

JUTTA

KOETHER

TOUR DE MADAME

UNTIL OCT

Accompanying booklet
on the exhibition

JUTTA KOETHER
TOUR DE MADAME
18 MAY TO 21 OCT 2018

Curators
Achim Hochdörfer
Tonio Kröner

Curatorial Assistant
Kirsten Storz

Translator
Timothy Connell

Design
Herburg Weiland

MUSEUM BRANDHORST

Bayerische
Staatsgemäldesammlungen
Theresienstraße 35 a
80333 München
+49 (0)89 23805-2286
museum-brandhorst.de

“Tour de Madame”
was funded by



The exhibition at Museum
Brandhorst was funded by



The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive catalog, which offers the first systematic engagement with Koether’s art practice and presents her entire oeuvre from 1982 to her most recent works. Essays by internationally renowned art historians, Manuela Ammer, Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, Julia Gelshorn, Achim Hochdörfer, Branden W. Joseph, Tonio Kröner, Michael Sanchez, and Anne Wagner illuminate diverse aspects of Koether’s practice.

372 pages, approx. 270 illustr.,
Verlag der Buchhandlung
Walther König,
German edition:
ISBN 978-3-96098-359-0,
English edition:
978-3-96098-360-6

The exhibition is organized by
Museum Brandhorst in
collaboration with Mudam
Luxembourg – Musée d’Art
Moderne Grand-Duc Jean.
The presentation at Mudam
Luxembourg runs from
8 February to 12 May 2019.

TOUR DE MADAME

JUTTA

KOETHER

JUTTA KOETHER – TOUR DE MADAME

Above all, Jutta Koether is a painter. This statement may seem surprising in view of the sheer diversity of an oeuvre, many sections of which comprising performances, music, and a variety of texts ranging from the literary to the theoretical and the critical. But the exhibition “Tour de Madame” demonstrates that painting is the preeminent vantage point in this artistic landscape from which all else can be ordered. At the same time, the exhibition represents a grand tour, a “tour d’horizon,” a “tour de plaisir” through this landscape, during the course of which we learn that painting also occupies a central position in Koether’s oeuvre for the very reason that she thinks about it differently than do many of her contemporaries—not as an isolated, historical phenomenon, but more as an open visual plane or stage. Thus, Jutta Koether’s painting often embodies the very thing that seems to have eluded painting over the past thirty-five years, namely a capacity to tell stories. In the process, Koether isn’t just looking for analysis and reflection but also excess and pleasure, generating from this perspective positively and constructively connoted references to the traditions in painting, which are not confined to references to modernism. Encompassing around 150 artworks made between 1983 and 2018, the exhibition “Tour de Madame” provides the first systematic and chronological survey of Koether’s painting.

Many of the works on show in the exhibition, above all, the predominantly unknown early canvases, are serendipities of sorts, as these paintings have either never been seen before, or at least not since they were first shown to the public. By bringing together all the disparate work groups, we are able to appreciate Koether’s oeuvre in terms of its historical significance: as an ambitious attempt to posit a counterhistory to the (male-dominated) canons of modernism and postmodernism. However, her recourse to Nicolas Poussin, Vincent van Gogh, Georgia O’Keeffe, et al are not historicizing reconfirmations, but instead a contemporarization of a history of art, of which she self-assuredly considers herself part. More importantly, the systematic and consistent nature of her oeuvre leaves us in no doubt that, above all else, Jutta Koether is one of the most important German painters in recent decades.

0.2 | SO CLOSE TO COLOGNE NEO-EXPRESSIONISM

The exhibition starts with the small-format paintings that arose within the context of the Cologne neo-expressionist art scene. Whilst the Neue Wilde (New Fauves) artists dominated their medium during the 1980s with large-format canvases, bold, expressive use of color, and masculine gestuality, Jutta Koether began developing her own model, which, looking back, shows the diverse tendencies in painting in the early 1980s in a different light. Her access to the male-dominated art system was hampered by the fact that she was a female painter, moreover, her concurrent occupation as a music journalist and art critic for diverse magazines, such as "Artscribe," "Flash Art," "SPEX," and "Texte zur Kunst," resulted in her performing something of a balancing act between both roles. "As close as close as close..." (1984) depicts a headless female body sending blossoms to an unconcerned, grinning volcano. However, the lava flowing from the volcano's crater hints at the response this friendly offering will receive. Koether may well have felt so close yet so far from her fellow painters. The pressure to which Koether was subject is also reflected in the formats and motifs of her early works, which she herself refers to as "trapped paintings." She frequently used the same basic formal pattern: a single, central motif—a female body, a machine or a combination of the two—is held in position by a thick crust of paint which doesn't penetrate but coats the canvas instead. The contiguity of the motifs and the physical boundaries of the canvas are so acute as to suggest a veritable blockading of expression. "Emma" (1984) depicts a battle-scarred female face sweetly framed by blonde curls above blue foam. A long scar adorns the left-hand cheek below the eye, which is outlined in red, turned inward and is surrounded by flame-like lashes. Above the mouth, with its resolutely pursed lips and an inflamed cheek, a wide-open eye with a red pupil stares out at the viewer and sheds a stream of colored tears. For Koether, the translation of emotions into colors and forms of this kind marks the beginning of a repositioning of painting. Her early works lay the foundations of her painterly theory and practice, which fuses personal expression with the traditions and clichés of expression in art, music, film, and literature. "Golden Days"

(2014) delivers a preview of this in the form of a reworking of a controversial painting by the French artist, Balthus, in which hitherto encrusted layers of paint are liquefied into flowing, radiant tints of red. The protagonist, lasciviously positioned on a chaise longue, subverts the traditional view of the artist and painting, both in her extroverted pose as well as her self-absorbed reflective state.

