburg am Inn on 22 April from injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident. Three of her sculptures are installed at the sculpture park there.

2009

Her heirs donate six sculptures and ninety-nine drawings, as well as the written documents in the artist’s estate, to Berlinische Galerie.

Exhibition texts

About the Exhibition

Louise Stomps (1900–1988) has left behind an impressive body of work which, however, has not been frequently exhibited since her death. Human suffering and vulnerable creatures have been lifelong sources of inspiration for the sculptor, who hails from Berlin. They are the central focus of her sculptures, which she produced between the end of the 1920s and the late 1980s.

Stomps's earliest achievements date to the early 1930s, a time before the Nazis rose to power in 1933, destroying the experimental culture of the Weimar Republic with their nationalist cultural politics.

In keeping with her own motto to 'be open to new things and use modern art – incredibly fresh and liberated as it is – as a compass guiding [her] into a new era', she continued to sculpt after the Second World War. Her abstract sculptures are still tied to the human subject.

Stomps continued to develop her artistic style until well into the 1980s. This exhibition aims to re-establish the artist, whose name has almost faded into oblivion, as an independent contributor to the history of art.

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM is pleased to present the result of research on Stomps's oeuvre at Berlinische Galerie. For the first time, her bronze figures "Pilger" (Pilgrim), "Einsamer" (The Solitary One), and "Gilgamesch" (Gilgamesh), which are over three metres high, will be displayed in the stairwell as a gift from Stomps's heirs to Berlinische Galerie.

The Sculptor Louise Stomps

In the late 1920s, Louise Stomps decided to become a sculptor. She was not deterred by the widespread preconception that women artists were better suited for arts and crafts. In 1928, Stomps, then divorced and the mother of two daughters, turned to her art. Under professional instruction, she developed an unconventional approach to the use of stone and wood as materials.

The shaping of the bodies is still very much inspired by nature in her early sculptures, such as "Vestalin" (Vestal Virgin, 1932) or her two "Paare" (Couples, 1937/1938). Over the course of the following decades, her style evolved from the use of natural forms to the more abstract. Her figures express her lack of hope in the world as a result of her experiences in the Second World War. Above all, "Nachdenkende" (Contemplative woman, 1947), "Trauernde" (Mourning female figure, 1951), "Gemeinsame Klage" (Shared lament, 1948), and Hiroshima (1960) are representations of suffering and silent protest.

In 1945, Gerd Rosen was among the first to open a gallery on Berlin's Kurfürstendamm after the Second World War. Louise Stomps was represented in the gallery's third exhibition, "Sculpture and Sculptural Drawings", alongside Renée Sintenis, Hans Uhlmann, Gustav Seitz, and Karl Hartung.

In 1960, she moved to Upper Bavaria due to the cultural and political climate of West Berlin. There, she set up a home and studio for herself in a converted mill in Rechtmehring, near Wasserburg. She travelled regularly to exhibitions and ancient shrines by motorcycle.

Natural Forms and Abstraction

Louise Stomps's artistic style was constantly in flux. Her figurative phase in 1928 gave way to massive, block-like sculptures in the 1940s, which increasingly moved away from natural forms.

Since the 1960s, only a few traces of her figurative style remain. Parts of the surface are left unfinished. She consciously incorporates natural variety – the growth of the trunk, the intertwined branches – into her artistic process as a means of self-expression.

Circling around Stomps's sculptures constantly provides the viewer with a new angle. Despite the changes within her work and her constant experiments, the human form remains the core of her oeuvre. At the same time, however, she maintains that the soul expresses itself more strongly in the abstract than in the figurative.



Exhibition catalogue

For the Berlin sculptor Louise Stomps (1900–1988) human kind and nature were the inspiration for the artistic oeuvre she created between the late 1920s and the late 1980s. The defenceless creature and human suffering were central to her sculptural art. Her partly figurative, partly abstract work is here presented in new photographs and examined in the international context.

