

For Immediate Release: 30 Years in Charlottenburg: An Anniversary Celebrating a Strong Community
Hotel Villa Kastania is proud to be an active member of the incredibly artistic community in Charlottenburg. For thirty years, the hotel has grown among its esteemed neighbors - the Kurfürstendamm, the German Opera and the exhibition grounds. It is with great respect for the local art culture defining Charlottenburg that proprietor Sylvie Moller has begun an exhibition program of Contemporary Fine Art at Hotel Villa Kastania. With rotating exhibitions, events and walking tours, the art program honors Charlottenburg's artistic heritage and supports the creative development of the Arts within the community.

This March, an inaugural exhibit of fine art, an Anniversary Gala and free guided walking tours hosted by Hotel Villa Kastania kicks off a new program celebrating the thriving and unique community of West Berlin.

Exhibition: "Landmarks West Berlin", curated by Alexandra Rockelmann & Leah Stuhltrager
Artists: **Florian Bolk, Mila Hacke, Manfred Hamm, Rebecca Loyche, Kathleen Vance, Elvira Hufschmid, Steven Lowy, Birgit Wolske, Eva AM Winnersbach/Ommo Wille and others with a Public Art lightwork by Travis Broussard / Leif Heidenreich & others**
Dates: **March 27, 2010 - May 07, 2010**
Reception: **March 27, 2010, 6 pm (invite only)**
**With Special Introduction by Stanley Fuls (CODE of PRACTICE architects),
Toast by Honoree Sylvia Moller (Owner of Hotel Villa Kastania)
Toast by Curators Alexandra Rockelmann (galerieOPEN) & Leah Stuhltrager (Dam, Stuhltrager)**
Venue: hosted by Hotel Villa Kastania, Kastanienallee 20, 14052 Berlin
Contact: direktion@villakastania.com
Online: www.villakastania.com

About the exhibition "Landmarks West Berlin":

The physical structures identifying West Berlin (its "Landmarks") are symbolic of the strength, fortitude and resilience of the people of West Berlin. In this exhibit, contemporary architectural photographs of iconic buildings depict the history of this community - paying homage to the past while embracing the future. The photographs each portray one notorious location's tangible existence- streets, brick and mortar buildings - a clear association to the businesses, organizations and institutions that define West Berlin. The bigger picture that emerges from viewing all the places immortalized in "Landmarks West Berlin" extends beyond the structures themselves. When brought together, the "Landmarks" are a sign of solidarity among a place that values, supports and cherishes its culture and each other.

Curators Alexandra Rockelmann and Leah Stuhltrager have assembled a renown group of contemporary architectural photographers to document the historical buildings:

Florian Bolk photographs The Deutsche Opera Berlin whose history dates to the Deutsches Opernhaus from 1911. The opera house was destroyed on November 23, 1943. After the war, the company used the building of the Theater des Westens until the new building, designed by Fritz Bornemann, was completed on September 24, 1961.

Mila Hacke photographs The Internationales Congress Centrum Berlin (ICC Berlin). Opened in 1979, its architects were Ralf Schüler and Ursulina Schüler-Witte. As perhaps Europe's biggest such centre, it is instrumental to Berlin being one of the top congress cities in the world.

As well, **Ms Hacke photographs Berlin Tegel "Otto Lilienthal" Airport**, notable for its hexagonal terminal building around an open square. Built during the Berlin Airlift in 1948 on a 1930s rocket research site, the airport is scheduled to close in 2012, after the completion of the new Berlin-Brandenburg International Airport.

Manfred Hamm photographs the Messe Berlin Fairgrounds. Built in 1936-37, Messe is comprised of 26 halls plus

Funkturm Berlin and Deutschlandhalle. The halls are also connected to the newer Internationales Congress Centrum Berlin.

Rebecca Loyche photographs Charlottenburg Palace, the largest palace in Berlin and the only building in the city dating to the time of the Hohenzollern family. A baroque and rococo wonder built in the late 17c and expanded during the 18c, it houses a formal garden, belvedere, mausoleum, theatre and pavilion. Badly damaged during WWII, it has since been reconstructed.

Elvira Hufschmid photographs The Automobil-Verkehrs-und Übungs-Straße, better known as AVUS. Built in 1907 as both a motor-sport venue and a testing track for the motor industry, nowadays it is an important part of the public highway system as Bundesautobahn 115.

Steven Lowy photographs The Olympiastadion (Olympic Stadium). There have been two stadia on the site: the present facility, and one that was built for the aborted 1916 Summer Olympics. Both were designed by members of the same family, the first by Otto March and the second by his son Werner March.

Birgit Wolske photographs The Berliner Funkturm or Funkturm Berlin (Radio Tower Berlin), a transmitting tower built between 1924 and 1926 by Heinrich Straumer. Nicknamed "der lange Lulatsch" ("the lanky lad"), it is one of the best-known points of interest in the city of Berlin and is now a protected monument.

In conjunction with the photographic survey of "Landmarks West Berlin":

Travis Broussard / Leif Heidenreich's Public Art installation transforms the exterior of Hotel Kastania greeting viewers with a series of lights rising and falling on the building. The waves of ascending/descending color and light visually measure the life - sound, activity, people - inside the building.

Kathleen Vance's installation, "Traveling Landscapes" greets visitors in the lobby of Hotel Kastania. In this installation, Vance juxtaposes whole living environments into suitcases. The artworks are self contained worlds that are informed and have a clear independent voice, yet are effected, adapt and grow in conditions outside of their homes.

Eva AM Winnersbach & Ommo Wille's AVUS soap cars greet guests in their rooms. Each hand carved, this limited edition series is a special tribute to the sophisticated luxuries of days gone by and a thank you to those who join us in what is to come.

Guided Walking Tours of "Landmarks West Berlin" are free and open to the public. Tours leave from Hotel Kastania: Tuesday - Saturday (10am - noon) and Sunday (noon - 6pm). RSVP required in advance: 01785230833 or galerie-open@galerie-open.net.

About the Curators:

Alexandra Rockelmann is the founder of galerie OPEN in Berlin Kreuzberg / Mitte. galerie OPEN devotes itself to exclusively young contemporary art, primarily from New York and Berlin. All the artists have a strong and individual position. Consciously no definition on a certain Medium occurs, for the quality and concept behind the work is most relevant. The gallery has worked with a number of curators, such as Sasa Hanten (Hubrecht collection, Cologne), Barbara Steffen (former curator of contemporary art at the Albertina, Vienna – now Fondation Beyeler) and Carola Zimmermann (Museum Jagdschloss Grunewald, Berlin).

Leah Stuhltrager founded Dam, Stuhltrager Gallery in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. The gallery is internationally recognized for incorporating technology and utilizing mediums in a new, fresh way. The gallery has done projects with Lincoln Center (New York), Coachella (Indio), E-Halle (Basel), Convention Center (Istanbul), Circulo de Bellas Artes (Madrid), The Hermitage Museum (St Petersburg) and the Oriental Pearl Tower (Shanghai). She launched the nonprofit artist residency The East/West Project (Berlin) in Sept of 2009.

About the Host:

Hotel Villa Kastania is a small, private hotel located in the heart of Berlin ideally near Kurfürstendamm, the German Opera and the exhibition grounds. Surrounded by chestnut trees, the hotel has 47 spacious rooms and luxurious suites, a Mediterranean Wellness area with swimming pool and sauna, cozy Marron restaurant, chimney and a garden terrace. Proprietor Sylvia Moller celebrates the 30yr Anniversary of Hotel Villa Kastania this year.