

Stefan Moses, Ohne Titel (Hannah Höch in ihrem Haus in Berlin-Heiligensee), 1975, © Münchner Stadtmuseum, Sammlung Fotografie, archiv stefan.moses



Online project “Mapping the Studio”

A changing landscape in Berlin

bg.berlin/en/mapping-the-studio

Interviewees

Carla Chan (*1989), Heiner Franzen (*1961), Andreas Greiner (*1979), Andrea Hofmann (*1969, architect, raumlaborberlin), Manfred Paul (*1942), Dr Martin Schwegmann (*1975, Berlin’s Studio Commissioner and head of kulturwerk studio unit, bbk berlin), Jorinde Voigt (*1977)

Historical studio profiles

Marta Astfalck-Vietz (1901–1994),
Max Beckmann (188–1950),
Hannah Höch (1889–1978),
Max Liebermann (1847–1935),
Jeanne Mammen (1890–1976),
Brigitte (1923–2011) and Martin
Matschinsky-Denninghoff (1921–2020),
Lu Märten (1879–1970), Iwan Puni (1892–1956),
Emilio Vedova (1919–2006), Heinrich Zille (1858–1929)

“Mapping the Studio”, the online project by trainee curators at the Berlinische Galerie, debunks the myth that studios are mysterious hideaways. Video interviews and essays open the doors on Berlin’s ateliers past and present. They reveal how the occupants work, live, party and fight for space, highlighting artistic aspects, architecture and political issues such as studios falling prey to development. The journey begins with a map of the city pinpointing the selected studios in the urban space.

Interviews

Six video interviews with contemporary artists and studio campaigners in Berlin cast light on the situation today. They reveal where and how art is produced in Berlin and flag up the opportunities and challenges associated with these places, be they homes, shared spaces or prestigious showcases. There is talk, too, of how hard it now is to find a studio in Berlin: in a city with creeping gentrification, spaces for artists have become a political issue.

A passion for designing interiors prompted Jorinde Voigt (*1977) to team up with architect Daniel Verhülsdonk and create a spacious atelier in an old factory. These rooms in the former industrial zone of Schöneeweide have given the artist a sense of home.

At the “Malzfabrik” in Schöneberg Andreas Greiner (*1979) shares space and tools with other artists. He distinguishes between the myth and reality of studio life and explains why it is important for the members of this community to stick together.

Carla Chan (*1989) came to Berlin from Hong Kong in 2015 and was bowled over by the chance to spread out after the narrow constraints of her home town. At the Lobe Block in Wedding she moved into her own studio for the first time, complete with a big terrace and plenty of space for her ideas to take shape.

Photographer Manfred Paul (*1942) has lived in his studio in Prenzlauer Berg since 1968. He remembers arriving in what was then East Berlin, lists his requirements of a studio and spells out why he cares little for outward show.

Heiner Franzen (*1961) sees his studio at the “Uferhallen” in Wedding as an external brain where his conceptual works can germinate. But today the riverside site and the artists who work there are threatened by urban development.

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New spaces for artists are currently being created in the “House of Statistics” on Alexanderplatz. Martin Schwegmann (*1975, the city’s Studio Commissioner and head of the kulturwerk studio unit at bbk berlin, the professional artists’ association) and Andrea Hofmann (*1969, architect, raumlaborberlin) put the case for these crucial alternative locations in the battle to confront the growing shortage of studios in Berlin.

Historical studios

Nine essays around items in the museum’s own collection illustrate the historical diversity of studios across the capital and their personal significance for the artists who worked there.

The photography studio of Marta Astfalck-Vietz (1901–1994) is one example of many such businesses founded or managed by women in the 1920s. Max Beckmann (1884–1950) had three studios in Berlin, reflected in the motifs of his early work. At his premium address by the Brandenburg Gate, Max Liebermann (1847–1935) painted in bright, airy attic rooms that provoked the Kaiser’s wrath with their modernity. By contrast, Ivan Puni (1892–1956), who came to the city as an exile, produced his art in a sparsely furnished one-room flat on Kleiststrasse. Jeanne Mammen (1890–1976) and Hannah Höch (1889–1978) sought refuge in their studios during the Nazi years, retreating into “inner emigration” to protect their art. Brigitte (1923–2011) and Martin Matschinsky-Denninghoff (1921–2020) not only ran workshops in Berlin and Paris, but also had a rural base in Saxony-Anhalt, where – among other things – they made their big steel sculptures.

A studio was more than a workplace. Artists would meet there for discussions and social gatherings, as Heinrich Zille (1858–1929) recorded with his camera. And as a site of artistic production it was sometimes exposed to constant change: within the space of almost 90 years, what is now Kunsthaus Dahlem evolved from a studio built to serve the Nazi regime into a zone of free art.

Trainee curators

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Press images

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The Berlinische Galerie will be closed until 25.5.23 for renovations.