

# Exhibition guide



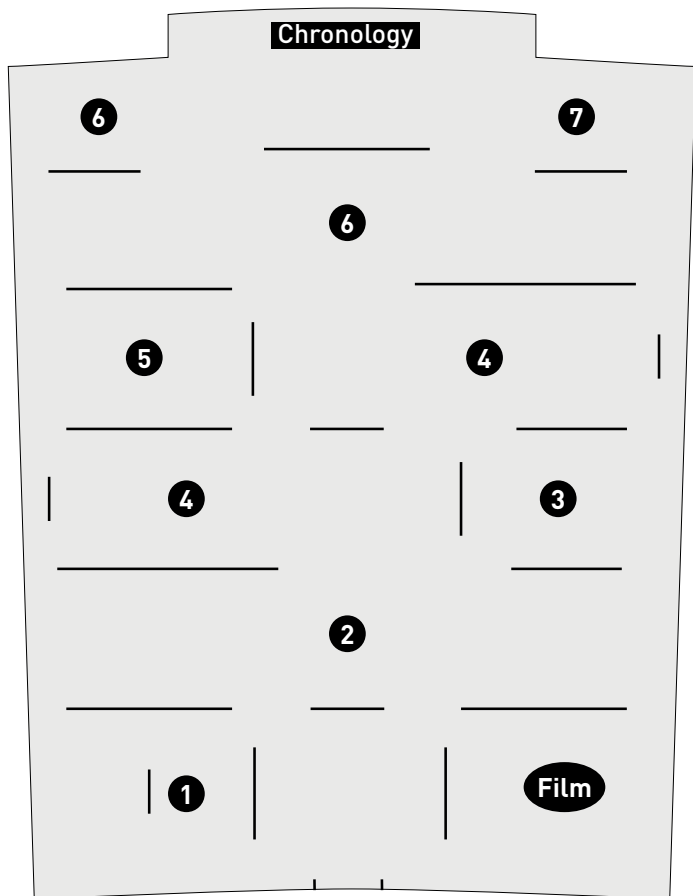
Founded by  
Maurice E. and Martha Müller  
and the heirs of Paul Klee

Zentrum Paul Klee  
Bern

## Gabriele Münter. Pioneer of Modern Art

29.1.–8.5.22

# Floorplan



# Introduction

*"My thing is seeing, painting, and drawing, not speaking."*

As a painter, Gabriele Münter was undisputedly one of the most important voices of the early twentieth-century European avant-garde. She belonged to the now legendary group Der Blaue Reiter (the Blue Rider): Together with Wassily Kandinsky, Alexei Jawlensky, Marianne von Werefkin, Franz Marc, August Macke, Paul Klee, and others, she developed a sensational new form of art that continues to inspire today. This exhibition provides an overview of Münter's work, spanning her early photographs of the United States, the late impressionist oil sketches, her colourful paintings, and her prints and drawings.

In their search for both a new artistic stance as well as an authentic and unspoiled art, the artists of the Blue Rider studied folk art, children's drawings, and non-European art. Münter was so interested in these art forms that she not only started her own collection but also copied reverse glass paintings and children's drawings. Against this backdrop, she discovered a modern visual language that broke from the exact reproduction of reality. Fields of bright colour surrounded by black lines became vehicles for expressing outer impressions and inner experiences. Gabriele Münter continually returned to classical themes, such as landscapes, interiors, and portraits.

She recognized subjects in her immediate surroundings and recorded them in her sketchbook. Even after the Blue Rider period, she enjoyed success – in Scandinavia after 1915, for example. Until her death in 1962, she continued to work through the ups and downs, changing her style and always daring to try something new.

Despite her significance within the avant-garde and her many successes, for a long time Gabriele Münter was seen as a marginal figure and a follower, as a mere witness to her time and not as an artist in her own right. In the male-dominated art world, her artistic contribution to the avant-garde was not acknowledged. The terms “naïve,” “intuitive,” and “primitive” were used to disparage her work. In contrast to her male colleagues, the conscious aspects of her creativity and inventiveness were thereby denied. The retrospective at the Zentrum Paul Klee refutes this view. It presents Münter as an important member of the avant-garde and emphasizes her role as a versatile, highly individualistic artist who delighted in experimentation.

This exhibition was developed in close collaboration with the Gabriele Münter- und Johannes Eichner-Stiftung, Munich and the Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau München.

