EXPRESSIONIST IMPULSES: GERMAN AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN ART, 1890–1990
October 1, 2015–January 10, 2016

Special exhibition charts the ebb and flow of Expressionism in Germany and Central Europe
Senior Curator Richard A. Born’s capstone exhibition before retirement

The University of Chicago’s Smart Museum of Art presents Expressionist Impulses: German and Central European Art, 1890–1990, a collections-based exhibition that charts the ebb and flow of Expressionist tendencies in Germany and Central Europe including Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Romania, among other countries.

On view October 1, 2015 to January 10, 2016, the exhibition spans a century of momentous and rapid political, social, and economic change. The incisive, emotionally charged paintings, drawings, and sculptures on view bear powerful witness to periods of war, utopian dreams, economic depression, political division, and personal and political exile. No single style, technique, or theme dominates. Rather, Expressionist Impulses offers a fluid account of multiple waves of artists who were concerned with stylistic innovation bent in the service of social and political critiques.

The exhibition features approximately 80 works drawn from the Smart Museum’s collection and supplemented by select promised gifts. Exhibition curator Richard A. Born, who retires at the end of December, has been responsible for bringing much of the work into the collection over the course of his 35-year curatorial career at the Smart Museum.

Expressionist Impulses opens with a public reception on Wednesday, September 30 from 7:30 to 9 pm.
ABOUT EXPRESSIONISM
In the years before World War I, Expressionism was a term vanguard art circles in France, Germany, and Central Europe used to denote various modern art movements that arose after Impressionism.

Whether figurative or abstract, pre-war Expressionism was foremost anti-naturalist in style and idealist in content. Utilizing simplified forms, distorted details, and unnatural colors, Expressionist artists sought to penetrate to the essence of outer appearances to elicit an emotional response from the viewer. For such artists, exaggeration expressed their inner responses to the visual world around them, whether in the service of utopian idealism or to rebut contemporary social mores and injustices.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION
The exhibition focuses on painting, sculpture, and drawing. The works are presented in loosely chronological sections that cover major Expressionist moments in Germany: Die Brücke (1905–1914), Der Blaue Reiter (1911–1914), New Objectivity (1920s), and Neo-Expressionism (1960–80s).

The exhibition also brings to the surface often overlooked international connections to modernism and the expressive impulse in avant-garde artists active across the great art centers of Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire before the rupture of The Great War and in a divided Germany and Communist Europe throughout the Cold War.

ARTISTS

CURATOR
Richard A. Born, Smart Museum Senior Curator and Interim Chief Curator

RELATED PROJECTS

RELATED PROGRAMS
Unless noted, all programs are free and open to the public and take place at the Smart Museum of Art.
Opening Reception
Wednesday, September 30, 2015, 7:30–9 pm
Public opening reception.

Family Day: Rainbow Faces
Saturday, October 3, 2015, 1–4 pm
Create colorful self portraits and face paintings inspired by works on view in Expressionist Impulses. All materials provided. Family programs are best for kids 4–12. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Biting Satire
Thursday, October 8, 2015, 5:30–7:30 pm
A satirical BBQ in the Smart’s sculpture garden. Create “biting” food collages and enjoy free frankfurters, KippenBurgers, and Spam-based delicacies inspired by work by George Grosz and others in Expressionist Impulses.

Film Screening
Friday, October 23, 2015, 7:00pm
Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E 60th Street, screening room
Independent and experimental film shorts dating from the postwar period to the last decades of Communism in Eastern Europe. Including films by Mieczysław Waśkowski and Tadeusz Kantor from Poland, Naško Križnar and the OHO Group from Slovenia, and Vladimir Havrilla from the former Czechoslovakia.
Presented in collaboration with the Film Studies Center and CEERES at the University of Chicago.

Film Screening
Nosferatu (1922)
Monday, October 26, 2015, 7:30pm
Rockefeller Chapel, 5850 S Woodlawn Avenue
Screening of F.W. Murnau’s archetypal film of the Dracula legend, which obliterated boundaries between the real and unreal. With live organ accompaniment by Dennis James.
Presented in collaboration with Rockefeller Chapel.

Family Day: Pillow Poppin'
Saturday, November 7, 2015, 1–4 pm
Silkscreen, sew, and stuff your own pillow. Inspired by works on view in Expressionist Impulses. All materials provided. Family programs are best for kids 4–12. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Gallery Talk: To See in Black and White
Saturday, November 21, 2015, 2 pm
With Kimberly Mims, curator of To See in Black and White.

**Family Day: Costume Mania**  
Saturday, December 5, 2015, 1–4 pm  
Make colorful costumes and write mini-plays inspired by theatrical illustrations by George Grosz.  
*All materials provided. Family programs are best for kids 4–12. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.*

**Gallery Talk: Expressionist Impulses**  
Saturday, December 12, 2015, 2 pm  
With Richard A. Born, Smart Museum Senior Curator and Interim Chief Curator, and Reinhold Heller, Professor Emeritus in Art History, Germanic Studies, and the College, The University of Chicago.

**Family Day: Family Day: Yellow Trees and Green Beaches**  
Saturday, January 9, 2016, 1–4 pm  
Paint unnaturally colored natural landscapes to brighten up the winter.  
*All materials provided. Family programs are best for kids 4–12. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.*

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First page images (l–r):  


**SUPPORT**  
Support for *Expressionist Impulses* and its programming has been provided by the Smart Museum’s Pamela and R. Christopher Hoehn-Saric Exhibition Fund, Nuveen Investments, the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany, the University of Chicago’s Arts Council, the Franke Institute for the Humanities, and the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on German Literature and Culture.

**ABOUT THE SMART MUSEUM OF ART**  
The Smart Museum of Art is an intimate museum for bold encounters with art. Both fueling and expressing the creative energy of the University of Chicago, the Smart opens the world to boundary-breaking art and ideas through innovative special exhibitions, dynamic programs, and distinctive collections.

**Mission**  
The Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago opens the world through art and ideas.
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Hours
Tuesday–Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
Thursday evenings until 8 p.m.

Galleries are closed Mondays and holidays.

Admission is always free. All are welcome.