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Press Kit
Berlin, 6.10.22

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Nollendorfplatz, Berlin, 1912 © Sammlung Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin, Foto: Oliver Ziehe, Berlin



Embracing Modernism

**Big names from the
Stadtmuseum Berlin**

From 7.10.22

**BERLINISCHE
GALERIE
MUSEUM OF
MODERN ART**



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Edvard Munch, Porträt Walther Rathenau, Berlin, 1907
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Embracing Modernism

**Big names from the
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From 7.10.22

Lovis Corinth, Edvard Munch, Max Beckmann, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and many others – the Stadtmuseum Berlin boasts outstanding works by eminent modernist painters. Twelve highlights from its premium collection will be guests at the Berlinische Galerie from October 2022. They bring new tones to the permanent in-house exhibition, sparking a conversation with resident works.

Sharing collections and jointly making them accessible to the public must become standard museum practice in the future. In this instance, the partnership was prompted by extensive conversion work at the Märkisches Museum, which is scheduled to close for four years in 2023, leaving the foundation Stadtmuseum Berlin without its principal home. To ensure that significant paintings from its collection can remain on display, the idea was born in the two houses of integrating selected works into the permanent exhibition “Art in Berlin 1880-1980”. Early modern art is a particular strength of the Stadtmuseum Berlin holdings.

The paintings to be hosted at the Berlinische Galerie are by Max Beckmann, Theo von Brockhausen, Lovis Corinth, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Walter Leistikow, Max Liebermann, Edvard Munch and Lesser Ury. All of them were important figures who enriched the city’s art scene in the early 20th century.

Modern art in Berlin

The highlight of the display is a striking portrait of the politician, manufacturer and art collector Walther Rathenau, painted in Berlin in 1907 by the Norwegian Edvard Munch. Munch’s arrival in the German capital in 1892 marked the birth of modernism in Berlin. His show with the Association of Berlin Artists was shut down within days when conservative members protested vehemently against his innovative style. That was the year when progressive artists, among them Max Liebermann and Walter Leistikow, formed the “Association of the XI” to bring the latest trends in German art to an audience in Berlin. Exhibitions by this initial alliance of modern artists were similarly seen as an affront to the conservative tastes that prevailed under Kaiser Wilhelm II. The “Association of the XI” was the nucleus that spawned the “Berlin Secession” in 1898/99. Munch was among those who regularly took part in its exhibitions.

“Secessions”

The “Berlin Secession” had ambitious aims. Like the “Secessions” in Munich and Vienna, it catalysed the modernist breakthrough in Berlin.

Thoughtfully chosen, carefully hung exhibitions provided a coherent overview of contemporary trends. The latest works by German artists took centre stage but there were also gems from the recent past and major paintings by European colleagues. Shows at the “Berlin Secession” encompassed a wide spectrum of styles including Naturalism, Symbolism, Art Nouveau, Impressionism and Pointillism.

A new generation encouraged a shift in paradigm around 1910. The “Berlin Secession” split over disputes between established artists and proponents of nascent Expressionism. The “New Secession” was founded in 1910, the “Free Secession” in 1914. These, too, were powerful countermovements that resisted the academic influence at exhibitions.

(Self-)Portraits – Edvard Munch, Lovis Corinth, Max Beckmann

In addition to Munch’s portrait of Walther Rathenau, there are several portraits here by Lovis Corinth. Leading public figures sat for him, like the influential journalist Alfred Kerr (1907), and so did his student and future wife Charlotte Berend (1902). She and her husband were both members of the “Berlin Secession”, frequently contributing to its shows. The works from the Stadtmuseum Berlin also include some outstanding self-portraits. By 1900 at the latest, when he moved from Munich to Berlin to pursue his career, Corinth was painting one every year on his birthday.

A self-portrait by Max Beckmann (1910/11) depicts him at the age of 27. He was probably reacting to a negative exhibition review in the Berliner Tageblatt in 1910, which hurt the artist badly. The clue is the newspaper he is holding with a derisive, self-assured smile.

