



Jeanne Mammen. The Observer. Retrospective 1910–1975
06.10.2017–15.01.2018

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BERLINISCHE GALERIE

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Jeanne Mammen. The Observer Retrospective 1910–1975 06.10.2017–15.01.2018

Press conference: 4.10, 11 am, Opening: 5.10, 7 pm



Jeanne Mammen, untitled (self-portrait), undated (c. 1926), Förderverein der Jeanne-Mammen-Stiftung e.V., © VG BILD-KUNST Bonn, 2017, photo: © Mathias Schormann

Jeanne Mammen (1890-1976), painter and illustrator, is one of the most colourful characters in recent German art history, and yet one of the hardest to unravel. This Berlin artist experienced war, destruction, poverty and the rise from ruins in her own very personal, productive way. By staging one of the biggest Mammen retrospectives to date, the Berlinische Galerie has initiated a rediscovery of her iconic works from the 1920s, her “degenerate” experiments and her magically poetic abstractions.

Jeanne Mammen’s oeuvre, with all its fierce fault lines, is a significant reflection of political and aesthetic upheavals in the last century. Art scholars have long valued Mammen as a distinctive figure in the art of the Weimar Republic and the post-war years, rare far beyond the confines of Berlin and Germany. Not easily reduced to a common denominator, her work is still little known among the broader public. Her own withdrawn nature, combined with a lack of diaries, copious correspondence or life companions, has hampered access. Berlin’s museum of modern art, photography and architecture is seeking to change that. The show includes 170 works from

over 60 years of output. At its core are some 50 paintings – alongside watercolours, drawings, illustrations, caricatures, cinema posters and sculptures. The exhibition, framed by photographs, magazines, films, letters and books, is conceived and curated by Mammen expert Dr Annelie Lütgens, who heads the Collection of Prints and Drawings at the Berlinische Galerie.

An **audio guide** is available in German and English (€ 2 to hire).

The exhibition is accompanied by a richly illustrated **catalogue**: 256 pages, ISBN German edition: 978-3-940208-51-4, ISBN English edition: 978-3-940208-52-1, price € 34.80 (museum edition), approx. € 45.00 (book trade).



New insights into the life and work of this fascinating artist are posted regularly at
#JeanneMammenBG: www.berlinischegalerie.de

The exhibition is being held under the patronage of Michael Müller, Governing Mayor of Berlin. It has been supported by the Jeanne-Mammen-Stiftung, the Förderverein der Jeanne-Mammen-Stiftung, the Max Delbrück Centre for Molecular Medicine in the Helmholtz Association based in Buch, and the Friends of the Berlinische Galerie. Funds for the exhibition and catalogue were provided by LOTTO-Stiftung Berlin and the Cultural Foundation of the German Federal States.



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SELECTED WORKS (AUDIO GUIDE TEXTS)



Jeanne Mammen
The golden Pot, ca. 1908-1914
Förderverein der Jeanne-Mammen-Stiftung e.V.

It's only a small ink drawing, but the uncanny scene seems to burst the page. Spirits and demons are rising from a steaming pot. A bright wreath of rays shines from the cauldron, bathing the figures in a magical light. The kneeling young woman stares spellbound at the ghostly figures. The older woman, who appears as a black silhouette against the light bears an arching cat on her back. She is the Apple Seller from E.T.A. Hoffmann's novella "The Golden Pot". The witch is manufacturing a mirror, with whose help Veronika hopes to gain the love of the student Anselmus. Jeanne Mammen brilliantly captures the fear and longing of the young woman, who turns to black magic for help. Shortly after her arrival in Berlin this and two other drawings brought the impoverished artist her first success. The prestigious "Kunstgewerbeblatt" published Mammen's works in July 1916. You can see an edition of the magazine in the display case. Throughout her life Mammen remained a 'reading artist', and her early works in particular deal intensively with themes from literature. Until 1914 her drawings and watercolours show the influence of Symbolism, an art movement that emphasized emotions, imagination and dreams. Inspired by artists like James Ensor and Edvard Munch, Mammen devoted much of her work in those years to the theme of 'seduction'. She depicts young women trapped by their own and foreign desires – dreams and nightmares, love and violence. Fantastical and social themes are central motifs that continued to be major elements in Mammen's work.



Jeanne Mammen
Untitled Big City, ca. 1927
Berlinische Galerie

This work adorned the cover of the first edition of a magazine called 'Großstadt' or 'Big City'. Mammen's design matches the theme perfectly. A glamorous couple is posed in front of the backdrop of a metropolis at night. The shine of the yellow feather jutting from the woman's hat competes with the lights of the city. She gazes seductively out of the picture, while the elegant man with top hat and monocle has his eyes shut as if in a dream. The magazine market in the Weimar Republic was booming and provided graphic artists and newspaper illustrators with a steady source of income. Talented women were also able to find opportunities in this expanding field. By the mid-1920s



Jeanne Mammen was a sought-after illustrator. She worked for satirical and society magazines, as well as for fashion and lifestyle periodicals. The long list of magazines that printed her watercolours and drawings include some of the best-known periodicals of the day. Kurt Tucholsky wrote enthusiastically in the 'Weltbühne' in 1929: *"The delicate and gossamer watercolors you publish in magazines and satirical reviews transcend the undisciplined scrawlings of most of your colleagues to such an extent that we feel we now owe you a little declaration of love. Your figures are clear cut with a clean feel, they are gracious yet austere, and they literally jump out at you out from the paper."*

In the delicatessen that your employers open up for us once a week or month, you are pretty much the only delicacy."

