

## On Giving Freely and Fading Away

### **The Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann Stirs Things Up – An Institutional Critique at the Intersection of Civic Engagement and Artistic, Curatorial, and Discursive Practices**

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#### The Transition of Private Collections into Public Ones

In 2018, Erika Hoffmann-Koenige donated a collection of 1200 works from the Sammlung Hoffmann to the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (SKD). For the first time, the scope of the collection and (some of) the artists featured in it became public knowledge. The gift is part of the first phase of a five-year transition period (from 2018 to 2022/2023) during which both parties, the SKD and the collector, are to make use of the works and “play”<sup>1</sup> with them in a mutual exchange of ideas and knowledge. Since the 1960s, the Hoffmanns had been steadfastly reticent<sup>2</sup> about describing their collection, but when Erika Hoffmann-Koenige curated the presentation *Mit dem Fahrrad zur Milchstraße*<sup>3</sup> in 2009, the public at large first became aware of their particular philosophy. The same was true of subsequent collection exhibitions in 2021 – *Still Alive* at the Albertinum in Dresden and *Adam, Eva und die Schlange* at the Bundeskunsthalle Bonn, the first to be curated without the direct involvement of the collector – and, beginning in 2020, the “Dialogues” with other SKD collections and the “Local Conversations” (*Ortsgespräche*) at “peripheral” art venues dotted around Saxony.

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<sup>1</sup> Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in conversation with the author, 21 May 2021.

<sup>2</sup> “I can’t describe it. Sometimes I’m asked what I collect, and I don’t have an answer for that either,” Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in conversation with the author, 21 May 2021. Elke Giffeler, the director of the Sammlung Hoffmann in Berlin, refers to the collection as a “cosmos” whose diversity defies definition in terms of themes or categories, as stated in conversation with the author, 10 June 2021.

<sup>3</sup> *Mit dem Fahrrad zur Milchstraße*, exh. cat., Erika Hoffmann-Koenige and Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (eds.), Dresden 2009.

During this transition period, the two institutions diverged significantly in how they represented the collection on their websites. The Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden has remained focused (so far) on drawing attention to better-known, Western, particularly male artists<sup>4</sup> who are already well-established in the art world. By contrast, the website of the Berlin-based Sammlung Hoffmann also reflects how, since 1997, the collection has expanded to include the work of Eastern European and women artists who are still not as well known today. Furthermore, the collector's own website concentrates on the creation and growth of the collection in relation to milestones in her personal biography, from Mönchengladbach and Cologne to Berlin, or the couple's travels to America or Japan. This aspect is not reflected in the presentation and publicity of the SKD.<sup>5</sup> What this cursory comparison reveals are the first "alienation effects"<sup>6</sup> that arise from the changing descriptions of private collections when they are transferred into public hands, even more so when the collection's accessibility has to be presented and legitimized in the eyes of politicians, taxpayers, and museum visitors. For Wolfgang Ullrich, however, the transfer of private collections to public institutions also

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<sup>4</sup> See URL: <https://schenkung-sammlung-hoffmann.skd.museum/> (accessed 26 August 2021), the following artists were mentioned on the SKD website: Jean-Michel Basquiat, Monica Bonvicini, Marcel Broodthaers, Miriam Cahn, Tracey Emin, Isa Genzken, Félix González-Torres, Roni Horn, On Kawara, William Kentridge, Julie Mehretu, François Morellet, Sarah Morris, Bruce Nauman, Ernesto Neto, Hermann Nitsch, Albert Oehlen, Sigmar Polke, Arnulf Rainer, Ad Reinhardt, Pipilotti Rist, Thomas Ruff, Anri Sala, Frank Stella, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Wolfgang Tillmans, Cy Twombly, and Andy Warhol.

<sup>5</sup> See URL: <https://sammlung-hoffmann.de/index.php?p=k%C3%BCnstler> (accessed 26 August 2021), the following artists were mentioned on the Sammlung Hoffmann website: Günther Uecker, Heinz Mack, Otto Piene, Marcel Broodthaers, James Lee Byars, Braco Dimitrijevic, François Morellet, Richard Serra, Arnulf Rainer, Bill Beckley, Frank Stella, Bruce Nauman, Mike Kelley, Fred Sandback, Roni Horn, Félix González-Torres, Nobuyoshi Araki, Hiroshi Sugimoto, or Fang Lijun. Nancy Spero, Ana Mendieta, Carolee Schneemann, Yayoi Kusama, Astrid Klein, Chris Newman, Albert Oehlen, Georg Herold, Isa Genzken, Thomas Ruff, and Wolfgang Tillmans. Katarzyna Kozyra, Zuzanna Janin, and Olga Chernysheva. Pipilotti Rist, Julian Rosefeldt & Piero Steinle, Yael Bartana, Monica Bonvicini, Ernesto Neto, and Katharina Grosse.

<sup>6</sup> Wolfgang Ullrich, "Vom Besitzen zum Rezipieren – oder: Warum es nicht leicht ist, Kunst von Privatsammlern in öffentliche Museen zu überführen", in *Sammlung Viehof. Internationale Kunst der Gegenwart*, exh. cat. Deichtorhallen Hamburg, Dirk Luckow (ed.), Hamburg 2016, pp. 45–51, p. 49.

presents an opportunity to “perceive” artworks with “previously concealed meanings” to then “interpret them with utmost dedication”, not least of all because this could prevent a looming “ontological crisis”.<sup>7</sup>

The change from the private to the public sphere becomes even more evident in how the works are rearranged or reorganized once they move into a museum context: works that “went together” in the disparate and contradictory co-existence of private “disorganization” are, in the museum, “neatly arranged according to artists and groups”.<sup>8</sup> What is practiced in the spaces of private collections is “art historically impossible”.<sup>9</sup> When transferred into public hands, the collection usually loses its character or charm precisely because in its private arrangement “the impact of a painting, a sculpture, an object isn’t particularly advantageous; it isn’t displayed in a way that befits a museum”.<sup>10</sup>

Andrea Bärnreuther wasn’t the first to realize that: “private collections follow different criteria than museum collections [...]. As soon as they land in the institutional setting of a museum, which has inherited the historical task of and claim to having the last word on matters of canonization, the collections change and are perceived and judged with a different set of expectations. [...] It is a given that both sides – the museum and the collector – are called upon to make critical sense of this change and engage in an intellectual process.”<sup>11</sup> Bärnreuther understands this process as a “work in progress”, a dynamic, open form that reconstitutes itself constantly and asks to be called into question.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> “Everything comes together in the Sammlung Hahn, everything works, even what is art-historically ‘impossible’. Vostell’s typewriter with lipsticks from a 1965 happening in Berlin is sandwiched between a large 1956 [Ernst Wilhelm] Nay and Beuys’s door with a bird skull and strips of rabbit fur [...]. Everything works. With books, wardrobes, chairs, and Jugendstil vases which won’t be there afterwards”, in “Sammlung Hahn”, introduction by Paul Wember in *Die 60er Jahre. Kölns Weg zur Kunstmetropole. Vom Happening zum Kunstmarkt*, exh. cat. Kölnischer Kunstverein, with essays by Paul Wember and Gabrielle Lung, 1986, pp. 232–261, p. 234.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Andrea Bärnreuther, “Die Nationalgalerie und ihre Sammler”, in *Zum Lob der Sammler. Die Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin und ihre Sammler*, Andrea Bärnreuther and Peter-Klaus Schuster (eds.), Berlin 2009, pp. 184–226, p. 219.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

According to Bernd Scherer and Stefan Aue, the exchange about private collection practices and those implemented at museums is a perennial point of contention, but this can: "lead to interesting dynamics, because the collector [...] has developed a highly personal form of organization, which creates friction with the existing categorizations and structures of state collections. [...] What is far more interesting is [...] to examine these points of friction and reveal how completely different narratives can arise from this interaction. In that respect, the contingent interplay between a collector and a public setting opens up a space that makes it possible to show how objects can be approached in completely different ways which are often concealed by the canonization of the museum."<sup>13</sup>

The growing self-evidence of these questions is most decisively demonstrated in examples of private collections which have evolved since the 1960s and found their way in recent years into museums: collections of art by living artists, Fluxus, kinetic art, time-based or ephemeral media, action or conceptual art produced by means of performance, photography, objects, multiples, or video. Originally acquired by private individuals, often under the premise that they would not last forever, these works are "snapshots of the era", or, as one commentator puts it, "time documents"<sup>14</sup> that fill what are perceived as fundamental gaps in public collections.

Occasionally the artworks are complemented by the archives and libraries of private collections. For instance, the Museum für Moderne Kunst (Mumok) in Vienna obtained the archive of the Sammlung Hahn in 2005 after having first acquired its art collection in 1978; whereas the Museum Abteiberg Mönchengladbach simultaneously acquired the Sammlung Andersch and its archive in 2020. New art forms have been dissolving the traditional understanding of art and the artwork since the 1960s, and increasingly pose an enormous challenge for collection conservators and custodians, as do private collections, which are often

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<sup>13</sup> "Das ganze Leben. Archive und Wirklichkeit", Bernd Scherer in conversation with Stefan Aue, in *Sich mit Sammlungen anlegen. Gemeinsame Dinge und alternative Archive*, Martina Griesser-Stermscheg, Nora Sternfeld, and Luisa Ziaja (eds.), Vienna 2020, pp. 207–218, p. 214.

<sup>14</sup> *Sammlung Etzold – Ein Zeitdokument*, adapted by Hannelore Kersting, exh. cat. Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach 1986.

shaped by close relationships between the collector, the artists, and other art-world actors, and comprised of disparate contents.<sup>15</sup>

By expanding the collection to include documents or materials pertaining to the artworks, an archive, or library, it becomes possible to illustrate insights into acquisition practices, into how works in the collection relate to one another, how collectors engage with the artworks, their relationships to the artists, as well as personal and institutional networks.

However, as Annette Maechtel and Anna Schäffler stated in 2020, "institutional archival practices do not fit the artistic processes and concepts of the past 30 years", making a paradigm shift inevitable. More "thought must be given to how we preserve inconsistent, process-based, immaterial works without at the same time rendering these practices obsolete [...] and without applying other kinds of logic to redefine them".<sup>16</sup> For Eugen Blume, this much-needed paradigm shift not only applies to institutional conservation practices but to a change in how institutions perceive themselves, a self-image which Blume believes should take its cue from contemporary art production. In the run-up to incorporating the Friedrich Christian Flick Collection, he saw an opportunity to: "embark on a redefinition of the museum, drawing on a theory which was evolving in direct correlation to the constant transformation of art, and developing a model that would extend beyond and reimagine the current working methods of the museum: a museum seen through the lens of an expanded concept of art; in other words, an expanded institute, a universal place of learning as imagined by Beuys."<sup>17</sup> Similar significance was attributed to the Sammlung Etzold and how the arrival of the private collection at the Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach was a "major catalyst"<sup>18</sup> behind the construction of a new building. Likewise, the incorporation of the

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<sup>15</sup> "There is not one version. There are many parallel versions. Then I realized that the Sammlung Hoffmann was intentionally arranged like that. It brings artists together under one roof who could be seen as contradictory," Elke Giffeler in conversation with the author, 10 June 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Anna Schäffler, "Er-Haltung und das Archiv als Arena. Capri-Care im Gespräch über das gegenhegemoniale Archivieren von konzeptuellen und kollektiven Praxen", *documenta studien #10*, November 2020, p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Bärnreuther 2009, p. 223.

