

# BUNDESKUNSTHALLE

Press Kit

## SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR AND 'THE SECOND SEX' 4 March to 16 October 2022



Simone de Beauvoir, 1954, © Pierre Boulat / Agentur Focus

### Content

- |                                     |         |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Exhibition Information           | page 2  |
| 2. General Information              | page 2  |
| 3. Media Information                | page 4  |
| 4. Exhibition Themes                | page 6  |
| 6. Publication                      | page 9  |
| 5. Educational Programme            | page 9  |
| 7. Current and Upcoming Exhibitions | page 11 |

Press Officer  
Sven Bergmann  
T +49 228 9171-205  
F +49 228 9171-211  
bergmann@bundeskunsthalle.de

Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle  
der Bundesrepublik Deutschland GmbH

Helmut-Kohl-Allee 4  
53113 Bonn  
T +49 228 9171-0  
F +49 228 234154  
www.bundeskunsthalle.de

*Geschäftsführung*  
Dr. Eva-Christina Kraus  
Oliver Hölken

*Vorsitzende/r des Kuratoriums*  
N.N.

*Stellvertretende Vorsitzende  
des Kuratoriums*  
Dr. Hildegard Kaluza

HRB Nr. 5096  
Amtsgericht Bonn  
Umsatzsteuer ID Nr. DE811386971

Konto 3 177 177 00  
Deutsche Bank Bonn  
BLZ 380 700 59  
IBAN DE03 3807 0059 0317 7177 00  
BIC DEUT DE 380



## Exhibition Information

Duration	28 January – 26 June 2022
Press Officer	Sven Bergmann
Curator	Katharina Chrubasik
Exhibition design	Jana Cerno, CERNO DESIGN, Munich
Admission	5 €/3,50 € reduced All visitors up to and including 18 years of age have free admission

In cooperation with the FrauenMediaTurm –  
Feministisches Archiv und Bibliothek



Media Partner



Cultural Partner



## General Information

Director	Eva Kraus
Managing Director	Oliver Hölken
Press Officer	Sven Bergmann
New Opening Hours	from 1 January 2022 Tuesday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday to Sunday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Holidays 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Public Transport	Underground lines 16, 63, 66 and bus lines 610, 611 and 630 to Heussallee / Museumsmeile



Deutsche Bahn / UN-Campus:  
Lines RE 5 (Rhein-Express), RB 26 (MittelrheinBahn), RB 30 (Rhein-Ahr-Bahn)  
and RB 48 (Rhein-Wupper-Bahn)

Parking

There is a car and coach park on Emil-Nolde-Straße behind the Bundeskunsthalle.  
Navigation: Emil-Nolde-Straße 11,  
53113 Bonn

Press Information (German / English)

[www.bundeskunsthalle.de](http://www.bundeskunsthalle.de)  
For press files follow 'press'.

General Information  
(German / English)

T +49 228 9171-200  
[www.bundeskunsthalle.de](http://www.bundeskunsthalle.de)

The Bundeskunsthalle is supported  
by



Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung  
für Kultur und Medien



## Media Information

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR  
AND 'THE SECOND SEX'  
4 March to 16 October 2022

Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986) is one of the most important intellectuals of the 20th century and is considered an icon of the women's movement. In 1949, the writer and philosopher published *Le deuxième sexe* (Engl.: *The Other Sex*), in which she addressed the situation of women in the Western world. Her brilliant analysis, the treatment of taboo subjects such as sexual initiation, lesbian love or abortion triggered a wave of criticism and hostility at the time.

The work was the first social science study to focus on the category of 'gender', consistently distinguishing between biological sex and cultural or social imprinting of gender. Only later was *Le deuxième sexe* recognised as the basis of women's and gender studies and as a standard feminist work.

With *Le deuxième sexe*, our exhibition is dedicated to what is probably Simone de Beauvoir's most famous work, which has lost none of its relevance as the emancipation of women is still ongoing globally. What began as an essay in which she wanted to draw from personal experiences developed into a fundamental work: "This world is a man's world, my youth was fed with myths invented by men, and I had by no means reacted to them as if I had been a boy. My interest was so great that I dropped the plan of a personal confession to deal with the condition of women in general," de Beauvoir wrote in her autobiography *The Course of Things* (1966).

