STEFAN
ROLOFF
Stefan Roloff grows up in West Berlin. Since the beginning of his career, he has been pushing limits as a painter and video artist.

In 1981 Berlin art critic Heinz Ohff writes:

“Many of his works are immensely spectacular. They stand out, more so as they sometimes orchestrate an event, a form of happening. ... He is one of a kind in an art world that’s formed by flocks. It could well be that some day he will play the same role in his generation that Beckmann took and fulfilled in his.”

Next page: Scullroller, Temporary Installation on Kurfürstendamm, 1980, foam rubber, mixed media
Vopos in the East and Fopos in the West (Performance, 1980)

Directly next to the Berlin Wall, Roloff built a watchtower where performers appeared in uniforms with a German Shepherd. They performed an anti-militaristic ballet right in front of border-guards at a checkpoint.
Berlin Mountain Cross (Temporary Installation - foam rubber, mixed media, 1980)

Rubens’ Nightmare (Temporary Installation - foam rubber, mixed media, 1980)
In 1985 New York art critic Carlo McCormick writes:

“Here is an expressionist who refuses to be sloppy, a craftsman who is inspired by the act of painting as he is by his subject matter, a social realist who is too active in the task of observation to pass comment. Roloff is a realist who locates the unreal as a definition of our world.”

> Please click here for more information
Aunt Eve Plays in the Rubble of Berlin - oil and tempera on canvas, 1.45 x 1.65

The Witt Case - oil and tempera on canvas, 1.45 x 1.90
BIG FIRE

In 1984, Roloff created Big Fire, his first digital video art work, at the New York Institute of Technology. It captures the moment when the Pentagon first hands over the possibility of digital image-making to the private sector. Roloff is one of five New York artists invited to experiment with the new media. He immediately recognizes its potential.

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In the catalog, American Pictures of the 1980s, at the National Museum of American Art, the curator Joshua Smith cites Roloff among his contemporaries: “This selection of nontraditional pictures includes the works by some of the decade’s most interesting experimenters - Cindy Sherman, Richard Prince, Barbara Kruger, Stefan Roloff and others – who create and manipulate the subject photographed.”

> Please click here for more information
In his video “Face” Roloff revolutionizes the style of MTV. He combines his painting with a new technique by individually filming 900 layers painted on a canvas and later edits them into a sequence. The video was produced in 1984 by Peter Gabriel and became the prototype of his 1986 video, Sledgehammer. In 1987 Roloff created “Zaar”, his second “Moving Painting.” Peter Gabriel used it for his album Passion, the sound track for Martin Scorsese’s film, The Last Temptation of Christ. Peter Gabriel uses it for his album Passion, the sound track for Martin Scorsese’s film “The Last Temptation of Christ.”

Together with the rock musician Martin Rev, Stefan Roloff develops an audiovisual multimedia-concept that combines Rev‘s music and Roloff’s videos.
When 6 is 9

In his photographic portraits of the series “When 6 is 9” Roloff shoots his models in a private and then in a public space, each one in the same pose and clothing. Then he composites the pieces into one image, mixing painterly and photographic techniques, questioning the much discussed difference between painting and photography.
When 6 is 9

The Brasilian gallerist and curator Marcia Fortes writes: “The exploration of space has always been a driving force in Roloff’s work. Like a child that dismantles a toy to find out what lies inside and elucidate how it works, he creates art through a bold process of dissection. He undertakes the task of locating the movement and the volume which compose and bring life to things, including all objects of art.”
Prinz-Albrecht-Strasse 8

With the installation “Prinz Albrecht Strasse 8” Roloff creates the digital group-portrait of a Berlin-based resistance group to which his father belonged. The Gestapo discredited them as a Soviet spy network, calling them the Red Orchestra. For this project Roloff morphed two photographs of each of the arrested individuals to create the face of a fictitious third person. To him it represents a member of the group which the Gestapo did not find. The installation questions the reality of photography and manipulation of media.

The curator Joshua Smith writes: “Stefan Roloff’s photoworks show life and art as an ongoing process of metamorphosis. Exposing with the camera the normally invisible elements of time, space, motion, and most important, the interaction of choice and chance. Roloff provides important insight into the mysterious and complex way dynamic transformation and redefinition deeply affect creation and perception.”
Exterior and interior view of the installation
With “Castle Gnome” Stefan Roloff created a virtual monument in 2009 that he installed on Berlin's then-empty castle square. He managed to create a Facebook account for this symbol of German bad taste. People from various countries embarked on trips to Berlin to admire the virtual monument on site but they could not get any closer to it than they had on their own screens. Castle Gnome’s number of friends kept growing into the thousands until Facebook realized it did not exist and shut it down. Roloff showed screen shots of the account’s communications in 2010 at Belles Artes in Caceres, Spain.

