

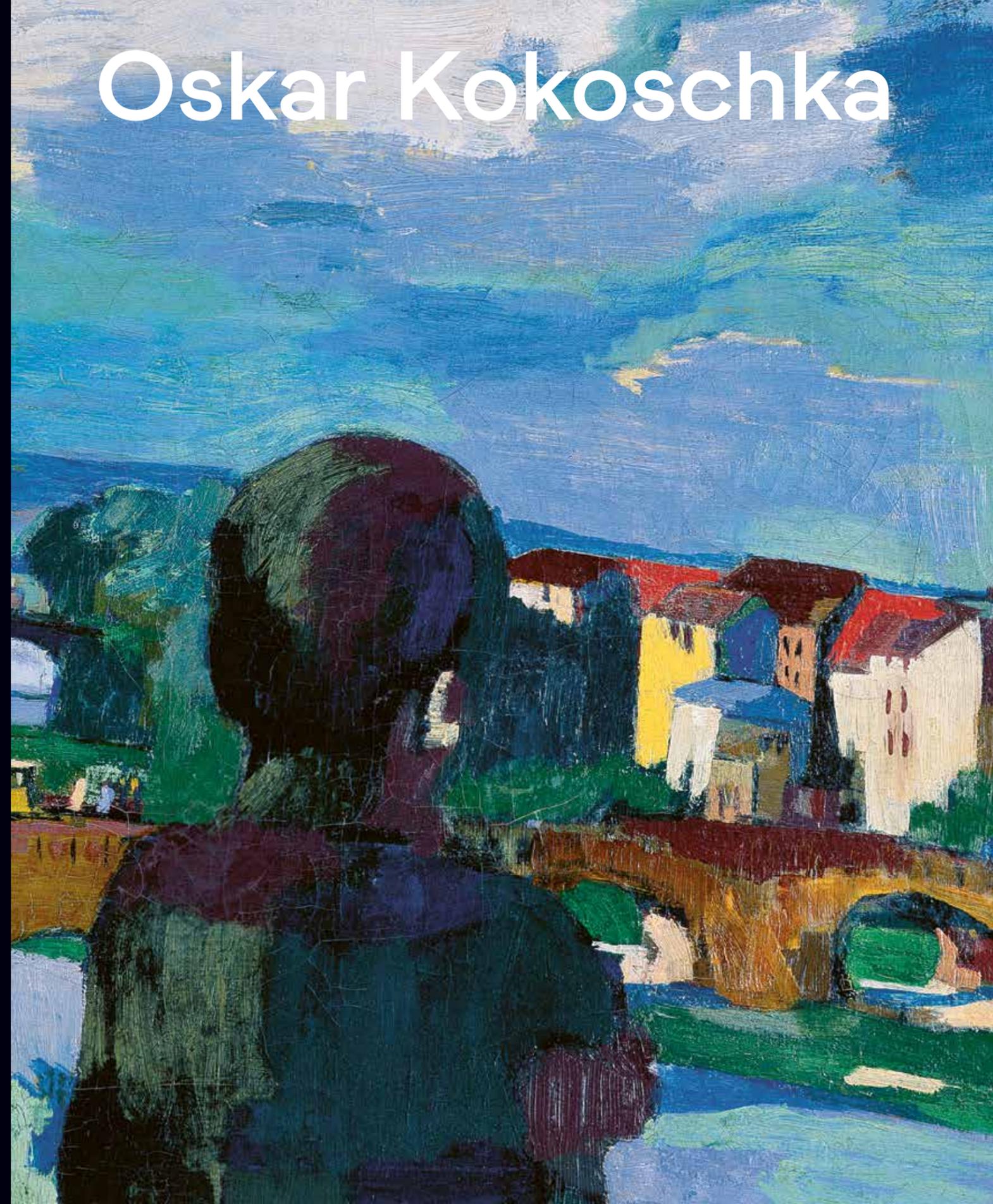


Kunsthhaus Zürich

Oskar Kokoschka

Leopold Museum

Oskar Kokoschka



Oskar Kokoschka

Expressionist

Migrant

European

A Retrospective

Cathérine Hug and Heike Eipeldauer

With contributions by Régine Bonnefoit, Iris Bruderer-Oswald,
Martina Ciardelli, Birgit Dalbajewa, Heike Eipeldauer, Katharina Erling,
Cathérine Hug, Aglaja Kempf, Alexandra Matzner, Raimund Meyer,
Bernadette Reinhold, Heinz Spielmann, Patrick Werkner

Table of Contents

4	Christoph Becker Preface	194	Bernadette Reinhold Kokoschka—Homo Austriacus? Reflections on a Difficult Relationship
6	Hans-Peter Wipplinger Preface	200	Katharina Erling Threatened Paradise—Art as an Alternative. On the Figurative Works of the 1930s
8	Acknowledgments		
10	Cathérine Hug Kokoschka Revisited. His Impact as a European and a Painter of the Figurative		The Second World War and Exile in London 1938–1950
	Viennese Biotope and Breakthrough in Berlin 1905–1912	210	Régine Bonnefoit Kokoschka’s Struggle for Recognition in England and the USA after 1938
22	Heike Eipeldauer ‘I struggle for womanhood’—Figurations of the Female in the Early Work of Oskar Kokoschka	220	Heinz Spielmann ‘A Political Man’. Oskar Kokoschka’s Criticism of the State and Society
34	Patrick Werkner Vienna circa 1909—Kokoschka in the Biotope of the Avant-Garde		The Post-War Period and Reflection on European Values 1946–1974
	Portraits and the First World War 1912–1918	238	Iris Bruderer-Oswald What We Are Fighting For. Oskar Kokoschka and Wilhelm Wartmann. A Late Friendship
98	Raimund Meyer Alliance—Misalliance. Sturm and Kokoschka and Dada	276	Aglaja Kempf Coloured Stenographs. Oskar Kokoschka’s Sketchbooks
	The Dresden Years 1917–1924	280	Alexandra Matzner ‘Man, who are you?’ Observations on Kokoschka’s Graphic Prints
154	Birgit Dalbajewa The Dresden Years. Reception, Working Process and Stylistic Options	286	Martina Ciardelli Chronology
	Travels and Expressive Landscapes 1923–1930		Appendix
163		296	List of Exhibited Works
	Degenerate Art and Exile in Prague 1931–1938	310	Authors’ Biographies
179		314	Image Credits
		318	Colophon

