

250 JAHRE PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE

WOLGAST. MORGEN DER ROMANTIK

PRESS KIT FOR THE ANNIVERSARY YEAR · MAY TO OCTOBER 2027



THE IDEA

MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE

Philipp Otto Runge made visible what has no form: colour as a body, time as an image, the world as a whole. In 2027 Wolgast, his place of birth, carries that work forward.

He came from a port town, not from a salon. His father was a shipowner and merchant; he learned papercutting from his mother. His elder brother Daniel supported him all his life. That is why craft stands alongside art in 2027 – and why it all begins in the place where he learned to see.

Philipp Otto Runge was born on 23 July 1777. Wolgast is therefore staging the 250th anniversary as the Rungesommer (the “Runge summer”) – with the official ceremony on his birthday at its centre.

PROJECT TITLE

250 Jahre Philipp Otto Runge

CLAIM

Wolgast. Morgen der Romantik

PERIOD

May to October 2027

LOCATION

Wolgast and partner venues

PUBLISHED BY

Town of Wolgast · Wolgaster Kulturgesellschaft

TOTAL BUDGET

approximately €1 million from 14 sources

EXHIBITIONS

4 formats, incl. the Landeskunstschau

FESTIVAL WEEKENDS

3 dates between June and August

WOLGAST SYMPOSIUM

mid-October 2027



WHAT HAPPENS IN 2027

Runge was a painter of light. In Wolgast he learned to see. With a permanent exhibition and further formats, original works from Hamburg and Greifswald, a symphonic ballet in the Ship Hall at the Town Harbour and much more, his home town honours its famous son.

The birthplace

On 2 May the Rungehaus (Runge's birthplace) opens new perspectives on the life and work of the early Romantic painter with its new permanent exhibition. In thematically arranged rooms, the former family home offers insights into the complex output of this universal artist and visionary – in the very house where 13 Runge's once lived at the same time. In the interactive exhibition, visitors can immerse themselves in Runge's world: in colour and sound, seeing and hearing, feeling and thinking.

The highlight

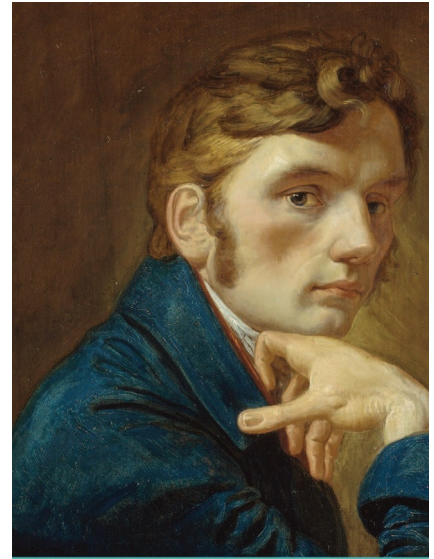
We are already looking ahead with pride and anticipation to 23 July, Philipp Otto's 250th birthday. That day is the cultural highlight of the summer of 2027 in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. Guests from politics and research, art and culture will speak at the official ceremony in Wolgast. As birthday presents for Runge and for our guests, we are offering something for every taste: a unique artwork inspired by Runge's "Zeiten" in the rotunda of St Gertrud's Chapel, a festive public dinner, a symphonic ballet in the Ship Hall at the Town Harbour, dance and music on Runge Square, and the interactive premiere of the Runge comic as the crowning finale.

The summer

From 22 May, the 37th Landeskunstschau (art exhibition of the federal state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) presents 50 contemporary artistic positions. Three festival weekends on Runge Square, in the historic old town and at the Town Harbour: theatre, concerts, hands-on activities for children, puppet theatre and fairy tales, together with food and drink, craft and a regional market.

What remains

With this anniversary, Wolgast is establishing itself for the long term as a cultural centre in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, and across the state and the country. Runge is becoming "our" artist, for every resident of Wolgast. Every condition is now in place for art and cultural work in Wolgast to continue at a high standard.



