

# **MODERN ART AND IDEAS 2** **1893–1913**

*A Guide for Educators*

Department of Education at The Museum of Modern Art

# FAUVISM AND EXPRESSIONISM

Artists included in this guide:  
André Derain, Paul Gauguin, Vasily Kandinsky, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Oskar Kokoschka, Käthe Kollwitz, Jacques-Henri Lartigue, Henri Matisse, Emil Nolde, August Sander.

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# A NOTE TO EDUCATORS

This is the second volume in the Modern Art and Ideas series, which explores the history of modern art through The Museum of Modern Art’s extensive collection. While traditional art historical categories are the series’ organizing principle, these parameters are used primarily as a means of exploring artistic developments and movements in conjunction with their social and historical context. This guide is informed by issues posed by the selected works in a variety of mediums (painting, drawing, prints, and photography), but its organization and lesson topics are tailored to the public school curriculum, with particular application to social studies, visual art, history, and language arts. Lessons are accompanied by writing, research, and hands-on, art-based activities that encourage students to make connections between the visual arts and other disciplines.

The works featured in this guide span the years 1893 to 1913, a period marked by rapid industrialization and population growth, as well as monumental changes in the ways artists produced and exhibited their work. Students will explore Fauvism and Expressionism, two movements in early twentieth-century Western art, as well as the historical, political, and social climates during the time. The close connections between artists, such as their academic training, friendships, travels, and common interests enabled them to collaborate both informally and through more organized efforts. In some cases, the name used to identify a group of artists working together originated from a critic; in other cases, artists publicized their philosophy themselves through manifestos and journals.

By closely examining a selection of artworks from this period, students will consider each artist’s relationship to the cultural and historical climate of the era. Through guided discussions and supplemental activities, students will be able to draw parallels between their own experiences and those of the artists featured here. The guide’s purpose is not just to explicate works of art, but also to model how images and historical information can be integrated into numerous subject areas and skill bases taught in the classroom. By comparing a variety of mediums and artistic styles, students will be able to practice observation, articulation, and discussion skills, and to further develop their visual literacy.

This series was devised with the understanding that the history of modern art is not simply a progression of hermetic styles; rather, a complex matrix of intellectual, social, and historical factors have contributed to the creation of art. Modern art is not solely the product of artists who seek to overthrow convention at all cost. As Kirk Varnedoe suggested, it “has been the product of individual decisions to reconsider the complex possibilities within the traditions available to them, and to act on basic options that were, and remain broadly available and unconcealed.”<sup>1</sup> Indeed, a work of art may be viewed as a locus that invites numerous approaches and offers multiple ways of understanding the historical moment in which it was made and the individual who created it.

1. Kirk Varnedoe, *A Fine Disregard*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1990), 22.

## USING THE EDUCATORS GUIDE

The three lessons that comprise this guide—**Rise of the Modern City**, **Portraiture**, and **Artists' Journeys**—may be used sequentially or as independent units. An introduction to the key principles of each lesson is followed by a close examination of the works, including historical context and artist's style and biography. Discussion questions based on the information lead students through formal analysis of the artwork, and seek to create connections between information and visual evidence. The activity or project that concludes each lesson encourages students to synthesize what they have learned about the works, and carries the lesson to the broader curriculum or skills students are practicing in the classroom.

Encourage dialogue and debate by asking your students to respond to each others' observations and interpretations. Restating students' responses, periodically reviewing students' comments, and summarizing the discussion all help to validate students' thoughts, focus the discussion, and generate additional ideas about the artwork.

### IMAGES

All of the questions, discussions, and activities in this guide are based on the accompanying slides and CD-ROM. Please examine the images carefully before showing them to your students. Your classroom should be equipped with a slide projector or computer and LCD projector.

### ACTIVITIES

The Activities sections encourage students to make connections between their own experiences and the concepts presented in the lessons. Through these activities, students will begin to develop a language for discussing and looking at art. Please feel free to tailor the activities to the age level of your students.

### RESEARCH PROJECTS

In many cases, the materials in this guide will provide opportunities for in-depth research on specific artists or artistic movements. We have suggested some topics, to which we encourage you to add your own.

### **FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES**

The section “For Further Consideration” proposes additional discussion questions and research projects. A bibliography and resources section has also been provided for teachers and students to use in conducting research. The resources recommended in these pages provide further information on the artists and artworks in this guide, general historical topics, and more classroom activities.

### **GLOSSARIES**

A glossary of art historical terms (bolded upon first mention in each lesson) is included at the end of the guide.

## SETTING THE SCENE

### 1. CITIES: THEN AND NOW

1893–1913, the period covered by this guide, was a time of rapid urban development. Ask your students to research the history, geography, and layout of their city or hometown. They should think about any changes that might have occurred, such as the construction of new buildings, demolition of old ones, or changes in transportation systems, and find out how people reacted to these changes. Ask them to make a list of five positive and five negative reactions that people had to the changes. Ask why they think these people had those reactions. Ask if they agree or disagree with their points of view.

### 2. FORMING A CLUB

The artists in this guide often worked with friends or joined with other artists to form professional groups based on common artistic, political, or social views. For example, some of the artists in this guide were associated with the Fauves (French for “wild beasts”) while others were members of the Brücke (the Bridge) or the Blaue Reiter (the Blue Rider). The class should begin with a discussion. Ask your students to consider the following questions:

- **How would you define a “club?” How many types of clubs can you think of?**  
Name some examples.
- **Are you a member of a club? Why did you join? Do you know the other members?**  
Describe some of the club’s activities.

Next, divide your students into small groups. Assign a specific interest to each group, for instance, an academic subject, a political or environmental cause, or a type of music, cinema, or sport. Have each group plan the formation of a club dedicated to their assigned interest. Students should keep track of the decisions they make as a group in forming their club.

LESSONS

LESSON ONE: Rise of the Modern City



**IMAGE ONE:** André Derain. French, 1880–1954. *London Bridge (Pont de Londres)*. 1906. Oil on canvas, 26 x 39" (66 x 99.1 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Zadok. © 2005 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris



**IMAGE TWO:** Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. German, 1880–1938. *Street, Dresden*. 1908 (dated 1907 on painting). Oil on canvas, 59 1/4" x 6' 6 7/8" (150.5 x 200.4 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Purchase



**IMAGE THREE:** Jacques-Henri Lartigue. French, 1894–1986. *Paris, Avenue du Bois de Boulogne*. 1911. Gelatin silver print, 11 7/8 x 15 3/4" (29.5 x 40 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of the photographer

## INTRODUCTION

The late nineteenth century saw the rise of the modern city shaped by industry, innovations in transportation, and shifting politics. During this period and throughout the early twentieth century, the urban experience became an important artistic subject.

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn to broaden their descriptive and analytical vocabulary through comparisons and close analysis of works of art.
- Students will discuss changes taking place in the modern world and the psychological effects on the artists discussed in this guide.

## IMAGE-BASED DISCUSSION

- Take a close look at André Derain's *London Bridge* (Image One) and describe what you see, using a variety of different words. How would you describe it to someone who has never seen it? Make a list of five to ten adjectives that apply to this painting.
- What kind of city do you think this painting is depicting? Think about *industry*, *population*, and *atmosphere* (the "feel" of a place). What do you see in the painting that supports your ideas?

In 1905, André Derain, a French Fauve painter, was **commissioned** by his art dealer Ambroise Vollard to paint views of London. Derain stayed in London for about two months, painting about thirty pictures. All of these paintings depict activity on or around the Thames, the wide river flowing directly through the heart of the city that was (and still is) both a tourist attraction and an essential part of London's industry. Derain set up his easel outdoors, and painted what was directly in front of him.

