



# ANXIOUS STATES

Expressionism from Gauguin to Oliveira

This catalogue is published on the occasion of *Anxious States: Expressionism from Gauguin to Oliviera*, an exhibition organized by members of the Fall 2017 Mills College Museum Studies class: Savanna Ames, Natasha Culbreth, Eva Goldstein-Moore, Hisaka Marubayashi, and Carmen Wiley.

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The Mills College Art Museum is a forum for exploring art and ideas and a laboratory for contemporary art practices. As a teaching museum at a dynamic liberal arts college for undergraduate women and co-ed graduate studies, the museum is dedicated to engaging and inspiring the intellectual and creative life of Mills students through innovative exhibitions, programs, and collections.

COVER: Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, *Portrait of the Artist's Wife*, 1922, Woodcut print

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Ernst Ludwig Kirchner,  
*Bathing Women Under Trees*, 1912,  
Woodcut print

# INTRODUCTION

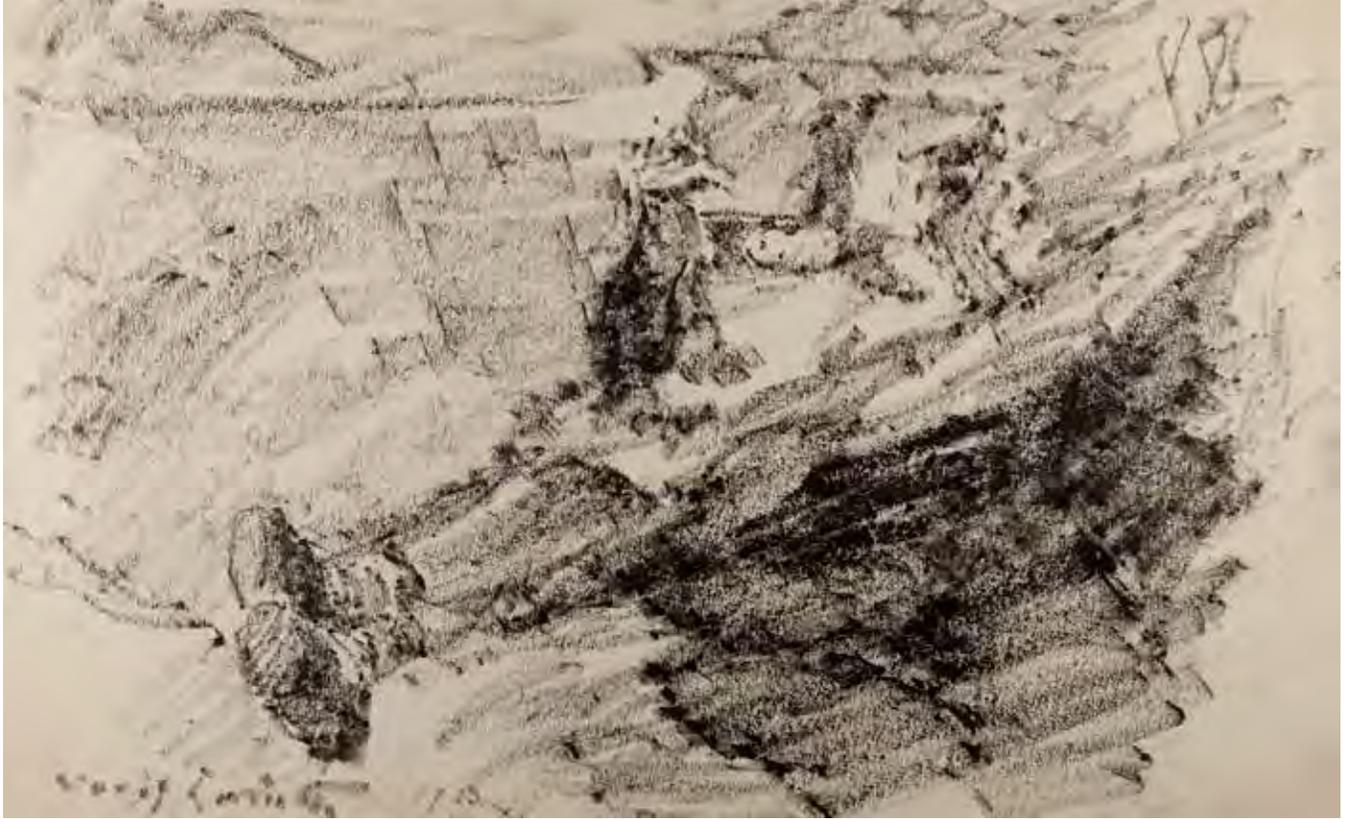
Dr. Stephanie Hanor

Featuring works from the Mills College Art Museum's collection, *Anxious States* follows the evolution of Expressionism as an artistic response to features of modernity and globalization—social anxiety, disruptive technologies, intractable wars—across a range of time periods and cultures. Expressionism describes an aesthetic style that developed from feelings of uncertainty, dread, and alienation that accompanied the industrialization and militarization of the 20th century. The works included in this exhibition can be read as political as well as emotional reactions to a rapidly changing world.

*Anxious States* includes examples of woodblock prints, lithographs, drawing, etchings and engravings by some of the progenitors of German Expressionism including founding members of *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivists), *Die Brücke* (The Bridge) and *Der Blaue Reiter* (The Blue Rider), as well as scions within the Symbolist and Bay Area Figurative movements. Linked by their stylistic qualities—angular and agitated lines, high contrast colors, primitivist appropriation—the featured artists produce visually jarring images that evoke a sense of inner angst.

Before and during World War II, Mills College played an important role in the promotion of German Expressionist artists. Beginning in 1935, MCAM's director Alfred Neumeyer used his extensive European network to introduce important and sometimes controversial European artists to Bay Area audiences. Many of these artists were condemned as "Degenerate Artists" by the Nazis. Visiting artists like Max Beckmann managed to flee the threat of fascism on guest visas through Mills' Summer Sessions program which invited international artists to teach at the College.

*Anxious States* includes major artists and rarely seen work from MCAM's collection. Though some of the works in the exhibition are over a century old, the ideas and forms expressed in them are relevant to our time of colossal technological change and global political upheaval. *Anxious States* is curated by Savanna Ames, Natasha Culbreth, Eva Goldstein-Moore, Hisaka Marubayashi, and Carmen Wiley, and their research is featured in this exhibition catalogue.



Lovis Corinth, *Portrait of Mme. Corinth in a Hammock*, 1923, Grease pencil

# EXPRESSIONIST MASTERPIECES: MIRRORING LIFE AND DEATH

Savanna Ames

In French author, Honore de Balzac's short story *The Unknown Masterpiece*, originally published in 1831, a young artist— Poussin—and an established artist—Porbus—try to get a glimpse of the masterpiece painting by the legendary artist Frenhofer. This was a painting that no one had seen before. The image was one which the artist had been working on for many, many years, and was said to be of a beautiful nude figure. After much hesitation and negotiation, the master finally allows the other artists to view his work. What the two younger artists found in the masterpiece was chaos. Layers of colors and lines filled the surface of the image and the only identifiable part of the figure was her foot.<sup>1</sup> By conveying Frenhofer's deep relationship with his painting, the story of *The Unknown Masterpiece* speaks about the love of art and life working together harmoniously. In the story, the master is completely committed to the figure within the image, saying many times she is his true love. Frenhofer argues that pure art is created when the artist doesn't just simply copy what he/she is seeing but expresses what the artist is trying to create, much like Expressionism.

German Expressionism began in 1905 and ended around 1933.<sup>2</sup> In 1905 the group *Die Brücke* (The Bridge) emerged in Germany. Artists such as Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Fritz Bleyl, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff and Erin Heckel were a part of this first group of Expressionists.<sup>3</sup> Later in 1911, a different group of Expressionist artists emerged called, *Der Blaue Reiter* (The Blue Rider). Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc, Paul Klee, August Macke and others were associated with this group.<sup>4</sup> The movement started as a reaction to the developing industrial world, and the anxieties that came from this new urban environment. Like the old master in Balzac's story, Expressionist artists thought that art should come from within the

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1 Honoré de Balzac and George Burnham Ives, *Honore de Balzac, Little French Masterpieces*, ed. Alexander Jessup [IV] (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1903).

2 "Expressionism Movement, Artists and Major Works," *The Art Story*. Accessed November 1, 2017. <http://www.theartstory.org/movement-expressionism.htm>.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

artist and his/her emotions, not just representations of the natural world around them. Unlike the Impressionist painters, Expressionists sought to confront the norms of the world by representing harsh and confrontational subject matters in their artwork.<sup>5</sup> Expressionist artists often used exaggerated, swirling and scratch-like strokes. These types of techniques helped portray the emotional state of the artists. Many modern anxieties, such as humanity's disconnect with the world and spirituality; the increase of industrialization; and the many wars that shook the world, inspired the Expressionist artists and led to the creation of the works on paper represented in this exhibition by artists such as Lovis Corinth and Harold Gregor.

Corinth was a German artist born in Prussia in 1858.<sup>6</sup> He was a painter and printmaker, whose work combined stylistic elements of both Expressionism and Impressionism. In Corinth's early work he used mostly Impressionistic styles and techniques. It was after a stroke in 1911, that his brushstrokes became more loose and emotional, taking a turn towards Expressionism.<sup>7</sup> It is in his later work that Corinth fused both styles together. Ernst Kirchner, leader of Die Brücke, described the evolution of Corinth's work, saying: "in the beginning, he was only average; at the end, he was truly great."<sup>8</sup> Throughout Corinth's career he created many self-portraits and portraits of other individuals. Besides painting, which Corinth was most known for, he was equally talented in black and white graphic works, as can be seen in his images shown throughout this exhibition. Many of his drawings, watercolors, etchings and lithographic prints are complete works, not just studies or preparatory work for paintings to come.<sup>9</sup> Corinth's strength in this area of art is seen in *Portrait of Mme. Corinth in a Hammock*.

The image of *Portrait of Mme. Corinth in a Hammock* is created using a grease pencil on paper. The image of the figure is hardly noticeable, as it is made up of lots of scribble-like strokes built up to create different lights and darks in the image. These lights and darks eventually bring the figure in the image forward to the viewer. Like the master Frenhofer's painting from *The Unknown Masterpiece*, the feet or shoes of the figure at the bottom left of the image are what appear to the viewer's eye first. Once one notices the shoes, one uses them as a tool to lead them back into space to the top half of the figure, laying within the hammock. Although this image is one of relaxation and life, the feeling a viewer gets from the

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5 Ibid.

6 "Lovis Corinth Biography - Infos - Art Market," Accessed November 9, 2017. <http://www.loviscorinth.com/>.

7 "Lovis Corinth, German Impressionist/Expressionist Artist," Accessed November 9, 2017. <http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/famous-artists/lovis-corinth.htm>.

8 Ibid.

9 "Musée d'Orsay: Lovis Corinth (1858-1925) Between Impressionism and Expressionism," Accessed November 1, 2017. <http://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/events/exhibitions/in-the-musee-dorsay/exhibitions-in-the-musee-dorsay-more/article/lovis-corinth-7834.html?print=1&>.

Harold Gregor, *Fallen Warrior*, mid 20th Century, Brush and ink



quick strokes of the piece, and the ambiguity of the figure is an anxious or unknown feeling.

This image can be juxtaposed with another within the exhibition by Harold Gregor entitled *Fallen Warrior*. Gregor is an American artist, who is not well-known for the type of work that is presented in this exhibition. The ink drawing of *Fallen Warrior* is significantly different in style and technique to his more well-known landscape paintings, that are large and bright in color. Gregor gained national recognition in the 1970's with his photorealist paintings of farm structures and sweeping rural horizons. Along with these realist panoramas, Gregor is known for his colorful "flatscape" paintings that combine an aerial perspective with distinctive color choices. In recent years Gregor has begun exploring color abstraction in his "trail paintings" and "vibrascapes." He continues to paint and show all four styles: realist panoramas, flatscapes, trail paintings, and vibrascapes.<sup>10</sup> Since *Fallen Warrior* is very different than his usual work, the piece that the Mills College Art Museum has in its collection is unique in this artist's body of work.

*Fallen Warrior* is brushed ink on paper and is small in scale, perhaps from a sketch book, as the remnants of the torn paper remain as part of the piece. A figure extends throughout the drawing, dark, rounded, and quick strokes make up the outline of the figure's body. Shading and chaotic strokes make up the foreground and background. The head and slumped forearms catch the viewer's eye at the bottom of the image. Once one notices the head, the eye is led back into the distance of the body where the lines making up the legs and feet are barely recognizable. Since this image is so similar in composition to the image by Corinth and reflects the rest of the exhibition in its dark chaotic lines that make up the figure, the image fits in nicely with the rest of the work chosen for the exhibition and helps give the exhibition a variety of different artists from different countries, cultures and time periods.

The works by Corinth and Gregor are pieces that were created by two very different men, one American and the other German and during two different time periods as well. Corinth was alive during World War I, which was one of several reasons why artists lashed out in emotion and created the images that define Expressionism. Gregor lived through World War II and this war, perhaps, is the reason for him creating this piece. Gregor may have created this piece as a reaction to war and the aftermath of it. Both images share very similar formal aspects. They are both works on paper that use strokes that are chaotic and almost hide the figure within them. Each image draws the viewer's eye into the image with aspects of the body that stand out and are recognizable within all of the other strokes.

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<sup>10</sup> "Harold Gregor," Tory Folliard Gallery, accessed November 1, 2017, <https://tory-folliard.com/artists/harold-gregor/>.

For *Fallen Warrior*, it's the head and arms of the figure and for the *Portrait of Mme. Corinth in a Hammock* it's the feet. These two different parts of the body located in the lower part of the images lead the viewer's eye back into the space and is the tool that lends the viewer the ability to read the rest of the piece. Although the images are different in style, material and subject, they almost mirror one another, depicting life and death: life reflected in the relaxation of the individual in the hammock, death of the fallen warrior in an unknown landscape. Together these images demonstrate the hardships of living through wars that impacted many nations around the world. In the end, many individuals had to work through their anxieties and stress from those experiences and live out the rest of their days. Although these images may be simple, together they embody the Expressionist movement and the many reasons why, the Expressionists movement began in the first place. War, anxiety, industrialization, urbanization, death and life are all subjects impacting art of this time period. This exhibition intends to inform the many changes, not always for the better, that the Expressionist artists portrayed in their work, and the importance of reflecting from their experiences, in order to learn and reflect about our own current changes in the present day and how they may impact our future.



Ernst Barlach, *The Famine*, 1919,  
Woodcut print

# THE PLIGHT OF WAR IN PRINT

Natasha Culbreth

War does not end when the battles have ceased, it leaves a trail of unrest and suffering in its wake for those left to carry on and re-assemble life. The period following war is one of chaos and anxiety. Such a psychological state is masterfully interpreted in two German Expressionist works created in 1919, *The Famine* by Ernst Barlach and *Widows and Orphans* by Käthe Kollwitz. Through print-making, these two artists created works that reflect on post-World War I Germany with despair, depicting a world that has changed for the worse and does not have the best interest of the people at heart.

*The Famine* by Ernst Barlach is a woodcut print created in 1919 that depicts a harrowing scene. A pair of figures stand in the foreground, their clothes hang loosely from their emaciated frames. A shoeless figure on the left rolls his sleeve to reveal a knife while his shrouded companion leans forward to strangle a skeletal dog with a rope. The two figures are fixed in a somber, hunger stricken daze, indifferently executing the tasks necessary to fix the dog for a meal. Behind them more misery is depicted in stark carved lines. A figure lays upon a rocky hill with their thin arms extending to the waving lines of the sky, a woman jumps into the air attempting to snatch a bird, and in the distance lays a decaying horse.

The line work is highly expressive, creating a contrasted and dense atmosphere, and highlighting skeletal features. Lines create dimension and volume in the landscape, the clothes worn by the figures evoke a pattern of protruding rib bones. The line work and the peeking blank areas articulate the kinetic movement of the figures. The action of the shrouded figure strangling the dog is forceful and the hatched lines that develop the fabric directionally drive the motion forward onto the struggling dog. This hatched line is present in the background, creating rolling angular hills and skies. Negative space is found in areas such as surrounding the dog, the knife gripping hand, and the feet of the attackers. This break from black helps to make the subjects visually discernable from the busy background. This work exemplifies the notion that a “medieval air cloaks the woodcuts of Ernst Barlach,” with its “sense of physical

and metaphysical burden, abstract rhythms and hostile atmospheric conditions.”<sup>1</sup> These stylistic elements and the graphic quality of the work is typical of Barlach’s woodcuts and evoke despair.

The lithograph *Widows and Orphans* by Käthe Kollwitz is less visually violent, but instead represents emotional suffering. This scene depicts a crowd of women and children. The woman in front wraps her arms around two cowering boys, women flanking her also hold infants close to themselves, and a figure behind and to the left hides her face with her hands. Kollwitz employed lithographic techniques to render a somber ghostly scene. The figures are defined with soft shadows and seem to stand in smoke or fog which fades them into the composition and out to the whiteness of the paper. The atmosphere is dense and foggy, making it difficult to discern how many women and children are present. The faces of the children are soft and undefined while the faces of their mothers are weary and expressive. The figures’ postures and the articulation of their hands also inform the expression of the work. Their hands, the tools of their toil as workers, hold and wrap around their children, and convey agony as is seen with the woman covering her face. The figures are rendered in a naturalistic style, resembling Socialist Realist works.

Although they are both printed works, each was crafted in a very unique way and style. Kollwitz’s print employed the softness of lithograph to depict an emotional scene, while Barlach employed the harshness of woodblock to evoke the horrors of hunger. Barlach’s scene is restricted to the rigid confines of the woodblock and Kollwitz’s scene floats in the space of the page. Despite their differences, Barlach and Kollwitz’s figures share a similar androgyny. The women and children of Kollwitz and the figures depicted in Barlach’s work lack bold or discernable features. These gaunt figures embody both suffering and the common person.

Both *The Famine* and *Widows and Orphans* respond to crises afflicting the people of Germany at the conclusion of World War I. Barlach’s work is responding to the famine that struck Germany during the Allied blockade from 1914 to 1919 which cut off trade and supplies. The constructed famine in Germany resulted in severe social strain and massive deaths. The National Health Office in Berlin “calculated that 763,000 persons had died as a result of the blockade” by the December of 1918.<sup>2</sup> Kollwitz depicts the war widow, referencing that the total number of women widowed as a result of the First World War was estimated to be 3 to 4 million.<sup>3</sup> Kollwitz’s depicted suffering as contemplative and passive. The women stand

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1 Laura Cleaver, *Gothic Legacies: Four Centuries of Tradition and Innovation in Art and Architecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing), 246.

2 Ralph Raico, “The Blockade and Attempted Starvation of Germany,” *Mises Institute*, <https://mises.org/library/blockade-and-attempted-starvation-germany>.

3 Peggy Bette, “War Widows,” *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, [https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war\\_widows](https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war_widows).

Käthe Kollwitz, *Widows and Orphans*, 1919, Lithograph



in wait and respond grimly to their current state of disenfranchisement from the world as they exist financially instable, hungry, and without hope. Barlach's suffering is much more active and violent, focusing on two figures slaughtering a pet and their indifference towards the action in face of their hunger. The suffering of Kollwitz's subjects is arresting and a testament to the emotional strength of her work, "her ability to reduce everything in her work to the portrayal of pain remains her signature."<sup>4</sup>

Kollwitz worked to develop this emotional aptitude early in her art education. She was trained classically in painting and printmaking and studied earlier masters extensively, focusing on how emotion could be conveyed through expressive poses and gestures.<sup>5</sup> She began working primarily in printmaking in the 1890s after discovering the "potential of the print for social commentary" as they could be reproduced repeatedly and inexpensively.<sup>6</sup> In June 1920 she encountered Barlach's woodcuts for the first time at the Secession, an art association that opposed the conservative art institutions in Berlin. Barlach is noted as "one of the artists whom she [Kollwitz] credited as a direct influence on her work."<sup>7</sup> Though Kollwitz's *Widows and Orphans* predates this introduction, seeds of this future connection can already be felt in her work as she shared similar stylistic elements and subject choices to Barlach. Her later work would feature woodblock prints inspired by Barlach, and "she hoped that the bold, block forms of woodcut would simultaneously simplify and strengthen" the messages in her works.<sup>8</sup>

Barlach began his artistic training in Hamburg, Germany and would go on to study in Dresden and Paris. A trip to Russia in 1906 would influence his style and work, "strong bodies and expressive faces of the peasants stimulated his commitment to sculpture and to the development of his mature style, which characteristically features bulky, monumental figures in heavy drapery."<sup>9</sup> This inspiration would also lead him to refer to Gothic printmaking and sculptural styles and techniques.<sup>10</sup> His work seeks to "mingle the heroic and the grotesque, admiration and horror at the bloodlust of the characters. For Barlach, there was no glory in senseless death" that was glorified in previous German art or the nation as wars were fought.<sup>11</sup>

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4 Sabine Oelze, "The Art of Tragedy: 150 Years of Käthe Kollwitz," *Made for Minds*, <https://www.dw.com/en/the-art-of-tragedy-150-years-of-k%C3%A4the-kollwitz/a-39600754>.

5 Elizabeth Prelinger, *Käthe Kollwitz* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 37.

6 "Käthe Kollwitz," *National Museum of Women in the Arts*, <https://nmwa.org/explore/artist-profiles/k%C3%A4-kollwitz>.

7 Prelinger, *Käthe Kollwitz*, 53.

8 Ibid.

9 "Ernst Barlach," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ernst-Barlach>.

10 "Ernst Barlach," *artnet*, <http://www.artnet.com/artists/ernst-barlach/>.

11 Benjamin Genocchio, "Skill and Sensitivity," *New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/17/nyregion/new-jersey/17artsnj.html>.

Ernst Barlach, *Der Schwebende [Hovering Angel]*, 1926, Gustrow Cathedral



He and Kollwitz held firm pacifist stances and attempted to spread their message in their work.

Käthe Kollwitz and Ernst Barlach have an interconnected history. Kollwitz would later become heavily influenced by Barlach and Kollwitz would become the model for Barlach's sculpted angel in his World War I memorial, *Der Schwebende*.<sup>12</sup> Their artistic goals and ambitions were shared. They created works that attempted to capture the emotional turmoil of the working class and impoverished/socially ostracized in order to bring awareness to the social injustices of their time. They also shared mediums, both working primarily with sculpture and printmaking.

In each of their pieces, they masterfully capture the emotional turmoil of their time. Through the printing press they addressed issues of famine and social deconstruction that occurred during the war. Although the works sought to depict the injustices of a moment in history, they are universal and timeless. One does not need context or history to understand the emotion or enter the minds of the characters. Visual art can transcend the human boundaries of time, culture, and language and communicate with us on a more instinctual and emotional level. The suffering of Kollwitz's and Barlach's subjects in the two works is as palpable today as it was when they were fresh off the press.

