BUNDESKUNSTHALLE

Press kit

1920s!
In the Kaleidoscope of Modernism
1 April to 30 July 2023

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**Exhibition Information**

Duration 1 April to 30 July 2023

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Combined ticket for all exhibitions 13 €/reduced 6,50 €

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[arte]

**Cultural partner**

[WDR³]

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Director Eva Kraus

Managing Director Oliver Hölken

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Thursday to Sunday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

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Press Information (German / English)

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General Information

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1920s!
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The 1920s are considered a period of upheaval and experimentation in Western modernism. The simultaneity and radicality of this epoch still lends it a remarkable topicality in the 21st century and forms the starting point of this exhibition. Like a kaleidoscope, the variety of different images and voices are brought together to form ever new constellations that are intended to sharpen the viewer's eye for the uniqueness of the events as well as for the analogies to the present day.

On the one hand, the decade is marked by a deep disruption, on the other hand, it is gripped by an unbroken belief in progress and an unprecedented surge of innovation in all areas of society (culture, science, economy and politics). The word NEW is becoming the ubiquitous buzzword of the era. Although trend-setting developments already began before 1900, they only really came to fruition decades later – unleashed by immense acceleration and international interdependencies.

Art and culture also self-confidently claim to want to help shape the "new reality". Wide-ranging artist networks unfold their power beyond the traditional art centres around/after 1900 – Paris, Vienna, Munich, London – radiating as far as the USA, Latin America and Asia. The rapid internationalisation of the art world expands the established network geography to include other art metropolises such as Berlin, Moscow, Rome, Prague, New York and Mexico City. Social upheavals, political divergences, mass communication and mobility contribute to the formation of urban, multicultural avant-gardes whose members define themselves beyond generational boundaries through programmatic orientation and multimedia art practice. It is an epoch of contrasts and conflicts in which different art positions assert themselves side by side.

The cross-disciplinary exhibition aims to subject this kaleidoscopic image of the 1920s to a contemporary examination. Three major thematic complexes determine and structure the exhibition narrative: the phenomenon of the big city as a biotope and distorted image of modernity; the discourse on the new role models of women and men; and the construction and perception of the new living worlds. The aim is not only to use the topos of the crazy, wild years, but also to reveal the aesthetic circulation processes.
between the individual art movements and art centres beyond the common (geo-cultural-politically sanctioned) thought patterns of centre and periphery. The focus will be on the formative phenomena of this epoch – globalisation, speed, the desire to experiment, the questioning of gender roles, urban lifeworlds, the diversity of artistic concepts, changing visual habits, mechanisation, mass communication – and provide a differentiated insight into the kaleidoscope of modernity. At the same time, possible parallels to the developments in the first decades of the 21st century are consciously in the room.
The Exhibition

Rarely in intellectual and cultural history has a single decade been so spoiled by posthumous fame as the 1920s. This relatively short period, considered the core epoch and experimental field of Western modernity, has not only become the subject of several multi-faceted overall analyses in recent years; meanwhile, almost every single year can proudly boast its own “biography.” These are the shooting stars of a supposedly golden age, whose myth is fed above all by the hopes for a better future that experienced their various manifestations around the globe. Never before had there been the feeling that the globe - due to the effects of the First World War, the pandemic of the Spanish flu and thanks to technological progress - had shrunk to a manageable size. The young generation's hunger for the new and the astonishing abundance of talent of this era unleashed enormous creative potential. Speed, mechanization, global networking, new role models for women and men, urban utopias set the pace of the decade, even if its flip side was marked by fragmentation and powerlessness. In their search for orientation, people felt torn between familiar thought patterns and modern challenges. The density of all these phenomena makes this period seem like a showcase of several epochs. The simultaneity and radicality of these events give them a remarkable topicality even 100 years later and inspired us to this exhibition.

We resisted the temptation to focus on the wild, crazy, "Golden Twenties,” which long before the furious success of the television series Babylon Berlin determined the (wishful) image of the time and the focus of numerous exhibitions. From the beginning, the focus was on a world in the throes of collective upheaval, a world that had lost a uniform system of coordinates and had to reinvent itself.

The 1920s left behind the old illusion of a uniform perception of the world and of life. A look at the map of Europe before and after the First World War reveals this paradigm shift: In 1914, the empires of Austria-Hungary, Russia and Germany dominated the political and geographical space alongside the territorial countries of France, Spain and Great Britain. Four years later - after the end of the war and the disintegration of multi-cultural great powers - Europe is unrecognizable. A colorful patchwork of newly created nation-states covers the continent from north to south and from east to west. The new foundations were accompanied not only by a focus on individual national identities, but also by the need for new forms of political and cultural representation.

Paradoxically - and in spite of advancing globalization - the fragmentation of the world (view) was transferred to all fields of people's lives and activities. It is under this premise that the narrative structure of this exhibition emerged. It focuses on three elementary parameters that remain valid across all national borders, artisms, and time horizons: Metropolises, images of people, and lifeworlds. These are universal phenomena that can be grasped intuitively by visitors and offer them a basis for reflection on their own time.

Like a kaleidoscope, the focal points of the open exhibition course are fanned out into ever new constellations, which in their richness of facets and their exemplary deepenings create a multi-layered picture of the epoch.

A decade, however dazzling, is only a fragment of a larger context that cannot be separated from historical continuity. The endless abundance of innovations that lent the 1920s their breathlessness is not solely due to the spirit of optimism that prevailed at the
time. Numerous developments in art, science and technology had already taken off before 1900 and could only now, through immense acceleration and international linkages, reach a climax or even become visible at all.

