

# DAS MINSK

## KUNSTHAUS IN POTSDAM

### PRESS RELEASE

#### ***IN DIALOGUE***

***Hasso Plattner Collection: Art from the GDR***

**February 1 – August 10, 2025**

DAS MINSK Kunsthaus in Potsdam is showing the exhibition *IN DIALOGUE – Hasso Plattner Collection: Art from the GDR* in spring 2025. The second presentation of the collection focuses on dialogue as a means of engaging with art from the former GDR.

*IN DIALOGUE* shows approximately 50 works from the collection by artists like Gudrun Brüne, Hartwig Ebersbach, Günter Firit, Ulrich Hachulla, Rolf Händler, Bernhard Heisig, Johannes Heisig, Peter Herrmann, Ralf Kerbach, Wilhelm Klotzek, Walter Libuda, Peter Makolies, Wolfgang Mattheuer, Ursula Mattheuer-Neustädt, Harald Metzkes, Stefan Plenkers, Núria Quevedo, Robert Rehfeldt, Gerhard Richter, Arno Rink, Cornelia Schleime, Thomas Schulz, Willi Sitte, Klaus Staeck, Gabriele Stötzer, Erika Stürmer-Alex, Werner Tübke, and Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt, predominantly from the period between 1966 and 1992.

The two chapters of the exhibition highlight the artists' different perspectives, along with the contexts in which the works were created. The impetus came from Arno Rink's painting *Portrait Henry Schumann* (1968) (Portrait of Henry Schumann), which depicts the art historian and critic in Rink's studio, as well as Schumann's book *Ateliergespräche* (Studio Conversations). In this publication, released in 1976 by the Leipzig press VEB E. A. Seemann, 20 artists exchange their views with him. Well-known personalities such as Bernhard Heisig and Werner Tübke appear alongside artists with unconventional training and career paths such as Peter Herrmann. This unusual mixture of artists and the focus on their individual voices signaled a relaxation of cultural policy at the time, yet this was marred in the same year (1976) by a series of cultural-political and social events like the expatriation of the poet and song writer Wolf Biermann.

In the first exhibition space, the artworks and the artists' conversations with Schumann will be placed into a historical context. On the upper floor of MINSK, individual works come into dialogue with one another. These constellations open up a perspective onto broader questions about the history of art and cultural policy in the GDR after the year 1976. The selection is complemented by other works from the collection that illustrate the dynamic between expression and withdrawal, between speaking out and silence.

*IN DIALOGUE* also provides occasion for a new series of studio conversations

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conducted by curator Daniel Milnes with artists from the collection, which will be released as a podcast series to accompany the exhibition. In this context, works from the collection will be examined from the artists' perspective as well as how art created in the GDR is seen and shown today.

The patron Hasso Plattner collects painting with a focus, among other things, on art from the former GDR. His collection was shown for the first time at Haus der Brandenburgisch-Preußischen Geschichte in Potsdam in 2012. After individual paintings were shown in the group exhibition *Behind the Mask* 2017–18 at the Museum Barberini, DAS MINSK will now host parts of this collection for the second time within East German modernist architecture that was completed in 1977 to house the former terrace restaurant "Minsk."

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### **PRESS CONTACT *IN DIALOGUE***

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We would be happy to assist you if you need further information or images.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

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www.dasminsk.de  
Instagram: @dasminsk

**OPENING HOURS**  
Daily except Tuesdays  
Wednesday to Monday 10 am – 7 pm

**ADMISSION**  
10 Euros, 8 Euros concession

Combined ticket 20 Euros, 12 Euros concession  
The combined ticket is valid for the Museum Barberini and DAS MINSK Kunsthaus in Potsdam.

DAS MINSK Kunsthaus in Potsdam is a project of the Hasso Plattner Foundation. The goal of the Hasso Plattner Foundation is to promote the digitalization of scholarship and education, to improve access to art and culture, and to support the preservation of the environment.

www.plattnerfoundation.org

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### EXHIBITION TEXT

#### DIE ATELIERGESPRÄCHE (STUDIO CONVERSATIONS)

In 1976, the publishing house VEB E. A. Seemann in Leipzig released the book *Ateliengespräche* (Studio Conversations) by the art historian Henry Schumann. Schumann and chief editor Alfred Langer met at an exhibition opening, which led to having their first meeting at the publishing house in January 1974. Schumann then submitted a proposal for a book project that represented a novelty in what was, relatively speaking, a still nascent art historiography of the German Democratic Republic (GDR): he proposed a series of studio conversations in a dialogical format. In direct exchange, the artists should have the chance to speak for themselves, shedding light on current artistic and related sociopolitical issues, as well as sharing their personal motives and inspiration behind their work. In the resulting publication, twenty artists entered into a dialogue with Schumann. Established personalities such as Bernhard Heisig and Werner Tübke encounter positions with unconventional artistic training and career paths like Peter Herrmann.

