

# Press Kit



**DEUTSCHES HISTORISCHES MUSEUM**

26. JANUAR BIS  
03. APRIL 2016

100 Werke aus der  
Gedenkstätte Yad Vashem  
100 יצירות מאוסף יד ושם  
100 Works from the  
Yad Vashem Collection

**KUNST AUS  
DEM HOLOCAUST**  
אמנות בשואה  
**ART FROM THE HOLOCAUST**

Deutsches Historisches Museum · Unter den Linden 2 · 10117 Berlin  
Täglich 10–18 Uhr · [www.dhm.de](http://www.dhm.de)

Yad Vashem

Stiftung für Kunst  
und Kultur e.V.  
Bonn

Abbildung: Kurt Bodek, Kurt Löw, Eli Fishberg / One Spring, 2011. © Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem, Gestaltung: Thomas Sankor

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# Art from the Holocaust – 100 Works from the Yad Vashem Collection

January 26 to April 3, 2016

For the first time in Germany, the Deutsches Historisches Museum is exhibiting 100 works of art from Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem. The exhibition, which was initiated by the German national daily BILD and is being held in collaboration with the Bonn-based Foundation for Art and Culture, is part of the official events surrounding the International Holocaust Remembrance Day and represents the culmination of events marking 50 years since the establishment of German-Israeli diplomatic relations. This is "hitherto the largest presentation of artworks from the Yad Vashem collection outside Israel, and should be cherished as an invaluable symbol of friendship," said President of the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Alexander Koch.

"Art from the Holocaust" will be inaugurated by the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany Angela Merkel on January 25, 2016 in the Deutsches Historisches Museum, in the presence of Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev. It will be on display until April 3, 2016.

The 100 works originate from the Jewish inmates of various concentration camps, labor camps and ghettos. "In these works that survived the Holocaust, we discern the power of art in revealing the personal perspectives of the Jewish victims," explains Avner Shalev. "This exhibition allows for a rare encounter, specifically in Berlin, between contemporary spectators and those that lived through the events of the Shoah. Each work of art from our unique collection constitutes a living testimony from the Holocaust, as well as a declaration of the indomitable human spirit that refuses to surrender."

Created under inhumane conditions in the utmost secrecy, the largely graphical works attest to the power of the human spirit in the face of adversity and death, and to the conflict between the reality of the Holocaust and an imaginary counter-world.

The curators Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg from Yad Vashem and Walter Smerling from the Foundation for Art and Culture have selected the 100 works from a trove of hundreds of representative works from the collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, which altogether comprises 10,000 objects. The curators have divided the exhibition into three overarching thematic sections: 1. Reality (persecution, displacement, "everyday life" in the ghettos and camps, torment, death), 2. Transcendence and spiritual support (faith, nature / landscape, fence motif as the transition to freedom, counter-reality) and 3. Portrait (self-portrait, portraits, people wearing the Star of David badge, details of age). "In an



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uncompromising act of resistance the artists drew and painted in mortal danger. Some vividly portray the atrocities and humiliations they had to endure, while others seek to counter the relentless dehumanisation by highlighting the individual and the inner spiritual life", explains Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg. "Art is a powerful response to oppression and terror", adds Walter Smerling. "This exhibition is an urgent reminder of the need to uphold the dignity of man - for it is the inviolable core of his being."

"The aspiration to show these deeply moving art works for the first time on this scale in Germany traces back to my first visit to Yad Vashem," recalls BILD Editor-in-Chief Kai Diekmann, who initiated the exhibition. "In honor of the legacy of Axel Springer, who both campaigned for and promoted moves towards a reconciliation between Jews and Germans, I hope that art can help to rebuild the bridges once destroyed."

From the 50 artists featured, 24 were murdered by the National Socialists. Alongside the largely unknown names, acclaimed artists such as Felix Nussbaum and Ludwig Meidner are also represented. The works are classified into themes and range from depictions of the daily atrocities in the camps to the evocation of an idyllic counter-reality. The biographies of the artists also form part of the exhibition.

The exhibition is a collaboration between the Bonn-based Foundation for Art and Culture, the Deutsches Historisches Museum and Yad Vashem – the World Center for Holocaust Remembrance in Jerusalem. The project was initiated by the BILD media partner and the Foundation for Art and Culture.

The exhibition is made possible by the sponsorship of the Daimler AG and the Deutsche Bank AG. The catalogue accompanying the exhibition is published by the Wienand Verlag, Cologne.