Nineteenth-century London underwent a huge growth in population following industrial developments, especially the building of the railways, beginning with the 1836 London and Greenwich line. London's population rose from about one million in 1800 to over six million a century later. Grand new architectural projects had been built in the city center, including several bridges over the River Thames, such as London Bridge, depicted in this painting. In 1905, the year before Derain painted this image, London Bridge had been widened to accommodate pedestrians.

Despite London's intense activity, Derain sought to create images of calm and tranquility. That same year, he wrote a letter to Matisse, which said:

I sincerely believe that we ought to aim for calm. . . . This calm is something of which we can be certain. Beauty, then, ought to be an aspiration towards this calm.<sup>2</sup>

- How do you think Derain evokes the "calm" he was aiming for?
- Now that you know more about London during this time, comment on the aspects of the city Derain chose to focus on. How do you think his choice of material, subject, and composition reflect his attitude to this modern city? Give examples from the work to support your ideas.

2. André Derain, January 1906, quoted in Judi Freeman, *The Fauve Landscape* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1990), 85.



- *Street, Dresden* (Image Two), painted by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner in his studio, is based on the artist's memories of walking about the city. In contrast, Derain painted *London Bridge* in the open air, setting up his easel along the banks of the river. Analyze these differences in approach and how they might affect the making of a work of art.
- Imagine that you are part of the scene depicted in Kirchner's *Street, Dresden*. Describe what it might be like to walk along that street. Compare and contrast *Street, Dresden* with Derain's *London Bridge*. Use visual evidence to support your ideas.
- Make a list of ten sounds that you might associate with the scene in *Street, Dresden*. Look closely at all the areas of the painting. Compare the sounds you associate with Kirchner's painting with those you might associate with Derain's painting. What are the main differences?

At the time this was painted, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner was twenty-eight years old and living in Dresden, a large city in southeast Germany. His studio, a former butcher's shop, was the meeting point for the artist's group the Brücke, formed in 1905, of which he was a founding member. In a letter to fellow painter Erich Heckel, he wrote of the Dresden crowds:

Completely strange faces pop up as interesting points through the crowd. I am carried along with the current, lacking will. To move becomes an unacceptable effort.<sup>3</sup>

During the nineteenth century, Dresden's population quadrupled from 95,000 in 1849 to nearly 400,000 in 1900 as a result of a boom in industry, especially food processing and the production of medical equipment. By the time this picture was painted, Dresden had over 500,000 inhabitants. The scene depicted in *Street, Dresden* is the fashionable Königstrasse (King Street), where wealthy inhabitants went to shop and to socialize.

- How does Kirchner express his opinion of the city in this painting? Give examples.
- Compare the choices that Kirchner and Derain made when painting the modern city. Using evidence from each painting, discuss the artists' use of color, composition, and setting, and analyze their attitude to the city.
- How do the different places in which Kirchner and Derain executed their paintings seem to have impacted their work?
- Now examine the photograph *Paris, Avenue du Bois de Boulogne* (Image Three), by Jacques-Henri Lartigue. What might be happening? Describe the scene.
- Compare this photograph to Derain's *London Bridge* and Kirchner's *Street, Dresden*. What are some of the similarities and differences between the three works? How does Lartigue's attitude to the city differ from that of Derain and Kirchner?

This photograph, taken in 1911 by Jacques-Henri Lartigue, depicts a pair of fashionable ladies walking along the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, a tree-lined avenue in Paris. Lartigue began to photograph at the age of seven, and was only seventeen years old when he took this picture. Throughout his career, he photographed daily life in Paris, often focusing on the leisure activities of the upper-middle classes, of which he was a member. Although Lartigue's

3. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, quoted in Sherwin Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers: Art, Luxury, and Immorality in Berlin, 1913–16," in *Art Bulletin*, 82, no. 1 (March 2000), 123.

work seems lighthearted and informal, and was intended for his own and his family's amusement, it tells us a great deal about the changes taking place in Europe during the early twentieth century.

## ACTIVITIES

### 1. Looking at London (Image One)

Have students research one of Derain's other London paintings, using a map of London to pinpoint the view and analyzing Derain's choice of setting and use of color. Why do you think he chose a particular scene? What impression of London does it give?

List of Web sites for this activity

1. For Derain's London paintings, see:

*Houses of Parliament at Night*

[www.metmuseum.org/works\\_of\\_art/viewone.asp?dep=15&viewmode=0&item=1975%2E1%2E168](http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/viewone.asp?dep=15&viewmode=0&item=1975%2E1%2E168)

*London: St Paul's Cathedral Seen from the Thames*

[www.artsmia.org/mia/e\\_images/06/mia\\_6842e.jpg](http://www.artsmia.org/mia/e_images/06/mia_6842e.jpg)

*The Pool of London*

[www.tate.org.uk/collection/N/N06/N06030\\_9.jpg](http://www.tate.org.uk/collection/N/N06/N06030_9.jpg)

2. For old photographs of London, see:

[www.images-of-london.co.uk/OldPhotos.htm](http://www.images-of-london.co.uk/OldPhotos.htm)

3. For a map of London, see:

[www.map-of-london.co.uk/map.html](http://www.map-of-london.co.uk/map.html)

The artist Claude Monet also visited London several times, between 1870 and 1904. Research Monet's scenes of London and compare and contrast them with Derain's. Do you see any differences between them? What do you think is the difference between the two artists' attitudes to the city? How do they convey their attitudes?

For Monet's London paintings, see:

*Houses of Parliament, London, Sun Breaking Through the Fog*

[artchive.com/artchive/M/monet/sun\\_fog.jpg.html](http://artchive.com/artchive/M/monet/sun_fog.jpg.html)

*The Thames at Westminster*

[artchive.com/artchive/M/monet/wminster.jpg.html](http://artchive.com/artchive/M/monet/wminster.jpg.html)

Think about which scenes of your hometown you would depict if you were trying to give a sense of it to someone who had never been there. Why would you use those particular scenes? What impression of the place are you trying to give?

### 2. A Letter from Dresden (Image Two)

Research the history, geography, and city plan of Dresden. Imagine you are living in Dresden during the time Kirchner painted *Street, Dresden*. Now write a letter to a friend or family member describing your experience of the city, based on the painting and your research.

### 3. Haussmann's Paris (Image Three)

Between 1850 and 1870, following periods of revolution, the streets of Paris were transformed by town planner Baron Georges Haussmann. Many of the densely crowded and

winding streets were destroyed to make way for broad avenues that eradicated overcrowding, created better traffic circulation, and improved the government’s chances at quelling future uprisings.

Have your students research the changes in Paris between 1850 and 1870, making note of the city’s layout before and after Haussmann’s design. What effect might these changes have had on the citizens? Imagine that you are living in Paris during this period. Name five positive and five negative impacts that the new town planning might have had on daily life.

