Report 3 (Dr Christian Weikop)

<u>Assessment of the significance of the collection as a key asset in the understanding of German Expressionism within the United Kingdom</u>

a) **The value of the collection to the UK public should be evaluated in relationship to the other major German Expressionist collections in the UK at National Galleries of Scotland and Tate.**

b) **Other significant holdings of German Expressionist work in public or private hands in the UK should be outlined**.

c) We wish to establish that this collection is pivotal to British audiences understanding of and access to German Expressionist art.

In the last century, art institutions in Britain were often slow off the mark in exhibiting modern German art, whilst conversely demonstrating what might be described as curatorial Francophilia, perhaps in accordance with public demand. Even though there have undoubtedly been some important exhibitions of major German artists staged in the last thirty years, organised by the likes of Jill Lloyd, Norman Rosenthal, Sean Rainbird, Keith Hartley, and Richard Calvocoressi, the fact remains that from 1945, certainly up until the 1980s, German art, and especially figurative Expressionism, lacked gallery coverage in Britain. When he was director of the Royal Academy, Rosenthal also did much to try and persuade a recalcitrant British public that twentieth-century German art was worthy of serious consideration, but in spite of positive press coverage for RA retrospectives such as Grosz (1997), Kirchner (2003), and Baselitz (2007), they simply did not compete with exhibitions of canonical French artists in terms of visitor numbers. I have examined the reasons for this institutional and public reticence in some detail in my essay 'The British Reception of Brücke and German Expressionism' (2011)[1], but I will also consider this matter to a degree in reports 3 and 4.

In the UK, German Expressionist art has been slowly disseminated through exhibition, and collected and protected in a variety of ways going back to the 1930s or even earlier. Institutions such as the Ben Uri Gallery, the Motesiczky Trust, and the art dealerships that have often staged interesting and pioneering exhibitions such Marlborough Fine Art, Fischer Fine Art, and Roland, Browse and Delbanco (dealers that at various times supplied the Leicester Museum and Art Gallery), have formed part of that fabric of appreciation. However, this report and report 4 will focus on relating the collection at Leicester to some key national institutions, exploring relative histories, as a means of underscoring the significance of this regional art museum as the key institution for accessing and appreciating German Expressionism in the United Kingdom.

Tate: An Impoverished Collection of Expressionism?

In the mid-1930s, while the curator A.C. Sewter was already making his mark on Leicester with his progressive acquisition policy (see report 4), the Tate was still culturally very conservative. As Matthew Potter has noted, 'Between 1932 and 1934 Hildebrand Gurlitt's proposal for an exhibition of modern German art was considered but not taken up by the Tate Gallery'.[2] Moreover, in 1938 when Hazel McKinley (Peggy Guggenheim's sister) offered four paintings by Wassily Kandinsky, after much debate, only one was accepted (*Cossacks*, 1910-11).

It is revealing that the Jewish art historian and collector Rosa Schapire was only partially successful in housing her large collection of artworks by the Brücke artist Karl Schmidt-Rottluff in England, in spite of her extensive correspondence with museum officials at the Tate, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the British Museum between 1938 and 1954. In a letter to her friend Agnes Holhausen, written in September 1950, Schapire gave vent to her frustration in dealing with the keeper of the Tate, John Rothenstein, stating that he was a 'conceited fool, who does not comprehend art much more than a cow comprehends dancing.'[3] Leicester would benefit from Rothenstein's lack of enthusiasm.

The Tate has never built up a good collection of German Expressionist art. Today Tate Modern only has a small room devoted to a handful of Expressionist works. Even work by an artist such as Max Beckmann, more closely associated with Neue Sachlichkeit than Expressionism, did not enter the Tate collection until 1979 (*Prunier*, 1944). This situation can be traced back to the insular conservative collecting policy of Rothenstein's predecessor J.B. Manson as well as to Rothenstein, who did much to promote modern British art, but far less for the European avant-garde. German Expressionism was not to Manson's taste, but then neither was the School of Paris. Of the meagre number of Expressionist works owned by the Tate, four are by Schmidt-Rottluff, one of which was presented by Schapire in 1950 (*Woman with a Bag*, 1915), and the others due to the efforts of her executors Gustav Delbanco and Nicholas Pevsner in 1954. The other works include the important oil-on-canvas portrait of *Dr Rosa Schapire* (1919), a Brücke period bathers painting *Two Women* of 1912, which was included in the Brücke exhibition at the Galerie Fritz Gurlitt in Berlin that same year, and a very impressive wood sculpture from 1917, *Male Head*, a masterpiece of arboreal Expressionism.[4]

A few years after Schapire's death the Tate did stage a survey exhibition called 'Hundred Years of German Painting' (1956), with the centrepiece of the show being the sections devoted to the Brücke and the Blaue Reiter.[5] It was the largest exhibition of modern German art in Britain since Herbert Read's 1938 New Burlington show; it was organised by Prof Dr Alfred Hentzen (Director of the Hamburg Kunsthalle), and revealingly it was sponsored by the West German government rather than through British arts funding. Hans Hess, a figure closely connected to the histories of Leicester and York art museums, reviewed the exhibition for the *Burlington Magazine*, but he noted that there were a number of regrettable omissions, not least with regards to Max Pechstein, whose work went unrepresented. Alluding to the degenerate art episode that had such a terrible impact on his family's collection, Hess acknowledged that the blame for many omissions was not wholly

the fault of the organisers stating: 'It is unfortunately true that the key pictures of the generation – those that had found their rightful place in public collections – have been destroyed.'[6] Lamenting the absence of the Brücke's best works he also asserted: 'one is left with the shallow expressionism of their less successful moments'.[7] In this statement he was also indicating the fate of his father's collection, although part of that collection would form the nucleus of what was to become an internationally renowned collection of modern German art at Leicester.