Philipp Otto Runge, "Selbstbildnis im blauen Rock" (Self-Portrait in a Blue Coat), 1805. Hamburger Kunsthalle / bpk. Photo: Elke Walford

Looking out over the Peenestrom as Runge did around 1800: "We cannot comprehend light, nor are we meant to comprehend darkness; and so revelation was given to humankind, and colours came into the world." Philipp Otto Runge · letter to Johann Daniel Runge, 7 November 1802

PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE

1777–1810

Painter, draughtsman, storyteller, visionary.
Born in Wolgast, died in Hamburg
at the age of 33.

Philipp Otto Runge was born the ninth of eleven children of the Wolgast shipowner and merchant Daniel Nicolaus Runge. The port town on the Peenestrom shaped Runge's childhood and youth. After a commercial apprenticeship in Hamburg he went to Copenhagen in 1799 and later to Dresden to study art. He eventually lived in Hamburg with his wife Pauline and their three children. Through his family he remained tied to Wolgast – both as home and as a place he yearned for.

Painter and draughtsman

Runge painted portraits of unusual directness: the portrait of his parents, “Die Hülsenbeckschen Kinder” (The Hülsenbeck Children), several self-portraits. He shows people without a pose and children as characters in their own right, not as small adults. His most ambitious undertaking – to realise the large-scale “Zeiten” cycle as a Romantic Gesamtkunstwerk – remained unfinished.

Colour theorist

His theory of colour was published in 1810 under the title “Farben-Kugel” (Colour Sphere). It was the first to arrange the colours in a three-dimensional spherical model – an approach that also interested Goethe and that still resonates today.

Networker

His correspondence with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Ludwig Tieck, Clemens Brentano and many other contemporaries from the Romantic period reveals a visionary who saw himself as part of an intellectual movement. The letters Runge wrote to friends and family open up his world of ideas and reveal the close ties he maintained with them.

Writer of fairy tales

Runge set down two fairy tales in Low German: “Von dem Fischer un syner Fru” (The Fisherman and His Wife) and “Von dem Machandelboom” (The Juniper Tree). By way of Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano they reached the Brothers Grimm and were taken into their collection.

Papercuts

His papercuts, mostly plants and ornaments, were made alongside his other work and yet form an art of their own. As a sickly child he was already cutting silhouettes from paper with scissors. Runge went far beyond a mere pastime and achieved extraordinary skill in this craft. Even on his deathbed he asked for the scissors.





The Rungehaus on Kronwiekstraße, Philipp Otto Runge's birthplace – in front of it the Rungesommer 2027 team. From left: Sultan Virk, Ann Kathrin Dworatzek, David Adler, Fabian Olbrich and Mayor Martin Schröter. Photo: Wally Pruss

THE TOWN AS EXHIBITION

Buntes Band

Five colour-coded routes – the “colourful ribbon” – run through the old town and connect its landmarks. Red leads to historic buildings, from the Rungehaus to the Poelzig-Bau. White leads to places where historical figures lived: the Runge family, Ludwig Gotthard Kosegarten, August Wilhelm Homeyer and many more. Blue takes up harbour, trade and water. Green runs along the Spitzhörbucht as far as the Dreilindengrund. The Runge route is multicoloured; it links authentic places where he spent time. All routes start at the Stadtinformation (tourist information), are free of charge and can be walked at any time. The points are accessible and digitally equipped with texts, images and audio content.

THE PLACE

WHY WOLGAST

No other place can tell the story of Runge's origins the way Wolgast can.

