

ALFRED WICKENBURG
1885 - 1978

MAN WITH MASK
AND SELECTED DRAWINGS

April 23rd through May 24th, 2013

Exhibition organized by
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Alois Wienerroither, Eberhard Kohlbacher

SHEPHERD
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GALLERIES

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ALFRED WICKENBURG

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for Shepherd Gallery, Associates, 2013

Alfred Wickenburg developed a strong sense for the coherence of an entire composition during his first years of studying in Munich at Azbé's painting school. Azbé taught his students to recognize principles of composition in the works of old masters. This fell on fertile ground with Wickenburg's preference for compositions defined by fields of color and line. In 1905, when Wickenburg met Adolf Hölzel in Dachau, he was well prepared to understand and appreciate Hölzel's ideas about the rhythm of painting, about the distribution of mass, and the balance of color. Hölzel, like Azbé, analyzed old master paintings in order to understand their artistic rules, which he strove to interpret with a modern sensibility. These two signposts, Azbé and Hölzel, pointed Wickenburg away from then popular movements—Secessionism, Late Impressionism, Naturalism—and towards an investigation of the means of painting, the plane, and the narrative element.

The logical next step was Wickenburg's 1906 move to Paris where he joined the *Académie Julian*, expecting new impulses from French painting. However, at that time, the academy was still based on traditional classes of drawing and painting from the nude model as well as after antique plaster casts. Nonetheless, the school was a melting pot of young artists (including women) from all over the world, and thus much more open to experiments than the *Ecole des Beaux Arts*. One of Wickenburg's classmates was Ludwig Meidner with whom he exchanged new ideas about painting.

In the following years Wickenburg encountered the paintings by Matisse, Vlaminck and Le Fauconnier. He studied Gauguin intensively. He had already seen Cézanne's work in Munich. The 1907 retrospective in Paris, after Cézanne's death in 1906, provided new insights. Once again, it was Adolf Hölzel who inspired Wickenburg to study Cézanne's work.

The last school Wickenburg attended was the Stuttgart Academy of Art and Design. Under Adolf Hölzel's guidance he refined his compositions. In the years from 1910 to 1914 in Stuttgart he met the German avant-garde, represented by Johannes Itten, Oskar Schlemmer, and Willi Baumeister, who based their compositions exclusively on color and abstract form.

Filled with these insights in innovative methods of composition, Wickenburg left for Italy in the early 1920s. In addition to the old masters, he encountered the new movements of Futurism and *Pittura metafisica*—a term applied to paintings by Giorgio de Chirico, Carlo Carrà, and a group of artists surrounding them during World War I. All these experiences entered Wickenburg's independent drawings and paintings. During the Italian journey, and the following years, Wickenburg's work changed. From the 1920s on, he played with symbols and narratives in a complex and imaginative way. He was inspired by stories—whether this was the mythos of King Midas or a caricature by William Hogarth—and always attempted to include symbolic content in his paintings.

Wickenburg's major work of 1937, *Man with Mask*, serves as an example of his complex use of symbols. The space is understood as flat, and yet the roundness of the figure is expressed by spacial tensions and the distribution of color in the architectural elements. The mood created in this painting is mysterious and imaginative. The mask

COVER ILLUSTRATION: Catalog no. 1

BACK COVER ILLUSTRATION: Catalog no. 2

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Keith Stout

TECHNICAL NOTES: All measurements are in inches and in centimeters; height precedes width. All drawings and paintings are framed. Prices on request. All works subject to prior sale.

SHEPHERD GALLERY SERVICES has framed, matted, and restored all of the objects in this exhibition, if required. The Service Department is open to the public by appointment, Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tel: (212) 744 3392; fax (212) 744 1525; e-mail: sgservicesny@aol.com.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

The staff of Shepherd Gallery, New York; the staff of Wienerroither & Kohlbacher Modern Art, Vienna; Constantin Wickenburg; Elisabeth Kashey; Harald Krejci, curator of 20th-century art Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna.

CHRONOLOGY

makes the antique youth even more of a representative of mankind. In addition, the mask is an allegory of death. The composition is reminiscent of Pompeian frescoes, a subject in which Wickenburg was very interested. In fact, I would claim that the instrument is not a trumpet but a shawm, an antique instrument.

