

Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich





# Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich

by Melanie Klier



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Front cover: The Rotunda of the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich  
Back cover: Staircase to the Rotunda

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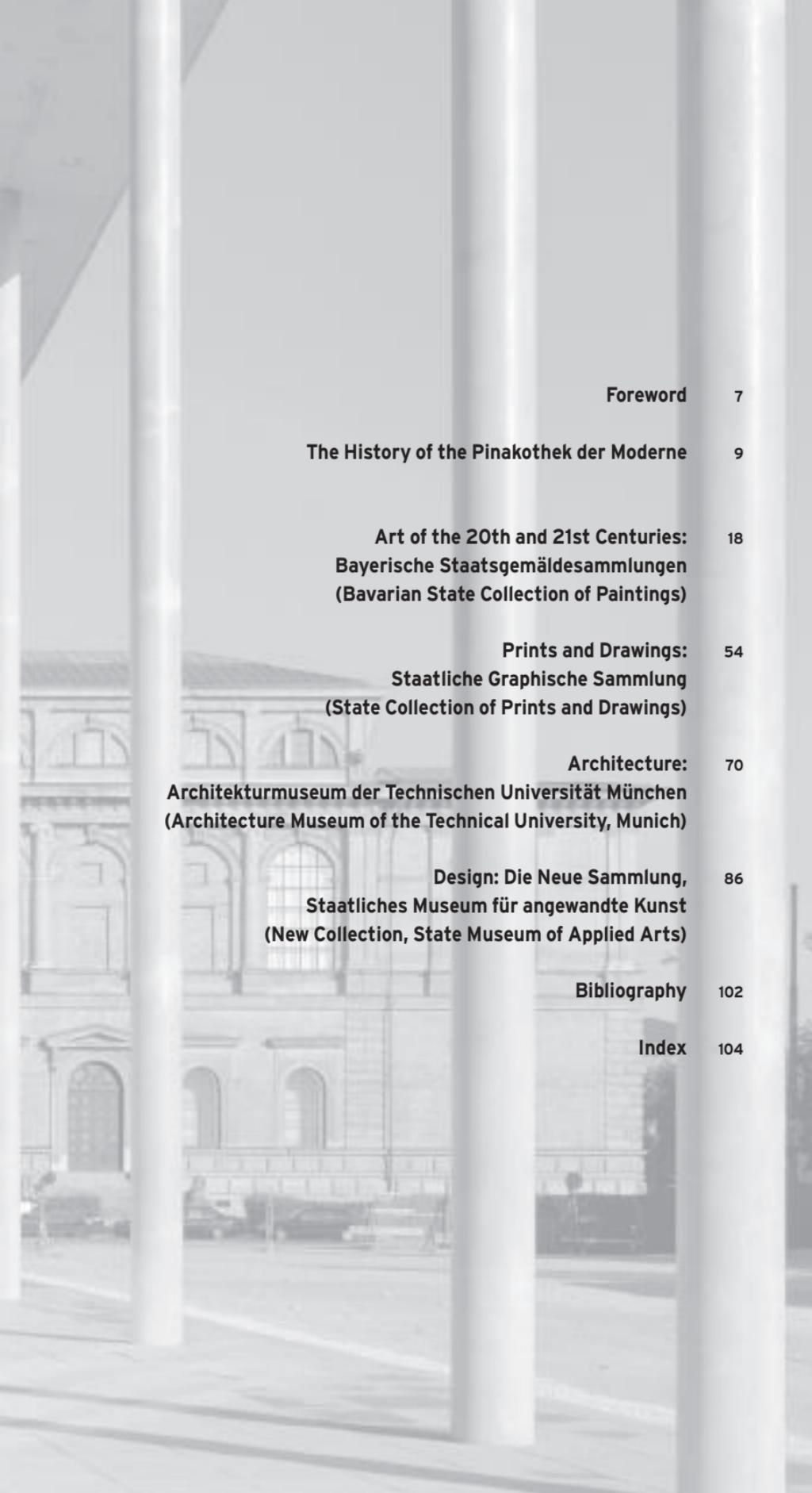
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## Foreword

Freely translated, the Spanish phrase *buscando la luz* means 'seeking the light'. It is also the name of a sculpture commissioned specially for Munich from the great Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida, who died on 19 August 2002. A sensitive, handcrafted statement on the subject of volume and space and the interaction of inside and outside, it is above all one thing: an impressive symbol of Munich's three most important art museums (the Alte and Neue Pinakothek and the Pinakothek der Moderne), and an aptly sited manifestation of the link between tradition and modernity. Three elements of rolled, undulating steel seek the light, an elegant U-shaped arrangement outside the Pinakothek der Moderne soaring eight metres high towards the sky, defying the sheer weight of the material.

