

Press information

Museum Folkwang

Museum Folkwang reacquires Schiele's watercolour *Standing Woman (1911)*

Essen, 22.3.2023 – In the exhibition *Expressionists at Folkwang*, which ended with great success in January 2023, the partial reconstruction of the Schiele collection of the museum's founder Karl Ernst Osthaus, which was confiscated by the National Socialists in 1937, was a particular highlight. Now Museum Folkwang has succeeded in reacquiring one of Egon Schiele's works for the collection.

Karl Ernst Osthaus, founder of Museum Folkwang, was one of the first collectors of works by Egon Schiele. As early as 1910, when Schiele was 20 years old, Osthaus acquired two figurative watercolours in Vienna, including a self-portrait. An extensive correspondence developed between the artist and the museum founder, which led to further purchases. Schiele's first solo museum exhibition took place in 1912 at Museum Folkwang. By the time of Schiele's death in 1918, Osthaus had acquired 14 watercolours and 1 painting. At the time, this was the largest collection of works by the exceptional Austrian artist in a museum.

In 1937, all of Schiele's works from the Folkwang collection were confiscated by the National Socialists as "degenerate". With the exception of a painted postcard that Schiele had sent to Osthaus in 1912, none of these works returned to Folkwang Museum after the Second World War. In the course of research for the special exhibition *Expressionists at Folkwang* (20 August 2022 - 8 January 2023), the former Schiele collection was largely reconstructed. Most of the works have been part of important collections in Germany and abroad for many decades.

With the watercolour *Standing Woman Covering Face with Both Hands* (1911), also presented in the Expressionist exhibition, Museum Folkwang has now succeeded in reacquiring one of the last Schiele works still in private hands, which had been seized from the museum in 1937. The purchase was made possible by funds bequeathed to the Folkwang-Museumsverein e.V. by the Essen-based couple Walter and Lieselotte Griese. With this special fund, significant works by Max Beckmann, Kate Diehn-Bitt, Erich Heckel, Max Pechstein and Anton Räderscheidt, among others, have been acquired for Museum Folkwang since 2017.

Dr Ulrich Blank, Chairman of the Folkwang-Museumsverein the Folkwang Museum Society, is extremely pleased: "85 years after the still painful confiscations, Museum Folkwang now once again has an outstanding work by Egon Schiele. At the same time, it bears witness to the early enthusiasm that Karl Ernst Osthaus had for the work of this extraordinary artist."

Museum Folkwang

Prof Peter Gorschlüter, Director of Museum Folkwang, adds: "We are very pleased that Egon Schiele's close personal relationship with Karl Ernst Osthaus and the museum, which the artist once described as "the best modern Museum Folkwang", will once again have a permanent presence in the museum collection through the reacquisition."

Press image



Egon Schiele

*Stehendes Mädchen, das Gesicht mit den Händen bedeckend/*Standing Woman Covering Face with Both Hands, 1911

Watercolour, 44,8 x 31,4 cm

Museum Folkwang, Essen 2023

© Photo: Jens Nober