

## Press release

### **Museum Folkwang, Essen – New Building, opens on 30 January, 2010**

27 January, 2010 – On 30 January, 2010, the new building of the Museum Folkwang opens its doors to the public. It was financed by the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung as sole patron, designed by David Chipperfield Architects, London/Berlin and built by the Neubau Museum Folkwang Essen GmbH, a company of the Wolff Group. In only 23 months' construction time, the aim of completing a building of the highest quality for the Folkwang collection in time for the Capital of Culture year 2010 and within the budget of 55 million Euros was achieved.

The Museum Folkwang has, with its new building, rooms equal to its collection and its international exhibition activities. Together with the old building, a listed building which has been preserved, the new building provides rooms for an encounter with art and is, at the same time, an open forum, a place of hospitality for art and for visitors, a place of discussion, vivid culture and social exchange.

Thanks to the generous support of the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung, the Museum Folkwang now has the possibility of showing its unique profile – in exhibiting at the same time its collections of paintings, sculptures, photographs, graphic arts, posters as well as antique and non-European art – which distinguishes it from other art museums in Germany. The exceptional quality of the collection will be accessible to the public in its wealth and diversity.

Apart from exhibition rooms for 20th and 21st century art and rooms for works on paper, the new building provides the Museum Folkwang with large depots and workshops to preserve and care for the collection, a reading and study room, a multi-function hall as well as, together with the old building, function rooms for education and exchange. The restaurant "Vincent & Paul", with its chef Frank Heppner, and the Walther König art bookstore, located directly on the entrance courtyard, are accessible via the foyer or directly via the entrance courtyard and are thus independent of museum opening hours.

The museum faces the city center with its generous open stairway and an inviting entrance courtyard, providing the city with a new accent in its cityscape. This architectural gesture is an expression of the historically justified confidence of the Museum Folkwang in being a place of art and cultural edification for everyone.

The new building of the Museum Folkwang welcomes its visitors with light facades, inviting arcades, openness and transparency. Via an open stairway on the newly created Museumsplatz you come to the bright interior courtyard and the large entrance foyer. From here you have access to all public parts of the museum: the hall for special exhibitions, the rooms for the 20th and 21st Century Art Collection, the Photographic Collection exhibition area, the German Poster Museum and the Graphic Arts Collection, the library's study and reading room, open to the public, the bookstore and the restaurant "Vincent & Paul". Even the old building is just in front of you. Visitors to this museum have rapid access to art; the six cubic structures are linked by four glass-walled interior courtyards and from the exhibition rooms you can access directly the hallways, ideal places to linger, relax and converse.

In the new building, special attention was placed on the effects of natural light. The passageways around the courtyards are filled with it, and in the exhibition rooms as well, light enters through carefully designed luminous ceilings and side windows, showing the works to their advantage. Visitors to these rooms can follow the changing light of the day and discover how vibrant art reacts to light and how much different conditions of natural light influence and stimulate our perception. Precisely and clearly proportioned rooms accommodate 20th and 21st century art. Grouped around a large, central hall are further rooms whose windows provide views of the exterior, allowing you to get your bearings. "You may want to lose yourself in contemplation in a museum, but you also want to be able to find your way around", says David Chipperfield. Both are possible in the new building. The almost 1,400 m<sup>2</sup> column-free hall for special exhibitions has a sophisticated shed roof system which spreads daylight evenly through the exhibition room. In the rooms for sensitive works on paper, on the other hand, electric, strictly controlled light needs to be used.

The Museum Folkwang's old building, which is listed, where the 19th century and classical Modern Collections will be presented from the spring of 2010, is connected with the new building on one level. It is currently being technically modernised and joined with the new building, all the while preserving its individuality as an independent building. Two bright glass passageways connect the old and new buildings allowing a circular tour. Including the old building, where extra exhibition space could be created thanks to the Folkwang-Museumsverein, the Museum Folkwang will have ca 7,000 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space at its disposal.

## **Texts from the editorial of the Museum Folkwang new building inaugurating newspaper, 2010**

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Reinhard Paß, Mayor of the City of Essen

When the Osthaus collection was put up for sale in 1921, the mayor of Essen at the time, Hans Luther pushed for its acquisition. He saw in culture a motor for the city's development and a foundation stone for its self-image. This is still true today. The City of Essen is deeply grateful to the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung as its chairman Prof. Dr. h. c. mult. Berthold Beitz for its generous gift. With its fantastic new building, the Museum Folkwang now has an edifice which will allow it to successfully develop further its internationally recognized collection and its ambitious exhibition program. The opening of the Folkwang's new building is an event of national as well as international importance and will spread the city's name well beyond its borders. It is thanks to the efforts of the architects and especially the planners here that this building was completed in time for the "European Capital of Culture 2010" – and this with the highest of quality. Not only the citizens of Essen will value and regularly visit their museum, of this I am sure.

