

KUNKEL FINE ART

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



MAX LIEBERMANN

(1847 - Berlin - 1935)

Two Spaniels, 1914

Oil on cardboard on wood

64.5 : 81 cm

Signed and dated upper right: 'M. Liebermann 14'

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Provenance:

Münchner Secession (1914)
Private collection, Frankfurt am Main (1927)
Private collection (until 1928)
Cassirer-Helbing, Berlin (1928)
Stuttgarter Kunstkabinett (1955)
Galerie Beyeler, Basel (1958)
Hans Soraperra, Zurich (1958)
Ketterer, Munich, 20th/21st May 1969, lot 833
Lempertz, Cologne, 17th May 1980, lot 409
Private collection, Switzerland
Collection of Dr. Heinz Nickels, Bielefeld
Private collection, Northern Germany

Exhibitions:

1. *Ausstellung der Freien Secession*, Berlin, 1914, no. 137
Kunstaussstellung der Münchner Secession, Munich, 23rd May until 31st October 1914, no. 137
Max Liebermann - Werke aus Frankfurter Privatbesitz, Galerie Goldschmidt, Frankfurt am Main, December 1927,
no. 40 (as *Zwei Hunde*, 1913, oil on cardboard, 65 : 78.5 cm)
Sammlung Dr. A. Ganz, St. Nikolas bei Luzern - Aus Berliner und anderem Privatbesitz -
Aus dem Nachlass Paul M. Robinow Hamburg, Cassirer-Helbing, Berlin, 30th. October 1928, no. 51
Max Liebermann - Gedächtnisausstellung der Jüdischen Gemeinde Berlin, February until March 1936, no. 28

Literature:

Kurt Zoege von Manteuffel: *Die Ausstellung der Freien Secession in Berlin*, in: *Kunst für Alle*, Jahrgang XXIX,
no. 20, July 1914, p. 468
Die Kunst für Alle, Jahrgang XXXII, 1916/17, ill. p. 409
Karl Voll: *Zu Max Liebermanns 70. Geburtstag*, in: *Kunst für Alle*, Jahrgang XXXII, no. 21/22, August 1917,
p. 401-408, ill. p. 409
N.N.: *Versteigerung der Sammlung Ganz*, in: *Der Cicerone*, Jahrgang XX, 1928, no. 21, p. 714
Dr. Helene Kästenbaum, Prof. Dr. Hans Tietze: *Internationales Jahrbuch der Gemäldeauktionen für 1930*, vol. 1,
Berlin 1930, p. 151
Matthias Eberle: *Max Liebermann. Werkverzeichnis der Gemälde und Ölstudien*, Munich 1996, vol. 2,
no. 1913/27, S. 876, ill. p. 877
„Was vom Leben übrig bleibt, sind Bilder und Geschichten“. *Max Liebermann zum 150. Geburtstag*, Stiftung neue
Synagoge Berlin - Centrum Judaicum, Berlin 1997, cat. no. 38

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Women Plucking Geese (1871, Nationalgalerie Berlin), *Woman with Goats* (1890, Neue Pinakothek Munich), *Pig Market in Haarlem* (1891, Städtische Kunsthalle Mannheim), *The Cowherd* (1894, Kunsthalle Bremen), *The Parrot Man* (1902, Museum Folkwang Essen), *Riders on the Beach* (1903, Wallraf Richartz Museum Cologne) and finally *Hunter in the Dunes* (1913, Österreichische Galerie im Belvedere, Vienna) - in the oeuvre of German Impressionist Max Liebermann, who is commonly associated with atmospheric depictions of his garden on Berlin's Wannsee, animal representations are neither rare nor marginal. The artist always places the animal in close connection with humans. The painting *Two Spaniels*, executed with a brushstroke that is both brisk and confident, is only at first glance an exception to this rule.



Max Liebermann: *Hunter in the Dunes*, 1913
©Österreichische Galerie im Belvedere, Vienna

Two Spaniels is one of a total of six pictorial studies of dogs that Liebermann created in 1913/1914 in the context of his work *Hunter in the Dunes*. The artist also prepared three figure and landscape studies in oil for this painting, which depicts a hunter holding a rifle under his left arm accompanied by a pack of six dogs. After completing it, he produced three more variations. It can be considered one of the most prominent motifs in his work before the outbreak of World War I.

