

PRESS RELEASE

June 2023

Beyond Fame The Art of the Stars

18 August 2023 through 21 January 2024

Every star an artist? More and more successful actors, musicians and other famous people are engaging in artistic pursuits and going public with their work. Why do they seek further success in the art world? Or is art more about personal self-discovery? From 18 August 2023 to 24 January 2024, the exhibition *Beyond Fame: The Art of the Stars* presents works by national and international celebrities that offer a glimpse behind the façade of public figures, beyond their persona and fame.

The paths that have led these personalities from the worlds of acting, sport, politics, music and literature to art are just as individual as they are. Their choice of artistic medium is often unexpected and surprising; their works are intrinsically linked to their lives. The exhibition presents paintings, photographs, video and installation works by **Bryan Adams, Meret Becker, Tim Bendzko, Carlito (Cro), Samy Deluxe, Anna Delvey, Lea Draeger, Peter Doherty, Harald Glööckler, Grimes, Josephine Henning, Anton Hofreiter, Isis-Maria Niedecken, Edi Rama, Jean Remy, Michael Stich** and **Gedeon Schenkt**.

The artists on display all share years of intensive engagement with art, although many of them did not attend art school and instead began as self-taught artists. This selection of works reflects the trend towards universal artists who write, paint, sing, take photographs and like to push the boundaries conventional formats.

Artists such as **Lea Draeger** and **Meret Becker** are at home in a variety of artistic fields. Lea Draeger is an actor, author and visual artist. Since 2015 she has been a permanent ensemble member of the Maxim Gorki Theatre in Berlin. She published her highly acclaimed debut novel in 2022 and started focusing more on her artistic work in 2018: she draws female popes as well as popes that challenge patriarchal systems and hierarchical structures. Meret Becker comes from a family of artists and is a singer, actor and painter herself. In her art, she explores social issues and leverages her popularity to campaign for women's rights.

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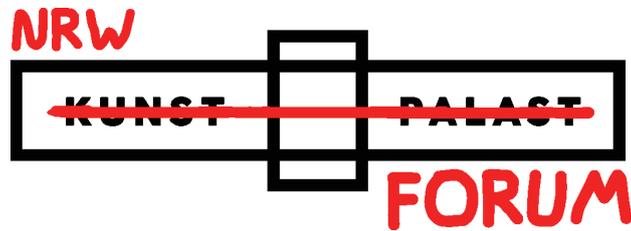
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Rock stars like **Bryan Adams** and **Peter Doherty** have sold millions of records and have already been producing art for many years. While for Adams good photographs are like time capsules that store memories, art offers the controversial Libertines singer Peter Doherty an expressive way of reflecting on his life alongside his lyrics. He paints with blood and charcoal, wildly combining drawing, painting, image-text collages and sculpture. The works of Canadian musician Claire Elise Boucher aka **Grimes** are populated by warriors, nymphs, cyborgs and manga characters, roles the artist herself assumes in her music videos. She draws inspiration for her drawings and album covers from mythical and psychedelic images, borrows figures and motifs from Art Nouveau and Surrealism and often uses artificial intelligence.

However, it is not only in the worlds of culture and entertainment that there are prominent figures creating art alongside their primary careers; they can also be found in fields that are supposedly further removed from art, such as politics and sport. There is a clear passion for botany in the works of politician **Anton Hofreiter**, who has been a member of the German Bundestag since 2005 and has a PhD in biology – his most frequently used motifs are flowers. For him, drawing is a way “to see things as they really are”. Former Wimbledon champion **Michael Stich** became interested in art at a young age and was initially an avid art collector before he began to work through his personal experiences by putting them on canvas. “My art is a reflection of my personality and my emotions,” he says.

Participating in the exhibition under the pseudonym **Gedeon Schenkt** is a celebrity whose identity has not yet been revealed. Visitors are left to look for clues in the works, and in doing so, to ponder the question of the extent to which identity is linked to both the public figure and the artwork.

In addition to personal insights and surprising perspectives on well-known figures, the exhibition also holds up a mirror to visitors: upon encountering the works, viewers cannot help but realise how strongly they are influenced by media stereotypes of celebrities, how much they guide their own perceptions, and how many of our own desires and fantasies we project onto famous people.

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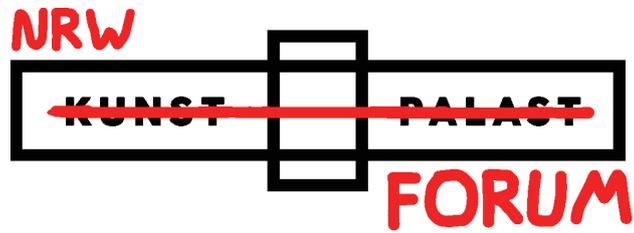
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The exhibition is curated by Alain Bieber, artistic director of the NRW-Forum Düsseldorf.

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