“Plein air” painting – Walter Leistikow, Max Liebermann, Theo von Brockhusen

Around 1900 Walter Leistikow was one of the most sought-after painters in Berlin. He had a flair for networking and was a driving force in the city’s avant-garde community. His landscapes, in particular, demonstrate a new, modern approach to art. “Evening over Schlachtensee” (c. 1895) is an example. Like the Impressionists, Leistikow often painted straight from the motif, usually in the countryside near Berlin with its many lakes.

Max Liebermann’s “Boys Bathing” was shown just after completion at the second exhibition of the Berlin Secession in 1900, where the rendering was praised for its vitality. Liebermann’s “plein air” painting inspired Theo von Brockhusen, whose motifs

focused from 1908/09 on the picturesque Havel scenery around Baumgartenbrück by Lake Schwielow. One specimen is “Wind on the Havel” (c. 1914), which reflects his affinity with Vincent van Gogh.

Nollendorfplatz – Max Beckmann, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Lesser Ury

Several artists featured Berlin’s Nollendorfplatz in their townscapes. From 1910 to 1914 the artist Max Beckmann and his wife Minna Beckmann-Tube spent the winter months living at no. 6. His studio window looked out across the north-west corner of the square. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s view of Nollendorfplatz was painted in 1912. In 1911 the Expressionist and co-founder of Brücke had moved from Dresden to Berlin, where he painted numerous street scenes reflecting his experience of the big city. Lesser Ury’s “Nollendorfplatz Station at Night” of 1925, by contrast, remains true to the artist’s Impressionist origins. Ury’s reputation for atmospheric paintings of nocturnal urban scenes dated back to before 1900.

Artists

- Max Beckmann (1884 Leipzig – 1950 New York)
- Theo von Brockhusen (1882 Marggrabowa, now Olecko/Poland – 1919 Berlin)
- Lovis Corinth (1858 Tapiau/East Prussia, now Gvardeysk/Russia – 1925 Zandvoort)
- Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880 Aschaffenburg – 1938 Davos)
- Walter Leistikow (1865 Bromberg, now Bydgoszcz/Poland – 1908 Berlin)
- Max Liebermann (1847 Berlin – 1935 Berlin)
- Edvard Munch (1863 Løten – 1944 Oslo)
- Lesser Ury (1861 Birnbaum, now Międzychód/Poland – 1931 Berlin)

Press images

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Admission 10€, concessions 6€
(Prices may vary during
temporary exhibitions)

Wed–Mon 10 am–6 pm
Tue closed

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Exhibition texts

The Collection of the Berlinische Galerie

Berlin is one of Europe's most important art hubs. That has not always been the case. When the German territories joined to form the German Empire in 1871 and Berlin became its capital, it was a provincial city in a rural setting. The art scene was conservative and remained so until 1899, when the Berlin Secession was founded. After that, the triumphal march of modernism could not be halted in Berlin.

Our permanent exhibition shows the highs and lows of this story: from early modernism around 1900, on through expressionism, the Eastern European avant-garde of the 1920s, New Objectivity, art under the Nazi dictatorship, the new dawn after 1945, post-war modernism and art in the Cold War, to the rebellious mood of the 1960s, and up to the 1980s, when the Wall still divided the city into East and West.

While the Märkisches Museum undergoes renovation, major works from the Stadtmuseum Berlin Foundation are guests at the Berlinische Galerie, enriching our permanent exhibition in Rooms 1 to 3.

Embracing Modernism

Lovis Corinth, Edvard Munch, Max Beckmann, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and many others – the Stadtmuseum Berlin Foundation boasts outstanding works by modernist painters. Highlights from its premium collection are now guests at the Berlinische Galerie. They bring fresh input and new tones to the first three rooms in our permanent exhibition.