The activities of the international art avant-gardes reflected these developments. Nevertheless, the omnipresent devastation of the First World War, the turmoil of the Russian October Revolution, and the bloodletting resulting from the Spanish flu represented a momentous caesura. New protagonists entered the stage, and the heroes of yore were sidelined. Among the tragic losers of history was the scandal-ridden shooting star of Austrian modernism, Egon Schiele, who succumbed to the Spanish flu on October 31, 1918, at the age of only 28. His final painting, The Family, exemplifies his approach to renegotiating traditional themes, and is at once a moving testament to both his personal and global tragedy. Schiele projected onto the canvas the family idyll he longed for, yet never lived: his pregnant wife Edith died of influenza three days before he did, taking the unborn child with her to her death. Edvard Munch, one of the most influential pioneers of modern art before the war, was luckier. He survived the insidious disease. The 1919 self-portrait shows him scarred by the flu, a man in his early fifties, prematurely aged, whose vital creative energy seems extinguished. In fact, he had increasingly withdrawn from the active art world since the 1920s, only to be celebrated by the German National Socialists after 1933, first as a great "Nordic artist" and finally defamed as "degenerate." Both key figures of pre-war modernism, to whom the Expressionist movements owed decisive impulses, unexpectedly became representatives of a "world of yesterday," to which Stefan Zweig set an ambivalent monument in his memoir of the same name.

Metropolises

From the disintegration of the old order, the young took the right to form their own new standards of value. For them, this era marked not an end, but a beginning. They turned their sharp eyes to current issues and pulsating places of action. Although the majority of the European population lived in the countryside under conditions that sometimes seemed archaic, it was the increasing urbanization with all its positive and negative effects that left its mark on the 1920s. The metropolises offered artists an inexhaustible source of inspiration as well as a media and public stage for their art. In the urban depictions of contemporary artists and photographers, the urban environment appears as a biotope, a field of experimentation, and at the same time as a distorted image of modernity, to which Arnold Zweig set an ambivalent monument in his memoir of the same name.

Modern architecture changed the face of cities and developed a new vocabulary whose origins lay in modern technology as well as in the aesthetic conceptions of the young urban avant-gardes. Their utopian urban designs were the expression of an artistic vision of the future, fueled by the postulates of a new society. The fact that history took a different course reveals the gap between the utopian aspirations for a new, better world and the brutal political reality in Europe.

The traditional cultural metropolises of Paris, Munich, Vienna, and St. Petersburg had lost none of their charisma, even though they faced competition in the form of young, up-and-coming art centers such as Prague, Berlin, Witebsk, London, Shanghai, and Mexico City. Far from any competition, New York developed in the 1920s into the first multi-ethnic global megacity. In the course of the "Great Migration" of the African-American population to the cities of the North, New York's Harlem district became the largest
black community in the world and the starting point of the emancipatory movement of the Harlem Renaissance. Jazz ruled here, and it was from here that exceptional artists such as Josephine Baker, Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong conquered the stages of Europe. African-American jazz music developed into an export hit that gave the USA an advantage in the transatlantic cultural shuttle for the first time.

Images of Man
The societies of the "Golden Twenties" were deeply divided. The changed conditions shaped people and thus also the new image of man, which brought a renaissance of portraiture to painting. Politically committed artists turned their attention to the "outcasts" who, beyond the glittering urban worlds, sought to escape the dreary reality of backyards and the monotony of factory work. Industrialization contributed to a new understanding of the body and interpreted the organism through technological metaphors. But the most important poles of the new social system reflected in art were SHE and HE. The sensa-tion of the 1920s was called "New Woman", and it is undisputedly her decade. The introduction of women's suffrage (Finland was the first in Europe in 1907, followed in 1984 by Lichtenstein as the last European country), economic independence and social emancipation formed the basis for a new self-confidence and new pictorial forms of representation for women. It was the New Woman who was addressed as the main target of car and cigarette advertising, the fashion and cosmetics industries discovered the life-hungry working girls as insatiable consumers, and the entertainment industry profited from the female desire for freedom and adventure.

The New Woman found an influential ally in the arduous process of self-empowerment in fashion. A slim silhouette steel-ed by dance and sport became her trademark, as did the short skirt and the tomboyish fashion hairstyle à la Garçonne. She helped Chanel's "little black dress" to a transcontinental triumph and irritated her male environment with androgy-nous chic. In addition to professional couturiers, it was the artists who put the synthesis of art and life at the service of emancipation with their creations.

Like hardly any time before, the 1920s cultivated a lusty determination to question established orders and break taboos, especially when these concerned sexuality and sexual morality. People developed a freer attitude toward sexuality and same-sex love. In Berlin, which had the most permissive gay scene in Europe, the world’s first Institute for Sexual Science was established as a contact point for people of all genders seeking help. The new visibility of diverse sexual identities was also reflected in art.

Lifeworlds
The 1920s are often described as the vanguard of the second industrial revolution, which began with full force after the Second World War and continues to shape our everyday lives today. The ambivalent cult of technology of this time revealed its dark side in the death-dealing war machinery between 1914 and 1918, which art and literature relentlessly recorded. The progressive mechanization of living and production conditions manifested itself in the ambivalent dream of a future-oriented fusion of man and machine. At the same time, the Bauhaus and internationally active designers developed a new industrial aesthetic of living culture and objects of daily use, which are cult today. People of the 1920s seemed to be virtually obsessed with their bodies. The awareness of having to function as part of an anonymous mass society awakened the desire for individual body optimization, which was to be achieved by means of aesthetic surgery and sporting activities. Sport developed into a mass phenomenon, successful athletes were
revered as stars, spectacular successes celebrated frenetically. Art reacted to this with a wide range of representations that oscillated between ideal human bodies and the technoid aesthetics of automata. This was accompanied by the obsessive pursuit of records in all disciplines - automobiles and aviation became symbols of an era in the throes of speed.

This world in upheaval is accompanied by an unrestrained flood of images. Small-format cameras, photojournalism, their use in advertising and in various media justify the omnipresence of photography in the public sphere. At the same time, it is assigned a key role in the avant-garde educational program of the "New Vision. Radio and cinema evolve from the status of a technical miracle to extremely influential mass media firmly anchored in people's everyday lives. The exhibition picks up on these phenomena by tying its thematic focus even more closely to the period in which they were created through the constant presence of photography and film.

