

Xanti Schawinsky: Head Drawings and Faces of War

September 19–December 14, 2014

Drawing Room

Opening Reception: Thursday, September 18, 6–8pm

For further information and images, please contact
Molly Gross, Communications Director, The Drawing Center
212 219 2166 x119 | mgross@drawingcenter.org

September 18, 2014



Xanti Schawinsky, *The Warrior (Faces of War)*, 1942, Mixed media, watercolor, and black pen on paper, 29 x 21 3/8 inches (73.7 x 54.2 cm), Copyright and courtesy of The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland.

New York – The Drawing Center presents *Xanti Schawinsky: Head Drawings and Faces of War*, a look at first generation Bauhaus artist Alexander ‘Xanti’ Schawinsky’s prolific oeuvre, which encompasses a range of social and political investigations. Schawinsky played a key role in the school’s vital social life and was a member of the Bauhaus Band. He studied graphic design and experimental photography and was also deeply engaged in the Bauhaus’s theater workshop as an actor, set and costume designer, creator of performances, and teacher.

The exhibition at The Drawing Center focuses on two bodies of work Schawinsky made between 1941 and 1946, *Faces of War* and the Head Drawings. The former are man-machine hybrids that could represent either an aggressive enemy or a powerful avenger—or perhaps an identity that encompasses both. The *Faces of War* break from the utopian optimism of the early Bauhaus and reveal the existential struggle of an artist coping with identity and the devastation of war. The Head Drawings allowed Schawinsky to literally remake his own “portrait” out of such detritus of the natural world as thread, crystals, rope, and rocks.

ABOUT XANTI SCHAWINSKY

The son of Polish Jews, Alexander (“Xanti”) Schawinsky was born in Basel, Switzerland, in 1904. In 1924, he enrolled at the Bauhaus, placing him in contact with legendary figures such as Walter Gropius, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Josef Albers, Oskar Schlemmer, and László Moholy-Nagy. Starting in the late 1920s, he took on a series of independent exhibition and commercial design commissions, but—fleeing fascism—Schawinsky left Germany in 1933, for Italy, where he

used his talents as a graphic designer to create advertising for a variety of companies including Illy Caffè, Cinzano, Olivetti, and Motta. As Mussolini's ties with Hitler strengthened, Schawinsky emigrated once more—to the United States and Black Mountain College, in North Carolina, in 1936, where Josef Albers had invited him to teach drawing, color theory, and stage design. In 1938, Schawinsky settled in New York City, where he remained until 1966, working as a teacher, an exhibition and graphic designer, a sculptor, and a photographer. That year, Schawinsky relocated to Laggio Maggiore, Italy. He died in Locarno, Switzerland, in 1979.

In 1938 Schawinsky was included in the seminal Museum of Modern Art, New York, exhibition *Bauhaus 1919–1928*. During the 1940s and 50s, humankind, in all its deformation and fantastic transformation, became Schawinsky's major topic. His work was shown in numerous exhibitions throughout the next decades, including, in 1986, the first Xanti Schawinsky retrospective, held by the Bauhaus Archive in Berlin.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Thursday, October 30 at 6:30pm

An evening walkthrough of *Xanti Schawinsky: Head Drawings and Faces of War* with Brett Littman, curator and Executive Director of The Drawing Center.

PUBLICATION

The 120-page edition of the *Drawing Papers* series in conjunction with this exhibition includes an introduction by Brett Littman, curator and Executive Director of The Drawing Center as well as essays by UK based cultural critic Michael Bracewell and art historian Juliet Koss.

CREDITS

Xanti Schawinsky: Head Drawings and Faces of War is made possible by the support of The Kind World Foundation, the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia, Daniel Schawinsky and the Xanti Schawinsky Estate, and Fiona and Eric Rudin.

Special thanks to Anke Kempkes and BROADWAY 1602.



ABOUT THE DRAWING CENTER

The Drawing Center is the only not-for-profit fine arts institution in the country to focus solely on the exhibition of drawings, both historical and contemporary. It was established in 1977 to provide opportunities for emerging and under-recognized artists; to demonstrate the significance and diversity of drawings throughout history; and to stimulate public dialogue on issues of art and culture.

ABOUT THE DRAWING CENTER

The Drawing Center is the only not-for-profit fine arts institution in the country to focus solely on the exhibition of drawings, both historical and contemporary. It was established in 1977 to provide opportunities for emerging and under-recognized artists; to demonstrate the significance and diversity of drawings throughout history; and to stimulate public dialogue on issues of art and culture.

LOCATION, HOURS & ACCESSIBILITY

35 Wooster Street between Broome and Grand Streets in SoHo, New York.
Gallery hours are Wednesday-Sunday 12pm–6pm, Thursday, 12pm–8pm.
Tickets: \$5 Adults, \$3 Students and seniors, Children under 12 are free, and free admission Thursdays 6-8pm.

The Drawing Center is wheelchair accessible.

FACEBOOK: [The Drawing Center](#)

TWITTER: [twitter.com/drawingcenter](#)

TUMBLR: [the-drawing-center.tumblr.com](#)

AT THE DRAWING CENTER

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <i>Thread Lines</i> | September 19–December 14, 2014 |
| <i>Xanti Schawinsky: Head Drawings and Faces of War</i> | September 19–December 14, 2014 |
| <i>Sari Dienes</i> | October 8–November 16, 2014 |
| <i>Open Sessions 2</i> | November 21–December 14, 2014 |
| <i>Tomi Ungerer: All in One</i> | January 9–March 22, 2015 |
| <i>Abdelkader Benchamma: Representation of Dark Matter</i> | March 2015–2016 |
| <i>Portraits from the École des Beaux-Arts Paris</i> | April 10–June 28, 2015 |
| <i>Natalie Frank: The Brothers Grimm</i> | April 10–June 28, 2015 |
| <i>Open Sessions 3</i> | April 10–May 15, 2015 |
| <i>İnci Eviner</i> | May 29–June 28, 2015 |

#

Xanti Schawinsky: Head Drawings and Faces of War

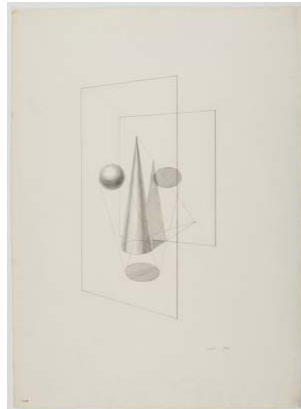
September 19–December 14, 2014

Images Available for Reproduction

For further information and images, please contact
Molly Gross, Communications Director, The Drawing Center
212 219 2166 x119 | mgross@drawingcenter.org



Xanti Schawinsky, *Rocky Fellow*, 1944, Graphite on paper, 31 x 22 1/2 inches (78.74 x 57.15 cm), Copyright The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland, Courtesy of The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland and BROADWAY 1602, New York.



Xanti Schawinsky, *Euclidian*, 1945, Graphite on paper, 31 1/2 x 23 inches (80.1 x 58.4 cm), Copyright The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland, Courtesy of The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland and BROADWAY 1602, New York.



Xanti Schawinsky, *Jewelry Head*, 1941-44, Graphite on paper, 30 1/2 x 22 1/2 inches (77.47 x 57.15 cm), Copyright The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland. Courtesy of The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland and BROADWAY 1602, New York.



Xanti Schawinsky, *The Aviator (Faces of War)*, 1942, Mixed media, watercolor and black pen on paper, 28 7/8 x 21 inches (73.4 x 53.4 cm), Copyright and courtesy of The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland.



Xanti Schawinsky, *The Admiral (Faces of War)*, 1942, Mixed media, watercolor and black pen on paper, 29 3/8 x 21 3/8 inches (74.6 x 54.4 cm), Copyright and courtesy of The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland.



Xanti Schawinsky, *Architectural Design*, 1945, Mixed media, water color and black pen on paper, 20 3/4 x 28 7/8 inches (52.7 x 73.4 cm), Copyright and courtesy of The Estate of Xanti Schawinsky, Switzerland.