0.3 | EXPRESSION, MUSIC, LITERATURE, AND PAINTING

Whereas Koether's early paintings feature static and isolated motifs, in the mid-1980s the encrusted coating of paint gives way to a more sensuous style. The application of paint appears to have been made with ease and a delicate touch, and the backgrounds have been realized as nuanced gradations of color recalling stock romantic clichés, such as sunsets, glowing fires, or sunny blue skies. Particularly in the context of these "blues" paintings (1984–85), but also in the series of "Sovereign Women" (2008–2009) (Room -1.4), Koether repeatedly refers to music, in that formal patterns flow into the facture of the painting. In addition, there are also straightforward adaptations when song titles and lines from lyrics appear in the titles of the paintings or have actually been handwritten into the paintings themselves. Music, so important to Koether—through her work at SPEX alone—is her constant companion, source of inspiration, and frame of reference. Just as in the songs that surround her, the focus of her painting is no longer on an individual pose, but on acts of exchange between bodies as well as messages of love and friendship, whereby Koether is most definitely also interested in the darker side of such emotions. Against a pitch-black background, head over heels, and sinking into tenebrous eternity, a painting completed in 1986 on a long, upright canvas depicts a spectral figure, the lettering either adorning or having been etched into the body. It spells out a series of place names reminiscent of fantasy novels, such as "HOLY ISLAND," "WHITE-HAVEN," and "BLOODY BAY," among others. With its significantly more sober ring, the name "HAWORTH" is the odd one out. The small Pennine town of Haworth is home to the Brontë sisters,

Anne, Charlotte, and Emily, whose novels and stories, such as Emily's "Wuthering Heights" (1847), powerfully combined the fantastical with reality, not to mention illicit emotions—hysteria, paranoia, greed, desire. The quasi-corporeal assimilation of written place names is a particularly incisive evocation of the actual painterly process of assimilation it mirrors. In another of the "blues" paintings from 1985, a woman, wearing an expression oscillating between pleasure and abandon, is spewing out strings of black pearls tinged with red that roll towards the right-hand side of the painting in a tightly wrought procession. The title itself, "Thoughts of Light and Sex, Music and Painting, Regret and Solution" is nothing if not programmatic for this period, in which Koether—with a great deal of enjoyment while experimenting—pursued her own decidedly female expressive voice and channeled supposedly off-limits arts into her painting. In her novella 'f.' (1987) she writes: "Doing nothing and saying nothing is an important statement that should be considered, even if I end up rejecting it since I'd like to add something to this world rather than carving out a hole in it [...]. And a hole is a hole, which can be filled again, unjustifiably, with speech."

0.4 | THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF PAINTING

In 1987 Koether decided to paint predominantly in red. Over the years she collected and experimented with the most diverse tones of this pigment—ranging from dark burgundy to effulgent neon pink. Depending on the individual context, red stands for pain, shame, hysteria, intensity, aggression, provocation, makeup, desire, femininity. This color can be read as a feminist gesture particularly when viewed against the backdrop of masculine poses of the Cologne neo-expressionists during the 1980s. It is as if Koether were grabbing the female clichés of painting by the horns, dressing the canvas in make-up and thus making the male-dominated tradition of painting blush. At the same time, the concentration on a specific color is also a kind of conceptual restriction: formally speaking, she unifies her paintings and subjects herself to a self-imposed system. Guided by a female hand, an overflowing stream of little pearls breaks out of

the left panel of the diptych “100% (Portrait Robert Johnson)” (1990), however, it collides with the cheek of a face and falls towards the ground like a cascade, collecting itself there in a hole between some cell-like material and filling it. Adjacent to this female hand of creation Johnson’s face—blues legend and role model for rock musicians such as the Rolling Stones—is idolized larger than life and becomes the object of desire of a searching, a scintillating tractor beam of light. At the time she painted this work there still wasn’t a picture of Johnson in circulation; he was thus more an invisible universal idea of a primal or meta-Blues. Koether uses painting to give form to this legend. The right-hand canvas is dedicated to a written composition as a complement to the scene: “100% SPIRITUAL,” “100% ASTRAL,” “100% AURA,” and various other attributes prefixed by “100%” generating a field of unconditionality, contradictoriness, and greatness, mythical qualities that she ascribed to Robert Johnson’s music. Intensity, expression, and emotion combine here with conceptual, dialectical ideas to highlight the very “impossibility of painting,” to create a boundless artificiality, to which Koether feels pledged and which she repeatedly seeks out in her engagement with the most diverse range of templates, models, and references.

0.5 | RED ARABESQUES

At the end of the 1980s, Koether began to adopt motifs from the paintings of canonized masters, remaking them using a palette of reds. For “Starry Night I” (1988), she borrows the constitutive elements of Vincent Van Gogh’s “The Starry Night” (1889)—above all the swirling sky and the Cyprus tree. However, a being resembling an embryo has nestled into the earth beneath the rolling hills. From its amniotic sac emerges one of the round, knobby forms that have been a feature of Koether’s work since 1983, and which might variously be interpreted, depending on context, as an apple, a breast, a head, an eye, or, as in this instance, a cell. It joins a throng of similar forms teeming down the hillside, like van Gogh’s cosmic mists, right into the base of a smoldering cypress down into a ravine to which they are

catapulted into the bright red night sky where they turn into stars. In the painting “Subject is the absolute Unrest of Becoming,” which Koether painted the following year, these round forms have taken on a life of their own. They have taken over the whole surface of the painting. The swirling-sky arabesques have set themselves in motion: from the lower edge of the painting, both streams channel upwards embracing a glowing head as though part of a dancing figure.

In the painting “ganz” (1991), Koether refines this repertoire of forms she deployed in her adaptations without directly referencing Van Gogh’s “The Starry Night.” The motif of the female face is based on a drawing she made in 1990 in which a head is projected onto a globe. Koether is thus demonstratively taking up the fusion of subject and world as a central trope of history painting. The face presents itself as a container for fragments of cultural information, a kind of processing machine with a made-up mouth, white teeth, and glittering eyes that absorbs and then releases moods and affects: loss, abandon, sorrow, joy, anger, desire, hysteria, fear. These are the chief affects permeating the various pitches of the representation—ranging from a quasi-naive self-portrait all the way to history painting’s aspiration to be a metaphor for a globalized subjectivity.