LESSON TWO: Portraiture



IMAGE FOUR

Oskar Kokoschka. Austrian, 1886–1980. *Self-Portrait*. 1913. Oil on canvas, 32 1/8 x 19 1/2" (81.6 x 49.5 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Purchase © 2005 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/Pro Litteris, Zurich

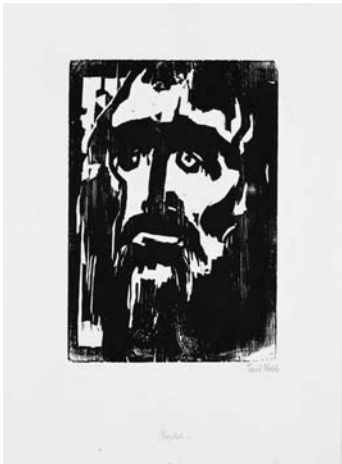


IMAGE SIX

Emil Nolde. German, 1867–1956. *Prophet*. 1912. Woodcut. Composition: 12 3/4 x 8 3/4" (32.1 x 22.2 cm); sheet: 19 1/16 x 14 3/8" (50 x 36.5 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Given anonymously



IMAGE FIVE

Käthe Kollwitz. German, 1867–1945. *Self-Portrait with Hand on Forehead, State II a*. 1910. Etching. Plate: 6 1/16 x 5 1/2" (15.4 x 14 cm); sheet: 13 3/16 x 9 13/16" (33 x 24.9 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Mrs. Milton Weill © 2005 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn



IMAGE SEVEN

Oskar Kokoschka. Austrian, 1886–1980. *Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat*. 1909. Oil on canvas, 30 1/8 x 53 3/8" (76.5 x 136.2 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund © 2005 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/Pro Litteris, Zurich



IMAGE EIGHT

August Sander. German, 1876–1964. *Farming Generations (Bauerngeneration)*. 1912. Gelatin silver print, 8 3/8 x 11 1/16" (21.9 x 29 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of the photographer © 2005 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn

## INTRODUCTION

The following lesson is divided into two parts. The first part features portraits of individuals and the second addresses works depicting more than one person. These images are presented together because in all cases the artists chose not to specify their subjects' setting nor to include details about their subjects' occupation or interests. Rather, the artists were deliberately ambiguous about such material concerns, seeking instead to communicate the inner dispositions of their subjects through compositional and medium choices. The self-portraits by Oskar Kokoschka and Käthe Kollwitz, as well as the portrait by Emil Nolde and the double portrait by Kokoschka, are not precise representations of specific people; instead, the artists manipulated their subjects' appearance to express what cannot be easily observed.

Image Seven, Kokoschka's double portrait of the art historians Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat, reveals a psychological study of the sitters. Kokoschka created portraits for many prominent figures of Viennese society, such as artists, lawyers, scientists, writers, and doctors. Here Kokoschka placed the two figures in an ambiguous setting, inviting the viewer to speculate about their relationship primarily through their facial expressions and hand gestures. As a point of comparison, August Sander's photograph *Farming Generations* (Image Eight) is a carefully constructed representation of an agrarian family, formally posed for a group portrait. In contrast to Kokoschka's double portrait, Sander's methodological photographic process attempts to capture as many physical details as possible about his subject.

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Students will compare portraits, two of which are self-portraits, focusing on artists' choices, such as *medium*, or the materials an artist uses to create a work of art, and *composition*, meaning the arrangement of different elements upon the surface of a painting, drawing, etc.
- Students will explore the characteristics that these portraits convey about the sitter.

## INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

Ask your students how they would define a portrait. Ask how they would define a self-portrait. Ask them to describe some similarities and differences between the two kinds of portraiture. Your students should consider examples of portraiture that they have seen in books, magazines, online, or in museums.

## IMAGE-BASED DISCUSSION

- Describe what you see in Kokoschka's *Self-Portrait* (Image Four). By looking at the painting, what can you tell about the artist? How has he chosen to depict himself?
- Suppose you were able to see more of the person in this painting. What would you see? What more might you learn about this person?

This painting is a self-portrait by the Austrian artist Oskar Kokoschka which he made when he was twenty-seven years old. Early on in his career, Kokoschka received numerous commissions for portraits from patrons in Vienna, mostly writers. Although he devoted most of his career to being an artist, Kokoschka was also a writer and teacher. Kokoschka made the following remark in a letter that he wrote to The Museum of Modern Art forty years after finishing this self-portrait:

It is a representative example of my work of that period, the student may learn from it to see with his own eyes how the self becomes a constant in a self-portrait that does not

vary even after years when age, life, ambitions have changed the persona of the creator. All my self-portraits were painted in the sense of stock-taking, in the view of estimating individuality.<sup>4</sup>

- Ask your students what they think Kokoschka is trying to express. Ask if they support or disagree with his statement. Ask if Kokoschka's comment changes their ideas about this painting. Ask why or why not.
- Compare Käthe Kollwitz's *Self-Portrait with Hand on Forehead* (Image Five), an etching, to Kokoschka's *Self-Portrait*. What sorts of similarities and differences do you see?
- What do you think Kollwitz has chosen to express about herself? How would you compare Kollwitz's self-portrait with others you have seen?

From an early age, Käthe Kollwitz expressed an interest in becoming an artist. During the late nineteenth century, the state-run art academies in Germany only admitted men, so Kollwitz attended a private art school for women. In 1890, Kollwitz gave up her studies in painting after seeing an exhibition of prints by Max Klinger (1857–1920), a German artist who advocated the use of printmaking and drawing, which can exist in multiple copies, as a means of communicating social concerns to a larger audience. Klinger's message resonated with Kollwitz, and she began to pursue printmaking.

By choosing printmaking as her primary means of making art, Kollwitz could make more copies of her work available to more people. She did not practice the tradition of printing a limited edition of an image, as most artists did. Instead, in order to keep prices of her prints affordable, she produced numerous copies of a single image. Kollwitz also published her work in periodicals, and she created posters to support various social causes. People occasionally sent their copies of prints to her so that she could sign them.<sup>5</sup>

Kollwitz chose not to be active in the avant-garde scene that surrounded her. Instead of mingling with other artists in smaller circles, she preferred to maintain a strong connection with a larger public; she considered the developing artistic movements to be elitist and out of touch with current social issues, as her following statement suggests:

[Art must be] an understanding between the artist and the people such as there always used to be in the best periods in history. [In] our century, the figurative arts have degenerated to the wretchedness of exhibition galleries.<sup>6</sup>

- Ask your students to compare Kollwitz's comment with *Self-Portrait with Hand on Forehead*. Ask if they feel that the way Kollwitz represented herself communicates the idea that there is a connection between art and its audience. Ask why or why not.
- Ask your students to consider Kollwitz's choice to make her works of art more accessible to a larger number of people. Ask them if they agree or disagree with her approach. Ask if they think that an artist must necessarily create more works of art in order to reach a larger audience.
- Ask your students what they think Kollwitz meant when she referred to "the wretchedness of exhibition galleries."
- Artists traditionally display their work for the public to see in museums and galleries. Ask your students to consider some of the places where they have seen works of art other

4. Letter from Oskar Kokoschka to Dorothy Miller, October 4, 1953. Tobias G. Natter, *Oskar Kokoschka: the Early Portraits from Vienna and Berlin, 1909–1914* (New York: Neue Galerie, 2002), 164.

5. Hildegard Bachert, in Elizabeth Prelinger et al., *Käthe Kollwitz* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1992), 120.

6. Fiona Griffith, *Käthe Kollwitz: Artist of the People* (London: The South Bank Centre, 1995), 12.

than in a museum, such as large sculptures in a public park, murals at school or in the library, and reproductions in books. Ask if they think the meaning of a work of art changes depending on where it is displayed. Ask why or why not.

- Give the class a few minutes to look at Emil Nolde's *Prophet* (Image Six). Ask your students what they see in the image. Ask them to think of three descriptive words that come to mind when they look at this image. Ask why they chose those words.
- Then ask your students what words they would choose to describe the person's expression. Ask them what they see that makes them say that.

This image is a woodcut by the artist Emil Nolde. Titled *Prophet*, Nolde made this print after recovering from a serious illness. His illness inspired him to address issues of spirituality in his work, and he began making references to Biblical passages. Prior to creating this print, Nolde began a cycle of religious paintings centering on the life of Jesus Christ.

- Ask your students how they would define the word "prophet." Have them compare their definition to Nolde's painting. Ask what they think of the way Nolde chose to depict a prophet.

