

**K20**

**Press kit**  
**September 1, 2022**  
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**Stiftung Kunstsammlung**  
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## **Press kit: Der Mucha**

***Der Mucha – An Initial Suspicion***  
**September 3, 2022 – January 22, 2023**  
**K20 and K21**

Press conference and preview  
Thursday, September 1, 2022, 11 am, K21

### **Speakers**

- Susanne Gaensheimer, Director Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen
- Vera Pues, Foundation for Art, Culture and Social Projects of Sparda-Bank West
- Falk Wolf, Curator, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen

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### **Download press information and images:**

Installation views:  
[www.kunstsammlung.de/en/press/](http://www.kunstsammlung.de/en/press/)

**#K20K21Mucha**  
**#ReinhardMucha**  
**#K20K21**

## Major Survey Exhibition Dedicated to Reinhard Mucha at the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen

Reinhard Mucha's oeuvre, with its redefinition of sculpture, photography, and installation, is considered one of the most important artistic positions from the 1980s to the present. With the exhibition dedicated to the artist, who was born in Düsseldorf in 1950, the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen will unite long unseen installations with works from all creative phases at its two venues, K20 and K21, starting on September 3, 2022, thus creating a panorama that spans more than four decades of artistic work.

For the director of the museum, Susanne Gaensheimer, "Reinhard Mucha is one of the internationally most important artists of the 1980s, having contributed significantly to our current conception of sculpture, installation, and conceptual art. With key works from his student days at the Düsseldorf Art Academy in the late 1970s, he fundamentally expanded the conceptual notion of what sculpture is and can be. To this day, his works have lost none of their significance, so that Mucha can thus be described as both a historical and contemporary artist. This major survey exhibition is long overdue and was therefore an essential desideratum for me when I came to Düsseldorf, a city with a lively art scene with numerous important positions since Joseph Beuys. For me, Reinhard Mucha is at the forefront of this. He was the first in line for an inaugural visit when I assumed my position here."

## K21

*Der Mucha – An Initial Suspicion* is the first major survey exhibition of the Düsseldorf-based artist since the double exhibition at the Kunsthalle Bern and the Kunsthalle Basel in 1987. During his studies at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art from 1975 to 1982, Mucha had already exhibited works that were groundbreaking for the artistic developments of the 1980s and beyond. This applies in particular to the significance of his multifaceted oeuvre in relation to the genre of installation, the institution-critical reflection of the art exhibition industry and the museum, and the handling of material in art, as well as to the awareness of history and the reflection of society. Especially when his works are experienced in context, contemporary and industrial history, as well as echoes of pop culture, are intertwined with the artist's biography. In this way, Mucha succeeds in weaving together seemingly disparate thematic approaches into complex, meaning-laden structures of high sensual quality.

### Das Deutschlandgerät (The Germany Device) as the Starting Point of the Exhibition

The distribution of works between K20 and K21 results in two very different spatial situations for the two parts of the exhibition. While the Grabbe Hall of K20 offers Reinhard Mucha the unique opportunity to combine three large-scale installations and several multi-part works into a self-contained overall installation, the second floor of K21 presents a par-course of twelve rooms with more than sixty carefully selected works spanning more than forty years. Here, the exhibition is not shown on the second floor as usual, but rather on the bel étage of the former Ständehaus. The key work on permanent display here since 2002—**Das Deutschlandgerät**. Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, K21 Ständehaus, Düsseldorf [2021] [2002], XLIV Biennale di Venezia, German Pavilion, Venice 1990, [2021] [2002]

1990—thus becomes the starting point of the exhibition parcours. Mucha originally conceived this expansive, site-specific work for the German Pavilion at the 44<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale in 1990, where he exhibited together with the Düsseldorf-based photographer couple Hilla and Bernd Becher. As a partial reconstruction, the installation was specially adapted to the former plenary hall of the Ständehaus in 2002 and expanded to include a sound and video installation. On the occasion of the exhibition, the work has now undergone a second technical and content-related adaptation by the artist.

Opposite the Deutschlandgerät is the early key work **Wartesaal** (Waiting Room), [1997], [1986] 1979–1982, which has not been shown publicly since *documenta X* in 1997. In a sense, these two installations form the energetic poles of the exhibition, around which the other rooms are oriented. Among these are current works such as **# Hashtag mit Lichtblick im Schmerz** (# Hashtag with Bright Spot in Pain), [2019] 2001, as well as important landmarks from the 1990s such as **Dokumente I-IV** from 1992, the installation for *DOCUMENTA IX* 1992, as well as early works such as **Baden-Baden / Standard II**, [2022] 1984 / 2022, which are reunited for the first time in a new way.