0.6 | INSIDE JOB – AFFECTIVE IMPORT

At the beginning of the 1990s, Koether gradually shifted the center of her life to New York. At the same time, she produced a series of intense and thematically diverse compositions that interweave motifs from pop-culture, literature, and art history. “The Inside Job” is the result of an event—part exhibition, part performance—which she staged in her studio apartment. The canvas was laid on the floor in the room. Koether had devised the composition beforehand, but after engaging her guests in conversation, subsequently incorporated their responses into the painting. She ultimately published the transcriptions of these conversations in an artist’s book in 1993. In the painting’s swirling all-over there are multiple references to Koether’s physical work on the ground, but also the presence of the guests

themselves: impressions of knees, thighs, elbows and underarms can all be seen scattered across the canvas, and ghostly faces push into the image from all sides, their speaking mouths and silent gazes commenting on what is happening. An anthropomorphic form schematically traces the vertical axis at the center of the painting. At one early stage, the figure appears as a dancer flitting across the picture plane. In the final version, the dancer has disappeared; only her right foot, with which she has touched the canvas, remains visible just below the center. Otherwise, all that remains is a pale outline, like the ghostly emptiness of a subject whose kneeling legs and underarms have left some trace recalling the painterly process. At the same time, it is as though a monstrous embryo can be discerned: it is a spectacle of death and resurrection, of dissolution and ecstatic reassembling of the image. Koether's visual concept established in the early 1990s and manifest in the "Massen" paintings as well as "The Inside Job," reached its apex in the exhibition "Affective Import: Antibodies I-V" (1993). The colors and some of the motifs in "Antibody I (First Moment after Noon: Night)" have been borrowed from techno-party flyers, the lettering spelling out "hard trance" traversing the painting and setting the beat and rhythm. Beams lighting up all over the picture plane like small explosions create an electric, pulsating effervescence.

0.7 | SPACE IS THE PLACE

By comparison to the teeming compositions of her "Antibodies," the paintings Koether made in the second half of the 1990s seem visually decongested and much sparser in comparison. The emptiness of the primed canvas is given its own space, on which the lines run almost weightlessly between expressive painting, drawing, and writing. Thematically, too, the images enter new territory. There are portrayals of the deserted cosmos and post-apocalyptic landscapes, all far from the urban hustle and bustle of the early 1990s. Koether stages a meeting of three WBs—William Blake, Walter Benjamin, and William S. Burroughs—and takes the encounter as an opportunity to redefine the relationship between text and image. For WB IV (Walter

Benjamin) (1997) she uses a black-primed canvas as a blackboard. She then processes this dark layer with gold and silver rollerball pens, of the kind that only became widely available in the mid-1990s. The hard point of the pen acts like a needle, engraving the finest and most delicate of lines onto the picture plane, glistening in metallic hues. Exquisitely drawn loops, waves, and hatching converge in a diagram of dynamic energy lines bundled into a kind of raveled knot at the upper midpoint of the picture. They are redolent of images depicting the magnetic fields of solar eruptions, in-between the lines of which individual words from Walter Benjamin's treatise on Surrealism have been inserted: "[Life seemed worth living only where] the threshold between waking and sleeping was worn away [...]." It was in the moment of waking—between sleep and full consciousness—that Benjamin had pinpointed the concept of "profane illumination" in which the purportedly dark layers of consciousness—dream, intoxication, and the unconscious—are potentially liberating rather than a "withdrawal into the self."

0.8 | "SUN//NY"

The sun quite literally took center stage in Koether's last exhibition at Pat Hearn: "sun//ny" (1999). Two large paintings dominated the space in a vibrant chord of black, red, and yellow, the expressive impact of "August Aloud" and "Foolish Fire" (both 1999) resulted to a large extent from the performative spontaneity of the painterly act. With a broad brush, the thick, oozing acrylic paint was swept across the canvas and further processed with spray cans and chalk. Koether weaves a web of references into this formlessness, ranging from Georges Bataille's descriptions of a "rotten sun" to the baroque philosopher Robert Fludd, from the musician Sun Ra to the journalist Kodwo Eshun, all of whom represent stances that evoke various forms of ecstasy as boundary-breaking forces. "August Aloud," for instance, depicts a rupturing, screaming sun, with jagged lines radiating hysterically in all directions and from which two hearts are catapulted, supplemented by two phrases: "the brain is a population" and "more brilliant than the sun." The radiant

darkness of “August Aloud” finds its counterpoint in the putrid yellow explosion of “Foolish Fire.” The monumental double loop morphs into a face from the center of which the paint gushes over the canvas and—very much in the sense of Bataille’s concept of the formless—as a discharge and defilement of the painting’s surface.

Koether’s gallerist Hearn, who was already very ill by the time the “sun//ny” exhibition opened, died in August 2000. And so the artist experienced the turn of the decade, and indeed, the century, as a “ground zero situation” as she later described it. There was already a hint of this uncertainty in the display: the canvases were no longer spanned onto stretchers as usual, but hung loosely on the wall and could be taken down from one moment to the next, rolled up and transported away. This prefigures what would become important in Koether’s work in the coming years, as she would go on to focus increasingly on performative, collaborative projects and less on painting. Against this backdrop, “sun//ny” can be seen as a kind of finale, a taking stock of the entire dynamics of the 1980s and 1990s. The exploding sun of “August Aloud” is reminiscent of the orb-like face of “ganz.” The series of small round paintings forge a link back to her early round forms. Koether has dedicated them to people who are important to her—Tom Verlaine, Tim Gordon, Daniel Buchholz, Bennett Simpson, Pat Hearn, and others. They likewise revisit the stars in Koether’s paraphrases of “The Starry Night:” they do not stand for themselves but become energy fields in the shape of mutable constellations.

