



מוזיאון ישראל, ירושלים
the israel museum, jerusalem
متحف إسرائيل، أورشليم القدس

Survey of Avant-Garde Masterworks Celebrates Artistic Freedom in Early 20th-Century Germany

A Centerpiece of the Israel Museum's 50th Anniversary Season, *Twilight over Berlin* Examines the Aesthetic Traditions Foundational to Israel's Modernist Visual Culture

Jerusalem (August 11, 2015) — Anchoring the second half of the Israel Museum's 50th anniversary year, *Twilight over Berlin: Masterworks from the Nationalgalerie, 1905-1945* brings together seminal examples of works by German artists, whose avant-garde creativity was foundational to Israel's modernist visual vocabulary in a range of creative disciplines. On view October 20, 2015–March 26, 2016, the exhibition features works by masters of the German Expressionist movement, among them Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Emil Nolde, and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, together with such Weimar period innovators as Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, George Grosz, Wassily Kandinsky, and Paul Klee.

Twilight over Berlin continues the Israel Museum's celebratory collaborations with sister institutions worldwide throughout its 50th anniversary year and marks its special partnership with the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, also honoring 50 years of diplomatic relations between Israel and Germany. Concurrently this fall, the Museum presents a companion exhibition highlighting the German modernist heritage that influenced the pioneers of modern Hebrew typography and the graphic arts in Israel. Together, these exhibitions amplify the ways in which aesthetic traditions migrated from Europe to Palestine in the period before World War II and shaped the development of Israel's 20th-century visual vocabulary.

“On the occasion of our milestone anniversary, it is important that we pay tribute to the pioneering movements that deeply influenced the trajectory of artistic practice here in Israel and were foundational for a modernist visual and cultural vocabulary for Israel—and indeed for the spirit and aesthetic ethos of the Israel Museum itself at the time of its opening fifty years ago,” said James S. Snyder, Anne and Jerome Fisher Director of the Israel Museum. “*Twilight over Berlin* also takes on especially deep meaning both in Israel and in Germany, 50 years following the establishment of diplomatic ties between our two countries, recognizing our shared cultural heritage in modern times and also the vitality of creative cultural interchange between Germany and Israel today.”

Featuring artworks created between 1905 and 1945, *Twilight over Berlin* examines the flourishing of the visual arts from pre-World War I years, and through its struggle against oppression and persecution through Hitler's ascent to power and World War II. Among the exhibition's highlights are:

- **Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's *Potsdam Square*** (1914), one of a series of paintings by the artist that focused on street life in the modern metropolis of Berlin. Depicting two prostitutes with mask-like faces, the work reflects the influence of “primitive art” on this seminal German Expressionist.

- **Otto Dix's *The Skat Players*** (1920), an anti-militarist collage marking the artist's transition from Dada to the socially critical New Realism, depicting three hideously disfigured officers in a café playing skat, a popular three-handed German card game.
- Among the paintings included in the historic 1937 Degenerate Art exhibition in Munich, **Emil Nolde's *Christ and the Sinner*** (1926), illustrates a scene from the Gospel of Saint Luke in a dramatically compressed pictorial frame in which the Pharisees condemn the prostitute Mary Magdalene as Jesus Christ embraces her.
- **George Grosz's *Pillars of Society*** (1926), a denunciation of German society and the Weimar Republic through four allegorical figures: the earless legal expert with a swastika on his tie and fencing weapon; a journalist with a chamber pot hat carrying a hypocritical palm frond; a politician whose brain is filled with steaming excrement; and a red-faced military chaplain in robes.
- **Christian Schad's *Sonja*** (1928), an iconic portrait of an androgynous office worker, dressed in fashionable clothes and smoking a Camel cigarette, alluding to the notion of the new independent woman.

Accompanying *Twilight over Berlin, New Types: Three Pioneers of Hebrew Graphic Design* further explores the foundational German heritage of Israel's modern visual culture, focusing on the uniquely seminal influence of German designers on modern Hebrew typography and on the graphic arts. Opening on October 20, 2015, this exhibition examines the history of Israeli typography through the drawings, sketches, and other documentation of three pioneering Israeli designers, Moshe Spitzer, Henri Friedlaender, and Franzisca Baruch, each of whom migrated to Palestine after training in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s. The aesthetic consequences of this migration created the foundation for the typographic and graphic artistic culture of the new State of Israel—especially as designers sought to address the need to create a new printed language in modern Hebrew, being perhaps the most urgent design need in Israel's first years—while also reflecting the ideological foundations and cultural aspirations of a new Israeli society.

