

What is Modern Art? (Group Show)

Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Walter Benjamin, Arnold Bode, Kazimir Malevich, Porter McCray, Dorothy Miller, Piet Mondrian, Salon de Fleurus, International Exhibition of Modern Art, Museum of Modern Art, Museum of American Art

Künstlerhaus Bethanien
& Galerie 35, Museum of American Art
Berlin, September 29 – October 29, 2006
www.whatismodernart.de

Exhibition Venues:

Künstlerhaus Bethanien

Mariannenplatz 2, D-10997 Berlin
Tel. ++49 – 30 – 616 903-0
Opening: Thursday, September 28, 2006, 19:00
With Christoph Tannert, Künstlerhaus Bethanien; Prof. Dr. Michael Fehr, Universität der Künste, Berlin; Dr. Inke Arns, Co-curator of the exhibition
Duration: September 29 – October 29, 2006
Opening hours: Wed-Sun 14:00 - 19:00

Museum of American Art – MoAA (permanent collection)

Frankfurter Allee 91, Berlin-Friedrichshain
Tel. ++49 – 30 – 420 222 21
Opening hours: Wed – Sun 14:00 – 19:00

Galerie 35 (Piet Mondrian, *Recent Paintings*, 1963-1996)

Simon-Dach-Str. 35, Berlin-Friedrichshain
Tel. ++49 – 30 – 257 688 89
Opening: Saturday, September 30, 2006, 20:00
Duration: October 1 – 29, 2006
Opening hours: Thu-Sun 15:00 – 20:00

Website: www.whatismodernart.de

Curators/Editors: Inke Arns, Berlin/Dortmund & Walter Benjamin, New York

Press preview: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Thursday, September 28, 2006, 11:00

Catalogue: A comprehensive two-volume catalogue will be published (source material / critical texts) in English and German.
Inke Arns, Walter Benjamin (eds.)
What is Modern Art? (Group Show)
Revolver – Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt am Main 2006
Vol. 1: 116 pages, ca. 110 color ill., Vol. 2: 96 pages, b/w, both 19x25,5 cm, 35 €

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Funded by: Kulturstiftung des Bundes

A project by mikro e.V., Berlin
Supported by Künstlerhaus Bethanien GmbH, Berlin

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Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Walter Benjamin, Arnold Bode, Kazimir Malevich, Porter McCray, Dorothy Miller, Piet Mondrian, Salon de Fleurus, International Exhibition of Modern Art, Museum of Modern Art, Museum of American Art

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Press release

The exhibition *What is Modern Art? (Group Show)* which takes place in Berlin from 29 September until 29 October 2006 in parallel to ArtForum Berlin gathers a series of art projects that have contributed to the development of a specific art practice based on anonymity and copying. These projects examine authors, exhibitions and institutions central to 20th century art (and its historiography), using copies to de- and reconstruct their specific art historical events and narratives. Some of them, with roots in the (South-Eastern) European art scene of the 1970s-80s, became a central point of inspiration for a younger generation of artists. So far, Salons, Mausoleums and Museums with permanent exhibitions have been established in New York, Belgrade and, most recently, Berlin.

What is Modern Art (Group Show) is the first exhibition internationally to gather these projects in a comprehensive group exhibit at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, the Galerie 35 and the Museum of American Art in Berlin. It is being curated, or rather edited, by Inke Arns (Berlin) and Walter Benjamin (New York).

The exhibition at Künstlerhaus Bethanien includes *Collection of Drawings of an Art Amateur Made on his Travels through a Mysterious and Faraway Land*, 1900, *Moderne Kunst from the Museum Folkwang*, Hagen 1904, and *From the Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1905-1913). All three works are by the Salon de Fleurus (New York), and examine the art of the 19th and the early 20th centuries. They are on display at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Studio 1 on the first floor. Studios 2 and 4 feature the *International Exhibition of Modern Art (Armory Show)*, 2013, and Kazimir Malevich's *Last Futurist Exhibition 0,10*, two important exhibitions that took place in the US and Russia between 1913 and 1916. Studio 2 also contains Alfred Barr's *Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1936*, while new works by the Museum of American Art focusing on documenta 2 (1959) can be found in Studio 1, ground floor: Arnold Bode, *Documenta II – Opening* (1959), Arnold Bode, *Documenta II – Visitors* (1959), Porter McCray, *Documenta II – Americans* (1959) and Dorothy Miller, *Neue Amerikanische Malerei* (1958).

As the Museum of American Art in Berlin-Friedrichshain shows its permanent collection (predominantly representatives of Abstract Expressionism 1953-59), the Galerie 35 presents *Recent Works* by Piet Mondrian, accompanied by video recordings of lectures by Walter Benjamin and Katherine Dreier.

