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SELF-PORTRAIT 1895

THE PRINTS OF EDUARD MUNCH
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

On behalf of the Trustees of The Museum of Modern Art, I wish to express my gratitude to the Norwegian Government and to the Munch Museum of the Oslo Municipal Collections, its Director Pål Hougen and his assistant Bente Torjusen, for making available material from their archives. For their invaluable assistance I also wish to thank Dr. and Mrs. David Abrahamsen, New York, Mr. and Mrs. P. Irgens Larsen, New York, Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Epstein, Washington, D.C., Eleanor Garvey of The Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., and Bjørn Jensen, Director of the Norwegian Information Service in the United States. Among many sources available, the studies of Dr. Reinhold Heller of The University of Pittsburgh have been extremely useful. I am most indebted to Mr. and Mrs. William B. Jaffe for their generous gifts to the Museum and to William S. Lieberman, the Museum's Chief Curator of Drawings, who has been largely responsible for the formation of its Munch collection. Finally, I would like to thank Howardena Pindell, Assistant Curator in the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, for her work on the exhibition.

R.C.
The Norwegian artist Edvard Munch once gave as his reason for making prints of the same subjects as his paintings that their sale would allow him the economic freedom to retain the paintings themselves. Beginning in 1893 Munch saw many of his compositions as part of a mural or frieze on love, life, and death. He continued to paint and to execute lithographs, etchings, and woodcuts of these subjects throughout his life, trying to refine them and use them as a measure of his progress toward his esthetic and spiritual goals. At the same time he attempted to preserve a group that would comprise the complete frieze. He had even hoped to issue the prints in a similar series, but the first etchings he made, published as a portfolio in 1895 by Julius Meier-Graefe, were of various unrelated subjects.

Since his printmaking began in the midst of the heady emotional atmosphere of Europe of the mid-1890s, the progression in Munch's painting from naturalism to expressionism is hardly evident in his prints. At the moment when Freud was formulating his theories, Munch's art was depicting the subjects of psychological studies. His concern with the relationship between the sexes emerges obsessively. This exhibition of Munch's prints in the collection of The Museum of Modern Art includes the first showing of the William B. and Evelyn A. Jaffe Collection devoted to this central theme: Man and Woman.

The haunting, magic atmosphere that Munch conjures so expressively in his prints is made more vivid by awareness of the personalities of the artist and his friends as well as the circumstances of their lives and times. Some of the more pertinent facts of Munch's life, augmented by quotations from his correspondence and books from his library, are given below. These letters and books are included in the exhibition. In addition, a few of the wood blocks he treasured long after he had printed from them are displayed, as he often did, as wall sculpture.

Riva Castleman
CHRONOLOGY

1863 Born December 12 at Engelhaugen farm, Løten, Hedmark county, Norway, son of Laura Catherine (née Bjølstad) and Christian Munch, an army doctor.

"My son Edvard has never, from his infancy, had a strong constitution."

(Dr. Christian Munch, September 17, 1885)

1864 Family moves to Christiania (former name of Oslo).

1868 Laura Munch dies of tuberculosis and her sister Karen Bjølstad cares for the family of five children (Sophie, Edvard, Andreas, Inger, and Laura).

1877 Sister Sophie dies of tuberculosis.

"She looked into the lamp with her big eyes - it was so sad - oh you will meet Mama... the last half hour she felt even lighter than before the pain had gone - she tried to sit up - pointed to the chair next to the bed - I should like to sit up she whispered - how strange she felt - the room was different - as seen through a veil..."

(Edvard Munch, mémoire, no date)

1881-83 Studies drawing for a short time at The Royal School of Design (1881); he and six young painters share a studio where Christian Krohg guides his painting; studies drawing at Frits Thaulow's open-air academy in Modum.

1884 Suffers from rheumatic fever; participates in the Bohemian life of Christiania.

1885 First trip to Paris, begins work on key paintings: Puberty, The Sick Child, The Morning After.

1889-90 Lives in Saint-Cloud near Paris with Danish poet Emanuel Goldstein; resolves to paint "living people who breathe and feel and suffer and love."

