

Peggy Guggenheim COLLECTION

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Press release

GERMAN PRIVATE COLLECTION OF SURREALIST PAINTINGS AND ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONIST DRAWINGS TO BE PRESENTED AT THE PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

AFFINITIES: WORKS FROM THE ULLA AND HEINER PIETZSCH COLLECTION, BERLIN

A selection of 43 paintings and works on paper from the celebrated Pietzsch collection of modern art will be on display this summer at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, June 4 – September 18. *Affinities. Works from the Ulla and Heiner Pietzsch Collection, Berlin*, will include works both by the European Surrealists and by American Abstract Expressionists. In this way the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, which also houses the Gianni Mattioli Collection and the Nasher Sculpture Garden, once more pays homage to the contribution of private collectors to the interpretation and conservation of modern art.

The concept of 'Affinity' in the title of this exhibition refers to a similarity of spirit and taste between Mr and Mrs Pietzsch and Peggy Guggenheim herself. Their decision, beginning in the 1960s, to collect both the work the European Surrealists and of young American artists of the New York school not only mirrors two areas of particular strength in Peggy Guggenheim's Venice museum but reminds us also of the historical role of Peggy Guggenheim who was instrumental in bringing together the European and New York avant-gardes in the 1940s. She did this both through her collection which was on public view at her museum/gallery Art of This Century, New York, and through her patronage of artists such as William Baziotes, Robert Motherwell and Jackson Pollock. This unusual project, in which works from two private collections are compared and contrasted, was conceived by Folker Skulima, a prominent figure in the Berlin art world.

The Surrealist works were selected by Luca Massimo Barbero, Associate Curator of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection. They will be installed in the main galleries of Palazzo Vener dei Leoni, in the company of comparable paintings in the museum's permanent collection. They include an abstract painting by Joan Miró of 1925, the year of the first exhibition of Surrealist painting, René Magritte's figurative *Les Complices du magicien* of 1926, an early painting by Yves Tanguy (to whom Peggy Guggenheim gave an exhibition in 1938), Max Ernst's *Painting for Young People* (painted in 1943 when Ernst was married to Peggy Guggenheim), a 1942 painting by Dorothea Tanning, who was to marry Ernst after his divorce from Peggy Guggenheim, and Gorky's preparatory study for a major painting that Peggy Guggenheim bought in 1945 and which is still today in her Venice museum. Other works are by Picasso, Hans Bellmer, André Breton, Leonor Fini, Matta, and Picabia.

The works on paper in the Pietzsch collection of early American Abstract Expressionism represent not only American art in the 1940s but the link between this and Surrealism at a time when many European artists were living in exile in New York or the United States during World War II. The selection for Venice was made by Susan Davidson, curator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Ms. Davidson is also the curator of *No Limits Just Edges: Jackson Pollock Paintings on Paper* by which is being exhibited concurrently at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection this summer. The Pietzsch drawings will be exhibited in the new exhibition galleries of the Peggy Guggenheim collection at 704 Dorsoduro. They include Robert Motherwell's study for *Pancho Villa Dead and Alive* (1944) which was first shown at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century gallery, a unique early work by Barnett

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Newman (The Slaying of Osiris, 1944-45), rare works by Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman of the mid-1940s, three works by William Baziotis, subject of a major recent exhibition at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, two drawings by Jimmy Ernst, Peggy Guggenheim's step-son and one-time secretary of her New York gallery, as well as works by Gerome Kamrowski, Hans Hofmann, Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, Adolph Gottlieb, Sam Francis, Richard Pousette-Dart, David Smith, Theodoros Stamos and Mark Tobey.

Mr and Mrs Pietzsch's passion for collecting continues today as strong as ever. Heiner Pietzsch remarked: "My wife and I are proud to find our own treasures placed side-by-side with the masterpieces of a legendary collector like Peggy Guggenheim."

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