

STREET LIFE: WEIMAR WORKS ON PAPER, 1918–1933

Through June 12, 2015

Ubu Gallery is pleased to present *Street Life: Weimar Works on Paper*, a collection of prints, drawings and publications created during the German Weimar Republic. Featuring works by Max Beckmann (1884-1950), Otto Dix (1891-1969), George Grosz (1893-1959) and Georg Scholz (1890-1945), among others, the exhibition will continue through June 12, 2015.

In the post World War I period of acute political polarization, a wide range of visual arts—similar in their realistic representation—emerged in the early 1920s as a “new rational vision.” Loosely referred to as *Neue Sachlichkeit* or “New Objectivity,” Gustav Hartlaub’s 1925 exhibition of the same name solidified this artistic style into a formal genre. New Objectivity sought clarity and definition through a “matter-of-fact” observation of material reality. The result of this approach was a distanced, sober perspective, in antithesis to pre-war Expressionist, Romantic or an otherwise sentimental rendering of the world. This anti-sentimentality lent itself to the satirical, caricatured and critical grotesque, all falling under the rubric of black humor, “...par excellence the mortal enemy of sentimentality” (André Breton, *Anthologie de l’humour noir*)

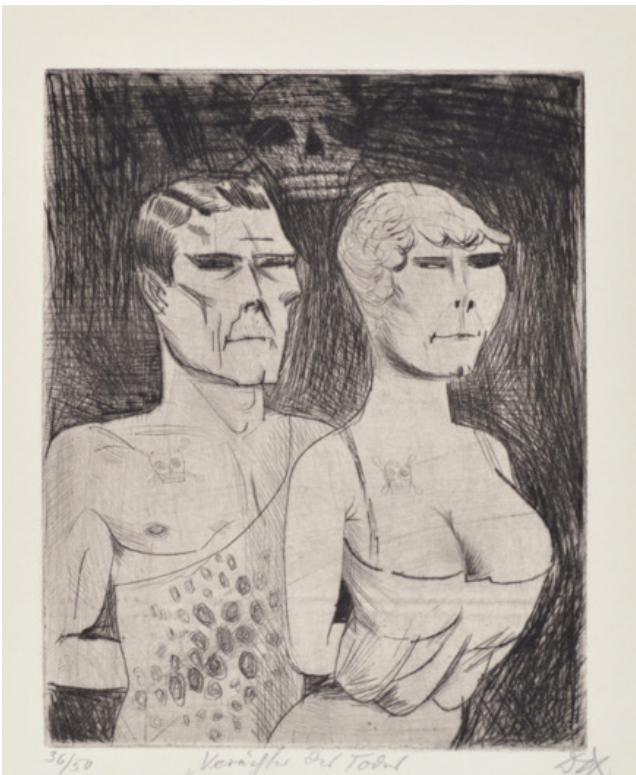
In addition to wry depictions, from acerbic and sardonic works by George Grosz—chastising all strata of society from the German military to the petite bourgeoisie—to the more reserved, sober mocking by Otto Dix of prostitutes and performers alike, a latent trauma from the recent World War permeated. Most of the artists served in the war: Beckman was enlisted until a nervous breakdown prevented him from continuing service; Dix, wanting to “experience all the ghastly, bottomless depths for life,” served as a machine gunner; Scholz served for three years and Grosz for one. Militarization is explicit in the exemplary Grosz portfolio, *Gott mit Uns* [“God with Us”], but also subtly present in works by Scholz and Dix, who, two years following the *Zirkus* [“Circus”] series on view, would publish his well-known war cycle, *Der Krieg* [“The War”]. References to death, either in allusion to WWI or to the everyday dangers encountered by marginalized members of the community, are found among the works exhibited—small coffins, skulls and crosses, decaying prostitutes and cherubs in Pickelhaube helmets.

The majority of the works on view at Ubu are prints, a popular medium during the first few decades of the 20th Century in Germany as advances in machine-made paper increased. Prostitutes, communists, workers and entertainers populate these pieces which often take as their locale city streets, circuses and billiard halls. Whether in the collapsed planes of Beckmann’s cabaret scene or the spatial disruption of Grosz’s *Friedrichstraße*, a Berlin street frequented by sex workers, movement and modernity are major themes in the works displayed, capturing in their compositions a period of precarious stability.

For visuals or further information, please contact Caitlin Suarez at Ubu Gallery - 212 753 4444 or suarez@ubugallery.com



George Grosz, *The Pimps of Death*, from the portfolio *Gott Mit Uns* [“God with Us”], Berlin: Malik Verlag, June, 1920. Portfolio of eight (9) photolithographs. 19 x 15 1/4 inches (48.3 x 38.7 cm) - approx. each. Edition 80 of 125, Ausgabe C



Otto Dix, *The Death-Defiers*, from the portfolio *Zirkus* [“Circus”]. 1922. Etching 13 5/8 x 10 7/8 inches (34.6 x 27.6 cm) Edition 36 of 50. Signed, titled & editioned on recto