A comprehensive two-volume catalogue (German/English) will be published by Revolver – Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt am Main 2006.

What is Modern Art? (Group Show)
Künstlerhaus Bethanien
& Galerie 35 / Museum of American Art
Berlin, September 29 – October 29, 2006

Edited by: Inke Arns (Berlin) &
Walter Benjamin (New York)

Organisation: Mara Traumane (Berlin/Riga)

Technical director (Künstlerhaus Bethanien): Toni Lebkücher

Technical assistant (MoAA): Goran Djordjević

Buchhaltung (mikro e.V.): Niels van Wieringen (Berlin)

Funded by Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

A project by mikro e.V., Berlin.

Generously supported by Künstlerhaus
Bethanien GmbH, Berlin.

List of exhibited works

Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Studio 1 – lower level

Museum of American Art

- Arnold Bode, *Documenta II – Opening*, 1959, 25 paintings à 100 x 70 cm (courtesy of the Museum of American Art)
- Arnold Bode, *Documenta II – Visitors*, 1959, 12 paintings à 210 x 169 cm (courtesy of the Museum of American Art)
- Porter McCray, *Documenta II (Americans)*, 1959, 24 paintings à 86 x 86 cm, 4 paintings à 200 cm x 150 cm (courtesy of the Museum of American Art)
- Dorothy Miller, *Neue Amerikanische Malerei*, 1958, 24 paintings à 96 x 84 cm, 2 paintings à 200 x 150 cm (courtesy of the Museum of American Art)

- Kunst nach 45. Ein Bericht über die documenta II (Art after 45. A reportage about documenta II), *Hessischer Rundfunk*, Erstausstrahlung / first aired on August 4, 1959, DVD, 20 min.

- *Modern American Art from the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art*, Belgrade 1956, *Filmske Novosti*, 1956, DVD, 1:20 min.

Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Studio 1 – upper level

Salon de Fleurus

- *Collection of Drawings of an Art Amateur Made on His Travels through a Mysterious and Faraway Land*, 1900, 130 framed drawings (courtesy of Karl Ernst Osthaus-Museum der Stadt Hagen)
- *Moderne Kunst*, 1904, 26 paintings, various dimensions (courtesy of Karl Ernst Osthaus-Museum der Stadt Hagen)
- *From the Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, 1905–1913, 20 paintings, various dimensions, 40 objects, 1 african sculpture (courtesy of Salon de Fleurus)

Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Studio 2

– *International Exhibition of Modern Art*, 2013, 46 paintings and objects

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Carl André
<i>Pyre (Element Stries)</i> , 1913
Wood, 42 x 42 x 42 cm | 8. Giorgio de Chirico
<i>Nostalgia of the Infè nite</i> , 1993
Acrylic on canvas, 132 x 61 cm |
| 2. Hans Arp
<i>Enak's Tears Terrestrial Forms</i> , 1967
Acrylic on canvas, 118 x 145 cm | 9. André Derain
<i>Westminster Bridge</i> , 1996
Acrylic on canvas, 82 x 100 cm |
| 3. Constantin Brancusi
<i>Mlle Pogany</i> , 1968
Plaster, 30 x 30 x 51 cm | 10. Jan Dibbets
<i>Perspective Correction</i> , 1907
Acrylic on canvas, 123 x 123 cm |
| 4. Constantin Brancusi
<i>The Kiss</i> , 1970
Plaster, 25 x 20 x 33 cm | 11. Marcel Duchamp
<i>Fresh Widow (Rrose Selavy)</i> , 2019
Mixed Media, 80 x 45 cm |
| 5. Constantin Brancusi
<i>Sleeping Muse</i> , 1969
Plaster, 16 x 20 x 30 cm | 12. Marcel Duchamp
<i>Bicycle Wheel</i> , 1986
Mixed Media, 65 x 40 x 140 cm |
| 6. Georges Braque
<i>Grand Nu</i> , 1991
Acrylic on canvas, 136 x 100 cm | 13. Marcel Duchamp
<i>L.H.O.O.Q.</i> , 1984
Mixed Media, 65 x 55 cm |
| 7. Paul Cézanne
<i>The Bather</i> , 2006
Acrylic on canvas, 124 x 94 cm | 14. Marcel Duchamp
<i>Fountain</i> , 1971
Plaster, 40 x 60 x 38 cm |

