

Artist at Work

15 September 2024–14 August 2025

»I spin myself totally into the great box of wonders known as the world and then bring the large forms inside, into my very own box.« This is how the artist Walter Ophéy 1921 described his painting and drawing in the first issue of the journal *Das Junge Rheinland*. What could he have meant by his »own box«? His head, the place where all perception based on the experience of feeling and thinking flows together? Or, a few years prior to the invention of the 35mm camera, his camera as a box? Perhaps he also meant the box of pastels, which he usually took with him along with his drawing block, in order to capture the world – while sitting in front of his motif. Taking the world in, with outward expression as the result; this is what art is, in most instances, however different the paths to get there might be.

The initial examples are sufficient to demonstrate: art is a game that has taken form and has content. It is a game, because although it is happy to function without respect for predefined criteria, it sets out its own rules where appropriate. Art is form, because only through form can content be communicated. In order to take shape, it depends on material. This could be anything available to our senses: substances, language, sounds, movements, pictures and so on. But that in no way means that we can define art only in terms of active work and »graspable« objects in the literal sense. »Artists in the West are not lazy, and therefore not artists, but producers of something [...] There is no art without laziness«, as Mladen Stilinović concluded, whose photo series and its title *Artist at Work*

we have adopted for our exhibition. And although he plays in his rejection of any form of production with the clichée of the poor poet, between hyperactivity and laziness there is a wide range of very different artistic working methods. This is precisely what this annual exhibition is about.

In a narrow selection, we present works that are the result of different art practices. Sometimes, individual ability and industriousness are what matter, at others, the rigorous application of an intellectual concept; sometimes, there is homage to genius, at others an ironic approach to this idea of greatness; sometimes, art lacking professionalism would be unthinkable, sometimes virtuosity is based on inspiration or on liberating dilettantism; sometimes, it is the perfect composition that distinguishes the work as art, whereas at others, it is intuition that is the guide; sometimes, fashioning of noble material is at the heart of the work, but at others, found leftover materials allow authenticity to be communicated or recycling to be realized; sometimes, art stems from the individual, at others, it requires collaboration in a collective. In *Artist at Work*, we offer examples of artistic working processes ranging from innovative research to the prolongation of traditions or typologies. Beyond well-rehearsed schemes and spiritual contexts, often enough it is functional everyday objects which can serve as a reference for art. We observe how artists wrestle with this world of things, crossing the dubious boundary to applied arts with objects in everyday use and designs for fashion and accessories.

Artist at Work allows us to ask (also self-critically) about the conditions of production and reception in art, such as

inequalities with regard to studying art, promotion and practice. These aspects also make their presence felt in the Kolumba collection, in which far fewer female artists are represented than their male colleagues. What about the social and societal contexts in which art is created? Hence, this is also about the studio as the place where art is made, unless the artist is wandering the world with a drawing block or a video camera. As the necessary studio niches in our cities disappear under pressure to be profitable or can hardly be afforded, what does this mean for art conceived as being devoid of purpose and function? Does this trend bring the museum as workshop increasingly into play? Or does a kiosk offer an alternative, as in Valeria Fahrenkrog's running of a kiosk as a place of exchange with invited guests for the coming year?

Stefan Kraus, Ulrike Surmann, Marc Steinmann,
Barbara von Flüe, Jonas Grahls

Perhaps this is my
starting point – here and
there a little light
that leads the way.

Peter Zumthor / Mari Lending,
Die Geschichte in den Dingen, Zürich 2018

Architecture

Peter Zumthor (*1943 Basel; lives in Haldenstein)

Collaborator **Rainer Weitschies** (*1965 Hausach; lives in Chur)

Kolumba. Art Museum of the Archdiocese of Cologne 1997–2007

The plan to erect a new museum building at such an historically charged location came with our specification at the start of the 1990s that all vestiges of previous buildings at the site were to be respected. The new building, which was inaugurated in 2007, arose seamlessly on the remaining ruins of the late-Gothic Kolumba church, and was able to integrate the whole and lend to it a new meaning. This was made possible thanks to a carefully-designed architectural competition and a 10-year planning and building phase. The explicit intention »we just go on building« (Peter Zumthor) became the decisive axiom of this special place: its history became its name, with St. Kolumba becoming Kolumba. St. Kolumba was one of the most important parishes and the oldest in medieval Cologne. According to legend, its patroness Saint Kolumba was saved by a she-bear from being raped, but was beheaded in Sens under the rule of Emperor Aurelius. As a Christian, she refused to marry the son of a heathen ruler. Archaeological excavations in 1974 brought to light the remains of numerous buildings that preceded the five-nave Gothic church erected around 1500. In terms of urban development, Kolumba represents the restoration of the lost heart of what was formerly one of the most beautiful districts in the inner city of Cologne. At its centre, a quiet garden replaces the medieval cemetery. The largest room provides a membrane porous to air and light. It covers the archaeological excavation of the church ruins and the autonomously functioning chapel.

Koho Mori-Newton (*1951 Katsuyama/Japan; lives in Tübingen)

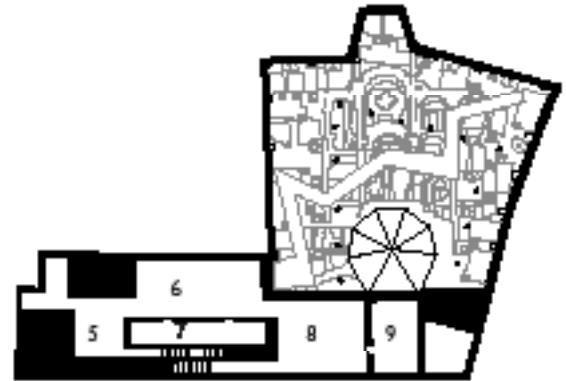
Curtains 2007, Japanese Kimono silk dyed with ink

The Japanese artist Koho Mori-Newton designed the curtains in front of the large windows on the second floor of Kolumba. Whether open or closed, they form a striking counterpoint to the clay plaster walls and give a private atmosphere to the rooms.

Floor Plan



Ground Floor



1st Floor

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Foyer | 12 |
| 2 Garden | 13 |
| 3 Excavation / Chapel | 14 |
| 4 Former Vestry | 15 View of Cathedral |
| 5 | 16 North Cabinet |
| 6 | 17 North Tower |
| 7 Cabinet | 18 East Cabinet |
| 8 | 19 East Tower |
| 9 Armarium | 20 South Cabinet |
| 10 | 21 South Tower |
| 11 | 22 Reading Room |



2nd Floor

Room 1 Foyer

René Zäch (Solothurn 1946–2023 Biel) **Untitled** 1987, wood, acrylic paint

Eric Hattan (*1955 Wettingen; lives in Basel und Baulmes)
S culture physique 2002, video, sound, 22:29 mins., packed furniture from Ikea (plinth: chair POÄNG, bench: TV Bank LACK)

Eric Hattan is an artist who creates art out of pre-existing stuff. Anything that catches his eye can inspire him to do something with it. He likes to make the slightest of interventions – he shifts, displaces, relocates, inverts – in order to rescue and display what is already there. For *S culture physique* he set up a camera in his studio in Paris and focused it on the street corner opposite, where piles of greenery and bulky waste were deposited. A municipal worker is busy loading the heap onto his delivery truck. He operates a principle of trial and error: in a mix of thoughtful systematic and playful improvisation, he becomes determined to take it all with him in one go. Who is the artist here? Is it the guy outside on the street exerting his muscles? Or is it the man in the studio transposing the situation into a conceptually rigorous video piece, thereby reflecting not only on the transitory nature of consumer goods, but also on the difference between art and refuse? The ambivalence of the title allows scope for either option.

Room 2 Garden

Hans Josephsohn (Königsberg 1920–2012 Zürich) **Große Liegende** (Large Lying Figure) finished 2000, naturally patinated brass

Josephsohn modelled plaster or clay in the traditional way, taking a long time to create his sculptures, before having them cast in bronze or brass, for preference. In his spartan studio, he sat amidst plaster pieces awaiting completion, eyed them, knocked bits off and built the sculptures up again using fragments. »You have to be prepared to risk failure«, he said in relation to his working method.

Josef Wolf (*1954 Andernach; lives in Cologne) **Untitled** 2007, tuff, two-part

For the sculptor Josef Wolf, his art practice involves an initial seeing and perceiving of features, even before setting to work with his hands, given that tuff as raw material already possesses body and form in its own right. Josef Wolf seeks order in chaos, combining volumes together. In the event of success, he achieves a tension between the parts, in relation to the surrounding space and to the body of the person who is viewing the piece.










