



Usedom – Arts and Culture

At all times the island of Usedom has inspired artists, literati and musicians. Usedom's diversity, tranquility, landscape, and its special light has fascinated amongst others Feininger, Niemeyer-Holstein, Gorki, Strauß and members of the Mann-family. Here they created their works of art and made the island popular beyond its borders. Poets, painters and musicians left their marks and thus a significant cultural legacy on the island.

Lyonel Feininger (1871-1956)

"I find myself in the middle of motifs, which I like and which inspire me," the famous German-American artist Lyonel Feininger wrote a hundred years ago about his visit to Usedom. Between 1908 and 1912 he kept returning to the island to discover it by bicycle. On these occasions he produced scores of sketches, which later were the basis for work in his studio. Today these motifs are presented worldwide in important galleries. The exact site where many of these sketches were drawn can still be identified. In 2008 all of these sites of Feininger's drawings were connected to a 56 kilometres long cycling route. Visitors can discover Usedom in the tracks of the famous German-American painter.

www.papileo.de

Thomas Mann (1875-1955)

Thomas Mann stayed on the island of Usedom for a vacation in August 1922. During this stay he wrote his essay "The German Republic". Together with his wife Katia and the children he stopped off at Haus Seeblick in Bansin (today ANCON Hotel Kaiser Wilhelm) on the 29th of July 1924 and later moved to a private house right at the seafront. In the seven weeks of his stay he worked on his famous novel "The Magic Mountain". On the 12th of August he wrote to his good friend Ernst Bertram: "At no time have I worked more smoothly and more productively than after my 'morning prayer' at the beach." After his return to Munich he gave his friend a written account of his stay on the island of Usedom: "After my morning swim I always worked hard and thus made a big step towards the imminent end of the "Magic Mountain". I expect to finish round about the end of October." Thomas Mann completed the novel on the 27th of September 1924 and published it in November of the same year.

Theodor Fontane (1819-1898)

This German novelist spent part of his childhood in Swinemünde, where his father ran a pharmacy. Fontane remained faithful to Usedom all his life. In 1863 he wrote to his wife: "... here you have peace and fresh air and these two things infuse nerves, heart and lungs with a silent bliss."

Ihr Ansprechpartner

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His fictional character Effi Briest is supposed to be based on the true story of a 19th century woman from Swinemünde. The novel is set in the Western Pomeranian town Kessin, for which Fontane used Swinemünde as model and inspiration.

Maxim Gorki (1868-1936)

When the beach was empty, Maxim Gorki loved to listen to the waves of the Baltic Sea and to watch the fishermen at work. Sometimes he took a stroll up on the Buchfinksberg, to the Gothensee, to Sallenthin or through the Wolfskuhle to the Langenberg near Bansin. The Russian Novelist Maxim Gorki came to Usedom in 1922 to recover from a lung disease. He stayed in Heringsdorf in the Pension Irmgard situated on the Langenbergstraße (today Maxim-Gorki-Straße). On the 1st of June 1922 he wrote to his acquaintance, the politician and philosopher Nikolai Bukharin: "My health comes apart at all the seams ... Soon I shall travel to Heringsdorf, to the seaside ...". Gorki not only recovered on Usedom, he was also working. Up to this day the living room and study in the Pension Irmgard commemorates Gorki's stay at the beginning of the Golden Twenties. Today the historic mansion, built in the famous Resort Architecture style, is open to visitors. Exhibitions and readings, not only about Gorki, but also for example of Tolstoi who regularly visited Gorki in Heringsdorf, take place on a regular basis.

Otto Niemeyer-Holstein (1896-1984)

Lüttenort (Tiny Place) is the name of the site, where the artist Otto Niemeyer-Holstein created his safe haven and adopted home. It is located between the villages Koserow and Zempin, where the island is only a few metres wide. At the beginning of the 1930s he landed here with his dinghy "Lütten" ("Tiny") and bought the patch of land for himself, his wife Annelise and his son. At first they stayed in an old commuter train wagon, brought there from Berlin for them to live in. Later further buildings were built. Every day the painter walked to the beach, where he allowed his thoughts to wander in the expanse of the Baltic Sea. "The beach is my great mistress", Niemeyer-Holstein once said.

It was the artist's wish, that his house and workplace should be preserved just as he had left them. So even today you can visit his studio and still find his last unfinished painting on the easel. It seems as if the master has only put down his paintbrush a little while ago to go for a walk. The artist's home with its unusual architecture and its beautiful garden is a piece of art in itself. The gallery shows Niemeyer-Holstein's paintings from all periods. Concerts and readings are held regularly on the premises.

www.atelier-otto-niemeyer-holstein.de

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Hans Werner Richter (1908-1993), Carola Stern (1925-2006)

The writer was born in Neu Sallenthin, which today is part of Bansin, and spent his childhood in Villa Paula in Bansin. Paintings of beach scenes adorn the blue and white patio of the villa in the Seestraße. On its gable you can read: "Ob Ost, ob West, to Hus is best" (Whether east or west at home is best). Hans Werner Richter is less known for his writing, than for his role as initiator of the Group 47, the most important literary association in post-war Germany.

