

NAH AM WASSER (CLOSE TO THE WATER)

Mar 9 — May 20, 2024 | Kunsthalle Rostock, Germany

“Nah am Wasser” (Close to the Water) is the most comprehensive museum exhibition of works by internationally renowned Berlin artist Gregor Hildebrandt.

Hildebrandt combines traditional materials such as cassette tapes, video cassettes and vinyl records with contemporary concepts and has created a fascinating, artistically rich oeuvre over the last few decades, which never gives the impression of being complete, instead remaining continually surprising.

The exhibition shows a selection of works spanning two decades, with the majority reflecting on themes such as the aura of the sea, lagoons, lakes or rain—either in their title or their subject matter.

The wide spectrum of artworks in the exhibition, encompassing painting, sculpture and installation, oscillates constantly between figuration and abstraction, blurring the boundaries between reality and illusion.

The works, often named after song lyrics, function as carriers of memory on two levels. On the one hand, the works’ materiality itself evokes memories of times past. On the other hand, the fact that songs by The Cure, Element of Crime or Hildegard Knef are recorded on the tapes or records evokes associations with specific pieces of music and thus creates links to individual memories and cultural references.

Additionally, the newly completed work “Blau im Gedächtnis” (Blue in Memory) will be shown for the first time in the Kunsthalle’s “White Cube”. The installation, consisting of over 1,300 blue, individually crafted elements, is the artist’s homage to one of Berlin’s most prominent landmarks, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church.

With its luminous and expansive presence, the installation creates a space for reflection on recent history and, at the same time, a link between art and the symbolic significance of the Memorial Church. The installation thus becomes a space of remembrance that goes beyond the purely visual. At the same time, “Blue in Memory” draws a connection between the two cities, Berlin and Rostock, which have been shaped by major ruptures in their history.

Hildebrandt’s works create a poetic atmosphere that invites viewers to immerse themselves in themes of transience, memory and change.

The exhibition *Gregor Hildebrandt—Nah am Wasser* is curated by Stephan Koal. It opens on March 8 at 6 p.m. and is on display at the Kunsthalle Rostock until May 20, 2024.