**About the accompanying publication**

This accompanying publication follows the structure of the exhibition and at the same time offers a polyphonic panorama of time in which art and photography, image and text enter into a fruitful dialogue. It is a stroke of luck that the renowned experts on the subject Philipp Blom, Harald Jähner, Anne Söll, Jens Wietschorke and Lukas Bächer got involved in this concept and were prepared to convey well-founded content with a light pen. Dramaturgically, two narrative strands are interwoven here - the core statements of the introductory texts are reflected in the subsequent picture essays. The generously laid out photo series with original quotations from the 1920s as well as short picture texts develop a narrative life of their own and yet remain integral parts of the larger structure. In writing the extended captions, it was my intention not so much to provide an art-historical analysis of the images, but rather to illuminate the context in which the images were created and to capture the zeitgeist of the era. The attractive graphic design of the publication gives it the character of a lively anthology of epochs, which I hope will offer readers an illuminating and entertaining read. In doing so, it takes up the idea of the kaleidoscope as a tried and tested instrument for viewing the world as well as for enchanting the world with casual matter-of-factness.

Agnieszka Lulińska
Curator
Exhibition texts

Introduction

1920s! In the Kaleidoscope of Modernism

The 1920s are generally seen as a period of upheaval and fevered experimentation in Western modernism. It was a world intoxicated with the idea of a collective fresh start. Although seminal developments had already set in before 1900, they only really came to fruition after the First World War. The hunger for innovation felt by the young unleashed an enormous creative potential. Speed, mechanisation, global networking, new role models for women and men and the pace of city life defined the image of the decade.

But it was also a decade riven by doubt and feelings of impotence. For all the euphoria, people felt torn between traditional ways of thinking and the unfamiliar challenges of modern life. This underlying ambivalence also left its mark on art and culture, which self-confidently set out to help shape the ‘new reality’. The simultaneity and radical nature of the period’s different driving forces have lost none of their relevance today. The exhibition focuses on three universal phenomena that transcend all national borders, ‘Isms’ of art and time horizons: Cities, People and Life-worlds. As if seen through a kaleidoscope, aspects of these thematic focuses converge in ever new constellations and produce a multi-faceted picture of an era.

I. The Modern City

After the First World War, artists turned their perceptive gaze to current issues and vibrant hubs of activity. Although the vast majority of the European population still lived in the country, often in conditions that could only be described as archaic, it was the increasing urbanisation that left its mark on the 1920s. As cities developed into industrial and service centres, they attracted ever more people who wanted more than just to work, live and enjoy themselves there. The city became a place of longing, full of seductive promises for the future that were rarely fulfilled. Henceforth, dynamism, speed and permanent acceleration were to determine the rhythm of urban life.

The metropolis itself became the medium and material of art. It offered the close-knit network of avant-garde artists a wealth of near-inexhaustible sources of inspiration and a highly visible forum. At the same time, it drew and fed the vitality of its myth from its myriad representations in art, photography, film and literature. Viewed from different perspectives, it was reflected as a sociotope, a testing ground, but also as a distorted image of modernity.

Urban Utopias

The cities soared upwards and dug deep into ground beneath them. The galloping and unchecked increase in population density, the enormous volume of traffic and changing lifestyles brought new challenges. Progressive architects developed models for standardised, prefabricated housing and designed ideal cities and settlements in a radically new formal language that was grounded in modern technology and in the politically driven visions for the future of urban life of a young international avant-garde.

The widespread and energising sense of the dawning of a new age also galvanised artists who sought to play an active role in shaping the future. In Germany, the Bauhaus was born; the Dutch art movement De Stijl called for a ‘new unity in life, art and culture.’ In their utopian urban designs, Eastern European avant-garde artists such as Kazimir Malevich, El Lissitzky and Gustav Klutsis developed autonomous worlds that were subject
to constant change. The change of political course in Soviet Russia put an abrupt end to these visions of the future: henceforth, Socialist Realism and Productivism were regarded as the only appropriate forms of expression of a revolutionary society.

Metropolitan Rhythm
Even though the established culture capitals of Paris, Munich and Vienna had lost none of their charisma, after 1918 they were beginning to face competition from young, up-and-coming art centres such as Berlin. Far removed from any such rivalry, in the 1920s New York developed into the first multi-ethnic global megacity. In the wake of the First Great Migration of the African American population from the Jim Crow South to the cities of the North, the New York district of Harlem became the world’s largest black community and the birthplace of the emancipatory movement of the Harlem Renaissance.

The Harlem Cotton Club became a mecca for jazz music. From here, African American artists such as Josephine Baker, Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong conquered the stages of Europe. Jazz music grew into an export hit and became the soundtrack of a new era on both sides of the Atlantic.

At a time when racial segregation was the norm in the US and racist ways of thinking were common across Europe, jazz was an expression of empowerment. Its electrifying rhythms were polarising and inspiring in equal measure and set the Western world aflame with jazz fever. After 1933, the Nazis vilified jazz as the music of the enemy of the Aryan race.

Jazz in Europe: Between Admiration and Prejudice
The epicentre of European jazz mania in the 1920s was Paris. Many African American army veterans who had fought alongside French troops in the First World War returned to Europe after the war to work as musicians and entertainers. With their exciting performances, they sent the pleasure-seeking public into a collective jazz frenzy that shaped the popular culture of the time – notwithstanding the prevalent resentment and prejudice.

Around 1925, Josephine Baker was the undisputed star of the Théâtre des Champs Élysées. She and her troupe inspired Paul Colin’s print portfolio Le Tumult Noir. Pulsating with colour and movement, the lithographs capture the exoticism of the stage show. Influenced by African sculpture, Cubism and Art Deco aesthetics, the images reflect a fascination with the unfamiliar culture, even though many of the performers’ exaggerated physiognomies no longer strike us as appropriate or politically correct today.

The Ambivalent Reception of Jazz
Blue notes and the novel rhythms of ragtime and blues also made their way onto the opera stage: in 1927, composer Ernst Krenek premiered his jazz opera Jonny spielt auf (Jonny Plays Up). It was a huge success: in the 1927-8 season alone, it was given 421 times in 45 different cities.

