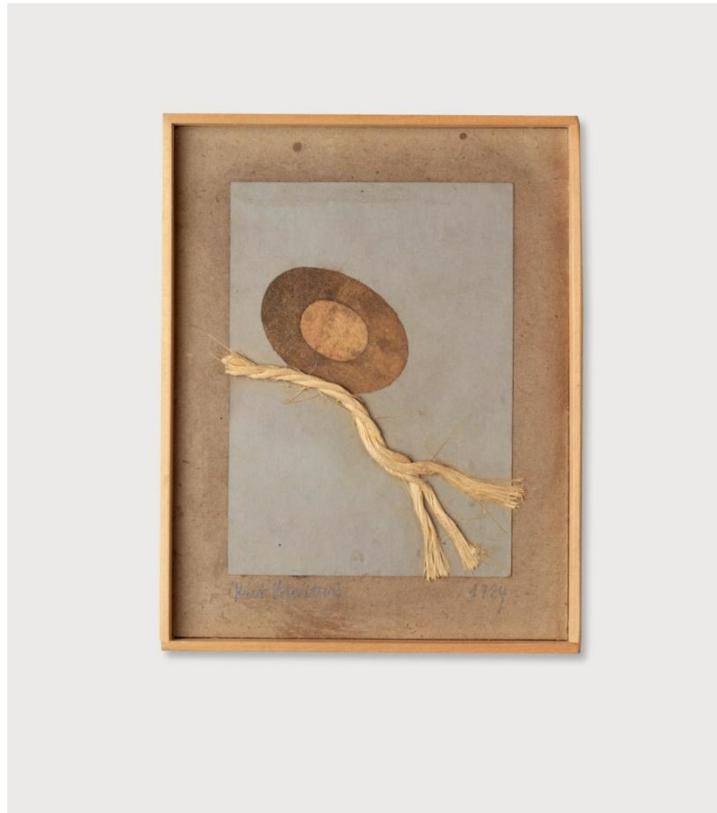


**Arp Collection 2018. Rendez-vous des amis:  
Kurt Schwitters and Hans Arp**  
(18 February – 17 June 2018)



Kurt Schwitters, untitled (Merzzeichnung with Arp and string), 1924, Kunstmuseum Basel, gallery of prints donation Marguerite Arp-Hagenbach, photo: P. Bühler

**Press conference: Friday, 16 February 2018, 11 am**  
**Exhibition opening: Sunday, 18 February 2018, 11 am**

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## Content

Media information »Arp Collection 2018. Rendez-vous des amis: Kurt Schwitters and Hans Arp«	3
General information	7
Exhibition preview 2018/2019	
Press pictures	

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Rolandseck, 16 February 2018

## Media information

### **“Arp Collection 2018. Rendez-vous des amis: Kurt Schwitters and Hans Arp”**

(Exhibition 18 February – 17 June 2018)

Press conference: Friday, 16 February 2018, 11 am

Exhibition opening: Sunday, 18 February 2018, 11 am

“Everything’s all right but the opposite too.”

(Kurt Schwitters)

**2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the friendship between Hans Arp and Kurt Schwitters. To commemorate this important occasion the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck will be presenting a new and very special *Rendez-vous des amis* featuring both the institution’s patron and MERZ creator Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948), to be shown in the Graphic Cabinet on the upper exhibition level of the new structure designed by Richard Meier. In addition to the close intellectual and artistic ties that bound the artists, the exhibition explores previously unknown mysteries and connections in the creative exchange between the two figures.**

Until 1918 the First World War held the world in suspense, leaving tremendous devastation in its wake. It was at this time that Hans Arp and Kurt Schwitters first met at the Café des Westens and came to the mutual understanding that the world could not be changed by means of politics but through art alone. From the ruins and wreckage something new had to be created. An intense friendship and artistic exchange that continued for several decades was the result of this meeting. To counter the legacy of war Arp and Schwitters sought to liberate themselves from the shackles of academic forms. The artistic movements DADA and MERZ were their answers to a shattered reality. Schwitters’ motto was: “You can just as well scream with garbage.” “Non-art” became a weapon to combat the conventions of Wilhelmine society and to break with the established concept of art. Collage, in the case of Schwitters

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made above all with materials that had nothing to do with art, would become their primary media, which is why it is the focus of the Cabinet exhibition. Works of collage are complemented by collaborative texts and individual works by Arp and Schwitters. Full of wit, humour and irony, many of their collaborative or interrelated works tell an amusing story, “*an attitude – now as relevant as ever – that seeks to question the existing intellectual order by means of laughter*”, comments **museum director Dr. Oliver Kornhoff**.