The dawn of modern art broke over Berlin in 1892 when a few progressive artists, among them Max Liebermann and Walter Leistikow, formed the Association of the XI. They were the first group to challenge dominant tastes in art under Kaiser Wilhelm II and to organise their own shows in private galleries. Later they also admitted women and in 1898/99 they spawned the Berlin Secession, a strong counterforce to the conservative, academic exhibition system. Rather like the Secessions in Munich and Vienna, this paved the way for modernism in Berlin.

The Berlin Secession pursued ambitious aims with its exhibitions from 1899. A pick of the best art of the day was clearly arranged in well-hung displays. The latest works by German artists took centre stage but there were also gems from the recent past and major paintings by European colleagues. They encompassed a wide spectrum of modernist styles including naturalism, symbolism, art nouveau, impressionism and pointillism. Most motifs were drawn from everyday life with a preference for portraits, interiors, landscapes and townscapes.

In this room too, key works from the Stadtmuseum Berlin Foundation await discovery. They were painted by influential figures who enriched the city's art scene in the early 20th century. Canvases by Max Beckmann, Walter Leistikow, Theo von Brockhusen and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner illustrate the vitality and creativity of Berlin's avant-garde. The highlight here is a striking portrait of the industrialist and art collector Walther Rathenau (1867–1922) painted in Berlin in 1907 by the Norwegian Edvard Munch.

Max Beckmann, Selbstbildnis (lachend), 1910/11

Max Beckmann was 27 when he made this self-portrait. He was probably reacting to a negative exhibition review. One clue is the newspaper he is holding. In February 1910 the Berliner Tageblatt wrote that Beckmann had no style of his own and was at risk of "finding himself on the floor after falling between the academic and the 'modern' chairs. Which would be a pity given his doubtless very great talent." True enough, Beckmann's early work occupies a grey zone between conservative and late impressionist trends. The criticism hurt the artist badly but here he confronts the viewer with a derisive, self-assured smile.

Max Beckmann, Blick auf den Nollendorfplatz, 1911

From 1910 to 1914 the artist Max Beckmann and his wife Minna Beckmann-Tube (1881–1964) spent the winter months on Berlin's Nollendorfplatz at no. 6. She had designed an out-of-town studio house at Hermsdorf but it was poorly heated. Beckmann's studio window overlooked the north-west of the square. His depiction of the place contrasts with the aggressively vibrant atmosphere in the work by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880–1938) painted just a year later. Kirchner was a founding member of the group of

artists known as Brücke. In 1911 the Expressionist moved from Dresden to Berlin, where he painted numerous street scenes reflecting his experience of the big city.

Theo von Brockhusen, Wind an der Havel (Stürmischer Tag), um 1914

Contemporary art critics struggled to attribute a style to Theo von Brockhusen's landscapes. The vibrant colours that light up his paintings reveal an affinity to impressionism, yet the clear contours are akin to 19th-century German art. Reviewers in Berlin did agree, though, on a proximity to Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890). The plein air painting of Max Liebermann (1847–1935) was also seen as a major influence. Brockhusen's motifs focused from 1908/09 on the picturesque Havel scenery around Baumgartenbrück by Lake Schwielow, as in this painting.

Lovis Corinth, Selbstporträt, 1900 / Charlotte Berend im weißen Kleid, 1902

A self-portrait for every birthday – by 1900 Lovis Corinth was sticking rigorously to his plan. That year Corinth also moved from Munich to Berlin, which was turning into the principal hub of the arts in the German Reich. The first “birthday picture” in the capital shows the 42-year-old in his studio. Those dynamic dabs and strokes of paint are typical of Corinth's impressionist style. They occur again in the portrait of Charlotte Berend (1880–1967), his student and future wife. After they married in 1904 she sidelined her own career, but like her husband she joined the Berlin Secession and regularly took part in its shows.