# The Woman Artist in Art History

This exhibition aims to introduce the public to a pioneer of modern art who has long been neglected in art history. Although Münter contributed important ideas to discussions among the Blue Rider and associated artists, as a woman she was not considered to have the same intellectual and creative capacities. Even in the Blue Rider's progressive circle, women artists were excluded from theoretical conversations. The texts in the *Blue Rider* almanac were written exclusively by men. In art history, therefore, Kandinsky and Marc are always presented as the central figures in the Blue Rider. Münter's part in editing the almanac is largely unrecognized, and the quality of her work is often solely attributed to the years she spent with Kandinsky.

Both of Münter's life partners, Kandinsky and Johannes Eichner, described her as a natural talent who worked intuitively and instinctively. The versatility of her work is negatively described as accommodating and without a strong will. Such assessments are typical in the reception of women artists. Although Gabriele Münter's art was rediscovered after the war, when it was presented in publications and exhibitions and placed in the context of German Expressionism and the Blue Rider, her own statements survive in only three publications.

Of these, two brief articles were published in journals in 1948, and the most comprehensive, “Bekenntnisse und Erinnerungen” (Confessions and Recollections), appeared in 1952 in the book *Gabriele Münter. Menschenbilder in Zeichnungen* (Gabriele Münter: The Human Image in Drawings). The lack of theoretical texts by women artists of the time makes it difficult to judge and contextualize their work in art historical terms. For this reason, some of them are still not recognized as artists in their own right.

# 1 USA 1898 – 1900

Münter was only 21 in the fall of 1898 when she undertook a journey with her sister Emmy, who was eight years older, to the USA to visit their relatives. Both of their parents, who had died at an early age, had lived there for lengthy periods. The sisters travelled to New York by ocean liner, and from there continued to St. Louis, Arkansas, and Texas. Münter outlined her travel experiences in the sketchbooks she had already begun in Germany. In 1899, she was given a Kodak Bull's Eye N°2 camera as a gift and discovered the medium of photography. Münter documented her relatives, their homes, and their workplaces, as well as city and country life. She also turned her attention toward advanced technology and machines, such as ships, steam trains, and even a rollercoaster. These stood in stark contrast to the old horse-drawn carriages by which the sisters travelled, especially in West Texas.

Münter always asserted the documentary aspect of her photographs. Their compositional quality, however, reveals her search for artistic expression. Numerous landscapes show her interest in and experimentation with distance and perspective, as well as her overall determination to consciously arrange objects within pictorial space.

In addition to photographing people and their activities, Münter was also fascinated by the objects surrounding her subjects – while at work and during their free time. Motifs such as a baby carriage filled with dolls and a votive tree also appear in her later work. The more than 400 photographs from her trip to the USA not only have biographical and artistic value, but also document what for the time was an extremely adventurous journey in the “Wild West.”



## 2 In Nature

*"From then on, I no longer strove toward the 'right' calculable form of things. And yet I never wanted to 'overcome,' defeat, or even ridicule nature. I represented the world as it seemed essential to me, as it gripped me."*

After a few months in Berlin, Münter returned to Munich in early summer 1908, settling in the artists' quarter of Schwabing. From 1909, she and Kandinsky lived together in an apartment on Ainmillerstrasse, where Paul Klee also resided with his wife Lily and son Felix. In late summer, she made her first study trip to the nearby village of Murnau with Kandinsky and their friends, the painter couple Marianne von Werefkin and Alexei Jawlensky. Murnau is situated among picturesque Alpine scenery, flat moorlands, and the Staffelsee. The stay marked a turning point in Münter's art. She moved from the impressionistic, impasto oil sketches made in Tunisia and Paris to Expressionism. The intense light of the Alpine foothills heightened the colours and contours of the landscape. Münter depicted impressions from nature in distinct, colourful planes, thereby transcending traditional perspectival representation. She replaced the palette knife with the brush, with which she spontaneously transferred bold, unmixed colours onto cardboard directly before nature. The results were expressive works such as *Toward Evening* (1909) and *Alley in Front of the Mountain* (1909).

In a lively exchange with Munich's international art scene, Münter cofounded the New Artists Association Munich, which was initiated by Werefkin, in 1909. The same year, Münter and Kandinsky moved from the city to the countryside in Murnau, where Münter bought a house. From then on, both the landscape and Münter's house became sites of inspiration and exchange for the aforementioned artists. Through their discussions, the artist couples Münter and Kandinsky, Werefkin and Jawlensky, Elisabeth and August Macke, as well as Maria and Franz Marc, solidified the opinion that art must be fundamentally reformed. That year, Kandinsky and Mark founded the editorial team of the *Blue Rider*, and together with Münter, von Werefkin, and Jawlensky, they developed a network of avant-garde artists. Then, the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 put an end to it all. Münter and Kandinsky fled to Switzerland, because the Russian citizen Kandinsky was considered an enemy. He travelled back to Russia without Münter.

