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## *Into the Night: Cabarets and Clubs in Modern Art*

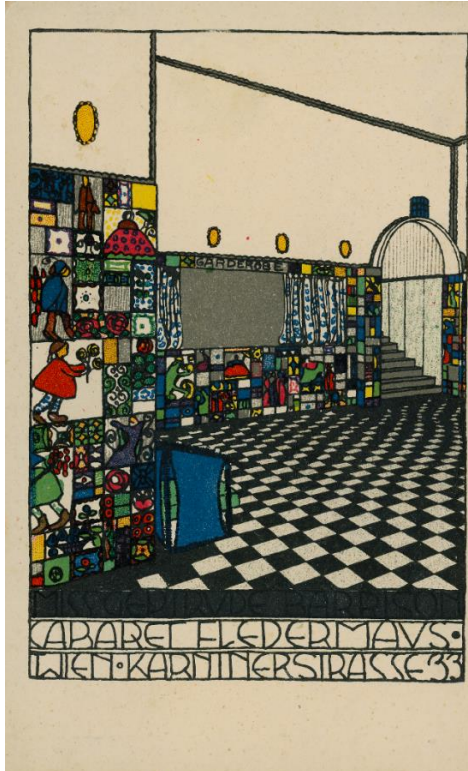
Barbican Art Gallery, London, UK

4 October 2019 – 19 January 2020

Media View: Thursday 3 October 2019, 10am – 1pm

#IntoTheNight @barbicancentre

*The exhibition is made possible through support from Pro Helvetia and a Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Research Grant from the Art Fund*



Josef Hoffmann, *Kabarett Fledermaus Postkarte (Cabaret Fledermaus Postcard)*, *Wiener Werkstätte*, Nr. 74., 1907, Theatermuseum, Vienna  
Erna Schmidt-Caroll, *Chansonette (Singer)*, c. 1928, Private collection, © Estate Erna Schmidt-Caroll

Opening 4 October 2019, *Into the Night: Cabarets and Clubs in Modern Art* explores the social and artistic role of cabarets, cafés and clubs around the world. Spanning the 1880s to the 1960s, the exhibition presents a dynamic and multi-faceted history of artistic production. The first major show staged on this theme, it features both famed and little-known sites of the avant-garde – these creative spaces were incubators of radical thinking, where artists could exchange provocative ideas and create new forms of artistic expression. *Into the Night* offers an alternative history of modern art that highlights the spirit of experimentation and collaboration between artists, performers, designers, musicians and writers such as **Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec**, **Loie Fuller**, **Josef Hoffmann**, **Giacomo Balla**, **Theo van Doesburg** and **Sophie Taeuber-Arp**, as well as **Josephine Baker**, **Jeanne Mammen**, **Jacob Lawrence**, **Ramón Alva de la Canal** and **Ibrahim El Salahi**.

Focusing on global locations from London to New York, Paris, Mexico City, Berlin, Vienna and Ibadan, *Into the Night* brings together over 200 works rarely seen in the UK, including paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, films and archival material. Liberated from the confines of social and political norms, many of the sites provided immersive, often visceral experiences, manifesting the ideals of the artists and audiences who founded and frequented them. The exhibition features a daily programme of live performances and full-scale recreations of selected spaces, such as the multi-coloured ceramic tiled bar of the *Cabaret Fledermaus* in Vienna (1907), designed by the **Wiener Werkstätte**, and the striking abstract composition of the *Ciné-bal* (cinema-ballroom) designed by **Theo van Doesburg** for *Café L'Aubette* in Strasbourg (1926–28).

