



GLYNN VIVIAN

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Press Release

Portrait of an Artist: Käthe Kollwitz

A British Museum and Ikon Partnership Exhibition

Generously supported by the Dorset Foundation

24 March – 17 June 2018

Preview: Friday 23 March, 7pm

Käthe Kollwitz (née Schmidt, 1867–1945) was one of the leading artists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, notable for the emotional power of her drawing, printmaking and later sculpture. This exhibition focuses on around thirty six works from the British Museum's remarkable print collection. The exhibition highlights the importance of Kollwitz's work and celebrates the enduring impact of her powerful and affecting images.

Kollwitz was born in Königsberg in East Prussia, which formed part of Germany from 1871-1945. After studying in Berlin and Munich she moved permanently to Berlin in 1891 when she married Karl Kollwitz, who was a doctor for the tailors' medical insurance union. Kollwitz lived an intensely examined life, expressed in her numerous self-portraits (featured in the exhibition), diaries and correspondence; at the core of this existence was her work as an artist: *'It alone is always stimulating, rejuvenating, exciting and satisfying.'* (New Year's Day, 1912). Her mastery of graphic art quickly established her reputation in Germany, then further afield as her influence spread to Russia and China after the First World War.

The thirty six works from the British Museum collection which feature in the exhibition were collected by Campbell Dodgson, Assistant Keeper then Keeper of the Department of Prints and Drawings (1893-1932). He bought Käthe Kollwitz's prints in

Germany before the First World War, influenced by his colleague Max Lehrs of the Dresden and Berlin Print Rooms, the artist's first and greatest champion. Since this time the prints have rarely been seen together in one exhibition.

The exhibition looks at her work through the exploration of three themes: social and political protest, self-portraits and the role of an empathetic and suffering mother, which is profoundly marked by the loss of her younger son Peter in October 1914.

Exhibitions and publications have constructed her as a 'woman and artist' and an 'artist of the people', describing her work as 'the art of compassion', but this exhibition will look at her as someone who first and foremost illuminates what it means to be an artist and to sustain a creative life. Käthe Kollwitz believed that art could be a force for good in society.

The exhibition is organised in partnership between the British Museum and Ikon, and is supported by the Dorset Foundation.

Curator Talk

5 May, 12.30pm

Join Frances Carey, curator of the exhibition & former Deputy Keeper of the Department of Prints and Drawing, British Museum, as she explores the work of Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945) which was notable for the emotional power of her drawing, printmaking and sculpture. Booking essential

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Notes to Editors:

1. Glynn Vivian Art Gallery is part of the Swansea Council
2. Glynn Vivian is open Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 5pm, Closed Mondays (except Bank Holidays) Alexandra Road, Swansea SA1 5DZ
3. For more information, high-res images or to arrange an interview with the Curator, please contact Charlotte Thomas on 01792 516900 or email charlotte.thomas@swansea.gov.uk

4. The British Museum

The British Museum is a national presence and works with hundreds of UK partner organisations each year through its wide-ranging National Programmes activity.

This includes single-object Spotlight loans, touring exhibitions, partnership galleries, short-term loans and long-term loans, with the lead support of the Dorset Foundation in memory of Harry M Weinrebe. In 2016/17, nearly 3,000 objects were loaned to over 150 venues in the UK, reaching 9 million people outside London. The Museum will continue to develop partnerships across the UK as part of its

commitment to sharing the collection as widely as possible.

5. Ikon Gallery

Ikon is an internationally acclaimed contemporary art venue situated in central Birmingham. Established in 1964 by a group of artists, Ikon is an educational charity and works to encourage public engagement with contemporary art through exhibiting new work in a context of debate and participation. The gallery programme features artists from around the world and a variety of media is represented, including sound, film, mixed media, photography, painting, sculpture and installation. Ikon's off-site programme develops dynamic relationships between art, artists and audiences outside the gallery. Projects vary enormously in scale, duration and location, challenging expectations of where art can be seen and by whom. Education is at the heart of Ikon's activities, stimulating public interest in and understanding of contemporary visual art. Through a variety of talks, tours, workshops and seminars, Ikon's Learning Team aims to build dynamic relationships with audiences, enabling visitors to engage with, discuss and reflect on contemporary art. www.ikon-gallery.org

Visit www.glynnviviangallery.org for all Glynn Vivian information.

Free entry, everyone welcome

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