Jeanne Mammen
o. T. (Self-portrait), o. D. (um 1926)
Förderverein der Jeanne-Mammen-Stiftung e.V.



Many of Jeanne Mammen's watercolours and drawings in the 1920s featured fashionably styled vamps and tramps. Yet she herself preferred "to pass through the world unseen". Peering at herself in an artistic mirror was not her thing. There is, however, a rare self-portrait from a sketchpad of 1926, when Jeanne Mammen and her sister took a holiday on the Belgian North Sea coast. It depicts the artist in a bright, bare space, probably a simple hotel room. She stands bolt upright, arms hanging loose, hands neatly folded – a lean and very introvert apparition. The plain, high-necked black dress swallows all signs of a body. Black is also the colour of her short-cropped hair and her eyes. Only the red lips offer a dab of colour. The expression on this round face is earnest and composed. The portrait has the feel of a sober self-examination. The observer, just for once, is observing herself.

Jeanne Mammen
Chorus Girls, 1928/29
Berlinische Galerie



The big theatrical entertainments known as revues were hugely popular in the 1920s. In pleasure-seeking Berlin the theaters outdid each other with the latest star cast, spectacular stage sets and lavish costumes.

An indispensable feature of a revue was the dance troupe. In scanty outfits, the 'revue girls' added an erotic touch, high-kicking their long legs to the rhythm of the music and forming ever-new ornamental displays. They were part of a mass, standardized in appearance, not individuals. Remarkably, Jeanne Mammen's Revue Girls shows them as just that – two women who could hardly be more different. True, they are wearing the same see-through costumes, but the strict profile view emphasizes their differences. Mammen focuses on the tired faces, pallid complexions and garishly painted lips. The actual attraction – the dancers' long-limbed bodies – are only shown as far as their breasts. Motionless and exhausted, the 'girls' are standing



stiffly,
without a trace of sparkling glamour. Their lives consist of hard work and drill. They are only small cogwheels in the machinery of the entertainment business.

Again and again in her graphic works Mammen unmasked idealized female images. The so-called 'New Woman' of the 1920s was emancipated, athletic and cheeky. But that image had little to do with the reality of most women's lives. Mammen, who as a self-employed, independent artist exemplified the prototype of the New Woman, takes a look behind the façade. She gives the revue girl in front her own features. The woman behind resembles her sister Mimi.



Jeanne Mammen
Café Reimann, ca. 1931
The Morgan Library & Museum, New York. Bequest of Fred Ebb

A sidewalk café – and a rendezvous. But instead of looking deep into their eyes, this couple has nothing to say to one another. The young woman has turned away with a bored expression, her cigarette held carelessly between her fingers, while her companion dozes. As so often when Jeanne Mammen trains her satirical gaze on the relations between the sexes, she finds a deep emotional distance. Man and woman remain strangers to each other even when they prowl the urban jungle together. These keenly observed society sketches sold well. Magazines published Mammen's drawings with added humorous or ironic titles and captions.

This work was published in 1931 in a very unusual travel book, Curt Moreck's "Guide through 'Immoral' Berlin". The book shows its readers the trendy establishments of Berlin's legendary night life. But Moreck also names places to go to recover from the excesses – for example the Café Reimann on Kurfürstendamm, illustrated here by Mammen.

Coal-burning heaters and woollen blankets enabled the guests to sit in comfort on the terrace even on cold days. One of these heaters appears in the background on the right.

This happens to be the first time the watercolour has been exhibited in Berlin. In 1971 the artist gave it to a gallery in Hamburg, which sold it to an American purchaser. It ended up in the collection of Fred Ebb, a well-known musical theatre lyricist. He wrote the songs for the musical 'Cabaret' which is set in Berlin of the early 1930s – precisely the period in which Mammen drew the bored couple in Café Reimann.



Jeanne Mammen
She Represents, ca. 1928
Private Collection

“Simplicissimus” was the most influential satirical magazine in Imperial Germany and the Weimar Republic. Every week the publication took a critical look at current political affairs and social developments.

From 1927 on it regularly published Jeanne Mammen’s watercolours and drawings. The artist would offer her work to the paper unrequested. The only condition was that humorous titles or captions written by the editorial

staff matched the pictures. This watercolour appeared with the line, “She Represents” The slender young woman has placed her top hat saucily over her forehead; her cigarette hangs jauntily from the corner of her mouth.

She is wearing a feminine version of elegant men’s evening clothes – while showing a lot of naked skin. Hands on hips, she regards us challengingly. The “Simplicissimus” editors put these words in her mouth:

“Daddy’s a state prosecutor, Mummy sits in the state parliament – I’m the only one in the whole family with a private life!”

What the cheeky, boyish woman from a respectable family does in her private life is not hidden from the viewer. Only women populate the boisterous carnival scene. We are in one of the many lesbian nightclubs of 1920s Berlin. Little is known about Mammen’s own love life, but it is notable that the artist made the lesbian scene in the German capital one of her themes. She drew the women with much sympathy, and often shows an intimate closeness that is missing in her depictions of men and women together.



Jeanne Mammen
Soldier, 1940-1945
Berlinische Galerie

These large eyes grip the viewer. The young soldier in uniform looks at both at us and through us. His eyes are empty – they have seen war: violence, destruction, death – too much for a lifetime. A pale shadow lies over the narrow face. The uniform and the background are rendered in broken olive and green tones. Only a few red and white accents on the clothing stand out. Jeanne Mammen confronts us here, not with a dashing hero but a lonely, isolated figure. The mysterious gesture of the hands seems helpless and passive. This nameless soldier asks us the only relevant question: why?

