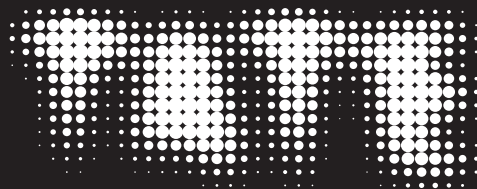


# EXPRESSIONISTS: KANDINSKY, MÜNTER AND THE BLUE RIDER

25 APRIL – 20 OCTOBER 2024

## LARGE PRINT GUIDE



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All information is correct at the time of publication

# CONCOURSE

## Concourse

### **EXPRESSIONISTS:**

### **KANDINSKY, MÜNTER AND THE BLUE RIDER**

25 APRIL – 20 OCTOBER 2024

**Expressionists** is presented in the Eyal Ofer Galleries.

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Modern and Genevieve Barton, Assistant Curator, International  
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ROOM 1

## **Clockwise from introduction wall text**

### **EXPRESSIONISTS: KANDINSKY, MÜNTER AND THE BLUE RIDER**

**In our case the principle of internationalism is the only one possible ... The whole work, called art, knows no borders or nations, only humanity.**

– Draft preface to The Blue Rider Almanac, 1911

What comes to mind when you picture expressionism? On the one hand, bold experiments with colour, dramatic forms, atonal music and poetry in free verse. On the other, cross-cultural artistic collaborations set against the imperial ideologies and social inequalities of early 20th century Europe.

Out of this context emerged a unique transnational community of artists known as the Blue Rider. United by the values outlined in their publication The Blue Rider Almanac, they brought together broad and interconnected experiences, relationships and art practices. In this exhibition we spotlight 17 figures – artists, musicians and performers. We meet women artists who defied social conventions as well as those engaging in environmental issues and searching for new forms of spirituality. We also witness how performance

enabled some to question seemingly fixed notions of identity and explore cross-cultural connections forged through photography.

The early 1900s was a turbulent age, and the Blue Rider artists experienced wars, revolutions and the dominance of extreme ideologies. Some artists lost their lives, while others were left bereft, stateless, displaced and persecuted. But for a brief moment before the outbreak of the First World War, their experimentation and belief in the transformative power of creativity played a decisive role in the making of European modern art.



## INTRODUCTION

The exhibition starts with the Blue Rider collective's core couple, Wassily Kandinsky and Gabriele Münter. We then follow like-minded artists from Eastern and Western Europe and the USA as they connect in Munich, engaging in collaborative work. Exploring the key concerns at the heart of their creative experimentation, later rooms are dedicated to spirituality, sonic perception and colour theory. Culminating in the legacies of the Blue Rider artists, this exhibition presents the lasting influence of a transnational artistic collective.

## NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The multicultural identities of the Blue Rider artists as well as their migratory biographies has resulted in various spellings of their names. In this exhibition, we have followed the spellings outlined in the original 1912 edition of *The Blue Rider Almanac* as well as common spellings of names and places used in the German primary sources of the period.

Please scan to view the exhibition texts online



After the death of their mother, Münter and her sister spent 1898–1900 visiting their extended family in the USA. Independently wealthy from her inheritance, Münter now had the means to pursue her artistic aspirations. She bought a Kodak Bull's Eye No. 2 – one of the first portable lightweight roll film cameras available on the market. As a self-taught artist, photography became her first means of creative expression.

Münter's range of photographs reveal interests in landscape, portraiture and social life. Some of the 400 works created during her trip also show the influence of pictorialism. This is an approach to photography that emphasises the picturesque, highlighting beauty and composition over realism. In other photographs she reflects on social subjects including gender, racial tension in the southern USA, and economic inequalities.

Top row from left to right

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**“Home Sweet Home at Aunt Annie’s”, Plainview, Texas**

1899, printed 2023–24

Photograph, inkjet print on paper

**Steamboat Mountain, near Guion, Texas**

1900, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

**Sunset on the Return Voyage from the USA, Steamship**

**“Pennsylvania”** 1900, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

**“Boys playing between Abilene and Lake Abilene, the day**

**we left”, Texas** 1900, printed 2022–23

Photograph, inkjet print on paper

**Sunset on the Return Voyage from the USA, Steamship**

**“Pennsylvania”** 1900, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich  
X88635, X88639, X88661, X88641, X88648

Bottom row from left to right

**Sheriff on horseback, Marshall, Texas**

1900, printed 2022–23

Photograph, inkjet print on paper

**Woman with a Parasol on the Levee of the Mississippi, near**

**St. Louis** 1900, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

**Three Women in their Sunday Best, Marshall, Texas**

1900, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

**Landscape near Guion, Texas, spring** 1900, printed 2023–24

Photograph, inkjet print on paper

**Interior: Votive Tree with Dolls and other Objects, Probably**

**Plainview, Texas** 1899, printed 2023–24

Photograph, inkjet print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich

X88642, X88645, X88644, X88638, X88636

As a 22-year-old law student, Kandinsky undertook a short ethnographic field trip to the north-eastern Vologda Province of the Russian Empire. Kandinsky identified his experience with the art, culture and traditions of the local Finno-Ugric Komi people as a turning point in his personal journey from academic research to creative practice. The trip also ignited Kandinsky's awareness of his own cultural heritage – his ancestry included Finno-Ugric Mansi people and Buryats from south-eastern Siberia, as well as Russians and Germans. The Komi buildings Kandinsky recorded in his travel journal can be spotted in the background of his early fairy-tale works such as **Riding Couple**.

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Notebook 1 (Trip to Vologda) 1889**

Pages 170–1, sketches of bath pavilions and foundations  
with annotations

© Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Jean-  
Claude Planchet

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Riding Couple 1906–7**

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X15234



ROOM 2

**Clockwise from room entrance**

## **CONCENTRIC CIRCLES**

**We were only a group of friends who shared a common passion for painting as a form of self-expression. Each of us was interested in the work of the other ... in the health and happiness of the others.**

– Gabriele Münter, 1958

The Blue Rider collective connected artists, musicians and performers across nations, cultures, media and styles. The circle wasn't constrained by the official status of a group or society. They instead embraced a plurality of creative approaches that came to define modern art in Europe and North America.

The collective included women artists and those exploring their gender identities. It grew through a transnational network of contacts and affiliations. This included artists with similar experiences of migration or displacement, as well as those seeking new approaches towards spirituality and artistic expression. Each artist's complex and varied lived experience contributed to and enriched the collective. The community's starting point was the formation of the

NKVM (New Artists' Association of Munich) in 1909. Progressive for its time, the association admitted women artists such as Marianne Werefkin and Elisabeth Epstein, enabling them to exhibit and sell their work. It also drew in musicians such as Thomas von Hartmann and the free movement performer Alexander Sacharoff. Previously solitary figures such as Paul Klee, Franz Marc and Robert Delaunay established creative bonds with other members of the community from 1911 – the year the idea of the Blue Rider was conceived. In this room, you can explore the relationships and affinities that grew between the artists of the Blue Rider circle.

Paul Klee 1879–1940

Born Switzerland, worked Germany and Switzerland

**Cacti** c.1912

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich

X87682

Robert Delaunay 1885–1941

Born France, worked Spain, Portugal and France

**Windows Open Simultaneously (First Part, Third Motif)** 1912

Oil paint on canvas

Tate. Purchased 1967

T00920

Lyonel Feininger 1871–1956

Born USA, worked France, Germany and USA

**Behind the Church** 1916

Oil paint on canvas

Leicester Museums & Galleries

X88343

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland  
and Sweden

**Man at the Table (Kandinsky)** 1911

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X87726

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**Olga von Hartmann** c.1910

Oil paint on canvas

The opera singer Olga von Hartmann sat for Münter on many occasions. Like in this portrait, Münter would often paint Olga on a green background. Having studied in Naples and St Petersburg, Olga had notable opera roles including the lead in the **Oresteia** trilogy by Sergei Taneev.

In 1906 Olga married the composer Thomas von Hartmann, who contributed the text 'On Anarchy in Music' to the **Almanac**. He also worked with Kandinsky on the score for the experimental play **Yellow Sound**. The couple were close friends with Kandinsky and Münter who shared their interest in modernist art and esoteric spiritual practices.

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,

Munich

X88074

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**Listening (Portrait of Jawlensky) 1909**

Oil paint on card

Münter recalled: 'They [Kandinsky, Jawlensky and Paul Klee] were constantly arguing about art and each of them, at first, had his own ideas and his own style. My 1908 portrait entitled **Listening** actually represents Jawlensky, with an expression of puzzled astonishment on his chubby face, listening to Kandinsky's new theories of art.' Speaking of her process, Münter noted, 'Those who look at my paintings with close attention, will discover the draftswoman in them. Despite their colourfulness, they boast a firm graphic framework. Mostly, I draw my paintings with a black brush onto the board or canvas before I add the colours.'

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X87722

Elisabeth Epstein 1879–1956

Born Russian Empire (now Ukraine), worked Germany, France and Switzerland

**Self Portrait 1911**

Oil paint on card

Epstein fills the canvas with her portrait. Using bold contrasting colours and a fragmented composition, she asserts an expressive and confident self-depiction. Born to a Ukrainian Jewish family, Epstein moved between Moscow, Munich and Paris, seeking a progressive art education. Breaking from social conventions, she separated from her husband and son to focus on her artistic practice and moved to France. She painted this self portrait after settling in Paris. She bridged the artistic and creative communities in Paris and Munich, introducing the work of Sonia and Robert Delaunay to the Blue Rider group.

Lenbachhaus Munich, on permanent loan from The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich

X87790



Alexej Jawlensky 1864–1941

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany and Switzerland

**Spanish Woman** 1913

Oil paint on card

Dancer and performer Alexander Sacharoff is the sitter in **Spanish Woman**. The painting belongs to a series featuring Sacharoff in crossdress, exploring gender fluidity through art and performance. Jawlensky wrote of Sacharoff, 'We were together constantly for a number of years; he was at our place almost every day. These years of friendship were very interesting, since Sacharoff is an intelligent, quick-witted, sensitive, gifted person.'

Jawlensky chose the life of an artist over a career in the military. He also opted for independent modernist art training over academic studies.

Lenbachhaus Munich

X87795

Wassily Kandinsky 1886–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Kallmünz - Gabriele Münter Painting II 1903**

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87818

August Macke 1887–1914

Born Germany, worked Italy, Switzerland and Germany

**Portrait with Apples (Elisabeth with Apples) 1909**

Oil paint on canvas

Macke painted this portrait of his wife, artist and writer Elisabeth Macke, in Tegernsee, Bavaria. Elisabeth, who experimented with drawing, painting and reverse glass painting, was instrumental in promoting the activities of the Blue Rider artists. Her uncle, Bernhard Koehler financed the **Almanac**, supported the Blue Rider exhibitions and the development of works by Macke and Marc. Elisabeth also focused on writing and her literary legacy which includes memoirs, publications and correspondence are now invaluable primary sources and records of the Blue Rider's activities.

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Bernhard and Elly Koehler,  
1965

X87687

Franz Marc 1880–1916

Born and worked Germany

**Portrait of Maria Franck with a Palette (Maria Franck Painting in the Snow) 1906**

Oil paint on canvas

This painting depicts Maria Franck, known as Franck-Marc, an artist and member of the Blue Rider collective. Born in Berlin, she moved to Munich to study at the Ladies' Academy of the Royal School of Art. It was there she met Franz Marc. An active participant in the Blue Rider activities, she took part in conversations around the **Almanac** concept and content. She also exhibited at the second Blue Rider exhibition. Franck met Marc the year before he painted this portrait. The couple broke social conventions by moving in together before marrying several years later, in 1913.

Lenbachhaus Munich

X87701

Marianne Werefkin 1860–1938

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Russian Empire, Germany, Lithuania and Switzerland

**Self Portrait** c.1910

Tempera on paper on card

Created in the year of her 50th birthday, this self portrait is a statement of Werefkin's independent status as a woman. Adorned in a distinctive crimson hat, she stares defiantly at the viewer, her irises painted a vibrant orange. She captures the extravagant accessories and make up that was part of her now bohemian artist life. The strong facial features, direct assertive gaze and use of bold colours play with traits associated with masculinity employed to confront gender stereotypes of the time. Werefkin made this work for the 1911 NKVM exhibition demonstrating the artist's intention to control her self-image.

Lenbachhaus Munich

X88071

Wladimir Burljuk 1886[?]-1917[?]

Born and worked Russian Empire (now Ukraine)

**Dancer** c.1910

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich

X87782

ROOM 3

**Enter via righthand room entrance. Anti clockwise from room entrance.**

Lyonel Feininger 1871–1956

Born USA, worked France, Germany and USA

**Gelmeroda III 1913**

Oil paint on canvas

National Galleries of Scotland. Purchased 1985

X88429



Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Munich – Before the City** 1908

Oil paint on card on board

**Interior (My Dining-Room)** 1909

Oil paint on card

**Bedroom in Ainmillerstrasse** 1909

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X88089, X87829, X87830

Erma Bossi 1875–1952

Born Austria-Hungary (now Croatia), worked Austria-Hungary, Germany, France and Italy

**Portrait of Marianne Werefkin c.1910**

Oil paint on card

Bossi met Kandinsky and Münter in Munich after moving there from the multicultural city of Trieste. She was drawn to Werefkin's circle and became a member of the NKVM. Here Bossi portrays Werefkin in her role as founder and host of the artistic and intellectual salon. This space became a vibrant meeting place to discuss the latest ideas on music, literature, theatre, philosophy and art. Werefkin spoke Russian, German, English, French, Polish, Lithuanian and Italian, enabling her to cultivate a highly transcultural atmosphere among Munich's local and international progressive circles.

Lenbachhaus Munich, on permanent loan from The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich

X87781

## MUNICH: THE POLITICS OF LOOKING

The Blue Rider was a largely Munich-based collective that grew out of personal bonds and connections formed in the early 1900s. It is mainly known for its two experimental exhibitions and *The Blue Rider Almanac* – a volume of collected images and texts by artists and musicians.

The city of Munich in Bavaria provided a relatively liberal and open environment, attracting marginalised artists from less tolerant societies. This includes artists with Jewish ancestry from Eastern Europe and North America (Epstein, Albert Bloch), artists from the more conservative Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires (Sacharoff, Erma Bossi), those who didn't fit socially within their own middle class privileged social group (Kandinsky, Lyonel Feininger) or those in pursuit of unconventional romantic partnerships (Werefkin, Alexej Jawlensky). Bavaria enjoyed prosperity, a culturally sophisticated monarchy and a conservative but well-established middle class who supported and sustained artistic experimentation. The thriving academic and scientific community of Munich offered intellectual stimuli, while the Blue Rider's chosen neighbourhood of Schwabing housed the Academy of Fine Arts and the university.

At the same time, the artists experienced Bavarian society as it integrated into the German Empire. Founded in 1871, the empire quickly developed into the world's third largest economy. The government embraced imperial and colonial ambitions including the exploitation of people and resources overseas. Public fascination with world cultures was underpinned by racist narratives and cultural and ethnic hierarchies of imperialism. These perspectives were reinforced by staged public 'ethnographic exhibitions' and displays at museums across Germany.

