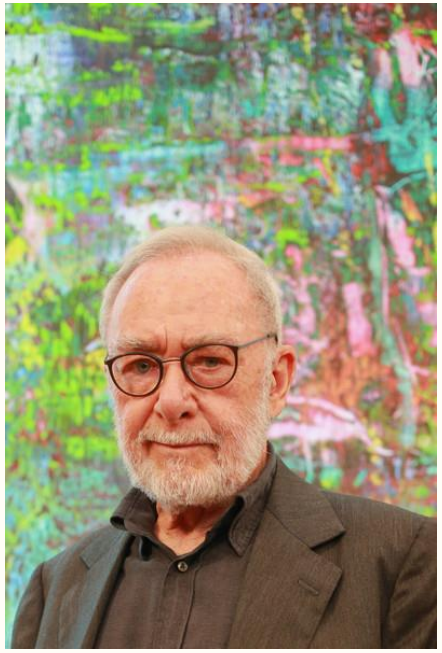
Artist Resources – Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)



Richter, 2018
Photograph: Christian Marquardt

Richter artist website

Richter at Marian Goodman Gallery

David Zwirner Gallery's 2004 exhibition of nine seminal landscape paintings traced the artist's engagement with the genre over forty years, five countries, engaging in tirless conversations with photography, painting, representation, and abstraction.

Richter spoke with Director Nicolas Serota in 2011 as the Tate Modern prepared for *Panorama*, a major retrospective of the artist's work in the London galleries, which also houses a permanent display of Richter's enigmatic series inspired by the melodic abstractions of American composer John Cage. "I believe all things of quality have this timelessness. Art, architecture, music, literature. Otherwise it's hard to handle this life."

Richter demonstrates the labor and ingenuity of his scrape and squeegee techniques in this excerpt from the 2011 doc *Gerhard Richter Painting*, filmed over the course of three years in the artist's studio in Cologne.

"Abstract pictures do indeed show something, they just show things that don't exist. But they still follow the same requirements as figurative works: they need a setup, structure. You need to be able to look at it and say, "It's almost something." But it's actually representing nothing. It pulls feelings out of you, even as it's showing you a scene that technically isn't there," Richter explained in a 2014 interview with *The Wall Street Journal* about abstraction and the importance of art as he prepared for a show at Marian Goodman Gallery in London.

In a frank and thoughtful interview in his native German at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Denmark in 2016, Richter philosophized on the value of art, beauty, Germany, and contemporary culture. "I don't really believe that art has power. But it does have value. Those who take an interest in it, find solace in it…it's comforting simply because it's beautiful. These days bea uty is not in fashion, we don't need it. We need entertainment, sensations. Beauty is an ideal of mine, as much as it ever was. I can't find anything bad about it."

The Met Breuer's 2020 exhibition, *Gerhard Richter: Painting After All* explores the duality between representation and abstraction that underpins Richter's prolific six-decade career, emphasizing the value of painting as an artistic medium. Digital resources include an exhibition guide and a virtual tour of the galleries, as well as interviews with artists on Richter's continuing influence. Curator's also contributed their insights. "Ultimately, Richter's work is about pictorial and painterly traditions. Standing in front of a painting has more of a singular presence and relevance to our actual living moment than photography will ever have, because photography always marks the instant of passing—the death—of the very moment it records. It is this paradox, burrowed deep in Richter's work, that enables the image to continue to live, to be relevant."



Richter at work, ca. 2011
Still from film, *Gerhard Richter Painting*



Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Schädel, abstract (Skull, abstract), 1983
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2026:75.2

Trained as a Socialist Realist painter at East Germany's Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, Gerhard Richter began his soft-focus photorealism and abstract work after escaping to West Germany in 1961. After his 50th birthday, Richter began to create series that were more introspective. **Schädel, abstrakt (Skull, abstract)** is part of a series of eight skulls the artist painted in 1983. This is the only example featuring abstract overpainting squeegeed on the surface, obscuring the *memento mori* (remember you must die) subject underneath. When asked about the skull motif, Richter said: "I felt protected because the motifs are so art-historically charged and I no longer needed to say that I painted them for myself…. So beautifully painted, they take away the fear."

