Exhibition Guide

Emil Nolde
17.11.18 – 03.03.19
Introduction

Emil Nolde ranks among the most well-known artists of the 20th century. He is also one of the most important proponents of Expressionism. His art is distinguished by an unparalleled intensity of color. Like many of his contemporaries in the early 20th century, he sought a new pictorial language that broke from naturalistic representation. In order to transcend European academic art, which was grounded in classicism, he explored the grotesque, the fantastic and what was for him the exotic. These themes that course through his oeuvre likewise provide the starting point for the present exhibition. Grotesques enabled Nolde to comment critically upon current events. He was able to lose himself in fantastic images, thereby freeing himself from academic structures and ideas. The “exotic” introduced Nolde to formal vocabularies from outside of Europe.

Although Nolde drew inspiration from different cultures, he saw himself as a thoroughly German artist. He supported Hitler, even though the National Socialists derided his art as “degenerate,” along with that of Paul Klee. Despite multiple attempts to clarify his rootedness in German culture, beginning in 1941, restrictions were placed upon his artistic practice. However, this did not diminish his enthusiasm for National Socialist politics. Klee, who fled from Düsseldorf to Bern at the end of 1933 with his wife Lily, did not share Nolde’s political convictions. However, the two were bound by a respectful friendship that lasted for decades. The Klees and the Noldes visited each other in their respective cities of residence, shared their news in letters and regularly exchanged gifts of books and pictures. Both artists emphasized their differences, but their relationship was nevertheless characterized by mutual admiration. Nolde recognized Klee as a soulmate and described him as “a moth
hovering in the starry universe,” while Klee described his colleague as “a cousin of the depth.”
1  Encounters

The most varied encounters between humans, fantastic beings and mythological figures find expression in Nolde’s oeuvre. They run the gamut from tense confrontations, tender moments and unexpected meetings to instances of restrained quiet between strangers and acquaintances. Dynamic tensions often arise between opposed pairs and especially between men and women, whom Nolde paints in serene coexistence, pleasurable desire and intimate togetherness. At the same time, Nolde’s encounters also encompass moments of threat and rivalry. In *Men and Woman* (1916), the artist depicts a confrontation between two demonic figures in a paradisiacal garden filled with countless flowers; both seem to lay claim to the nude female figure in the background. Although Nolde often juxtaposes opposites to invite comparison and contrast, he still seems to be motivated by the search for complete harmony. In his works, figures from past and present, from fantasy and reality coexist. They do not convey mutual exclusion, but rather a form of recognition by both parties whereby individual identities nevertheless remain securely intact. It is as if accepting difference or the so-called other is indeed a validation of the self.
2 Ghostly Figures

In 1923, Nolde made a series of five paintings that are unique within his oeuvre in terms of their coloring and modeling. A procession of four ghostly figures wanders in *On the Periphery* of what is for Nolde an unusually cool and austere landscape. Glimmering on the horizon are the lights of a faraway civilization; this no man’s land symbolizes a place where the imagination can run free. In *Distant Rabble*, goblin-like specters wind through the painting from all directions. Nolde abolishes the rules of nature and opens up multifaceted worlds that exist on different planes, but that nevertheless overlap or become entangled. Within the series, *Strange Courting Couple* represents a recurring motif within Nolde’s oeuvre: a couple consisting of a man and a woman. Two elongated, mannerist nude figures confront one another under sky streaked with a cotton candy-like cloud. Nolde repeats motifs not to convey an overarching truth, but as a means of continuous reflection and to reflect spontaneously upon a theme.

In 1929, he revisited these ghostly figures, this time in the form of a farcical *Trio* in unusual poses. The visible play on gravity, the elimination of “over” and “under” symbolizes a world in which opposing factors do not cancel each other out, but instead coexist. When Nolde superimposes these imaginary spheres, he visualizes their limits and reveals a spectacular parallel universe. By introducing the emotional and the absurd, he expands the realm of the rational, using a dramatic visual language to strengthen its expressive quality.
Visions in Seclusion

Nolde spent the summer of 1901 in Jutland, where the flat landscape surrounding the fishing village of Lild Strand stirred his imagination. “Often I rested in the shelter of the dunes, burying my hands in the sand for hours and days, until the sun went down. In the evenings in my small room, I sat scribbling long past the midnight hour, drawing robbers and robbers’ dens, sandpipers, wild people, somnambulists, sun worshippers, and I can’t remember all the imaginary terms. – Whatever I couldn’t capture in my drawings vanished as soon as it had appeared into the vast eternal space where everything spiritual hovers and lives.” (Nolde on his stay in Lild Strand, Nolde I, p. 239) Nolde would often capture these apparitions in the form of loose sketches in works like Sun Worshipper (1901) and Phantom of the Dunes (1901). Alongside several works on paper that convey momentary impressions, in 1901 Nolde also reworked a small sheet depicting two fantastic animals in the painting Before Sunrise.

