

Museum Folkwang

Folkwang Collection

The Museum Folkwang was founded in 1902 by Karl Ernst Osthaus. From its beginnings as an art collection with natural science and crafts sections it soon developed into one of the most pioneering museums of modern art in the world. The Museum Folkwang was the first public collection in Germany to acquire and exhibit works of the forerunners of Modernism – Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh and Henri Matisse. After the death of its founder in 1921, the Osthaus collection was acquired for the city of Essen by the recently founded Folkwang-Museumsverein, an initiative of Essen companies and citizens, and in 1922, it merged with the Municipal Art Museum to form a new Folkwang Museum. Today, the Museum Folkwang is among the most important art museums in Germany. The focal points of its collection are 19th century art and classic modernism, photography and painting after 1945. It holds 550 paintings and 250 sculptures, ca 14,000 drawings and works on paper as well as ca 98,000 photographs and related objects. One special aspect is a collection of works of antique and non-European art as well as European and non-European crafts (4000 B.C. – 19th century) with about 1,800 objects.

The German Poster Museum has now become a department of the Museum Folkwang. With ca 350,000 posters, it is among the largest collections of its kind in Europe and documents the development of German posters in a European context. The German Poster Museum now occupies exhibition and studio rooms in the Folkwang's new building, allowing it to present its collection to a broad public in suitable rooms for the first time.

The collection activity and exhibition program of the Museum Folkwang includes all artistic media, bringing their most important exponents from inside and outside the globalized art scene to Essen.

Internet – Online Collection

The revised internet site www.museum-folkwang.de provides new applications for visitors. With the opening of the new building on 30/1/2010, a part of the museum's collection can be viewed for the first time. Apart from illustration and basic information, texts by the museum's curators offer more detailed information on numerous individual works or groups of works. The application draws directly on information in the museum's internal databank, Museum+. The online collection will continually be extended and updated in the coming years.