On the ground floor of DAS MINSK, the book *Ateliengespräche* has literally been picked apart, creating a new kind of encounter with the historical conversations in the space. In addition to the individual pages from the book, works are also on display, created by artists who participated in the conversations with Schumann at the time: Bernhard Heisig, Peter Herrmann, Ursula Mattheuer-Neustädt, Harald Metzkes, Núria Quevedo, Arno Rink and Werner Tübke. The unusual mixture of established and younger positions, as well as the focus on the artist's individual voices, signaled an easing of the GDR's cultural policy at the time. However, this was fundamentally compromised in the same year, 1976, by a series of cultural-political and social events—such as the expatriation of the poet and songwriter Wolf Biermann and the public self-immolation of Pastor Oskar Brüsewitz in Zeitz.

#### THE MISSED CONVERSATIONS

On the upper floor of DAS MINSK, works of art from the collection enter into dialogue to address broader questions about the GDR's art history and cultural policy after 1976. In contrast to the presentation on the ground floor, where Schumann's historical conversations are brought into the present, the focus in the second part of the exhibition is on creating dialogues between works in the collection that, for various reasons, could not take place at the time.

This approach allows Gabriele Stötzer to come into contact with Bernhard Heisig, Wolfgang Mattheuer, Willi Sitte, and Werner Tübke through their works. In 1977, Heisig,

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Mattheuer, Sitte, and Tübke were the first official representatives from the GDR to be shown at documenta during its sixth edition in Kassel. Their appearance caused an uproar and led to Gerhard Richter and other artists withdrawing their paintings from the major art event. While these four painters were presented at documenta as figureheads of the GDR's cultural policy, Gabriele Stötzer experienced a very different treatment at the hands of the Socialist Unity Party regime, which made her invisible to the public in both the West and the East. As one of the first signatories of the petition against the expatriation of Wolf Biermann, she was arrested for her alleged dissident stance and was serving time in prison at the time of documenta 6: first in pre-trial political detention in Erfurt and then in Hoheneck women's prison. The painting *Seher in der Wüste* (Seer in the Desert, 1978–79) was one of several small-format paintings that she produced after her release, during a phase in which she was unable to speak freely about her experiences in Hoheneck.

Ralf Kerbach painted a second conversation directly onto canvas. In his painting *Dresdner Freunde* (Dresden Friends, 1983–84), the painter can be seen at a table with the artist Cornelia Schleime and the writer Sascha Anderson. Together, the three formed an important part of Dresden's subculture in the late 1970s and early 1980s and played with others in the punk band Zwitschermaschine. However, the painting was created at a time when Ralf Kerbach had already emigrated to West Berlin due to the limited possibilities for creative development and professional self-realization in the GDR. The painting thus represents an imaginary encounter or a memory of a conversation with friends who were still in Dresden at the time. Other works relating to the themes of exile, emigration, and border crossings between East and West Germany are arranged around Kerbach's work, including paintings by Schleime, Günter Firit, and Stefan Plenkers.

A third dialogue becomes visible between Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt and the mail artist Thomas Schulz, who lives in Potsdam today. As a leading protagonist of the Mail Art movement, Wolf-Rehfeldt conducted correspondence across national borders and thus ensured that works of art from the GDR reached the world via the postal system in a self-determined and autonomous network. Wolf-Rehfeldt herself said: "I had the ambition, like a spider in her web, to spin my threads to every place on earth." In spite of strict travel restrictions, connections were made with artists in Western and Eastern Europe as well as in Uruguay, Brazil, the United States, and Canada, among others, which remained mainly friendships in writing. In this context, Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt was also in contact with the mail artist Schulz, who was still living in Poland at the time. Several works are brought together here and presented alongside Wolf-Rehfeldt's painting *In sich gefangen* (Trapped Within Itself, 1973). Using painterly abstraction, the artist visualized a state of psychological pressure that was due, among other things, to the radical decrease in the flow of information within the GDR coupled with an increase in information from the West. For Wolf-Rehfeldt, the postal service became an outlet and enabled artistic freedom in exchange with others.

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These dialogue scenarios are complemented by further works from the Hasso Plattner Collection, which illustrate the dynamic between speaking out and silence, between expression and withdrawal.