Kokoschka Revisited. His Impact as a European and a Painter of the Figurative

Cathérine Hug

‘That is why this exhibition is worthy of note as a new beginning. Here, for perhaps the first time, Viennese painting was shown abroad as a growing, living, organic and fruitful entity, and the fact that the most favourable selection, even in such necessary abbreviation, maintained its meaning, impact and value is a most fortunate omen. [...] Where a country strives to present itself correctly, it must leave all considerations behind.’¹

The exhibition mentioned here is not about our retrospective and the present publication but about the presentation of *A Century of Viennese Painting*, which took place from May to June 1918 at the Kunsthau Zürich.² Stefan Zweig, from whom these lines originate, is not necessarily famous for his art critical texts; it must, therefore, have left a deep impression on him, since he spent a great deal of time visiting the exhibition. The timing is also quite remarkable: the First World War was still raging, and standing between the ravaging Entente and Axis powers, neutral Switzerland, and Zurich in particular, welcomed European migrant members of the intelligentsia, especially from Austria, Germany and France, but also from Russia and Italy.³ The most important meeting point for the war emigrants was Café Odeon, located five minutes by foot from the Kunsthau Zürich, where Albert Einstein, Leon Trotsky, Tristan Tzara and people close to Kokoschka, such as his mentor Karl Kraus and his gallerist Paul Cassirer—as well as roughly fifty other well-known European personalities—came and went in a continuous stream.⁴ Most probably, Zweig read the exhibition’s small brochure, in which the painter and curator Carl Moll resolutely spelt out across three pages the message he was striving to convey: ‘The democratic spirit of our time elevates the majority to power, and in art, of course, the minority is the more valuable part.’⁵ Zweig summarised the significance of Moll’s exhibition as a ‘strong and extraordinary impression’, and although the concept finds more mention than the participating artists, Kokoschka is praised in the highest tones: ‘Never before has Viennese painting found a similarly concise and personal abbreviation, the bow has never been stretched tighter—but never before has the artistic resonance of the taut string been felt so

keenly and definitively as from this exhibition [...]. In the halls of youth, Kokoschka is the focal point, with a completely new, splendidly dynamic portrait of Carl Moll’⁶ (cat. 27, p. 108). Zweig’s decision to write a review of this exhibition is all the more remarkable, since his priorities at that time were elsewhere, for he committed himself to a pacifist mission to ‘write against the war’,⁷ which culminated in the pertinent essay *The Heart of Europe* about the Red Cross based in Geneva.⁸ Given Carl Moll’s popularity and importance as a painter in Vienna, it can be assumed that Zweig was aware of the resonance and international appeal of this special show. The fact that Kokoschka is given special mention in Zweig’s article may, in addition to artistic aspects, also be due to the fact that the young painter was well connected with the literary world; it was thus only consequential that he should draw Zweig’s interest, especially when one considers Kokoschka’s connections to Albert Ehrenstein, Karl Kraus, Adolf Loos, Georg Trakl and Herwarth Walden. For Kokoschka, it was not the first museum exhibition in Switzerland, and especially at the Kunsthau Zürich, where his works were presented in 1913 and 1917, but as this review by an internationally recognised author demonstrates, it was certainly the most momentous thus far.⁹

The European

What do Zweig and Kokoschka share in common, apart from the fact that they both came from Austria and were artists? What makes them so topical to this day, or rather once again? In a Europe shattered by two world wars, both of them had become well known for their declared anti-nationalist Europeanism, their lives having been marked by exclusion, persecution and migration. Although their references were of a different nature—while Zweig referred to the Enlightenment, Kokoschka looked back to Greek antiquity—both held to the principle that civilisation’s achievements did not emerge from the background of national but rather European and even global dynamics. Zweig thus analysed the situation in countless publications and stated particularly soberly in his world-famous publication *The World of Yesterday*: ‘I have seen the great mass ideologies grow and spread before my eyes—Fascism in Italy, National Socialism in Germany, Bolshevism in Russia and above all else that arch-plague nationalism which has poisoned the flower of our European culture.’¹⁰ Kokoschka, too, had repeatedly made public statements on the problem of nationalism and made

concrete suggestions for its containment, for example at the Brussels Peace Congress in September 1936, attended by some 5,000 participants: ‘The elementary school as a preparation for the life of adults must train children to become active, and—true to its inventor’s intentions—it must not be an institution where national ideology, war myths and ‘heroic’ self-abandonment are taught. The national primary school must become an international school of work!’¹¹ Kokoschka’s ideas about how European society and the political landscape were to be reformed were not, however, confined to the micro-level of the school but can be understood as an anticipation of today’s concept of a ‘Europe of Regions’,¹² since, as he asserted, it was ‘conceivable—this is my hope—that the historical developments to stateless federalism will replace the centralised national form of society’.¹³ This background also explains Kokoschka’s programmatic choice of ‘Europe’ as the motif for the lithograph of the special edition for the fourth volume of his collected writings, entitled *Political Comments*, the source of these quotes of his (fig. 1). In the face of growing renationalisation tendencies, which have been gaining ground throughout Europe over the past decade and give cause for concern as they threaten European integration as a peace project, we have deliberately chosen Kokoschka’s commitment to a humanist Europe in the approach of this retrospective. A prominent advocate of the European project is Robert Menasse, like Kokoschka also from Vienna, who, in his speech on the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the Treaties of Rome, appealed to the conscience of the European parliamentarians with the following words: ‘[M]any people believe that the nation state is a little like a house in which they are the lords and masters, and that is what they want to be [...]. Whoever encourages these members of the electorate and goes about gathering up their votes deceives them all the more. For this post-national process is happening whether they like it or not and is no longer bothered with national house rules.’¹⁴ The issue of renationalisation tendencies and ultimately their failure is explained by Menasse both laconically and plausibly as follows: ‘All those things which affect or beleaguer our lives today have in fact been transnational for a long time: the supply chain, the food chain, money supply, ecological problems, the flow of refugees and migrants, the internet and its socio-political ramifications, the surveillance of and therefore the threats to citizen’s rights—whatever it is that we have to get to grips with today doesn’t come to a halt at national frontiers and is not politically ordered and regulated within those same national frontiers.’¹⁵



