

Charles Sheeler, 1883-1965

***Still Life with Pitcher and Peaches*, 1923**

Crayon and pencil on paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Wright S.

Ludington, 1941.2.32

During the 1920s, many artists working in the United States, like Sheeler, rejected elaborate Victorian ornamentation and embraced a clean, spare, modern aesthetic. At this time, the United States, formerly a mostly rural and agrarian country, had become urban and driven by manufacturing. Cities like Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh were growing, skyscrapers shooting up, while newly-built streetcar systems were about to be replaced by automobiles made in the factories of Detroit and its suburbs. Notice the hint of nostalgia with the inclusion of the small wine glass and pitcher, both perhaps old-fashioned by the standards of 1923. Sheeler collected antiques, especially the austere furniture of the Shakers, a Christian sect that lived communally and rejected all decoration or personal adornment.

Käthe Kollwitz, 1867-1945

The Mourners: A Memorial to Karl Liebknecht, ca. 1920

Conté crayon over blue pencil on buff lightweight paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Dorothy Riley Brown, 1953.31

Probably the most famous woman artist in Germany in the early 20th century, Kollwitz is best known for her heartbreaking images of working-class people mourning the loss of children, struggling for food, or suffering the deprivations of war. Her own son, Peter, was killed in WWI, and a grandson was killed in WWII. At the invitation of Liebknecht's widow, Kollwitz was invited into the morgue to draw his corpse. Liebknecht had been the head of the German Communist Party. In November 1918, the German Emperor fled, the government collapsed, and a revolutionary council was established in Berlin to draft a new democratic constitution. During this period of unrest, Liebknecht was murdered alongside fellow communist Rosa Luxemburg. The perpetrators, part of a proto-fascist paramilitary group, were later caught and sentenced. Kollwitz used this drawing as a study for a woodcut she made to show German workers mourning their fallen hero.



Käthe Kollwitz, *In Memoriam Karl Liebknecht*, woodcut. Third and final version, 1920. Collection of the Käthe Kollwitz Museum, Köln.

Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973

***Blind Minotaur Guided by a Little Girl in the Night*, 1934-35**

Aquatint with drypoint and engraving

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Wright S. Ludington, 1958.27

This is one print from a series of 100 that make up the Vollard Suite, which were commissioned by the Parisian dealer Ambroise Vollard in the 1930s. The plates were made between 1930 and 1937, but the prints were not issued to the public until the 1950s. None of these prints have a specific literary reference, but they do contain allusions to Greek mythology. The minotaur was a creature with the body of a man and the head of bull who was imprisoned in a labyrinth built by the architect Daedalus and who required in some versions of the myth a regular sacrifice of children to appease him. In this print, Picasso has shown the minotaur as powerful and potentially dangerous, but also blind and tame as he is led by a small girl. Nonetheless, there is a feeling of danger in this print with the fire casting strange shadows and characters hovering around and staring, as if waiting for something to happen.

Diego Rivera, 1886-1957

***Man Loading Donkey with Firewood*, 1938**

Graphite and watercolor on paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Barbara J. and Robert K. Straus, 1991.47

One of the great Mexican muralists along with David Alfaro Siqueiros and José Clemente Orozco, Rivera's art celebrated the dignity of workers and the Mexican people. The man's outstretched arms stabilize the huge, rounded pile of sticks on top of the donkey, emphasizing his control of the situation and the animal. Rivera's art mirrored his politics: in 1922, Rivera joined the Mexican Communist Party, though he was later expelled for supporting Leon Trotsky, a rival of Joseph Stalin. (In 1940, Trotsky was assassinated in Mexico on Stalin's orders, and a drawing of his corpse by Gunther Gerzso is on view in this exhibition.)

Carlos Orozco Romero, 1898-1984

Portrait of Rufino Tamayo, 1939

Pen and ink on paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs.
MacKinley Helm, 1969.35.39

Orozco Romero was a cartoonist and a pivotal figure in the Mexican art world, helping to establish La Escuela Nacional de Pintura, Escultura y Grabado (National School of Painting, Sculpture and Printmaking) in Mexico City. His illustrations appeared in nationally important publications like *El Heraldo de México*, *Excélsior*, and *El Universal*, all based in Mexico City, and *The Nation*, published in New York. Born to a working-class family in Guadalajara who encouraged his study of art, he left home at the age of 13 to support himself. A scholarship allowed him to travel to Spain, France, and Belgium, and he exhibited widely in Mexico, Europe, and the United States during his lifetime.

