



ART

RECENT GERMAN GRAPHIC

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AN EXHIBITION

SELECTED BY DEUTSCHER KUNSTRAT

1955

NEW ZEALAND

THE GERMANS ARE A PEOPLE OF DRAFTSMEN and graphic artists. This does not mean that they do not know how to paint, but that almost every German painter is a peintre-graveur. With many of them – E. L. Kirchner for instance – we are inclined to regard their graphic work as their decisive contribution to the history of art.

The small selection from present-day production in Germany here shown is indeed not complete, but it has been made in such a way as to give the outsider an adequate impression of the forces at work. The older generation is represented by Erich Heckel and Karl Hofer, the middle one by Otto Dix and Otto Pankok – along with Gerhard Marcks and Ewald Mataré – and the younger by a number of artists who are following a great variety of roads, and who mirror the play of present forces and possibilities which are esteemed to hold promise. The picture would be richer if Germany had not suffered great losses since 1914 among her artists and sculptors, as among the other representatives of cultural life: Franz Marc, August Macke, Wilhelm Lehmbruck, E. L. Kirchner, Oskar Schlemmer and Paul Klee might well have still been with us; war or illness put a premature end to their work.

Among the senior generation of painters, Emil Nolde, Erich Heckel, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Max Pechstein, who belonged to the group „Die Brücke“, and the South German Karl Hofer, are still alive. It was their merit to have been the first in Germany to substitute for Impressionism a design of the world more in keeping with the spirit of the times. It was a very German thought to place man and his destiny once again in the center of artistic creation, after the Impressionists had made of the colourful reflection of the world the exclusive theme of art. The Germans did something similar to Matisse and the „Fauves“ in France, with the difference that they put greater emphasis on expression – whence the name „Expressionists“ which was given to them.

A new language had to be developed before the graphic arts could convey their message – a language capable of translating the imaginative conceptions of the peintre-graveurs directly into black and white. It was no longer a question of interpreting nature, but of adjusting it to the outline of the world which the artists brought with them. Nature and spirit met in the centre, the lines and planes only partly reproduced the object; for the rest, they were invented. In their desire for



more rapid and far-reaching realization, the artists proceeded from the whole to the parts, and not, as formerly, from the parts to the whole. As this method of work resulted in departures from the model, people talked of deformation. They would have been better advised to point to the hieroglyphic character of the drawings, for, in these highly condensed representations, there was something of the concentration of the picture to the brevity of hieroglyphics.

Otto Dix was one of those artists who did not emerge until after the First World War. His series of 50 etchings "The War" aroused the greatest interest. By reason of his acute gift of observation, he was counted among the protagonists of the "Neue Sachlichkeit" (New Realism) – an artistic tendency which soon degenerated into académisme, and even Dix did not succeed in maintaining his complete independence from the support of tradition, particularly romantic tradition. From the very beginning, his critical vision and his feelings were in

conflict; but it was precisely this conflict which was responsible for his positive achievement. In the case of Otto Pankok, who is older in years, the relation between reality and feeling is similar to that with Otto Dix, but Pankok has more pathos and expresses his inner sympathy with the object in rhythmical and arabesque-like forms.

Johanna Schuetz-Wolff has earned recognition as a weaver; the graphic arts come only second in her activities. The sculptors Marcks and Mataré on the other hand have devoted themselves with great earnestness and success to wood-engraving since the very beginning of their careers. Their method of working directly on the material links them with the "Bruecke" their feeling for form, on the other hand, with those artists who invent rather than copy. They are never abstract; Marcks emphasizes the indissolubility of the human figure, and his "Orpheus" is a work of the humanistic spirit. However, his formal language is not classical; he indicates, concentrates, transforms, and yet retains the totality of the object. Mataré departs much further from this totality and at times approaches a more decorative variety of abstract art in which the black-white and coloured surfaces are interspersed like the warp and woof of a picture tapestry.