Fig. 1: Oskar Kokoschka, *Europe*, 1975, publ. 1976
Chalk lithograph on Japanese paper, 31.3 × 50 cm
Fondation Oskar Kokoschka, Vevey

Traveller and Migrant

Kokoschka considered himself neither a citizen of Austria (where he was born) nor a Czech (where his name originates), neither as an Englishman (where he lived in exile and was awarded citizenship) nor as a Swiss (where he spent the last quarter of a century of his life). This is repeatedly confirmed by the titles of large-scale exhibitions dedicated to Kokoschka, such as *Emigrant Life—Prague and London, Exile and New Home* and *A Vagabond in Linz*.¹⁶ It may thus be no coincidence that, in the early Kokoschka monograph written by Paul Westheim, the travel paintings from Geneva and Paris created in 1924 are reproduced directly next to Westheim’s conclusion on the artistic process of creation, defining travel as a strategy of self-discovery: ‘This painting is a highly personal documentation, and at the same time it is a most determined attempt to contribute to the realisation of the general. [...] The world is also an idea for this artist, something that still needs to be creatively designed. His destiny, the destiny of the creative mind, is to conceive the world in a creative way.’¹⁷ The book had been published by Paul Cassirer, the gallerist who financially supported Kokoschka in his nomadic self-discovery.¹⁸ The Kokoschka biographer Joseph Paul Hodin also describes travel as a broadening of horizons, although his apodictic tone seems



Fig. 2: Oskar Kokoschka, *Lisbon, Street Scene*, 1925
Oil on canvas, 38 x 49 cm
Private collection

a bit strange in view of the impossibility of the monocausal: 'In the winter of 1908, Adolf Loos took a decisive step in the promotion of the young artist. He took him with him to Switzerland. [...] But then, around 1924, the nightmarish pressure, under which the works of this first important period were created, was lifted from him. Thus liberated, during his travels he discovered the beauty of the mountains and the lakes and the greatness of the human genius in its urban creations and important buildings, a greatness that was equal to the first mighty impression of the high mountains.'¹⁹ Kokoschka's letters to his family and friends provide vivid insight into how profoundly these journeys must have impressed him, for example a letter from Lisbon, where it is proved that two paintings were made in 1925: *Lisbon, View over the Rooftops* (destroyed) and *Lisbon, Street Scene*, (fig. 2): 'Take into consideration that I have a ravenous appetite for travel; I love every new impression as if I've once again found this and that, and yet I am still plagued by a fluttering feeling, as if I was bidding farewell. [...] If you could only see this ocean! The air blows towards South America, the vegetation is incredible, the land is so green, at least the southern half, just as the birches at home blossom in May. The Tajo is rosy and the light so violent that you imagine you can hear or smell it.'²⁰ Kokoschka would visit countless places and countries during his life, from Berlin and Dresden to France, Spain and Portugal, as well as Algeria, Egypt and Turkey. In the post-war period, he found his way to the USA—but more for

professional rather than sentimental reasons—and was repeatedly drawn to Greece, the cradle of European civilisation.

Travelling was not always a voluntary choice in the 1930s, but rather the unbearable, politically unstable situation caused by the Second World War forced millions of people into exile—including Kokoschka. The precarious circumstances also had an influence on his artistic production, since the utensils and studio space required for painting were in short supply. Thus, as at the beginning of his artistic career, the painter increasingly relied on the genre of drawing, and the sketchbook was now to become a constant companion for him from the second half of the 1930s onwards.²¹ Out of necessity, the portrait commissions he actively sought became an important source of income during his exile in Prague and London, and the formats chosen were correspondingly uniform.²² Marked by the experience of being branded a 'degenerate artist' from 1933 on, the painter developed an independent artistic language of political protest, which, on the one hand, pilloried the perpetrators in typical Expressionist manner (cats. 75–80, pp. 226–33) and were, on the other hand, with the forced staging of Arcadian landscapes and the use of mythological role models, a humanistic counter-proposal of a singular kind (cat. 43, pp. 186–7; cat. 66, pp. 184–5; cat. 74, p. 207).²³ On 7 March 1937, an article was published in the leftist liberal newspaper *Basler Nationalzeitung* and the anti-fascist journal *Der Gegen-Angriff* (Prague/Zurich/Paris), which referred to Kokoschka's exhibition as a rehabilitation of the liberal arts and succinctly described his situation, as well as that of many others in exile: 'Kokoschka belongs to the family of representative artists who preferred exile over an enslaved life in the sphere of influence of the National Socialist mercenaries. [...] Displaced and exiled, he carried on with his work. He will be one of those called upon to paint the frescoes of humankind's suffering and victory in the fight against their slayers in the community centres of the coming liberated Germany.'²⁴