Based on the iconography, one might search for parallels to Max Beckmann's *Self Portrait with Horn* of 1938. Wickenburg might have seen other works by Beckmann in the mid-1920s in Otto Kallir's *Neue Galerie* in Vienna. Beckmann's self-portrait, however, is dominated by the facial expression of the sitter. It evokes the strong symbolism of listening for the echo of the sound and less the making of music. This is why Beckmann's painting has been interpreted as an image of insecurity the artist experienced while on his way to Amsterdam.

Wickenburg's *Trumpeter's* grotesquely masked face might represent a wake-up call to lost values and the dangers of the time. Wickenburg's paintings in the 1930s go far beyond the art-immanent questions with his symbolic-allegorical readings. Parallels to Beckmann's painting are not only reduced to the subject of the musician but they are also to be found in the symbolic charge of the painting with social and biographical contents.

Wickenburg's painting *Enigma* of 1943 is loaded with encoded messages. This painting, as well as *Man with Mask*, attains a mysterious aura and political dimension if one considers the encoding machine called Enigma, which was used by the German army. In fact, Wickenburg's art was deemed degenerate and his frescoes in the hall of the Chamber of Labor in Graz were covered over by the regime. Wickenburg was always concerned to balance symbols and composition and to unite as a painter the subjective myths with the big world theater. By doing so, he could live his "inner emigration".

Harald Krejci

1885	Alfred Count Wickenburg born in Bad Gleichenberg (Styria), Austria.
1904/05	Attends the private school of Azbé in Munich. Former students include Alexej von Jawlensky, Wassily Kandinsky, Eugenius Zak.
1905-1906	Wickenburg spends the summer of 1905 and winter of 1905/06 in the private art school <i>Neu Dachau</i> , co-founded by Adolf Hölzel. The school also attracted an artists' colony. Students include Ida Kerkovius and Emil Nolde. Wickenburg studies composition with Hölzel; also studies composition of the old masters.
1906-09	<i>Académie Julian</i> , Paris. Studies with Jean-Paul Laurens. Meets Ludwig Meidner; they discuss the Fauvists Henri Matisse, Georges Rouault, Maurice Vlaminck and André Dérain. Other lasting impressions: Gauguin, van Gogh, Picasso's early Cubist paintings.
1910-14	Academy in Stuttgart. His teacher: Christian Landesberger. Prepares for composition class of Adolf Hölzel. Hölzel's ideas about color and composition remain a strong influence on Wickenburg. Hölzel and Wickenburg stay in touch after 1914. Hölzel's circle included Ida Kerkovius, Johannes Itten, Oskar Schlemmer, Willi Baumeister.
1914-18	Reserve officer at the Italian front.
1918	Wickenburg returns to Styria.
1919-23	Italy. Extensive travels. Studies old masters (Piero della Francesca, Paolo Ucello) as well as contemporaneous <i>Pittura metafisica</i> , Futurism and Cubism.
1920	First group show at Miethke Gallery. Watercolors after Apuleius' <i>Metamorphosis (The Golden Ass)</i> .
1923	Return to Graz, Austria. Founder of Secession Graz together with Wilhelm Thöny and Fritz Silberbauer.
1924/25	Winter, marries Elisabeth Hönel. They move to Vienna.
1926	Son Johannes is born.
1926	Assistant art teacher at Graz <i>Gymnasium</i> .
1934-36	Professor at <i>Landeskunstschule</i> Graz. Director of the department for still life and landscape painting. Prize of Honor from the Julius Reich Foundation of the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna.
1936	Director of the fresco department at the <i>Landeskunstschule</i> .
1937	The school is dissolved and replaced by <i>Master Classes for Fresco Painting</i> ; director: Fritz Silberbauer, Wickenburg serves as his assistant.
1938	Annexation of Austria into the German "Reich". All artists' unions are dissolved; Wickenburg does not join the newly created, streamlined <i>Kameradschaft Steirischer</i>

Künstler und Kunstfreunde. The *Landeskunstschule*, where Wickenburg teaches, is reformed and renamed several times. Wickenburg is assistant teacher until 1945.