### STUDIO CONVERSATIONS 2025

*IN DIALOGUE* also provides the occasion for curator Daniel Milnes to conduct a new series of studio conversations with artists from the collection, which will be released as a podcast series accompanying the exhibition. In this context, works from the collection will be examined both from the artists' perspective and in terms of how art created in the GDR is viewed and exhibited today.

In the first episode, which is planned to be released on 18.02.2025, Gabriele Stötzer will be in conversation with the curator. Other artists who will take part in the dialogue include Johannes Heisig and Ralf Kerbach. Further information will follow shortly.

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Thanks to the lenders:

Galerie Koenitz, Leipzig / Glashaus e.V. - Archiv "ex.orientale.lux", Claus Löser, Berlin / Sächsisches  
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### **DAN PERJOVSCHI: *POTSDAM NOTEBOOK***

In April 2021, even before the completion of the museum building, Romanian artist Dan Perjovschi (\*1961 in Sibiu) began to inaugurate the walls of DAS MINSK Kunsthaus in Potsdam with his drawings. For a whole week, he drew on the various wall surfaces in the shell construction, surrounded by noise and dust.

The title of Perjovschi's intervention at DAS MINSK is *For No One And Everyone*, referring to the specific environment of the construction site that was concealed from public view. As the construction work progressed, the drawings were absorbed by the building and disappeared behind the exhibition walls where they remain hidden.

Perjovschi's *Potsdam Notebook* was created in 2021 as part of the intervention *For No One and Everyone* and brings together the drawings he produced for DAS MINSK. For this presentation, some of the drawings from the notebook have been reproduced on the walls.



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### BIOGRAPHY DANIEL MILNES

Daniel Milnes grew up in Leeds, UK and studied modern languages (German and Russian) in Oxford and art history in Freiburg and St. Petersburg. After a traineeship at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Milnes was part of the curatorial team at Haus der Kunst in Munich where he collaborated, among others, on the globally aligned exhibition project curated by Okwui Enwezor, Katy Siegel, and Ulrich Wilmes entitled *Postwar: Art Between the Pacific and the Atlantic, 1945–1965* and co-curated the exhibition *Blind Faith: Between the Visceral and the Cognitive in Contemporary Art*. He subsequently moved to the Hamburger Bahnhof where he was curatorially responsible for the Preis der Nationalgalerie and co-curated the presentation of the Christian Friedrich Flick Collection under the title *Scratching the Surface*. At Hamburger Bahnhof, Milnes also worked on solo exhibitions with Katharina Grosse, Polina Kanis, Sandra Mujinga, Agnieszka Polska, Theodoulos Polyviou, Raphael Sbrzesny, Kiki Smith, and Jack Whitten. In 2019, he was part of the curatorial collective that organized the 12th Kaunas Biennale under the title *After Leaving / Before Arriving*.

Milnes has been working at DAS MINSK Kunsthaus in Potsdam since 2023 and *IN DIALOGUE* is his second exhibition project at the museum. In summer 2024, his exploration of textile design as a means of artistic expression could be seen in *Soft Power* (16.3.-11.8.2024).

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### AUDIOGUIDE

Whether directly in the exhibition or from your sofa – DAS MINSK's audio guide can be accessed on the museum's website and therefore can be listened to anywhere at any time.



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**PROGRAM**

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### GUIDED TOURS

#### **Tour through the current exhibition**

Public Guided Tour in German

Every Thursday and Friday at 11 am, Saturday at 12 pm and Sunday at 2 pm

Cost: 4 € plus admission

The public tour guides visitors through the current exhibitions. In addition to offering background information about the exhibited works and artists, the tour also offers glimpses into the history of the exhibition house and information about the artistic interventions and artworks that are installed in and around the building. In dialogue with the art, and also with each other, the tour allows us to look forwards, backwards, and to the side.

#### **Tour on the history of DAS MINSK in German**

Every Saturday at 2 pm

Every Sunday at 3 pm

Cost: 4 € plus admission

This tour deals with the history of the building. Built in the 1970s in the modernist style of the GDR, the former terrace restaurant is a place laden with different memories. After its closure in 2000, vacancy and decline followed until 2018 when a debate about the fate of the building flared up again, ultimately leading to its reopening as an exhibition space.

The tour offers insight into the creation of the restaurant, the time of the vacancy, the transformation into an exhibition space, and the interior design, as well as interventions and artworks in and around the building.

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### **Bring Your Baby to DAS MINSK**

Every last Monday of the month 11 am

Cost: 4 € plus admission

Every last Monday of the month, we offer a special tour for parents on parental leave who would like to visit us with their little ones. In a relaxed atmosphere, a guide will alternately lead you through the current exhibition or the history of the space. Afterwards, there is an opportunity to chat with other parents in Café Hedwig.

