

*Berlin, September 2007*

## **The Cultural Metropolis of Berlin Presents Itself in 2007 with a New Campaign**

### **Part 4: Art and Museums**

Lifestyle and high culture, experiment and tradition: an unsurpassed offering of culture is Berlin's trademark. In upcoming years, Berlin – supported by the state Senate – will move this core potential to the center of its marketing strategy with a large-scale campaign.

In the fourth part of the series found below, we present Berlin as a city of the arts with a unique museum landscape and a whole series of fantastic exhibitions.

#### **Berlin Lives and Breathes Art**

Exquisite, world-class collections, impressive museum buildings, a lively gallery scene, important artists of the past, and creative forces of the present all make the German capital a blossoming paradise of the arts in which nearly every era and stylistic direction is represented. The city's exhibition spaces house treasures of world culture, such as the Pergamon Altar or Nefertiti, old and new masters from Giotto to Caravaggio, from Breughel to Caspar David Friedrich, from Joseph Beuys to the "young and wild" such as Baselitz or Haring, all the way to the most contemporary art. More than 170 museums reinforce the traces of history and display the treasures of the world: a veritable encyclopedic compendium of history and world art from all ages.

#### **A Temple to the Arts: Berlin's Museum Island**

Museum Island in the heart of Berlin is home to an absolute temple of the arts. Treasures from six thousand years of human history are collected there in five museums. From the Bode Museum with its prominent dome to the slender columns

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of the Old National Gallery, every one of them is its own unique architectural gem. Taken together, they form a museum ensemble that is unique in the entire world. In 1999, it was declared by UNESCO to be a World Heritage site. A master plan that extends until 2015 calls for Museum Island to be restructured, to undergo costly renovation, and to be provided with a central entrance area as well as an underground archeological promenade.

The five museums present a cultural and historical panorama that ranges from ancient Egypt to the end of the nineteenth century, that is, from Nefertiti through German and French Impressionists. The Pergamon Altar, the Market Gate of Miletus, the Ishtar Gate with the Processional Way from Babylon, and other imposing architectural ensembles that are housed in the Pergamon Museum bring the great structures of bygone cultures back to life. The Egyptian queen Nefertiti, lovingly referred to as “the most famous woman in Berlin”, is currently being housed in the Altes Museum (Old Museum) along with other art treasures from the Egypt of the pharaohs. This museum also presents masterpieces of Hellenic art.

Paintings and sculptures from the nineteenth century, from Caspar David Friedrich and Adolph Menzel to French Impressionists along with Edouard Manet and Paul Cézanne, can be admired in the Roman temple setting of the Old National Gallery. This was the first building on Museum Island that was completely renovated in 2001. In the autumn of last year, the Bode Museum opened its doors as the second museum after a costly restoration, and since that time, it has captivated throngs of visitors. Its halls and galleries that are flooded with light house around 1,900 art treasures, including masterpieces of the Sculpture Collection, the Numismatic Collection, and the Byzantine Museum. By July 2007, half a million guests had already been counted.

The next milestone in the master plan for the restoration of Museum Island will be the reopening of the Neues Museum (New Museum) in 2009. After the destruction of the Second World War, the lavishly decorated building behind the simple façade with its

gloriously colorful interior courtyards lay in ruins for more than sixty years. The leitmotif running through the renovation and rebuilding directed by architect David Chipperfield is cautious additional construction: that which remained has been carefully restored and refurbished, supplemented with modern fixtures, and completed. The spectacular results of this architectural mélange will be presented to the public for the first time September 22-24 during an Open House. After the completion of the New Museum in 2009, the Egyptian Museum with Nefertiti will move in, as will a part of the Museum of Prehistory and Early History.