<sup>18</sup> Sammlung Etzold 1986, p. 146.

Sammlung Erich Marx into the Hamburger Bahnhof was credited as a “key moment in bringing about the comprehensive redesign of the museum”.<sup>19</sup>

Although much has been written about the “energizing and beneficial competition”<sup>20</sup> that private collections provide public museums, there is little scholarship on how those same influences impact institutional thought and action in the transfer from private to public hands. Robert Fleck believes that: “a look back from an art-sociological standpoint [...] might arrive at the conclusion that private collections represent a signalling function and a paradigmatic factor in the structural transformation of the public profile of contemporary art and the institutional organization of museums on the threshold of the 21st century.”<sup>21</sup>

The initial objective of my three-month-long research project was to examine how the meaning of the Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann changed during its transfer to the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. Specifically, my research would focus on whether the collection had an impact on any potential or intended change in the current institutional self-image, on collection or exhibition practices, or even on a general transformation of the institutional culture of public or state museums. This essay provides answers to some of these questions.

### The Donation of the Sammlung Hoffmann to the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

Initially Erika Hoffmann-Koenige had not considered transferring (most of) her collection to public hands. She doubted whether a public institution would be interested in this personal compilation and in the way in which she engaged with the artworks. At best she imagined that “certain pieces would complement public collections, whereas others would be incorporated into private collections”. As

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<sup>19</sup> URL: <https://www.smb.museum/museen-einrichtungen/hamburger-bahnhof/sammeln-forschen/sammlung/> (accessed 23 September 2021).

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Gerda Ridler, *Privat gesammelt – öffentlich präsentiert. Über den Erfolg eines neuen musealen Trends bei Kunstsammlungen*, Bielefeld 2012, p. 416.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

she saw it, the works could thus “live on in other contexts”,<sup>22</sup> a reference to an artistic principle she had adopted from Félix González-Torres.

A few works remain in the family, and Erika Hoffmann-Koenige gifted six works by Isa Genzken, Mike Kelley, Gordon Matta-Clark, Steve McQueen, and Félix González-Torres to the Museum Abteiberg Mönchengladbach in 2018, “precisely selected in the hope of complementing the collection’s existing holdings of these artists’ work”.<sup>23</sup> With the exception of those six works, the entirety of the Sammlung Hoffmann went to the SKD. In her conversation with the author, the collector described the donation as an unconditional gift: unlike other private collectors, Erika Hoffmann-Koenige did not request a separate wing for the permanent display of the works, nor did she commit the museum to regularly organizing special or thematic exhibitions of her collection, a common mechanism and lever for collaboration between private patrons and museums. Instead the collector has publicly stated her desire for the donation to “dissolve” into the state-owned art collections and in the process “stir them up”.<sup>24</sup> In her choice of words, Erika Hoffmann-Koenige evokes something revolutionary, subversive, or defiant, even though she does wish for the works to be seen as an integral part of the SKD. She wishes that they be allowed to exert an influence within the art collections, questioning or at the very least critically examining the established conditions, circumstances, and practices of the receiving institution(s). The collector’s wish is for contemporary art to be shown and debated alongside works and objects from other eras and collections, both inside and outside (at the periphery) of the museum alliance in order to “establish dialogues between contemporary art and the art that has always been [...] on display and which people are accustomed to seeing [...]”.<sup>25</sup> This makes it possible to re-examine and break with traditional and established perspectives and forms of seeing, as well as adding different points of view and new accents of meaning.<sup>26</sup> According to Hoffmann-Koenige, “art must be

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<sup>22</sup> Ridler 2012, p. 420.

<sup>23</sup> URL <https://museum-abteiberg.de/sammlung/neuerwerbungen-sammlung/schenkungsammlung-hoffmann-feierstunde-und-praesentation-sonntag-10-maerz-2019-12-00-uhr> (accessed 4 September 2021).

<sup>24</sup> Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in conversation with the author, 21 May 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in conversation with the author, 21 May 2021.

<sup>26</sup> Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in conversation with the author, 21 May 2021.

[...] a thorn, perforating comfortable ways of thinking and the illusion of permanence."<sup>27</sup>

The fact that the Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann does not stipulate its own, centralized space within the SKD immediately raises questions about the structural conditions of the receiving institution: how, when, where, in which manner, and by whom will the works of the Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann be used and shown? The "local conversations",<sup>28</sup> akin to off-shoot exhibition projects, carry the artworks beyond the confines of Dresden, the state capital, and into the often-overlooked and culturally underserved regions of Saxony, further blurring the limits of the existing institutional framework. In other words, the collection arrived in the political and cultural centre that is Dresden and immediately turned away from it, addressing questions of established spatial hegemonies and undermining the institutional claim to canonical authority in selecting, categorizing, and framing the art. The act of sharing and making the artworks available for "dialogues",<sup>29</sup> not just across the SKD's many collections but also with local art associations away from the capital, encourages and empowers people from different fields and social and socio-geographic contexts in their civic engagement of making sense of the artworks for themselves. This curatorial-cum-outreach format, with its focus on dialogue and exchange between different kinds of people and institutions, marks the continuation of the anti-canonical and counter-hegemonic practice of

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<sup>27</sup> Peter Brors and Susanne Schreiber, "Kunstsammlerin Erika Hoffmann: 'Kunst muss ein Stachel sein'. Die Kunstsammlerin und van Laack-Erbin schenkte Dresden 2018 über tausend Werke. Warum? Ein Gespräch über ihre persönlichen Erlebnisse mit Kunst und Künstlern", *Handelsblatt*, 19 March 2020, URL [https://www.handelsblatt.com/arts\\_style/kunstmarkt/interview-kunstsammlerin-erika-hoffmann-kunst-muss-ein-stachel-sein/25658532.html](https://www.handelsblatt.com/arts_style/kunstmarkt/interview-kunstsammlerin-erika-hoffmann-kunst-muss-ein-stachel-sein/25658532.html) (accessed 6 September 2021)

<sup>28</sup> So far "local conversations" have taken place at the following institutions since 2020: Kunstverein Meißen, Offspace Kaisitz, Im Friese e.V., Kirschau, Galerie Forum K (Plauen), Freunde Aktueller Kunst (Zwickau), Kunstverein Meißen, Kunstkeller Annaberg-Buchholz e.V.

<sup>29</sup> Since 2020 "dialogues" (since renamed *Blickwechsel* – "shifts in perspective") have taken place in co-operation with the Rüstkammer, Mathematisch-Physikalischem Salon, Porzellansammlung, Grassi-Museum für Völkerkunde, Kunstgewerbemuseum, and, in October 2021, with the Neues Grünes Gewölbe.



showing and collectively interpreting and communicating contemporary art that Erika Hoffmann-Koenige began in her collection rooms in Berlin.<sup>30</sup>

The fact that this approach is already having an effect is evidenced by the “disturbances resulting from subtle interventions”<sup>31</sup> as documented by Léontine Meijer-van Mensch, director of the State Ethnographic Collections of Saxony at the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. According to Meijer-van Mensch, the dialogue “Don’t Stop, Werkstatt Prolog mit der Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann” (2020–2021) between the ethnographic collection of the Grassi-Museum Leipzig and the ephemeral, conceptual, and immersive works of the Sammlung Hoffmann also brought attention to the institutional handling of ethnographic objects, currently the subject of much debate. Ethnographic museums in particular are confronted with similar questions about how to present contemporary artworks when they are transferred from private to public hands. How should one address the loss of the customary context? It is about taking a different approach to exploring objects and artefacts “that we display as items in a glass case, but which actually represent a completely different world”<sup>32</sup> and making them transparent, capable of being experienced.

The traditional idea of “conserving eternal values, permanence, and identity” – one of the cornerstones of museum work<sup>33</sup> along with exhibiting, educating and engaging the public, researching, and documenting – is something Erika Hoffmann-Koenige considers “deeply questionable”. In engaging with her own works, the collector was always keenly aware of how the material and form of the art, as well as its ascribed meanings, can change, decay, be destroyed or rekindled over time. This complicates the notion of the artwork’s true original condition, a state

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<sup>30</sup> “Precisely because it includes pieces by very famous artists, just as it does works by lesser-known artists. It is a way of continuing this non-hierarchical treatment [...]”, Elke Giffeler in conversation with the author, 10 June 2021.

<sup>31</sup> Léontine Meijer-van Mensch in conversation with the author, 7 September 2021.

<sup>32</sup> Léontine Meijer-van Mensch in conversation with the author, 7 September 2021.

<sup>33</sup> *Standards für Museen*, Deutschen Museumsbund e.V. and ICOM Deutschland (eds.), Kassel/Berlin 2006.

which cannot be preserved as such.<sup>34</sup> Today, institutions, especially museums, face precisely this dilemma: "That's exactly what [Jean] Tinguely was going for; the sculptures were not meant to exist forever but fall apart at some point."<sup>35</sup> In the main courtyard of the Sophie-Gips-Höfe in Berlin, fixed to the brick wall next to the entrance to the collection rooms, is a warning sign of sorts (Fig. 1), a piece by Bazon Brock. This memento mori in the semi-public exterior space partly reflects how the collector sees herself and her role.<sup>36</sup> Likewise, Teresa Murak's (*Project for a*) *Sculpture for the Earth* from 1996 needs tending to "not by an art conservator but a gardener".<sup>37</sup>

This fundamental assumption of change and transformation, of the constant renewal of the present, is a central motif that runs through the many interlinking and mutually permeating practices that the Hoffmanns, in their treatment of the artworks in their collection, implemented without favouring one over another. This applied equally to the acquisition and exhibition of and public engagement with art in collection displays as well as the collective contemplation and archiving of the practices in the accompanying *Passagen* publication series. In developing these practices, Erika Hoffmann-Koenige and her husband Rolf Hoffmann, who passed away in 2001, not only followed their own rules but were guided and inspired by artistic principles<sup>38</sup>, theories, and concepts that they encountered in collaborations and exchanges with members of their team.

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<sup>34</sup> At the Kunstmuseum Luzern (Lucerne), the current exhibition *Zustandsberichte. Vom Werden und Vergehen* shows how collection conservator Alexandra Blättler is wrestling with these questions at the intersection of conservation and curatorial work.

<sup>35</sup> Erika Hoffmann-Koenige, *Passagen XIX*, Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin 2015–2016, n.p.

<sup>36</sup> "der Tod muss abgeschafft werden. Diese verdammte Schweinerei muss aufhören. Wer ein Wort des Trostes spricht, ist ein Verräter. Bazon Brock" (Blech, 1967) [We must get rid of death. This damn filthy business must stop. Whoever speaks a comforting word is a traitor.]

<sup>37</sup> "As such it reveals the extent to which many artworks attempt to withstand the passage of time. Even to overcome life. They offer a frozen instant to an ephemeral spectator. Grass is growing and changing the artwork. It's an organic version of Félix González-Torres's poster stacks and candy piles", Jennifer Allen in Introduction, *Passagen I*, Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin 1997–1998, n.p.