A Premier—Prometheus and Thermopylae

Two large-format triptychs, each roughly eight metres wide and over two metres high, titled *The Prometheus Triptych* (1950) and *Thermopylae* (1954) represent the culmination of Kokoschka's mature work (cat. 87, pp. 254–5; cat. 91, pp. 258–9). They were created during a transitional phase, in a Europe weakened by the devastating consequences of the war and now

rebuilding itself, when, after more than ten years in exile in England, the artist relocated to Villeneuve in Switzerland.²⁵ For the first time since 1962, when they were exhibited in the Tate in London, these two works can now once again be seen together in our retrospective. *The Prometheus Triptych*, the impressive key work originally conceived for the ceiling of the entrance hall of Count Antoine Seilern's mansion and now owned by The Courtauld Gallery in London, has not been seen and admired outside the British Isles, except at the Venice Biennale in 1952.²⁶ 'Yesterday, I painted the last stroke (an axe blow, I would almost say) on my ceiling painting, and now I am more desperate than I have been in many, many years. That something is completed, which cannot be changed in the least triviality, seems like an attack. [...] A consolation is that even Uccello, who invented perspective for the Renaissance world out of spiritual distress, was not understood any better. [...] This is perhaps one last great work, perhaps my best, and Seilern does not quite know what he has there,'²⁷ Kokoschka wrote to Josef Paul Hodin, his future biographer, who later emigrated from Prague to London. From these lines, it becomes clear how important this painting was to him and how he suffered from its initially negative reception. It must have been a great satisfaction for Kokoschka to be able to present the impressive triptych to the global public at the most important international exhibition of contemporary art in Venice. His official statement on the occasion read: 'This painting should evince representational content and space as befits a European connected with his history. I present a spatial conception, to which I deliberately added the fourth dimension of movement discovered in the Baroque period, which allows the viewer to read the painting in time, so to speak, in the sequence of the described events from the beginning to the end. I foresee that this affirmation must seem blasphemous to an abstract painter [...].'²⁸ Here, two of Kokoschka's points become clear: firstly, the painter focuses not only on his own movement in the artistic and thus performative production process but also on the movement of the viewer; secondly, he evidently has little sympathy for abstract art and, in particular, Abstract Expressionism, which, after the Second World War, advanced to become the dominant art movement, together with its European equivalent Art Informel.²⁹ In Kokoschka's 'School of Seeing', which he founded one year later, namely in 1953, and which continues to exist as the Summer Academy in Salzburg, he programmatically expressed these two aspects, the necessity of the gestural and the rejection of abstraction, in his opening speech: 'Visual art existed before the spoken message; the

written language is based on this. Visual art is a language in pictures [...]. A transliteration and translation into the verbal language, an explanation of the content with the help of another medium, is merely a substitute. [...] For the first time in the history of humanity, contemporary art claims the privilege of being independent of the laws of articulated language. It may indeed be the privilege of the abstract artist, should he not wish to be understood, to withdraw into the ivory tower. It seems more worrisome, however, that this non-objective art is being propagated throughout the world.'³⁰ Today, Kokoschka's dismissive scepticism may be seen as being 'anti-modern', which, however, does not necessarily mean backward, conservative and outmoded.³¹ With the founding of this art academy, which was open to all, Kokoschka—with the active support of, among others, Friedrich Welz—realised his dream mentioned previously, namely to provide democratic access to art education as a cornerstone of an anti-authoritarian society. This reactionary but not entirely unjustified mistrust of the 'over-theorisation' of abstract art could, incidentally, also be found in the USA: probably the most famous representative among them was the popular New Journalism author Tom Wolfe (1930–2018) with his pamphlet *The Painted Word*.³² It is noteworthy that Kokoschka's grand appearance at the Venice Biennale took place shortly before the founding of the International Summer Academy in Salzburg: he already enjoyed international fame, but the Biennale was also a welcome place to attract potential academy members.

It is worthwhile at this point to make a digression to fully understand the connection between *The Prometheus Triptych* as a programmatic painting and the Summer Academy founded just one year later. From the first summer (and explicitly noted in the programme), the motto 'man as the measure of all things'³³ was at the centre of his formal, artistic approach, albeit less an affirmative attitude towards the Anthropocene³⁴ than the power of somatic learning in the sense of restoring the unity of body and mind. Students should thus uninhibitedly trust their spontaneous intuition and give free rein to their expressive power, regardless of the result. This was one of the reasons why they worked exclusively with uncorrectable watercolours. Although the aspects of the spontaneous and the aleatory are in some ways reminiscent of the production methods of the Abstract Expressionists and Colour Field painters, Kokoschka consciously distanced himself from these by simultaneously 'opposing both the empty formalism of the old school (so-called

“Naturalism, Impressionism”) and the “sterile formalism of so-called non-objective trends”.³⁵ But in spite of this decidedly anti-abstract attitude of the founding father, with Slavi Soucek a representative of the highly topical and globally acclaimed abstract pictorial language was appointed to the teaching staff as early as 1955. What connects Prometheus as the originator of human civilisation with a concept such as that of the Summer Academy is Kokoschka’s unwavering belief in the conscientiousness of man—this must have been of particular relevance a few years after the horrors of the Second World War, of which these paintings have lost nothing to this day. Art must be seen as an integral part of a humanistic constitution of civilisation; thus Kokoschka: ‘Man, the measure of all things. In this sense, European man has always been able to rediscover himself in the mirror of art, to intervene actively in the conditions of existence, to develop the ability to shape the human condition, indeed the conditions for the survival of his species. The change, the transformation, even the altering of climatic conditions thus lost the mysterious inevitability of fate.’³⁶