Of the younger artists, by no means all are divorced from the object. Roughly half of them remain the prisoners of optical reality. A master of woodcut like H. A. P. Grieshaber succeeds, by dint of a rigorous simplification and development of forms, such as was conceived by the "Bruecke" group, in reaching beyond the customary format and imparting a monumental character to his prints. These are no longer of portfolio size but must be hung. By contrast, Rolf Nesch, with craftsmanship as his starting-point, has created something quite new in expressive art. By soldering or disposing loosely on a metal ground, wires, cut-out or punched tinplate, button-moulds, etc, and colouring them in various ways for the different proofs, he has succeeded in producing monotypes of the most vigorous pictorial effect. The observer is at a complete loss to know these "metal designs" – as Nesch calls his plates – are produced. Sometimes he continues his theme over several plates and joins the prints together vertically or horizontally into "roller pictures".

The most discussed are the abstract artists: Willi Baumeister, E. W. Nay, Fritz Winter, Georg Meistermann, Hann Trier and Josef Fassbender. These are the best known but not the only ones. What they are striving for is not easy to express in words, for speech – the means of expression most universally used

and common to all men – has remained far behind pictorial art.

Common to all these artists is the refusal of the object and of the forms of nature; in other respects, they vary greatly from each other. Each has his own conception of the world; but these conceptions are no longer bound to visual facts. Reality is present here also, for each of the artists in question is, after all, a member of present society and participates in its discoveries and experiences. But this reality is less in the foreground and cannot be pictorially reproduced in "models". The natural scientist also must today forego models and content himself with "formulae", which, however, as Max Planck often emphasized, have a symbolical meaning.

The artist begins with what is available – ground, planes, colour, form. He labours as the musician composes, and, if he possesses intuition and not simply dexterity, the resultant work speaks to the beholder with the same intensity with which he created it.

Willi Baumeister began as an objective artist, and even today one sometimes meets with visual recollections in his pictures, but they are only recollections; the visual has undergone transmutation. His silkscreen prints give an idea of what today's graphic techniques are capable of rendering – they have become a substitute for pictures. Nay is the very opposite of Baumeister, although he too, as a pupil of Hofer, began as an objective artist. He is a contrapunctual, not a symphonic artist; he sets point against point, and a single coloured form can become the theme of a fugue. As with Johann Sebastian Bach, this theme, with the possibilities it offers of repetition, reversal, etc., determines the progress and sense of the work.

Meistermann and Winter are similar opposites. Whereas, with the former the visual is present in the distant undertones of reminiscence, the latter's plates have certainly nothing to do with optical experiences – landscapes, for instance – as many people believe. The lover of art likes to read into work which strikes him as significant something definable, but the artist does not aim at any identity between his creation and a known content. When the work is finished perhaps casts round for a title, but titles are no more than poetic metaphors. Pictures and designs are not made today; they happen, and the "it" is generally stronger than the "I".

Fassbender and Trier too are the antipodes of each other. Fassbender is full of indications which one could interpret; Trier's plates on the other hand are like handwriting. It is indeed impossible to read the separate letters, but their linking



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ERNST WILHELM NAY

in words and combinations of words results in mysterious diagrams of great charm.

Graphic and calligraphic elements are fundamental to present-day art. This is not true of Germany alone, but is more characteristic of that country than of France or America. The painter Paul Klee once said before one of his letter pictures: "Everything really originated from these few signs". This sentence lights up the artistic situation of today. When things no longer exist in their accustomed individuality, visibility and order – and that is the case today – what else remains but to establish communication with the stream of phenomena by the medium of signs rich in associations – notes between which, as in music, the essential may be perceived?

In the effort to achieve this, the artist may remain within the realm of the formal, the exact, almost the mathematical, or he may make use of association, which, in a sense, imposes itself without his help. For, as Goethe already discovered, the laws of nature and the laws of mind correspond. A painter like Meistermann gladly makes use of such associations; a painter like Nay avoids them. This has nothing to do with questions of value or development; art is as multiform today as in earlier times, and this multiformity is great even within the abstract sphere. In any event, the possibilities of expression without reference to an object are very far from being exhausted.

