



Visite
From Gerhard Richter to Rebecca Horn
Works by contemporary artists from the collection of the Federal Republic of Germany
11 April 2008 to 17 August 2008

*An exhibition of the Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany in cooperation with
the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM)*

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Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 4, 53113 Bonn
Press Office
Telephone +49/228-9171-204/5/6 Telefax +49/228-9171-211
www.bundeskunsthalle.de / e-mail: majer-wallat@kah-bonn.de



Exhibition Dates

Duration	11 April – 17 August 2008
Director	Christoph Vitali
Managing Director	Bernhard Spies
Exhibition curator	Anette Hüscher
Project manager	Susanne Kleine
Press officer	Maja Majer-Wallat
Catalogue / Press Copy	€ 19 / € 10
Opening hours	Tuesday and Wednesday 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday to Sunday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Open on Fridays for groups from 9 a.m. Closed on Mondays
Admission	
<i>up to 24.04.2008</i>	
Standard / Reduced	€ 7,50 / € 5
Family ticket	€ 11
<i>from 25.04.2008</i>	
Standard / Reduced	€ 8 / € 5
Family ticket	€ 11
Public transport	Subway lines 16, 63, 66 and Bus 610 and 630 to Heussallee. A parking garage is located on Joseph-Beuys-Allee behind the Art and Exhibition Hall
Press information	www.bundeskunsthalle.de Press file (German/English)
Guided group tours	Information and registration: Telephone +49 (0)228-9171-263 Fax +49 (0)228-9171-191 E-mail: paedagogik@kah-bonn.de
General information	Telephone +49 (0)228-9171-200 www.bundeskunsthalle.de (German/English)



Information on the Exhibition

The exhibition of the contemporary art collection of the Federal Republic of Germany was first shown in Brussels in February 2007 to mark the German EU Council Presidency. The Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany is delighted to be able to present the exhibition in an extended form in Bonn.

Visite is an exhibition of contemporary art focusing on three main lines of enquiry: Existence – Space – History. With some sixty outstanding works by, among others, Rebecca Horn, Katharina Sieverding, Gerhard Richter and Wolfgang Tillmans, it presents artistic reflections on the philosophical conditions of human existence. The works cover a wide range of media – from drawing, painting and sculpture to photography and video.

The contemporary art collection of the Federal Republic of Germany was launched in 1970 and allows the German government to document important milestones in contemporary art.

Wall Texts

The title of this exhibition already suggests a temporally delimited visit: *Visite* was conceived and shown in Brussels in spring of 2007 to mark the occasion of the German presidency of the EU Council.

The word *Visite* – whose meaning vacillates between 'to visit' and 'to inspect' – points toward the exhibition's immediate intention: the presentation of selections of a collection, an expanded version of which is now on view in Bonn.

The show is organized thematically, and is divided into three chapters dealing with the topics 'Existence', 'Space' and 'History'. Presented in exemplary fashion through these thematic foci are approximately 60 artistic positions from the past 20 years. This arrangement not only generates dialogic encounters between pairs of individual works, but also creates striking and telling linkages between various techniques and media, from drawing, painting and sculpture to photography and video. Finally, the exhibition's thematic triad can be interpreted as an overarching theme, namely the 'Existential Space of History'. The viewing of individual works in this configuration allows the human existential agitation embodied in art to become comprehensible as an integral question.

Appearing in a German-English edition in conjunction with the exhibition is a catalogue.

Besides introductory essays on the collection and brief chapters on the exhibition, this volume offers brief commentaries on individual works as well as information on the responsibilities, structure, and holdings of the Bundeskunstsammlung.

The Federal Republic of Germany's Contemporary Art Collection

The German government has been collecting art since 1970. Coming together over a period of 35 years has been a wide-ranging collection of German art. While this collection does document artistic production in Germany, it provides no comprehensive picture of the development of art in the Federal Republic.



The ‘Bundeskunstsammlung’ was initiated by Willy Brandt, then Federal Chancellor. He took up an idea presented by Georg Meistemann, Chairman of the Deutsche Künstlerbund (Association of German Artists). Initially, the collection stood under the aegis of the Interior Minister; today it is administered by the Minister of State for the Federal Chancellor Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media.

