

KURT SCHWITTERS' *AN ANNA BLUME* AND THE  
GENDERED POLITICS OF PRINTMAKING IN WEIMAR GERMANY

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of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
KAITLYN M.L. GARBARINO

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Dr. James van Dyke, Thesis Supervisor

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

KURT SCHWITTERS' *AN ANNA BLUME* AND THE  
GENDERED POLITICS OF PRINTMAKING IN WEIMAR GERMANY

presented by Kaitlyn M.L. Garbarino,

a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

Professor James van Dyke	
Professor Michael Yonan	
Professor Sean Ireton	

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	ii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	iv
INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER 1: KURT SCHWITTERS AS PRINTMAKER.....	9
CHAPTER 2: ANNA BLUME IN PRINT.....	28
CHAPTER 3: FEMININE IDENTITIES ON PRINT IN POST-WAR GERMANY.....	49
CONCLUSION.....	68
FIGURES .....	71
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	103

## LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure</i>	<i>Page</i>
1 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Mühle an der Leine</i> , 1918.....	71
2 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Abstraktion No. II (Die Gewalten)</i> , 1917.....	71
3 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Zeichnung A 6</i> , 1918.....	72
4 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Mit roter 4)</i> , 1919.....	72
5 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Anna Blume hat ein Vogel)</i> , 1919.....	73
6 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Wisch)</i> , 1919.....	73
7 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Berlin-Friedenau)</i> , 1919.....	74
8 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Zwei Kreise, aus: Das Kestnerbuch)</i> , 1919.....	74
9 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Zwei Kreise, Probedruck)</i> , 1919.....	75
10 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Holzschnitt/ vom Stock gedruckt)</i> , 1919.....	76
11 Kurt Schwitters, <i>2. Probedruck</i> , 1919.....	76
12 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Lithographie, mit Nietenlöchern)</i> , 1919.....	77
13 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Lithographie, mit Nietenlöchern)</i> , 1919.....	77
14 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Die Kathedrale, 8 Lithos von Kurt Schwitters</i> , 1920.....	78
15 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Mit Kreisformen, Blatt 2 aus: Die Kathedrale)</i> , 1920.....	79
16 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (10 Acetylen, Blatt 3 aus: Die Kathedrale)</i> , 1920.....	80
17 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Oval, Blatt 4 aus: Die Kathedrale)</i> , 1920.....	81
18 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Merz 8, Blatt 5 aus: Die Kathedrale)</i> , 1920.....	81
19 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Die Osteuro, Blatt 6 aus: Die Kathedrale)</i> , 1920.....	82
20 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (75 9 x heim, Blatt 7 aus: Die Kathedrale)</i> , 1920.....	82
21 Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Valori Plastici, Blatt 8 aus: Die Kathedrale)</i> , 1920...83	83

22	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil)</i> , 1921.....	84
23	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (ff)</i> , 1922/23.....	85
24	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (E uis)</i> , 1922/23.....	86
25	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Bügel zu)</i> , 1922/23.....	86
26	Kurt Schwitters, <i>MERZ 3. MERZ MAPPE. ERSTE MAPPE DES MERZVERLAGES. 6 LITHOS</i> , 1923.....	87
27	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Innentitel von: MERZ 3. MERZ MAPPE ERSTE MAPPE DES MERZVERLAGES. 6 Lithos</i> , 1923.....	87
28	Kurt Schwitters, Blatt 1 aus: <i>MERZ 3. MERZ MAPPE ERSTE MAPPE DES MERZVERLAGES. 6 Lithos</i> , 1923.....	88
29	Kurt Schwitters, Blatt 5 aus: <i>MERZ 3. MERZ MAPPE ERSTE MAPPE DES MERZVERLAGES. 6 Lithos</i> , 1923.....	89
30	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Z. i 22 Likan</i> , 1926.....	90
31	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Title (PELIKAN)</i> , 1925.....	90
32	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Z. i. 24. Spielendes Kind nach Boccioni</i> , 1926.....	91
33	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Ohne Titel (Katzen)</i> , 1923.....	91
34	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Zeichnung I 6 Mode I</i> , 1920.....	92
35	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Vision</i> , 1916-17.....	92
36	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Merzbild 5 B (Bild rot Herz-Kirche)</i> , 1919.....	93
37	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Merzbild 10 A (Konstruktion für edle Frauen)</i> , 1919.....	93
38	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Das ist das Biest, das manchmal niest</i> , 1919.....	94
39	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Anna Blume und ich</i> , 1919.....	94
40	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Cover design of Anna Blume. Dichtungen</i> , 1919.....	95
41	Kurt Schwitters, <i>Intro page of Anna Blume: Dichtungen</i> , 1919.....	96
42	Unknown, <i>Lebkuchenherz</i> .....	97

