MASTER DRAWINGS NEW YORK

Preview: Friday 26 January, 4-8pm

Saturday 27 January to Saturday 3 February 2018
Daily 11am – 6pm | Admission: Free

Exhibiting at: Shepherd W&K Galleries
58 East 79th Street, New York, NY 10075
W&K at Master Drawings New York

Established in 2006, Masters Drawings New York (MDNY) is the pre-eminent event for exhibiting and celebrating old master through contemporary drawings in the United States. Dealers from the United States and Europe showcase their highest quality drawings in galleries along Madison Avenue on the Upper East Side of Manhattan.

W&K presents at Shepherd W&K Galleries major works from the first half of the 20th century at Master Drawings New York. Featuring Viennese Modernism with works by such masters as Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, Alfred Kubin and Oskar Kokoschka, the exhibition highlights the sheer versatility of works on paper. Innovative draftsmanship is clear to see in the works of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Paul Klee and Lyonel Feininger, among others.

Press Kit and press pictures at: https://www.w-k.art/press

W&K - Gallery

Due to its many years of expertise, W&K – Wienerroither & Kohlbacher, with its locations in Vienna and New York, is one of the world’s first addresses for the purchase and sale of artworks by Austrian artists like Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka.

In addition to Viennese art around 1900 and German Expressionists like Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Otto Mueller, Erich Heckel and Franz Marc the gallery program also includes international artists of classical modernism such as Pablo Picasso, Paul Cézanne, Lyonel Feininger and Joan Miro as well as established contemporary artists like Günther Uecker and Heinz Mack.

The gallery regularly cooperates on loan with more than 30 museums and collections worldwide such as, for example, the Austrian Galerie Belvedere, the Tate Gallery of Modern Art, the Louis Vuitton Fondation and the Los Angeles Getty Museum.
Lyonel Feininger

(1871 – New York – 1956)

The German-American painter, graphic artist and caricaturist Lyonel Feininger is one of the most important artists of classical modernism.

Lyonel Feininger was born on 17 July 1871 in New York, as the son of two German musicians. At the age of sixteen he moved to Germany, where one year later he enrolled at the Royal Academy in Berlin. He interrupted his studies with stays in Paris and at the Collège St. Servais in Liège. From 1892 he regularly stayed on the Baltic coast and this, along with historic urban architecture, was a major source of inspiration for his art. While he was studying, he worked successfully as a caricaturist for various journals, but he didn’t start painting until 1907. In 1909, Feininger became a member of the Berlin Secession and exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Indépendants in Paris. Feininger was in contact with the artists from the Blaue Reiter, became a friend of Alfred Kubin and in 1917 his first solo exhibition was held at Herwarth Walden’s gallery ‘Der Sturm’ in Berlin. In 1919 he was appointed to teach the theory of form at the Bauhaus in Weimar. With Kandinsky, Klee and Jawlensky he founded ‘Die Blaue Vier’ in 1924 in order to organize exhibitions together. After the Bauhaus moved to Dessau, Feininger stopped teaching and in 1929 he painted eleven of his most famous views of Halle. In 1937 he moved with his family to New York; soon afterwards his pictures were confiscated by the Nazis and declared ‘degenerate’. In New York he was at first still attached to motifs from his homeland but became increasingly fascinated by the skyscrapers in Manhattan. On 15 January 1956 Lyonel Feininger died in New York. Feininger did not start painting until he was thirty-six, but developed a specific style early on in his work as a caricaturist, which after meeting Robert Delaunay he dubbed ‘prism-ism’. His fine but precise use of line was well suited to his choice of motifs showing towns and villages in Thuringia and the architecture of old European cities. The geometric construction of the buildings lends itself well to being transformed into a crystalline structure, which endows these motifs with a bright, light-flooded transparency and a sense of fragility. His late work was painted mainly from his memories and the graphic, clear line increasingly gave way to a painterly vision.
Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

(Aschaffenburg 1880 – 1938 Frauenkirch bei Davos)

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner was born on 6 May 1880 in Aschaffenburg. As a founding member of the artist group ‘Brücke’, the German painter and graphic artist is one of the most important representatives of German expressionism. His expressionist main work is concerned with the hustle and bustle of life in the metropolis, which he expresses through highly simplified forms.