The exhibition rooms and entire building are barrier-free and can be comfortably visited with a baby carriage or with a baby in a sling.

### Dates

Guided tour through the current exhibition

February 24, April 28, June 30, 2025

11 AM

Guided tour on the history of DAS MINSK

March 31, May 26, July 28, 2025

11 AM

### **Family Sunday**

February 16, 2025, 12 AM

March 9, 2025, 12 AM

April 6, 2025, 12 AM

May 4, 2025, 12 AM

Cost: for adults €4, plus admission,

for children 3,- € incl. materials

On Family Sunday, we invite families to discover art and creativity. While the parents take part in a guided tour of the current exhibition, the children discover the art on their own age-appropriate tour. Afterwards, they can participate in a creative workshop, where they can get hands-on by painting, building, or designing. Inspired by the exhibition and led by experienced art educators, they will have the opportunity to create their own small works.

Family Sunday combines relaxed art fun for adults with creative development for children. Suitable for families with children aged between 5 and 8.

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### WORKSHOPS

#### **Ceramics Workshop for adults**

##### **With the HB-Werkstätten für Keramik**

February 2, May 18, August 10, 2025

1:30 pm and 3:30 pm

Cost: 20 € plus admission

In the footsteps of Hedwig Bollhagen: Together with painters from the Hedwig Bollhagen Workshops in Marwitz, classic HB ceramics are painted with their own patterns. After the workshop, the painted ceramics will be brought to the Bollhagen workshops where they will be glazed and fired. The results can be picked up from at DAS MINSK. The exact pick-up date will be announced on the day of the workshop. The ticket price includes the painting of one blank.

#### **Ceramics Workshop for children from 8 years old**

##### **With the HB-Werkstätten für Keramik**

February 2, May 18, August 10, 2025

12 – 1 pm

Cost: 20 €

In the footsteps of Hedwig Bollhagen: Together with painters from the Hedwig Bollhagen Workshops in Marwitz, classic HB ceramics are painted with their own patterns. After the workshop, the painted ceramics will be brought to the Bollhagen workshops where they will be glazed and fired. The results can be picked up from at DAS MINSK. The exact pick-up date will be announced on the day of the workshop. The ticket price includes the painting of one blank.

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### **MINSKDAY**

Admission to DAS MINSK Kunsthaus in Potsdam is free on the last Sunday of every month. Everyone is welcome to visit the exhibitions and enjoy the Café Hedwig from 10 am to 7 pm. On MINSKDAY there will additionally be two public tours at 2 pm and 3 pm, which can be booked for 4 €. We recommend booking a timeslot ticket in advance and look forward to your visit.

Dates: February 23, March 30, April 27, May 25, June 29, July 27, September 28, October 26, November 30, December 28, 2025

### **Drop-in, Creative workshop for children ON MINSKDAY, 2-4 PM**

As part of the MINSKDAY, a creative workshop for children aged 3 and over will be held in the foyer of our building. The children can create, paint, and design under the guidance of experienced art educators. Whether postcards, ornaments, sparkling decorations, or small gifts, everyone is invited to take part. This workshop offers the opportunity to participate without prior registration or a fixed duration. All materials are provided and participation is free of charge.

Please note: Participants between 3-6 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian

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### **Training Sessions for teachers at MINSK**

March 19, 2025, 4–6 pm

April 3, 2025, 4–6 pm

Admission is free of charge

DAS MINSK offers training sessions for teachers to complement the framework curriculum for art, as well as the overarching themes of social sciences and ethics.

Participating teachers will receive a guided tour the current exhibition *IM DIALOG – Sammlung Hasso Plattner: Kunst aus der DDR*, along with information about the program for school classes in the context of the current exhibitions.

*IN DIALOGUE* shows works from the Hasso Plattner Collection that were created in the GDR between 1966 and 1992. The exhibition sheds light on the historical context of their creation and explores how these works are received today.

Information and registration are available via the Berlin-Brandenburg training server ([www.tisonline.brandenburg.de/catalog](http://www.tisonline.brandenburg.de/catalog)) under the following event numbers:

25LP46401

25LP46402



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### **IN DIALOGUE – with films**

#### **Film series accompanying the exhibition IN DIALOGUE**

To accompany the exhibition *IN DIALOGUE – Hasso Plattner Collection: Art from the GDR* at MINSK KunsthauS in Potsdam, the Filmmuseum Potsdam looks back at the 1970s and 1980s in the GDR with three feature films and a new documentary film. It kicks off with a recording of Wolf Biermann's momentous Cologne concert on November 13, 1976. After the loosening of cultural policy at the beginning of the 1970s, which was brought about by the change of power from Walter Ulbricht to Erich Honecker, the expatriation of the songwriter Wolf Biermann marked a new era of social and cultural-political restrictions.

