THE ABSTRACTION OF LANDSCAPE FROM NORTHERN ROMANTICISM TO ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

2007

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The 19th-century landscape and the Romantic tradition of Northern Europe as the origin of modern abstraction is the thesis of this exhibition catalogue, which seeks to visually demonstrate, through the works of the great masters, the evolution of the Romantic landscape in modern art, up to and including its ultimate abstraction in American Abstract Expressionism. Inspired by the premise of the celebrated art historian Robert Rosenblum (1927-2006), it includes 124 works by 26 European and American artists from Caspar David Friedrich to Mark Rothko, as well as the contemporary artists Gerhard Richter and Anselm Kiefer. The works exhibited come from more than 20 European and American museums as well as private collections.

With contributions by
Werner Hofmann, Hein-Th. Schulze Altcappenberg, Barbara Dayer Gallati, Robert Rosenblum, Miguel López-Remiro, Mark Rothko, Cordula Meier, Dietmar Elger, Bernhard Teuber, Olaf Mörke and Victor Andrés Ferretti

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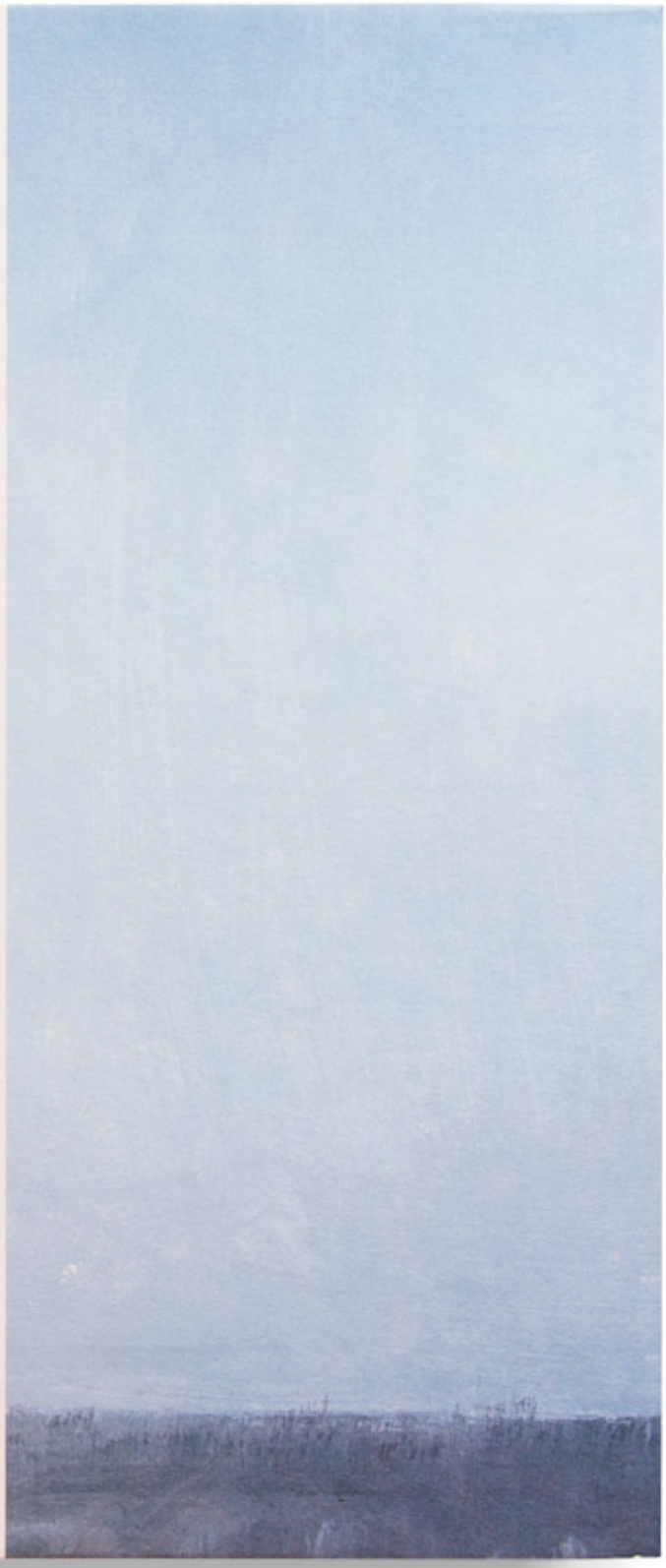

THE ABSTRACTION OF LANDSCAPE

Fundación Juan March

This catalogue, and its Spanish edition, are published on the occasion of the exhibition
THE ABSTRACTION OF LANDSCAPE
From Northern Romanticism to Abstract Expressionism

Fundación Juan March, Madrid
October 5, 2007 – January 13, 2008

THE ABSTRACTION OF LANDSCAPE

FROM NORTHERN ROMANTICISM TO ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

IN MEMORIAM
Robert Rosenblum (1927–2006)

FOREWORD

The 19th-century landscape and the Northern Romantic tradition as the origin of modern abstraction or the birth of abstraction out of the spirit of Romantic landscape: that is the thesis of the exhibition that this catalogue accompanies. Both wish to visually demonstrate the evolution of the Romantic landscape throughout modernism up to its ultimate abstraction in American Abstract Expressionism. To this end, a careful selection was made of 124 works by 26 European and American artists, from Caspar David Friedrich to Mark Rothko, as well as two contemporary artists who have a unique relationship with their Romantic heritage: Gerhard Richter and Anselm Kiefer.

Although remote in time, the moment in which *The Abstraction of Landscape: From Northern Romanticism to Abstract Expressionism* was conceived can be precisely pinpointed. In 1972, a 45-year-old American professor and art historian, Robert Rosenblum, was invited to be the Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford University and to present eight public lectures, with the sole suggestion that they be of a "broad and speculative character." "To most art historians, especially in the English-speaking world," he would later add, "such a challenge would be an uncommon one. For better or for worse, we feel more at home in the secure foothills of facts than in the precarious summits of ideas, and are happier proving a date than constructing a new historical synthesis."

Within an intellectual landscape, Rosenblum preferred the summits to the foothills. Without neglecting dates and facts, he basically decided to test a new historical synthesis. Already known and celebrated, he had published a brief article in *ARTnews* in 1961 – which this catalogue publishes for the first time in Spanish – with the suggestive title of "The Abstract Sublime." There he first proposed a connection between the Romantic tradition of Northern Europe and the movement, which, at that time, was still the vanguard of the pictorial avant-garde: American Abstract Expressionism.

For his Slade Lectures, Rosenblum decided to expand upon his argument, and the eight conferences covered the temporal divide between Friedrich's *Monk by the Sea* (ca. 1809-10) and the painting cycle that would come to be known as the Rothko Chapel in the Menil Collection in Houston (ca. 1970). He surveyed the entire pictorial tradition of the North, in which he included – in addition to the German Romantics – Turner, Constable, van Gogh, Munch, Kandinsky, Mondrian, Klee, Nolde and Ernst, among many others. The lectures, subsequently gathered in his 1975 book *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (published in Spanish in 1993), comprise a fascinating survey of the history of painting and European and American culture over two centuries.

Needless to say, it was an ambitious and risky thesis, spanning more than 200 years of cultural history and involving the work of many renowned names of art history as well as themes and concepts rife with difficulties, of which Rosenblum was quite conscious. Consider, for example, the historiographical dilemmas of his proposal (which points to "an important, alternative reading of the history of modern art which might well supplement the orthodox one that has as its almost exclusive locus Paris, from David and Delacroix to Matisse and Picasso"). Or the discussion of artists then relatively unknown. Or the methodological difficulties of the iconography (Rosenblum himself cites the interpretive danger of "pseudomorphosis" – false formal analogies – denounced by Panofsky). Or the revolutionary relationship established between the sublime and the abstract (20 years before Jean-François Lyotard, for example). Or his audacity, as an art historian, in linking philosophical, religious and even geographical matters with artistic and aesthetic ones.

This book's reading of the history of landscape and abstraction from Friedrich to Rothko is as brilliant as it is unfamiliar even to an educated public. Furthermore, beyond the polemics, distortions, nuances and critiques that the book could have provoked, there is something more obvious: that the argument laid out in those pages had all the necessary components to become the core thesis of an exhibition. It was sufficiently suggestive to awaken that peculiar mix of intellectual fascination, aesthetic emotion and practical ability that should be put in motion every time one begins work on the conception and organization of an exhibition.

Naturally, being inspired by that book to organize an exhibition did not entail a rigid application of Rosenblum's proposal, but a liberal adaptation of this different way of "reading" modern art history. This allowed us to situate the exhibition one step beyond that of a monographic or historical display of landscape painting or Romanticism – or both subjects at once – which are as worthy as they are numerous and, up to a certain point, conventional. That liberal adaptation not only offered the possibility of presenting a series of masterful and – in some cases – exceptional works for contemplation but, moreover, provided, in a visually convincing manner, thought-provoking insights about art and cultural history and the evolution of religious, philosophical, aesthetic and even political thought (it is the era covered in Serge Gilbaut's *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art*, 1983) on two continents and during the last two centuries. It was a tempting challenge.

Any exhibition that advances a historical and thematic argument must address a series of specific difficulties that are sometimes more acute than those in a monographic exhibition. In this case, they entail the vastness of time and geographical space, the large number, variety and apparently extreme difference among some of the artists selected, the need to specify references that seek to be more than mere arbitrary geographical points (what is "Northernness"?, besides that which is in the North) and the need to obtain loans of very specific works by very specific artists.

Among those difficulties there is one that refers to a theoretical-practical aspect essential to exhibitions, which in this case has consisted of a kind of "restitution." In effect, in the prologue to his book, Rosenblum referred to "the usual risks attending the transposition into a book of a series of lectures whose persuasiveness may have depended in good part upon techniques of audio-visual sequence and informed delivery rather than upon the leisurely scrutiny of an argument on a printed page." He was referring to the oral presentation, accompanied by slides, so typical of lectures: a kind of discourse that reduces formal differences and permits the convincing comparison of works as diverse as a sepia drawing by Friedrich, measuring only a few inches, to a work by Rothko more than five feet in height. In this common medium they are equated in size.

This exhibition – one inspired by a book – allows us to prove and delight in the "plastic verisimilitude" of Rosenblum's premise because it restores the visual plausibility that the author feared would be lost upon its transfer to the distinct format of a book. At the same time, that book has imposed a curatorial rigor on the placement of the works in the actual exhibition space that, without detracting from their contemplative enjoyment, permits one to examine his argument as if it were a page printed in space, one that goes beyond installations based on mere formal dialogue. In addition to this, we have attempted, in the display of the works in this catalogue – that is, in the book inspired by the exhibition – to maintain the intuitive presence of the visual sequence of the works in the actual space.

The exhibition began to take shape when, after examining the themes treated by Rosenblum, that of landscape was decided upon and thus focused our selection – except in a few cases – to that intimate medium that is a work on paper: drawings in various techniques, oil sketches on cardboard, engravings. Research on landscape and its evolution on both continents led to the works of the 19th-century American Luminists (barely touched upon by Rosenblum and little-known in Europe) and, while respecting his proposed time span, two contemporary artists were added.

In those initial stages of work on the exhibition, Professor Rosenblum was contacted so as to show him the project and ask if he would write a catalogue essay. He modestly insisted that he did not like to look back on his work, which led to the idea of printing a Spanish translation of "The Abstract Sublime" ("it would be exactly the right place to give the original text," he kindly responded) and his consent to an interview that would allow him, almost four decades later, to discuss his ideas on the abstraction of landscape. That interview, to which he generously lent himself on two occasions – in Malaga and Madrid – in 2006, is published here as an epilogue to this catalogue and as a posthumous homage.

The exhibition begins with three 1803 sepia landscapes by Friedrich: three of the four seasons – Spring, Autumn and Winter – from his first *Jahreszeiten* cycle, lost since 1935 and recently rediscovered. Exhibited here, the Fundación Juan March hosts their world premiere, preceded only by their presentation in Berlin after being restored. Our exhibition ends with the works of the principal figures of American Abstract Expressionism: and along with impressive acrylics on paper by Rothko, are other works by Gottlieb, Newman and Pollock, as well as Kiefer and Richter.

All told, they span the period from 1803 to the present day. Among them are landscapes by artists firmly belonging to the Northern tradition, such as Runge, Dahl, Oehme, Carus, Blechen, Turner, Cozens and Constable; American Luminists such as Cole, Church, Heade and Bierstadt; as well as artists who bridge the transition from the 19th to the 20th centuries, or are decidedly ensconced in the latter: van Gogh, Mondrian, Munch, Nolde, Klee, Kandinsky and Ernst, among others.

Without detracting from their individual importance, the exhibition presents them in a wey that looks beyond their purely formal values – if such values can exist in a vacuum –within a chance "geography of artists" completely overlaid with relevant aspects of the history of ideas, and especially aesthetic ideas, of Western Europe and America. The essay of Professor Werner Hofmann spans – with an enviable and profound capacity for synthesis – the entire exhibition. More specific aspects are brilliantly addressed, in order, in the essays of Hein-Th. Schulze Altcappenberg, Barbara Dayer Gallati, Dietmar Elger, Cordula Meier, Bernhard Teuber, Olaf Mörke and Victor Andrés Ferretti. To all of them, we would like to express our deep appreciation. Miguel López-Remiro, who has edited – in various languages – Mark Rothko's complete writings, introduces the artist's forceful essay, "The romantics were prompted…", which was first published in Spanish in the catalogue of the Fundación Juan March's Rothko exhibition in 1987, exactly twenty years ago, and that we offer here in facsimile.

The Fundación Juan March would like to express its gratitude to the Corporación Alba and to Banca March, for the help they have given this exhibition. The works presented in it come from more than 20 European and American museums as well as private collections. Our specific and sincere thanks to these individuals is given elsewhere, but we would like to highlight here the decisive contribution of the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin, under the directorship of Professor Schulze Altcappenberg, without whose loans of more than 30 works this exhibition would not have been possible.

Fundación Juan March
Madrid, September 2007

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This exhibition received its impetus and vision from Robert Rosenblum's *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (1975). Just as important as this groundbreaking text, however, was the insight and encouragement received from the man himself. His advice was indispensable in the initial planning stages and his delight at its evolution was, for us, a thoroughly satisfying and fitting reward. His unfortunate passing in December 2006, kept him from seeing the final exhibition and its catalogue but his mark upon both is indelible. We would like to take this opportunity to express our indebtedness to Robert Rosenblum as well as to his wife Jane Kaplowitz and their children Theo and Sophie.

The Fundación Juan March would also like to express its heartfelt gratitude to the following people and institutions for making this exhibition possible by generously granting and helping to administer its loans: Dr. Sigrid Achenbach, Lynne Addison, Ida Balboul, Dr. Michael Baumgartner, Jill Bloomer, Suzanne Boorsch, Kerry Brougher, Dr. Holger Broeker, Connie Butler, Consuelo Ciscar, Catherine Clement, Francisca Cruz, Kathy Curry, Gail Davidson, Jan Debbaut, Glòria Domènech, Peter Ellis, Mark Evans, Carlos Fernández de Henestrosa, Dr. Andreas Fluck, Heidi Frautschi, Dr. Sandra Gianfreda, Suzanne Greenawalt, Jodi Hauptman, Edith Heinimann, Dr. Sjraar van Heugten, Sanford Hirsch, Sylvia Hoffmann, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Holler, Ellen Jansen, José María Jiménez Alfaro, Mark Jones, Adrie Kok, Dr. Petra Kuhlmann-Hodick, María Ángeles Lafita, Steve Langehough, Dr. Hans-Ulrich Lehmann, Nancy Litwin, Floramae McCarron-Cates, Cristina Mulinas, Yolanda Montañés, Philippe de Montebello, Kathleen Mylen-Coulombe, José Ortiz, Carlotta Owens, Roxanne Peters, Earl A. Powell III, Dr. Manfred Reuther, Jock Reynolds, Charles Ritchie, Prof. Dr. Martin Roth, Axel Ruger, Ludmilla Sala, Dr. Dieter Schwarz, Alan Shestack, Ira Schirm, Claudia Schmid, Prof. Dr. Hein-Th. Schulze Altcappenberg, Sabine Schumann, Prof. Dr. Peter-Klaus Schuster, Amy Snyder, Guillermo Solana, Dr. Juri Steiner, Dr. E. J. van Straaten, Alicia Thomas, Paul Thompson, Gary Tinterow, Keri Towler, Marije Vellekoop, Dr. Birgit Verwiebe, Olga Viso, Jeri Wagner, Ian Warrell, Marije Wissink, Barbara Wood and Dr. Moritz Wullen, as well as to those generous collectors who wish to remain anonymous.

We would like to give equal thanks to the many people and organizations who advised and supported us on this project, in particular, Banca March, Corporación Alba, Kevin Avery, Linda Ferber, Javier Gómez Montero, Sheldon Nodelman and Ralph Sessions.

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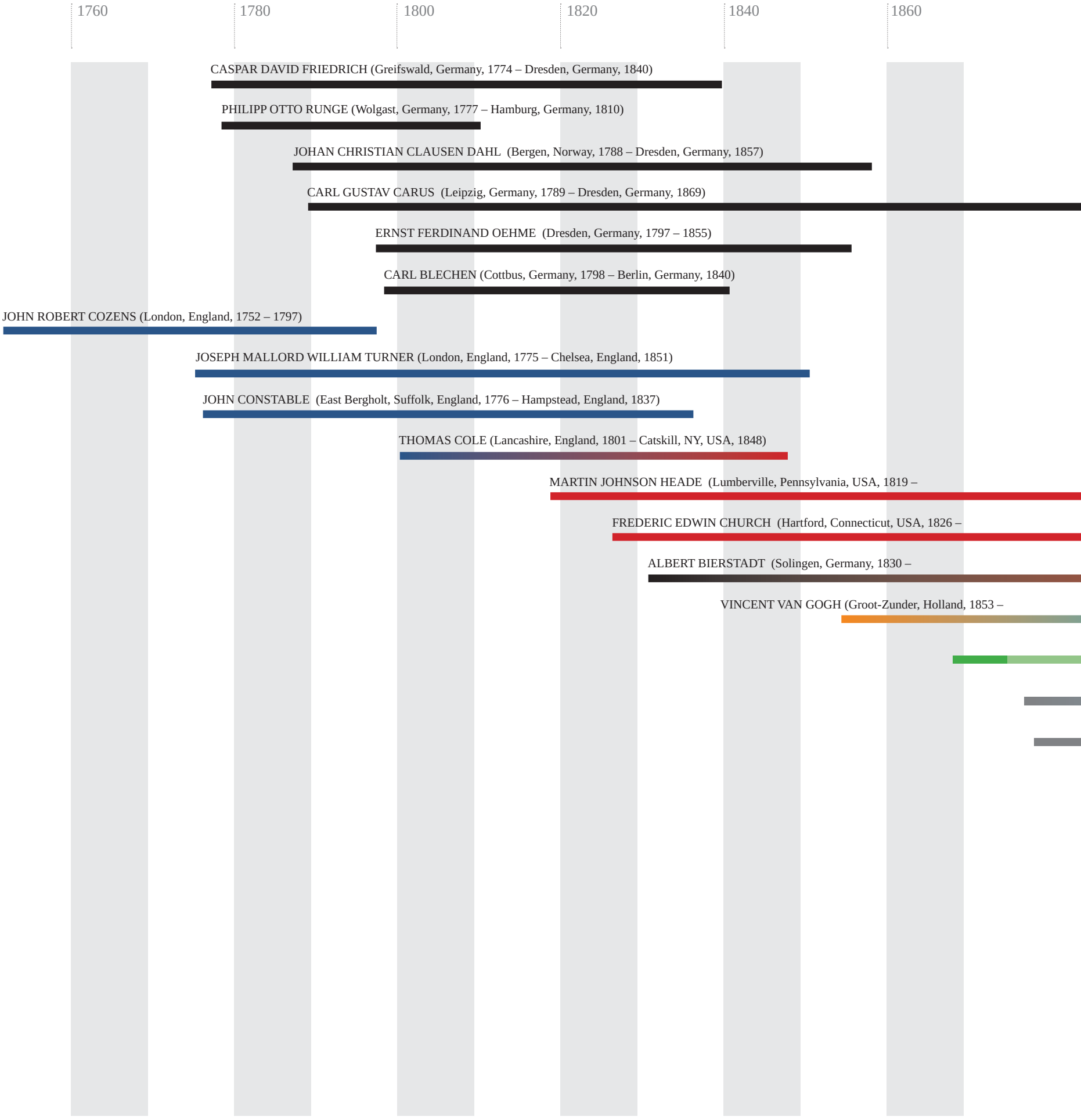
1760
1780
1800
1820
1840
1860
CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH (Greifswald, Germany, 1774 – Dresden, Germany, 1840)
PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE (Wolgast, Germany, 1777 – Hamburg, Germany, 1810)
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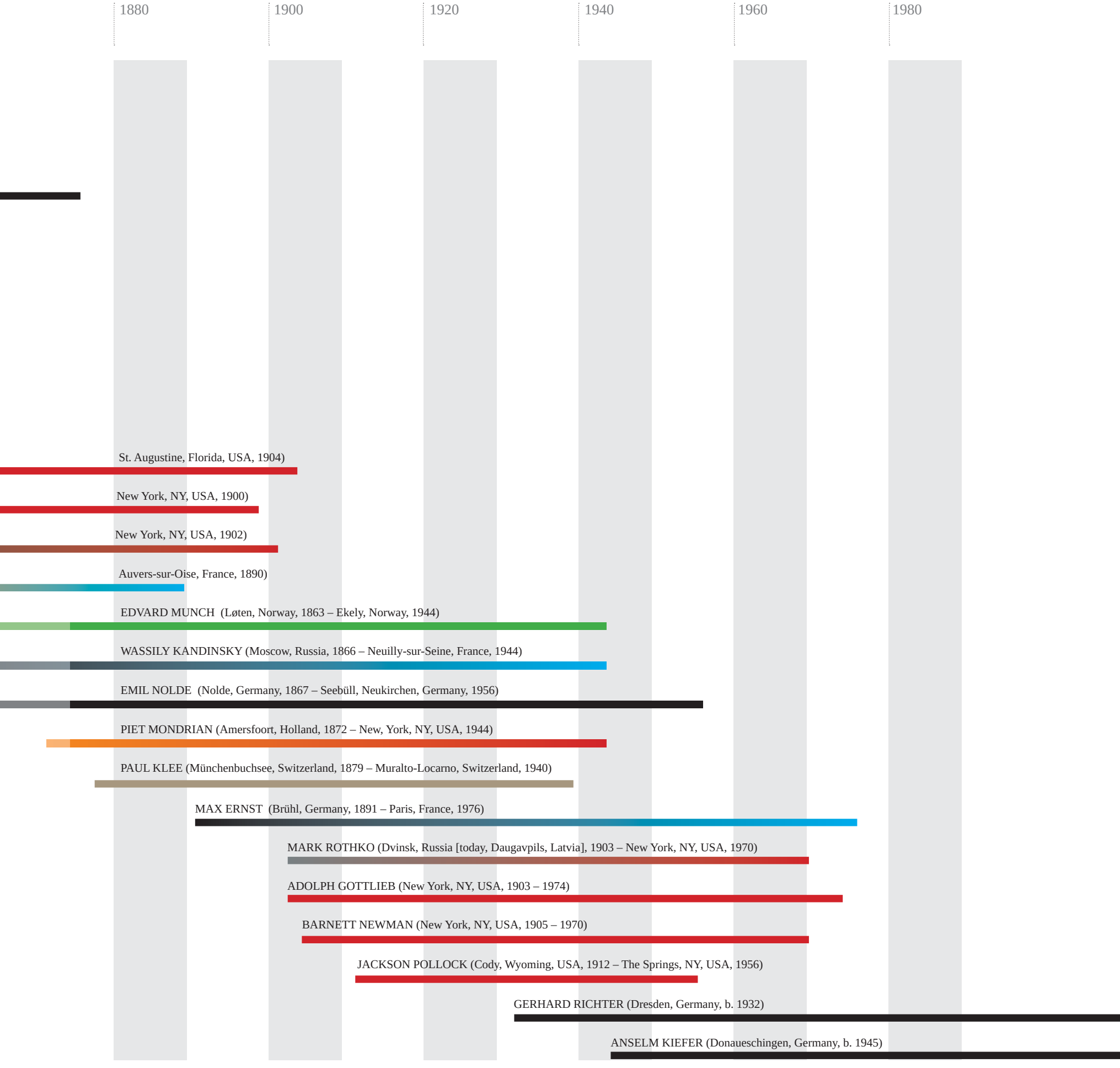
A CHRONOLOGY OF ARTISTS



“NO FRENCH IMPRESSIONIST PICNICS OR STROLLS COULD TAKE PLACE IN THESE SANCTIFIED NORTHERN LANDSCAPES; THEY ARE, RATHER, THE SHRINES WHERE NATURE’S ULTIMATE MYSTERIES ARE CONTEMPLATED.”

ROBERT ROSENBLUM

Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko (1975)

From Petrarch to the present day, the artistic experience of landscape bears the mark of subjectivity: man is a part of that nature that we isolate from the cosmic whole and call "landscape."

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THE PARTS AND THE WHOLE

WERNER HOFMANN

This exhibition owes much to the perspective introduced by Robert Rosenblum (1927-2006) more than three decades ago when he launched a new chapter in art historical research with his book *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (1975).[1] The American scholar certainly could not be suspected of wanting to reassess the European role in the creation of "modernism" – such a polysemous word – through chauvinistic or even racist arguments. What opened his eyes was the insight that 20th-century modernism was not limited to the artistic self-consciousness characterized by *l'art pour l'art*. Rosenblum was interested in questions about the meaning of artistic actions during an age in which irrefutable religious truths were no longer acknowledged. What he discovered was that, around the year 1800, this roaming doubt manifested itself in a "troubled faith in the functions of art."[2] In this manner, he came across "the religious dilemmas posed in the Romantic movement."[3]

Rosenblum did not linger on the prehistory of this split state of awareness – he went directly to the heart of the matter. The findings drawn together in his book (based on a series of lectures) met with wide acceptance. And they came at the right moment. The first comprehensive retrospective on Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840) took place in 1972 at the Tate, London. The Hamburg Kunsthalle and the Dresden collections followed suit in 1974 – the 200th anniversary of Friedrich's birth – with an even more extensive show. Paris reinforced and expanded this new perspective in the wide-ranging exhibition *La peinture allemande à l'époque du Romantisme*. Three decades later, the time now seems ripe to once again examine the question of the obstinacy of the "Northern Romantic tradition."

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The modern era's discovery of nature in the form of landscape cannot be traced back to a painter but, instead, to a man of letters in whose breast beat the heart of a cleric and poet: Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374). His ascent of Mount Ventoux on April 26, 1336, as well as the resulting epistle relating this event are historic facts continually analyzed in new ways by scholars. Did the insatiable modern tradition of "sightseeing" begin here, henceforth dispelling the restrictions imposed by medieval religiosity when it paganized and demonized the mountains? Petrarch himself withheld his discovery of the clear-cut consequence of a new, secular "world consciousness" after taking in the panoramic view from atop the mountain; what he longed for was an added dimension of experience beyond human sensory stimuli. The need to exalt the soul to higher spheres (*ad altiora*) led him to turn to the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine (397 A.D.). He entrusted the election of the passage to chance, reading whatever fell before his eyes. He opened the book and "accidentally" came across a passage in Book X: "Men go forth to marvel at the heights of mountains and the huge waves of the sea, the broad flow of the rivers, the vastness of the ocean, the orbits of the stars, and yet they neglect to marvel at themselves." The passage forced him to doubt the new

Detail. Carl Blechen
Grauer Wolkenhimmel mit Mond
(Gray Cloudy Sky with Moon), 1823
Oil on paper
CAT. 22

view of the world and he admitted that he should have learned sooner that "nothing is admirable besides the mind; compared to its greatness nothing is great." Immediately afterwards, in the 29th section, Saint Augustine completed his renunciation of the outer world and his turn to the inner world: "I was completely satisfied with what I had seen of the mountain and turned my inner eye toward myself" (*in me ipsum interiores oculos reflexi*).

What had been characterized in dualistic overstatement as "the fight between the external and the internal, between the world and the mind,"[4] can be defined less antagonistically as perhaps the modern era's first experience of the European dual view. The expounding of this dual view was carried out alternately in the outer and the inner worlds, but nonetheless bound each to the other. Caspar David Friedrich resolved to pursue the latter. He made two remarks of differing stridency on the subject and at one point made a plea for an intertwining of both arcs: "The painter should not solely paint what he sees, but also what he sees in himself. If he does not see anything in himself, then he should give up painting what he sees."[5] His other statement was categorically formulated: "Close your bodily eye so that you may first see your picture with your mind's eye. Then bring up to the surface what you saw in the dark, that it may react with others from outside to inside."[6] But there is no evidence of this cleverly chosen rhetoric in Friedrich's oeuvre. All of his works, whether landscapes or interiors, look toward the secular world, but simultaneously appear to most interpreters as a filter through which the believer experiences the hereafter.

The topos of the landscape of the soul had already appeared in Petrarch's works and along with it a moral, religious field of reference. Petrarch apparently was the first person to consciously experience nature *bifocally*: as an empirical place and as a place of the mind, simultaneously. In earlier passages, he analyzes the soul's access to nature. Initially the ascent was fatiguing, which is why he decided to take the shortcut by which his brother, who accompanied him, endeavored to reach the summit. He then realized that "The life we call blessed is located on a high peak,"[7] and "narrow is the way" (Matthew 7:14) up to it. This path leaves the valleys of sin behind, rejects earthly pleasures and embraces the discomforts of asceticism.

Petrarch, therefore, was confronted with the choice of the *homo viator in bivio*, which would become one of the great themes of humanistic self-assessment.[8] It can be traced back to a topos of classical antiquity that began with the Sophist Prodicus's account of Heracles at the crossroads. When the young Heracles had to choose between virtue and vice, he decided against taking the more comfortable path of pleasure, choosing the more arduous path of virtue instead. Petrarch was confronted with this same conflict because his ascent also began with a decision made at a fork in the road. The choice he made was not an unambiguous one but ultimately was of little consequence. He was not granted an "aesthetic experience of nature," as it would be called today, because Mount Ventoux revealed itself to be an "antithetical summit" – a metaphor for the otherworldly as well as the worldly. "Both ... point alternately to the other, but are dependent on each other in importance."[9]

The question regarding the autonomy of the worldly arose just as infrequently for Petrarch as it did for Friedrich and other painters of the following centuries, not only those within the "Northern tradition." For Friedrich, this "fork in the road" becomes apparent in his sepia drawing *Autumn* (fig. 1), from his second cycle depicting the stages of life. A man and a woman are standing at a fork in a road. The woman gestures upwards towards a cross visible on the summit of a distant mountain. Conversely, the man, a warrior, points down into the valley where a city awaits him. This subject of ascending a mountain was one that Friedrich often turned to: the figures represent the transmigration of the soul on the path to a Mount Ventoux that the artist's imaginative powers distilled from various images of actual places.

Fig. 1: Caspar David Friedrich
Herbst – aus der Folge Die Lebensalter
(Autumn – from the Ages of Man series), ca. 1826
Sepia over pencil, 7-½ x 6-⅞ in. (19.1 x 17.5 cm)
Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg (41115)

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The artistic experience of landscape has carried the mark of subjectivity ever since Petrarch's ascent, even in those cases in which the painters made themselves subservient to ideal criteria. A landscape by Claude Lorrain can just as easily be distinguished from one by Poussin as it can from works by other artists, such as Rubens and Rembrandt, who did not strive for standardized beauty. From the very beginning, subjectivity was linked to a process founded on objective groundwork. I am speaking of the construct of central perspective, which also comes from Italy.

About a century after Petrach's ascent of Mount Ventoux, Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472) defined a picture (*quadro*) in his treatise *De Pictura* (1435), as a *finestra aperta* (open window) whose contents are made legible by the axial lines of central perspective.[10] The linear framework produces a two-fold reference. On the one hand, it orders the facts of the perceivable world *within the picture* into a three-dimensional (illusional) continuum and, on the other, this continuum stands out from the otherworldly *in the world*, referring to humanity as the center of this secular world of perception and as the carrier of its visual comprehension. The perspective reinforces Jakob Burckhardt's (1818–1897) description of the Renaissance as the "discovery of the world and of man," giving it a specific accent: the discovery of the world *through* man.

This anthropocentric worldview enables one to add subjective accents to the objectivity of central perspective. It happens this way: the perspectival axial lines determine the physical and spatial relationships in terms of the vanishing point on the horizon. These relationships, however, are simultaneously dependent on the viewer, i.e. each body is dependent on the viewer's respective viewpoint (or that of the painter). If the viewer/painter changes his standpoint (and therefore his sightline), then the objects in that space also change their relationships and consequentially their three-dimensional appearances. From this follows, as we shall soon see, the estrangements inherent in anamorphosis.[11]

The "open window" can and wants to present only a brief glimpse of the visible world. This monofocal detail usually produces unambiguous relationships between body and space. The factual topographical information ignores spaces in the far-off distance, and thereby the nature that extends out into *infinity*. Petrarch's view from the summit, therefore, was characterized by the dominant emptiness atop Mount Ventoux. (And Petrarch would hardly have been interested in perspectively legitimized detail and the "open window.")

In other words: central perspective has the effect of causing the stable world of facts fixed by measurable relationships to withdraw itself from the open, flowing space continuum that, for example, makes mountain summits or sea shores visible. These are new *pictorial subjects*, in which space, divested of its factual inventory, develops into a significant autonomous, elementary entity in its own right. The panoramic infiniteness that opened up before Petrarch's eyes led him "from the contemplation of space to that of time." He, therefore, discovered – without ever changing location – how nature changes over the course of the day yet nevertheless remains the same: nature as a process. He consequently had a complementary experience – similar to Wagner's *Parsifal*, who, in Act 1, discovered with amazement: "I scarcely tread, yet seem already to have come far." To which Gurnemanz replied: "You see my son, time here becomes space."

Simply put, the world of perception offers the painter two main focuses of thematic form: *body* and *space*, both phenomena of the third dimension brought into correlation with one another through central perspective. Alberti's geometric measurement of space was just as imperative to the stocktaking of the physical, factual world as it was for the understanding of depth as a dimension that the viewer could enter virtually. However, this seemingly reliable orientation in the world also contains confusing potentials. The physical world can be made ambiguous on the one hand and, on the other, the enterable space can turn into a chaos whose cosmic outreach denies us entry. Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) – who herein personifies the third contribution from Italy to our subject matter – tested these two possible ambiguities.

A puzzling drawing can be found on folio 35v of the *Codex Atlanticus* (1490). It is comprised of horizontally extended, softly curving lines. Man conceals himself therein in his primordialness: a child's head (fig. 2). Leonardo employed the artistic device of anamorphosis in distorting objective pictorial contents, thereby making their legibility difficult. He does not look at the child's head at a right angle, but at an obliquely slanted one. If the viewer also takes an oblique position, the picture distortion rectifies itself. Leonardo's head of a child contains an important morphogenetic motive: to the extent that the fine lines dissolve the firm volumes of the head, they open up into something that cannot be read as body, but at best as the beginnings of a spatial con-

figuration. Concretely and with reference to the view of subject matter, they become an *idea prima* of landscape. We suspect a shallow pond in the front and behind it (or rather above it), slender cirrus clouds. The head, therefore, becomes (in the perpendicular view) a metaphor of infiniteness. I know of no other anamorphosis that contains a comparable metamorphosis from the physical to the spatial.

Leonardo corrected, so to speak, the Quattrocento's cold obsession with objects by transforming a firm, palpable body into an embryo about to solidify its plasma. He does this because his idea of "form" is flexible as well as transitory and is driven by a central concept, the *trasmutazione di forme*. Joseph Gantner pointed this out decades ago in his 1958 study on Leonardo's visions of the deluge and the end of the world.[12]

This disposition forms the cause and supplies the "decisive definition" of Leonardo's artistic intentions. Gantner refers to a passage by Giuseppina Fumagalli: "Everything is a circle of life, but it is not material; it is movement, it is energy, it is soul."[13] Leonardo blends the animate with the inanimate, dynamizes the solid, allows active and destructive powers to intermingle, but also ignores the duality of the inner and the outer, the mind and the world, in a metaphor that is as simple as it is beautiful. We read in folio 116r of the *Codex Atlanticus*: "Because the eye is the window of the soul, it is in permanent fear of losing it." The contrast between the inner and outer worlds is succinctly and easily diminished: the mind looks through the window of the eye at the world. It furnishes no additional "inwardness"; it is simply included within the process of seeing. When Friedrich later recommended closing one's eyes, he was protesting against the positivistic, centuries-old imitative zeal that saw myriad occasions in the outer world to constantly further refine the language of illusionism – up to and including *trompe l'oeil*.

Friedrich expressed the discontent from which would emerge, a century later, Wassily Kandinsky's (1866-1944) programmatic text, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1911): "After the period of materialist effort, which held the soul in check until it was shaken off as evil, the soul is emerging." With such thoughts, Kandinsky formulated the hope of a transition that would assist the "soul" to "resonate" again. Unlike Kandinsky, Friedrich did not wish to relinquish the outer world – for him, even the "most insignificant, dirtiest object" was worthy of pictorial representation[14] – but wanted instead to recapture the inner world in the outer world. How he succeeded in achieving this remains the almost indescribable fascination of his art – its aura. He traveled the same path of equivalency between the spiritual and material that Kandinsky would take when he posed the question: "Is everything material? Or is everything spiritual?" A further question simultaneously offers an answer: "Can the distinctions we make between matter and spirit be nothing but relative modifications of one or the other?" The transitions assumed by Kandinsky refer back to Leonardo, who made an analogy between the human microcosm and macrocosm: "... just as man is shaped from earth, water, air, and fire, so too is the body of the earth."[15] According to this, humanity is included in nature, which we separate from the *cosmic whole* as "landscape."

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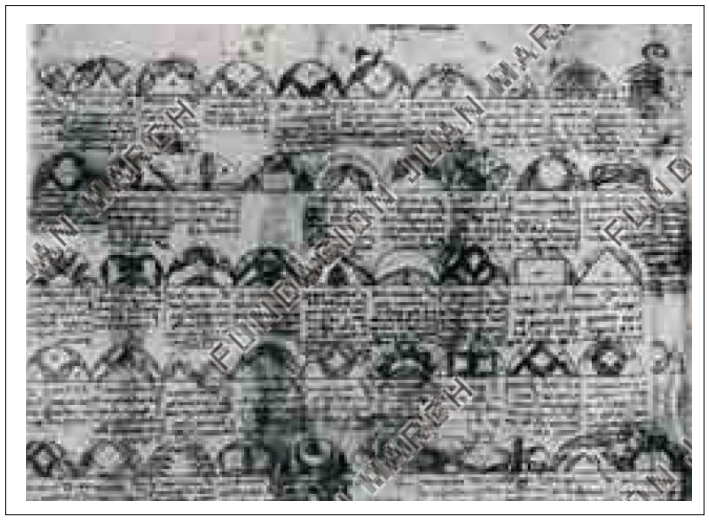
The continuing *trasmutazione di forme* is a dynamic factor that is only reluctantly satisfied with factual information concerning the outer world championed by the modern era's illusionism. The painter can only succeed in achieving a perfect mimesis if he portrays every appearance in its autonomous, unmistakable material form. This ambition relies on unequivocal certainty; it, therefore, has no use for the rider depicted by Andrea Mantegna in the cloud in his painting of the martyred Saint Sebastian (ca. 1470, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna). Something that was just marginal for Mantegna was at the core of Leonardo's thoughts on form that consistently sought in *one form* the potential of *others* simply because it deduces *trasmutazione* everywhere. This polyfocal way of seeing might have been one of the reasons that Leonardo discontinued his plans to write a book about perspective and not simply because he heard about Piero della Francesca's (1412/20-1492) *Da prospectiva pingendi* (before 1482), as Luca Pacioli (ca. 1445-

Fig. 2:
Leonardo da Vinci. Anamorphic Sketch of a Child's Head
Codex Atlanticus, fol. 35v. Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan



1517) surmised.[16] Leonardo the draughtsman satisfied his desire for *trasmutazione* with no consideration of the corset of perspectival spatial geometry as can be proven on four formal levels:

1 In the drawings that transform a basic geometric figure in a series of variations, for example the segments in *Codex Atlanticus*, folio 167r: (ab) (= double page) (fig. 3).
2 In the technical inventions. These devices dealing with the problem of movement function when dynamic processes emerge from their material casings. The *trasmutazione* now occurs under mechanistic signs.
3 By reverting to pre-morphic forms that inspire "inventions." This is only possible because Leonardo – to use Paul Klee's term – understands "form as genesis": "Amongst these regulations I cannot avoid including a new invention based on speculation that, although they might seem unimportant and almost laughable, are nonetheless of great use to awaken the mind to various inventions and that is: when you look at all sorts of walls that are marred with various types of blots and constructed of various kinds of stone, and have to invent some kind of scenery there, you will find similarities with different landscapes ... and you will see diverse battles and the lively gestures of figures, amazing physiognomies and costumes as well as a never-ending assortment of things that you can bring back into a perfect and good form."[17]
4 In *view of the entirety of nature*, which is already visible in the anamorphotic dissolution of the child's head that reveals both an appearance and disappearance. This view is brought fully to bear in the drawings of the deluge and the end of the world. The viewer strays into a vortex of reciprocal concentrations and explosions, of resolutions and interlacings (fig. 4). Earthquakes and torrential floods fill the surface of the paper as vertical occurrences whose forward-surging chaos overwhelms the coordinates of the static spatial depth. Perspective quits the field; consequently the viewer is denied entrance into these tumultuous occurrences. The *Kastenraum* (box-shaped room) validated by the "open window" has been eliminated.

These cosmic turbulences touch upon the question posed by Joachim Ritter (1903-1974) in his 1963 essay on landscape: "What forces the spirit to shape an organ for the theory of the 'entirety' of nature as 'divine' on the groundwork of the modern era?" (from which the "landscape" will emerge); "What does it mean when solely the aesthetic concept of nature as a landscape becomes as equally universal as an object of science?"[18] Leonardo responds to this as a scientist and as a speculative artist/philosopher by projecting the microcosms of man into the macrocosm of nature and comprehends the cosmos as an entirety whose elements – earth, water, fire and air – are found in continuous unions and divisions, in collisions and transformations. His powers of imagination reach the point where religious and philosophical thought has for centuries sought answers to the questions: *D'où venons-nous, que sommes-nous, où allons-nous?* (Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?).

When Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) posed this question

Fig. 3: Leonardo da Vinci. Variations on a geometrical motif
Codex Atlanticus, fol. 167r. Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan
Fig. 4: Leonardo da Vinci. The Deluge, *ca. 1517-18*
6-½ x 8 in. (16.5 x 20.4 cm). The Royal Collection © 2006,
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. (RL 12384)

in the title of his large 1897 painting (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), he created a key picture. It represents his most ambitious contribution to the changes that gripped Parisian painting during the 1880's. Like Gauguin, artists such as Edgar Degas (1834-1917) – in his late landscape monotypes – Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), Vincent van Gogh (1852-1890) and the Nabis brought an end to the *monofocal tradition* of the "open window," of which Émile Zola (1840-1902), the spokesman of the Impressionists, had just declared his support. For him, their pictures were *fenêtres ouvertes* (open windows) and he observed with satisfaction that they opened *trous dans le mur* (holes in the wall) of the exhibition galleries, thereby shocking the public with true reality. And, in fact, the Impressionists painted the last chapter on the window metaphor by directly drawing their pictorial contents from spontaneously understood, unique visual sensations. This sharpening conflict was already laid down in Alberti's *quadro;* the window postulates, in the final analysis, that the world is everything that can be contained in a rectangular frame, i.e. everything that can be included monofocally within the perspectival axes. The "window" is by definition a *detail* requiring a willingness and determination to omit certain things.

The Impressionists drew the obvious conclusions from these preconditions when they abstained from the conventions of academic canons and bestowed their paintings with seemingly unpremeditated details. Their informally prescribed artistic will had no use for the eye as the window of the soul; it was enough if the artist had "temperament" at his disposal. Zola coined a phrase for this: "A work of art is a corner of nature seen through a temperament."[19] The mention of an arbitrary place – "a corner" – reveals that the painter was content with portraying undemanding moments. He preferred the anonymous, everyday episodes in parks and gardens,

Fig. 5: Paul Cézanne. Plan d'eau à l'orée d'un bois
(Pond at the Edge of a Wood), *1900-4. Watercolor on paper*
Framed: 28 ¼ x 34 ¾ x 1 ¾ in. (71.8 x 88.3 x 4.4 cm)
Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A.,
Museum Purchase (52:1948)

on the boulevards and the banks of the Seine – areas in which the promiscuous masses would spend their free time and where the viewers would be able to complete the image to form a larger whole.

The experiences of time and space were abbreviated or condensed respectively. Insofar as the painter limits himself to the moment of a fleeting occurrence involving color and light, he shuts off time as an element of durability (i.e. stability); and because he subtracts the detail from the whole, he decides on an aphoristic optic of the fragment. This process found its correlation in their brushstrokes and their free and seemingly improvised characteristic style, which underscored the casual impression given. The colored "abbreviations" of their brushstrokes often bordered on the formless. Details taken out of context still seem puzzling and without reference to recognizable objects according to our present way of seeing.

It was this "preliminariness" that made the disappointed Zola realize that the painters he defended remained "precursors": "They are all precursors. The man of genius has not yet been born. One can clearly see their intentions and give them credit, but one searches in vain for the masterpiece…"[20] He later also included his childhood friend Cézanne in this accusation without realizing that the painter was working on a new pictorial structure in far-off Aix that would overcome Impressionism, though his efforts involved in the squaring off of the circle (fig. 5). Cézanne wanted to see the world impartially again as a newborn child would, and simultaneously make something "that would be as substantial and enduring as the art of the museums." The Louvre became his textbook and primer, but at the same time he knew: "The painter must devote himself entirely to the study of nature."[21] He responded to the Impressionists' repudiation of form with a dense syntax and he again contrasted the detail aesthetic with *nature as a sublime whole*. His brushwork corrected the sketch-like casualness without renouncing its airy openness. Cézanne instead invented a fabric of blots that, while not yet rooted in figurativeness, already showed signs of objects (bodies). He allowed the empirical world to emerge as a process from his colored particles without suppressing their own individual existences. He excluded the line from this morphogenesis. Like Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) before him, he never caught up with the Impressionists in nature, but saw only contrasts instead. He did not want to "model," but to "modulate" – a word that brings to mind the transformations that Leonardo drew from forms with his *trasmutazione*. Joachim Gasquet (1873-1921) preserved his words for us: "One does not paint souls. One paints bodies, and if the bodies are well-painted … then the soul, if there is one, radiates from everywhere."[22] Ultimately, Cézanne was not, in fact, interested in isolated bodies; on the contrary, he wanted to do away with Cartesian dualism and produce a color continuum of *equivalent bodies and spaces*.

In doing so, Cézanne did away with the *Kastenraum* (Panofsky's "system space"), and with it the authority of central perspective. Relieved of its traditional task of providing an illusionistic simulacrum, the third dimension became the receptacle of a *space-body-symbiosis*, the most striking cipher of which was the subject of Sainte-Victoire, the mountain from which Cézanne could never free himself. What he had in mind was a harmony that he understood as an homage to the *Pater Omnipotens Aeterne Deus*. This aim probably was in accordance with what he felt before Paolo Veronese's *Wedding Feast at Cana* (ca. 1562, Musée du Louvre, Paris): "This is painting. Every piece, the whole, the physicality, the values, the composition, the shudder, everything is here. … This is what a picture should first give us, harmonious warmth, an abyss into which the eye is submerged, a muffled turmoil. A state of colorful transfiguration … a different yet entirely real world. The miracle is there. Water is turned into wine; the world is turned into painting. One is submerged in the truth of painting."[23]

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Cézanne's attempts to revalue color and to raise its status to that of an autonomous element within the structures of the painting and the world disturbed the public and critics alike, just as the Impressionists had with their "unfinished" painting style. As late as 1894, when Gustave Caillebotte (1848-1894) wanted to donate his collection to the Louvre, they had to put up with the insults of their painter-colleague Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904): "Garbage … extravagance at any price … by anarchists and madmen."[24] Even Zola saw Cézanne, his childhood friend, as a "great aborted painter."[25] The visual confusion on the viewer's part is an essential element of the history of the reception of modern art. A century before the Impressionists, Denis Diderot (1713-1784) expressed the public's bewilderment when he explained the secret of the "magic" in Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin's painting in his critique of the Salon

of 1763. If one stands too close to the painting, "everything gets cloudy", if one stands at the correct distance from the painting, "all is recreated and is reproduced."[26] This correlation shows that the painter is not a passive illustrator, but someone who is capable of creating the world out of colors by the most direct route. Diderot went into greater detail in his *Essai sur la peinture* (1765, published 1795). He described the painter standing excitedly in front of the empty canvas. His palette is a picture of chaos from which he brings out "the work of his creation."[27] However, he proceeds hesitantly and uncertainly because he has no predetermined plan – the colored forms gradually become clarified in terms of the figurative world. With this description, Diderot uncovered one of the origins of modern art. The painter does not illustrate things he finds, but realizes material reality in *creative color processes*. His brush does not describe and define; it uses color as the *autonomous material* with which it initiates the forming process – it has a life of its own, an *implementing power*.

Shortly thereafter, in 1785, the landscape painter Alexander Cozens (1717-1786) succeeded in developing the process he employed in his publication, *A New Method of Assisting the Invention in Drawing Original Compositions of Landscape*.[28] The emphasis in this long title is placed on "invention." For Cozens, the landscape was not a subject for imitation (of a detail from nature), but rather an ideal form, and as such, a metaphor for the creation of form itself. For this reason, he declared the accidental "blot" to be the seed of all inventions. He fell back on Leonardo's *Treatise on Painting* and was the first to quote a passage that painters have since often called upon as justification – Max Ernst, to name one – "... If you look upon an old wall covered with dirt, or the odd appearance of some streaked stone, you may discover several things like landscapes." Cozens initiates his determined shaping process with a discussion of the "blotting" that produces "unmeaning, general forms." These are multivalent and trigger various figurative associations among the viewers. The painter progressively lends "meaning and coherence" to these amorphous blots. He only works with light and dark contrasts without the use of lines. The results, when they are successful, are well-proportioned ideal landscapes whose parts harmoniously contrast with each other (figs. 6-7).

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As so often in the history of art, we stand here at a fork in the road. In resorting to the amorphous, Diderot and Cozens presented a choice between two consequences. The first was practiced by the Impressionists who were unaware of Diderot when they renounced the dominance of the line, forgot the academic principles of composition and presented everyday reality as a *detail* of time and space produced with light and color. *The other consequence led to the Northern tradition*. Cozens' *New Method* was the driving force behind this. While the pragmatist never would have thought of appealing to ideological ideas of unity, the idea of relating the "blot" to organic growth procedures or even to cosmic processes would have been just as foreign to him. Cozens' *New Method* nevertheless supplied the lucid foundation for the paradigm shift that occurred around the turn of the 19th century. This can be shown by means of several documents, which have in common the transfer of analytic thought in syntheses.

The dissection of enlightened Rationalism as a means in itself was succeeded by the "view of nature as whole."

Fig. 6: Alexander Cozens. A New Method of Assisting the Invention in Drawing Original Compositions of Landscape, *1785, Plate 37*
Fig. 7: Alexander Cozens. A New Method of Assisting the Invention in Drawing Original Compositions of Landscape, *1785, Plate 38*

In 1779, Georg Forster (1754-1794) delivered his first lectures as Professor of Natural History at the Collegium Carolinum in Kassel, under this title.[29] He first directed his attention to the "dismembered science" that lost itself amidst lists of names, made-up words and systems. He dreamed of a science that recognized in nature, "whether as an effect or an effecting force ... God's first immediate revelation." This omnipotence provides nature with the tension between creation and destruction in which everything comes to the surface and then disappears again, enflames and sputters out. Earth, air, water and fire act together in a combination that occurs within an "everlasting circle." Man, who came from darkness, participates in forming the streaming transformations of natural occurrences that take place between birth and death. If he is unsuccessful, everything goes out and returns to dust and desert. Forster, who was familiar with the fine arts, makes no mention of landscape painting. He might have regarded it as illustration and lacking meaning and thus dispenses with the view of nature as whole. His vision nevertheless contains the *cantus firmus* of a painting that neither idealizes nature nor simply presents it as a detail, but comprehends it as a process of continuous reorganization, as *trasmutazione di forme*. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) concurred in his spontaneous empirical idea of the *Urpflanze* (Primal Plant). On May 17, 1787, he wrote his mentor Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) from Naples: "With this model and with its key, it becomes immediately possible to infinitely invent plants that must be consistent, that means that even if they do not exist, they could exist."[30] Paul Klee (1879-1940) discovered such paths of invention during the 20th century.

In Dresden, Carl Gustav Carus (1789-1869) reduced Goethean thought on metamorphosis to a common denominator that we would call interdisciplinary today. He was a physician, natural historian and painter. In his *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting: Written in the Years 1815-1824,* Carus coined the term *Erdlebenbild* (earth-life painting) to describe the work of his friend Caspar David Friedrich.[31] In these letters, Edmund Burke's *Theory of the Sublime* (1757) found an important addendum. For Carus, *Erdlebenkunst* (earth-life art) not only reaches out to include "gigantic scenes in the largest format as if only depictions of the Alpine world, sea storms, great mountainous woodlands, volcanoes and waterfalls were reproached in such *Erdlebenbilder*."[32] The *Erdlebenbild* is more differentiated and more comprehensive than Burke's *sublime*. Even if these scenes presented the most sublime of *Erdlebenkunst*, every aspect of earth-life, "even the stillest and simplest, is a worthy and beautiful object of art if only its real meaning and the divine idea it encompasses are correctly grasped."[33] The last sentence agrees almost word for word with statements made by Friedrich.

In Austria, Adalbert Stifter (1805-1868) – probably without knowledge of the *Nine Letters* – formulated a credo that encompassed both levels of the *Erdlebenbild* in the preface to his *Bunte Steine* (Colored Stones, 1853): "I consider the blowing wind, the trickling water, the growing grain, the surging seas, the greening earth, the glowing heavens, the shimmering stars to be great: I do not consider the storm passing magnificently across the sky, the lightning that splits houses, the tempest that drives the waves, the fire-spitting mountain, the

Fig. 8: Alexander Cozens. A New Method of Assisting the Invention in Drawing Original Compositions of Landscape, *1785, Plates 17, 18*

earthquakes that shake entire countries greater than the above-mentioned appearances, in fact I consider them lesser because they are only the effects of superior laws."[34] From this, Stifter developed the "mild law" that guides humanity. As a painter and a draftsman he carefully observed the course of nature occurring in the immediate vicinity, which simultaneously pointed to greater events, and set them down in drawings such as those dealing with movement (fig. 9).

In English painting, this dual view that included the great and the small can be traced back to Cozens' *New Method* because the "blot" potentially contains the near and the far; it is the nucleus *from which everything can emerge*. The landscapes in which Alexander Cozens himself might have developed his theory can be surmised from a letter in which he quoted a passage about Cape Desolation from Captain Cook's *A Voyage towards the South Pole* (1777): "These mountains terminate in horrible precipices, whose craggy summits spire up to a vast hight [sic], so that hardly anything in Nature can appear with a more barren & savage aspect, than the whole of this country."[35]

The drawing academy of the physician Dr. Thomas Munro (1759-1833) was essential for spreading the *New Method* in artist's circles. Young painters like Thomas Girtin (1775-1802) and William Turner (1775-1851) became acquainted with contemporary English landscape painting there, of which Munro possessed a good collection. Since it also included works by Alexander's son John Robert Cozens (1752-1797), the theories of his father were certainly also discussed there. We know that John Constable (1776-1837) was familiar with the *New Method*; as a painter of clouds, he learned the "vocabulary of the sky" by copying twenty etchings that Cozens included in his treatise but did not discuss in his text. In them, he presented an alphabet of clouds in the form of scientific illustrations that began with an almost completely empty sky, "nothingness," a first day of creation (fig. 8). Constable, who understood himself to be a "natural painter,"[36] saw painting as a science and paintings as its experiments. That did not hinder him from defining his way of seeing with the words of a poet and justifying his observations of nature with religious convictions: "It is the Soul that sees; the outward eyes / Present the object, but the mind descries."[37]

Wandering through a springtime landscape, he felt impelled to recall the biblical passage: "I am the Resurrection and the Life" [John 11:25]. This concurred with his belief that human nature is "congenial with the elements of the planet." The range of nature explored by Constable extended from calm *Erdlebenbilder* to forceful skyscapes. His art, he modestly explained, is "found under every hedge and in every lane," but it also extended into the frontiers of the desolation of solitude. He described the extinct city of Old Sarum – in the landscape of the same name – by means of a poetic quotation: "Paint me a desolation." It is the same feeling that Cape Desolation (named for this reason) triggered in Captain Cook. Like Stifter, Constable recognized the correlation in nature between loud and silent forces. Leslie wrote that he often quoted a passage from the Book of Kings [19, 11-12]: "A great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake the fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a *still small voice*."

John Ruskin (1819-1900) quoted the passage in *Modern Painters* (1858), in reference to "the truth of skies."[38] Fixated on Turner's grand landscapes and their messages, Ruskin saw "the immediate presence of the deity" in the clouds. Ruskin's guiding thought was that the admired artist paints acts of creation. This gives him the right to be dark. Ruskin developed a new characterization of quality from this: "Excellence of the highest kind, without obscurity, cannot exist." This paradigm shift is already indicated by Burke, who derisively considered a "clear idea" to be a "little idea."[39] Turner, how-

Fig. 9: Detail. Adalbert Stifter. Die Bewegung (Movement)*, 1858. Preparatory drawing for second version*
Adalbert Stifter-Gesellschaft Wien

ever, did not see himself as removed from the tradition of landscape painting. He broadly laid out its history in a lecture. His criticism was aimed at the Flemish and Dutch painters who lost themselves amidst common nature. (This may also have been directed at Constable.) Only Rubens and Rembrandt were in a position to rise above this, and Rembrandt cast "mysterious doubts" over common things. His colors made up for the deficits of his language of form: the mystic "shell of color" was the ultimate decisive factor.