The Deutsches Historisches Museum is funded by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media.



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**Yad Vashem**

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## Exhibition Concept

These 100 works from the Yad Vashem Collection, created between 1939 and 1945 by 50 artists – half of whom were murdered during the Holocaust – reflect the tension between the urge to document the terrible events endured and the desire to break free through art, transcending to the realms of beauty, imagination and faith. While portraying their brethren, the Jewish artists wished to leave a trace, to commemorate them for future generations, thus fighting against the Nazi process of dehumanization and annihilation. Albeit the appalling conditions and in spite of the daily struggle to survive, the artists overcame the paucity of materials with inventiveness, and through their creativity reasserted their individuality and their will to live. Beyond the variety of approaches, the different styles and the multiplicity of themes evoked, all the artworks testify to the power of the human spirit that refused to surrender. They are expressions of a profound conviction: the perpetrators' acts of humiliation and annihilation could destroy a man, but not his soul. And it is this very soul which is present in the works exhibited.

Each work from the Holocaust tells at least three stories: that depicted, that of the artist and that of the work's annals.

### Reality

Most of the works in this section were executed by Jewish artists at the risk of their lives, in ghettos and camps. Shut off from the world, they used brushstrokes and pencils to leave testimony of the daily atrocities inflicted upon them. The artists recorded dramatic events, such as expulsion from home to ghetto, transport arrivals or more individual scenes of violence and torture. Interestingly, the perpetrators are not often portrayed. The threat of death is omnipresent, addressed either directly or allegorically. Many works are devoted to the representation of the camp, its symbols of imprisonment constituting a reminder of the loss of freedom. These depictions are generally restrained, conveying the general sense of alienation the inmates felt in these sites of desolation and despair. In parallel, the artists also documented their shared private space. They tried to reconstruct a personal corner, to recover a sense of intimacy where there was none. The silent personal items in the cramped rooms at times tell the stories of their owners' tragic fate.

### Portraits

Portraiture is a prominent genre in Art from the Holocaust, constituting about one-quarter of all works that survived. In reproducing each individual's face, the artists

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gave back the subject's soul – the very quality the Nazis sought to eliminate. Portrait art can thus be seen as a successful act of subversion that refused to accept any negation of the individual's inherent human essence. Amazingly, the majority of the portraits do not readily disclose the fact that they were created in the hell-hole of the camps and ghettos. Most of the portraits show no outward sign of the cruelty, persecution and abhorrent living conditions that pervaded the inmates' daily routine. Indeed, had it not been for the Yellow Star seen in a number of works, we would not necessarily identify the subjects as Jewish, condemned to persecution or sentenced en masse to an agonizing death. The artists memorialize their brethren as they see them, and draw their own portraits as they would like to be remembered by future generations – not as victims, but as human beings.

### Transcendence

Along with their urge to document reality, the artists searched in art for the means to break free from their cruel environment, as is clearly depicted in the landscapes seen beyond the fences. They escaped through their works, finding spiritual refuge in the realms of beauty, memory, imagination and faith. Thus, they also provided their fellow inmates with an opportunity to forget for a moment the worries and the hardships of the ghettos and camps. The house motif appearing repeatedly in these open landscapes evokes the yearning for a home, while the emphasis given to the sky may be interpreted as an aspiration for freedom and hope. In recording scenes of prayer, the artists gave expression to the spiritual life maintained by the Jewish inmates in spite of the hardship and despair. They also suggest the sense of community that was essential in the struggle for survival.



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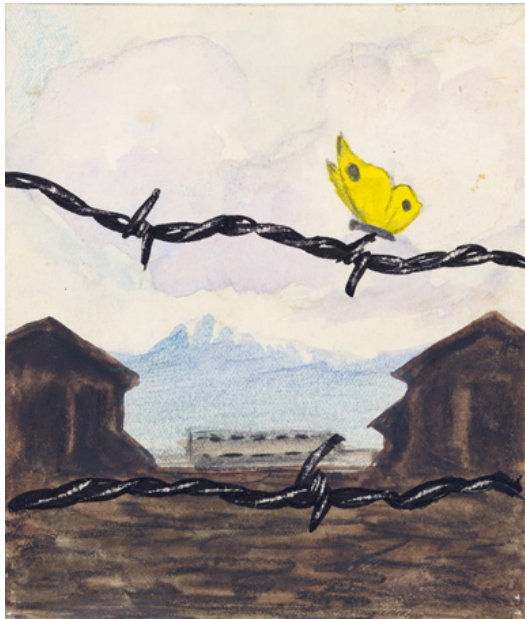
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## The Artists and the Works: Extracts from the Exhibition's Audio guide

