

MUSEUM LUDWIG

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PRESS RELEASE

Icons of Art History and Present-Day Luminaries: The Permanent Collection of the Museum Ludwig

Europe's most extensive collection of Pop Art, the third-largest Picasso collection in the world, one of the most important collections on German Expressionism, outstanding works from the Russian avant-garde, and an excellent collection on the history of photography: Today the Museum Ludwig is home to one of the most important collections of twentieth- and twenty-first-century art in the world. And, unlike royal collections, it owes its existence to the extraordinary dedication of private citizens. The cornerstone for the founding of the museum was laid in 1976 with a donation of 350 works of modern art to the city of Cologne by the collectors Peter and Irene Ludwig.

The Ludwigs made their donation on the condition that a dedicated museum be built for contemporary art. In 1986, the building designed by the architects Peter Busmann and Godfried Haberer between the cathedral, the Rhine, and the Hauptbahnhof was opened.

The donation by the Cologne lawyer Josef Haubrich, who gave his collection of modernist paintings to the city of Cologne in 1946, is now also part of the Museum Ludwig under the name **Haubrich Collection**. Here visitors will encounter central works of Expressionism and the New Objectivity, including masterpieces such as Otto Dix's *Portrait of Dr. Hans Koch* (1921) and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's *Female Half-length Nude with Hat* (1911) as well as works by Max Beckmann, Marc Chagall, Erich Heckel, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, August Macke, Heinrich Hoerle, Wilhelm Lehmbruck, and Paula Modersohn-Becker.

The development of art history continued in the second half of the twentieth century with American **Pop Art**. The Ludwigs began collecting masterpieces of this fresh, provocative genre in the 1960s. These include icons such as Roy Lichtenstein's blonde *M-Maybe – A Girl's Picture* (1965), Claes Oldenburg's *Soft Washstand* (1965), Tom Wesselmann's *Great American Nude No. 98* (1967), as well as other notable works by Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg, James Rosenquist, Robert Rauschenberg, and Jasper Johns.

Another highlight is the large **Picasso collection** with paintings from all phases of the artist's career, including *Harlequin with Folded Hands* (1923) and *Woman with Artichoke* (1941) as well as numerous prints, ceramics, and sculptures. The **Russian avant-garde** between 1905 and 1935 also makes up a prominent part of the collection, with over 600 works by artists such as Natalia Goncharova, Alexander Rodchenko, and Kazimir Malevich.

In addition to these focuses, the Museum Ludwig offers an overview of the most important **artistic movements and media of the twentieth century**. The collection includes works of

Abstract Expressionism by Mark Rothko, Frank Stella, and Jackson Pollock, Minimalist and conceptual artists such as Donald Judd, Carl Andre, and Eva Hesse, European tendencies from the 1950s and 1960s with artists such as Jean Dubuffet, Lucio Fontana, Pierre Soulages, Wols, and Hans Hartung, as well as film and video art, installations, and performance works from recent decades. The history of art in the Rhineland region is represented with key works by artists such as Gerhard Richter, Sigmar Polke, Rosemarie Trockel, and Martin Kippenberger.

With some 70,000 works, the Museum Ludwig is home to an important and comprehensive collection of **photography** from the beginning of the medium to the present. These include early daguerreotypes, important artistic photographs from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries, albums and portfolio works, as well as extensive materials on the cultural history of the medium. Here, too, it was private collectors who laid the foundation for the photography collection in 1976 with purchases and donations from the collection of L. Fritz and Renate Gruber, who had excellent contacts with photographers in Germany and abroad.

The contemporary art section extends up to the present and encompasses all genres and media. The works range from paintings by Wade Guyton, Lubaina Himid, and Kerry James Marshall to installations and conceptual works by artists such as Georges Adéagbo, Minerva Cuevas, Maria Eichhorn, Renée Green, Bodys Isek Kingelez, and Haegue Yang as well as video and photographic works by artists including Moyra Davey, Andrea Fraser, Marcel Odenbach, Raghubir Singh, and Jeff Wall. This area of the collection is continually expanded with new acquisitions and donations, most recently including works by Ei Arakawa, Anne Imhof, and Avery Singer. After all, a collection is never complete.