Erma Bossi 1875–1952

Born Austria-Hungary (now Croatia), worked Austria-Hungary,  
Germany, France and Italy

**Circus** 1909

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, on permanent loan from The Gabriele  
Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich

X87780

August Macke 1887–1914

Born Germany, worked Italy, Switzerland and Germany

**Promenade** 1913

Oil paint on card

**Promenade** is a poetic celebration of everyday life. Elisabeth Macke commented on works like this: 'they are true poems, visions of daily life, created with uninhibited joy and a deep fervour of devotion to the work'. August Macke later wrote, 'work for me means a thorough enjoyment of nature, the blazing sun and trees, shrubs, human beings, animals, plants and pots, tables, chairs, mountains, water of illuminated becoming. I immerse myself in the snow-drop's friendly nodding, in the rhythm of the bird-laden twigs swaying in the sun ...'.

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Bernhard and Elly Koehler,  
1965

X87688

August Macke 1887–1914

Born Germany, worked Italy, Switzerland and Germany

**Milliner's Shop** 1913

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Bernhard and Elly Koehler,  
1965

X87690

Albert Bloch 1882–1961

Born USA, worked Germany and USA

**Prize Fight** 1912–13

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich

X87777

Vitrine against wall - right to left

Max Van Berchem, F. R. Martin, F. P. T. Sarre

**Die Ausstellung Von Meisterwerken Muhammedanischer Kunst in München 1910**, Volume 1, F. Bruckmann, Munich 1912

**Die Ausstellung Von Meisterwerken Muhammedanischer Kunst in München 1910**, Volume 3, F. Bruckmann, Munich 1912

Victoria and Albert Museum

X88867, X88868



From right to left

Unknown Artists

**Photograph of an Indian miniature, 'Nautch girl' c.1910**

**Photograph of an Indian miniature, 'Scene, 17th century'**  
c.1910

**Photograph of Persian ceramics, 'Panel in tilework,  
horsemen killing a dragon, 17th century' c.1910**

**Photograph of a Persian ceramic, 'Animal in shape of jug,  
from Rhages, 13th century' c.1910**

**Photograph of a Persian miniature, 'Turkish Prince, ca.  
1500's**  
c.1910

**Photograph of a Persian bookbinding lacquered in gold,  
17th century c.1910**

Victoria and Albert Museum

X88632, X88634, X88630, X88631, X88629, X88627

This selection of photographs presents the range of exhibits showcased at Munich's 1910 exhibition Masterpieces of Muhammadan Art. It featured 3600 works of Islamic art, crafts and armour from European collections originating from countries in South Asia, West Asia and North Africa. The organiser's scholarly approach to Islamic visual culture sought to counter reductive orientalist trends. Yet, they subordinated the works from the Islamic world via the Western gaze in terms of their presentation and analysis.

The exhibition attracted modernist artists such as Henri Matisse, Edvard Munch and the Blue Rider circle, fascinated by the rich visual culture of the Islamic world. Kandinsky wrote in a review of the Persian paintings, 'This is truth; this, beauty!' - everything else was eclipsed, obscured, forgotten.' Although positive in his outlook, Kandinsky, along with his fellow artists was informed by Eurocentric positions that impacted how they experienced and interpreted the works.

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and France

**Impression IV (Gendarme) 1911**

**Impression VI (Sunday) 1911**

Oil paint on canvas

Kandinsky painted a series of works showing people socialising in Munich in 1911. He depicts members of Munich's bourgeoisie society with some degree of irony. This includes a promenading middle class couple in **Impression VI (Sunday)** and public festivities on Prince Regent's birthday in **Impression IV (Gendarme)**. Here, Kandinsky uses his newly mastered technique of expressive bold brushstrokes defined by flattened black outlines.

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87807, X87827

ROOM 4

## **Clockwise from room entrance**

### **JOURNEY TO TUNISIA**

Münter's Tunisian photographs were taken during her and Kandinsky's trip to North Africa in December 1904–March 1905. During French colonial occupation (1881–1956), Tunisia became a popular tourist destination for Europeans. Following established routes, Münter produced her second largest group of photographic works. Marking the start of a period of active artistic experimentation, she explored new forms of expression using traditional media (painting, embroidery and reverse glass painting) alongside new technologies (photography and linocut prints).

Münter's architectural imagery demonstrates her interest in depicting the simplified, abstracted essence of a scene. They also reveal her occasional engagement with the established European visual culture of orientalism. This genre of painting and photography tended to depict places and people in North Africa and West Asia in reductive, stereotypical and exoticised terms.

Some images reflect Münter's broader curiosity and engagement with modern Tunisia as an outsider. She captures a range of scenes including photographs of women in different roles – as mothers, travellers, camel riders and active participants in city life. These photographs counter the orientalist trope of women as odalisques – sexualised depictions of enslaved women. They also reveal the complexities of a colonial capital in a way that doesn't appear in contemporary orientalist paintings.

Wassily Kandinsky **Photograph of Gabriele Münter with sketchbook on a rock**, Tunisia, 1905. The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich.

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland  
and Sweden

**Rue du Pacha, near the Madrasaa Bir el-Hadjar, Tunisia**

1905, printed 2023–24

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich

X88652

**Souk Dziria, Rue de l'Hôpital Sadiki, Tunisia**

1905, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich

X88651

**Eddamous Mosque in Sousse, Tunisia** 1905, printed 2006–7  
Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich  
X88658

**Sousse, View of the City and Harbour from the Ribat Tower**  
1905, printed 2006–7  
Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich  
X88657



**Djellaz Cemetery with Ruins of a Mausoleum, Tunisia**

1905, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich

X88654

**Caravane in Bardo. Herd of Camels with Female Riders,  
Tunisia** 1905, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich

X88650

## **Carnival in Tunisia, Arab Rider Performing an Exercise**

1905, printed 2023–24

Photograph, inkjet print on paper

Münter made 30 photographs of Tunisian carnivals, reflecting her interest in the parades. Here she depicts a Tunisian rider atop a rearing horse during a presentation. In the background we see rows of Europeans observing the traditional equestrian exercise. Kandinsky based compositions of paintings such as **Arabs III (with Pitcher)**, 1911 on this dynamic photograph, reflecting one of the many ways the couple influenced each other during this crucial point of their respective artistic development.

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,

Munich

X88898

**At the Port of Tunis** 1905, printed 2023–24

Photograph, inkjet print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,

Munich

X88764

**Merchants with Camels Resting in Front of the City Walls of**

**Sousse** 1905, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,

Munich

X88656

**Small Children in a Suburban Alley, Tunisia**

1905, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich

X88655

**Street Scene with Women in Traditional and Men in  
European Dress, Tunisia** 1905, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich

X88653

**Person from Behind in an Alley Leading to a Zawiya, Tunisia**

1905, printed 2023–24

Photograph, inkjet print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,

Munich

X88649

**Three Men in Front of a Grocery Store in Bab Souika, Tunisia**

1905, printed 2006–7

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,

Munich

X88765

**Family at the Carnival, Tunisia** 1905, printed 2023–24

Photograph, inkjet print on paper

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,

Munich

X88766

This newspaper front page advertises **Tunis in Munich**, an ethnographic exhibition featuring people from Tunisia and neighbouring regions, staged as part of Munich's 1904 Oktoberfest.

**Tunis in Munich**, illustrated front page of **Neues Münchener Tagblatt**, September 26, 1904. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, 2 Eph.pol. 12 o-28,9/10

Münter's sketches from her travels reveal an interest in traditional dress, architecture, and depictions of local people.

Gabriele Münter, Sketchbook spread with garment studies with notes on colours, 1905. The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich

This is the steamship Münter and Kandinsky travelled on from Marseilles, France to the port town Bizerte, Tunisia.

**Departure of the Ville de Tunis**, Compagnie Générale Transatlantique, postcard, ca. 1904. DORA Collection, Sydney

In the 1900s, as photography became increasingly accessible in Europe and the USA, commercial advertising linked the technology to ideas of travel. Münter used an early box camera, similar to the model shown here.

**Camera advertisement**, Soennecken & Co., Munich.  
Münchner Stadtmuseum, poster collection

ROOM 5



## **Clockwise from room entrance**

### **PERFORMING GENDER**

Traditionally, theatre and performance offered safe environments for the exploration of sexuality and gender. Performers could switch gender and power roles, and engage with transgressive themes. Artist and patron Werefkin was attracted to the free arts of street theatre and popular entertainment for their freedom of expression and potential to disrupt the highly regulated social structures women were confined to.

Werefkin experimented with expressionist painting while also grappling with questions of identity. This included navigating the legal and social barriers of gender inequality. Her privileged upbringing and financial independence allowed Werefkin to assume a position of power, acting as patron and supporter of the arts – a field traditionally monopolised by men. In this period, such women were given the pejorative label 'manwoman' to denote their being 'unnatural', members of a 'third sex'. This perspective was critically explored in the writing of contemporary philosopher and minority rights activist Johannes Holzmann.

Resenting gender binaries, Werefkin stated: 'I am not a man, I am not a woman, I am I.' She shared affinities with artists challenging traditional gender roles. This is reflected in her support of performer Sacharoff. Presenting androgynously both on and off stage, Sacharoff explored gender fluidity through new styles of performance that activated form through free movement. Believing that dance resembled music or painting, Sacharoff said: 'In the art of dance the body must be an elaborate instrument capable of expressing the soul. In this sense, it must be as valid as the word, the sound and the colour'. Performance was central to both Werefkin and Sacharoff's investigations and constructions of self-identity.

Marianne Werefkin 1860–1938

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Russian Empire, Germany, Lithuania and Switzerland

**Marionette theater with Jawlensky and Marianne Werefkin  
in the foreground 1917–18**

Tempera on paper on card

Lenbachhaus Munich

X88072

**Into the Night 1910**

Tempera on paper on board

Collection of the Friends of Lenbachhaus

X87779

**Summer Stage 1910**

Tempera on paper on board

Fondazione Marianne Werefkin, Museo Comunale d'Arte  
Moderna, Ascona

X88693

## **The Skaters 1911**

Tempera on paper on board

Here, figures are depicted as shadows skating under the moonlight. Werefkin creates a dynamic choreography of body movements surrounded by a turquoise outline. Her sketchbooks reveal studies of bodies in motion, used to inform her approach to larger compositions like this.

After a ten-year break, Werefkin returned to easel painting in 1906. She abandoned the realist approach she had been exploring through oil painting to concentrate on experimenting with opaque intense colourful compositions in tempera, a fast-drying medium often used in religious art.

Fondazione Marianne Werefkin, Museo Comunale d'Arte  
Moderna, Ascona  
X88692

## **The Dancer, Alexander Sacharoff 1909**

Tempera on paper on board

Sacharoff entranced audiences with groundbreaking free-movement performances, radically disrupted gender norms by performing in women's or gender-fluid outfits. Sacharoff also assumed an androgynous off-stage and in social life. Werefkin's portrait of the dancer in the role of Salome is a powerful celebration of the body, transgressing the sexualisation of the male gaze. Rejecting both traditional and modernist modes of bodily representation, she presents an empowering image of Sacharoff that challenges the turn-of-the-century's societal norms and expectations.

Fondazione Marianne Werefkin, Museo Comunale d'Arte

Moderna, Ascona

X88691

In vitrine - left to right

Marianne Werefkin 1860–1938

**Sketchbook d3** Date unknown

**Sketchbook a23** Date unknown

**Sketchbook a16** Date unknown

**Sketchbook g5** Date unknown

Mixed media on paper

Fondazione Marianne Werefkin, Museo Comunale d'Arte  
Moderna, Ascona

X88695, X88717, X88696, X88697

ROOM 6

## Anti clockwise from wall text

### **MURNAU: THE POSSIBILITY OF PLACE**

Murnau, a rural town in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps by the shores of the Staffelsee lake, became a place of artistic exchange and inspiration for the Blue Rider artists. Münter and Kandinsky first visited with Werefkin and Jawlensky for a summer open air sketching holiday in 1908. In 1909, Münter purchased a house there, alternating with Kandinsky between the city and the country. Fellow artists Marc and Franck-Marc settled in the neighbouring town of Sindelsdorf and later, Kochel. In 1910, August and Elisabeth Macke moved to nearby Tegernsee. Murnau became a site of creative collaboration that laid the foundations of the NKVM and the Blue Rider. The artists embraced a country lifestyle, swimming in the lake and skiing in the mountains. They also designed their own garden, growing a vegetable patch and using the produce for the household and their guests.

The artists engaged with local arts and crafts, including reverse glass painting. This method consists of painting pictures on the back of a clear glass panel. Viewed from the opposite side of the glass, the colours appear bold and reminiscent of enamels. Münter was the first to learn the



technique, later stating that 'the traditional reverse glass painting which used to flourish around the Staffelsee had a lasting influence on me with its strong colours in black outlines and its carefree decorative designs.'

In Murnau, Kandinsky experimented with the local landscape, simplifying his forms and producing his first non-figurative paintings. Münter forged her own radical approach to figuration 'intuiting the content, abstracting, presenting the essence'. Werefkin found a spiritual affinity with the environment that fuelled her return to easel painting.

Marianne Werefkin 1860–1938

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Russian Empire, Germany, Lithuania and Switzerland

**The Red Tree** 1910

Tempera on paper on cardboard

Fondazione Marianne Werefkin, Museo Comunale d'Arte  
Moderna, Ascona

X88699

Marianne Werefkin 1860–1938

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Russian Empire, Germany, Lithuania and Switzerland

**The Prayer** 1910

Tempera on paper on cardboard

Fondazione Marianne Werefkin, Museo Comunale d'Arte  
Moderna, Ascona

X88701

Marianne Werefkin 1860–1938

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Russian Empire, Germany, Lithuania and Switzerland

**Portrait of Rosalia Leiss** 1908–9

Tempera on cardboard

On loan from the PSM Privatstiftung Schloßmuseum Murnau  
at the Schloßmuseum Murnau, Inv. PSM 55/12355

X89814

Top row from right to left

**Gabriele Münter 1877–1962**

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**Grave Crosses in Kochel 1909**

Oil paint on card

**Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944**

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and France

**Murnau - View with Railway and Castle 1909**

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87723, X13022

Bottom row from right to left

**Gabriele Münter 1877–1962**

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**Jawlensky and Werefkin 1909**

Oil paint on card

**Alexej Jawlensky 1864–1941**

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked Germany and Switzerland

**Landscape near Murnau 1909**

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X87720, X87794

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**Kandinsky and Erma Bossi at the Table** 1912

Oil paint on canvas

Through simplified forms, a bold colour palette and a carefully framed composition, Münter playfully subverts an intimate domestic setting. She reflected on these early Murnau paintings: 'after a short period of agony, I took a great leap forward, from copying nature – in a more or less impressionist style – to feeling the contents of things, abstracting, conveying an essence. It was a wonderful, interesting, enjoyable time, with lots of conversations about art...'

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X88303

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**Portrait of Marianne Werefkin 1909**

Oil paint on card

This is one of many portraits Münter painted in Murnau. She recalled, 'I painted the Werefkina in 1909 before the yellow basement of my house. She was a woman of grand appearance, self-confident, commanding, extravagantly dressed, with a hat as big as a wagon wheel, on which there was room for all sorts of things.' The summer of 1909 was an intense period of collaborative creativity within the circle of friends. Münter developed her own daring and distinct experiments with figurative form, carefully considered composition and expressive colour.

