

# HEIDIHORTENCOLLECTION

## Collection Guide

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Fig. 1: Museum benefactress Heidi Horten (seated) with founding director Agnes Husslein-Arco

## FOREWORD

Agnes Husslein-Arco

The collection is the heart and soul of a museum, shaping its character and giving it an identity and standing in a national and international context. But a collection should never stagnate; it must remain dynamic and engaging, which is what museums achieve through their changing exhibitions. Collecting and showcasing go hand in hand, driven by motivations and interests as diverse as the collectors themselves. The Heidi Horten Collection is the result of one woman's passion, steered by personal taste, to build an internationally recognized art collection. Heidi Horten's path to creating her collection was unique. In her childhood, art played an important role for her parents—especially her father, who worked as an engraver—which instilled in her a lifelong belief that art is an essential part of life. However, it was not until the 1990s that she began to collect with a purpose, which introduced new and exciting goals into her life as an art buyer. At that time, as a specialist in modern and contemporary art at Sotheby's, I had the privilege of advising and assisting her in building her collection from the ground up.

### HISTORY OF THE COLLECTION—THE BEGINNINGS

In the early 1990s, Heidi Horten was focused on broadening the range of works by artists already in her core holdings, and thus acquired additional pieces by Marc Chagall, Emil Nolde, Raoul, Jean Dufy, and Moïse Kisling. Initially, there was no clear plan or strategy behind the acquisitions. The goal was to furnish newly designed living spaces, so personal taste and the collector's penchants were paramount in selecting works. At first, she focused on established artists, but as time went on, her approach changed and became more daring. At a London auction in 1996, some thirty modern and contemporary art masterpieces were purchased—anon-ymously—in one fell swoop, instantly elevating the character of the collection. This coup caused a sensation in the art world and generated widespread media attention. On June 30, 1996, in their summary of the London auction, the *New York Times* speculated that the “mystery buyer” would eventually open a museum or set up a foundation for art. That decision would come more than two decades later. As a result of the



Fig. 2: Salon of Heidi Horten's penthouse in Vienna with paintings by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Pablo Picasso

London purchases, Heidi Horten's interest in collecting intensified, leading her to amass entire blocks of works focused on specific art movements.

#### THE HEIDI HORTEN COLLECTION TODAY— A COLLECTION OF INTERNATIONAL STATURE

After more than three decades in the making, the collection has developed a distinct global identity. Focusing on classical Modernism, notably German Expressionism, American Pop Art, Arte Povera, and the group ZERO, it provides a representative cross section of the significant art movements of the 1950s and 1960s. The collection features a wide range of works by renowned artists such as, among others, Emil Nolde, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Yves Klein, Lucio Fontana, Francis Bacon, Andy Warhol, and Jean-Michel Basquiat.

The collection also has a strong emphasis on sculpture, a subject of particular interest to the collector. Over the years, many works by contemporary artists such as Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne, Antony Gormley, Georg Baselitz, and Anselm Kiefer, as well as Angelika Loderer, Anne Speier, and Constantin Luser, have found their way into the collection.



Fig. 3: Entrance hall of the Sekirn villa at the Wörthersee with paintings by Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein

### *WOW!*—THE FIRST STEP INTO THE PUBLIC SPOTLIGHT

In 2018, the collection was presented to the public for the first time. The exhibition *WOW!* was held at the Leopold Museum in Vienna and featured 170 celebrated works from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Its resounding success led to the decision to preserve the collection for future generations: Heidi Horten would build a new private museum in her hometown of Vienna to make her vast collection permanently accessible to the public, as the capstone to her decades of collecting.

### THE COLLECTION CONTINUES TO GROW

With the museum's establishment within reach, the collection was expanded to include room-sized formats, such as a neon work by John M. Armleder with an impressive diameter of three meters, acquired in 2019. The goal of our collecting policy in recent years has been to give the collection a solid, independent profile and to build a landmark art institution that will stand out with its own identity and offer high-quality, relevant exhibitions to local and international audiences in the future. Our focus has been on acquiring works by emerging national and international artists,

especially those with a contemporary perspective; pieces by Ulrike Müller, Philipp Timischl, Lily Reynaud-Dewar, Lena Henke, Michèle Pagel, and Monica Bonvicini are a testament to our commitment to this goal.

#### PRIME LOCATION—FOUNDING THE MUSEUM IN VIENNA

In recent years, the number of private art museums has increased significantly. These institutions are established around the personal visions and priorities of their founders, which dictates the direction of their collections. This trend has allowed art to be presented beyond the confines of public institutions, albeit on a smaller scale. In our case, our museum, which opened in June 2022, offers innovative and highly personalized spaces for the display and sharing of art.

The Heidi Horten Collection found its home in an historic building in the heart of Vienna, which was transformed by the next ENTERprise Architects firm into a museum that meets all the requirements of a contemporary exhibition space. The newly established art center in the inner courtyard of a cluster of Gründerzeit buildings between the State Opera and the Albertina has already become a fixture in the Austrian museum landscape.

#### WHAT'S NEXT—A LOOK INTO AN INSPIRED FUTURE

The museum of the Heidi Horten Collection strives to develop contemporary approaches to art. To this end, several contemporary artists have been invited to bring this vision to life. The museum has commissioned works from Markus Schinwald and Hans Kupelwieser, who have created a unique *Tea Room* that seamlessly integrates interior design and art space. Additionally, Andreas Duscha has furnished the side rooms on the exhibition levels with site-specific artworks, highlighting the museum's role as a dynamic and evolving space for art.

With the museum's opening, the team has taken over the responsibility of caring for the extensive collection and ensuring its continued reappraisal and relevance for coming generations. Such a responsibility also includes the continued expansion of the collection, generously provided for by our benefactress.

A guide to the collection with over one hundred descriptions provides an engaging and informative look into the collection's focal points. With its several hundred artworks, the collection spans the nineteenth century to the present and is presented in its various facets through the framework of changing exhibitions.

On behalf of our team at the museum, we hope you enjoy your visit and find the book to be an enjoyable read.





Fig. 4: Mimmo Paladino's *Architettura (Cavallo)* and Georg Baselitz's *Yellow Song* in the garden at Sekirn



# WORKS

## FRIEDRICH VON AMERLING

1803 Vienna (AT) – 1887 Vienna (AT)

*Der Brief*

The Letter

1837

Oil on canvas, 58 × 47 cm

Acquired 2021

A woman is seated, seemingly unaware of her surroundings. Her head is slightly tilted, and her eyes are cast downward. She holds a letter she must have just finished reading in her right hand. Her hair is parted in the middle and then parted again from one ear to the other, a style typical of the Biedermeier era. A braided pigtail runs from her temple to the back of her head, where it disappears into a chignon held in place by a silk ribbon tied into a bow. At first glance, her clothing seems a bit careless when compared to her hairstyle. The woman's blouse and dress are open at the back. Both garments have slipped off her shoulders, giving the picture an undeniably erotic component, subtly emphasized by the silk ribbon that lightly touches the woman's neck and a draped red cord drawing the eye to her décolleté: despite the innocuous appearance of the picture, Friedrich von Amerling left nothing to chance.

After studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, Amerling spent some years in Prague before moving to London and Paris from 1827 to 1828, where he was greatly influenced artistically. During his stay in these cities, he had the opportunity to observe the works of Thomas Lawrence, a renowned portrait painter of his era. While in Paris Amerling also contacted Horace Vernet, a prominent history painter, who advised him to copy the old masters in the Louvre (an essential part of an artist's training at the time). Upon his return to Vienna, Amerling was commissioned to paint a larger-than-life portrait of Emperor Franz I in 1832. This portrait marked a turning point in Amerling's career and propelled him to the forefront of Vienna's portraitists. With the decline of Biedermeier modesty, the nobility and bourgeoisie, including pioneers of the Industrial Revolution, demanded portraits that accentuated their social standing, mirroring Lawrence's iconic portraits. However, it is unlikely that any woman of high social standing such as a noblewoman or a banker's wife would have consented to be depicted in the same manner as the girl holding the letter. The picture is not a portrait in the classical sense but rather an idealized image based on an anonymous young woman who posed for the painting. Here, Amerling is more interested in the woman's reaction to the letter's content. She seems lost in thought, perhaps thinking about her lover. RJ



## FERDINAND GEORG WALDMÜLLER

1793 Vienna (AT) – 1865 Hinterbrühl, near Mödling (AT)

*Der belohnte Fleiß*

Diligence Rewarded

1830

Oil on wood, 34 × 28.7 cm

Acquired 2017

Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller shows a small family in a tight-knit arrangement. The focus is on the son, who has received a medal, possibly for his exceptional academic performance. He carries his bundled books, notebooks, and quill under his arm. The mother, wearing festive attire, holds the medal and assists the blind grandfather in touching it. Meanwhile, the boy's father observes the scene before him. The boy, smiling mischievously, turns to the grandmother, who hands him a gingerbread man. On her lap sits the younger sibling, who, in an awkward, childlike manner, feeds herself a piece of bread using her fingers. Waldmüller conveys this little story solely through gestures, glances, and the use of light. The secondary characters, the father and grandmother, stand or crouch in the shadows, while the main characters, the boy, mother, and grandfather, are in full light. Their glances and gestures connect them and would form a closed group if the boy did not turn to the grandmother and thus to the second group. Finally, the toddler draws us, the viewers, into the action with a gaze that extends beyond the canvas.

The year 1828 when Waldmüller created the first version of *Diligence Rewarded*—he frequently repeated his paintings—was a significant milestone in his career as an artist. Already an accomplished and sought-after portrait painter in Vienna as well as a success in genre painting (the depiction of supposedly everyday scenes), in the late 1820s Waldmüller shifted his focus to landscapes. The figures in this painting are arranged in the manner of a *tableau vivant* (French for “living picture”), yet the landscape is no longer a mere backdrop but a portrayal of the family's living environment. Consequently, Waldmüller paid as much attention to the landscape as he did to the sitters, depicting it with great detail and topographical accuracy, including the Schneeberg in the background. RJ



## PAULINE VON KOUDELKA-SCHMERLING

1806 Vienna (AT) – 1840 Ober-St.-Veit/Vienna (AT)

*Großes Blumenbouquet in einer griechischen Vase*

Large Bouquet of Flowers in a Greek Vase

1836

Oil on wood, 68 × 54.5 cm

Acquired 2022

An exuberant profusion of flowers and blossoms: at first glance they seem disorganized, but on closer inspection it becomes clear that nothing has been left to chance. A diagonal line runs from the (somewhat faded) roses in the lower left corner to the bold red poppy blossom in the upper right. The most magnificent flowers are arranged along this imaginary line, catching the majority of the light: a blue hyacinth, roses, a carnation, and even a few daffodils hidden away. In partial shade around the edges of the bouquet are a blossoming fruit tree branch, tulips, cornflowers, and bindweed—whose trumpet-shaped flowers make it easily recognizable. Pauline Koudelka-Schmerling has painted all this with extraordinary realism and details that reflect her skill. The ivy surrounding the stone niche where the bouquet has been placed is also painted with the same attention to detail: like the roses hanging over the edge of the niche, its leaves seem to protrude three-dimensionally, reaching over into our physical space.

As was customary in the heyday of Viennese Biedermeier and the art of Viennese flower painting, Koudelka-Schmerling's painting depicts both early bloomers such as the tulip and summer flowers, including poppies and cornflowers. She did not have a physical bouquet in front of her when she painted the picture (it would have wilted much too quickly) but rather resorted to using patterns, mainly watercolor drawings. On the other hand, it was uncommon to arrange flowers in antique vases. In this case, a black-figure Greek amphora from the Archaic period (sixth century BC). The oil lamp on the right is probably of Roman origin, its terracotta color contrasting beautifully with the blossoms and leaves of the red wild rose.

Koudelka-Schmerling is one of the few Biedermeier artists known by name. As a woman, she was barred from studying at the academy. Instead, her father encouraged her to take private lessons with the Viennese flower painter Franz Xaver Petter and in Paris with Jan van Dael. After her return to Vienna, Koudelka-Schmerling participated in the art exhibitions of the Vienna Academy from 1830 to 1838. Her flower paintings could easily compare to those of her contemporaries, especially those of Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller. RJ





## EUGEN VON BLAAS

1843 Albano Laziale, near Rome (IT) – 1931 Venice (IT)

*Der Liebesbrief*

The Love Letter

c. 1870/75

Oil on canvas, 84 × 68 cm

Acquired 2022

A young woman stands by a balustrade, gazing downward. In her hand, she holds a letter that has been sealed and weighted with a stone. She is biding her time, waiting for the perfect moment to release it. Her dress and the balcony with its Gothic arches suggest that she is a Renaissance lady—possibly even Shakespeare’s Juliet, with Romeo as the intended recipient of her letter. In the end, however, we do not know who she is, just as we do not know the identity of the woman in another painting by Friedrich von Amerling (p. 12) from thirty years earlier, who is also seen holding a letter. Despite the stylistic differences between the two works, they belong to the single-figure genre of painting.

Genre painting, broadly defined as the depiction of everyday scenes, flourished in seventeenth-century Dutch painting and often included depictions of brothel scenes or drunken peasants fighting. The nineteenth century, however, marked a significant difference in style. Eugen von Blaas’s works have a quiet and elegiac tone, whether he is depicting individuals or multi-figure scenes. Titles such as *Der Liebesbrief*, *Beim Brunnen* (Woman at the fountain), *An einem Festtag in Venedig* (Festival day in Venice), or *Der venezianische Schneider* (The Venetian tailor) speak for themselves. They evoke an ideal and orderly world. The pictures serve as both a retreat and a counter-design—they retreat into a supposedly better past through architecture and clothing as an alternative to an industrialized, commercialized, and ultimately confounding world. Blaas was not the only one with such views about the second half of the nineteenth century. His more famous fellow painters Anselm Feuerbach and Arnold Böcklin shared his beliefs. They found their inspiration in the figures and stories of Greco-Roman mythology.

Blaas was born into a family of artists and he and his brother Julius received their artistic training from their father. The family relocated to Venice in 1856, and in 1866, Blaas traveled to Paris and London. Firmly rooted in Historicism, Blaas was not influenced by contemporary art movements, particularly Impressionism, as *Der Liebesbrief* demonstrates. RJ



## PIERRE-AUGUSTE RENOIR

1841 Limoges (FR) – 1919 Cagnes-sur-Mer (FR)

*Buste de femme, corsage jaune*

Bust of a Woman, Yellow Dress

c. 1883/85

Pastel on paper, 62.1 × 50.5 cm

Acquired 1996

Pretty, melancholy, and insecure are the attributes that come to mind when we look at this very young woman who timidly and wistfully looks past her observer. In *Buste de femme, corsage jaune*, Pierre-Auguste Renoir does not portray a modern, fashionable, self-confident Parisienne, but rather a young woman who presumably comes from humble beginnings, as the petit-bourgeois elegance of her clothing suggests. She is putting the finishing touches to her beautiful ensemble: only the flowered hat, perfectly matched to her yellow dress, still needs to be pinned in her upswept hair. Is she gazing dreamily into a mirror? Is she harboring doubts after a *rendez-vous galant*, a little lovers' tryst, that has just taken place? Or is she anxiously expecting something to happen? Just as Jean-Baptiste Greuze's painting *La cruche cassée* (The broken pitcher) in the Louvre in Paris is ambiguous despite, or perhaps because of, its equivocal title—the shattered vessel being an allegory for lost virginity—Renoir's pastel also leaves us uncertain. What is certain, however, is that his art is deeply rooted in the eighteenth century. The great masters of that era provided Renoir with compositional models, or at least inspired him to capture moving emotional states and use them to reach the hearts of his viewers. As much as he emulated the measured and clear lines of Raphael after a trip to Italy in the early 1880s, the medium of pastel is closely linked to the art of the ancien régime. In his 1788 treatise on pastel painting, Paul-Romain Chaperon wrote: "No other [technique] comes this close to nature. None other produces such genuine hues."<sup>1</sup> Renoir's facile command of the pastel pencil at first lead him to use it primarily for portraiture, which requires a high degree of spontaneity and flexibility, but later also for his genre paintings. For *Buste de femme, corsage jaune*, he chose a very reduced color palette. Against a plain blue background, this petite woman in the process of exploring her soul is given life and form through Renoir's artful juxtaposition of rapid strokes and blurred areas, as well as a clever use of light. AN

1 Paul-Romain Chaperon, *Traité de la peinture au pastel* (Paris, 1788), p. 13.



## EDGAR DEGAS

1834 Paris (FR) – 1917 Paris (FR)

*Torse de femme*

Female Torso

c. 1896–99

Pastels and charcoal on paper, 37.7 × 47cm

Acquired 1995

Edgar Degas, born into a wealthy family, was exposed to the world of opera by his music-loving parents while he was still a teenager. From the mid-1860s, opera became the central focus of his creative work. For almost half of his artistic career, Degas devoted his time to observing the daily activities at the opera, documenting his experiences through his paintings, sculptures, and drawings. He was deeply familiar with every aspect of the Paris opera houses, including the Salle Le Peletier and later the Palais Garnier. Degas was keenly observant of everything that happened in the orchestra pit, the boxes, and the foyers, but he was particularly interested in ballet themes. “People call [him] the painter of dancing girls, but it has never occurred to them that [his] chief interest in dancers lies in rendering of movement and painting pretty fabrics.”<sup>1</sup> When Degas created *Torse de femme*, he rarely drew in the rehearsal and recreation rooms of the Opera House. Everything now took place in his spacious studio, which he was able to acquire in 1890 spurred by his success. In this case, he meticulously sketched movements and collected poses based on a nude model hired for this occasion. Nude studies, which Degas succeeded in modernizing, were the foundation for him to analyze and “describe” a movement or posture carefully. He favored charcoal pencils and pastels that allowed him to quickly “note” shapes, textures, and lighting effects. With her hair pinned up, the model stands with her back to the painter. Brown pastel pencil and white highlights model the slender back; the surrounding bright blue, subtly placed as a complementary color, emphasizes plasticity. In this study sheet, Degas focuses not on an arabesque ballet pose but on a random gesture that appears with regularity, more or less varied, throughout an entire series beginning in the mid-1890s. Tirelessly he thus created a repertoire of forms, “a kind of private ballet encyclopedia,” as the great Degas connoisseur Richard Kendall once put it. Degas then incorporated the expertly recorded studies into pictorial compositions. For instance, Degas selected *Torse de femme* for one of the four dancers in the eponymous painting at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. This dancer adjusts the strap of her leotard, or justacorps, before her performance. AN

1 Quoted after Ambroise Vollard, *Degas. 1834–1917* (Paris, 1924), pp. 109–10.



## MAURICE DENIS

1870 Granville (FR) – 1943 Paris (FR)

*Saint-Sacrement à l'autel bleu*

The Holy Sacrament at the Blue Altar

c. 1898/99

Oil on canvas, 37.5 × 31 cm

Acquired 1996

From an early age, Maurice Denis—devout Catholic, multitalented artist, theorist, and critic—had a strong desire to create religious paintings. Over the years, this calling became increasingly important to him, leading him to establish Ateliers d'art sacré in 1919.

The renowned Parisian art dealer Ambroise Vollard acquired *Saint-Sacrement à l'autel bleu* shortly after its completion. In his inventory of receipts, Vollard listed it as “Communi-antes” (Communion girls). This additional title, combined with the spring-like setting surrounding the altar, strongly suggests that the painting depicts the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament on Corpus Christi Day, the solemn conclusion of the Communion season. The altar boys can be seen on the bottom left, kneeling on the steps leading up to the altar and waving incense to draw the eye upward in a diagonally ascending line toward the priest. Dressed in a golden choir robe with a white humeral veil, the priest approaches the altar with a raised monstrance in his hand to place it there. The protagonist's size and central position dominate the composition, which is further amplified by the skillful use of line and the smooth transition from dark to light areas. A soaring effect is created that lends additional grandeur to the mystical act. The somewhat naive and indistinct rendering of the few figures—even the participating nuns and girls at the bottom of the picture are reduced to their veiled heads—is indebted still to the aesthetics of the Nabi period. The Nabis (a Hebrew term for “prophets”) were a group of artists that had existed since 1888/89, of which Denis was one of the founders. The surrounding vegetation in the painting, however, with its flowering shrubs, is painted in a Neo-Impressionist technique. The predominant colors—gold for the divine and heavenly and blue for contemplation, devotion, and the earthly connection with the supernatural—have a high symbolic value. This small devotional painting of a personal nature demonstrates Maurice Denis's love of church festivities, which he had noted at the age of fifteen. It expresses his deep religiosity, a driving force behind his art. AN

1 See Maurice Denis, *Journal. 1: 1884–1904* (Paris, 1957), p. 35.





## ODILON REDON

1840 Bordeaux (FR) – 1916 Paris (FR)

*Bouddha marchant dans les fleurs*

Buddha Walking among the Flowers

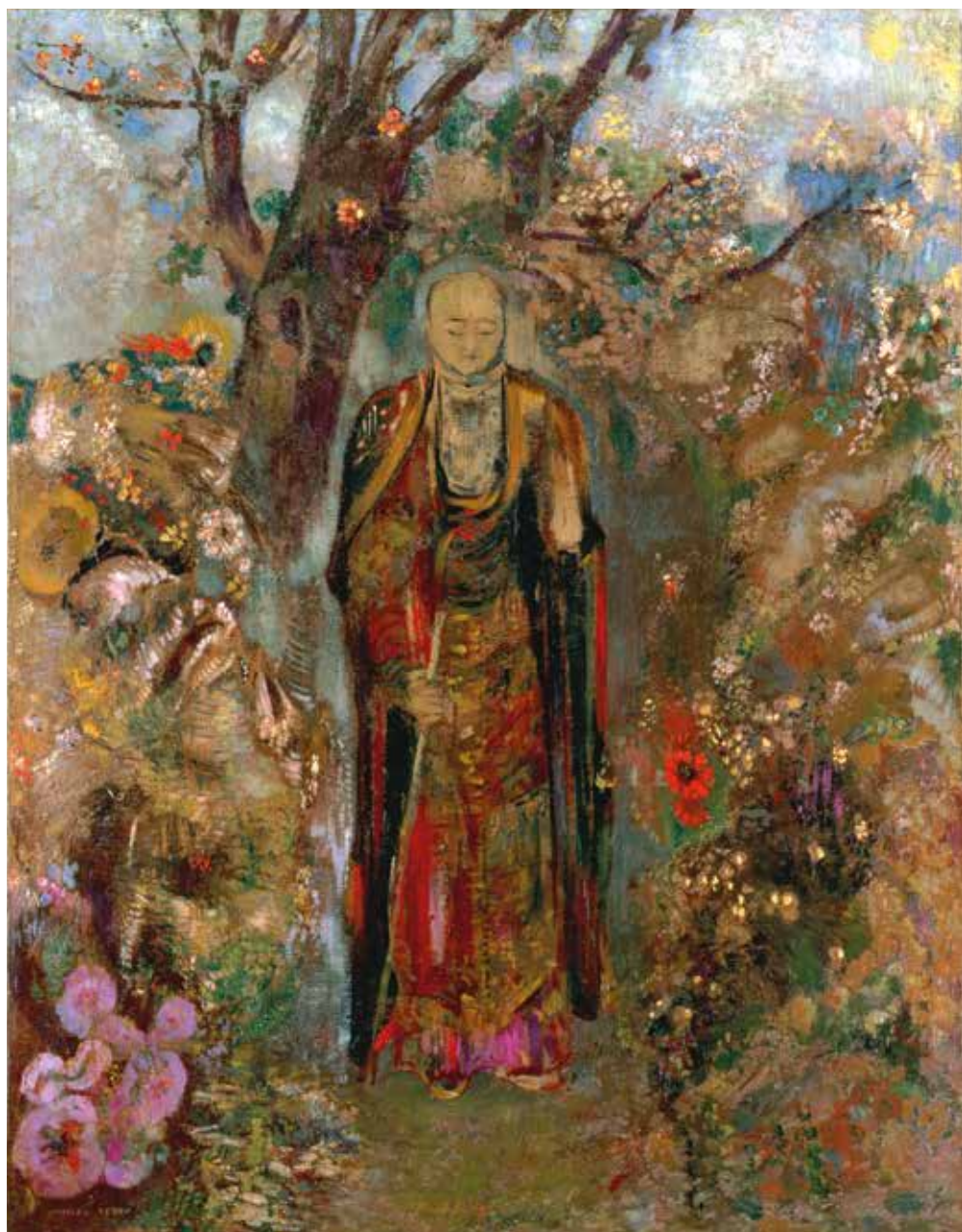
1905

Oil on canvas, 73.3 × 56.8 cm

Acquired 1999

We see Redon's Buddha with a walking stick in his right hand and his left raised in a gesture of encouragement. Despite the suggestion of the title, he appears in rapt spiritual contemplation on the path under the sacred fig tree. An aura surrounds the spiritual wanderer, evoking the higher level of consciousness he inhabits. With his eyes closed, he stands in harmony with the multicolored vegetation that surrounds him and that resonates with the brilliance of his robes. Imbued with mystical reverence, the composition *Bouddha marchant dans les fleurs* synthesizes Redon's Westernized understanding of Eastern religion and his profound spiritual fusion with nature. Subtle, symbolic colors and his ability to realistically render these fantastical plants reflect his aesthetic vocabulary, altogether rejecting academic conventions. Redon allows a world of the unconscious and the imaginary to emerge.

Odilon Redon, one of the leading exponents of French Symbolism, was introduced early on to the world of plants as well as to the teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism by his friend, the botanist Armand Clavaud. Redon was familiar with the latest publications of the 1890s about the life of Siddhartha Gautama, an Indian spiritual teacher active around 500 BCE and the founder of a Buddhism. The painter was also fascinated by the teachings of the Theosophical Society, founded in New York in 1875, which propagated a world religion encompassing all religions. This society was instrumental in spreading Buddhist knowledge among educated circles during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Without these literary influences and personal encounters, the history of the development of Buddha representations in Redon's oeuvre could not be explained. However, the artist did not have a religious mission. Redon's religious and philosophical stance rested on the equality of all religions and their founders, and he desired complete neutrality in the interpretation of his works. AN



## ALFRED KUBIN

1877 Leitmeritz/Litoměřice (CZ) – 1959 Zwickledt, near Wernstein am Inn (AT)

*Das Wesen vom Mars*

The Creature from Mars

1906

Pastel and gouache on cardboard, 42 × 35.6 cm

Acquired 2000

The creature from Mars is an extraterrestrial, an alien. Alfred Kubin assembled the hybrid creature using various animal parts: bug-like eyes, a trunk-shaped nose, bird legs with sharp claws, a jagged lizard back, and the spotted body of a hyena. The creature's head, which is gray-greenish in color, peeks out from a protective ruff that it can retreat into like a turtle in its shell. The creature from Mars squats lonely and abandoned on a slight elevation looking out over a desolate heath landscape beneath a gray sky. The atmosphere is bleak, and it's hard to determine whether the creature is on Mars or Earth and whether one should fear the creature or feel sorry for it. Kubin drew from a rich inner repository of images. From a young age, he collected beetles and kept insects, reptiles, and a tame crow. He spent hours on the shore of the Zeller See drawing snakes and spiders and observing aquatic life like fish, newts, diving beetles, and water boatmen. Here, the master of eerie phantasms showcases his incredible imagination and mastery as a painter and draftsman. The creature is depicted in pastel chalk and gouache on cardboard, with a particularly delicate color treatment for its front body and legs in pink-white tones. The artist skillfully contrasts this with gray-green tones that dominate the rest of the piece.

When Kubin painted *The Creature from Mars* in 1906 he had just moved with his wife to Wernstein in Upper Austria, to the old Zwickledt manor high above the Inn River. In 1908 while staying in the small castle, he wrote the fantastic novel *Die andere Seite* (The Other Side). During the First World War, which triggered a creative crisis in Kubin, he added a dedication on the back of the folio: "This picture is dedicated to Marianne, the best mother, wife, and friend in 1906, by Alfred Kubin, Zwickledt in May 1917." Marianne is believed to be the wife of poet and Kubin collector Felix Grafe, a friend of the artist. VT



## CAMILLE PISSARRO

1830 Charlotte Amalie, Virgin Islands (today US) – 1903 Paris (FR)

*Prairie à Moret*

Meadow near Moret

1901

Oil on canvas, 55.3 × 65.4 cm

Acquired 1996

Pissarro is considered one of the “Fathers of Impressionism” and a leading proponent of this art movement, which sought to capture in painting changing light and its effect on color and form. Although Pissarro experimented with Neo-Impressionism in the mid-1880s, he soon abandoned this style due to its lack of spontaneity and time-consuming technique. He preferred to paint in a more natural and unforced manner that reflected his deep connection to nature. However, his four-year foray into Neo-Impressionism left its traces when he returned to his artistic roots, as evidenced by a new technical proficiency, well-planned compositions, and the unrestrained use of color.

In November 1899, Pissarro visited Moret for the first time. His son Georges Manzana-Pissarro, who was also an artist, had recently moved into a spacious house and studio in this charming village southeast of Fontainebleau on the banks of the Loing. Two years later, Pissarro received a second invitation to Moret. He was encouraged by his son, who assured him that this time everything he needed would be provided, including a lightweight field easel and a carrier for his painting supplies. During his brief stay in Moret from April 26 to May 15, 1901, Pissarro was less drawn to the village’s remnants of medieval architecture than he was to the surrounding landscape and the rows of poplars lining the river. He painted *Prairie à Moret* on a gloomy spring day, in “temps gris,” or cloudy weather, as he noted. Against a vast, still pale green meadow and an expansive sky, a row of houses stretches in a horizontal line behind the fields and river, interrupted only by the somewhat crooked, towering, and partly still bare poplars in the foreground. Painted in the spring of 1901, just two years before Pissarro’s death, this late work, along with four others from a total of seven landscapes in the *Moret* series, was purchased immediately upon his return to Paris by the prestigious Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, one of the oldest and leading institutions of classical Modernism. AN



## MAURICE UTRILLO

1883 Paris (FR) – 1955 Dax (FR)

*Rue sous la neige à Sannois*

Street under Snow in Sannois

c. 1914

Oil on canvas, 66.7 × 75.6 cm

Acquired 1976

Maurice Utrillo painted *Rue sous la neige à Sannois* in 1914 while staying at the Sannois Sanatorium. The alcoholic artist was under the care of Dr. Revertegart at the time, just as he had been two years earlier. Using deft brushstrokes, Utrillo captures a snow-covered street in Sannois, northwest of Paris. On the left side of the painting, we see the fences of upscale townhouses; the center shows a few pedestrians as colorful splashes of paint against the snow; and on the right side stands a low corner house with muted red walls displaying two inscriptions: “Vins et Liqueurs” and “Restaurant.” Utrillo’s artistic sensitivity effortlessly imbued this ordinary scene with a profound significance. Given his ongoing withdrawal treatment, the seemingly unremarkable image of the chilly, snow-covered street with the vibrant, commanding red of the wine shop can be interpreted as a symbol of his internal emotional condition.

Utrillo was the illegitimate son of Marie-Clémentine Valade, a model for nudes who became known as Suzanne Valadon. The Catalan painter and art critic Miguel Utrillo y Molins gave the frail child his name in 1891. Utrillo had a difficult childhood and adolescence. After a brief stint at the Crédite Foncier in 1896, he decided to pursue painting. The self-taught artist received guidance from the artists at his mother’s studio, but Utrillo was an excellent painter and draftsman by nature. He had an affinity for street scenes, which he would sketch, outline, and accentuate with quick brushstrokes. The French writer and art critic Francis Caro, who often observed Utrillo paint, described his swift painting manner as: “knocking out a picture of Montmartre in a few hours as if a magic hand had guided him.”<sup>1</sup> Utrillo had an innate ability to recognize and visually translate onto his canvas the picturesque qualities of a stained old wall or abandoned railroad tracks.