Mammen painted this work during the Second World War. In every way it goes against the heroic depiction of soldiers that was usual under the Nazis. The painting style is also contrary to the official art of the Third Reich. The brushwork is flat – in places harsh – no detailed realism in the service of nationalistic, ‘völkisch’ propaganda. Mammen’s painting of a

soldier is an anti-war work in the best sense of the word, without any accusatory pathos. Equally sober are her portrait drawings of soldiers which you can also see in this room. They were made during the evening



nude drawing class in Hardenbergstrasse. Soldiers on leave from the front were among the participants who Mammen unsparingly portrayed. The drawing school had to close in 1943 when the air raids on Berlin grew more severe.



Jeanne Mammen
Crashing Façades, ca. 1945
Berlinische Galerie

These are Berlin ruins. Simple grey-black with a hint of pink. That was how Jeanne Mammen described a black-and-white photograph of this painting which was completed around 1945. The demolished city inspired the artist – but this is not about a realistic rendition of Berlin's landscape of ruins. Instead Mammen uses ciphers from architecture, severely simplified forms suggesting arches and arcades. They look about to collapse at any moment like a house of cards. The contrasts of light and darkness increase the tension and at the same time produce the impression of a dramatically lit stage set. The fragile structure becomes an abstract allegory of Mammen's time – a time in a phase between war and peace, between destruction and reconstruction.

In 1946 Mammen wrote to her long-time friend, the renowned scientist Max Delbrück:

The remains of Jeanne sit in the remains of Berlin – they have survived much, infinitely much that is atrocious and terrible... Now it has become a little bit better for us – especially now that the 'life in cellars' has ended – and the terrible weeks of siege and conquest of Berlin. Our good old Berlin is an ocean of rubble and ruins. You wouldn't be able to find your way around, even though there are now quite appetizing scars and no longer open wounds.



Jeanne Mammen
Mackensen, ca. 1939-1942
Jeanne-Mammen-Stiftung

This is a portrait in the style of Synthetic Cubism – composed of geometrical, in part patterned, fields of colour. The tiny eyes are white dots positioned on a black, horizontal bar. The nose, a white triangle, is turned in profile. The row of teeth resembles the blade of a saw. What kind of figure is this that protrudes its chin and bares its teeth so aggressively? An answer is given by the epaulet on the right of the picture and the medal on the chest. Here a highly decorated officer is presented in garish colours as a warlike, cubist monster. The title reveals which real person was the model for the picture. August von Mackensen, the Prussian field marshal and prominent World War One commander, who was trotted out by the Nazis for propaganda purposes. As a symbolic figure Mackensen represents a bridge between Imperial Germany and the Third Reich. Mammen depicts him as the embodiment of military might. With works like "Mackensen" the artist was taking a stand against the Nazi regime and its glorification of the military. Stylistically, she was protesting against the eradication of modern art. Painting such



'degenerate art' was dangerous. If her paintings were discovered she risked detention or worse. To protect herself, Mammen joined the commercial art division of the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts in 1936 even though she no longer worked in that sector. Later she stated:

I disguised myself. A woman commercial artist makes flowers. I painted and painted with tempera on sheets of cardboard. I had a guardian angel



Jeanne Mammen

The Angel of Death (Antonius und der Engel), ca. 1939-1942

In 1937 Mammen travelled to Paris. This was the fulfilment of a long-cherished wish and a chance to briefly escape the oppressive situation in Nazi Germany. During her stay the French capital hosted the World's Fair at which Pablo Picasso presented his famous anti-war painting "Guernica". It was Picasso's response to the bombing and destruction of the Basque town of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. Mammen most likely took the opportunity to study the work in original. Many of her paintings in the time thereafter demonstrate her love of Picasso's rough, bursting visual language. Her painting "The Angel of Death" is also a symbolic depiction of war and violence that is undeniably influenced by the Spanish artist. Mammen took on Picasso's vocabulary of terror – with its distorted, twisted bodies, eyes wide in dread, the mouth torn open, giant hands that come out of nowhere to strangle the main figure. But unlike Picasso Mammen is not referring to a particular event, and while Picasso replied to the terror and death with a painting in black and white Mammen chose to give hers an insistent coloration.

In the years of the Nazi dictatorship an indictment like this could only be made in secret – it was a risky form of resistance. Nonetheless the artist painted obsessively whenever she found the time – in part because she felt herself obliged as a witness of the period to safeguard modern art from oblivion.



Jeanne Mammen

Pluie au Kurfürstendamm (Noinsirmjogi), ca. 1951

With this oil painting we meet an entirely different Jeanne Mammen, one who is moving even further in the direction of abstraction. The lines and crosshatching merely suggest human figures. They form a non-representational net that spans the painting. The background is constructed entirely from the paint and is built up in several layers. On the cardboard primed in dark grey Mammen has applied blue, red, green and yellow. Over that is a layer of white paint laid on with a palette knife, thickly in some places, in others so thinly as to be transparent. This produces a living structure with bumps and tears. Accents in red, orange and light blue that were added at the end enliven the composition. The paint is no longer used to represent an object or a particular shape. Instead it has become an autonomous material. Mammen has adopted the approach of Art Informel, also known as Informalism, a movement that originated in France around



1950. This non-formal painting style emphasized the painting process itself. Mammen however produced an independent variant by adding linear structures and figurative notes. The painting is called *Pluie au Kurfürstendamm* – Rain on Kurfürstendamm – and the oval shapes could be interpreted as umbrellas. Max Delbrück, who bought the work, came up with an alternative title while playing

Scrabble with friends – *Noinshirmjogi*, which sounds like the German phrase for ‘nine umbrellas’. Are there really nine umbrellas? – Count them yourself.