LaInformación / arte writes: “The installation shows the absurd side of social networks that can create thousands of friends who don’t know each other, within a non-existing concept. To achieve this effect, Roloff created a giant dwarf and installed it virtually on a plaza in Berlin. Subsequently he uploaded it on social networks. He gathered thousands of friends even though the statue doesn’t exist.”
Lindenhotel

The British curator Mark Gisbourne writes:
“The artist Roloff has generated his project in the location where the original interrogations and abuses took place. But rather than create a conventional documentary format, he has chosen to present the work in a manner that derives from his experience of painting. Inspired initially by Van Dyck’s portraiture, Roloff has attempted to create a sense of the pictorial layers or accretions as simile to a painting over time over time, analogous that is to the forty year period of the interrogated and incarcerated interviewees. ... Roloff throughout presents this work as a 'layered' accounting of the past, but at the same time as anti-portraits, another aspect expressed and reinforced by his chosen use of silhouettes”.

Bernd R., detained in 1971, writes:
“They tied my hands to a radiator outside in the hall where I had to squat for hours until I broke down. At one point they put another prisoner into my cell - he was the same age as I was - and he had cut his arteries the day before”.

> Please click here for more information
The Berlin paper TAZ writes: “Stefan Roloff's installation “Beyond the Wall” stretches across a striking 229 meters of wall facing the river Spree in Friedrichshain. Printed on segments of paper and wallpapered on to the wall this work shows stills from videos that Roloff shot in 1984 from Westberlin of the GDR’s border installations. The sequences are interrupted by black human silhouettes with white texts printed on top of them. The images appear to be painted. In reality Roloff, a pioneer of digital photo- and video art created a special technique which allows him to blow up old video stills from the 80s to enormous three by four meter - pictures, covering the wall from top to bottom. The more you step away from the wall, the more the painterly impression changes into a photo-realistic image”.

> Please click here for more information
Stefan Roloff

Stefan Roloff is a painter. Parallel to that he always worked with a camera. He developed an early form of street-art as a result of his coming of age in the walled-in city. Roloff is one of the four founders of Galerie am Moritzplatz.

Yet he preferred to travel out into the world. He worked in Spain, Mexico, the US and settled in New York. Over the course of 30 years the city was the center of his life and work. Still, in his work, he kept referencing his birth place Berlin. The distance enabled him to uncover its hidden elements layer by layer, making it visible. In his works reality turns into vision.

Videos und Installations by Stefan Roloff can be seen at: www.when6is9.com
One man shows and projects / permanent Installations

2017  "Beyond the Wall" West Side Gallery, Berlin
      "Flight" Westwendischer Kunstverein, Gartow
2016  Audiotvideoguide „Rote Kapelle“ Hauptstadtkulturfond, Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand Berlin
2014  "Chairing the Meeting" Kunsthalle Brennabor, Brandenburg an der Havel >link
      "Lindenhotel" permanente Videoinstallation, Lindenstrasse 54, Potsdam
      "The Kindness of Strangers", Summerhall, Edinburgh, UK >link
2013  "Das Leben im Todesstreifen" permanente Videoinstallation, Villa Schöneichen, Potsdam >link
2011  "4 Video Projections", Ninna-ji, Kyoto, Japan
2010  "Lindenhotel", Lindenstrasse 54, Potsdam
2009  Galerie Deschler, Berlin
2008  Pierogi Gallery, Leipzig
2006  "Prinz Albrecht Str. 8", Altes Rathaus, Potsdam
2005  "Eins Plus Eins" Glaskasten, Potsdam
2004  "Altered States" Kunsthalle Osnabrück
2003  Gallery Deschler, Berlin
2002  "When 6 is 9" DAI Saarbrücken, Tübingen, Nürnberg
1998  "When 6 is 9" Gallery Deschler, Berlin
1995  "Pence Springs Resort“ Thread Waxing Space, New York City
1992  "Our Daily Planet“ Casa de Cultura Basauri, Bilbao, Spain
1991  "Niveles“ Palau Soller, Palma de Mallorca, Spain
1990  "Metamorphosis“ Casa de Cultura Laura Alvim, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
      "Still Life and Metamorphosis“ Evan Janis Fine Art, New York City
      "Photomorphosis“ Montogmery College, Maryland, curated by Joshua Smith
1989  "Moving Painting“ Installation at Centre Pompidou, Paris
1987  Galerie Hannah Feldmann, Bern, Schweiz
      Hartje Gallery, Frankfurt
1985  Helen Shlien Gallery, Boston, Mass.
      Art Palace, New York City
1984  Galerie Barbara Farber, Amsterdam, Holland
      Art Palace, New York City
1983  Helen Shlien Gallery, Boston, Mass.
Selection of group shows

