

*Im Farbenrausch*  
Munch, Matisse  
und die Expressionisten  
Museum Folkwang

**Press Release**

***The Ecstasy of Colour – Munch, Matisse and the Expressionists***

*Essen, 27 September 2012*

After two years of preparation, on 29 September Museum Folkwang, Essen will finally open its doors to present visitors with the highlight of this year's exhibition season.

In the special exhibition *The Ecstasy of Colour – Munch, Matisse and the Expressionists* (29 September 2012 to 13 January 2013), Museum Folkwang focuses on one of the most exciting chapters of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century painting. The major exhibition was made possible thanks to the museum's established and indeed close cooperation with RWE AG, likewise based in Essen, which as exclusive sponsor actively supports Museum Folkwang with its excellent advance financing concept.

This show is the first to present Norwegian artist Edvard Munch and the "Fauves", the so-called "wild beasts" of French art (Henri Matisse, André Derain, Maurice de Vlaminck) in relation to the Expressionists in Germany including Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Erich Heckel, Alexej von Jawlensky, Wassily Kandinsky, Gabriele Münter and Franz Marc. It encompasses over 150 paintings and sculptures, some of which have only rarely or indeed never before been on public display.

In eleven chapters, the exhibition will illuminate the new approach to and altering significance of colour. Starting with the "fathers of modernism" (Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin and Paul

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Signac) *The Ecstasy of Colour* will show how, between 1905 and 1911, the young generation of artists in France and Germany definitively steered painting away from depictions of nature and developed a revolutionary painting style with a distinctive and novel use of colour. The exhibition will illustrate how both the artists belonging to the "Brücke" in Dresden (Heckel, Kirchner, Hermann Max Pechstein and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff) and the "Murnau" artists (Kandinsky, Münter, Jawlensky and Marianne von Werefkin) attentively followed new developments in painting and took them as the starting point for their own revolutionary work.

The exhibition *The Ecstasy of Colour*, curated by Mario-Andreas von Lüttichau and Sandra Gianfreda, has a direct connection to Museum Folkwang's history. From an early stage, the museum in Hagen, founded in 1902 by collector and patron of the arts Karl Ernst Osthaus, promoted, exhibited and collected Munch, Matisse, Braque, the "Brücke" painters, as well as Kandinsky, Jawlensky and Marc. The museum's early commitment to avant-garde art now forms the basis for the re-examination of this influential period and the dialogue between the artists with striking comparisons.

Professor Ute Eskildsen, Interim Director of Museum Folkwang, says: "This excellent show in the new building by David Chipperfield is certainly an impressive sight. Such a detailed consideration of the "Fauves" and the German Expressionists with a particular focus on Munch is a first worldwide. Referencing the brief but key period from 1905 to 1911, the exhibition directs the gaze on a trailblazing era and visualizes the manifold fruitful influences of the Norwegian and the French artists in German painting at that time."

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Volker Heck, Head of Group Communications at RWE, explains the commitment as follows: "For RWE, social and regional responsibility is very important. We also have a lot in common with the "Fauves" and the Expressionists, who have established an art genre that bubbles over with energy. In a sense, we do that, too. This served as additional motivation for us to deepen our longstanding partnership with the Folkwang Museum and add a special highlight."

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**Images** can be downloaded from [www.folkwang-im-farbenrausch.de](http://www.folkwang-im-farbenrausch.de)

**Opening hours special exhibition** Tues–Sun 10 a.m. – 8 p.m., Fri 10 a.m. – 10.30 p.m.; Mon closed

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