In his later years, Utrillo finally achieved the artistic success he had always longed for and found love with Lucie Pauwels, the widow of a Belgian financier. The two married in Angoulême in 1935 and settled into a prestigious villa in the elegant Paris suburb of Le Vésinet. VT

1 Quoted after Jürgen Claus, *Maurice Utrillo. Suzanne Valadon*, exh. cat. (Munich, 1960), p. X.





## EDVARD MUNCH

1863 Løten/Innlandet (NO) – 1944 Ekely/Oslo (NO)

*Self-Portrait*

1904

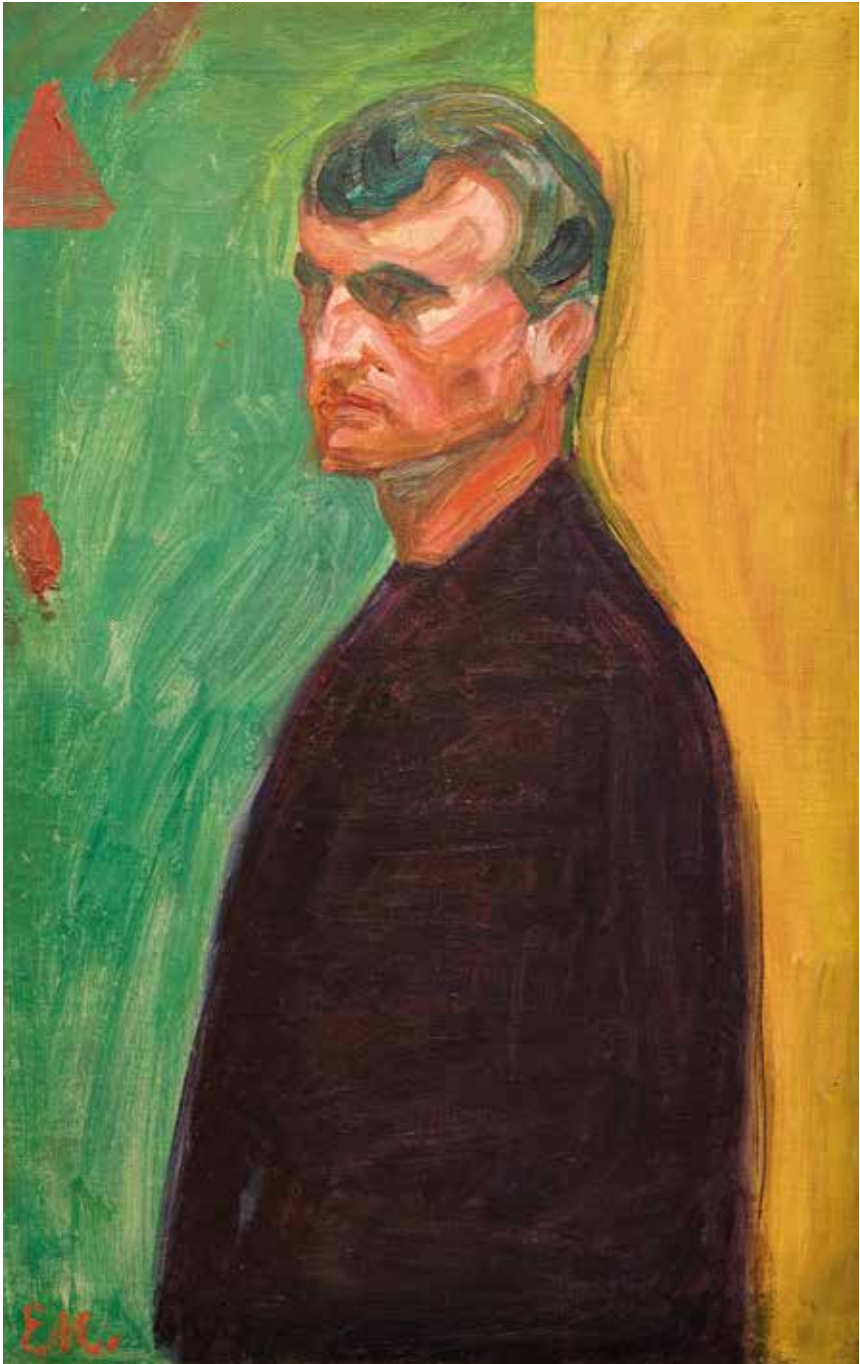
Oil on canvas, 69.7 × 44 cm

Acquired 2006

Edvard Munch painted this self-portrait against a two-color background in 1904. Two years earlier, he had celebrated his breakthrough as an artist in Berlin. German art dealers and collectors such as the ophthalmologist Max Linde from Lübeck showed interest in his work. At that point, he had also experienced a dramatic break-up with Mathilde Larsen, otherwise known as Tulla, the daughter of the largest wine merchant in Kristiania (today Oslo).

In his many self-portraits, Munch relentlessly documented his physical and psychological states. Using dynamic brushstrokes, he painted himself in dark clothing, turned to the left, monumental and solitary against an abstract background consisting of two blocks of color. Munch also uses a two-color background in other portraits of Tulla and himself. While his face is rendered with strong colors, his eyes are obfuscated by darkness. Eye contact with the sitter is denied to the viewer; it is time for introspection.

Munch was a master of depicting things in such a way that nothing is what it seems. At forty years old, he was full of drive and energy, yet the background, divided into two halves of different colors, suggests an inner conflict. Throughout his life the sensitive artist was vexed by conflicting forces, which he attributed to his ancestral heritage. On his mother's side, his ancestors were farmers, sailors, and timber merchants, and plagued by tuberculosis. His paternal line consisted of civil servants, priests, scientists, and artists. When Munch's parents met, his father, Christian Munch, was forty-four years old and a naval surgeon. His mother, Laura Cathrine, née Bjølstad, was more than twenty years younger than Christian and worked as a housemaid for a fellow doctor. In their short married life together, she gave birth to five children. Munch was only five years old when his mother, suffering from tuberculosis, died of exhaustion in 1868. When he was fourteen years old, his sister Johanne Sophie also died of tuberculosis. Munch was a sickly child for whom the bed became a place of torment. His life was haunted by gloomy childhood memories and his own wounded soul, which proved an inexhaustible source for his visionary painting. VT



## EMIL NOLDE

1867 Nolde/South Jutland (DK) – 1956 Seebüll (DE)

*Anna Wieds Garten*

Anna Wied's Garden

1907

Oil on canvas, 60.3 × 50 cm

Acquired 1999

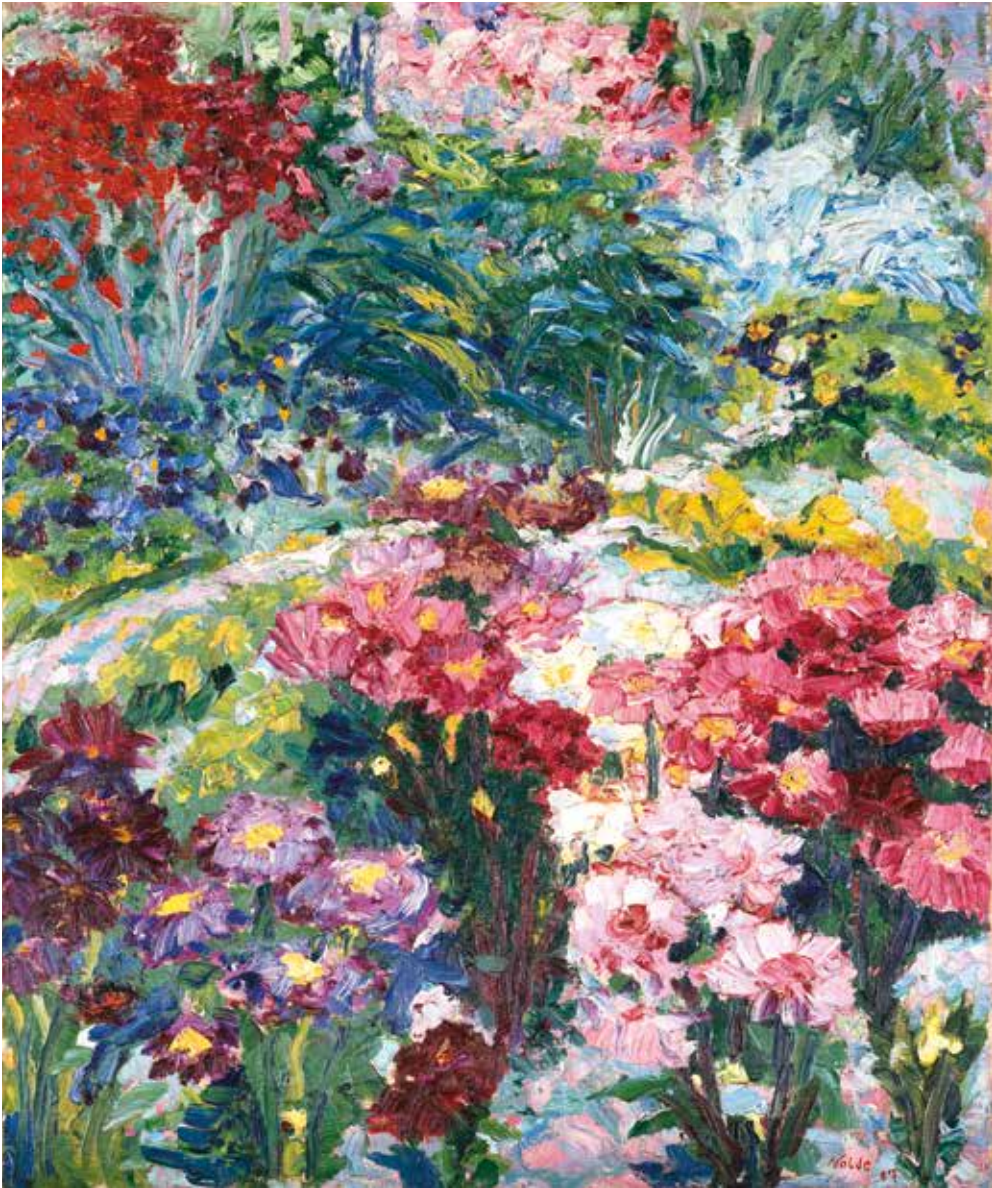
On October 21, 1907, Gustav Schiefler, a lawyer, art collector, and patron from Hamburg, wrote in his diary: “After long and careful consideration, Luise [Schiefler’s wife] decided to fulfill the Nolde dream by purchasing the small flower painting.”<sup>1</sup> This work, *Anna Wieds Garten*, would bring Luise Schiefler great joy into her old age, as she never tired of repeating in many letters to the Nolde couple. Emil Nolde and his wife, Ada, spent their summers between 1903 and 1916 on the Danish island of Alsen, then part of Prussia. “They inhabited a small cottage in [...] Guderup, which was furnished simply but tastefully. The cottage was surrounded by roses and was situated in the middle of a small and lush garden full of flowers [...]”<sup>2</sup> Later, colorful gardens adorned his estate in Utenwarf and, finally, the one in Seebüll. The love of flowers accompanied Nolde throughout his life, finding expression in numerous oil paintings and watercolors that he painted spontaneously without idealization, exaggeration, or symbolism. Nolde wrote to Schiefler in September of 1908: “Yet again, it is mostly the small flower gardens in which I painted. I am so fond of those bright [and] joyful, luminous colors. Those are such quiet, beautiful hours, walking or sitting among the fragrant and blooming flowers on a peaceful summer day, I would love my paintings to impart some of this beauty [...]”<sup>3</sup> In the late fall of the previous year, while on their way back from Alsen to Berlin, the Noldes stopped at the home of Schieflers in Hamburg. They brought with them six paintings of flowers and gardens, which were, “despite all the similarities in artistic spirit, fundamentally different in composition, tone, rhythm, and approach.” Luise Schiefler, “who was interested in purchasing a painting, demonstrated a quite independent judgment, which she defended against Nolde’s objections. In the end, she was right.” *Anna Wieds Garten* has proven itself consistently and is recognized in all quarters as a delightful decoration for any room.”<sup>4</sup> AN

1 Quoted after Indina Woesthoff, *Ada und Emil Nolde – Luise und Gustav Schiefler. Briefwechsel*, Vol.1: 1906–1914 (Berlin/Munich, 2023), no. 115, p. 112.

2 Gustav Schiefler, *Meine Graphiksammlung* (Hamburg, 1974), pp. 48–49.

3 Woesthoff 2023 (see note 1), no. 250, pp. 230–31.

4 Schiefler 1974 (see note 2), pp. 48–49.



## EMIL NOLDE

1867 Nolde/South Jutland – 1956 Seebüll (DE)

*Rote Abendsonne*

Red Evening Sun

1913

Oil on canvas, 87 × 102 cm

Acquired 1958

The sea, already darkened by nightfall, is agitated. Its foamy, white-crested waves toss beneath a shimmering, greenish sky. The sun is halfway down the horizon, its light reflecting off the sea. The last rays cause an almost unreal play of color in a trough of waves that narrows and leads toward the horizon like a path. What *Rote Abendsonne* represents is Expressionism in its purest form. There are no longer references to French Impressionism, as were evident in the subject and impasto painting style of *Anna Wiedes Garten* (p. 36)—they have all but disappeared. Short, individually placed dabs of color have turned into long continuous color swaths, explained in no small part by Nolde's preferred motifs of the time—the sea and the horizontally expansive landscape of the northern German lowlands.

The Düsseldorf Kunstmuseum bought *Rote Abendsonne* in 1935. Two years later, however, it was confiscated as “degenerate” and removed from the museum. Nolde's artwork was considered to have “international appeal” and was sold through the Swiss art trade for the benefit of the German Reich, like numerous other Expressionist works. National Socialism's relationship with Expressionism was ambiguous: An exhibition of contemporary art, in particular Expressionism, was organized by the National Socialist German Student League in Berlin in July 1933. The exhibition was closed after a few days though, only to be reopened shortly after with all references to the Student League removed. Joseph Goebbels, the propaganda minister, placed watercolors by Nolde in his offices to draw Hitler's attention to the artist.

Nolde's relationship with National Socialism, on the other hand, was less ambivalent. In 1933 he applied for membership in the Militant League for German Culture but was unsuccessful. He also falsely denounced Max Pechstein as a Jew. In 1933, and again in 1937, he successfully rejected suggestions that he leave the Prussian Academy of Arts. In 1941, following an appraisal of works by the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts, Nolde was expelled from the chamber, resulting in a ban on his practicing his profession as well as on exhibitions and sales. Nonetheless, Nolde managed to continue selling his paintings. RJ



## ERICH HECKEL

1883 Döbeln (DE) – 1970 Radolfzell on Lake Constance (DE)

*Dangaster Landschaft*

Dangast Landscape

1908

Oil on canvas, 64.3 × 72.2 cm

Acquired 2001

A red, sandy, dusty path that disappears into meadows and fields. In the background, an elevation in lush shades of green. Above, the blue sky. This is Dangast on the Jade Bight—or rather, a section of the landscape—named after the small seaside resort on the North Sea. Erich Heckel, a member of the Dresden artist group Brücke, visited Dangast for the first time in the fall of 1907, accompanied by his colleague Karl Schmidt-Rottluff. The following summer Heckel returned to paint *Dangaster Landschaft*, likely staying in one of the three “lodging houses” mentioned in a 1904 travel guide, as he did in subsequent years until his last visit in 1910. Roaming tirelessly, Heckel painted landscapes and the few village houses from ever-changing perspectives and in various light. Schmidt-Rottluff followed his lead and also spent the summers in Dangast until 1912. In 1910, Max Pechstein (p. 60), another Brücke artist, joined them as their guest.

Heckel was going through a phase of stylistic transition. Although his initial landscapes painted in Dangast were heavily influenced by Vincent van Gogh’s style, both in composition and the use of short, nervous, almost ecstatic brushstrokes, the structure of his paintings and brushwork settled down as early as the following year in *Dangaster Landschaft*. A similar transformation can be observed in Schmidt-Rottluff’s work, where the brushstrokes were no longer placed side by side but were applied over more extensive areas, sometimes without mixing, and individual elements such as house roofs and walls were set off against each other and isolated by black strokes.

The Brücke artists Heckel, Schmidt-Rottluff, and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (p. 66) formed a tight community in their early years. They were all architecture students at what is now the Technical University of Dresden, and none had any formal art training. They spent their summers in places like Dangast, the Baltic Sea island of Fehmarn, Nidden (now Lithuania), and the Moritzburg Ponds north of Dresden. Working together and learning from the same subjects and models led to the development of an early, uniform Brücke style. This becomes particularly evident in the works of Heckel and Schmidt-Rottluff from the summers of 1907 and 1908 spent in Dangast. The verso of *Dangaster Landschaft* shows the double portrait *Erich Heckel und Sidi Riha* (p. 64). RJ





## REMBRANDT BUGATTI

1884 Mailand (IT) – 1916 Paris (FR)

*Zebra and Grant's Gazelle*

1909

Bronze, 37 × 57 × 15 cm

Acquired 1997

*Nomen est omen*—meaning the name is a sign—could hardly be a more fitting portent for the sculptor Rembrandt Bugatti. Named after the famous Dutch painter, he was born into an art-loving family from Milan. His father was the furniture designer Carlo Bugatti; an uncle, the Italian painter Giovanni Segantini; and one of his godfathers was the sculptor Ercole Rosa, who, according to family lore, suggested the first name. In addition, visual artists frequented the family home, alongside composers Ruggero Leoncavallo and Giacomo Puccini, known for operas like *I Pagliacci*, *La Bohème*, and *Tosca*. The last name also has a familiar ring to it: Ettore Bugatti, the designer and manufacturer of legendary luxury automobiles, race cars, and sports cars, was the brother of Rembrandt Bugatti.

Bugatti began modeling at an early age; however, he never attended an art school or academy. Instead, he was trained by his father and Italian-Russian sculptor Paolo Troubetzkoy, who was also a family friend. Bugatti's models were almost without exception animals, which he literally "portrayed" in the menagerie of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris starting in 1903, and at the Antwerp Zoological Gardens from 1907. Just as Impressionist painters set up their canvases outdoors, he positioned his modeling stand in the animal enclosures. He meticulously observed his models, pioneering the art of portraying animals as individuals, such that they were even recognizable by their keepers. *Zebra and Grant's Gazelle* was no exception to this approach. The zebra and the dainty, much smaller gazelle face each other in an intimate tête-à-tête. Instead of resting on a plinth, which was the norm for small sculptures at that time, the animals were placed on a thin slab miming the sandy soil of their natural enclosure.

Bugatti signed an exclusive contract with bronze caster Adrien Hébrard a year after arriving in Paris in 1904. Hébrard was renowned beyond Paris for his leadership in the quality of castings and surface treatment. The casts capture every detail, including Bugatti's fingerprint from modeling. Only a few copies of each casting were usually produced. RJ



## FRANZ MARC

1880 Munich (DE) – 1916 Braquis, near Verdun (FR)

*Rote Rehe I*

Red Deer I

1910

Oil on canvas, 88.3 × 87.6 cm

Acquired 1998

Franz Marc's *Rote Rehe I* embodies unison and harmony, evoked on the one hand by the motif and, on the other, by a plain yet subtle pictorial mise-en-scène. Four deer can be seen in a tree-covered landscape. Two of the animals are turning around—one is standing next to a tree with its neck and torso curved around the slender trunk, while the other faces the same way and looks into the scene. The two additional deer move in opposite direction to one another, possibly searching for food or grazing. The bodies of the deer on the fringes have been cropped by the edge of the picture, which gives the impression that the picture is a section of a frieze due to the relatively narrow space within which the animals are placed. However, this effect is counteracted by a green and a blue tree trunk conspicuously leaning toward each other to form a kind of gateway. The two deer are positioned centrally in front of this gateway, which frames not only them but also a view of the hills in the background.

Marc, together with August Macke (p. 58), argued that humans possess not only an external but also an internal “capacity for experience.” They believed that modern art’s objective should be to blend these two aspects into a novel form of expression: Marc’s *Rote Rehe I* satisfies this objective with its vivid hues and tranquil aura that exudes a meditative serenity. *Rote Rehe I* was created in 1910. At the beginning of the following year, Marc and Wassily Kandinsky met and joined forces to create the “editorial board” of *Der Blaue Reiter*. Many artists, including Macke, Alexej von Jawlensky (p. 62), and Paul Klee (p.76), were affiliated with the group. It did not, however, develop into an artists’ group along the lines of the Brücke (p. 40) in Dresden. Eventually, in 1912, Mark and Kandinsky published the *Der Blaue Reiter* almanac, a highly influential artists’ publication of early Modernism.

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 brought an end to *Der Blaue Reiter*. Kandinsky and Jawlensky left Germany, while Macke was drafted and killed in action only a few weeks after the war began. Marc, like many Germans at that time, was filled with war euphoria and joined as a volunteer. He perished in early March 1916 during a reconnaissance expedition near Verdun. RJ



## STANISLAW KUBICKI

1889 Ziegenhain/Schwalmstadt (DE) – 1942 Warsaw (PL)

*Hirschkuh mit Jungem IV*

Doe with Fawn IV

c. 1931

Oil on canvas 100 × 80 cm

Acquired 2022

Consistent with the principles of Cubism, every element in Stanislaw Kubicki's painting—animals, landscape, and background—is reduced to angular surfaces. They consist of small, mostly square dots that serve as an internal framework and vary in tone, creating the impression of light and shadow. Kubicki uses smooth transitions, especially in the lower part of the painting, to depict the structures of the forest floor. This technique is reminiscent of the color fields in the foreground of Franz Marc's *Rote Rehe I* (p. 44), painted two decades earlier. The doe's body, which constitutes the picture's most prominent and relatively unstructured shape, is sharply contrasted against the background. With just three angularly broken straight lines, Kubicki masterfully captures the essence of a doe's back and neck. Her leg is gracefully extended as she leans toward the fawn, gazing at it with her half-rounded eyes while taking in its scent. The fawn's body shape is fractured into multiple pieces, smaller than the doe's. The head and torso are nearly inseparable, and only three legs are visible—one aligned with the mother's leg while the other two extend in opposing directions. The middle legs form an acute triangle pointing toward the doe, which Kubicki highlights as a symbolic representation of the strong bond between the mother and her fawn.

After abandoning his architecture studies, Kubicki transferred to the Königliche Kunstschule in Berlin in 1910. There he met Margarete Schuster, his future wife and fellow artist. Kubicki established contacts with Polish cultural figures during World War I while stationed in Poznan. He contributed to German and Polish magazines and artists' collectives. He also exhibited in both countries, varying the Cubist style he developed around 1920 but ultimately remaining true to it. For political reasons, Kubicki emigrated to Poland in 1934, while his wife remained in Berlin. The couple divorced in 1937 to protect their family, but they continued to have contact. In 1940 Kubicki joined the Polish resistance. He was arrested and probably died of torture at the hands of the Gestapo in January 1942. RJ



## EGON SCHIELE

1890 Tulln an der Donau (AT) – 1918 Vienna (AT)

*Damenbildnis (Wally Neuzil)*

Portrait of a Lady (Wally Neuzil)

1912

Gouache and pencil on paper, 24.8 × 24.8 cm

Acquired 1998

With a slightly tilted head, reminiscent of a Gothic Madonna, Wally Neuzil gazes out of the canvas, her lips red, her left cheek rouged. Her hands are rendered in the typical Egon Schiele manner, with closed, elongated fingers. One hand points upward, the other downward, running parallel to each other and enclosing an area that comprises rectangular and pointed shapes. This area appears as an ornament, detached from Wally's body. Nevertheless, it is most likely a piece of clothing or, more specifically, a kimono made of relatively sturdy fabric.

At the time Schiele was painting Wally Neuzil, he had already attracted a small circle of collectors, particularly of his drawings. A number of intellectuals were also supporting him through publications. His mentor was none other than Gustav Klimt. They first met in 1907 when Schiele was still a student at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. Inevitably, the young student was influenced by the doyen of Viennese art around 1900. Despite the differences in their painting styles, Schiele's flat treatment of the background and his design of the kimono-like garment reveal Klimt's undeniable impact. It is also possible that Schiele was introduced to Wally Neuzil by Klimt himself.

Like most artist models of the time—who were almost exclusively women—Wally Neuzil's origins were dubious. The boundaries between professional modeling, prostitution, and exploitation were blurred. Wally was born in 1894. Her mother was a day laborer, and her father passed away when she was still a child. With five daughters, her mother moved to Vienna in 1906, frequently changing residences. Wally and her sisters probably received no formal education. In 1910 or 1911, Wally became Schiele's model and lover. They lived in a common-law marriage, and Wally stood by him even when he was accused of seducing a minor, an allegation which turned out to be baseless. Even so, since children were exposed to his nude drawings, Schiele was sentenced to three days of detention for "disseminating indecent drawings." The relationship with Wally Neuzil only came to an end when Schiele married another woman in June of 1915. RJ





## GUSTAV KLIMT

1862 Baumgarten, near Vienna (AT) – 1918 Vienna (AT)

*Kirche in Unterach am Attersee*

Church in Unterach on the Attersee

1915/16

Oil on canvas, 110 × 110 cm

Acquired 2011

“It is dreadful, just awful here in Vienna, everything is withered, hot, horrid, and on top of that, so much work, the ‘hustle and bustle’—I long to get away like never before,” wrote Gustav Klimt to his confidant and life partner, Emilie Flöge, on August 1, 1901. Klimt could hardly wait to go on his summer holiday to the Attersee, where, until 1906, he usually spent several weeks a year with Emilie Flöge. He always took his painting materials with him, along with a telescope and, from 1903, a “seeker,” a simple piece of cardboard with a square hole cut in it. Klimt used the telescope to search for motifs and his homemade “seeker” to determine the composition he wanted to capture in the painting.

Klimt painted more than two dozen landscapes during these summer holidays, completing a significant portion of them in his studio in Vienna. In the early years, he created them in quick succession. In letters to his lover Marie Zimmermann, he mentions six paintings that he completed in 1900 and six or seven the following year, which he hoped to bring back to Vienna. By 1915/16, he was producing only half as many paintings each year, including *Kirche in Unterach am Attersee*. Unterach is located opposite Weißenbach, where Klimt and Emilie Flöge spent their summer vacations from 1914 to 1916. Klimt depicted the town from the lakeside. The towering church, trees, a multistory building by the shore, and a boathouse are reflected in the water, with a grassy slope rising in the background.

For *Kirche in Unterach am Attersee*, Klimt employed the *alla prima* technique, which means he painted without underdrawing and without subsequent corrections. Each brushstroke remains visible, creating the effect of everything shimmering as if in bright sunlight. He also abandoned the “correct” perspective of individual elements in the painting. As a result, the image appears strangely “flat,” lacking in depth. In both his landscapes from the Attersee and his numerous portraits of women, Klimt pursued stylization: moving away from the landscape or person as perceived by the eye toward an aestheticized, ornamentalized depiction. RJ



## HENRI MATISSE

1869 Le Cateau-Cambrésis (FR) – 1954 Nice (FR)

*Jeune femme à la fenêtre, robe rayée bleu*

Young Woman at the Window, Blue Striped Dress

1921/22

Oil on canvas, 65.2 × 54.7 cm

Acquired 1995

Henri Matisse painted *Jeune femme à la fenêtre, robe rayée bleu* in Nice during the winter of 1921–22, a period of great productivity during his career. He spent the colder months in the South of France beginning in 1917, where the southern light shifted his color palette. In September 1921, Matisse settled into a spacious third-floor apartment on Place Charles Félix in the old town of Nice, which provided the artist with two workrooms and a stunning view of the Promenade des Anglais and the Baie des Anges (Bay of Angels). He arranged his models and still lifes in the larger room with two windows and a fireplace.

Inside this room stands a young woman, the ballerina Henriette Darricarrère, dressed in a white gown with blue stripes and gazing out the closed window at the sea and the grand bay of Nice. Inside, the walls are decorated with a floral pattern, and a red carpet covers the floor. Outside, one can make out the low, pink-washed front of a house with a passage to the sea, the beach with two palm trees, and a few people with umbrellas. The opposite western shore is clearly visible in the distance. Matisse's favorite model from 1920 to 1927 was Darricarrère, whom he met at the Hollywood-inspired Studios de la Victorine in Nice when she was 19. In the painting, Darricarrère is positioned turning slightly to the left, with her right hand resting on the window transom, while her left hand holds a letter placed behind her back. Below the window is a picture frame covered with a colorful patterned fabric, a typical backdrop Matisse often used in his compositions.

Here, Matisse skillfully plays with the relationship between indoor and outdoor spaces, showing an interior scene and a landscape as a picture within a picture. In Nice, he frequently created scenes that take place in front of partially open windows and balcony doors. Matisse's style is consistently characterized by direct, clean, self-contained arrangements with equally well-composed foregrounds, middle grounds, and backgrounds, the color schemes and luminosity of which have a moving effect on the viewer. Holding a letter as she gazes out at the sea, the woman standing by the window exudes a sense of yearning for distant shores, summertime, and the person who wrote the letter but is not there with her. VT



## PIERRE BONNARD

1867 Fontenay-aux-Roses (FR) – 1947 Le Cannet (FR)

Le Cannet, la route rose

Le Cannet, the Pink Road

c. 1938

Oil on canvas, 55.5 × 63 cm

Acquired 1996

*La route rose* depicts a section of Avenue Victoria facing southeast, just below Bonnard's estate Le Bosquet in Le Cannet in the South of France. As we gaze at the painting that seems to depict a sunny spring day, the wide road leading deep into the scenery invites us to join the group of figures strolling in the shade of the towering canopy. The bold, seemingly hurried brushstrokes lend a sense of order to the well-balanced composition, where green, pink, yellow, and blue dominate the palette. The careful interplay of these hues, which vary in intensity, breathe life into the landscape while evoking a gentle Mediterranean ambiance.

Beginning in 1922, Bonnard spent much of his time in Cannes. Eventually, in 1926, he acquired a villa with a garden in the nearby village of Le Cannet, situated on a hill. During the winter and spring months, he often resided on the Côte d'Azur with his preferred model, the delicate and reclusive Marthe Boursin, whom Bonnard married in 1925. From their modest and sparsely furnished home studio, Bonnard explored the surrounding area's lush vegetation, constantly seeking new subjects and reimagining potential settings for his paintings. Despite the temptation to see this idyllic late work, with its contrasts of light and shadow, as a continuation of the achievements of Impressionism, Bonnard remained detached from that movement. He was by no means a plein air painter—he found the presence of the subject in the moment of painting to be distracting. Instead, he always carried a pocket diary with him, filling it with impressions and pictorial ideas which, filtered through memory and stimulated by imagination, he would later transfer to canvas in the seclusion of his studio. For instance, on April 14, 1938, in a brief yet dense sketch of the area near Le Bosquet that he would later develop into *La route rose*, he described the weather that day with the comment “beau” (beautiful).<sup>1</sup> AN

1 Véronique Serrano, *Pierre Bonnard. Au fil des jours. Agendas 1927–1946* (Strasbourg/Paris 2019), p. 186.



## LYONEL FEININGER

1871 New York (NY, US) – 1956 New York (NY, US)

*Die Hochzeitsreise*

The Honeymooners

1908

Oil on canvas, 51 × 44.5 cm

Acquired 1998

A couple walks energetically and with a playful verve toward an illuminated house. It is a self-portrait of the painter with the artist Julia Berg, whom he married in 1908. The building in the picture is probably the couple's home on Königstrasse in Berlin-Zehlendorf, where they lived until Feininger was appointed director of the graphic arts workshop at the Bauhaus in Weimar in 1919. The woman and the man can only be seen from behind, their silhouettes blending. The artist couple appears to be supporting each other. This harmony shows in their posture and, most notably, in their clothing. While the red and white of their long coats emphasize their differences, their silhouettes are one, not to be separated. Both coats have the same narrow cut. Interestingly, the coat of the shorter person, obviously that of the bride, has two buttons in the back, reminiscent of a man's morning coat, while the groom appears to carry a woman's handbag across his shoulder. The man's pants appear playful and feminine, whereas the cut of the woman's ankle-length skirt is somewhat ambiguous. Qualities considered characteristically feminine or masculine seem irrelevant to the bride and groom. Feininger portrays an emancipated couple here: similar attire, kindred hats, and short haircuts demonstrate a modern appreciation of women's and men's roles.

Prior to their time in Berlin, the couple lived in Paris and shared a studio. Under Julia's influence, Lyonel turned to printmaking and oil painting; she drew caricatures under his guidance. *Die Hochzeitsreise* illustrates this hybrid style. The sketch-like quality of the painting is achieved by emphasizing the lines around the clothes and the house while omitting specific details in favor of a balanced overall composition. For half a century, Germany was the adopted home of American-born Feininger. His fame stemmed from his time as a Bauhaus teacher and an exponent of an abstract form of Cubism. The couple emigrated in 1937 to escape Nazi persecution. CK





## AUGUST MACKE

1887 Meschede (DE) – 1914 near Souain-Perthes-lès-Hurlus (FR)

*Zwei Frauen vor dem Hutladen*

Two Women in Front of a Hat Shop

1913

Oil on canvas, 56.2 × 42 cm

Acquired 2002

August Macke painted *Zwei Frauen vor dem Hutladen* in 1913, a year before his death. In less than a decade, he had created an unparalleled body of work. As he explored Symbolism, Impressionism, Expressionism, Fauvism, Futurism, and Cubism, his style matured. His encounter with Robert Delaunay and his “window” series (*Fenêtres*) in 1912 brought refinement, with his compositions afterward featuring softer forms with smooth transitions and pure, bold colors.

The year 1910 ushered in a highly productive period, which Macke initially spent at the Tegernsee, where he became friends with Franz Marc (p. 44). Marc and Macke were members of the Blauer Reiter artists group. From 1910 to 1913 was a busy period in Bonn, followed by a creative, joyous time in Hilterfingen on Lake Thun in Switzerland between the fall of 1913 and June 1914. Thanks to the monthly allowance his wife, Elisabeth, née Gerhardt, received from her wealthy father’s estate, he could live a modest yet carefree life. Macke was also supported by Elisabeth’s uncle, Bernhard Koehler, an industrialist and art collector.

In Hilterfingen, Macke produced a series of paintings depicting hat and fashion shops that featured elegantly dressed ladies admiring the latest fashions. Macke’s first rendition dates from 1912; he later modified the style and content of these scenes and also captured them in drawings and watercolors. Macke found the subject matter for his artwork while exploring the promenades and arcades of small towns surrounding Lake Thun. *Zwei Frauen vor dem Hutladen* is a self-contained composition, with the central perspective and the diagonals of the architecture lending a certain degree of movement. Macke was keenly interested in the effects of light and its painterly realization through pure, luminous color. The “faceless” staffage figures seem to be nothing more than mannequins, but, like the entire group of works, this painting is cheerful and light-hearted, depicting an idealized, sophisticated world with a big-city vibe.

