

MAX BECKMANN

PAINTINGS · DRAWINGS · PRINTS



GALERIE THOMAS

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September 13 – Dezember 21, 2013

GALERIE THOMAS







Self-Portrait in Bowler Hat

drypoint etching on laid paper, 1921
32,3 x 24,7 cm / 12 ³/₄ x 9 ³/₄ in. image
53 x 42 cm / 20 ⁷/₈ x 16 ¹/₂ in. sheet
signed lower right
4th state, unnumbered 2nd edition of c. 50
Hofmaier 180 IV. B.

LETTER FROM MAX BECKMANN TO REINHARD PIPER

FRANKFURT A/M IN MARCH 1923

Dear editors, you would like me to deliver a written self-portrait. My god, my head is swimming, what shall I say. And, even worse, what shan't I say?

I find that far more important, what I shan't say.

So it will become a piece of music consisting of nothing but pauses. – I cannot suppress the fact that I was born on 12 February 1884 near Lake Schwansee close to Leipzig. However, I do not consider this my essential place of birth. Since both of my anonymous parents are from Braunschweig (where the famous sausages and canned foods come from), my siblings were born there, and we moved back there soon after I was born.

At least there are a number of dark Pleiße lanes and fur product smells from Brühl that have remained in my memory. I find it embarrassing to be reminded of one's birth, anyway. It somehow strikes me as too naturalistic. And it always reminds me of encyclopaedias and the like. But we are just starting.

So I now live in Frankfurt on the Main, Schweizerstr. 3. I am sitting in my atelier and am upset because I am not going for a walk, since it is spring outside, and the French are in Griesheim. We would almost have been occupied, but I was in Berlin at the time. Besides, I have to get a shave, because I have been invited by my friend Simon for tonight, who has just returned from the Weidner Sanatorium, invigorated.

And still I am sitting here and writing my autobiography. For, I have noticed that the effect of one's personality is very unfavourably influenced by an unshaven chin. One is embarrassed oneself, and so is the other. Nevertheless, it is difficult to have sharpened blades for the razor at all times.

It was so much nicer when I went on the lookout at night, without always shaving or being shaved, equipped with a large butterfly net, hoping to catch the ardently wished-for Death's head Hawk moth, for which I had carefully dipped apple chips in beer and tied them to a tree in order to bait it. With this passion I had filled the time that I was supposed to spend sleeping or working, when I was eight years old and lodged at my sister's place for half a year, who had been married to a pharmacist in Falkenburg in Pomerania. Alas, nonetheless I never caught it, which still hurts me now, even though I spent many afternoons combing all the potato fields for its majestic caterpillar.

In Braunschweig, I distinguished myself at school particularly by erecting a small picture factory during the lessons, the products of which went from hand to hand and obscured the gloomy fate of many a poor fellow drudge for a few minutes. During this period, I had my 'great passions.' Yes, I was deeply in love and seriously proposed to my cousin, who was 18 years old. I asked her to wait until I was ready. That's better than nothing. I was a second-year grammar school pupil and had the whole world ahead of me.

But my talents were not greatly appreciated. – As for colours, I actually love cinnabar red and violet very much, and tobacco brown. Probably because I appreciate cigars so immensely. Is there anything more wonderful than a good cigar? Perhaps a woman? But you can't put her aside as easily. Still. I love women, too. I even got married, 1906!! To Minna Tube, opera singer at the municipal theatre of Graz. In 1908, Peter Beckmann was born. A promising youth. From time to time, I take random samples of his development, and I am very interested in them. Around 1912, I met the publisher Reinhart Piper, and a little later, I. B. Neumann (Graphisches Kabinett

Berlin W Kurfürstendamm 232), too; both of which are experienced men who were later to somewhat support my precarious journey through life.

– Following my first debut in 1906 with Berliner Sezession (which is now Freie or Befreite Sezession, I think), I also had a rather unhappy marriage with the art dealer Paul Cassirer, but I managed to shake off these chains in good time, as they were putting a slight damper on my tender genius. Artists and art dealers are a tricky match; that is why I have to silently pass this important point of my 'development' over. Besides, money is indeed an unpleasant thing.

I also write dramas and comedies. Besides, I would like to play music, but since I cannot read it, I would have to learn for another five years. That's a bit too much. But maybe? Oh, that would be lovely. –

I'm good enough to sculpt, however! I love jazz so much. Especially because of the cow bells and the car horn. That's a sensible kind of music. What one could make of it!

By the way, I painted "antiquity" for one year. With Prof. Fritjof Smith, when I came to Weimar in the year 1900, after terrible family rows. – At the art academy. Yes, I am particularly proud of that. As you can see. There is a foundation, a solid foundation.

In 1903, I went to Paris as a determined German youth. I rented a studio in Rue Notre Dame des Champs and painted a gigantic picture that was twice as large as the ones with which I later surprised and put off my respected contemporaries. That was a good start.

There, too, the spring of 1904 was my undoing; I left the gigantic painting unfinished, had studs put on my boots and roved through the South of France by foot. But in Geneva, I was fed up with beautiful nature, so I took the fast train to Berlin, where I stayed until 1914, off and on. That was my actual academy period. I learned what had to be learned. Art, love, politics kept me busy enough. I think I was a bit more diligent than at school in Braunschweig. In the end, I was just eagerly learning the tango, when I was reminded by stupendous cheering and the singing of quite a few patriotic songs that it was time for a change of roles in my life.

When I came to my senses, I found myself in an Augustinian monastery in Belgium, busy trying to light a fire in a rebellious stove, and noticed that I was wearing a nursing uniform. Now, you see, that was certainly different. I always had to pour lots of petrol onto the wet wood to make it burn at last. And still the entire ordination room was full of terribly smelly smoke for almost two hours, which made my charming chief physician, Dr. Spinola, frown sternly. The patients who had eye trouble didn't like it, either. But after all, you can't expect to get it all right first time. Still it was actually quite cosy there, compared to the military typhoid hospital where I had been before. That was a nasty kind of fever.

But even there, I found some sensible people. One of them was almost lying in agony, but still reading a novella by Poe. He took comfort in it.

Now this wouldn't be a bad opportunity to draft some war paintings. But I have dealt with this subject so extensively that I no longer have time to make words about it. I have long started other wars.

By chance, I ended up in Frankfurt on the Main during these merry years.

Here, I found a river that I liked, a few friends, and an atelier.

Now I decided to start up my own business.

It was very small at first.

Gradually, it became larger.

What will become of it?

– We live from day to day.

Sincerely yours

Beckmann



Family Scene (Beckmann Family)

drypoint etching on laid paper, 1918

30,6 x 25,9 cm / 12 x 10 1/8 in. image

45 x 37,5 cm / 17 3/4 x 14 3/4 in. sheet

signed lower right

with embossed stamp of the Marées Gesellschaft

unnumbered edition of 60 + 40 on Japan paper

Hofmaier 127 B.b.

LETTER TO HARRY GRAF KESSLER BERLIN, 18. IV.11

Anyway, the term 'Impressionism' is an expression that doesn't nearly cover all the aspirations of the great French artists; as for me, I do sense emotional impressions in their works, which, however, with Manet, Monet and Renoir are mainly spirited or lyrical in nature. After all, emotions are always involved, and the difference is only in the way we perceive the world. Some perceive it in a rather cosmic and dramatic, others in a rather microcosmic and lyrical way. Both are on an equal footing, as long as they emanate from an inner unity.



Equestrian Battle

reed pen and pencil on paper, 1910

15,5 x 17,5 cm / 6 1/8 x 6 7/8 in.

signed and dated lower right

inscribed 'Entwurf 2 Reiterschlacht' lower left



Night

drypoint etching on Japan paper, 1914
 22,9 x 27,3 cm / 9 x 10 ³/₄ in. image
 26,6 x 33 cm / 10 ¹/₂ x 13 in. sheet
 signed lower right
 with embossed stamp of the Marées Gesellschaft
 unnumbered edition of 50
 Hofmaier 77 III.



Lovers I

drypoint etching on Japan paper, 1916
 23,8 x 30 cm / 9 ³/₈ x 11 ⁷/₈ in. image
 30,2 x 37,5 cm / 11 ⁷/₈ x 14 ³/₄ in. sheet
 signed lower right, inscribed
 'Liebespaar I (16)' lower left
 with embossed stamp of the Marées Gesellschaft
 unnumbered edition of 40 + 60 on laid paper
 Hofmaier 88 II. B.a.