(Edvard Munch, Saint-Cloud statement, published 1929)

1891-92 Travels to Paris and Nice, summers at Asgardstrand; paints Evening, recording his friend Jappe Nilsen's unhappy affair with Christian Krohg's wife Oda, also the subject of a frontispiece for Emanuel Goldstein's book Alruner.

"You do appreciate these poems of my youth... It should really be something symbolic. You know, of course, that "Alrune" (Mandragora) is the plant from which people in the Middle Ages believed they could brew a love potion..."

(Emanuel Goldstein, December 12, 1891)

1892 Exhibition in Berlin causes a scandal and is closed after one week.

"The old painters want to overthrow the committees and close the exhibition... This, by the way, is the best that can happen, better publicity I couldn't get."

(Edvard Munch, November 12, 1892)

1893 Exhibits paintings as series ("Love") for first time, the beginning of the "Frieze of Life."

1894 First etchings and lithograph repeat themes of paintings of 1880s, some of which he paints again; publication of first book on Munch's work.

1895 Brother Andreas dies of tuberculosis; Meier-Graefe publishes portfolio of Munch's etchings.

"It is not going well with the portfolio at all, we have distributed them all over here, but have not yet sold anything."

(Julius Meier-Graefe, August 9, 1895)

"Paris is really lovely... it is perfect to work here - I stick to lithographs and etchings... I have finished a lithograph of Strindberg..."

(Edvard Munch, July 1, 1896)

"They write me from Berlin that Pb (Przybyszewski) has been jailed 'because he has poisoned his wife and two children with gas.' There you have fair Dagny whose knight you still want to be!"

(August Strindberg, July 2, 1896)

1897-1901 Purchases house in Åsgårdstrand and paints first version of Girls on the Bridge there; romantic involvement with Tulla Larsen.

"In the future, when you know me, you will understand my need for solitude - which is the regulator of my life. And you will defy it as you have done earlier - you must understand that it means murdering me...."

(Edvard Munch, ca. 1900)

"... about Miss Larsen... She loves you so devotedly and can no longer be without news from you, she is ill from longing..."

(Max Dauthendey, September 17, 1901)

1902-03 Affair with Tulla Larsen ends after she accidentally shoots him; meets Max Linde who commissions a portfolio of his etchings; begins work on frieze for Linde; meets English violinist Eva Mudocci.

"I should be happy to go to your concert some time - and to read in your music what I can read in your eyes... I must definitely make a portrait or an etching of you sometime...."

(Edvard Munch, ca. 1903)

"... about Miss Larsen... She loves you so devotedly and can no longer be without news from you, she is ill from longing...."

(Max Dauthendey, September 17, 1901)

1904-07 Linde rejects frieze; works mainly in Germany after fight in 1905 with Ludwig Karsten; designs stage sets for Ibsen's Ghosts and decorations for Max Reinhardt's Kammerspielhaus, Berlin.

1908-09 Begins Alpha and Omega, cycle of lithographs with original text; nervous breakdown and treatment at Dr. Daniel Jealouson's clinic in Copenhagen.

"I have entered a nerve sanatorium - I hope finally to get rid of the unbearable inner restlessness from which I have suffered since these events... When you realize what I had to suffer in those days - along with other persecutions you probably find it quite reasonable that the nerve system had to burst...."

(Eva Mudocci, ca. October 1908)

1909-16 Executes murals for University of Christiania (Oslo); lives in various houses in the vicinity of Christiania, finally buying Ekely in Skøyen in 1916, the year his murals are installed.

1919 Suffers from Spanish influenza.

1922 Executes paintings in Freia Chocolate Factory, Christiania.

1926 Sister Laura dies.

1930 Suffers eye trouble that hampers much of his work for the remainder of his life.

1937 Eighty-two works by Munch in Germany branded as degenerate and confiscated.

1943 Munch prepares to depart from Ekely should there be air raids.

"... one must be prepared to leave house and home and evacuate. Strangely enough I haven't thought of this earlier... it is not easy to understand how this overwhelmingly great quantity of things can be arranged so that it can be sent away on short notice."

(Edvard Munch, June 11, 1943)

December 19. The shock waves of a bomb detonated in Oslo blow out the windows of his house, and as a result, Munch suffers a serious attack of bronchitis.

