

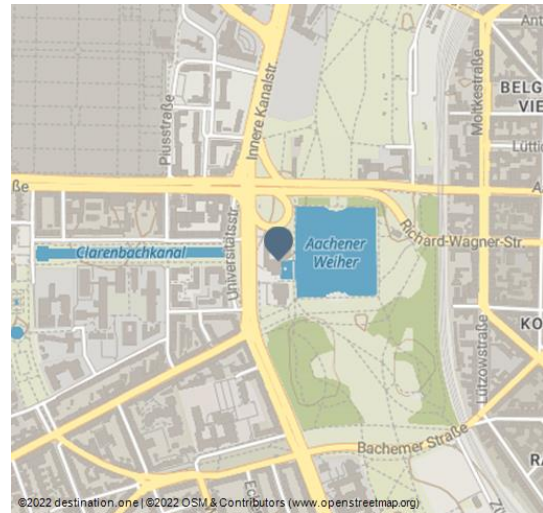


## Museum of East Asian Art

Museum/Exhibition



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As visitors enter the Museum for East Asian Art, the exhibition rooms receive them with soothing, directly sensed tranquillity, as though contemplation itself had found a new home here. But this understated and minimalistic atmosphere discreetly conceals the huge significance of this specialized museum, which was the first of its kind in Europe.

The Museum of East Asian Art in Cologne, which opened its doors in 1913, today houses the most significant collection of East Asian art from China, Korea and Japan in Germany — next to the Museum of Asian Art in Berlin.

### The museum's opening in 1913: A step into the cosmopolitan modern age

The founders and collectors Frieda and Adolf Fischer wanted this museum to offer visitors an "unobstructed" view of the art of East Asia, as well as a new perspective on "equally valuable world art" that transcends geographic and cultural differences. Back then, this was a modern, cosmopolitan and revolutionary approach, in face of the colonial policy Germany was pursuing at that time.

### The original museum was destroyed in the Second World War and had a new start in 1977

The two world wars pushed the idea of the museum and continued art collection into the background, and bombs destroyed the museum building on Hansaring. Although a large part of the collection could be saved, some small-scale objects stored in a bunker near Cologne were unfortunately lost due to theft. The reopening of the museum in a new building on Universitätsstraße in 1977 marked a new beginning that would continue to implement the original concept.

### The collection and highlights of the Museum of East Asian Art

The museum was expanded in 1997, but because of the limited available space you'll be able to view only a part of this significant collection. The museum changes its presentation of objects from its permanent collection several times a year. Your best approach would be to simply visit the museum more often. After all, the collection includes significant exhibits such as — to mention just one of the

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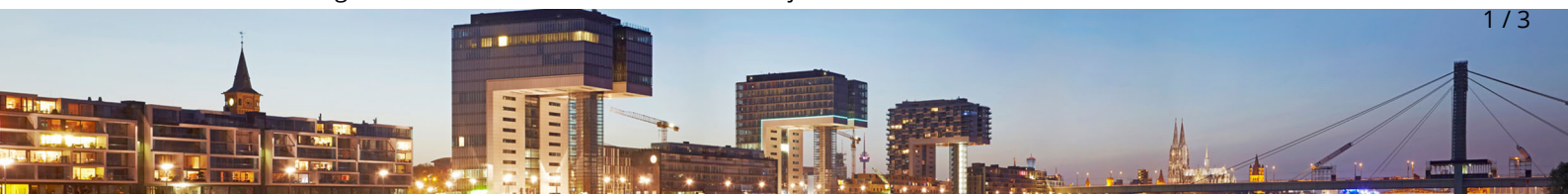
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highlights — a Chinese carillon consisting of nine bronze bells dating back to around 800 A.D. — the only preserved carillon of this kind exhibited outside China. Other highlights include Japanese screens, illustrated horizontal scrolls, Buddhist paintings, woodcuts, valuable lacquerwork and more than 70 exemplars of Korean ceramics, constituting one of the best collections of this kind in Europe.

Equally interesting is the collection of historical photographs, especially the hand-coloured photos from Japanese photographic studios. Of course the museum is continually adding new works, such as the walk-in bronze sculpture "Usagi Kannon" by Leiko Ikemura.

### **A new building in 1977: based on plans drawn up by Kunio Maekawa — a student of Le Corbusier**

The museum building itself is outstanding and a significant exponent of its time period. The architecture of today's Museum for East Asian Art shows understated modern restraint that evokes ancient Japanese traditions. Building structures of varying sizes and heights are grouped austere around an interior landscape garden in the style of a Japanese meditation garden. The slightly uneven glazed ceramic tiles of the external façade shimmer in warm shades of brown — and in the foyer, high glass walls open up the space to the atrium and the Aachener Weiher (Aachen Pond). In the wide and brightly lit exhibition rooms, some of the floors are covered with sand-coloured sisal.

### **The museum building unites worlds and reflects the founders' basic concept**

The Japanese architect Kunio Maekawa designed the museum and its outdoor area, and the Cologne architect Joachim Jacobs implemented these plans. The sculptor Masayuki Nagare from Tokyo designed the concrete island with its sculptures in front of the terrace, as well as other elements. The museum and its atrium, foyer, exhibition rooms and esplanade have been listed as protected historical monuments since 2012.

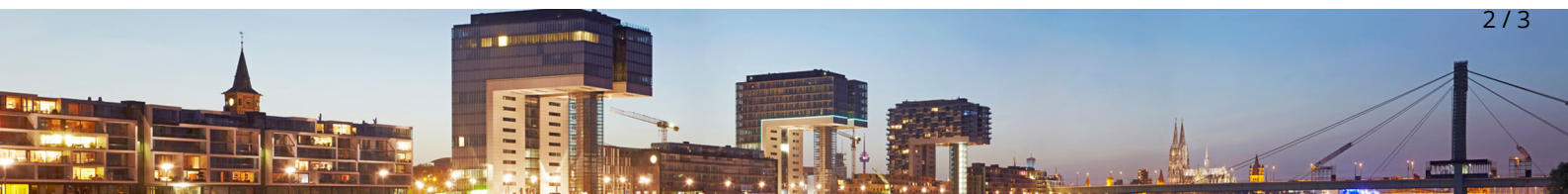
Overall, the exterior, interior, shape, purpose and aesthetics form a homogeneous unity that has a strikingly Euro-East Asian character and reflects the basic concept of the museum: the correspondence of equally valuable cultures.

### **What else? An extensive programme, a museum shop and a library**

The extensive programme of the Museum for East Asian Art offers a range of theme-related guided tours throughout the year as well as exhibition-specific tours, lectures and workshops — including some designed specifically for children and families. You may enjoy finding out more about the Chinese tea ceremony or practicing techniques such as calligraphy or origami, and thus not just looking at Asian culture but also actively cultivating it yourself. Here in the museum you have an opportunity to do that.

### **The café in the Museum for East Asian Art The Coffee Bike at the weekend**

The Museum for East Asian Art also offers you wonderful opportunities to relax as you gaze at the Aachener Weiher, either through the huge panoramic window or directly from the terrace. At the weekend the Coffee Bike is on hand to provide various kinds of coffee, refreshments and snacks.







**By the way**, if you are not coming to the museum on public transportation, you can use a parking disc to leave your car in one of its parking lots free of charge.

Openinghours

Weekday	Time
Tuesday until Sunday	11:00 - 17:00



KölnTourismus, Foto: Christoph Seelbach



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