A similar sense of mission in the style of the political *muralismo* tradition, such as that revealed in *The Prometheus Triptych*, can also be read in *The Thermopylae Triptych* (cat. 91, pp. 258–9). From the beginning, the painting was intended as an ‘appeal to the Western youth’, as the rector of the University of Hamburg, Bruno Snell, stated in his 1961 text on the genesis of the triptych: ‘Kokoschka was a downright fanatical European: if a culture was to continue to exist, he said, it would have little to expect from either Russia or America; we had to focus on ourselves.’³⁷ The choice of the Battle of the Thermopylae as a motif was essentially due to suggestions made by the classical philologist Snell, who pointed out the ideological historical derivation of the Western European concept of freedom—freedom in the sense of one’s own responsibility to make a choice—and the related reference to the Battle of the Thermopylae and the tragedy of Aeschylus.³⁸ Before the painting donated by Philipp and Gertrud Reemtsma could be installed in the so-called ‘Philosophers’ Tower’ of the University of Hamburg in 1962, the history painting was first shown at the Kunsthaus Zürich in 1955, in the Salzburg Residenz five months later during the International Summer Academy, and in the Vienna Secession that same year. In a letter to the mayor of Hamburg, Kokoschka explained why, against the background of his own vision of Europe, it meant so much to him that the triptych had finally found a worthy home in the lecture hall of a philosophical faculty: ‘To be a European

means to repeatedly fight the barbarian in one’s own self; “you are not human because you were born, you have to constantly become human,” a Greek philosopher once said. That is the theme of my painting. The figure of freedom turns to every viewer who walks past the picture, she extends her hand to him. [...] My best work.’³⁹ The art press intensely discussed the final painting.⁴⁰ In addition to the previously described topicality, the critic Walter Kern drew attention in the internationally renowned magazine *Das Werk* to the artistic significance of Kokoschka’s unique production process, which bears conspicuously striking moments of the performative: ‘The paintings, all of which breathe the immediacy of the experienced brushstroke, have only been prefaced by preliminary studies but are not based on binding sketches.’⁴¹ The final version is created on the canvas, and the work as a whole is thus an example of the perfect harmony of spontaneous experience and intuition with the weighing and balancing attitude of an enormously artistic mind.⁴² But would it then not ironically be the characteristics of the ‘spontaneous’ and the ‘intuitive’ that unite Kokoschka with the Abstract Expressionists, about whom he was so critical?

Kokoschka’s Influence on Contemporary Art

Kokoschka’s legacy for artistic production from the early 1980s to today is more present in many ways than commonly assumed. Artists such as Nancy Spero (1926–2009) and Denis Savary (b. 1981) consciously refer to him, while others such as Oswald Oberhuber (b. 1931) and Herbert Brandl (b. 1960) pay tribute to him via circuitous routes. Although this genealogical strand has rarely been mentioned in specialist literature, let alone been the subject of a more profound analysis, Kokoschka must be counted among those artists who significantly paved the ground for the generation of neo-Expressionist painters known as the Neue Wilde. The original influences of what is now subsumed under the term ‘Bad Painting’ are unanimously seen as being rooted in artists such as Asger Jorn, Francis Picabia and Philip Guston, while Kokoschka’s late work, with paintings such as *The Rejected Lover*, *Time*, *Gentlemen Please*, *Peer Gynt* and *Theseus and Antiope* (cat. 95, p. 260; cat. 99, p. 285; cat. 101, p. 284; cat. 93, p. 261), could certainly be called in for comparison on a formal level.⁴³ In particular, Picabia’s influence on postmodern painting was repeatedly pointed out and analysed.⁴⁴ In conversations which the

author conducted with the artists Oberhuber, Brandl and Savary, however, it has been revealed that Kokoschka’s consistent commitment to figurative painting can certainly be seen, at least informally, as contributing to the growing recognition of the representational within the painting discourse.⁴⁵ A symbolic step in bringing Kokoschka into the consciousness of the general public and especially of aspiring artists was made in May 1980 (less than three months after the death of the artist), when the square in front of the University of Applied Arts in Vienna was renamed Oskar Kokoschka Platz—due primarily to the efforts of Oswald Oberhuber, the former rector of the university. Oberhuber was concerned not only with the rehabilitation of the artist, who, since being defamed as a ‘degenerate artist’, had an ambivalent relationship with his country of origin,⁴⁶ but also with linking his curriculum unmistakably to that of the University of Applied Arts Vienna, his former place of study, to which he felt deeply connected right up into old age.⁴⁷

A first comprehensive presentation of Kokoschka’s mature and late work took place in Vienna in 2008 at the Albertina. Why recognition came so late was kept open, while Kokoschka’s strengths in old age were pointed out from various sides with understandable emphasis; in the director’s preface, one can read: ‘Kokoschka had never been as free in his painting than he was in his very last years [...] the revival of expressive figuration by Baselitz and Lüpertz, the courage to paint after decades of conceptual austerity. For their contemporaries, however, Picasso and Kokoschka were regarded as anachronistic standard bearers of a figurative and expressive painting that seemed to have been overcome for all eternity.’⁴⁸ The freedom of Kokoschka mentioned here, especially with regard to questions of composition and colour treatment in landscape paintings, is also that which drew Brandl into his spell (cat. 28, pp. 106–7 / fig. 3): ‘Time and again, this blue-green intrigued me. [...] He almost always looks at the landscape from above, from a bird’s-eye view. Figures placed in the landscape seem to dissolve in an abstract manner, without, however, actually becoming abstract. [...] This feverish style of painting, this pictorial space of narration which Kokoschka did not abandon until the end of his life were—beyond Abstract Expressionism and all the [predominantly American] currents—his consistent influence and thus his artistic merit for posterity.’⁴⁹ Nancy Spero and Denis Savary, in turn, have explicitly referred to Kokoschka’s early work. The seismographically oscillating brushstroke and the deliberate use of white heightening over a monochrome but still lively background are based on works

such as *Hans und Erica Tietze* (fig. 4) or *Hugo Caro* (cat. 14, p. 68), which Spero used in her *Lovers* series (fig. 5).⁵⁰ In his installation, Savary in turn explored the question of how a destroyed object—the doll that Hermine Moos created upon Kokoschka’s commission in 1918 but which the artist quickly and wrathfully disposed of⁵¹—could be consciously reconstructed without (actual existing) photographic material and rather on the basis of (partially illustrated) correspondence (cat. 103, p. 127).⁵² The contemporary artist was not interested in faithfully reconstructing the destroyed fetish but rather in how the suggestive force of Kokoschka’s actions affect us, and, in particular, the sewer Fanny Jackson Terribilini (Vevey) Savary commissioned, today: ‘The breasts, I would like to ask you to please give them more detail! The nipples not raised but more uneven and emphasised more than anything else through the roughness. [...] The skin, finally, peach-like to the touch, with no sewing permitted in places where you think that it would grieve me and remind me that the fetish is a poor rag doll.’⁵³