Evidently, Kirchner is already three years old. His father preserved the early testimony of his talent. The family moves several times: Frankfurt am Main, pearls near Lucerne, Chemnitz. At the age of twenty, the first of a hundred and eighty sketchbooks was created. In 1901, Kirchner began his architectural studies at the Technical University of Dresden, which he successfully completed in 1905. He made his acquaintance with Fritz Bleyl, Erich Heckel and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, with whom he founded the artist group ‘Brücke’ on June 7, 1905. In the same year, he worked on the ‘quarter-hour acts’. One year later Pechstein and Nolde also joined the ‘Brücke’ painters. In 1908 Kirchner first painted on Fehmarn an island in the Baltic Sea. The summer 1909 Kirchner spent with Heckel and Pechstein and the child model Fränzi Fehrmann for the first time at the Moritzburger ponds, north of Dresden. This is repeated in the summer of 1910 and 1911. In 1910 he met Otto Mueller. He visited Gustav Schiefler and Rosa Schapire in Hamburg, contacted Karl Ernst Osthaus, whom he met during the following years Henry van de Velde, Ernst Gosebruch, Carl Hagemann and Ludwig Schames. In October 1911 Kirchner left Dresden to improve his professional possibilities in Berlin. In 1912 he met Erna Schilling, who remained with him as his life companion. In 1915 he was drafted for military service, and after a short time he collapsed physically and mentally. After some stays in the sanatorium, he travels to Davos in 1917 to seek recovery. He settled down near Davos in Switzerland. In 1923 he rented a house on the ‘Wildboden’. In 1926 he travelled to Germany for the first time, visited his mother in Chemnitz and Fränzi Fehrmann in Dresden. In 1937 639 of his works were removed as ‘degenerate’ from German museums. On 15 June 1938, at the age of fifty-eight, Kirchner chose to commit suicide.
Paul Klee

(Münchenbuchsee/Bern 1879 – 1940 Muralto/Tessin)

The German painter and graphic artist Paul Klee, who was born on 18 December 1879, includes Expressionism, Cubism, Constructivism, Primitivism and Surrealism in his oeuvre. Like Miró and Picasso, Klee used stick figures and simplified depictions of people in his drawings. Its main activity, however, is in the area of graphics. He is inspired by works by Van Gogh and Cezanne and maintains close friendships with Wassily Kandinsky, August Macke and Franz Mark. In 1920 Paul Klee went to the Bauhaus in Weimar as a teacher and in 1931 to the Düsseldorfer Academy. In 1934, Klee, persecuted by the National Socialists, flees to Bern, where he is active as an artist until his lifebloom.

Paul Klee studied under the direction of Franz von Stuck at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts, but left the same one already in 1901 and went to Italy. He comes to Paris for a four-year stay and finally resides in Munich. In 1911, he became acquainted with Wassily Kandinsky, August Macke and Franz Mark, with whom he shows his works, among others, in exhibitions by the ‘Blaue Reiter’ and ‘Sonderbund’. In 1920 he followed the call of Walter Gropius and took a course at the Bauhaus, where he also wrote his theory of ‘pictorial forms of form’ in the following years. Until 1931, a diverse and important part of his oeuvre was created in Weimar, expressing his imagination in the form of various techniques and materials. Because of disagreements with his colleagues, he finally turned his back on the Bauhaus and went to Düsseldorf to attend the Kunstakademie. In 1933, as a degenerate artist, he was dismissed by the National Socialists from his position as a teacher. After evacuating his apartment in the same year, he emigrated to Bern. There he continues to work as an artist after the state accepts his naturalization application in the first instance. He organized the sale of his paintings to America, since he does not want his works to be sold on the German market. In 1935 Paul Klee fell ill with bronchitis, which developed into a pneumonia. In spite of the serious illness in his last years, some pictures still emerge, whose motifs and themes are characterized by his illness. He died in 1940 in a clinic in Muralto, Switzerland.
Gustav Klimt

(1862 – Wien – 1918)

Gustav Klimt was born on 14 July 1862 in Baumgarten near Vienna. As one of the most famous representatives of Jugendstil and founder of the Vienna Secession, Klimt is one of the most important Austrian painters. Even during his lifetime, Klimt is regarded as one of the most controversial but at the same time most popular artists of the century. Klimt died on 6 February 1918 in Vienna.

