

On The Square.

The Museum Ritter Visiting The Berlin Branch Of Ketterer Kunst.

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- **Quadratisch. Praktisch. Kunst.**
(on the square. practical. art)
February 24 to May 4, 2024,
Mon. through Sat. 12 - 4 pm
Ketterer Kunst, Fasanenstraße 70,
10719 Berlin
With works by, among others, Josef **Albers**, Antonio **Calderara**, Enrico **Castellani**, Camille **Graeser**, Gerhard **Richter** and Victor **Vasarely**.

- **Opening reception**
Friday, February 23, 6 - 8 pm
Speakers: Dr. Simone Wiechers
(Ketterer Kunst, Berlin),
Marli Hoppe-Ritter,
Dr. Barbara Willert (director
Museum Ritter)



Esther Stocker, Ohne Titel, 2004 © artist,

A square is the most special rectangle. It has four sides of equal length, connected by four right angles. Very simple, compact and invariable, unless you position it on one of its four corners, than it mutates into a rhombus. If you make a bar of chocolate of

exactly this shape, one that has thicker pieces that don't melt or break so easily, it will fit in any jacket pocket and is a sturdy companion in everyday situations. Especially when doing sports. In 1932, **Clara Ritter**, wife of the owner of the chocolate factory founded in 1912, had this simple yet ingenious idea, which remains the trademark of the company based in Waldenbuch near Stuttgart to this day.

In 1913, **Kazimir Malevich** painted a large black square on the stage curtain of the opera "Victory over the Sun", which premiered in St. Petersburg, followed by more black squares, on canvas, in drawings and lithographs, initially provoking furious protests from critics and an outraged audience. However, this fundamental work or rather motif with its elementary formal language was nothing less than a revolution for the development of Modernism. Countless artists have rendered homage to this radical turn towards non-objectivity and continue to do so to this day. Radical because Constructivism (or Suprematism) is not characterized by the abstraction of objects, people or landscapes, but by the combination of geometric elements to create a dynamic composition. With neither aim nor purpose. Fed by an artistic claim to absoluteness (in 1923, Malevich said rather pathetically: "I have painted the naked icon of my time ... the regal in its taciturnity"). Even if the brutal approach to artistic expression soon waned, not least because the Russian nomenclature could not see any meaningful, that is propagandistic use for this type of art and rejected it, the fascination and the resulting confrontation remained. To this day.

Marli Hoppe-Ritter, granddaughter of the inventor of the squared and practical chocolate bar and partner in the internationally renowned family business, lawyer, philanthropic supporter of women in need and of sustainable cocoa farming in Nicaragua, has been collecting art since the early 1990s. The main focus of the **Marli Hoppe Ritter Foundation** for the Promotion of Art is on geometric-abstract art, its constructive-concrete pictorial creations, from the iconic square (not only thanks to her grandmother's inspiration) over works of Cubism and Futurism, works by Bauhaus disciples, the Zurich School of Concrete Artists and de Stijl, to contemporary kinetic art and photography.

Reflecting the aesthetics of her collection, Marli Hoppe-Richter had a purist-cubic museum building erected next to the company headquarters in Waldenbuch in 2005, where she showcases selections from her 1,200 works strong collection, which has broadened in scope, in regularly changing exhibitions.

"Classic works of concrete-constructive art from the 20th century," the collector once said in an interview, **"will continue to be relevant in the future, as a deeper understanding of contemporary art is not possible without these historical positions."** The expansion of the collection is particularly important with regard to contemporary art and has proven to be extremely viable, as the square is a motif with an unexpected potential.

In addition to the customary auction preview exhibitions, **Ketterer Kunst** has been organizing shows at its Berlin branch just off Kurfürstendamm for a number of years. Last year the company added newly opened gallery premises in Cologne to its list of venues. This way, the Munich-based auction house provides opportunities for discoveries of museum quality art off the beaten track. Some of these events are themed overview exhibitions of contemporary or post-war art, others are presentations of private collections.

Almost fifty works from the private Hoppe-Ritter Collection make a guest appearance in Berlin from February 24. In its scope, the meticulously curated selection is exemplary of hundred years of constructivist art - and offers a number of surprises that may even sharpen the eye for a new, but in any case undisguised reception of an art movement that has never become static.

The range of the almost fifty works on display, which, depending on the nature and approach of their creator, deal seriously, playfully, mathematically, spiritually or analytically with the ideal form of the square, includes early works on paper by the first Suprematists, a large version of **Josef Albers'** "Homage to the Square" from 1961, as well as "Caput mortuum", a ironic squared Hard Edge painting by the Swiss artist *Camille Graeser* from 1978. Alongside the tiny typewriter print by the unjustly little-noticed **Peter Roehr**, they also include current positions by young artists to whom the collector devotes great attention.

Geometry, chocolate and a distinct sense of art - how exciting this extraordinary combination can be, how well it works when it is permeated by dedication and expertise, can be experienced at the Berlin branch (Fasanenstraße 70) of the Munich auction house Ketterer from February 24 to May 4.

KETTERER KUNST

Ketterer Kunst with its headquarters in Munich and branches in Hamburg, Cologne and Berlin, as well as with a global network of experts, was founded in 1954. Robert Ketterer is the second generation to run the family business. The auction house has a focus on Contemporary, Modern and 19th Century Art and on Rare Books from five centuries. In its market segment, Ketterer Kunst is the number 1 in the German language region and is in the global top ten of the strongest-selling art auction houses (artprice.com).

PRESS INQUIRIES

Anja Häse

Tel.: +49-(0)89-552 441 25

E-Mail: presse@kettererkunst.de

www.kettererkunst.com

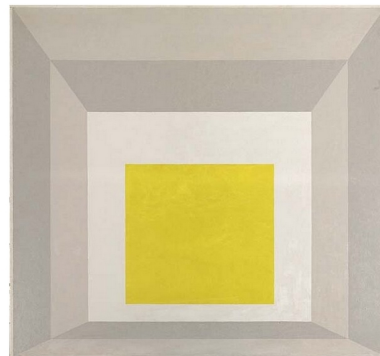
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Leon Polk Smith, Diagonal Passage,
1947 © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2024



Josef Albers, Homage to the Square: Pronounced,
1961 © The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation / VG
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