In the new presentation of the Arp Collection into which the *Rendez-vous des amis* is embedded, five selected quotations of Kurt Schwitters accompany visitors through the works. The texts correspond to the individual themes of the presentation of the collection – *Constellation, The Artist’s Studio, Metamorphosis, Relief* and *The Human Form* – and open up a new perspective on Hans Arp’s work. Though not originally intended as commentaries to Arp’s art, Schwitters’ words underscore the artistic bond between the two. At two sound stations the poems “Kaspar ist tot” [Kaspar is dead] and “Anna Blume” can be heard, providing visitors with an initial impression of the dialogue between the two artists.

“*That’s why when snapping off lilies place left hand on left handle,*” is the quotation at the core of the exhibition, which originally appeared in Schwitters’ *Memoiren Anna Blumes in Bleie*, written during the Constructivist Congress in Weimar in 1922. Hans Arp, who added his comments to the text, signed this passage with the letters PRA – the name by which Schwitters called him. Before entering the Cabinet, visitors see to the left of the entrance a sign that Schwitters designed for the public transportation authority of the city of Hanover in 1929. It contains a very similar phrase: “*Right hand on left grip: that’s how you get on. When getting off don’t forget: left hand on left grip.*” The text is neither by Arp nor Schwitters, but was taken from an entry to a competition held by the Berlin public transportation authority in the late 1920s to teach passengers the most important rules. The still unsolved mystery of the similarity between the phrases is the point of departure for the exhibition behind the doors of the Graphic Cabinet. Here visitors encounter a fan-shaped architecture that fills the rooms much like an object and that makes reference to Kurt Schwitters’ so-called *Merzbau*, without attempting to reproduce it. Inspired by the angular, contorted structure created by Schwitters, the angles in the architecture explore various themes that are also addressed by the main works of the exhibition.

# arp museum Bahnhof Rolandseck

Half of the works are part of the Arp Museum's collection. On display are 12 pieces by Hans Arp and Sophie Taeuber-Arp as well as two avant-garde publications owned by the museum. These go along with items generously loaned by such institutions as the Sprengel Museum and Kunsthaus Zürich, the exhibition's two main lenders. Eighty percent of the loaned items have never been exhibited or may not be loaned for conservational reasons. The motivation to make the works available to the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck for the exhibition can be attributed to the unique curatorial concept of Astrid von Asten, the Arp curator of the museum. She has presented the dialogue between Arp and Schwitters with new insights and lent a voice to Sophie Taeuber-Arp in the context of the two great artists. "*We poetize, merzize and arpize the whole day long,*" wrote Arp and his wife Sophie Taeuber-Arp in a brief to Tristan Tzara in 1923, thus indicating their spiritual relation to Schwitters – a sentence that in the exhibition retrospectively casts the position of Taeuber-Arp in a new light.

## Exhibition overview:

The thematic arrangement of works in the angles of the exhibition architecture correspond to the works presented on the surrounding walls. The Homage section focuses on the tribute that each artist paid to the other in his works. *Puppe, Schwitters tragend* [Doll, Schwitters carrying] refers to the fragment of a picture by Schwitters and is a posthumous tribute to the artist. The highly enlarged diagram *Merz-Arp* is in turn an homage to Arp by Schwitters. A reproduction of it appeared in 1939 in the journal *plastique* co-edited by Sophie Taeuber-Arp, demonstrating Schwitters' affinity to the Arps.