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Burke's sublime, Cozens' blots, Constable's "carelessness" (an accusation made by French critics) and Turner's "instinctive and burning language"[40] – these are all positions in which the Northern tradition has made its presence felt. Unlike the Germans who thought about the metamorphoses of form and – like Goethe – invented them or turned their sights to the "view of nature as a whole," where they encountered the "unity of the forces of nature" (Humboldt), the English spontaneously and directly permitted themselves "*la négligeance du pinceau*," as Stendhal critically noted about Constable's *Haywain*. They did not break with tradition, however, but rather pointed to the examples of landscape in works by Richard Wilson (1714-1782), Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) and Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792). Not only did the English have fewer problems detaching themselves from academic conventions – as opposed to the Germans and the French – they also had no need for theoretical crutches. They spoke for example about "nothingness" as the origin of artistic activities without calling upon philosophic teachings. Much ink would have been spilled in Germany with the intent of defending or denying the painter his right to work *ex nihilo*.

Constable wrote in a letter that he did not want to compress a 50-mile long valley into a few square inches; he was satisfied "to make something out of nothing"; in another letter, he defended the artist's right "of making a picture out of nothing."[41] "Nothing" also played an important role for William Hazlitt (1778-1830). He wrote that Rembrandt "works something out of nothing" and quoted a statement about Turner: "pictures of nothing and very like."[42] Only Turner gave "nothing" a dark connotation: it is a nothingness that contains the destruction and extinction of human life. This, as well as its rebirth, is the subject of his two late paintings *Shade and Darkness – The Evening of the Deluge* and *Light and Colour – The Morning after the Deluge* (figs. 10-11), which were inspired by Goethe's color theory. While the pragmatist Turner rejected this complicated attempt at systematization, he also associated color with the processes of life. *The Evening of the Deluge* is based on Goethe's cool "minus" colors, the morning on his warm "plus" colors. In *Morning*, Moses sits at the center of a vortex of light. He

Fig. 10: Joseph Mallord William Turner. Shade and Darkness – The Evening of the Deluge, *exhibited 1843. Oil on canvas. 31 x 30 ¾ in. (78.7 x 78.1 cm). Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (N00531). Fig. 11: Joseph Mallord William Turner.* Light and Colour (Goethe's Theory) – The Morning after the Deluge – Moses Writing the Book of Genesis, *exhibited 1843. Oil on canvas. 31 x 31 in. (78.7 x 78.7 cm). Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (N00532)*

knows the laws of life cycles and their transformations of form; this makes him the mythic *prototype of the artist*, who – since the Renaissance – regarded himself as an *alter Deus*. Such pathos was foreign to artists on this side of the English Channel. It was solely the outsider Victor Hugo (1802–1885) who styled himself as a seer in his visionary landscapes (fig. 12). Only decades later did the old Cézanne pose a question in a letter to Ambroise Vollard, dated January 3, 1903: "Is art really a priestly office that demands pure people who belong to it entirely?"

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"Nothingness" is an important clue; it reveals that the means of expression started to become autonomous. Color was no longer obliged to serve the reliable representation of the visible world; it assumed a *life of its own*. This offer can objectify itself – as Cozens' ambitious dealings with the "blots" show – but it also convinced artists to move away from the illusionism of detail (i.e. the open window) and to intensify *nature as a whole* into a *parable of creative and destructive forces*. The place of *natura naturata* is taken by *natura naturans*. Such is the case in the *trasmutazioni di forme* shown in the present exhibition in works by van Gogh, Munch and Nolde, Klee and Kandinsky, Rothko and Pollock, Newman and Kiefer.

NOTES

1. Robert Rosenblum, *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1975).
2. Rosenblum 1975, p. 8.
3. Rosenblum 1975, pp. 7–8.
4. Translated from Kurt Steinmann, *Francesco Petrarca: Die Besteigung des Mont Ventoux* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1995), epilogue, p. 46. The quotations from Francesco Petrarch's "The Ascent of Mont Ventoux" are taken from Ernst Cassirer, et al. (eds.), *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 36–46.
5. "Der Maler soll nicht bloss malen, was er vor sich sieht, sondern auch, was er in sich sieht. Sieht er aber nichts in sich, so unterlasse er auch zu malen, was er vor sich sieht." Translated from Sigrid Hinz (ed.), *Caspar David Friedrich in Briefen und Bekenntnissen* (Munich: Rogner & Bernhard, 1974), p. 92.
6. "Schliesse dein leibliches Auge, damit Du mit dem geistigen Auge zuerst siehest dein Bild. Dann fördere zutage, was du im Dunkeln gesehen, dass es zurückwirke auf andere von aussen nach innen." Hinz 1974, p. 125.
7. Petrarch, in Cassirer 1948.
8. Wolfgang Harms, *Homo viator in bivio: Studien zur Bildlichkeit des Weges*, Medium Aevum 21 (Munich, 1970).
9. Translated from Ruth and Dieter Groh, "Petrarca und der Mont Ventoux," in *Merkur* 46 (1992), pp. 290f.
10. Leon Battista Alberti, *De la peinture/De pictura* (Paris: Macula, 1993), pp. 114f.
11. Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *Anamorphoses ou perspectives curieuses* (Paris: Perrin, 1955).
12. Joseph Gantner, *Leonardos Visionen von der Sintflut und vom Untergang der Welt; Geschichte einer künstlerischen Idee* (Bern: Francke, 1958).
13. "Tutto è circulo di vita, che non è materia, è moto, è energia, anima." Gantner 1958, p. 41.
14. " … geringfügigste, schmutzigste Gegenstand …." Hinz 1974, p. 107.
15. Leonardo da Vinci, *Codex Atlanticus*, fol. 55v. Cited in Gantner 1958, p. 227.
16. Luca Pacioli. *De divina proportione* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, [1982]).
17. Leonardo, *Ms. Ashburnham*, vol. I, fol. 22v.
18. Joachim Ritter, "Landschaft. Zur Funktion des Ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft," *Subjektivität* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1974), pp. 150ff.
19. "Une oeuvre d'art est un coin de la création vu à travers un tempérament." Emile Zola, "Les réalistes du Salon," *L'Evènement* (May 11, 1866).
20. "Ce sont tous des précurseurs, l'homme de génie n'est pas né. On voit bien ce qu'ils veulent, on leur donne raison; mais on cherche en vain le chef-d'oeuvre...." Emile Zola, "Le naturalisme au Salon," *Le Voltaire* (June 18-22, 1880).
21. Both quotes in Letter CLXXXVI to Charles Camoin. John Rewald (ed.), *Paul Cézanne: Letters* (London: Cassirer, 1948).
22. "Joachim Gasquet, *Joachim Gasquet's Cézanne: A Memoir with Conversations*, trans. Christopher Pemberton, intro. Richard Schiff (London: Thames & Hudson, 1991), chapter: "The Louvre".
23. Gasquet 1991.
24. "ordures ... extravagance à tout prix ... des anarchistes et des fous." Cited in Gerstle Mack, *La vie de Paul Cézanne* (Paris, 1934), p. 284.
25. "... le grand peintre avorté." Emile Zola, "Compte-rendu du Salon de 1896," *Le Figaro* (May 1896).
26. "tout se brouille; tout se recrée et se reproduit." Denis Diderot, *Salons, Vol. 1: 1759, 1761, 1763*. Jean Seznec and Jean Adhémar (eds.) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957).
27. "l'oeuvre de sa creation." Denis Diderot, *Essai sur la peinture* (1795).
28. Facsimile reprint (London: Paddington Press, 1977).
29. Georg Forster, *Werke*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1968).
30. Translated from Günther Müller, *Die Gestaltfrage in der Literaturwissenschaft und Goethes Morphologie*, Die Gestalt, no. 13 (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1944), p. 76.
31. Carl Gustav Carus, *Briefe und Aufsätze über Landschaftsmalerei* (Leipzig/Weimar, 1982). English edition: *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting. Written in the Years 1815–1824, with a Letter from Goethe by way of Introduction*, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2002).
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Fritz Novotny, *Adalbert Stifter als Maler* (Vienna: Anton Schroll & Co., 1941).
35. Andrew Wilton (ed.), *The Art of Alexander and John R. Cozens,* (New Haven: Yale Center of British Art, 1980), p. 37. Exhibition catalogue.
36. Charles R. Leslie, *Memoirs of the Life of John Constable*, (London: Phaidon Press, 1951): "Resurrection and the Life", p. 73; "Old Sarum", p. 196; "a small voice," p. 280; "desolation," p. 197; "painting is a science," pp. 303, 323; "the

Fig. 12: Victor Hugo. Ma destinée (*My Destiny*)*, 1867*
Pen and brown ink wash, gouache, on vellum paper
6-¾ x 10-¼ in. (17 x 26 cm)
Musée Victor Hugo, Paris (Inv. 927)

inner eye," p. 318.

37. George Crabbe, "A Lover's Journey," no. X in *Tales* (1812). *Tales, 1812, and other selected poems*, Howard Mills (ed.) (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967).
38. John Ruskin, *Modern Painters* (1858), Part II, Section III.
39. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London, 1757), Part II, Section III (obscurity).
40. Ruskin 1858, Part I, Section VI, Chapter II, § 6.
41. Leslie 1951, pp. 124, 221. R. B. Beckett (ed.), *John Constable's Correspondence VI* (Ipswich: Boydell Press, 1968), p. 172.
42. Geoffrey Keynes (ed.), *Selected Essays of William Hazlitt, 1778-1830* (London: Nonesuch Press, 1930), p. 749.

I

THE ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE OF NORTHERN EUROPE

FROM FRIEDRICH TO CONSTABLE

The Seasons cycle from 1803 is the incunabula of German Romanticism, the matrix for Friedrich's evolution, from his realistic views of nature to his constructed, allegorical landscapes.

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AT THE CRADLE OF ROMANTICISM: CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH'S SEASONS OF 1803

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Seasons, Times of Day, Ages of Man – these are universal themes in European art and cultural history. Prior to 1800, the integration of man into the eternal cycle of nature – whether as an expression of hymnal joy or admonishing concerns – subject to the will of its creator, dominated, but it was also about that time that the perspective changed. The cycle of nature became a mirror, an image of the subject's spirit and nature. The literature, philosophy and aesthetics of the era provide rich evidence of this. In the visual arts, Caspar David Friedrich's (1774–1840) first cycle depicting the seasons, created in 1803, marked this change from lofty traditional subject matter to modern concept (cat. 1–3).

The drawings of Friedrich's Seasons were only recently rediscovered, making it possible to purchase them for the Kupferstichkabinett (graphic arts museum) of the Berlin State Museums in 2006.[1] This was the museum's most important acquisition of recent decades and was made possible by the generous support of the Herrmann Reemtsma Stiftung, the Kulturstiftung der Länder, a loan from the Ernst von Siemens Kunststiftung as well as a contribution from the Fundación Juan March. This gift of art was not only enthusiastically received by the scholarly community but gilded the 175th anniversary of this renowned graphic arts museum in Berlin. The drawings are shown internationally for the first time in the Madrid exhibition *The Abstraction of Landscape*, which this catalogue accompanies.

Dating to 1803, the Seasons cycle was well known to scholars from a number of sources dating from the artist's lifetime as well as from reproductions in prewar publications.[2] The drawings were published and analyzed in many articles,[3] often in conjunction with the artist's amended and supplemented 1826 sepia cycle[4] in the Hamburger Kunsthalle. They were exhibited several times, perhaps even within Friedrich's own lifetime, as well as at the centennial exhibition in Berlin organized by Hugo von Tschudi in 1906.[5] Because the originals – which were deemed lost or destroyed – were not available, publications and exhibitions after 1945 – including Werner Hofmann's well-known 1974 Friedrich retrospective – could only avail themselves of the Hamburg versions in addition to the other variations of cycles combining the times of day, seasons and ages of man that Friedrich painted during the latter part of his life.

Only now that the originals have been rediscovered can Friedrich's early Seasons cycle be comprehensively presented anew. It originally consisted of four carefully composed sepia drawings of which three are preserved: *Spring* (Morning/Childhood [cat. 1]), with the autograph date "1803" on the reverse; *Autumn* (Evening/Maturity [cat. 2]); and *Winter* (Night/Old Age/Death

Detail. Caspar David Friedrich
Die Jahreszeiten: Der Winter *(Seasons of the Year: Winter), 1803*
Brush with sepia ink over underlying pencil drawing on vellum paper
CAT. 3

[cat. 3]). *Summer* (Youth/Midday [fig. 1]) remains missing despite explicit searches.

The Seasons possibly entered the possession of the Bavarian general consul and bookseller Heinrich Wilhelm Campe (1770–1862) directly from the artist in Leipzig sometime before 1837.[6] All the drawings bear the stamp of this famous collection and there are diverse inscriptions on two of the original mounts.[7] Campe bequeathed his extensive collection to his daughters in 1863, the core of it to Sophie Hasse, née Campe, and her husband, the Göttingen physician Professor Karl Ewald Hasse (1810–1902). The sepia drawings were then passed on by bequest to the Hasse's son-in-law, the Göttingen zoology professor Dr. Ernst Ehlers (1835–1925) in 1902. His heirs ultimately auctioned them on November 27, 1935, along with other German drawings from the 17th to 19th centuries, at C. G. Boerner in Leipzig.[8] Carl Meder acquired the cycle – which was complete at that time – at the auction for the "Reichskammer der Bildenden Künste (Reich Chamber of Fine Arts)."[9] According to verbal accounts, they entered a German private collection sometime after 1937,[10] where the three drawings – showing signs of serious deterioration – were passed on to the present generation.

Before Friedrich began painting in oil in 1807, he produced independent works in sepia for the marketplace that were praised by the public and critics alike.[11] Ink and paper were not only inexpensive and easy to transport, but the technique's characteristic monochromatic appearance also conceptually approximated idealistic as well as romantic notions of the time. One primarily finds views of interest to tourists traveling through Rügen or Saxon Switzerland. Only rarely, however, does one see figurative allegories set in a landscape or with transposable symbolic elements. Prior to the Seasons, there are no multi-part cycles or freely composed "romantic" landscapes enhanced by subjective thoughts and moods in Friedrich's work. Like the drawing itself, the first-known description of *Spring* (cat. 1) strongly recalls Philipp Otto Runge's ideas and his own cycle depicting the times of day, conceived in 1802–3 and realized during the ensuing years (cat. 9–12).[12] They were written down by Friedrich himself and can be found in a diary entry from the year in question, namely 1803, which further confirms the date of the drawings:

> Softly rising hills hinder the view off into the distance; simultaneously the wishes and wants of the children, who enjoy the precious time of the present, long for nothing that is further away. The calm clear stream enfolds blossoming bushes, nourishing herbs and fragrant flowers by reflecting the pure blue of the cloudless sky; like a glorious picture in the souls of the divinity's children. Children play, kiss each other, and enjoy themselves; and one of the children greets the approaching sun with a joyous clapping of the hands. Lambs graze in the valley and on the hills. No stars can be seen here, no withered twig, no fallen leaves; all nature breathes peace, joy, innocence and life.[13]

Following this, the physician, theologian and romantic nature philosopher Gotthilf Heinrich von Schubert (1780–1860) presented a comprehensive and still-fascinating interpretation of the Seasons in his "Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft" (Views on the Dark Side of Science), published in 1808.[14] Like the diary entry from 1803, as well as the Dresden article from 1807, discussed below, and other miscellaneous sources, they unquestionably refer to the 1803 cycle under discussion here.[15] It offered Schubert the opportunity to analogize the "various stages of human existence" with the "history of the formation of nature" and to relate them to the principle of hope during the times of the Napoleonic occupation, the Wars of Independence and the emancipation of the Bourgeoisie. Schubert was thoroughly convinced that only through recurring cyclical structures, interwoven with determined temporal stages and phases, could there be revealed "a future world, with its deep powers still undisclosed, as pure aspiration, and as fresh and joyous pleasure, a present world." His interpretative descriptions begin with *Childhood* (Spring/Morning [cat. 1]):

> We awaken at the clear spring of life in which eternal heaven is still reflected in its original purity. As of yet, one's desires do not reach beyond the edge of the nearby hills, we only seek and recognize the flowers in nature, and life still appears to us like the image of the playful innocent lambs. An early blossoming temperament touches the first ray of that yearning that leads us from the cradle to the grave; and unconscious of the infinite distance that separates us from the eternal source of light, the childish arms extend to embrace that, which it believes to be nearby.[16] But the first steps are already a mistake, and we rush from the lonely hill of childish dreams on which we received the first rising rays downwards into the deep throng of life, where a new dawning embraces us.

This was followed by *Youth* (Summer/Midday [fig. 1]), with its bold attitude, as yet unaware of boundaries; the time of worldly love that makes one "immediately" forget "all far-away strivings." *Maturity* (Autumn/Evening [cat. 2]) and *Old Age* (Winter/Night [cat. 3]) follow this phase:

> The evening lets us see the open fields in their last and most powerful shape, at the time of ripeness. … The dreams of quiet cot-

tages on blossoming hills, the song of the turtledoves has dispelled the city's dismal noises.[17] After midday, however, the mind finally realizes what that deep striving, what that desire longs for in us. See the three-part summit, sublime over the flight of the clouds, covered by eternal snow; but these immortal heights still stand in immaculate cheerfulness illuminated by the rays of the sun, a noble symbol of the eternal light.[18] … but the urge of passions has become a great waterway within us, which ships convey down with them. … If the inner striving is now exhausted from the last feet of the path full of rocks and cliffs, a resting place is found here at the nearby bank, under the cross, which stands peacefully atop the cliffs. The mind finally realizes that the home of that longing which has led us to this place is not on earth.

Hurry then down the stream! Where your waves enter the eternal sea, we perceive a final resting place on a distant shore. … See at last, the sun of man's prime has set. The final part of the journey was dreary and lonesome. All blossoming has passed, and even the fruits they brought forth to us. … Even before our eyes, a part of our labors that seemed to be built for the ages sinks into rubble and is forgotten by the young world. Only the will, the strivings in us, that remain until the grave, only purer and better, was ours, and our inner trust holds fast to this. Upon reaching the calm coast, where the once so powerful stream loses itself in the sea, the old wanderer finds himself alone among the graves. The deep longing that has led us to this place is not yet satisfied but, oh!, even the hopes of a summer that should have ripened have now passed and the time of snow covers the seeds of a future springtime. Then, through the rubble of a remote and great past, can be seen a fully lit moon. The heavens open up over the sea and show their clear blueness one more time, as during early childhood. The coast of a distant land beyond the seas becomes apparent in a prophetic gleam. We have heard of its eternal springtime ….

On the whole, Schubert's text literally, and sometimes also metaphorically, paraphrases Friedrich's four landscapes, from *Spring* through *Winter*. In the latter, the moon recalls a bright sun on the horizon, seen off in the distance through the morbid relics of civilization and nature. There, previously unnoticed (and not taken up again in the Hamburg version), a tender shoot of ivy twines around a bare tree symbolizing new, eternal life.

Fig. 1: Caspar David Friedrich
Die Jahreszeiten: Der Sommer *(Seasons of the Year: Summer), 1803*
Sepia wash over pencil on vellum paper; 7-½ x 10-⅞ in. 19 x 27.5 cm.
Last documented, 1935; present whereabouts unknown.

The "lofty world of poetry and of artists' ideals, and even more the world of religion," as Schubert further elaborates, chafe against the crush and strivings of a constantly rejuvenated earthly life.

Friedrich's own words sound very similar, wherein the ego continuously sways between an "internal … being / That always raises up heaven in me / High above the Earth and the turmoil of the world / Striving only for the light" and a "desire … in my breast / That holds me fast to the Earth / Holds me captive in sin / Only holding fast to the earthly."[19] The world in whose attractions, everyday experiences and course of events the subject's states of mind are rooted, serves therefore as an essentially complementary guiding light to the high ideals of art and the premonition of a higher power – just as real and allegorical spaces simultaneously emerge in the construction of the landscape paintings that correspond to the nature cycle.[20] The term "simultaneously" is important here because the current controversial debate on the principal interpretations of Friedrich's romanticism is polarized between the traditional allegorical-religious reading based on pictorial motifs, on the one hand, and, on the other, the research into picture theory that focuses on the aesthetic-constructive characteristics of Friedrich's work.[21]

Friedrich himself condemned those painters who chose "to express in words what they are not capable of expressing with colors and shapes."[22] He did not want to be judged as an unworldly theoretician, but instead as an artist. And as such, his ideals chafed against reality. Ultimately, in his entire oeuvre, which is structurally set up in a cyclical manner, he strove to annul the antitheses of heaven and earth, belief and experience, feelings and reason, outward appearances and inward glances, signs and meanings in paintings of nature. Aside from his own numerous statements – which unmistakably point out that he drew his own personal existential, spiritual and creative strengths from those constantly virulent pressures – there are important clues from third parties about his deliberate, even "highly genius" modes of representation that very precisely bring form and message in tune with each other.

In 1807, one year before Schubert's "Views" was published, an article in the form of a letter signed with the initials "C.B." (probably Carl Bertuch or Carl August Böttiger) was published in the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*. In the letter, the author wrote about his visit to Friedrich's studio, where he was able to see a series of large-format sepia landscapes, including an early version of the *Cross on the Mountain* (cat. 4).[23] At the end, the artist showed him,

> as an amusement, a cycle of four landscapes, rich in poetic invention, in which he very ingeniously characterized the times of day and the year in addition to the four phases of human life from childhood to deterioration in old age by means of staffage, intertwined details as well as by means of the entire attitude of the landscapes.[24]

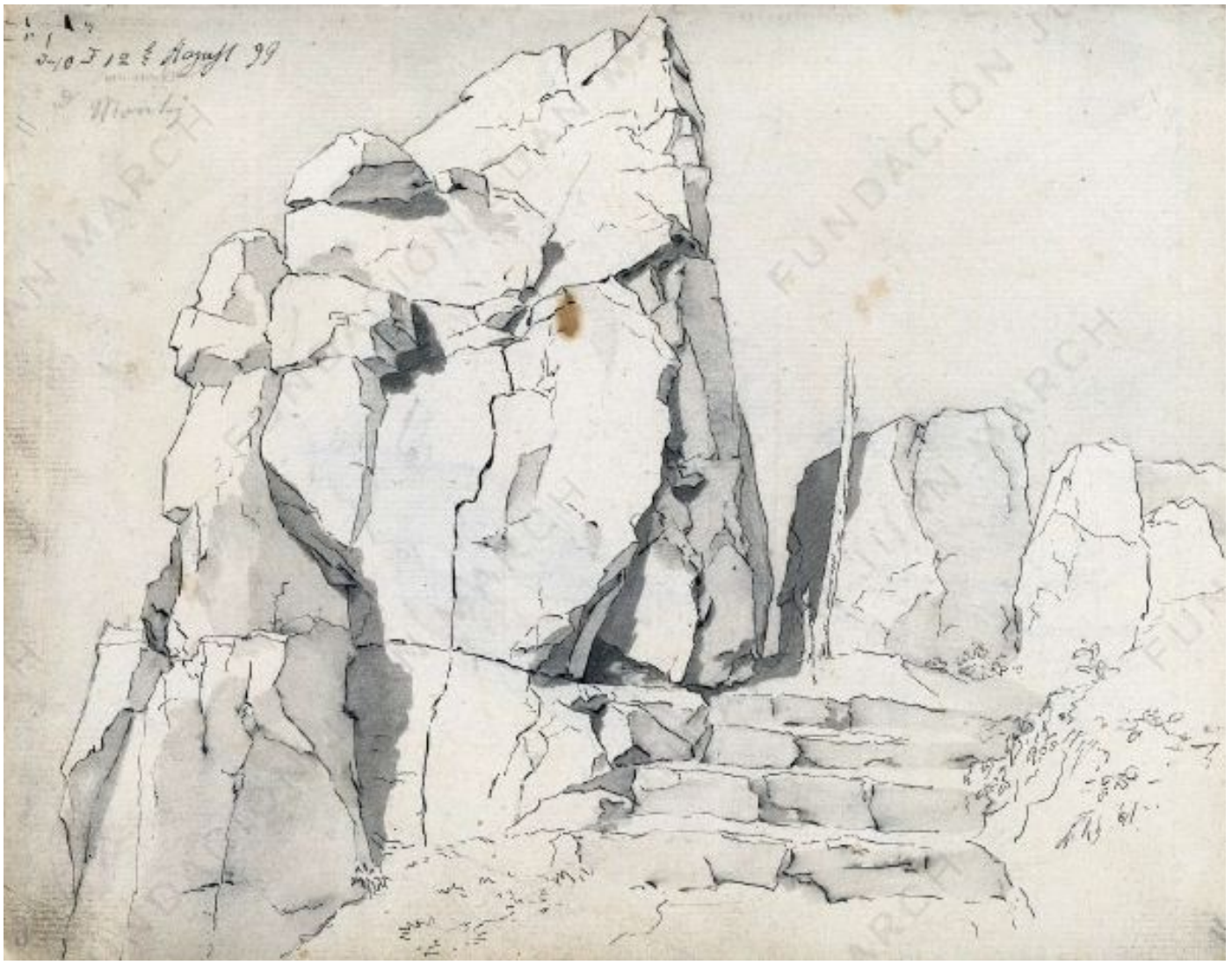
"The entire attitude of the landscapes" is the formula that synthesizes the extremely precious, even programmatic, character of our Seasons. We must remember that Friedrich – as well as Runge, although with different intent – abandoned the narrative element in their landscapes, that representation of space composed by means of a constant and gradual transition from foreground to background. Neither the traditions of Lorrain, Poussin, Bruegel, Ruisdael, nor those of Friedrich's teachers' generation – such as Hackert, Klengel, or Zingg – are evident here. It is true that Friedrich often began with direct studies of nature. This is strikingly revealed in the sketches for the tree and rocks in the right foreground of *Autumn* (cat. 2) found in diverse drawings from the first and second Berlin sketchbooks of 1799-1800 (figs. 2-3). These sketches bear little revision in their transference to the final drawing. But whether as objects, groups of transposable elements or spatial levels, the components of his landscape compositions retain their independent existence, occasionally heightened to a symbolic one. Only the relationship of the components to one another, constructed in accordance with mathematical and aesthetical rules – i.e. the purposeful artistic rearrangement of nature's substances – creates a new whole. It is that picture, with its partially traditional allegories, symbols and connotations, that knows how best to relate the cycle of the times of day, seasons of the year and ages of man. At the same time, its sensitive power sets associations free and finally stimulates a reflection of its own manner of functioning. Prompted in this fashion, the viewer's aesthetic activities open up further levels of comprehension. They tend to be of a boundless nature because they find themselves before an entire inner and outer world.

This type of dialogical way of seeing on the part of the viewer sets time and place in a parallel relationship, and this seems to be the first conclusion of this and similar cycles. Only in this manner can the desired atmosphere be attained, exposing the symbolism mirrored by the

landscape. The respective categories of time and space expand the frame of perception and experience: the time frame ranges from morning to night, spring to winter, cradle to grave, from naïve feelings about an absolute, paradisiacal present to the most sublime reflection about the past and future. Space ranges from source to outlet, earth to sky, close proximity to the most distant climes. But while no enlightenment comes to the figures in the painting – from the children to the old man, the pair of lovers and (invisible) inhabitants of the city – because they consistently act while turned away from the light, at least the person who contemplates the work at least obtains a premonition about the riddle's solution or at least the hope of knowledge of eternal recurrence.

The interwoven and interrelated cyclical character of Friedrich's Seasons contributes to this impression. It does not, however, solely define itself through the axis of time and space; there is a systemic mode of representation applied, legible in all the pictorial elements, that constitutes the "attitude of the landscapes." To those elements belong the style of drawing and application of color: the drawing technique and color blending range from cool to warm, even to cold and gradually progress from dark to heavy to dense in the passage from *Spring* to *Winter*, which varies from a spotted shimmer to linear clarity to broad areas of ink washes. It also encompasses the construction of space, the form and expressive quality of the landscape formations and the rendering of light from the illumination of the simply represented foreground, bordered solely by an arcing line (*Spring*), to the relatively evenly lit and soft pictorial parallel gradations extending into the background (*Summer*). The

Fig. 2: Caspar David Friedrich
Study for a group of trees *(model for the group of trees in the lower right of* Herbst *[Autumn]; from the first Berlin sketchbook, 1799), July 24, 1799*
Pen and brush with black ink over pencil on laid paper, 7-½ x 9-⅓ in. (18.9 x 23.8 cm). Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (Friedrich SZ 71 recto)



distant space then unfolds by means of three staggered triangles and expands outwards in a series of four perspectively desconcerting grounds that are increasingly illuminated from bottom to top and from front to back (*Autumn*). Finally, the self-illuminating infinite depths of *Winter* are only superficially obstructed by two transposable parallel sections. This further pertains to the special quality of light, air and sky, which paradoxically tells a very individual story of promise that runs parallel to the course of earthly things and nature. This it does by means of the increasing encapsulation of pure light produced by the untreated sections of the white paper: from the pictorially dominant surface of the directly lit sky in *Spring* to the small circle of the moon drawn with a compass in *Winter* and its reflection captured in the finest of undulating lines. This is a light that – similar to Christ in *Cross on the Mountain* (cat. 4) – only refers to its source via multiple reflections.

This artistic concept is also supported by staffage figures and individual motifs: from small child to old man, from brook to stream to sea, from seed to tree skeleton, from an arbor on the plain to the magnificent palaces that sit before noble mountain ranges to the solitary church ruins among the paired, cross-shaped gravestones in a discordant churchyard during a winter night. Finally, to all this is added the pictorially immanent traces present throughout the series, from the detailed foliage on the lower edge of *Spring* to the completely open, untreated space above, for example. Or in *Autumn*, from the dark foreground, past varying stages, to the brightest glow of rapturous tri-fold mountain summits with fleeting clouds strategically placed right between them that

Fig. 3: Caspar David Friedrich. Study of a cliff
(model for the group of boulders in the lower right of Herbst *[Autumn]; from the second Berlin sketchbook, 1799-1800), August 10/12, 1799*
Pen and brush with black ink over pencil on laid paper, 7-½ x 9-½ in. (19 x 24.2 cm)
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (Friedrich SZ 85 recto)

serve to separate the earthly and heavenly spheres with a voluptuous magic. The hazy cloud fragments in the mountains, the arc of a hill and the shimmering waves that mark the horizon, dialectically speak here about various states of the secular as well as the continuous strivings for the hidden origins of light, the repeated refusal of knowledge and salvation.[25]

The Seasons cycle from 1803 reveals itself to be not only one of the birthplaces of German Romanticism but *the* incunabula. It is apparent in the manner in which the drawings were made, how the brush was used, the use of light and construction of surface and space with their formal symmetries, the thresholds of sight, triads and gradations as well as obvious symbolic configurations open to interpretation: the cross on the cliff, the high alpine mountains, the elevated ruins of Eldena on the edge of the sea. It contains the matrix for the further development of Friedrich's own art and related tendencies in the first half of the 19th century. It was not the *Tetschener Altar* of 1808 (Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Galerie Neue Meister, Dresden), as has been often surmised even in recent scholarship,[26] but the Seasons from 1803 that mark the crossroads from the illustrative to the aesthetically thought-out, allegorically charged and constructively shaped landscape in Friedrich's oeuvre. For philosophical reasons, the pictures are still linked to the enlightened ideal of every human being's search for happiness and knowledge according to their own cyclically and prospectively undertaken strivings. At the same time, however, this ideal is questioned for theological reasons and strengthened by personal, political and social experiences. Cloaked in the classic garb of a cycle depicting the seasons and times of day and encompassing the history of nature, humanity and civilization, it presents diverse moods as well as the individual's journey through life and formation. With Friedrich, it coalesced, in a "romanticized" manner, into a new allegory of the simultaneously divisive and reconciliatory tendencies of the conflicting aims of modern bourgeois life, which, in its constant recollection of and longing for its Creator, is thrown into the realm of self-responsibility and the struggle for existence.

NOTES

1 After they were first shown to Dr. Norbert Suhr in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the Landesmuseum Mainz in 2004, the drawings were finally offered – through the intermediation of the Friedrich expert Prof. Dr. Helmut Börsch-Supan (Berlin) and the art dealer C. G. Boerner (Düsseldorf) – to the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett, which acquired, restored, exhibited and published them; Schulze Altcappenberg, Hein-Th., Helmut Börsch-Supan, Irene Brückle and Eva Glück, *An der Wiege der Romantik. Caspar David Friedrichs Jahreszeiten von 1803,* Patrimonia 317 (Berlin: Kulturstiftung der Länder / Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2006). The author's introductory text in that publication is the basis of this English version.

2 On the extensive literature, including the written sources, see Helmut Börsch-Supan, Karl Wilhelm Jähnig, *Caspar David Friedrich. Gemälde, Druckgraphik und bildmäßige Zeichnungen* (Munich, 1973), pp. 275ff., nos. 103-106, ill. as: "Formerly Berlin, Reichskammer der Bildenden Künste (Weltkunst 1935); probably burned during World War II."

3 Aside from Börsch-Supan/Jähnig 1973 (see note 2) and Werner Sumowski, *Caspar David Friedrich-Studien* (Wiesbaden, 1970) (especially pp. 142ff.), Peter Rautmann, and more recently Werner Busch, among others, have dealt intensively with Friedrich's Seasons. See Peter Rautmann, "Der Hamburger Sepiazyklus. Natur und bürgerliche Emanzipation bei Caspar David Friedrich," in Berthold Hinz, Hans-Joachim Kunst, Peter Märker et. al. (eds.), *Bürgerliche Revolution und Romantik. Natur und Gesellschaft bei Caspar David Friedrich* (Gießen, 1976), pp. 73-109; Werner Busch, "Von unvordenklichen bis zu unvorstellbaren Zeiten. Caspar David Friedrich und die Tradition der Jahreszeiten," in Andreas Blühm (ed.), *Philipp Otto Runge – Caspar David Friedrich. Im Lauf der Zeit* (Amsterdam/Zwolle, 1995), exh. cat., pp. 17-32. Further literature: Werner Sumowski, "Zu Fragen der Repliken bei Caspar David Friedrich," in Kurt Wettengel (ed.), *Caspar David Friedrich – Winterlandschaften* (Dortmund: Museum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte der Stadt Dortmund, 1990), exh. cat., pp. 42-53 (here pp. 47ff. on *Winter*).

4 Börsch-Supan/Jähnig 1973, pp. 294ff., nos. 153-157, ill.

5 *Austellung Deutscher Kunst aus der Zeit von 1775-1875. Zeichnungen, Aquarelle, Pastelle, Ölstudien, Miniaturen und Möbel* (Exhibition of German Art, 1775-1875. Drawings, Watercolors, Pastels, Oil Studies, Miniatures and Furniture) (Berlin: König Nationalgalerie, Berlin, 1906), exh. cat., nos. 2432-2435 (with inverted descriptions of *Spring* and *Summer*).

6 Sumowski 1970, p. 237, nos. 393-397.

7 Frits Lugt, *Les Marques de Collections de Dessins & d'Estampes*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1921) and (The Hague, 1956); Supplément, no. 1391 (Campe-Hasse), and no. 806 (Hasse-Ehlers); most recently, Dieter Gleisberg, "Ein Gerichtssiegel auf Zeichnungen aus Goethes Besitz. Der Leipziger Kaufmann Heinrich Wilhelm Campe und das Schicksal seiner Sammlung," in Markus Bertsch and Johannes Grave (eds.), *Räume der Kunst. Blicke auf Goethes Sammlungen* (Göttingen, 2005), pp. 76-88.

8 C. G. Boerner, *Versteigerungskatalog 190: Handzeichnungen aus der Sammlung des verstorbenen Geheimrats E. Ehlers, Göttingen, und einige wenige andere Beiträge, Deutsche Meister des XIX. Jahrhunderts ..., Deutsche Meister des XVII. und XVIII. Jahrhunderts …* (Leipzig, November 27, 1935), cat. 80, 82 and 83, ill.

9 According to information from the art dealer C. G. Boerner and press reports: „Überraschung auf der Boerner-Auktion" (Surprise at the Boerner Auction), in *Weltkunst* IX, 48 (December 1, 1935), front page: "The cycle of the four seasons (or times of day) by Caspar David Friedrich was auctioned off separately, but they remained in a single hand, and at 12.150 RM with a charge of 2.600 RM, brought in more than four times the estimate! They were auctioned off to the representative of the Reichskammer der Bildenden Künste, Berlin, Herr C. Meder. A high price such as this one at a German drawings auction … will probably not be surpassed soon." Information about the individual prices is provided by Lugt 1956 (Suppl. Nr. 860): According to him, *Winter* fetched 4.200, *Autumn* 4.000, *Spring* 2.100 and *Summer* 1.850 RM.

10 The year 1937 was the acquisition date circulated within the family of the previous owners, now deceased, over the course of two generations. It is also conceivable that the works changed hands during the last tumultuous years of the War or during the subsequent post-war period. However, neither the files nor publications of the Reichskammer der Bildenden Künste, nor the literature on Friedrich published after 1935, contain any indication of this. Only the old Ehlers provenance is quoted: Herbert von Einem, *Caspar David Friedrich* (Berlin, 1938), p. 110, note 7 ("formerly in the Ehlers Collection, Göttingen, auctioned by Börner, Leipzig, 1934 [sic]. Illustrations in the auction catalogue"); Otto Schmitt, *Die Ruine Eldena im Werk von Caspar David Friedrich* (Berlin, n.d. [ca. 1944]), fig. 6: *Winter (the Eldena ruin seen from the west)*, sepia, ca. 1803 (formerly Göttingen, Ehlers Collection)," in the photographic credits, C. G. Boerner is given as the source.

11 Differentiations are made between "sepia" (a pigment derived from the ink sac of the common cuttlefish), "*a la* sepia" (the characterization of autonomous, usually completely worked out monochrome works on paper produced with various brown inks or watercolors) and the color "sepia." On the drawing technique see the article by Eva Glück and Irene Brückle in *An der Wiege der Romantik* 2006, pp. 39-46, note 1.

12 The two artists, who worked in Dresden at this time, had especially close personal contact around 1802-3. Runge's large engraved cycle depicting the times of day was created during that year. Conversely, Runge purchased the pair of corresponding works from Friedrich's first known Times of Day cycle, encompassing views of the island of Rügen done in sepia, for 30 Thalers each; the "first deals with the *Morning*, the second with the *Evening*"; Philipp Otto Runge, *Hinterlassene Schriften*, edited by his eldest brother (Hamburg, 1841) (Facsimile of the first edition from 1840-1841, 2 vols., Göttingen, 1965), vol. II, p. 208. See also the article by Börsch-Supan in *An der Wiege der Romantik* 2006, pp. 25-38, note 1.

13 Translated from Sumowski 1970, p. 142, note 4, who was the first to draw the connection between this passage and the depiction of *Spring* from this cycle.

14 Gotthilf Heinrich von Schubert, *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* (Dresden, 1808), pp. 303ff.; translated from Börsch-Supan/Jähnig 1973, pp. 70ff, note 2.

15 The still-held assumption regarding a further sepia cycle dating to about 1807, which remains, however, completely unknown, was invalidated by the identification of many of the details that Schubert took such pains to describe and that are not recognizable in reproductions. These include the cross on the cliff at left in the foreground of *Autumn*, which is now easily discernable in the original drawing. Fundamentally, however, the problem lies in assuming that these detailed descriptions, which are metaphorically charged according to their own rules especially in idealist and romantic literature, are precise descriptions of the work. Friedrich's 1803 cycle reached such a level of technical and intellectual perfection that no further version was required between the time it was made and the first Times of Day cycle painted in oil about 1807-8, and the next documented sepia version of 1826-34.

16 In an incomplete or deleted preliminary sketch one can see the shaft of a sunflower turning towards the light alongside the solitary child at center who appears to clap his hands.

17 The majestic cityscape visible at the lower right, along a river beyond the rocks, bears a striking resemblance to Dresden, up to and including the distinctive dome of the Frauenkirche and the expansive Brühl'sche Library.

18 The exceptional formation of the high mountain region anticipates the celebrated view of Friedrich's *Watzmann* (1824-25) in the Alte Nationalgalerie Berlin.

19 C. D. Friedrich in a letter to Amalie von Beulwitz, ca. 1810-11; translated from *Caspar David Friedrich. Die Briefe*. Edited with commentaries by Herrmann Zschoche (Hamburg, 2006, 2nd edition), letter 31, p. 74.

20 For Friedrich's decisive contemporaneousness as well as the function of pictorial objects, which in their natural appearance refer to the "divine elementary form," see Werner Busch, *Caspar David Friedrich. Ästhetik und Religion* (Munich, 2003), p. 149.

21 Most recently, Werner Busch, "Friedrichs Bildverständnis," in Hubertus Gaßner (ed.), *Caspar David Friedrich. Die Erfindung der Romantik* (Munich, 2006), exh. cat.: Museum Folkwang Essen and Hamburger Kunsthalle, pp. 32-47, here pp. 32ff.

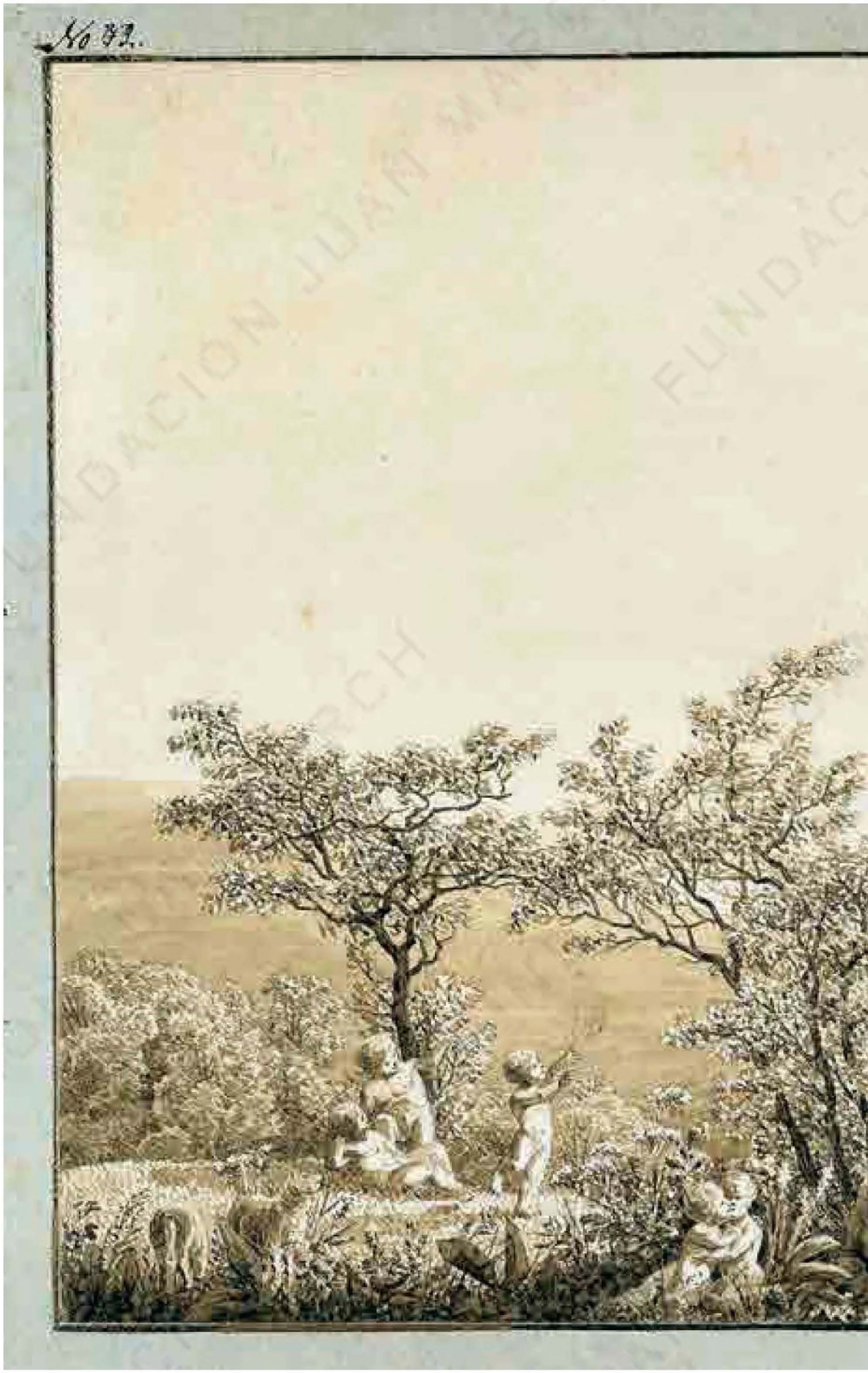
22 Translated from *Caspar David Friedrich. Die Briefe* 2006 (see note 19), letter 33, pp. 75ff.; he was referring here to academic classicism, but also had the Nazarenes in mind.

23 "Kunst-Erinnerungen aus Dresden," dated "Dresden, den 28. Febr. 1807," in *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* (Weimar, 1807), pp. 269f.: In a group of several large "sepia landscapes: … 3. At the center of a large open area one can see the summit of a rocky mountain range covered with fir-trees and a large crucifix at the very top, which is just being illuminated from below by the first rays of the rising sun." This is probably the work now in the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett or a comparable one. See Börsch-Supan/Jähnig 1973, note 2, nos. 145f.

24 *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* 1807, p. 270.

25 A work such as *Abbey in an Oak Forest* (1809-10), is also based on just such a pictorial conception that takes into account the fine modal tensions between upper and lower, and between dark and ambiguous forms and graphically overt ones: "I am now working on a large painting in which I am planning to portray the secret of the grave and the future. What can only be seen and recognized through faith and that will eternally remain a puzzle to mankind's finite knowledge: … The ground is covered by a thick fog and while the upper parts of the ruins can still be clearly seen, the forms become more and more uncertain and indefinable the lower one gets until they finally get lost entirely in the fog the closer they are to the ground. The oak trees stretch up their arms out of the fog while they are almost entirely invisible at the bottom." Translated from *Caspar David Friedrich. Die Briefe* 2006, letter 36, p. 64, note 19.

26 For example, in the articles by Gaßner and Busch in *Caspar David Friedrich. Die Erfindung der Romantik* 2006, pp. 14, 17 and 35ff, note 21.

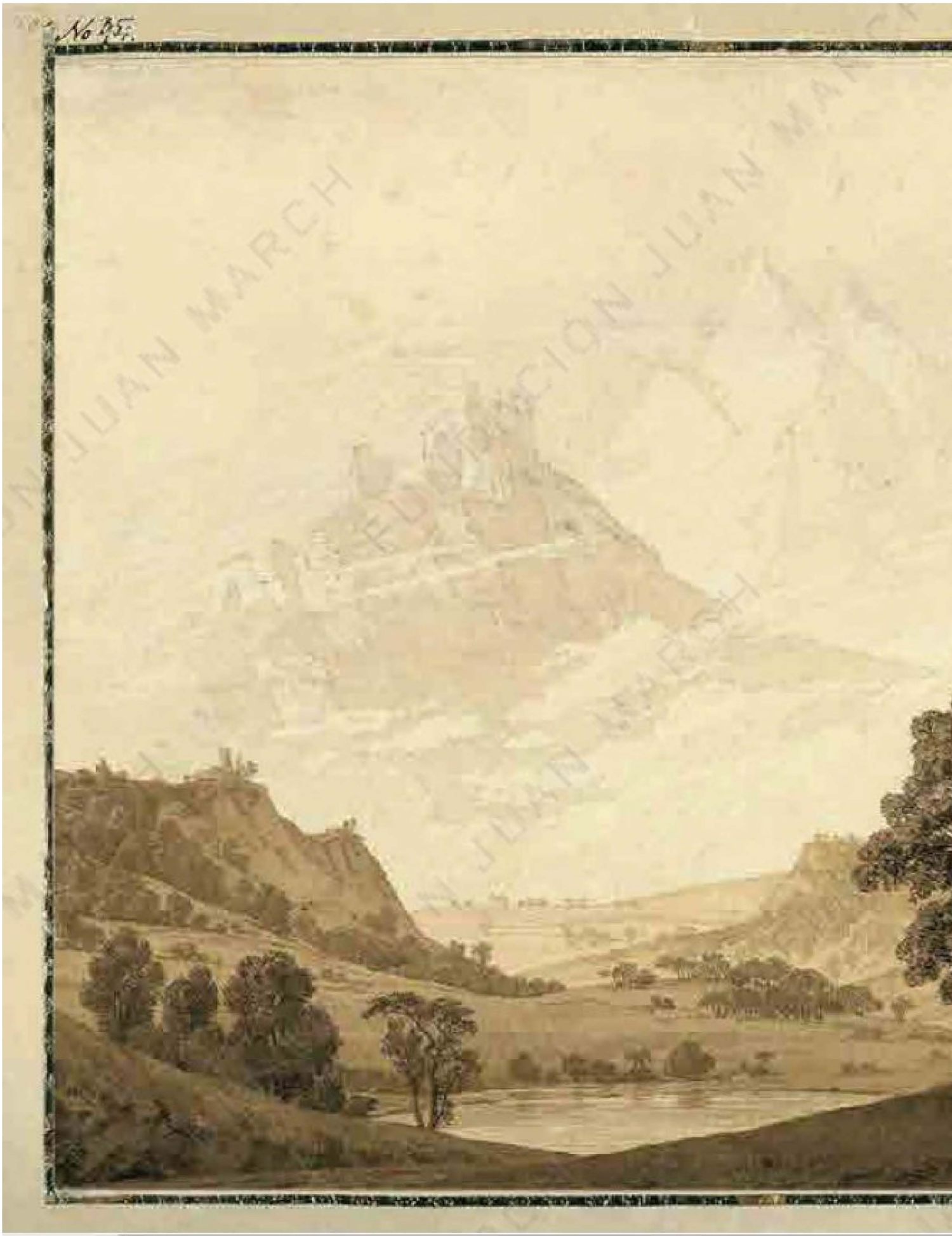


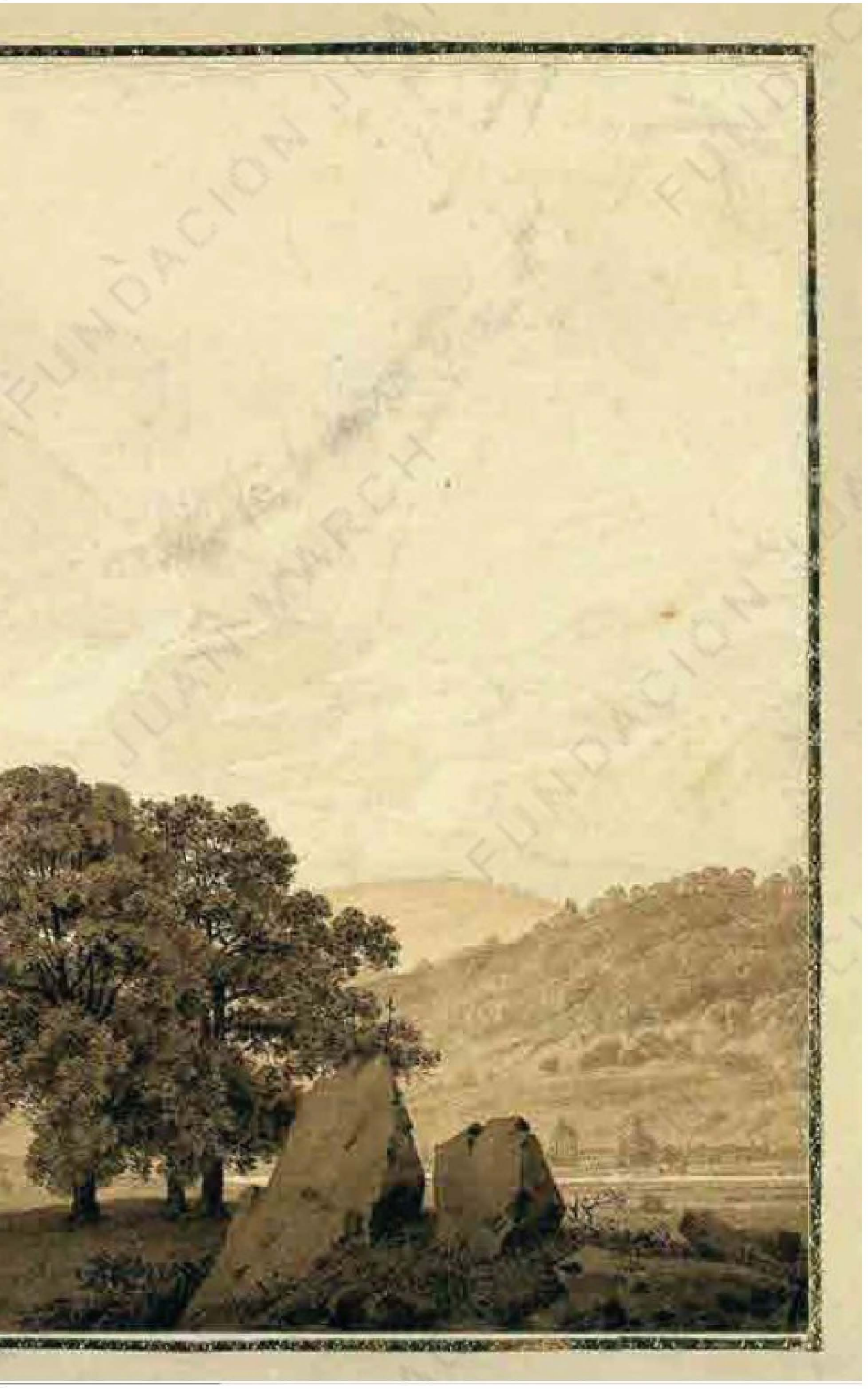
1

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH

Die Jahreszeiten: Der Frühling
(Seasons of the Year: Spring), 1803
Brush with sepia ink over underlying pencil drawing on vellum paper
7-9/16 x 10-13/16 in. (19.2 x 27.5 cm)

[EDRICH
Herbst
mn), 1803
underlying
m paper
27.5 cm)

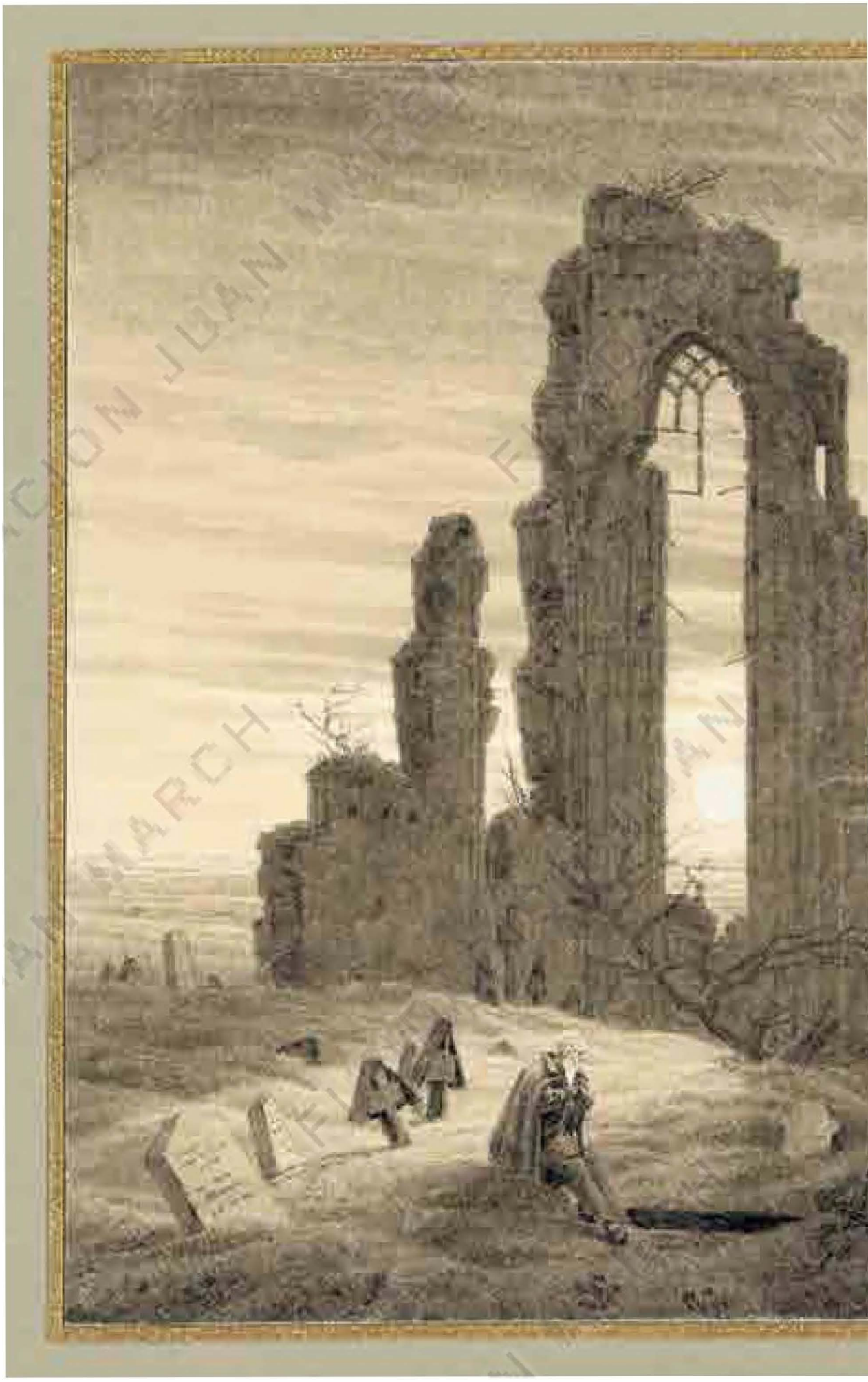




2

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH

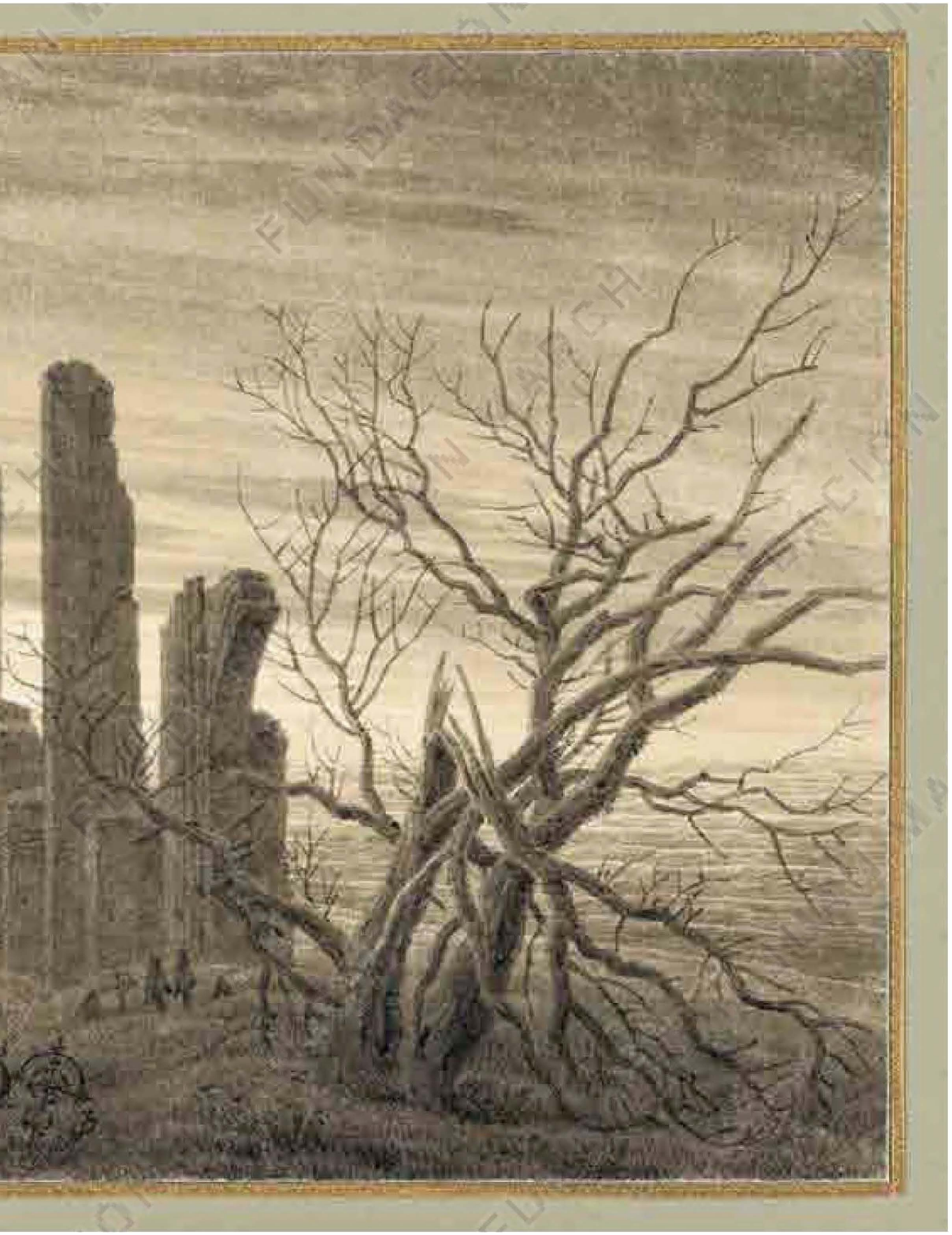
Die Jahreszeiten: Der Herbst
(Seasons of the Year: Autumn), 1803
Brush with brown ink over underlying pencil drawing on vellum paper
7-½ x 10-13/16 in. (19.1 x 27.5 cm)



3

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH

Die Jahreszeiten: Der Winter
(Seasons of the Year: Winter), 1803
Brush with sepia ink over underlying pencil drawing on vellum paper
7-⅝ x 10-⅞ in. (19.3 x 27.6 cm)



"Close your bodily eye so that you may first see your picture with your mind's eye. Then bring up to the surface what you saw in the dark, that it may react with others from the outside to the inside."