Lovis Corinth, Porträt Alfred Kerr, 1907

Alfred Kerr (1867–1948) was one of the most influential journalists of his day. He had a distinctive caustic style, especially evident in his sharp-witted theatre reviews. In 1907 Lovis Corinth portrayed him with lively brushwork in the pose of an orator. Several disturbing stories of persecution are associated with this painting. Brutal treatment by the Nazis targeted not only the sitter and his family but also the portrait's later owners Leo Nachtlicht (1872–1942), Robert Graetz (1878–1945) and Gertrud Kahle (1897–1945) together with their relatives. Alfred Kerr's daughter Judith (1923–2019) described the experience of forced exile in her book “When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit”.

Walter Leistikow, Abendstimmung am Schlachtensee, um 1895

Around 1900 Walter Leistikow was one of the most sought-after painters in Berlin. He had a flair for networking and was a driving force in the city's avant-garde community. His landscapes, in particular, demonstrate a new, modern approach to art. Like the Impressionists, Leistikow often painted straight from his motif, usually by the many lakes near Berlin. He went further, however, than depicting an atmosphere created by weather or time of day. Like his friend Edvard Munch (1863–1944) he used colour and composition to reflect emotions: Leistikow's paintings always articulate a mental experience of nature.

Max Liebermann, Badende Knaben, 1900

Bathing boys were a popular theme in plein air painting. The fast brushwork in Max Liebermann's rendition enhances the dynamics of this scene. Movement is not confined to the boys: waves roll, clouds scuttle and light glitters on the surface of the water. Liebermann based his canvas on studies he had drawn on the North Sea beach at Scheveningen in the Netherlands. Here he captures the relaxed atmosphere of a summer's day at the seaside. Just after completion the painting was shown at the second exhibition of the Berlin Secession, eliciting praise for the vitality of its depiction.

Edvard Munch, Porträt Walther Rathenau, 1907

The young Norwegian Edvard Munch shot to fame in 1892 by provoking outrage. His show with the Association of Berlin Artists was shut down within days of opening when conservative members protested against his innovative style. The “Munch Affair” marks the birth of modernism in Berlin. The artist loved the attention and moved to the German capital, spending several lengthy periods working there until 1907. One of his first collectors was the Berlin industrialist Walther Rathenau (1867–1922), later assassinated as foreign minister of the Weimar Republic. After Munch did his portrait in 1907, he observed: “That is what one gets from being painted by a great artist: one becomes more of a likeness than one is.”

Artists & Works

Max Beckmann

1884 Leipzig – 1950 New York

- Selbstbildnis (lachend), 1910
- Nollendorfplatz, 1911

Theo von Brockhusen

1882 Marggrabowa, now Olecko/
Poland – 1919 Berlin

- Wind an der Havel (Stürmischer Tag), um 1914

Lovis Corinth

1858 Tapiau/East Prussia, now
Gvardeysk/Russia – 1925 Zand-
voort

- Porträt Walter Leistikow, 1893
- Selbstbildnis, 1900
- Porträt Charlotte Berend im wei-
ßen Kleid, 1902
- Lovis Corinth, Porträt Alfred Kerr,
1907