Before settling down in Bonn, Macke and his wife took a trip to Tunisia in 1914, where they had traveled with the painters Paul Klee (p. 76) and Louis Moilliet. Unfortunately, with the outbreak of World War I, Macke was drafted, and only a month later, he was killed in action while fighting in France. He was buried in a common grave. In 1991, his former residence and studio in Bonn was opened to the public as the Museum August Macke Haus. VT



## MAX PECHSTEIN

1881 Zwickau (DE) – 1955 West Berlin (DE)

*Die gelbe Maske II*  
The Yellow Mask II

1910

Oil on canvas, 52.2 × 52.2 cm

Acquired 1974

A woman with fashionably cropped hair, wearing a scarf wrapped turban-style, tilts her head back and gazes upward. Her mouth is slightly open, and the nose, eye, and forehead areas are covered by a yellow mask with greenish undertones. The eyes appear as dark holes. The colors of the mask and scarf are repeated in the background, while the red of the woman's lips is echoed in the neckline of her dress. Rather than a focus on the woman herself, Max Pechstein's painting explores the interplay and dynamics of color—yellow, red, green, and blue; the latter in shades ranging from almost black to a light blue-gray. While staying in Paris for nine months before returning to Germany in the late summer of 1908, Pechstein was deeply moved by the city and the vibrant “colorful” paintings of the Fauvist artists (from French *fauves*: wild beasts). He was a member of the Brücke group of artists, but chose not to go back to Dresden again where his artist colleagues Erich Heckel (p. 40, 46) and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (p. 66) lived and worked, instead setting up a studio in Berlin. Nevertheless, he maintained contact with Heckel and Kirchner and Dresden itself, even painting with them in nearby Moritzburg in 1909. The following year, he visited Heckel in Dangast and later met with both Heckel and Kirchner at the Moritzburg ponds. Pechstein may have also reached out to Munich artists such as Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, the latter of whom created *Rote Rebe I* (p. 44) around the same time as Pechstein's own *Die gelbe Maske II*.

The Fauves' impact on the Brücke artists' art is impossible to miss. Pechstein played a significant role in this, as did the Henri Matisse exhibition in Berlin that Pechstein and Kirchner attended in January 1909. While Vincent van Gogh had been their primary influence up to that point, as evidenced by Heckel's *Dangaster Landschaft*, his style of nervous brushwork was replaced by a more generous, two-dimensional application of paint around 1910. This shift is evident in works such as *Die gelbe Maske II* and the double portrait *Erich Heckel und Sidi Riha*. Like Heckel and Kirchner, Pechstein also painted the reverse sides of paintings: the verso of *Die gelbe Maske II* (turned 180 degrees) features a young woman wearing a feathered hat. RJ



## ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

1864 (or 1865) near Torschok (RU) – 1941 Wiesbaden (DE)

*Er und Sie*

He and She

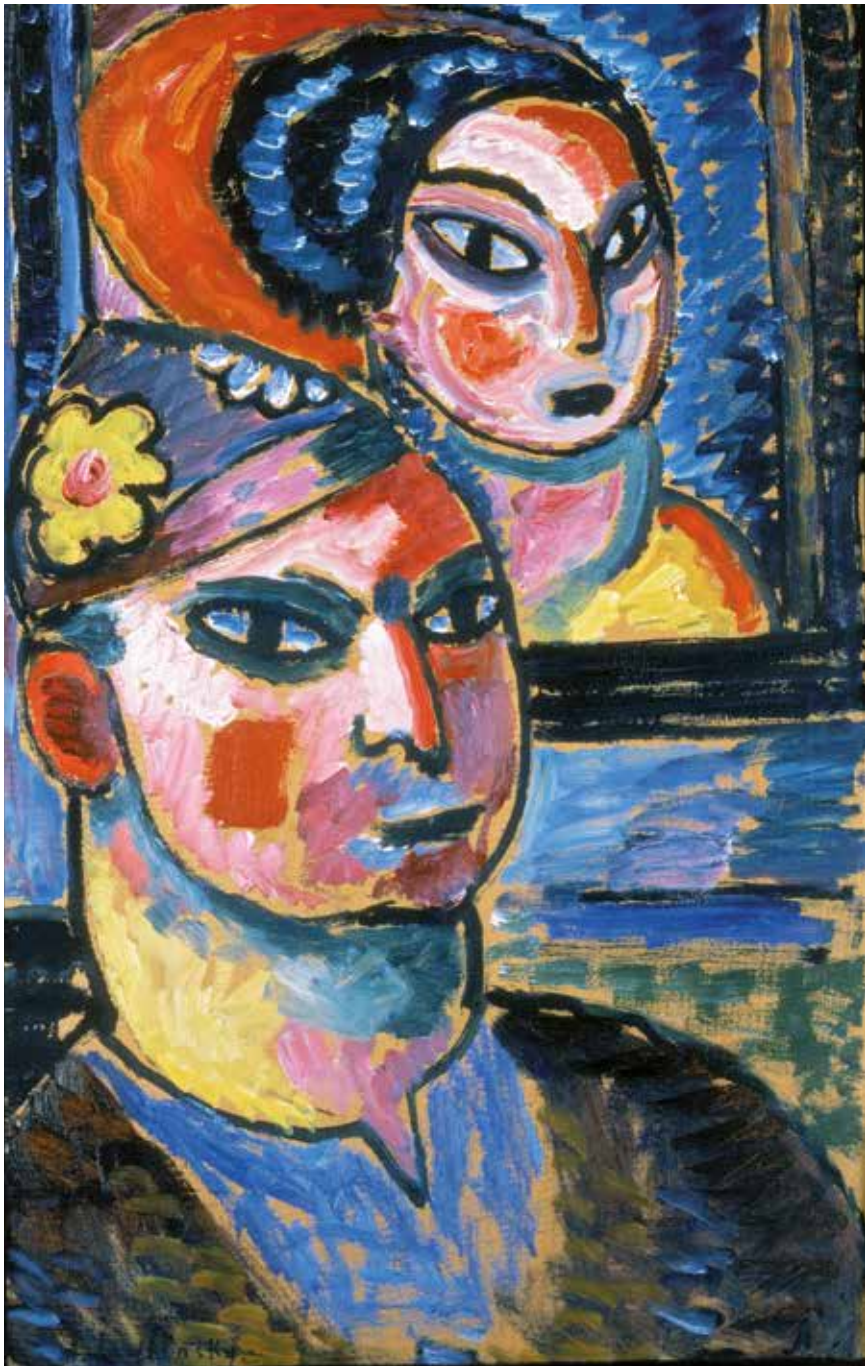
1912

Oil on cardboard, 66.4 × 42 cm

Acquired 1998

In the foreground is a male figure, in the background—as a “picture within a picture”—is a framed portrait of a woman. Both figures have similar posture and face in the same direction. The double portrait *He and She*, with its loose, gestural brushwork and intense color, is characteristic of the early Expressionist work of Alexej von Jawlensky. The painting shows one of the most preeminent artist couples of the avant-garde: “He” refers to Alexej von Jawlensky himself, while “She” represents Marianne von Werefkin. They met in 1892 during Jawlensky’s studies at the St. Petersburg Academy through Ilya Repin, the most prominent representative of Russian Realism. Werefkin, Repin’s former private student, was already a recognized artist and Jawlensky’s mentor. The couple moved to Munich in 1896, where they would remain together for nearly thirty years. Werefkin had a vision of Jawlensky being the tool to create a new form of art, something she felt she could not achieve due to her social position as a woman. In the face of this, she granted Jawlensky the upper hand as a man: “Everything, everything he received from me, I pretended to take—everything I poured into him, I pretended to receive [...] so that he wouldn’t be jealous of me as an artist, I hid my art from him.”<sup>1</sup> Against this background, Jawlensky’s double portrait symbolizes a complex, ambivalent relationship where he placed himself dominantly at the center of attention while Werefkin endured in the background as a frame of reference. During the early twentieth century, Jawlensky’s artistic style underwent a significant development. He was influenced by Werefkin and inspired by trips to Paris, where he encountered the works of Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, and Henri Matisse. As a result, he moved away from the late Impressionist tradition and embraced an expressive painting style that emphasized the unrestricted use of color, as seen in his piece *He and She*. This work was created when Jawlensky and Werefkin were members of The Blue Rider, a network of artists founded by Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc that is widely recognized as a key precursor of Modernism in art history. VA

1 Bernd Fäthke, “Marianne Werefkin und ihr Einfluß auf den Blauen Reiter,” in *Marianne Werefkin. Gemälde und Skizzen*, exh. cat. (Wiesbaden, 1980), pp. 14–34, here p. 17.



## ERICH HECKEL

1883 Döbeln (DE) – 1970 Radolfzell on Lake Constance (DE)

*Erich Heckel und Sidi Riha*

Erich Heckel and Sidi Riha

c. 1911

Oil on canvas, 72.2 × 64.3 cm

Acquired 2001

Some members of the Brücke artist group, including Erich Heckel, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (p. 66), and Max Pechstein (p. 60), were known to paint both sides of their canvases. Thus, the double portrait *Erich Heckel und Sidi Riha* is actually the verso of *Dangaster Landschaft* (p. 40). The decision as to what is considered the front or back of a double painting depends on how the canvas is stretched: the stretcher always being located on the “back” of a painting. In line with the subject matter, Heckel turned *Dangaster Landschaft* over and by ninety degrees to paint himself and Sidi Riha, thus transforming the classic rectangular landscape format into a portrait format that is still commonly used today, especially for full-length portraits.

Featured in this image are Heckel and Sidi Riha (legal name Milda Frieda Georgi). The two met in 1910, probably in or near Dresden, became a couple, and married five years later. In 1911 Heckel relocated to Berlin, where Riha pursued a career as a dancer. They settled into an attic space, which they furnished together with vibrant painted and batiked fabrics and sculptures crafted by Heckel himself. One such sculpture, which he partially carved from stair posts, can be observed on the right-hand side of the painting: a nude woman standing with her arms folded over her head. The sculpture incorporates elements from the traditional art of the indigenous population of sub-Saharan Africa and the Pacific islands of Palau; at the time, it was often derisively referred to as “Negro Sculpture.” The painting is likely to depict the attic apartment of the couple described earlier. Riha, who had been Heckel’s preferred model since 1910, is dressed in athletic apparel while the artist himself appears to be in costume. Her physique is feminine and curvaceous, except for her right hand, which appears stiff and awkwardly spread out, while Heckel’s forms are square and angular. Heckel is positioned in front of Riha, holding her by the waist and supporting her right leg, which extends upward. Meanwhile, Riha is looking out from the painting, directing her gaze toward a mirror, seemingly striving to perfect her posture. Notably, her foot points toward the sculpture in the background, suggesting that she may have served as a model for its creation. RJ





## ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER

1880 Aschaffenburg (DE) – 1938 Frauenkirch-Waldboden, Davos (CH)

*Weiblicher Akt im Badezuber*

Female Nude by a Bathtub

1912

Oil on canvas, 96.4 × 64.5 cm

Acquired 1999

A woman, who could be Kirchner's partner, the dancer Erna Schilling, is seen cautiously stepping into a bathtub, testing the water with her foot. To maintain her balance, she stands on one leg with her arms slightly spread. The woman's hairstyle raises questions: Is her hair pinned up, or is she is sporting a trendy new bob? It is hard to tell. She is most likely in Kirchner's studio, which clearly lacks a bathroom and may not even have a toilet. The bathtub is placed in the middle of the room with carpets underneath and to the right. An armchair can be seen on the right. Behind the woman, everything seems to be swaying and falling: two shadowy figures facing each other on the left, possibly another carpet above or behind them, and the keyboard of a piano, all in "converging perspective." Finally, at the room's back wall, one can see two carelessly placed pictures and a sculpture—or is the woman just entering the room once again?

In 1911, the artists' group Brücke relocated from Dresden to Berlin. Kirchner was the first to move to the German capital, in October, followed by Erich Heckel (pp. 40, 64) and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff toward the end of the year. This move brought about a fundamental change in their style. While the Dresden years were marked by a uniform Brücke style, in Berlin, each artist developed a unique mode of expression. This shift was likely triggered by the impact of the "big city" phenomenon, which Kirchner in particular explored. The artist's focus shifted from depicting landscapes and humans living in harmony with nature to capturing the dynamics and chaos of the city. On the one hand, the artist was intrigued by the fleeting connections that people make, such as when a prostitute and her john make eye contact amid the hustle and bustle of the city. On the other hand, are intimate scenes like the woman climbing into a hot tub. This motif significantly contrasts with the painting on the back, which Kirchner created a few years earlier in Dresden. There we see, absorbed in reading a book on a sofa, a female nude rendered in the vibrant palette of Brücke style. RJ



## KEES VAN DONGEN

1877 Rotterdam (NL) – 1968 Monte Carlo (MC)

*Comedia (Montparnasse Blues)*

1925

Oil on canvas, 101 × 81.5 cm

Acquired 1999

*Comedia (Montparnasse Blues)* hails from the heyday of European art, culture, and science in the twentieth century, the so-called Golden Twenties. The looming shadows of the Great Depression were largely ignored or suppressed, and people were eager to embrace new trends in modern life, especially in the big cities. As new social roles emerged, women became more independent and career-oriented.

Kees van Dongen's painting captures this shift in society. The title suggests a nightclub or blues atmosphere. "Artificial silk girls," a "gentleman" with a monocle and top hat, and "employees" in dark suits move leisurely past each other. Two women in translucent dresses wear fashionable bob haircuts and look at each other from the corners of their eyes. The two figures clearly show their breasts: one woman's dress is sheer enough to reveal them, while the other is entirely topless. As for the remaining figures, their gender remains somewhat ambiguous. They wear traditionally masculine attire, including suits, a top hat, and tuxedo, but also high-heeled shoes typically associated with femininity. In addition, the figures have strikingly made-up eyes and bright red lipstick, adding to the ambiguity. The monocle, a distinctive symbol of lesbian women in Paris during the inter-war period, provides an important clue. These women would gather at the "Le Monocle" bar in Montparnasse, which remained open until German troops occupied the city.

Van Dongen started his career as an illustrator for Dutch journals and magazines before moving to Paris in 1899. As a politically left-leaning artist, he rose to fame as a member of the Fauves, a modernist avant-garde movement that included Matisse, de Vlaminck, and Dufy, whose works are also held in the Heidi Horten Collection.

Van Dongen was more than just a renowned artist; his lavish lifestyle was just as famous as his art. His studio parties were attended by movie stars, politicians, and famous artists, evocative of the scenes portrayed in *Comedia*. Van Dongen was in close contact with the fashion designer Paul Poiret, who was credited with freeing women from the corset. Van Dongen frequently collaborated with models from Poiret's studio, using their clothes as templates. This could explain why the couturier was the first owner of this painting. CK



## MARC CHAGALL

1887 Vitebsk (BY) – 1985 Saint-Paul-de-Vence (FR)

*Les amoureux*

The Lovers

1916

Oil on canvas, 70 × 50 cm

Acquired 1996

Tenderly, a woman leans over a man, embracing him in her arms. Their eyes are closed, their faces resting together, their lips lightly touching—the love between two people could hardly be depicted more intimately, existing unconditionally and entirely in the moment. The couple in question are the renowned artist Marc Chagall and his wife, Bella Rosenfeld, who was born into a wealthy Jewish family in Vitebsk. They first met in 1909, the same year that Chagall painted his first portrait of Bella. They eventually married in 1915 and had a daughter named Ida the following year. In 1922, the family relocated to Paris via Lithuania, which Chagall had left eight years earlier. Due to the war, however, in 1941 the family sought exile in the United States, where Bella died in 1944.

Having received artistic training in Vitebsk and St. Petersburg, Chagall arrived in Paris in the late summer of 1910 equipped with the proceeds from the sale of two paintings and a small stipend. He briefly lived in a studio near the Gare Montparnasse and later moved into the artists' house La Ruche (the Beehive). *Le poète* (the poet), as Chagall was called by his fellow residents, quickly established himself in the Parisian art scene. Among other artists, Chagall had the opportunity to meet Robert Delaunay, who was the leading proponent of Orphism (from the French *orphique*, or mysterious), an offshoot of Cubism. Delaunay's brief influence on Chagall's work is evident in his painting *Les amoureux*. In the summer of 1914, Herwarth Walden, a prominent Berlin art dealer and publisher, offered Chagall a solo exhibition at his gallery Der Sturm (The Storm). Following the exhibit, Chagall journeyed to Russia, but with the outbreak of World War I, he was unable to return. As a result, Chagall remained in Russia for eight years.

Although Chagall was able to complete the paintings he created in Russia in 1922, including *Les amoureux*, the works he left behind in Berlin and Paris vanished without a trace. Chagall repainted many of these lost works from memory, which can be seen as an act of reappropriation of his artistic past and an act of self-assurance: Chagall retained a pictorial world that was ultimately profoundly rooted in Eastern Jewish culture, mysticism, and religion throughout his life (p. 72). RJ



## MARC CHAGALL

1887 Vitebsk (BY) – 1985 Saint-Paul-de-Vence (FR)

*Couple au vase de fleurs*

Lovers and Vase with Flowers

c. 1955

Oil on canvas, 64 × 75 cm

Acquired prior to 1987

Marc Chagall painted *Couple au vase de fleurs* around 1955. By then, he had already developed his unique style blending naive and expressive elements. Chagall was at the peak of his career, living in Saint-Paul-de-Vence in Provence with his Russian wife Valentina Brodsky, whom he fondly referred to as Vava. Ida, his daughter from his first marriage, introduced them, and they married in 1952. Chagall's newfound love served as motivation and inspiration for his work.

The gossamer composition is dominated by an oversized, lush bouquet of flowers placed in a comparatively small glass vase. On the left side of the picture, we see a pair of lovers, the bride and groom, floating out of the room through an open window into the night sky. The bride has flowing dark hair and wears a white dress complemented by white stockings. The groom, meanwhile, is dressed in a tailcoat, with the coattails blowing out of the window. His face resembles the color of the moon. Compared to the flowers, the couple's small size makes them appear like elves. Below them, a violin and a bowl of fruit can be seen, while the table and chair are only hinted at. The picture is bathed in shades of blue, creating a nocturnal mood and evoking a dreamlike vision reminiscent of the sensual flight of a wedding night.

In Chagall's colorful pictorial worlds, dreams, romantic fantasies, and memories of his impoverished youth in Vitebsk (now Belarus) blend seamlessly with his present reality. Following marriage to his first wife, Bella, in 1915, Chagall's oeuvre was imbued with countless motifs of brides and lovers, which he often combined with bouquets of flowers and open or closed windows. This harmoniously composed masterpiece is a wistful, nostalgic homage to his great love, Bella, who passed away in 1944, as well as a tribute to his present love, Valentina, who wore her long black hair in a bun during the day. Flowers symbolize joie de vivre and are the classic gift between lovers. Their delicate transience also reminds us of the cycle of life, of blossoming and fading. In Chagall's cosmos, flowers also represent France, the country where, according to the artist, he first saw bouquets of flowers. VT





## ALFONS WALDE

1891 Oberndorf, near St. Johann in Tyrol (AT) – 1958 Kitzbühel (AT)

*Auracher Kirche mit Hallerwirt*

Church in Aurach with the Hallerwirt Inn

c. 1928

Oil on canvas, 100 × 78 cm

Acquired 2016

From a high-angle view, almost from a bird's-eye view, Alfons Walde captures the small church of Aurach in the south of Kitzbühel, easily recognizable by its tall, prominent onion tower. The landscape and the deeply snow-covered buildings are bathed in a blazing midday light—even in the painting itself, the snow-covered surfaces seem to dazzle. In contrast, the shadowed, icy, blue-gray mountain slope is only partially lit by the sun. The slope occupies most of the background, leaving only a tiny glimpse of the winter sky. The red cloak or coat worn by one of the faint figures in front of the Hallerwirt inn provides the sole color accent in the painting. The other colors, apart from the aforementioned blue-gray, are restricted to various shades and tints of white, ochre, and brown.

Walde began studying architecture at the Technical University of Vienna at his father's request in 1910. However, Walde also took classes in nude and freehand drawing. During this time he formed friendships with Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele, who influenced his artistic style. In the 1920s, Walde independently developed the winter scene genre, depicting views of buildings and towns, snow-covered mountain landscapes, carnival parades, and skiers navigating challenging ascents and graceful descents. He used sketches and photographs as references. In 1924 Walde won a competition organized by the Tyrolean Tourist Office on the theme of "winter scenes." Two years later he designed his first poster for Tirol Werbung [Tyrol Advertising] and continued to produce numerous others.

In the 1920s, Walde's winter scenes such as *Church in Aurach with the Hallerwirt Inn* were highly sought after. Walde generated these paintings in quick succession, frequently altering the motifs only minimally. Furthermore, Walde established an art publishing house in Kitzbühel in 1923, successfully selling color reproductions and postcards of his paintings. Due to his popularity, Walde faced numerous imitations and forgeries of his work, against which he took legal action in the 1930s. RJ



## PAUL KLEE

1879 Münchenbuchsee (CH) – 1940 Muralto (CH)

*Geschwister*

Siblings

1930

Watercolor and oil on chalk-primed canvas, 70.7 × 45.2 cm

Acquired 1996

Two figures fused into one—heads and bodies have become melded together as if in an intimate embrace in Paul Klee’s artwork *Geschwister*. Pared down to the minimum, two distinct pairs of eyes mark the two faces, while two slender pairs of legs walk side by side in step. A small red heart in the center serves as a universally understandable symbol of love. Both figures share this life-giving organ, further emphasizing their connection. A biographical significance is certainly plausible; throughout his life, Klee maintained a close relationship with his older sister, Mathilde. This emblem of sibling love is part of a series of works begun in the summer of 1929 that are characterized by overlapping forms, hatched color accents, and the cheerfulness of their protagonists. The technical precision, lightness of line, and clarity and wit of Klee’s visual language give his pair of siblings a cartoon-like quality. The black outline playfully conveys the sense of closeness and familial bonds. Drawing and line work play a central role in Klee’s work as a whole. In 1920, Klee noted: “The first act of movement (line) takes us far beyond the dead point.”<sup>1</sup> He believed it is the line that brings life to art. In his view, the line serves as the starting point for the realization of all ideas. Poetically, Klee compared the creation of a drawing to a journey or a walk through open nature.

*Geschwister* was created in 1930, and two years later the artist would revisit the motif of two pairs of legs supporting a shared body in the work *Maske Furcht* (Mask of fear) under entirely different circumstances. The cheerfulness of the earlier work gave way to a sense of oppression, as the figure expresses fear in the face of the political situation in Germany. In 1932, the year the Nazi Party made significant gains in the Reichstag elections, the shift toward the right had become unstoppable. The following year, Klee was classified by the Nazis as “degenerate” and was forced to return to Switzerland as an emigrant with his family. VA

1 Cited in Werner Hofmann, *Die Grundlagen der modernen Kunst. Eine Einführung in ihre symbolischen Formen* (Stuttgart, 1978), pp. 419–20.



## RENÉ MAGRITTE

1898 Lessines (BE) – 1967 Brussels (BE)

*L'empire des lumières*

The Empire of Lights

1961

Oil on canvas, 50 × 73 cm

Acquired 1999

It is a paradoxical image: while the figure wearing a hat as seen from behind and the house in the background and surrounding nature is obscured in darkness, the sky above is a blue hue, suggesting daylight. The brightest source of light, however, emanates from the illuminated windows of the house. In the work's title, René Magritte speaks of the "empire of lights," and it is undoubtedly the idiosyncratic arrangement of light that takes center stage in this irrational scene. René Magritte is known for his mastery of enigmatic pictorial worlds, often featuring recurring motifs such as a man with a hat, clouds, apples, or a "picture within a picture." Despite the occasional strong narrative or symbolic character, he did not want his pictures to be interpreted or deciphered; instead, he created "unsolvable" images. By alienating what is familiar and placing people and objects in unusual settings, Magritte created a counternarrative to reality. The corporeal and the cerebral, the visible and the invisible, the animate and the inanimate, the real and the imaginary merge fluidly in his pictorial worlds. Magritte questions the very notion of reality and encourages us to consider the possibility of multiple realities.

Magritte was a prominent figure in the Surrealist movement, along with Salvador Dalí. Unlike Dalí, he did not incorporate the concept of the subconscious from Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic teachings. Magritte is also stylistically distinct: his paintings follow a precise illustrative expression that can be traced back to his early career as a commercial painter in advertising. He believed that the relationship between image, language, and object is essential in perception and reality. One of his most famous works, *La trahison des images* (The treachery of images) from 1929, features a painting of a pipe and the sentence, "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" ("This is not a pipe"). Magritte challenges the viewer's perception of reality with humor by breaking down the conventional definition and representation of reality. VA



## JOAN MIRÓ

1893 Barcelona (ES) – 1983 Palma (ES)

Trois femmes

Three Women

1935

Oil, enamel, and sand on canvas, 104.5 × 75 cm

Acquired 1996

July 1936: The Spanish Civil War began with a military uprising led by General Francisco Franco. The struggle between the Republicans, supporters of Spain's democratically elected government, and Franco's right-wing Nationalists was one of the country's darkest periods. Joan Miró, who had fled the war from Barcelona to Paris, where he had previously lived, was deeply concerned about the rise of fascism in Europe in the 1930s. In response to the burgeoning right-wing extremism, he created a group of works in 1935 and 1936 called *pinturas salvajes*, or "savage paintings." With depictions of disfigured bodies and distorted, ominous landscapes, themes of violence and struggle permeate Miró's paintings. They reveal the artist's dark feelings in anticipation of a global catastrophe: "I had an unconscious feeling of impending disaster. Like before it rains; aching bones, a feeling of asphyxiation, strangulation. It was a physical sensation rather than an intellectual perception. I sensed a catastrophe would happen soon, but did not know which: it was the Spanish Civil War and World War II [...]."<sup>1</sup> *Trois femmes* from 1935 is among Miró's "savage paintings," characterized by their darker motifs and colors. Miró's pictorial worlds underwent a significant transformation in the summer of 1934. Miró's earlier works had a universal formal vocabulary based on reduced signs and characterized by lightness. The figures in his later works, however, lack this quality. Thus, the faces and bodies of the "three women" are deformed, as if damaged by violence; organs and extremities seem to have been severed from their bodies. The artist increasingly experimented with the texture of the painting ground by adding sand to the black paint of the central figure, giving it a sculptural materiality and additional weight. Miró's *Trois femmes* are the protagonists of a world slowly approaching its inevitable end. VA

1 Quoted after Walter Erben, "Die Lust mitzuspielen," in *Joan Miró 1893–1983. Mensch und Werk*, ed. Ingo F. Walther (Cologne, 1988), pp. 51–83, here p. 80.





## FERNAND LÉGER

1881 Argentan (FR) – 1955 Gif-sur-Yvette (FR)

*Natur morte, fond bleu (à l'étoile)*

Still Life, Blue Background (with Star)

1937

Oil on canvas, 113 × 150.5 cm

Acquired 1999

In Fernand Léger's still life, you will not find the typical artfully arranged objects like books, glasses, plates, flowers, or food items. Instead, the composition consists of abstract elements that the artist created by playing with the contrast between organic shapes and industrialized, mechanized environments. Even the star on the left, mentioned in the title, is presented in an abstracted form. The blue background only partially covers the canvas against which the discrete monochrome color fields stand out and are clearly separated from each other. Léger also dispensed with the use of perspective. Freed from spatial depth, the arrangement lacks solid grounding; the various components are presented two-dimensionally without any clear anchor. The absence of a grounding surface in the composition allows each part to be appreciated for its unique value, standing independently. In his art, Léger pursued a reordering of reality by assembling objects and figures of various forms, as exemplified by this star. His figurative works often featured people, plants, or objects composed of tubes and cylinders. Still lifes, which played a crucial role in Léger's oeuvre, over time became increasingly abstract, moving away from the traditional concept of the genre.

Léger grew up in Normandy, the son of a cattle trader. His experience fighting in the trenches at Verdun during World War I was a defining event in his life. A German mustard gas attack nearly claimed his life. He also came into contact with laborers and ordinary city dwellers, who inspired him with how they coped with their harsh living conditions. From then on, he frequently incorporated their experiences into his work. The Nazis labeled Léger a "degenerate" artist, prompting him to flee to New York City. He later returned to France in 1945 and became a member of the French Communist Party. The artist's political and social ideologies deeply impacted his art, as he aimed to create works that were comprehensible and approachable to a broad audience. In 1950, he installed his monumental work *Les Constructeurs* (The builders) in the Renault car factory cafeteria near Paris. AW



## PABLO PICASSO

1881 Málaga (ES) – 1973 Mougins (FR)

*Femme à la couronne de fleurs*

Woman with Crown of Flowers

1939

Oil on canvas, 53.9 × 32.2 cm

Acquired 1997

In *Femme à la couronne de fleurs*, Pablo Picasso portrayed his longtime lover Marie-Thérèse Walter. He scratched the date of creation, June 18, 1939, into the impasto of the wet paint with his brush handle and signed it “Picasso.” The portrait showcases Picasso’s unmistakable style—the figure is in profile and has been reduced to essential details, with autonomous areas of color, without modulation or shadowing, set against a yellow background. Picasso’s fascination with the simultaneous representation of profile and front view is evident. Inspired by children’s drawings, Picasso painted both eyes, nostrils, and breasts—areas not all visible in a profile view. He applied colors with an impasto technique, sometimes using the brush like a pencil. Picasso abstracted his work, but it always remained figurative.

Walter and Picasso met for the first time in January 1927 at the Galeries Lafayette in Paris. At that time, Picasso was still married to Russian dancer Olga Khokhlova, and their son, Paulo, was only five years old. Walter became Picasso’s model and secret lover, and in 1935, she became the mother of their daughter, Maya, whose full name was María de la Concepción. Although Picasso separated from Khokhlova only when Maya was born, they remained married until Khokhlova passed away in 1955. When the portrait was painted, Picasso was in a two-year relationship with Dora Maar, a photographer whose real name was Henriette Theodora Markovitch. Nevertheless, on Thursdays and Sundays and French school holidays, Picasso spent time with Walter and Maya. There was a great rivalry between Walter and Maar, and Picasso could not decide between them, so he decided not to decide. He enjoyed the women’s wrestling for his favor.

Picasso created a series of portraits featuring his two lovers, using different color schemes to express their unique personalities. Walter, the sweet and gentle blonde, was typically depicted in lighter and more cheerful colors, while Maar, the self-possessed and vivacious brunette, was portrayed in bolder and more contrasting tones. Thérèse Walter, who committed suicide in Juan-les-Pins in 1977, is ever-present in Picasso’s oeuvre through hundreds of drawings and countless portraits. VT



## PABLO PICASSO

1881 Málaga (ES) – 1973 Mougins (FR)

*Plante de tomate*

Tomato Plant

1944

Oil on canvas, 73 × 91.5 cm

Acquired 1999

Pablo Picasso painted *Plante de tomate* during World War II when German troops occupied Paris. On the back of the painting, he dated it August 4, 1944. He had also painted the same subject the previous day, and created additional versions in the following days. With its red glowing fruit, the green plant served as a metaphor for his inner resistance and symbolized his hope for better times during this bleak period.

Despite the four years of occupation, Picasso chose to remain in Paris and painted still lifes of everyday objects that alluded to the deprivations of the subjugated city. Amid the food shortages of World War II, many Parisians resorted to growing their vegetables in window planters. One of Picasso's friends, the photographer Brassai, recounted in his memoirs from June 16, 1944, that Picasso had kept two pots of ripening tomatoes in his studio, of which he made drawings and gouaches. When street fighting erupted in Paris in August 1944, Picasso moved into Boulevard Henri-IV home of his partner, Marie-Thérèse Walter and their daughter, Maya. Walter also had tomato plants in her windows. This still life is one of a small group of nine oil paintings done in July and August 1944; each shares the same size canvas but alternates between portrait and landscape formats. The subject matter of each painting was a tomato plant positioned before an open or closed window. In this particular version, the window is wide open, and the plant is set in the center of the picture against a blue summer sky with the gray and black elements of a big city house flanking it. In typical Cubist fashion, Picasso dissolves these elements and the pot. The luxuriant plant, with its ripe red and young green tomatoes, its spreading shoots, and its lush green leaves, outshines the dreariness of the occupied city.

Returning to his studio on the rue des Grands-Augustins shortly after the liberation of Paris on August 24, 1944, Picasso saw himself as a revolutionary leading the fight with brush and paint. He joined the French Communist Party that same year and remained a member until his death. VT



## JEAN FAUTRIER

1898 Paris (FR) – 1964 Châtenay-Malabry (FR)

*Tête d'otage no. 3*

Hostage Head No. 3

1944

Oil on vellum on canvas, 55 × 46.3 cm

Acquired 1997

France, World War II: In October 1943, the National Socialists gained complete control over the country. However, a group of writers, intellectuals, and artists continued to speak out against political repression, injustice, and criminal activity, networking and publishing their work in underground literary texts and magazines. In 1942, Royal Air Force planes had dropped thousands of leaflets over France containing Paul Éluard's poem *Liberté* (Freedom). Jean Fautrier, a prominent artist, was also an active member of the French Resistance. His *Otages* (Hostages) series, created between 1943 and 1945, is regarded as one of the most important artistic expressions of the Resistance movement and was dedicated to those murdered in Nazi reprisals. The German occupiers had introduced radical measures, including a hostage policy that began in 1941, as a response to the increasing frequency and number of assassination attempts by the Resistance. The Wehrmacht ordained hostage status for all persons detained in France and ordered the execution of fifty to a hundred hostages in retaliation for every German soldier killed. Fautrier portrays these hostages as mere fragments and masks, devoid of their humanity and individuality and in a state of lifelessness.