There exists no fixed abode where the collection can be viewed on a regular basis. Works are loaned to public institutions, to ministries, embassies, to the Federal Chancellery, as well as to numerous German museums. It is mainly through temporary exhibitions that the collection is made accessible to the public.

Decisions concerning purchases for the Bundeskunstsammlung are made by an independent commission consisting of experts in the field. Its members – who work without compensation – are appointed for three-year intervals by officials from the Federal Agency for Culture and Media. In order to make purchases, members meet at three major art fairs taking place in Basel, Berlin and Cologne. Currently available to them is an annual budget of almost € 500,000.

Despite its official character and high quality criteria, the Bundeskunstsammlung is not a museum collection. Rather, it represents the highly varied convictions and collecting strategies of its changing purchasing committee, which is not in a position to acquire works by universally acclaimed artists at correspondingly high prices. Certain gaps, then, must be accepted: a number of recognized artists, including Georg Baselitz, Markus Lüpertz and A.R. Penck, for example, are represented only by works on paper. Others, including Gerhard Richter, are represented by single works, while there are none by Anselm Kiefer. Given current trends in the art market, such deficiencies will be virtually impossible to remedy.

Today, the federal collection encompasses nearly 1200 works. With a few exceptions, acquisitions are of works produced after 1949. Represented are all genres of the fine arts – from prints to installations, from photography to video.

Published for the first time in the catalogue, is a comprehensive list of all commissions and purchases.

Existence – Space – History

Who are we, where do we come from? Throughout the history of images, questions relating to the meaning of existence have persistently been central themes: images facilitate dialogue between human existence and divine forces. Ever since the Renaissance, the human being has been portrayed in all of his or her individuality. Contemporary artists too explore the conditions of their own existences, and those of others as well. They are concerned with power relations between individuals, as well as with abstract philosophical questions related to the essences of things and people. In this collection of contemporary art, a multiplicity of artistic approaches can be traced from the 1960s right up until the present day. We find both classical portraits as well as installations and sculptures which pose questions about forms of life in the 20th and 21st centuries: How do we live? Which societal, cultural and political conditions have an impact on contemporary notions of existence?

Although strongly resembling a photograph, Gerhard Richter’s *Sekretärin* (Secretary, 1964) is in fact a painting. The image is based on a seemingly ephemeral, almost chance impression of a figure. In fact,



the artistic prototype was drawn from a newspaper. Richter published his photographic source material in *Atlas*, his collection of found visual materials. The schematic impression made by the depicted woman in the original photograph was retained by Richter when he translated it into a painting that is reminiscent of a snapshot. In this work, Richter thematises the relationship between painting and photography, as well as that between personal identity and socially shaped cliché representations.

Martin Kippenberger confronts his role as an artist in an ironic fashion. For his *POP IT OUT* (1995), he asked artistic colleagues to design posters for exhibitions of his works. In so doing, Kippenberger adopts the role of client, generating commentaries on his own role as a public artistic figure from a variety of angles.

Anna and Bernhard Blume stage themselves in their images. *Hänsel und Gretel* (Hansel and Gretel, 1990/91) displays a bizarre scene from the series *Im Wald* (In The Forest): here, this artistic couple slips into the roles of the celebrated German fairytale siblings. Both look bourgeois, and seem (given the situation in which they find themselves) inappropriately dressed: they cling to and slide down tree branches in the dark German forest, indicated here by just a few tree stumps. *Hänsel und Gretel* ironically thematises childhood memory, Germany's cultural patrimony, and the bourgeois division of roles between male and female.

Rebecca Horn's sculpture *Paradieswitwe* (Widow of Paradise, 1975) makes a majestic impression: the artist herself once wore this object, covered in black chicken feathers, providing partial views of her naked body by opening and closing its wing-like elements. Implicated in this play between the female body and the masculine, feathered costume are relationships of visibility and invisibility, disclosure and concealment. Today, the object is accompanied by a photo series of Horn's performance; seemingly the product of a process of metamorphosis, it is always presented in its closed position.