It is ironic that in the Foreword to the catalogue for 'Hundred Years of German Painting' Rothenstein wrote: 'Our opportunities in England of seeing modern German art have been regrettably limited … German art of the last hundred years is not nearly as widely known in England as it deserves to be.'[8] Clearly, this was a situation not helped by his initial reluctance to accept work from Schapire's collection. To be fair, several important exhibitions of German and Austrian art took place under his stewardship from 1956 onward, and one might surmise that his change of heart on modern German art might in part have been brought about by a certain sense of contrition concerning the way he had handled Schapire's offer, especially given the fact that she died in the Tate Gallery, as well as other factors.

In 1960, the Tate staged a Blaue Reiter exhibition, and in 1964 a major show on the Brücke, organised by the Arts Council of Great Britain, which included not only paintings and drawings, but also sculpture, prints, jewellery, and documents. The exhibition was presented under the patronage of two of the surviving members of the group, Professor Erich Heckel and Professor Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, who lent generously from their own studios. Will Grohmann, Martin Urban and Frank Whitford were chiefly responsible for the catalogue.[9] A *Guardian* review of the exhibition was memorably captioned 'Teutons at the Tate', in which Eric Newton argued that the exhibition of the Brücke was 'easier to assimilate than it would have been five years ago'.[10] By this he meant the increased attention that had been given to German Expressionism in Britain since 1959 onwards, particularly at the Malborough Fine Art gallery.[11] He also argued that our eyes had now become accustomed to shrill colour and frenzied brushstrokes partially as a result of our familiarity with Brücke's descendents in CoBrA, which he referred to as the 'School of Appel'.[12] By contrast, another review in the *Observer* by Nigel Gosling, 'Looking back at the German Essence', suggested that this art was still 'strange and disturbingly unfamiliar'.[13] Unlike Leicester, where successive curators steadily built up the collection of modern German art from 1944 onwards, acquiring work at relatively affordable prices, the Tate did not acquire Expressionist works in the wake of exhibitions during this post-war period. For many decades, the nucleus of four works from Schapire's collection remained just that, a very small core.

In the 1960s, there were other exhibitions on the Brücke members Emil Nolde and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, as well as many other German modernists, at the Malborough Fine Art gallery; and in 1969-70 there was a further Arts Council exhibition entitled 'German Expressionism: Watercolours, Prints and Drawings by the Painters of the Brücke', which travelled from the Bethnal Green Museum to Southampton City Art Gallery and Bradford City Art Gallery and Museum, and which like the earlier and much larger Brücke retrospective at the Tate in 1964, had considerable input from the Arts Council director,

Gabriel White.[14] It is somewhat surprising that neither the major Tate Brücke exhibition nor the later Arts Council touring show of works on paper involved any input from the Leicester Museum. Instead, the latter drew on the collection of Lothar-Günther Buchheim, a rare event given Buchheim's reluctance to lend works during this period.

In the last forty years, the collection of modern German art work at Tate has expanded slightly to include works by artists such as Beckmann, and there have certainly been more exhibitions on Expressionist artists such as Kandinsky and Klee, due in no small measure to the appointment of the curator Sean Rainbird in 1987 (currently Director of the National Gallery of Ireland), and later appointments such as Emma Chambers at Tate Britain, who along with her team were responsible for the 'Schwitters in Britain' exhibition of 2013.

The British Museum and V&A Print Collections

In the post-war period, the situation at the British Museum in terms of acquiring modern German art was no better than at Tate. Dennis Farr noted that during the late 1940s, A.E. Popham, the Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the BM and an associate of the Bloomsbury group, could not bring himself to put Schapire's gift of many fine examples of the graphic work of German Expressionists (an extensive collection of 600 works) before his Trustees, as he was 'not himself persuaded of their aesthetic and historical significance'. Farr continues: 'He (Popham), at least, is remembered as saying he feared future generations might curse him for his decision'.[15] Frances Carey and Anthony Griffiths also refer to this critical incident in the preface to the catalogue of their important 1984 exhibition of German Expressionist prints, held at the British Museum. In addition, they note that Popham's predecessor, Campbell Dodgson, while being the Prints and Drawings Department's greatest benefactor, bequeathing over 5000 late nineteenth-and early twentieth-century prints, 'clearly and explicitly disliked Expressionism, and acquired nothing by any member of the Brücke'.[16] As in the case of Rothenstein at Tate, Leicester would be a net beneficiary of their lack of judgement. After her death in 1955, the largest part of Schapire's collection was bequeathed to German museums in Mannheim, Berlin, Altona, Hamburg, Cologne, and elsewhere, although the Leicester Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum received part of her collection of Schmidt-Rottluff's graphic work. Leicester's selection consisted of eleven illustrated postcards from Schmidt-Rottluff to Rosa Schapire, twelve prints comprising one etching, six woodcuts and five lithographs, and one watercolour.

