

Karel Appel

Karel Appel is a Dutch artist born in Amsterdam in 1921. From 1940 to 1943 he studied at the State Academy of Fine Arts in his home city, then swiftly embarked on the road to freedom. After working with the experimental group Reflex, in autumn 1948 in Paris he became one of the founders of the CoBrA group. Born out of the surrealism-revolutionary movement and in reaction to the quarrel over figuration versus abstraction, this movement brought together artists and writers from Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam. United by their shared interest in experimentation, naïve, primitive and popular art, they all believed that art can be practised with great freedom, released from established pathways and in association with artists from a variety of disciplines.

After moving to Paris in the early 1950s, Appel would soon turn towards the American scene, where he swiftly found recognition on the East and West coasts. Throughout his 60-year career, the artist demonstrated intense creative energy, producing paintings, sculptures and engravings, often using very bright colours that celebrated his expressionist figuration.

Karel Appel died on 3 May 2006 at the age of 85, in Zurich, Switzerland. His works have been the focus of many exhibitions around the world and form part of the collections of prestigious museums, including the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Tate Modern, London; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; National Museum of Art, Osaka and the Musée d'art moderne et d'art contemporain, Nice.

Solo shows (selection)

2021

Eternal Space of Being, Galerie Lelong & Co., Paris, France

2020

Pierre Alechinsky & Karel Appel: Travaux à deux pinceaux (1976-1978), Galerie Lelong & Co., Paris, France

2019

Late Nudes 1985-1995, Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin, Germany

2017

Karel Appel, L'art est une fête!, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

2016

Karel Appel: Der Abstrakte Blick, Emil Schumacher Museum, Hagen, Germany

Karel Appel: A Gesture of Color. Paintings and Sculptures 1947-2004, The Phillips Collection, Washington D.C., United States

Karel Appel: De Opera, Cobra Museum, Amstelveen, Netherlands

Karel Appel: Works on paper, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Germany

Karel Appel: Retrospectief, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Hague, Netherlands

Karel Appel: De Opera, Cobra Museum, Amstelveen, Netherlands

Karel Appel: A Gesture of Color. Paintings and Sculptures 1947-2004, The Phillips Collection, Washington, United States

Karel Appel: Der Abstrakte Blick, Emil Schumacher Museum, Hagen, Germany

2015

Karel Appel: Works on paper, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

2013

Karel Appel: I do not paint, I hit!, Museum Jorn, Silkeborg, Denmark

2011

Karel Appel & Van Gogh, Vincent van Gogh Huis, Zundert, Netherlands

2009

Karel Appel: Peintures 2000–2001, Galerie Lelong, Paris, France

2008

Karel Appel - Jazz 1958–1962, Cobra Museum, Amstelveen, Netherlands

2007

Karel Appel: Monumentale Aktzeichnungen, Albertina, Vienna, Austria

2005

Karel Appel: Recente Werken, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Hague, Netherlands

Karel Appel: Retrospective 1945–2005, Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum, Bratislava, Slovakia

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

2004

Karel Appel Itinéraire: Voyage de Rudi Fuchs, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Bruxelles , Belgium

Paperworks of Karel Appel, National Museum, Belgrade, Serbia

2003

Karel Appel: Oeuvres sur papier 1999-2002, Galerie Lelong, Paris, France

2002

Karel Appel: Japanese Landscapes, Galerie Lelong, Zürich, Switzerland

Karel Appel, Kunstforum Wien, Vienna , Austria

Karel Appel: Werken op Papier, Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, Netherlands

2001

Karel Appel: "Sag zum Abschied leise Servus", Galerie Lelong, Paris, France

Karel Appel: Beelden 1936–2000, Cobra Museum of Modern Art, Amstelveen, Netherlands

Karel Appel: Pastorale Chiaroscuro, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Karel Appel: Werk op papier, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Hague, Netherlands

2000

Karel Appel: 2000, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands

1998

Sculptures without a Hero, The Sculpture Garden at 590 Madison Avenue, New York, United States

Karel Appel: Psychopathological Art 1948–50, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Karel Appel: Psychopathological Art 1948–50, Cobra Museum of Modern Art, Amstelveen, Netherlands