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X87721

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Murnau – Garden I** 1910

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X87824 Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**The Cow** 1910

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X87826



Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Murnau with Church I** 1910

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X14011

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Murnau – Footpath and Houses** 1909

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87799

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Murnau – Johannisstrasse from a Window of the Griesbräu**

1908

Oil paint on cardboard

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X87803

Wall mounted vitrine - right to left

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and France

**St. George I** 1911

Ink, oil paint and metal foil on glass in painted frame

**With a Yellow Horse** 1909

Oil paint on glass in painted frame

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**Murnau Farmer's Wife with Children** 1909–10

Ink and oil paint on glass in painted frame

**Madonna with Child** 1909–10

Ink and oil paint on glass in painted frame

**Holy Mary** 1908–9

Ink, oil paint and metal foil on glass in painted frame

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X88865, X88866, X88102, X88101, X88103

ROOM 7

## ARTIST AS COLLECTOR

Collecting folk artworks, artefacts and popular media was important for the Blue Rider artists as they strived towards the idea of an art 'that knows no borders'. They were interested in the local crafts and religious artefacts of Bavarian craftspeople, toys and popular prints from Eastern and Central Europe, as well as prints and reverse glass painting from South and East Asia. Marc and Jawlensky collected Japanese prints. Münter and Franck-Marc were interested in children's art and toys. Kandinsky collected popular prints and with Münter they assembled religious images to use as motifs in their work. This included votive paintings (commissioned to fulfil a spiritual vow) and carvings of saints and the Madonna. Photographs of their apartment in Munich's Ainmillestrasse and their house in Murnau showcase their extensive collections.

Objects produced by local and international artists and craftspeople who were not academically trained were perceived by European modernists as 'unspoiled' and 'authentic'. When shown in modernist exhibitions and illustrated in publications these works were often presented anonymously and removed from their original context. They were showcased purely for their stylistic qualities, artistry and boldness of colour.

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland  
and Sweden

**Madonna with Poinsettia** c.1911

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter  
X87716

Unknown Artist

**Devotional Copy of the Miraculous Image of Our Lady of**

**Ettal** Early 19th century

Paint on carved wood

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich

X88226

Unknown Artist

**Dove of the Holy Spirit** Mid 19th century

Paint on wood

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich

X88228



Unknown Artist

**Accident with a Wagon 1842**

Votive panel. Oil paint and tempera on wood

Votive offerings of paintings, sculptures and objects originated in polytheism (the belief in more than one god) and found their place in popular Christian practices. Kandinsky and Münter collected local Christian votive art whilst living in Murnau and Munich. This depiction of a miraculous interference by Our Lady of Sorrows is related to the local image of Our Lady in Murnau's church of St Nicholas. The church hosts a range of such panels with narratives of miracles and deliverances. Five of them are reproduced in the **Almanac**, although the narrative texts central to their spiritual significance are edited out.

Lenbachhaus Munich, on permanent loan from The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich

X88227

Unknown Artist

**Virgin and Child with Saint Anne/Raimundsreut c.1800**

Reverse glass painting

Schloßmuseum Murnau, Collection Udo and Hedi Dammert,

Inv. 4171

X90001

Unknown Artist

**Nobleman on a Tiger Hunt North India/Rajasthan**

19th century

Reverse glass painting

This reverse glass painting captures a theatrical hunting scene set against a stage set. The technique is believed to have entered India through global trade routes established by British, Portuguese, Dutch and French colonial governments. Originating in Europe in the 16th century, Chinese traders introduced reverse glass painting to India in the late 18th century. Artists from various centres of production adopted the technique, which became popular with royal patrons and prosperous landowners. The themes pictured ranged from religious imagery to portraits of rulers and hunting scenes like this one.

Schloßmuseum Murnau, Collection Udo and Hedi Dammert,

Inv. 4250

X90000

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Rider** c.1909

Oil paint on wood

Lenbachhaus Munich, on permanent loan from The Gabriele  
Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich

X88259

ROOM 8

**Clockwise from room entrance**

## **THE INNER NECESSITY OF ART**

**Art was concerned with the most profound matters, that renewal must not be merely formal but a rebirth of thinking.**

– Franz Marc, 1914

The Blue Rider circle's aesthetic concerns developed in parallel with their belief in the deep spiritual significance of artistic experimentation. This drove their creative investigations of form, colour, sound and the performing arts. The artists engaged with diverse structures and systems of belief including pre-Christian tradition and polytheism (belief in more than one deity).

With his background in Christian theology, Marc also became interested in Buddhism. This fuelled his engagement with animism – a belief in the latent spirituality of animals, objects and the natural world. A number of artists in the circle followed the emerging controversial esoteric teachings of the Theosophical Society. Theosophists mixed European occult traditions with appropriated elements of Hinduism and Buddhism, ancient Greek philosophy and modern science.

Kandinsky's 1912 book **Concerning the Spiritual in Art** communicated a vision for a new, 'great spiritual' age, in which all art forms would coalesce. His notion of artists' 'inner necessity' described an inherent drive or will towards spiritual expression. Similarly, an interest in the inner creativity and spirituality of children was prominent in scientific and academic research at the turn of the century. This was captured in feminist publications such as Swedish writer Ellen Key's **The Century of the Child**, published 1900. It marked a cultural shift that recognised the inner life of children, including their natural spirituality and original creativity. Franck-Marc's work reveals deep engagement with the subject.

Franz Marc 1880–1916  
Born and worked Germany

**In the Rain** 1912  
Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Bernhard and Elly Koehler,  
1965  
X87699



Franz Marc 1880–1916  
Born and worked Germany

**Tiger** 1912  
Oil paint on canvas

After discontinuing his studies at the Munich Academy of Art, Marc spent time in France and in the Alpine town of Sindelsdorf, where he painted relentlessly. Even before he joined the Blue Rider, the young Marc was interested in spirituality and philosophy, stating 'although I have been an artist all my life, as a result of my upbringing and environment and my own inclinations, I have also been half cleric and half philologist.' The coiled geometry in **Tiger** evokes wild animal energy. The depiction of the tiger – an animal important to Buddhist tradition – was informed by Marc's interest in spiritual teachings as well as Japanese prints.

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Bernhard and Elly Koehler,  
1965  
X87697

Franz Marc 1880–1916  
Born and worked Germany

**Doe in the Monastery Garden** 1912  
Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Bernhard and Elly Koehler,  
1965  
X87700

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944  
Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**All Saints I** 1911  
Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87815

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**St George III** 1911

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87808

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Improvisation Deluge** 1913

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X88258

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**On the Theme of the Deluge** 1913–14

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87816

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Lady in Moscow** 1912

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87810

Maria Franck-Marc 1876–1955  
Born and worked Germany

**Three Wise Men** c.1911  
Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich  
X87787

Maria Franck-Marc 1876–1955  
Born and worked Germany

**Girl with Toddler** c.1913  
Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich  
X87789

Maria Franck-Marc 1876–1955

Born and worked Germany

**Two Children between Flowers** c.1912

Oil paint on canvas

Courtesy Galerie Thomas, Munich

X88894

ROOM 9

## Clockwise from wall text

### SOUND

**Kandinsky paints pictures in which the external object is hardly more to him than a stimulus to improvise in colour and form and to express himself as only the composer expressed himself previously.**

– Arnold Schönberg, 1912

On 2 January 1911, Kandinsky and Marc attended a concert of the experimental composer Arnold Schönberg. Kandinsky's **Impression III (Concert)** was created a few days later as a chromatic or visual response. The artist and the composer both strived towards surfacing the connections between colour and sound. Many within the Blue Rider were accomplished or professionally trained musicians. Kandinsky was a skilled cellist and Klee and Feininger were gifted violinists. Schönberg experimented with painting, exhibiting with the collective. His contributions to the **Almanac**, alongside musicians Thomas von Hartmann and Leonid Sabanejev were central to the group's questioning of the seemingly rigid boundaries between different creative mediums. Kandinsky experimented with the vital relationship between form and colour, becoming increasingly interested in the neurodivergent



condition of synaesthesia. A person with synaesthesia experiences one sense through another, such as perceiving sound through colour.