Karl Bodek & Kurt Löw, *One Spring*, 1941



The frequent use of fences and barbed wire depicts loneliness and imprisonment, but also a view at the far side of a brutal reality. The power of self-assertion, both as a person and artist, as well as the will to survive and hope for the future were not to be suppressed. In the Gurs camp in southern France, Karl Bodek und Kurt Löw designed postcards they sent from the ghetto to the whole world. Postcards carrying promising messages.

In this case, a yellow butterfly sitting high above the dark reality embodies

the hope of the coming spring. The barbed wire overarches the view of the mountains on the Spanish border in the background. The chosen perspective makes it clear that art was used in the camps as a way of expressing courage and optimism.

Kurt Löw was a textile designer from Vienna and Karl Bodek a photographer from Czernowitz. They frequently worked together in Gurs and also designed stage sets for the camp cabaret. While Kurt Löw was released at the age of 28, and able to flee to Switzerland, 37 year-old Karl Bodek was sent via Drancy to Auschwitz, where he was murdered.

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**Leo Haas, Transport Arrival, 1942**



„At Terezin, in order to protect my friends and me from being sent to the gas chambers at Auschwitz, the self-administration put us to work on construction management, where we did architectural drawings – partly for real but largely as a means of camouflage. It was clear that we should not only use the material that was put at our disposal for that purpose, so we marched around drawing whatever we regarded as notable. (...) I did it because it was what I felt I should do,... in all camps... create witness testimony... and to some extent create evidence. I almost never thought I was making art. I just wanted to create pieces for the prosecution."

That is how Leo Haas described his imprisonment during an interview in East Berlin in 1981. He was the only one from the group of artists in the ghetto to survive the war. He was 44 at the time of his liberation. Some of his 500 or so drawings were used as evidence in court. Despite its documentary intention, the washed pen and ink drawing depicting the arrival of a transport, is a well composed work of art. Bare black trees create a baleful trellis along the path. Like messengers of death, birds of prey circle over a long, lonely train of people moving through a cold and bleak landscape. Next to the gate of the ghetto in the lower left hand corner of the picture, Haas drew the letter V – as a symbol of his resistance.



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**Nelly Toll, Girls in the Field, 1943**



This drawing is the work of an eight-year-old girl, and shows two women, maybe a mother and daughter, strolling over a sunny meadow next to a dense forest. Both, in whom the young artist paid great attention to detail, are happy and dressed in pretty clothes.

Nelly Toll lived in Lemberg, which following the German invasion of Poland was occupied by the Russian army under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The girl's father hid in order to avoid being deported to Siberia, but when Lemberg was taken by German troops in 1941, Nelly, her mother and brother were forced to move to a ghetto. While her brother was carted away and murdered as part of a so-called "children's action", her father managed to organise a place for his wife and daughter to stay. Nelly and her mother spent two years in a tiny hideaway with a Christian family. During the long hours they spent there, Nelly's mother encouraged her to draw, write stories and keep a diary.

After the war Nelly Toll studied art and emigrated to America where she worked as an author and lecturer for art and literature. Nelly Toll is the only artist featured in this exhibition who is still alive today.



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**Bedřich Fritta, Rear Entrance, 1941–44**



More than 140,000 people were deported to the Terezin ghetto between its establishment in November 1941 and the last days of the war. Some 120,000 of them died – more than thirty thousand as a result of the miserable conditions in the ghetto itself. The rest were murdered after being taken to extermination camps.

There are no people in this pen and ink drawing by Bedřich Fritta, but nature and architecture form the ominous backdrop to unseen events. As a metaphor for death, he shows threateningly high walls and a half-open gate. With no visible alternative, the only path is into darkness.

Fritta hid his work in the courtyard, while other members of his ghetto artist's group, bricked their pictures into walls before they were arrested in July 1944. It is thanks to their clandestine pursuit of art that there is so much pictorial evidence of the reality in the camp. Like all his colleagues – with the exception of Leo Haas – Bedřich Fritta was also murdered before the end of the war.