In 1943, Fautrier was arrested and briefly imprisoned by the Gestapo. However, with the help of his writer friend Jean Paulhan, he managed to escape in April 1944 and hid in a psychiatric hospital near Châtenay-Malabry outside of Paris, using the false identity "Jean Faron." He set up a studio on the hospital premises, where he produced a significant portion of his *Otages* series. In a wooded area not far from the hospital, hostages were shot. As cultural life resumed at the end of the war, Fautrier's exhibitions were a vital reference point for the new political and intellectual scene. The art critic Pierre Restany described the *Otages* as expressions of "rage, fear, hatred, and impotence" while also symbolizing "human solidarity." André Malraux, a writer, former Resistance fighter, and later French Minister of Culture, stressed their significance as a memorial to those who died in World War II. VA





## JEAN DUBUFFET

1901 Le Havre (FR) – 1985 Paris (FR)

*Hommes et arbres somnambuliques*

People and Trees Sleepwalking

1945

Oil, sand, and putty on canvas, 96.5 × 161.5 cm

Acquired 1996

People, trees, and a house scratched into a thick layer of paint with just a few strokes—Jean Dubuffet’s *Hommes et arbres somnambuliques* may seem strikingly rudimentary. Rejecting prevailing painterly conventions, the artist discarded the importance of color and form and instead allowed the material to dictate his work. He experimented with the thickness and plasticity of paint application, overlapping layers of paint and mixing them at different stages of drying. He also incorporated non-art materials into the oil paint such as sand and putty, to add volume and further enhance the relief-like surface texture of the painting. He carved and scraped his motifs into the accumulated mass of paint to achieve a simple, childlike drawing effect. Dubuffet, rejecting conventional techniques, appeared to adopt a contrary approach that favored an uninhibited, sponaneous creative process. In 1949, he published one of his earliest theoretical works, *L’art brut préféré aux arts culturels*, in which he advocated “raw art” over “cultural art” and championed a style in which the creator pulls solely “from the inner self rather than from the drawers of classical art or any other art movement that happens to be in fashion.”<sup>1</sup>

Dubuffet decided to pursue art as a full-time career when he was forty-one years old and living in Nazi-occupied France. Even then, he was drawn to a naive, anti-academic, and anti-classical formal language, consciously countering the art the Nazis were propagating. Dubuffet actively opposed the Nazi belief in the superiority of the “self” over the “other,” who was deemed unfit to live. Instead, he chose to acknowledge the value of those who were considered “other.” The intellectual foundation of his Art Brut stemmed from his artistic defiance. In July 1945, Dubuffet traveled through Switzerland, visiting psychiatric hospitals and prisons; through his examination of the artwork created by those struggling with mental illness, he became convinced that humanity needed to break free from its traditional cultural norms in order to establish a fresh, groundbreaking form of art. VA

1 Quoted after Gerd Presler, *L’art brut. Kunst zwischen Genialität und Wahnsinn* (Cologne, 1981), p. 165.



## LUCIAN FREUD

1922 Berlin (DE) – 2011 London (GB)

*Girl in a White Dress*

1947

Color pencil and pencil on paper, 57 × 48 cm

Acquired 1996

Speaking of his early portraits, Lucian Freud himself admitted to being “visually aggressive”: “I would sit very close and stare. It could be uncomfortable for both of us.”<sup>1</sup> Even his first wife, Kitty Garman, was not spared in *Girl in a White Dress*. In 1947, a year before they married, Freud drew her in a girlish white dress with a frilly collar. She looks out of the picture almost skittishly, her large eyes wide open. Her lips are parted, her eyebrows plucked. Her gaze is fixed, with the pupil of her left eye circular, in contrast to the right pupil’s irregular shape. Each eyelash has been drawn individually. Nothing escapes Freud’s downright analytical gaze; every detail of the face is of equal importance and is reproduced accordingly. But Kitty Garman evidently feels uncomfortable and avoids the staring gaze of her future husband. She seems nervous and distrustful, as if she were being subjected to a “visual interrogation.” This is also true for other portraits that Freud made of his wife that same year, as well as later ones. She is always referred to as “Girl” in titles of paintings, never by name, such as in *Girl in a Dark Jacket*, *Girl with a Kitten*, or *Girl with Roses*. *Girl in a White Dress* was probably a preliminary sketch for those paintings.

Lucian Freud, grandson of the founder of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud, is best known for his large-format depictions of male and female nudes, especially those created in the 1980s and beyond. Like Francis Bacon with Henrietta Moraes (p. 136, Freud found muses in Leigh Bowery and his girlfriend Sue Tilley, whom he frequently captured in repose or sleeping. The two artists, in addition to their preference for individual models, also shared a lifelong friendship. They also both focused on representational or figurative art, putting them in the company of Georg Baselitz and Alex Katz (pp. 144, 146, 186). One, if not the central theme of the four artists mentioned above is the human form. RJ

1 Michael Auping, “Freud from America,” in *Lucian Freud: Portraits*, ed. Sarah Howgate, exh. cat. (London, 2012), pp. 37–55, here p. 41.



## SERGE POLIAKOFF

1900 Moscow (RU) – 1969 Paris (FR)

*Composition rouge bleu jaune blanc*

Composition Red Blue Yellow White

1955

Oil on canvas, 116 × 86 cm

Acquired 1996

From the corners, one yellow and three red jagged fields protrude toward the center of the picture. Together with other shapes, some rounded, some jagged, they enclose two elongated elements and form the backbone of Serge Poliakoff's abstract piece *Rouge bleu jaune blanc*. The outer edges of these elongated elements are also jagged, but they have a straight edge at their point of contact with each other, preventing them from interlocking. The elements could slide apart but are immovably wedged with the other shapes. Color is another important feature in his work: the shapes are entirely created as a result of the sudden collision of areas of color, with no intervening factor between them. Poliakoff believed that every form had two colors, one internal and one external. For this reason he applied successive layers of paint, with the lower, denser layers showing through the upper layer—as seen in *Rouge bleu jaune blanc*. It becomes clear that Poliakoff equates color with form, which he interweaves to create pictorial compositions that are both dynamic and “musical”: his works can be described as “optical tapestries of sound,” the resulting textures “complex yet amazingly simple at the same time.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1917 after the tsarist regime fell, Poliakoff left Russia and embarked on an adventurous journey through various cities, including Kyiv, Tbilisi, Istanbul, Sofia, Belgrade, Venice, Cologne, and Berlin, before settling in Paris in 1923. Initially, he worked as a guitarist in a nightclub and took on minor roles in theater and film to make ends meet. But in 1927 Poliakoff became deeply interested in mathematics, metaphysics, and, a little later, in art. He started creating abstract compositions in 1937 in addition to his vibrantly colored depictions of Russian folk scenes. He and his wife and son stayed in Paris despite the occupation, where he remained committed to his artistic pursuits and continued to create abstract works. Eventually his talent was recognized, and he achieved artistic success in the late 1940s, no longer needing to rely on odd jobs to support himself. RJ

<sup>1</sup> Nils Ohlsen, “Serge Poliakoff. Architekt einer bildnerischen Poesie,” in *Serge Poliakoff. Retrospektive*, ed. Christiane Lange and Nils Ohlsen, exh. cat. (Munich, 2007), pp. 29–33, here p. 32.



## KAREL APPEL

1921 Amsterdam (NL) – 2006 Zurich (CH)

Dog and Fish

1951

Oil and chalk on canvas, 80 × 80 cm

Acquired 1995

A cheerful dog with no ears and a vivacious fish happen to cross paths. The dog prances toward the left, as if singing a happy tune, while the fish gracefully flies in the opposite direction, soaring high above and flipping over to expose its dorsal fin. The painting predominantly features thickly applied impasto in shades of gray, blue, and yellow. Red-orange lines form a border around both animals to set them apart from the light background. The formal elements, such as strokes and circles, repeat themselves throughout the painting, creating a sense of unity between the two animals. Together, they fill almost the entire picture surface. The painting has a square format, which could make one think of rotating it 180 degrees so that the fish is swimming right-side up at the bottom and the dog is somersaulting in the air above it. However, the artist has signed his work at the top left to indicate the intended reading direction.

In this piece, Karel Appel masterfully recreates a childlike perspective of the animal kingdom. Although the dog has the correct number of legs, they are each unique and appear to be moving in opposing directions. The legs are roughly placed in their anatomically correct positions. The body is wing-like, reminiscent of a butterfly, while the head has a curiously human appearance.

The painting dates back to the final year of the CoBrA artists' group, which originated in Paris in 1948 as a response to Surrealism championed by artists like René Magritte (p. 78). Karel Appel, Christian Dotremont, Asger Jorn, Constant, Corneille (p. 98), and the Belgian poet and painter Joseph Noiret convened at the Le Notre Dame Café to realize their vision of a more avant-garde artistic direction. CoBrA is an artificial word created from the first letters of the founding members' hometowns: Copenhagen, Brussels, and Amsterdam. In addition to the groundbreaking departure from traditional artistic conventions, the movement is characterized by a shift in content, featuring naive, spontaneous, and "primitive" forms of expression.

Appel's fascination with the theme of "questioning children" and their unique perspective on the world, as demonstrated by *Dog and Fish*, started during his travels through devastated postwar Germany. CK





## CORNEILLE

1922 Liège (BE) – 2010 Auvers-sur-Oise (FR)

*Untitled*

1958

Oil on canvas, 49.5 × 73.2 cm

Acquired 1995

In 1958, Corneille produced a series of paintings presumably inspired by the coastal region of Brittany. Some paintings have titles such as *Ivresse de la mer* (Sound of the sea) or *Jeune paysage* (Young landscape). These works closely resemble the untitled piece from the Heidi Horten Collection. Is it a colorful hilly landscape or a drift line against the red evening sun? What Corneille shows us remains abstract. Nonetheless, the piece exudes a cheerful and airy vibe through its vivid colors. Meanwhile, the black outlines reinforce this impression by sparking the viewer's imagination.

Corneille, like Karel Appel, was one of the co-founders of the CoBrA group and shared a lasting friendship with him that began in 1940 at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam. They were studying during a time of war in an occupied city. This period was critical for Corneille's development as an artist as it solidified his belief in the value of free and independent expression, aligning him with other artists of the era. Unlike Picasso (p. 86), for example, he was not concerned with pointing out and processing war events but aimed to create counter images. Members of CoBrA, much like the Expressionists before them, rejected the images war had left in their minds with a style that was free of rules and the burden of memory, drawing inspiration instead from children's drawings and depictions of exotic innocence.

This painting predates Corneille's debut at documenta II in Kassel in 1959 by one year. Alongside pieces by the CoBrA artists, the Heidi Horten Collection also includes works by Paul Klee (p. 76), who significantly influenced Corneille's art. The collection boasts an exciting set of pieces highlighting the progression from the avant-garde of the 1920s and 1930s to the abstract art of the postwar era and the 1960s. CK



## JOSEF ALBERS

1888 Bottrop (DE) – 1976 New Haven (US)

*Homage to the Square: Blue Mirage*

1959

Oil on Masonite, 102 × 102 cm

Acquired 1995

Squares of varying sizes and colors arranged on top of each other—in his body of work, comprising over two thousand individual pieces titled *Homage to the Square*, Josef Albers follows a formula of pictorial composition that is simple yet stringent. Instead of adhering to a conventional painting process, he employs color as an independent design tool, thereby revealing his unique artistic style. Albers used industrially produced paint, which he applied unmixed directly from the tube to the painting surface and distributed with a painting knife. He meticulously recorded the product numbers of the respective colors on the backs of his paintings. Although the series title implies that the focus is on the geometric form, the primary emphasis is on exploring the impact of the colors used. Crucial for Albers is the fundamental realization that color is “the most relative medium in art.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, Albers’s compositions demonstrate the discrepancy between the physical properties of individual colors and the perception of them when viewed alongside other colors.

To accompany his visual work, Albers wrote *Interaction of Color*, a “School of Seeing” that he intended as a teaching tool for artists, educators, and students. It was a significant milestone in his lifelong exploration and teaching of color. Albers had been teaching for more than four decades by the time the book was published in 1963. In the 1920s, he taught at the Bauhaus and worked alongside such artists as Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee. After the institution closed in 1933 due to Nazi oppression, Albers accepted an invitation to teach at the newly established Black Mountain College in North Carolina, where he taught Donald Judd and Robert Rauschenberg among others. Finally, from 1950 to 1958, Albers taught design at Yale University. He continued to work on his *Homage to the Square* series, which he had started in 1949 with black-and-white studies, until he died in 1976. VA

1 Josef Albers, *Interaction of Color* (New Haven, 1963), p. 1.



## MARK ROTHKO

1903 Dwinsk (RU), today Daugavpils (LV) – 1970 New York (NY, US)

*Composition*

1959

Oil on paper on fiberboard, 76.6 × 59.9 cm

Acquired 2000

Expansive, blurred, monochrome fields of color that seem to merge into one another, as in *Composition*, are Mark Rothko's unmistakable formal language. Rothko was part of a generation of artists in Western Europe and the United States who, after the trauma of World War II, rejected artistic conventions and sought new, free forms of expression, making abstraction the universal language of art.

Mark Rothko, born Marcus Rotkovich in present-day Latvia, immigrated to the United States with his family in 1913. After briefly studying the history of psychology and philosophy at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, he moved to New York in 1924. While his early work was figurative, he developed an abstract, biomorphic language of form under the influence of Surrealism in the 1940s before devoting himself to painting fields of color. Rothko's paintings—as well as those of such artists as Barnett Newman, Helen Frankenthaler, Ad Reinhardt, and Clyfford Still—were defined by color fields. In 1955, art critic Clement Greenberg, one of the most influential proponents of postwar American Modernism, coined the term “color field painting.” For Rothko, painting was, first and foremost, a source of sensory experience through which fundamental human emotions are conveyed: “I am not interested in the relationships of color or form. [...] I'm interested only in expressing basic human emotions—tragedy, ecstasy, doom, and so on.”<sup>1</sup> To fully experience his art, Rothko emphasized the need for meditative perception. He believed his works should be viewed in darkened rooms at close range to allow for contemplative immersion. One of his major works exemplifying this approach is the painterly decoration of an interdenominational chapel in Houston, Texas. Commissioned in 1964 by collectors John and Dominique de Menil, the chapel features fourteen monochromatic murals over ten feet high, transforming the spiritual space into one of transcendence. The building, now known as the Rothko Chapel, was posthumously dedicated to the artist at its unveiling in 1971. VA

1 Miguel López-Remiro, ed., *Writings on Art: Mark Rothko* (New Haven/London, 2006), p. 119.



## ALBERTO BURRI

1915 Città di Castello (IT) – 1995 Nice (FR)

*Rosso P. I*

Red P. I

1956

Mixed media, collage, oil, plastic foil on canvas, 100 × 70 cm

Acquired 1997

For *Rosso P. I*, titled, signed, and dated “56” on the reverse, Alberto Burri worked with charred plastic foil on canvas for the first time. The paint was applied in impasto, and the foil is partially painted over. Whereas Burri only used red in the “material wounds” in his earlier *Sacchi*, in *Rosso P. I* the bright red dominates the entire composition, contrasting only with black. The haptic surface with its “wounds” and the vibrant expressiveness of the red brings the furioso of color to life. The black color is reminiscent of dead body parts, while the red evokes involuntary associations of human blood and wounds. *Rosso P. I* is the first of Burri’s red *Plastiche* series, followed by a series of black, white, and transparent *Plastiche*, whose formal aesthetics also remind one of injured skin.

Burri’s extensive body of work, which includes the *Sacchi*, *Legni*, *Plastiche*, and *Ferri* series (paintings made of, respectively, burlap, wood, plastic, and metal), was heavily influenced by his experiences during World War II and his career as a doctor. During the war, as a doctor of tropical medicine who had just received his doctorate in 1940, he was deployed to Libya, taken prisoner, and sent to an American camp in Texas, where he began to paint. After the war, he gave up his medical practice and used his material paintings as a way to process the traumatic memories of war, particularly the memories of the wounded and dying.

Throughout his works, Burri has repeatedly recreated the physical sensations and emotional pathos of injuries and their treatment through bandaging, suturing, and surgical removal. In his 1981 Land Art installation in Sicily, the artist ingeniously performed a “medical” procedure to remedy a gaping wound in the landscape. He poured a thick layer of concrete over the remains of Gibellina Vecchia, a village destroyed by an earthquake in 1968, thus rendering the original village’s volumes and narrow streets walkable and tangible again. Burri’s innovative manipulation of inherently worthless materials like burlap, rusty nails, and burnt plastic, his process-driven integration of chance, and his formal composition techniques bridge the divide between Art Informel and Arte Povera, as well as between European and American postwar art. VT





## LUCIO FONTANA

1899 Rosario (AR) – 1968 Comabbio, near Varese (IT)

*Concetto spaziale, Attese*  
Spatial Concept, Waiting  
1960

Water-based paint on canvas, 60 × 92 cm  
Acquired 2000

*Concetto spaziale, Attese* from 1960 belongs to Lucio Fontana's group of works *Tagli* (slashes). Born in Argentina, the artist moved to Milan in 1905, returned to Argentina in 1922, before moving back to Milan again in 1928, where, in the 1940s, he developed the *Bucchi* (holes) and the *Tagli* series in the 1950s. For this innovative pioneer of Modernism, the perforation of the pictorial surface is his most important artistic discovery. Fontana simultaneously wanted to become a sculptor like his father and a painter like his grandfather. With his spatial concepts, he succeeded in combining the two. Fontana's monochrome color surfaces are free of naturalistic and figurative elements. Slashing the canvas was not a form of destruction for him, but a creative act to open the flat color surface into three-dimensional space. After preparing himself emotionally, he would make these slits using very precise body movements. For Fontana, they represented a profound permeation of the color surface. The vertically placed slits have the effect of rhythmic strokes, and the artist varied them in number, width, and length just as he did with the color of his paintings. Fontana imagined the slits and holes allowed for the dynamic movement of light and shadow in the composition, connecting them to the infinity of space. Fontana's intention was not to destroy but to expand, to break through the boundaries of the panel painting, and to take his works into the fourth dimension.

While the creative act entailed a concentrated dynamic process, the result appears spiritual and contemplative. Much like the generation of artists his junior—most notably Yves Klein (p. 118, 120), with whom he was linked by mutual esteem, Günther Uecker and the Düsseldorf group ZERO (p. 110, 112), as well as Piero Manzoni—Fontana sought spirituality and sensitivity. In his 1951 *Manifesto Tecnico*, he writes: “The true conquest of space by man is the detachment from the earth, from the horizon line [...]” Similar to Yves Klein's sponge reliefs, the ability to experience the material in Fontana's slash paintings by way of the senses serves to intensify them, lending them a certain poetic aura, which encourages one to sink into meditative contemplation. In the atomic age, the imitation of nature has lost its meaning—the new goal has become the conquest of space. VT



## LUCIO FONTANA

1899 Rosario (AR) – 1968 Comabbio, near Varese (IT)

*Concetto spaziale* (from the series *Venezie*)

Spatial Concept

1961

Oil and gold on canvas, 150 × 150 cm

Acquired 1997

*Concetto spaziale* of 1961 belongs to Lucio Fontana's complex of works entitled *Olii* (oil paintings). It is one of twenty-four masterpieces from the series *Venezie* in which the artist processes his visual impressions of the lagoon city in large format. A dark, saturated red and deep black are applied impasto to the canvas. Fontana has drawn double spirals into the thick layer of paint. The central element consists of three dark-colored arcs with a golden stripe applied on top of them. Above the central arc, a row of holes (*Bucchi*) crowns the composition, evoking vague memories of the golden mosaics inside St. Mark's Basilica and the reflected lights the waters of the Grand Canal.

According to Fontana's concept, the relief-like application of paint and the perforation of the canvas extend the composition into three-dimensional space. The holes bring light and shadow into the picture. He believed that the light shining through the holes draws a line through the canvas, connecting the composition to infinite space. With each movement of the viewer, the light and shadow in the painting change, so that there is genuine movement in the painting itself, not captured on the canvas as in a classical painting.

With his *Concetti spaziali*, which occupied the artist until his death in 1968, Fontana transcended classical panel painting with its centuries-old central perspective and broke away from the horizon line. His enigmatic abstract works, imbued with spirituality and poetry, build a bridge from Futurism to Arte Povera. They are an art form fit for the atomic age, which, after the destruction of two world wars, was characterized by technological optimism and faith in the future on the one hand, and the Cold War and nuclear armament with the threat of a third world war on the other, as well as the zero gravity conquest of space. *Concetto spaziale* was created in the same year that the Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first man in space. VT



## HEINZ MACK

1931 Lollar (DE)

*Lamellen-Relief*

Lamellae Relief

1961

Aluminum on panel, 130 × 105 cm

Acquired 2023

Bands of thin, flexible aluminum strips of varying heights are attached horizontally to a panel and overlap like roof tiles. Each individual sheet is cut (similar to a comb) at intervals of a few centimeters almost to the base, resulting in several dozen narrow ribbons or lamellae per sheet. The sheet must be relatively soft to allow some lamellae to bend upward, some to lie on each other, or to be twisted up ninety degrees around their longitudinal axis, creating a relief a few centimeters high. However, that is only half of the artwork: the other half comes from the outside—light—which makes the lamellae shimmer and sets them in visual motion, producing structures resembling column charts or wave-like progressions. These structures morph according to the viewer's perspective. Heinz Mack studied in Düsseldorf in the early 1950s, when the city's art academy was rapidly becoming a hub for teaching, creation, and, most notably, discourse for the avant-garde movement in West Germany. Joseph Beuys, ten years Mack's senior, was among his contemporaries and by 1951 already a master student at the academy. Later, Günther Uecker joined the academy mid-decade, and Gerhard Richter followed suit in 1961 (p. 140). In 1955, Mack and his fellow student and friend Otto Piene moved into a "Ruinenatelier" in a former factory not far from Düsseldorf's Rhine harbor. Together they established the artists' group ZERO in 1957 (officially recognized in 1958), which Günther Uecker joined in 1961. Light is also a central component of Uecker's "nail pictures": while Mack used curved lamellae to create dynamism in the relief through interaction with light, Uecker used nails hammered into panels in different directions to achieve an interaction between three-dimensional object and (immaterial) light. Mack's relief and Piene's "fire painting" (p. 112) can be classified as kinetic art in a broader sense. In contrast to the classic works of the movement, such as Jean Tinguely's famous "Machine Sculptures," where the works themselves move, Mack's and Piene's works are set in motion by light. RJ



## OTTO PIENE

1928 Laasphe (DE) – 2014 Berlin (DE)

*Ohne Titel*

Untitled

1964

Mixed media, pearl on canvas, 60 × 70 cm

Acquired 2019

The canvas is painted red, with burn marks in the center. The paint has encrusted over time, and a pearl clip is attached to the lower left corner. Otto Piene makes a radical break with traditional pictorial ideas, just as Heinz Mack did three years before with his *Lamellen-Relief* (p. 110). Piene and Mack first met at the Düsseldorf Academy in the early 1950s, became friends, and shared a studio after graduation. In 1957, they co-founded ZERO, an artists' group that aimed to establish the "ground zero" of art as a departure and an optimistic new beginning, possibly by deliberately reversing the negative connotations of the "zero hour" term commonly used to describe the period after Germany's unconditional surrender on May 8, 1945.

In Piene's work, this unencumbered view of the future is expressed in brightly colored paintings. He used a technique to push paint through a screen to create small knobs on the painting's surface. These knobs form continuous patterns, circular structures, or rhythmic sequences. Light plays a significant role in Piene's work. Depending on the intensity of the light and the angle of incidence, a play of light and shadow points is created through the paint relief. This alternation and the viewer's movements constantly change perception, turning the painting into a kinetic object despite its static, immobile character, much like Mack's *Lamellen-Relief*.

The screen technique Piene used to make his earlier "grid pictures" was also used for his "smoke drawings." He expanded his repertoire in 1959/60 by applying smoke and soot instead of paint to the support, which was most often paper. The smoke drawings form a bridge between the grid pictures of 1955 and the "fire painting" shown above. Piene probably worked overhead, both for the smoke pieces and certainly in the works with fire, where he suspended the painted canvas above him and held the flames of one or more candles directly against it to produce circles and rings of varying color shading and structure, one inside another. RJ





## SIGMAR POLKE

1941 Oels/Oleśnica (PL) – 2010 Cologne (DE)

*Ohne Titel*

Untitled

1963

Oil on printed cloth on canvas, 96 × 94 cm

Acquired 1995

Instead of a white canvas that would have given him complete freedom to design his profile head, Polke chose a fabric printed with scattered flowers—cheap yardage available at any department store. Polke worked freely but deliberately with the patterned canvas, connecting individual blossoms with lines. The result is a caricature head with an oversized nose and an open mouth as if speaking or laughing. Polke used red for the outline of the head, brown for the inner drawing (which he also corrected), and green for the whimsically balanced hat on the head. In addition, an angular shape and a blossom function as an eye. The latter was not touched by the artist and yet plays a crucial role in how the picture is perceived. The blossoms, something already existing and industrially prefabricated, are the integral element of the work. Depending on the role he assigns to them in the picture as a whole—background, scaffolding, eye—they receive their function through the artist's interventions, allowing them to enter the viewer's consciousness or inhibiting their perception. Just as Polke turned down the "compulsion" to use a white canvas for his profile head, he also steadfastly refused to comply with society's expectations of artists. He satirically defied the prevailing belief that art should be venerated, ridiculing it instead. Meanwhile, he playfully questioned his own identity as an artist, jokingly asserting in 1966 that one of his works was "painted under the direction of superior beings."

In the 1960s, Polke became a "picture pirate," painting from newspaper clippings, and a petty bourgeois realist, as seen in his work *Mehl in der Wurst* (Flour in the sausage), 1964 in which he depicts an unappetizing green sausage and adds the comment that it had been stretched with flour. This and other works, including paintings of chocolate, cookies, and ironed shirts, are best understood in the context of the West German economic miracle, when the food shortages of the early postwar years had been resolved. At this point, the sausage was no longer stretched because of a lack of meat, but because of the capitalist desire for profit. RJ



## ERNST WILHELM NAY

1902 Berlin (DE) – 1968 Cologne (DE)

*Schwarze Dominante*

Black Dominant

1955

Oil on canvas, 100 × 161 cm

Acquired 1999

Black dominates: four black dots appear in each of two lines, seven in each of two circles. Black also rises from the depths as an amorphous shape. Bold red, ochre, and blue dots provide strong color accents. However, the primary focus of the painting is on the “discs” that break out from the black and bold colors at the same time as being overlapped, even compressed, by them. Because of their bright, “light” colors—Ernst Wilhelm Nay used light red, light yellow, and gray—the discs appear to float in space like planets, densely packed, surrounded by constellations, suns, and black holes from distant galaxies.

Nay achieved his first artistic success in the 1920s. But just weeks after the Nazis seized power in Germany in 1933, his paintings were ridiculed. Four years later, two of his paintings were featured in the infamous *Degenerate Art* exhibition. Nay was drafted into military service in late 1939 and stationed in France. There he was able to continue his artistic work with the help of a local artist. In 1943 he met Wassily Kandinsky in Paris. After the war, Nay moved to the Taunus region of Germany before moving to Cologne in 1951. Influenced by Kandinsky and especially the New Music movement he discovered in the war-torn Rhine metropolis, he created the group of works *Rhythmic Pictures* (1952/53), followed by *Disc Pictures* (1954–62). The latter included *Black Dominant* and portrayed “spherical, seemingly infinite worlds with discs lying next to and underneath each other.” Contrasts of light and dark allow the discs to optically advance or retreat, while the black or white “in-between” areas suggest penetrations into deeper space. The work groups mentioned above and the brief phase of *Eye Pictures* (1963/64) established his importance as a leading figure in West Germany’s postwar art scene. RJ

1 Karin Schick, “Im Kreis der Zeichen. Scheibenbilder, Augenbilder und Späte Bilder”, in *E. W. Nay. Retrospektive*, exh. cat. (Cologne, 2022), p. 185–87, here p. 185.



## YVES KLEIN

1928 Nice (FR) – 1962 Paris (FR)

*RE 1 (Relief éponge bleu)*

RE 1 (Blue Sponge Relief)

1958

IKB pigment, synthetic resin, and natural sponges on canvas, 200 × 165 cm

Acquired 2000

Yves Klein, born in Nice, France, believed that blue symbolized the boundless expanses of the sky and sea. During his judo training at the Kōdōkan Institute in Tokyo between 1952 and 1953, the artist experimented with monochromes in different colors and eventually settled on ultramarine, as it embodied a “blue depth” that conveyed immaterial sensibility and spiritual poetry. Subsequently, he broadened his palette to incorporate shades of pink and gold.

Klein was captivated by the radiant powdered pigments that were available in paint stores. In order to preserve the enchanting quality of the pure color pigments without using binders such as oil, he concocted a one-of-a-kind chemical mixture with the assistance of a Parisian paint dealer and a French chemical firm. He used this mixture for the first time in 1957 and refined it in 1959 with the help of architect Werner Ruhnau, who also involved Klein in creating the only sponge relief in a public space, at the Musiktheater im Revier in Gelsenkirchen. To claim exclusive rights to use this color, the artist patented it in 1960 under the name “International Klein Blue (IKB)” and called for a “blue revolution.”

Klein initially used rollers to apply paint but later switched to natural sponges. He was captivated by the beauty of ultramarine-soaked sponges, which transformed from mere tools to key elements in his artistic expression due to their ability to absorb paint fully. Small pebbles were added. Klein created the first sponge sculpture in 1957 and the first sponge relief in 1958. *RE 1 (Relief éponge bleu)* is the first masterpiece of this new body of work. The monochromatic composition of natural sponges and pebbles dipped in IKB exudes an aura of peaceful serenity and poetic tranquility. It presents a world that is fully immersed in ultramarine, a blue parallel universe of breathtaking beauty and pure harmony. It is akin to gazing into the depths of the sea and one’s soul.

Following Klein’s sudden death in 1962, his widow, Rotraut Klein, an artist and sister to the object artist Günther Uecker, retained ownership of *RE 1 (Relief éponge bleu)*. In 1969, she displayed the artwork in the significant Klein exhibition at the Galleria Civica d’Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Turin, and again in 1971 at the Kunstverein Hannover. VT



## YVES KLEIN

1928 Nice (FR) – 1962 Paris (FR)  
*Anthropométrie sans titre (ANT 23)*  
Untitled Anthropometry (ANT 23)  
1960

Blue pigment and synthetic resin on paper on canvas, 93.8 × 55.2 cm  
Acquired 2005

“It was the block of the body itself, that is to say the trunk and part of the thighs, that fascinated me. The hands, the arms, the head, the legs were of no importance. Only the body is alive, all-powerful, and non-thinking.”<sup>1</sup> With these words, Yves Klein once explained his particular focus on the torso and thighs in his anthropometries (i.e., his “body prints”). Klein was a highly skilled judoka in France, holding a black belt and fourth dan from the renowned Kōdōkan Institute in Tokyo. The anthropometries—reminiscent of the fleeting body marks judoka leave on the mats as they fall—blend Klein’s judo expertise with his artistic craft. For the judo master, as for this artist, the center of strength lies within the torso and thigh, which represent “the real universe, hidden by the universe of our limited perception.”<sup>2</sup>

At the height of his career in 1960, Klein had only a limited time left to dedicate to his artistic oeuvre. In February of that year, he produced his first series of anthropometries, one of which was *ANT 23*. As early as 1958, Klein had been experimenting with incorporating his models into the painting process by directing them to use natural sponges soaked in ultramarine blue on their bare skin, and then to press themselves against stretched sheets of paper. Each print is unique. The first major public demonstration of the anthropometries took place on March 9, 1960, at the exclusive Galerie internationale d’art contemporain on rue Saint-Honoré in Paris. The text on the invitation card placed the anthropometries in the succession of prehistoric handprints: “The blue gesture of Yves Klein reaches back 40,000 years as modern art draws close to the anonymous trail at the dawn of our universe, where the awakening of man to the consciousness of himself was marked at Lascaux or Altamira.”<sup>3</sup> VT

1 Quoted after Sidra Stich, “Anthropometrien”, in *Yves Klein*, exh. cat. (Ostfildern, 1994), pp. 171–91, here p. 175.

2 Stich 1994 (see note 1).

3 Stich 1994 (see note 1).





## CY TWOMBLY

1928 Lexington (VA, US) – 2011 Rome (IT)

*Rape of the Sabines*

1961

Oil, colored crayon, and pencil on canvas, 130 × 161 cm

Acquired 1997

Pencil scribbles, triangles, hearts, formations resembling stems and clouds, amorphous shapes in white, dark red, orange, and brown tones—Cy Twombly cannot be accused of lacking dynamism, movement, or artistic imagination. Everything seems to be whipped up by the wind. But there are also fixed points: the frame, which Twombly delineates with a pencil line around the action; the blocks that enclose the picture from the sides; and, finally, the straight line, which can be interpreted as a horizon with a ship in front of it. Everything below the line, including the square grid with number sequences at the bottom of the painting, appears as a stage. Twombly names the “drama” unfolding with an inscription right in the middle of the stage: *Rape of the Sabines*, a subject that enjoyed great popularity in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century painting.

At the latest with his move to Rome in 1960, Twombly began to explore themes from mythology and history, especially those that had already been addressed by artists such as Raphael, Nicolas Poussin, and Jacques-Louis David—as with *Rape of the Sabines*. Historically situated in the eighth century BC, the rape of the Sabine women is one of the founding myths of Rome. Due to a lack of women, the city’s founder, Romulus, felt that the survival of his settlement was threatened, as it consisted almost exclusively of men. He invited the inhabitants of neighboring towns to a festival, including the Sabines who lived on the edge of the Apennines. At his signal, the Romans kidnapped the unmarried women. When the Sabines later marched against Rome, these women in turn prevented the war. They did not want to lose their husbands and sons, nor their fathers and brothers.