Emil Nolde was originally named Emil Hansen. He later changed his family name to Nolde in honor of his birthplace, a seaside town in the state of Schleswig-Holstein, a region of northern Germany bordering on Denmark. Although he came from a farming family, Nolde worked in a furniture factory before becoming an artist. He once explained that making woodcut prints remained one of his preferred methods of creating art because of some of the same skills and delights it shared with furniture making. For example, he chose to include in his prints the inconsistencies and knots from his woodblocks. He once described the process of making woodcuts as "controlled (and happy) accidents."<sup>7</sup>

- Ask your students to take another look at *Prophet*. Ask them if knowing about how Nolde made the work of art changes their ideas about it.
- Ask your students what kinds of comparisons they would make between Nolde's *Prophet* and Kollwitz's *Self-Portrait*, considering that the artists used two different printmaking processes.

Nolde was briefly involved with the Brücke group, where he exchanged printmaking skills with the other members; he taught them about *intaglio* and etching, and learned how to make woodcuts. Nolde, along with the other Brücke artists, shared an interest in non-Western art. However, he eventually departed from the group because he felt at odds with his colleagues. Nolde was strongly attached to his agricultural roots, which clashed with the group's urban cultural sensibility. He described his art as "... a rural art [that] believes in all human qualities and in the primal beings that scientific research already rejected long ago, and that are, indeed, no longer to be found within the city walls."<sup>8</sup>

- Ask your students what they think Nolde meant by this statement. Ask them if his comment supports their ideas about his work. Ask why or why not.

7. Timothy O. Benson, in Benson et al. *Nolde: The Painter's Prints* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts in association with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1995), 37.

8. Benson et al., *Nolde: The Painter's Prints*, 15.



Throughout his artistic career, Nolde collaborated most closely with his wife, Ada. She often printed his work and helped him maintain fastidious records of his prints. In 1926, the couple settled permanently in Seebüll, a quiet village near Nolde's birthplace. There, Nolde and his wife purchased a house where they established a foundation and museum where Nolde's works are exhibited today.

- Show your students Kokoschka's *Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat* (Image Seven) and ask them to spend a few moments looking closely at the image. Ask them to describe what they see in the painting. Ask them what they can tell about the two people in the painting. Ask them to describe their gestures.
- Ask your students if, based on what they see, they suppose there is a relationship between the two figures. Ask them what they see that makes them say that.
- Ask your students to take a look at the space around the two figures. Ask how they would describe the space.

This painting, a double portrait called *Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat*, was painted by Kokoschka in 1909, four years before he completed his *Self-Portrait* (Image Four).

- Ask your students what kinds of similarities they can find between *Kokoschka's Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat* and his *Self-Portrait*? How do the two paintings differ?

Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat were a married couple. They commissioned Kokoschka to paint their double portrait, which they kept in their home. The Tietzes were art historians and supported Kokoschka's work. However, they refused to show this painting in public, regardless of Kokoschka's attempts to borrow it for inclusion in an exhibition of his work. During the Nazi occupation, the Tietzes fled Germany and came to the United States. In order to help finance the cost of their relocation, the Tietzes sold this painting, which they had rolled up and carried with them. The Museum of Modern Art purchased the painting in 1940, and it has remained in the Museum's collection ever since.

- Ask your students to take a moment to look at the photograph titled *Farming Generations* (Image Eight). Ask them what they notice about the photograph. Ask them to pair up with a classmate to make a list of similarities and differences between this picture and Kokoschka's painting *Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat*.
- Ask your students what they can determine about the people in the photograph. Ask them who they suppose they are. Direct them to look closely at all the elements of this image. Ask them what details they think the photograph reveals to us about these people.

This photograph, called *Farming Generations*, was taken by August Sander. Shown in the photograph is a farming family from Westerwald, an area in southwestern Germany. During Sander's youth, Westerwald contained many farming communities and small, family-run mines. Sander took this photograph in 1912 after he had opened his own photography studio in a suburb of Cologne. One Sunday Sander packed his photographic equipment onto his bicycle and set off to a few of the towns in Westerwald, aware that many of the families would be dressed in their best church attire and would therefore most likely be receptive to having their portraits taken.



Sander's frequent trips through Westerwald inspired him to begin an ambitious endeavor around 1911 that would span over forty years. A selection of these portraits was first published in 1929, as a volume of sixty photographs titled *Face of Our Time*. Sander was unable to complete the project during his lifetime, but in 1980 his son, Gunther, published a group of the photographs in a book called *Citizens of the Twentieth Century*.<sup>9</sup>

Along with his portraits of the Westerwald farmers, Sander also photographed writers, artists, bankers, miners, lawyers, circus performers, musicians, beggars, and gypsies. His goal was to capture as thoroughly as possible German types from different professions and social strata. The organization of these images was based on Sander's own sense of Germany's economic and sociological structure at the time, and was not associated with any scientific research. Rather than following a typical hierarchical social order, Sander's own philosophy espoused the strong connection between man and nature, and therefore privileged farmers because of their close ties to the earth.

Sander often made his photographs in the sitter's home or local environment. He was also very particular about the composition of the photograph; the subject's entire body had to be visible in the photograph or else cropped from the knee up. Sander believed that these compositional choices maintained a level of scientific objectivity in his work.<sup>10</sup>

- **Ask your students to respond to this information. Ask them to compare *Farming Generations* with other family portraits they have seen, either in books, museums, or their own photo album at home. Ask if they notice any similarities or differences. Ask them to explain their response.**
- **Ask your students to define "scientific objectivity" in their own words. They should include other examples of photographs that they have seen. Ask your students to consider whether or not they feel that the image represents scientific objectivity, based on what they know about Sander's photograph. Ask them why or why not.**

## ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS

### 1. Looking at Yourself in the Future (Image Four)

Imagine yourself twenty-five years from now. What do you think you will be doing? How do you think you will have changed? Do you suppose certain characteristics of yourself will remain the same? Create a self-portrait as you envision yourself in twenty-five years. Compare this self-portrait with the one you did earlier. Do you notice any similarities or differences?

### 2. The Meaning of Body Language (Image Seven)

What are gestures and what do they tell us? Gestures often communicate specific feelings or messages. For instance, we wave a hand to say hello. Some gestures can be ambiguous, leading people to interpret them differently.

For this activity, divide your students into small groups. Ask each group to create a gesture that communicates the following: happiness, sadness, fear, anger.

### 3. Banned Art (Image Seven)

During the 1930s, the Nazi party rose to power in Germany. Many artists and intellectuals were affected by the suppression of political, individual, and artistic rights. Some artists, such as Kokoschka, sought asylum outside of Germany, while others, such as Kollwitz,

9. Robert Kramer, *August Sander: Photographs of an Epoch, 1904–1959* (New York: Aperture, Inc., 1980), 17.

10. Ulrich Keller, *August Sander: Citizens of the Twentieth Century, Portrait Photographs, 1892–1952*, ed. Gunther Sander, trans. Linda Keller (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989), 28.

remained in the country for fear of repercussions against family members. Research the impact of political events in Germany during this period on the artists in this guide. As an extension, consider examples of other political events and their impact on other artists.

#### 4. Group Portraits (Image Eight)

Ask your students to bring a photograph of themselves taken with family or friends. Students can volunteer to show their picture to the rest of the class for discussion.

- Describe what happened when this picture was taken.
- Consider the following details: Who took the photo? How many people were in the picture and who were they? Did everyone pose, or did people move around? Where was the picture taken? What other details were included in the photograph? Why do you think they were included?

#### 5. Faces of Our Time (Image Eight)

Obtain a copy of Sander's *Faces of Our Time* or *Citizens of the Twentieth Century*. Alternatively, you can view Sander's photographs on the following Web sites:

[www.moma.org/collection/depts/photography/blowups/photo\\_009.html](http://www.moma.org/collection/depts/photography/blowups/photo_009.html)

[www.getty.edu/art/collections/bio/a1786-1.html](http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/bio/a1786-1.html)

[www.metmuseum.org/special/August\\_Sander/Germany\\_images.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/special/August_Sander/Germany_images.htm)

Choose two or three photographs to compare. List their similarities and differences.