- 1940 Elisabeth Wickenburg dies.
- 1944 Wickenburg marries Dr. Friederike Jele.
- 1945 Re-joins the Graz Secession.
- 1952 Wickenburg retires from the *Ortweinschule*, formerly the *Landeskunstschule*.
- 1956 Grand Austrian State Prize for Visual Arts.
- 1957 Wickenburg becomes member of the Austrian Art Senate. Receives Austrian Art Prize.
- 1969 Receives Gold Medal of Florence Biennale of Contemporary Art.
- 1978 Wickenburg dies in Graz on December 25th.

ALFRED WICKENBURG

Man with Mask and Selected Drawings

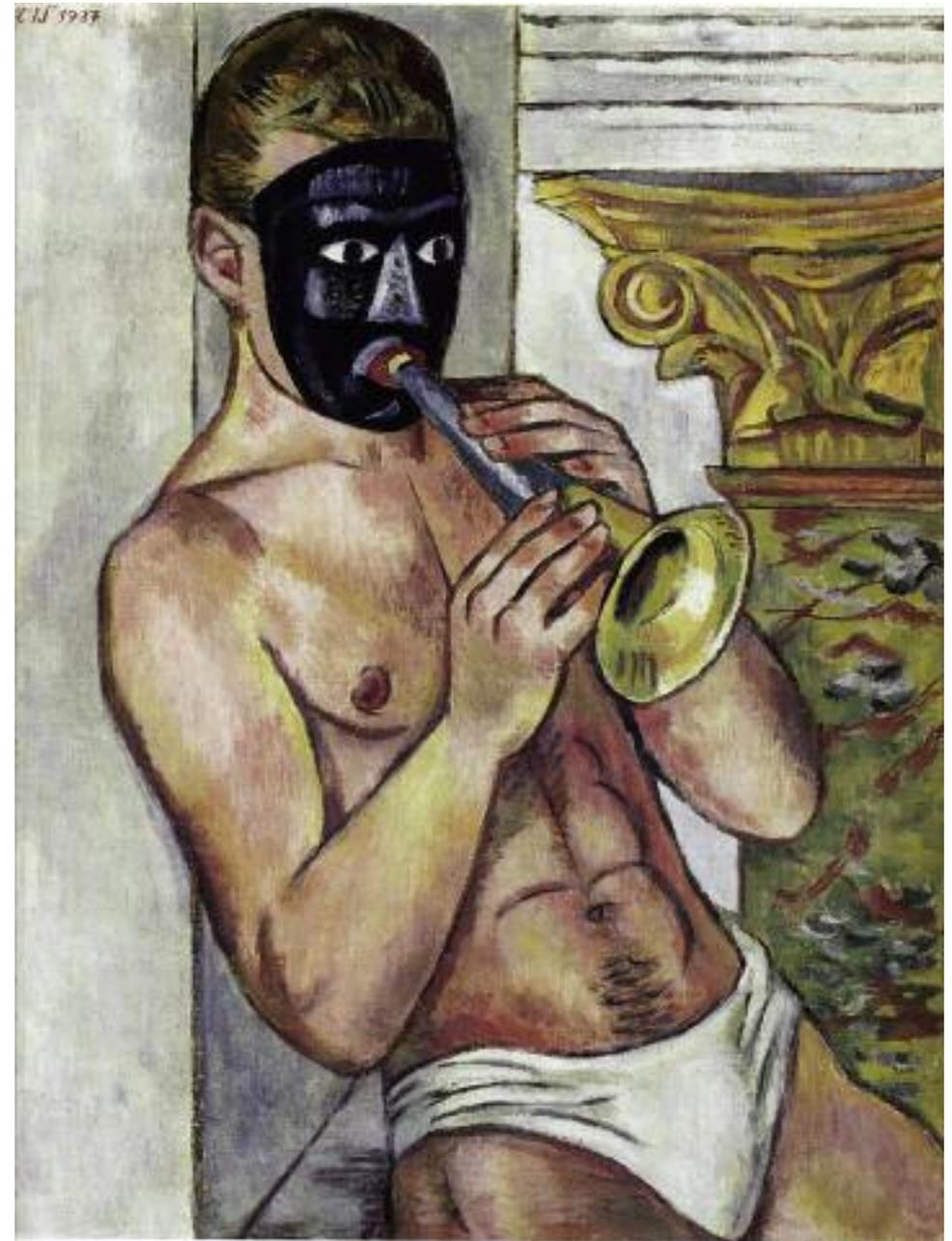
Note: German titles and catalog entry numbers are given when the works appear in Otmar Rychlik, *Alfred Wickenburg 1885-1978, das künstlerische Werk 1905 - 1945*, Vienna, 1996.