43	Cover page for <i>Neue Europäische Graphik: Deutsche Künstler, Mappe 3</i> , 1921	97
44	<i>Neue Europäische Graphik: Deutsche Künstler</i> , 1921	98
45	Introduction page for <i>Neue Europäische Graphik: Deutsche Künstler</i> , 1921	98
46	Franz Marc, <i>Genesis</i> , printed in 1921	99
47	August Macke, <i>Greeting</i> , printed in 1921	99
48	Otto Dix, <i>Matrose und Mädchen</i> , 1923	100
49	Otto Dix, <i>Besuch bei Madame Germaine in Méricourt</i> , 1924	100
50	Max Beckmann, <i>Frau in der Nacht</i> , 1920	101
51	Hermann Max Pechstein, <i>Am Strand</i> , c. 1922-23	101
52	Käthe Kollwitz, <i>Die Mütter</i> , Blatt 6 aus: <i>Der Krieg</i> , 1922-23	102
53	Hannah Höch, <i>Da-Dandy</i> , 1919	102

## INTRODUCTION

Kurt Schwitters was a prominent German artist in the early twentieth-century who can be difficult to categorize. During his career he was associated with Expressionism, Dadaism, Abstraction, and Constructivism. Above all, he was a free agent in the art world experimenting with different mediums and styles, which led him to create his own type of art called “Merz.” Constructions, assemblages, and collages are typically what come to mind when people think of Schwitters’ Merz. The concept of Schwitters’ activity as a print maker has thus been neglected even though print culture can indeed be linked to many of the works that defined his artistic career and theory. Therefore, this thesis explores Schwitters as a print maker and the prints he produced during the height of his career from 1919 to 1924. Ultimately, this thesis aims to reveal how and why print culture of the Weimar Republic was significant to an artist who is otherwise associated with different modes of artistic production.

World War I and the subsequent formation of the Weimar Republic coincided with the height of Schwitters’ artistic exploration. During the war, he successfully avoided conscription by bribing his army doctors, and later stated, “I preserved myself for the fatherland and for the history of art by bravery behind the lines.”<sup>1</sup> Throughout 1917 and 1918, Schwitters devoted his time to promoting his art and associating himself with the Sturm Gallery in Berlin, which was home to the many of the Expressionists.<sup>2</sup> From the Expressionists, Schwitters discovered that each element within a work of art has

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<sup>1</sup> John Elderfield and Museum of Modern Art, *Kurt Schwitters* (New York, N.Y: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

a unique expressive content, which he thought it was the artist's duty to reveal.<sup>3</sup> Towards the end of the war, however, Schwitters believed the world was broken and "new things had to be made from fragments."<sup>4</sup> Like numerous other artists and intellectuals throughout the post-war period, Schwitters sought to redefine the concept of visual and literary arts.

His interest in abandoning pre-war notions of art was similar to the Dadaists, whose first artist circle originated in Zurich in 1916. The group, under the direction of the poet and philosopher Hugo Ball, used improvisational and nonsensical performance art to work against the dominating "nationalist politics, bourgeois values, communicative functions of language, and pious social mores."<sup>5</sup> Ball believed those factors were to blame for the outbreak of the First World War. When many of the members dispersed in 1917, artist Richard Hulsenbeck moved from Zurich to establish another Dada circle in Berlin.<sup>6</sup> The Berlin Dadaists promoted an even greater nonsense-driven, politically dissident, and anti-art cause. As seen in many of Schwitters' works from 1918, he adapted the Dadaist's use of collages, assemblages, and readymade objects, which worked against the traditional methods of art making. To some extent he adapted a Dadaist style when he stated, "sense is only vital when it is also valuable as a factor. If I compare sense and nonsense, I prefer nonsense, but this is a purely personal choice. I am sorry for nonsense, because up till now it has so seldom received artistic form; that is

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>5</sup> Sarah Ganz Blythe and Edward D. Powers, *Looking at Dada* (NY: The Museum of Modern Art, 2006), 4.

<sup>6</sup> Other subsequent circles were formed in Paris, New York, Berlin, Cologne, and Hannover. For further reading, see Leah Dickerman and Brigid Doherty, *Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, Paris* (Washington: National Gallery of Art in association with Distributed Art Publishers, New York, 2005).

why I love nonsense.”<sup>7</sup> In other words, Schwitters wanted to represent nonsense through his style because had a place in the art world. Although Schwitters partook in Dada’s nonsensical aspect of art, Schwitters’ statement also shows a sense of sentimentality and seriousness in his art with which the Berlin Dadaists did not agree. Under the leadership of Richard Huelsenbeck, the group had a decidedly cynical outlook on traditional art and right-wing politics. Unlike Huelsenbeck, Schwitters was a passionate advocate of art rather than against it, and he was not as politically motivated as the members of the group. Finally, since he was already associated with the Sturm Gallery and the Expressionists, the Dadaists rejected Schwitters from their circle.<sup>8</sup>

With the influence of artistic expression from the Expressionists, and the influence of nonsense and media from the Dadaists, one can begin to understand how Schwitters developed his idea of “Merz.” During his first exhibition of collages and assemblages at the Sturm gallery in 1918, Schwitters used the word “Merz” as a generic term to refer to all of his works of art. The term “Merz” originated from the second syllable of the German word “Kommerz.” The term had no insightful significance, rather, when he cut up scraps of paper for a collage he was intrigued by the look of the fragmented word. Merz became known as Schwitters’ one-man movement, since he was not quite an Expressionist and he was also not permitted to call his works “Dada.”<sup>9</sup> However, Schwitters would frequently utilize the word “Dada” in his works to subtly connect his works to the group and undermine Hueselbeck’s authority, which can be seen on the cover illustration of Schwitters’ popular book *Anna Blume. Dichtungen*.