Editors

Marion Beckers, Elisabeth Moortgat

Publisher

Hirmer Publishers

Authors

Contributions from Thomas Köhler, Marion Beckers, Elisabeth Moortgat, Christiane Meister, Christina Thürmer-Rohr, Annelie Lütgens, Yvette Deseyve, Arie Hartog, Julia Wallner, and personal memories from Berthold Kogut, Peter Schrader, Martin Meggle and Hans Goswin Stomps

Format

23 x 28 cm

Pages

224 pages

Illustrations

180 coloured illustrations

Languages

German and English

ISBN

978-3-7774-3776-7 (Museum Edition)

978-3-7774-3776-7 (Book Trade Edition))

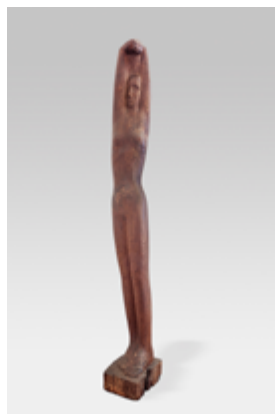
Price

29,00 € (Museum Edition)

39,90 € (Book Trade Edition))

BG

Press images



Louise Stomps, Vestalin, 1932, Eiche, H – 197 cm, Privatbesitz,
Foto: Martin Weiland, fineartservice.de
© Nachlass Louise Stomps



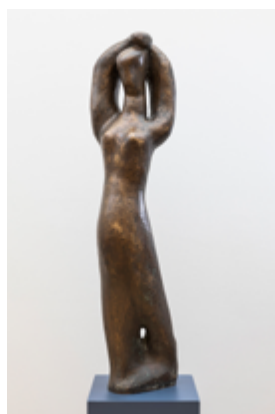
Louise Stomps, Das Paar I, 1937, Eiche, H – 45 cm, Berlinische Galerie
© Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Nachdenkende, 1946/47, Marmor, 31x19x29cm,
Nachlass Hanna Bekker vom Rath, Foto: Ed Restle
© Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Trauer, 1947, Eiche, H – 84 cm, Privatbesitz,
Foto: Martin Weiland, fineartservice.de
© Nachlass Louise Stomps



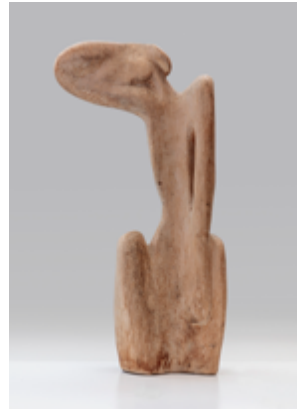
Louise Stomps, Göttin, 1950, Bronze, H – 133 cm,
Nachlass Louise Stomps, Foto: Enric Duch
© Nachlass Louise Stomps

**DAS VERBORGENE
MUSEUM
ZU GAST IN DER
BERLINISCHEN
GALERIE**

BG



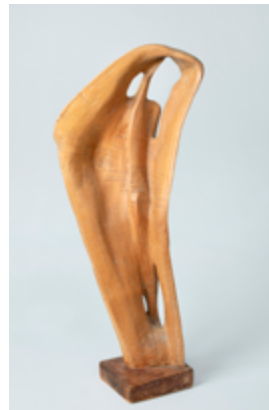
Louise Stomps, Kleine Liegende, um 1950, Bronze, 16x35x16cm, Nachlass Louise Stomps, Foto: Friedhelm Hoffmann, © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Trauernde, 1951, Erle, H – 42 cm, Privatbesitz, Foto: Martin Weiland, fineartservice.de © Nachlass Louise Stomps



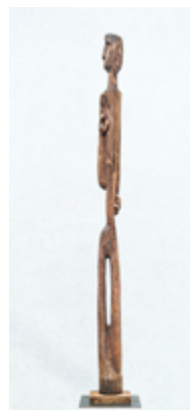
Louise Stomps, Meergott, 1956, Rotbuche, H – 27 cm, Nachlass Louise Stomps, Foto: Friedhelm Hoffmann, © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Gabriel, 1960, Akazie, H – 70 cm, Privatbesitz, Foto: Friedhelm Hoffmann, © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Hiroshima, 1960, Esche, H – 68 cm, Privatbesitz, Foto: Martin Weiland, fineartservice.de, © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Asket, 1963, Föhre, H – 305 cm, Nachlass Louise Stomps, Foto: Friedhelm Hoffmann, © Nachlass Louise Stomps



