The Westfälischer Kunstverein
in 113 Artworks

Westfälischer
Kunstverein

1 Hermann tom Ring
2 Rune Mields
3 Lovis Corinth
4 Tom Burr
5 Charlotte Flamm
6 Walter Stöhrer
7 Johann Brabender
8 Nam June Paik
9 Margarethe König
10 Tess Jaray
11 Gertrud Metz
12 HAP Grieshaber
13 Conrad von Soest
14 Johann Christoph Rincklake
15 Otto Pankok
16 Alexander Michelis
17 Josef Albers
18 Johannes Spruyt
19 Matteo Thun
20 Georg Flegel
21 Simone Nieweg
22 Oswald Achenbach
23 Ellsworth Kelly
24 Arnold Schlick
25 Sol LeWitt
26 Andrea Büttner
27 Adolf Schmidt
28 August Sander
29 Johann Peter Hasenclever
30 Matt Mullican
31 Otto Mueller
32 Heinrich Aldegrever
33 Sigmar Polke
34 Heinrich Nauen
35 Peter August Böckstiegel
36 Derick Baegert
37 Friedrich Tüshaus
38 Camille Henrot
39 Rembrandt van Rijn
40 Donald Judd
41 Westphalian or Lower Rhine Master
42 Eric Snell
43 Jan Gossaert
44 Max Pechstein
45 Albrecht Dürer
46 Sol LeWitt
47 Derick Baegert
48 Gerhard Richter
49 John Bell
50 Fillide Giorgi Levasti
51 Hendrick Goltzius
52 Günter Fruhtrunk
53 Eugen Napoleon Neureuther
54 Meindert Hobbema
55 Jan Boeckhorst
56 Haku Maki
57 Elisabetta Sirani
58 Martin Kippenberger
59 Master of Liesborn
60 Donald Judd
61 Master of Liesborn
62 Julia Schily-Koppers
63 Lucas Cranach t. E.
64 Allan Kaprow
65 Theodoor Rombouts
66 Eberhard Viegener
67 [Unknown]
68 Martin Boyce
69 Paula Modersohn-Becker
70 Matthew Buckingham
71 [Unknown]
72 Johann Zoffany
73 Gerrit van Honthorst
74 Thomas Struth
75 Isa Genzken
76 Gert van Lon
77 Blinky Palermo
78 Hans Collaert t. E.
79 Robyn Denny
80 Master of St Laurence
81 [Unknown]
82 Helen Louise Wiehen
83 [Unknown]
84 Virginia Overton
85 Herman van der Myn
86 Christian Rohlfs
87 Margarethe König
88 Georg Karl Pfahler
89 Pieter van Noort
90 Hanne Darboven
91 Bonaventura Peeters
92 Edward Ruscha
93 Carl Busch
94 Bernhard und Hilla Becher
95 Adolf Teichs
96 Master of the Marian Altar in Fröndenberg
97 David Teniers
98 Josef Albers
99 Ludger tom Ring t. Y.
100 Jon Rafman
101 Kerstiaen de Keuninck
102 Lowell Nesbitt
103 Various Artists
104 Eberhard Viegener
105 Jan Baegert
106 Jessica Stockholder
107 Ulrich Rückriem
108 [Unknown]
109 Bernhard Pankok
110 Adolph von Menzel
111 Max Bill
112 Hans Baldung
113 Jessica Stockholder

Artworks

1 Reinhard Hoeps
2 Katja Schroeder
3 Kristian Vistrup Madsen
4 Kristina Scepanski
5 Miriam Lowack
6 Jens Bülskämper
7 Taslima Ahmed
8 Colby Chamberlain
9 Gudrun Püschel
10 Jana Peplau
11 Anna Luisa Walter
12 Hans-Jürgen Lechtreck
13 Sarah Siemens
14 Christian Katti
15 Nadia Ismail
16 Sophia Trollmann
17 Monja Droßmann
18 Inga Krüger
19 Vanessa Joan Müller
20 Moritz Scheper
21 Franziska Kunze
22 Martina Padberg
23 Marianne Wagner
24 Stefan Kötz
25 Carla Donauer
26 Rebekka Seubert
27 Christoph Westermeier
28 Felicitas Schwanemann
29 Gerd Dethlefs
30 Julia Jung
31 Eline van Dijk
31 André Raatzsch
32 Anne Krönker
33 Klaus Honnef
34 Kai Eric Schwichtenberg
35 David Riedel
36 Slavs and Tatars
37 Elena Winkler
38 Clara Napp
39 Antonia Lotz
40 Till Julian Huss
41 Marijke Lukowicz
42 Jenni Henke
43 Ursula Renner
44 Julia Pechstein
45 Nina Günther
46 Sabine Maria Schmidt
47 Carina Plath
48 Ursula Frohne
49 Library Stack
50 Mathilde Belouali
51 Angela Theisen
52 Susanne Böller
53 Herbert W. Rott
54 Georg Imdahl
55 Maria Galen
56 Gemma Mathilda Heinen
57 Liberty Adrien
58 Carina Bukuts
59 Marcus Lütkemeyer
60 Peter Ballantine
61 Camille Gouget
62 Leonie Lieberam
63 Evan Tepest
64 Noemi Smolik
65 Sophia Roxane Rohwetter
66 Andreas Prinzing
67 Reinhard Hoeps
68 Anna Sophia Schultz
69 Sarah Siemens
70 Tim Saltarelli
71 Martin Zangl
72 Benedikt Fahrnschon
73 Lars Weisbrod
74 Jule Hillgärtner
75 Oriane Durand
76 Dominikus Müller
77 Rose-Maria Gropp
78 Mariam Hammami
79 Oliver Koerner von Gustorf
80 Roland Krischel
81 Perrette Russon
82 Angela Steidele
83 Tobias Viehoff
84 Cathrin Mayer
85 Nadja Abt
86 Karolin Baumann
87 Juliane Schickedanz
88 Wulf Herzogenrath
89 Leonie Pfennig
90 Merle Radtke
91 Sabine Oelze
92 Manuel Gnam
93 Eckhard Kluth
94 Judy Ditner
95 Gerd Dethlefs
95 Patricia Vester
96 Wolfgang Ullrich
97 Gabriela Acha Errazti
98 Heinz Liesbrock
99 Dietmar Wohl
100 Jörg Albrecht
101 Thomas B. Erdmann
102 Tono Dreßen
103 Maria Engelskirchen
104 Jolanda Saal
105 Petra Marx
106 Friedrich Meschede
107 Jana Bernhardt
108 Hermann Arnhold
109 Magnus Elias Rosengarten
110 Heinrich Bosse
111 Erec Gellautz
112 Kirsten Claudia Voigt
113 Liz Park

Texts

German Art Associations (Kunstvereine) constitute a unique success story. Among their number, the Westfälischer Kunstverein is one of the oldest and largest—and boasts an additional attribute.

Founded in 1831 as a democratic impetus of civil society, the Westfälischer Kunstverein was intended to promote contemporary art and help its members to "develop their taste". In the nineteenth century, artworks were still primarily the representational vehicles of the nobility and the church. They were often commissioned works or were intended to provide a specific (religious) form of education. In contrast, the citizens of Münster, who founded the Kunstverein, were keen to devise an autonomous mode for art that was separate from these dedicated purposes and was relevant to their own world. At the same time, the concept of the *Bildungsbürgertum* (the educated bourgeoisie) was the order of the day: people wanted to learn and to understand what contemporary art was all about. Even at that time, the Kunstverein was a forum for a direct exchange between artists and an interested audience in the presence of original artworks.

What makes the Westfälischer Kunstverein special is the fact that—in addition to promoting contemporary art and educating its members and the public—it had also taken on another task: in 1831, the founding year of the Kunstverein, the erstwhile province of Westphalia did not yet have a museum. And so the founding of the first museum in Westphalia was also part of Westfälischer Kunstverein's remit.

A museum needs artworks. The Kunstverein went about collecting artworks actively and in a variety of ways. Many holdings from dissolved churches and monasteries were preserved by the Kunstverein; in some cases, artworks were purchased from exhibitions, donated by artists or collectors. The tradition of annual gifts or editions (Jahresgaben), which the Kunstverein has cultivated in various forms since the 1850s, also contributed to the steady growth of its own collection. It is therefore self-evident that this collection is eminently eclectic and not the result of a rigorous, orchestrated or specific collecting strategy. Rather, it is a reflection of and a testament to the daily work of the Kunstverein and its representatives over the decades (soon to be centuries). It is the collection of a democratic association, a multiplicity, and it is at once a collection representative of all its eras, the transient fashions and conjectures for the future.

Thus, the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection now includes almost 2,500 works, which, in 1908, laid a substantial foundation for the Westfälisches Landesmuseum (today's LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur). The artworks from the Westfälischer Kunstverein are labelled there now as permanent loans. They span a prodigious arc from the early Middle Ages to the Kunstverein's activity today.

This publication presents a fraction of this magnificent and invaluable collection for the first time with individual texts for each of the 113 works. 113 authors from a wide range of fields and backgrounds have selected artworks, approached them from their own unique perspective and shared their impressions in a series of short texts. The result is a surprising and inspiring juxtaposition of artists, forms of expression, tonalities, epochs and fashions. And this is precisely what defines this specific kind of institution, the Kunstverein, the art association: on the one hand, we are deeply rooted in (art) history generally and, regionally, in Münster and Westphalia, thanks to a tradition spanning some 190 years. On the other hand, the exhibition practice has always been (and still is) characterised by the most diverse contemporary references possible, typified by the enduring motto of the long-standing chairman Friedrich Jerrentrup —"not *from the* region, but *for the* region".

Over and above this lies another special feature of the Kunstverein and our understanding of it and its mission: as early as 1831, the aim was to learn ways to understand art, to create access and to broaden an individual perspective in a dialogue with artists. Over the past eleven years, during which we have had the honour of jointly directing the fortunes of Westfälischer Kunstverein, this has always been our guiding principle. We want an open Kunstverein that communicates our own curiosity to the outside world and invites others to partake in the experience. In this sense, this book is also intended as an entreaty to readers to look at art, both old and new, to invite their own thoughts and experiences without barriers or intimidation.

Ideally, it will also make tangible the exigencies, crises and vagaries of the times that the Westfälischer Kunstverein has had to endure in its 193 years of existence: the founding of states, world wars, economic crises and ideological coordination under the Nazis. The commitment, attitude and personal dedication of its members and supporters have borne it through the years. This realisation and achievement of what a small association—an initiative, a union of a handful of people at the beginning of the nineteenth century—has been able to create, preserve and repeatedly renew to date, still gives us hope in today's vexed world. It strengthens our belief in the significance and importance of such a free, flexible and democratic institution—at all times.

Kristina Scepanski
Director 2013–2024

Tobias Viehoff
Chairman of the Board

History

1831
FOUNDATION OF THE WESTFÄLISCHER KUNSTVEREIN

The foundation of the Westfälischer Kunstverein dates back to 1831 and exemplifies civic proactivity in the best possible sense of the word. When numerous churches and monasteries were dissolved after 1803 and many artworks, primarily from the Middle Ages, were in danger of falling into disrepair, Münster's citizens rallied together and decided to save them. Gradually, they accumulated a considerable number of valuable art-historical artefacts.

1836
THE KUNSTVEREIN'S FIRST EXHIBITION SPACES IN THE TOWN HALL

The initiative, then known as the 'Kunstverein zu Münster', held its first exhibition showing around two hundred works by regional artists as early as 1832. The show met with a highly positive response from the townspeople. In 1836, the Kunstverein then moved into its own exhibition space for the first time in the Alter Stadtkeller, a sixteenth-century Renaissance building situated on the corner of Prinzipalmarkt and Clemens-Ludgeristraße. Exhibitions were regularly held there until the building was demolished in 1902. In order to catalyse and increase the interest, support and engagement of the local populace, the Kunstverein focused its exhibitions on so-called historical and contemporary 'Heimat-Kunst' (homeland/regional art). Meanwhile, the collection continued to burgeon.

1908
INAUGURATION OF THE MUSEUM, TODAY'S LWL-MUSEUM FÜR KUNST UND KULTUR

The Westfälischer Kunstverein's move to the Westfälisches Landesmuseum's new building, today's LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, took place in March 1908. It was based on a contract between the museum and the Kunstverein: the latter had an important collection of old Westphalian panel paintings, but lacked an appropriate exhibition space to accommodate them. The museum, which itself lacked its own art collection, had rooms to spare. Thus, both institutions continue to complement one another symbiotically to this day: the Kunstverein as a lender and the museum as a host.

1910S
THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

From the 1910s onwards and under its then chairman Prof Hermann Ehrenberg, the Westfälischer Kunstverein added a further exhibition focus to its programme: internationally renowned contemporary art. Works by Emil Nolde and Franz Marc, Alexej von Jawlensky and Max Liebermann were shown.

1920S
THE CRISIS OF 'MODERN TIMES'

Like the artists themselves, the Westfälischer Kunstverein also suffered from the consequences of the global economic crisis and the ensuing, politically unstable predicament afflicting the Weimar Republic in the 1920s. Nevertheless, the Kunstverein continued to attract contemporary artists of national and international renown for exhibitions, such as Lovis Corinth's show in 1927, representatives of the Berlin Secession in 1928 and Josef Albers, El Lissitzky and László Moholy-Nagy in the following year. Important acquisitions for the collection during this period included works by Heinrich Nauen, August Macke and Wilhelm Lehmbruck.

FROM 1933
THE NAZI ERA AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

After the Nazis assumed absolute control in Germany, political reprisals immediately followed. Exhibitions featuring contemporary art positions that had already been planned were summarily cancelled because they did not coincide with the dictatorship's rigid ideological policy. The Kunstverein had to comply and was forcibly coordinated into the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts.

Consequently, exhibition activity during this period was mainly limited to 'inoffensive' topics and regional art. Furthermore, the Nazis confiscated two works by Christian Rohlfs as 'degenerate art' in 1937, which the Kunstverein had acquired from the artist himself in the 1920s (→ **86**). Nevertheless, the Kunstverein managed to protect several artworks from Nazi purges, including *Charlotte Berend in a Deck Chair* (1904) by Lovis Corinth (→ **3**) and *Bright House Behind Trees* (1926) by Heinrich Nauen (→ **34**). Both artists had been classified as 'degenerate' by the Nazis. Over and above this, the Kunstverein was at pains to support artists who were defamed by the ruling system for several years after the Nazi ascendency. In 1935, for example, it purchased the print *In the Water* (1920) (→ **44**) by Max Pechstein and showed works by Lovis Corinth and Otto Pankok in its exhibitions. There were hardly any war-related losses of artworks from the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection—the timely removal of all works into storage, together with the collection of the Landesmuseum, prevented potential losses.

FROM 1945
THE DIFFICULT NEW BEGINNING AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The Landesmuseum on the Domplatz had been all but destroyed as a result of the war. The restoration work went on until 1946. After that, a circumspect exhibition programme was possible, and the limited space was shared with the museum during this time. In the first post-war years, the Westfälischer Kunstverein's exhibitions picked up where the progressive programme of the period before 1933 had left off. In the 1950s, however, this modern orientation only met with a conditional positive response from the public. At the same time, however, references to Westphalian art were also fostered. In 1958, the Kunstverein reintroduced the Jahresgaben (annual editions), which offered members the opportunity to purchase compact artworks and editions specially produced by various artists for the occasion.

1960S
THE COLLECTION GROWS ONCE MORE

From the 1960s onwards, the collection of the Westfälischer Kunstverein steadily expanded through various acquisitions, including works from exhibitions. In the middle of the decade, the programmatic orientation increasingly shifted towards contemporary art, which brought the Kunstverein media attention far beyond regional borders.

1972
OUR OWN ROOMS IN THE NEW MUSEUM BUILDING

After more than a decade of planning and construction, the museum's extension in the style of post-war modernism was finally completed in 1972—for the first time with its own exhibition and office space for the Westfälischer Kunstverein. The exhibition space was located behind the strikingly-tiered façade above the main entrance and was accessible via the large spiral staircase in the museum foyer. There, the Kunstverein successfully made its way along the path it had already embarked upon in the field of contemporary art. Contrary to the generally declining fortunes of other art associations, the Westfälischer Kunstverein was able to record a rapidly increasing number of members at the beginning of the 1970s.

1980S
THE FIRST FEMALE DIRECTOR

In 1981, the Westfälischer Kunstverein celebrated its 150th anniversary. In general, the 1980s were characterised by an orientation towards avant-garde contemporary art and an increased collecting activity. After 155 years, Dr Marianne Stockebrand became the first woman in charge of the Kunstverein. During this decade, the range of exhibitions expanded to include a wide variety of art forms, such as murals, sculpture and photography, which also included the fields of architecture and design. Classical minimalism became a further staple.

1990S
INCREASED INTERNATIONALISATION

The focus on installation art characterises this period, featuring artists, such as Jessica Stockholder and Hermann Pitz, who created expansive works. In addition, the Westfälischer Kunstverein becomes an increasingly important springboard for young artists: several times during this decade, the Kunstverein presents first institutional solo exhibitions by national and international artists.

2008/2009
THE MUSEUM'S FIRST NEW BUILDING IS REPLACED

The museum building from the early 1970s is demolished, the Kunstverein temporarily lost its traditional space it had hitherto inhabited for decades. Over a period of four years, the Kunstverein presents exhibitions at various locations in the city as part of a nomadic concept.

2013
MOVING INTO THE NEW PREMISES

In 2013, the Westfälischer Kunstverein moved into its new premises on Rothenburg and, for the first time, has its own entrance, independent of the museum, which effectively renders the institution visible in its own right. In addition to its own premises, the Kunstverein has also been using a project space since 2015 that was originally designed as a display window and which not only connects the museum and the Kunstverein architecturally, but also conceptually. Via the exhibition series RADAR that regularly features emergent young artists, a topical collaboration was established with the museum's contemporary art department, to which the space actually belongs.

Artworks

1

Hermann tom Ring, *The Last Judgement*, 1555

2

Rune Mields, *Untitled*, 1971

3

Lovis Corinth, *Charlotte Berend in a Deck Chair*, 1904

4

Tom Burr, *Surplus Edition*, 2017

Charlotte Flamm, *Still Life with Glass and Fruit*, c. 1850

5

Walter Stöhrer, *April*, 1964

6

Johann Brabender, Crucifixion altarpiece from St Paul's Cathedral in Münster, 1540

Nam June Paik, *Self-Portrait*, 1993

9

Margarethe Konig, *Still Life with Bird's Nest and Flowers*, 1752–1792

10

Tess Jaray, *Panta Rhei*, 1969

Gertrud Metz, *Floral Still Life*, 1764–1774

11

HAP Grieshaber, *Quelle*, 1962

12

Conrad von Soest, *Saint Odilia*, 1410

Conrad von Soest, *Saint Dorothea*, 1410

Johann Christoph Rincklake, *Self-portrait*, 1813

Otto Pankok, *Marabou*, 1947

Alexander Michelis, *Westphalian Landscape*, 1859

Josef Albers, *Homage to the Square: Protected Blue*, 1957

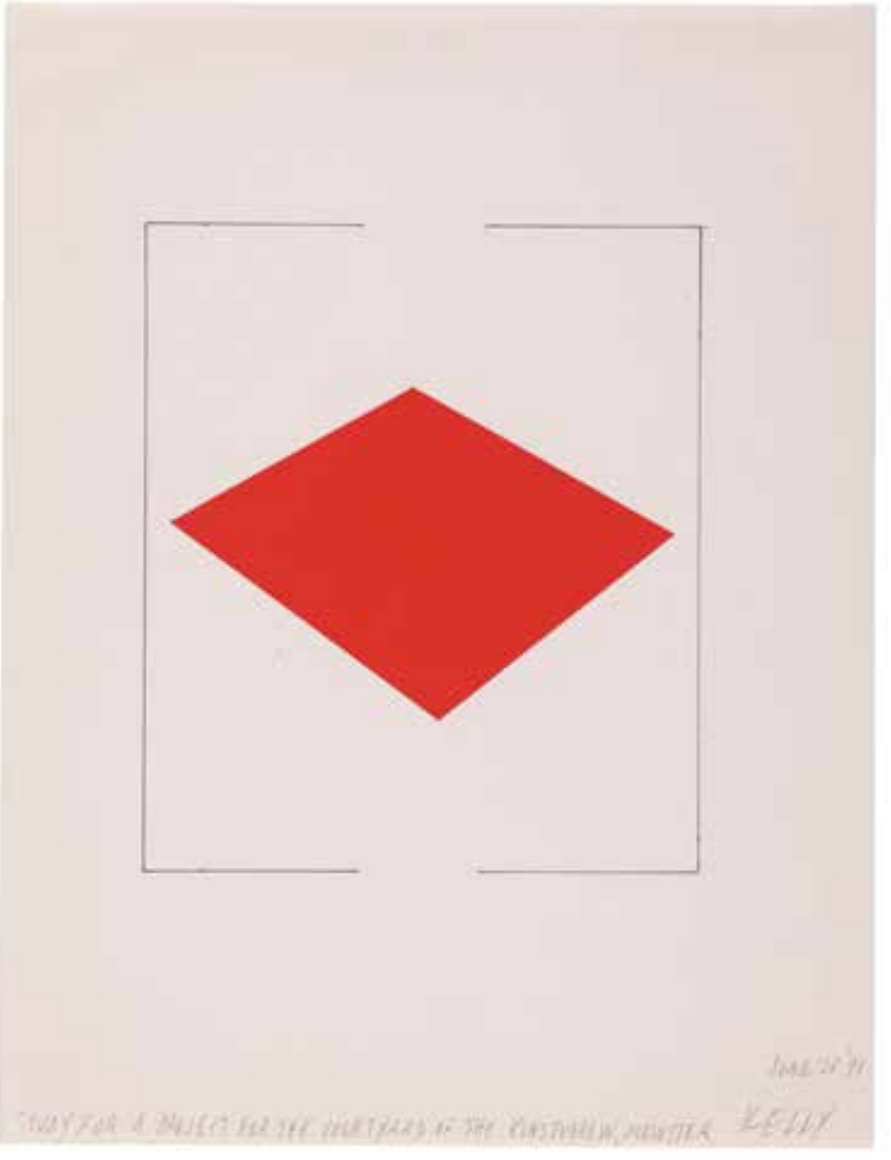
Johannes Spruyt, *Poultry Piece*, 1658

Matteo Thun, *Passerina Noctua / Nocturna*, 1987

Georg Flegel, *Still Life with Rummer, Pretzel and Almonds*, 1637

Simone Nieweg, *Gerstenfeld*, 1994

Oswald Achenbach, *San Pietro in Vincoli in Rome*, 1883



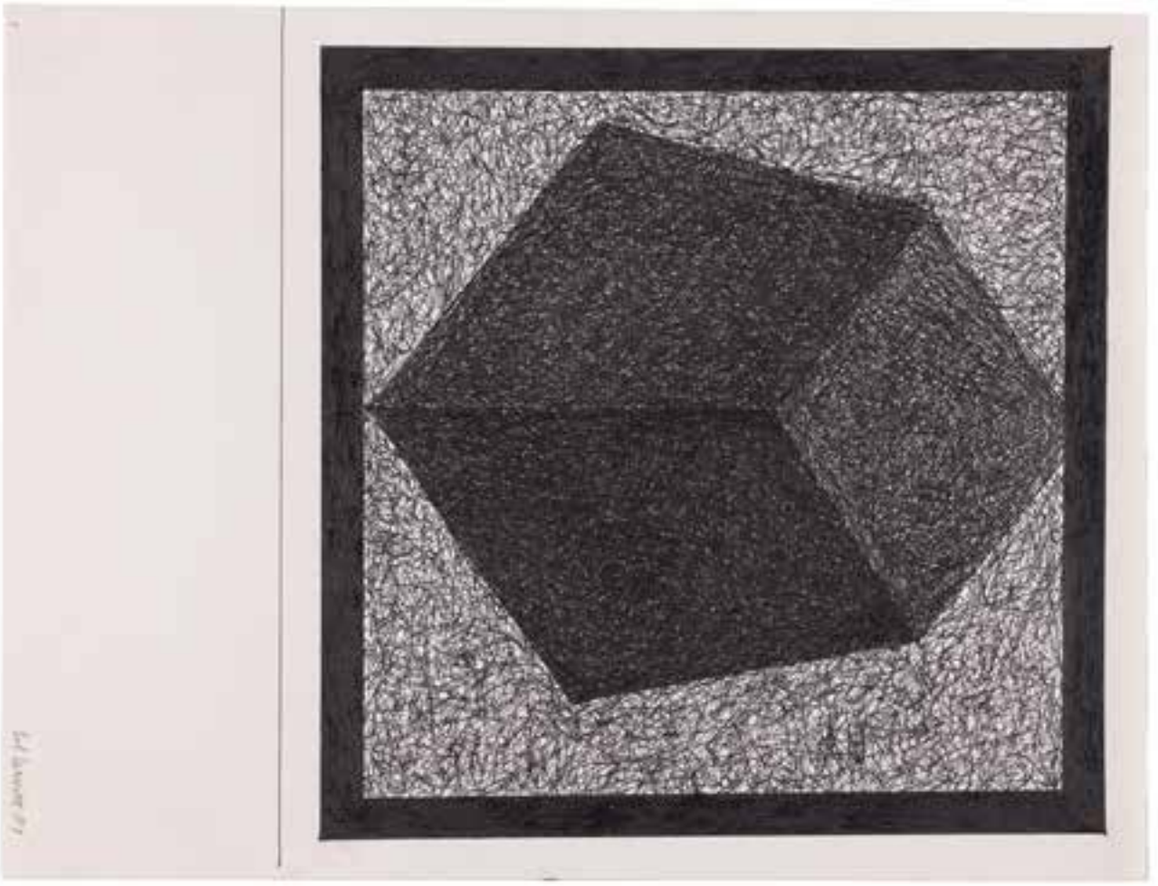
Ellsworth Kelly, *Study for a project for the courtyard of the Kunstverein, Münster*, 1991

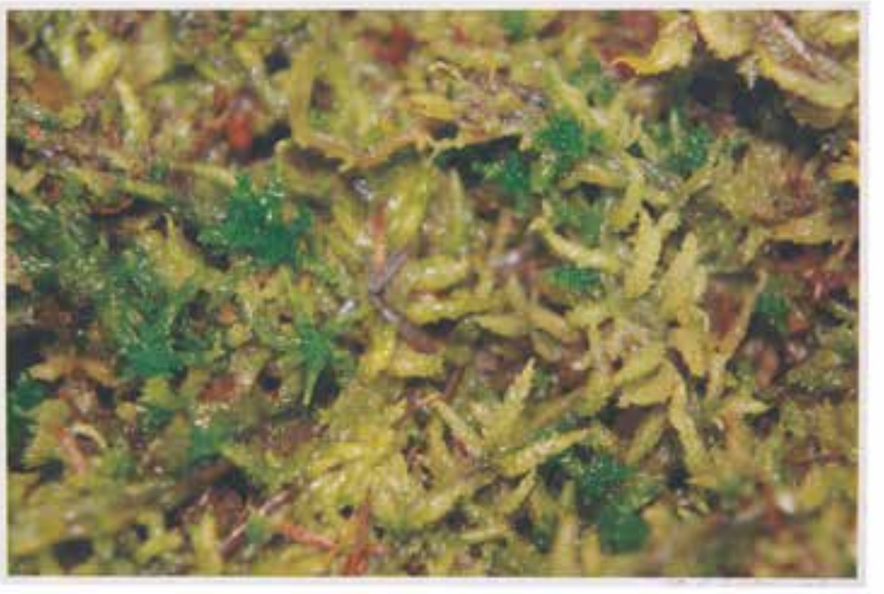
24

Arnold Schlick, ‘Plaque of Honour’ of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, [n. d., 1933]

25

Sol LeWitt, *Untitled (Tilted Forms)*, 1987





Andrea Büttner, *Moose*, 2012

Adolf Schmidt, *The Milkmaid*, 1834

August Sander, *The Hotelier*, 1931

Johann Peter Hasenclever, *Workers In Front of the Magistrates*, 1848

Matt Mullican, *4 × 8 Flags from a Stone*, 2021

Otto Mueller, *Woman in Profile* (formerly titled: *'Gypsy' Woman in Profile*), 1927

The collection of the Westfälischer Kunstverein holds a few works with original titles that are no longer considered suitable from today's perspective. They include artworks that derive from a stereotypical, debasing, colonial or Eurocentric (pictorial) tradition and/or were labelled with corresponding terminology.

The Westfälischer Kunstverein is committed to dealing sensitively with problematic works of this kind in its own collection. In the texts relating to these works in this publication, various spellings and forms of dealing with such designations are also being further explored (→ **31**, **95**). The reproduction of the original title here is set in inverted commas for the sole purpose of historical retrieval and unambiguous attribution.

← This colour lithograph by the painter Otto Mueller, who died in 1930, was originally titled *'Zigeunerin' im Profil* (*'Gypsy' Woman in Profile*) and thus, from today's perspective, used a discriminatory and stigmatising exonymn for members of heterogeneous Sinti and Roma groups. For centuries, this served as the basis for the systematic discrimination, criminalisation, exclusion and, ultimately, the racist persecution and extermination of the people named in this way. The acknowledged self-designations of members of Roma groups are: *Rom/Roma* (male singular/plural) and *Romni/Romnja* (feminine singular/plural). *Sinto/Sinti* (male singular/plural) or *Sintiza/Sintize* (feminine singular/plural) are the designations used by men and women who belong to Roma groups and have been living in German-speaking Europe for more than 600 years.

31

[Note]

Heinrich Aldegrever, *The Creation of Eve* (Plate 1 of the *Adam und Eva* series), 1540

Sigmar Polke, *Untitled*, 1973

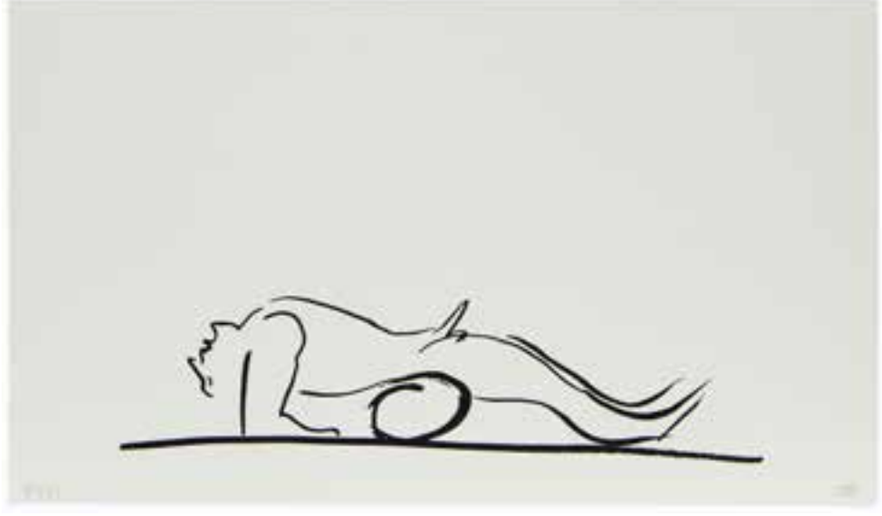
Heinrich Nauen, *Bright House behind Trees / Southern Landscape*, 1926

Peter August Böckstiegel, *Peasant Couple*, 1920

[Circle] Derick Baegert, *St George as Dragon Slayer* (recto), c. 1480

[Circle] Derick Baegert, *Death of St Martin of Tour* (verso), c. 1480

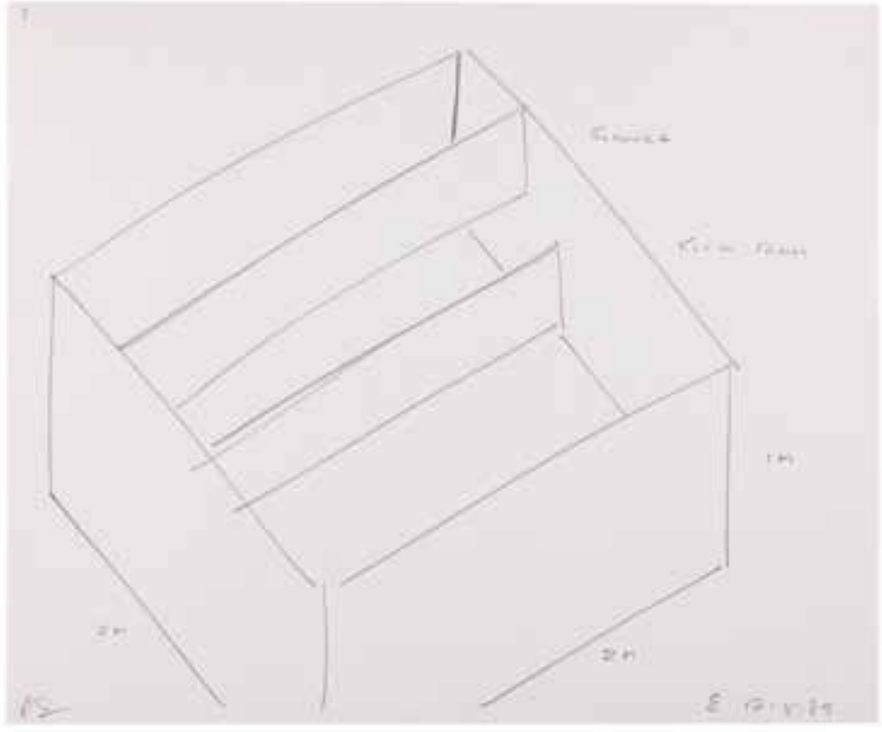
Friedrich Tüshaus, *Battle between German Tribes and Romans*, 1876



Camille Henrot, *Working/Resting*, 2015

Rembrandt van Rijn, *Virgin and Christ in the Clouds*, 1641

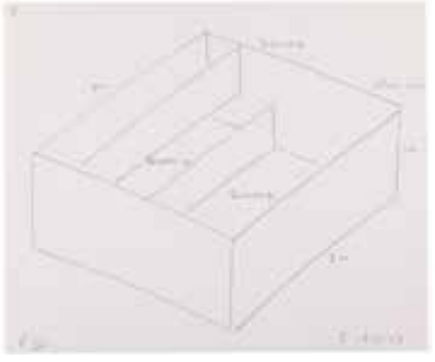
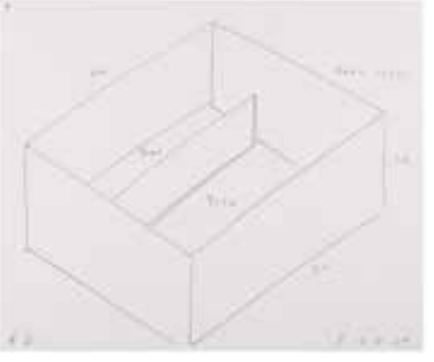
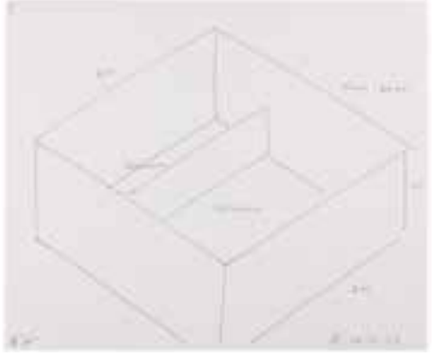
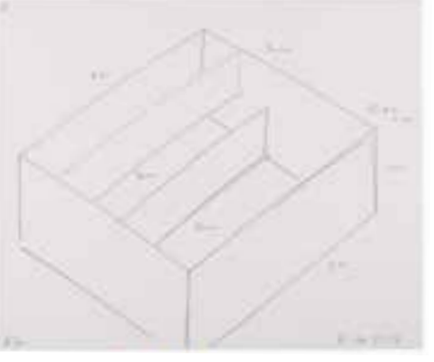
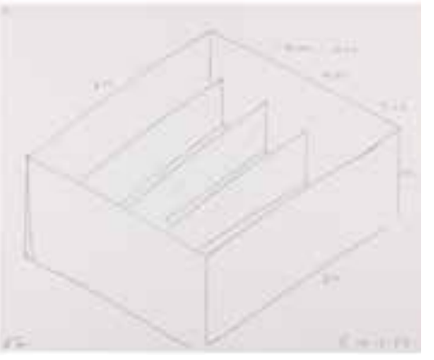
39

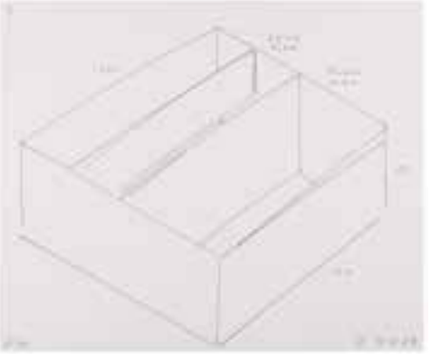


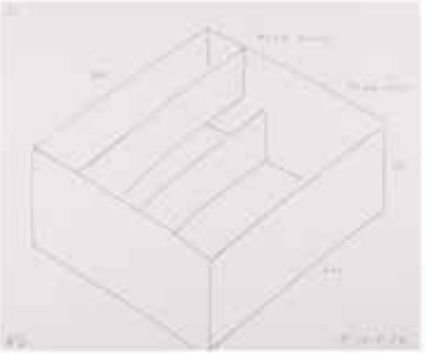
Donald Judd, *Untitled*, 1989

40








41

Westphalian or Lower Rhine Master, *Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1530

42

Eric Snell, *Magnetic Drawing #29*, 1984

Jan Gossaert, *The Mother of God*, c. 1520

43

Max Pechstein, *In the Water*, 1920

44

Albrecht Dürer, *Die Kleine Passion*, 1511


1510

46

Sol LeWitt, *Tilted Forms with Colors Superimposed (S70)*, 1989

Derick Baegert, *Saint Luke Painting the Madonna ('Lukasmadonna')*, 1480–1485

47

Gerhard Richter, *Vermalung (braun)*, 1972

48

John Bell, *Bell's edition. The poets of Great Britain complete from Chaucer to Churchill*, 1782–1785

Fillide Giorgi Levasti, *Fairground Scene*, [n. d., before 1929]

Hendrick Goltzius, *Saint Sebastian*, 1615

Günter Fruhtrunk, *Untitled*, 1966

Eugen Napoleon Neureuther, *The Alpine Rose*, 1846

Meindert Hobbema, *Wooded landscape*, 17th century

Jan Boeckhorst, *Madonna and Child*, 1655–1659

55

Haku Maki, *Poem 70-67*, 1970

56

Elisabetta Sirani, *The Penitent Mary Magdalene*, 117th century

Martin Kippenberger, *I.N.P.*, 1984

[Workshop] Master of Liesborn, *Christ Appears to Mary*, 1489

59

Donald Judd, [Title unknown], [Date unknown]