The exhibition traces the genesis of the work in post-war Paris, when the philosophy of existentialism was setting new standards, and tells of the significance and reception of this 'bible of feminism' within the women's movement. Literary and journalistic contributions, interviews and films present Simone de Beauvoir's thinking and her understanding of the free and independent life and allow her most important companions such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Alice Schwarzer to have their say.

Director Eva Kraus says about Simone de Beauvoir: "Her life was writing. With her writing, she opened new doors for many, especially for many women. Doors to a self-determined, independent and fulfilled life. The legacy of her book *Le deuxième sexe* – English: *The Second Sex* – is that of self-empowerment. It became the 'bible of feminism' and for many women a key to courageous change and to taking their lives into their own hands. Her theses were groundbreaking at the



time and it took a lot of courage to advocate them unbendingly. She still deserves a lot of respect for that, that's how she became a role model, that's how she remains today - for me too."

With Simone de Beauvoir and her standard work on modern feminism, the Bundeskunsthalle continues the series initiated with Hannah Arendt on women writers, philosophers, scientists and pioneers from a wide range of disciplines who have set decisive accents for the emancipation of women.



## Exhibition Themes

### The Modern Life

Simone de Beauvoir's epochal work *The Second Sex* was written in a time of upheaval and change. Numerous intellectuals and artists made post-war Paris the intellectual and cultural centre of Europe. They debated the end of the capitalist system and a new anti-bourgeois world. They set new standards in philosophy and literature, art and music, journalism and fashion, and redefined interpersonal relationships.

The ideas of existentialism, whose most important representatives were Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, played a central role. In his philosophical work *L'être et le néant* (Being and Nothingness), published in 1943, Sartre argued that man is nothing except what he chooses to be, in other words, "existence precedes essence". De Beauvoir explored existentialist themes of freedom, fear and otherness in her first novel, *L'Invitée* (She Came to Stay), published in 1944.

The Saint-Germain-des-Prés district was the centre of intellectual and cultural life. Both Sartre and de Beauvoir worked and held court in the neighbourhood's cafés – Café de Flore, Café les Deux Magots and Bar Napoléon. An important mouthpiece for the ideas of existentialism was the literary-political journal *Les Temps Modernes*, founded by Sartre and de Beauvoir in October 1945. It was published by Gallimard, a platform for modern, innovative and controversial authors.

### The scandalous work

Simone de Beauvoir wrote *Le deuxième sexe* not as a feminist but as a social science and existentialist study. The first volume *Les faits et les mythes* (Facts and Myths) was published by Éditions Gallimard in June 1949 and sold 22,000 copies in the first week. The second volume, entitled *L'expérience vécue* (Lived Experience), followed in November 1949.

In her study, de Beauvoir linked her own experiences with those of other women as well as with findings from numerous studies. In the first part, she analysed the history of humanity, which she exposed as the history of patriarchy, while in the second part she examined the life of a woman from birth to old age. Her guiding principle was that biological preconditions do not matter and that it is decisive whether a person grows up as a girl or a boy: "One is not born, but rather becomes, woman."

Like the preprints in the journal *Les Temps Modernes*, the publication of the study triggered a passionate debate. Above all, de Beauvoir's open treatment of female sexuality provoked numerous, mostly male critics. The Vatican, the Soviet Union and Spain placed the work on the Index of Banned Books. The writer Albert Camus thought it ridiculed the French male, and the sexologist Alfred Kinsey criticised the work for its lack of scientifically relevant data. Simone de Beauvoir, on



the other hand, received much encouragement from female readers, as evidenced by numerous letters now preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

### **The global phenomenon**

Since its first publication in 1949, Simone de Beauvoir's *Le deuxième sexe* has been translated into more than forty languages. These translations demonstrate the work's continuing relevance in a variety of global contexts.

The worldwide reception of the book took place in three waves. The foreign-language editions reflect the political and socio-cultural conditions of their respective times and the influences of their translators. The translations that appeared until the early 1960s (German 1951, English 1953, Japanese 1953, Argentinian Spanish 1954) mostly came from existentialist, male intellectual circles. Many editions were heavily abridged and edited without any indication of the interventions. This trivialised and distorted the expressiveness of the original.

