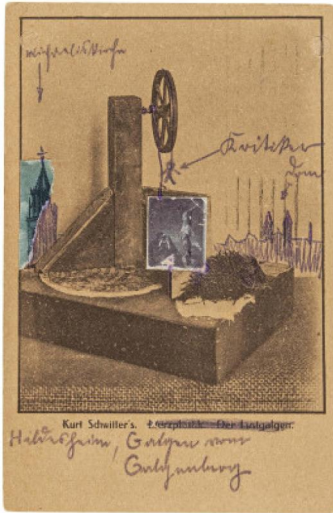


## Lot 11



**Auction** Modern, Post War & Contemporary

**Date** 01.12.2021, ca. 10:09

**Preview** 26.11.2021 - 10:00:00 bis  
29.11.2021 - 18:00:00

SCHWITTERS, KURT

1887 Hannover - 1948 Ambleside

Title: Kurt Schwitters Hildesheim, Galgen vom Galgenberg.

Date: 1921.

Technique: Collage, indelible pencil and paper on card.

Measurement: 14 x 9cm.

Notation: Inscribed recto at the bottom: Hildesheim, Galgen vom Galgenberg.

Frame/Pedestal: Framed.

Provenance:

- Johannes Molzahn Centrum, Kassel

Literature:

- Orchard, Karin/Schulz, Isabel: Kurt Schwitters - Catalogue Raisonné, vol. 1, 1905-1922, Ostfildern-Ruit 2000, cat. rais. no. 916, ill.

- Kunzelmann, Petra: Gemalte Antikritik - Zu bildkünstlerischen Reaktionsweisen auf die Kunstkritik, in: Vom Streit zum Bild - Bildpolemik und andere Waffen der Künstler, Doris H. Lehmann (ed.), Merzhausen 2017, p. 195ff., ill. p. 196

- Müller-Alsbach, Anja (ed.): Kurt Schwitters, MERZ - ein Gesamtweltbild, Wabern/Bern 2004, p. 121. ill.

- Ewig, Isabelle: Kurt Schwitters Oxymore ou l'art de la contradiction, unpublished typescript, dissertation, Sorbonne University, Paris 2000, ill. 334

- Nündel, Ernst: Kurt Schwitters in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten, Reinbek near Hamburg 1981, ill. p. 46.

This postcard, reworked by Kurt Schwitters with paper collages, drawings and inscriptions, is addressed to his artist friend Johannes Molzahn. Here, Schwitters, Walter Dexel, and gallery owner Herbert von Garvens announce to visit Molzahn on October 14, 1921: "Dear Molzahn Sunday / we are coming, but not / for long, train is still reported / We are very pleased (double underlined) Your Dexel / Warm regards Herbert von Garvens / Many warm regards Your ... Schwitters / Sincerely MERZ"

The postcard is originally the announcement of the publication "Anna Blum - Dichtungen von Kurt Schwitters" edited by the publishing house Paul Steegemann, Hannover, which appeared in volume 39/40 of the late expressionist-dadaist series "Die Silbergäule" in 1919 (see text impression on the back). On the front is an image of the 51cm high Merz sculpture "Lustgarten", the view of which has been preserved only in this reproduction. Schwitters created the

sculpture around 1919 and then, over time, integrated it into the cave-like room sculpture "Merzbau," on which he worked primarily in his apartment for more than 20 years. In 1943 it was destroyed in a bombing on Hanover.

Through his reworking of the reproduction on our postcard, Schwitters gives this new interpretation of the "Lustgalgen" the title "Hildesheim, Galgen vom Galgenberg". By using the name, he refers to the hill in the southeast of the city of Hildesheim, which has been called "Galgenberg" since the late 14th century because criminals were hanged there. Until far into the 19th century a gallows could be found there. Schwitters also refers to the city near Hanover with the painted silhouette of Hildesheim Cathedral in the background on the right. Furthermore, he adds a stick figure and the depiction of a crucifixion, each hanging from one end of the rope drawn on the sculpture's wheel. With the designation "Critic" and the associated arrow pointing to the stick figure, Schwitters comments in an ironically crude way on his lack of understanding of the negative reviews by art critics, probably especially an anonymous one from Hildesheim, concerning his works as well as those of other avant-garde artists. Thus Schwitters' crucifixion hints at the martyrdom with which many expressionist artists identify, with the critics assuming the role of the treacherous Judas. Schwitters finds examples of the violent treatment of critics in Goethe, among others, who wrote in his 1774 poem "The Reviewer," "Beat him dead, the dog! It is a reviewer." (quoted in Kunzelmann, p. 198) In the transformation of his "Lustgalgen" into a passion play, Schwitters at the same time reflects on the highly insecure society, which is focused on a "resurrection" after the devastating events of the war.

Estimate: 40.000 € - 60.000 €; Hammer: 40.000 €

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