Bethan Huws (*1961 Bangor/Wales; lives in Berlin und Paris)
The Unicorn (or Hortus Conclusus) 2016–2017, copper, stainless steel

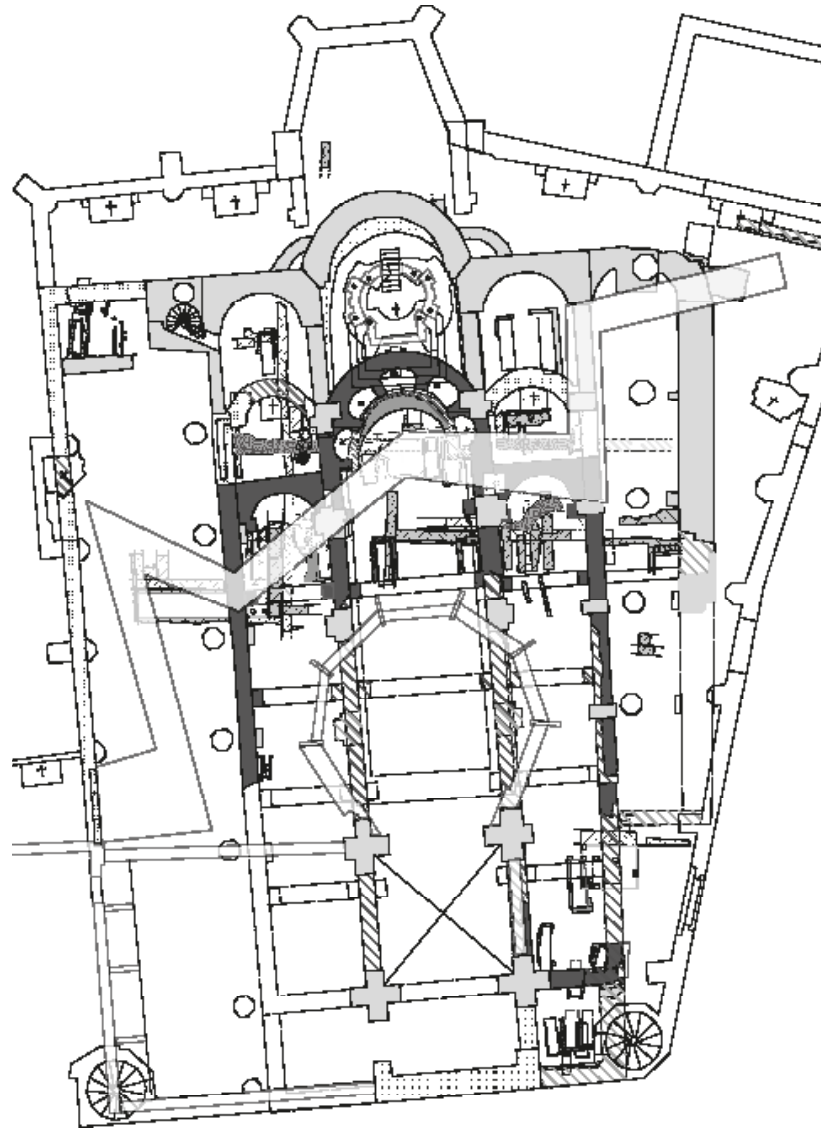
Room 3 Excavation

A Roman building with an adjoining 7th century apse marks the likely beginning of the Kolumba parish complex. A single-nave church was erected next to this building in the 9th century (?), and was extended several times up to the 13th century until it was finally replaced by a five-nave church. The Gothic new build was financed by the families who chose to be buried in the numerous tombs underneath the church. The exposed remnants show clearly that the older buildings were not completely replaced by new ones. Large parts of the old structures were rebuilt and extended. In keeping with this, Peter Zumthor has positioned the new museum on top of the ruins of the Gothic church.

Excavation Box at the end of the gangway: **Floor tiles** from St. Kolumba, early 16th century and late 19th century | **Roof and hypocaust tiles** from the Kolumba excavation, 1st – 4th century.

The Romanesque buildings (III and IV) had floors made in part from recycled Roman thermal, wall or roof tiles. The stamp *L(egio) XXX V(lpia) V(ictrix)* on the round thermal tiles points to Xanten as their place of manufacture. The green, yellow and brown glazed Gothic tiles from the former chapel of the family Wasserfass (which now serves to link the excavation to the foyer) create a tracery pattern and a second ornamental composition with eagles and circles. The more recent tiles are fine stoneware from Mettlach by Villeroy & Boch.

	Roman residential development, 1st to 3rd century
	late Roman, 4th to mid-5th century
	Phase I Frankish incl. apse on Roman building, 7th century
	Phase II Carolingian single-nave church
	Phase III three-nave Romanesque church, mid-11th century
	two reconstruction phases, 12th century
	Phase IV four-nave late Romanesque church, 12th to 14th century
	Phase V five-nave Gothic church, 15th to 16th century and more recent buildings
	invisible sections of wall



Room 3 | Room 4 Former Vestry

Gottfried Böhm (Offenbach/Main 1920–2021 Cologne)

Kolumba chapel 1949/1956

At the end of the Second World War, a late-Gothic figure of the Madonna with Child escaped destruction amidst the devastation and was soon being venerated as *Madonna in the Ruins*. The senior priest Joseph Geller promoted the creation of a new contemporary chapel building, in spite of considerable opposition. The chapel was built according to a design by Gottfried Böhm, inaugurated on 6 January 1950, and in 1956 a Chapel of the Holy Sacrament was added. The high-quality interior is indebted to the contributions of leading artists of the time with whom Geller was in personal contact, including Elisabeth Treskow, Ludwig Gies, Ewald Mataré, Georg Meiermann and the young Rudolf Peier.

Bill Fontana (*1947 Cleveland; lives in San Francisco)

Pigeon Soundings 1994/2007, sound installation

Richard Serra (San Francisco 1939–2024 Orient/New York)

The Drowned and the Saved 1922/1997, Corten steel, solid, two-part

The sculpture *The Drowned and the Saved* was made in 1992 for an exhibition in the synagogue of Pulheim-Stommeln. Serra took the title from the author Primo Levi, who was arrested in 1944 for being a Jew and a member of the Italian Resistance; he was deported to Auschwitz. In 1993, the sculpture was acquired by Kolumba and erected here on 24 February 1997 in the Old Vestry as the ideal foundation stone of the museum's new building. Until that time, Serra had ruled out having his works translocated, but in this case, he accepted the shift of context, because the commemorative function was retained: the crypt under what is now an open space harbours the bones that were reinterred after the excavation and emptying of the tombs underneath the church.

Stairwell | Room 5

Robert Filliou (Sauve 1926–1987 Les Eyziès-de-Tayac-Sireuil)

Hand Show 1967, 24 photolithographs, wooden box with plexiglass lid, Edition SABA-Studio, Villingen (partly donated by Edith and Steffen Missmahl)

In search of the key to art, Robert Filliou came up with the following idea: »to investigate the sense or significance of every part and every line in the pattern and shape of an artist's hand.« (R.F.). In collaboration with the photographer Scott Hyde, he took pictures of the hands of 24 artists, both male and female. In 1967, he issued the series as a multiple in a box with a plexiglass lid. The drawing on the plexiglass points to possible interpretations and invites inspection of the specifics of the artist's hand with the help of these 24 examples.

Konrad Kuyn (†1469 Cologne; attributed) **Four Crowned**

Martyrs from the Epitaph Ensemble of Nikolaus von Bueren (†1445), Cologne, after 1445, Baumberg sandstone with the exposed original paint and vestiges of the second version (restored with financial support from the Renate König-Stiftung)

The four figures from the epitaph ensemble of the Cathedral master builder Nikolaus von Bueren represent sculptors from antiquity, who refused to make pagan idols and were therefore sentenced to death. The martyrs were, and still are, the patrons of the building trade workers. However, instead of being depicted as such, they appear as proud representatives of the intellectual upper class. Building such challenging Gothic architecture was not just a matter of skill, but also of comprehensive knowledge of geometry and arithmetic. The tools, now mostly lost, served to identify the bearer as a mason (mallet; lost), sculptor (large compasses; lost), foreman (angle iron; plumb) and master workman (small compasses; lost; sketchbook). The figures were placed in the choir of Cologne Cathedral, where they became a monument to the self-esteem of the ecclesiastical workshop, which established confraternities as of the mid-15th century. Konrad Kuyn, Nikolaus' successor, who was the sculptor of this ensemble, was appointed as master builder of

the workshops north of the Mosel in 1459. The treatment with colour of the sculptural ensemble both technically and artistically is particularly advanced for the times. It was probably not carried out by Kuyn himself, but by specialists.

Mladen Stilinović (Belgrade 1947–2016 Pula) *Umjetnik radi / Artist at Work* 1978/2014, s/w photographs, 8-part

»I would prefer not to« is the polite response of Bartleby the Scrivener in Hermann Melville's eponymous narrative of 1853, turning down any summons to work. Neither negation nor acceptance, the friendly not-wanting-to amounts to radical refusal, making any objection pointless. With his not-doing, Bartleby became not only an icon of modern literature, but also an agent of the political and ethical social movement opposing the productivity and self-optimisation of upcoming capitalist society. The self-taught, conceptual artist Mladen Stilinović can also be considered as belonging to this movement: his action *Artist at Work* realized in socialist Zagreb in 1978 shows the artist lying in bed fully clad in broad daylight. His plea for doing nothing is directed against the concept of the artist as producer, as embodied by Jackson Pollock painting in overalls in the 1950s, for example, which in the West has become the rule, driven by the art market. 15 years later, Stilinović wrote his programmatic text *The Praise of Laziness*, in which he exalted boredom and doing nothing as the pivotal conditions of art practice. Laziness becomes a token of opposition: not only the dividing line between work and leisure is annulled, but furthermore, the concept of taking one's time or *otium*. Working as an artist means creating purpose-free spaces, opposing the System and, from this »outlying« standpoint, contributing to society nonetheless by initiating possible changes. It is precisely because the artist in doing nothing produces a work, which can be sold, that he extracts the functional conditions from the heart of the system and puts them on the agenda.

Knowing about laziness
is not enough,
it must be practiced
and perfected.