2016  “Auf Rosen Gebettet” Galerie Deschler, Berlin
2015  “Elsie Supreme”, Adelsheim Leuchtet, Adelsheim
      “Querschläger”, Galerie Deschler, Berlin
2013  “Resistance”, Video Installation The Kindness of Strangers, Galerie Deschler, Berlin
2012  “In the Pictures”, Galerie Deschler, Berlin
      “Assimilating into Catastrophe”, Kulturpark, Berlin
2011  “4 Video Projections”, Ninna-ji, Kyoto, Japan
      “Bob B.” at Rencontres Internationals, Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid, Haus der Kulturen, Berlin
2010  “Rohkunstbau”, Schloss Marquardt, Marquardt
      “Lindenhôtel – Bob B.” at Rencontres Internationals, Centre Pompidou, Paris
2002  “Reactions”, Exit Art, New York City
1999  “Landscapes” Thomas Ammann Fine Art, Zürich, Schweiz
      “Sade”, with Ana Laura Alaez, Galeria Juana de Aizpuru, Madrid, Spaniel
      “One Less Than Nine”, Proposition Gallery, Belfast, Nord Irland
1994  “First Gramercy International Exhibition”, Gramercy Park Hotel, New York City
1990  “Atlas”, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Canada
      Arts Center, Minneapolis; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
1984  “European Attack”, Galerie Barbara Farber, Amsterdam, Holland
Catalogs, Publications

2017
"Beyond the Wall" Kunst darf alles e. V. Berlin
"Flight" Westwendischer Kunstverein, Gartow

2010
"Lindenhotel" Fördergemeinschaft Lindenstrasse 64, Potsdam
"XVII Rohkunstbau" Rohkunstbau, Germany

2009
"Videos, 1978-2008" Gallery Deschler, Germany

2004
"Veränderte Zustände" Kunsthalle Osnabrück, Germany
Stefan Roloff: "Rote Kapellen-Schwarze Kapellen – Kreisauer Kreise"
Publisher: VSA Verlag, Hamburg,
Stefan Roloff: "Unterschlagen und missverstanden – die Rote Kapelle"
Publisher: Neue Gesellschaft Frankfurter Hefte, Berlin

2002
Stefan Roloff: "Die Rote Kapelle"
Publisher: Econ Ullstein List Verlag GmbH KG, München, Germany

2001
"When 6 Is 9" Gallery Deschler, Kunstverein Salzgitter and DAI

1994
"Volume Three", Pierogi Press, Pierogi 2000 Gallery, Brooklyn NY
"Transsexual Expres", Bilboarte, Bilbao, Spain

1991
"Pence Springs Resort", Thread Waxing Space, New York City

1992
"Nuestro Planeta Cotidiano", Casa de Cultura Basauri, Bilbao, Spain
"Stefan Roloff, Works, 1982-1992", The Seed Hall, Tokyo, Japan

1998
"Atlas", Art Gallery of Hamilton, Canada

1997
"The Photography of Invention", National Museum of American Art,
Washington DC

1988
"Dritte Videonale", Bonn, Germany

1987
"Stefan Roloff", Ausstellungen Schirnkestraße, Berlin, Germany
"Digital Visions", Everson Museum, Syracuse, New York

1985
"Zweite Videonale", Bonn, Germany

1984
"Stefan Roloff", Art Palace, New York City

1983
"Internationales Plastik Symposium", Städtisches Museum, Lindau, Germany

1981
"Dimensionen des Plastischen", Staatliche Kunsthalle, Berlin, Germany
"Gedankengut in Öl und Gummì", Schloß Gartow, Germany
Selection of video compilations

2004   “Play the videos”, Peter Gabriel, Real World
1992   “US”, Peter Gabriel, Real World
1990   “Black Box”, Suicide, WaxTrax!Records: The first 13 Years

Awards and grants

2015   FFA, Drehbuchstipendium
2008   MEDIA
2007   Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities Stipendium
2006   BKM
2002   Jerome Foundation, New York City Media Arts Grant
1995   Art Matters Grant
1989   Fellowship, New York Foundation for the Arts

Selection of collections

Thomas Ammann Fine Art, Zürich; Rhode Island School of Design Museum; Middlebury College Museum, Middlebury, Vermont; New York Public Library, Print and Photo Collection; Polaroid Collection; Evan Janis Fine Art, New York; Peter Lewis, Cleveland, Liszt Gallery at MIT, Auschwitz Museum, Auschwitz-Birkenau; Holocaust Exhibition, Imperial War Museum, London; Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Miami; Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington DC, Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand, Berlin
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