Kandinsky's earlier experimentations linked sound, colour and language. He explored this in a book of interlinked free verse and woodcuts entitled *Sounds* published in 1913. He continued to investigate the connection of drama, words, colour and music through stage performances, one of which was published in the Almanac as 'Yellow Sound'. Schönberg's contribution to the Almanac 'The Relationship to the Text' explored the abstract nature of poetry as it relates to sound.

This is the first of three experiential rooms in the exhibition. In these rooms, you are invited to explore the Blue Rider's engagement with sound, colour and light.

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and France

**Impression III (Concert)** 1911

Oil paint on canvas

On 2 January 1911 Kandinsky attended an Arnold Schönberg concert in Munich. The painting **Impression III (Concert)** was created as a chromatic response to the atonal compositions Kandinsky experienced during the concert. The painting belongs to a series of six paintings called **Impressions** created in response to the direct impression of 'external nature' expressed in linear-painterly form. On 18 January Kandinsky wrote to introduce himself to Schönberg, stating, 'The particular destinies, the autonomous paths, the very lives of individual voices in your compositions are precisely what I have been looking for in pictorial form.'

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87809

Vitrine against wall - left to right

Letter from Wassily Kandinsky to Michael Ernest Sadler  
7 December 1911

Tate Archive  
Z88792

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

**Klänge**, R. Piper & Co. Munich 1913

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X88184

ROOM 10

**Enter room via lefthand entrance. Clockwise from room entrance.**

## **COLOUR**

The Blue Rider artists' interest in the relationship between sound and colour was underpinned by scientific investigations. They were particularly engaged with colour theory, a discipline that spanned physics, chemistry, psychology, philosophy and aesthetics. A key inspiration was German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's work on the psychological impact of different colours on mood and emotion, published as **Theory of Colours** in 1810. The Blue Rider artists pushed these theories further through creative experimentations.

Kandinsky, Marc and others in the group explored the expressive values of colour and form. Marc's experimentations with light refracting prisms are documented in his correspondence in winter 1911 with August Macke. The letter reveals the transition of theoretical thinking into the process of painting: 'Viewed through a prism, the yellow appeared dull grey, the entire form was surrounded by the most fantastic coloured circles. I now proceed to paint in stages in 'pure colours', every time the colour got purer, the colourful circles around the form receded, until finally a clear relation

between yellow, the cold white of the snow and the blue emerged’.

The composition of paintings such as **Deer in the Snow II** testify to this intense exploration of the scientific and emotional qualities of colour. In this room, we invite you to re-enact Marc’s experiments. You can view his painting through an achromatic doublet prism akin to the one used by the artist.

## JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

German writer, statesman, scientist and poet Goethe (1749–1832) investigated the physiology of colour perception. He shifted the colour paradigm from a purely scientific view to one that explored how colour is perceived and experienced. His colour spectrum charts how different tones can influence mood or emotion. In his 1810 book **Theory of Colours**, Goethe places himself in opposition to the scientific establishment, contradicting Isaac Newton. His findings appealed to many artists, including the Blue Rider circle.

Symmetric colour wheel with 'reciprocally evoked colours', **Theory of Colours**, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (Weimar, 1810). Pictures from History / Bridgeman Images

## MICHEL-EUGÈNE CHEVREUL

French chemist and colour theorist Chevreul (1786–1889) published **The Principle of Harmony and Contrast of Colours** in 1839. He observed that the psychological effects of colour on humans are not individual but general, and subject to physical laws. These ideas were particularly important for late 19th and early 20th century artists.

Illustration of the law of simultaneous contrast, **On the Law of Simultaneous Contrast of Colours and on its Applications in Decorative Art**, M.-E. Chevreul (Paris, 1839). Courtesy of Science History Institute



## COMPLEMENTARY COLOURS

Complementary colours are pairs of colours that contrast with each other. When placed side by side, the contrast makes them appear brighter, therefore complementing each other. In colour theory, complementary colours appear opposite each other on the colour wheel. The colour complement of each primary colour (red, yellow and blue) can be obtained by mixing the two other primary colours together. For example, the complementary of red is green which is a mix of yellow and blue.

First chromatic circle containing pure hues, Cercles Chromatiques, M.-E. Chevreul (Paris, 1861). Courtesy of Science History Institute

## PRISMATIC COLOURS

The colours of the visible spectrum produced by passing white light through a prism are known as prismatic colours. English scientist and philosopher Isaac Newton (1642–1727) developed the prismatic arrangement of colour theory at the end of the 17th century. According to Newton, prismatic colours are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet

Prisms, **Theory of Colours**, Goethe (Weimar, 1810) Klassik Stiftung Weimar

## ACHROMATIC DOUBLET PRISM

An achromatic doublet prism is an optical device that is designed to reduce or eliminate chromatic aberration. This is an optical phenomenon that occurs when different colours of light are refracted at different angles, resulting in an image that is distorted or blurred. They were commonly used in optical instruments such as polariscopes – devices designed to demonstrate the effect of double refraction. When looking through such a prismatic instrument at a painting, the colours overlap, either producing a neutral grey, signifying the best complementary colours.

A red and a green square of paper viewed through the achromatic doublet prism. © Photo: Lenbachhaus, Simone Gäscheimer

Only the prism has become indispensable to me... Nearly every painting requires an alteration of its use; sometimes it appears nigh on impossible. It serves the purpose of checking adjacent colours for their purity...

– Franz Marc

Vitrine against wall - from left to right

Franz Marc 1880–1916

Two pages from Franz Marc notebooks c.1910–11

Facsimiles

Original: Franz Marc Museum, Kochel am See, Stiftung Etta und Otto Stangl

Walter Bayer, Munich

Z89434, Z89435

William Ladd's Polariscopes, with lens and quarter undulations,  
1870

Science Museum Group

X89182

Franz Marc 1880–1916  
Born and worked Germany

**Deer in the Snow II** 1911  
Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Elly Koehler  
X87695

### Viewing instructions

Place your eye close to the prism to view Franz Marc's painting **Deer in the Snow II**.

Marc might have used such a prism in his experiments with complementary colours. When looking through the prism you will notice colours faintly overlap. These overlapping edges either produce a neutral grey, signifying complementary colours or coloured edges.

The large image reproduced nearby also gives a sense of the view through the prism.

## **VISITOR GUIDANCE FOR ROOM 11**

**The next room contains an artwork that uses monofrequency lighting.**

**Please speak to a member of staff if you need more information.**

ROOM 11

## VISITOR GUIDANCE

**This room contains an artwork that uses monofrequency lighting.**

**Please speak to a member of staff if you need more information.**

### LIGHT

This room brings Kandinsky's work into dialogue with a environmental light installation by contemporary artist Olafur Eliasson. Produced in 2006, **Lichtdecke Kandinsky** explores the effects of white light in a gallery space. Responding to Kandinsky's abstract artworks, Eliasson draws attention to the ways in which changing light and colour conditions can affect our perception.

Displayed alongside Eliasson's installation is Kandinsky's painting *Improvisation Gorge*, completed a few months before the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Encountering the painting and light installation together might make us think of colour as a concept, or space as an artwork. It also raises questions of authenticity and authorship: how is our perception of the painting affected by Eliasson's shifting environment?