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<sup>12</sup> Matty Edwards, "Käthe Kollwitz's beauty in the face of adversity," *The Local*, <https://www.thelocal.de/20150423/kthe-kollwitz-in-the-face-of-adversity>.



# THE ROLE OF EMOTION AS THE ARTIST'S MUSE

Eva Goldstein-Moore

The artist Edvard Munch wrote: "What is art? Art grows out of grief and joy, but mainly grief. It is born of people's lives."<sup>1</sup> When looking at Munch's works this statement is easily proven true, but it applies to many artists' works as well, tying together artworks by various artists from various periods in various locations. The personification of emotions from personal experiences can be seen in Munch's *Self-Portrait with Cigarette*, José Clemente Orozco's *La Loca*, and Nathan Oliveira's *Man and Child*. Each of these pieces are prime examples of artworks formed through each artist's own personal experiences, especially the more unpleasant experiences. Despite the fact that these three artists lived in different places during various time periods, and had incredibly different life experiences, their art is connected through their focus on emotion. This focus on emotion, has made these works universal while still giving the viewer insight into the artists' own lives as well as their psyche.

Stylistically, these works are also connected. Each is a portrait, but unlike more traditional portraiture, the figures in each image are removed from any discernable setting. There are no objects to provide context, leaving the figure alone in the work, making themselves, and the emotions they personify, the only focus. It is clear when looking at not only Munch's *Self-Portrait with Cigarette*, but Orozco's *La Loca*, and Oliveira's *Man and Child*, that each of these artists used art to communicate their own inner anxieties and experiences while still creating an artwork that reached viewers through universal emotional connections. Despite their different backgrounds and experiences, these artists' works connect with one another because they were truly each born of the individual artist's experiences. And because these emotions truly resonate with viewers, they are recognizable to anyone.

*Self-Portrait with Cigarette* was originally drawn by Munch in 1908-09 with crayon, during a time when the artist was living in an institution in Copenhagen recovering from a nervous breakdown. The work itself depicts Munch smoking his last cigarette before

Edvard Munch, *Self Portrait with Cigarette*, 1908, Lithograph

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<sup>1</sup> Ragna Stang, *Edvard Munch* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1977), 15.

he decided to quit in hopes of soothing his anxiety.<sup>2</sup> Of the three works, Munch's is the only portrait that is depicting a specific person, specifically the artist himself. Munch made many self-portraits in his lifetime, but *Self-Portrait with Cigarette* stands apart from his other works. While his other self-portraits usually depict Munch acknowledging the viewer by looking directly towards them, *Self-Portrait with Cigarette* shows him looking almost unconscious and completely unaware of the viewer. Munch's other self-portraits also depict him with fairly similar facial attributes, but this specific portrait does not look very much like Munch in comparison. The face is almost mask-like, surrounded by clouds of smoke, which themselves resemble waves. Because of this, upon first glance the image almost looks like a man in the middle of drowning, or a corpse surrounded by waves, connoting ideas of death and mortality. Despite this dark tone, the image itself does not feel sad or hectic, but rather calm.

This period in Munch's life was one of mental instability. It was also a period of social change in Europe, which is reflected in Munch's art as well. Migration and urbanization began to occur and new technological innovations spread. This led to heightened anxiety and fear, which can be seen in many German Expressionist works. German Expressionist artists were focused on isolation caused by the ever-growing urban populations and the many technological changes of the time. This increase urbanization and change in Europe led many artists to focus on industrial themes, critiquing the new technologies of the time. In the year 1908, before checking into the clinic, Munch began painting industrial scenes and images of workers, subjects that differ greatly from Munch's earlier subject matter.<sup>3</sup> This, teamed with Munch's nervous breakdown, led to the creation of *Self-Portrait with Cigarette*.

Orozco's work *La Loca*, made during the artist's later years, in 1944, is a much more critical view of humanity in comparison to Munch's image. Orozco's later works are best described as "so full of comic mockery and sarcasm . . . with overtones of caricature."<sup>4</sup> But Orozco's work is also incredibly emotionally charged. Each image conveys strong emotions and in response, viewers have intense reactions to the pieces, Orozco is often compared to German Expressionist artists but he actually viewed himself as a "romantic expressionist."<sup>5</sup> The art historian Jon Hopkins wrote, "Orozco was romantic in that he exploited the emotive fragment. He carefully selected one aspect of emotion or of a situation and developed it into a total design that exists as an art object."<sup>6</sup> This emphasis on emo-

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2 Thomas M. Messer, *Edvard Munch* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.), 43.

3 Ibid., 102.

4 Jon H. Hopkins, *Orozco: His Graphic Works* (Arizona: Northern Arizona University Publications, 1967), 14.

5 Messer, *Edvard Munch*, 43.

6 Hopkins, *Orozco: His Graphic Works*, 17.

Jose Clemente Orozco, *La Loca*, 1944,  
Etching and aquatint on wove paper





in every artwork he went on to make throughout his career. Because of these incredibly dark subject matters, Orozco is often compared to Spanish painter and printmaker Francisco Goya; who also created art that showed the disgusting nature of humankind and was greatly influenced by violence and war.

*La Loca* is not a depiction of a real person, which was common in Orozco's work.<sup>7</sup> Unlike Munch's portrait, *La Loca* is literally the personification of an emotion. Even the title, *La Loca*, simply means, "The Insane," which is exactly what the figure is; the embodiment of insanity. This personification of pure emotion is common for Orozco, and this representative figure being a woman is also not uncommon in his work: "Orozco rarely presented the female nude as virtuous and good; generally she never develops beyond the state of magnificent whoredom."<sup>8</sup> Munch also shared this negative view of women as "whores," which can be seen in some of his works, most notably the painting *Woman in Three Stages*, painted in 1895. In the piece Munch portrays a woman at three

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 18.

Edvard Munch, *Woman in Three Stages*, 1895, Oil on canvas

times of her life: the first stage as angelic and virginal, the second as an openly nude woman showing off her body, and the third and final stage as a dark figure. Munch's depiction of women is similar to Orozco's portrayal of his female subjects: either the woman was a virginal and holy figure, or she was a disgusting unashamed whore; both artists viewed a woman as one or the other and nothing more. *La Loca* is not at all sympathetic towards the figure, in fact it is quite critical of her. But it is also incredibly critical of the society that led to her creation. She is unapologetically nude, her hair in a rat's-nest and wearing a wicked smile on her heavily shaded face. Orozco, who was incredibly concerned with his graphic works staying somewhat traditional stylistically, seems to veer a bit more toward abstraction in *La Loca* as compared to some of his other works.<sup>9</sup> The figure is well shaded, as is typical with traditional Mexican prints, but the lines are ragged and sharp. The figure of *La Loca* herself is sharp and appears bony. This more jagged style fits the subject of the image as a whole. *La Loca* is not well groomed, not at all soft, and seems almost disoriented. The artistic style that Orozco chose to create this work using take the emotions in the image even further.

Orozco's technical style in *La Loca* has a bit in common in the style of Oliveira's *Man and Child*, made in 1957. The sketch-like quality of the lines in both works create a more sinister air for both pieces. However, Oliveira's piece is the most abstract and anonymous. Although *La Loca* is not actually depicting a real person, the figure is still, to some extent, realistic. Oliveira's figures are much more difficult to discern. Although the large male figure has identifiable facial features he is not expressing much emotion, at least, not through his facial expression. The child that he is clutching to his chest is much harder to see, it has no actual facial features and is sitting in a very upright position, contrasting with the man's seemingly hunched posture. Scratch-like marks cover the image, heightening the image's initial feeling of anxiety. Oliveira's work is the only one of the three images that is depicting multiple people, and it is also the only one that isn't using the figure's facial expressions to communicate the overall emotion of the piece. In fact, it is actually the lack of detail in *Man and Child* that makes it so unnerving and disconcerting. The technique and anonymity make the viewer feel an intense sense of unease, which contrasts with the very straightforward title Oliveira gave the work.

Although Oliveira was born in Oakland, California in 1928 and resided in the Bay Area most of his life, he shared many feelings and traits with artists from the Expressionist movement in Europe. Susan Landauer, whose writing focused on The San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism, of which Oliveira was a part, wrote: "Oliveira shared their acute anxiety about the rising

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 14.

threat to humanity and individuality posed by totalitarian systems and mass culture.”<sup>10</sup> This seems odd since Oliveira was a generation removed from the Expressionist movement and had incredibly different experiences than those artists. However, Oliveira had a difficult life himself in different ways. His parents, who eventually divorced when Oliveira was still a child, were both immigrants from Portugal, and Oliveira was their only child. He had little to do with his father, only to eventually find out that when Oliveira was ten years old that his father had drowned. Oliveira was often alone as a child; his mother and aunt were working in order to take care of him and his blind grandmother. These circumstances led to Oliveira’s childhood not being typical at all, and although he was not raised in wartime Europe like the artists who he shares traits with, it is clear that his difficult upbringing contributed to his similar style and interests. In his book focusing on Oliveira, Peter Selz wrote, “These artists [European artists such as Beckmann, Kokoschka and Munch], with their existential view of humankind—battered, tragic, but enduring—became archetypal for the young American painter.”<sup>11</sup> Oliveira was also a student of Max Beckmann, a well-known German Expressionist artist, when Beckmann taught summer classes here at Mills College. Oliveira also cited Munch as one of his greatest inspirations saying that Munch was “always superb to me, he had everything.”<sup>12</sup> Selz explains that “everything,” to Oliveira, meant that he saw “the unity of visual form and human content for which he was searching” in Munch’s work.<sup>13</sup> This inspiration is clear when looking at Oliveira’s art, both on its own as well as when contrasted with Munch’s own art.

Of the three works, Oliveira’s *Man and Child* gives off the most uncertain air. There is a much more intense feeling of unease, which is not as present in Munch’s *Self-Portrait with Cigarette*, or Orozco’s *La Loca*. The figure is completely anonymous, and much easier to project onto than the other two portraits. Despite this, Oliveira’s *Man with Child* communicates emotion just as effectively as Munch’s and Orozco’s works. Each of these works express the individual artist’s emotions differently, but each one of these pieces contain the emotions of the artist that created the work. Munch, Orozco, and Oliveira each lived incredibly difficult lives, and each used art as a way to express their inner-selves as well as a way to connect with others. Despite being separated by time, location, and having unique lives of their own, Munch, Orozco, and Oliveira each used emotion as their muse, making their artworks both incredibly personal and universally understandable all at the same time.

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10 Susan Landauer, “Between the Notes: The Art of Nathan Oliveira”, *Nathan Oliveira*, by Peter Selz, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 2.

11 Peter Selz, *Nathan Oliveira* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 17.

12 Nathan Oliveira, interview with Paul Karlstrom, 7 September 1990, transcript, 87.

13 Selz, *Nathan Oliveira*, 17.





10 / Corinth

Lovis Corinth, *The Last Judgement*,  
1923, Etching

# CHRISTIANITY IN GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM

Hisaka Marubayashi

Christianity and art have very strong relationship. From the beginning of Christianity, art has been used to spread religion around the world and has served as a symbol for worship.<sup>1</sup> The zenith of Christian art was from the Byzantine period, started in fourth century, to the end of Renaissance, in the seventeenth century, when the Vatican had tremendous influence over Europe. However, even today, religious art is still one of the major topics within art and influences people by adapting its form to the modern world. Lovis Corinth's *The Last Judgement* (1923) expresses the image of anxiety in the aftermath of World War I. By comparing this work with another Last Judgement scene (1509-1511) by German artist Albrecht Dürer, this paper explores a relationship between German art and Christianity as well as the development of artistic technique over time.

