

# **Käthe Kollwitz**

**(1867-1945)**



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## The Life of Käthe Kollwitz

Käthe (KAY-teh) Ida Schmidt was born on July 8 1867 in Königsberg, East Prussia (now Kaliningrad, Russia). She was the fifth of seven children (four surviving past infancy) born to Karl Schmidt, a mason and contractor, and his wife Katharina Schmidt, née Rupp.

Prussia during this time was an authoritarian and repressed society, characterized by strict conformance to the dictates of the ruling Hohenzollern family. The Schmidt family, however, was an integral part of the Free Religious Congregation, a small sect with beliefs similar to today's Unitarians. Katharina Schmidt's father, Julius Rupp, had founded this organization some twenty years earlier in opposition to the dictates of the state-controlled Protestant Church of East Prussia. This unconventionality spilled over into many other areas of the Schmidt family life. Käthe, her brother Konrad, and her sisters Julie and Lise were schooled privately rather than being subjected to the indoctrination of the state-run schools. In particular, the Schmidt girls were educated far beyond the normal standard for girls in that era. The family encouraged intellectual and artistic pursuits, as well as emphasizing a social consciousness far beyond the norm for the time and giving each child the freedom to explore their own interests. Käthe and her younger sister Lise roamed the streets of Königsberg unchaperoned, absorbing the sights and sounds of the working environs of the city. The images of struggle and poverty viewed during youth undoubtedly formed the single most important influence on Käthe's artistic subject matter throughout her life.

Käthe was a nervous and sensitive child, prone to both fits of temper and nightmares. This evolved into recurrent depressions in her teens, which would follow her throughout her life and find their way into her work. The nurturing attitude of her family, though, helped temper this sensitivity. Her seriousness and lack of personal emotional expressiveness in later life would be modeled on her mother's behavior in her youth.

In her late teens and early twenties, Käthe devoted herself to the study of art. In the late nineteenth century, women were not admitted to the major art academies, so while still in Königsberg, she took private lessons with engraver Rudolf Maurer. Later, in Berlin, she attended the School for Women Artists, studying with Swiss artist Karl Stauffer-Bern. While in Berlin, she was also introduced to the work of artist Max Klinger, work that profoundly moved her and eventually turned her attention away from painting toward

graphic arts. Returning to Königsberg, she again took private lessons, this time with Emil Neide, followed by two years in Munich under the tutelage of Ludwig Herterich. In Munich, she first encountered Emma Beate Jeep, who was to become her life-long friend and a model for many of her nude studies. Also during this time, her brother Konrad introduced her to the concepts of socialism as espoused by Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, concepts that she readily embraced.

In 1891, Käthe married Karl Kollwitz, a young doctor. Kollwitz and his sister Lisebeth, orphaned in their youth, had been friendly with the Schmidt family for years. Kollwitz shared the socialist ideals of his close friend Konrad Schmidt, and thus had opted to open his practice in a working-class neighborhood of Berlin. The Kollwitzes would live and work in this same building on Weissenburgerstrasse (now Käthe Kollwitz Strasse) for the next fifty years, and here Käthe would see the working class men and women who were her husband's patients, and who would become the inspiration and models for her own works.

Marriage, for Käthe, was a much-deliberated event, and one that she had great difficulty reconciling with her own artistic ambitions. Her options as a single woman, socially and economically, were painfully limited. Gainful employment to become a self-supporting graphic artist would be virtually impossible, while continuing to live with her family was unlikely to prove productive. As a married woman, though, it just might be possible to reconcile the roles of wife and artist, and thus gain a far greater freedom to live and work as she pleased. In fact, she is the only one among the few well-known female artist of her time to successfully combine marriage and work over an extended time. Other female artists such as Suzanne Valadon, Paula Modersohn-Becker (with whom she is often compared) and Gwen John either took lovers rather than marrying, or endured stormy marriages that eventually dissolved through death or divorce.

The birth of sons Hans in 1892 and Peter in 1896 completed the Kollwitz family. Both Hans and Peter would serve as occasional models for their mother's work during their childhood. Peter would become one of the first casualties of World War I, killed in action at Dixmuiden, Belgium, on October 22, 1914. Peter's death was an emotional blow from which Kollwitz never fully recovered. His death was the inspiration for the memorial *Mourning Parents*, two granite figures modeled after Käthe and Karl, which was installed seventeen years after his death near his grave in the cemetery in Dixmuiden.