When noted, stamps consist of a facsimile artist's signature estate stamp, along with the stamp of Johannes Wickenburg, architect (the artist's son) and his signature in ink.

CATALOG

- [1] *Man with Mask* (Mann mit Maske). 1937. Oil on canvas, 36 1/8" x 28 7/8" (91.7 x 73.3 cm). Cat. no. Ö133. Initialed and dated top left: AW 1937. Exhibitions: Galerie Würthle, Vienna 1937, cat. no. 2; Galerie Brandstätter, Vienna 1977, cat. no. 1; Künstlerhaus, Graz 1982, cat. no. 48; *Meisterwerke der Steirischen Moderne*, Museum der Moderne Rupertinum Salzburg 2003
- [2] *Group of Cubist Figures*. 1920s. Charcoal on grey paper, 12 3/8" x 9 1/4" (31.5 x 23.5 cm)
- [3] *Cubist Heads and Torso*. 1920s. Charcoal on paper, 12 1/4" x 9 3/8" (31 x 23.8 cm)
- [4] *Cubist Male and Female Figures*. 1920s. Charcoal on yellow paper, 9 5/8" x 12 3/4" (24.5 x 32.3 cm)
- [5] *Cubist Figures with Urn*. 1920s. Charcoal on grey paper, 12 1/4" x 9 5/8" (31 x 24.4 cm)
- [6] *Man, Woman, and Horse*. 1920s. Charcoal on paper, 12 5/8" x 19" (32 x 48.3 cm). On verso: Cubist scene of seated woman in black chalk
- [7] *Man and Woman by Mountains and Lake*. 1920s-1930s. Pencil on paper, 9 1/4" x 12 3/8" (23.6 x 31.5 cm)
- [8] *Omnipotent* (Allmacht). 1920s. Charcoal on paper, 19 1/8" x 12 7/8" (48.5 x 32.8 cm). Titled lower left: *Allmacht*. Initialed lower right: AW
- [9] *Lovers in Bed*. 1925. Pencil on blue paper, 12 3/8" x 9 1/2" (31.5 x 24 cm)
- [10] *Cleopatra*. 1920-23. Pencil on paper, 10 3/8" x 15 1/2" (26.5 x 39.5 cm). Cat. no. G52. Initialed and titled lower left: AW/*Cleopatra*. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [11] *Fairytale* (Märchen). 1934. Charcoal on paper, 19 7/8" x 27 1/2" (50.5 x 70 cm). Cat. no. G124. Inscribed in pencil on verso: *Nachlass/Alfred Wickenburg/1885-1978/Johannes Wickenburg*
- [12] *Old Man Kissing a Young Lady's Hand at a Dinner Party* (Drei Gestalten am Tisch). 1920-23. Pencil on paper, 9 1/4" x 14" (23.6 x 35.5 cm). Cat. no. G51. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [13] *Woman and Child with Angel Playing Horn* (Frau und Kind mit musizierenden Engeln). 1920-23. Pencil on paper, 10 x 13 5/8" (25.5 x 34.7 cm). Cat. no. G53. On verso: Nude figures in black chalk, estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [14] *Heads, Cat, and Vase*. 1930s. Charcoal on paper, 13 3/4" x 8 7/8" (34.9 x 22.5 cm). On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [15] *Bedroom Scene* (Im Schlafzimmer). 1941. Watercolor on paper, 7 7/8" x 10 7/8" (20 x 27.5 cm). Cat. no. A135. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [16] *Crowned Skeleton*. 1930s. Watercolor on paper, 10 5/8" x 14 3/8" (27 x 36.6 cm)

- [17] *Adam and Eve in Fantasy Landscape II* (Adam und Eva in phantastischer Landschaft II). 1943. Watercolor on paper, 27 3/4" x 20 1/8" (70.5 x 51.2 cm). Cat. no. A151. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [18] *King Midas at Tent with Dog*. 1941-45. Blue ink on paper, 10 5/8" x 14 5/8" (27.1 x 37.1 cm). On verso: Restudy in blue ink, estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [19] *King Midas Swimming in the River Pactolus*. 1941-45. Pen on paper, 10 5/8" x 14 1/2" (26.9 x 36.9 cm). On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [20] *King Midas Seated Amongst the Reeds* (König Midas). 1941-45. Charcoal on paper, 13 7/8" x 18 1/4" (35.1 x 46.4 cm). Cat. no. G246. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [21] *Hay Field in Styria*. 1947. Charcoal on paper, 12 5/8" x 17 3/4" (32.2 x 45.2 cm). Initialed and dated lower left: AW/47
- [22] *The Artist's Son Reading*. Ca. 1944. Charcoal on paper, 12 5/8" x 16 7/8" (32.2 x 43 cm)
- [23] *Still Life "Et Industrie IV"*. 1946. Pencil on paper, 13 7/8" x 18 1/2" (35.2 x 47 cm). Dated and initialed lower right: 46/AW. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [24] *The Vegetable Man* (Gemüsemann). 1945. Watercolor on paper, 9 1/4" x 9 1/2" (23.4 x 24 cm). Cat. no. A169. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [25] *Vegetables with Faces* (Gemüse). 1945. Watercolor on paper, 9" x 9" (23 x 22.8 cm). Cat. no. A172. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [26] *Two Roses and a Lily* (Zwei Rosen und eine Lilie). 1945. Watercolor on paper, 12 1/8" x 12" (30.8 x 30.5 cm). Cat. no. A170. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [27] *Swimming Pool* (Am Schwimmbecken). 1945. Watercolor on paper, 12 1/8" x 11 5/8" (30.7 x 29.5 cm). Cat. no. A161. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [28] *Lovers at Window*. Ca. 1948. Sanguine on paper, 9 3/8" x 8 5/8" (23.8 x 21.8 cm). Possibly an illustration for a work by Gogol
- [29] *Fantasy Forest*. 1950s. Black pen on paper, 14 3/8" x 6 3/4" (36.5 x 17 cm). On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [30] *Christmas Tree*. 1954. Pen on paper, 14 1/8" x 18" (35.8 x 45.8 cm). On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [31] *Abstracted Christmas Tree Ornaments*. 1954. Charcoal on tracing paper, 12 5/8" x 16 3/8" (32 x 41.5 cm). On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [32] *Two Figures in Japanese Costume*. Sanguine on paper, 14 3/8" x 9 7/8" (36.4 x 25.2 cm). On verso: King receiving ambassadors in frock coats in red chalk, estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [33] *Figure Mounted on Horse with Other Figures*. Watercolor on paper, 10 5/8" x 7 7/8" (27 x 20 cm). On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son
- [34] *At the Fortune Tellers* (Bei der Wahrsagerin). 1974. Charcoal on paper, 16 1/2" x 22 7/8" (42 x 58 cm). Initialed and dated lower left: AW/74
- [35] *View from a Window*. Charcoal on paper, 12 5/8" x 16 3/4" (32 x 42.5 cm). On verso: Figure studies of embracing nude figures in black chalk
- [36] *People on a Walk*. 1954. Charcoal on paper, 20 1/8" x 15 3/4" (51.1 x 40 cm). Initialed and dated: AW/54. On verso: Estate stamp, stamp and signature of the artist's son





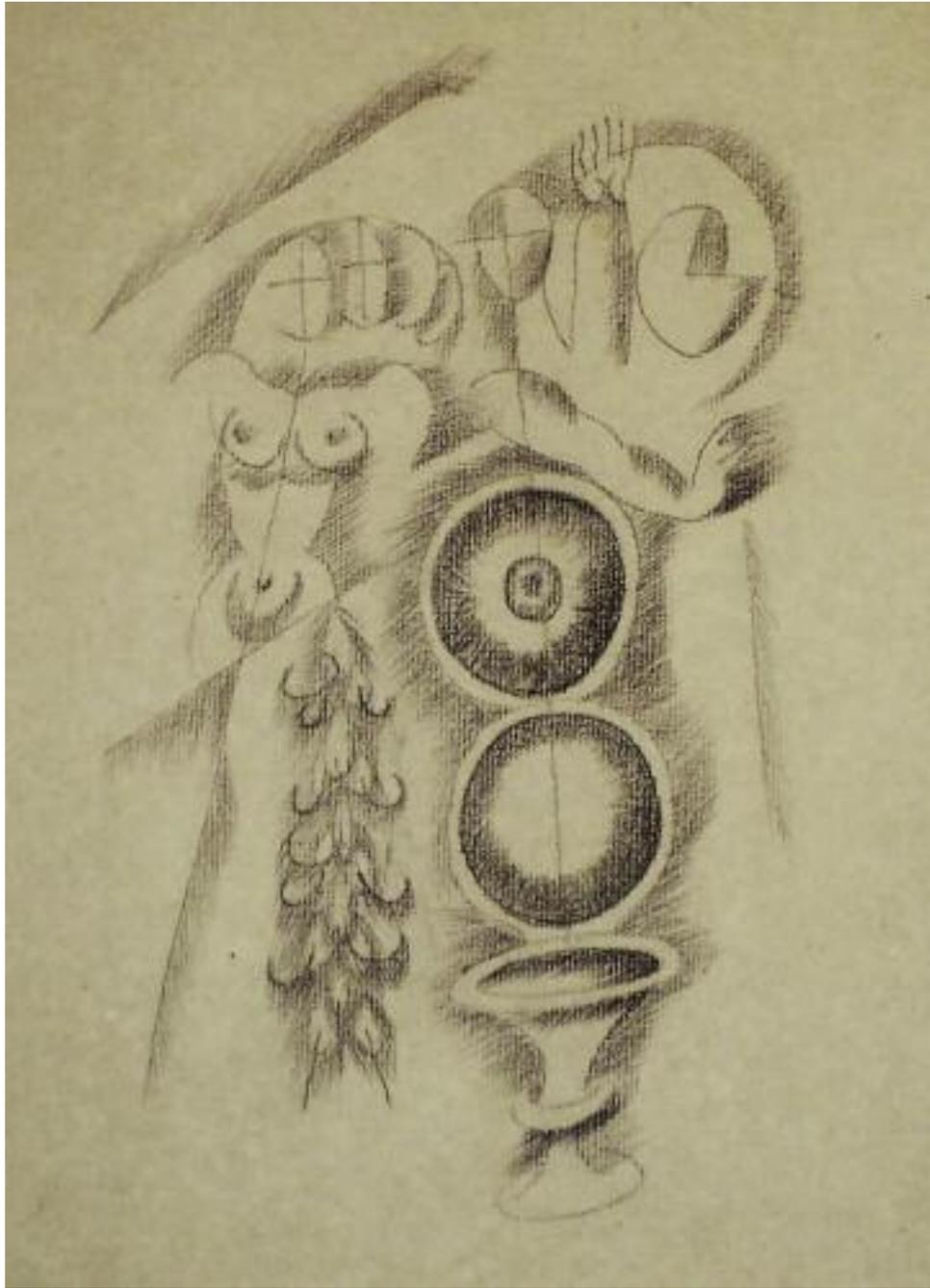
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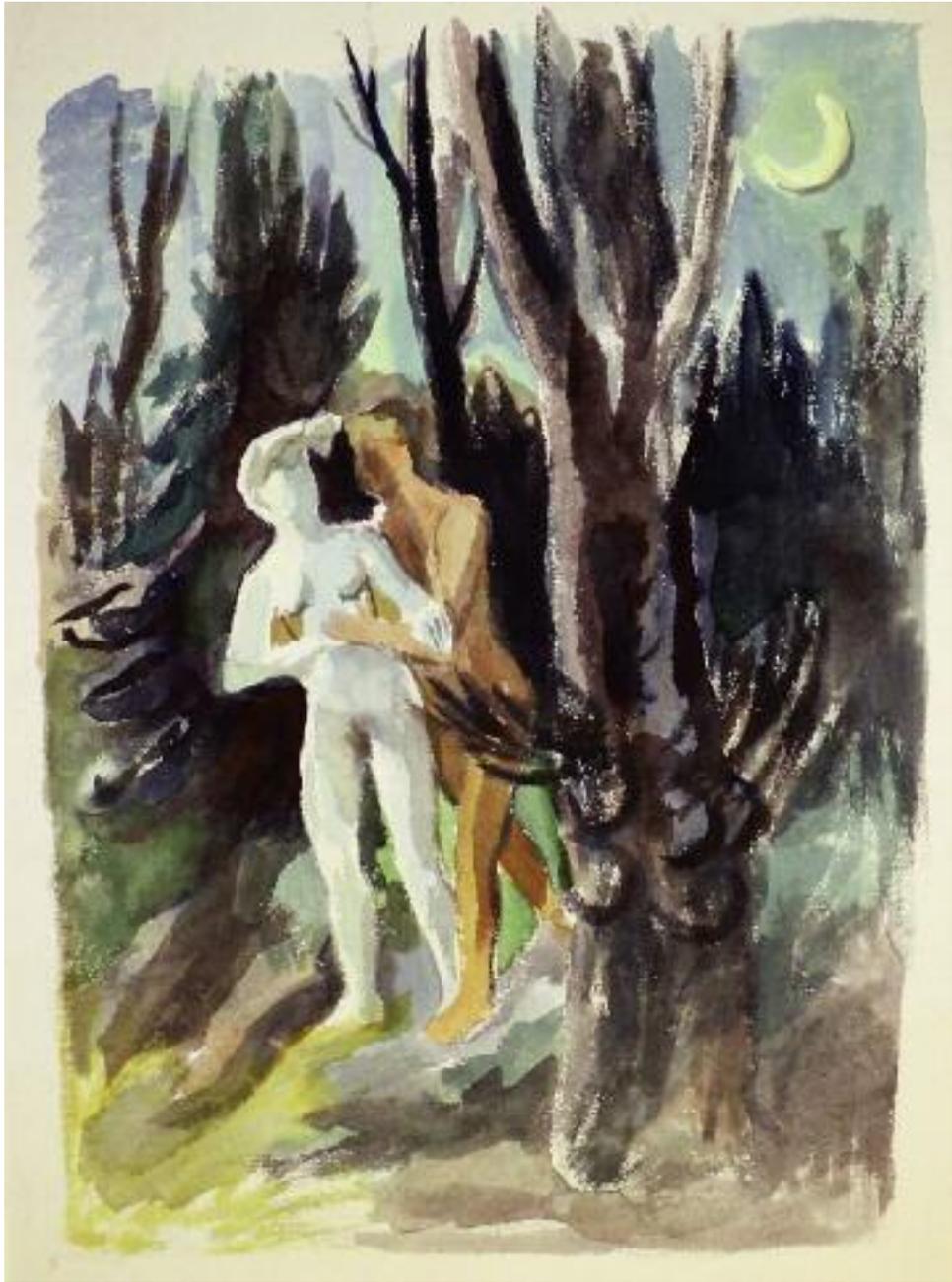