DIARY, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28 1945

(Morning). "The entirety" is an enormous self-reflection. Made up in order to enjoy the 'self' – the 'atman' again and again. –

And we must admit that dividing oneself into male and female is a fabulous trick, a stimulant that can "hardly" weaken, persistently keeping us in line. I doubt that a final redemption is possible by extinguishing one's senses (Buddhism or Trappists), because the absolute self has chosen this mask of empiricism itself. – So there can, at best, be a change, and hopefully an elevation of the visual aspect to another form of existence. – Let us hope for that and wait calmly. Until then, the aim must be to make every reasonable effort to find out what is good and what is bad, what is ugly and what is beautiful, again and again. Still, the danger of negation remains

when we are confronted with the enormous deficiency of the given stimuli. Fortuity, fatalism, divine predestination, freedom of will, moral a priori, or pure physiological experience are the major enemies of an absolute confirmation. – Our age can only be called the 'age of absolute disillusionment'.

The shamelessness of the two last great wars – an abuse of the power of atman?
 Since we must reckon with determination a posteriori and perhaps even a priori – ultimately our own error and brutish sin. – Since we live eternally, it should be possible to make up for that, too.

What matters in this context is the indestructibility of the individual in infinity. – Despite the pantheistic chocolate mush of the atman – or universal soul.

Self-Portrait

drypoint etching on laid paper, 1918

27,5 x 25,5 cm / 10 ⁷/₈ x 10 in. image

45,2 x 37,5 cm / 17 ³/₄ x 14 ³/₄ in. sheet

signed lower right

with embossed stamp of the Marées Gesellschaft

unnumbered edition of 60 + 40 on Japan paper

Hofmaier 137 II. B.b.



DR. PETER BECKMANN ABOUT HIS FATHER

The atelier reeked of cigar smoke and turpentine. The painter silently paced up and down. There were pictures leaning against the walls, facing them. He did not just take the first picture he came across; he searched, pulled one out and put it on the easel. Sometimes I said something, remarked the vitality of a flower, the depth of the space, the intensity of a painted candle, the similarity of a portrait. I avoided asking about the pictorial theme, as I knew that I could hardly expect an answer. If, inspired by the picture, I squeezed topical remarks into phrases – half questions, half statements – there was rarely a discussion. In most cases, there was just a confirming Yes, yes, in various timbres.

STEFAN LACKNER ABOUT BECKMANN

Although he liked acting obligingly and civilised, he was out of place in every society. His very light, clear blue eyes with piercingly small pupils seemed to look through his vis-à-vis, which was sometimes mistaken as an unconcerned disregard. His rare, hoarse, rather high middle-voice laughter emanating from his corpulent body came across as incongruous. His smile was even rarer.





Grey Beach

oil on canvas, 1928

35,5 x 78,5 cm / 14 x 30 ⁷/₈ in.

signed, inscribed and dated 'F[rankfurt] 28' lower right

Göpel 298

In his handlist, the artist noted: 'Grey Beach. Finished 3rd October. Berlin, sold to Raemisch'.

Provenance

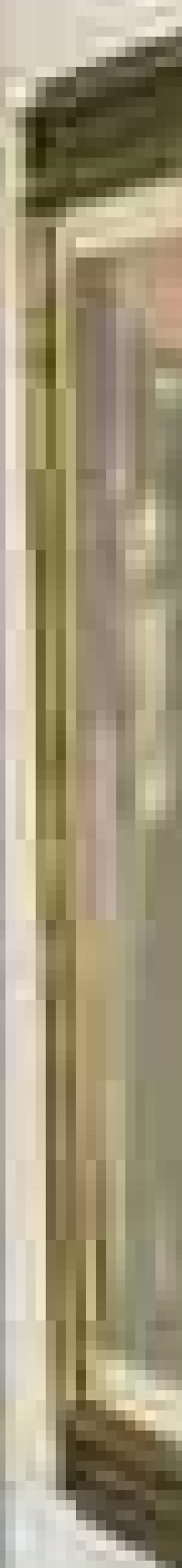
- Studio of the artist
- Dr. Erich Raemisch, Krefeld (acquired in 1929 through Galerie Alfred Flechtheim, Berlin)
- Private collection (by descent in the family)

Literature

- Volfradt, Will. Berliner Ausstellungen, in: Der Cicerone 21, 1929. P. 59, ill.
- Der Querschnitt 9, 1929. Illustr. after p. 818
- Wichert, Fritz. Max Beckmann, in: Kunst und Künstler 29, 1931. Pp. 7-14, ill. p. 12
- Galerie de la Renaissance. Max Beckmann. Paris 1931. exhibition catalogue, no. 22 (not exhibited).
- Roh, Franz. Beckmann als Landschaftler, in: Die Kunst und Das schöne Heim 50, 1952. P. 9, ill.

Exhibited

- Galerie Alfred Flechtheim, Berlin 1929. Max Beckmann, Neue Gemälde und Zeichnungen. No 14, ill.
- Galerie Alfred Flechtheim, Düsseldorf 1929. Lebende deutsche Kunst aus rheinischem Privatbesitz. No 3.
- Kunstverein, Frankfurt a.M. 1929. Max Beckmann. No 38.
- Graphisches Kabinett (Günther Franke), München 1930. Max Beckmann-Ausstellung. No 76 (label).
- Kunsthaus, Zürich 1930. Max Beckmann. No 62.
- Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo 1932. Nyere tysk kunst. No 9 (stamp).
- Statens Museum for Kunst, Kopenhagen 1932. Den drie udstilling nyere tysk kunst, maleri og skulptur. No 11.
- Kongressaal Kölner Messe, Köln 1932. Neue deutsche Kunst. No 8.
- Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt/M. 1951. Max Beckmann Gedächtnis-Ausstellung.
- Haus der Kunst, München; Schloss Charlottenburg, Berlin 1951. Max Beckmann zum Gedächtnis, 1884-1959. No 66.
- Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam 1951/52. Max Beckmann. No 20.





Madhouse

drypoint etching on Japan paper, 1918
 26 x 30,5 cm / 10 1/4 x 12 in. image
 34 x 37,7 cm / 19 3/4 x 14 7/8 in. sheet
 signed lower right
 with embossed stamp of the Marées Gesellschaft
 edition of 40 + 60 on laid paper
 Hofmaier 135 Ill. B.a.



Resurrection

drypoint etching on laid paper, 1918
 24 x 33,2 cm / 9 1/2 x 13 in. image
 36,5 x 45 cm / 14 3/8 x 17 3/4 in. sheet
 signed lower right
 with embossed stamp of the Marées Gesellschaft
 unnumbered edition of 60 + 40 on Japan paper
 Hofmaier 132 II. B.b.

DIARY, SATURDAY, 24 AUGUST 1946

The world is more than ridiculous, and one delusion follows from the other. One man believes the other, who doesn't know anything either – but claims to, with an air of importance. Thus, the world is literally a madhouse that is primarily directed by the most impudent and foolish – for that is identical in almost all cases.



The Evening (Self-portrait with the Battenbergs)

drypoint etching on laid paper, 1916

24 x 17,9 cm / 9 1/2 x 7 in. image

40,5 x 34,5 cm / 16 x 13 5/8 in. sheet

signed lower right, inscribed 'Probedruck' (trial proof) lower left

trial proof before the edition of 100

Hofmaier 90



Fastnacht

drypoint etching on wove paper, 1922
 32,5 x 24,2 cm / 12 ³/₄ x 9 ¹/₂ in. image
 53,5 x 37,5 cm / 21 x 14 ³/₄ in sheet
 signed lower right, numbered '51/60' lower left
 partly numbered edition of 100 + 50 on Japan paper
 Hofmaier 231 II. B.d.



Embrace

drypoint etching on velin, 1922

42,8 x 25,7 cm / 15 ⁷/₈ x 11 ¹/₈ in. image

53 x 38,3 cm / 20 ⁷/₈ x 15 ¹/₈ in. sheet

signed lower right

partly numbered edition of 100 + 50 on Japan paper

Hofmaier 236 IV. B.c.

MAX BECKMANN – MY THEORY OF PAINTING

Extract from the speech of Max Beckmann on occasion of the opening of the exhibition 'Twentieth Century German Art' on 21 July 1938 at the New Burlington Galleries, London.

"What I want to show in my work is the idea which hides itself behind so-called reality. I am seeking for the bridge which leads from the visible to the invisible, like the famous cabalist who once said: 'If you wish to get hold of the invisible you must penetrate as deeply as possible into the visible.'

My aim is always to get hold of the magic of reality and to transfer this reality into painting – to make the invisible visible through reality. It may sound paradoxical, but it is, in fact, reality which forms the mystery of our existence.