To commemorate the most famous son of Bansin, the former fire brigade station of Bansin was converted to a museum. It is equipped with a library and exhibition space. The author's literary legacy is open to the public. Many of his novels give a lively account of ordinary people's life on the island of Usedom in the first half of the 20th century. Every year in the autumn during the Hans Werner Richter Literaturtage (Hans Werner Richter Literature Days) lectures, readings, discussions and scientific colloquia inform about the life and work of Hans Werner Richter and his literary colleague Carola Stern.

www.kaiserbaeder-auf-usedom.de

Volker Köpp (*1953)

The artist Volker Köpp was born and grew up on Usedom. He studied at the art college of Dresden, and is part of the so-called "Dresden Painting Culture", characterized by "an internalized experience of nature and a differentiated colourfulness" (Siegfried Klotz). Without adhering to any ideological demands the painter continues with modern figurative painting as it was taught to a high level in the art colleges of the former German Democratic Republic. Thus he presents a most unusual form of painting, which hasn't been taught in the West for decades. In his reclusiveness he created art that couldn't find a home in the 1980s. Nowadays, as figurative art becomes rehabilitated, it is much sought after. Unique are his village and town scenes, which show the magnificent Resort Architecture of the island Usedom.

Many of his motifs show scenes of life – impressionistic, cubistic and always distinct. Those who have watched Volker Köpp work in his light-flooded studio in Ahlbeck will never forget how he wields the brush. He exhibits his paintings in the Gallery Köpp – small and hidden away in a listed former fisherman's cottage.

www.galerie-koepp.de

Oskar Manigk (*1934)

Oskar Manigk is one of the most popular contemporary German artists. He lives and works not only in Berlin but also in Uckeritz on the island of Usedom. His father Otto Manigk had been one of the well-known artists of the circle of Otto Niemeyer-Holstein.

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From the 1970s onwards Oskar Manigk created his characteristic expressive-figurative paintings on paper, abstract drawings, caricatures, paint-overs, collages, poems and even films. Since German Reunification he shows his art in numerous exhibitions. Since the millennium, the unique paintings of the “manic painter Manigk”, as he was called on German television in 2000, fill large-format canvases, too. His art is on exhibit in all major museums of Germany.

Susanne Kandt-Horn (1914-1996)

Since 1954 Susanne Kandt-Horn and her husband, the painter Manfred Kandt, belonged to a circle of painters on the island of Usedom, that also included Otto Manigk, Otto Niemeyer-Holstein and Herbert Wegehaupt. After the change in cultural policy in the GDR in the 1970s her constructional work and large-format zincographies were supplemented by paintings. In 1979 she received the GDR-National Prize “for her contribution to the shaping of the image of man in painting”. Often she worked with the well-known photographer Günther Rössler.

Rolf Werner-Gedenkatelier (Commemorative Workshop)

The painter Rolf Werner died in 1989. His widow Siegrid Werner converted his former workplace into a commemorative workshop. It is located idyllically in an old thatched house in the Seestraße in Bansin. Rolf Werner had a strong influence on the art of the island of Usedom. He was born in 1916 and came to Usedom in 1953, where he met his later wife Siegrid. He was a master in observing landscapes or figures, internalizing them and later combining the motifs at the easel. His pictures still radiate the passion with which he processed his impressions on canvas.

Usedomer Kunsthaus Villa Meyer

Zinnowitz has more to offer than traditional fisherman’s cottages with thatched roofs, finely grained white sandy beaches, the impressive pier or the glamorous Resort Architecture. With the Usedom Kunsthaus in the Villa Meyer the seaside resort has an outstanding artistic location. The gallery, created by the artists Brigitte and Reinhard Meyer, exhibits paintings with local motifs, sculptures and contemporary as well as traditional photographs. With the opening of their Usedom Kunsthaus in 2002 the couple has added a major attraction for all art lovers in Germany as well as in nearby Poland. Artists of both nations display their works and thus help unifying the bi-national island Usedom.

www.insel-usedom.net

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Sonneninsel Usedom

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Galerie im Hühnerstall

In the quaint village of Neeberg the artist Margaret Schreiber-Gorny realized her dream. She established a small gallery in the old chicken coop of her parental home. There she sells paintings, collages, photographs and the very popular calendar "Romantische Insel Usedom" (Romantic Island of Usedom). Meanwhile the whole farmyard, including the thatched main house, turned into an artistic ensemble. Visitors can buy pottery and small-scale sculptures or take a rest in the feng shui garden, which Margaret Schreiber-Gorny has laid out herself as a haven of tranquility.

www.neeberg-galerie-fengshui.de

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There are even more artists and galleries to be discovered:

Zinnowitz: Galerie Usedomfotos

www.insel-usedom.net/usedomfotos_galerie.htm

Heringsdorf: Usedomer Kunstverein im Kunstpavillon

www.kunstpavillon-ostseebad-heringsdorf.de/

Heringsdorf: Villa Irmgard

www.kaiserbaeder-auf-usedom.de/ausstellungen/

Neppermin: Kunsthaus Usedom

www.kunsthhaus-usedom.de

Neppermin: Galerie Wittig-Weißensee

www.utewittig.de

Usedom Tourismus GmbH (UTG) is the official Marketing Company of the island of Usedom. As a comprehensive service provider for the tourist industry of Usedom, the regional authorities and their institutions dealing with tourism, the UTG realizes the destination marketing for the island of Usedom at home and abroad. It runs the destination portal, a booking center and is contact for supra-regional public relations activities of the island of Usedom.

www.usedom.de, flug.usedom.de, kurzurlaub.usedom.de