In 1893, Käthe attended the premiere performance of Gerhard Hauptmann's play *The Weavers*, which dramatized the Silesian peasants' revolt of 1844. This seemingly inconsequential event in her life had far-reaching consequences, as it caused her to abandon her current projects and embark on the first of her great print cycles, *A Weavers' Rebellion*. This series of six prints (a seventh was dropped from the series), three etchings and three lithographs occupied Käthe for the next five years. Its exhibition, first in 1898 at the Greater Berlin Art Exposition, then in 1899 at the German Art Exposition in Dresden and in 1900 in London, established her as one of the great printmakers of her time. Juries for both the Berlin and Dresden expositions awarded her medals; however, the Berlin award was blocked by Kaiser Wilhelm II, who once stated "Art should elevate and instruct...It should not make the misery that exists appear even more miserable than it is."<sup>1</sup> This was not to be the last time that her subject matter offended Germany's rulers – Kaiserin Augusta Victoria, Wilhelm II's consort, demanded that Käthe's poster for the 1906 German Home Workers Exhibition be removed from display, while three decades later Adolf Hitler would declare her anathema and prohibit further exhibition of her work.

From 1900 until the beginning of World War I, Käthe continued to develop her skills as an artist. She began teaching at the Berlin School of Art for Women, where she herself had been a student. She spent several weeks in Paris in 1904, studying sculpture at the Académie Julian, followed by several months' study in Florence, Italy in 1907 as a result of winning the Villa Romana Prize established by Max Klinger. She produced her second great print cycle, *Peasants' War*, between 1902 and 1908, as well as a series of drawings for the progressive Munich monthly *Simplizissimus* and numerous posters.

With the beginning of World War I and the loss of her younger son shortly afterward, Käthe struggled with her art as well as her life. As she began to slowly come to terms with her deep grief, she began to struggle with the design of the memorial for Peter, which fully occupied her until after the end of the war. Her grief and resulting introspection during this time led her to renounce all violence, all war, and to accept the possibility of evolutionary, rather than revolutionary, change. She therefore refused to support the Communist Party, despite her sympathy for their cause, because of their acceptance of violence as an agency of social change. Instead, she became an early supporter of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, as well as a member of the International Workers Aid organization.

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<sup>1</sup> Hinz, *Käthe Kollwitz: Graphics, Posters, Drawings*, p. xix.

From 1914 to 1916 Käthe produced very little. Still, she continued to be recognized for her work. In 1916, she became the first woman elected as a juror of the Berlin-based New Secession artists' group, three years after being elected secretary of the group. For her fiftieth birthday in 1917, the Cassirer Gallery in Berlin put on an enthusiastically received retrospective of her works. After the war's end, in 1919, she was named a member and professor in the Prussian Academy of Arts, heading the graphic arts department from 1928 until forced to resign from the Academy altogether by Adolf Hitler upon his ascension to power in 1933.

The assassination of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in early 1919 triggered another turning point in Käthe's career. At the request of Liebknecht's family, she visited his corpse in the morgue. The sketches from that visit evolved into the *Memorial Sheet to Karl Liebknecht*, showing workers paying final homage to their fallen leader. Käthe started developing the print, intending to reproduce it as an etching, then as a lithograph. Her dissatisfaction with the results from both methods led her to explore the woodcut technique. This became her primary working medium for the *Memorial Sheet*, as well as for her next two print cycles, *War (1917-1923)* and *The Proletariat (1925)*, and quite a bit of other graphic work during the 1920s.

She did not give up the lithograph, however, contributing her talents to various relief and anti-war organizations by producing artwork for leaflets and posters. During 1924 alone, she produced four of her most famous poster images: *The Survivors* for the International Trade Union Federation, *Germany's Children Are Starving!* for the International Workers' Relief Organization, *Bread!* for the Help by the Artists group, and *Never Again War!* for the 1924 Central German Youth Day in Leipzig. These powerful images have been used again and again through the years, first for those causes in which Käthe so passionately believed by now, later being co-opted by the Nazi Party among others for purposes which she deplored.