**Jane Alison, Head of Visual Arts, Barbican**, said: “*Into the Night casts a spotlight on some of the most electrifying cabarets and clubs of the modern era. Whether a creative haven, intoxicating stage or liberal hangout, all were magnets for artists, designers and performers to come together, collaborate and express themselves freely. Capturing the essence of these global incubators of experimentation and cross-disciplinarity, immersive 1:1 scale interiors will be animated by performance, taking the visitor on a captivating journey of discovery.*”

*Into the Night* begins in Paris, on the eve of a new century, with two thrilling and iconic locations of the avant-garde. The theatrical shadow plays of the *Chat Noir* in the 1880s are brought to life through original silhouettes and works that decorated the interior of the cabaret, which acted as a forum for satire and debate for figures such as founder **Rodolphe Salis**, artist **Henri Rivière** and singer **Yvette Guilbert**. The captivating serpentine dances of **Loie Fuller** staged at the *Folies Bergère* in the 1890s were ground-breaking experiments in costume, light and movement. **Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec** captured her performances in his remarkable series of hand-coloured lithographs. Visitors will encounter the immersive “gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art)” design of the *Cabaret Fledermaus* (1907) in Vienna by the **Wiener Werkstätte**, where experimental cabaret and theatre productions were staged. The exhibition includes original documentation of **Oskar Kokoschka**’s exuberant short plays and **Gertrude Barrison**’s evocative dances.

The *Cave of the Golden Calf* (1912), an underground haunt in Soho, is evoked through designs for the murals in the space by British artists **Spencer Gore** and **Wyndham Lewis**, as well as programmes offering insight into the eclectic performance evenings – advertised at the time as encompassing “the picturesque dances of the South, its fervid melodies, Parisian wit, English humour”. Rumoured to be one of the earliest gay bars in London, it epitomised decadence and hedonism. In Zurich, the radical atmosphere of the *Cabaret Voltaire* (1916) is manifested through absurdist sound poetry and anarchic performances by **Hugo Ball**, **Emmy Hennings** and **Marcel Janco**. This is the birthplace of Dada, where humour, chaos and ridicule reign. Two significant clubs in Rome provide insights into the electrifying dynamism of Futurism in Italy in the 1920s. **Giacomo Balla**’s mesmerizing *Bal Tik Tak* (1921) is summoned by drawings for the club’s interior, capturing the swirling movement of dancers. Also on show are designs for **Fortunato Depero**’s inferno-inspired *Cabaret del Diavolo* (1922), which occupied three floors representing heaven, purgatory and hell, with the motto “Tutti all’inferno!!! (Everyone to hell!!!)”.

A few years later, a group of artists from the radical movement Estridentismo met at the *Café de Nadie* (Nobody’s Café) in Mexico City – the site acted as the centre for their subversive activities. Their first exhibition held at the café in 1924 was a poetic response to the industrial metropolis, with artworks, poems and music by figures such as **Ramón Alva de la Canal**, **Manuel Maples Arce** and **Germán Cueto**. Meanwhile in Strasbourg, **Theo van Doesburg**, **Jean Arp** and **Sophie Taeuber-Arp** worked together to create the *Café L’Aubette* (1926–28), conceived as the ultimate “deconstruction of architecture”, with bold geometric abstraction as its guiding principle. Open 24 hours, the vast building housed a cinema-ballroom, bar, tearoom, billiards room, restaurant and more, each designed as immersive environments.

After a period of restraint in Germany during the First World War, the 1920s heralded an era of liberation and the relaxation of censorship laws, with numerous clubs and bars opening in metropolitan cities playing host to heady cabaret revues, daring striptease and chorus lines. Major works by often overlooked female artists such as **Jeanne Mammen** and **Erna Schmidt-Caroll**, as well as **George Grosz** and **Max Beckmann**, capture the pulsating energy of these nightclubs in Weimar Germany during the 1920s and 1930s. During the same time in New York, the literary and jazz scenes flourished in the neighbourhood of Harlem. **Aaron Douglas** and **Jacob Lawrence**’s paintings convey the vibrant atmosphere and complex racial politics of the time, while writing by **Langston Hughes** and music by **Billie Holiday** and **Louis Armstrong** shed light on the rich range of creative expression thriving within the city.