What helps me most in this task is the penetration of space. Height, width and depth are the three phenomena which I must transfer into one plane to form the abstract surface of the picture, and thus to protect myself from the infinity of space.

My figures come and go, suggested by fortune or misfortune. I try to fix them divested of their apparent accidental quality. One of my problems is to find the Ego, which has only one form and is immortal – to find it in animals and men, in the heaven and in the hell which together form the world in which we live.

Space, and space again, is the infinite deity which surrounds us and in which we are ourselves contained.

That is what I try to express through painting, a function different from poetry and music but, for me, predestined necessity.

When spiritual, metaphysical, material or immaterial events come into my life, I can only fix them by way of painting. It is not the subject which matters but the translation of the subject into the abstraction of the surface by means of painting. Therefore I hardly need to abstract things, for each object is unreal enough already, so unreal that I can only make it real by means of painting.

Often, very often, I am alone. My studio in Amsterdam, an enormous old tobacco store-room, is again filled in my imagination with figures from the old days and from the new; and the sea, through storm and sun, is always present in my thoughts.

Then shapes become beings and seem comprehensible to me in the great void and uncertainty of the space which I call God.

Sometimes I am helped by the constructive rhythm of the Cabala, when my thoughts wander over Oannes Dagon to the last days of drowned continents. Of the same substance are the streets with their men, women and children; great ladies and whores; servant girls and

duchesses. I seem to meet them, like doubly significant dreams, in Samothrace and Piccadilly and Wall Street. Eros and the longing for oblivion.

All these things come to me in black and white like virtue and crime. Yes, black and white are the two elements which concern me. It is my fortune, or misfortune, that I can see neither all in black nor all in white. One vision alone would be much simpler and clearer, but then it would not exist. It is the dream of many to see only the white and truly beautiful, or the black, ugly and destructive. But I cannot help realizing both, for only in the two, only in black and in white, can I see God as a unity creating again and again a great and eternally changing terrestrial drama.

Thus without wanting it, I have advanced from principle to form, to transcendental ideas, a field which is not at all mine, but in spite of this I am not ashamed.

In my opinion all important things in art since Ur of the Chaldees, since Tel Halaf and Crete, have always originated from the deepest feeling about the mystery of Being. Self-realization is the urge of all objective spirits. It is this Ego for which I am searching in my life and in my art.

Art is creative for the sake of realization, not for amusement; for transfiguration, not for the sake of play. It is the quest for our Ego that drives us along the eternal and never-ending journey we must all make.

My way of expression is painting; there are, of course, other means to this end such as literature, philosophy or music; but as a painter, cursed or blessed with a terrible and vital sensuousness, I must look for wisdom with my eyes. I repeat, with my eyes, for nothing could be more ridiculous or irrelevant than a 'philosophical conception' painted purely intellectually without the terrible fury of the senses grasping each visible form of beauty and ugliness. If from those forms which I have found in the visible, literary subjects result – such as portraits, landscapes or recognizable compositions – they have all originated from the senses, in this case from the eyes, and each intellectual subject has been transformed again into form, colour and space.

Everything intellectual and transcendent is joined together in painting by the uninterrupted labour of the eyes. Each shade of a flower, a face, a tree, a fruit, a sea, a mountain, is

noted eagerly by the intensity of the senses to which is added, in a way of which we are not conscious, the work of the mind, and in the end the strength or weakness of the soul. It is this genuine, eternally unchanging center of strength which makes mind and senses capable of expressing personal things. It is the strength of soul which forces the mind to constant exercise to widen its conception of space.

Something of this is perhaps contained in my pictures. Life is difficult, as perhaps everyone knows by now. It is to escape from these difficulties that I practice the pleasant profession of a painter. I admit that there are more lucrative ways of escaping the so-called difficulties of life, but I allow myself my own particular luxury, painting.

It is, of course, a luxury to create art and, on top of this, to insist on expressing one's own artistic opinion. Nothing is more luxurious than this. It is a game and a good game, at least for me; one of the few games which make life, difficult and depressing as it is sometimes, a little more interesting.

Love in an animal sense is an illness, but a necessity which one has to overcome. Politics is an odd game, not without danger I have been told, but certainly sometimes amusing. To eat and to drink are habits not to be despised but often connected with unfortunate consequences. To sail around the earth in ninety-one hours must be very strenuous, like racing in cars or splitting the atoms. But the most exhausting thing of all – is boredom.

So let me take part in your boredom and your dreams while you take part in mine which may be yours as well.

To begin with, there has been enough talk about art. After all, it must always be unsatisfactory to try to express one's deeds in words. Still we shall go on and on, talking and painting and making music, boring ourselves, exciting ourselves, making war and peace as long as our strength of imagination lasts. Imagination is perhaps the most decisive characteristic of mankind. My dream is the imagination of space – to change the optical impression of the world of objects by a transcendental arithmetic progression of the inner being. That is the precept. In principal any alteration of the object is allowed which has a sufficiently strong creative power behind it.





The uniform application of a principle of form is what rules me in the imaginative alteration of an object. One thing is sure – we have to transform the three-dimensional world of objects into the two-dimensional world of the canvas.

If the canvas is only filled with two-dimensional conception of space, we shall have applied art, or ornament. Certainly this may give us pleasure, though I myself find it boring as it does not give me enough visual sensation. To transform three into two dimensions is for me an experience full of magic in which I glimpse for a moment that fourth dimension which my whole being is seeking.

I have always on principle been against the artist speaking about himself or his work. Today neither vanity nor ambition causes me to talk about matters which generally are not to be expressed even to oneself. But the world is in such a catastrophic state, and art is so bewildered that I, who have lived the last thirty years almost as a hermit, am forced to leave my snail's shell to express these few ideas which, with much labour, I have come to understand in the course of the years.

The greatest danger which threatens mankind is collectivism. Everywhere attempts are being made to lower the happiness and the way of living of mankind to the level of termites. I am against these attempts with all the strength of my being.

So, let's continue.

The individual representation of the object, treated sympathetically or antipathetically, is highly necessary and is an enrichment to the world in form. The elimination of the human relationship in artistic representation causes the vacuum which makes all of us suffer in various degrees – an individual alteration of the details of the object represented is necessary in order to display on the canvas the whole physical reality.

That means: Human sympathy and understanding must be reinstated.

As we still do not know what this Ego really is, this Ego in which you and I in our various ways are expressed, we must peer deeper and deeper into its discovery. For the Ego is the great veiled mystery of the world. Hume and Herbert Spencer studied its various conceptions but were not able in the end to discover the truth. I believe in

it and in its eternal, immutable form. Its path is, in some strange and peculiar manner, our path. And for this reason I am immersed in the phenomenon of the Individual, the so-called whole Individual, and I try in every way to explain and present it. What are you? What am I? Those are the questions that constantly persecute and torment me and perhaps also play some part in my art.

These, however, are all theories, and words are too insignificant to define the problems of art. My first informed impression, and what I would like to achieve, I can perhaps only realize when I am impelled as in a vision.

One of my figures, perhaps one from the Temptation, sang this strange song to me one night:
Fill up your mugs again with alcohol, and hand up the largest of them to me.
in ecstasy I'll light the great candles for you now in the night,
in the deep black night.
You cannot see us, no you cannot see us but you are ourselves.

That is what makes us laugh so gaily when the skies are red in the middle of the night, red in the blackest night.

Stars are our eyes and nebulae our beards... we have people's souls for our hearts. We hide ourselves and you cannot see us, which is just what we want when the skies are red at midday, red in the blackest night. Our torches stretch away without end... silver, glowing red, purple, violet, green-blue and black. We bear them in our dance over the seas and mountains, across the boredom of life.

We sleep and our brains circle in dull dreams

We wake and the planets assemble for the dance across bankers and fools, whores and duchesses.

Thus the figure from my Temptation sang to me for a long time, trying to escape from the square on the hypotenuse in order to achieve a particular constellation of the hebrides, to the Red giants and the Central Sun.

And then I awoke and yet continued to dream... painting constantly appeared to me as the one and only possible achievement. I thought of my grand old friend Henri Rousseau, that Homer in the porter's lodge whose pre-historic dreams have sometimes brought me near the gods. I saluted him in my dream. Near him I saw William



Dogs

oil on canvas, 1930

49,5 x 61 cm / 19 1/2 x 24 in.

signed, inscribed, and dated 'P.30' lower left

Göpel 331

In his handlist, the artist noted: 'Dogs. Finished 24th September. Berlin, Neumann, N.York'.

