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Following Final Gift from the Estate of Ruth Cole Kainen, National Gallery of Art to Showcase Works from the Kainen Collection



Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (German, 1880–1938), *Self-Portrait*, 1928
brush and ink with watercolor over black crayon
National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Ruth Cole Kainen

Washington, DC—In May 2012 the National Gallery of Art accepted 781 paintings, watercolors, drawings, prints, and illustrated books from the estate of Ruth Cole Kainen, representing her final gift to the Gallery. Before this bequest, beginning in 1974, Ruth and Jacob Kainen had together and individually already donated a total of 1,289 paintings, prints, and drawings to the Gallery.

"Jacob and Ruth Kainen, one of the foremost couples in Washington art circles, have been astute connoisseurs and generous donors to the Gallery for many decades, giving more than 2,000 works to the collection," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We look forward to spotlighting Ruth's most recent gifts in a series of

three upcoming exhibitions."

Some fifty of the donated works will be featured in an exhibition, *Northern Mannerist Prints from the Kainen Collection*, on view in fall 2013 in the Gallery's West Building.

Ruth Cole Kainen (1922–2009), who began collecting art in the early 1960s, served in the Navy WAVES during World War II and received two bachelor's degrees, one from the University of Oregon and the other from Yale University. After working for Columbia Artists Management in New York in the early 1950s, she came to Washington and worked as a fundraiser for the National Symphony Orchestra. She also volunteered with opera and ballet groups and worked as a freelance food and travel writer. Ruth Kainen published a book, *America's Christmas Heritage*, in 1969. That same year, on her 47th birthday, she married Jacob Kainen, a painter, draftsman, and printmaker. She served on the National Gallery of Art Trustees' Council from November 1989 to December 1995 and again from March 2008 until her death in September 2009.

Jacob Kainen (1909–2001), who had numerous gallery and museum shows to his credit, worked first in New York, then in Washington, with brief periods at studios in Paris and Chicago. He was also an internationally known curator and scholar. He helped to build and manage the print collections at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, arranged numerous exhibitions, and published research on subjects as varied as 16th-century mannerism, 18th-century Venetian etchings and woodcuts, and German expressionism. He maintained friendships with such pioneering artists as Stuart Davis, Arshile Gorky, Willem de Kooning, and Mark Rothko, all of whose works he collected.

In addition to the National Gallery of Art, the Kainens donated many works to the Phillips Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Smithsonian American Art Museum, and National Museum of Women in the Arts, all in Washington, DC, as well as the Baltimore Museum of Art, Yale University Art Gallery, Portland Art Museum, and other institutions.

Ruth Cole Kainen's recent bequest of 781 European and American works of art covers five centuries, ranging in date from 1531 through the 1980s. The 10 paintings, 39 watercolors and drawings, and 732 etchings, engravings, woodcuts, lithographs, and

illustrated books include a comprehensive range of schools, styles, and subjects, reflecting her delight in many different types of art.

To celebrate this magnificent gift the National Gallery will present several exhibitions drawn from the bequest that highlight areas of Ruth Kainen's particular interest. The first of these, this fall's *Northern Mannerist Prints from the Kainen Collection*, will be drawn from the late 16th and early 17th century. Ruth and Jacob Kainen both loved the extravagantly theatrical art of the Northern mannerists, which embodied exceptional sophistication in its development of earlier figurative art and its refined graphic techniques. Jacob wrote about the works of the acknowledged master of the field, Hendrik Goltzius. Ruth Kainen's bequest includes a number of Goltzius' finest engravings as well as an excellent early drawing of *Ignis* (Fire) (c. 1580) in the guise of an elegant male nude. Other allegorical, religious, mythological, and portrait masterworks include Bartholomaeus Spranger's premier original etching, *Saint Sebastian* (c. 1590), as well as Abraham Bloemaert's only original etching, *Juno* (c. 1610). The bequest and the exhibition also feature outstanding groups of works by other superb artists, such as Jacob Matham, Jan Muller, Aegidius Sadeler, Jan Pietersz Saenredam, and Willem Swanenburgh.

The second exhibition, from February 23 through July 6, 2014, will celebrate Ruth Kainen's well-known passion for German expressionism, revealed for the first time at the Gallery three decades ago in the exhibition *German Expressionist Prints from the Collection of Ruth and Jacob Kainen* in 1985. Ruth Kainen's bequest includes paintings, watercolors, drawings, and other masterworks by the core group of Emil Nolde, Erich Heckel, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Max Pechstein, and, above all, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. The bequest and the exhibition also reflect Ruth's connoisseurship with the inclusion of many of the precedents for the expressionists, such as Max Klinger and Edvard Munch, in addition to related artists like Egon Schiele, Otto Dix, and particularly fine groups of work by Paul Gangolf, Walter Gramatté, and Ludwig Meidner.

The third exhibition will focus on a core sample of Ruth Kainen's outstanding collection of American modernism. In 2005 and 2006 she gave the Gallery select drawings and prints by Stuart Davis, Adolph Gottlieb, Max Weber, Louis Lozowick, and Milton Avery,

among others. That group is now crowned by Ruth Kainen's bequest, which includes outstanding examples of drawings, watercolors, and oil paint on paper by foremost American abstract expressionist artists Arshile Gorky, David Smith, and Willem de Kooning (de Kooning's *Untitled*, 1976, is currently on view in the Gallery exhibition *Shock of the News*), plus one of the finest drawings by Jackson Pollock in private hands, a large black and red ink and gouache *Untitled* from 1951.

In addition to her numerous donations of art, Ruth Cole Kainen also gave the National Gallery of Art a substantial financial bequest to endow the Ruth and Jacob Kainen Memorial Acquisitions Fund for the purchase of drawings and prints. The first acquisitions from this fund reflect several of Ruth Kainen's special artistic interests: two German expressionist watercolors, Wilhelm Morgner's *Holzfäller* (1913), and René Beeh's *Dead Scottish Soldiers on the Battlefield near Ypres* (1916); James Ensor's brilliantly colored lithograph *Carnaval Ostende* (1931); and from the German Renaissance, Daniel Hopfer's original etched printing plate *Three German Soldiers with Halberds and a Dog* (c. 1510), the first original plate to come to America by the inventor of etching, recently on view in the Gallery's exhibition *Imperial Augsburg: Renaissance Prints and Drawings 1475–1540*.

Works from the Kainens' collections have appeared in numerous loan exhibitions at the National Gallery of Art through the years, and the Gallery has presented several exhibitions that featured their collections or works by Jacob Kainen, including *German Expressionist Prints from the Collection of Ruth and Jacob Kainen* (1985–1986), *Jacob Kainen: Prints and Drawings* (1989), and *An Artist's Artists: Jacob Kainen's Collection from Rembrandt to David Smith* (2002–2003).

Study Rooms

Works on paper not on display may be viewed and studied by appointment in the Gallery's Print Study Rooms by qualified scholars and students in accordance with the Gallery's rules and requirements. Single visitors as well as small groups are welcome.

The Study Rooms are open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to noon and 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., except on federal holidays.

To make an appointment to view prints or drawings, please telephone (202) 842-6380.

Appointments should be made at least two weeks in advance.

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General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit www.nga.gov/renovation (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on Twitter at twitter.com/ngadc.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

Press Office

National Gallery of Art

2000B South Club Drive

Landover, MD 20785

phone: (202) 842-6353 e-mail: pressinfo@nga.gov

Deborah Ziska

Chief of Press and Public Information

(202) 842-6353

ds-ziska@nga.gov