60

[Workshop] Master of Liesborn, *Shroud of St Veronica (Vera Icon)*, 1467–1500

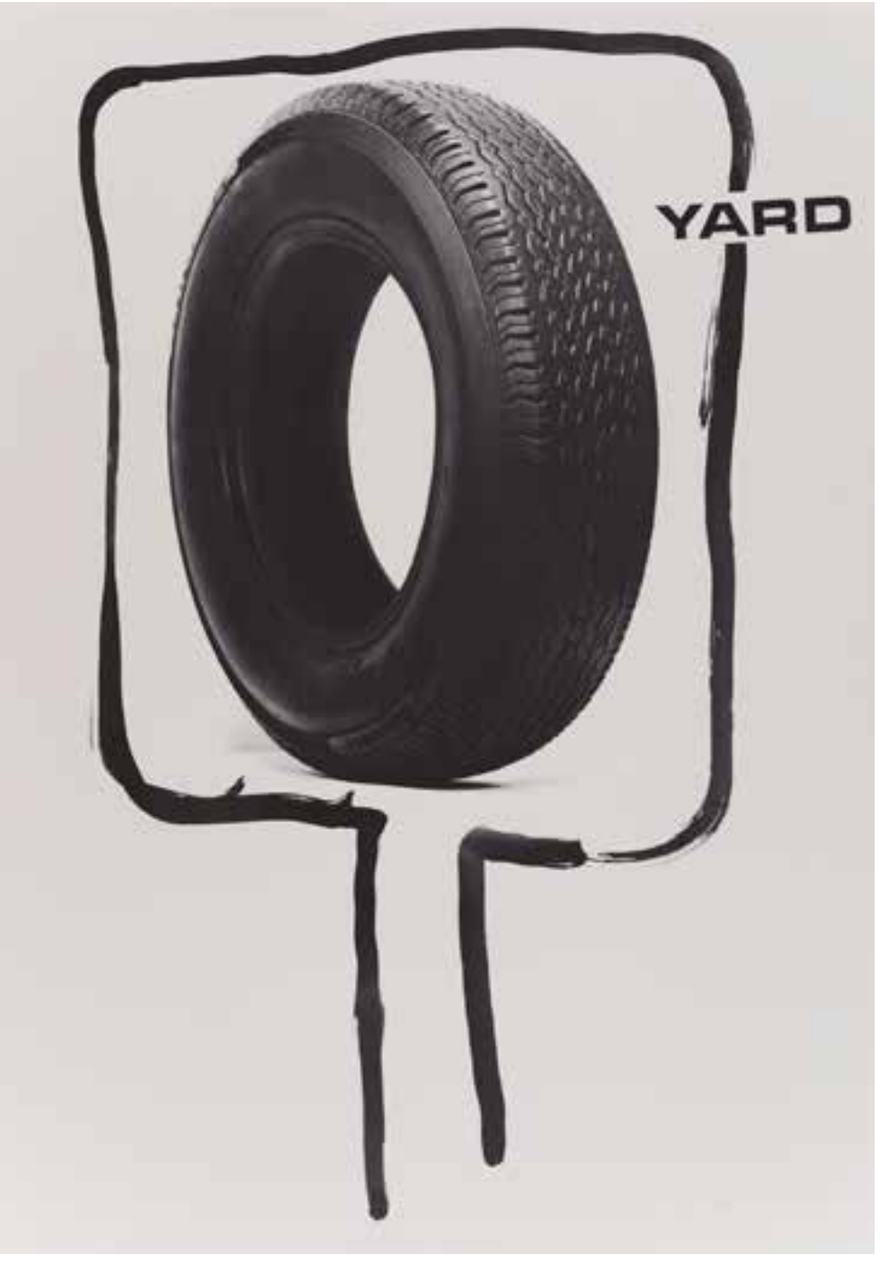
61

Julia Schily-Koppers, *The Orphan*, 1888

62

Lucas Cranach t. E., *The Holy Trinity (Mercy Seat)*, 1516–1518

63



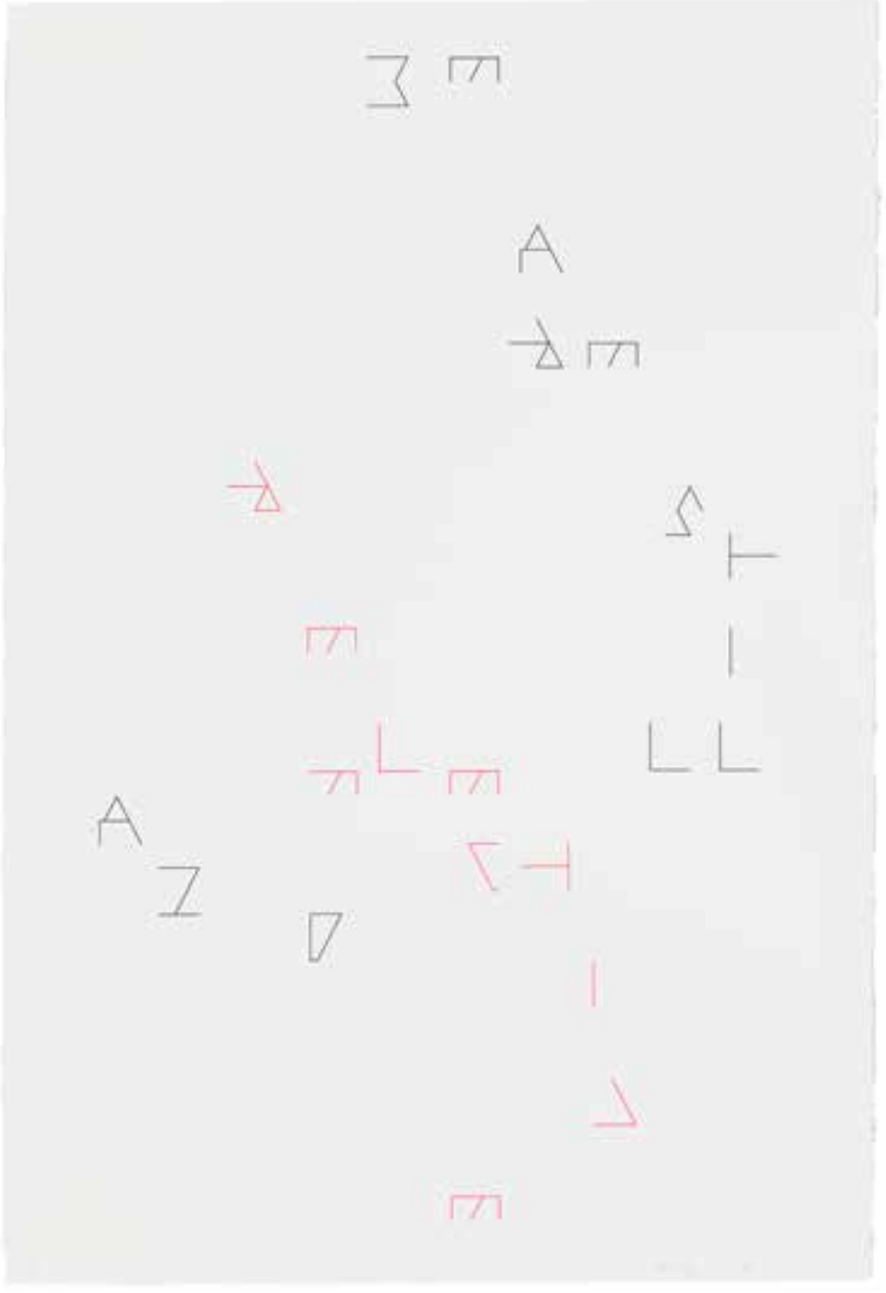
Allan Kaprow, *Yard*, 1971

64

Theodoor Rombouts, *The Tooth-puller / The Dentist*, c. 1628

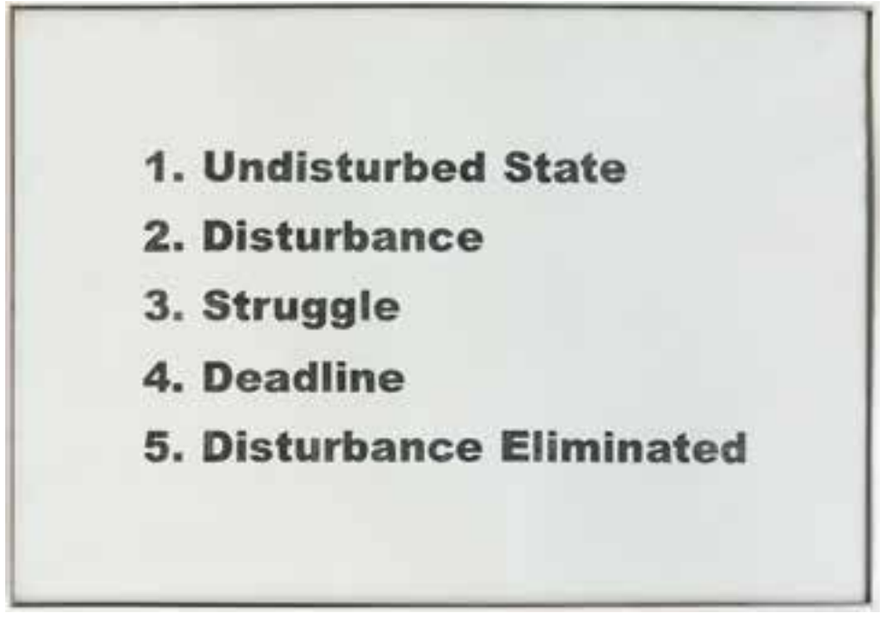
Eberhard Viegener, *Portrait of the Poet Theodor Däubler*, 1928

[Unknown], Ivory Relief depicting *St Mark the Evangelist*, 1000–1020



Martin Boyce, *Like Stars and Broken Glass*, 2007

Paula Modersohn-Becker, *Peasant Woman by the Birch Tree*, 1900



Matthew Buckingham, *Narrative*, 2005

[Unknown], Initial A from a liturgical manuscript, 1300–1325

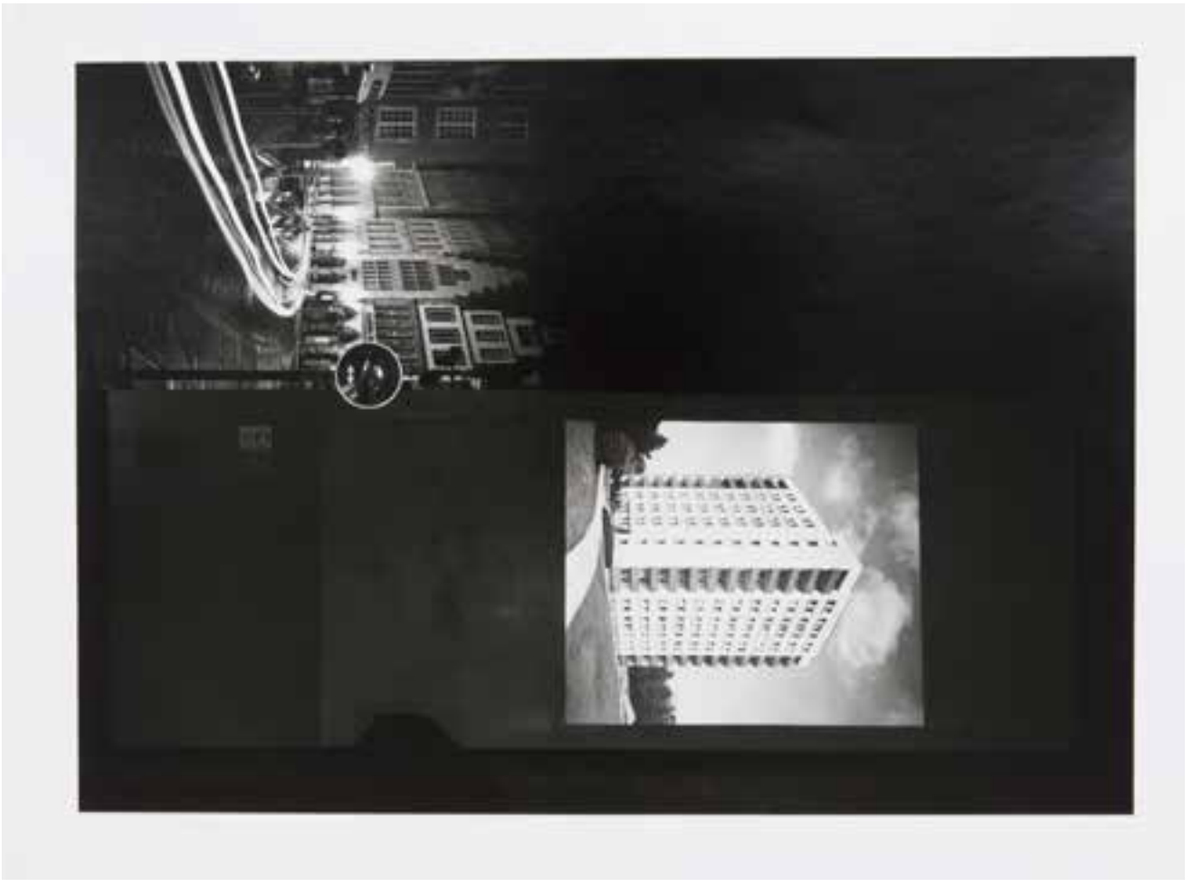
Johann Zoffany, *The Death of Lucretia*, 1758–1760

Gerrit van Honthorst, *Cimon and Pero (Caritas Romana)*, 1601–1650

Thomas Struth, *Eine Projektion für Münster* (Title page, recto), 1987

Thomas Struth, *Eine Projektion für Münster* (Title page, verso), 1987

Thomas Struth, *Eine Projektion für Münster* (House on Weißenburgstraße/Geisbergweg), 1987



Thomas Struth, *Eine Projektion für Münster* (House on Goerdelerstraße/Rothenburg), 1987

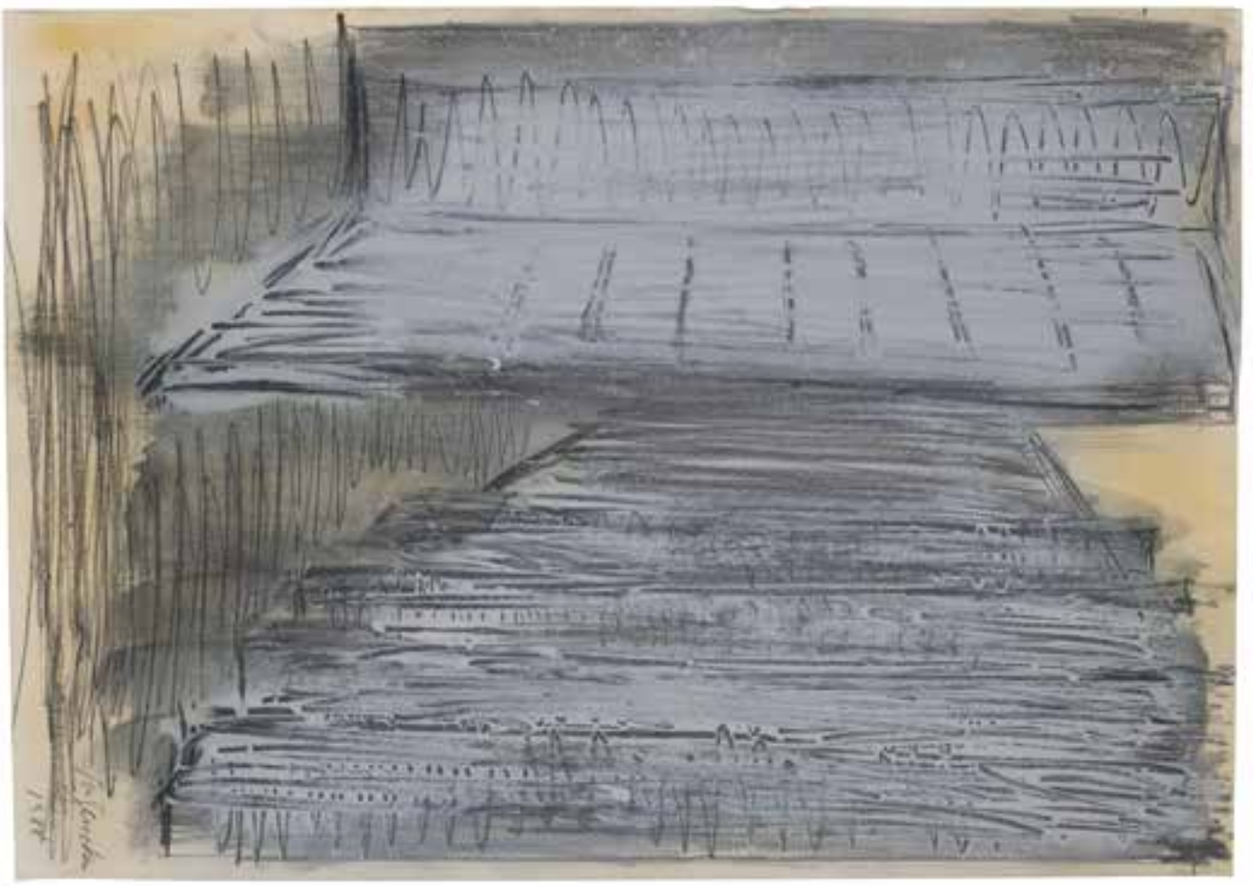
Thomas Struth, *Eine Projektion für Münster* (Housing estate on Lauenburgstraße/Domplatz [Regierung]), 1987

Thomas Struth, *Eine Projektion für Münster* (Housing estate on Grüner Grund/Prinzipalmarkt), 1987

Thomas Struth, *Eine Projektion für Münster* (Gartenstraße [Landschaftsverband]/Alter Steinweg [City library]), 1987

Thomas Struth, *Eine Projektion für Münster* (Wolbecker Straße/Horsteberg), 1987

Isa Genzken, *Untitled*, 1987



Gert van Lon, *The Holy Clan*, 1510–1520

Blinky Palermo, *Untitled*, 1971

Hans Collaert t. E., *The Imitation of Christ*, 16th century

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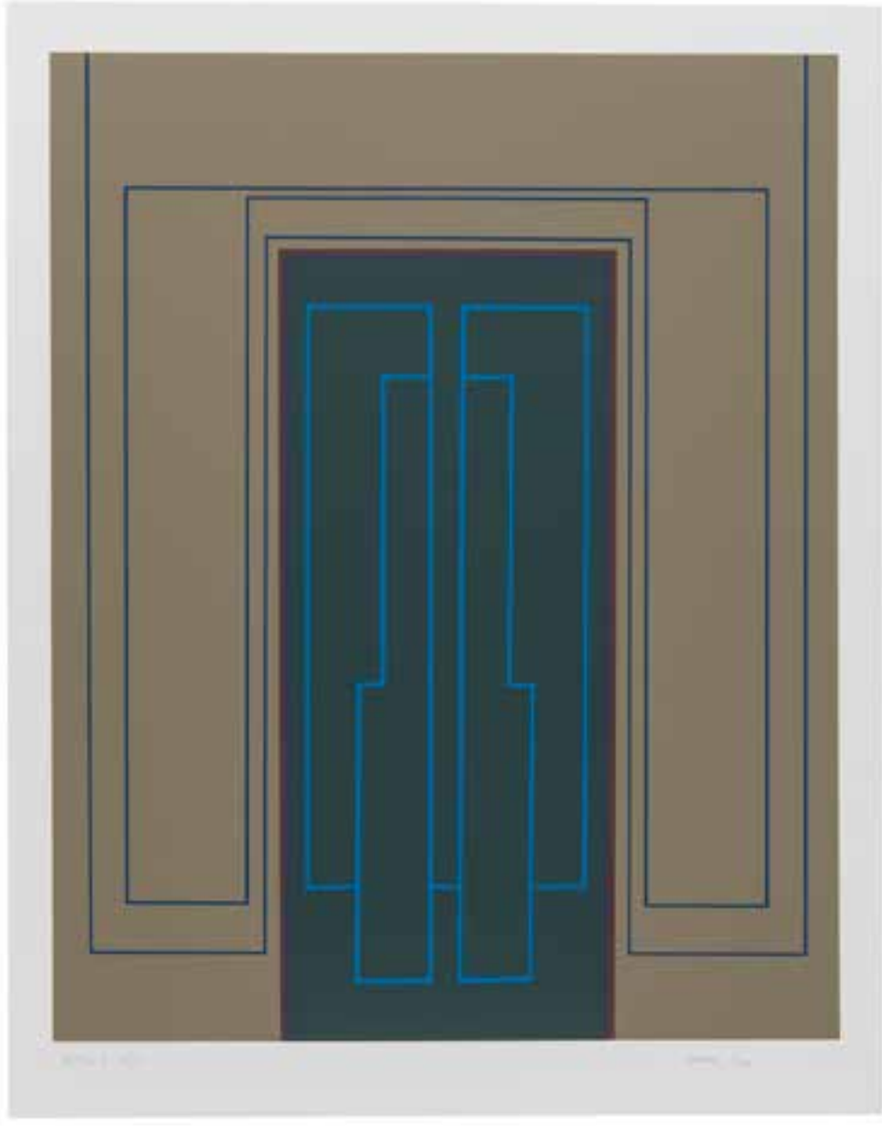


Robyn Denny, *out-line 3*, 1962/67

79

Master of St Laurence, Fragment of a domestic altar, centre panel (verso and recto), c. 1420

[Unknown], Mirror Compact: *Offering of the Heart*, 1300

81

Helen Louise Wiehen, *Portrait of the Poet Ilse von Stach*, 1924

82

[Unknown], Altarpiece with depictions of the *Passion of Christ* in St Martin's Church in Spenge, c. 1470

Virginia Overton, *Untitled (Westfälischer Kunstverein)*, 2013

Herman van der Myn, *Unequal Love* (formerly titled: *Temptation*), 1711–1720

Christian Rohlfs, *The Frog Princess* (alternative title: *The Frog Princess*), 1924

85

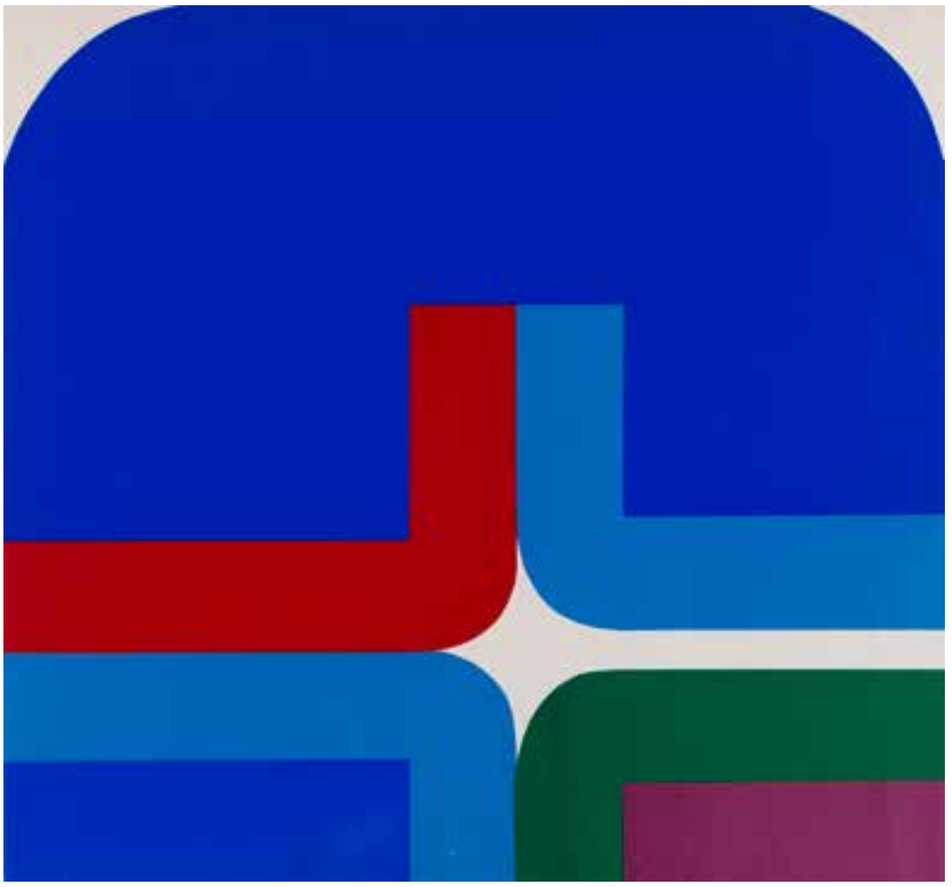
86

87

Margarethe König, *Still Life with a Dead Duck*, 1752–1792

88

Georg Karl Pfahler, *Spirit of Reality*, 1965



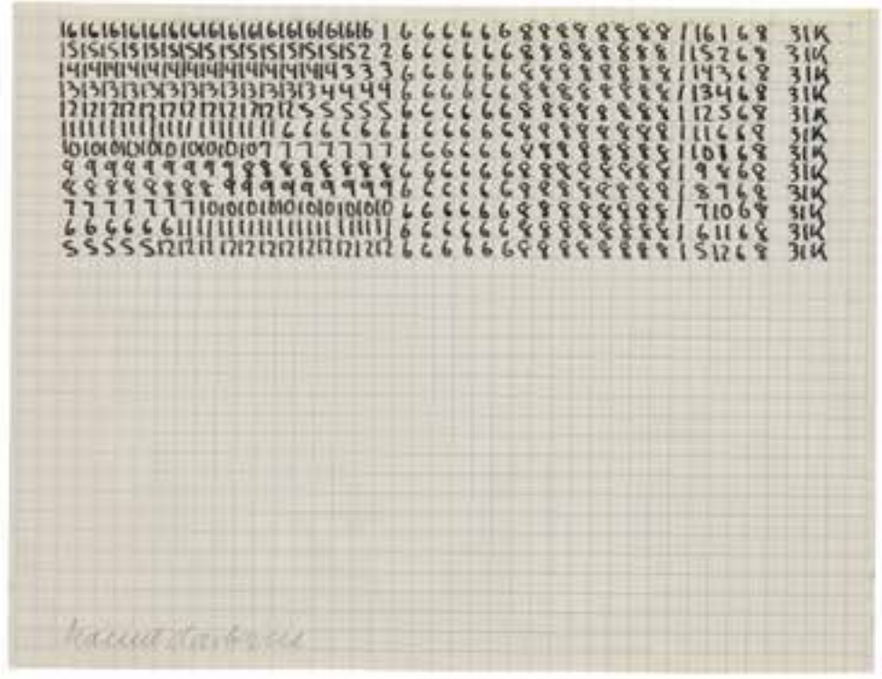
Pieter van Noort, *The Five Senses* (*Sight*), c. 1650

Pieter van Noort, *The Five Senses* (*Hearing*), c. 1650

Pieter van Noort, *The Five Senses* (*Smell*), c. 1650

Pieter van Noort, *The Five Senses* (*Taste*), c. 1650

Pieter van Noort, *The Five Senses (Touch)*, c. 1650

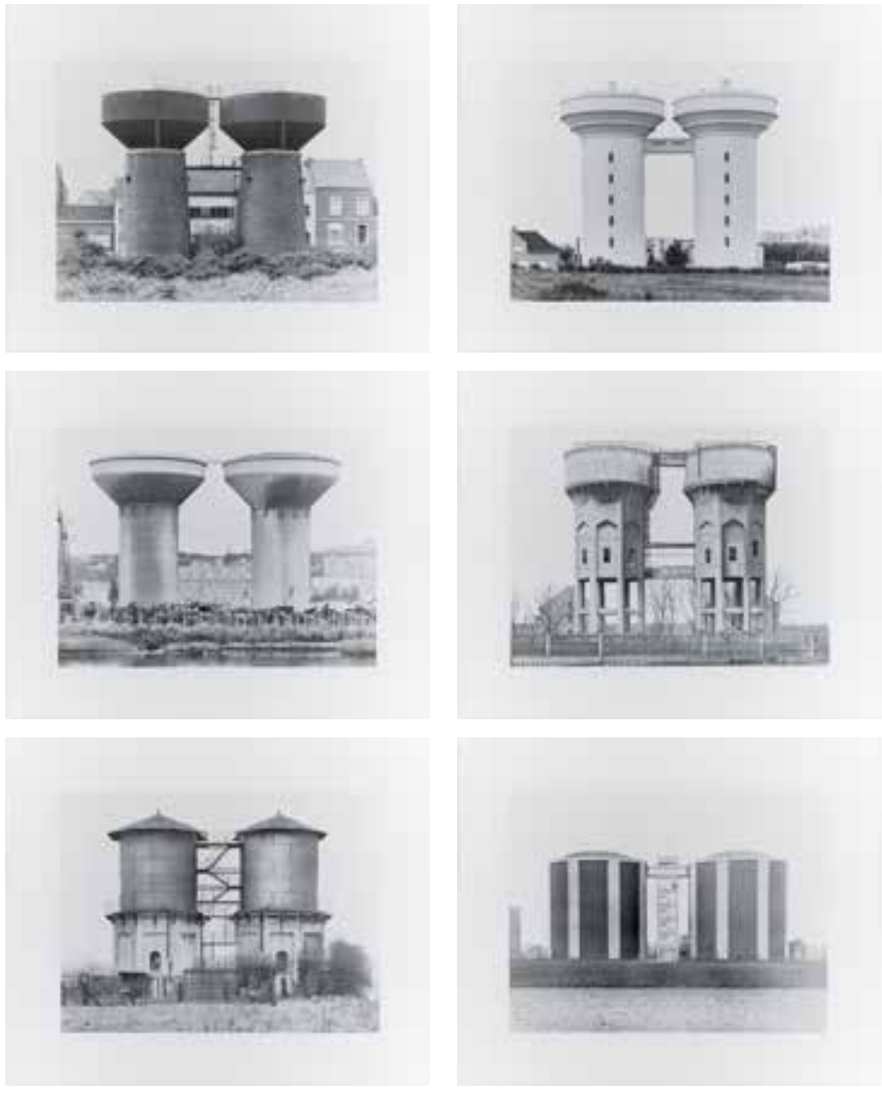


Hanne Darboven, *Untitled*, 1971

Bonaventura Peeters, *Seascape*, 1640

Edward Ruscha, *Industrial Nerves*, 1985

Carl Busch, *Portrait of Professor Martin Wackernagel*, 1940



Bernhard and Hilla Becher, *Sechs Doppelwassertürme*, 1972. Top left: Chapelle-lez-Herlaiment, B 1972; top right: Douay, Nord, F 1967.
Middle left: Le Havre, F 1972; middle right: Dortmund-Dorstfeld, D 1965. Bottom left: Hagen-Haspe, D 1963; bottom right: Essen, D n. d.

Adolf Teichs, *Captive Greeks Guarded by Mamluks*, 1836

← ‘Mamluks’: This is the term used to describe enslaved mercenaries who had been deployed in the military service of Islamic rulers since the ninth century. There are various spellings of the word. Etymologically, the term can be traced back to the Arabic and literally means ‘the one taken into possession’. In terms of the painting itself, references to ‘otherness’ and ‘exoticism’ particularly resound in the apparel of those depicted. This reflects the Eurocentric view, enshrined in a colonial tradition, on something purportedly ‘foreign’ that deviates from one’s own ‘norm’. This frame of meaning and reference, as well as the duality inherent in it and in the subject of the painting, is illuminated by two texts on the work → **95**.

95

[Note]

Master of the Marian Altar in Fröndenberg, *Intercession of Mary to Christ with St Walburga and St Augustine*, 1420

David Teniers, *Dice Players*, 17th century

Josef Albers, *Intaglio Duo S-Z*, 1958

Ludger tom Ring t. Y., *Vase with Lilies and Irises, Vase with Irises*, 1562

Jon Rafman, *L'Avalée des avalés (The Swallower Swallowed) Rhino / Bear*, 2016

Kerstiaen de Keuninck, *Mountain Landscape with the Sacrifice of Isaac*, 1580–1590

101

Lowell Nesbitt, *Apollo 13-70*, 1970

102

Various Artists, *L'Affiche*ur *(The Bill Sticker)*, 1742

103

Eberhard Viegener, *The Drinker (Jan Buschmann drinks)*, 1924

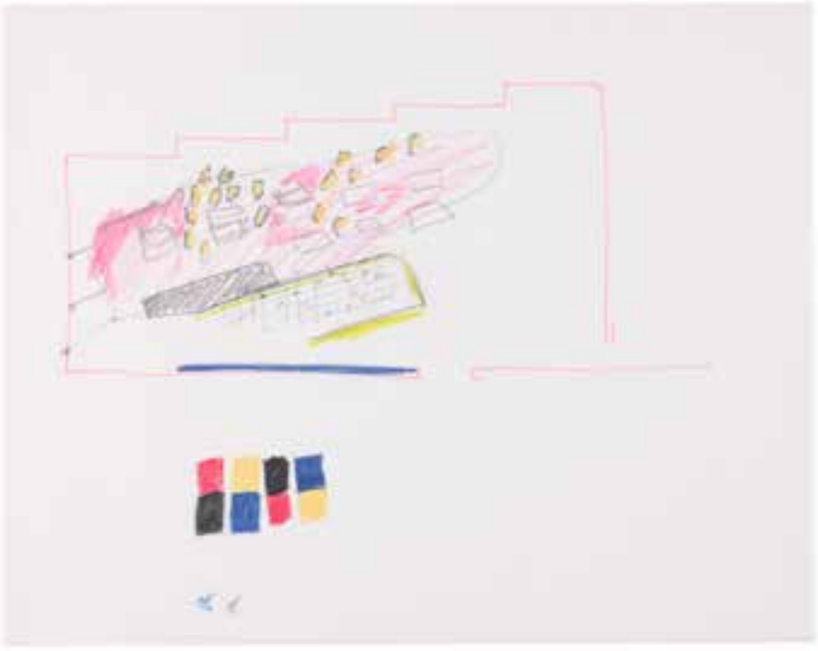
104

Jan Baegert, *Anna selbdritt with Two Saints and a Carthusian Monk*, 1500–1510

105

Jessica Stockholder, *Growing Rock Candy Mountain Grasses in Canned Sand*, 1992

106



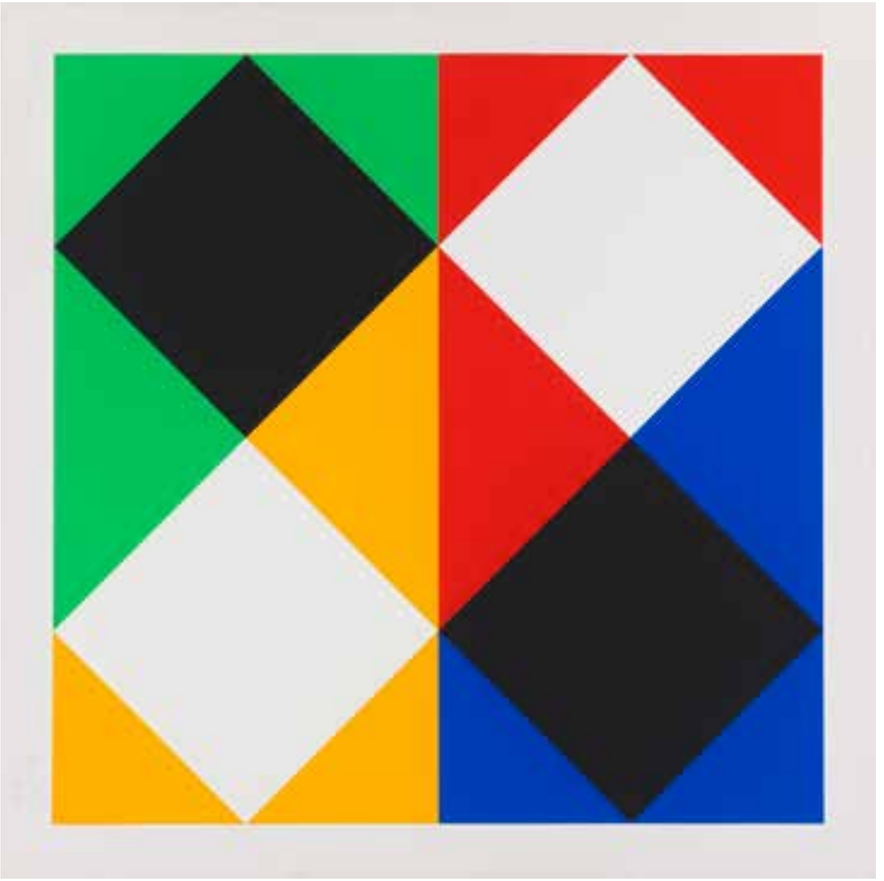
Ulrich Rückriem, *Granit (Normandie) gespalten, geschnitten, geschliffen*, 1985

[Unknown], *Soester Antependium: Majestas Domini*, c. 1170–1180

Bernhard Pankok, *Man in the Arbour*, 1894

Adolph von Menzel, *The Immigrating Protestants of Salzburg 1732*, 1836

Max Bill, *rot, blau, grün, gelb, schwarz*, 1969



Hans Baldung, *Saint Verena*, 1515–1516

Jessica Stockholder, *Siebdruck*, 1992

Texts

The Last Judgement, 1555

Oil on oak wood
164.5 × 134 cm
Inv. no. 76 WKV

Hermann tom Ring

1

The Last Judgement at the End of Days (Mt 24) cannot be determined in terms of space and time. The Anabaptists in Münster (1534/35) countered the uncertainty of time and place with the immediacy of the here and now. Twenty years after the end of the Anabaptist kingdom, Hermann tom Ring painted his *Last Judgement* for the Church of the Friars, where it replaced an altarpiece destroyed in the wake of Anabaptist iconoclasm.

Tom Ring places the Last Judgement under a wide dome with various tiers, while the lower half of the painting is dedicated to the separation between the chosen and the damned (Mt 25)—with the descent into hell at the bottom right and the ascent into the light at the left edge of the painting. In the domed space, light radiates from above around the name of God and the dove of the Holy Spirit, while Christ is enthroned on an arch, backed by the tier of the apostles and saints. Christ hovers under the open vault of heaven, his feet resting on the floating globe. A cloud connects above and below: with the announcement of judgment by angels, the intercession of Mary and John the Baptist (Deësis) and an angel holding up the Book of Life to the judge (Rev 20:12).

Tom Ring relocates the Last Judgement from the realm of the cathedral to an abstract domed space that stands for the idea of the world as a whole. Both benefactors can be seen at the edge of the dome, like the viewer of the image. Judgement is close to them and, at the same time, keeps them at a distance—a critique of the Anabaptists' threat of judgement.

In the church's iconographic programme, we encounter the Last Judgement at the threshold of the building. Tom Ring's Last Judgement is also an image of the threshold, here between the Brothers' choir and the nave of the congregation, often the location of the crossing cupola. On the back of the panel, tom Ring places a second image of Christ, also framed by a painted dome: Christ, under his cross, has mercy on those who believe in him. The obverse of the judgmental Christ seen by the canons is the merciful Christ turned towards the faithful.

The two sides of the panel were later separated for artistic use. The painting of the merciful Christ is in a ruinous state today. In 1885, Clemens Freiherr Heeremann von Zuydtwyck, president of the Westfälischer Kunstverein from 1866 until his death in 1903, donated the panels to his association.

Reinhard Hoeps was Professor of Systematic Theology and its Didactics at the Catholic Theological Faculty of the University of Münster from 1993 until 2020. Founder and director of the *Arbeitsstelle für christliche Bildtheorie* (Research Centre for Christian Image Theory).

Untitled, 1971
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1971

Printing ink on paper
80 × 60.3 cm
Inv. no. C-551 WKV

Rune Mields

Rune Mields's early tube paintings were made as part of her exploration of perspective in painting. The painted illusion of spatial depth is based on geometry. However, by allowing her black tubes on white backgrounds to protrude from the picture like naked spikes, the barrels of cannons or spears, thus addressing the viewer directly, Mields reverses customary perspective, which, in classical painting, usually draws the viewer's gaze into the distant background of the composition. Her exploration of geometry is her preliminary step towards a far-reaching engagement with mathematics, coding and abstract sign systems beyond the boundaries of cultural history. It is the continuous quest for the possibilities of comprehending infinity, space and dimension that Mields has consistently visualised and explored on canvas in black, white and grey over many years.

When Rune Mields presented her tube paintings at the Westfälischer Kunstverein in 1971, it was not only one of her first institutional solo exhibitions, but also the first exhibition by a woman to whom an exhibition had been dedicated at the beginning of her career. The museum and the Kunstverein moved into their new building the following year and a phase followed in which new and progressive trends in contemporary art played an important role in the programme and laid the foundations for its current direction. In the course of the 1970s, the Westfälischer Kunstverein not only pioneered a consistent shift towards contemporary art, but also fostered a change in the gender distribution of the exhibited positions. And as a result, the exhibition by Rune Mields—from which the work shown here emerged—can be interpreted in several ways as a caesura in the development of the Kunstverein. Her conceptual and equally concrete method of working still represents a unique position in painting today. She has also succeeded in consistently asserting herself with her work in a male-dominated art scene and has acted as a trailblazer for subsequent generations of rising female artists.

Katja Schroeder is a curator for contemporary art. From 2009–2012, she was director of the Westfälischer Kunstverein before taking over as director of the Kunsthaus Hamburg. Most recently, she joined the management team of the Arthur Boskamp Foundation in 2024.

Charlotte Berend in a Deck Chair, 1904

Pastell on cardboard
49,5 × 60 cm
Inv. no. 939 WKV

Charlotte Berend, Lovis Corinth's wife, in a sun chair. Charlotte Berend looking at us overbearingly and not without attitude. Charlotte, his first student—I wonder what she must have thought. It is a very particular kind of person who can manage this sort of thing, becoming the wife of a much older man, and an artist at that, the notorious narcissist. It is easy to feel trapped, or obliged to empty yourself, endlessly, into the other; to feel that he is insatiable, while you, always playing catch-up, forget yourself like an item on a grocery list. But this is not the picture of someone forgotten. Rather, I see in this picture, reflected in Charlotte's eyes, adoration. That is to say: she sees him, adoring her. And she rests there, inside that view, quite casually. Remarkably relaxed.

I see this picture of Charlotte in a constellation of two other of Corinth's favoured motifs. First, the magnificent slaughtered ox, suspended by its hind legs from the ceiling, slit right down the middle. His characteristically rough brushwork makes it feel caught in the wind, all that flesh and blood brought back to life, dragging in the wake of time. And second, the many self-portraits: the painter as Samson, blinded, fumbling ahead in his loincloth; the painter with his naked model holding his palette; the painter with a skeleton; the painter with a glass of water, a bare chest and a small red hood. Between these two subjects—the former staring brutality in the face, the latter conspicuously deluded—there is Charlotte in the sun chair with her hair out and that look in her eyes.

There is something very grand about this picture, which I am trying to put my finger on. A kind of truth, which cannot, like the wretched body of a slaughtered ox, however brute, lay claim to eternity, but nor, like the self-portrait, one that betrays some sordid human banality, the lies we tell ourselves. Charlotte in her sun chair, Charlotte with that overbearing look in her eyes. Here is not revelation but complete transparency. A moment of strong connection—neither more nor less—in which a subject is seen. And that subject is not her, but the one she is looking at.

Kristian Vistrup Madsen is a Danish writer based in Berlin.
He has published widely in international magazines, such as *Artforum*, *The White Review* and *Harpers*. His book *Doing Time* was released by Floating Opera Press in 2021.

Lovis Corinth

Surplus Edition, 2017
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 2017

Wood, plastic film, drawing pins
38 × 38 cm
Inv. no. A-1340 WKV

In his sculptures, collages, photographs and texts, Tom Burr has been dealing for more than three decades now with the themes of site-specificity, the blurring of private and public space, restrictions in urban space and queer history.

In addition to references to the institutional critique from the 1960s and 1970s, Burr also appropriates the formal vocabulary of minimal art, by charging these forms and materials—only seemingly neutrally and free of references—with a whole range of connotations that often negotiate the emancipation of subcultures or details of his own biography. Born in New Haven in the 1960s and raised near the campus of Yale University, Burr incorporates architectural influences, such as the style of Brutalism prevalent at the time, icons from music, literature and politics, as well as a line of artistic icons in which he sees himself as a successor.

This approach to the production of contextually-charged art, which incorporates historical and social factors, accounted for Tom Burr's prodigious popularity in the 1990s, particularly in the United States. In 1995, for example, his series of *42nd Street Structures* referenced the urban planning and legal changes initiated by the then-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani pertaining to Times Square in New York. Tom Burr responded to these highly controversial measures—widely denigrated as 'Disneyfication'—with a series of sculptures made of plywood and in a minimalist formal language, which turned out to be references to the erstwhile and now banned video booths in the sex shops and porn cinemas of the artificially-purged district.

