

GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN ART AT SOTHEBY'S IN LONDON OCTOBER 6, 1999

A masterpiece by Franz Marc; an important early landscape by Gustav Klimt;

the Rolf Deyhle Collection

and the Gustav Klimt and Emilie Flöge collection

among the highlights

AN EXCEPTIONAL series of German and Austrian Art sales will be held at Sotheby's in London on Wednesday, October 6, 1999. The sales comprise the most important group of German and Austrian art ever to be offered at Sotheby's, and include outstanding works, many of which have not been seen on the market for several decades.

Helena Newman, Senior Director of Sotheby's Impressionist and Modern Art Department in London, said: "We are very excited to be able to offer such a major group of German and Austrian Art here in London this season. The quality and variety of the works to be sold reflects the increasing international demand for top quality works by German and Austrian Expressionist artists. Sotheby's sales will provide a unique opportunity to see a broad range of important works which in many cases are completely fresh to the market."

Paintings, drawings, sculpture and prints by almost all the great German and Austrian artists from the late 19th and 20th centuries will be offered for sale. Included are a superb early Gustav Klimt landscape; examples of the pre-World War I German Expressionist movements of Der Blaue Reiter and Die Brücke, the former represented by a masterpiece by Franz Marc, and, from the inter-war period, fine works from the Bauhaus and the Neue Sachlichkeit movements.

There are also approximately 120 works from the Rolf Deyhle Collection illustrating art in Germany over a period of 100 years. The separate catalogue for the collection begins with works by German Impressionist artists such as Max Liebermann and Lovis Corinth, it continues with works by a range of early 20th century Modern artists such as Otto Dix, Carl Hofer and Oskar Schlemmer; the Post-war Informel artists Willi Baumeister and Max Ackermann and ends with the more recent works by Georg Baselitz and Markus Lüpertz (see separate release). The series will also include the collection "Gustav Klimt and Emilie Flöge: Artist and Muse" which has a dedicated catalogue and includes Wiener Werkstätte objects, textiles, jewellery, photographs and correspondence exchanged between Klimt and his muse, the dress designer Emilie Flöge.

The highlight of this series of sales is Franz Marc's Der Wasserfall (The Waterfall), the most important work by this artist to have been offered at auction in decades and one of the last major examples of Marc's work still in private hands. Painted in 1912, this monumental and rare painting summarises perfectly the excitement and intensity that marked the development of German art during the years that preceded World War I. The painting is consigned by the Robert Gore Rifkind Charitable Remainder Unitrust.

Together with Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc published Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider almanac) and was responsible for two seminal exhibitions of the Blaue Reiter Group in 1911 and 1912. These were a focus for the most innovative art of the period, both in Germany and internationally.

Der Wasserfall was painted in the small town of Sindelsdorf in the Bavarian Alps, where Marc had retreated to live out his belief that art could form a bridge between nature and the spiritual world. It depicts one of the most dramatic displays provided by nature - a waterfall - in full primitive force. Primary colour was of great significance to Marc and in Der Wasserfall he divides the large canvas into three clear areas to reflect the symbolism of the painting. The yellow on the left represents the gentle, cheerful and sensual 'female principle'; the blue of the cascading water in the middle of the composition represents the severe, bitter, spiritual and intellectual 'male principle' and the dominating red on the whole of the right-hand side symbolises the heaviness of 'matter'. Der Wasserfall is an early 20th century masterpiece, estimated to fetch in the region of £6 million.

Other works from the Blaue Reiter movement include two splendid watercolours by August Macke, Figuren im Park (Figures in the park) of 1913, estimated at £200,000-300,000 and Eselreiter (Donkey rider) of 1914, estimated at £150,000-200,000 and inspired by the artist's trip to Tunis with Paul Klee. A colourful and harmonious composition

of two heads by Heinrich Campendonk, *Zwei Köpfe* of 1917, comes from a private Californian collection. The oil is estimated at £250,000-350,000.

Of further interest is a spectacular early landscape painting by Gustav Klimt, *Die Grosse Pappel I* (The Big Poplar I), an intensely evocative and poetic painting from 1900. The landscape setting is at Litzlberg on the Attersee, near Salzburg, a lake whose tranquility and beauty inspired Klimt to produce some of his most peaceful, even mystical works.

Bertha Zuckerkandl, a Viennese commentator, said: "The landscapes of Klimt, the greatest of the Austrian painters, are melodies from Schubert translated into colour."* *Die Grosse Pappel I* is estimated to fetch £2-3 million.

Important works by artists associated with the Brücke group, Max Pechstein (1881-1955) and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880-1938) are also featured in the sale. A double-sided oil by Max Pechstein depicting on the recto a portrait of a masked woman, *Die Gelbe Maske I* (The yellow mask I) from 1910, and on the verso, a magnificent cabaret scene of 1909, *Sängerin in Rot* (Singer in red), is estimated at £300,000-400,000. Both these images reflect the Brücke artists's fascination with the bohemian side of city life and the world of the music hall and the theatre. This double-sided work is estimated at £300,000-400,000. Kirchner first visited Berlin in 1910 and moved there from Dresden in 1911.

Inspired by the metropolitan and vibrant life of the city, he produced some of his best works in the years immediately preceding the First World War. *Stilleben mit Lampe* (Still life with lamp), a sensual and fascinating example of the artist's Expressionist period, is painted with dynamic brushwork and bold colours representative of Kirchner at the height of his powers. It shows a still life with a lamp and a coffee pot in the foreground and a naked couple in the middle distance. The painting is estimated at £300,000-400,000.

Also on offer are four impressive paintings by Otto Mueller, among which is *Liegendes Mädchen* (Reclining woman) from the mid-1920s, a typical subject showing a wonderfully alluring gypsy girl with jet-black hair and olive skin, dressed in Bohemian style. Executed with tempera on burlap, it is estimated at £400,000-500,000.

Max Beckmann (1884-1950) fled Frankfurt for Amsterdam in 1937 after his work was attacked as 'degenerate' by the Nazi Regime. From 1942 is *Stilleben mit Geige und Flöte* (Still life with violin and flute), an archetypal still life painting which he executed in Amsterdam before he moved to America in 1947. The painting shows a beautifully poised arrangement of instruments, music sheets and a vase of flowers, these creating a harmonious and optimistic composition. It is estimated at £200,000-300,000.

The series of sales are as follows on Wednesday, October 6, 1999: Gustav Klimt and Emilie Flöge: Artist and Muse at 11.00am German and Austrian Art at 2.00pm The Deyhle Collection at approximately 3.00pm

Exhibition Tour: Munich (August 26-28); Berlin (August 31- September 1); Hamburg (September 3); Cologne (September 7 & 8); Stuttgart (September 10); Vienna (September 13 & 14); Frankfurt (September 16 & 17); New York (September 21-23). On view in London from Friday, October 1, 1999 until the date of the sale

* Quote taken from Klimt by Gerbert Frodl, London, 1992 (page 99).

PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST:

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