330 years as a ducal seat

From 1295 to 1625 the Dukes of Pomerania-Wolgast resided here. The Renaissance castle then became the administrative seat of Swedish Pomerania. After a devastating bombardment by Brandenburg troops it fell into decay. Runge only ever knew the former castle as a ruin. What has survived to this day is the ducal crypt beneath St Peter's Church. It is the oldest ducal crypt in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

A craft that became cultural heritage

The Museum of Town History on Town Hall Square is a half-timbered building that the people of Wolgast affectionately call the “Kaffeemühle” – the coffee grinder – because of its shape. Its holdings include an extensive collection of Pommersche Fischerteppiche (Pomeranian fishermen's rugs). They have been knotted since 1928, originally as relief work for impoverished Baltic fishermen. The particular knotting technique produces around 58,000 knots per square metre. Since 2023 they have been listed in the Nationwide Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Not the only one

Runge's teacher at the Wolgast town school was Ludwig Gotthard Kosegarten – university scholar, preacher and poet of early Romanticism. He shaped Runge's way of seeing decisively and supported the young artist. August Wilhelm Homeyer was, like Runge's father, a merchant and shipowner, and he committed himself to social causes such as the building of an almshouse and a grammar school. Heinrich August Julius Quistorp, born in Wolgast in 1836, was likewise a merchant and a visionary of urban development.

A town built on water

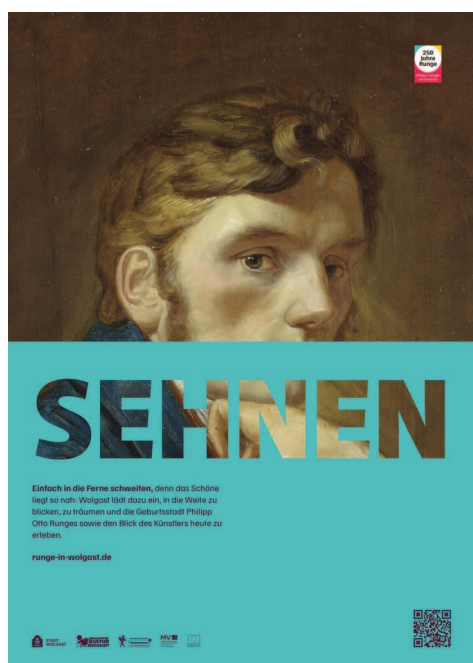
The town's maritime heritage continues to this day. The port economy and the Peenewerft (shipyard) shape the character of the town alongside water-based tourism.

In Philipp Otto Runge's lifetime, up to 200 ships lay in the harbour. Wolgast merchants such as his father traded goods as far as America.



IMAGES FOR THE YEAR

The campaign rests on three words. Each takes up a motif from Runge's work, each carries one of the three primary colours of the brand guidelines – Runge-Rot, Runge-Gelb and Runge-Türkis (Runge red, yellow and turquoise) – and each shows a painting. The pairing of word, colour and image is binding and is not interchanged.



SEHNEN – YEARN · Runge-Türkis

Let your gaze wander far – the beauty lies so close. Wolgast invites you to look into the distance and to experience the artist's way of seeing today.

Painting: "Selbstbildnis im blauen Rock" (Self-Portrait in a Blue Coat)



LIEBEN – LOVE · Runge-Rot

Love has many faces: brotherhood, friendship, romantic attachment, nature. For Runge they were all bound up with his home town.

Painting: "Wir Drei" (We Three)



LEUCHTEN – SHINE · Runge-Gelb

A light dwells in every beginning. Runge sought that light within himself, in nature and in the ideal of the child.

Painting: "Die Hülsenbeckschen Kinder" (The Hülsenbeck Children)

The motifs are available as poster, banner, advertisement and for social media in all common aspect ratios. All files can be downloaded at print resolution from runge-in-wolgast.de. The image credits for the paintings appear in the imprint.

AT A GLANCE

The Rungesommer runs from May to October 2027. Four exhibition formats, three festival weekends and the 250th birthday of Philipp Otto Runge on 23 July form the framework. The key dates below set out the shape of the year. All individual dates are listed in the accompanying insert.

