

Press kit: Charlotte Posenenske

Charlotte Posenenske: Work in Progress
May 30 – August 2, 2020
K20

Press preview:
Wednesday, June 3, 2020, 10:30 am, K20

Speakers:

- Prof. Dr. Susanne Gaensheimer,
Director Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen
- Dr. Isabelle Malz, Curator of the exhibition

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#CharlottePosenenske
#K20

Charlotte Posenenske: Work in Progress**May 30 – August 2, 2020****K20**

With the survey exhibition “Charlotte Posenenske: Work in Progress”, the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen is paying tribute to the work of a remarkable and radically consistent artist of the post-war period. In the 1960s, parallel with American Minimalism and the emerging Conceptual Art, Charlotte Posenenske (1930–1985) developed an impressive body of minimalist works within just twelve years, thus demonstrating her innovative understanding of art. Although the artist, who worked in Frankfurt am Main, exhibited during her lifetime together with artists such as Carl Andre, Donald Judd, and Sol LeWitt, and, in 1967, had an exhibition in the gallery of Konrad Fischer in Düsseldorf, which had opened only shortly before, her contribution to the discourse of Minimalism and Conceptual Art remained largely ignored for a long time.

The exhibition “Charlotte Posenenske: Work in Progress” now provides the most comprehensive overview of the artist’s individual work phases to date—including her experimental paper and “Palette-Knife Works” from the 1950s and early 1960s, her “Sculptural Pictures,” the reliefs of the “Series A”, “Series B”, and “Series C”, the modular square tubes made of galvanized sheet steel and corrugated cardboard of the “Series D” and “Series DW” (1967), and her last group of works, the revolving vanes of the “Series E” (1967–68). Her development from painting to performative works and installations in public spaces, which she consummated over a short period of time, can thus be impressively traced.

A pioneering protagonist of Minimalism and Conceptual Art

The exhibition, organized by the Dia Art Foundation in cooperation with the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, has several venues (Dia Art Foundation, New York; MACBA, Barcelona; Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d’Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean) with varying forms of presentation and highlights in terms of content. The presentation in Düsseldorf, for example, features the experimental work *Monotonie ist schön* (Monotony Is Nice, 1968), Posenenske’s only artistic examination of the moving image, based on Super 8 films. Two film contributions by Gerry Schum document the performative approach of her late works, which she also presented in public spaces. Insightful documents and letters from the artist’s archive, early stage and costume designs, manifesto-like statements, photographs, and concepts for public art projects also paint the picture of a highly reflective artist who increasingly grappled with the social relevance of her art. The exhibition at K20 will therefore not only present Charlotte Posenenske as a pioneering protagonist of Minimalism and Conceptual Art, but will also convey the radically consistent, participatory approach of her late works and her associated social and socio-political interest. In a conceptual radicalism that was still quite unusual for the late 1960s, Charlotte Posenenske opened up her art to its “consumers.” By selling her works unsigned, endlessly reproducible and at cost price, she also deliberately infiltrated the capitalist mechanisms of the art market.

Exhibition presentation at K20

At the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, the works of Charlotte Posenenske are being presented in a single, open exhibition space, the Klee Halle in K20. Her artistic development can be traced by the hanging of the early paper and multi-part relief works—including nearly all the rare prototypes that still exist—on the outer walls of the hall in a largely chronological manner. The expansive sculptural works of the “Series D” and “Series DW”, each in different combinations, together with the revolving vane objects of the last work group, the “Series E”, will structure the interior of the exhibition space, from which an exciting juxtaposition of the various, stringently interrelated work phases will develop. As a result of this open spatial structure, rhythmized solely by the works, visitors will be able to move freely through the exhibition situation—in keeping with Charlotte Posenenske’s democratic understanding of her work. The works and constellations of works can thus be perceived from various spatial perspectives and, as in the case of a reconstructed version of the revolving vane objects, can be explored individually by visitors.

In order to demonstrate the many possible variations of the different modular combinations of the “Series D” and “Series DW”, a group of these works will be reconfigured during the course of the exhibition. In addition, an installation in the foyer of the Kunstsammlung, which bypasses the boundary between the interior and exterior of the museum, will demonstrate the irritating and thoroughly resistant potential of the works, which, for her part, Posenenske consciously presented at social interfaces, at public hubs.