Will Grohmann

CATALOGUE

Willi Baumeister

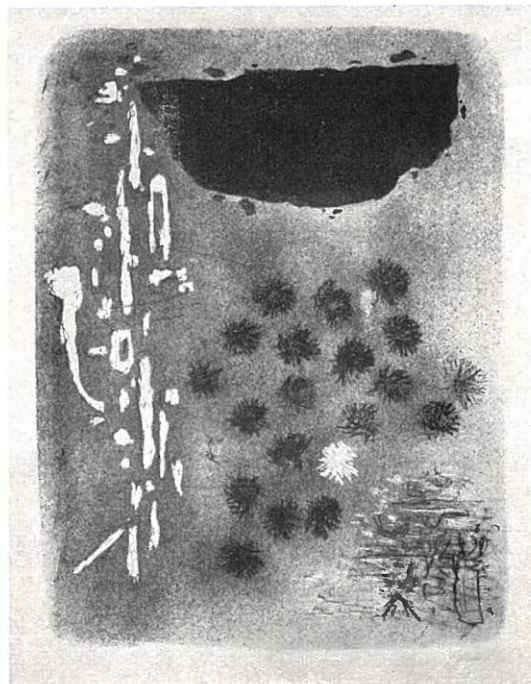
Born on January 22, 1889 in Stuttgart. Lives in Stuttgart. Studies at the Stuttgart Academy under the direction of Adolf Hölzel. Friend with Oskar Schlemmer, since 1945 professor at the Stuttgart Academy. Member of the German Arts Council.

- 1 Ideogramm – Ideogram
1937, serigr., sg.
- 2 Nocturne
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
- 3 Rot-Blau-Gelb – Red-Blue-Yellow
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
- 4 Safer
1953, lithogr., sg.
- 5 Fantom – Phantom
1953, colour-serigr., sg.
- 6 Komposition in Grün – Composition in Green
1953, colour-serigr., sg.
- 7 Allegro
1953, lithogr., sg.
- 8 Steintraube – Stone-Grapes
1953, lithogr., sg.
- 9 Kreuzigung – Crucifixion
1954, lithogr., sg.

Gerth Biese

Born on August 20, 1901 in Karlsruhe. Lives in Tübingen. Since 1950 art instructor at the University of Tübingen.

- 10 Engeltürme II – Towers of Angels II
colour-woodcut, sg.
- 11 Mädchen mit Gitarre – Girl with Mandoline
colour-woodcut, sg.
- 12 Die Wächter – The Guardians
1951, colour-woodcut, sg.



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WILLI BAUMEISTER

Otto Coester

Born on April 3, 1902. Lives in Düsseldorf.

- 13–16 Composition 1–4
1954, serigr., sg.
- 13–16 Gallery „Der Spiegel“, Cologne.

Otto Dix

Born on December 2, 1891 in Gera. Lives in Hemmenhofen at the Lake of Constance. Handicraftsman-training in commercial painting and decorating, later studies at the Academy in Dresden. 1927–33 professor at the Dresden Academy.

- 17 Rothaariges Mädchen – Red-Haired Girl
1948, colour-lithogr., sg.
- 18 Einäugiger Bauer – One-eyed Peasant
1948, lithogr., sg.



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OTTO DIX

- 19 Ecco homo
1948, lithogr., sg.
- 20 Saul und David – Saul and David
1951, lithogr., sg.
- 21 Schweiß Tuch der Veronika – The Cloth of Veronica
1951, lithogr., sg.
- 22 Hahn – Rooster
1952, colour-lithogr., sg.

Joseph Fassbender

Born on April 14, 1903 in Cologne. Lives in Cologne. 1929 Villa-Romana-Prize.

