

Introduction

The Irish Museum of Modern Art is delighted to present the first ever solo exhibition of works by Franz Ackermann in Ireland.

Franz Ackerman, the Germany-based artist, has gained international recognition for his exciting and brightly coloured paintings and installations, reflecting the changing natures of, and attitudes to cities in an ever more globalised society. Ackermann's works are a comment on today's world, using architectural forms to allude to the turbulence experienced by our urban reality, in physical, social, political, economic and ethnic terms. He complements this with a fluid attitude to colour and by giving a vital, energetic and dynamic sense of activity. Cities, to Ackermann, are living, breathing entities. Ackermann's experiences within this world are that of a tourist, rather than a traveller, and his work reflects this dizzying sensory overload.

At IMMA, Ackermann has mapped out a skeleton and grid template of the installation of the exhibition. The four rooms in the east ground galleries have been constructed as a series of installations, the first two rooms consist of work from two series, *faceland III* and *Travelantitravel*, and are followed by two rooms of new work, which Ackermann has entitled *The Landing Room* and *The Staying Room*. The artist has devised new works especially for the Irish Museum of Modern Art and consists of two major practices; his work reflects both active experience and memory. His smaller works on paper, *Untitled: Mental Maps*, are drawn while travelling, reproducing the cities and landscapes he visits in the form of a topographic memory, recalling the activities of the *flâneur* of Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin. His larger paintings, depicting urban dynamics in the form of organic energy centres, are based on his experience of travel, via documentation, postcards and newspapers.

Franz Ackermann has exhibited internationally, at Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York, the Castello di Rivoli, Turin, White Cube, London, Portikus, Frankfurt and the Galerie neugerriemschneider, Berlin. Recent group shows have included the Sao Paulo Biennial in 2002, 'Casino' at SMAK in Gent and 'Painting at the Edge of the World' at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis in 2001.

The Irish Museum of Modern Art would like to acknowledge the assistance of a number of individuals: The Goethe-Institut, Dublin who have supported the project; the designers of this book, Niall Sweeney and Nigel Truswell, and the writers Daniel Birnbaum and Caoimhín Mac Giolla Léith. We would like to thank the lenders to the exhibition, The Sander Collection, Gavin Brown Enterprise, New York, Whitecube, London and Salome Sommer of neugerriemschneider, Berlin. Finally and most importantly, we would like to thank Franz Ackermann for his vision and enthusiasm in developing this project.

Rachael Thomas

Acting Senior Curator: Head of Exhibitions

A publication, available from the Museum bookshop, accompanies this exhibition.