<sup>38</sup> "At particular moments, we found the work of certain artists stimulating [...]. Their creative approach influenced the idea behind our collecting activities and the way in which the works are shown today," states Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in Pamela Rhode, *Die Sammlung Hoffmann. Ein Konzept einer öffentlichen Privatsammlung*, Master's thesis, TU Dresden 2010, p. 33.

In the artistic concept of Félix González-Torres, whose work the Hoffmanns first encountered in New York in 1990, the couple's ideas culminate and gain complexity: "The idea of opening up our collection to the public was largely influenced by his understanding of the ephemeral, wanton dissipation, and the generosity of making something free for the taking."<sup>39</sup> (Figs. 2, 3). In his conceptual work, the artist assigns the recipient an essential role in creating the work. By involving the recipient in the art-making process, and providing instructions for doing so, the artist invariably causes the recipient and the exhibiting institution to question their own conventions and understanding of art. The situations which arise from the "re-presentation" of participatory artworks ignite tensions between seemingly irreconcilable opposites, especially within a museum context: usage and touching of artworks, private and public property, the dissipation and giving away (of material) and the invitation to partake in an experience (or its conscious reception), authorship, originality and (endless) reproduction, as well as monetary and cultural value. The Hoffmanns' position coincides with the artistic strategy of Félix González-Torres in contradicting and clearly interrogating the institutionally embedded standards of a museum; it calls into question the concept of an immutable artwork since the artwork can be "presented" in different contexts and various forms. And when Félix González-Torres entrusts the owners of his work with a certificate of authenticity that comes with an obligation to re-present the work, unfamiliar concepts and unusual vocabulary start surfacing within the museum context: notions of giving, sharing, imparting – also in a communicative sense – or of external contemplation and internalization (not only by way of symbolic reception) of an artwork, of the expectations that come with it and the accompanying disillusionment, of empathy and solidarity; and of an artistic method with which to overcome the clear separation of objectivity and subjectivity. Although the work of Félix González-Torres is presented as programmatic here, in fact several other artworks in the *Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann* display comparable artistic methods. Worth noting are works in the conceptual tradition of the 1960s and 1990s that question their respective medium, or contemporary works that seize on the same ideas, even more so when the artists assume the role of director in

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<sup>39</sup> Susanne Pfeffer (ed.): *Alte Hasen*. Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in conversation with Peter Herbstreuth, 17 November 2009, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin 2009, p. 18.

guiding collective (and also formally transformative) production processes. This brings to mind the likes of Saâdane Afif, William Engelen, Rosa Barba, Mathilde ter Heijne, or Peter Welz. In their creative approach, these artists dissolve past categories and concepts like artwork, original, authorship, or audience through participatory strategies and transdisciplinary working methods.

Indeed the acquisition of works that resist common categorizations, museum exhibition formats, and established attributions by the art world and its actors<sup>40</sup> seems to have been a theme and a motivating force for the Hoffmanns. This can be seen in the acquisition of artworks which critically examine their medium, power, and representation – for instance, Marcel Broodthaer's *Signatur* (1971, Fig. 4),<sup>41</sup> Braco Dimitrijević's *The Casual Passer-By I met at 10:11 pm, Berlin 1969* (1969–1976), Georg Herold's *Skulptur, vom Sockel erschlagen* (1992, Fig. 5), Felix Droese's *Schule* (1988), or Joelle Tuerlinckx's *ronds d'exposition, ensemble "Berlin"* (1996–2004, Fig. 6). It is also apparent in the simultaneous display of art objects and furnishings, ethnographic, quotidian, or supposedly non-artistic collection items (Fig. 7), and the juxtaposition of the seemingly obvious with the discreetly inconsequential, such as a video piece by Pipilotti Rist, entitled *Selbstlos im Lavabad* (1994, Fig. 8), installed in the parquet floor.<sup>42</sup>

Although the collector consistently returns to the private sphere in her reasoning, she and her collaborators are thoroughly aware of the ambivalence of the private-public space, oscillating between poetry and certainty, full of contradictory connotations and formulations, which they regard with benevolent acceptance. This leads to the assumption that the SKD will not only receive the artworks, but something else, something non-material: "the Hoffmannesque".<sup>43</sup> In

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<sup>40</sup> Mark Giannori in conversation with the author, 29 May 2021.

<sup>41</sup> "Some of Broodthaer's contemporaries call for museums and opera houses to be blown up. He instead asks, what makes a museum? And, what makes artworks worthy of being in a museum? And he examines the inscription and pedestal from which both derive their authority," Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in *Passagen V*, Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin 2001–2002, n.p.

<sup>42</sup> "Pipilotti Rist and I chose the site for the little monitor together before the parquet was put in. [...] It was important to her that the artwork should not be immediately visible, but would initially go unnoticed so that the surprise of seeing it would be all the greater," Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in *Passagen IX*, Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin 2005–2006, n.p.

<sup>43</sup> Léontine Meijer-van Mensch in conversation with the author, 7 September 2021.

addition to the artworks, the collection also has intangible qualities, which can only be understood by closely analysing the interplay between the practices that the collectors employed: that is to say, how can one pass on the immediate lived experience of contemporary art, the exchange of social and cultural (rather than primarily economic) values, and the conveyance of contemporary art as an act of social interaction within a communal setting? Within this context, it would also be worth debating whether the semantic formulations that make up the standard museum lexicon should be reviewed. (Appendix 1) For instance, the term "preservation" should be replaced with "perpetuation" (*Erhaltung* in German). After all, on a conceptual level the word "preservation", according to Anna Schäffler, "is far stronger at evoking a dimension of truth and the idea of a supposedly authentic original condition or state [...]". In contrast, the term "perpetuation" alludes to the act of passing something on, in the sense of continuing the existence of "something that has been received from someone else [...]". To paraphrase Schäffler, the German word *Erhaltung* not only refers to the act of receiving or maintaining something, but implies a stance, both in a physical sense and in terms of substance, as in adopting and taking a position [*Haltung*].<sup>44</sup>

### Excursus on Donating

Underlying Erika Hoffmann-Koenige's unconditional donation to the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden is her emphasis on communal dialogue and social responsibility. The collector is less concerned with the "immeasurable"<sup>45</sup> economic value of the donation, more with the gesture of passing on, perpetuating, and sharing artistic and cultural values from one generation to the next. Indeed, the act of passing on and sharing had always been an important motivating force for

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<sup>44</sup> Anna Schäffler, "Er-Haltung und das Archiv als Arena. Capri. Care im Gespräch über das gegenhegemoniale Archivieren von konzeptuellen und kollektiven Praxen", in *documenta studien* #10, November 2020, p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> URL: <https://www.medien-service.sachsen.de/medien/news/240968> (accessed 22 September 2021).

the two collectors in their own activities and in their decision to open up their collection to the public.<sup>46</sup>

The emphasis on social values over economic ones in the formation and stabilization of interpersonal bonds through gift-giving was already highlighted by the French anthropologist Marcel Mauss in his *Essai sur le don* (English: *The Gift*). The introduction to *The Gift*, written by E. E. Evans-Pritchard, states: “[...] how much we have lost, whatever we may have otherwise gained, by the substitution of a rational economic system for a system in which exchange of goods was not a mechanical but a moral transaction, bringing about and maintaining human, personal relationships between individuals and groups.”<sup>47</sup> Rather than merely representing an exchange of goods, the act of giving, in Mauss’ view, fosters peaceful social communication; it also articulates itself in giving something freely to the public, in the pleasure of hospitality, in generosity, and a new morality of “gracious squander”: “Peoples, classes, families and individuals may become rich [when] they can sit down like the knights around their common riches. [...] It is to be found in the imposed peace, in the rhythm of communal and private labour, in wealth amassed and redistributed, in the mutual respect and reciprocal generosity that education can impart.”<sup>48</sup> For Mauss, who was also a supporter of the cooperative movement, the gift economy “is the basis of society and constitutes the commonweal.”<sup>49</sup>

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Hoffmanns’ library contains a book published in 1983 by Lewis Hyde, bearing the same title as Mauss’ work in English translation – *The Gift*.<sup>50</sup> In it, Hyde explains that making a gift of art can be the “engine of change” in a society.<sup>51</sup> Its importance as such cannot be measured in terms of its commercial value, rather in terms of the power and potential that the artist’s gift

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<sup>46</sup> “What worries me is that by emphasizing commercial value, you lose sight of artistic value [...] it’s a thought that worries me more and more,” Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in: Berlin 2009, p. 29.

<sup>47</sup> E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Introduction, in: Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (translated by Ian Cunnison), London (1950) 1966, p. ix.

<sup>48</sup> Mauss 1966, p. 81.

<sup>49</sup> Susanne Kippenberger, *Die Kunst der Großzügigkeit*, Munich 2020, p. 19.

<sup>50</sup> Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: How the Creative Spirit Transforms the World*, London 1983.

<sup>51</sup> Kippenberger 2020, p. 179.

– their *giftedness*, their talent – has in bringing about lasting change in viewers through their momentary encounter with the work of art. The emotions, feelings, and human bonds that an artist’s giftedness can bestow on those less “gifted” are of a different quality entirely than those that are “acquired” in both senses of the word.<sup>52</sup>

### Civic Engagement: Dresden – Berlin – Dresden

Equipped with a belief in art’s potential to bring about change in society (or societies) and the desire to share their profound experiences with Western postwar modernism, the husband-and-wife team first attempted to found a public gallery – a *Kunsthalle* (deliberately circumventing the term *Kunstmuseum*) – in Dresden in 1991. Emboldened by the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification, they now expected “a public discussion to take place – naturally a long-term discussion – about the intrinsic values of both our societies in East and West”.

Although the Hoffmanns pursued the idea of setting up a *Kunsthalle* as a place for this kind of discourse, they initially went down the road of the private-public partnership. The Dresden *Kunsthalle* was conceived as an independently curated project that would put contemporary art from private collections (German but also international) on public display in a series of rotating temporary exhibitions and without featuring a permanent collection. The daring architectural designs for the planned *Kunsthalle* park were the brainchild of the American artist Frank Stella, who came up with his own answer to “Pöppelmann’s Baroque style” and whose “fluid and composed pavilion architecture” “would herald a new age” in response to the neighbouring Zwinger.<sup>53</sup>

Frank Stella’s work *Of Whales in Paint, in Teeth, in Wood, in Sheet Iron, in Stone, in Mountains, in Stars (Moby Dick Series chap. 57)* (1991; Fig. 6) introduced the people of Dresden to the artist and his working methods and gave them a glimpse of what the complex building project might entail. In 1991, the Hoffmanns acquired this work directly from the artist’s New York studio for presentation (as

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<sup>52</sup> “The work appeals to a part of our being which is itself a gift and not an acquisition.” Hyde 1983, p. XXII.

