

The Council of Europe art exhibitions



- Since its foundation in 1949, the Council of Europe has been working to promote awareness of a European identity based on common values. The Council of Europe exhibitions organised since 1954 play a key role in this.
- The 28 exhibitions held so far (a full list is appended to this document) have led to increased knowledge and recognition of European culture and art throughout the continent.
- The exhibitions use works of art to highlight the cultural importance of a period or a style, an artist or a school. In some cases the emphasis is on the interaction between art and society in the past and present.
- The Exhibition themes should be central to European art and important enough to interest a large number of Council of Europe member countries.
- The 29th art exhibition is a perfect example: the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation was noteworthy for its decentralised organisation and for being multiconfessional and multilingual. It covered and influenced a large part of present-day Europe. Hence its importance for European unity.
- The Council of Europe, whose headquarters are in Strasbourg, is the only international organisation which organises art exhibitions in the framework of intergovernmental co-operation. As a result, a Europe-wide network of museums has developed over the decades.
- The exhibitions always have an educational function. Working in unison, curators and art historians ensure that they are of the highest possible quality.
- What are the prospects for the future? Given that many themes have already been covered, future exhibitions could focus more on Europe's relations with other cultures and continents. Culture thus serves as a tool for intercultural dialogue.

Organisation and funding of exhibitions

- Proposals for exhibition themes are submitted to the Council of Europe secretariat, which refers them to a group of consultants composed of the directors of eight leading European museums: [British Museum](#), London, [Museo del Prado](#), Madrid, [Opificio delle Pietre Dure](#), Florence, [Rijksmuseum](#), Amsterdam, [Graphische Sammlung Albertina](#), Vienna, [Hermitage Museum](#), St Petersburg, [Musée du Louvre](#), Paris and [Bundes- und Ausstellungshalle](#), Bonn).
- After the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Culture has given its agreement, the exhibition is incorporated in the series of Council of Europe art exhibitions. A European organising committee is set up to liaise with the museums concerned. Scientific and technical issues are dealt with jointly.

- Responsibility for funding and organisation lies mainly with the country mounting the exhibition. Other European countries provide technical assistance or lend works of art from their museums.

Past Council of Europe exhibitions

1. Humanist Europe, Brussels, 1954
2. The triumph of mannerism from Michelangelo to el Greco, Amsterdam, 1955
3. The 17th century in Europe: Realism, classicism and baroque, Rome, 1956
4. The Age of Rococo, Munich, 1958
5. The Romantic Movement, London, 1959
6. Sources of the 20th century: The Arts in Europe 1884-1914, Paris, 1960
7. Romanesque Art, Barcelona and Santiago de Compostela, 1961
8. European Art around 1400, Vienna, 1962
9. Byzantine Art, Athens, 1964
10. Charlemagne – His life and work, Aachen, 1965
11. Queen Christina of Sweden, Stockholm, 1966
12. Gothic Art, Paris, 1968
13. The Order of St John in Malta, Valletta, 1970
14. The Age of Neo-Classicism, London, 1972
15. Trends in the 1920s, Berlin, 1977
16. Florence and Tuscany under the Medici, Florence, 1980
17. Portuguese discoveries and Renaissance Europe, Lisbon, 1983
18. Anatolian Civilisations, Istanbul, 1983
19. Christian IV and Europe, Denmark (10 venues), 1988
20. The French Revolution and Europe, Paris, 1989
21. Emblems of liberty – The image of the Republic in Art, Bern, 1991
22. From Viking to Crusader – Scandinavia and Europe 800-1200, Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen, 1992
23. Art and Power, Europe under dictators 1930 à 1945, London, Berlin, Barcelona, 1993
24. The dream of happiness – The Art of Historicism in Europe, Vienna, 1996
25. Gods and heroes of the Bronze Age, Copenhagen, Bonn, Paris, Athens, 1998
26. War and Peace in Europe, Münster and Osnabrück, 1998
27. Otto the Great, Magdeburg and Europe, Magdeburg, 2001
28. Universal Leonardo, Florence, London, Oxford, Munich, Milan, 2006
29. The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation 962-1806, Magdeburg et Berlin, 2006