The 1984 exhibition 'The Print in Germany 1880-1933: The Age of Expressionism', curated by Frances Carey and Anthony Griffiths, was one of the most significant and influential exhibitions on the subject staged in the United Kingdom. It was well covered and positively received in the press with Annely Juda writing in *The Times* that the exhibition was 'intellectually very stimulating: it makes us think, it implants new ideas and helps us arrive at new definitions … it is a powerful emotional experience'.[17] It was an exhibition of 234 prints (plus four loans), with 170 recent acquisitions, partially repairing an earlier gap in the collection caused by Popham's refusal. Only five of the works included in the exhibition

were acquired in the thirty years between Campbell Dodgson's death in 1948 and the end of 1978. In the preface to the catalogue, Carey and Griffiths emphasized that in the UK 'the best collection is that most enterprisingly assembled by the Leicestershire Museums and Art Gallery since the early 1940s, of which a fully illustrated catalogue was published in 1978.'[18] This was an important acknowledgement from one of the most important Prints and Drawings departments in the world, one that had decided to seriously bolster its holdings in this area. Since 1984, the collection of Expressionist prints and drawings has continued to grow at the British Museum, and representation of twentieth-century German art has recently been augmented by a large donation of major works by Baselitz, Lüpertz, Palermo, Penck, Polke and Richter from the collection of Count Duerckheim, a number of which can be seen in the exhibition 'Germany Divided: Baselitz and his Generation' (2014). This gift transforms the Museum's holdings of German post-war graphic art.

The following remarks on the V&A have been written by Dr Dorothy Rowe as she worked at the Victoria and Albert Museum between 1995 and 1998 and worked closely on the print collection at this time:

> The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, has an extensive collection of Prints and Drawings. It consists of about 500,000 objects, including fine art prints from the Renaissance to the present day. Amongst this vast collection, there are some prints by the main artists associated with German Expressionism, although not a comprehensive collection and certainly not an especially renowned one. The lack of renown for the German Expressionist holdings at the V&A is largely due to the predominant focus on objects of craft and design at the Museum (graphic arts, posters etc) rather than fine art. As a result, although it is a national collection, it tends to be overlooked as less prominent than other national holdings such as the British Museum, Tate and Leicester. German Expressionist artists represented by the V&A print collection include: Max Beckman, Ernst Barlach, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Eric Heckel, Oskar Kokoschka, Egon Schiele, Karl Schmidt-Rotluff, Kurt Schwitters, Emil Nolde, Conrad Felixmüller, Otto Dix, George Grosz, Wassily Kandinsky, Lea Grundig, Käthe Kollwitz, Max Pechstein, Otto Müller, Franz Marc, Paul Klee, Oskar Schlemmer and Lyonel Feininger. Many of these artists are represented only by single or a handful of prints, or in the case of Ernst Barlach, multiple leaves from a single book and in the special case of Schmidt-Rotluff, 25 items bequeathed to the V&A by Dr Rosa Schapire.

Today, the Expressionist print collections of the BM and V&A have a similar range as can be found at the New Walk Museum in Leicester. While the Leicester New Walk Museum & Art Gallery has a connection to the V&A through the Schapire bequest, it should be noted that this regional museum in the Midlands has a superior collection of Expressionist graphics (greater depth and often quality) even compared with the world's largest museum of decorative arts and design. On graphics, perhaps it does not quite surpass the BM's current

collection, but then Leicester also has Expressionist paintings and sculpture, which the BM does not.

National Galleries of Scotland / Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

In 1990, an exhibition was staged at the William Hardie Gallery in Glasgow titled 'Masters of German Expressionism'. It was covered by Clare Henry in *The Herald*:

> William Hardie's superb show of Feininger, Heckel, Marc, Pechstein, Nolde, and Kandinsky in his new gallery in West Regent Street is certainly the best selection ever to come to Glasgow. The strength of Feininger's representation (18 works including the first of a famous series, Gelmeroda Church, 1913), with its characteristic combination of cubist and futurist features is unquestionable. This together with powerful Heckel woodcuts and Rohlfs watercolours, 40 works in all, makes a visit mandatory for all students and artists.[19]

This exhibition devoted to German Expressionism from a private collection was primarily drawn from the collection of Tekla Hess's brother, Stefan Pauson (or rather his descendants who inherited the work). Pauson was the man who sold the Franz Marc *Red Woman* painting to Leicester in 1944 (see report 4). For the 'Masters of German Expressionism' exhibition, William Hardie made a translation of Hans Hess's introduction to the book *Dank in Farben – Aus einem Künstlergästebuch*, (Piper Verlag, Munich, 1957).[20] And it should be noted that Feininger works in the collection of the National Galleries of Scotland also come from the Pauson family.

