

Berlin Jubilee Art Exhibition (1886)

Abstract

This woodcut shows the central exhibition grounds for the Jubilee Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts in Berlin, which was held from May to October 1886. In the background, we see the Temple of Zeus, which contained the Pergamon Panorama. Halfway up its staircase is a replica of the massive Pergamon altar. Not shown is the immense Egyptian temple (40 meters long and 20 meters deep), whose five dioramas celebrated the role of Germany and other nations in African colonization. Also omitted is the great iron and glass exhibition hall, which featured giant canvasses by Anton von Werner (*Congress of Berlin*, 1881), Adolph Menzel (*Coronation of King Wilhelm I in Königsberg*, 1865), and other artists, German and non-German alike. (No French paintings were included in the exhibition, because the French, citing the Germans' non-participation in the Paris Universal Exposition of 1878, refused to send any works.)

As many as 20,000 people are said to have visited the Jubilee Exhibition on a single evening, June 6, 1886, and according to reports it attracted more than 1.2 million visitors before closing on October 31, 1886. An uncontested box-office success, the exhibition generated a profit of more than 15,000 marks from total revenues of 70,000 marks. In the eyes of Prussian Minister of Culture Gustav von Gossler, the exhibition had also shown the rest of Europe that “art had gradually taken up its dwelling among us, had found in the north a firm home.” (Beth Irwin Lewis, *Art for All? The Collision of Modern Art and the Public in Late-Nineteenth-Century Germany*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, p. 97). Hopes that the exhibition had finally displayed a “unified” German art, however, went unrealized. In fact, throughout the 1880s, Berlin figured only marginally in a German art scene characterized by regional distinctiveness and competition—as Munich’s Third International Art Exhibition in 1888 made abundantly clear.

Source



Source: Jubilee art exhibition in Berlin. "Olympia-Zeustempel, Pergamonaltar und Denkmals-Obelisk auf dem Ausstellungsplatz" ["Olympia Zeus Temple, Pergamon Altar and Monument Obelisk on the Exhibition Square"]. Wood engraving (1866), from *Centralblatt der Bauverwaltung*. Berlin: Ernst and Korn. bpk-Bildagentur, image number 30012835. For rights inquiries, please contact Art Resource at requests@artres.com (North America) or bpk-Bildagentur at kontakt@bpk-bildagentur.de (for all other countries).

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