The painting, created in Paris in 1930, depicts the black and white 'Chilly', a Japan-Chin, and 'Majong', a red Pekingese, lying on an issue of the newspaper 'L'Intraseigant'.

Provenance

- Estate of the artist
- I.B. Neumann, New York
- Private collection, New York

Exhibited

- Schlossmuseum, Murnau 2002. Friedrich August von Kaulbach - Max Beckmann "Ich kann wirklich ganz gut malen". P. 60, no. 37, col. ill.

Blake, noble emanation of English genius. He waved friendly greetings to me like a super-terrestrial patriarch. 'Have confidence in objects,' he said, 'do not let yourself be intimidated by the horror of the world. Everything is ordered and correct and must fulfil its destiny in order to attain perfection. Seek this path and you will attain from your own Ego ever deeper perception of the eternal beauty of creation; you will attain increasing release from all that which now seems to you sad or terrible.'

I awoke and found myself in Holland in the midst of a boundless world turmoil. But my belief in the final release and absolution of all things, whether they please or torment, was newly strengthened. Peacefully I laid my head among the pillows... to sleep, and dream, again."



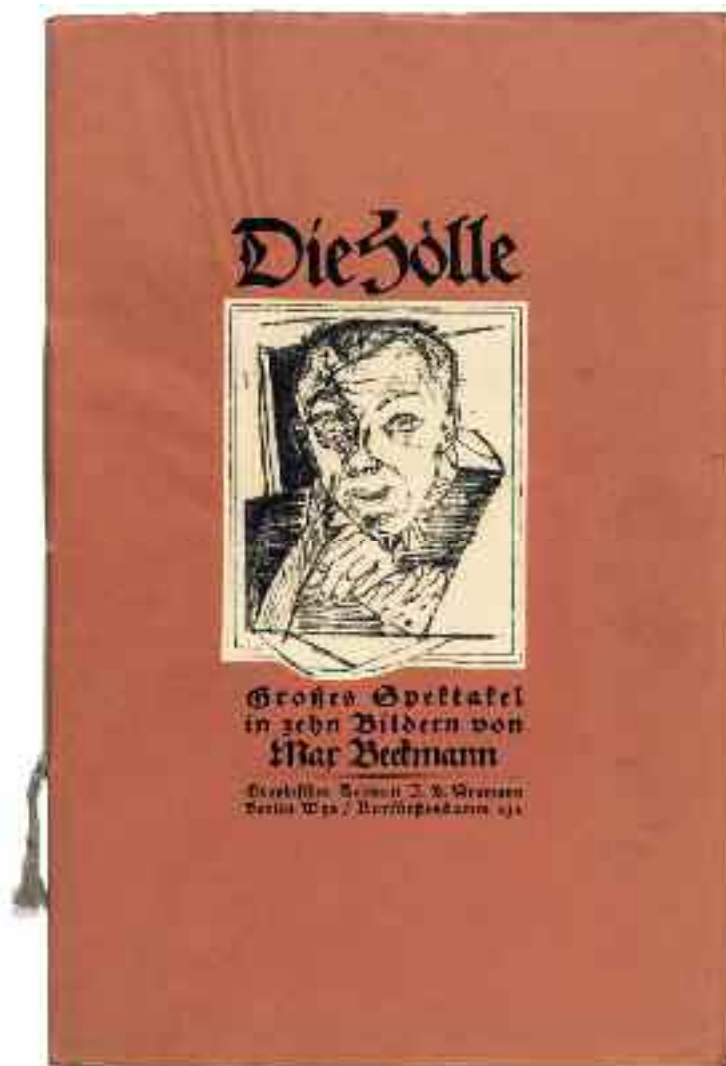
Group Portrait, Eden Bar

woodcut on velin, 1923

49,5 x 49,5 cm / 19 1/2 x 19 1/2 in. image

64,5 x 55,5 cm / 24 3/8 x 21 7/8 sheet

signed and with dedication 'for Quappi, Frankfurt a. Main, 27.7.29' lower right, inscribed 'Kafé couvert' lower left
Hofmaier 277 I.



Hell

portfolio with 11 photolithographs on paper, 1919

40,5 x 26,3 cm / 16 x 10 ³/₈ in. each

edition of 1000

Hofmaier 139-149

This portfolio is a reduced photolithographic reproduction of the original portfolio with 11 lithographs *Die Hölle* (Hell) of 1919 (original size 86 x 62 cm / 33 ⁷/₈ x 24 ³/₈ in.). Both editions were published simultaneously by I. B. Neumann in Berlin.

Plate 1 (title): *Self-Portrait*, Plate 2: *The Way Home*, Plate 3: *The Street*, Plate 4: *The Martyrdom*,

Plate 5: *Hunger*, Plate 6: *The Ideologists*, Plate 7: *Night*, Plate 8: *Malepartus*,

Plate 9: *The Patriotic Song*, Plate 10: *The Last Ones*, Plate 11: *The Family*

LETTER TO ISRAEL BER NEUMANN, F. 7.11.20

I know what it means to rummage through these many inconceivable forms of becoming, to get one's way through this endless sum of stupidity, ignorance and intrigues and not to lose one's courage and faith in something that is complete. – But you also have a form of completeness within yourself. The loneliness in which we both live is probably because there are so few people that are complete. Most of them are only pygmies. That's the trouble. It is nice that we know of each other. That is encouraging. So, on we go.

Wrestlers

drypoint etching on laid paper, 1921
 20,5 x 14,8 cm / 8 1/8 x 5 7/8 in. image
 40,2 x 30 cm / 15 7/8 x 11 7/8 in. sheet
 signed and dated '21' lower right, inscribed
 'Ringkämpfer (Handprobedruck)'
 (hand trial proof) lower left
 hand printed trial proof outside the edition
 of c. 265
 Hofmaier 201 A.



Self-Portrait

woodcut on Japan paper, 1922
 22,2 x 15,5 cm / 8 3/4 x 6 1/8 in. image
 41 x 37,5 cm / 16 1/8 x 14 3/4 in. sheet
 signed lower right
 partly numbered edition of 75
 + 125 on laid paper
 Hofmaier 226 III. B.



Still Life with Tulips and View of the Sea

oil on canvas, 1938

80,5 x 61 cm / 31,7 x 23,8 in.

signed, dated and inscribed 'A[msterdam] 40' upper right

Göpel 494

In his handlist of 1938, the artist noted: 'Still Life with Tulips and a View of the Sea. Franke München'.

He presumably signed and dated it later for the sale (19)40.

Provenance

- Studio of the artist, Amsterdam
- Galerie Günther Franke, Munich (c. 1940)
- Heinz Berggruen, San Francisco, later Paris (around 1946)
- Ernst Stiefel, New York (around 1965)
- Private collection (c. 1999)
- Private collection (2006)

Literature

- Reifenberg, Benno und Hausenstein, Wilhelm. Max Beckmann. Munich 1949. No. 401





Weeping Woman

drypoint etching on laid paper, 1914
 24,8 x 19,7 cm / 9 ³/₄ x 7 ³/₄ in. image
 44,5 x 36,5 cm / 17 ¹/₂ x 14 ³/₈ in. sheet
 signed and dated lower right
 unnumbered edition of 50 on velin
 and laid paper
 Hofmaier 72 Ill. B.a.

FROM: LETTERS TO A WOMAN PAINTER (1948)

lecture, held in Spring 1948 at Columbia University, New York,
 and at Art School, Boston.

"Remember that depth in space in a work of art (in sculpture too, although the sculptor must work in a different medium) is always decisive. The essential meaning of space or volume is identical with individuality, or that which mankind calls God. For, in the beginning there was space, that frightening and unthinkable invention of the Force of the Universe. Time is the invention of mankind; space or volume, the palace of the gods. But we must not digress into metaphysics or philosophy. Only do not forget that the appearance of things in space is the gift of God, and if this is disregarded in composing new forms, then there is the danger of your work being damned by weakness or foolishness, or at best it will result in mere ostentation or virtuosity."

"One must have the deepest respect for what the eye sees and for its representation on the area of the picture in height, width, and depth. We must observe what may be called the Law of Surface, and this law must never be

broken by using the false technique of illusion. Perhaps then we can find ourselves, see ourselves in the work of art. Because ultimately, all seeking and aspiration ends in finding yourself, your real self of which your present self is only a weak representation."

