

Exhibition

Maria Franck-Marc

21 June to 27 September 2026

On the occasion of Maria Franck-Marc's 150th birthday (1876–1955), the Franz Marc Museum is dedicating a comprehensive solo exhibition to the artist for the first time. In the museum's anniversary year, celebrating its 40th year, the institution turns its attention to a figure closely associated with the Blue Rider, but whose own artistic work long remained overshadowed by her role as Franz Marc's wife and estate administrator.

"Maria Franck-Marc is one of the women artists of modernism whose work was overlooked for a long time. With this exhibition, we are placing her own artistic achievement at the centre for the first time," says Jessica Keilholz-Busch, Director of the Franz Marc Museum and curator of the exhibition.

The exhibition brings together around 30 works from public and private collections and opens up a new perspective on Maria Franck-Marc as an independent artist of modernism. Lenders include the Museum Wiesbaden and the Schlossmuseum Murnau, among others. Most of the works on display come from private collections; some are being shown publicly for the first time. In this form, Maria Franck-Marc's work is being brought together on a larger scale for the first time in decades.

The exhibition presents paintings, drawings and textile works that reveal the diversity of her practice. The focus is on floral compositions, landscapes, nature studies, still lifes and depictions of children. Precisely those motifs that art history long classified as private, decorative or marginal prove in Franck-Marc's work to be independent fields of artistic experimentation. With great sensitivity to colour, form and rhythm, she developed a visual language that transforms everyday subjects into concentrated studies of perception and composition.

Maria Franck-Marc belonged to a generation of women artists who were largely denied access to state art academies and to the established structures of the art

world. Although she was represented with three works in the second Blue Rider exhibition in 1912, she was scarcely able to establish an independent public position. After Franz Marc's death in 1916, she devoted herself for decades to preserving and mediating his work, and played a decisive role in shaping its afterlife. This important activity, however, came to overshadow the perception of her own oeuvre.

Even into the 1990s, her works were only rarely presented in public and received little scholarly attention. The exhibition therefore focuses not only on the surviving works, but also on the conditions of their creation, transmission and reception. "The question is not only why Maria Franck-Marc remained unknown for so long. The question is also how art history decides who becomes visible," says Keilholz-Busch. In doing so, the exhibition also opens up a broader perspective on the visibility of women artists in the context of the Blue Rider and in the art history of modernism.

Biography

Maria Franck-Marc (1876–1955)

1876 Born Bertha Pauline Marie Franck on 12 June in Berlin.

1890s Training as a drawing teacher at the Royal Art School in Berlin and at a private women's academy. Early flower studies and still lifes already show technical assurance and a pronounced sense of form and colour.

1903 Move to Munich. Studies in Max Feldbauer's women's class at the School of the Women Artists' Association; temporary instruction from Angelo Jank and Marie Schnür.

1905 Working stay in the artists' colony of Worpswede under Otto Modersohn. Intensive engagement with landscape painting and an anti-academic conception of the image. First encounter with Franz Marc in Munich.

1906–1907 Stay in Kochel am See with Franz Marc and Marie Schnür – a personally difficult constellation. In 1907, she falls ill with rheumatism, but continues to work, including on poster designs, lithography and colour woodcuts.

1908 Joint working stay with Franz Marc in Lenggries; beginning of an especially productive phase. Creation of the portfolio *Kinderbilder* (Children's Pictures) – an independent thematic field that distinguishes her within the context of the later Blue Rider.

1909 Maria Franck and Franz Marc move their place of residence and work to Sindelsdorf. Floral paintings, still lifes and garden views are created; her painting becomes more colourful and compositionally freer.

1910 Acquaintance with August and Elisabeth Macke. Exchange with Wassily Kandinsky, Gabriele Münter, Alexej von Jawlensky and Marianne von Werefkin.

1912 Participation in the Second Exhibition of the Blue Rider with three of her own works – under the name Maria Franck-Marc.

1913 Marriage to Franz Marc.

1914 Move to the couple's shared house in Ried near Kochel am See.

1916 Death of Franz Marc near Verdun. A few months later, Maria Marc plays a significant role in a major memorial exhibition at the Neue Münchener Secession. Beginning of her decades-long activity as estate administrator.

1920 Publication of Franz Marc's letters and writings.

1920s Turn towards weaving and textile art. Several stays at the Bauhaus in Weimar and, from 1926, in Dessau; encounters there with Kandinsky, Paul Klee, and Julia and Lyonel Feininger.

1929–1945 Relocation of the centre of her life to Ascona, where she is in contact with Marianne von Werefkin, among others. Intensive work on tapestries based on her own designs. Return to Ried during the Second World War.

1936 Collaboration on the first monograph on Franz Marc.

1937 Present at the auction in Lucerne of confiscated works by Franz Marc in the context of the "Degenerate Art" campaign.

After 1945 Transfer of the administration of the artistic estate to the Munich gallerist Otto Stangl; transfer of the written estate to the art historian Klaus Lankheit.

1952 The Moderne Galerie Otto Stangl, Munich, presents an exhibition of her woven works – one of the few public presentations of her own work during her lifetime.

1955 Dies on 25 January at the age of 78 in Ried near Kochel am See.

Press Contact

Eva-Maria Neuburger

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

+49 (0) 8851 92488-11

presse@franz-marc-museum.de

www.franz-marc-museum.de

facebook.com/franz.marc.museum / instagram.com/franzmarcmuseum