This suite of contour drawings of prominent figures in the Mexican art scene were illustrations for a publication, *13 Mexican Painters* (pub. 1939).

Rufino Tamayo, represented in this exhibition by his drawing *El Fumador* (*The Smoker*), was a significant artist in Mexico and abroad during the 20th century. Beginning in the late 1930s, he and his wife Olga relocated to New York City where they remained into the 1940s. Museo Tamayo in Mexico City contains many works by him and his contemporaries, including Helen Frankenthaler, who was his student during his New York year.



Carlos Orozco Romero, 1898-1984

Portrait of Julio Castellanos, 1939

Pen and ink on paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs.
MacKinley Helm, 1969.35.42

Julio Castellanos was an active Mexican artist whose career was cut short by an early death at the age of 42. He began studies at the Academia de San Carlos in Mexico City at the age of 13, and later traveled to the United States, Paris, and Buenos Aires, where he had his first exhibition in 1925.

Carlos Orozco Romero, 1898-1984

***Portrait of Goitia*, 1939**

Pen and ink on paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs.
MacKinley Helm, 1969.35.42

Francisco Goitia studied at the Academia de San Carlos in Mexico City and later traveled abroad to Barcelona in 1904 where he continued his studies. His success with an exhibition there prompted the Mexican government to give him a stipend to travel to France and Spain. When the Mexican Revolution broke out in 1910, he returned home and eventually joined General Felipe Ángeles, as part of the Revolutionary Army of Pancho Villa. The experience of the bloodshed and horrible deprivations of the Mexican people led Goitia to a life of asceticism and poverty. He lived in the then-isolated town of Xochimilco for most of the rest of his life, avoiding artists and intellectuals. He died in obscurity, but in 2007 his art was the subject of a significant exhibition in Zacatecas, where he was born.



Gunther Gerzso, 1915-2000

***Untitled (Postmortem Portrait of Leon Trotsky)*, 1940**

Charcoal on paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of the Colonel Thomas R. Ireland
Collection, 2003.102

Gunther Gerzso, 1915-2000

***Untitled (Postmortem Portrait of Leon Trotsky)*, 1940**

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Leon Trotsky was a figure of international significance in 1940 when he was assassinated in Mexico under orders from Josef Stalin. He had been driven out of the Soviet Union by Stalin who saw Trotsky as a rival for control. At one point, Trotsky had been minister for foreign affairs in the Soviet government and head of the Red Army. While this image portrays him as serene and saint-like, he was responsible for mass murder, imprisonment, and forced relocations during his time in Russia as the Communists sought to extinguish democracy and perceived rivals.

Henri Matisse, 1869-1954

Head of a Woman (Lydia Delectorskaya), Number I, 1937

Pen and ink on white laid paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Wright S.
Ludington, 1941.2.18

This drawing exemplifies the themes of serenity and revolution. Delectorskaya was Matisse's studio manager, model, and muse for the latter part of his life, caring for him until his death. Born in Siberia, she was a refugee of the Russian Revolution who fled to China and made her way to France. In 1932, she met the artist after having dropped out of medical school in Paris because she could not afford the fees. By this stage, Matisse was living in Nice, a resort town on the Mediterranean Sea, and had already made his artist studio and living space filled with flowers, birds, rich fabrics, potted plants, and views to the sea a focus of his work.

Henri Matisse, 1869-1954

Head of a Woman (Lydia Delectorskaya), Number II, 1937

Pen and ink on white laid paper with watermark

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Wright S.
Ludington, 1941.2.19

Matisse was particularly proud of his contour drawings, in which there is no shading, hatching, or filling. He struggled to achieve confident concise lines with no erasures:

I must also say that I achieved a very rare voluptuousness and elegance of line [in the pen drawings]. I poured my entire sensibility into them.

His fellow painter and sometime rival, Picasso, felt otherwise:

Matisse makes a drawing, then he makes a copy of it. He recopies it five times, ten times, always clarifying the line. He's convinced that the last...is the best, the purest, the definitive one; and in fact, most of the time it was the first.