- 23 Der Stein – The Stone
1954, lithogr., sg.
- 24 Sternzeichen – Stars
1954, woodcut, sg.
- 23, 24 Gallery „Der Spiegel“, Cologne.

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H. A. P. Grieshaber

Born on February 15, 1909 at Rot-Leutkirch Castle. Lives in Reutlingen, Württemberg. Grieshaber's work only consists of woodcuts.

- 25 Freunde – Friends
1953, colour-woodcut, sg.
- 26 Anwalt – Lawyer
1953, colour-woodcut, sg.
- 27 Chow Chow
1953, colour-woodcut, sg.
- 28 Herbst – Autumn
1953, colour-woodcut, sg.
- 29 Standesamt – Registrar's Office
1953, colour-woodcut, sg.
- 30 Tierwärter – Keeper
1954, colour-woodcut, sg.

Willem Grimm

Born on May 2, 1905 in Eberstadt/Hessen. Lives in Hamburg. Since 1946 professor at the Landeskunstschule.

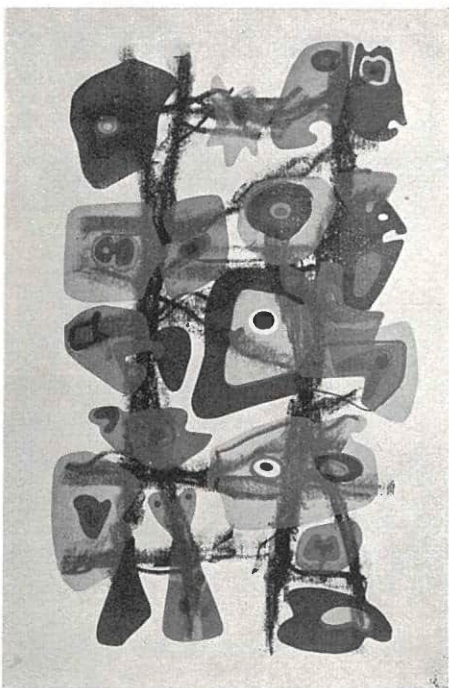
- 31 Orest
1950, woodcut, sg.
- 32 Baseler Karneval – Carnival in Basle
1952, woodcut, sg.



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H. A. P. GRIESHABER

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OTTO COESTER

Gustav Hagemann

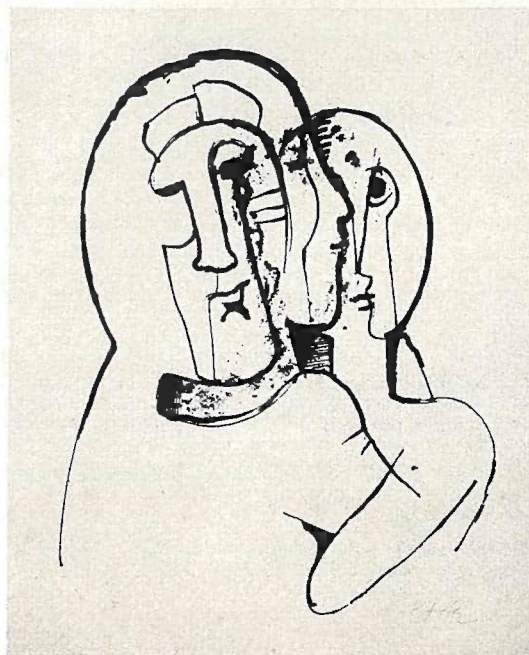
Born 1891 in Niedersachsen. Lives in Salzgitter. Since 1927 every year, except the years of war, for several months in North Scandinavia and Lapland.

- 33 Ren
1952, colour-woodcut, sg.
- 34 Polarnacht – Polar Night
1952, woodcut, sg.
- 35 Zwei Frauen – Two Women
1954, woodcut, sg.

Erich Heckel

Born on July 31, 1883 in Döbeln/Sachsen. Lives in Hemmenhofen at the Lake of Constance. 1905–11 in Dresden with Kirchner, Schmidt-Rottluff and other founders of the Artists-Group "Brücke". Since 1950 professor at the Karlsruhe Academy. Member of the German Arts Council.