On the facing wall seven lithographs by Hans Arp are on display that were included in the fifth *Merzmappe* [Merz Portfolio] that Schwitters released in 1923. The section Object in Space focuses on the *Merz 5* publication. The title page is displayed, which contains the names of the so-called *Arpaden*: Moustache Hat, The Sea, A Navel, The Navel Bottle, Moustache Watch, Egg Breaker and the Arabian Eight. Alongside it is one of the cover pages. In the middle of this page appears a *Papier déchiré* by Hans Arp. Arp ripped apart the fifth *Merzmappe* and made a collage from the scraps. On the facing wall we see, on the other hand, how playfully Schwitters approached the motifs of the *Arpaden*. He integrated Arp's navel into a collage, adding a piece of string to it, as he did the Moustache Watch – a combination of Wilhelmine moustache and stylized clock face.

Moving in a counter clockwise direction, visitors then come to the *i* corner, where a further surprise awaits them. Arp's *i-Collage* seems out of place in the artist's oeuvre, as the use of typography in an image is unusual for him. The collage is from the year 1920, which is also when Schwitters began his *i-Zeichnungen* [i-Drawings], which he worked on with great dedication. There clearly must be a connection between Arp's collage and the *i-Zeichnungen*. As a result this entire corner of the exhibition architecture focuses on the *i* in Schwitters' work, which does not have to be "deformalized" (in German *entformeln*, a word that Schwitters himself coined) as do the found everyday items that he used in his collages. Comparable to a readymade, Schwitters selects excerpts from found material and defines them as *i*.

The section focusing on the artist's self-portrait follows. The documentation of Schwitters' recitation of his *Ursonate* – made by his son Ernst Schwitters in London in 1944 – is shown here alongside other portraits of Schwitters. Among them is an early "deformalized" and reassembled portrait as well as an artistic portrait by El Lissitzky, which demonstrate the artist's conception of himself. The transition from *entformeln* ("deformalize") and *vermerzen* ("merzify"), from the early period to the constructive phase in Schwitters' work, becomes apparent. In this creative period the artist's work shows close parallels to pieces by Sophie Taeuber-Arp completed in 1920. The overflowing triangular form and the warped red square demonstrate similarities that reference has not been made to since the artists' deaths! Further parallels are revealed in the juxtaposition of Schwitters' *Lampenbild* [Lamp Picture] and Taeuber-Arp's *Komposition mit Kreisen und Halbkreisen* [Composition with Circles and Half-Circles]. The clear geometrical forms reappear in Schwitters' work. This new insight is reflected in the exhibition for the first time.

Special focus is also placed on the Merz drawing *MZ 474 De schoenmaker* from 1922, which has never been shown outside the Sprengel Museum. It is to be found in the long glass showcase at the end of the room and makes reference to the *Arpaden* on the facing wall, as was the intention of the *Merzbild* from the year 1919 as well. The glass case also contains both original copies and reproductions of Merz publications, including the original *Memoiren Anna Blumes in Bleie*.

The curator ends the exhibition with a further mystery. In 1919 or 1920-21 Kurt Schwitters composed the novel *Franz Müllers Drahtfrühling*. Shortly afterwards he published a fragment

# **arp museum** Bahnhof Rolandseck

of the work in the journal *Der Arat*. Yet in a longer version of the same fragment that appeared in *Der Sturm* in 1922, Arp appears as one of the protagonists under the name PRA. Though Schwitters told his friend in 1921 of the demise of the fictitious character Franz Müller, in 1923 Arp and Schwitters collaboratively continued the story. “Everything’s all right but the opposite too,” seems fitting – a motto that describes the entire exhibition.