Room 6

On the floor

Georg Herold (*1947 Jena; lives in Cologne) *Eimer neben Sockel* (Bucket next to Plinth), 1987, wood, plastic, paint (donated by Gundel Gelbert and Hans Böhning)

On the wall

Georg Herold *Das Tafelwerk* (Set of Plates), 1992, offset prints on card, Cologne, Buchhandlung Walther König (partly donated by Edith and Steffen Missmahl)

Georg Herold's art is the result of a »manic search for the perfection of the imperfect« (Stephan Berg, 2018). In the piece *Tafelwerk* realized together with Fritz W. Heubach, he traces the course of this quest more or less systematically. With a total of 28 plates and 597 Polaroid photos of his own work with commentaries, it is both the medium for his work and the art product at one and the same time, perhaps even a kind of grammar or oeuvre catalogue, which the artist compiled over some 45 years. The system appears open-ended and in flux – the Polaroids are attached with masking tape, so they can be substituted for or even removed at a moment's notice. »What I've done each time is a kind of game, which is played for a certain time and from a certain point of view [...] and this is what I want to connect to my work, [...] that one can interpret everything according to what result one happens to find useful at the time.« (G.H., 1995) The systematisation has a traditional air, with titles like *Ugly Collection* or *Figuranten des Symbolischen* (Figures of the Symbolic), and the sequence of photos seems familiar too: didn't Aby Warburg in 1924 make a start in his *Mnemosyne Atlas* with sequences of object photos, in order to retrace how antiquity lived on? One senses the challenge, and one takes note of the acuity and sceptical stance with which Georg Herold approaches this method. His own work is nourished by art history. With humour, perspicacity and pleasure in being provocative, he takes apart lofty goals and idealistic superstructures. An example can be seen in plate 25, where he laconically comments on Aby Warburg by recreating the buildings of antiquity out of building blocks and

confronting them with pebbledash plant pots and rows of dustbins. In this deconstruction, his own method becomes clear: after the era of creators and geniuses, Georg Herold orients himself towards the opposite type of the hobby craftsman (bricoleur): the hobbyist works without any plan, feeling his way forwards and testing out the material and its properties (for preference, using a so-called *Lattus Communis*, the common roof batten). Art presents itself here as mundane handicraft employing ordinary methods, and can be created literally from a bucket with base, whereby the being-hand-made is not concealed, but always clearly displayed. Thus, Georg Herold works artfully and enigmatically on a »sociology, in which he, the reporter, appears to be deeply entangled.« (Rainer Speck)

Anna Blume (Bork 1937–2020 Cologne), from the series:

Die reine Empfindung (Pure Perception), 1993, pencil/text printed on paper

For *Die reine Empfindung* Anna Blume had abstract shapes from Classical Modernism printed onto T-shirts. After donning the T-shirts herself, she recorded in her drawings how geometry and alignment were distorted and ultimately destroyed by the curves and bulges of the female body. She confronts these images of deconstruction with the »universalistic-phallocratic statements« of the »artist priest«, so that image and text as well as statement and counterstatement illuminate each other. To crown it all, she cites Piet Mondrian's statement in 1925 (No. 1, Museum am Ostwall, Dortmund): »The feminine and material cripple the spiritual expression in the male functions.« There are some 40 works in this series (we are showing three of them), in which Anna Blume conjugates the claims of a kind of art which rests on a bedrock of faith confronted with the banal horizon of real (female) existence. »The drawings with folds and ornaments are a considerable amount of work, just like slave labour, demanding a lot of drawn discipline. Bernhard Johannes Blume calls them »small pencilled doubts«. But such doubt is surely »self-determined« art.« (A.B., 1996)

Room 6

Madonna in the Bay Window Upper Rhine, 2nd half 15th century, tempera and plaster of Paris on wood

Madonna and Christ Child almost completely fill the bay in which they appear to be located. The windows open onto a landscape in the immediate vicinity of a city; the everyday items in the room can be understood as images of Our Lady's purity and the replacement of the Old by the New Covenant. The fly near the lower margin to the right is ambivalent. It refers to a story about artists, which goes as follows: a fly Giotto painted in his picture was so lifelike that his tutor Cimabue tried to brush it away. Accordingly, this anecdote is about the idea of the painter as genius. Needless to say, *Beelzebub* (Lord of the Flies) could also have crept into the scene.

In the display case

Evangelist portraits in alternating manuscripts:

mid-September – mid-December: **Book of Hours from Bruges**

Master of Saint Omer 421, Bruges, 1475–1480 | mid-December

– mid-August: **Flemish Book of Hours** Tournai, 1450–1460 (both donated by Renate König)

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the authors of the four canonical Gospel accounts of the life of Jesus. The fictional likenesses of the Evangelists were often placed as »author portraits« in front of the respective text and were identified by their winged symbols – human, lion, ox and eagle – which are derived from the prophet's vision of the Lord at the beginning of the Book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament. With quill in hand, the Evangelists either go about their business, test the quality of their writing tool or listen attentively to their respective attribute, the manifestation of heavenly inspiration, thus lending absolute authority to the written word.

Room 7

Paul Thek (New York 1933–1988 New York) **Fashion Drawings** 1950–1954, pencil, ink, pastel chalks and watercolour on paper (donated by Helen Thek Orr)

In a series of earlier works by Paul Thek, there are a surprising number of fashion drawings, which periodically helped him to make a living. With rapid precise lines and some fleeting colouring, Thek captures much of the esprit of New York and the perception of women in that city in the 1950s.

Bettina Gruber (*1947 Minden; lives in Cologne)

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man 1971/2019, Pigment print on handmade paper

The space in front of her camera is Bettina Gruber's stage for her »self-portraits«, probing possible ways of conceiving identity and its limits. »They toy with desires and with being able to, but also with not being able to.« (B.G., 2020) As so often, this time Bettina Gruber also serves as her own model, which for her is both a matter of radical pragmatism and the fun of transformation. Drawing on James Joyce's novel of the same title, she slips into the shoes of young Stephen Dedalus and questions, not only her role as a woman, but above all her role as an artist. Bringing her Super 8 mm camera into play leads to a self-image presented with relish, to be reassessed and brought into focus by her choice of single shots (seen and photographed through the lens of a magnifying glass).

In the display cases

Giampaolo Babetto (*1947 Padua; lives near Padua)

Progetto astucci contenitori (Designs for tubes of lipstick), 2016, wood, plexiglass, silver, gold

This artist, who lives near Padua, has been highly respected for many decades and is still regarded as one of the most important goldsmiths of his times. »Through all the phases of his development as a goldsmith, he has retained his sense of reduction and consolidation; he has made relatively few objects, but always as the result

Room 7

of lengthy (invisible) thought processes and drawing perspectives.« (Rüdiger Joppien) On a studio visit, we were able to make a selection of works for Kolumba, which reflect the draughtsman just as well as the designer of buildings, furniture and other objects of everyday use. The richly varied collection of small sculptures arose from an inquiry from a cosmetic manufacturer of repute for a lipstick tube, which however, did not lead to a commission. For Babetto, this turned into an opportunity to investigate cylindrical forms, which might as easily become large sculptures.

Room 8

On the plinth

Pensive Christ Upper Rhine, ca. 1480, lime wood with a visible ground and vestiges of coloured paint (acquired and restored with the financial support of the Renate König-Stiftung)

The scene in which Christ waits to be crucified on Calvary is part of the Passion narrative, although the episode was not mentioned in the Gospels. Rather, the image is indebted to »mystical« piety, addressing the themes of being alone and out in the cold, nakedness and Christ's despair on his path of suffering. The source of this interpolation of strong feelings into the sober historical account lies in the Old Testament and the way its narratives are interpreted to refer to Christ – for example, the story of Job. A striking type of figure was invented for this through recourse to the heathen pictorial cipher for melancholy from antiquity, (cf. August Rodin, *The Thinker*, 1880–82). How the carver rose to the challenge posed by this image, which in the mid-fifteenth century was without precedent, is easy to comprehend: contour lines running in parallel, along with the hardly detectible lengthening of the limbs, provide tangible evidence of the struggle to compose a sculpture to be seen from all sides.

On the wall

Andor Weininger (Karancs 1899–1986 New York): #1 **Composition with proportional figure** 1923, pencil and watercolour on paper | #2 **Spatial composition with basic forms and colours** 1926/1927, pencil and watercolour, paper sheets collaged on paper | #3 **Geometric Spatial Composition** ca. 1980, pencil, tempera and gouache on paper | #4 **Spatial composition with basic forms and colours** 1926/1977, pencil, watercolour and tempera on watercolour card (all donated by Eva Weininger)

As founder and director of the Bauhaus Band, Andor Weininger was at the heart of the legendary festivities at the Bauhaus in Weimar from 1921 and had a decisive influence on Oskar Schlemmer's stage workshop. In 1925, Walter Gropius, the longstanding director, brought him back to the new Bauhaus in Dessau. Without Weininger ever having been a Bauhaus Master, he was an effective »integrating

force« internally and an important ambassador to the outside world. He was friends with Kandinsky, who belonged to an older generation, and shared the latter's theory of a correspondence between basic shapes and colours. Along with Herbert Bayer, it was Weininger who extended the investigation of these relations to cover pictorial depth and spent the rest of his life developing possible complex formats to depict them. Given his knowledge of the classical theory of proportion since antiquity, Weininger strove for balanced dimensions in keeping with the human stature.

In the display tables

Andor Weininger Studies and sketches (all: donated by Eva Weininger): #1 **Spatial study** with basic colours and shapes, 1925–1926, pencil and watercolour on paper | #2 **Spatial study** with basic shapes and bodies, 1926, pencil on paper | #3 **Study** for a cylinder of colours, 1955–1965, pencil and coloured crayon, ballpoint pen on paper | #4 **Three Studies** of areas, space, and basic shapes, 1926, pencil and watercolour on paper | #5 **Stijl Studies** spatial, ca. 1923, pencil on paper | #6 **Study** with a proportional figure, 1923, pencil on paper | #7 **Figurine sketches** for the *Mechanische Bühnenrevue* (Mechanical Stage Revue), ca. 1924, pencil and (later) ballpoint pen on transparent paper | #8 **Study** of cubes, 1960–1965, pencil and coloured crayon on paper | #9 **Stijl Studies** spatial, ca. 1923, pencil on paper | #10 **Sketch** with geometric studies, ca. 1960, pencil and coloured crayon, ballpoint pen on paper | #11 **Fritz Stark Das Netzhautbild** (Retina Image. Method of producing a true visual image using the basic principles of human vision applied to a drawn construction of perspective), Neuss: self-publishing, 1928, with notes by Andor Weininger | #12 **Four sketches** by Weininger with thoughts on the book by Fritz Stark

You can manage
to not go along with the
passage of time. But
you should certainly keep
a grip on reality.

Room 9

Michael Kalmbach (*1962 Landau, Pfalz; lives in Berlin) **Der kleine Pinsel (Menschensuppe)** (The little brush/Human Soup), 1993–2002 plaster, wire, modelling clay, fibreboard, metal, plastic, string, hair | **Michael Kalmbach** and **Susanne Walter** (*1966 Frankfurt/Main; lives in Frankfurt/Main) **Der kleine Pinsel** (The little brush), 1998/2012, video, paint, sound, 4:49 mins.