<sup>53</sup> Berlin 2009, p. 8.

a loan) on the second-floor landing of the Albertinum staircase (Fig. 9). Where historical murals had once adorned the flight of stairs before the destruction of 1945, Stella's monumental hybrid wall piece now bulged into the space. The local-born art historian Werner Schmidt was the newly appointed director-general of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden at the time, the first of the post-reunification era, after having served as director of the Kupferstich-Kabinett in Dresden from 1959 to 1989. In him, the Hoffmanns had an important partner on their side, someone who displayed an interest in "Western art" and who was more than sympathetic towards the risky and daring enterprise being planned on his doorstep, even though he did not, in fact, become a member of the Kunsthalle's friends advisory council. Schmidt had already made a name for himself beyond the Iron Curtain, even as far as the United States, ever since the legendary auctions held in the Kupferstich-Kabinett in 1964 and the thin booklets produced to document his new acquisitions, which ultimately succeeded in generating international attention and interest in his collecting activities.

He was a supporter of both contemporary non-conformist artists from the GDR (Hermann Glöckner and A. R. Penck, to name but two) and international artists (primarily American Pop artists), and often found inventive and unconventional ways to have their art enter the collection. It was Werner Schmidt who first paired an iconic work from the Hoffmann Collection – Frank Stella's *Moby Dick*, which until 1997 hung on the western wall of the Albertinum – with Dresden's recent acquisition of *Go Go Gorbachev* (1988) by A. R. Penck on the wall opposite. The latter work had been chosen by Penck himself for this display constellation: "Stella's 'Moby Dick' is now getting its eastern counterpart on the other side of the staircase: the painting 'Go Go Gorbachev' by Penck, which will be unveiled on Friday, 29 April 1994, at 6:30 p.m."<sup>54</sup> (Appendix 2).

Despite all the publicity generated, the planned project of building a Kunsthalle for Dresden ultimately had to be aborted after the initial euphoria of the early 1990s ebbed away and there was an insurmountable difference of opinion between the Hoffmanns and the then-serving state governor of Saxony, Kurt

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<sup>54</sup> Letter from Werner Schmidt to Rolf Hoffmann, 6 April 1994, Archiv Sammlung Hoffmann, EHK-Mappe Frank Stella.



Biedenkopf. The governor was determined to channel all political resources into rebuilding the historical cultural centre of the Saxon capital that had been obliterated in the war, rather than pouring resources into contemporary art. The two sides did not share the view that the "idea of the former city of art", represented by such "magnificent collections of the past",<sup>55</sup> could now be revived by new spaces for modern and contemporary art. As Erika Hoffmann-Koenige stated: "The fact that Stella's imaginative architectural vernacular took little heed of Dresden's customary sandstone facades provoked the local resistance that finally made us abandon the project."<sup>56</sup>

Erika and Rolf Hoffmann were not alone in their social commitment to establishing a place for contemporary art in "the new states" (the German term for the former GDR) in the immediate post-reunification period. In the 1990s, private collectors from West Germany descended not only Dresden, but also the art capitals of Leipzig and Weimar, taking the cities by storm with their envisioned projects in contemporary art. Upon a trip to Weimar shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Cologne-based gallery owner Paul Maenz commented on the general break with the past and the need to start all over again<sup>57</sup> in the tradition-soaked city of Goethe and Schiller, whose foundations had been shaken to the core by the atrocities at the nearby Buchenwald concentration camp prior to the founding of the GDR. Maenz's philanthropy was therefore explicitly and exclusively directed at the city of Weimar: "The spirit and history of this city touch me deeply for many reasons – historical as well as current, intellectual as well as political. This is why Weimar gets first billing as the future and final location of my collection."

That collection would form the backbone of a living and constantly evolving museum in Weimar. Maenz found a suitable partner for his venture in Rolf Bothe, director of Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar, precursor to today's Stiftung Weimarer Klassik. In the press conference after the Cranach robbery in 1992, Bothe, himself from the West-German state of Hesse, publicly announced that "the city needed

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<sup>55</sup> Jean-Christophe Ammann et al. (ed.), *Räume für Kunst. Europäische Museumsarchitektur der 90er Jahre*, Kestner-Gesellschaft, Hanover 1993.

<sup>56</sup> Berlin 2009, p. 8.

<sup>57</sup> URL: <https://taz.de/Ein-Tropfen-im-stillen-Kunstozean/!1582655/> (accessed 23 September 2021).

a museum of modern art".<sup>58</sup> With Paul Maenz's pledge, Rolf Bothe could now seek to fulfil his goal of "building for Weimar a collection with an unmistakable character or, even better, of receiving from a private collector such a collection [...] which could intermesh international qualities with the diverse strands" of art in the recently reunified republic.<sup>59</sup> In 1993, the contract for transferring the collection into public hands was signed. In this case it amounted to part-donation, part-purchase, and part-permanent loan. In 1994, the largest slice of the collection, consisting of just over 300 paintings, objects, installations, and drawings, was handed over to the Kunstsammlungen. At the same time, the gallerist's long-time partner Gerd de Vries donated his library of over 3500 books and catalogues on modern art to the Neues Museum in Weimar. In 2004, however, Paul Maenz pulled the plug on the venture, withdrawing his collection from the city after becoming disaffected, he claimed, by the city's sole concentration on its "cash cow", Weimar Classicism, at the expense of contemporary art.<sup>60</sup>

In Leipzig, Brigitte and Arend Oetker<sup>61</sup> channelled their resources and patronage into the city under the umbrella of the Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft, one of Germany's main charities for patrons from the world of industry and commerce, which, incidentally, also included Erika and Rolf Hoffmann among its members. The Friends Council of the GfzK (Galerie für zeitgenössische Kunst) was founded on 10 November 1990 under the chairmanship of Arend Oetker, following the launch of a campaign started in Cologne earlier that year, on 22 March 1990. (In the 1990s Cologne was still the centre of the German art world.) At the heart of the GfzK and its affiliated Friends Council was the East German art historian Klaus Werner (1940–2010).<sup>62</sup> The council's goal was to support Werner in

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<sup>58</sup> Rolf Bothe, Ulrike Bestgen, Paul Maenz (eds.), *Neues Museum Weimar. Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar Bothe, mit Sammlung Paul Maenz. Internationale Avantgarde seit 1960*, Stuttgart 1998, p. 8.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> URL: <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/kultur/meine-sammlung-ist-fuer-die-zukunft-warum-kunstmaezen-paul-maenz-mit-weimar-bricht/556536.html> (accessed 23 September 2021).

<sup>61</sup> Brigitte Oetker and Christiane Schneider (eds.), *Gedichte der Fakten. Aus der Sammlung Arend und Brigitte Oetker*, Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig, Cologne 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Klaus Werner, *Für die Kunst*, Stiftung Neue Kultur Potsdam, Berlin/Cologne 2009.

building the collection and fulfilling his ambition of putting particularly non-conformist East-German artists on the international stage.

"It was a conscious decision," says Barbara Steiner, who took over the directorship from Werner in 2001, "to model the Friends Council on the 19th-century tradition of civic engagement, which ended so abruptly with the Nazis and was not resumed with the founding of the GDR. [...] It created a link to developments in postwar West Germany."<sup>63</sup> Marking the opening, the new cultural venue for contemporary art in the east of Germany received from the Friends Council its first donation of works by Marcel Odenbach, Rosemarie Trockel, Günther Uecker, and Michael Morgner. In September 1991, the Cologne gallery owner Paul Maenz donated an extensive collection of art journals on modern art to the Leipzig City Library. In 1992, Arend Oetker donated another collection – initially on permanent loan with the prospect of donation (which did indeed occur in 2006) – of Western postwar modernist art, primarily abstract paintings by Ernst Wilhelm Nay, Fritz Winter, and Emil Schumacher, among others, which were made in the wake of their experiences of state repression during the Nazi dictatorship. In 1994, the Kulturkreis der deutschen Industrie added 75 works of modernist art to the GfzK's collection from the stock of the so-called "Museum Donation",<sup>64</sup> while the founding director Klaus Werner personally selected a further 50 works for the GfzK put up for selection by the Kulturkreis's members dating from the postwar period. These included works by Gerhard Hoehme and Hans Hartung, both artists originally from cities in the east of Germany with careers in the West, making them theoretically assignable to both Eastern and Western art.<sup>65</sup> In 1990, Klaus Werner

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<sup>63</sup> Barbara Steiner, "Räume des Verhandeln", in *Mögliche Museen, Jahrbuch für moderne Kunst*, Jahresring 54, Barbara Steiner and Charles Esche (eds.), commissioned by Brigitte Oetker on behalf of the Kulturkreises der Deutschen Wirtschaft im BDI e.V., Cologne 2007, p. 197.

<sup>64</sup> For more on the idea behind the *Museumsspende* (Museum Donation), see *Umgewidmet. Bilder fördern Bilder*, Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft im Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie e.V., Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst gGmbH and Förderkreis der Leipziger Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst e.V., Cologne/Leipzig 1996, pp. 19ff. The Museum Donation was an instrument of the Kulturkreis der Deutschen Wirtschaft e.V. which made it possible to purchase works by contemporary (mostly German) artists that the museums themselves were unable to acquire due either to a lack of funds or the will to have such purchases rubberstamped by official committees. These works were then made available to West German museum collections as permanent loans on request.

<sup>65</sup> The Sammlung Hoffmann contains works by Georg Herold, Georg Baselitz, Werner Küttner, and A. R. Penck, all of whom abandoned the GDR. After the reunification, this

selected further non-conformist works of East German art from the dissolved Zentrum für Kunstausstellungen der DDR (the central selection committee for exhibitions at the former East German Ministry of Culture). Among these were works by Hubertus Giebe and Friedrich B. Henkel, and Werner presented them alongside works of established postwar Western modern art to show that there had, indeed, been a shared modernist vernacular on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

In their civic engagement, the Oetkers in Leipzig, Paul Maenz and Gerd de Vries in Weimar, and the Hoffmanns in Dresden were all guided by the view of countering the “unfree” and ideologically overwrought official art of the GDR with abstract art as an autonomous art form of the Western “free” society. Their collections (and libraries) were intended to nudge the East German public closer towards appreciating and understanding modern and contemporary art, especially Western postwar modernism.<sup>66</sup> This outsider approach picked up from the point of early West German modernism, without taking into account the existence of lesser-known, independent and free artistic expression in the former GDR, as well as unofficial, subversive self-organized groups from the most recent past. In 1996, the Kulturkreis der Deutschen Wirtschaft summed up the situation as follows: “Contrary to initial expectations, [private patrons] were ultimately unable to establish a certain type of civic engagement, characterized by a sustained commitment to redefining the community agenda in the ‘new states’ [the former East]. We found this to be in line with experiences in other post-communist countries.”<sup>67</sup>

To date, no scholarly study has been made of the cultural-political influences of West German private collectors and West German institutions and their collection policies on the development and expansion of the museum landscape in former East German cities. It is true that, to use Klaus Werner’s words, the injection of West German postwar art “constituted a much-appreciated broadening of the

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group was expanded to include art from within the GDR by Gunda Förster, Gundula Schulze-Eldow, and one piece by Hermann Glöckner.

<sup>66</sup> “But we thought that contemporary art – studying it to get to grips with it – was precisely the right way to go about getting a foothold on our present day, shaped as it is by Western culture, which the people of the former GDR were unaccustomed to”, Erika Hoffmann-Koenige, in: *Kunsthalle Dresden – ein Projekt. Architektur: Frank Stella*, Rolf and Erika Hoffmann (eds.), Förderverein Kunsthalle Dresden, Cologne 1996, p. 14.