First of all, out of all the iconic scenes in the Bible, the Last Judgement is often featured in religious masterpieces like Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel in Vatican City. In Christianity, it depicts the Second Coming of the Christ and his judgement on all humanity where all souls are sent to heaven or hell.<sup>2</sup> In a traditional painting, Christ is shown as the judge surrounded by angels while humans are kneeling on the ground waiting for the ultimate decision. Some paintings also have scenes of heaven above and hell underground. These pieces were generally placed at the altar of churches or on the walls of government buildings during the Renaissance.<sup>3</sup> The Last Judgement served as a symbol of divine determination and authority.

Lovis Corinth was a German painter active from the late 1880s through 1920s. Corinth was originally born in Prussia during the 1850s. He studied art at the Academy of Königsberg at the

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<sup>1</sup> "Early Christian Art," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, July 23, 2015. Accessed October 31, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/art/Early-Christian-art>.

<sup>2</sup> "Last Judgment," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, February 17, 2012. Accessed November 12, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Last-Judgment-religion>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

age of 18 under Otto Günther, who was a landscape painter.<sup>4</sup> He destroyed many of his early works around this time because he thought no one would buy or adore his “crazy art.”<sup>5</sup> In 1880, Corinth moved to Munich, studied a realist approach painting. Realism was an early modern art movement, which reproached traditional iconographic painting and focused, instead, on real-life events using an avant-garde approach.<sup>6</sup> He traveled to several locations of Europe after that, finally settling in Paris in late 1884. There, he became a student at Academie Julian, which was a famous art school in France that featured live models and an open environment for artists from foreign countries.<sup>7</sup> Corinth studied mainly nudes and figure compositions, producing many sketches on paper. Although artists in Paris were heavily involved in the Impressionism movement during the mid-1880s, he was never involved in the movement nor painted in that style.<sup>8</sup> His goal during his Paris days was to be accepted in one of the salons but unfortunately, his works were never shown at the salon in those three years.<sup>9</sup>

Once he moved back to Munich in 1887, he joined the Secession movement. The Secession movement was led by the painter Max Libermann and members criticized the German art academies and associations which were only accessible to selected artists with reputations.<sup>10</sup> Corinth, being a founding member of the Secession movement, was engaged in a world of cultural politics which later influenced his work and his career goals.<sup>11</sup> Around this period, his style shifted to Expressionism, featuring loose brush strokes mixed with vibrant hues. He focused on more religious and mythological themes rather than realism, yet he never considered himself an Expressionist artist.<sup>12</sup> His art drastically changed when he suffered a stroke in 1911, which paralyzed parts of his body.<sup>13</sup> Because of this condition, he could no longer paint the same as before. His brush strokes became more simplified and rough, and figures became more abstract. Once World War I started, Corinth suffered severe anxiety when his hometown, Tapiau, was invaded by Russians who destroyed his paintings. His work also became very dark and his themes focused more on aggression and combat as he expressed his confusion between the hope of winning the war and fear of losing everything.<sup>14</sup>

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4 “Lovis Corinth,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*. March 29, 2017. Accessed October 31, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Lovis-Corinth>.

5 Horst Uhr, *Lovis Corinth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 7.

6 “Realism Movement, Artists and Major Works,” *The Art Story*. Accessed November 12, 2017. <http://www.theartstory.org/movement-realism.htm>.

7 Uhr, *Lovis Corinth*, 29-30.

8 *Ibid.*, 30-37.

9 *Ibid.*, 38.

10 *Ibid.*, 67.

11 *Ibid.*, 68.

12 “Lovis Corinth,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

13 *Ibid.*

14 Uhr, *Lovis Corinth*, 232-241.

As mentioned, Corinth was interested in painting religious motifs at several periods in his life time. In his youth, he was nonchalant about Christian motif paintings but as he matured, he went back to this subject and completed a few series of religious paintings.<sup>15</sup> In his *Last Judgement* (1923), the standing figure with a halo—the soldier—is holding a weapon and looking over the crowd laying on the ground. This figure takes the role of Christ, who determines the afterlife of people. His power and decision are absolute at this moment and there is no way to escape from it. This irony of Christ and the soldier performing the same task, yet being on the opposite symbol of good and evil, portrays Corinth's despair and anger towards the absurdity of the war. The people on the ground look life-less and depressed through their facial expression and the shading on their faces. The man on the left side is holding a woman looking up the soldier as he is about strike them with his weapon. The small details of this scene leave the viewer with the sense of the hopelessness and confusion during war time. Also, Corinth's technique of harsh outlines and rough shading enhances the chaotic setting. Although Corinth was not an enthusiastic Christian, he used the Last Judgement as a theme because it was understood by large audiences and relatable to not only to Germans but also to all people affected by war.<sup>16</sup> Thus, Corinth, by combining a religious theme with a modern touch and his experience, successfully created this iconic contemporary religious print.

Corinth used a technique called etching in *The Last Judgement*, which was revolutionized by Albrecht Dürer during the Renaissance.<sup>17</sup> Dürer was born in 1471 in Nuremberg, Germany. Following his father's footsteps, he studied art from young age, and after traveling to Italy, he returned to Germany and produced religious wood-block prints and etchings. By his thirties, Dürer began his most well-known religious series of wood-block prints *The Apocalypse* (1498), the *Large Woodcut Passion* cycle (1497–1500), and the *Life of the Virgin* (begun 1500).<sup>18</sup> He also produced single Madonnas, mythological figures, and nudes to improve his technique. His work is heavily influenced by early Renaissance art, and traveled to Italy twice in his life to study proportion and perspective.<sup>19</sup> Dürer's technical mastery of wood-block prints encouraged German artists to experiment with this medium and embrace print-making until Corinth's era.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>17</sup> Jacob Wisse, "Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528)," *The Met's Timeline of Art History*. Accessed October 31, 2017. [https://www.themetmuseum.org/toah/hd/durr/hd\\_durr.htm](https://www.themetmuseum.org/toah/hd/durr/hd_durr.htm).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

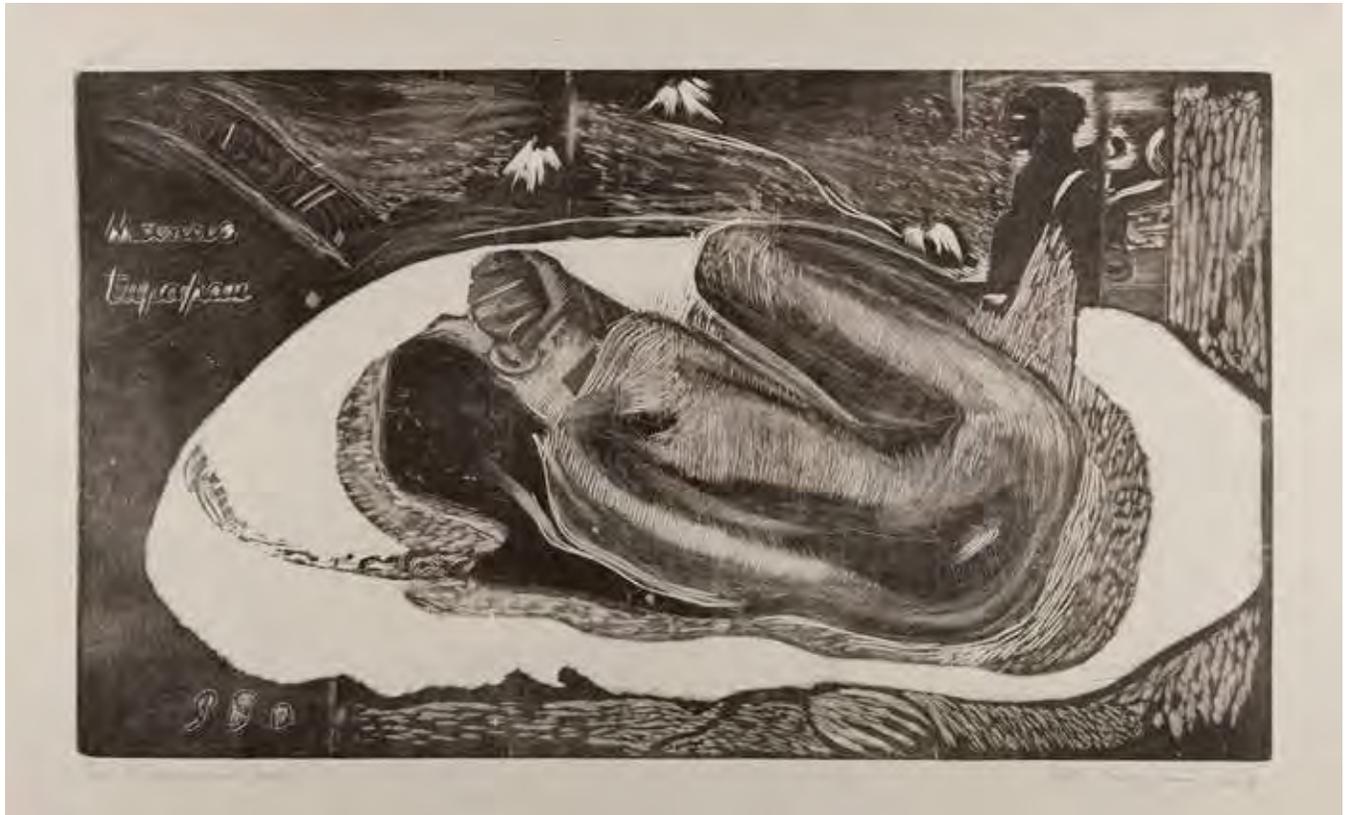
<sup>19</sup> "Biography of Albrecht Dürer," *Albrecht Dürer*. Accessed October 31, 2017. <https://www.albrecht-durer.org/biography.html>.

In Dürer's religious series, he also created a print of the *Last Judgement* (1509-1511). With his passion for Renaissance style, his version follows the traditional iconographical form. In this palm-sized print, Christ is placed in the middle of the composition with two angels on the sides. Under the two kneeling figures are heaven with angels and hell with malevolent creatures. The sword and the wand above the Christ's head represent the justice and power of Christ. Each figure is naturalistic and the lines are simple and neat. With his exceptional technique in wood-cut, Dürer was able to depict the clear context of the Last Judgement in such a small piece. This straightforward representation was necessary in Dürer's era in order to be understood by all viewers even for whom without knowledge. As a result, Dürer's *Last Judgement* became one of his religious masterpieces using the wood-cut technique.

By comparing prints with the same themes by German artists from different time periods, it is apparent that the relevance of Christianity in the art world has not changed over time even if the style and representation has been altered. Both Corinth and Dürer used religious concepts to create their work that would resonate with a majority of viewers. The significance of Christian motifs and dynamic interpretation allows these pieces to still be relatable today in this current anxious state.

Albrecht Dürer, *The Last Judgment*,  
1509-1511, Woodblock print





Paul Gauguin, *Manao Tupapau (The Spirit of the Dead Watching)*, 1892, Woodcut

# NEW HUMANITIES: THE ARTIST'S RESPONSE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN SOCIETY

Carmen Wiley

During the turn of the twentieth century, Europe experienced rapid industrialization, urbanization, and changes in societal structures. These changes were paired with a tension that began to grow between nations. This pressure was felt throughout all sectors of society and helped lead to the construction of German Expressionism. German Expressionism was in many ways, an artistic response to new stresses attributed to this modernized society. Through their work, these artists sought to express internal grief and universal emotion.

A common theme of German Expressionism was a desire to go back to nature. Drawing on ideas from earlier movements such as Primitivism, an art movement based off European artists' fascination with Indigenous art, the German Expressionists saw the structure of European society as inferior to what they considered to be simpler cultures. At the same time, German Expressionists worked to revolt against artistic and cultural norms and values. They did so by depicting new subject matters such as everyday people living in this new kind of society.

Their anti-traditional stance is manifested in the use of high contrast, illustrative block prints and chaotic form and subject matter. Additionally, the emotional aspect of these works is essential. German Expressionists were concerned with depicting the inner emotions and psyche that were brought on by burgeoning societal stressors. Much of what was expressed was a desire to "go back" to a simpler, more natural way of life, and the Brücke artists were directly influenced by Primitivism and the philosophies of Paul Gauguin.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Die Brücke* was an artistic movement founded by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Fritz Bleyl, Erich Heckel and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff in Dresden, Germany in 1905. Their movement was founded on anti-bourgeoisie ideals and promoted a relaxed, bohemian lifestyle. They were young, naïve and believed their generation could affect revolutionary social change. Brücke artists sought to capture everyday people participating in their day to day lives. This ranged from people working in urban centers to relaxing in nature. In many ways, Die Brücke was influenced by an earlier artistic movement called Primitivism which claimed that Indigenous societies were superior to European society by being simpler and closer to an authentic way

## **Social Darwinism and “The Cultural Evolution”**

Anthropological thought during the latter half of the nineteenth century proposed that human difference was based on culture and not race.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the belief that one could look at non-industrialized civilizations as though they were a “window into the past.” During this time, Europeans considered Indigenous people to be in an earlier stage of psychological development, which led artists like Gauguin to believe their way of life was closer to nature, or the essential way of being. Primitivist theory was involved with finding a true way of living, and looking “back” to a pre-industrial world was considered to be the way of finding universal truths about humanity.

## **Primitivism and the Escape into Nature**

The rapidly changing physical and social environment that practically all Europeans were facing during the latter half of the nineteenth century was a major source of anxiety. Many artists responded to this by spending time in nature. Gauguin took this one step further than most other artists and moved to Tahiti. Here, he spent time “studying” Indigenous people and often engaging in sexual acts with young women. Essentially, his idea of escaping into nature was inherently sexual, violent, and overtly male.

## **Savage Exoticism and Orientalism**

Artists who were experiencing anxiety due to burgeoning industrialism sought to remedy this by searching for the primal truth of personhood. And, because of the idea that non-industrialized societies were a window into the past, Primitivists believed that these people had a greater access to the truth of natural personhood. They sought to access this truth by associating themselves with all things deemed tribal. Gauguin believed this to be true and went to live an “unspoiled” life in Tahiti. From his writings in *Noa Noa*, the journal he kept during his time in Tahiti, it is clear that he highly exoticized the land and people. He also saw the local women as something for the taking, conflating body with land. The following quote from *Noa Noa* illustrates his villainous attitude towards Indigenous women:

All, indeed, wish to be ‘taken,’ literally, brutally taken, without a single word. All have the secret desire for violence because this act of authority on the part of the male leaves to the woman-will its full share of irresponsibility. For in this way she has not give her consent for the beginning of a permanent love. It is possible there is a deeper meaning in this violenc which at first seems so

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of being human.

<sup>2</sup> Alex Mesoudi, “Cultural Evolution,” *Oxford Bibliographies*, January 11, 2012, <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766567/obo-9780199766567-0038.xml>

revolting. It is possible also that it has a savage sort of charm. I pondered the matter, indeed, but I did not dare. Then, too, some were said to be ill, ill with that malady which Europeans confer upon savages, doubtless as the first degree of their initiation into civilized life . . .<sup>3</sup>

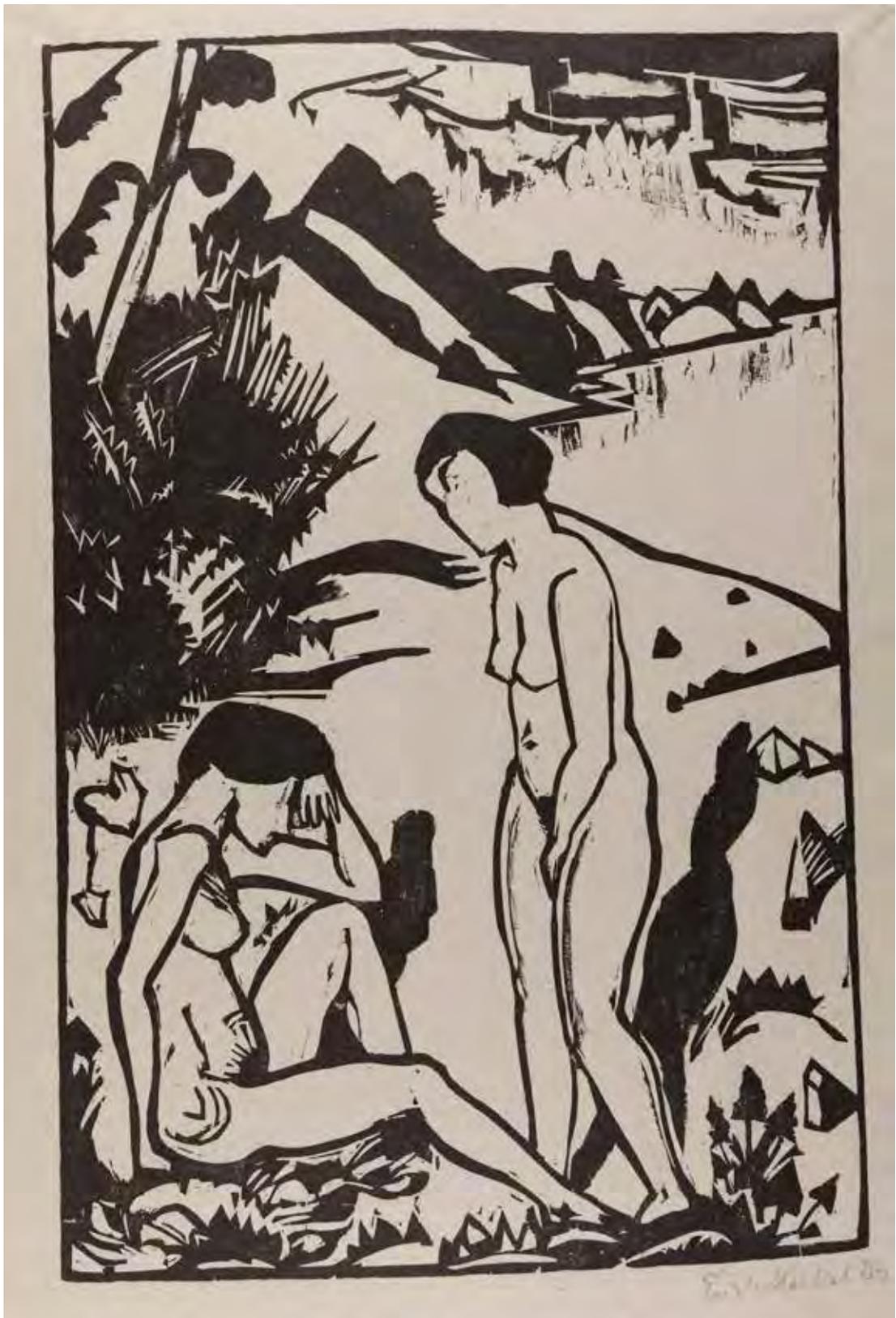
*Manao Tupapau*, a woodcut by Gauguin, is part of a series that was meant to accompany his writings in *Noa Noa*. In many ways, these woodcut prints reflect the same kind of racist sexism that Gauguin displayed in his writings. The image depicts an Indigenous woman lying in the fetal position with her back turned to us. She is not given any sort of specific identity leading the viewer to consider her more of a symbol or object rather than an individual. For Gauguin, that symbol was savage eroticism. Additionally, *Manao Tupapau* translates to “The Spirit of the Dead Watching,” which elicits a voyeuristic element to the print. The image surrounding the young woman is mystic and unclear. Dense foliage is suggested by the use of ragged lines crafted by woodcut printing. There is a masked figure in the back who is presumably the spirit in the title of the work suggests. Her body can be read as an “island,” which alludes to the idea of conflating landscapes with women’s bodies. Essentially, this image denies the woman of her own autonomy and identity while engaging in processes of consumption and exotification.

Images of otherness are essential to Primitivism. If Europeans live in highly advanced societies and are essentially too smart for their own good, what is the opposite? Edward Said, a founding member of postcolonial studies, coined the term Orientalism, which describes the way the “West” orients itself as the center of the world.<sup>4</sup> The construction of the “East” is then used to describe all that deviates from the normal “West.” This thought process eventually evolved into “normal” being superior and the concept of European Paternalism came into being. European Paternalism was used as a justification for colonization that essentially stated that non-industrialized civilizations were less advanced and in need of Europe’s guidance and control. While Primitive artists and German Expressionists considered Indigenous cultures more authentic than European culture, it was still under the guise that they were inferior. The simplistic nature that Gauguin and German Expressionist, Erich Heckel projected onto these cultures was the selling factor for them. Additionally, it is important to note that they could not be more wrong. These artists inability to understand difference led them to consider variation in cultural practice as an inferior practice.

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Gauguin, *Noa Noa; The Tahitian Journal of Paul Gauguin*, translated by O. F. Theis, (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1994), pp. 30-32.

<sup>4</sup> Edward Said, “Introduction,” *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), pp. 1-31.



### **Chaotic yet Simple Forms**

Many German Expressionists employed woodblock printing as their choice of medium. From a formal perspective, woodblock printing employs simple, highly contrasted, black and white forms. German Expressionists were also heavily informed by the geometry that existed in African masks and textiles. They were interested in this because of both the primitivist influence that was discussed earlier and the sheer visual impact of the forms. Erich Heckel's *The Bathers* demonstrates this through simple lines and sheer lack of shading. While sharing certain similar traits with Primitivists such as Gauguin, Heckel does not engage with the same level of consumption and exoticism as Gauguin. Here, he is depicting himself, other members of the Brücke group, and their girlfriends. Heckel is undeniably influenced by Gauguin but his work does not mean to depict or consume some sort of distant, mystic entity. Many members of the Brücke group spent a considerable amount of time in rural coast towns in Germany where they practiced nudism and relaxed amidst nature.

### **After the War: Käthe Kollwitz's Realism**

Käthe Kollwitz represents a different kind of reaction to the kinds of anxieties faced in the modern world. Instead of looking to Primitivism to inform her art, she utilizes naturalism to depict anxiety and emotion in her art. Many of her prints and sketches consist of grieving mothers and illustrate the after effect that war had on the working class.

