

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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EDVARD MUNCH'S PRINTS FROM EPSTEIN FAMILY COLLECTION

TO BE PRESENTED AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 30, 1990 - Selections from the largest and finest collection of Edvard Munch's graphic work outside Europe will be exhibited at the National Gallery of Art, May 27 through September 3, 1990. Edvard Munch: Master Prints from the Epstein Family Collection will feature ninety-four prints from the collection that has been formed primarily by Lionel C. and Sarah G. Epstein since the early 1960s.

"The National Gallery has had a strong interest in Munch's powerful art ever since 1943 when Lessing J. Rosenwald began donating works by Munch to the Gallery," said J. Carter Brown, director, National Gallery of Art. He continued, "We have been friends with the Epsteins since the 1960s and are very pleased to present this outstanding group of works from the family's collection. The art in this exhibition is sure to delight the eye and engage the emotions of every visitor."

The exhibition is made possible by Statoil, the national oil company of Norway, which is exporting increasing amounts of energy to North America.

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"Statoil is very proud to support this remarkable exhibition of graphic works by Edvard Munch, whose art represents an important chapter in Norway's cultural history," said Kristoffer M. Maro, general manager, Statoil North America Inc.

The Norwegian artist Edvard Munch (1863-1944) produced more than 700 woodcuts, lithographs, and intaglio prints -- one of the major accomplishments in the graphic arts of the past hundred years. Personal events such as the deaths of his mother and sister, which occurred when he was a child, his own close brush with death at the age of 13, and his intense love affairs had a profound effect on his work. His artistic themes centered on birth and family, desire and jealousy, the ambiguities of sexual love, loneliness and anguish, and death and regeneration. He explored these themes through repetition and variation in different media over the course of decades. He was a great painter, but his distinctive method of work lent itself to printmaking. His woodcuts and lithographs were revolutionary for their combination of subtlety and powerful expressive technique.

Andrew Robison, senior curator and curator of prints and drawings at the National Gallery of Art, conceived the exhibition and was primarily responsible for the selection of works. According to Robison the works were chosen "to show the finest impressions of the major works, as well as their most interesting variations in different colors or states."

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The exhibition includes five versions of The Sick Child, one of Munch's first print subjects: three 1896 color lithographs, an 1894 drypoint with roulette, and an 1896 etching and drypoint. Variations in lithograph and color lithograph of many of Munch's most familiar images, such as The Scream (1895), The Sin (1901), and Madonna (1895), in addition to three 1898 versions of Munch's best-known woodcut, The Kiss, are included in the exhibition.

To the Forest, a 1915 woodcut that Munch created by cutting the woodblock into pieces, which he inked separately, will also be shown. Through this innovative process he was able to produce variations of tone and color within the work as well as multicolored variations of the image.

The fully illustrated exhibition catalogue includes an essay by Sarah G. Epstein in which she describes the origins and growth of the family collection and the abiding influence of Munch's art in her life. Lionel Epstein was a guest curator of the master print section of the National Gallery's 1978 exhibition, Edvard Munch: Symbols and Images. Their renowned collection has continued to expand in recent years with the involvement of their five children -- David, Jim, Richard, Miles, and Sally Anne -- who share their parents' avid interest in collecting the art of Edvard Munch.

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After the exhibition closes at the National Gallery, it will travel, under the auspices of Art Services International, to the Honolulu Academy of Arts, September 12 - October 28, 1990; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, November 22, 1990 - January 6, 1991; the Center for the Fine Arts in Miami, January 19 - March 3, 1991; the Indianapolis Museum of Art, March 23 - May 5, 1991; The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, May 26 - July 7, 1991; the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, August 17 - November 10, 1991; and the The Dixon Gallery and Gardens in Memphis, November 30, 1991 - January 12, 1992. Art Services International is a nonprofit traveling exhibitions organization based in Alexandria, VA.