Nolde created a cycle of eight etchings known as “Fantasies” in 1905. Here, he is concerned with printmaking techniques, and experiments with the possibilities and effects of varied and repeated aspects of the etching process. In this manner, he conjures mysterious figures from diffuse backgrounds, which are then integrated into peculiar scenes. These etchings do not seem to make specific assertions, and their meanings appear to be open. Indeed, they are plays on ideas about play, a dynamic that recalls Francisco de Goya’s Caprichos, which Nolde admired greatly.
At the beginning of the 20th century, Berlin was a vibrant metropolis with lively arts and culture scenes. Although Nolde strongly identified with his rural homeland on the German-Danish borderland, the city offered him vital stimuli and access to the art world. As a dance and theater buff, Nolde frequented cafés, theaters and other entertainment venues, creating multiple watercolors and ink drawings from the spectator’s point of view. In paintings of this period, he also depicts the metropolis, a central motif in expressionist painting and literature. His work illuminates both the convivial world of entertainment as well as human isolation in a modern metropolis.

Nolde’s café and dance scenes like Young Lady (1911) and At the Ball (1911) evoke works of the same subjects by the French Impressionists and Post-Impressionists. Nolde rendered these scenes in warm tones, lending them a non-threatening air. Nevertheless, he also creates images that are critical towards Berlin’s entertainment world. Nolde repeatedly shows people immersed in hard, artificial light, the view unimpeded. With quick brushstrokes and flattened, fiery backgrounds, he conveys the intoxication of dance, entertainment and inebriation. Suggestive glances define the relationships between men and women, and sallow features, like those Nolde bestows upon the woman in At the Wine Table (1911), betray the downside of an unrestrained lifestyle. With these blunt caricatures, Nolde abandons his typically neutral stance and distances himself from the spectacle he beholds.
5 Grotesque Myths

While he was teaching at the Drawing School for Industry and Commerce in St. Gallen, Switzerland, Nolde became interested in the Alps and their surrounding mythology. As a result, in 1894, he created a watercolor series of caricatures that depict naturalistically rendered mountain peaks with human attributes. In 1897, he was able to have 30 of these images reproduced as postcards, the sale of which allowed him to begin his studies in the fine arts. By overlaying the distinctive forms of the mountains with human features, Nolde playfully combines elements from nature, Alpine mythology and his own imagination. The “mountain caricatures” thus represent Nolde’s earliest engagement with a pictorial theme grounded in the grotesque and the fantastic. These figures then became the basis for Nolde’s first oil painting, which he named Mountain Giants. The exaggerated facial expressions that come to resemble masks or grotesques is foundational to his visual language, and he would return to it many times.

As demonstrated by several early sketches of figures from mythology, Nolde likewise studied the ways other artists such as Arnold Böcklin portrayed mythological figures and narratives. This early synthesis of nature and mythology found in both the “mountain caricatures” as well as the sketches would become an important stimulus for conceiving future works of art. Specifically, the development of a repertoire of characters that stem from his personal experience of nature, and from local folklore and mythology, set the parameters for later representations of the grotesque in Nolde’s work.
6 Exotic Still Lifes

Nolde carried out the search for an unspoiled, original form of expression in the ethnographic wings of the Berlin Ethnological Museum. In the winters of 1910/11, 1911/12 and 1912/13, he studied works produced by various cultures and captured his observations in the form of drawings. In turn, these became a reservoir of motifs from which the painter would first draw in *Still Life with Wooden Figure* (1911) and in many still lifes thereafter. During his journey to the South Seas from 1913 to 1914, Nolde began acquiring indigenous art in the former colony of German New Guinea; he would eventually build a collection of over 400 objects from different cultures. They, too, find their way into his still lifes, in which he combines artifacts regardless of their cultural origins and intended functions. In this manner, he deliberately brings together opposites, as in the painting *Still Life H (Large Tamburan, Moscow Group, 1915)*, in which an Uli figure from what is today New Ireland (Papua New Guinea) confronts a porcelain figurine from Russia. The arrangement reflects the oppositions between men and women, animals and humans, and the spheres of the known and the unknown that are so often found in Nolde’s work. Additionally, he displays a special interest in the tension between vitality and material tangibility, which is especially apparent in his representations of masks. Thus, Nolde’s still lifes with figures become both stages for unexpected encounters as well as fields for experimenting with human facial expressions.
Ethnographic Objects
Authors: Alban von Stockhausen, Samuel Bachmann
(Bernisches Historisches Museum)

Beings from the Clouds
According to the religious beliefs of the Pueblo cultures in the American South West, katsinam are spiritual beings. As mediators between gods and humans, they take on hundreds of different forms, including those of plants, animals and ancestors. Since katsinam live in the clouds and only come down to earth periodically, they are often summoned to bring longed-for rain and bountiful harvests to this incredibly dry region. Village elders give katsina figures to children in order to familiarize them with individual figures and their meanings. The diversity of these “beings from the clouds” inspired many European artists to produce new pictorial motifs.