The article *Liebermann als Tiermaler (Liebermann as an Animal Painter)*, published in the Vossische Zeitung on 27 February 1914, provides further information on the background to the painting *Hunter in the Dunes*. The author,

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journalist Harry David, reports on a Dutch tobacco magnate who kept a kennel near Noordwijk and invited German artists, who traditionally spent their summer holidays there, to come and see it. Accompanied by the journalist and Paul Cassirer, who owned a summer house in Noordwijk, Liebermann set off to accept the invitation: *"There we saw eight rather shaggy dogs, grey or white with black and brown spots, barking at each other. They were so-called spaniels, those miniature versions of pointing dogs that are said to originate from Spain and are now bred in England. They resemble our quail dogs, have soft, wavy coats, fairly round heads and particularly long drooping ears. [...] Liebermann seemed little interested in the hunt itself; on the contrary, the crack of the shots disturbed him each time he observed the phenomenon of the dogs' bodies, growing darker and darker in the rosy light of the setting sun, scurrying across the grey-yellow dunes - a real Velasquez atmosphere."*



Diego Velázquez: *Joseph's robe* (detail), 1630

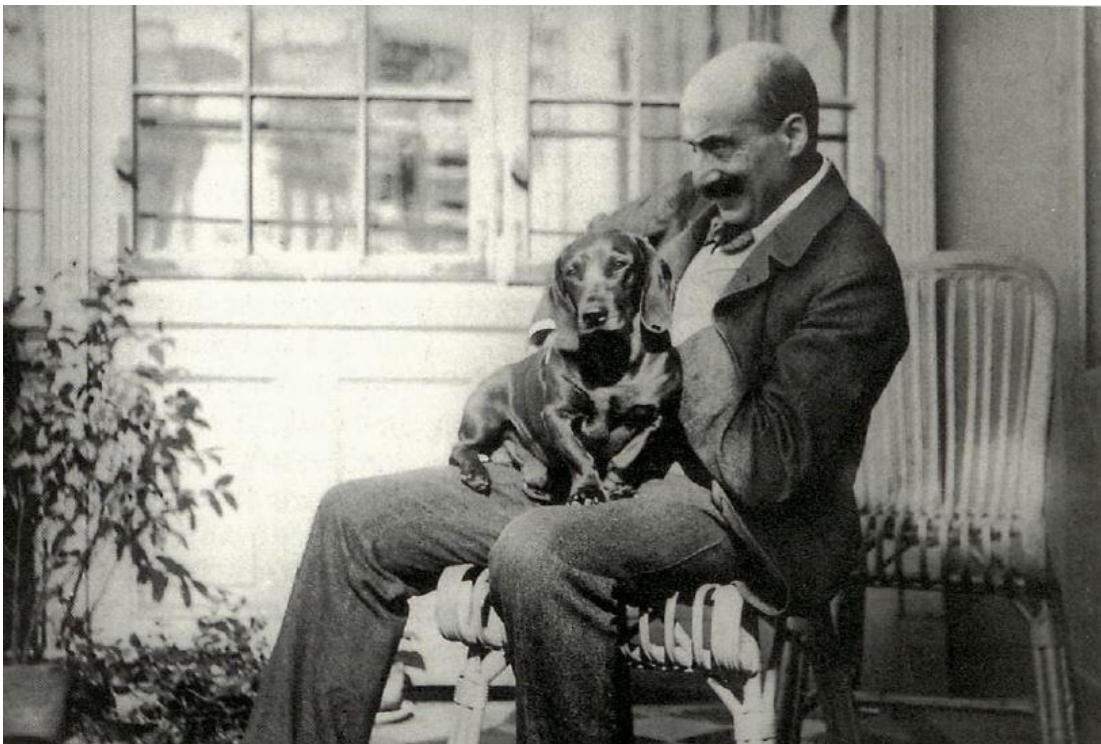
©San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Madrid

The reference to the great Spanish Baroque painter Diego Velázquez, whose work became widely popular in Germany shortly before World War I as part of a general fashion for all things Spanish and was particularly appreciated by Impressionist painters, is no coincidence. Liebermann, who kept a hand-painted copy of Velázquez's portrait of Pope Innocent X in his Berlin studio on Pariser Platz, wrote in a letter dated 24 September 1913 to Alfred Lichtwark, director of the Hamburger Kunsthalle, after the end of his summer holiday: *"[...] we came back three days ago. My wife and Käthe [i.e. Liebermann's daughter] from Switzerland, I from Noordwyk, where I think I have worked with some success: an English trainer with a pack of spaniels, a breed of dog as painted by Velázquez. And strangely enough, I wanted to do something similar in Weimar more than 40 years ago. Without being able to. Can I do it now?"*

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With the painting *Two Spanials*, created shortly after writing that letter, Liebermann once again demonstrated his mastery in capturing animals. The sheer number of six thematically related works - most of which are now in museum collections or considered lost - shows how much he was fascinated by the subject. The fact that the artist, who had still doubted himself during his studies, succeeded four decades later in capturing the anatomy, expression and behaviour of his models with seemingly effortless ease may not only be attributed to Liebermann's maturity as a painter. For many years, the dachshund Männe, a gift from Hugo von Tschudi, director of the Nationalgalerie in Berlin, had been part of the artist's family. Through daily interaction with his pet, Liebermann was very familiar with hunting dogs and had a brilliant understanding of not only their outward appearance but also their nature.



Max Liebermann with his dachshund Männe, c.1910