

MASTERPIECES VIII

KEES VAN DONGEN

MAX ERNST

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

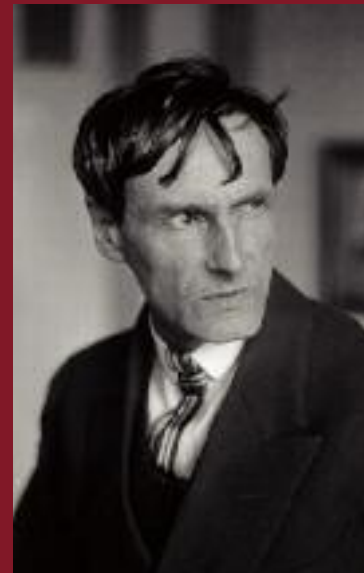
OTTO MUELLER

EMIL NOLDE

MAX PECHSTEIN

OSKAR SCHLEMMER

GALERIE THOMAS



MASTERPIECES VIII

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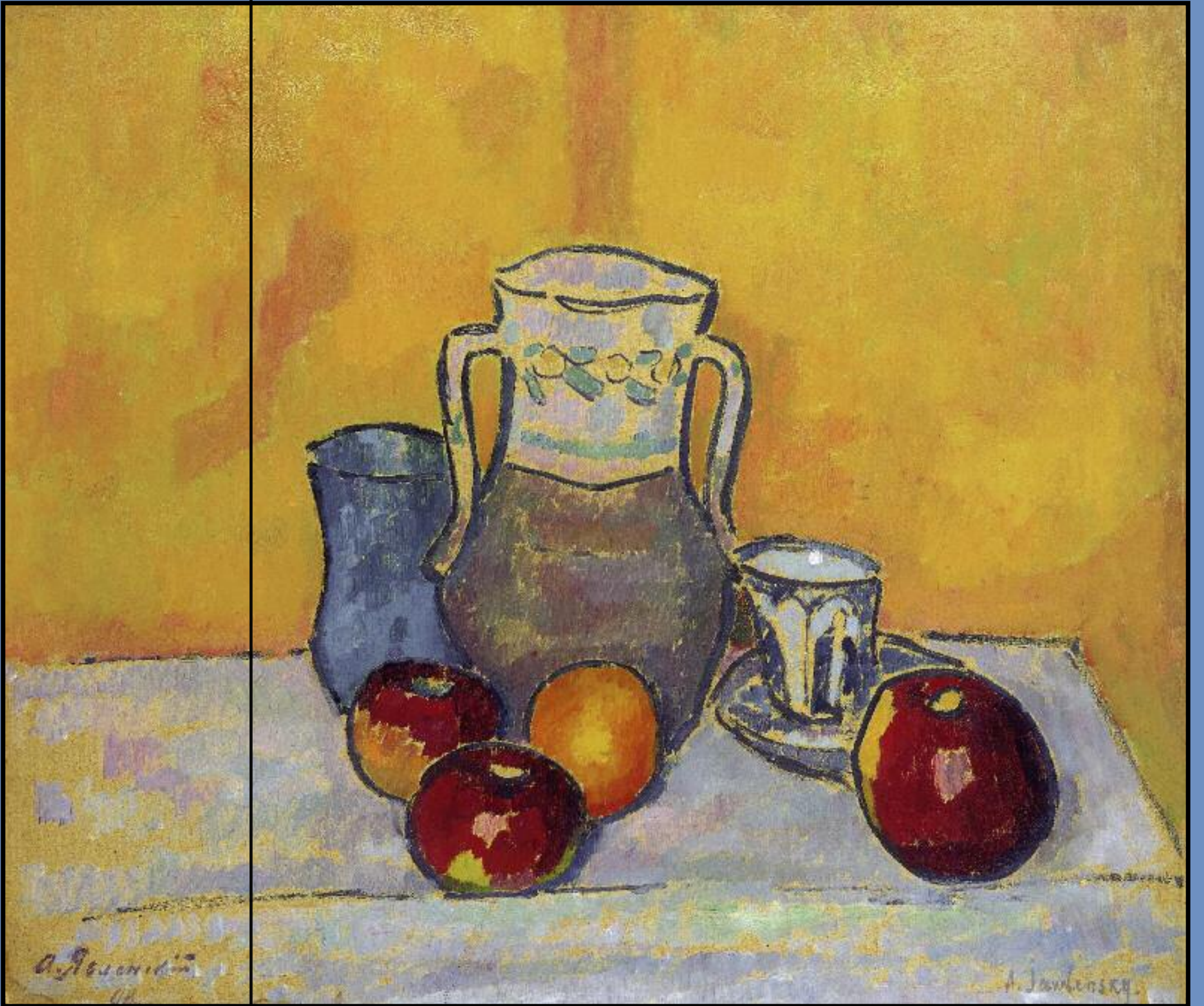
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STILL LIFE WITH JUG AND APPLES 1908

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

oil on cardboard
1908
23 x 26 3/4 in.
signed lower right,
signed in Cyrillic and
dated lower left

Jawlensky 219

Recorded in the artist's
photo archive with the title
'Nature morte'

Provenance
Studio of the artist
Adolf Erbslöh
Galerie Otto Stangl, Munich
Private collection
Galerie Thomas, Munich
Private collection

Exhibited

Moderne Galerie, Munich 1910. Neue Künstlervereinigung, II. Ausstellung. No. 45.
Galerie Paul Cassirer, Berlin 1911. XIII. Jahrgang, VI. Ausstellung.
Galerie Otto Stangl, Munich 1948. Alexej Jawlensky. Image (leaflet).
Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris; Haus der Kunst Munich, 1966.
Le Fauvisme français et les débuts de l'Expressionisme allemand. No. 164, ill. p.233.
Ganserhaus, Wasserburg 1979. Alexej von Jawlensky – Vom Abbild zum Urbild. No. 18, ill. p.55.
Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich; Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, 1983.
Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 41, ill. p.154.
Palazzo Medici-Ricardi, Florence 1986. Capolavori dell'Espressionismo tedesco. No. 32, ill.

Literature

Fischer, O. Das Neue Bild, Veröffentlichung der neuen Künstlervereinigung München.
Munich 1912. Ill.
Weiler, C. Alexej Jawlensky. Cologne 1959. No. 718, ill. p. 278.
Jawlensky, M., Pieroni Jawlensky, L., Jawlensky, A. Alexej von Jawlensky
Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings, Volume I 1890-1914.
London 1991. No. 219, p. 187, with ill.



STILL LIFE WITH JUG AND APPLES 1908

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

"Apples, trees, human faces are for me just indications for seeing something else in them: the life of colour, captured by a passionate person, a person in love."

Alexej von Jawlensky in a letter dated 1905

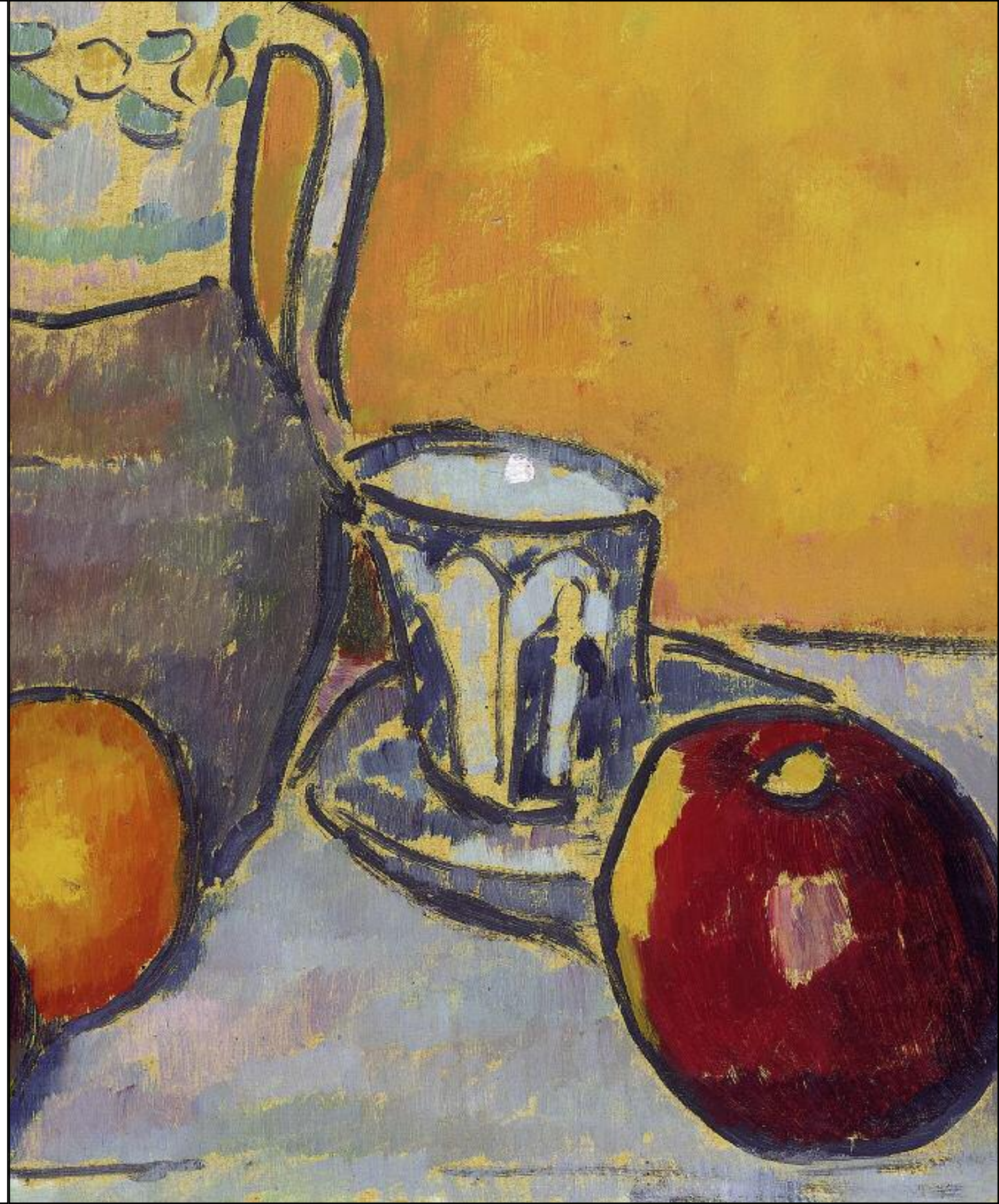
Of all the painters who would be connected with the Blauer Reiter, Alexei von Jawlensky studied the French art of his day most intensively. From 1903 Jawlensky went to France regularly, primarily to Paris, the art metropolis. *Still Life with Jug and Apples* (1908) is unthinkable without a first-hand knowledge of contemporary French painting.

A table, cut into on the left, extends virtually parallel to the picture edge against a surface modulated purely by colour in vibrant orange tones. Covered with a bluish cloth, it takes up much of the lower third of the picture. The still life as such is set on that table: a purple jug with exquisite lines and two elegantly curved handles is flanked by a sketchily drawn water glass with a saucer and a smaller blue vase whose form echoes the gently flaring profile of the jug. In front of the vessels are two red-cheeked apples and an orange; another apple on a larger scale is off to the right. The boldly contrasting complementary colours yellowish orange and bluish purple, which characterise the large surface of the tabletop and the background, determine the initial impression made by the picture. This colour spectacular is enhanced on the central axis of the picture, where the vibrant, densely painted colour orange asserts itself amid the surrounding blues and

purples. Intensified by strong contrasts, colour takes on a pulsing life of its own within the bluish black contours of the fruit – metaphorically speaking, this is where the heart of the composition beats.

For lack of narrative and representative content, still lifes have always required concentration on painterly execution. Consequently, they have been predestined for reflections on the premises of the medium as such and function as mirrors for the theoretical convictions of their creators. When the late 19th-century avant-gardes began again to explore the relationship between art and reality and proclaimed the autonomy of art, it was Paul Cézanne who re-defined the relationship between thing and image, which had long been determined by the constraints of purely reproductive handling: painting, as he saw it, was an art parallel with nature. This was Jawlensky's aesthetic creed as well. After all, apart from the dominant colour theme, *Still Life with Jug and Apples* gives scope for observations pointing to Jawlensky's investigation of the specific genre problem and searchingly refers viewers to the purely visual existence of his motif. When an apple in a picture grows to a disproportionate scale in order to function as a countervailing balance to the larger assemblage of fruits at the centre of the composition, the appearance of that apple does not follow nature but rather an inner-pictorial logic.

The emergence of pictorial qualities becomes evident in another place: in the lower right-hand corner of the picture, where, as in many passages





Alexej von Jawlensky
Stilleben (Still Life)
1907
Jawlensky 178

Alexej von Jawlensky
Stilleben mit Früchten
Figur und Flasche
(Still Life with Fruits,
Figure and Bottle)
1907
Jawlensky 190

Otto Fischer, *Das Neue Bild*,
Veröffentlichung der neuen
Künstlervereinigung München.
Munich 1912

of the painting, the ochre-coloured priming of the academy board remains visible, the painter loosely juxtaposes his colour hatching in uniformly parallel brushwork. Only gradually does the colour condense here into the stable surface of the table. Equally, the close juxtaposition of extremely plastic elements such as the highlighted apples and extremely flat parts, such as the decorated neck of the jug, turns out to be an optical illusion: painting functions here as trompe l'œil that is consummate in execution. There, on the other hand, it is revealed as the material substance of pigment functioning qua sign on the two-dimensional surface of the support. Thus each object in the picture also refers to its artificial, ie, artistic, genesis. Paint on academy board – composed nature morte – the spectacle of living colour – these are the factors that determine both the sensory and the reflective perception of Jawlensky's pictorial creation.

Even in the early years after his arrival in Munich in 1896, Jawlensky produced mainly still lifes. From the outset his aim was, as he put it, to attain "harmony in colours". After the early works, some of which were realistic while others tended towards Jugendstil/Art nouveau, the still lifes he did between 1906 and 1908 reveal in the artist an ardent quest for a distinctive style of his own. Jawlensky worked almost synchronously in a variety of styles. In the background stand – more or less clearly from work to work – the French models. A 1907 *Still Life with Fruits, Figure and Bottle* (fig. above left) is, with its dense, pastose handling of colour, reminiscent of the

Nabis group of painters and for another 1907 *Still Life* (fig. above right), Jawlensky has notably borrowed Cézanne's technique of closely applied "packets of colour".

Jawlensky's *Still Life with Jug and Apples* marks the end of a phase that lasted several years during which the artist experimented with the still life as genre. Building on the work of Cézanne and Matisse and inspired by the bold handling of colour practised by van Gogh, this painting, with its elegant pictorial tectonics and smouldering palette marks a first high point in Jawlensky's early still lifes. Here is experientially palpable what Jawlensky would later record in his Memoirs: "In the still lifes I did not seek matter in the object; rather I wanted to express an inner pulsing through form and colour."

DAS NEUE BILD

VERÖFFENTLICHUNG DER
NEUEN KÜNSTLERVEREINIGUNG MÜNCHEN

TEXT VON OTTO FISCHER



DELPHIN-VERLAG MÜNCHEN

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

Die Bedeutung dieses Malers liegt in der Frische und Beweglichkeit seiner sehr ausgesprochenen Begabung. Jawlensky wendet als russischer Hauptmann seinen Abschied und wendet sich der Malerei zu. Die Bildwelt ist schon auf eine künstlerische Vergangenheit zurück, die reich an Wandlungen und einem viel an gelungenen Werken ist. Gogol, van Gogh und Cézanne haben ihm viel gegeben, in unserer Zeit ist die orientalische und primitive Kunst, das byzantinische Bild, mit der deutschen Malerei auf ihn nicht ohne Einfluss geblieben. Sein Hauptwerk ist seine Farbe, deren Frische, deren Blauheit und tiefe Modulationen, deren spontane Ausdruckskraft, was tiefste Empfindung hat. In ihrer weichen und überaus schönen Schönheit an der viel, die in der Natur ausgesprochenen Eigenschaften finden. Die farbige Welt, die mit den Bildern dieses Malers ist ein Erlebnis. Seine Stillleben sind aufgrund der Komposition und der subtilen und in der farbigen Wirkung. In seinen Bildern ist eine besondere Stimmung immer präsent, immer eigenartig und oft mit hoher Einfachheit und Schönheit ausgesprochen. Seine Hauptwerke zeigen das Selbstbildnis, die Monogramme, die in einer Wendung, einer Bewegung, einem Blick des Auges, die mit den kühnen und schillernden Mischungen des Phantoms sind. Hier finden dann die besten Beispiele für die Darstellung der menschlichen Natur, die der Kunst immer deutlicher steht. Die Kunst selber hat in diesen Bildern die Art eines Geistes, die Selbstbildnis wird unmittelbar zum Ausdruck, und so ergibt sich als Resultat eine ungenutzte Natur, die der Begabung des Künstlers die Basis verleiht, und aus ihr heraus mit einer beglückenden Leichtigkeit im Schaffen sich bewegt.



ADOLF ERBSLÖH

Adolf Erbslöh was born in New York on 27 May 1881, the son of a partner in a large export business. The family returned to Germany in 1887. After six months' commercial training, Adolf Erbslöh enrolled at the Karlsruhe Art Academy in 1901 to study painting. There he met Alexander Kanoldt, with whom he remained friends for the rest of his life.

In 1904 Adolf Erbslöh transferred to the Munich Art Academy to continue his studies. Making the acquaintance of Alexei von Jawlensky there gave Erbslöh the crucial incentive for his further career. In 1909 Erbslöh became the secretary of the Neue Künstlervereinigung München, of which he was a founding member along with Kandinsky, Jawlensky, Kanoldt, Münter, Werckin et al. The Blauer Reiter succeeded the NKVM.

