INDEPENDENT VISIONS: HELENE SCHJERFBECK AND HER CONTEMPORARIES
FROM THE COLLECTION OF ATENEUM, FINNISH NATIONAL GALLERY

Exceptional grouping of 19th and 20th-century works by four Finnish artists on view for the first time in the United States at Scandinavia House 4-29 through 10-3-2017

WHAT

*Independent Visions: Helen Schjerfbeck and Her Contemporaries from the Collection of Ateneum, Finnish National Gallery*, an exhibition presenting 55 works by 4 celebrated Finnish artists, opens at Scandinavia House: The Nordic Center in America, in New York City, on April 29, 2017. The exhibition highlights the pioneering role of these artists at the end of the 19th century and in the early decades of the 20th: Helene Schjerfbeck (1862–1946), Sigrid Schauman (1877–1979), Ellen Thesleff (1869–1954), and Elga Sesemann (1922–2007). Coinciding with the year-long celebration of the centennial anniversary of Finland’s independence, the exhibition provides a rich opportunity for American audiences to engage with these beloved Finnish painters.

Drawn from Ateneum’s extensive collection, *Independent Visions* features Schjerbeck’s complex self-portraits, Thesleff’s colorful woodcuts, Schauman’s lush and delicate landscapes, and Sesemann’s brooding Expressionist portraits. Sharing the experience of traveling and studying in France and Italy while maintaining strong attachments to their home country of Finland, these artists and their work reveal the excitement and turbulence of the modern period in Europe that generated a newly found independence—both cultural and personal.

WHEN

SAT—4-29-2017 THROUGH TUE—10-3-2017
PRESS PREVIEW WED—4-26—9-11 AM

GALLERY HOURS & ADMISSION
TUE-SAT—12-6 PM & WED—12-7 PM
free

WHERE

Scandinavia House
58 Park Avenue
New York City

Helene Schjerfbeck, *Self Portrait, Black Background*, 1915. Oil on canvas, 18 x 14 1/5 in., Ateneum Art Museum / Finnish National Gallery
Independent Visions was curated by Anu Utriainen and organized by Dr. Susanna Pettersson of the Ateneum, Finnish National Gallery.

Anu Utriainen is the curator of collections at Ateneum Art Museum, Finnish National Gallery. She has co-curated a number of exhibitions at Ateneum, including Stories of Finnish Art 2016–2020; Tuulikki Pietilä Collection, 2017; and The Great Rider: Italian Prints & Finnish Female Sculptors, 2016. She is also an editor of Ateneum’s exhibition catalogues. Her work focuses on Finnish art and sculpture of the 1920s and 1930s.

Dr. Susanna Pettersson is museum director of the Ateneum Art Museum, Finnish National Gallery. She previously served as director of the Finnish Institute in London, director of the Alvar Aalto Museum, and director of development at the Finnish National Gallery. She is also an adjunct professor of museology at the University of Jyväskylä and associate professor at the Reinwardt Academy in Amsterdam. She specializes in museum history and collection studies and the history of art history, and has published widely on the subjects. Dr. Pettersson headed the curatorial team of the Ateneum’s extensive collection exhibition Stories of Finnish Art, 2016–2020.

The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue featuring essays by Curator Anu Utriainen and Museum Director Dr. Susanna Pettersson.

Independent Visions: Helene Schjerfbeck and Her Contemporaries from the Collection of Ateneum, Finnish National Gallery is organized by Ateneum, Finnish National Gallery. Presentation of the exhibition at Scandinavia House has been made possible by the generous support of The Jane and Aatos Erkko Foundation.

The American-Scandinavian Foundation (ASF) is the leading cultural and educational link between the United States and the Nordic countries. An American nonprofit organization, ASF works to build international understanding through an extensive program of fellowships, grants, intern/trainee sponsorship, publishing, and membership offerings. Headquartered at Scandinavia House, in New York City, ASF celebrated its centennial in 2011. For more information visit amscan.org

As the headquarters of ASF, Scandinavia House: The Nordic Center in America presents contemporary Nordic culture through a wide range of programs that encompass the visual arts, music, and literature, as well as business, finance, and technology. Offerings include art, design, and historical exhibitions; films; concerts; lectures and literary programs; symposia; language courses; and programs for children and families.

For more information visit scandinaviahouse.org | #IndependentVisions

To request visual materials and further press information, please contact:
Lisbeth Mark and Heather Meltzer, Bow Bridge Communications, LLC, New York City
+1 347-460-5566 or info@bow-bridge.com

To request further information on Ateneum please contact:
Anna Kari, Communications Officer, Ateneum, Finnish National Gallery
+358 40 717 8185 or anna.kari@ateneum.fi