

AUREL SCHEIBLER

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

Berlin Street Scenes (*Berliner Straßenszenen*)

November 16 – November 23

Opening: Saturday, November 16 from 3 pm to 6 pm

The Street Scenes - »Perhaps the most valuable of my creations«

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner



Leipziger Strasse, Kreuzung, 1914, lithograph on yellow paper, 595 x 505 mm / 23 ½ x 20 in.

Berlin – On Saturday November 16, the exhibition "Ernst Ludwig Kirchner – Berlin Street Scenes (*Berliner Straßenszenen*)" opens to the public at Aurel Scheibler, offering an extraordinary opportunity to see the most comprehensive overview of Kirchner's prints connected to the Berlin Street Scenes (1913 & 1914) ever to be exhibited in an institution or gallery. The group of twelve prints is complemented with four drawings and two hand colored versions of the only woodcut from 1915 related to the subject. All works come from private collections and none are for sale. The one-week-only exhibition frames the publication of the first two volumes of the catalogue raisonné of E.L. Kirchner's prints, edited by Günther Gercken and published by Galerie Kornfeld Verlag in Bern, which will be presented by Mr. Gercken at the gallery on Saturday November 16 at 3 pm. The exhibition runs until Saturday November 23.

A twist of fate brings together this unique ensemble of Kirchner works in our gallery which is only minutes away from the location portrayed in most of Kirchner's Street Scenes and which was constructed barely two years before the artist began to intensively focus on the streets of Berlin and on the *kokottes* whose presence so hugely characterized the look and flair of German's capital at the beginning of the twentieth century.

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Kirchner is widely regarded as a quintessential cosmopolitan artist who was able to capture the city in its full paradoxicality: seductive and dangerous, gay and depressing, social and deeply isolating. Berlin had been in many ways a huge disappointment for the ambitious Kirchner who had hoped to find recognition, kindred spirits and a supportive professional and private environment in Germany's capital. Instead he entered an anguished existence in which pretense, fierce competition and extreme loneliness loomed largely. His meeting with Erna and Gerda Schilling, both cabaret dancers and 'demi-mondaines', provided Kirchner with a direct window into the city's feverish soul. It was this encounter which drove the artist to a highly charged yet partially frustrated outburst of creative energy which was totally centered on the figure of the *kokotte*, the very incarnation of the scabrous side of Berlin and a living paradox in her own way. This easy-to-get ticket to love – a time-share-woman is what Kirchner called her – seems to promise everything yet she remains elusive, uncommitted, unloving and unloved. In a sense the *kokotte* symbolized the essence of the very city that brought her about. An intensely condensed group of eleven paintings, seven woodcuts, twelve etchings and four lithographs formed the final outcome of this obsession and with their completion, the theme of the *kokotte* disappeared from Kirchner's imagery forever.

The catalogue raisonné of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's prints is initiated and supported by the Ferdinand Möller Foundation, Berlin and published by Galerie Kornfeld Verlag, Bern as a comprehensive and critical revision of the catalogues raisonnés by Gustav Schiefler (1926 and 1931) and Annemarie & Wolf-Dieter Dubes (1967/1980).

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Ernst Ludwig Kirchner
Berlin Street Scenes (*Berliner Straßenszenen*)

Opening: November 16 from 3 pm to 6 pm

Catalogue Presentation: November 16 at 3 pm

Exhibition: November 19 through 23 from 11 am to 6 pm