



Press Release / Pressemitteilung

October 2025

A Tribute to a Pioneer of Modern Living: Kunstmuseen Krefeld Present Germany's First Major Retrospective of Charlotte Perriand

Opening: November 2, 11.30 a.m., Kaiser Wilhelm Museum (KWM)

Press conference: October 29, 11 a.m., KWM

From November 2, 2025, through March 15, 2026, Kunstmuseen Krefeld will present *Charlotte Perriand: L'Art d'habiter / The Art of Dwelling*—the first comprehensive retrospective in Germany dedicated to the influential French architect and designer (1903–1999). The exhibition offers a profound exploration of one of the most visionary figures in 20th-century design—a woman whose radical reshaping of modern living continues to resonate far beyond her own time. As a key collaborator of Le Corbusier and a pioneering force in her own right, Perriand redefined the intersection of design, architecture, and everyday life.

Developed in close collaboration with the Archives Charlotte Perriand, the exhibition explores her life's work through the lens of interior and architectural design in relation to living spaces. From her iconic early tubular steel furniture, like the famous *Chaise Longue Basculante*, and experimental minimal dwellings of the interwar years to modular storage systems in the postwar period, culminating in her visionary design for the Alpine resort Les Arcs, the exhibition showcases the full scope of Perriand's creative vision. It also highlights her meaningful commitment to social and environmentally conscious design across more than 1200 square meters of exhibition space.

"Charlotte Perriand approached design as a holistic endeavor—an expression of life itself, and a bridge between art, architecture, and politics," says Katia Baudin, museum director and curator of the exhibition. "That ethos resonates deeply with the mission of Kunstmuseen Krefeld, where design is always understood in a wider cultural and social context. Her work speaks powerfully to the responsibilities design carries today—whether aesthetic, ecological, and social."

The exhibition unfolds across three venues: the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum (KWM) and Haus Lange, Haus Esters—the two modernist villas designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Together, these venues offer a nuanced and multi-dimensional portrait of Perriand's practice in more than 500 exhibits. Central themes include her artistic networks, her dialogue with nature, craft traditions and industrial production, her travels in Japan, Indochina, and Brazil, and her engagement with photography and photomontage as tools to articulate her social vision. Full-scale reconstructions of interiors bring Perriand's design philosophy to life, while thematic sections trace the evolution of her ideas from the 1920s through the 1970s.

At the **KWM**, the display features rare original furniture, never before seen archival documents as well as photographs and film footage. Numerous high-caliber loans come from international institutions such as the Centre Pompidou and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein and the Museum für Gestaltung in Zurich.

Kunstmuseen Krefeld

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Thanks to **Cassina**, the exhibition's premium partner committed to the diffusion of design culture, a faithful reconstruction of the groundbreaking *Équipement intérieur d'une habitation* designed by Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret and Charlotte Perriand for the Salon d'Automne in Paris in 1929 will be exhibited. Through the company's intense philological research, not only Perriand's visionary early work can be experienced by visitors but also her later projects, including faithful reconstructions of pieces designed for the landmark Tokyo exhibitions of 1940 and 1955, where she forged a unique synthesis of Western modernism and Japanese tradition.

Haus Lange focuses on Perriand's lifelong pursuit of a "synthesis of the arts," highlighting her cross-cultural collaborations with figures such as Fernand Léger, Le Corbusier, and Isamu Noguchi. Her time in Japan, Indochina, and Brazil is presented as a critical period that enriched her formal language and deepened her intercultural approach to design.

An exhibition in **Haus Esters** contextualizes the retrospective on Charlotte Perriand and links it closely to the history of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld and the international present. Highlights from the Kunstmuseen Krefeld's art and design collection are presented here, providing a new perspective on the relevance and topicality of Perriand's ideas and design strategies - for instance with regard to sustainability.

The exhibition is about far more than questions of artistic form. At the core of Perriand's work is her steadfast independence, her remarkable sense of freedom, and her intuitive grasp of themes such as health, movement, and the human experience of living. Above all, it was her life, her travels, her friendships and her collaborations that inspired her to find new ways to improve the everyday.

An exhibition catalog will be published in both German and English by Hatje Cantz.

An exhibition organized by Kunstmuseen Krefeld in collaboration with Museum der Moderne Salzburg (May 1–September 13, 2026) and Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona (October 22, 2026–February 27, 2027).

Curated by Katia Baudin with Waleria Dorogova, with support from Pernette Perriand-Barsac and Jacques Barsac.

We thank our sponsors, the Ministry of Culture and Science of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Ernst von Siemens Art Foundation, the IKEA Foundation, and the German-French Citizens' Fund for their support of the exhibition.

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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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