

Press release



**PIERRE GIANADDA FOUNDATION  
MARTIGNY - SWITZERLAND**

**TOULOUSE-LAUTREC AND THE BELLE EPOQUE**  
*French Cancans – A Private Collection –  
Graphic Works*



**December 1<sup>st</sup> 2017- June 10<sup>th</sup> 2018**

**Every day from 10.00 AM to 6.00 PM**

**Curator : Daniel Marchesseau**, heritage honorary general curator  
with the collaboration of **Gilles Genty**, art historian

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<http://www.gianadda.ch/>

**The Pierre Gianadda Foundation presents for the first time in Europe, one of the most important private collections of prints and posters by Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901). It is approximately 120 works that are exhibited covering the brief but prolific decade (1890-1900) of the production of this exceptional observer of a Paris milieu and way of life at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.**

The exhibition gathers the most famous graphic works of the artist with among them the thirty posters constituting the most accomplished corpus of his monumental work, completed with over a third of his prints – a technique for which he became one of the most daring renovators. These prints, all in an exceptional state of conservation, show the variations between the different stages which will no doubt seduce keen connoisseurs and graphic art lovers. There are some very rare color lithographs, previously unreleased tests prints of **Moulin Rouge – La Goulue** (for example). Others are exhibited for the first time like the famous posters of one of the most famous night club hostesses, **Jane Avril**. And finally, the relationship between Toulouse-Lautrec and Yvette Guilbert has undoubtedly been one of the most productive as evidenced by the album entitled **Yvette aux longs gants noirs**.

Of course, this exhibition would not have been complete should the cryptic prints composing the **Elles** portfolio (1896). In this collection of eleven color lithographs, Toulouse-Lautrec exposes, with a rare affection and the utmost kindness, the intimacy he shared for several years of different brothels and whorehouses including the notorious Fleur Blanche, rue des Moulins. In this set, we discover them as Toulouse-Lautrec saw them at any time of the day and also of the night when they would on certain occasions develop for one another spontaneous Sapphic feelings – rare private moments of which the artist left several painted master works.

Another series of prints completing this cycle around seduction will also be presented :

- The poster for **La Revue blanche** founded by the Natanson brothers, more especially Thadée and his flamboyant young wife Misia who gathered around her in her literary and artistic salon a very selected society : Stéphane Mallarmé, Pierre Bonnard, Edouard Vuillard, Pierre-Felix Vallotton....
- Other **lithographs** for newspapers including Le Matin, la Dépêche de Toulouse .. and other papers and magazines among them the ones for bicycles (**La chaîne Simpson** and the **Cycles Michael**) the new fashionable practice of the time.

The exhibition also shows an additional set of works signed by artists who were the contemporaries and friends of Toulouse-Lautrec :

- a painting unknown to this day by Louis Anquetin : **L'Intérieur de chez Bruant - Le Mirliton**, canvas dated 1886,
- lithographs by Bonnard, Mucha, Vallotton... ,
- the famous poster of **La tournée du Chat Noir** by Steinlen,
- the unique print of an etching by Van Rysselberghe **Le café-concert**,

But also the rare **Suite complète des Saltimbanques** by young Pablo Picasso (1904-1905).

The Pierre Gianadda Foundation will on this occasion also show an exceptional self-portrait

of the artist which is part of its collection : **Toulouse-Lautrec lisant son journal**, on the back of a poster : **Le Divan japonais**, a washing on paper dated 1893.

Everything is particularly joyful, warm, colorful and alive as this Belle Epoque was in Paris, on the Butte de Montmartre when people were slumming happily in the cafés with live music and other Palaces of women.

## Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, A major artist in the heart of the Belle Epoque

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### **Toulouse-Lautrec (Henri-Marie Raymond de Toulouse-Lautrec-Monfa) 1864–1901**

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec is born on November 24th 1864 in Albi. He is the elder son of the Count Alphonse-Charles de Toulouse-Lautrec-Monfa (1838-1913), from a very old French aristocratic family, and of Adèle Tapié de Céleyran (1841-1930). His parents are first cousins.

