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Dieter Appelt

Gerhard Altenbourg Prize 2025

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- Provides a profound insight into Dieter Appelt's artistic development oeuvre
- Features important projects and large-scale series of photographs, drawings, objects, and films

Since the 1960s, Berlin-born artist Dieter Appelt (b. 1935) has traced the losses of modern society through his camera lens. The trained musician and opera singer discovered photography as a means of reconnecting with nature, mythology, and mortality. In countless activities that he documented with his camera, Appelt incorporates his own body into the images with a poetic approach, exploring its fragility and relationship with nature. Time and again, he circles around existential questions of life and death, memory and recurrence.

The Lindenau Museum in Altenburg is honouring Dieter Appelt with the 2025 Gerhard Altenbourg Prize for his life's work and has dedicated an exhibition to him. This publication provides an extensive and profound insight into Appelt's artistic development and, in addition to important projects and large-scale series of photographs, also documents drawings, objects, and films from the artist's oeuvre.

Text in English and German.

Dieter Appelt is a contemporary German artist known for his black and white photographs which depict performances and sculptures of his own construction. Appelt's works often exude a menacing air reminiscent to the Surrealist films of Luis Buñuel and Maya Deren. Born on March 3, 1935 in Niemegk, Germany, he studied singing and music at the he Mendelssohn Bartholdy Akademie in Leipzig, before taking photography courses under Heinz Hajek-Halke at the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin. During his early years in Berlin, the artist continued to be involved in music and performed in the choir of the city's Opera. After a trip to Italy in 1976, Appelt started to focus his photographic attentions on his own body. Using the strange forms produced when he wrapped himself in plaster or gauze as subject matter. Over the following decades, other objects appeared within his performances and subsequent photographs, and his works gained international attention. He continues to live and work in Berlin, Germany. Today, Appelt's works are held in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, among others. **Michel Frizot** is Emeritus Director of Research at CNRS - EHESS, is a historian and theorist of photography. He teaches at Paris University 4, the Ecole du Louvre and EHESS. **Roland Krischke** (born 1967 in Heidelberg) is a German literary scholar and has been director of the Lindenau Museum Altenburg since 2016. **Angela Lammert** is head of special interdisciplinary projects in the Visual Arts Section at the Academy of Arts in Berlin and associate professor at the Institute for Art and Visual History of the Humboldt University of Berlin. She has organised numerous exhibitions and published widely on the art of the 19th to the 21st century. **Dr. Benjamin Rux** is curator of the Paintings and Prints and Drawings Collection at Lindenau-Museum Altenburg.







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