On view October 21, 2026 – February 15, 2027

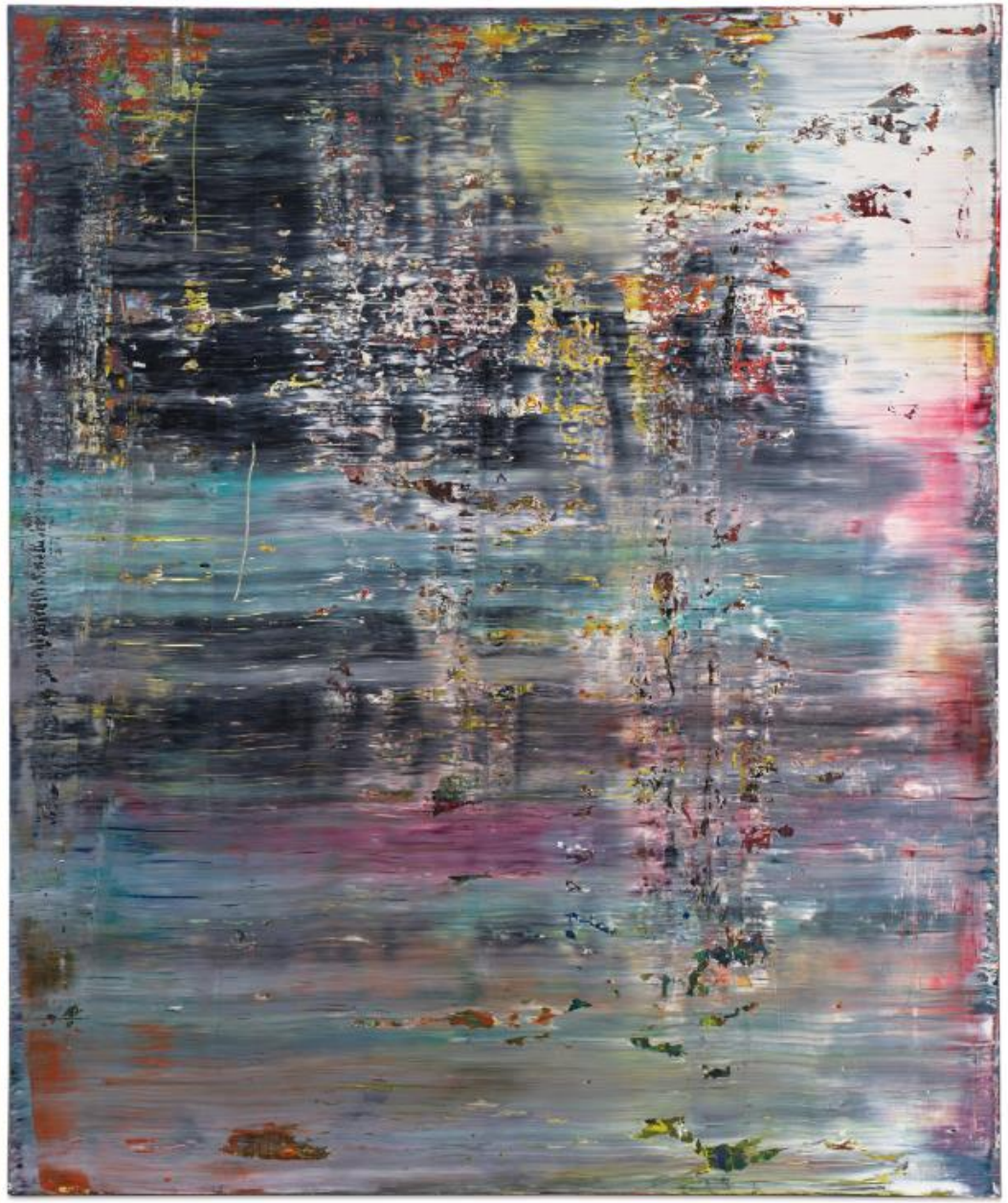
Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Domplatz, Mailand [Cathedral Square, Milan], 1968
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2025:97.1

Gerhard Richter trained in East Germany before escaping to West Germany two months before the construction of the Berlin Wall. In the 1960s, he developed his characteristic soft-focus style and "photo-paintings," which are made by projecting a photograph onto canvas, tracing the image, and "blurring" the paint with a soft brush or squeegee. **Domplatz, Mailand [Cathedral Square, Milan]** was originally a commission for the Siemens Corporation office building in Milan. Richter's view juxtaposes the Gothic Duomo Cathedral with the Neoclassical Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, forcing centers of commerce and religion to face each other across the bustling square.