This book presents the Pinakothek der Moderne, one of the largest museums in the world devoted to 20th and

21st-century art, housing not one, but four major museums. Occupying the 12,000 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space beneath its roof are the former Staatsgalerie moderner Kunst (State Gallery of Modern Art) from the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen (Bavarian State Collection of Paintings), the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung (State Collection of Prints and Drawings), the Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München (Architecture Museum of the Technical University, Munich) and the Neue Sammlung, Staatliches Museum für angewandte Kunst (New Collection, State Museum of Applied Arts). With a single ticket the visitor has access to a variety of art forms that cater for a wide range of interests and are likely to lead to new discoveries. Having come to experience computer culture or automotive design, you may well find yourself discovering contemporary architecture that may lead you to want to look at the architectural collection too. Video art buffs or fans of Max Beckmann, Pablo Picasso, Cy Twombly or Georg Baselitz might likewise go for a stroll round the Graphische Sammlung to catch a glimpse of the full range of high-quality prints and drawings the collection has to offer.

Like Chillida's sculpture, Stephan Braunfels's fantastic building is driven by the concept of transparency.

Designed on a generous scale, the open building presents glimpses, overviews and interconnections within a spectrum of art that reaches across the turn of the millennium and beyond.

The stunning design of the building in which the Pinakothek der Moderne is housed impressively brings out the individuality of the various collections and, despite the wealth and variety, enables visitors to gain ever-new insights into the works exhibited

Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002)

**Buscando la Luz** 1997

Three pieces of rolled steel,  
H each 798 cm, base dimensions each  
approx. 150 × 140 × 150 cm  
Inv. no. B 900, purchased in 2002  
with funds from Kunst am Bau and  
from a private donation

MK



## **The History of the Pinakothek der Moderne: Stephan Braunfels's Architecture**

### **Preconditions: Requirements, urban planning, prerequisites**

Just imagine everything that has to be borne in mind in order to build a museum for 20th and 21st-century art. Let's take a quick look at a few basic points, starting with the prehistory of the site and the urban planning context.

The site was one of the last undeveloped plots of land in downtown Munich, a block measuring roughly 33,100 m<sup>2</sup>. The museum is located on the southern part of the block, which lies between Gabelsbergerstrasse, Türkenstrasse, Theresienstrasse and Barerstrasse. The site used to be part of the former Türkenkaserne, a barracks built in 1826 to house the 1st and 2nd Royal Bavarian Infantry Regiments, but destroyed during air raids in the Second World War. Apart from the gateway on Türkenstrasse, none of the buildings is left, for what survived the war was later demolished. To most Munich residents, the southern part of the block was more familiar as an undeveloped site used for parking and later called Roncalli-Platz, because the Roncalli Circus set up its Big Top here between 1977 and 1996.

The design had to take into account that the area is a link between the rectangular grid of the planned Maxvorstadt area of Munich and the irregular street plan of the old city. Moreover the existence of the other cultural institutions in this part of town needed to be acknowledged. From a planning point of view, the positioning of the projected museum relative to the isolated grandeur of the Alte Pinakothek and its setting also needed to be borne in mind.

In the competition for the design of the new building—under these conditions—the key questions asked were: Could a link be created via the new building to the museum ensemble of the Alte Pinakothek and Neue Pinakothek, the Antikensammlung (Antiquities Collection) and Glyptothek (collection of Greek and Roman statuary) on Königsplatz and the adjacent Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus? As a free-standing building should the new museum form an extension of the row of Munich's great museums? Should the Pinakothek der Moderne be oriented to the old city or to the newer area of the Maxvorstadt? Or should it fit in with the mainly residential buildings of the surrounding area? And, last but not least, how should four separate Munich collections, which could hardly be more different from each other, be united under one roof? These four institutions had hitherto been in separate locations, to some extent in rather unsatisfactory accommodation?