Together with Francis Picabia and Pablo Picasso, Kokoschka belongs to that generation of painters, who, because of the vehement and generally prevailing doubt with regard to representational painting in the immediate post-war period by their (one is inclined to say conservative) loyalty to the figurative, have at the same time significantly contributed to the fact that the painting discourse did not in turn fall victim to a dogma of abstract and conceptual art but rather gradually allowed that, today, abstraction and figuration can be practiced, self-evidently and without ideological trench warfare, parallel and in communion with each other, and this from one and the same person.

1 Stefan Zweig, exhibition review in: *Neue Freie Presse*, 8.7.1918; reprinted in: Klemens Renoldner (ed.), *Stefan Zweig, 'Ich habe das Bedürfnis nach Freunden'. Erzählungen, Essays und unbekanntes Texte*, Vienna 2013, p. 422.

2 A list of exhibited works can be found in: *Ein Jahrhundert Wiener Malerei*, exh. cat. Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich 1918. As one of the youngest participants—Kokoschka was only thirty-two at the time—he was represented by three paintings, comprising the portrait *Carl Moll* (cat. 27, p. 108), the impressive large-format *The Visitation* (1912, Belvedere, Vienna) and a picture identified as *Alpine Landscape, Mürren* (p. 290, fig. 6) see *ibid.*, p. 12.

3 The Dada anniversary in 2016 especially was an occasion for numerous publications and exhibitions, which shed light on the significance of Zurich as a centre of the European intelligentsia during the First World War. Among the vast literature, see in particular: Juri Steiner / Stefan Zweifel (eds.), *Phantom Dada. Flucht durch die Zeit, 1916–2016*, Zurich 2016.



Fig. 3: Herbert Brandl, *Untitled*.
From the 'Black Sulm' Series, 2013
Oil on canvas, 150 x 300 cm
Kunsthaus Zürich, 2015



Fig. 4: Oskar Kokoschka, *Hans and Erica Tietze*, 1909
Oil on canvas, 76.5 x 136.2 cm
The Museum of Modern Art, New York,
Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund



Fig. 5: Nancy Spero, *Lovers VIII*, 1964
Oil on canvas, 131.4 x 205.7 cm
Courtesy of Gallery Lelong, New York