- 36 Birnen – Pears
1948, colour-lithogr., sg.
- 37 Große Wolke – Big Cloud
1951, woodcut, sg.



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KARL HOFER

38 Bildniskopf – Portrait

1950, colour-woodcut, sg.

39 Circusclown – Clown

1951, woodcut, sg.

40 Schlafende Frau – Sleeping Woman

1952, colour-lithogr., sg.

41 Tulpen – Tulips

1952, colour-lithogr., sg.

Karl Hofer

Born on October 11, 1878 in Karlsruhe. Lives in Berlin. 1913–33 professor at the Berlin Academy. Since 1945 director of the Academy. Member of the German Arts Council.

42 Hunger

lithogr., sg.

43 Zwei Männer – Two Men

lithogr., sg.

44 Menschen – Men

lithogr., sg.

Rudolf Kügler

Born on September 27, 1921 in Berlin. Lives in Berlin.

- 45 Aus Ägypten – Egypt
1954, colour-lithogr., sg.
- 46 Jazz
1954, colour-lithogr., sg.

Dietmar Lemcke

Born on January 13, 1930 in Goldap/East Prussia. Lives in Berlin.

- 47 Gethsemane
1951, colour-etching, sg.

Gerhard Marcks

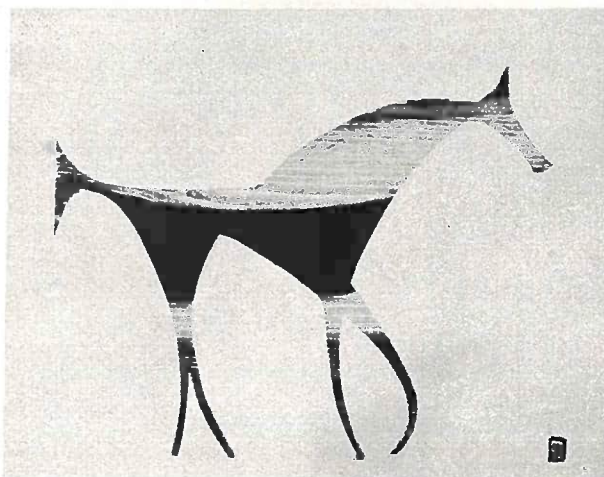
Born on February 18, 1889 in Berlin, lives in Cologne. Sculptor. 1919–25 Director of the pottery workshop Dornburg of the Weimar Bauhaus. 1933–45 in Berlin. 1946–1950 professor at the Landeskunstschule Hamburg. Member of the German Arts Council.

- 48 Der Pflüger – The Ploughman
1944, woodcut, sg.
- 49 Alte mit Spaten – Old Woman with Spade
1945, woodcut, sg.
- 50 Charon
1946, woodcut, sg.
- 51 Ostflüchtlinge – Refugees from the East
1947, woodcut, sg.
- 52 Stierkampf III – Bullfight III
1950, woodcut, sg.
- 53 Zusammenbrechender Stier – Collapsing Bull
1950, woodcut, sg.



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GERHARD MARCKS



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EWALD MATARÉ

- 54 "La Farucca"
1951, woodcut, sg.
 - 55 Fischer am Netz – Fishermen with Nets
1951, woodcut, sg.
- 48–55 Gallery Rudolf Hoffmann, Hamburg.

Ewald Mataré

Born on February 25, 1887 in Aachen. Lives in Büderich/Rheinland. Sculptor. Since 1918 sculptor in Berlin. 1932/33 and since 1945 professor at the Düsseldorf Academy. Member of the German Arts Council.