Caspar David Friedrich

CASPAI
Die
(Seasor
Brush w
penci
7-⅝ x

4

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH

Das Kreuz im Gebirge

(Cross on the Mountain), ca. 1806

Brush with sepia ink, over pencil

25-3/16 x 36-1/4 in. (64 x 92 cm)

5

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH

Meeresküste mit Statue und Kreuz

(Coastal Landscape with Statue and Cross), ca. 1806–7

Brush with sepia ink on vellum paper

15-13/16 x 22-13/16 in. (40.1 x 58 cm)

6

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH
Steinbruch bei Krippen (Quarry near Krippen)
Dated: "*Krippen, den 19. Juli 1813*"
Watercolor and pencil on vellum paper
8-¼ x 6-⅞ in. (21 x 17.4 cm)

7

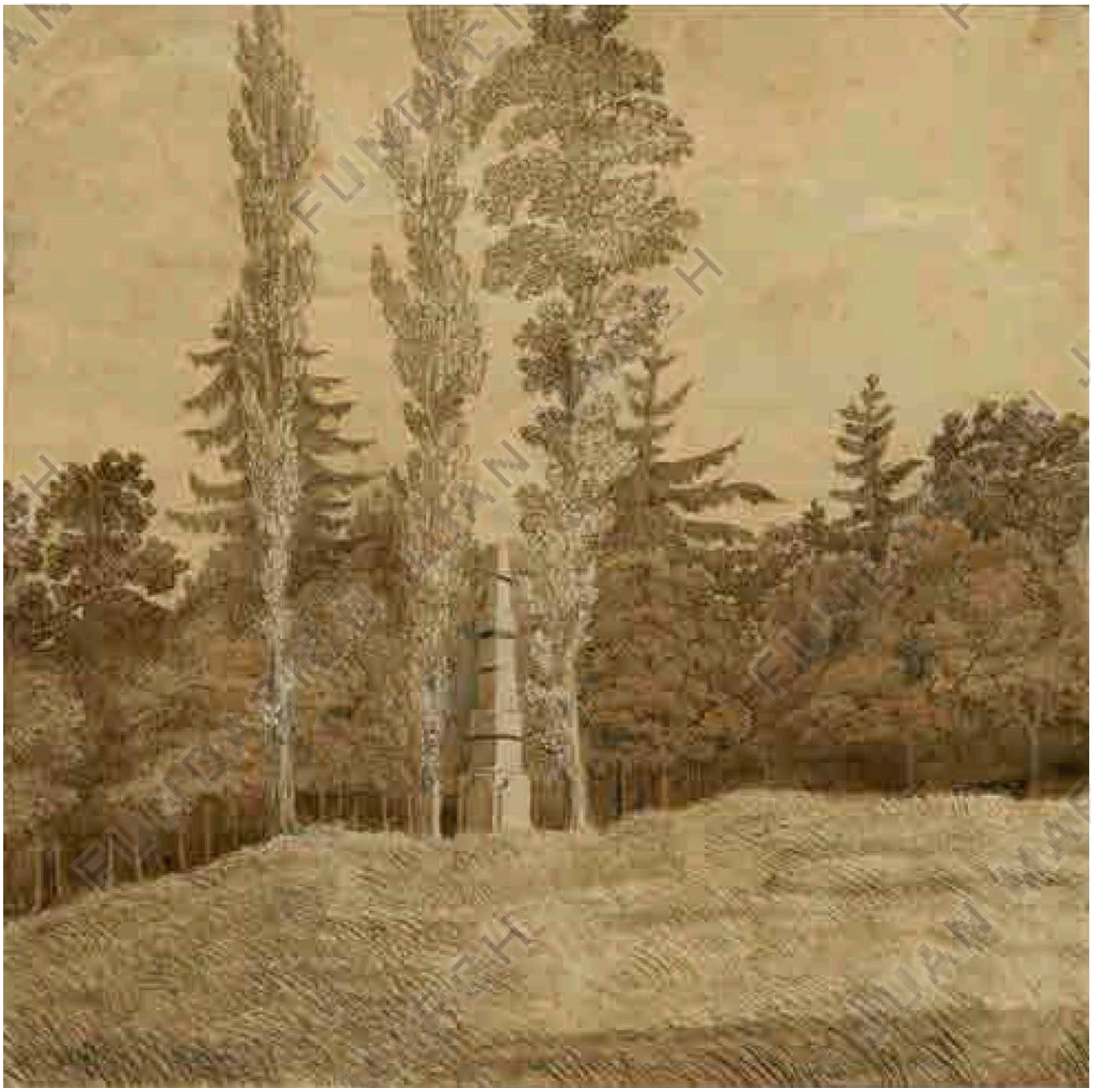
CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH

Der Schlossberg bei Teplitz

(Schlossberg, near Teplitz), 1835

Pen and brush with brown ink, over pencil, on vellum paper

9-9/16 x 14-1/8 in. (24.3 x 35.9 cm)



8

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH

Waldlichtung mit Obelisk im Seifersdorfer Tal

(Clearing with Obelisk in Seifersdorf Valley), n.d.

Sepia drawing over an underlying pencil drawing

7 x 7 in. (17.8 x 18 cm)

"My four pictures, their vast greatness, and what can emerge from them: in short, when this actually evolves, it will be an abstract, painterly, fantastic-musical poem with choirs, a composition for all three arts together, for which the art of architecture should create a building of its own."

Philipp Otto Runge, Letter to his brother Daniel describing his Times of Day cycle (1803)

9

PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE

Der Morgen (Morning), 1808

Pen and brush with gray ink and wash over pencil on paper

16-9/16 x 13-1/8 in. (42.1 x 33.3 cm)

10

PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE

Der Tag (Day), 1805

Copper etching on paper

28-⅛ x 18-¹³⁄₁₆ in. (71.5 x 47.8 cm)

11

PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE
Der Abend (Afternoon), 1805
Copper etching on paper
28-¼ x 18-¾ in. (71.7 x 47.6 cm)

12

PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE

Die Nacht (Night), 1805

Copper etching on paper

28 x 18-1/16 in. (71.1 x 47.5 cm)

13

PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE

Landschaft an der Peene

(Landscape along the Peene River), n.d.

Gray and brown ink applied with a pen on paper

11-13/16 x 15 in. (30 x 38 cm)

14

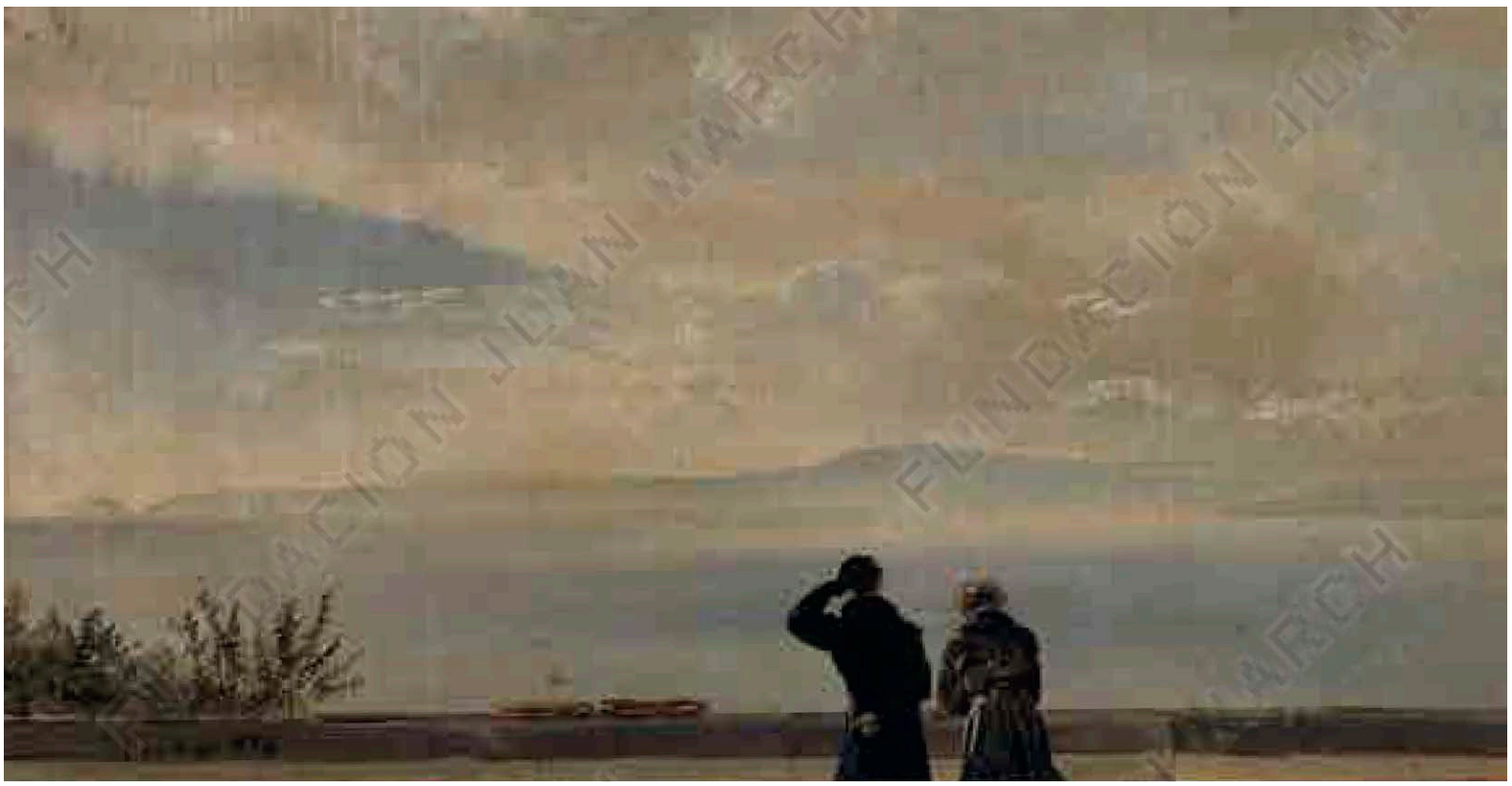
JOHAN CHRISTIAN CLAUSEN DAHL

Blitzstudie. Am Golf von Neapel

(Study of a Lightning Bolt. The Gulf of Naples), 1820

Oil on paper

7-3/16 x 10 in. (18.3 x 25.5 cm)



15

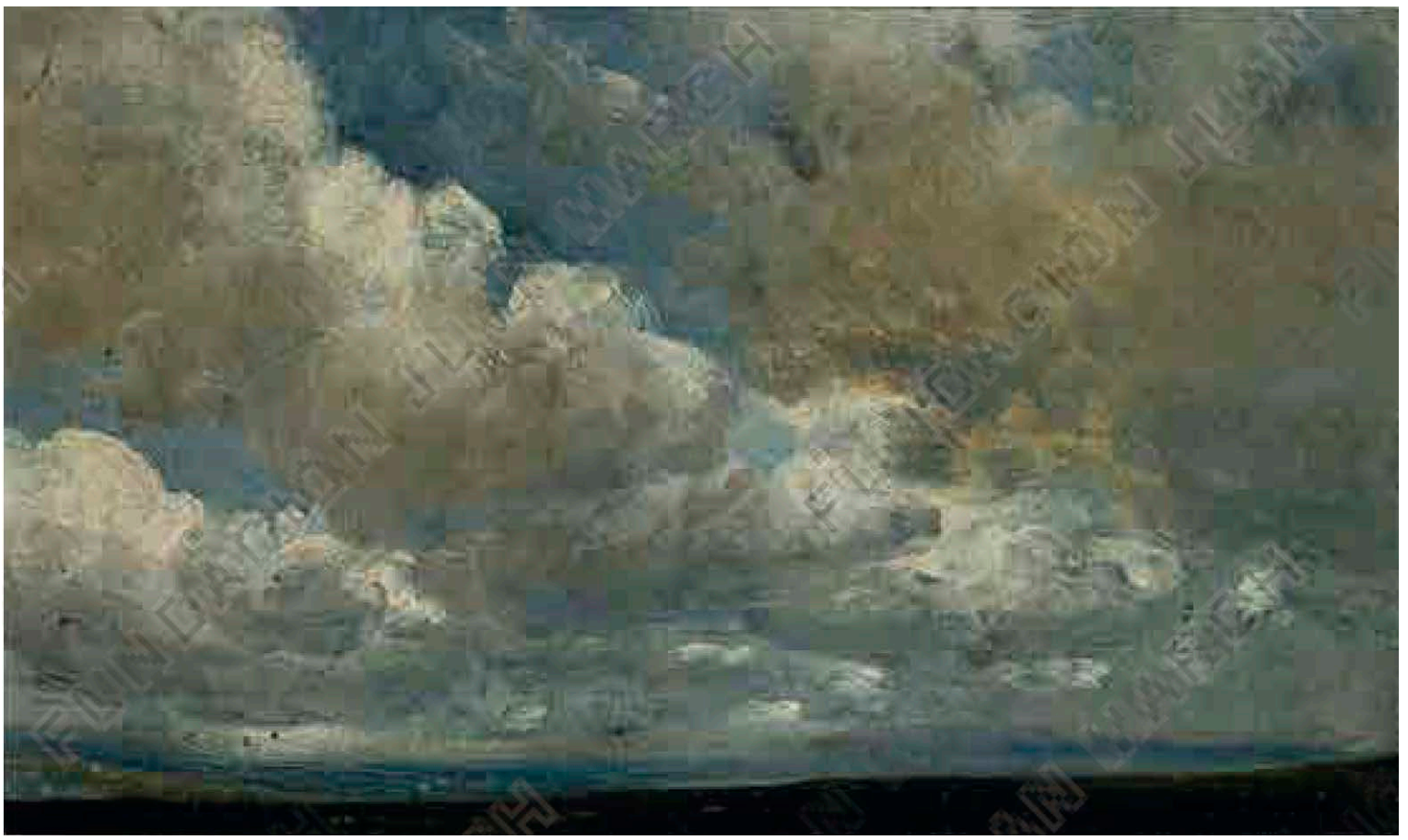
JOHAN CHRISTIAN CLAUSEN DAHL

Zwei Männer auf einer Terrasse

(Two Men on a Terrace), 1830

Oil on paper

5-13/16 x 11-1/4 in. (14.7 x 28.6 cm)



16

JOHAN CHRISTIAN CLAUSEN DAHL

Wolkenstudie mit Horizont

(Study of Clouds with Horizon), 1832

Oil on paper

4-13/16 x 8 in. (12.2 x 20.2 cm)

17

JOHAN CHRISTIAN CLAUSEN DAHL

Blick auf Swinemünde, 25. April 1840

(View of Swinemünde, April 25, 1840)

Brown pen over pencil, brownish-gray wash, highlighted in white, on paper; 8-13/16 x 12-1/2 in. (22.4 x 31.7 cm)

18

CARL GUSTAV CARUS

Morgennebel

(Early Morning Fog), ca. 1825

Oil on paper on cardboard

7-1/16 x 10-1/4 in. (19.5 x 26 cm)

Always to me beloved was this lonely hillside

And the hedgerow creeping over and always hiding

The distances, the horizon's furthest reaches.

But as I sit and gaze, there is an endless

Space still beyond, there is a more than mortal

Silence spread out to the last depth of peace,

Which in my thought I shape until my heart

Scarcely can hide a fear. And as the wind

Comes through the copses sighing to my ears,

The infinite silence and the passing voice

I must compare: remembering the seasons,

Quiet in dead eternity, and the present,

Living and sounding still. And into this

Immensity my thought sinks ever drowning,

And it is sweet to shipwreck in such a sea.

Giacomo Leopardi, "The Infinite" (1819-21)

19

CARL GUSTAV CARUS

Insel im Meer (Capri)

(Island in the Sea [Capri]), n.d.

Oil on cardboard

5-1/16 x 7-7/16 in. (14.4 x 18.9 cm)

20

ERNST FERDINAND OEHME

Kapelle in Winterlandschaft

(Chapel in a Winter Landscape), 1850

Watercolor

11 x 8-⅞ in. (28 x 22.5 cm)

21

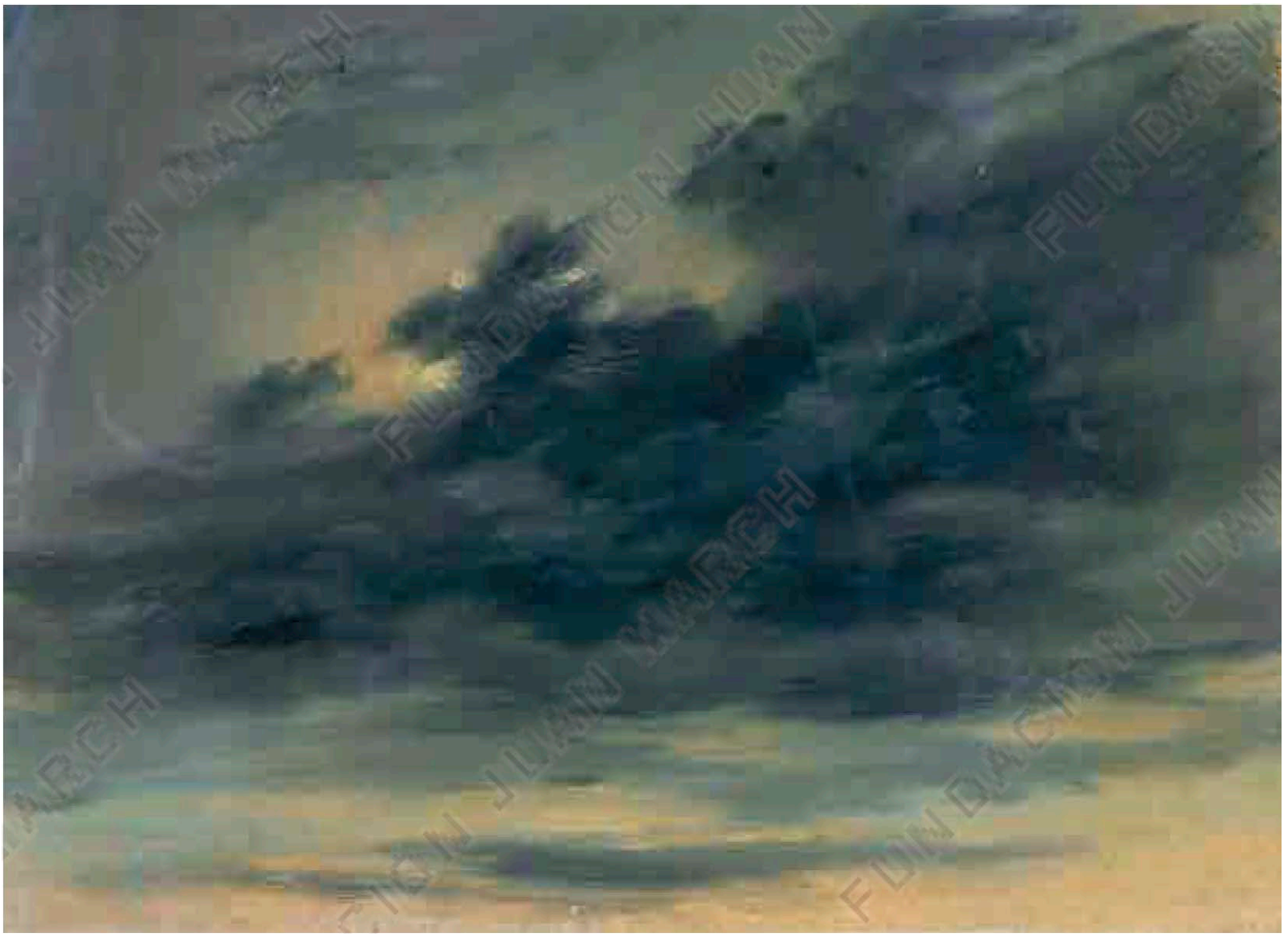
ERNST FERDINAND OEHME

Wetterhorn und Rosenlauigletscher

(Wetterhorn and Rosenlaui Glacier), n.d.

Pen with India ink and watercolor, highlighted in white

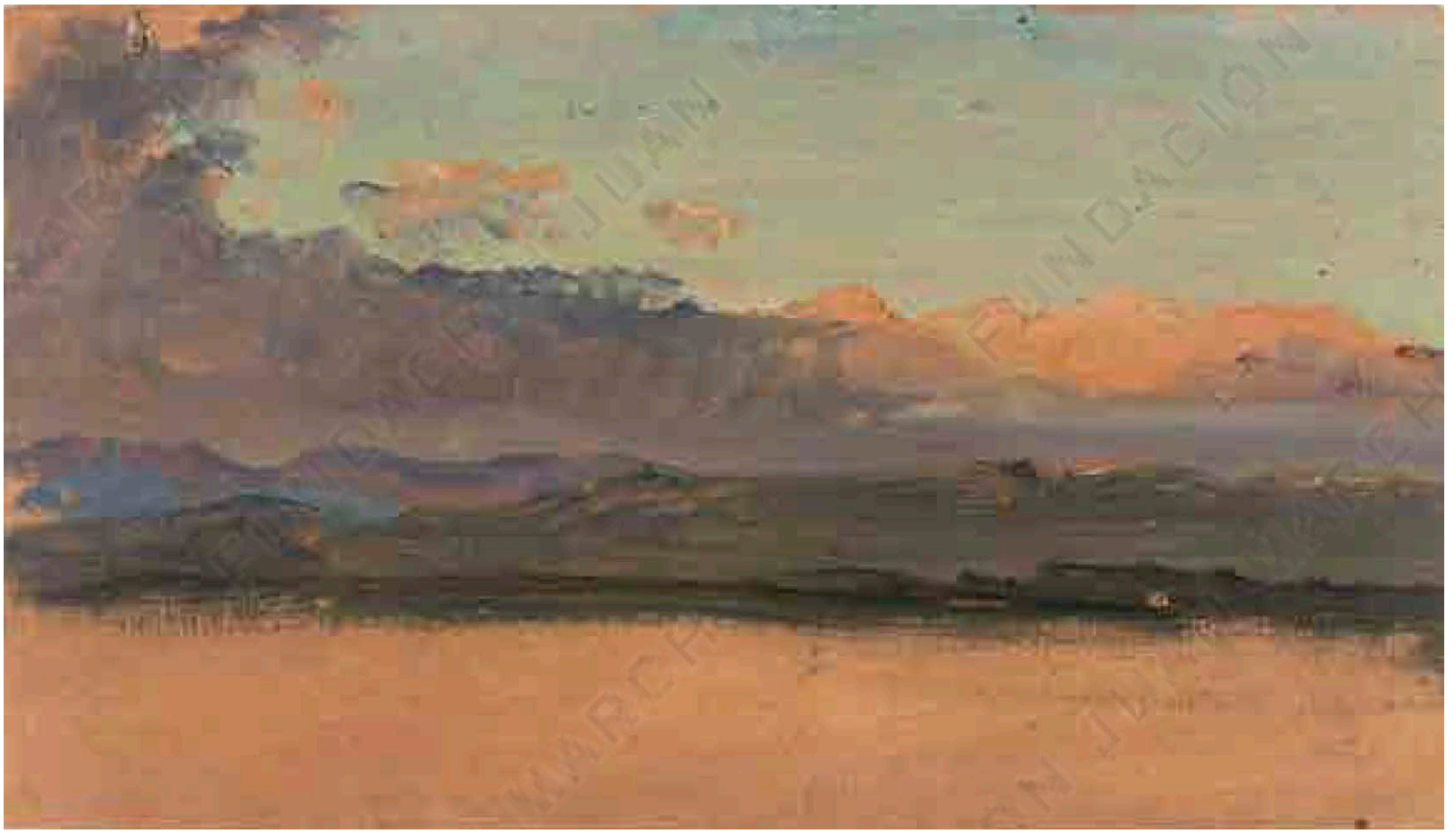
9-5/16 x 13-1/8 in. (23.6 x 33.3 cm)



22

CARL BLECHEN

Grauer Wolkenhimmel mit Mond
(Gray Cloudy Sky with Moon), 1823
Oil on paper
5-¼ x 7 in. (13.3 x 18 cm)



23

CARL BLECHEN

Violett getönte Abendwolken über Gebirge
(Violet Evening Clouds over the Mountains), n.d.
Oil on paper
4 x 7 in. (10.2 x 17.7 cm)

24

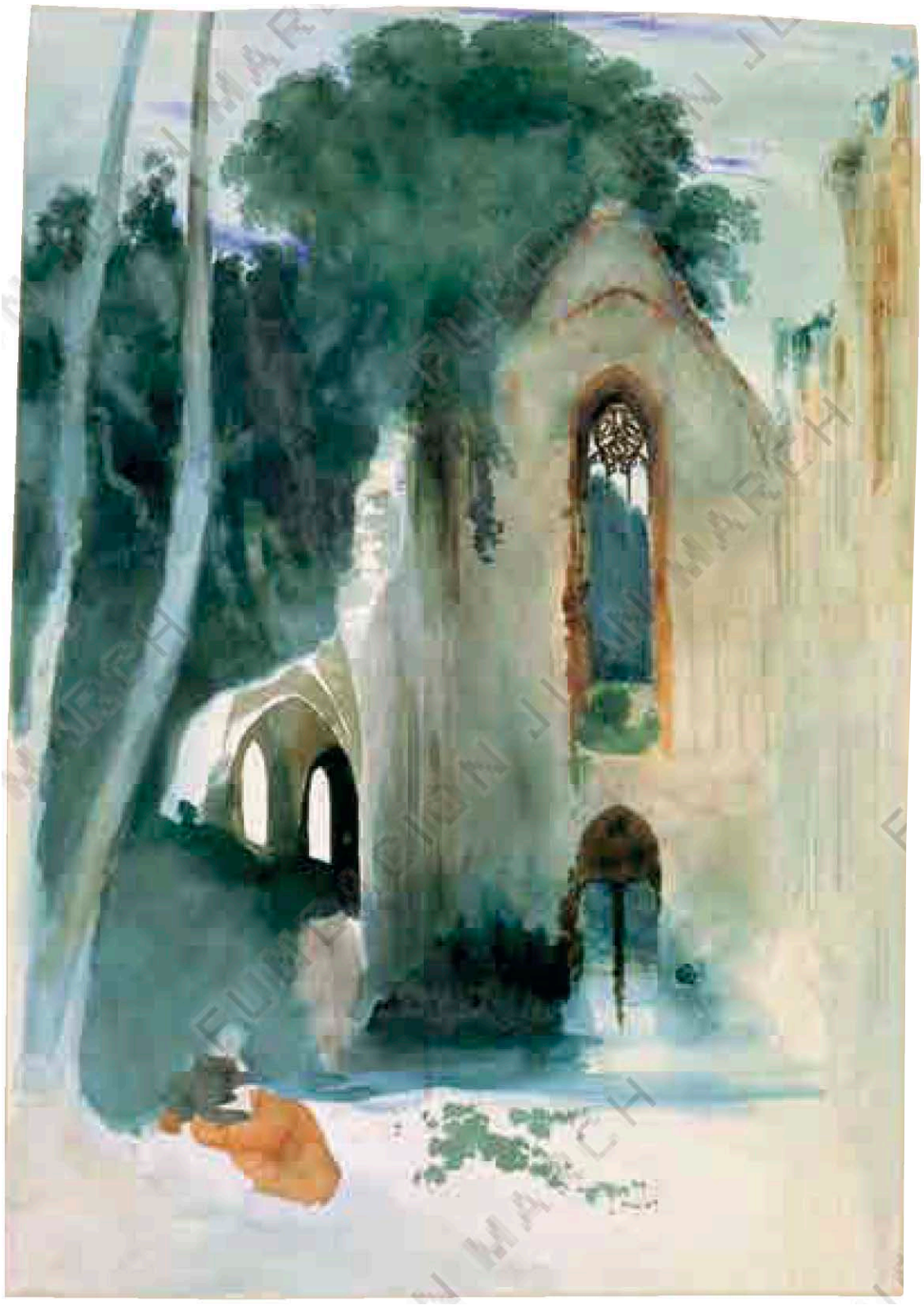
CARL BLECHEN

Waldlandschaft mit Wasserlauf und zwei Jägern
(Forest Landscape with River and Two Hunters), ca. 1830-35
Pen and brush with black, sepia wash over pencil
11-½ x 13-⁹⁄₁₆ in. (29.2 x 34.4 cm)

25

CARL BLECHEN

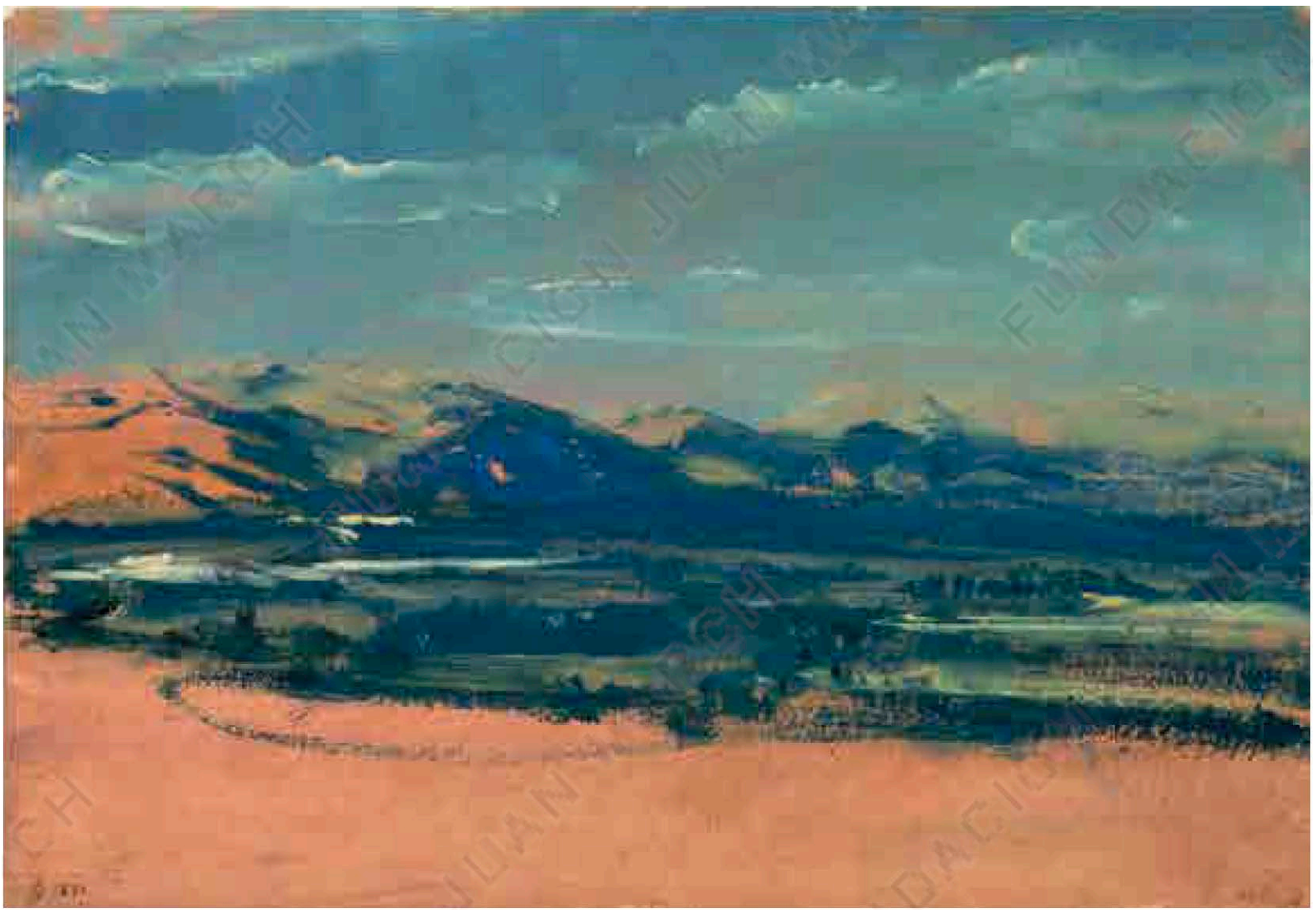
Reh am Wasser vor Kirchenruine (Tannengruppe bei einer Kirchenruine)
(Doe beside Water before Church Ruins
[Group of Fir Trees beside Church Ruins]), 1831
Pencil and brown ink, wash
15 x 10 in. (38 x 25.2 cm)



26

CARL BLECHEN

Gotische Kirchenruine von Bäumen überragt
(Gothic Church Ruins overrun with Trees), ca. 1834
Watercolor and graphite on paper
14-⅝ x 14-⅛ in. (37.2 x 35.8 cm)



27

CARL BLECHEN

Landschaft mit Ebene und Gebirgszug

(Landscape with Lowlands and Mountain Range), n.d.

Oil on paper

11-¼ x 11-13⁄16 in. (28.6 x 30 cm)

28

CARL BLECHEN

Wald und Hügellandschaft mit einem Mönch
(Forest and Hilly Landscape with Monk), n.d.
Oil on paper
11-⅝ x 9-³⁄₁₆ in. (29.6 x 23.3 cm)

29

CARL BLECHEN

Baumgruppe (Group of Trees), n.d.
Pen drawing with India ink
22-13/16 x 18 in. (58 x 45.5 cm)

"Composing landscapes by invention, is not the art of imitating individual nature; it is more; it is forming artificial representations of landscape on the general principles of nature, founded in unity of character, which is true simplicity; concentrating in each individual composition the beauties, which judicious imitation would select from those which are dispersed in nature."

Alexander Cozens, father of John Robert Cozens,
A New Method of Assisting the Invention in Drawing Original Compositions of Landscape (1785)

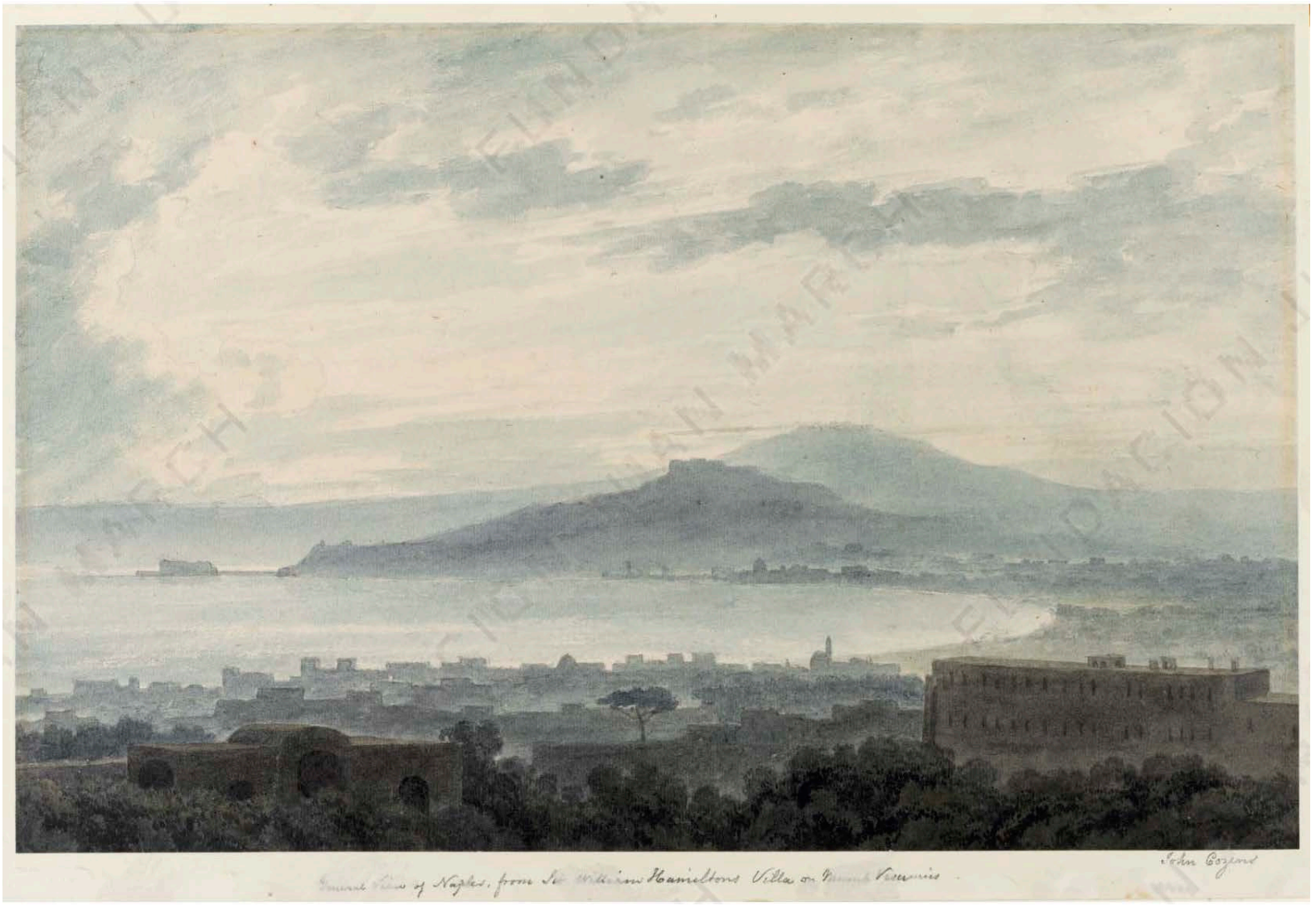
30

JOHN ROBERT COZENS

Chigi Palace, near Albano, n.d.

Watercolor

10-5/16 x 14-3/4 in. (26.2 x 37.5 cm)



31

JOHN ROBERT COZENS

City and Bay of Naples, n.d.

Watercolor

9-⅜ x 14-1⁄16 in. (23.8 x 37.3 cm)

32

JOHN ROBERT COZENS

The Terrace of the Villa d'Este, n.d.

Watercolor

10-¼ x 14-¾ in. (26.1 x 37.4 cm)

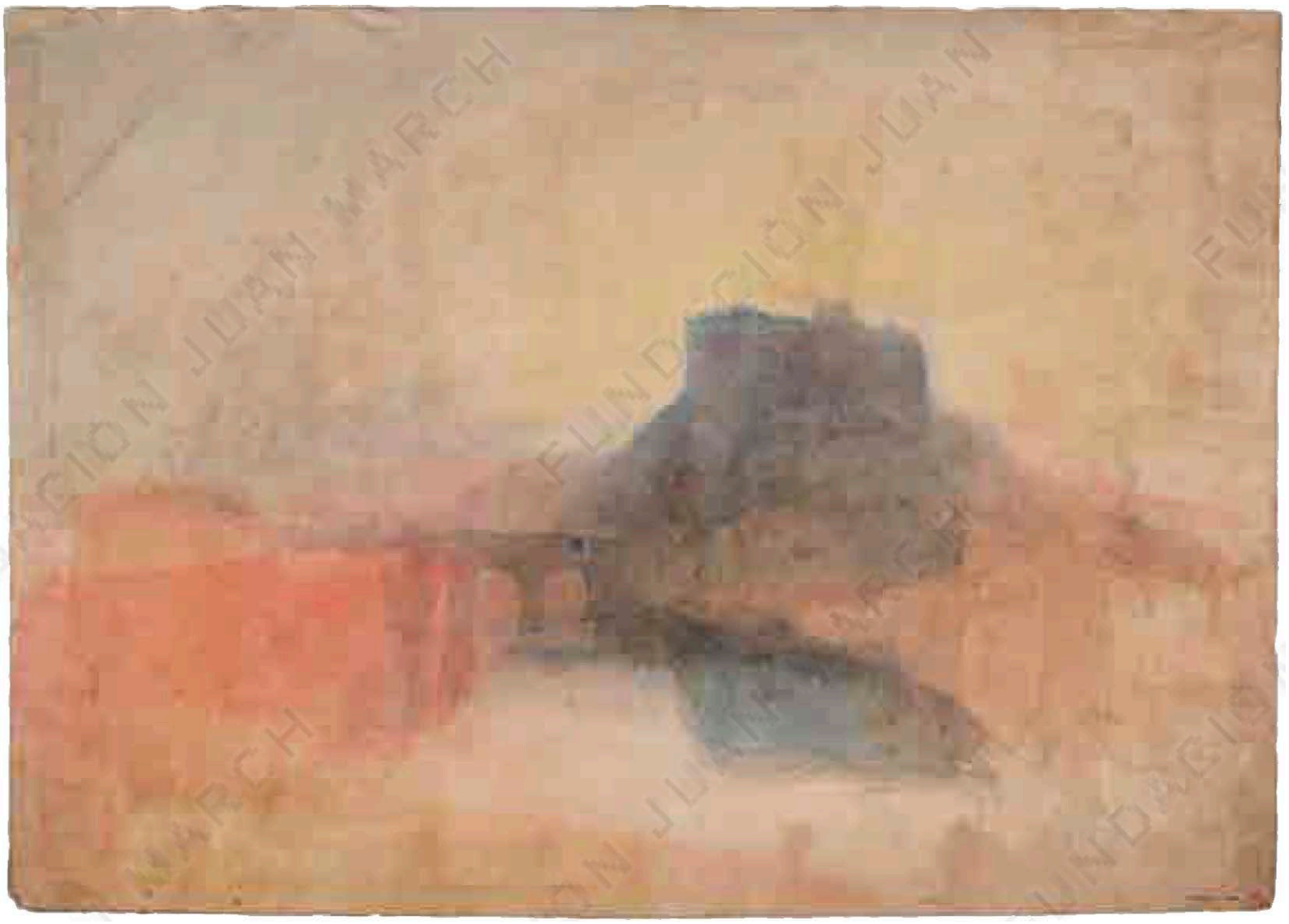
33

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER

Tivoli, 1819

Pencil and watercolor on paper

10 x 15-⅞ in. (25.6 x 40.4 cm)



34

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER

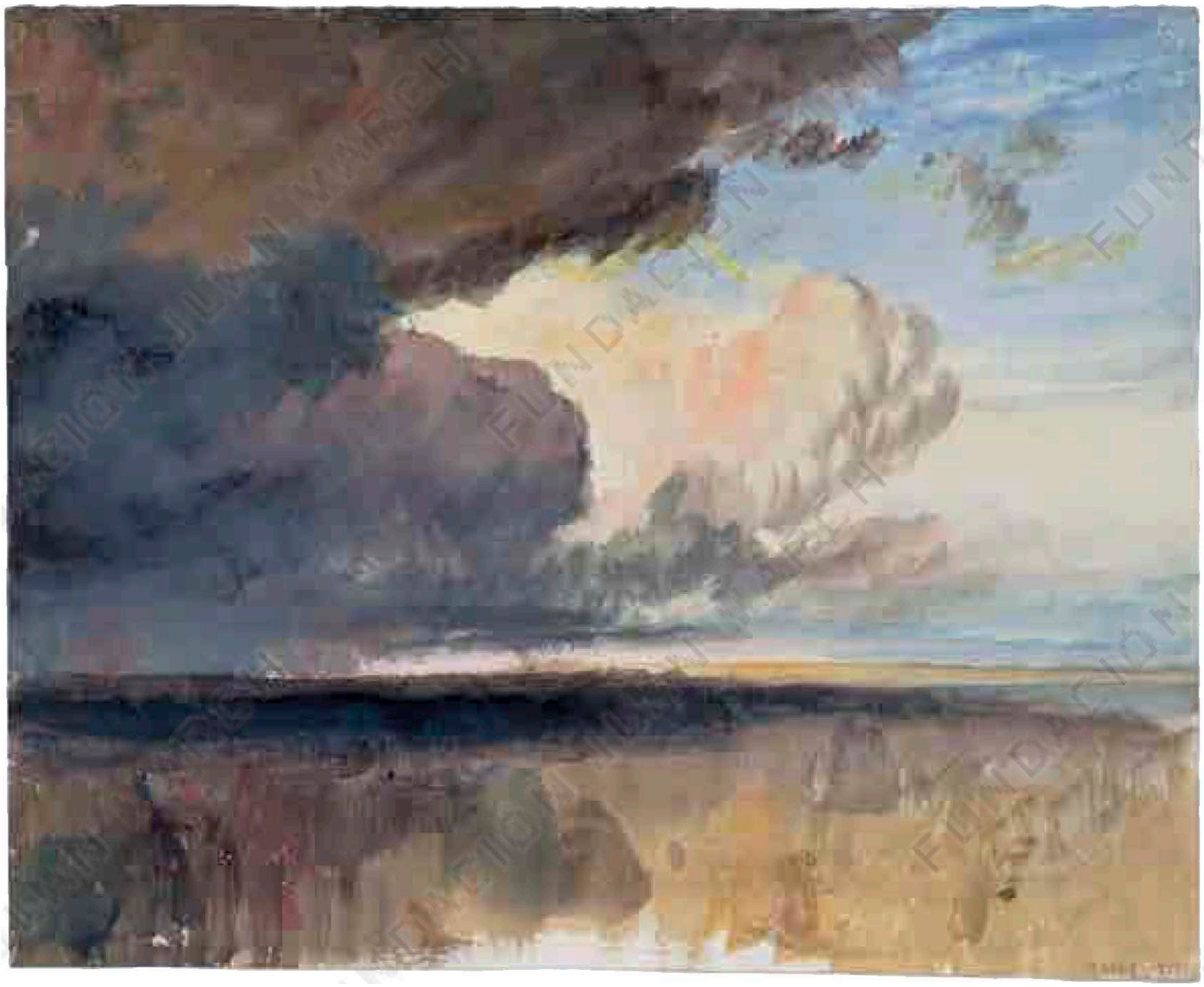
The Grey Castle, ca. 1820-30

Watercolor on paper

13-1/16 x 19 in. (34.8 x 48.3 cm)

"In all truly great painters, and in Turner's more than all, the hue is a beautiful auxiliary in working out the great impression to be conveyed, but is not the source nor the essence of that impression; it is little more than a visible melody … to prepare the feelings for the reading of the mysteries of God."

John Ruskin, "Of truth of color," *Modern Painters* I (1843)



35

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER

Heavy Dark Clouds, ca. 1822

Gouache and watercolor on paper

7-3/16 x 8-7/8 in. (18.2 x 22.6 cm)

36

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER

Dunstanburgh Castle, Northumberland, ca. 1828

Watercolor and gouache on paper

10-¾ x 17-⅛ in. (27.3 x 43.5 cm)

37

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER

Margate, ca. 1830

Watercolor and pencil on paper

13-⅞ x 20-⅜ in. (35.2 x 51.8 cm)

38

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER

Burg Hals from the Hillside, 1840

Pencil, watercolor and gouache on paper

5-½ x 7-7/16 in. (14 x 18.9 cm)

39

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER

Burg Hals and the Ilz from the Hillside, 1840

Pencil, watercolor and gouache on paper

5-9/16 x 7-1/2 in. (14.2 x 19.1 cm)

40

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER

Distant View of Cochem from the South, 1840

Pencil, watercolor and gouache on paper

5-½ x 7-⁹⁄₁₆ in. (14 x 19.2 cm)

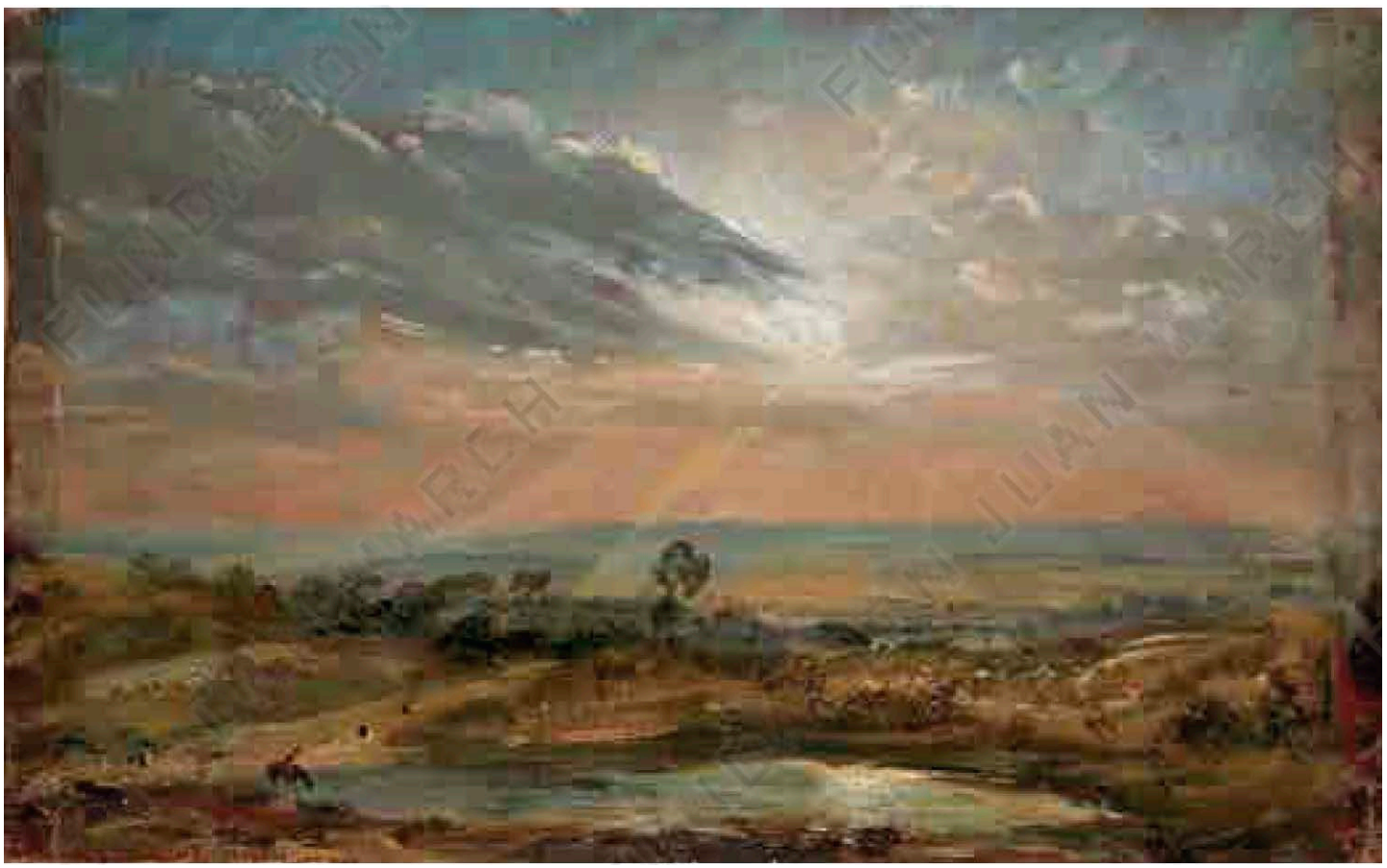
41

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER

Ehrenbreitstein with a Rainbow, 1840

Pencil, watercolor and gouache on paper

5-9/16 x 7-5/8 in. (14.1 x 19.3 cm)



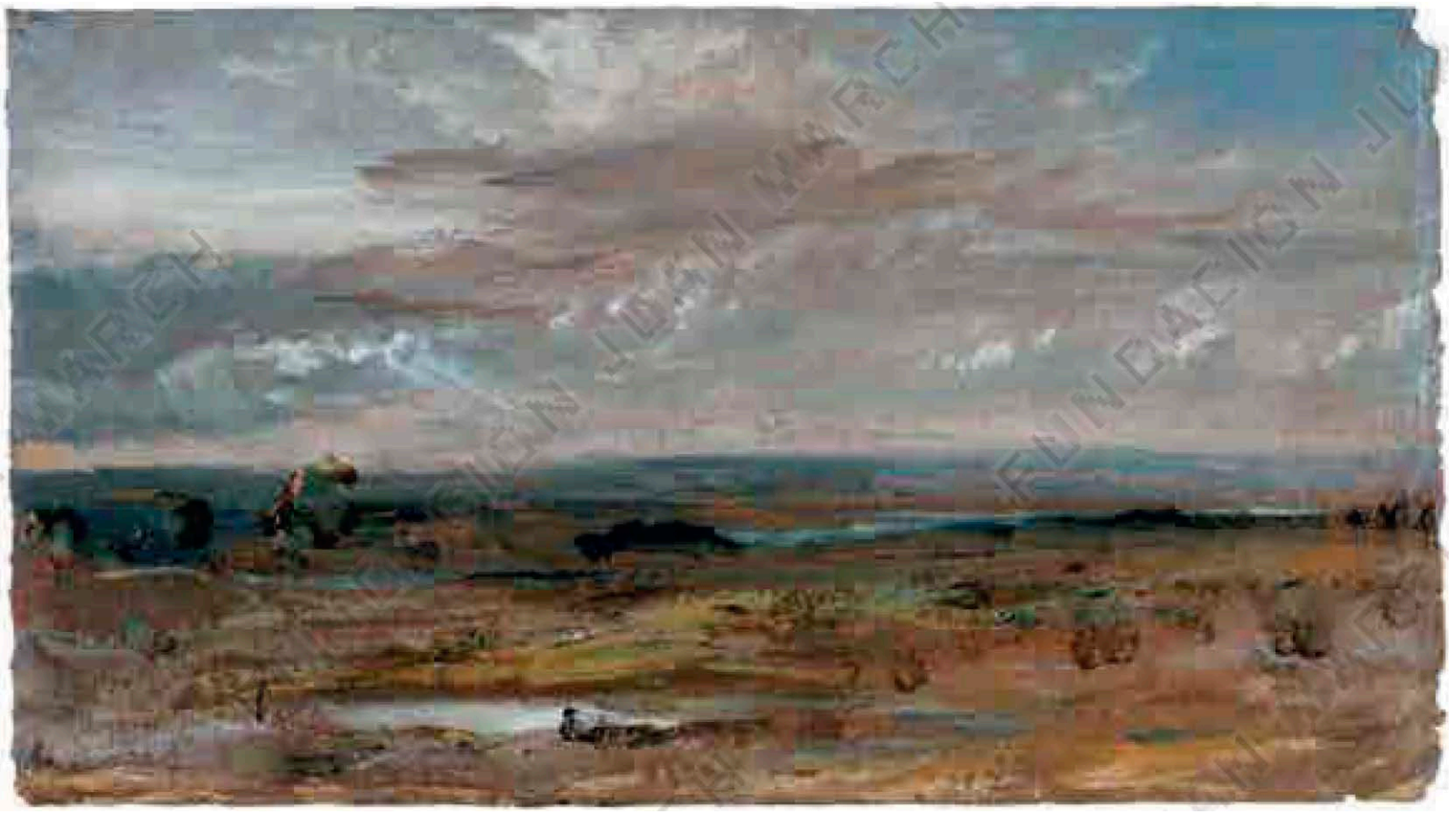
42

JOHN CONSTABLE

Branch Hill Pond, Hampstead, 1821-22

Oil on canvas

9-⅝ x 15-½ in. (24.5 x 39.4 cm)



43

JOHN CONSTABLE
A View at Hampstead: Evening, 1822
Oil on paper
6-½ x 11-¾ in. (16.5 x 29.8 cm)

44

JOHN CONSTABLE

Study of Clouds above a Wide Landscape, 1830

Pencil and watercolor

7-½ x 9 in. (19 x 22.8 cm)

45

JOHN CONSTABLE

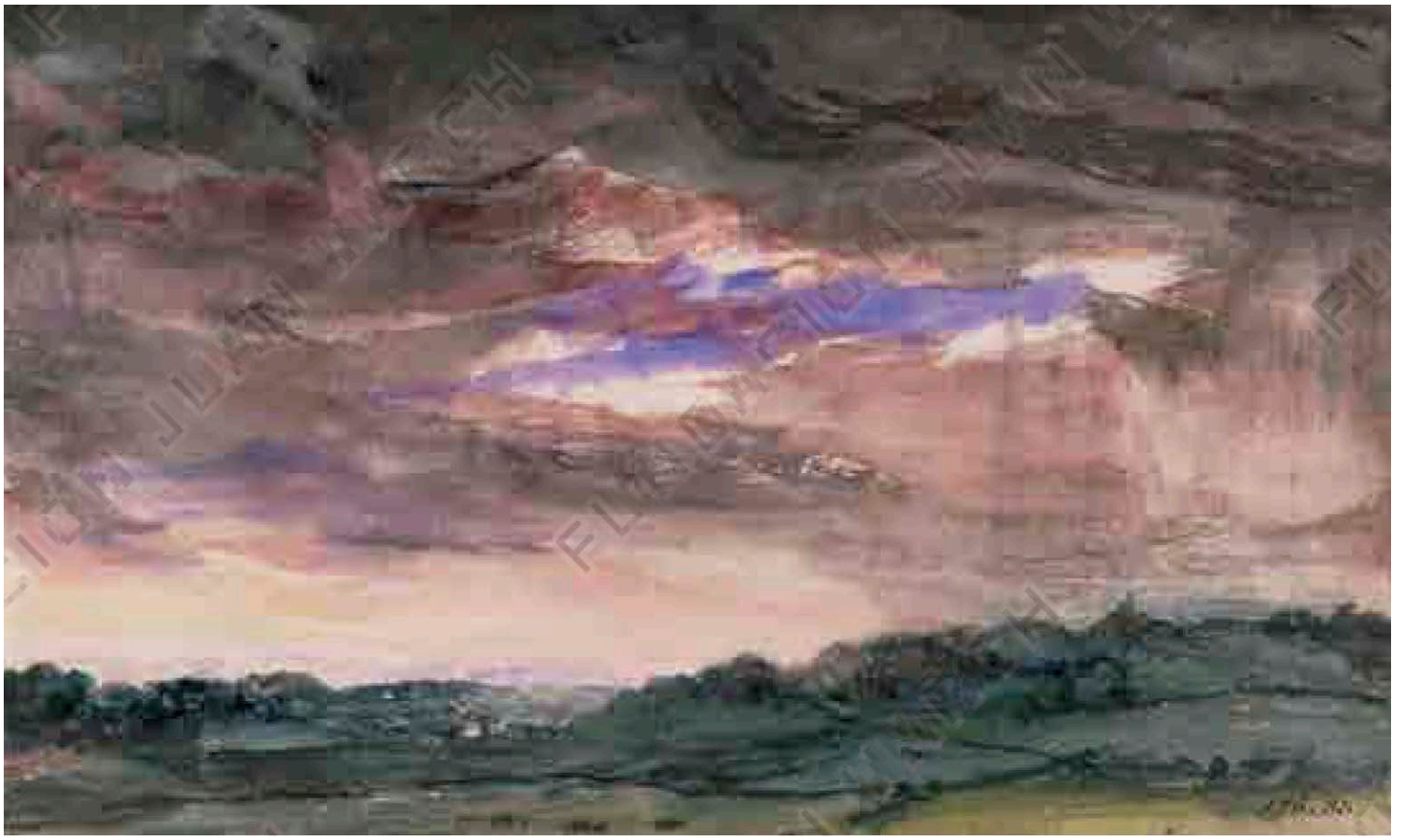
View over a Wide Landscape, with Trees in the Foreground, 1832

Pencil and watercolor

7-5/16 x 8-3/4 in. (18.6 x 22.2 cm)

46

JOHN CONSTABLE
Study of Sky Effect, n.d.
Pencil and watercolor
7-7/16 x 9 in. (18.9 x 22.9 cm)



47

JOHN CONSTABLE

View over Hilly Country with a Stormy Sky, n.d.