Kollwitz was born in Prussia in 1867 to a progressive middle-class family who encouraged her to pursue her art career. Greatly influenced by graphic artist, Max Klinger, Kollwitz focused her energy towards etching and woodcuts, increasing the simplicity of her visual language. This medium was also largely used for social commentary and was easily replicated for accessibility purposes. Later in her career, she turned almost entirely to drawing for its stark purity and ability to report what is seen. Particularly interested in egalitarianism, Kollwitz appreciated the accessibility of printing and the immediacy of drawing. Kollwitz was an incredibly compassionate person and often drew inspiration from the poor and working-class individuals who were admitted to her husband's medical clinic. Additionally, Kollwitz lost her son during World War I which expanded her understanding of grief and suffering. Due to her inherently sympathetic nature, Kollwitz worked tirelessly to explore human despair and universal emotion.<sup>5</sup>

*A Warning to be Careful While Working* is a lithograph that depicts a grieving woman knelt before a deceased figure. While this image has a sketch-like quality, Kollwitz does not go out of her way to depict her figures in any kind of stylized approach. Instead,

Erich Heckel, *The Bathers*, 1923,  
Woodcut print

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Prelinger, *Käthe Kollwitz*, (Washington: National Gallery of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 1-20.

she focused on creating naturalistic portrayals of visceral emotion. Kollwitz was not interested in escapism like Gauguin and Heckel. She was producing work after World War 1 and was recovering from tragedy rather than trying to escape from it before it occurred. Here, Kollwitz represents post-war emotion. Her naturalistic depictions do not have an overt feeling of anxiety to them, but rather, the feeling of complete despair. She is not looking into the future with fear, she is looking at the past and present with agony.

Kollwitz did not draw upon ideas of Primitivism or the concept of “going back” into nature. Instead, she represented a different, more socially conscious variant of German Expressionism. Growing up as a woman in a progressive family, who later married a man who ran a hospital for the working class, Kollwitz was likely more sensitive to the different types of inequalities that existed in European society. Kollwitz typically produced images of people who she could directly relate to rather than some distant idea or concept of other. Her naturalistic style was depicting individuals rather than concepts or objects, thus focusing on the individual’s experience of emotion, rather than a collective society’s experience of emotion. Often depicting women grieving over deceased children, Kollwitz draws upon her own life experiences to inform her work. Unlike Gauguin and Heckel, she is not relying on an outside source to achieve an expressive work.

## **Conclusion**

Gauguin, Heckel, and Kollwitz all represent the different ways artists reacted to the industrialization and modernization of European society. Furthermore, these artists sought universal human truths and experiences. Gauguin engaged with Primitivism and sought to use Indigenous culture as a way to look back in history to find some kind of primal human truth. Heckel drew upon theories of Primitivism and applied it to his group of artist friends in Germany, who sought to relieve modern anxiety by spending time in rural coast towns and practicing nudism. Lastly, Kollwitz expressed her inner turmoil and compassion by depicting the working class’s pain and suffering. Interested in universal human emotion, Kollwitz drew on society’s worst fear: the death of a loved one.

Käthe Kollwitz, *Eine Mahnung zur  
Vorsicht Bei der Arbeit (A Warning to be  
Careful While Working)*, n.d., Photo-  
lithograph



*Eine Mahnung zur Vernunft bei der Arbeit*



Hans Erni, *Bacchanale*, 1954, Color lithograph

## EXTENDED LABELS

## LEONARD BASKIN

(United States, 1922–2000)

*Man with Spring Plants*, 1953

Wood engraving on paper

20 1/2 in. x 13 1/4 in.

Museum Purchase, Susan L. Mills Fund, 1956.78

Although *Man with Spring Plants* was not created within the context of German Expressionism, it combines many of the elements that defined the movement. Leonard Baskin was a noted printmaker and sculptor who spent several decades teaching printmaking at Smith College, Amherst College, and Hampshire College. In *Man with Spring Plants*, Baskin channels human emotion with nature. The expressive and fluid lines that develop the figure resemble roots which stylistically link the man to his plants. Nature and how it connects to the human form and consciousness was of significant interest to the German Expressionists who sought to return to a simpler state of mind. Two other works on display, *Bathing Women under Trees* by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and *The Bathers* by Erich Heckel demonstrate this call to nature. *Man with Spring Plants* represents the enduring influence of the German Expressionists as artists seek to engage the emotional core of the viewer through visual imagery.

Natasha Culbreth





## **MAX BECKMANN**

(Germany, 1884–1950, New York)

*Portrait of 'Frau H.M.' (Naila)*, 1923

Woodcut print on paper

15 1/2 in. x 13 1/2 in.

Museum Purchase, Susan L. Mills Fund, 1940.96

What I want to show in my work is the idea which hides itself behind so-called reality.

– Max Beckmann

Max Beckmann, a skilled portrait artist, made this work in 1923 while living in Germany, before his art was labeled as “degenerate” artist by Hitler and the Nazi Party. Yet, Beckmann’s early work is still influenced by trauma and anxiety. Serving as a medical officer during WWI, Beckmann was scarred by the terror he witnessed, which can be seen in his own work as well as the artists he influenced. Beckmann’s *Portrait of 'Frau H.M.'* is made up of sketch-like lines, making the figure seem less solid, giving off a more anxious air. Beckmann eventually moved to the United States to teach at various institutions, including at Mills College during the summer of 1950. Nathan Oliveira, whose work is also shown in this exhibition, was one of his students at Mills and he cites Beckmann as a huge influence on his art. While Beckmann skillfully portrays everyday people and objects, he depicts much more than that: he is showing human emotion and anxiety through the lens of reality.

Eva Goldstein-Moore

## LOVIS CORINTH

(Germany, 1858–1925, The Netherlands)

*The Last Judgement*, 1923

Etching on paper

13 1/4 in. x 10 5/8 in.

Museum Purchase, Susan L. Mills Fund, 1940.95

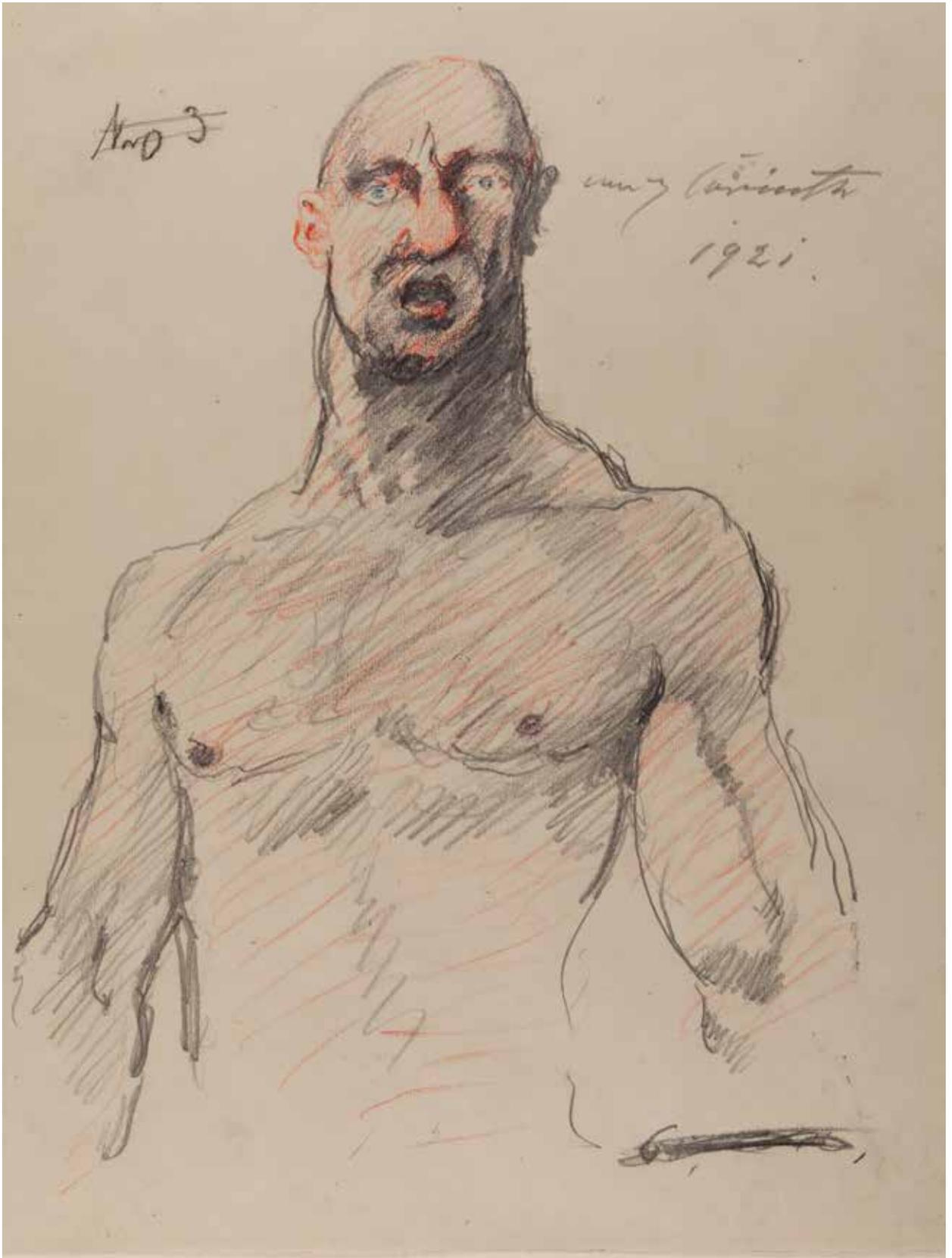
Religious zeal was often characterized by the German Expressionists in their work. *The Last Judgement* by Lovis Corinth presents a frightening depiction of the Biblical end of time. During his art education, Corinth studied under academic realist William-Adolphe Bouguereau at the Académie Julian and developed an Impressionist painting style. He later rebelled against his traditional training by joining the Secession movement of artists who embraced progressive styles and developed a more Expressionist approach towards his work.

In *The Last Judgment* we can see a meeting of the traditional with the avant-garde. In the print, Corinth employs thick and chaotic line work and the dramatic staging of figures found in traditional Northern European etchings, such as those by Peter Paul Rubens, who Corinth greatly admired. His treatment of the Last Judgement is apocalyptic and almost industrial; the armored archangel Michael smites the wicked with a large sword and rays of light emanate blindingly from his halo against the smoky background. This imagery calls to mind a battlefield, scenes of which would had been familiar to Corinth from World War I.

Natasha Culbreth



10 / *[Handwritten signature]*



## **LOVIS CORINTH**

(Germany, 1858–1925, The Netherlands)

*Bust of a Nude Man with Open Mouth*, 1921

Pencil and colored crayon on paper

12 3/4 in. x 9 7/8 in.

Gift of Mr. Theodore Corinth, 1954.101

*Bust of a Nude Man with Open Mouth* illustrates the industrialized man. The enlarged trapezius muscles and athletic torso paired with an emotionally distraught face shows a man who is experiencing the kind of emotional violence that was fundamental to early twentieth century European society. Some formal characteristics are visually similar to the heroic warriors of Greek and Roman antiquity, alluding to the history of Europe's military power. But there is more to this figure than a historic nod to antiquity. There is an added element of grittiness, perhaps as a reflection of an imperfect society. At first glance, the man looks aggressive and hostile, but after further contemplation, his expression seems to soften and he becomes more of an observer. There are subtle hints of concern and anguish that line his face, once again insinuating that the modern world may not be as commendable as one might initially think.