The Power of Artworks
Anthropomorphic carvings from West and Central Africa convey highly specific, localized ideas about artistic practice. The context of use is central, because figures are changed and further developed as they are utilized. Thus, a work is never fully complete. These figures are mortal, and their temporary existence comes to an end when they have served their political, religious or social purpose. During the early twentieth century, Europeans did not comprehend these artistic representations of ancestors, the hereafter and the transcendental. Thus, in modern European art, they became symbols of African irrationality, superstition and barbarism.
Spirits, Ancestors and Markets

New Ireland, an island on the outer reaches of the Bismarck Archipelago, was part of the colony of German New Guinea from 1899 to 1914. Above all, Malangan carvings and Uli figures brought back from scientific expeditions came to represent local cultures in European museums. The interweaving of spirits and ancestors in these works attests to the complexity of the religious ideas they represent. Many artists, however, were motivated to collect them because of their distinctive aesthetics. It was not long before a lucrative market sprung up around these carvings. When Emil Nolde visited New Ireland in 1913/14, almost all of the large carvings had already been taken from North Ireland to be sold on the European art market.

Shadows and the Present

In the Indonesian shadow play wayang kulit and the mask play wayang topeng, aspects of local ancestor worship intermingle with Hindu motifs. The theater recounts stories about spirits, ancestors and shades from the great Indian epics Mahabharata and Ramayana as well as from local tales. “Wayang” is an Indonesian word that encompasses these concepts. However, the social and political realities of the present also find their place in wayang, often in the form of political satire. European reception often overlooked the adaptability of this art form and its embeddedness in the social fabric. Rather, it was seen as a static and timeless form of religious imagery and symbolism.
Individuality and Awareness
What Europeans have often perceived as the austerity and clarity of Japanese art stems from the teachings of Zen Buddhism: overcoming the individual self is the precondition for true awareness. For example, the training of the actors and mask makers of the Nô theater reflects these ideas. To achieve timeless artistic quality, strictly ordered forms must be internalized. Just as the actors of the Nô theater must learn every movement, every word and every motif of the pieces they practice down to the very last detail, the mask makers could only realize a work of high quality by leaving their own thoughts behind and losing themselves to the manual process of creation.

Immediacy and “Sensual” Viewing
The ceramic figures Nolde represented allude to central aspects of his interest in and indifference towards the “other.” Whether the ceramic figurines from Asia were produced for a local religious market or for Europeans remains an open question. However, the European examples had a primarily decorative function. During the 18th and 19th centuries, porcelain figurines served as exotic decorative objects. For Nolde, this “sensual” mode of viewing was paramount, and it extended to objects from Oceania, Africa, the Americas and Asia. He disregarded the social and cultural contexts of these works, which led him to combine objects from disparate cultures in his still lifes.
The Search for Originality

Nolde’s interest in origins led him and his wife Ada on a journey to what is today Papua New Guinea in 1913/14. Even before the turn of the century, this fascination with the foreign and the promise of an unspoiled way of life, which indigenous peoples who were untouched by Western civilization were supposed to have preserved, had inspired many artists to explore what they perceived as exotic cultures. Nolde was one of the few artists of his generation to travel to the source and produce work on site. Upon his arrival in the South Seas, he was nevertheless confronted with evidence that this unspoiled way of life was already disappearing. Given his fixation on and yearning for untouched nature, he purposefully suppressed any signs of colonial rule in the work he made in the South Seas. Nolde was primarily interested in people and scenes of nature. One series of watercolors focuses on men’s faces. His representation of their physiognomy remains free from all traces of exoticization or caricature. Rather, Nolde seems to have been working from a documentary perspective. To that end, in his drawings he captures his sitters’ distinctive features, including face painting, headdresses and jewelry.

After his return to Germany, Nolde also painted many works that relate to his experiences in the South Seas. For example, Tribesmen from New Guinea (1915) suggests a direct confrontation between the indigenous population and European visitors. The painting stands for pure visual experience and conveys that both those portrayed and the artist saw each other as foreign. To be sure, there are caricatural elements in the painting Trophies of the Savages (1914), in which Nolde presents four heads strung up on a spear in glowing colors.
Emil Nolde’s Journey to the South Seas from 1913 to 1914
In 1913, Nolde and his wife joined a scientific expedition led by the German Colonial Imperial Office. The goal of the journey was to research diseases as well as to gather geographic and demographic data on the German colony in the South Seas. Nolde’s participation was an opportunity to explore his interest in what he thought would be untouched nature and traditional ways of life. During the journey, he created several studies, drawings, paintings and carvings based on his impressions.