### **A museum building as a work of art: The realisation of the diagonal and the rotunda**

These were the questions Munich architect Stephan Braunfels found answers to. His was the design that won first prize from among 167 proposals. His Pinakothek der Moderne, the third largest of the Bavarian art collections in Munich after the Alte and Neue Pinakothek, came up with some impressive solutions.

In an interview, he was asked what the principal ideas were that had influenced his design: 'The key aspect was not, as is always asserted, the diagonal, i.e. opening up the museum on two sides, but the way the huge overall complex breaks down into several separate

buildings. Thus the first section of building constitutes the core around which the second section of building can be wrapped in several stages of construction, like a skin.' Opening up diagonally from south-east to north-west was, as he said, much more an opportunity to bring out the internal relationship between the three Pinakotheks without diminishing the central prominence of the Alte Pinakothek.

Nonetheless, the Pinakothek der Moderne can be entered both from the city centre and from the Maxvorstadt side. On the south side, entry to the Museum is via the tall glazed loggia of the conservatory with its café. On the north side, visitors enter the Museum via an imposing pillared hall and glazed lobby. From either entrance, one passes into the spectacular 24.5-metre-high central hall shaped like a rotunda. This forms the starting point of all 'tours' of the Museum. The view upwards into the 30-metre-wide dome, where the incoming light is broken up as in a prism, is breathtaking. Here it is easy to understand why the Pinakothek der Moderne was described as a 'cathedral of light' even before it was opened to the public. Here in the 'core', the pivot and centre-point of the whole complex, is Braunfels's answer to the fundamental question in museum architecture as to whether the architecture should serve as a mere handmaiden to art or itself be approached as a work of art.

The architect opted for a two-part solution: 'The size of the whole complex and the specific planning problem provoked by the diagonal cutting through the building enabled the "social" areas of the Museum, such as the rotunda, entrance loggia, winter garden and grand staircase, to be









developed as a composition of exciting spatial sequences offering diverse perspectives. In the exhibition rooms proper, the architecture must take a secondary role, with clear, simple rooms lit from above, square or rectangular in varying proportions as the works of art require, with white plastered walls, a minimally obtrusive stone floor, so that in the exhibition rooms the focus is on the art, not the building.'

### **Realisation: Staircase, lighting and spatial requirements of the collections**

The ground plan of the Pinakothek der Moderne is rectangular. All exhibition rooms are grouped around the central rotunda and follow a square grid pattern. In this purist setting, the various museums are not simply stacked one above the other on three floors; the solution is more elegant. Though the rooms devoted to the Neue Sammlung are in the basement, those of the Graphische Sammlung, the Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München and temporary exhibitions are on the ground floor and the selection of 20th and 21st-century art from the Bayerische Staatsgemälde-sammlungen is displayed on the upper floor, the various areas of the Museum are also linked vertically. Braunfels achieved this, as he says, with the 'large staircase funnelling upwards and downwards, allowing visitors to pass diagonally through the whole building from the Neue Sammlung in the basement to the former Staatsgalerie moderner Kunst on the upper floor. Integrated into the rotunda, this staircase forms an extraordinary interior sculpture that over a distance of 100 metres and a height differential of 12 metres links every part of the building.'

Braunfels's design for the Museum was conceived on a supra-disciplinary basis. Externally a fair-faced concrete block (made of concrete, glass, steel), internally the building endeavours to accommodate the diverse spatial requirements of the four departments, allowing for numerous perspectives and optical links as well as conveying openness and transparency.

Particularly in the display surfaces for art on the entire upper floor, Braunfels has created a bright, light-filled space by installing a 'light ceiling combining a maximum degree of both homogeneity and variability'. The square, 1.5-metre-high light cassettes are above the 5.8-metre-high room.

Contemporary installation art, current large-scale artefacts and video art can be presented in large, darkened rooms at the end of the staircase and in the temporary exhibition area on the ground floor. 'The encircling gallery linking the first and second circuit of the painting collections provides the rotunda with another exhibition area, whence you can look down into the central foyer of the ground floor from a height of 14 metres. ... Being integrated into the double skin of the rotunda, the staircase allows visitors to break off after one of the two circuits or to take all sorts of short cuts during a circuit' (Braunfels).