Carmen Wiley

## **FRANCIS DE ERDELY**

(Hungary, 1904–1959, United States)

*Untitled (from the War Drawing Series)*, ca. 1940-1950

Pen and ink on paper

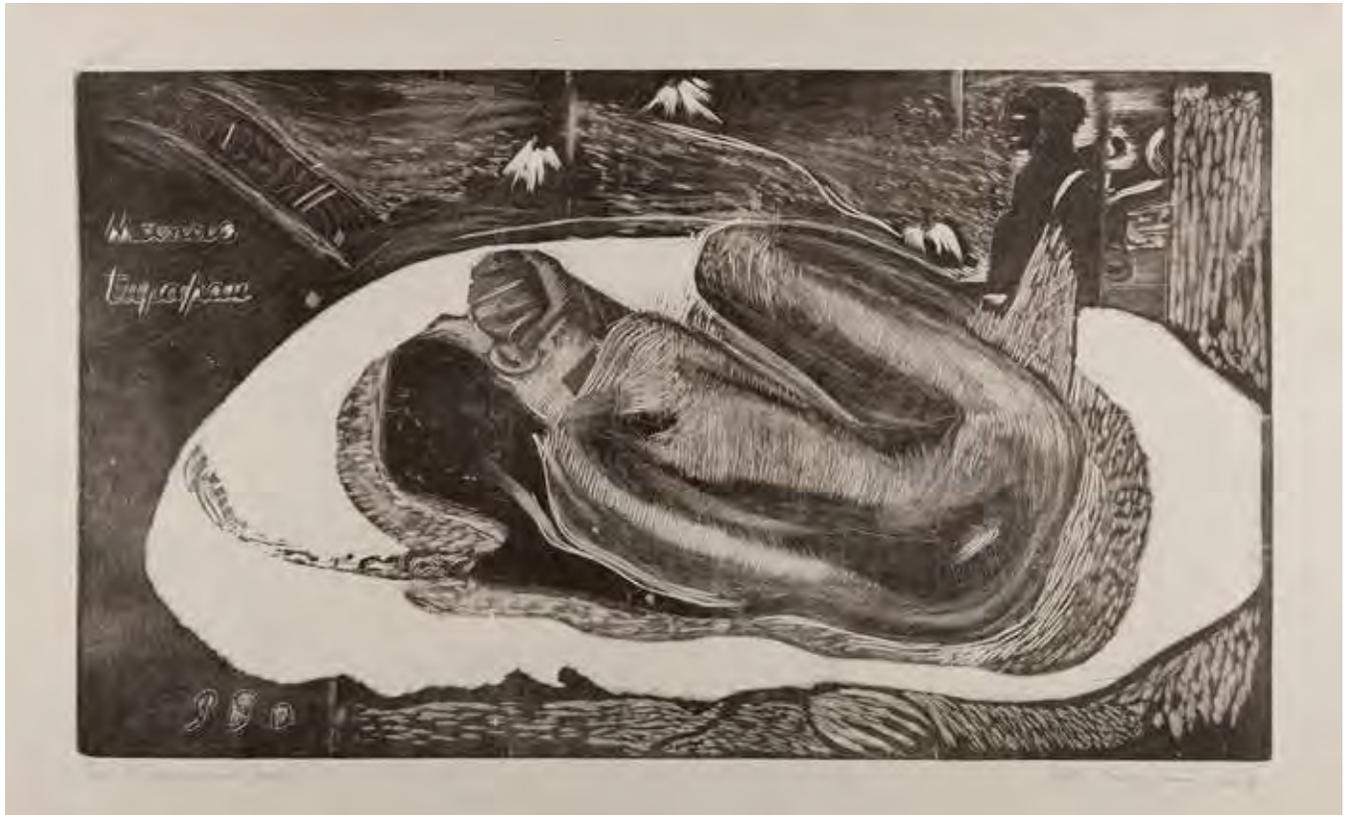
18 1/4 in. x 24 1/2 in.

Gift of Margaret Johnstone Barlow, class of 1929, 1988.9.13

*Untitled (from the War Drawing Series)* evokes a visceral emotional response to war and genocide. The swastika on the armband of the Nazi soldier clearly marks the antagonist of this image. The people confronted by the Nazi are fragile and huddled together. Dead bodies in the mid-ground offer a glimpse into their collective near futures. A bleak cityscape creates a dramatic backdrop to this violent interaction, reminding the viewer that genocide is the product of a so-called advanced civilization. While this drawing was created after German Expressionism, it reflects many of the same themes of the earlier movement. De Erdely, born in 1904, fled Hungary in the 1940s after being banished by early Gestapo members. After witnessing two separate world wars, De Erdely's art cannot be naive. He depicts visceral suffering as a direct result of war. Perilous cityscapes and war-torn families are inherent in both De Erdely's work as well as that of many German Expressionists, thus depicting an almost circular notion of history, with dreaded events doomed to be repeated again and again.

Carmen Wiley





## **PAUL GAUGUIN**

(France, 1848–1903, French Polynesia)

*Manao Tupapau (The Spirit of the Dead Watching)*, 1893-94

Woodcut on paper, printing by Pola Gauguin

10 3/8 in. x 16 3/4 in.

Museum Purchase, Susan L. Mills Fund, 1941.153

Paul Gauguin was a Post-Impressionist artist whose aesthetic style and subject matter influenced many artistic movements, such as Expressionism. Like Expressionist artists, Gauguin was very interested in Primitivism, a belief in the value of what is simple and unsophisticated expressed as a philosophy of life or through art or literature. Artists used Primitivism to look into the past to express feelings of their present. Gauguin's interest in Primitivism is what drove him to travel and live in Tahiti, where this and other important works were created in his later career. Gauguin's work in Tahiti was controversial, because he appropriated the local Indigenous culture through his images. This image shows a young female huddled in a fetal position, being watched by a spirit in the background. The uncomfortable setting gives off a sense of anxiety, such as one might feel while being watched by the unknown.

Savanna Ames

## **GEORGE GROSZ**

(Germany, 1893–1959)

*Street Scene*, 1920

Etching on paper

18 1/4 in. x 13 7/8 in.

Museum Purchase, Susan L. Mills Fund, 1957.67

“. . . I considered any art pointless if it did not put itself at the disposal of political struggle . . . my art was to be a gun and a sword.”

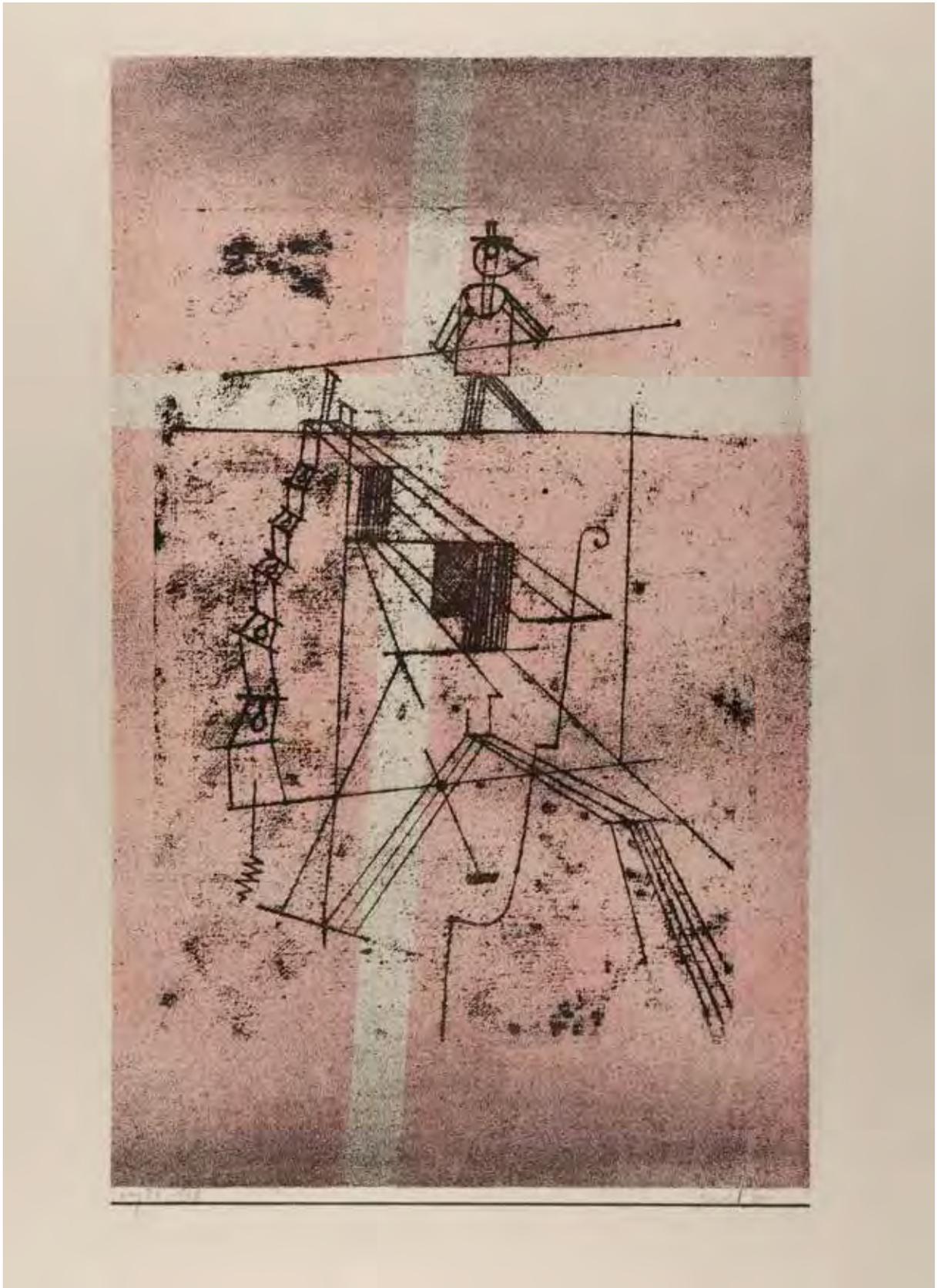
— George Grosz

George Grosz is a German artist who is known for work that is a form of social critique. He was associated with New Objectivity movement and Berlin Dada, and he created satirical pieces that harshly criticized German society, especially after the World War I. He often used pen and ink as well as etching in order to produce illustrations for magazines and journals. His unique style is considered to be a social-realist style, which accurately conveys his vision of society and its simplicity allowed any viewer to understand the context clearly.

This piece captures a daily city scene in Germany after the WWI. Although each figure is defined well, they represent a general group of people from different classes and are not specific individuals. By symbolizing the whole crowd, Grosz successfully depicts critique of the government as well as portraits the ideal modern society.

Hisaka Marubayashi





## **PAUL KLEE**

(Switzerland, 1879–1940)

*Seiltanzer (The Rope Dancer) from Kunst der Gegenwart (Art of the Present)*, 1923

Color lithograph on BSB laid paper

20 1/2 in. x 15 in.

Museum Purchase, Susan L. Mills Fund, 1940.98

Paul Klee's work is more abstracted than many pieces in this exhibition, but this style was an important aesthetic within Expressionist art. In 1911, Klee joined the artist group *Der Blaue Reiter* (The Blue Rider), which was founded by one of Klee's closest friends, Vasily Kandinsky, and the artist Franz Marc. In 1920, a bit before this work was made, Klee joined the faculty of the Bauhaus, one of the most well-known art and architectural schools, located in Germany. During his time at the Bauhaus, Klee produced many works, including *The Rope Dancer*. His works during this period are characterized by Klee's fascination with color, symbolism, and his dark sense of humor. In *The Rope Dancer*, Klee depicts a stick figure of a tightrope walker balancing on a complex system constructed of various lines and shapes, creating a feeling of both whimsy and slight anxiety. The artworks produced later on in Klee's life would become increasingly melancholic after his artwork was labeled as "degenerate" by the Nazis and eventually moved back to his hometown in Switzerland.