Watercolor

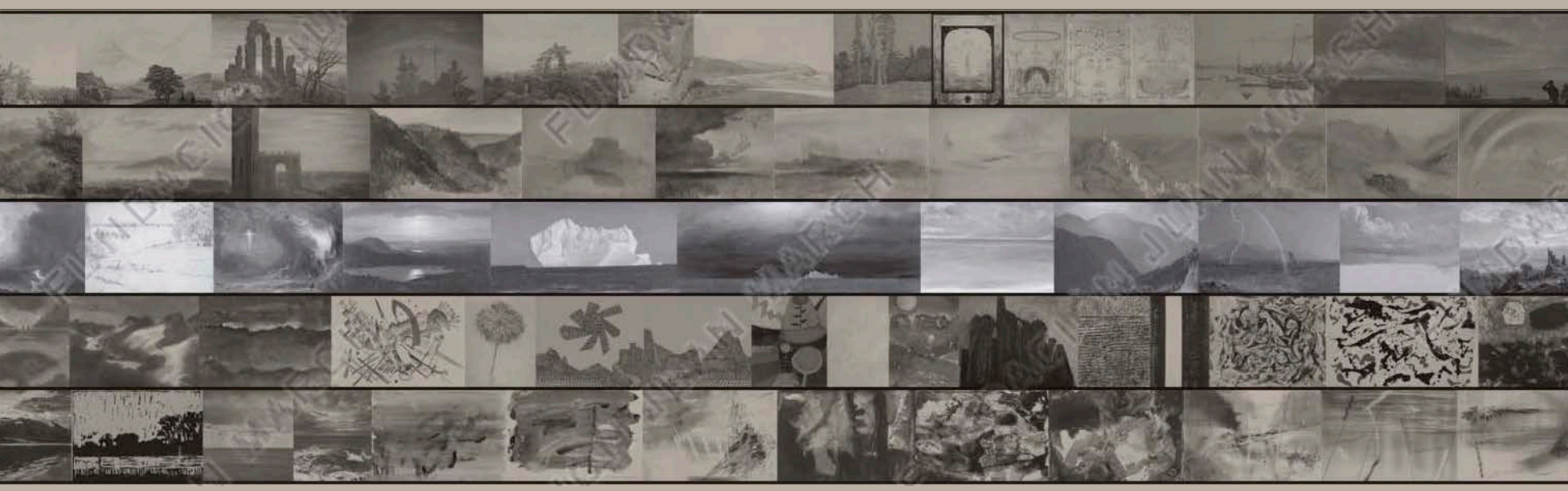
4-7/16 x 7-3/8 in. (11.2 x 18.8 cm)

48

JOHN CONSTABLE
View of Downland Country, n.d.
Pencil and watercolor
5 x 8-¼ in. (12.9 x 21 cm)

49

JOHN CONSTABLE
The Close, Salisbury, n.d.
Oil on paper
10-⅜ x 8 in. (26.4 x 20.3 cm)



II

NORTH AMERICA: THE NATURE OF THE SUBLIME

FROM COLE TO BIERSTADT

The transformation of the sublime in American art:

from a concept based on an inherited European construct

to one that has become distinctly American.

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THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE AND THE MUTABLE SUBLIME

BARBARA DAYER GALLATI

The line from the Romantic Sublime to the Abstract Sublime is broken and devious, for its tradition is more one of erratic, private feeling than submission to objective disciplines.

Robert Rosenblum, "The Abstract Sublime," 1961[1]

In his groundbreaking essay, "The Abstract Sublime," Robert Rosenblum opened a rich and ongoing dialogue concerning the manifestation of the aesthetic of the sublime in American painting. Expanding his ideas in *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (1975), he sought to account for the similar experiences induced by, for example, the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840) and Mark Rothko (1903-1970).[2] While allowing for the possibility of coincidence rather than historical continuity, Rosenblum posited that the aesthetic correspondences he detected had their origins in humanity's communal and profound quest for the spiritual in a secular world.[3]

Since 1961, when Rosenblum first posed his theory of the Abstract Sublime, other art historians have investigated the sublime in terms of its contribution to the construction of the 19th-century American school of landscape painting. Chief among them are Barbara Novak and Angela Miller, both of whom underscore the shifting character of the concept as it meshed with a network of notions that alternately cast America as a primal, savage wilderness, a New Eden, a Paradise regained, the contested geography of Manifest Destiny, or as a document for reading God's hand in the geological evolution of the cosmos.[4] Notwithstanding the acknowledged mutability of the sublime, there is consensus that, as the 19th century matured, the American sublime relied less on the conventional Burkean model and engaged in what might be called a transcendent, or spiritual sublime.[5] This alteration triggered a consonant shift in the aesthetic experience; the painted image no longer represented (or visualized) the sites of the sublime but, instead, was meant to generate it in the viewer, elevating him/her to a higher state of consciousness. This essay presents a brief summary of the factors that contributed to the transformation of the sublime in American art from a concept based on an inherited European construct to one that has become distinctly American.

THE INHERITED SUBLIME

Almost without exception, the first American landscape specialists were British, either by birth or by cultural heritage.[6] Regardless of whether or not they had actually read Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London, 1757), they arrived in the New World conversant in the spoken and visual idioms that bore evidence of just how deeply Burke's theories were embedded in the intellectual apparatus of picture-making and in the verbal descriptions of what was seemingly a virgin land.

Detail. Thomas Cole
The Voyage of Life - Manhood, *1848*
Engraving
CAT. 54

Burke, of course, was not the only writer who had endeavored to codify experience in aesthetic terms and it is just as likely that the writings of William Gilpin exerted influence of similar weight on the first generation of professional landscape painters in the United States.[7] As Edward Nygren has observed, Gilpin's aversion to the sublime landscape and his promotion of the picturesque view were compatible with the pragmatic desires of early settlers whose goal was to tame and cultivate the wilderness rather than to admire it.[8] Within a generation, however, this attitude changed radically. If, in 1782, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur could confidently state, "Many ages will not see the shore of our great lakes replenished with inland nations, nor the unknown bounds of North America entirely peopled," then, by 1827, novelist James Fenimore Cooper's famed character Hawkeye would despair, "How much has the beauty of the wilderness been deformed in two short lives!"[9]

Crèvecoeur's notion that the boundless North American continent would remain undeveloped for "ages" had quickly collapsed under the realities of a rapid westward push, one of the most stunning examples of which was the Erie Canal. Completed in 1825, the manmade waterway spanned the breadth of New York State to provide a vital navigable route linking New York City, the Great Lakes, and western regions beyond. The canal, a pet project of Governor DeWitt Clinton, was not only a commercial boon to New York City, but it made the wilder reaches of the nation more accessible. Clinton himself may have been responsible for stirring public curiosity about the landscape as he began the difficult campaign to fund the canal. His 1816 address delivered at the American Academy of the Fine Arts in New York extolled the benefits of living in a nation blessed with a varied landscape: "Can there be a country in the world better calculated than ours to exalt the imagination – to call into activity the creative powers of the mind, and to afford just views of the beautiful, the wonderful and the sublime?"[10] Clinton's words position landscape as a site of national identity and it is perhaps no coincidence that the success of the aspiring young painter Thomas Cole (1801-1848) rested on similar sentiments when he burst on the New York City art scene in 1825, capturing critical accolades for his novel canvases featuring the Catskill region.

A number of factors account for Cole's position as the primary inheritor and practitioner of the sublime tradition in the arts of the United States. Instilled with the Romantic ideals that permeated the England of his birth, Cole as a youth briefly had lived at the edge of the American frontier where the borders separating the savage wilderness and the fragile outposts of civilization were indistinct at best. His travels through Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York had made him a privileged witness not only to the untouched landscape, but also to the advance of settlement and the concomitant annihilation of the natural forests. He translated this experience into prose, poetry and paintings whose themes center on solitary journeys through perilous territories in which the lone traveler often finds himself on the brink of utter chaos and darkness.

Cole repeated the iconography of mankind on the brink in paintings ranging from scenes from Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (for example, *The Death of Cora*, ca. 1827, Annenberg Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania) to his own historicized transcriptions of the Catskills, as in *The Falls of Kaaterskill* (1826, Warner Collection of Gulf States

Thomas Cole
Fig. 1: Course of Empire: Savage State
Fig. 2: Course of Empire: Arcadian State
Both works: 1833-36, oil on canvas, 39-¼ x 63-¼ (100 x 160 cm)
Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York, NY
(1858.1), (1858.2)

Paper Corporation, Tuscaloosa, Alabama), in which an Indian standing at the edge of the waterfall functions as a symbol of the indigenous populations that had already been pushed westward from their lands. Although expressed in an American vernacular, the motif is a distant relation of the imagery of gothic horror found in European literature. Cole's familiarity with this tradition is borne out in *The Devil Throwing the Monk from the Precipice* (cat. 50), a drawing that possibly illustrates a passage from Matthew Gregory Lewis's 1796 novel *Ambrosio, or the Monk*, in which the devil casts the disgraced monk Ambrosio to his death upon the rocks. A bestseller in its time, Lewis's lurid tale of the monk's pact with the devil was doubtless inspired by Goethe's *Faust* and exemplifies the occasional intersection of German and British literary concerns.[11]

Conscious of landscape's inferior status within the subject hierarchy governing the fine arts, Cole set out to achieve a "higher style of landscape."[12] His goal was fueled by his travels to Europe (in 1829-32 and 1841-42), after which he undertook complex multi-canvas projects wherein the repertoire of iconic landscape styles (an amalgam of modes standardized in the art of Claude Lorrain, Salvatore Rosa, John Martin and J.M.W. Turner, among others) was deployed to propel allegorical narratives in serial format. Whereas Cole's great series *The Course of Empire* (figs. 1-5) mapped the rise and fall of a civilization, his *Voyage of Life* (cat. 52-55) traced the progress of an individual through the stages of life (childhood, youth, manhood and old age).[13] In the latter series, Cole reduces his imagery to a simple opposition of the Burkean beautiful and the sublime; the solitary pilgrim on life's river finds islands of calm in the quiet, sunlit arcadian countryside, while his travails are signified by a journey on perilously rough waters under a tumultuous sky punctuated by a Turneresque vortex of cloud and light. Although the scenes are imaginary, Cole's fundamental allegiance to nature is apparent in the incorporation of details such as the barren trees in the foreground of *Manhood*, which have their origins in the many tree studies Cole created (cat. 51). Yet even Cole's trees contribute mightily to the sense of the sublime. Their jagged, irregular forms testify to the irresistible forces of the nature to which they have succumbed.

THE REVELATORY AND UTILITARIAN SUBLIMES

Cole's didactic applications of the "inherited sublime" to landscape influenced his student Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900). However, shortly after Cole's premature death in 1848, Church paid homage to his master with *To The Memory of Cole* (1848, Des Moines Women's Club, Des Moines, Iowa), a deeply symbolic painting that nonetheless determinedly rejects the overtly allegorical landscape formulae Church had learned from Cole.[14] Yet Church also executed a thematically related sketch, *Apotheosis to Thomas Cole* (cat, 57) that acknowledges the codified patterns of the sublime he had received from his teacher.

As part of a new generation of painters, however, Church was not content to perpetuate an essentially European mode of expression that was barely hidden under the veneer of the American landscape. What is more, his comfortable, New England family background likely spared him the dark insecurities that haunted Cole and accentuated his predilection for gothic moods. Church's encounter with the sublime brought about an ecstatic,

Thomas Cole
Fig. 3: Course of Empire: Consummation, *51-¼ x 76 in. (130 x 193 cm)*
Fig. 4: Course of Empire: Destruction, *39-¼ x 63-½ in. (100 x 160 cm)*
Both works: 1833-36, oil on canvas.
Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York, NY (1858.3), (1858.4)

eclectic blend of direct observation, theater and natural history played out in his monumental canvases of exotic locales (or national locales made exotic) that substantiated the divine hand of creation. The romance of geographic exploration in the name of science reached him primarily through the writings of the German naturalist Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), whose ideas inspired Church's travels to such far-flung reaches of the globe as South America, Labrador, the Middle East, as well as more familiar spots in Europe and the United States. In his *Cosmos: A Sketch of a Physical Description of the Universe* (1845–61), Humboldt expounded on the tasks of the landscape painter, whose mission he believed was to record direct impressions of nature that would then be distilled in the painter's mind and manifested on canvas as a fresh and independent image. Church answered Humboldt's call for a painter of heroic landscapes, adopting the panoramic vistas and monumental scale recommended by the naturalist who theorized that the Grand Style modified the reception of the viewer, who, "inclosed [sic], as it were, within a magic circle, and wholly removed from all the disturbing influences of reality, may the more easily fancy that he is actually surrounded by a foreign scene."[15] Church's remarkable *Above the Clouds at Sunrise* (fig. 6) embodies the artist's pictorial response to Humboldt's theory of enclosing the viewer in a "magic circle." In this case it is the viewer himself who stands at the brink – not of a hellish chasm, but of a glorious firmament. Church often returned to the compositional device of pulling the viewer into pictorial space and simultaneously building the tensions associated with the sublime; deprived of a solid foothold in the landscape that enfolds him, the viewer is forced to straddle the boundaries of the real and pictorial spheres.

Unlike Church, who attempted to reconcile science and belief in landscape, the Prussian-born and Düsseldorf-trained Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902) implemented an essentially utilitarian approach to his magisterial depictions of the American West.[16] Although both artists (and many of their contemporaries) executed small plein-air sketches (cat. 63, 64, 66, 67) that formed the basis for their large studio productions, their aims diverged. The pragmatic Bierstadt recognized the market potential of works that would satisfy the curiosity of an

Fig. 5: Thomas Cole, Course of Empire: Desolation, *1833-36*
Oil on canvas, 39-¼ x 63-¼ in. (100 x 160 cm)
Collection of The New-York Historical
Society, New York, NY (1858.5)

essentially eastern, urban audience about the distant reaches of the continental expanse. His highly publicized travels with government-sponsored expeditions validated the truthfulness of his imagery, though, like Church, he composed and manipulated the landscape for aesthetic effect. Remarked upon by James Jackson Jarves as displaying a "hard-featured rationalism," Bierstadt's "Great Pictures," vied with Church's for general popularity, but garnered vastly different responses from the critical community and appealed to a different set of patrons, many of whom were railroad industrialists whose wealth was born of westward expansion.[17] Writing about Bierstadt's *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak* (fig. 7), one reviewer compared the art of the two painters of heroic landscape:

> It is purely an American scene, and from the faithful and elaborate delineation of the Indian village, a form of life now rapidly disappearing from the earth, may be called a historic landscape. It is the curtained continent with its sublime natural forms and its rude savage human life. . . . And unlike Mr. Church's pictures of equatorial mountain scenery of America, which from their volcanic and tropical character, however, luxuriant, yet forbid hope and leave an impression of profound sadness and desolation, this work of Bierstadt's inspires the temperate cheerfulness and promise of the region it depicts and the imagination contemplates it as the possible seat of supreme civilization.[18]

The passage quoted here underscores the dramatic cultural shift that was occurring in the United States at a time when the concept of Manifest Destiny emerged as the sustaining rationale for the swift and comprehensive expansion of "civilization" to the Pacific. In this sense, power over landscape was transferred from the exclusive authority of Divine Providence and given over to the will of man. In this new context, the classic (or Burkean) meaning of the sublime could no longer function, for it would be impossible to experience terror in a landscape over which humanity had dominion.[19] In short, if Church's epic canvases revealed the divine and ineluctable natural forces that shaped the earth's past and future, then Bierstadt's advertised the promise of national hegemony.

Fig. 6: Frederic Edwin Church
Above the Clouds at Sunrise, *1849. Oil on canvas*
Property of the Westervelt Company and displayed in The Westervelt-Warner Museum of American Art in Tuscaloosa, Alabama

THE TRANSCENDENT SUBLIME

The visual bombast orchestrated by Church and Bierstadt was not the only route to the sublime, however. There was a quieter mode that had its source in the writings of such diverse thinkers as John Ruskin (1819–1900) and Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), both of whom believed that nature provided access to higher spiritual realms. Ruskin's precept espousing the "earnest loving study of God's work in nature" was central to his *Modern Painters* (1843–60) and *The Elements of Drawing* (1857), volumes that were widely read by American artists at mid-century. The English critic's moralizing tone and emphasis on "truthful" and "faithful" attentiveness to nature coincided with attitudes already firmly entrenched in American thought[20] and are paralleled in Asher B. Durand's 1855 "Letters on Landscape Painting" in which the then leader of the American landscape school wrote:

> There is yet another motive for referring you to the study of Nature early – its influence on the mind and heart. The external appearance of this our dwelling place, apart from its wondrous structure and functions that minister to our well-being, is fraught with lessons of high and holy meaning, only surpassed by the light of Revelation.[21]

Durand and many of his painter contemporaries believed that the contemplation of nature (either in actuality or through paintings) exerted palliative effects by transporting the viewer from a vulgar, material existence to a mental state on a higher, spiritual plane. Such notions, the surviving remnants of Romanticism, were voiced earlier by Friedrich's friend and admirer Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869):

> Climb to the topmost mountain peak, gaze out across long chains of hills, and observe the rivers in their courses and all the magnificence that offers itself to your eye – what feeling takes hold of you? There is a silent reverence within you; you lose yourself in infinite space; silently, your whole being is purified and cleansed; your ego disappears. *You are nothing: God is all*.[22]

There is no evidence that Durand had read Carus's *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (1815–24), and it may simply be an odd coincidence that both painters wrote nine letters about the art and purpose of landscape painting. Nonetheless (and as evidence of the Romantic Zeitgeist), both men shared the belief that the contemplation of nature was a purifying process that involved the surrender of the self to a higher power. This content finds strong parallel in Emerson's words:

Fig. 7:
Albert Bierstadt, The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak*, 1863*
Oil on canvas, 73-½ x 120-¾ in. (186.7 x 306.7 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1907 (07.123)

> Standing on the bare ground, – my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, – all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God.[23]

Emerson – a conspicuous conduit for delivering an eclectic array of eastern and western philosophies to the American Transcendentalist movement – was likely the crucial link in the chain of thought that crossed the Atlantic from Germany to the United States, where it was seized by Durand.[24] Durand's solitary figure in *Early Morning at Cold Spring* (once known as *Sabbath Bells*) (fig. 8), does, indeed, commune with, and in, nature as if part of the Emersonian Over-Soul and functions as well as a visual cognate to Friedrich's lonely witnesses to the landscape.

THE ABSTRACT SUBLIME

The transcendent experience described by Durand, Carus and Emerson promoted the ideal of man's unification with nature and approached the type of "private feeling" Rosenblum cited as a prime constituent of the sublime. As a result of what Angela Miller has called the "sentimental revolution" in mid-century American culture, the sublime had become domesticated, "redefined as a voluntary and entirely painless subjection to nature's majestic forces."[25] It is this willing submission of self that is at the core of the Abstract Sublime, where it affects both process and reception. The works of Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, Adolph Gottlieb and Barnett Newman (however different they may be) involve the complete immersion of both artist and viewer in the infinite spaces suggested in their compositions. Pollock's now famous statement, "When I am *in* my painting, I'm not aware of what I'm doing"[26] is a forthright declaration of this sublime loss of self and corresponds with Newman's quest for "transcendental experiences" by suppressing imagery that evoked a predetermined meaning.[27] Rothko's rationale for painting on a large scale registers similarly:

> I paint very large pictures. I realize that historically the function of painting large pictures is painting something very grandiose and pompous. The reason I paint them, however . . . is precisely because I want to be very intimate and human. To paint a small picture is to place yourself outside your experience, to look upon an experience as a stereopticon view or with a reducing glass. However you paint the larger picture, you are in it. It isn't something you command.[28]

Despite their collective desire to free their art from the past, the language used by many of the Abstract Expressionists to describe their aesthetics betrays their philosophical and art-historical ancestries. The sheer physicality of the works alone makes the idea of the sublime unavoidable and the excursion into the veritable abyss of total abstraction demands the vocabulary of the Burkean sublime to form meaning out of pure sensation. The disparities in formal terms aside, the imagery of revelation claimed by Newman for the Abstract Expressionists holds the same profound, spiritual wonder that Cole discovered – not in the inherited sublime – but in the natural world.[29] Indeed, Cole might well have been describing a Rothko – or a Friedrich – when he wrote this response to a luminous, cloud-filled sky:

> There is neither height depth nor limit[;]. . . . There is deep unbroken repose. There nor form nor colors (one color only) nor chiaro scuro [sic] (only one gradation from the horizon) nor motion, nor sound is to be discovered. The changeful drapery of the earth is withdrawn from before us & we stand in the midst of the infinite & everlasting, tremblingly looking toward God.[30]

As this episodic survey demonstrates, the imagery of the American sublime is undeniably mutable. Yet, as Rosenblum originally believed, the unifying concept is bound up

Fig. 8:
Asher B. Durand. Early Morning at Cold Spring, *1850*
Oil on canvas. Montclair Art Museum,
Montclair, New Jersey

in the yearning to merge with the infinite, perhaps to discover that there is something greater than ourselves.

NOTES

1 Rosenblum's pioneering essay "The Abstract Sublime," originally published in *ARTnews* 59, no 10 (February, 1961), is reprinted in this catalogue.

2 Robert Rosenblum, *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975).

3 Rosenblum 1975, p. 218.

4 See Barbara Novak, "American Landscape: Changing Concepts of the Sublime," *American Art Journal*, vol. 4, no. 1 (spring, 1972), pp. 36-42; Barbara Novak, *Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting 1825-1875* (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1980); and Angela Miller, *The Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825-1875* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1993), esp. pp. 243-288.

5 Throughout the vast body of literature on the subject, the sublime has been dissected and categorized variously; examples of these categories are the "material sublime," the "theatrical sublime," the "atmospheric sublime," the "apocalyptic sublime," the "old sublime" and the "new sublime."

6 Among the first generation of American landscape specialists were: Joshua Shaw (ca. 1777-1860), William Groombridge (1748-1811) and Thomas Birch (1779-1851), all of whom were born in England.

7 The English Reverend William Gilpin (1724-1804) developed the theory of the picturesque as an alternative to the Burkean "sublime" and "beautiful." His essays were widely read in America and his ideas were transmitted especially through the teachings of the Scottish brothers Archibald (1765-1835) and Alexander Robertson (1772-1841) at the Columbian Academy of Painting, which they established in New York City in the 1790s.

8 See Edward J. Nygren, "From View to Vision," in Edward J. Nygren, et al., *Views and Visions: American Landscape before 1830*, exh. cat., Washington, D.C., The Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1986, p. 18.

9 J. Hector St. John de Crévecoeur (1735-1813), *Letters from an American Farmer*, Letter III, "What is an American?" reprinted from 1904 edition (New York: Fox Duffield), AS@UVA Hypertexts, 1995: http://xroads.virginia.edu. and James Fenimore Cooper, *The Prairie* (1827; reprint, New York: New American Library, 1980), p. 260.

10 Governor DeWitt Clinton (1769-1828), quoted in Tim Barringer, "The Course of Empires: Landscape and Identity in America and Britain, 1820-1880," in Andrew Wilton and Tim Barringer, *American Sublime: Landscape Painting in the United States, 1820-1880*, exh. cat., London, Tate Britain, 2002, p. 39.

11 Lewis (1775-1818), who was fluent in German, had met Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in Germany sometime in 1792-93.

12 For Cole's use of the phrase, see Alan Wallach, "Thomas Cole: Landscape and the Course of American Empire," (pp. 79-84) in *Thomas Cole: Landscape into History*, William H. Truettner and Alan Wallach, eds., exh. cat., Washington, D.C., National Museum of American Art, 1994.

13 Cole executed two versions of *The Voyage of Life*. The first, dated 1839-1840, is in the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, New York. The engravings reproduced here are based on the first series. The second series, painted in 1841-42, is now in the collection of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

14 See J. Gray Sweeney, "'Endued with Rare Genius:' Frederic Edwin Church's 'To the Memory of Cole,'" *Smithsonian Studies in American Art* 2, no. 1 (Winter 1988), pp. 44-71.

15 Humboldt, *Cosmos*, trans. by E. E. Otté, 2 vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1850), vol. 2, p. 98, quoted in Novak 1980, p. 63.

16 Despite Bierstadt's studies in Dusseldorf and his probable familiarity with contemporary German landscape painting, there is no evidence of his knowledge of German philosophy. For Bierstadt see especially Nancy K. Anderson and Linda S. Ferber, *Albert Bierstadt: Art & Enterprise*, exh. cat., New York, The Brooklyn Museum, 1990.

17 James Jackson Jarves, *The Art Idea: Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture in America*, 1864 quoted in Anderson/Ferber 1990, p. 28.

18 "The New Pictures," *Harper's Weekly* 8 (March 26, 1864), pp. 194-195.

19 Winfried Fluck has made similar observations, "The sublime of the Hudson River School is hardly ever the Burkean sublime, then, because this would have meant to question the ennobling, benevolent character of the American landscape and thus, by implication, the manifest destiny of the American nation." See Fluck's essay, "Theatricality and Excess: A European Look at the American Landscape," in *New World. Creating an American Art*, exh. cat. by Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser in collaboration with Ortrud Westheider and Karsten Müller, Hamburg, Germany, Bucerius Kunst Forum, 2007, p. 95.

20 For the influence of John Ruskin on American art, see especially Linda S. Ferber, "Determined Realists": The American Pre-Raphaelites and the Association for the Advancement of Trust in Art," (pp. 11-37) in Linda S. Ferber and William H. Gerdts, *The New Path: Ruskin and the American Pre-Raphaelites*, exh. cat., New York, Brooklyn Museum, 1985.

21 Asher B. Durand, "Letter II," reprinted in Linda S. Ferber, *Kindred Spirits: Asher B. Durand and the American Landscape*, exh. cat., New York and London: Brooklyn Museum, 2007, p. 235.

22 Carl Gustav Carus, "Letter II," reprinted in *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting, Written in the Years 1815-1824 with a Letter from Goethe by Way of Introduction*, intro. by Oskar Bätschmann, trans. by David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2002), p. 87.

23 Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Nature*, from which these lines are quoted, was first published in 1836 and again in 1849.

24 This is not to say that Emerson had read Carus. Rather, he was familiar with the ideas in German philosophy that contributed to Carus's beliefs.

25 Miller 1993, pp. 248-49.

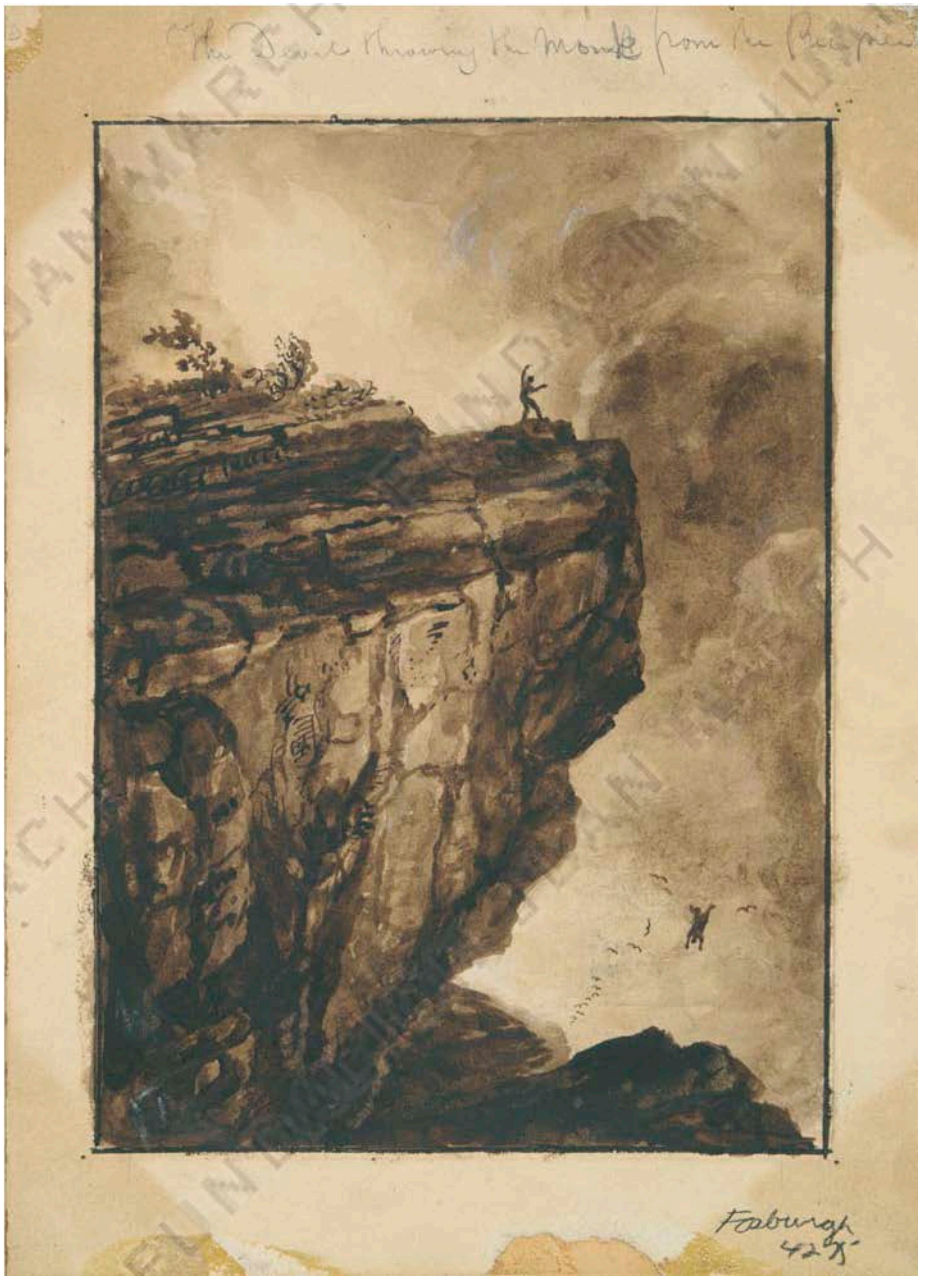
26 Jackson Pollock, "My Painting," *Possibilities* 1, vol. 1 (Winter 1947-48), p. 79.

27 Irving Sandler, *The Triumph of American Painting: A History of Abstract Expressionism* (New York: Harper & Row, Icon Editions [1976]), p. 149.

28 Rothko quoted in "A Symposium on How to Combine Architecture, Painting, and Sculpture," *Interiors* 110 (May 1951), p. 104.

29 Newman wrote: "We are reasserting man's natural desire for the exalted, for a concern with our relationships to the absolute emotions. . . . The image we produce is the self-evident one of revelation, real and concrete, that can be understood by anyone who will look at it without the nostalgic glasses of history." "The Sublime is Now," *The Tiger's Eye*, No. 6 (December 1948), p. 51.

30 Marshall B. Tymn, *Cole: Collected Essays* (St. Paul, Minn: John Colet Press, 1980), p. 185.



50

THOMAS COLE

The Devil Throwing the Monk from the Precipice, n.d.

Pen and brown ink, touches of graphite on paper, touches of white body color

7-⅝ x 5-⅜ in. (19.3 x 13.5 cm)

51

THOMAS COLE

Sketch of Two Dead Trees, n.d.

Graphite on paper

Sheet: 8 x 10-¼ in. (20.3 x 26 cm)

52

THOMAS COLE

The Voyage of Life – Childhood, 1848

Engraving

Image: 14-13/16 x 22-3/4 in. (37.6 x 57.8 cm)

Sheet: 18-7/8 x 25-1/2 in. (48 x 64.8 cm)

53

THOMAS COLE

The Voyage of Life – Youth, 1848

Engraving

Image: 14-13/16 x 22-3/4 in. (37.6 x 57.8 cm)

Sheet: 18-7/8 x 25-1/2 in. (48 x 64.8 cm)

54

THOMAS COLE

The Voyage of Life – Manhood, 1848

Engraving

Image: 14-13/16 x 22-3/4 in. (37.6 x 57.8 cm)

Sheet: 18-7/8 x 25-1/2 in. (48 x 64.8 cm)

55

THOMAS COLE

The Voyage of Life – Old Age, 1848

Engraving

Image: 14-13/16 x 22-3/4 in. (37.6 x 57.8 cm)

Sheet: 18-7/8 x 25-1/2 in. (48 x 64.8 cm)

"Rural nature … is, in fact, the exhaustless mine

from which the poet and the painter have brought such wondrous

treasures – an unfailing fountain of intellectual enjoyment,

where all may drink, and be awakened to a deeper feeling of the works

of genius, and a keener perception of the beauty of our existence."

Thomas Cole, "Essay on American Scenery," *American Monthly Magazine* (January 1836)

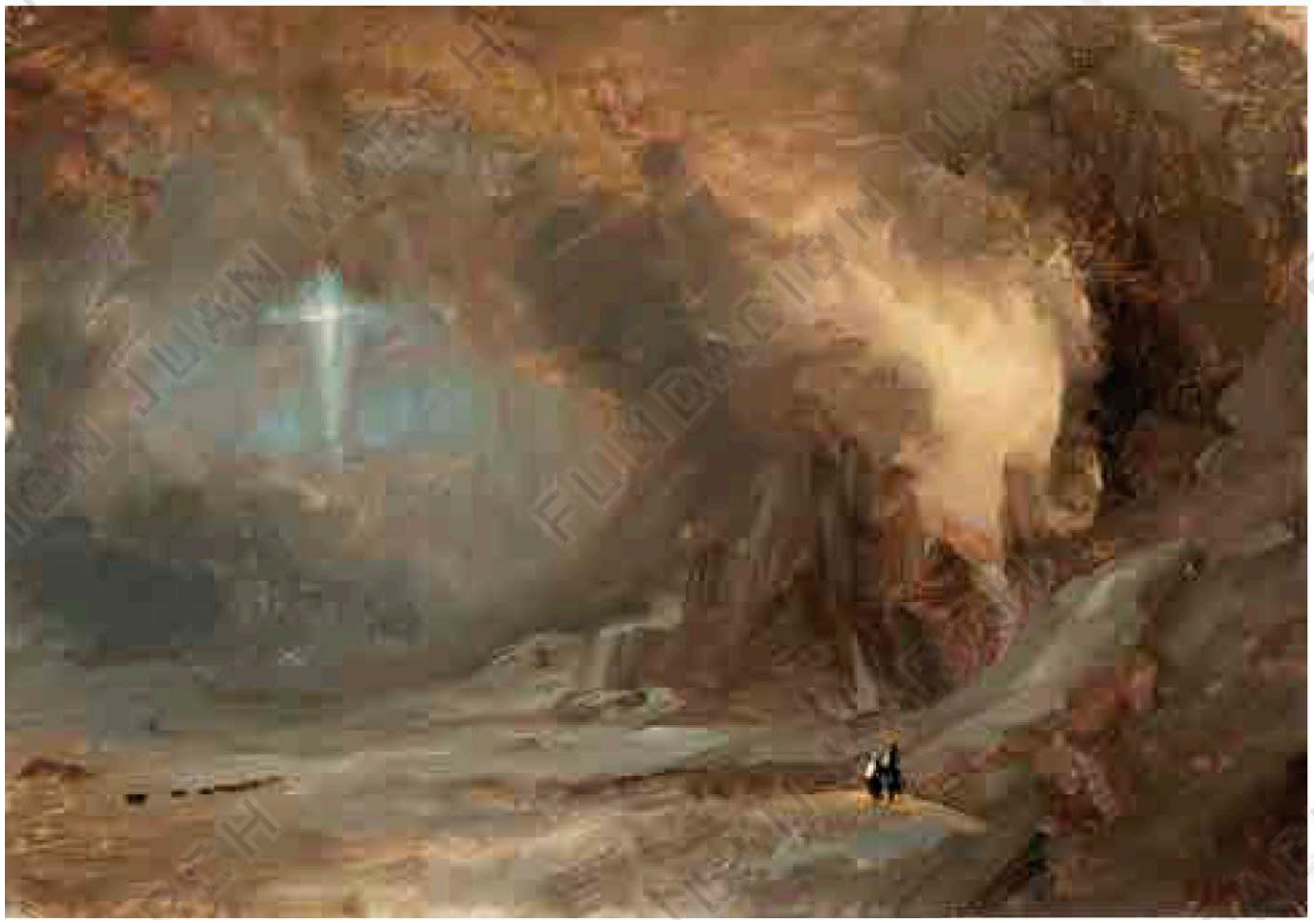
56

MARTIN JOHNSON HEADE

Friars Head / Campobello, August 24, 1862

Pencil on paper

7-¾ x 11 in. (19.7 x 27.9 cm)



57

FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Vision of the Cross, Study for "Apotheosis to Thomas Cole," after 1847

Brush and oil paint on paperboard

7 x 10 in. (18 x 25.5 cm)

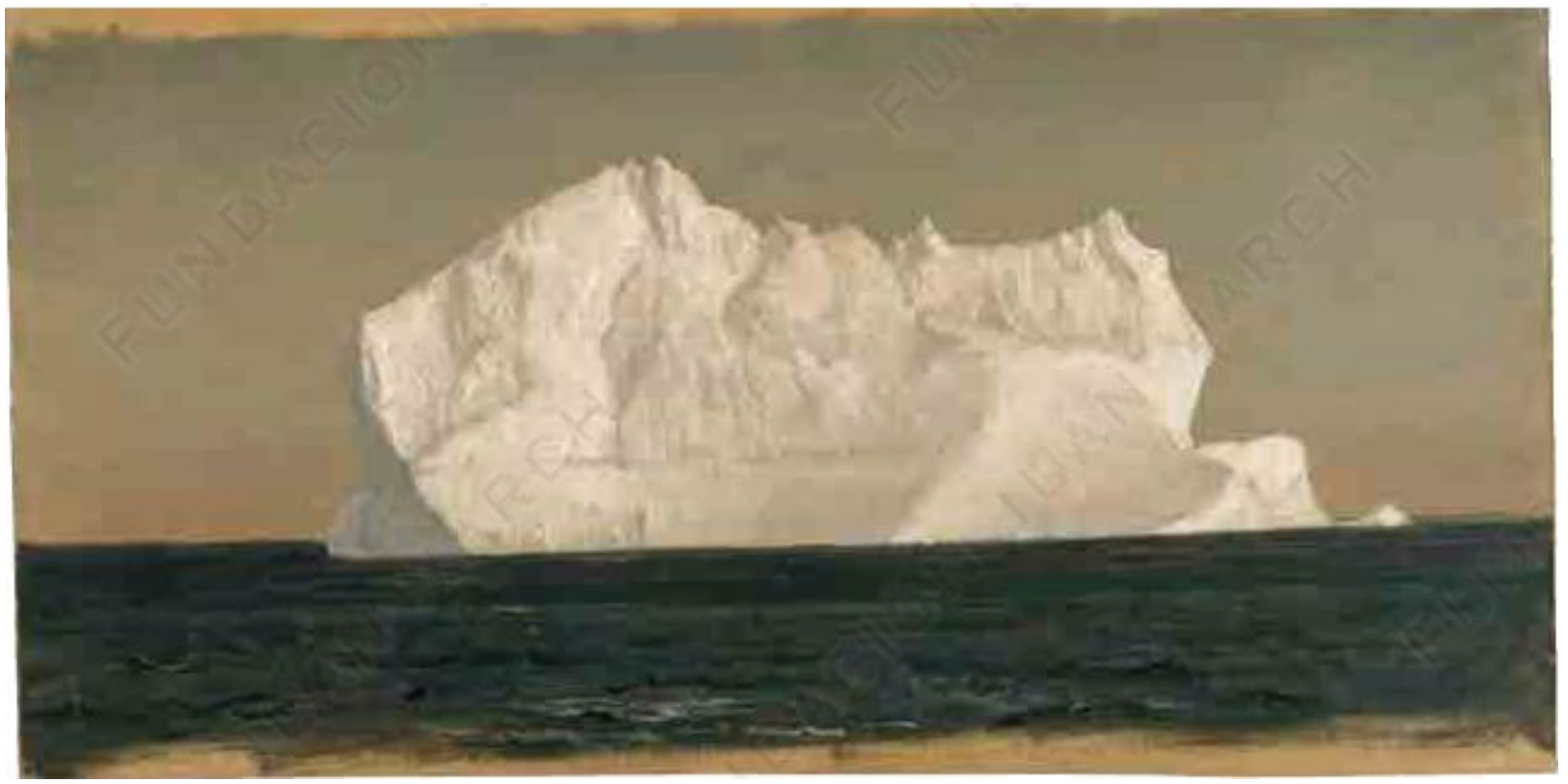
58

FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Eagle Lake Viewed from Cadillac Mountain, Mount Desert Island, Maine, 1850-60

Brush and oil paint, graphite on paperboard

11-9/16 x 17-1/2 in. (29.4 x 44.5 cm)



59

FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Floating Iceberg, 1859

Brush and oil paint on paperboard

7-⅜ x 14-¾ in. (18.8 x 37.5 cm)

60

FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Iceberg, New Foundland, 1859

Brush and oil paint on paperboard

5-⅜ x 13-⅞ in. (13.7 x 35.3 cm)

61

FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Seascape with Icecap in the Distance, June or July 1859

Brush and oil paint, graphite on paperboard

7-⅛ x 10 in. (18.1 x 25.6 cm)

62

FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Blue Mountains, Jamaica, August 1865

Brush and oil paint on paperboard

11-⅞ x 18 in. (29.1 x 45.4 cm)

"Standing on the bare ground, – my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, – all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* (1836)

63

FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Alpine Scene in Thunderstorm, 1868

Brush and oil paint, graphite on paperboard

29-⅜ x 44-½ in. (74.7 x 113 cm)

64

FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Cloud Study, 1871

Brush and oil paint, graphite on paperboard

10-⅛ x 12-¹⁵⁄₁₆ in. (25.7 x 32.9 cm)

65

ALBERT BIERSTADT
Scene in the Tyrol, 1854
Oil on fiberboard
9-½ x 13 in. (24 x 32.8 cm)

66

ALBERT BIERSTADT

White Mountains, New Hampshire, 1857

Oil on paper mounted on paperboard

5-¾ x 8-⅝ in. irreg. (14.6 x 21.8 cm); on mount: 6 x 8-¾ in. (15.2 x 22.2 cm.)

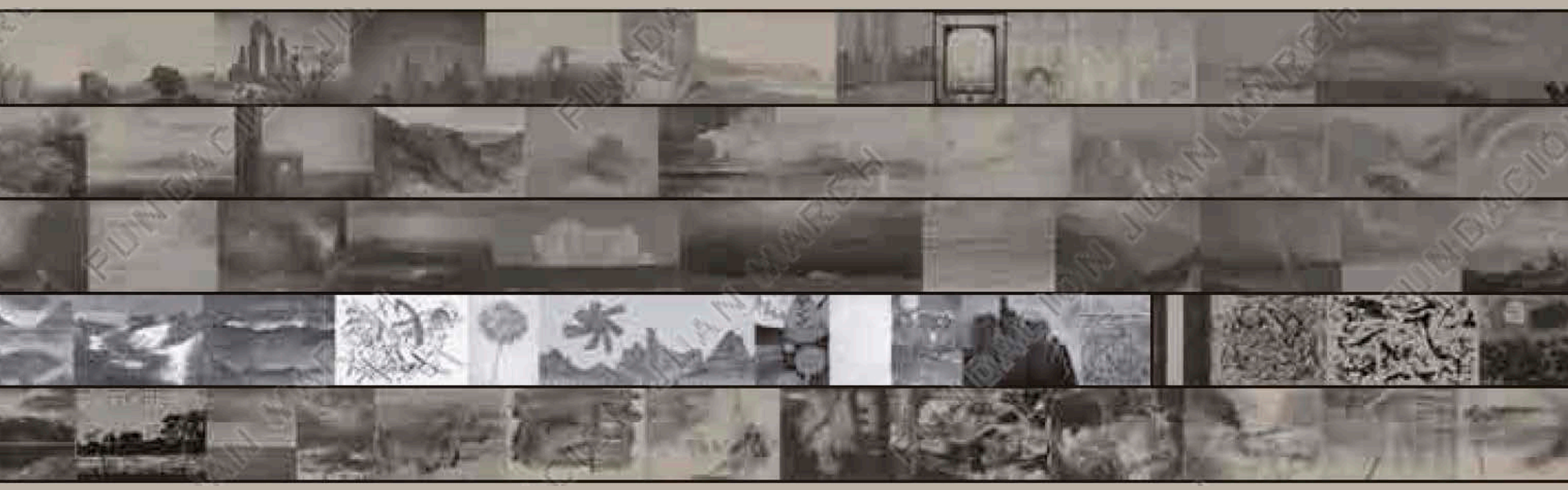
67

ALBERT BIERSTADT

Gathering Storm, ca. 1857-58

Oil on paper mounted on paperboard

6-⅞ x 9-¾ in. (17.4 x 24.7 cm)



III

THE NORTHERN ROMANTIC TRADITION AND ABSTRACTION: LANDSCAPE BETWEEN THE CENTURIES

FROM VAN GOGH TO ERNST

68

VINCENT VAN GOGH
Felder und Gärten
(Fields and Gardens), n.d.
Pen and India ink
9-½ x 12-½ in. (24.1 x 31.8 cm)

69

VINCENT VAN GOGH

Boomwortels

(Tree Roots), 1882

Chalk on paper

19-5/16 x 27 in. (49 x 68.5 cm)

"It is a sad and very melancholy scene, which must strike everyone who knows and feels that we also have to pass one day through the valley of the shadow of death…. What lies beyond this is a great mystery that only God knows, but He has revealed absolutely through His word that there is a resurrection of the dead."