Because of their sensitivity to light, the works from the Graphische Sammlung and the Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München have been housed in north-facing rooms on the east side of the ground floor, lit by artificial or indirect light. The objects in the Neue Sammlung, the Museum für angewandte Kunst, vary greatly in size—ranging from automobile designs to designer furniture or miniatures.

The rooms therefore likewise vary in

size and are optimally located on the ground floor, where they show off the design exhibits to best advantage, such as the Thonet amphitheatre.

The Pinakothek der Moderne is also a place for the exchange of new artistic ideas and for discussion and debate. The lecture theatre is the venue for this, a tiered structure reaching from the depths of the basement to the ground floor. We can also look forward to the planned Danner Rotunda, the 'jewel' of the basement and a showroom of the Neue Sammlung. This will be a walk-in, two-storey display measuring over 600 m<sup>2</sup> and presenting the whole spectrum of design exhibits.



## Chronicle

### 1990

In spring the Bavarian government decides to use the site of the former Türkenschanze, previously reserved for the Technische Universität, as the site on which to build museums instead. The ministerial council decrees that a building for four museums should be erected—the Staatsgalerie moderner Kunst, the Neue Sammlung, the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung and the Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München.

### 1992

In February 167 architects submit plans for the site. First prize is awarded to Munich-based architect Stephan Braunfels.

### 1993

In summer Bavaria's Minister President Edmund Stoiber declares the museum to be 'desirable but not necessary'. Minister of Culture Hans Zehetmair saves the day by adding that if 10 per cent of the construction costs were raised in donations, the building could proceed. The Wormland-Stiftung, long an active supporter of the Staatsgalerie, calls for an initiative to be taken up and makes the first contribution itself.

### 1994

The Stiftung Pinakothek der Moderne is founded. So far over DM 30 million have been raised. In July the Bavarian government agrees to build the museum with monies earned by privatisation measures. It imposes an unrealistic cost cap of DM 200 million.

### 1995

In December Minister President Edmund Stoiber announces the decision to go ahead with construction.

### 1996

On 9 September the first sod is turned for the 'Pinakothek der Moderne: Art—Architecture—Design'. The target date for completion is the millennium.

### 1998

July brings the topping-out ceremony. Johann Georg, Prince of Hohenzollern and Director General of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, retires. He had vigorously campaigned for the Pinakothek der Moderne. His successor is Peter-Klaus Schuster.

### 1999

Peter-Klaus Schuster is appointed Director General of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Reinhold Baumstark,



who is Schuster's successor, and his team drive planning forward.

2000

Over the following months a dispute between Braunfels and the construction authorities comes to a head. Having never been allowed control over construction, Braunfels has already resorted to legal action, owing to the use of inferior materials, for example. The architect is accused of incurring additional costs of DM 30 million. Following a stormy debate, parliament's Budget Committee approves additional funds.

2001

Construction defects are remedied, such as on the roof of the Museum, but a plague of rats also has to be dealt with.

2002

In March the Pinakothek der Moderne—bare of exhibits—is presented as 'pure architecture', to great acclaim from the specialist press. In June, the National Audit Office provides a bit of excitement once again, declaring the cost cap to be illusory and stressing that the total cost of DM 237.5 million will still be exceeded (recourse claims etc). The opening date is postponed several times before being set definitively for 16 September. Germany's Federal President, Johannes Rau, and Bavaria's Minister President, Edmund Stoiber, and Minister of Culture, Hans Zehetmair, inaugurate the Pinakothek der Moderne.

## The Pinakothek der Moderne in figures

Building:

length 143 m

width 68 m

gross volume 258,527 m<sup>2</sup>

usable floor area 20,105 m<sup>2</sup>

Exhibition space:

art 5,262 m<sup>2</sup>

prints and drawings 219 m<sup>2</sup>

architecture 424 m<sup>2</sup>

design 2,587 m<sup>2</sup>

temporary exhibitions 1,013 m<sup>2</sup>

Staircase: 100 m

height differential 12 m

Rotunda: height 24.5 m

diameter 24.75 m

Total cost: € 121,431,820

The museums and their holdings:

1. 3,000 paintings from the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen zur Kunst des 20./21. Jahrhunderts, of which some 350 are on show at any given time

2. 400,000 works on paper from the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, of which some 100 are exhibited at any given time

3. 350,000 drawings, 100,000 photographs and 500 models from the Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München, of which some 380 items are on display at any given time

4. 60,000 objects from the Neue Sammlung, Staatliches Museum für angewandte Kunst, of which 1,000 items are on show at any given time

# Art of the 20th and 21st Centuries: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen

August Macke (1887–1914)

**Girls Beneath the Trees** 1914

Oil on canvas

119.5 x 159 cm

Inv. no. 13466

Gift of Sofie and

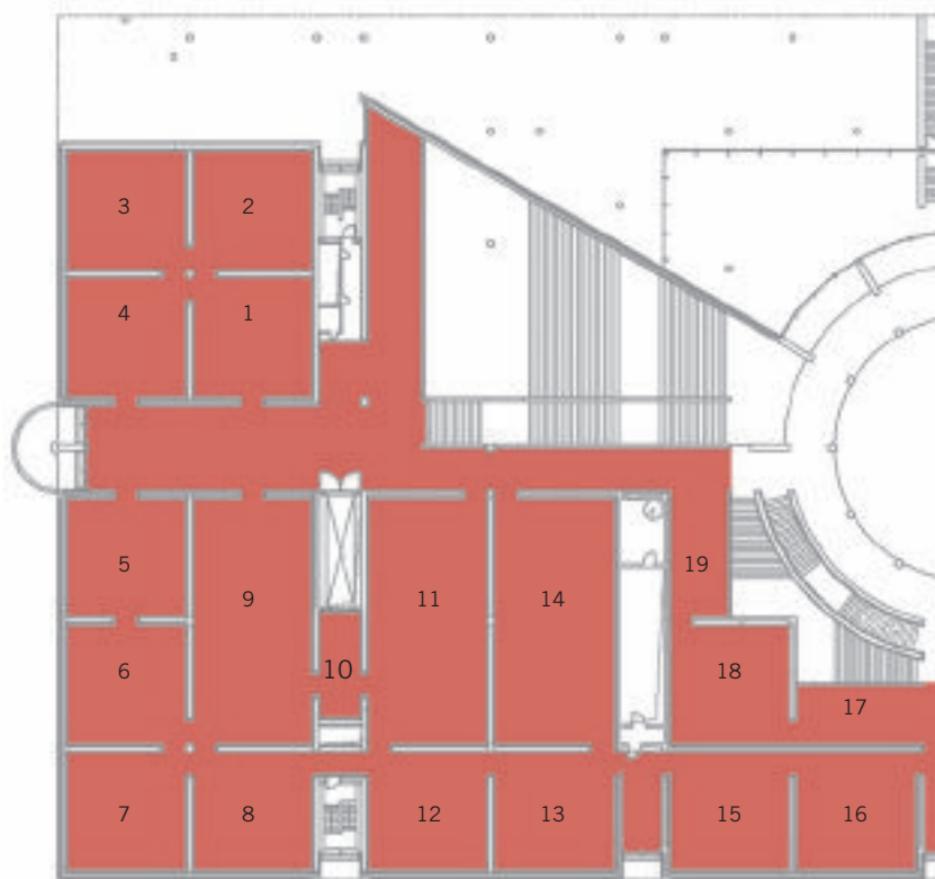
Emanuel Fohn 1964

August Macke and Robert Delaunay are two names that have come to be associated with each other. Macke's development of his own personal idiom would be inconceivable without the encouragement and impetus he received from Delaunay and his notions of art, such as the concepts of Orphism and Synchromism. Delaunay's window pictures had impressively demonstrated to the Blaue Reiter painter what could be done with 'living' colour or colour

prismatically fragmented—and how light in painting can glow from within to create an undertow of spatial depth by means of colour contrast. The present Expressionist picture by Macke depicts two sets of three girls in a park. We are drawn into a geometric arrangement of surfaces with and alongside polished colour harmonies. What is essentially an ordinary walk in the park is stylised here as an idealised, well-nigh Elysian portrayal of nature. Everyday life is seen here as a sunny, relaxed, fragrant riot of colour.



