

## Events and exhibitions

### Article

09/20/2017

20 September 2017 – 7 January 2018

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Schatzkammern, 1st floor

### The exhibition

Titled SHOWCASE, the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek presents selected exhibits from its collection of artists' books, which was started in 1915 and has today reached a top rank on an international level. A quarter of a century has passed since the exhibition "Papiergesänge. Buchkunst im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert" ("Vocal papers. Book art in the twentieth century"). Today, the collection encompasses around 13,000 objects.

SHOWCASE makes reference to the glass cases in which the exhibits can be viewed by the visitors, but also indicates that these objects of contemporary art are collected exemplarily and individually in order to be "shown", to be exhibited, presented for browsing, but also within the meaning of a "case" for perception, for contemplation. SHOWCASE pursues the goal to effectively bring to bear the dynamism and multi-faceted expressiveness of these books, which are autonomous works of art.

From William **Blake** to Pablo **Picasso**, from Louise **Bourgeois** to Anselm **Kiefer**, artists have availed themselves of the book as a form of artistic expression. They have also contemplated the question what a book can be and can effect. They illustrated, wrote, coloured, created collages, photographed or took entirely experimental approaches. At times, their ideas and frequently completely novel solutions also pursued socio-political, even political objectives with an aesthetic claim. They addressed a new society in a new language and with new forms of representation. Some of them posit a new idea of man. The urge to change is directed not exclusively against terrorism and war or colonialism. It is also expressed in



the "subculture" of comics, record covers and zines.

SHOWCASE illustrates impressively the enormous differences between the artists' approaches to using the book as a form of expression and the differences between the appearance of the artists' books, their design and price. Inexpensively produced, off-the-shelf books can be artists' books just like costly books of bibliophile appearance created by famous artists.

## The exhibition rooms

The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek shows around 70 exhibits in three exhibition rooms.

The first room offers the largest number of works, frequently in small formats, and is inspired by a quote by Kruchenykh: "Books should be slim. No lies. Nothing frivolous." The books run the gamut from the historical avant-garde movements of the 20th century up to "Fluxus" and the conceptual artists' books of the 1960s/ 70s, from **Marinetti** and **Malevich** up to **Beuys**, **Broodthaers**, **Ruscha** or **Duchamp**.

Large-format and more expensively produced works by Louise **Bourgeois**, Marina **Abramovic** up to Anselm **Kiefer** or Chuck **Close** and not least the Munich artist Katharina **Gaenssler** can be seen in the second room.

The third room is dominated by "flatware": Leporellos, portfolio editions, a scroll, a record cover, a poster all serve as a reminder of the multifariousness of media types, since the collection of artists' books offers much more than merely "books". Here, works with a socio-political objective can be found, such as **Picasso's** portfolio edition against Franco and the war, but also a portfolio edition by Keith **Haring**, comics such as "RAW" or zines by **Pettibon**, "Destroy all Monsters" by Mike **Kelley** and others, and the "Französische Bilder" by the artist group **Bazooka**. The bandwidth and topicality of the artist's book and of the collection become obvious, up to the unique work of art created specifically for this exhibition by Emil **Siemeister** in 2016, establishing a remarkable link back to the origins of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.

## The supporting programme

At the same time, SHOWCASE is also an appeal to become newly or more strongly aware of this special form of expression of contemporary art, a broad variety of which is collected in Munich in particular, of the artists' book and its importance for our culture and its scholarly potential. The supporting programme is an extra encouragement to do so: an academic symposium in particular, titled SHOWTIME, which takes place from 23 to 24 October 2017 at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. At the event "We keep on fighting... – Two collectors, two concepts of the true artist's book", Hubert



Artist's book by Kottie Paloma, Mystery Spot, Cal., 2008 R3/ V7 (L.sel.I 3974) | © Kottie Paloma/ VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017

Kretschmer and Reinhard Grüner give an extensive insight into their work and activities.

- 23 – 24 October 2017

**SHOWTIME – the artist's book today**

A symposium within the framework of the exhibition of artists' books SHOWCASE

- 7 November 2017, 19:00

**We keep on fighting... – Two collectors, two concepts of the true artist's book**

Event accompanying the exhibition of artists' books SHOWCASE

**SHOWCASE – WORTH SEEING – SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR A CHANGE IN THE CASES of the BAYERISCHE STAATSBIBLIOTHEK?!**

[www.showcase-bsb.de](http://www.showcase-bsb.de)

**Further information about the collection**

**Painters' books, fine press books and artists' publications**

## Further exhibitions of artists' books in 2017/ 2018

In 2017/ 2018, exhibitions of differently structured collections of artists' books will take place in libraries, museums and art archives in Munich and Germany-wide. The cooperation of these collections is supported by the working group "Arbeitskreis Künstlerbücher" initiated in 2012/ 2013 by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek together with the Klingspor Museum in Offenbach.

## Contact

Technical questions

Dr. Claudia Fabian

Phone: +49 89 28638-2255

[claudia.fabian@bsb-muenchen.de](mailto:claudia.fabian@bsb-muenchen.de)

Press and public relations

Peter Schnitzlein

Phone: +49 89 28638-2429

[presse@bsb-muenchen.de](mailto:presse@bsb-muenchen.de)

## Information overview

Venue

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek  
Ludwigstraße 16, 80539 Munich  
Schatzkammern, 1st floor

<b>Opening hours</b>	<p>20 September 2017 – 7 January 2018 Sundays to Fridays 10:00 – 18:00</p> <p>Closed on Saturdays and bank holidays Closure days in 2017: 3 October, 31 October – 1 November, 24 – 26 December, 31 December Closure days in 2018: 1 January, 6 January</p>
<b>Admission</b>	<p>Admission is free.</p>
<b>Public transport</b>	<p>Underground lines U3/ U6, bus lines 150/ 153/ 154, station/ bus stop Universität Bus lines 100/ 150/ 153, bus stop Von-der-Tann-Strasse</p>
<b>Guided tours</b>	<p>Free-of-charge public guided tours for individuals: on Thursdays at 16:30 and on Sundays at 14:00 Meeting point: Schatzkammern of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (1st floor) No registration required.</p> <p>For guided tours for groups please make an appointment in advance: Phone +49 89 28638-2115 or e-mail to <a href="mailto:veranstaltungen@bsb-muenchen.de">veranstaltungen@bsb-muenchen.de</a> Costs per guided tour: €60.00</p>
<b>Catalogue</b>	<p>On the occasion of the exhibition a catalogue is published, which can be purchased for €39.00.</p> <p><b>We would like to thank the Ernst von Siemens Art Foundation for their generous support in the realization of the catalogue.</b></p> <p><b>Further information and online order</b></p>