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<sup>7</sup> Kurt Schwitters and Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, *Kurt Schwitters: Retrospective: May-June 1965* (New York: Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, 1965), 7.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>9</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 12-13.

To quote art historian John Elderfield, “the creation of Merz was the completion of his artistic education.”<sup>10</sup> Schwitters wanted to liberate art. Therefore, he sought to exploit all possibilities of art based upon using a variety of media and techniques, from poetry to print making. By doing so, he strove to create “the sum total of art in its various forms” and shape his oeuvre into a personal *Gesamtkunstwerk*. In 1918, Schwitters wrote, “to confine oneself to one material is one-sided and limited. That is how I came to form MERZ...It is my ultimate object to combine art and non-art in a world-embracing MERZ-picture.”<sup>11</sup> Full of fragmented compositions, found objects, and nonsensical meanings, Schwitters created Merz works in order to experiment with the boundaries of art. Schwitters called himself and all of his creations “Merz” after 1918. By that definition, his prints should also be analyzed as Merz and situated within the history of Schwitters’ artistic project. While Schwitters’ assemblages are three-dimensional and formed with found objects and a variety of material, his prints were also abstracted and nonsensical in nature. Both unrelated mediums are formed with same Merz ideology in mind, and thus equally important to Schwitters’ artistic exploration. The print medium fulfilled many of the goals Schwitters sought to achieve through his Merz. Printmaking can be experimental, as it offers a variety of techniques from lithography to etching to woodcuts. Prints allow an artist to publish an illustration with any written text, such as poems and essays, which effectively combines two separate classes of art. Prints can also be used as found objects, such as the scraps of printed material seen in Schwitters collages and assemblages. Furthermore, exhibiting an artist’s work on paper, which was otherwise viewed in a gallery, offered a new method of

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>11</sup> Schwitters, *Kurt Schwitters: Retrospective: May-June 1965*, 14.

sharing ideas, styles, and trends in subject matter among avant-garde circles.

Incidentally, prints were cost-effective and a practical alternative to painting during the Weimar Republic.

The scholarship devoted to Schwitters' art generally discusses the innovativeness of Merz works and the artist's place in twentieth-century avant-garde movements. While Schwitters' prints are mentioned, they have not been the primary focus of early or recent research. In 1967, art historian Werner Schmalenbach offered the first comprehensive bibliography of Schwitters, which revealed his influences and life as an artist, poet, and typographer. Schmalenbach discusses several of Schwitters' prints in his research, providing formal analyses and background on the production and material of the works. Schmalenbach views the prints as an indication of Schwitters' versatility and his ability to adopt and "bend" a medium in order to achieve his artistic goals.<sup>12</sup>

Following Schmalenbach's research, art historian John Elderfield published another detailed account of Schwitters' biography, although centered on the invention and development of Merz. Elderfield primarily focuses on Schwitters' early assemblages, collages, poetry, and constructions. He does, however, acknowledge the stylistic similarities between Schwitters' lithographs and collages, as well as the influence of modern graphic design. Elderfield argues that while Schwitters did not create a *Gesamtkunstwerk* by linking all the arts together, the artist was successful in blurring the boundaries between different media.<sup>13</sup>

In more recent literature on Schwitters, art historian Dorothea Dietrich also discusses Schwitters' prints in relation to his collages. She suggests that much of his

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<sup>12</sup> Werner Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters* (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1970), 149.

<sup>13</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 31.

work adopts the process of collage making. Dietrich touches on one print by Schwitters, which he designed as a cover illustration for his book *An Anna Blume: Dichtungen* in 1919. Dietrich focuses on the contents of the print, as well as its connections to Schwitters' collages, watercolors, poetry, and the influence of modern life.<sup>14</sup>

Art historian Megan R. Luke primarily focuses on Schwitters' late career when he was exiled in Norway. However, she also uses his earlier works to explore the transformation of his oeuvre. In one portion of her research, Luke mentions Schwitters' use of discarded printed material. Luke calls upon these misprints, or “*i*-drawings”, to generate discussion on space and subjectivity in his work. Luke argues that Schwitters' understanding of found objects was essential to the development of his notable, large-scale *Merzbau* construction from the 1920s to 1930s.<sup>15</sup>

What is missing from current scholarship is a comprehensive investigation of Schwitters' prints within the socio-historical context of the Weimar Republic. This thesis builds upon previous research by switching the focus and viewing Schwitters' art through the perspective of the print medium. I use Schwitters' prints to generate discussions on the technical and material processes of print making, print and print portfolio culture during the post-war period, and the subject matter of Schwitters' prints.

The first chapter presents a broad, systematic analysis of the prints Schwitters made during the Weimar Republic. While the chapter does not discuss every individual graphic work Schwitters created in detail, it provides insight into how and why he created works with stamps, woodcut reliefs, lithography, and misprinted material. This

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<sup>14</sup> Dorothea Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters: Tradition and Innovation* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 83-107.

