

Press Release

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Carl Einstein archive at the Akademie der Künste digitalised

The entirety of Carl Einstein's work manuscripts and letters can now be accessed as 8,000 pages in digitalised form in the data base of Akademie der Künste at www.adk.de/einstein. The digitalisation was made possible with the cooperation of the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, whose exhibition *Neolithische Kindheit. Kunst in einer falschen Gegenwart, ca. 1930* (Neolithic childhood. Art in the wrong present-day, ca. 1930) showcases numerous manuscripts by the art historian and poet Carl Einstein from 13 April to 9 July. No one would have expected his artistic legacy to be passed on when, at the age of just 55, he took his own life in the south of France in 1940 whilst fleeing the national socialists. Yet during his years in Spain when he fought against Franco and was imprisoned in France after the German invasion, the author made sure that his manuscripts would be preserved. The various parts of his work he left behind were brought together in the 1960s chiefly with the help of Einstein's first wife, Maria Einstein-Schaefer, their daughter Nina, Einstein's widow Lyda, the Germanist Sibylle Penkert, and not least the archive director at that time, Walter Huder. The Carl Einstein archive is rated as a 'valuable national cultural asset'.

Carl Einstein didn't see himself as an art historian, but rather as a party in the debate about the art of today and tomorrow. He took his criteria for judging how contemporary art itself should be from studying the French avant-garde and African sculpture. The judgements he made were in comparison a source of fear for German artists owing to their searing astuteness. An author first and foremost, Einstein adored aphoristic emphasis. His archive is full of such notations, which essentially intend to constitute a work, yet could hardly be published in book form. The publication online should be taken as an invitation to discover, in contrast to the printed works, the manuscripts for his great projects *Handbuch der Kunst*, *Histoire de l'art*, *Bebuquin II* and the smaller essays as well. The effort needed to adjust to Einstein's handwriting, which changed radically many times in the course of his life, is rewarded by new insights and perspectives gained into his work and the revelation that even the tiniest scrap of a note from Einstein's hand may give more pause for thought and be more provocative than many a thick tome on art history.

>> **Link to the data base:** www.adk.de/einstein

>> **Informationen on the exhibition 'Neolithische Kindheit. Kunst in einer falschen Gegenwart, ca. 1930' at www.hkw.de/1930 #hkw1930**

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