-1.3 | FRESH GESTURES

In the 2000s, Koether imposed a rigorous system on her artistic modes of expression. This resulted in her drawing on reams of paper pre-printed with a grid of fine red lines for 512 consecutive days. Recalling the forms of abstract art, Koether actually bought the sheets in New York’s China Town: their actual purpose is as a practice aid for Chinese logograms. Koether’s artistic markings, which take the form of lines made with colored crayon, enter into a dialogue with these monotonous

squares. However, her expressive voice doesn't appear to struggle with the individual boxes, but instead seems to derive comfort from filling them out. She only ends the series when she has run out of sheets and binds all the drawings into a folder. There is a video, which documents the contemplative *ronde* of these daily atmospheric paintings.

Two years later, her expressivity no longer needs this kind of support. Pale smears, compositions made up of spots and dark swirls, traverse a total of 170 similarly proportioned canvases in "Fresh *Aufhebung*" (2004). Everything is set in black, thereby shifting the nuanced intensity of the brush strokes into the foreground all the more markedly. Out of the limitations of the world, the uniform little boxes that frame our lives, and the limitations of the self, the act of confining herself to a single color, Koether still manages to squeeze out expression, emotions, and the capacity for action. Her goal is not authentic expression, however, which she likewise views as a restriction, but instead unbounded artificiality. The drawing on canvas expressively titled "Need Change (Ladies of the Rope)" (2002) (with its play on the cosmic desire "need for change," but also the worldly request for small change) thus doesn't depict a face, rather a glowing aura, which stretches out beyond the boundaries of painting in a brilliant red thread.

-1.4 | EXTREME ART

The openness Koether demands of art is explicit in her material paintings. Plastic bric-à-brac, fashion accessories, reflective foil, rivets gather together on pitch-black or luminous red canvases and chains, nets, strings and threads go beyond the scope of the normal. Ever since the American artist, Robert Rauschenberg, began attaching objects to his abstract paintings in the 1950s and extending them to become "combine paintings," this mode of painting has been repeatedly explored. Koether's assemblages, however, are not somehow miraculously fastened to the paintings, but are held together by a thick layer of "liquid glass," an artificial resin, which hardens into a transparent surface. Optically speaking, she incorporates the ground into

the composition—Koether often hangs her material paintings on glass walls. As a result, the processually assembled collages simultaneously become crystalline outgrowths of the exhibition architecture. Koether's materials allude to biker and metal music subcultures, scenes that fuse what is essentially a self-staging with the threat of the mostly male self through bodily intensities evoked by machines, such as motorbikes, guitars, and amplifiers.

The "Sovereign Women" series represents a counterpoint to the material paintings, inasmuch as it embodies the extreme of simultaneous freedom and the driven nature of pop stars and actresses, a self that has been constructed as a media image and an art figure selling itself ecstatically on stage in the moment of purported self-expression. Like Venus emerging from the waves, the Electroclash-singer, Peaches in "Souveraine Nr. 5 (After Peaches)," rises from the spume of color to step out in front of us, or is she actually dissolving into it? Koether paints the musician—who is renowned for her stage performances that oscillate between concert and sex show—as a sovereign, masterful woman in this ambivalent moment of her appearance. The visual center of the painting is a ball, a circle, perhaps a peach, but in any event one of the forms that populate Koether's entire oeuvre. In this instance, it appears as an individual ball whereas in "Unganzheitsymbole: K (Hommage an Kenneth Anger)" (2004) it appears en masse forming the letter K like rivets on a leather jacket. K for Koether or Kenneth Anger (the filmmaker to whom the painting is dedicated), but also for "Kunst" i.e. art, with an extreme capital K.

-1.5 | HOW TO GO ABOUT PAINTING A STORM?

In parallel to her material paintings—which introduce the idea of the readymade into her art—and the "Sovereign Women" series, Koether turns to Nicolas Poussin. She counters the traditional interpretation of Poussin as a cool "classist" by highlighting his painterly, narrative intensity. In the painting "Hot Rod (after Poussin)" (2009), colors, meanings, references, and emotions seem to boil over. Koether has used Poussin's

"Stormy Landscape with Pyramus and Thisbe" (1651) as a template. Like a "hot rod," a vintage car that has been modified into a hybrid using the original chassis and bodywork but fitted with a new engine packing lots of horsepower, Koether modifies the forms of her chosen template and submerges them in a host of luminous reds.

Poussin stages Ovid's tale of Pyramus and Thisbe against the backdrop of a breaking storm. The stormy weather and lightening are an expression of the pivotal action of this dramatic story: distraught with horror, Thisbe catches sight of her beloved Pyramus as he lies dying. Pyramus, for his part, has fallen on his sword in the mistaken belief that his chosen one, Thisbe, had been killed by a lion. Unbeknownst to him, she had fled the scene only to return later to the agreed meeting place whereupon the thunderous horror hits Thisbe like a bolt of lightening, and so she picks up Pyramus' sword in order to kill herself as well. The painting and the narrative are thus dramatically conjoined. Koether pushes this aspect to extremes. The characteristically red bolt of lightening flashes diagonally across the stridently colorful canvas. The drama seems to be putting not only the immediate scene, indeed, even the whole world into a state of turmoil, but also the material substance of the painting, the colors themselves. The inherent theatricality of the scenario also leaps out of the composition in Koether's version. When the work was shown at Reena Spaulings Fine Art in New York in 2009, Koether staged three performances with the painting. As Koether states elsewhere: "Text is a reaction to the painting, the painting is a reaction to the text." At the same time, for Koether paintings are invariably reactions to other paintings, in this case Poussin's stormy landscape. However, her templates are not confined to picture galleries. Her storms of color also inundate shop-bought paint-by-numbers canvases that have been pre-printed with the outlines of a famous Cézanne still life of a bowl of fruit. Moreover, she has Poussin's lightening bolt strike a pot brimful of mussels by the Belgian artist, Marcel Broodthaers, spilling forth its contents. The pot itself, rather like Koether's paintings, doesn't adhere to the physical laws governing pots boiling over, but to art's own logic: the mussels form a column, an abstract shape made from everyday signs.