Olafur Eliasson Born 1967  
Born Denmark, works Germany

**Lichtdecke Kandinsky 2006**

Fluorescent lights, translucent acrylic glass (white), paint  
(chamois grey), control unit

Courtesy of the artist, neugerriemschneider, Berlin; Tanya  
Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles  
X89935

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Improvisation Gorge 1914**

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87811

ROOM 12

**Clockwise from room entrance**

## **THE BLUE RIDER PROJECT**

**Blue Rider... will be the call that summons all artists of the new era and rouses the laymen to hear.**

– Advert for The Blue Rider Almanac, 1911

The collective rallied around their programmatic publication **The Blue Rider Almanac**. Although only Kandinsky and Marc were credited as co-editors, a collective effort from many artists in the community contributed to the Almanac's concept, content, design, writing and fundraising, including Münter, Franck-Marc and Elisabeth Macke. This collaborative approach also generated two groundbreaking exhibitions of paintings and works on paper.

The Blue Rider artists navigated the economic and critical landscape of 1900s European artistic circles, successfully building their careers. They participated in exhibitions nationally and internationally as well as staging monographic shows. Collaboration with the gallerist Herwarth Walden ensured access to the art market. They built relationships with museum curators and gallerists while contributing to Walden's progressive magazine **Der Sturm**, bringing their

ideas to a wider audience.

With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 the collective dispersed, devastated by the loss of lives and changing personal relationships. Yet, following the Second World War, the Blue Rider works appeared in the first iteration of the Documenta exhibition in Kassel, Germany in 1955. This signalled the ongoing relevance of the collective's dynamic artistic vision. Marking a celebration of complex cultural connections in post-war artistic communities, it also secured the collective's lasting influence on generations of artists to come.

Robert Delaunay 1885–1941

Born France, worked Spain, Portugal  
and France

**Study for 'The City'** 1909–10

Oil paint on canvas

Tate. Presented by the Friends of the Tate Gallery 1958

T00217

Wladimir Burljuk 1886[?]-1917[?]

Born and worked Russian Empire (now Ukraine)

**Trees** 1911

Oil paint on canvas

Brothers David and Wladimir Burljuk met the Blue Rider artists during their student years in Munich. By 1911 they were hailed as leaders of cubo-futurism, a style fusing cubism with futurism that emerged from what was then the Russian Empire. They exhibited both internationally and in their native Ukraine, taking part in the **Izdebsky Salon** with Kandinsky in 1911. Kandinsky invited Wladimir to share photographs of his work to be included in the picture research for the **Almanac**. Two were featured and another two, including **Trees**, were shown in the first Blue Rider exhibition. The painting was later acquired by Marc.

Lenbachhaus Munich, on permanent loan from The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich

X87783

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland  
and Sweden

**Dark Still Life (Secret)** 1911

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, on permanent loan from The Gabriele  
Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich

X87731

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland  
and Sweden

**Still Life with Saint George** 1911

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X87727

Franz Marc 1880–1916  
Born and worked Germany

**Cows, Red, Green, Yellow** 1911  
Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich  
X87703

Franz Marc 1880–1916  
Born and worked Germany

**Deer in the Woods II** 1912  
Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Bernhard and Elly Koehler,  
1965  
X87698



Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**Still life in Grey** 1910

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X88304

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and France

**Study for Composition VII** 1913

Oil paint and tempera on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X87823

Paul Klee 1879–1940

Born Switzerland, worked Germany and Switzerland

**Legend of the Swamp** 1919

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich and The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich; Settled in 2017 with the heirs of the former owner Sophie Lissitzky-Küppers, with generous financial support of the Kulturstiftung der Länder and the Ernst von Siemens Kunststiftung

X88300

**Legend of the Swamp** was acquired from the artist by Dr. Paul Erich Küppers. After his death in 1922, his widow Sophie Küppers inherited the painting. She married the artist El Lissitzky in 1927 and moved to Moscow. In July 1937, it was confiscated by the Nazis as part of the 'degenerate art' campaign and displayed in the Degenerate Art exhibition. In 1941, the German Reich illegally sold the painting that changed owners until 1982. The Lenbachhaus and the Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation acquired equal shares of the work in 1982.

In 1944 Sophie Lissitzky-Küppers was exiled by Soviet authorities to Novosibirsk as an 'enemy alien'. Her son Jen Lissitzky applied for the restitution of **Legend of the Swamp** in 1993. The settlement between the heirs and the City of Munich was reached in 2017. This settlement was made possible by the generous support of the Ernst von Siemens Kunststiftung, the Kulturstiftung der Länder, and the Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation.

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and France

**Cossacks** 1910–1

Oil paint on canvas

This painting relates to the larger **Composition IV. Cossacks** was included in the **Exhibition of Twentieth Century German Art** at the New Burlington Galleries in London in 1938. Featuring over 300 works, at the time it was the largest international response to the Nazi's persecution of the modernist artistic community in Germany. The artists on show had faced discrimination and their art had been denigrated in the infamous **Entartete Kunst** (Degenerate Art) exhibition. The London exhibition brought artists associated with the Blue Rider to a UK audience for the first time.

Tate. Presented by Mrs Hazel McKinley 1938

N04948

Albert Bloch 1882–1961

Born USA, worked Germany and USA

**Entombment** 1914

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich

X88257

August Macke 1887–1914

Born Germany, worked Italy, Switzerland and Germany

**Walk on the Bridge** 1913

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Bernhard and Elly  
Koehler, 1965

X87689

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland  
and Sweden

**Village Street in Winter** 1911

Oil paint on card

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X87725

Marianne Werefkin 1860–1938

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Russian Empire, Germany, Lithuania and Switzerland

**The Storm** c.1907

Tempera on paper on cardboard

**The Storm** was included in the **Second Izdebsky Salon**, an international modernist exhibition that toured Ukrainian cities of Odesa, Mykolaiv and Kherson in 1911. The work was described amongst the highlights of the show in the **Odesa Newspaper** on 2 March: 'Marianna Werefkin's work is peculiar and beautiful, especially "The Storm". The painting depicts the despair and supplication of the wives of fishermen who went to sea'. The exhibition resonated strongly with the public with reactions ranging from complete rejection and attempted acts of vandalism to genuine appreciation.

Fondazione Marianne Werefkin, Museo Comunale d'Arte  
Moderna, Ascona

X88702

Robert Delaunay 1885–1941

Born France, worked Spain, Portugal and France

**Circular Shapes, Moon no. 1** 1913

Oil paint on canvas

Lenbachhaus Munich and Gabriele Münter and Johannes

Eichner Foundation, Munich

X88097



Sonia Delaunay 1885–1979

Born and worked Russian Empire (now Ukraine)

**Prose on the Trans-Siberian Railway and of Little Jehanne of France 1913**

Watercolour and relief print on parchment

In 1913 Delaunay and the poet Blaise Cendrars collaborated on the first simultaneous book that brought together text and design to express spoken words through colour. A fusion of poetry and visual art, it was printed in varying typefaces and colours, showcasing a vibrant, rhythmic composition. Delaunay's pictorial interventions are designed to augment the text rather than illustrate it. The work was shown at Der Sturm's **First German Autumn Salon** in 1913. The exhibition's organiser Herwarth Walden said he sought to 'give an overview of the new movements in the pictorial arts of all countries.'