The Western women's movement of the late 1960s and 1970s set new accents in translation practice and took over the interpretative authority over the central statements of the text. Since the 1990s, a new generation of scholars has taken a fresh look at the book and its author: in addition to new translations of the complete original version (Russian 1997, Hebrew 2001, Swedish 2002), the existing editions have been critically revised (Chinese 2013) and made accessible to new readers.

### **The classic of the women's movement**

With the beginning of the new women's movement in the late 1960s, the contents of *Le deuxième sexe* were received in Western Europe. They were mediated by works of important pioneers of the American women's movement.

The focus of the debate on *Le deuxième sexe* was on the issues of women's sexual and physical self-determination discussed by de Beauvoir, which played a central role within the new women's movement. In France and in the Federal Republic of Germany, they manifested themselves, among other things, in campaigns against the existing abortion bans.

Simone de Beauvoir publicly declared her support for feminism in the early 1970s and took part in numerous actions of the French women's movement. This support by the world-renowned intellectual gave feminist demands publicity and was of epoch-making importance for the women's movement.

Since 1972, the journalist and feminist Alice Schwarzer has regularly interviewed Simone de Beauvoir in Paris. Due to these talks and the publication of numerous portraits in the feminist magazine *EMMA*, founded in 1977, Simone de Beauvoir became an important point of reference for the women's movement in the Federal Republic of Germany as well.

In addition to its influence on the new women's movement *Le deuxième sexe* also anticipated some of the questions of later gender research, including the thesis of



the social construction of gender. Although it has been criticised again and again over the years, the work continues to offer food for thought on current issues.



## **Publication**

A publication on the exhibition will be published in June 2022.  
Approx. 96 pages, published by Buchhandlung Walther König.

## **Educational Programme**

### **GUIDES**

#### **Public guided tours**

Tuesdays, 5-6 p.m.

3 €/reduced 1,50 €, plus admission to the exhibition

Tickets are available at the box office or via Bonnticket.

ArtCard reservation: T +49 228 9171-200

#### **Guided tours by curators**

With Eva Kraus, artistic director, and Katharina Chrubasik, curator

Friday, 18 March, 5-6 p.m.

Wednesday, 13 April, 5-6 p.m.

Wednesday, 11 May, 5-6 p.m.

Friday, 17 June, 5-6 p.m.

Wednesday, 13 July, 5-6 p.m.

Wednesday, 10 August, 5-6 p.m.

Friday, 9 September, 5-6 p.m.

Wednesday, 12 October, 5-6 p.m.

3 €/reduced 1,50 €, plus admission to the exhibition

Tickets are available at the box office or via Bonnticket.

#### **Art education in the exhibition**

Sundays 12-17 h

During opening hours, an art mediator will be present at the exhibition. You are welcome to ask questions and talk to us about the works in the exhibition.

#### **Guided tours during the lunch break**

Art Break - "I am here, my heart is beating."

Wednesday, 30 March, 15 June, 10 August, 7 September, each 12.30-13 hrs.

As a balance to your daily working life, we offer you an entertaining speed tour during your lunch break.

8 € (guided tour and admission)

Tickets are available at the box office or via Bonnticket.

Registration required, individual dates can be booked for groups

Information and registration [buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de](mailto:buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de)



### **Group tours**

60 minutes, 65 €

90 minutes, 85 €

plus admission ticket 5 €/reduced 3,50 € per person

Written registration required: [buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de](mailto:buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de)

Freely bookable

### **Exhibition tour**

MEET & SPEAK

Dialogue tour for people with and without a migration background

Intercultural groups can discover the exhibition together, get into conversation with each other and ask questions.

Come along, bring friends and your languages!

60 minutes, bookable free of charge for intercultural groups

Max. 15 persons/group

Written registration required: [buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de](mailto:buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de)

### **Digital offer to prepare for the exhibition visit**

#Masterworks

For all those who want to learn more: In short clips, the curators of the exhibition and freelance art educators bring important masterpieces of the exhibition to life.

Free of charge at [www.bundeskunsthalle.de/#masterworks](http://www.bundeskunsthalle.de/#masterworks)

## **EVENTS**

### **speed tours\_DJ\_Drinks**

WEDNESDAY\_LATE\_ART

Wednesday, 27 April, 18-21 h

Your evening off full of art, culture and music!