At the center of the presentation in K20 is **Das Figur-Grund Problem in der Architektur des Barock (für Dich allein bleibt nur das Grab)** (The Figure-Ground Problem in Baroque Architecture (for you alone only the grave remains), [2022] 1985, one of the few surviving installations of utilitarian objects and museum furniture. For the first time since 1985, the work, one part of which is in the collection of the Musée national d'art moderne / Centre Pompidou in Paris, has been recreated in its complete form. In addition to these spectacular exhibits, in which office and museum furniture represent fairground attractions that have solidified into sculptures, **Frankfurter Block**, [2016], [2014] 2012 and **Stockholmer Raum** (Für Rafel Moneo) [Stockholm Room (For Rafel Moneo)], [1998] 1998 are “exhibitions within the exhibition.” Each brings its demountable museum space along and contains several previously independently conceived works. The show thus also becomes an exhibition about exhibiting. The museum space, the institutions of exhibiting and presenting, are repeatedly challenged and put to the test by Mucha's works.

### ***Der Mucha – An Initial Suspicion***

With the title of the exhibition, Mucha refers back to the restaurant guide DER MUCHA, which was widespread in Austria in the 1980s and on which the design of the exhibition catalog is also based. Taking up Mucha's almost sculptural handling of language and words, the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen pursues the initial suspicion that his oeuvre needs to be explored anew in its entire breadth.

**Publication**

The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive catalog published by Hirmer Verlag. With this book, edited by Susanne Gaensheimer and Falk Wolf, the Kunstsammlung presents the long-awaited monograph on the oeuvre of Reinhard Mucha. Not only the exhibited works, but also important previous states of these are systematically documented. Mucha's working method is characterized by a constant review of solutions once found, so that several works were further developed due to adjustments to the respective exhibition situation and the circumstances of the time. In-depth essays by Julian Heynen, Stefanie Kreuzer, Sebastian Egenhofer, Kolja Reichert, and Falk Wolf examine key aspects of Reinhard Mucha's work from different perspectives. 400 pp., price ca. 39 EUR.

A free booklet with all work details and introductory texts on individual rooms and works is also available at the ticket counter.

**Short Biography:**

Reinhard Mucha was born in Düsseldorf in 1950 and studied at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art in the class of Klaus Rinke in 1972 and then from 1975 to 1982. Reinhard Mucha lives and works in Düsseldorf. His major exhibitions include: Kunstmuseum Basel (2016), *documenta X* (1997), Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa), Berlin (1996), *DOCUMENTA IX* (1992), *Das Deutschlandgerät*, La Biennale di Venezia, German Pavilion (1990), *Nordausgang*, Kunsthalle Basel (1987), *Kasse beim Fahrer*, Kunsthalle Bern (1987), *Gladbeck*, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1986), *Das Figur-Grund Problem in der Architektur des Barock (Für dich allein bleibt nur das Grab)*, Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart (1985), and *Von hier aus – Zwei Monate neue deutsche Kunst in Düsseldorf* (1984)

The exhibition is supported by the Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne and the Kunststiftung NRW.

The exhibitions in the Bel Étage of K21 are supported by the Stiftung Kunst, Kultur und Soziales der Sparda Bank West.

Media Partner of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen:  
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

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**Supporting Program**

**Opening of the exhibition**

**September 2, 2022, 7 pm**

**K21**

Speakers:

Susanne Gaensheimer, Director of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf

Ina Brandes, Minister of Culture and Science of the German State of North Rhine-Westphalia

Prof. Thomas Sternberg, President of the Kunststiftung NRW

Vera Pues, Stiftung Kunst, Kultur und Soziales der Sparda-Bank West Foundation for Art, Culture and Social Projects of Sparda-Bank West

Falk Wolf, Curator

The exhibition takes place at both venues, K20 and K21. At K20, the exhibition is already open as of 5:00 pm.

**Art Guides**

On Saturdays, Sundays, and public holidays, as well as on KPMG Art Evenings,

Art Guides in the exhibition provide information about the works on view:

Saturdays, Sundays, and public holidays, 2 – 4 pm

1st Wednesday of the month, 4 – 10 pm

**K21**

**Exhibition preview****Mondrian. Evolution****Oct 29, 2022 – Feb 12, 2023****Press conference: October 27, 2022, 11 am, K20**

The world-renowned painter Piet Mondrian (1872–1944) is famous for his astringent, geometric compositions in black and white with selected primary colour fields in red, blue or yellow. Yet it is not commonly known that the Dutchman opted to paint landscapes and other figurative motifs in his early years as an artist and often staged them with a surprising palette of colours. The Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen delineates Mondrian's artistic path from his early endeavours in painting to his wholly abstract works and traces the connections between the different groups of paintings.

From the beginning of his career as an artist, Mondrian was in search of the ideal composition. In his view, this comprised the perfect balance of all pictorial elements. Mondrian readily came across motifs – windmills, lighthouses, the dunes by the sea and the water, in which farms and rows of trees were reflected – in his homeland. This selection of paintings provides an insight into his work in the studio and his individual experimentation with colours and forms with the aid of Cubist stylistic elements, before turning to pure abstraction at the beginning of the 1920s.

**K21**

The exhibition is courtesy of the Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel and the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, in conjunction with the Kunstmuseum Den Haag.