1944 Dies January 23; leaves over 20,000 of his drawings, paintings, and prints to the City of Oslo.
PRINTS

All prints are from the collection of The Museum of Modern Art. A date enclosed in parentheses does not appear on the work itself. The dimensions given are plate or composition size, height preceding width. Reference cited:


1. The Sick Girl. (1894). Drypoint, 15 3/16 x 11 1/2". Sch. 7 Vc/Vd. Given anonymously


3. Tete-a-tete (Conversation Hour). (1895). Etching and drypoint, 8 5/8 x 12 7/8". Sch. 12 Il/b. Given anonymously

4. Moonlight. (1895). Drypoint and aquatint, 13 7/8 x 10 1/2". Sch. 13 H/III. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund

5. Girls on the Beach. (1895). Drypoint and aquatint, 8 3/4 x 12 3/4". Sch. 14 III. Purchase

6. The Morning After. 1895. Drypoint and aquatint, 7 9/16 x 10 13/16". Sch. 15 IV. Gift of Samuel A. Berger

7. Lovers on the Beach II (Attraction). 1895. Etching and drypoint, printed in color, 10 1/2 x 13 1/6". Sch. 19 b. Given anonymously


9. Two Beings (The Lonely Ones). (1895). Drypoint, 6 5/8 x 8 7/8". Sch. 20 Vc/Vd. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund

10. Woman II. (1895). Drypoint and aquatint, 11 3/4 x 13 7/16". Sch. 21 B/V. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest


13. The Shriek. (1895; signed 1896). Lithograph, 13 15/16 x 10". Sch. 32. Matthew T. Mellon Fund


15. Vampire. (1895; signed 1897). Lithograph, 15 1/4 x 21 3/6". Sch. 34 a II/b. The William B. and Evelyn A. Jaffe Collection


17. Knut Hamsun. (1896). Drypoint, 11 3/4 x 7 7/8". Sch. 52. Purchase


20. The Sick Child. 1896. Lithograph, printed in color, 16 3/4 x 23 1/2". Sch. 59 c/d. Purchase


22. Anxiety. (1896; signed 1897). Woodcut, printed in color, 18 x 14 13/16". Sch. 62. Purchase

23. The Urn. (1896). Lithograph, 18 3/16 x 10 9/16". Sch. 63 II. Purchase


25. The Death Chamber. (1896). Lithograph, 15 1/4 x 21 5/8". Sch. 73. Gift of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller

26. August Strindberg. (1896). Lithograph, 19 7/8 x 14 7/16". Sch. 77 I/II. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund

27. Man's Head in Woman's Hair. (1896). Woodcut, printed in color, 21 5/8 x 15". Sch. 80 b. The William B. and Evelyn A. Jaffe Collection


29. Evening (Melancholy: On the Beach). (1896). Woodcut, printed in color, 16 1/4 x 18". Sch. 82. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund


31. Essen with Lighthouse, program for "John Gabriel Borkman." (1897). Lithograph, 8 1/4 x 12 5/8". Sch. suppl. 171 a. Purchase

32. Model with Cape and Collar. (1897). Mezzotint, 15 1/8 x 11 3/4". Sch. 88. Purchase

33. Sigbjorn Obstfelder. (1897). Etching and drypoint, 7 3/16 x 5 7/8". Sch. 88. Purchase

34. The Kiss. (1897-1902). Woodcut, printed in color, 18 3/8 x 18 5/16". Sch. 102 D. Gift of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller

35. Women on the Beach. (1898). Woodcut, printed in color, 17 15/16 x 20 1/4". Sch. 117. Purchase

36. Ashes. (1898). Lithograph, printed in black and hand-colored, 13 15/16 x 18". Sch. 120. The William B. and Evelyn A. Jaffe Collection


40. Two Beings (The Lonely Ones). (1899-1917). Woodcut, printed in color, 17 1/16 x 20 1/4". Sch. 144. Purchase

41. Encounter in Space. (1899). Woodcut, printed in color, 7 5/8 x 10". Sch. 145. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund

42. Nude Figure (Sin). (1901). Lithograph, printed in color, 10 1/2 x 13 1/8". Sch. 146. Given anonymously

43. The Kiss. (1895). Etching, drypoint, and aquatint, 13 1/2 x 11". Sch. 22 b. The William B. and Evelyn A. Jaffe Collection

