

Rolf von Bergmann, Untitled (Klaus Nomi), New York, 1979
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Rolf von Bergmann Photography

26.2.27 – 13.9.27

Klaus Nomi before a performance, Nina Hagen in Studio 54, backstage at a drag show – from West Berlin to New York, Rolf von Bergmann (1953–1988) recorded queer subculture and the vibrant art, fashion and club scene of the 1970s and 1980s. This exhibition turns the spotlight on a little-known artist and conveys the spirit of this distinctive era.

Rolf von Bergmann was shaped by the West Berlin art scene around the Galerie am Moritzplatz and his early encounters there, for example with the painter Salomé. The camera was an important medium for forging his own identity, but also a means to an end because it earned him a living. The move to New York, where he was taught by Lisette Model at Parsons School of Design, added range to his photographic vision. He took pictures at the Gay Pride Parade in 1979, portrayed queer artists like Divine and John Waters, created experimental fashion sequences and met figures such as Debbie Harry, Lil Picard and Andy Warhol.

This exhibition of about 160 works, including vintage prints, slide shows, films and objects, is the first to celebrate his output in all its diversity. The inclusion of works by contemporaries such as Rainer Fetting, Anne Jud, Jürgen Klauke, Lisette Model and Salomé supplies context by conveying the free-spirited vitality of West Berlin and New York during that period and helps to bring queer art and cultural history out of the shadows.

The show draws on the substantial estate left by the artist, who died in 1988 during the AIDS crisis, and on research conducted by the Berlinische Galerie. It is accompanied by a catalogue in German and English, which breaks new ground by making Rolf von Bergmann's work available to the public.



Press images

berlinischegalerie.de/en/press-release/rolf-von-bergmann

Tickets

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Admission 12 €, concessions 7 €
Every 1st Wed of the month
7 € for everyone
Wed–Mon 10 am–6 pm
Tue closed