Additional members of the expedition included:
– Expedition Leader Prof. Dr. Alfred Leber (1881–1954), Ophthalmologist and Specialist in Tropical Medicine
– Prof. Dr. Ludwig Külz (1875–1938), Specialist in Tropical Medicine
– Gertrud Arnthal (1890–1914), Nurse

This visualization retraces the route and highlights important stations of the journey. In 1936, Nolde recorded his travel experiences; entitled Welt und Heimat. Die Südseereise 1913–1918, the text was not published until 1965. The projected quotes are from this book.
8 Dream Images

Nolde’s desire to connect with nature and untouched locales finds expression throughout his oeuvre. To that end, the influence of summers spent in his North-German homeland is unmistakable. By retreating to the farmhouse in Utenwarf that he had acquired in 1916, the painter enjoyed undisturbed periods of work in a rural idyll that was far from war and from city life. There he painted water-colors that are populated by people, animals, supernatural beings, devils and dancing figures. These works often include juxtapositions of different figures in groups of two, the ambiguity of which creates striking dynamic. In *Fat Woman with Mythical Figure* (undated), Nolde opposes a mythical figure striding out of the dark haze with a woman against a blue background, thereby combining the realm of fantasy with that of reality. Compared to the ghostly figures that haunt his early works on paper from Lild Strand, the phantoms he depicted in Utenwarf push to the fore, and their striking colors emanate a life-like physicality.
Excursions into the Fantastic

In 1919, Nolde retreated to Hallig Hooge, a North Frisian island. During his seclusion, the artist made a series of 71 watercolors. He painted dancers, actors and couples as well as devils, ghosts and phantoms, often in groups of two or three. Brushstrokes in thick black and glowing color simultaneously serve as independent compositional elements and as the basis for figures that Nolde augments in part with delicate lines in ink or with added coloration. With this technique, he found a fitting means to represent the figures conjured by his imagination. It builds upon gestural marks that suggest new forms, incorporating chance and spontaneity in the process. The unfinished quality evokes the idea of fantastic beings that cannot be fully articulated because they are constantly shifting and ephemeral. Nolde did not exhibit the watercolors he made on Hallig Hooge during his lifetime. Yet, upon his return home he transferred some of these motifs to oil paintings. Whereas the watercolors exemplify latency and chance, the figures in the oils are far more tangible. Nolde uses expressive and saturated colors within a clear compositional structure to capture grotesque motifs, including the demonic beings in *Avarice and Satan* (1919) and the lascivious woman in *Raving Woman* (1919).
In order to capture his fantasies, Nolde developed a technique that he often used in his watercolors to convey both open forms and the latency of these visionary figures, as well as specific features. From 1931 to 1935, he painted a series of large-scale watercolors in Seebüll that depict humans, legendary figures and grotesque hybrid beings either alone or in pairs. With impressive color, his juxtapositions thematize different aspects of togetherness and encounter that take place in dream-like worlds. Lustful glances between male and female, human and fantastic figures embody the theme of seduction. Just as often, close couples and strange loners populate this group of works that is known as the “Fantasies.” Nolde renders the figures in pure color, using a wet-on-wet technique to let the watercolor pigments flow into one another. In this manner, he incorporates chance into his creation of forms, realms and moods. He then introduces line to this painterly application of color: with fine strokes Nolde accentuates the contours and facial features of these peculiar figures that emerge from spontaneously applied pigment. There is a parallel between Nolde’s artistic process for translating his fantasies into paint and the ways motifs arise from the unconscious or the imagination. Thus, the distinctive “Fantasies” may be understood as more developed versions of the quickly rendered sketches that he made in Lild Strand and the watercolors from Cospeda, Utenwarf and Hallig Hooge.
Strange faces, characters from legends, grotesque animals and mythological figures recur in Nolde’s oeuvre through the late period, in his painting as well as in his graphic work. This is also the case for the more than one thousand small-format watercolors that Nolde called his “unpainted pictures.” At the end of the 1930s, Nolde’s advancement into the infinite vastness of his fantasy worlds and intuitive artistic processes coincided with his personal withdrawal from society. In 1937, the National Socialists confiscated 1,052 of his works from German museums. Four years later, in 1941, Nolde was expelled from the Reich Chamber of Visual Art. Consequently, he no longer received the coupons required to obtain painting supplies, so he concentrated on watercolors instead. The “unpainted pictures” are painted on highly absorbent Japan paper, in which the color penetrates the layers of the paper and can spread erratically. Color gradients created in this manner make visible the different layers that Nolde augmented with watercolors and opaque pigments. He reworked the pieces repeatedly, adding new tones and further defining contours and details. Although Nolde’s works on paper can be understood as finished, he returned to them again and again, treating them as starting points for further exploration. They represent initial thoughts, or the first expression of a theme to which Nolde would later return and develop further. Just as with the watercolors he made on Hallig Hooge, Nolde transferred selected motifs from the “unpainted pictures” such as Triumph of Wisdom (1946) and Dream (1947) to oil paintings.
The names Emil Nolde (1867–1956) and Paul Klee (1879–1940) represent two starkly divergent positions in 20th-century art. Whereas Nolde’s expressionistic imagery is characterized by color, line is the dominant compositional element in Klee’s work. Until now, little has been known about the friendship between the two loners, despite the fact that it lasted for many years. The correspondence between the artists’ families, from which 28 pieces of writing have been preserved, and their exchange of gifts stand as testaments to their friendship.

