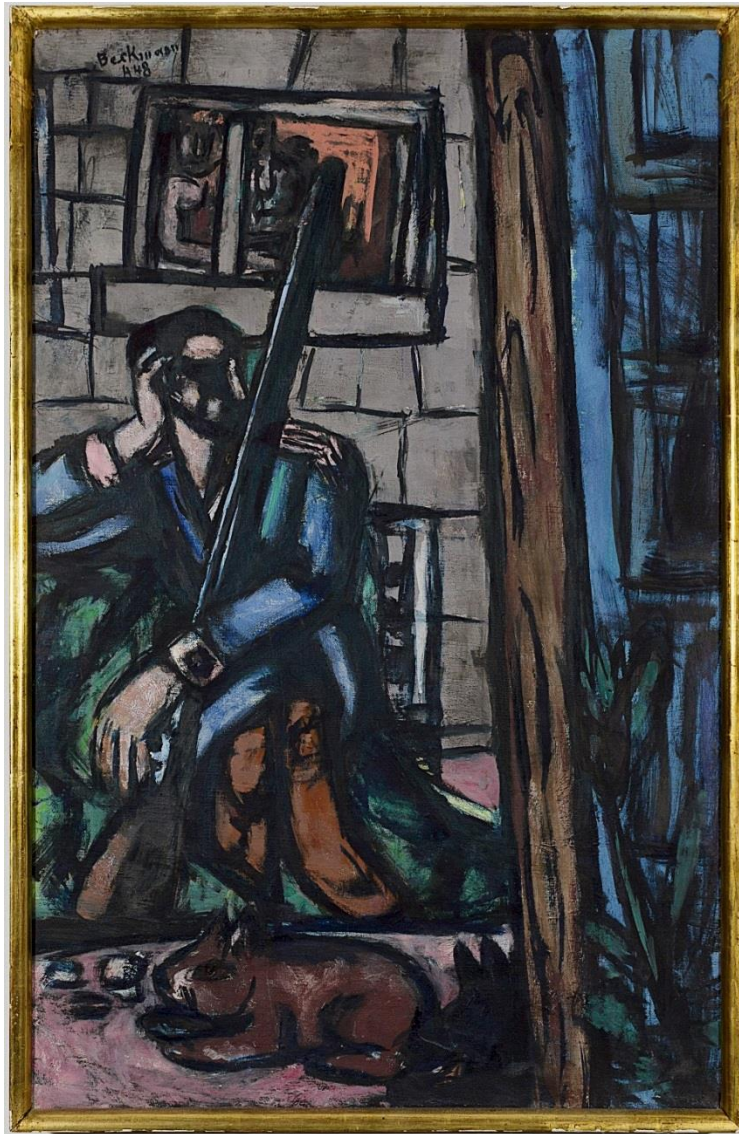


BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



Max Beckmann, *Soldat*, 1947, oil on canvas, 85 x 55 cm. (33 1/2 x 21 5/8 in.)

ASPECTS OF GERMAN ART (PART TWO)

29 November 2017 – 26 January 2018

Ben Brown Fine Arts is proud to present *ASPECTS OF GERMAN ART (PART TWO)*, an exhibition which spans eight decades of German painting and features work by some of the most important and pioneering artists of the twentieth century. The exhibition begins in the 1920s with Max Beckmann, whose work emerges directly from his experiences during the First and Second World Wars, the political upheavals of the 1920s and 1930s, the rise of Nazism, his subsequent exile in Amsterdam and his final emigration to the United States. With a particular focus on painting, this exhibition brings together seminal works that provide an overview of the artistic, socio-economic and political concerns of artists in Germany, during a time period when these artists were reconciling with the trauma of war, finding a national identity, struggling for freedom of expression and constantly pushing the limits of modern and contemporary art.

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Please find a brief overview of the artists included in the exhibition.