The opera touched the nerve of the zeitgeist and riled conservative sensibilities. This was not so much due to the daring mix of musical styles as to the highly provocative titular character, the black jazz musician Jonny and his adventures involving a stolen violin. He is the cunning antagonist to the sophisticated composer Max. The opera juxtaposes the Old World and the New, Western classical tradition and new-fangled sensuality – as an expression of modernity and, at the same time, as a protest against it.

The Nazis picked up on this juxtaposition and turned it into a battle between the races, vilifying the opera as ‘impudent Jewish Negro filth’. 
II.
New Woman – New Man
1920s societies were deeply divided. The profound shift in the basic parameters of everyday life left its mark on people, and, with it, on their self-image, which, in turn, gave rise to a veritable renaissance of portraiture. Politically engaged artists turned their back on the glitz of the so-called Roaring Twenties to focus on the ‘left behind’ who sought to escape the bleak reality of tenement backyards and soul-destroying monotony of factory work.

But the main focus was on the changing roles of men and women. Having won wider access to education and employment, equality before the law and the right to vote, women became more active participants in all walks of life and society and embraced the term New Woman to affirm their emancipated status. The New Woman quickly became a trope in popular culture that gave rise to clichéd representations in art, literature and the media. Predictably, the male response to the empowerment of women was ambivalent, ranging from enthusiastic approval to vehement rejection. Moreover, men had to come to terms with the unfamiliar role of spectators on the fringes of change, which encouraged many of them to reassess the traditional gender roles.

Fashion
Fashion is inextricably linked to the time of its creation. It gives expression to the wearer’s personality and, conversely, shapes the way they are perceived by society. After the end of the First World War, the face and very fabric of urban society underwent rapid change. Fashion changed with women’s new role in society, and the New Woman found an influential ally in fashion: her slim, athletic silhouette embodied the zeitgeist, as did her short drop-waist dress and bobbed hair. She helped make Chanel’s iconic ‘little black dress’ a transcontinental success and provoked her male environment with her androgynous chic. Flowing fabrics and casual, body-skimming cuts created a natural look that also influenced men’s fashion.

While fashion was the domain of professional tailors and dressmakers, artists such as Sonia Delaunay, Natalia Goncharova and Raoul Dufy pursued a synthesis of art and life and created clothing that moved fluidly between art and design. At the same time, their designs of prototypes for serial production and exclusive one-of-a-kind creations reflect different artistic and ideological concepts and world views.

Scandalous Bob
For centuries, long hair had defined the female ideal of beauty. Around 1920, a new trend from Paris hit the international fashion world with unexpected ferocity. The short haircut coupe à la garçonne, also known as a bob, caused a sensation and quickly came to epitomise daring modernity. The cut’s inventor, the eccentric celebrity hairdresser Antoine Cierplikowski, achieved cult status, and his illustrious clients included Josephine Baker, Wallis Simpson and Elsa Schiaparelli.

The chic short hairstyle was much more than just a short-lived fad – it gave expression to the new attitude to life of women in the 1920s, to their burgeoning emancipation and hope for a new beginning. Despite the initial hostility, with which the stunned male world reacted to this apparent attack on femininity, the bob became popular among all social classes.

Flexible Identities
More than any other period before, the 1920s were determined to challenge established orders and break taboos. People took a more liberal view of sexuality and same-sex love.
Berlin was not only home to the most permissive gay scene in Europe but also to the world’s first Institute for Sexual Research, headed by Magnus Hirschfeld, who since 1897, had run the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee, which campaigned for social recognition of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and against their criminalisation and legal persecution.

The new visibility of diverse sexual identities was also reflected in art. Artists such as the czech avant-garde painter Toyen made a point of alternating between masculine and feminine forms of self-presentation. In so doing, they not only questioned normative gender roles but also the authorship of creative production. The self-portraits of the lesbian photographer Claude Cahun show that the presentation of gender is ambiguous and fluid. The Danish artist Einar Wegener took the most radical step. After years of living with a double identity, he underwent several gender reassignment operations in the early 1930s in order to live as Lili Elbe.

The Institute for Sexual Research
Founded in 1919 and dedicated to ‘love and suffering’, the institute faced many challenges. In addition to serving the medical needs of patients in several treatment rooms, the institute sought to put sexual research on an academic footing and to provide further education. Magnus Hirschfeld, the enterprising director of the institute, faced hostility from many sides for his enlightened efforts.

That notwithstanding, the institute’s collections and lectures, both open to the public, were very popular. Questions could be submitted anonymously before the lectures. Contraceptives tended to be a central and sensitive topic. For reasons of demographic policy, they could only be advertised to a very limited extent. The consequences of this restrictive strategy were disastrous: for every birth in Germany there was an abortion, usually performed illegally and unprofessionally.

The Nazis hated the institute. In 1933 it was promptly ransacked and closed.

‘Artificial Paradises’ – Life on Drugs
Drugs were widely used in the First World War. They spurred soldiers on before battle and helped them forget the misery of the trenches. At the end of the war in 1918, the army medical depots were full to the brim with stimulants. In Germany, as in other countries, former military doctors and soldiers engaged in a booming black-market trade. The drugs found their way into Berlin’s bars, cabarets and clubs. At the same time, cocaine and opiates were available as medicine in pharmacies on prescription.

The fascination with drugs and intoxication is a recurring theme in the art of the 1920s. Existential insecurity, scepticism about the fervent faith in progress and the quest for new forms of expression led creative artists of all disciplines to experiment with drugs.

The Polish painter Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, for example, painted portraits of his clients under the influence of drugs and various psychedelics, whose names he noted on his works.

III.
Life-worlds: Man – Machine
Even before 1914, industrialisation and new technologies had set in motion a fundamental transformation of the world. The deadly war machinery of the First World War revealed the brutal flip side of technological progress, as art and literature recorded with unflinching honesty. But the progressive mechanisation of production processes and living conditions could no longer be stopped. It manifested itself in the increasing fusion of man and machine, a process that was viewed with considerable ambivalence. The
controllability of the machine was questioned; the human body itself began to turn into a kind of machine. Mechanisation forced an ever-faster pace on people – productivity instead of leisure determined the everyday experience of the masses. Nevertheless, the hope for a glorious future in which man and technology would become one was one of the defining subjects in the art, literature and film of the 1920s. While artists like Fernand Léger and Willi Baumeister emphasised the interaction between man and machine, the film Metropolis shows the destructive power of a female robot whose technoid aesthetic comes dangerously close to the ideal of beauty of the time.

