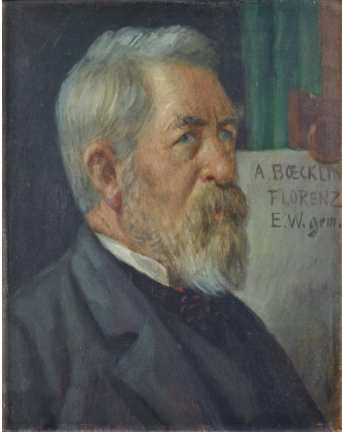


Ernst Würtenberger (*23.10.1868 Steisslingen, +5.2.1934 Karlsruhe)



Title	Bildnis Arnold Böcklin
Also known as	Portrait of Arnold Böcklin
Date	1894/1895
Medium	Oil on wood
Dimensions	image: 24 x 19 cm
Signature	inscr. c. r.: A. BÖCKLIN / FLORENZ / E.W. gem.
Inscription	verso auf Bildträger M. aufgeklebtes weisses Papier in schwarzer Tinte: dieses Bild hat Ernst Würtenberger / mein Schul- und Jugendfreund von mir, / etwa im Jahr 1894 in Florenz gemalt; / er hat sich damals längere Zeit dort / aufgehalten und war fast täglich / bei Bocklin im Atelier. Würtenberger / beschäftigte sich damals besonders, wie / Boecklin selbst, mit maltechnischen / Fragen u. hat viel mit [unleserlich], / [unleserlich] u. s. w. geprobt. / Dr. O Brugger. / Kreuzlingen [hs]
Catalogue raisonné	-
Edition / number	-
Edition	-
Inv. No.	ZKG.2020/0044
Credit line	Kunsthau Zürich, Bequest Ueli Müller, Zurich, 2020
Accession year	2020
Object type	painting
Classification	C 1[3] painting 19th century Europe
Description	<p>Numerous artists have created painted and sculptural portraits of Arnold Böcklin (1827 - 1901), who was admired as one of the greatest painters in the German-speaking region during his lifetime. One of these was donated to the Kunsthau Zürich in 2020. It complements the small group of portraits by the Basel master. Very few of them were painted directly in front of the model - Böcklin was considered a reserved person - but based on photographs.</p> <p>The German painter and graphic artist Ernst Würtenberger (1868 - 1934) also created portraits of Böcklin even before he met him personally.[1] Prints have been preserved in</p>

his estate that may have served as models for him.[2] This is probably also the case with the small-format wooden panel discussed here, which bears the inscription 'A. BOECKLIN / FLORENZ / E.W. gem.' and can be dated 1894 /1895. The indication of the place cannot be clearly related to the person depicted or the painter,[3] but it is certain that Würtenberger travelled to Florence for a few months as late as October 1895 in order to establish contact with his idol.

The painting shows the painter, who at that time had settled in Florence or San Domenico, as a bust portrait in three-quarter profile looking to the right. Behind him, in front of a rich green curtain, is an unpainted canvas on an easel with the above-mentioned inscription. Both elements - the curtain and the unpainted canvas - could be an allusion to Böcklin's 'Self-Portrait in the Studio' from 1893 (Kunstmuseum Basel). The head itself is framed by an anthracite-grey ground, which makes the lighter parts of the face and hair stand out more. Würtenberger's colour palette is restrainedly dark-toned, his brushstrokes applied coarsely or finely as required. The portrait is painterly in structure, i.e. it does without hard contours. Although Würtenberger uses parts of light and shadow, the picture does not show any elaborate plasticity in the interplay between figure and ground. This may be due to his inexperience, as he produced the painting during his student years.[4]

Böcklin's painting had made a lasting impression on the young artist around 1893 during a visit to the Künstlergut, the predecessor institution of the Kunsthaus Zürich.

Würtenberger subsequently engaged with Böcklin not only artistically but also in terms of art theory.[5] In 1902 Würtenberger settled in Zurich, took an active role in the Zurich Art Society and became the city's most sought-after portraitist. Seen in this light, the 'Portrait of Arnold Böcklin' now returns to Würtenberger's place of inspiration and activity.

Provenance	<p>Ernst Würtenberger (*1868 Steisslingen, +1934 Karlsruhe) (Künstler/-in) [Verbleib unbekannt?] Privatbesitz Privatbesitz, Nachlass spätestens ab 25.5.1977 – 2020, Ueli Müller (*1937, +2020 Zürich) (Sammler/-in), Zürich, Nachlass 2020, Nachlass Ueli Müller, Zürich, Nachlass ab 2020, Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft Kunsthaus Zürich (Museum), Zürich, Geschenk</p>
Provenance category	-
About the provenance	
Literature	<p>- Jahresbericht 2020, hrsg. von Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, Zürich, 2021. - Sandra Gianfreda: «Ernst Würtenberger. Bildnis Arnold Böcklin, 1894/1895», in: Jahresbericht 2020, hrsg. von Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, 2021, S. 18-20.</p>