- 4 The Conceptual artist Uriel Orlow (b. 1973, lives in London and Lisbon) has compiled the portraits of roughly fifty such world-renowned Odeon guests in his installation *Oddly, One Lived the War in One's Mind More Intensively Than at Home in a Country at War* (2008–09, Art Collection of the City of Zurich); for additional information, see: Manuela Reissmann in: *Europa. Die Zukunft der Geschichte*, exh. cat. Kunsthaus Zürich, ed. Cathérine Hug/Robert Menasse, Zurich 2015, pp. 228–31. And for more information in general on the history of the Odeon, see: Curt Riess, *Café Odeon. Unsere Zeit, ihre Hauptakteure und Betrachter*, Zurich 1973.
- 5 Exh. cat Zurich 1918 (note 2), p. 3.
- 6 Renoldner 2013 (note 1), pp. 418 and 421.
- 7 Curt Riess/Esther Scheidegger, *Café Odeon*, Zurich 2010, p. 123.
- 8 Stefan Zweig, 'Das Herz Europas. Ein Besuch im Genfer Roten Kreuz', first published in: *Neue Freie Presse*, 23.12.1917. Reprinted in: id., *Die schlaflose Welt. Essays 1909–1941*, Frankfurt a. M. 1983, pp. 74–89. For more on the intensive cooperation between Wilhelm Wartmann and Kokoschka, encompassing roughly ten exhibitions, see: Nadja Baldini/Patrick Zamarián, 'Oskar Kokoschka und die Ära Wartmann am Kunsthaus Zürich', in: *Oskar Kokoschka. Beziehungen zur Schweiz*, exh. cat. Seedamm Kulturzentrum, Pfäffikon, ed. Andreas Meier, Wabern 2005, pp. 147–60; for more on the friendship between the two men based on an analysis of previously unpublished letters, see Iris Bruderer-Oswald's contribution in this volume, pp. 238–44.
- 9 Particularly noteworthy in this context is the trailblazing *Exhibition of German Painting in the 19th and 20th Centuries* at the Kunsthaus Zürich in 1917, in which Kokoschka, even before his appointment as a professor at the Dresden Academy of Arts, was included as an Expressionist due to his collaboration with Herwarth Walden from 1910 on and with Paul Cassirer from 1911 on.
- 10 Stefan Zweig, 'Preface', in: *The World of Yesterday. Memories of a European*, London 1943 (first published posthumously in Stockholm in 1942), pp. 7 f.
- 11 Oskar Kokoschka, 'Rede auf dem Brüsseler Friedenskongress, 1936', quoted in: Oskar Kokoschka, *Das schriftliche Werk*, vol. 4: *Politische Äußerungen*, ed. Heinz Spielmann, Hamburg 1976, p. 177.
- 12 One of the most important champions of a Europe of Regions is the Swiss Denis de Rougemont; see: Denis de Rougemont, *Rapport au peuple européen sur l'état de l'union*, Paris 1979, p. 24. According to information from the Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe given to the author in March 2014, de Rougemont first used the apt term 'cicatrices de l'histoire' (scars of history) to describe national boundaries in a lecture held in Strasbourg on 1 July 1972.
- 13 Oskar Kokoschka, 'Der moderne Staat—ein Absurdum' (1937), quoted in: Spielmann 1976 (note 11), p. 196.
- 14 Robert Menasse, *Kritik der Europäischen Vernunft*, speech in the plenary hall of the European Parliament in Brussels for the ceremony '60th Anniversary of the Treaties of Rome', 21.3.2017. Reprinted by Bernstein-Verlag, Siegburg 2017, p. 33.
- 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 33 f.
- 16 Oskar Kokoschka, *Emigrantenleben—Prag und London 1934–1953*, exh. cat. Kunsthalle Bielefeld/National Gallery, Prague, ed. Jutta Hülsewig-Johnen, Bielefeld 1994; Oskar Kokoschka, *Exil und neue Heimat 1934–1980*, exh. cat. Albertina, Vienna, ed. Antonia Hoerschelmann, Ostfildern 2008; and Oskar Kokoschka, *Ein Vagabund in Linz. Wild, verfemt, gefeiert*, exh. cat. Lentos-Kunstmuseum, Linz, ed. Elisabeth Nowak-Thaller/Nina Kirsch, Weitra 2008.
- 17 Paul Westheim, *Oskar Kokoschka. Das Werk in 135 Abbildungen*, Berlin 1925, pp. 96–8.
- 18 For more on Kokoschka's travels supported by Cassirer and their influence not only on his creativity but also on his productivity, see Birgit Dalbajewa's essay in this volume, pp. 154–61.
- 19 Joseph Paul Hodin, 'Neue Horizonte', in: id., *Oskar Kokoschka. Sein Leben. Seine Zeit*, Berlin 1968, pp. 147 f.
- 20 Letter from Kokoschka to Countess Alexandrine Khuenburg, Lisbon, 18.4.1925, in: *Oskar Kokoschka, Briefe II. 1919–1934*, ed. Olda Kokoschka/Heinz Spielmann, Düsseldorf 1985, pp. 109 f.
- 21 For more on Kokoschka's sketchbooks, see Aglaja Kempf's essay in this volume, pp. 276–9.
- 22 For more on Kokoschka's not always easy acquisition of portrait commissions in England and the USA, see Régine Bonnefoit's essay in this volume, especially pp. 210–18.
- 23 For more on Kokoschka's figurative Arcadian paintings of the 1930s as a political counter-proposal, see Katharina Erling's essay in this volume, pp. 200–6.
- 24 Bruno Frei, "'Artist in Exile"—Streiflichter aus dem Exil', quoted in: Gloria Sultano/Patrick Werkner, *Oskar Kokoschka. Kunst und Politik 1937–1950*, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2003, p. 134.
- 25 For more on the circumstances surrounding the production of *The Prometheus Triptych*, see Régine Bonnefoit's essay in this volume, especially pp. 210–18; see also: Barnaby Wright, *Oskar Kokoschka. The Prometheus Triptych*, exh. cat. The Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery, London 2006. Kokoschka himself wrote about both works roughly one year after their respective completion; see: Oskar Kokoschka, *Das schriftliche Werk*, vol. 3: *Vorträge, Aufsätze, Essays zur Kunst*, ed. Heinz Spielmann, Hamburg 1975, pp. 313 ff. and 321 ff.
- 26 Astonishingly, in his preface to the Tate retrospective, the Vienna-born art historian Ernst H. Gombrich does not address the spectacular presence of both large formats (in the catalogue of the Tate London, nos. 137 and 145) but rather refers in his remarks exclusively to *The Thermopylae Triptych*; Ernst H. Gombrich, 'Oskar Kokoschka', in: *Kokoschka. A Retrospective*, exh. cat. The Tate Gallery, London 1962, p. 15. For more on *The Prometheus Triptych* at the 36th Venice Biennale, Room XLVI, cat. 2, see the online catalogue of works of the Fondation Oskar Kokoschka, Vevey: Katharina Erling/Walter Feilchenfeldt (eds.), *Oskar Kokoschka. Die Gemälde*, available online at: <http://oskar-kokoschka.ch/index.php/home-49.html> (last accessed 28.7.2018).
- 27 Quoted in: *Oskar Kokoschka, Briefe III. 1934–1953*, ed. Olda Kokoschka/Heinz Spielmann, Düsseldorf 1986, p. 241.
- 28 Oskar Kokoschka, 'Die Prometheus Saga' (1952), quoted in: *Kokoschka 1975* (note 25), p. 316.
- 29 For more on the political climate that substantially benefitted the success of Abstract Expressionism, see: Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art. Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War*, Chicago 1983.
- 30 Oskar Kokoschka, 'Zur Eröffnung der internationalen Akademie Salzburg', quoted in: *Kokoschka 1975* (note 25), p. 223.
- 31 The following exhibition catalogue made particular reference to these productive contradictions: *Anti:modern—Salzburg inmitten von Europa zwischen Tradition und Erneuerung*, exh. cat. Museum der Moderne Salzburg, ed. Sabine Breitwieser, Munich 2016.
- 32 Tom Wolfe, *The Painted Word*, New York 1975.
- 33 Oskar Kokoschka, quoted in: Martin Fritz, 'Humanismus, Pluralismus, Globalisierung', in: Hildegrund Amanshauer, *Das schönste Atelier der Welt. 60 Jahre Internationale Sommerakademie für Bildende Kunst Salzburg*, Salzburg/Vienna 2013, p. 19.

