

# TILLA DURIEUX

## A WITNESS TO A CENTURY AND HER ROLES

14TH OCT. 22–27TH FEB. 23 | LEVEL -2  
CURATOR: DANIELA GREGORI

She was a celebrated star of the film and theater, a modern woman of the 1920s, politically active and perhaps the most portrayed woman of her time. The roles of Tilla Durieux (1880–1971) were as remarkable and varied as the artists for whom she posed as a model. These included Ernst Barlach, Lovis Corinth, Mary Duras, August Gaul, Olaf Gulbransson, Oskar Kokoschka, Max Oppenheimer, Emil Orlik, Auguste Renoir, Max Slevogt, Sasha Stone, Franz von Stuck, Charley Toorop, as well as the photographers Lotte Jacobi and Frieda Riess.

Otilie Helene Angela Godeffroy was born on 18th August 1880 into a solid middle-class but unloving home in Vienna. Drawn to the stage from a young age, she changed her name – derived from her paternal grandmother – to Tilla Durieux. Following her actor's training in her hometown and stints in Olomouc and Wroclaw, Durieux made it to Berlin in 1903 to play under Max Reinhardt. She initially only received small roles, until the celebrated actress Gertrude Eysoldt, who played Salomé in the eponymous play by Oscar Wilde, fell ill and ceded her part to Durieux. This marked the birth of the myth of Tilla Durieux. She subsequently appeared in all the major European theaters over the years, and liked to take on new, challenging roles not only on the stage but also in front of the camera.

Through her first husband, the artist Eugen Spiro, Durieux first came into contact with the visual arts and the corresponding circles which she herself would become a part of via her second husband, the art dealer and publisher Paul Cassirer. Durieux remained active as a collector and model for artworks until the onset of Nazi rule in Germany. Her commitment extended not only to art but also to social and political issues, whether during her time in exile in Zurich during World War I, during the turmoil of the Munich Soviet Republic, or after her unsuccessful attempt to flee with her third husband, the industrialist and collector Ludwig Katzenellenbogen, as members of the Zagreb resistance against National Socialism.

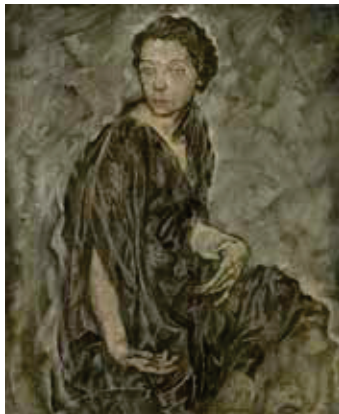
The comprehensive exhibition at the Leopold Museum is the first to investigate the fascination Tilla Durieux held already for her contemporaries, and to explore the traces of this scintillating personality through portraits of all media (including paintings, graphic works, sculptures, photographs and films). Featuring rarely exhibited archival material and loans from Austrian and international museums and private collections, the presentation highlights Durieux's career, her social and artistic milieu as well as her life which spanned almost a century and was shaped by political upheaval.

The exhibition is created in cooperation with the Georg Kolbe Museum.

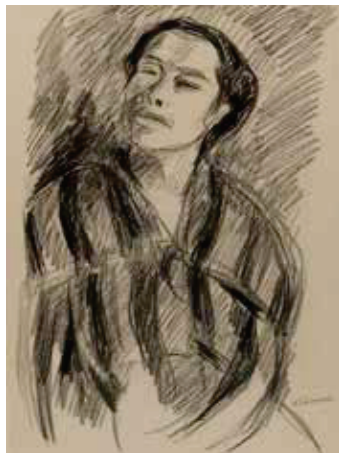
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