

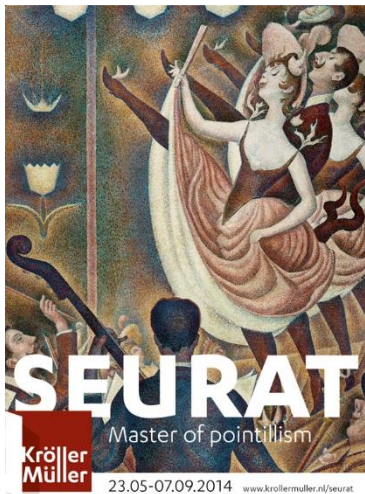
Announcement

Otterlo, 17 February 2014



The Kröller-Müller Museum presents: 'Seurat. Master of pointillism'

From 23 May until 7 September 2014, the Kröller-Müller Museum presents the exhibition *Seurat. Master of pointillism*.



For the first time, the museum is showing the important and popular paintings by Georges Seurat (Paris 1859-Paris 1891) from its own collection, such as *Le Chahut* and the harbour views of the French Channel coast, in a broader context within the artist's oeuvre and from a perspective that has never previously been examined in an exhibition: that of French symbolism. The views of Seurat's symbolist contemporaries serve as the basis for the interpretation of the development and meaning of his work.

Seurat died at the early age of 31 and made some 50 paintings in his short career. The exhibition includes 23 of his paintings and 24 drawings. The 40 works on loan from museums and private collectors from all over the world make this the first time that Seurat's painting and drawing oeuvre has been exhibited on such a large scale in the Netherlands. Even *Le Cirque*, the last work that Seurat painted, is coming to Otterlo. This masterpiece from the collection of Musée d'Orsay is loaned out very rarely.

Inventor of neo-impressionism

Georges Seurat makes his name as the inventor of neo-impressionism, with his paintings composed of minutely dotted – pointillist – brushstrokes and his keen interest in scientific colour theories. He aims to develop an aesthetic that retains the impressionists' attention to colour and light, but that surpasses the fleeting, purely visual effects of impressionist painting. Gustave Kahn, one of the literary symbolists, aptly summed up Seurat's endeavour by stating that it was his intention to express a 'permanent image' of a depiction, rather than its outward appearance.

Until his sudden death in 1891, Seurat is a leading figure of the avant-garde and exchanges ideas with like-minded young artists and writers.

The French capital, which in the course of the nineteenth century develops into a modern metropolis, with wide boulevards, spacious parks, commercial places of entertainment and a ring of suburbs, provides Seurat with countless subjects for his drawings and figure pieces. He paints the Eiffel Tower, the symbol of progress, still before its completion. The themes for *Le Chahut* and *Le Cirque* he finds in the dance halls and circuses, which in his day were regularly frequented by artists and writers.

The pendants of the scenes of bustling city life are the tranquil seascapes that Seurat makes in the coastal towns of northern France, where he spends the summers from 1855 onward, from Grandcamp to Gravelines. For the first time in 20 years, the Kröller-Müller brings together the complete series of paintings from Gravelines.

With photographs, film footage, maps and documents, Seurat's world and network are revealed in the exhibition: the places he lives and works, the locations he selects as subjects, the exhibitions in which he participates and the writers, art critics and theorists that he meets with regularly.

The spread of neo-impressionism

In addition to *Seurat. Master of pointillism*, the Kröller-Müller Museum also shows the spread of neo-impressionism among artists in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. While Seurat is the undisputed founder of the new style, his colleague and friend Paul Signac acts as the spokesman and fervent propagator thereof. Via the Brussels avant-garde group Les Vingt, Belgian artists such as Henry van de Velde, Théo Van Rysselberghe and Georges Lemmen become acquainted with Seurat's aesthetic and start working in his style. The Netherlands also has a group of followers, including Jan Toorop, Johan Joseph Aarts, Hendricus Petrus Bremmer and Jan Vijlbrief. With some 60 paintings by these painters, as well as Maximilien Luce, Henri Edmond Cross and Johan Thorn Prikker, among others, the museum reveals the strong influence that Seurat exerted on a whole generation of artists.

Ger van Elk – flatscreens

In his so-called flatscreens, Dutch artist Ger van Elk transforms existing paintings into moving images. A number of these works are based on neo-impressionist paintings by Georges Seurat, Paul Signac and Henri Edmond Cross. On the occasion of the Georges Seurat exhibition, the museum is showing this series of flatscreens in a complementary presentation. This is the first time that Van Elk's *Snow over Seurat* and Seurat's *La Grève de Bas-Butin à Honfleur*, upon which it is based, are being shown simultaneously.

To accompany *Seurat. Master of pointillism*, the museum is organizing an extensive side-programme for young and old, with (dance) workshops, concerts, theatre performances and artists in residence.

A lavishly illustrated publication, which places Georges Seurat in his times, will also be available, entitled *SEURAT* (+/- 160 pg.).

Public information: www.krollermuller.nl/seurat.

Editorial note: more information is available via Sylvia Gentenaar, telephone 0318-596152, 06-12506816 or sylviagentenaar@kmm.nl. You can download photos from the image bank: www.kmm.nl/beeldbank, user name: Pers, password: GS2014kmm.

The Kröller-Müller Museum is open from Tuesday to Sunday from 10.00 hrs to 17.00 hrs; the sculpture garden closes at 16.30 hrs. More information: www.krollermuller.nl, www.krollermuller.nl/seurat, [Facebook.com/krollermuller](https://www.facebook.com/krollermuller), [Twitter.com/krollermuller](https://twitter.com/krollermuller).