In 1914 Erbslöh was conscripted into the military after travelling in Italy. He served on the Western Front as a battle painter until 1918. He joined the Neue Sezession München in 1916.

The 1920s saw Erbslöh travelling far and wide. From 1927, however, the painter spent most of his time on Lake Constance and in Upper Bavaria, where he bought a house in 1934 in the Isar Valley. After a large-scale retrospective at the Barmen Kunstverein in 1931, little was heard of Erbslöh. Since he was no longer able to show paintings and work publicly from 1933, the artist lived in retirement with his family in Irschenhausen, producing numerous portraits of members of his family and friends. Unaffected by passing fads, Erbslöh is a leading exponent of classic Modernism.



ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

TORSCHOK, RUSSIA 1864 – 1941 WIESBADEN

THE YEAR 1908

From 1896 Jawlensky lived in Munich, then the centre of art in Germany. He attended the Ažbe School, where he met Wassily Kandinsky. The cornerstone for Jawlensky's further development was laid in Munich.

The artist travelled regularly to France from 1903, where he gave priority to Paris, the art metropolis. In 1905, 1906 and 1907 Jawlensky showed work there at the Salon d'automne and made the acquaintance of Henri Matisse.

In Munich, on the other hand, Jawlensky became friends with Willibrord Verkade, who made him familiar with the teaching of Paul Gauguin. Jawlensky joined Verkade in going to the Munich exhibitions of works by Toulouse-Lautrec and Cézanne. Later Jawlensky also saw work by Gauguin and van Gogh, buying the latter's *La maison du père Pilon* in 1908, an acquisition which represented a considerable expense for the artist.

Jawlensky and Marianne Werefkin had spent some time painting in Murnau in 1907. They invited Wassily Kandinsky and Gabriele Münter to spend the summer there with them in 1908.

In 1909 Jawlensky co-founded the Neue Künstlervereinigung München (NKVM) along with Kandinsky, Münter, Werefkin, Erbslöh, Kubin and other friends.

Alexej von Jawlensky
Munich c. 1912



PORTRAIT C. 1916
ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

oil on thick linen-finish
artist paper
c. 1916
51 x 33.9 cm
20 x 13 3/8 in.
signed lower left
verso unfinished oil sketch
of a still life and date
by Lisa Kümmel

Jawlensky 751

Provenance
Studio of the artist
Lisa Kümmel, Wiesbaden (until November 1944)
Karl-Heinz Kümmel, Wiesbaden (nephew of the above, by descent since 1944)
Private collection, Switzerland/Northern Germany (acquired between 1994 and 1996)

Literature
Jawlensky, M., Pieroni-Jawlensky, L., Jawlensky, A. Alexej von Jawlensky.
Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings. Volume II 1914-1933.
London 1991. No. 751, p. 119, col. ill. p. 98.



PORTRAIT C. 1916

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

In the years preceding World War I, a decisive development took place in Jawlensky's work. Until around 1911, he created still lifes, landscapes, and portraits in equal parts, but then the human face became the ideal means of expression. This motif allowed him to apply the achievements of expressionism. These early portraits, which the artist called 'Farbige Köpfe' (Colourful Heads), were informed by the influence of Matisse and of the Fauves with their doctrine of the dominance of colour, which became increasingly independent of the imitation of nature. The friendship with Kandinsky and the circle of the 'Blue Rider' intensified the simplification of form and the concentration on suggestive colour. The Heads are a first high point in Jawlensky's oeuvre.

After World War I broke out, Jawlensky, who was now an 'enemy foreigner', had to leave Germany within 48 hours. He and his family travelled to Switzerland, where a friend had found them a place to stay in the village of St-Prex on Lake Geneva, in Rue de Motty. This drastic change had a dramatic effect on his artistic work. The series of the Colourful Heads was abruptly broken off.

He later wrote: "We had to flee to Switzerland with nothing, except what we could carry. We came to St-Prex on Lake Geneva, a small village near Morges. I wanted to continue painting the vigorous, intense pictures, but I was not able to. I felt that I had to find another language, a more spiritual language ... But through all these terrible occurrences my soul was so gloomy and unhappy, that I was glad just to be able to quietly sit by the window, to collect my feelings and my thoughts."

"I had a little colour, but no easel. I went to Lausanne, twenty minutes by train, and bought a small easel for four Francs from a photographer, an easel

on which he placed his photographs. This easel was not suitable for painting, but I painted my best works on this small easel for more than twenty years ..."

The first pictures created in St-Prex were experiments in a search for a new way of painting. The works Jawlensky called 'Variations on a landscape theme' are the first series of his new artistic phase. The motif is always the same, the view from the artist's window into the garden and the path leading to the lake. His intensive contemplation of this one motif re-awakened Jawlensky's creative energy and resulted in new insights for his progressing abstraction. In a letter to Willibrord Verkade, Jawlensky wrote: "For some years I painted these Variations, and then I found it necessary to find a form for the face, because I had realized that great art must only be painted with religious feeling. And I could only introduce that into the human countenance. I comprehended that the artist has to express with his art through shape and colour what is divine in him. Therefore the work of art is a visible God and art the desire for God."

Portrait is one of the first heads the artist painted in exile; it ties in with the Colourful Heads from before the war. The posture of the head, the features, and the flower above the ear are mindful of the *Infantin (Spanierin)* of 1912. However, the colour fields clearly mark the abstraction already reached in the Variations.

Jawlensky devoted himself to the rediscovered motif with perseverance and, with progressing abstraction, developed the 'Mystical Heads', the 'Saviour's Heads' and finally, the 'Meditations' from it.

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

TORSCHOK, RUSSIA 1864 – 1941 WIESBADEN



THE YEAR 1916

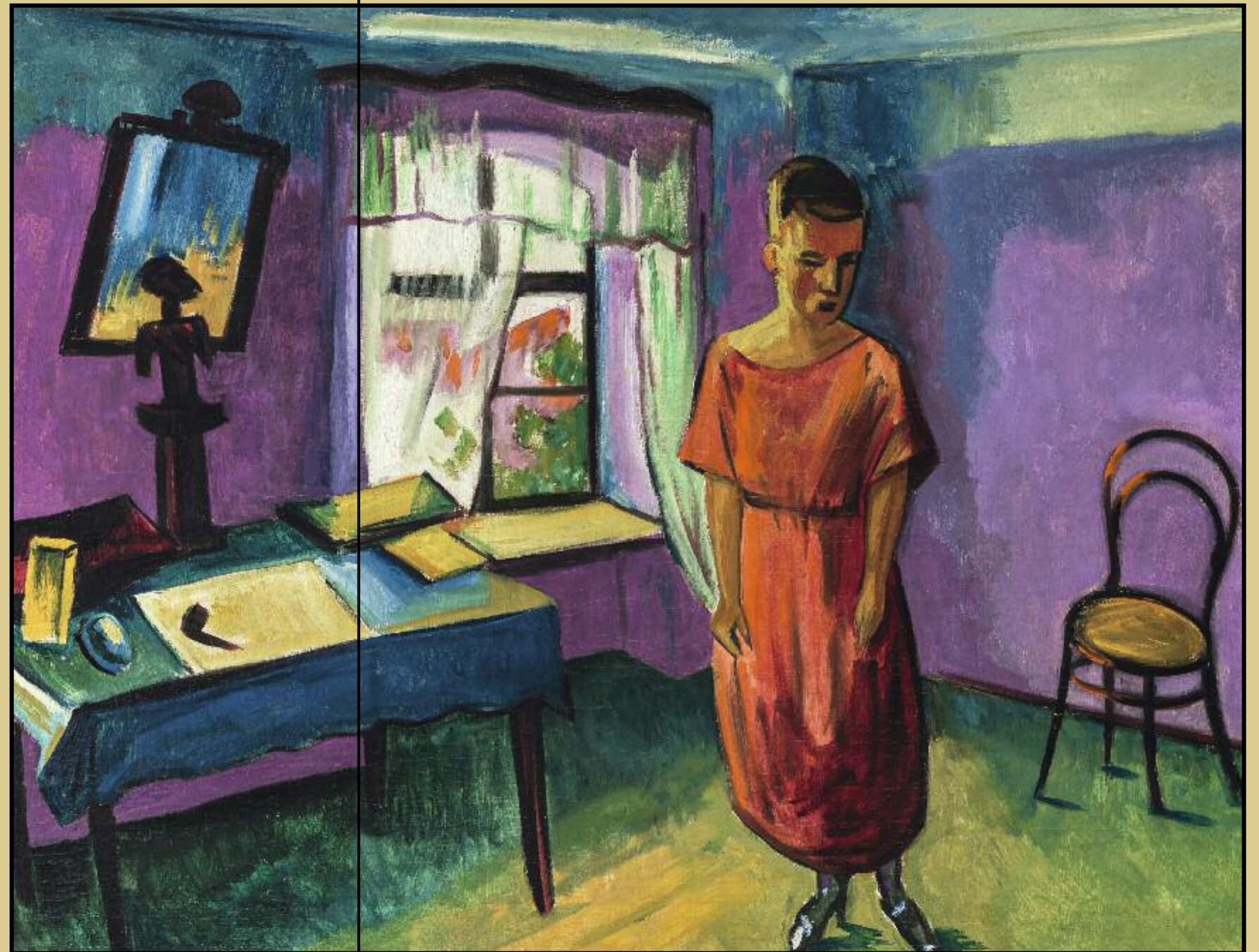
Jawlensky has been living in St-Prex on Lake Geneva in Swiss exile since 1914. With the very little paint he has, he starts the series of 'Variations' which all show the same view from the window of one of the three small rooms which he is living in with Marianne von Werefkin, Helene Nesnakomoff and his son Andreas.

The few pleasures include trips to Lausanne, where he buys a small easel from a photographer which is actually meant to set up large photographs. He paints his 'Variations' on it.

During one of his visits to Lausanne, Jawlensky gets to know the young artist Emmy Scheyer at an exhibition. He later calls her 'Galka', Russian for jackdaw, because of her black hair.

Emmy Scheyer visits Jawlensky in St-Prex and is fascinated by the Hunchback. When the artist had to leave Munich head over heels in 1914, he was not able to take a single one of his paintings with him. His friend and fellow artist Cuno Amiet had fetched this painting and another head from the studio in Munich for him. They were exhibited in Lausanne in 1915 and Jawlensky was able to sell the head which made his financial situation a little easier.

The friendship with Emmy Scheyer was a blessing for the artist. The young woman was so impressed by his art that she decided to give up her own painting and put her efforts to the service of Jawlensky's art. Some years later she went to America to spread Jawlensky's art there.



INTERIEUR 1922

MAX PECHSTEIN

oil on canvas

1922

91 x 119 cm

35 7/8 x 46 7/8 in.

verso signed, dated, titled

and inscribed '23'

Soika 1922/64

The painting was created during Pechstein's second stay in Leba / Western Pomerania.

It shows the artist's second wife, Marta Möller, in her parents' beach hotel on Hindenburgstrasse.

The marriage took place in 1923 in the same hotel.

Provenance

Galerie Lutz & Co., Berlin (1922/23-1932)

Collection Dr. Karl Lilienfeld, Leipzig/Berlin/New York (1932-1966 acquired from the above)

Margarete Lilienfeld, New York (1966 - c. 1994)

Private collection

Galerie Thomas, Munich (1997)

Private collection, Germany (since 1997, acquired from the above)

Exhibited

Galerie Lutz & Co., Berlin 1923. Sommer-Ausstellung. No. 50.

Van Diemen-Lilienfeld Galleries, New York 1932.

College Art Association, New York et. al 1932-35. Traveling exhibition of the collection of Dr. Karl Lilienfeld.

Germanic Museum, Harvard University Cambridge, Mass. 1935-1937. 27 Paintings from the collection of Dr. Karl Lilienfeld.

Museum of Art, San Francisco 1938. Max Pechstein – Paintings and Watercolors.

Gallery of Fine Arts, Columbus; Museum of Fine Arts, Dallas; Museum Toledo, Cleveland 1939-1950. Max Pechstein.

Literature

Soika, Aya. Max Pechstein, Das Werkverzeichnis der Ölgemälde Vol II 1919-1954.

Munich 2011. No. 1922/64, p. 294, col. III.



INTERIEUR 1922

MAX PECHSTEIN

Leba, now in present-day Poland, at that time in Pomerania on the coast of the Baltic Sea, became Pechstein's third place of longing, where he arrived at a new artistic understanding of himself. This 'Baltic Arcadia' was, like Nidden before it, a place that served him, like Fehmarn for Kirchner or Alsen for Nolde, as a place of refuge from the city and a source of inspiration and vitality.

Pechstein travelled to Leba for the first time in March 1921 in search of a new place to work. For political reasons, he could no longer travel to Nidden in present-day Lithuania and thus spent his summers in Leba until 1945, and even lived there as of 1944. Pechstein found an idyllic landscape here, which reminded him of the South Seas with its untouched nature and primitiveness.

He fled from Berlin, the big city and the everyday quarrels into nature and into alternative living conditions. According to witnesses, Pechstein literally came to life again among the fishermen of the coast, with whom he felt a kinship: "... I am looking forward to being able to depart again soon and to living uninhibited in nature", he wrote to Walter Minnie in the spring of 1922.¹ Both in terms of motifs and artistic development, something central occurs regarding the oeuvre overall, so that the paintings of this period can be considered highlights among his painting production.

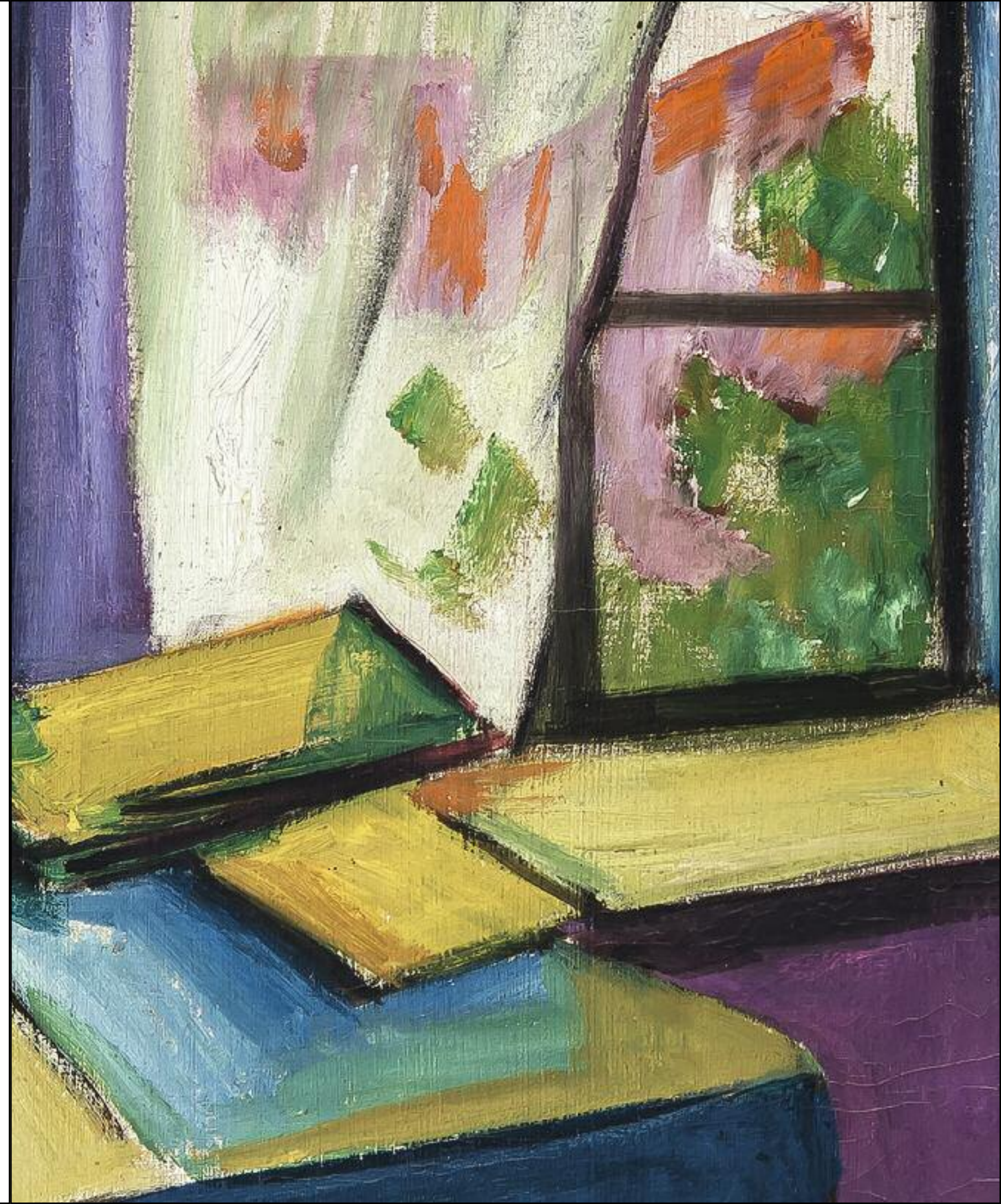
In 1921, Pechstein was still accompanied by his first wife Lotte and their son Frank, who spent their summer holidays here. They lived in the Gasthof Möller,

where Pechstein remained behind on his own after his wife and child had returned to Berlin. Pechstein began portraying the two daughters of the innkeeper, Marta and Liese Möller, developing a particular interest in the 16-year-old Marta. The result is a large number of portraits and figure paintings.

Already on 4 August, he wrote to his school friend Alexander Gerbig in a letter that he had fallen in love with Marta: "I have also ... fallen for a dark little imp. There is practically steam coming out of my ears ..."²

He divorced Lotte, who would later marry Marta's brother Hermann, shortly before Christmas of the same year. Pechstein married Marta, 18 years old in the meantime, in the inn of her parents in 1923.

