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PRESS RELEASE

Beyond Impressionism – Slovenian Modernism and Dachau

**Special Exhibition by the Dachau Picture Gallery and the National Gallery of Slovenia in
Cooperation with the Slovenian Cultural Center SKICA Berlin**

November 28, 2025 – April 12, 2026

When we talk about Impressionism, we think of France, Claude Monet, light reflections on water, and perhaps the famous water lilies. But the movement had many faces—even beyond its well-known centers. The new special exhibition “Beyond Impressionism – Slovenian Modernism and Dachau” at the Gemäldegalerie (Picture Gallery Dachau) is the first exhibition in Germany to focus on Slovenian Impressionism and its close connections to Dachau and Munich. More than forty prestigious loans from the National Gallery of Slovenia and other lenders trace the development from late 19th-century realism to more expressive modernism, while also showing how strongly Slovenian artists were part of a pan-European art movement whose lesser-known masterpieces can now be rediscovered.

The three chapters of the exhibition vividly unfold the story of a fruitful, mutual inspiration: from the realism of Anton Ažbe and Ivan Kobilca to the luminous landscapes of the Slovenian Impressionists—Rihard Jakopič, Matija Jama, Ivan Grohar, and Matej Sternen—to the haunting images of Zoran Mušič, which are marked by the experiences of the 20th century. The exhibition reveals for the first time how closely Slovenian Impressionism was linked to the Dachau artists’ colony. Numerous Slovenian artists studied in Munich, painted in the Dachau marshland, and were in close contact with members of the Dachau artists’ colony.

Anton Ažbe, a key figure in Slovenian modernism and teacher to Wassily Kandinsky and Alexej von Jawlensky, among others, founded a private painting school in Munich in 1891, which became a magnet for young talents from Slovenia and all over Europe. Inspired by the open-air painting of the Dachau artists’ colony, Slovenian painters sought a new artistic language in the interplay of light, atmosphere, and color. The influences from Dachau had a decisive impact on the style of Slovenian modernism and made the town—alongside Munich—an important place for their artistic development.

Dr. Laura Cohen, head of the Dachau Picture Gallery and curator of the exhibition, describes this relationship as “an impressive example of European exchange in art around 1900”: “The Slovenian artists came to Munich to learn and found in Dachau a place where observation of

nature and artistic freedom came together. What appears ‘lovely’ today was a new beginning at the time – a quiet revolution in the use of color and light.”

The exhibition also focuses on the work of Zoran Mušič, who was imprisoned in the Dachau concentration camp. His later paintings reflect the existential experiences of this period and build a bridge between Impressionism, Expressionism, and the culture of remembrance.

The works from the National Gallery of Slovenia, most of which are being shown in Germany for the first time, are closely related artistically to numerous paintings that are on permanent display in the Picture Gallery in Dachau. Labels accompanying the works in the permanent exhibition offer visitors the opportunity to discover and understand these connections for themselves.

With the exhibition “Beyond Impressionism – Slovenian Modernism and Dachau,” the Dachau Picture Gallery presents an art-historical bridge between regions, eras, and worlds. Impressionism was not a national phenomenon, but rather a transnational one, albeit with a time lag: a movement that thrived on exchange and mutual inspiration. The special exhibition invites visitors to rediscover Impressionism beyond the familiar masters – in luminous pine forests, springtime country scenes, impressive portraits, and lively everyday scenes: a diversity of colors, stories, and perspectives that stretch from Munich to Ljubljana and beyond.

SUPPORTERS AND COOPERATION PARTNERS

The special exhibition is a project of the Dachau Galleries and Museums and the National Gallery of Slovenia in cooperation with the Slovenian Cultural Center SKICA Berlin. It highlights the long-standing relations between Bavaria and Slovenia: 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Permanent Commission Bavaria-Slovenia.

DACHAUER
GALERIEN
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The exhibition is made possible thanks to the kind support of:



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CATALOG

A richly illustrated, bilingual catalog (German/English) accompanies the exhibition.

SUPPORTING PROGRAM

A supporting program with special tours and themed events will be offered in conjunction with the exhibition. Dates and details to follow.

THE PICTURE GALLERY WITHIN THE DACHAU GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS

The Dachau Picture Gallery (Gemäldegalerie), located in the heart of the old town opposite the town hall, displays masterpieces by the Dachau artists' colony and subsequent generations. Its collection dates back to the initiative and collecting activities of Dachau artists and the museum association founded in 1903. Around 200 paintings document the development of landscape painting from the 19th to the 20th century – from Eduard Schleich the Elder and Carl Spitzweg to Lovis Corinth and Fritz von Uhde. The gallery is part of the Dachau Galleries and Museums, which was founded in 1981 and combines two important cultural sites in the city: the Gemäldegalerie (Picture Gallery) and the Bezirksmuseum (Dachau History Museum). Since 1998, they have been a member of "EuroArt," the European Association of Artists' Colonies.

Website: dachauer-galerien-museen.de

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF SLOVENIA

The National Gallery of Slovenia (Narodna galerija Slovenije) in Ljubljana was founded in 1918 and, as the country's most important art museum, houses the most extensive collection of Slovenian and European art from the late Gothic period to the early 20th century. In 2016, following extensive renovation, the newly arranged permanent exhibition was opened, integrating all parts of the building—the historic Narodni dom palace, the Ravnika wing, and the glass connecting wing—into a unified presentation for the first time. Today, the collection comprises around 3,500 paintings, approximately 1,000 sculptures, over 8,000 works on paper, and numerous documents. The National Gallery of Slovenia is home to the most important major works of Slovenian modernism, including works by Anton Ažbe, Rihard Jakopič, and Matija Jama.

Website: ng-slo.si

THE SLOVENIAN CULTURAL CENTER SKICA BERLIN

The Slovenian Cultural Center SKICA Berlin was established in June 2016 at the headquarters of the Slovenian Embassy in Berlin. It promotes cooperation between Slovenian and German cultural institutions and artists, presents Slovenian art in Germany, and supports the mobility of Slovenian artists. It is a joint project of the Slovenian Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and acts as a bridge between Slovenian actors and German institutions by initiating exhibitions, artist residencies, and collaborations and promoting intercultural dialogue.

Website: skica.de

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PRESS IMAGES

Press photos to illustrate your article about the special exhibition are available in the press section of our website:

<https://dachauer-galerien-museen.de/presse/>

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SOCIAL MEDIA

You can find the latest information and content about the exhibitions on the social media channels of the Dachau Galleries and Museums:

Instagram: @dachauergalerienmuseen

Facebook: @Dachauer Galerien und Museen

We are looking forward to comments and new followers!