-1.6 | "THE SEASONS"

Koether develops her preoccupation with Poussin in the "The Seasons" (all 2011) group of paintings, transporting his exploration of time and temporality into the present. She allows Poussin's compositions to shine through like ghostly traces in many places in the shape of daubs of paint or schematic figures, and she overlays Poussin's themes with her own contemporary concerns. Although the seasons have a decisive effect on the rhythms of modern life, primarily as climatic phenomena, a whole range of other types of seasons have been derived from these defined passages of time, as in the fashion world, or new ones have been invented, in the more recently established coinage "seasons" to describe various TV series with extensive narrative arcs spanning a set number of episodes, or indeed to encompass the run of various types of large sporting events over a set period of time. The stock exchange visualizes the finance market with its omnipresent vicissitudes and seasonalities, and generates new indices on a daily basis that zigzag like lightning or a mountain range through Koether's works as jagged graphs. Her critical and exaggerated approach fuses contemporary visual worlds with Poussin's templates to forge new configurations that are at once homage, contradiction, and fun.

In "Spring," Eve holds two apple-breasts, familiar from Koether's other works, in front of Adam's eyes like a pair of binoculars, the act of biting into the apple is substituted by a forbidden look directly into the face of the viewer. In "Summer," Koether places a tree full of ripe fruit next to Sebastian Vettel clad in a pink-red race suit, who raises his arms aloft in the victory salute like the branches of the tree stretching heavenward. His external aspect—heavily disguised due to his helmet—is reminiscent of a knight's suit of armor, a suggestion mitigated only by the branding logos on the garment. In "Fall," Poussin's grapes burgeon into huge thought-grapes that overlay the composition, whereas "Winter" presents a cat surveying a scenario of black chaos filled with zigzagging glyphs. In the engagement with classical pictorial tradition, Koether charges the paintings with attributes of our consumer and information-based society, its inherent impermanence, seriality, and duplication.

-1.7 | BODY – COLOR – SIGNIFIER

The body is central to Koether's work: the body of the painting, the painting body, the observing body, the body as a motif. Koether bundles all of these categories together in "Bond Freud National Gallery" (2016), by fusing different templates: the figure sitting with his back toward us is none other than James Bond, who, in the movie "Skyfall," is looking at a painting by J. M. W. Turner in London's National Gallery. The picture within a picture in this instance is an abstracted motif from a Honda advert being painted by a naked female painter, a further motivic borrowing from the self-portrait by Lucian Freud from 1993 depicting the painter equipped with brush and palette and wearing nothing apart from a pair of unlaced boots. The body resists gender-based attribution, the artist projects herself only partially onto the male motif; having appropriated his pose, she allows Freud to shine through her work.

In "More Naked than Naked" (2016), the human body features centrally not as figurative representation, but as a signifier. The flow of color gathers in the facial area to form a pool of intense materiality. Furthermore, this colorful maelstrom is held in check by graphic forms, a grid, two crossed lines, one of them with a crook like a walking stick, a sphere. Or is it an apple? Even a breast? All of these objects and signs are part of her painterly vocabulary. Koether explores the potential oscillation between imitation and abstraction when representing the human body via the example of Lewis Hamilton. She adopts a motif from a Mercedes advert for the painting "Re: Formula Won Balthus" (2015) depicting the famous Formula One racing driver dressed in a race suit covered with bristling brand logos, standing within a circle, and adopting a pose reminiscent of Leonardo da Vinci's "Vitruvian Man" (c. 1490), which in turn becomes the characteristic 3-point Mercedes Star and thus a logo in its own right. The most well-worn, contentious bodily signifier, the phallus, features literally in Koether's "Isabelle" (2013). The delicate and masterful painting on paper contrasts sharply with the motif, an oversized and comically abstracted penis that alludes to the latex sculpture by Louise Bourgeois who was renowned for her wild and playful approach to the body as signifier and to

psychoanalytical theory. The phallus and testicles also seem to dictate the painting's eccentric shape, which is in turn isolated by both the actual frame and its internal painted counterpart. In 2013, Koether hung the painting from the ceiling on its own in the middle of one of her exhibitions. In opposition to the psychoanalytical interpretation of the phallus as a signifier of power and strength, Koether devises an ambiguous analysis of male forms of appearance. Precisely in the coupling of the quasi-helpless, supine male nude in "Lucian Israel Balthus" (2014) and the introspective man in "More Naked than Naked," the phallus reveals a fragile and vulnerable dimension.

-1.8 | FULL CIRCLE

Koether's group of small-format paintings titled "Untitled (from the series 'Zodiac Nudes')" (all 2016) represents a decisive formal reference to her early work, featured at the start of the exhibition. As in the "trapped paintings" from the early 1980s, she is also working with opaque, encrusted, iridescent colors, indeed, spheres make a reappearance in their various guises—as apples, globes, orbs, and suns. However, the paintings are updated via the use of the latest acrylic paints and pastes that lend the constricting crust of the early paintings an opulent, sensual sheen and manifest a clear delight in pure materiality. The paintings are the consolidation of an energy cycle, the connection of existential nakedness and cosmic cycles, and above all, the astrological Zodiac. The small-formats themselves become a supplement to and partners in the dialog with larger compositions, such as "Freud Broodthaers #2" (2016). The painting's central figure has been appropriated from Lucian Freud once more and embedded in a welter of references: it is standing in the middle of a literally amused or amusing letter painting adapted from Marcel Broodthaers, grapes, garlands and Koether's ubiquitous blue bow, which she has borrowed from a baroque still life by Daniel Seghers.