Münter presented numerous paintings in the 1912 *Blue Rider* almanac as well as the group's first exhibition at the Galerie Thannhauser in Munich. Together with her comrades, she probed the previously established boundaries of painting. In her abstract landscape paintings, nature is radically simplified and represented in bold colours.

In 1935, Münter painted a new series depicting Murnau and its surroundings. A road from Munich to Garmisch-Partenkirchen had been built for the 1936 Winter Olympics.

Münter often spent long periods at the construction site. In these paintings, the view shifts from nature to modern technology. The visual language increasingly loses its expressionistic character and the colour palette and mode of representation become naturalistic once more. In 1936, probably at the recommendation of her life partner Johannes Eichner or one of her gallerists, she contributed her paintings of construction sites to the propaganda exhibition *Adolf Hitler's Streets in Art*. In this, she participated in the brand-new genre of "Autobahn" painting, which the National Socialists promoted with the summons: "German artists – to the front of road construction!" Research has not yet revealed the extent to which Gabriele Münter resisted the political changes in Germany. She adapted to the circumstances and became a member of the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts, which is how she acquired rationed canvases, brushes, and paint during the war. Although her art was not deemed "degenerate," it was removed from a show and never again displayed in official National Socialist art exhibitions. During this period, she hid works by artist colleagues who were considered "degenerate" in her cellar in Murnau.

### **3 Tunisia 1904 – 1905**

Soon after her return from the USA in 1900, Münter moved to Munich. Women were not yet admitted to the state art academy, so she initially took courses at the Women Artists Association's Ladies' Academy. In 1902, she attended her first sculpture course at the modern Phalanx School, and then Kandinsky's painting course. Münter set herself the goal of "mastering colour as naturally and as effortlessly as line." Thus, early on, she revealed her interest in an individual use of colour and a simplified visual language that would transcend the academy's naturalism.

Münter embarked upon adventurous experiments not only in her art but also in her personal life. In summer 1903, she became engaged to Kandinsky, who was already married. Due to these uncertain circumstances, they began a life of travel in spring 1904, which brought them to Tunisia and France, among other destinations. In winter 1904/05, they travelled to Tunisia, where they visited tourist destinations such as Carthage, Sousse, and Kairouan.

Once more, Münter recorded her impressions with the camera. In addition to tourist motifs, such as monuments and street life, she appears to have been especially interested in the geometric structures of the buildings, windows, archways, and ornaments. In approximately 140 photographs, Münter's characteristic compositional framework is already recognizable: the arrangement of pictorial space through simplified lines and planes. For example, while on site, she translated the photographic image of a domed Arab tomb with orange sellers into a colourful work on paper, which then served as the basis for the colour linoleum print *Marabout* (1907) two years later.

During rainy days in Tunisia, Münter passed the time making fabric appliqués and glass bead embroideries based on designs by Kandinsky, including the large wall hanging *Volga Ships* (1905). In 1906, her textiles were exhibited on par with drawings and paintings at the Paris *Salon d'Automne*. As shown by photographs from Münter's house, these works were intended to be both viewed as well as used.

## 4 In the Mirror

*“Painting portraits is the most daring, difficult, spiritual, and extreme task for the artist. To go beyond the portrait is a demand that can only be made by those who have not yet advanced toward it.”*

Even as a child, Münter was enthusiastic about drawing people. Numerous drawings with heads, half- and full-length portraits fill her early sketchbooks. Beginning in 1908, she created a series of head studies in Munich and Murnau that are captivating in their spontaneous brushwork and unconventional colour palette. At the same time, Münter employed different painting styles, suggesting that these portraits were primarily studies and experiments in colour and form. In 1913, she painted a portrait of a man in an armchair. It represents Paul Klee, who Münter later described as seated in her “thinking chair” in white summer pants on a visit to Ainmillerstrasse. Münter and Kandinsky met the Klee family, their neighbours in Schwabing, at the end of 1911. They visited each other regularly until the outbreak of the First World War. With the likenesses of Jawlensky and von Werefkin, Münter portrayed two other close companions from the Munich art scene.

In later portraits, especially in the drawings from the 1920s, there is again a proliferation of representations of women writing, reading, thinking, and smoking – all activities that were exclusively ascribed to men during that period. During her career, Münter created approximately 250 portraits, of which four-fifths were images of women. The elegantly clothed women exude a sense of coolness and self-assuredness. As portraits such as *The Blue Blouse (Mrs Oscar Olson)* (1917) or *Women Listening* (1925 – 1930) demonstrate, the women are clearly up to date in terms of fashion. These acquaintances from Berlin include the painter Loulou Albert-Lazard and the writer Eleonore Kalkowska. Münter portrays them with the typical straight-cut, below-the-knee skirts and short haircuts of the time. She also depicts them smoking or lying partially dressed on a sofa – unusually relaxed poses for that era. Münter herself was certainly an emancipated woman who did not let anyone – man or woman – tell her what she should and should not do.

## 5 Paris 1906 – 1907

Despite the close private and artistic exchange with Kandinsky, Münter consistently followed her own artistic path. During a one-year stay in Sèvres, near Paris, starting in June 1906, she attended a four-month course in brush drawing at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris. She took advantage of this opportunity to live and work in the city, far from Kandinsky. Many paintings from Paris, such as *Park in the Autumn* (1906–07), still exhibit an impressionistic painting technique that retains a naturalistic sense of colour. In spring 1907, she exhibited six of these works at the Paris *Salon des Indépendants*. One reviewer noted: “A lot of courage and little skill [...] without a hint of individual interpretation.” The works may be conventional, but Münter’s composition and palette are convincing. Her desire to experiment is reflected in the replication and expansion of a single pictorial motif in a variety of techniques. One example is the photograph of a tree that she drew and then painted many years later.

In Paris, she ultimately turned her full attention to wood and linoleum cuts. During this period, both techniques underwent a reappraisal. The starting point for this reevaluation was the discovery of Japanese woodcuts in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, which led French artists to try the technique. The Expressionists around Die Brücke (the bridge) and the artists of the Blue Rider also participated in this revival. With their clear, reduced lines and fresh colour, Münter’s prints exhibit a remarkably modern visual language that today reminds us of Pop art, especially the portraits by Andy Warhol.



## 6 In the Salon

*"There would be so much to see here – [...] to think – to do. [...] and then there are still lifes asking to be done in every corner. – It's so beautiful here with the flowers! And the table with the 17 madonnas!"*

Letter from Gabriele Münter to Wassily Kandinsky,  
October 1910

Photographs from the trip to the USA, embroideries from the Tunisian journey, and prints from the repeated stays in France demonstrate that even before her exchange with the artists associated with the Blue Rider, Münter was occupied with dolls, embroidery, and folk art – in short, with the aesthetic production of artists who were not trained at the academy. As a glance at the living room of her house in Murnau or her apartment on Ainmillerstrasse in Munich reveals, she collected reverse glass paintings and small sculptures, such as nativity and Marian figures, crucifixes, and toys made from wood and clay. Objects from her own collection of folk art are frequent motifs in her still lifes and interiors. Münter and other artists of her generation were searching for supposedly unspoiled ways of life. Like the objects that hailed from other parts of the world, regional folk art was represented as authentic and unspoiled.

Münter brought together some of the carved wooden figures she had collected in unconventional still lifes of the early 1910s, such as *Still Life Lament* (1911). Alongside the figurines and dolls in her collection, she also used flowers, fruit, vases, and dishes as props in her still lifes. Through these combinations, she succeeded in creating a contemporary version of the traditional genre. But spontaneous impressions also inspired Münter. In a letter to Eichner from February 1930, she wrote from Paris about her work *Still Life with Red Salad Servers*: “While the table was being cleared, I suddenly saw a still life, was moved, and painted [...]” The degree to which the objects in her still lifes are simplified, flattened, or colourfully painted depends on the period. In this way, Münter addressed questions of form, pictorial space, and colour, exploring the creative possibilities between naturalism and abstraction.

## 7 In the Nursery

For Münter and her contemporaries, children likewise represented the unspoiled, naïve, and anti-academic. As early as 1908, Münter started a comprehensive collection of pictures by children. Paul Klee's son, Felix, also loved to draw and paint with their neighbours Münter and Kandinsky. Some of Münter's collection is illustrated in the *Blue Rider* almanac in order to pave the way for a naïve and, therefore, authentic art. During a 1907/08 stay with her sister in Berlin, Münter finished a series of colour linoleum prints with toys and dolls that she found in her niece Elfriede (Friedel) Schroeter nursery.

She took motifs from drawings by children from her circle of friends or translated entire children's drawings to her own work. In the painting *In the Room* from the year 1913, Münter copied a work by her niece Elfriede as a picture within a picture. The artist, whose compositions consist of black outlines filled with colour, as in colouring books, seems to have been equally inspired by children's drawings, reverse glass paintings, and the French Cloissonism of Paul Gauguin or Émile Bernard.

Münter was described by her artist colleagues – above all by Kandinsky – as a childlike natural talent. Already established, the artist perceived Münter as a gifted student, who created simple and unmediated images “from a purely inner drive.” Art history has often made use of this reading. Artists like Münter experienced multiple forms of discrimination. They were described as natural talents who worked according to an inner drive and, unlike their male colleagues, did not develop their visual language through deliberation. Additionally, women were denied access to the European academies. This is one reason that few women painters from Münter’s generation receive public recognition today. In the case of Gabriele Münter, this exhibition proves beyond a doubt that it has nothing to do with the quality of the work.



## Chronology

- 1877** Gabriele Münter is born on February 19 in Berlin as the youngest of four children. Her mother had immigrated to the USA as a child, her father as a young man. They returned to Germany together in 1864, where her father continued his dental practice.
- 1886** Her father dies.
- 1897** Münter attends a private women's art school in Düsseldorf.
- Her mother dies after a brief illness. Münter returns to her siblings in Koblenz.
- 1898 – 1900** With her sister Emmy, Münter voyages to North America. Over two years, they visit relatives on her mother's side, traveling from New York to Texas, with stops in Missouri and Arkansas.
- Presumably for her birthday in 1899, Münter receives a Kodak Bull's Eye N°2 camera as a gift and begins taking photographs.
- 1901** Münter moves to Munich and resumes her art training at the Women Artists Association's Ladies' Academy.

**1902** Münter takes a woodcut course at a private painting and drawing school.

The same year, she enters the progressive Phalanx School, which was cofounded by Kandinsky. There she attends Wilhelm Hüsgen's sculpture course and receives painting instruction from Kandinsky.

**1902 – 1903** Kandinsky's class makes painting trips to Kochel and Kallmünz (Bavaria, Germany).

In Kallmünz, Münter and Kandinsky are unofficially engaged, as he is still married.

**1904 – 1905** From 1904 to 1908, Münter and Kandinsky lead a life of travel. They set out for the Netherlands, and then Tunisia. There they remain for over three months, visiting the cities of Carthage, Sousse, and Kairouan from Tunis.

Münter makes the textile piece *Volga Ships* (1905), which is based on a design by Kandinsky, and exhibits it the following year with other embroideries at the *Salon d'Automne* in Paris.

**1905 – 1906** During the Christmas holidays in 1905, Münter and Kandinsky arrive in Rapallo (Liguria, Italy). They stay for four months.

**1906 – 1907** The couple spends a year in Paris and Sèvres, a Parisian suburb.

In winter, Münter lives alone in Paris and attends the Académie de la Grande Chaumière. She focuses intensively on linoleum and woodcut techniques.

Münter exhibits for the first time in her life at the *Exposition du Salon des Artistes Indépendants* in spring 1907 (six oil sketches).

The same year, additional works by Münter are on view at the *Salon d'Automne* (five linoleum cuts).

**1907 – 1908** From the beginning of September 1907 to the end of April 1908, Münter and Kandinsky live in Berlin. Münter's first solo exhibition is held at the Kunstsalon Lenobel in Cologne in January 1908, with works from her time in Paris. The newspaper *Kölnische Zeitung* calls Münter a "pure Impressionist in the genuine Parisian style."



For the first time, Münter visits the Upper Bavarian town of Murnau near the Staffelsee. She spends late summer with Kandinsky, as do Alexei Jawlensky and Marianne von Werefkin. Münter changes her painting style from a late Impressionist approach to an independent colour scheme.

With Kandinsky, she assembles a remarkable collection of folk-art objects: mostly reverse glass paintings, but also small sacral sculptures, and the like. She makes her first reverse glass paintings.

A few years later, the *Blue Rider* almanac will stylize and romanticize folk art, children's art, and non-European art as expressions of a primordial stage of artistic development.

## 1909

In winter/spring, Münter stays with Kandinsky in Kochel, together with the Russian composer Thomas von Hartmann and his wife Olga.

From spring, she again paints together with Kandinsky, Jawlensky, and von Werefkin in Murnau, where she buys a newly built house. The couple decorates the interior in the Bavarian folk art tradition.

In the coming years, numerous Munich avant-garde artists are received here, including Paul Klee.

Alongside Kandinsky, Jawlensky, von Werefkin, Adolf Erbslöh, and others, Münter is a cofounder of the New Artists Association Munich. In January, the New Artists Association Munich is established with the aim of a freer approach to exhibitions that would encompass a wide variety of artistic currents and genres.

The New Artists Association Munich's first exhibition takes place at Heinrich Thannhauser's Moderne Galerie in Munich. Münter is best represented, with 21 works. The presentation is met with incomprehension in the local press: "In the Moderne Galerie on Maffeistrasse, a collective exhibition of the New Artists Association of Munich has been arranged, and upon entering it, even those who are used to putting up with a lot recoil with a shudder. The whole thing comes across as a wild parody, like a grotesque carnival joke [...]."

**1910**

The New Artists Association Munich's second exhibition takes place at the Moderne Galerie Heinrich Thannhauser and includes seven larger paintings by Münter. Once again, the reviews are devastating: "There are only two ways to explain this absurd exhibition: either one assumes that most of the members and guests of the association are incurably insane, or that one is dealing with shameless bluffers [...]." Only a hitherto unknown Bavarian painter named Franz Marc wrote enthusiastically in a letter to the gallerist: "We should join in and help and not discourage [them] with foolish laughter. [...] Anyone with eyes must see here the powerful draw of a new art [...]."

**1911**

Münter and Kandinsky meet Marc in person on New Year's Day. In June, Kandinsky shares with him the idea of creating an almanac. Münter meets the young painter August Macke in Bonn.

The first editorial meetings for the almanac take place with the Mackes and Marcs at Münter's house in Murnau.

In December, a dispute arises within the New Artists Association Munich over the jury's rejection of an abstract painting by Kandinsky: Münter, Kandinsky, and Marc resign.

They quickly organize an independent exhibition: the *First Exhibition of the Editorial Board of the Blue Rider* takes place in parallel to the New Artists Association Munich's third exhibition at the Moderne Galerie Heinrich Thannhauser.

Paul Klee reports on the exhibitions in the column "The Literature and Art of Foreign Countries" for the Swiss monthly *Die Alpen*: "Among the private galleries, the Thannhauser has again attracted my attention with the third exhibition of the new association and its radical secession, called the Blue Rider. [...] I believe in the movement and also in the absolute seriousness of one or the other Munich Expressionists. [...] The bravest of them is Kandinsky, who also seeks to influence through the word."

Klee meets Kandinsky in October, and Münter shortly thereafter. He joins the artists of the Blue Rider.

## 1912

*The Second Exhibition of the Editorial Board of the Blue Rider Black-and-White* takes place at the art dealer Hans Goltz's showroom in Munich. In addition to 14 works by Münter, 17 pieces by Klee are also exhibited.

Münter collaborates on the *Blue Rider* almanac by collecting ideas for the illustrations, among other things. When the almanac is published in May, her name does not appear in the credits.

## 1913

In January, Münter's largest solo exhibition to date takes place in Herwarth Walden's gallery Der Sturm in Berlin (84 paintings).

Münter participates in the *First German Autumn Salon*, also at Der Sturm gallery.

The painting *Man in an Armchair* (Paul Klee) (1913) is based on a visit by Klee to Münter and Kandinsky, who live only two houses down from the Klee family. Klee's son Felix regularly visits Münter and Kandinsky and paints with them.

Münter herself collects children's drawings, including those of her nieces, and uses them as inspiration for her own paintings.

## 1914

With the outbreak of the First World War, Kandinsky must leave Germany because he is Russian. Münter and Kandinsky seek refuge in Mariahalden near Goldach (Switzerland), where the Klee family visits them.

In November, Kandinsky returns to Moscow. His works and possessions remain in Munich and Murnau.

**1915 – 1916** After Münter spends the first half of the year 1915 in Munich and Berlin, she leaves Germany and goes to Scandinavia. Before her departure, she lends Klee two paintings by Kandinsky.

In neutral countries, she waits for Kandinsky and their promised marriage. Münter lives in Copenhagen and Stockholm and travels to Lapland and Norway.

Kandinsky is in Stockholm from December 1915 to March 1916; this is their final meeting.

**1917** When her letters go unanswered, Münter files a missing person's report for Kandinsky with the German Red Cross. It is years before she learns that Kandinsky has remarried and become the father of a son.

From late fall 1917 until February 1920, Münter primarily lives in Copenhagen and is regularly given the opportunity to exhibit her works.

- 1918** Münter's largest solo exhibition to date is held at *Den Frie Udstilling* in Copenhagen (100 paintings, 20 reverse glass paintings, and prints).
- 1920 – 1921** In February 1920 Münter returns to Germany.
- She lives between Berlin, Munich, Murnau, and Cologne in the following years.
- 1925** The traveling exhibition *Gabriele Münter-Kandinsky* begins at the Cologne Art Association (65 paintings and drawings). The exhibition tours through seven German cities until the end of October 1926.
- Münter moves to Berlin at the end of October and reestablishes her connections with the circle of avant-garde artists and writers based there.
- She records her acquaintances in numerous pencil drawings. The paintings from this period reflect her engagement with New Objectivity.
- 1926** Between December 1925 and April 1929, Münter takes various courses at Arthur Segal's painting school.

The pre-1914 paintings by Kandinsky that remained in Munich are divided between the artist and Münter.

**1927** Münter spends the summer in Ticino (Switzerland), and visits Marianne von Werefkin, who has settled in Ascona and lives apart from Alexei Jawlensky.

On New Year's Eve, she meets the art historian and philosopher Dr Johannes Eichner. He becomes her partner and devotes himself to her work for the rest of his life.

**1929 – 1930** At the end of October 1929, Münter goes to Paris. In March 1930, Eichner joins her. Together they travel through the country from the beginning of September to the end of October, with stops in Chamonix, Avignon, Marseille, and a longer stay in Sanary-sur-Mer. Münter paints more again.

**1931** Münter settles in Murnau for good.

**1933** The large solo exhibition *Gabriele Münter: 50 Paintings from 25 Years (1908 – 1933)* is held at the Paula Modersohn-Becker-Haus in Bremen. It travels to numerous museums and art associations throughout Germany through



June 1935. In reviews, Münter is praised as a “divinely gifted artist” who displays an “unadulterated nature” through her predominantly “folkish” motifs. Her partner, Johannes Eichner, emphasizes the closeness of her work to folk art. The exhibition unleashes controversy, as many people see Münter’s paintings as too “primitive.”

When the National Socialists seize power, Münter joins the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts in order to preserve opportunities for exhibitions and sales.

**1936** Eichner moves in with Münter in Murnau.

Münter participates in the Munich exhibition *Adolf Hitler’s Streets in Art* with two images of construction sites.

**1938 – 1945** In Murnau, her city of residence, the National Socialists have already been the dominant party since 1923. Münter and Eichner live inconspicuously and in modest circumstances.

In contrast to her former Blue Rider comrades, Münter is never counted among the so-called “degenerate” artists, whose works are confiscated from German museums. But like them, Münter does not exhibit for a long time.

From the 1930s, Münter hides numerous works by Kandinsky and the artists affiliated with the Blue Rider in the cellar of her Murnau house.

**1949** The large Blue Rider exhibition with works by Kandinsky, Marc, Münter, Macke, Klee, Alfred Kubin, and others at the Munich Haus der Kunst aims to rehabilitate artists who were ostracized for years. It anchors the artists firmly within the modernist canon and continues to shape our view of the Blue Rider today.

**1950 – 1953** Eichner organizes the large retrospective *Gabriele Münter: Works from Five Decades*. The exhibition tours throughout Germany with 22 stops.

Münter participates in the 25<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennial in 1950, contributing three works.

**1956** Münter receives the city of Munich's art prize for her painting.

- 1957** On the occasion of her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, Münter gives the Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus over a thousand works by the artists of the Blue Rider and its circle. This substantial donation includes 25 paintings by Münter herself. She is honoured for rescuing Kandinsky's early work.
- Eichner publishes the double biography *Kandinsky and Gabriele Münter: From the Origins of Modern Art*. The volume's characterization of Münter upholds the common cliché of the woman artist as intuitive and naïve. In contrast to the carefully planned, cerebral work of her male colleagues, her painting is purely emotional.
- 1958** Johannes Eichner dies on February 11 as the result of a stroke.
- 1960** Münter celebrates her first exhibition successes in the USA in Los Angeles and San Francisco.
- 1962** Gabriele Münter dies at her home in Murnau on May 19.

**1966**

In accordance with Münter's last will and testament, the Gabriele Münter- und Johannes Eichner-Stiftung, based at the Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus in Munich, is established.

The foundation includes not only Münter's artistic estate but also her house in Murnau and her entire surviving written estate, as well as a portion of Kandinsky's letters to Münter and some of his manuscripts.

## Begleitprogramm

Samstag, **19. Februar 2022**,  
13:30

### **Gabriele Münter: eine Künstlerin des Blauen Reiters? Warum Sie das bisher nicht wussten**

Gespräch in der Ausstellung mit Isabelle Jansen, Leiterin Gabriele Münter- und Johannes Eichner-Stiftung, und Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Kuratorin der Ausstellung

Samstag, **26. März 2022**,  
13:30

### **Mit der Kamera unterwegs. Münter entdeckt die USA**

Gespräch in der Ausstellung mit Madleina Deplazes, Kuratorin Fotostiftung Schweiz, und Kai-Inga Dost, Kuratorische Assistentin

Samstag, **23. April 2022**,  
13:30

### **Wer steckt eigentlich hinter dem Blauen Reiter? Eine kritische Analyse aus heutiger Sicht**

Gespräch in der Ausstellung mit Matthias Mühling, Direktor Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau München, und Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Kuratorin der Ausstellung

## Digitale Angebote

Mittwoch, **23. Februar 2022**,  
17:30

### **Kunst am Abend**

Zoom-Führung live aus der Ausstellung mit Dominik Imhof, Leiter Kunstvermittlung

Dienstag, **29. März 2022**,  
17:00

### **Kunst und ich**

Zoom-Führung im Dialog  
rund um ein Werk der  
Ausstellung mit Ramona  
Unterberg, Kunstvermittlerin

## **Führungen durch die Ausstellung**

Samstags, 15:00

Sonntags, 13:30

### **Öffentliche Führungen**

Dienstags, 12:30 – 13:00

### **Kunst am Mittag**

### **Fremdsprachige Führungen**

Auf Französisch, Englisch  
und Italienisch

Mittwoch, **2. Februar 2022**,  
14:00

### **Einführung für Lehrpersonen**

Mit Dominik Imhof, Leiter  
Kunstvermittlung

Donnerstag, **10. März 2022**,  
18:00

### **Freunde ZPK**

Führung für die Mitglieder  
«Freunde ZPK» mit der  
Kuratorin Fabienne Eggel-  
höfer und Expert:innen des  
Hauses

Sonntag, **13. März 2022**,  
15:00

### **Kunstgespräch**

Im gemeinsamen Gespräch  
begeben wir uns auf eine  
persönliche Entdeckungs-  
reise zu Werken der Aus-  
stellung mit Ramona Unter-  
berg, Kunstvermittlerin

Samstag, **30. April 2022**,  
13:00

### **Sinn-Reich**

Eine alle Sinne anspre-  
chende Führung für Gäste  
mit und ohne Behinderung.  
Mit Gebärdensprachdol-  
metscher:in und induktiver  
Höranlage

## Kunstvermittlung für Familien

Dienstag bis Sonntag,  
10:00–17:00

### **Interaktive Ausstellung «unterwegs nach bunt»**

Kreativer Brückenschlag  
aus den Ateliers des Kin-  
dermuseum Creaviva in die  
Ausstellung zu Gabriele  
Münter. Für Familien mit  
Kindern ab 4 Jahren

Dienstag bis Freitag,  
14:00/16:00

Samstag und Sonntag,  
12:00/14:00/16:00

### **Offenes Atelier im Kinder- museum Creaviva**

Stündige Workshops zu  
einem monatlich wechseln-  
den Thema in Verbindung zu  
den Ausstellungen im  
Zentrum Paul Klee. Für  
Familien mit Kindern ab 4  
Jahren, bis 8 Jahre in  
Begleitung Erwachsener

Sonntags, 10:15–11:30  
6.2.22–8.5.22

### **Familienmorgen**

In der Ausstellung und im  
Atelier des Kindermuseum  
Creaviva für die ganze  
Familie.

Für Kinder und Jugendliche  
bis 16 Jahre kostenlos

Samstags, 9:30–11:45

### **Kinderforum**

Kunst am Samstag unter  
Gleichaltrigen. Mit wechseln-  
den Themen pro Quartal.  
Für Kinder und Jugendliche  
ab 7 Jahren

Dienstag bis Sonntag,  
10:00–17:00

### **Fünfliber-Werkstatt**

Frei zugängliche Werkstatt  
mit einfachen Anleitungen zu  
kurzweiligen Ideen und wech-  
selnden Themen. Für Fami-  
lien mit Kindern ab 4 Jahren

**Infos zum Kursprogramm  
für Erwachsene:**  
[creaviva-kurse.ch](http://creaviva-kurse.ch)

In cooperation with

Gabriele Münter- und  
Johannes Eichner-Stiftung, München

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URSULA WIRZ-STIFTUNG

Pierre Kottelat

The Zentrum Paul Klee is open to all  
and offers inclusive events.



## Zentrum Paul Klee

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zpk.org

## Opening hours

Tuesday – Sunday 10:00 – 17:00

Open on all Easter days.

Find us on



Zentrum Paul Klee  
Bern

Founded by  
Maurice E. and Martha Müller  
and the heirs of Paul Klee