



THE CAPITAL'S ART SCENE SHINES

With the annual Berlin Art Week this month, **Hilda Hoy** explores the rich creative offerings of Berlin and charts the best places to admire some art.

Artists love Berlin, and Berlin loves art. With a relatively low cost of living, a permissive, laissez-faire attitude, and healthy public funding of the arts, the capital has long been a destination for artists and art-lovers of all stripes. Creativity – and an appreciation for it – has thrived here for many generations, leaving behind a robust legacy of museums, galleries, and private collections that easily ranks among the best

in the Western world.

Every fall, **Berlin Art Week** (15-20 September) capitalizes on this reputation with not one but two art fairs that draw artists, gallerists, collectors, and art enthusiasts to discover what the local scene has to offer. Both celebrations are open to the public and provide an overview of current art trends as well as a behind-the-scenes peek of the art market. The first of these fairs, **abc – art berlin contemporary**

(www.artberlincontemporary.com), takes place 17–20 September at STATION Berlin, where high-powered galleries from around the world unveil the creative masterpieces of their best and brightest artists. Whether you're an ardent collector looking for your next must-have painting or merely a curious fan, abc offers a diverse concentration of contemporary art under one roof.

The smaller **Positions Berlin** (www.positions.de) is poised to make its second



Clockwise from left: A scene from the 2014 Berlin Art Week, a photo collage by Dieter Urbach, an event from last year's Berlin Art Week, Mwangi Hutter's *Field of Joy* (2015) at Deutsche Bank KunstHalle's *Xenopolis* exhibit, Alicja Kwade's *Theoretisches Gebilde I* (*Theoretical Structure I*), Engelbert Kremser's unrealized design for the Europa-Center.

foray at Berlin Art Week. Founder Kristian Jarmuschek, himself a local gallerist, introduced the upstart fair last year in an attempt to break abc's monopoly, citing his belief that diversity and breadth can only benefit the Berlin art scene. Similarly to abc, Positions brings together local and international galleries to present their most cutting-edge offerings, which come together at the spacious **Arena** (p. 56) venue in Kreuzberg.

In addition to the two art fairs, a number of special Berlin Art Week exhibitions, performances, and artist talks are also

held in galleries, museums, and project spaces across the city. Not to be missed is **Extended Reality**, a solo show by daring conceptual artist Alicja Kwade, opening on 18 September at **Haus am Waldsee** (p. 44). Represented by the very respected Galerie Johann König, the Berlin-based artist is renowned for her sculptural installations that question the nature of reality and the systems of order we rely upon.

Also on Art Week's program is **STADT/ BILD (Image of a City)**, an expansive exhibition taking place across four different venues. Don't miss the perspectives

on urbanism captured at **Deutsche Bank KunstHalle's** (p. 44) **STADT/ BILD. Xenopolis**, which presents the city as a living organism independent of its residents. The **KW Institute for Contemporary Art** (p. 44), meanwhile, has titled its contribution to the four-part exhibition **Welcome to the Jungle**. From indoor swimming pools in Japan to bowling alleys in Berlin, the show's works explore imaginary, subconscious places that exist beyond the tangible city we can control. Both shows open 15 September.

The recipient of the renowned Käthe



Top to bottom: Loris Cecchini's *Monologue Patterns* (2009) features at Deutsche Bank KunstHalle's *Xenopolis* exhibit; American photographer Cindy Sherman's conceptual portraiture will be on display at the me Collectors Room.

Kollwitz Prize for 2015 is French artist **Bernard Frize**, whose win is being fêted with a new show at the exhibition space at the **Academy of the Arts** (p. 42). The awarding of the prize on 10 September doubles as the launch of Frize's show, which stars his sensually splashy yet introverted paintings. Also opening during Berlin Art Week is an exhibition of the work of **Cindy Sherman** at **me Collectors Room** (p. 45) on 16 September,

presenting 60 photographs from every phase of the renowned American artist's decades-long career. Sherman, playing both subject and artist, by turns depicts herself as magazine centerfold, film starlet, or unhappy housewife, uncannily mimicking and deconstructing cultural tropes and stereotypes. Like all the Berlin Art Week openings, this show is ongoing – and well worth a visit even after the week has drawn to a close. [W](#)

ART ATTRACTIONS

Even outside Berlin Art Week's fairs and exhibitions, the city is always teeming with museums, with art from throughout the ages in particular. Love the Flemish Old Masters? Crazy for Picasso? Want to see some German heavyweights like Caspar David Friedrich? Here are the museums you'll want to add to your itinerary.

THE OLD CLASSICS

To admire grand, historic paintings, visit the **Gemäldegalerie** (p. 44), which covers the breadth of European painting from the 13th to 18th centuries. Expect to see works by such Italian greats as Titian, Caravaggio, and Botticelli, plus Dutch and Flemish Old Masters like Rembrandt, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, and Jan van Eyck.

At Museum Island's **Alte Nationalgalerie** (p. 44), the permanent collection includes paintings by Friedrich and Adolph Menzel – considered the two most prominent German artists of the 19th century – as well as Romantic and Impressionist masterpieces by Monet and Manet.

To go really far back on the art timeline, visit the **Bode Museum** (p. 44), which boasts an impressive collection of Byzantine artwork that spans the 3rd through 15th centuries. Amongst the Christian artifacts and mosaic icons, you'll find evocative pieces by famed German sculptor Tilman Riemenschneider.

20TH CENTURY AND BEYOND

From Cubism to Dada, the previous century brought about many monumental changes in the way art was created and seen.

Museum Berggruen (p. 45) has more than 120 works by one of the era's greatest artists, Picasso, plus pieces by Cézanne, Paul Klee, Henri Matisse, and Georges Braque. Directly across the road (and accessible with the same ticket) is **Sammlung Scharf-Gerstenberg** (p. 45), a Surrealist treasure trove featuring Salvador Dali, Max Ernst, and René Magritte.

BEYOND EUROPE

Admire calligraphy scrolls, jade carvings, and sacred terracotta sculptures at the **Museum of Asian Art** (p. 42), which covers a wide swath of the Asian continent, from Korea to India. And not to be overlooked is Museum Island's venerable **Pergamon Museum** (p. 42), home to the **Museum of Islamic Art**, one of the most important collections of such art outside the Islamic world.