Although it is not known exactly how Nolde and Klee met, on the basis of mutual acquaintances, their participation in the same exhibitions and written references, it may be assumed that their relationship began in the 1910s. In the 1920s, the artists visited each other and kept up with one other’s career trajectories. For example, the Noldes reacted to the hostility towards the Bauhaus, where Klee had been teaching since 1921, by expressing “their complete sympathy” for the Weimar school. In 1926, the gallerist Rudolf Probst, who knew both artists, excitedly told Nolde that he had discovered one of his watercolors of flowers in Klee’s Bauhaus studio in Dessau. Klee had a total of three works by Nolde. For Nolde’s 60th birthday, there was a major traveling exhibition, and the Klees traveled to attend the opening. Klee’s contribution to the accompanying commemorative publication expresses his admiration for his colleague, which was characterized by a simultaneous distance and proximity: “Nolde is more than terrestrial, he is a demon of this region. Dwelling elsewhere myself, one feels strongly towards one’s cousin, kindred spirits.” At the end of the year, Nolde sent his friend a published volume of his letters, in which he characterized Klee as a “butterfly among the stars.” Both statements convey that the artists held each other
in high esteem, which characterized their friendship over the course of their lives. Although the artists often participated in the same exhibitions and despite may parallels in their works, including their predilection for the grotesque, the fantastic and the “exotic,” more substantial discussions between the two artists on content have not been preserved. Whatever they spoke about when they met in person has also been lost to history.

The artists’ wives Ada Nolde (1879–1946) and Lily Klee (1876–1946) knew each other well and often managed the couples’ correspondence – Ada wrote all of the letters on behalf of the Noldes. By chance, in 1930, both women were staying at the spa hotel Sonnmatt in Lucerne, where Klee and Nolde visited them at different times. Following their stay, the wives wrote each other more frequently, and with greater familiarity. During the 1930s, they commented on the changing political circumstances in Germany, which affected both Nolde and Klee. In December 1933, before immigrating to Switzerland, Lily affirmed the friendship between Nolde and Klee: “[…] Especially in these difficult times, the contact between intellectual and artistic creators means so very much. […]” Despite their different political stances – Emil and Ada Nolde supported the National Socialists, whereas Paul and Lily Klee were avowed opponents – they remained in contact after the Klees’ immigration to Bern. It is likely that the Noldes visited their friends in Bern in 1936, 1938 and 1939. Klee may have recorded aspects of these meetings in the works Nordic Artist and Sailor’s Love. Although the artists were preoccupied by different artistic questions and had divergent political leanings, both sides agreed that mutual respect should always be maintained. Their contact ended with Paul Klee’s death in the year 1940.
“Paul Klee has died. [...] A butterfly hovering divinely among the stars, ingeniously ornamental [and] decorative. As a person and a friend, he was true and dear to his many loved ones. When abstraction was in full bloom and his comrades mockingly berated my art, he stood by me – he who is not present. Yet his deep fundamental being has remained an enigma to me. [That part of him] never made an amicable human utterance to me.”

*Emil Nolde, Notes in the Margin, 8/15/40*

“Being far from this earth or fleeing it, abstract [painters] sometimes forget that Nolde exists. But not me, even on my farthest flights, from which I always make sure to return to earth, to rest, having become weighty once again. Nolde is more than terrestrial, he is a demon of this region. Dwelling elsewhere myself, one feels strongly towards one’s cousin, kindred spirits.”

*Paul Klee in the commemorative publication for Emil Nolde, 1927*
Chronology

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>1867</td>
<td>August 7, Emil Hansen (from 1902 on Emil Nolde) is born as the sixth child to the farmer couple Niels and Hanna Christine Hansen in Nolde, in the border region between Germany and Denmark.</td>
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<td>1884–1888</td>
<td>In Flensburg Hansen began an apprenticeship as a wood sculptor and draftsman at the Sauermann Furniture Factory and Woodcarving School.</td>
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<td>1888–1891</td>
<td>During his years as a journeyman, Hansen worked as a wood carver in furniture factories in Munich and in Karlsruhe, where he also studied at the applied arts school and secretly attended nude drawing classes. In 1890 he found employment in a Berlin furniture factory.</td>
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<td>1892–1897</td>
<td>Hansen becomes a teacher at the Drawing School for Industry and Commerce in St. Gallen. There he meets Hans Fehr, who would become a longtime friend.</td>
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<td>1894</td>
<td>Makes the first mountain caricatures, which would be published in a postcard edition in 1897.</td>
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<td>1898–1900</td>
<td>When his application to study under Franz von Stuck at the Munich Academy was not accepted, he began attending Friedrich Fehr’s painting school in 1898. Then</td>
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he transferred to the Hölzel School in Dachau in March 1899. That fall he traveled to Paris, where he attended the Académie Julian and undertook his own studies at the Louvre.

1899  Hansen makes compositional studies after works by Francisco de Goya and Arnold Böcklin, among others.

1901– 1902  Hansen spends the summer in the fishing village of Lild Strand on the north coast of Jutland. He cultivates a lively correspondence with the Danish actress Ada Vilstrup (1879–1946), whom he marries in February 1902. At first, the couple lives in Berlin and stays in Jutland during the summer. In the fall, they move to Flensburg.

1901  In Lild Strand he produces a series of fantastic drawings of beachcombers, sleepwalkers and other strange creatures.

1903– 1905  The Noldes spend the summer months at their new residence on Alsen Island, where Nolde has a studio in a wooden hut on the beach. They spend the winter in Berlin. Their financial straits are dire. After Ada has a health crisis, friends finance the couple’s six-month sojourn in Italy from 1904/5.

1905  In the fall of 1905, he produces a series of etchings entitled “Fantasies.”

1906– 1907  Nolde is a member of the artist’s group Die Brücke until the end of 1907.
1908 In March, Nolde visits his friend Hans Fehr in Cospeda near Jena, where he develops his own watercolor technique. Fehr supports Nolde not only through his efforts as an intermediary, but also with multiple financial contributions. Later, Fehr would meet the Klee Family in Bern, where he took up residence in 1924.

Nolde joins the Berliner Secession. At its sixteenth exhibition of works on paper, he shows four watercolors, two drawings and nine woodcuts. Paul Klee exhibits six reverse glass paintings.

1910 Sizable Nolde exhibitions take place in Hamburg, Essen, Jena and Hagen.

After an argument with the artist Max Liebermann, the president of the Berliner Secession, Nolde is expelled from the group and joins the Neue Secession.

1911 The Noldes move into a Berlin apartment with a studio at Tauentzienstrasse 8. There they take advantage of the great myriad of Berlin’s entertainment offerings.

Nolde also visits the ethnographic galleries of the Berlin Ethnological Museum and works on publishing the book *Kunstäusserungen der Naturvölker* (Artistic Expressions by Indigenous People), which he would never finish.

Publication of the first volume of the catalogue raisonné of Nolde’s graphic work, compiled by Gustav Schiefler.
1912 Nolde contributes 16 works to the second exhibition of the Blauer Reiter at Hans Goltz’s gallery in Munich. Paul Klee, who had met the artists in the circle of the Blauer Reiter the previous year, is represented with 17 works.

Both artists would also participate in the pathbreaking Sonderbund exhibition in Cologne as well as in multiple additional group exhibitions in the following years.

1910–1913 In Berlin, he makes images of nightlife as well as studies of exotic artifacts, which would inspire many still life paintings.

1913–1914 In October, as members of the Medical-Demographic German New Guinea Expedition, the Noldes travel from Berlin to Russia, Korea, Japan, China and the Philippines to what is today Papua New Guinea. Their return voyage in May includes stops in Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Yemen and Egypt, where they are when the First World War breaks out. Nolde’s luggage, including his paintings and some collected artifacts, are confiscated in Port Said. In September, the couple arrives back in Alsen.

Nolde is represented by two paintings in the first exhibition of the Neue Münchener Secession, among the founding members of which was Paul Klee.

1913–1914 During his journey to the South Seas, Nolde creates 19 paintings alongside multiple studies, sketches and watercolors. Back home in Germany, he would return to some of these motifs.
1916  The Noldes give up their house on Alsen and move to a farm in Utenwarf near Tondern.

1916–1918  At the farm in Utenwarf, he creates a series of grotesque watercolors.

1919  Nolde becomes a member of the Working Council for Art in Berlin.

At Easter, he takes a trip to the Hallig island Hooge.

1919  During a stay on Hallig Hooge, he produces watercolors with fantastic motifs, a selection of which he recreates as oil paintings.

1920  North Schleswig, which includes Utenwarf, becomes part of Denmark. Consequently, Nolde becomes a Danish citizen.

Ludwig Justi dedicates a gallery to Nolde’s work at the Kronprinzenpalais in Berlin, which would remain in place until 1936.

1921  Trips to Paris, England, Spain and Switzerland. In Plymouth Nolde gets back his confiscated luggage with the works he had made in the South Seas.

The Noldes visit the Klee family in Munich. Shortly thereafter, Klee takes up his post at the Weimar Bauhaus.

Max Sauerlandt publishes a monograph on Nolde.
1923 The Klees travel to Berlin for the opening of Klee’s exhibition at the Kronprinzenpalais, and visit the Noldes while they are there.

1923 In Berlin, Nolde makes series of images of ghostly figures.

1924 In December 1923, Klee sends a postcard to the Noldes asking them to meet with the German collector Otto Ralfs. The latter was organizing the Klee and Nolde exhibition at the State Museum Braunschweig, which would take place in March 1924 and include works from private collections in Braunschweig.

1925 The Noldes convey their sympathy to Klee for the political pressure the Bauhaus is facing in Weimar. Each artist invites the other to visit, respectively in Berlin and in Weimar and Dessau.

1926 After the decision to leave Utenwarf, Nolde begins building a home with a studio he designed himself. It would be ready for occupancy in 1927.