My first encounter with the artist happened to be a work from the *42nd Street Structures* series. In 2007, under the directorship of Kasper König, Museum Ludwig in Cologne purchased Burr's *Video Booths*. I was a student, intern and devoted fan, and subsequently wrote my master's thesis on Tom Burr. Ten years later, in 2017, I was fortunate enough to work with Tom Burr and Kasper König in Münster on a solo exhibition and a work for the *Skulptur Projekte*.

In this context, Burr produced this edition for Westfälischer Kunstverein, a formal reference to his work *New Haven 1963*, which he had developed for his solo exhibition at the Kunstverein. In the form of *Benz Bonin Burr*, a collaboration with Cologne-based artist Cosima von Bonin for the concurrent *Skulptur Projekte*, public space—its design, its appropriation and its defence, was once more a vibrant topic of discussion.

Kristina Scepanski studied art history, English and German philology in Cologne and came to Münster via Düsseldorf and New York, where she was director of the Westfälischer Kunstverein from 2013 until 2024.

Tom Burr

4

Still Life with Glass and Fruit, c. 1850

Oil on canvas
31 × 26 cm
Inv. no. 261 WKV

A plate, a glass and fruit are sitting on a table covered with a cloth: the objects, arranged in front of and next to each other, almost completely fill the small-format painting. Against the dark background, they stand out clearly in their colourfulness and differing materiality.

In the depiction of everyday objects, fruit and food, artists present pictorial sophistication, while the motifs and forms of representation are redolent of social and cultural-historical contexts. The context of production and reception in the nineteenth century is particularly relevant when considering Charlotte Flamm's still lifes, since women artists had few opportunities to work on an equal footing in a male-dominated art world.

Little is known about Flamm and her work. As the sister of the painter Albert Flamm and a thought to be a private student of Johann Wilhelm Preyer, who was renowned for his still lifes, she belongs to the Düsseldorf School of Painting. Women were not officially admitted to study there until 1920 and were previously dependent on private lessons. In academic circles, still lifes were considered the lowest form of artistic achievement and the most acceptable field of activity for women. Women painters found opportunities here to be active and to gain recognition in the art market. This is because still lifes were very popular with the public. Local newspaper reports from Flamm's lifetime and a few more recent auction catalogues indicate that her works were occasionally exhibited, raffled or auctioned. The painting, which came into the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection through an estate in 1887, differs significantly from Preyer's style, which, on the other hand, can be discerned in other fruit still lifes by the artist. An independent analysis of both her work and artistic development is yet to be undertaken.

Since the end of the twentieth century, women artists have been receiving increasing attention in art-historical discourse and in exhibitions, which promise a further reappraisal of previously unknown œuvres, such as that of Charlotte Flamm. The ongoing discrimination against women in the art world is still an important issue.

Miriam Lowack is an art and literatry specialist. She works as a freelance author, designs projects at the interface between art and society, as well as supporting NGOs and cultural projects in the development of communication concepts.

Charlotte Flamm

April, 1964

Oil on canvas
165 × 135 cm
Inv. no. 2484 WKV

Walter Stöhrer

Strolling through the Westfälischer Kunstverein in the company of the critic Georg Imdahl: Dr Elmar Rolfes had donated Walter Stöhrer's painting *April* from 1964 to the house collection, and it was on display on this occasion. However, our visit had nothing to do with that; we were taking a tour with a different intention—and suddenly we stumbled on this painting. Imdahl spontaneously drew his 'pistol finger' in the style of an art-critical drive-by shooting—and, aiming at the artwork, discharged the tersest of verbal reviews: 'good painting!'

Why did this moment in passing make such an impression on me? Well, half a step later, the painting had already captured my gaze and a good second before Imdahl's verdict reached my ears, it had already grabbed my attention, actually prompting identical words: 'good painting!'

This kind of joy in evaluating an artwork is not exactly en vogue, but it is of course fun to throw yourself into the fray passionately and with absolute bias, as Charles Baudelaire once did and as unreservedly as Clement Greenberg.

What does a good painting that presents itself so immediately as something that simply works, actually look like? Stöhrer allows a dynamic brushstroke course down the canvas vertically, like a punch. This thrust is parried by a calm, horizontal brushstroke trace. The mediating colour palette pacifies these head-on directional forces: both sweeping strokes in grey. This collision and communication within the composition sets the tone for an indissolubly oscillating basic tension that Stöhrer continues to elaborate: the grey leads into a blue in the horizontal movement and a red in the vertical; a cold-warm footnote, if you will. He disrupts the dominant presence of the primary colours—red, yellow, blue—with the presence of black and white, slender lines crossing broad-chested painting, whereas he counteracts flowing colour fields with text. The counterclockwise direction of one brushstroke is juxtaposed with the clockwise direction of another. These conflicting impulses repeatedly and inextricably intensify one another—a constant flexing of muscles that, to quote the exhibition title of his colleague Dieter Krieg, is "pleasant on the eye".

In fact, Walter Stöhrer was awarded the German Critics' Prize in the very year he painted *April.* So, despite the possibitity of contingent criteria, there must be something to it—hats off to Walter Stöhrer: good painting!

Jens Bülskämper is an independent art critic who lives in Münster. He studied art and art education at the Academy of Fine Arts Münster, the Bauhaus University Weimar and the Berlin University of the Arts.

Crucifixion altarpiece
from St Paul's Cathedral in
Münster, 1540

Baumberg sandstone
260 × 225 cm
Inv. no. D-455 WKV

Johann Brabender

7

Relief is a place where nothing is real. To borrow an arrangement from a prominent philosopher of science, there's world one where the surface plain undergirds the whole structure. Usually this surface is flat and unobtrusive performing the disappearing act. Next is world two, which is the relief itself—the fine-surface modelling of protrusions—impossible life out of the flat primordial world which grabs the attention of the viewer with various degrees of (melo-) drama, emotional supplication and evocation. These incitations usually go according to the various degrees of apprehension of forms, from bas-relief or even incision, to high relief which guide us through the level of involvement we take into this dramatic marsh of form. This world is embellished with ornament and illusion which also exists in the ephemeral space of perception and aesthetics. The last is world three—where the emergent ideas appear—the realm of the story, the imagination, the mythologies that often inform the relief medium—which are designed to make life otherworldly with exaggeration, strangeness and metaphor—an embedded irreality.

The obvious note is that the process of crucifixion and the concomitant resurrection of Christ is like the raising of a relief—where the material body is left behind and the symbolic body is what remains—a perplexing paradox in full view. Mystic states lend themselves well to the in-between somewhat fragile embodiment of the relief—hinting towards its precarity, which we know to be vulnerable yet timeless. These metaphors are made for the medium, they are born out of the dead tubers of material reality and extrude outwards into the emergent realm of meaning only to be fed back into the waking world through action and experience: a few examples being the appearance of the patron (Adolf von Bodelschwingh) or the vivid rendering of a kind of 1500s existentialism on the mournful expressions of the people.

The power of relief however is that its inbetween-ness has always been put to use in complex situations, where a picture without dimensional texture was not enough, but where a free-standing sculpture could not elaborate a foundational theme within the space. It's what makes the relief a somewhat intellectual medium where the semantics are formalized but can also be overridden by an author's sentience—in this case expressed through Brabender's empathetic and convivial touch.

Taslima Ahmed is a British-German artist living in Berlin. She exhibited at the Westfälischer Kunstverein in 2023 with a show entitled *Canvas Automata* consisting of 18 textured abstract paintings made purely by digital means.

Self-Portrait, 1993
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1993

Offset lithography with pastel
28 × 38 cm
Inv. no. C-24401 WKV

Nam June Paik

Nam June Paik's lithograph *Self-Portrait* (1993) is not a self-portrait in any obvious way. Rather, it reproduces a picture of George Maciunas, the founder of the Fluxus movement and a crucial figure in Paik's career. The two met when Maciunas moved from New York to Wiesbaden, Germany, for a job as a graphic designer at the United States Air Force Exchange. "Maciunas first wrote in the middle of 1961 to three persons in Europe: Poet Hans G. Helms, composer Sylvano Bussotti, and myself," recalled Paik in 1990. "Helms and Bussotti ignored this mysterious American, and I was the only person who responded to him. His letter was typed on expensive red rice paper with the IBM Executive [typewriter]. The rest is history."

Paik became one of Fluxus's earliest members, performing in concerts and contributing to Maciunas's ambitious program of intermedia publications, which included multiples, books, films, and a newspaper. Their friendship was fractious. For a time, Paik was even "excommunicated" from Fluxus. Nevertheless, the connection between them endured. For instance, shortly after Maciunas passed away from pancreatic cancer in 1978, Paik and Joseph Beuys together performed *In Memoriam George Maciunas: Klavierduett* at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf.

The image in Paik's print is a still from Jonas Mekas's film *Zefiro Torna or Scenes from the Life of George Maciunas* (1992). Maciunas and Mekas had known each other since the 1950s through New York's Lithuanian émigré community. While Maciunas organized concerts and publications for Fluxus, Mekas built the distribution infrastructure for American underground film. In a 1992 essay, Paik observed that the two Lithuanians shared in common: "1. a combination of defiance and humor, like a frog, 2. a combination of extreme fatalism and extreme optimism, 3. a combination of a smile and resignation." Here is why, in all likelihood, Paik chose to call this lithograph of Maciunas a self-portrait. Paik saw the same characteristics in himself. Paik's observation also explains why he chose to adorn the image with an orange paper cut-out of a frog. Paik wrote, "George Maciunas wanted to be reincarnated as a frog—the most ecologically sane of all creatures." In Paik's print, Maciunas gets his wish.

Colby Chamberlain is the author of *Fluxus Administration: George Maciunas and the Art of Paperwork* (University of Chicago Press, 2024). He teaches art and theory at the Cleveland Institute of Art.

Still Life with Bird's Nest and Flowers, 1752–1792

Oil on oak wood
39.2 × 30.2 cm
Inv. no. 137 WKV

Margarethe König

Margarethe Elisabeth König was evidently an accomplished and enthusiastic painter of flowers, but birds were apparently less her speciality. A lush bouquet of flowers glows in the right foreground comprising damask roses, yellow jewellery baskets, mock orange, a dahlia and morning glories, while a field bindweed stylishly entwines itself around a branch in the background. There is a bird perched on this branch, which, with a bit of imagination, could be a female chaffinch. König has painted far less 'according to nature' in the colour of the plumage than in the carefully worked flowers, and the unnaturally overstretched neck of the bird also suggests a lack of a physical model. Straining somewhat, the bird is looking down at a clutch of eggs in its nest, which it has built on the ground—atypical for chaffinches.

The light falls on the scene from the left, caresses the chest and coverts of the chaffinch, settles on the flowers and strangely illuminates the bare forest floor directly in front of the nest. The empty space leaves room for speculation about the composition, in which the flower still life, the depiction of the bird and the woodland are combined in a way that is not true to nature, but in a certain sense natural and unobtrusive. Perhaps König was orientating herself towards the bourgeois ideal of the Enlightenment, which propagated simplicity and naturalness.

She may have been aware of the traditional symbolism of the chaffinch in painting, although it is primarily the males with their striking plumage that symbolise the soul, the Passion of Christ or the schooling of youth in the ways of virtue. In nature, however, it is the female chaffinches that build the nest, brood and are responsible for most of the brood care, i. e. metaphorically speaking, leading 'youth to virtue'. Thus, the painter depicted the less prominent but more active gender.

As an eighteenth-century artist, König knew what it meant to be invisible. To this day, her entry is still missing from the usual encyclopaedias of artists, and it is not clear whom she studied under or whether she was able to finance her livelihood through her art. After all, she was commissioned to paint several overdoors in Schloss Münster and one might assume that this would have at least led to some local renown. After all, three of her works are owned by the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster and are on permanent loan to the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur.

Gudrun Püschel prefers to work in the museum, with excursions into the fields of editing and academic research. As an amateur ornithologist, she considers birds to be an underestimated motif in art and is delighted with every avifaunal discovery in a painting.

Panta Rhei, 1969
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1969

Screen print on paper
62.1 × 66.1 cm
Inv. no. C-487 WKV

The aphorism that supplies the artwork's title – *Panta Rhei*—is an abbreviation of Heraclitus's river theory and can be translated from ancient Greek as "everything flows". It highlights the idea that the world—and everything in it—is constantly in a state of flux and becoming. Nothing stands still, everything is subject to constant change. This idea can be transferred to Tess Jaray's eponymous screen print from 1969: two pastel-coloured, geometric bodies always come together in pairs here, forming a pattern, and seemingly flow across the sheet in front of their background.

Jaray developed this unique visual language as early as the 1960s, inspired by encounters with the Italian Renaissance and Middle Eastern architecture. Born in Vienna in 1937, her family was forced to migrate to Great Britain in 1938 due to their Jewish heritage. Accordingly, Jaray attracted considerable attention there both as an artist and, from 1968, as the first female lecturer at the Slade School of Fine Art in London. At the invitation of Friedrich Heckmanns, director of Westfälischer Kunstverein at the time, Jaray developed an edition for the 1969 round of annual editions (Jahresgaben). This is particularly noteworthy given that the artist herself was never represented in an exhibition at the Kunstverein. Thus, she is representative of a number of artists who were invited to produce annual editions independently of ongoing exhibition practice and based on personal preferences and acquaintances, and whose work—via these annual editions—ultimately found its way into the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection.

Although her work is congruent with Minimalism, abstraction or Op Art, it defies formal categorisation: instead, she develops spaces between figuration and abstraction, characterised by the striking use of colour, repetition and lacunae. Through experiments with line, geometry, patterns and colour, abstract painted spaces are generated, as if they were themselves architectural structures, such as columns, windows, arcades or Islamic ceiling paintings. In short: familiar architectural elements ranging from Syrian mosques to Gothic cathedrals.

Jana Peplau is responsible for exhibition organisation and artistic production at the Westfälischer Kunstverein. Together with Jana Bernhardt, she realised the annual programme of FAK23, curated various editions of the RADAR series and was involved in the project management of FLURSTÜCKE 2024.

Tess Jaray

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Floral Still Life,
1764–1774

Oil on oak wood
45.7 × 33.0 cm
Inv. no. 133 WKV

Gertrud Metz

From an art-historical perspective, it is not surprising that little information exists about the floral artist Gertrud Metz, who was born in Bonn in 1746. Like many women artists, she was not considered to possess the same talent as her male colleagues, and as a result, her work and biography have been less thoroughly researched. Metz initially studied with her father, Johann Martin Metz, who was also an artist, before continuing her studies at the Düsseldorf Art Academy—a career path that was denied to many women and people who were read as women or felt they belonged to the female gender.

Although Metz's father also painted still lifes, it is not unusual for a woman to turn to this genre. Mostly excluded from studying the naked human body (which, however, was the basis of history painting), women often only had the less prestigious genres of portrait and still life painting left at their disposal.

Metz's *Blumenstillleben* (Floral Still Life), which was formerly also titled *Allegorie des Frühlings* (Allegory of Spring), depicts a lush bouquet of roses, daffodils, lilies and poppies, whose blooms are already beginning to wilt. In front of the vase, there is also a snail and its shell and a bird's nest containing eggs, one of which is broken open outside the nest. The artist's painting effectively inverts the symbols of spring, which signify blossoming, awakening (perhaps even of new life) and fertility.

From today's perspective, much of this can be interpreted in terms of the position of women artists and women per se in the Early Modern Period. For example, women artists, if they had received a decent education at all, often had to give up their careers when they married. If they did not marry, they were left with the 'barren' life of an 'old maid'. So it was a case of 'children or career'. This is still a question that concerns many women today, as the care situation and career opportunities after maternity leave still all too often stand in the way of the and in 'children and career'. But marriage did not—and still does not—automatically mean family bliss: due to poor hygiene and the state of medicine at the time, the probability of miscarriage was very high; infant and child mortality was around fifty per cent. Today, around one in seven couples have an unfulfilled desire for children, although the causes have changed.

Whether Metz was married is not known—at least there is no recorded change of her surname.

Anna Luisa Walter is curator for modern art at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur in Münster. She specialises in female artists and their work, as well as portrait painting from the seventh to the twentieth century.

Quelle, 1962
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1962

Colour woodcut on paper
57 × 88 cm
Inv. no. C-438 WKV

HAP Grieshaber

In the hall of my parents' house, as long as I lived there, a single print hung on the wall, clearly visible and impossible to miss due to the sheer radiance of the colours. When I browsed through the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection, I recognised the composition, almost lost to memory: it was a woodcut by Helmut Fiebiger, which the Kunstverein had offered its members as an annual edition (Jahresgabe) in 1957/58; the artist's name was completely unknown to me.

HAP Grieshaber—whose work was also offered as an annual edition in 1962 by the Kunstverein in the form of a woodcut—is much more prominent in my memory. The sheet, typical of his art, shows boldly-outlined shapes, animated by dynamic intersections, which stand on the paper like characters and merge to form a figurative scene. I knew Grieshaber's prints, posters and books from visits to my grandparents, who, like him, lived in Reutlingen, knew him personally and occasionally told me about them. Even before I realised how eminently political his art was, I experienced there that it could be the occasion for conversations and shared experiences.

Looking back on the fledgling Federal Republic of Germany, which has long since been the subject of contemporary history, these early artistic impressions are linked to a new historical beginning: for large sections of post-war West German society, interaction with art and culture was part of a safe and fulfilling life, which seemed possible again at the time—as a personal need and cultural, political goal. This gave rise to the importance of the annual editions. Thanks to their favourable prices, even members with limited financial means were able to acquire works by modern or contemporary artists.

HAP Grieshaber always recognised the personal and social value of art; this is most evident in his decision to use woodcuts for the publication of his works in larger editions. A few weeks after HAP Grieshaber was invited to stage a solo exhibition at the Westfälischer Kunstverein, he recalled in a speech to exhibition visitors in Munich in October 1963 "that until recently we lived without art in Germany. [...] There is probably no way to learn art. Everyone must be allowed to find an artistic presence within themselves. If there is no contemporary art, then there is no route to it."

Hans-Jürgen Lechtreck has been a research associate at Museum Folkwang since 2008. He has curated exhibitions with Lothar Baumgarten, Gerhard Richter, Hans Josephsohn and Keith Haring amongst others.

Saint Odilia,
Saint Dorothea, 1410

Right and left wing of a tabernacle (?)
Tempera on oak wood
Each 94.5 × 27.7 cm
Inv. no. 2 WKV, 3 WKV

Conrad von Soest

Labelling something as a B-side usually qualifies many things as second-rate, because there is always something better: the A-side. This phenomenon is best known from music, especially 7" vinyl or single. For example, Wikipedia states: "The B-side (or "flip-side") is a secondary recording that typically receives less attention [...]."

But if you take a closer look, you will find this phenomenon in art as well: Conrad von Soest painted the two saints Odilia and Dorothea on oak panels in 1410 to decorate—presumably—a shrine containing a silver figure of Mary in the church of the Augustinian Canonesses of St Walburgis in Soest. The artist did not stint on splendour: the golden background of both figures continues to shine on to this day. After about fifty years, the purpose of the two panels changed. They were now used as the doors of a container for storing communion wafers, and the magnificent side with the two saints now faced inwards. Now, for the time when the doors were closed, the previously unpainted side had to be painted, the B-side as it were. Around 1460, an artist unknown to us today, perhaps from Westphalia, created the depiction of the Gregorian Mass for the reverse side which was now the front. This theme of Christian iconography depicts Pope Gregory I as Christ appears to him in the flesh as the Man of Sorrows during the celebration of Holy Mass; his instruments of suffering surround him. The stigmata of Jesus Christ are often visible. In the mid-fifteenth century, this form of representation was very much in vogue. However, our unknown painter of the B-side was neither inspired nor particularly impressed by the work of Conrad von Soest, which is of the highest artistic quality. Instead, the reverse side features a popular, rough painting style, executed more like a craft than an art, with less idealism and much more reality.

While the depictions of Saints Odilia and Dorothea appear almost flawless more than 600 years after their creation, the same cannot be said of the reverse side, which shows countless signs of damage. The painted surface is badly scratched and not all of the figures depicted are still clearly recognisable. At the same time, however, this B-side is an authentic work of art from the fifteenth century and reveals its original state of preservation without any special conservation measures having been undertaken. For this reason alone, the reverse deserves to be more than just a flip-side. Rather, being able to view both sides today is of great merit. Actually, it is a double A-side, very much in the mode of the Beatles singles!

Sarah Siemens, is a historian and art historian with a penchant for everything concerning post-1945 history.

Self-portrait, 1813

Oil on oak wood
43.1 × 34.4 cm
Inv. no. 147 WKV

Johann Christoph Rincklake

The self-portrait is a special breed: the artist both as the *subject* and *object* of the depiction. Both are inevitably entangled in self-reflective, philosophical mirroring. A searching, probing, almost sceptical gaze looks out from the painting. It seems somewhat strained between the lowered forehead and the heart-shaped mouth, which has something defiant and yet also sensual about it. His gaze is anything but self-assured or calm, the background dark and undefined, his blonde hair already thinning somewhat. A high, black collar reaches up to his right ear. It was the job and the inherent fascination of the portrait to capture the living gaze and to entrance, especially in a time before the invention of photography. Who is this person? Is that me? Is it really me? The fact that this last self-portrait was made a few weeks before Rincklake's death lend the painting and the questions—which, at the time of its making were endowed with something transient—an existential charge. But that is only half the story. The painter's gaze leaves the painting and encounters us in a completely different time. If not only the question of one's own self is captured in the gaze directed at the viewer, then contemporary history may also contribute another aspect to this painting. To call the decade before its creation volatile is an understatement.

In 1802, Prussian troops under General von Blücher occupied the city. In 1803, the Prince-Bishopric of Münster was dissolved by the Principal Conclusion of the Extraordinary Imperial Delegation. The Napoleonic period from 1805 to 1813 was characterised by war, military occupation and foreign domination. Between 1802 and 1813, Münster had to change its nationality and national constitution five times. In 1806, Napoleon's troops had moved into Münster, the city was incorporated into the French Empire and became the capital of the Lippe department. In 1813, Prussian troops invaded again; the Battle of the Nations took place near Leipzig, the largest military conflict in the world at that time, ending the supremacy of the French emperor, who had kept Europe in suspense. The Congress of Vienna awarded Westphalia to the Kingdom of Prussia and Münster became the capital of the province of Westphalia. Can, or indeed, should Rincklake's view of the world and of himself be detached from his time? The founding of the German Empire in 1872 was still a good sixty years away, and the founding of the Westfälischer Kunstverein just under twenty years in the future. In the same year that the Kunstverein began to collect and preserve the cultural heritage of Westphalian art and culture, the so-called Revised Municipal Code of 1831 marked the first step towards the restoration of municipal self-government in Münster. This made it politically and structurally possible for the first time to establish a larger collection reflecting middle-class aspirations, which would also be for the general public. The fact that photography was still excluded from the canon of academic art for the time being was a defensive reaction, since it represented much more than just a technical innovation. In the long term, it invoked a paradigm shift in the visual arts, in the wake of which the conventions of portraiture also underwent a complete transformation. On the eve of this transformation, Johann Christoph Rincklake looks at himself and us with his haunting gaze.

Christian Katti studied philosophy, art history and psychology in Munich, Berlin and Potsdam. He was a fellow of the *Getty Grant Program*, has worked conceptually on the preparation of various exhibitions and works as an editor and translator.

Marabou, 1947
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1971

Woodcut on paper
44 × 24.8 cm
Inv. no. C-596 WKV

Otto Pankok

The side view of a stylised African marabou on a white background, bent slightly forwards and looking directly at the viewer, is merely supplemented by the monogram of its creator, Otto Pankok.

Although Pankok's works are classified as Expressive Realism, which is stylistically characterised by the use of colour and brushstrokes as the main means of expression, his extensive œuvre of prints is typified by a monochrome and reduced colour palette. The physical appearance of the crested stork, as the marabou is also known, is characterised by the hard, black lines of the woodcut, a favourite medium of expression for the artist. Posture, gaze and the reduction to essential attributes evoke an almost human-like expression and the bird is thus reminiscent of the figure of an elderly, good-natured man, which is hinted at in the friendly, mischievous facial expressions.

This print, posthumously signed in pencil by his wife Hulda, is thus more reminiscent of the illustration of a fable or parable than an anatomical depiction of a large bird. The contrast between the visual characteristics of the marabou—a chunky beak and almost naked, pink-coloured head and neck, which make it a useful scavenger for humans, and the fluffy under-tail feathers of its breeding plumage, which are highly coveted in the fashion industry—appears almost emblematic.

Otto Pankok's œuvre seems equivalent to this. On the one hand, his love is for the depiction of nature in all its facets and, on the other, he is known for the political dimension in his works, in which he primarily dedicated himself to people suffering on the margins of society, which also incorporates his experience of violence under the Nazis. The figure of the marabou thus remains relevant to Otto Pankok's work even after his death—realistically depicted as an animal worthy of protection and a memorial to an endangered natural world.

Nadia Ismail has a doctorate in art history and is director of the Kunsthalle Giessen. She also advises the LBBW on acquisitions for its art collection, is the art commissioner for the State of Hessen and works as a lecturer at JLU Giessen.

Westphalian Landscape,
1859

Oil on canvas
44 × 56 cm
Inv. no. 299 WKV

A pure idyll, consoling nature, a place where people and nature coexist in harmony—this landscape painting embodies all of this. The colour palette is earthy, the mood homely, contemplative, warm and comfortable. Nothing in this perfectly composed painting has been left to chance. A true place of longing and belonging.

Even today, such representations shape our image of the 'ideal' landscape and our relationship with nature. Our perception of landscape is learned—moulded by painting and literature. Landscape becomes an aesthetic pleasure that manifest itself in our minds. Although our individual perception of a beautiful landscape is unique, for many of us, Romantic paintings are part of our collective memory. On our walks through the Westphalian countryside, we compare what we see with the ideal in our minds. To this day, paintings such as this one, are deeply rooted in our perception.

Even at that time, Romantic landscape painting was wholly at odds with the reality of industrialised nineteenth-century society. Today, these idealised landscapes are being revived in travel reports on Instagram, in advertising brochures and on city marketing websites. They, too, often show us landscapes that do not exist today. Distractions and incursions, such as roads or construction sites, are deliberately photoshopped out of the images.

As early as the 1980s, Lucius Burckhardt was already examining this relationship between landscape, nature and aesthetics, and founded the science of strollology, aka promenadology. He believed it was important not to confuse nature and landscape, because otherwise the political dimension of landscape and ecological issues would also vanish behind an ideological veil. Current discourses and practices in contemporary art, sociology and ecology are increasingly questioning the relationship between humans and non-humans. New images and stories are emerging that explore alternative relationships between nature and humans. It remains to be seen whether and, if so, what effect this will have on our image of a 'typically idealised' landscape.

Sophia Trollmann is a curator specialising in cultural participation and art in public spaces. She works as a mediator in the New Patrons model (Neue Auftraggeber) in Brandenburg and North Rhine-Westphalia.

Alexander Michelis

Homage to the Square: Protected Blue, 1957

Oil on hardboard (Masonite)
76 × 77 × 3 cm
Inv. no. 1278 WKV

Josef Albers

A radiant, deep blue, framed by two matt reds and a soft turquoise, sits there as the cool, luminous centre of this 'homage to the square'. It was the titular square regulation of form that provided Josef Albers the scope to examine the interplay of colour in detail and make it the actual core of his work from 1950 onwards. By the time of his death in 1976, he had made over 2,000 works in the series: an almost endless project to which he devoted himself with the utmost precision and dedication. Thus, in the inherent mutability of colour and our inconsistent, variable perception of it, he posited a concise, tonal metaphor for our constantly changing reality.

Then as now, his works invite us, phenomenologically, to hone our perception and to open ourselves up to our relationship with the environment. As a title, *Protected Blue* can be understood programmatically here: the matt tones seem to shield the blue, allowing it to radiate unhindered. But what is being shielded? Does the blue not respond in our perception to the matt tones framing it? Isolated from the surrounding colours, it stands out, appearing light yet dominant, always in relation to red and green.

This painting is one of a series of works featuring a similar colour palette that Josef Albers gave to various museums and exhibition spaces in Germany and Europe around 1960, including the Westfälischer Kunstverein. At the time, the reception of Albers's work was undergoing a revision: previously known primarily as a Bauhaus master, a renowned art instructor and university professor, he received international recognition for his art after the Second World War. Even today, his work stands out as something seminal in the vast canon of twentieth-century art. Terms such as Op Art, geometric abstraction or concrete art miss the point; Albers rejected them as generic pigeon holes for his vision.

Josef Albers had a very special relationship with the Westfälischer Kunstverein that began well before 1945. Correspondence with Albers from 1929 is held in the Kunstverein's archive. Thanks to the then director Peter Leo, contact with Albers was re-established in the 1950s. Two events stand out in the relationship between the Kunstverein and the artist: on the one hand, Albers offered the Kunstverein the administration of his entire art collection based in Europe in 1959; on the other, Dieter Honisch and Albers initiated the edition *Allegro* in 1961/62, a small silkscreen print inspired by the *Homage to the Square* series, which was available at the time for five DM and resulted in the felicitous introduction of this famous artwork into numerous homes.

Monja Droßmann is a research trainee at the Josef Albers Museum in Bottrop. She studied art, English, educational sciences and art history in Paderborn and Cologne and has worked at ZADIK in Cologne and the DFK in Paris, among other places.

Poultry Piece, 1658

Oil on canvas
82 × 117 cm
Inv. no. 206 WKV

Johannes Spruyt

»tweet tweet«
Wind tans you too!

»cock-a-doodle-doo«
A hen cannot leave her love behind. As is usual in the classical mode, the bird is lying on an ottoman with the cockerel sitting at the head. A room to a quiet courtyard, the window open. The hen repeatedly tells of her pain. A lot of grief, a lot of value. After many sessions, which for the cockerel take place in circular movements, he is no longer fully focused.
A particularly beautiful dove settles on the window ledge, attracting his attention. He watches the dove, is distracted and forgets to listen.
The dove flies away and his concentration returns.
He realises that there has been a remarkable change. Upright, with a strong voice, the hen announces:
You can't look for trousers, they have to find you!
The cockerel is completely unprepared for these words.
There were only seconds, barely time to speak more than a few sentences. What did the hen say?

«Ciao!»

Watching wants to focus and asks 'What?'
Seeing passes by, on an indefinite trajectory, and asks 'How?'
»cock-a-doodle-doo«
Birds are more beautiful when they suddenly land!
The question is: what is your stand?
»cock-a-doodle-doo«

I don't want to jinx it. Only when the eagle eye disappears can the hen reveal its personality.
»cluck cluck«
Surprise! The hen has also seen the dove.
»quack quack«

And »tweet tweet« don't forget, the wind also tans!

Inspired by Anne Dufourmantelle, Emily Ogden and Yvonne Rainer.

Inga Krüger, a native of Iserlohn, loves the moment when something has started but nothing has happened yet.
In her performances, she analytically and humorously stages language as a fabric of reality.

Passerina Noctua/Nocturna, 1987
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1987

Glazed clay
25 × 8 × 27 cm
Inv. no. O-1016 WKV

Matteo Thun

Designed by Matteo Thun and produced by Alessio Sarri Ceramiche between 1981 and 1984, the *Passerina Noctua* is a sculptural, pale-coloured ceramic teapot with a painted finish. Its oval, disc-shaped body with a fitted triangular lid is reminiscent of a bird and rests on a wedge-shaped, oval base. A small segment of a circle between the body and base suggests claws. Wings in the form of crenelated triangles and a tubular spout complete the impression of a vessel that has mutated into a living being via the diversion of abstraction.

Matteo Thun, co-founder of the Memphis Group, has repeatedly used the motif of a bird's wing in his postmodern designs for vases and teaware, evoking associations with animal forms through jagged, dynamic shapes. The special edition of the *Passerina Nocturna* for the Westfälischer Kunstverein from 1987 is characterised by round, wafer-shaped wings, a shiny silver glaze and golden decorative elements on the base and wings. The metallic appearance of the teapot lends the bird's body a futuristic, aerodynamic appearance, while the delicate gold pattern recalls the ornamentation of Art Nouveau.

This teapot does not appear to be particularly practical, nevertheless the Memphis design generally replaced modernist functionality with an emotionalisation of the form with no regard for ease of use or, indeed, any utility value to speak of. Geometric shapes, sculpturally accentuated and often dissonantly arranged, were combined in the designs of the Milanese design group with a bright, colourful palette and striking patterns that reproduced high-quality materials—such as marble or high-grade wood as templates—on cheap plastic. Matteo Thun's designs adhered to this aesthetic but remained comparatively restrained in their chromatic range. The overlapping of different styles and their semantic import, the visible contrasts and deliberate dissonances create an elegant interplay of 'high' and 'low' that exemplifies Art Deco's penchant for teaware.

The silver teapot, which was a status symbol and was already avant-garde at the time with its compressed shape and protruding handle, would become a ceramic object a hundred years later. In itself a somewhat lowly caste in the hierarchy of design, this model—with its golden wings and a silver glaze—trumps its predecessor: an amalgam of surreal metamorphosis and material camouflage, more a piece for a display case than a utility object.

Vanessa Joan Müller is a curator and author who lives and works in Vienna. She was head of the dramaturgy department at Kunsthalle Wien, director of the Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen in Düsseldorf and curator at the Frankfurter Kunstverein.

Still Life with Rummer, Pretzel and Almonds, 1637

Oil on oak wood
19.3 × 14.6 cm
Inv. no. 905 WKV

Georg Flegel

By no means do I want to interpret Flegel as a precursor of abstraction, but, at the same time, I am impressed by how he feels his way to the cusp of figuration with this still life of a repast. This begins with the rather dominant introduction of a peculiar non-form in the composition—the broken pretzel stuck in the glass. An effect that is further emphasised by the modulated refraction of light in the wine.

It is an extremely compact composition in every respect, above all, of course, because of the decision in favour of a small format, which effectively squeezes the objects together. This is reinforced by minimal spatial layering, which not only affords the motifs little space but also emphasises their juxtaposition. The fact that the symbolic dimension of the autumn allegory is not particularly complex also reinforces the assumption that someone may have intended the still life as a mere pretext for a playful exploration of form and colour. The colour values are modulated from different mixtures of browns, with gradations running gradually over the neighbouring objects: the dark green of the rummer merges into the greenish-yellow wine and from there into at least two different shades of brown—the pretzel halves—and whence the modulation continues via walnuts and almonds. The end points of this movement coalesce in the part of the pretzel lying on the table on the left, which almost seems to merge into the brown of the overlay, and the foot of the glass, the dark green of which is shaded black and thus merges into the fourth dominant colour of the picture.

'Monochrome Banketjes' such as this one mark a shift within still life painting away from what is depicted towards painterly modes of representation, which Flegel radically teases out in this painting, at least for his time. Another part of the painting's appeal is that it offers us, as viewers tainted by psychoanalysis, yet another possibility of interpretation, which would probably have been too daring for the author to consciously attempt.

Moritz Scheper is director of the Neuer Essener Kunstverein.

Gerstenfeld, 1994
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1997

Chromogenic print on photographic paper
23.5 × 30 cm
Inv. no. C-18195 WKV

Simone Nieweg

Simone Nieweg is considered a master in her examination of human-made agricultural landscapes. At first glance, this seems like an unspectacular, almost dry subject. However, when the artist repeatedly stresses that she is only attracted to a few agricultural landscapes to such an extent that she wants to photograph them, then this is only logical. She devotes herself to the search for her motifs with passion and precision, leaving nothing to chance when photographing them.

When Nieweg came across the barley field (Gerstenfeld) on a peaceful summer evening, she was immediately drawn to the arrangement of fields and paths and then picked her spot. “What struck me immediately about this beautiful scene was the fact that the stalks on the left-hand corner of the field are particularly effective because they gracefully arch over a small section of the path”, as Nieweg put it when she wrote to me during my research on the photograph. It quickly emerges how closely connected she is to her subject, indeed, how keenly she notices the details that turn a mundane situation into something very special.

And although we always detect the presence of humans—who have increasingly transformed the landscape into a farmscape—they are not visible in Nieweg’s photographs. The atmosphere captured seems calm, almost meditative—were it not for that one gap in the barley field, which represents a kind of opening. Another detail that fascinated the artist and that she deliberately placed in the picture with the help of her large-format camera.

When she presented the work in an exhibition, an observer told her that she probably wouldn’t have captured the wild boar that had apparently disappeared right there in the field, as Nieweg recounts with some amusement. And indeed: even the asphalt in the foreground appears to have been disturbed, contrary to all logic. A bent stalk, a few stones, reddish mud tracks and scattered earth are further indications of a putative crime scene. But these are associations of a society whose driven gaze Nieweg merely wants to encourage to slow down. To consciously roam through the image from the foreground to the middle and backgrounds, from right to left across the image, and then back again.

Franziska Kunze is head of the Photography and Time-Based Media Collection at the Pinakothek der Moderne. She takes on teaching assignments and is involved in various juries on photography.

San Pietro in Vincoli in Rome, 1883

Oil on canvas
78.5 × 100 cm
Inv. no. 241 WKV

Oswald Achenbach

Italy: there is scarcely any other country that conjures up so many images and projections of longing! Its inexhaustible wealth of artworks from all eras, its picturesque cities patinated with age, its temperate climate and lush vegetation, offers everything that is often lacking in the north: sensuality, beauty, warmth and light. Since the sixteenth century, a sojourn in Italy has been the highlight of every "Grand Tour", upon which the young male aristocracy of Europe embarked in order to acquire education, manners and an air of cosmopolitanism in a foreign clime. In imitation of this aristocratic lifestyle, wealthy commoners later followed suit. Goethe's fabled, almost two-year-long trip to Italy (1786–1788) served as a kind of blueprint. From 1861, the Baedeker Verlag published travel guides to Italy to help educated tourists find their way around, which eclipsed eighteen editions by 1914. And for the many who could not afford an expensive trip to the "Belpaese", literature or paintings had to suffice as sought-after surrogates.

Oswald Achenbach (1827–1905), one of the most prominent representatives of the Düsseldorf school of painting, embarked on his first grand tour to Italy in 1850. From this and other visits to the "blessed land", he brought countless studies and sketches of Italian cities and landscapes back to the Rhineland and transformed them into atmospheric spectaculars of colour and light in his studio. *S. Pietro in Vincoli in Rome* from 1883 depicts a lively square in the angular shadows of the original late-classical church. The ochre tones of the architecture set the tonal palette, harmoniously corresponding with the bright azure of the sky, which morphs into a hazy pink in the background. One's eye is drawn from the market to the Roman veduta, the realistically rendered cityscape, in the distance via a single towering palm tree. The result is a kind of proscenium in front of which a scene unfolds, not unlike a genre study, allowing a supposedly authentic view of the 'primeval life' of ordinary people. Achenbach, who had long been a celebrated and award-winning painter at the time, thus fulfilled the expectations of his Wilhelminian audience in the best possible way—his subtle manipulation of light, his refined colour palette and his freedom in the use of brush and paint also aligned the then fifty-six-year-old with the new visual concepts of the younger German Impressionists.

Martina Padberg has been director of the Ahlen Art Museum since 2020 and previously worked as a freelance author and curator for numerous museums in Germany. She has taught art history at the University of Bonn for many years.

Study for a project for the courtyard of the Kunstverein, Münster, 1991

Collage on paper
35.5 × 27.2 cm
Inv. no. KdZ 4245 WKV

Ellsworth Kelly

In Münster, there are numerous kitchens and hallways in which, quite incidentally, a wonderful exhibition poster is hanging. It features a red rhomboid floating on an eggshell-coloured background, with the simple caption below: 'Ellsworth Kelly Münster'. It is a poster design that could hardly be more simple, which Ellsworth Kelly donated to the Westfälischer Kunstverein in 1992 and which, reproduced as an edition using the screen-printing process, found many admirers. The basis for this popular poster was the collage *Study for a project for the courtyard of the Kunstverein, Münster,* which the artist made while planning this installation. In this context, a plan for the work was also created, which Kelly likewise donated to the Kunstverein.

Whenever I see the poster somewhere, I also see the atrium of the Landesmuseum in front of me, because the rhomboid was at home there for a short time in 1992. And there is also a poster for this, which depicts the red shape mounted in a black-and-white photograph of the atrium: it shows the neo-Gothic architecture from 1908, with a rhomboid placed precisely in the middle of the courtyard and measuring 8.04 × 12.16 metres with two angles measuring 123° and 65° respectively.

Kelly had designed the poster for an exhibition at the Kunstverein, which took place at the same time as the retrospective *Ellsworth Kelly, The Years in France, 1948–1954* at the Landesmuseum. In addition to Münster, the travelling exhibition was also shown at the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris and the National Gallery in Washington D.C. in 1992. Because the exhibition space of the Kunstverein, which at the time was still located in the old museum building from the 1970s, was also needed for this major exhibition, the museum's Lichthof was temporarily made available to it in exchange. Friedrich Meschede, the Kunstverein's director at the time, promptly invited Kelly to realise the floor piece *Red Floor Panel* in this space, which otherwise remained completely empty. This was Kelly's answer to *Yellow Curve* (1990), a yellow segment of a circle that he had exhibited at Portikus in Frankfurt two years earlier at the invitation of Kasper König and Ulrich Wilmes. There is also an edition of a silkscreen print of this work: a yellow and a red shape. Incidentally, the Landesmuseum acquired the work *Two Panels: Red Yellow* (1971) for its collection a little later.

Ellsworth Kelly died in 2015, the year I came to Münster. Unfortunately, I didn't get to know him, but I feel very close to this slightly alien-looking, signal-red entity. In the black-and-white photograph, the red floor panel looks like a red cloth that could lift off and fly away at any moment.

Marianne Wagner is curator of contemporary art and head of the Skulptur Projekte Archive at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur / Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Münster.