<sup>15</sup> Megan R. Luke, *Kurt Schwitters: Space, Image, Exile* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

discussion implies that printmaking was essential to Schwitters' experimentation with traditional and untraditional methods of art making. To achieve the goal of Merz and blur boundaries between the arts, Schwitters was successful in combining print making techniques with other methods, such as collage and drawing.

The second chapter will contribute to current scholarship by offering a new, more developed account of Schwitters' print *Ohne Titel (Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil)* from 1921, which has either been solely reproduced in catalogues or, in one instance, discussed through short formal analysis.<sup>16</sup> The chapter initially explores the print's connection to Schwitters' poem *An Anna Blume* from 1919. A number of scholars including Elderfield, Dietrich, Annegreth Nill, Elizabeth Burns Gamard, and Frauke von der Horst have discussed Schwitters' poem. Building on their research, I will provide an analysis of how Schwitters transformed a Dadaist poem into various visual works of art. Furthermore, *Ohne Titel (Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil)* will be discussed as a part of the Bauhaus' portfolio series, "Neue Europäische Graphik," which brings to mind the promotional and commercial function of the print medium. Finally, the second chapter addresses how Schwitters' use of the print medium corresponds to a time in Weimar Germany when post-war print production was booming. This ultimately suggests that Schwitters' production of prints during these years was not random, but rather historically situated.

The final chapter provides a cultural historical and feminist approach to the print *Ohne Titel (Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil)*. The print's depiction of Schwitters'

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<sup>16</sup> Reinhold Heller and Stephanie D'Alessandro, *Stark Impressions: Graphic Production in Germany, 1918-1933* (Evanston, IL: Mary and Leigh Block Gallery, Northwestern University : Distributed by Northwestern University Press, 1993), 352.

fictional character, Anna Blume, entices a discussion of precisely what ideas Schwitters was circulating to his viewers. As a result of the First World War, new, confusing, and sometimes controversial identities for German women emerged. Prints such as *Ohne Titel (Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil)* therefore functioned to promote certain gender roles and identities to the public, like the New Woman. By comparing how Schwitters' treatment of the theme is similar or different from the approaches taken by his contemporaries, the chapter aims to clarify where Schwitters placed himself regarding gender issues.

This thesis does not attempt to be comprehensive, since there are numerous other prints by Schwitters that could be discussed in further detail. Ultimately, this thesis is concerned with demonstrating how the print medium can add to our understanding of Schwitters' artistic career. As an artist who has been placed within the canon of modern art history, some aspects of Schwitters' oeuvre have been marginalized. By bringing Schwitters' prints to the foreground, even his secondary works shed interesting light on modern artistic printmaking, Merz theory, and the politics of gender during the Weimar Republic.

## CHAPTER ONE KURT SCHWITTERS AS PRINTMAKER

The history of Schwitters as a print maker reveals how he utilized print material and techniques in a variety of traditional and untraditional ways. In fact, he only created thirty-known original prints, including two print portfolios and a few proofs. His career as a woodcutter and lithographer lasted a brief five years from 1919 and 1923, and he never utilized other printing techniques such as dry point or etching. He did, however, extensively play with print material and techniques, which ultimately changes conventional concepts of printmaking. Indeed, his use of stamps and misprinted material from 1918 to the late 1930s will demonstrate the underlying connections between a number of his works, as well as his understanding of the print medium *in toto*. The present chapter is based on a systematic analysis of the original prints in Schwitters' complete body of works in order to explore the connections between the print medium and the artist's stylistic, technical, and theoretical changes, which rapidly changed during the Weimar Republic.

It is necessary to acknowledge Schwitters' early works because they demonstrate the evolution of his artwork before the creation of his Dadaist prints. He was born in Hannover, Germany into a middle class family. By 1905, at the relatively late age of eighteen, he first began producing works of art in a naturalistic style, working with oil paint on canvas or wood. He studied at the Hannover and Dresden art academies focusing on portraiture, animal, and genre painting, which he referred to as his Impressionism phase (fig. 1).<sup>17</sup> Soon after, he was turned away from the Berlin Art

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<sup>17</sup> Dietrich interprets a quote from Schwitters saying, "Schwitters himself described his

Academy for being “incurably ungifted.”<sup>18</sup> It is important to recognize that Schwitters was experimenting. Naturalism and formal education for Schwitters were simply ways to “learn how all art was based upon measurement and adjustment” and how he could adjust the idea of art himself.<sup>19</sup> By 1916, Schwitters used a variety of mediums and styles; he was no longer just painting oil on canvas, but rather oil on cardboard and canvas, combined. He had even created a few bust sculptures of women: one named Hella Vorster and another of his wife, Helma Schwitters.<sup>20</sup>

By 1917, Schwitters began his Expressionist phase, titling a series of oil paintings as “Expressions” and “Abstractions,” which shows a painterly shading of fragmented, linear, or converging shapes (fig. 2). He was being influenced by his involvement with the Sturm Gallery in Berlin, which was home to the many of the Expressionists.<sup>21</sup> From them Schwitters discovered the ways in which formal abstraction could heighten the affective impact of his work and suggest a strongly subjective vision. Schwitters stated that, “any desire to reproduce natural forms limits the force and consistency of working out an expression. I abandoned all reproduction of natural elements and painted only with pictorial elements. These are my Abstractions. I adjusted the elements of the pictures against each other...not for the purpose of reproducing nature but with the aim of

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early art as “Impressionism,” the term used in Germany during that period to describe the tonal painting of Naturalism: “I concerned myself with the extensive exploration of the effects of light in a sketch-like manner of painting (Impressionism).” See Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters*, 48.