The Nazis presented Terezin as a so-called "show ghetto" – designed to convince the outside world that life inside what they termed a "Jewish settlement" was perfectly normal. The International Red Cross visited Terezin several times, and as late as April 1945, was still writing positive reports about the living conditions there. Against that backdrop, Fritta's bleak and expressive images don't only reveal the reality of the camp, but also the blindness of the world.



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**Pavel Fantl, The song is over, 1941–44**



There are very few pictures in this exhibition that show those responsible for the anguish of the persecuted. Works created in the midst of indescribable arbitrariness generally served to express self-assuredness and to document the resistance against Nazi attempts to dehumanize their victims.

This coloured drawing by the Prague doctor Pavel Fantl is therefore all the more astounding. It shows Adolf Hitler as a miserable clown, blood dripping from his hands. The instrument on which he plays his violent melodies lies on the ground with torn strings. The picture, which was worked

on in secret, expresses a deep longing but is simultaneously a prediction. "The song is over," wrote Fantl in Czech beneath his work. It underscores the fearlessness and resistant humour of the painter.

Pavel Fantl, who like his wife and son was later murdered, was in contact with Czech police who guarded the camp at Terezin. It was from them that he got painting equipment and received news of what was happening in the world. When Pavel Fantl was taken to Auschwitz, a Czech railway worker smuggled some 80 works by the painter out of their hiding place in the ghetto. He hid them in the walls of his own flat until the war was over.

**tonwelt, Berlin / text: Marc Wrasse / editor: Stephanie Kissel**



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PRESS IMAGES

# Art from the Holocaust

## 100 Works from the Yad Vashem Collection

25 January to 3 April 2016



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1 Karl Robert Bodek/Kurt Conrad Löw  
Ein Frühling / One Spring, 1941  
© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



2 Leo Breuer  
Pfad zwischen den Baracken / Path between the Barracks, 1941  
© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



3 Pavel Fantl  
Das Lied ist aus / The Song is Over, 1942-1944  
© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



4 Bedřich Fritta  
Hintereingang / Rear Entrance, 1941-1944  
© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem

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5 Leo (Lev) Haas  
Ankunft eines Transports / Transport Arrival, 1942  
© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



6 Josef Kowner  
Eine Straße im Ghetto von Lodz / A Street in Lodz Ghetto, 1941  
© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



7 Josef Kowner  
Selbstporträt / Self-Portrait, 1941  
© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



8 Jacob Lipschitz  
Der Geschlagene (Mein Bruder Gedalyahu) Beaten (My Brother Gedalyahu),  
1941-1944  
© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem

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9 Moritz Müller  
Dächer im Winter / Rooftops in the Winter, 1944

© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



10 Felix Nussbaum  
Der Flüchtling / The Refugee, 1939

© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



11 Charlotte Salomon  
Selbstporträt / Self-portrait, 1939-1941

© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



12 Nelly Toll  
Mädchen im Feld / Girls in the Field, 1943

© Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem

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## Facts and Dates

Venue	Deutsches Historisches Museum Exhibition Hall, 1st. Floor
Duration	26th January to 3rd April, 2016
Opening hours	Daily 10 am to 6 pm
Admission	Admission free up to 18 years Day ticket 8 €, concession 4 €
Information	Deutsches Historisches Museum Unter den Linden 2   10117 Berlin Tel. +49 30 20304-444   E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@dhm.de">info@dhm.de</a> <a href="http://www.dhm.de">www.dhm.de</a>
Exhibition space	560 sqm
Size of exhibition	100 works on paper and paintings
Overall direction	Alexander Koch (Deutsches Historisches Museum), Avner Shalev (Yad Vashem), Walter Smerling (Foundation for Art and Culture)
Curators	Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg (Yad Vashem), Walter Smerling (Foundation for Art and Culture)
Project coordination <b>BILD</b>	Kai Diekmann, Willem A. Tell
Project management	Dorlis Blume, René Freund, Ulrike Kretzschmar, Hedva Nachmias, Tina Rudolph, Vivian Uria
Exhibition architecture	Nadine Rasche, Werner Schulte



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**Art from the Holocaust –  
100 Works from the Yad Vashem Collection**

**Publication**

Art from the Holocaust. 100 Works from the Yad Vashem Memorial

Wienand Verlag GmbH, Cologne

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24 x 29cm, hardcover

German/English/Hebrew

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**Audio guide**

tonwelt GmbH, Berlin

**Initiated by**

BILD

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## Accompanying Programme

Wednesday, 27th January 2016, 6 pm  
Curator-led tour in English, Exhibition Hall, 1st floor  
***But My Soul is Free – Art from the Holocaust 1939–1945***  
Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem



Wednesday, 17th February 2016, 6 pm  
Lecture in English, Auditorium  
**Re-present the un-speakable**  
Dr. Anda Rottenberg, Warsaw, Poland



Yad Vashem

Wednesday, 23rd March 2016, 6 pm  
Lecture, Auditorium  
**Kunst angesichts der extremen Gewalt (Warschauer Ghetto)**  
**(Art in the Face of Extreme Violence – Warsaw Ghetto)**  
Prof. Dr. Magdalena Marszałek, University of Potsdam

Wednesday, 30th March 2016, 6 pm  
Lecture in English, Auditorium  
**Through the eyes of witnesses. Visual evidence of ghetto life in Vilnius and Kaunas during the Second World War**  
Prof. Dr. Giedre Jankeviciute, Vilnius, Lithuania

### Overview Tour:

The exhibition "Art from the Holocaust – 100 Works from the Yad Vashem Collection" features works by inmates from various concentration camps, labour camps and ghettos, of whom almost half were murdered by the National Socialists. The guided tour focuses on the conditions in which these work originated, the motivation of the artists and the themes addressed in these largely graphical works. The drawings, oil paintings and water colours represent an attempt to give expression to the ineffable "collapse of civilisation", or the Holocaust, using the means of the visual arts. The tour endeavours to do justice to these works in two ways – both as an historical source and as autonomous works of art.

Each Saturday, 1 pm

4 €, plus admission

### English Tour:

The guided tour offers an overview of artworks originating from the Jewish inmates of various concentration camps, labour camps and ghettos. From the 50 artists featured, 24 were murdered by the National Socialists and the tour



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focuses on their biographies as well as the circumstances under which the works were created.

Each Friday, 2 pm  
4 €, plus admission, 60 minutes

**Further Special Tours:**

Wednesday, 27th January 2016, 1 pm  
Admission free

**Public Guided Tour**

Wednesday, 27th January 2016, 3 pm  
Admission free

**English Tour**

Friday, 25th March 2016, 3 pm  
4 €, plus admission

**Public Guided Tour**

Sunday, 27th March 2016, 1 pm  
4 €, plus admission

**Public Guided Tour**

**Guided tours for elementary school and secondary school classes**

Despite being at the mercy of their oppressors, the prisoners of the National Socialists' labour camps still managed to surreptitiously create works of art, which enabled them to preserve a degree of freedom, hope and dignity. Today their paintings serve as crucial testimony to the horrors experienced in the concentration camps, labour camps and ghettos. By featuring selected biographies, the pupils are granted an insight into the personal fate of the persecuted inmates and into their daily struggle between helplessness and self-survival. Both in the choice of motifs and composition, these images constitute works of art in their own right. By viewing and interpreting the water colours, drawings and oil paintings, it is hoped to enhance the ability of the pupils to analyse such evocative images.

**Booking a guided tour:**

Groups 75 € (max. 25 people), plus admission

School classes 1 € per pupil, admission free, includes up to 2 accompanying adults per school class

**Book at:** [fuehrung@dhm.de](mailto:fuehrung@dhm.de), Tel.: +49 (0)30-20304-750

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## Yad Vashem



Spanning over some 45 acres across Jerusalem's Mount of Remembrance, Yad Vashem is the world center for Holocaust education, remembrance, research and documentation. For over six decades, Yad Vashem has dedicated itself to perpetuating the memory of

the Jewish men, women and children who were murdered by Nazi Germany and its collaborators, and to passing on the legacy of the survivors. Its state-of-the-art museums, world-class research and education centers, and expansive archives and libraries provide an unparalleled venue for inter-generational learning and contemplation, reflected also in its comprehensive online resources utilized by millions of people around the globe. Drawing on the memories of the past, Yad Vashem seeks to meaningfully impart the legacy of the Shoah for generations to come.

Yad Vashem's Art Collection is comprised of close to 10,000 works of art, most of which were created during the Holocaust. These provide a unique perspective based on the individual's experience. Each of these works is, in essence, an irreplaceable personal testimony of human existence during the Holocaust.