44. Male Nude. (1902). Lithograph, 19 5/8 x 14 1"/. Sch. 169. Purchase


47. Violin Concerto. (1903). Lithograph, 18 1/2 x 21 1/2". Sch. 211 II. Purchase
50. Portrait of Goldstein. (1908-09). Lithograph. 10 13/16 x 9 3/4". Sch. 276 c. Given anonymously
52.-60. Prints from the portfolio Alpha and Omega. (1908-09).
54. Madonna (Woman with Brooch; Eva Mudocci). (1903). Lithograph. 12 1/4 x 10 3/4".
55. The Death of Marat. (1906-07). Lithograph, printed in color. 17 5/16 x 13 15/16". Sch. 256 h/l. The William B. and Evelyn A. Jaffe Collection
56. Self-Portrait. (1912). Lithograph, 12 1/4 x 10 3/4".
58. Despair. 16 5/8 x 13 5/8". Sch. 325
59. The Bear. 9 5/16 x 16 1/16". Sch. 315
60. Tiger and Bear. 9 9/16 x 18 1/4". Sch. 317
61. Self-Portrait. (1912). Lithograph, 12 1/4 x 10 3/4". Sch. 396. Purchase
62. Three Girls on the Bridge. (1918-20). Woodcut and linocut, printed in color. 10 3/4 x 17 1/16". Sch. 486. Purchase
63. Shadows. 10 1/16 x 19 5/8". Sch. 313
67. Murderess, (ca. 1928; signed 1930). Lithograph, 10 1/16 x 19 3/16". Sch. 323
68. Women on the Beach. (1898). Four parts, 17 15/16 x 21 7/8". The William B. and Evelyn A. Jaffe Collection
70. Two Beings (The Lonely Ones). (1899). Four parts, 17 1/4 x 15 3/8". Sch. 510. Purchase
71. Dr. Christian Munch. Autograph letter, Christiania, November 23, 1915
72. Edvard Munch. Autograph letter to Laura and Inger Munch, Copenhagen, December 12, 1915
73. Emanuel Goldstein. Autograph letter to Edvard Munch, Copenhagen, December 12, 1915
74. Edvard Munch. Autograph letter to Emanuel Goldstein, Nice, February 20, 1920
75. Edvard Munch. Autograph letter to Karen Bjølstad, Bergen, November 12, 1922
76. Julius Meier-Graefe. Autograph letter to Edvard Munch, Berlin, August 9, 1895
82. Edvard Munch. Autograph letter (draft) to Tulla Larsen, Gausdal, Faberg, (ca. 1900)
83. Max Dauthendey. Autograph letter to Edvard Munch, Munich, September 17, 1901
84. Edvard Munch. Autograph letter to Karen Bjølstad, Leipzig, February 27, 1903
85. Edvard Munch. Autograph letter to Eva Mudocci, Lübeck, (ca. 1903)
86. Eva Mudocci. Autograph letter to Edvard Munch, Copenhagen, (ca. 1903)
87. August Strindberg. Autograph postcard to Edvard Munch, Stockholm, September, 1908
88. Edvard Munch. Autograph letter to Karen Bjølstad, Copenhagen, (ca. October, 1908)
89. Jappe Nilsen. Autograph postcard to Edvard Munch, November 23, 1915
90. Edvard Munch. Autograph manuscript concerning the death of his sister Sophie, (ca. 1923)
91. Edvard Munch. Autograph letter to Inger Munch, Ekely, June 11, 1943

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS
Munch memorabilia, including books to which he contributed and publications about his work. Lent by the Munch Museum, Oslo, unless otherwise noted.
95. Przybyszewski, Stanislaw; Servaes, Dr. Franz; Pastor, Willy; Meier-Graefe, Julius. Das Werk des Edvard Munch. Berlin: S. Fischer, 1894
98. Bøsen, Henrik. "Når vi døde vagner" ("When We Dead Awaken"). Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag, 1899. Lent by The Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
99. Quickborn (Berlin), vol. 4, January 1, 1899. Issue devoted to August Strindberg and Edvard Munch. Lent by The Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts