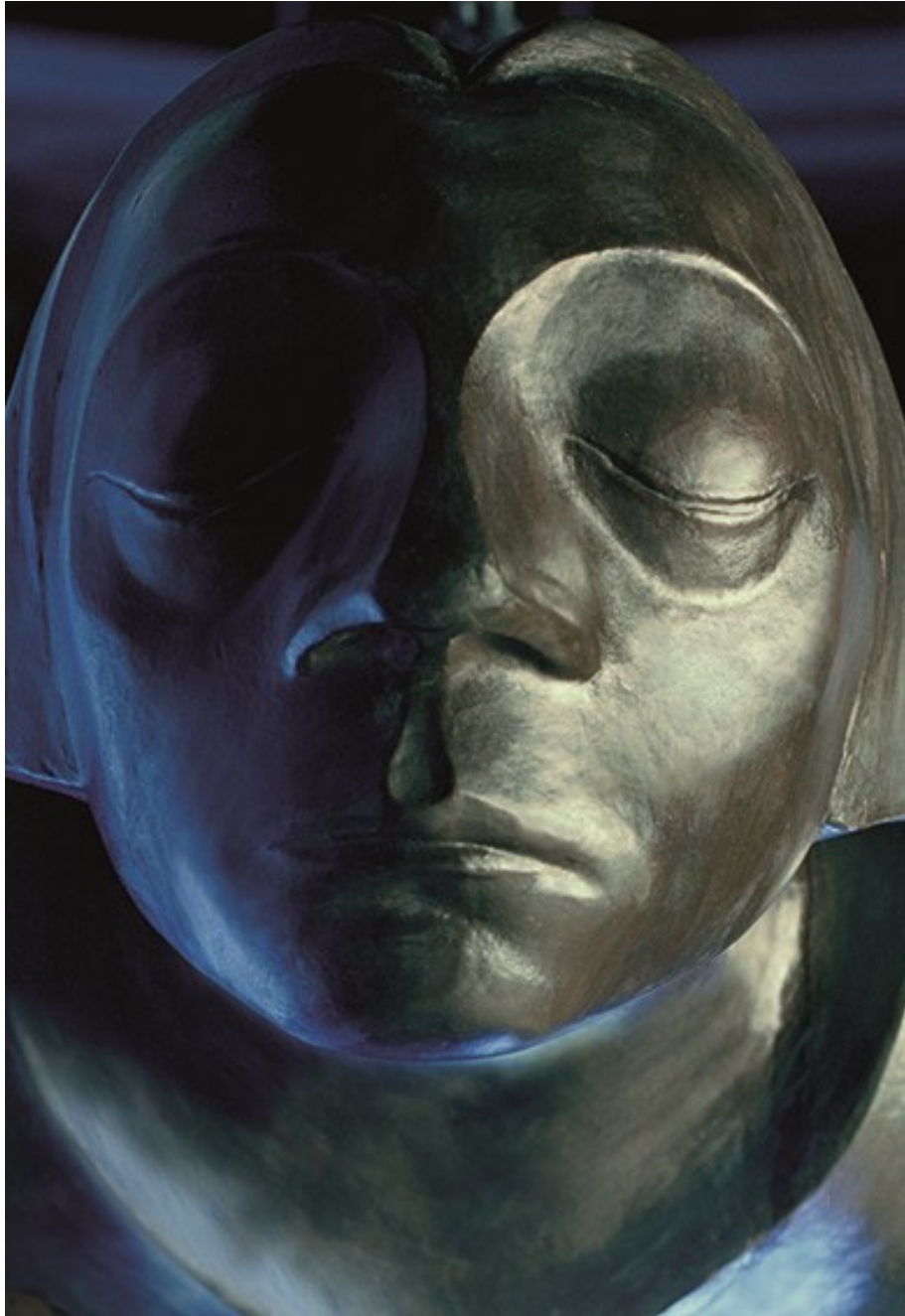




# ERNST BARLACH | KÄTHE KOLLWITZ

Exhibition Dossier



## 1 BARLACH | KOLLWITZ

Ernst Barlach is one of the most famous artists of the beginning 20<sup>th</sup> century in Europe as well is Käthe Kollwitz. Their numerous sculptures, drawings and graphic works can be seen in worldwide collections and museums.

What makes them outstanding representatives of modernism is their unwavering advocacy for mankind in its existential situation. Neither Barlach nor Kollwitz ever attempted to abstract from human existence; instead, they made it the focus of their art and captured it in powerful images - still relevant to this very day.

The exhibition Ernst Barlach | Käthe Kollwitz opens up an engaging dialogue between these two artists, who explored the same themes in very different ways.



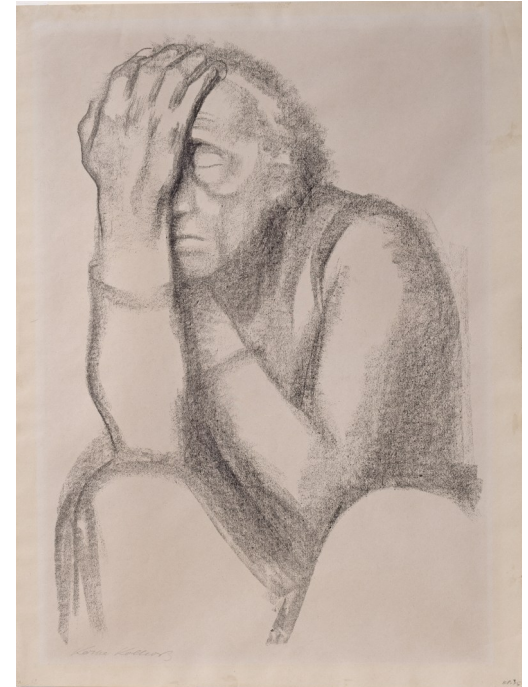
Images: Ernst Barlach, Güstrow Memorial Detail, bronze 1927 and Käthe Kollwitz, Selfportrait, woodcut 1923



Early on, Ernst Barlach and Käthe Kollwitz conceived their artistic work in opposition to a reality they perceived as cold and dominated by material interest.

Käthe Kollwitz created a wealth of socially critical works. Her attention was on those people who lived in the shadow of progress in poorest conditions and waged a daily struggle for their existence.

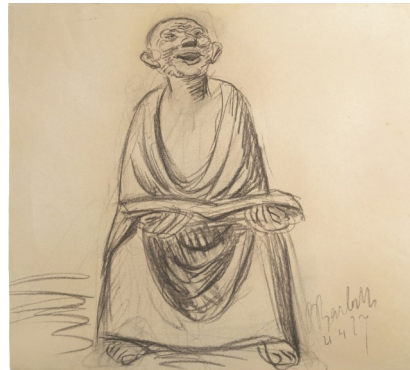
She presents very personal and individual portraits of people. Unusual for the time, many of them are women, mothers and children.



While Käthe Kollwitz's work focuses on concrete social conditions, Ernst Barlach can be described as a mystic of modernity. His images of people bear hardly any individual characteristics. They symbolically embody the fundamental conditions of human existence and serve as an expression of spiritual orientation.

Especially Barlach's sculptures develop a direct and universally comprehensible dialogue with the viewer. A cosmos of human emotional states are manifest in a simple basic figure. Barlach contrasts the well informed, enlightened person of the modern with the image of an unsophisticated, unpretentious and undivided human being. Thus he declared:

*'What man has suffered and can endure, his greatness, his concerns (including myth and utopian dream), this is what engages me.'*



### 3 BARLACH | KOLLWITZ

Images: Ernst Barlach: Doubting Man, bronze 1931. Cheerful Reader, Charcoal 1927. Entombment, charcoal 1927. The Horror, bronze 1923. Death in Life, bronze 1926. Singing Man, bronze 1928.



With 150 to 200 works, the exhibition offers a retrospective insight into the complete works of both artists.

Barlach and Kollwitz wanted to transcend the boundaries of existence with their art. The current debates on social responsibility, poverty and wealth, empathy and commitment to peace are reflected in there, as is humanity's search for sense in the crisis-ridden world.





The retrospectively arranged presentation comprises around 40 impressive sculptural works and about 160 graphics and drawings, letters, autographs, historical photos and videos.

The exhibition provides an in-depth insight into the historical period of industrialisation and modernisation in Germany and Europe, with its dreams, ideals and frightening social reality, marked by two world wars.

To this very day, it remains amazing how both artists used their works to campaign for a better world, social justice and peace.



The plea of their art transcends time and culture. Both artists' works are understandable all over the world because they articulate people's basic needs for peace, sustenance and community.





Exhibits: a carefully selected collection of approximately 150–200 works,  
Exhibition space: 500 – 1,000 square meters (size can be adjusted)  
Available from April 2026 to end of 2028.

We are always available to answer any questions you may have about  
a potential collaboration.

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