## **Works on loan and from the Arp Museum’s collection (Cabinet exhibition only)**

12 works by Hans Arp and Sophie Taeuber-Arp and 2 avant-garde publications from the collection of the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck  
12 works on loan related to Hans Arp and Kurt Schwitters  
13 avant-garde publications

## **We would like to thank all the individuals and institutions that have lent works for the exhibition:**

Sprengel Museum / Kurt und Ernst Schwitters Foundation (main lender)  
Kunsthhaus Zürich (main lender)  
Stiftung Arp e. V. Berlin / Rolandswerth  
Fondazione Marguerite Arp Locarno  
Galerie Gmurzynska, Zurich  
Kunstmuseum Basel  
Public library of the city of Hanover  
Private collection, London  
Private collection, Königswinter

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Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday and on holidays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Admission: 9 Euros; reduced rates, 7 Euros (applies to the entire museum); 4 Euros, reduced rates 2 Euros (railway station building only)

You will find our complete program at: [www.arpmuseum.org](http://www.arpmuseum.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/arpmuseumbahnhofrolandseck](http://www.facebook.com/arpmuseumbahnhofrolandseck)

Twitter ([#arpmuseum](https://twitter.com/arpmuseum))

Instagram ([#arpmuseum](https://www.instagram.com/arpmuseum))

### PRESS MATERIAL

Press releases and press photos for the exhibition may be found on the Homepage of the Arp Museums at:

<http://arpmuseum.org/museum/ueber-uns/presse.html>

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**Exhibition preview 2018/ 2019**

**Theme year 2018: »Realm of Colour«**

until 17 June 2018

**Arp Collection 2018 *Rendez-vous des amis*: Kurt Schwitters and Hans Arp**  
Richard Meier building upstairs

until 10 February 2019

**Gotthard Graubner.**  
**Breathing with Pictures**  
Richard Meier building ground floor

until 29 July 2018

**Kunstkammer Rau**  
**In the Realm of Colour.**  
**From Tiepolo to K. O. Götz**  
Pavillon

29 April until 15 July 2018

**I takes time. It's risky. It might last forever.**  
Fellowship holders from the Künstlerhaus  
Schloss Balmoral and the State of  
Rhineland-Palatinate 2017/18  
Station

## Arp Collection 2018 *Rendez-vous des amis: Kurt Schwitters and Hans Arp*

until 17 July 2018



Kurt Schwitters, untitled (Merz drawing with Arp and string), 1924, Kunstmuseum Basel, Collection of Copper Engravings, donation Marguerite Arp-Hagenbach, © VG Bild-Kunst 2018, photo: Martin P. Bühler

In 1918 Hans Arp and Kurt Schwitters met at the Café des Westens in Berlin. This would prove to be the beginning of an intense friendship between the artists, the 100th anniversary of which we will be commemorating with a new exciting *Rendez-vous des amis*. Shaken by the effects of the Great War and in search of an artistic reaction, Arp and Schwitters defied tradition and classical techniques from very early on. Both also declared collage to be one of their most important artistic vehicles.

As predecessors of DADA and MERZ, they were bound by a close philosophical affinity that was characterized in no small part by humour and irony. Fantastic texts and avantgardistic publications allow us to vividly experience this intimate connection. “We poetize, merzize and arpize the whole day long”, reported Arp and Sophie Taeuber-Arp euphorically on their collective projects.

Placing emphasis on their collages and collective publications, in the Graphic Cabinet we explore the often amusing and always ingenious cooperation between two great artists that still harbours many secrets.

## Gotthard Graubner. Breathing with the pictures

until 10 February 2019



Gotthard Graubner, untitled, 1983/84, © Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf – Foundation Collection Kemp, photo: Horst Kolberg

The Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck is dedicating a major exhibition to Gotthard Graubner (1930–2013), one of the most important abstract painters of our age.

Gotthard Graubner maintained close ties to the Bahnhof Rolandseck from the 1970s onwards. Like numerous other artists, he valued, breathed life into and left his mark on this special location. The show's point of departure is ten extraordinary black-and-white photographs of dancing monks from the Whangdue

Phodrang monastery that he took while in Bhutan in 1976 and that are now part of the museum's collection. Following Graubner's interest in Buddhism, the atmosphere of the exhibition is permeated by this theme. Such formal elements as transparency, lightness and penetration as well as color surface as a living organism all play a role. This is evident not only in the impressive *Farbraumkörper* [Color Space Bodies] but also in the artist's print works. Biographical notes, such as the body prints in the portfolio *Simulacrum* from 1978, bring Graubner's authorship vividly to light.

