

## Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Self-Portrait as a Soldier* (1915)

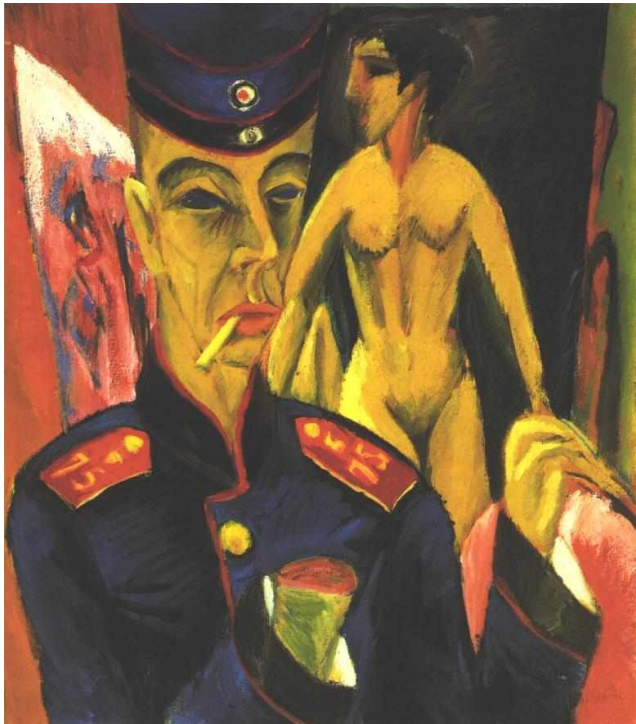
### Abstract

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This famous self-portrait shows Ernst Ludwig Kirchner after his nervous breakdown and subsequent dismissal from military service. Kirchner wears the uniform of the 75th artillery regiment. The fictive amputation stump on his right arm represents the trauma he experienced in the war. It also symbolizes the anxiety he felt about the possible negative effect of the war on his art: simply put, Kirchner feared that his failing mental health would prevent him from painting. Unable to cope with his traumatic war experiences, Kirchner had become addicted to morphine. He died by suicide in Switzerland in 1938, after the Nazis had defamed his works as "degenerate."

### Source

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Source: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, oil on canvas, 1915. Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College

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