In the beginning, there was a doll that the sculptor Michael Kalmbach came across at a flea market. Its body was made up of interlocking pieces, and this is what caught the artist's attention – the start of an intensive investigation of the spatial potential of this toy. Taking casts from the body parts produced negative moulds from positive forms – the first module resembled the first atoms in the universe. Biomorphous forms coalesced. The modules became bigger, shorter, distorted, leading to the original form becoming ever more disguised. It was not long before figures appeared, especially one with long nose and short trousers called the »Little brush«. This cosmos expanded to embrace strange forms originating in everyday items such as bath tubs or lightbulbs. An installation grew over the years out of the work connected with *The little brush* and *Human Soup* to over 130 elements. In the animation trick film of the same title, based on a tale by the artist and produced in collaboration with Susanne Walter, the »Little brush« as a plasticine figure began to move. In a rainy landscape, »Little brush« steps through a cave in a mountain. Here he encounters a fantasy world, in which he as a malleable being keeps on meeting himself. Michael Kalmbach conducts a self-referential game with the original form; while reshaping the prototype, he chooses to respect its formal limits, while never ceasing to probe its potential anew. Thus, he positions himself in the tradition of Minimal Art, which works with a predefined and deliberately minimal vocabulary of form, but breaks with it in the narrative.

Room 10

Susanne Kümpel (*1960 Hannover; lives in Cologne) **BROSCHÉ TAUBE VOGEL** (BROOCH PIGEON BIRD), 2020, acrylic, oil pastel chalks and felt-tip pen on paper | **STILLEBEN MIT WASSERFLASCHE** (STILL LIFE WITH WATERBOTTLE), 2004 | **BRAUT** (BRIDE), 2023, felt-tip pen and wax crayon on paper | **LES COMPAGNONS** 2004 | **MUSEUM FÜR ANGEWANDTE KUNST** (MUSEUM OF APPLIED ARTS), 2000 | **JACOB GERRITS** 2005, all acrylic and oil pastel chalk on paper | **GRÖNEN HERBSTBLÄTTER** (GROON AUTUMN LEAVES), 2023, wax crayon, felt-tip and pencil on paper

»Learning from the Old Masters« refers to an old teaching method that claims one can attain artistic mastery through copying exceptional artworks. The autodidact painter Susanne Kümpel worked for many years at the *Kunsthau Kat18* in Südstadt, Cologne. One could say that she was taught by the Old Masters, but gives herself free rein in her update. Accordingly, the artist positions herself next to *Madonna with the Violet* by Stefan Lochner (*BROOCH PIGEON BIRD*). Thereby, she not only documents her encounter with the painting, but also presents us with her own formal art vocabulary, which makes use of colourful patches and texts, in relation to this painting dating from the Late Middle Ages. A table plentifully laden with all kinds of fruits (*STILL LIFE WITH WATERBOTTLE*) – a still life by Cézanne – is augmented with garden tools like a rake or a hose. To take another example: in Susanne Kümpel's »copy« of Jacop Gerritsz. Cuyp's genre painting *Two children with a lamb*, a minor detail – a pearl necklace – becomes the central motif, although in the original a string of pearls makes only an inconspicuous appearance, albeit an enigmatic one. In addition to learning from the Old Masters, copying Nature is a further instructive path, also rich in tradition. *GROON AUTUMN LEAVES* is the title Susanne Kümpel gives to a painting in which autumn leaves are unexpectedly green, but disintegrating, seeming almost crystalline. What developed over the years of her art practice into a personal idiom of form dissolves in Susanne Kümpel's late work into loose compositions keeping pace with her affliction with dementia.

We do not lack
communication, on the
contrary, we have too
much of it. We lack
creation. We lack
resistance to the present.

Gilles Deleuze und Félix Guattari,
Was ist Philosophie, 2000

Room 10

Crucifix from Erp Rhineland, ca. 1190, walnut (corpus, right arm); ca. 1235, poplar (left arm, face); ca. 1483, pine (cross)

This sculpture of Christ Crucified is most unusual. The garments, consisting of the tunic and pallium, are not mentioned in the account of Christ's death according to the gospels. However, especially in Byzantine depictions of the crucifixion, Christ is often clothed. In occidental art of the Early Middle Ages, crucifixes following in this tradition are often linked to a legend. Devastated by the death of Jesu, one of his followers called Nicodemus is alleged to have carved an image of Christ on the Cross. In an early version of this legend, which locates the image in Beirut, blood began to flow from the cross after it had been deliberately damaged. Holy Blood pilgrimages, many of which became established in the wake of the crusades, may often refer back explicitly to the blood »*ex imaginem*« (from the image). There is some evidence that the Erp Crucifix really came from the Brenig district of Bornheim (near Bonn), only 20 km from Erp, for where there is documentary evidence of such a pilgrimage. As a result of frequent damage and reworkings – for example, the replacement of the head and the addition of the wound in Christ's side – the visual conception of God received an update. The living and victorious saviour on the Cross became a suffering and dying person. The impact of the figure is more dynamic if viewed at an oblique angle from a little to the right. It is probable that the body of Christ originally hung on the Cross with more of a slant. Alterations at the back and to the arms support this supposition.

Room 11

Terry Fox (Seattle 1943–2008 Cologne) **Clutch** 1971, video, s/w, sound, 53:42 mins.; camera: George Bolling

Terry Fox was a conceptual artist. He was not only interested in art as an idea, but also in art as experience. He used video as a medium to record performance actions and share them with others. *Clutch* is an early and pithy example of this approach: recorded in 1971 in his studio in Rose Street, San Francisco, the artist is seen lying face down on the floor. His hands slowly follow the light on the floor of the studio in real time. The light falling from above into the room moves slowly across it from right to left, until it finally passes out of the square of the video frame. The camera is almost static, the footage left raw. The sound seems to have been recorded live: superimposed street noises can be heard along with a record player loop with its needle stuck in a groove. The piece is radically minimal, both formally and in terms of content. *Clutch* (in the sense of holding onto, embracing) shows nothing other than the passing of time, or in the words of Terry Fox, the loss thereof.

St. Jerome by #1 **Albrecht Dürer** (Nuremberg 1471–1528 Nuremberg) | #2 **Hans Spinginklee** (Nuremberg ca. 1490/95–1540 Nuremberg?) | #3 **Melchior Lorck** (Flensburg ca. 1526/27–1583 Copenhagen) | #4 **Dürer (School) / Theodor (?) de Bry** (Liège 1528–1598 Frankfurt/Main) | #5 **Antonie Wierix** (Antwerp ca. 1552/53–ca. 1624 Antwerp) | #6 **Hieronymus Cock** (Antwerp 1518–1570 Antwerp) | #7 **Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn** (Leiden 1606–1669 Amsterdam) | #8 **Ferdinand Bol** (Dordrecht 1616–1680 Amsterdam); all: copperplate engraving, etching or woodcut (all: donated by Ursula Rolinck)

Saint Jerome (Stridon 347–420 Bethlehem) was one of the Church Fathers, who defined the foundations of the Christian Church in their writings. His attribute is a lion; according to legend he removed a thorn from the paw of this beast. Having recourse to his excellent knowledge of languages, Jerome translated the Hebrew Bible into the Latin language. This Latin version was called *The Vulgate* (*vulgata* is Latin for demotic), which remained the commonly used

standard text for the holy scriptures for over 1000 years. Visual representations always characterize the saint as an elderly man. He is either depicted as a penitent hermit, a monk or high ecclesiastical dignitary (bishop or cardinal). He never actually held such a post, but he did act as secretary to Pope Damasus for a short time, before withdrawing to a monastery. Usually, Jerome the scholar sits at his desk. His place of work is described as his »study«: this room offers a haven from disturbances from the outside world and is therefore ideal for study and creative contemplation. During the Renaissance, a »Studiolo« of this kind was a normal facility in aristocratic palaces. It often included a chamber of wonders, where the master or the lady of the house strove for knowledge by gazing at marvellous objects.

Valeria Fahrenkrog (*1980 Asunción/Paraguay; lives in Cologne) **El Kiosco** (The Kiosk), 2021/2024, made from recycled materials: wooden battens, MDF, coated chipboard panels, multiplex, plywood, fluorescent tubes (all such materials came from the Kolumba store); changing assortments of books, newspapers, posters and works on paper (all on loan from the artist and her guests)

El Kiosco was inspired by the kiosks of Santiago de Chile. In the days when the free and printed press was more diverse, these functional architectural structures in the public space were lively meeting points; here, newspapers and consumer items for everyday use were offered for sale and purchased, and news was shared. They were places of transitory attachment, where three sentences were exchanged and the benefits of the caring infrastructure of a village found a place in the big city. These moments of social bonding have been transferred by Valeria Fahrenkrog into the public space of the museum. Her art practice is informed by Lucius Burckhardt's principle of the »smallest possible intervention«: in the belly of the museum, she finds material from past exhibitions, which she assembles to form a temporary sculpture by adapting and cutting to size. In the resulting remake, she offers a new interpretation, since it is not only the materials that are recycled, but

Room 11

also the ideas and stories associated with them. Like its predecessors, *El Kiosco* is a place of information, exchange and attachment. It offers a platform for actions and performative events, which Valeria Fahrenkrog not only uses herself, but also makes available to other participants. At regular intervals, she invites other players to follow her example and put their spaces at the disposal of other artists.

From one event to the next, the way the kiosk operates changes, so that the threads can be spun further, and traces left in their wake. At best, *El Kiosco* will develop into a kind of solidarity sculpture, where different modes of production and ways of working are presented and questions can be posed about resource-saving art practice.

The events are advertised on our homepage and in the newsletter.

In the Reading Room

René Zäch **UNGENAU** (INEXACT), 2022, metal, glass, coloured card, synthetic material, engine

There really is no
such thing as Art.
There are only artists.