The approximately 50 works allow visitors to trace his development from a muted palette to a veritable ecstasy of colors, to silently immerse themselves in the color spaces, and to – as intended by the artist himself – “breathe together with the pictures”.

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Kunstkammer Rau

**In the Realm of Colour. From Tiepolo to K. O. Götz**

until 29 July 2018



Maurice de Vlaminck, fauvist landscape near Chatou, at 1907, Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck/ Collection Rau for UNICEF, © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2018, photo: Mick Vincenz

In 2018, the Arp Museum will be under the spell of “the Realm of Colour”. The year opens with the exhibition “Gotthard Graubner – Breathing Images”, which will be devoted to the work of the famous German painter Gotthard Graubner (1930–2013), from 18 February 2018 to 10 February 2019. Since the 1970s, Graubner

was closely connected with the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck. Better than anyone else he delves into the theme of colour and its multiple nuances, layer after layer. He frequently employs a canvas lined with synthetic wool. So-called ‘colour space bodies’, dense cushion-like coloured fabrics, emerge from this. They reflect nature’s vast palette of colour and narrate about sun and sky. Through their intensity they attract our view; you can lose yourself visually in them in order to discover your own colour landscapes. The exhibition is framed by the spacious, light-flooded architecture of the prominent architect Richard Meier and the impressive surrounding nature.

We will trace the arc of colour back into history. Since 2009, the Artchamber Rau has become home for one of the most precious German private collections of ancient art: the Collection Rau for UNICEF, which is on permanent loan in our museum. In parallel and in close cooperation with the Graubner Retrospective, we would like to present the theme of colour under the motto “In the Realm of Colour” (18 March until 30 July 2018) over the course of the centuries and in dialogue with Modernity. We will examine and reveal the use and meaning, as well as the language of colours, beginning with their symbolic value in medieval art, through their subjectively emotional use in Baroque painting, to the momentary, glimmering impressionistic landscapes and the Fauves’ abstract colour storms. K. O. Götz, Antonius Höckelmann, Ulrich Erben and Mark Tobey will be among the featured exponents of contemporary painting.

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## I takes time. It's risky. It might last forever. Fellowship holders from the Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral and the State of Rhineland-Palatinate 2017/18

29 April until 15 July 2018



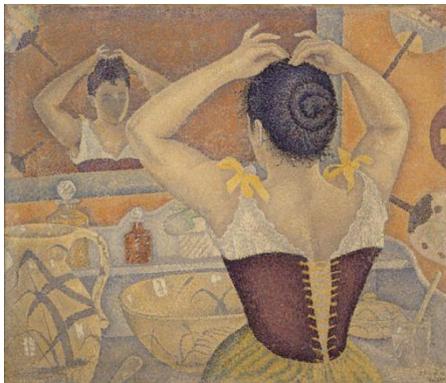
Daniel Wetzelberger, Gustostückerl 3, 2017, photo: Olga Vostretsova

In *Vita activa*, Hannah Arendt states that works of art have the ability to stabilize human lives. Yet during the creation of this work she herself was anything but stable. Making art is a labour that seldom yields a stable result. It takes time until a coherent aesthetic message takes shape. Sometimes risks are inherent in the material. The ceramic objects, for example, at the center of the Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral residencies in 2017-2018 can survive for thousands of years, but they can also explode in the kiln or develop irreparable cracks ...

Producing, exhibiting and perceiving art always involves risk. Experiencing art exposes one to the danger of having one's thoughts and actions modified. The artists-in-residence of the Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral and grant recipients of the state of Rhineland-Palatinate examine such controversial current themes as globalization, communication, gender, religion and visions of the future and explore such questions as the history of forms, mythology and the search for the self. The exhibition will be curated by Olga Vostretsova (curator-in-residence).

