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Auction Modern, Post War & Contemporary

Date 01.12.2021, ca. 10:07

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

BAUER, RUDOLF
1889 Lindenwald - 1953 Deal, NJ/USA

Title: Contrast.

Date: 1924.

Technique: Oil on canvas.

Measurement: 93 x 73,5cm.

Notation: Signed and inscribed lower right: Rudolf Bauer Baut.

Frame/Pedestal: Craftman's frame.

Provenance:

- R. Bauer Das Geistreich Die Bautokratie, Berlin-Charlottenburg (adhesive label)
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (acquired from the artist ca. 1936)
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York (as a donation from the museum in 1937)
- Borghi & Co., New York (acquired in 1986)
- Hauswedell & Nolte, Hamburg, auction 375, 2.12.2003, lot 25
- Private collection Baden-Württemberg
- Private collection Baden-Württemberg (by inheritance)

Exhibitions:

- Gibbes Memorial Art Gallery, Charleston/South Carolina, cat. no. 10, p. 16
- Philadelphia Art Alliance 1937, cat. no. 10, p. 17
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York 1939

Literature:

- Exhibition catalogue Solomon R. Guggenheim Collection of Non-Objective Paintings, Gibbes Memorial Art Gallery, New York 1936, cat. no. 10, p. 16, ill.
- Exhibition catalogue Solomon R. Guggenheim Collection of Non-Objective Paintings, Philadelphia Art Alliance, New York 1937, cat. no. 10, p. 17, ill.
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation (ed.): Art of Tomorrow, New York 1939, cat. no. 83, p. 90

- A work full of tension that heralds the transition into a new stage of the artistic work

- Distinctive pictorial and stylistic language
- Excellent, well-documented provenance

Like many painters at the beginning of the 20th century, Rudolf Bauer considers content and idea more important than the form of what is depicted. Thus, in his non-objective compositions, he searches for a new, appropriate language in which line, surface, form and color are the sole carriers of meaning. Inspired by the art of Wassily Kandinsky, he initially found this by using impulsive, expressive formulations freed from compositional rules. Until about the early 1920s, he uses them to illustrate emotional movement and modern spirituality.

"Contrast" conveys the transition from expressive language to two-dimensional content. The field of tension that opens up here is condensed in the medium-format painting as if the canvas had not been enough to communicate everything.

Together with the German painter Hilla von Rebay, he founded "Das Geistreich," the Museum for Non-Objective Painting in Berlin, where Bauer's works, as well as those of his other artist friends, were made accessible to the public. In the following years, Bauer changed his way of painting. Probably inspired by the modernist and functional style of the Bauhaus artists and the Russian Constructivists, he adopted a geometric formal language.

Through his involvement with the painting of Kasimir Malevich and Piet Mondrian, Bauer then achieved a clarification of his mode of representation. He now created his compositions in a considered and differentiated manner, using only simple geometric forms. With this reduced style of painting, he developed the adequate way of expressing the "highest" human principles of knowledge. Until the end of his work he remained faithful to this kind of geometric abstraction.

He exhibited his paintings not only in Germany, but also in America. Thus, in 1936, through his mentor Solomon R. Guggenheim, he was able to present 60 works in numerous cities in the USA. While he is successful there, Bauer is ostracized by the National Socialists at home. In 1937, they put some of his works on display as "degenerate art." In 1939 he was finally arrested. He succeeded in escaping and emigrated to America in 1939. He never returned to Germany. His art fell into oblivion after the Second World War. It was not until an exhibition of his works in Cologne in 1969 that attention was drawn to them again.

Estimate: 100.000 € - 150.000 €