Jeanne Mammen
Photogenic Monarchs, ca. 1967

This picture is entitled “Photogenic Monarchs”. However the upright figures in the middle of the detailed composition are hard to resolve at first. Their heads almost touch the upper edge of the picture. The face of the figure on the left resembles a cat. Her body is composed of rounded, feminine shapes. The figure on the right is made up of animal skulls with pointed horns and ears. A closer look reveals that the lower halves of the bodies are two additional figures out of which the upper bodies are growing. As in a totem pole, the individual parts join to form the overall design.

In some places Mammen has glued on praline wrappers and other shiny packaging material. This is however not intended as a critique of consumerism. In a newspaper interview the artist explained:
...the paints from the tube seemed dirty, and I found the shiny sweet wrappers and started timidly to glue them on. It was bloody horrible work.... I never thought of connecting tinfoil to my worldview – I just had a lot of fun with it for a while....

But who are these two “photogenic monarchs”? The occasion for the picture was the visit to Berlin of the Shah of Iran Reza Pahlavi and his wife Farah Diba in June 1967. It resulted in brutal clashes between the police and demonstrators who accused the Shah of repressing democratic opposition in his country.

Mammen turns the glamorous royal couple into exotic dolls that she decorates with ordinary praline wrappers. In view of the demonic figure that forms the base of the Shah figure on the lower right, a fathomless aggression is hidden behind the shiny façade.



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BIOGRAPHY JEANNE MAMMEN

- 1890** Gertrud Johanna Louise Mammen, known as Jeanne, is born in Berlin on November 21.
- 1901** The family moves to Paris, and Jeanne and her sister Maria Louise, known as Mimi, attend the Lycée Molière. This girl's high school provides a comprehensive education including the arts and sciences.
- In **1907** the sisters both begin art training at the renowned Paris art school Académie Julian.
- 1908** The two sisters attend Brussels' Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts.
- 1914** With the outbreak of the First World War, the family is forced to flee to the Netherlands as enemy aliens. Her father's estate is confiscated by the French government.
- 1915** Mammen follows her family to Berlin, who now lives at Motzstraße 33 in Berlin-Schöneberg.
- 1916** The Mammen sisters are able to publish illustrations in the journal *Kunstgewerbeblatt*.
- 1920** Jeanne and Mimi move into a combined apartment/studio at Kurfürstendamm 29.
- 1922** Her productive years as a graphic artist and illustrator for fashion, lifestyle and satirical magazines as well as in humorous papers begin. By the end of the 1920s, Mammen is able to earn a good living with her art.
- 1929** Kurt Tucholsky praises Jeanne Mammen's work in *Die Weltbühne*.
- 1930** Mammen holds an exhibition at Berlin's Galerie Gurlitt.
- 1931/32** Mammen works on a series of prints commissioned by Wolfgang Gurlitt on Pierre Louÿs' *The Songs of Bilitis*. The onset of the economic crisis prevents the publication of the edition.
- 1932** Mammen travels to Moscow together with the engineer and later sculptor Hans Uhlmann.
- 1933** Most of the journals and magazines Mammen works for either cease publication or are forced to tow the new national line. The artist loses her livelihood. Mammen, her sister, and Hans Uhlmann pull a book cart through the streets of Kurfürstendamm.
- In October, Hans Uhlmann is arrested while distributing flyers and is sent to Tegel Prison until May **1935**. Mammen visits her friend several times.
- 1935** She becomes good friends with the scientist Kurt Wohl and his wife. At home concerts at their home on Schlachtensee, she becomes acquainted with the Gaffrons, Max Delbrück, and Erich Kuby. This circle of enemies of the regime make up her earliest collectors.
- 1937–1939** Max Delbrück, the Wohls and the Gaffrons all emigrate. Mimi moves to Tehran. Mammen spends the summer in Paris. At the Spanish Pavilion of the World Expo, Pablo Picasso shows his mural *Guernica*.



- 1945** Hans Uhlmann organizes an exhibition entitled *After 12 Years: Anti-Fascist Painters and Sculptors on Display* at Volksbildungsamt Steglitz. Mammen presents 25 works.
- 1946–1948** Mammen illustrates covers and articles for *Ulenspiegel*, an anti-fascist journal published in Berlin by Herbert Sandberg and Günther Weisenborn.
- 1947** Mammen holds a solo exhibition at Galerie Rosen.
- 1948** She participates in the group show *zone 5* at Galerie Franz.
- 1949** Mammen works together with the existentialist artist cabaret *Die Badewanne*. Participants include: Alexander Camaro, Werner Heldt, Katja and Karl Meirowsky, Theo Goldberg, Hans Laabs, Johannes Hübner, and Lothar and Lopi Klünner.
- 1954** She presents a solo show at Galerie Anja Bremer.
- 1960** She presents her works at (West) Berlin's Akademie der Künste.
- 1967** Mammen's translation of Arthur Rimbaud's *Illuminations*, which she began during the war and completed after 1945, is published by Insel-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main.
- 1969** On a trip to Morocco with Max and Manny Delbrück, she comes down with a serious case of pneumonia.
- 1970** Mammen presents her work at Neuer Berliner Kunstverein.
- 1974** For an exhibition at the Stuttgart gallery G. A. Richter, Mammen writes what she calls an *Äußerlicher Kurzbericht*.
- 1975** She completes her last picture on October 6.
- 1976** Jeanne Mammen dies on April 22. Estate and studio are managed by the Förderverein Jeanne-Mammen-Stiftung e.V.



