
Press release, Potsdam, September 11, 2024

Museum Barberini – A center for Impressionist Painting

With the Museum Barberini, the city of Potsdam has gained a high-profile art venue, whose ambitious exhibitions range from the Old Masters to contemporary art, with an emphasis on impressionist painting. Seen as one of the most successful foundation of an art museum in Germany, the Barberini has established itself as one of the most popular art museums with international exhibitions and an extraordinary collection of Impressionist paintings.

Located in the historic center of Potsdam on the town's Old Market Square, the Barberini is centered around works from the extensive collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings of its founder and patron Hasso Plattner, including masterpieces by Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Berthe Morisot, Gustave Caillebotte, and Paul Signac. 115 works by 23 artists present the history of French Impressionism – from its beginnings in the nineteenth century to its further development through the Pointillists and Fauves in the early twentieth century. With 40 paintings by Claude Monet, there is no venue in Europe outside of Paris that shows more works by this artist. This makes Potsdam one of the most important centers of Impressionism in the world.

All exhibitions are accompanied by an extensive program of events and education, including symposia, readings, tours, concerts, film evenings, and workshops that encourage a lively artistic discourse. In a similar way, with changing online resources, Barberini Digital brings the museum's works and their stories to the digital realm, opening up new approaches to art. The experience is completed by the museum shop and the Barberini cafés that offer panoramas of the old market square with its Italian flair and the so-called Freundschaftsinsel on the river Havel.

Preview 2025

Kandinsky's Universe: Geometric Abstraction in the 20th Century

February 15 – May 18, 2025

At the beginning of the 20th century, painting underwent a profound transformation. Artists no longer wanted to depict the visible; they aspired to a new visual language that reduced artistic expression to an interplay of colors, lines, and shapes. Geometric Abstraction viewed these elements as a visual language that reflected the modern world and transcended national boundaries. The exhibition featuring more than 100 works by over seventy artists and more than thirty international lenders spans six decades and showcases how Geometric Abstraction found radical expression in all its variations in Europe and the USA.

The Honest Eye: Camille Pissarro's Impressionism

June 14 – September 28, 2025

With Camille Pissarro, an outsider became a central figure within the Impressionist collective. Born in the Caribbean, he came to France in 1855, sensed the anti-academic upsurge in painting, and attracted like-minded people. With their revolutionary style of painting, they founded the Impressionist movement.

Pissarro took up the pointillism of the younger artists as well as their interest in social utopian ideas. He was the only artist to take part in all eight Impressionist exhibitions.

Starting with the seven paintings by Pissarro from the Hasso Plattner Collection, the exhibition shows 80 paintings from lenders such as the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and the Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

In cooperation with the Denver Art Museum, where the exhibition will be shown from October 26, 2025, to February 8, 2026.

Unicorn: The Mythical Beast in Art

October 25, 2025 – February 1, 2026

The unicorn has stimulated the imagination like no other animal. It has been documented in many cultures for centuries. Its fascination continues to this day. The mythical animal is a multi-layered symbol that emanates an associative energy. Traces of the unicorn can be found in Christian and non-European art, in natural science and medicine and in a wide range of symbolism. An examination of the iconography of the unicorn invites us to reflect on knowledge of the world, wishful dreams and the limits of reality.

The exhibition presents over 100 works from antiquity to contemporary art from international lenders, including the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, the Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna.

The exhibition *Unicorn: The Mythical Beast in Art* will be on display at the Musée de Cluny in Paris from March 16 to June 28, 2026.

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