In the depictions by Poussin and David, the key protagonists of the story take center stage. Twombly took these figures and translated them into his own visual language, reshaping them according to his artistic vision. By comparison, the events in the works of the two older painters seem frozen, with the figures suspended in time. They focus on the pivotal moments of the myth. Poussin chose to capture the signal for the abduction, the abduction itself, the flight, and the submission, while David focused on the separation of the combatants by Hersilia, Romulus’s wife. Twombly, on the other hand, showed the flow of movement, which he illustrated through his quickly drawn “scribbles.” RJ



## ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG

1925 Port Arthur (TX, US) – 2008 Captiva (FL, US)

*Dry Run*

1963

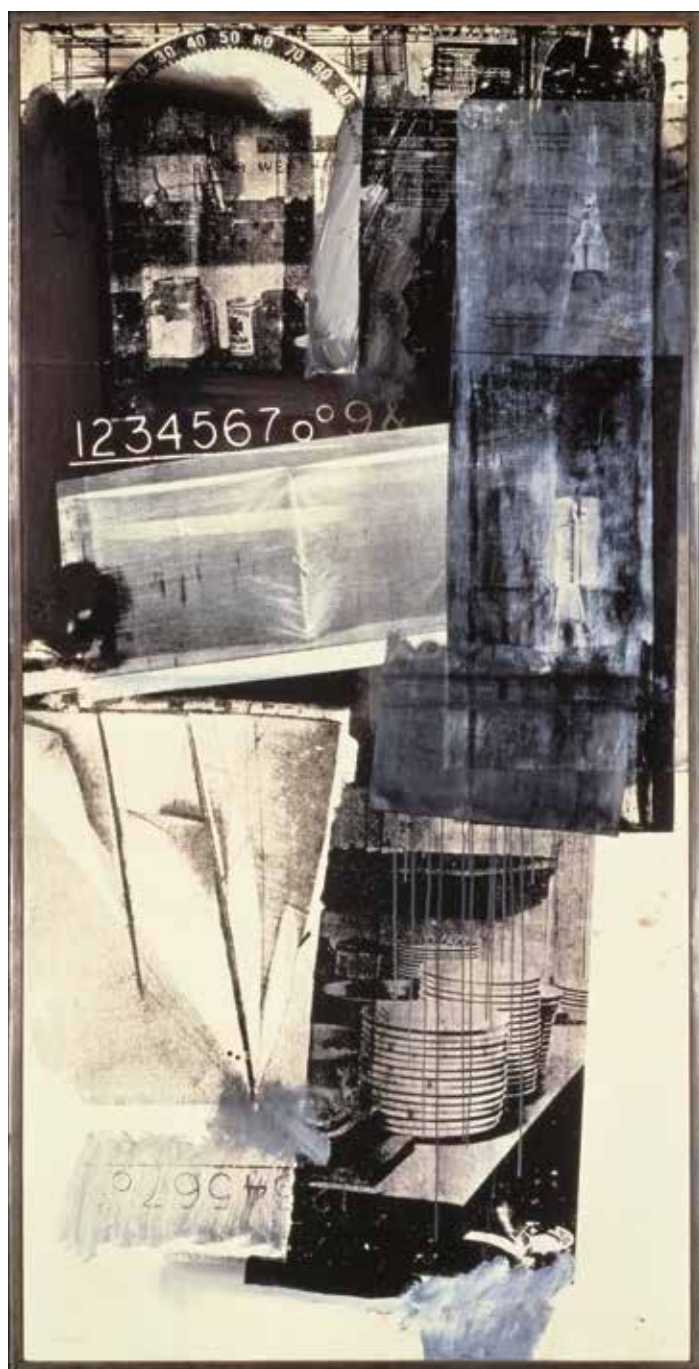
Oil and silkscreen on canvas, 182.9 × 91.4 cm

Acquired 2000

The monochrome image seems to communicate with the viewer in a kind of secret language. Familiar scenes from everyday life, often seen in magazines and ads, are identifiable but do not weave a captivating narrative. The individual visual components are removed from their original context and rearranged into fragments. An interesting aspect is the series of numbers between one and nine on the top third. They conclude with an ampersand, signifying openness and pointing toward infinity. The photograph of a silk-screened speedometer stretches like a dome over the slightly ascending figure of one million—which is how the sequence of numbers can be read—transforming the mundane into secret code.

The lower part of the image mirrors the numbers in reverse order, suggesting the countdown of the space shuttle on the right edge of the image. Next to the shuttle, it says that the capsule will be ready for launch in 140 seconds. All signs point to speed and acceleration, a fetish of Modernism since the 1920s. By combining the elements of the image, we arrive at the essence of the American dream of progress and conquest. The stacks of plates in the lower right symbolize prosperity and social advancement, which are at the heart of this dream. As we observe the image, our eyes continuously scan for hints to comprehend it. We explore its entirety, yet understanding the artwork as a cohesive unit proves challenging. The collaged components produce a distorted, multidimensional appearance where some elements appear inverted. Moreover, the sporadic application of pale gray paint fails to evoke a serene ambiance.

The title of the painting, *Dry Run*, describes a characteristic of Robert Rauschenberg's art. He is often considered a precursor of Pop Art due to his subject matter and use of printed materials. However, compared to the usually starkly executed paintings of Pop artists, Rauschenberg's works are highly gestural. The silkscreens have an expressive quality that stems from the hand-painted surfaces, the collage-like layering of photographic images, and the deliberate use of dissonance and incongruity. As the title suggests, Rauschenberg's works are still in a state of rehearsal. CK



## TOM WESSELMANN

1931 Cincinnati (OH, US) – 2004 New York (NY, US)

*Smoker Study #22*

1967

Oil on canvas, 20.3 × 25.4 cm

Acquired 2000

Sensual red lips surround a cigarette, the end of which disappears into the moist redness of this toothless mouth. The lips are highlighted by a subtle sheen. In the lower right corner, Tom Wesselmann has inscribed the title of the artwork along with his signature. The remaining surface is tinted in a grayish-beige tone. *Smoker Study #22* engages the senses and evokes the feeling of either smoking or watching someone else do so.

Tom Wesselmann, one of Pop Art's most prominent figures, is known for playing with erotic allure in his works. Aesthetically, he drew inspiration from the advertising industry of the 1960s and 1970s. His body of work ranges from still lifes filled with industrially produced American food to pornographic female nudes. Bold colors complement the simplified, anonymized figures and objects. Wesselmann deliberately avoided any semblance of portraiture, typically painting faces with only mouths and occasionally highly stylized noses and eyes. He delved into the historical genre of the nude, with his figures almost always depicted unclothed, in provocative poses, before, during, or after sexual encounters. Nipples consistently appear erect. Even the smoking mouth, which can be seen as a secondary sexual trait, is reduced to its externality and its capacity to receive something (phallic).

Wesselmann's works are subject to diverse interpretations. On the one hand, they can be seen as depictions of women freely exploring their sexuality. On the other hand, a more pronounced feminist perspective suggests that Wesselmann catered to the *male gaze*, that is, the objectifying male perspective on women. He reduced women to their sexuality and presented the female body as a commodity.

Wesselmann's art is provocative and, even during the sexually liberated 1960s, its suggestive nature proved polarizing. Yet he never portrayed the sexual act itself, only the idea of it. Wesselmann intentionally kept the titles of his works neutral to allow viewers to interpret them without his guidance. In addition to his drawings and paintings, in his later creative period he also produced metal objects that bear thematic and stylistic similarities to his paintings. AW



## ANDY WARHOL

1928 Pittsburgh (PA, US) – 1987 New York (NY, US)

*Group of Five Campbell's Soup Cans*

1962

Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas, 137.8 × 106.1 cm

Acquired 2000

Andy Warhol was once asked why he drew, painted, or printed soup cans. He responded that he had been eating the same food for twenty years. The Pop artist had a keen interest in ordinary consumer goods, believing them to be a significant part of the culture of industrialized societies. This became apparent in the early 1960s, when he began featuring commonplace objects as the central theme of his artwork. Warhol was particularly inspired by advertising illustrations. After studying commercial art and moving from Pittsburgh to New York in 1949, he worked for many years in the advertising industry and became familiar with its strategies. The ubiquity of Campbell's soup cans in the United States provided Warhol with a motif that he repeatedly explored and reimagined. He recognized the significance of mass production for capitalism and represented it in his works through symbols of consumption such as dollar signs, banknotes, Brillo detergent boxes, and Kellogg's cereal boxes.

In most cases, Warhol displayed the soup cans individually, ensuring that the logo lettering was legible and always presented in the same view. In *Group of Five Campbell's Soup Cans*, the artist takes a unique approach by displaying several cans in an unconventional manner. The cans are depicted at different angles: tilted, upside down, and stacked. The perspectives are simplified, resembling a comic book style, devoid of shadows. Warhol's method involved using photographs as a reference, projecting them onto the canvas, and then tracing them with pencil. These pencil drawings were partially preserved, as not all of the lines were covered with black acrylic paint. For his inaugural solo exhibition at the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles, Warhol presented thirty-two paintings, each featuring a single Campbell's can. The cans were depicted from a frontal view, with only the labels varying to represent different flavors of soup. He organized the paintings on the shelves to resemble regular, mass-produced items, similar to how products are displayed in a supermarket. Unlike in a supermarket, however, through the change in medium and a new context, the commonplace "can" is revalued and thus transformed into a work of art. AW





*Campbell's*  
CONDENSED  
CONSOMME  
SOUP

*Campbell's*  
CONDENSED  
BLACK BEAN  
SOUP

SOUP  
SCOTCH BROTH  
CONDENSED

*Campbell's*  
CONDENSED  
CLAM CHOWDER  
(MANHATTAN STYLE)  
SOUP

## ANDY WARHOL

1928 Pittsburgh (PA, US) – 1987 New York (NY, US)

*Nine Multicolored Marylins (Reversal Series)*

1979/86

Acrylic paint and silkscreen printing on canvas, 137.8 × 106.1 cm

Acquired 1996

Andy Warhol saw Marilyn Monroe's famous smile as a symbol of "pop." Pop encompasses what the general public knows, consumes, and discusses—such as music, sports, consumer products, and public figures. As an actress and Hollywood star, Marilyn Monroe was a global celebrity. She reshaped the image of the archetypal sexualized woman. After her untimely death, Monroe became stylized and staged as an icon, further magnifying the myth that surrounded her. Warhol also contributed to this. In 1962, the year of her death, he began experimenting with the technique of screen printing, which enabled him to serially produce his works. Inspired by the media frenzy, he began to integrate Monroe's face into his art. He used a press photograph by Frank Powolny as his source, which was taken during the promotion of the 1953 film *Niagara* starring Marilyn Monroe. The photo was distributed in magazines, making it widely known to the public. Warhol acquired Powolny's photograph and reproduced the image repeatedly over the next few years, including in *Nine Multicolored Marylins*.

Warhol experimented with different techniques of screen printing. Initially, he used only positive black-and-white printing methods, which resulted in black lines and blocks of white on the canvas. He later experimented with color, dyeing the canvas with one or more colors or roughly tracing the outlines of his images. He then printed the contours onto the canvas using stencils inspired by photographs, usually in black, but occasionally in color. Despite their serial production, the pictures differed from one another and could be considered unique.

The varying results of each screen print allowed Warhol to, in a way, imitate the rapid capture of a camera, which snaps images in a matter of milliseconds—thereby also introducing movement into these canvases. Throughout his life, Warhol remained creative in his methods, constantly modifying them. Through these serial screen prints, he transformed his art into a mass-produced commodity, in keeping with the principles of Pop Art. AW



## MIMMO ROTELLA

1918 Catanzaro (IT) – 2006 Milan (IT)

*Marilyn*

1963

Paper collage on canvas, 190 × 132 cm

Acquired 2021

Marilyn Monroe appears to be torn apart. She is positioned off-center and relegated to the left-hand side of the picture. Her dress is torn in multiple places, revealing scraped and bruised skin. Nevertheless, her smile, eyes, and hairstyle remain radiant—Marilyn Monroe's allure is undiminished.

Mimmo Rotella's art was revolutionary. While other artists were busy applying and adding layers, Rotella removed posters from walls and tore them up with his signature style. In the 1950s, the Italian artist was disenchanted with the lack of innovation in painting. In response, he developed his technique called "d collage." Rotella would first remove advertising posters from public walls and then glue them onto canvas. He would often layer multiple posters on top of each other, tearing out parts of them to create his artwork. When Rotella first introduced his novel art form, it was met with critical acclaim but also a controversial reception by the public. Initially, his d collages were abstract, occasionally including letters. It was not until the early 1960s that he began incorporating figurative motifs into his work. Over time, he increasingly integrated people and objects from advertising posters and newspaper clippings into his art. Rotella presents a different perspective from Andy Warhol's glamorized portrayal of Marilyn Monroe. Instead of an artificially created icon, the actress is portrayed as a relatable human being, which makes her no less attractive. Rotella's poster also underscores the fleeting nature of fame. The inscription "La storia di una delle donne pi  belle del nostro tempo" ("The story of one of the most beautiful women of our time") is only partially visible and appears insignificant. Cracks in the poster reveal more layers of paper underneath, and a faintly recognizable poster for the movie *Bambi* can be seen. Interestingly, *Bambi* was released in Italy in 1948, six years after its release in the United States, and both Marilyn Monroe and *Bambi* symbolized the American way of life. AW



SC  
PIL  
LE

LA STORIA  
DI UNA  
DONNE  
BELLE  
E SENSUALE  
DEI  
NOSTRI  
TEMPI  
PRESENTATA  
SULLO SCHERMO  
DA

ROCK  
HODSON

# Marilyn

IL MITO DI UN'EPOCA

LE SCENE  
INEDETE  
DEL  
SUO FILM  
INCOMPIUTO

UNICO  
SPETTACOLO E SEGRETO

UN "CCEZ"



1967

## DOUGLAS GORDON

1966 Glasgow (GB)

*Self-Portrait of You + Me (Blue Pepper Shot Jackie)*

2008

Silkscreen, burnt and mounted on mirror, 125 × 102.5 cm

Acquired 1997

Punctured: burned holes, as if made by bullets, cover Jackie Kennedy's portrait. The former First Lady of the United States is shown in profile, her head slightly lowered and her facial features blurred. Douglas Gordon has appropriated a screen print originally made by Andy Warhol, who specifically chose a photograph of Jackie Kennedy during a time of mourning. After the assassination of her husband John F. Kennedy in November 1963, Warhol, who was fascinated by public figures and headlines, created multiple silkscreens of Jackie Kennedy.

Gordon was inspired by an incident that allegedly occurred in Warhol's New York studio: Dorothy Podber, a performance artist, fired several shots with a pistol at the silkscreens of Marilyn Monroe. Warhol left the works as they were, the added bullet holes enhancing their value as originals. Gordon mimicked these bullet holes by burning them into Jackie Kennedy's face, even though she was not the one who was shot. During the assassination, she was sitting beside John F. Kennedy, who collapsed on top of her. As a widow she remained in the public eye—cameras followed her every move, even filming her at the funeral. The semantic ambiguity of “to shoot” is evident here—it can refer to both the act of firing a gun and of taking a photograph. By mounting a mirror behind the perforated screen print, Douglas Gordon added another level of meaning to reveal the expectations society places on individuals in the public space. Jackie personifies a nation's grief that, decades after John F. Kennedy's assassination, is deeply etched in our collective memory. The myth of Kennedy and his family lingers, but with the holes in Douglas Gordon's artwork, Jackie seems to disappear as a public figure. Viewers are left to ponder how to deal with this momentous event. AW



## FRANCIS BACON

1909 Dublin (IR) – 1992 Madrid (ES)

*Study for a Portrait of Henrietta Moraes*

1964

Oil on canvas, 198.1 x 147.3 cm

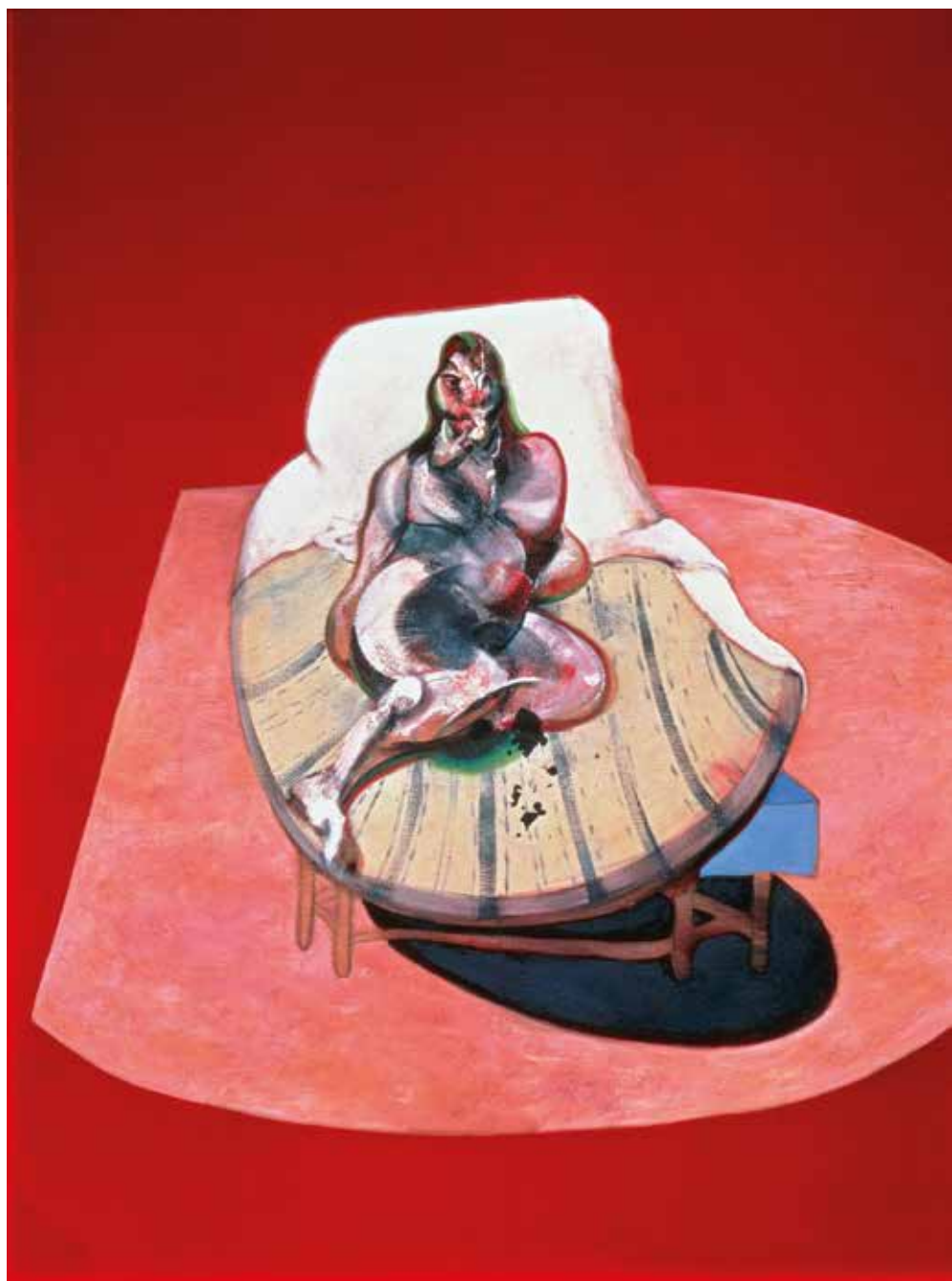
Acquired 2002

On a grimy, partially stripped mattress lies Henrietta Moraes, the inspiration for many artists in London. She seems to be gazing directly at us, if only with one eye. Her face is covered in messy brushstrokes, giving her a disfigured and perplexing appearance. Her voluptuous, fleshy figure and barely recognizable expression make her seem less human and almost bestial. Bacon's figures show the inner conflict between good and evil, victim and perpetrator, repulsion and seduction. Initially, Bacon painted mainly those close to him, but as more and more people in his circle passed away, he began to portray himself more frequently.

Although the contours of Moraes's body are drawn more precisely than her face, it is the classical pose she strikes that creates a dynamic effect—the pictorial representation is almost reminiscent of a slightly out-of-focus photograph—a medium, in fact, Bacon employed as a model in most of his works. Moraes was photographed by John Deakin, but the poses were specified by Bacon. He comments on the photographs through his paintings, creating tensions that a camera cannot capture. The empty room, with only a simple bed, supports this. The round shape on the floor sharply separates Moraes and the bed from the rest, giving the impression that she is on a dark stage under a spotlight. Noticeably, only the mattress, but not the bed frame or Moraes herself, casts a shadow. Bacon deliberately paints a strongly reduced background to isolate the protagonist in the picture and emphasize her presence. In this way she is removed from any temporal or spatial context and stands alone, representing herself.

Irish-born Francis Bacon was a self-taught artist who never attended an art academy and who began his career as an interior decorator in London. His exposure to the Paris art scene of the 1920s, however, ignited his passion for painting. Bacon's style defies easy categorization but draws inspiration from Diego Velázquez and Pablo Picasso. AW





## NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE

1930 Neuilly-sur-Seine (FR) – 2002 San Diego (CA, US)

*Nana (petite Gwendolyn IV)*

Nana (Little Gwendolyn IV)

1965/66

Fabric, strings, plaster, wire mesh, steel, 92 × 49 × 48 cm

Acquired 1997

“I am working like a tiger,” Niki de Saint Phalle wrote to her friend and museum director Pontus Hultén in New York in 1965. From late 1964 to August 1965, she and her husband, the Swiss artist Jean Tinguely, lived and worked in New York’s famous Chelsea Hotel, which had served as a residence and workshop for writers, musicians, and artists as diverse as Mark Twain, Bob Dylan, and Andy Warhol (p. 128, 130, 162). As she succinctly put it, this phase was incredibly productive and marked a critical turning point in her career. Since the early 1960s, Saint Phalle had been working intensively on the *Tirs* series, her “shooting pictures,” in which she and a select group of artist friends shot at bags of paint on white reliefs and assemblages. The performative act of shooting, an expression of violence and devastation, was also for her a gesture of emancipation and a new beginning. Saint Phalle was sending a message of confrontation against the patriarchy. At the same time, she worked through the terrible personal trauma of her father’s sexual assault.

In New York, she developed a new form of expression. Instead of dismantling the patriarchy, she paid homage to the strength of women. She realized this tribute by creating smaller-than-life, voluminous female figures made of wire mesh and covered with small fabric patches and strings. Her so-called *Nanas* (*la nana* is colloquial French for a woman) appear as symbols of matriarchy, becoming synonymous with female strength, self-confidence, and self-empowerment. She was inspired to create the *Nanas* after her friend Clarice Rivers, the wife of artist Larry Rivers, became pregnant. Saint Phalle even included the name of the girl, Gwendolyn, in the title of some of the *Nanas*. While the early *Nanas* have an intimate character in their materiality and dimension, the artist later translated her concept into oversized, brightly colored figures made of plastic that brought the “Nana Power” she proclaimed into the public sphere. VA



## GERHARD RICHTER

1932 Dresden (DE)

*Schneelandschaft*

Snow Landscape

1966

Oil on canvas, 50 × 40.2 cm

Acquired 1996

A vast, snow-covered plain and, as if blurred and barely perceptible in the background, buildings on the horizon, with a sky above them that ranges from light gray to nearly black—it is not easy to put Gerhard Richter's *Schneelandschaft* into words. It was painted in 1966, a time when representational painting was deemed outdated, and artistic engagement with landscapes was viewed as reactionary. Landscape painting's last heyday had been in the nineteenth century—during the Romantic era—and had no place in contemporary art.

Born in Saxony, Richter studied at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, where he received a classical academic education. His final-year project in 1956 consisted of a wall mural of over sixty square meters at the German Hygiene Museum in Dresden. Art, according to Socialist Realism, was to serve the young German Democratic Republic and celebrate the success of building a new socialist state. Abstraction was condemned as Western decadence, yet Richter still experimented in this style. In 1959, he visited documenta II in Kassel and was greatly impressed by the works of Lucio Fontana (p. 106, 108) and the Abstract Expressionist Jackson Pollock. Two years later, Richter enrolled at the Düsseldorf Academy, where Sigmar Polke (p. 114) was studying at the same time.

Richter saw himself as “heir to a vast, great, rich culture of painting, of art in general, which we have lost, but to which we are obligated.”<sup>1</sup> Richter's dedication to German Romanticism, and particularly to Caspar David Friedrich, is present in all of his landscapes, not just in *Schneelandschaft*. While Friedrich used drawings as the basis for his landscapes, Richter used photographs, which he projected onto the canvas in order to paint. In the process, he “blurred” everything. He noted in 1964/65 that he did this “to make everything the same, equally important and unimportant. I don't blur to make it look artistic and craftsmanlike but technical, smooth, and perfect. I blur to bring all parts closer together. It's possible that I may also be wiping away the excess of unimportant information.”<sup>2</sup> RJ

1 Hans-Ulrich Obrist, ed., *Gerhard Richter. Text. Schriften und Interviews* (Frankfurt am Main/Leipzig, 1993), p. 137.

2 Obrist 1993 (see note 1), p. 31.



## MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO

1933 Biella (IT)

*Infermiera e ragazza*

Nurse and Girl

1965

Colored vellum mounted on polished steel, 230 × 121 × 2.5 cm

Acquired 2006

Two women standing close together and leaning against a railing form the central content of the painting *Infermiera e ragazza* by Michelangelo Pistoletto. The figure on the right is the nurse referred to in the title, as indicated by her light coat and bonnet. The nurse's posture conveys empathy and suggests that she is offering comfort to a patient. Both figures are depicted from behind, and their faces, which could reveal their emotions, are not visible to the viewer. Pistoletto's choice to portray the figures with their backs to the viewer taps into a classical painting motif: figures turned "into the painting" serve as intermediaries to connect the pictorial realm and the viewer. This approach allows viewers direct entry, who then naturally turn their attention to the image situated in the space beyond.

However, in Pistoletto's "mirror paintings"—known as *Quadri specchianti*, which include *Infermiera e ragazza*—there is no traditional pictorial space such as a landscape or a narrative scene. Instead, highly polished stainless steel reflects the surroundings of the exhibition space and the viewers themselves. For a moment, these viewers become part of the image, existing in the interplay between the real and pictorial worlds, representation and reflection, stasis and dynamism. Pistoletto's *Quadri specchianti* combine two key components: they feature enlarged and artistically transferred photographs of people from the artist's personal life, visible from behind, and a mirrored surface that reflects an infinite number of fleeting glimpses. Pistoletto talks about how, in addition to the two-dimensionality of the photograph and the three-dimensionality of the virtual pictorial plane, time is added as a fourth dimension; not as an actively measured unit, but as an aspect structured by past, present, and future.

Pistoletto's mirror paintings are thus able to span time, from the past to the present and into the future. As a tangible image of a transient moment from the past, the reproduced photograph is confronted with the reflection of a current moment, while also anticipating the many reflections yet to come. VA



## GEORG BASELITZ

1938 Deutschbaselitz/Kamenz (DE)

*Der Hirte*

The Shepherd

1965

Oil on canvas, 163 × 131 cm

Acquired 2001

*Der Hirte* by Georg Baselitz is one of the highlights of his *Helden* (Heroes) series, in which the artist questioned male heroism. He created the works in the spring of 1965, during his fellowship in Florence. They attest to impressions gained from Florentine collections that exposed Baselitz to Mannerist works from the sixteenth century. His incorporation of a bright red and a strong blue, as well as the elongated limbs of the figure, seem to suggest that he was particularly inspired by Rosso Fiorentino and Parmigianino. Upon closer inspection, we see that the shepherd is not a hero, but a fallen man in the midst of an inferno that is monumental within the picture, surrounded by a dilapidated burning city. Everything is in ruins. Next to charred remains, new flames flare up. He is sitting on a lamb he is supposed to be tending. The lamb is dead, the shepherd having failed his task and given in to carnal lust. Sitting on top of him is a woman with huge, protruding breasts, her arms spread wide in utter helplessness. Stigmata are on her palms, reminiscent of Christ's passion. Her hands and feet are oversized. The shepherd's bright red, erect member bulges from between her legs. The world has fallen apart, and humanity has gone to waste.

Born as Hans-Georg Kern in 1938 in Deutschbaselitz, Saxony, the artist himself said: "I was born into a destroyed order, into a destroyed landscape, into a destroyed people, into a destroyed society." It was not that Baselitz wanted to establish a new order, but he did question everything. Memories of his birthplace, which was caught between Nazi and Red Army fronts by the end of World War II, repeatedly appear in his visual worlds. Baselitz began his studies at the East Berlin art academy in Weißensee in 1956, from which he was expelled after only two semesters for "sociopolitical immaturity." In 1957, he then moved to West Berlin to study at what is now the University of the Arts. There, together with the painter Eugen Schönebeck, Baselitz published the *Pandämonisches Manifest* (Pandemonic manifesto) in 1961 and *Pandämonium* (Pandemonium) in 1962. At first, however, not even the West was ready yet for Baselitz's impetuous, rebellious painting that he used to unabashedly and provocatively criticize society. VT





## GEORG BASELITZ

1938 Deutschbaselitz/Kamenz (DE)

*Dreieck zwischen Arm und Rumpf*

Triangle between Arm and Torso

1973

Oil and charcoal on canvas, 250 × 180 cm

Acquired 1997

The painter and sculptor Georg Baselitz: nonconformist, individualist, rebel; someone with a hunger for knowledge who eventually began turning everything upside down—this would be the highly abridged version of the artist's biography until the 1970s. Baselitz grew up in Saxony, experiencing the end of World War II at age seven. He was deeply influenced by the landscape of his childhood and youth in the Soviet occupation zone and East Germany. After graduating from high school in 1956, he began his studies at the Weißensee Art Academy in East Berlin. Later expelled by that school, he went on to study at what is now the University of Arts in the western part of the city, where he became a master student in 1961/62. It was around this time that Baselitz emerged as a painter. His first solo exhibition in 1963 became a scandal. His painting *Die große Nacht im Eimer* (The big night down the drain), which depicted a naked man with an oversized phallus, was confiscated by the police and only released two years later. In the same period, Baselitz painted landscapes from his Saxon homeland and eventually his heroes and anti-heroes (p.144), which became symbols of both his rebellion and self-reflection. A new phase of works began to surface in which Baselitz dissected figures and objects into separate segments, culminating in the motif being rotated 180 degrees. This cements itself as an enduring principle in Baselitz's art that literally turns our visual and perceptual habits upside down.

*Dreieck zwischen Arm und Rumpf* is a self-portrait in the same monumental format as *Die große Nacht im Eimer*. Baselitz depicts himself naked in profile with his left arm outstretched, not quite at a right angle. Although the hand is clenched into a fist, the figure does not appear aggressive, thus dispelling any inadvertent associations with the Hitler salute. Sky and landscape are only indicated with swaths of color. Between the outstretched arm and the body, Baselitz has painted a wing. What comes to mind are allusions to Daedalus, who built wings for himself and his son Icarus to escape the labyrinth of Minos in Crete. Although they managed to successfully escape, Icarus, despite his father's warnings, flew too close to the sun. The wax attaching the feathers to the wings melts, and Icarus plummets back down to earth. RJ



## ALEXANDER CALDER

1898 Lawnton (PA, US) – 1976 New York (NY, US)

*Critter with Peaked Head*

1974

Painted metal, 198 × 83.8 × 45.8 cm

Acquired 1995

The guiding principle in Alexander Calder's sculptural work is movement. The artist gained the greatest recognition for his mobile objects, which are characterized by the composition of various hanging abstract shapes that come together to form a balance. Marcel Duchamp referred to these objects, which emerged in 1931, as "mobile." The French term, which relates to both "mobility" and "motif," became the expression used for of this series. While early mobiles were kinetic constructions set in motion by hand or by motor, Calder subsequently relied on air circulation as the natural force that moves the elements comprising these works. Referring to the mobiles, perhaps with a touch of irony, Hans Arp named Calder's static works *stabiles*. These included the *Critters*, with which Calder returned to human figuration and the playfulness present in his early works. As a trained mechanical engineer, the artist created his first movable wire sculptures and toys in the 1920s; *Cirque Calder* being a central work of this period. Created in Paris between 1926 and 1931, this miniature circus consisted of over seventy figures. Each about fifteen centimeters tall, Calder would set the members of this little circus troupe in motion by hand, with a few that were mechanically animated. Until 1961, Calder staged around seventy circus performances, attracting the attention of artists such as Piet Mondrian, Fernand Léger, and Joan Miró. His exchange with these artists greatly influenced Calder's evolution toward abstraction.

Expanding upon his playful "circus" figures, Calder created his larger-than-life *Critters*. Having crafted them from flat metal, he dispensed with the sculptural principle of elaborating on mass and corporeality. Made from cut and bent metal, *Critter with Peaked Head* represents a three-legged figure. Despite its immobility, it suggests movement: the three legs resemble a blurred image caused by rapid rotational motion, in which forms appear multiplied. The simplicity of his style of rendering notwithstanding, Calder's dynamic design conveys the idea of movement. VA



## DAN FLAVIN

1933 New York (NY, US) – 1996 Riverhead (NY, US)

*Untitled (Fondly, to Helen)*

1976

Fluorescent tube with blue, yellow, green fluorescent light, height: 243.8 cm

Acquired 2002

*Untitled (Fondly, to Helen)* features a blue fluorescent tube nearly two and a half meters long and two smaller green and yellow tubes that are mounted on an angle in a corner of the room. They are shunted and light up simultaneously, producing a cool color gradient that is focused and reflected on two sides. The individual fluorescent tubes can only be seen when viewed from certain angles. The light column alters the appearance of and visually redefines the space, dissolving the corner into abstraction and creating a sacred atmosphere, reminiscent of Gothic cathedral stained glass windows.

When he was starting out, Flavin, a self-taught artist, was heavily influenced by Abstract Expressionism. This American art movement, which spanned from the late 1940s to the early 1960s, was grounded in a commitment to reality. To Flavin, this meant departing from traditional artistic mediums. He, along with Donald Judd and Walter De Maria, favored instead the straightforward objectivity and “sublime” effect of commonplace factory-made materials. From 1964 onward he used fluorescent tubes, which he placed on the wall, ceiling, or floor to dissolve the actual space as a physical space and deal with it playfully.