- 56 Sieben Pferde – Seven Horses
colour-woodcut, sg.
- 57 Schreitendes Pferd – Stepping Horse
woodcut, sg.
- 58 Drei Pferde – Three Horses
colour-woodcut, sg.
- 59 Zueinander – Together
woodcut, sg.
- 60 Vier Kühe – Four Cows
colour-woodcut, sg.
- 61 Zwei Kühe – Two Cows
woodcut, sg.
- 62 Kühe auf der Weide – Cows on the Pasture
colour-woodcut, sg.

Georg Meistermann

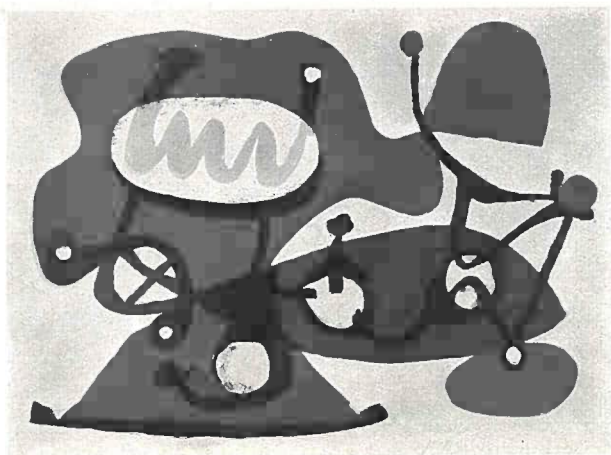
Born on June 16, 1911 in Solingen. Lives in Cologne. Leading in stainglass. Professor at the Stadel-Art-Academy. Member of the German Arts Council.

- 63 Das Blatt – The Leaf
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
 - 64 Pflanze – Plant
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
 - 65 Symbolum
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
 - 66 Efeublätter – Ivy
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
 - 67 Qualle – Jelly-Fish
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
- 63–67 Gallery „Der Spiegel“, Cologne.

Rolf Mueller-Landau

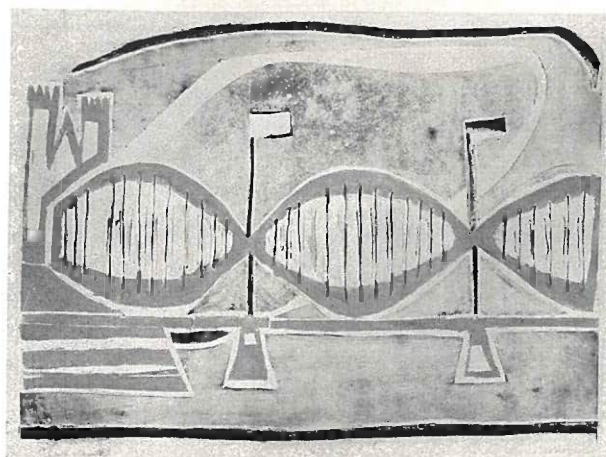
Born on June 5, 1903 in Kayingchow/China. Lives in Heuchelheim-Klingen/Palatinate. 1922–1929 studies at the academy of Karlsruhe.

- 68 Fischkaskade – Cascade of Fishes
1953, colour-monotype., sg.
- 69 Der Unnahbare – The Inaccessible
1952, colour-monotyp., sg.
- 70 Samum
1953, colour-monotyp., sg.



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GEORG MEISTERMANN



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ROLF NESCH

Ernst Wilhelm Nay

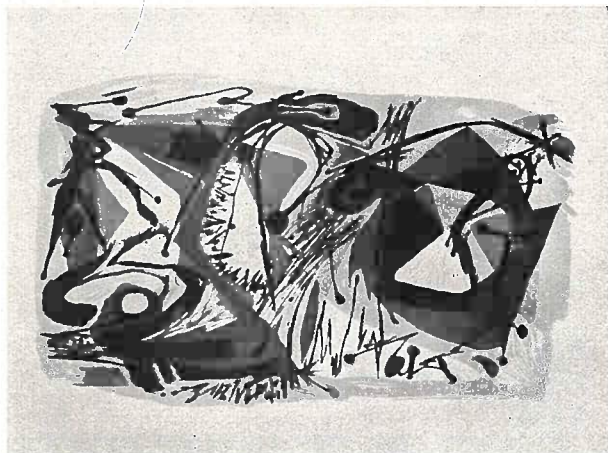
Born on June 11, 1902 in Berlin. Lives in Cologne. 1936/37 in Norway as guest of Edvard Munch. Since 1952 in Cologne. Member of the German Arts Council.

