

# Press Release

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## **Mathias Hornung, Martin von Ostrowski Konrad Sommer**

**16 December 2020 to 10 April 2021**

**Mon. to Fri. 9 am to 7 pm**

**Deutsche Wohnen SE, Mecklenburgische Straße 57, 14197 Berlin**

***Due to Covid-19 restrictions this exhibition will not have an official opening. If you wish to visit, we would ask you to register in advance by telephone (030 / 89786-0).***

Because of construction work in the building it was not possible to hold exhibitions here for a long time. And then came the Covid-19 pandemic, which at the time put paid to all the plans we had in the pipeline. However, despite this second lockdown, we have prepared a new exhibition which the public will be able to visit in compliance with whatever restrictions to combat the spread of the virus apply at the time.

This time, the exhibition focuses on painting and includes works by Konrad Sommer, the painter and graphic artist, who died in 2012 and whose works are being exhibited in public for the first time. The exhibition also includes works by Martin von Ostrowski, who visitors to the GEHAG Forum will be familiar with. However, he is not just involved here as the guardian of Konrad Sommer's artistic oeuvre; he is also exhibiting his own paintings of recent years. The standpoints on painting of these two artists from different generations and operating in very different genres are accompanied by Mathias Hornung's wood prints and wood sculptures, whereby the latter also served as the original plates for the prints. Visitors to the GEHAG Forum at Deutsche Wohnen will be familiar with this artist as well. Works by him are amongst those on display in the company's own collection.

**Mathias Hornung's** work is closely associated with the concept of metamorphosis. He produces wood prints and then processes the wooden plates and uses them as wood sculptures. In 2015/16 he used these wooden plates, whilst retaining the traces left on them by the printing process, to produce mural reliefs and tables on steel feet. As a way of acknowledging the original function of these objects, he also presents in this exhibition wood prints that were printed with the wooden plates used to create these objects. The patterns of the printing plates and the wood prints on paper are based on a visual representation of digital data clusters, which Hornung conveys first of all by creating a drawing and then by cutting the patterns in this drawing into the wooden plate. In this process, two unfamiliar worlds, the virtual and the haptic, collide. What is supposed to look like an abstraction is not really abstract but a very precise representation of data programmes, achieved through projection and woodcutting.

**Martin von Ostrowski** uses a variety of artistic forms and media. Back in the 1990s he was known above all for his performance art as "Queen Louise". Later he started a participative project, asking the question "Why art?" in order to campaign with considerable empathy for the importance of art. On this occasion he is represented in the GEHAG Forum with paintings from various years. Von Ostrowski, who holds a degree in fine arts, references motifs from the Romantic period and the Renaissance, for example floral decor, representations of the Virgin Mary and cherubs, and integrates these pictorial elements into his neo-expressionist but realistic painting. Self portraits with distorted reflections that result in a two- and threefold representation of the head evoke questions of identity and are reminiscent of both Rimbaud's "I is another" and Walt Whitman's "I contain multitudes".

**Konrad Sommer**, the painter who died in advanced years in 2012, is represented with his landscapes in the GEHAG Forum for the first time. Sommer devoted himself to landscape painting with a riot of colours, which – according to Martin von Ostrowski – he daubed almost rhythmically onto paper and cardboard with broad and bold brushstrokes. Whether he is creating an autumnal mood with clear reddish tones or summer warmth with yellows or a wintry atmosphere with cool shades of blue, Sommer makes full use of his palette of colours to clearly convey the seasons to the observer. And then there are acoustic impressions which Sommer integrated into his pictures and sometimes immortalised in the titles he chose. In his treatment of woodland motifs, his brushwork often makes it seem as if the trees are actually dancing. Bold brushstrokes convey the slight blurring that occurs when things move and turn. With these pictures the GEHAG Forum is showing the works of an almost unknown painter who is worth discovering.

**Mathias Hornung** (\*1965 in Tübingen); 1984 - completed his Abitur; 1985-1988 - did an apprenticeship as a mechanic for industrial machinery; 1988-1993 - studied stage and costume design under Professors Peter Gau and Jürgen Rose at the University for the Visual Arts in Stuttgart; has had numerous individual and group exhibitions both in Germany and abroad; lives and works in Berlin

[www.mathiashornung.de](http://www.mathiashornung.de)

**Martin von Ostrowski** (\*1958 in Bietigheim-Bissingen); 1978 - studied art history, history and literature at the University of Karlsruhe; 1982 - moved to Berlin, continued his studies at the FU and started to work as an artist on a regular basis; since 1983 - has been a member of various artists' groups; 1988 - was awarded the French state prize *Villa Arson*; 1990 - completed his dissertation on Historic German Fountains 1813-1871; has had numerous exhibitions nationally and internationally; lives and works in Berlin

[www.martinvonostrowski.de](http://www.martinvonostrowski.de)

**Konrad Sommer** (\*1915 Munich - †2012 Munich); after secondary school he attended vocational school for photography, chemigraphy, copperplate printing and gravure printing; from 1941 he worked as a draughtsman for Krauss-Maffei, Munich; after the war he worked as an artist with periods of unemployment in between; from 1949 he worked in chemigraphy and etching at the graphic art and map printers Joh. Roth; from 1959 to 1973 he worked in chemigraphy for the publishing company Heering; alongside his profession he was consistently active artistically as a painter, graphic artist and photographer until he became completely blind in 1997.

## GEHAG Forum

Support for art and artists has a long tradition at Deutsche Wohnen. The roots of this support go back to the 1920s. At that time, Bruno Taut was the in-house architect at GEHAG. As a successful architect, he designed residential apartment houses, but had come originally from painting and was a member of the artists' association "Gläserne Kette" (*Crystal Chain*). In honour of Bruno Taut, the first exhibition of the GEHAG Forum, which was founded in 1988, took as its subject a house in Dahlewitz which Taut had designed and created the colour scheme for. Since then, numerous artists have presented their work here. Over the past decades, the GEHAG Forum, with its variety of subjects and its integration of work that is far removed from the mainstream, has become a recognized location for contemporary art.

## Deutsche Wohnen

Deutsche Wohnen is one of the leading publicly listed residential property companies in Europe. The business focus of the company is on managing its own portfolio of residential properties in dynamic metropolitan regions and conurbations in Germany. Deutsche Wohnen sees itself as having both a social responsibility and a duty to maintain and newly develop good-quality and affordable housing in vibrant residential neighbourhoods. As at 30 September 2020, the portfolio comprised a total of around 165,700 units, of which 162,700 are residential and 3,000 commercial. Deutsche Wohnen SE is listed in the Deutsche Börse's DAX and is also included in the leading indices EPRA/NAREIT, STOXX Europe 600, GPR 250 and DAX 50 ESG.