Details from the everyday life of a metropolis are seen in Wolfgang Tillmans' large format photographs taken from the London Underground (2000). The individual images are named for the transport lines he rode while shooting. Tillmans' close-ups of individual body parts, items of clothing, and rapid shifts of view mirror the confinement of the subway compartment. The crowding and bodily closeness between strangers is almost palpable, while at the same time, we are aware of their attempts to maintain mutual distance.

Existence – **Space** – History

Space can be experienced both corporeally and mentally: nature and architecture, temporal frames, the growth of scientific knowledge, collective life in its various forms, and human powers of imagination provoke highly divergent, perpetually changing perceptions of that which we experience as space. The enormous upheavals of the 20th and 21st centuries, the overcoming of distance, the political reorganization of the global map, and the increasing significance of electronic data worlds have led to decisive transformations. Inevitably, questions regarding the shaping of our sense of reality by spatial ideas constitute a central theme in contemporary art.

Thomas Struth shows us specific locations in his photographs. His inconspicuous, empty street corners or urban nooks and crannies are capable of triggering highly personal recollections in viewers. These seemingly everyday perspectives are also documents of historical change: this West German artist photographed these scenes in East German cities and in East Berlin shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1991/92.



Heidi Specker too photographs objects of urban architecture that are rarely the focus of attention. But Specker arrives at very different types of image than does Struth. She photographs the details of Berlin façades and reworks them digitally (*Teilchentheorie*, Particle Theory, 1998). In the process, contrasts and degrees of focus are often almost imperceptibly altered. The results are autonomous and as a rule abstract spatial and surface structures. Specker thereby shifts the focus of interest to the post-war German architecture that continues to shape many cityscapes up to the present day.

The potential of built space to elicit or trigger feelings of anxiety and desire is demonstrated by the photographs of Gregor Schneider (*Der Deutsche Beitrag – Venedig, Totes Haus u r / The German Contribution – Venice, Dead House u r*, 2001). His photo series documents the reproduction of a residential house found in Rheydt, which Schneider has maintained in a perpetually state of reconstruction since 1985. With this replica, erected in the German Pavilion in Venice, the artist won the “Golden Lion” at the Venice Biennale in 2001. These rooms are deserted, making an impression of abandonment and menace: blank walls, blocked-off views, and pitfalls evoke a sense of violence and hopelessness.

Johannes Kahrs’ picture *Thomson homestead, Slater – Missouri* (1997) shows a location whose effect is one of oppressiveness. As prototypes for his extraordinarily minute drawings, Kahrs often uses images found in the mass media, including newspapers. He often uses only a single detail from a found image, on which the work is then based. Here, we see the house where US-American actor Steve McQueen spent part of his childhood. Yet Kahrs’ depiction of the building conveys no feeling of home; instead, he shows us an uncanny locale, one reminiscent of the actor’s difficult childhood.

The degree to which scientific knowledge and societal transformations condition our image of Earth is shown by Ingo Günther in his work cycle *Worldprocessor* (1999), in progress since 1988. Using the surfaces of more than 300 globes, Günther displays various statistics and data related to climate change, the routes of electronic data flows, and the political formation of states. The result is a series of new world maps lying somewhere between science and art, which deploy a variety of colours and structures to convey an impression of highly intricate states of affairs.

Existence - Space – **History**

To recall real or imagined events is a basic human need. The confrontation with memory and history, then, is a central theme of contemporary art. Rather than according it a single chapter, it is allowed to permeate the exhibition as a whole. We encounter both political depictions of history as well as personal narratives, invented histories and interpretations of historical fact. Resonating again and again is the question of how history is constructed, of that which is conveyed via recollection, and of that which is excluded from such transmissions.

Individual works deal with German history and with the formation of national identity. Among these is Rirkrit Tiravanija’s *Siegerkränze* (*Victor’s Laurels*, 2001), for which the artist recreated 24 laurel crowns from the archive of the Formula One driver Heinz-Harald Frenzen, stacking them to form a sculpture of trophies. Through an object that could serve simultaneously as trophy and burial object, Tiravanija alludes to the ambiguity of award ceremonies. He thereby comments on the mental constitution of an entire nation for which competitive ideas play such an important role.

