



## Press Release / Pressemitteilung

April, 2025

### Krefeld to become a center for concrete art: The Kunstmuseen Krefeld and the Adolf Luther Foundation launch a close cooperation

The Kunstmuseen Krefeld and the Adolf Luther Foundation in Krefeld are setting new accents with a long-term partnership: The aim of the new cooperation is to closely link-related the scholarly and organizational activities and develop synergies between both institutions. The “Adolf Luther Foundation at the Kunstmuseen Krefeld” will preserve and render visible the legacy of the important light and object artist Adolf Luther (1912 –1990) as well as strengthen the focus on concrete art in Krefeld.

“Adolf Luther is considered one of Krefeld’s most important artists. His distinctive works are nationally and internationally renowned and recognized. Combining Luther’s charisma with the reputation of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld is an excellent idea that is sure to bear fruit. I would like to thank the Adolf Luther Foundation, especially Magdalena Broska, and everyone involved at the Kunstmuseen Krefeld, especially Katia Baudin, for their work on this cooperation, which will continue to develop positively in the coming years,” explains Krefeld’s Mayor Frank Meyer.

The cooperation will be officially launched with the exhibition *Adolf Luther. Seeing Is Beautiful* to open on May 16, 2025 (duration: May 17–September 21, 2025) and will occupy the entire second floor of the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum. Following the exhibition, the Adolf Luther Foundation will obtain a permanent space in *Collection in Motion*, the KWM’s dynamic presentation of its permanent collection. *Collection in Motion* sheds light on the diverse collection of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld from changing perspectives in thematically grouped presentations.

“With the launch of the close cooperation between the Kunstmuseen Krefeld and the Adolf Luther Foundation, we are not only fulfilling the founder’s wish. Two protagonists of the Krefeld art scene are placing the cooperation on a new footing from which both sides will benefit enormously. The first visible sign of this will be the long-term presence of objects by Luther in a permanent Luther Room at the KWM. What a joyful event, for which I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone involved,” says Gregor Kathstede, Chairman of the Board of the Adolf Luther Foundation.

The cooperation is a natural result of the artist’s biography and the connections between the two collections, which make this partnership both meaningful and forward-looking. The Kunstmuseen Krefeld played an important part in Adolf Luther’s artistic career. Like many other key modern and contemporary artists, Luther had his first solo exhibition at the Kunstmuseen Krefeld in 1960. The collection of the Luther Foundation complements the holdings of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld in many ways. Concrete art, based on abstract, geometric principles and immediately accessible to the viewer through the senses, is also a focal point of the Kunstmuseen’s collection.

Kunstmuseen Krefeld

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Concrete art, kinetic art, op art, and their constructivist precursors were an integral part of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld's postwar exhibition program. Adolf Luther, the ZERO artists Heinz Mack, Günther Uecker, and Otto Piene, as well as Lucio Fontana, Yves Klein, Theo van Doesburg, Hans Arp, and Jesús Rafael Soto are just some of the central figures whose works were exhibited and collected by the Kunstmuseen Krefeld early on. The Luther Foundation, in turn, looks after Luther's own oeuvre as well as a collection of works by other artists that Luther collected since the 1960s through exchanges and purchases. It includes works by the Düsseldorf ZERO group, the Nouveaux Réalistes, Joseph Beuys, Antoni Tàpies, Ad Reinhardt, Lucio Fontana, Mario Merz, and Herbert Zangs, among others. Another focus of the collection is on geometric abstraction of the 1920s and 1930s, represented by artists such as Ella Bergmann-Michel, Henrik Berlew, Theo van Doesburg, Kazimir Malevich, and Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart.

Over the past few years, the 2 directors have fostered a constructive dialogue and mastered appreciation that has enabled the cooperation to take form. In 2022, the solo exhibition *Adolf Luther. Interactive Experience Spaces* at Haus Esters, curated by Katia Baudin and Magdalena Broska, honored the radicalism and relevance of Luther's work in his hometown and juxtaposed it with the work of the French-Argentine kinetic artist Julio Le Parc.

"One pillar of the program we have been developing since 2016 is the close interweaving of local and national and international references, questioning our own history and collection as an impulse for the present and the future. The partnership we are now entering into with the Luther Foundation has been a priority for me for years, and I would like to thank the Luther Foundation for its great trust and commitment," said Katia Baudin, director of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld. "Luther's work is closely linked to the collection and history of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld and echoes our focus on activating viewers to participate. With this alliance, we are creating visibility for Luther's work and for concrete art in general, far beyond the borders of Krefeld."

Magdalena Broska, director of the Adolf Luther Foundation, emphasizes: "Adolf Luther had a close relationship to his hometown. It was the artist's firm wish to establish a close cooperation between his foundation and the Kunstmuseen Krefeld. With his work and his collection of abstract and concrete art, for which he created his foundation thirty-five years ago, he wanted to contribute to the strengthening and further development of Krefeld as a city of art. Now, after many years of development based on recognition and appreciation, the Kunstmuseen and the Adolf Luther Foundation want to pursue this goal together."

Adolf Luther is one of the most renowned light artists of German postwar art. Using materials such as glass, aluminum, concave mirrors, lenses, lasers, and smoke, he turned away from painting and instead placed the perception of light at the center of the visual experience. He gained international recognition for his objects made of glass and concave mirrors, as well as large architectural integrations, such as those in the Olympic Stadium in Munich, the Federal Chancellery in Bonn, the International Congress Center (ICC) in Berlin, and the Tonhalle in Düsseldorf.

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In 1989, with the support of the then mayor of Krefeld, Dieter Pützhofer, Luther established the foundation, which is based in the artist's former home and studio in Krefeld and will continue to be maintained as an artist's foundation and remain open to the public. The cooperation with the Kunstmuseen Krefeld will be further developed through joint activities such as exhibitions, events, research and restoration projects, and more. A new position of foundation curator will be created at the Adolf Luther Foundation the search will begin shortly. The curator will not only administer the foundation and preserve Luther's legacy but will also promote synergies between the Luther Foundation and the Kunstmuseen Krefeld and implement joint activities. Both institutions will benefit from increased visibility, new programs, and innovative approaches to encourage new interactions with the public.

The press conference for the exhibition *Adolf Luther. Seeing Is Beautiful* will take place on May 13, 2025 at 11 am at the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum.

**Visit**  
**KUNSTMUSEEN KREFELD**  
**Kaiser Wilhelm Museum**  
Joseph-Beuys-Platz 1  
47798 Krefeld  
**Haus Lange Haus Esters**  
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47800 Krefeld

The Kunstmuseen Krefeld are a cultural institution of the City of Krefeld.

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<https://kunstmuseenkrefeld.de/en/Press>

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