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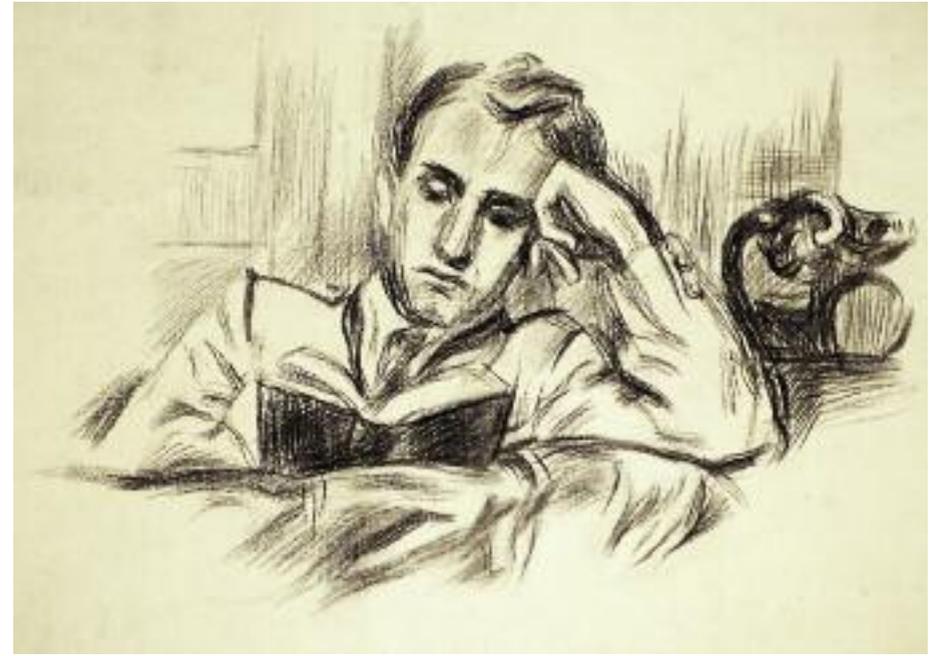