<sup>67</sup> Cologne 2008, p. 13.

East German museum landscape". But the desire "to make a reciprocal gesture by gifting something in return deemed of equal value" largely went unheard. "Although such art did exist in no short supply, an appetite for it [among former West Germans] evidently did not."<sup>68</sup> Admittedly, there are now some noteworthy collections of East German art dotted here and there on the map of West German museums (acquired, for instance, through the efforts of the cultural politician Georg Girardet or West German gallery owners like Hedwig Döbele). The collections of Kunstmuseum Albstadt and the Sprengel Museum in Hanover are two such examples. However, it should nevertheless be noted that the striking lack of public interest in East German artists of the communist period, stemming partly from their apparent "lack of true internationality", lives on to this day.<sup>69</sup>

### Sammlung Hoffmann in Berlin: Institution – Deconstitution

After the failure of the Kunsthalle project for Dresden, in 1997 the Hoffmanns decided to relocate from Cologne to Berlin. They made their collection accessible to the public, giving rise to a new institution, unlike any other in the Berlin art scene at the time. They housed the collection in a revamped mixed-use building (in their case part-home, part-workplace) in former East Berlin, thus creating a space where previously unknown works could be seen in new<sup>70</sup> and unusual ways "without an established reception history".<sup>71</sup>

Until 1997, the collectors still referred to their collection as a "private collection" in the credits to works loaned to museums.<sup>72</sup> By relocating to Berlin, however, the two collectors had created a space that defined both their collection and their self-image, so it now seemed only natural that it should go by the name

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<sup>68</sup> Werner 2009, pp. 13f.

<sup>69</sup> Thomas Strauss (ed.): *Westkunst-Ostkunst. Absonderung oder Integration? Materialien zu einer neuen Standortbestimmung*, Wissenschaftliches Kolloquium im Ludwig-Forum für internationale Kunst, Aachen 1991, p. 4.

<sup>70</sup> Pfeffer 2009, p. 17.

<sup>71</sup> Press release on opening, 13 September 1997, Archiv Sammlung Hoffmann.

<sup>72</sup> After making their collection public, the collectors still sometimes agreed to loan requests from museums. But very soon they started turning such requests down, stating that the works were already on public display in Berlin.

"Sammlung Hoffmann", doing away with the prior emphasis on private anonymity. Putting the collection on public display, viewable on open days but also partly to anyone passing through the Sophie-Gips-Höfe, corresponded to their idea of modern art "in a fluid arrangement made in response to constantly changing needs that eventually mutate into permanence".<sup>73</sup>

The move to Berlin was announced on invites bearing an image of the (symbolic) return of Frank Stella's *Moby Dick*, disassembled into its individual parts, from the Dresden Albertinum to its new place of installation in Berlin (Fig. 10). Now reassembled, this work set the scale for the glass-block extension atop the converted historical sewing-machine factory. The dimensions of the new living quarters presented the couple with possibilities previously denied them in their former home in Cologne. For the first time, they could now comfortably consider acquiring and displaying video art, which had not featured in their collecting activities until then.<sup>74</sup>

Another (ideational) connection with Dresden transported to Berlin was evident in the inaugural hang in Berlin, which continued the dialogue with A. R. Penck originally sparked at the Albertinum, but now with the artist's work in the Sammlung Hoffmann, bearing the title *The Worker Returning to His Workplace Because It Had Become Too Hard Keeping up the Strike: His Wife Is Glad Because She Can Now Go Shopping Again* (1987; Fig. 11). The hang was rotated on an annual basis. During the next 25 years, Stella's *Moby Dick* would remain the only work not to leave its initial place on the wall. As a changeable constant, all manner of ideas could be pinned on it regarding the collection's programme for that specific year, and, due to its openness and complexity, it could be framed and interpreted in numerous variations and iterations with all the implied excursus and digression suggested in the title. (Henry Melville's sprawling *Moby-Dick* of 1851 runs to 135 chapters and contains literary references to 600 sources.) But Stella's work also exemplifies the self-imposed criteria by which the collector couple chose to acquire art: "At the time of its creation, a work of art should be independent in both form and content, which is to say it should be new, contemporary, and forward-

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<sup>73</sup> Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in *Berlin Berlin*, Miriam Wiesel et al (eds.), Ostfildern 1998, p.180.

<sup>74</sup> Elke Giffeler in conversation with the author, 10 June 2021.

looking at one and the same time, and, as such, should also reflect current problems faced by a society in flux; it should challenge us intellectually as well as emotionally, present idea and form in one, which is as much to say, it should not be possible to conceive its realization in any other than its present form. Furthermore, it should elude us in some ineffable way at least in part, meaning it should be a source of prolonged bewilderment. And finally, it should possess power and urgency, great staying-power, and density."<sup>75</sup>

In the rooms where the collection is on display, visitors are confronted with this persistent presentness, which substitutes the "immediate future" with an "extended present",<sup>76</sup> through the eschewal of conventional gallery labelling and introductory texts. This absence of additional information denies the visitor any chance of contextualization or historical framing, aiming at an unmediated encounter – both sensual and physical – with art that is entirely of the moment.<sup>77</sup>

These curatorial attitudes and collecting practices, as described earlier, reflect a set of views that Erika Hoffmann-Koenige and her late husband Rolf Hoffmann arrived at over time through their own initial experiences in exhibiting, and by wrestling with artistic practices while devising the hanging schemes for homes (including Haus Lange and Haus Esters) and museum shows in the 1960s and 1970s. With this set of views, the couple criticized the models and concepts of the hitherto prevailing idea of the museum as an apparatus that applied immovable rules in bringing order to an otherwise unwieldy art production.

Because of their "radicalism",<sup>78</sup> the ideas behind Paul Wember's "hyperactive museum"<sup>79</sup> in Krefeld and Johannes Cladders's "anti-museum in permanence" in Mönchengladbach had a major impact on Erika and Rolf Hoffmann's thinking and actions. When Erika Hoffmann-Koenige, in conversation with the author, speaks of the rebelliousness that applies to all museums that must maintain an ongoing

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<sup>75</sup> Pfeffer 2009, p. 19.

<sup>76</sup> Helga Nowotny, *Eigenzeit. Entstehung und Strukturierung eines Zeitgefühls*, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

<sup>77</sup> Olivia W. Seiling in conversation with the author, 29 May 2021.

<sup>78</sup> Sylvia Martin, Sabine Röder, and Bernward Wember (eds.): *Paul Wember und das hyperaktive Museum*, exh. cat., Kunstmuseen Krefeld 1947–1975, Nuremberg 2013.

<sup>79</sup> Pfeffer 2009, p. 29.

criticality,<sup>80</sup> her view echoes that of Paul Wember when he speaks of the art museum that manages to keep abreast with the times as being, in his words, a “hyperactive enlightenment institute”, because “museums are always in need of revision”, or “stirring up” to use Hoffmann-Koenige’s phrase.<sup>81</sup> Paul Wember believed that museums have the task of “negotiating history in such a way that it is presented as a slice of the present”, that it under no circumstances seem “like an accumulation of old things”, but “stay in conversation with and almost appear as the present”.<sup>82</sup>

The radical nature of these influences, their intellectual fine-tuning and the adaptations of artistic concepts and strategies applied to her own art space and curatorial discourse are not overplayed or overly apparent in Erika Hoffmann-Koenige’s home. Rather they operate at the subversive level, the result of many years of curatorship of the interior “appointments” – the collector’s punning term (*Einrichtungen*) to describe the collection displays as furnishings for her space – and of coediting the *Passagen* series that serves as a cumulative archive of her work. Visits to her collection displays are only possible in the form of moderated discussions between docents and visitors in groups of no more than nine. Lasting one and a half hours and staggered throughout the day, the tours allow visitors to share their different experiences and knowledge in response to the art. Each new collection display is on view for eleven months of the year, starting with a fall opening in September. The latest acquisitions are showcased and presented alongside works already in the collection. With each new rotating collection display, Erika Hoffmann-Koenige curates new combinations and constellations from the near-limitless possibilities available to her and, by doing so, brings forth new contextual

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<sup>80</sup> The concept of criticality – according to Irit Rogoff – assumes the impossibility of the duality of the critic regarding the object of her criticism, whereby the act of critiquing places the critic in a relationship to that object from the outset. Critique thus does not take place from the outside in, but negates such a critical distance from the moment the object is selected for criticism. The critic envisions her involvement in the act of criticism. See Irit Rogoff: “From Criticism to Critique to Criticality”, transversal 2003, URL: <https://transversal.at/transversal/0806/rogoff1/en?hl=rogoff> (accessed 29 November 2021): “In ‘criticality’ we have that double occupation in which we are both fully armed with the knowledges of critique, able to analyse and unveil while at the same time sharing and living out the very conditions which we are able to see through.”

<sup>81</sup> Martin/Röder/Wember 2013, p. 187.

<sup>82</sup> Martin/Röder/Wember 2013, p. 188.



meanings.<sup>83</sup> From the hidden “rhizomatous connections” within the curated displays that she helps bring to light, the collector has, as she puts it, “learned that there is hardly a work – no, correction: there is none that does not respond to another.”<sup>84</sup>

By putting on no more than one display a year, she pointedly resists the frenetic pace of the art world, with its oversaturation and blind consumption. Visitors to her collection have a whole year to make repeated visits, giving them the opportunity to recognize something new or different in the already seen, to witness how the works are transformed by the changing light of each passing season. This reciprocal interpenetration of “the two realities”,<sup>85</sup> of inside and outside, is of vital importance to the collector and manifests itself in different ways. It can be seen in various places in the Sammlung Hoffmann, on the courtyard walls featuring wall works by Thomas Locher and Lawrence Weiner, but also inside the collection rooms themselves when the outer walls of Hoffmann-Koenige’s library become a fitting display for the “interior appointments” of that year (Fig. 12).

The particular challenge for visitors lies in the discursive and spatial balancing act required of them as they negotiate the interstices between inside and outside, private and public. Although the visitor and admission guidelines are stated on the collection’s website, the ambiguity of the space, viewing context, and hosted discourse lies in the constant oscillation between the private and public. Far from a shortcoming, it is instead embraced as a fruitful misconception for visitors on the day.<sup>86</sup> What makes it fruitful is that, as a consciously staged leitmotif,

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<sup>83</sup> “They looked different in the present. That’s something I’ve observed again and again here. That through whatever’s going on out there, through the passage of time, through the events that filter through our minds, the works of art are themselves constantly changing. And their meaning does not remain how they were originally intended, but in the best instances they accumulate meaning and accrue additional layers,” Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in conversation with the author, 29 May 2021.

<sup>84</sup> Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in *Passagen XIX*, Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin 2015/2016, n.p.

<sup>85</sup> “But for me, these two realities are so incredibly important. That’s something I do also miss on many a museum visit, the fact that you only stand in relation to a limited space, bathed in artificial light, and never in relation to reality as we see it outside. You can forget about reality entirely. But I find this tension so important,” Erika Hoffmann-Koenige in conversation with the author, 21 May 2021.