Henri Matisse, 1869-1954

Bust of a Woman, Her Hand Under Her Chin, 1943

Pencil on Arches paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Dwight and Winifred
Vedder, 2006.54.8

This is likely a drawing of Matisse's granddaughter,
Jacqueline Matisse.



Henri Matisse, 1869-1954

***Odalisque in Striped Pants, Reflected in the Mirror*, 1923**

Lithograph on Chine volant paper, Edition 3/50

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Virginia Ridder, 2017.18.1

Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973

***Woman with a Pitcher (Femme tenant un vase)*, 1919**

Pencil over charcoal on paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Wright S. Ludington, 1946.10.1

With a headdress, traditional garb, and a pitcher, this woman's clothing is not typical of fashion in 1919, and, in fact, Picasso drew this from a photograph dating from between 1860 and 1890. Around this time, Picasso often found old photographs and drew from them, as if to convey nostalgia about a time long past. The clear rendering of the subject's face, hair, and jewelry contrasts with how loosely and imprecisely he drew the rest of her body.



Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973

***Italian Peasants (Paysans italiens)*, 1919**

Pencil and smeared charcoal on paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Wright S.
Ludington, 1946.10.2

These two young people seem out of sync with the early 20th century, and, indeed, Picasso made this drawing while referring a photograph he found from the 19th century. The clear outlines of their face and clothing stand out against the soft, mostly erased forms of the background.

Rufino Tamayo, 1899-1991

The Smoker (El Fumador), 1947

Crayon on paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Shirley and Bill Wilson, 1991.44

During the 1930s and 1940s, Tamayo often drew people smoking, an activity that was then thoroughly contemporary and a sign of modern sophistication. Cigarette companies made smoking appealing through advertising, and along with going to the movies, motorcars, comic books, magazines, and records, it was yet another cheap consumer item for people to buy with their increasing disposable income. Unlike Diego Rivera, also in this exhibition, or the other great Mexican muralists, Siqueiros and Orozco, Tamayo did not always align his work with explicit leftist and Marxist political positions.

Tamayo was born in Oaxaca to an indigenous family of Zapotec heritage, but moved to Mexico City as a child. In 1917, he enrolled at the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (National Institute of Fine Arts) where he quickly became a star student, encouraged by Diego Rivera. By 1947, the year of this drawing, he had been splitting his time between New York City and Mexico City for about fifteen years. He had significant one-person shows at Julien Levy Gallery, Weyhe Gallery, and Valentine Gallery, and museum shows in Chicago and Cincinnati. He also received significant state commissions for murals in Mexico, and in 1948 he had a solo show at Mexico's Palacio de Bellas Artes.

Eileen Agar, 1899-1991

***Untitled (figure with cithara)*, 1938**

Collage with pencil, pen and ink, crayon, and watercolor on pressed board

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Museum purchase, London Collectors' Group Fund, 1987.37.2

Like the Picasso print also in this exhibition, Agar looked to ancient Greek culture and to the long history of representational art with recognizable subjects. Here the body of a nude woman holds a cithara, an ancient instrument that the Greeks first used to accompany the reading of poetry, dances, and songs. She is superimposed on the head of another person, probably a woman. On top of that, the artist added a red-orange lattice. Then, she covered the frame with marks, giving an effect of a picture within a picture within a picture. While she always resisted the name, Agar was included in the First British Surrealist Exhibition of 1936, and for ever after found herself grouped with them, though her work varied considerably over her long life and career.

Wifredo Lam, 1902-1982

The Casting of the Spell, 1947

Oil on burlap

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Wright S. Ludington, 1956.2.4

After spending time in Paris and meeting Picasso and the Surrealists, Lam fled France in 1941 because of the Nazi invasion. He returned to his native Cuba and explored the nation's Afro-Cuban history.

This painting refers to Santería, which combines elements of African religions and Catholicism. Lam's maternal grandmother was an enslaved person from the Congo, and his father was a Chinese immigrant to Cuba. Lam saw his painting as a tool to combat the forces of colonialism, and he viewed his art as aligned with the liberation movements that led to many peoples declaring their independence from the European colonial powers.



Joan Miró, 1893-1983

***Femme fuyant l'incendie (Woman Fleeing Fire)*, 1939**

Pencil and gouache on watercolor paper

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Wright S. Ludington, 1956.7.3