In 1922, he spent the months May to September, as well as December in Leba. The painting entitled Interior, a figure portrait of Marta in a room in the beach hotel of her parents, also originates from this period. It is an intimate representation showing a young woman entirely absorbed in thought. The colours of the interior shimmer in shades of violet, blue and green and frame Marta, who, clad in a brilliant red robe, provides the focus of the composition. The brushstroke ranges from loose to glazing, the colours transition harmoniously into one another and are accentuated by the dark contours. The work demonstrates Pechstein's masterful handling of paint, which had become the focus of his artistic mastery in this heyday of his creativity.



¹ quote from Soika, Aya: Max Pechstein, Das Werkverzeichnis der Ölgemälde, Munich 2011, vol. 2, p. 11
² Max Pechstein to Alexander Gerbig, Leba, August 4, 1921, Kunstammlungen Zwickau Max-Pechstein-Museum, quote from Soika, Aya: 'Auf der Suche nach einem baltischen Arkadien' in: Frenssen, Birte (ed.): 'Zwei Männer – ein Meer. Pechstein und Schmidt-Rottluff an der Ostsee.' Exhibition catalogue Pommersches Landesmuseum Greifswald, March 29 - June 28, 2015. p. 33



MAX PECHSTEIN

ZWICKAU 1881 – 1955 BERLIN

THE YEAR 1922

In May 1921, Pechstein travelled with his family to a holiday in the small fishing village of Leba on the Baltic Sea coast. They stayed at the Möller inn, where they made the acquaintance of the landlord's daughters Marta and Lise, and probably their brother Hermann as well. Leba became Pechstein's new artistic sanctuary, now that Nidden had become part of Lithuania. In the following three months, Pechstein produced over fifty paintings here, with different landscape subjects, including several of the mill ditch, which runs through the entire locality, with its two wooden bridges, the large and small mill ditch bridge. While they were staying there, Max Pechstein and his wife Lotte each fell in love with Marta and Hermann Möller respectively; the divorce followed in December 1921. Pechstein's preoccupation with local subjects in Leba continued in summer 1922, and gained a new intensity with the mill ditch, he produced his work *Great Mill Ditch Bridge*.

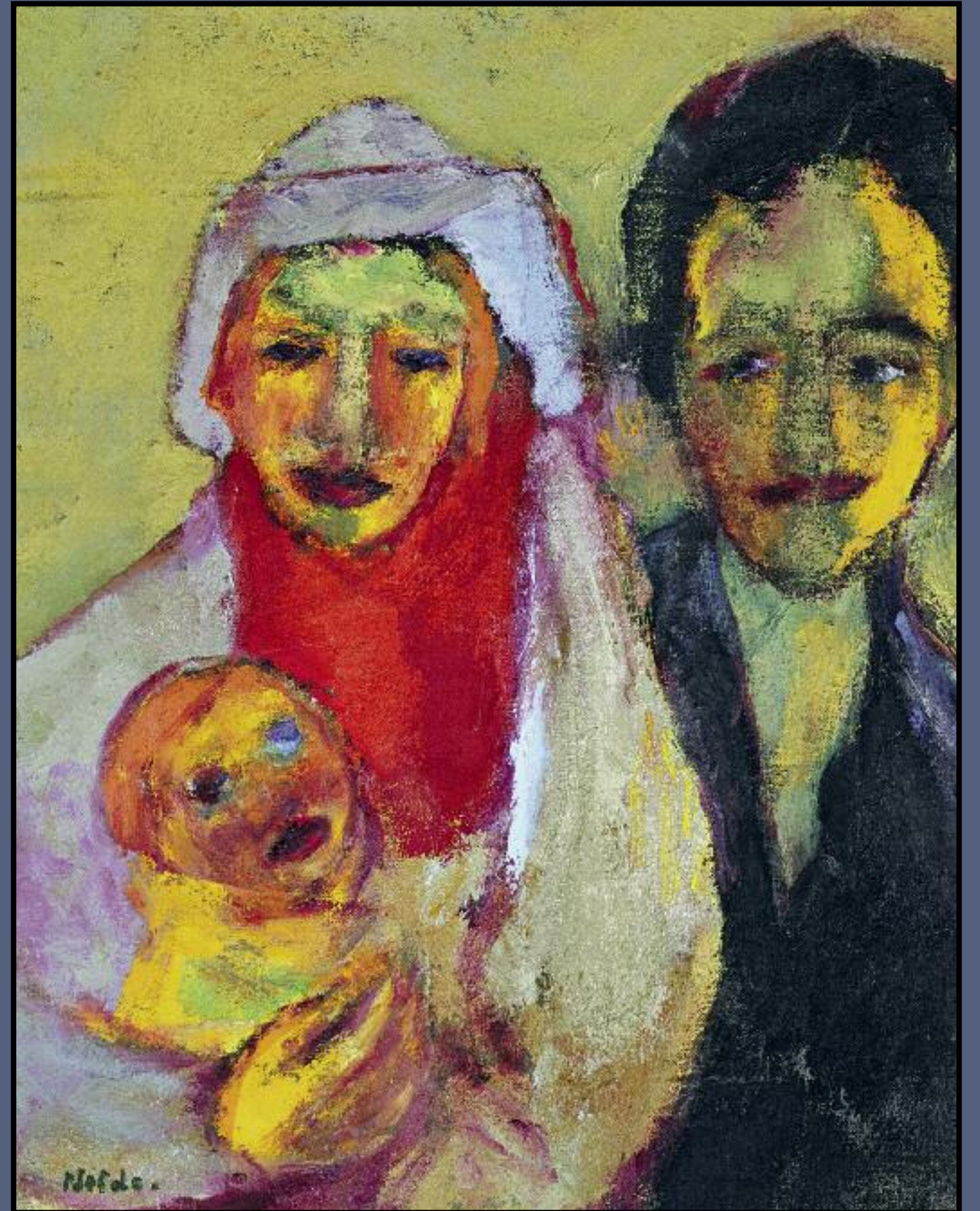
His relationship with his gallerist Wolfgang Gurlitt has already been completely shattered in 1922.

From 1912, Pechstein was under contract to Gurlitt, who, until the early 1920s, counted among the artist's most important patrons. In 1912, the first Berlin exhibition of the Brücke was held in his rooms; Gurlitt financed the artist's journey in the South Seas,

and supported the family in the First World War. In return, in 1914 and after his military service, Pechstein transferred almost his complete artistic oeuvre to Gurlitt. This dependency by Pechstein increasingly led to tensions, especially as Gurlitt not only had the exclusive rights for dealing in Pechstein's works, but also considered the artist's consignment goods held in storage as his own property, refusing to release them to the artist. The disputes with Gurlitt eventually led to a court claim in December, which gave Pechstein his property back, at least in portions. Following the quarrel with Gurlitt, it was the collector and friend Dr. Walter Minnich who supported Pechstein emotionally and financially and regularly acquired new works. The two had met one another in 1919 – Minnich had already acquired pictures from Pechstein before the outbreak of the war.

Although Pechstein sold his pictures at exhibitions very successfully, received great public recognition and had loyal collectors, he suffered constant financial problems during the 1920s, because he had no reliable gallerist to represent him and organise his sales. 1922, at least, ended with welcome news for Pechstein, and he wrote to Minnich: "Osborn's monograph has now fortunately been published, and looks really good".¹

¹ Quoted from: Soika, Aya: Max Pechstein – Das Werkverzeichnis der Ölgemälde, volume I – 1905-1918. Munich, 2011, p. 13.



YOUNG FAMILY 1949

EMIL NOLDE

oil on canvas
1949
70.3 x 56.5 cm
27 1/2 x 22 1/4 in.
signed lower left
verso signed and titled
on the stretcher

Provenance
Nolde Stiftung, Seebüll
Gallery Knoedler, New York, 1967
Private collection, Switzerland, 1981
Galerie Thomas, Munich
Private collection, Germany
Private collection, Greece

Urban 1327
Exhibited
Galerie Thomas, Munich 1981. Emil Nolde, Watercolours, Paintings, Prints. No. 81 col. ill.

In the artist's handlist of 1930
the painting is listed as
'1949 Junge Familie'.

Literature
Urban, Martin. Emil Nolde, Catalogue Raisonné, Vol. II 1915-1951. London 1990. No. 1327, p. 581 ill.



YOUNG FAMILY 1949

EMIL NOLDE

Besides the landscape, it is portraits and figures that define Nolde's entire oeuvre. In addition to the classic portrait (which is rare for Nolde) or the fantasy portrait in single or group compositions, one finds biblical or family constellations like brother and sister or mother and child.

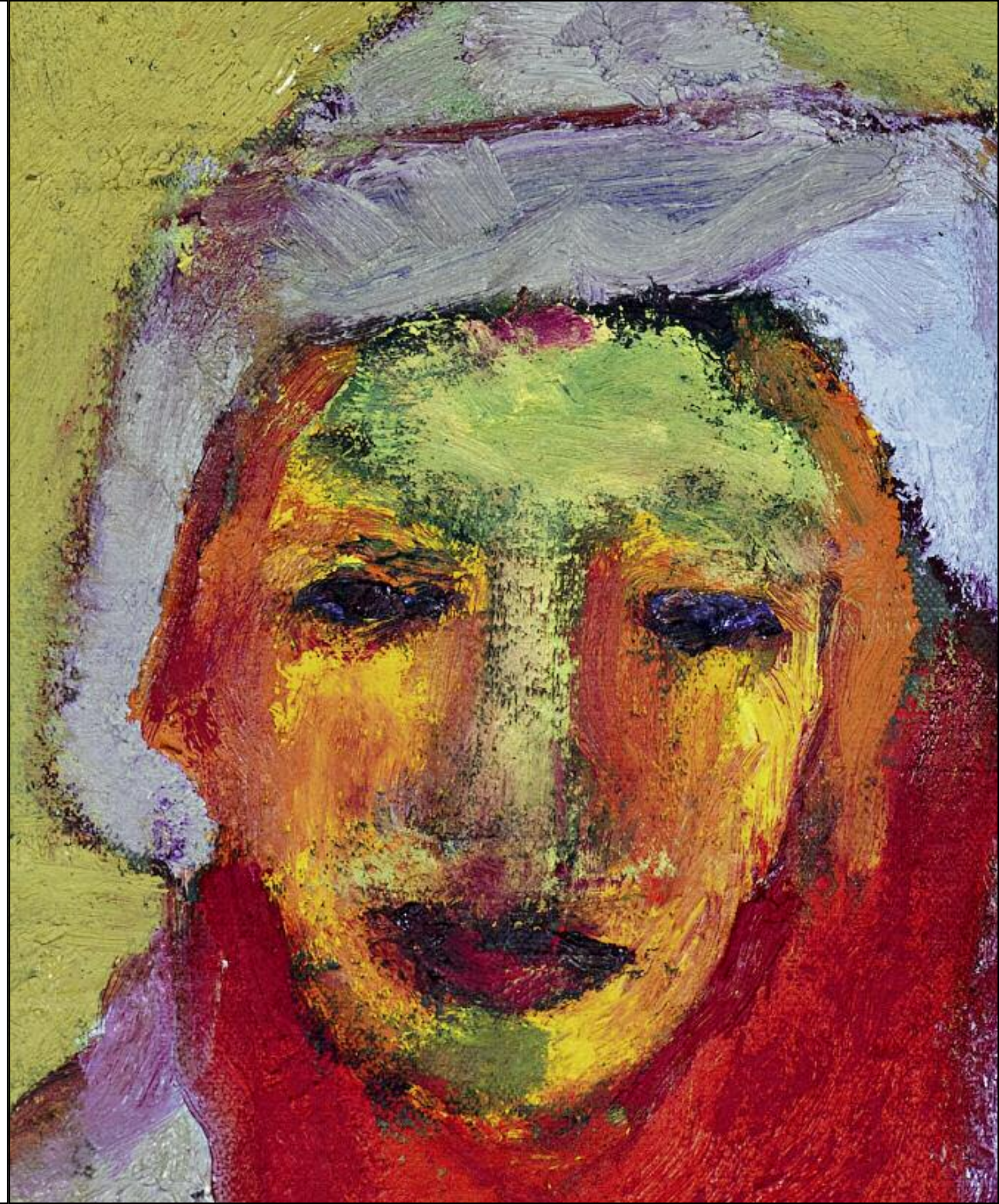
The approaching of the subjects is seldom classical in the sense of the faithful reproduction of the real physiognomy. Much more than this, Nolde attempts to work out the characteristics beyond a traditional and mimetic presentation.

The representation of the Young Family with mother, father and infant, originating in 1949, can be traced back to the so-called 'unpainted painting', a small watercolour from the period 1938-1941,

which is today found in the Nolde Foundation in Seebüll. The artist realised the painting in oil, which deviates only in nuances, in 1949. The subject of the family in a trio constellation immediately awakens associations with the thematic cycle of the religious paintings, a focus in Nolde's work – especially with the Holy Family of Maria, Joseph and the little Christ child – the archetype of the ideal family. Biblical themes occupied Nolde, whose life had been defined by religion from earliest childhood, throughout his entire creative life.

Manfred Reuther wrote the following about Nolde's biblically influenced works. "It is a religious art outside of the churches and free of dogmatic restriction, at the same time born of childlike naivety and personal emotional turmoil ...".¹

¹ Reuther, Manfred: 'Die biblischen und Legendenbilder' in: Reuther, Manfred (ed.) Emil Nolde. Cologne 2010. P. 226





Emil Nolde
Young Family
watercolour and pencil from the series
of
'Unpainted Pictures'
Nolde Stiftung Seebüll, Inv.Nr. Va.EP. 196

Emil Nolde
Family
oil on canvas
1918

None of the figures look directly at the viewer. Instead, the gazes of the parents are fixed on the small child, which the mother carries on her arm, wrapped in her protecting cloak. The child in turn looks with big eyes to its mother. The moment is poised in deeply felt introspection and affection. The figures fill the canvas almost entirely, while Nolde dips the remaining background in a warm, nearly golden shade of ochre that almost iconically accentuates the scene. The clothing of the represented figures is simple; the outer garment of the mother in simple, light blue with whitish accents, veiling her head in an almost oriental manner, the red undergarment extending almost to her chin. The material frames her head in a Madonna-like fashion, so that all attention is concentrated on her face. The figure of the darkly clad father fades slightly into the background.



The scene appears to be illuminated by an intensely radiant source of light beyond the right edge of the painting, which intensifies the mystic atmosphere further. Especially the child and the mother are enveloped in a radiant glow: "The colour tones are more subtle; the surface is given a delicate shine, which was not accessible to the tumultuous pathos of the pre-war years"².

²Haftmann, Werner.
Emil Nolde. Cologne 1995, p. 96

EMIL NOLDE

NOLDE/SCHLESWIG 1867 – 1956 SEEBÜLL



THE YEAR 1949

After Ada's death in 1946, Emil Nolde lived a very secluded life in Seebüll, North Friesland. He every day visits his wife, who was buried in a small burial chamber near the garage. His only companion during this time is Joachim von Lepel who was already at his side when Ada was still alive. He negotiates with museums, art dealers, and private collectors for Nolde. A friendship had evolved from this initial business relationship; von Lepel later becomes the first curator of the 'Stiftung Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde' ('Foundation Seebüll Ada and Emil Nolde'), which Ada and Emil had already planned in the thirties.

At the end of 1947, Nolde marries Jolanthe Erdmann, a 26-year old student of German Language and Literature Studies, the daughter of composer and concert pianist Eduard Erdmann, who is also a friend of Nolde. She gives the artist new courage to face life and enhances his creativity. A ten-week-trip through Switzerland with his young wife inspires Nolde to execute a number of watercolours of mountains. Between 1945 and 1951, Nolde creates over 100 paintings; he does watercolours until the end of 1955.

The second edition of the first volume of his autobiography 'My own Life' (1867-1902) with 126 illustrations is published in 1949. Nolde had always been against reproductions, but now, he decides to

publish 40 reproductions of etchings with Rudolf Hoffmann. Werner Haftmann writes the introduction. The city of Cologne awards Nolde the Stefan-Löchner Medal.

In September, Ernst Wilhelm Nay visits Nolde at Seebüll.

Nolde's eyesight is getting increasingly worse; he no longer can keep up the extensive correspondence he led for a lifetime. He begins dictating his letters to Jolanthe; the only person he still writes handwritten letters to is his lifelong friend, Hans Fehr.

Nolde was hit hard by the fact that, apart from a large part of his paintings and watercolours, a great part of his graphics and prints had also been destroyed in a bomb raid in Berlin in 1944. Thus, it is a great honour and a source of satisfaction to the artist that he is awarded the Graphics Prize at the 26th Biennale in Venice in 1950. The artistically difficult times are over, Nolde is rehabilitated.



PORTRAIT DE FEMME BLONDE AU CHAPEAU C. 1912

KEES VAN DONGEN

oil on canvas
c. 1912
64.7 x 54 cm
25 1/2 x 21 1/4 in.
signed upper right

Provenance
Galerie Kahnweiler, Paris
Galerie David et Garnier, Paris
Sotheby's New York, 1977, lot 60
Private collection (acquired from the above)

With a confirmation by
Jacques Chalom des Cordes,
Wildenstein Institute, Paris,
dated 8 February 2011,
that the work will be
included in the forthcoming
catalogue raisonné.



PORTRAIT DE FEMME BLONDE AU CHAPEAU C. 1912

KEES VAN DONGEN

After Kees van Dongen participated in the important Salon d'automne in 1905 together with radical artists such as Matisse, Derain, de Vlaminck and others, his work took on a more unsparing and broad character. Louis Vauxcelles called these artists Fauves: wild animals, whose audacity stood out from the neoclassical busts in the exhibition space and was painful for the public's perception. Although van Dongen's works, as shown in this exhibition, were rather reserved compared to his colleagues, the model, for example, Henri Matisse helped the young artist move from his roots in realism to a definitely and defiantly fauvistic style of painting. In fact, Vauxcelles said about him that he was "the most terrifying" of the Fauves – because of his sense of texture, his handling of the "lacquer skin", rough or soft and velvety, of the women portrayed in his pictures, "which brings the sultry of their bodies to expression".

In the years after the 1905 Salon d'automne, van Dongen became known as the pioneer of this emerging group, a remarkable distinction for an artistic movement that was very vague in its own definition and united by the same daring taste for color. With his extravagant use of colors and bold lines, which represent the female form in its full provocation, van Dongen pointed out the sensuality of his models and amplified them tenfold.

After this fauvistic high point, there is an increasing diversification in van Dongen's painting. Sophisticated life and his travels to the south changed van

Dongen's pictorial view. His increasing work as a painter of commissioned portraits since around 1911 also led to a wider range of stylistic representations. After the realistic and impressionist beginnings and the decidedly Fauvist period, van Dongen mixed these painterly possibilities into a kind of urban orientalism, which also shows the artist's interest in contemporary fashion. This pluralism of styles did not change the specific sensuality, the vibrant expression that van Dongen was able to give to his representations.

Van Dongen paints the portrait of the blonde lady with a hat, which was created around 1912, in bold colors, but instead of wildly fauvistic in a rather impressionist style that makes the lady dreamy and lovely-gentle at first glance.

While the portrayed in this special portrait is unknown, it shows the attributes of the upper middle class: a dainty chain with a pendant, an imposing, flower-decorated fur hat and draped, reserved clothes, chic and fashionable for that time. She is still catlike in her averted, but intense look and the slightly pursed lips, which give her a certain superiority.

In this way, the portrayed woman gains an insistent presence, even though she remains in her pose with grace and balance – qualities that were to be repeatedly expressed in van Dongen's portraits of the Parisian bourgeoisie in the decades that followed.

KEES VAN DONGEN

DELFSHAVEN 1877 – 1968 MONACO



THE YEARS AROUND 1912

It had already been a good ten years since Kees van Dongen came to Paris from his home town of Rotterdam for the first time when he became a nominal member of the 'Brücke' artist group in 1909 and, as one of the most important advocates of the Fauves, which he had in the meantime become, attempted to intensify the exchange between the German Expressionists and the French Fauves. In the same year, the painter left Montmartre, where he had lived up to that point and was at times a neighbour of Pablo Picasso in the famous Bateau-Lavoir, and moved to the increasingly popular artist district in Montparnasse.

Until around 1913, Van Dongen also continued to paint there, primarily in the style of the Fauves, but, thanks to his growing reputation as a portraitist and his contact with ever growing circles of not only bohemian society, but also of the bourgeoisie, a gradual change in his painting style became more apparent. In 1912, he taught at the at that time renowned Académie Vitti, one of the many private painting schools in Paris at the turn of the century, at which Paul Gauguin had also already taught. Van Dongen's interest in Orientalism, typical of the time, occasioned him to undertake a voyage to Egypt in 1913 and, after this point at the latest, the artist developed his portrait style, highly coveted in the 1920s, and which is already completely established in his representation of the *Femme blonde au*

chapeau. Only the outbreak of World War I lay between the impetuous fauvist and the subsequent portraitist of 'better' society. Van Dongen returned to the Netherlands during the war from 1914 to 1917. That Van Dongen was also very much capable of looking at his career, which extended from being a painter of lascivious-erotic, in some cases even seemingly threatening female figures in the period of Fauvism, the models of which were often ladies of the demi-monde, to being the sophisticated portraitist of no less attractive society ladies (and occasionally also gentlemen), with a certain irony is shown by his now famous witticisms. "Painting is the most beautiful of all lies", he claimed, for instance, and concluded the following about his own painting: "Life is beautiful, and this work is even more beautiful than life". Van Dongen described the formula for his attractive female figures such: "The main thing is to allow the women to appear elongated and, most importantly, to make them thin. After that you only need to enlarge their jewels. They are enchanted."



LANDSCAPE (PETERSEN II) 1924

EMIL NOLDE

oil on canvas
1924
73.5 x 106.5 cm
29 x 42 in.
verso on the stretcher inscribed 'Emil Nolde' and titled
Urban 986

Entered in the artist's handlist of 1930 as '1924 Landschaft (Petersen II)'.

Provenance
Stiftung Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde
Private collection

Exhibited
Kunstgebäude am Schloßplatz, Stuttgart 1924. Ausstellung neuer deutscher Kunst. No. 157.
Städtisches Kunsthaus, Bielefeld 1929. Emil Nolde. Gemälde, Aquarelle, Graphik.
Das Kunsthaus, Rudolf Probst, Mannheim 1937. Emil Nolde. Gemälde und Aquarelle.
Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig 1962. Die Maler der 'Brücke' in Schleswig-Holstein. No. 60.
Marlborough Fine Art, London 1964. Emil Nolde. Paintings – Watercolours – Drawings. No. 25, ill. p. 2.
Nolde Stiftung, Seebüll 1966.
Nolde Stiftung, Seebüll 1969.
Nolde Stiftung, Seebüll 1971.
Nolde Stiftung, Seebüll 1973.
De Zonnehof, Amersfoort 1983. Emil Nolde. Schilderijen, aquarellen en grafiek.
Werken uit de verzameling van het Nolde-Museum te Seebüll. No. 9.
Kunstforum Bank Austria, Vienna 1994. Emil Nolde. No. 51, ill. pl. 51.
Nolde Stiftung, Seebüll 1997.
Nolde Stiftung, Seebüll 2004.
Werner Berg Galerie, Bleiburg 2006. Emil Nolde und Werner Berg. Ill. p. 55.
Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Bielefeld 2008. Emil Nolde. Begegnung mit dem Nordischen. Ill. p. 33.
Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden 2013. Emil Nolde. Die Pracht der Farben. No. 48, ill. p. 91.
Unteres Belvedere, Vienna 2013. Emil Nolde. In Glut und Farbe. Ill. p. 200.

Literature
Urban, Martin. Emil Nolde. Werkverzeichnis der Gemälde, Vol. 2, 1915-1951.
London 1990, p. 314, no. 986 ill.
Sprotte, Martina. Bunt oder Kunst? Die Farbe im Werk Emil Noldes. Berlin 1999, p. 229 ill.



LANDSCAPE (PETERSEN II) 1924

EMIL NOLDE



Utenwarf, c. 1920

Between 1915 and 1926 Emil Nolde lived in Utenwarf house on the North Frisian-Danish west coast. The homestead was located in the marshland near the city of Tondern, which is now Danish, not far from the river Wiedau (Danish: Vida). Nolde often depicted the landscape around Utenwarf in paintings and watercolours during these years, as in his picture from 1924. The view shows the farm of Nolde's neighbour Boy Petersen and the nearby mill, a motif that the painter has repeatedly depicted.

After Nolde and his wife Ada had given up their previous domicile in Alsen on the Baltic Sea to move back to their home North Sea, the austere beauty of this rough landscape played an important role in his painterly work. Nolde himself described his connection with this area around Utenwarf and its influence on his work as follows:

"It was wonderful when everything around us was water for miles, when the high sky was reflected, or when the moon with its cold glow formed a silver wonderland at night. We also liked it when the path from the old dike to us was marked with poles, and when our horse had to pull the wagon through the water as high as its legs. And it was nice when the wind whipped the waves in long stripes, or when the coloured morning and evening clouds doubled in the water. A lot of romance and a lot of adversity, but the beauty could replace everything else. ... The Wiedau once meandered wide in large arches through the green country, freely to the sea. Large farms lay proudly and defiantly on their large peninsulas, on raised mounds. During the summer months everything was flowery and peaceful,

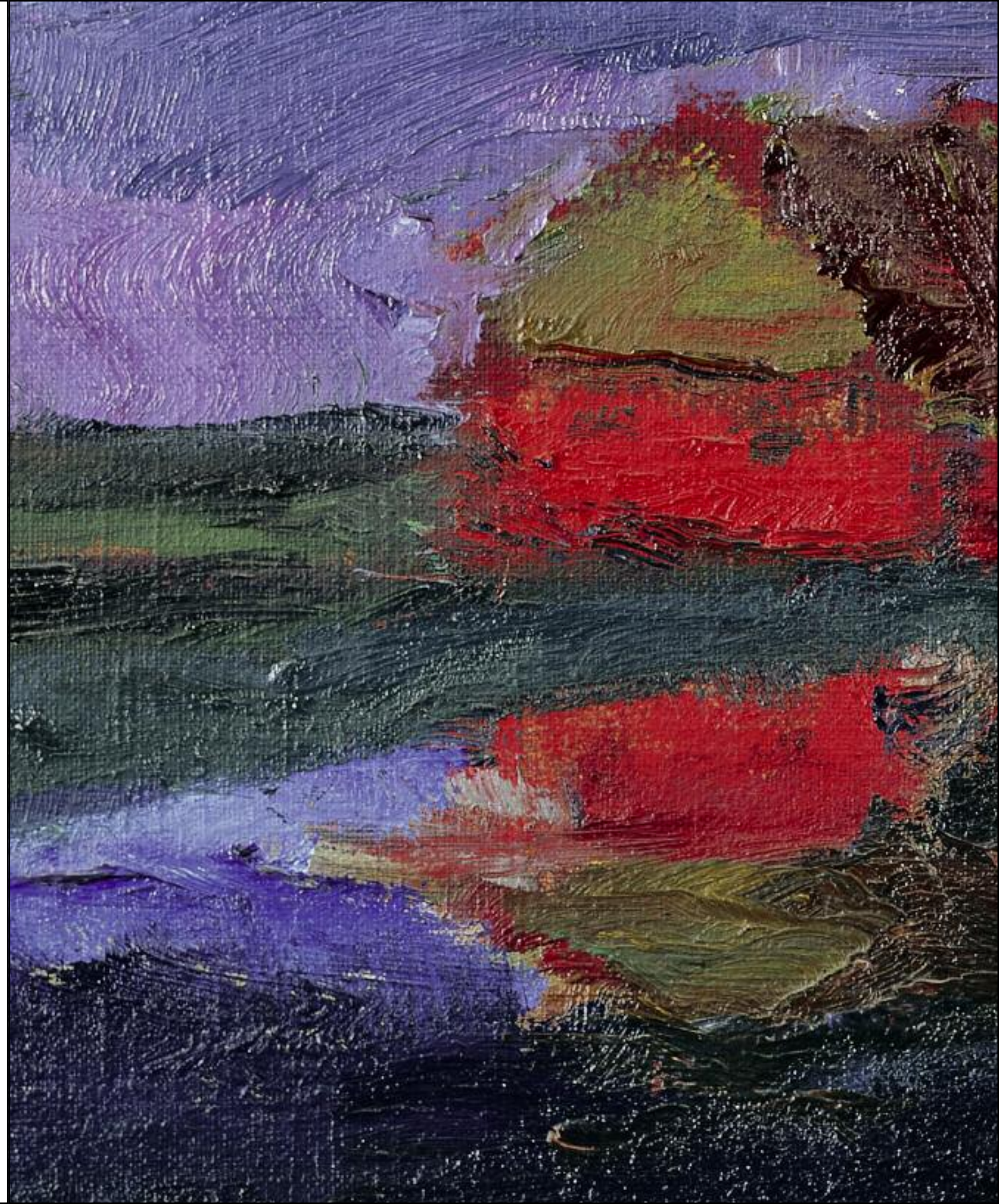
but in autumn the storms drove the sea across the grass, lashing the waves against the mound, sometimes even breaking through the walls into the houses." (Emil Nolde, *My Life*).

It is therefore not surprising that the progressive changes in the marsh landscape around Utenwarf caused by construction measures and drainage plans, led Nolde to leave Utenwarf and have his house built in Seebüll, not too far from Utenwarf. Shortly before, in 1925, Nolde wrote to a friend how difficult it was for him to say goodbye:

"It is hard that our little dear home can no longer be our home, with all the changes that are about to come. We look around, searching where we can lower our wings, where we may settle. Here, the autumn winds cross the house from sea to sea. We are preparing for the trip with a little sadness in our hearts, because the next summer will bring a change. It is already a quiet farewell to everything, the neighbours around us and every dear thing in and around the house and in the garden."

Nolde's attention was focussed on the dramatic play of clouds, the dynamics of natural phenomena and in particular the effects of reflections on the surface of the sea, the watercourses and the flooded marshland.

The farm's red brick building with the thatched roof, together with their reflection, serves not only as a compositional colour contrast and accentuation of the landscape, which is otherwise depicted in green and blue tones, but also, like the almost black





upper left
Emil Nolde
Landscape (Petersen)
1922
oil on canvas

lower left
Emil Nolde
Landscape, Northern Frisia
1920
oil on canvas

right
Emil Nolde
Children Summer Joy
1924
oil on canvas

silhouette of the mill on the left of the picture, serves to construct depth in the painting's composition. The buildings also locate the horizon in the upper third of the picture and make a decisive contribution to the impression of the vastness of the sky covered with dark clouds and the marsh landscape with its water and meadow areas.

Nolde also singled-out or highlighted the motif of the mill in many of his works. However, the vastness of the sky, the play of sometimes dramatic, sometimes atmospheric and calm clouds and the repetition of the landscape in the water reflections in the foreground are more important than the scenery of the landscape and buildings.

In *Landscape (Petersen III)*, Nolde combines the intense depiction of the looming rain clouds and their reflection sinking into the foreground in black depth with the brightly coloured and bright parts around the homestead behind which the horizon begins to brighten. The artist supports this drama with an energetic, often pastose application of paint, the surface relief and dynamics of which seem to physically bring the represented storm into the picture.

As is almost always the case in his landscapes, Nolde is not concerned with an anecdotal description of a particular region, but rather with the atmospheric peculiarity of the colours and the expression of a mood, so that a 'landscape of the soul' is created rather than a topographical representation. As a result, Nolde succeeds in using only a few visual elements and almost purely painterly means to create an intensity that goes far beyond a simple landscape representation. Rather, in this painting, too, Nolde achieves his characteristic combination of symbolism and abstraction.

Emil Nolde summed up his fascination with this highly inspiring North German landscape, its colours and moods, its variability in these words: "There are people who absolutely cannot understand that we, who could have it differently, would like to live in this flat, 'boring' area, where there is no forest and no hills or mountains, and where not even the banks of the small waters have any trees – this is what all ordinary, fast-moving travelers think. Our landscape is modest, far from all intoxicating and lush things, we know that, but it rewards the intimate loving observer with an infinite amount of quiet and intimate beauty, harsh greatness, and also stormy wild life."

EMIL NOLDE

NOLDE, SCHLESWIG 1867 – 1956 SEEBÜLL



Emil Nolde
writing, 1909

THE YEAR 1924

Since 1916, Ada and Emil Nolde had spent summers in Utenwarf, a farmhouse they had acquired in a desolate condition in 1913 and renovated. They spent the winter in Berlin, where a room had been set up for Nolde in the Kronprinzenpalais in 1920.

Nolde enjoyed country life and the proximity to nature. He caught eels and hunted ducks, and he and Ada even husbanded livestock. "We were given a cow for Utenwarf by my brother in law. My Ada milked it. The neighbours had eggs, and thus so did we, and we caught enough fish ourselves. Our 12 young oxen kept to the pasture, eating their full."

Ada worked hard. She took the horse carriage to pick up coal and "did all of the difficult work so that I could keep painting".

In 1920 the boundaries were redrawn following a referendum, and Utenwarf became part of Denmark. Ada was Danish, and Nolde took on Danish citizenship.

The year 1924 was characterised by travel. Emil showed Ada the Swiss mountains, of which he had

Painted humorous postcards as a young man, and St. Gallen, where his friendship with Hans Fehr began. A subsequent tour of Italy led them to Venice, Rapallo and Sestri Levante. In Florence, Nolde was disgusted by the "pompous, gold-ridden frames ... the intrusiveness of which kills the paintings", and in Arezzo they admired the frescoes of Piero della Francesca.

In Tuscany, he bought "another armful of the most beautiful blooming orchids", and then drove to the last stage, Zurich, where they spent some time in the apartment of friends before returning to Utenwarf.

Numerous drainage projects and the waste water redirected by the city of Tondern into the river flowing by Utenwarf, the Wiedau, caused Ada and Emil Nolde to leave Utenwarf two years later and build a house on the other side of the border, which they called Seebüll.



FEMMES TRAVERSANT UNE RIVIÈRE EN CRIANT 1927

MAX ERNST

oil on canvas
1927
81 x 60 cm
31 7/8 x 23 5/8 in.
signed upper right

Provenance

Paul Gustave and Norine van Hecke, Brussels
David Nahmad Collection, New York (until 1989)
Max Kohler collection, Zurich
Private collection

Spies/Metken 1111

Exhibited

Galerie Van Leer, Paris 1927. Exposition Max Ernst. No. 28.
Galerie Le Centaure, Brussels 1927. Exposition Max Ernst. No. 44.
Kunsthaus Zurich, Haus der Kunst Munich, Nationalgalerie Berlin, 1998. Eine Reise ins Ungewisse.
No. 188, p. 443, col. ill. p. 377.

Literature

Ernst, Max. Beyond Painting and other Writings by the Artist – The Documents of Modern Art,
Director Robert Motherwell. New York 1948. P. 67 with ill.
Schloss Augustusburg, Brühl 1951. Max Ernst – Gemälde und Graphik 1920-1950. P. 34 with ill.
Russell, John. Max Ernst – Leben und Werk. Cologne 1966. No. 37 addendum with ill.
Spies, Werner and Metken, Sigrid and Günter. Max Ernst Werke 1925-1929.
Cologne 1976. P. 165, no. 1111 with ill.



FEMMES TRAVERSANT UNE RIVIÈRE EN CRIANT 1927

MAX ERNST

It was Max Ernst who said, "Art has nothing to do with taste, art is not there to be 'tasted'". And indeed, many of his contemporaries did not find his art to their 'taste' at all.

They regarded his bizarre, at times irrational and mysterious creations as a provocation – which of course is exactly what they were intended to be. Ernst rebelled against social convention and saw his work as an act of revolt and critique. Not by chance did he say elsewhere: "If art is a mirror of the times, they must be crazy."

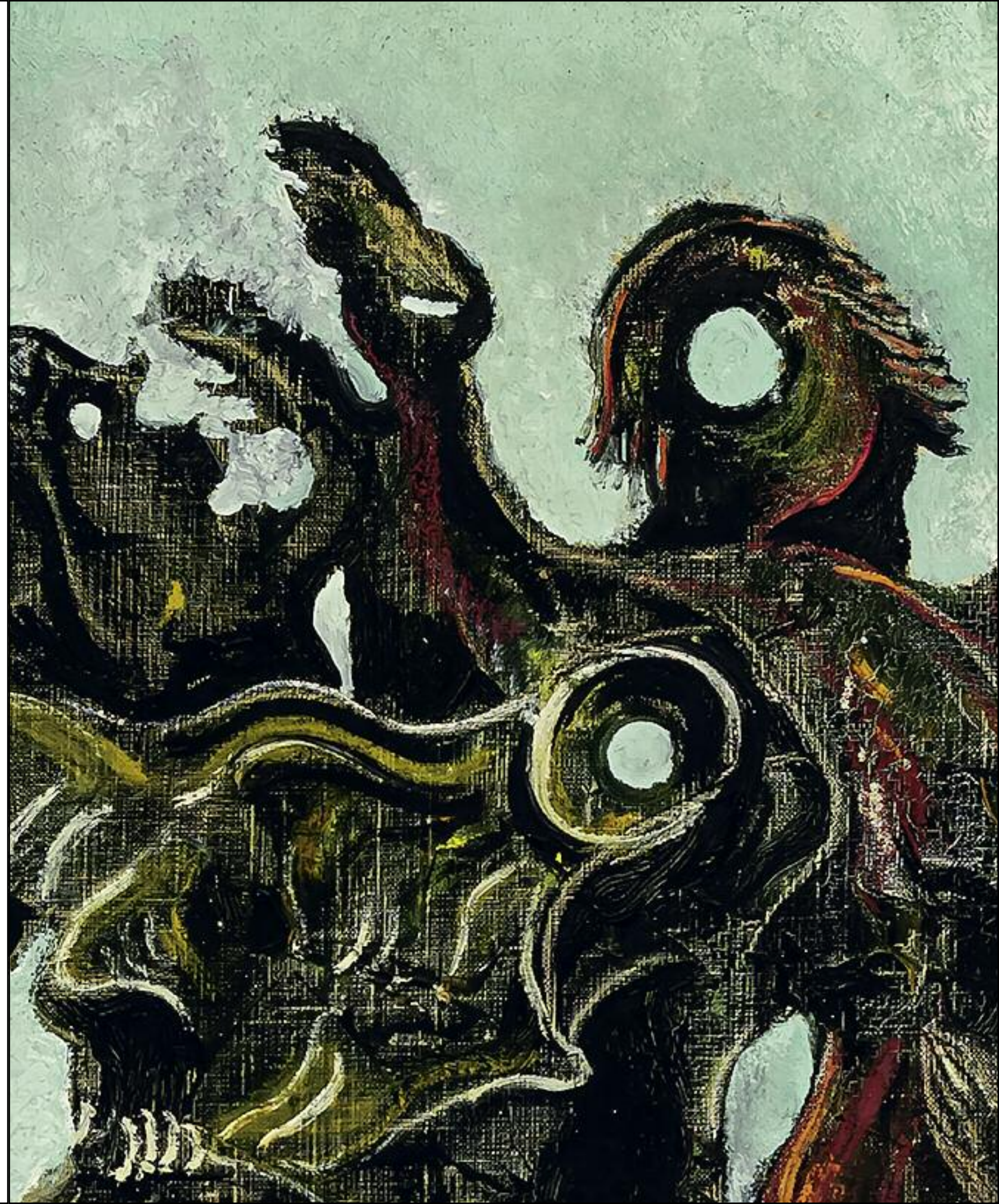
The artist who these days counts as a leading exponent of Dadaism and Surrealism was born in Brühl near Cologne in 1891. He came into contact with art through his father, a self-taught painter. At the age of eighteen he went to university to study philosophy but soon dropped out again in order to devote himself entirely to art. His fascination with pictures produced by the mentally ill even at this early stage can be read as presaging his later interest in the subconscious. He got to know August Macke in 1911 and joined the group of Rheinische Expressionisten. The decisive turn came in 1919, when he became a co-founder of the Cologne-based Dada Group. Three years later, in 1922, he settled in Paris and henceforth belonged to the circle of the Surrealists.

Andre Breton, the Father of Surrealism, was fascinated by the writings of Sigmund Freud. Profoundly influenced by Freud's theories of the subconscious

and how it governs the individual, Breton strove for art with the capacity to open the door on the human soul. And to his mind, the artist most likely to have access to such realms was Max Ernst – Ernst the magician, the 'man of limitless possibilities'.

Ernst invented completely new techniques for bringing chance into play and for putting his own conscious will as an artist on hold. The frottage, which he developed in 1924, was one such method. Frottage entails transferring the surface texture of an object onto paper or canvas by rubbing it with pencil or charcoal. This gives rise to a pattern which the artist cannot define in advance. To adapt frottage to the conditions of painting, Ernst also applied decalcomania and grattage. For the latter technique, several layers of paint are applied to the canvas and then scraped away again so as to bring the layers underneath back to light. Decalcomania, meanwhile, is essentially a form of counterproofing. Here, paint is applied to a surface more or less at random, a canvas laid on top of it, pressed down and then removed again. The outcome in all three cases is a structure shaped solely by the material, and it was these structures that served Ernst as a source of inspiration for the carefully calibrated development of the work.

Whereas the collages of his early period are full of wit, the worlds that Ernst created became increasingly menacing. He recalled and reflected on the war and used his art to lend expression to his image of the human species. His dark forests and



As a last superstition, as a sad remnant of the creation myth in Western culture, the fairy tale of the artist's creativity remained. It is one of the first revolutionary acts of Surrealism to have attacked this myth in a matter-of-fact manner and in the sharpest form and probably destroyed it forever by insisting emphatically on the purely passive role of the 'author' in the mechanism of poetic inspiration and exposing all 'active' control through reason, morality or aesthetic considerations as worthy of inspiration. He can attend the creation of the work as a spectator and follow the degrees of its development with indifference or passion. As the poet listens to his automatic thought processes and notes them, the painter projects on paper or canvas, what his visual imagination supplies him with.

Max Ernst



Max Ernst
Forêt
1927
gouache on paper on wood
Berlin, Nationalgalerie

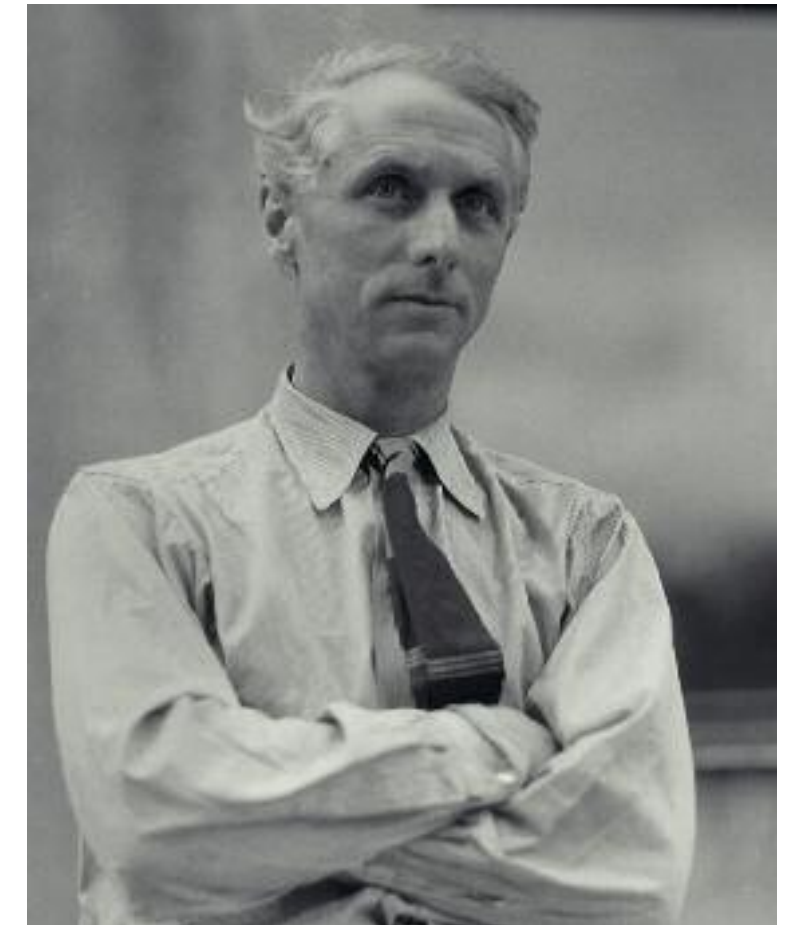
landscapes overgrown with climbing, creeping plants, seem to negate all claims to civilization. Scarcely any light at all penetrates these empty plains. The wild hordes and fantastical creatures are not steered by any rational power. They come across as monsters, symbolizing the animalistic aspects and brute force latent in all humans. Like all the Surrealists, Ernst believed that all living creatures

are inclined to belligerence. Hence his sceptical view of humanizing social and political structures as a force for good.

Max Ernst combines fantasy, critique, sarcasm and protest with high art as does almost no other painter of his generation.

MAX ERNST

BRÜHL 1891 – 1976 PARIS

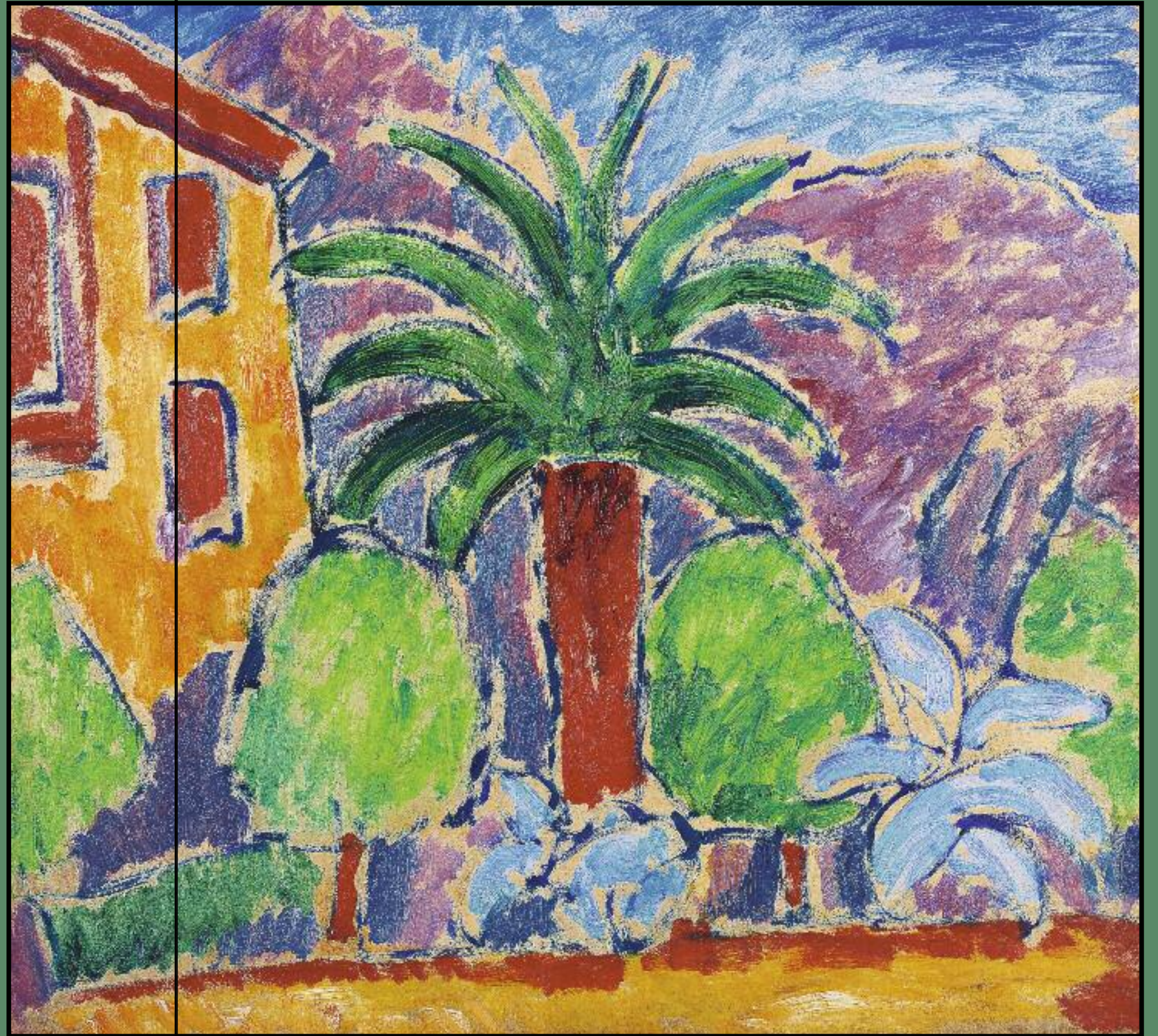


THE YEAR 1927

In the 1920s, Max Ernst was a driving force behind what was called "the heroic time of surrealism". In 1922, Max Ernst moved to Paris without his family, his wife Luise Straus and their son, and stayed with Paul Eluard, who was to remain one of his closest friends during the war. With the publication of André Breton's Surrealist Manifesto, the first high phase of surrealism began in 1924, with the intensive participation of Max Ernst. In the years that followed, outstanding works emerged that are still emblematic of surrealist art, such as the famous portfolio of 'Histoire Naturelle', which appeared in 1926, in addition to the paintings. In the same year, Max Ernst divorced his wife, and a violent affair began with Marie-Berthe Aurenche, which Ernst married in 1927.

This year was also shaped by today's iconic series of forest paintings, bird memorials and horde paintings.

The connection with Marie-Berthe Aurenche was not under a good star, even if it should continue for a few years. Max Ernst increasingly suffered from the eccentric nature and psychological instability of his second wife. In 1936, Ernst left her and fled from Paris to the southern French province with his new lover Eleonora Carrington. Marie-Berthe Aurenche, on the other hand, met Chaim Soutine in 1940 and became his partner.



HOUSE WITH PALM TREE 1914

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

oil on cardboard on masonite

1914

50 x 54 cm

19 3/4 x 21 1/4 in.

verso inscribed by another

hand 'A. Jawlensky',

and 'Ascona'

Jawlensky 1466

The artist painted a second

version of this motif,

Haus mit Palme II

Jawlensky 2279

(Addenda, Vol. IV).

Provenance

Frankfurter Kunstkabinett Hanna Bekker vom Rath, Frankfurt (1954)

Sidney Janis Gallery, New York (by 1957)

Redfern Gallery, London (before 1963)

Private collection

Caroll Hogan (1971)

Elkon Gallery, New York (1971)

Siegfried Adler, Montagnola (1971)

Private collection, Switzerland (by 1987)

Private collection, Switzerland (since 2010)

Exhibited

Frankfurter Kunstkabinett Hanna Bekker vom Rath, Frankfurt 1954. Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 33, ill. cover.

Kunstkabinett Dr. Klihm, Munich 1954. Alexej von Jawlensky (same catalogue as Frankfurt).

Redfern Gallery, London 1956. Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 9.

Sidney Janis Gallery, New York 1957. Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 14.

Redfern Gallery, London 1959. Michael Ayrton, Alexej von Jawlensky, Vieira da Silva. No. 57.

Redfern Gallery, London 1960. Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 4.

Literature

Jawlensky, M. Pieroni; Jawlensky, L. Jawlensky, A. Alexej von Jawlensky,

Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings, Volume II 1914-1933. London 1992.

Addenda to Volume I, no. 1466, p. 513 with ill (titled here as 'House with palm trees').



HOUSE WITH PALM TREE 1914

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

After health problems in January of 1914 and still another tiring argument with Marianne von Werefkin, Jawlensky goes to Bordighera on the Italian Riviera for two weeks in March in order to enjoy a regimen at the thermal springs and to regenerate in the mild Mediterranean climate.

He does not choose this region by chance. Rich Russians already visited the area for cures, against tuberculosis in particular, in the first half of the 19th century or spent the winter in Liguria to flee the harsh winter climate. They started to either buy or build villas. Tsarina Maria Alexandrowna, the widow of Tsar Alexander II who was murdered in 1881, treated her tuberculosis in the winter of 1874/75 in the neighbouring village of San Remo. She donated an alley of palm trees along the lake promenade to the city which is still called 'Corso Imperatrice' in her honour.

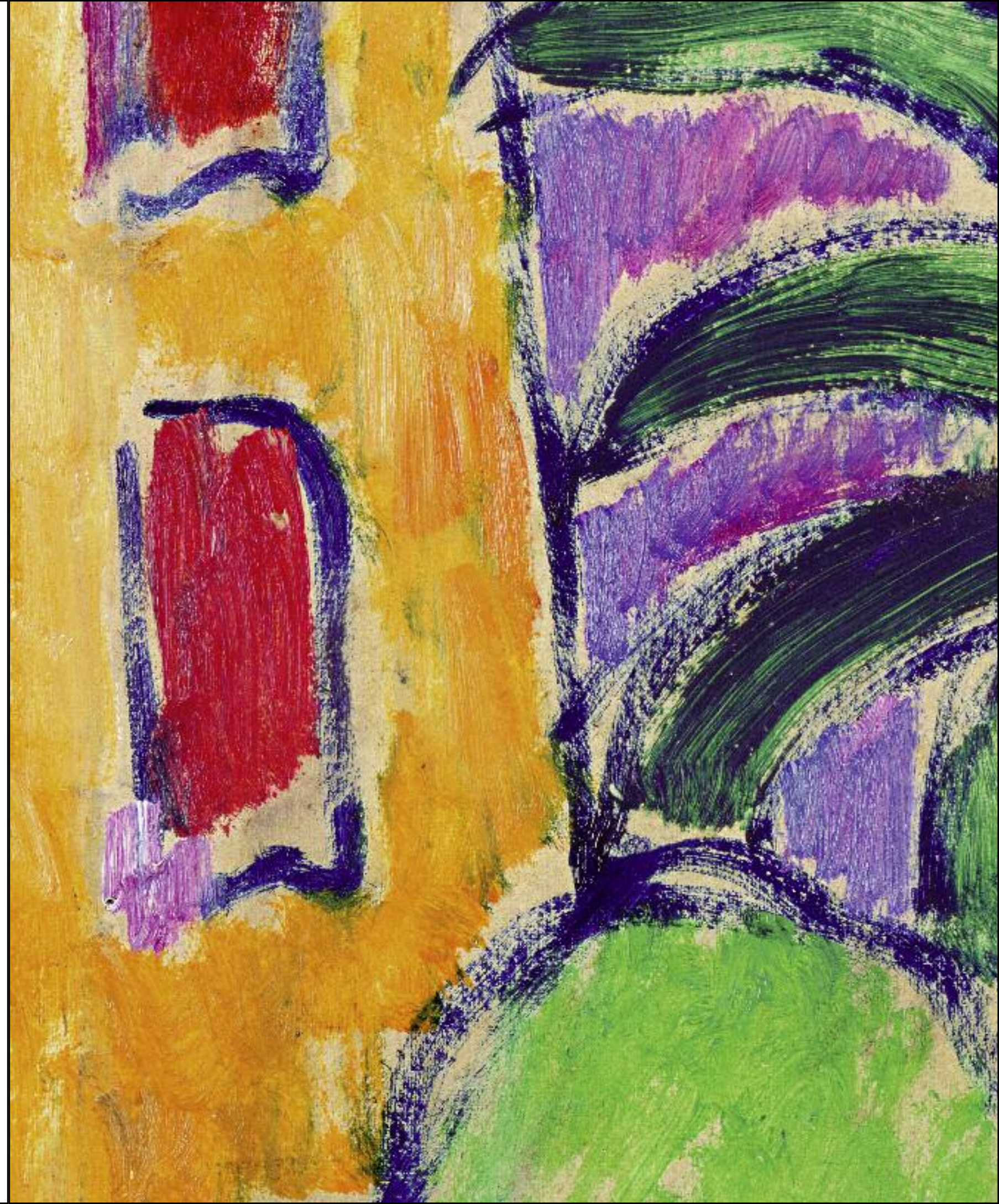
Soon artists, writers and composers followed, such as Ilya Repin, Jawlensky's teacher in St.Petersburg, Alexandra Exter, Nikolai Gogol, Anton Chechov, Maxim Gorky, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Ivan Turgenyev, Peter Tchaikovsky and Alexander Skryabin. Wassily Kandinsky and Gabriele Münter having just returned from Tunisia also live and work in Rapallo from December 1905 to April 1906.

After the 1905 revolution, many Russians leave their homeland, some later live in Liguria forever. When Jawlensky arrives, he finds a large Russian colony

with a strong social and cultural life. The Russians have their own bakery and chemist, a library and since 1912 even a Russian-Orthodox church.

Although he only spends two weeks there, this stay at the so-called 'Flower Riviera' has a great effect on Jawlensky. The varied landscape with the steep mountains towering over the coast, the Italian architecture and the opulent nature inspire him to create a unique group of paintings which clearly show how comfortable the artist feels. He enjoys the *Festival of Nature* as he names one painting. This can even be depicted in his new way to paint. He still frames the individual colour fields with outlines, but no longer with the usual dark colours; instead he uses a bright blue. His colours are overall brighter and happier, applied in thin layers, sometimes transparent so that the grounding shines through or even remains entirely visible in smaller areas. All of this reverberates an easiness and lust for life which clearly express Jawlensky's mood during these two weeks.

Jawlensky was soon not to be so relaxed and care-free any longer. In August of the same year World War I breaks out and deprives the artist of the home of his choice – for 18 years after all – and forces him to emigrate to Switzerland. This ends one of the most productive phases in his life as an artist and forces him to make a difficult reorientation both personally and artistically.





ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

TORSCHOK, RUSSIA 1864 – 1941 WIESBADEN

THE YEAR 1914

1914 bears much excitement and is also a year of global political and personal upheaval.

In March Jawlensky travels for two weeks to Bordighera on the Italian Riviera. He paints colourful landscapes and town views inspired by the opulent nature and the mild climate.

Jawlensky joins the 'Neue Sezession München' (New Munich Secession) and remains to be member he until 1921. In May he participates in an exhibition of the 'Neue Sezession München' in Galerie Arnold in Dresden. Solo exhibition in Galerie Goltz in Munich.

The problems with Marianne von Werefkin result in their separation; she travels to Lithuania on her own. Jawlensky travels to Russia to visit his mother and brothers and sisters. He does not know that he will never see them again. On this trip he gets to know the major collector Sergey Schtschukin and the collector and artist I.S. Ostrouchov. Jawlensky and Werefkin meet on this trip in Kovno and make up.

Herwarth Walden takes the artist under contract. He exhibits his works in February in his gallery 'Der Sturm' in Berlin and organises a travelling exhibition which tours Germany from April to June.

On August 1st Germany, as Austria-Hungary's ally, declares war on Russia. On the evening of the same day Russian cavalry crosses the Eastern Prussian border. As 'enemy foreigners' Jawlensky and his family are ordered to leave Germany within 48 hours. They may only take what they can carry.

They find refuge in the small Swiss village of St-Prex on Lake Geneva. Jawlensky starts the 'Variations' here.

On Jawlensky's request, the Swiss artist Cuno Amiet travels to Munich and fetches from the studio on Giselastraße the treasured painting by van Gogh which the artist had bought in 1908 and the *Hunchback* and another head. These two works are exhibited one year later in Lausanne in an exhibition of works by emigrated Russians.

Jawlensky in Bordighera, 1914



ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE R 1919

OSKAR SCHLEMMER

plaster
1919/cast after 1949
100 x 25 x 10 cm
39 ³/₈ x 9 ⁷/₈ x 4 in.

von Maur P 10

Provenance

private collection, Germany (since 2009)

Exhibited (other casts)

Kunstgebäude am Schloßplatz, Stuttgart 1919. Herbstschau Neuer Kunst, 'Der Sturm' Berlin und 'Üecht-Gruppe'. No. 42.

Berlin 1920. Oskar Schlemmer, Willi Baumeister, Walter Dexel. No. 1.

Galerie Arnold, Dresden; Museum Folkwang, Hagen, 1920. Baumeister, Schlemmer, Schwitters. No. 1.

Staatliche Akademie für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe, Breslau 1930. Ausstellung der Professoren. No. 25, p. 15.

Deutsche Bauausstellung, Berlin 1931. Oskar Schlemmer in der Abteilung 'Bildende Kunst und Baukunst' in einer von ihm gestalteten Koje.

Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart 1953. Oskar Schlemmer Gedächtnisausstellung zum 10jährigen Todestag. No. 381.

Haus der Kunst, München 1953. Ausstellung zum Gedächtnis an seinen 10. Todestag. No. 240.

Strasbourg, 1968 – L'art en Europe autour de l'an 1918. No. 218.

Kunsthalle, Nürnberg 1969. Biennale Nürnberg, Konstruktive Kunst-Elemente und Prinzipien. No. 5.

Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zürich 1973. Die Zwanziger Jahre-Kontraste eines Jahrzehnts. No. 141.

Staatsgalerie Stuttgart im Württembergischen Kunstverein, Stuttgart 1973. Oskar Schlemmer – Der Maler – Der Wandgestalter – Der Plastiker – Der Zeichner – Der Graphiker – Der Bühnengestalter – Der Lehrer. P. 112, no. 246.

Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart 2014. Oskar Schlemmer – Visionen einer neuen Welt. P. 57, no. 24.

Literature

von Maur, Karin. Oskar Schlemmer, Bd. II: Oeuvrekatalog der Gemälde, Aquarelle, Pastelle und Plastiken (catalogue raisonné of paintings, watercolours, pastels and sculpture). Munich 1979. P. 382, no. P 10, ill. p. 383



FIGURE ON GREY GROUND 1928

OSKAR SCHLEMMER

oil and tempera on canvas
1928
58.5 x 23.3 cm
23 x 9 1/8 in.

With a certificate by
Dr. K. von Maur,
dated November 17, 1986.

Provenance

Adolf Rothenberg, Breslau (1932)
Jürgen Holstein, Berlin (1986)
In Chic, Inc., Tokyo
Private collection, Switzerland (until 2000)
Private collection, Germany

Exhibited

Staatsgalerie Stuttgart/Museum Folkwang, Essen 1993-1994.
Der Folkwang Zyklus – Malerei um 1930. No. 149a, p. 167, col. ill.
Museum of Art, Sezon/The Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura/The Museum of Art, Kochi/The Miyagi
Museum of Art, Sendai/The Museum of Art, Yamaguchi 1995-1996.
Eine Krise der Kunst – Entartete Kunst im Dritten Reich. No. 156, p. 344, ill.



ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE R 1919

OSKAR SCHLEMMER

Schlemmer's architectural sculpture reliefs are of particular significance for the early development of his work because they complete the step from the spatial illusion in painting to true sculpture, not without transferring Schlemmer's principles of design to the three-dimensional realm. In 1919, in the same year, Schlemmer also developed a pronounced interest in movement in space, and thus in dance, the foundation of which provides the tectonic laws of his human figures.

The author of the catalogue raisonné of Oskar Schlemmer, Karin von Maur, described the *Architectural Sculpture R* so accurately that her description is not only paraphrased here, but is instead reproduced in its entirety:

"With Schlemmer, the series of reliefs of 1919 reached its zenith in *Architectural Sculpture R*, with which he abandoned not only polychromy, but also for the most part the confinement to surface. On the vertical axis of a slim vertical rectangle, a figure of a boy turned to the right, the slender outlines of which have been reduced to elementary geometric elements of form. Their proportions result in a tectonic system of cubic, rectangular fields, offset against one another on both sides of the dividing and connecting longitudinal axis. The surface is tiered into the depths and superelevated on several levels as a result of the rhythmic alternation of concave and convex sections. This results in a both clear and differentiated structure of box-like hollow forms, cut in contours, sharp-edged burrs and

modelled curvatures. Instead of colour, light assumes the function of the activating placing of accents: depending upon the lighting, pronounced and alternating contrasts of illuminated and shaded elements are created, which contribute to the spatial sculpture design as a dynamic element. Despite its prominent inner structure, in which the consistent unit of measurement is made transparent, figure and construct merge to form a harmonious whole.

A symbol was created for the human being as the measure of art and of a new architecture. Thus, what Schlemmer said at the time about his paintings applies word for word to *Architectural Sculpture R*: "That they have an impact beyond the frame, in order to 'become part of the larger area, of the space larger than themselves, thus part of a conceived, desired architecture, is condensed in them, pressed together into something small, which would be the form and law of their environment. In this sense: tablets of the law.'"

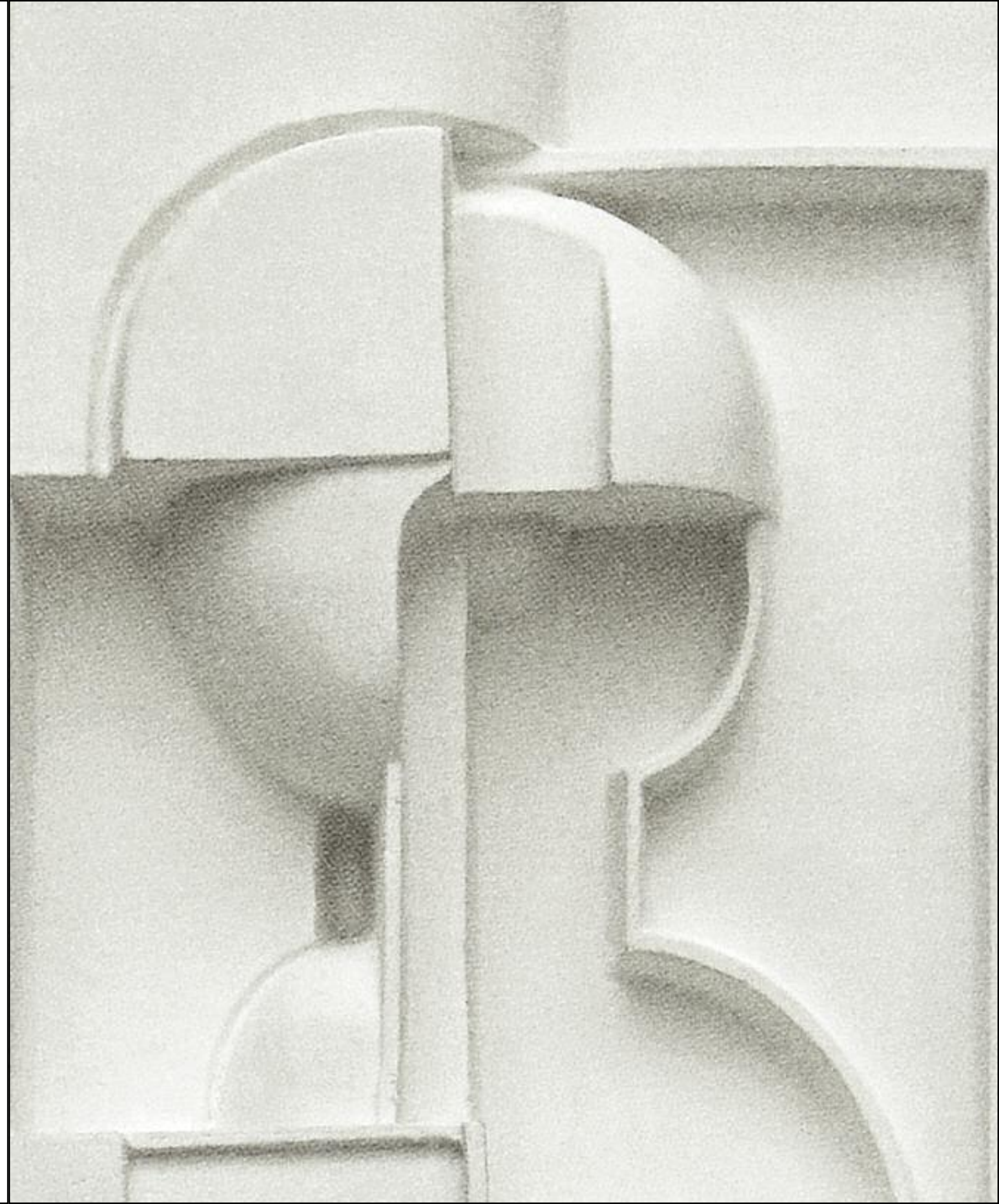


FIGURE ON GREY GROUND 1928

OSKAR SCHLEMMER

The theme that leads through Schlemmer's oeuvre like a common thread is the human being in space. However, for Schlemmer it was about overcoming naturalism. The human form in the pictorial work was abstraction for him, heads or figures were not likenesses in the sense of a recognisable representation, but instead a transmission of the individual into a pictorial structure of elementary language of form. The figures, initially reduced to geometric forms, are incorporated into the play of light and shadow, in which they appear in some cases to disappear, and elsewhere to project. The form, usually represented in profile, became his preferred mode of artistic expression of his idea of the human being as a 'cosmic entity' and the guiding principle of his work overall in the 1920s.

The painting was created in the year in which Oskar Schlemmer took over a course at the Bauhaus Dessau, in addition to the stage department, which was actually dedicated to nude drawing, in which he, however, developed his expanded conception of the human being in a comprehensive sense and conveyed this to his students.

In October 1928, Schlemmer, who was at this time (until 1929) still active at the Bauhaus, was commissioned by the Director of the Folkwang Museum in Essen, Ernst Gosebruch, with the painting of the round room built by Henry van de Velde, in the middle of which stood the figurative fountain monument of the Art Nouveau sculptor Georg Minne.

Figure on grey ground originated as a study for one of four individual panels of the first of three versions, which Schlemmer designed for the decoration of the fountain room.

The figure, represented to three quarters, is dissected into its individual elements; the oval forms of the thighs, the torso and the head are placed on top of one another. The strict architectural structure, like the sculptural modelling through chiaroscuro values, lends the figure column-like statics. Referring to Greek Antiquity, Schlemmer avoids any individualisation of the person. With his abstraction, he aims at the expression of an archaic idea of the human being and thus of the 'mental' per se.

The impression of static standing is nullified by the jointless stringing together of body parts, which allows the figure to appear like a doll that can be set into jagged, robotic motion like a marionette, similar to how he also allowed the figures in his theatre pieces and dance choreographies to act. The artist primarily emphasises the dynamic aspect of the figure through the arm cocked at shoulder height, which places the horizontal form in a relationship with the vertical and the space.

With his seemingly coolly calculated paintings, Schlemmer aims beyond the rational representation of reality at the symbolic 'making visible of the unconscious'. The human figure, upright and looking forward in a tensed posture, becomes for him a symbol of a transcendence to the metaphysical dimension. Schlemmer referred to this type in other works as 'comer', 'goer' or 'passer-by'.





OSKAR SCHLEMMER

STUTTGART 1888 – 1943 BADEN-BADEN

THE YEARS 1919 TO 1928

Following his military service in World War One, Schlemmer returned to Stuttgart in 1919 due to his injuries. He exhibited together with Willi Baumeister and with him founded the Üecht Group, which was already occupied with the renewal of art teaching. In 1920, Schlemmer was called by Walter Gropius to the Bauhaus in Weimar. Thus began the most important creative period for Schlemmer's work, which to a great extent revolved around theatre and dance. This intensified following the move of the Bauhaus to Dessau in 1925, where Schlemmer also headed the Bauhaus stage. Schlemmer already expressed himself as follows regarding the significance of dance for his work in a letter to Otto Meyer-Amden on 12 June 1920:

"Dance used to seem the most inappropriate thing imaginable, and I have to wonder how it could happen that this inherited, as if repudiated due to bad conscious, best-hated side of my nature could become so central. A finger given to temptation – and the whole man sinks! ... The victory of the aesthetic? – I strode from the geometry of the two-dimensional image to the semi-sculptural (relief): to (also a kind of) statuary of the human figure (the paradox can be considered proven that, the more

sculptural, the flatter; the two-dimensional image was the most sculptural). However, there still remains a geometry of the dance floor area, if only as part and projection of the spatial stereometry."

1928, however, would prove to be Schlemmer's last year at the Bauhaus, because he accepted a position at the art academy in Breslau (Wrocław) in 1929. Schlemmer described his farewell celebration in Dessau and his new start in Breslau to Gunta Stölzl on 20 October 1929: "The farewell from Dessau was nice, funny, boisterous, yes, yes. A pity that you were not there. It was a lot of fun! ... Here too (in Breslau), a lot of work and back and forth, but that's how transitions are. In my 'stage arts class' department (please!) there are seven men and two girls, and they paint and craft with gusto. They seem to like the new broom and his ways."



WOMAN IN RED BLOUSE 1911

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

Provenance

Estate of the artist

Galerie Beyeler, Basel (1956 on consignment from the above)

Emil G. Bührle, Zurich (1956 acquired or on view from the above)*

Galerie Beyeler (August 1956 / returned by Emil G. Bührle's widow)

Ragnar Moltzau, Oslo (1957 acquired from the above)

Marlborough Gallery, Zurich/London (by 1959)

Collection Gianni Agnelli, Turin (before 1961, probably acquired from the above)

Serge Sabarsky Gallery, Inc., New York (by 1978, acquired from the above)

Collection Ahlers, Herford, Germany (1979 acquired from the above)

Exhibited

Travelling exhibition 1920-21. Alexej von Jawlensky. Nr. 2.

Kunsthütte, Chemnitz 1923. Alexej von Jawlensky.

Kunstsalon Schaller, Stuttgart 1923. Alexej von Jawlensky.

Galerie Schames, Frankfurt 1924. Alexej von Jawlensky.

Galerie Beyeler, Basel 1956. Maîtres de l'art moderne. No. 18 ill.

Galerie Beyeler, Basel 1957. Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 27 ill.

Kunsthalle, Bern / Saarlandmuseum, Saarbrücken 1957. Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 33.

Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf / Kunstverein, Hamburg 1957.

Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 29.

Kunsthalle, Bremen 1957-58. Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 29.

Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart / Städtische Kunsthalle, Mannheim 1957-58.

Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 30 ill.

Marlborough Fine Art, London 1959. Art in Revolt. No. 46 col. ill.

Galleria Civica d'Arte moderna, Turin 1961. La pittura moderna straniera nelle collezioni private italiane.

No. 49 ill.

Marlborough Gallery, New York 1971. Masters of the 20th Century. No. 21, col. ill. p. 45.

Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich / Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden 1983.

Alexej von Jawlensky. No. 87, col. ill. p. 196.

Käthe-Kollwitz-Museum, Berlin; Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich; Wilhelm-Lehmbruck-Museum,

Duisburg; Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt; Kunsthalle Emden; Kunsthalle Bielefeld 1993-1995. Expressionistische

Bilder, Sammlung Firmengruppe Ahlers. Herford/Stuttgart 1993, p. 44, no. 2, col. ill. p. 45.

Franz Marc Museum, Kochel am See 2012. 'Ich ist ein Anderer' – Gesichter einer Epoche.

Kirchner, Klee, Picasso. P. 31.

Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz – Museum Gunzenhauser, Chemnitz 2013-14. Jawlensky. Neu gesehen.

P. 97, no. 82 col. ill., p. 230s., no. 16 col. ill.

Franz Marc Museum, Kochel am See 2017. Blaues Land und Großstadtlärm – Ein expressionistischer

Spaziergang durch Kunst und Literatur. P. 153, ill. no. 20.

Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau, Munich / Museum Wiesbaden, Wiesbaden 2019-20.

Lebensmenschen – Alexej von Jawlensky und Marianne von Werefkin. No. 115, p. 177 col. ill.

Literature

Weiler, Clemens. Alexej von Jawlensky. Cologne 1959, no. 91, p. 233, ill. p. 170.

Jawlensky, M. Pieroni-Jawlensky, L. Jawlensky, A. Alexej von Jawlensky, Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings. Vol. I, 1890-1914. London 1991, no. 392, p. 317, col. ill. p. 308.

Künstler des Expressionismus, ahlers collection. Cologne 1998, p. 44, no. 2, col. ill. p. 45.

oil on cardboard

1911

53.4 x 49.4 cm

21 x 19 1/2 in.

signed and dated upper right,

signed with monogram

upper left

verso signed, dated and in-

scribed 'N. 94, V.K.'

(= 'Vorkrieg', pre-war),

dated and titled

by Andreas Jawlensky

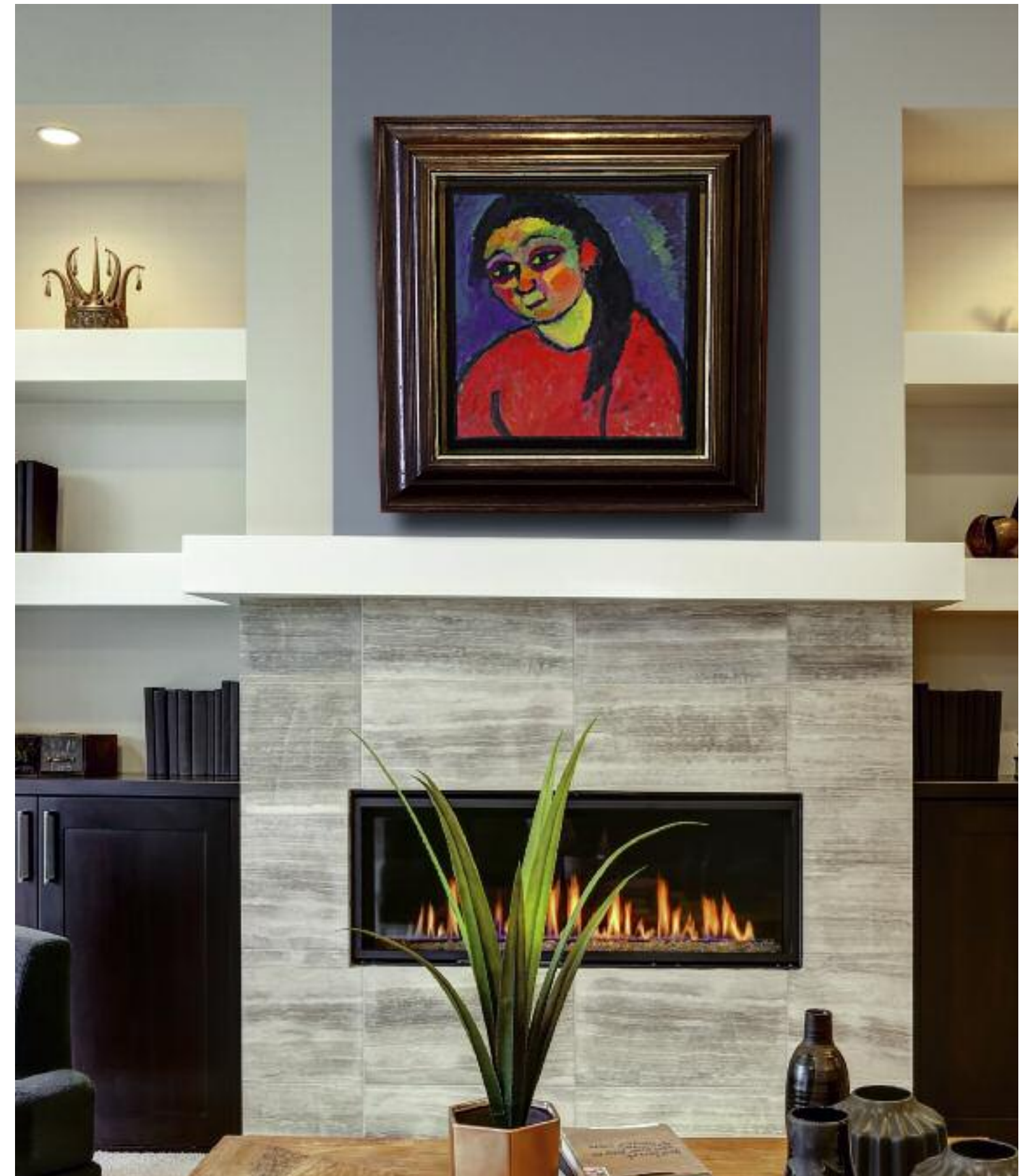
Jawlensky 392

The work is recorded

in the artist's photo archive,

titled 'Helene'.

*Bührle had started sales negotiations with Galerie Beyeler in 1956 or had already acquired the painting before he suddenly died in November 1956. In any case, Bührle had the painting with him for a short time and after his unexpected death it was deposited by his widow at the Kunsthau Zurich for a short time before it was returned to the Beyeler Gallery: the sale was reversed – either Beyeler took it back on consignment, or the sales negotiations were suspended.



WOMAN IN RED BLOUSE 1911

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY



Alexej von Jawlensky, Helene Nesnakomoff and Andreas Jawlensky, 1920

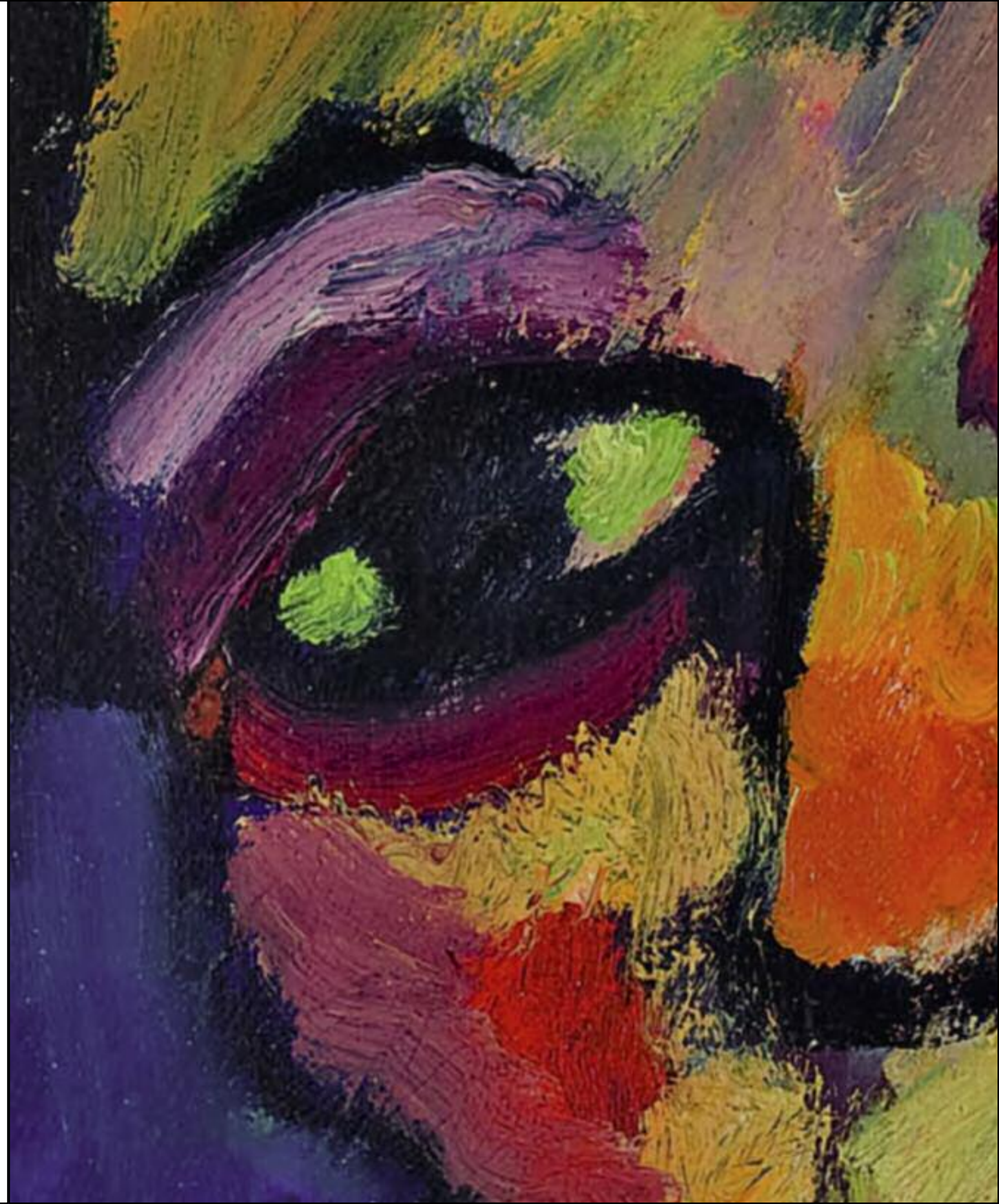
Jawlensky's strong-coloured portrait of a *Woman in Red Blouse* belongs to a group of similar representations and stylistically related works that were created in 1911 and which Jawlensky himself understood as a turning point in his painting.

The representation of the female bust is dominated by strong red and blue tones that surround the head of the sitter. From the physiognomy, but also from the name in the artist's photo archive, it follows that the portrait depicts Helene Nesnakomoff, Jawlensky's lover, later wife (the two finally married in 1922) and mother of Jawlensky's son Andreas. In addition to the reference to Helene in the photo archive, the work is marked on the back with "V.K." (= "Vorkrieg"), i.e. as pre-war

work, which Jawlensky used as an indication of special quality.

Jawlensky spent the summer of 1911 in Prerow with Marianne von Werefkin, Helene and his son Andreas. Some landscape pictures were created here, which are mostly still painted using a comma technique reminiscent of Fauvism, such as the *Storm Pines on Prerow*.

At the same time, however, Jawlensky increasingly developed a painting based on primary colour contrasts, which he used in particular in the depiction of heads and portraits, and which also marked Jawlensky's first intensive preoccupation with the subject of the head or the human face.





Alexej von Jawlensky
Sturmkiefern in Prerow
1911
oil on cardboard on wood

The painting of a hunchback, formally very close to the portrait of the *Woman in Red Blouse*, is seen as the first highlight in Jawlensky's changed style of painting. Jawlensky repeatedly chose the wife of a fisherman, whose acquaintance he made in Prerow, as a motif.

However, as with the *Woman in Red Blouse*, he is not concerned with an individual portrait of a certain person, but with painting a symbolic expression that leads to the strong colours and contours typical of these works. In his memoirs, Jawlensky described this artistic development in the following words:

"In the spring of 1911 we went to Prerow on the Baltic Sea, Werefkin, André, Helene and me. For me, this summer led to a big development in my art. I painted my best landscapes and large figurative works there, in very strong, glowing colours, absolutely not naturalistic and material. I took a lot of red, blue, orange, cadmium yellow, chrome oxide green. The shapes were very strongly contoured with Prussian blue, and powerful because of an inner ecstasy. ... This was a change in my art. And

until 1914, just before the war, I painted my strongest works known as 'pre-war work'."

In fact, the painting of the *Woman in Red Blouse* is one of the works that mark the culmination of the expressionist phase in Jawlensky's work shortly before the foundation of the Blue Rider.

ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY

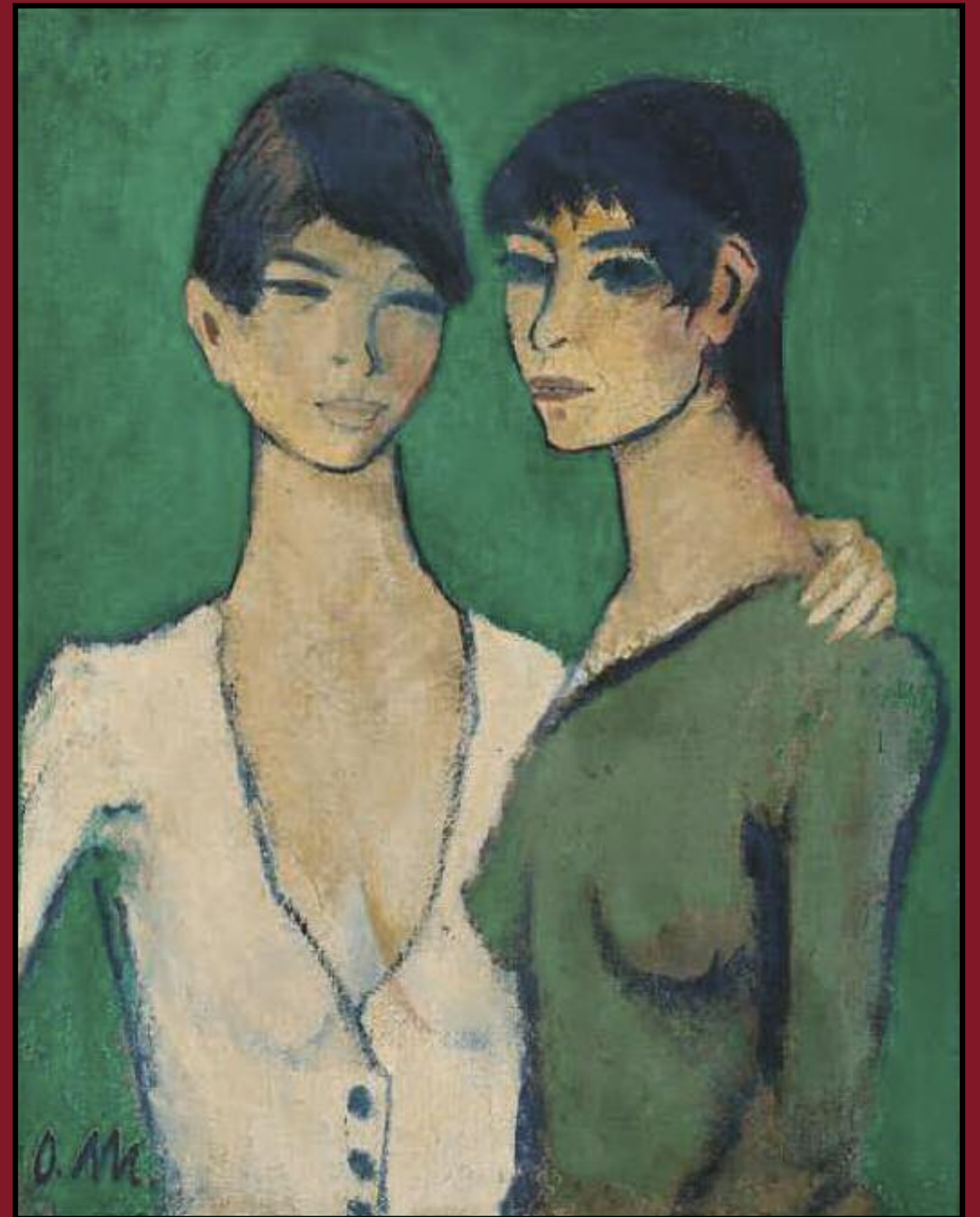
TORSCHOK, RUSSIA 1864 – 1941 WIESBADEN



THE YEAR 1911

The year 1911 began for Alexej von Jawlensky in Munich with a visit to a concert by Arnold Schönberg on January 2nd. His later comrades-in-arms of the Blue Rider – Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc, Gabriele Münter, and of course Marianne von Werefkin – attended the concert together with him. Jawlensky and Werefkin painted with Kandinsky and Münter in Murnau in the summers of 1908 and 1909, which gave the impetus for the founding of the New Artists' Association (Neue Künstlervereinigung) in Munich in 1909. Just a few days after Schönberg's concert, the discrepancies in the New Artists' Association increased so much that Kandinsky resigned.

In 1912, Jawlensky followed him by leaving the association to join the Blue Rider. Before that, however, in the summer of 1911, Jawlensky laid the foundation for his participation in the Blue Rider with a new, strong-coloured painting that he developed during his summer stay in Prerow on the Baltic Sea. The year ended for Jawlensky with a visit to Paris, where he met Henri Matisse, and with the opening of his first solo exhibition in Wuppertal-Barmen.



PAIR OF RUSSIAN GIRLS 1919

OTTO MUELLER

Provenance

Studio of the artist

Städtisches Museum, Stettin (1928)

1937 seized from the above mentioned museum and declared as degenerated art by the National Socialists, NS-No. 7581

Karl Buchholz Galerie, Berlin (acquired 1939)

Buchholz Gallery Curt Valentin, New York (1939 taken over from the above)

Collection Morton D. May (acquired 1951)

Estate of the collection of Morton D. May

Private collection (within the family)

Exhibited

Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri 1970. The Morton D. May Collection of 20th Century German Masters.

Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York 1970. The Morton D. May Collection of 20th Century German Masters. No. 101 with col. ill.

Richard Kasselowsky-Haus, Kunsthalle der Stadt Bielefeld; Wallraff-Richartz Museum, Cologne; Museum Folkwang, Essen (et al.) 1968-1969. Deutsche Expressionisten aus der Sammlung Morton D. May, St. Louis, USA. No. 64, p. 93 with ill.

Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York 1963. Artist and Maecenas – A Tribute to Curt Valentin. No. 267 with ill.

Saint Louis University, Saint Louis, Missouri 1960. Paintings from the Collection of Mr. And Mrs. Morton D. May. No. 10/11 with ill.

Travelling exhibition: The Denver Museum; University of California, Los Angeles, Art Galleries; Fine Arts Gallery, San Diego; M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco; The Art Institute of Chicago; Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown; Akron Art Institute; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; Baltimore Museum of Art 1960-1962. German Expressionist Paintings from the Collection of Mr. & Mrs. Morton D. May. No. 12 with ill. (dated here 1926).

Milwaukee Art Institute, 1954. German Expressionism. No. 33.

Saint Louis Art Museum, 1952. St. Louis Collects. No. 68 with ill.

Curt Valentin Gallery, New York 1951. Lehmbruck and his Contemporaries. No. 39.

The Arts Club of Chicago, 1951. German Expressionists and Max Beckmann from the Collection of Mr. & Mrs. Morton D. May. No. 18.

Schlesisches Museum der bildenden Künste, Breslau 1931.

Gedächtnisausstellung – Otto Mueller 1874-1930. No. 24.

Galerie Paul Cassirer, Berlin 1925. Otto Mueller. No. 25 with ill.

Literature

von Lüttichau, Mario und Pirsig, Tanja. Otto Mueller Werkverzeichnis der Gemälde und Zeichnungen (CD-ROM), no. 191 with col. ill.

Werthmann, Gabriele (ed.). Otto Mueller – Zwei weibliche Halbakte. Berlin 2001.

Patrimonia – Kulturstiftung der Länder. No. 191, p. 13 with ill.

Elger, Dietmar. Expressionismus – Eine deutsche Kunstrevolution. Cologne 1991. p. 92 with col. ill.

Jähner, Horst. Otto Mueller – Maler und Werk. Dresden 1974. No. 5 with col. ill.

Buchheim, Lothar-Günther. Otto Mueller. Feldafing 1968. Cover with col. ill. (detail).

Buchheim, Lothar-Günther. Otto Mueller – Leben und Werk. Feldafing 1963. P. 239 with col. ill.

Aust, B. A. Otto Mueller – Eine Monographie in Bildern. Breslau 1925. Vol 1, p. 18 with ill. (unpublished).

Scheffler, Karl. Otto Mueller. In: Kunst und Künstler – Illustrierte Monatsschrift für bildende Kunst und Kunstgewerbe 17.9.1919. P. 349-356, S. 355 with ill.

oil on canvas

1919

90.5 x 71 cm

35 5/8 x 28 in.

signed with monogram

lower left

Lüttichau/Pirsig 191



PAIR OF RUSSIAN GIRLS 1919

OTTO MUELLER

Otto Mueller's 1919 painting entitled *Pair of Russian Girls* from 1919 is in several respects outstanding work of German Expressionism, in terms of composition and colour, as well as of iconography. The two female figures of this pair of girls appear against an intense, dark green background, which, other than the texture of the brushstroke, leaves no other details recognisable and the location of the in this way abstracted representation open. While the brightly clad female figure to the left is shown frontally, has her head tilted slightly toward the second figure and places her hand on her shoulder as if in an embrace, the figure to the right stands in front of her, turned to the side. Darkly clad, she turns her head slightly away from the first figure and appears to be looking diagonally to the left out of the painting. The relaxed posture of both women, the left of which appears to be more cheerful, while the gaze of the figure to the right seems more serious, implies a situation of friendship and inner mutual understanding. Unlike in his typical representations of women in natural settings, Mueller does not present his models here as nudes and removes them from the surrounding nature, in order to instead create a placeless, universal double portrait. Due to the intense, monochrome green background and the statuary posture of the figures, the result is not the Arcadian mood characteristic of Mueller, but instead a more iconic impression.

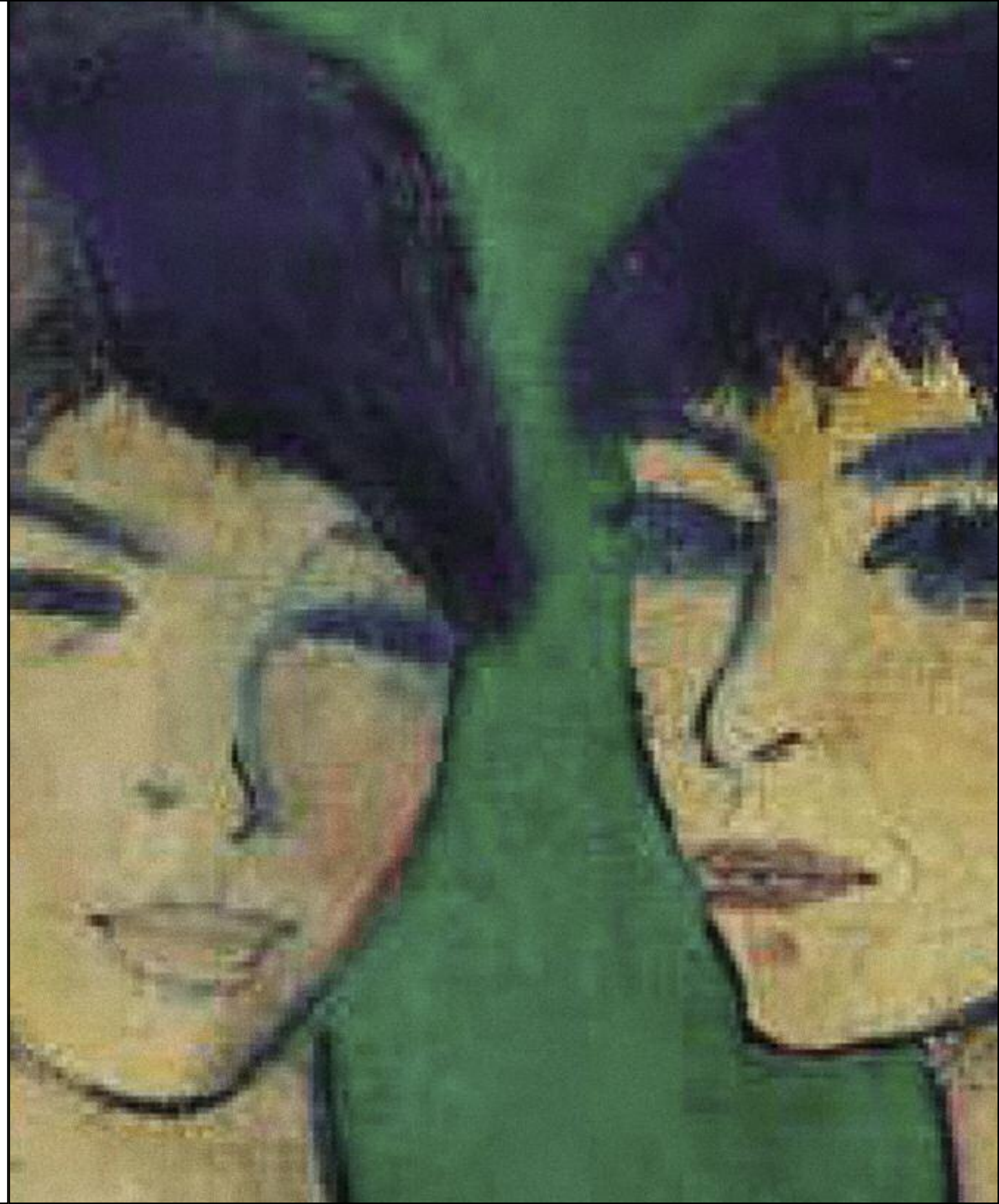
In the year in which this work originated, on the occasion of his exhibition with Paul Cassirer, Otto

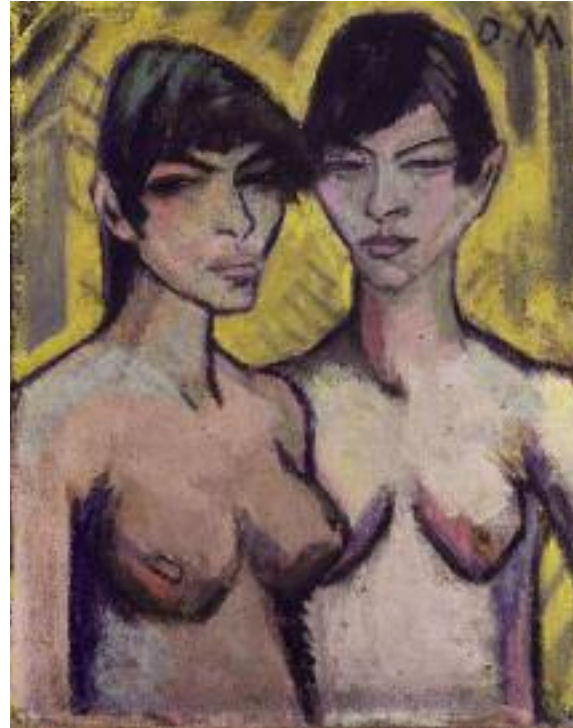
Mueller expressed himself with the following words regarding his artistic intentions:

"The main objective of my efforts is to express a sentiment of landscape and human being with the greatest possible simplicity; exemplary for me, as well as for the pure craftsmanship, was and still remains the art of the ancient Egyptians."

Mueller thus described the origin, or at least a source of the linearity and flatness of his painting, as well as the importance of the contour. The 'angular', seemingly oriental shaping, especially of the faces, as can also be seen in the *Pair of Russian Girls*, is among the fundamental stylistic elements of Mueller's painting and is attributable to his aesthetic intentions. In order to remain with the comparison with the art of ancient Egypt, Mueller's stylised female figures can very well be comprehended as hieroglyphs: actually a term of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, which, however, also has its justification for Mueller's painting. Such a stylised manner of painting served both him and Kirchner in achieving a universal form of representation, which, irrespective of all references to the surrounding reality and to autobiographical events, hoped to be understood as extending beyond these.

Mueller occupied himself repeatedly with the composition of the two women standing next to one another. Mueller most likely also presents the same two women in his *Two Female Semi-Nudes* in this posture, only this time turned toward and mirroring





Otto Mueller
Zwei weibliche Halbkugeln
1919
Museum Ludwig, Cologne

one another, nude and in front of an intensively articulated, textured background. When one considers the seemingly transparent clothing of the two women in *Pair of Russian Girls*, which was also occasionally titled *Sisters*, the assumption is immediately suggested that Mueller also initially intended to show two nudes here and first clothed them in the subsequent painting process.

A privately owned drawing by Otto Mueller shows the same composition of the two women, who are on this sheet, however, accompanied by Otto Mueller, who stands behind them and lays his arms over their shoulders. It thus seems extremely probable that the painting of the pair of Russian girls actually shows Otto Mueller's wife Maschka and his Breslau lover and student, Irene Altmann; a proposition that is supported by several representations of both women in the same or a similar attitude. Of the composition of Mueller's drawing, which shows him together with the two women, a hand remains in the painting, which is now allocated to the woman on the left, who can be identified as Maschka. That Mueller is obviously uniting his two significant others in a painting and showing them in an embrace, leaving himself out, may have two meanings. For

one thing, Mueller's conflict between his deep love of many years for his wife Maschka and his new love for his student Irene, whom he later attempted to marry, without success. At the same time, this representation also reflects Mueller's ideas of a non-conformist, anti-bourgeois life, which he also hoped to continue as a professor in Breslau.

As is often the case with his paintings, Mueller later used the composition in 1921 as a reference for a lithograph.

OTTO MUELLER

LIEBAU, SLESIA 1874 – 1930 OBERNIGK N. BRESLAU




THE YEAR 1919

The year 1919 was especially significant in Otto Mueller's life. Paul Cassirer showed Mueller's first solo exhibition in Berlin, and the artist was appointed professor at the academy of art in Breslau (Wrocław), where he remained until his death in 1930. In Breslau, Mueller met the 17-year-old Irene Altmann, who was his student there, and fell in love with her. This relationship resulted in the separation from his wife Maschka (Maria Mayerhofer), who he had married in 1905 and who remained in Berlin. Mueller even planned to marry Irene, but this plan was abandoned in the face of the resistance of Irene's father. In 1921, Maschka divorced Otto Mueller, but remained a close confidante of the painter until his death, prior to which he married two more times.

THOMAS

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PUBLICATION DETAILS

All works of art featured in this catalogue are for sale.
Prices upon request.
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Measurements: height before width by depth.

Masterpieces VIII
Catalogue 139
© Galerie Thomas 2020

Catalogue editing:
Sarah Dengler, Ralph Melcher

Translation:
Kenneth Friend

Photos:
Walter Beyer
Archiv Galerie Thomas

Design:
Sabine Urban, Gauting

Colour Separation:
Farbsatz, Neuried
Reproline mediateam GmbH + Co. KG, Munich

Printing:
SDM, Stulz-Druck & Medien GmbH, Munich

Mon - Fri 9 am - 6 pm · Sat 10 am - 6 pm

Tuerkenstrasse 25 · 80333 Munich · Germany
Phone +49-89-29 000 80 · Fax +49-89-29 000 888
info@galerie-thomas.de · www.galerie-thomas.de

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