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| **Kubišta, Bohumil (1884-1918)** |
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| The Czech avant-garde artist BohumilKubišta came from a rural farming family. Educated in Hradec Králové, Kubišta moved to Prague in 1903 to attended art school, first at the School for Applied Art (1903-1904) and then at the Academy of Fine Art (1904-1905). After a year of service in 1905 with the Austrian imperial navy in Pula he studied at the Institute of Fine Art in Florence (1906-1907). Upon his return to Prague he contributed to the first exhibition of *Osma* (The Eight, spring 1907) before returning to military duty in Pula. In summer 1908 he participated in *Osma*’s second and final exhibition. |
| The Czech avant-garde artist BohumilKubišta came from a rural farming family. Educated in Hradec Králové, Kubišta moved to Prague in 1903 to attended art school, first at the School for Applied Art (1903-1904) and then at the Academy of Fine Art (1904-1905). After a year of service in 1905 with the Austrian imperial navy in Pula he studied at the Institute of Fine Art in Florence (1906-1907). Upon his return to Prague he contributed to the first exhibition of *Osma* (The Eight, spring 1907) before returning to military duty in Pula. In summer 1908 he participated in *Osma*’s second and final exhibition. As a founding member of *Osma,* Kubišta shared the pursuit of Expressionist representation of the psyche through non-local color and idiosyncratic form. Early impact of the art of Auguste Rodin and Edvard Munch exhibited in Prague in 1902 and 1905, respectively, was augmented in 1907 by Kubišta’s visits to exhibitions of Symbolists, Post-Impressionists, and the Fauves in Vienna, alongside his study of color theory and optics back in Prague.  With financial support from his uncle, Kubišta spent April to June, 1909, in Paris where he wrote reviews of exhibitions of Emil Bernard and Claude Monet for Czech cultural magazines and visited exhibitions of Fauve and Post-Impressionist works. In summer 1909 he conducted military service before returning to Bohemia. Kubišta returned to Paris a second time (December 1909 – June 1910) and was introduced to the Cubist work of Picasso. He visited countless exhibitions, sketched street life and working-class entertainment venues, and studied paintings by El Greco, Nicolas Poussin, and Mesopotamian and Egyptian sculpture in the Louvre. Back in Prague he had access to Vincenc Kramař’s collection of Old Masters and avant-garde art, which included analytic Cubist pieces by Picasso and Braque. In 1910 Kubišta began interlacing Cubism and Expressionism, resulting in a synthesis that informs his mature work of the years 1911-1918. These paintings, drawings, and prints epitomize the characteristically Czech concern with the spiritual content of subjects emphasized through the fragmented planes of Cubism and psychological intensity of Expressionist color and compositional structure. Kubišta participated in organizational meetings of *Skupina výtvarných umělců* (Group of Fine Artists) in 1911 but did not officially join, returning instead to the Mánes exhibiting society. He befriended the younger artist Jan Zrzavý in 1911 and exhibited with the latter’s group *Sursum* (Crude Ones) in 1912 in Prague*.*  At the height of his artistic career (1911-1915) Kubišta increased his international involvement. In 1911 he accepted an invitation from *Brücke*-artist Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and became the last member to join this Expressionist group. He participated in several international exhibitions, including the 1912 *Sonderbund* exhibition in Cologne, *Neue Secession* exhibitions in Berlin and Düsseldorf, and Herwarth Walden’s *Der Sturm* exhibitions in Berlin and Budapest. Occasionally Kubišta traveled to Germany in conjunction with exhibitions. He also wrote extensively during these years. Alongside exhibition reviews, Kubišta wrote four theoretical treatises. These essays reveal a sophisticated awareness of Vedic philosophy, communist ideology of Karl Marx, the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, and the artistic theories of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Wassily Kandinsky, and Charles Baudelaire, among others. Kubišta’s essays and correspondence indicate an acute understanding of the role of art and art criticism in contemporary society, and suggest the radical mindset of an intelligent artist who experienced the art world from the marginal standpoint created by class-based and ethno-linguistic prejudice in the Habsburg Empire. Ever-dependent on financial income from military service, Kubišta was called to war in the Balkans in 1913 and served in the Great War after 1914. He died of Spanish influenza at a military hospital in Prague in 1918.  File: Self-Portrait.jpg  Figure 1. Self-Portrait (1907), etching.  Source: <http://sbirky.cmvu.cz/\_cmvuURLDrivenWebPage.php?id=G\_22\_print&recnum=510&auth=Bohumil%20Kubi%C5%A1ta&tit=Self-portrait&cpr=,%20digitized%20by%20AiP%20Beroun%20s.r.o.>  File: Promenade.jpg  Figure 2. Promenáda u Arna [Promenade along the Arno] (1907)  Source: <http://dic.academic.ru/pictures/wiki/files/80/Promen%C3%A1da\_u\_Arna.jpg>  File: Vases.jpg  Figure 3. Zátiší s vázami [Still Life with Vases] (1911)  Source: <http://www.artmuseum.cz/resources/works/kubista\_17.jpg>  File: Lazarus.jpg  Figure 4. Vzkříšení Lazara [Raising of Lazarus] (1911-1912)  Source: <http://www.hagioterapie.cz/wp-content/uploads/231.jpg> Key Bibliographic Works *Předpoklady Slohu. Úvahy, Kritiky, Polemiky* [Prerequisites of Style. Reflections, Critiques, Polemics]. František Kubišta and Karel Teige, eds (Prague: Nakladatelství Otto Girgal, 1947). Reprints of all Kubišta’s published essays.  *Korespondence a úvahy* [Correspondence and Reflections]. František Čeřovský and František Kubišta, eds (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby, a umění, 1960). Kubišta’s correspondence with family, artists, benefactors, patrons, mentors. |
| Further reading:  (Lahoda)  (Lamač)  (Mansbach)  (Nešlehová)  (Pomajzlová)  (Svestka, Vlček and Liška) |