

Press Release

Museum Folkwang

A Century of Museum Folkwang in Essen: Major Jubilee exhibitions on Impressionism and Expressionism in 2022

Essen, 14 April 2021 – In 2022, Museum Folkwang in Essen will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of its foundation. What was once termed “the most beautiful museum in the world” is celebrating this special event in the form of two major exhibitions, the one on (Late) Impressionism, the other on Expressionism. Things will kick off with the exhibition ***Renoir, Monet, Gauguin – Images of a Floating World***, which will come under the patronage of Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Taking as his starting point Pierre-Auguste Renoir’s Impressionist masterpiece *Lise with a Parasol* (1867) from 1901 onwards art historian Karl Ernst Osthaus, who had inherited an industrial fortune, laid the foundations for the art collection of Museum Folkwang. The latter was founded in 1902, initially as a private institution in Hagen, and swiftly evolved into a trailblazing museum for contemporary art and culture. As the first private collection in Germany it acquired and exhibited works by pioneers of Modernism such as Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin. After the death of the museum founder in 1921, large parts of Osthaus’ collections were acquired by the newly established Folkwang-Museumsverein on behalf of the City of Essen and in 1922 combined with the separate Municipal Art Museum in Essen, founded in 1906. In this way, the backbone of today’s Museum Folkwang was created, which in 2022 will celebrate the 100th anniversary of its foundation in the city of Essen.

The jubilee year will kick off with a real exhibition highlight, namely ***Renoir, Monet, Gauguin – Images of a Floating World. The Kojiro Matsukata and Karl Ernst Osthaus collections*** (6 February – 15 May 2022). The major collection of Late Impressionist works from the Museum Folkwang will be presented in dialogue with the Kojiro Matsukata collection which is housed at the National Museum of Western Art in Tokyo. In this way, key paintings from the Japanese museum’s collection will go on show in Europe for the very first time since the 1950s. Thus, the famous composition *On the Boat* by Claude Monet or Paul Signac’s *The Port of Saint-Tropez*, which was part of the original Museum Folkwang collection, will be on view alongside Pierre-Auguste Renoir’s *Lise with a Parasol* or Paul Gauguin’s *The Girl with a Fan*. By means of some 120 exhibits, the exhibition will visualize how Impressionism evolved from an art current initially viewed critically into a style that is today considered the very beginning of Modern art – a story told here by means of two outstanding and fascinating early 20th century collectors: Kojiro Matsukata and Karl Ernst Osthaus. Following the show in Essen, the National Museum of Western Art will present a second part of the show in Tokyo, entitled *People and Nature*.

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In autumn 2022, the major special exhibition ***Expressionists at Folkwang. Discovered – Defamed – Celebrated*** (20 August 2022 – 8 January 2023) will for the first time trace the special relationship between Museum Folkwang and the Expressionists. Founding director Karl Ernst Osthaus already nurtured close links to Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff and Erich Heckel, for example. About 120 exhibits covering the genres of painting, sculpture, and prints – masterpieces from the Folkwang's own collection and works on loan from around the world – tell the story of the revolutionary current in art from its beginnings in Germany via the confiscation of the works during the Third Reich to the celebrated post-War exhibitions of them. The jubilee exhibition will bring together, amongst others, works by Max Beckmann, Alexej von Jawlensky, Oskar Kokoschka, Franz Marc and Paula Modersohn-Becker.

Peter Gorschlüter, Director of Museum Folkwang, comments: "It is now 120 years ago that Karl Ernst Osthaus started collecting contemporary art, and 100 years ago thanks to the endeavours of committed citizens the unique trove he had assembled in such a short space of time became the property of the City of Essen. In 2022, with two major exhibitions, one on Impressionism and the other on Expressionism, we will be looking back at our beginnings, which to this very day continue to influence the history of art and of the museum."

Information

RENOIR, MONET, GAUGUIN

Images of a Floating World

The Kojiro Matsukata and Karl Ernst Osthaus collections

6 February 2022 – 15 May 2022

Made possible by: RAG-Stiftung

Supported by: RWE

EXPRESSIONISTS AT THE FOLKWANG

Discovered – Defamed – Celebrated

20 August 2022 – 8 January 2023

Supported by: E.ON