

MATHILDE TARDIF 1872-1929

A Panopticon of Society Around 1900

First-ever public encounter in a solo exhibition

This show devoted to Mathilde Tardif (1872-1929), who was born in Marseille and died in Germany, is the first-ever public encounter with her art in a solo exhibition. Some 70 paintings from private estates, all dating from the period between 1897 and 1929, provide new insights into the work of an artist trained in the 1890s at the Académie Julian in Paris.

At the Académie, Mathilde Tardif was influenced by Les Nabis, a group of rebellious young art students led by Maurice Denis, but she evolved her own themes and style. She found material for her critical observations of society in the everyday milieu of the middle classes and the petty bourgeoisie and drew inspiration for her technique from both Symbolism and Art Nouveau.

This was the era of the Third French Republic (1870-1940) in Paris, the proverbial capital of art and since the middle of the century, the Impressionists had secured a place in art for everyday motifs, and like Mathilde Tardif, Thèophile-Alexandre Steinlen (1859-1923) portrayed the lives of simple people, while Henri Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901) depicted the shady side of night life in the entertainment business.

Tardif had a preference for genre scenes, and these tend to be melancholy rather than cheerful. The intimacy of the small format requires particular concentration when contemplating the dire poverty, death and morbid premonitions that mark the figures, or the scenes reflecting sexual services performed for money. Recurring subjects are hypocritical Catholic and Protestant clergymen, prostitutes with their clients, and the elegant demi-monde of the night clubs. Her visual repertoire features social outsiders, beggars, the homeless, destitute families with numerous children, and caricatures such as the ageing dandy. But there are modest everyday pleasures too, such as the tingling excitement of watching circus performers.

Around 1900 Mathilde Tardif arrived in Wilhelminian Berlin, where women artists were lampooned in unflattering terms and were still denied academic training. She managed, however, to show with the Berlin Secession, the forum for modern art. Works displayed there between 1901 and 1906 included "The Dead Mother" (1902), "Wedding" (1903) and "Homeless" (1903), seen here in public for the first time since.

In 1907 Mathilde Tardif married the portrait painter Leo Freiherr von König (1871-1944) in Berlin. From 1894 to 1897 he had also attended the Académie Julian, where they had met during her student days.

In Berlin they enjoyed an active social life, regularly meeting up with people such as the art essayist and critic Julius Meier-Graefe and his wife



Mathilde Tardif, ohne Titel (Die Chefine), 1898, Mischtechnik auf Papier, 17,2 x 9,8 cm, Privatbesitz

Duration

23rd April – 22th August 2021

Opening Hours

Fri 15 – 19

Sat & Sun 12 – 16

Location

DAS VERBORGENE MUSEUM
Schlüterstraße 70, 10625 Berlin
www.dasverborgenemuseum.de

Contact

berlin@dasverborgenemuseum.de

Transportation Links

S 3, 5, 7, 75 Savigny Platz
U 2 Ernst-Reuter-Platz
Bus M49, X34, 101 Schlüterstraße

Entrance Fee

3,- €, reduced 1,50 €

Supported by **Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa**



Pressekontakt

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Pressematerial als Download unter:
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Anna, Gerhart Hauptmann, the art sponsor Ida Dehmel, and the artist Dora Hitz. In 1908 they joined the Meier-Graefes on a lengthy strip around Spain.

Some time after her divorce from Leo von König in 1920, Mathilde Tardif returned to France with her daughter Yvonne (1892-1957) and her son-in-law, the painter Walter Becker (1893-1984). In 1929 she ended her own life in Woltersdorf, Brandenburg.

Mathilde Tardif's works on paper and board apply a mixed technique consisting primarily of watercolour combined with tempera and pencil, sometimes with further additions of chalk pastels and opaque white. They are approximately 25 x 17 cm in size. Photographs and documents complement this fragmentary picture of the artist, mother and wife Mathilde Tardif.



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