What does each image tell you about the person or people in the photograph? How would you describe the decisions Sander made when he took the photograph? For example, what can you tell about the setting of the picture? Take some time to discuss what you *don't* see in the photograph as well. Suppose Sander had taken the photograph ten steps further away from the scene than he actually did. How do you think this new vantage point would change the photograph? What do you think you would see?

Now that you have spent time looking at a few photographs from one of Sander's books or from a Web site, what are your thoughts about his work? For instance, do you think that he achieved his goal of creating a record of the people around him during his lifetime?

- Consider your own experiences taking pictures, or other photographs you have seen. Return to the picture you chose of your family or friends for the class discussion earlier. How would you compare your photograph with Sander's *Farming Generations*?
- Choose another portrait from this lesson or another lesson in this guide. Consider the type of medium the artist used. Compare Sander's *Farming Generations* with your selected portrait. How do you think the medium of each work affects your interpretation of it? Explain your ideas. You can explore this idea further by taking into consideration specific techniques the artist used and choices he or she made. For instance, in Kokoschka's painting *Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat* (Image Seven), the artist used his fingernails to create small scratch marks on the surface of the canvas. Matisse deliberately left spaces between the marks of paint, revealing the bare canvas in his painting *Landscape*

at *Collioure* (Image Eleven). Sander's photographs were made according to consistent guidelines that he had established; he made sure that the subject appeared either from the waist up or from head to toe.

Find out more about some of the other photographs included in *Faces of Our Time*.

- How would you describe the system Sander used to organize these photographs?
- Learn more about critics' responses to Sander's work. For example, the writer Thomas Mann once commented:

This collection of precise and unpretentious photographs is a treasure-trove for lovers of physiognomy and an outstanding opportunity for the study of human types as stamped by profession and social class.<sup>11</sup>

- What do you suppose Mann meant? Compare Mann's ideas and those of other writers with your own ideas. Do you find that you agree or disagree with these statements?
- Take another look at *Farming Generations*. What is the effect of looking at this image by itself versus looking at it as part of a group of photographs?

## 6. Portrait versus Self-Portrait

The purpose of this activity is to enable students to compare the experiences of creating a portrait of a close acquaintance and a self-portrait.

### A Portrait of Someone You Know

Create a portrait of someone you know, such as a friend or family member. As you make your portrait, keep track of the decisions you make along the way.

- What sorts of things do you want other people to know about this person? How did you choose to represent these details? Why?
- Are there certain characteristics of this person that you excluded? Explain.
- Did you create your portrait from direct observation, from memory, or from a photograph? Why?

Many artists have received commissions to create portraits of people they do not know well. Suppose you were an artist and were asked to make a portrait of someone you do not know. What kinds of things would you like to know about this person in order to create a portrait? How do you suppose knowing this information would influence your work? How would you represent certain characteristics of this person in the portrait?

### Looking at Yourself

Create a self-portrait. While working, consider the types of materials you choose. Keep track of compositional choices, such as the arrangement of figures or objects in space.

- What types of other choices did you make?

11. Letter from Thomas Mann to Kurt Wolff, January 6, 1930, in Kramer, *August Sander: Photographs of an Epoch*, 11.

- What did you include in your self-portrait—your face, your body—and why? How would you describe your pose?
- What kinds of meanings do these choices have for you? If you were to give your work a title, what would you call it?
- Think about the works of art that you discussed in this lesson. Did these portraits play a role in the portraits you created for this activity? In your view, would it make sense to make these portraits before or after looking closely at the portraits in this lesson? Why?

LESSON THREE: Artists' Journeys



**IMAGE NINE:** Paul Gauguin. French, 1848–1903. *Noa Noa (Fragrance)* from *Noa Noa*. 1893–94. One from a series of ten woodcuts. Woodcut on endgrain boxwood, printed in color with stencils. Composition: 14 x 8 1/16" (35.5 x 20.5 cm); sheet: 15 1/2 x 9 3/8" (39.3 x 24.4 cm). Publisher: the artist, Paris. Printer: Louis Ray, Paris. Edition: 25–30. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Lillie P. Bliss Collection



**IMAGE TEN:** Henri Matisse. French, 1869–1954. *Study for "Luxe, calme et volupté."* 1905. Oil on canvas, 12 7/8 x 16" (32.7 x 40.6 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Mrs. John Hay Whitney Bequest. © 2005 Succession H. Matisse, Paris/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



**IMAGE ELEVEN:** Henri Matisse. French, 1869–1954. *Landscape at Collioure*. 1905. Oil on canvas, 15 1/4 x 18 3/8" (38.8 x 46.6 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift and Bequest of Louise Reinhardt Smith. © 2005 Succession H. Matisse, Paris/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



**IMAGE TWELVE:** Vasily Kandinsky. French, born Russia, 1866–1944. *Picture with an Archer*. 1909. Oil on canvas, 68 7/8 x 57 3/8" (175 x 144.6 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift and Bequest of Louise Reinhardt Smith. © 2005 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris

## INTRODUCTION

Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century artists often took advantage of innovations in transportation by traveling to exotic or rural locations. Driven in part by their dissatisfaction with the modern city, many artists sought out places resembling untouched earthly paradises. In these areas, away from the bustle of the modern city, artists were able to focus on their work and observe nature firsthand; because of this, many radical artistic experiments occurred in the most rural and least "modern" of settings.

Escaping from the urban environment had an effect on certain artists' work. In order to evoke the sensation of being in a harmonious, warm, and tranquil coastal setting, for example, Matisse experimented with vibrant colors and sketchy brushwork that was suitable for the setting in which he painted. Similarly, the Russian artist Vasily Kandinsky, working in the quiet rural setting of Murnau, away from his home in the bustling city of Munich, experimented with colors and subject matter that reflected the unspoiled rural environment.

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze modern artists' interest in travel.
- Students will discuss modern artists' radical and unusual use of artistic materials.
- Students will look at the ways in which modern artists were inspired by unusual artistic sources.

## IMAGE-BASED DISCUSSION

Give your students a moment to look at *Noa Noa (Fragrance)* (Image Nine). Then begin the discussion by asking them to describe what they see in this work. Ask them who they think the figures might be and what they might be doing.

- Ask your students to look closely at the medium that the artist used. Ask them how they would describe it, using five adjectives. (For more information on the processes of printmaking, see [www.moma.org/exhibitions/2001/whatisaprint](http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/2001/whatisaprint).)

In 1891, disgusted by what he saw as a corrupt and decadent bourgeois culture in Paris, the French artist Paul Gauguin decided to seek an unspoiled, simpler society. Abandoning his family, friends, and artistic career in Paris, he went on a voyage to Tahiti, in French Polynesia, a journey of over 9,500 miles. After returning to Paris, in 1893, Gauguin created the *Noa Noa* woodcuts (Tahitian for "fragrance"), which he had intended to print in book form alongside poems to explain his reasons for traveling to Tahiti. The book, however, was not published in France until Gauguin's return to Tahiti, in 1901.

- Ask your students what clues about Gauguin's experience of Tahiti they pick up from this image?
- Ask how they think Gauguin evoked the idea of "fragrance" in this work. Make sure they give examples to back up their ideas.
- Have your students compare and contrast Matisse's *Study for "Luxe, calme et volupté"* (Image Ten) with Gauguin's print *Noa Noa*. Ask them to describe the main similarities and differences.