The Human Montage
Thanks to medical advances, the injuries soldiers had suffered in the mechanised warfare and ‘battles of materiel’ of the First World War had become more treatable. Veterans were often badly disfigured, and their mutilations presented a challenge to plastic surgery. The countless people who had lost limbs spurred a surge of innovation in the construction of prostheses. Cosmetic prostheses were intended to make the disabilities as invisible as possible in everyday life. However, if the disabled were to go back to work, their maimed bodies needed reconstruction in ways that would facilitate heavy labour or specialised tasks. Artists commented on these developments in their own way. They drew attention to the fate of war veterans and reacted to the mechanical ‘spare parts’ and surgical reconfiguration of war invalids with, among other things, hybrid body collages that they referred to as ‘montages’.

Mad for Sport
The introduction of the eight-hour day in 1918 gave a wide section of the population access to new leisure activities. Sport became a mass phenomenon: new venues, major international events and rousing coverage on the radio and in the illustrated press heightened interest in team sports such as football and rugby. This went hand in hand with the obsessive hunt for records in all disciplines. The achievements of civil aviation fuelled tales of valour and heroism – the masses breathlessly followed the hitherto unimaginable feats of intrepid aviators, among them several women. The irrepressible advance of the automobile made the motorcar the symbol of an era intoxicated with speed. Another obsession of the 1920s was with the human body. The awareness of having to function as a part of an anonymous mass society awakened the desire for individual body optimisation, which was to be achieved through sporting activities. Successful athletes were celebrated as stars and role models. Boxing enjoyed particular popularity, and even beyond the ring, boxers were seen as the very embodiment of masculinity and as representatives of a new age.

New Media
The 1920s were marked by a flood of images. The advent of the 35mm camera and its use in the media and advertising established the ubiquity of photography in the public sphere. As a result, photography played a key role in the programme of the movement that came to be known as New Vision. Self-examination and dynamic views of the world from unexpected angles chimed with the aesthetics of the time and laid the foundations for a whole host of avant-garde forms and techniques, among them photomontage, which brought together disparate images to encourage the viewer to think about their relationship.
At the same time, radio and cinema lost their technical miracle status and became mass media that were firmly anchored in people’s everyday lives. Radio stations sought to inform and entertain broad sections of the population but were also increasingly exploited for propaganda purposes. The transmission of a Christmas concert on 22 December 1920, with its mix of talk and music that remains successful to this day, marked the birth of public broadcasting in Germany. But more than any other art form, it was cinema that conveyed a vivid image of the era. Society saw itself reflected in new role models for men and women, fashion and sport, mobility and urban life.

**Double-edged Progress**

Many technological innovations of the previous decades became part and parcel of everyday life in the 1920s. The unwavering belief in progress was one of the reasons why they were adopted with such enthusiasm. In practice, however, it quickly became apparent that progress did not only open up new possibilities, it also brought with it new kinds of problems. How does the technical reproducibility of an image affect the original? How does society change when more and more people work with typewriters, calculators and telephones? What role does a mass medium like radio play in shaping political opinion?

While the new technologies made life easier, the world became more complex. Unsettled by this, many longed for simple answers which gave a boost to parties offering simple solutions and advocating extreme policies. The 1920s became the prelude to one of the darkest chapters in European history.
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AUDIOGUIDE
An accompanying audio guide about art, literature and film of the time, with original quotes and music.
German, free of charge on your own smartphone via the Bundeskunsthalle app:
www.bundeskunsthalle.de/app
Artistic conception and production tonwelt

Photo workshop in the exhibition
Photo studio 1920
Every Sunday, 11-17 h
Knee breeches, sliding caps, fringes, sequins, Garçonne look, headbands, Mary Janes, hourglass figure and cufflinks in the style of the 1920s help us to play fashionably with roles, identities or gender. Crank telephone, Charleston step and co. underline our transformations, which we capture in a photo studio. Whether solo, as a duo, family or group - we take our best snapshots home with us.
Included in the admission

Public tours
Wednesdays 6-7 p.m. (except July 5)
Sundays and holidays 15-16 h
3 €/reduced 1,50 €, plus admission to the exhibition
Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.
ArtCard reservation: T +49 228 9171-200

Curator tours
With Agnieszka Lulinska, curator of the exhibition
Thursday, April 20 and Friday, May 26, 11 a.m., Saturday, June 17 and Sunday, July 16, both 4-5 p.m.
3 €/reduced 1,50 €, plus admission to the exhibition
Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

Guided tour during lunch break
Art break - Vintage
Wednesday, April 5, April 19, May 3, May 31, July 12, each 12:30 - 1 p.m.
As a balance to your daily working life, we offer you an entertaining speed guided tour during your lunch break.
8 € (guided tour and admission)
Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.
Registration required, can be booked individually for groups
Information and registration at: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de
Offer for integration and language courses

Culture_language_art_getting_acquainted

During a joint tour, the language learners discover our exhibition. Afterwards, they can all engage in artistic-practical activities.
The offers can be adapted to the respective language level.
Dates freely bookable
120 minutes, 2 € per person (integration courses)
Written registration required: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de

Telephone tour

By Call Culture 1920s - In the Kaleidoscope of Modernity

With Uschi Baetz

Thursday, May 4, 5-6 p.m.
Tuesday, June 6, 5-6 p.m.

From home or on the road, you can take part in a guided tour of our exhibition 1920s - In the Kaleidoscope of Modernism via your (landline) telephone. You will get an insight into the exhibition concept and detailed descriptions of the artworks. The art mediator will give you a lively insight into a decade which, on the one hand, was characterized by a deep disunity and, on the other hand, had an unbroken belief in progress and this in a time of unprecedented innovation in all areas of society (culture, science, economy and politics).

