

## Royal Suite by the "banana tagger" Thomas Baumgärtel

For over 25 years he has established a network of the world's most interesting places for art with his spray-painted banana. In 1998 he created his "Royal Suite" for Luise — all in gold, with bananas as symbols of fertility and love and as his signature distinction for venues featuring young, fresh art. In late 2012 he completely reworked the room, which once again displays a majestic gold and purple, but now containing works with more immediate relevance.



Scenes beginning with the fall of man in the Garden of Eden and ranging from different signet images to Berlin's city emblem all appear in Baumgärtel's true — and of course bananified — style.

And naturally he has included the art banana, a "must" for this room.

In addition to giving the room's its spray-painted aesthetic, Baumgärtel also tells stories, which are sometimes political, based on the meeting point of East and West, sometimes ethnological, historical, or even autobiographical.

For example, on the wall is a somewhat hidden crucified banana. One could say that it is based on Baumgärtel's very first banana artwork from 1983, when he was not yet an artist but was doing his compulsory community service at a catholic hospital in his native Rheinberg. A cross had fallen off the wall. Picking it up, he replaced the broken Jesus with a nearby banana and hung the cross back on its nail — inspired by the admitted motivation of ruffling the feathers of the nuns, which he certainly managed to do. The intense reactions to his action reinforced his desire to study art. So in this sense, the artist is also working

through his past in the current installation.

While studying art and later psychology he began spraying his first bananas on the outside walls of galleries and on canvases. At first the police and court officials pursued him for property damage, but within a short time his street art symbolism was most welcome in the art world, and the number of his exhibitions in galleries and museums, book projects, editions, objects, installations, performances, and murals began to grow. Germany's most famous graffiti artist presents a diverse range of work all about bananas!

With his "new Royal Suite" he has now created the second edition of his stylish and inspiring artist room, which is intended to spark guests' interest in the Berlin and the city's art sites, of which there are large, concentrated number of very high quality within walking distance. As guests make their way through the city, a banana on a building or entranceway is the telltale sign that they have come to the right place.

[www.bananensprayer.de](http://www.bananensprayer.de)