Richard Calvocoressi, a former Director of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and currently Director at the Henry Moore Foundation, has commented that:

> Twentieth-century German art has always met with a degree of resistance in Britain. This is particularly true of Expressionism; an art which questions naturalism, tends to be introspective, places emotional content above formal concerns, and seems to offend English taste. It comes as something of a shock to learn that no oil painting by Kirchner was bought by a public collection in England until as late as 1980. In Scotland, where there is perhaps more natural feeling for Expressionist art, he was acquired earlier, in 1965.[21]

When Calvocoressi refers to the Scots 'more natural feeling' for Expressionism in the above passage, he may have been thinking back to points of cultural exchange going back to nineteenth–century Romantic movements and forward to turn–of–the–century connections of the Glasgow School to the Vienna Secession and Wiener Werkstätte, and certain aesthetic affinities between Scottish colourists such as John Duncan Fergusson and Expressionist art, as well as perhaps the preferences of the Society of Scottish Artists for the work of pioneering artists such as Edvard Munch, whose work was first shown in the UK at the Galleries at the Mound in 1931, an exhibition organised by the SSA. In that year, a

reviewer for the *Scotsman* wrote: 'His work [Munch] expresses, with a greater force and directness than that of any other person of recent times, the old Viking spirit of his ancestors.'[22] Perhaps a sense of a shared 'Viking spirit' also underpins Calvocoressi's statement for a Scottish appreciation for the emotional content of Expressionism. Additionally, reverberations of Expressionism and Neue Sachlichkeit can be seen in the work of Scottish artists such as John Bellany, Ken Currie, and Alan Davie.

The Kirchner painting to which Calvocoressi refers as being the first to enter an English public collection in 1980 is *Bathers at Moritzburg*, which was acquired by Tate in the wake of the successful exhibition *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner 1880–1938* at the Nationalgalerie, Berlin (November 1979–January 1980). Some fifteen years earlier in 1965, when German Expressionism was far from fashionable, Douglas Hall, the progressive and pioneering Keeper of the Scottish Gallery of Modern Art (1960-1984) acquired an important Kirchner painting *Japanisches Theater* (1909; verso *Interior with Female Nude and Man* c.1924) for the national collection, bought from the Marlborough Gallery in London in 1965 for just under 20,000 pounds, and which like *Bathers at Moritzburg* represents a high moment in Brücke Expressionism. The SNGMA also owns one of Kirchner's post-Brücke lithographs, the very rare *White Dancer in a Cabaret* (1914), one of only two known impressions. This was an appropriate purchase given that the earlier acquisition was also of a stage scene, and the theatre, cabaret and circus are important themes of German Expressionism. Hall also acquired important paintings by Alexei Jawlensky (*Head of Woman*, 1911) and Emil Nolde (*Head*, 1913) in the 1960s, although it is worth remembering that this was still some twenty years after Leicester had started to acquire Expressionist artworks, a point which reveals the progressive nature of this regional museum.

While Hall was enthusiastic about modern German art, his boss, David Baxandall, the Director of the National Gallery of Scotland (1952-1970), was less so. Hall has written: 'My own taste for this tendency had to be kept in check during his directorship, after which I managed to acquire several important works of European expressionism.'[23] Hall's successor, Calvocoressi, was equally enthusiastic about German Expressionism and built on the nucleus of works put together by Hall. The Kirchner painting, although it was the first to be 'bought', was not the first modern German artwork to 'enter' the NGS collection. That honour went to Oskar Kokoschka's *Zrání* (*High Summer*) 1938-40, which was given on behalf of the Czechoslovak Government in Exile in 1942. The Gallery's rule that the work of living artists could not be acquired was waived on this occasion. There are four other works by Kokoschka in the SNGMA collection. These include a copy of Kokoschka's *Dreaming Boys* (1908; purchased in 1990), the painting *Prague, Nostalgia* (1938, acquired in 2000), the first work the artist completed in London after fleeing Czechoslovakia in 1938, and a work that can be related to other allegorical paintings by Kokoschka that can be found in the collections of Tate and the Courtauld. The SNGMA also have on long loan (since 1975) Kokoschka's important *Self–Portrait as a Degenerate Artist* (1937), which first featured in the New Burlington Galleries exhibition of modern German art in 1938. This work is

thematically linked to the Ernst Barlach's wood sculpture, *The Terrible Year*, 1937 (given its allegorical title the following year in response to Hitler's Degenerate Art Exhibition). It is the only wood carving by Barlach in a public collection in Britain and was purchased with assistance from the National Art Collections Fund in 1987. The Expressionist tradition in wood carving was also established with the late 1980s acquisitions of Georg Baselitz's sculpture *Untitled* (1982-84) and the woodcut *Large Head* (1966), and Stephan Balkenhof's *Small Head Relief* (1995) acquired in 1998, although as Patrick Eliot has pointed out Balkenhof's 'figures represent the polar opposite of Expressionist angst'.[24] In the 1990s, the SNGMA also acquired work by Wilhelm Lehmbruck.

Bauhaus period works by Wassily Kandinsky (*Small Worlds* portfolio of twelve prints; 1922) and Paul Klee (*Ghost of a Genius*; 1922) can be found in the SNGMA collection, along with collage and assemblage work by Schwitters and Höch, and an outstanding collection of Max Ernst's work, including eleven paintings and collages dating from 1914 to 1937 from the Gabrielle Keiller Collection (allocated to the SNGMA in 1998). Also works by Klimt, Munch, Arp, and Hodler are present in the collection. The SNGMA holds a number of other works on paper by modern German artists, including the powerful portfolio of eleven lithographs by Max Beckmann (*Hell*; 1919), purchased in 1981, which is an important cycle chronicling the uprisings in Berlin following the collapse of the *Kaiserreich*, and George Grosz's work from the same period (*Toads of Property*), a pen and ink drawing from 1920. Otto Dix is represented by a later work, the unusual painting *Nude Girl on a Fur* (1932), as well as an earlier drypoint etching of his painting *Cardplayers* (1920). In addition, the SNGMA possess rare Expressionist and Dada periodicals and books in the Keiller Library archive, and like the Leicester New Walk Museum, it possesses a copy of the *Blaue Reiter Almanach*.