If not for the extreme economic hardships and disastrous social conditions around them during the 1920s, family life for Käthe Kollwitz during this time would have been relatively content. Her remaining son Hans married Otilie Ehlers, a Berlin printmaker, in 1920, and over the next decade they gave Käthe four grandchildren: Peter in 1921, twins Jutta and Jördis in 1923, and Arne-Andreas in 1930. A visit to Belgium in 1926 provided her the opportunity to view the future site of the *Mourning Parents* memorial. In

1927, shortly after her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Kollwitzes accepted an invitation to visit the Soviet Union on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

*Mourning Parents* was finally completed in 1931, and the plaster models were displayed at the Prussian Academy to great acclaim. A year later they had been rendered in granite, and in late July Käthe, Karl, and Hans went to Belgium to oversee their installation at the cemetery in Dixmuiden.

The early 1930s saw the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist Party. Käthe was forced to resign from the Prussian Academy of Arts, and her works were systematically removed from public view and exhibition. Except for the blacklisting, and a single interrogation by the Gestapo, in 1936, after an interview by a Russian journalist, the Nazis did not otherwise actively persecute Käthe. Although she and Karl were urged to emigrate, they could not bring themselves to do so. Their entire life, their family, was in Germany, and in Germany they would remain.

Although banished from the public view, Käthe continued to work in a private studio near her home, producing the last of her great print cycles, *Death*, between 1934 and 1937. Death, as a subject, had long held a great fascination for her, so much so that she recognized the compulsion toward this subject as early as 1927. Yet she managed to portray Death in these images “without a trace of sentimentality or romanticism.”<sup>2</sup> Other than this, she did little more graphic work, choosing instead to focus her attention on sculpture. Fewer than two dozen of her sculptures are known, almost all dating from the 1930s and early 1940s.

The death of Karl Kollwitz in 1940 was not unexpected, since both and Käthe had been in failing health for several years. From the day that he died, the former hiker and mountain climber Käthe walked with the aid of a cane. She also finally moved her studio into her home. Her sorrow was compounded two years later when her oldest grandson, Peter, was killed in the fighting in Russia.

Käthe’s final works during this period, though few in number, retain the powerful messages of her earlier pieces. Her final lithograph, *Seed Corn Must Not Be Ground*, shows clearly her belief in the futility of war and the waste of the sacrifice of the young to violence. Her final self-portrait, in 1943, shows an aged and weary woman gazing beyond that which the viewer can see, to the inevitable approach of death.

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<sup>2</sup> Nagel, *Käthe Kollwitz*, p. 77.

By 1943, conditions in Berlin were so bad that Käthe was forced to leave her home of over fifty years. She took refuge, first in Nordhausen with sculptor Margret Böning, then a year later on the estate of Prince Ernst Heinrich of Saxony at Moritzburg, outside of Dresden. The Prince was an ardent fan of Käthe and a collector of her works, and felt “an obligation...to this great, unique German artist...” to assist her and make her remaining months as pleasant and comfortable as possible.<sup>3</sup> Here, at Moritzburg, she died on April 22, 1945, in the company of her twin granddaughters Jutta and Jödis. Her body was cremated, and the ashes originally interred at the small cemetery in Moritzburg. After the end of the war, her ashes were moved to the family plot in Friedrichsfelde cemetery in Berlin. There her remains were buried alongside her husband, under a headstone bearing a bronze relief which Käthe herself had created a decade earlier.

The Weissenburgerstrasse building, where Käthe lived for more than fifty years and which was destroyed by the Allied bombings six months after she left Berlin, is now a small park, Kollwitz Place, on Käthe Kollwitz Strasse. The main feature of the park, opened in 1950, is a large statue of Käthe Kollwitz, created by sculptor Gustav Seitz, on a stone pedestal. The statue shows Käthe as an elderly woman, in a pose very like her final self-portrait, seated with her head thrust forward, one hand holding a pencil, the other touching a portfolio. Yet despite the heavy, almost foreboding image depicted in the statue, “the neighborhood children seem to find a friendly sort of monument, for they clamber familiarly into the great stone lap.”<sup>4</sup> How appropriate this seems, for an artist who focused so much of her life and her work on the joys and sufferings of children and their families.

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<sup>3</sup> Klein and Klein, *Käthe Kollwitz: Life in Art*, p. 157.

<sup>4</sup> Klein and Klein, p. 165.



## The Work of Käthe Kollwitz

Though Kollwitz's primary reputation is as a graphic artist, she began her career as a painter and ended it as a sculptor. Her finished works combine a mastery of technique with powerful, often startling and disturbing, imagery to bring across her powerful messages. Her overall themes are primarily social and political, yet with an emotional quality to their expressiveness that saves them from being strident. Kollwitz lived and worked among the people whose struggles she depicted in her art, and so was able to portray them with truth and a discerning eye that won her the enmity of the ruling powers more than once.