Jeanne Mammen. The Observer. Retrospective 1910–1975 **06.10.2017–15.01.2018**

EXHIBITION TEXTS

Introduction

Jeanne Mammen (1890–1976) is internationally well known as a chronicler of Berlin life during the 1920s. With her watercolors and drawings, she provided an unmistakable contribution to the urban art of that decade. But her overall oeuvre is more complex and makes the political and artistic transformations of the twentieth century visible.

The First World War put an end to her carefree childhood and youth in Paris and the German artist was forced to leave France. Her new start in Berlin in 1915 was difficult, but Jeanne Mammen mastered the challenge, making a name for herself over the course of the 1920s as a graphic artist and illustrator.

The year 1933 marked another dramatic turn in Jeanne Mammen's life: Hitler's rise to power ended her work for satirical journals. The artist retreated to her combination studio/apartment and turned toward cubist art, which the Nazis considered "degenerate."

After the end of the Second World War, Mammen once again took part in Berlin's cultural life, but withdraws once again at the start of the 1950s. The abstract late work between 1965 and 1975 forms the spectacular conclusion of the exhibition.

The show pays homage to Jeanne Mammen as an artist personality with many facets who cannot be summed up with familiar stylistic terms like "new objectivity" and where the influence of 19th century French art and literature is still visible in her late work.

First Years in Berlin, 1915–1926

In 1915, during World War I, Jeanne Mammen returned to Berlin as a refugee with her family. The young artist, trained in Paris and Brussels, felt very much at home in these major European cities, but her own birthplace was now foreign to her.

She now needed to find a way of making a living with her art. In 1916, she published fantastic scenes from her time in Brussels in the journal *Kunstgewerbeblatt*. The ability to capture literature in images was something that helped Mammen not just as a book illustrator: in 1921/22 she also designed several movie posters. The films were typical melodramas from the silent film era.

As of 1922, she conquered the world of fashion magazines and entertainment journalism. Her early sketchbooks, filled with impressions from Paris and Brussels, proved to be a useful source for her scenes of urban life. Later she added Berlin motifs as well. Her sympathy for ordinary people was something that she quickly transferred to her new living environment.

Pictures of 1920s Society

Jeanne Mammen was one of the sharpest observers of Berlin urban life. Her watercolors and drawings from the second half of the 1920s describe a society addicted to pleasure and distraction, published in magazines like *Simplicissimus*, *Jugend*, *Ulk* or *Uhu*.

Her depictions of couples focus on the ambivalence of interpersonal relationships. Moments of intimacy and harmony are rare. The faces often reflect resignation disguised as boredom. Women are the artist's focus of attention. She shows them self-confidently in public with a bob haircut and a cigarette, entirely embodying the "new woman." But she also sees the loneliness of the modern urban woman. She sympathetically depicts the efforts of the young female employees to adapt to the popular fashions of the day. At the same time, she celebrates the



glamorous self-staging of the vamp. The artist returns over and over to women who amuse themselves without the help of men.

Portraits from around 1930

In the late 1920s, Mammen regularly attended drawing class. Beside the nude models, she also portrayed the participants. The result was a collection of head portraits that she later used for her illustrations and paintings.

Based on the actual students, in her painting as well the artist is able to create portraits that in their caricatured exaggeration seek to capture the true "face of the period." In a review of her exhibition at Galerie Gurlitt in 1930, one critic writes of her portraits: "A sharply carving knife is here at work."

The social reality of the crisis at the start of the 1930s does not go unnoticed by her. Mammen sympathizes with socialism. But after her trip to Moscow in 1932, she does not paint and draw optimistic images of the new Soviet citizen, but of the city's beggars and street urchins. After 1930 as well, women remain the artist's preferred subject.

But now the images take on a harsher edge. This is also true of the series of color lithographs that Mammen created around 1931 on Pierre Louÿs' erotic poem collection *The Songs of Bilitis*.

Artistic Resistance, 1933–1945

The year 1933 brought about a dramatic shift in the artist's career, threatening her livelihood: "The end of my 'realistic' period and a transition to an aggressive painting style that involves the fragmentation of form (as a contrast to officially sanctioned art)." For the next twelve years, she created works that only her closest friends were able to view, at best. In response to Picasso's 1937 mural *Guernica*, Jeanne Mammen practiced an idiosyncratic form of "art engage," unique in German art history.

The secretly cubist painter also engaged intensely with French poetry and translated Arthur Rimbaud's *A Season in Hell* into German.

Also still extant today is a screenplay for a film that was never realized: *Write Me Emmy!* In the script, which was written around 1937, the artist works through her own life experience. She wants to air her own dramatic sense of isolation: in a text full of nightmarish, grotesque and surrealist scenes. The Berlin illustrator Manuel Kirsch created a storyboard based on the screenplay in 2017, and students at University of the Arts Bremen made an animated film based on this.

Postwar Years

After the end of the Second World War, a vital cultural life returned to Berlin. Jeanne Mammen is now again able to work as a critical artist. To mark the first free elections in Berlin in 1946, she designed the cover of the journal *Ulenspiegel, The Non-Voter Votes As Well*.