2 May to October

Exhibitions

New permanent exhibition at the Rungehaus, the digital town trail "Buntes Band", temporary exhibitions, the 37th Landeskunstschau (art exhibition of the federal state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) and the three-part special exhibition "Der Traum vom Ganzen – Philipp Otto Runge in Wolgast" (The Dream of Wholeness).

26/27 June

1st Festival Weekend

Children's programme, music, dance and theatre on Runge Square, at the Town Harbour, at the Rungehaus and the Museum of Town History, in the old town and at Am Fischmarkt.

23 to 25 July

2nd Festival Weekend

The 250th birthday of Philipp Otto Runge, with the official ceremony, a festive public dinner, a symphonic ballet and the Wolgaster Kulturnacht (Culture Night) on 24 July.

21/22 August

3rd Festival Weekend

Children's programme, Robert Lillinger's composition for string quartet, inspired by Runge's "Zeiten" cycle, literature and live bands. Plus the Fabmobil – a mobile future workshop on tour.

September to October

Drawing to a close

A concert as part of the Usedom Music Festival, a children's festival, the 6th Manufakturtag (Crafts Day), the Wolgast Symposium "Romantik : Religion : Revolution" and the theatre performance "Von dem Machandelboom" (The Juniper Tree) at Halloween.

THE INSERT

The full programme with all confirmed dates is enclosed with this press kit as a separate booklet. It is reprinted separately whenever the programme changes. The current version can always be downloaded at runge-in-wolgast.de.

WHAT REMAINS

Wolgast owns a Runge picture of its own. Someone else painted it – and that is exactly what makes it a special contribution to the anniversary year.

One painting, two hands

Julius von Ehren, a Hamburg painter, copied Runge's "Bildnis der Eltern des Künstlers" (Portrait of the Artist's Parents) in 1906. This version belongs to the town of Wolgast; the original hangs in Hamburg. The copy is being restored by April 2027.

More than a copy

Around 1800, copying the masters was an honour, not a blemish. And sometimes a version by another hand is all that remains: Runge's "Wir Drei" (We Three) was destroyed by fire in 1931. It survives only because Julius von Ehren had copied it earlier.

Painted. Copied. Restored.

Which work may call itself authentic? A question that could not be more topical – and one that touches the anniversary too.

THE BIRTHDAY GUESTS

For the 250th birthday, Wolgast is receiving guests: originals travelling in from Hamburg and Greifswald.

"Maske der Mutter" (Mask of the Artist's Mother), "Petrus auf dem Meer" (Peter on the Sea) – Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg

"Bildnis der Wilhelmina Sophia Helwig" (Portrait of Wilhelmina Sophia Helwig) – Pomeranian State Museum, Greifswald

The print cycle "Zeiten" – three prints from the holdings of the Town of Wolgast, plus "Der Morgen" (The Morning) – Pomeranian State Museum, Greifswald

Runge's illustrations for Ludwig Tieck's "Minnelieder aus dem Schwäbischen Zeitalter" (Minnesongs from the Swabian Era)

Stammbuch des Johann Adolf Schieve, an album amicorum (Town of Wolgast)

Bibel des Daniel Nicolaus Runge, the family Bible (private collection)

Extract from the baptismal register (St Peter's Parish, Wolgast)



THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

€1m

total budget for the anniversary year, rounded · as at September 2026

14

funding sources: EU, federal government, state, district, town, foundations and regional business

50

contemporary artistic positions at the 37th Landeskunstschau (art exhibition of the federal state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania)

3

festival weekends between June and August 2027

6

original works on loan, including from the Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, and the Pomeranian State Museum, Greifswald

4

exhibition formats: the new permanent exhibition, guest exhibitions, the 37th Landeskunstschau (art exhibition of the federal state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) and the three-part special exhibition “Der Traum vom Ganzen – Philipp Otto Runge in Wolgast” (The Dream of Wholeness)

Funded from resources of the EU, the federal government, the state, the district, the town, foundations and regional business. The project management holds a breakdown of the individual amounts. Information as at September 2026.



PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

The initiators are the Town of Wolgast and the Wolgaster Kulturgesellschaft, supported by a network of museums, universities, associations, local authorities, tourism organisations and businesses.



Kofinanziert von der Europäischen Union

Interreg

Mecklenburg-Vorpommern / Brandenburg / Polska



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STADT WOLGAST



Ostdeutsche Sparkassenstiftung
mit Hilfe des PS-Lotterie-Sparens



Stiftung der Sparkasse Vorpommern



Funders

Town of Wolgast

Ostdeutsche Sparkassenstiftung and Stiftung der Sparkasse Vorpommern für Wissenschaft, Kultur, Sport und Gesellschaft

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Landkreis Vorpommern-Greifswald

Regionaler Planungsverband Vorpommern

WOW! Wolgast Wolgaster

Wohnungswirtschafts GmbH

Museumsgesellschaft Wolgast e. V.

Historische Kommission für Pommern e. V.

Lenders and academic partners

Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg

Pomeranian State Museum, Greifswald

Caspar David Friedrich Centre, Greifswald

Kügelgenhaus – Museum of
Dresden Romanticism

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

University of Greifswald

Atelier Otto Niemeyer-Holstein, Koserow

Muzeum Rybołówtwa Morskiego w
Świnoujściu (the sea fisheries museum
in Świnoujście)

Culture and production

Berufsverband Bildender Künstlerinnen und
Künstler Mecklenburg-Vorpommern e. V.

Jugendkunstschule Greifswald

Koeppenhaus, Greifswald

Vorpommersche Landesbühne GmbH, Anklam

Spielkartenfabrik Stralsund

Heimvolkshochschule Lubmin – Bildungshaus
am Meer

Eine-Welt-Laden El Mundo e. V., Wolgast

Wolgaster Vokalisten

Kreisemusikschule Wolgast-Anklam

Förderverein Schloss- und Gutshofanlage
Ludwigsburg e. V.

Wolgast partners

Förderverein für Kultur, Kunst, Bildung und
Sport Wolgast e. V.

Förderverein St. Gertrud zu Wolgast e. V.

Philipp Otto Runge Klub Wolgast e. V.

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Runge-Gymnasium Wolgast

Tierpark Tannenpark Wolgast e. V.

SteelVoll Maritim

no46 – Das Restaurant

Weisse Düne Segeltouren

Wein hoch 10

DIY Culture e. V.

Tourism

German National Tourist Board (Deutsche
Zentrale für Tourismus e. V.)

MV Tourismus GmbH

Tourismusverband Vorpommern e. V.

Usedom Tourismus GmbH

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Tourismusverband Insel Usedom e. V.



PRESS IMAGES

Press photographs can be downloaded at runge-in-wolgast.de. The image credits are given in each case and must be reproduced unchanged.

What is available

Views of the town of Wolgast, photographs of the venues, the three campaign motifs of the anniversary year and portraits of the contacts.

Formats

Each motif is available at print resolution (300 dpi, CMYK) and as a web version (RGB, 2,000 pixels wide).

File naming

RS27_<type>_<content>_<language>_<version>. No umlauts, no spaces. Example:
RS27_Motiv_Lieben_DE_RZ3.jpg

Image credit

The credit reads "Foto: [name]" — without a © symbol. For works from external collections, the owning collection comes first and the photo credit second: "Hamburger Kunsthalle / bpk. Photo: Elke Walford".

Use of the word-and-image mark

Unaltered, in an editorial context, top right or bottom right, not on red, yellow or turquoise, not scaled below 60 per cent. Please observe the brand guidelines.

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The series by Christoph Eisenmenger is free for editorial use. Credit: "Foto: Christoph Eisenmenger, Town of Wolgast".



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