15. Marcel Duchamp
Nude Descending a Staircase, No.2, 1973
Acrylic on canvas, 160 x 101 cm
16. Jasper Johns
Flag, 1930
Acrylic on canvas, 110 x 154 cm
17. Jasper Johns
Target with Four Faces, 1932
Mixed Media, 87 x 66 cm
18. Wassily Kandinsky
Improvisation No 27, 1976
Acrylic on canvas, 123 x 144 cm
19. Wasily Kandinsky
Painting with Black Curve, 1976
Acrylic on canvas, 110 x 120 cm
20. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner
Five Women in the Street, 1993
Acrylic on canvas, 120 x 88 cm
21. Joseph Kosuth
Idea (A.A.I.A.I.), 1905
Acrylic on canvas, 184 x 184 cm
22. Joseph Kosuth
Painting (A.A.I.A.I.), 1905
Acrylic on canvas, 184 x 184 cm
23. Roy Lichtenstein
Still Life with Goldfish Bowl and Painting of a Golf Ball, 1911
Acrylic on canvas, 203 x 143 cm
24. Roy Lichtenstein
Woman with Flowered Hat, 1913
Acrylic on canvas, 203 x 143 cm
25. René Magritte
The Use of the Words I, 1968
Acrylic on canvas, 55 x 74 cm
26. René Magritte
The False Mirror, 1968
Acrylic on canvas, 54 x 80 cm
27. Kazimir Malevich
Black Square, 1985
Acrylic on canvas, 80 x 80 cm
28. Kazimir Malevich
Painterly Realism, Boy with Knapsack – Colour Masses in the Fourth Dimension, 1985
Acrylic on canvas, 71 x 45 cm
29. Kazimir Malevich
Black Square, 1985
Gips, 37 x 37 x 10 cm
30. Henri Matisse
Red Studio, 1988
Acrylic on canvas, 167 x 205 cm
31. Henri Matisse
Dance I, 1990
Acrylic on canvas, 143 x 204 cm
32. Henri Matisse
Dance II, 1990
Acrylic on canvas, 143 x 204 cm
33. Henri Matisse
Blue Nude, 1997
Acrylic on canvas, 91 x 137 cm
34. Piet Mondrian
Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue, 1983
Acrylic on canvas, 44 x 44 cm
35. Piet Mondrian
Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue, 1983
Acrylic on canvas, 44 x 44 cm
36. Piet Mondrian
Composition, 1965
Acrylic on canvas, 108 x 58 cm
37. Piet Mondrian
Composition in Black and White, 1966
Acrylic on canvas, 80 x 80 cm
38. Edvard Munch
Madona, 2002
Acrylic on canvas, 120 x 90 cm
39. Barnett Newman
Onement III, 1922
Acrylic on canvas, 183 x 85 cm
40. Francis Picabia
The Spring, 1972
Acrylic on canvas, 200 x 200 cm
41. Pablo Picasso
Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.), 1995
Acrylic on canvas, 201 x 191 cm
42. Pablo Picasso
Three Musicians I, 1978
Acrylic on canvas, 206 x 192 cm
43. Pablo Picasso
Three Musicians II, 1978
Acrylic on canvas, 196 x 204 cm
44. Ad Reinhart
Abstract Painting. Red, 1921
Acrylic on canvas, 275 x 120 cm
45. Aleksandr Rodchenko
Spatial Construction, 1976
Wood, 43 x 43 x 71 cm
46. Frank Stella
Ossipee I, 1932
Acrylic on canvas, 196 x 203 cm

– Alfred Barr, *Museum of Modern Art, 1936*, 200 x 200 x 50 cm, wood, 61 paintings (acrylic on cardboard, various dimensions) and an object (plaster) (courtesy of the Museum of American Art)

Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Studio 4

– Kazimir Malevich, *The Last Futurist Show*, 1985, installation, 21 paintings, 6 needle points, 2 reliefs, 1 black and red cross, 1 object, 2 sculptures, 1 column, 1 pedestal, various dimensions

Galerie 35, Simon-Dach-Str. 35, Berlin-Friedrichshain

- Piet Mondrian, *Recent Paintings*, 1963–1996, 12 paintings à 60 x 80 cm
- Walter Benjamin, “Mondrian ’63–’96” (Video), lecture in Belgrad, 1986, recorded in 1987 for “TV Galerija” by Dunja Blažević
- Katherine Dreier, “Mondrian’s Nod” (Video), lecture in New York, 1992, recorded by Colleen Fitzgibbon

Museum of American Art, Frankfurter Allee 91, Berlin-Friedrichshain

– permanent collection; 1953–1959, paintings, furniture, printed matter

Catalogue

The catalogue published on the occasion of this exhibition is bilingual and consists of two volumes.

The first of these contains exhaustive source material on the works in the exhibition (and beyond). Many of these documents are being published here for the first time.

The second volume contains critical commentary in the form of articles and an interview. The contributions focus on individual bodies of works. Juliane Debeusscher's text examines the *Americans 64* of the Museum of American Art displayed at the Venice Biennial 2005, while Branislav Dimitrijević reflects upon the Kunsthistorisches Mausoleum in Belgrade. Kim Levin discusses the Salon de Fleurus and Katherine Dreier's lecture on *Mondrian 63-96* in New York. Slobodan Mijušković examines the *International Exhibition of Modern Art* in Belgrade in 1986. The catalogue also contains an interview that Beti Žerovc made with Walter Benjamin at the presentation of the Museum of American Art's collection *Americans 64* at the Venice Biennale 2005.