‘Plaque of Honour’ of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, [n. d., 1933]

cast bronze,
burnished dark brown
weight 175.420 g,
diameter 61.3 to 62.3 mm,
thickness 5.1 to 6.8 mm at the rim, on relief up to 9.2 mm
Inv. no. 32495 Mz

Arnold Schlick

This is the only medal in the Westfälischer Kunstverein’s collection and also the only one it has issued in its almost 200-year history. The artist responsible is Arnold Schlick, who was born in Mecklenburg and moved to Münster in 1925, where he was a university lecturer for artistic and academic drawing and modelling from 1929 to 1962. He also worked as a freelance artist and sculptor; he mainly created sculptures in the round, focussing on animals as well as portraits. Schlick, like August Gaul (1869–1921), was regarded as an important sculptor of animals, but his work is largely forgotten today outside Münster, which boasts several large sculptures in the cityscape. He devoted little attention to two-dimensional sculpture—the relief—and apparently just this once to the art medal.

The occasion in question was the ‘Young Westphalians’ (“Jung-Westfalen”) competition initiated by the Kunstverein in 1932/33; in an open call for the ‘Plaque of Honour’ in April 1933, Schlick had prevailed against fourteen competitors. The prize, a cash award and also this medal, was awarded alternately for painting, sculpture and graphic art from 1933 to 1939, then only once more in 1943. With the inscriptions ‘WESTFÄLISCHER KUNSTVEREIN’ and ‘DEM VERDIENSTE UM DIE KUNST’, the medal also functioned as a general complimentary gift from the Kunstverein. This piece hails from Provincial Councillor Dr Maximilian Kraß (1873–1949), who was deputy chairman and treasurer of the Kunstverein in the 1930s and 40s. It is not known whether the medal continued to be awarded when the competition was resumed in 1951 or for how long; there were around fifteen awards up to 1943.

The medal depicts a falcon taking flight with its pinions raised at an acute angle, symbolising the aspirations of art; in place of the eternal horse, the voluminous oak leaf serves as an original reference to Westphalia. Using simple means, Schlick was also able to penetrate the essence of the person depicted, and the work fits into his œuvre in many ways, both in terms of motif and artistry. The unusually weighty medal is particularly impressive due to the design of the relief: the medal ground is slightly curved on both sides, the lettering—artistic in itself—is raised, and the pictorial motifs also stand out flatly but distinctly; in the case of the falcon, however, the interior of the wing delves once more into the depth of the ground. It is a successful, relevant, albeit largely unnoticed contribution to the medallic art of the time—and thus more than worthy of a Kunstverein.

Stefan Kötz has been a curator of the numismatic collection at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur since 2014 and a consultant for the preservation of coin finds at the LWL-Archäologie für Westfalen since 2017/18; he has been on the board of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Medaillenkunst since 2018.

Untitled
(*Tilted Forms*), 1987
(27 drawings)

Ink on Paper
Each 30.2 × 22.7 cm
Inv. no. KdZ 2763 WKV–
KdZ 2789 WKV

Sol LeWitt

On the occasion of Sol LeWitt's exhibition at the Westfälischer Kunstverein in 1987, in which he showed variations of his *Tilted Forms* as wall drawings, the drawings *Untitled (Tilted Forms)* were made in addition. While the exhibition titled *Tilted Forms/Wall-drawings,* which was tailored to the space, showed a selection of the various forms of a distorted cube in coloured ink wash, which were applied in up to six layers (in red, blue, yellow and grey), this series of drawings in contrast consists of twenty-seven variations of small-format distorted cubes in black ink and different shades of grey. Sol LeWitt's wall drawings, which he made between 1969 and 2007, were each preceded by sketches, so that the drawings reflect this approach.

The central form of the first sheet depicts a pyramid without an apex, which seems to lean forward towards the viewer, while its diamond-shaped apex extends out of the picture into the background plane. All the other sheets show declinations of similar forms, rotated and distorted, which, in their composition, seem to move and float through space.

The wall drawings in the exhibition were first completed in 1987 and are one of the many works by LeWitt from that period in which isometric forms and coloured ink, which was dabbed onto the paper, were used. LeWitt began using ink wash in the early 1980s and perfected a specific and complicated process for applying the ink. The fresco-like quality of the wall drawings and the intense colours with which they were executed show LeWitt's characteristic system of layering rather than mixing pigments.

The composition of the isometric shapes, reminiscent of early Italian frescoes, gives rise to a certain colour impression through the layering of black ink on paper, which is created by gradations in the application and the liny pattern, thus producing an impression of spatiality. Both the four outer lines of the distorted forms and the thick black border around the geometric figure are reminiscent of the grid format often used by LeWitt, which is also laid out in the artist's preferred method of hanging works in blocks. Despite their three-dimensional appearance, these forms also cohere with the idea of flatness, not unlike Sol LeWitt's linear geometries. An isometric drawing technique is used in these drawings, which initially suggests depth and volume, but, in reality, is neither reproduced in perspective nor relies on illusionism to create a form.

Carla Donauer lives and works in Cologne and Berlin. She is an art historian and researcher with a curatorial background. She studied art history and comparative literature at the Goethe University in Frankfurt and is the founder of the nomadic curatorial project *Hospitality* as well as being Rosemarie Trockel's assistant for many years.

Moose, 2012

Screen print
50 × 33 cm
Inv. no. C-25968 WKV

Andrea Büttner

Where are the boundaries of our own world? At the limits of what is conceivable, of language, of perception? In addition to concepts, such as poverty and shame, Andrea Büttner repeatedly engages with smallness. She addresses it through mosses (Moose)—these small, moist, sponge-like plants that can be found on the ground but feed on rainwater, capturing, filtering and storing it. These mosses create micro-worlds for micro-animals, creating very intimate landscapes and important helpers in the ecosystem, which only exist in the plural. In cultural history, moss has always been associated with the female vulva, a damp area and the source of the world. Mosses actually take us back to our origins, at least to the flora that still exists on earth, since they developed from green algae about 400 to 450 million years ago. There is no older surviving plant species on earth.

In Büttner's work, seen through a macro lens, they appear as photographs and prints, as casts and enlargements, as communities on rock, which the artist integrates into her exhibition as organic readymades, thus also ensuring that the exhibition space is colonised by ants, as was recently the case in 2023/24 at the K21 in Düsseldorf. In her enthusiasm for mosses, I discern the interest in community and the attentive immersion in smallness, which not only stimulates the imagination as if to escape from the world, but also creates an increased awareness of the simultaneity of different realities on earth.

Mosses are imbued with an enchanted beauty that challenges the physical possibilities of human perception due to their diminutive size. Discovering this beauty, for example through a magnifying glass or microscope, reminds us that perception is always a question of scale—and that we must question our judgement whenever we look at something, even when looking at art: what, if anything, can I perceive? Can I perceive more if I pay attention? And does heightened attention lead to a different resonance with the things in the world, to a different relationship to the world? Mosses as a school and way of seeing—and thus symbolic of the Kunstverein, which is always an invitation to do just that: to suddenly be able to see something that you were previously blind to.

Rebekka Seubert is artistic director of the Dortmunder Kunstverein. She was working for Kunsthalle Portikus in Frankfurt am Main, the Bonner Kunstverein and the Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof, Hamburg. As a freelance curator she has initiated and supervised various projects at home and abroad.

The Milkmaid, 1834

Oil on canvas
111.2 × 87 cm
Inv. no. 322 WKV

Adolf Schmidt

The reception of Adolf Schmidt's *Das Milchmädchen* (The Milkmaid) over the years has been somewhat chequered. Painted in 1834, the picture came into the possession of the Westfälischer Kunstverein by means of a lottery a year later. Schmidt painted the picture to mark the end of his studies and his departure from the Rhineland, as he moved back to Berlin, his hometown, shortly afterwards.

The painting was permanently exhibited in Münster until 1941. The melange of genre painting and portrait was appreciated, and the hard-working milkmaid exuded elegance and a fashionable sense of style. In 1934, *Das Milchmädchen* was shown in the exhibition *Die deutsche Frau* (The German Woman), bestowing it with a decidedly propagandistic tenor. When the collection was removed during the Second World War, the painting ended up in the storerooms. In 2009, a local cultural editor remembered the "storeroom gem" and a year later, the painting, freshly restored, was declared artwork of the month and presented to the public as a rediscovery.

For the Kunstverein's inaugural exhibition *There's no place like home* in the new building in 2013, I explored aspects of the Kunstverein's history in the work *Das schielende Archiv* (The Squinting Archive), which was conceived for the foyer. The description of paintings that were exhibited in the nineteenth century "in passing" was the impetus for the presentation of four large-format photographic plates, on which collages from the archives and excerpts of individual paintings from the collection can be seen. One of the plates shows *Das Milchmädchen.* The milkmaid's head can be seen with a scarf and pillow, the lustrous frame can be guessed at as it merges with the fields of gold. *Das Milchmädchen* seemed Italian to me and the portable pillow fascinated me.

In 2022, the picture returned to the Kunstverein for the exhibition *Butcher's Coin* by Eliza Ballesteros and nestled with contemporary art. A figure we read as female was placed at the centre of attention; she does not show the toil of her labours and corresponds to an ideal of beauty that originated in the Biedermeier period. *Das Milchmädchen* thus functions as a kind of time traveller who appears in different realities and transports the nineteenth century into our era.

Christoph Westermeier is a visual artist living in Düsseldorf. He studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy and at de Ateliers, Amsterdam.

The Hotelier, 1931
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1975

b/w print from the original negative on photo paper
29 × 22 cm (photo),
55 × 45 cm (cardboard with mat)
Inv. no. C-2136 WKV

August Sander

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the basic idea of physiognomy was anchored in the collective consciousness. Not only since the Nazis used it as a basis for racial theory and eugenics, but already in ancient times, it was considered secret knowledge that you could see who people are by simply looking at them. August Sander's photographic masterpiece *People of the 20th Century* from 1925 to 1955 as a cultural document avails itself of this desire to create a visual taxonomy of the world. With the aim of creating an inventory of the German people, Sander divided people into forty-five types and photographed members of all social classes. A contemporary spoke of "professional physiognomy", Sander himself spoke of "a mirror of the time in which these people live". The organisation of the photographs in the form of folders makes it possible to compare individuals and thus supports the development of a visual typology that leads to a photographic representation of a society in all its facets.

The Hotelier is a stately man wearing the finest threads, looking openly and directly into the camera. The shot is carefully composed in terms of décor and ambience, with the entrance door and hotel sign forming part of the considered composition. It is important to the photographer to maintain the dignity of the subjects, while at the same time depicting them as objectively as possible. The tension in these images lies in the discrepancy between appearance and reality: the individual portraits are less concerned with private appearance and the obtaining specific characteristics than with the typical features that determine their social affiliation or function.

Nowadays, Sander's typification would admittedly be subject to robust criticism, as it conveys an antiquated, even discriminatory world view with a lack of diversity and featuring clichéd stereotypes. Does the hotelier always have to be white and male? However, when viewed in the context of the time, the photographs become an archive of German life, when belonging to a social group was part of the social contract and people's points of reference were clearly defined. Sander's individual portraits thus appear as symbols of a German past.

Felicitas Schwanemann (née Rhan) is an arts editor. She was born in Leipzig, studied art history and German literature in Freiburg, Florence and Dresden, works at the *Weser-Kurier* and contributes as a features editor to the art-market section of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

Workers In Front of the Magistrates, 1848

Oil on canvas
47 × 63,5 cm
Inv. no. 270 WKV

The Westfälischer Kunstverein acquired this oil sketch from the painter's widow as early as 1855. It was made in the autumn of 1848, shortly after a dramatic event that Hasenclever, as a vigilante officer, may have experienced himself. Due to a lack of funds, the Düsseldorf magistrates court had decided to stop supporting around 600 unemployed people. The affected workers banded together in resistance and went to the town hall on 9 October 1848—the crowd and a red flag can be seen through the open window. A deputation disrupted the meeting of the magistrates and confidently presented a paper with their demands. The magistrates, with piles of bureaucratic files glimmering under the lamp on their table, are paralysed; in the foreground, a bald magistrate wipes the cold sweat from his brow—the otherwise normally self-confident bourgeoisie clearly feel threatened. The old authorities, embodied by the portraits of rulers on the walls, fade in the shadows; the bust of the reigning king on the right and the portrait print of the regent Archduke Johann beneath it seem remote and impotent: it is an image of revolution. However, it does not accurately depict the atmosphere in Düsseldorf: "The scene of the action is Germany", as a reviewer put it in 1850. Shortly afterwards, the revolution in Düsseldorf was suppressed and the militia disbanded.

Hasenclever completed three further versions by 1850, two of them in larger formats (154 × 225 cm, in Düsseldorf, and 89 × 131 cm, in Solingen). These artworks reveal the precisely painted details of Hasenclever's typical style, as an ironic and socially-critical genre painter. None of them achieves the spontaneity of the oil sketch, which captures the drama of the scene: the open window shows how a new era dawns when the working class articulates itself politically, makes demands, organises itself—a veritable political turning point. The painting was exhibited many times, even in Moscow, Leningrad and Paris between 1974 and 1977, and is now considered to be the artist's most important work.

Gerd Dethlefs is a historian, who worked at the Stadtmuseum Münster from 1980 until 1996, was a consultant for regional history from 1996 until 2024 and, from 2014, likewise for the Diepenbroick Portrait Archive at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur / Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Münster.

Johann Peter Hasenclever

4 × 8 Flags from a Stone, 2021
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 2021

Digital print on polyester
500 × 150 cm
Inv. no. A-1427 WKV

Matt Mullican

It is 1987 and the second iteration of the *Skulptur Projekte*. The already highly-renowned artists Matt Mullican and Daniel Buren participate in this still rather experimental exhibition format featuring art in public spaces. Matt Mullican chose a location for his work away from the city centre in the immediate vicinity of the Chemistry Institute of the University of Münster. Daniel Buren installed his *Tore* (Gates) most prominently on the Prinzipalmarkt, the central locus of consumerism and a venue for important city events. Buren's installation, which consisted of his iconic coloured stripes, was designed specifically for the Prinzipalmarkt and its historic architecture. Matt Mullican's floor relief remains as part of the public collection, but Daniel Buren has also inscribed himself in the city's collective memory.

Thirty years later, in the summer of 2017, when I was part of the Skulptur Projekte team, I remember these seminal works. On my numerous tours through the city, I always return to Matt Mullican's sequestered floor relief. In 1987, Matt Mullican installed this work *Untitled (Sculpture for the Chemistry Institutes)*. It consists of thirty-five dark granite slabs that form a rectangular formation measuring eight by twelve metres. Each of these elements is adorned with symbols, pictograms and text fragments that embody Mullican's unique visual vocabulary. It is fascinating how Matt Mullican visualises our appropriation of the world based on categories and concepts and how this new system of classification facilitates a different experience of the city.

Forty-five years later, as part of the group exhibition *Nimmersatt?* at the Westfälischer Kunstverein (in cooperation with the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur and the Kunsthalle Münster), Matt Mullican then co-opted the famous Prinzipalmarkt and hoisted his five-metre-long flags on the facades of the merchants' houses in 'Münster's cosy parlour': once again featuring motifs from his sign system. In this instance, specifically for the trade market of commerce and politics. As part of the circulation of resources, the flags have become annual editions (Jahresgabe) for the Kunstverein after the exhibition. In times of so many flags and different expressions of solidarity, I would like to look at these flags more often and orientate myself more towards abstract and new forms.

Julia Jung studied business administration and arts management in Mannheim und Dresden. She worked at the Kunsthalle Portikus, the Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, *Skulptur Projekte Münster 2017* and New Patrons (Neue Auftraggeber) in Berlin. Since November 2021, she has been a consultant for visual arts at the Behörde für Kultur und Medien in Hamburg.

Woman in Profile
(formerly titled: *'Gypsy' Woman in Profile*), 1927
see note → **31**

Chromolithograph on paper
54.2 × 43.5 cm
Inv. no. C-569 WKV

So far, we can only conjecture about how the work *Woman in Profile* by Otto Mueller arrived in the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection. The technique used to produce the print makes it difficult to research its provenance. The motif was printed onto paper multiple times using the lithographic technique of printing with a stone. Initially, Mueller planned an edition of sixty prints, but he is said to have corrected the number from sixty to twenty-one on the copy that his widow Maschka owned. So there are at least twenty other sheets that look confusingly similar to the work from the Kunstverein's collection. Determining the route taken by the sheet in question from Mueller's studio in Breslau to the Kunstverein in Münster is made considerably more difficult by this serial production.

Nevertheless, there is a feature on the back of the print that reveals something about the work's biography: Mueller's estate stamp, affixed by his friend Erich Heckel. The stamp can be found on all of Mueller's works that Heckel found in Mueller's studio at the Breslau Academy and at his home after the artist's death. Heckel added his own surname in pencil to the text "O. M. Nachlass Prof. Otto Mueller Breslau" to authenticate it. This means that the artist must have owned the print up until 1930 and that it was inherited by his son Josef Mueller after his death. However, this also applies to other copies featuring the same motif.

Although the Kunstverein acquired the print in 1952, there is no reference to the seller(s) in the association's records. It is known, however, that Josef Mueller sold his father's works through the Graphisches Kabinett Günther Franke in Munich and the Alex Vömel Gallery in Düsseldorf in the 1950s. It is possible that the Westfälischer Kunstverein purchased the print from one of these galleries, which traces a possible route for the work from 1952 back to 1927, the year it was made.

Eline van Dijk studied art history and English in Düsseldorf and Maastricht. She worked in the field of provenance research at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur in Münster from 2018 to 2024 and has been working at the Museum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte in Dortmund since 2024.

Otto Mueller

31

Woman in Profile
(formerly titled: *'Gypsy' Woman in Profile*), 1927
see note → **31**

Chromolithograph on paper
54.2 × 43.5 cm
Inv. no. C-569 WKV

Otto Mueller

31

Susan Sontag once commented in an interview in answer to a specific question about the agency of photographs to prevent war: "Photographs merely illustrate, they don't explain." I think that may apply to some images, such as Otto Mueller's work here, but in so doing, I don't want to call its artistic quality into question. Of course, you can't compare a painting with a photograph, but there are particular exceptions where we should. This helps us to understand the painting and who is in the composition.

The woman Otto Mueller depicts in this work is still socially significant today. If you now learn that this woman in the composition is someone whose ancestors have been victims of racist discrimination and persecution in Europe for centuries and that half a million Sinti and Roma in Europe were murdered in the Holocaust as a direct result of Nazi tyranny, then for some people the question arises of whether one can or may still speak of 'gypsies' in this picture or whether it is more appropriate to speak of Sinti and Roma? The latter is our self-designation: I—the author—am a member of the German Sinti and Roma people. Of course, these artworks cannot show—nor was this the intention of the artist either—that people are capable of unimaginable atrocities and that Sinti and Roma have been part of our European art, culture and history for 600 years. The picture of a dark-haired woman says nothing about why Sinti and Roma are still exposed to discrimination and persecution as 'gypsies' in large parts of Europe. It does not tell us the fate of this woman, whose name we do not know, but should know. But isn't the demand for more knowledge about Sinti and Roma somewhat utopian and naive of me? Do we really need political knowledge, context or a moral system of values to understand and appreciate Otto Mueller's artworks? What I do know is that even when we are confronted with one of Otto Mueller's masterpieces, we must stand united and steadfast in the fight against antigypsyism, antisemitism, racism, discrimination of all flavours, right-wing extremism and other inhumane barbarities.

André Raatzsch is head of the Documentation Department at the Documentation and Cultural Center of German Sinti and Roma in Heidelberg and curated the archive section "The Politics of Images" (Bilderpolitik) for the RomArchive.

The Creation of Eve (Plate 1 of the *Adam and Eve* series), 1540

Engraving on paper
8.8 × 6.5 cm
Inv. no. C-1 WKV

Heinrich Aldegrever

The EVA principle describes the input-process-output (IPO) model (Eingabe-Verarbeitung-Ausgabe): the hand-sized work could be reproduced roughly in its original size in the image section before. A hand placed underneath it, the depictions of trees vertically trace the stretching of the phalanges. In front of it, above the skin folds of the hand, three figures are situated in an organic rotational composition: according to the title, Adam and Eve, and, according to the text in Genesis 2, God the Lord. On the right, where lines suggest a mountain landscape beyond the sheet, a stag is running back into the composition. The signature 'A G 1540' is modelled on Albrecht Dürer's 'A D', as perhaps is also the vegetation, which is characteristically European. Although the Garden of Eden is located in Assyria (Gen 2:20), what is certain in Dürer's work and speculative in Aldegrever's is the presence of a mountain ash growing at the back on the left. The central tree trunks could be wild cherries, which would also be atypical for the arid climate of the Near East.

In the features section of the *Deutsches Ärzteblatt* in 2002, Renate V. Scheiper called Aldegrever a "performer and provocateur". She claims that his subjects are intended "as a moral template for a moral life in the sense of Luther's interpretations of the Bible". Contrary to the title of this etching, the figures in the 2017 Luther Bible are generic: 'man', 'woman'/'männin'/'mann' (Gen 2). It is only in the next chapter that the narrative voice mentions the names 'Adam' in verse 8 and 'Eve' in verse 9 (Gen 3)—scenically, templates for Aldegrever's sheets 4 and 5. Since the dawn of Creation, man has named what he sees (Gen 2:20). On 14 July 2024, Wikipedia referred to Adam as the "biblical progenitor" and Eve "a biblical woman". In Genesis 3:20, it says, "and Adam called his wife Eve; because she became the mother of all the living". Aldegrever did not illustrate the implication of the word 'father': "And Adam knew (i. e. had intercourse with) his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain", (Genesis 4:1).

In 2017, Sophia Vegas, divorced Sophia Wollersheim, born Sophia Charlier, fell asleep and had Dr Michael K. Obeng remove four ribs from her chest. The result is a wasp waist. The procedure is called thoracoplasty. Sophia's recovery took a year and left scars. The rib taken from Adam has seemingly left him thoracoplastically unscathed.

Anne Krönker, on 14 July 2024: she/her one of (according to Statista, as of 09/2023) 8.06 billion people, hand size 16.5 × 7.5 × 2 cm, 12 pairs of ribs out of a maximum of 193.44 billion possible homo sapien ribs.

Untitled, 1973
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1973

Watercolour on paper
100 × 70 cm
Inv. no. KdZ 1504 WKV

Sigmar Polke

In 1973, Sigmar Polke staged an exhibition at the Westfälischer Kunstverein in the series *Kunst und Fälschung* (Art and Forgery) which was titled *Franz Liszt kommt gern zu mir zum Fernsehen* (Franz Liszt Likes to Pop over to my Place to Watch TV). This was his first solo exhibition outside the context of private galleries. As the Kunstverein financed its budget to a not inconsiderable degree from the sale of annual editions (Jahresgaben), Polke was also asked to produce a series of works for sale to members of the Kunstverein. He agreed to the deal without asking too many questions. The sole condition: Sigmar Polke wanted to mark all the works with a stamp from the Kunstverein so that they could be traced on the art market.

The Kunstverein then offered the annual edition for 220 DM, but without knowing in advance what Polke would produce. Ultimately, forty-eight colourful gouaches in the representative format of 100 × 70 cm arrived by post. Only at second glance did it become apparent that Sigmar Polke had used templates ranging from erotic to pornographic motifs for his annual editions and had laid these over the somewhat turbulent, colourful grounds in various configurations. Any anticipated outcry from the members of the Kunstverein didn't happen. After some toing and froing, they were sorted out under legal supervision, as there were, of course, far more interested parties than editions and lots had to be drawn. I had become a member of the Kunstverein myself—as its director—so that I could also take part in the draw. Unfortunately, it was in vain, but the then chairman of the Westfälischer Kunstverein was luckier and actually won one of the editions. But owing to his familial situation, the motif—a heterosexual couple in the nude on the kitchen table—seemed a little too bold for him. So I ended up with an edition by Sigmar Polke after all. It hung on a shadowy wall in our flat for over half a century—not out of shame, but to protect the work from the incidence of deleterious sunlight.

This text is an abridged version of the essay "Polke und die Jahresgaben für den *Westfälischen Kunstverein", published in: Sigmar Polke,* Erotische Arbeiten, *exh. cat., Michael Werner Kunsthandel (Cologne, 2013) on the occasion of the eponymous exhibition, which ran from 18 May to 13 July 2013.*

Klaus Honnef was director of the Westfälischer Kunstverein from 1970 to 1974. In 1972, he collaborated on *documenta 5* in the section 'Idee und Idee/Licht' with Konrad Fischer and was co-curator of *documenta 6* for the photography and painting section in 1977 together with Evelyn Weiss.

Bright House behind Trees/ Southern Landscape, 1926

Tempera on cardboard
51 × 61 cm
Inv. no. 940 WKV

Heinrich Nauen

It is 1926, a summer's day in the south: a brightly illuminated house on a gentle acclivity, a stubborn, gnarled olive tree, reverent before the wind, yet unbroken by the wuthering years. It is midday beneath an azure sky and a fierce sun, the shadows cast by it offering scant refuge. Our gaze wanders and lingers, there is a destination, perhaps a longing, perhaps a hope.

Heinrich Nauen was forty-six years old when he painted this picture, and in this year, as if the painting were a parable, he is standing in the very place in his life that promises inner peace. He had recently become a professor at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, a vocation that finally brought some financial stability to his family. He had come to terms with the fact that his path and ideas diverged from those of the young, controversial artists who then called the shots in the artists' association he co-founded, *Das Junge Rheinland*. They accused him of being too close to the establishment; insults were traded, they parted ways, later reconciled, but by then the short-lived association was over.

Nauen's generation, inveterately scarred in body and soul, was a witness to the most singular catastrophe of the century. He was one of the survivors. Nauen did not want to argue, he wanted only peace. The Rhenish Expressionist longed to return to the visual worlds of van Gogh and the summer of 1905, when he was so close to them in Paris—the olives, the fields and the sunflowers. Now, in Berlin in the summer of 1927, he presented works once more at Alfred Flechtheim's, a group show entitled *Das Problem der Generation. Die um 1880 geborenen Meister von heute* (The Problem of Generation. The Masters of Today Born circa 1880). The gallery owner sold the 'Bright House' to the Westfälischer Kunstverein in the same year.

Longing, hope, only a few more years remain. Alfred Flechtheim died in compulsory exile in London in 1937, the same year the Nazi state forced Nauen into retirement and likewise condemned his works into exile, mandatory sale and destruction in keeping with the culturally barbaric definition of 'degenerate art'. Nauen died of cancer in 1940, but his memory endures. *Helles Haus hinter Bäumen / Südliche Landschaft* (Bright House behind Trees / Southern Landscape) survived the purgatorial madness of the Nazi regime due to the protection of private care, safe in the house of the deputy chairman of the Kunstverein, Dr Maximilian Kraß.

Kai Eric Schwichtenberg recently returned to his native Düsseldorf after many years in Münster. He is currently an assistant to the board of the Malkasten Artists' Association. In his spare time, he is a committed supporter of the arts and cultural scene in the city.

Peasant Couple, 1920
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1969

Woodcut on Japanese paper
50 × 40 cm
Inv. no. C-328 WKV

Peter August Böckstiegel

The woodcut *Bauernpaar* (Peasant Couple) is a central work in Peter August Böckstiegel's œuvre, but this is not the only reason why it is properly at home in the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection.

After all, the Kunstverein played a not insignificant role in the increasing 'popularisation' of the artist after his death in 1969. The idea was to introduce Böckstiegel to a wider circle and a younger generation of art lovers, and so his eightieth birthday was celebrated with a first, splendid, illustrated catalogue and two exhibitions, which opened in autumn 1969, initially at the Kunstverein in Münster and then at the Bielefeld Kunstverein. Printed matter designed by Heinz Beier with a Pop Art design and colour scheme attracted attention. The artwork *Bauernpaar* was printed from the original wood bock—the only surviving copy—in a limited edition of 100 and sold for 25 DM per copy. As a result, the print not only became very well known, but also often the cornerstone of new collections.

The woodcut *Meine Eltern* (My Parents), as it was originally titled, is one of Böckstiegel's rarest sheets. The only prints he made and signed in 1920 are held at Kunsthalle Bielefeld and in a Berlin collection. The print was preceded in the summer of 1919 by a watercolour and the magnificent painting *Meine Eltern*. The heightened, expressive mode in the woodcut is determined by the juxtaposition of light and dark areas as well as the geometrically-interrupted outlines, which make the parents recognisable and, at the same time, show them as a statuesque, reposeful unit. Despite the concentration on the motif, two chickens and a cat remain palpable testimony to Böckstiegel's carefree élan in storytelling. With this sheet, he continues the 'ecstatic' expressionism of his woodcuts of the late war years.

Böckstiegel would not have been troubled by the fact that *Meine Eltern* became a *Bauernpaar*—he took the private realm as his starting point and elevated it to the supra-personal. He regarded father and mother as "symbols of humanity"—thus creating a timeless image of the quiet, natural bond and reciprocity of a shared life and work.

David Riedel studied art history and Danish philology in Münster and Paris. He was a student trainee at *skulptur projekte münster 07*, a trainee at the Kunsthalle Baden-Baden and a research assistant at the Kunsthalle Bielefeld. Since May 2012, he has been artistic director of the Museum Peter August Böckstiegel in Werther.

St George as Dragon Slayer (recto),
c. 1480

Oil on oak wood
86 × 90 cm
Inv. no. 383 WKV

Circle

Derick Baegert

Wars change everything. The closer the war is, the more it changes us. Even at a relative distance of privilege, with a bit less than 1000 kilometers between Berlin and the Ukrainian border. The image of George as Dragon Slayer by Derick Baegert's circle was painted some 500 years ago, near Wesel, another 600 kilometers away, in a decidedly different world. And yet upon seeing it, we cannot but think of St George stabbing a basilisk, the official emblem of the City of Moscow.

Since the fall of the USSR and especially since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, there's been an important drive towards articulating national identity and agency away from the top-down, imperial influence of Moscow. Slavs and Tatars have long been more interested in the peripheries of knowledge production, the edges of belief systems, the margins of rituals rather than the centers; for it is at these borders where syncretism and hybridity thrives. Where the edges bleed is also where we thrive. The core—be it Moscow or London, Tehran or even Berlin—is often rotten.

Finding differences is in some sense easy: what we desperately need today though are resemblances. Sharp, serrated likenesses bind us as much as that which distinguishes us: these regional solidarities or commonalities can be linguistic (say the Slavic languages without privileging one over another; the Turkic languages instead of a singular focus on Turkey per se), folkloric (the symbol for the mythical bird Simurgh found across the Turkic-Persianate world), culinary (a propensity for pickles), or ritualistic (for example, harvest festivals featuring elaborate constructions made from dried wheat).

A symbol widely used in the former Byzantine world, found across Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia, St George should ostensibly be one such razor-edge around which we come together, not one which drives us apart. Like the Russian language itself, however, St George has been appropriated and instrumentalized for revanchist purposes by those who draw a false binary between tradition and modernity, between multiplicity and unity. For a millennium we've been told to sympathize with St George. In this year of 2024, the year of the Dragon, 1446 Hijri, with things falling apart around us, we find ourselves aligned more with the beast than the man.

Slavs and Tatars is an internationally renowned art collective devoted to an area East of the former Berlin Wall and West of the Great Wall of China known as Eurasia. The collective's practice is based on three activities: exhibitions, publications, and lecture-performances.

Battle between German Tribes and Romans, 1876

Oil on canvas
84.2 × 118 cm
Inv. no. 334 WKV

Friedrich Tüshaus

Great narratives require great personalities. Our history books are full of characters who have significantly shaped 'German identity'. First and foremost, there is one who was already described by the Roman historian Tacitus at the end of the first century, thus drawing the image of a Germanic people that had hitherto not existed: Hermann, the Cheruscan. But the myth of a Germanic warrior who was raised among enemies to the status of a Roman general, only to end up on the *right side of* history and leave the battlefield of David (the Germanic) and Goliath (the Romans) as the winner, not only filled the history books. From Schlegel to Klopstock, Grabbe and von Kleist to Peyman: Hermann is a popular motif in German literature and theatre, especially since humanism. Cultural institutions at possible locations of the famous 'Hermannschlacht' (the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest 9 AD) in Westphalia are also popular places of pilgrimage and focus on Arminius, as Hermann was known to the Romans. The over 50-metre-high monument to Hermann (Hermannsdenkmal) in Detmold is one of these places where Westphalian pride was literally set in stone in 1875, the year in which the painting in the collection of the Westfälischer Kunstverein was also made. The battle scene shows Romans and Germans—recognisable here, among other things, by the winged helmet of the protagonist—in a battle on the Rhine. Only the title, handed down from the estate, provides information about the location.

Friedrich Tüshaus (1832–1885) had returned to his hometown in 1858 after his training in Munich and Antwerp and began his artistic career with historical paintings before devoting himself first to genre and later to church painting—works by him or executed according to his designs can be found in almost all of Münster's churches. The inauguration of the memorial in Detmold provided the artist with an opportunity to devote himself to a historical theme once more and perhaps encouraged the Kunstverein to add the subject to its collection. Almost 150 years later, the Kunstverein is looking at it again, and the view of the struggle, the war between two European peoples and the question of national identity and belonging appear more topical than ever.

Elena Winkler is an art historian and family business owner from the Ruhr area. Her Greek-Westphalian roots provided her with the necessary change of perspective early on. In her doctorate, she is researching selected photographs of the Skulptur Projekte 1987 and examining their genre-specific discourses.

Working/Resting, 2015
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 2015

Screen print on paper
48 × 28 cm
Inv. no. C-23894 WKV

Camille Henrot

Camille Henrot's 2015 annual edition (Jahresgabe) *Working/Resting* was made for the Westfälischer Kunstverein as part of her exhibition *The Pale Fox*. Some will still remember the royal blue room, the almost overwhelming abundance of objects and the pulsating, rhythmic music.

'In the beginning, the universe was a black egg.'
(*Grosse Fatigue*, 2013)

Just as the circle—both in the exhibition, or in her video *Grosse Fatigue*—stands for origin, egg or universe, here, too, it is the central, unifying form and, in the truest sense of the word, the linchpin of the motif. As a diptych of two ink drawings, presented one above the other in their respective frames, we see a person, either running purposefully or even rushing, with a ball, or lying on top of a ball, or gently set in motion by it. According to the title of the work, one is working and the other is resting.

Perhaps because the person depicted would appear to be naked, but perhaps also because of the reduced, gestural style of drawing, associations are evoked with cave paintings of hunters or depictions of Olympic athletes on ancient vases. Or one might think of Sisyphus, the ultimate metaphor for futile labour, eternally condemned to pushing a boulder up a mountain, only for it to roll back down from the summit once more. However, in keeping with Albert Camus words on the subject, we have to imagine Sisyphus as a happy person. As someone who rebels against the absurdity of human existence—on the one hand in face of the world's lack of meaning and on the other, man's yearning for meaning—but someone who at the same time accepts it and ultimately gains a sense of freedom from it.

Just as our gaze now swings back and forth from one motif to the other, the figure moves his body regeneratively on the ball or the blackroll, and so we all oscillate constantly between *working* and *resting*—in search of the perfect work-life balance. Or is the reality of our achievement-oriented society not rather that we rest in order to be able to achieve even more?

For years, the Westfälischer Kunstverein was a place of 'working' *and* 'resting' for me—tough job and refuge, power tools and icing sugar, my first employer, second home and third place all rolled into one. So work-life balance was not thought of as a negotiation between a pair of antonyms, but rather understood and lived as a unity. So far, I have yet to find anything that matches it.

Clara Napp has worked for various cultural institutions and administrations, such as *Skulptur Projekte Münster 2017* and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. She lives in Cologne and currently works as a consultant at the Ministry of Culture of North Rhine-Westphalia and as a freelance systemic coach.

Virgin and Christ in the Clouds, 1641

Etching on paper
16.6 × 10.7 cm
Inv. no. C-260 WKV

Rembrandt van Rijn

39

Maria mit dem Kind in den Wolken (Virgin and Christ in the Clouds) was made in 1641, which was incidentally the same the year Rembrandt's first child was born and who lived to adulthood. The mother of his son, Saskia, died the following year, probably of tuberculosis. Before that, three of the couple's children had died in infancy—within the first few weeks or months of their lives.

Mary has turned her gaze away from the child and looks upwards, rapturously foreseeing Jesus's future, as is typical for this type of depiction as, indeed, is the radiant child. And yet, both are drawn true to life with large noses as individuals, not stylised glorifications of the divine. Mary's eyes seem tired, although her mouth indicates contentment. Having become a mother myself, I see for the first time a mixture of physical and psychological pain, the fear of losing a child's life coupled with a fluctuating mood between bliss, annoyance and total exhaustion. Mary cradles a peacefully dozing, sated baby in her arms, whose gaze is nevertheless alert and mischievous at the same time. Instead of putti playing in the sea of clouds as occasionally is the case, Mary's left knee features another upside-down portrait of a sad, serious man with an empty gaze. A picture of Marian devotion, a depiction of motherhood and, at the same time, a concealed family portrait?

Even if the idea of the immaculate mother and the smooth delivery of the child—at least in light of Rembrandt's personal experience—is somewhat undermined in Rembrandt's etching, the depiction of Mary with the child remains to this day formative for the ideal of loving and caring motherhood, as well as classical, normative family and gender role distribution. In contrast, Camille Henrot—who transformed the Westfälischer Kunstverein into a walk-in, blue environment of an encyclopaedic nature in the shape of *The Pale Fox* in 2015—addresses the dissolution of this ideal in her collection of essays *Milkyways* (2023) as well as in a series of drawings, paintings and sculptures with titles such as *The Island / Mothership* (2018), *Wet Job* (2020) and *Learning to Lose* (2019). With her own unique way of combining mythological, philosophical, psychoanalytical and other sources with personal experience, emotions and thoughts, she creates a stirring, intimate body of work in which the ambivalence and fragility of motherhood and birth indicate an alternative way in which we can live and grow together.

Antonia Lotz studied art history in Münster, Perugia and London and worked as Carina Plath's assistant at the Westfälischer Kunstverein, among other endeavours. She combines her curatorial practice with the principles of permaculture, worms and compost workshops.

Untitled, 1989
(12 drawings)

Pencil on paper
34.9 × 42.2 cm
Inv. no. KdZ 3449 WKV–
KdZ 3460 WKV

Donald Judd

40

The term ‘designart’ is a peculiar composite word used to describe those artworks that make many art and design theorists and philosophers uncomfortable due to their proximity to design. Donald Judd’s minimalist works are increasingly cited as an example in debates about the boundaries between art and design. Due to their reduced formal language and materiality, they could also be visually recognised as furnishings for a classy boutique, for example. If one were to remove their material property and thus their concrete appearance, as in Judd’s drawings from March 1989, would there then no longer be any recognisable difference between an artist’s sketch and a piece of design?

This would not only be a provocation, but also a great misunderstanding of both Minimal Art and art in general. The concept of design helps to counter this misunderstanding. In the sixteenth century, Giorgio Vasari coined the term *designo* to valorise drawing as the embodiment of the artistic idea. In doing so, he laid the foundation for the later concept of design, as the basic understanding of modern design as the creation of meaning was derived from the Latin origin *de + signare* (‘to signify’). Design is a creative practice that gives not only form but also meaning to everyday objects. To dismiss Judd’s works as design goes against the artist’s intention of avoiding any content in the work through his specific formal language. Art is not merely aimed at meaning through form, rather it is a reflection on the relationship between form and meaning—or so Judd might say by inference. In this sense, his drawing can be seen as an attempt to sketch an object that has a very specific form that is designed neither for use nor for meaning. Its significance is the balance between arbitrariness and concrete content. A comparison of the twelve drawings in the series reveals slight variations in form and colour. They are the expression of a careful weighing up of formal specificity in the shape of an open box with sides two metres long and one metre high.

Till Julian Huss is Professor of Design and Cultural Theory at the University of Europe for Applied Sciences in Potsdam. He studied art and philosophy in Münster and completed his doctorate in art and visual history at the Humboldt University in Berlin.

Adoration of the Magi,
c. 1530

Oil on oak wood
67.3 × 52 cm
Inv. no. 69 WKV

Westphalian Master*

*or Lower Rhine

Paul Pieper, former director of the Westfälisches Landesmuseum, describes this panel painting of unknown authorship as “a confusingly rich scene” within a rather small format. And, indeed, the question is: where do we look first?

In trying to grasp what the painting is actually about—namely, the arrival of the Three Kings or the Magi from the East to venerate the newly-born Christ Child—one’s gaze is repeatedly distracted. On the one hand, by the extravagant richness of detail, which is particularly evident in the clothing of all those depicted, and on the other, by the simultaneity of different scenes: while a wide, rocky landscape opens up in the background on the right, in which a retinue of noble horsemen can be made out, a scuffle between two people is visible in the left middle ground, both of whom are evidently trying to catch a glimpse of the scene in the foreground from a parapet that appears to be part of a castle. Mary is pointing to her newborn child there, who is just about to reach out for the gold coins that one of the kings is bestowing upon him.

The fact that the three guests from afar are interpreted here as kings and not as wise men is clearly indicated by the design of their robes. Gold brocade, fur collars and velvet undergarments look precious, and the heavy gold chain does the rest. The two kings to the right of the Holy Family are also dressed in fine raiments, “whereby the large back-figure of the M*** is the most imposing”, as Paul Pieper put it in 1963.

Apart from the use of the M-word, an exonym that was already viewed critically at the time, the statement refers to an observation that can be made in many representations of this kind. What Pieper formulated as a subordinate clause is at the centre of a cultural and socio-historical discourse that, for some time now, has been dealing with depictions of the Three Kings, in which one of them is shown as a person of colour. Since the Early Middle Ages, art historians have developed different theories about how, when and why one of the Magi has often been depicted as a person of colour. It is interesting to note that the earliest paintings of this kind were not only located in Germany, as posited in the recently published US publication *Balthazar: A Black African King in Medieval and Renaissance Art.* Perhaps the painting by the Westphalian or Lower Rhine master is another impetus to engage with the Afro-German history of Westphalia.

