

Pablo Picasso | Max Beckmann

Man – Myth – World

Von der Heydt-Museum Wuppertal, 17 September 2023 - 7 January 2024

Sprengel Museum Hannover, February - May 2024

Pablo Picasso (1881 - 1973) and Max Beckmann (1884 - 1950) are key figures of modernism. In the first half of the 20th century, both made decisive contributions to a redefinition of the possibilities and tasks of representational painting. However, it has never been possible to compare their works and thus their artistic attitudes and views on a broad basis and within the framework of an exhibition. The Von der Heydt Museum Wuppertal and the Sprengel Museum Hannover have joined forces to make this possible for the first time. With its exhibition the Von der Heydt Museum is an official partner of the international project "Celebration Picasso 1973-2023", which commemorates the 50th anniversary of the artist's death in 2023.

For the joint project, the two museums draw primarily on their own rich holdings. In doing so, they not only show the strengths of their collections, but also reflect on their history. The Von der Heydt Museum was the first museum in the world to acquire a painting by Pablo Picasso, in 1911, and one of Max Beckmann's key works, his "Self-Portrait as a Nurse" (1915), a turning point in his work, was secured for public art ownership in Wuppertal as early as 1925 by the Barmer Kunstverein.

Around 200 works by Pablo Picasso and Max Beckmann can be experienced in the exhibition: Paintings and graphics as well as individual sculptures. The high-ranking holdings of the Von der Heydt Museum and the Sprengel Museum are supplemented by precious loans - among others from the Centre Pompidou and the Musée Picasso, Paris, the Kunstmuseum Basel, the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen Munich and from private collections.

The exciting dialogue between the works reveals what moved Picasso and Beckmann as artists, how they revolutionised the history of painting, where they arrived at similar and where they arrived at opposing answers to the great challenges of their time. They were always concerned with man and his relationship to the world. They dealt intensively with the tense relationship between men and women. And both made use of the power of myth to give their statements weight and depth. In this way, they created symbols for the crises and ruptures of the 20th century that have lost none of their impact to this day.

The exhibition is under the patronage of the Ambassador of the French Republic in Berlin, François Delattre.

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