Henri Matisse painted this work, an oil sketch for a larger work, in the small fishing village of Saint-Tropez, in the south of France, where he and his family were on holiday with the painter Paul Signac. One day, after an argument with Signac, Matisse, his wife Amélie, and their son Pierre went for a walk, during which Matisse painted an earlier version of this study. In that version, only Amélie and Pierre are visible, sitting by the edge of the sea; in this version, Matisse has added not only a picnic blanket and food, but also a boat and nude women drying themselves after a swim.

The title for this work, *Luxe, calme et volupté* (Richness, calm, and pleasure), was inspired by a poem by the French poet Charles Baudelaire, called *Invitation to the Voyage*:

My child, my sister, dream  
 How sweet all things would seem  
 Were we in that kind land to live together,  
 And there love slow and long,  
 There love and die among  
 Those scenes that image you, that sumptuous weather.  
 Drowned suns that glimmer there  
 Through cloud-disheveled air  
 Move me with such a mystery as appears  
 Within those other skies  
 Of your treacherous eyes  
 When I behold them shining through their tears.

There, there is nothing else but grace and measure,  
 Richness, calm and pleasure.

Furniture that wears  
 The luster of the years  
 Softly would glow within our glowing chamber.  
 Flowers of rarest bloom  
 Proffering their perfume  
 Mixed with the vague fragrances of amber;  
 Gold ceilings would there be,  
 Mirrors deep as the sea,  
 The walls all in an Eastern splendor hung—  
 Nothing but should address  
 The soul's loneliness,  
 Speaking her sweet and secret native tongue.

There, there is nothing else but grace and measure,  
 Richness, calm and pleasure.

See, sheltered from the swells  
 There in the still canals  
 Those drowsy ships that dream of sailing forth;  
 It is to satisfy  
 Your least desire, they ply  
 Hither through all the waters of the earth.  
 —The sun at close of day  
 Clothes the fields of hay,



Then the canals, at last the town entire  
 In hyacinth and gold:  
 Slowly the land is rolled  
 Sleepward under a sea of gentle fire.

There, there is nothing else but grace and measure,  
 Richness, calm and pleasure.<sup>12</sup>

- Ask your students how they think Matisse attempted to create “richness,” “calm,” and “pleasure” in his painting. Ask for examples that support their ideas.
- Ask them how Matisse’s use of color creates an atmosphere. Ask if they think the atmosphere Matisse conjured with color is like the atmosphere Baudelaire created with words.

When Matisse painted this work, the South of France was a popular tourist destination. The new railways from Paris to the South made travel quick and easy. For artists, the distinctively brilliant light of the South and the opportunity to paint outdoors were especially tempting. Like Gauguin, Matisse and some of his contemporaries sought out locations untouched by the modern world, valuing unspoiled landscapes in the same way regular city-dwelling vacationers did.

- Ask your students how knowing this information about the new railways affects their ideas about the painting.
- Ask your students to consider Baudelaire’s poem. Ask them how they think Matisse created a sense of environment in *Study for “Luxe, calme et volupté.”*
- Ask your students to compare and contrast Matisse’s *Study for “Luxe, calme et volupté”* with *Landscape at Collioure* (Image Eleven), also by Matisse. Ask what they think changed in the way the artist used paint to describe a scene. Ask why they think this might be.

In May 1905 Matisse traveled to Collioure, a small village near the French-Spanish border. His wife Amélie had suggested the location, since she grew up nearby and had family living there. The Matisses stayed in Collioure until early September, by which time Matisse had created about fifteen canvases, forty watercolors, and over one hundred drawings. André Derain joined the Matisses in Collioure in June 1905 and wrote to his fellow painter Maurice de Vlaminck about his experience, saying that he had discovered “. . . a new concept of light, which consists in the following: the negation of shadow. Here, the light is very strong, the shadows very clear.”<sup>13</sup>

In *Landscape at Collioure*, Matisse applied oil paint onto an unprepared (unprimed) canvas, using paint in nonnaturalistic colors, sometimes directly from the tube and often with quick, sketchy strokes. Despite the fact that some of the canvas was left untouched, showing raw material between the strokes of paint, this painting is considered a “finished” work. By contrast, Matisse’s *Study for “Luxe, calme et volupté”* was a sketch made as preparation for another painting, and was never intended to be displayed as a finished work of art.

12. Charles Baudelaire, *Invitation to the Voyage* from *The Flowers of Evil*, c. 1850s; repr. *Baudelaire: Invitation to the Voyage, a Poem Illustrated*, trans. Richard Wilbur (New York: Bulfinch Press, 1997).

13. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, *Art in Theory: 1900–2000* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 64.



- **How does knowing this information affect your ideas about the work?**

Some art critics and historians have described work such as Matisse's *Landscape at Collioure* as "unfinished." Audiences at the time were used to paintings that filled the entire canvas, and that were rendered in naturalistic colors and were often varnished. However, later art critics discussed the idea of "finished" and "unfinished" works of art as being something distinctively modern.

Using this idea and Matisse's *Landscape at Collioure* as starting points, have your students discuss what makes a finished work of art.

- **Ask your students how they know when they have finished a painting, sculpture, or other work of art.**
- **Ask them to think about works of art they have made at school or at home. Ask them why they stopped when they did. Ask if they think they could have stopped earlier.**
- **Ask your students to consider why Matisse might have stopped painting *Landscape at Collioure* when he did. Ask what they think the work would have been like if he had continued working on it.**
- **Show your students *Picture with an Archer* by Vasily Kandinsky (Image Twelve). Ask them to look at it carefully for a few moments. Have them compare this painting with Matisse's *Landscape at Collioure*. Ask them to describe the main similarities and differences.**

Vasily Kandinsky painted this work during a summer visit to a small town called Murnau in the south Bavarian Alps, a particularly dramatic and mountainous region that he and three other avant-garde artists who lived in Munich visited regularly between 1908 and 1911. Famous for its local folk art, especially paintings on glass, which the visiting artists collected and emulated, Murnau was similar to the small rural towns that Kandinsky had visited while practicing law in his native Russia.

- **Ask your students to think about how Kandinsky evoked the atmosphere of a rural culture or setting in *Picture with an Archer*. Ask them to give examples from the work to support their ideas.**

## ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS

### 1. Gauguin in Tahiti (Image Nine)

What Gauguin found in Tahiti was a culture significantly altered by 125 years of French colonial rule. Although native traditions were all but wiped out, he attempted to evoke an untouched and harmonious culture in his work. Gauguin's image of precolonial Tahiti was largely based on an 1837 book by a Belgian explorer, Jacques Antoine Moerenhout. Most of Gauguin's Tahitian works had very little connection to the reality of the Tahiti that he experienced.

Have your students create their own "travel journal," just as Gauguin did, based on either a real visit or on an imaginary one. They should reflect on whether or not the visit lived up to their expectations. They should consider how the experience was different from what they were expecting, what their expectations were based on, and whether or not they would visit again.

## 2. The Blaue Reiter (Image Twelve)

Research the lives and works of other artists associated with the **Blaue Reiter** group. How would you compare their work with Kandinsky's? Look closely at work by one of these artists before and after his or her membership in the group. How was the artist's work affected by being part of this group? How did it change after the group dissolved? Look at connections with other artists working at the time, such as the Dutch artist Piet Mondrian. What was distinctive about the Blaue Reiter artists?