Kollwitz herself acknowledged the influence of a number of artists on her work. Her first sight, as a girl, of the works of Rubens enthralled her. Obviously the work of Max Klinger played a great role in leading her to graphic arts. Ernst Barach's woodcuts provided her with a new direction at a time in her life when she became dissatisfied with her chosen techniques. However, the authors that Kollwitz read so voraciously were a far more significant influence on her work, particularly in the choice of subject matter. Zola's novel *Germinal* inspired the first student piece of Kollwitz's to bring her peer recognition. Hauptmann's play *The Weavers*, depicting the Silesian revolt of 1844, was the starting point for her first great print cycle, *A Weavers' Rebellion*. Other authors of the time such as Ibsen, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky undoubtedly are reflected in her work. But the great German poet Goethe remained her favorite author and a major influence throughout her life, despite her disagreement with his social and political attitudes.

Kollwitz's primary works were produced during the Modernist/Expressionist eras. She is often classified as part of the German Expressionist movement, though this is mostly an accident of timing and geography. Her work actually bears little resemblance to the typical works produced by other German Expressionist artists, most notably Paula Modersohn-Becker (with whom she is occasionally compared despite the immense differences in style between the two women). The socialist content of much of her work falls well outside the Modernist ideal of individual artistic freedom, while she herself regarded Expressionism as a studio form divorced from the social reality of the current times.<sup>5</sup> Naturalism, Realism, Modernism, Expressionism – she drew from all of these movements, but transcended each and every one to form her own unique style.

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<sup>5</sup> Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*, pp. 291-292.

Kollwitz was not interested in abstraction, but in depicting the reality of her subjects and their emotions. She made use of color minimally, and that only during a brief span around the turn of the century. The stark contrasts of black and white in her work compound the impact of the images themselves.

Her interest was in people, their sufferings and joys and longings. Instead of finding beauty in physical attractiveness, she found it “in human intensity, in the physical reflection of the labors, the efforts, the cares and concerns, the loves, losses, and griefs that made up the lives of real and ordinary people.”<sup>6</sup> Many of her works were images of herself, and her ongoing series of over fifty self-portraits covering a forty-five year span provides a visual chronology of the artist herself as well as a reflection of her world. Other images were drawn from the urban proletariat of Königsberg and Berlin with whom she was so familiar. While Kollwitz was not alone among artists of her period in depicting the working proletariat, she was unique in that many of the figures in her works are women, often mothers with children. In her forties, she found herself using actual models less and less (except for her self-portraits), drawing instead from her memories for the images of people in her later work.

Perhaps because of Kollwitz’s emphasis on realism in the people depicted in her work, her frequent use of a skeleton to symbolically represent Death, from the *Weavers’ Rebellion* cycle throughout her work to the *Death* cycle, is startling and powerful. In doing so, she remained true to an iconographic tradition dating from medieval times and retaining its power to this day.<sup>7</sup>

For Kollwitz, the message in her work was to focus awareness on the social ills of the day: war, poverty, starvation, grief, struggle. Her socialist, feminist, eventually pacifist philosophy is clear in her choice of subject matter. “Like Barlach and Grosz she was essentially a Gothic artist, in whom idealized beauty and balance were subordinated to emotional expressiveness.”<sup>8</sup> Her purpose was awareness, and she achieved that through a simplicity, both of medium and of image, that made her work accessible to the viewer. Regrettably, this accessibility led to later devaluation of her work by critics and historians.<sup>9</sup> Even with this diminishment, her message lives on. In the PBS series *The Great War*, Jay M. Winter of Cambridge University states:

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<sup>6</sup> Klein and Klein, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Hinz, p. xix.

<sup>8</sup> Zigrosser, *Prints and Drawings of Kaethe Kollwitz*, p. xiii.

<sup>9</sup> Chadwick, p. 287.