The two other buildings are also to undergo an overall renovation through 2015, after which they, too, will radiate with a new shine. A sixth building, the new central entrance hall, will be added to the ensemble of museums in the futures. In his most recently presented draft, Chipperfield is adapting classical temple architecture in the form of a delicate, transparent structure consisting of light, slender columns. A colonnaded courtyard will be located between the entry building and the New Museum. It will form a continuation of the Stüleresque colonnade between the New Museum and the Old National Gallery. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2010.  
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### **Old Masters and New Masters by the Potsdamer Platz**

Whether engraved by the hand of Albrecht Dürer in copper, applied by Rembrandt to canvas, or captured by the lens of Helmut Newton – the artworks on exhibit in Berlin can quicken the pulse of any art lover. In addition to the shining steel and glass façades of the Potsdamer Platz, several museums with unique works of European art are assembled all together at the Kulturforum (Culture Forum). One of the world's most important collections of European painting from the thirteenth to eighteenth century is housed in the Gemäldegalerie. It includes works by Eyck, Bruegel, Dürer, Raffael, Titian, Caravaggio, Rembrandt, and Rubens. The neighboring Kupferstichkabinett – Museum of Prints and Drawings also boasts an extraordinary connection. With 80,000 hand drawings and around 520,000 prints, ranging from

Pisanello and Dürer to Picasso and Beuys, it is one of the most outstanding graphic collections in the world. [www.smb.spk-berlin.de](http://www.smb.spk-berlin.de), [www.kupferstichkabinett.de](http://www.kupferstichkabinett.de)

In the immediate vicinity is the New National Gallery. This glass cube, flooded with light, was created by Mies van der Rohe and has become an icon of classic modern architecture. The institution houses a brilliant collection of modern art: from Edvard Munch and Oskar Kokoschka to Karl Schmidt-Rottluff and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner to Otto Dix and George Grosz. The New National Gallery has also repeatedly been the venue for spectacular traveling exhibitions. In 2004, 1.2 million visitors came to see the exhibition "The MoMA in Berlin". A unique show presented French masterpieces of the nineteenth century from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York in 2007. [www.neue-nationalgalerie.de](http://www.neue-nationalgalerie.de)

### **Contemporary Art: From the Hamburger Bahnhof to the Schlossplatz**

In recent years, Berlin has developed with unbelievable dynamics into a site for contemporary art. The most important collection of the art of the present is housed in the Hamburger Bahnhof. On display are works by Andy Warhol, Joseph Beuys, Cy Twombly, Keith Haring, and many innovative contemporary artists from the connection of the National Gallery, the Erich Marx Collection and the Friedrich Christian Flick Collection. [www.hamburgerbahnhof.de](http://www.hamburgerbahnhof.de)

Small but fine spaces for the art of today are offered by Deutsche Guggenheim and the Haus am Waldsee. While the former provides three or four top-quality exhibitions every year on the modern or contemporary art of one artist, the latter features rotating exhibitions of international artists with themes such as "Art and History", "Precursors of the Modern Era", or "Art in Context". [www.deutsche-guggenheim-berlin.de](http://www.deutsche-guggenheim-berlin.de), [www.hausamwaldsee.de](http://www.hausamwaldsee.de)

New sites are in the works. There is an empty spot that was left by the former Palace of the Republic. Until construction begins on the Humboldt Forum in 2010, a temporary art gallery for contemporary art will be installed. The chosen one is a

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colorful cube that shines over a long distance that consists of an exhibition hall surrounded by a café and a museum shop.