On view June 3 – September 6, 2026





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Abstraktes Bild, 1990
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2025:62.1

Gerhard Richter is one of the most influential artists to emerge from postwar Germany in the early 1960s. Born in Dresden and originally trained as a Social Realist painter, he escaped from East Germany in 1961, shortly before the Berlin Wall was built. Working in West Germany in the 1960s, Richter became known for his soft-focus works based on photographs. Today he is also known for large-scale abstract canvases created with the same technique of "blurring" the paint with a soft brush or squeegee. **Abstraktes Bild** was painted in 1990, at the height of the artist's *Abstraktes Bild* series and on the eve of his breakthrough retrospective at Tate Gallery in London. The artist once said: "The abstract works are my presence, my reality, my problems, my difficulties and contradictions. They are very topical for me."

On view July 2 – October 10, 2025

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Versammlung (Meeting), 1966
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2024:77.1

Trained as a Social Realist painter at East Germany's Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, Gerhard Richter escaped to West Germany shortly before the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961. The artist settled in Düsseldorf, and he soon began to develop a new, soft-focus style that blurred boundaries between painting and photography. **Versammlung (Meeting)** is one of the earliest "photo-paintings" that Richter produced, made by projecting a photograph onto canvas, tracing the image, and "blurring" the paint with a soft brush or squeegee. Richter later reflected: "When I copied the first photos, I had the feeling for the first time that I was doing something special and above all, something on my own. In the jargon of the day, it was 'radical.' And those who saw it suddenly had no argument, except for the one that it was unacceptable simply to ignore the rules and copy a photo."

On view September 25, 2024 – January 5, 2025





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Abstraktes Bild (Abstract Painting), 2009
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2024:53.1

Born in Dresden on the eve of World War II, Gerhard Richter escaped to West Germany two months before the Berlin Wall was erected in 1961. The artist quickly became known for his soft-focus photorealist and abstract paintings that rebelled against the Socialist Realism of his earlier training. **Abstraktes Bild (Abstract Painting)** is a bright white monochromatic composition. It was produced with help from a homemade squeegee that spread and scraped the white paint into translucent layers. As the artist describes: "I would like to obtain in the end a picture which I had not planned at all… this method of working with randomness, chance, sudden inspiration, and destruction lets a particular type of picture emerge but never a predetermined one."

On view July 10 – October 13, 2024

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Snow – White (01.11.05), 2005
Acrylic paint and pencil drawing on offset print in artist's frame

Private Collection; L2023:135.1a-i

Gerhard Richter is one of the most influential artists to emerge from postwar East Germany in the early 1960s. Originally trained as a Social Realist painter, Richter is best known for his soft-focus works based on photographs and his large abstract paintings. As in his blurred photorealist works, Richter's abstract paintings are frequently made by "blurring" the paint with a soft brush or squeegee. The **Snow – White (01.11.05)** works on view are a small portion of 100 pieces based on *Abstract Painting* (2004). Richter took details of this painting, created offset prints, and applied acrylic paint and pencil to make a new series that emphasizes white and gray.

On view January 10 – April 14, 2024



Gerhard Richter
Abstraktes Bild (Abstract Painting), 2004
Oil on canvas
Catalogue Raisonné 890-5





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Snow – White (07.11.05), 2005
Acrylic paint and pencil drawing on offset print in artist's frame

Private Collection; L2023:135.1a-i

On view January 10 – April 14, 2024

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Snow – White (10.11.05), 2005
Acrylic paint and pencil drawing on offset print in artist's frame

Private Collection; L2023:135.1a-i

On view January 10 – April 14, 2024





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Snow – White (20.11.05), 2005
Acrylic paint and pencil drawing on offset print in artist's frame

Private Collection; L2023:135.1a-i

On view January 10 – April 14, 2024

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Snow – White (21.11.05), 2005
Acrylic paint and pencil drawing on offset print in artist's frame

Private Collection; L2023:135.1a-i

On view January 10 – April 14, 2024





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Snow – White (23.11.05), 2005
Acrylic paint and pencil drawing on offset print in artist's frame

Private Collection; L2023:135.1a-i

On view January 10 – April 14, 2024

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Snow – White (24.11.05), 2005
Acrylic paint and pencil drawing on offset print in artist's frame

Private Collection; L2023:135.1a-i

On view January 10 – April 14, 2024





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Snow – White (05.11.05), 2005
Acrylic paint and pencil drawing on offset print in artist's frame

Private Collection; L2023:135.1a-i

On view January 10 – April 14, 2024

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Snow – White (05.11.05), 2005
Acrylic paint and pencil drawing on offset print in artist's frame

