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| Cubism was one of the first currents of the European avant-garde, which asserted itself meaningfully in Czech art and developed concisely here in the areas of everyday objects, interiors and in architecture. The use of its characteristic polygonal morphology led to Czech Cubism being evaluated as a style, although the goals of the creators of “new art” (the term *Cubism* was introduced ex post) were to find a new path, the horizon of which – hitherto demarcated with a series of “-isms” (hence also the pejorative designation of Cubism) – had to be transcended in order for art to reflect its mission in the modern era. In the autumn of 1911, the progressive wing of artists, influenced by works of Picasso, Derain and Cézanne established the Group of Fine Artists, the main protagonist of which became painter Emil Filla (1882-1953). The Group’s core included painters Antonín Procházka (1882-1945), Josef Čapek (1887-1945), sculptor Otto Gutfreund (1889-1927), architects and designers Pavel Janák (1882-1956), Josef Gočár (1880-1945), Vlastislav Hofman (1884-1963), Josef Chochol (1880-1956) and theoretician Václav Vilém Štech (1885-1974). The same year, the first issue of the group’s periodical, *Umělecký měsíčník*, was published and became a platform for formulating the principles of ‘new art’. |
| Cubism was one of the first currents of the European avant-garde, which asserted itself meaningfully in Czech art and developed concisely here in the areas of everyday objects, interiors and in architecture. The use of its characteristic polygonal morphology led to Czech Cubism being evaluated as a style, although the goals of the creators of “new art” (the term *Cubism* was introduced ex post) were to find a new path, the horizon of which – hitherto demarcated with a series of “-isms” (hence also the pejorative designation of Cubism) – had to be transcended in order for art to reflect its mission in the modern era. In the autumn of 1911, the progressive wing of artists, influenced by works of Picasso, Derain and Cézanne established the Group of Fine Artists, the main protagonist of which became painter Emil Filla (1882-1953). The Group’s core included painters Antonín Procházka (1882-1945), Josef Čapek (1887-1945), sculptor Otto Gutfreund (1889-1927), architects and designers Pavel Janák (1882-1956), Josef Gočár (1880-1945), Vlastislav Hofman (1884-1963), Josef Chochol (1880-1956) and theoretician Václav Vilém Štech (1885-1974). The same year, the first issue of the group’s periodical, *Umělecký měsíčník*, was published and became a platform for formulating the principles of ‘new art’.  File: GutfreundAnxiety.jpg  Figure 1 O. Gutfreund *Úzkost* (*Anxiety*), 1912.  Source: http://www.artplus.cz/web/uploads/image/Hascoe-Gutfreund.jpg  Emil Filla achieved autonomy of creative form most expressively in painting. He expanded his figural motifs of 1911-13 to still lifes, in which an orientation toward Picasso’s work is most evident. In addition to Cubism, the work of Procházka shows influences of Fauvism and Expressionism, and there appears a mobile motif as well. Čapek, who was developing his artistic and literary talents simultaneously, entered the Cubist current of painting with a distinctive and independent conception. Kubišta, whose artistic development had been accelerated by his stays in Paris in 1909-10, used expressive psychologisation of the motif and plot content. Kubišta and Filla also worked peripherally in sculpture, but it was Gutfreund who unequivocally excelled in this field and also made theoretical contributions to it. In field of architecture, the most productive was Janák, who also ranked among Cubism’s most active theoreticians. Janák’s architectural designs are much more telling than his realisations of his inventiveness. Gočár designed Prague’s first major Cubist building, the House of the Black Madonna (1911-12); his stylistically purest work is the sanatorium house in Bohdaneč. One of the group’s most original architects was Hofman, who took up ambitious modifications to cemetery structures in Prague’s Ďáblice district (1912). Chochol, who dynamised otherwise modest façades with polygonal forms, enhanced Prague architecture with a trio of Cubist buildings (a row house, a villa and an apartment building). Cubist architects also pursued interior and furniture design and established the manufacturing company “Pražské umělecké dílny” (1912). Janák and Hofman also designed a series of ceramic tableware which was produced and sold by the art production cooperative Artěl. Czech Cubists presented their work abroad at the collective exhibition at the Goltz Salon in Munich (1913) and at the Deutscher Werkbund in Cologne (1914). |
| Further reading:  (Kramář)  (Lahoda)  (Lamač)  (Švestka and Vlček) |