In "Tate BP Bacon Balthus PdF" (2015), a viewer placed centrally in the composition is contemplating the sheer profusion of overwhelming connections. The tapestry of sources here includes a

triptych by Francis Bacon, an ancient sculpture of a cat, a copy by Balthus of Gustave Courbet's scandalized painting "The Origin of the World" (1866), and a Tate Gallery advertisement. The advert's slogan, which depicts a woman sitting calmly in front of Bacon's protagonists squirming in torment: "I love the mix of old and new". Perhaps the elusively changing sparkle of the painting is an expression of this declaration of love and thus the concomitant complex and pleasurable work on relationship building.

-1.1 | THE "TOUR DE MADAME" CYCLE

For the central room on the lower level of Museum Brandhorst, Koether has devised the "Tour de Madame" (2018) series of paintings as a response, in both arrangement and format, to Cy Twombly's monumental "Lepanto" cycle (2001). With its semi-circular architectural design on the upper floor of the museum reminiscent of the apse in a church, this monumental cycle is a highlight in the Museum Brandhorst's permanent collection. Based on the same floor plan, twelve panes of glass have been installed on the museum's basement level inviting the visitor to try different perspectives and enabling an experience of space. There, in the belly of the building as it were, Koether fights her battle with painting and art history in front of our eyes.

The motifs and the dynamics of Koether's career since the 1980s resonate in this retrospective. The color red lends the paintings a formal and atmospheric sense of cohesion and is disrupted by two smaller, encrusted, pitch-black paintings, thus giving it a rhythmical form. In one of the paintings we see a return of the spherical shapes that have been a firm fixture in Koether's work since the outset, in this instance completely monopolizing the canvas in an exuberant allover. The start and endpoint of the cycle is a funeral cortege borrowed from Poussin's "The Funeral of Phocion" (1648). In Koether's painting, the canvas becomes the shroud covering the body on the funeral bier and generates thus a masterful interplay of lustrous highlights. The topos of the death of painting, which has accompanied the utopian and rational designs of modernism like a ghost, becomes a death within painting in this instance, and is ultimately duplicated in a pixelated

variant, in which the mythological scene can only be made out as a schematic echo. The painting alludes to her „Bruised Grids“ and, indeed, the multitude of other grids that appear as decoration on bags or benches or as motifs which have permeated her work since the early 2000s and have become paintings in their own right. As an important reference point for her praxis, Cézanne—alongside painters, such as Balthus, Freud, Poussin and van Gogh—also makes an appearance once more in the pose of her self-portrait, among other things. It plays in turn on his portrait of Madame Cézanne, onto which Koether has projected her initials JK, filling the whole format.

The central painting of the cycle—a paraphrase of Balthus’ “La Chambre” (c. 1953)—depicts a naked woman reclining lasciviously upon a bed. Her head is hanging down backwards so that her face appears upside down. Supporting herself with her right hand, she is trying to kick a grid painting situated in the bottom right-hand corner out of the composition itself. Prostrate in this precarious, semi-contorted position, she is holding a transparent sphere aloft with her left hand—a balancing act between below and above, up and down, gravity and floating lightness, resistance and abandon.

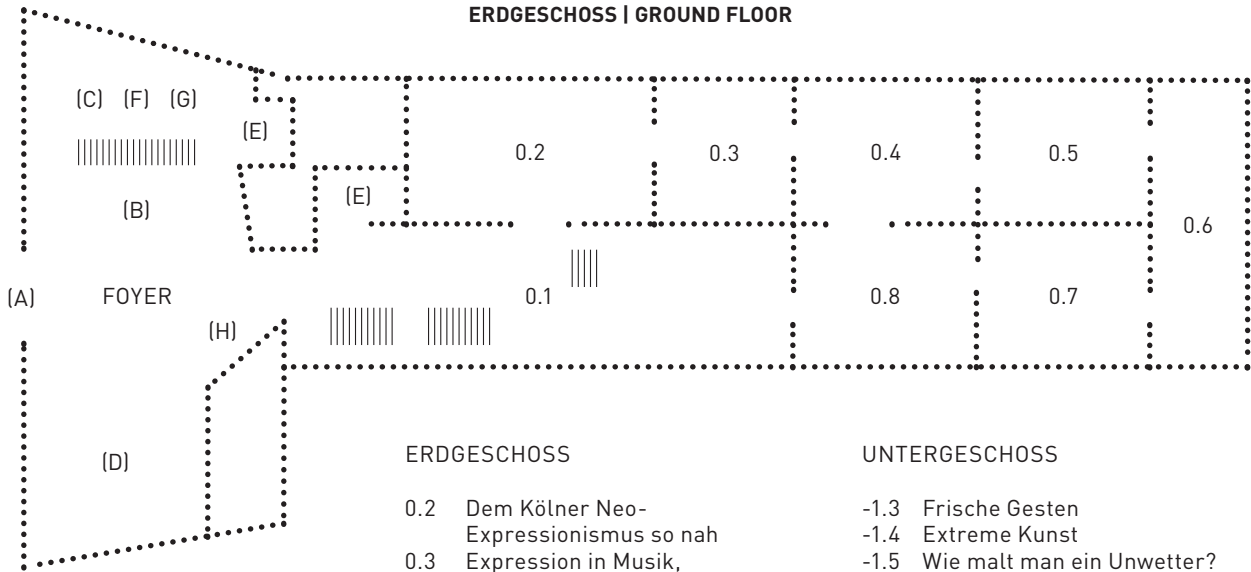
Koether’s choice of the title “Tour de Madame” refers to a further intellectual model, namely Michel de Montaigne. His library and study were housed in a tower—the “tour de Montaigne”—situated on his family estate. Another tower reserved for his wife, the so-called “tour de Madame,” stood opposite his tower library. One of Montaigne’s key precepts was the idea that thinking can only come about through movement: a movement that is eminently articulated in the installation and the twelve works comprising “Tour de Madame,” as well as its accumulation of references, themes and motifs familiar to us from the rest of her oeuvre.