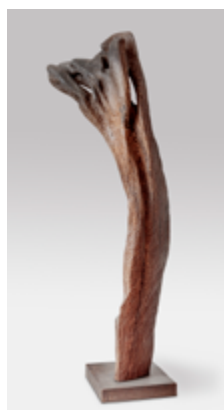
Louise Stomps, Sklave, 1965, Ahorn, 57x200x40 cm, Nachlass Louise Stomps, Foto: Friedhelm Hoffmann, © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Umarmung, 1966, Bronze, H – 25 cm, Nachlass Louise Stomps, Foto: Friedhelm Hoffmann, © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Gordo, 1967/68, Birnholz, H – 205 cm, Künstlergemeinschaft Wasserburg am Inn AK 68, Foto: Martin Weiland, fineartservice.de © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Schwarze Flamme, 1969, H – 215 cm, Privatbesitz, Foto: Martin Weiland, fineartservice.de © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps, Laokoon, 1977, Inn-Eiche, H – 170 cm, Privatbesitz, Foto: Martin Weiland, fineartservice.de © Nachlass Louise Stomps



Louise Stomps und ihre Skulptur „Der Ruf“, 1977, Birnholz, H-430 cm, © Nachlass Louise Stomps

Die Skulptur „Der Ruf“ wurde 1994 beim Brand der Herz-Jesu-Kirche in München-Neuhausen vollständig zerstört.

BG



Gerda Schimpf, Louise Stomps im Atelier Schillerstraße 21, Berlin 1948, Berlinische Galerie,
Foto: Anja Elisabeth Witte, © Gerda Schimpf Fotoarchiv



Anonym, Louise Stomps und „Die Scheue“, Berlin 1946,
© Nachlass Louise Stomps



Stefan Moses, Louise Stomps, Bildhauerin, Rechtmehring 1982, aus der Serie „Große Alte“ im Wald,
© Archiv Stefan Moses

BG

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM e.V. was founded in Berlin in 1986: its declared aim is to publicise the life's work and biographies of women artists who have fallen into obscurity for various reasons.

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM is the only existing institution world-wide whose programme focuses on the public presentation and academic appraisal of women artists from past centuries, or of those who are no longer working within the art world.

The initiative to found the association DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM resulted from an investigation carried out in Berlin museums (West) from 1984-1987, during which artworks by more than 500 women artists - of whom only a small minority are still known - were discovered in archives and collections.

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM presents exhibitions of work by women artists of all genres: painters, photographers, sculptresses and architects - up until now, most of them have belonged to the generation born around the turn of the 20th century. Frequently, our presentations are the first recognition of their work in Germany after the Second World War.

Over the past 35 years, DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM has drawn public attention to c. 100 artistic oeuvres in exhibitions and publications, and has laid the foundations for their inclusion in academic discourse and evaluation on the art market by means of specialist publications.

During its existence, the association has developed its national and international connections with museums, archives and universities, with gallery owners, estate administrators and the public into a network. This has led in turn to the discovery of the forgotten, often scattered estates of other women artists.

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM is a non-profit association, which receives financial support from the programme for women artists at the Senate Offices for Science, Research and Culture in Berlin. Its project work is facilitated by financial aid from foundations, cultural funds, sponsors etc.

Contact

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM
Dokumentation der Kunst von Frauen e.V.
Schlüterstraße 70
10625 Berlin
Tel. +49 (0) 30 313 36 56
berlin@dasverborgenemuseum.de

Board

Elisabeth Moortgat
Alexandra Goy
Prof. Dr. Renate Berger

Managing & Chief Curator
Marion Beckers

DAS VERBORGENE
MUSEUM
ZU GAST IN DER
BERLINISCHEN
GALERIE



Contact **Berlinische Galerie**

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

Contact **Press**

ARTEFAKT Kulturkonzepte
Alexander Flöth
Tel: +49 (0)30 440 10 688
alexander.floeth@artefakt-berlin.de
artefakt-berlin.de

Contact **Programme**

Christine van Haaren
Head of Education and Outreach
Tel +49 (0)30 78 902 836
haaren@berlinischegalerie.de

Katrin-Marie Kaptain
Education
Tel +49 (0)30 78 902 837
kaptain@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