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Curator Biography:

[Andrew Robison](#)

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For Press Inquiries Only:

(202) 842-6353

pressinfo@nga.gov

Chief Press Officer

Deborah Ziska

ds-ziska@nga.gov

(202) 842-6353

National Gallery of Art Pays 150th Birthday Tribute to Edvard Munch through Celebrated Works on Paper from the Collection



Edvard Munch
Madonna, 1895 (printed 1912/1913)
color lithograph and woodcut on golden
japan paper
National Gallery of Art, Washington, The
Epstein Family Collection
© Munch Museum/Munch Ellingsen
Group/ARS, NY 2013

Washington, DC—The National Gallery of Art marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Edvard Munch, Norway's most famed painter and printmaker, with an exhibition of more than 20 renowned works from the Gallery's collection. On view from May 19 through August 11, 2013, on the Ground Floor of the West Building, *Edvard Munch: A 150th Anniversary Tribute* includes *Geschrei* (*The Scream*) (1895), *The Madonna* (1895), and a unique series of six variant impressions, *Two Women on the Shore* (1898).

"In recent decades the National Gallery of Art has presented three major exhibitions of Munch's work, the last in 2010," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We are pleased to bring together these stellar prints and drawings to celebrate this milestone."

The exhibition was organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington. It is made possible by The Exhibition Circle of the National Gallery of Art.

Edvard Munch (December 12, 1863–January 23, 1944) both absorbed and influenced the work of innumerable artists throughout the world. He is today revered for his passionate visual expression of intense human experiences: "Art is your heart's blood," he said. His most famous image—a screaming figure, its eyes wide with horror—is an icon of anxiety, alienation, and anguish. Attraction, love, jealousy, and death were also recurring themes. His continual reworking of these subjects is commonly linked to Munch's personal struggles. He made many telling portraits: tender visions of women and sensitive studies of lovers, children, and adolescents. However, the real power of his art lies in his ability to extrapolate universal human experiences from his own life.

Raised in Oslo (then called Christiania), Munch studied at the Royal School

of Design before a state scholarship enabled him to study in Paris in 1889. Printmaking was an essential component of Munch's art for 50 years following his introduction to the graphic media in Berlin in 1894. With the capacity to produce multiple works from a single plate, stone, or woodblock, printmaking served to expand the accessibility of the artist's themes to the general public and to provide income. Like his repeated revisions in paintings, prints also enabled him to experiment with his imagery; by altering color, line, texture, and composition, Munch drastically changed the appearance and emotional impact of a given subject. Thus a woman kissing a man could appear amorous in one print and predatory in another. In many cases Munch continued to print impressions of his graphic works years after the creation of the original matrix.

The exhibition curator is Andrew Robison, Andrew W. Mellon Senior Curator of Prints and Drawings, National Gallery of Art.

Prints, Drawings, and Illustrated Books at the National Gallery of Art

The National Gallery's collection of prints, drawings, and illustrated books consists of more than 111,000 Western European and American works on paper and vellum dating from the 11th century to the present day. Because works on paper are highly susceptible to damage by overexposure to light, they can be exhibited only for short periods. For that reason, the Gallery maintains a schedule of changing exhibitions drawn from its own collection or borrowed from other institutions and private individuals. Drawings and prints not on view may be seen by appointment by calling (202) 842-6380.

General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Avenue NW, and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/modern-art-during-renovation.html>.

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on Twitter at www.twitter.com/ngadc.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

Press Office
National Gallery of Art
2000B South Club Drive

Landover, MD 20785
phone: (202) 842-6353
e-mail: pressinfo@nga.gov

Deborah Ziska
Chief of Press and Public Information
(202) 842-6353
ds-ziska@nga.gov

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