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Art from the Holocaust –  
100 Works from the Yad Vashem Collection

## Foundation for Art and Culture (Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur e.V. Bonn)

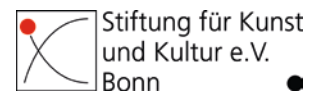
A Gerhard Richter retrospective in Duisburg, an exhibition of contemporary German art in Beijing, a sculptural tour through Salzburg's historical Old City or a major thematic exhibition on art and press in Berlin – the spectrum of themes and venues chosen by the Foundation for Art and Culture is as broad as it is diverse. Launched as a private initiative in 1986, and perceiving itself both as a creative think tank and driver of projects spanning all aspects of contemporary art and culture, the Foundation is due to celebrate its thirtieth anniversary in May 2016. The main focus of its activities lies in mounting exhibitions, public art projects and organising cultural-political events, which are held both in the Foundation's headquarters in Bonn and in many other places. To date, we have staged over 300 major and minor art projects, funded almost exclusively by sponsors from commerce and industry and by private individuals. Our declared objective is to achieve public impact through private initiative.

### Projects

The Foundation has organised major theme-based exhibitions, including "60 Years. 60 Works. Art from the Federal Republic of Germany from 1949 to 2009", staged in Berlin's Martin-Gropius-Bau, together with surveys of the art scene of a featured country or solo shows by artists such as Tony Cragg, Anselm Kiefer, Gilbert & George, K.O. Götz, Jörg Immendorff, Gerhard Richter, Sean Scully, Günther Uecker, to name but a few.

In Duisburg the Foundation established the MKM Museum Küppersmühle for Modern Art, which it has operated since 1999, and in which it holds changing exhibitions, in addition to the permanent Ströher Collection ([www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de](http://www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de)). The Foundation has also assumed a pioneering role in promoting contemporary Chinese art in Europe. With the "CHINA 8" exhibition (2015), involving the collaboration of nine museums in eight cities along the Rhine and Ruhr, it has also staged the world's largest museum-based survey of modern Chinese art to date.

In cooperation with the Salzburg Foundation, the Foundation launched the "Walk of Modern Art" between 2002-2011, a globally unique sculptural tour through the public spaces of Salzburg's Old City, featuring a total of 12 works by highly acclaimed contemporary artists. Since 2014, the Foundation in Salzburg has been engaged in mounting the series of exhibitions entitled "Art and Church", together with the sculpture project sited on the city's famous Krauthügel ([www.salzburgfoundation.at](http://www.salzburgfoundation.at)).



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The Foundation has also been fostering public art in the city of Bonn, and is currently preparing the installation of the monumental sculpture ARC '89 by the French artist Bernar Venet on the "Bg/Museum Mile", which commemorates German Reunification and its profound repercussions. After Markus Lüpertz and Tony Cragg, this marks the third "Art Project Bonn". Within the Ruhr region the Foundation is also collaborating in the initiative "PUBLIC ART RUHR", launched by the RuhrKunstMuseen alliance.

**For an overview of the Foundation's projects please visit:  
[www.stiftungkunst.de](http://www.stiftungkunst.de).**

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**DEUTSCHES  
HISTORISCHES  
MUSEUM**



Stiftung für Kunst  
und Kultur e.V.  
Bonn



**Yad Vashem**

**Deutsches Historisches Museum**

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## That Which Remains

By **Walter Smerling** and **Alexander Koch**

One hundred works from Yad Vashem—never before have the doors of the central memorial to the victims of the Holocaust been opened so wide for an exhibition outside of Israel. There are no words of consolation that could help to overcome the Holocaust, that unthinkable crime against humanity. No words that could excuse this trauma or even compensate for it. There are simply no words that could bring comfort. The book written by Alexander Kluge and dedicated to the initiator of the Auschwitz trials, Chief Public Prosecutor Fritz Bauer, bears the title *Wer ein Wort des Trostes spricht, ist ein Verräter* (He Who Utters a Word of Solace Is a Traitor). This title must be taken at face value. Kluge is of the opinion that those who have not suffered themselves cannot and should not offer solace. Or, to put it another way, no subsequent narrative can reverse the sins of the past. In his notes on “human dignity in ourselves” he also states, “He recited for his guest a formulation by Immanuel Kant, whereby every misdeed against human dignity destroys our own dignity, so that such a deed is not only committed against the victim but also against the perpetrator, as well as all of us.”