Vincent van Gogh, Letter to his brother Theo (1878)

70

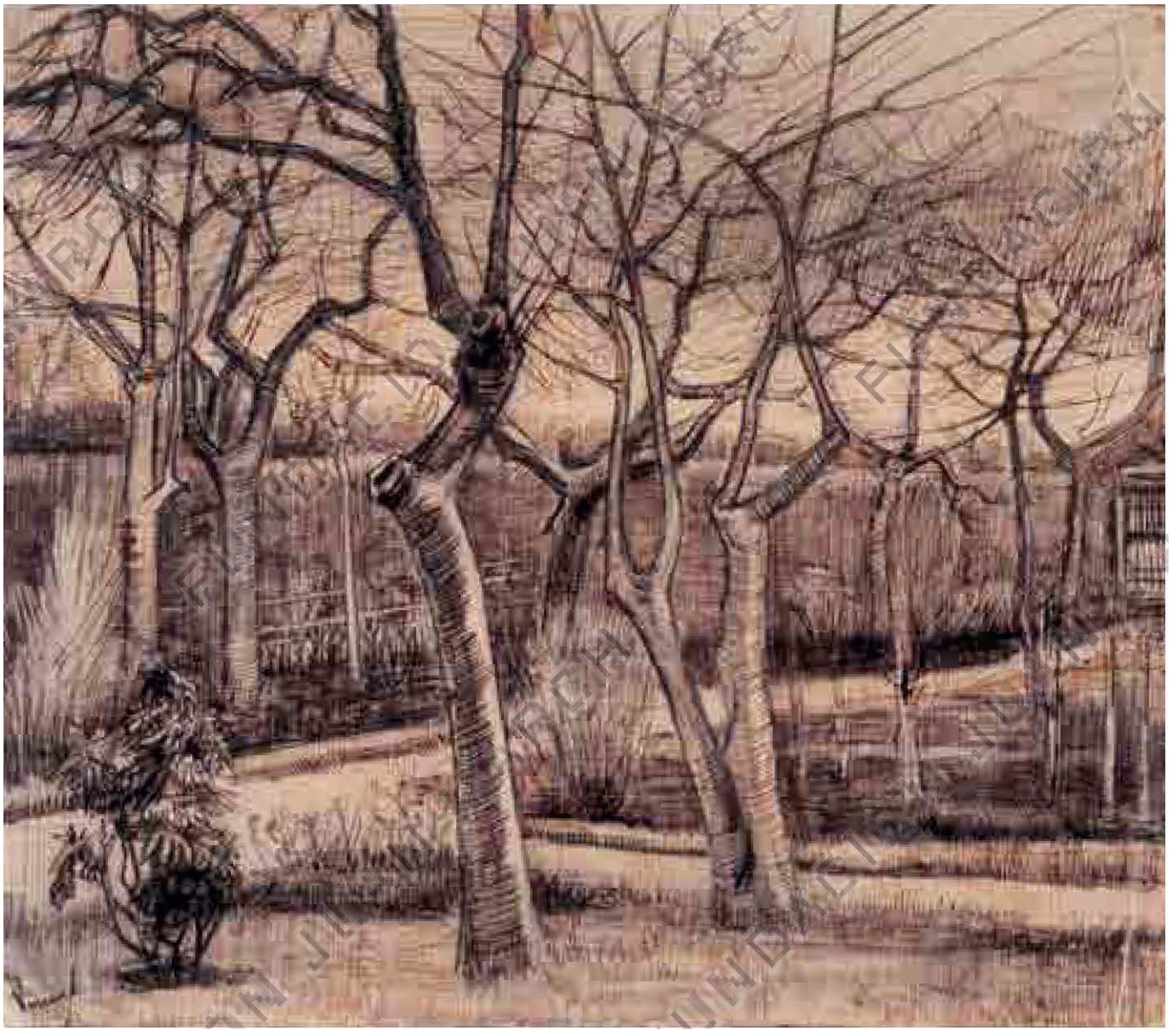
VINCENT VAN GOGH

Melancholie (Melancholy)

Nuenen, December 1883

Pencil, pen and ink, on paper

11-¼ x 8-⅛ in. (28.6 x 20.6 cm)



71

VINCENT VAN GOGH

De pastorietuin (The Vicarage Garden)

Nuenen, March 1884

Pencil, pen and ink, on paper

7-⅞ x 9-³⁄₁₆ in. (20 x 23.5 cm)

72

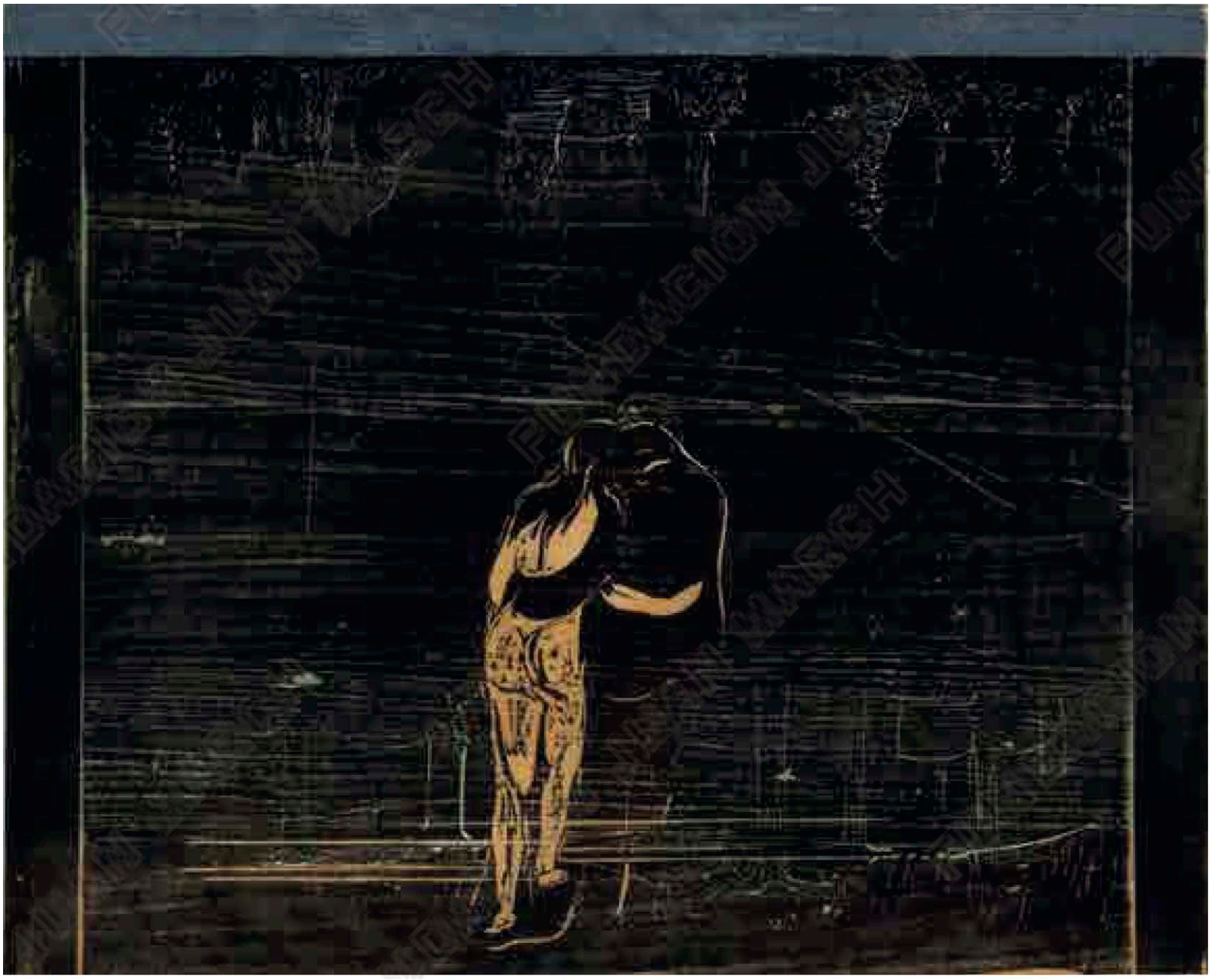
EDVARD MUNCH

Junge Frau am Strand (Die Einsame)

(Young Woman on the Beach [The Loner]), 1896

Mezzotint and drypoint on handmade paper

11-⅜ x 8-¹⁄₁₆ in. (28.9 x 22 cm)



73

EDVARD MUNCH

Zum Walde I

(Towards the Forest I), 1897

Colored woodcut print on paper

20-13/16 x 25-1/8 in. (52.8 x 64.5 cm)

74

EDVARD MUNCH

Zwei Frauen am Meeresufer (Two Women along the Bank), 1898

Colored woodcut print on paper

17-15/16 x 20-3/16 in. (45.5 x 51.3 cm)

75

EDVARD MUNCH
Grosse Schneelandschaft
(Large Snowy Landscape), 1898
Colored woodcut print on paper
12-⅔ x 18 in. (32.4 x 45.8 cm)

76

EDVARD MUNCH
Zwei Menschen (Die Einsamen)
(Two Figures [The Loners]), 1899
Colored woodcut print on paper
15-9/16 x 21 in. (39.5 x 53.2 cm)

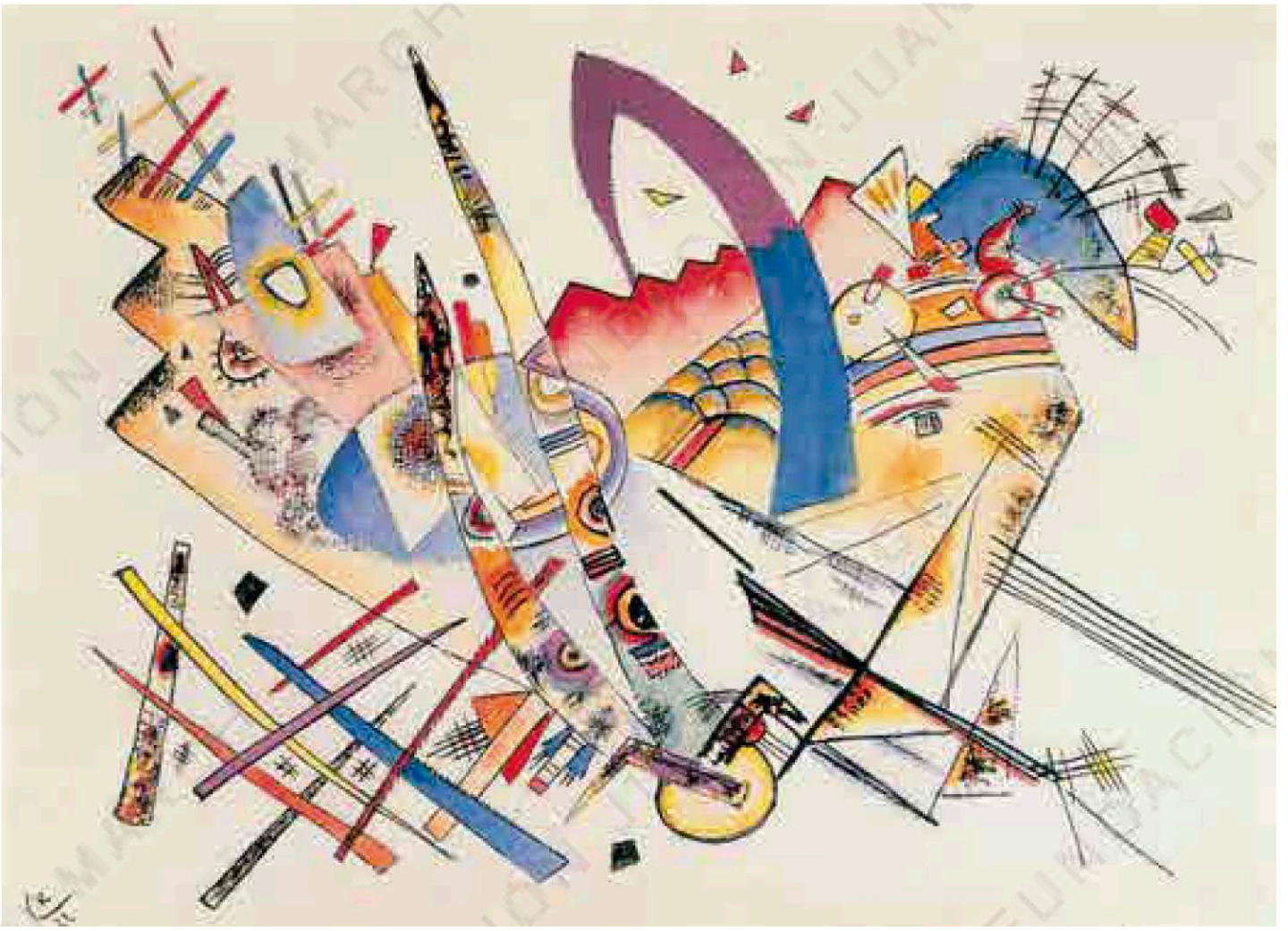
77

EDVARD MUNCH

Die Eiche (The Oak Tree), 1903

Etching on heavy wove paper

25-5/16 x 32-1/16 in. (64.3 x 49.8 cm)



78

WASSILY KANDINSKY
Untitled, 1922
Watercolor and ink on paper
10-½ x 14-5⁄16 in. (26.7 x 36.3 cm)

79

EMIL NOLDE

"Lichte Meerstimmung"

(Seascape with Luminous Atmosphere), 1901

Oil on canvas

25-9/16 x 32-1/16 in. (65 x 83 cm)

80

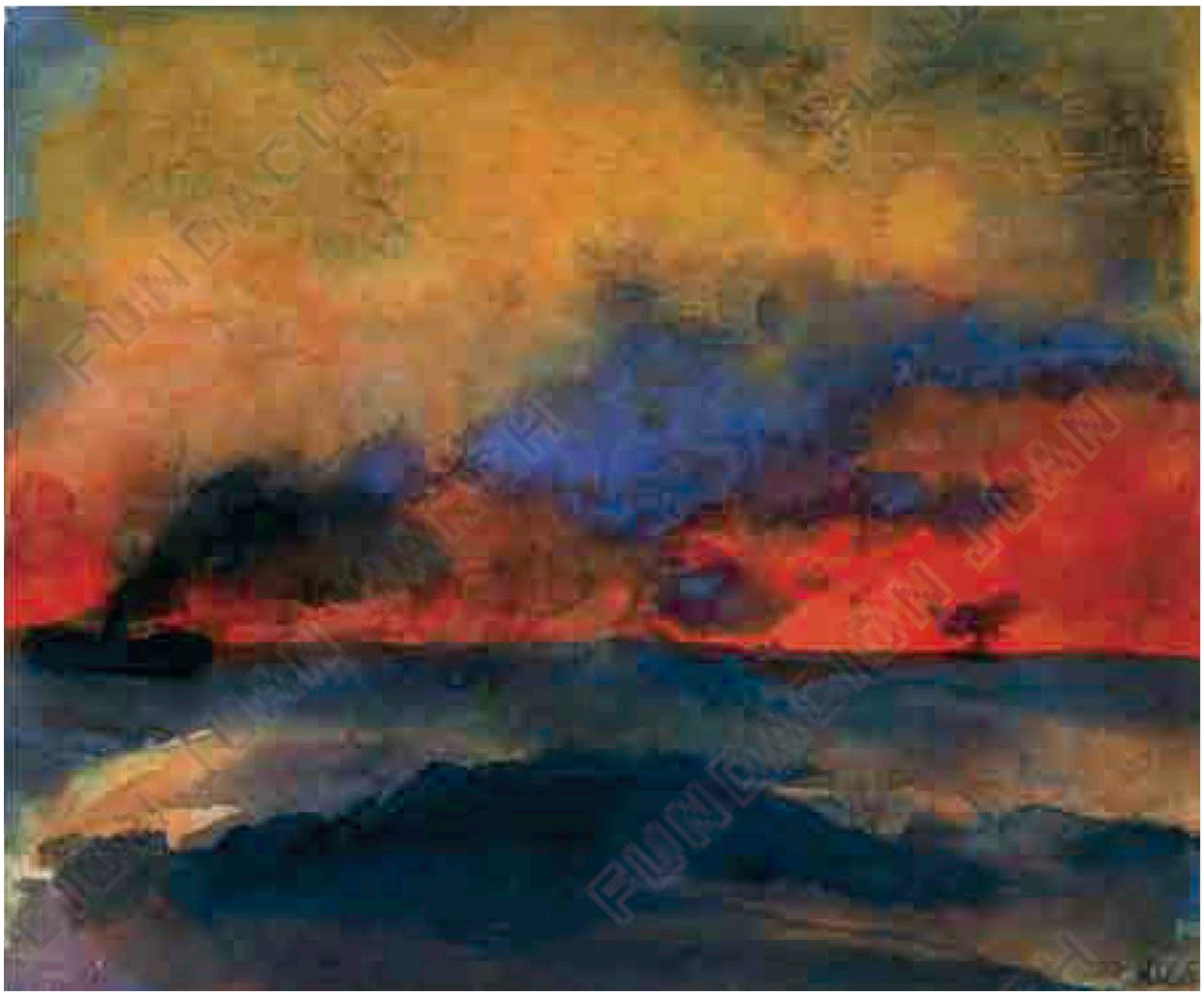
EMIL NOLDE

Herbstmeer

(Autumn Sea), 1920

Watercolor

13-9/16 x 18-5/8 in. (34.5 x 47.3 cm)



81

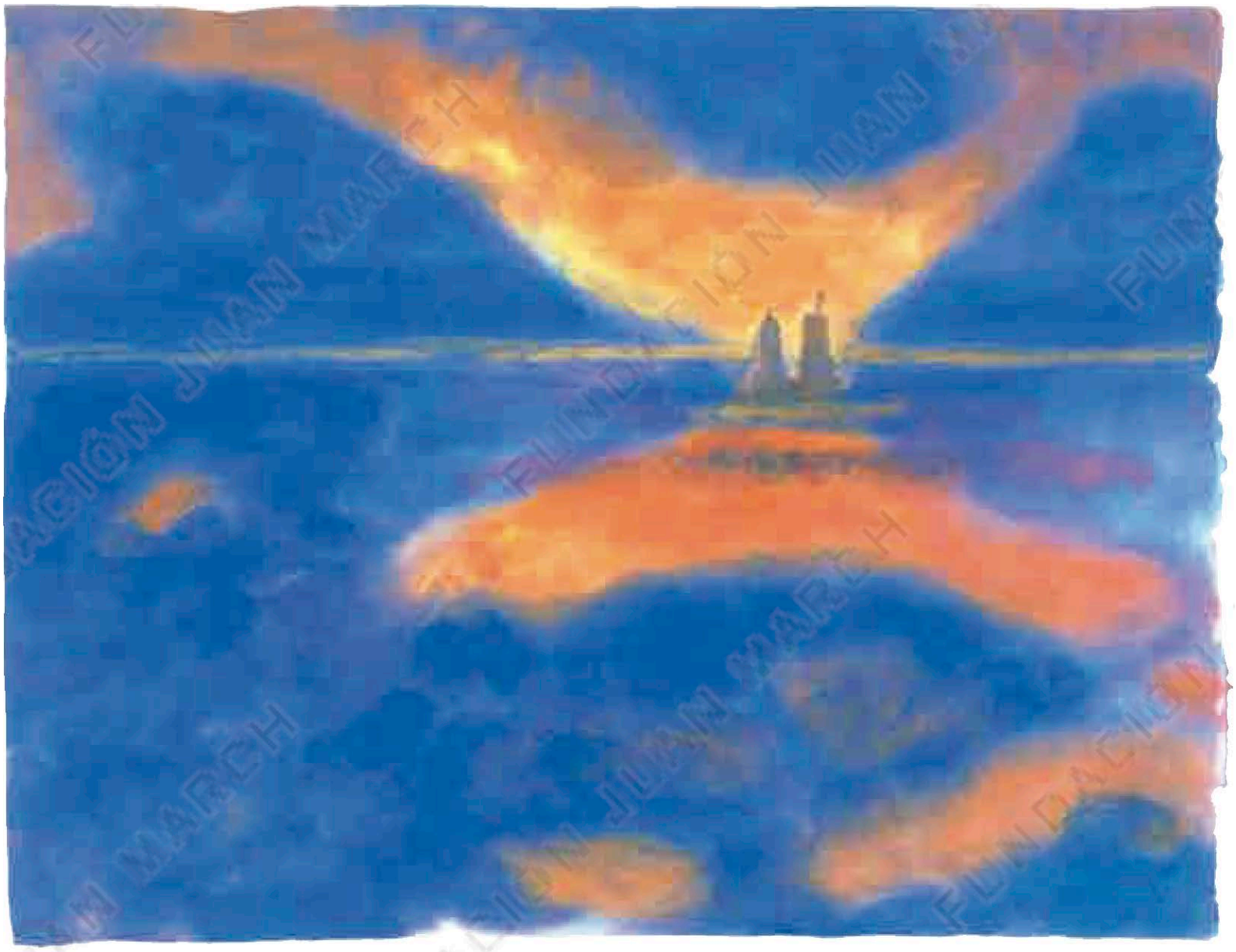
EMIL NOLDE

Meer mit rotem Himmel (kleiner Dampfer)

(Sea with Red Sky [Small Steamboat]), 1946

Watercolor

9 x 10-13/16 in. (23 x 27.4 cm)



82

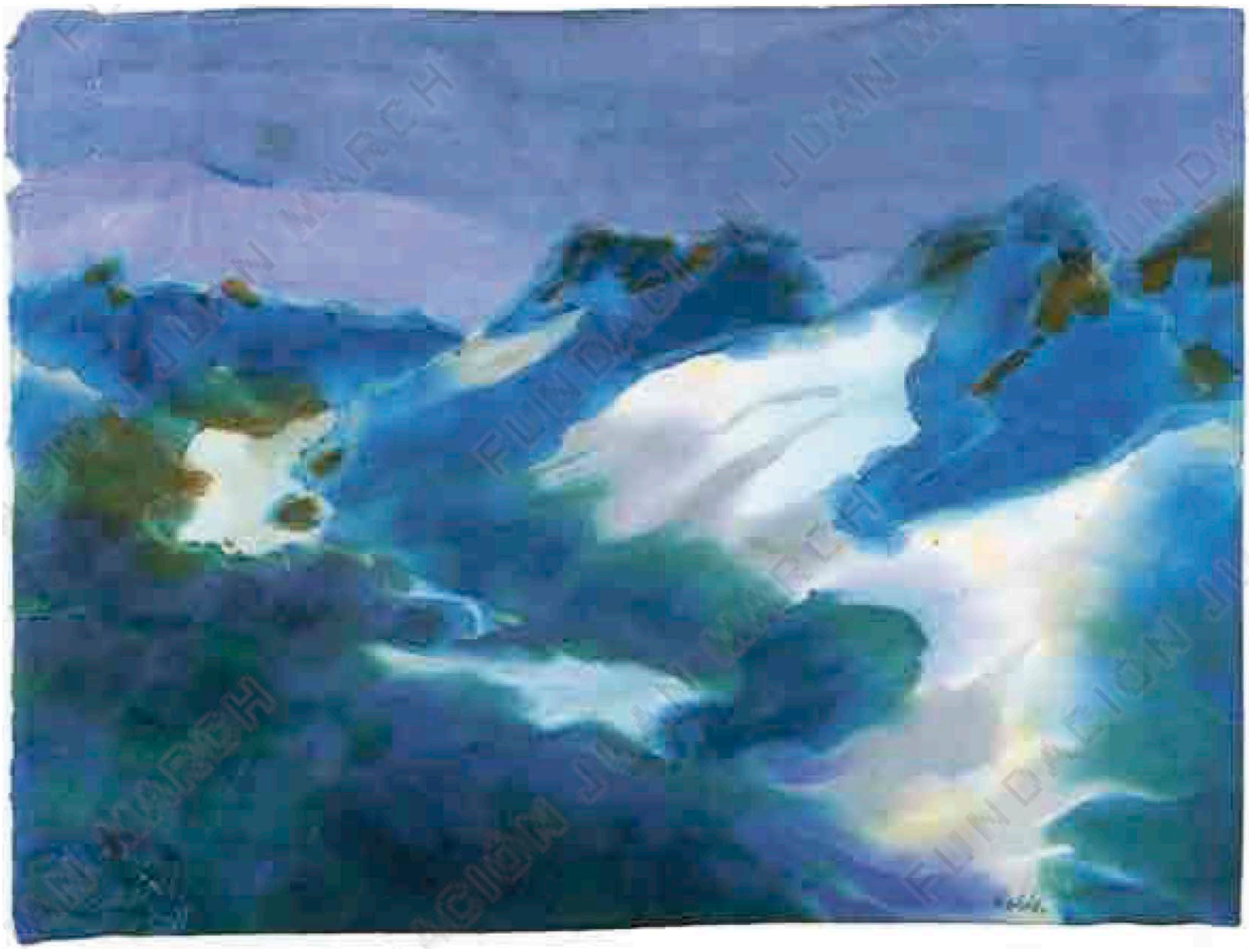
EMIL NOLDE

Rote Wolken

(Red Clouds), n.d.

Watercolor on handmade paper

13-9/16 x 17-5/8 in. (34.5 x 44.7 cm)



83

EMIL NOLDE

Berglandschaft (blau und grün)

(Mountainscape [Blue and Green]), n.d.

Watercolor

13-⅞ x 18-⅜ in. (35.2 x 46.6 cm)

84

EMIL NOLDE

Ozean

(Ocean), n.d.

Watercolor

13-5/16 x 18 in. (33.8 x 45.6 cm)

"The natural appearance, natural form, natural color, natural rhythm, natural relations most often express the tragic .... We must free ourselves from our attachment to the external, for only then do we transcend the tragic, and are enabled consciously to contemplate the repose which is within all things."

Piet Mondrian, 1920

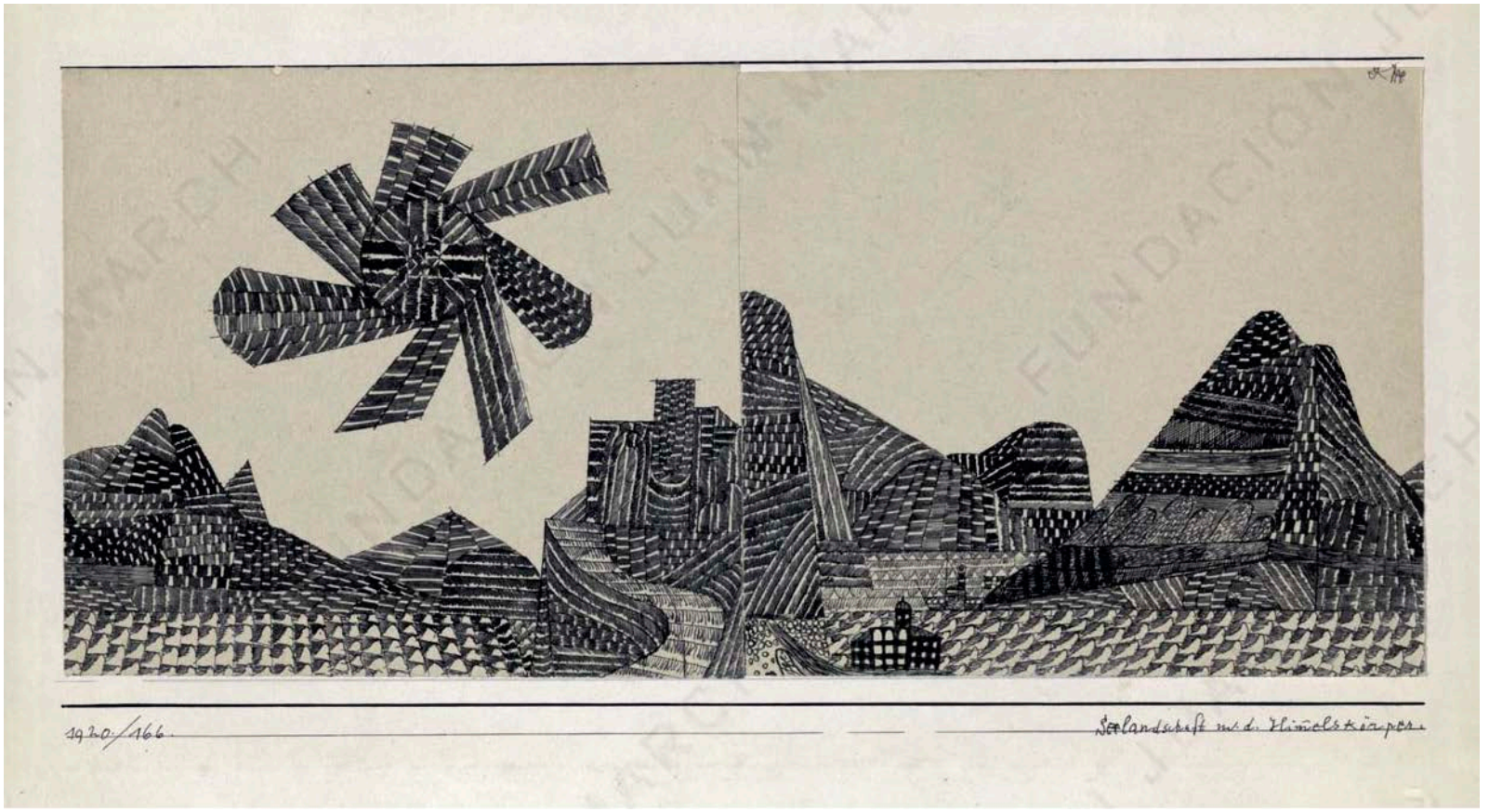
85

PIET MONDRIAN

Chrysanthemum, 1907

Pencil on paper

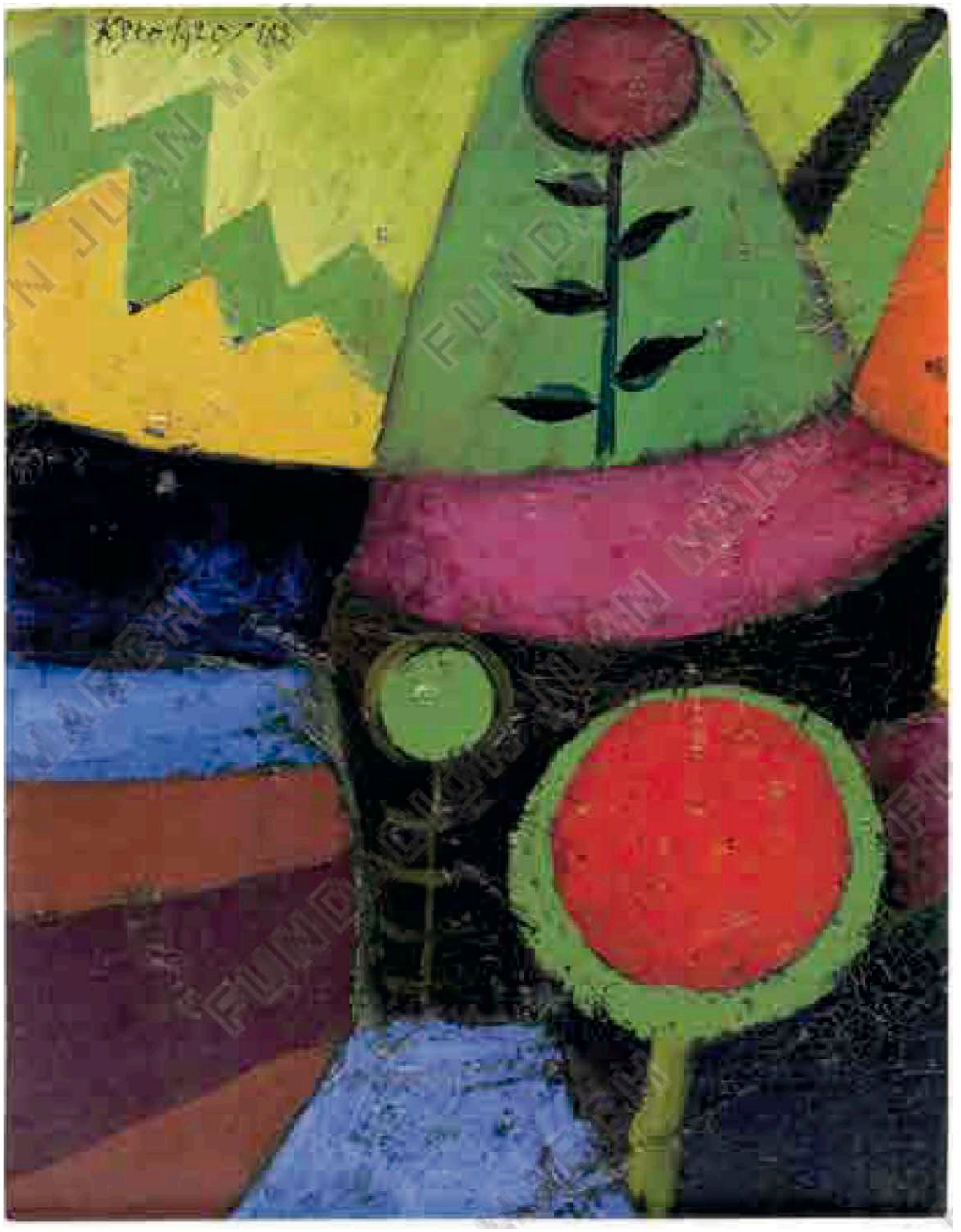
15-3/16 x 8-1/4 in. (38.6 x 21 cm)



86

PAUL KLEE

Seelandschaft mit dem Himmelskörper
(Lake Landscape with the Celestial Body), 1920, 166
Pen on cut paper on cardboard
5 x 11 in. (12.7 x 28.1 cm)



87

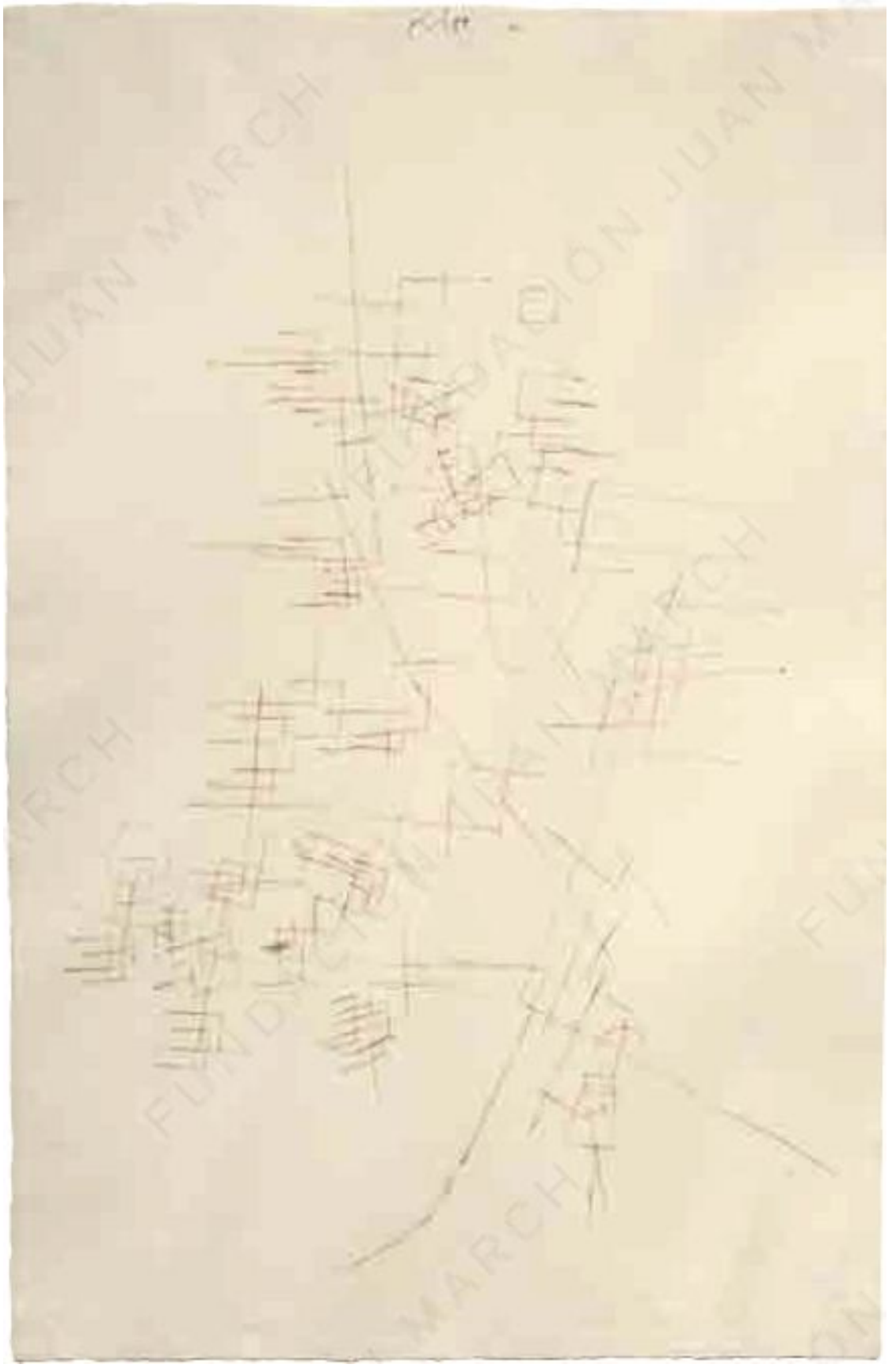
PAUL KLEE

Drei Blumen

(Three Flowers), 1920, 183

Oil on primed cardboard

7-1/16 x 5-7/8 in. (19.5 x 15 cm)



88

PAUL KLEE

Ansteigende Ortswege

(Rising Village Roads), 1930

Ink and brush on paper mounted on board

22-7/16 x 13 in. (57 x 33.1 cm)

89

MAX ERNST

Soleil (Sun)

Copper engraving, etching and aquatint in two colors

Image: 8-⅞ x 6-½ in. (22.5 x 16.5 cm)

Sheet: 18-⅜ x 13-⅞ in. (46.7 x 35.2 cm)

90

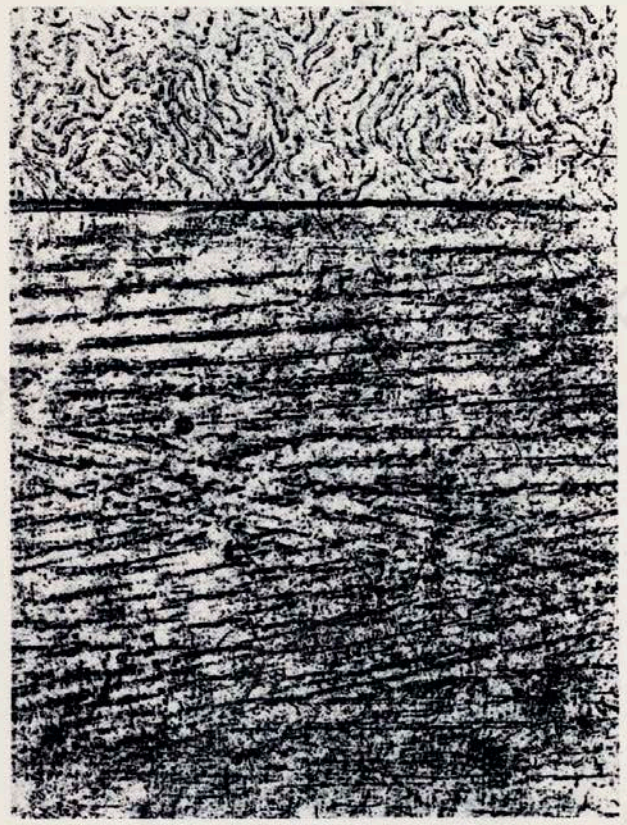
MAX ERNST

Forêt et soleil

(Forest and Sun)

Oil on canvas

39-⅜ x 31-⅞ in. (100 x 81 cm)



Kleist Brentano Arnim

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH

Seelandschaft mit Kapuziner

Paysage marin avec un Capucin

Illustriert und ins Französische übertragen von

MAX ERNST

Edition Hans Bolliger Zürich 1972

91

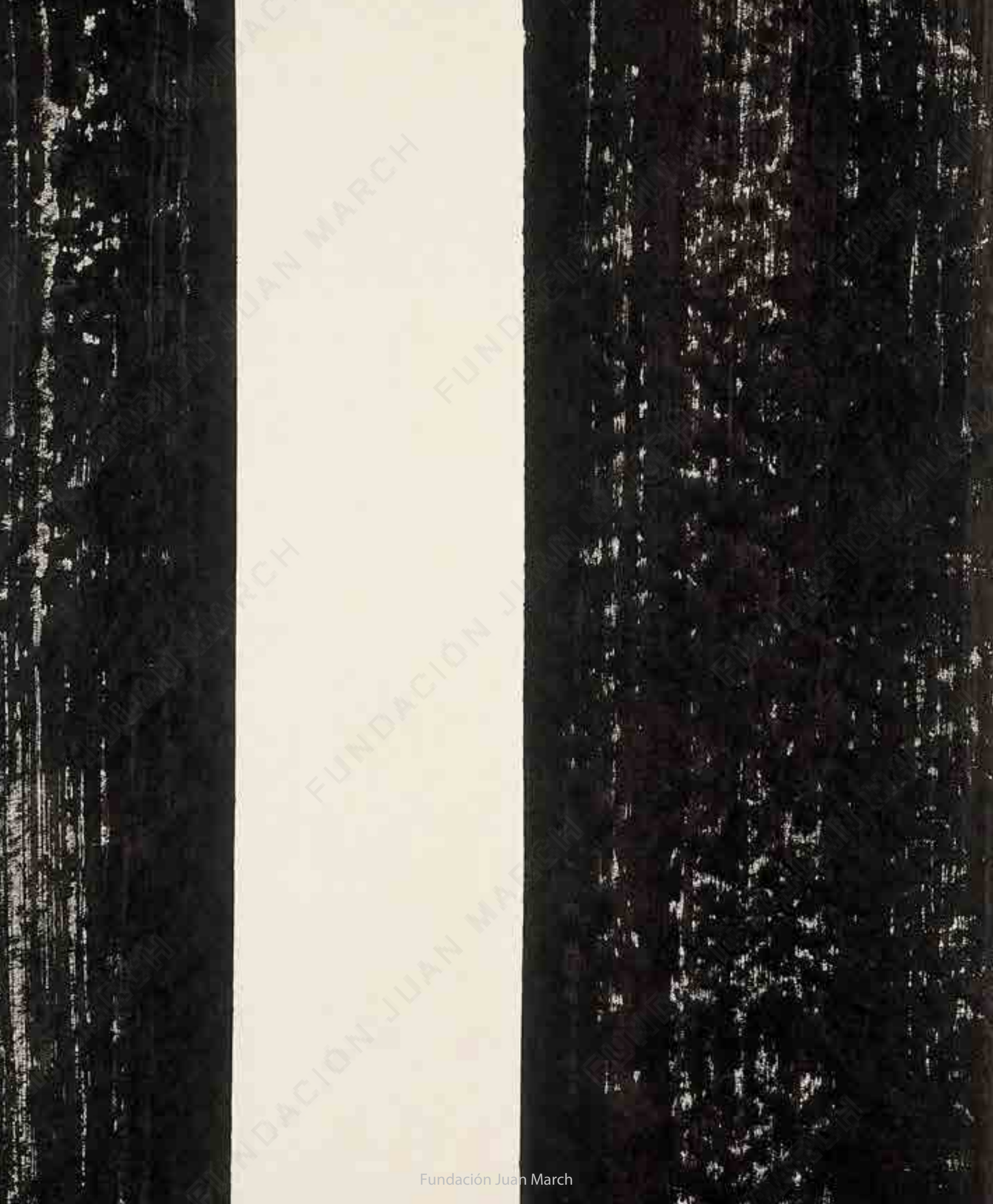
MAX ERNST

Heinrich von Kleist, Clemens Brentano, Achim von Arnim
Caspar David Friedrich: Seelandschaft mit Kapuziner=Paysage marin avec un Capucin
(Caspar David Friedrich: Seascape with Capuchin Monk)
Edited, illustrated and translated into French by Max Ernst
Zurich: Edition Hans Bolliger, 1972

IV

THE SPIRIT OF LANDSCAPE AND TOTAL ABSTRACTION

FROM NEWMAN TO ROTHKO



How some of the most heretical concepts of modern American abstract painting relate to the visionary nature-painting of a century ago.

•

THE ABSTRACT SUBLIME

ROBERT ROSENBLUM

"It's like a religious experience!" With such words, a pilgrim I met in Buffalo last winter attempted to describe his unfamiliar sensations before the awesome phenomenon created by seventy-two Clyfford Stills at the Albright Art Gallery. A century and a half ago, the Irish Romantic poet, Thomas Moore, also made a pilgrimage to the Buffalo area, except that his goal was Niagra Falls. His experience, as recorded in a letter to his mother, July 24, 1804, similarly beggared prosaic response:

> I felt as if approaching the very residence of the Deity; the tears started into my eyes; and I remained, for moments after we had lost sight of the scene, in that delicious absorption which pious enthusiasm alone can produce. We arrived at the New Ladder and descended to the bottom. Here all its awful sublimities rushed full upon me.… My whole heart and soul ascended towards the Divinity in a swell of devout admiration, which I never before experienced. Oh! Bring the atheist here, and he cannot return as an atheist! I pity the man who can coldly sit down to write a description of these ineffable wonders: much more do I pity him who can submit them to the admeasurement of gallons and yards.… We must have new combinations of language to describe the Fall of Niagra.

Moore's bafflement before a unique spectacle, his need to abandon measurable reason for mystical empathy, are the very ingredients of the mid-twentieth-century spectator's "religious experience" before the work of Still. During the Romantic Movement, Moore's response to Niagra would have been called an experience of the "Sublime," an esthetic category that suddenly acquires fresh relevance in the face of the most astonishing summits of pictorial heresy attained in America in the last fifteen years.

Originating with Longinus, the Sublime was fervently explored in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and recurs constantly in the esthetics of such writers as Burke, Reynolds, Kant, Diderot and Delacroix. For them and for their contemporaries, the Sublime provided a flexible semantic container for the murky new Romantic experiences of awe, terror, boundlessness and divinity that began to rupture the decorous confines of earlier esthetic systems. As imprecise and irrational as the feelings it tried to name, the Sublime could be extended to art as well as to nature. One of its major expressions, in fact, was the painting of sublime landscapes.

A case in point is the dwarfing immensity of Gordale Scar, a natural wonder of Yorkshire and a goal of many Romantic tourists. Re-created on canvas between 1811 and 1815 by the British painter James Ward (1769-1855), *Gordale Scar* (fig. 1) is meant to stun the spectator into an experience of the Sublime that may well be unparalleled in painting until a work like Clyfford Still's *1956-D* (fig. 2). In the words of Edmund Burke, whose *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757) was the most influential analysis of such feelings, "Greatness of dimension is a powerful cause of the sublime." Indeed, in both the Ward and the Still, the spectator is first awed by the sheer magnitude of the sight before him. (Ward's canvas is 131 by 166 inches: Still's, 114-1/2 by 160 inches.) At the same time, his breath is held by the dizzy drop to the pit of an abyss; and then, shuddering like Moore at the bottom of Niagra, he can only look up with what senses are left him and gasp before something akin to divinity.

Detail. Barnett Newman
The Name, *1949*
Brush and black ink on paper
CAT. 92

Lest the dumbfounding size of these paintings prove insufficient to paralyze the spectator's traditional habits of seeing and thinking, both Ward and Still insist on a comparably bewildering structure. In the Ward, the chasm and cascades, whose vertiginous heights transform the ox, deer and cattle into Lilliputian toys, are spread out into unpredictable patterns of jagged silhouettes. No laws of man or man-made beauty can account for these God-made shapes; their mysterious, dark formations (echoing Burke's belief that obscurity is another cause of the Sublime) lie outside the intelligible boundaries of esthetic law. In the Still, Ward's limestone cliffs have been translated into an abstract geology, but the effects are substantially the same. We move physically across such a picture like a visitor touring the Grand Canyon or journeying to the center of the earth. Suddenly, a wall of black rock is split by a searing crevice of light, or a stalactite threatens the approach to a precipice. No less than caverns and waterfalls, Still's paintings seem the product of eons of change; and their flaking surfaces, parched like bark or slate, almost promise that this

Fig. 1: James Ward. Gordale Scar (A View of Gordale, in the Manor of East Malham in Craven, Yorkshire, the Property of Lord Ribblesdale)*, 1812-14, exhibited 1815. Oil on canvas, 131 x 166 in. (332.7 x 421.6 cm). Tate Britain, London, Purchased 1878 (N01043)*
Fig. 2: Clyfford Still. 1957-D, No. 1*, 1957. Oil on canvas, 113 x 159 in. (287 x 403.9 cm) Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1959*

natural process will continue, as unsusceptible to human order as the immeasurable patterns of ocean, sky, earth or water. And not the least awesome thing about Still's work is the paradox that the more elemental and monolithic its vocabulary becomes, the more complex and mysterious are its effects. As the Romantics discovered, all the sublimity of God can be found in the simplest natural phenomena, whether a blade of grass or an expanse of sky.

In his *Critique of Judgment* (1790), Kant tells us that whereas "the Beautiful in nature is connected with the form of the object, which consists in having boundaries, the Sublime is to be found in a formless object, so far as in it, or by occasion of it, boundlessness is represented (1, Book 2, §23). Indeed, such a breathtaking confrontation with a boundlessness in which we also experience an equally powerful totality is a motif that continually links the painters of the Romantic Sublime with a group of recent American painters who seek out what might be called the "Abstract Sublime." In the context of two sea meditations by two great Romantic painters, Caspar David Friedrich's *Monk by the Sea* of about 1809 (fig. 3) and Joseph Mallord William Turner's *Evening Star* (fig. 4), Mark Rothko's

Light Earth over Blue of 1954 (fig. 5) reveals affinities of vision and feeling. Replacing the abrasive, ragged fissures of Ward's and Still's real and abstract gorges with a no less numbing phenomenon of light and void, Rothko, like Friedrich and Turner, places us on the threshold of those shapeless infinities discussed by the estheticians of the Sublime. The tiny monk in the Friedrich and the fisher

Fig. 3: Caspar David Friedrich. Der Mönch am Meer *(Monk by the Sea), ca. 1809–10*
Oil on canvas, 43-⅓ x 67-½ in. (110 x 171.5 cm)
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Nationalgalerie
Fig. 4: J. M. W. Turner. The Evening Star, *ca. 1830. Oil on canvas*
35-⅞ x 48-¼ inches high (91.1 x 122.6 cm)
The National Gallery, London, Turner Bequest 1856 (NG 1991)

in the Turner establish, like the cattle in *Gordale Scar*, a poignant contrast between the infinite vastness of a pantheistic God and the infinite smallness of His creatures. In the abstract language of Rothko, such literal detail – a bridge of empathy between the real spectator and the presentation of a transcendental landscape – is no longer necessary; we ourselves are the monk before the sea, standing silently and contemplatively before these huge and soundless pictures as if we were looking at a sunset or a moonlit night. Like the mystic trinity of sky, water and earth that, in the Friedrich and Turner, appears to emanate from one unseen source, the floating, horizontal tiers of veiled light in the Rothko seem to conceal a total, remote presence that we can only intuit and never fully grasp. These infinite, glowing voids carry us beyond reason to the Sublime; we can only submit to them in an act of faith and let ourselves be absorbed into their radiant depths.

If the Sublime can be attained by saturating such limitless expanses with a luminous, hushed stillness, it can also be reached inversely by filling this void with a teeming, unleashed power. Turner's art, for one, presents both of these sublime extremes. In his *Snowstorm* of 1842 (fig. 7), the infinities are dynamic rather than static, and the most extravagant of nature's phenomena are sought our as metaphors for this experience of cosmic energy. Steam, wind, water, snow and fire spin wildly around the pitiful work of man – the ghost of a boat – in vortical rhythms that suck one into a sublime whirlpool before reason can intervene. And if the immeasurable spaces and incalculable energies of such a Turner evoke the elemental power of creation, other work of the period grapples even more literally with these primordial forces. Turner's contemporary, John Martin (1779-1854), dedicated his erratic life to the pursuit of an art which, in the words of the *Edinburgh Review* (1829), "awakes a sense of awe and sublim-

Fig. 5: Mark Rothko. Light Earth over Blue, *1954*
Oil on canvas, 76 x 67 in. (193 x 170.2 cm). Private collection
Fig. 6: Barnett Newman. Vir Heroicus Sublimis, *1950-51. Oil on canvas*
95-⅜ in. x 263-¼ in. (242.2 x 541.7 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Heller, 1958

ity, beneath which the mind seems overpowered." Of the cataclysmic themes that alone satisfied him, *The Creation*, an engraving of 1831 (fig. 8), is characteristically sublime. With Turner, it aims at nothing short of God's full power, upheaving rock, sky, cloud, sun, moon, stars and sea in the primal act. With its torrential description of molten paths of energy, it locates us once more on a near-hysterical brink of sublime chaos.

That brink is again reached when we stand before a *perpetuum mobile* of Jackson Pollock, whose gyrating labyrinths recreate in the metaphorical language of abstraction the superhuman turbulence depicted more literally in Turner and Martin. In *Number 1, 1948* (fig. 9), we are as immediately plunged into divine fury as we are drenched in Turner's sea; in neither case can our minds provide systems of navigation. Again, sheer magnitude can help produce the Sublime. Here, the very size of the Pollock – 68 by 104 inches – permits no pause before the engulfing; we are almost physically lost in this boundless web of inexhaustible energy. To be sure, Pollock's generally abstract vocabulary allows multiple readings of its mood and imagery; although occasional titles (*Full Fathom Five*, *Ocean Greyness*, *The Deep*, *Greyed Rainbow*) may indicate a more explicit region of nature. But whether achieved by the most blinding of blizzards or the most gentle of winds and rains, Pollock invariably evokes the sublime mysteries of nature's untamable forces. Like the awesome vistas of telescope and microscope, his pictures leaves us dazzled before the imponderables of galaxy and atom.

The fourth master of the Abstract Sublime, Barnett Newman, explores a realm of sublimity so perilous that it defies comparison with even the most adventurous Romantic explorations into sublime nature. Yet it is worth noting that in the 1940s, Newman, like Still, Rothko and Pollock, painted pictures with more literal references to an elemental nature; and that more recently, he has spoken of a strong desire to visit the tundra, so that he might have the sensation of being surrounded by four horizons in a total surrender to spatial infinity. In abstract terms, at least, some of his paintings of the 1950s already approach this sublime goal. In it's all-embracing width (114 ½ inches), Newman's *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* (fig. 6) puts us before a void as terrifying, if exhilarating, as the arctic emptiness of the tundra; and in its passionate reduction of pictorial means to a single hue (warm red) and a single kind of structural division (vertical) for some one hundred and forty-four square feet, it likewise achieves a simplicity as heroic and sublime as the protagonist of its title. Yet again, as with Still, Rothko and Pollock, such a rudimentary vocabulary creates baffflingly comp largest canvases by Newman, Still, Rothko and Pollock might well be interpreted as a post-World-

Fig. 7: J. M. W. Turner. Snow Storm – Steam-Boat off a Harbour's Mouth, *exhibited 1842. Oil on canvas 35-½ x 47 in. (91.4 x 121.9 cm) Tate Britain, London, Bequeathed by the artist 1856 (N00530)*
Fig. 8: John Martin, The Creation, *1831. Engraving*

War-II myth of Genesis. During the Romantic era, the sublimities of nature gave proof of the divine; today, such supernatural experiences are conveyed through the abstract medium of paint alone. What used to be pantheism has now become a kind of "paint-theism."

Much has been written about how these four masters of the Abstract Sublime have rejected the Cubist tradition and replaced its geometric vocabulary and intellectual structure with a new kind of space created by flattened, spreading expanses of light, color and place. Yet it should not be overlooked that this denial of the Cubist tradition is not only determined by formal needs, but also by emotional ones that, in the anxieties of the atomic age, suddenly seem to correspond with a Romantic tradition of the irrational and the awesome as well as with a Romantic vocabulary of boundless energies and limitless spaces. The line from the Romantic Sublime to the Abstract Sublime is broken and devious, for its tradition is more one of erratic, private feeling than submission to objective disciplines. If certain vestiges of sublime landscape painting linger in the later nineteenth century in the popularized panoramic travelogues of Americans like Bierstadt and Church (with whom Dore Ashton has compared Still), the tradition was generally suppressed by the international domination of the French tradition, with its familiar values of reason, intellect and objectivity. At times, the counter-values of the Northern Romantic tradition have been partially reasserted (with a strong admixture of French pictorial discipline) by such masters as van Gogh, Ryder, Marc, Klee, Feininger, Mondrian; but its most spectacular manifestations – the sublimities of British and German Romantic landscape – have only been resurrected after 1945 in America, where the authority of Parisian painting has been challenged to an unprecedented degree. In its heroic search for a private myth to embody the sublime power of the supernatural, the art of Still, Rothko, Pollock and Newman should remind us once more that the disturbing heritage of the Romantics has not yet been exhausted.*

* Originally published in *ARTnews* 59, no. 10 (February 1961), pp. 38-41, 56, 58. Copyright © 1961, ARTnews, LLC, February.

Fig. 9: Jackson Pollock. Number 1A, 1948*, 1948*
Oil and enamel on unprimed canvas
68 x 84 in. (172.7 x 264.2 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Purchase (77.1950)

"When he [Barnett Newman] seeks sublimity in the here and now he breaks with the eloquence of romantic art but he does not reject its fundamental task, that of bearing pictorial or otherwise expressive witness to the inexpressible."

Jean-François Lyotard, "The Sublime and the Avant-Garde" (1984)

92

BARNETT NEWMAN

The Name, 1949

Brush and black ink on paper

24 x 15 in. (61.1 x 38 cm)

93

JACKSON POLLOCK

Untitled, 1944-45

Engraving and drypoint

Plate: 15 x 17-13/16 in. (37.9 x 45.3 cm)

Sheet: 21-3/8 x 29-5/16 in. (54.4 x 74.5 cm)

94

JACKSON POLLOCK
Untitled, 1951
Black and sepia ink on mulberry paper
25 x 38-¾ in. (63.5 x 98.4 cm)

"The Beautiful in nature is connected with the form of the object …

the Sublime is to be found in a formless object, so far as in it, or by occasion of it, boundlessness is represented."

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment* (1790), I, Book II, § 23

95

ADOLPH GOTTLIEB

Imaginary Landscape No. 2, 1956

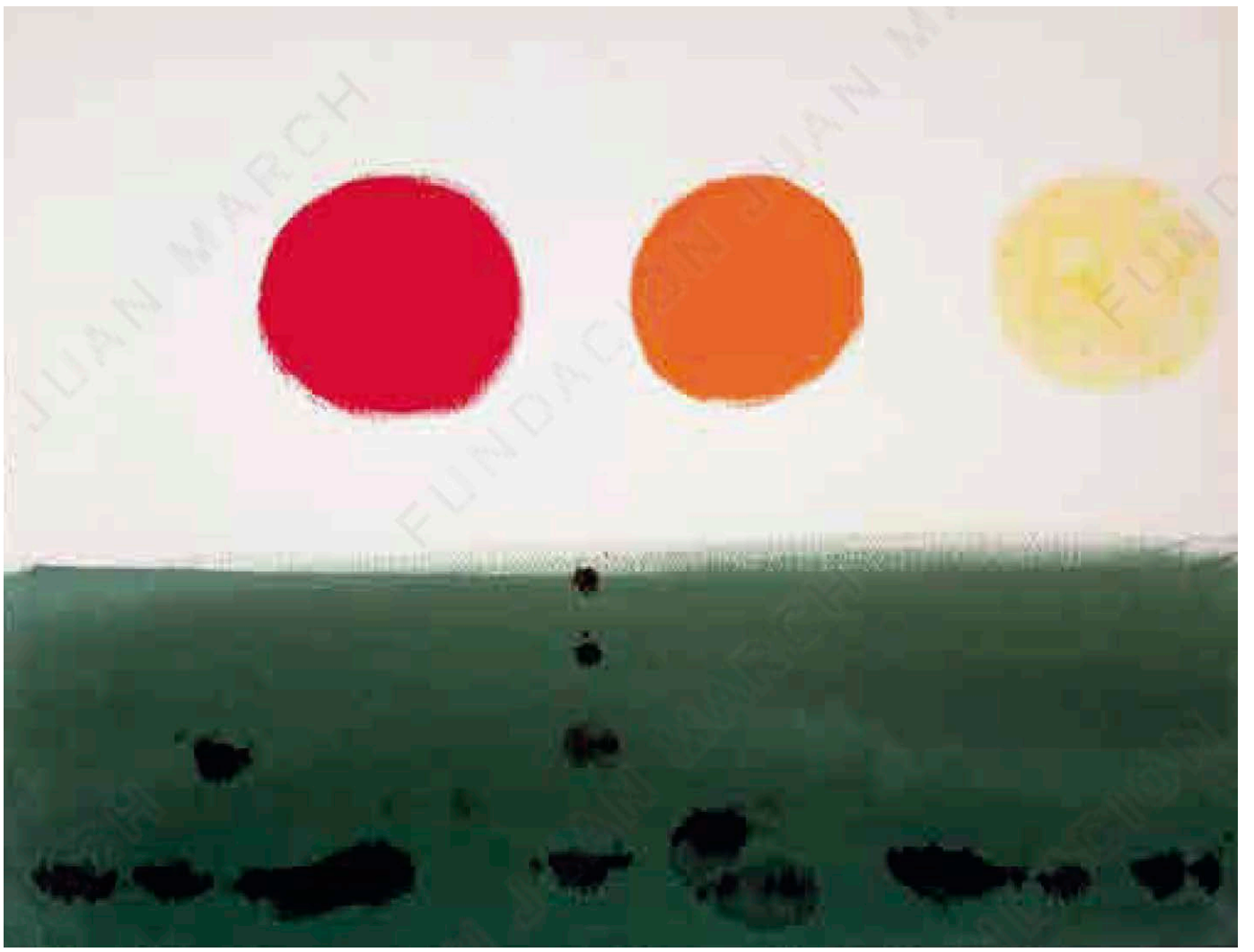
Gouache on paper

Image: 21 x 29-½ in. (53.3 x 74.7 cm)

Sheet: 22-⅛ x 30-⅝ in. (56.3 x 77.8 cm)

96

ADOLPH GOTTLIEB
Heavy Sky, 1956
Gouache and watercolor on paper
22-¼ x 31 in. (56.5 x 78.7 cm)



97

ADOLPH GOTTLIEB
Untitled, ca. 1966
Acrylic and gouache on paper
20- ⅛ x 26-⅛ in. (51 x 66.4 cm)

98

ADOLPH GOTTLIEB

Untitled, ca. 1967

Silkscreen and collage on paper

30 x 22 in. (76.2 x 55.9 cm)

99

ADOLPH GOTTLIEB
Untitled, 1973
Acrylic on paper
24 x 18 in. (61 x 45.7 cm)

100

ADOLPH GOTTLIEB

Burst (First State), 1974

Acrylic on paper

23-⅞ x 18 in. (60.6 x 45.7 cm)

problems of contemporary art:

possibilities 1

abel. arp. baziotes. caffi. calvo. haieff

hayter. hulbeck. goodman. miró. motherwell

niemeyer. poe. pollock. rosenberg. rothko

david smith. virgil thomson. varèse. ben weber

Presented in its original form, Rothko's essay, introduced here, reveals his conception of art as drama and representation and can practically be taken as a manifesto, not only of Rothko's art but that of the entire New York School.

•

MARK ROTHKO'S "THE ROMANTICS WERE PROMPTED..."

INTRODUCTION BY MIGUEL LÓPEZ-REMIRO

In a recent conversation with professor Sheldon Nodelman, a scholar of Rothko's work, we debated about how difficult it is to pass critical judgment on the aesthetics of the American Abstract Expressionists – above all those of Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman – from a postmodern perspective. That same difficulty arises upon studying the discourses of the two most important art critics of that American era, Clement Greenberg and Harold Rosenberg.

From a postmodern point of view, in effect, those artists pursued transcendental desires of a romantic bent that can be seen as utopian, in the same way that the theoretical interpretations of those artists' critic-contemporaries are considered reductionist and formalist. Nevertheless, today it appears necessary to adopt a new perspective that permits one a glimpse at the plane from which artists such as Rothko and Newman carried out that aesthetic gamble and to seize the interpretive keys of the cited art critics.

It can be said that Rothko's artistic aims consisted of a constant search to reinforce a series of aesthetic principles. Rothko achieved an authentic deconstruction and reconstruction of what he understood to be the artist's mission and the place assigned to art within the parameters of human understanding. Frequent are the artist's pronouncements in which the search for the authentic, the original and even the archaic and primitive can be detected as an essential element of his art.[1] It is a search that cannot be reduced to a strictly intellectual plane, but one that Rothko transferred to the very subject matter of the pictorial work that he realized during the years of World War II.[2]

It is true that in the 1930's and 1940's, Rothko established what would become the nucleus of his artistic proposal: the creation of a symbol, of a perennial language.[3] In this sense, Rothko believed that the mission of the artist was to become a shaman, a "mythmaker,"[4] as he himself put it, someone capable of making miracles when they are needed. Moreover, this conviction, far from belonging solely to his early "pre-classic" period – an era regarded as one of trial and error for the artist – can be seen as a fundamental key to understanding the latent unity of Rothko's entire artistic career.

Robert Rosenblum was one of the first authors to understand the importance of placing a unifying focus on Rothko's work that would contemplate those factors of the authentic and original. In fact, *terra incognita*[5] is how Rosenblum himself referred to those years during which emerged,

Opposite page: Cover of Possibilities, *which included Mark Rothko's essay, "The romantics were prompted ...," 1947. Above:* Mark Rothko in his Studio *(1952) by Kay Bell Reynal, courtesy of the Photographs of Artist taken by Kay Bell Reynal Collection, 1952, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution*

like the Big Bang,[6] Rothko's classic abstract forms of the late 1940's and early 1950's. The unity that Rosenblum saw in the work of Rothko and other artists led him, in the early 1960's, to propose in his celebrated article, "The Abstract Sublime,"[7] a theory relating and linking American painting to that of the Romantic masters. It was a subject he would further develop in his book *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko*, published in the mid-1970's, when Abstract Expressionism co-existed alongside Pop Art and Post-Painterly Abstraction.