Kandinsky was interested in creating an art that described the essence, rather than the external appearance, of things he saw in the world. This was largely due to the influence of Theosophy, a spiritual movement that foretold a future in which all material things would be destroyed, leaving only their essence. This informed his intentions of creating an art of "internal necessity."<sup>14</sup> For instance, he once saw a painting of a haystack in an exhibition and was unable to recognize what the subject was. He remarked:

It was from the catalogue that I learned this was a haystack. I was upset I had not recognized it. I also thought the painter had no right to paint in such an imprecise fashion.<sup>15</sup>

- **Ask your students how they think Kandinsky's ideas about abstract art are reflected in *Picture with an Archer*. They should give examples from the work to support their ideas.**
- **Ask your students why, based on the information given in these lessons, they think the Blaue Reiter artists chose to create images in the manner that they did.**

## 3. Kandinsky Goes Abstract (Image Twelve)

The word "abstract" is used to describe ideas or images that do not depict the visual appearance of things in the world in a naturalistic manner. Kandinsky did not want us to look at an image and try to figure out what it depicts or what story it tells; rather, he invites us to leave behind our attachment to the material world and immerse ourselves instead in the color and rhythm of the image.

Ask your students to research the meaning of abstract art by looking at examples of abstraction throughout the twentieth century. Examples from MoMA's collection that could be used include Joan Miró, Jackson Pollock, and Piet Mondrian ([www.moma.org/collection/depts/paint\\_sculpt.html](http://www.moma.org/collection/depts/paint_sculpt.html)). Discuss why these examples might be thought of as abstract, and why the artists might have wanted to make this kind of art. Ask your students how they would define abstract art, judging by the works they have looked at in their research. Ask how they would compare their definition with Kandinsky's idea of abstraction. Ask them if they can make any connections between their ideas and other works of art discussed in this guide.

14. Harrison and Wood, *Art in Theory*, 89.

15. [www.modjourn.brown.edu/mjp/image/kandinsky/kandinsky.html](http://www.modjourn.brown.edu/mjp/image/kandinsky/kandinsky.html)

## FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

### CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

After completing the lessons in this guide, ask your students to make a list of any questions they may still have about one or more of the artists. Organize their questions into categories so that they can conduct their own research. Categories can include: biographical questions; questions about a specific work of art, such as why the artist made it and what types of materials the artist used; and questions regarding an historical event that took place during the artist's lifetime.

### ADDITIONAL WORK TO EXPLORE

Henri Matisse. French, 1869–1954. *Interior with a Young Girl (Girl Reading)* [*Intérieur à la fillette (La Lecture)*]. 1905–06. Oil on canvas, 28 3/8 x 23 1/2" (72.7 x 59.7 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. © 2005 Succession H. Matisse, Paris/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



### IMAGE-BASED DISCUSSION

- Think of five words you might choose to describe this painting. Write them down. Why did you select them? Compare your choices with those of your classmates.
- Describe the figure in this painting in as much detail as possible. What do you suppose this person is doing? How can you tell? Take a moment and assume the pose of the figure in this painting. What does this pose suggest to you? Why?

The figure shown in Matisse's *Interior with a Young Girl (Girl Reading)* is the artist's daughter, Marguerite. Matisse's family was often the subject of his work, portrayed at home playing music or reading. Marguerite's pose—looking down with her head buried in a book—suggests a private moment. Although Marguerite may have been reading quietly, the bright colors Matisse applied to articulate her likeness, as well as the objects and space around her, are vibrant and intense. One writer even likened the painting to a room on fire.<sup>16</sup> Matisse once summarized his work in the following manner:

Expression to my way of thinking does not consist of the passion mirrored upon a human face or betrayed by a violent gesture. The whole arrangement of the picture is expressive. The place occupied by figures or objects, the empty spaces around them, the proportions, everything plays a part. Composition is the art of arranging in a decorative manner the

16. Pierre Schneider in John Elderfield, *Matisse in the Collection of The Museum of Modern Art* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1978), 46.

various elements at the painter's disposal for the expression of his feelings. In a picture every part will be visible and will play the role conferred upon it, be it principal or secondary. All that is not useful in the picture is detrimental. A work of art must be harmonious in its entirety; for superfluous details would, in the mind of the beholder, encroach upon the essential elements.<sup>17</sup>

- **What is your reaction to Matisse's statement? Does it change your initial observations of this painting? Why or why not?**
- **Look back at Matisse's *Landscape at Collioure* (p. 19). Make a list of similarities and differences between *Interior with a Young Girl (Girl Reading)* and *Landscape at Collioure*.**

### ACTIVITY: ARTISTS ON ART

Many of the artists in this guide wrote frequently about current issues in art as well as about their own art. Have your students read the following statements by Matisse and Nolde. The questions that follow may be used for discussion or for a writing project.

In 1908, Matisse published *Notes of a Painter*, a book of his personal essays on art. The following passage describes one of his views on art:

What I dream of is an art of balance, of purity and serenity devoid of troubling or depressing subject matter, an art which might be for every mental worker, be he businessman or writer, like an appeasing influence, like a mental soother, something like a good armchair in which to rest from physical fatigue.<sup>18</sup>

Nolde's views are a study in contrast:

When you notice anarchy, recklessness, or licentiousness in works of contemporary art, when you notice crass coarseness and brutality, then occupy yourself long and painstakingly precisely with these works, and you will suddenly recognize how the seeming recklessness transforms itself into freedom, the coarseness into high refinements. Harmless pictures are seldom worth anything.<sup>19</sup>

- **Ask your students to consider the quotes by Matisse and Nolde. Ask them to respond to each artist's ideas about art. Ask if they support or differ with Matisse's or Nolde's views.**
- **Ask your students if these statements help inform them about Matisse's and Nolde's work. Ask them to explain their response.**
- **Ask your students to define art in their own words. Ask them to share their ideas with their classmates and compare their own statements with those of Matisse and Nolde. Ask your**

17. Henri Matisse, "Notes of a Painter," in *Matisse: His Art and His Public*, 1951; repr. Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories on Modern Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 130.

18. Ibid, 135.

19. Benson et al., *Nolde: The Painter's Prints*, 37.

students to locate writings or interviews of other artists they have studied, and to compare the artists' opinions about art with their own ideas.

- Ask your students to research other artists associated with Fauvism and Expressionism who are not included in this guide. Ask them to select a work by one of these artists and compare it with a work in this guide. Ask if they notice any similarities or differences. Ask why they think the two artists were identified as part of the same group.

### WRITING PROJECT: BE AN ART CRITIC

Have your students assume the role of art critic and write an article for a local newspaper. They should choose one of the works in this guide and write a review. As part of their critique, they should explain their opinions about the work they have selected. If they wish to see samples of critical reviews, they can refer to the arts section of any major newspaper, for example *The New York Times* ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)). Students should choose from one of the following scenarios:

- Imagine that you are an art critic in the year 1913. Consider what it might have been like at the time in terms of how people were living and what was going on socially, politically, and culturally. How would these factors have affected the way people might have responded to a work of art at the time?
- Imagine that you are a reporter covering a current art exhibition. What are your opinions of the artwork, and why?

### CLASS TRIP

Visit The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and locate an artwork that was included in this guide. Now that you are looking at the actual work, think about its size and scale. How would you compare the work in the Museum with the reproduction that you saw in the classroom? Are there any details you see now that you didn't notice earlier? Have your ideas about this work changed? Why or why not?

Consider the works of art installed around the one you are viewing. How would you compare the works? Why do you think they were chosen to be exhibited together?

### RESEARCH PROJECTS

#### Looking Back

Refer your students to *Modern Art and Ideas 1: 1883–1900*. Use the activities and lessons in that guide to introduce your students to some of the artists active before and during the era

presented there. Ask your students to look for connections between some of the artists featured in both guides, in order to trace artistic influences, common political and cultural interests, and whether or not certain aspects of an artistic movement had a lasting influence.

### LOOKING AHEAD

Select one of the artists in *Modern Art and Ideas 2: 1893–1913*. Follow the artist's career after 1913. What kind of artwork did he or she make? Describe the different mediums used by the artist. Compare and contrast one of these works with a later work by another artist in this guide. Do you notice any similarities or differences? Were there any factors that played an important role in their work, such as historical events (for example, World War I) or personal experiences? How did other people react to the earlier artist's work?

