

Akim Monet Fine Arts, LLC



Joseph BEUYS (1921 - 1986)

Untitled (signed Reichsmark)

20 Reichsmark from 1924, with handwritten addition

3 1/8 x 6 1/4 in (8 x 15,9 cm)

After 1979

Signed in red felt "Joseph Beuys"
This work is unique

PROVENANCE

Stairs, Hudson

EXHIBITED

Disruptive selection, Fall 2019, Popcorn Gallery Akim Monet Fine Arts, Los Angeles
Assisted Readymade, Winter 2022, The Lone Star Gallery Akim Monet Fine Arts, Dallas

NOTES

In 1979 Joseph Beuys scribbled "Kunst = Kapital" on a banknote and signed it, and it became art.



See: Schellmann 298

DAS KAPITAL RAUM 1970–1977 / THE CAPITAL ROOM 1970–1977



In a room filled with chalkboards covered in formulas, Joseph Beuys created one of his most important works: an installation examining capitalism.

Fifty chalkboard slates are hung on a wall, their surfaces covered in chalked-in formulas. Alongside, a piano with an axe leaning against it, a zinc tub beside a watering can, a ladder, grease, film projectors. With this installation, Joseph Beuys substantiated his thesis, which was still considered quite radical in the 1970s: Capital actually lies in the creative power of every human being.

"Art against capitalism"

"Anyone who has not understood Beuys' meaning with this phrase has not understood Beuys and will never understand him," says Erich Marx. Marx bought the work for a "not too modest two-digit million sum" and left it on permanent loan to the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin. The installation "Das Kapital Raum 1970-1977" from 1980 is considered by many to be the legacy of the German artist who lived from 1921 to 1986. It can be visited at the Hamburger Bahnhof - Museum für Gegenwart.

Beuys created the environment The Capital Room 1970-1977 for the central gallery of the International Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 1980. The complex installation comprises 27 objects that form a Gesamtkunstwerk. Among the environment's many components are 50 blackboards, a grand piano, and various electrical devices, such as tape recorders and a microphone. Incorporated in the installation are elements from earlier performances, such as his action 'Celtic (Kinnloch Rannoch)' from 1970 and 'Celtic + ~~~', as well as 50 blackboards that first went on display at documenta V in 1972 and documenta VI in 1977. The Capital Room 1970–1977 can thus be seen as representing the sum of the most important events and impulses in the preceding ten years of the artist's career.

In 1984 Beuys installed the work in the Hallen für Neue Kunst in Schaffhausen (Switzerland), modifying it to fit the space. Before going on show in Schaffhausen, the environment also went on view in other versions, in other venues. In 1981, directly after the Biennale, it was displayed at the InK, Halle für Internationale neue Kunst, Zurich, and in 1983 it featured in the exhibition 'Der Hang zum Gesamtkunstwerk' at the Kunsthaus Zurich.

Please view Deutsche Welle interview of Erich Marx about Das Kapital Raum 1970–1977:
<https://p.dw.com/p/3KBkc>

THE REICHSMARK



The Reichsmark was the currency in Germany from 1924 until 20 June 1948 in West Germany, where it was replaced with the Deutsche Mark, and until 23 June in East Germany when it was replaced by the East German mark. The Reichsmark was subdivided into 100 Reichspfennig. The Mark is an ancient Germanic weight measure, traditionally a half pound, later used for several coins; whereas Reich, that is realm in English, comes from the official name for the German nation state from 1871 to 1945, Deutsches Reich.

The Reichsmark was introduced in 1924 as a permanent replacement for the Papiermark. This was necessary due to the 1920s German inflation which had reached its peak in 1923. The exchange rate between the old Papiermark and the Reichsmark was 1 RM = 1012 Papiermark (one trillion in US English and French, one billion in German and other European languages and UK English of the time; see long and short scales). To stabilize the economy and to smooth the transition, the Papiermark was not directly replaced by the Reichsmark, but by the Rentenmark, an interim currency backed by the Deutsche Rentenbank, owning industrial and agricultural real estate assets. The Reichsmark was put on the gold standard at the rate previously used by the Goldmark, with the U.S. dollar worth 4.2 RM.

After the Second World War, the Reichsmark continued to circulate in Germany, but with new banknotes (Allied Occupation Marks) printed in the US and in the Soviet Zone, as well as with coins (without swastikas). In practice, massive inflation dating back to the latter stages of the war had rendered the Reichsmark nearly worthless. For all intents and purposes, it was supplanted by a barter economy (commonly, "cigarette currency"). The Reichsmark was replaced in June 1948 by the Deutsche Mark in the Trizone (three western occupation zones) and (in the Soviet occupation zone) later in the same year by the East German Mark (colloquially also "Ostmark", since 1968 officially "Mark der DDR") in East Germany. The 1948 currency reform under the direction of Ludwig Erhard is considered the beginning of the West German economic recovery; however, the secret plan to introduce the Deutsche Mark in the Trizone was formulated by economist Edward A. Tenenbaum of the US military government, and was executed abruptly on 21 June 1948.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichsmark>