



Charlemont grant report

Recipient name:	Dr Ann Murray
Discipline and subject area:	Humanities and Social Sciences; Musicology and History of Art and Architecture
Amount and year awarded	€990 in 2020
Title of project	The Memorialisation of War in the Work of Otto Dix, 1914-1934



Summary of findings:

This project is the first sustained study of Otto Dix’s war art with regard to how it engaged with the impact of World War I on German society, from the beginning of the conflict, through the turbulent years of the Weimar Republic, and during the first years of Nazi rule, when Dix was condemned by the Nazis as a ‘degenerate’ artist who ‘insulted’ German war memory. It carefully examines a body of work created by an artist who spent thirty-eight months as a frontline soldier, paying close attention to the socio-political and artistic conditions at the time of the works’ creation, and the reception of the works at the time of their first public exhibition, by fellow artists, cultural critics, the popular press, and where possible, political figures. As such, this study attempts to ascertain to what extent these now famed works mattered – or did not matter – as incisive commentary on the war.

Though I had already gathered much material via online digital databases and printed media, it was crucial that I gain access to primary and archival materials pertaining to figures and organisations that contain unique data on Dix’s career and the reception of his work. The bulk of this material that remains undigitized or is otherwise inaccessible elsewhere is located in the Saxon State Archives, and the Saxon State Library, both in Dresden, and in the Berlin State Library and Art Library of the Berlin State Museums. The highly intensive, month-long visit enabled me to gather all remaining relevant materials, which are microfiche of press materials, extremely rare catalogues and paper-only press and journal articles, as well as library-specific databases, in addition to a comprehensive analysis of state documentation, institutional documentation and personal papers containing data relevant to Dix and which are kept at the Saxon State Archives. The data was collected via scans, pdf-save-enabled microfiche viewers and DSLR photography (numbering around 1000 files). Much of this material has permitted new and valuable insights that will significantly increase the academic value of the completed monograph.

Published work and publication plans:

Book Chapter: ‘Between Art and History: Reconfiguring the Memory of World War I in Otto Dix’s Metropolis’, in *Artistic Expressions and the Great War, A Hundred Years On* ed. by Sally Charnow (New York: Peter Lang, 2020). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3726/b15605>

Journal article: *The German Artists Association Dresden vs. Otto Dix*, *Academia Letters*, Article 1128 (July 2021). <https://doi.org/10.20935/AL1128>



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Monograph (to be completed 2022), working title: Otto Dix. War, Art and Society, 1914-1934. Two academic publishers have expressed interest and the manuscript will be forwarded for peer review by late Spring, 2022.

Dissemination and plans for future dissemination:

This project in its earlier stages was presented at the annual conference of the German Studies Association (Johns Hopkins University), Pittsburgh (2018), US, and the conference Artistic Expressions and the Great War, Hofstra University, New York (2018).

I hope to present the new material collected during the research trip as soon as conditions relating to Covid-19 allow.

Outreach and engagement activities:

Due to Covid-19 in the past two years, the opportunities to present work have been limited. However, I have participated in the following events that relate to the current project:

- Participation (presentations followed by Q+A) in roundtable event as part of the launch of the edited collection Artistic Expressions and the Great War, A Hundred Years On, ed. Sally Charnow, Hofstra University, New York, 23 September 2021 (online).
- Guest lecture (video conference), 'Käthe Kollwitz and the German No More War movement', The Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah and Atlanta, Georgia, 8 February 2021.
- Public lecture, 'Otto Dix, War and Society', Western Front Association (Cork Branch), 30 October 2019.
- Public interview, Art, War and Memory in Twentieth Century Visual Culture, Galerie Spot, Zagreb, chaired by Prof. Leonida Kovač (University of Zagreb) and Dr Sandra Križić Roban (Galerie Spot), 18 January 2019.
- Gave interview on war in visual culture to Davor Konjikušić, for cultural magazine Novosti Hobocin, Zagreb, published 12 February 2019. <https://www.portalnovosti.com/ann-murray-umjetnicipredosjecaju-dolazak-rata>
- Erasmus Teaching Mobility – delivered a series of lectures on post-World War I art to final year undergraduates and Masters students at the Academy of Fine Arts, University of Zagreb, 14-18 January 2019.
- 'The Reception of Otto Dix's triptych War at the Prussian Academy, October 1932', at the conference Artistic Expressions and the Great War, A Hundred Years On, Hofstra University, New York, 7-9 November 2018.
- 'Memorialising World War I: Otto Dix's Metropolis and the Reconfiguration of Militant Masculinity' at the German Studies Association Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, 27-30 September 2018.
- Discussant for the panel 'Weimar Representations of Women and Modernity', German Studies Association Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, 27-30 September 2018.
- 'Against a militarised culture: Re-assessing Käthe Kollwitz's War series in post-World War I Germany' (long paper), at the symposium The Aftermath of War, National Gallery of Ireland, 11 November 2017.