### **Made in Berlin: Art from More than One Hundred Years**

The fact that Berlin did not suddenly become a metropolis of creative forces overnight can be gathered from the numerous museums that are dedicated to the work of local artists. The broadest approach is being followed by the Berlinische Galerie, which collects, preserves, and presents the art of Berlin from 1870 to the present: the “old” Secessionists and the “young and wild”, Dada and Fluxus, the Expressionists and the “Neusachlichen”, Russians in Berlin, the avant-garde in architecture and photography, and many others. [www.berlinischegalerie.de](http://www.berlinischegalerie.de)

The expressionist artists’ group “Die Brücke” (“The Bridge”), which was headquartered in Berlin starting in 1911, is the focus of the Brücke Museum. The most comprehensive collection in the world on this theme comprises around four hundred paintings as well as thousands of drawings, watercolors, and original prints. Among the institutions that are devoted to an individual artist is the Käthe Kollwitz Museum Berlin. On four floors, drawings, prints, and sculptures are on display by the artist who lived in Berlin for more than fifty years. Another special crowd puller for the last year has been the Villa Liebermann am Wannsee. It is a small private museum in the summer home of the famous Berlin artist Max Liebermann that displays around forty original paintings. [www.bruecke-museum.de](http://www.bruecke-museum.de), [www.kaethe-kollwitz.de](http://www.kaethe-kollwitz.de), [www.max-liebermann.de](http://www.max-liebermann.de)

### **The Perfect Art Space: The Martin Gropius Bau**

The present and the past are never far apart in Berlin’s most significant exhibition space, the Martin Gropius Bau. Built in the style of an Italian renaissance of building according to the plans by Martin Gropius and Heino Schmieden, the imposing museum offers an impressive setting for numerous temporary exhibitions. Through the end of September, the exhibition “In Search of the Golden Griffon: Royal Graves

of the Scythians” will continue to amaze crowds of visitors. Exhibitions that will run until at least the end of the year include a retrospective of the French photographer Eugène Atget (September 28, 2007 to January 6, 2008) as well as a show on the origins of the Silk Road and the sensational new discoveries from Xinjiang, China (October 13, 2007 to January 14, 2008). [www.berlinerfestspiele.de](http://www.berlinerfestspiele.de)

### **Architecture, History, and Art: The Jewish Museum Berlin**

One of the most impressive examples of contemporary architecture in the German capital is the Jewish Museum Berlin. It's external shape is adapted from a shattered star of David. The silvery, glossy, steel-covered building with its brusque, nearly windowless façade was realized according to the plans of architect Daniel Libeskind. The spectacular exterior is matched by the unusual arrangement of the rooms. The museum houses a permanent exhibition on Jewish-German history and presents rotating exhibits with cultural and historical themes as well as contemporary art installations. [www.juedisches-museum-berlin.de](http://www.juedisches-museum-berlin.de)

### **Kennedy, Nolde and the GDR: New Museums in Berlin**

Berlin is regarded as a city of change, and that certainly holds true for the museum landscape that is growing at a breathtaking speed. And new highlights have been added in the last five years. These include the Berlinische Galerie, the Museum of Decorative Arts in Köpenick, and the Museum for Photography with the Helmut Newton Foundation. The latter presents rotating exhibitions on the life and work of Helmut Newton, one of the most significant fashion and portrait photographers of the twentieth century, as well as installations on contemporary photographers and artists. [www.helmut-newton.de](http://www.helmut-newton.de)

Two new openings in the past year are also drawing many guests. History and stories from everyday life behind the Wall are told by the GDR Museum. Since July 2007, numerous exhibits in four hundred square meters of space – from a completely furnished living room to an original Trabant car – invite the visitor not only to look, but

to try things out. With the motto “Touching the everyday life of a state of the past”, the atmosphere of the DDR is revived with its own objects, sounds, and smells.

[www.ddr-museum.de](http://www.ddr-museum.de)

With the opening of the museum “The Kennedys” on November 11, 2006 at the Pariser Platz not far from the Brandenburg gate, the German history of the Kennedys has returned to the place which for many people represents a historical and political fixed point of special global significance. The exhibition focuses on the life and convictions of the Kennedys and portrays the destiny and the prominent position of the family that has remained influential in American history up to this day.