The essay by Rothko that this introduction accompanies is one of his most important texts, and in it one can see the origin of his aesthetic and ethical positions with respect to art. "The romantics were prompted…" was written by Rothko in 1947 for the first issue of the magazine *Possibilities*. With Robert Motherwell as art co-editor, Harold Rosenberg as literature editor, Pierre Chareau as architecture editor and John Cage as music editor, *Possibilities* was the first magazine founded with the mission of covering the American art scene in all its diverse manifestations. Forty years later, the essay was republished for the first time by Bonnie Clearwater in the catalogue of the 1987 Rothko retrospective at the Tate. It was first published in Spanish by the Fundación Juan March in the catalogue of its Rothko exhibition in Madrid in late 1987, exactly twenty years ago.

As is known, Rothko was not as prolific a writer as Newman and Motherwell when it came to penning articles in defense of his aesthetic ideas. Nevertheless, his essays – as is the case here – benefit from a style and precision difficult to compare with those written by other members of the New York School. As previously noted, "The romantics were prompted…," is considered one of Rothko's most inspired essays, due to the precise nature of his pronouncements. Along with *The New York Times* letter[8] written by Rothko and Gottlieb in 1943, "The romantics were prompted…" practically can be taken as a manifesto, not only of Rothko's art but that of the entire New York School.

Formally, the main point developed by Rothko in his article relates to his conception of art as drama and representation. On various occasions, Rothko emphasized the representative quality, or *performance*, of his paintings as places where an action is staged and that describe "an unknown adventure in an unknown space." With this approach, the work becomes a revelation, in nature, as much for the artist as for the viewer. As Nodelman has well noted, the active dialogue that Rothko proposes in his pictures is strengthened as a result of the implied performance presumed by the work of art that is created in the viewer. This prevents the viewer from remaining neutral; the viewer is immersed in the work due to his or her own movement.[9]

Brian O'Doherty argues, in this same sense, that Rothko's work is not meant to be declarative and instantaneous for the viewer but hypnotic. It is frontal, converting the viewer into an intrinsic part of the artwork,[10] hence the absence of their neutrality pointed out by Nodelman.

The viewer's empathy with the work is a very clear aspect emphasized by Rothko on various occasions. Aside from using the term "revelation," Rothko employed others such as "resolution," "faith" and "miracles" in this context. As he writes in "The romantics were prompted…":

> The most important tool the artist fashions through constant practice is faith in his ability to produce miracles when they are needed.

Rothko stresses in that essay that, in our time, the possibility of creating miracles arises because the work is completely "disguised" due to the fact that the society in which the artist lived no longer granted aesthetic experience the "official status" it held in the archaic world. For this reason, Rothko writes that art in which the probable and the known were accepted as themes solely admired Romantic painting, such as that of Caspar David Friedrich, whose works represent the lone human figure. That concept of "disguise" makes just reference to the representative and ostentatious aspects of the work as a dramatic and active event. All drama has need of a disguise, of a series of tricks – "empathic" tricks, to use David Anfam's term to refer to the importance of scale in Rothko's work[11] – that allows it to transmit basic human experiences such as tragedy or ecstasy.[12]

To this interest in scale – through which he seeks to include the viewer in his work and create an intimate and personal space[13] – Rothko further adds another series of empathic tricks, of which repetition is perhaps one of the most important. Rothko "activates" his painting,[14] gives it an iconic, frontal character typical of Byzantine and primitive art, so as to catch the eye of the viewer. The enigma of Rothko's painting lies precisely in knowing how to repeat. His work acquires the range of that true repetition that, according to Kierkegaard, is eternity,[15] because repetition is perfectly constant, faithful and committed to the same objective: that of being a presence.

NOTES

1 See his early writings, such as the *Scribble Book* and *Notebook* of 1934, or the drafts of the letter to the editor of *The New York Times* from 1943, in Miguel López-Remiro (ed.), *Writings on Art: Mark Rothko* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 4-15, 35-36.

2 Rothko and other Abstract Expressionist painters considered the thematic to be the central aspect of their art, although as Elaine de Kooning was to point out in the late 1950's, the superficial reading of Abstract Expressionism as lacking in theme and content was frequent. See Elaine de Kooning, "Two Americans in Action: Franz Kline and Mark Rothko," *ARTnews Annual* (1958), pp. 86-97.

3 D. Waldman, *Mark Rothko, 1903-1970. A Retrospective* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1978), p. 43.

4 It was Rothko who coined the phrase *mythmaker* in reference to another of the most celebrated artists of American Abstract Expressionism, Clyfford Still: "It is significant that Still, working out West, and alone, has arrived at pictorial conclusions so allied to those of the small band of Myth Makers who have emerged here during the war." "Introduction to *First Exhibition Paintings: Clyfford Still,* 1946," in López-Remiro 2006, p. 48.

5 Robert Rosenblum, *Notes on Rothko's Surrealistic Years* (New York: The Pace Gallery, 1981), p. 5.

6 Rosenblum 1981.

7 Robert Rosenblum, "The Abstract Sublime", *ARTnews* 59 (February 1961), pp. 38-41, 56, 58. The article is reprinted in this catalogue.

8 The well-known letter to *The New York Times* was written jointly by Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb. Both artists were exhibiting their works, *The Syrian Bull* and *The Rape of Persephone*, respectively, in the Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors. As both works were the object of criticism by *Times* editor Edward Alden Jewel, Rothko and Gottlieb wrote a letter in defense, which was published in June 1943. Though he did not sign it, Barnett Newman collaborated on the letter. "Rothko and Gottlieb's letter to the editor," López-Remiro 2006, pp. 35-36.

9 Cfr. S. Nodelman, "Rediscovering Rothko," *Art in America* (July 1999), p. 63.

10 "The frontality of Rothko's art stops and embraces us in a single action. The aspect of frontality, here called the stare, can be identified with authority, will, and control. How is it modified? How is that the work is not simply declarative and instantaneous, but hypnotic and sustained in its effect on the viewer? This brings us to the most mysterious question about Rothko's work: its atmosphere, light and color." Brian O'Doherty, "Mark Rothko: The Tragic and the Transcendental," in *American Masters: the Voice and the Myth* (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 163.

11 "Rothko's handling of scale involves tricks of empathy that make spectators feel as if they have been thrust into a close-up encounter with the compositions. This impression is engineered by rectangles big enough in proportion to the overall image that they seem about to burst its bounds and impose upon our space." David Anfam, *Mark Rothko. Catalogue Raisonné*, (Washington, D.C.: Yale University Press/National Gallery of Art, 1999), p. 79.

12 See "Notes from a conversation with Selden Rodman, 1956," in López-Remiro 2006, pp. 119-120.

13 Thus, and as Scully has noted: "Rothko's idea of the big painting that is not authoritative but intimate and approachable." Sean Scully, "Bodies of light," *Art in America* 87, no. 6 (July 1999), p. 70.

14 "While Newman was laying down flat colors in giant formats with simple geometric divisions, Rothko was activating the surface almost as Veronese or Titian would have done. This gives Rothko's art an extraordinary power." Scully 1999, p. 69.

15 S. Kierkegaard, cited in O'Doherty 1973, p. 185.

Contents:

possibilities 1

Winter 1947/8

An Occasional Review

Editors: Robert Motherwell, *art*
Harold Rosenberg, *writing*
Pierre Chareau, *architecture*
John Cage, *music*

This is a magazine of artists and writers who "practice" in their work their own experience without seeking to transcend it in academic, group or political formulas.

Such practice implies the belief that through conversion of energy something valid may come out, whatever situation one is forced to begin with.

The question of what will emerge is left open. One functions in an attitude of expectancy. As Juan Gris said: you are lost the instant you know what the result will be.

Naturally the deadly political situation exerts an enormous pressure.

The temptation is to conclude that organized social thinking is "more serious" than the act that sets free in contemporary experience forms which that experience has made possible.

One who yields to this temptation makes a choice among various theories of manipulating the known elements of the so-called objective state of affairs. Once the political choice has been made, art and literature ought of course to be given up.

Whoever genuinely believes he knows how to save humanity from catastrophe has a job before him which is certainly not a part-time one.

Political commitment in our times means logically – no art, no literature. A great many people, however, find it possible to hang around in the space between art and political action.

If one is to continue to paint or write as the political trap seems to close upon him he must perhaps have the extremest faith in sheer possibility.

In his extremism he shows that he has recognized how drastic the political presence is.

September 1947 *Robert Motherwell* *Harold Rosenberg*

THE ROMANTICS WERE PROMPTED

Mark Rothko

to seek exotic subjects and to travel to far off places. They failed to realise that, though the transcendental must involve the strange and unfamiliar, not everything strange or unfamiliar is transcendental.

The unfriendliness of society to his activity is difficult for the artist to accept. Yet this very hostility can act as a lever for true liberation. Freed from a false sense of security and community, the artist can abandon his plastic bank-book, just as he has abandoned other forms of security. Both the sense of community and of security depend on the familiar. Free of them, transcendental experiences become possible.

I think of my pictures as dramas: the shapes in the pictures are the performers. They have been created from the need for a group of actors who are able to move dramatically without embarrassment and execute gestures without shame.

Neither the action nor the actors can be anticipated, or described in advance. They begin as an unknown adventure in an unknown space. It is at the moment of completion that in a flash of recognition, they are seen to have the quantity and function which was intended. Ideas and plans that existed in the mind at the start were simply the doorway through which one left the world in which they occur.

The great cubist pictures thus transcend and belie the implications of the cubist program.

The most important tool the artist fashions through constant practice is faith in his ability to produce miracles when they are needed. Pictures must be miraculous: the instant one is completed, the intimacy between the creation and the creator is ended. He is an outsider. The picture must be for him, as for anyone experiencing it later, a revelation, an unexpected and unprecedented resolution of an eternally familiar need.

★

On shapes:

They are unique elements in a unique situation.

They are organisms with volition and a passion for self-assertion.

They move with internal freedom, and without need to conform with or to violate what is probable in the familiar world.

They have no direct association with any particular visible experience, but in them one recognizes the principle and passion of organisms.

★

The presentation of this drama in the familiar world was never possible, unless everyday acts belonged to a ritual accepted as referring to a transcendent realm.

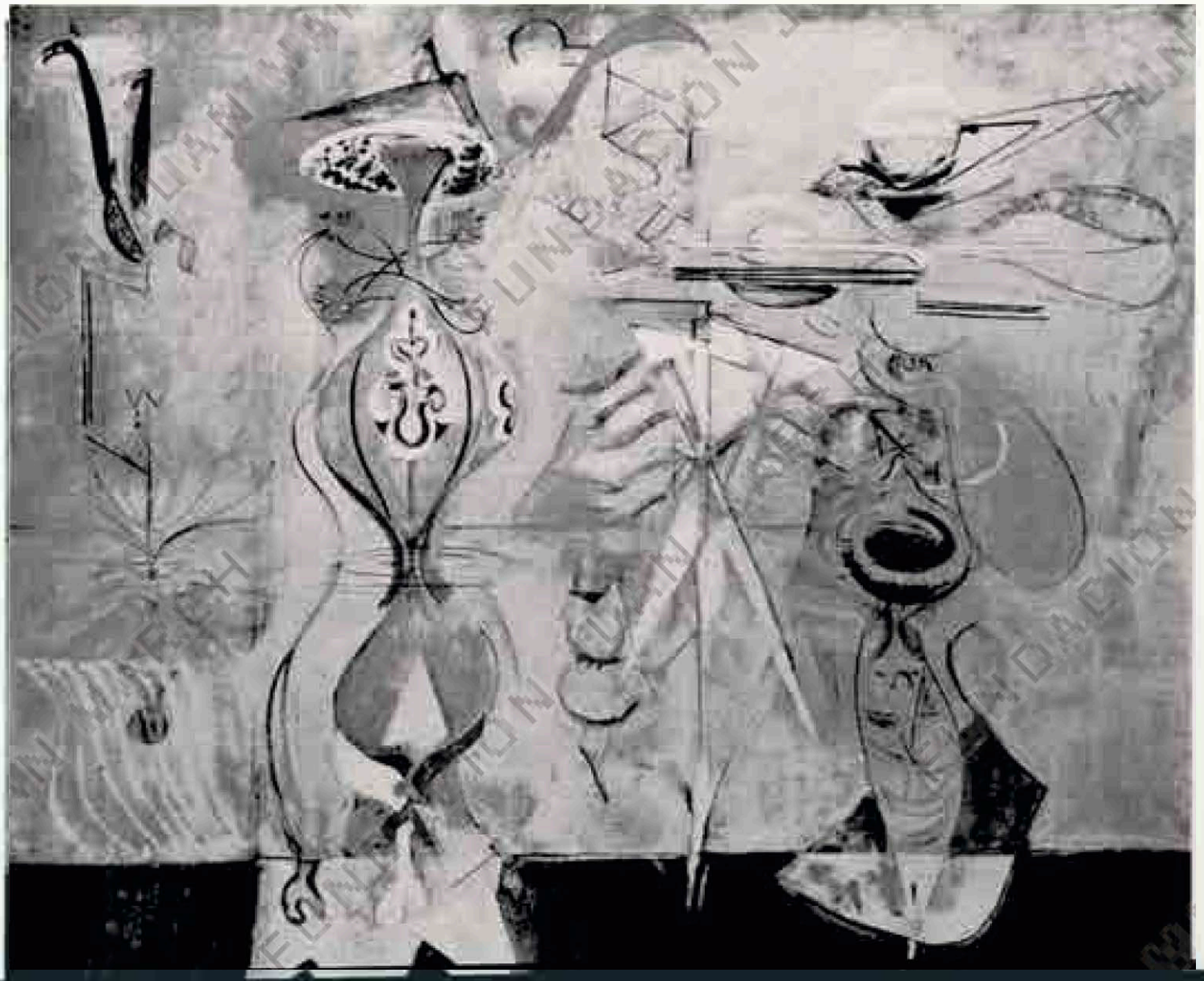
Even the archaic artist, who had an uncanny virtuosity found it necessary to create a group of intermediaries, monsters, hybrids, gods and demigods. The difference is that, since the archaic artist was living in a more practical society than ours, the urgency for transcendent experience was understood, and given an official status. As a consequence, the human figure and other elements from the familiar world could be combined with, or participate as a whole in the enactment of the excesses which characterize this improbable hierarchy. With us the disguise must be complete. The familiar identity of things has to be pulverized in order to destroy the finite associations with which our society increasingly enshrouds every aspect of our environment.

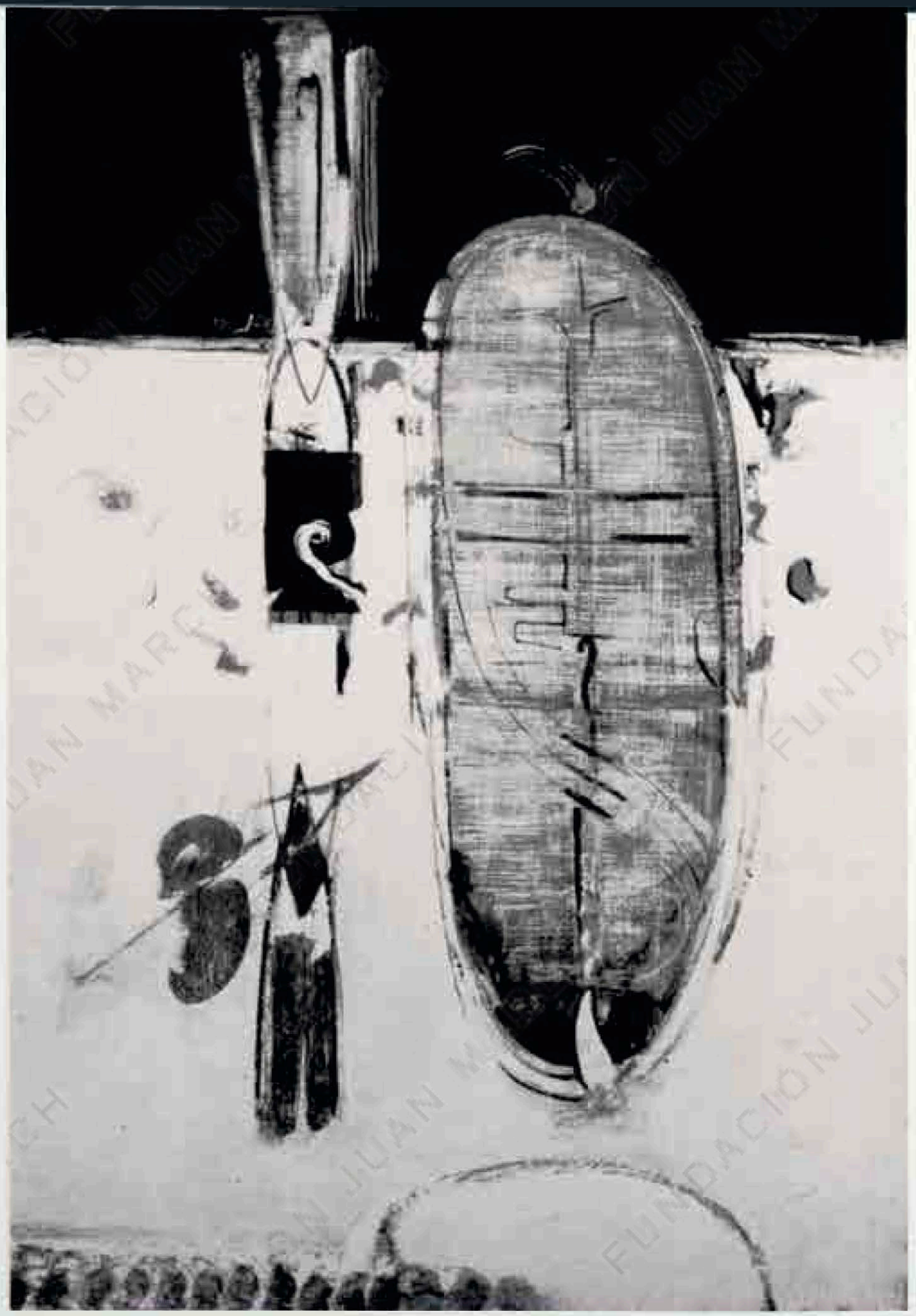
Without monsters and gods, art cannot enact our drama: art's most profound moments express this frustration. When they were abandoned as untenable superstitions, art sank into melancholy. It became fond of the dark, and enveloped its objects in the nostalgic intimations of a half-lit world. For me the great achievements of the centuries in which the artist accepted the probable and familiar as his subjects were the pictures of the single human figure — alone in a moment of utter immobility.

But the solitary figure could not raise its limbs in a single gesture that might indicate its concern with the fact of mortality and an insatiable appetite for ubiquitous experience in face of this fact. Nor could the solitude be overcome. It could gather on beaches and streets and in parks only through coincidence, and, with its companions, form a *tableau vivant* of human incommunicability.

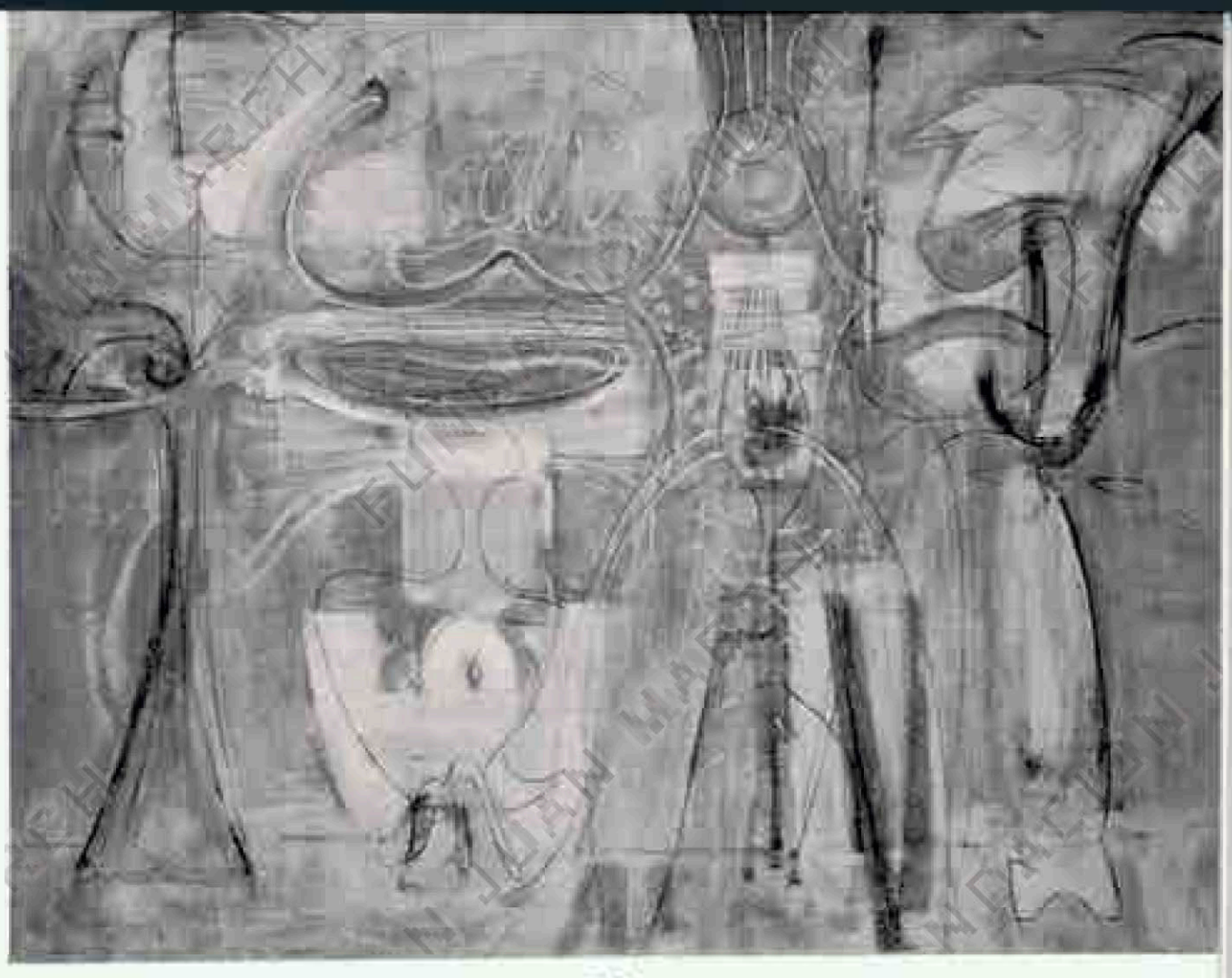
I do not believe that there was ever a question of being abstract or representational. It is really a matter of ending this silence and solitude, of breathing and stretching one's arms again.

Mark Rothko. 1945. Oil and tempera, 36 x 54. Parsons Gallery (above)
Mark Rothko. 1945. Oil, 72 x 80. Coll. San Francisco Museum



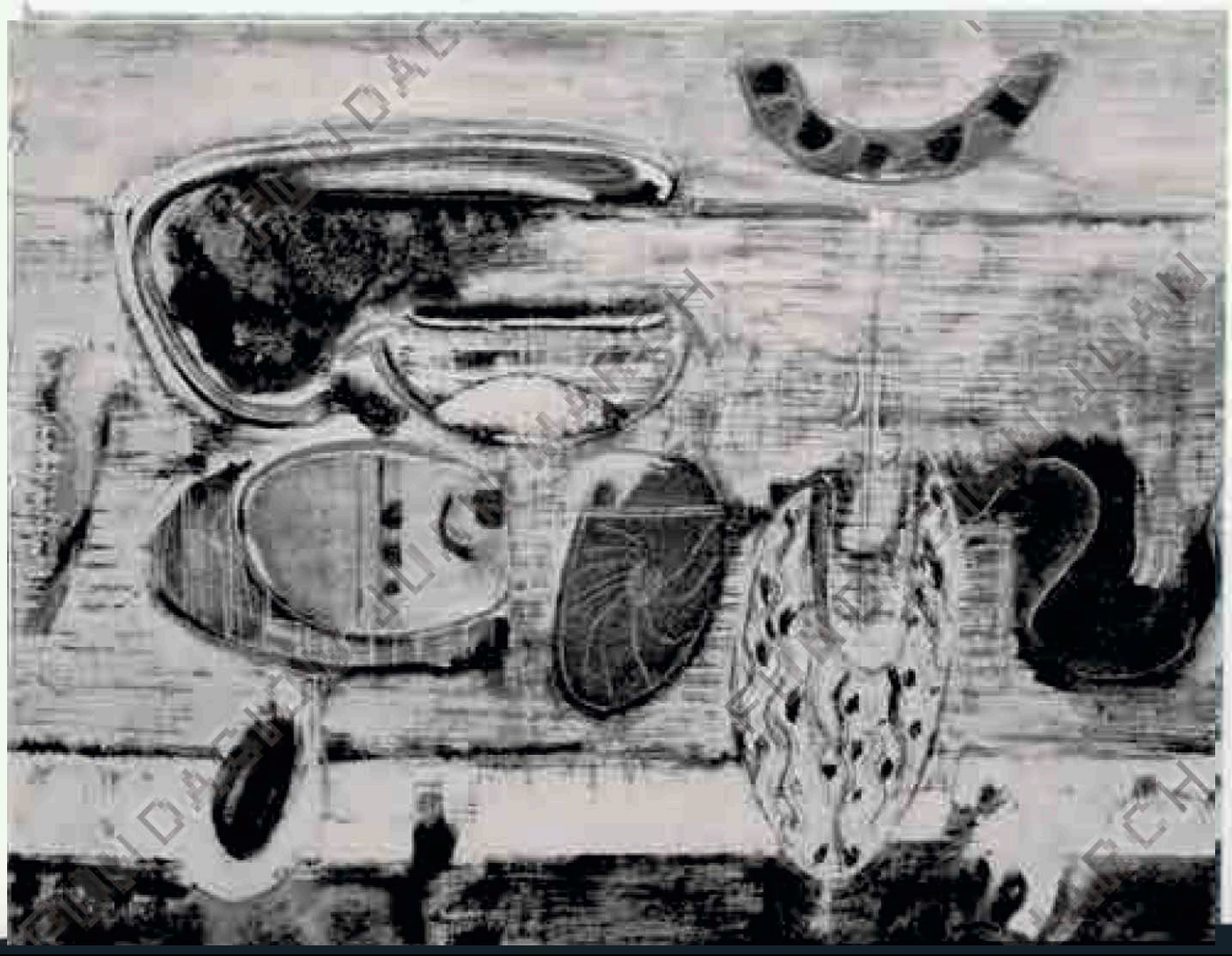


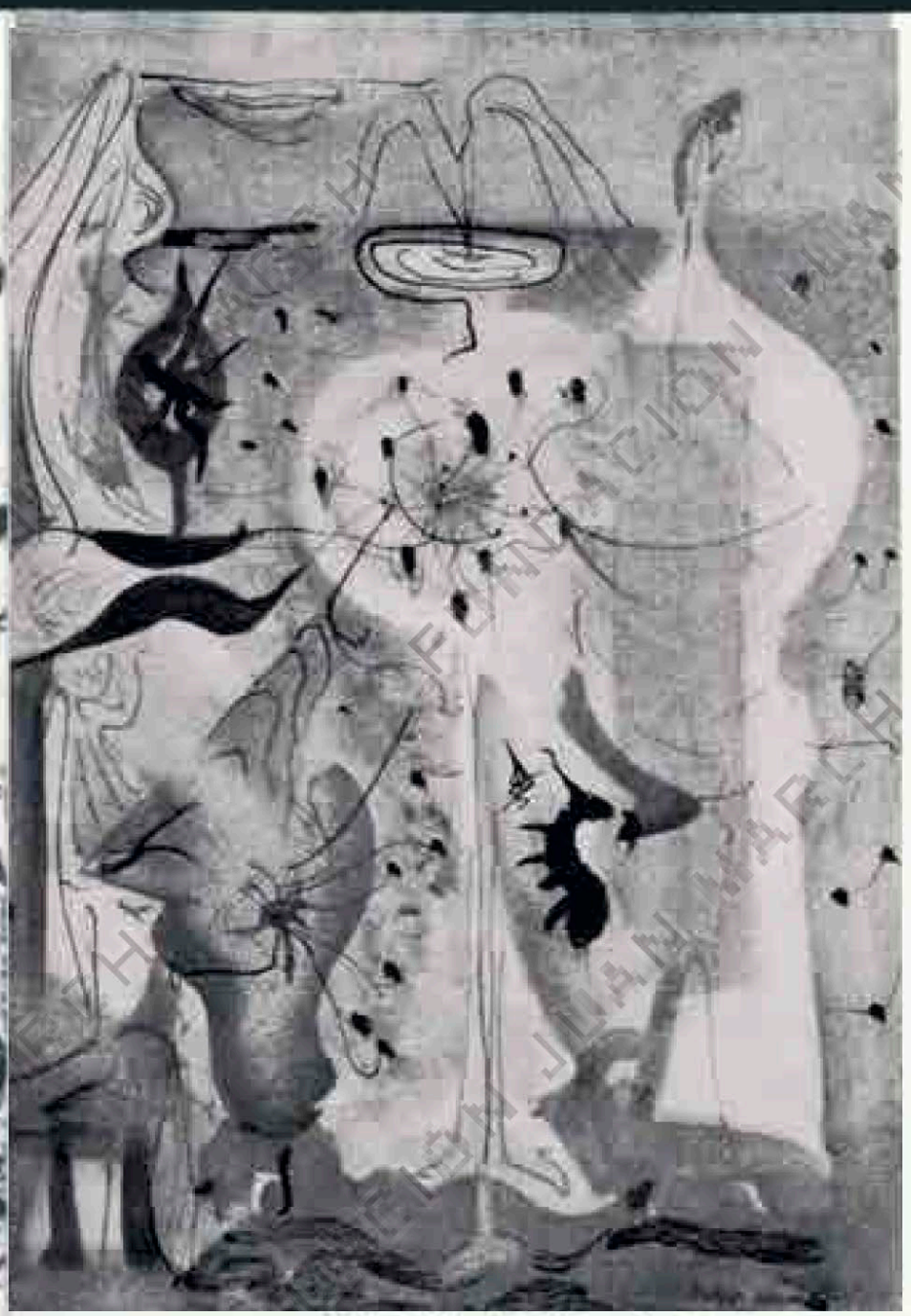
Mark Rothko. 1947. Oil, 29 x 39. Parsons Gallery



Mark Rothko. 1947. Oil and tempera, 84 x 108. Parsons Gallery

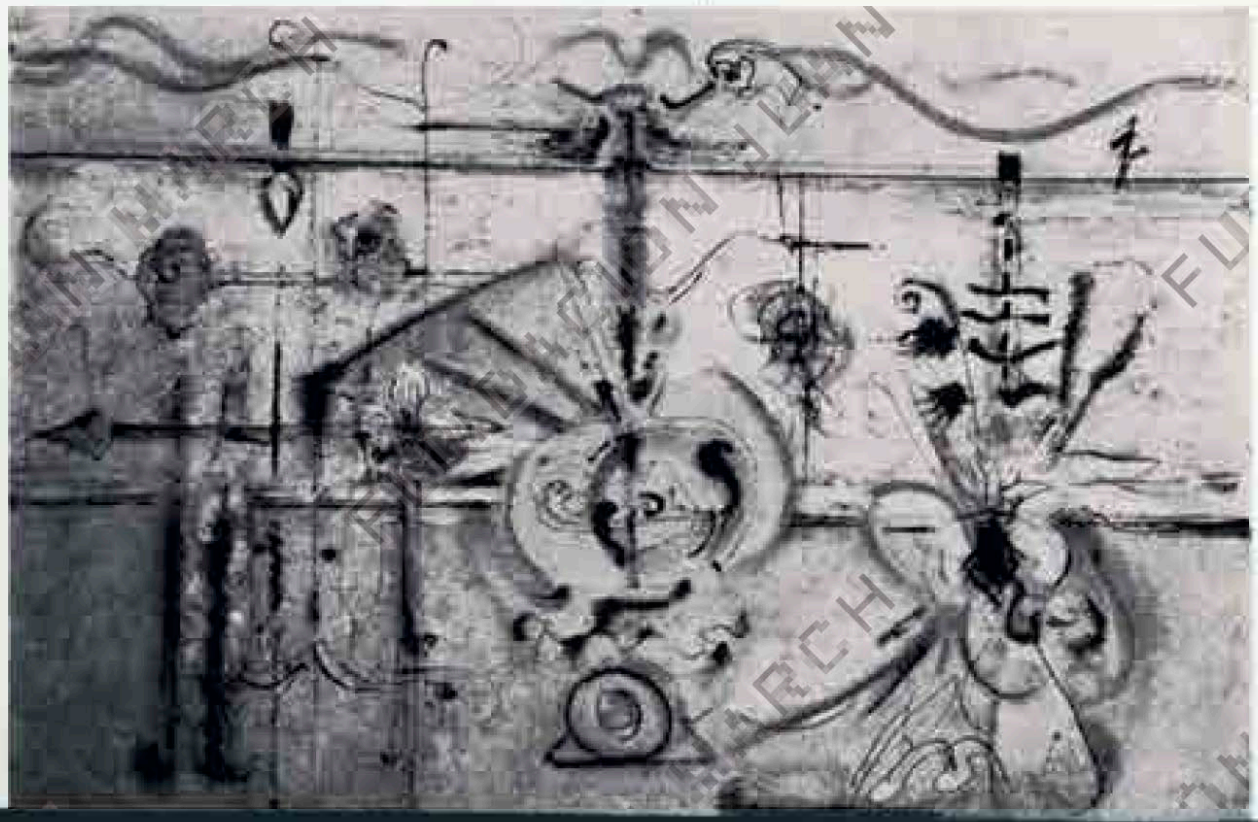
Mark Rothko. 1947. Oil and tempera, 36 x 40. Parsons Gallery

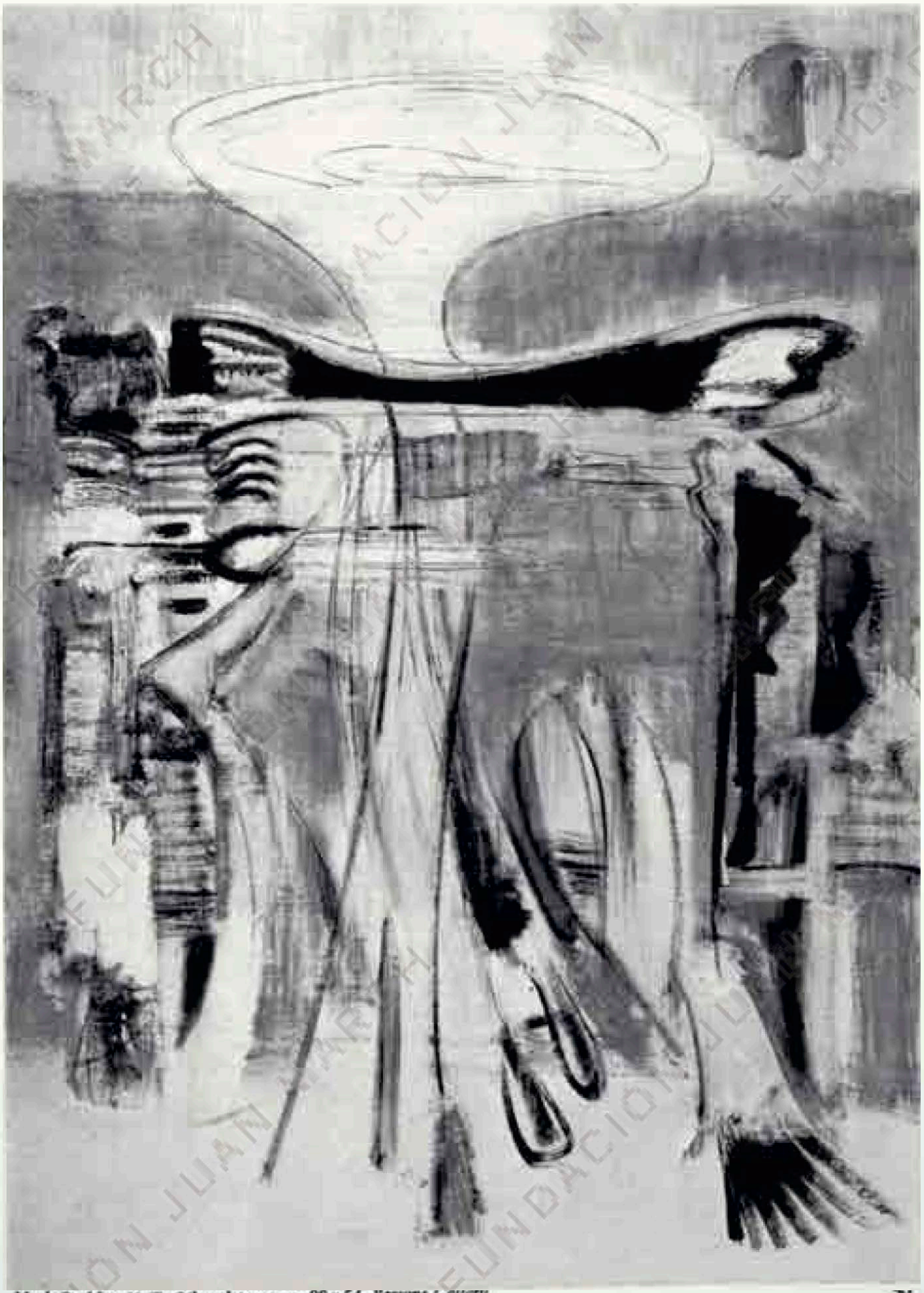




Mark Rothko. 1946. Watercolor, 15 x 22. Coll. Whitney Museum

Mark Rothko. 1946. Watercolor, 22 x 30. Coll. Kenneth Macpherson





Mark Rothko. 1947. Oil and tempera, 36 x 54. Parsons Gallery

101

MARK ROTHKO

Landscape with Mountains, n.d.

Watercolor on brown wove paper

17-1/16 x 12 in. (44.9 x 30.5 cm)

102

MARK ROTHKO

Untitled, 1945-46

Watercolor and ink on paper

40-⅛ x 26-¼ in. (102 x 66.6 cm)

"The recipe of a work of art: … There must be a clear preoccupation with death – intimations of mortality. … Tragic art, romantic art, etc. deals with the knowledge of death."

Mark Rothko, Address to Pratt Institute (November 1958)

103

MARK ROTHKO

Untitled, 1968

Acrylic on paper mounted on hardboard panel

39-1/16 x 25-3/4 x 1-7/16 in. (100.8 x 65.4 x 3.7 cm)

104

MARK ROTHKO

Untitled, 1969

Acrylic on paper

71-13/16 x 42-3/8 in. (182.4 x 107.6 cm)

105

MARK ROTHKO

Untitled, 1969

Acrylic on paper

54-⅜ x 42-⅞ in. (138.1 x 107.8 cm)

"In its heroic search for a private myth to embody the sublime power of the supernatural, the art of Still, Rothko, Pollock and Newman should remind us once more that the disturbing heritage of the Romantics has not yet been exhausted."

Robert Rosenblum, "The Abstract Sublime," *ARTnews* (1961)

106

MARK ROTHKO

Untitled, 1969

Acrylic on paper

74-⅛ x 48-⅛ in. (188.3 x 122.3 cm)

V

THE POST-ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE

KIEFER, RICHTER


für Julia

After thirty years, the interpretation of Kiefer's landscapes continues to fascinate: materially dense, his German landscapes are universal, charged with age-old meaning.

•

ANSELM KIEFER: GERMAN LANDSCAPE, UNIVERSAL SPIRIT

CORDULA MEIER

I first saw a work by Anselm Kiefer in 1978, in the Essen Folkwang Museum. I had just turned eighteen and was in the first term of my art history studies. The landscape on view fascinated me, captured me, as is the case with almost all of Kiefer's works, a result of their sublime grandeur and melancholic spirit. Some thirty years later, the history of the reception of Kiefer's work continues to fascinate. Though interest awakened by his art began locally, today Kiefer's subjects are universal and have long since emancipated themselves from their original preoccupation with the so-called "German problem." My own experience with Kiefer's work also dates back about thirty years now and is equally characterized by highs and lows. Kiefer planted endless questions in my head, which dominated my thoughts for a long time.

Why the use of those materials over and over again in his paintings? Solely based on their pure materiality, the chosen elements possess an eminent aesthetic quality. Earth, sand, straw, ashes, lead, to name only the organic materials. Why numbers in the paintings? What do they mean? Why written words? Why writing in the paintings? Who was Shulamith? Margarethe? Lea? Kiefer had sent me, as he probably had each of those obsessed with him, on an exciting journey to decipher these paintings filled with meaning. It was a painstaking search that endured for weeks, through the history of literature, art and all manner of mythical accounts. I wandered through numerous libraries and exhibition galleries, read literature previously unknown to me. In this guesswork, Kiefer did not refrain from the Old and New Testaments, mythology, stories of gods and heroes from throughout the ages, the Book of Leviticus. All played their part in the formation of the meaning of these impressive landscapes. In much the same way that the elderly are fascinated with crosswords, which they sometimes put down in despair only to take up again, frustrated at not being able to solve them completely, Kiefer's works sent me on a trip to decipher these enigmas.

I was driven by a desire for an absolute understanding of Kiefer's works. The manner in which these materials are charged with meaning is highly complex. Thus, I quickly understood that the yellow straw is a reference to the golden hair of Margarethe, a character in Paul Celan's poem, "Todesfuge" (Death Fugue, 1948). The strange writing that appears in his paintings can generally be understood as the beginnings of an infantile school alphabet. Landscapes are never individual works for Kiefer, but recurrent pictorial citations in his oeuvre. The artist prioritizes the continuity among various related works over the individual completed work of art. The landscapes acquire importance through their meaning, not only immanently, but through their rela-

Detail. Anselm Kiefer
Stausee *(Reservoir), 1971*
Watercolor, gouache and graphite pencil on paper
CAT. 109

tion with many other artworks, by Kiefer as well as by other artists. With this working method, science operates under the heading of intertextuality.

Kiefer's landscapes are charged with materiality and thus represent a German landscape burdened with many centuries of *Sinngebung* (definition of meaning). In one of his rare interviews – given to the newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* – he described how in the evenings he rides through his studio on his bicycle, hearing his paintings whisper. At such moments, thousands of years of cultural history are present for him in abstract form.

Landscapes interpreted as mythical German spaces are found in great numbers in Kiefer's oeuvre (figs. 1, 2).[1] Among his early works, one series in particular attracted the attention of the media. In 1975, the artist provoked a lively debate with the publication of his photographic series on the Nazi salute, which he had shot in 1969. Eighteen photographs appeared in the magazine *Interfunktionen* under the title "*Anselm Kiefer / Zwischen Sommer und Herbst 1969 habe ich die Schweiz, Frankreich und Italien besetzt*" (Anselm Kiefer / Between the Summer and Fall of 1969 I occupied Switzerland, France and Italy), and show Kiefer at different European historical sites, dressed in the coat of a German Wehrmacht soldier with his arm raised in a Hitler salute (fig. 3). Lacking commentary by the artist, this display of national-socialist symbols nurtured the suspicion that Kiefer might possibly sympathize with the represented subjects. They provoked violent criticism during the 1970's.

What Kiefer really demonstrated was that the concealment of the past had only brought about a silence that was like a thin layer of ice under which lurked menacing aspects of the past that needed to be unearthed and exposed. Kiefer sought to give voice to that which had been silenced without avoiding the barbs provoked by his direct approach to the subject matter. It required a critical reception willing to accept such confrontational signs, without ascribing culpability to the representer but instead to those who had originated them. Accepting this ambivalent representation initially seemed impossible for the critics. At the time of their publication there was a general lack of knowledge prevalent among a large portion of the German public that they only became aware of with the onset of the Holocaust debate and *Historikerstreit* (Quarrel of the Historians), namely because binding or guiding ethics that dealt with fascism had never before existed. As recently as 1988, when Philipp Jenninger delivered his controversial *Kristallnacht* speech before the Bundestag, the German people demonstrated that any attempts to deal with the fascist past that did not express sufficient outrage would immediately be in danger of being identified with fascism.

It is, therefore, probably no coincidence that the work shown in the present exhibition *Ohne Titel (Heroische Sinnbilder)* (Untitled [Heroic Symbols], cat. 108), which was created in conjunction with the photographs, is in the collection of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. The conscious accounting for its national-socialist

Fig. 1:
Anselm Kiefer. Märkische Heide *(March Heath), 1974*
Oil, acrylic and shellac on burlap, 46-½ x 100 in.(118 x 254 cm)
Collection Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven

past, as seen from a foreign perspective, was long overdue for Germans. Today, Kiefer's landscapes are no longer controversial and elude such a specific interpretation. They are present in all the great museums of the world and can take their place alongside those landscapes that Robert Rosenblum described in such an exemplary way. In fact, for each of the themes discussed by Rosenblum, there are large-format works by Kiefer with their corresponding drawings, smaller works and sketches.

The fact is that since the beginning of Kiefer's artistic production, his works place themselves in a similarly ambivalent relationship to the nation's past – of which he makes a subject – which thus brought the era of his birth into the critical consciousness of his contemporaries and also made the critique of his work susceptible to obvious misjudgment. In most of the cases, it was the first impression – provoked by the sheer material nature of the works – that seemed to legitimize such a classification. The size of the works, which were unusually large for the 1970's, as well as his use of the anachronistic and monumental format of history painting, provoked significant comparisons to pan-germanic aesthetic preferences. Their monumentality hit the eye of the (German) viewer at a delicate moment in history. An aspect as banal as size is here elevated to a sign of power. Kiefer's landschapes are codified. The main impetus of the work turns out to be a revealing of signs, a visualization of the buried, an archaeology followed by the spectator. There are ciphers that are obvious and others not so evident but an interpretation of Kiefer's works solely from a nationalist-socialist perspective would not do them justice.

Since the 1970's, a conspicuous revival of mythical thinking became apparent in various areas.[2] This interest, which initially developed outside of academic institutions, also left its mark in aesthetic contexts. Particularly in the visual arts, as well as in literature, one could detect an increasing willingness towards the reception of those mythological subjects imbued with historical meaning. Thus, at that time, a fundamental reformation, reassessment and revaluation of mythological schools of thought and historical subjects inevitably took place in the scientific discourse. The previous association of myth with irrationality prevented the analytical study of works inspired by myths. It was then that Kiefer introduced mythological subjects into his landschapes. The

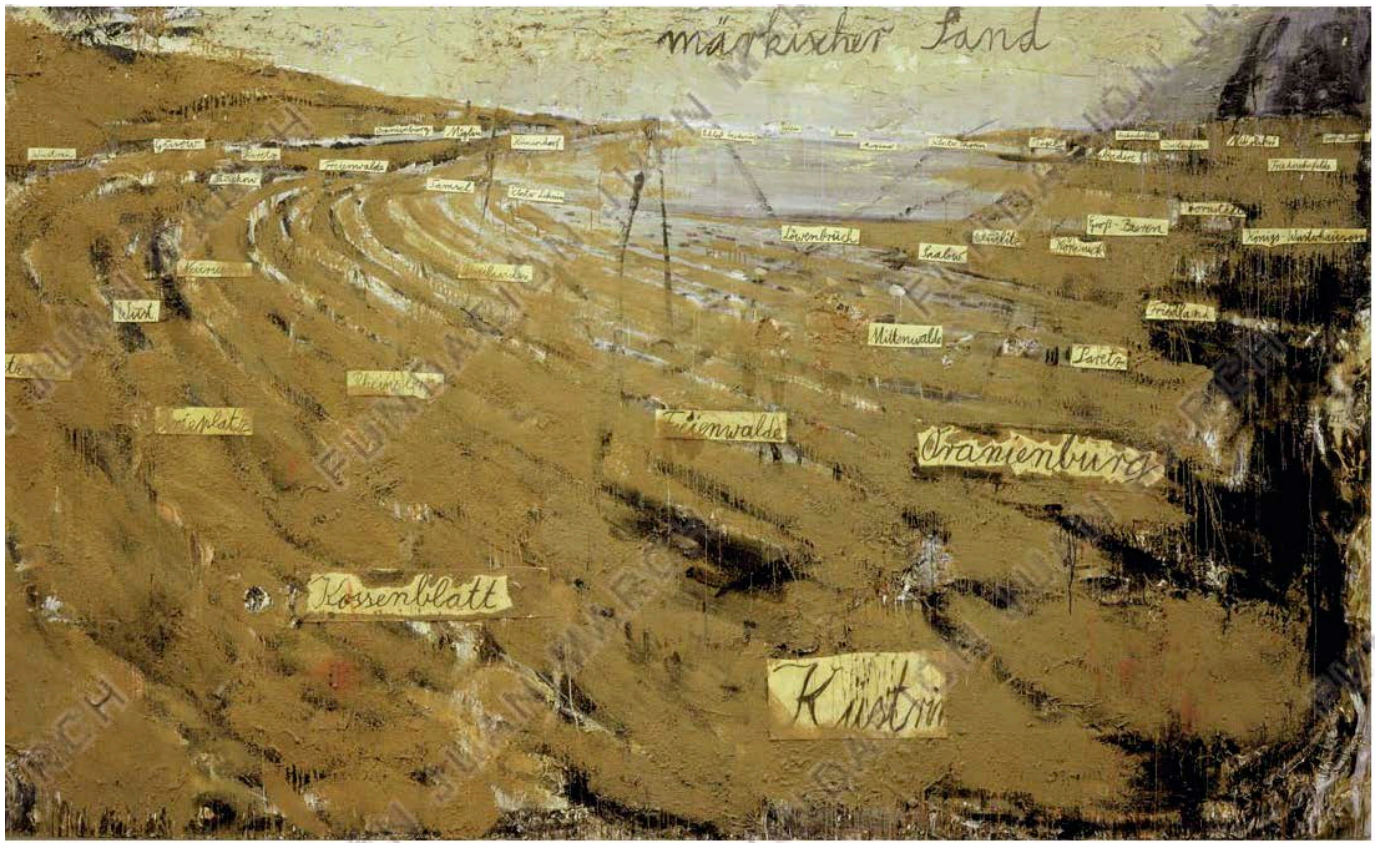


Fig. 2:
Anselm Kiefer. Märkischer Sand *(March Sand), 1980-82*
Emulsion, sand, oil (on photograph mounted on paper), canvas, with assemblage: cardboard strips, painted, 130 x 218-½ in. (330 x 555 cm)
Collection Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (A 38641)

great initial interest in his work largely bypassed the typical art circles and presumed that his landscapes of that era reflected the freely floating spirit of the times and expressed different ways of appropriating history and basing themselves on myths.

Kiefer was born in Donaueschingen in 1945. A statement of this kind does not merely serve as an introduction, it implies much more. According to ancient ways in which the real obtains its meaning, place and date of birth determine one's entire life. These facts incorporate an ordering of systems that go beyond individual biographies and assure the individual's participation in what could be called world relations or historical significance. The individual is integrated into that larger whole, which also endows him/her with meaning. Thus, the interpretation of these facts fulfills – according to Theodor Lessing's famous *dictum* – the fundamental function of history: to give meaning to the meaningless.[3] As a result, it was inevitable that by relating individual destinies to broad historiographic fields, the date of Kiefer's birth would acquire a special aura. All too easily, the relationships arose unbidden, almost miraculously, given that the German artist was born in the year of the catastrophic apocalypse and national rebirth, a year that conferred its catharsis upon the Federal Republic of Germany. Correlations between Kiefer's work and the nation's prehistory were facilitated by the fact that the artist himself, since the beginning, openly makes thematic reference in his pictures to this national trauma of birth. It populates his landscapes of apocalyptic myths and fallen gods and heroes, expressing in part the self-accusatory attitude of thousands of years represented and denoted in his paintings.

Today, almost 30 years later, when I discover a Kiefer painting anew, I gladly remember that period in which I was guided through a world of knowledge by someone I did not know, nor get to know during a much later phase of my doctoral dissertation on his work.[4] Before newly discovered works, I catch myself briefly assessing whether there might be something to decipher that is yet unknown to me. A slight smile crosses my lips when the meanings of those paintings that seem to resist interpretation appear so clearly to me, and I continue strolling along. I often see older generations contentedly standing in front of Kiefer's works, attempting to decipher them. That is when I know that they have seduced us, captured us with their melancholy, to our benefit. For the new internet generation, therefore, Kiefer presents a challenge.

NOTES

1 For example, in the paintings *Maikäfer flieg* (Cockchafer Fly), 1974; *Märkische Heide* (March Heath), 1974; *Märkischer Sand* (March Sand), 1980; *Märkischer Sand* (March Sand), 1980-82; *Märkischer Sand* (March Sand), 1981; *Meistersänger* (The Mastersingers), 1981; *Ikarus gleich Märkischer Sand* (Icarus = March Sand), 1981; and *Nürnberg* (Nuremberg), 1982.

2 Cf. Cordula Meier, *Kunst und Gedächtnis. Zugänge zur aktuellen Kunstrezeption im Licht digitaler Speicher* (Munich, 2002).

3 Theodor Lessing, *Die Geschichte als Sinngebung des Sinnlosen oder Die Geburt der Geschichte aus dem Mythos* (1916) (Hamburg, 1962).

4 Cordula Meier, *Anselm Kiefer: Die Rückkehr des Mythos in der Kunst* (Essen, 1992).

Fig. 3: Anselm Kiefer. Anselm Kiefer / Zwischen Sommer und Herbst 1969 habe ich die Schweiz, Frankreich und Italien besetzt *(Anselm Kiefer / Between the Summer and Fall of 1969, I occupied Switzerland, France and Italy), published in:* Interfunktionen. Zeitschrift für neue Arbeiten und Vorstellungen, *Nº 12 (Cologne 1975)*

107

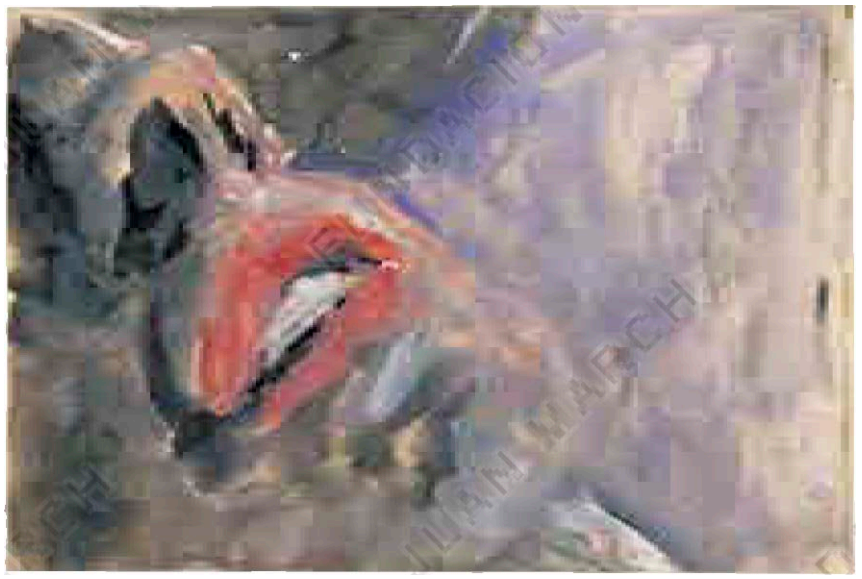
ANSELM KIEFER

Ohne Titel (Heroische Sinnbilder)

(Untitled [Heroic Symbols]), ca. 1969

Watercolor, gouache and charcoal on paper

14-⅛ x 17-⅞ in. (35.9 x 45.4 cm)



108

ANSELM KIEFER

Herbstwald (Autumn Forest), 1970

Watercolor, gouache and graphite pencil on paper

A. top sheet: 4-½ x 6-¾ in. (11.5 x 17.1 cm);

B. bottom sheet: 9-½ x 13 in. (24.1 x 33 cm)

109

ANSELM KIEFER

Stausee

(Reservoir), 1971

Watercolor, gouache and graphite pencil on paper

16-⅜ x 22 in. (41.6 x 55.9 cm)

110

ANSELM KIEFER

Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh

(*On Every Mountain Peak There is Peace*), 1971

Inscribed: "*Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh! In allen Wipfeln spürest Du kaum einen Hauch! / für Julia*"

(On every mountain peak there is peace! In all the treetops you detect scarcely a breeze! / for Julia)

Watercolor and gouache on paper

12-⅜ x 18-⅞ in. (31.4 x 47.9 cm)

211

On all hilltops

There is peace,

In all treetops

You will hear

Hardly a breath

Birds in the woods are silent.