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

1880 Aschaffenburg – 1938 Davos

- Nollendorfplatz, 1912

Walter Leistikow

1865 Bromberg, now Bydgoszcz/
Poland– 1908 Berlin

- Abendstimmung am Schlachten-
see, um 1895

Max Liebermann

1847 Berlin – 1935 Berlin

- Badende Knaben, 1900

Edvard Munch

1863 Løten – 1944 Oslo

- Porträt Walther Rathenau, 1907

Lesser Ury

1861 Birnbaum, now Międzychód/
Poland – 1931 Berlin

- Bahnhof Nollendorfplatz bei
Nacht, 1925

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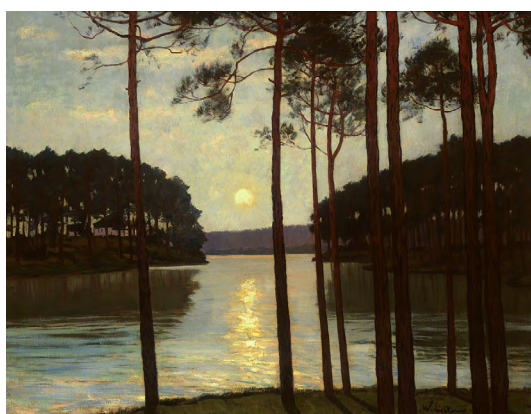
Edvard Munch, Porträt Walther Rathenau, 1907
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Max Liebermann, Badende Knaben, 1900
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Theo von Brockhusen, Wind an der Havel, Geltow, um 1914
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Walter Leistikow, Abendstimmung am Schlachtensee, um 1895
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Max Beckmann, Selbstbildnis (lachend), 1910
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Max Beckmann, Nollendorfplatz, 1911
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Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Nollendorfplatz, 1912
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Lesser Ury, Bahnhof Nollendorfplatz bei Nacht, 1925
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Lovis Corinth, Porträt Charlotte Berend im weißen Kleid, 1902
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Lovis Corinth, Porträt Alfred Kerr, 1907
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Lovis Corinth, Porträt Walter Leistikow, 1893
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Lovis Corinth, Selbstbildnis, 1900
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**BERLINISCHE
GALERIE
MUSEUM OF
MODERN ART**

Press release

Beginning on 7th October, the Berlinische Galerie will host a series of highlights from the Stadtmuseum's painting collection

The Märkisches Museum is scheduled to close in 2023 for several years of renovation work. During this period, the treasures of the Stadtmuseum Berlin will be available to the public through a series of exhibitions at other institutions.

Beginning on 7th October 2022, the Berlinische Galerie's permanent exhibition "[Art in Berlin 1880-1980](#)" will be enriched by a loan of twelve outstanding works of classical modernism from the Stadtmuseum Berlin's [painting collection](#). These works by Berlin artists Max Beckmann, Theo von Brockhusen, Lovis Corinth, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Walter Leistikow, Max Liebermann, Edvard Munch and Lesser Ury bear witness to the collection's immense artistic and historical value and form a link between the Stadtmuseum Berlin's focus on urban history and the Berlinische Galerie's focus on art history.

A highlight of the selection and indeed of the entire collection is the portrait of Berlin engineer and industrialist Walther Rathenau by Edvard Munch (1863-1944). Rathenau (1867-1922), who as Foreign Minister of the Weimar Republic was assassinated by right-wing radicals in 1922, acquired his first painting by Munch in 1893. In 1907, he commissioned Munch to paint his portrait. An exhibition of the Norwegian painter's works held in Berlin in 1892 stirred up long-standing tensions within Berlin's artistic community. The modern currents of contemporary art - Impressionism and the beginnings of Expressionism - were moving away from the trajectory of Historicism. The exhibition was closed soon after its opening, splitting the Berlin art scene for good. In 1898, the Berlin Secession was established.

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STADTMUSEUM BERLIN



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Admission	€ 10 reduced € 6
Press contact	presse@berlinischegalerie.de
Press photos	www.berlinischegalerie.de/pressemitteilung/aufbruch-in-die-moderne
Website	www.berlinischegalerie.de

During the closure of the [Märkisches Museum](#), the Stadtmuseum Berlin's mechanical musical instruments are also expected to be presented at the Bezirksmuseum Pankow from spring 2023. The project in cooperation with the Bezirksmuseum Pankow is of particular significance to the district of Pankow, which developed into a global centre of barrel organ production beginning around 1870. The exhibition will feature the Stadtmuseum Berlin's collection of self-playing musical instruments (automatophones) along with the products of Pankow's barrel organ factories and chronicle the story of their Italian manufacturers and players who were concentrated in the district. The project is made possible by support from the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin.

Further information at: www.en.stadtmuseum.de/collections.