"We will enjoy ourselves with the forms that are given us: a human face, a hand, the breast of a woman or the body of a man, a glad or sorrowful expression, the infinite seas, the wild rocks, the melancholy language of the black trees in the snow, the wild strength of spring flowers and the heavy lethargy of a hot summer day when Pan, our old friend, sleeps and the ghosts of midday whisper. This alone is enough to make us forget the grief of the world, or to give it form. In any case, the will to form carries in itself one part of the salvation for which you are seeking. The way is hard and the goal is unattainable, but it is a way."

Theater

drypoint etching on Japan paper, 1916
 13,1 x 18,1 cm / 5 1/8 x 7 1/8 in. image
 23,8 x 24,8 cm / 9 3/8 x 9 3/4 in. sheet
 signed lower right, titled lower left
 with embossed stamp of the Marées Gesellschaft
 edition of 40 + 60 on laid paper
 Hofmaier 89 III. B.a.



Street, Small Version

drypoint etching on Japan paper, 1916
 12 x 17,6 cm / 4 3/4 x 7 in. image
 24,2 x 28,6 cm / 9 1/2 x 11 1/4 in. sheet
 signed lower right
 edition of 10 + 40 on laid paper,
 some numbered
 Hofmaier 91 III. B.a.



Society

drypoint etching on velin, 1915
 26 x 32 cm / 10 1/4 x 12 5/8 in. image
 32,2 x 45 cm / 16 5/8 x 17 3/4 in. sheet
 signed lower right, inscribed '2. Zustand'
 (2nd state) lower left
 unnumbered edition of c. 30
 Hofmaier 86 III. B.a.





Merry-Go-Round

etching on Japan paper, 1921

29,2 x 25,8 cm / 11 1/2 x 10 1/8 in. image

53 x 38 cm / 20 7/8 x 15 in. sheet

signed lower right

with embossed stamp of the Marées Gesellschaft

unnumbered edition of 75 + 125 on velin

Hofmaier 197 II. B.a.

BRIEF AN ISRAEL BER NEUMANN, 1921

As for your letter from yesterday, you are surely right in many respects. It goes without saying that I must support you with all my might. I would not do that only for money, but because you are simply the one with the closest and most immediate relationship to my work. As for the Piper issue, you also think that it can only assist our cause, don't you? But individual parts cannot be torn off a complete work that I have thought through. After all, I am no art-sausage-machine that immediately produces

a new sausage; I am dependent on moods and nerves. Once a subject has become boring for me, like the fun-fair has now, I am no longer able to deal with it. You should take that into consideration with regard to my denying you the Shooting Gallery Lady, and after all, it has to turn out nicely and support our cause. Basically, once they are finished, I cannot tear works (art folders or the like) apart for you, because that goes against my conscience as an artist.



Café Music

drypoint etching on imitation Japan paper, 1918

31,3 x 23 cm / 12 ³/₈ x 9 in. image

45 x 35,5 cm / 17 ³/₄ x 14 in. sheet

signed and dated lower right, inscribed 'Konzertkaffe (Probedruck)' lower left
with embossed stamp of the Marées Gesellschaft

trial proof before the edition of 100

Hofmaier 130 III. A.

Woman with Snake (Snake Charmer)

oil on canvas, 1940

145,5 x 91 cm / 57 1/4 x 35 7/8 in.

verso inscribed 'This painting was painted by my husband Max Beckmann in 1939 in Amsterdam.

Mathilde Q. Beckmann, New York, 26. Jan. 1971'

Göpel 546

In his handlist, the artist noted: 'Woman with snake. Finished August 16'

Provenance

- Studio of the artist
- Ilse Leembruggen, Den Haag (c. 1940)
- Estate of Ilse Leembruggen (1961)
- Gemeente Museum, Den Haag (on permanent loan from 1955 on)
- Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York (1970)
- Mr. and Mrs. William Green, Mt. Kisco, New York (1971)
- Private collection, Switzerland

Literature

- Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. Max Beckmann. Amsterdam 1951-1952. No. 46
- Rachum, Stephanie (ed.). Ein Fest der Farbe - Die Sammlung Merzbacher. Cologne 1998. No. 74, p. 206-207, col. ill.

Exhibited

- Haus der Kunst, Munich; Schloß Charlottenburg, Berlin 1951. Max Beckmann zum Gedächtnis 1884-1950. No. 119
- Kunsthaus, Zurich 1955-56. Max Beckmann 1884- 1950. No. 91
- Kunsthalle, Basel 1956. Max Beckmann. No. 80
- Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag 1956. Max Beckmann. No. 68
- Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York 1970. Max Beckmann. No. 2, ill.
- Thomas Ammann Fine Arts, Zurich 1992. Max Beckmann. No. 6, ill.
- Museen der Stadt Köln, Cologne 1996. Die Expressionisten – Vom Aufbruch bis zur Verfemung.





Seated Half-Nude

black chalk on heavy laid paper, 1928

100 x 70,5 cm / 39 ³/₈ x 27 ³/₄ in.

signed, dated and inscribed 'F[rankfurt] 28' lower right

Provenance

Private collection, Berlin

Private collection, Germany

Private collection, Germany



Toilette (Before the Mirror)

drypoint etching on laid paper, 1923
 27,9 x 21,9 cm / 11 x 8 ⁵/₈ in. image
 53,4 x 41,4 cm / 21 x 16 ³/₈ in. sheet
 signed lower right, titled and inscribed
 '(Probedruck)' (trial proof) lower left
 trial proof before the edition of 60
 Hofmaier 286 A

LETTER TO MATHILDE KAULBACH
 F. 21. JULI 1925

In the morning, at the atelier.
 Yesterday, the Frankfurter Zeitung printed utter nonsense
 about the Mannheim exhibition: The "New Objectivity",
 of which I am held up as the main leader. – That's cute,
 but rather odd for me, because I never bothered about
 groups and movements. Still, that's the rage now, and I
 have to do whatever I can to withdraw from the hassle
 that will increasingly come with it.

LETTER TO ISRAEL BER NEUMANN
 F. 25. JANUARY 1926

My form is continuously further developing, becoming as
 simple and clear as possible. I am perfectly aware that I
 am presently on the extreme end of the development of
 painting and (probably) always will be. – Through nature
 (and not through antiquity), I have reached a new form of
 condensing the essence, and all I need now is tranquility
 and time to complete my work. – That is, at least another
 30 years.



