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*Modern German Prints and Drawings from the Kainen Collection* Charts the Evolution of German Art, from the Late 18th Century to Contemporary Works of the 1970s

February 23–June 29, 2014



Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Russian Dancers (Russisches Tänzerpaar)*, 1909

lithograph in red, blue, yellow, and black on wove paper

overall: 42.3 x 49.6 cm (16 5/8 x 19 1/2 in.)

Ruth and Jacob Kainen Collection

Washington, DC—German expressionists created some of the most powerful art of the 20th century and are central to a new exhibition at the National Gallery of Art, on view from February 23 to June 29, 2014. Starting with a foundation of works from the 18th and 19th centuries and culminating with contemporary works from the 1960s and 1970s, ***Modern German Prints and Drawings from the Kainen Collection*** maps the development of modern German art.

In 2012, the Gallery received 781 works from the bequest of Ruth Cole Kainen, including this field as its biggest strength. Although Ruth Cole Kainen (1922–2009) collected German art of every period from the 15th century to the present, this exhibition represents her favorite area of interest.

“What is most fascinating about this exhibition, and Ruth’s collection, in particular, is that it takes the long view on contemporary German art,” said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. “It seeks and finds a common thread that connects the 18th century to the late 20th century, and mixes German Romanticism and impressionism with German expressionism, the Bauhaus, and even pop art.”

#### Exhibition Organization and Support

***Modern German Prints and Drawings from the Kainen Collection*** is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington.

The exhibition is supported in part by a generous grant from the Thaw Charitable Trust.

#### About the Exhibition

Powerful and colorful works by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880–1938) fill two galleries, including his

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#### AUDIO/VIDEO

[Press Event: Modern German Prints and Drawings from the Kainen Collection](#)  
(1:27:07 mins)

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#### CURATOR BIOGRAPHY

##### [Andrew Robison](#)

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bawdy and bold *Russian Dancers* (1909), sensual *Bathing Couple* (1910), and geometrical *Head of Dr. Bauer* (1933). A kaleidoscopic array of images by his Die Brücke colleagues follow, notably a unique artist's proof of Emil Nolde's (1867–1956) primitive and ecstatic color lithograph *Dancer* (1913) and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff's (1884–1976) joyous landscape *The Sun* (1914).

Also featured are works by classic expressionists of the Rheinland and Berlin, more abstract work of the Bauhaus, and the later "Art Informel" movement. Exploring themes of human life and passion, the place of man in nature, and the urbanization of society, this exhibition exemplifies what Ruth Cole Kainen pursued in her collecting of art: prints and drawings that manifest an "authentic graphic quality."

In fitting testimony to Ruth Cole Kainen's instincts as a collector, unusual drawings by famous artists—including intensely personal works by Egon Schiele (1890–1918) and abstractions by Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948)—hang with her favorite works by less well-known artists, like the tender and fragile Walter Gramatté (1897–1929), the profound and vivid Ludwig Meidner (1884–1966), and dreamy Wilhelm Morgner (1891–1917).

"Ruth discovered people," said the exhibition's curator Andrew Robison, Andrew W. Mellon Senior Curator of Prints and Drawings, National Gallery of Art. "She was unusual in that she collected not just for the name of an artist, but for the depth and breadth of a school."

### **Jacob and Ruth Cole Kainen**

Jacob and Ruth Cole Kainen were among the most important friends and benefactors of the Gallery. From 1975 until Ruth Cole Kainen's death in 2009 they gave the Gallery a total of 1,289 European and American works, principally prints and drawings. To celebrate Ruth Cole Kainen's 2012 bequest, and more broadly the Kainens' achievement as collectors and benefactors, the Gallery is presenting a series of three exhibitions dedicated to areas of her greatest interest: northern mannerism; German prints and drawings, especially by the expressionists; and American modernism through abstract expressionism.

Ruth Cole Kainen, who began collecting art in the early 1960s, 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, 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.

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

### **Prints, Drawings, and Illustrated Books at the National Gallery of Art**

The Gallery's collection of prints, drawings, and illustrated books consists of more than 111,000 European and American works on paper and vellum, dating from the 11th century to the present. Because works on paper are highly susceptible to overexposure to light, they can be exhibited only for short periods. For that reason, the Gallery maintains a schedule of changing exhibitions drawn from its own collection or on loan from other institutions and private individuals. Drawings and prints not on view may be seen by appointment by calling (202) 842-6380.

### **Curator**

This exhibition is curated by Andrew Robison, A.W. Mellon Senior Curator of Prints and Drawings, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

## 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 at 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 remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/modern-art-during-renovation.html>.

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

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