"Bei Anruf Kultur" is aimed at people who, for various reasons, cannot get into museums or visually grasp the contents of a guided tour. For example, because they are blind or visually impaired. Or they are not mobile or live in a nursing home. For these interested parties, the communication of culture, art and historical topics is made possible via telephone.
Free participation

The registration is possible up to one day before the guidance with Melanie Wölwer (BSVH) under: buchung@beianrufkultur.de or by telephone 040 20940429. The access link will be sent by e-mail the day before the telephone tour.
Further dates and information: www.beianrufkultur.de

With call culture is a common initiative of the blind and visually impaired association Hamburg (BSVH) and grey value, the office for

Detailed descriptive tour for visually impaired and blind people

1920s - In the kaleidoscope of modernity

With Uschi Baetz

Sunday, April 30, June 18, July 23, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. each day

The 1920s with their social upheavals, the technical developments that accelerated everything, and the innovative developments in art and culture still exert a special attraction on us today.

The exhibition immerses us in a time that was characterized by deep conflict and at the same time by an unbroken belief in progress. In doing so, it sheds light on the phenomenon of the big city, the changing role models of women and men, and the emergence of new lifestyles, and looks for parallels in developments in the present day.

Even though the presentation cannot offer any objects that can be touched, the art mediator Uschi Baetz would like to make the works accessible to you during the tour by means of detailed descriptions and integrate them into the cultural-historical context.

We look forward to an intensive exchange with you!

3 € tour fee, plus admission to the exhibition
A guided tour in plain language  
*Machine Man and Bubi Head: The 1920s*  
With Uschi Baetz  
Sunday, April 30, 2-3:15 p.m.  
Sunday, July 23, 2 - 3:30 p.m.  
The exhibition is about the time 100 years ago.  
At that time a lot changes:  
The big city emerges. With high-rise buildings, factories and wide streets.  
More and more people drive cars. For the first time also the women.  
Women now wear short dresses and short hair. The new hairstyle is called Bubi head.  
People meet in bars and listen to jazz, a new music.  
People dance the Charleston to it: a new dance. Many people find the dance very bad.  
The machine man is invented: the first robot.  
The exhibition asks a question: Do such changes also exist in our time today?  
Together we look at everything and talk about it.  
Clear language means: everything is easy to understand. Everything is explained.  
3 € guided tour fee, plus admission to the exhibition.  
Written registration required: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de

Guided tours in German Sign Language  
*A tour through another time*  
With Juliane Steinwede  
Saturday, May 27, 3 - 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday, June 24, 3 - 4:30 p.m.  
The 1920s were a time of upheaval in the modern Western world.  
Life was exploding in the big cities. Many people moved there to work. Skyscrapers and factories were built. Technical developments shaped people. The automobile soon became part of city life. Paris, Vienna, Munich, London, Berlin and Rome were central for the new art, music, dance and literature. In the exhibition you will find many topics that also concern us today: Globalization, speed, gender roles, mechanization and communication. We hope you enjoy the tour through another time.  
3 € guided tour fee, plus admission to the exhibition.  
Written registration required: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de

Art and culture for people with dementia  
*The 1920s: Charleston, Bubikopf and the Miss from the Office*  
With Uschi Baetz  
100 years ago, life changed fundamentally: The big cities grew with their high-rises and factories. The automobile began its triumphal march. Jazz was played and Charleston danced in the clubs. Women wore the bobble head with their short dresses and appeared in public smoking. The radio made its appearance, and the Miss from the Office established a telephone connection between two people.  
The 1920s are characterized by an unbroken belief in progress, forward-looking technical developments and changing role models: an era that still has a special appeal for us today. We immerse ourselves in this bygone world and at the same time see if there are any parallels to the present day.
50 € guide fee, plus admission to the exhibition
Free booking for groups
Written registration required: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de

**Group tours**
60 minutes, 70 €
90 minutes, 90 €
plus group entrance ticket 10,40 €/reduced 6,50 € per person
Written registration required: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de

**EVENTS**

**Concert in the Forum**
Beethoven Orchestra Bonn:
*Les mariés de la Tour Eiffel - The Wedding under the Eiffel Tower*
Wednesday, April 5, 7 p.m.
Introduction: Agnieszka Lulińska (Curator of the exhibition) and Tilmann Böttcher (Leitender Dramaturg Beethoven Orchester Bonn).
What happens when a couple plans their wedding on the Eiffel Tower in the city of lights, love and culture around 1920? Jean Cocteau has invented a hair-raising story in which, among other things, a lion, an ostrich, a telegram, a wedding party and, of course, the director of the Eiffel Tower play a role. Five of Cocteau’s friends have put music to paper that is just as lively and makes your feet bounce: Georges Auric, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc and Germaine Tailleferre are five of the six composers of the legendary Groupe des Six. They wrote the music that smelled of music hall and circus tent, that breathed the spirit of Josephine Baker and the Folies Bergères. With it, they wanted to put an end once and for all to impressionistic fleecy clouds and goldfish glasses. So, Curtain up for an imaginary theater, for an audio cinema from the most beautiful city in the world from the "Roaring Twenties". "Grrrr...!" goes the lion.
Instrumentation: 1 flute, 1 oboe, 1 clarinet, 1 bassoon, 1 horn, 1 trumpet, 1 trombone, 1 timpani, 2 percussionists, 1 harp, 1 violin I, 1 violin II, 1 viola, 1 violoncello, 1 double bass, 1 speaking conductor, 1 narrator (texts)
In cooperation with the Beethoven Orchester Bonn
13 €/reduced 6,50 € (incl. admission to the exhibition before 7 pm)
Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

**Matinee in the foyer**
(with small gastronomic offer)

**1920s Matinee**
With the pianist Pauli Jämsä
Sundays, April 02 and 23, from 12 p.m. to about 1:30 p.m. each day.
The Finnish pianist Pauli Jämsä studied at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki and at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna.
His diverse concert activities have taken him to stages throughout Europe, Japan, Taiwan, Argentina, Palestine, Israel and the USA as a soloist, chamber musician and song accompanist. He has made guest appearances at the Vienna Musikverein, the Gulbenkian Center (Lisbon), the Teatro Colón (Buenos Aires), and Izumi Hall (Osaka), among others. His passion for opera has led him to collaborate with many important singers as well as renowned conductors.
Prior to his appointment as director of studies in Bonn, he worked as a solo repetiteur at the Graz Opera. From the next season on, the pianist is engaged at the Deutsche Oper Berlin.
Participation in the matinee is free of charge.