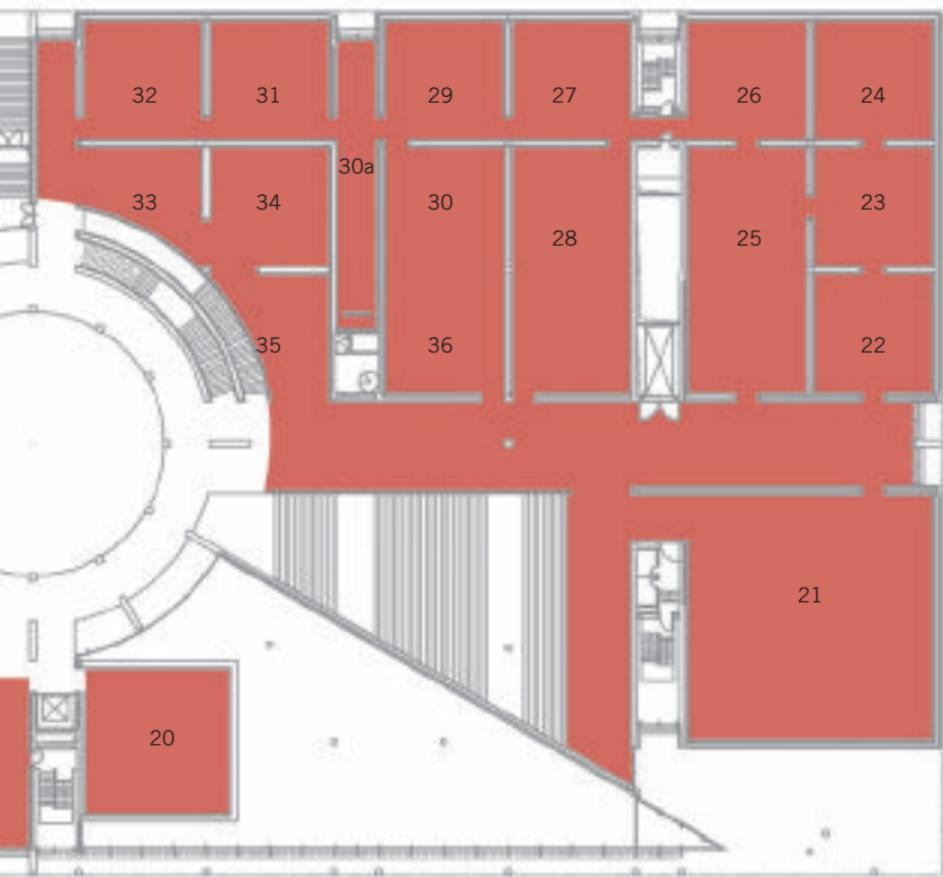




'What we exhibit is based on the biography of the collection and a certain art-historical credo. ... We are strong mainly in Beckmann, Beuys, Warhol and Baselitz. It would be completely wrong to try to show everything.' This is how Carla Schulz-Hoffmann, Deputy Director General of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, describes the exhibition of 20th and 21st-century art. It comprises the static exhibits of early modernist art in the West Wing, and art from 1960 onwards in the East Wing. Temporary exhibitions of contemporary art, which encompass installations, object art and video art, keep visitors abreast of the latest artistic trends.

Stephan Braunfels's architecture opens up many perspectives, allowing the visitor to make unexpected cross-references between rooms within the

exhibition, particularly on the upper floor. The advantage of this open matrix is that we are thereby confronted with both connections and contrasting positions in 20th and 21st-century art. The classic museum circuit is thus broken up and imperceptibly instructive. For example, in the West Wing Max Beckmann and Pablo Picasso are juxtaposed. Post-1950 art is presented on a one room, one artist basis. Thus Lucio Fontana's slashed canvases immediately precede Arnulf Rainer's overpaintings, his crucifixions. No one familiar with the way these works were hung in the old Staatsgalerie moderner Kunst would recognise the same pictures in the Pinakothek. Today one of the world's leading collections of painting, sculpture and new media, the Staatsgalerie in 1945 contained only six works of art of great significance—those of Henri Matisse, Franz



Marc, Oskar Kokoschka and Lovis Corinth. Its present rich offerings are the result of donations and bequests made since then, notably by Sofie and Emanuel Fohn in 1964 (works of German Expressionism), Theodor and Woty Werner (early modernist art), the Stiftung Günther Frankes (paintings by Max Beckmann) and Markus Kruss (works by the Brücke artists) in the 1970s and the Theo Wormland Collection (Surrealist art) and Prince Franz von Bayern Collection (German art after 1960) in the early 1980s. Since the mid-1960s the former association of art galleries, the Galerieverein München e.V. (now called PIN), has also helped build up the collection.