Jörg Immendorff’s small format painting *Pass (Deutsche Farben)* (*Passport (German Colours)*, 1965) displays the German national colours. Legible upon closer inspection is the artist’s family name, inscribed literally in the painting in yellow on yellow. *Pass* provides testimony of Immendorff’s early critical confrontation with German politics and with the relationship between citizen, state and identity.



Georg Herold constructed an image of Germany from unfinished roof battens, entitling it *Deutschland in den Grenzen von 1937* (Germany within its 1937 Borders, 1985). Two years before the inception of World War II, national Socialist propaganda reached a crescendo: Germany's national boundaries were questioned, while armaments production reached its highpoint. The program known as 'Entartete Kunst' (Degenerate Art) allowed thousands of artworks to vanish from German museums, their creators maligned. Herold recalls these historical events, alluding to the subsequent course of history through the handwritten notations of the names of enterprises, cities, and federal states.

Katharina Sieverding's *Deutschland wird deutscher* (Germany becoming more German, 1992) is exhibitionist in the truest sense of the word: in 1993, a paper version of the large-format work was posterized throughout the city of Berlin. Shown is a portrait of the artist, who appeared in a circus in the early 1970s as a partner of a knife thrower. Set above the image is a text drawn from newspaper headlines. Sieverding plays on associations with Germany's past, and with the influence of text on our perception of images – and vice versa.

The setting of Neo Rauch's *Der Auftrag* (The Task, 1996) seems strongly encoded. Action sequences and objects are placed alongside and above one another in the pictorial space almost like stencils. Although figures and objects are clearly recognizable, their relationships to one another, the activities being performed, and the significance of the arrangement as a whole remains enigmatic.

Recognizable in Daniel Richter's painting with the multivalent title *Europa – immer Ärger mit der Sogenannten* (Europe: Always Trouble with the So-Called, 1999) are only vaguely indicated spatial relationships and figurative elements. At the same time, the act of painting is strongly present in this powerfully chromatic image through traces of dried paint. Alluded to in the title is both the continent and the political union of states, as well as the antique figure of Europa, who was carried off by Zeus in the form of a bull to the island of Crete where she was seduced by the God.



Guided Tours

Free public guided tours

Tour stickers available at the information desk in the foyer.

Time: Tuesday and Wednesday 3 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Thursday and Friday 3 p.m.

Saturday, Sunday and public holidays noon and 3 p.m.

Group guided tours

Guided Tours can be booked until seven opening days before the desired date at the Educational Service. Special demands and interests of groups are welcome.

Self guided tours

Groups without tour reservation or touring on their own are asked to register in advance with the Educational Service. These groups can be admitted on a priority basis.

Registration

Mon - Fri 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Phone: +49(0)180 / 1000 – 166

(4,6 ct/min, calling by T-Com; prices could differ for calls from mobile phones)

Fax: +49(0)228 / 9171 – 244

Registration and advice for school groups

Mon - Fri 9.30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Phone: +49 (0)228 / 9171 – 243

Fax: +49(0)228 / 9171 - 244

Catalogue

VISITE

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Works from the Contemporary Art Collection of the Federal Republic of Germany

German-English edition

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200 pages with 90 color illustrations

Format 24,5 x 28 cm

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Preview 2008 / 2009
subject to alteration

Temple Treasures of a Sacred Mountain
Daigo-ji - The Secret Buddhism in Japan
25 April - 24 August 2008

On display in Germany for the first time is the magnificent temple treasure from one of the most ancient monasteries in Japan: Daigo-ji. The exhibition shows 160 outstanding works, including large sculptures, valuable paintings and scrolls, exquisite ritual objects, artistic calligraphy, sutras – the sacred writings of Buddhism – and historical documents, of which an hitherto unseen contingent of national treasures and important cultural property. The exhibition offers viewers an introduction to the esoteric Buddhism of Japan and showcases the mountain monastery Daigo-ji as a first-class culture bearer, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1994. The Daigo-ji monastery south of Kyoto with a history reaching back more than 1100 years was founded in 874 A.C. The monastery has been preserved up to our day as one of the most influential religious centres and pilgrimage site.