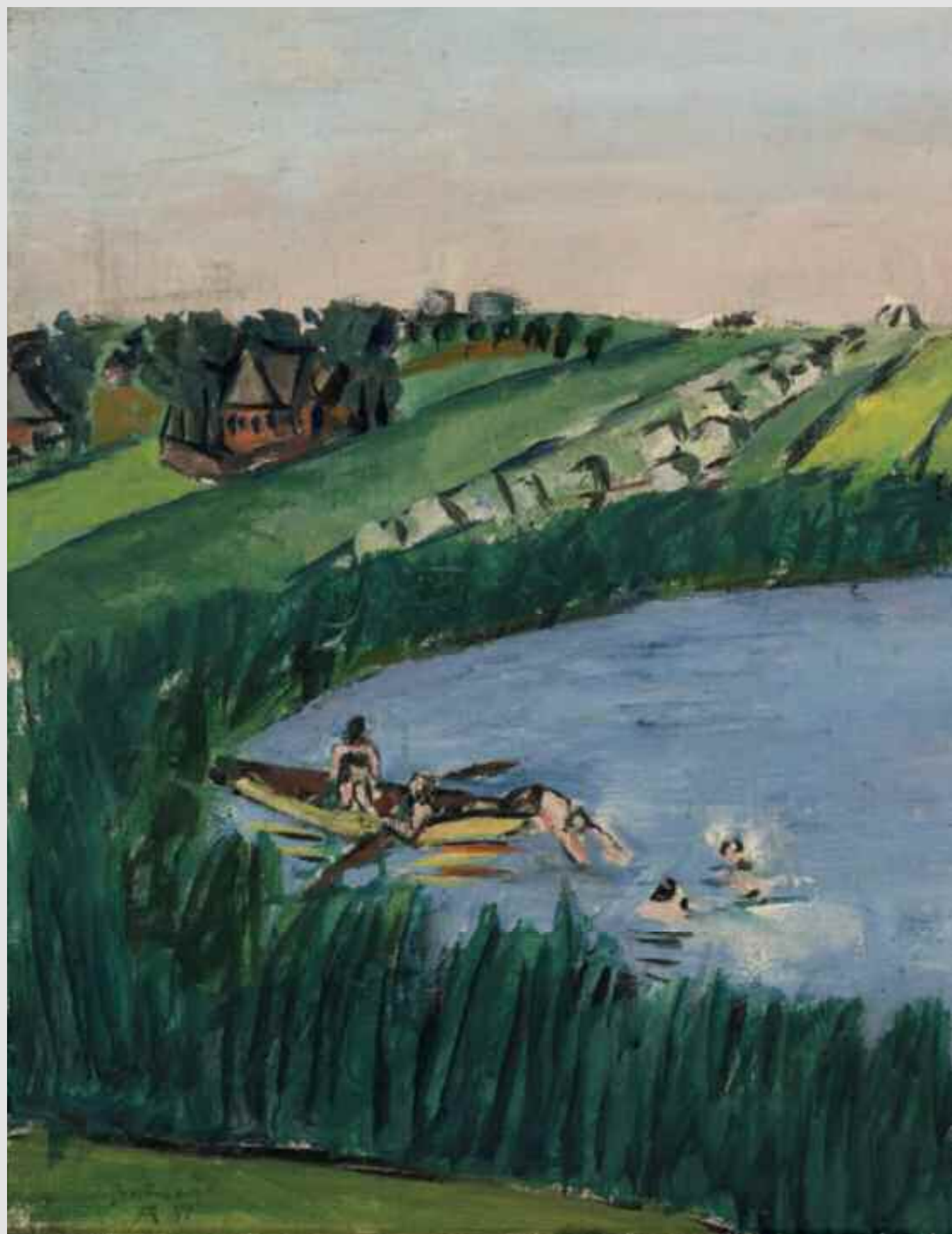
The Ice-Skater

lithograph on laid paper, 1922
49 x 37 cm / 19 1/4 x 15 1/2 in. image
68 x 54,2 cm / 27 3/4 x 21 3/8 in. sheet
signed lower right, numbered '69/100' lower left
edition of 100
Hofmaier 217 B.



Ice Skating

lithograph on laid paper, 1922
 40,6 x 24,5 cm / 16 1/8 x 9 3/8 in. image
 70,5 x 53 cm / 27 3/4 x 20 7/8 in. sheet
 signed lower right
 edition of 200, partly numbered
 Hofmaier 223 B.c.





Dutch Landscape with Bathers

oil on canvas, 1941

50 x 76 cm / 19 ⁵/₈ x 30 in.

signed, dated and inscribed 'A[msterdam] 41' lower left

Göpel 572

Noted in Beckmann's handlist with this title.

Provenance

- Private collection
- Galerie Beyeler, Basel (ca. 1968)
- Kunsthandel Franz Resch, Gauting
- Private collection, Mannheim
- Private collection, Nordrhein-Westfalen





Wooden Bridge

drypoint etching on velin, 1922

28,6 x 23,8 cm / 11 1/4 x 9 3/8 in. image

47 x 35,5 cm / 18 1/2 x 14 in. sheet

signed lower right, dated and titled lower left

unnumbered edition of 150 + 25 on Japan paper + 100 on imitation Japan cardboard

Hofmaier 242 B.b.

LETTER TP STEFAN LACKNER, ROTTERDAM, 29.1.1938

"Politics is a subordinate matter, its form of appearance constantly changes depending on the needs, the same way cocottes adjust to the needs of men by transforming and masking themselves. – Because of that it is not fundamental. – That is about what endures, what is unique, what is in the stream of illusions – withdraw from the workings of the shadows. Perhaps we will manage to do that."



The Windmills

pen and Indian ink and pencil on velin, 1946

33 x 24,7 cm / 13 x 9 3/4 in.

In the spring of 1946 Max ad Quappi Beckmann drove from Amsterdam to Laren near Hilversum several times. After one of these outings he made the pen drawing of the windmills there. In the summer of 1946 he created the painting *Große Landschaft Laren mit den Windmühlen* (Large Landscape Laren with Windmills) (Göpel 726, Saint Louis Art Museum).

In another painting, *Luftballon mit Windmühle* (Balloon with Windmill) (Göpel 749, Portland, Oregon, Art Museum)

Beckmann dealt with the subject again a little later.



Spring Landscape with New Construction

pencil on paper, 1928

30,1 x 21 cm / 11 ⁷/₈ x 8 ¹/₄ in.

verso inscribed by Quappi Beckmann 'This drawing was done by my husband Max Beckmann.

Mathilde Q. Beckmann Frankfurt a. M. 1926. (Q.)'

This drawing of 1928 is a study for the painting *Neubau* (New Construction) in the collection of the Museum Frieder Burda, which Beckmann also created in 1928. The artist has added colour notations for the later painting in the drawing.

Provenance	Literature
- Vladimir Selinsky, New York	- S. von Wiese. Max Beckmanns zeichnerisches Werk
- Private collection, New York	1903-1925. Düsseldorf 1978. S. 146.



Workmen on a Roof

pastel and watercolour on paper, 1937

97,5 x 120 cm / 38 ³/₈ x 47 ¹/₄ in.

signed and dated lower right

verso inscribed 'auf Leitersprosse' (on rung of ladder)

Beckmann/Gohr/Hollein 90

Provenance

- Mathilde Quappi Beckmann, New York
- Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York
- Private collection, USA
- Private collection

Exhibited

- Grace Borgenicht Gallery, New York 1984. Max Beckmann. Col. ill.
- Literature
- Erpel, Fritz. Max Beckmann - Leben und Werk. Die Selbstbildnisse. Berlin 1985. No. 150/A, ill. p. 265, p. 345





MAX BECKMANN, SIX SENTENCES ON FIGURATION

PROLOGUE TO THE CATALOGUE: MAX BECKMANN.

DAS GESAMMELTE WERK, STÄDTISCHE KUNSTHALLE MANNHEIM, 1928

I.

Changing the optical impression of the world of objects by a transcendental arithmetic of the soul of the subject determines the construction of the picture.

Therefore, in principal, any alteration of the object is allowed which has a sufficiently strong creative power behind it.

What matters is the consistent application of a single principle of form during the alteration.

II.

The transformation of the three-dimensional space of the world of objects into the two-dimensional world of the canvas is the object of a comprehensive design.

If the canvas is only filled with two-dimensional conception of space, we shall have applied art and ornament.

III.

It is inadmissible to dissolve or break the corporeal volume when pursuing three-dimensionality, because artificially invented insertions of a two-dimensional nature of space – i. e. with purely decorative properties – have to be used to unite the broken or severed three-dimensional things in space. That would lead to a blend of various formal elements, in turn resulting in an impurity of the artistic principle, which may only follow a single formal element.

IV.

The individualisation of the object through the sentiment serves to enrich its form.

The individual alterations of the form of all of the object's details are a necessary means to display aggregate corporeal volumes. The application of the sentiment increases the individuality to a type.

V.

Light as a means of arranging the pictorial plane and penetrating deeper into the form of the object.

Its application in the design of the picture takes place through the apriori mechanism of the soul of the subject which creates the architecture of the pictures.

VI.

Colour as a means of expressing the basic emotional temper of the subject.

It is secondary to the treatment of light and form.

A predominance of colour at the expense of form and space is the beginning of a two-dimensional treatment of the pictorial plane, i. e. of commercial art. Broken shades and pure local colours must be used.



Still Life with Green Book and Radishes

oil on canvas, 1949

55 x 34,6 cm / 21 ⁵/₈ x 13 ⁵/₈ in.

signed, dated and inscribed '49 St. [ouis]' lower left

Göpel 786

In his handlist, the artist noted: '10) Still life with green book and radishes. April 5. Buster May.'

Provenance

- Studio of the artist
- Morton D. May, St Louis (1949)
- Private collection USA

Exhibited

- The Arts Club of Chicago, 1951. German Expressionists and Max Beckmann from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Morton D. May. No 32.
- City Art Museum, St. Louis, 1956. Paintings and Drawings by Max Beckmann from St. Louis Art Collections.
- Pius XII Memorial Library, St. Louis University, St. Louis, 1960. Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Morton D. May. No 85, ill.
- The Denver Art Museum; Art Galleries, University of California, Los Angeles; Fine Arts Gallery, San Diego; M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco; The Art Institute of Chicago; Akron Art Museum; The Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh; The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; The Baltimore Museum of Art; The William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City. 1960 - 1963. German Expressionist Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Morton D. May. No 91.