Room 12

Manos Tsangaris (*1956 Dusseldorf; lives in Berlin and Cologne)
Marble Run Design I 9.3.1997, pencil on typewriter paper
(donated by the artist)

Manos Tsangaris *Kugelbahn – Räumlich installative
Komposition für eine Person im Zentrum* (Marble Run –
spatial installative composition for one person at the centre), 1997,
mixed media

The *Marble Run* was created in 1997 at the former location of the museum: at Roncalliplatz opposite the south side of the cathedral. So, is it just a toy or perhaps more of an experimental setup, a kinetic sculpture or a spatial drawing, a sound sculpture or a Gesamtkunstwerk? As a »spatial installative composition«, it surrounds the »person at the centre« with their scope of view, enabling her or him to experience an inner and external outlook on the situation simultaneously. *The Marble Run* demonstrates »that the ›survey‹ of the human world and self-orientation intended by Tsangaris is not tied to music, theatre or film, but can be realized in any medium, likewise in an installative mode.« (Rainer Nonnenmann) This happens as an analogue process, with immediacy and authenticity. The *Marble Run* is a low-tech machine, which was assembled in order »to ultimately arrive at sounds«, according to Tsangaris addressing schoolchildren during the building phase in 1997. »Man shall only play with Beauty, and he shall play only with Beauty,« Friedrich Schiller stated in 1793 in his letters on aesthetic education to the Danish heir to the throne, his patron Friedrich Christian von Holstein Augustenburg in Copenhagen: »For, to speak out once for all, man only plays when in the full meaning of the word he is a man, and he is only completely a man when he plays.«

Frederic Kraul (*2011 Leipzig; lives in Leipzig) **Ain Labirint** 2017,
felt-tip pen, lino-cut ink and ink on paper

The production and gestalt of the picture are shaped by what material happens to be available in the print workshop of the Leipzig *Buchkindergarten* (Book Kindergarten). A pile of 42 sheets, which would normally be painted one by one, inspired a single oversized picture. First attempts to draw a labyrinth at the centre with a felt-tip pen took too long. With the help of two different paint-brushes attached to either end of a broom, it was possible while standing upright to work on a sheet lying on the floor. Lino-cut colours were soon abandoned in favour of more liquid ink. Now, large areas, long lines and lots of drips could come into being at much greater speed. Frederic Kraul ran around over the surface to be painted six days long, often with his painting rod on his shoulder. Not all areas were to be covered, »for that would be too much and destroy the beauty.« (F.K., 2020) In parallel to the painterly process, stories were spun about a raven (at the top), crabs (lower down) and a sour lemon at the centre of the labyrinth.

Jeremias Geisselbrunn (Augsburg 1595–1660 Cologne) **Madonna
with Child from the Altar of Our Lady in St. Kolumba** Cologne,
ca. 1650, alabaster (destroyed in 1945, reconstructed from over
70 fragments and restored in 1991/92)

Geisselbrunn was active in Cologne from 1624. He assumed various offices in the stonemasons' guild and of the city until his death. His pictorial idiom drew on the Italian tradition and Peter Paul Rubens' painting. In keeping with the Counter Reformation, Geisselbrunn aimed to convince his audience through his depiction of intense emotions. Accordingly, the Madonna figure made in about 1650 emphasizes the intimate bond between mother and child. The sculpture was donated to St. Kolumba Church by Jacob de Groote in 1677.

Room 13 | Room 14

On plinths

- #1 **Pingsdorf Madonna** Cologne (?), ca. 1170, willow with vestiges of old paint (long-term loan from St. Pantaleon, Brühl-Pingsdorf)
- #2 **Sedes Sapientiae** Hennegau (Tournai?), 2nd quarter 13th century, poplar with vestiges of old paint (donated by Härle)
- #3 **Dattenfeld Madonna** Cologne, 1st half 14th century, walnut with old paint (long-term loan from St. Laurentius, Dattenfeld)
- #4 **Madonna with Christ Child** Cologne, 1st half 14th century, walnut, original paint destroyed
- #5 **Madonna with Christ Child** Cologne, 1360–1370, walnut with restored paint
- #6 **Michels' Madonna** Rhineland, 2nd half 14th century, walnut (?) with vestiges of older paint (donated by Härle)
- #7 **Madonna with the Grape** Bavaria, ca. 1480, limewood with vestiges of old paint (purchased and restored with the financial help of the Renate König-Stiftung)
- #8 **St. Nicholas** Cologne, ca. 1320, walnut with original paint
- #9 **Holy Bishop** Cologne, ca. 1330, walnut with vestiges of various layers of paint

The image of the Virgin Mary as Mother of God always touches on the question of the simultaneously divine and human nature of Jesus Christ. The theological and pious historical shifts in the direction of the one or the other pole thus have an influence, not only on the image of Christ, but also that of the Madonna. Up to the twelfth century, the majesty of the Son of God was at the focus of viewing: sitting passively, Our Lady acts as a throne for baby Jesus, who does not seem at all childlike. The term established in research for this type of image is *Sedes Sapientiae* (Throne of Wisdom). It is most likely that during this period, the figures of the Madonna were mobile, that is to say, they were only put in position on particular occasions and then disappeared again into the vault for storage. This practice changed in the course of the twelfth century, as the human nature of Jesus in theological reflection came to the fore. His mother was regarded as the Mediatrix (mediator), who could intercede on

behalf of supplicants with her Son and be certain of success. Her suffering during the Passion of Christ made her the ideal sympathetic listener for the multifarious miseries of the faithful, indeed she was declared the Co-Redemptrix. Depictions of Our Lady were now omnipresent. The Madonnas started to smile, she or her child turned towards the people looking at them, while the relationship between the loving mother and lively child became a new theme for pictorial invention to address. Mary's attributes correspond to her numerous honorary titles: Virgin, Queen of Heaven, new Eve, »Sponsa« (Bride of Christ = the Church), »Immaculata« (Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception), to name but a few. The Cologne workshops reacted to the increase in demand for pictures of the Mother of God in the fourteenth century with a typification that became a virtual Cologne trademark. Numerous versions of the ensemble of smiling Virgin Mary on her throne with Christ Child were reissued time and again, and this composition was also used for other enthroned saints.

On the wall

Adalbert Trillhaase (Erfurt 1858–1936 Niederdollendorf)
Adam and Eve ca. 1923, oil on canvas

The legendary account goes like this: Adalbert Trillhaase meditated so often in front of the wood grain of his desk that Otto Pankok advised him, not just to detect pictures, but to paint his own. This is how Trillhaase found his way, not only into painting, but also via Otto Pankok into the artist group *Das Junge Rheinland* (Young Rhineland), where as the »German Rousseau« he came into contact with Otto Dix, Jankel Adler, Gert Wollheim and Alfred Flechtheim. Reason enough for Jean Dubuffet not to include the self-taught artist in his anthology *Art Brut* (=raw Art) (reason: not sufficiently »unaffected«). Adalbert Trillhaase took his themes from the bible. As was typical of his times, he found inspiring visual material to work from, not only in the Middle Ages, but also in his own era. »There was a clamour of images of the times [...] coming from the walls: sweet-talking Laurencin, screeching Max Ernst, hard-boiled Dix, spectral Kubin, praying Marys from old churches [...],

jumbled-up, stacked on top of each other, to form turbulent walls.« (Otto Pankok, ca. 1930). Trillhaase seldom kept to the biblical text and did not copy as a matter of principle. His pictures are intriguing on account of the artist's unconventional way of interpreting traditional iconography and his pointed treatment of themes. In his rendering of *Adam and Eve*, the unusual gestures add a surprising twist to the well-known story of the banishment from Paradise.

Crucifix Rhineland (?), 2nd half 12th century, ivory (purchased with the financial support of the Kulturstiftung der Länder, the Federal Representative for Culture and Media, the Kunststiftung NRW, the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung and other public and private benefactors.)

This figure of the crucified Christ was made of ivory, a substance which can be polished to achieve a surface with luxurious sensory appeal. This encourages the eye to wander over the sculpture. According to medieval notions, the line of vision is an extension of the body, so that while looking at a picture, a person becomes unified with it. Except for the arms, this figure of Christ is made up of two pieces fashioned from an elephant tusk. Both parts were turned at 180° in opposite directions and dovetailed together, with the joint hidden behind the bead of the loincloth. As a result, the grain of the surface is given by the growth rings of the tooth, which appear like hatching lines to wrap around the torso. However, it is not certain that this effect could be anticipated at the time of production, or whether it emerged unintentionally, after centuries of pollution had acted on the figure.

Giampaolo Babetto Vaso (Vase) 2015, silver, gilt | **Vaso** (Vase) 2019, silver

The paper-thin vessels, which Giampaolo Babetto hammers out of a single piece of silver in a laborious manual process, are one of his hallmarks. The technique demands extensive experience and utmost attention to constantly adjust the intensity of the strokes of the hammer to the thickness of the material. The sound of the blows as a constant resonance plays a role that should not be underestimated. A hard hit can produce cracks or holes. In this way of working, meditation and concentration merge into an inseparable whole. It is characteristic of Babetto's method that the path of the strokes remains visible in the ornamental structure (repoussage). The degree of imperfection imbues objects with an enduring human quality.

Joseph Marioni (Cincinnati 1943–2024 New York) **Blue Painting** 1999, Acrylic on linen on stretchers (donated by the artist)

From the late 1960s, Marioni laid the foundation of his painting with such consistency of purpose that in retrospect, the process can be regarded as conceptual, or as a »project«, to use his own words. In so doing, the dynamics of painting gradually gained the upper hand over the deliberate decisions taken by the artist. »I become ever more aware that what I would like intellectually is at odds with what I perceive in my paintings«, Marioni concluded. The initially opaque cascades of vibrant colour in his monochrome painting gave way to the transparency of gauze-like glazes of such technical perfection that they »animate« the painting by way of minimal interventions alone.

