

## Max Beckmann

Lot 544

„Die Nacht“



Low estimate :

€ 25,000

High estimate :

€ 35,000

VAT on hammer price :

7 %

Buyers premium incl. VAT :

27 %

VAT over buyers premium :

7 %

**Artist**

Max Beckmann

**Additional description**

Lithografie auf Simili-Japan. (1919). Ca. 55,5 x 70 cm (Blattgröße ca. 59,5 x 72 cm). Eines von 75 nummerierten Exemplaren. Signiert unten rechts, betitelt unten mittig.

**Period**

(1884 Leipzig - New York 1950)

**Technique**

Druckgrafik

**Provenance**

Isselbacher Gallery, New York; Privatsammlung, Norddeutschland, 1989 bei Vorgenannter erworben.

- Graphic for the painting of the same name from the same year
- Beckmann interweaves personal situation and political events
- From the well-known series "Hell"

What is hell?

Max Beckmann knows Schopenhauer's text, reads it again and again ... and experiences it first-hand.

When he painted his painting "The Night" in 1918/19 and published the matching graphic cycle "Hell", the First World War had just ended. An armistice was signed in Compiègne, the material battles and nightmares in trenches that had come true were over. Today, over 100 years later, this sounds like a reason to rejoice. But the reality is different: In the German Reich, the situation escalates until the November Revolution of 1919, inflation and hardship, war-disabled and destitute, major cities resemble civil war zones, the law of the jungle applies. The purifying effect of war hoped for by many intellectuals, such as Nietzsche and Beckmann, who was influenced by him, gave way to the realization that there were only losers in war.

In this climate, Max Beckmann created "Hell", a cycle of prints that linked his personal experience with the social situation. The pictures are full of iconographic depth, interlocking in terms of content as well as visually. Beckmann creates expressionist, almost cubist spaces, narrowing into claustrophobia, pushing and pulling forward.

In "The Night" we witness a scene of extreme violence. We cannot look away, as the artist throws the events at our feet and forces us to become voyeurs: In an apartment, the residents are brutally tortured. A married

couple, a child and an elderly lady become playthings for the sadistic outbursts of a group of burglars who torture, rape, kidnap and finally murder. Beckmann masterfully combines the disintegrating marriage and the resulting family difficulties - the victims bear the facial features of Max, Minna and Peter Beckmann - with political statements. Not only does he refer to the painful situation in the Reich in the setting, he also identifies the culprits: Thus, the figures of the criminals as well as the old lady are governors for the Wilhelmine and reactionary bourgeoisie, for the war-disabled and the Spartacists (with the face of Lenin).

Sheet 7 from the portfolio "Die Hölle" (Hell), comprising a total of 11 sheets, published by I. B. Neumann, Berlin.

Hofmaier 145 B (from B).