- Jacksonville Art Museum; Vanderbilt University, Nashville, 1966. German Expressionist Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Morton D. May. No 17.
- Portland Art Museum, 1967. German Expressionist Paintings from the Collection of Morton D. May. No 46.
- Kunsthalle, Bielefeld; Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Köln; Museum Folkwang, Essen; Kunsthalle, Bremen; Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe; Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts, Wien. 1968/1969. Deutsche Expressionisten aus der Sammlung Morton D. May St. Louis. No 28, ill.
- Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York; The Saint Louis Art Museum, 1970. The Morton D. May Collection of 20th Century German Masters. No 52, ill.
- Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, 1994/1995. Max Beckmann, Meisterwerke aus Saint Louis. No 59, ill. p. 186

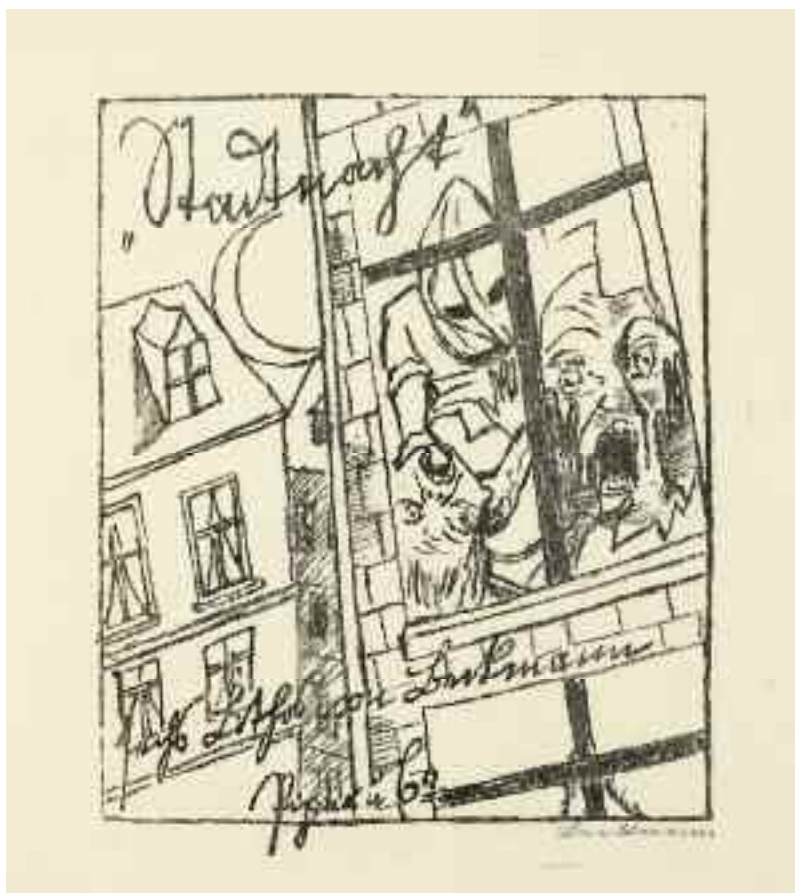
Literature

- McCue, George. St. Louis Beckmanns. Paintings owned here represent flavor of late artist's work; (Obituary for Beckmann) St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 14 Januar 1951, ill.
- Maur, Karin von. Max Beckmann, Meisterwerke 1907-1950. Stuttgart 1994. No 59, ill. p. 187.



Suburban Morning

lithograph on Japan paper, 1920
 19,6 x 15 cm / 7 ³/₄ x 5 ⁷/₈ in. image
 30,7 x 24,7 cm / 12 ¹/₈ x 9 ³/₄ in. sheet
 signed lower right
 unnumbered edition of 100
 Hofmaier 168 B.



City Night (Title-Page of the Stadtnacht portfolio)

lithograph on Japan paper, 1920
 18 x 15,2 cm / 7 x 5 ⁷/₈ in. image
 30,8 x 24,7 cm / 12 ¹/₈ x 9 ³/₄ in. sheet
 signed lower right
 unnumbered edition of 100
 Hofmaier 164

City Night

lithograph on Japan paper, 1920
 19 x 15,3 cm / 7 1/2 x 6 in. image
 31 x 24,6 cm / 12 1/4 x 13 5/8 in. sheet
 signed lower right
 unnumbered edition of 100
 Hofmaier 166 II. B.



City Night Title-Page, Suburban Morning and *City Night* are three of seven illustrations for Lili von Braunbehrens' book of poems 'Stadt nacht' (City Night).

Morning

drypoint etching on laid paper, 1923
 25,4 x 30,6 cm / 10 x 12 in. image
 36,5 x 42,2 cm / 14 3/8 x 16 5/8 in. sheet
 signed lower right, dated, titled and inscribed
 '(Probedruck)' (trial proof) lower left
 trial proof before the edition of 275
 Hofmaier 299 A.





Mr. Müller, I and the Barmaid

drypoint etching on velin, 1920
 19,2 x 15 cm / 7 ³/₄ x 6 ¹/₈ in. image
 34,4 x 24,5 cm / 13 ¹/₂ x 9 ⁵/₈ in. sheet
 signed lower right
 edition of 40 + 10 on imitation Japan paper
 Hofmaier 161 B.b.



Dostojewski II

etching on laid paper, 1921
 16,8 x 11,5 cm / 6 ⁵/₈ x 4 ¹/₂ in. image
 27,9 x 20,3 cm / 11 x 8 in. sheet
 dated '20.1.22' and inscribed 'Berlin' lower left
 with dedication 'fuer Franke herzlichst von Beckmann'
 (to Franke kindest regards Beckmann) lower right
 unnumbered edition of 215 signed
 + 1190 unsigned prints on laid paper
 Hofmaier 187 B.b.

GÜNTHER FRANKE ABOUT BECKMANN

"This remarkable man immediately made an impression on me, although I actually came from Klee and was not very close to his work. He dedicated his etching 'Dostojewski' to me ...".

Source: Ingrid Seidenfaden, Das Schönste von Beckmann: Gespräch mit Günther Franke, der seine Sammlung verschenkte, in: Süddeutsche Zeitung, 11 July 1974.

Bitterness (Self-Portrait)

lithograph on Japan paper, 1920

19,5 x 15 cm / 7 ⁵/₈ x 5 ⁷/₈ in. image

30,8 x 24,5 cm / 12 ¹/₈ x 9 ⁵/₈ in. sheet

signed lower right

unnumbered edition of 100

Hofmaier 167 II. B.



MAX BECKMANN, EIN BEKENNTNIS.

CONTRIBUTION TO: SCHÖPFERISCHE KONFESSION (1920), 1918

Now that I can often – with astonishment – observe eloquent painters, my head frequently swims because my poor tongue is not at all able to capture the inner enthusiasm and the flaming passions for the things of the visible world with beautiful and spirited words. But in the end, I have learned to take it easy, and now I am actually quite happy, telling myself, you are a painter; do your job and let those who can talk do the talking. I think the reason why I love painting so much is because it forces us to be factual. There is nothing I hate as much as sentimentality. The stronger and more intense my will to capture the ineffable things in life becomes, the heavier and deeper the trauma of our existence burns within me, the tighter does my mouth close, the colder does my will become to grab this eerie, jolting monster

of vitality and lock it up in crystal-clear, sharp lines and surfaces, to force it down and strangle it.

I do not cry; I hate tears, those signs of slavery. I just always think of the object.

Of a leg, an arm, of the breach of a surface through the wonderful feeling of contraction, of the division of space, of the combination of straight lines in relation to the curved ones. Of the amusing compilation of small round things, often with varying legs, that add up to the straightness and flatness of wall edges and the depth of table surfaces, wooden crosses and house facades. For me, the most important thing is roundness, enclosed in height and width. The roundness in the surface, the depth in the feeling of the surface, the architecture of the picture.

DIARY, WEDNESDAY, 31. DECEMBER 1940

Every good picture must readily fit into good architecture. That is almost a yardstick for the quality of the picture. As soon as the illusion of space goes only slightly beyond that which is artistically necessary, it breaches the surface of the picture and, along with it, the actual main principle of art that separates it from naturalism. Especially for this, placing it in an architectural room is a good yardstick. Of course, there are

many cases of pictures in which the surface has been preserved excellently, and yet the pictures are bad, because they lack an original idea. – But this is the only way to locate the greatest power of suggestion, where the feeling of nature has merged with the pictorial plane, creating the illusion of space on the canvas.

The metaphysics of substance.