Room 15

Konrad Klapheck (Dusseldorf 1935–2023 Dusseldorf)

Der Wille zur Macht (The Will to Power), 1959, oil on canvas

With the aim of achieving »prosaic hyper-realism« in painting, the Dusseldorf painter Konrad Klapheck turned to machines in the mid-1950s, and made a discovery that would define his work thereafter: »With the help of the machine, I could bring forth things from myself that I wasn't aware of before, it forced me to reveal my innermost wishes and thoughts.« The paintings are based on large-scale preliminary drawings in which one can follow the evolving abstraction and transformation of forms. Klapheck did not paint a typewriter as such; instead, he used the object as a catalyst for a realist style with the aesthetic power to give expression to a whole generation or epoch. »My paintings should be seen as a whole, as an epic in which the key figures, instead of being played by people, are embodied by their most significant objects. Perhaps these are in a better position than a portrait of their inventor to depict the human comedy of today.« (K.K., 1966)

René Zäch *Untitled* 1988, wood and synthetic resin varnish

The Swiss sculptor René Zäch was a constructor among artists. With the precision of a civil engineer, he designed objects at the drawing board with a minimalist aesthetic that evokes a wealth of associations with everyday utensils. And yet, no functional purpose can be assigned to these objects. In terms of form, they are reduced to a minimum, stripped of any application, and liberated from any potential usefulness, thus promoting basic experiences of sculpture. The ambivalence of possible levels of meaning turns the positioning of the works in an exhibition space into a humorous, but serious, game.

Stefan Lochner (†1451 Cologne) ***Madonna with the Violet***

Cologne, just prior to 1450, mixed media on oak wood (on permanent loan from the Archiepiscopal Seminary of Cologne)

Stefan Lochner's epitaph painting for the abbess of St. Cecilia's Abbey Cologne, Elisabeth von Reichenstein (ca. †1486) depicts a visionary event. The abbess kneels in front of the very much larger Madonna, who is holding the Christ Child, and asks for intercession. The location of the event is the Garden of Paradise, where strawberries and violets are growing in the meadow. The violet in the Virgin Mary's hand appears to be an answer to Elisabeth's prayer: the flower stands for humility as a key to divine blessing. Meditative immersion in prayer is a path to mystic visions, which take on a tangible form in such pictures, with the intention of offering a visual stimulus for renewed prayer. The iconographic scheme would have been agreed between the painter and the client, along with the size and the unusual format, which has nonetheless been well documented for epitaph paintings. Lochner applied layers of glazes, but the uppermost layers of paint were lost when extensive overpainting was removed in the mid-nineteenth century. This is why the colours today are unusually pale and lacking in depth. The fabric folds in the cope would have looked fuller originally. The curtain in the background in its current form stems from the time of restoration. It probably replaces a medieval fabric made of pressed brocade with tin foils, a technique that was just being developed at the time the picture was created and encouraged a realistic representation of the textiles in paintings. This desire for realism reflected the zeitgeist and had an impact on the depictions of other items, such as the large brooch on the cope of the Virgin Mary and the flowers in the meadow.

Room 16

Marcel Odenbach (*1953 Köln; lives in Köln und Biriwa/Ghana)
In still waters crocodiles lurk 2002/2004, video installation,
sound, 31:20 min.

»When God lays his head to rest, he faces Rwanda« – so goes an old saying, which marks the beginning of this »subjective documentation of a drama in seven chapters«. It makes a theme of the fragile coexistence of offenders and victims after the genocide, which claimed the lives of more than 800'000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu in only three months in 1994. A year after the genocide, Marcel Odenbach came upon the picture and documentation material from Rwanda while doing research at the film archive of the UN in New York, which serves as the departure point of this work. The video installation, lasting about half an hour, does not place the bloody conflict at the forefront, however. Rather it shows scenes from a seemingly everyday life characterized by impressive beauty, tranquility, and slowness. The artist has shifted the portrayal of the murderous savagery above all to the realm of language, for which the soundtrack repeatedly records the hate propaganda on the radio, calling for the Hutu to annihilate the Tutsi. – By using film montages of public and private images, found footage (film and television recordings) and shots he produced himself, Marcel Odenbach finds his way to a narrative technique that connects the historical event with the subjective feelings of the individual. Through diverse associations (with the story of the Passion, film quotes...), he lifts the happenings from their concrete historical context and searches for archetypical motifs that characterize and accompany mankind throughout his history. The differentiated cutting technique of working with cross-fades and juxtaposition creates an associative system of images that mutually comment and analyze one another, which transfers the given themes into new context meanings, and thus places them up for discussion. In doing so, even things that cannot be seen also have an effect because their obvious absence presses into the viewer's consciousness.

In the display tables

Marcel Odenbach: #1 work and research materials for the video installation *In still waters crocodiles lurk*, 2002–2004: **Diary** Rwanda, 2003 | **Notes** on publications, archive materials and film documentation | **Protocols** for videotapes | **Editing plans** for each film chapter | **#2 Stamp album** compiled as of 1964 by Marcel Odenbach | **Zebra tail** 20th century (?), a present from Belgian relatives of Marcel Odenbach to his grandfather Heinrich Nöker | **Marcel Odenbach** (with zebra's tail) with his mother and his sister in their grandparents' garden in Köln-Hahnwald, 1957, s/w photograph | **Three official certifications** 2003: permission for Marcel Odenbach and Frederik Walker to travel to Rwanda and to visit the central prison Butare. (all: donated by Marcel Odenbach)

Marcel Odenbach also questions his role as a (German) artist in his video piece *In still waters crocodiles lurk*. Up until the First World War, Rwanda belonged to the German Empire as a district of German East Africa, before it was taken over by Belgium. Some of his family on his mother's side were from Belgium and lived in the Belgian Congo until independence, as could be ascertained from the utensils of his childhood.

Jannis Kounellis (Piraeus 1936–2017 Rome) ***Tragedia civile***
(Civil Tragedy), 1975/2007, spatial installation

Kounellis uses everyday things in his work, which when introduced into ever new contexts serve as his own visual vocabulary. He works with requisites from the theatre, but uses them to create a picture, in his view, rather than a classical stage set. The past (tradition) and the present are constantly interwoven. The utensils in this picture speak of absence and loss. The golden wall is reminiscent of medieval mosaics in churches and the backdrops of sacred icons, but what is reflected in them is one's own image, without it really becoming tangible in a spatial sense. A blurred view beyond the limits of the everyday experiential world.

The artist today [...] puts together a one act play that sums up the drama that occurs between two or more people in conflict with others, in conflict with the

authority of the state which modifies the laws in accordance with social requirements.

Room 17

Leonhard Kern (Forchtenberg 1588–1662 Schwäbisch Hall)

Mourning of Christ 1625–1630, alabaster

The upper body of Christ rests on Maria Jacobi's lap, from where it appears to be slipping down and tilting forwards, while twisting a little to present a frontal view. In so doing, it acts as a counterpoint to the profile view of Maria Magdalena. She is bending towards the dead Christ in a great arch and pressing his limp hand to her breast. Her robe has slipped down, leaving her shoulder bare, contrasting appealingly with the male body of Christ. Her flowing hair and her garments characterise the reformed sinner as an erstwhile prostitute. The differentiation of the surfaces and the elaboration of contrasts – man/woman, frontal view /profile – were the hallmarks of Leonhard Kern's sculpture, who was highly esteemed in his day for his striking artistic signature and his preference for working with alabaster and ivory. His apprenticeship and journeyman years had taken him as far as Italy and North Africa, before he settled in Schwäbisch Hall. From there, he supplied the art chambers of aristocratic palaces as well as the residences of prosperous citizens across Europe.

Terry Fox *Site Pendulum* 1977/2022, installation with piano string, lead ball and a glass of water

The work is set in motion at 1pm and at 3 pm.

Terry Fox is not only one of the most important representatives of American concept and performance art; his work has also played a key role in sound art in Europe, which took off in the 1980s. He did not see art as having an aura, and his goal was not to create a done-and-dusted thing, but rather, he strove to achieve transformation through action. To this end, he turned to performances, which he carried out with or without an audience and in which the (collective) experience of the moment was central. He himself never spoke of performances, but of »situations« – in his view, these were sculptural works in which he shaped a specific situation sculpturally. In 1972, Terry Fox was in Europe and visited Chartres among other places. On the floor of the cathedral, he discovered a mosaic labyrinth with

11 circles. Over the years to follow, this labyrinth served him as a metaphor for his physical existence and as a conceptual springboard for numerous pieces. The relationship between movement and rhythm that he found in the meanders of the labyrinth also inspired him to work with pendulums. *Site Pendulum* was first performed in 1977 in San Francisco.

The highest purpose is to
have no purpose at all.
This puts one in accord
with nature in her
manner of operation.

John Cage, *Silence*, 1971

Room 18

John Cage and Terry Fox

No other artist of the twentieth century had such a radical revolutionary influence on the concepts of art and artist as John Cage. By integrating the *I Ching* (the Chinese Book of Changes) into his art practice and with it, the principle of chance, he put paid to the idea of an artist as a creative genius. He dispensed with the idea of authorship and a self-contained work; instead, art is realized and completed, according to Cage, in the length of time that it is being viewed. With this stance, he became the prime stimulus provider for many artists – including Terry Fox, and his view of art as a »Situation«, drawing on John Cage's work among others (Cage and Fox are both from the West Coast of America and thus grew up closer to Asia than to Europe ...).