**Cinema in the Forum**

**Metropolis:**

*Sunrise*

Silent film with live music
Director: Friedrich-Wilhelm Murnau, USA 1927, 91 minutes
Wednesday, May 10, 7 p.m.

*Sunrise - Song of Two Men* was the first film Friedrich-Wilhelm Murnau made in the United States. The plot is based on Hermann Sudermann's short story *The Journey to Tilsit*. Upon its release, the film received excellent reviews, won three Oscars, but became a flop at the box office.

In 2012, the film was ranked fifth among the best films of all time in a survey of film critics by Sight & Sound magazine.

In cooperation with Förderverein Filmkultur Bonn e.V.
13 €/reduced 6,50 € (incl. admission to the exhibition before 7 p.m.)
Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

**Menschenbilder - The New Woman:**

*Pandora’s Box*

Silent film with live music
Director: Georg Wilhelm Pabst, USA 1929, 134 minutes
Wednesday, June 21, 7 p.m.

*Pandora’s Box* is a German silent film starring American actress Mary Louise Brooks. The film’s story is loosely based on the dramas Erdgeist and Pandora’s Box by Frank Wedekind.

Mary Louise Brooks played a decisive role in shaping the new image of women in the twenties, with her bobbed hairdo and a new permissiveness in fashion and gender issues. With her natural acting style, Brooks developed a completely new, sensational type of actress. She became a legend with this film. At the same time, the film broke a number of taboos about the image of women and their reality, and was the first film to show lesbian love. Among censors and distributors, one of the main scenes of the film, Lulu’s love for Countess Geschwitz, met with great resistance and was even cut from the film in some countries. In Germany, it was banned for young people in 1929 and was banned altogether by Nazi censors in 1934.

In cooperation with Förderverein Filmkultur Bonn e.V.
13 €/reduced 6,50 € (incl. admission to the exhibition before 7 p.m.)
Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.
**Cinema in the Forum**

Lifeworlds:

"Mother Krausen's Ride to Happiness"

Silent film with live music

Director: Phil Jutzi, D 1929

Wednesday, June 28, 7 p.m., 105 minutes

Mutter Krausens Fahrt ins Glück (Mother Krausen's Ride to Happiness) is a German silent film produced by the Prometheus Filmproduktionsgesellschaft at the Jofa Ateliers in Berlin-Johannisthal. He counts among the representatives of the so-called Proletarian Cinema. The film is based on an idea of the draftsman Heinrich Zille, who is known for his socially critical depiction of the lower class of Berlin, the Miljöh. The setting is the Berlin district of Wedding, then a working-class neighborhood.

Mother Krause, her daughter Erna and her son Paul live there in poor conditions in a small apartment, which they still have to share with the sleeping boy, a gano-ven, and his bride Friede, a prostitute.

Mother Krause works as a newspaper seller. One day Erna meets the love of her life, the construction worker Max, at the fairground.

In cooperation with Förderverein Filmkultur Bonn e.V. ((Logo))

13 €/reduced 6,50 € (incl. admission to the exhibition before 7 p.m.)

Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

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**MUSEUM MILE FESTIVAL**

**Saturday, June 3 and Sunday, June 4, 2023**

The five houses of Bonn’s Museum Mile celebrate a big family festival. Guided tours, hands-on workshops, concerts, children's stations and many other activities are on the program.

Admission to all exhibitions is free!

The complete program from May onwards at www.museumsmeilebonn.de

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**ART NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM SQUARE**

to the museum mile festival

at the Bundeskunsthalle and the Kunstmuseum Bonn

speed tours_DJ_Drinks

SATURDAY_LATE_ART - Who We Are

Saturday, June 3, 20.30-24h

13€/6,50€ with ELLAH-Card

ELLAH - The annual ticket for young art lovers (Free until 25 years)

Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

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**WEDNESDAY_LATE_ART-SUMMERFEST**

Kaleidoscope

Your after-work party full of art, culture and music!

July 5, 18-21 h

Speedguided tours

(German and English)

1920s. In the kaleidoscope of modernity

Participation action

**ALL TYPO**

Design advertising posters in the style of Bauhaus, de Stijl and DADA
**Intervention**
With the shellac DJ Stephan Wuthe
A short journey with the mechanical suitcase gramophone through the music of the 20s!

**Lounge & DJ & Drinks**
With the DJ Jones P. Johnson
12 €/6 € with ELLAH-Card, including a drink
ELLAH - The annual ticket for young art lovers (Free of charge until 25 years)
Tickets are available at the box office on the day of the event.

**Lecture**
*The twenties*
*Metropolises - Images of People - Lifeworlds*
Texts, poems and correspondence, read by Frauke Poolman and Manon Straché
Sunday, June 18, 4-7 p.m.
Frauke Poolman is a German-Dutch actress, dubbing and radio speaker who comes from a Dutch theater family. She is now the fifth generation of her family to work as an actress. She teaches radio drama and microphone work at the Otto-Falckenberg-Schule in Munich. As the narrator of countless audio book productions, her voice can now be heard in the reading of Salman Rushdie's new novel "Victoria City".
Manon Straché is known from numerous television productions, including Lindenstrasse, Hotel Elfie, girl friends - Freundschaft mit Herz or Das Traumschiff. In addition to her film roles, she can be seen time and again on German theater stages. With her book Leise jedoch kann ich nicht, meine Geschichte der Geschichte (Südwestverlag) she is on reading tours throughout Germany and also works as an audio book and radio play narrator.
Both artists studied acting in the same year at the Hans Otto Theatre Academy in Leipzig.
Disc jockey Stephan Wuthe frames the event with music from the 1920s. He puts original shellac records on his gramophone and comments on what he hears.
13 €/reduced 6,50 €
Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