The artist is featured in all the important postwar art exhibitions. At Galerie Rosen, she holds her first large scale solo show in February 1947. In the fall of 1948, artists from the former circle of the gallery hold the exhibition *zone 5*. Mammen shows new work for the first time. During the last years of the war, she had discovered plaster and clay as expressive materials, influenced by non-European art and sculptures by Henry Moore. Her painting develops into assemblages: cords from care packages are added to the outlines of the instrument depicted in *Trumpet* and wires are bent to create dual profiles. In 1949, Mammen worked on the anarchic-existential cabaret *Die Badewanne* and designed stage sets and paper figurines.

Painting, 1945–1955

Nothing remained of the glowing aggressiveness that still characterized her paintings from the period of internal resistance in the artist's gentle chiaroscuro painting from the first postwar



decade. A pastose application of paint replaces the dry, flat tempera painting. The cubistic, flat formal dissection is replaced by spatial visual architectures.

In the mid-1950s, Jeanne Mammen retreated almost entirely from the art world. The Cold War shaped the debate between abstraction and realism, which was fought in Berlin with great gusto. Mammen described her own inner painting ban: "I invented, by the way, the 'antipainting pill' a couple of years ago, in that I now devote myself daily to the pleasure of painting and then paper

over the results again after marveling at them. What would the pope say to that?"

From the formal abstractions from the 1950s, for example *Pluie au Kurfürstendamm*, the artist now developed painting backgrounds with labyrinthine structures.

Late Works 1965–1975

Mammen's late work is a dialogue of contrasts: in her figurative collages of glossy paper, she assembles candy and chocolate wrappings to create paintings with mosaic-like structures.

In abstract symbolic images, she paints individual outlines of forms next to one another. These paintings seem like a secret code that wants to be broken. During the last phase of her life, the painter sums up the various formal experiments over the course of her career.

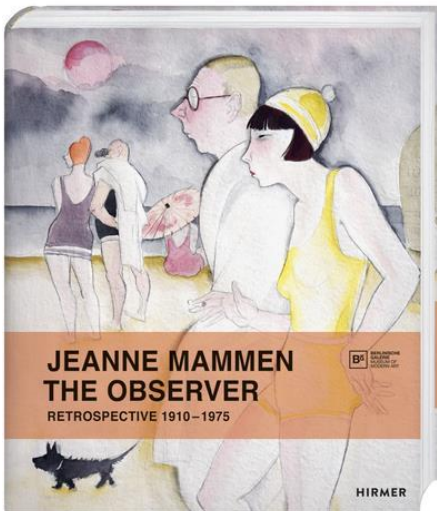
Her engagement with French literature also reached a new level of intensity. As a young artist, she translated Gustave Flaubert's *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, her favorite book, into a symbolist visual language. In the 1960s, similar figures emerged in her paintings as abstract-drawn shapes.

Mammen's German translation of Arthur Rimbaud's *Illuminations*, published in 1967, represents another highlight in the career of the Francophile artist.



Jeanne Mammen. The Observer. Retrospective 1910–1975
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CATALOGUE



Parallel to the exhibition at the Berlinische Galerie (06.10.2017–15.01.2018)
Hirmer-Verlag publishes its exhibition catalogue „Jeanne Mammen. Die Beobachterin.
Retrospektive 1910–1975“.

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Scharrer, Dorothea Schöne, Julia Schubert, Camilla Smith,
Carmela Thiele, Gundula Wolter
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Languages: German, English
Price: € 34.80 (Museum Edition)
€ 45.00 (BookTrade Edition)



Jeanne Mammen. The Observer. Retrospective 1910–1975
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Write Me Emmy!

A Contemporary Interpretation of a Filmscript by Jeanne Mammen

Screening und Talk (in German): 20.10.2017, 6 pm, free admission

The emigration of close friends around 1937 left Jeanne Mammen with no choice but to overcome painful separations. The motifs of farewell are unmistakable in her art, for example, in the painting *Segelschiff* [Sailing Ship]. The port of Hamburg, which fascinated the artist, became the site of departure, and not just in her painting but also in a filmscript titled *Schreib mir Emmy!* [Write Me Emmy!] that was found among her papers. It is about the dream of young Max. He is lying in bed and worrying about Emmy, who has set off from Hamburg on a long sea voyage. As soon as she arrives overseas, she will write Max – or so they agreed. His dream conjures up the adventure of postcards making their way to him by ship and the myriad obstacles they have to overcome. In her brief text full of imagery, Mammen describes nightmarish, grotesque scenes in various locations: on the streets of big cities, on the piers and jetties of harbors, on the ship's deck, in a greenhouse, in the museum of ethnology. Numerous villains have it in for the postcards. Max has to defeat them. In the end, however, the card slips through the mail slot and lands at the young man's feet. In her script, Mammen indicated the precise camera shots and the change from positive to negative image; she was clearly familiar with the art film of the 1920s, such as Erik Satie and René Clair's *Entr'acte*, 1924, or Walther Ruttmann's *Berlin. Sinfonie einer Grossstadt* [Berlin: Symphony of a Great City], 1927.