In the years 1876 until 1883 Klimt studied at the Vienna School of Applied Art with professors Ferdinand Laufberger and Julius Viktor Berger. After completing his studies, he established a studio together with his brothers Ernst and Franz Matsch. From 1885 onwards, they painted for theatres in the Monarchy numerous wall and ceiling paintings, of which those in the Burgtheater in Vienna merit special emphasis. These were followed in 1891 with paintings in the staircase of the Kunsthistorisches Museum. At that time Klimt was already an esteemed painter and his oil paintings and drawings clearly demonstrated the influence of Historicism. In 1892 his brother Ernst died which led to the dissolution of the artist company. As Klimt had already attracted attention with the paintings in the spandrels and between the columns at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, he was awarded in 1894 the commission to paint the faculty pictures in the Great Hall of the University of Vienna. In 1897 the artist association Secession was founded, and Klimt was appointed their first president. The presentation of Klimt’s first faculty picture Philosophy in 1900 unleashed a tremendous scandal. As Medicine (1901) and Jurisprudence (1903) also did not receive appropriate acknowledgement from the commissioners of the paintings, Klimt repurchased the faculty pictures in 1905. In the same year differences of opinion caused him to leave the Secession. The works Adele Bloch-Bauer and The Kiss, which were shown at the Kunstschau exhibition of 1908, marked the pinnacle of Klimt’s ‘Golden Style’. International exhibitions led to him gaining recognition abroad. In addition to his portraits, in the last ten years of his life he devoted himself increasingly to landscapes.

Klimt Gustav, Reclining female figure propped up on her elbows, Study made in connection with Judith II (Salome), 1907/1908
Oskar Kokoschka

(Pöchlarn/Niederösterreich 1886 – 1980 Montreux/Schweiz)

The Austrian painter, graphic artist and writer Oskar Kokoschka was born on 1 March 1886 in Pöchlarn on the Danube. As an ‘enfant terrible’ he shapes the art of the turn of the century and is today one of the most important representatives of Viennese Modernism. Oskar Kokoschka died on 22 February 1980 at the age of 94 years.

After attending the imperial and royal Staatsrealschule (secondary school) in Vienna/Mödling he started at the Vienna School of Applied Art in 1904 and while still studying worked for the Wiener Werkstätte from 1907-09. At the exhibitions of the Kunstschau in Vienna in 1908 and 1909 his works caused a sensation. In 1910 he travelled to Berlin to support Herwarth Walden with the publication of the progressive journal ‘Sturm’. Apart from numerous ink drawings Kokoschka’s play Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen (Murderer, Hope of Women) was published in this journal. In 1912 his love affair with Alma Mahler-Schindler began; in October he became an assistant for one year at the College of Applied Art in Vienna. After the breakdown of his relationship with Alma Mahler he volunteered for military service at the beginning of the war, but in 1915 was seriously wounded in Galicia. After convalescing in Vienna, in 1916 he accompanied a group of war painters to the Isonzo Front where he created numerous drawings in coloured chalk. In 1917 he made friends with the circle of artists and writers around the actress Käthe Richter in Dresden; from 1919 until 1924 he was professor at the Dresden Academy. After this Kokoschka embarked on extensive travels through Europe, to North Africa, Palestine, Istanbul and Jerusalem. The political events in Austria eventually forced Kokoschka to move to Prague in 1934. In 1937, in the course of the campaign against ‘degenerate art’, 417 of Kokoschka’s works were removed from German museums and many of these destroyed. Due to the increasingly precarious situation for artists in the Nazi period he emigrated to London in 1938 and in 1947 decided to become a British citizen. After the war Kokoschka received numerous honours and took part in many important exhibitions. He also taught at and was co-founder of the ‘School of Vision’ at the International Summer Academy of Art in Salzburg. In 1953 he moved to Villeneuve on Lake Geneva where he spent the last years of his life, interspersed with extensive travels. Oskar Kokoschka died on 22 February 1980 at the age of ninety-four.