Tate. Purchased 1980

P07355

**The following 7 artworks will be on display until week commencing 15 July. This is for conservation reasons.**

Top row left to right

Franz Marc 1880–1916

Born and worked Germany

**Animal Legend** 1912

Woodcut on paper

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland  
and Sweden

**Farmer's Family** 1912–13

Woodcut on paper

Franz Marc 1880–1916

Born and worked Germany

**Shepherdess** 1912

Woodcut on paper

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X88204, X88215

Lenbachhaus Munich

X88199

Bottom row left to right

Franz Marc 1880–1916

Born and worked Germany

**Reconciliation** 1912

Woodcut on paper

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland  
and Sweden

**Habsburg Square** 1912–13

Woodcut on paper

**Watering Plants** 1912

Woodcut on paper

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X88203, X88216, X88213

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Born Russian Empire (now Russian Federation), worked  
Germany, Switzerland, Russian Socialist Federative Soviet  
Republic and France

**Front page of 'Der Sturm', Berlin, October 1912, no.129 1913**

Print on paper

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X88206

**The following 7 artworks will be on display from the week commencing 15 July. This is for conservation reasons.**

Top row left to right

**Gabriele Münter 1877–1962**

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**Construction Work 1912**

Woodcut on paper

**Franz Marc 1880–1916**

Born and worked Germany

**Small Leaping Horses 1912**

Woodcut on paper

**Tiger 1912**

Woodcut on paper

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X88212, X88201

Lenbachhaus Munich

X89583

Bottom row left to right

**Gabriele Münter 1877–1962**

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden

**New Years Greeting 1913**

Woodcut on paper

**August Macke 1887–1914**

Born Germany, worked Italy, Switzerland and Germany

**Greeting 1912**

Woodcut on paper

**Franz Marc 1880–1916**

Born and worked Germany

**Drinking Horse 1912**

Woodcut on paper

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957

X88217, X88200

Lenbachhaus Munich

X88198

Gabriele Münter 1877–1962

Born Germany, worked USA, Germany, France, Switzerland  
and Sweden

**Watering Plants** 1912

Print on paper

Lenbachhaus Munich, Donation of Gabriele Münter, 1957  
X88214

**Vitrine - middle of room**

**Anti clockwise from West Wall (entrance to Room 12)**

**South side**

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Franz Marc 1880–1916

**Der Blaue Reiter**, R. Piper & Co. Munich 1912

**Der Blaue Reiter**, R. Piper & Co. Munich 1914

Victoria and Albert Museum

X88689, X88690

Bottom row left to right

Photograph of Robert Delaunay's 'Tour Eiffel'

Photograph of David Burljuk's painting  
'Image from Multiple Points of View'

Spread from the unfinished mock-up of the **Neue  
Künstlervereinigung München. First Exhibition** catalogue,  
1910 featuring works by Pierre Girieud and Alexej Jawlensky

**Almanac's** vignettes by Franz Marc,  
Wassily Kandinsky and Hans Arp

All from Kandinsky and Münter archive

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich  
Z89425, Z89427, Z89426, Z89429



Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Page with text, illustrations and annotations: Wassily Kandinsky's '**Der Gelbe Klang**' text for **Der Blaue Reiter Almanac's** mock-up 1912

Page with text, illustrations and annotations for August Macke's '**Die Masken**' text for **Der Blaue Reiter Almanac's** mock-up 1912

Facsimiles

© Center Pompidou, MNAM-CCI Bibliothèque Kandinsky,  
Dist.RMN-Grand Palais / Kandinsky Fund  
Z89433, Z89432

Top row left to right

Photograph of 'Bova Korolevich fighting Polkan' woodcut by V. A. Vasiliev and I.D. Sytin, from **Russkii narodnyi lubok: albom**, 1887–9

Photograph of 'Battle with a Dragon'  
Toy, wood carving, Russian Empire, with retouchings by Kandinsky

Original probably owned by Kandinsky

Photograph of 'Ancestor figures', Borneo, Dayak

**Photograph of wooden figures 'Woman' and 'Mother and Child', Bali c.1900**

Redrawing of 'St Martin and Begger', Bavarian reverse glass painting, used as **Almanac's** frontispiece.

Original owned by Kandinsky and Münter

All from Kandinsky and Münter archive

The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation,  
Munich

Z89422, Z89430, Z89423, Z89424, Z89428

Attributed to Katsushika Hokusai 1760–1849

**Shishi Lion** Early 19th century

Facsimile

Original previously owned by Franz Marc

Schloßmuseum Murnau, acquired 2009

Z89431

Franz Marc 1880–1916

**Fabulous Beast** 1912

Woodcut on paper

Private Collection

X88430

Franz Marc 1880–1916

## **Wild Horses** 1912

Woodcut on postcard

Marc used woodcuts for limited edition prints featured in publications such as **Der Sturm** and the **Almanac**. He also made a series of postcards for his family to use. The postcard displayed here was sent by Maria Franck-Marc to Lily Klee-Stumpf, the wife of Paul Klee, on 14th March 1913 offering comfort:

‘My dear Mrs Klee – we’re delighted to hear that you’re feeling better – and we hope your lad will soon get over the bad days. If you really don’t mind, I’d like to come by on Wednesday afternoon at 4.30pm to play the piano. But only if it isn’t too much for you.’

Leicester Museums & Galleries

X88431

## North side

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Printed prospectus for Der Blaue Reiter, R. Piper & Co.,  
Munich, and **The First Exhibition of the 'Blue Rider'**  
**Editorial Board**

Printed prospectus for Der Blaue Reiter, R. Piper & Co.,  
Munich, and **The First Exhibition of the 'Blue Rider'**  
**Editorial Board**

Tate Archive  
Z89518, Z89519

From left to right

**Letter from Wassily Kandinsky to Michael Ernest Sadler**

6 October 1911

TRANSLATION

Dear Sir,

Thank you for sending me your periodical. I am very glad to give permission for the reproduction of my wood-cuts. I am very pleased that the so-called modern art movement is mirrored in your journal and meets with interest in England. Mr Brooke from Cambridge also told me about this last winter. I enclose for you the prospectus of the art periodical that I have founded, the first issue is due to appear in January. Also this month my book *Über Das Geistige in der Kunst* will be published. I will send you a copy. Please write back with your impression.

Yours,

Kandinsky

Tate Archive

Z88789

**Letter from Michael Ernest Sadler to Wassily Kandinsky**

11 March 1913

**Letter from Gabriele Münter, Munich to Michael Ernest**

**Sadler** 24 November 1913

## TRANSLATION

Dear Professor...

The fact is, firstly, that I was somewhat disconcerted when I heard, a year ago, that among other things you had bought a drawing of mine from the art dealer Putze Nachfolger Goltz, because I don't think much of those drawings and, besides, do rather fear that you paid more for it than I was asking. That is often the way of art dealers. With you always mentioning this unimportant little work so kindly in your letters I have felt for quite some time now that I would like to "pay homage" (that means as much as to make a present with a compliment. I don't know the English expression)... to your collection with something better of mine... I would be delighted if you allow me to include a small picture when he sends his painting to you.

With best wishes from Kandinsky and your humble servant,  
Gabriele Münter

Tate. Archive

Z88789, Z88788, Z88790



Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

**Concerning the Spiritual in Art**, R. Piper & Co. Munich 1912

**Über das Geistige in der Kunst (Concerning the Spiritual in Art)** outlines Kandinsky's art theories, grounded in his journey from representation to non-figuration. In this influential text he strives to represent hidden meanings within art through abstraction. Demonstrating the potential of colour and form as methods of communication, he declared the onset of a new creative era. Through the cover and in ten woodcut plates, Kandinsky conveys his ideas by reducing complex compositions to simplified forms of lines and shapes.

Tate Library

Z88771

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

**The Art of Spiritual Harmony**, Constable London 1914

Tate. Library

Z88787

Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944

Franz Marc 1880–1916

**Der Blaue Reiter**, R. Piper & Co. Munich 1912

Tate Library

Z88768