**Open workshop for ALL**
*Trash_Up*
Sunday, April 30, (jacket like pants) Sunday, May 28, both 2-5 p.m.
Turn old into new! In the open workshop we invite you to breathe new life into old objects with the help of artistic techniques. Artists will give you tips on how to design your objects. As always, EVERYONE can participate!
10 € adult, 5 € child/reduced 5 € adult, 2,50 € child/free of charge for refugees and people with disabilities.
Written registration required: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de
Current and Upcoming Exhibitions

THE LAST OF THEIR KIND
Crafts and Professions in Transition
until 2 April 2023

RIDICULOUSLY YOURS!
Art, Awkwardness and Enthusiasm
until 10 April 2023

One of the most important attitudes or feelings underlying modern and contemporary art is an enthusiastic awkwardness that does not shy away from the embarrassing, the unreasonably silly: seriously?! The cross-epoch exhibition includes works by around 100 artists from all over the world and spans an arc from earlier centuries of art-making to the immediate present. In modernism since the 19th century in general and the classical avant-gardes of the early 20th century in particular, a very specific dialectic is at work: on the one hand, bold innovations, radical negation and aesthetic dogmas – but on the other, a certain kind of laughter that formed the basis for the creation of this exhibition project. It is a laughter that is fun and at the same time – without only wanting to scandalise – under-mines all conservatism, bigotry, moral concepts and not least avant-garde dogmatisms. By opposing the use of culture to intimidate, to secure unearned privileges, this laughter shows how authority loses its grip, how the pompous gesture and the image of the hero are invalidated.

Works by numerous important artists are represented in a scenography containing different chapters – from Pieter Bruegel the Elder to Alfred Jarry and James Ensor, Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia, George Grosz and René Magritte, Giorgio de Chirico and Sturtevant, Sigmar Polke and Martin Kippenberger to numerous contemporary positions, as for example Paul McCarthy, Nicole Eisenman, Fischli & Weiss, Isa Genzken, Pauline Curnier-Jardin, Kiluanji Kia Henda or Ming Wong.

RIDICULOUSLY YOURS! flirts with the humour of catastrophe, bad taste, the camp approach, B-movie culture, science fiction, horror, etc., as well as immaturity, idiocy, intuition and, of course, passion – not to mention enthusiasm.

This exhibition project has been initiated and conceived by Jörg Heiser and Cristina Ricupero.

INTERACTIONS
30 April to mid October 2023
Media conference: Thursday, 27 April 2023, 11 a.m.

The Bundeskunsthalle is organising an interactive summer programme that will unfold around the museum building and complement the works of art already in place in the outdoor space, among them the Circular Appearing Rooms water pavilion by Jeppe Hein, which graces the square every summer, the Bonn Slide by Carsten Höller, which spirals down the façade, and The Curve by Bettina Pousttchi, which is also dedicated to movement.
Interactions will take over and enliven various sites in the public space of the Bundeskunsthalle. From the roof garden to the foyer, the inner courtyard to the plaza, selected works of art and performances will be presented to invite visitors to engage in interactive play and to think about visual language, dance, performance, music or sound as universal forms of communication that transcend borders. Interactions, interventions, perhaps even irritations are designed to give visitors the opportunity to participate in art in a playful way. They are conceived as an open invitation that can be experienced both individually and collectively – fostering a sense of togetherness in which roles are questioned and openness, tolerance and sensitivity are promoted.

A small festival programme and a party to mark the opening (Dance into May) on 30 April complement the vibrancy of the programme.

**JOSEPHINE BAKER**

**Freedom – Equality - Humanity**

18 May to 24 September 2023

Media conference: Wednesday, 17 May 2023, 11 a.m.

Josephine Baker is an icon. She was an international star, a champion of liberty and the civil rights movement and the struggle against racism. Singing and dancing, she captivated audiences around the world and used the stage to promote the message that peace, liberty and equality are a universal human right, regardless of skin colour, religion, nationality, gender or sexual orientation.

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1906, Josephine Baker experienced segregation and racial violence as a child. In 1925, her show talent took her from the USA to liberal Paris, then the creative epicentre of Europe. There she became a star, the highest-paid revue dancer and the first female superstar with African American roots.

Our exhibition sheds light on the foundations of Josephine Baker's success and how she transformed the ostensible stigma of her skin colour into a strength by using her fame to liberate others: As a member of the Resistance during World War II, as a mother of twelve adopted children of diverse backgrounds, as an ambassador for humanity and a committed champion of the American civil rights movement.

For her lifetime achievements, Josephine Baker became the sixth and the first non-white woman to be inducted into the French Hall of Fame, the Panthéon in Paris, on 30 November 2021, and has been officially considered a national heroine ever since.

**WHO WE ARE**

**Reflections on the Country of Immigration**

26 May to 8 October 2023

Media conference: Thursday, 25 May 2023, 11 a.m.

What is it that gives rise to the sense of ‘we’ in a society? Is it only possible to achieve it by setting oneself apart from ‘the others’? Is it possible to arrive at a shared and comprehensive sense of ‘we’ in our society? The exhibition Who We Are puts critical questions to Germany as a country of immigration, a term that politicians have long resisted and one that should now seem self-evident. Migration is nothing out of the
ordinary, on the contrary, it is the normal state of affairs. Experiences of racism and discrimination, however, are still the order of the day for people who are denied membership of the ‘we’. Their paths through life are marked by resistance, but also by success.

The exhibition looks at the structures of our society: Who is allowed to join the conversation and have a say? Who is visible in politics and the media? Who We Are takes a look at the struggle for equal coexistence – the achievements along the way as well as the problems and hurdles that still litter the path. The exhibition shows works by contemporary artists and combines them with personal testimonies and documents relating to migration and history.

An exhibition of the Bundeskunsthalle and DOMiD (Documentation Centre and Museum on Migration in Germany).

Subject to change
Status: March 2023