Although Flavin typically refrained from titling his pieces, he occasionally used subtitles referencing friends or models, including Josef Albers, Alexander Calder, Sol LeWitt, John Heartfield, and Vladimir Tatlin. These unconventional dedications reflect the artist’s frame of reference, and the resultant illuminated objects can be seen as “pseudo-monuments.” One such work is this tribute to art historian Helen Winkler, who co-founded the Dia Art Foundation in 1974 with German gallerist and patron Heiner Friedrich and his future wife, Philippa de M n il. The foundation was established to realize large-scale artistic projects. *Untitled (Fondly, to Helen)* is the first light work acquired by Heidi Horten, and its dedication to a woman makes it particularly special in the collection. CK



## BIRGIT JÜRGENSSEN

1949 Vienna (AT) – 2003 Vienna (AT)

*Aschenbrödel*

Cinderella

1976

Wood, satin, leather, 68.5 × 40 × 46 cm

Acquired 2021

The silky texture of a tapered and extra-long lady's shoe seems to facilitate its graceful descent down a set of stairs. Despite the absence of its owner, the shoe nevertheless evokes her previous presence and movements in the space. Birgit Jürgenssen's work entitled *Cinderella* explores the pivotal scene in the fairy tale, in which the protagonist loses her slipper as she hastily leaves the royal ball. Jürgenssen critically analyzes this scene, which has been widely popularized in Western culture by the Brothers Grimm and Walt Disney's adaptation. The traditional narrative of the "damsel in distress", in which Prince Charming rescues a beautiful and virtuous girl and helps her to a better life, reflects stereotypical gender roles. In the context of a collective rebellion by female artists in the 1960s and 1970s, Jürgenssen here exemplifies the inequality of the sexes. Artists belonging to the feminist avant-garde often depict the female body as liberated from its role as a mere object, using items such as clothing, shoes, and other feminine accessories as vehicles and artistic materials to highlight social grievances and create alternative models. Thus, in *Schuhwerk* (Foot wear), a series of works from 1973 to 1976, Jürgenssen focuses on the shoe as a stereotypically feminine attribute and allows it to appear in the field of tension between oppression, emancipation, and empowerment. The "feminine" is unmasked as a social construct shaped by male projections and ideals that must be deconstructed. As the metamorphosis of Jürgenssen's Cinderella shoe symbolically suggests, the feminine has long since outgrown its socially assigned form. VA





## ALIGHIERO BOETTI

1940 Turin (IT) – 1994 Rome (IT)

*Primo giorno di Agosto*

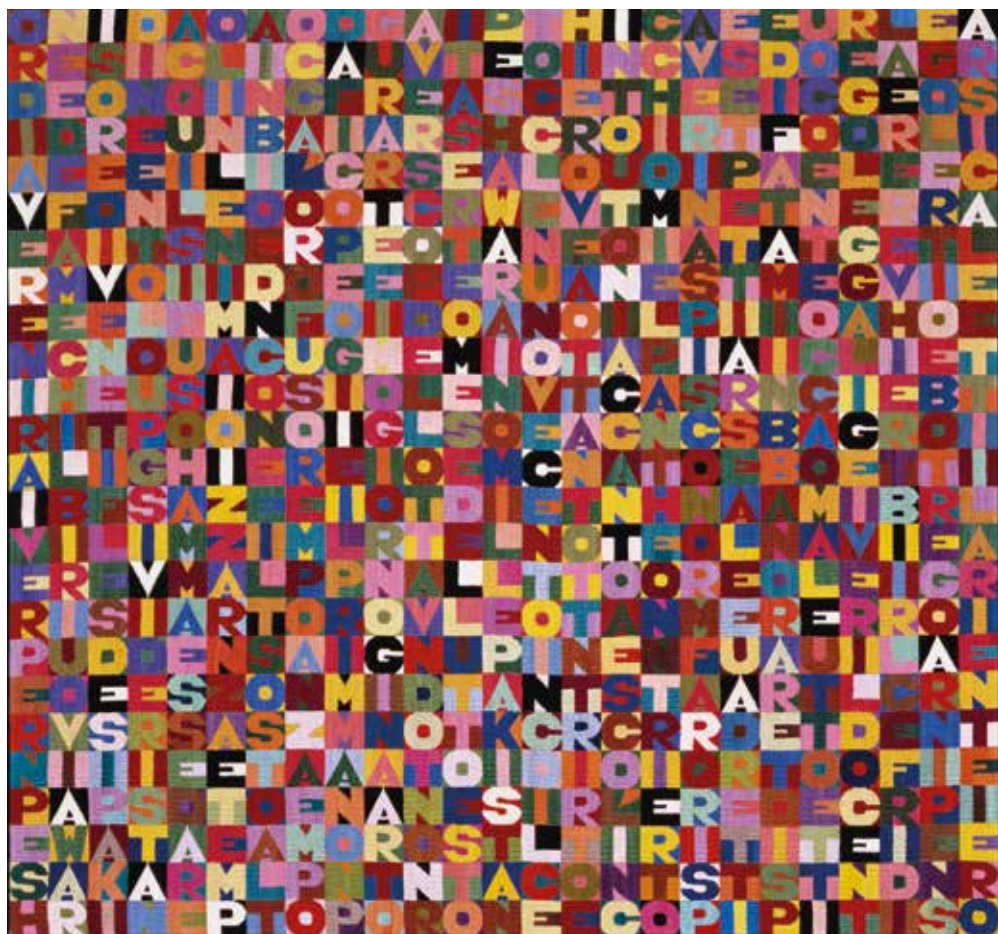
The First Day of August

1988

Embroidery on muslin, 109 × 116 cm

Acquired 2000

Rows and columns of tightly packed and uniformly sized fields feature 625 brightly colored letters inscribed on equally vibrant backgrounds. Some fields are almost completely filled with letters that thrust—due to their specific shape and color—to the fore; in others, the background plays a more sustaining role. The interplay of positive and negative form, color, and shape ultimately results in the artwork—an embroidered tapestry—being primarily perceived as ornamental. The letters are not randomly arranged but rather follow a classification system. When reading from top to bottom, the thirteenth column at the center of the tapestry reveals the place and country of manufacture: Peshawar in Pakistan. This set of eight-letter words defines the system. The artist's signature "ALIGHIER/O E BOETTI" can be found in the corresponding middle line (the "E" being Italian for "and" that Boetti added to his signature in the early 1970s). The words begin and end at the border of the tapestry, following the "system of eight letters." To maintain this pattern, Boetti separated the "O" from his first name and placed it at the beginning of the second section of the line. At the center of the tapestry is a field of nine-by-nine letters, with "ANNO MILLE/ NOVECENTO/ OTTANTT[O]" denoting the year of creation. Finally, the motto of this and most of Boetti's other tapestries is encapsulated in the four-by-four letter square at the top left corner. It reads "ORDI/NE E D/ ISOR/DINE," which translates to the coexistence of order and disorder without one negating the other. Boetti was self-taught and never attended an art school or academy. From 1973 to 1979—the year of the Soviet Union's invasion—Boetti made several trips to Afghanistan. In Kabul, and later in Peshawar, he commissioned embroiderers to produce his tapestries, sometimes incorporating both Pashto and Latin letters into the designs. He also created embroidered maps of the world in which national territories were filled in with motifs of the respective national flags, as well as created a likewise embroidered monumental directory of the thousand longest rivers in the world. RJ



## MIMMO PALADINO

1948 Paduli, near Benevento (IT)

*Architettura (Cavallo)*

Architecture (Horse)

2005

Bronze, 198 × 215 × 78 cm

Acquired 2006

Mimmo Paladino has named his sculpture, which recognizably depicts a horse, *Architettura*—Architecture. Is the artist making a humorous statement, or is the piece meant to convey a deeper meaning beyond just depicting an animal? The latter is probably the case. If one understands architecture as “the art of building,” this comparison seems apt. This is because architecture is based on the principles of support and load, where columns or piers carry the weight of ceilings and walls in large buildings. Similarly, in *Architettura*, the legs of the horse serve as supports on which the trunk rests. Paladino illustrates this bearing down by placing a caesura between the legs and the trunk rather than adhering anatomically to the “correct” modeling of the transition from (in technical terms) lower arm to upper arm and lower leg to thigh. Paladino commissioned the Giuseppe Di Giacomo art foundry in Naples to produce *Architettura* in 2005 in an edition of seven regular and two artist’s copies. The foundry mainly uses the lost wax process. To start the procedure, the artist, or someone working under their direction, creates a full-size model. The model is then cast, with Paladino taking great care to ensure that every detail, no matter how small, is reflected in the bronze casting. In *Architettura*, in addition to the actual traces of processing, these details include intentionally placed incisions and wedge-shaped depressions that contribute to the vitality of the surface and, thus, significantly to the overall impression of the work. Precision craftsmanship is involved in every step of the bronze casting process, from wax lining the mold to the actual casting to, finally, the time-intensive patination and finishing of the bronze surface.

In terms of style, Paladino’s work aligns with the Transavanguardia (“beyond the avant-garde”) movement. This particular art is characterized by a deliberate use of antiquated and “archaic” styles of representation coupled with mysterious and encrypted motifs. Such features are present in *Architettura*: the horse draws inspiration from ancient Greek art dating back to the sixth century BCE, while the ball wedged between the hind legs and the amorphous form on the side of the back disrupt the sculpture’s silhouette, adding a mysterious element to it. RJ



## ROY LICHTENSTEIN

1923 New York (NY, US) – 1997 New York (NY, US)

*Forest Scene*

1980

Oil and acrylic on canvas, 243.8 × 325.1 cm

Acquired 1996

Bold colors, precisely placed lines, simplified motifs—in this “style,” we see an animal nestled against a tree. Two more animals of the same kind can be seen, along with a human figure. Similarly, the trees and flowers are also highly simplified. In his nearly eight-square-meter painting entitled *Forest Scene*, American artist Roy Lichtenstein drew inspiration from elements in works by various other artists. He extracted clichés from historical models, which are both ironically repurposed and underscore the artist’s interpretive engagement with art history. Lichtenstein primarily oriented himself toward German Expressionism. He was particularly fascinated by the visual language of this art movement, which was characterized by angular forms, an emphasis on contour lines, and a bold color palette often unrelated to the object being represented. During the National Socialist era, Expressionism was considered “degenerate.” Many works found their way into American museums and private collections through the art trade, giving Lichtenstein the opportunity to see works by artists such as Alexej Jawlensky, Erich Heckel, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, and others at a young age.

Lichtenstein was particularly taken with Franz Marc’s *Rote Rehe I* (p. 44). It served as the model and inspiration for *Forest Scene*. He adopted the motif of the deer winding around the tree almost one-to-one, but he was able to uniquely paraphrase it by translating it into his own formal and chromatic vernacular.

After his art studies, Lichtenstein worked as a lecturer at Ohio University. In 1957, he relocated to New York, where he continued to teach at universities and met artists such as Claes Oldenburg. In 1961, he came to know the most important representatives of Pop Art, such as Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, and Jasper Johns. He also established contact with the renowned art dealer Leo Castelli. Today, Lichtenstein is considered one of the most significant Pop Art artists of the second half of the twentieth century. His style is defined by three characteristics: the fusion of art with everyday and consumer goods, the introduction of speech bubbles into visual art, and the use of so-called Ben-Day dots. PS



## JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT

1960 New York (NY, US) – 1988 New York (NY, US)

*Red Savoy*

1983

Acrylic and oil on canvas, 167.5 × 153.3 × 4.5 cm

Acquired 1997

A figure with a face resembling a mask and arms raised demands all attention. It is the focal point of this key work by African American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, whose oeuvre often features frontal representations of figures. At first glance, the image may resemble the imagery of Haitian voodoo. Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes evident that it portrays a conductor with arms raised in the air. Basquiat thus establishes a relationship to music here. The painting *Red Savoy* is an ode to music, as Basquiat intended. The grid lines that serve as the background of the artwork are a nod to the style of sheet music notation used by John Cage, a composer whom Basquiat deeply admired for his experimental musical compositions. Above the figure, a staff appears to be suspended, with the words “RED CROSS BEGINNING OF THEME (FIG 1.)” written above it. A column of text with individual words or short phrases like “ANOTHER HAIRDO” or “MARMADUKE” is situated on the left, some of which are crossed out. These refer to song titles by jazz musician and saxophonist Charlie Parker. Most can be found on his album of recordings from the 1940s, *Complete Savoy Sessions*, from which the painting takes its name.

While the art of Jean-Michel Basquiat alludes often to music, art, and pop culture, it frequently centers on the examination of racism, the oppression of Blacks in the United States, African American history, and slavery. Basquiat’s father was Haitian, and he himself lived on the island for several years, incorporating its traditions into his artwork. His art is inherently political, created in opposition to the exclusion of African American culture in a Eurocentric art world. While still a teenager, Basquiat established himself as a graffiti artist in New York, collaborated with Andy Warhol, and was featured at documenta 7 in 1982 when he was just twenty-one. Basquiat died in 1988 of an overdose, but his legacy lives on through the thousands of pieces he left behind, many of which have sold for record prices at auctions and been displayed in exhibitions worldwide. AW





## ANDY WARHOL & JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT

1928 Pittsburgh (PA, US) – 1987 New York (NY, US)

1960 New York (NY, US) – 1988 New York (NY, US)

*Collaboration (Paramount)*

1984/85

Acrylic and oil pastel on canvas, 191 × 263 cm

Acquired 2000

In the 1980s, New York City was home to two great names in contemporary art: Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat, the latter the younger by thirty years. For more than two decades, Warhol had been a global superstar with his Pop Art, while Basquiat, a former graffiti artist, emerged in the early 1980s and quickly gained widespread recognition. Their styles and subjects differed—Warhol’s work was centered on everyday life, economics, and media icons, while Basquiat’s paintings were primarily focused on issues surrounding racism and African and African American culture. Both, however, were responding in their paintings to the changes unfolding in the contemporary world.

Each came from humble beginnings but quickly rose to prominence in the art world. Their lives were affected by drug use, police violence, and the AIDS epidemic. Basquiat and Warhol had to contend with dangers they feared as, respectively, a black man and a gay man, but managed to forge a dialogue through their collaboration. Despite their different backgrounds and ages, they worked as equals in art. Warhol began by priming a large canvas with paint and employing the silkscreen technique to print an everyday and graphic image. For this piece, he chose the Paramount Pictures film studio logo. He intentionally left ample space for Basquiat to make his own artistic contribution, with the latter painting figures—most with black skin and mask-like faces—lettering, and hieroglyphic symbols throughout the canvas. Basquiat and Warhol worked alternately on the wall or floor, continuously adding new pictorial elements. *Collaboration (Paramount)* embodies the duo’s typical style. Basquiat’s archaic-looking figures and faces contrast with the triple logo representing the glamorous world of Hollywood’s stars, who embody the American dream. The two (visual) worlds converge, blending and complementing each other.

The *Collaborations* are celebrated today, but their first joint exhibition in New York in 1985 received poor reviews. Basquiat was disappointed by the criticism and subsequently withdrew from the collaboration. The relationship between the two artists was never quite the same again and came to an abrupt end with Warhol’s unexpected death. AW



## KEITH HARING

1958 Reading (PA, US) – 1990 New York (NY, US)

*Untitled*

1985

Acrylic on canvas, 122.2 × 122.2 cm

Acquired 2000

There is a struggle playing out on the canvas. A man's oversized member grabs hold of his neck and strangles him. As the man wrestles with his body—his sexuality—he stumbles and falls. In the 1980s, the world was shaken by the appearance of the first cases of AIDS, which initially affected gay men and drug addicts in particular. With the onset of the disease came stigmatization and exclusion, which Keith Haring defended against using the means at his disposal. The artist addressed the disease repeatedly, as in the present painting—even several years before he became aware that he, too, had contracted the immunodeficiency virus. In the reduced color palette typical of Haring's paintings, red serves here as a warning color.

There is a strong resemblance between the painting and comic strip imagery, which also influenced Pop Art artists like Andy Warhol. In this case, the figure is highly simplified and is rendered only in outline form. The short, curved strokes create a feeling of movement and could also convey a sense of fear and trembling. This gives his work a dynamic similar to graffiti. Haring also created art in public spaces, and gained fame particularly with his *Subway Drawings* in New York underground stations. He believed that art should be accessible to everyone, which was also a criticism of the elitist art establishment. Haring's style was intuitive, spontaneous, and easy to understand, using a visual language that was simple to decipher. He did not give his work titles, reflecting his days as a street artist and his desire to avoid influencing the viewer's perception. In 1985 he began to paint on canvas, using traditional picture formats with painted borders. Despite his short life, Haring created an impressive oeuvre of several thousand works. Sadly, he passed away from the illness in 1990, but his legacy lives on through the Keith Haring Foundation he established to help prevent AIDS and care for people stricken by it. AW



## JOSEPH KOSUTH

1945 Toledo (OH, US)

*No Number #3 (Not On Color Red)*

1990

Neon tubes, transformer, and wire, 11.5 × 199.5 cm

Acquired 2021

“Language must speak for itself.” Joseph Kosuth uses illuminated red letters that are almost twelve centimeters high to represent this sentence from the work of the philosopher and linguist Ludwig Wittgenstein. The sentence is a quotation, meaning it already existed before Kosuth extracted it from the context of Wittgenstein’s cosmos of thought and transformed it into a work of art. As a quote, the sentence is self-referential, giving language an intrinsic value that frees it from its role as an instrument and mediator to formulate thoughts, which in turn anticipates writing and images.

Kosuth first articulated his fundamental ideas regarding language and the interplay of language, image, and object in his early three-color neon work *Three Color Sentence* as well as in *Clear, Square, Glass, Leaning*, both from 1965. The latter work consists of four square panes of glass leaning against a wall. These panes are etched with the exact words that make up the artwork’s title, thereby serving as an explanatory reference to the piece. *One and Three Chairs* from the same year pointed to the future direction of his work. It consists of three elements: a commercially manufactured wooden folding chair; a black-and-white photograph of the chair in its actual size, positioned against the same wall and under identical lighting conditions as in its physical installation; and the dictionary definition of the word “chair.” Kosuth shows the chair as a tangible, space-occupying, and functional object, accompanied by a description in image and text. These three parameters—object, image, and text—serve as the foundation of the artwork. They represent the visible level, but it is the concept, the idea behind it, that gives the work meaning. Without it, the artwork would be nothing more than a mundane chair, a photograph, and some explanatory text. This is also true of *Language must speak for itself*. To fully understand the work, it is important to know that the phrase originated from Wittgenstein and that Kosuth’s concept of art is essentially based on the ideas of the philosopher of language. RJ

Language must speak for itself.

Language must speak for itself.

## DAMIEN HIRST

1965 Bristol (GB)

*Love, Love, Love*

1994/95

Butterflies and household gloss on canvas, 213 × 213 cm

Acquired 2003

A swarm of colorful butterflies populates the canvas of *Love, Love, Love*. Scattered across the background in no discernible order, they give the impression of being free-floating creatures, but the beauty and majesty of their vibrancy are deceptive. In fact, they are not painterly representations of living butterflies but real, dead insects that are directly applied to the canvas. What at first appears to be an expression of joyful vitality ultimately becomes a vanitas symbol. The transience of all life is a leitmotif in Damien Hirst's body of work. As a leading proponent of the Young British Artists movement, he has significantly impacted the art world, particularly throughout the 1990s and 2000s. His fascination with existential questions is evident in his use of medical or scientific tools, modes of presentation, and techniques. For instance, Hirst arranges surgical instruments, oversized pills, or packages of pharmaceutical products in pharmacological cabinetry or showcases prepared animal cadavers in bespoke exhibition cases. In his 1990 installation titled *A Thousand Years*, the artist radically illustrated the natural cycle of growth and decay by allowing flies to decompose a cow's skull. *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* featured a preserved tiger shark over four meters long in formaldehyde. Throughout his work, Hirst often incorporates butterflies as a symbol of metamorphosis in his exploration of the concepts of life and death. *Love, Love, Love* also has a humorous component. The monochromatic square base, for example, may be interpreted as a nod to the reduction of color and form in postwar modernist abstract art championed by artists like Josef Albers (p. 100) and Mark Rothko (p. 102). Hirst's commentary is ironic, highlighting how life can often disrupt our carefully laid plans—as evidenced by the “destruction” of a minimalist painting caused by a butterfly landing in the still-wet paint. This is where art history meets slapstick comedy. VA





## DAVID HOCKNEY

1937 Bradford (GB)

*Near Bruges*

1995

Oil on canvas, diptych in artist's painted frame, 67.5 × 167 cm

Acquired 1999

David Hockney painted the abstracted, surreal landscape of *Near Bruges* using a Pop Art palette with expressive, bright colors segmented into fields and partially accentuated with dots and stripes of complementary colors. The frame is also part of the composition and was designed by the artist. The painting is executed as a diptych on two canvases, a style typical for him at the time. Throughout his career, Hockney shifted between realistic and stylized representations, but his landscapes and portraits remained dominant. Hockney is primarily interested in questions of perception and how human vision works. As a result, he has constantly worked to expand his stylistic means. In the 1970s, he began experimenting with Polaroids and 35mm color film. Works from his *Pictures* series are photo collages composed of more than one hundred individual photographs taken from different perspectives. In the following decade, he created the series *Home Made Prints* using color copiers, fax machines, and, later, the iPad. In the 1980s, the artist returned to painting, and in the 1990s, to painting outdoors.

Hockney is one of the most significant contemporary British artists. After attending Bradford College of Art from 1953 to 1957, he began studying at the Royal College of Art in London in 1959. When the avowed homosexual was informed that he could not graduate without drawing a female model, he created his protest painting *Life Painting for a Diploma*, which contains homoerotic symbols. He refused to write the mandatory thesis and demanded to be judged solely on his artwork. Hockney succeeded in changing the outdated rules and received his diploma in 1962. Two years later he moved to California where he created his iconic acrylic swimming pool paintings, known for their realistic, bright, and vibrant quality. He also co-founded the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles in 1979. In 2008, he established the David Hockney Foundation, which administers some of his works in the UK and the US. VT



## FRANZ WEST

1947 Vienna (AT) – 2021 Vienna (AT)

*Ohne Titel*

Untitled

c. late 1990s

Papier-mâché, plaster, paint, paint bucket lid, 69 × 45 × 37 cm

Acquired 2018

What can sculpture be today? In addressing this question, the work of Austrian artist Franz West plays a central role. West's approach challenges and playfully subverts conventional artistic genres like painting and sculpture. His creative universe is all-encompassing: as well as an expanded concept of sculpture, his oeuvre includes drawings, collages, posters, objects, large-scale installations, videos, and, above all, works that prioritize participation. In the mid-1970s, he introduced "Passstücke" (Adaptives)—portable and interactive objects made of papier-mâché or plaster that were designed to function as extensions of the human body. Only through the recipient's use do these pieces become complete works of art. Related in terms of subject matter are West's sculptures of an often abstract, amorphous form, which he titled "Legitimate Sculptures"—such as the ones in the Heidi Horten Collection—as well as furniture sculptures that break down the boundary between artwork and utilitarian object and, ultimately, between art and life. Through collaborations with fellow artists, West transcended what he considered to be outdated notions of artistic autonomy and authorship. Beginning in the early 1980s, the artist's fascination with the texture and colors of his sculptures prompted him to team up with acclaimed artists, including Albert Oehlen, Herbert Brandl, and Otto Zitko. Recognizing their expertise as painters, he invited them to join him in co-authoring his sculptures by painting them.

The present work showcases the artist's signature style of incorporating inexpensive materials like papier-mâché and garish color choices. One aspect that particularly catches the eye is the paint bucket lid, which inevitably reads as an offhand commentary on a pedestal. Upon presenting his Passstücke in their initial exhibitions, West was quick to observe that the pedestal was a customary display form employed by museums. However, instead of conforming to this conventional practice he rejected the pedestal, subsequently elevating it into an integral element of his sculptures: an ironic swipe at the over-the-top nature of artistic staging and presentation. VA



## STEPHAN BALKENHOL

1957 Fritzlar (DE)

*Ohne Titel*

Untitled

1999

Painted wood, 178 × 58 × 57 cm

Acquired 2002

On a pedestal: a kneeling man, his eyes fixed ahead, his arms relaxed on his sides. He is dressed in black pants and a white shirt and appears average, with no specific identity. The figure and pedestal are crafted from wood—Stephan Balkenhol is a sculptor, or, more precisely, a hewer of wood, who chisels his works directly from tree trunks, carving pedestal and figure together as one cohesive piece. Aside from wood as the artistic medium, his sculptures are characterized by the way they reference the working process: visible traces of the chiseling and individual shavings protruding from the sculpture.

A frequent theme in Balkenhol's work is the anonymous human figure, who appears as a nameless representative of mainstream Western society as expressed through their clothing and mannerisms. In his sculpture *Ohne Titel*, created in 1999, the artist portrays an archetypal citizen on a tall pedestal. By incorporating the pedestal, he alludes to the traditional sculptural concept of a monument and simultaneously challenges it. While working within the traditional genre of sculpture, he liberates it from historical connotations and transposes it into a contemporary form of expression. As a result, he plays with the viewer's perceptual habits, creating a kind of inversion of the fundamental idea of the monument: Rather than honoring historically significant figures such as rulers, heroes, poets, or composers, his art glorifies an unknown individual. Instead of a heroic pose, the kneeling posture represents humility and adoration but also recognition of authority. Balkenhol's figures are not integrated into a narrative context; they stand for themselves and thus remain enigmatic: "Everything that makes up the sculpture occurs on and through it, with no other context involved."<sup>1</sup> Due to their ambiguous nature, Balkenhol's figures invite the viewer to project their own interpretations onto them. VA

1 Stephan Balkenhol, interview by Marie Luise Syring and Christiane Vielhaber, *The BiNational: Amerikanische Kunst der späten 80er Jahre/American Art of the Late 80s – Deutsche Kunst der späten 80er Jahre/German Art of the Late 80s*, exh. cat. (Cologne, 1988), p. 68–78, here p. 68.



## GEORGE CONDO

1957 Concord (NH, US)

*Standing Alone*

2000

Oil on canvas, 178 × 178 cm

Acquired 2002

Oversized ears, cartoonish eyes, mouth and cheeks sucked in: *Standing Alone* depicts a female figure with black curls whose face appears as if viewed through a funhouse mirror. In a picture hanging behind her, she is portrayed in exactly the same way. Since the 1980s, George Condo has made women his primary subject, his style of rendering both expressive and grotesque. He paints portraits that blur the line between fantasy and reality. The proportions of faces, eyes, noses, and mouths are intentionally deformed to create a kind of exaggerated caricature. These distortions are not accidental; they express the emotions and psyche of the person portrayed. Condo turns the inner workings of his characters outward, making them seem initially disconcerting but, upon closer inspection, poignantly authentic. His paintings serve as mirrors of the soul, offering a glimpse into the lives of his subjects, much like reading a book.

Condo's work has, in fact, influenced literature, stirring such writers as William S. Burroughs and Salman Rushdie. In the case of the latter, the main character of his 2001 novel *Fury* was inspired by Condo's painting *The Psychoanalytic Puppeteer Losing His Mind*, while Condo has illustrated short stories for Burroughs.

An artist whose style defies categorization, Condo studied art history and music theory for two years at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. His interest in music led him to Boston in 1981, where he joined the band The Girls as a bass player. During a performance, he met Jean-Michel Basquiat (p. 160, 162), who was also in a band, and later moved to New York. In the early 1980s, Condo was a key figure in the revival of painting, along with Basquiat and Keith Haring (p. 164). He spent about two years working in Andy Warhol's Factory, although he had limited personal interaction with the artist. Condo eventually decided to focus on his own artistic work and spent ten years in Paris and Cologne, where he became acquainted with William S. Burroughs through mutual friends. This connection led to a collaborative relationship that endured until the writer's death in 1997. PS





## TIM NOBLE & SUE WEBSTER

1966 Stroud (GB)

1967 Leicester (GB)

*Fucking Beautiful (Hot Pink Version)*

2000

8 neon tubes, transformers, 168 × 148 × 6.5 cm

Acquired 2020

A bright red heart is formed by lettering whose contours are blurred by the light emanating from it. Closer inspection reveals the words “Fucking Beautiful” repeated three times. The British artist duo Tim Noble and Sue Webster first incorporated iconic symbols from pop culture into their work in 1996. They were inspired by the glowing, flashing images and lettering commonly found on marquees in British seaside towns and, especially, in Las Vegas and New York City’s Times Square. Noble and Webster’s illuminated signs use intricate light sequences to convey to the world powerful emotions such as eternal love or deep hatred. One of the most striking pieces in the series is undoubtedly *Fucking Beautiful*, which captures both a sense of promise and trashiness while also illustrating the ambivalent legibility of neon light. Initially used in one-off creations, neon tubes have since evolved into a widely used tool for advertising, an important architectural element, and a favored medium for installation artists. Throughout this evolution, neon has come to symbolize an increasingly superficial and sensationalistic society.

Tim Noble and Sue Webster are a couple in private life as well as artistic partners, and belong to the extended circle of the Young British Artists, a group that includes London’s Goldsmiths’ College graduates Tracey Emin, Michael Craig-Martin, and Damien Hirst (p. 168). Much of the impact of Noble and Webster’s art is derived from its blending of seemingly contradictory elements such as form and anti-form, high culture and counterculture, male and female, craft and trash, and eroticism and violence. The pair’s exceptional talent was recognized early, and they were represented at the Venice Biennale in 2009. Their works are now found in prestigious collections such as the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and the National Portrait Gallery in London. PS



## JOHN M ARMLEDER

1948 Geneva (CH)

*Ohne Titel (target)*

Untitled (Target)

2001

Neon tubes, cables, transformers, Ø 300 cm

Acquired 2020

John M Armleder describes his work as a “supermarket of forms,” playfully drawing from the repertoire of Modern and Postmodern art, combining high and low, art and design. In the interplay of these contrasts, *Ohne Titel (target)* emerges as an imposing light circle three meters in diameter. Composed of nine concentric neon circles distinguished by their different colors, the work radiates a luminosity that extends far into the surrounding space. The artist’s concept allows for it to be hung both horizontally from the ceiling and vertically on the wall. The structure and title of the work reference a target, like those seen in sports such as darts or archery. In an art historical context, the target also relates to Kenneth Noland’s *Target* works from the 1950s and 1960s, which were based on the motif of a simple bull’s-eye. Following the principles of abstract and color field painting, Noland avoided any personal painterly gesture, focusing instead on the impact of color (see pp. 100, 102). There are no hidden codes in Kenneth Noland’s targets. Another point of reference arises from Jasper Johns’s *Target* paintings, which form part of a series that featured various symbols chosen for their clarity. Targets, along with the American flag, letters, and numbers, served as a formal framework for Johns’s artistic explorations. His target paintings inhabit the field of tension between the graphic, representational nature of the target and the abstract, geometric qualities of circles.

With a deep knowledge of art history, Armleder appropriates and “recycles” forms. A significant aspect for the artist is the recognition that iconic elements of modern art sometimes suffer from overexposure and reproduction. In his work, two levels of meaning coexist: one as a milestone in art history, the other as a formula rendered banal through exploitation. VA



## ANTONY GORMLEY

1950 London (GB)

*Quantum Cloud XXXVII*

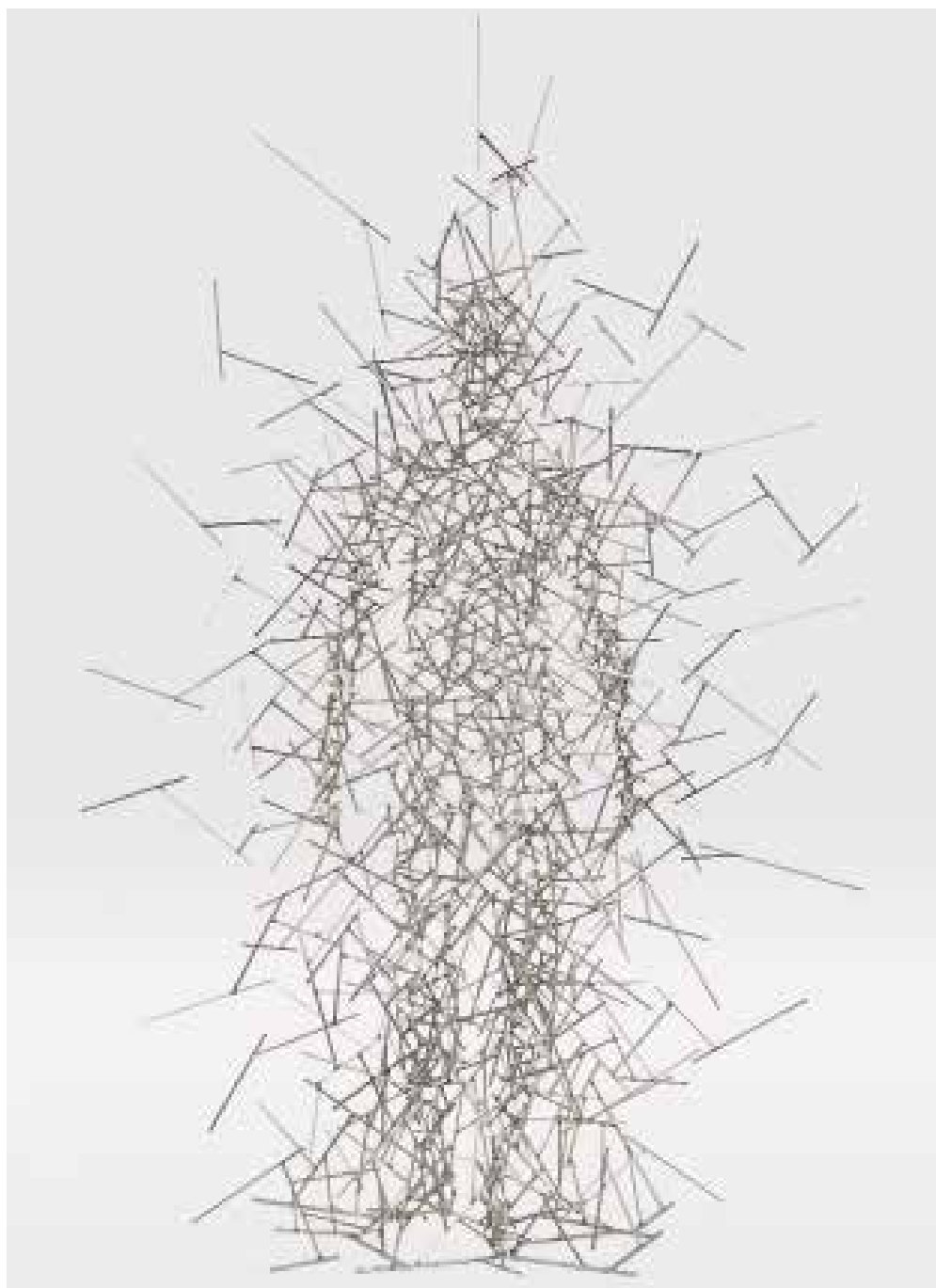
2001

Stainless steel, 237 × 150 × 125 cm

Acquired 2016

A larger-than-life, seeming abstract construction of countless sharp-edged stainless steel rods: Antony Gormley's *Quantum Cloud XXXVII*. As one moves around the construction, the rods seem to condense from certain angles, revealing the outline of a ghostly human figure. This figure occupies and demands the space of the viewer. Unlike traditional sculpture, however, it is not a solid mass that displaces space, but rather a filigree structure that both absorbs and allows space to flow through it. Then there are the rods that project beyond the figure's outline. In *Quantum Cloud XXXVII*, the rods represent an aura that extends into space. Conversely, in the artist's thirty-meter-tall *Quantum Cloud*, erected on a pier on the river Thames near London's Millennium Dome in 1999, the rods protectively envelop the figure, much like a cocoon.

