

# GUGGENHEIM BILBAO

Press release



The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao presents on April 22, 2016

## **Windows on the City** **The School of Paris, 1900–1945**

The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao presents  
*Windows on the City: The School of Paris, 1900–1945*

- Dates: April 22 through October 23, 2016
  - The first exhibition of works from the collection of the Guggenheim Museum in New York since the renewal of the management agreement between the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in December 2014
  - Curated by Lauren Hinkson, Assistant Curator for Collections, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
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- **This presentation charts the key movements of modernism, from Cubism to Orphism to Surrealism, and the artists who came to be known as the École de Paris (School of Paris).**
  - **In Paris Picasso and Braque radically overturned the conventions of painting, Delaunay composed harmonious visions of color, Kandinsky pursued new directions in abstraction, and Brancusi reimaged how sculptures could be present in space.**
  - **The exhibition presents some of the most influential paintings and sculptures of the last century, created by artists such as Brancusi, Braque, Delaunay, Modigliani, and Picasso.**

From April 22 to October 23, 2016, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao presents *Windows on the City: The School of Paris, 1900–1945*, an exhibition of more than 50 masterpieces from the collection of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. This exhibition is the first since the renewal of the management agreement with the Guggenheim Foundation, signed in December 2014 and valid for 20 years. The agreement provides for a range of new initiatives that will broaden the partnership and emphasizes the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum's commitment to present an exhibition of key, iconic works from its collection every two years at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

*Windows on the City: The School of Paris, 1900–1945* includes some of the most influential paintings and sculptures of the last century, created by artists such as Constantin Brancusi, Georges Braque, Robert Delaunay, Amedeo Modigliani, and Pablo Picasso.

In the early twentieth century, Paris was the capital of the avant-garde. Artists from around the world settled in the City of Light, where they created new forms of art and literature and responded to the rapid economic, social, and technological developments that were fundamentally transforming city life. It was in Paris that Picasso and Braque radically overturned the conventions of painting, Delaunay composed harmonious visions of color, Kandinsky pursued new directions in abstraction, and Brancusi reimaged how

sculptures could be present in space. The title of the exhibition, which refers to a series by Delaunay, illustrates how the modern city became a backdrop and an inspiration for artistic production.

Spanning from the first years of the twentieth century through World War II, the exhibition charts the key movements of modernism—from Cubism to Orphism to Surrealism—and the artists who came to be known as the *École de Paris* (School of Paris). Among the masterpieces featured are Picasso's *Le Moulin de la Galette* (1900), Modigliani's *Nude* (1917), and Marc Chagall's *Green Violinist* (1923–24). Though diverse, the artistic visions represented in this exhibition manifest a common impulse to eschew conservative aesthetics and transform perceptions of everyday life in a modern city.

The rise of Fascism and the occupation of France during World War II ultimately ended the School of Paris, as the artists who had once sought political, spiritual, and creative refuge in the city were forced to leave.

## A tour through the exhibition

### Gallery 305

Cubism was one of the most important artistic innovations that emerged in Paris in the first half of the twentieth century. This revolutionary approach to painting, developed by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque between 1907 and 1914, challenged the conventions of visual art and the very nature of representation. This gallery includes key works that exemplify Analytic Cubism, an intellectual style in which form and space are “broken down;” Braque's *Piano and Mandola* (1909–10) and Picasso's *Bottles and Glasses* (1911–12) feature many characteristics of this approach, including a muted palette. While still recognizable in these paintings, objects are fractured into multiple planes, as is the background.

### Gallery 306

In the years leading up to and following World War I, artists used the visual vocabulary of Cubism to achieve various ends, such as exploring pure abstraction and modern science, and infusing contemporary experience with the spirituality of folk traditions. Robert Delaunay's depictions of Parisian life and landmarks, are exemplified in works such as *Red Eiffel Tower* (1911–12), while his later abstract painting, *Circular Forms* (1930) showcases his interest in contemporary developments in optics.

In this gallery, visitors can also observe *Green Violinist* (1923) by Russian artist Marc Chagall, who produced this painting upon his return to Paris after having spent much of World War I in his home country. The work merges the Cubist fragmentation of space with colorful imagery inspired by Russian and

Jewish folklore, conveying the artist's nostalgia for the religious festivals and popular celebrations of his youth.

The work of Constantin Brancusi, who traveled from his native Romania to settle in Paris in 1904, rejects the theatrical, narrative impulse of much nineteenth-century sculpture in favor of radically simplified, abstract forms and the unadorned presentation of wood, metal, and other materials. Brancusi never identified the specific sources or meanings of his works, but *The Sorceress* (1916–24) might relate to a supernatural figure from Romanian legends.

### Gallery 307

After the First World War, Paris once again became a center of cultural production. During that time, the adherents of Surrealism—a movement inaugurated with André Breton's 1924 manifesto—were also counted as part of the School of Paris. Drawing on the theories of Sigmund Freud, these writers and artists attempted to articulate and give form to repressed desires, dream imagery, and other elements of the unconscious. Some, like Yves Tanguy, juxtaposed incongruous images and objects; others, like Jean Arp and Joan Miró, experimented with automatism, creating drawings without a premeditated composition or subject in order to bypass the conscious mind. Influenced by Arp and Miró, American sculptor Alexander Calder created a language of movement and balance with his famous mobiles and wire sculptures, including *Romulus and Remus* (1928).

Vasily Kandinsky, who made significant advances in abstract painting while living in Germany and Russia during the 1910s and '20s, settled in Paris in 1934. In his works from this period, including *Yellow Painting* (1938) and *Around the Circle* (1940), Kandinsky combines free-playing forms similar to those from his earliest abstractions with the more geometric and biomorphic shapes he developed while teaching at the Bauhaus.