[www.thekennedys.de](http://www.thekennedys.de)

The future also promises new visual pleasures. On September 20, many of the paintings and watercolors of Emil Nolde will return to Berlin. The leading expressionist regularly spent the winter months here. This is where he got his stimulus and created his famous works centering on the nightlife. The Nolde Foundation in the town of Seebüll is opening a branch at Jägerstraße 54/55, next to the Gendarmenmarkt. The gallery rooms will house two to four exhibitions per year with around fifty works on changing themes. The first show will be entitled “Nolde and Berlin”. [www.nolde-stiftung.de](http://www.nolde-stiftung.de)

In the coming year, the city will get another new museum at a well-known address. Across from Charlottenburg Palace, in the eastern Stüler building, the Scharf-Gerstenberg Collection can be experienced beginning in the spring of 2008 with the title “Surreal Worlds”. Top-quality works will be shown on three floors featuring surrealists and their predecessors, from Piranesi, Goya, and Redon to Dalí, Magritte, Max Ernst, and Dubuffet. With more than 250 works including paintings, sculptures, and works on paper, the collection will trace the history of the art of fantasy.

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This collection forms an ideal complement to the permanent exhibition “Picasso and his Time” in the Museum Berggruen in the western Stüler building on the other side. It is regarded as one of the most significant private collections of classic modern art. The Berggruen family recently announced an expansion of the collection for which the state of Berlin is making available the Kommandantenhaus that is adjacent to the western Stüler building. The precise opening date is still to be arranged.

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### **Booming Gallery Location and Center of the Art Trade**

With increasing international significance, Berlin is distinguishing itself as the most important location for contemporary art in Europe. Not only are works collected and presented here, the city is at the same time a pool of creativity and a crucible of talent. More than six thousand artists and creative minds here are creating the new art of today for the collections of tomorrow. There are currently around four hundred contemporary galleries in the German capital with more than 57,000 square meters of exhibition space. And the place is booming. Entire new gallery landscapes are springing up. If in the 1990s it was Auguststraße that established itself as the spot for art, then in recent times a part of the scene has moved over to Checkpoint Charlie. That is where gallery owners such as Raphael Jablonka from Cologne and Julius Werner from Munich have set up shop. On Schlesische Straße in Kreuzberg, the focus has definitely also been on art ever since Vilma Gold from London, Peres Projects from Los Angeles, or most recently the Galerie Zink from Munich have moved in and put works by renowned artists on display.

[www.berliner-galerien.de](http://www.berliner-galerien.de)

There is now a new center for modern art in Schöneweide in the southeastern part of Berlin. Old industrial buildings there from the former Reinbeck and Rathenau halls have been converted into galleries and artist studios. The “Museum für moderne Kunst in Frankfurt am Main” (the Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art) wishes to establish a permanent branch here. In addition, renowned private art collections as well as sixteen galleries are moving in. [www.schauhallen.org](http://www.schauhallen.org)

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## **Art Fairs and the Biennale: Trends of Today and Tomorrow**

Berlin's biggest international trade fair for contemporary art, **ART FORUM BERLIN**, takes place in the autumn of this year for the twelfth time. Around 120 galleries from more than twenty-five countries will exhibit their stars and newcomers at the beginning of the fall season. Painting, sculpture, installations, video, photography, works on paper, editions, and multiples are all represented. [www.art-forum-berlin.de](http://www.art-forum-berlin.de)

At the same time, Berlin's newest art trade fair, **Preview Berlin**, will be held at Tempelhof Airport. Subtitled as "The Emerging Art Fair", fifty-seven national and international galleries will be represented with the artists who will be the center of tomorrow's buzz. [www.previewberlin.de](http://www.previewberlin.de)

The Berlin Biennale also views itself as a temporary platform for contemporary art. Its next edition will run from April 5 to June 15, 2008 at several central locations in Berlin. A prestigious, international exhibition of contemporary art is put on every two years, and it also offers a platform to younger artists with less established positions.

[www.berlinbiennale.info](http://www.berlinbiennale.info)

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