Appel: Natural Phenomenon, Galerie Lelong, Paris, France

Karel Appel, Atelier del Bosco di Villa Medici, Rome, Italy

Karel Appel: Toys from the Attic, Bergen Kunstmuseum, Bergen, Norway

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

1997

Karel Appel: Unintended Monuments, Galerie Lelong, Zürich, Switzerland

1996

Appel: Figures et Paysage, Galerie Lelong, Paris, France

Karel Appel: Gemälde, Gouachen, Zeichnungen 1950–1965, BAWAG Fondation, Vienne, Austria

1995

Karel Appel: Toskanischer Horizont, Galerie Lelong, Zürich, Switzerland

1994

Karel Appel Retrospective, The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul

1993

Singing Donkeys: Nieuwe beelden van Karel Appel, Paleis Lange Voorhout, The Hague, Netherlands

1990

Karel Appel: Ik wou dat ik een vogel was, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Hague, Netherlands

Karel Appel: Ik wou dat ik een vogel was. Grote formaten in de Beurs van Berlage, Beurse van Berlage, Amsterdam, Netherlands

1989

Appel, The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan

1987

Karel Appel: Dipinti, sculture e collages, Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy

1986

Karel Appel: Recent Paintings and Sculptures; Clouds, Windmill, Nudes and Other Mythologies, Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale, Fort Lauderdale, United States

1985

Karel Appel, Palazzo Medici Riccardi, Florence, Italy

Appel 1950-1970, The Contemporary Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan

1984

Karel Appel: Recent werk / oeuvres récentes, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, Belgium

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

Karel Appel: 14 Cobra-werken op papier, Collection d'Art, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Karel Appel, National Gallery of Iceland, Listasafn Islands, Iceland

1982

Het Nieuwe Werk van Karel Appel 1979-1981, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands

Karel Appel: Werk op papier 1941-1981, tekeningen, aquarellen, gouaches, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Hague, Netherlands

25 Years on the Road: A Visual Tribute to Kerouac, Boulder Center for the Visual Arts, Boulder, United States

1981

Karel Appel, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Appel, Museu de Arte do São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

1978

Dreissig Jahre Karel Appel, Saarland Museum, Saarbrücken, Germany

Karel Appel: Peintures et Sculpture, Fondation Château de Jau, Cases-de-Pène, France

1977

Karel Appel, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico

1975

Appel: Paintings, Wildenstein, London, United Kingdom

1974

Karel Appel Retrospective, Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale, Florida, United States

1972

Appel's Appels, Musée d'Art Contemporain, Montreal, Canada

1970

Appel's Oogappels, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, Netherlands

1968

Karel Appel: Reliefs 1966-1968, Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Paris, France

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

1967

Karel Appel: Paintings, Gouaches, Graphics, Redfern Gallery, London, United Kingdom

1965

Appel, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands

1961

Karel Appel, Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands

Karel Appel: West Coast Exhibition, San Francisco Art Museum, San Francisco, United States

1959

Dipingere coi tessuti, Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italy

1958

Appel, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, Belgium

1953

Karel Appel, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, Belgium

1951

Karel Appel, Kunstzaal Van Lier, Amsterdam, Netherlands

1947

Works by Karel Appel, Spaanschen Brabander, Anvers, Belgium

Public collections (selection)

Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, United States

San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, United States

MOCA Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, United States

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, United States

Museum of Fine Art, Boston, United States

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

Kemper Art Museum, Saint Louis, United States

Knoxville Museum of Art, Knoxville, United States

Institut Valencia d'Art Modern, Valencia, Spain

Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain

Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Gemeentemuseum Den HAag, The Hague, Netherlands

Cobra Museum, Amstelveen, Netherlands

Berardo Museum, Lisbon, Spain

Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany

Centre de la Gravure et de l'Image imprimée, La Louvière, Belgium

Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Liège

National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan

Tate Britain, London, United Kingdom

Les Abattoirs-FRAC Midi-Pyrénées, Toulouse, France

Musée d'Art Moderne de Céret, Céret, France

The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel

Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Canada

Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy

Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bologna, Italy