

ADRESS

Militärhistorisches Museum der Bundeswehr
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OPENING HOURS

Daily	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Monday	10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Wednesday	closed

How to get there by Public Transport

Tram No. 7 or 8, Bus No. 64,
Stop Stauffenbergallee

From the Airport
S-Bahn transit, till Stop Industriegelände,
change to Tram No. 7 or 8,
2nd Stop Stauffenbergallee

Re-designed and expanded by the American architect Daniel Libeskind, the Bundeswehr Museum of Military History opened its new permanent exhibition in October 2011. More than 10,000 exhibits examine violence as a historical, cultural and anthropological phenomenon. Visitors are confronted with their own inherent potential for aggression. The museum seeks to encourage creative, open and unbiased discussions and sees itself as a forum for the critical examination of military history and for a dialogue on the role of war and the military in the past, present and future.

14 July 2012, 6 p.m. – 1 a.m.

Museum Summer Night

Opening of the special exhibition "Iconoclastic Controversy – Tanks and Positions in Contemporary Art"

Preannouncement: 6 September 2012

Opening of the special exhibition

"Martin Hertrampf: ОТКУДА? КУДА? –
From where? To where?"

Images of the Withdrawal of Russian Forces from Saxony"



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Iconoclastic Controversy

14. JULY - 21. AUGUST 2012

"Bilderstreit" (Iconoclastic Controversy) – Tanks and positions in contemporary art

They can be found more and more often in art museums and galleries: artistic installations, projects and paintings which revolve around the de-/construction of weapons. But what happens, if such works are displayed in the Bundeswehr Museum of Military History? What is their effect, set in the conflicting space between real weapon systems and the architecture of the Libeskind Wedge?

This question is addressed by a project involving tanks by artist Frank Bölter.

The 60th anniversary of the founding of NATO inspired Bölter in 2009 to fold a cardboard **LEOrigamiPard III** in the size of the "preceding version" Leopard II with the assistance of Bundeswehr soldiers. The artist already worked on large-scale origami projects previously, collaborating with institutions and persons in the creation process which normally are not related to the contemporary art scene. In 2006, for example, he constructed a seaworthy giant paper ship with the help of Cistercian monks and "went to sea"..

In a catalogue of works of 2009, the LEOrigamiPard III is still listed among the "not realized projects". In 2010, with the "Call for Future" of the "Bundeskulturstiftung" (Federal Cultural Foundation), the project entered into a new phase. As one of nine sponsored artists, Bölter participated in the initiative „Über Lebenskunst“ (the art of living respectively the art of surviving) in the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin. At the end of 2010, Bölter wrote a letter to the 1st Tank Division in Hannover. And so the journey through authorities and administrations began. The "Kollaboration Kunst & Militär" (Bölter) gained a momentum of its own which had not been anticipated neither by the artist nor by the Bundeswehr. On July 9th, the installation of the work begins under the supervision of origami expert Kristina Wißling and the assistance of soldiers of the Army Officer School and of the Bundeswehr Staff Band – outside, in front of the Libeskind Wedge.

How will visitors react? Will the LEOrigamiPard III survive the open-air exhibition scheduled for five weeks? The installed origami tank is only one part of the project. The pictures that last, the collaboration, the tensions between artist, voluntary helpers and institutions, the resulting conversations and food for thought are the essence of Bölter's participatory art.

With Michael Sailstorfer's work T 72 (sand), the Museum of Military History displays another piece of art in the original size of a tank.

The artist uses the inflatable dummy of a Russian tank which he purchased from a Chinese manufacturer for 7,000 Dollars. Normally, such dummy tanks simulate engine sounds and produce heat in order to deceive enemy radars and infrared sensors. They simulate a higher combat power or divert forces from the actual real weapon systems. Dummy tanks are also employed for research and training at the Bundeswehr "Technologiestützpunkt Tarnen/Täuschen" (Technology Base for Camouflage/Deception) in Storkow.

But Sailstorfer uses a slightly modified model without inner structure or technical features. He connects a blower unit to the empty hull. The dummy comes to life, inflates to its full size and then collapses with a crippling gun barrel. The sound of the compressor fills the room in which the dummy inflates and then, while collapsing, reveals its true nature.

While Bölter and Sailstorfer employ a scale of 1:1, textile artist Jan Bejšovec confuses by cuteness.

Like ants, his 15 tiny "Konfliktstoff-Panzer" (cause-for-conflict – tanks) are making their way across one of the Libeskind Wedge's inner walls. The tiny, toy-like tanks are part of his "Konfliktstoff"-project for which he uses original military and in particular camouflage materials to produce textile pictures and objects. The "Konfliktstoff"-tanks toy with the contradictory feelings of intimacy and defensiveness, nostalgia and provocation.

The „Bilderstreit“ exhibition is an experiment. Each of these three contemporary pieces of art stands for itself, but each one questions in its own way the significance and fascination of weapons and thus touches on a central aspect of military history museums.

Anselm Kiefer's eponymous painting „Bilderstreit“ (Iconoclastic Controversy) opens a wide time horizon.

It belongs to a series of works created around 1976/88 which refer to the debate on the veneration of holy icons in the Byzantine Empire of the 8th/9th century. The names of the early medieval protagonists cover the surface of the picture. On the edge of a broken painter's palette, tanks are approaching and form the bridge to the excessive violence of the 20th century.

The picture and thus art itself becomes the battlefield.



© Photo: Denis Bury



Photo: Alexis Zavaloff
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn
Courtesy Johann König, Berlin



© Photo: M/HM/David Brenitt

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open-air space in front of the Libeskind Wedge (origami tank) and foyer (film, models + documentation)
Frank Bölter (born 1969 in Lippstadt, currently living in Köln)
LEOrigamiPard III, 2009-2012
construction and design: Kristina Wißling
photos: Denis Bury
film: Julia Staszak & Olaf Mach
folded and installed with the assistance of Bundeswehr soldiers
coated paper

2

1. floor at the entrance to the chronology 1945 to present
Michael Sailstorfer (born 1979 in Velden/Vils, currently living in Berlin)
T 72 (sand), 2008
dummy tank, blower, control
loan: Sammlung Haus N, Kiel

3

2. floor of the Libeskind Wedge
Jan Bejšovec (born 1975 in Freiberg, currently living in Berlin)
"Konfliktstoff"-tank, 2012
15 different camouflage patterns

4

ground floor of the Libeskind Wedge
Anselm Kiefer (born 1945 in Donaueschingen, currently living in France)
Bilderstreit, 1977-1988
mixed technique on canvas
loan: Sammlung Würth