Nolde makes a detour from Erfurt, where he visits his exhibition at the Art Association, to see Klee in Weimar.

The gallerist Rudolf Probst tells Nolde that he had discovered a beautiful watercolor of flowers by Nolde in Klee’s studio at the Bauhaus. Probst represented both Klee and Nolde at his Dresden gallery Neue Kunst Fides.
1926 In Flensburg Nolde begins a series of large-scale color lithographs. Among them are motifs of grotesque meetings.

1927 On Nolde’s 60th birthday, an anniversary exhibition opens in Dresden before traveling to Hamburg, Kiel, Essen and Wiesbaden. Probst publishes a commemorative publication, to which Paul Klee contributes. Klee reserves a spot for himself and his wife Lily (1876–1946) at the celebration and asks Probst to set aside one of his works (Lieschen and the Offenders) as a gift.

The Noldes and the Klees spend a day together in Wörlitz and Dessau.

The second volume of Gustav Schiefler’s catalogue raisonné of the graphic work comes out, and Max Sauerlandt publishes a selection of Nolde’s letters. Nolde sends a copy with a dedication to Klee.

1928 In March Nolde meets Klee, who is in Berlin for his exhibition opening at the Flechtheim Gallery.

1929 Nolde visits Klee’s exhibition at the Kronprinzenpalais and attends the opening of Klee’s solo show at the Flechtheim Gallery in Berlin in October. For his 50th birthday, Klee receives a watercolor from Nolde as a gift.

Nolde’s plans for building a house designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in Berlin-Dahlem fall through. Instead, that winter he and his wife move into an apartment at Bayernallee 10 in Berlin.
1930  Lily Klee and Ada Nolde meet at the spa hotel Sonnmatt in Lucerne, where they are both staying on a cure from April 3 to May 21. At different points, Nolde, Klee and Hans Fehr come to visit.

Nolde spends the summer on the island of Sylt, while his wife manages the renovations in Seebüll.

1931  Nolde becomes a member of the Prussian Academy of the Arts.

The first volume of Nolde’s autobiography *Das eigene Leben* is published. Nolde sends a copy to Klee, who had recently left the Bauhaus and is now professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Düsseldorf.

1931–1935  In Seebüll, Nolde works on the large-format watercolors in the series “Fantasies.”

1933  After the National Socialists took power, Nolde hopes that the supporters of his art within the new regime will assert themselves. In a letter to the Klees, Ada and Emil Nolde likewise stress their strong ties to Germany. After Klee is dismissed from his teaching position in Düsseldorf, he and his wife emigrate to Bern in December out of political conviction.

1934  In August 1934, Nolde confirms his support for Hitler’s role as Führer by adding his signature to the *Aufruf der Kulturschaffenden* (Call of the Artists). The following month, in his capacity as a Danish citizen, he joins the National Socialist Association of Northern Schleswig.
(NSAN), an organization for ethnic Germans in the Danish border zone. The following year, it would be assimilated into the newly founded National Socialist German Workers Party of Northern Schleswig (NSDAPN). In November 1934, the second volume of Nolde’s autobiography is published under the title *Jahre der Kämpfe*. In the book, the artist presents himself as having campaigned against a purported “Jewish dominance” in the art world, which, as he said, he felt exposed to as a loner again and again.

1930s Begins working on the so-called “Unpainted Pictures,” to which Nolde devotes himself until the end of the Second World War.

1935 Klee receives Nolde’s book *Jahre der Kämpfe* from mutual friend Hans Fehr as a Christmas present.

1936 The Noldes travel to Switzerland in the spring. It is likely that they took this opportunity to visit the Klees in Bern.

1937 The National Socialist regime confiscates 1,052 works by Nolde from German museums. Nolde is the most prominently represented artist in the disdainful *Degenerate Art* exhibition. The Nazis confiscate 102 works by Klee and show 15 of those in the defamatory show.

When it is suggested that he leaves the Prussian Academy of the Arts, Nolde refuses, citing his party membership.

1938 Nolde visits the Klee family in Bern. Together they view Klee’s work *Sailor’s Love*, since Klee had conceived it most likely with Nolde in mind.
In the London exhibition *Twentieth Century German Art*, which was meant to be an antidote to the demeaning *Degenerate Art* exhibition, works by Nolde from a private Jewish collection are displayed, much to the artist’s consternation.

Nolde writes flattering letters to authorities, including Goebbels, to plead for the return of works that had been confiscated from his private collection. He gets them back in December. Furthermore, his works would no longer be shown at the *Degenerate Art* exhibition’s subsequent stations around Germany.

1939
At the beginning of the year, Nolde visits Hans Fehr in Berlin and possibly Klee as well, who created the portrait *Nordic Artist* on the basis of Nolde that year.

1940
Upon Paul Klee’s death, Emil and Ada Nolde offer their condolences to Lily Klee.

1941
In June, Nolde must present a selection of his work to the Committee for the Assessment of Inferior Artistic Products at the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts (“Reichskunstkammer”). As a result, he is excluded from the organization and is forbidden to practice “in any area of the visual arts at a professional level or on the side.” Further, in November he receives notice that from then on he would have to present the Reichskunstkammer before exhibiting publically or selling any of his works. Because Nolde stops receiving ration coupons for painting supplies, he can no longer obtain them legally. This official strategy puts Nolde under pressure to align his style with
the state-sponsored requirements for artistic production. To thwart them, Nolde retreats to Seebüll. Despite all of this, he continues to support the National Socialists, and hopes his work will be recognized by the regime.

In February 1944, Nolde turns to Otto von Kursell, the newly appointed director of Berlin’s Associated Municipal Schools. On the basis of his party membership, he asks him to withdraw the restrictions on his work. Nolde’s plea remains unheard.

On February 15, bombs destroy Nolde’s Berlin apartment. An estimated 3,000 graphic works, watercolors and drawings as well as works by Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Oskar Kokoschka, Lyonel Feininger and Ernst Josephson go up in flames.

In August 1946, the De-Nazification Committee in Kiel exonerates Nolde despite his party membership and interprets the National Socialists’ rejection of his art as a “rejection of the regime.”

Ada Nolde dies on November 2.

Nolde marries Jolanthe Erdmann (1921–2010), daughter of the composer Eduard Erdmann.

Emil Nolde dies on April 13 in Seebüll. On June 12, 1956, the Ada and Emil Nolde Foundation Seebüll that he had stipulated in his will is legally recognized under civil law.
13 **Film**

Emil Nolde – Painter and Myth

A film by Wilfried Hauke, Germany 2017

Appx. 63 Min., Languages: German and English
Führungen durch die Ausstellung

Samstags 15:00
Sonntags 13:30
Öffentliche Führungen

Dienstags 12:30 – 13:00
Kunst am Mittag

Mittwoch 21. November 2018 14:00 – 15:30
Einführung für Lehrpersonen
Mit Dominik Imhof, Leiter Kunstvermittlung

Donnerstag 24. Januar 2019 18:00
Freunde ZPK
Führung für die Freunde ZPK mit dem Kuratorinnenteam und Experten des Hauses

Samstag 02. Februar 2019 13:00
Sinn-Reich
Eine alle Sinne ansprechende Führung für Gäste mit und ohne Behinderung. Mit GebärdendolmetscherIn

Audioguide
In Deutsch, Französisch, Italienisch und Englisch erhältlich

Fremdsprachige Führungen (Französisch, Englisch, Italienisch) siehe www.zpk.org
Begleitprogramm

Sonntag 25. November 2018 15:00
**Kunst und Religion im Dialog**
Brigitta Rotach, Haus der Religionen, im Dialog mit Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Chefkuratorin ZPK

Sonntag 02. Dezember 2018 15:00
**Nolde und seine ethnografische Sammlung**
Dominik Imhof, Leiter Kunstvermittlung ZPK, im Gespräch mit Dr. Alban von Stockhausen, Kurator Ethnografie Asien, Ozeanien, Altägypten und Europa, Bernisches Historisches Museum

Samstags 14:00
**Nolde getanzt**
Tanzperformance von Karin Minger in der Ausstellung

Sonntag 09. Dezember 2018
**Das Nordamerika Native Museum (NONAM) besucht das ZPK**
10:30 – 11:45
**NONAM-Familienmorgen**
Im Atelier des Kindermuseum Creaviva für die ganze Familie
15:00
**Katsina-Figuren und ihre Bedeutung in der Pueblo-Kultur**
Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Chefkuratorin ZPK, im Gespräch mit Heidrun Löb, Leiterin Nordamerika Native Museum, Zürich

Sonntag 27. Januar 2019 11:00
**Marcus Signer liest**
aus Briefen und Texten von Emil Nolde
Sonntag **17. Februar 2019** 15:00
**Wie stellt man heute ethnografische Objekte aus?**
Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Chefkuratorin ZPK, im Gespräch mit
Samuel Bachmann, wiss. Mitarbeiter Ethnografie Amerika, Afrika,
Bernisches Historisches Museum

Sonntag **24. Februar 2019** 15:00
**Noldes Bezug zur Schweizer Bergwelt**
Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Chefkuratorin ZPK, im Gespräch mit
Beat Hächler, Direktor Alpines Museum Bern

Sonntag **03. März 2019** 17:00
**Konzert mit Tomasz Herbut, Klavier**

**Kunstvermittlung für Familien**

Sonntags 10:30 – 11:45
18.11.18 – 03.03.19
**Familienmorgen**
In der Ausstellung und im Atelier des Kindermuseum Creaviva für
die ganze Familie

Dienstag bis Freitag 14:00 / 16:00
Samstags und sonntags 12:00 / 14:00 / 16:00
**Offenes Atelier im Kindermuseum Creaviva**
Workshop zu einem monatlich wechselnden Thema in Verbindung
to den Ausstellungen im ZPK.

Programmänderungen vorbehalten
With the support of

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