<sup>18</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 30.

<sup>19</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 13.

<sup>20</sup> Kurt Schwitters, Sprengel Museum Hannover, Niedersächsische Sparkassenstiftung, Norddeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale, and Stadtparkasse Hannover, *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue Raisonné 1905-1922* (Ostfildern-Ruit : New York: Hatje Cantz, 2000), 42, 50, 51.

<sup>21</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 17.

expression.”<sup>22</sup> In other words, each element within a work of art has a unique expressive content in which it is the artist’s task to reveal. His appreciation of Expressionism came from their ability develop feelings and emotions from the elements within a work of art, itself. While he continued with representational subject matter, his pictures are noticeably more textured with layered paint and wider brush strokes. He also created charcoal and chalk “Abstractions,” of abstracted landscapes with heavy lines and rough shading. With many of these drawings, Schwitters deliberately placed his compositions in the center of the paper, leaving plain and thick borders around each drawing. In a way, Schwitters was executing his drawings like prints, perhaps foreshadowing his later use of the print medium. At the same time, Schwitters produced his first collages with different textured papers (fig. 3). These works are also composed in the center of a white piece of paper, where he has titled the work at the bottom right and placed his signature and date on the bottom left. Throughout 1919, Schwitters abandoned his earlier experiments in favor of multimedia assemblages and collages, which is when he also began to utilize rubber stamps as a primary tool.<sup>23</sup>

### **Stamps**

Schwitters’ multimedia collages titled “Merz pictures” are comprised of random sketches in ink, pen, charcoal, or chalk on layered paper, cardboard, newspaper, and other printed matter. For the collages that used typographical stamps, however, Schwitters

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 19

<sup>23</sup> Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 86-211.

made a distinction by titling them “Merz rubber-stamp drawings.”<sup>24</sup> In all of the stamp-drawings, Schwitters created fragmented Dadaist compositions using stamped text and drawn images in a child-like, playful manner. His *Catalogue raisonné* records twenty-two such works from 1919, in which a few are created on both sides of one sheet of paper and primarily use red, violet, and black ink.<sup>25</sup> Fifteen of Schwitters’ stamp drawings were reproduced in print and published in black and white in the *Der Sturm Bilderbuch IV* in 1920.<sup>26</sup> These experimental drawings were well received from their first appearance. In the introduction to the *Sturm Bilderbuch IV*, poet and painter Otto Nebel praised Schwitters and wrote, “Numbers and letters remain purely pictorial. Their sense is artistically irrelevant. In itself writing is the graphic outline of a word. In the Merz-picture writing becomes the wordless sound of pure line. Sense has been weeded out.”<sup>27</sup> After 1919, Schwitters created only ten more stamp-drawings, which utilized more stamps than pen-drawn forms.<sup>28</sup>

Created in 1919, *Ohne Titel (Mit roter 4)* particularly demonstrates the playful nature of stamping, as Schwitters has inked a variety of stamps and marked the paper until the ink ran dry. He emphasizes repetition in the use of the stamps “v. Romer,”

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<sup>24</sup> They are also referred to as “Stamp drawings” (*Merzzeichnung*) in his *Catalogue raisonné*. Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 107.

<sup>25</sup> Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 241-248.

<sup>26</sup> The fifteen works include: *Ohne Titel (Mit roter 4)*, *Ohne titel (Berlin Friedenau)*, *Ohne titel (Verlag Der Sturm)*, *Ohne titel (Du Drucksache)*, *Ohne titel (Anna Blume hat ein Vogel)*, *Ohne titel (Mit roter Kaffeemühle)*, *Ohne titel (Drucksache)*, *Ohne titel (Der Sturm – recto)*, *Ohne titel (Berlin Friedenau – verso, rejected version)*, *Ohne titel (Mit Kaffeemühle)*, *Ohne titel (Belegexemplar)*, *Ohne titel (Großes R oder Das Sekretariat – recto)*, *Ohne titel (Wisch)*, *Ohne titel (Abteilung: Inserate – recto)*, *Ohne titel (Komisches Tier)*.

<sup>27</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 107.

<sup>28</sup> Schwitters also broadened his stamp vocabulary and made a few of the works as gifts in 1922, titled “*Für Hartmann*.” In Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 516-517.

fragments of the words “Amt Plazburg” and “Wag–,” as well as a circular image containing writing in the border (fig. 4). The writing within the circular stamp was originally from a stamp for the “Association for the Support of the Deaf and Dumb.”<sup>29</sup> Schwitters further morphed the circle into a wheel or cog by creating the spokes in pen-and-ink. Other hand-drawn pictorial images include a windmill and a locomotive, which develops an industrial context for the stamping-drawing. However, nearly all of the works include a combination of these phrases with doodle-like images of eyes, coffee mills, abstracted human figures, numbers, and bottles, which seemingly disrupts any definite interpretation of the works.