Marijke Lukowicz is an art historian and curator. She works primarily in the field of contemporary art in public space and has, among other things, worked at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur in Münster. She is a member of the advisory board of Westfälischer Kunstverein.

Magnetic Drawing #29, 1984
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1984

Aluminium tube,
blue string, two magnets,
packaged in plastic tube
60 × 60 cm
Inv. no. A-1241 WKV

A blue thread runs through a 60-centimetre-long aluminium tube, with two small magnets at either end. When the tube is stretched between two nails hammered in at different depths, the free end of the tube extends forward into the room almost by itself, creating the raised dimensions of a triangle. And that is where the tension lies—in the truest sense of the word:

"I see all my work as a series of visual comments—a dialogue between materials and the natural forces that surround us. With the magnetic drawings, I wish to challenge while at the same time show respect for this unseen energy; to make visible that which would otherwise remain invisible; to create a visual, cerebral, and physical balance, while also wishing to provoke a sense of uncertainty."

The British artist Eric Snell (b. 1953) had already begun to use the attractive force of magnets in his art during his studies in the 1970s. When small, light polymer magnets were invented in the 1980s, he was able to implement his ideas: they found their way into installations of line sculptures in space: constructions made of string that were stretched in the given architectural space and became tangible interventions.

In 1984, Eric Snell developed a work of this kind in a small format for the Westfälischer Kunstverein as an annual edition (Jahresgabe).

Snell's *Magnetic Drawings* occupy the field between drawing and sculpture, surface and space, material and form. Snell included assembly instructions for the work. In a signed typewritten text with a design drawing, he describes how the position of the nails and the all-important distance between the two magnets ensures that the work remains suspended. The magnets should not touch: "a gap between the magnets of approximately 5–7 mm should be achieved." The gap between them is just large enough for the magnets to hold the string taut through their attraction to each other, making it straight—and the shape into a triangle.

The poetry of this delicate work lies precisely in this tension-filled 'void', which visualises the invisible energy field—in an enchanting equilibrium.

Jenni Henke is an art historian born in same the year *Magnetic Drawing #29* was made. She studied art history and English philology in Freiburg and Münster. She has been working at the Westfälischer Kunstverein since 2013 and is responsible for exhibition organisation, artistic production, as well as press and public relations.

Eric Snell

The Mother of God, c. 1520

Tempera on oak wood
38.5 × 30 cm
Inv. no. 159 WKV

Jan Gossaert

A bust portrait—literally. A devotional image. The violence of the Reformation reawakened a cult of Marian images circa 1500. Mary was celebrated as the Queen of Heaven and a breastfeeding mother ('Maria lactans'). Jan Gossaert (1478–1532), court painter to Philip of Burgundy, also contributed to this trend in Catholic Flanders with a very particular, visually-rhetorical take on things.

Where could the incarnate Son of God be more tangible than in intimate contact with the virgin mother breastfeeding? Her exposed breast is full to bursting—a 'fertile moment' before the actual event. The artist depicted this subject in several paintings, most audaciously in a small composition in Vienna, which shows not Mary, but baby Christ with two round breasts.

Gossaert presents an ambivalent crossover of religious symbolism—the breast with its erect nipple as a sign of spiritual nourishment—and an erotic staging through the artistic 'pictorial act'. Roundness and curves characterise the picture. Mother and child are nestled as if in a cocoon. Mary's engorged right breast, almost in the centre of the picture, is embraced by the child's arm. In turn, she forms a small breast-like ball from the baby fat on his right hip. With her other hand, she grasps his anklet. In this way, she holds the child on the parapet and, at the same time, close to her body. In the foreknowledge of Christ's passion, they both look out of the painting with a serious mien. But while the child is looking upwards, perhaps towards the heavenly Father(?), Mary's glance is directed diagonally downwards at the viewer in front of the painting. The viewer has to read the signs: the round apple, Eve's original sin, lies at the edge of the shadow below. Fat chance when compared to the radiant, engorged breast! The props of traditional Marian iconography are almost undercover in the picture: Mary's hairband instead of a halo points to her as the Woman of the Apocalypse clothed in sun, the small strip of carpet to her heavenly throne. Her royal red cloak over the blue dress envelops the child as if—let's change the paradigm again—a protective cloak. A semi-concealed abundance of symbols in a seemingly private space.

As a mother, Mary is in tactile *communio* with the child, *in touch*. However, her gaze also addresses the (male) viewer as a woman. Her breast is the object of his gaze, serving erotic curiosity instead of meditative devotion. Are we, as female viewers, excluded or included in Gossaert's mammopoetry?

Ursula Renner is a retired professor and member of the Westfälischer Kunstverein. She studied German, English and art history and taught literature and cultural studies at the University of Duisburg-Essen.

In the Water, 1920

Woodcut on paper
43.9 × 56.9 cm
Inv. no. C-611 WKV

Water, colour, light—these three elements define Max Pechstein's entire artistic career. His œuvre comprises 1,200 oil paintings and almost as many prints. Time and again, water, colour and light abound in them. Looking back, he wrote about his first stay in Nida on the Curonian Spit in the summer of 1909: "... so I experienced the intoxicating, eternal rhythm of the sea for the first time!"

The colour in its purity and the light in its radiance also fascinated him about this place. Thus Nida became the seminal paradise for his art. The only thing he lacked there compared to his colleagues from the Brücke group of artists, who worked at the Moritzburg Lakes, was the nude in the great outdoors.

This situation changed in 1911, when he married Charlotte Kaprolat, known as Lotte. From then on, he always had his own nude model around him, free of charge. During his second stay in Nida in the summer of 1911, Lotte became his favourite subject, alongside the water, the colour and the light. He created pictorial compositions and prints with a wide variety of nude studies, with Lotte alone serving as a model for him.

After the First World War, Max Pechstein was unable to travel again until 1919 and 1920. His destination was once again his favourite painters' paradise of Nida. He wrote to a friend: "Here is work, joy, anger, storm. Canvases are not enough, nor are hands. I had to laboriously piece together my craft from memory. This is how the first works came about, somewhat awkward, hesitant and angular in form. Gradually, I shuddered again in the exquisite bliss of creative joy."

It was with this enthusiasm that he created this woodcut *Im Wasser* (In the Water) in 1920, an expressive depiction of Lotte and his son Frank on the beach by the Baltic Sea on the water's edge. He uses the sharp black-and-white contrast of the print to express the water, the colour and the light.

Julia Pechstein is in charge of the art historical documentation of Max Pechstein's work alongside her job as a pharmacist. She is the chairwoman of the board of trustees of the Max Pechstein Foundation.

Max Pechstein

Die Kleine Passion, 1511
(37 woodcuts)

Woodcut on paper
14.4 × 10.7 cm
Inv. no. C-74 WKV–C-110 WKV

Albrecht Dürer

Albrecht Dürer's prints are closely interwoven with a core idea to which the Westfälischer Kunstverein also dedicated itself around 300 years later—namely, remote from the institutions of the court and church, making art accessible to the people. Dürer's so-called *Die Kleine Passion* (The Little Passion) which he published as a devotional volume in 1511, combines this aspect of accessibility in many ways. In a series of thirty-six woodcuts, plus the title page, Dürer depicts the Passion of Christ.

On the one hand, the accessibility of what he depicts lies in the medium of printmaking itself: due to their reproducibility and transportability, artworks were distributed on an unprecedented scale and could be experienced and, for the first time, purchased by the populace removed from the court and the church. On the other hand, the Passion as a central theme of late-medieval and early-modern pious practice was an already familiar, easily-recognisable pictorial motif. This was enhanced by the salient characteristics of the studies, such as the reduction of the individual scenes to their main protagonists and the central plotline, which visualise the biblical story in a clear narrative. Dürer also integrates the plotlines into the contemporary world of the viewer—in many instances, the scenes do not take place in biblical Jerusalem, but in front of late-medieval cityscapes. He also intersperses the depicted scenes with satirical pictorial elements and characterises Christ's adversaries, for example, by adding an exaggeratedly-repulsive rendering of their physiognomies. All these factors promote an accessible legibility, facilitate the identification with and rejection of what is seen and, ultimately, provide a pause for thought.

At the same time, however, the discussion about accessibility also unavoidably highlights the inaccessible. The Latin verses attached to the woodcuts, for example, can only be read by an initiated group of people. And even at the Westfälischer Kunstverein, many works, such as Dürer's *Passion*, can only be experienced by the public to a limited extent, as they are often stored away in the vaults. It is therefore all the more pleasurable that this treasure trove of a collection has been brought to light in this publication.

Nina Günther is a research assistant at the Institute of Art History, University of Münster. At the same time, she is writing her doctoral thesis about the materiality and systematics of adhesive bindings in printed manuscripts/works as an early-modern type of collection.

Tilted Forms with Colors Superimposed (S70), 1989
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1989

Screen print on paper
26.25 × 112.50 cm
Inv. no. C-18278 WKV

Sol LeWitt

Towards the end of the 1980s, the wall paintings of conceptual artist Sol LeWitt conquered the European continent, particularly Germany. The artist was already present in Münster with two iconic sculptures made for the second edition of Skulptur Projekte in 1987. One of them was a *White Pyramid* in the Botanical Garden and the other a *Black Form* made of concrete blocks that blocked the view of the entrance to the palace (which houses the University of Münster). The cuboid black form was "dedicated to the missing Jews" and thus charged with a memorial connotation, somewhat unusual for the artist. In the same year, he was invited to design a large-scale, site-specific wall painting for the Westfälischer Kunstverein. Most of his ephemeral wall paintings were sanded down, pulverised or whitewashed after the exhibition ended. It is all the more pleasing that a kind of echo of the colour scheme at the time has been preserved in this edition (Jahresgabe). This is because a small edition of this screen print on paper was also created as part of the exhibition. Due to high demand among members, the copies were raffled off to interested parties. The print was mounted and framed.

As rationally conceived as Sol LeWitt's works are on the one hand, the effect of their formal languages remains diverse. With just a few elements, Sol LeWitt ushers different colour compositions and tonal harmonies into a kind of dialogue with one another, dissolving the form of the cube into surface elements or changing its perspective and spatial location. At the same time, he condenses the spatial experience of the Westfälischer Kunstverein's unique architecture of the time with its projecting walls, which he sets in a sequential movement. In doing so, Sol LeWitt illustrates classical design principles, such as the laws of geometry, proportion, series and colour systematics. He seeks an aesthetic that coheres with a rational, but also equally, an inner idea and intuition, an ideal artistic design that positions itself far from socio-political issues and can, to a certain extent, be implemented beyond time. Particularly in connection with buildings and architecture, Sol LeWitt's minimalist concepts generate an unusual workability and beauty.

Sabine Maria Schmidt studied art history, German literature and musicology at the University of Münster and completed her doctorate in 1997 titled *Die öffentlichen Monumente von Eduardo Chillida.* Since then, she has worked as a (museum) curator and freelance author. She currently lives and works in Düsseldorf and at the Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz.

Saint Luke Painting the Madonna ('Lukasmadonna'), 1480–1485

Oil on oak wood
113 × 82 cm
Inv. no. 62 WKV

Derick Baegert

Even as a child, I was thrilled by Derick Baegert's paintings when I visited the Landesmuseum with my parents—in particular, the devil in the painting *The Death of Saint Martin of Tours* haunted my dreams. This was mainly due to the (in this case frightening) attention to detail, but also a special warmth and intimacy that Baegert's paintings radiate; intuitively, I probably sensed that they, like the equally fascinating sculptures of the Brabender, were at home in this landscape situated between the Münsterland and the Netherlands. Even today, I am delighted when I discover works by Joos van Cleve, Derick Baegert or the tom Ring brothers when travelling, even if this is something of a rarity.

What inspires me when looking at the *Lukasmadonna* is the sheer complexity of a number of features: the self-assured Christ Child, the loving gaze of Mary, the artist's manifest concentration and, ultimately, the wonderful views of the landscape and the back room, where the angel and the scholar presage the arrival of the Son of God. St Luke painting the Madonna as a type of devotional work has recourse to Byzantine templates, in which St Luke was initially regarded merely as a technician who (mechanically) realised the God-given icon. With the emboldening of the individual during the Renaissance, the apostle Luke became an inspired artist who portrays the Madonna and is allowed to take a seat in the same room. Baegert's painting coheres with a type introduced by the Master of Flémalle at the end of the fifteenth century, in which the Madonna and the painter are moved to the front edge of the composition on the same plane, so that they enter into a direct dialogue with one another and, thereby, intensify the realism of the scene.

From a contemporary point of view, the conceptual aspect of the painting within a painting is important to me—after all, this type of work seems to anticipate the conceptual art of, say, Joseph Kosuth or Lawrence Weiner (who staged the legendary 'Retrospective' *Lawrence Weiner: 50 Works* at the Westfälischer Kunstverein in 1973, which consisted of precisely one poster). In Baegert's work, the individual figures are self-contained and connected to one another more in terms of colour and composition rather than scenically. The Christ child, the Madonna, the painter, even the bull, are depicted in a concentrated manner. In this calm, dignified mise en scène, the painting on the easel becomes the focus—the act of making the painting, i. e. the sacred work of the artist, is the most important element. Thus, Baegert is reflecting upon his own activity as the creator of this image. Even if a painter at that time did not possess the degree of self-reflection that Weiner commanded, it nevertheless testifies to the self-assurance of the late Gothic master.

Carina Plath, curator of painting and sculpture at the Sprengel Museum Hannover, was formerly the director of the Westfälischer Kunstverein from 2001 till 2009 and, in 2007, associate curator of *skulptur projekte münster 07* together with Kasper König and Brigitte Franzen. As a native of Münster, she visited the Landesmuseum on the Domplatz as a child.

Vermalung (*braun*), 1972
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1972

Oil on canvas
27 × 39.5 cm
Inv. no. 2013 WKV

Gerhard Richter

48

Unusual for an edition, Gerhard Richter's *Vermalung (braun)* is a small-format painting. However, the work, made in 1972, is a unique piece and part of a larger whole: Richter created 120 individually signed originals (oil on canvas) for the Westfälischer Kunstverein, which, when joined together, formed a monumental painting measuring 270 × 474 cm. The individual pieces were sold to the members of the Westfälischer Kunstverein for 180 DM each, as documented by a photo in the 1972 Jahresgaben (Editions) booklet.

In this segment of the painting, which is identified as an edition, Richter makes painting itself the subject. The act of painting and the materiality of the medium come to the fore in his sweeping brushwork. The emphasis is on the haptic quality of the paint, the application of which criss-crosses the surface in a characteristic style and is elevated to the actual subject of the painting in an almost hyperrealistic way. But the colour tone, that deep brown—the dark overall impression of which is intensified by a few lighter areas at the lower left edge of the painting—can also be read as a signifier. Richter's explicit mention of brown in the title of the edition gives rise to speculation about the colour brown itself, which is somewhat marginal in art. Even if he is not concerned with representation as narration, but with the objectification of the actual act of painting, the prominently-staged colour brown invokes the early landscapes and, not least, more in a figurative sense, also the subjects of the photographic inpaintings made at the same time as this edition. Richter used many biographical scenes from the dark chapter of German history as templates for them, which, referring to the devastating crimes of the Nazis, are associated with the frequently used term of the dominant 'brown disposition' during this period. In the context of Richter's œuvre, such ambivalence in meaning proves to be programmatic. They arise from Richter's insistent approach and simultaneous distancing from any form of representationalism by means of abstraction. In her lectures on Immanuel Kant, Hannah Arendt used chapter headings such as 'Unschärfe und Konstruktionen' (Uncertainty and Constructions), 'Zufall und Konzept' (Coincidence and Concept), 'Natur und Material' (Nature and Material) to cut lanes through the work of the ancient philosopher Anaxagoras. These terminological couplets could, in equal measure, aptly characterise Gerhard Richter's multifaceted work. The endeavour to overcome the separation between abstraction and narration through latency follows a profoundly conceptual understanding of painting, which already made its mark in his early work, for example, in his curtain paintings *(Vorhang)* or the blurred photographic inpaintings. Rather than creating an image of reality, Richter is sceptical about the illusory nature of images, since they both simultaneously reveal and conceal. It takes artistic imagination to create representations of what has become inaccessible to direct experience. The modular character of the edition thus also stands as a *pars pro toto* for the concern to repeatedly test the relevance of painting anew: this happens via the artist's desire to resist the violence of the erasure of history. It is by means of these conceptual approaches that Richter repeatedly channels painting in new directions.

Ursula Frohne is a professor of modern and contemporary art history at the University of Münster. She was formerly a curator at the ZKM Karlsruhe and has held professorships at the University of Cologne, the International University Bremen and Brown University, RI (USA).

Bell's edition. The poets of Great Britain complete from Chaucer to Churchill,
1782–1785

Travel library with
109 volumes in wooden box,
spruce wood, covered
with maroquin
44.5 × 32.0 cm
Inv. no. B SGD 2 WKV

Disc 6, row 61, column 988: an array of images documenting a set of objects, each one showing signs of age: they would already have been historical artifacts at the time of documentation.

Both show the same design: a rectangular volume with an articulated left edge, adjacent to a text inscription, connected to a moveable panel that can be folded back along a hidden hinge to expose the interior contents. Both volumes are hollow. Encased within each are a set of approximately 60 smaller objects that match the design of the containers: the same hidden hinge allows the outer face to open and their interior contents to be viewed. Here, however, the design differs from the parent objects. Bound along that edge are an array of thin panel sheets, brighter in color, with flexural qualities that appear to allow the sheet to be bent, enabling sequential viewing. These interior surfaces are the carrier medium of mechanically-produced texts and images, attributed to a roughly 500 year period preceding the creation of the objects themselves.

Several of the original writings are found elsewhere in our disc archive, but as primary texts, etched directly onto the nickel plate. It is notable that their recursive miniaturization demonstrates the same rudimentary information compression employed by our own archive's disc design—but anachronistically, as these container volumes have been dated to roughly 1777 of the Eurasian Common Era.

An accompanying abstract names them as "Bell's Traveling Library," suggesting that they may have also had a shared purpose as a kind of portable archive. Little information at the excavation site has provided an answer as to who brought the discs to the location, but these two volumes may provide historical context as to their purpose in the ancient world.

Library Stack (Erik Wysocan & Benjamin Tiven) is a publication archive built upon global library catalogues, that collects, circulates and produces digital objects in the fields of design, architecture and the digital humanities. https://www.librarystack.org

John Bell

Fairground Scene,
[n. d., before 1929)

Oil on cardboard
48 × 72 cm
Inv. no. 878 WKV

Fillide Giorgi Levasti

At first glance, it's hard to know whether we're invited, intruding or invisible. There's a lot of backs turned and off-screen in this scene: a chat in front of the photo booth, one on its side, another on the ground around a nailing board. The only one facing us is a woman on the threshold of her caravan, whom we seem to see in profile on the photographer's sign, and perhaps the pensive child sitting on the steps. We can't say that we're really looking at a fun-fair scene, as the title suggests: we're more likely glimpsing at its preparations. No crowds, no sugar, no confetti, no adrenalin, but work clothes, hammers and stolen glances. Rather than the heat of the action, Fillide Giorgi Levasti shows a moment of latency that lies behind the scenes of popular entertainment and the nomadic life of fairground performers and workers. The simplicity of this everyday moment contrasts with the clichés and satires, but the man on crutches leaving the stage in the background acts as a clue to the precariousness of these lifestyles, and as a reminder of the freak shows that were gradually dying out during the interwar period, at the time the painting was made.

This scene, which at first appears hieratic and staged, could in fact have been taken on the spot: its startling framing, between two barracks whose signs cannot be read, could be a photographic snapshot. Speaking of photography: it's impossible to know what the author, Fillide Giorgi Levasti, who lived in the intellectual, mystical and anti-fascist circles of early twentieth-century Rome, looked like. A Germanophile, she made several trips to Germany and Austria and took part in an exhibition at the Westfälischer Kunstverein in 1929, perhaps the same year that this painting entered the collection. As is often the case, especially in the lives of women artists, it is a fill-in-the-blanks text, and more so when the subjects are other marginal existences. This painting is part of a group of her work depicting scenes of acrobats, greengrocers and farmers, in silent scenes full of a certain tranquility, which for the artist represented 'the simple and instinctive essence of life', that which often escapes the history of art, its theories and categories.

Mathilde Belouali is a curator and art worker. She is currently Director at Centre d'art contemporain Les Capucins in Embrun in the Southern Alps and has worked as Head of exhibitions at Bétonsalon – center for art and research in Paris.

Saint Sebastian, 1615

Oil on canvas
104.5 × 91.5 cm
Inv. no. 192 WKV

Hendrick Goltzius's *Saint Sebastian* is a something of highlight in the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection,—even beyond its established art historical canon. The motif has long been considered an icon of queer identity. In this reading, not only the martyrdom of the saint is at the centre of our attention, but also his body: a youth tied to a tree, his head lasciviously inclined, gazing into the distance in a state of rapture, while the arrows piercing his body draw the viewer's gaze.

Goltzius's template for his painting is the legend of St Sebastian. In the third century, Sebastian was one of the bodyguards detailed to Emperor Diocletian, under whom the most draconian persecution of Christians during the Roman Empire was perpetrated. After Sebastian outed himself as a Christian, archers were ordered to execute him. Believing their work to be done, they left him for dead—but Sebastian survived. For the time being.

What is essential for the rise of St Sebastian as a gay icon is less his martyrdom and more the development of the iconography relating to him. While early depictions show him as an older man, who was also considered a plague saint, he was adapted to a new body ideal in the wake of the Renaissance's enthusiasm for classical antiquity: the flawless and muscular youth. There is no doubt that Goltzius also responded to the spirit of the age by eroticising and aestheticising the motif.

During the nineteenth century, at the same time that Goltzius's work was acquired by the Kunstverein, St Sebastian became a secret code. The early sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld reports that during the imperial era, the saint was used as a secret sign in the apartments of homosexuals. In the Weimar Republic, it was then *Der Eigene* in particular, the world's first magazine for homosexuals, that took up the depiction of Sebastian, thus making the former secret code something of an open secret. He finally became a full-blown gay icon in the second half of the twentieth century. The saintly figure is repeatedly taken up in parallel with the socio-cultural emancipation of queer (sub)cultures, for example in Derek Jarman's film *Sebastiane* in 1976 or in paintings by Keith Haring.

Angela Theisen is an art historian with her main focus on nineteenth-century painting and sculpture, as well as contemporary art. She has held various positions at institutions in Germany, including the Ludwig Forum for International Art in Aachen and the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster.

Hendrick Goltzius

Untitled, 1966
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1966

Silkscreen on paper
36 × 36 cm
Inv. no. C-389 WKV

Günter Fruhtrunk

In the run-up to the exhibition *Tendenzen strukturaler Kunst* (Tendencies of Structural Art) for the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster, Jürgen and Christa Wißmann travelled to Paris at the end of January 1966. Jürgen Wißmann had in mind a selection of works by representatives of 'structural' art—ranging from Jean Arp to Victor Vasarely, many from the programme of the Galerie Denise René, which had also included works by Günter Fruhtrunk, who had been living in Paris since 1957. On their return, the Wißmanns thanked the Fruhtrunk couple effusively for their warm welcome, "for their gracious hospitality, for the generous use/waste of their time for our wellbeing and benefit, for the good times in the studio et pour toute l'ambiance! [...] We look forward to the exhibition here and also to your arrival in Münster!" (undated [Feb.] 1966, DKA, NL GF, 556; all further details from this file).

Perhaps the idea for a screen print as an annual edition (Jahresgabe) was born at that reunion on the occasion of the opening of the exhibition (8 May–19 June 1966). Fruhtrunk's representative in Cologne, Galerie Der Spiegel, commissioned the renowned screen printer Domberger in Bolanden near Stuttgart to print the work. Fruhtrunk chose one of the main motifs of those years: diagonal, parallel bands forming three zones; sometimes border elements are rotated through 45°. Shades of red, green or yellow are set against black or white, the bands accompanied by coloured lines. In each composition, the concrete relationships between neighbouring elements are renegotiated; there is no absolute system of reference. New changes are constantly occurring as we look, the picture abides in a flux of constant 'becoming'. Fruhtrunk referred to these structural principles with terms such as 'interference', 'continuum' or 'progression'. However, he did not give a title to the screen print for Münster, which is related in motif to *Untitled (Diagonal Progression),* WVZ 408, even when asked by Wißmann. Domberger printed 245 copies instead of 200. Whether the surplus was 'peddled under the gallery counter', as Wißmann feared, remains unclear. On 1 December 1966, the distribution to members of the Kunstverein began and No. 151 was purchased on 14 December. Wißmann and Fruhtrunk remained close for years.

Susanne Böller is a research associate and curator at the Lenbachhaus in Munich. Most recently, she curated the exhibition *Günter Fruhtrunk: Die Pariser Jahre (1954–1967)*.

The Alpine Rose.
After a poem by Franz
von Kobell, 1846

Etching on paper
36.6 × 26.5 cm
Inv. no. C-244 WKV

Eugen Napoleon Neureuther

Eugen Neureuther worked in Munich during the reign of King Ludwig I and his successor, King Maximilian II, and was well known as an artist. As a student of Peter Cornelius, he was influenced by the romantic-idealist movement in art. Neureuther made a name for himself primarily as a draughtsman and illustrator. At the age of just twenty-three, he published lithographs with illustrations in the margins to poems by Goethe. The close relationship between word and image was also decisive for his later work. In his illustrations, he combined the classical ornamental forms of the arabesque and the grotesque with naturalistic scenes taken from literary templates. It was this combination of the ideal and the realistic that made Neureuther an outstanding illustrator of works of German literature of his time. It is not surprising that the young artist received the highest praise from Goethe, who had pioneered a literary model for the symbiosis of classical form and realistic, bourgeois content in his verse epic *Hermann and Dorothea*.

The sheet *Die Almros'n* (The Alpine Rose) comes from a series of four etchings that Neureuther dedicated to the poems of Franz von Kobell (1803–1882) and published in 1846. Kobell was a naturalist and one of the leading mineralogists of his time. He also wrote poems and stories, many of them in Bavarian dialect.

The most important pictorial element is a filigree pergola entwined with tendrils in the style of Pompeian wall paintings, the forms of which Neureuther transposed into the Alpine landscape. The main scene depicts a young man in knee breeches and a janker, a traditional Bavarian cardigan, wooing a young woman. She demands a bouquet of Alpine roses as proof of his love and points to the lofty peaks in the background. The young man accepts the challenge and climbs the mountain. As he nears the summit and reaches for an Alpine rose, he slips and falls to the ground below. Neureuther shows the stages of this tragedy in two medallions above and below the main scene. At the top, you see the climber on the rock; at the bottom, he lies dead in the gorge. In his hands, he holds the bouquet of flowers and the cross that he was supposed to place on the summit as an emblem of his success, but which now, tragically, becomes the cross on his grave.

Herbert W. Rott is a curator at the Bavarian State Painting Collections in Munich, Director of the collection of the Neue Pinakothek and Schack Collection. Publications and exhibitions focus on the history of the Neue Pinakothek and on eighteenth and nineteenth-century painting and sculpture.

Wooded landscape,
17th century

Oil on oak wood
84 × 62.5 cm
Inv. no. 226 WKV

Meindert Hobbema

As I can't fall back on any art-historical training regarding Old Masters collections and certainly not on any connoisseurship to speak of, I've got into the habit over time of simply letting my gaze wander casually. Instead of paying attention to name plates, I tend to look at which paintings trigger me and why. The paintings of Meindert Hobbema and his teacher and friend, Jacob van Ruisdael, immediately and invariably prompt this wandering gaze. It arouses a strange longing for the past in me, a homely past that I did not experience; it embodies a moral nature with a religious touch, although I am sceptical about it; it evokes a pleasant mood and, at the same time, discreetly casts doubt upon it. It appears wholly quotidian and yet is emotionally charged.

In this painting of woodland, which is owned by the Westfälischer Kunstverein, a mighty, manifestly dying tree projects somewhat pathetically into the composition as a diagonal. However, this pathos is immediately decelerated to the left by a small tree in the process of growing, which Hobbema has also prominently positioned so that it stands there shyly, in all modesty. The painter even grants it a small clearing. This can probably be understood as a parable of decay and emergence, of a limited time for all of us, be we trees or people.

All of life's great themes and ultimate questions are embedded in the seemingly transient moment of everyday life in the seventeenth century and—without wishing to be sentimental—can certainly provide comfort. This is where you want to tarry, at least for a moment, before you realise which amenities of the twenty-first century were not yet available to Hobbema's contemporaries and which you also don't want to forgo.

Realism, the Baroque and Impressionism fuse in this arboreal study, also emotionally. In my experience, the fact that such a degree of empathy can be awakened at all is due to a special chromatic warmth in the combination of greens, browns, blues and greys, which is reiterated in Hobbema's œuvre and is sometimes cooler in Ruisdael's, if I am not mistaken. You can recognise them from a distance in the collections of the Old Masters.

Georg Imdahl is a freelance art critic and has held the professorship 'Art and the Public' at the University of Fine Arts Münster since 2011. His most recent book is titled *Ausbeute. Santiago Sierra und die Historizität der zeitgenössischen Kunst* (Hamburg, 2023). [2nd edition.]

Madonna and Child,
1655–1659

Oil on canvas
148 × 108 cm
Inv. no. 172 WKV

Jan Boeckhorst

Today, the artist Johann (Jan) Boeckhorst is hardly known in Münster, and his name and work barely resonate. Yet he was a successful, young contemporary artist—albeit almost 400 years ago.

An unimaginable scenario today: in the middle of the Thirty Years' War, during the turmoil and uncertainty of the time, a young man with no familial artistic ambitions or previous training is drawn to Antwerp, more or less the Berlin of the seventeenth century. All the artists of distinction are gathered there: Peter Paul Rubens, Antonius van Dyck and Jacob Jordaens. And it is precisely in their workshops that the young man can enter—without (at least we don't know otherwise) being able to show any notable works, a portfolio or anything similar beforehand. He also learnt from Jordaens and had close contact with the most famous painters of the time. Yet more besides: the young artist, who had only been in Antwerp since 1626, was involved in the largest commissions of the time: the 'Pompa Introitus', the artistic city decoration of Antwerp for the entry of the Cardinal Cardinal-Infante and 'Torre de la Parada', the decoration of a hunting lodge near Madrid for the Spanish King Philip IV. And yet more: he is friends with van Dyck, the still life painters Frans Snyders and Jan Wildens, and after the death of the grand master Rubens, he is responsible for the dissolution and sale of parts of his workshop. After Rubens's death, he became one of the Flemish painters, alongside Thomas Willeboirts Bosschaert and Theodor van Thulden, as evidenced by a large number of major commissions.

Unfortunately, Johann Boeckhorst, or 'Tall Jan' as he was known because of his stature, was quickly forgotten in his home town, where he maintained regular contact, visited frequently and also painted works for the local churches (such as St Martini and St Mauritz). While he was still praised at the end of the seventeenth century, for example by Cornelis de Bie, the master's life and works were later forgotten all the more. Due to his proximity to Rubens and van Dyck, many paintings and drawings were no longer attributed to Boeckhorst, but to these masters, and the contours of his œuvre gradually became blurred and obscure.

It is therefore all the more gratifying that one of the artist's works is owned by the Westfälischer Kunstverein. In 1892, this *Madonna and Child* was acquired in Antwerp through the mediation of Baron Egon von Landsberg from the holdings of St Mary's Church, thus securing a characteristic work by this 'emerging artist' for Münster.

Maria Galen is an art historian and has been working as an art dealer for over ten years. After completing her doctorate on the artist Johann Boeckhorst, she and her gallery specialised in paintings and drawings from this period.

Poem 70-67, 1970
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, 1970

Embossed print on paper
44.3 × 34.3 cm
Inv. no. C-540 WKV

Poem 70-67 is an artwork by the Japanese artist Haku Maki; it was an annual edition (Jahresgabe) issued by the Westfälischer Kunstverein Münster in 1970. Haku Maki was born Maejima Tadaaki in Asomachi, Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan in 1924 and died in 2000. During the Second World War, he was trained as a kamikaze pilot and narrowly escaped death. Initially working as a teacher, he changed his name in 1950 and became internationally recognised as an artist. Although he did not complete any formal artistic training, he learnt the highly respected craft of printmaking in artist groups.

Haku Maki further developed the technique of traditional woodblock printing by casting the carved wooden block in cement and engraving his drawings again when dry. In this way, he achieved the deep and clear embossing typical of his works, creating a three-dimensional impression. Equally typical are a stamp and his signature in English. In addition to calligraphic and graphic works, his œuvre also includes prints of ceramics and the fruit persimmon.

Haku Maki began the *Poem* series in 1967 with a refined printing technique: the artist placed laminated, damp paper on the wood block worked with cement, into which he pressed his drawings and only then applied colour to the embossed areas. One or more mostly modified Kanji characters can be seen. They possess an animated, almost choreographic character; added splashes of colour serve to create balance and further abstraction. The result is a fascinating aspect of his art: delicacy and balance, suggestion instead of clarity, lively indeterminacy instead of obvious figuration.

The title *Poem 70-67* is also a date: the first number stands for the year in which it was made, the second for the number of the work in the series—the sixty-seventh print made in 1970. Today, his works can mainly be found in North America. Alongside the British Museum in London, the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster is one of the few institutions in Europe to own a work by Haku Maki.

Gemma Mathilda Heinen was an intern at the Westfälischer Kunstverein Münster in 2018. After working in publishing, theatre and studying art history, she now works as a bookseller in Cologne in the fields of art and architecture.

Haku Maki

The Penitent Mary Magdalene, 17th century

Oil on canvas
84.5 × 68 cm
Inv. no. 364 WKV

Elisabetta Sirani

In the intimate confines of domestic spaces, Elisabetta Sirani's (1638–65) petite devotional images were highly appreciated by her discerning patrons. Influenced by the social transformations of Counter-Reformation Italy, the painter grew up in the papal city of Bologna, where its prestigious university and progressive ideas provided a fertile ground for vibrant exchanges among religious, intellectual, and artistic circles. Under the guidance of her father, a respected figure in Bologna's learned society, Sirani received a comprehensive education. She mastered the art of painting, drawing, and print-making, learned philosophy, history, literature, and art theory, among others, all while practicing music and poetry. Celebrated for her artistic talent and intelligence, Sirani's studio quickly became a kind of *salon* where Italian and European members of the elite, intelligentsia, and royalty gathered eagerly to see the young maestra at work. Over the course of ten highly prolific years, a brief career that ended prematurely with her death at the age of 27, Sirani produced over 200 works.

With one hand over her heart and the other pointing towards the divine, the figure of Mary Magdalene stands out against a dark background, her pale skin and red cloak contrasting vividly. She is gazing tenderly towards the heavens, with the book of Sacred Scripture and Adam's skull placed before her. Akin to her renown predecessors, such as Lavinia Fontana and Artemisia Gentileschi Sirani's work celebrated the strength and resilience of worthy and heroic women. From naturalism to High Baroque, the painter developed an iconography of subjects drawn from the lives of figures from spiritual and classical sources. The recognition of women's contributions to art and society was dear to her, and this commitment was thus reflected in her advocacy for the professionalisation of her fellow artists. Upon her father's decline in health, Sirani took charge of the family workshop, which she transformed into a community marked by sisterhood. Sirani's paintings are featured in museum collections worldwide, highlighting her rightful place in the annals of art history.

Liberty Adrien is a curator at Kunsthalle Portikus in Frankfurt am Main since 2022. Previously, she co-founded the independent art space Âme Nue (2015–20), received a curatorial research grant from the French Ministry of Culture, and has curated a series of exhibitions across Europe. Adrien teaches at the Städelschule and contributes regularly to art magazines and publications.

I.N.P., 1984
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1986

Screen print on paper
80 × 120 cm
Inv. no. C-24605 WKV

Martin Kippenberger

The name Martin Kippenberger is certainly one of the first to crop up when the conversation turns to the 'Neue Wilde', the group of neo-expressionist painters who came to prominence in West Germany in the 1980s when—although not exactly putting an end to painting—they declared war on the canvas and expanded it to include conceptual approaches. However, it would be an ironic omission if the conversation about Kippenberger were to end there, inasmuch as the real achievement of his work is its treatment of the end *per se*—be it the end of the Nazi dictatorship, the end of the Cold War, the end of medium specificity or the end of morality. Until his death in 1997, he created a body of work that spanned all media, but always remained faithful to one element: language. It is precisely this condensation of language that finds expression in the title of *I.N.P.* In 1984, the then thirty-one year-old Kippenberger exhibited a series of eight paintings at the Max Hetzler Gallery in Cologne titled *I.N.P.*, an acronym that stands for 'ist nicht peinlich' (is not embarrassing) and alludes to aspects of German national culture that trigger feelings of unease.

For Kippenberger, language was not just a communication tool but something he used just as subversively and playfully as he used paint, colour or canvas—and sometimes in combination. This was also the case in his exhibition at the Neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst in Berlin, where, in 1981, Kippenberger showed twelve paintings that he had commissioned from the professional poster company Werner-Werbung, and which could not bear clearer witness to his authorship if you consider the title: *Lieber Maler, male mir* (Dear painter, paint me ...). When the art market was dying for young painting, Kippenberger announced that he had banned himself from painting. It is precisely these acts of negation, but also of collaboration and outsourcing, that characterise many of his works and thus attempt to call into question the myth of the artist as a genius. In this context, it may therefore come as a surprise that his œuvre is also characterised by a large number of self-portraits—including *I.N.P.*, in which the artist can be seen tumbling through a train compartment with legs akimbo. In keeping with Kippenberg's style, however, these served less a representative purpose and more as a critical commentary on the strategies of self-promotion. "Embarrassment", as a sign Kippenberger once wore around his neck proclaimed, "knows no bounds".

Carina Bukuts is an author and curator. In conjunction with Liberty Adrien, she has been managing Kunsthalle Portikus in Frankfurt am Main since 2022. She previously worked as an editor at *frieze*. Her texts appear in a range of monographs and magazines.

Christ Appears to Mary,
1489

Painting on oak wood
135 × 153 cm
Inv. no. 14 WKV

Workshop

Master of Liesborn

Noli me tangere (*do not touch me*) –according to the Gospel of John (Jn 20:17), it is Mary Magdalene who is the first person to encounter Jesus Christ after his death. She mistakes him for a gardener and asks where he has taken the body. When he addresses Mary Magdalene by name, she recognises that he is Christ resurrected and is tempted to embrace him. He forbids her to do so and commands her to inform the disciples, thus making her his first apostle.

In an enclosed garden, *MARIA* kneels with her hands raised before *IHESVS*. He is leaning on a shovel, while his right hand is outstretched. John the Baptist is standing on the left and St Quirinus on the right, whose spear adorns the former Neuss coat of arms, while the shield bears the coat of arms of the founding family, Stael von Holstein. While the three figures on the left interact and form the initial *M (*Maria), the figure on the right turns his head away. His eyes are cast down, unworthy of direct eye contact … or as if everything we see in the painting somehow faraway and only imagined by the young man.

While in the Gospel of Luke, the miracle performed between Jesus and a woman requires but a touch (Lk 8:43–46), inasmuch as only this allows Jesus to feel that power has emanated from him, in this instance *prohibition* prevails, and the description persists in the simultaneity of turning towards and turning away—a classic double-bind, demanding things and actions from each other that neither partner can adequately provide, or in the words of G.K. Chesterton: “All Christianity concentrates on the man at the crossroads.”

Only in not touching does Mary Magdalene succeed in detaching herself from herself and recognising and acknowledging the Other in his Otherness. If the Other could be grasped and understood, they would no longer be the Other. The young man’s averted pose may also be indicative of this. Standing directly next to the resurrected Jesus, it can be read both as propriety and remoteness—the ability to experience the Other in their Otherness: manifestly Jesus Christ the resurrected, who, in the same way as people, is like them in the image of their Creator.

Proximity inscribes a distance that engenders a transcendental decency that liberates the Other in their Otherness, whereby the altar wing from the former St Walburgis Church in Soest could also be read as a highly contemporary plea for love. It is presented to us as the ‘Stage of the Pair’, as developed by Byung-Chul Han in *Agony of Eros* (2012). Its true essence is to abandon self-awareness and to lose oneself in another self. This love goes through death as an absolute conclusion. One dies in the other, but for the return to oneself—a return as the gift of the Other, which is preceded by the surrender, the abandonment of my self.

Marcus Lütkemeyer is a freelance art historian. He has curated international solo and group exhibitions, including collaborations with the Kunsthalle Münster until 2018. He is also an expert in promoting young talent and is currently responsible for the conception and implementation of Residence NRW+.

[Title unknown]
[Date unknown]

Aluminium (powder-coated),
screws (stainless steel)
75 × 50 × 50 cm
Inv. no. A-1437 WKV

Donald Judd

Donald Judd furniture never had an entirely unfraught relationship with his art, never, no matter how often he rejected the term, escaping a general perception as a middle category of *art furniture*. It was something he was painfully aware of as early as 1971, when a stainless steel coffee table he designed and began, then stopped, production of, much too closely resembled several of his floor pieces of the same time. I don't think it's unfair to say that the realisation shocked him. For someone like Judd, who tended not to discuss his failures, it's telling how often he returned to mentioning this table, in person and in furniture essays. Although a failure, because it caused him a sharp rethink about what his furniture was and how it should be made and be seen, I argue that it was one of the most important pieces of furniture he ever made, and I take it as a measure of how much he wanted to continue making furniture. '1971' resulted, I argue, in two in-house Judd rules, strictly followed, almost without exception. One was that his art and furniture should not be shown together in the same exhibition space, and the second that his art and furniture should be made by separate fabricators.