Just wait, soon

You too will rest.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wayfarer's Night Song II* (1780)

Translation by Milan Kundera

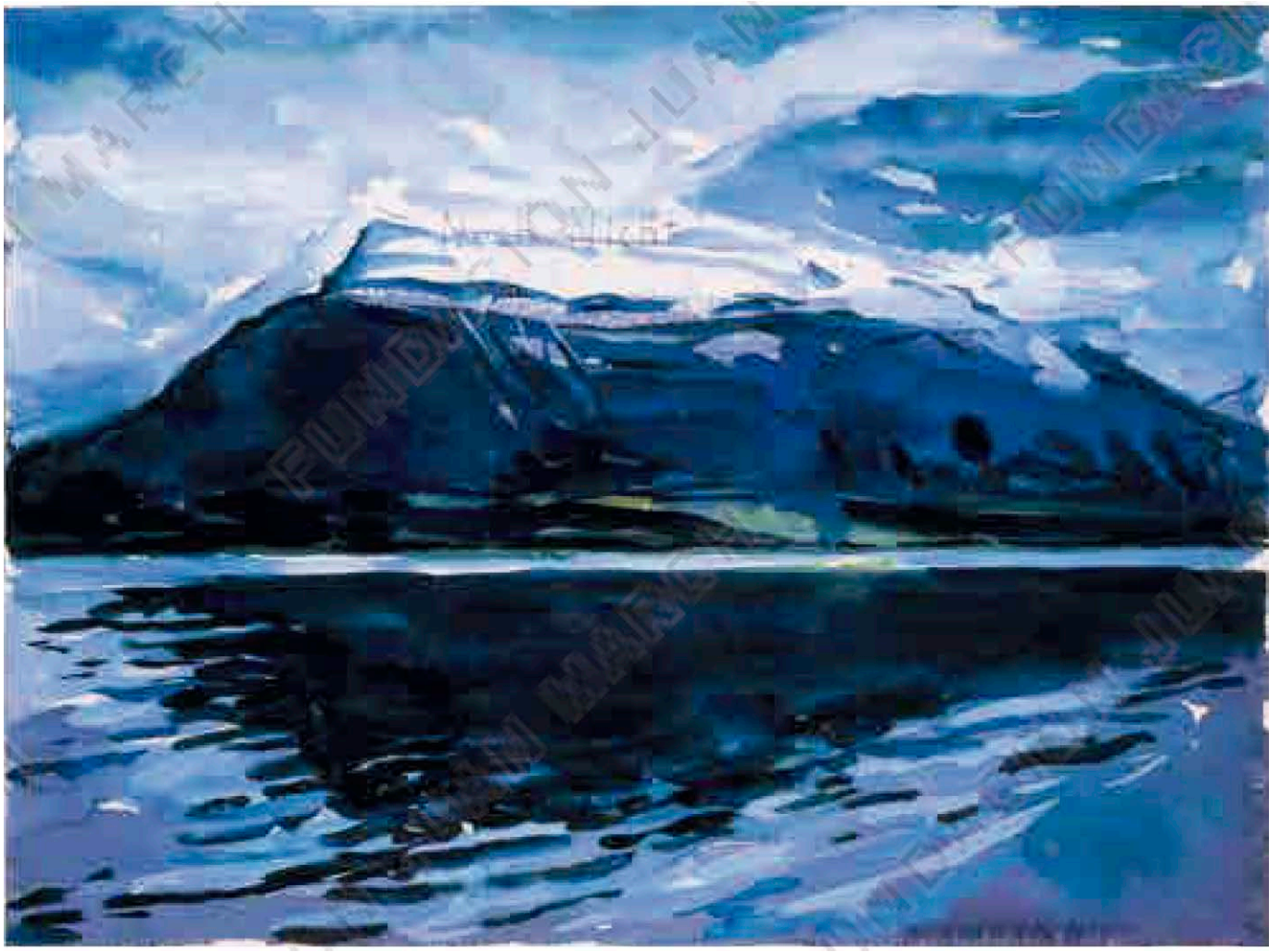
111

ANSELM KIEFER

Stefan!, 1974

Watercolor, gouache, colored pencil and ballpoint pen on paper

9-⅜ x 12-⅝ in. (23.8 x 32.1 cm)



112

ANSELM KIEFER

Noch Nicht

(Not Yet), 1974-75

Watercolor, gouache and ballpoint pen on paper

9-½ x 12-⅝ in. (24.1 x 32.1 cm)

113

ANSELM KIEFER
Der Rhein (The Rhine), ca. 1982
Woodcut, collage on cardboard
24-3/16 x 12-5/8 in. (61.5 x 32 cm)

By reclaiming landscape painting through the medium of photography, Richter experiments with the possibility of revitalizing the traditional genre of landscape for contemporary audiences.

•

GERHARD RICHTER: BLURRY LANDSCAPES

DIETMAR ELGER

In 1968, Gerhard Richter vacationed with his family on the island of Corsica for the first time. Later, in his Düsseldorf studio, he painted his first landscapes (fig. 1) based on snapshots taken during this stay. Richter has been painting such "romanticized" landscapes for almost four decades now. At irregular intervals, he returns again and again to his exploration of landscape as a motif. No other subject matter has so fascinated him or held his attention for such an extended period. Even so, the total number of these works has remained comparatively small. Their importance lies in the prominent position they occupy within the artist's oeuvre as a whole, and in the sustained and illuminating dialogue between them and Richter's abstract paintings. In this light, the artist's assertion that his landscapes are works of a private nature should be viewed with skepticism, and a distinction should be drawn between this claim and the actual conceptual approach in his paintings. Richter's personal motivation in abandoning the artistic avant-garde to paint "what he felt like" could not have been maintained as a position over decades had it not provided the basis for a viable aesthetic program. However important it may have been as an initial impulse, of equal importance was Richter's ability to find more in these paintings than mere private impressions.

Initially, these landscapes really did seem like a radical break with the whole of his previous oeuvre. And this in spite of the many changes of style with which the artist had confronted viewers of his work in prior years. The first Corsica paintings already display all of the qualities that were to remain characteristic of Richter's later landscapes and seascapes (figs. 2-3). He prefers a distant point of view from which the eye can range across a wide-open plane, all the way to the horizon. All the motifs are painted in color, which is surprising when compared to earlier groups of works and others painted at the same time. The transitions between the individual colors are painted with extreme subtlety and delicacy and, as a result, a transparent veil is laid over the motifs, cutting the viewer off from the details of the landscape.

Nineteen sixty-eight was a year of student protests and political renovation, a time when avant-garde art, too, was utilized for purposes of solidarity and propaganda. At that moment, Richter's landscapes, with their atmospheric and romantic appearance, inevitably came across as an affront to all progressive stances. Instead, what Richter presented with those works was a painterly withdrawal into a private idyll and the replacement of art's relevance to contemporary history with a reference to art history, in this case German Romantic painting. In 1970, when an interviewer asked him to explain the motivation for painting these landscapes, his answer was concise and provocative, but not without deeper meaning: "I felt like painting something beautiful."[1] This reasoning represents a twofold challenge: Richter claims personal pleasure as a source for his painting and at the same time formulates a counter-position to the

Detail. Gerhard Richter. Untitled, *1991*
Brush and ink on paper
CAT. 120

artistic avant-garde's belief in progress. Initially, it was only possible for him to paint such landscape motifs if he renounced all professional pretenses and declared the works to be purely private exercises. This kind of argument, initially denying any artistic impetus for his pictures, became an often-used strategy of resistance for the artist. It was the only way that he could get away with certain pictorial motifs. But it is also true that Richter very soon made the landscapes public, showing them in exhibitions and thus introducing the paintings into a critical art discourse. At the outset, however, in his choice of certain private or *difficult* motifs and during his work in the studio, this strategy of resistance and privatization of his painting often proved helpful.

Richter once spoke of the subversive and simultaneously contemporary nature of these landscapes which, paradoxically, lies precisely in their timelessness.[2] Indeed, critical reception of these works has often placed them in the tradition of, and distinct from, the rhetoric of the sublime manifested in German Romantic painting. In particular, the early landscapes he painted between 1968 and 1981 provoked discussions of this kind. The open skies, dramatic sunsets, colored rainbows and light breaking through the clouds heightened the atmospheric quality of this type of painting to the point of making it a metaphor of light and transcendence. In 1970-71, Richter experimented with similar strategies of overpowering effect in a series of monumental architectural designs for utopian interiors. However, because they were unrealizable, they are documented only in his *Atlas*, the artist's encyclopedic collection of source materials, photographs, sketches and designs.

Comparisons of Richter's landscapes with those of Caspar David Friedrich seem particularly appropriate. Both artists spent important years of their lives in Dresden, and some critics have deduced from this a shared experience of nature that extends beyond the centuries that separate them. Richter seems to confirm this in a letter to Jean-Christophe Ammann in 1973:

> A painting by Caspar David Friedrich is not a thing of the past. What is past is only the set of circumstances that allowed it to be painted: specific ideologies, for example. Beyond that, if the painting is any 'good,' it intrigues us – transcending ideology – as art that we consider worth the trouble of defending (contemplating, showing, making). It is, therefore, quite possible to paint like Caspar David Friedrich 'today'.[3]

At the art academy in Dresden in the early 1950's, Richter had already showed interest in Friedrich's work, studying his pictures closely. In spite of this, the similarity between the two artists' landscapes must remain a superficial one, as the society from which they emerged and the media through which we perceive the world have changed fundamentally. Richter no longer allows himself an unhindered view of nature but records his surroundings indirectly via a mechanical reproduction

Fig. 1: Gerhard Richter. Korsika *(Corsica), 1968*
Oil on canvas, 33-⅞ x 35-⅞ in. (86 x 91 cm)
Staatliche Kunstammlungen Dresden, Gerhard Richter Archiv (199)
Fig. 2: Gerhard Richter. Seestück *(Seascape), 1969*
Oil on canvas, 78-¾ x 78-¾ in. (200 x 200 cm)
Staatliche Kunstammlungen Dresden, Gerhard Richter Archiv (234)

medium. By reclaiming landscape painting through the technical parameters of photography, Richter experiments with the possibility of revitalizing such a traditional genre so deeply rooted in art history for contemporary viewing and experience.

The hundreds of landscape views photographed and collected in *Atlas* are the counterpart to the unlimited fragments of reality that appear in Richter's Gläser (Panes of Glass) and Spiegel (Mirrors) series. For the artist, they are important in several respects: each of these photographic prints reveals in part the same *veracity* of nature that appears as *finished works* in the transparent views and reflections in the Gläser and Spiegel series. But although Richter chooses just a few images for use in his paintings, this rigorous narrowing down cannot be explained purely in terms of the impossibility of painting all of the available material. Richter defends his selective approach as follows: "I see countless landscapes, photograph barely one in 100,000, and paint barely one in 100 of those that I photograph. I am therefore seeking something quite specific; from this I conclude that I know what I want."[4] His preference for source images whose point of view maintains a distance between the viewer and the topography of the landscape results in representations in which a vanishing point can no longer be identified. Conversely, there is also no clear viewer position. If, as Richter has repeatedly emphasized, it is a matter of using painting to help him see the world,[5] then at the same time, these landscapes also represent the dilemma of the impossibility of such an endeavor. If in his early gray photo paintings this "vision of the world" dissolved into a blur, thus denying clear identification, here the viewer is set in motion, losing his fixed position and thus his *unambiguous* view of this world.

This *ambiguity* of representation also applies to the Seestücke (Seascapes) series begun in 1969, and above all to the Wolkenbilder (Clouds) series of a year later. In this light, far from being romantic, the experience of reality realized in Richter's landscapes is actually very timely and rather skeptical. For the artist, every picture represents a fresh attempt at approaching this reality, without ever completely doing it justice.

In 1962, at the very beginning of his artistic career, Richter expressed his hope of being able, in his painting, to formulate an artistic truth as an alternative to the reality of nature: "Since there is no such thing as absolute rightness and truth, we always pursue the artistic, leading, *human* truth."[6] Almost thirty years after this optimistic statement, Richter returned to and relativized his earlier position. Far more skeptical with regard to the potential of painting, he now admitted: "I don't believe in the absolute picture. There can only be approximations, experiments and beginnings, over and over again."[7]

NOTES

1 Gerhard Richter, "Interview with Rolf Gunther Dienst, 1970," in Hans-Ulrich Obrist (ed.), *Gerhard Richter, The Daily Practice of Painting: Writing and Interviews 1962–1993*, translated by David Britt (Cambridge/London: MIT Press and Anthony d'Offay Gallery, 1995), p. 64.

2 Gerhard Richter, "Interview with Rolf Schön, 1972," in Obrist 1995, pp. 71ff.

3 Gerhard Richter, "Letter to Jean-Christophe Ammann, February 1973," in Obrist 1995, p. 81.

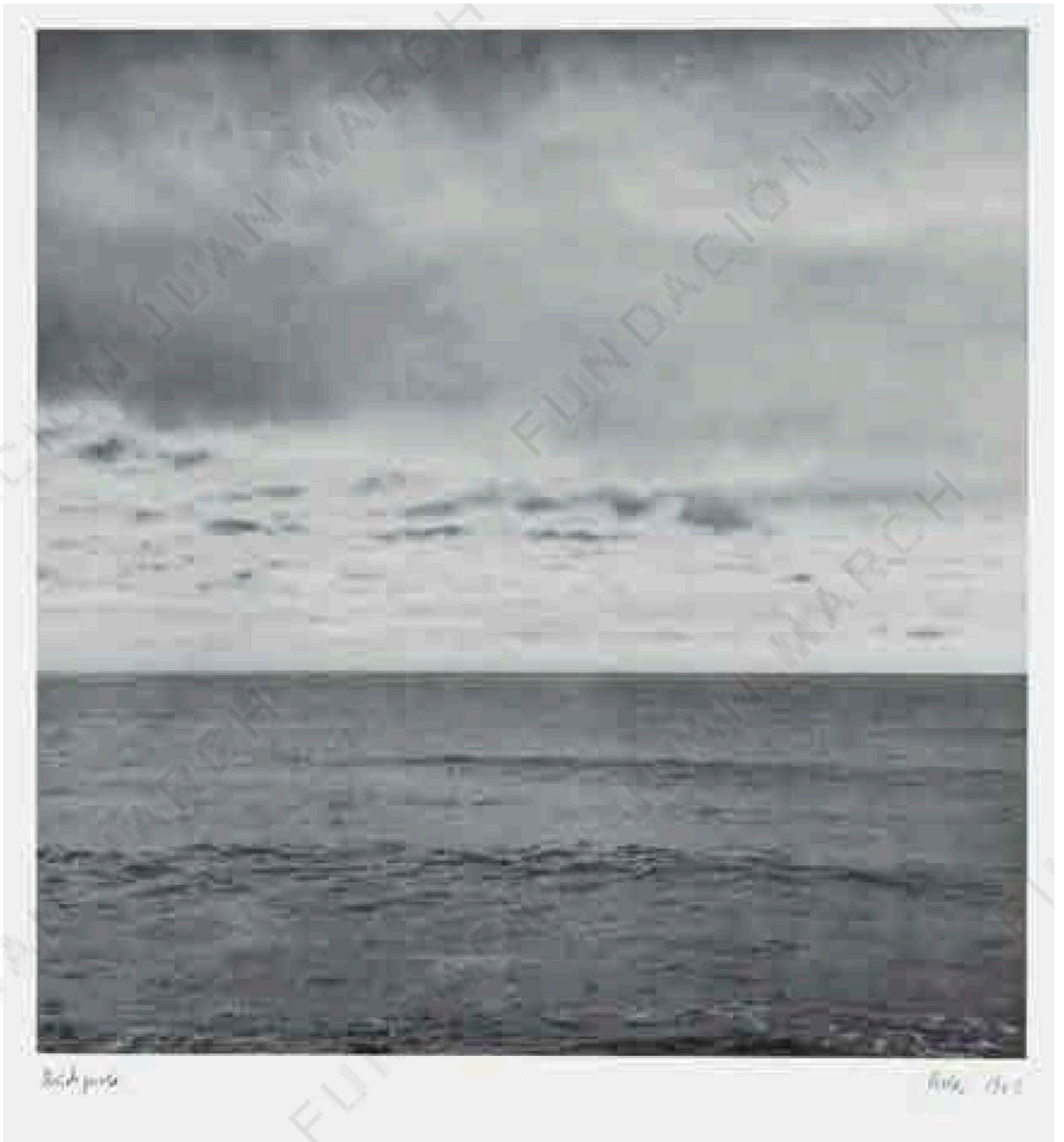
4 Gerhard Richter, "Notes, 1986," in Obrist 1995, p. 130.

5 Gerhard Richter, "Interview with Sabine Schütz, 1990," in Obrist 1995, p. 216.

6 Gerhard Richter, "Notes, 1962," in Obrist 1995, p. 15.

7 Gerhard Richter, "Conversation with Jan Thorn Prikker, 1989," in Obrist 1995, p. 199.

Fig. 3: Gerhard Richter. Seestück *(Seascape), 1975*
Oil on canvas, 78-¾ x 118 in. (200 x 300 cm)
Staatliche Kunstammlungen Dresden, Gerhard Richter Archiv (376)



114

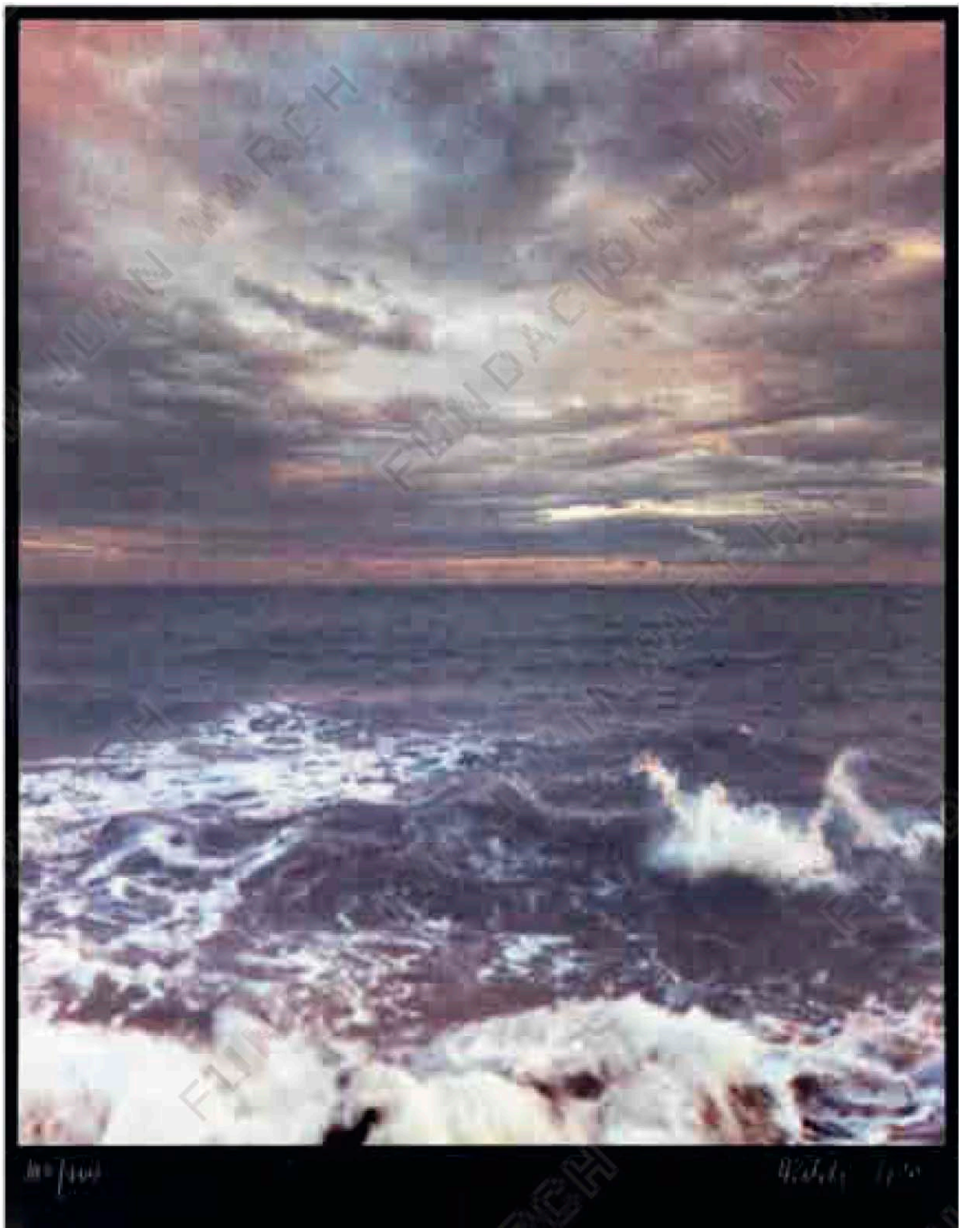
GERHARD RICHTER

Seestück

(Seascape), 1969

Offset photo lithograph on paper

20 x 19-5/16 in. (50.7 x 49 cm)



115

GERHARD RICHTER

Seestück

(Seascape), 1970

Offset photo lithograph on paper

23-7/16 x 17-5/8 in. (59.5 x 44.8 cm)

116

GERHARD RICHTER

2.1.1978, 1978

Watercolor on paper

5-13/16 x 8-1/4 in. (14.8 x 21 cm)

117

GERHARD RICHTER

2.1.1978, 1978

Watercolor on paper

5-13/16 x 8-1/4 in. (14.8 x 21 cm)

118

GERHARD RICHTER

27.8.1985 (1), 1985

Graphite on paper

8-¼ x 11-^{1}⁄$_{16}$ in. (21 x 29.7 cm)

119

GERHARD RICHTER

Untitled, 1991

Pen and brush with ink on paper

6-7/16 x 9-7/16 in. (16.4 x 23.9 cm)

120

GERHARD RICHTER

Untitled, 1991

Brush and ink on paper

9-7/16 x 13-1/4 in. (23.9 x 33.7 cm)

121

GERHARD RICHTER

Untitled, 1991

Brush and ink on paper

6-½ x 9-7⁄16 in. (16.5 x 23.9 cm)

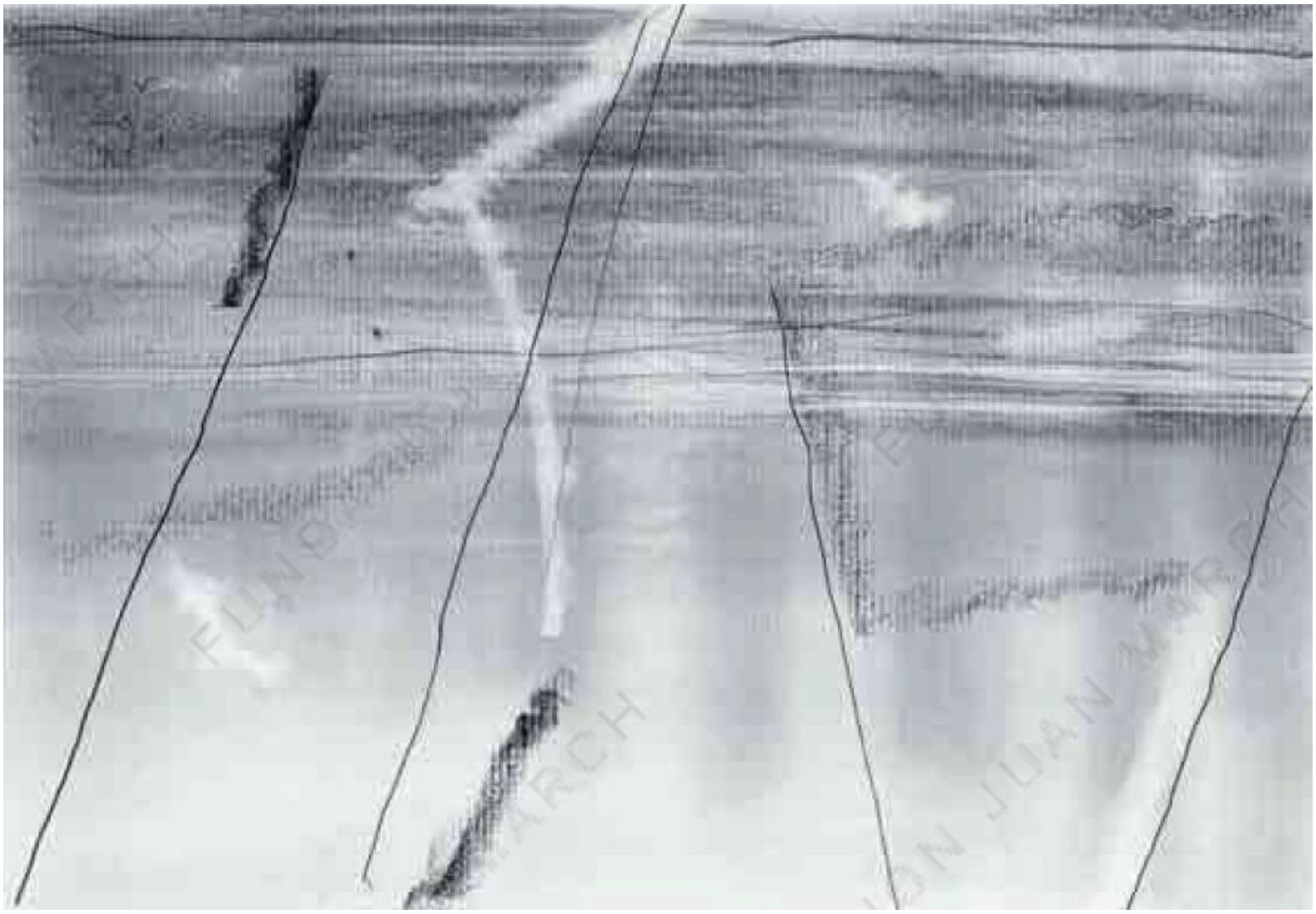
122

GERHARD RICHTER

31.5.1999, 1999

Pencil on paper

8-¼ x 11-⅞ in. (21 x 30.2 cm)



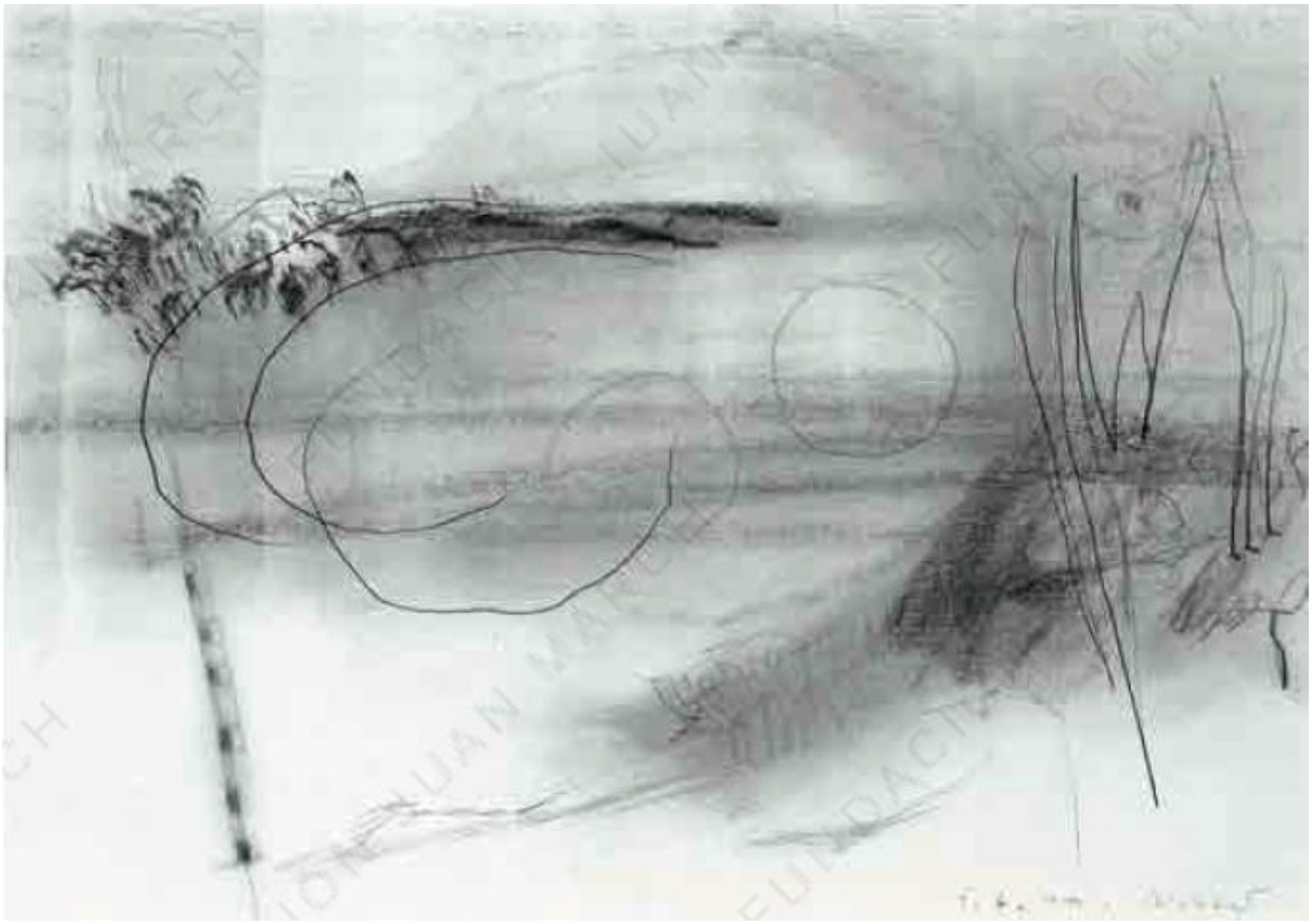
123

GERHARD RICHTER

31.5.1999, 1999

Pencil on paper

8-¼ x 11-⅞ in. (21 x 30.2 cm)



124

GERHARD RICHTER

1.6.1999, 1999

Pencil on paper

8-¼ x 11-⅞ in. (21 x 30.2 cm)

“IN THE PROTESTANT NORTH, FAR MORE THAN IN THE CATHOLIC SOUTH, ANOTHER KIND OF TRANSLATION FROM THE SACRED TO THE SECULAR TOOK PLACE, ONE IN WHICH WE FEEL THAT THE POWERS OF THE DEITY HAVE SOMEHOW LEFT THE FLESH-AND-BLOOD DRAMAS OF CHRISTIAN ART AND HAVE PENETRATED, INSTEAD, THE DOMAIN OF LANDSCAPE.”

ROBERT ROSENBLUM

Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko (1975)

EPILOGUE

"AS THOUGH YOU WERE BORN ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS OR AS IF YOU WERE THE LAST PERSON ON EARTH …"

Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition … revisited (1975–2007)

•

AN INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT ROSENBLUM

When the Fundación Juan March first approached Robert Rosenblum three years ago about organizing an exhibition based on his seminal text, *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (1975), he found the idea intriguing and agreed to serve as a consultant but resisted the offer to contribute an essay to the catalogue saying that he never liked to look back on his work, only forward. The Fundación then proposed an interview in which Mr. Rosenblum could hold forth on his book, its success, its critics, and his thoughts on it all some 30 years later.

The result is the following two-part interview conducted in Malaga and Madrid in May and October of 2006, shortly before his passing in December 2006. In it, this extraordinary scholar reveals the insight, intelligence and self-deprecating wit that marked his more than 50-year career as a venerated professor and scholar.

Mr. Rosenblum, as you know we are in the midst of preparing an exhibition for October 2007 at the Fundación Juan March in Madrid. It will be comprised, for the most part, of works on paper that will explore the pictorial "theme" of landscape from the perspective of Romanticism and within the fixed geographical regions of Northern Europe and America. In addition, the temporal parameters will encompass the early 19th century until the present day.

As this description makes clear, it is obvious that the exhibition is inspired by your 1975 *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko*, which is the result of eight public lectures you gave at Oxford. You selected the theme because you had already worked on it previously. Can you tell us why?

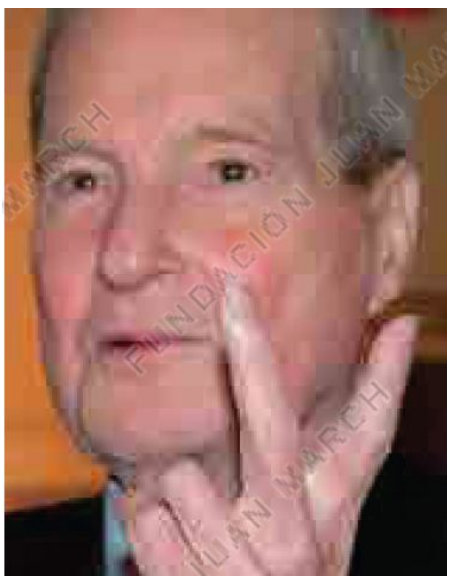
—Well, it had to do with a dialogue between the past and the present, between contemporary art and historical art, and I think the story begins in the 1950's when I was a student at New York University, … this was a decade in which we were all challenged by the new art of what we call the Abstract Expressionists. Namely, works by Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Clyfford Still. And I was passionate about them. I loved this work and people either loved it or hated it. But one thing that nobody ever was interested in or even thought about was whether this art had any relationship to the past. The assumption was that it was like nothing that was ever painted before. That it was a totally new invention and also the fact that it was created in New York gave it the sense of being totally unconnected, disconnected with European art. So that there was this body of new work, which I loved, which seemed to exist suddenly and in a vacuum. And as I studied art history,

Detail. J. M. W. Turner. Heavy Dark Clouds*, ca. 1822*
Gouache and watercolor on paper. CAT. 35
Detail. Mark Rothko. Untitled*, 1968. Acrylic on paper mounted on hardboard panel. CAT. 103*

I began to see similarities between the look of this work, and the emotions that they induced in spectators like me, and other art that I was familiar with and really beginning to study in the past.

What exactly attracted you to the theme?

—I think that I was actually attracted to the work of Friedrich because of my experience with Rothko. I suddenly saw a kindred spirit, an artist who also put you on the brink of eternity, made you feel as though you were on a threshold between life and death, between one world and another, so that there were emotional connections as well as visual connections. And the more I looked at the present, at the contemporary works, the more I would see parallels in other art of the 19th and early 20th century. So it was an ongoing dialogue between history and contemporary experience. And I think – if I'm correct – I think the first time that I actually published something which said this was in 1961, when I wrote an article called "The Abstract Sublime." And this word [sublime], which is a traditional classical concept, but revived in the 18th century, seemed to me useful in order to make connections between, on the one hand, Romantic landscape painting, and on the other hand, contemporary American painting of the 1950's, which wasn't so contemporary when I gave these lectures in 1972.



"The story begins in the 1950's when I was a student at New York University, … this was a decade in which we were all challenged by the new art of what we call the Abstract Expressionists."

As a professor, did you begin by studying the 19th-century European pictorial tradition or was your approach to the Romantic landscape indebted to your pre-existing interest in the work of Mondrian, van Gogh, Munch, Ernst, Rothko and Barnett Newman?

—Well, it's neither one thing nor the other. That is, they were simultaneous. I was always attracted to contemporary art but at the same time I was always attracted, especially in the 1950's and 60's, to artists of Germany, Holland, Scandinavia, because they were, at the time, discoveries. People did not usually include them in the traditional histories of 19th– and 20th–century art. So that was also an adventure in the same way that experiencing, or thinking about, or writing about contemporary art was for me. So it isn't one thing preceding the other. Both of these explorations are going on simultaneously.

When you were chosen Slade Professor of Fine Art it was suggested that you give your lectures "a broad and speculative character," something quite unusual with regard to Anglo-Saxon art historians because "… for better or worse," as you wrote in the prologue to your book, "we feel more at home in the secure foothills of facts than in the precarious summits of ideas, and are happier proving a date than constructing a new historical synthesis." More than 30 years later, what do you now think of your historical synthesis, which spans Friedrich's *Monk by the Sea* to the Rothko Chapel in Houston, that is, a period of 150 years?

—Well, to be honest, I think about it as very ambitious juvenilia. The point is that I, by instinct, do not like to build fictional structures. And it was only because of the program of the Slade Lectures, of giving eight lectures, which were consecutive, and of which the whole would be greater than the sum of the parts. It was this circumstance that prompted me to construct this vast overall new view of the history of modern art. And my nature generally is against grand ideas and grand syntheses. I like things to be open and flexible and messy, so that this was really, perhaps, a unique experience for me and I liked the challenge of a series of lectures that would have a grand sequence and produce a new way of thinking about things but in truth, later, I regretted the fact that so many people took this as truth, as gospel…

In fact, you warn in your book against the danger of innocent readers codifying a cohesive tradition in modern art as a "fixed historical truth" an …

—… absolute fact. That there was this history of

19th- and 20th-century art that I had constructed and, you know, I have heard students, for instance, speak about the Northern Romantic tradition as if this were a historical truth.

We have taken seriously your suggestion to be flexible and of the themes you have treated as elements of the Northern Romantic tradition, we have chosen only that of landscape. Do you feel that the manner in which you structured your argument at that time (in those eight chapters) continues to be plausible, truthful, credible?

—… It is a beautiful historical fiction and I must say I believed in it when I was constructing it but in retrospect it seems to me much too simple and too linear so I have regrets about making things too clear so that they can be repeated as if they were truths. But, on the other hand, I do think it was at the time a major change in the way in which I and other people could look at the history of 19th- and 20th-century art. So that I think it was important that I introduce new connections and new ideas but I would always regret that people would consider this an absolute truth and a structure that is enduring and that is still as true as it might have been in the 1960's and 70's. Things change and constructions like this are useful for a particular time in history but today they may be, you know, anachronistic. People have completely different ways of seeing the evolution of modern art. So, you know, it is time bound. It's a historical moment when people were trying to connect the present tense of contemporary art with the history of the last century, of the 19th century.

Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition **has been published in several languages. What critical response did it have among your art historian colleagues?**

—Well, a wide range of responses. I mean, the positive responses I obviously enjoyed. That was, that I had resurrected a large territory of 19th-century art that had been forgotten or usually ignored or it was unknown in terms of the received ideas of who was important in the history of modern art. So that was very comforting, to know that I was something of an archaeologist who had discovered new works of art to look at. Other people were very negative about it in so far as my construction completely contradicted a more formal reading of this history of modern art. And especially in the 1950's and 60's, and even into the 70's, the weight of critical authorities like Clement Greenberg was very heavy. And in order to understand works by Jackson Pollock or Mark Rothko, one point of view would be to relate it to the internal structure of the development of modern art and to see it as purely formal evolution. And my own point of view is completely different from that so that I was going against the grain of a more formalist interpretation of abstract art. So there was that conflict and that, of course, was a good thing because it meant that I had touched the nerves of one kind of reflex response to the looking at modern painting and abstract painting. And this made a lot of people very angry, or upset them, because they could not see how landscape painting had anything to do with the work of Jackson Pollock or Mark Rothko …

Yes, because one of the currents, if not the principal one, of your book is that which relates the Romantic landscape to 20th-century abstraction. ***Modern Painting…*** **could be described,** ***à la Nietzsche*****, as a book about the "birth of modern abstraction out of the spirit of the Romantic landscape." However, although the argument is quite suggestive it is not immediately and easily understandable. Even highly educated people would have difficulty explaining the continuity between a Friedrich or a Palmer and a Rothko or Pollock…**

—… So, it was a question of introducing a completely different approach, and that usually means that people are very positive or very negative about it.

The interpretation you advanced in your Slade Lectures in 1972 must have been quite innovative at that time. Do you feel that the topic has been sufficiently studied? Would you say that it created a "school of thought?" Has your argument been "refined" or "refuted"?

—Well … I would hate to think that it created a system, a philosophy, a school of thought. I would like to think of it as a tentative idea that is rooted in a particular moment in history. Namely, the time in which it was possible to reconsider the new painting that was made in America in the 1950's and to locate it in a tradition. But that is a long time ago. What I think is more important is the fact that it introduced an audience to artists of the 19th century that were virtually unknown, unstudied. And the most conspicuous example of that is, of course, Casper David Friedrich, because when I was thinking about these things, when I was studying, he was virtually unknown

and this was also true of other artists of his generation, people like Philipp Otto Runge in Germany, and then there were Scandinavian disciples, like Dahl, but in any case this was *terra incognita*. And it was material that I really think I introduced to an Anglo-Saxon, and then also to, perhaps, a French, Italian, Spanish audience so that today Caspar David Friedrich, for instance, is completely known throughout not only the Western world but in Japan as well, where there have been exhibitions and he is now considered, you know, an essential, major artist. And this was not the case at all. I mean people at the time, in the 1960's, had no idea who he was. So, if I did this, that already, I think, was something of an achievement apart from all of the philosophical connections.

You said that you were actually attracted to the work of Friedrich because of your own experience with Rothko, but in your book there are artists, like Mondrian for example, who seem more "plausible" than others.

—Well, just a word to begin with. I said initially that I was attracted to Friedrich because of my new experience with Rothko and I just wanted to expand on this to say that I believe strongly that contemporary art, new art, changes drastically what we see in the history of art, so that things that looked irrelevant at one point suddenly look as though they are central at another. And this is what happened in my case with being awed by Rothko's work, and that made Friedrich's work more accessible to me.

We'd like to ask you about those others whose presence in your book appears less "obvious". For example, Samuel Palmer, whose landscapes appear to have many of the characteristics of the "picturesqueness" typical of 17th-century Dutch landscape painting, with bucolic and quotidian scenes.

—As for Samuel Palmer, although I guess he is, in part, rooted to 17th-century Dutch landscape painting – and any British artist who is a landscape painter in the 18th or 19th century would have looked back to them – much more important is the fact that he was in many ways a disciple of William Blake who would have hated 17th-century Dutch landscape painting because it was so literal, so terrestrial. And what is so extraordinary about Palmer's work is that he was really a visionary, he was passionate. He believed in a supernatural deity and he looked at landscape with the kind of religious fervor that characterized many of the German Romantics. And he was really a tortured soul and fits very, very comfortably into the image of a Romantic genius who is trying to find some kind of metaphors in nature to explain the mysteries of life on earth and death afterwards. So he is an artist who is completely imbued with a vision of nature as something not natural but supernatural. And he actually was also an artist who was revived in the middle of the 20th century. He had been somewhat ignored throughout the history of 19th- and early 20th-century studies of British art or international art and then he began to have a cult following and was very often compared, in fact, to van Gogh because his work has that sense of mysteriously animate nature, a kind of vitality, a sense of growth and magic that was often equated with the experience one has in van Gogh's landscapes.

And Ferdinand Hodler?

—Hodler ... Well, I think, although Hodler has a much more cheerful, optimistic temperament than most of these artists, especially Friedrich, he nevertheless experienced – you know, living in Switzerland, exploring the Alps – this sense of the threshold. What one feels so much in Hodler's works is the sense that we have gone as far as we can on this planet. We have reached the edge of the terrestrial world and, on the top of a mountain, we are confronting whatever nameless mysteries lie beyond. So at the very least he fits into a tradition of mountain paintings. Mountains are very important in the landscape imagery of the early 19th century and he really revives it in a very grand way. But I don't think he has the kind of passion and mysticism that one associates with artists like Runge and Friedrich. He's much more of a public figure.

And Max Ernst? Ernst is the only surrealist who appears in your book. Why not Yves Tanguy or other Surrealist painters? Along those same lines: was the inclusion of Ernst influenced by the fact that Ernst admired Friedrich and that, if I'm not mistaken, translated and illustrated Kleist, Brentano and Arnim's texts on Friedrich's *Monk by the Sea*?

—Well I think, in fact, Tanguy or Masson could conceivably have been included but I think this was my own restriction in the sense that one of my goals when I wrote the book was to rewrite the general history of modern painting not in terms of Paris, which had been the traditional art center, but in terms of mainly Northern Europe. So there were surely French artists who could have been included but, for better or for worse, I con-

sciously excluded them.

And what about Kandinsky and Pollock?

—I think they're central. I don't know if Northern includes Russia but, why not? But they are both artists who see apocalyptic visions in nature. I mean, nature, whether it means just energy, upheaval, chaos, earthquakes, storms, is the central image of their work and they also have, especially Kandinsky, transcendental goals. I mean, they are representing some kind of apocalyptic experience that is more clear in Kandinsky than it is in Pollock. But I think just in terms of their imagery and in terms of their projection of the end of the world or the beginning of the world, they fit very well into my scheme.

Friedrich has become a renowned figure, familiar to all. That is not the case with the other artists in your book. Could you tell us something about two whom we believe exist within the Romantic tradition and are of interest to you: Strindberg and Peder Balke?

—Yes. In the case of Peder Balke, I believe I have one illustration of his work in my book. But he has, in fact, remained relatively obscure. Only Scandinavians know about him. But Strindberg is a completely different story. And, in fact, when I gave the lectures for this book in 1972, I am not sure if I myself was aware that Strindberg was a painter. And I think had I known his work then I would have included it. And by a series of coincidences I later became involved with Strindberg. I was once asked to give a lecture on him – this must have been in the 1980's – on the occasion of an exhibition of his work in Valencia, at IVAM. And I got all excited about this. I only barely knew his work and I did a lot of work. In fact, I remember I think I did more work for that than I did for any other lecture I had given in a long time. And he then became even more famous and he's had major exhibitions and monographs all over the world in the last ten years. And that is something I regret, because if I had known him then he would have had a much more important role. He certainly would have been included.

"At the time I gave these lectures I had very little experience in making art exhibitions. That has changed. It seems to me now that the most important thing in an exhibition is that it be immediately, visually convincing."

A thesis as suggestive as that of *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition* – which encompasses 150 years, two continents and more than 30 artists and begins with the figurative landscape and continues on through European abstraction arriving at American Abstract Expressionism – wouldn't it be the dream of any curator? Your book, from the point of view of theory and exhibition organization, is quite suggestive: you advanced a selection of artists of the first order within a broad time frame and, what is more interesting, upon reflection you relate them, not just chronologically or thematically; that is, you achieve the idea that an exhibition is a display … with an interpretation, and not merely an index of artworks. Did you ever conceive of your book as the outline for an exhibition?

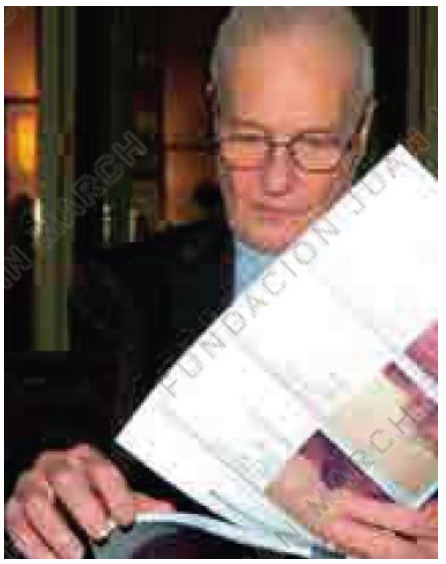
—No, in truth, I never thought about that. And in a way, the structure of the lectures, which turned into a book, was really that of a slide lecture rather than an actual exhibition because the effectiveness of the lectures and the arguments really had to do with the comparison of left slide and right slide and this was often, in truth, very deceptive in so far as there was always the question of the actual size of the works of art.

Well, in one of your answers to our questions you referred to the problems inherent in basing your arguments (in this case, that of *Modern Painting*…) on visual comparisons – as in a slide lecture – that equate in size (that of a slide) works whose dimensions are quite diverse. This problem is especially clear in your book, in which large-format works (Newman, Pollock) are compared with intimately scaled works, like those of Romantic landscapes.

—For instance. And this would completely falsify the fact that the American paintings – the Abstract Expressionist paintings I often showed – were huge pictures, whereas I would compare them with works that had similar structure or similar mood, which might be very small. So that the visual persuasiveness of the argument really had to do with the constant comparison of an image on the left and an image on the right and this was, as it were, an exhibition, like an art exhibition except that it was done through the medium of slides rather through actual works of art. So that I think even in retrospect I would say that the argument of this series of lectures was more convincing when seen in slide comparisons than in photographs in a book or certainly in an exhibition because you can't have, you know, a small Turner watercolor next to a large painting by Rothko. So I think, in a way, the lecture is an illusion or maybe even a deception in terms of the actual visual experience of the real works of art. I'm being honest.

But … don't you think that this is not only a "technical" problem but one that profoundly affects the same "scientific" process of art history, at least each time "comparative studies" are made? You cite Panofsky, who called attention to the danger of *pseudomorphosis*, that is, "the accidental appearance at different moments in the history of art of works whose close formal analogies falsify the fact that their meaning is totally different." Do you believe that your book was immune to this type of "virus"? Is it possible that your vision of the relationship between the Romantic landscape (i.e. Friedrich) and American Abstract Expressionism (i.e. Rothko) was affected by *pseudomorphosis*?

—Oh absolutely. This is one of the dangers of being an art historian who gives lectures with slides because, you know, our whole approach is based on comparing two things that look alike and this is the way we think so that very often there are deceptions. And just because two things look good together they are meant to be similar, persuasive, the same, but this is often false. So I think this is one of the dangers of the techniques of giving slide lectures.



"I really underestimated, when I did these lectures, the importance of the indigenous American tradition. … There are now many 19th-century American landscape painters whom I would include as antecedents to the work of especially Rothko."

As a matter of fact, in the prologue to your book you already discuss the risks implied by "the transposition into a book of a series of lectures whose persuasiveness may have depended in good part upon techniques of audio-visual sequence and informal delivery." However, exhibitions have catalogues and books need images. Do you think that an exhibition inspired by your book can return to your thesis the "persuasiveness" that your lectures "lost" upon being edited in book form, as you state in the prologue?

—Well, that, of course, depends on the kind of exhibition it is and my own feeling about exhibitions and I should say now that at the time I gave these lectures I had very little experience in making art exhibitions. That has changed. But it seems to me now that the most important thing in an exhibition is that it be immediately, visually, convincing. That is, what I would be against in an exhibition is something that has an idea, an abstract idea, and that the works do not really fully reflect this, that you would have to read something in order to understand why two works are placed next to each other. So, I think the first thing about an exhibition is that it should be intelligible visually even if you have absolutely no scenario or no structure to impose on it. So it really is a very different thing to do to make an exhibition than to give a lecture or write an article.

We have the impression that some of the controversy that your book incited came from the emphasis that you gave Northern European religiosity in explaining

the pictorial evolution and the political aspect of your non-"Paris-based" interpretation of modern art history, in which the center changes from Paris to New York. Is this the case?

—Well, yes in a way. This has to do with politics and power. Because I remember vividly in the middle of the 20th century in New York, especially, the sense was that the forces of modern art, the energy, had switched from Paris to New York. This was almost a kind of imperial triumph and, therefore, there was a great deal of antagonism to[wards] French art, especially contemporary French art, which New Yorkers considered to be vastly inferior to what was being produced in the United States. And there was some kind of sense of the shift of power and a feeling that Paris is dead, that it's history and the world has to be reconstructed. So that my own relationship to this is similar. I hope it wasn't a question of politics but it was a question of taking away the traditional position of France and Paris as being the center of modern art and relocating the forces of the making of modern art in other countries. So it was a question of shifting the balance and of course this kind of thing always has nationalist repercussions. If you say that a German painter is as important for the history of modern art – i.e. Caspar David Friedrich – as Jacques Louis David then you are immediately setting up a war situation between France and Germany. So there is this implication. And I think it was also a result of a feeling that America had triumphed over France after the Second World War.

As to the religious aspect: Does it still seem to you that there is a relationship between Southern Europe – Mediterranean, Catholic, colorful – and the North – Protestant, pious and Romantic (in the manner of Friedrich)?

—Well, this is just a very simple, ordinary experience. All you have to do is travel from Sicily to Norway and you will know that something has changed in terms of the way people behave and the way the world looks. So, this is simply a fact of landscape, a fact of culture, a fact of society, and there has always been this distinction in Europe. So it's even beyond questions of Catholicism and Protestantism.

What does "Northernness" mean to you?

[LAUGHTER] Silence.

If we understand correctly, the "turning point" in Northern Romantic landscape painting is, on the one hand, the fact that in 18th-century Europe there is a type produced that does not allow itself to be defined as a genre by the canons of landscape painting (of a Ruisdael, for example) and, on the other hand, that there is a religious feeling quite alive in Northern Europe (and also among artists) that cannot be defined by the standard canons of religious painting. And you propose what you call the Protestant "Spectator Christianity" as a basis of Romantic landscape painting. Yet we also notice in your book few references to the idea of the "sublime," which has an important history in Western Europe from Kant up to the modern day via Schiller, the Schlegels, Novalis …

—That surprises me in a way because the first time I wrote about these connections I actually put the word sublime in the center. So much so that it became a phrase that was later used by other people: "The Abstract Sublime." So it may be that in my lectures because I had already made this clear … I minimized it, but I absolutely think that it is important and that this is a continuous theme. But I think if I didn't mention it that much it's probably because I had done it originally in a much more reduced form. It was like the *Reader's Digest* version of the lectures.

Your theory of the "survival" and "revival" of Romantic landscape painting in the 20th century is focused on the mainly religious point of view. Are other views possible? Perhaps political or national ones? What would they be?

—Well there certainly are other views that are possible here. And one of the most frightening is the German history of the greatness of Casper David Friedrich and Runge, and the fact of the matter is that these artists were much revived during the Third Reich. Adolph Hitler actually owned a painting by Runge at one point and they were considered, you know, pure German artists, national heroes, and represented the Third Reich as opposed to the rest of the world. So there is always the possibility of using works of art for nationalist reasons, political reasons. So, I mean, there is a very good example.

Friedrich is a constant in landscape painting. Many artists consider themselves his heirs. You begin your book with Friedrich and end with Rothko. Why end with Rothko?

—Oh, well, the answer to that is simple. In the sense that originally – and this was around 1960 when I thought

of this thesis – Rothko seemed to be the contemporary end of this tradition and it was an alpha and omega structure. So he seemed the logical conclusion especially because his works really looked like Friedrich at least as I had constructed it. And the lectures in the 1970's were really predicated on my earlier writings so I did not want to go beyond that.

Do you believe there are no successors as of the 1960's?

—The fact of the matter is that I think that there are many artists who continue this tradition but probably not with the same kind of total faith in things spiritual or religious that I would attribute to artists like Rothko or Clyfford Still. But, I mean, I would think, for example, that the earthworks of the 1970's, for instance, could be put into this tradition, works by Robert Smithson or Walter de Maria. Another artist, American, would be James Turrell with his fascination for light and infinity and landscape.

The use of Romantic imagery in the work of 20th-century artists is relatively common, but do you believe that today we are confronting an unconscious "survival" of Romantic traditions or a conscious "revival" of them?

—Yes, I think it's a revival.

In Europe there appears to be a "survival" and "revival" of the Romantic up to the present day as, for example, in the painting of Kiefer and Richter.

—But I think that's exactly it. It's a difference between revival and survival. The fact is that Rothko was not reviving Friedrich whereas Kiefer and Richter *are* reviving Friedrich, I mean, these are quotations from history rather than naïve beliefs. Kiefer and Richter are quite conscious of reviving Friedrich. However, this said, I think that something very basic changed in terms of the history of art from the 1960's on and that is that there was much more of a sense of irony, of quotation, of the seriousness … in a way, the naïveté of Rothko or Barnett Newman or Clyfford Still really belonged to the past. I mean, people, artists, I don't think from the 1960's on, ever thought that their works of art could change the world, that they really could have a genuine religious aspect to them and this was a tradition that I think really died with the generation of Rothko. People became much more ironic, sophisticated, yes, disillusioned. So it was a last gasp of some kind of naïve fantasy that works of art have this kind of power. I don't think people believe that anymore. But that is not true, I think, of these Earth [Art] workers.

Of course there are solitary artists who continue that.

—I'm sure there are. There are mystical artists but they are isolated. They don't really form a group. They're like crazy individuals …

Let's turn to America. As in Northern Europe, in America nature also served as a source of inspiration for many artists (i.e. 19th-century American painting, Hudson River School, etc.). Nevertheless, in your book you establish a direct connection between American Abstract Expressionism and European Romanticism. Do you believe it's possible that American landscape painting (that is painting of the American landscape) may have had a direct influence on artists such as O'Keeffe, Rothko, Still and Newman?

—This is actually a very good question in the sense that I really underestimated, when I did these lectures, the importance of the indigenous American tradition. And, for instance, the landscape tradition of 19th-century America is much more separate …

There are now many 19th-century American landscape painters whom I would include as antecedents to the work of especially Rothko, and what is, I think, most relevant is a 19th-century tradition of painting in America that was later called Luminism. And there are any number of artists of the mid-19th century who were just fascinated by a kind of transcendent light that seemed to absorb all material things. It was the equivalent of what you have in a Friedrich or in a Rothko and this also has to be [the case] with the sublime paintings of mountains or the geographical wonders of North America. So I think that this is something that I did not sufficiently emphasize in the 1970's. And if I had it to do again today I probably would give that a much greater role. But I think the reason is again political.

One could ask if the inspiration of the American Abstract artists really comes from Europe or from this genuine American tradition.

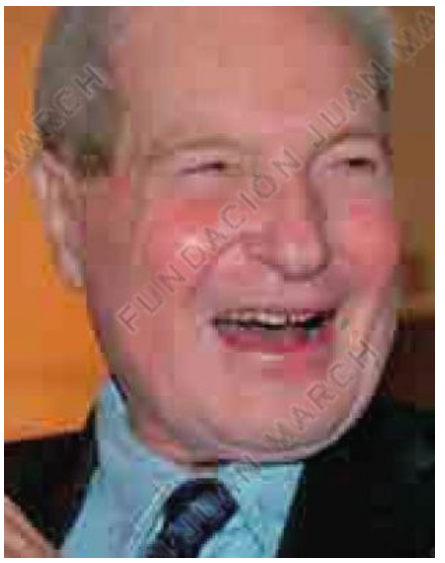
—Well, of course, it's complicated because the American landscape painters of the 19th century were, in turn, indebted to the Europeans. So it's not either or. I mean, hey, themselves, have absorbed some of the traditions and, you know, many of them came from England or

studied in Germany so it's really a hybrid situation. But it is true that my own response to this had to do with giving these Abstract Expressionist artists a much grander pedigree, to relate them to somebody like Church or Bierstadt was not as fancy as relating them to Casper David Friedrich. … But then there is also the fact that Friedrich is earlier. I mean, he really invented this kind of landscape so that the Americans are following him, the 19th-century Americans.

Bierstadt and Church and all these artists travel to Europe in the 19th century.

—Oh yes. Some of them were even [European]. You know, Thomas Cole was born in England. … I should say, by the way, just for the record, that after I published this book in the 1970's I had written later about Rothko and I did say more about American roots. ... I remember that I wrote an essay, a catalogue essay about Rothko for an exhibition in London at the Tate Gallery and I specifically mention other American 19th-century parallels ["Notes on Rothko and Tradition," *Mark Rothko, 1903-1970* (London: The Tate Gallery, 1987), pp. 21-31. Exhibition dates: June 17-August 31, 1987]. I think. And I know that after this was published if I ever spoke about these artists again I would have [mentioned] many more American predecessors. So I did change.

The reason I underestimated this is that I wanted to give the American Abstract Expressionists the sense of belonging to an international tradition rather than to a local indigenous tradition of American art. So here again the question of politics is relevant. And the fact of the matter is that these Americans, these Abstract Expressionists were very universal in their ambitions. And the concept of the time was that American 19th- and early 20th-century art was provincial, regional, peripheral to European art and they would have preferred to see themselves in an international context.



"If you are on the beach thinking of Picasso and you are all alone on the beach you have a very different experience … of the cosmos than if you are walking with 20 people on the beach."

So I think that I followed this prejudice and tried to give them a genealogical table that was grander than the history of American art.

It's fascinating what you say because, of course, we normally think of … this possessiveness that Americans have and how proud they are that it is almost a homegrown movement, Abstract Expressionism, and here you are establishing a European lineage for it to give it validity within the international artistic community. So there has been a change, don't you think? That people see it more as … completely indigenous, Abstract Expressionism. It's an expression of that America at that time. Vibrant … coming out of the wars. It's just fascinating the dichotomy now, the change in perception.

—Well it is true. I mean, well, that's one thing that we all know, that things constantly change. I mean, people look at everything differently every 10 or 20 years. So, I mean, I can't begin to imagine how a young generation looks at Mark Rothko today, probably so differently from the way I do.

Well, it would be difficult to combine in our galleries two centuries of European and American Art.