Private Collection; L2023:135.1a-i

On view January 10 – April 14, 2024





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
I.G., 1993
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2022:75.5

Born and raised in East Germany, Gerhard Richter was first trained as a Socialist Realist painter before escaping to West Germany and turning to his characteristic soft-focus style that blurs boundaries between painting and photography. Richter's "photo-paintings," which he began making in the 1960s, are made by projecting a photograph onto canvas, tracing the image, and "blurring" the paint with a soft brush or squeegee. **I.G.** is a portrait of Richter's second wife, sculptor Isa Genzken (b. 1948). The work is one of three paintings the artist completed of Genzken, which all feature her naked back against a vague white wall and shadowed doorframe. Richter once said: "A portrait must not express anything of the sitter's 'soul,' essence or character…it is far better to paint a portrait from a photograph, because no one can ever paint a specific person—only a picture that has nothing in common with the sitter."

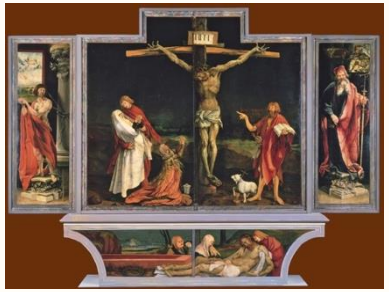
On view November 9, 2022 – February 12, 2023



Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Colmar I – V, 1984
Watercolor, oil pastel and graphite on paper

Private Collection; L2022:28.1a-e

Gerhard Richter is perhaps best known for his oil paintings based on photographs, but the artist has also worked with watercolors throughout his career. **Colmar I–V** was made the same year as the international exhibition, *von hier aus (from here),* which originated in Düsseldorf and traveled to multiple galleries in New York City, bringing a wide range of contemporary West German art to the attention of a broad American art public. This series was titled in homage to the Isenheim altarpiece in Colmar, France, made by German artists Nikolaus of Haguenauer and Matthias Grünewald in the 16th century. Richter continues to discuss the altarpiece in interviews as one of the most impactful artworks he has encountered. In 2016, over 30 years after he produced this series, Richter said: "Art has value. Art offers solace. I recently visited Colmar and saw the Isenheim altarpiece, a tragic story! A great picture, it is wonderful, it is consoling, because it is beautiful."



Nikolaus of Haguenauer and Matthias Grünewald
Isenheim Altarpiece, 1512-1516
Musée Unterlinden

On view May 18, 2022 – August 21, 2022

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Colmar I, 1984
Watercolor, oil pastel and graphite on paper

Private Collection; L2022:28.1a

On view May 18 – August 21, 2022





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Colmar II, 1984
Watercolor, oil pastel and graphite on paper

Private Collection; L2022:28.1b

On view May 18 – August 21, 2022

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Colmar III, 1984
Watercolor, oil pastel and graphite on paper

Private Collection; L2022:28.1c

On view May 18 – August 21, 2022





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Colmar IV, 1984
Watercolor, oil pastel and graphite on paper

Private Collection; L2022:28.1d

On view May 18 – August 21, 2022

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Colmar V, 1984
Watercolor, oil pastel and graphite on paper

Private Collection; L2022:28.1e

On view May 18 – August 21, 2022





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Arena, 1995
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2021:128.1

Gerhard Richter's practice is informed by his youth in postwar East Germany. Though trained as a Social Realist painter, the artist is known for works that blur boundaries between painting and photography, realism and abstraction. In **Arena**, Richter employs his characteristic, soft-focus realist style to signal the intensity and drama of bullfighting without truly showing it. Instead, he offers a dreamlike, distanced, and indistinct rendition that functions as a silent screen on which to project fantasies, summon memories, or entertain arguments about bullfighting's value and morality. The controversial sport appears repeatedly in European art history, with artists using the theme to explore complexities of national identity, personal conflict, and survival. Richter's version was first displayed in a 1996 exhibition of one hundred small-scale paintings at the Museé d'Art Contemporain in Nîmes, France. As Ernest Hemmingway famously wrote: "Bullfighting is the only art in which the artist is in danger of death and in which the degree of brilliance in the performance is left to the fighter's honor."