The collection of twentieth-century German art has been greatly augmented by the collection of international contemporary art acquired for the nation by the National Galleries of Scotland and Tate through a major gift by Anthony d'Offay, a collection acquired (for a fraction of its real value) with support from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund and the Scottish & British Governments. This led to the development of ARTIST ROOMS 'On Tour', which includes regional art institutions such as the Leicester New Walk Museum and Art Gallery, and the ARTIST ROOMS research partnership with the University of Edinburgh at the hub. As part of the ARTIST ROOMS collection there is a considerable body of work by post-1945 German artists such as Joseph Beuys, Gerhard Richter, Georg Baselitz, and Anselm Kiefer, as well as the photographer August Sander.[25] Anthony d'Offay was a graduate of the University of Edinburgh in 1962, but when he was growing up in Leicester as a boy he first acquired an appreciation of German Expressionist art at the Leicester Museum and Art Gallery, a cultural awakening that no doubt created an aesthetic pathway for his later preferences as a prominent art dealer for the so-called 'Neo-Expressionist' generation of Baselitz, Kiefer, et al. These two factors will come together at the New Walk Museum in the autumn of 2014 when the ARTIST ROOMS Georg Baselitz exhibition is staged at Leicester, and will be seen in the same location as the new displays of German Expressionist art, giving visitors the opportunity to consider aesthetic and

ideological points of continuity and rupture between first-generation Expressionism and a major inheritor of that tradition.[26]

For all the many strengths of the collection, the body of the SNGMA's modern German art works on paper is still not as impressive as Leicester's. Leicester has a richer collection. For instance, it has a much greater number of artworks by Lyonel Feininger, due to the fact that the Feininger family were very close to Thekla Hess, who deposited her collection with Leicester in the 1940s, and of course Hans Hess was also the first to write a major monograph on the artist. This collection has been greatly enhanced by the 2009 Gift of Michael Brooks. Leicester is also much stronger that NGS in terms of its collection of prints by Brücke artists (Schmidt-Rottluff, Heckel, Kirchner, Pechstein), and works on paper by George Grosz, many of which were acquired from sources such as Fischer Fine Art in the 1970s and 1980s. With respect to works on paper, in the case of many artists from Ernst Barlach to Martin Bloch, Lovis Corinth, Oskar Kokoschka, Käthe Kollwitz, Franz Marc, Ludwig Meidner, Christian Rohlfs, Emil Nolde, and others, Leicester has a more substantial collection (and often higher quality examples) than can be found at Tate, SNGMA, or even the Courtauld. In some respects, whilst perhaps lacking the thematic coherences that can be found in the SNGMA collection, Leicester has a more intriguing and diverse range of oil paintings than what is presently available in these other institutions, especially with artworks by such underrated figures as Ernst Neuschul[27] and Lotte Laserstein, as well as Ludwig Meidner's impressive *Apocalyptic Vision* (1912), which featured in the major survey of German art at the Royal Academy in 1985. However, as Patrick Legant's report makes clear, the New Walk Museum could do with augmenting its fine collection of works on paper with more oil paintings and perhaps a few more sculptures. While there are many prints by Brücke artists in the Leicester collection, apart from work by Pechstein, there is a deficiency in paintings by other key Brücke members. Ideally, the New Walk might acquire (this author acknowledges the often prohibitively high costs of any potential purchase) or be loaned or gifted a painting by Kirchner to supplement its small but fine collection of prints by this artist, which includes the outstanding and rare woodcut impression, *Sailing Boat off Fehmarn* (1914). A painting would be particularly desirable, especially given the importance of Kirchner's work to the Hess family, and the fact that a whole room was devoted to the artist in the Hess Erfurt villa. Equally, a painting by Schmidt–Rottluff or Heckel, or by another Expressionist artist important to Leicester's historical narrative, such as Kokoschka, would be appropriate additions.

The Courtauld Institute

In 1910, Roger Fry famously coined the term 'Post-Impressionism' for an exhibition of modern French painters at the Grafton Galleries in London, although intriguingly he had also briefly entertained the idea of 'Expressionism' as the title for this exhibition. Fry helped to found and edit the *Burlington Magazine* from 1903 onwards, and would educate the British public into accepting these 'Post-Impressionists' as serious artists. Kenneth Clark wrote of Fry: '… his influence on taste and on the theory of art had spread to quarters where his