K21**Konrad Fischer presented Charlotte Posenenske in Düsseldorf (1967)**

In December 1967, Konrad Fischer organized an exhibition with works by Charlotte Posenenske and Hanne Darboven in his gallery, which had opened shortly before on October 21, 1967 at Neubrückestrasse 12 in Düsseldorf. Since Posenenske ended her artistic activity only one year later, it remained her only presentation at Fischer’s gallery. Almost fifty years later, in 2016, the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen acquired parts of the private collection of Dorothee and Konrad Fischer, which, however, does not include any work by Charlotte Posenenske. Against this background, it is a particular concern to honor the importance of this avant-garde artist for the first time with a comprehensive exhibition in Düsseldorf. Posenenske’s artistic positions are thus also to be placed in the context of American Minimalism, which is also being presented at K20 as a focal point of the collection of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen.

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Her withdrawal from art

In 1968, in reaction to the perceived ineffectiveness of artistic action, Charlotte Posenenske ended her work as an artist and turned to sociology. Her work is imbued with a democratic conception of art and an associated vision of society. Her work continues to inspire artists to this day and enriches contemporary art discourse with concerns and themes that have lost none of their topicality. The exhibition therefore once again confirms Charlotte Posenenske's importance as a critical and avant-garde voice in contemporary art.

Curator: Isabelle Malz

"Charlotte Posenenske: Work in Progress" was organized by the Dia Art Foundation, New York City in cooperation with the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf.

The exhibition is supported by the Kunststiftung NRW.

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Supported by the Ministry for Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia

Charlotte Posenenske. Biography

Charlotte Posenenske was born in Wiesbaden in 1930. As the daughter of a Jewish father who committed suicide in 1940, she survived the last months of the Nazi era in hiding. In the early 1950s, she studied with the painter Willi Baumeister at the Stuttgart Academy of Art and subsequently worked as a costume and stage designer for theaters in Lübeck and Darmstadt. In 1956, Posenenske turned again to painting.

From 1965 onwards, Posenenske became increasingly interested in conceptual working and production methods. She became preoccupied with “Sculptural Pictures”—three-dimensional, curved or folded metal sheets. She developed these further into modular sculptural units that enabled mass industrial production. With the reliefs of the “Series A”, “Series B”, and “Series C”, the square tubes of the “Series D” and “Series DW”, and the revolving vanes of the “Series E”, Posenenske’s main work was created in only two years between 1966 and 1968. In order to undermine the commercial mechanisms of the art market, she stipulated that the “Series B” to “Series E” be produced in unlimited editions and sold at cost price.

Despite her imminent international breakthrough, Posenenske increasingly struggled with the social relevance of her art. At the age of thirty-eight, she finally gave up her artistic activities completely and studied sociology with a focus on industrial production and working conditions. She died in Frankfurt am Main in 1985.

K21**Publication**

Charlotte Posenenske: Work in Progress

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalog with a foreword by Susanne Gaensheimer and contributions by Alexis Lowry, Isabelle Malz, Rita McBride, Jessica Morgan, Charlotte Posenenske, Daniel Spaulding, and Catherine Wood, as well as a chronology by Matilde Guidelli-Guidi and Liz Hirsch.

German edition: edited by the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf
ca. 272 pages, 38 €

Published by Verlag König, Cologne

Accompanying program**For children**

We have a special offer for children 6 years and older (with adult chaperone) in conjunction with the exhibition “Charlotte Posenenske: Work in Progress” at the K20. A complimentary museum suitcase guides visitors through the exhibition in 6 stages. En route, children become familiarized with the work and ideas of Charlotte Posenenske and learn more about the materials and techniques she employed. The suitcase also invites visitors to become active, to experiment with a variety of creative forms, and to produce their own artworks, which participants are welcome to take home after the event has ended.

Art Guides

Beginning on May 23, art experts will be available to visitors in special exhibitions and in the permanent collection. Here is an opportunity to become better informed about artists and their works through conversations with our experts. You can meet with our Art Guides at the following times:

Saturdays 4 – 6 pm

Sundays and holidays 3 – 5 pm

Personal Guides

During the current situation, the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen is making a very special service available: You can book a “personal guide” for your museum visit who will accompany you for 60 min. through special exhibitions or the permanent collection. Through one-on-one discussions, you will learn fascinating details about the artists, their works, and their historical backgrounds, and take up your questions about art in intensive exchanges with experts. This offering can be booked individually for all exhibitions and for the permanent collection at both the K20 and the K21. Maximum number of participants: four individuals from two different households. During your museum visit, please respect the current rules concerning social distancing and hygiene.