-1.2 | COSMOS OF IMAGES

A series of alternating projections is shown in the media room: reproductions of the 170 paintings that make up the work “Fresh Aufhebung” (Room -1.3) take turns with the presentation of the nine-minute long video “Touch and Resist,” which Koether shot

together with Amy Granat in 2007 based on one of her performances, and three of her digitalized visual dossiers. The latter consist of collections of materials, be it art-historical templates and discourses, items from popular culture or excerpts from daily events, of interest to her during the course of different series of works and which she has collated and ultimately published as printed dossiers. Alongside "Fortune" (2015) and "Zodiac Nudes" (2016), a current dossier on "Tour de Madame" (2018) will also be presented. The dossiers provide an insight into Koether's creative universe—a dense web of ongoing daily reflection and association. It offers up a search for clues and is at the same time an invitation to look back at the motifs and images of "Tour de Madame."

ERDGESCHOSS | GROUND FLOOR



- FOYER
- (A) Eingang
 - (B) Kasse / Information
 - (C) Buchhandlung
 - (D) Café
 - (E) Aufzug
 - (F) WC
 - (G) Garderobe
 - (H) Kunstvermittlungsstation

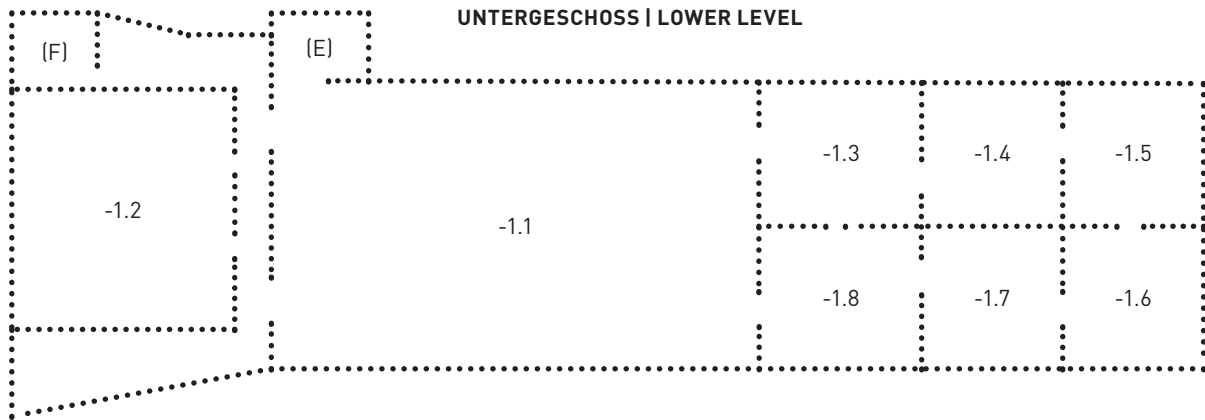
ERDGESCHOSS

- 0.2 Dem Kölner Neo-Expressionismus so nah
- 0.3 Expression in Musik, Literatur und Malerei
- 0.4 Unmöglichkeit der Malerei
- 0.5 Rote Arabesken
- 0.6 „The Inside Job“ und „Affective Import“
- 0.7 Weltraum der Malerei
- 0.8 „sun//ny“

UNTERGESCHOSS

- 1.3 Frische Gesten
- 1.4 Extreme Kunst
- 1.5 Wie malt man ein Unwetter?
- 1.6 „The Seasons“
- 1.7 Körper – Farbe – Zeichen
- 1.8 Der Kreis schließt sich
- 1.1 Der „Tour de Madame“-Zyklus
- 1.2 Bilderkosmos

UNTERGESCHOSS | LOWER LEVEL



- FOYER
- (A) Entrance
 - (B) Ticket Desk / Information
 - (C) Book Shop
 - (D) Café
 - (E) Lift
 - (F) WC
 - (G) Cloakroom
 - (H) Arts Education Station

GROUND FLOOR

- 0.2 So close to Cologne Neo-Expressionism
- 0.3 Expression, Music, Literature, and Painting
- 0.4 The Impossibility of Painting
- 0.5 Red Arabesques
- 0.6 Inside Job – Affective Import
- 0.7 Space Is the Place
- 0.8 “sun//ny”

LOWER LEVEL

- 1.3 Fresh Gestures
- 1.4 Extreme Art
- 1.5 How to Go about Painting a Storm
- 1.6 “The Seasons”
- 1.7 Body – Color – Signifier
- 1.8 Full Circle
- 1.1 The “Tour de Madame” Cycle
- 1.2 Cosmos of Images

**JUTTA KOETHER IM
GESPRÄCH MIT
KERSTIN STAKEMAIER**

Im Foyer | kostenfrei
DO 28.06. | 19.00

**ZEICHENHEFT FÜR
KINDER UND ERWACHSENE**

Gehen Sie mit Jutta Koether auf Tour! An der Kunstvermittlungstation im Foyer liegen Zeichenhefte und Stifte für alle Besucherinnen und Besucher, ob Kind oder Erwachsener, bereit. Lernen Sie mit diesem Heft Koethers Arbeits- und Malweise kennen und tauchen Sie ein in die Farbe Rot, die Lieblingsfarbe der Künstlerin. An die Stifte, fertig, los!

**VERANSTALTUNGSREIHE
„JUTTA KOETHER –
TOUR DE MADAME“
19. UND 20. OKT 2018**

Das Museum Brandhorst organisiert in Kooperation mit den Münchner Kammerspielen und der Akademie der Bildenden Künste München eine Veranstaltungsreihe zum Abschluss der Ausstellung. Vorträge, Performances und Konzerte bieten erweiterte Perspektiven auf die künstlerische Praxis Koethers. Weitere Informationen finden Sie ab Juli auf den Webseiten der beteiligten Institutionen.