I was a pre-1971 exemption. In 1969–70 I made what is sometimes considered to be one of the earliest pieces of Judd furniture, a walnut bed on the fifth floor of his loft building at 101 Spring Street in New York. After I started fabricating his art in 1971—more than 200 works in total by 1994—I never made another piece of furniture for him. Which was then made by other exclusively furniture makers.

The reason the difference between Judd's furniture and art is more important than who made them, and more serious than some old-fashioned distinction between functional and non-functional [*one you can sit on, the other you can't*] is that both have relationships—but very different ones—to architecture.

Judd considered furniture a branch of architecture and, although furniture can occupy and give identity to existing architecture, his highest aspiration for his art, as he very clearly set out in the 1980s, was that his art—*his best art*—rather than occupying space the way furniture does, actually *makes* space, the same way the best architecture does. It has a function, in other words.

Judd once wrote that he first decided to design furniture himself when he couldn't find good furniture in Marfa. It's an appealing enough story, but for anyone who knew Judd before Marfa, or knows how much furniture he owned (Rietveld, Alto, Schindler, Stickley, Biedermeier, Bank of England chairs, etc.), it doesn't hold up—an excuse for something that didn't need an excuse. I think he had furniture ideas and he just wanted to see them realised.

Peter Ballantine lives and works in New York. Since 1969 he has been Donals Judd's longtime fabricator.

Shroud of St Veronica (*Vera Icon*), 1467–1500

Tempera on oak wood
78 × 55 cm
Inv. no. 11 WKV

A woman holds a cloth in front of her body—we can only see her upper body and her head. The fabric is wider than her outstretched arms, which is why we do not see her in full size. The face of Christ is depicted on the cloth. He looks at us. It is undoubtedly a representation of Saint Veronica: a *vera icon*, meaning the true, genuine image. It is 'true' and 'genuine' because it was created by the imprint of Christ's face on this cloth.

However, the iconography differs from the traditional representation of St Veronica and shroud in one respect. At first glance, one has the impression that Veronica's gaze is directed at us. However, if you look more closely, you will see that she is looking both inwards and outwards: one eye is on us and one eye is on the cloth. One eye on reality and one eye on the holy relic. In this painting by the Master of Liesborn, we are dealing with a saint who suffers from the vision disorder strabismus; she has a squint.

However, this is not an oversight or a lack of skill, rather, one could assume that this almost comical gaze allows for a different reading of the religious image. In the fifteenth century, artists gained a new freedom of expression through the paradigm shift that occurred during the Renaissance. Isn't that what this painting is really about? By means of strabismus, the master creates a theological ambiguity in order to bring the human to the fore. By looking at us with one eye, Veronica is looking in the same direction as Christ. The apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus relates that Jesus's face is imprinted on the shroud of Saint Veronica. She offered the cloth to dry Christ's sweat and held it up for the onlookers as testimony. Without her there would be no imprint, no image. Consequently, Saint Veronica's first name is derived from *vera icon*.

Since then, the *vera icon* has stood for the image of Christ and for Veronica, the woman who presents it. She is the one who spreads the image of Christ and effectively becomes the author of the first image. Veronica, with one foot (or rather one eye) in reality, bears witness to the message of Christ, namely the incarnation of God. The Master of Liesborn's Veronica gives us the opportunity to become a subject and thus approach the sacred.

Camille Gouget is a member of the team at Galerie Christophe Gaillard Paris. She is responsible for the residency programs and events at Château du Tremblay, the gallery's space in Normandy. Alongside these duties, she leads various research, publishing, and exhibition projects.

Workshop

Master of Liesborn

The Orphan, 1888

Oil on canvas
79.5 × 47 cm
Inv. no. 321 WKV

Julia Schily-Koppers

Julia Schily-Koppers (1855–1944) was an artist from Borken in Westphalia. She began her training at the Düsseldorf School of Painting at the age of twenty-one. Incidentally, she is also the grandmother of the politicians Otto and Konrad Schily.

An orphan sits on a sarcophagus—as the title of the painting *Die Waise* (The Orphan) would suggest, which Julia Schily-Koppers probably named herself. In 1888, she exhibited this work for the first time at the academy show in Dresden, where she had already enjoyed success by selling the painting *Gelegenheit macht Diebe* (Opportunity Makes Thieves) to Kaiser Wilhelm I. The orphan herself poses a mystery: why is the girl sitting in a classically-styled interior with a candelabra and on a sarcophagus, and, at the same time, flanked by a piece of Christian iconography in the form of a palm branch and decked with a wreath of flowers on her head? Most striking is the penetrating gaze of the child's dark eyes in contrast to the pale, almost luminous marble crypt. Her direct gaze is a typical feature of childhood depictions of the Romantic and Biedermeier periods. The scene seems almost surreal due to its setting, as if it were made up, even fairytale-like. The style is probably due to Julia Schily-Koppers's training at the Düsseldorf School of Painting and her Christian upbringing in the bourgeois environment of her hometown of Borken in Westphalia, as well as her foundational training with the Münster church painter, Dominik Mosler (1822–1880). As a woman artist who was allowed to study at the Düsseldorf School of Painting at a time when women were not even admitted and when she was denied some courses, Schily-Koppers remained true to the painting style that genre artists, such as Benjamin Vautier (1829–1898) and others taught her throughout her life. This is not surprising, as the environment and prestigious name of the Düsseldorf School of Painting guaranteed her success via the opportunity to present her art at academy exhibitions throughout Germany.

Orphans were a popular motif in art from the Vormärz period up until the outbreak of the First World War (1830–1914). During this time, orphanages and aid organisations were established in numerous cities, as there were many individuals in need of help. Schily-Koppers addresses the issue of social ills without any visible criticism of the system, unlike her Impressionist and Expressionist contemporaries. Rather, in this genre painting, she pointedly depicts what the bourgeois audience that bought the art wanted to see in museums and institutions, such as the Westfälischer Kunstverein: the orphan is supposed to find strength in her piety, the painting is supposed to appeal to Christian charity. Be that as it may, artworks such as this did indeed contribute to the fact that current social grievances were reflected in modern art.

Leonie Lieberam has been a research trainee in the public relations department of the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur since November 2022. She studied cultural anthropology, Spanish and cultural poetics in Freiburg and Münster.

The Holy Trinity (Mercy Seat),
1516–1518

Oil on lime wood
42.2 × 27.8 cm
Inv. no. 112 WKV

First off, the colours. Pink and light blue, mother-of-pearl and so much turquoise to make you think Cranach had painted in the tropics rather than in Saxony. Second, the figures: God the Father, the Son of God in his arms, two angels, the Scourging at the Pillar and the cross in their arms. Eighteen further angel heads in the firmament above an imaginary city. Measuring 42.2 × 27.8 cm, this picture is only the size of an ordinary tray and, at first glance, is as kitschy as the print of Michelangelo's frescoes on the ceiling of my gym. Third, as with any artwork, the question abides: "Could this picture actually save a life?"

Jesus is strikingly ugly, his eyes a void as though the result of a bad trip, from which his father, total aftercare, brings him back to life. The latter is very masculine and very white. I've never cared much for angels. My gaze lingers on the dove that is sitting complacently on Christ's left shoulder and giving us the side-eye.

As a child, I always tried to imagine that God is three and one at the same time. That he is not a father like my father and not a son like me. That the Holy Spirit permeates everything like a benevolent mist, "the flesh of the world" (Maurice Merleau-Ponty). That life is finite and the universe infinite. I couldn't comprehend it all and yet I kept going, with my eyes closed, until I felt like I was bumping into the insides of my eyelids.

I am still a sucker for religion and the flesh, for mortality and human emotions across the board. I still bump into the insides of my eyelids sometimes. I have come to understand one thing: that we can never fully understand is an ineluctable fact of life. The psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan calls this basic condition of being human 'the real': the limitations of understanding and experience render us deficient beings. This is an instance of grace. We must learn to accept it.

The 'real' and the Holy Spirit: they are *not*—at least not like the red nails of the woman opposite me or the heartbeat in my scarred chest or the grubby keyboard beneath my fingers. The fact that we can never comprehend them makes our lives possible. But to endure this passion, we need things—painted doves and funerals, the psychoanalytical trinity and hoodies with star prints. And that could save a life.

Evan Tepest is an author and lives in Berlin. His novel *Schreib den Namen deiner Mutter* was published in 2024 and preceded by his collection of essays *Power Bottom* in 2023. Tepest teaches essay writing at the German Institute for Literature in Leipzig.

Lucas Cranach t. E.

Yard, 1971
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1971

Offset print on paper
87.9 × 62.3 cm
Inv. no. C-494 WKV

Allan Kaprow

A white sheet displays a black and white photograph of a car tyre standing upright. The circular tyre is framed by a rectangular black brushstroke, interrupted at the bottom by a kind of corridor. Perhaps an entrance? The word YARD interrupts the line at the top right corner. YARD is also the title of this offset print from 1971, which is all it reveals. And yet in this picture, as in a prism, one of the most lasting upheavals in twentieth century art oscillates.

The sheet was created by the American artist Allan Kaprow, originally an abstract painter who, under the influence of the composer John Cage, shifted his focus to direct action at the end of the 1950s. In contrast to painting, he was interested in using his art to achieve an immediate interaction with his audience. Kaprow's performance *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* at the Reuben Gallery in New York in 1959 is legendary. It consisted of simple gestures, such as smoking a cigarette, drinking from a glass of water, simply sitting on a chair … In his essay *The Legacy of Jackson Pollock*, written a year earlier, he defined such actions as "events that simply happen". He called them 'performances'. In 1958, Kaprow thus introduced a term for such acts into art theory that has not lost its validity to this day and is even becoming topical again. Another of his now legendary performances also took place in New York in 1961: the group exhibition *Environments, Situations, Spaces* in the sculpture garden of the Martha Jackson Gallery, in which Allan Kaprow was joined by Barbara Hepworth and Alberto Giacometti with their traditional sculptures. Kaprow's contribution consisted of filling the space with hundreds of car tyres and inviting the audience to climb over them, leap off them, sit on them or rearrange them. They were to take possession of this space filled with tyres. It was with this action at the latest that Kaprow entered the consciousness of a wider audience. His sheet created ten years later, in 1971, for the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster—a tyre bordered with a black line and labelled YARD—is therefore to be understood as a reminiscence of and allusion to this legendary action.

Noemi Smolik grew up in Prague and studied art history, history and philosophy in Cologne and New York. She taught at the HFBK Hamburg and Dresden. Her articles have been published in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Artforum*, *frieze* and *Kunstforum*. She received the Art Cologne Prize for Art Criticism in 2020. She lives and works in Berlin and Prague.

The Tooth-puller /
The Dentist, c. 1628

Oil on canvas
125 × 204 cm
Inv. no. 182 WKV

Theodoor Rombouts

Shortly after returning from Italy to his hometown of Antwerp—the early capitalist centre of the then modern world, the veritable 'capital of capitalism'—probably in 1628, the Flemish painter Theodoor Rombouts (1597–1637) painted *The Tooth-puller*. Presumably still under the influence of Caravaggio's raw, realistic depiction of the same motif from 1608, which he had previously seen in the ducal collection of the Medici family in Florence, Rombouts presents the everyday yet sensational scene of a tooth extraction in a large large-format genre painting in high-contrast light and shadow—not just once, but eight times, with different figures and varying in the quality of the painterly execution, which suggests that it was reproduced by less technically-versed students from his workshop.

In contrast to the earlier versions in the Museo del Prado in Madrid and the Národní Galerie in Prague, Münster's *Tooth-puller*, which has been in the possession of the Westfälischer Kunstverein since 1887, lacks the optical and technical refinements in the representation of volume, depth, light and shade and some details, such as the somewhat flat folds of the clothes. In addition to the reproductions from Rombouts's workshop, there are also a number of prints and engravings—one of them, by Andries Pauli (or Pauwels), bears the inscription: "Of all the evils to which men are exposed, that of the teeth is the most common. The quickest way is to visit the tooth-puller who promises to extract it painlessly. His trade is lying, and when the forceps are in position, lament as much as you want, he will get his tooth, come what may."

Rombouts's *Tooth-puller* is depicted here behind his arsenal of tools, arranged in a miniature still life—including a goose's foot, a mouth gag and a jaw clamp—and he is already gripping the aching tooth of the unanaesthetised patient with forceps in his right hand. He is surrounded by a crowd of onlookers, who, with morbid fascination, stare and gesticulate as the patient, his left hand raised to signal 'stop!', his right firmly clutching the back of the chair, looks up imploringly at the tooth-puller. But the cunning quack, who deceives and takes advantage of the unsuspecting victim who is expecting painless treatment, looks out of the picture with a mischievous half-smile and at the viewers instead of into the mouth of his anxious patient—proudly displaying his previous victims' extracted teeth in a chain around his neck. Rombouts liked to be a *performer in his own paintings*, and so the knowing smirk of the tooth-pulling adept in lying is presumably also a portrait of the artist himself.

Sophia Roxane Rohwetter is a research associate at the Institute of Art History at the University of Vienna. She works and writes on modern and contemporary art, psychoanalysis and film. She was awarded the AICA-Preis für Junge Kunstkritik in 2024.

Portrait of the Poet Theodor Däubler, 1928

Oil on oak wood
97 × 121 cm
Inv. no. 635 WKV

Eberhard Viegener

Akin to an anthropomorphic mountain range, the reclining male figure blends into the classical Mediterranean landscape strewn with ruins. The folds of his jacket are the rising slopes, his distinctive head a tonsured summit. The simplicity of the subject's clothing matches the austerity of the tenebrous scenery, which is dominated by horizontals in the composition. The dark sea behind him, he directs his thoughtful gaze beyond the edge of the composition into the distance. Or perhaps inwards? The page in front of him is still blank.

The full-length portrait of the poet Theodor Däubler (1876–1934) conveys a tangible physical presence. It seems to say: here lies a literary heavyweight that is impossible to ignore. A few years before Däubler's death, Viegener painted this pictorial monument to his artist friend. Self-confident and casual, in the pose of a river god statue, the gentle colossus rests on the ruins of classical antiquity, which, as it were, underpin his literary edifice. A fragmented marble head, drawing on Däubler's striking physiognomy, links past and present. It is no coincidence that the composition also quotes Johann H. W. Tischbein's painting *Goethe in the Campagna* (1787), placing him in a continuity from antiquity to classicism. An enigmatic, de Chirico-like mood replete with light and colour pervades the painting. The calm seems deceptive and charged with tension, not unlike the advent of a storm.

The legendary lyrical anthology *Menschheitsdämmerung* (Dawn of Humanity) springs to mind, which, in 1919, voiced the precarious and uncertain attitude of an entire generation of artists toward existence. Däubler was also prominently represented in this volume. The author, whom Viegener portrays as a rock in the turbulent times, was a striking figure who was much portrayed in the cultural life of the Weimar Republic. Viegener, who was part of avant-garde artistic circles in Soest, had abandoned his expressive style in 1922 in favour of a mode more in keeping with New Objectivity. In 1931, he donated this expressive portrait to the Kunstverein, presumably on the occasion of its centenary. A short while later, he found himself painting conventional landscapes, which, in their agreeable realism, would have been hard put to offend Nazi sensibilities.

A century later, both painter and author have fallen into obscurity of sorts. Likewise, portraits of poets, whether in bronze, stone or oils, seem somewhat suspect today in their auratic, idealised superelevation. Other media have since adopted strategies toward this kind of iconisation that build conjunctively on the images of authors and literary careers in a more casual but no less effective way. No longer only of men.

Andreas Prinzing works as a curator and author and lives in Berlin.

Ivory Relief depicting
St Mark the Evangelist,
1000–1020

Ivory
13.7 × 13.8 cm
Inv. no. G-5 WKV

One of the oldest works in the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection is an ivory relief dated around 1,000 CE depicting the Mark the Evangelist. It probably adorned the cover of a gospel manuscript, presumably from the cathedral library in Münster, with depictions of the other three Evangelists. Such depictions honour the Evangelists in the style of ancient author portraits, even though God is actually the author of his writings. Human authors are presented as recipients of divine afflatus, the "inspiration of God" (Tim 3:15).

The relief depicts Mark, sitting bent over his book, with a quill in his right hand. The panel is divided into two—actually four—pictorial fields. A band of clouds separates the earthly and heavenly spheres. In the corners at the bottom right and top left, we can see a cityscape, while from the top right a winged lion turns to face the Evangelist with a book. This lion originally belongs to the visual repertoire of the throne-chariot vision of the prophet Ezekiel (Ez 1). The Book of Revelation adopted it, together with three other winged creatures, in the vision of the Throne of God (Rev 4). The Heavenly Jerusalem (Rev 21) above the band of clouds also derives from this visionary context. The city below can be interpreted as an earthly counterpart; Jerusalem, that is, or Rome as the new Jerusalem.

Since Irenaeus (c. 130–200), and consistently since Jerome (c. 347–420), the four creatures of the Apocalypse have been symbolically assigned to the Evangelists. The lion in the relief indicates Mark, but it also explains the inspiration process: the lion shows Mark an open book, which he seems not to notice, while he is absorbed in his own book. But the absorption in his book is at the same time a nod to the book that the lion is showing. Inspiration is presented as a correspondence between the two books; it occurs between outward and inward vision. The visual medium of inspiration is supplemented by an acoustic counterpart: Mark turns his ear towards the lion; the band of clouds above him traces the outline of the auricle.

The relief comes from the collection of Alexander von Frankenberg (1820–1893), a member of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, who sold the work to the association in 1880/81 along with other works.

Reinhard Hoeps was Professor of Systematic Theology and its Didactics at the Catholic Theological Faculty of the University of Münster from 1993 until 2020. Founder and director of the *Arbeitsstelle für christliche Bildtheorie* (Research Centre for Christian Image Theory).

[Unknown]

Like Stars and Broken Glass, 2007
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 2007

Screen print on paper
76 × 112 cm
Inv. no. C-23893 WKV

Martin Boyce

In Martin Boyce's annual edition (Jahresgabe) for the Westfälischer Kunstverein, twenty-three letters are scattered loosely and in a non-linear fashion across the white sheet, forming the sentence "We are still and reflective". Contrary to what one might think, the work was not created in connection with his solo exhibition at the Kunstverein in 2008, but in the aftermath of *skulptur projekte münster 07,* in which Boyce participated and which took place in conjunction with the Kunstverein. As part of this long-term artistic study of public space, Boyce created a square—still in situ—made of differently shaped, cast concrete slabs that fit together like a puzzle to form a grid. Brass strips have been inserted into some of the joints, forming the same words that appear in the edition.

The edition, which, as a screen print, is in keeping with the Kunstverein's intent of making art affordable for the many, could be read—especially in its relationship to the floor piece—as a model of Martin Boyce's modus operandi. While the letters in his work for the *Skulptur Projekte* appear to be part of the grid that produces them, in the silkscreen in contrast, they are detached from this grid and linked in free association to form a sentence. At the same time, they still bear the formal idea of the four concrete trees invented by the French sculptors Jan and Joël Martel in 1925, from which Boyce developed his vocabulary of forms and letters. He proceeds in a very similar way when he removes design icons of modernism, the furnishings of urban spaces or architectural settings from their historico-cultural contexts—which they formulated and into which they inscribed themselves—and loops them into new, strangely timeless, spatial structures. The tension between the natural and the built, the dynamic and the static—which characterises the Martel twins' concrete trees—is also omnipresent in Boyce's works and is evident here, among other things, in the formal migration in which the floor piece and the screen print are equally integrated. The Martel twins' concrete trees translate natural form into a constructed analogue. From this formal idea, Martin Boyce first develops a formal vocabulary and then a typography that feeds into his floor piece, which, as a public square, is exposed to the elements and the seasons. In the edition, the letters become falling signs that tumble through the pictorial space like autumn leaves, forming a segue into this journey's point of departure.

Anna Sophia Schultz worked at *skulptur projekte münster 07*, the Westfälischer Kunstverein and the Ludwig Forum for International Art in Aachen amongst others. Since 2018, she has been working at the North Rhine-Westphalian Ministry of Culture and Science.

Peasant Woman by the Birch Tree, 1900

Oil on cardboard
72.3 × 48.4 cm
Inv. no. 823 WKV

Paula Modersohn-Becker

Today, Paula Modersohn-Becker is generally considered the most famous German artist of the early twentieth century. However, a career in art was anything but a given for women during this period. This was because classical courses of study at art academies, which many of their male colleagues completed, were denied to them by virtue of their gender. The only routes out of this impasse at the time were to attend so-called, 'ladies' academies", or to go to Paris. This was precisely the path that Paul Modersohn-Becker chose: she began by taking lessons at the Berlin Academy for Women Artists from 1897 and then visited Paris for the first time between January and June 1900 to continue her studies at the famous Académie Colarossi. The city remained a very special place for the artist, who visited it a total of four times before her premature death in 1907.

To this day, the name Paula Modersohn-Becker and many of her works are inextricably linked with Worpswede—a place that meant home to her, but also one that at times made her feel claustrophobic. The artist colony, situated in solitude in the middle of the Teufelsmoor just outside Bremen, fascinated the painter just as much as the nature and light there. She was also deeply impressed by the rural population in the area, and this interest found its way into her art. Her aim was not to depict a romanticised idyll, but rather to portray the people who bore the scars of their hard daily toil in the barren bog and moorland. *Bäuerin an der Birke* (Peasant Woman by the Birch Tree) is an early painting from this group of works. The painting actually depicts only the bare essentials: at the centre is the peasant woman with her bright red skirt, which stands out clearly among the other natural tones. The wide brim of her hat extends deep into the woman's face and casts a shadow; she looks towards the viewer with tired, exhausted eyes. With sparingly but effectively applied pictorial means, Modersohn-Becker succeeds in accurately characterising her subject.

In particular, Paula Modersohn-Becker's way of not idealising people in her paintings became the undoing of many of her artworks after 1933. The Nazis classified her works as 'degenerate' and had them removed from museums and public collections. The *Bäuerin an der Birke* has been in the possession of the Westfälischer Kunstverein since 1936 at the latest. In order to protect it from confiscation by the Nazis, the then treasurer and deputy chairman of the Kunstverein, Dr. Maximilian Kraß, kept it in his private apartment together with other artworks from the collection. As a result, the work was preserved and is still part of the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection today.

Sarah Siemens is a historian and art historian with a penchant for everything related to post-1945 history.

Narrative, 2005
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 2005

offset print, screen print
56 × 80 cm
Inv.-Nr. C-24855 WKV

Matthew Buckingham

1. Undisturbed State
The email found me in mid-April—and despite not being in Venice, sipping on a spritz as its sender supposed—life in New York City was as good as one could expect. In addition to a writing invitation, Kristina Scepanski announced that she was leaving the Westfälischer Kunstverein after more than 11 years as its Director.

2. Disturbance
From this point emanated a set of concentric waves. I instantly recalled a framed artwork that I'd previously seen hanging in Kristina's office at the Kunstverein, one that didn't appear among those I could choose to write about. And a photo, seemingly lost, of the Director sitting behind her desk, in front of said work.

3. Struggle
Though the Kunstverein hadn't previously acquired this text-based piece, they would do so now, prompting me to both find the original photo and write about the work. An OCR text search resolved the first part: originally saved to a phone many times replaced, the photo's metadata says it was taken March 16, 2013, a month before the opening of Kristina's first exhibition.

A few weeks later in Münster, Kristina gave me a copy of Matthew Buckingham's catalogue for his 2005 exhibition there. Pictured on its cover is *Narrative*, a pencil drawing Buckingham had made for the show, and that he then reproduced as an editioned print for the Kunstverein's 2005 Jahresgaben.

Narrative is comprised of a numbered list, set in what appears to be Arial Black. Buckingham described it as a "five-part sequence [that] represents a narrative structure often employed in telling or re-telling fiction and non-fiction stories. *Narrative* points to the circular balance and sense of closure desired by classic storytelling, particularly in Hollywood cinema." To this I would add that it also recalls the way that texts are written and constructed.

4. Deadline
I've never had a writing due date that I didn't miss, and when this one arrived, it was nearly passed. I had to request an extension, and Kristina had to request additional space in the book. Which then set off the kind of frenzied work dramatized in films and satirized in memes about writers writing.

5. Disturbance Eliminated
Text submitted, the last to be received. While an edition of *Narrative* was the final work to enter the Kunstverein's collection during Kristina's time as Director, another was given to her as a gift; it now hangs behind her desk in her new office at the Kulturamt Münster.

Tim Saltarelli is a Director at Miguel Abreu Gallery in New York. In 2011–12, along with Kristina Scepanski, he was a Helena Rubinstein Fellow in the Curatorial Program at the Whitney Independent Study Program. He has visited the city of Münster on four occasions, most recently in 2017.

Initial A from a liturgical manuscript, 1300–1325

Opaque paint on parchment
33.5 × 18 cm
Inv. no. KdZ 2813 WKV

An initial (from the Latin *initium* = beginning) is an enlarged, elaborately-wrought illuminated letter at the beginning of a chapter, paragraph or section of a manuscript or printed work. During the era of manuscripts (c. 800–1450 CE), initials for illuminated volumes were often handsomely adorned with figure paintings as miniatures. Artistic illumination of this kind was the work of a dedicated professional body known as illuminators and miniaturists and has considerably increased the value of a codex of this kind to this day. Based on typical motifs or stylistic features, these manuscript illuminators can be categorised in terms of time and place, and some can even be identified as individuals.

A special form of illustrated medieval manuscripts were huge antiphonaries, choir books that had to be legible for all singers of the Gregorian chant even from a great distance and in poor lighting conditions. Their manuscript illumination was intended to achieve a great effect from a distance using precious and bold colours, such as blue and gold leaf.

The size of the initial presented here, measuring 33.5 × 18 cm and roughly corresponding to the dimensions of today's A4 format, suggests such contexts. It is remarkable—but also not uncommon—that this initial was later neatly cut out, making it impossible to assign it to a specific text or antiphonary. This initial A, with the inhabited depiction of a bishop with a halo and a kneeling monk, for which three further cut-outs held by the Westfälischer Kunstverein are comparable, certainly comes from such a large-format antiphonary.

The dimensions of the letter are roughly the same size and similarly formed in all of these cut-outs, but instead of a detailed, patterned background, a continuous golden backdrop has been chosen here. The kneeling monk and the nun, who can be identified as a member of the Dominican order by virtue of her habit, would indicate a Dominican monastery, where this manuscript could possibly have been made or commissioned. According to Dr Joseph Lammers's research into illuminated manuscripts from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries in Westphalia, the Paradiese monastery near Soest, which maintained a scriptorium (from Latin *scribere* = to write = writing room), is the most likely provenance. The figure of the nun kneeling on a rectangular pediment of the scrollwork tendrils adorning the initial has also been preserved in two other cut-outs. Perhaps not only a reference to a manufacturer's monastery but also a kind of signature of a particular illuminator due to the specific placement of the figure?

Cutting out magnificent initials from manuscripts and archiving them as a separate collection is regarded today as an act of wanton 'cultural vandalism' that has not only vitiated a universal artwork in the form of an original manuscript illumination, but has also massively hampered further research. However, this approach is not untypical for the period of the secularisation of monasteries from 1803 and the ensuing decades of the nineteenth century. Historically speaking, this coincides perfectly with the founding decades of the oldest German Kunstvereine.

Martin Zangl is a qualified librarian and has worked in the library at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur / Westfälisches Landesmuseum Münster, since 1995. He has been head of the library department since 2001.

[Unknown]

The Death of Lucretia,
1758–1760

Oils on canvas
64 × 78.5 cm
Inv. no. 138 WKV

Johann Zoffany

“Content warning: this painting is about suicide.” On social media, Johann Joseph Zoffany’s painting *The Death of Lucretia* would probably be preceded by a tag of this kind.

Zoffany depicts the tragic climax of a story that marks the end of the monarchy and the beginning of the Roman Republic: the death of Lucretia. According to Livy (*Ab urbe condita*, I, 57–60), Lucretia was the beautiful and virtuous wife of Collatinus. Sextus Tarquinius, one of the king’s sons, visited Lucretia without prior notice (and without the knowledge of the absent Collatinus, as Livy reports). At night he attacked the sleeping Lucretia, threatened her with a sword, blackmailed and raped her. After this terrifying ordeal, Lucretia sent for her husband and father, each with a faithful companion. Lucretia told them about the rape. The men assured Lucretia that she was not to blame. But the social pressure Lucretia felt was simply too great to bear.

Zoffany captures the moment in the story when Lucretia takes her own life with a dagger to her heart. Her left hand grasps the hilt of the dagger. Blood oozes from the wound below her breast and onto her white dress. Lucretia’s gaze is directed upwards, two large tears flow down her forlorn cheeks. Collatinus holds his wife in his arms. With tears in his eyes, he seems to be begging her not to kill herself. To no avail. The three other men can be read as a sequence of despair: the father rushes into the chamber with his eyes wide open and his arms outstretched to prevent the worst from happening; the soldier in front of him appears to be ossified in a state of shock, while the third soldier at the bottom right of the composition has already buried his face in his arms in abject grief. There is nothing more they can do, Lucretia’s fate is sealed. Zoffany’s theatrical mise en scène heightens the drama of the moment.

Lucretia’s death, moral values of marital fidelity and violated chastity form a crucial part of the founding myth of the Roman Republic. Brutus, one of the two companions, swore revenge on the body of the deceased and then called for the violent overthrow of the royal house. Even in Zoffany’s time, the ethical content of the story was still perceived as exemplary testimony to Roman virtue. Today, we tend to look at the story and realise that Lucretia was the victim of a patriarchal system and its superordinate social and moral codex.

Benedikt Fahrnschon is a curator at Kunsthalle Bielefeld. Despite the rather traditional disposition of the universities of Heidelberg and Siena, where he studied, his focus is on contemporary art across all media.

Cimon and Pero
(*Caritas Romana*),
1601–1650

Oil on canvas
150 × 188.5 cm
Inv. no. 194 WKV

Gerrit van Honthorst

The story of a young Roman woman visiting her father in prison dates back to the first century CE. Her father had been sentenced to starve to death in prison and the guards kept a close eye on his daughter to make sure she did not smuggle in any victuals for him. Nonetheless, in order to save her father's life, the young woman eventually offered him her breast when no one was looking, and he drank her milk. In the seventeenth century, the Dutchman Gerrit van Honthorst, like many other artists before and after him, painted this motif, which is known as *Caritas Romana*. At the very beginning of the twenty-first century, the German pop singer Jürgen Drews, who became famous with hits like *Ein Bett im Kornfeld* or *König von Mallorca,* gave a remarkable TV interview together with his wife. Ramona Drews squirts milk out of her breasts on camera and Jürgen Drews cheerfully declares that he partakes of "a measure" every day. Drews's wife is almost thirty years younger than him—she could easily be his daughter; it stands to reason then that this unforgettable moment in German television history can be interpreted as a latter-day enactment of *Caritas Romana.*

Just as one may, if one wants, ascribe van Honthorst's painting to the Baroque, the television episode with Jürgen and Ramona Drews can be considered the work of an art-historical epoch that the late cultural theorist Mark Fisher called 'capitalist realism.' In his eponymously titled book, Fisher—probably his most famous point—compared the capitalist context, in which we live, to the dystopia depicted in the British film *Children of Men*: namely, a world in which children are no longer being born, societies are ageing and ultimately disintegrating. Fisher believed that just as the future depicted in *Children of Men* lacks children, we lack visions of a future that might be different from what we already know.

Couldn't the scene that van Honthorst painted also come from a world in which children no longer exist? In this case, of course, they have only recently disappeared, which is why the daughter is still lactating. But there are no children around to drink it anymore. Until it finally dries up, it will have to be surrendered to the elderly, the infirm, who no one will take care of in the absence of nurses, cooks or engineers. The young woman in the painting looks around anxiously: her world is threatening to sink into chaos, the lights are going out, and stragglers will be left behind in the dark.

Lars Weisbrod is an editor in the feature section of *DIE ZEIT*. Together with Ijoma Mangold and Nina Pauer, he also moderates the podcast *Die sogenannte Gegenwart*.

Eine Projektion für Münster, 1987 (eight photographs) Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1988

Silver gelatin print on photo paper
Each 30.5 × 38.2 cm
Inv. no. C-8145 WKV–C-8151 WKV

Thomas Struth

An intoxication comes over the man who walks long and aimlessly through the streets. With each step, the walk takes on greater momentum; ever weaker grow the temptations of shops, of bistros, of smiling women, ever more irresistible the magnetism of the next streetcorner, of a distant mass of foliage, of a street name.
Walter Benjamin (*The Arcades Project*)

In the above passage, Walter Benjamin describes walking through the city as a kind of trip. He compares the flaneur to a "hashish eater" who absorbs his surroundings as he strolls through the city. "Intoxicated by hashish, the room begins to wink at us: 'Now, what might have happened inside me?'" For Walter Benjamin, the city is Paris when he is strolling or—in his *Childhood*—Berlin.

Not Münster. Even if Thomas Struth's photographs could unquestionably be interpreted as an invitation to take a stroll through nocturnal Münster. For the (second) Skulptur Projekte in 1987, Struth used the façades of administrative, library, commercial and other buildings as projection surfaces for photos that he had previously taken of architecture on the outskirts of the city. Every evening for two and a half hours, he used a slide projector to project his images from residential areas onto prominent building walls in the city centre. In this way, Struth's *Eine Projektion für Münster* (A Projection for Münster) connects two different urban spaces. In the light installation, as in the six photographs that document it, centre and periphery, day and night, emphatic architecture and fleeting light images overlap and contrast. By concentrating on light and darkness in the black-and-white shots, the compositions create connections between the projection and the surrounding space, for example, when windows in the neighbouring building or street lights are illuminated. Both sets of buildings brought together here also share the fact that they—as is usual in Thomas Struth's architectural photographs—are devoid of people. And yet the buildings in the residential houses, photographed in daylight, and in the nocturnal streets of Münster city centre suggest the presence of people. They are there and have left their manifold traces.

Jule Hillgärtner is a curator and has been director of the Science and Art Lab at the TU Braunschweig since 2024. She was previously director of the Kunstverein Braunschweig. Her work is concerned with expanding our scope of perception in favour of transdisciplinary thinking and multiple perspectives.

Untitled, 1987
(seven drawings)
Edition of the Westfälischer
Kunstverein 1990

Mixed media on paper
42 × 29.7 cm
Inv. no. KdZ 3842 WKV–
KdZ 3848 WKV

Isa Genzken

The drawings *Untitled* (1987) by Isa Genzken depict a fragment of a building like a sketch, perhaps an alley between two parts of a building. It is reminiscent of the series of concrete sculptures created at the same time, such as *Marcel* or *Blick* (both 1987): pieces of raw concrete that take on an architectural form and stand on a base of raw metal. The insistent black pencil strokes of the drawings immediately associate a hardness. Does it correspond to the architecture of the building, its material or the artist's sensibility? For me, these definite, thick strokes carry the same aggressiveness as Lee Lozano's drawings from the early 1960s, in which the forms, be they sexual organs or crucifixes, are sharply outlined. Finally, the sprayed-on grey and white surfaces and the few ink stains lend *Untitled* a state of uncertainty.

This raw side of Isa Genzken's work gets under my skin. I also felt the same way about her recent sculptures, which are made of MDF panels. The assembled panels, which resemble towers architecturally speaking, are exhibited in their rawest, most exposed state to such an extent that it becomes almost unbearable. MDF panels, which are made from pressure-glued wood fibres, are a popular material that is valued for its ease of use, but the formaldehyde resin they contain can sometimes be highly harmful to health.

And at the same time as this naked danger, whether in *Untitled* or in her tower-like sculptures, these architectural bodies—which almost become physical bodies through the association with their size and verticality—exude a subliminal vulnerability. The drawings and sculptures hide nothing, even the stains that could be interpreted as a playful gesture or the personal images casually pasted on the towers seem like a crack in the surface: hardness, aggression, rawness or even dominance are never far from fragility.

Oriane Durand is a curator and writer working in France and Germany. In 2021, she curated Sara Sadik's solo exhibition for the Westfälischer Kunstverein together with Kristina Scepanski.

The Holy Clan, 1510–1520

Tempera on oak wood
134.5 × 154 cm
Inv. no. 46 WKV

Gert van Lon

Clan. What a word. So ancient, so problematic, so unusual; today, if at all, it tends to be used in a pejorative sense, at best mockingly. The clan is an association of different people, related to one another in the broadest sense, somehow, no one quite knows how for sure, but in any case, without the sharp boundaries and the exclusivity of the nuclear family triad. Instead of father-mother-child: several fathers, mothers, children. A lack of clarity, frayed edges. The clan is a bunch. And a bunch thrives on fluid transitions, its existence unstable, its shape amorphous.

In late medieval art, the so-called Holy Clan was a popular motif. At the centre of this extended holy family was 'Anna selbdritt' (Anna herself making a third/the third): the mother of the Mother of God, the Saviour's grandmother. She can be seen on this altarpiece by Gert van Lon, which is from the Benedictine monastery of Corvey, to the left of the Madonna, who holds the baby Jesus in her lap. At Anna's side, talking to her, is her husband Joachim, Mary's father.

But the clan is altogether larger. Starting with Anna, the family splits and triples: the two women on the Madonna's right are also called Mary, or more precisely Mary Salome and Mary Cleophas. They are the half-sisters of the Mother of God, because, according to Saint Joachim, Anna would go on to marry two more men, with whom she, in turn, had a daughter in each marriage. The men behind the two half-sisters are supposedly their husbands and the children in front of them are their children—later disciples of Jesus, often referred to in the Bible as his "brothers".

Derived from the apocryphal gospels, the Holy Clan was intended to help reinforce the doctrine of the immaculate conception at a time when genealogy and descent were becoming increasingly important. For Jesus's proverbial "brothers" can be shifted beyond the metaphorical level to that of actual blood relations in the distant family through the tripling of Mary. The holy nuclear family, meanwhile, remains pure, the Mother of God remains virginal—at the cost, however, of her now finding herself in (all too) worldly company, embedded in the earthly nature of the flesh, in reproduction and all that goes with it, not least in a culture of strong women and matrilineal kinship. What is duplicated, tripled, multiplied is not least the meaning. And before you know it, you are where you didn't want to be, namely in the messy business of procreation, the unclean. An image resembling a bunch, proliferating, imprecise, impossible to contain. A clan.

Dominikus Müller is a freelance author, editor and translator.
He lives in Berlin.

Untitled, 1971
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1971

Dichromatic silkscreen print
49.5 × 51 cm
Inv. no. C-587 WKV

Blinky Palermo

The untitled screen print by Blinky Palermo comprises a signed, numbered and dated sheet measuring 49.5 × 51 cm. It is most likely that the entire edition of 150 copies was produced by Palermo in 1971 as one of the Westfälischer Kunstverein's annual editions (Jahresgaben), available at the time for a modest 45 DM per print. The surface is divided up in an astonishingly elementary way into three horizontal planes into which a narrow vertical stripe penetrates. The colour scheme—a shade of brown that is difficult to define and a restless black on a light background—is extremely restrained, yet it generates a vague sense of space. The prematurely-deceased artist was born as Peter Heisterkamp in Leipzig in 1943; he died in the Maldives in 1977. As one of Joseph Beuys's master students, he attracted the interest of collectors early on with his mercurial artworks that resided somewhere between Minimalism and colour field painting and included equally-reduced sculptural objects: an interest that continues to this day.

The Münster edition is very delicate. Even a small scratch could damage the black surface on the offset paper. It is unknown today how many of these delicate copies have survived. Perhaps quite a few of them have perished over the course of more than fifty years because their inherent brittleness was misjudged. Those unfamiliar with such a degree of openness of interpretation may also not have realised the artistic value of this small work.

However, one interesting aspect of the career of this now rare screen print is the fact that, if it appears on the art market at all, the prices it can fetch are phenomenal. Two authenticated examples were auctioned in Munich and Freiburg in 2016 and 2021 respectively. In Munich, the ultimate sale price of € 3,200 was over double the guide price, which was set at € 1,500 (including the auctioneer's surcharge). In Freiburg, the print sold for € 2,200—almost four times its guide price (set at € 600); according to the auction house, it was numbered 94/150 in the Kunstverein's series. At the beginning of 2024, the screen print was subsequently put up for sale for the princely sum of € 4,850 (titled *T* and erroneously dated as 1970) by an art dealer on the Internet.

Looked at another way: if 45 DM are equivalent to around € 23 today, then Blinky Palermo's print has thus enjoyed a good two-hundred-fold increase in value. All the better, then, that the Westfälischer Kunstverein has held onto its copy of this handsome print, which is iconically numbered 1/150.

Rose-Maria Gropp is an art and literary critic, journalist and cultural-affairs correspondent. For many years she was the editor of the art market section of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

The Imitation of Christ,
16th century

Copperplate engraving
on paper
34.4 × 24.2 cm
Inv. no. C-67 WKV

In this engraving by the Dutch artist Hans Collaert, image and text combine to create a compact and multi-layered structure of meaning. Its framework—in both a literal and figurative sense—is formed by the scenes of the Christian history of salvation arranged in the margins. Together with the Latin quotations from the Old and New Testaments assigned to them, the depictions of the Nativity (right, 1st from top), Flagellation, Crucifixion and Entombment (at the top) and Resurrection of Christ (left, 1st from top) and the so-called Four Last Things (right, 3rd from top: Death; left, 3rd from top: Last Judgement; left, 2nd from top: Heaven; right, 2nd from top: Hell) combine to form the central theological statement of the engraving: only those who follow Christ in life, his passion and death will ultimately experience redemption.