Eva Goldstein-Moore

## **NATHAN OLIVEIRA**

(United States, 1928–2010)

*Man and Child*, 1957

Lithograph on paper

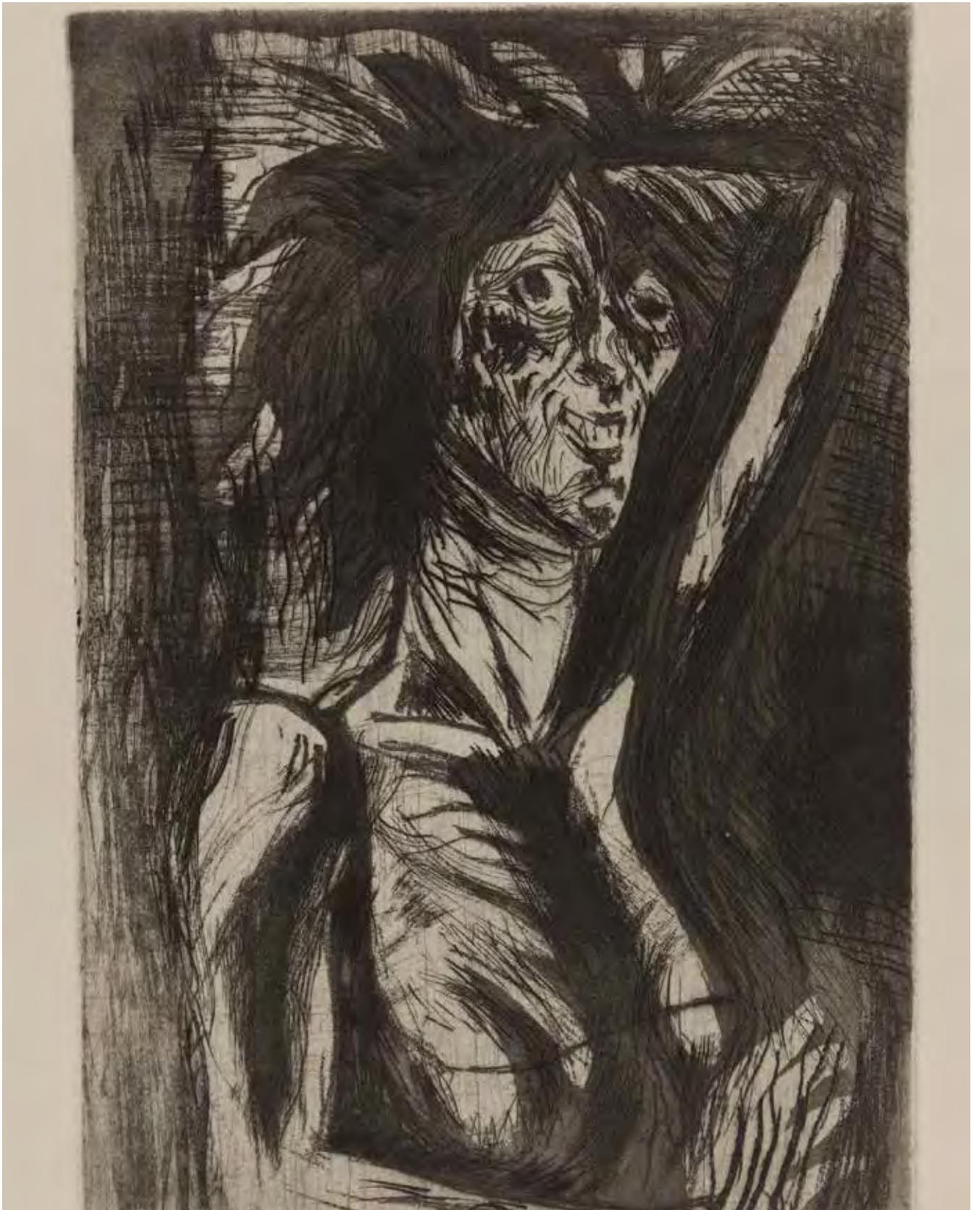
33 3/4 in. x 25 in.

Museum Purchase, Susan L. Mills Fund, 1957.76

Nathan Oliveira was a very prominent Bay Area artist, and was a student of Max Beckmann, a German Expressionist featured in this exhibition. The two met when Beckmann was invited to teach in the 1950 Summer Session at Mills College. Oliveira and Beckmann, as well as the rest of the artists represented in this exhibition, created works on paper using different printmaking and drawing techniques to express the emotional content in their images. While Oliveira and Beckmann's images are both portraits, they vary dramatically in style and technique. Yet both convey a state of anxiety. The viewer is left with a sense of uneasiness or that something isn't quite right with the individual in the portrait.

Savanna Ames





## **JOSE CLEMENTE OROZCO**

(Mexico, 1883–1949)

*La Loca*, 1944

Etching and aquatint on wove paper

11 3/4 in. x 9 in.

Gift of Dr. Paul Wescher, by exchange, 2001.10.2

Jose Clemente Orozco, who is considered one of the “Three Greats” of the Mexican Muralists, was highly impacted by the tragedy, violence, and suffering he witnessed during the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). Contemporaries of Orozco viewed him as an incredibly cynical man, and this can be seen in his artworks. Orozco’s works usually depict the darker aspects of the human experience, and *La Loca* is no exception. Made during his later years, the work has all of the characteristics that define Orozco’s works. The print is critical of both the woman he is depicting as well as the world she lives in, yet Orozco’s depiction of her is almost a caricature. The figure of *La Loca* has giant eyes bulging from her head, her hair is so disheveled it defies reality. This cartoonish depiction creates a dark, cynical humor that he used in many pieces. Orozco was incredibly jaded by the Mexican Revolution and in turn, of human beings overall. His work is highly critical of the world and of people, as well as incredibly emotional. Orozco, unlike other artists from his period, was willing to show the underbelly of humanity, making his work more difficult to look at but also more emotionally powerful.

Eva Goldstein-Moore

## **MAX PECHSTEIN**

(Germany, 1881–1955)

*Two Nudes*, 1920

Color woodcut print on paper

20 in. x 14 7/8 in.

Museum Purchase, Susan L. Mills Fund, 1959.10

Max Pechstein was a leading member of the German Expressionist group, *Die Brücke* (The Bridge) and is known for his nudes and landscape paintings. *Die Brücke* was founded in 1905 by a group of German artists including Erich Heckel and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, whose work is also on view in this exhibition. Their manifesto called for producing work that broke with traditional rules of creating art, instead adopting the late nineteenth century influences of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. Many of the prints by this group, including landscapes, portraiture, human figures, were simplified but impactful, created with bold outlines and vivid hues, as seen in this piece.

Pechstein traveled to Palau, Western Pacific, in 1914, where he started to work in a Primitivist style, which was influenced by a Western understanding of Indigenous cultures and was of major interest among German Expressionists. In *Two Nudes*, the shape of the body is boldly stylized and the contrast of bold orange and blue creates an exoticized impression. The texture of the wood shown in the print also enhances the primeval quality of this piece.

Hisaka Marubayashi



## WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

All works in *Anxious States* are from the collection of the Mills College Art Museum.

### ERNST BARLACH

(Germany, 1870–1938)  
*The Famine*, 1919  
Woodcut print on paper  
14 1/4 in. x 19 3/4 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1953.183

### LEONARD BASKIN

(United States, 1922–2000)  
*Man with Spring Plants*, 1953  
Wood engraving on paper  
20 1/2 in. x 13 1/4 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1956.78

### MAX BECKMANN

(Germany, 1884–1950,  
New York)  
*Portrait of 'Frau H.M.' (Naila)*,  
1923  
Woodcut print on paper  
15 1/2 in. x 13 1/2 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1940.96

### LOVIS CORINTH

(Germany, 1858–1925,  
The Netherlands)  
*The Last Judgement*, 1923  
Etching on paper  
13 1/4 in. x 10 5/8 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1940.95

### LOVIS CORINTH

(Germany, 1858–1925,  
The Netherlands)  
*Portrait of Mme Corinth in a  
Hammock*, 1923  
Grease pencil on paper  
12 3/8 in. x 19 3/4 in.  
Gift of Mr. Theodore Corinth,  
1954.99

### LOVIS CORINTH

(Germany, 1858–1925, The  
Netherlands)  
*Bust of a Nude Man with  
Open Mouth*, 1921  
Pencil and colored crayon  
on paper  
12 3/4 in. x 9 7/8 in.  
Gift of Mr. Theodore Corinth,  
1954.101

### FRANCIS DE ERDELY

(Hungary, 1904–1959,  
United States)  
*Untitled (from the War Drawing  
Series)*, ca. 1940  
Pen and ink on paper  
18 1/4 in. x 24 1/2 in.  
Gift of Margaret Johnstone  
Barlow, class of 1929, 1988.9.13

### HANS ERNI

(Switzerland, 1909–2015)  
*Bacchanale*, 1954  
Color lithograph on paper  
16 in. x 21 1/4 in.  
Gift of Mrs. Henry Potter  
Russell, 1954.69

### PAUL GAUGUIN

(France, 1848–1903,  
French Polynesia)  
*Manao Tupapau (The Spirit of  
the Dead Watching)*, 1892-93  
Woodcut on paper, printing by  
Pola Gauguin  
10 3/8 in. x 16 3/4 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1941.153

### HAROLD GREGOR

(United States, 1929–)  
*Fallen Warrior*, ca. 1940-1950  
Brush and ink on paper  
5 1/2 in. x 8 1/2 in.  
Gift of the Jefferson Gallery, La  
Jolla, 1964.12

### GEORGE GROSZ

(Germany, 1893–1959)  
*Street Scene*, 1920  
Etching on paper  
18 1/4 in. x 13 7/8 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1957.67

**ERICH HECKEL**

(Germany, 1883–1970)  
*The Bathers*, 1923  
Woodcut print on paper  
18 1/2 in. x 13 7/8 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1940.100

**ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER**

(Germany, 1880–1938,  
Switzerland)  
*Bathing Women Under Trees*,  
1912  
Woodcut print on paper  
17 3/4 in. x 16 1/4 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1957.15

**PAUL KLEE**

(Switzerland, 1879–1940)  
*Seiltanzer (The Rope Dancer)*  
*from Kunst der Gegenwart*  
*(Art of the Present)*, 1923  
Color lithograph on BSB laid  
paper  
20 1/2 in. x 15 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1940.98

**KÄTHE KOLLWITZ**

(Germany, 1867–1945)  
*Widows and Orphans*, 1919  
Lithograph on paper  
20 in. x 27 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1939.84

**KÄTHE KOLLWITZ**

(Germany, 1867–1945)  
*Eine Mahnung zur Vorsicht Bei*  
*der Arbeit (A Warning to be*  
*Careful While Working)*, n.d.  
Photo-lithograph  
16 5/8 in. x 23 3/8 in.  
Gift of Miss Betty Glendenning,  
1941.155

**EDVARD MUNCH**

(Norway, 1863–1944)  
*Self Portrait with Cigarette*,  
1908  
Lithograph on paper  
25 3/8 in. x 19 3/8 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1941.2

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*Man and Child*, 1957  
Lithograph on paper  
33 3/4 in. x 25 in.  
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Etching and aquatint on  
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(Germany, 1881–1955)  
*Two Nudes*, 1920  
Color woodcut print on paper  
20 in. x 14 7/8 in.  
Museum Purchase, Susan L.  
Mills Fund, 1959.10

**KARL SCHMIDT-ROTTLUFF**

(Germany, 1884–1976)  
*Portrait of the Artist's Wife*,  
1922  
Woodcut print on paper  
27 1/2 in. x 21 7/8 in.  
Gift of the Artist, 1938.96