- 71 David und Bathseba – David and Bathseba
1949, colour-lithogr., sg.
 - 72 Composition
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
 - 73 Toreros
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
 - 74 Composition
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
 - 75 Composition
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
- 71–75 Gallery „Der Spiegel“, Cologne.

Rolf Nesch

Born on January 7, 1893 in Ober-Esslingen/Wurttemberg. Lives in Aal, Hallingdal/Norway. Studies at the Dresden Academy. 1924 with Kirchner in Davos. 1930–33 Hamburg. Development of the new graphic technique in metal print.

- 76 Abschied – Farewell
1932, metal-print, sg.
- 77 Rödingsmarkt – Roeding's Square
1932, metal-print, sg.
- 78 Elbbrücke – Elbe-Bridge
1932, metal-print, sg.
- 79 Straße – Street
1933/34, metal-print, sg.



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HANN TRIER

- 80 Birken – Birch-Trees
1933/34, metal-print, sg.

- 81 Dorsche – Coods
1936, metal-print, sg.

Otto Pankok

Born 1893 in Mühlheim-Ruhr. Lives in Düsseldorf. Professor at the Düsseldorf Academy.

- 82 Mädchen mit Mondsichel – Girl with Crescent
colour-woodcut, sg.

- 83 Barlach – Portrait of the Artist Barlach
woodcut, sg.

- 84 Stier – Bull
colour-woodcut, sg.

- 85 Nuna
colour-woodcut, sg.

Johanna Schütz-Wolff

Born on July 10, 1896 in Halle/Saale. Lives in Söcking/Obb. Graphic artist and weaver.

- 86 Die Fröhlichen – Joyful and Glad
1050, woodcut, sg.

- 87 Freundinnen – Friends
1950, woodcut, sg.

- 88 Figurenkomposition Schwarz-Gelb – Composition in Black and Yellow
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.

- 89 Figurenkomposition I – Composition I
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.

- 90 Mutter mit Kind – Mother and Child
1953, colour-woodcut, sg.

Hann Trier

Born 1915 in Kaiserswerth/Rhine. Studies in Düsseldorf. Lives in Bornheim near Bonn.

- 91 Brieföffnen – Opening a Letter
1952, colour-lithogr., sg.

- 92 Abstrakte Komposition – Abstract Composition
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.

- 93 Auch ein Igel ist verwundbar – A Hedgehog is vulnerable too
1952, colour-lithogr., sg.

- 94 Komposition – Composition
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.

91-94 Gallery „Der Spiegel“, Cologne.



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JOHANNA SCHÜTZ-WOLFF

Fritz Winter

Born on September 22, 1905 in Altenbögge/Westfalen. Lives in Diessen/Oberbayern. First miner. 1927-30 pupil of Kandinski, Klee and Schlemmer at the Bauhaus Dessau. Member of the German Arts Council.

- 95 Komposition in Schwarz – Composition in Black
1950, serigraph, sg.
- 96 Komposition in Schwarz, Braun und Oliv – Composition in Black, Brown and Olive
1950, serigraph, sg.
- 97 Komposition in Schwarz – Composition in Black
1950, serigraph, sg.
- 98 Komposition – Composition
1950, serigraph, sg.
- 99 Komposition – Composition
1950, serigraph, sg.
- 100 Komposition – Composition
1950, serigraph, sg.
- 101 Komposition – Composition
1950, serigraph, sg.
- 102 Komposition – Composition
1953, colour-lithogr., sg.
102 Gallery Lothar Günther Buchheim, Feldafing.