The fact that the viewer's gaze during the viewing process repeatedly crosses the central and, at the same time, largest depiction, forms an essential part of the visual argument. This is because it is condensed into an allegorical pictorial form in the centre of the composition, to which the verses from the Gospel of Matthew (10:38) and the Book of Job (21:13), which can be read in the cartouche below, are assigned. In an iconographic reference to Lucas Cranach's *Gesetz und Gnade* (Law and Grace) depictions, for example, the existential choice between devotion to earthly pleasures and the *imitatio Christi*, which is as painful as it is salvific, is staged here. The execution scene, which can be seen on the left behind the figure of Christ prostrate under the cross, indicates that the latter path could mean a violent death in the historical context of sixteenth-century Netherlands, which was characterised by political and religious strife. Thus, from the perspective of its time of origin, the engraving emphasises the enduring validity of biblical teachings and is, as it were, a mise en scène of an anthropological constant: the enduring topicality of the choice between short-term self-interest on the one hand and the onerous and sometimes sacrificial commitment to higher goals and ideals on the other.

Mariam Hammami is a research assistant at the Institute of Art History at the University of Tübingen. Her dissertation, published in 2023, analyses visual concepts of truth in Dutch printmaking and graphic art around 1600.

Hans Collaert t. E.

out-line 3, 1962/67
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1967

Screen print on paper
75 × 58.9 cm
Inv. no. C-354 WKV

Robyn Denny

Robyn Denny is simply a cool guy. A sacred, transcendent guy, who anticipated the London Swinging Sixties with simmered-down, jazzy abstractions as early as the late 1950s. *Great Big, Biggest Wide London* was the name of a mural he painted in 1959 for Austin Reed, the traditional yet trendy menswear outfitter on London's Regent Street, and which established his early fame. The Beatles had their first photograph taken in front of it for their first recording as a band. The slogans on the painting behind them are young, full of optimism and literally disintegrate into abstraction. There is this moment of mod and working-class culture, something intoxicating and, at the same time, completely empty, elegant, deathly.

Denny, born in Surrey in 1930 as the son of a Church of England clergyman, embodied—like David Hockney or Richard Hamilton—the symbiosis of high-end/pop culture, but more in the mode of abstraction. He looked incredibly stylish, even as a student at the Slade School of Art, with his shaved head like a skinhead and black horn-rimmed glasses. Initially influenced by Abstract Expressionism, he began in the early 1960s with super-flat images reminiscent of hard edge painting—and yet they are architectural, quintessentially urban. The structures he generated from monochrome colour fields and Art Deco-like outlines, as in his silkscreen *out-line 3* (1962/67), are reminiscent of the doors, window shutters, grilles and ornaments that you pass by on the streets of London. They convey the style of films such as Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blow Up* (1967) or the designs of the famous Biba department store by Barbara Hulanicki in Kensington.

Similar to Mark Rothko's colour field paintings, Denny's dry-as-a-biscuit geometric abstractions are portals leading into a zen-like void and meaninglessness, *great, big, biggest wide.* Denny is considered one of the greatest British abstract artists of the post-war period. The casualness with which he opens these sacred portals in his *out-line* series is almost shocking—and absolutely contemporary. His 1960s paintings could have been produced in the twenty-first century; back in the day, they were way ahead of their time. As early as 1966, he was showing at the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale together with Anthony Caro, Bernard and Harold Cohen, and Richard Smith. In 1973, he was the youngest artist to ever receive a retrospective at the Tate in London. After that, he was forgotten and considered outdated, even though he painted sensational pictures later in California. But like his early fame, this early obscurity is also the stuff of legends.

Oliver Koerner von Gustorf lives and works as a freelance author and art critic in Berlin and the Uckermark. He writes endless commentaries and essays on art, politics and culture for his column 'Die leere Welt' on *Monopol Online*.

Fragment of a domestic altar, centre panel (recto and verso), c. 1420

Tempera on oak wood
23.2 × 15.9 cm
Inv. no. 86 WKV

Master of St Laurence

In 1881, the Westfälischer Kunstverein acquired this really small oak panel painted on both sides. On loan to the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, the late medieval work returned to its place of origin, Cologne, before 1936 and until 1950. Since 1978, the same museum has been authorised to hold the panel on permanent loan from the Westfälischer Kunstverein and the Westfälisches Landesmuseum. In return, the Cologne museum has also lent the portrait of his wife Anna, painted by Ludger tom Ring the Elder in 1541, to the Münster museum on a permanent basis.

The front of the panel shows God the Father holding the body of his son Jesus Christ, crowned with thorns, who has been taken down from the cross, against a gold background with embossed borders. The dove of the Holy Spirit flies between the heads of the two protagonists. The Trinity is flanked by two angels at the edges of the composition: the two angels at the back hold the instruments of Christ's passion, such as the scourging pillar, the rod with the vinegar sponge and the lance; the two at the front encourage the devout use of the devotional image through their prayerful veneration of the Trinity. On the other side of the panel, the isolated 'true' face of Christ (Vera Icon) without the crown of thorns is depicted frontally against a red background with a cross-shaped nimbus. The work, which was made around 1415, is probably a fragment of a two-part folding panel painting (diptych), the other—right—wing of which shows the mourning Mother of God on the inside.

Who made these paintings? We know many names of late-medieval Cologne painters from non-artistic documents, such as property transactions. However, as they did not sign their names, it is not possible to establish a link to the numerous paintings that have also survived. After a stylistically very similar altarpiece panel from the Cologne parish church of St Laurence, the apparently Westphalian-influenced painter of this panel has been given the notional name 'Master of St Laurence'. Most recently, he was regarded as the workshop successor to the so-called 'Master of St Veronica'. However, recent research has called this chronology into question. Research is also currently redrawing the boundaries between the œuvres of the two—apparently collaborating—Cologne painters.

Roland Krischel is head of the medieval department at the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum. His areas of research include the media history of late-medieval and early-modern painting in Cologne, the Venetian Renaissance and twentieth-century art history.

Mirror Compact with *Offering of the Heart*, 1300

Ivory
9 × 9 cm
Inv. no. G-15 WKV

From the thirteenth century onwards, ivory was in great demand in Parisian workshops. Its substance as a sculptural material and its smooth, silky surface made it particularly suitable for the delicate ornamentation that characterises Parisian Gothic art. Ivory was often used for toiletries, such as combs and mirror compacts, which were very popular with the French aristocracy.

Mirror compacts consisted of two connected ivory discs that formed a small case about ten centimetres in size. The two outer sides were decorated with sculptures in low relief, and a polished metal disc was set into the contoured inner side. As with most surviving mirror compacts, the two lids of the case that the *Offering of the Heart* belonged to have become detached from each other and the metal disc has been lost.

Nevertheless, the carving is still characterised by its sophistication and grace. The amorous scene in the centre of the medallion is framed by four dragons crouching on the edge: a youth in a long robe with a hood kneels before a young woman standing in a garden. He presents her with his heart in both hands, which she gently takes with her right hand while touching the kneeling man's hand with her left. Characteristic of courtly love, the simple representation emphasises the symbolic gestures of the young man's courtship to great effect. By offering his heart to the woman he adores, he assures her of his utter, steadfast devotion. Thus, the scene points to the possible function of the mirror compact: these objects, much coveted by courtly ladies, were often presented as a token of courtly love. In this way, the feelings of the beloved, expressed through the decoration, could enter the bedchamber of the beloved woman through the accessory intended for beauty care.

The fascination that such objects held for eighteenth and nineteenth-century art collectors can be explained by their symbolism and preciousness. This also applies to the *Offering of the Heart*, which was part of the Oberst von Frankenberg collection before it was acquired by the Westfälischer Kunstverein in 1879.

Perrette Russon studied art history at the Sorbonne in Paris, specializing in the Middle Ages. From April to May 2024, she was an trainee at the LWL Museum of Art and Culture, also in the Medieval Department.

[Unknown]

Portrait of the Poet Ilse von Stach, 1924

Oil on plywood
63 × 67.3 cm
Inv. no. 870 WKV

A woman, not yet old, but visibly aging. Not beautiful, but not marked by illness or fate either. Simple, almost rustic in appearance. Her eyes are watery and bright, her greying hair rigorously combed back from her forehead. Her dress as simple as its wearer. The background shimmers in shades of green. There are no traces of wealth, but neither is there a hint of poverty. Neither in her appearance nor in the room. No indication of anything at all.

The woman depicted, Ilse von Stach, was the wife of Martin Wackernagel. Nothing is known about the artist. That is all the Westfälischer Kunstverein knows today. The Landesmuseum, which holds the Kunstverein's collection on permanent loan, keeps the painting in storage. Does one not consider the painting of an ageing woman by an unknown female artist worthy of exhibition?

Ilse von Stach (1879–1941) enjoyed early success as a writer. At nineteen, she published her first volume of poetry and eight years later, Hans Pfitzner set her Christmas fairy tale *Das Christ-Elflein* (1906) to music. Further volumes of poetry, novels translated into foreign languages and plays performed on stage would follow. She produced her extensive work despite having six children from three marriages, as well as many moves, to Berlin, Paris, Rome and Leipzig, where Hildegard Domizlaff (1898–1987) had already made a portrait bust of Stach in 1918. Both women converted from the Protestant to Catholic faith. When Stach's third husband accepted a position at the University of Münster, Domizlaff followed them, together with her fellow student Helen Louise Wiehen (1899–1969), who chose not to paint Ilse von Stach at her desk in 1924, not with her finger in a book or in her library: Stach was famous and did not need any trappings.

In 1926, Domizlaff and Wiehen moved from Münster to Cologne, where they lived in a studio house built especially for them and worked on modern forms of expression for Catholic architectural decorations, sculptures, wall paintings, liturgical objects, etc. Does Wiehen's portrait depict these shared endeavors? What is suggested on the shiny medallion that Ilse von Stach touches with her left hand? A head? Christ? Mary? Or a portrait within a portrait, a greeting from artist to artist? When will we be able to see the painting in the permanent exhibition?

Angela Steidele reflects on history as the present, on art as science and love as provocation in her novels, biographies and essays. The award-winning author's most recent publication is *Aufklärung. Ein Roman* (2022).

Helen Louise Wiehen

Altarpiece with depictions of the *Passion of Christ* in St Martin's Church in Spenge, c. 1470

Oak and walnut (?)
c. 200 × 259 cm
Inv. no. E-152 WKV

By harvest festival in the autumn of 1993, Pastor Budde and his fellow campaigners from Spenge near Bielefeld had succeeded: after a total of 116 years and protracted, tough negotiations with the powers that be the Westfälischer Kunstverein and the Westfälisches Landesmuseum, the carved altarpiece from the fifteenth century, which depicts scenes from the Passion of Christ, finally returned to St Martin's church. In the late nineteenth century, the church had become too small for the steadily burgeoning number of worshippers, so the parish decided to undertake a comprehensive renovation of the premises. The altarpiece was in the way, and consequently the Kunstverein saw an opportunity to purchase it from the parish for 285 marks in 1877—a transaction mediated by Oberst von Frankenberg.

The museum in Münster opened its doors in 1908, and numerous high-quality works from the Kunstverein have graced the permanent exhibition ever since. The altarpiece was initially restored and shown for the first and only time in 1915. This work, like most of the others, miraculously survived the Second World War undamaged in storage in western Münsterland. After that, it ended up back in storage, hidden from public view. Representatives of the community in Spenge remembered 'their' altarpiece and, over the following decades, repeatedly tried to persuade the Kunstverein to repatriate it. This story in particular troubled the then pastor Burkhard Budde from the 1980s onwards: taking up the gauntlet, he wrote countless letters to the then board of the Westfälischer Kunstverein and to the museum director. He even initiated a petition in his community to underline the importance of this endeavour. The whole enterprise was, of course, accompanied by numerous articles in the local newspaper, which naturally also provided excellent publicity for the cause. Finally, all parties agreed on the following terms: the parish in Spenge would be granted its altarpiece on permanent loan and would henceforward be responsible for any necessary restoration and maintenance. In addition, a brass plaque was to be affixed to the altarpiece indicating the Westfälischer Kunstverein's proprietorship. To this day, the work is located in St Martin's Church in Spenge—and what's more is looked after and cherished by the community!

Tobias Viehoff is a fourth-generation market tradesman at the Prinzipalmarkt. For more than thirty years, he has been involved in various honorary positions for the tradespeople's community, economic affairs and urban development. He is particularly interested in and passionate about contemporary art. He joined the board of Westfälischer Kunstverein more than twenty-five years ago and has been its chairman since 2008.

[Unknown]

Untitled (*Westfälischer Kunstverein*), 2013

Lightbox (metal casing, fluorescent tubes, [milky] Plexiglas plate, individual letters)
30.7 × 243.5 × 15.3 cm
Inv. no. A-1425 WKV

Virginia Overton

In a text about the artist Virginia Overton for the Venice Biennale 2022, I read: "Her site-specific sculptural installations explore the untapped potential of objects associated with industry and infrastructure." At first glance, the work *Untitled (Westfälischer Kunstverein)* from 2013 appears both site-specific and yet completely anonymous. A white lightbox with black letters unceremoniously reads 'Westfälischer Kunstverein'. This work was created for her solo exhibition in Münster, which took place in the new exhibition spaces of the Kunstverein in the building complex of the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur. Overton spent two weeks in the city collecting a variety of materials from the Kunstverein and museum warehouses, the construction site of the new buildings for both institutions, a bunker that was being converted, as well as from various farms in the Münsterland region. After the exhibition ended, Overton donated the lightbox to the Westfälischer Kunstverein.

I came across the exhibition in Münster in an article in *Artforum* magazine about Overton's work. Among other things, it states: "More humorously, when Overton recently made sculptures for an exhibition at Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster, Germany, she employed materials from the institution's storage; after dismantling the works, she was prevented from leaving with certain sections of two-way mirror—because they were actually spare parts for a Dan Graham sculpture that had been left in a storage closet."

From the exhibition views, I can see that the sign was placed above the entrance to the large exhibition hall. This made it a signifier, a symbol of the institution that could be redefined in this place. Although the sign initially appears to follow the visual logic of print media or advertising and uses language as a graphic device, it has a particular history. In 2012, The Kitchen—a legendary exhibition space in New York City founded by artists in the 1970s—invited Overton to stage a solo exhibition. In one of the storage rooms there, she found the original lightbox that had graced the entrance to The Kitchen in the 1980s. The artist has always produced light boxes for various institutions, including Kunsthalle Bern and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

By precisely recreating The Kitchen's light box, Overton has tendered a subversive gesture that can be understood as a comment on globalised contemporary art. These art venues and works seem to look identical wherever they are. At the same time, the artist unobtrusively integrates a reference to The Kitchen as a place of resistance and subcultural encounters into the white cubes of the international art scene.

Cathrin Mayer studied art history in Vienna. She is currently director of Kunstverein Braunschweig. Previously, she worked as an independent curator and at the HALLE FÜR KUNST Steiermark (Graz) and the KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin.

Unequal Love
(formerly titled: *Temptation*),
1711–1720

Oil on canvas
76.7 × 63.2 cm
Inv. no. 197 WKV

Herman van der Myn

Him (nagging): My beauty, what delicate skin you have!
Her (disgusted): Your beard tickles unbearably, what's more it stinks of onion sauce.
Him: Your cheeks are rosy, your lips are red …
Her: Leave it out …
Him: I'll give you everything, ANYTHING you want.
Her: I want some peace and quiet!
Him: Let's lie together!
Her: Your breath! Yuck, it reeks of hard stuff!
Him: Give me a kiss!
Her: No chance!
Him: Just one …
Her: No thanks—how plain do I have to be?
Him: You can buy yourself something nice with the money!
Her: So I'm not beautiful enough after all?
Him: I didn't mean it like that.
Her: Not even the scent of a rose can hide the fact that you haven't washed in days …
Him: Don't be like that! Just take the money!
Her: I can't!
Him: Why not?
Her: With one hand I have to fend you off, with the other I have to waft the rose in front of me so that I don't faint.
Him: What is that in your hand?
Her: A letter.
Him: From whom??
Her: From the pastor.
Him: What do you have to do with the pastor?
Her: Actually nothing.
Him: You hussy, you whore, you slut!
Her: Isn't that what you wanted?
Him: Read the letter!
Her (reads): *Virgins—Song. In gold, six months of dog roses, praised by old and young. But when the little flower has been plucked, it is only regarded as invalid currency. But maidens, you need to avoid that, love honour more than money, let virtue hold sway. Whoever resists money betimes will also be master of it otherwise.—There is a time for everything.* (Pause)
Him: You totally made that up!
Her: It says so here!
Him: What does he mean by 'six months of dog roses'?
Her: Six months seems like a very short time to me too …
Him: There is a time for everything. The pastor, the letter and now me.
Her: I'm not the slightest bit tempted.
Him: You're no longer a virgin!
Her: And you're no longer a young man!
Him: I love you!
Her: What's love got to do with it?!
Him: We could become a couple!
Her: You're delirious! Totally plastered …
Him: I don't know what you want anymore!
Her: To be rid of you!
Him: At least look at me!
Her: I see right through you to the exit into the garden, where colourful, sweet treasures await me!
Him: But you are *my very own* treasure!
Her: Keep your own SACK of gold to yourself!
Him: Enough of this farce!
Her: My point exactly.

She pushes him behind the curtain, draws it and disappears through the exit.

Nadja Abt (née Vladimirovich) is an artist, author and editor.
She lives in Berlin and Vienna, where she most recently taught 'Writing Alongside Art' at the University of Applied Arts.

The Frog Princess,
alternative title: *Princess and the Frog*, 1924

Tempera on canvas
77 × 61 cm
Collection of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, confiscated in 1937 as 'degenerate', today presumably in private possession
Inv. no. 634 WKV

Christian Rohlfs

Fairytale scenes are a recurring motif in the Expressionist œuvre of Christian Rohlfs (1849–1938). The painting *Froschkönigin* (The Frog Princess) from 1924 depicts the central, crowned figure of the princess. She looks down at a frog that she is holding to her chest. According to the Brothers Grimm fairy tale, the shadowy figures on the left and lower edges of the picture are presumably the father of the princess and Iron Henry, the faithful servant of the transformed prince. The energetic brushwork causes the background to merge with the figures. The original colours can only be speculated upon as to the only existing reproduction is in black and white. The defamiliarisation of the *Frog Prince* was a thorn in the side of the Nazis, as the instrumentalisation of the children's fairy tales was an integral part of their educational theory and journalism.

The Westfälischer Kunstverein acquired the work together with the pastel *An der Ostsee* (By the Baltic) directly from the artist in the late 1920s after an exhibition. In 1935, the *Froschkönigin* was probably last shown in the exhibition *Hundert Jahre Kunst der Nordmark* (One Hundred Years of Art in the Nordmark) at the Kunstverein in the Landesmuseum. In 1937, both works were confiscated by the Nazis without compensation on the basis of the 'Law on Confiscation of Products of Degenerate Art', along with more than 450 of Rohlfs's graphic works and panel paintings from the Hagen Art Museum, now the Osthaus Museum Hagen, and other German museums. Rohlfs was banned from exhibiting and painting and died in 1938, one day after being expelled from the Prussian Academy of Arts.

After the confiscation, programmatic works by Rohlfs, such as *Elias wird vom Raben gespeist* (Elijah Being Fed by the Raven) (1921) and *Dorf* (Village) (c. 1913) toured Germany and Austria as part of the 'Degenerate Art' exhibition in 1937/1938. They were then stored in the Schönhausen Palace in Berlin as 'internationally marketable' works—including *Froschkönigin* and *An der Ostsee* (cf. list, inventory in Schönhausen, 1939, Gurlitt dealer file, Bundesarchiv, Berlin, R55/21015, fol. 47, no. 700). The pictures were to be sold abroad by Bernhard A. Böhmer, who was acting on behalf of Goebbels's 'Reich Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment', as goods on commission. This is known to have been successful in hundreds of cases. According to the dealer's file, however, the work *Froschkönigin* was returned to the Ministry of Propaganda (see list, Bernhard A. Böhmer - Commission, 7.1940, Dealer file Böhmer, Bundesarchiv, Berlin, R55/21019, p. 25). After that, the painting's whereabouts are unknown. It first reappeared in 1960 at an auction held by the Lempertz art dealership in Cologne, followed by further auctions in 1964 (also Lempertz) and 1969 (Wolfgang Ketterer Gallery, Munich). The winning bid at the last auction was placed by a Berlin art dealer. In the catalogue raisonné published in 1978, Paul Vogt still referred to the work as: "private collection, Dortmund". No further details are known and the painting does not appear to have resurfaced on the art market since then.

Karolin Baumann is an art historian and cultural studies specialist. She is a research associate at the Geschichtsort Villa ten Hompel in Münster, where she is responsible for the collection and develops formats for historico-political education.

Still Life with a Dead Duck,
1792

Oil on canvas
43.5 × 54 cm
Inv. no. 135 WKV

Margarethe König

I can only speculate whether Margarethe König painted her *Still Life with a Dead Duck* in the knowledge that she was about to die. Little is known about the painter. She was the daughter of the Prince-bishop's court sculptor, Johann Heinrich König; she designed several overdoors for Schloss Münster between 1770 and 1780 and three of her still lifes are on permanent loan from the Westfälischer Kunstverein to the Westfälisches Landesmuseum in Münster.

Her painting *Still Life with a Dead Duck* (Stillleben mit toter Ente) depicts a typical vanitas still life prevalent in the Baroque period. The symbolic props on the laid table accentuate the transience of human life and humility before the divine, current at the time. The cut flowers presage their ultimate withering in their bloom. The chestnut on the table is emblematic of the passage of time and autumn, when birds fly south. The fragile porcelain, the ripe melon and the hunted duck allude to the vanitas motif and, at the same time, bear witness to Margarethe König's access to the court and her family privileges. As if plucked from the sky, the shot duck crash-lands on the table and brutally interlopes into the mise en scène of an already transient life. The plate, melon, chestnut and vase of flowers are unceremoniously shunted to the edge of the painting. The dead body of the duck dominates the composition, as does the empty black background, which gapes open behind the dead bird like a screen. So much for the detailed analysis of the composition. The duck is dead. Margarethe König is dead.

The painting has been preserved as an item in the collection, but the lack of information about Margarethe König emphasises the wholesale amnesia about and suppression of female artists in the past and present. Of the 100 works from the Westfälischer Kunstverein's collection that were made available to me to choose from, only just under ten per cent were by women. And so a prodigious silence envelopes the painting when I look at it again, not realising that, as a woman artist, she would only become a marginal note in art history. This makes her presence all the more important in this new examination of the Kunstverein's collection. What does her still life tell us today? Knowing full well that climate change is shifting the seasons and upsetting the routines of flora and fauna. Despite all our prosperity and belief in progress, our mortality is a constant, ineluctably present. This makes it all the more important not to forget the achievements of an equal society, but to keep retelling them, also in a respectful interaction with nature.

Juliane Schickedanz studied art education in the field of fine arts and specialised in queer-feminist exhibition practice as an artist in her own right. In conjunction with Anna Jehle, she has been in charge of the Kunsthalle Osnabrück since 2020.

Spirit of Reality, 1964
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1964

Screen print on paper
67.5 × 63 cm
Inv. no. C-627 WKV

Georg Karl Pfahler

‘Jahresgaben’ or annual editions are a blessing for artists and members of the Kunstverein alike. They replaced the so-called ‘Nietenblätter’ (reproductions of original artworks), which, in the many decades before, had been given to members unlucky enough not to have won original artworks in the annual lottery. In the 1920s, more and more original prints were being produced in smaller editions. As director of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, Dieter Honisch commissioned Georg Karl Pfahler, for example, to design an annual edition for the Kunstverein. In 1964, the artist chose silkscreen printing, a new medium for the art world, for this very purpose.

In the context of the exhibition *Formen der Farbe* (Forms of Colour) at the Württembergischer Kunstverein in spring 1967, the term *Hard Edge* was coined and two Stuttgart-based artists, Thomas Lenk and G. K. Pfahler, played a decisive role in designing the German contribution to this internationally active, new, boldly-coloured two-dimensional turn. The Domberger screen printing company, which worked not only in advertising but also with artists, such as Willi Baumeister, gave the motif a distinct lustre and widespread exposure.

The most important figure in this field was Dieter Honisch (1932–2004), director of the Westfälischer Kunstverein between 1961 and 1965. Honisch not only brought the *Fifty Years of the Bauhaus* exhibition to the Württembergischer Kunstverein in 1968, which then travelled around the world, visiting nine different venues, but also *Forms of Colour* the previous year. He confirmed his early choice of Georg Karl Pfahler in Münster by publishing the artist’s first annual edition here at a very early stage.

The high point of the collaboration—indeed friendship—with Pfahler was Honisch’s curatorial selection for the German pavilion, the *Padiglione tedesco* at the 1970 Venice Biennale: it comprised Pfahler, Lenk, Mack and Uecker. In 1971, Honisch and the four artists realised the first exhibition of contemporary West German art in the then People’s Republic of Poland. Together with his colleagues at the Galeria Zachęta in Warsaw, he had created something of a sensation.

Wulf Herzogenrath is an independent curator and author. Among other roles, he has been director of the Kölnischer Kunstverein, head curator of the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin and director of the Kunsthalle Bremen. In 1977, he supervised the video art contribution for *documenta 6*. Until 2021, he was honorary director of the Visual Arts Section at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin.

The Five Senses, c. 1650
(five paintings)

Oil on oak wood
Each 87.7–88.3 × 66.6 cm
Inv. no. 199 WKV–203 WKV

Pieter van Noort

The group of works on the five senses by the Dutch painter Pieter van Noort, about whom little is known apart from his year of birth circa 1592, belongs to the Flemish genre painting style, but is also a combination of still life and portrait. What are the actual motifs here—the sitters or the allegories? The faces and actions of the male figures depicted or the appurtenances that surround them?

While the allegories of hearing and taste are depicted in a rather typical manner (a man playing the violin and opening his mouth to sing, and a visibly cheerful gentleman regaling himself with wine and a plate of partly-eaten fish morsels), i. e. presenting attributes that were quite familiar in paintings of the five senses, Pieter van Noort resorts to his own, sometimes enigmatic visual language and invented allegories for touch and smell.

The painting *Sight* shows a dark-haired man in half-profile, holding up and looking at a glass jar containing a reddish liquid against the light. On the table in front of him are pages with writing on them, extracted teeth, instruments and vials. His hat is adorned with a snake instead of a feather, an emblem that identifies him as a doctor. It is interesting that van Noort associates the sense of sight with a very specific profession, which also depends on good eyesight, but certainly also requires the senses of smell, hearing and touch. Pensive in the ritual of smoking a pipe, a splendidly-dressed man in the picture *Smell* leads a long white pipe toward his mouth or nose with his right hand, while his left hand lights a match on the embers contained in a small vessel. Using the aroma of foggy pipe smoke instead of the scent of fragrant flowers, for example, chimes with the theme that dominates all five pictures: pleasure. While the red-nosed drinker raises his glass towards the viewer and the musician looks out of the picture almost invitingly, as if he wants to encourage the spectators to sing along, the pipe smoker allegorising *Smell* and the viewer are completely absorbed in their respective sensory impressions.

The fifth picture in the series allegorising *Touch* is the most surprising. In modern times, this faculty was regarded more as a sensation of pain than a sense of touch; Rembrandt depicted touch as a cerebral function in his Five Senses cycle, which is considered to be the earliest known work by the then still young painter. Pieter van Noort associates feeling with a sensory experience, the feel of silver coins. A man dressed in a flowing red throw and a hat adorned with feathers and jewellery smiles proudly and contentedly at the viewer as he counts a pile of coins, moving them from his right hand into his left. Certainly, the feeling of cold, heavy coins in the hand is something that everyone can recall; it provides satisfaction, and the accumulation of coins favours every form of consumption, which, as in the other four works, can lead to pleasure and enjoyment. However, the choice of coins as the sole attribute is surprising, as numerous other surfaces and textures explored in Flemish still lifes and genre paintings treating the sense of touch readily spring to mind. Is Pieter van Noort playing with allegory as a pictorial mode here by using the coins as familiar symbols from still lifes or genre scenes? As a symbol of vanitas, coins symbolise the transience of material wealth, while in other paintings, they embody the temptations of worldly life, greed and abundance. The artist leaves us alone with this enigma—there is scant literature on this cycle of paintings, and works by the artist can only be found in a few museum collections.

Leonie Pfennig is an art historian and works as a freelance author and editor in Cologne. She writes regularly for magazines as well as for artists, galleries and institutions. She is co-founder of the feminist initiative *And She Was Like: BÄM!*

Untitled, 1971
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1971

Ink on paper
21.5 × 27.8 cm
Inv. no. KdZ 7566 WKV

Hanne Darboven

In 1971, Klaus Honnef curated the first large-scale exhibition of works by Hanne Darboven (1941–2009) at the Westfälischer Kunstverein. In the same year, she created a unique series of fifty drawings based on a mathematical operation as an annual edition (Jahresgabe).

After a two-year sojourn in New York in 1968, Darboven developed a system for calculating the sums of days, months and years, which from then on formed the basis of her work. She noted down the calculated sum of the digits, which she also referred to as "K values", as well as the dates as numbers or written numerical words. Her first geometric constructions and tabular documentations of a century were on display at the exhibition in Münster. Hundreds of drawings were organised in folders and files on tables, while others hung in blocks close together on the wall. Through her repetitive system, Darboven filled entire rooms with numbers; her series of figures thus assumed a sculptural dimension.

In the edition, which remains in the Kunstverein's collection, Darboven devoted herself to all the dates in a year with the sum of 31: 16.1.68, 15.2.68, 14.3.68, 13.4.68, 12.5.68, 11.6.68, 10.7.68, 9.8.68, 8.9.68, 7.10.68, 6.11.68, 5.12.68. In this and other artworks, the numbers appear as pure numbers. Darboven wrote texts with numbers, which she called "mathematical prose". The numbers do not represent anything, they merely appear as themselves. According to Darboven herself, her data based on calendar calculations thus gave her the opportunity to "write without describing". Following a concept, she recorded time in her date calculations, visualising the flow of time, whereby her method allowed her to depict periods of time and, at the same time, create an awareness of time in private, social, historical and cultural terms. And since she refrained from using specifying centuries in her works, her calculations are valid for every century, be they in the past or in the future.

Merle Radtke has been director of the Kunsthalle Münster since 2018. Previously she worked for the Hamburger Kunsthalle and the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart. She was a member of the graduate programme *Aesthetics of the Virtual* at the HfbK Hamburg and a fellow at Villa Kamogawa, Japan.

Seascape, 1640

Oil on oak wood
24.2 × 34.2 cm
Inv. no. 180 WKV

Bonaventura Peeters's *Seestück* (Seascape) pressgangs us and takes us out on the open sea. A stiff breeze is driving two frigates, one of which is heading towards the right-hand edge of the picture, while the other—only vaguely visible—seems as though it is being swallowed up by dark clouds.

The sea is agitated, dark clouds are looming in the sky. Is a storm brewing or abating? In any case, the blue gaps in the clouds indicate a change in the weather. A coastline can be seen in the distance. A rudderless boat is drifting towards the land. The *Seestück* is a work in which humans are absent as a motif. This gives rise to the impression that the raging forces of nature dominate the pictorial space.

The frigate on the right-hand side of the painting is particularly striking. Its ensign flies taut in the wind. The colour of the pennant could indicate that the ship is sailing in peaceful waters or belongs to a particular national fleet. Bonaventura Peeters was born on 23 July 1614 in Antwerp and died on 25 July 1652 in nearby Hoboken. The Flemish painter is best known for his fascinating seascapes, which are often characterised by dramatic weather scenarios and detailed depictions of ships, including wrecks.

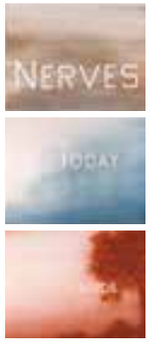
The play of light and shadow, as exemplified by the small seascape, enhances the expressive movement of his paintings. Bonaventura Peeters achieves atmospheric depth through his keen powers of observation. He contrasts grey-blues and warm browns with cool blues. Thus, the dark sea and tenebrous clouds meet the calming and hopeful blue of the sky in a theatrical way. Bonaventura's work radiates a turbulent yet fearless mood that sets it apart from other seascapes of his time.

Although Peeters was a successful marine painter during his lifetime, he was largely forgotten after his death and his works were rarely exhibited for a long time. His paintings are considered masterpieces of maritime art.

Sabine Oelze is an art historian and journalist from Cologne. Since 2018, she has been running the website www.audioarchivkunst.de, an oral art history archive on the beginnings of contemporary art in the Rhineland (together with Marion Ritter).

Bonaventura Peeters

Industrial Nerves, 1985



Colour powder on paper
Each 58,6 × 73,8 cm
Inv. no. KdZ 2398 WKV–
KdZ 2400 WKV

Edward Ruscha

It is quite difficult not to read Ed Ruscha's text paintings as the final credits to a film titled *The Rise and Fall of Painting*. It devoted itself to nature, it replaced reality with symbols, it idealized life and criticized society, it became self-referential, it became nostalgic, The End.

After painting died, art was "transformed into merchandise" (Marcel Broodthaers) and started to double up what it tries to convey in what it depicts. This had been internalized by the conceptual artists of the 1970s who showed information as art—names of things instead of the things themselves. Nowadays the 'meaning' of an artwork is usually spelled out in front of you and the quicker it needs to be processed by minds and machines alike, the more unambiguously decipherable it has to be.

When people conjure up words, like when they daydream, they tend to stare out the window and project their thoughts, sentences, memories etc. in front of this framed landscape. Or they glaze over the screen and its background of a more or less generic nature. Some scientists believe this is how consciousness developed—by simulating oneself as an I in future circumstances.

It seems that over time Ed Ruscha's text paintings were coming to make use of that deeply ingrained process. Throughout the 1960s up until 1972, Ruscha's choice of words was rather nominalist and pop—'vapor', 'rancho', 'vista bonita' etc. However, in the 1980s, when it was palpable that the regime of semantic declarations of conceptual art had collapsed under the weight of its own bathos and a style of faux-expressive painting became popular, his paintings accessed 'the mind's eye'—they became private utopias and promises for better products at the same time (as much as failures of communication), projected onto 'natural' screens made from edible organic matter.

If your eyes look up to the left, it means you are constructing a visual image, if they look up to the right it means you are remembering an image—they show where in your brain you are accessing information. Ed Ruscha inserts text here—one that was or was not on your mind once.

Manuel Gnam is an artist and writer. He has exhibited internationally both as a solo artist and as one half of the artist duo *Flame* (with Taslima Ahmed).

Portrait of Professor Martin Wackernagel, 1940

Oil on canvas
198.5 × 111.5 cm
Inv. no. 868 WKV

Carl Busch

Carl Busch painted this portrait of Martin Wackernagel, who at the time was both chairman of the board of the Westfälischer Kunstverein and professor of art history at the University of Münster, at a time when art and science were restricted in their freedom and subjected to ideological exploitation by the Nazi regime. Neither Busch nor Wackernagel distinguished themselves as ardent supporters of Hitler or resistance fighters. Busch was, however, extremely successful as an artist and, with his war paintings, part of the Nazi propaganda machine. Wackernagel, on the other hand, was one of the central figures in the reconstruction of the Westfälischer Kunstverein after 1945.

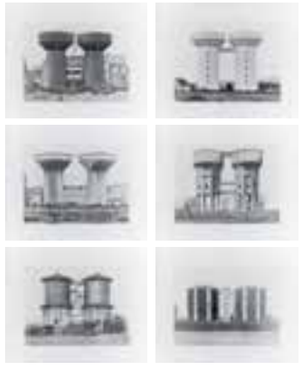
The painting was commissioned by the Kunstverein in celebration of Wackernagel's sixtieth birthday. A few months earlier, he had published his major academic work *Der Lebensraum des Künstlers in der florentinischen Renaissance. Aufgaben und Auftraggeber, Werkstatt und Kunstmarkt* (The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist. Projects and Patrons, Workshop and Art Market). In this study, he reconstructed the extent to which artists at the time were dependent on external circumstances in their work, thus countering any cult of genius. In his laudatory review in the *Burlington Magazine* in 1939, Nikolaus Pevsner observed: "[...] the author's anxiety for the precarious and unwholesome position of art and artists today comes out in many passages of immediate topical significance [...]."

So if Wackernagel's contemporaries could read his text on two levels, the question arises of whether an interpretative view is also permissible in this portrait. Does the picture show a real spatial situation or does the juxtaposition of books on the shelf on the left and painting utensils on the shelf on the right address the relationship between art history and art practice? Do you want to go so far as to identify the bronze figure on the bookshelf on the left as Eve with the apple from the Tree of Knowledge and thus ascribe a critical message to the painting? How important then is the observation that Wackernagel is leaning on the bookshelf or that the bronze figure and the person portrayed are shown in almost the same posture? Carl Busch's œuvre is too inconsistent to provide clues to a correct reading of his paintings. However, in the volume marking the 150th anniversary of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, Günther Fiensch suggests that Wackernagel vehemently criticised the tendency toward aesthetic distancing in art appreciation at the time. The implicit message to his students is that art is not an abstract entity, it is made by people for people—at different times and under different conditions—thereby generating its meaning. Perhaps this thought, which is also based on the reality that can be experienced daily at the Kunstverein, is also a subtext of this painting.

Eckhard Kluth, art historian with a museum background (Münster, Dresden), originally specialising in early modern art. Now head of the Central Custody at the University of Münster, where he is responsible, among other things, for the art collection (twentieth and twenty-first centuries).

Sechs Doppelwassertürme,
1972 (six photographs)
Edition of the Westfälischer
Kunstverein 1972

Silver gelatin print on
photo paper
Each 52 × 42 cm
Inv. no. C-323,1 WKV–
C-323,6 WKV



Bernhard and Hilla Becher

Bernd and Hilla Becher began their creative partnership in 1959 and, over the next fifty years, created a sprawling record of modern industrial architecture that profoundly shaped post-war photography. Using a large-format view camera mounted on a tripod, the Bechers created meticulously detailed black-and-white photographs of structures from blast furnaces to water towers. They photographed their subjects objectively and unsentimentally, in a manner reminiscent of Karl Blossfeldt's plant specimens or August Sander's anonymous portraits of German citizens. Working on overcast days, they centered the structures against the blank sky and frequently used ladders or scaffolding to attain unobstructed vantage points devoid of figures or other extraneous details. By the early 1960s, the duo had settled on presenting their work as 'typologies'—groups of images of the same subject—in grids ranging from four to thirty prints. Celebrated by Minimalist and Conceptual artists, their work propelled the acceptance of photography as a contemporary art form. At the same time, their teaching at the Düsseldorf Academy influenced a generation of German photographers.

The photographs in *Sechs Doppelwassertürme* (Six Double Water Towers) were taken on trips through Belgium and Northern France, and in North Rhine-Westphalia, near Düsseldorf, where the couple lived and worked. Close inspection reveals idiosyncrasies in material and scale between the cylindrical brick and concrete bases and funnel-like steel tanks of *Chapelle-lez-Herlaiment* (top left), *Douay*, *Nord* (top right), and *Le Havre* (middle left). Hat-like roofs and solid octagonal bases distinguish the cylindrical towers in *Hagen-Haspe* (bottom left), while in *Dortmund-Dorstfeld* (middle right), octagonal towers, supported by pillars, feature architectural elements that evoke city gates. Such embellishments starkly contrast the massive, purely functional design of *Essen* (bottom right). Hilla Becher described their admiration for such utilitarian structures: "We photographed water towers and furnaces because they are honest. They are functional, and they reflect what they do—that is what we liked." Notably, only five of the 224 photographs published in their 1988 book *Wassertürme* (Watertowers) depict double water towers, and four of those images appear in *Sechs Doppelwassertürme*, making it a particularly rare example in the Bechers's œuvre.

Judy Ditner is the Richard Benson Curator of Photography at the Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven, USA, where her most recent project, *David Goldblatt: No Ulterior Motive*, will open in February 2025.

Captive Greeks Guarded by Mamluks, 1836
see note → **95**

Oil on canvas
185.5 × 247.5 cm
Inv. no. 332 WKV

Adolf Teichs

95

The painting only arrived in the collection by chance: it was purchased by the board member Caspar Geisberg (1782–1868) on behalf of the Westfälischer Kunstverein in 1838 for 250 thalers. He had won it in a lottery held by the Düsseldorfer Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, which—at that time closely connected with the Düsseldorf Art Academy through the joint director Willhelm von Schadow—organised the annual exhibition there and purchased paintings that were then raffled off among the members. This large-format painting had originally cost 600 thalers. Wholly out of place in a middle-class living room, it was more suited to the public nature and aspirations of a municipal exhibition space, which the Westfälischer Kunstverein had maintained in the former 'Stadtkeller' on Prinzipalmarkt in Münster since 1836. As early as 1835, the Kunstverein had acquired its first modern painting in a similar way, *Das Milchmädchen* (The Milkmaid → **27**) by Adolf Schmidt (1804–1864).

Adolf Teichs (1812–1860) completed his training as a history painter at the Düsseldorf Art Academy with this painting. It was his masterpiece and, for a long time, remained his sole painting in a German museum. The painting is a variation on a well-known work by Eduard Bendemann (1811–1889) from Düsseldorf, *Die trauernden Juden im Exil* (Mourning Jews in Exile) from 1832.

Teichs refers to the Greek emancipation from the yoke of Ottoman rule in the 1820s, which ended with the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece in 1830/31. Two Mamluks—Turkish soldiers of Egyptian origin—are guarding several couples dressed in Greek costume, who are bound up in ropes and chains. The ruins of a temple allude to classical Greek culture, the artistic heyday of which, according to Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768), was a consequence of freedom. The broken columns and the chained captives are at once a symbol of servitude under Ottoman hegemony. The fact that these shackles had now been cast off renders the painting a metaphor of European aspirations for freedom, as the Greek War of Independence had been closely followed and supported throughout Central Europe—in Münster, too.