Rome and the Barbarians
Europe during the Migration Period
22 August - 7 December 2008

In the face of the persistent and momentous invasions of the barbarian hordes into the territory of the Roman Empire Saint Jerome wrote in 396: “The Roman Empire is collapsing.” In fact, the pervasive political, social, and cultural cataclysms that shook the Hellenistic-Roman world from the fourth to the seventh century A.D. initiated massive migration movements among Germanic and horse nomadic tribes. This migration period, which occurred in several waves, ultimately led to the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, which was followed by new forms of governance and the emergence of a complex Roman-Barbarian culture. At the same time the remote geographical region between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea became the starting point of an unprecedented confrontation and subsequent redistribution of various tribes (e.g. the Goths, Gepids, Alamanns, Huns) across Europe. The exhibition offers a systematic account of these complex processes. What set this mass migration in motion, who were the main actors of the events, how did the Empire react? The richly varied selection of magnificent weapons and riding harnesses, precious jewelry, luxurious status symbols, as well as functional articles of everyday use, cult objects and exquisite burial objects makes the distant era of the migration period come alive.

Gandhara – The Buddhist Legacy of Pakistan
Legends, Monasteries, and Paradise
21 November 2008 - 15 March 2009

Buddha's life is the main focus of this exhibition, which can be viewed in Germany for the first time. Approximately 350 unique objects, including masterly crafted stone sculptures with Buddha motifs, elaborately worked reliefs with scenes from Buddha's life as well as exquisite coins and magnificent gold jewelry transport viewers into the period from the first to the fifth century B.C. The presentation sheds light on different aspects of the works of art, making the extraordinary cultural legacy of Gandhara, the melting pot of cultures in modern Pakistan, come alive before our eyes. The representations appear strangely familiar to Western eyes – as the Greek legacy is very apparent. Thus Buddha is depicted in Greek robes, and reliefs show Greek divinities such as Dionysus and Athena. The goods sold along the southern Silk Road also spread the teachings of Buddhism, which originated in India. The legacy of the artists and craftsmen who came to Hindukush in the wake of Alexander the



Great (330 B.C.) was the creation of the first Buddha depictions, which were nonexistent in India before this time. The exhibition spans a vast period of time and territory – beginning with Greek culture in Central Asia and the historical northwestern India, modern Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan and Central Asia: the realm of Gandhara. Gandharan culture became known to a broader public when the largest Buddha statues in the world, carved into cliffs in Bamiyan, were blown up by the Taliban in March 2001.

Amedeo Modigliani

new date: 17 April - 30 August 2009

Amedeo Modigliani is one of the most important artists of modern art and of the 20th century, whose works became icons in the collective memory of images a long time ago. With a comprehensive retrospective the Art- and Exhibition Hall wants to celebrate this outstanding artist, who died when he was only 35.

Born in Italy in 1884 Modigliani was painter, draughtsman and sculptor. His most important subjects are portraits and nudes. Apart from that he eventually painted few pure landscape paintings. Not to be overlooked in Modigliani's paintings is their relationship to the language of the styles of Renaissance and Mannerism. He combines expressionist, cubist and symbolistic elements but as well takes up figures of African sculpture, popular at his time, which fascinated him because of their idolatry. He can not be classified as belonging clearly to any of the contemporary styles like Cubism or Fauvism. All his works document the restless manner of life of an artist full of relish, who in great sadness is fully aware of his vulnerability and his mortality from his childhood on and who needs the euphoria of the intoxication, in order to live and work. In his portraits Modigliani reached a highly individual, at times melancholy expression which one can not resist.

The exhibition is closely oriented along the biography of the artist reflecting decisive turning points. It is planned to show a composition of approximately 70 paintings, 30 drawings and a number of sculptures. The works will comprise the period from 1909 until 1919, cover almost the whole time of activity of the artist.

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Press

Telephone +49 (0)228-9171-204/5/6 Fax +49 (0)228-9171-211
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