

Ute Rakob. Traces of time.

MAD

10 May – 14 September 2025



MAD_Intervention

„I paint the deterioration, in it the moments of beauty.“

Ute Rakob

On the occasion of a substantial donation of her artworks, the Museum am Dom is once again dedicating an exhibition to the artist Ute Rakob—the first since 2009. This new exhibition will take the form of an intervention within the permanent collection.

A particular honour for the Museum am Dom, and an absolute highlight of the exhibition, is the opportunity to present her latest work *Die Große Fülle / The great abundance* to the public for the first time, alongside a newly produced video accompanying her significant piece *Die Große Wunde / The large wound*. In addition, *The large wound* itself, as well as her striking *Tieraltar / Altar of animals*, will be on display.

To speak of *The great abundance* in relation to the work of this multi-award-winning artist is, in many ways, a double-edged phrase. Not only does it refer to her rich and impressive body of work, but it also carries a critical message: Rakob deliberately chose this title for her most recent piece, which pictures a discarded plastic sheet, to provoke reflection on the devastating pollution of our land and seas by plastic waste.

„Dear M,
I'd like to share with you a painting I'm currently working on. It's still in progress, but closely related to *The large wound*. The piece depicts a sheet of plastic foil I found here last year—a reflection of our round world, now so full of plastic.

It will be several months before the work is completed, but for me, it has unexpectedly become one of the most important pieces I've created in recent years. I sincerely hope you'll consider exhibiting it! “ Ute Rakob

Ute Rakob remains true to herself and her artistic approach in this extraordinary work. With masterful subtlety, she she paints the random found objects she encounters in her ongoing search for meaning—using them to explore existential questions and reflections on the human condition.

The large wound, detail 2007–2008
Oil on wood
178 x 105 cm



In these objects, she uncovers vulnerability, transience, and decay; she perceives the threat and destruction of creation and the environment. Yet at the same time, she senses an inherent beauty in what has been left to deteriorate. Executed with the utmost artistic sensitivity, her works become visual expressions of her deep contemplation of the present moment.

Their symbolic weight and worldly references, however, also gesture toward the future. Ute Rakob captures the strange allure and unexpected beauty of neglected things with careful attentiveness. Through the process of artistic transformation, she succeeds in elevating what might otherwise be dismissed as worthless.

In doing so, she creates new aesthetic contexts and pictorial realities. If we follow these interpreted traces of time, we may find ourselves newly sensitised to our surroundings—and inspired to nurture greater respect for both people and the environment.

Object study 1997
Graphite on paper
50 x 50 cm



Piece of lead, object study 2003
Graphite on paper
50 x 50 cm



„Everything essential leaves traces. Algae, stones, and plants are shaped by the random forces of wind and sea. Amid the chaos of these vegetative remnants scattered along the shoreline, unexpected beauty can be found. These paintings capture the richness of such ephemeral discoveries—in both form and colour.“

Ute Rakob

Power hunger 1999
Oil on wood
55 x 120 cm



Ute Rakob in the studio 2004



Traces (algae) 2021
Oil on wood
65 x 65 cm



Vita

- 1941** Ute Rakob was born in Bünde, Westphalia.
- 1979–81** she studies painting with Prof. Inge Dörries-Höher in Bielefeld.
- 1981** she participates in the Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts. She is awarded the Prize of the City of Salzburg.
- 1982** she moves to Vienna to study at the Academy of Fine Arts in the Master class of Prof. Rudolf Hausner. She studies philosophy as a minor subject.
- 1984** she is awarded the Fuger Prize.
- 1985** she receives the Rudolf Hausner Prize in Vienna.
- 1986** she completes her artistic studies with a diploma and participates at Art Basel 86.
- 1988** she designs three choir windows for the Romanesque Laurentius Church, Bünde.
- 1989** she is invited as a guest artist to the Villa Romana, Florence.
- 1991–94** she designs ten windows for the Bartholomäus Church, Dortmund.
- 1992** she moves into a studio in the Chianti hills. Since then she lives and works in Italy during the summer months.
- 1995–96** she designs three round windows, a stainless steel wall object and a glass object for the administration building for the church district of Herford.
- 2004–24** she exhibits in Vienna at the Technical Museum, the Belvedere and the Natural History Museum, in Linz at the Lentos, as well as in Florence, Brixen and Achberg Castle.

- 2007–08** she creates the important work *The large wound*.
- 2009–11** she originates the *Altare degli Animali* (*Altar of animals*).
- 2021** she focuses on a series of algae paintings.
- 2024** her latest major work *The great abundance* is completed.
- 2024–25** together with Sebastian Fröhlich the video *Werden und Vergehen* (*Becoming and decaying*) is created, inspired by the work *Die Große Wunde* (*The large wound*).

Ute Rakob lives and works in Vienna and Italy.



Traces (algae), detail 2021
Oil on wood
65x65 cm

„I’m in my beloved Italy! In my peaceful hermitage, surrounded by beauty and wide-open views. Silence is filled with the songs of birds, crickets, and cicadas; the warmth is gentle, and I feel the joy of new paintings taking shape.“
Ute Rakob



Two sides topic I | 2004
Oil on wood
32 x 45 cm each

Altare degli Animali / Altar of animals 2009–2011
Oil on wood + video
75 x 35 cm / 145 x 50 cm / 75 x 35 cm / 20 x 130 cm



„Here in my beloved quiet place, I can’t tear myself away from the tondo (115 cm)—it’s more exciting to me than anything has been in quite some time!

It’s a major, deeply important work: plastic waste everywhere, hence the circular format. I’ve rarely painted with such looseness, and I simply can’t put it aside.

I truly hope to finish it by spring. It’s certainly the most important piece I’ve created in recent years.“

Ute Rakob

Accompanying events

MAD_Kunstkantine – Beauty in decay

30-minute art snack with curator Michael Koller on the current MAD_Intervention Ute Rakob: Traces of Time

Tue 08.07. 12:30 h

MAD_Senior*in – „I paint the decay. In it the moments of beauty“

Guided tour of the current MAD_Intervention Ute Rakob: Traces of Time - with curator Michael Koller

Wed 16.07. 15:00 h

You can't get any closer – finissage with art talk

Ask questions and talk to Ute Rakob about her art in an informal atmosphere. Curator Michael Koller moderates.

Sun 14.09. 14:00 h

→ Further events and information can be found at www.museum-am-dom.de/en.

→ Eine deutsche Version dieses Folders findest du unter www.museum-am-dom.de



EN



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Title The great abundance, Ute Rakob, 2024, Oil on wood, ø 115 cm

Photo credits

Title: © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025, photo: Roman Keller, Wien / Die large wound, detail; Power hunger; Object study; Piece of lead, objectstudy; Two sides topic I; Altare degli Animali: © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025, photo: Franz Sachinger, Wien / Ute Rakob in the studio: privat / Traces (algae); Traces (algae), detail: © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025, photo: Department of Art of the Diocese

Text Michael Koller

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Bezirk
Unterfranken



Sparkasse
Mainfranken Würzburg

MAD

10 May – 14 September 2025
Tue – Sun 12–17 h

Kiliansplatz 1
97070 Würzburg