

Die Neuen Wilden (*The New Wild Ones*)

Neo-Expressionism in Germany

Minneapolis Institute of Art ~ G315 and G316

On view through June 11, 2017



This information has been compiled based on a November 15th discussion in the galleries with Dennis Jon, Senior Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings. Also included below is information found on Mia's website. A substantial Bio on Baselitz can be found on The Guggenheim website.

Research far beyond the scope of this document is possible given the number of artists and prints involved, the political climates of Germany and Israel during this time, as well as the printing techniques utilized. This document is intended to simply provide a broad overview of information and gallery organization as highlighted by the exhibition coordinator.

Neo-Expressionism (New Expressionism)

- mid 1970s – Early 1990s
- An international return to the sensuousness of painting and departure from the cool and non-figural work of the Minimalist and Conceptual Art movements of the time. Taking some cue from Expressionists before them.
 - 1) Raw, Bold images, almost brutish depictions
 - 2) Gestural, messy
 - 3) Intense and expressive color
 - 4) Sometimes figural
 - 5) Sometimes Nihilistic
 - 6) Rejuvenation of historical and mythological stories
- Intentionally male-dominated, promoting Artist as Hero.
- Most prominent in Italy, France, America and Germany. Key artists included Schnabel (American), Baselitz (German), Basquiat (American), Guston (American), Immendorff (German), Clemente (Italian), Kiefer (German). Baselitz is considered the de facto leader of this movement in Germany.

Gallery Details

Each Gallery represents a complete portfolio of limited edition prints created by prominent Neo-Expressionist artists working in Germany.

G315 - *Erste Konzentration I* (First Concentration I) is comprised of 12 prints, published in 1982 by Maximilian Verlag, Munich, Germany. It is the first of a series of three. It features six artists (two prints each): Baselitz, Höckelmann, Immendorff, Kirkeby, Lüpertz and Penck.

Gift of Anne Dayton Buxton, Artist - and daughter of Bruce Dayton (from a marriage previous to Ruth, who was his third wife)

- For at-home access to works on view in this gallery, enter “Baselitz” in the search bar on Mia’s website, select the first print (black and white upside down eagle - below), then select “G316” to the right (at this time these prints are misclassified as on view in G316)– and then select “view all results” - All 12 prints should now be shown and available for you to select. I will not list all prints separately in this document.



Adler (Eagle) by Georg Baselitz (born 1938)

- Baselitz is known for his upside down images. Dennis Jon said that while our brain wants to right the image, we are still forced to look at it upside down. Able to see it as pure form. The Eagle is a symbol for the German government. When created, East Germany was still in existence and Berlin was a divided city. With this print, he is mocking the government. Here is a link to a great 1984 New York Times article about Baselitz and his upside-down world:

<http://www.nytimes.com/1984/04/13/arts/art-the-upside-down-world-of-georg-baselitz.html>

- The above print is hanging on the entrance wall to this gallery. The wall itself has intentionally been painted in a raw and jarring way to mirror the artists' work. You can still see the "American Unseen" lettering from the previous exhibition underneath the random, unfinished paint. The unattractive, pea green color was also chosen for effect.
- On the reverse side of this wall is Baselitz's 2nd print in this portfolio *Kopf (Head)*.
- Also on view in this gallery is a smaller inverted woodcut eagle (not part of the portfolio) *Untitled*, 1977 P82.25 by Baselitz.
- In the vitrine in G315 is a Neo-Expressionist book *Unternehmen Seelöwe* (Operation Sea Lion), 1975. B83.1 by Anselm Kiefer
 - 1) Dennis Jon did his Masters thesis on this book
 - 2) A collection of staged photographs crudely pasted on cardboard w/ paint added on certain images.
 - 3) It is intended to mock the German government for their ill-conceived plan to invade England during WWII (Operation Sea Lion).
 - 4) The image open in the vitrine was shot in Kiefer's studio. We see:
 - A Nazi-issued lead bathtub at center. Filled to the top with dark deep liquid (referencing blood). Lead, known to be poisonous, is also symbolic.
 - A large artist canvas painting is twisted and folded all around the tub.
 - Hitler used a large table for establishing strategic battle plans. The ships floating the tub reference this.



G316 – Expedition to the Holyland is comprised of 15 prints, published in 1983 by Joshua Gessel, Jerusalem, Israel. All prints in the portfolio are the work of A.R. Penck. Also on view is one of six intaglio copper plates gifted to Mia with the portfolio.

New Acquisition in 2016! Gift of Dolly Fiterman, owner of Fiterman Fine Arts Gallery in Minneapolis. She is also a dedicated Mia Patron.

- Images for these prints and plates are not available on Mia’s website at this time (recent acquisition). The names of these prints are listed below. I have not included all images. It’s best to explore this portfolio in the gallery.
- A leading proponent of German Neo-expressionism, A.R. Penck (Ralf Winkler) produced the print portfolio “Expedition to the Holyland” in response to a visit he made to Israel and its occupied territories in early 1983. The project was the brainchild of prominent publisher and collector Joshua Gessel, who invited Penck to portray some of his experiences and impressions of the Holyland. Penck and Gessel traveled for a month gathering sketches and ideas and then spent a second month working in Jerusalem to create the prints for the portfolio. Penck chose five distinct themes and subjects for the portfolio’s fifteen plates, choosing techniques he considered best suited for each of the particular themes.
 - 1) The Region’s landscape and geological formations are represented using color lithography (see three images on page 1 of this document):
 - *Water Problems*
 - *Stones & Shadow*
 - *View of the Rocks*
 - 2) Sculptures he saw during his travels are in black-and-white lithography:
 - *Idea for Sculpture No. 1*
 - *Idea for Sculpture No. 2*
 - *Idea for Sculpture No. 3*
 - 3) Israel’s turbulent political situation is represented in color screen prints:
 - *The Opposition waits to overthrow the Government*
 - *The Strong Point*
 - *The Weak Point* (below)



- 4) His memories and experiences are represented in Aquatint:
- *Middle East Complexities*
 - *Communication* (representing his ongoing dialogs and collaboration work with Gessel)
 - *Snow in Jerusalem* (below)



Snow is rare in Jerusalem but does happen about every 7 years. A snowstorm occurred during Penck's visit. It obviously made a strong impression on him to be a focus for one of his fifteen prints. It's represented in high contrast /and black. There are some figural forms present. There may also be footprints in the snow. Google Images for "Snow in Jerusalem" to find tour images for the iPad. There are fantastic photographs of the Western Wall and Dome of the Rock covered in snow. The black and white may even reference the contrast of Jewish people dressed in black carrying umbrellas being covered in white snow.



5) Engraving was used to represent his sketchbooks / ideas from his month of travel.

- *Taste of the Desert*
- *Concept*
- *Thoughts in a Kibbutz* (below)



The copper plate for this print is also on view.

Penck also created a narrative print entitled “Introduction for *Expedition to the Holyland* portfolio”. This print is on view.

Penck chose the horizontal rectangle for all of the prints in this portfolio. It was intended to emulate a picture travel postcard. A rectangle is considered to have more visual tension than a square which was his intent with this portfolio.

A. R. Penck (born Ralf Winkler 1939, Dresden) – Painter, Print maker, sculptor and jazz drummer – known worldwide for his new-primivist imagery of human figures and other totemic images.

Of the seven Neo-Expressionist artists represented in this exhibition (this includes Kiefer’s book) five are still creating today. Only Immendorf and Höckelmann have passed away.