Schwitters’ use of typography relates to works by the Cubists Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, and Georges Braque, who utilized whole and broken text in their collages and paintings around 1910 to 1914. Art historian Robert Rosenblum has argued that certain words act as deliberately placed puns within the Cubists’ works. Humor becomes especially apparent when the text is broken down. Picasso and Gris’ use of the word *Le Journal*, for example, was frequently fragmented to JOU, JOUR, or URNAL. Since JOU recalls the root for the verb *jouer* (to play) or URNAL conjures the word *urinal*, these fragments can ultimately change the meaning of the work.<sup>30</sup> Similar to Rosenblum’s argument, art historian Michael White believes that some of Schwitters’ stamps could be interpreted as comical puns. In one case, the stamp for the “Association of the Deaf and

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<sup>29</sup> Michael White, “Merzzeichnung: Typology and Typography,” *Tate Papers*, no.14 (Autumn 2010).

<sup>30</sup> Also following the Cubists, the Dadaists Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia used text and wordplay in their works. Duchamp, for example, parodied the word *Le Journal* when he “defined” his fellow Dadaist Man Ray as “n.m. synonym. de Joiejouerjourir” in a dictionary entry. In Robert Rosenblum, “Picasso and the Typography of Cubism,” in *Picasso 1881-1973* (London: Paul Elek, 1973), 51.

Dumb” could refer to the work’s inability to communicate a definitive meaning.<sup>31</sup>

Therefore, while the scattered use of text Schwitters’ in stamp-drawings show his preference for the nonsensical, they can be also viewed as images that can produce particular, witty, and meaningful associations.

Many of the other works included in the *Sturm Bilderbuch* use stamps making overt references to the gallery, such as “Der Sturm,” Verlag Der Sturm,” and the gallery’s founder, “Herwarth Walden.” Others stamps provide business or commercial references such as: “Das Sekretariat” (secretary), “Die Redaktion” (office of the editor), “Verlag Abteilung Inserate” (publishing department advertisements), “Drucksache” – (printed matter), “Belegexemplar” (voucher copy), “Bezahlt” (paid), “Wisch” (note), “Zahlbar nach Empfang innerhalb 14 Tagen” (payable within 14 days of receipt), “Abteilung: Inserate” – (department: small ads). Finally, the other nonsensical stamps include: “Rheingaustraße 23 and 26” (streets in Berlin), “v. Römer” (Romans), “Fereinkolonie für Taubstumme” (Holiday Camp for Deaf Mutes), and “Berlin-Friedenau” (suburb of Berlin).<sup>32</sup> In general these texts use a variety of fonts from calligraphy to modern sans serif script. Schwitters’ own handwriting in *Ohne Titel (Anna Blume hat ein Vogel)* uses the “Sütterlin script,” a style that was taught in German schools from 1919 to 1941 (fig. 5).<sup>33</sup> It is likely that Schwitters obtained these stamps ready-made from a variety of sources, although it is also possible that he formed some of the words and phrases himself from a moveable typeface rubber stamp.

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<sup>31</sup> White, “Merzzeichnung: Typology and Typography,” 9.

<sup>32</sup> Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 241-248. Also listed in Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 107.

<sup>33</sup> The script was created by the Berlin graphic designer Ludwig Sütterlin and modeled after German Chancery. See Anne Umland and Adrian Sudhalter, *Dada in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art* (The Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 283.

While many of the stamps' imprints seem scattered and random, some are used to create patterns, as seen in *Ohne Titel (Wisch)*. Within the abstracted bottle to the left of the page, Schwitters stamped consecutive rows of "Berlin-Friedenau" as if the vessel was full of liquid (fig. 6). In *Ohne Titel (Berlin-Friedenau)*, the stamps "Berlin-Friedenau" and "Rheingaustraße 23" alternate consecutively and counter clock-wise in a circle, but then are abruptly broken apart by the edge of the left page and near-vertical stamping of "Berlin-Friedenau" (fig.7). Furthermore, small pieces of paper depicting numbers and text are scattered around many of the compositions, which were supposedly taken from envelopes from the post office.<sup>34</sup> With the combination of paper scraps, stamped patterns, and drawn images, these works form particularly collage-like compositions.

Art historian Werner Schmalenbach has argued that Schwitters' stamp drawings, "fully deserve to be called drawings because they are not merely stamped but also designed...the charm of these sheets is in their rhythm, the humor of association, and in general the naïve delight in printing with rubber stamps."<sup>35</sup> Yet Schmalenbach's statement also hints towards another technique being used in these works: printmaking. Fundamentally, stamps create a type of relief print. Small-scale stamps are commonly used as a learning technique for printmaking in the classroom, which allows students to learn how to engrave and understand how stamping ink will print the areas not carved.<sup>36</sup> Stamps have the same reproductive function as any conventional printmaking technique, even though Schwitters used his stamps in a monotypical fashion to create singular

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<sup>34</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 107.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Thank you to Professor Chris Daniggelis, printmaker and associate Professor Chris Daniggelis at the University of Missouri–Columbia, for pointing me towards the possible printmaking techniques Schwitters used.

objects, rather than editions of more or less identical images. Like a student developing their knowledge of the print medium, Schwitters was experimenting.