Mammen's script from 1937 was filmed for the first time on the occasion of a retrospective of her work:

Write Me Emmy! Animated Episodes Based on the Script by Jeanne Mammen

This was performed in the summer semester 2017 by students at the University of the Arts Bremen. The course was directed by Prof. Heike Kati Barath (painting), Ulrike Isenberg (head of the film and video workshop), and Prof. Kilian Schwoon (electroacoustic composition). Students: Livia Brocke, Bohi Choi, Ji Yoon Chung, Armando Ducellari, Grace Esford, Nathalie Gebert, Hairihan, Mayuko Kudo, Luan Lamberty, Stephan Mangelsen, Emre Meydan, Lennard Mülder / Lukas Bode, Elise Müller, Ghaku Okazaki, Ole Prietz, Johanna Rafalski, Yoriko Seto, Antonia Wetzel, Lea Woltermann.
Duration of the film: 25 minutes

In Mammen's extensive oeuvre of drawings, there are just three sketches related to her filmscript. The artist did not leave behind a storyboard for the script. That fact gave the Berlin-based draftsman Manuel Kirsch the freedom to translate the text into a graphic novel with 78 sequences, which can be seen in the exhibition for the first time – together with Mammen's sketches and her filmscript.

Screening and Talk (in German) with curator Annelie Lütgens and the authors of the film: 20.10.2017, 5–6 pm exhibition visit (museum admission), 6 pm Screening and Talk (free admission).

Use of the script with friendly support of Förderverein der Jeanne-Mammen-Stiftung e.V.



Jeanne Mammen. The Observer. Retrospective 1910–1975
06.10.2017–15.01.2018

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Public Guided Tours in English

Mon 04.12., 3 pm

Tour is included in Happy-Monday-admission

Tours by the Curator 2017 (in German)

Mon 16.10./ 06.11./ 20.11./ 04.12./ 18.12. at 2 pm

Included in museum admission

Group Tours for groups of up to 22 people

Price: € 60 for 60 minutes, € 80 for 90 minutes plus admission to museum (individual tickets at concessionary rate). Tours can also be booked in English, French and Italian (€ 10 extra).

Booking and further details: MuseumsInformation at Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH,

Tel. +49 (0)30 247 49 888, museumsinformation@kulturprojekte-berlin.de

Tour (in German) by Dr. Annelie Lütgens, curator of the exhibition, in conversation with guests

Sun 29.10./ 05.11./ 19.11./ 03.12. at 2 pm

Further information about topics and guests at www.berlinischegalerie.de/kalender

Included in museum admission

Tour by the curator and Brunch (in German)

Guided tour through the exhibition "Jeanne Mammen. The Observer" with Dr. Annelie Lütgens, curator of the exhibition, and Julia Schubert, Trainee Curator (in German). Followed by a brunch at Museum Café Dix

Sun 26.11., 11 am

Admission: € 20 for Members of the Förderverein Berlinische Galerie e.V. / € 25 Non-Members
limited number of participants, booking until 13.11.2017: foerderverein@berlinischegalerie.de

Audio Guide to the Exhibition

The audio guide invites visitors to delve deeper into the life and work of Jeanne Mammen.

Building on the experience and creativity of this fascinating personality, it paints a multi-faceted picture of the Berlin art world across many decades of the 20th century.

Audio guide in German/English (€ 2 to hire), duration approx. 60 minutes



Jeanne Mammen. The Observer. Retrospective 1910–1975 **06.10.2017–15.01.2018**

#JeanneMammenBG – Online Campaign for the Exhibition

Back in summer, in the run-up to the exhibition “Jeanne Mammen. The Observer. Retrospective 1910–1975” (06.10.2017–15.01.2018), the Berlinische Galerie launched an online campaign featuring works by this artist, one of the most prolific and colourful figures in recent art history. 10 stories posted at #JeanneMammenBG illustrate her life with her pictures: the glitter and squalor of Berlin in the 1920s, Mammen’s “degenerate” experiments, and the magical, poetic abstractions of her later years.

Grace and guts: that was how Kurt Tucholsky described Jeanne Mammen’s figures in 1929. Her urban milieus teeming with divas, vamps and cheeky hussies were all the rage in the illustrated and satirical magazines of the 1920s. The online stories include how the young artist turned up in the capital in 1916 impoverished and unemployed. She survived by selling fashion drawings, poster designs and illustrations. In 1920, she moved into a studio in a fashionable neighbourhood downtown west, in a rear tenement right on Kurfürstendamm at no. 29. This was her base for excursions with her pencil and sketch pad into the chic urban bustle of this major boulevard, but also to the gay and lesbian subculture around Nollendorfplatz and the proletarian pubs of Wedding. Back in her studio, she painted watercolours published by satirical magazines and still celebrated today.

New insights into the life and work of this fascinating artist are posted regularly at www.berlinischegalerie.de



#JeanneMammenBG
#berlinischegalerie

#JeanneMammenBG – the stories so far

Self-Caricature, 1947

Discretion in her own affairs was one of Jeanne Mammen’s cardinal principles. Self-portraits are few and far between, and she produced no written résumé of her life. Not until 1974 could she be coaxed into a few personal jottings entitled “Short Surface Report”. In 1947, for her first solo exhibition since the Second World War, she submitted no biography, but drew a feeble line in the Galerie Rosen almanac and wrote underneath: “This is the course of my life – it began some time and hasn’t stopped yet.” Next to the line with its lackadaisical caption, Mammen sketches herself from the rear, dancing with a mirror in her raised hands. All we can see in it is a pair of eyes. The viewer must rest content with a glimpse of her reflection. We do not see her, but she sees us. And so this drawing formulates Mammen’s creed. She never wished “to be anything but a pair of eyes, to pass through the world unseen, only seeing others.”