The pictures in the exhibition *Art from the Holocaust* take on a special role. These one hundred works were created by detainees in various concentration camps, labor camps, and ghettos. Of the fifty artists presented here, twenty-four were murdered by the National Socialists. The works—predominantly works on paper—were created clandestinely and under inhumane conditions. They provide testimony to the power of the creative spirit in the face of suffering and death as well as to the conflict between the reality of the Holocaust and an imaginary alternative world. Here, art was created against all possible obstacles in order to ensure a constant presence of the very meaning of humanity under the most dire circumstances. Just try to imagine, in the midst of suffering and degradation, knowing that the hour of death—bestially organized—is imminent, someone has the strength and the creativity to create art, images of an abhorrent environment, but also of longing and hope. This insight into the very core of the Holocaust is what is so special about this exhibition. We cannot even imagine what the situation was like for these people, but within the images presented here there is a certain truth, which helps us to at least gain an inkling. The exhibition is both a memorial and an imperative to never again jeopardize the dignity of mankind.

This exhibition sets a great deal in motion: thoughts about the dimension of evil, about keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive, about the quality of dignity. “To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric,” Theodor W. Adorno stated in 1949, thus decidedly shaping the discussion on cultural history in the post-war era. The works



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in this exhibition were not created after Auschwitz, but rather in Auschwitz and other camps. They bear witness to the endless horror and terror. And it is precisely this immediate, complex identity of the works that disturbs us and concurrently renders us speechless.

**Walter Smerling**

Curator / Chairman of the Foundation for Art and Culture

**Alexander Koch**

President of the Foundation of the Deutsches Historisches Museum



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HISTORISCHES  
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## **Preface**

By **Dieter Zetsche**

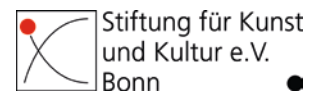
The pictures from Yad Vashem movingly demonstrate what art is capable of: upholding humaneness—also under the most inhumane conditions. For me, this exhibition is powerful evidence of the strength and freedom of the human spirit. A freedom that remains unbroken in all situations.

At the same time, this exhibition should provide further cause to remember the crimes of the Nazi era and to stand up for freedom and tolerance in society. Today more than ever.

Daimler AG is aware of its past and its responsibility. That is one of the reasons why we nowadays place particular importance on openness and tolerance amongst our approximately 280,000 employees from more than 150 nations. Accordingly, we are glad to contribute toward making the unique exhibition Art from the Holocaust accessible for the first time to the public in Germany. I hope that the artworks from exceptional artists will move a great number of visitors—but, above all, will make them reflect.

**Dieter Zetsche**

Chairman of the Board of Management of Daimler AG,  
Head of Mercedes-Benz Cars



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**DAIMLER**

## Preface

By John Cryan and Jürgen Fitschen

Yad Vashem, the name of the Israeli memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, refers to a text from the Old Testament. In the Book of Isaiah (56:5), it is stated: "To them I will give within My Temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever." It is thus a memorial for the millions of those murdered, in order to name each of them as individuals, to pay tribute to the victims, to never forget them, and to learn from history.

A deeply personal and especially moving visualization of those who were detained and those who died in the concentration camps is provided by the drawings made there at the highest of risks and now preserved in the collection of the museum at Yad Vashem. These are unparalleled pictures, which document the unimaginable horror but also evoke hopes and memories. To facilitate this exhibition of a selection of these works in the German Historical Museum in Berlin was a high priority for Deutsche Bank. For by presenting these pictures, the fate of those who were murdered and detained is demonstrated with the greatest immediacy—and, with this, also the necessity to keep the memory of the past alive.

Coming to terms with the past and recognizing one's responsibility toward this also dictate the actions of Deutsche Bank with regard to its own history: we are conscious of our own ethical and moral responsibility and are committed to this, for Deutsche Bank also subordinated itself to the racist goals of the Nazi regime from the very beginning. In 2000, together with the German business community and the federal government of Germany, the bank thus participated in establishing the foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and the Future for the benefit of victims of the Nazi era and continues to make all efforts to have its own past fully and critically reappraised.

Art from the Holocaust is the last in a series of events commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Israel and Germany. We very much hope—and will actively work toward these ends—that this exhibition meets with the level of recognition commensurate with its significance and its message, so that we can continue to learn from the past for the benefit of the future.

John Cryan  
Jürgen Fitschen  
Deutsche Bank AG



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Yad Vashem



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