The present catalogue's layout corresponds to the design of the publication *What is Modern Painting*, published by the New York MoMA in 1948.

Inke Arns, Walter Benjamin (eds.)

What is Modern Art? (Group Show)

A publication of the Museum of American Art (MoAA)

Revolver – Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt am Main 2006

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- in slipcase -

in the exhibition: 35 €

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What is Modern Art? (Group Show)

Ed. by Inke Arns & Walter Benjamin, Revolver: Frankfurt am Main 2006
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Preface

Inke Arns

Tripping into Art (Hi)Stories: Genealogy and/as Fiction. On the exhibition *What is Modern Art? (Group Show)*

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Acknowledgements

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Authors' Biographies

Inke Arns (Dortmund/Berlin) is artistic director of Hartware MedienKunstVerein in Dortmund (Germany), curator, lecturer and author focussing on media art, net cultures and Eastern Europe; studied Eastern European cultural studies, political science and art history in Berlin and Amsterdam 1989-1996; PhD degree at Humboldt University Berlin in 2004. Recent exhibitions include „IRWIN: Retroprincip 1983-2003“ (Berlin, Hagen, Belgrade 2003-2004), „On Disappearance“ (Dortmund 2005), „Glamour and Globalization“, „The Wonderful World of irrational.org“ (both Dortmund 2006) and „What is Modern Art? (Group Show)“ (Berlin 2006). Books include *Netz:kulturen* (2002), *Neue Slowenische Kunst* (2002), and *Objects in the Mirror may be closer than they appear: The Avant-Garde in the Rear-View Mirror* (forthcoming in Slovenian by Maska, Ljubljana, and in German by BoD, Norderstedt 2006). www.inkearns.de

Walter Benjamin (New York) is not a political author. In addition to the interview published here, he is known for the 1986-1987 lectures on *Mondrian 36-96* and his thesis on copies (2003).

Juliane Debeusscher (Milan) is a researcher in art history, focussing on Eastern European art and its presentation within contemporary discourses. Studied art history in Montpellier and Rome. MA degree in curatorial and exhibiting practices in Rennes, France, with a thesis on the IRWIN group and its activities of recontextualization (2004). Currently conducting a MA2 research in “History and Criticism of the Arts” at the University of Rennes, with a thesis on “The Retroavantgarde – strategies of re-enunciation in Yugoslavia 1980-200..”.

Branislav Dimitrijević (Belgrade) is art historian, writer and curator; Lecturer at the School for Art and Design (VSLPUB); Associate Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade. In 1999 he co-founded “School for History and Theory of Images” in Belgrade. He is the author of various essays on contemporary art, theory of art, film and visual culture. Most recent publications: *International Exhibition of Modern art feat. A. Barr's Museum of Modern Art* (ed.), MOCAB, 2003; *On Normality: Art in Serbia 1989-2001* (ed.), MOCAB, 2005. Most recent curatorial projects: *Situated Self: Confused Compassionate, Conflictual* (with M. Hannula, 2005), *Pavilion Yugoslavia* (Biennale di Venezia, 2003, w. B. Andjelković, D. Sretenović), etc. Currently working on a PhD thesis on “Consumer Culture in Socialist Yugoslavia” at the University of Arts in Belgrade.

Slobodan Mijušković (Belgrade) is Senior Lecturer at the Art History Department of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. He is the author of the book *Od samodovoljnosti do smrti slikarstva: Umetniske teorije i prakse ruske avangarde* (Belgrade, 1998).

Kim Levin (New York) is a prominent New York art critic, curator and author of *Beyond Modernism: Essays on Art from the '70s and '80s* (Harper Collins 1988; Tokyo Shoseki 1991). She was advisor to the 1995 Kwangju Biennial in Korea and has organized exhibitions in Denmark, Germany, Japan, Norway, Poland, and the United States. President of the International Association of Art Critics from 1996 to 2002, her awards include the Art/World Award for Distinguished Newspaper Journalism in 1986 and the SECA Fellowship for Criticism by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1993. In 2004, she was selected as a Fellow for the Annenberg/Getty Arts Journalism Program.

Beti Žerovc (Ljubljana) is an art historian based in Ljubljana. She works as a researcher at the Department for Art History at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. She wrote extensively on Slovene art of the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Now she writes mainly on contemporary art, where her main subject is not the artist but the curator. Her writing has appeared in *Maska*, *M'ars*, *Site*, *Manifesta Journal*, *Zivot umjetnosti*.