Ultimately, these stamp-drawings correspond to the moment when Schwitters developed his Merz theory and began exploring how he could combine a variety of media.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, Schwitters commented on his stamp drawings and said that his intention was, “to efface the boundaries between the arts.”<sup>38</sup> Through the use of seemingly banal rubber stamps, pen, and paper, Schwitters effectively blurred the lines between drawing, collage, and printmaking.

### **Woodcuts**

By the end of 1919, Schwitters created his first original prints using a woodcut relief technique. Four are known, two of which are proofs. One of the two final prints, *Ohne Titel (Zwei Kreise)*, was published by Paul Eric Küpper in his *Das Kestnerbuch*, who was also founder of the Kestner Gesellschaft in Hannover, one of the most important venues for the display of contemporary art in Germany during the years of the Weimar Republic (fig. 8). *Das Kestnerbuch* was a “deluxe” book, featuring Expressionist woodcuts and lithographs by twelve artists, such as Erich Heckel, Ernst Barlach, and Paul Klee. The prints were also accompanied by various texts. Schwitters’s woodcut was placed between pages 128 and 129 to unintentionally illustrate Karl Aloys Scherzinger’s drama *Berggang*. Each copy of the book was hand-bound on hand-made paper, and the

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<sup>37</sup> As mentioned in the introduction, Schwitters created the idea of Merz in 1918, just before he produced his first stamp-drawings in 1919. See page 3-4.

<sup>38</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 48.

circulation of the book is unknown.<sup>39</sup>

Only one trial proof exists for Schwitters's print and the proof shows three separate sections of a test block. Since very few of the cuts match the final printed version, this suggests he restarted on a new block (fig. 9). The other finished woodcut print, *Ohne Titel (Holzschnitt/ Vom Stock gedruckt)*, was created in 1919 but later published in the ninth issue of *Der Sturm* in 1922. Likewise, only one trial proof has been recorded, although it is titled as a second trial proof, *2. Probedruck [Von. Ohne Titel (Holzschnitt/ Vom Stock gedruckt)]*.<sup>40</sup> The proof is noticeably the same block as the final version, only printed upside down and inked more evenly (figs. 10, 11). The final versions are printed on the full page, whereas the proofs left space for Schwitters to sign, date, and title the page.

These four prints are reminiscent of his "Abstractions" paintings and drawings from the year prior (fig. 2). The prints feature mostly non-representational forms comprised of fragmented circles and heavy gouges in the wood. In *Ohne Titel (Holzschnitt/ Vom Stock gedruckt)* and its trial proof, Schwitters included pieces of abstracted and linear wheels. It is possible that Küpper advised Schwitters to make the print using the woodcut technique, since it was a particularly popular method in Germany just before World War I. Schwitters would have known that woodcut prints were closely associated with the Expressionists, especially the artist group Die Brücke, who were active between the years 1905 and 1913, and individually after that time. Die Brücke had revolutionized the concept of artistic woodcuts, which were primarily used for book illustrations in the previous centuries. They sought for a direct engagement with the

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<sup>39</sup> Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 264-265.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 265-266.

material by engraving and printing the works themselves, rather than working with a xylographer.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, woodcuts were able “to record subjective visions quickly, with the physical and emotional directness of drawing.”<sup>42</sup>

However, the compositions of Schwitters’ woodcuts do not follow the Expressionist’s style. As art historian Reinhold Heller argues, this print “fundamentally serves as an antithesis to Expressionism...the crossing, intersecting, overlapping, and interfering with each other, gouged straight lines act as diagonal signs of directional motion that play against the circles and their ‘painterly’ emanations and configurations.”<sup>43</sup> These woodcuts therefore represent the end to Schwitters’ Expressionist phase. In 1919, Schwitters remarked, “today the striving for expression in a work of art also seems to me injurious to art. Art is a primordial concept, exalted as the godhead, inexplicable as life, indefinable and without purpose. The work of art comes into being through an artistic evaluation of its elements.”<sup>44</sup> As Heller and Schwitters suggest, the heavy gouges in the wood are used to fragment the circles and disrupt any meaning of the print. Viewers are left to enjoy the basic element of lines, rather than the subjective emotion of the artist.

While he did not continue with woodcut technique, works such as these built necessary relationships for Schwitters and allowed his art to be circulated among public audiences. Schwitters had joined the Hannover Sezession in 1917, which introduced him

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<sup>41</sup> Ida Katherine Rigby, “The Revival of Printmaking,” In *German Expressionist Prints and Drawings. The Robert Gore Rifkind Center for German Expressionist Studies, Vol. 1*, edited by Stephanie Barron, et al. (Los Angeles, California: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), 40.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>43</sup> Heller and D’Alessandro, *Stark Impressions*, 354.