The urban chronicler

The 1920s were boom years in Berlin. After the First World War, young people flocked to the capital of the new republic in search of work, prosperity and a life of their own choosing, and possibly to escape traditional gender roles. Jeanne Mammen, who had benefited from a progressive upbringing and education in Paris, arrived in the German capital in 1916 impoverished and unemployed. She survived by selling fashion drawings, poster designs and illustrations. In 1920, she moved into a studio in a fashionable neighbourhood downtown west, in a rear tenement right on Kurfürstendamm at no. 29. This was her base for excursions with



her pencil and sketch pad into the chic urban bustle of this major boulevard, but also to the gay and lesbian subculture around Nollendorfplatz and the proletarian pubs of Wedding. Back in her studio, she painted watercolours published by satirical magazines and still celebrated today, like "Two Women Dancing" (c. 1928).

Strolling down Ku'damm

Kurfürstendamm was the street that made Berlin a modern entertainment hub. Cafés, variety halls, cabarets, theatres, cinemas and shops sprouted here around 1900. In the 'Golden Twenties' the working and middle classes, artists and intellectuals, all came here for a good time. The celebrity Who is Who would be endless. Anyone who was anyone strolled down Ku'damm, and the young Jeanne Mammen was there too with her sharp eye and her sketch pad. She drew the residents of Berlin on their famous boulevard, in bars and in coffee houses like the legendary Café Reimann.

The watercolour shows a trendy urban couple sitting close together at a table with a coffee tray and a local white beer. Their boredom is cultivated. Behind them stands a typical Café Reimann coke-fired stove, and above them is a cropped fragment of the sign. Mammen's many pictures of Kurfürstendamm pay homage to the original cradle of down-town Berlin.

Glamour and Objectivity

In the late 1920s, Jeanne Mammen turned her attention to women in the urban entertainment business. The emphasis in *Show Girls* is not on the flirtatious frivolity of night-club dancing, but on the darker aspects of the job: alienation and tough graft. In this depiction, the sober perspective and the New Objectivity style strip away the glamour of the 'Golden Twenties'. There were also times, however, when Mammen was enchanted by the sparkle of the city: Café Terrace in KaDeWe, which dates from the 1930s, is an example. This is a specimen of the old Berlin: the restaurant also known as the "Silver Terraces", on the fifth floor of the time-honoured department store on Wittenbergplatz, lived to the ripe old age of 103. With formal reductionism in the Cubist vein and pastose brushwork, the artist offers a view of Tauentzienstrasse below lit by the headlamps of passing cars.



Jeanne Mammen. The Observer. Retrospective 1910–1975
06.10.2017–15.01.2018

PRESS IMAGES



Jeanne Mammen,
Kaschemme (Fasching Berlin N III), um
1930,
Museum of Modern Art, New York,
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017 / ARS New
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Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence



Jeanne Mammen,
Die Großstadt, um 1927,
Titelblattentwurf für: Die Großstadt,
1927, Jg. I, Heft 1,
Berlinische Galerie,
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Jeanne Mammen,
o. T. (Selbstbildnis), o. D. (um 1926),
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Stiftung e.V.,
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Jeanne Mammen,
Ostende, am Strand, um 1926, Harvard
Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum,
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Jeanne Mammen,
Sie repräsentiert, um 1928,
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Jeanne Mammen,
Frau mit Pelzkragen, um 1931,
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Jeanne Mammen,
Die Rothaarige, um 1928,
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Jeanne Mammen,
Zwei Frauen, tanzend, um 1928,
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Jeanne Mammen,
Mädchen mit Katze, 1943,
Leihgabe aus Privatbesitz,
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Karen Bartsch, Berlin



Jeanne Mammen,
Café Reimann, um 1931,
The Morgan Library & Museum, New
York. Bequest of Fred Ebb.,
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Jeanne Mammen,
Photogene Monarchen, um 1967,
Leihgabe des Max-Delbrück-Centrum
für Molekulare Medizin in der Helmholtz-
Gemeinschaft, Berlin-Buch,
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017,
Repro: © Förderverein der Jeanne-
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Jeanne Mammen,
Kirche am Winterfeldtplatz, 1935-1940,
Berlinische Galerie, Erworben aus dem
Haushalt des Senators für Volksbildung,
Berlin,
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Gerd Ladewig,
Jeanne Mammen in ihrem Atelier in
Berlin, um 1974-75,
© Förderverein der Jeanne-Mammen-
Stiftung e.V., Berlin



Unbekannter Fotograf,
Jeanne Mammen in Berlin, um 1930,
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K. L. Haenchen,
Jeanne Mammen in ihrem Atelier in
Berlin, um 1946-1947,
© Förderverein der Jeanne-Mammen-
Stiftung e.V., Berlin

Write me Emmy!

A Contemporary Interpretation of a Filmscript by Jeanne Mammens (1937)

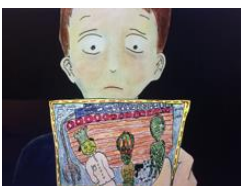
This was performed in the summer semester 2017 by students at the University of the Arts Bremen. The course was directed by Prof. Heike Kati Barath, Ulrike Isenberg and Prof. Kilian Schwoon.



Der Koch wendet ihm langsam seine freche Fratze zu und läßt die Karte mit einem Schnippchen seiner Wurstfinger über Bord segeln.
© Luan Lamberty



Max schiebt sieht erschrocken die große Fratze des Postboten ganz nah durch die runde Öffnung.
© Stephan Mangelsen



Während Max die Karte in Leseweite gehoben hat, wird der Text von einer Frauenstimme gesungen: „Lieber Max! Ich bin gut angekommen. Onkel Justus war am Schiff. Vergiß nicht die Blumen zu begießen, die Zimmerlinde etwas mehr.“
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