Gormley initially pursued a career in the humanities. From 1968 to 1971, he studied archaeology, anthropology, and art history at Trinity College, Cambridge. There, he met the sculptor Barry Flanagan and installation artist Michael Craig-Martin. After spending three years traveling overland to India and Sri Lanka, Gormley returned to London to begin his art studies, completing them in 1979. His work explored issues of concealment and disclosure, shelter and protection. During the mid-1980s, he created a series of sculptures by casting his own body in plaster and then enclosing the molds in lead sheets. Gormley places his figures on ceilings and walls as well as in streetscapes, the Wadden Sea, or the mountains. In addition to metal, he also works with clay, which he molds into hand-sized figurines that are exhibited alongside his lead sculptures. Placed close together, the figures can occupy a given space entirely, making it impossible to enter and only allowing for observation. The *Angel of the North*, a sculpture rising twenty meters above the ground, was unveiled near Gateshead in northern England in 1998. Its slightly angled wings, spanning fifty-four meters, appear to embrace its surroundings, creating a unique connection with the environment. This is very different from *Quantum Cloud XXXVII*'s relationship to its surroundings. RJ



## ALEX KATZ

1927 New York (NY, US)

*Wading*

2002

Oil on canvas, 213.4 × 213.4 cm

Acquired 2003

Two young women walk energetically along the high-water line, gentle waves washing around their ankles. They both wear light summer clothes resembling tennis outfits, not meant for exercising but as fashion statements, indicative of a society that flaunts its leisure. The scenery is diffuse, with the blue of the water fading almost imperceptibly into the sky. The faces in the picture lack distinct features, appear sketch-like, and are rendered in a flat manner like the painting as a whole, which is the trademark of the American painter Alex Katz. Katz has been associated with the concept of cool since the 1997 exhibition *Birth of the Cool* in Hamburg and Zurich. The exhibition's title was adopted from a 1957 album by jazz musician Miles Davis, whom Katz admired.

The figure on the left appears to be gazing directly at the viewer, as she might look at a camera, while the woman on the right has her eyes closed; this creates the impression of a photographic snapshot. Like other Pop artists, Katz draws inspiration from advertising and magazines. Unlike typical Pop Art, this painting does not reference any specific location or product. The two figures stand for themselves or perhaps represent the feelings of an entire generation. They are in their early twenties and belong to the generation born between 1980 and 1999, commonly referred to as “millennials” or “Generation Y.” Committed to family and career while questioning outdated values, they have grown up with a new and strong sense of equality and are striving for a better work-life balance. The women in the picture embody this particular attitude. It would be inaccurate, however, to say that Katz set out to capture this outlook on life prevalent at the turn of the millennium. Rather, he can be described as a perpetual observer. Since his artistic beginnings in the early 1950s, Katz has left nothing to chance, producing detailed sketches on paper and cardboard. He counters traditional, emotive European painting with precise emotional control and the principle of “flatness”—a surface on which a viewer's ideas can reflect or unfold. CK





## YOSHIMOTO NARA

1959 Hiroasaki (JP)

*Little Thinker*

2002

Acrylic on canvas on fiberglass, Ø 54 cm

Acquired 2005

A little girl, alone and lost. Her arms end in stumps, her eyes are closed, and her mouth is drawn downward. The backdrop of the painting is made up of frayed pieces of canvas that resemble a city with countless rows of houses. Amid this sea of buildings there is a small opening, an escape hatch, through which the little girl emerges. She rises above the city, but what she discovers up there is no better than what she left behind. Yoshitomo Nara's images are deeply intertwined with his life story. Born in northern Japan, he grew up with a much older brother while his parents worked. At some point, he stumbled upon an American radio station that played country and rock music. Although he could not understand the lyrics, he created his own stories in which melody and rhythm were an essential part. Music and the experience of loneliness during his childhood played a crucial role in shaping his creative process.

Nara studied at the Aichi Prefectural University of Fine Arts and Music in Nagakute, Japan, before transferring in 1988 as a master student to the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, where he spent twelve years. During this period, he continued to experience loneliness and repeatedly drew figures and faces in a style characterized by *Kindchenschema* (that is, with childlike aesthetic traits). The bodies are too small and the heads too large, evoking Western comics and cartoons as well as Japanese manga and animated films known as anime. In the 1990s, Nara gained recognition for his *Angry Girls* series. Throughout this collection, Nara continued the *Kindchenschema* approach while conveying anger through the use of grim facial expressions and by placing knives or guns in the hands of the girls. After returning to Japan, Nara achieved international success and became an important representative of the Japanese art movement known as Superflat, which, in its focus on Japanese everyday life and consumer culture, is comparable to American Pop Art. For Nara, however, the similarity is limited. He is more interested in connecting with his audience. To achieve this, he embraces the Japanese concept of *kawaii*, which means the quality of being “cute,” “sweet,” and “innocent.” The term refers to people, animals, or objects that are devoid of negative traits, thereby embodying positivity in its purest form. RJ



## CLAUDE LALANNE

1924 Paris (FR) – 2019 Fontainebleau (FR)

*Choupatte (très grand)*

Cabbage Feet (Very Big)

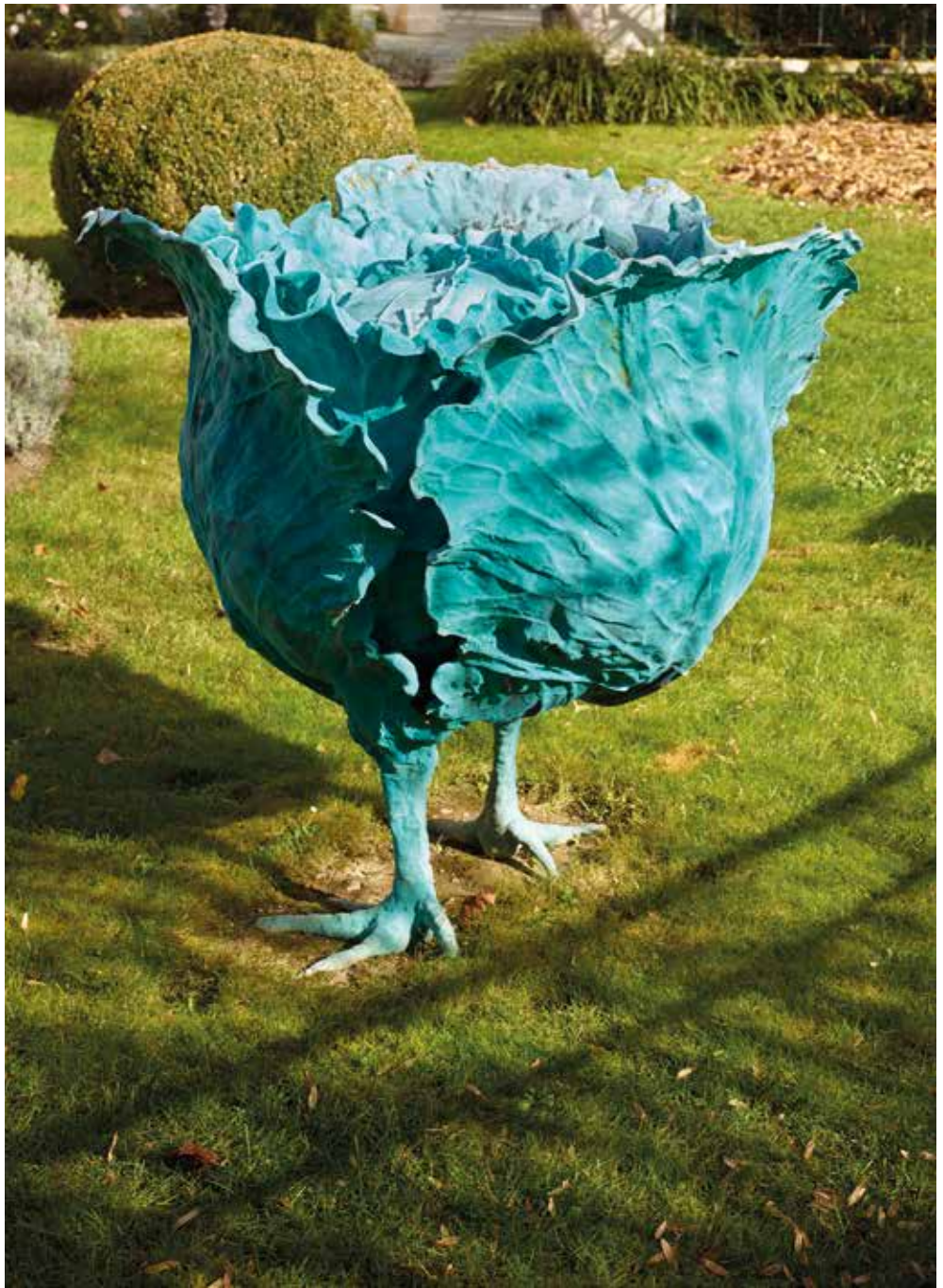
2007/12

Bronze, copper, 122 × 123 × 123 cm

Acquired 2014

Cabbage heads, apples, ginkgo leaves, crocodiles, and butterflies are some of the organic forms found in nature that served as inspiration for Claude Lalanne's artistic work. The artist translated them into oversized sculptures, mainly made of bronze, that exude a surreal quality. This effect is achieved by combining the chosen forms with those of other living creatures—or at least their parts—and objects like furniture, to create hybrid structures. In the case of *Choupatte (très grand)*, it is a cabbage head on bird legs that, as the title suggests, appears “very big” and at the same time enigmatic and humorous. The artist executed the “choupattes,” which are among her most prominent works, in different sizes and variations. The first *Choupatte* was exhibited in 1964 as part of the *Zoophites* exhibition at Galerie J in Paris, a prominent venue for showcasing the latest artistic trends. Claude Lalanne also entered popular culture with a version in which the head of a cabbage replaced the head of a seated male figure. French chansonnier Serge Gainsbourg acquired the sculpture, titled *L'homme à la tête de chou* (The man with the cabbage head), for his private collection. The work inspired his album of the same name released in 1976, and even appeared on the album cover.

The artist, who continued creating art into her old age, collaborated with her husband, François-Xavier Lalanne (p. 190), for over half a century. After meeting in Paris in 1952, they began sharing François-Xavier's studio. During that time they maintained close relationships with their neighbor, the sculptor Constantin Brâncuși, and prominent Surrealists such as Salvador Dalí, Marcel Duchamp, and Man Ray. They also associated with the “New Realists” Niki de Saint Phalle (p. 138) and Jean Tinguely. The close personal and artistic ties between Claude and François-Xavier, together often called “Les Lalanne,” did not prevent them from maintaining their individual expression. A Surrealist orientation characterizes Claude's works, while François-Xavier primarily produced zoomorphic sculptures and objects that symbolize the overcoming of the boundary between high art and utilitarian objects. VA



## FRANÇOIS-XAVIER LALANNE

1927 Agen (FR) – 2008 Ury (FR)

*Singe avisé (très grand)*

Insightful Monkey (Very Big)

2005/08

Bronze, 200 × 140 × 140 cm

Acquired 2012

The artist duo Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne held a distinct position in the French art scene during the 1950s and 1960s. Their sculptures, greatly inspired by the world of flora and fauna, demonstrated a figurative expression that differed from the increasingly abstract tendencies of the postwar era. “Les Lalanne” worked together for over fifty years, each developing a distinct yet complementary language of form. While Claude became increasingly interested in botanical subjects, transposing them into the surreal and fantastical, François-Xavier’s focus was on creating larger-than-life representations of animals, with smooth surfaces and gentle contours, as evidenced in the work *Singe avisé (très grand)*. Following his claim that “the supreme art is the art of living,” he dedicated himself to dissolving the divide between high art and utilitarian objects. Based on his animal sculptures, he created a series of functional objects for everyday use. These include the *Rhinocrétaire* of 1964, a cross between a rhinoceros and a desk, the *Baignoires hippopotame*, a cross between a hippopotamus and a bathtub, and the *Bar aux autruches*, or the “ostrich bar.” The latter was acquired by Georges Pompidou for the Elysée Palace during his term as French president. The Heidi Horten Collection includes the sculpture *Grand chevreuil* (Big deer), a deer with a flattened back that also doubles as a console table. During the 1960s, the Lalannes’ works were highly sought after by a prestigious clientele, gaining them international acclaim. The fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent was the couple’s most important patron and client. François-Xavier met him in the mid-1950s when he was creating a Chinese dragon display for Christian Dior’s window, and Saint Laurent was his assistant. A few years later, he designed the BAR YSL for the designer and populated the library of Saint Laurent’s apartment with one of his most famous works, a flock of sheep cast in bronze and covered with fur to serve as seating. VA



## MARGHERITA SPILUTTINI

1947 Schwarzach im Pongau (AT) – 2023 Vienna (AT)

*Schloss Pielach – J. W. Bergl*

Pielach Castle – J. W. Bergl

2003

C-print on alu-dibond, 90 × 113 cm

Acquired 2021

Pielach Castle is located not far from Melk in the Wachau region of Austria, on the edge of the Dunkelstein Forest. The Benedictine monks of Melk converted it into their summer residence between 1692 and 1766. While its exterior appears simple and almost austere, the castle's interior dazzles in princely splendor thanks to the imaginative and colorful frescoes painted by Johann Baptist Wenzel Bergl around 1766. Bergl was famous for his murals, in which he combined the Baroque longing for nature with foreign landscapes, mythical creatures, and religious scenes.

Margherita Spiluttini held the distinction of being Austria's most prominent architectural photographer. She created the multifaceted *Archiv der Räume* (Archive of Spaces), an exhibition at the Landesgalerie Linz in 2015. She worked with various architects including Hermann Czech and Herzog & de Meuron, and artists like Sol LeWitt and Michelangelo Pistoletto (p. 142). She also worked freelance, as in her series showcasing the Bergl rooms in Pielach and the Schönbrunn Palace (c. 1770); what these works share in common is that they are not merely photographic records of the murals, but instead offer a contemporary perspective on the intricately designed, illusionistic rooms. In the photograph above, she shows a diagonal view into the corner of a room. Transom windows puncture the walls, and the incident backlight is reflected on a glossy floor that occupies the same amount of space as the ceiling in the photograph. Due to this angle, the ceiling fresco appears slightly distorted, making it difficult to discern the subjects; the murals are also either cropped or too far away, making it challenging to appreciate the intricate details of the fantastical world they portray. This demonstrates that the photographer was not focused on maintaining the trompe l'oeil technique that creates a visual illusion for the viewer. Instead, the artist reinvents the luxurious and lively ambiance prevalent in the eighteenth century. When observing the photograph, one is captivated and may even squint to appreciate Bergl's intricate design fully. In the vein of Roland Barthes, Spiluttini shows "what has been" while also subtly connecting it to contemporary perspectives. CK





## ERWIN WURM

1954 Bruck an der Mur (AT)

*Schlechter Gedanke*

Bad Thought

2008

Acrylic, fabric, concrete, 47 × 50 × 40 cm

Acquired 2018

A pair of men's shoes, trousers just above the ankles, and above them, an indistinct, compressed form "dressed" in pink fabric: Erwin Wurm conjures up a human figure almost slain by the power and weight of a bad thought. Fusing the body with foreign objects is a consistent theme in his artwork. In his series of one-minute sculptures, which he began in 1997, he builds on the relationship between humans and the material world in that the viewer becomes an actor and—guided by the artist—becomes a sculpture himself in interaction with various objects for the duration of one minute. Moments of embarrassment and ridicule are deliberately calculated. The sculptures in the Heidi Horten Collection such as *Kastenmann* (Big-box man) and *Schlechter Gedanke* depict the temporary fusion of humans and objects permanently. In *Kastenmann*—a hybrid of human anatomy and cabinet—the furniture component replaces the role of the human torso and head. In *Schlechter Gedanke*, a human being seems to merge with an ambiguous, amorphous form that appears to crush its body. Wurm's humorous play with form and deformation, exaggeration and distortion, seems to bring "seeing the strange in the everyday" into the open. The body, distorted and alienated by merging it with attributes and everyday objects, has a slapstick-like yet eerie and ominous effect, similar to that in his *One Minute Sculptures*. In terms of content, *Schlechter Gedanke* can be considered similar to Wurm's *Neidbeulen* (Envy boils) and *Ärgerbeulen* (Anger boils), sculptures of people with bizarre bulges on their bodies that may reveal their repressed inner emotions. Wurm describes them as psychologically conditioned deformations of the body, as "physical realizations of a mental state." Processes and states of change in the tension between body and mind produce surreal forms. They appear to be out of psychoanalytic dream interpretation in which the subconscious and unconscious push outward, revealing thoughts and landscapes of the soul. Wurm brings the hidden to the surface but does not attempt to decode it. VA



## SYLVIE FLEURY

1961 Geneva (CH)

*White Gold*

2010

Palladium leaf on bronze, 46 × 56 × 40 cm

Acquired 2010

Hermès, Christian Lacroix, and Alaïa—Sylvie Fleury placed eight of these high-end shopping bags, which she had collected on shopping trips and filled with luxury goods, on the floor of the Rivolta Gallery in Lausanne in 1990 and declared the ensemble to be a work of art. *Shopping Bags* marked the beginning of her artistic exploration into the world of luxury and consumption. Her provocative bronze sculptures of shoes and bags from high-end fashion houses are among her most striking works. At first glance, the stunning beauty of these products might suggest they are glorifying consumerism, but their provocative superficiality ultimately challenges the promise of luxury goods and the expectations placed on status symbols. Fleury examines consumption and capitalism through the brand recognition of these products: by reproducing de facto luxury items precisely and transforming them into a different material, she amplifies their allure and mirrors the persuasive tactics employed by the fashion and luxury sectors to create desire. Her work *White Gold*, for example, is an exact rendition of the iconic Birkin bag by Hermès, which can only be acquired after a long wait. The bag's exclusivity and rarity have made it one of the most coveted luxury items. By casting it in bronze and plating it with palladium, the artist adds value to the bag. Through this ironic and exaggerated staging, she showcases an ordinary object that plays a significant and defining role for some of its consumers, making it akin to a fetish object. 1867, Karl Marx coined the term "commodity fetishism" in his book *Das Kapital*. He argued that people had become slaves to commodities, a realization that dawned during the Industrial Revolution but that is even more pertinent today in the age of overconsumption and fast fashion. In *White Gold*, Fleury also touches on the theme of "art as a commodity" with a panel painting that seems to have been dropped into the purse by accident. The art market operates similarly to the luxury industry, where artists are transformed into brands, and the appropriate "label" justifies any pricing. VA



## BRIGITTE KOWANZ

1957 Vienna (AT) – 2022 Vienna (AT)

*Light Up*

2010

Neon tube, lacquer, wood, 245 × 175 × 9 cm

Acquired 2020

Conceptual artist Brigitte Kowanz used light as a medium for her artistic expression for more than forty years. She experimented with it in various forms, including as object, installation, and intervention. One of her notable works was exhibited at the Austrian Pavilion during the 2017 Venice Biennale, where she combined light with mirrors and glass.

Deciphering the vibrant red neon lettering of *Light Up* can be quite a task. The bold “L” serves as the starting point, with a noticeable tilt to the left, while the end of the word tilts to the right. The “i” has two “dots”—a dot and a ring of light—that create an echo effect. The downstroke of the “g” reaches far down, almost touching the “u” below, while the “t” and “p” move away from each other. The glossy red stencil follows the contours of the writing and reflects the light, intensifying its impact. The lettering in front, slightly shifted, creates duplication. It appears Kowanz is using visual onomatopoeia rather than relying on traditional writing or calligraphy—the work is a “burst” of red light spreading out in all directions.

The unique lighting effect of this work is achieved through the use of genuine neon tubes. In German-speaking countries, the light rods of ceiling lamps—like those found in doctors’ offices or parking garages—are often mistakenly referred to as “neons.” However, those tubes are typically filled with mercury vapor and coated with fluorescent substances, resulting in a cold, harsh effect. True neon tubes, on the other hand, are one-of-a-kind, hand-blown pieces filled with the noble gas neon, which produces a red glow when electrically charged. This spectacle is a performance in itself, perfectly capturing the literal meaning of the phrase *Light Up*.

Kowanz is fascinated by codes and symbols, finding them more intriguing than plain letters due to their intricate nature. The artist skillfully balances visual appeal with readability, though the literal legibility of the text may not be necessary at all. The form and neon light itself may be enough to convey the intended message. CK



## HEIMO ZOBERNIG

1958 Mauthen (AT)

*Ohne Titel*

Untitled

2017

Bronze, 187 × 49 × 49 cm

Acquired 2021

The casting is raw, the surface unpolished, the cast seems unprocessed, and the joints unrendered—Heimo Zobernig’s bronze sculpture from 2017 exposes much. Although by conventional sculpture standards it may be considered fragmentary and incomplete, it provides valuable insight into the production process, suggesting a nascent stage of development. There are distinct indications of the casting process evident in the sculpture. Alongside the sprues that connect the casting core to its casing and channel the molten metal into the mold and permit air to exit, there are visible cracks, fractures, and whitish streaks that arise during casting. The artist intentionally avoids any subsequent modifications, opting instead to analyze the sculpture’s structure and meaning.

It is the cast of a human figure. The body seems androgynous and does not clearly indicate a specific gender; the anatomy lacks distinct features, except for the face, which displays a more intricate physiognomy. The artist assembled the figure through a composite of casts derived from various mannequins. Mannequins, the most pedestrian incarnations of the human form, have been a recurring theme in Zobernig’s work since the early 2000s. Given the artist’s preoccupation with the art historical significance of human figuration, the use of idealized body shapes and a predominantly white color palette appears as an ironic allusion to the idealized human representation found in classical sculptures. The mannequins take on the role of proxies through which Zobernig investigates the relevance of mimetic depictions of the human form in contemporary artistic practice. With only minor alterations in the form of blue tape, pastel paint, wigs, or T-shirts, these readymades transform into self-contained sculptures, or—as casts paired with the artist’s earlier figurations in some instances—they become hybrid, independent forms that disrupt Zobernig’s characteristically minimalist formal rigor, almost as if they were antagonists. VA





## LILI REYNAUD-DEWAR

1975 La Rochelle (FR)

*Lady to Fox*

2018

HD-Video, 6:28 min

Acquired 2022

A young woman dances around a flock of sheep, visits them in the barn, and follows them out to pasture. She is dressed only in shoes, with her face and body painted bright orange. It is the artist Lili Reynaud-Dewar herself who slips into the role of a fox in her video work *Lady to Fox*. Unlike the traditional image of foxes as sly hunters, this encounter between fox and sheep is playful and sometimes humorous. In the idyllic landscape, both sides interact peacefully and with curiosity; unlike a real-life counterpart, the artist portrays the fox without any discernible threat.

The artist titled her work after the novella *Lady into Fox* by the British writer David Garnett, published in 1922. Garnett was a member of the Bloomsbury Group, a cultural and intellectual circle that included Virginia Woolf. He was known as an eccentric dandy and a defining figure in Britain's modernization during the early twentieth century. In the novella, set in the Victorian era, Garnett uses an allegorical fable to describe the peculiar transformation of a young bourgeois wife into a vixen, highlighting the strict moral conventions of the time. Interpretations of the novella vary from a critical examination of marriage to an allegory of female sexuality, identity, and social conditioning. Reynaud-Dewar, too, explores questions of identity and its cultural and political preconditions through her performances and videos. In these, her own body—naked and painted in bright colors—becomes both a tool and a medium for artistic expression. In a role oscillating between alien body and frame of reference, the artist moves through museum, institutional, or public spaces following her own choreographies. By doing so, she challenges their representative character and hierarchical ordering with a personal, intimate counter model. Even though her performances are primarily created in an art context, *Lady to Fox* takes place in a rural setting: the contrast between the performer's coded appearance and animals and nature could not be more striking. VA



## LENA HENKE

1982 Warburg (DE)

*UR Mutter*

Primordial Mother

2019

Plaster, plastic foam, 132.1 × 213.4 × 139.7 cm

Acquired 2021

A larger-than-life female pig with prominent teats. Lena Henke has created a surprisingly monumental sculpture of an animal that rarely appears as a subject in art history. The pig is a controversial animal, evoking conflicting responses across different cultures and religions. While Judaism and Islam consider the pig impure, it is widely regarded as a symbol of prosperity and good luck in German-speaking cultures. In her exhibition *Germanic Artifacts*, the artist explored the pig in the context of Germanic history. Henke's inspiration for the show's centerpiece, *UR Mutter*, was drawn from the Teutoburg Forest, an ancient woodland area in Germany. In addition to the pig, which was the first domesticated animal of the Germanic tribes, she also incorporated elements from nature within the context of *Germanic Artifacts*, including tree bark, trunks, and architectural structures of Germanic dwellings, which serve as formal starting points for her sculptural works. While Henke derives these formal qualities from nature and historical models, her approach to materials and surface design initiates a critical reevaluation of the themes and issues she engages with. *UR Mutter*, for example, follows nature in terms of form, but its surface features an almost Pop Art–design with purple color gradients. In other sections of the exhibition, Henke recreated runic symbols using neon lighting. The National Socialists had appropriated the pre-Christian myths of Germanic tribes to argue for the supremacy of an Aryan race; Henke, however, rejects the notion of a “pure” Germanic past, and her artistic interventions should be viewed as a deliberate attempt to challenge nationalist ideologies.

In the exhibition, Henke positioned a dying wild boar alongside *UR Mutter*. The boar, made of iron chain mesh, was cast from the same mold as *UR Mutter*. Henke's artistic practice is centered around the fundamental principle of sculpture: the creation and replication of forms. The artist often draws parallels between the interplay of image and likeness in her works and the concept of becoming a mother. This connection is ultimately reflected in the work's title, *UR Mutter*, as the artist associates creating a new form and its replication with biological reproduction. VA



## PHILIPP TIMISCHL

1989 Graz (AT)

*Drip / Drop*

2020

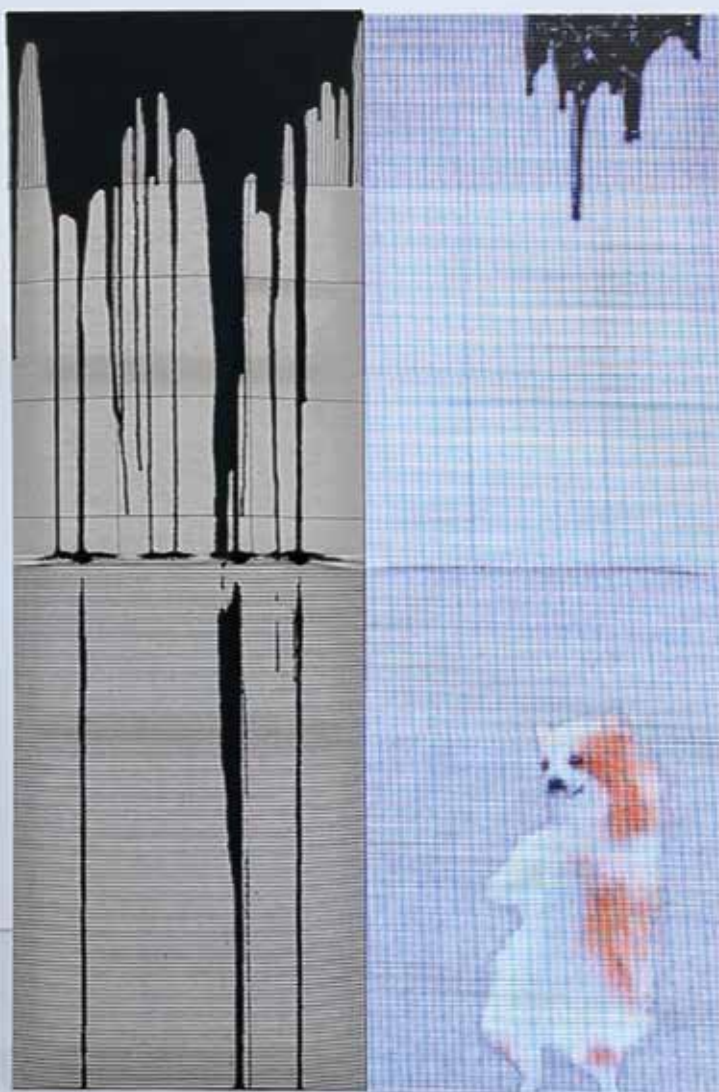
Acrylic paint on canvas next to LED panels, video, media player, 150 × 100 × 50 cm

Acquired 2021

For a brief moment, the screen appears empty, but then black paint starts to trickle from the top to the bottom against a grey background, continuing on for several minutes. To the left of the video display is a static, analog rendition of the moving image on the LED screen in a classical panel painting format. Despite the difference in technology, screen and canvas combine to form a single, unified image. Two distinct art forms meet in a powerful yet straightforward manner: the conventional genre of painting, on the one hand, which has long been used to depict the world and construct visual narratives; and, on the other hand, “new media,” which has gained significant traction as a tool for artistic expression since the 1960s.

In the *Drip / Drop* video, time plays a crucial role. To fully appreciate the work’s punch line, the viewer must patiently wait for the moment when the real and virtual images on the screen coincide. Timischl’s piece reflects on the impact of visual overstimulation on our ability to focus, particularly in light of the constant barrage of easily digestible, ultra-short content on social media and in advertising. To engage the viewer while waiting, the artist incorporated an animation of a dancing lapdog; the choreography is straightforward and similar to dance challenges featured on TikTok. The dog, most likely chosen for its popularity, provides “comic relief”—the term for a stylistic device often used in literature and film to add humor and surprise to an otherwise serious scene.

Timischl’s artistic works often bridge the gap between conventional and new media, drawing on sourced footage from social media platforms, YouTube, reality TV, and self-produced recordings. The artist explores questions of human identity and portrayal and staging of self, particularly against the backdrop of social belonging and queerness. VA



## ULRIKE MÜLLER

1971 Brixlegg (AT)  
*Rug (las criaturas)*  
Rug (The Creatures)  
2021

Sheep's wool, hand-woven in the workshop of Jerónimo and Josefina Hernández Ruiz,  
Teotitlán del Valle, Oaxaca, Mexico, 260 × 420 cm  
Acquired 2022

The title—*Rug (las criaturas)*—composed of the English term “rug” and the Spanish word for “creatures,” provides a revealing look into Ulrike Müller’s artistic practice. The first part of the work’s title refers to the medium: a hand-woven carpet of sheep’s wool. In this piece and others, the artist scrutinizes the potential of materials and techniques, deliberately choosing processes that establish connections to areas of production and life outside of the art world. She often translates her pictorial compositions into enamels or textile works—an approach that explicitly encourages collaboration and dialogue with diverse communities. *Rug (las criaturas)*, for example, was made from designs by the artist in collaboration with two weavers in the Mexican city of Oaxaca. These weavers drew inspiration from a traditional Zapotec technique passed down for centuries. It is important for the artist to acknowledge the contribution of the weavers to the creation of the rug, and therefore, their names are prominently displayed on the object’s label as well as on the tag sewn onto the rug.

