

# Self-Guided Tour

2400 Third Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

## Envisioning Evil: “The Nazi Drawings” by Mauricio Lasansky

This self-guided tour provides you with questions to ask yourself as you visit the free exhibition Envisioning Evil: “The Nazi Drawings” by Mauricio Lasansky in Galleries 262, 275, and 276.

Mauricio Lasansky made these raw and powerful drawings to confront the horrors of the Holocaust and with the hope that they might help prevent racism and its associated atrocities in the future.

Please be aware that the exhibition contains some drawings that depict violence, the suffering of children and adults, and nudity.



**No. 5, 1961, graphite, charcoal, brush and asphaltum turpentine and red wash, on card paper, two sheets, with some torn edges**

View the Nazi Soldier drawings (Nos. 1–5) as a group. After completing a set of drawings depicting the shoulders and heads of the soldiers, Mauricio Lasansky drew a nearly full standing figure for No. 5. What do you see as common features of all the drawings? How does the artist dehumanize the soldiers? Why do you suppose Lasansky put the large drawing, No. 5, back together after severing the top and bottom parts?



**No. 12, 1961-66, graphite, charcoal, brush and asphaltum turpentine and red wash, on card paper**

The next set of drawings (Nos. 7–12) in the series confronts the Nazi's use and abuse of women as prostitutes in the concentration camps. Look closely at drawing No. 12 to notice the forcefulness of Lasansky's technique. What message does this drawing convey to you? What details does he include to indicate this is a sex worker? Why do you think it was important to Lasansky to show sexual violence in this set of drawings and others (Nos. 16–17)?



**No. 15, 1961-66, graphite and charcoal, with erasures, brush and asphaltum turpentine and red wash, on card paper**

Lasansky was drawn to the plight of women and children (as shown in Nos. 24–28 and others). No. 15 is a powerful statement about the relationship between women, children, death, and loss. What do you think is going on in this drawing? After viewing the series of drawings of individual children and women, do you see the impact of this drawing as unique? How does this image both humanize and dehumanize the experience of loss?

# 2nd Floor



**No. 23, c. 1964-66, graphite and charcoal, with erasures, brush and asphaltum turpentine, red and white wash, with touches of red chalk, cut and pasted biblical scripture and paper, on card paper, torn at right corners**

Lasansky intentionally evokes familiar Christian depictions of mourning Christ's dead body in this drawing as a criticism of the Catholic Church's response to the Holocaust. Look closely at the details in this image, including the only Stars of David in the whole series, drawn on the child victim's stomach. What is going on in this picture? How does he visually convey his criticism of the Church? Why do you suppose this would be an important element of Lasansky's series?



**No. 28, 1961-66, graphite and charcoal, brush and asphaltum turpentine and red wash, stencil, and cut, torn, and pasted biblical scripture and paper, on card paper, with torn edges**

This group of drawings (No. 24-28) focuses on Nazi violence against children, a modern-day massacre of the innocents. How does Lasansky express fear in the faces and bodies of the children in this group? Look closely at No. 28. What stands out the most for you in this particular drawing? Why? Why do you suppose Lasansky made the decision to include children in so many of the Nazi drawings? How does his focus on the innocence of children resonate today?



**No. 30, c. 1961-66, graphite and charcoal, brush and asphaltum turpentine and red wash with splatters of red wash and fingerprints, on card paper, three sheets, with some torn edges**

Lasansky's final drawing in the series is a self-portrait, which seems to infer that evil may lurk within us all. Look closely at the drawing. What details draw you in? What details do you find most difficult to look at? Think about the toll such a task would take on an artist. Why do you think Lasansky decided to end the series this way?



**Triptych, 1963-71, graphite and charcoal, with erasures, brush and asphaltum turpentinized and white wash, with splatters of red wash, cut, torn, folded, and pasted newspaper, biblical scripture, and paper, on card paper, with some torn edges**

Lasansky completed *Triptych* in 1971, years after finishing the other drawings. It boldly references current traumas, specifically racism in the United States. How does Lasansky connect the horrors of the Holocaust to the Vietnam War and the fight for civil rights? What current events would you call out to continue the conversation about human suffering and social injustice? Lasansky drew with pencil because he considered it a "tool used by everyone everywhere." What media would you use to ignite conversation today?

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