



Press Release / Pressemitteilung
May 2025

Adolf Luther. Seeing Is Beautiful
May 17 – September 21, 2025, Kaiser Wilhelm Museum

Opening: Friday, May 16, 2025, 7:00 p.m., KWM

The exhibition *Adolf Luther. Seeing Is Beautiful* marks the start of close, long-term cooperation between the Kunstmuseen Krefeld and the Adolf Luther Foundation. The aim of this partnership is to distinguish Krefeld as a key site for Concrete Art and, through the relationship between the two institutions, ensure Adolf Luther's artistic legacy in Krefeld. The exhibition at the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum (KWM) celebrates this long-term partnership. It will unite major works by Luther with works by other artists from the Adolf Luther Foundation collection, while also introducing visitors with lesser-known aspects and projects of this native of Krefeld.

The exhibition *Seeing Is Beautiful* will provide a comprehensive experience of Adolf Luther's lifework as an artist, collector, and foundation founder. Luther (1912–1990) was one of the most important light artists of the post-war period. With materials such as glass, mirrors, smoke, and lasers, he created an art form in which light itself is the medium and the protagonist. His works make physical phenomena visible and challenge accustomed patterns of perception.

Featuring some 80 works by Adolf Luther as well as examples from his prominent art collection, the exhibition will be the most extensive tribute to the artist of Krefeld in his native town to date. On 800 square meters of exhibition space, not only his light objects but also hitherto lesser-known creative phases of his oeuvre will be visible: from early Informalist paintings to works in which he experimented with glass breakage to utopian visions of a light architecture on the moon.

"Adolf Luther is one of the most outstanding protagonists of Concrete Art. His artistic vision of using light as a medium and enabling the viewer to physically experience it continues to fascinate. The cooperation with the Adolf Luther Foundation provides us with new means of securing this important legacy on a permanent basis, while at the same time taking it further, conceptually speaking, in dialogue with other artistic approaches," comments Kunstmuseen Krefeld director Katia Baudin: "The exhibition will offer an opportunity to experience Adolf Luther's art and collection from a new perspective in the spacious rooms of the KWM."

"This exhibition brings Krefeld full circle in a wonderful way. Adolf Luther had his first solo exhibition at the KWM 65 years ago. It was the beginning of his artistic career. I would be delighted if this show were to provide impulses for further research and reflection in keeping with the artist's vision," adds Dr. Magdalena Broska, artistic director of the Adolf Luther Foundation and curator of the exhibition.

Kunstmuseen Krefeld

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Rather than presenting the works in strictly chronological order, the show will explore key concerns of the artist and his time—for example abstraction, the monochrome, dissolution of boundaries, architectural speculation, and light art—in thematic sections. A lively dialogue will thus ensue between Luther's art and works in his collection by other artists, among them Joseph Beuys, Marcel Duchamp, Yves Klein, and Soto.

Space is always an active component of Luther's works. The interplay between light, space, and the viewers' movement unleashes the energy of his art and makes it palpable in ever new ways. Many of the artist's works bear a close relation to architecture—for instance in the form of light walls for public buildings and large-scale mirror installations in places like the Munich Olympia Stadium, the Office of the Federal Chancellor in Bonn, the International Congress Centre (ICC) Berlin, and the dome of the Düsseldorf Tonhalle (concert hall). His designs for transparent living cells and light cities on the moon show him to be a utopian visionary.

Film material never before presented to the public also awaits the visitors: In recorded conversations, the philosopher and artist Bazon Brock—a companion of Luther's for a time—, the concept artist Angela Bulloch, and Magdalena Broska share their personal impressions of the artist's personality and impact.

*The exhibition Adolf Luther. Seeing Is Beautiful marks the beginning of the **Adolf Luther Foundation at the Kunstmuseen Krefeld**—a close, long-term partnership between the Kunstmuseen Krefeld and the Adolf Luther Foundation whose purpose is to strengthen Krefeld as a national site for Concrete Art. The cooperation will take the form of joint activities such as exhibitions, public programs, research and conservation projects, and more. After the exhibition, a room in the KWM's Collection in Motion—its dynamic collection presentation—will be permanently devoted to the Adolf Luther Foundation for changing presentations. Both institutions will benefit through increased visibility, new programs, and innovative approaches to dialogue with the public.*

Visit
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The art museums are a cultural institution
of the City of Krefeld.

Kunstmuseen Krefeld

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