#### **February 2, 2025, 5PM**

Wolf Biermann: Das Kölner Konzert 13. November 1976 [The Cologne Concert November 13, 1976], FRG (TV) 1976, concert recording, 215'

#### **February 28, 2025, 7:30PM**

Nelken in Aspik [Carnations In Aspik]

D: Günter Reisch, D: Armin Mueller-Stahl, Helga Sasse, Erik S. Klein, GDR 1976, 94'

#### **April 25, 2025, 7:30PM**

Geschlossene Gesellschaft

D: Frank Beyer, D: Jutta Hoffmann, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Sigfrit Steiner, GDR (TV) 1978, 118'

#### **June 27, 2025, 7:30PM**

Jadup und Boel

D: Rainer Simon, D: Kurt Böwe, Katrin Knappe, Gudrun Ritter, GDR 1980/88, 104'

#### **August 8, 2025, 7:30PM**

Behauptung des Raumes – Wege unabhängiger Ausstellungskultur in der DDR

D: Claus Löser, D 2009, Doc., English subtitles, 100'

For more information, events and tickets visit our website at [www.dasminsk.de/en/program](http://www.dasminsk.de/en/program).

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**COLLECTION AND FOUNDATION**

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*"We're showing works from the collection at DAS MINSK that were created after 1945 and deal with the GDR. I've always been interested in the diversity of the art from the former GDR. It's remarkable how many of the painters in particular have dealt with modernism and the Old Masters in their own unique way. The fact that this art is still only rarely seen in museums is a great pity. Showing these works their due appreciation at DAS MINSK can be understood as a recognition of the life achievements of the GDR citizens in general."*

– Hasso Plattner

### **Art from the Hasso Plattner Collection at DAS MINSK Kunsthaus in Potsdam**

The former terrace restaurant "Minsk", built in the 1970s in the modernist style of the GDR, has become a place of encounter between modern and contemporary art—and between people. Artworks from the former GDR, which are part of the Hasso Plattner Collection, will be shown here in new contexts.

*"For many Potsdamers, the building is associated with happy memories. The architecture from the time of the GDR is part of the city's history and I want to give the place back to the people of Potsdam."*

—Hasso Plattner

One focus of the Hasso Plattner Collection is art from the former GDR, and DAS MINSK Kunsthaus in Potsdam maintains the works from the collection that were created after 1945. Developed over the course of years, the extensive collection of significant works by renowned artists from the former GDR, such as Wolfgang Mattheuer, Bernhard Heisig, and Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt, forms the starting point for the museum's program. Works from this time will be brought into dialogue with contemporary art at DAS MINSK.

*"In the new exhibition space, works from after 1945 in the collection will find a home. Art from the former GDR is still scarcely represented in museums today and does not receive the appreciation it deserves. We want to change that by making the works available to the public and showing how diverse and significant the art of this time is."*

—Hasso Plattner

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### **Commitment to Art, Science, and Nature Conservation**

As cofounder and long-time chairman of the software company SAP, Hasso Plattner is one of Germany's most distinguished entrepreneurs. The city of Potsdam now has him to thank for founding two museums and the Hasso Plattner Institute. He was honored with honorary citizenship of Potsdam in 2017 for his great commitment to the city as his second home.

The long-term philanthropic activities of the Plattner family have been consolidated into the Hasso Plattner Foundation since 2015. The Hasso Plattner Foundation's mission is to educate and inspire generations. Through its initiatives, the Foundation aims to accelerate the adoption of digital technologies, support environmental science and conservation, and foster connections through art and culture.

As sponsor and shareholder of both cultural venues DAS MINSK Kunsthaus in Potsdam and Museum Barberini, the Hasso Plattner Foundation finances museum operations, the exhibition program, and the expansion of the collection.

*"The former terrace restaurant Minsk is connected with memories for many Potsdamers. Many of them fought for the preservation of the old Minsk precisely for this reason, because to a certain extent it was also about the preservation of their own identity and that of the city. DAS MINSK wants to pick up exactly where it left off and once again establish itself as a place of encounter that extends beyond art. Here we show, search, discuss, endure, and bring together, and hopefully also dance and laugh together again. I hope for being together and for each other."*

— Stefanie Plattner