

Murnau am Staffelsee

In 1908, after a journey through Europe and North Africa, the artists Gabriele Münter and Wassily Kandinsky, members of the first modernistic association, the Neue Künstlervereinigung München (NKVM), first came to Murnau a. Staffelsee, together with Marianne von Werefkin and Alexej Jawlensky. They enjoyed their stay and felt inspired by the beautiful landscape. As suggested by Wassily Kandinsky, Gabriele Münter bought a house in 1909 in the Kottmüllerallee in Murnau, which would later on be used by them as a summer house. Between 1909 and 1914 they stayed there in summers and created a new style of painting, inspired by the region's traditional reverse painting on glass. The essence of this folk art, reducing themes to simple coloured structures, influenced both artists and showed them the way to a striking visual style. It would be the first step to Expressionism.

Münter and Kandinsky were often visited in Murnau a. Staffelsee by other artists and friends, such as Franz Marc, August Macke, Marianne von Werefkin, Alexej Jawlensky and the composer Arnold Schönberg. It soon became an important meeting place of the artistic avant-garde of the 20th century: it was in Münter's house that the plans for the almanac „Der Blaue Reiter“ were discussed. The art shown in this publication marked a dramatic turn away from the traditional and conventional orientation. During the First World War the couple separated: Kandinsky returned to Russia, while Münter went to Scandinavia but returned to Murnau a. Staffelsee in 1931. She lived there together with the art historian Johannes Eichner until her death in 1962.

Artists of the Artists' Colony

Marianne von Werefkin

(1860 - 1938)



Alexej Jawlensky
Wassily Kandinsky
Gabriele Münter

(1864 - 1941)
(1866 - 1944)
(1877 - 1962)

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