“So the fundamental vision that I think Kathe Kollwitz provides us, is of the impossibility of forgetting and the impossibility of letting go of the guilt; for the responsibility of the old, for the sacrifice of the young...In addition, I think what Kathe Kollwitz captured in her art was the sense that the fundamental problems of war and peace were not resolved into victors and vanquished – only into the living and the dead. She captures the view that nobody won the First World War. There were just survivors. And, that universality of message, the simplicity of that message, escapes from political notation.”<sup>10</sup>

Tracing the development of Kollwitz’s artistic vision is most effective in the context of her life, as discussed in the previous section. In her early works, particularly in *A Weavers’ Rebellion*, there is a complexity of image based on an attention to detail. This facilitates Kollwitz’s interpretation of this real, historical event. Detail gradually disappears in her later works, until the *Death* cycle and her final lithograph, *Seed Corn Must Not Be Ground*. In these images, there is a paring-down to the pure essence of the image – no background, no scenery, no superfluous details. There are only the players and their interaction with one another; the rest of the world is irrelevant.

Kollwitz’s progression through techniques mirrors the evolution of her vision. Early images particularly those rendered as etchings, allow the tiny details of realism to show through. As her mastery of the lithographic technique matured, she found a medium that allowed the presence of detail when it was needed and omitted it when it detracted. After World War I, her vision shifted. As Carl Zigrosser states, “The aim of realism to capture the particular and accidental with minute exactness was abandoned for a more abstract and universal conception and a more summary execution. It is a logical development in an artist’s career,...”<sup>11</sup> In woodcut and then sculpture she moved into techniques that captured only the essential image. In a sense, the eventual resolution of her artistic vision could truly be summed up as “less is more.”

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<sup>10</sup> Winter, *The Great War and the Shaping of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*.

<sup>11</sup> Zigrosser, p. xiii.

## ***A Weavers' Rebellion***

*A Weavers' Rebellion* is the first of Kollwitz's great print cycles, and established her reputation as Germany's premier graphic artist at the turn of the century. In speaking of *A Weavers' Rebellion*, critic and friend Otto Nagel states, "I do not think it is an exaggeration to state that if Käthe Kollwitz had done nothing else in her lifetime besides the 'Weavers', this work alone would have earned her a place in the history of art."<sup>12</sup>

Consisting of six prints (the first three, lithographs, and the remaining three, etchings), it depicts the revolt of the Silesian handloom weavers in 1844 against the oppression of their masters, and the revolt's quick suppression by Prussian military forces. Though Gerhard Hauptmann's play *The Weavers* provided Kollwitz's initial inspiration for the cycle, Nagel clearly states that she studied the relevant literature thoroughly before beginning even the preliminary sketches for the images.<sup>13</sup>

It is difficult to discuss the individual images of *A Weavers' Rebellion* in isolation from one another. Normally, in a print cycle, all of the prints are made with the same technique. In this cycle, however, Kollwitz found it necessary to render the first three images as lithographs since she did not believe her etching skills up to the standard necessary to achieve her desired results. This gives the first three images a "shadowy, mood-provoking"<sup>14</sup> feel. By the time she reached the remaining three prints, however, she felt that her etching had matured and was capable of catching the images as she wished them seen. In particular, the first two of these three images have a very pictorial and precise look to them as a result. The use of the two different techniques gives the series a dissonance that actually compounds the effect of the images seen as a whole.

The first two images in the cycle, *Poverty* and *Death*, provide the background and the impetus respectively for the impending revolt. The third image, *Conspiracy*, depicts the clandestine planning for the revolt, while the next two images, *March of the Weavers* and *Riot*,<sup>15</sup> show the revolt in full swing. Finally, in *End*, the devastating aftermath appears in the lifeless bodies of the rebellious workers.

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<sup>12</sup> Nagel, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup> Nagel, pp. 25-26.

<sup>14</sup> Klein and Klein, p. 33.

<sup>15</sup> Prelinger entitles this print *Storming the Gate*, while Nagel lists it as *Attack of the Weavers*.

In the four interior scenes (*Poverty*, *Death*, *Conspiracy*, and *End*), Kollwitz makes masterly use of light and shadow to bring the focus onto a single individual in each case. For *Poverty*, it is the face of the starving child, with the shadowy shapes of the handweaver's tools receding into the background. In *Death*, it is, of course, Death himself alongside the blankly staring child. The father in this image stands off to one side, with the darkness of his image mirroring the suffering, helpless darkness of his soul. *Conspiracy* brings the main focus to one of the four conspirators, the man on the right, as he pounds his fists on the table to emphasize the point he is making to his attentive audience. Finally, in *End*, the viewer's gaze is drawn to the woman standing just inside the door, with weary grief on her face and anger in her clenched fists. Only after observing her does attention turn to the other shadowy figures in the room.