Max Beckmann (1884-1950) One of the most important German figurative painters of the twentieth century, Max Beckmann's work was highly informed by his harrowing experiences during both World War I and World War II, the political upheavals of the 1920s and 1930s, the rise of Nazism, his subsequent exile in Amsterdam and his final emigration to the United States. His portraits are often characterized by their fractured angularity, exaggerated and distorted human features, and amplified colours. In the 1920s, Beckmann was associated with the *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) movement, in which its members sought to represent the sordid and disaffected post-war society of the Weimar Republic with critical and often satirical realism.

Günther Förg (1952-2013) Günther Förg, painter, photographer, sculptor and graphic designer, is most highly regarded for his monochromatic lead paintings. These tactile, minimalist works were achieved by wrapping lead over wood panels and stretchers and layering them with acrylic in either one or two colours, the lead providing a rough ground for his gestural work that was highly informed by modernism, through a postmodern lens.

Heinz Mack (b. 1931) Heinz Mack entered the canon of art history for his part in creating ZERO, an artistic movement founded with Otto Piene in 1957. ZERO's manifesto advocated pure and limitless possibilities in artistic creation and marked a distinct departure from the gestural language of European abstract expressionism. Mack's early works are characterised by a minimalist, monochromatic aesthetic and a reverence for the transformative power of light.

Albert Oehlen (b. 1954) A pivotal shift in Oehlen's oeuvre took place during his now famed trip to Spain with peer and fellow artist Martin Kippenberger in 1988, where he sacrificed his focus from the expressionistically figurative to make way for the gestural, the abstract and what he would later coin as 'post-non-figurative.' From that point on, Oehlen often began by imposing a set of rules or structural limitations—restricting his palette or deliberately working at a slow pace—while challenging himself to approach each painting differently.

Sigmar Polke (1941-2010) Sigmar Polke's oeuvre is marked by a fascination with experimentation and manipulation of artistic media. Polke printed his photographs with intentional haphazardness, underexposing, overexposing, combining negatives and positives, repeating images, creasing wet photo paper, using chemical solvents to create stains, and hand colouring blemishes made from a scratched negative. Polke would continue this experimentation in his paintings, combining pigments, solvents, resins and fabrics to produce extreme chemical reactions, forever questioning the rules of conventional art making.

Gerhard Richter (b. 1932) Gerhard Richter has found success in every stage of his varied artistic output, which has included both photo-realist and abstract painting as well as photography. Richter's work demonstrates an unyielding exploration of colour (or absence of colour), texture, source materials, pictorial representation and abstraction—all the while moving seamlessly between artistic styles and series that are entirely unique and pioneering. Richter has garnered critical and commercial acclaim internationally and is considered one of the most important living painters.

Günther Uecker (b. 1930) Günther Uecker cultivated a strong interest in repetitive practices and purification rituals throughout the 1950s, including the meditative hammering of nails, which he proceeded to translate into his artistic practice. His nail-relief works exceed the limits of the two-dimensional plane and create a new realm for vision to explore the calculated patterns of light and shadow. In 1961 he joined the ZERO movement alongside Heinz Mack and Otto Piene.

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Ben Brown Fine Arts opened its first location on Cork Street in the heart of Mayfair, London, in 2004. The gallery has prominently positioned itself on the contemporary art scene with the sole UK representation of artists such as Ron Arad, Tony Bevan, Ori Gersht, Candida Höfer, Claude & François-Xavier Lalanne, Heinz Mack, Vik Muniz, Gavin Turk and Not Vital. Also renowned for its strong expertise in 20th century Italian art, the gallery has been exhibiting the work of Alighiero Boetti and Lucio Fontana, amongst others, since its inception. In 2008, Ben Brown Fine Arts opened a new exhibition space on Brook's Mews, also in Mayfair, designed by architect Alexander Maybank. The office and viewing room are conveniently located across from the gallery space. In 2009, the gallery took its first step in an international expansion with the opening of an exhibition space in Hong Kong designed by André Fu.

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Monday to Friday: 11am - 6pm

Saturdays: 10.30am - 2:30pm