name was barely known .... In so far as taste can be changed by one man, it was changed by Roger Fry.'[28] Together with Clive Bell, who developed his formalist aesthetics using the 'model' of modern French art, Fry had a considerable impact on art patronage in the UK throughout the inter-war period, and not least on a certain Samuel Courtauld. According to the foreword written for the catalogue to the twentieth-century displays at the Courtauld Gallery, Courtauld wanted to show how in his own collection, as well as the national collections he supported that the 'great tradition of European painting since the Italian Renaissance had been renewed by the "Impressionist Revolution" of the 1870s'.[29] The most interesting criticism of Bloomsbury Francophilia and the hegemonic influence that Italian and French art seemed to have upon a British cultural sensibility emerged in the writings of Herbert Read, the most influential British critic commenting on modern art in the 1930s. In his articles for the BBC *Listener* magazine Read sought, as Andrew Causey has put it, 'to redress the overbalance in British taste for Paris'.[30] Read would chastise the British art world, especially Fry, Bell, and the Bloomsbury circle, for marginalising German art and failing to acknowledge the significance of German Expressionism, arguing that 'in England we have for many years been content to take all our ideas about contemporary art from Paris … it is a disgrace that none of their [Brücke] works is to be seen in London.'[31] In 1930, Read was almost a lone critical voice in Britain in his support of modern German art, and he was the first to condemn National Socialist art policy in his book *Art Now* published in 1933, the year he became editor of the *Burlington Magazine*.[32] In many of his publications of the 1930s, he was clearly attempting to move the Paris–schooled British to consider an alternative German tradition that culminated in his own time in Expressionism. This is why the progressive vision of A.C. Sewter, who would take over from Read at the *Burlington Magazine*, and other Leicester curators Trevor Thomas, Hans Hess, and Peter Tomory, in the period from the mid-1930s until the mid-1950s was so critically important; they gave a public museum profile to a neglected and under–rated area in the development of modern art.

It was not until 1978 that the Courtauld's collection was transformed by the generosity of Count Antoine Seilern (1901-1978), who left his collection of about 350 drawings to the Institute in 1978, including an extensive collection of works on paper by his fellow Austrian, Kokoschka. The Seilern bequest included a special edition of Kokoschka's *Dreaming Youths* (1908/republished 1917), and several notable paintings, especially the *Prometheus Triptych* (1950), described by Brian Sewell as the most important 20th century German painting in Britain, although elsewhere he said something similar about Leicester's *Red Woman* painting by Marc (see report 4). In 2002, the gallery's collection of modern German art was further enhanced by the Fridart Foundation and other collectors, who loaned in perpetuity many Fauvist and Expressionist artworks, including a number of important pieces by André Derain, Henri Matisse, Raoul Dufy, Alexei Jawlensky, Wassily Kandinsky, August Macke and the Brücke members Max Pechstein and Kees van Dongen, as well as other prominent figures of European modernism. The Fridart Foundation is made up of private collectors who prefer to remain anonymous. Today the Courtauld collection is comparable with the New Walk's, although Leicester is much stronger on graphic work. Leicester also owns a copy of Kokoschka's *Dreaming Youths* that was acquired with the aid of a V&A purchasing grant.

At the Courtauld Institute, the art historian Dr Shulamith Behr has been key in raising the profile of modern German art in the collection, and especially the importance of the Blaue Reiter artist Gabriele Münter, through Courtauld displays and exhibitions such as 'Gabriele Münter: The Search for Expression 1906-17' (2005). With her postgraduate students, Dr Behr frequently utilizes and promotes the Leicester New Walk Museum, acknowledging the institution for its 'outstanding collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth–century German art'[33], and she has written on the acquisition of Münter's *Portrait of Anna Aagaard* (1917) by the Leicester museum in late May 1991. Of this addition, Dr Behr has commented that it 'enhances the existing range of valuable Expressionist oil paintings, such as Ludwig Meidner's *Apocalyptic Vision* (1912) and Franz Marc's *Red Woman* (1911), and focuses attention on the Museum Service's new Acquisition Policy which aims to secure work by leading women artists … Impressive holdings of Käthe Kollwitz's graphics and sculptures by Renée Sintensis also anticipated this enlightened emphasis on the historical role of women's production.'[34] Dr Behr has also supported Amanda Wadsley, former keeper of Art for Leicestershire Museums Service, in staging 'the first major retrospective exhibition of the work of Conrad Felixmüller ('Between Politics and the Studio', 1994),[35] contributing towards the exhibition and catalogue, and organising a complementary exhibition of works on paper at the Courtauld Institute. As thanks for staging this exhibition, Titus Felixmüller, made a gift of a stunning woodcut made by his father, the *Portrait of Christian Rohlfs* (1927), a portrait of another important Expressionist artist who is well represented in the Leicester collection.

The Midlands' Network: The Barber Institute of Fine Arts

In addition to major national institutions, it is important to consider the New Walk Museum's collection of German Expressionism in relation to the interests of other art and academic institutions in a Midlands' regional network. The first port of call in terms of close neighbours would be the Barber Institute of Fine Arts in Birmingham. A number of key figures with respect to the Leicester history have also been involved with the Barber Institute and the University of Birmingham Art History department. A.C. Sewter, a progressive figure at the Leicester Museum and Art Gallery in the 1930s (see Lot 4) and who displayed the work of Klee, Ernst, Kandinsky, Arp, and Moholy Nagy in the Contemporary Art exhibition at the Leicester Museum and Art Gallery in 1936, took up a post as Assistant Director of the Barber Institute in 1940. The Barber has a good selection of modern German art works on paper (although far less in number than Leicester) and one might assume that Sewter was responsible. In fact, a later Director, Richard Verdi (Director from 1990-2007) acquired all of the German works on paper during the 1990s, apart from Georg Grosz's *Querschnitt-Platin & Co* (1919/20) which was acquired in 2010 under Ann Sumner. Through these acquisitions, Verdi was attempting to surmount the original restrictions placed upon twentieth–century purchases in the collection, restrictions due in part to Lady Barber's misgivings about modern art. He was also attempting to make up for the fact that modern German art and other central European schools was so poorly represented in other UK collections, with the Leicester New Walk Museum being a key exception. This body of work

was shown at an exhibition, 'Apocalypse Then: Graphic Art and the Great War', which took place at the Barber Institute in 2001. Another exhibition of these prints, 'Print Power' was staged in 2010 when Dr Weikop, an alumnus of the University of Birmingham, was invited to give a lecture to mark the occasion.[36]

