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NEWS RELEASE

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ACCLAIMED 20TH CENTURY ARTWORKS ON VIEW AT UM

MISSOULA—

Two masterpieces of 20th century European art will be on display for public viewing at The University of Montana until Tuesday, Nov. 28.

The paintings, “Herbstsonne” by Egon Schiele and “Descent of the Soul” by Anselm Kiefer, are on loan to the Museum of Art & Culture from an anonymous private collector.

They will be showcased in the lobby of the President’s Office in University Hall. Lobby hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Schiele, who lived from 1890 to 1918, was a premier Expressionist artist from Austria.

Painted in 1914, “Herbstsonne,” is one of Schiele’s most important paintings. It is a melancholy landscape with sunflowers painted in earth tones and expressive broad brushstrokes. Completed just three months before the start of World War I, it is said to be prophetic of the impending changes to occur in Europe.

The painting’s dramatic World War II fate was covered by the media worldwide. “Herbstsonne” was purchased by Schiele’s friend Karl Grünwald. In 1940 during World War II, Grünwald was forced by the Nazis to flee his home and his art collection. Last seen at a Nazi auction of seized artworks in 1942, “Herbstsonne” was thought to be lost or destroyed for more than 60 years.

Grünwald’s family never gave up the search for the artwork. In 2005, the painting was discovered in France, and the owner returned it to Grünwald’s heirs.

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Another painting by Schiele, "Young Girl Seated, Half Nude (Valerie Neuzil, 1913)," also is displayed in the President's Office lobby until Monday, Sept. 25.

Schiele's works are in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City; Kunstmuseum Basel in Switzerland; the Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart, Germany; and Österreichische Galerie Belvedere in Vienna, Austria.

"Descent of the Soul," painted in 1996 by Kiefer, is one of his most successful paintings.

Kiefer is a major figure of Neo-Expressionism, an art style characterized by intense subjectivity of feeling and aggressively raw handling of materials. He is ranked among the most successful and most disputed postmodern German artists.

Kiefer is well-known for his highly textural paintings with materials such as oil, tar, seeds and hay. He addresses themes not only of World War II German history, national identity and collective memory, but also of occult symbolism, mysticism and theology.

Viewers of "Descent of the Soul" look up through a dizzying, groundless cityscape under a starless, black sky with an overlay of concentric circles signifying the Ptolemaic universe. The imagery touches on the existential dilemma of man's brief existence.

Kiefer's works are in the permanent collection of the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, Netherlands; Staatsgalerie Moderner Kunst in Munich, Germany; Saatchi Collection in London; Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

For more information, call the Montana Museum of Art & Culture at 406-243-2019 or visit the Web site at <http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum>.

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