

# CALENDAR

*Art Basel in Miami Beach: 30 Nov-4 Dec*

## How Anselm Kiefer used Germany's past to understand its present

NSU brings together 50 works while a never-before-seen installation debuts in Wynwood

**Regeneration Series: Anselm Kiefer from the Hall Collection**  
UNTIL 13 AUGUST 2017

NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale

**Anselm Kiefer, New Installation**

UNTIL 29 APRIL 2017

Margulies Collection at the Warehouse

➔ A survey of the German artist Anselm Kiefer is due to kick off Regeneration, a new series at the Nova Southeastern University (NSU) Art Museum in Fort Lauderdale that examines artists' responses to the Second World War. The exhibition features around 50 artist books, works on paper, paintings and sculptures from 1969 to 2013, drawn from the collection of the hedge-fund manager Andrew Hall and his wife, Christine. The couple and their foundation have one of the world's largest holdings of the artist's work.

Kiefer, born during the final days of the war, was among the first generation of Germans to confront the horrors of Nazism and national complicity as historical fact.

According to Bonnie Clearwater, the museum's director and curator of the show, this backdrop (known as *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, or "coming to terms with the past"), provided his animus from the start.

One of the earliest works in the show is a book of photographic

self-portraits staged in front of monuments and sites significant to the rise of National Socialism. Gazing out of empty arenas and fields, silent of fiery speech or the march of jackboots, Kiefer defied the postwar interdiction on representing emblems of the Third Reich and prodded the viewer to consider where, exactly, evil is located.

The study of symbols remains a constant in Kiefer's work. It led him to reach further back into history, both German and ancient, to grapple with how mythologies are created and reinforced. *Wege der Weltweisheit – die Hermannsschlacht* (1978), a 10ft-wide collage of woodcut portraits of great German minds in philosophy, music and literature, asks how a nation that produced such works could have fallen under the sway of a proudly anti-intellectual, regressive regime.

The roughly chronological layout of the exhibition shows Kiefer stretching for ever more monumental forms and materials to convey the vastness of his inquiry. By the 1980s, he had begun to incorporate industrial found objects and organic materials into his paintings.

The show includes two epic canvases from 2005-06, among Kiefer's most grandly realised works. These panoramic, scorched-earth landscapes, with their high horizons, have "the effect of really



inserting the viewer right into the scene", Clearwater says. "We're being implicated."

In contrast to these monumental statements – and perhaps surprising for viewers less familiar with Kiefer's early works – are several small paintings of transcendent beauty, such as the lyrical, Emil Nolde-like watercolour *Die Kunst geht knapp nicht unter* (the art almost does not drown, 1975).

To complement the historical overview offered by the NSU show, the Margulies Collection at the Warehouse, in Miami's Wynwood neighbourhood, is showing Kiefer for the second year in a row. The spotlight is on a newly acquired sculptural installation that has never been shown before: *Steigend steigend sinke nieder* (rising, rising, falling down, 2009-12), which draws its title from Goethe's *Faust*.

The collector Martin Margulies and the warehouse's curator, Katherine Hinds, saw the work in Kiefer's studio in France and moved to buy it for the collection. It is so large that the warehouse's entrance had to be redesigned to accommodate it. Consisting of stalks of white suspended over a base of broken concrete and earth, it suggests regrowth and regeneration – a small but significant triumph over death and destruction.

Sarah P. Hanson



Top, Kiefer's installation *Steigend steigend sinke nieder* (rising, rising, falling down, 2009-12, detail). Above, *Die Etsch* (the Adige, 1970s)



See pages 22-24 for full exhibition listings

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