## **OFFER FOR SCHOOLS**

### **In-service training for teachers on active duty**

Wednesday, 9 March, 5-7 p.m.

Friday, 11 March, 3-5 p.m.

Wednesday, 16 March, 5-7 p.m.

In a 90-minute tour of the exhibition, art educator Susanne Ortiz Ortega will introduce key exhibits, themes and points of connection to the curriculum.

Afterwards, there will be 30 minutes for an exchange of questions and suggestions in the workshop room.

Free participation for teachers, trainee teachers and lecturers only after written registration with details of the school at [buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de](mailto:buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de) by 4 March (limited number of places).



## Current and Upcoming Exhibitions

THE BRAIN  
In Art & Science  
until 26 June 2022

The brain is one of the last big mysteries of the human body. What do we actually have in our heads, and how should we picture the processes that take place there? Are our mind and our body two separate entities, and how do we understand and construct the world around us? What will the human brain of the future look like? Will we become computer-assisted cyborgs? The cooperation of various disciplines is needed to address these complex questions. Although brain research is constantly delivering new results, many questions remain unanswered. The arts can help us to ponder concepts of thinking and feeling, consciousness and perception, memory and dream. The exhibition brings together scientific research and associatively linked works and objects of art and cultural history with a view to explore and gain a better understanding of the terra incognita of the human brain.

An inclusive guidance system takes visitors through the exhibition. In addition, an accompanying virtual exhibition was developed to run on the internet parallel to the 'analogue' exhibition in the Bundeskunsthalle. The two exhibitions are linked through several augmented reality experiences in the Bundeskunsthalle. The virtual exhibition was made possible by the NEUSTART KULTUR programme of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media.

COLOR AS PROGRAM  
8 April to 7 August 2022  
Media conference: Thursday, 7 April 2022, 11 a.m.

The exhibition deals with the theme of color as a programmatic tool. It brings together works and objects from the realms of art and cultural history spanning more than a hundred years. With the advent of Modernism, color itself became an autonomous medium of art and design. As a result, the use of color as a material has changed dramatically. In the wake of the fastpaced development of digital technologies in recent years, our perception of color and our understanding of the role of art have been shaped by increasingly intense chromatic experiences. The powerful impact of color touches all disciplines, not only aesthetically, but also politically and economically. By the same token, its commercial use in Capitalist societies has increased exponentially.

The central theme of Color as Program is the artistic preoccupation with the affective and representative power of color. More than ever before, the meaning of color has become a complex construct of social conventions. The visual arts play a central role in the exhibition – not least because of their capacity to open up abstract spaces of thought.

The tour through the exhibition and its associative approach are integral to the overarching concept, which is further enhanced by the expansive site-specific



architecture developed for the large central gallery by the British artist and co-curator Liam Gillick.

Color as Program is the first exhibition to be developed by the gallery's entire curatorial team and thus brings together a wide range of different research interests and specialisms.

'IDENTITY NOT PROVEN'

NEW ACQUISITIONS OF THE CONTEMPORARY ART COLLECTION  
OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Acquisitions from 2017 to 2021 and acquisitions NEUSTART KULTUR 2020  
to 2021

7 May to 3 October 2022

Media conference: Thursday, 5 May 2022, 11 a.m.

'Identity not Proven' presents a selection of works that have been purchased for the collection of the Federal Republic of Germany by an honorary expert commission over a five-year period (2017–2021). The display will be complemented this year by purchases made by another acquisition commission with funds from NEUSTART KULTUR. The curatorial team hopes that the mixture of the two sets of acquisitions will not only prove topical and relevant but also offer a representative cross-section of contemporary art, including some very recent works.

The dialogic concept of the exhibition is based on themes such as contemporary political and social relevance, postcolonial discourse, the constructs and construction of history, urbanity as well as individual or collective identities. The exhibition illustrates how historical and current developments, collective habits of seeing or questioning images translate into contemporary art. Ranging from large-scale installations to drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, video works, the selection bears witness to the wealth of media and techniques that distinguish contemporary artistic practice.

Subject to change

Status: March 2022