Bar Créola

oil on canvas, 1943

80,5 x 60 cm / 31 1/2 x 23 7/8 in.

signed, dated and inscribed 'A[msterdam] 43' lower centre

Göpel 625

Provenance

- Studio of the artist, Amsterdam
- Dr. Peter Beckmann, Ebenhausen near Munich (stamp on verso)
- Stuttgarter Kunstkabinett, 18. Kunstauktion 24. - 26. November 1953, No. 1377
- Dr. Hans Sommer, Wertingen
- Dr. Ferdinand Ziersch, Wuppertal (since 1966)
- Ilse Ziersch, Feldafing near Munich (until 1973)
- Private collection, Germany
- Private collection, Germany

Exhibited

- Galerie Günther Franke, Munich 1946. Max Beckmann. No. 6
- Galerie Axel Vömel, Düsseldorf 1951. 35 Deutsche Maler. No 2
- Galerie Welz, Salzburg 1952. Max Beckmann. No. 119
- Galerie Wilhelm Grosshennig, Düsseldorf 1966. Ausstellung deutscher und französischer Meisterwerke des 20. Jahrhunderts. Col. ill.
- Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris 1968; Haus der Kunst, Munich 1969; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels 1969. Max Beckmann. No. 80, ill.
- Galerie Thomas, Munich 1981. Sammlung Rheingarten. P. 8-11, col. ill.



Tuesday, 19 October 1943

G. and Fr. came to visit – nevertheless money again – oh well, I need that, too – but the voice of conviction is more important. Alas, it does not make itself heard very well. – I had envisioned my pictures to radiate in remote gods in the dark night – but – was that already me? – no – far from me, from my poor self, they circled as independent entities that sneered down at me, "this is us" and "you n'existe plus" – o ho – the battle of the self-born gods against their inventor? – Well, I must bear that as well – like it or not – until I have overcome the big wall – then I might be myself and "dance the dance" of the gods – outside of my will and representation – and yet be myself. For, you should realise that I manufacture such lustre out of your dissolute mystery. ("O – is it not us?!")

Saturday, 25 August 1945

It is, indeed, a damned fate to be what I am. To live in extreme ecstasies of perception and then suffer humiliation again, like a little office employee. – The leaps are big.

Friday, 11 January 1946

I'd just like to know why painting is so strenuous. – Daubing that bit of paint – good heavens! – "Laboratorium" completed. Painted for 4 or 5 hours. – Nice rest, that is.

Thursday 2 May 1946

Success, no success, madness and boredom are flooding me and washing away my foundations. – Fifteen years ago, I was more amusing. Especially for myself. Now, the regular success life has begun, which one fears to lose, apparently – although I am merely the shadow of the power I used to represent 20 years ago. They tickle the old corpse with laurel, while they denied it the glorious helot.

Sunday, 12 May 1946

A day of human weakness by accepting publicity, even in its weaker forms, although it came from London, at least. What is it that you want, you old fool. You can't complain, even though you are still locked up a little in this flat-as-a-board country. All else is an even shabbier illusion – so be quiet.

Thursday, 4 July 1946

Cold wrath rules my soul. Are we never to break free of this eternally hideous vegetative physicality? Shall all our deeds be nothing but piddling trivialities compared to the boundless universe? – One thing, at least, is still free. Hatred – wrath and the inner refusal of obedience to the atrocious, ever obscure laws that have been imposed on us for times immeasurable in the nameless, ghastly determination of will. – Protest is all we have left – protest and haughtiness of the miserable slave – the only form of inner freedom – and with that we shall live.

Boundless contempt for the lecherous enticements with which we are persistently lured back to the tight rein of life. And then, when we are almost dying of thirst and try to quench it, we hear the jeering of the gods. – You are licking salt, you poor, megalomaniac slave, and you are dancing delightfully and infinitely awkwardly in the arena of infinity, under the thundering applause of the divine audience. The better you do it, the more awkward you get. Most awkward of all are the ascetics, who come up with ever new sensory means of austerity or self-castigation – saddest of all is the pure voluptuary, because he drinks fire and brimstone instead of water. – Let us stick to contempt.

Sunday, 3 August 1947

Don't do it – don't do it – a fearful voice inside of me keeps saying – don't go over there [note: to the USA]. It is a danger and your undoing, and a great embarrassment on top of it all – those poor in spirit and body expect you to revive them, and you can't. – So why are you doing it? – Pure madness and perhaps even a self-destructive urge – exactly because it is so pleasant.

Monday, 8 September 1947. New York.

Arrival at daybreak; giants, shrouded in damp fog, stood sleepily in Manhattan – and me in front of the public bath, waiting for a boring Dutchman and swearing, while the foggy Statue of Liberty glided by outside. Dreadful moment of nerves – during the passport control in the awfully hot lunchroom. Finally, we wobbled along the gangway into the dreadful Holland-America pier building, and nobody was there in the endless halls. Sweating hot and empty, and suddenly there was Valentin with a 'hello' and roses, later Drewes, too, the future colleague. Valentin took care of the awful customs procedures fabulously.



Young Woman with Glass

pen and Indian ink, watercolour, gouache, and pencil on laid paper, 1946/49

42,2 x 30,2 cm / 16 5/8 x 11 7/8 in.

verso pencil drawing 'Frauenkopf' and inscription by Quappi Beckmann: 'Girl with Glass,
Pendrawing done in Amsterdam 1946, watercolored in St. Louis 1949 by Max Beckmann'

Beckmann/Gohr/Hollein 143

Provenance

- Mathilde Q. Beckmann, New York
- Sammlung Ahlers, Herford
- Private collection, Switzerland

Exhibited

- Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rom 1996. Max Beckmann. No 42, p. 208, ill. p. 201.
- Galerie Pels-Leusden, Kampen auf Sylt 1997. Zeichnungen und Aquarelle aus dem Nachlaß Mathilde Q. Beckmann und andere Sammlungen. No 57, ill. on cover and p. 38.

- Sprengel Museum, Hannover 1998. Circus Beckmann. Werke aus dem Sprengel Museum Hannover, der Sammlung Ahlers und internationalen Sammlungen. No 43, p. 129, ill. p. 62.

- Singer Museum, Laren 1998. Duitse Expressionisten, Collectie Ahlers. No B 20.

- Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Albertinum, Dresden 2000. Expressionistische Bilder, Sammlung Firmengruppe Ahlers. No 36.

- Tate Modern, London und The Museum of Modern Art, Queens, New York 2003. Max Beckmann. No 148, ill. p. 233.

Before the Ball (Two Women with Cat)

oil on canvas, 1949

142,5 x 89 cm / 56 x 35 in.

signed, dated and inscribed 'N[ew]Y[ork] 49' upper left

Göpel 796

In his handlist, the artist noted: '17) Before the ball. Started Sept. 14. Finished October 2'.

Provenance

- Studio of the artist
- Private collection, New York
- Galerie Neuendorf, Hamburg
- Private collection (since 1986)

Exhibited

- Frank Perls, Beverly Hills 1950. Max Beckmann
- Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York 1967. Twelve Paintings of Women by Max Beckmann. No. 11, ill.



1949

After having visited St. Louis, New Orleans and Boulder, Beckmann arrived in New York on 30 August 1949, where Curt Valentin had found an apartment for him and Quappi in 13th Street. He dreaded the change and did not know what was in store for him there. Prior to his departure, he noted in his diary: "How to keep my solitude and a more or less clean shirt there, I have no clue – but I must". Yet, already on 31 August, he wrote: "The evening run through town, to the plaza, was nice; and for the first time, I felt the freedom of the big city again... After all, I don't care where I am – as long as it's not a small town." The artist was celebrated in New York, invited to parties and functions, his works were exhibited, the newspapers

wrote about him, and he found a favourite eating place: 'Pete's Restaurant'.

On 14 September, he wrote: "Sketch of »vor dem Ball« (Before the Ball)"; and on 27 September, he added: "Worked on »zwei Frauen« (two Women) almost all day long, pink green and black grey. Pretty interesting, perhaps even finished – I'll have to see later." But only on Sunday, 2 October, he knew: "»Zwei Frauen mit Katze« (Two Women with a Cat) is finished (quite sure)". That same month, he received the sought-after Carnegie Prize that the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, awards once a year to an outstanding artist. With that, he had truly arrived in the US.



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Christiane Zeiller. Max Beckmann Die Skizzenbücher / The Sketchbooks. 2 volumes. Ostfildern 2010.

Stephan von Wiese, author of the catalogue raisonné of Max Beckmann's drawings of 1903 to 1925, is working on a comprehensive edition of a catalogue raisonné of the drawings from the early works to the artist's death.

Owners of drawings by Max Beckmann are requested to contact Ms. Patricia von Eicken, Galerie Thomas: p.voneicken@galerie-thomas

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| Max Beckmann – Bekenntnis 1918. Drei Briefe an eine Malerin. Berlin 1966 | P. 32 |

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