

the israel museum, jerusalem



מוזיאון ישראל, ירושלים
the israel museum, jerusalem
متحف إسرائيل، أورشليم القدس

martin z. margulies donates anselm kiefer's monumental die erdzeitalter to israel museum, honoring 60th anniversary



installation view of anselm kiefer's die erdzeitalter (ages of the world) israel museum, jerusalem 2025. photo by elie posner

gift of 17-foot-tall sculpture reinforces israel museum's longstanding relationship with kiefer

jerusalem, israel, december 18, 2025—today, the israel museum, jerusalem (imj) announced that it has received a donation of anselm kiefer's monumental sculpture die erdzeitalter (ages of the world) from collector and philanthropist martin z. margulies, who holds one of the preeminent private collections of contemporary art in the united states. facilitated by the american friends of the israel museum and the martin z. margulies foundation, the donation reflects both the museum's and margulies' longstanding relationships with the german painter and sculptor, whose work reflects the immensity of history, collective memory, and the impacts of war. die erdzeitalter (ages of the world) is on view as of today, december 18 at the israel museum, jerusalem.

die erdzeitalter (ages of the world) was created for the royal academy, london's 2014 retrospective of kiefer's work. upon the exhibition's opening, it was acquired by the esteemed collector and philanthropist martin margulies and subsequently installed in a bespoke room within the margulies collection at the warehouse, the nonprofit institution in miami, florida founded by margulies to share the collection with the

public. a permanent exhibition of monumental works by kiefer has been on view at the warehouse since 2015.

die erdzeitalter (ages of the world) is an immense, 17-foot-tall sculpture consisting of an assemblage of stacked canvases, interspersed with dried sunflowers, boulders, lead books, and earth. it is flanked by two large paintings on either side with words inscribed on the surface, such as 'archaikum' and 'mesozoikum,' referring explicitly to periods of time. part totem and part funeral pyre, the work considers the poetry of ruins, and the relationship between humankind and the deep, cyclical nature of the cosmos. it evokes several themes represented within kiefer's oeuvre, with stacked layers of canvas and rubble literally referencing geological strata, as well as metaphorical references to the tower of babel and jacob's ladder.

in 1984, the israel museum's director suzanne landau mounted a solo exhibition of kiefer's work in her then-role as curator of contemporary art; kiefer's travels to israel around the exhibition inspired him to incorporate stories from the hebrew bible and the mysticism of kabbalah into his future practice. die erdzeitalter marks the fourth work by anselm kiefer acquired by the israel museum, joining mohn und gedächtnis (poppy and memory, 1989), a three-dimensional lead aircraft weighed down with oversized lead books interspersed with dry poppy plants, aaron, a 1984 painting inspired by the judean desert and the story of exodus, created especially for his exhibition at the israel museum that year, and lilith's tochter (lilith's daughters), a 1990 work focused on the jewish folkloric figure lilith—a recurring subject in kiefer's work.

"since the beginning of his artistic practice, the work of anselm kiefer has helped process complex questions around cultural memory and life in landscapes impacted by war, putting our humanity in context with the immensity and unknowability of the universe we share," said the israel museum, jerusalem's director suzanne landau. "we are deeply grateful to the margulies collection for their generosity in bringing die erdzeitalter to jerusalem and enabling our community to experience this deeply resonant, awe-inspiring work."

"one of the most important factors in donating works of art is to align with institutions that respect the artist, a principle that has guided me across over forty years of giving," said collector martin z. margulies. "i couldn't be more pleased with this incredible work becoming part of the israel museum's collection, particularly given its long history of deep engagement with kiefer's practice and its 60 years of excellence in the region."

about the israel museum, jerusalem

the israel museum, jerusalem, is israel's foremost cultural institution and one of the world's leading encyclopedic museums. founded in 1965, the museum's terraced 20-acre campus houses a wide-ranging collection of art and archaeology of world-class status. its holdings include the world's most comprehensive collections of the archaeology of the holy land, and jewish art and life, as well as significant and extensive holdings in the fine arts, the latter encompassing 10 separate departments: israeli art; european art; modern art; contemporary art; prints and drawings; photography; design and architecture; asian art; the arts of africa and oceania; and the arts of the americas. the campus also includes the shrine of the book, which houses the 2,000-year-old dead sea scrolls, the world's oldest biblical manuscripts; an extensive model of jerusalem in the second temple period; the billy rose art garden; and a dynamic youth wing for art education whose educational programs attract over 100,000 children every year. the museum has built a far-ranging collection of roughly 500,000 objects through an unparalleled legacy of gifts and support from a wide circle of friends and patrons throughout the world. the museum also embraces a dynamic program of temporary exhibitions, a rich annual program of publications, educational activities, and special cultural events that reach out to every sector of the population.

about the margulies collection

the margulies collection is among the most preeminent collections of modern and contemporary art in the united states, developed by collector and philanthropist martin z. margulies over more than four decades. spanning painting, large and small-scale sculpture, installation, video, film, and photography, the collection represents some of the most significant artists of the 20th and 21st centuries. selections from the collection are frequently on view to the public at the margulies collection at the warehouse, which presents rotating exhibitions and robust educational programming in a 55,000-square-foot retro-fitted warehouse in the wynwood arts district of miami, florida. the warehouse is operated and funded by the martin z. margulies foundation, a resource for the study and enjoyment of the visual arts as well as key social services in miami-dade and nationwide. the longtime curator of the collection is katherine hinds.

about anselm kiefer

anselm kiefer was born in donaueschingen, germany in 1945 and has lived and worked in france since 1993. he has exhibited widely, including solo shows at the saint louis art museum, missouri (2025); royal academy london (2025); stedelijk museum and van gogh museum (2025); ashmolean museum, oxford (2025); nijo castle, kyoto (2025); palazzo strozzi, florence, italy (2024); lam, lille, france (2023–24); museum voorlinden, wassenaar, netherlands (2023–24); palazzo ducale, venice, italy (2022); grand palais éphémère, paris (2021); franz marc museum, kochel, germany (2020); couvent de la tourette, lyon, france (2019); astrup fearnley museum, oslo (2019); the state hermitage museum, saint petersburg, russia (2017); albertina museum, vienna (2016); centre pompidou, paris (2015); royal academy of arts, london (2014); tel aviv museum of art, israel (2011); rijksmuseum, amsterdam (2011); louisiana museum of modern art, humlebaek, denmark (2010); grand palais, paris (2007); guggenheim museum bilbao, spain (2007); san francisco museum of modern art, california (2006); modern art museum of fort worth, texas (2005); the metropolitan museum of art, new york (1998); neue nationalgalerie, berlin (1991); and the museum of modern art, new york (1987). in 2023, kiefer was awarded the antonio feltrinelli international prize for the arts, as well as being awarded the prestigious prize for understanding and tolerance in 2019 by the jewish museum in berlin, and in 2017 he was awarded the j. paul getty medal. in 2007, kiefer became the first artist since georges braque 50 years earlier to be commissioned to install a permanent work at the louvre, paris. in 2009, he created an opera, *am anfang*, to mark the 20th anniversary of the opéra national de paris. in november 2020, kiefer unveiled a new series of work for the panthéon in paris, including a permanent installation comprised of six vitrines. together with a composition by the french contemporary composer pascal dusapin, it forms an ensemble of new works commissioned by president emmanuel macron. this marks the first time since 1924 that such a commission has been effectuated for the panthéon.