### Didaktika

The exhibition includes an educational area that aims to transport visitors to turn-of-the-century Paris through a "time tunnel" that provides a historical, political, economic, and social context of the time. An icon of modernity and the avant-garde, Paris is, in a way, a co-star of the exhibition.

Focusing on four major expositions that took place in Paris during the first half of the twentieth century—the 1900 Universal Exposition, the 1925 International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts, the 1931 International Colonial Exhibition, and the 1937 International Exposition of Art and Technology in Modern Life—the contents of the Didaktika are presented through texts, large photomurals, videos, and audio recordings that evoke the vibrancy of the City of Light.

In connection with the exhibition, the museum also will offer the following programs:

#### Course About the School of Paris

In collaboration with the Philharmonic Society of Bilbao, the museum will offer a course on the history of the School of Paris for museum members only. The course will focus on music, painting, and literature from the first decades of the twentieth century. It will include six sessions and take place in May and June.

#### Classic French Cinema and Live Music Cycle

On the Saturdays, May 7 and 21 and June 4, a selection of the best films from French silent cinema will be screened, including Man Ray's *The Mysteries of the Château de Dé* (1929). The film will be accompanied by live music from prominent DJs using collectors' vinyl records in collaboration with the Filmoteca de Cataluña and produced by Visual Phonic.

#### Shared Reflections

These special events reveal behind-the-scenes work as well as curious details about the exhibition.

- **Curatorial Vision**, May 4, led by Lucía Agirre, curator, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao
- **Key Concepts**, May 11, led by Marta Arzak, Associate Director of Education and Interpretation, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

Finally, for additional information about the exhibition, visitors can approach our **gallery hosts**, a free service that the museum offers daily from 11 am to 2 pm.

#### **Cover Image**

Marc Chagall

*The Soldier Drinks (Le soldat boit)*, 1911–12

Oil on canvas, 109.2 x 94.6 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection

49.1211

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#### **For more information:**

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**Complete information about the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao is available at [www.guggenheim-bilbao.es](http://www.guggenheim-bilbao.es) (press room).**

Images for press usage  
*Windows on the City: The School of Paris, 1900–1945*  
Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

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For further information, please contact the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Press Department: tel. +34 944 35 90 08 and email: [media@guggenheim-bilbao.es](mailto:media@guggenheim-bilbao.es)

**Jean Arp**

*Growth (Croissance)*, 1938

Marble

80.3 cm high

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 53.1359

© 2016 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn



**Constantin Brancusi**

*King of Kings (Le roi des rois)*, ca. 1938

Oak

1300 x 48.3 x 46 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 56.1449

© VEGAP, Bilbao, 2016

Photo: David Heald, © SRGF



**Georges Braque**

*Violin and Palette (Violon et palette)*, September 1, 1909

Oil on canvas

91.7 x 42.8 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 54.1412

© VEGAP, Bilbao, 2016



**Marc Chagall**

*The Soldier Drinks (Le soldat boit)*, 1911–12

Oil on canvas

109.2 x 94.6 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection, 49.1211

© VEGAP, Bilbao, 2016



**Robert Delaunay**

*Red Eiffel Tower (La tour rouge)*, 1911–12

Oil on canvas

125 x 90.3 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection, 46.1036



**Robert Delaunay**

*Circular Forms (Formes circulaires)*, 1930

Oil on canvas

128.9 x 194.9 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection, 49.1184



**Juan Gris**

*Newspaper and Fruit Dish (Journal et compotier)*, March 1916

Oil on canvas

46 x 37.8 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, By gift, Estate of Katherine S. Dreier, 53.1341



**Vasily Kandinsky**

*Around the Circle (Autour du cercle)*, May–August 1940

Oil and enamel on canvas

96.8 x 146 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection, 49.1222  
© VEGAP, Bilbao, 2016



**Fernand Léger**

*Nude Model in the Studio (Le modèle nu dans l'atelier)*, 1912–13

Oil on burlap

128.6 x 95.9 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection, 49.1193  
© VEGAP, Bilbao, 2016



**Joan Miró**

*Landscape (The Hare) (Paysage [Le lièvre])*, autumn 1927

Oil on canvas

129.6 x 194.6 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 57.1459

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**Amedeo Modigliani**

*Nude (Nu)*, 1917

Oil on canvas

73 x 116.7 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection, By gift, 41.535



**Piet Mondrian**

*Still Life with Gingerpot II (Stilleven met gemberpot II)*, 1911–12

Oil on canvas

91.5 x 120 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, L294.76

© 2007 Mondrian / Holtzman Trust



**Pablo Picasso**

*Le Moulin de la Galette*, autumn 1900

Oil on canvas

88.2 x 115.5 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Thannhauser Collection, Gift, Justin K. Thannhauser, 78.2514.34

© Sucesión Pablo Picasso. VEGAP, Bilbao, 2016



**Pablo Picasso**

*Carafe, Jug and Fruit Bowl (Carafon, pot et compotier)*, summer 1909

Oil on canvas

71.8 x 64.6 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection,

By gift, 37.536

© Sucesión Pablo Picasso. VEGAP, Bilbao, 2016



**Pablo Picasso**

*Mandolin and Guitar (Mandoline et guitare)*, 1924

Oil with sand on canvas

140.7 x 200.3 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York 53.1358

© Sucesión Pablo Picasso. VEGAP, Bilbao, 2016



**Yves Tanguy**

*There, Motion Has Not Yet Ceased (Là ne finit pas encore le mouvement)*, 1945

Oil on canvas

71.1 x 55.5 cm

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Bequest, Richard S. Zeisler, 2007.47

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