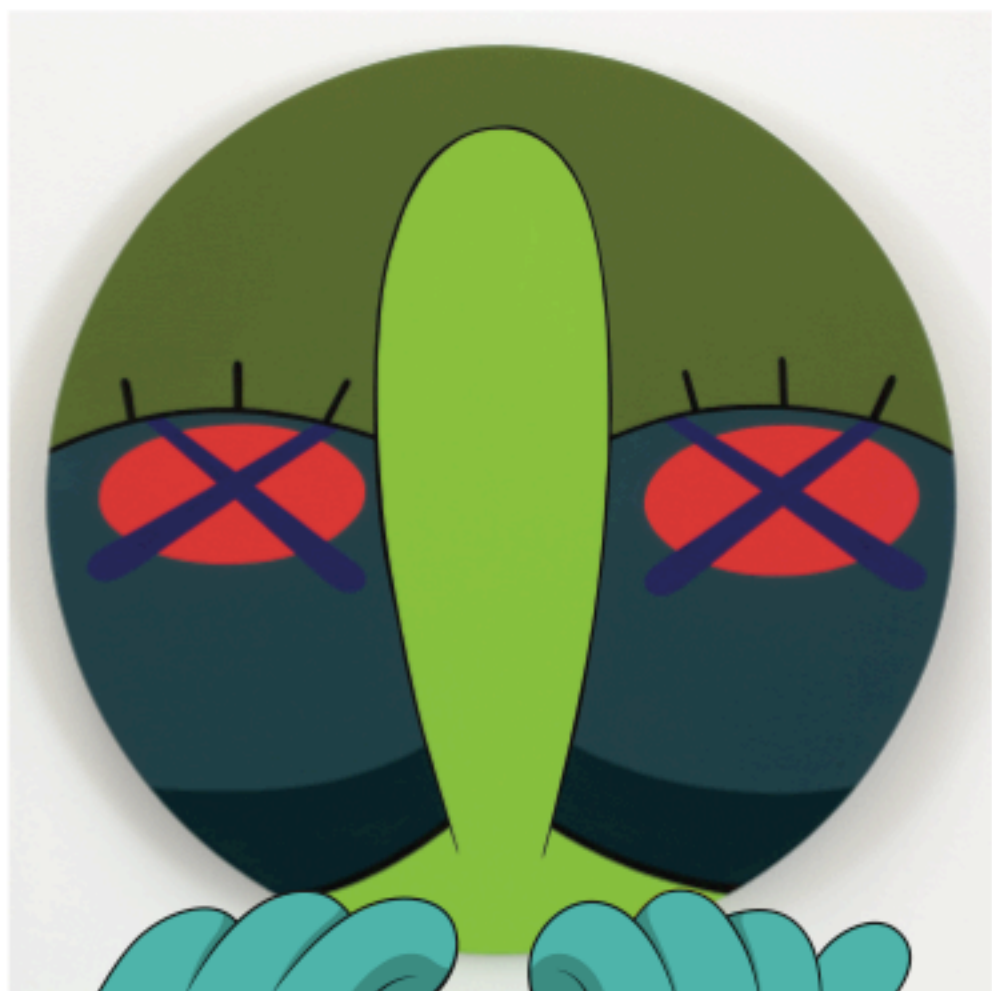


# whitewall

CONTEMPORARY ART AND LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

WINTER 2012



LUXURY

*KAWS, MAURIZIO CATTELAN, WALTON FORD, SYLVIE FLEURY*



Katrin Kampmann  
*Das versonnene Land (3-parts / middle part)*  
 2008  
 Indian ink, acrylic, linocut, and oil on canvas  
 79 x 157 inches  
 Collection Hans Grothe  
 Courtesy of the artist

## HIP MEETS HAUTE

BY KATY DONOGHUE

For many years now, Berlin has been a place for both established and emerging artists to live. It's in Europe, but rents are cheap, allowing for the growth of an underground scene filled with artists who reside in the city, but are from all over the world. One of our liveliest contributors, Ana Finel Honigman, has been sending *Whitewall* "postcards" about this scene nearly since the inception of the magazine. She's from New York, but has lived in Berlin for several years and still hasn't found it necessary to learn how to speak German — that's how international the city has become.

When you think of the country's capital city, you probably think of two things — its complex history and ultra-cool East Berlin, where the art crowd generally resides. But there is a growing high-end trend in the city that shouldn't be overlooked, especially for those who are interested in contemporary art, but not in crashing on someone's futon or staying in a hostel. A lot of that evolution — from hip to haute — is taking place on the main street, Kurfürstendamm, known by Berliners as the Ku'damm. It's the Champs-Élysées of Germany, full of boutiques, designer flagships, luxury hotels, and Michelin star-worthy restaurants. It's also littered with avant-garde sculpture. It seems in Berlin you can't escape the city's reputation for nurturing, fostering, and inspiring creativity and artmaking.

And for a collector or art enthusiast looking to counteract some serious visual stimulation with a leisurely retreat, we recommend staying at the Hotel Concorde Berlin just off the Ku'damm (impossible to miss because of its sleek, powerfully modern design

by the architect Jan Kleihues) and a stone's throw from shops by nearly every major fashion designer. The hotel is part of the Concorde Hotels group, which has hotels in Europe, North America, Asia, and North Africa, but why I'd recommend it to our readers — aside from its flawlessly design-centric decorated rooms, especially the corner suites — is because of its art collection. When entering the lobby, the first thing you'll note is a large sculpture of a seated figure by the German artist Dietrich Klinge. It's a striking welcome and sets the tone for the hotel's collection, which can be described as a quick study in modern and contemporary German art.

It's on trend for hotels to display contemporary works in lobbies or in suites, but rarely is the work in individual rooms also a glance at the personal collection of a major collector. That collector is the owner of Hotel Concorde Berlin, Hans Grothe. All the works you see on the property are from his collection, and they are quite an amazing treat. Originally, Grothe chose 25 major works from his collection by artists such as Gerhard Richter, George Baselitz, Anselm Kiefer, and Sigmar Polke. "We wanted to take responsibility for the location of Berlin. We are here in Germany, so we wanted to explore German artists. Hans Grothe made copies of works from his collection by printing them on canvas. He made sure the prints were in a different size [than the original work], so that the art connoisseur would recognize immediately that it is not an original," General Manager Carsten D. Colmorgen told us when we visited in March of this year.

Also on view in the first- and second-

floor lobbies were works by up-and-coming German artists Junior Toscanelli and Katrin Kampmann. At Grothe's request, Toscanelli had created large-format oil paintings and collages for the opening of the hotel. The collector met the artist through a friend, the artist Markus Lüpertz, whom Toscanelli was studying under at the time. The paintings are lively and playful, full of colors and references to Parisian life. And they've got a bit of humor hidden in them. Each corner has the works' dimensions noted in bright red, a wink at the constraints of the commissioned artist.

Kampmann's work hung on the second floor during our visit in early spring. These, too, were a series of boldly colorful paintings, but they draw from urban Berlin. Grothe was looking for a young, emerging German artist that matched the feel of the hotel when he found Kampmann. He has since gone on to become one of her biggest collectors, commissioning her to create paintings for another hotel property. Said the artist, "I think that it's great that he presents my paintings after he bought them. Collectors often buy art and put it into storage."

Both Toscanelli and Kampmann's work offer a brighter side of German art, and we suspect that's the reason why later this year the iconic (but sometimes dark and downbeat) modern works that were once in guest rooms were changed out with prints of 25 specially commissioned artworks by Toscanelli. Much like the hotel itself, it's an example of the changing face of Berlin — a transformation we look forward to following.