**SKETCHBOOK FOR
KIDS AND GROWN-UPS**

Go on tour with Jutta Koether! Sketchbooks and coloured pencils are ready and available to all visitors great and small from the art education point in the foyer. Use this book to get to know Jutta Koether's methods of working and painting and immerse yourselves in her favourite colour – red. On your markers, get set, go!

**SERIES OF EVENTS:
“JUTTA KOETHER –
TOUR DE MADAME”
19 AND 20 OCT 2018**

In collaboration with the Münchner Kammerspiele and the Academy of Fine Arts Munich Museum Brandhorst is hosting a series of events scheduled for the final weekend of the exhibition. Lectures, performances and concerts will provide a broader perspective on Jutta Koether's art practice. More information will be available from July on the webpages of the participating institutions.

museum-brandhorst.de
muenchner-kammerspiele.de
adbk.de



JUTTA KOETHER
TOUR DE MADAME
18. MAI BIS 21. OKT 2018

WORKSHOPS FÜR ERWACHSENE

Treffpunkt: Kunstvermittlung-
station im Foyer
Kosten: 15 Euro inkl. Eintritt

Anmeldung unter:
programm@pinakothek.de oder
T +49 (0)89 23805 – 198

MALERISCHE GROTESKE – IRRITATIONEN COLLAGIEREN

SO 10.06. | 11.00 – 13.30
SO 08.07. | 15.00 – 17.30
DO 11.10. | 17.00 – 19.30

Mit Lina Zylla, Künstlerin
Im praktischen Teil des Work-
shops werden wir im Studio ma-
lerisch tätig, arbeiten mit selbst
angerührten Pigmenten und ent-
wickeln Collagen, die irritieren.

JUTTA KOETHER: ICH BIN VIELE

SO 23.06. | 13.30 – 16.00
SO 09.09. | 14.00 – 16.30

Mit Annegret Hoch, Künstlerin

Schreiben, Malen, Musik-
machen und Performatives
sind die Ausdrucksmittel Jutta
Koethers. Bei den ausgewählten
Werken agiert sie mit Schrift
und Geometrie als Störfaktoren
– und packt alles zusammen
in ein Bild, in übereinander ge-
lagerte Zeit-, Farb- und Be-

deutungsebenen. Aus vielen
Einzelaspekten der Teilnehmer
entsteht eine gemeinsame
Arbeit aus übereinander-
geschichteten Folien.

KINDERFÜHRUNGEN

Die Kinderführungen
finden parallel zur
Ausstellungsführung statt.

Treffpunkt: Kunstvermittlung-
station im Foyer | kostenfrei

Anmeldung unter:
programm@pinakothek.de oder
T +49 (0)89 23805 – 198

MUSIK IN BILDERN

SA 02.06. | 07.07. | 04.08. | 15.09.
jeweils 16.00

Mit Lina Zylla, Künstlerin

Wir betrachten die Farbe in den
Bildern und bringen sie mit
Tönen zusammen. Dabei werden
wir uns mit der Technik einer Mu-
sikcollage auseinandersetzen.
Wir werden selbst mit einfachen
Mitteln Musik machen, unsere ei-
genen Töne zu einer Gesamtkom-
position entwickeln und später
anhören.

Cover: Jutta Koether, Untitled, 1982, Foto: Robert Hamacher

DIALOGFÜHRUNGEN

Treffpunkt: Kunstvermittlung-
station im Foyer | kostenfrei

PAINTING LIGHTS – DEN ZWI- SCHENTÖNEN AUF DER SPUR

DO 31.05. | 26.07. | 02.08. | 27.09.
jeweils 18.30 – 19.30

Dialogführung mit Lina Zylla
und Stephanie Müller aka
rag*treasure, Künstlerinnen

Hier wird über künstlerische
Herangehensweisen aus den
Bereichen Malerei und Sound dis-
kutiert. Die beiden Künstlerinnen
sprechen über ihren eigenen
Kunstbegriff und bringen die Ar-
beiten von Jutta Koether mit ihren
persönlichen Ansätzen in Verbin-
dung. Dabei sind Klang und Farbe
zwei sehr wichtige Elemente.

EXKLUSIVE FÜHRUNGEN

Gerne organisieren wir eine
exklusive Führung für Sie.
Informationen unter
fuehrungen@
museum-brandhorst.de

GUIDED TOURS OF THE EXHIBITION

All guided tours listed here
are held in German.
English guided tours
may be booked at
fuehrungen@
museum-brandhorst.de

AUSSTELLUNGSFÜHRUNGEN

Treffpunkt: Kunstvermittlung-
station im Foyer | kostenfrei

Begrenzte Anzahl an Teil-
nahmeplätzen.
Ausgabe von Teilnehmerkarten
ab 30 min vor Führungsbeginn
an der Infotheke.

DI 12.06. | 19.06. | 03.07. | 17.07.
24.07. | 31.07. | 07.08. | 21.08.
28.08. | 04.09. | 11.09. | 18.09.
25.09. | 02.10. | 09.10. | 16.10.
jeweils 15.00

SA 02.06. | 09.06. | 16.06. | 23.06.
30.06. | 14.07. | 21.07. | 28.07.
04.08. | 11.08. | 18.08. | 01.09.
08.09. | 15.09. | 29.09. | 06.10.
13.10. | 20.10.
jeweils 16.00

AUS ERSTER HAND

DI 29.05. | 15.00
mit Achim Hochdörfer

THEMENFÜHRUNGEN CY TWOMBLY

DI 05.06. | 15.00
DI 26.06. | 15.00
SA 07.07. | 16.00
DI 14.08. | 15.00
SA 25.08. | 16.00