KPMG-Kunsttag/Art Day: Free of charge on June 3 at the K20 and K21

On June 3, in the context of the Coronavirus situation, and in order to provide as many visitors as possible with a cost-free – and safe – encounter with art, the KPMG and the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen have organized the first KPMG-Kunsttag/Art Day, which replaces the customary Kunstabend/Art Evening. Both houses will be open from 10 AM to 8 PM, and admission is free of charge. As many guests as possible will be admitted to the K20 and the K21, without of course, violating the distancing and hygiene rules currently in force. Admission to the exhibition “Pablo Picasso: The War Years 1939 to 1945”

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will be possible only with a time slot ticket. These will be distributed on location (Studio 1, opposite the entrance of the K20), and entitle holders to an encounter of up to 60 min. with the paintings, drawings, and collages created by the Spanish master during in the war years 1939 to 1945. Admission to the exhibition "Charlotte Posenenske: Work in Progress" and to the permanent collection will be possible at any time. In both buildings, Art Guides will be available to answer your questions, introducing you to various artists and shedding light on historical contexts and individual works. KPMG and the Kunstsammlung look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible.

Ausstellungsvorschau

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Exhibition preview

Simon Denny
September 5, 2020 – January 17, 2021
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Press conference and preview: September 3, 2020, 11 am at K21

In his multifaceted, research-based works, Simon Denny (b. 1982 in Auckland, New Zealand) examines how profoundly the experience and perception of culture is changing as technology and politics reconfigure. On the Bel Etage of K21, the artist will present a group of new works not previously shown in Europe. His sculptures, wall works, and immersive installations expose the political and social consequences of the advent of the data economy, the transformation and reconfiguration of “work,” and humankind’s interaction with non-human life and the planet, often as “resources.”

Simon Denny studied at the Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland (2001–05) and the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main (2007–09). His works have been presented in international exhibitions, including MoMA PS1, New York (2015) and the 56th Venice Biennale. The artist is Professor for Time-Based Media at the HFBK Hamburg. He lives and works in Berlin.

Curator: Susanne Gaensheimer, Agnieszka Skolimowska

K21 The exhibitions on the Bel Etage are sponsored by Stiftung Kunst, Kultur und Soziales der Sparda-Bank West

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Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

With funding support from the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia

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Thomas Ruff

12.9. – 7.2.2020

K20

Press conference and preview: September 10, 2020, 11 am at K20

The comprehensive exhibition of works by Thomas Ruff (b. 1958, lives in Düsseldorf) on the lower level of K21 focuses on photographic series from the past twenty years, for which the artist, one of the most important protagonists of contemporary photography, hardly ever picked up a camera himself. For his often large-format images, he instead used found photographs from a wide variety of sources. The exhibition therefore not only offers an overview of Ruff's work of the past decades, but also of nearly 170 years of photographic history.

The image sources range from nineteenth century studio photography to machine-made photographs of distant planets, from post-war press photos to propaganda images from the People's Republic of China. In each series, Ruff explores the technical conditions of photography by examining these highly varied pictorial worlds: the negative, digital image compression, or rasterization in offset printing. At the same time, he takes the afterlife of the images in archives, databases, and on the Internet into consideration, thus formulating highly complex perspectives on the photographic medium and the world that has always been photographed.

Curator: Falk Wolf

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The exhibition "Thomas Ruff" is made possible by National-Bank, Essen.

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Hito Steyerl

26.9.2020 – 10.1.2021

K21

Press conference and preview: September 24, 2020, 11 am at K21

The Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen is presenting the first comprehensive exhibition dedicated to the artist, filmmaker, and author Hito Steyerl (b. 1966 in Munich, lives in Berlin). Steyerl is currently regarded as one of the most advanced artists in terms of the current reflection on the social role of art and museums, the development of artificial intelligence, and experimentation with media-based forms of presentation. With early works exemplary of the “documentary turn,” the exhibition begins with a different conception of the documentary, the conceptual change of which Steyerl has decisively co-conceived, formulated, and practiced.

Another key aspect of Steyerl’s work is the mutations of camera images over the past thirty years, from the development from analog images and their manifold montages to the shared, increasingly fluid image of the digital information age. In her most recent works, Steyerl takes a critical look at how art is increasingly becoming the object of investment and speculation, determined and driven by large galleries and powerful oligarchs. The concept of public art, to which Steyerl lays claim, thus takes on a new meaning. The exhibition Hito Steyerl is a cooperation between the Centre Pompidou, Paris, the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf.

Curator: Doris Krystof

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The exhibition “Hito Steyerl“ is funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

Hito Steyerl

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