<sup>86</sup> “It is an unusual situation. It is a home, but not every room is recognizable as a living room, office, music room. There are clearly more rooms than one usually has at home. And some rooms are only there to display the art. They give art a space to be shown.

it is ever-present in the discussions that arise from a visitor experience that is essentially a cross between private invitation and public viewing.

In title and style, the *Passagen* series is a nod to Walter Benjamin's unfinished *Das Passagen-Werk*<sup>87</sup> (published in English as the *Arcades Project*). Each new instalment is a record of the participants' discussions and experiences with the collector's curated "interior appointments" for that year, featuring a different main editor each time but always coedited by the collector herself. Each issue of *Passagen* is created retrospectively and can be understood as a mixture of personal and collective memory work and archival practice, in which all those involved in the creation and curation of the year's "appointments" can freely participate. As the edition of *Passagen XIV* states: "This fragmentary record of the many wanderings through an *agencement* [arrangement] of a selection of works is a multifaceted interpretation, a place to swap subjective views on the current constellation of works. Our [...] ever-new reading of the collection sketches successive possible paths through a limitless reservoir of images and visions. The collection functions as an unfinished dynamic form, as a plasticine mass that can be moulded this way or that, with nomadic works that hold the potential for experiential viewing. Each newly appointed display turns the kaleidoscope by a few degrees and unforeseen combinations fall into place, generating new thoughts and energy fields. Always in motion, the collection is inexhaustible fuel for thought." The *Passagen* series is not an archival resource, a depository, but a "mental storehouse of what has moved the work".<sup>88</sup> The series does not present a linear narrative by a single author, rather it is a successive anthology of stylistically different primary texts penned by various authors and the collector in the form of notes, interview transcripts (including with the collector herself and with featured artists), drawings, artist quotes, statements from docents, excerpts from student essays, and visitor comments. The texts are accompanied by images of the hang,

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People often don't really know how to navigate through these spaces," Elke Giffeler in conversation with the author, 10 June 2021.

<sup>87</sup> Walter Benjamin. *Das Passagen-Werk*, Rolf Tiedemann (ed.), 2 vols., Frankfurt am Main 1983.

<sup>88</sup> Céline Piller in *Passagen XIV*, Sammlung Hoffmann Berlin 2010/2011, n.p.

which are always shot as installation views and never show works of art in isolation, as would normally be the case in a conventional museum catalogue.<sup>89</sup>

The collectors' actions have always been linked to the (utopian) idea that the experiences they had gained with the art or through the art could change their own and other's thinking, and sharing and communicating their experience could also change society. One could even say that this was the Hoffmanns' "mission" (to repeat the term used by longstanding employees and the docents).<sup>90</sup> In a dynamic melding of "building, living, and thinking",<sup>91</sup> this mission manifests itself in a bifurcating, rhizomatous thought process and strategy for action. This is comparable to Arthur C. Caspari's model of what he dubs the "labyr", a portmanteau of laboratory and labyrinth, which is described in an architectural analogy as: "a conglomeration of social spaces lined up on each side and stacked above and below to form a proliferating labyrinth with a multiplicity of centres and entrances [...] conceived as passageways [...] where inside and outside constantly swap places."<sup>92</sup> With his model of "constant self-renewal and fluidity through de-regulation of thought and the skimming-off of ideas",<sup>93</sup> Caspari enters the social space from the space of art practice, as the Labyr aims to change everyday actions by overcoming logical, linear structures of thought. "It is about safeguarding the process of transformation, a procedural guarantor of all permanent change, all movement, all revolution, all aliveness." Caspari's model thereby overcomes being a

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<sup>89</sup> *Collecting Now, Quellen zeitgenössischen Kunstsammelns*, interview with Erika Hoffmann, 1 February 2010, p. 18 (URL: [http://www.collectingnow.de/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/COLLECTING-NOW\\_Interview-Erika-Hoffmann\\_100201.pdf](http://www.collectingnow.de/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/COLLECTING-NOW_Interview-Erika-Hoffmann_100201.pdf), accessed 25 August 2021).

<sup>90</sup> "In principle, I share your opinion entirely that by having the collection here, our goal right from the start was to create a space where people can come together to share an experience with each other – that is the basic idea," Elke Giffeler in conversation with the author, 10 June 2021.

<sup>91</sup> Stephanie Regenbrecht, "Vorher waren wir namenlos. Bauen, Wohnen, Denken mit der Sammlung Hoffmann", Berlin/Dresden 2020 (URL: <https://schenkungsammlunghoffmann.skd.museum/forschung/>)

<sup>92</sup> Wilfried Dörstel, *Ein Labyr ist kein Labyr. Carlheinz Casparis Modell ästhetischer Selbstbildung zwischen Cage, Constant und den Situationisten*, Cologne 2009, p. 21.

<sup>93</sup> Dörstel 2009, p. 16.

spatial construct and takes aim at “overthrowing the inner logic of experience and action.”<sup>94</sup>

With the rules she sets herself and the practices that follow them, Erika Hoffmann-Koenige takes a critical stance on the rules and practices embraced as standards by the art market and public art museums. In her actions, her thinking, and her pronouncements on art, she always reflects museum standards and institutional realities more from the position of “art lover”<sup>95</sup> than collector. In this way, she follows in the long line of institutional critique that first erupted in the art world of the 1960s, and which, as the author Franziska Brüggmann suggests, resurfaced in waves in the 1980s and 1990s and which has come to the fore again now.<sup>96</sup> By distinguishing herself from the museum-as-institution, whose purview is permanence and predictability, Erika Hoffmann-Koenige instead adheres to what Brüggmann calls the “expanded, immaterial understanding of what it means to be an institution”, one that sees itself not as a fixed, static structure, but a place where “forms of discourse and practice meet in a dynamic field”.<sup>97</sup>

With a seamless interweaving of curatorial, artistic, discursive outreach, and archiving practices, Erika Hoffmann-Koenige’s Berlin collection spaces have for almost 25 years employed a polyphonic, horizontal, i.e., non-hierarchical practice aimed at the sensory and bodily involvement of each visitor – a practice that is playing an increasingly important role in museums and public art institutions today in the wake of debates on diversity and inclusion. When it comes to acquiring the donated collection, therefore, the museum should take care to also pass on these “Hoffmannesque” qualities and the benefactor’s immaterial practices and poetics, instead of thinking exclusively about preserving the works of art in material terms as objects.

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<sup>94</sup> Dörstel 2009, p. 17.

<sup>95</sup> Collecting Now 2010, p. 24 (URL: [http://www.collectingnow.de/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/COLLECTING-NOW\\_Interview-Eika-Hoffmann\\_100201.pdf](http://www.collectingnow.de/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/COLLECTING-NOW_Interview-Eika-Hoffmann_100201.pdf) accessed 25 August 2021).

<sup>96</sup> Franziska Brüggmann, *Institutionskritik im Feld der Kunst. Entwicklung, Wirkung, Veränderung*, Bielefeld 2020, pp. 66ff.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

According to Suely Rolnik, this could help to “activate sensual experiences also in the present moment, which are necessarily different from those originally experienced, but have the same critical and poetic density”.<sup>98</sup> As in Félix González-Torre’s work, “giving away can also mean letting go and forgetting”, but, through the “transformation” of a change of hands, the “accumulations can attain new vitality, even if, as in this case, they are no longer at all visible”.<sup>99</sup>

Translated from the German by Logan Kennedy and Leonhard Unglaub

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<sup>98</sup> Suely Rolnik, *Archivmanie. 100 Notizen – 100 Gedanken*, dOCUMENTA 13 (vol. 22), Kassel 2011, p. 19.

<sup>99</sup> Erika Hoffmann-Koenige and MG, *Passagen XIX*, Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin 2015/2016, n.p.

**Appendix I**

# 390 Wörter

abgrenzen  
Abstraktion  
**Aktivität**  
Aktualität  
Akzeptanz  
Alltag  
**Ambivalenz**  
**Amerika**  
anhalten  
Anstrengung  
Antwort  
antworten  
anzweifeln  
Arbeit  
Architektur  
Archiv  
Assoziation  
**Ästhetik**  
Aufklärung  
auseinanderfallen  
ausgrenzen  
antworten  
aufgehen  
auflösen  
Auflösung  
aufnehmen  
Aufuhr  
Asien  
Atem  
Aufmerksamkeit  
**Aufrichtigkeit**  
auseinandersetzen  
**Austausch**  
Außen  
Autorschaft  
Barock  
Baumarkt  
**Bedeutung**  
Beginn  
benutzen  
Beobachtung  
berühren  
**Berlin**  
Bibliothek  
Bildtafel  
Besucher  
Bestimmtheit  
**Betrachtung**  
Betrachter  
Betrachterkörper  
beruhigen  
Beweglichkeit  
Bewegung  
Begegnung  
Bewusstsein  
Beziehungen  
Bezüge  
Bibel  
Bild  
Biografie  
**Blickwechsel**  
Boden  
Bottari  
Buch  
Chaos  
CV  
Dankbarkeit  
Dazwischen  
denken  
Denken  
Dekonstruktion  
Desillusionierung  
**Dialog**  
**Dichte**  
Docent  
dokumentieren  
drehen  
Dresden

Dringlichkeit  
Durchgang  
**Echtheitszertifikat**  
**Eigentum**  
Einführung  
einladen  
**Einrichtung**  
**Empathie**  
Empfindung  
Ende  
Energie  
Entäußerung  
entgrenzen  
Entropie  
Erde  
erinnern  
Ekel  
Emotion  
Engagement  
entdecken  
Entwicklung  
Ermuterung  
**erkennen**  
Erkenntnis  
Erneuerung  
Enttäuschung  
Erlebnis  
Ernst  
Erfahrung  
erweitern  
Erweiterung  
Existenz  
Experiment  
Familie  
Fenster  
Filzantoffeln  
fließen  
Fotografie  
Flüchtigkeit  
Form  
Frage  
Freiheit  
Frau  
Freundschaft  
Freiheit  
Gabe  
Gast  
Gastfreundschaft  
Gastgeber  
Gedächtnis  
Gegensatz  
Gegenwart  
gehen  
Gemeinschaft  
Geschichte  
Geschwindigkeit  
Gespräch  
Gewalt  
Glück  
Grenzen  
Großzügigkeit  
Haltung  
handeln  
Hauskonzert  
Himmel  
Himmelskörper  
hinübergehen  
Humor  
Hybrid  
Ideen  
Identität  
Inhalt  
Innen  
Installation  
Intellekt  
Inspiration  
Interpretation  
Ironie

