

KUNKEL FINE ART

Zeichnungen, Gemälde und Skulpturen
des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts

Ernst Heilemann

1870 Berlin - 1936 Kitchener (Kanada)

Ernst Heilemann began his artistic training at the University of Fine Arts in Berlin. However he broke off his studies to embark on an extended journey with the objective of continuing his education independently. He travelled to Italy, France, Great Britain and the United States. On his return to Berlin he quickly made a name for himself as a society portraitist and painter of the fashionable and elegant side of city life. A succession of exhibitions were to cement his reputation. He participated at the annual *Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung* for the first time in 1893 and became a regular exhibitor. Solo shows of his work were staged at the Galerie Eduard Schulte, one of Berlin's leading dealerships, in 1902 and 1912. He also exhibited at the Künstlerhaus in 1918. His focus on portraiture strengthened during the Weimar Republic. Many of his portraits of the period show the influence of New Objectivity.



Hermann Boll, *Ernst Heilemann at his studio in Berlin, 1902*

Between 1898 and 1912 he contributed around two hundred drawings to the Munich-based satirical magazine *Simplicissimus*. Most of his drawings depict scenes in an affluent upper middle class or aristocratic milieu. His bold, dynamic draughtsmanship deftly crystallizes the pleasures of a charmed, seemingly carefree existence. His choice of motifs and stylistic approach closely recall the work of Eduard Thöny, a friend who was also a regular contributor to *Simplicissimus*. In Heilemann's drawings, however, the strong caricatural element typical of Thöny's work is lacking. Instead, Heilemann's drawings are marked by an elegant, illustrative approach. This in turn links him to another *Simplicissimus* artist – Ferdinand von Reznicek. Reznicek was the magazine's chief exponent of this style of drawing. When he died suddenly in 1909 Heilemann stepped into his shoes, producing virtuoso drawings on a par with his. Clearly, Heilemann's drawings were already popular with readers of *Simplicissimus* before 1909 since a portfolio of thirty plates after drawings by Heilemann titled *Die Berliner Pflanze* was published by Albert Langen Verlag, the magazine's publishing house, in 1908.