—Especially with works on paper. What are you going to do [for your exhibition], are you going to have Pollock, Rothko? You would start with Friedrich? Certainly lots …

We start with Friedrich. We have Turners. Constables…

Do you have van Gogh?

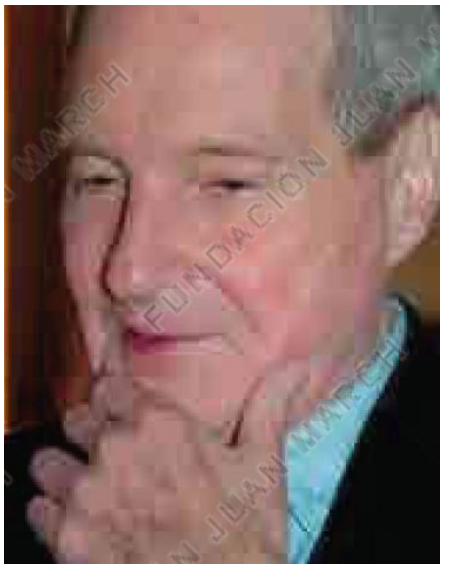
Yes. We also have Dahl and Carus.

Oh, you have Dahl and Carus? That's wonderful.

And then Munch, Mondrian, Klee, Richter, Kiefer…

Let's go on. Nature has always existed, "landscape" has not. One of the things that distinguish landscape as a genre from those by Friedrich is that the latter is made "divine." It is a landscape that tends to be unpopulated. Do you think that the reason for this may be that all the superfluous elements must be removed so that the typically Protestant God can "fit" without intermediaries, without church, without religious iconography, leaving us with a God that is basically symbolic?

—Yes, absolutely. The truth is that the fewer people there are in a picture the more mysterious it seems in relationship between the figure and landscape and of course, ideally, it is just one figure. Naturally the archetype of that is the *Monk by the Sea*. That really is the absolute definition of the experience. But, you know, we all know the experience of being on the beach. If you are on the beach thinking of Picasso and you are all alone on the beach you have a very different experience; you have a very different relationship to the natural world and to the mysteries of the cosmos than if you are walking with 20 people on the beach. So, you know, loneliness is essential to the experience, isolation.



"[Newman] wanted to make you feel as though you were born on the first day of the Book of Genesis or as if you were the last person on earth."

Let's return to the source of this whole story, Caspar David Friedrich. When you started working with this idea of the Northern Romantic tradition, had you read Werner Hofmann's *The Earthly Paradise* **(1960)?**

—Yes. And very much so. I'm glad you mentioned this because I remember vividly, given that this book opened one vista after another to me. It was a complete overhaul of the conventional histories of 19th-century painting and as such it was really a liberation. I mean, I suddenly felt that I didn't have to think in terms of the familiar sequence of "isms" and French artists, but that I could think about 19th-century art in thematic terms and he also was completely international so he avoided that French-based vision. So this was really an essential book in terms of my own education.

Well, the other part of the question was: Hofmann's text, focused on European artists, could it have inspired your theory in any sense?

—Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely. I'm happy to say that.

Did you see the Caspar David Friedrich exhibition organized by Hofmann in Germany in 1974?

—No, I did not. Although, obviously I saw the catalogue. I think the first Friedrich exhibition, retrospective, I saw was the one at the Tate Gallery in London [July-October 1972] that was organized by William Vaughan. I do not remember the date but I do remember seeing it very carefully especially because I knew him [Vaughan] and we went around the exhibition together and I was able to ask him a lot of questions. I don't know what year that was …. I had seen a lot of Friedrichs simply by traveling in Germany.

Let's return to total abstraction. You would probably say that what distinguishes the Northern Romantic tradition from the more Paris-based Impressionist currents is that the former belong to a certain "aesthetic of the sublime" and the latter to an "aesthetic of beauty". Your 1961 article, "The Abstract Sublime," establishes a European lineage for the American Abstract Expressionist School. Did you coin this term? Were you the first to use it?

—Yes. I think I was the first to use it. At least I thought I coined the term but the truth also is that Barnett Newman used the word "sublime" often and in the name of a painting and in articles he wrote and, you know, Newman was central to my world and I clearly must have been influenced by that. In truth, at the time, I don't remember thinking about this as belonging to Newman but in retrospect I obviously was aware of it. But, in any case, the exact phrase "abstract sublime" is something I think I coined.

How would you relate synthetically two such disparate concepts as the "sublime" and the "abstract"?;

concepts that at first glance seem to have no relation at all? Barnett Newman, in addition to being known as a painter, is also known as a writer of seminal texts (like "The Sublime is Now," 1948), and the titles of many of his works have a religious resonance, closely approaching what can be described as the aesthetic of the sublime. But, is there a connection, or relation, between Newman's theories and titles and his works (abstract, linear, large format)?

—Yes. I think he was after the experience of some sort of alternate irrational mystery that could not be calculated by reason, by measurement and he wanted to make you feel as though you were born on the first day of the Book of Genesis or as if you were the last person on earth. So there is always this alpha and omega experience. And his thinking about this was translated into images that make you feel as though they are absolutely primordial. They are elementary, the beginnings of the world, origins, the difference between order and chaos. But they have a cosmological quality and that is what he wanted to convey in his paintings.

You knew many of the Abstract Expressionists you write about. What did they think of this assessment of their work? Did you find some who agreed with your theory? Disagreed? What was their reaction?

— Well it's a question I have never asked myself and I have never been asked before. [Among] the Abstract Expressionists I knew, the one I knew best was Newman. I actually socialized with him; the translation is I had dinner with him a few times and I knew his wife. Rothko I had met but did not feel any compatibility with but it was really Newman. And the truth is I never remember his mentioning my article [LAUGHTER]. But I know that he read it because there was a very famous controversy in *ARTnews* after it was published. This is all a good story and relevant. The caption of the painting – very famous painting – *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* by Barnett Newman was given under the illustration in my article and the caption was misspelled, that is, the Latin was wrong. And instead of "sublimis," which is correct Latin, they wrote "sublimus," n - u - s. And Erwin Panofsky, of all people – whom I actually knew because I was at Princeton at the time, and like everybody else I thought he was a genius (one of the bad things about Panofsky is that he hated contemporary art and he really disliked abstract art) – he caught this mistake in Latin in the caption of my article. And he wrote a letter to *ARTnews*, which was in effect saying that, you know, this was all just ridiculous and that this man didn't even know his Latin.

This was a generation that also wrote a great deal about their art. … And Barnett Newman, who was actually very learned, and who did know Classical languages, wrote a very vicious letter trying to defend the misspelling in some kind of, you know, obscure grammatical terms. But it was a big controversy between them, which in fact had no relationship to the content of my article. But it was just a kind of amusing little tempest.

But, was there a response to your book from these artists?

—It never ever got any response. So I never knew. Funny…

We have to finish but we have the feeling we will never finish with you because we will always have questions to ask you and you will always have very interesting answers. Thank you very much.

—Well, that's because they're interesting questions [LAUGHTER]. They are things I never thought about. Now I'm absolutely dumbfounded that Barnett Newman never commented on this. But he lived way, way up there [LAUGHTER] and he somehow didn't connect with the real world.

Malaga, May 5, 2006 / Madrid, October 18, 2006

The North is not only a geographical place, it is also a cultural dimension; and 19th-century landscape painting, with its nationalist connotations, is but one of its manifestations.

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APPENDIX

IMAGINATIO BOREALIS. A CULTURAL TOPOGRAPHY OF "NORTHERNNESS"

BERNHARD TEUBER, OLAF MÖRKE,
VICTOR ANDRÉS FERRETTI

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The formation and transformation of mental images and discursive concepts of the North has always played a significant role in the self-understanding and understanding of the Other in European cultures from the Middle Ages right up to today's debates on definitions of Europe.[1] This process can be understood as a lengthy and contradictory history of working through and adapting both social – the real, or everyday – and discursive points of departure, in the course of which the *imaginatio* draws up signs, texts and discourses of the North – *imagines boreales* – for a large variety of contexts and purposes. The concepts linked to this are not given *a priori*, but are instead either constructed or deconstructed. Their specific form is subject to historical transformations that can be manifested in terms of politics and territorial claims, religion, language and culture. An exemplary history of notions about the North, as we encounter them to this day in history, everyday culture, language, literature and art, amounts to a supreme challenge to cultural studies.

When societies reflect on their own position, they establish points of contact with other cultures. They may distance themselves from the Other, or pursue principles of perception that place them within contrasting traditions serving to bolster their own self-value. This amounts to the (re-)construction of a kind of collective biography, which can also imply falsified histories.

In this process of cultural self-assertion (or sometimes self-mirroring) it was always the East and, later, the South – specifically Greece and Italy – that played a significant role in Europe. In Western culture, the humanist preference for Greek and Latin was dominant up to the 18th century, and, as the culture of the South, it was set against the alleged non-culture of the "barbarian" North. European cultures, therefore, have been continuously influenced by the persistence of an ancient concept of "Northernness" that identifies the North largely as a culturally irrelevant and devalued Outsider (for the Greeks: the Hyperboreans and Thracians; or the Augustan idea of an *ultima Thule*[2] on the northern edge

Detail. F. E. Church. Iceberg, New Foundland, *1859. Brush and oil paint on paperboard. CAT. 60*

of the known world). The producers and utilizers of hegemonic discourse repeatedly determined their own locations as "not Northern," and structured the world basically in terms of symbolic centers (Rome, Jerusalem) that lay in the East and South, but never in the North.

These hegemonic discourses thus deny over a long period of time any equal status for a potential Northern subject, or even its very right to exist. It is certainly worth asking how this concept changes by dint of historical experience (for example, the *translatio imperii* onto the Franks, the Saxons and the Germans; the political integration of the Normans in France and England; the re-evaluation of Denmark and Sweden after the Peace of Westphalia; the discovery of English culture in the course of the European Enlightenment; the elevation of Shakespeare to a model for European theater; the cult of Ossian). Enthusiasm for Ossian, for example, led to Nordic myths in art and literature gaining a status similar to that previously enjoyed by Greek and Latin mythology. The increasing interest in the North also facilitated opposition to Christian traditions. With the advent of modernism, these conditions again drastically shifted, permitting us to question whether "Northernness" and modernity act as metonyms for each other, while the South and the Latin are transformed into quasi-archaic counterparts within a North Atlantic civilization; and also how highly civilized and mechanized modernity finds a topos of retreat and a vanishing point in the idea of a "healthy" North. It is through concepts like these that new self-definitions and delimitations of the North have been formed (in opposition to the Italian South and the French West, for example; or in opposition to non-Scandinavian countries, etc.) and, in turn, have influenced hegemonic discourses.

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A fair description of the discursive concepts of "Northernness" and the mental images of the North, as we encounter them to this day in history, everyday culture, language, literature and art, proves revealing both in synchronic and diachronic terms. Developments and transformations of concepts and images such as these can certainly provide exemplary insight into the basic human faculty of creative imagination (*imaginatio*). The specifics in each case are the result of:

a) everyday realities, experiences and requirements of the producers (perception);

b) cultural communication, dissemination and exchange processes among the utilizers (reception);

c) the fundamentally constructed character of all mental perception and reception, which, admittedly, cannot be deduced from these alone but rather includes further components whose nature and effects must always be *re*constructed.

In contrast to trends in the cultural sciences that interpret allegedly "natural" concepts such as gender and space in a one-dimensional manner as mere cultural constructs, it is precisely the irreducible two-dimensionality of mental images of the North that should be emphasized: "Northernness" as a fundamental category in knowledge that serves the purpose of orientation pre-forms the relevant signs, texts and discourses (the dimension of everyday experience). At the same time, "Northernness" is itself formed in the first place by signs, texts and discourses (the discursive dimension). The faculty of the creative *imaginatio borealis* operates as a link between these dimensions of everyday experience and the discourse – between the entirety of the actual and potential experience of human life, on the one hand, and the discourse produced to reflect on this, on the other.[3]

The creative faculty may take a fundamentally different approach to the structure and semantics of the North, depending on the northern or southern viewpoint. It can start from the topographical structure of the North or it can order the world spatially with reference to the North – creating its own North Pole, as it were. It can also imagine "North" as a metaphorical space, can modalize the specific ontological status of the concept in different ways (empirically, as utopia, in terms of the fantastic, etc.), and can create different hierarchies between, or functions for, competing models. Every *imaginatio*, therefore, represents, actualizes and modifies specific basic forms, types and strategies of the semantics of North and "Northernness." These trans-individual concepts and images, which have become socially and culturally productive in the course of history, may be explained sociologically in terms of research on stereotypes (as auto- and hetero-stereotypes), historically in terms of the history of mentalities, and semiotically by means of relevant sign, text and discourse theories. The primary terms of reference for investigation are the mental images of those topographical and cultural spaces in Europe that have been labeled as "Northern" in an emphatic sense – often in ways contrary to today's usage. In different historical epochs these are:

1. North Pontic or trans-Alpine "barbarian" Europe (set off against the ancient Greek or Roman worlds)
2. Celtic and British territories
3. Viking and Norman cultures
4. Protestant Europe (set off against the Catholic nations)
5. The Netherlands and North Sea area
6. Hanseatic Baltic, including southern Scandinavia, the Baltic nations and Russia
7. Scandinavia, in the sense of the modern concept of "Northern Europe"

Even if the final category (no. 7) is a child of modernism, the spatial concept it denotes can be seen as a preliminary culmination of a long tradition (nos. 1-6), in which the North was always subject to various contextualizations.[4]

These geographical references clearly show that the spatial (territorial) extent and intellectual definitions of Northern Europe have been subject to considerable transformations over the centuries. In many ways, however, it has remained the case that "Northern Europe" is a significant conceptual category that has not only influenced the political development of the continent, but also played an important role in Western art, literature, historiography, and in everyday knowledge and thus in the identity formation of a non-North. The idea of Northern Europe transpires – from a critical and academic perspective – as "questionable," but in the positive sense of the word.

In all of this the aim should not be to merely identify and describe mental images of the North, in purely immanent and descriptive terms, but rather also to always consider the historical, social-psychological, mentality-specific, semiotic, rhetorical and aesthetic conditions under which it was – and is – possible to construct the *imaginary of the North*.

Two matters deserve particular attention here: a true and fair knowledge of paradigmatic images of the North; and a deeper understanding of the processes and dynamics on the basis of which human imagination has been (de)constructing a series of different images of the North since the Middle Ages in Europe (and further afield). This kind of detailed description of the *imaginatio borealis* would certainly remain fragmentary, but could nonetheless be understood as an archaeology of the concept of European "Northernness." To achieve this, needless to say, neither a traditional history nor even a complete inventory of mental images of the North can suffice. Rather, of particular interest here is the revealing of various images of the North by using exemplary cases and representative historical cross-sections.

This approach could also show how the definition of the borders between North and South is linked to highly differing worldviews, dependent on perspective and epoch, and that these views may be determined by history, politics and ideology, science, everyday life and experience, literature, or iconography. For this investigation, it would therefore be essential to approach the various discourses in an interdisciplinary manner: openness and pluralism in theoretical and methodological concepts, entering into productive dialogue with one another, are necessary requirements for an investigation of the Nordic.

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It is possible to identify a total of four categories as strategies in the conceptualization of "Northernness," each of which may take the upper hand in certain epochs, and each of which may overlap with the others or even counteract the others within one and the same epoch:

I. *Abiectio borealis*: Rejection of the North by the South

The North is constructed as a space of absolute alterity, a "barbarian" and depraved Outside, on the margins or even totally beyond discursive ecumenism. That the North is seen as essentially different by the South is taken for granted, and in this the North is seen as inferior to the South. The producers and utilizers of these abject images of the North do not occupy their own discursive locus within the North; rather, they construct images of the North as the Other so as to stabilize their own self-image. This means that abject images of the North as the Other no doubt play a constructive role for self-images of the South.[5] *Abiectio borealis* is "the North, as it is constructed by the South with disgust," and is perhaps a production and a projection of what is kept silent, impossible to utter, and made taboo in the South. Like anything that is ostracized, *abiectio borealis* engenders in the addressee both shock and horror and also a seductive enticement. Within this ambivalence, the abject images of the North may be comprehended. Historically powerful paradigms of *abiectio borealis* are evident in

the ancient world (for example, the *furor Teutonicus*) and in the Middle Ages (for example, the fear of the Viking onslaught). And this basic pattern can also no doubt be *re*activated and updated in other periods (for example, the Nazi period in Germany). The aesthetic paradigm here is the grotesque.

II. *Aemulatio*: The rivalry of the North with the South

The North is constructed as a space that can be seen just as positively, if not more so, than the South. A preliminary difference between the North and the South is conceded, however, it is not seen as fundamental but rather as a historical phase that can be overcome, with the result that the South becomes an object of rivalry for the North. The producers and utilizers of emulative images of the North no longer have their own discursive locus in the South, but in the North: therefore, they are constructing self-images of the North. Nonetheless these self-images of the North are dependent on the hegemonic discourses of the South, insofar as they take these as their yardstick (for example, in denominations such as the "Venice of the North"), which must be acknowledged and, wherever possible, surpassed. "The North, as an aspiring North wishes it to be constructed," ultimately produces and projects precisely the idealized image that the South has of itself. Like anything that is idealized, *aemulatio borealis* engenders in the addressee the effect of disinterested pleasure or permanent iteration. Powerful historical paradigms of *aemulatio borealis* are found, in particular, in the early modern era, when northern humanism (Erasmus, Justus Lipsius, etc.) and the increased power and influence of Nordic states (England, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark) meant that Northern nations became the subject of self-confident discourses (as for example in Scandinavianism). The classical work of the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1844) represents an analogue example from the period around 1800. The aesthetic paradigm here was classicism.

III. *Imitatio*: Imitation of the North by the South

The North is constructed as a space that is now (also) worthy of imitation by others.[6] A preliminary difference between North and South is conceded; however, it is not seen as a serious matter, but rather as a historical phase that can be overcome, with the result that the North becomes an object to imitate for the South. The producers and utilizers of these emulative images of the North occupy their own discursive locus that is not situated in the North, but rather more in the South and, therefore, they construct images of the Other that they then wish to emulate. "The North as admired by, and as an object of emulation for, the South," produces and projects an idealized image of the Other of the North, which now becomes an object of mimesis for the self-image of the South. Like anything that is Other, *imitatio borealis* engenders in the addressee the effect of the sublime or desire. Emulative images of the North can be analyzed in terms of this ambivalence. Historically powerful paradigms of *imitatio borealis* can be seen in the Northern landscape painting of Jacob van Ruisdael (ca. 1628-1682), and later – with the historical turn against ancient and classicist aesthetics – in the Shakespearean and Ossian cults of the 18th century, in the rediscovery of old Nordic mythology,[7] in the enthusiasm of the French writer Madame de Staël (1766-1817) for the Gothic and in the reception of the work of Caspar David Friedrich (by the German architect and painter Karl Friedrich Schinkel [1781-1841], for example). The aesthetic paradigm here is the sublime.[8]

IV. *Vindicatio*: Self-assertion of the North vis-à-vis the South

The North is constructed as a space that claims its own autonomy. That the North is seen as necessarily different by the South is taken for granted, but now the North appears as superior to the South. The producers and utilizers of vindicatory images of the North have their own discursive locus that is no longer in the South, but in the North; they construct self-images designed to firm up their identity. "The North that self-assertively claims to be the North," produces and projects an idealized self-image of the North that no longer wishes to be linked back to a self-image of the South, but possibly still requires its own image of the Other of the South. Like all aspirations for autonomy, *vindicatio borealis* engenders in the addressee *ex aequo* the effects of emancipation or hubris. Within this ambivalence,[9] the vindicatory images of the North may be investigated. Historically powerful paradigms of *vindicatio borealis* are found in those elements of aesthetic modernism that attempt to equate

modernity and "Northernness" (from Charles Baudelaire to Marcel Proust; in the "modern breakthrough" in Scandinavia; and also in National Socialism). The aesthetic paradigm of *vindicatio* in its pure form would be: modernism.

It is to be understood that the manifold strategies outlined here in reality all operate in a complex manner that exceed any pure categories. And that it would also be possible to speak of a specific *experientia borealis*, whereby the empirical experience of the North appears interlaced with the imagination of the North, as is now topical in "postmodernism" and its extreme spaces (see for example Julio Médem's film *Los amantes del círculo polar* [1998]); this phenomenon was also already identifiable in certain concepts of landscape in the 19th century with their *national* (fjord, Black Forest, etc.) and *Nordic* (meaning: pan-Germanic and idealized) associations.[10]

In short, what all of the approaches to conceptualization discussed here have in common is that they do not simply map "Northernness" cartographically, but rather see it in terms of a topography whose parameters are less geographical units than cultural products. An *imaginatio*, as it were, that ultimately leads to a *scientia*, or even a *sapientia borealis*.

NOTES

1. This essay is based on thesis papers presented at the graduate symposium "*Imaginatio borealis*: Perzeption, Rezeption und Konstruktion des Nordens," at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at Christian-Albrechts-Universität, Kiel, between 1999 and 2005. For more detail, see also the anthology: *Ultima Thule: Bilder des Nordens von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Annelore Engel-Braunschmidt et al. (Frankfurt am Main et al., 2001). The general nature of this essay does not allow for a more specific study of the concepts of *northernness* discussed in the context of North America (and particularly Canada).
2. See also *Última Tule* (Mexico: Imprenta universitaria, 1942) by the Mexican Alfonso Reyes, who transfers the utopian potential to the Americas.
3. See on this the conference proceedings: *Imagologie des Nordens: Kulturelle Konstruktionen von Nördlichkeit in interdisziplinärer Perspektive*, ed. Astrid Arndt et al. (Frankfurt, 2004).
4. It is important not to forget that there was a "North" before there was "Sca[n]dinavia" (Plin. nat. VIII, 39), although not everything that has been seen as "Northern" since antiquity was really also "Nordic" (let alone strictly North German or Scandinavian), but, rather, boreal.
5. See, as an Italian example, Manuela Boccignone, *Der Norden ist die äußerste Grenze, der Norden ist jenseits der Alpen. Poetische Bilder des Nordens von Petrarca bis Tasso* (Berlin, 2004).
6. An eminent defender of a similar perspective would be Jorge Luis Borges. See especially, Victor Andrés Ferretti, *Boreale Geltung. Zu Nördlichkeit, Raum und Imaginärem im Werk von Jorge Luis Borges* (Frankfurt, 2007).
7. Note, in this context, the collection of poems *Castalia bárbara* (1899), by the Bolivian modernist Ricardo Jaimes Freyre, with "Parnassian" verses linked to Nordic mythology.
8. On the specific relationship between the "Nordic" and the sublime see the conference proceedings: *Nördlichkeit–Romantik–Erhabenheit: Apperzeptionen der Nord/Süd-Differenz (1750–2000)*, ed. Andreas Fülberth et al. (Frankfurt et al.: Peter Lang, 2007).
9. On the Iberian milieu see Edmund Voges, *Briefe aus dem Norden – Verhandlungen mit dem Norden. Konstruktionen einer iberischen Moderne bei Ángel Ganivet und Josep Pla* (Frankfurt, 2004).
10. On this see the essay by Ralph Tuchtenhagen, "'Nordische Landschaft' und wie sie entdeckt wurde," in the above-cited *Nördlichkeit–Romantik–Erhabenheit* 2007.

CATALOGUE OF WORKS

I

THE ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE OF NORTHERN EUROPE
From Friedrich to Constable

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH
(German, 1774-1840)

1. *Die Jahreszeiten: Der Frühling* (Seasons of the Year: Spring), 1803	2. *Die Jahreszeiten: Der Herbst* (Seasons of the Year: Autumn), 1803	3. *Die Jahreszeiten: Der Winter* (Seasons of the Year: Winter), 1803	4. *Das Kreuz im Gebirge* (Cross on the Mountain), ca. 1806	5. *Meeresküste mit Statue und Kreuz* (Coastal Landscape with Statue and Cross), ca. 1806-7
Brush with sepia ink over underlying pencil drawing on vellum paper	Brush with brown ink over underlying pencil drawing on vellum paper	Brush with sepia ink over underlying pencil drawing on vellum paper	Brush with sepia ink, over pencil	Brush with sepia ink on vellum paper
7-9/16 x 10-13/16 in. (19.2 x 27.5 cm)	7-1/2 x 10-13/16 in. (19.1 x 27.5 cm)	7-5/8 x 10-7/8 in. (19.3 x 27.6 cm)	25-3/16 x 36-1/4 in. (64 x 92 cm)	15-13/16 x 22-13/16 in. (40.1 x 58 cm)
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstich-kabinett, acquired in 2006 with the generous assistance of the Herrmann Reemtsma Stiftung and the Kulturstiftung der Länder (KdZ 29941, 134-2006)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstich-kabinett, on permanent loan from the Ernst von Siemens Kunststiftung (FV 79)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstich-kabinett, acquired in 2006 with the generous assistance of the Herrmann Reemtsma Stiftung and the Kulturstiftung der Länder (KdZ 29942, 135-2006)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 21)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstich-kabinett (Friedrich 111)

JOHAN CHRISTIAN CLAUSEN DAHL
(Norwegian, 1788-1857)

CARL GUSTAV CARUS
(German, 1789-1869)

ERNST FERDINAND OEHME
(German, 1797-1855)

14. *Blitzstudie. Am Golf von Neapel* (Study of a Lightning Bolt. The Gulf of Naples), 1820	15. *Zwei Männer auf einer Terrasse* (Two Men on a Terrace), 1830	16. *Wolkenstudie mit Horizont* (Study of Clouds with Horizon), 1832	17. *Blick auf Swinemünde, 25. April 1840* (View of Swinemünde, April 25, 1840)	18. *Morgennebel* (Early Morning Fog), ca. 1825	19. *Insel im Meer (Capri)* (Island in the Sea [Capri]), n.d.	20. *Kapelle in Winterlandschaft* (Chapel in a Winter Landscape), 1850	21. *Wetterhorn und Rosenlauigletscher* (Wetterhorn and Rosenlaui Glacier), n.d.
Oil on paper	Oil on paper	Oil on paper	Brown pen over pencil, brownish-gray wash, highlighted in white, on paper	Oil on paper on cardboard	Oil on cardboard	Watercolor	Pen with India ink and watercolor, highlighted in white
7-3/16 x 10 in. (18.3 x 25.5 cm)	5-13/16 x 11-1/4 in. (14.7 x 28.6 cm)	4-13/16 x 8 in. (12.2 x 20.2 cm)	8-13/16 x 12-1/2 in. (22.4 x 31.7 cm)	7-11/16 x 10-1/4 in. (19.5 x 26 cm)	5-11/16 x 7-7/16 in. (14.4 x 18.9 cm)	11 x 8-7/8 in. (28 x 22.5 cm)	9-5/16 x 13-1/8 in. (23.6 x 33.3 cm)
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 5)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 2)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 3)	Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett (C1937-467)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Nationalgalerie (A II 425)	Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett (C1937-467)	Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett (C1995-10)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 1)

PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE
(German, 1777-1810)

6. *Steinbruch bei Krippen* (Quarry near Krippen) Dated: "*Krippen, den 19. Juli 1813*"	7. *Der Schlossberg bei Teplitz* (Schlossberg, near Teplitz), 1835	8. *Waldlichtung mit Obelisk im Seifersdorfer Tal* (Clearing with Obelisk in Seifersdorf Valley), n.d.	9. *Der Morgen* (Morning), 1808	10. *Der Tag* (Day), 1805	11. *Der Abend* (Afternoon), 1805	12. *Die Nacht* (Night), 1805	13. *Landschaft an der Peene* (Landscape along the Peene River), n.d.
Watercolor and pencil on vellum paper	Pen and brush with brown ink, over pencil, on vellum paper	Sepia drawing over an underlying pencil drawing	Pen and brush with gray ink and wash over pencil on paper	Copper etching on paper	Copper etching on paper	Copper etching on paper	Gray and brown ink applied with a pen on paper
8-1/4 x 6-7/8 in. (21 x 17.4 cm)	9-9/16 x 14-1/8 in. (24.3 x 35.9 cm)	7 x 7 in. (17.8 x 18 cm)	16-9/16 x 13-1/8 in. (42.1 x 33.3 cm)	28-1/8 x 18-13/16 in. (71.5 x 47.8 cm)	28-1/4 x 18-3/4 in. (71.7 x 47.6 cm)	28 x 18-11/16 in. (71.1 x 47.5 cm)	11-13/16 x 15 in. (30 x 38 cm)
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstich-kabinett (SZ 18)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstich-kabinett (SZ 25)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 26)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 1, Kiste B 153)	Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett (A1968-331)	Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett (A1968-332)	Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett (A1968-333)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 24, Kiste B 154)

CARL BLECHEN
(German, 1798-1840)

22. *Grauer Wolkenhimmel mit Mond* (Gray Cloudy Sky with Moon), 1823	23. *Violett getönte Abendwolken über Gebirge* (Violet Evening Clouds over the Mountains), n.d.	24. *Waldlandschaft mit Wasserlauf und zwei Jägern* (Forest Landscape with River and Two Hunters), ca. 1830-35	25. *Reh am Wasser vor Kirchenruine (Tannengruppe bei einer Kirchenruine)* (Doe beside Water before Church Ruins [Group of Fir Trees beside Church Ruins]), 1831	26. *Gotische Kirchenruine von Bäumen überragt* (Gothic Church Ruins overrun with Trees), ca. 1834	27. *Landschaft mit Ebene und Gebirgszug* (Landscape with Lowlands and Mountain Range), n.d.	28. *Wald und Hügellandschaft mit einem Mönch* (Forest and Hilly Landscape with Monk), n.d.	29. *Baumgruppe* (Group of Trees), n.d.
Oil on paper	Oil on paper	Pen and brush with black, sepia wash over pencil	Pencil and brown ink, wash	Watercolor and graphite on paper	Oil on paper	Oil on paper	Pen drawing with India ink
5-1/4 x 7 in. (13.3 x 18 cm)	4 x 7 in. (10.2 x 17.7 cm)	11-1/2 x 13-9/16 in. (29.2 x 34.4 cm)	15 x 10 in. (38 x 25.2 cm)	14-5/8 x 14-1/8 in. (37.2 x 35.8 cm)	11-1/4 x 11-13/16 in. (28.6 x 30 cm)	11-5/8 x 9-3/16 in. (29.6 x 23.3 cm)	22-13/16 x 18 in. (58 x 45.5 cm)
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (630)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 878)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (1317)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 548, Kisten SZ A 42 Blechen 18)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (562, Kiste A 43)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ Nr. 271, 1484)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (572)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (SZ 617)

JOHN ROBERT COZENS
(English, 1752-1797)

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER
(English, 1775-1851)

30. *Chigi Palace, near Albano*, n.d.	31. *City and Bay of Naples*, n.d.	32. *The Terrace of the Villa d'Este*, n.d.	33. *Tivoli*, 1819	34. *The Grey Castle*, ca. 1820-30	35. *Heavy Dark Clouds*, ca. 1822	36. *Dunstanburgh Castle, Northumberland*, ca. 1828	37. *Margate*, ca. 1830
Watercolor	Watercolor	Watercolor	Pencil and watercolor on paper	Watercolor on paper	Gouache and watercolor on paper	Watercolor and gouache on paper	Watercolor and pencil on paper
10-5/16 x 14-3/4 in. (26.2 x 37.5 cm)	9-3/8 x 14-11/16 in. (23.8 x 37.3 cm)	10-1/4 x 14-3/4 in. (26.1 x 37.4 cm)	10 x 15-7/8 in. (25.6 x 40.4 cm)	13-11/16 x 19 in. (34.8 x 48.3 cm)	7-3/16 x 8-7/8 in. (18.2 x 22.6 cm)	10-3/4 x 17-1/8 in. (27.3 x 43.5 cm)	13-7/8 x 20-3/8 in. (35.2 x 51.8 cm)
Victoria and Albert Museum, London (FA.497)	Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by J. E. Taylor (121-1894)	Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Ashbee Bequest (1712-1900)	Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (D16116)	Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (D25306)	Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (D25460)	Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (D25313)	Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (D25166)

46. *Study of Sky Effect*, n.d.	47. *View over Hilly Country with a Stormy Sky*, n.d.	48. *View of Downland Country*, n.d.	49. *The Close, Salisbury*, n.d.
Pencil and watercolor	Watercolor	Pencil and watercolor	Oil on paper
7-7/16 x 9 in. (18.9 x 22.9 cm)	4-7/16 x 7-3/8 in. (11.2 x 18.8 cm)	5 x 8-1/4 in. (12.9 x 21 cm)	10-3/8 x 8 in. (26.4 x 20.3 cm)
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by Isabel Constable, daughter of the artist (202-1888)	Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by Isabel Constable, daughter of the artist (176-1888)	Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by Isabel Constable, daughter of the artist (225-1888)	Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by Isabel Constable, daughter of the artist (334-1888)

JOHN CONSTABLE
(English, 1776-1837)

38. *Burg Hals from the Hillside*, 1840	39. *Burg Hals and the Ilz from the Hillside*, 1840	40. *Distant View of Cochem from the South*, 1840	41. *Ehrenbreitstein with a Rainbow*, 1840	42. *Branch Hill Pond, Hampstead*, 1821-22	43. *A View at Hampstead: Evening*, 1822	44. *Study of Clouds above a Wide Landscape*, 1830	45. *View over a Wide Landscape, with Trees in the Foreground*, 1832
Pencil, watercolor and gouache on paper	Pencil, watercolor and gouache on paper	Pencil, watercolor and gouache on paper	Pencil, watercolor and gouache on paper	Oil on canvas	Oil on paper	Pencil and watercolor	Pencil and watercolor
5-1/2 x 7-7/16 in. (14 x 18.9 cm)	5-9/16 x 7-1/2 in. (14.2 x 19.1 cm)	5-1/2 x 7-9/16 in. (14 x 19.2 cm)	5-9/16 x 7-5/8 in. (14.1 x 19.3 cm)	9-5/8 x 15-1/2 in. (24.5 x 39.4 cm)	6-1/2 x 11-3/4 in. (16.5 x 29.8 cm)	7-1/2 x 9 in. (19 x 22.8 cm)	7-5/16 x 8-3/4 in. (18.6 x 22.2 cm)
Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (D28997)	Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (D28960)	Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (D28987)	Tate, London, Bequeathed by the artist, 1856 (D28979)	Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by Isabel Constable, daughter of the artist (125-1888)	Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by Isabel Constable, daughter of the artist (337-1888)	Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by Isabel Constable, daughter of the artist (240-1888)	Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by Isabel Constable, daughter of the artist (597-1888)

II

NORTH AMERICA: THE NATURE OF THE SUBLIME
From Cole to Bierstadt

THOMAS COLE
(American, born England, 1801-1848)

50. *The Devil Throwing the Monk from the Precipice*, n.d.	51. *Sketch of Two Dead Trees*, n.d.	52. *The Voyage of Life – Childhood*, 1848	53. *The Voyage of Life – Youth*, 1848	54. *The Voyage of Life – Manhood*, 1848
Pen and brown ink, touches of graphite on paper, touches of white body color	Graphite on paper	Engraving	Engraving	Engraving
7-5/8 x 5-5/16 in. (19.3 x 13.5 cm)	Sheet: 8 x 10-1/4 in. (20.3 x 26 cm)	Image: 14-13/16 x 22-3/4 in. (37.6 x 57.8 cm); sheet: 18-7/8 x 25-1/2 in. (48 x 64.8 cm)	Image: 14-13/16 x 22-3/4 in. (37.6 x 57.8 cm); sheet: 18-7/8 x 25-1/2 in. (48 x 64.8 cm)	Image: 14-13/16 x 22-3/4 in. (37.6 x 57.8 cm); sheet: 18-7/8 x 25-1/2 in. (48 x 64.8 cm)
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, Collection of Mary C. and James W. Fosburgh B.A. 1933, M.A. 1935 (1979.14.17)	Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut (1942.337)	Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., B.A. 1960 (1969.82b)	Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, Gift of Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., B.A. 1960 (1969.82c)	Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., B.A. 1960 (1969.82d)

MARTIN JOHNSON HEADE
(American, 1819-1904)

FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH
(American, 1826-1900)

55. *The Voyage of Life – Old Age*, 1848

Engraving

Image: 14-13/16 x 22-3/4 in. (37.6 x 57.8 cm); sheet: 18-7/8 x 25-1/2 in. (48 x 64.8 cm)

Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., B.A. 1960 (1969.82e)

56. *Friars Head / Campobello*, August 24, 1862

Pencil on paper

7-3/4 x 11 in. (19.7 x 27.9 cm)

Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, Anonymous Print Purchase Fund (1980.42)

57. *Vision of the Cross, Study for "Apotheosis to Thomas Cole,"* after 1847

Brush and oil paint on paperboard

7 x 10 in. (18 x 25.5 cm)

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of Louis P. Church (1917-4-254-b)

58. *Eagle Lake Viewed from Cadillac Mountain, Mount Desert Island, Maine*, 1850-60

Brush and oil paint, graphite on paperboard

11-9/16 x 17-1/2 in. (29.4 x 44.5 cm)

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of Louis P. Church (1917-4-324)

59. *Floating Iceberg*, 1859

Brush and oil paint on paperboard

7-3/8 x 14-3/4 in. (18.8 x 37.5 cm)

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of Louis P. Church (1917-4-296-a)

60. *Iceberg, New Foundland*, 1859

Brush and oil paint on paperboard

5-3/8 x 13-7/8 in. (13.7 x 35.3 cm)

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of Louis P. Church (1917-4-296-c)

61. *Seascape with Icecap in the Distance*, June or July 1859

Brush and oil paint, graphite on paperboard

7-1/8 x 10 in. (18.1 x 25.6 cm)

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of Louis P. Church (1917-4-667)

62. *Blue Mountains, Jamaica*, August 1865

Brush and oil paint on paperboard

11-7/8 x 18 in. (29.1 x 45.4 cm)

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of Louis P. Church (1917-4-419)

III

THE NORTHERN ROMANTIC TRADITION AND ABSTRACTION: LANDSCAPE BETWEEN THE CENTURIES

From van Gogh to Ernst

VINCENT VAN GOGH
(Dutch, 1853-1890)

EDVARD MUNCH
(Norwegian, 1863-1944)

68. *Felder und Gärten* (Fields and Gardens), n.d.

Pen and India ink

9-1/2 x 12-1/2 in. (24.1 x 31.8 cm)

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (1)

69. *Boomwortels* (Tree Roots), 1882

Chalk on paper

19-5/16 x 27 in. (49 x 68.5 cm)

Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo (KM 117.091 recto)

70. *Melancholie* (Melancholy), Nuenen, December 1883

Pencil, pen and ink, on paper

11-1/4 x 8-1/8 in. (28.6 x 20.6 cm)

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation) (d 87 V/1962)

71. *De pastorietuin* (The Vicarage Garden), Nuenen, March 1884

Pencil, pen and ink, on pape

7-7/8 x 9-3/16 in. (20 x 23.5 cm)

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation) (d 88 V/1962)

72. *Junge Frau am Strand (Die Einsame)* (Young Woman on the Beach [The Loner]), 1896

Mezzotint and drypoint on handmade paper

11-3/8 x 8-11/16 in. (28.9 x 22 cm)

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (28-1933)

ALBERT BIERSTADT
(American, born Germany, 1830-1902)

63. *Alpine Scene in Thunderstorm,* 1868	64. *Cloud Study*, 1871	65. *Scene in the Tyrol*, 1854	66. *White Mountains, New Hampshire*, 1857	67. *Gathering Storm*, ca. 1857-58
Brush and oil paint, graphite on paperboard	Brush and oil paint, graphite on paperboard	Oil on fiberboard	Oil on paper mounted on paperboard	Oil on paper mounted on paperboard
29-3/8 x 44-1/2 in. (74.7 x 113 cm)	10-1/8 x 13 in. (25.7 x 32.9 cm)	9-1/2 x 13 in. (24 x 32.8 cm)	5-3/4 x 8-5/8 in. irreg. (14.6 x 21.8 cm); on mount: 6 x 8-3/4 in. (15.2 x 22.2 cm.)	6-7/8 x 9-3/4 in. (17.4 x 24.7 cm)
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of Louis P. Church (1917-4-509)	Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of Louis P. Church (1917-4-586)	Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.508)	Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.502)	Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.503)

WASSILY KANDINSKY
(Russian, 1866-1944)

EMIL NOLDE
(German, 1867-1956)

73. *Zum Walde I* (Towards the Forest I), 1897	74. *Zwei Frauen am Meeresufer* (Two Women along the Bank), 1898	75. *Grosse Schneelandschaft* (Large Snowy Landscape), 1898	76. *Zwei Menschen (Die Einsamen)* (Two Figures [The Loners]), 1899	77. *Die Eiche* (The Oak Tree), 1903	78. *Untitled*, 1922	79. *"Lichte Meerstimmung"* (Seascape with Luminous Atmosphere), 1901	80. *Herbstmeer* (Autumn Sea), 1920
Colored woodcut print on paper	Colored woodcut print on paper	Colored woodcut print on paper	Colored woodcut print on paper	Etching on heavy wove paper	Watercolor and ink on paper	Oil on canvas	Watercolor
20-13/16 x 25-1/8 in. (52.8 x 64.5 cm)	18 x 20-3/16 in. (45.5 x 51.3 cm)	12-2/3 x 18 in. (32.4 x 45.8 cm)	15-9/16 x 21 in. (39.5 x 53.2 cm)	25-5/16 x 32-11/16 in. (64.3 x 49.8 cm)	10-1/2 x 14-5/16 in. (26.7 x 36.3 cm)	25-9/16 x 32-11/16 in. (65 x 83 cm)	13-9/16 x 18-5/8 in. (34.5 x 47.3 cm)
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (72-1934)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (184-1929)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (69-1918)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (32-1933)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (714-1912 G)	Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (607 [1974.50])	Stiftung Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde, Neukirchen, Germany (Wvz. Urban 84)	Stiftung Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde, Neukirchen, Germany (A.Me.20)

PIET MONDRIAN
(Dutch, 1872-1944)

PAUL KLEE
(Swiss, 1879-1940)

81. *Meer mit rotem Himmel (kleiner Dampfer)* (Sea with Red Sky [Small Steamboat]), 1946	82. *Rote Wolken* (Red Clouds), n.d.	83. *Berglandschaft (blau und grün)* (Mountainscape [Blue and Green]), n.d.	84. *Ozean* (Ocean), n.d.	85. *Chrysanthemum*, 1907	86. *Seelandschaft mit dem Himmelskörper* (Lake Landscape with the Celestial Body), 1920, 166	87. *Drei Blumen* (Three Flowers), 1920, 183	88. *Ansteigende Ortswege* (Rising Village Roads), 1930
Watercolor	Watercolor on handmade paper	Watercolor	Watercolor	Pencil on paper	Pen on cut paper on cardboard	Oil on primed cardboard	Ink and brush on paper mounted on board
9-1/16 x 10-13/16 in. (23 x 27.4 cm)	13-9/16 x 17-5/8 in. (34.5 x 44.7 cm)	13-7/8 x 18-3/8 in. (35.2 x 46.6 cm)	13-5/16 x 18 in. (33.8 x 45.6 cm)	15-3/16 x 8-1/4 in. (38.6 x 21 cm)	5 x 11 in. (12.7 x 28.1 cm)	7-11/16 x 5-7/8 in. (19.5 x 15 cm)	22-7/16 x 13 in. (57 x 33.1 cm)
Stiftung Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde, Neukirchen, Germany (A.Me.53)	Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (694 [1983.9])	Stiftung Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde, Neukirchen, Germany (A.Bg.11)	Stiftung Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde, Neukirchen, Germany (A.Me.10)	Private collection	Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, Switzerland (PKS Z 441)	Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, Switzerland, Gift of Livia Klee (SLK B 49)	Private collection, New York

IV

THE SPIRIT OF LANDSCAPE AND TOTAL ABSTRACTION

From Newman to Rothko

BARNETT NEWMAN
(American, 1905-1970)

JACKSON POLLOCK
(American, 1912-1956)

ADOLPH GOTTLIEB
(American, 1903–1974)

92. *The Name*, 1949	93. *Untitled*, 1944-45	94. *Untitled*, 1951	95. *Imaginary Landscape No. 2*, 1956	96. *Heavy Sky*, 1956
Brush and black ink on paper	Engraving and drypoint	Black and sepia ink on mulberry paper	Gouache on paper	Gouache and watercolor on paper
24 x 15 in. (61.1 x 38 cm)	Plate: 15 x 17-13/16 in. (37.9 x 45.3 cm); sheet: 21-3/8 x 29-5/16 in. (54.4 x 74.5 cm)	25 x 38-3/4 (63.5 x 98.4 cm)	Image: 21 x 29-1/2 in. (53.3 x 74.7 cm); sheet: 22-1/8 x 30-5/8 in. (56.3 x 77.8 cm)	22-1/4 x 31 in. (56.5 x 78.7 cm)
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1949, Gift of the Woodward Foundation, 1976 (1976.56.119)	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Lee Krasner Pollock, 1975 (1975.647.4)	The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Lee Krasner in memory of Jackson Pollock, 1983 (666.1983)	Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2155)	Collection of the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, New York (5612.1)

MAX ERNST
(German, 1891-1976)

89. *Soleil* (Sun)	90. *Forêt et soleil* (Forest and Sun)	91. Heinrich von Kleist, Clemens Brentano, Achim von Arnim *Caspar David Friedrich: Seelandschaft mit Kapuziner=Paysage marin avec un Capucin* (Caspar David Friedrich: Seascape with Capuchin Monk) Edited, illustrated and translated into French by Max Ernst Zurich: Edition Hans Bolliger, 1972 Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kunstbibliothek (NB 4 2005 197)
Copper engraving, etching and aquatint in two colors	Oil on canvas	
Image: 8-7/8 x 6-1/2 in. (22.5 x 16.5 cm); sheet: 18-3/8 x 13-7/8 in. (46.7 x 35.2 cm)	39-3/8 x 31-7/8 in. (100 x 81 cm)	
Private collection	Private collection	

MARK ROTHKO
(American, born Latvia, 1903-1970)

97. *Untitled*, ca. 1966	98. *Untitled*, ca. 1967	99. *Untitled*, 1973	100. *Burst (First State)*, 1974	101. *Landscape with Mountains*, n.d.	102. *Untitled*, 1945-46	103. *Untitled*, 1968	104. *Untitled*, 1969
Acrylic and gouache on paper	Silkscreen and collage on paper	Acrylic on paper	Acrylic on paper	Watercolor on brown wove paper	Watercolor and ink on paper	Acrylic on paper mounted on hardboard panel	Acrylic on paper
20-1/6 x 26-1/8 in. (51 x 66.4 cm)	30 x 22 in. (76.2 x 55.9 cm)	24 x 18 in. (61 x 45.7 cm)	23-7/8 x 18 in. (60.6 x 45.7 cm)	17-11/16 x 12 in. (44.9 x 30.5 cm)	40-1/8 x 26-1/4 in. (102 x 66.6 cm)	39-11/16 x 25-3/4 x 1-7/16 in. (100.8 x 65.4 x 3.7 cm)	71-13/16 x 42-3/8 in. (182.4 x 107.6 cm)
Collection of the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, New York (6631)	Collection of the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, New York (6797)	Collection of the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, New York (7305)	Collection of the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, New York (7450)	National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of The Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc., 1986 (1986.56.536a)	The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of The Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc. (461.1986)	National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of The Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc., 1986 (1986.43.255)	National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of The Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc., 1986 (1986.43.270)

105. *Untitled*, 1969	106. *Untitled*, 1969
Acrylic on paper	Acrylic on paper
54-3/8 x 42-7/16 in. (138.1 x 107.8 cm)	74-1/8 x 48-1/8 in. (188.3 x 122.3 cm)
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of The Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc., 1986 (1986.43.276)	National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of The Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc., 1986 (1986.43.295)

GERHARD RICHTER
(German, b. 1932)

112. *Noch Nicht* (Not Yet), 1974-75	113. *Der Rhein* (The Rhine), ca. 1982	114. *Seestück* (Seascape), 1969	115. *Seestück* (Seascape), 1970	116. *2.1.1978*, 1978	117. *2.1.1978*, 1978	118. *27.8.1985 (1)*, 1985	119. *Untitled*, 1991
Watercolor, gouache and ballpoint pen on paper	Woodcut, collage on cardboard	Offset photo lithograph on paper	Offset photo lithograph on paper	Watercolor on paper	Watercolor on paper	Graphite on paper	Pen and brush with ink on paper
9-1/2 x 12-5/8 in. (24.1 x 32.1 cm)	24-3/16 x 12-5/8 in. (61.5 x 32 cm)	20 x 19-5/16 in. (50.7 x 49 cm)	23-7/16 x 17-5/8 in. (59.5 x 44.8 cm)	5-13/16 x 8-1/4 in. (14.8 x 21 cm)	5-13/16 x 8-1/4 in. (14.8 x 21 cm)	8-1/4 x 11-11/16 in. (21 x 29.7 cm)	6-7/16 x 9-7/16 in. (16.4 x 23.9 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 1995 (1995.14.12)	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (Kiste WGal 5/7)	IVAM, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat	IVAM, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat, Carolyn and Brooke Alexander Donation, New York	Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Permanent loan from the artist, 1996 (Z.1996.60)	Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Permanent loan from the artist, 1996 (Z. 1997.61)	Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Purchased with lottery funds from the canton of Zürich, 1997 (Z.1997.24)	Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Purchased with lottery funds from the canton of Zurich, 1996 (Z.1996.30)

V

ANSELM KIEFER
(German, b. 1945)

THE POST-ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE
Kiefer, Richter

107. *Ohne Titel (Heroische Sinnbilder)* (Untitled [Heroic Symbols]), ca. 1969	108. *Herbstwald* (Autumn Forest), 1970	109. *Stausee* (Reservoir), 1971	110. *Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh* (*On Every Mountain Peak There is Peace*), 1971*	111. *Stefan!*, 1974
Watercolor, gouache and charcoal on paper	Watercolor, gouache and graphite pencil on paper	Watercolor, gouache and graphite pencil on paper	Watercolor and gouache on paper	Watercolor, gouache, colored pencil and ballpoint pen on paper
14-1/8 x 17-7/8 in. (35.9 x 45.4 cm)	A. top sheet: 4-1/2 x 6-3/4 in. (11.5 x 17.1 cm); B. bottom sheet: 9-1/2 x 13 in. (24.1 x 33 cm)	16-3/8 x 22 in. (41.6 x 55.9 cm)	12-3/8 x 18-7/8 in. (31.4 x 47.9 cm)	9-3/8 x 12-5/8 in. (23.8 x 32.1 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 1995 (1995.14.2)	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 1995 (1995.14.3ab)	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 1995 (1995.14.7)	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 1995 (1995.14.8)	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Denise and Andrew Saul Fund, 1995 (1995.14.9)

*Inscribed: "*Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh! In allen Wipfeln spürest Du kaum einen Hauch! / für Julia*" (On every mountain peak there is peace! In all the treetops you detect scarcely a breeze! / for Julia)

120. *Untitled*, 1991	121. *Untitled*, 1991	122. *31.5.1999*, 1999	123. *31.5.1999*, 1999	124. *1.6.1999*, 1999
Brush and ink on paper	Brush and ink on paper	Pencil on paper,	Pencil on paper	Pencil on paper
9-7/16 x 13-1/4 in. (23.9 x 33.7 cm)	6-1/2 x 9-7/16 in. (16.5 x 23.9 cm)	8-1/4 x 11-7/8 in. (21 x 30.2 cm)	8-1/4 x 11-7/8 in. (21 x 30.2 cm)	8-1/4 x 11-7/8 in. (21 x 30.2 cm)
Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur. Purchased with lottery funds from the canton of Zurich, 1996 (Z.1996.31)	Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Purchased with lottery funds from the canton of Zurich, 1996 (Z.1996.32)	Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Purchased with lottery funds from the canton of Zurich, 2000 (Z.2000.72)	Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Purchased with lottery funds from the canton of Zurich, 2000 (Z.2000.73)	Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Purchased with lottery funds from the canton of Zurich, 2000 (Z.2000.74)

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This catalogue, and its Spanish edition, are published on the occasion of the exhibition
THE ABSTRACTION OF LANDSCAPE
From Northern Romanticism to Abstract Expressionism
Exhibition concept and organization: Fundación Juan March, Madrid
October 5, 2007 – January 13, 2008

CATALOGUE

Fundación Juan March
Castelló 77
E-28006 Madrid
Tel. +34 (91) 435 42 40
Fax +34 (91) 431 42 27
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Reproduced on cover, backcover:
Caspar David Friedrich, *Die Jahreszeiten: Der Herbst* (Seasons of the Year: Autumn), 1803 (CAT. 2); Mark Rothko, *Untitled*, 1969 (CAT. 106)

Translations
German/English: Grindell Language Services (Dietmar Elger essay), Tradukas GbR (Teuber/Mörke/Ferretti essay), Michael Wolfson (Werner Hofmann, Hein-Th. Schulze Altcappenberg essays), Department of Exhibitions, Fundación Juan March (Cordula Meier essay)
Spanish/English: Department of Exhibitions, Fundación Juan March (Miguel López-Remiro essay)
Editing
Department of Exhibitions, Fundación Juan March, Madrid

Catalogue design: Guillermo Nagore

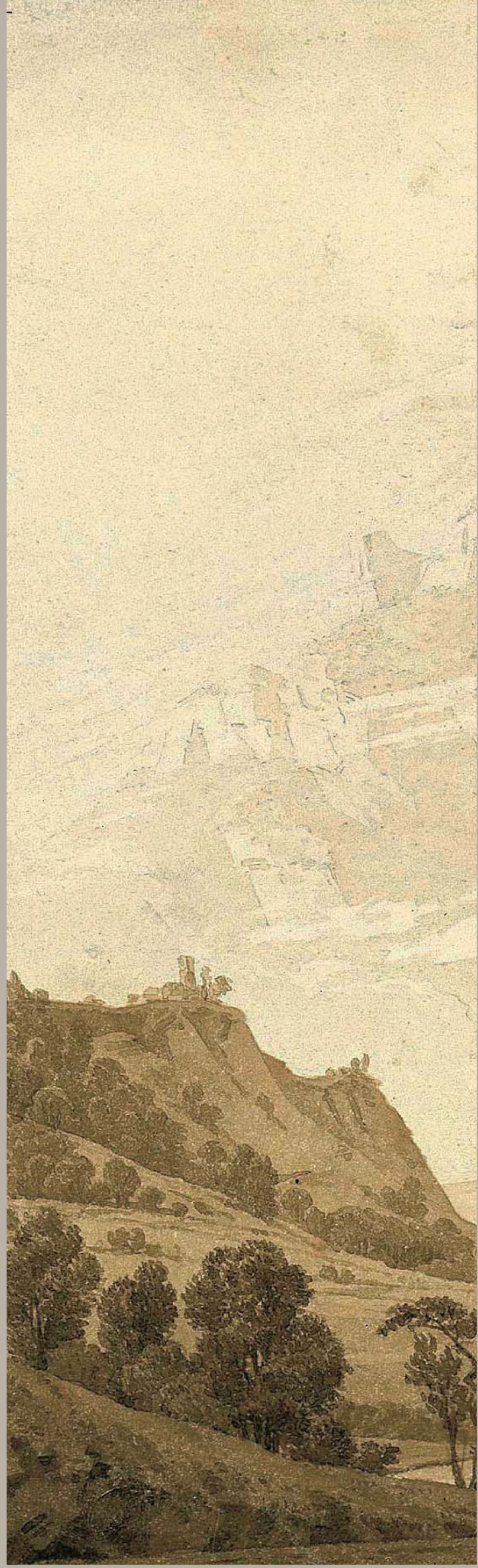
Typeface: Ehrhardt
Paper: Gardapat, 135 gr. (Torras Papel)
Prepress and printing: Estudios Gráficos Europeos S.A., Madrid
Binding: Ramos S.A., Madrid

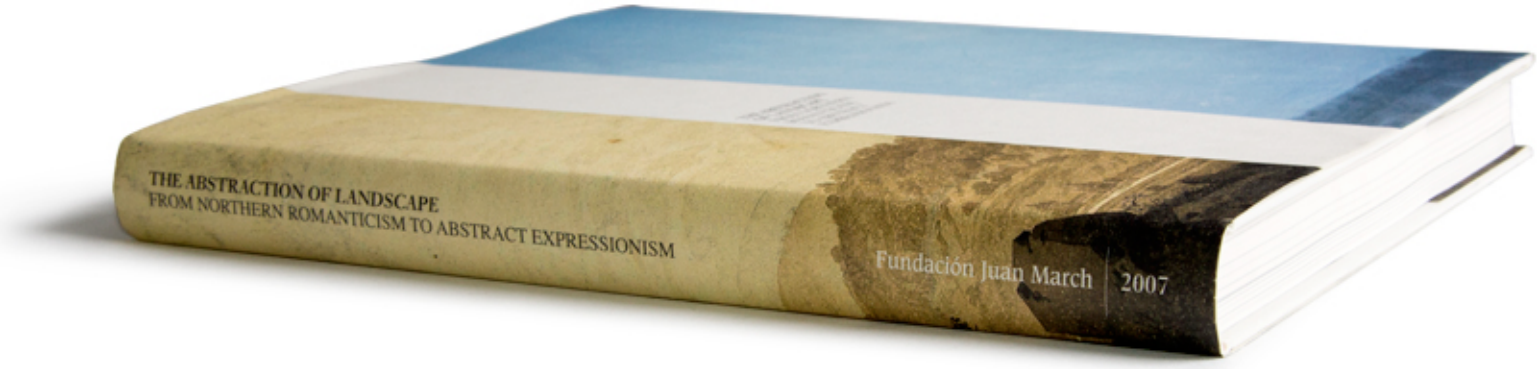
Spanish edition (paperback):
ISBN: 978-84-7075-548-4 Fundación Juan March, Madrid
ISBN: 978-84-89935-74-7 Editorial de Arte y Ciencia, S.A., Madrid

Spanish edition (hardcover):
ISBN: 978-84-7075-547-7 Fundación Juan March, Madrid
ISBN: 978-84-89935-73-0 Editorial de Arte y Ciencia, S.A., Madrid

English edition (hardcover):
ISBN: 978-84-7075-549-1 Fundación Juan March, Madrid
ISBN: 978-84-89935-75-4 Editorial de Arte y Ciencia, S.A., Madrid

Legal deposit:
Spanish edition (paperback): M-41821-2007
Spanish edition (hardcover): M-41823-2007
English edition (hardcover): M-41822-2007

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Fundación Juan March
2007