Oskar Kokoschka, Young Girl in Blue Coat, 1907
Alfred Kubin

(Leitmeritz/Böhmen 1877 – 1959 Zwickleld bei Wernstein am Inn)

Alfred Kubin was born on 10 April 1877 in Leitmeritz in Bohemia. The Austrian graphic artist, writer and book illustrator is one of the most important representatives of symbolism and expressionism. Kubin died in Zwickleld on August 20, 1959 at the age of eighty-two.

Kubin had a turbulent childhood: his mother died young and his family was always moving. Uncertain about which profession to pursue, he first completed an apprenticeship with a photographer in Klagenfurt. Yet he found his true calling from 1898, when he attended the painters’ academy in Munich and various drawing schools. Kubin then continued his training autodidactically. He was influenced by the graphic work of Max Klinger, James Ensor, Odilon Redon and Edvard Munch. An exhibition of his work at Paul Cassirer’s gallery in Berlin perplexed and horrified visitors, although in the poet Max Dauthendey and collector and publisher Hans von Weber, Kubin found important supporters. The publication of the Hans von Weber portfolio in 1903 resulted in his breakthrough. The death of his fiancée Emmy Bayer plunged the young Kubin into a deep crisis, which he only overcame when he married Hedwig Gründler. In 1905 he visited Paris, in 1907 he travelled around Dalmatia and in 1909 he was in the Balkans. He established ties with artists like Franz Marc, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee and Lyonel Feininger which were to last a lifetime. From 1906 Kubin lived in Zwickleld near Wernstein am Inn. In 1909 Kubin joined the New Artists’ Association of Munich (Neue Künstlervereinigung München) and from 1911 he was a member of the Vienna Secession. In addition to many prizes he was also made an honorary member of the Vienna Academy and the Prague Secession. He devoted his work to drawings, prints and book illustrations (by authors like Poe, Dostoevsky, Hauff, E.T.A Hoffmann, Hauptmann etc.). Even during his lifetime his work was acclaimed in large collective exhibitions. Kubin died on 20 August 1959 in Zwickleld.
Egon Schiele

(Tulln 1890 – 1918 Wien)

Egon Schiele was born on 12 June 1890 in the small town of Tulln as the son of a railway official. In addition to painters such as Gustav Klimt and Oskar Kokoschka, he is one of the most important representatives of Viennese Modernism. Schiele died half a year after his first commercially successful exhibition in the Secession on October 31, 1918, shortly after the death of his pregnant wife at the Spanish flu.

Schiele’s character professor Ludwig Karl Strauch is already drawing attention to his talent. After the death of his mentally ill father, 1906 his uncle Leopold Czihaczek was appointed guardian. On the other hand, Schiele breaks down from the school and enrolls at the Vienna Academy in 1906, where he is, however, quickly stifled by his teacher Christian Griepenkerl and the strictly academic procedures. At the ‘Internationale Kunstschau 1909’, which Klimt presides as president, he already shows four pictures, which testify to the manifestation of his academic stiff-free style. This year he left the academy and became a co-founder of the ‘Neukunstgruppe’. During his lifetime, Egon Schiele was lucky enough to have important friends and supporters like Gustav Klimt. In 1910, Leopold Czihaczek resigned the guardianship. Wally Neuzil became his favorite model from 1911 on, and soon afterwards they lived in a wild marriage in Bohemian Krumau, where nude studies of young girls arouse small-town emotions. Schiele moved to Neulengbach, and on 13 April 1912 he was taken into custody, one of his paintings publicly burnt for alleged seduction of a minor. The accusation is dropped and converted into three days' imprisonment for the distribution of immoral drawings. Moved to Vienna, he married Edith Harms in 1915 and was recruited to Prague for military service. In 1917 he was finally transferred to the Army History Museum in Vienna. This year purchases are made by the Austrian Gallery and the founding of the ‘Sonderbund’. In March 1918, a large exhibition of the Secession, dedicated to Schiele and his friends, brought the first real success both artistically and materially. Schiele died half a year after his first commercially successful exhibition in the Secession on October 31, 1918, shortly after the death of his pregnant wife at the Spanish flu.