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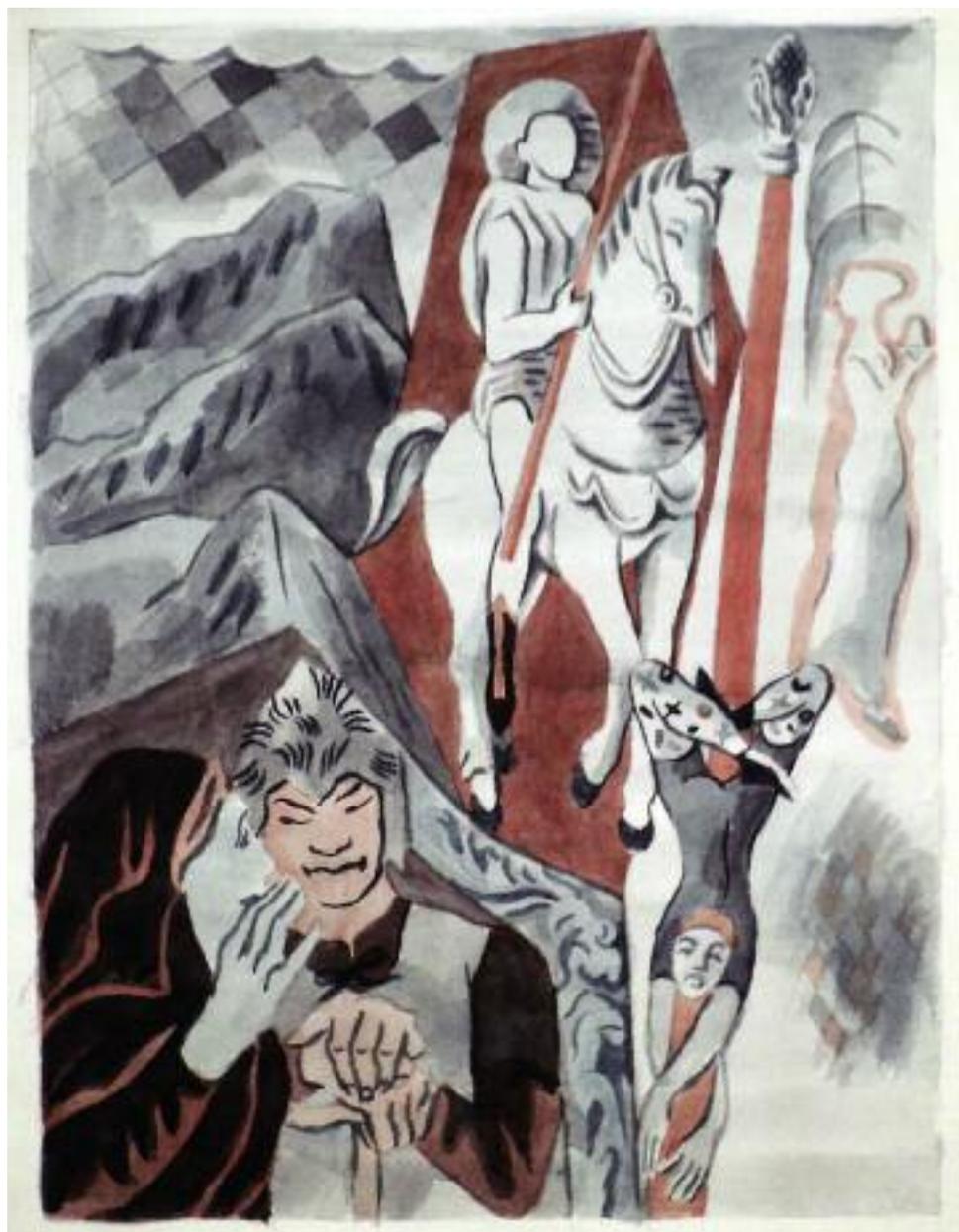
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