*Into the Night* also celebrates the lesser known but highly influential *Mbari Artists and Writers Club*, founded in the early 1960s in Nigeria. Focusing on two of the club's key locations, in Ibadan and Osogbo, the exhibition explores how they were founded as laboratories for postcolonial artistic practices, providing a platform for a vibrant range of activities – including open-air dance and theatre performances, featuring regular productions by **Duro Ladipo**; poetry and literature readings; experimental art workshops; and groundbreaking exhibitions by pan-African and international artists such as **Colette Omogbai**, **Ibrahim El Salahi**, **Twins Seven Seven** and **Uche Okeke**.

The exhibition is curated and organised by Barbican Centre, London, in collaboration with the Belvedere, Vienna.

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### Notes to Editors

#### Press Information

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#### Full press pack available online from the Barbican Newsroom:

Links to all documents can be found in the 'Downloads' box on the top right-hand side of the page from [www.barbican.org.uk/IntoTheNightnews](http://www.barbican.org.uk/IntoTheNightnews)

#### Public Information

Barbican Art Gallery and Gallery Shop, Barbican Centre, Silk Street, EC2Y 8DS, London  
0845 120 7550 [www.barbican.org.uk/IntoTheNight](http://www.barbican.org.uk/IntoTheNight)

Follow updates on the exhibition via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

#IntoTheNight and @barbicancentre

Tickets on sale from early 2019

#### Important Notes

Young children need to be supervised at all times

Large bags, rucksacks and luggage are not permitted in the gallery. All bags are subject to search.

Food and drink are not permitted.

#### Exhibition

*Into the Night: Cabarets and Clubs in Modern Art* is curated and organised by Barbican Centre, London, in collaboration with the **Belvedere, Vienna**. It opens at Barbican Art Gallery on 4 October 2019 and runs until 19 January 2020. The exhibition then tours to the Belvedere, Vienna (14 February to 1 June 2020). *Into the Night* is made possible through support from Pro Helvetia and a Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Research Grant from the Art Fund. The exhibition is designed by **Caruso St John** with graphic design by **John Morgan**.

#### Catalogue

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue designed by **John Morgan** and published by **Prestel**. Organised by city, it features a series of enlightening essays that explore how each space fostered and stimulated new forms of artistic expression.

**Price:** £39.99 **ISBN:** 978-3-7913-5888-8

## Events

A rich programme of talks and events accompanies the exhibition. Please check the webpage nearer the time for more information. [www.barbican.org.uk/IntoTheNight](http://www.barbican.org.uk/IntoTheNight)

## Barbican Art Gallery Shop

In addition to the official exhibition catalogue the Gallery Shop will also feature a wide selection of books and other related titles plus prints, stationery, postcards, gifts and more. The best of the Barbican Shop ranges can be found online at [www.barbican.org.uk/shop](http://www.barbican.org.uk/shop)

## Barbican Art Gallery and The Curve

Our visual arts programme embraces art, architecture, design, fashion, photography and film. Many of our exhibitions explore the interconnections between disciplines, periods and cultures, and aim to imagine the world in new ways. Designers, artists and architects are our collaborators in this process.

We invest in the artists of today and tomorrow; The Curve is one of the few galleries in London devoted to the commissioning of new work. Through our activities we aim to inspire more people to discover and love the arts. Entrance to The Curve is free. Through Young Barbican we offer £5 tickets to 14-25 year olds for our paid exhibitions, children under 14 are free.

Our exhibitions are complemented by comprehensively researched catalogues and a full range of public events. We develop engaging online content for audiences and offer special tours for schools. In partnership with renowned museums and art galleries, many of our exhibitions travel to reach both national and international audiences.

## About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](http://www.barbican.org.uk) pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over 1.1 million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 300 [staff](#) work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, The Pit, Cinemas One, Two and Three, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery The Curve, foyers and public spaces, a library, Lakeside Terrace, [a glasshouse conservatory](#), conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, [London Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Orchestra, [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Ensembles the [Academy of Ancient Music](#) and [Britten Sinfonia](#), Associate Producer [Serious](#), and Artistic Partner [Create](#). Our Artistic Associates include [Boy Blue](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), Deborah Warner, [Drum Works](#) and [Michael Clark Company](#). The [Los Angeles Philharmonic](#) are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court and [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble.

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