- 34 In any event, in 1953, Kokoschka would not have been able to refer to a concept that would not be coined until 2000 and describes our age as one in which man has become the most important (often negative) factor influencing the biological, geological and atmospheric processes of the earth. With this realisation, it was simultaneously claimed that man should understand himself only as a dependent part and not as a dominant instance of the whole, in order, in particular, to cope with the urgent problems of ecology. In the art context, see the exhibition and online discourse series *Das Anthropozän-Observatorium*. Kulturelle Grundlagenforschung mit den Mitteln der Kunst und der Wissenschaft of the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW), Berlin www.hkw.de/anthropozan (last accessed 27.7.2018).
- 35 Quoted in: Fritz 2013 (note 33), p. 19.
- 36 Kokoschka, quoted in: Kokoschka 1975 (note 25), p. 225.
- 37 Bruno Snell, 'Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Triptychons', in: Oskar Kokoschka / Carl Georg Heise et al., *Thermopylae 1954*, Stuttgart 1961, p. 31.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Letter from Kokoschka to Max Brauer, Villeneuve, 19.3.1958; quoted in: *Oskar Kokoschka, Briefe IV. 1953–1976*, ed. Olda Kokoschka / Heinz Spielmann, Düsseldorf 1988, p. 78.
- 40 'Relatively intense', insofar as art reviews are generally devoted to exhibitions and not individual works. Reports were published in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 17.3.1953; *Weltkunst*, vol. 25, no. 4, 1955; and *Forum*, vol. 2, no. 18, 1955.
- 41 For more information about the sketches and the genesis of this triptych see the exhibition curated by Régine Bonnefoit taking place at the same time as the retrospective at Kunsthau Zürich: *Kokoschka—Dürrenmatt. Der Mythos als Gleichnis*, exh. cat. Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel (Cahiers du Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel, no. 20), Neuchâtel 2018.
- 42 Walter Kern, 'Zu Oskar Kokoschkas Triptychon Thermopylae', in: *Das Werk. Architektur und Kunst*, issue focus 'Studio Buildings', vol. 42, no. 1, St. Gallen 1955.
- 43 Especially with exhibitions on the subject in Vienna, the connection to Kokoschka did not seem opportune, which may be related, in particular, to Kokoschka's inviolable position on the one hand and the generally relatively poor knowledge or exclusion of his late work on the other hand. See: *Bad Painting—Good Art*, exh. cat. mumok | Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna, ed. Eva Badura-Triska / Susanne Neuburger, Cologne 2008. Important Kokoschka exhibitions in Vienna that paid special attention to his late work include *Oskar Kokoschka*, exh. cat. Kunstforum Länderbank, Vienna, ed. Klaus Albrecht Schröder / Johann Winkler, Munich 1991 and exh. cat Vienna 2008 (note 16).
- 44 First analysis of Picabia's influence: Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, 'Parody and Appropriation in Francis Picabia, Pop, and Sigmar Polke' (1982), in: id., *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry. Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975*, Cambridge, MA, 2000. Groundbreaking exhibition: 'Lieber Maler, male mir ...': *Radikaler Realismus nach Picabia*, exh. cat. Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna / Centre Pompidou, Paris / Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt a. M., ed. Alison M. Gingeras / Sabine Folie et al., Vienna 2002. See also (more recently): Cathérine Hug, 'Picabia after Picabia', in: *Francis Picabia. Our Heads Are Round so Our Thoughts Can Change Direction*, exh. cat. Kunsthau Zürich, Zurich / The Museum of Modern Art, New York, ed. id. / Anne Umland, Ostfildern / New York / Brussels 2016, pp. 294–309.
- 45 The conversations took place as follows: Oswald Oberhuber, Vienna, 14.12.2017; Denis Savary, Zurich, 26.1.2018; and Herbert Brandl, per Skype, 2.6.2018. The author also spoke with Mireille Wunderly on 1 February 2018 regarding her experiences as a participant at the 'School of Seeing' under the directorship of Kokoschka in the 1960s (presumably 1966, although Wunderly could no longer recall the exact year).
- 46 See Bernadette Reinhold's essay in this volume, pp. 196–8.
- 47 Conversation with Oswald Oberhuber, 2017 (note 45). Oskar Kokoschka, *Mein Leben*, Munich 1971, p. 49. [Oskar Kokoschka, *My Life*, London 1974]
- 48 Klaus Albrecht Schröder, 'Vorwort', quoted in: exh. cat. Vienna 2008 (note 16), p. 11.
- 49 Conversation with Herbert Brandl, 2018 (note 45).
- 50 For more on the analysis of formal analogies between Spero and Kokoschka, see especially: Christopher Lyon, *Nancy Spero. The Work*, Munich / Berlin et al. 2010, pp. 19, 60, 64 and 215, as well as *ills.*, pp. 58–69.
- 51 Brassai, *The Artists of My Life*, New York 1982, p. 74; quoted in: Alfred Weidinger, *Kokoschka und Alma Mahler*, Munich / New York 1996, p. 92.
- 52 The photographs are preserved in the Oskar Kokoschka Centre of the University of Applied Arts Vienna and have been published on numerous occasions, including a selection in: Bernadette Reinhold / Patrick Werkner (eds.), *Oskar Kokoschka—ein Künstlerleben in Lichtbildern*, Vienna 2013, pp. 86–95. See also the outstanding radio feature 'Hermine Moos. Die Frau hinter der Puppe von Justina Schreiber', first broadcast by Deutschlandfunk on 29.6.2018, 8:10–9:00 pm, https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/die-frau-hinter-der-puppe-hermine-moos.1247.de.html?dram:article_id=420215 (last accessed 30.7.2018).
- 53 Letter from Kokoschka to Hermine Moos, Berlin, 10.12.1918, in: *Oskar Kokoschka, Briefe I. 1905–1919*, ed. Olda Kokoschka / Heinz Spielmann, Düsseldorf 1984, pp. 300 f.