The untranslated Spanish title of the work reflects its cultural origins. “Las criaturas” refers to the vividly colored animal figures depicted in silhouette. These figures allow the artist to challenge the notion of simplistic and easily interpreted visual information. While acknowledging “the immediate emotional impact of the animal figures,” the artist also portrays them “in a more open, non-specific manner as creatures that defy easy categorization,” thus offering a more nuanced perspective. The animals can be seen in conjunction with the artist’s monumental mural in 2020 for the exhibition *The Conference of the Animals* at the Queens Museum in New York. The project explored the impact of traumatic events in the city’s recent past, such as 9/11 and the COVID-19 pandemic, as depicted through children’s drawings. The exhibition’s name was inspired by Erich Kästner’s 1949 children’s book, *Konferenz der Tiere* (The Animals’ Conference). In it, the author presents animals as counter models to the destructive adults who threaten their own offspring’s future. VA





## MICHÈLE PAGEL

1985 Werdau (DE)

*Büstenhalter*

Brassiere

2021

Gilded construction steel, coat rack, glazed bricks, and adhesive filler, 200 × 75 × 40 cm

Acquired 2022

An oversized bra hangs on a clothes rack, masoned from raw bricks by Michèle Pagel. Though delicate and fragile in traditional purpose, this undergarment takes on a rigid and alienated form that challenges stereotypes of sensual femininity. The artist addresses the criticism levied against bras as instruments of oppression and sexualization, especially by the women's movement of the 1970s. The pointed conical cups in Pagel's work concretely reference the "bullet bra" popular in the 1950s and 1960s, which defied the anatomy of the female body and perpetuated the sexualization of women. The title *Büstenhalter*—the artist has deliberately chosen an outdated term—introduces an anachronistic layer that points to the constant flux of beauty standards. The sculpture is part of Pagel's *The Brick Series*, a group of clay and unfired brick reproductions of utilitarian objects—from Bialetti-Caffettiera to telephones—taken from the private sphere of the domestic environment. The weight and rigidity of their unusual material lend these objects an ominous charge—implying potential misuse as blunt objects in domestic violence. Likewise, with *Büstenhalter*, the artist seeks to "highlight vestiges and tools of omnipresent violence and power relations, isolate them, and present them for contemplation in a different context." Thus, Pagel's sculptural realizations—in addition to the brassiere, a fascia roller or a facial massage roller, for example—represent consumer goods marketed to a female clientele under the pretext of self-care. Although touted as a program of self-pampering, the call for self-optimization ultimately conceals the social pressure behind normative beauty ideals. Meanwhile, the brassiere's defensive capabilities—which Pagel formally associates with *Star Trek's* Bird-of-Prey Klingon battleship—convey the idea of "feminine wiles" and focus on aspects of resistance and female self-empowerment. VA



## CONSTANTIN LUSER

1976 Graz (AT)

*Vibrosauria*

2022

Brass, silver; 1 tuba, 4 trumpets, 20 horns, 622 × 717 × 285 cm

Acquired 2022

At the opening of the Heidi Horten Collection in June 2022, the head of the more than six-meter-tall *Vibrosauria* protruded over the parapet to the second floor of the building. Constantin Luser developed the sculpture as a direct nod to the museum's architecture, utilizing the space to its fullest potential. The artist's sculptural pieces are closely linked to the medium of drawing, which holds great significance in his artistic arsenal as an immediate and spontaneous form of expression. He frequently uses drawings in journals documenting his thoughts, ideas, and concepts, which are then sometimes translated into expansive structures. By crafting filigree sculptures out of wire, the artist brings the drawing to life in a three-dimensional form. The wire now takes on the role of the drawn line, and the concept of sculpture transforms into that of a spatial drawing. For *Vibrosauria*, the thin wire was replaced by the thicker tubes of a total of twenty-four adapted brass instruments. These also provide the necessary support for the sculpture. Crucially, these instruments retain their vibrational properties and can be utilized collectively, allowing multiple individuals to play them simultaneously. As with previous works, Luser exploits the sculptural and aesthetic possibilities of musical instruments. The 2007 piece *Gitarre wie eine schlechte Beziehung* (Guitar like a troubled relationship) illustrates the dysfunctionality of troubled relationships. In this case, however, in being repurposed, the instruments were not suitable for collective music-making. Later works such as *2-Takt-Viertel – Rotationsquintett* (2 bar quarters – rotation quintet), *Trommeliglu* (Drum igloo), and *Molekularorgel* (Molecular organ) embraced the concept of polyphonic music-making. Importantly, the production of three-dimensional works is itself “polyphonic”: by working in teams, Luser pursues an extension of authorship. Thus, the Office for Spatial Drawing, which he founded, was born out of the intention to expand the medium of drawing—a practice associated initially with a single author and perceived by Luser as “solitary”—by adding a social component of sculptural teamwork. VA



## ANDREAS DUSCHA

1976 Heidenheim a. d. Brenz (DE)

*Tulpenmanie*

Tulip Mania

2022

Glass, silver nitrate, silkscreen, 290 × 150 cm

Acquired 2022

The Heidi Horten Collection is a museum devoted to art through and through. A unique aspect of the building is the incorporation of interventions by contemporary artists (p. 212, 216, 218), making it a truly distinctive art space. For example, near the restrooms on all three exhibition floors are beautifully crafted mirror works by the artist Andreas Duscha. These floor-to-ceiling pieces are fragile and one-of-a-kind, made by the Vienna based artist in a traditional manner. At first glance, they seem antiquated, with different shades and degrees of brightness around the edges, as if they were about to go blind. Duscha says that for him, mirrors are like unexposed negatives that capture and reflect a certain “aura.” Mirrors and photography are based on the same chemical elements and reactions. The technical process of photography is about capturing and fixing what appears in front of the glass lens—the mirror, on the other hand, only reflects the moment. In this way, Duscha’s works seem to point in two opposite directions: to the past and the present. This ambivalence is intensified by the photographs, which are silk-screened onto the surface of the mirrors.

Research and references to historical events characterize Duscha’s work. Color and nature, two focal points of the Heidi Horten Collection, inspired the mirrors in the museum. Duscha is particularly fascinated by the multiple interpretations of floral still life. He is interested in the revolutionary potential, appreciation, and dissemination of flowers. The mirrored surfaces on each floor display a different bouquet. The ground floor features historical tulips, symbolizing the first financial bubble in history, caused by reckless speculation in tulip bulbs in the Netherlands in the 1630s. The mirror on Level I displays a magnificent bouquet symbolizing revolutions; and on the top level, Duscha’s photograph shows invasive flowers to bring attention to the unintentional introduction of non-native plants. CK



## MARKUS SCHINWALD

1973 Salzburg

*Tea Room*

2022

Tapestry, (brass) lamps, seating furniture, variable dimensions

The building that houses the Heidi Horten Collection is marked by history, having evolved from an archducal administrative building into a modern museum that currently exists in an interplay of historical and contemporary elements (see pp. 231–235). Drawing inspiration from the aristocratic and bourgeois tradition of tea salons in castles and palaces, Markus Schinwald has transformed one of the house’s “cabinets” into the contemporary equivalent of such a salon. In its new museum context, the *Tea Room* has become a unique space for relaxation, contemplation, and reflection. As both an exhibition area and a lounge, the *Tea Room* blurs the line between the public and private and manages to evoke similarities to its historical predecessors, such as the tea salon near the Vienna State Opera.

Part “boudoir” and part “cabinet of curiosities” (Schinwald), the room’s design includes a wall of display cases having forty circular windows, each showcasing various craft objects and artifacts from Heidi Horten’s collection. The walls of the *Tea Room* are entirely covered with specially woven tapestries, connecting to a centuries-old tradition of creating interiors as “textile spaces.” Textiles, beyond their aesthetic appeal as precious materials, also function as artistic media to extend the actual space with narrative and illusionistic motifs. Schinwald’s tapestries open up a visual space reminiscent of a late-nineteenth-century café setting—a sanctuary within the public sphere and a stage for social life. While furniture, mirrors, and windows are recognizable and repeated motifs, the café itself is devoid of people. Guests and staff have vanished, leaving it to museum visitors to bring the scene to life and bridge the gap between yesterday and today.

Interior design fundamentally demonstrates how authorship is shared between the artisans and the artist. In the case of the *Tea Room*, Schinwald’s work enters into a dialogue with a ceiling relief by Hans Kupelwieser (p. 218). VA





## HANS KUPELWIESER

1948 Lunz am See (AT)

*Ohne Titel*

Untitled

2022

Anodized aluminum, 600 × 410 × 35 cm

Acquired 2021

Hans Kupelwieser's six-meter-long large-scale relief is positioned in an unusual spot—hanging from the ceiling of the Heidi Horten Collection's Tea Room. It creates the illusion of a luxuriously flowing fabric, seemingly defying gravity as it drapes from the cabinet's ceiling. Kupelwieser's relief plays with the different properties of materials and their mutability. The deep red, velvety color and soft movement of the surface evoke an association with fabric when, in fact, the relief is made of aluminum. Furthermore, the aluminum plates were not handcrafted in the artist's studio but rather manufactured in an industrial plant. Kupelwieser used prefabricated industrial products molded by grab excavators of the kind used in scrap yards—a “machine imprint” that has become his artistic signature. Ultimately, the form is not determined by the artist but by the process on which his concept is based. Controlled randomness comes into play here: unexpected holes and openings and visible traces of raw processing emerge. It is important to Kupelwieser that this design process produces a unique and unrepeatable result. The surface treatment of the folded and crumpled aluminum sheets therefore plays a special role. First, they are napped and then anodized in color using an electrolyte method. The originally smooth metallic surface becomes matte, which creates the impression of cloth.

Addressing the interior use of fabric on a grand scale, the relief references the centuries-old importance of textiles as a material and medium in the design of courtly ceremonial rooms and upper-class salons. In Vienna alone, for example, a multitude of “red salons” can be found—whether in the Albertina, the Hofburg, the City Hall, or Schönbrunn Palace, these spaces are characterized by walls covered in red silk fabrics or tapestries. VA



## ANSELM KIEFER

1945 Donaueschingen (DE)

*Sappho*

2022

Resin, acrylic, lead, 187 × 135 × 135 cm

Acquired 2022

A woman in a floor-length white dress, arms missing and books piled on top of her instead of a head. The books are made of lead, their spines twisted, their pages wrinkled. They appear ancient. Who does the sculpture represent? Is it meant to be someone specific? Using the books as a clue, could it be a writer? Perhaps from the Middle Ages or antiquity? Has she been forgotten? The artist himself provides the answer: Anselm Kiefer named the statue after Sappho, the ancient Greek poetess. Sappho lived more than two and a half millennia ago on the Greek island of Lesbos. She wrote hymns to the gods, wedding songs, and love poems. In the latter, she described the beauty of women—her students, friends, and her daughter—making her the namesake of sapphic or lesbian love in the fifteenth century. Whether this was what Sappho envisioned for herself can only be speculated, as less than ten percent of her work has been preserved.

*Sappho* is part of a series of works entitled *Frauen der Antike* (Women of antiquity), which Kiefer began in the mid-1990s. The female subjects include historical personages such as Sappho as well as mythological and biblical figures. Alongside women who are today virtually unknown, such as Bilistiche, the Olympic champion of 264 BC, there is also Danaë, one of Zeus's countless lovers, and Phryne, believed to be the model for Praxiteles's sculpture *Aphrodite of Knidos*. Additionally, there are women from the Old Testament: Rebekah, Leah, and Rachel. What they all have in common is that they wear long, mostly white dresses. Several figures, including Sappho, have lead books in place of their heads (with the poet Nossis, her books are open and spread across her outstretched arms), while others, such as Phryne, have a tangle of copper wire. Roman empress Julia Domna, on the other hand, has branches and twigs sticking out from the neckline of her dress. But why are they all missing heads? Kiefer again provides the answer. The missing heads signify that the achievements of ancient women have been attributed to them only by men. It is the patriarchy, the male-dominated historiography, that has overlooked and continues to overlook women in all areas, which is what Kiefer means to symbolize with the absence of the head. RJ







## THE HEIDI HORTEN COLLECTION BUILDING

### TRANSFORMATION OF A SITE

Matthias Boeckl

With the opening of the Heidi Horten Collection in Vienna's city center in June of 2022, Austria not only gained a new museum of modern and contemporary art of international stature but an ambitious architectural work as well. The understated conversion of a more than 100-year-old chancellery and garage building has served to delightfully enhance the concentration of renowned cultural buildings in its immediate vicinity (the Albertina, State Opera, Secession, Academy of Fine Arts, Museumsquartier, and the Art History and Natural History Museums). The building is located in the courtyard of a Gründerzeit building block and evokes the mood of a hidden little residential palace, which—quite intentionally—also reflects the private and individual character of the institution.

The area surrounding the museum features prominently in Vienna's urban history. With the construction of a medieval ring wall around 1200, the Carinthian Gate, on the site where Karlsplatz stands today, functioned as the city's most important entrance, owing to the fact that three long-distance roads from the west, south, and east converged in front of it. During the Turkish sieges of 1529 and 1683, the Ottoman army concentrated its attacks on the area of the wall between the royal residence in the Hofburg and the Carinthian Gate. After the first siege of 1529, large-scale military bulwarks, or bastions, were built to buttress the city's fortifications. Protruding from the reinforced city walls, they were mainly used for the placement of guns. Next to the Carinthian Gate, Italian fortress engineers built the Augustinian Bastion. As the military importance of city fortifications dwindled and the lack of space in the densely built-up inner city increased, however, it gradually came into view as a site for new construction.

From 1800 to 1805, the former Palais Tarouca between the Hofburg and the Augustinian Bastion was rebuilt and extended (today's Albertina) for Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen and his wife, Archduchess Marie Christine, by the French architect Louis Montoyer. Chancellery buildings for the administration of the duke's extensive estates were erected on the bastion, as well as a riding hall with a large stable for one hundred horses (Fig. 1).



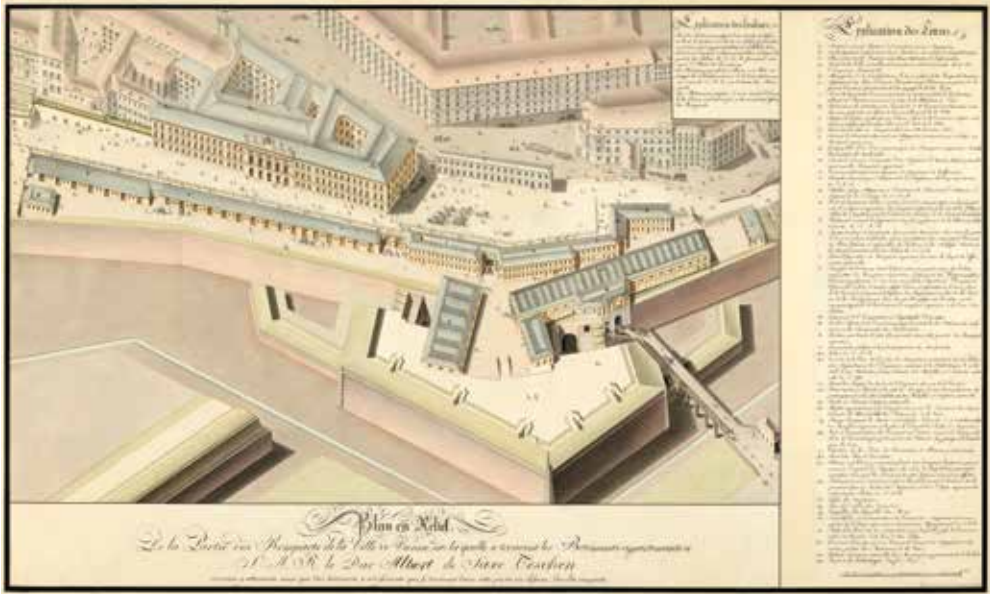


Fig. 1: Nicolas Laforêt, Albert von Sachsen-Teschen Palace with neighboring buildings on the Augustinian Bastion, Vienna, bird's eye view, 1805

#### FROM THE BASTION TO THE RING ROAD: THE ALBRECHT BUILDINGS 1860–62

In 1857, Emperor Franz Joseph decided to demolish the city fortifications and build the Ringstrasse on the newly freed-up space as well as the extensive open area created by the glacis beyond the city walls. For military purposes, the glacis had always been kept free of any buildings and formed a wide greenbelt surrounding the city, used for military parades and the entertainment of the city's residents. The demolition of the fortifications resulted in the flattening of the Augustinian Bastion and the annexes of the Albert Palace located on it. In return, the owner at the time, Archduke Albrecht—a son of Archduke Charles, the “Lion of Aspern,” and a first cousin once removed of Emperor Franz Joseph—was generously compensated in the form of a valuable building plot that, in 1860, had been created by the demolition of the bastion between the future Court Opera House and the Burggarten directly on the new Ringstrasse. Albrecht initially planned to construct a new residential building with a riding school, as per a design by Ludwig von Förster (Fig. 2). His intentions, however, soon changed. Ultimately he divided the site into eight building lots, seven of which he sold off. The eighth, which took up nearly half of the entire block, he kept in order to erect a sizable new construction with three inner courtyards and a riding school. The seven building sites that he sold were used to construct the new



Fig. 2: Ludwig von Förster, Project for the development west of the Vienna Court Opera, facade of the residential building facing the Ringstrasse, 1860

city palaces of the successful banker and industrialist families of Schey, Zinner, Schoeller, Dreher, Faber, Mayr-Melnhof, and Hainisch. All of these palaces remain preserved, with the exception of beer baron Dreher's house on the corner of Operngasse and Opernring. The building that Albrecht constructed in 1862/63, referred to as the "Lower Albrecht Palace" (as opposed to the "upper" one, today's Albertina), was initially intended as the administrative headquarters of his extensive holdings in Austrian Silesia (Teschener Kreis), in Moravia (including Seelowitz Castle), in Hungary (including Hungarian Altenburg), and in Austria (including Weilburg Castle in Baden). Living quarters for staff were also planned. A riding hall with stables in the inner courtyard was to replace the corresponding functions of the old buildings in the Augustinian Bastion. Archduke Albrecht commissioned these designs from Carl Hasenauer, the architect who would later head the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873 and (together with Gottfried Semper) design the court museums and the new wing of the Hofburg. He also enlisted Anton Hefft, who had already planned several buildings for the archduke, including the neo-Gothic chapel of Weilburg near Baden. The main facade facing the castle garden of Hefft's implemented design shows a classical structure with shallowly projecting central and side risalti and domed roofs (since modified), which are distantly reminiscent of the French Baroque. Typical of the archduke's patent business acumen was an additional fifth floor in the central wing, while the side wings were constructed with the four originally planned floors (Fig. 3).

Despite his forward thinking in technical and economic matters, Archduke Albrecht still adhered to traditional princely forms of ceremony. The riding hall in the largest of the complex's three inner courtyards makes this particularly evident. The dimensions of the building, no longer standing, were 20 by 10 Viennese Klafter ( $37.93 \times 18.96$  m) and five Klafter high (9.48 m), almost exactly the same as those of its predecessor in the Augustinian Bastion (Fig. 4).



Fig. 3: Andreas Groll, Lower Albrecht Palace and Schey Palace, Vienna, 1864/65

#### THE CHANCELLERY BUILDING IN 1914

In 1895, Archduke Albrecht's adopted nephew Friedrich received a grand inheritance consisting of his agricultural and industrial enterprises, real estate properties in several countries of the monarchy, and the Albertina's extensive art collection. Much like his Albertine ancestors (Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen, Archduke Carl, Archduke Albrecht), Archduke Friedrich of Austria-Teschen pursued a military career. In 1889, he was promoted to general of the cavalry and commander of the Fifth Army Corps in Preßburg/Bratislava, where he also lived with his rapidly growing family. In 1905 he moved to Vienna, where he resided in the palace he inherited, the Albertina, until 1914. Early that year, he decided to replace the riding school in the Lower Albrecht Palace with a modern garage for automobiles. Yet again, business acumen dictated that the inner courtyard, which had until then been merely a one-story structure, be raised to three stories with chancellery rooms and an extended roof. Friedrich was equally "practical" in his choice of designer: not just any architect would draw up the plans for the new building, but the municipal architect Hugo Schuster himself.

The design and construction of the chancellery building show a combination of traditionalist formal language and a thoroughly progressive structural design (Fig. 5). By adding corner rustics and dormers with oval windows, Hugo Schuster's initially sober, undecorated design was transformed into something reminiscent of the Baroque. This is typical of the preferred style of the Habsburgs, and was also applied to the extensions of the Hofburg and numerous state buildings. Considering that by this time the

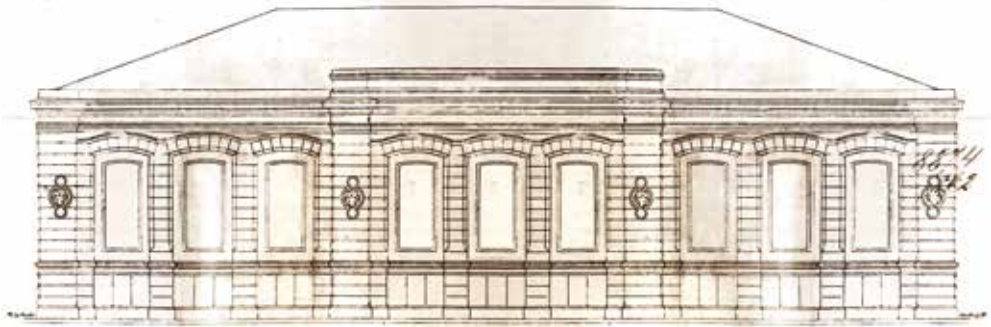


Fig. 4: Anton Hefft, Riding Hall in the Lower Albrecht Palace, Vienna, 1862

Viennese Modernism of Otto Wagner, Josef Hoffmann, and Adolf Loos had long since reached its first heights, Archduke Friedrich's choice of style seems quite conventional. The building's progressive nature was nevertheless demonstrated by its function as a garage for automobiles—an invention that was barely twenty years old at the time—and the construction of the garage hall itself, which was situated on the ground floor and utilized concrete columns. This reinforced concrete construction method was new and only employed in Vienna, mainly in commercial and industrial buildings but also in multifunctional townhouses such as the famous Goldman & Salatsch house by Adolf Loos located on the Michaelerplatz.

Friedrich's chancellery building has nine axes in the western main front and a U-shaped layout. The two short side arms were extended back to the property line of the neighboring houses in the Operngasse belonging to the Hainisch and Mayr Melnhof families. Between the two arms of the chancellery building was a glass-roofed courtyard, which was used as, among other things, a car wash. The upper floors served as offices and residences for the archduke's staff and were accessed by a majestic spiral staircase in the north wing and a simple two-flight staircase in the south wing. By means of a glass-covered iron bridge, the second floor was connected to the north-facing street wing of the Albrecht building on today's Hanuschgasse.

#### USES AND ALTERATIONS 1918–2005 AND A 2019 COMPETITION FOR THE HEIDI HORTEN MUSEUM

At the beginning of World War I, Archduke Friedrich was appointed supreme commander of the Imperial and Royal Army by Emperor Franz Joseph. He occupied this position until December 2, 1916, when Franz Joseph's successor, Emperor Charles, per-

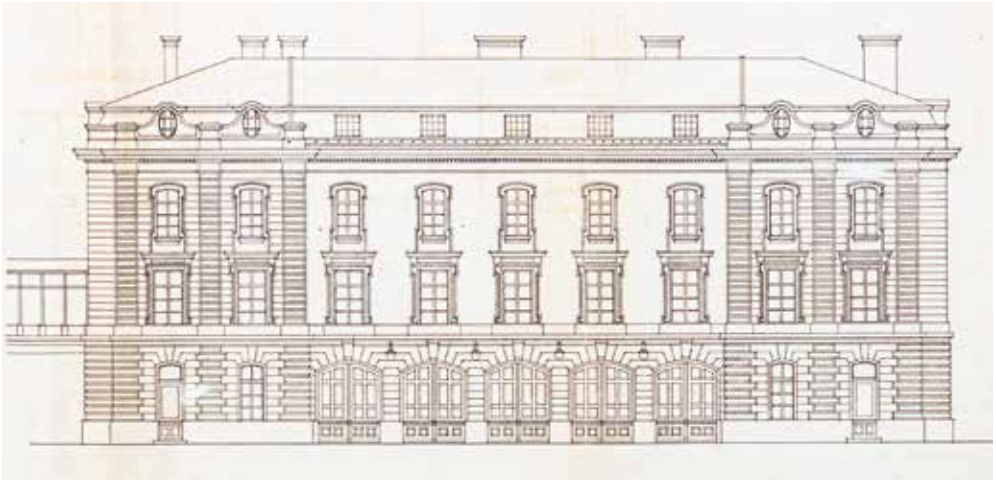


Fig. 5. Hugo Schuster, chancellery building for Archduke Friedrich, Vienna, 1914, west facade

sonally took over his post. Under Friedrich, the Army Supreme Command was stationed at Teschen in Austria-Silesia, where Friedrich owned extensive estates. He lived there with his family at Teschen Castle. The Supreme Command was later moved to Baden near Vienna, where it was housed in Friedrich's Weilburg Castle under Emperor Charles's rule. In 1919, following the end of the war, Friedrich's properties in the newly founded Republic of Czechoslovakia, in Poland, and in Austria were taken over by the State. The properties and art collections of the Albertina, including its outbuildings, were also bequeathed to the Republic of Austria. Friedrich and his family withdrew to his properties in Hungary, which had not been nationalized.

The building complex of the former Lower Albrecht Palace was used by the new Austrian government for the Ministry of Social Welfare and, given its location next to the State Opera, was also used for administrative purposes for the new state theater. The covered bridge that spanned from what is now Hanuschgasse to the Albrecht Ramp, a small remnant of the Augustinian Bastion demolished in 1860, was itself destroyed in 1935 (Fig. 6). The ground floor of the chancellery building continued to be used as a garage; in 1928, Karl Schwetz built a gasoline pump in the courtyard in front of the garage doors. After surviving the bombings of World War II more or less intact, the garage was then used as storage for theater props, among other things. In 1972, the ground floor was converted by Josef Wenz into the "Bundestheaterkassen" for advance ticket sales, which made use of the courtyard at the rear. In 2005, the first-floor hall was adapted as an opera museum by Hans Hoffer. The building was then sold to a private project developer, who in turn sold it to Heidi Goëss-Horten in 2019.



Fig. 6: Marianne Strobl, the Albrecht Ramp und flying buttress, Vienna, c. 1905

Due to its size, its position in the middle of Vienna's main art district, and its somewhat hidden location in an inner courtyard, Archduke Friedrich's former chancellery building proved ideal for Goëss-Horten's vision: having successfully exhibited numerous highlights of her art collection at the Leopold Museum in 2018 (curator: Agnes Husslein-Arco), the benefactress wanted to make her collection permanently accessible to the public. For the adaptation of the chancellery building into a private art museum, she launched a competition in which she invited three architectural firms to participate, each with extensive experience in the design of ambitious cultural buildings. Of the designs from O&O Baukunst (Laurids and Manfred Ortner, Vienna/Cologne/Berlin), Kuehn Malvezzi (Berlin), and the next ENTERprise Architects (Ernst J. Fuchs and Marie-Therese Harnoncourt-Fuchs, Vienna), the latter was selected to be realized.

#### ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS

The next ENTERprise's design was able to subtly combine a multitude of considerations. While the building's exterior was to retain its historical appearance, the mu-

seum also had to offer multifunctional spaces and exhibition rooms suitable for the presentation of light-sensitive works on paper, as well as sculptures weighing several tons, paintings, installations, and video works by contemporary artists. The architects' design accomplished this task via three main modifications (Fig. 7). Ernst J. Fuchs and Marie-Therese Hannoncourt-Fuchs describe their initial strategy as follows: "We [did] not consider the building and the space surrounding it as separate from one another, but rather [we saw] each [element] as extending itself into the body of the other." This meant that the content of the house, i.e., art exhibitions, should spread out through the large-format glass enclosure that can be opened into the inner courtyard on the ground floor. There, in front of the house, a sculpture garden shaded by four trees is enclosed by a knee-high, pink-colored concrete wall that also serves as a bench, greatly enhancing the public space (Fig. 8). There are additional green spaces on two rear terraces on the upper floors that can be reached by walking through the open format exhibition rooms (Fig. 9).

The second modification employed by the architects was the design of the museum entrance opposite the public gateway from the Hanuschgasse into the inner courtyard. Here, an opening the size of a room was "cut out" of a corner of the former chancellery building, creating a roofed entrance area with the inner sides lined with gold-toned metal panels (Fig. 10).

The third modification established the building's varied and innovative interior structure, which first required the building's central wing be gutted. "Two floating exhibition plateaus of approximately 240 square meters each, slightly tilted toward each other, [were] inserted into the exposed space [comprising] about 3,600 cubic meters. They were connected to each other by two sculpturally designed staircases." The platforms have a rectangular floor plan that is rotated by about forty-five degrees relative to the building's interior walls so that the four corners of the open-plan space remain free. This creates four vertical openings that provide a view from the ground floor to the top floor, affording extraordinary views between the exhibition levels from different heights as well. The underside of the platforms and the ceiling beneath the offices in the built-out loft level were designed as a technically sophisticated illuminated ceiling. In different modulations, it provides the basic lighting for the multipurpose platforms. The complex three-dimensional composition of the central room is one of the most beautiful interiors in Vienna (Fig. 11).

A traditional enfilade was deliberately installed in the building's north and south wings to bring about a noticeable contrast between old and new—a contrast further represented by types of flooring, which are Venetian terrazzo in the central room and smoked oak in the "cabinets" (small exhibition rooms).

In addition to the architectural firm's ambitious interior designs, the building also boasts a number of artistic interventions. With works by Andreas Duscha, Hans

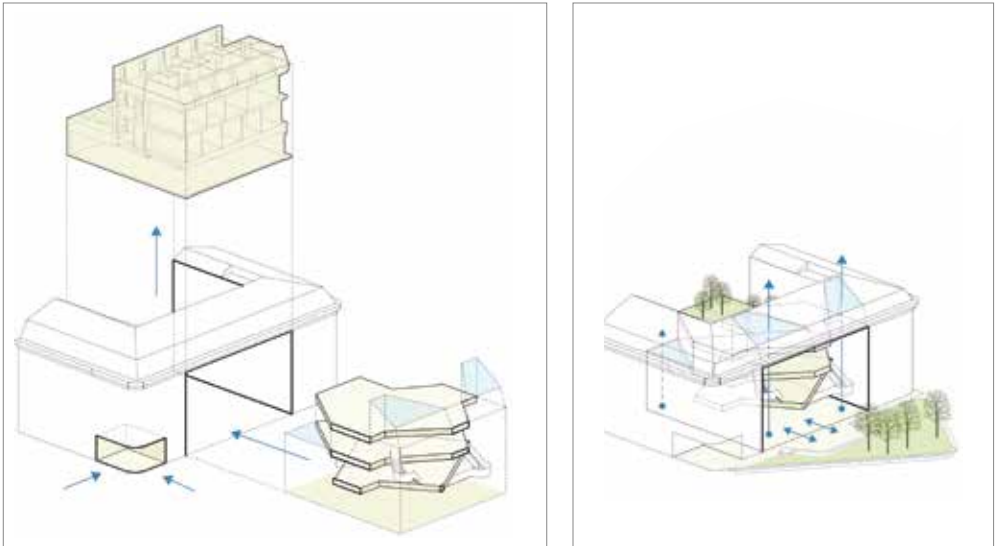


Fig. 7: the next ENTERprise architects, three interventions on the former chancellery building



Fig. 8: Heidi Horren Collection, Vienna, west facade



Kupelwieser, Constantin Luser, and Markus Schinwald, a group of prominent contemporary artists had their say. The “Tea Room” on the second floor was designed in the spirit of a salon by Markus Schinwald. He devised the walls, fixtures, and furniture with the aim of relaxing visitors (p. 216). The entirety of the wall facing the main hall was fitted with “portholes” through which premium art objects can be seen. The bench in the middle of the room resembles those found in grand salons and art museums. The ceiling of the Tea Room features an impressive relief by Hans Kupelwieser that belongs to his series of machine-crumpled aluminum objects (p. 218). The deformed sheets are anodized a deep red that gives the impression of velvet despite the material’s metallic stiffness; that contrast produces an exhilarating tension.

Such material transformations are a characteristic of contemporary art. Andreas Duscha’s mirror works, which can be found near the museum’s restrooms, achieve this expertly. Duscha silkscreened the backs of the mirrors with floral motifs that, when viewed in the mirror, mesh with “reality” in an exciting way (p. 214). Constantin Luser, on the other hand, has expanded the traditional concept of art by choosing to acoustically interact with museum visitors. He builds objects out of metal tubes that tend to resemble animals. For the Heidi Horten Collection, he designed the Vibrosauria, a filigree sculpture that, like a prehistoric giant dinosaur, stands two stories tall and can be “played” like a musical instrument (Fig. 12). Last but not least, is Oswald Stimm. In 1966, he designed all the furnishings of Berislav and Natalie Klobučar’s rented apartment in Vienna, including the ceiling and wall panels, furniture, and sculptures. Elements of the famous conductor’s apartment, which had to be vacated in



Fig. 9: Heidi Horten Collection, Vienna, east side with roof terraces



Fig. 10: Heidi Horten Collection, Vienna, entrance loggia



Fig. 11: Heidi Horten Collection, Vienna, hall with exhibition platforms



Fig. 12: Constantin Luser, *Vibrosauria* (detail), 2020–22



Fig. 13: Oswald Stimm, mural relief in the Klobučar apartment, Vienna, 1966

2021, have been placed in certain rooms of the museum. In particular, an abstract wall relief made of chased metal plates and evoking urban structures from a bird's-eye view is an important work of late modern sculpture (Fig. 13).

The former chancellery building, with its eventful history on one of Vienna's most prominent sites, its creative transformation into a private art museum, and its subtle artistic interventions, is undoubtedly a highlight of Vienna's architectural and cultural history.

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## COLOPHON

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Please note that not all of the works presented in this Collection Guide will be on display in the exhibition at any given time. We appreciate your understanding.

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