National Gallery of Art

Washington, D.C. 20565

EDVARD MUNCH: MASTER PRINTS FROM THE EPSTEIN FAMILY COLLECTION Checklist

- * color transparency available
- o black and white photograph available

The credit line for all images is:
Epstein Family Collection

1. Two People, The Lonely Ones, 1895
Drypoint and roulette, 6 1/8 x 9 3/8 in.
2. The Sick Child, 1896
Etching and drypoint, 5 7/16 x 7 1/16 in.
3. Potsdamer Platz, Berlin, 1902
Color etching, aquatint, and drypoint, 9 x 11 1/4 in.
4. StreetScene by Night, 1897
* Color mezzotint with drypoint,, 9 1/4 x 11 3/4 in.
5. Female Nude, 1896
Color mezzotint, 5 7/8 x 5 in.
6. The Lonely One, 1896
Color mezzotint and drypoint with graphite,
11 1/8 x 8 3/8 in.
7. Female Nude in an Interior, 1896
Color mezzotint and drypoint, 5 3/4 x 5 in.
8. Girls on the Pier, 1903
Etching and aquatint, 7 1/4 x 10 1/4 in.
9. Marie Linde, 1902
Color drypoint, 13 1/4 x 9 5/8 in.
10. Linde Sons, 1902
o Color drypoint, 9 1/8 x 12 1/2 in.
11. Old Woman, 1902
Color etching, aquatint, and scraping, 12 11/16 x 19 3/8 in.
12. The Kiss, 1895
Etching, drypoint, and aquatint, 13 5/8 x 10 7/8 in.
13. Consolation, 1894
Drypoint and aquatint, 8 9/16 x 12 3/4 in.

14. Death and the Maiden, 1894
Drypoint, 11 9/16 x 8 1/8 in.
15. The Day After, 1895
o Drypoint and aquatint, 8 1/4 x 11 11/16 in.
16. Study of a Model, 1894/95
Etching, 11 1/8 x 8 1/8 in.
17. Woman, 1895
Drypoint, etching, and aquatint, 11 3/4 x 13 11/16 in.
18. Puberty (At Night), 1902
o Etching, 7 13/16 x 6 5/16 in.
19. Summer Night (The Voice), 1895
Drypoint and aquatint, 9 3/8 x 12 3/8 in.
20. The Sick Child, 1894
Drypoint with roulette, 14 1/8 x 10 5/8 in.
16 3/8 x 22 1/4 in.
21. Bathing Girls, 1895
Aquatint and drypoint, 8 3/8 x 12 1/4 in.
22. Moonlight (Night in Saint Cloud), 1895
Drypoint, 12 x 10 in.
23. Inheritance, 1897/98
o Lithograph, 16 7/8 x 12 3/16 in.
24. The Urn, 1896
Lithograph, 18 3/16 x 10 1/2 in.
25. Attraction II, 1896
Color lithograph with chalk,
16 1/16 x 25 1/16 in.
26. Separation I, 1896
Lithograph, 18 1/8 x 22 1/4 in.
27. Separation II, 1896
Color lithograph, 16 5/16 x 25 5/16 in.
28. Lovers in the Waves, 1896
Lithograph, 12 13/16 x 16 3/8 in.
29. Attraction I, 1896
Lithograph, 18 1/2 x 14 1/8 in.
30. Madonna, 1895, [1902 printing]
Color lithograph, 23 5/8 x 17 3/8 in.

31. Madonna, 1895
* Lithograph with watercolor, 23 5/8 x 17 3/8 in.
32. Madonna, 1895, [1902 printing]
* Color lithograph, 23 5/8 x 17 3/8 in.
33. Madonna, 1895
o Lithograph, 23 5/8 x 17 3/8 in.
34. Madonna, 1895, [1902 printing]
Color lithograph, 21 7/8 x 13 3/4 in.
35. Vampire, 1895
o Lithograph, 15 1/8 x 21 3/4 in.
36. Vampire, 1895 [1902 printing]
* Color lithograph, 15 1/8 x 21 7/8 in.
37. Jealousy, 1896
Lithograph, 13 1/8 x 18 in.
38. Jealousy, 1896
Lithograph, 18 3/4 x 22 3/4 in.
39. The Scream, 1895
o Lithograph, 13 7/8 x 9 13/16 in.
40. Self-Portrait with Skeleton Arm, 1895
o Lithograph, 17 7/8 x 12 1/2 in.
41. Death Chamber, 1896
o Lithograph, 15 1/8 x 21 5/8 in.
42. Death Chamber, 1896
Lithograph, 15 1/8 x 21 5/8 in.
43. By the Deathbed, 1896
o Lithograph, 15 5/8 x 19 11/16 in.
44. The Sick Child, 1896
*o Color lithograph, 16 3/8 x 22 1/4 in.
45. The Sick Child, 1896
* Color lithograph with oil, watercolor, and wax-resist paint
16 1/2 x 22 1/4 in.
46. The Sick Child, 1896
Color lithograph, 16 1/2 x 22 in.
47. Man's Head in Woman's Hair, 1896
* Color woodcut, 21 3/8 x 15 in.

48. The Sin, 1901
Color lithograph, 27 3/8 x 15 3/4 in.
49. The Sin, 1901
* Color lithograph, 27 3/8 x 15 3/4 in.
50. The Sin, 1901
o Lithograph, 27 1/4 x 15 11/16 in.
51. Stéphane Mallarmé, 1896
Lithograph, 20 1/2 x 11 3/4 in.
52. Moonlight, 1896
Color woodcut, 15 3/4 x 18 9/16 in.
53. Moonlight, 1896 [1901 printing]
Color woodcut, 18 3/8 x 18 11/16 in.
54. Moonlight, 1896
*o Color woodcut, 15 3/4 x 18 11/16 in.
55. August Strindberg, 1896
o Lithograph, 24 x 18 1/8 in.
56. Anxiety, 1896
*o Color lithograph, 16 1/4 x 15 1/4 in.
57. Anxiety, 1896
* Color woodcut, 17 9/16 x 14 3/4 in.
58. Lust (Desire), 1898
Lithograph, 11 9/16 x 15 11/16 in.
59. The Kiss, 1898 [1902 printing]
* Color woodcut, 18 1/2 x 17 3/4 in.
60. The Kiss, 1898
Color woodcut, 16 x 18 1/4 in.
61. The Kiss, 1898 [1902 printing]
o Color woodcut, 18 5/8 x 18 11/16 in.
62. Woman at the Urn, 1898
Lithograph, 16 5/8 x 10 7/8 in.
63. Ibsen in the Café of the Grand Hotel, Christiania, 1902
Lithograph with crayon and watercolor, 16 3/4 x 23 3/8 in.

64. Apple Tree, 1902
Woodcut, 13 3/4 x 17 1/4 in.
65. Melancholy, (Woman on the Shore), 1898
* Color woodcut, 13 x 16 1/2 in.
66. Melancholy (Evening: On the Beach), 1901
* Color woodcut, 14 13/16 x 18 9/16 in.
67. Girl's Head against the Shore, 1899
* Color woodcut, 18 1/4 x 16 1/8 in.
68. Kiss of Death, 1899
o Lithograph, 11 5/8 x 18 1/8 in.
69. Three Stages of Woman (The Sphinx), 1899
o Lithograph, 17 5/8 x 23 3/8 in.
70. Fertility, 1898
Woodcut, 16 7/16 x 20 5/16 in.
71. Ashes II, 1899
*o Lithograph with watercolor, 13 7/8 x 17 7/8 in.
72. Girl with the Heart, 1899
Color woodcut, 9 13/16 x 7 3/8 in.
73. Women on the Shore, 1898
* Color woodcut with chalk, 17 7/8 x 20 1/8 in.
74. Encounter in Space, 1899
Color woodcut, 7 7/16 x 9 15/16 in.
75. Stump, Moonlight, 1899
Color woodcut with gouache, 14 1/2 x 22 1/4 in.
76. Rouge et Noir, 1898
Woodcut, 7 3/16 x 6 11/16 in.
77. Two People (The Lonely Ones), 1899
* Color woodcut, 15 5/8 x 21 3/4 in.
78. Girls on the Pier, 1920
Color woodcut and lithograph, 19 11/16 x 16 3/4 in.
79. Girls on the Pier, 1912
*o Lithograph with watercolor, 15 3/4 x 20 3/4 in.

80. Girls on the Pier, 1920
Woodcut, 19 5/8 x 16 3/4 in.
81. Two People (The Lonely Ones), 1899
* Color woodcut, 15 7/16 x 21 1/2 in.
82. Woman with the Brooch (Eva Mudocci), 1903
Lithograph, 23 5/8 x 18 1/8 in.
83. Woman with the Brooch (Eva Mudocci), 1903
o Lithograph (early state), 23 7/8 x 18 1/4 in.
84. Violin Concert, 1903
Lithograph, 18 1/2 x 21 1/4 in.
85. Self-Portrait after an Illness, 1919
o Lithograph with crayon, 16 5/8 x 24 5/8 in.
86. Self-Portrait with Cigarette, 1908/09
Lithograph, 22 1/4 x 17 7/8 in.
87. Hjørdis Gierløff, 1914
o Color lithograph, 23 7/16 x 17 5/16 in.
88. Brigitte III (The Gothic Girl), 1930
Woodcut with gouache and oil, 23 1/2 x 12 5/8 in.
89. Man and Woman Kissing Each Other, 1905
*o Color woodcut, 15 1/2 x 21 1/4 in.
90. To the Forest, 1915
*o Color woodcut, 20 11/16 x 25 3/8 in.
91. To the Forest, 1897
Color woodcut, 19 11/16 x 25 3/8 in.
92. Old Man, 1902
Woodcut with crayon, 18 3/8 x 11 13/16 in.
93. The Fat Whore, 1899
o Color woodcut, 9 13/16 x 7 7/8 in.
94. Crowds in a Square, 1920
Woodcut with watercolor, 11 15/16 x 19 3/8 in.

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EXHIBITION BACKGROUNDER

Edvard Munch:
Master Prints from the Epstein Family Collection

May 27 - September 3, 1990

Edvard Munch (1863-1944) was the most powerful and influential of modern Norwegian artists. However, his art transcended nationality and focused on the universal themes of birth and family, desire and jealousy, the ambiguities of sexual love, loneliness and anguish, and death and regeneration. Personal events such as the deaths of his mother and his sister, which occurred when he was a child, his own close brush with death at the age of 13, and his intense love affairs had a profound effect on his work.

After studies at Oslo, Munch received an art scholarship that enabled him to visit Paris for three weeks in 1885. During the next two decades he traveled throughout Europe. His early paintings from this period were influenced by impressionism, and then by symbolism, but they quickly developed an emotionalism and intensity that anticipated the later expressionist movement. By the 1890s, Munch's paintings were exhibited extensively.

Munch's dire poverty may have contributed to his decision to take up printmaking for the first time in 1894. In comparison with paintings, prints were easier to transport, could be seen by many more people, and were less expensive to buy.

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Among his earliest lithographs were Madonna, The Scream, and Self-Portrait with Skeleton Arm. In 1895 Munch's friend, Julius Meier-Graefe, who helped found the quarterly illustrated publication, Pan, produced Munch's first portfolio of eight etchings and drypoints. The works revealed Munch's immediate understanding of the new medium.

The Sick Child was also one of Munch's first print subjects. In 1886 he created this image in a painting inspired by the death of his sister Sophie from tuberculosis. Munch used the painting as a point of departure for his 1896 lithograph of the girl's head. This lithograph, with its many color variations, became one of his most highly regarded prints.

Just as he grieved for his sister through many versions of The Sick Child, Munch explored the emotional themes of his life through repetition and variation in different media over the course of decades. Munch was a great painter, but his distinctive method of work also lent itself to printmaking. Through the print Munch worked repeatedly on an image, eventually reducing it to ultimate simplicity. Furthermore, printmaking allowed Munch to achieve effects of light, color, and texture that were not possible to attain in oil paint.

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Munch was particularly interested in the woodcut for its expressiveness and color potential. He experimented with cutting a block of wood into pieces with a jigsaw. He inked the pieces separately with different colors, fit them together like a puzzle, and, with one pass through the press, produced a multicolored image. Munch sometimes saved the blocks and, years later, would recarve and print them in new color combinations.

One of Munch's best-known woodcuts, The Kiss, went through a process of abstraction over five years, during which he sawed the shape of the two intertwined figures from a block of wood to separate them from the rest of the image. He inked that piece of wood and then printed it over a wood grain background to create a unified image. This resulted in the stark image in its most familiar form, a color edition of 1902. Woodcuts such as The Kiss and To the Forest reveal how Munch utilized the grain and surface irregularities of the wood and incorporated these "found" lines and shapes into his compositions.

Numerous sketches and paintings, through which Munch tried to distill the most evocative image possible, often preceded his rendition of the image in a print. Munch's best-known image, The Scream, went through this rigorous process, and is rooted in his earlier painting called Despair. The 1895 black and white lithograph of The Scream, dominated by an ageless and sexless figure against a threatening Norwegian landscape and sky, boldly communicates fear, desperation, loneliness, and desertion. These

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powerful themes of fear and alienation are echoed in a number of Munch's other works, including Anxiety.

On his return to Norway from Germany in 1908, Munch stopped in Copenhagen for treatment at the nerve clinic of Professor Jacobson. After his recovery he turned a new leaf on life and settled in the town of Kragerø, Norway. Proceeds from the more extensive sales of his work, beginning in 1909, enabled him to live comfortably.

In 1916 Munch purchased an estate in Ekely, outside Oslo. He produced many paintings and prints of such subjects as landscapes and portraits, often of friends and local laborers. He also spent time reshaping the many themes of his earlier works. His later work reflected the same emotional intensity of his earlier paintings and prints, but he infused his work with a more positive outlook.

Although he occasionally traveled, Munch spent his later years living a solitary existence. He continued to create works of art until the time of his death from pneumonia on January 23, 1944. During his career as a printmaker, which spanned fifty years, he produced more than 700 woodcuts, lithographs, and intaglio prints comprising one of the major accomplishments in the graphic arts of the past century.

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CHRONOLOGY OF MUNCH'S LIFE

- 1863 Edvard Munch born in Løten, Norway, to an army doctor, Christian Munch, and his wife, Laura.
- 1864 The family moves to Christiania (Oslo).
- 1868 Munch's mother dies of tuberculosis not long after the birth of her fifth child. Her sister Karen Bjolstad comes to care for the house and children.
- 1877 Munch's sister Sophie dies at age 15 of tuberculosis.
- 1880 Leaves the Technical College and decides to become an artist.
- 1881-
1883 Enrolls in the School of Design, then joins with other young artists in renting an art studio. He exhibits for the first time.
- 1885-
1886 An art scholarship enables Munch to spend three weeks in Paris. Involved with a radical group called Christiania Bohème. Paints his famous The Sick Child, which is ridiculed at a Christiania exhibition.
- 1889 Rents a house in Åsgårdstrand on the Oslofjord during the summer. A grant makes it possible for him to leave for Paris in the fall. His father dies.
- 1892 Exhibits in Berlin at the Verein Berliner Künstler. Members of this artists' association are so shocked by his art that they vote to close the show. Exhibits elsewhere, then returns to Berlin. Becomes member of a literary group which meets at a tavern nicknamed Zum Schwarzen Ferkel.
- 1894 Begins work in graphic media, producing his first etchings and lithographs.
- 1895 Julius Meier-Graefe publishes portfolio of eight etchings. The Scream lithograph is reproduced in La Revue Blanche in Paris. Munch's brother Andreas dies.
- 1896 Moves to Paris, produces his first color lithographs and his first woodcuts.

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- 1897-
1900 Travels and exhibits extensively, buys the cottage in Åsgårdstrand. Becomes involved with Tulla Larsen. Spends time at various sanitoriums for rest cures.
- 1902-
1903 Exhibits "Frieze of Life" in Berlin. Meets Dr. Max Linde, art collector from Lubeck. His finger is damaged by a gunshot in an episode with Tulla Larsen; stays with Dr. Linde and works on prints for "Linde Portfolio," joins the "Société des Artistes Indépendants." While living in Paris, meets the British violinist Eva Mudocci.
- 1904-
1906 Works in Berlin and becomes a member of the Berlin Secession. Travels, exhibits, and paints several portraits, works on designs for Ibsen plays at Max Reinhardt's theater in Berlin.
- 1907 Patrons continue purchases and commissions. Does a portrait in Stockholm of Ernest Thiel who has bought several of his paintings; in Berlin works on a frieze for Reinhardt's theatre.
- 1908-
1909 Nervous exhaustion and alcohol bring collapse. Spends nine months at Dr. Daniel Jacobson's clinic in Copenhagen, produces the Alpha and Omega series. Receives the Royal Norwegian Order of St. Olav medal, belated recognition by his own government. Jens Thiis, director of the Nasjonalgalleriet in Christiania, purchases important Munch paintings for the museum. Returns to Norway, settling in Kragerø. Begins sketches for the competition to decide which artist will decorate the Oslo University Festival Hall (Aula).
- 1910 Needing space to work on mural, purchases large house at Hvisten, across the Oslofjord from Kragerø.
- 1911-
1916 Several years of work ensue before design for the Aula is finally accepted in 1914 and completed canvases are installed in 1916. Meanwhile, also travels and exhibits. In the Sonderbund exhibition in Cologne in 1912 he is especially honored along with Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Gauguin. Gives aid to young German artists. Purchases an estate, Ekely, on the outskirts of Christiania, which becomes permanent home.

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- 1917- Spends the remainder of the war years in Norway and
1919 Sweden; publishes brochure "The Life Frieze" in
connection with an exhibition at Blomqvist gallery in
Christiania.
- 1920- Exhibits frequently on the continent, purchases
1925 prints from German artists to assist and encourage
them. Later sells some of his own prints for the
same purpose.
- 1926- Munch's sister Laura dies. Travels widely in 1927.
1927
- 1928- Works on studies for murals in the contemplated new
City Hall for a number of years. Eye troubles start
in 1930. Books published about him in connection with
seventieth birthday. In 1937 Hitler government
declares Munch's art degenerate and sells many
confiscated paintings to raise money for arms. Munch
lives a reclusive life at Ekely.
- 1940- Rejects overtures from the German invaders and
Norwegian collaborators, raises food on properties at
Ekely and Hvitsten for local populace.
- 1943 Receives many tributes on his eightieth birthday.
- 1944 Munch dies on January 23 after bout with pneumonia.
Leaves art to the city of Oslo.

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Adapted from: Sarah G. Epstein, The Prints of Edvard Munch,
Mirror of His Life (Oberlin, Ohio, 1983).

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