

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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KÄTHE KOLLWITZ EXHIBITION OPENS AT NATIONAL GALLERY

ON MAY 3, 1992

Washington, D.C. -- Approximately one hundred prints, drawings, and sculptures by the renowned German artist Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945) will be on view at the National Gallery's East Building from May 3 through August 16, 1992.

Celebrated for the powerful social content of her imagery, Käthe Kollwitz became widely known in this country during the 1930s and was even more acclaimed following World War II. Her stark depictions of injustice, poverty, and deprivation struck a resonant chord during those troubled years and earned her an extensive and devoted audience.

"The political and moral aspects of Kollwitz' work have long been acclaimed in this country through her powerful treatment of human themes," said Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery. "Our exhibition will balance that view by revealing her also as an artist of the highest achievement."

The National Gallery is grateful to Lufthansa German Airlines for its transportation support of the exhibition. Additional support has been provided by the Federal Republic of Germany.

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The exhibition will coincide with the "Tribute to Germany," a Washington-area cultural festival coordinated by the Kennedy Center.

Käthe Kollwitz is the latest in a series of exhibitions at the National Gallery devoted to Germany and its arts, from the multi-faceted Splendor of Dresden: Five Centuries of Art Collecting in 1978 to the more focused German Expressionist Prints from the Collection of Ruth and Jacob Kainen in 1986.

Known largely in America through political posters and restrikes of her prints, Kollwitz will be represented in this seminal exhibition by brilliant self-portraits, exquisite works in color that counter her reputation as a monochromatic artist, and examples of sculpture that had a strong impact on her development. Preparatory drawings and working proofs, many never before exhibited in this country, will lend insight into the artist's struggle to master her media and trace Kollwitz' progress as a gifted and technically inventive artist.

Dr. Elizabeth Prelinger, assistant professor of fine arts at Georgetown University, curated the exhibition in consultation with Judith Brodie, assistant curator in the department of prints and drawings at the National Gallery. A fully illustrated scholarly catalogue, co-published by the National Gallery and Yale University Press, will include essays by Dr. Prelinger; Dr. Alessandra Comini, University Distinguished Professor of Art History at Southern Methodist University; and Hildegard Bachert, a leading expert in modern German art. The National Gallery will be the sole venue.

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In conjunction with the Käthe Kollwitz show, the Gallery will present lectures and a film series focusing on German expressionist films of the 1920s and a documentary on the life of Kollwitz on weekends during May and June. The lectures include: "Käthe Kollwitz Reconsidered," by Elizabeth Prelinger on May 3; "Dark Images of the City: The Urban Milieu from a German Naturalist View," by John Czaplicka, assistant professor of fine arts, Harvard University, on May 10; and "Kollwitz in Context: The Formative Years," by Alessandra Comini on June 7.

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