As a means of comparing the range of the collection to Leicester's, it is worthwhile listing the acquisitions in chronological order since 1991, all made under the former director, Richard Verdi, with the exception of a work by Grosz, acquired by his successor, Ann Sumner:

1. Käthe Kollwitz, *Help Russia*, lithograph, 1921, signed in pencil and purchased from the W. Weston Gallery in London, June 1991. Inv. No. 91.1 ; 2. Max Klinger, *The Philosopher*, etching and aquatint, purchased from Garton and Co. New Bond Street, February, 1992. Inv. No 92.1.; 3. Otto Dix, *Chalk Pit in the Sun*, drawing, purchased from Garton European Prints, Wiltshire, October 1992. Inv. No. 92.5; 4. Lovis Corinth, *Christ at the Cross*, woodcut signed and dated in pencil, 1919, purchased from Garton and Co. Wiltshire, September 1994. Inv. No. 94. ; 5. Emil Nolde, *Prophet*, woodcut in black ink, 1912 signed by the artist, purchased from Garton and co. Wiltshire, April 1996. Inv. No. 96.5 ; 6. Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Mourners *on the shore*, woodcut in black ink, 1914, signed in pencil, purchased from Garton and co. Wiltshire, February 1997. Inv No. 97.3 ; 7. Max Beckmann, *Self-portrait with stylus*, drypoint, 1917, purchased from Garton and Co. Wiltshire, 1998. Inv No. 98.5; 8. Max Beckmann*, Resurrection*, etching, 1918, purchased from Villa Griesebach, Munich, November 2000. Inv. No. 2000.6.; 9. Franz Marc*, Lionhunt, After Delacroix*, woodcut, 1913, purchased from Villa Griesebach Munich, November 2000 (same time as Beckmann no.8). Inv. No. 2000.7 ; 10. Kaethe Kollwitz, *Woman with a dead child,* etching, 1903, purchased from Garton and Co. Wiltshire, December 2000. Inv. No. 2000.8 ; 11. Max Klinger, *Castle by the Sea* (Die Burg am Meer), etching with acquaint, after Arnold Boecklin, 2001. Inv No. 2001.10. ; 12. Kaethe Kollwitz, *Selbstbildnis im Profil*, lithograph, 1927, 2001. Inv. No. 2001.11; 13. Kurt Schwitters*, Merz V* (Plate 5 of the 'Merz Mappe'), lithograph, 1923, purchased at a Print Fair, London. 2002. Inv. No. 2002.3 (The Merzmappe consisted of 6 lithographs 'auf den Stein gemerzt'. 'Merzed' onto the stone, which were published as the third issues of Schwitters's series Merz in a numbered edition of fifty. This is the only portfolio he ever produced of his own prints; 14. George Grosz, *Querschnitt-Platin & Co*., lithograph, purchased from Garton and Co. Wiltshire, July 2010. Inv. No. 2010.2.[37]

While the Barber undoubtedly has a reasonable representative selection of German prints from the first half of the twentieth century, it lacks the range and depth of the Leicester collection. The reception of the Leicester New Walk Museum collection of German Expressionist art in academic circles in institutions in the Midlands will be considered in a short appendix to report 4.

[1] My research for reports 3 and 4 has been underpinned by my earlier scholarship on the British reception of German Expressionism in various academic and public lectures, and in this extended essay for my edited volume, *New Perspectives on Brücke Expressionism: Bridging History*, Farnham, 2011, pp. 237–76.

[2] Matthew Potter, *The Inspirational Genius of Germany: British Art and Germanism 1850-1939*, Manchester, 2012, p. 272.

[3] See Maike Bruhns, 'Rosa Schapire und der Frauenbund zur Förderung deutscher bildenden Kunst' in *Avantgarde und Publikum*, 282, note 48.

[44] I discuss this work in Christian Weikop, 'Karl Schmidt-Rottluffs Arborealer Expressionismus', in Sabine Schulze (ed.), *Rosa Schapire und die Expressionisten*, Hamburg, 2009.

[5] *A Hundred Years of German Painting 1850-1950*, Tate exhibition catalogue, London, 1956.

[6] Hans Hess, 'Hundred Years of German Painting 1850-1950', review in the *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 98, No. 639 (Jun. 1956), p. 203.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid, p. 3.

[9] *Painters of the Brücke*, Tate exhibition catalogue, London, 1964.

[10] Eric Newton, 'Teutons at the Tate', *The Guardian*, 30 October 1964, p. 11.

[11] *Art in Revolt Germany 1905-192*', an exhibition in aid of world refugee year, was shown at the Marlborough Fine Art gallery. The accompanying catalogue was edited by Kirchner's biographer Will Grohmann. He also wrote the preface. Norbert Lynton would describe this exhibition as a 'major piece of pioneering' in his own catalogue introduction for *Apocalypse and Utopia: A View of Art in Germany 1910-1939* an exhibition held at Fischer Fine Art in 1977, op.cit., p. 3.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Nigel Gosling, 'Looking back at the German Essence', *Observer*, 1 November 1964, p. 25.

