

## **Exhibition**

### **Imagination & Form. Adolf Erbslöh's Path to Modernity**

**26 April – 26 July 2026**

## **Venue**

Franz Marc Museum, Franz Marc Park 8–10, 82431 Kochel am See

Curated by Jessica Keilholz-Busch (Director, Franz Marc Museum)

## **Exhibition Opening**

Sunday, 26 April 2026, 11 a.m.

Welcome address by Jessica Keilholz-Busch (Curator and Director, Franz Marc Museum).

This will be followed by a moderated panel discussion with members of the Erbslöh family.

## **Exhibition Dates**

26 April – 26 July 2026

## **Opening Hours**

Tuesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

## **Admission**

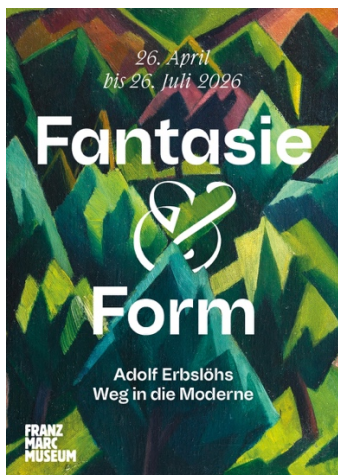
€11 standard adult / €2.50 children and young people (aged 7–16)

€22 family ticket / €37.50 annual pass / concessions available

## **Accompanying Programme**

In our interactive space, visitors can give free rein to their imagination and explore their own forms of expression through playful experimentation with light, colour, contrast and transparency. Guided tours, workshops, and holiday programmes for children and families complement the educational offer.

## Key Visual



## Exhibition Catalogue

Jessica Keilholz-Busch (Ed.): Fantasie & Form. Adolf Erbslöh's Weg in die Moderne. (In German) Texts by Adolf Erbslöh, Jessica Keilholz-Busch and Dr. Brigitte Salmen. Approx. 80 pages, 50 illustrations. Publication date: May 2026

## Press Images

Download at: <https://franz-marc-museum.de/en/press-login/>

Password: fmm-presse

## Press Visit

Individual visits can be arranged. Please contact us with your preferred date. We look forward to welcoming you.

## Press Contact

Eva-Maria Neuburger

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## **Press Release**

### **A Key Figure of Modernism: Rediscovering Adolf Erbslöh**

The Franz Marc Museum presents a comprehensive exhibition dedicated to a defining protagonist of the Munich avant-garde.

Adolf Erbslöh (1881–1947) is among the influential, yet often overlooked painters of modernism. This exhibition invites visitors to rediscover his distinctive visual language. As a co-founder and later chairman of the Neue Künstlervereinigung München, he stood at the centre of the avant-garde alongside Wassily Kandinsky, Alexej von Jawlensky and Franz Marc. Through both his artistic work and his close connections within Munich's art scene, Erbslöh played a decisive role in shaping the artistic climate around 1910—an environment from which the Der Blaue Reiter emerged.

In his 1929 essay *Phantasie und Form*, Erbslöh articulated key ideas underpinning his artistic thinking. Here, imagination does not appear as the opposite of order, but as its very source: "The work of art is formation—imagination made form." The exhibition takes up this idea, demonstrating how Erbslöh developed an independent visual language rooted in inner perception. His work moves between expressive colour and an increasingly constructive pictorial structure. His paintings combine luminous colour, clear lines and a perceptive, reflective mode of seeing.

From impressionist beginnings, through encounters with the work of Paul Cézanne and the Cubists, to the tectonic landscapes of the 1920s, the exhibition traces a central question in his oeuvre: how can the fleeting multiplicity of appearances be translated into a lasting pictorial order?

The Franz Marc Museum, whose research focus and collection are closely linked to the Munich avant-garde, presents around 40 paintings in this exhibition. Loans come from institutions including the Hamburger Kunsthalle, Kunstpalast Düsseldorf, Leopold-Hoesch-Museum Düren and Schloßmuseum Murnau. Many works are drawn from private collections and are in some cases being shown in public for the first time. The exhibition is curated by Jessica Keilholz-Busch, Director of the Franz Marc Museum.

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## **Biography**

Adolf Erbslöh was born in New York in 1881 and grew up in Barmen (now part of Wuppertal). In 1904 he moved to Munich to study, then one of the most vibrant centres of the European avant-garde. More formative than his academic training, however, was the artistic milieu: travels to France, Italy and the Netherlands brought him into contact with contemporary currents in modern art, while the Munich circles around the Neue Secession and the Scholle group also proved influential.

Around 1908, Erbslöh engaged intensively with the colour theories of Neo-Impressionism and began to understand colour as a structuring element within the image. At the same time, through Alexej von Jawlensky, he became acquainted with the circle around Wassily Kandinsky, Gabriele Münter and Marianne von Werefkin. In 1909 he was among the founders of the Neue Künstlervereinigung München (NKVM), whose aim of translating inner experience into pictorial order closely aligned with his own artistic thinking.

Erbslöh used landscape as his principal field of experimentation. In particular, the mountains near Brannenburg on the River Inn, as well as urban parks, provided motifs in which forms could be layered and organised into constructed compositions. His work was highly regarded by his contemporaries. In 1910, Franz Marc wrote admiringly: "Erbslöh's new works are splendid." A decisive stimulus came from his engagement with Paul Cézanne, whose work he encountered in Munich in 1910. Cézanne's conception of the painting as an architectonic structure—an autonomous order of colour, plane and volume—had a lasting influence on him.

The First World War marked a profound biographical rupture. In 1915, Erbslöh was conscripted, and from 1916 he worked as a war artist in France and Flanders. He maintained his formal principles, rendering destroyed landscapes as rhythmically structured, tectonic compositions. After the war, he further condensed his pictorial

language. In the 1920s, he developed increasingly rigorous compositions with pyramidal interlocking elements and clearly articulated zones of light and shadow.

From 1934, Erbslöh withdrew to Irschenhausen in the Isar valley. Under National Socialism, his works were denounced as “degenerate” and he was forced out of public artistic life. He died in Irschenhausen in 1947. After the Second World War, his work initially received less attention, yet remained present in major collections and exhibitions. The exhibition at the Franz Marc Museum contributes to a renewed appreciation of Adolf Erbslöh and highlights his significance for modernism: as an artist who reconciled the freedom of imagination with the clarity of form.

### **Press Contact**

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