On the wall

John Cage (Los Angeles 1912–1992 New York):

#1 **Where R = Ryoanji 2R/11** 1990, pencil on handmade Japanese paper | #2 **New River Watercolor** 1988, watercolour on paper | #3 **River Rocks and Smoke** #15, 1990, fire, smoke and watercolour paints on paper

The series *Ryoanji* comprising more than 150 sheets was created by John Cage between 1983 and his death in 1992. The leaves are all the same size and refer both formally and in content to the Ryoanji garden of the Zen Buddhist temple in Kyoto. In this garden, there are 15 rocks divided into groupings of 3, 5 and 7 and arranged in an open area on a surface of raked sand. John Cage also based *Where R = Ryoanji 2 R/11* on 15 stones (R=15). Their placement on the paper was determined by *I Ching*, as was the choice of pencils (in our case, there are 11) and the number of tracings of their perimeters that Cage undertook (2R = 2 times round). The score for *Ryoanji for Double Bass* (display table 4) was written a year after the first drawing. While John Cage's scores are almost always of high graphic quality in their own right, here he first tries out in art what will later become music. *New River Watercolor* and *River, Rocks and Smoke* were created in the biennial *Mountain Lake Workshops*

in the Appalachians (Virginia), where invited artists (alongside Cage e.g. Mierle Laderman Ukeles and Ray Kass) worked together with students on art activities. In 1988, John Cage started to use watercolour, inspired by the smoothly polished pebbles from the New River. At first, he painted with pheasant and hen quills, mainly to liberate himself from the tools normally used for painting, but then for the fourth series (from which our sheet comes) he used a paintbrush. He positioned his 15 stones at the lower picture margin, thus evoking the impression of a landscape under a vast sky. In the second workshop, he withdrew more markedly from being the creator and allowed the work to be done by the four elements of earth, water, fire and air: the papers were dampened and held collaboratively over fire. What became visible as pigments were trails of smoke and soot along with burnt straw, the traces of which were completely obliterated by the very high temperature. At the lower margin, there is a circle painted with a single flowing brush-stroke. It has the lightness of Japanese calligraphy and represents the Ensō from Zen Buddhism: absolute reality (the universe) and emptiness (the origin of creation). »We live in a world where there are things as well as people. Trees, stones, water, everything is expressive... I see this situation as a complex interpenetration of centres.« (J.C., 1956)

Display tables 4–5

John Cage: A Mycological Foray. Variations on Mushrooms

Los Angeles: Atelier Édition, 2020; volume 1: *A Mycological Foray*, 168 pages, bound; volume 2: *Mushroom Book*, 1972, 20 lithographs, 20 transparent papers with texts (reprint) | **Ryoanji. Version for Double Bass solo with Percussion or Orchestral obbligato**,

22 bound pages and 2 sheets of music, Edition Peters Group, Leipzig/London/New York, 1984 (Print on demand, 2024) |

Wild Edible Drawings 1990, 12 paper sheets handmade with petals, stalks, seeds and plant leaves in a fabric-lined box; photocopies with computerized *I-Ching*-tables and lists of ingredients; colour photographs (exhibition copies)

John Cage was an enthusiastic mushroom picker. In 1959, his Italian television audience were kept on tenterhooks as they waited for him to give the correct answer to the very last question on this theme in a several-part quiz programme *Lascia o Raddoppia?* (approx. meaning: “leave or double it”). He spent the prize money of 5 million lira on a grand piano for his house at Stony Point near New York. John Cage treated mushroom picking as more than a hobby, as it trained his sensibility for happenstance and he used it as a tool for his art practice to be taken seriously. »Ideas are to be found in the same way that you find wild mushrooms in the forest, by just looking. Instead of having them come at you clearly, they come to you as things hidden.« (J.C., 1972) Picking mushrooms was an integral part of his teaching at the New School for Social Research in New York. In collaboration with the mycologist Alexander H. Smith and the textile artist Lois Long, he translated his experiences into art, as for example in his legendary *Mushroom Book* dating from 1972, in which science, art, poetry and ecology are brought together. In August 1990, he created a series of *Wild Edible Drawings* from edible plants that were included in his macrobiotic diet. He harvested 27 seasonal ingredients with the help of friends in North Carolina (incl. mulberries, bananas, woodbine, hibiscus flowers and stems, sorrel, clover, burdock, nettle, pokeweed and bulrush). The individual recipes for the »edible drawings« were determined by *I Ching*.

On the wall

#6 Terry Fox Catch Phrases (#7 from a 27-part-series),

1981–1984, pencil and felt-tip pen on paper, steel

During an artist-in-residence award in West Berlin 1980/81, Terry Fox listened on the radio to the American military broadcasts (US American Forces Network Europe). Terms were used such as »relaxation of tension«, »balance of terror«, »friendly fire« or »soft target«. Terry Fox took these euphemisms as the starting-point for a series of 27 works with the title *Catch Phrases*, (corresponding to the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet, plus one title drawing), which

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are both drawing and object simultaneously. The pieces were made between 1981 and 1984 in Berlin, Naples and Minneapolis. Each sheet is covered in a squared grid with a fine letter written by Terry Fox's hand into each square. Scanning along in the direction of reading, it is possible to make out pairs of words and phrases, which the artist had heard or read and recorded in his notebooks. This network of letters is overlaid with signs and graffiti, which he had found on the walls of houses in Italy, now written with a felt-tip pen. These are quickly executed and politically-charged signs such as variations of the cross and the swastika, hammer and sickle, target and dollar sign. On top, there is a second, found symbol transferred to welded steel – aestheticized and turned into an object on account of its three-dimensionality. Thus, there are three superimposed manifestations of a (pictorial) idiom at work here: whereas the fine script – as the euphemism claims – is more concealing than revealing, the objects unfold effects that are appealing and yet at the same time aggressive. Art or weapon?

Display tables 7–8

Terry Fox: materials for **Catch Phrases:** notebook | individual sheets | s/w photographs on the roof at Mariannenplatz in Berlin, 1980/81 (exhibition copies) | typescripts | colour photographs from the studio in Minneapolis, 1984 | s/w photograph with Terry Fox in front of *Catch Phrase #4* (exhibition copy) | invitation card and advert for the exhibition at Galerie Ronald Feldman 1984, New York (all: loans from The Estate of Terry Fox, Cologne)

Sound piece

Terry Fox *Berlino* 1988, stereo, 19 mins.

On the wall

Terry Fox *Berlin Wall Scored for Sound* 1982 (from: *Linkage* 1982/2019, reissued LP vinyl record, US, San Francisco)

Display tables 9–10

Terry Fox: drawings for ***Berlin Wall Scored for Sound*** 5 individual sheets, 1980/81 | street plan of Berlin, with drawing (all: loans from The Estate of Terry Fox, Cologne) | ***Berlino / Rallentando*** 1988, prod. by Het Apollohuis, Eindhoven, LP record and booklet | ***Linkage*** 1982, publ. by Kunstmuseum Luzern, LP record

From the roof of Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin-Kreuzberg in 1980/81, Terry Fox as the holder of a DAAD study grant looked down on the Berlin Wall in immediate proximity. This architectural structure sliced through the urban districts, buildings and biographies – a symbol of the Cold War, in a period of elevated tension. Fox decided to interpret the graphic features of the Wall as an urban composition and to chart it as »aural geography«. Like John Cage, Terry Fox analysed the surroundings he encountered, here the city space, using musical means. Four geographic cornerstones on the map defined how far the Wall extended. Thence he drew a horizontal line, which being bound within notational lines, resembles the rise and fall of a tonal passage. At the same time, Fox »converted« the length of the Wall into units of time and the sections into formal categories such as straight, curved or bent, chaotic zigzags or various shapes. He played from this score using recordings of his performances involving piano strings and the sounds from the environs of Künstlerhaus Bethanien, ranging from thunder and rain to the noise made by the rotors of military helicopters. The composition to be heard fluctuates between sonorous acoustic tones with quivering tremolos and soundscapes.

On the wall

#11 Alexej von Jawlensky (Torzhok 1864–1941 Wiesbaden)

Große Meditation – Der Mensch ist dunkler als die Nacht

(Great Meditation – Man is darker than the night), 1937, oil on canvas

This *Great Meditation* ranks among the late works of the painter, who became almost completely paralyzed three years before his death and had to abandon his artistic work in consequence. The precise reduction to a minimum and the decisive brushwork are

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evidence of the serial character that is typical of Jawlensky's work as a whole. The lineal framework of a face is stylized to become a pictorial type, but this is counteracted by the differentiated colour impact. The application of paint alternates between glazed and opaque areas, lighting the two sides of the face quite differently. As an object of reflective contemplation, aspiring to exploit all artistic possibilities by way of constant repetition, the exemplary nature of the *Meditations* still holds in contemporary art. They build the bridge to understanding quite distinct oeuvres which refer back to them, such as the work of Josef Albers, Mark Rothko and Agnes Martin. »You are my teacher«, the upcoming composer John Cage wrote to him in 1935 full of admiration, after he had bought one of his pictures (*Meditation* No. 160, 1934): »Now it is in me.«

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Stefan Wewerka (Magdeburg 1928–2013 Berlin) **Bäume / Stuhl** (Trees / Chair), 1978–80, 1982 and 1986, pencil, coloured crayon, ink, watercolour, opaque white on paper

It is quite impossible to imagine Stefan Wewerka without the pencil that he always carried with him and brought out when thinking was to be made visible. »I have always loved sketches and still value them today, more than anything else. They all have something in common: the process of searching.« Wewerka was an architect, designer, object artist, printmaker, painter and performer, but above all he was a sculptor, who always started with a sketch, since »the mindset and philosophy of art cannot become more clear than in a drawing.« Arguably, it was thanks to his accurate observation of nature that his deconstruction in an era of arbitrary post-modernism always remained constructive: »I have a keen interest in landscapes, silhouettes, avenues and trees with regard to structuring factors.« This is especially evident in cases where the abstract rendering of a tree becomes a preliminary drawing for a sculpture or flows seamlessly into the silhouette of a deconstructed chair. (quotes from: *Stefan Wewerka. Nahaufnahme*, Berlin 2010)