[14] *Emil Nolde: February – March 1964*, (introduction by Werner Haftmann), exhibition catalogue, Malborough Fine Art, London, 1964; *Drawings, watercolours, collages – Expressionism, Bauhaus, Dada*, dealer's catalogue, Malborough Fine Art, London, 1966; *Nolde*, (with introductory essay by Paul Klee), dealer's catalogue, Malborough Fine Art, London, 1966; *Kirchner, 1880-1938: Oils, Watercolours, Drawings and Graphics*, exhibition catalogue, Malborough Fine Art, London, 1969; *German Expressionism: Watercolours, Prints and Drawings by the Painters of the Brücke*, Arts Council, London, 1969.

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[15] Dennis Farr, 'J.B. Manson and the Stoop Bequest', *Burlington Magazine*, 125: 968 (1983), 690. Interestingly, A.E. Popham was the father of Anne Olivier Popham Bell, the wife of Quentin Bell, close colleague of Hans Hess, and probably the last surviving member of the Bloomsbury group. I discussed the refusal of Schapire's gift with Mrs Bell in an interview on the 24 September 2007. Anne Olivier Bell also talked of her work for the MFAA, which was established in 1943 to assist in the protection and restitution of cultural property in war areas during and following World War II.

[16] Frances Carey and Anthony Griffiths, *The Print in Germany 1880-1993: The Age of Expressionism*, exhibition catalogue (1984), second edition, 1993, p. 7.

[17] Annely Juda, 'Opening the doors to the unconscious: The Print in Germany 1880-1933', The Times, 2 October 1984.

[18] Carey and Griffiths, *The Print in Germany*, p.7.

[19] Clare Henry, 'German style set to inspire', 22 June 1990. Access: http://www.heraldscotland.com/sport/spl/aberdeen/german-style-set-to-inspire-1.571346

[20] A copy of this translation is available in the Leicester New Walk German Expressionism archive.

[21] Richard Calvocoressi, Max Beckmann's 'Carnival', *National Art Collections Fund*, 1983, p. 89.

[22] ART INTERESTS: THE S.S.A, *The Scotsman*, 24 November, 1931; Access: ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Scotsman* (1817-1950).
pg. 12.

[23] Douglas Hall, 'Damnably difficult questions about modern art'. Access: http://www.scottishreview.net/DouglasHall267.shtml

[24] Patrick Elliott, *Companion Guide to the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art*, Edinburgh, p. 216.

[25] See: http://www.tate.org.uk/search/weikop%20sander Articles relating to August Sander have been brought together in issue 19 of *Tate Papers* by Christian Weikop, who co-organised the symposium 'August Sander and Weimar Germany', held at the National Galleries of Scotland on 13 May 2011 during the ARTIST ROOMS exhibition August Sander at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art.

[26] See Christian Weikop interview with Georg Baselitz. Access at https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/112

[27] See Christian Weikop 'Encounters with the Image of the Black: The German and French Avant-Garde (1905-1920)', and 'Afrophilia and Afrophobia in Switzerland and Germany (1916-1938)' in *The Image of the Black in Western Art, Vol. V: The Twentieth Century*, David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr (eds), Harvard University Press, 2014.The Neuschul painting is discussed on p. 168 and represented on p. 169.

[28] Kenneth Clark, 'Introduction' in Roger Fry, *Last Lectures*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1962, p. ix. In terms of acting as a powerful 'tastemaker' Roger Fry could be seen as a predecessor to Charles Saatchi, although Fry was much more of a learned polymath.

[29] *The 20th Century at the Courtauld Institute Gallery*, exhibition catalogue, London, 2002, p. 7.

[30] Andrew Causey, 'Herbert Read and Contemporary Art', in David Goodway (ed.), *Herbert Read Reassessed*, Liverpool, p. 125.

[31] Herbert Read, 'Modern German Painting', *Listener* (29 October 1930), p. 708.

[32] For further information on the relationship between Herbert Read and Max Sauerlandt see Andrew Causey, 'Herbert Read and the North European Tradition 1921-33', in Benedict Read and David Thistlewood, *Herbert Read: A British Vision of World Art*, Leeds City Art Galleries, London, 1993, pp. 48-51.

[33] Shulamith Behr, 'Leicestershire's new acquisition: Gabriel Münter's portrait of Anna [Roslund–] Aagaard', *National Arts Collections Fund Review*, Marina Vaizey (ed.), London, 1992, p. 56. Dr Behr's important Aubrey Newman lecture, 'The Expressionist Ludwig Meidner, Exile, Creativity and Holocaust Awareness' (May 2014), also responds to key works in the Leicester collection**.**

[34] Ibid.

[35] Tim Schadia-Hall, 'Foreword', Shulamith Behr and Amanda Wadsley, *Conrad Felixmüller 1897-1977: Between Politics and Studio*, Leicestershire Museum and Art Gallery, 1994, p. 3.

[36] Christian Weikop, 'Print Power: the Religious, the Social and the Body in Twentieth Century Works on Paper', lecture at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham, June 10, 2010.

[37] I would like to thank Dr Camilla Smith, University of Birmingham, for supplying me a list of German artworks at the Barber Institute. Dr Smith also confirmed that A.C. Sewter made no acquisitions of modern German art during his tenure.