Irritation  
Kaleidoskop  
Klang  
Kleid  
Köln  
kommen  
Konflikt  
Konsequenz  
Kontakt  
Kontrast  
Konstruktivismus  
Konzentration  
Kopie  
Körper  
Kosmos  
Kraft  
Krankheit  
Kreativität  
Kritik  
Künstler  
Künstlerin  
Kunst  
Kunstwerk  
Langsamkeit  
leben  
Lebendigkeit  
lernen  
lesen  
Licht  
Literatur  
Lust  
Lyrik  
**Magnetfeld**  
Malerei  
Mannigfaltigkeit  
Material  
Mablosigkeit  
Mehrdimensionalität  
Meinung  
Mensch  
miteinander  
mitteilen  
mitwirken  
Mobilar  
Mode  
Moderne  
Modell  
Möglichkeit  
Mönchengladbach  
Museum  
Musik  
Mut  
Nachbarschaft  
Nachtigall  
Nähmaschinenfabrik  
Natur  
Neues  
Neugier  
nichtlinear  
Notizen  
öffnen  
Offenheit  
**Optimismus**  
Opulenz  
organisch  
Original  
Ort  
**Ortsgespräche**  
Osteuropa  
Ostkunst  
Paar  
Passagen  
**Partnerschaft**  
Pausenraum  
Periphere  
Performance  
Parcours  
Picknick

Poesie  
Politik  
Postkarte  
Privatheit  
Problem  
Prozess  
Radikalität  
Rand  
Raum  
Rätsel  
Reflexion  
Regeln  
**Respekt**  
Resonanzfläche  
Rest  
Revolution  
Rhizom  
Rhythmus  
Risiko  
Rundgang  
sammeln  
Sammlung  
Samstag  
scheitern  
schenken  
Schenkung  
Schlange  
Schlüsselwort  
Schmerz  
Schrecken  
schreiben  
Schock  
**Schönheit**  
sehen  
Selbstbewusstsein  
Selbsterkenntnis  
Selbstermächtigung  
**Selbstironie**  
Sensibilität  
Signal  
Signatur  
sitzen  
Skepsis  
Skulptur  
Sockel  
Sonntagsfrühstück  
Spiel  
Spielregeln  
Sprache  
sprechen  
Stachel  
Stimme  
Streitgespräch  
Strenge  
Störung  
Struktur  
Subjektivität  
Tagebuch  
Tanz  
teilnehmen  
Text  
Tageslicht  
Tisch  
Tischgespräche  
Titel  
Tod  
Transformation  
Transgression  
Transition  
Transversalität  
Überbelichtung  
Überforderung  
überraschen  
Übergang  
überschreiben  
überschreiben  
übersehen  
überwältigen

umhergehen  
umräumen  
Unbekanntes  
unfassbar  
unkonsumierbar  
Uneindeutigkeit  
unendlich  
unfertig  
ungelöst  
Ungewissheit  
Universum  
Unruhe  
unterwegs  
Unübersichtlichkeit  
unternehmen  
Unternehmen  
unverständlich  
Utopie  
wohnen  
Veränderung  
Verantwortung  
Verfall  
Vergänglichkeit  
vergessen  
vergleichen  
Vergnügen  
Verknüpfungen  
verletzen  
Verletzung  
Verlust  
verschwinden  
verschwinden  
verschwinden  
verweilen  
Verwirrung  
Vertrauen  
verzweifeln  
Verzweigungen  
Video  
Vielseitigkeit  
Vorstellung  
Wal  
Wand  
Wandel  
Wandelkonzert  
Wasser  
Wechselseitigkeit  
Welt  
Werk  
Werkittel  
Werte  
Westkunst  
Widerspruch  
Widerstand  
wiedererkennen  
Wirklichkeit  
**Wissen**  
Zeichnung  
zeigen  
Zeit  
zeitgenössisch  
Zeitungsausschnitte  
Zero  
zerstören  
Zerstörung  
Zitat  
Zuhause  
Zufall  
zuhören  
Zukunft  
Zumutung  
Zurückhaltung  
Zusammenhang  
zusammentreffen  
Zustand  
Zutrauen  
Zweifel  
zweifeln

Der Grundwortschatz, der zum Erlernen einer Fremdsprache nötig ist, wird auf etwa 1285 Wörter beziffert.

Vocabulary Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann, developed by Jeannette Brabenetz during the Fellowship of the Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann 2021



CHRONIK

**Dialog im Treppenhaus des Albertinums**

„Go Go Gorbatschow“, ein fünf Meter breites Tafelbild von A. R. Penck aus dem Jahr 1988, schmückt seit Ende April das Treppenhaus des Dresdner Albertinums. Der Maler selbst hat es auf Wunsch des Generaldirektors Werner Schmidt für die elf mal elf Meter große Wandfläche ausgewählt, die Kulturstiftung der Dresdner Bank kaufte das Werk. Das Monumentalbild korrespondiert mit Frank Stellas Skulptur „Chapter 51“, einer Dauerleihgabe des Kölner Sammlerehepaars Erika und Rolf Hoffmann, die schon 1991 an der Westwand installiert worden war. Der ursprüngliche Bild- und Skulpturenschmuck im Treppenhaus des Albertinums wurde 1945 beim Bombardement Dresdens zerstört.



A. R. Penck, „Go Go Gorbatschow“ (285 x 500 cm) aus dem Jahr 1988

lers geraubt worden. Insgesamt stellten die Polizisten Skulpturen und Bilder im Gesamtwert von zwei Millionen Mark sicher. ■ Edvard Munchs Gemälde „Der Schrei“ (1893), am 12. Februar aus der Osloer Nationalgalerie gestohlen, wurde in einem Hotel südlich der norwegischen Hauptstadt wiedergefunden. Die Polizei verhaftete zwei der Hehlerei verdächtige Norweger.

schlossenen Abriss der Zeile protestiert und die 14 Millionen Mark teure Rettungsaktion durchgesetzt. Jetzt steht das Ensemble wieder: Drei denkmalgeschützte Häuser aus dem 18. Jahrhundert wurden originalgetreu wieder aufgebaut oder rekonstruiert. Von den übrigen Gebäuden blieb nur die alte Fassade erhalten.



Kopf-Studie (1617) von Anthonis van Dyck (I.), „Der Schrei“ (1893) von Edvard Munch

**Wiedergefunden.** Italienische Polizisten haben die 1617 vom Flamen Anthonis van Dyck in Öl gemalte „Studie eines Kopfes“ Ende April unter dem Bett eines Bankangestellten in Rom entdeckt. Die Beamten waren auf der Suche nach Hehlerware. Das Gemälde – Schätzwert: 1,3 Millionen Mark – war vor 13 Jahren aus einer Kirche nahe der sizilianischen Stadt Ragusa gestohlen worden. ■ In einem Lastwagen fanden Carabinieri im Piemont ein Gemälde des venezianischen Manieristen Tintoretto (1518 bis 1594); es war im März aus der Villa eines Turiner Kunsthand-



Die Täter waren in eine Falle gegangen: Spezialagenten des britischen Scotland Yard hatten Kontakte zur Osloer Unterwelt geknüpft und sich als Kaufinteressenten ausgegeben.

**Auferstanden.** 1987 wurden acht historische Kaufmannshäuser am Rotterdamer Wijnhaven – eines der wenigen im Zweiten Weltkrieg nicht zerstörten Viertel – wegen eines Tunnelbaus Stein für Stein abgetragen und in riesigen Metallcontainern eingelagert (ART 7/1992). Bürger hatten gegen den bereits be-

**Personalien.** Herbert Beck, 53, Leiter des Frankfurter Liebieghauses, wurde zum neuen Direktor des Städelschen Kunstinstitutes ernannt. Er übernimmt den Posten von Klaus Gallwitz, 63, der 1992 von Hermann Josef Abs, dem inzwischen gestorbenen Vorsitzenden der Städels-Administration, zum vorzeitigen Rücktritt gezwungen worden war (ART 10/1992). Beck, Wunschkandidat der Städelsverwaltung, hatte im Frühjahr mit einer anderen Stelle geliebäugelt: Er war bereits designierter Generaldirektor des Germanischen Nationalmuseums in Nürnberg. Beck bleibt in Personalunion Chef am Liebieghaus.

**Neue Museen.** Mit 6000 Kunstwerken aus China, Indien, der Südsee, Afrika und Altamerika besitzt das 1952 gegründete Zürcher Museum Rietberg die bedeutendste Sammlung außereuropäischer Kunst in der Schweiz. Jetzt hat das in der Villa Wesendonck untergebrachte Institut eine Dependence eröffnet: Für acht Millionen Franken wurde die benachbarte Park-

Villa Rietter, 1888 von einem Schüler Gottfried Sempers im Neorenaissance-Stil errichtet, renoviert und als Quartier für die Sammlung asiatischer Malerei sowie japanische Holzschnitte hergerichtet. ■ Auch das Düsseldorfer Hetjens-Museum, mit 20 000 Objekten aus acht Jahrtausenden auf Keramik spezialisiert, muß künftig nicht mehr über Platzmangel klagen. Das Institut, seit 1969 im Palais Nesselrode nahe dem Alten Hafen ansässig, hat 1650 Quadratmeter Schaufläche in einem angrenzenden Neubau hinzugezogen, den es sich mit dem Filmmuseum teilt. Kosten: 10,8 Millionen Mark. Die Sammlung des seit Sommer 1993 geschlossenen Hauses wurde neu strukturiert, der neue Raum für Wechselausstellungen im Anbau Anfang Mai mit Keramiken von Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró und Antoni Tàpies eingeweiht (bis 28. August). Der Düsseldorfer Zerkünstler Heinz Mack hat das Foyer des Hauses mit Keramiken und Lichtobjekten ausgestattet. ■ In Malpartida de Cáceres, 300 Kilometer südwestlich von Madrid, wurde das Museum Vostell eingeweiht. Der Fluxuskünstler Wolf Vostell hatte schon Mitte der siebziger Jahre in der rauen Landschaft der Estremadura eine alte aufgelassene Wollwäscherei entdeckt. Nach langen Querelen akzeptierten Stadt und Region, dort ein öffentliches Museum einzurichten und sich an der Finanzierung zu beteiligen; im März 1992 wurde mit der Restaurierung begonnen. Seit Mai sind etwa 50 Arbeiten Vostells zu sehen. Räume für Werke seiner



Park-Villa Rietter in Zürich





Fig. 1 Bazon Brock, 1967  
© the artist, Photo: courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin



Fig. 2 Felix Gonzalez-Torres, „Untitled“ (We don't remember), 1991  
© Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Courtesy The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation  
Photo: Jens Ziehe, courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin





Fig. 3 Felix Gonzalez-Torres, „Untitled“ (Placebo – Landscape – For Roni), 1993  
© Felix Gonzalez Torres, Courtesy The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation  
Photo: courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin

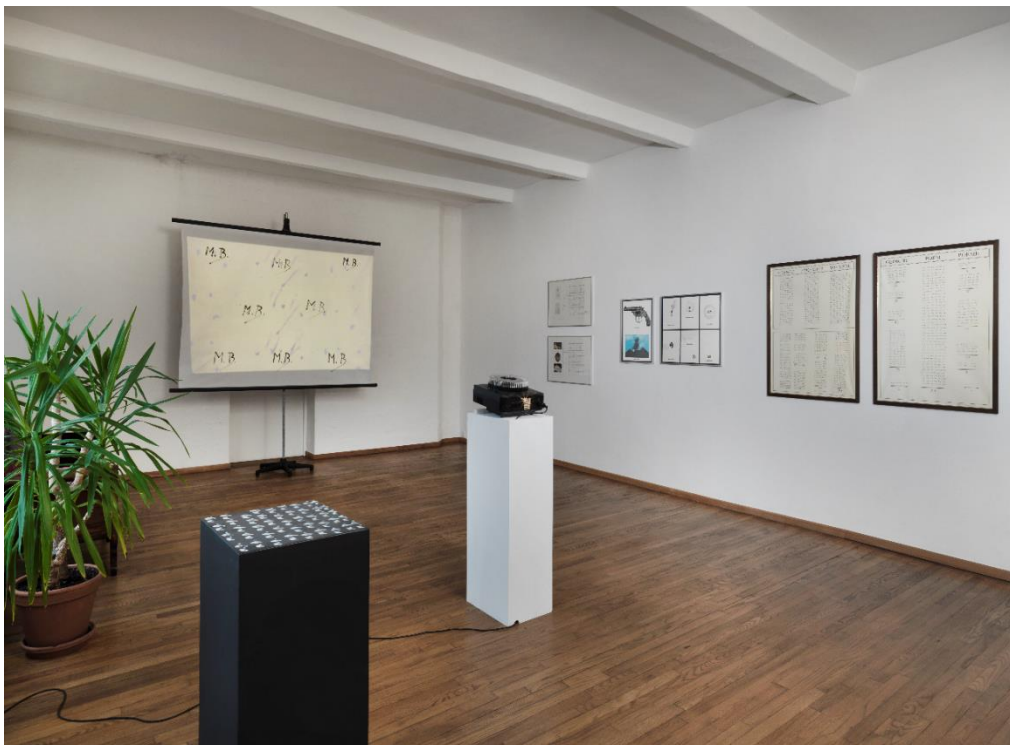


Fig. 4 Marcel Broodthaers, Signatur, 1971  
Copyright Estate Marcel Broodthaers  
Photo: Jens Ziehe, courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin



Fig. 5 Georg Herold, Skulptur vom Sockel erschlagen, 1992  
© VG Bild Kunst, Bonn, Photo: Jens Ziehe, courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin



Fig. 6 Joëlle Tuerlinckx, ronds d'exposition - ensemble 'Berlin', 1996/2004  
© the artist, Foto: courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin



Fig.. 7 Titus, Es war einmal, 1991  
© the artist, Photo: studioschuurman, courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin





Fig. 8 Pipilotti Rist, *Selbstlos im Lavabad*, 1994 and Richard Philipps, *Origin of the Milky Way*, 1998  
© the artist, Photo: Jens Ziehe, courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin

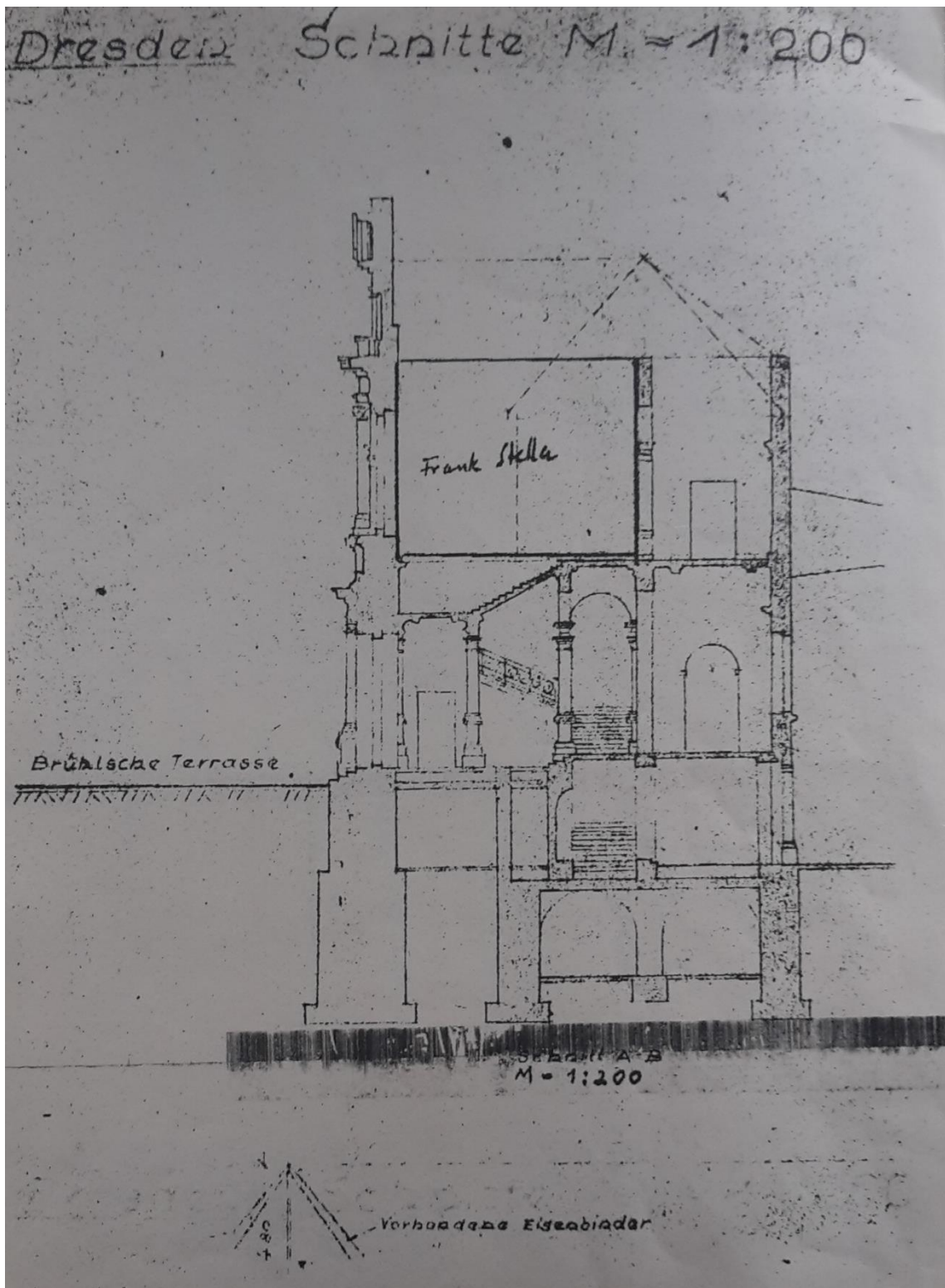


Fig. 9a Cross section of the Albertinum Dresden, Installation of Frank Stella, „Of Whales in Paint, in Teeth, in Wood, in Sheet Iron, in Stone, in Mountains, in Stars (Moby Dick Series chap.57), 1991 on the 2nd floor Photo: courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin



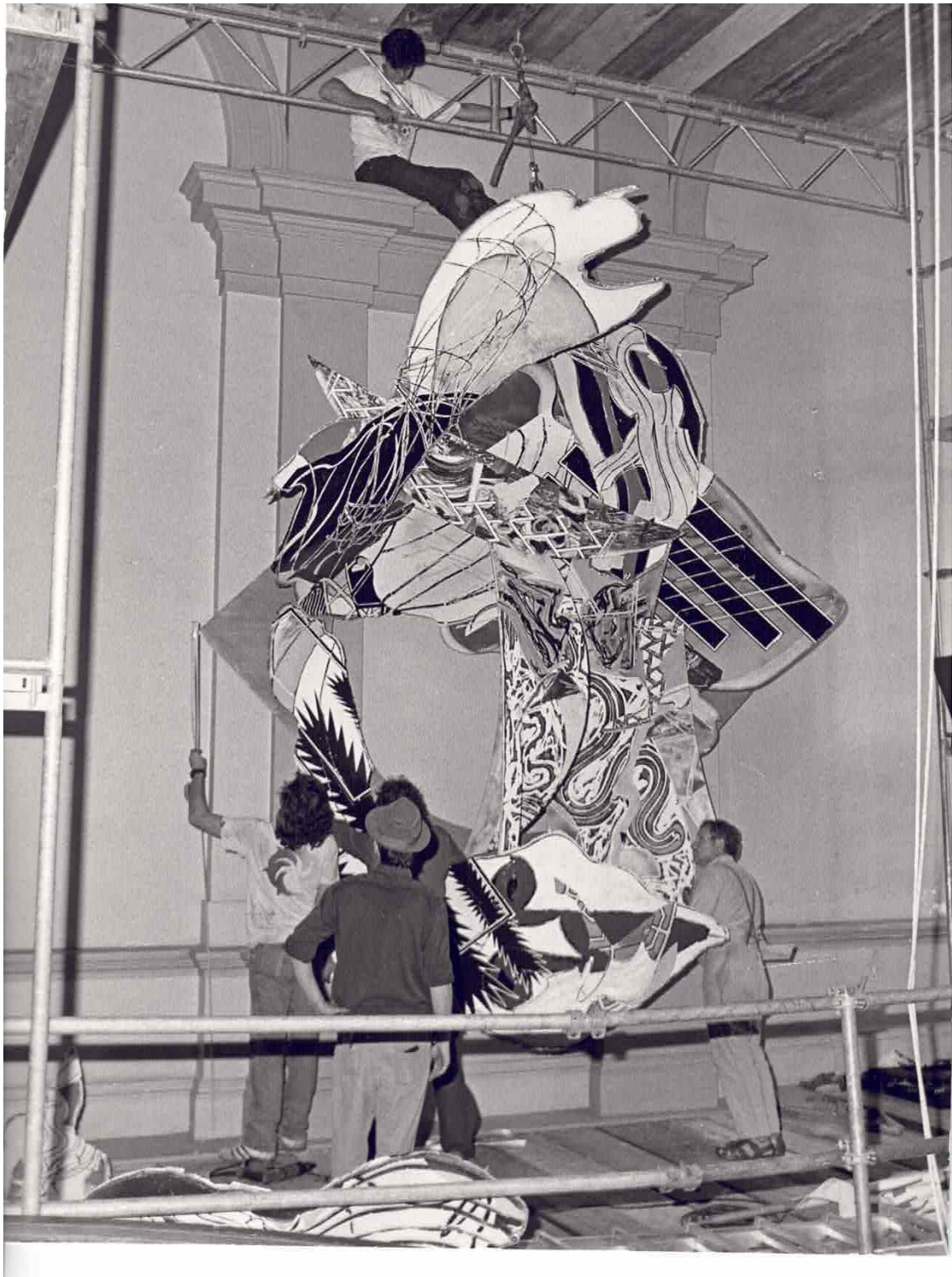


Fig. 9b Installation of Frank Stella, „Of Whales in Paint, in Teeth, in Wood, in Sheet Iron, in Stone, in Mountains, in Stars (Moby Dick Series chap. 57), 1991 at the Albertinum, 1991  
Photo: courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin



Fig. 10 Frank Stella flies to Berlin, Invitation card to the opening of the Sammlung Hoffmann, 1997  
Photo: courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin



Fig. 11 A.R. Penck, Der Arbeiter kehrt an seinen Arbeitsplatz zurück (...),1987, 1. Einrichtung, 1997/1998 © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn, Photo: courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin





Fig. 12 Christian Boltanski, Les Archives de C.B. 1965-1988 No. 1, 1989  
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn, Photo: courtesy Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin