

Press Release

Museum Folkwang

***Emil Pirchan: Poster – Stage – Object.* Beginning 22 February, Museum Folkwang is showing the complete oeuvre of this versatile artist.**

Essen, 21 February 2019 – From 22 February to 5 May 2019, Museum Folkwang is dedicating the first major solo exhibition to the designer and artist Emil Pirchan (1884–1957). Pirchan, one of the pioneers of the *Lebensreform* movements of the early twentieth century, worked as an architect, stage designer and author. He made his name primarily as a graphic artist and designer. His posters, logos, bookplates, brochures and technical illustrations were seminal, influencing many of his contemporaries. Presented across eight rooms and arranged thematically according to his different fields of activity, the 700 m² exhibition shows over 350 examples of Pirchan's incredibly diverse work.

Emil Pirchan's poster designs and works for the stage were particularly successful. His posters are mostly characterised by a clarity of colour and surface treatments reminiscent of silhouette cut-outs. Around 1910, they quickly made him one of the key representatives of the creative Munich poster scene. In 1913 Pirchan founded a school for poster and stage design in Munich, where he set new standards in education as a theoretician and practitioner. Well into the 1920s, his expressive stage designs and technical innovations were highly influential in German-speaking countries. For example, he promoted stage photography or complemented backdrop constructions with innovative image projections. The focal points of the exhibition are his theatre projects and poster designs, but the show also presents his other fields of work through numerous drawings, sketches, designs, objects, furniture, photographs and publications.

The exhibition ***Emil Pirchan: Poster – Stage – Object*** is based on the estate of the Viennese Steffan / Pabst Collection, which was catalogued by Pirchan's grandson Beat Steffan. It is supplemented by loans from the Münchner Stadtmuseum and the Theatermuseum in Vienna, as well as a series of posters from the German Poster Museum's collection at Museum Folkwang.

This survey exhibition presents Emil Pirchan as a universal artist, innovator of style and teacher, who operated between artistic disciplines and media. For the first time, the show provides insights into his working methods and opens up connections between the various fields. The rediscovery of this extensive body of work has the potential to lead to a reassessment and reclassification of Emil Pirchan's achievements.

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Information

Emil Pirchan

Poster – Stage – Object

22 February - 5 May 2019

Opening: 21 February, 7 p.m.

Curator: René Grohnert

Location: Exhibition hall 2

Entry: € 5 / 3.50 (combined ticket with *Marge Monko*)

The first Pirchan monograph was published by Nimbus Verlag in November 2018:

Emil Pirchan – Universalkünstler

Beat Steffan (ed.), ca. 368 pages, ca. 300 illustrations, ISBN 978-3-03850-042-1

Price: € 44– in German



Emil Pirchan

Zwei Damen in pink und blau, Munich, approx. 1912

Two women in pink and blue

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Photo: Steffan / Pabst Collection