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Berthold Beitz, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung

The opening of the new Museum Folkwang is seen by the citizens of Essen as a high point of the museum's history. For the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung, the building is exceptional. The entire financing of a museum building is unique in the work of the Stiftung, which was founded in 1967. The project is the culmination of support for cultural institutions in Essen by the Stiftung. The history of the city is closely tied to the history of the firm of Krupp. The company has its roots here and the Krupp-Stiftung its headquarters. The dazzling new building – a gift from the Stiftung to the citizens of Essen – is entirely in the spirit of Alfried Krupp. For its construction, an architect with an international reputation was brought to Essen. That the new building is so successful is also due to David Chipperfield. He created bright, generously proportioned rooms that please and that provide a wonderful new home for the museum's exceptional collection. The project's undertaking is seen as unique by those who know communal projects. The targets – construction time limited to two years and a price of 55 million Euros – were met. This is due to the superb, highly committed cooperation between David Chipperfield and the museum's director, Dr. Hartwig Fischer, the constructor Klaus Wolff and with many other collaborators.

I am proud of, and delighted with the successful project.

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Hartwig Fischer, Director, Museum Folkwang

On 24 August, 2006, Professor Beitz announced that the Krupp-Stiftung would finance a new building for the Museum Folkwang as sole patron, a unique sponsorship in the history of German museums. The true dimensions of this gift were obvious from the beginning. Giving one of Germany's most important museums, with an exceptional new building, a future, creating a place which allowed an encounter with the collection's works and visitors the experience of art, art of the past and art of today, was inspiring. In the Spring of 2007, David Chipperfield Architects, London/Berlin won the international architectural competition organized by the city of Essen. In the summer, the Neubau Museum Folkwang GmbH, under the direction of Klaus Wolff, was commissioned for the construction. Planning was carried on in intense cooperation, borne by the enthusiasm and commitment of all participants. Construction work began in November, 2007.

Two years later the magnificent design has been turned into reality – an admirable feat of architecture and engineering.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Professor Beitz and the Krupp-Stiftung for this unique gift.

We would also like to thank David Chipperfield and his team for this wonderful building that fulfilled our dreams and more; thanks, too, to Klaus Wolff and his team for their unprecedented commitment to this project and also for the support of the Museum Folkwang. The Essen city council and its administration did everything in their power to assist in the project and helped in surmounting a number of difficulties.

Like never before, in the new Museum Folkwang the works of the collection will be shown at their best in natural light, light sensitive works displayed in well-proportioned rooms and exhibitions will take place in large, well-lit halls. A freely accessible reading room, a bookstore, the restaurant "Vincent & Paul" with the Hirschland-Saal as function room complete the ensemble. We are opening the new building with a presentation of the 20th and 21st century collection, the Photographic and Graphic Arts Collections and the German Poster Museum. In the Spring, the old building will be re-opened – it is currently being technically refitted to the standards of the new building. The rooms for the 19th century and modern collections will then be available and it will become apparent how well the old and new buildings complement each other. We will celebrate the inaugural year with alternating presentations of the collection and a closely packed series of exhibitions which we will put on in cooperation with our long-term partners.

### **Interview from the editorial of the Museum Folkwang new building inaugurating newspaper, 2010**

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Because of the cooperation between the City of Essen, the W+P Gesellschaft für Projektabwicklung mbH and the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung for the Philharmonie Essen project, the Krupp-Stiftung approached us for the new building of the Museum Folkwang. To allow completion of such a major project in time for 2010, the European Capital of Culture year, the model of the private company Neubau Museum Folkwang Essen GmbH was developed by the Wolff Gruppe. With such a company it was possible to plan and construct the Museum Folkwang's new building within two and a half years. The NMFE GmbH pre-financed the project and built the new museum for the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung. After completion the Krupp-Stiftung the museum to the City of Essen as donation in kind.

The new building of one of Germany's best-known museums on one of the City's most important traffic arteries has an important role in the cityscape. By selecting David Chipperfield's design, the museum will attract notice not only because of its collection and numerous special exhibitions, but also because of the architectural language and the new building's orientation towards the city. I am pleased that Essen has a further national and cultural attraction.