#### Upper storey, West Wing: Early modernism

Room 1 Fohn Collection  
Room 2 Die Brücke

Room 3	Kirchner
Room 4	Müller, Nolde, Schmidt-Rottluff
Room 5	Cubism, Futurism
Room 6	Der Blaue Reiter
Room 7	Bauhaus
Room 8	Between Expressivity and Neue Sachlichkeit
Room 9	Braque, Corinth, Kokoschka et al.
Room 10	Klee, Lehmbruck
Room 11	Beckmann
Room 12	Theo Wormland Stiftung I
Room 13	Theo Wormland Stiftung II
Room 14	Picasso
Room 15	Early Abstraction
Room 16	Appel, Burri, Jorn, Saura et al.
Rooms 17–19	Figurative Painting of the 1960s and 1970s

#### Upper storey, East Wing: Art from 1960 onwards

Room 20	Beuys
Room 21	Temporary exhibitions
Room 22	Fontana
Room 23	Rainer
Room 24	Beuys
Room 25	Judd
Room 26	Polke, Richter
Room 27	Twombly
Room 28	Baselitz
Room 29	Flavin
Room 30	Wall
Room 30a	Grimonprez
Room 31	Palermo
Room 32	Warhol
Room 33	Wall
Room 34	Bacon, Richter, Segal et al.
Room 35	Johns, Rauschenberg, de Kooning

Second upper storey: Sculpture gallery  
Basement: Temporary exhibitions



Room 1—Sofie and Emanuel Fohn Collection

Paula Modersohn-Becker  
(1876–1907)  
**Child Nude with Goldfish Bowl**  
c. 1906/07  
Oil on canvas, 105.5 x 54.5 cm  
Inv. no. 13468, Gift of Sofie and Emanuel Fohn 1964

'Paula hates the conventional and is now making the mistake of making everything angular, ugly, bizarre and

wooden.' Even Modersohn-Becker's husband, Otto, thought this, according to a diary entry of 1903. Yet the artist did not make everything merely 'ugly'; there was something to be said for the wooden and the bizarre. As an artist, her thinking was always oriented to avant-garde trends in Paris and had nothing in common with the initial views of the Worpswede artists' colony, which she had joined. The child here resembles a clay sculpture, in a style influenced by Van Gogh or Gauguin, and reveals the artist's particular

predilection for the use of symbolism. Compositinally reduced to simple forms and earthy colours, the figure of the girl would seem to have been inspired from 'primitive' art, while the motifs of fruit (fertility) and plants (growth) indicate a transitional stage between child and woman. It is an irony of fate that her preoccupation with the subject of growth and death in the year this picture was painted coincided with the artist's own death from childbirth.

#### Room 2—Die Brücke

Emil Nolde (1867–1956)

**Dance around the Golden Calf** 1910

Oil on canvas, 87.5 × 105 cm

Inv. no. 13351, purchased 1963

'To be both a child of nature and a cultivated person, to be both divine and a beast, ... that is the gifted artist

who does not cling one-sidedly to one thing but creates the greatest art.' This was Nolde's view, even in his early days, and throughout his lifetime dance in particular served as subject and means of expression in both his art and his personal life. 'Expressive' dance (Nolde had been acquainted with Mary Wigman and Loë Fuller's serpentine dances) applies especially to this picture. The biblical subject is presented without any moralising finger-wagging. By means of burning coloration and sharp, complementary contrasts (yellow-blue), the Brücke artist kindles an emotionally unbridled fire, a Dionysian intoxication. The relaxed, sensually uninhibited wildness of the spontaneous dance movements sends skirts whirling and unbound hair streaming. The stamping feet—whether barefoot or in red shoes—suggest drum rhythms. Nolde was an enthusiastic frequenter of vaudeville theatres and café dance floors.