Gerd Dethlefs is a historian, who worked at the Stadtmuseum Münster from 1980 until 1996, was a consultant for regional history from 1996 until 2024 and, from 2014, likewise for the Diepenbroick Portrait Archive at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur / Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Münster.

Captive Greeks Guarded by Mamluks, 1836
see note → **95**

Oil on canvas
185.5 × 247.5 cm
Inv. no. 332 WKV

Adolf Teichs

What does the title convey and what is implied, what is obscured? What basic knowledge do we assume here, what understanding and knowledge of the period? This staging has previously unilaterally been described from a one-sided perspective: "… reference to the Greek emancipation from Turkish rule …" But what has been and is being forcibly illustrated here in our consciousness if we recognise paintings as a mirror of the times and a means of educating us about them?

History painting had and still has a responsibility for education and mediation, without the painters necessarily being aware of it and without today's exhibition machinery being fully aware of it, too. The painter, a graduate of the Royal Academy of Arts under Wilhelm von Schadow in Düsseldorf, was certainly exposed to the latter's influences and views, which can still be found today in large-format and glorifying form in his racist skull measurement sketches and depictions that serve as illustrative wall decoration in the Knoblauchhaus in Berlin. This is where the dynamic arc begins, leading up to the debate about visible and invisible reproduction in images.

A. F. Teichs, as a supporter of philhellenism, intellectually connected to Greece and Greek culture, puts down in his painting which side, which myth of warlike struggle he sympathised with. And at the same time, I recognise a continuity here, the development of a symbolism of a pictorial sign, similar to the painted canine adjunct, as a symbol for supposed disloyalty. In this instance, it is the headscarves of the Mamluks (Arabic mamlūk [pl. mamālīk] is the passive participle from Arabic *malaka:* English: to own / literally: 'the one taken into possession' or '~~the possessed~~', a group of former enslaved people). They become a symbol, a hint at ~~otherness, exoticism, that which is to be despised, the enslaved body~~. In the following periods, it was used figuratively and practically in dealing with the clothing of enslaved, robbed and abducted people. For example, abducted, stolen and trafficked children and adolescents from Africa were often forced into the idea of what Mamluk clothing looked like and portrayed with and without their owners, with and without a sword, with and without a headscarf. The best-known example is Bililee Ajiamé Machbuba. She wears this very headscarf in her own paintings. So how do we make these continuities legible? How do we view people with headscarves today? How can the legibility of art be schooled and contextualised in a way that is critical of racism?

Patricia Vester is an illustrator, intervention designer, process facilitator on colonial contexts and museum practice, developer of critical art education in the field of racism, as well as a lecturer and author on the new legibility of art.

Intercession of Mary to Christ with St Walburga and St Augustine, 1420

Tempera on oak wood
120 × 173 cm
Inv. no. 4 WKV

Master of the Marian Altar in Fröndenberg

Since Plato, painting has repeatedly been accused of causing confusion because it is able to depict real objects and imaginary scenarios, the bygone past and the present in equal measure. However, the fact that different realities do not play a role for painting can also be regarded as its greatest quality. Few artists proved this better than the Master of the Marian Altar in Fröndenberg, which was made circa 1420 for the Augustinian monastery of St Walburgis in Soest, either in Dortmund or Soest, as the figures in this painting are each in a different state of being.

In the centre, Mary and Christ sit side by side on a bench. This is obviously situated in heaven, as Christ is shown with a sphere on his lap as the ruler of the world. The Son of God blesses Mary, who brings intercessions to him. Eight angels are hovering above the two resurrected figures, lifting a curtain that renders the scene visible in the first place. Two further angels are making music at the feet of Mary and Christ. As they are less important than the main protagonists, they are much smaller, not unlike the donor of the altarpiece, who is also standing under the bench and praying. However, she is the only earthly and living figure in the painting, so she actually forms the greatest possible contrast to the purely celestial, transcendent angels but is painted no differently from them and can therefore almost be mistaken for them. In contrast, St Walburga and St Augustine, who complement the scene to the side, are as large as Mary and Christ. They had already been dead for several centuries when the painting was made, so they are also already in the afterlife, to which the golden background testifies. The fact that this constellation of figures can be visualised at the same time—in *one* painting—must have been particularly moving for many contemporaries, perhaps even like a miracle. But if this was possible, one could hope all the more that one's prayers would be answered when beholding the painting. Thus, the unlimited representational power of painting became a symbol of divine omnipotence for the faithful.

Wolfgang Ullrich lives and works as an art historian and freelance author in Leipzig. He publishes on the history and critique of the concept of art, on sociological issues relating to images, on digital visual culture and on consumer theory.

Dice players, 17th century

Oil on oak wood
28.5 × 35.5 cm
Inv. no. 880 WKV

David Teniers

The Arabic word *az-zahr* means both ‘flower’ and ‘dice’. In antiquity, a flower would often decorate one side of a knucklebone to indicate luck. Among the most archaic games, knucklebone consists of variations on throwing, catching, and manipulating small sheep bones. This logic has inspired the many extant dice games, down to the present, with bones having been replaced by cubes bearing numbers on each of their six sides, to be employed in a variety of chance-based games.

The outcome of such games is purely accidental, random, and may entail some risk, depending on the stakes. Not coincidentally, the English term ‘hazard’, whose meaning is associated with risk, relates to the French *hasard* and the Spanish *azar*—the latter two convey a meaning of chance, and are derived from the Arabic *az-zahr.* The term and its range of meanings were never separated from the actual nature of the dice game, and both turn on the lack of predictability the game reflects, which mirrors that quality in life itself. Both the term and the game emerged in England during the sixteenth century, having been transmitted from the French, and, due to its characteristic, contingent ability to make or unmake a player entirely in the blink of an eye—as was readily observed—the game grew in popularity among the peasantry in the following century.

Flemish master David Teniers the Younger (1610–1690), who gained part of his fame for his accomplished depiction of peasants, took note of the power of this game of chance. Teniers the Younger’s undeniable grace in portraying taverns or rustic settings in which the ‘lower classes’ drank, smoked, and played dice, inspired the references to his paintings as ‘tenierkens’ (‘small Teniers’). One such work, *Würfelspieler* (Dice players), shows four peasants playing dice around a table. Two direct their gaze to the table, whereas the other pair fix their eyes on their fellow players. The latter appear to have more at stake in the turn, but for the viewer, the exact wager is indecipherable. Here, the outcome is not represented; only the prior moment of tension, perhaps of imminent defeat, and the curious certainty found in the expressions of those with little to lose in the face of a hazard, of uncertainty.

Gabriela Acha Errazti is a writer and critic based in Berlin. She co-edited the publications *METAL* (2021) and *Agathe Bauer, Issue Zero: Picking Up Promises* (2019) and contributes to publications such as *frieze*, *Spike*, *Mousse*, *Artforum*, *PW* and *Elephant* among others.

Intaglio Duo S-Z,
1958

Embossed print on paper
38.2 × 56.4 cm
Inv. no. C-312 WKV

We generally tend to associate Josef Albers with his large series of paintings *Homage to the Square*, which is wholly dedicated to the exploration of colour and its reciprocal interactions. In each composition, three or four colours coincide in a rectangle, constantly changing in our vision: this applies to the individual tones when they combine unpredictably with others, but also to their spatial effect: the colours step forward or back and expand sideways.

Albers favoured seemingly simple structures in his visual language and he loved to use them to create complex forms that confront our understanding with paradoxes. From the beginning of his artistic career in the 1920s, he was fascinated—initially in the medium of drawing—by a pictorial concept, in which the fecund tension between surface and spatial depth repeatedly leads to illuminating formulations that put our familiarised way of seeing to the test. Formal simplification goes hand in hand with structural complexity. Albers paved the way to *Homage to the Square* in these drawings, which were produced in large numbers in the 1930s and 1940s in particular and then realised in various media, for example as prints or engravings in plastic; the colour that finally comes into play is an extension of this basic theme.

Intaglio Duo S-Z also owes its existence to this élan. The Italian term refers to a carving, or more precisely a stone carving. So what happens in this drawing embossed on heavy paper? Basically, it is about a rhythmic interplay of line and form. A linear pattern merges into a geometric structure that remains transparent: it coalesces as a volume and dissolves again at the same time. A final shape never emerges, instead we observe a constant impulse of movement. Rational means are used here to erode all certainties in favour of never-ending transformations. The unequivocal becomes magical. This is how one might describe Albers's *modus operandi* in a nutshell.

Heinz Liesbrock is an art historian and philologist and has published extensively on twentieth-century art, photography and literature in Europe and the USA. He was director of the Josef Albers Museum Quadrat in Bottrop for twenty years until 2022. Before that, from 1992 to 1997, he was the director of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster.

Josef Albers

Vase with Lilies and Irises,
Vase with Irises,
1562

Oil on oak wood
Each 63.8 × 26.6 cm
Inv. no. 82 WKV, 83 WKV

The two floral still lifes by Ludger tom Ring the Younger are among the earliest examples of this artistic genre. Two vases contain a white Madonna lily (Lat. *Lilium candidum L.*), yellow irises (Lat. *Iris pseudacorus L.*) and, above all, German bearded irises (Lat. *Iris x germanica L.*). The latter are a natural hybrid of two species of iris, the flowers of which are normally blue in colour, tending more or less towards purple. Apart from a white-flowered variety, cultivars with other petal colours have only existed since the early twentieth century.

The fact that the flowers in the still lifes today have a brownish hue is due to a colour change caused by Ludger tom Ring's use of an unstable blue pigment, which also occurs in other flower still lifes: all blue-flowering plants, such as violets, periwinkles or columbines have lost their specific colour. This also applies to the studies in the *Codex Miniatus 42* of the Austrian National Library in Vienna, which are attributed to him. In his portrait of the Braunschweig reformer Martin Chemnitz (81 WKV), the white lily in the coat of arms does not appear against the traditional heraldic blue background, but against a brown one. The tone resulting from the colour change can vary; a pure blue has usually become a greenish brown, while the partly violet hues of the *Iris germanica* in the paintings discussed here appear more reddish brown because the additional red pigment it contains is stable.

The paintings of Ludger's brother Hermann show comparable changes in colour; his formerly blue Marian gowns now appear as a greenish brown. However, such colour changes are not a characteristic of the tom Ring family of painters; for example, in an *Adoration of the Magi* painted around 1520 (→ **41**), the Virgin Mary wears a brown dress, contrary to iconographic conventions, and the distant landscape and the sky between the clouds are now light brown. Colour changes are not uncommon in paintings; as in Ludger tom Ring's still lifes, they can be due to a lack of lightfastness of certain pigments but can also have other chemical causes.

Dietmar Wohl, retired freelance conservator/restorer of fine art; numerous teaching positions in art technology and theory of conservation/restoration at the Institute of Art History at the University of Münster since 1994.

Ludger tom Ring t. Y.

L'Avalée des avalés
(*The Swallower Swallowed*)
Rhino/Bear, 2016
Edition of the Westfälischer
Kunstverein 2016

Bronze
11 × 23 × 6 cm
Inv. no. H-1151 WKV

Jon Rafman

Why is Albrecht Dürer's rhinoceros swallowing John Irving's bear? I ask myself this question when I look at Jon Rafman's sculpture (an image of the sculpture). But is the rhinoceros swallowing the bear or is it spitting it out? Or has the bear become lodged in the rhino's attempt to swallow it whole, this attempt to emulate a boa constrictor (de Saint-Exupéry)? Or did the title deceive me? Who is the *swallower*, who is being *swallowed*? It's not opaque—the English title at least has two meanings: the swallower swallowed. Or: the swallower is swallowed.

Rhino/Bear is part of a series by Rafman, born in 1981, other parts are: *Dog/Lion*, *Ram/Sea Lion* and *Iguana/Sloth*. In none of them do I know, after looking at the images of these sculptures, who is doing the swallowing and who is being swallowed, who is 0 and who is 1. In this respect, *Rhino/Bear*—as analogue as this sculpture appears at first glance—is just as post-digital as Rafman always is. My gaze scans the sculpture (the image of the sculpture) several times in order to find the glitch somewhere, which most of his works—er, yes, what: manifest? Or: contain? Or: hide? Or: swallow? The glitch is already embedded in the title.

My gaze wanders further to look at the year the sculpture was made: 2016, the year in which the AI AlphaGo defeated the world's best Go board game player at the time, South Korean Lee Seedol, four times in five games.

My gaze wanders still further to check the information on the work's provenance, which seems unambiguous here with this annual edition, but who would be fooled by that? How can we confirm the provenance if the swallower ends up being swallowed? Those who have just swallowed are swallowed whole, digested and thus become part of this great whole that we call CULTURE, a collection of all those who have been swallowed, all those who were still full of life not five minutes ago.

As is so often the case, Rafman manages the almost impossible (and if so, then only in art): to heave it all together with archaic force and, at the same time, sketch it with a light hand. Or: in a single image (a single sculpture in this image) to invoke the entire cultural history of mankind and, simultaneously, its absolute present, its currently expiring (since expired) decadal second.

Jörg Albrecht has published novels, essays, texts for theatre and performance, radio plays. He has been the founding director and artistic director of Burg Hülshoff – Center for Literature (CfL) since 2018.

Mountain Landscape with the Sacrifice of Isaac, 1580–1590

Oil on oak wood
50 × 83 cm
Inv. no. 174 WKV

A resplendently-clad Abraham walks towards us clasping his son Isaac by the hand and is set against this rugged, menacingly austere mountain landscape. God, symbolised as a fiery, numinous celestial light, is overseeing the proceedings. He has ordered Abraham to "sacrifice" Isaac for him and, because Abraham is afraid of God, but also because he has allowed himself to be bribed with an "eternal blessing", he is ready to become a murderer. In his veneration of God, he is to kill Isaac and immolate his body on a pyre. Conveniently enough, the boy in the painting is already carrying a bundle of brushwood under his arm to this end.

Father and son are both victims in this macabre rite of passage. However, as luck would have it, an angel prevents the bloodbath in the nick of time. But is everything really okay afterwards? Could Isaac, and also Abraham's wife Sarah, ever forgive him for this attempted murder and trust him again? Was Abraham able to continue living his life free from doubt and fear? Was he perhaps afraid that God would speak to him again and demand similarly terrible things of him? But with the promise of an "eternal blessing" in the back of his mind, apparently no problem.

What kind of God is this who uses his believers like pawns and demands the worst of them? Is he even "believable" at all?

As a small child, I was given a picture book with essential biblical stories that my grandma interpreted for me. This gruesome event horrified me and I can still see poor writhing Isaac to this day, prostrate and bound on a huge pyre of kindling, his father bent over him with a naked blade at his throat, ready to do anything. A sacred moment?

Yes, it is a most definitely a parable, a figurative story, but at the time, I really did fear for my own life for a while, because in my deeply Catholic family, infanticide seemed a completely legitimate enterprise and could have happened to me at any time. Who could I trust?

A beneficent, loving deity engages with people peacefully, does not threaten them and does not put them to the test. Such a deity heals and brings hearts together instead of tearing them asunder, as Abraham's trial exemplifies.

I have a fondness for love. It is both bold and beautiful.

Thomas B. Erdmann is a self-confessed country bumpkin, family man and author. As a cabinet-maker, he supports artists in the realisation of their projects. He loves the idea of "Thought to Brought", just as much as he loves cycling and tinkling the ivories.

Kerstiaen de Keuninck

101

Apollo 13-70, 1970
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1970

Screen print on film
60.2 × 60.1 cm
Inv. no. C-580 WKV

Lowell Nesbitt

In 1962, just a few years after NASA was founded, the then head of the space agency, James Webb, recognised the potential of having the achievements of space travel documented—not only scientifically but also artistically. This is how the *NASA Artists' Cooperation Program* was launched. It came about at a time when space travel was taking the world by storm, and Webb's vision was to capture the emotional and aesthetic aspects of space travel and preserve them for posterity. The artists were granted an astonishingly deep insight into the inner circles of the space programme. The artists, at that time still significantly fewer women artists, attended briefings as observers and had the opportunity to accompany the technicians, scientists and astronauts during the preparation and execution of their missions.

Naturally, the *NASA Art Program* was also a vehicle for PR and communication, as it was important to continually inspire American citizens and taxpayers to help fund the 'Space Race'. Recalling the tradition of painting historical battle scenes, art also contributed significantly to the aestheticisation of space travel. The complex technical processes were conveyed visually by a large number of graphic artists, whose illustrations shaped the early image of space travel and the cosmos.

Lowell Nesbitt, who is better known for his series of large-format, realistic floral paintings, was invited to provide artistic support for the American Apollo 9 and Apollo 13 space missions. He made most of his works for NASA based on photographs, accurately depicting the technical aspects of space travel without neglecting their aesthetic import. In their precision and clarity, there is a recognisable affinity to the visual language of information graphics of the time, as they also make use of the design possibilities of technical documentation and, in a way that was typical of the era, reflect the widespread enthusiasm for science and technology.

Tono Dreßen, who was born two years after the first crewed moon landing in 1969, was a student trainee for *Skulptur. Projekte in Münster 1997* and later for the *26th Council of Europe exhibition 1648—War and Peace in Europe*. He returned to the Westfälisches Landesmuseum for *skulptur projekte 2007* and subsequently moved to the Westfälischer Kunstverein. Today he is assistant to the director and board there. He has been an expert on all matters of space travel and the cosmos since the tender age of six.

L'Afficheur (*The Bill Sticker*), 1742

Etching, engraving on paper
22.8 × 18.6 cm
Inv. no. C-189 WKV

In a self-referential gesture, the bill sticker announces the appearance of the fourth of a total of five twelve-part series of *Etudes prises dans le bas peuple ou Les Cris de Paris* (1737–46), the title page of which he adorns. Created as a joint project by the amateur Anne Claude Philippe de Thubières, Comte de Caylus, and the sculptor and draftsman Edme Bouchardon, together with the engraver Étienne Fessard, *Cris* are a type portraits of Parisian street vendors and their distinctive hectoring cries. The sheet appears interwoven with the discourse of the modern city on several levels: there is urban life as a subject in its own right, and there is public space characterised by lettering. There is the ephemeral materiality of the advertisements, which, as Louis-Sébastien Mercier describes in his *Tableau de Paris* of 1781, are removed or covered shortly after they have been posted. There is also the media-reflective level of the title page, which refers to the artists' own publishing houses and, with this aesthetic strategy, is reminiscent of the Lumière brothers' film *Colleurs d'affiches* (1897); and finally, there is the collaborative artistic venture, which, as a self-organised model of art production, knew how to make ideal use of the new journalistic possibilities for advertising and distributing its printed products.

The coveted series of engravings primarily appealed to the collecting preferences of a wealthy aristocratic and bourgeois milieu. The genre is therefore characterised by a folksy, romanticising view of the supposed simplicity of the so-called 'little people', which in no way corresponded to their precarious living and working conditions and sought to (further) delimit their emergent political sovereignty. Bouchardon's full-length figures, which often do not face the viewer head-on, but rather appear in profile or as a rear view, and which otherwise have little in common with the picturesque or burlesque depictions of other *Cris* series, are characterised by a seriousness that has an almost documentary character. It is therefore not least the socio-typological photographic studies, such as August Sander's *People of the 20th Century*, that influence today's view of *Cris*.

Maria Engelskirchen is a research associate in the research group 'Zugang zu kulturellen Gütern im digitalen Wandel' (Access to Cultural Goods in the Digital Age) at the University of Münster.

Various Artists

The Drinker
(Jan Buschmann drinks), 1924

Oil on oak wood
29 × 22 cm
Inv. no. 1365 WKV

Eberhard Viegener

The First World War had long since ended, but the caesura between the next bout of worldwide hostilities was still having an influence on the art world. In keeping with the *zeitgeist* of the New Objectivity, the Westphalian artist Eberhard Viegener also rid himself of a view tainted by pathos in the 1920s by increasingly painting impaired and infirm individuals as metaphors for marginalised social groups.

Der Trinker (Jan Buschmann trinkt) (The Drinker [Jan Buschmann drinks]) from 1924 is not only a witness to the formal and thematic consensus of those years due to its two-dimensional, almost static style. The work also exemplifies the challenges of an historical reappraisal facing the present day, in particular, the attempts to reconstruct the ownership of all those works that were subsequently castigated as 'degenerate' by the Nazi regime. Although the previous owners who held this work before it was privately donated to the Westfälischer Kunstverein in 1969 are known, its provenance from 1933 to 1945 remains unclear to this day.

After the Nazis rose to power, with their decreed conception of art and the ban on all modern trends, Viegener was forced to abandon his figurative depictions of the 1920s and, instead, produce naturalistic works of Westphalian landscape idylls; many of his works in the vein of the New Objectivity, however, were confiscated during the Nazi 'Degenerate Art' campaign in 1937.

The unclear provenance of the formalist work *Der Trinker (Jan Buschmann trinkt)*, suggests that it was also either kept hidden in private ownership, or confiscated by the Nazis. Whichever way, provenance research focusses on the one hand on aspects of and connections between artworks such as this, and, on the other, on Nazi cultural policy—in this case in Westphalia. It is therefore not only an important part of the process of coming to terms with the past, but also helps to preserve the identity and ideals of the artist.

Jolanda Saal is studying for a master's degree in contemporary history and art history at the University of Münster. She is currently researching restitution policy for her master's thesis. She also works as an assistant to the director of the Kunsthalle Münster.

Anna selbdritt with Two Saints and a Carthusian Monk, 1500–1510

Oil on oak wood
76.8 × 59.9 cm
Inv. no. 65 WKV

Jan Baegert

The collection of medieval panel paintings at the Westfälischer Kunstverein, which, as is well known, formed the basis for the focus on this genre at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, also includes several major works by the Wesel artist, Jan Baegert. Thanks to fortunate acquisitions by the Westfälischer Kunstverein and the museum, numerous fragments of retables or even paintings have been reunited over time, making the collection here one of the largest and most important in the world for this artist.

The individual panel showing the Virgin and St Anne with two Apostles came to Münster in 1869 via the Minden collector, Carl Wilhelm Bartels. It was probably commissioned by the unknown benefactor depicted on the right, a Carthusian monk in the typical white habit of the order, for his convent *insula regina coeli* (Island of the Queen of Heaven) on the Rhine island of Grave near Wesel. This theory is based on the similarities between the church and gate structures depicted in the background of this work and two others by Baegert. By making this endowment, the cleric was taking precautions for his salvation in the afterlife, as was common practice in the Middle Ages.

The foreground of the painting is characterised by a brick wall as an enclosed garden paradise (*hortus conclusus*) and symbol of virginity—not only of Mary, enthroned on the left, with her untied golden hair, cradling the naked Saviour in her lap, but also of her mother Anna, who sits on the right and is characterised as a married woman by her headdress. The idea of Mary's Immaculate Conception led to the development of the image of the Holy Kinship in the late Middle Ages, with Anna as its progenitrix. It has only recently been recognised that the apostles Judas Thaddeus on the left (recognisable by his club) and James the Elder on the right (with a pilgrim's staff and girdle book), who were obviously not chosen and depicted at random, are Anna's putative grandsons. Inconsistencies in the ages of the main figures did not pose a problem for contemporary viewers. They were able to decipher not only the symbols of Mary and Anna's virginity but also the equally significant allusions to Christ's passion and death: the basket of cherries on the left, the blood-red mantle of the Virgin Mary, the fruit that Anna offers to the child, whose outstretched arms could be an anticipation of the crucifixion.

Petra Marx has been curator for the Middle Ages at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur since 2005. The main focus of her work is on the furnishings of medieval women's monasteries, Westphalian sculpture and goldsmithery, as well as aspects of the history of the collection.

Growing Rock Candy Mountain Grasses in Canned Sand, 1992
(nine drawings)

Pencil, coloured pencil
on paper
Each 28 × 35.5 cm
Inv. no. C-8112 WKV,
KdZ 4247 WKV–KdZ 4254 WKV

Jessica Stockholder

For her first institutional exhibition in Germany in 1992, the Canadian sculptor Jessica Stockholder was invited to create an installation for the Westfälischer Kunstverein. Stockholder came up with a highly individual title for the large, uniform sculpture made of various materials comprising stone, fabric and straw: *Growing Rock Candy Mountain Grasses in Canned Sand*.

Without being able or needing to translate this title exactly, there is a visible commonality in the materials “rock”, “mountain” and “sand”, of which both—title and work—evidently consist. An intrinsic component of the Münster installation were several rectangular lumps of unworked Baumberg sandstone stone from the local area. These rocks effectively pinned down a fabric surface laid out in the centre of the room at its edges. Wire ropes were used to hoist this fabric surface upwards at certain points and attach it to the beams traversing the saw-tooth roof, creating a “mountain range” with individual peaks around which visitors could walk. A particular feature of the material was the fact that it is normally used in the manufacture of swimwear. This tensile fabric was therefore eminently suited to the kind of elasticity and durability that Jessica Stockholder was looking for. The English-language title expresses the unrelated juxtaposition of opposites, which was also evident in the installation—without actually spelling it out.

In retrospect, the series of drawings now takes on a special significance. Initially, they are to be understood as sketches in the classical sense. Stockholder lays out the fabric mountain range in coloured pencil, marks the wire guide ropes and arranges the rocks accordingly. The installation related in precise detail to the then characteristic space of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, which Max von Hausen had designed at the beginning of the 1970s: a high, uniformly windowless exhibition space, closed off at the top by a saw-tooth roof that allowed natural daylight to enter. To the west, the wall was divided into five almost square sections, each of which receded by a quarter of a metre at the start of a new wall segment, in order to achieve a pavilion-like sequence of wall segments. Jessica Stockholder visualised this in a drawing in which she depicts the exact floor plan. In other drawings, this knowledge enables the revisualisation of the impressive structure in outline.

By referring specifically to the former space of the Westfälischer Kunstverein in these design sketches, Jessica Stockholder’s drawings take on a new significance from today’s perspective—as this exhibition hall no longer exists and has had to make way for the new building of the Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte: they become an art-historical document not only of a temporary installation, but also of the architectural history of the Westfälischer Kunstverein’s wonderful erstwhile home on the Domplatz.

Friedrich Meschede, art historian; professional appointments including Director of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, Head of the Visual Arts Department at the DAAD and Director of the Kunsthalle Bielefeld until 2019.

Granit (Normandie) gespalten, geschnitten, geschliffen, 1985

Granite
340 × 300 cm
Inv. no. D-1059 WKV

Ulrich Rückriem

Münster is entirely made of sandstone. At least that's the impression you get when you look at the cathedral, the Prinzipalmarkt and the museum façade. Everywhere you look you see the same monotonous beige edifice—sometimes polished, sometimes roughly hewn. The penchant for the quartz sandstone may be due to its local availability in the Baumberg hills of the Münsterland and typifies the city's architectural history with astonishing alacrity. It is therefore all the more surprising that the stone fetishist of the German art world, Ulrich Rückriem, chose granite for his sculpture in front of the Westfälischer Kunstverein.

Five more or less heavily-worked blocks of stone from Normandy are joined together to form a monolith. It is only from the elevated vantage point of one of the museum's large windows that it is possible to see how the artwork has been made: removed by machines, steel struts hold the blocks together. One could now assume that the sculpture—just like its brother *Dolomit zugeschnitten* (1977) around 200 metres away on the Jesuitengang—is a relic from one of Rückriem's three participations in the Skulptur Projekte. However, the Kunstverein actually bought the work from the Rückriem exhibition that took place at the Westfälisches Landesmuseum in 1985, when it was still on the other side of the current new building. Since 2014, it has adorned the forecourt between the institutions and provides pleasant shade on the paved savanna, especially in summer.

If you look at Rückriem's sculpture today, you quickly realise that it is the epitome of a sculptural manifestation. The monumental stele is an example of the profound condensation of aesthetic ambition, but also of what has long since ceased to be contemporary: the grand gesture, the massive block, the phallic setting … Recently, 'classical' sculpture of this kind has been joined by more flexible artistic formulations. Participatory formats, performances and new materials have softened the rigid concept of sculpture. In a contemporary art world, Rückriem's sculpture seems primarily to have a historical quality; like its stone, it is a sediment, a deposit from the past.

Jana Bernhardt is a research assistant at the Skulptur Projekte Archiv and is currently writing her doctorate on political contemporary art at the University of Münster. She studied in Hamburg, Amsterdam and Münster and, as a member of the Westfälischer Kunstverein, is a friend.

Soest Antependium: Majestas Domini,
c. 1170–1180

Tempera on lime wood,
frame: oak wood
99.5 × 195.5 cm
Inv. no. 1 WKV

In the centre of the three-part composition, we see Christ enthroned, holding the Holy Bible, which is open towards the viewer, in his left hand. Christ is framed by a trefoil-shaped mandorla in the colours of the rainbow. In the corners of the central square, the symbols of the four New Testament evangelists surround him: the angel for Matthew, the bull for Luke, the lion for Mark and the eagle for John. Christ is accompanied by Mary and St Walburga (patron saint of the Soest secular convent for canonesses, where the panel originated) on the left and by John the Baptist and St Augustine on the right. The four saints are depicted on narrow columns under round arches, facing the resurrected Christ.

The panel is missing numerous pections, including the original raised right hand of Christ. Nevertheless, the colouring of the robes, the flesh tones of the humbly-bowed faces of the saints and the remnants of the gilded pictorial background give us an idea of the original colour palette. In this instance, a comparison with the numerous well-preserved antependia and altarpieces from the same period, such as those in the collection of the Museo Nacional d'Art de Catalunya in Barcelona, is worthwhile.

For some time now, art historians have been debating whether the panel, in keeping with its historical designation, is an antependium, i. e. an altar covering or frontal, or whether the panel had the function of a retable, i. e. a structure or element placed either on or immediately behind and above the altar. The inscription on the book, "Ego sum panis vivus" ("I am the living bread", Jn 6:51–52), may be an important clue. It refers to the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist (Holy Communion), in which Christ is celebrated in real presence on and not in front of the altar in the liturgy.

The *Soest Antependium* is considered to be the oldest surviving wooden panel painting north of the Alps. It originally came from the St Walburgis convent in Soest. In 1908, it was salvaged by the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster from the Wiesenkirche in Soest, where it had been neglected in the open air for several years, and thus came into its possession. Since then, it has been one of the most important works of medieval art in the Kunstverein's collection, which makes it available to the Museum and its collection on permanent loan.

Hermann Arnhold is an art historian and director of the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur in Münster. He has been curating exhibitions in Münster since 1994 featuring, among others, the French artist Pierre Soulages, Heinrich and Johann Brabender, as well as Otto Piene.

[Unknown]

Man in the Arbour, 1894

Watercolour on paper
33.7 × 33.7 cm
Inv. no. KdZ 9824 WKV

A man sits pensively in his arbour. His right hand is deep in his pocket, while his left holds a pipe with a strikingly long stem. His legs are crossed, and an open book rests on his thighs.

As the title might suggest, Bernhard Pankok's watercolour *Herr in der Laube* (Man in the Arbour) does not depict some randomly chosen subject, but rather the artist's close friend, Alois Hülsmann. The painting captures a private moment of contemplation on the part of the subject, a teacher from the Lower Rhine. We know little about the relationship between the two men. Nevertheless, it was one of the many questions that occupied me when I looked at the work for the first time. What *was* the relationship between the two men? How did they know one another? Was it a classic 'male friendship'? What happened on the day they met? And what was significant about the moment that Pankok so fleetingly captures here?

Hülsmann's face is entirely blurred, adding to the ephemeral character of the image; only the full, more densely painted lips stand out clearly, emphasising his friend's pout. His face, painted in pale watercolour, stands out clearly from the overall composition, while this hair marks the transition to the work's warm summer background. It is as if the individual colours of the flowers had playfully transferred from the arbour to Alois's head, leaving dabs of paint in their wake. They brighten up the subject's otherwise anaemic, white face, making him both the foreground and background of the watercolour, part of the greater whole as it were, without losing his individual pose.

One thing is certain: Pankok's attitude when he created *Herr in der Laube* was one of empathetic love, intended to show both his good friend Alois Hülsmann lost in thought and the full bloom of a dreamy summer's day. The two men must have been very close, as the warmth and intimacy that radiates from the drawing still has a strong effect on viewers today.

Magnus Elias Rosengarten works primarily as an author and curator in the fields of performance, discourse and film/video, most recently at Gropius Bau and the Berliner Festspiele in Berlin. He has written for *Contemporary And Magazine (C&)*, *Artforum*, Berlin Biennale and arte/ZDF.

Bernhard Pankok

The Immigrating Protestants of Salzburg 1732, 1836

Lithograph on paper
27.1 × 35.8 cm
Inv. no. C-236 WKV

The reformation of the Christian faith circa 1500 resulted in, among other things, murder and manslaughter. The religious wars ended with each prince seizing the right to regulate the confession of his subjects. This was also the case with the Catholic prince-bishop in the archbishopric of Salzburg. More than twenty per cent of his population, mainly Protestant mountain farmers, had to leave their homes. In the winter of 1731/32 the landless (servants, maids) were led in seven convoys, followed in the summer of 1732 by the propertied classes in sixteen convoys, escorted by commissioners. The King in Prussia had publicly invited them to inhabit his depopulated Prussian enclave in Lithuania. The exodus of more than 20,000 Salzburg exiles to the north attracted attention and sympathy, and was documented in numerous leaflets, broadsheets and maps.

A century later, the young lithographer Adolph Menzel (1815–1905) turned the arrival of the Salzburg exiles into a history painting for his portfolio of twelve *Memorabilia from Brandenburg-Prussian History* (1836). He had studied old prints as a self-taught artist but gave a new twist to the depiction of the trains of refugees. In his depiction, the displaced enter the urban space as a compact horde, with the foreground left blank. The men are wearing pantaloons instead of urban knee breeches, men and women alike are sporting broad-brimmed hats and carry large books in front of them, undoubtedly their Bibles as sacred objects, with two clergymen to the fore. A medieval gate has spat them out into the city with its crowds of onlookers and a backdrop of socially-mixed housing, ranging from the simple building next to the gate via the merchant's house to the fashionable façades of wealthy citizens. Small welcoming gestures assuage the confrontation: a young boy binds an old man's foot—a lady drops money into the open hands of a travelling woman—a small boy clutches his father's bag in readiness.

In 1732, around 16,000 Salzburg exiles travelled to East Prussia via Berlin and Königsberg. Almost a fifth of them died during the first two years of the journey.

Heinrich Bosse was formerly a German lector in Finland and Canada and is now a retired academic advisor at the University of Freiburg and a researcher in the field of the Enlightenment.

Adolph von Menzel

110

rot, blau, grün, gelb, schwarz, 1969
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1984

Colour screen print on paper
68 × 68 cm
Inv. no. C-3951 WKV

The Westfälischer Kunstverein's inventory and its overview of annual editions (Jahresgaben) from 1984 list the serigraph by Swiss artist Max Bill as *rot, blau, grün, gelb, schwarz* (red, blue, green, yellow, black). It has not been possible to determine beyond doubt whether this title is correct, as several copies of the edition have been sold at auctions in recent years with different titles, such as a *Komposition mit Quadraten diagonal* (Composition with Diagonal Squares) or *Feld mit zwei weißen und zwei schwarzen Zentren* (Field with Two White and Two Black Centres). The title variations are indicative of Bill's typical, often mathematically-grounded compositional style, which involves a playful approach to patterns of order, as well as to the contrasting use of colours. This is evident in the quadratic composition: it is structured by white and black squares standing on their angles, with larger and smaller triangles in four colours adjacent to their outer edges. All of the triangles are equal in area to the square they surround and are coded in terms of their respective, uniform colours. The combination of shapes and colours still looks fresh and dynamic today. Max Bill, who applied himself the screen printing technique from 1962, particularly appreciated the technical precision with which uniform colour surfaces can be sharply separated from one another: ideal conditions for Concrete Art, which does not abstract from nature but "must be entirely built up with purely plastic elements, namely surfaces and colours", as Theo van Doesburg put it as early as 1930 in the manifesto of the artists group *Art Concret.*

Bill produced the sheet in an original edition of 250 copies for his presentation *Graphiques et multiples* at the Galerie Denise René in Paris in November 1969. The composition also adorned the exhibition poster for the show, which focused on prints and editions, known as multiples. As forms of artistic expression, silkscreen and multiples productively challenge the idea of an original in the sense of a unique piece. For Bill, the (often) limited edition at affordable prices was an effective means of duplicating and distributing his works and ideas as widely as possible.

Erec Gellautz is an art historian and curator. He has been an academic associate at the Institute of Art and Architectural History at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology since 2023.

Saint Verena, 1515–1516

Oil on oak wood
142.5 × 44 cm
Inv. no. 110 WKV

Hans Baldung

He painted witches, he painted saints—Hans Baldung was clearly fascinated by women and extremes. Jakob Heimhoffer—financial advisor to Emperor Maximilian I, and his wife Verena Schmidt—commissioned Baldung, who had moved from Strasbourg to Freiburg in 1512, to paint an altarpiece tryptic. It was to be placed in one of the choir chapels of the Cathedral in Freiburg. The centre panel was probably the *Lamentation of Christ*, now preserved in the Gemäldegalerie Berlin, which is clearly influenced by Matthias Grünewald and his Isenheim Altarpiece. Two wings flanked this centre panel. The one on the left—now lost—presumably depicted *Christ as the Man of Sorrows*. The right-hand panel is held in the collection of the Szépemüvészeti Múzeum Budapest and is one of the most vivid depictions of the *Mother of Sorrows*: wringing her hands, praying, her pale face framed by a bright yellow nimbus, she gazes in horror at Christ while a sword pierces her breast.

The panel of *Saint Verena* forms the much less dramatic inner side of this wing. Although the two depictions of women that fill the format do not correspond in their emotional impact, they do compare in their monumentalised conception of the figure, which concentrates on the essentials. On the Freiburg altarpiece, St Verena appears as the patron saint of the patron. Baldung depicts the woman from Thebes in Upper Egypt with a humbly lowered gaze and her classical attributes: comb and wine amphora. According to legend, she travelled via Milan to Solothurn in Switzerland around 300 AD to live here in a cave, the 'Verena Gorge', which was subsequently named after her. Ultimately, she is said to have worked as a parish housekeeper in Zurzach, Switzerland. When she brought wine to the poor and sick from the priest's depository against his orders, the wine turned to water when she was confronted. She used the water from a holy spring to wash the sick and comb their hair. Baldung depicts the benevolent saint with a sensual, gentle smile—an image of peace of mind, a stark contrast to the expressive depiction of Mary's anguished soul.

Kirsten Claudia Voigt studied art history, philosophy and literature. She has a doctorate and a professorial degree. She has been lecturer in art history at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, research associate and curator at the Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe since 1999.

Siebdruck, 1992
Edition of the Westfälischer Kunstverein 1992

Silkscreen on paper
50 × 70 cm
Inv. no. C-8344 WKV

I have a fantasy of putting Jessica Stockholder's screenprint *Siebdruck* (Silkscreen) (1992) in water, and watching it enlarge into *Growing Rock Candy Mountain Grasses in Canned Sand*—the artist's 1992 exhibition at the Westfälischer Kunstverein. For the exhibition, Stockholder suspended yards of pink spandex from the gallery ceiling to create a topography of peaks and valleys. Sandstone from a local quarry anchored the tented fabric to the floor. On the walls, the artist, trained as a painter, pasted newspaper onto peninsular shapes of vermilion. A string of bulbs, curled amid concrete blocks, connected to a lighting track via long extension cords that snaked out of the gallery, defying the bounds of the white cube. Completed after *Growing Rock …*, *Siebdruck* suggests the cartography of the installation in its analogous colors, shapes, and lines. The orange dabs of the print, for instance, conjure the scatter of stones on the gallery floor while the coral strokes on the print recall the painted shapes on the walls.

I never got to experience the exhibition first hand. Looking at the photo-documentation three decades later, I imagine *Siebdruck* and *Growing Rock …* as landscapes that recall the stony shores of Canada's Pacific coast—a place both Stockholder and I call home. On the Pacific coast, it is easy to see how nature actively shapes matter—waves round rocks, winds bend trees, and roots draw zigzag lines into the earth. From the Snuneymuxw territory where she recently resettled, Stockholder spoke with me on a video call and discussed the life of materials she uses as an artist: trees become paper; minerals become pigment; limestone becomes drywall. Beyond physical matters that are processed or naturally change over time, Stockholder explained her interest in "proposing things that go past the moment"—for example, language as a carrier of meaning into the future.

As an artist, Stockholder orders and arranges objects—in various states of processing and transformation—to create form as a container of evershifting meanings, associations, and ideas. In 2024, what do we make of her polymer wave-forms, cords precariously drawing power, and stones looking ruinous on the floor? The world from which Stockholder has been sourcing materials is under threat, yet I sense in her work an evocation of natural forces that never cease to create dynamic forms. Looking at *Siebdruck*, I feel the pull of a familiar place where rocks multiply under crushing waves, coastal mountains provide a bounty, and sand stretches as though it may never end.

Liz Park is the Richard Armstrong Curator of Contemporary Art at Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, USA, where she and Cynthia Stucki, curatorial assistant, organized *Jessica Stockholder: Picture Making and Assembling* (2024).

Jessica Stockholder

Ministry of Culture and Science
of the State of
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Kunstvereine (Art associations) are seminal institutions in the promotion, development and mediation of current artistic positions. The various art associations in North Rhine-Westphalia, in all their diversity, contribute significantly to the vibrant cultural landscape of our region and, moreover, are supported in their work by the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia.

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The fact that the Kunststiftung NRW has been a dedicated supporter of the Westfälischer Kunstverein's extraordinary work in the fields of art and culture for many years now, is an expression of our inestimable regard for its work in the field of contemporary art. This is a site where new networks are established, both regionally in North Rhine-Westphalia as well as internationally, and a forum where artists' careers can flourish and daring experiments successfully unfold, all of which makes the art landscape here so unique. For us, the Westfälischer Kunstverein is an outstanding example of this unwavering commitment to the local promotion of art and culture.

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