Francisco de Goya, *Bullfight, Suerte de Varas,* 1824, oil on canvas (left)
Pablo Picasso, *A Bullfight (Course de taureaux),* 1934, oil on canvas (right)

On view November 3, 2021 – February 6, 2022

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Frau mit Schirm (Woman with Umbrella), 1964
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2021:83.3

Trained as a Social Realist painter at East Germany's Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, Gerhard Richter escaped to West Germany shortly before the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961. With the proliferation of mass media technologies after World War II, the artist was inspired to explore the boundary between photography and painting. **Frau mit Schirm (Woman with Umbrella)** is based on a news photo of Jacqueline Kennedy as a grieving young widow, in the days following the assassination of her husband, President Jack Kennedy. The painting's blurry, photorealistic style heightens the emotional weight of this traumatic and unstable moment in U.S. history. To produce the work, Richter projected a photograph onto his canvas, traced the image, and "blurred" with a soft brush or squeegee. The artist explains, "I'm not trying to imitate a photograph; I'm trying to make one. And if I disregard the assumption that a photograph is a piece of paper exposed to light, then I am practicing photography by other means."

On view July 21 – December 12, 2021





Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
941-5 Abstraktes Bild (Abstract Painting), 2015
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2020:127.4

Lifelong interests encompassing photography and painting, representation and abstraction, surface and process define the prolific and innovative sixty-year career of Gerhard Richter. The technique showcased in **941-5 Abstraktes Bild** is characteristic of Richter's large abstract paintings going back to the 1980s. First applying paint to canvas with a brush, he then quickly moves a long, homemade squeegee (comprised of a flexible piece of acrylic plastic attached to a wooden handle) horizontally and vertically across the canvas. The resulting sweep of colors creates a layered, lushly smeared surface of thin washed valleys and thick impasto peaks, celebrating the physical fact of paint on canvas, the intentionality and labor of creation, and the delicate balance between chance and artistic control.

"I would like to obtain in the end a picture which I had not planned at all," Richter reflected in 1990. "Also, this method of working with randomness, chance, sudden inspiration, and destruction lets a particular type of picture emerge but never a predetermined one…this is also a method to put into action unconscious efforts, as much as possible—after all, I would like to get to something more interesting than what I can think of myself."

On view January 4 – April 11, 2021



Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Christiane und Kerstin, 1968
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2020:89.1

Informed by a youth lived in the shadow of German fascism, WWII, and the communist regime of East Germany, Gerhard Richter was trained as a Social Realist painter. He escaped to the west shortly before the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and rose to prominence in West Germany in the 1960s, developing a career-defining sensitivity to medium, surface, and process. His first solo exhibition in Düsseldorf, in 1963, introduced Richter's idiosyncratic art practice, which ignores the boundaries between painting and photography, realism and abstraction. By refusing to limit his work to a single, signature style, and periodically embracing highly topical, political subjects, he helped redefine the options for contemporary painting in the 1960s, 1970s, and beyond.

Christiane und Kerstin depicts the daughters of the artist's collectors and patrons, Margot and Werner Schäfer, in the signature style of his blurred photorealism. The black-and-white, out-of-focus aesthetic of the painting was achieved by moving a squeegee across the wet surface – a technique perfected in Richter's photo paintings and employed to outstanding effect in later abstract canvases. His goal: to highlight the imprecise, uncertain, transient, and incomplete nature of vision and perception. "I wipe to make everything equal, both important and unimportant at the same time," Richter reflected in 1965. "I wipe so that all parts move a little closer. Perhaps I also wipe away unnecessary information."

On view September 30, 2020 – January 3, 2021

Gerhard Richter (German, b. 1932)
Buschdorf, 1985
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2020:88.3



In **Buschdorf**, Gerhard Richter entices viewers with a naturalistic view of the small titular town in Luxembourg. To the artist, the scene is more than a pastoral view of verdant fields and wild arboreal beauty. In 1986, Richter reflected: “My landscapes are not only beautiful or nostalgic, with a Romantic or classical suggestion of lost Paradises, but above all 'untruthful' (even if I did not always find a way of showing it); and by 'untruthful' I mean the glorifying way we look at Nature…which in all its forms is always against us, because it knows no meaning, no pity, no sympathy, because it knows nothing and is absolutely mindless: the total antithesis of ourselves, absolutely inhuman.”

Gerhard Richter is widely considered one of the greatest living artists. Underpinning his influential approach to painting is a lifelong interest in the mediums of painting and photography, the relationship between representation and abstraction, and the expressive potential of blurring the boundaries between them. He has returned to landscapes throughout his career as a vehicle to merge and explore the binary poles of abstraction and figuration.

On view September 16 – December 27, 2020