Exhibition Organization

Twilight over Berlin: Masterworks from the Nationalgalerie, 1905-1945 is co-curated by Dr. Adina Kamien-Kazhdan, David Rockefeller Curator, The Stella Fischbach Department of Modern Art at the Israel Museum, and Dr. Dieter Scholz, Curator, Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin.

New Types: Three Pioneers of Hebrew Graphic Design is curated by Guest Curator Ada Wardi.

50th Anniversary Exhibition Program Sponsorship

The Israel Museum's 2015 anniversary exhibition program is generously supported by the donors to the Museum's 50th Anniversary Exhibition Fund: Herta and Paul Amir, Los Angeles; Foundation Albert Amon, Lausanne, Switzerland; Ellen Bronfman Hauptman and Andrew Hauptman, Los Angeles and Stephen and Claudine Bronfman, Montreal, in honor of three generations of Bronfman family support for the Museum; Claudia Davidoff, Cambridge, Massachusetts, in memory of Ruth and Leon Davidoff; The Gottesman Family, Tel Aviv and New York, in memory of Dov Gottesman and in honor of Rachel Gottesman; The Hassenfeld Family Foundation, Providence, Rhode Island, in honor of Sylvia Hassenfeld; Alice and Nahum Lainer, Los Angeles; The Nash Family Foundation, New York; and Yad Hanadiv, the Rothschild Foundation in Israel.

Additionally, *Twilight over Berlin* has benefitted from the generous support of Grace Frankel and Hanns Salzer Levi, The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Germany, and Israel's Ministry of Culture and Sport. The exhibition catalogue was made possible through the generosity of the Museum's Association of Friends in Germany, Sonja Lahnstein-Kandel, Chairman, and Nancy Wald, Oxford.

About The Israel Museum, Jerusalem

Over the past five decades, the Israel Museum has become one of the leading art and archaeology museums in the world, with a comprehensive collection totaling more than 500,000 objects from prehistory to the present day. Home to the most extensive collections of Holy Land and Biblical archaeology in the world, the Museum's Samuel and Saidye Bronfman Archeology Wing draws connections across many of the world's ancient cultures and religions, tracing over 1.5 million years of religious and daily practice in the Land of Israel through the 18th century. Its Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Wing for Jewish Art and Life holds the world's most comprehensive collection of Judaica and ethnography of the world's diverse Jewish communities, together with a unique set of synagogue interiors from Europe, Asia, and the Americas. And the encyclopedic holdings in its Edmond and Lily Safra Fine Arts Wing range from Old Masters to contemporary art, including dedicated departments for Asian Art; the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas; Prints and Drawings; Photography; and Architecture and Design.

In addition to the tremendous growth of its collections, the Museum has also increased its architectural footprint ten-fold since opening in 1965 to 600,000 square feet today. The original landmark campus designed by Alfred Mansfeld and Dora Gad was enhanced most recently by a comprehensive renewal and expansion, completed in 2010, which was led by James Carpenter Design Associates, New York, and Efrat-Kowalsky Architects, Tel Aviv. The goals of this transformational project were to heighten the visitor's appreciation for a universal display of art and archeology set against the backdrop of the Museum's architecture and landscape and to renew and reconfigure the presentation of its three collection wings, doubling its collection galleries to 200,000 square feet to enable for a completely new installation of highlights from its encyclopedic holdings. The project also introduced new temporary exhibition galleries, orientation facilities, and public spaces that further enhance the experience of visiting the Museum for its annual audience of 750,000–1,000,000 visitors.

The Museum also organizes and presents programming at its off-site locations in Jerusalem at the Rockefeller Archaeological Museum, where it presents archaeological artifacts from the Land of Israel, and at its historic Ticho House in downtown Jerusalem, recently renewed as a special venue for exhibitions of contemporary Israeli art.

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For more information please contact:

Debbie Rapps
The Israel Museum, Jerusalem
debbiera@imj.org.il
972.2.670.8935

Chelsea Beroza/Juliet Sorce
Resnicow + Associates, New York
cberoza/jsorce@resnicow.com
212.671.5160/5158