

# KUNKEL FINE ART

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

## Albert Weisgerber

1878 St. Ingbert – 1915 Fromelles (France)

Albert Weisgerber completed an apprenticeship as a scene painter in Frankfurt am Main before moving to Munich in 1894. He enrolled at the Munich School of Arts and Crafts and went on to study at the Munich Academy of Art. In 1898 he was accepted into the painting class led by Franz Stuck. Among his fellow students were Hans Purrmann, Wassily Kandinsky and Willi Geiger. The Munich-based weekly art magazine *Jugend* published over five hundred drawings, watercolours and paintings by Weisgerber in the years 1897 to 1913. He was closely involved with the cultural community of Munich's Schwabing district, a lively Bohemian neighbourhood which attracted intellectuals, political figures, artists and publishers.



Albert Weisgerber, *Self-portrait*, 1907

Weisgerber's contact with *Jugend* provided him with a regular source of income and raised his public profile, but it also had a formative influence on his artistic development. An extended study trip to Paris in 1905-6 funded by the magazine's founder and publisher, Dr. Georg Hirth, enabled Weisgerber to study at first hand the work of the Impressionists, the paintings of Cézanne and the posters of Toulouse-Lautrec. He came into contact with the painters of the *Café du Dôme*, in particular Matisse. Their artistic approach was to have a lasting influence on his pictorial vocabulary.

Weisgerber's stay in Paris was crucial to his artistic development. On his return to Munich he distilled his impressions in a versatile and distinctive new style which he applied to a wide variety of themes. Elements of Impressionism mingle with references to Expressionism. Some of his paintings are portraits, others depict nudes, cafe and cabaret scenes, landscapes and religious subjects.

His enthusiastic reception of French painting injected fresh stimuli into German art. This made him something of a trailblazer of modernism and earned him increasing recognition. In 1911 Franz Josef Brakl, a leading Munich dealer, and the Dresden gallery *Kunstsalon Richter* organised the first major collective exhibition featuring Weisgerber's work. A year later, exhibitions staged by Paul Cassirer in Berlin and Ludwig Schames in Frankfurt am Main followed.

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In his role as founding Chairman of the artists' collective *Neue Münchner Secession* Weisgerber energetically supported the diffusion and public acceptance of work produced by artists of his own generation. The group's first exhibition ran from May to October 1914. It included work by Max Beckmann, Paul Klee and Oskar Kokoschka. By the time the exhibition ended, Weisgerber had already been called up for active service. He would be one of the first modernist talents lost in the First World War.