

Press Release

1 February 2024

Opening of the Otto Dix Archive at the Akademie der Künste

Max Moor reads from the artist's letters and documents

Wednesday, 7 February 2024, 7:30 pm

Akademie der Künste, Pariser Platz 4, 10117 Berlin

100 years ago – in the spring of 1924 – Otto Dix exhibited his scandal-ridden work *Schützengräben* for the first time in Berlin. Academy President Max Liebermann had included the large-format anti-war painting with its relentless depiction of violence in the spring exhibition of the Prussian Academy of Arts. The painting, completed in 1923, caused a stir and sparked one of the biggest art controversies of the Weimar Republic. One of the central pieces by the verist Otto Dix, the artwork was declared by the National Socialists to be “degenerate”. It has been missing since 1940. Images of it only exist as black and white photos, some of which are to be found in the artist’s own catalogue of works.

This documentation of works, photos, correspondence and biographical documents are part of a bequest entrusted to the Akademie Archives by the Otto Dix Foundation, and is now being studied and opened to the public. It is an outstanding complement to the archives of Dix’s artistic contemporaries George Grosz, John Heartfield and Paul Westheim, which are also held by the Akademie.

Ten years after the start of the First World War, the art critic Willi Wolfradt described the painter Otto Dix (1891–1969) as an “elementary event in art” who displays “unabashed genius.” The Dix monograph published in Leipzig in 1924 and, above all, his etching series *Der Krieg* became the starting point for the reception of the artist’s work in the Weimar Republic; in 1933, after the National Socialists came to power, it was also the reason for the artist’s forced resignation from the Prussian Academy of Arts. This led to years of inner emigration, which he spent on Lake Constance.

In 1955 and 1956, the two institutions of the divided Akademie der Künste in Berlin, one founded in the East and the West, managed to persuade the artist to take up dual membership. Well aware of the cultural-political significance of this step, Dix made an effort to maintain his artistic independence and carry out his artistic activity in both parts of Germany.

The event on 7 February will be opened by **Werner Heegewaldt**, Director of the Archives of the Akademie der Künste. **Max Moor** will read from letters and documents by Otto Dix, followed by a conversation with **Anja Adeoshun, Michael Krejsa, Ulrike Lorenz** and **Olaf Peters**, with moderation by **Matthias Flügge**.

Press and Public Relations

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Film excerpts about Otto Dix will be shown from *Schaffende Hände* (director: Hans Cürlis, 1926/1927) and *Variationen zu einem Thema* (director: Karl-Heinz Boxberger, written by: Irmtraut Wecks, 1966).

Event information

Otto Dix – An elementary event in art

Opening of the Otto Dix Archive at the Akademie der Künste

With Anja Adeoshun, Matthias Flügge, Werner Heegewaldt, Michael Krejsa, Ulrike Lorenz, Max Moor and Olaf Peters
in German

Wednesday, 7 February 2024, 7:30 pm

Akademie der Künste, Pariser Platz 4, 10117 Berlin

Admission €6/4

Ticket reservations: 030 200 57-1000 or ticket@adk.de

Press tickets: Tel. 030 200 57-1514 or email presse@adk.de

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