

KARL&FABER

Alexej von Jawlensky

Lot 567

Meditation (1935/II/N.69)



Low estimate :

€ 40,000

High estimate :

€ 60,000

Buyers premium incl. VAT :

32 %

Artist

Alexej von Jawlensky

Öl auf leinenstrukturiertem Papier, auf Karton kaschiert. (19)35. Ca. 18 x 14 cm (Unterlagekarton ca. 31 x 25 cm). Monogrammiert unten links sowie datiert unten rechts.

Provenance

Privatsammlung, Norddeutschland, durch Erbfolge an den jetzigen Besitzer.

- Important work by Jawlensky from his series "Meditations"
- Dynamic brushwork and a strong contrast of light and dark convey emotional expressiveness
- Small-format work with a characteristic simultaneity of abstraction and figuration

This small oil painting dates from the late creative years of Alexej von Jawlensky and is part of the series of works entitled „Meditations“, which were created from the mid-1930s onwards. In these works, the artist reduced forms and colors and developed a clear, concentrated visual language. Our composition shows a central, almost symmetrical arrangement of the color fields with precisely placed brushstrokes. Jawlensky abstracts the elements of the face – eyes, nose, mouth and eyebrows – with a few characteristic lines and achieves a meditative effect through this reduction.

Small formats can often be found within the series of works from 1933 onwards. The compact size creates a special closeness to the viewer. In terms of motif, the „Meditations“ continue to develop from the earlier series of „Abstract Paintings“. The subject that determines the composition is the human face, which Jawlensky now depicts in even more consistent abstraction. The serial work to which the artist devoted himself from as early as 1914 and the now always identical, small format of his paintings allowed him to explore the effect of various color combinations and the resulting contrasts with an almost scientific joy of experimentation.

Jawlensky's „Meditations“ also refer to orthodox icon painting: the symmetrical structure, the frontally arranged compositions and the concentration on the essentials are reminiscent of its strict pictorial canon.

In addition to his artistic striving for condensation and reduction, the artist's state of health also forced him to adopt a more static painting style and reduce the size of his pictures. From the end of the 1920s, painting became increasingly difficult for the almost 65-year-old artist. He suffered from arthritis with considerable symptoms of paralysis in his hands and knee joints, his mobility was greatly reduced and associated with great pain. But Jawlensky would not be deterred from painting. The precision and clarity of

his later works in particular show the extraordinary discipline and concentration with which he realized expressive works even under physical strain.

Our „Meditation“ is an outstanding example of Jawlensky's late phase, in which he consistently pursued his formal clarity, expressive color design and meditative pictorial language despite health-related adversities.

Recto inscribed by Lisa Kümmel, the artist's assistant, on the lower edge of the backing card: „II.1935. 69" and on the verso in the center: „A. Jawlensky II 1935 W.69" and on the lower edge „II.1935. I.A. N.69" (the „9" barely visible)

With an expertise from the Alexej von Jawlensky-Archiv S.A., Muralto, dated 30.4.2025. The work will be included in the catalog raisonné of Alexej von Jawlensky.