## In Japan Fever. From Monet to Manga

26 August 2018 – 20. January 2019



Paul Signac, Hairdressing scene. Opus 227 (Project for a washroom), 1892, private collection, © All Right reserved

The wide-ranging double exhibition at the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck shows the remarkable influence of Japanese culture on western art from the Impressionists through the present. The exhibition is being presented on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Meiji Restoration (1868–1912). After 200 years of isolation Japan opened itself to the West, which was subsequently flooded by previously unknown artistic objects from the island nation. This led in turn to an aesthetic revolution in the western world and painting, paving the way for modernism.

The exhibition's point of departure is the collection of Japanese colour woodcuts of the Impressionist painter Claude Monet. A comprehensive selection of these will be shown for the first time outside of France. Masterworks by Monet, Signac, Seurat, van Gogh and others demonstrate the major influence that Japan had on the late 19th-century art scene.

Representations of the interiors of artist studios from Vallotton to Ensor provide evidence of the "Japanese fever" with objects from the Far East and sensual "Geisha" models in kimonos. Yet the most enduring and revolutionary influence that Japan had on Europe is in the observation of nature. Our perception was broadened and enhanced and our attention was drawn to our surroundings and the beauty of detail. Daring natural views, high horizons,

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# arp museum Bahnhof Rolandseck

surprising close-ups and the directness of the moment shaped many landscapes and still lifes, from Monet and Caillebotte to Signac and van Gogh.

That Japanese fever is not just a phenomenon of the 19th century becomes evident in the section of the exhibition in the Bahnhof Rolandseck's historical rooms. This is linked to the Kunstammer Rau, as motif traditions and lines of development have continued through the present. It becomes quite clear that Japan's inspiration continues to be an essential element of everyday western visual culture and of global popular culture as well: manga, which to some extent emerged from the tradition of Japanese woodcuts, are as wide-ranging and diverse as *anime*, which since the 1970s and such productions as *Biene Maja* and *Heidi* have captured German children's hearts and now are closely related to the fantasy genre. In a cosplay (costume play), beloved manga and anime characters will be brought to life, turning the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck into a colourful fantasy world.

The comic made especially for the exhibition by the artist Christina S. Zhu (*Pummelpanda*) makes for an exceptional highlight. The story takes visitors through the tunnel connecting the old and new structures, thus establishing a pictorial link between the different parts of the exhibition. The architecture of Richard Meier provides a breathtaking backdrop for a wild, fantastic chase.

Press picture for the exhibition

»Arp Collection 2018. Rendez-vous des amis: Kurt Schwitters and Hans Arp«

For the works of Kurt Schwitters and Hans Arp © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2018



Hans Arp, Puppe, Schwitters tragend, 1959, private property, photo: David Godfree



Kurt Schwitters (first on the right) and Hans Arp (third from the left) together with El Lissitzky, Theo van Doesburg, Helma Schwitters and Nelly van Doesburg together with Ernst Schwitters, Hannover 1922, Archiv der Stiftung Arp e.V., Berlin/Rolandseck

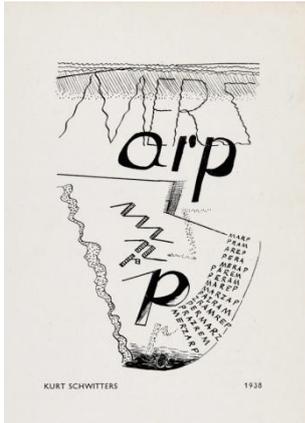


Kurt Schwitters, untitled (Merzzeichnung with Arp and string), 1924, Kunstmuseum Basel, gallery of prints donation Marguerite Arp-Hagenbach, photo: P. Bühler

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Kurt Schwitters, untitled (Merz Arp, diagram for Plastique 4/ 1939), 1938, Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck, photo: Mick Vincenz



Kurt Schwitters, untitled (Schnurrühr of Hans Arp), 1928, Kunsthaus Zürich, photo: Kunsthaus Zürich



Kurt Schwitters, untitled Titel (including an early portrait of Kurt Schwitters), 1937/ 38, Sprengel Museum Hannover, photo: bpk, Sprengel Museum Hannover, Michael Herling, Aline Gwose

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