**1878**: this year will be marked by two very serious accidents that will have complex consequences on the destiny and career of young Henri. He is 14 years old when within a few months, he breaks his left femur, and after that his right femur. They discover that the young teenager suffers from a very severe congenital illness that will forbid the growing of the bones of his legs – he will never grow up ! – Immobilized for long months by several painful treatments, he spends his days drawing. He will then, in the various country houses belonging to his family, receive the education of René Princeteau (1843-1914), a painter deaf and mute, a great friend of his father.

**As of 1882**, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, very protected by his mother, Countess Adèle, completes his classical studies **in Paris at the lycée Condorcet** then **in Montmartre in the studios of the academic painters Léon Bonnat and Fernand Cormon**. He also meets with Louis Anquetin, Vincent van Gogh and Emile Bernard but also with Maurice Joyant and Michel Manzi who will always defend his work. **In 1884**, he settles in Montmartre and meets with **Edgar Degas** who he deeply admires. He also makes the acquaintance of the young painter Suzanne Valadon who becomes his mistress.

His immersion in the life of the Butte offers him many inspirations always human-based. Curious about all the cabarets like Le Chat Noir, Le Moulin-Rouge, Le Mirliton, Lautrec actively takes part in the special Montmartre lifestyle, in its demimonde and the ephemeral excitement of the night. He sketches with a very sharp sense of observation and always uncompromisingly, his artist-friends but also the male clientele of the cabarets. Thanks to him, the so very colorful characters of La Goulue, Jane Avril, Yvette Guilbert, May Belfort and so many others were

offered timelessness. Theater, comedy, vaudeville or avant-garde plays for which he creates programs and posters, also fulfill his insatiable taste for a certain 'social menagerie'.

Toulouse-Lautrec then establishes himself as one of the best press illustrators : his drawings are published in the Figaro Illustré, the Dépêche de Toulouse, Le Matin, la Revue Blanche ... he will also become a passionate of the rising fashion of biking and of the world of horse races.

**Painter, poster designer, engraver, lithographer, Toulouse-Lautrec** will deliver in less than twelve years, **from 1890 to 1901**, a huge production : some **thirty posters** that made his reputation before his **three hundred and forty lithographs and engravings and his five hundred paintings**.

Be it in social history or in art history, his work left a bright aura which still keeps its power to enthrall, not only because of the themes chosen but also because of the influences of Degas's art and of the Japanese prints, recently made very fashionable in Paris.

A hard working artist, a dazzling creator, a free and independent spirit, eager for an intense personal life, Toulouse-Lautrec epitomizes one of the princes of the Belle Epoque. But his frantic and chronic alcoholism, as well as his priapic obsessions, his unrestrained sexuality in numerous whorehouses, quickly alter his health – a combination of alcoholism and syphilis.

In 1900, back to his native region, he suffers a stroke which leaves him hemiplegic. He **dies** at the dawn of his thirty seventh birthday, at the château de Malromé, in the Gironde region, on **September 9<sup>th</sup> 1901**.

# USEFUL INFORMATIONS

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## Fondation Pierre Gianadda

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## **TOULOUSE-LAUTREC A LA BELLE EPOQUE – French Cancans - from December 1rd to June 10th**

The exhibition is open every day from 10.00 AM to 6.00 PM

### Price :

Individual	CHF	Euros	Groups	CHF	Euros
Adults	18	16.50	Adults	16	14.50
Seniors	16	14.50	Seniors	14	13.00
Students (up to 25)	10	9	Children/Students	8	7
Family	38	34.50	Children under 10	free	free

**Catalogue** : Price : CHF 39 ; € 35,50

Catalogue by Daniel Marchesseau, curator. Profusely illustrated by unpublished or very rare documents, it gathers contributions by Gilles Genty, Hilliard Goldfarb, Renée Maurer and Danièle Devynck.

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