BG

Conrad Felixmüller

Works from the Wilke Collection in our Permanent Exhibition

12.5. – 26.9.22

To mark the 125th anniversary of the birth of Conrad Felixmüller (1897–1977), the Berlinische Galerie is presenting 37 prints and archive documents from the Wilke Collection in a room within the Permanent Exhibition.

Hans-Jürgen Wilke, Felixmüller's last printer, worked with him from 1970 until the artist's death in 1977. Wilke's extensive collection of prints reflects the great diversity unfolded by the artist, who lived through two world wars and several political systems. People always remained his central theme. The loans are complemented by a watercolour and an oil painting from the collection of the Berlinische Galerie.

The exhibits

Self-portraits are a constant thread in the work of Conrad Felixmüller and they illustrate his artistic development from an Expressionist style towards clear forms. From the 1920s, Felixmüller made many distinguished portraits of intellectuals and collectors such as Carl Sternheim and Max Liebermann. These big woodcuts rank as highlights in his printed oeuvre.

In 1920 Felixmüller was awarded the Saxon State Prize. This usually entailed a two-year sojourn in Rome, but the artist chose instead to spend a lengthy period in a working-class setting in the Ruhr area. The works he made there cast a critical eye on society, illustrating the often precarious working and living conditions of the proletariat, and some of these are on display.

Another section of the exhibition features landscapes and cityscapes. In 1944, after his studio home in Berlin suffered bomb damage, Felixmüller moved to Tautenhain in provincial Saxony. The artist took a great interest in village and rural life and captured this in many of his prints. In 1961 he came to Berlin, turning increasingly to urban motifs in the final years of his creative career.

Biography

Conrad Felix Müller, who adopted the pseudonym Felixmüller in 1917, was born in Dresden on 21 May 1897. He recognised his passion for drawing at an early age and, after obtaining special permission at only 15, joined Carl Bantzer's painting class at the Royal Academy of Art in Dresden.

Felixmüller taught himself a variety of printing techniques. At 18 he set up as a freelance painter in Dresden and after the First World War he became a vocal advocate of Expressionism. He published prints and essays in left-wing magazines such

BG

as "Der Sturm" and "Die Aktion". When his revolutionary hopes failed to materialise, he withdrew from political activity, gradually turning his back on his early Expressionist period.

From 1934 to 1941 Felixmüller lived in Berlin with his wife Londa and their two children Titus and Luca. He was gradually excluded from the art world under the Nazis due to his earlier political views. 40 of his works were included in the "Degenerate Art" exhibition in Dresden and more than 150 were confiscated from German museums.

In 1949 Felixmüller was appointed to teach painting and drawing at Martin Luther University in Halle. In 1961 he moved back to Köpenick in Berlin. As his art also clashed with official state policy in the GDR, he moved to Zehlendorf in West Berlin in 1967. He died there on 24 March 1977, shortly before his 80th birthday.

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Admission 10€, concessions 6€
(Prices may vary for special exhibitions)

Wed–Mon 10am–6pm
Tue close

Press images
berlinischegalerie.de/en/press-release/conrad-felixmueller

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