### LOOKING AT AMERICAN HISTORY

Compare the artistic climate in the United States during this period with that of France and/or Germany. Who were some prominent American artists at this time? Why were they prominent?

As part of your research, choose one or two works of art by an American artist. Describe the work in as much detail as possible and include reactions from art critics or historians from around the time the work was made. Do you agree or disagree with published opinions of this work?

### ART CONNECTIONS

The artists featured in this guide worked during an era of great artistic accomplishments in culturally rich environments. Have your students explore other art forms during the era of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century.

Explore connections with:

- **Writers active during this time and writers who were influential to the artists in this guide, for example, Émile Zola, Charles Baudelaire, Leo Tolstoy, Sigmund Freud, Friedrich Nietzsche, Arthur Schopenhauer, Thomas Mann, Gerhard Hauptmann.**
- **Artists in other disciplines. Music: Richard Wagner, Gustav Mahler, Arnold Schönberg, Richard Strauss. Dance: the popularity of the café-concert and the cabaret. (Many historians have written about the popularity of dance during the early 1900s in large cities such as Paris and Vienna, and the connections between dance and visual art. For instance, Kokoschka frequented a popular cabaret, or dance hall, in Vienna, called the Cabaret Fledermaus. There, he saw many performances by popular dancers of the time, such as Isadora Duncan.)**

**Brücke (the Bridge) and the Blaue Reiter (the Blue Rider):** the German Expressionist movement was made up of two groups of artists, the Brücke (the Bridge) and the Blaue Reiter (the Blue Rider), which were active in Germany between 1905 and 1914. Both groups were committed to the expression of extreme internal feelings, which led them to experiment with bold, nonnaturalistic colors, distorted forms, and dramatic compositions. However, their methods of artistic expression were very different.

The Brücke, founded in Dresden in 1905 by four young architecture students, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Erich Heckel, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, and Fritz Bleyl, is associated with an interest in the distortion of reality to express anguish about modern urban society. These artists sought out violent clashes of color and dynamic means of expression, as is demonstrated by the woodcut by Kirchner, shown below, which was used as the insignia for a Brücke manifesto in 1906.

The Blaue Reiter was formed in Munich in 1911 by the Russian artist Vasily Kandinsky, the Czech artist Alfred Kubin, and the German artists Gabriele Muntér and Franz Marc. The Blaue Reiter artists, who were generally older and more intellectual in approach than the Brücke's young radicals, were concerned with a more mystical approach to art making.

Both groups felt that expression at its purest and most authentic was to be found in the seemingly distorted and exaggerated forms in German medieval art, African and Oceanic art, and folk art and the art of children. To claim such influence was an especially radical move, since the art academies that trained most of these artists placed a strong focus on the tradition of drawing from life and of illusionistic representation.

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. German, 1880–1938.  
Insignia for the manifesto of the Künstlergruppe  
Brücke. 1904. Woodcut. Composition:  $4\frac{5}{16} \times 2$ "  
(12.5 x 5.1 cm). Publisher: Künstlergruppe Brücke,  
Dresden. Printer: the artist, Dresden. Edition:  
unknown. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.  
Gift of J. B. Neumann, 1941

In the 1890s, many German artists withdrew from the state-controlled exhibitions and organized their own shows, known as “Secessions.” This independence enabled them to exhibit works that would not necessarily have been in line with contemporary taste, and ensured that their work was seen as a breaking away from the traditions of the art academies they had attended. (For more information on the Brücke group, please see the online exhibition at [www.moma.org/exhibitions/2002/brucke](http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/2002/brucke).)

**Commission:** to request, or a request for, a work of art to be produced.

**Etching:** a type of print made by using a pointed metal instrument to make marks onto a copper plate that has been treated with a wax-based ground. When the plate is placed into a vat of acid, the acid bites through the exposed portions of the plate. The plate is inked, and an image is created by running the plate and paper through a printing press. For more information on different types of printmaking, visit the Web site What Is a Print? at [www.moma.org/exhibitions/2001/whatisaprint](http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/2001/whatisaprint).

**Fauves:** Henri Matisse and André Derain were among a group of French artists who at different points in time had studied with the same teachers, shared friendships, or traveled together—and in some cases even worked in the same studio. In 1905, this group exhibited a selection of their recent paintings at the Salon d’Automne (Fall Salon), in Paris. The paintings by these artists—predominantly landscapes of city views and rural scenes—were characterized by bold brushstrokes of primary and secondary colors. The brightly colored paintings were exhibited in a room along with a lone, rather traditional sculpture, prompting the art critic Louis Vauxcelles to comment that the sculpture was like “Donatello among the fauves (wild beasts).” The vibrant color, rapid brushstrokes, and lack of illusionistic imagery (the illusion of reality created through such artistic devices as shading and perspective) made the work of Matisse, Derain, and their colleagues look like a ferocious attack on what was considered serious art at the time. Vauxcelles seemed to relish the term he had created, and his comment ultimately branded Matisse and his colleagues. Following the Salon d’Automne of 1905, the group found themselves at the center of attention.

In France, up until the late nineteenth century, the sole opportunity for artists to exhibit their work to the public had been through an annual, state-sponsored exhibition called the Salon, a juried exhibition held in spring. In response to the changing artistic climate of the late nineteenth century, artists sought alternative exhibition venues, both to escape the rigid standards of the French Academy and to show their work to a larger audience of patrons and the general public. Founded in 1903, the Salon d’Automne represented one such environment. The setting was unique because the works of less-established and younger artists appeared alongside those of well-known artists and Old Masters.

**Intaglio:** a type of print that is made by first applying a “ground” (an acid-resistant coating) to a metal plate. The artist can then use different types of special tools to remove the ground wherever they desire, and the plate is submerged in acid. The acid bites into the exposed



parts of the plate. Ink is then applied to the plate using a rolled up cloth or roller. The ink stays only on the exposed areas, creating an image. The image is printed onto dampened paper using a printing press.

**Woodcut:** a type of print made by carving an image onto a block of wood with a sharp instrument, such as a knife or gouging tool. The block is then inked with a roller and printed onto dampened paper, a process that can be accomplished either by hand or by a printing press.

For more information on different types of printmaking, visit the Web site *What Is a Print?* at [www.moma.org.exhibitions/2001/exhibitions/whatisaprint/flash.html](http://www.moma.org.exhibitions/2001/exhibitions/whatisaprint/flash.html)

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**ONLINE RESOURCES**

The Museum of Modern Art, New York  
[www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org)

Artists of Brücke (online exhibition)  
[www.moma.org/exhibitions/2002/Brucke](http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/2002/Brucke)

What Is a Print?  
[www.moma.org/exhibitions/2001/whatisaprint](http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/2001/whatisaprint)

Brücke Museum  
[www.bruecke-museum.de](http://www.bruecke-museum.de) (in German and English)

The Grove Dictionary of Art Online  
[www.groveart.com](http://www.groveart.com)

Käthe Kollwitz Museum, Berlin  
[www.dhm.de/museen/kollwitz](http://www.dhm.de/museen/kollwitz) (in German, French, and English)

National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh  
[www.natgalscot.ac.uk](http://www.natgalscot.ac.uk)

Neue Galerie, Museum for Austrian and German Art, New York  
[www.neuegalerie.org](http://www.neuegalerie.org)

Resources on history before and on World War I (the Great War)  
[www.pbs.org/greatwar](http://www.pbs.org/greatwar)

Stiftung Nolde-Museum Seebüll  
[www.nolde-stiftung.de](http://www.nolde-stiftung.de) (in German, Dutch, and English)

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