In these four prints, Kollwitz relies heavily on hatching for the depth and texture of the shadows. Shapes define the images; few individual lines are seen. Many of the shapes seen in the background are merely those mundane tools of the handweaver's trade, yet their massive presence in the shadows lends an ominous feeling to the cramped, almost claustrophobic interior scenes.

The two exterior scenes, *March of the Weavers* and *Riot*, are the two highly pictorial etchings. In both, action and motion is the focus. In the former, the rhythm of the purposeful tread of the men as they resolutely stride toward their goal contrasts with the slower pace of the woman, carrying a sleeping child on her back, by their side. The determination of the workers is clear, their destination evident. The latter shows a smooth, ordered rhythm of movement in the stooping of the women to pick up the rocks torn from the pavement, the handing off of the rocks to the men, who then fling them at the owner's mansion through the bars of the ornate iron gate.<sup>16</sup> That gate is the focal point of the image, just as it is the focal point of the attack, with the full attention of the workers focused on, and through, it.

These two images rely far more on line as a visual element than do the other four images. One example is the intricate detail of the gate in front of the owner's house in *Riot*. Shading and hatching is still an important visual element, however, particularly in the clothing of the workers.

In all six prints of *A Weavers' Rebellion*, Kollwitz's life-long focus on people is evident, as people are the primary emphasis of each image. Every element of the print directs attention to the players in the

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<sup>16</sup> Nagel, p. 29.

scenes. Even in *Riot*, where the energetic focus is on the gate to the owner's house, the viewer's attention is drawn through the attackers to the gate.

The flow of light and dark – from the shadows of the first images, to the focused yet dimmed light of *Conspiracy*, through the bright optimism of the revolt suddenly crashing back into the shadowed despair of *End* – mirrors the emotion of the rebellion itself, from despair to optimism back to even deeper despair. The movement through the cycle is further emphasized by the gradual increase in size of the prints as they move through the cycle, from the small 6 1/8-inch by 6 inch *Poverty* to the 9 5/8 inch by 12-inch *End*.

Each individual image in the cycle is complete in and of itself artistically. However, when viewed in sequential order, the full impact of the cycle's message is most dramatically perceived. As is usual with Kollwitz's work, the visual and compositional elements serve an aesthetic function; yet their primary purpose is to focus the viewer's attention on her message.

## ***Selbstbildnis, 1919***

Kollwitz used herself as a model for her work throughout her life, and her self-portraits are some of her most expressive and moving work. For her, most of the self-portraits were works in which she could try out and perfect techniques. For others, they are a window into the heart and mind of the artist herself.

I originally attempted to copy *Selbstbildnis (Self-Portrait)*, c. 1921, a relatively small (8½ inches by 10½ inches) etching, touched with blank ink and white on paper. The image of the fifty-four year old Kollwitz clearly shows the suffering and anguish of the past decade, especially the pain of the loss of her son in World War I. Kollwitz's weariness is evident in her face and her pose, yet so is the strength of character that allowed her to hold to her ideals and continue to produce her work until very near the end of her life. Unfortunately, I was unable to reproduce an acceptable (to me) copy even with pencil.

I then chose to replicate *Selbstbildnis (Self-Portrait)*, c. 1919. The original image is a lithograph, 13 5/8 inches by 11 ½ inches, showing Kollwitz in profile. The copy presented here is done in Conté crayon, as the closest thing available to lithographic crayon, and is slightly smaller than the original.

## Derived Works

As Käthe Kollwitz's self-portraits are the images that I find most moving and inspiring of all her work, I have chosen to present three self-portraits as my series of drawings inspired by her life and work. I did not attempt to replicate exact poses or expressions, but rather allowed the images that I have studied throughout my research for this project to inspire three interpretations with my own face. I did use Kollwitz's customary sober, solemn mien in all three images, as that is not an unusual expression for me.

The first image, done in compressed charcoal, is a three-quarter profile. This is not unlike *Selbstbildnis*, 1921 (K. 133), though without the head resting on the hand.

The second image is done in black Conté crayon with a very few touches of white Conté crayon for highlights. The pose, with the head resting on the hand, is reminiscent of several of Kollwitz's self-portraits, particularly a crayon drawing from 1924 and a charcoal drawing of 1925.

The third image is another three-quarter profile, in vine charcoal. I wanted to do a full profile for one of the drawings but could not get a mirror set up so that I could get a good profile in a location where I could do the drawing. I had also thought about a pen and ink drawing, but the first two attempts did not suit me.



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