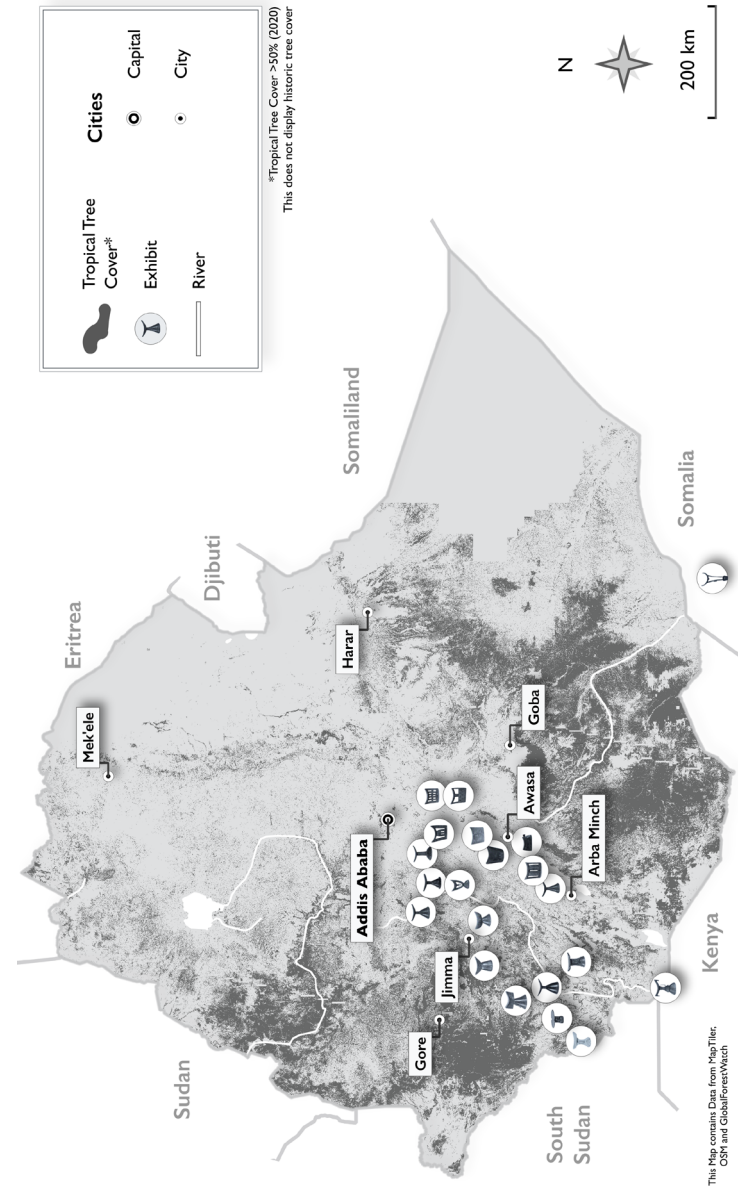
21 unknown artists Neck supports or headrests wooden or African »pillows« = boraati (Afaan Oromo), akičcolong (Ñanatom), chákam (Me'en), barkumma (Hadiyya, Hamär, Gurage) and others, Ethiopia, from about 1900 to 2000s, made from various kinds of tropical timber of North East African provenance, different types of fats incl. *Ricinus communis* (patina), leather, sisal and cotton cord (donated by Dorothea and Hermann Abrell/donated by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate OMI, African collection of P. Franz Konrad OMI)

The big picture: a group of unusual wooden objects, bought in galleries, at trade fairs, the flea market or from African art dealers. All the neck supports (or rather, headrests?) are created according to the same production principle, that is to say, a single block of wood gives rise to the final form. This is made up of three parts that demand a prior stylistic decision about the upper shape for resting

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the head, the middle section and the base. In Ethiopia, there are four main types, of which three can be seen in the installation: a. the concave shape (woodblock), b. interlaced, with vertical or diagonal struts, c. with a supportive column and base, or a conical base without a central support. On the basis of such formal criteria, it is possible to locate the objects within a regional »cultural mapping«. The exhibition display is oriented towards the probable places of origin and, in the light of new knowledge, will probably be altered during the course of the year.

The individual item: each wooden »pillow« is unique, indicating something of the high aspirations of people to personalize a standard everyday object through design. Who are these persons, who lay down their head every day on such a distinctive artefact? What local premises, what practical aspect or what social status determines the design, the choice of wood, the privileged usage? Decoding the individual stories of the headrests is still in its infancy. Researchers from Ethiopia, Holland and Germany will get closer to these collection artefacts during the year of the exhibition, thereby initiating the transformation of an artwork into a bearer of information – a first step towards the reconstruction of an object's biography.



Find everything – seek nothing

Monika Bartholomé *Finde alles – suche nichts*,
Ausstellung in Oldenburg 2017

Room 20

On the floor

Norbert Prangenberg (Cologne 1949–2012 Krefeld)

Figur (Figure), 1996, clay, fired and glazed

On the wall

Norbert Prangenberg *Untitled* (working drawings), undated, pastel on transparent and kraft paper (donated by Nils Dietrich)

We have been able to present Norbert Prangenberg using works from our collection several times already. They have a big impact solely by virtue of their vibrant colours, sensual feel and sheer size. It is easy, however, to overlook the fact that a foundation for his work was laid by his apprenticeship as a goldsmith in Cologne (C. Kessler) and Dusseldorf (F. Becker), which he probably never left completely behind. In the 1970s, Prangenberg worked as a designer for the glass foundries *Peill+Putzler* in Düren und *Sißmuth* in Immenhausen. For him, a draft drawing was an utterly self-evident means of developing a form. Thanks to the donation of all 55 original-sized working drawings for his unique ceramics, we can now explore this aspect in greater depth. He closed in on the form using freely drawn lines, before having it translated into a sculpture with the help of a craftsman in a highly specialized workshop.

Walter Ophey (Eupen 1882–1930 Dusseldorf): ***Frauen auf dem Felde*** (Women in the field), ca.1920 (purchased with the financial support of Kunsthaus Lempertz) | ***Ebene*** (Lowlands)?, ca. 1923 | ***Landschaft mit Flusslauf*** (Landscape with river course), ca. 1923 | ***Kirche in Oberammergau*** (Church in Oberammergau), ca. 1927, all coloured pastel chalk on paper

The immense graphic work in which Walter Ophey spins himself »into the great box of wonders known as the world«, is without parallel, and not only in Rhenish Expressionism. As of 1914 at the latest, he developed a technique of drawing with coloured pastel chalks, which in his view was »not at all expressionist, nor impressionist, nor objective«, opening up painterly potentialities in a medium that was independent of painting. For it was the line,

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at first applied with a brush, later smudged to one side using the hand exclusively, which created area and space. With the speed of a photographer and the certainty of a draughtsman, Ophéy achieved a spontaneous, but equally authentic, rendering of reality in front of his motif.

Monika Bartholomé (*1950 Neukirchen-Vluyn; lives in Cologne): 5 sheets **Untitled** 1993–2003, all tempera or ink on paper

Unlike a preliminary sketch, these drawings neither aim to design something, nor to represent anything. They eschew purpose, asserting their autonomy. With playful fantasy, Monika Bartholomé reverses any predefined order of things and transforms our spontaneous associations in the next instant into something else. She does not draw what she knows, nor what she wants. Her drawings follow the path her hand takes. Arising in a state of absent-mindedness, in an intense moment of concentration and emptiness, they precede thought; to be more precise: thinking happens within these drawings as such and is inscribed in them.

Room 21

Inge Schmidt (*1944 Bonn; lives in Cologne) **On the wall** 2003–2022, 18-part wall piece, wood, corrugated paper roll, cord, wire, metal strips, plaster, pinecones, partly brightly painted (donated by the artist)

When the sculptress Inge Schmidt calls her small sculptures »midgets, who whisper to each other«, this points to a playful, but strongly committed approach to her work. Very much in keeping with the English verb *to put* (in the sense of: to place, set or lay) the artist explores possible ways of putting objects in a room. They may lean casually against the wall, hang on narrow brackets or stand by themselves. In her work, she used the stuff of the modern world, which at first sight might seem mundane and anonymous. Ordinary corrugated paper, cheap wood or objects found on the street are often regarded as worthless manufacturing products or even mere rubbish. Yet when Inge Schmidt »tames« these materials, they become animated. She shapes their fragile bodies, meandering somewhere between construction and fragility, by sticking, bonding, rolling, layering or folding. The reference to human beings is underscored by the titles of the work series: *midgets*, *floor-bound*, *crouched* and *works at body height* stand for ratio variables, which take both the viewer and the intimate sphere of the sculptural pieces into account. In her video piece 3.53, named after the duration of the activity shown, she transfers her radically simplified manner of working into a moving image: the artist goes into a corner of her studio, where she finds a stool and wood planks; bit by bit, she puts together a wobbly construction, which finally becomes a kind of hut to hide in.

Inge Schmidt 3.53 1997, video, colour, no sound, 3:53 min.

Inge Schmidt Dunkle Stele (Dark Stele), ca. 2007, spare wood, tacked | **Aufrechte** (The upright one), 2013, wood and cord | **Stele mit verdicktem Fuß** (Stele with a thickened foot), ca. 2002, wood and clay, coloured black and white | **Hohes Standstück** (Tall standing piece), 2004, wood, coloured white | **Stele mit Schlitzfuß** (Column with a slotted base), ca. 2009, wood

Exhibition

August Macke (Meschede 1887–1914 near Perthes-lès-Hurlus)

Saint George 1912, oil on canvas

With an openness and painterly spontaneity that is unusual for one of August Macke's paintings, large areas of the canvas remain visible and contribute to the sense of pictorial space, which corresponds to that in Kandinsky's abstract paintings. The mindset of the European Avant-garde was seldom captured so clearly in art as it was in 1912. Here, the formal solutions of cubist, futurist, and Orphic painting came together, and the corresponding original works were encountered by Macke during the course of that year. However, the sources of inspiration for Macke's portrayal of a saint can be sought more widely. In both the Eastern and Western Churches, Saint George is one of the popular saints, which means that Russian icons are relevant as well as the colourful painting behind glass of Upper Bavaria. The naivety of such images, which Macke picks up on in preliminary drawings, lives on in certain details, such as the embroidered saddlecloth.

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Colophon

Artist at Work

15. September 2024 – 14. August 2025

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Pocketbook: Barbara von Flüe, Jonas Grahl, Stefan Kraus,
Marc Steinmann, Ulrike Surmann, Kerstin Volker-Saad

Translation: Celia Brown

Editorial office: Ulrike Surmann

Cartography: Simon Schweitzer

Design: Tino Graß

Pre-Press: farbanalyse, Köln

Print: Zimmermann GmbH, Druck + Medien, Köln

Script: Gill Sans, Times New Roman

Paper: Munken Print White, Caribic

We like nicely designed printed materials and hope to continue to be able to provide you with these in paper form. For the sake of sustainability, please return the booklets to the cash desk unless you want to take them home.

Kolumba-Taschenbuch #5

1. English edition; print run: 7.000 ex.

ISBN: 978-3-9825800-4-3

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www.kolumba.de