Beyeler Foundation hosts the comprehensive interesting retrospective "Georgia O'Keeffe" until May 22nd



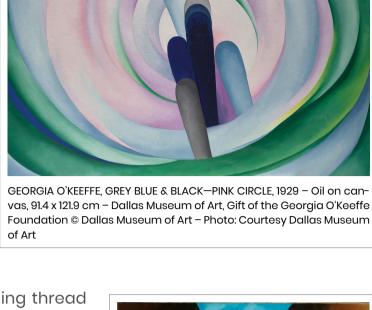
(1887–1986), one of the most significant painters and an icon of modern American art. With 85 works from mainly American public and private collections, "Georgia O'Keeffe" offers a repre-

by GianAngelo Pistoia

sentative overview of this exceptional artist's many-faceted and endlessly surprising work. The retrospective provides European viewers with a rare opportunity for such in-depth exploration of Georgia O'Keeffe's work, which is hardly represented in collections outside the United States. The exhibition at the Fondation Beyeler highlights O'Keeffe's distinctive way of contemplating her environment and translating her perceptions into wholly unprecedented images of reality – at times almost abstract, at times close to their model in nature. "One rarely takes the time to really see a flower. I have painted it big enough so that others would see what I see."

The Foundation Beyeler will devote the first exhibition of its anniversary year to Georgia O'Keeffe





a highly distinctive visual language, shifting between abstraction and figuration, which to this day has lost none of its topicality. Her singular gaze, combined with her delicate and respectful approach to nature, make Georgia O'Keeffe

tistic development in New York City, at the heart of the then fashionable and highly influential small circle around Alfred Stieglitz, photographer, gallery owner and advocate of modern art. Next to providing an early venue for the display and discussion of the European avant-garde, his gallery also fostered new American art and photography. O'Keeffe owed her early recognition and subsequent career to the support provided by Stieglitz, who later became her husband, and to her connection over many decades to the New York art scene. Yet in terms of her artistic output, urban life

the most significant and interesting landscape and nature

From 1918, Georgia O'Keeffe spent decisive years of her ar-

painter of the 20th century.

left only very few discernible traces. O'Keeffe grew up on her parents' dairy farm in Wisconsin, in the American Midwest. The decisive steps in her artistic development took place in Charlottesville, Virginia, and later in Canyon, Texas, where she taught art from 1916 to 1918. Even after moving to New York, her life as an artist remained punctuated by regular stays in different places. During many years, she thus spent summers at the Stieglitz family's holiday home on Lake George in the State of New York, which provided the inspiration for much of the work she produced during this time. In 1929, O'Keeffe for the first time spent several weeks in New Mexico in the American Southwest, where she would henceforth return every year, always alone, and where she would settle for good following Stieglitz' death. The exhibition starts with a look at O'Keeffe's early works, produced during her time as an art teacher in Virginia and in Texas. Charcoal drawings such as Early Abstraction, 1915, and No. 14 Special, 1916, are shown alongside a selection of small-format, saturated and vibrant watercolours. Red Landscape, 1916/17, with its night sky lit up by a spectacu-

provided key motifs in O'Keeffe's work.



lar explosion that turns the barren hillscape crimson red, is one of the rare oil paintings produced

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE, JIMSON WEED / WHITE GEORGIA O'KEEFFE, JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT NO. IV, GEORGIA O'KEEFFE, SERIES I, NO. 8, 1919 - Oil on FLOWER NO.1, 1932 - Oil on canvas, 121.9 x 101.6 1930 - Oil on canvas, 101.6 x 76.2 cm National canvas, 51 x 41 cm

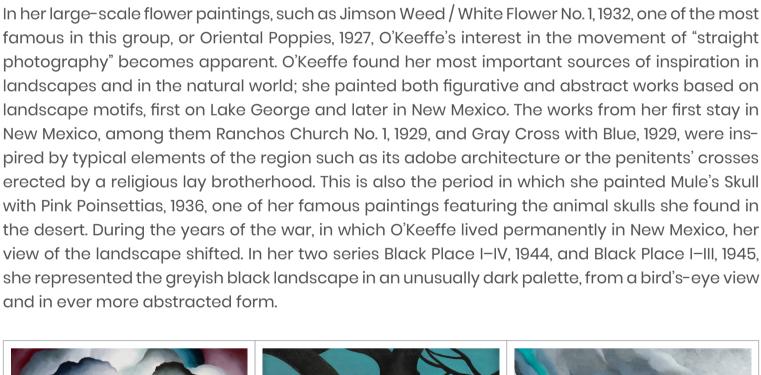
Gallery of Art, Washington, Alfred Stieglitz Co-

llection, Bequest of Georgia O'Keeffe, 1987 - ©

Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Was-

hington

during these years. Subsequent works such as Blue and Green Music, 1919/1921, and Series I – From the Plains, 1919, manifest the artist's path toward abstraction. Fundamentally, however, O'Keeffe's work is defined by the coexistence of figurative and abstract painting. Plants, especially flowers,



cm - Crystal Bridges Museum of American

Art, Bentonville, Arkansas - © Georgia O'Kee-

ffe Museum / 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich - Photo:

Edward C. Robison III

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE, ABSTRACTION - ALEXIUS,

Regula and Beat Curti - © Georgia O'Kee-

ffe Museum / 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich - Photo:

courtesy of the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum

1928 Oil on canvas, 91.4 x 76.2 cm

Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art The still life It Was a Man and a Pot, 1942, featuring a human skull, suggests that O'Keeffe's perception of her surroundings changed in the 1940s as the war raged on. In the last room of the exhibition, O'Keeffe's late work comes face to face with Black Mobile with Hole, 1954, by Alexander Calder (1898–1976), whose work has long been closely associated with the Fondation Beyeler – by way of both the museum's collection and several exhibitions. While Calder, unlike O'Keeffe, maintained an ongoing relationship with Europe, both artists shared a deep attachment to the wide expanses and endless horizons of rural America, which permeate their work. During her own lifetime, Georgia O'Keeffe was considered a major exponent and co-initiator of new American art

by Sam Keller and Theodora Vischer.



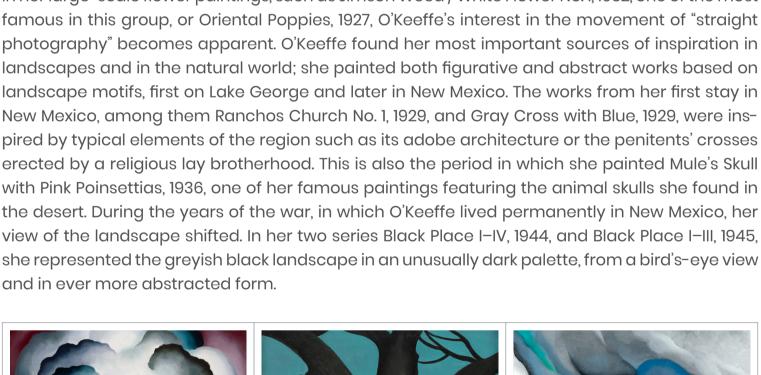
GEORGIA O'KEEFFE, THE CHESTNUT TREE - GREY,

Myron Kunin Collection of American Art, Min-

neapolis, MN © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum /

1924 Oil on canvas, 91.44 x 76.2 cm

2021, ProLitteris, Zurich



Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und

Kunstbau Munich, Gift of the Georgia O'Keeffe

Foundation - © Städtische Galerie im Lenba-

chhaus und Kunstbau Munich

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE, FROM THE LAKE NO. 1, 1924

Oil on canvas, 91.4 cm x 76.2 Des Moines Art

Center, Nathan Emory Coffin Collection, pur-

chased with funds from the Coffin Fine Arts

Trust, 1984 © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / 2021,

ProLitteris, Zurich Photo: Rich Sanders, Des

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE, PELVIS WITH THE DISTANCE, 1943 GEORGIA O'KEEFFE, BLACK MESA LANDSCAPE, NEW MEXICO / OUT BACK Oil on canvas, 60.6 x 75.6 cm OF MARIE'S II, 1930 Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, Gift of Anne Marmon Green-Oil on canvas, 61.6 x 92.1 cm leaf in memory of Caroline Marmon Fesler, Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe, NM. Gift of The Burnett Foundation, © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich 1997 © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich Photo: Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe / Art Resource, NY In 1943, her first museum retrospective took place at the Art Institute of Chicago and in 1946, the Museum of Modern Art in New York organised a large exhibition of her work, the first such display the institution had ever devoted to a female artist. Most of O'Keeffe's works are to be found in the United States, both in more than 100 public collections and in private hands. In Europe, to which O'Keeffe herself travelled for the first time in 1953 aged 65, only around a dozen works are held in private and public collections. Her first major exhibition on the Old Continent took place in 1993 at the Hayward Gallery in London. One of the rare exhibitions in the years that followed, and the very first to be held in Switzerland, was the retrospective curated by Bice Curiger at the Kunsthaus Zürich in 2003. Today, Georgia O'Keeffe is also among the highly recognised artists in Europe, even though the originals of her works are rarely to be seen here. "Georgia O'Keeffe" is curated by Theodora Vischer, Chief Curator, and is on view at the Fondation Beyeler from 23 January to 22 May 2022. The exhibition has been organised by the Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel, the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, and the Centre Pompidou, Paris, in partnership with the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe. The exhibition catalogue is published in German by Hatje Cantz Verlag, Berlin. Numbering 208 pages, it brings together articles by Cody Hartley, Anna Hi-

ddleston-Galloni, Didier Ottinger, Marta Ruiz del Árbol, Ariel Plotek and Julia Keller. With a foreword