<sup>44</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 78.

to important figures from Hannover such as Küppers, Paul Steegemann, and Christof Spendemann. The Kestner-Gesellschaft gallery held the Hannover Sezession exhibitions, where Schwitters was later invited to show works in 1924/25 and 1931.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, Schwitters frequently collaborated with Steegemann and Spendemann, who were both vocal supporters for Schwitters' art and graphic works. In the fall of 1919, Paul Steegemann published Schwitters's famous book *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* as a part of the publisher's series *Die Silbergäule* (nos. 41/42). Likewise, Christof Spendemann included Schwitters in a graphic arts exhibition and published the artist's pamphlet *Die Wahrheit über Anna Blume* in 1920.<sup>46</sup>

### **Lithographs**

Schwitters created twenty-six known original lithographs between the years 1919 and 1923, which includes two print portfolios, several proofs, and monotypes. Five of his first lithographs dated from 1919 are rather experimental. Two prints that are both titled *Ohne Titel (Lithografie, mit Nietenlöchern)* show faint impressions of multifaceted circles and scattered pieces of triangular and rectangular leather with rivet holes around the edges (figs. 12, 13). They are in fact two prints of the same block and one impression is simply printed upside down. Neither of the prints are labeled with edition numbers, nor are there any other prints recorded. Therefore, while both are from the same stone, they are also two separate monotypes on different sizes of paper. It is also difficult to tell which print is the original. Schwitters wrote "For Robert Michel" below his signature and date on the left corner of the page of Figure 12. On Figure 13, Schwitters'

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<sup>45</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 19-21.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

handwriting is seen in the margins of the page saying, “Dem Geheim Zentralrat/Hülsenbeck/gewidmet von” on the top and “Dr. Dem. Proic/KURt ScHwItTeRs/” on the bottom. Both notes indicate they were gifts for Schwitters’s friend Robert Michel and the Dadaist Richard Hülsenbeck, respectively.<sup>47</sup>

In order to transfer the metal and leather surfaces on a lithographic stone, it is possible that Schwitters used a transfer process or a photographic transfer process.<sup>48</sup> Through the use of a non-photographic transfer technique, these prints would have been created in a two-part process. Instead of drawing directly on the stone, Schwitters would first “ink” the found objects with a greasy substance and then press them onto the soluble side of a sheet of transfer paper. The paper would then be pressed face down on the lithographic stone and treated for printing like a normal lithograph.<sup>49</sup> However, the leather with rivet holes are essentially a type of relief or intaglio plate and Schwitters could have also simply pressed the objects directly onto the stone. Through a photolithographic process, Schwitters would have transferred imprints of the plates onto the stone with or without transfer paper. He would have covered the stone with photo emulsion and used a photographic negative to develop stone, effectively making the image part of the stone.<sup>50</sup> It is also uncertain how Schwitters developed the knowledge to create lithographs using either of these techniques. He could have experimented on his own, learned from his schooling in Dresden and Hannover, or it is possible he learned

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<sup>47</sup> *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 266.

<sup>48</sup> Thank you again to Professor Chris Daniggelis for providing with insight on Schwitters’s technical process.

<sup>49</sup> Antony Griffiths, *Prints and Printmaking: An Introduction to the History and Techniques* (Berkeley: Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 102-103.

<sup>50</sup> I credit Professor Chris Daniggelis for his description of photographic transfer lithography.

from his close friends and graphic artists Robert Michel and Ella-Bergmann Michel.<sup>51</sup> Nevertheless, Schwitters would rely on both of these techniques in his subsequent prints since most of his lithographs utilize found objects.

In the print portfolio *Die Kathedrale* from 1920, Schwitters used paper, leather, doilies, and possibly shoe soles to create texture on five of the eight sheets (fig. 14-21).<sup>52</sup> According to Adrian Sudhalter at the Modern Museum of Art, “he would have begun by gluing doilies and nailing piece of leather to wooden blocks that were then inked and printed onto transfer paper. He would cut these papers into ovals, rectangles, and other fragments that were then transferred onto lithographic stones for printing. Schwitters probably also used transfers of these transfers in the printing process, evidenced by the fragments that appear more than once throughout the book.”<sup>53</sup> The hand-drawn elements, such as the usual windmills, wheels, and numbers, would have been directly drawn onto the stone, most likely before he transferred the found objects.

On sheet six (fig. 19), Schwitters also utilized fragments of the cursive stamp “Die Osteuropa” (Eastern Europe). The words “*Die Oster*” is seen cascading down the middle of the page and becomes “*Die Osteurope*” in order to create a pun on the German words for “Easter” (*Ostern*) and “Eastern Europe” (*Osteuropa*).<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, Schwitters makes textual references to himself, Anna Blume, Dada, Merz, and *Der Sturm* gallery. On sheet 3 (fig. 15), art historian Dorothea Dietrich has speculated that

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<sup>51</sup> The couple exhibited their work and toured the Netherlands with Schwitters in the 1920s. See Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 267.

<sup>52</sup> Found objects are seen on sheets 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

<sup>53</sup> From 1919-1922, each of the 153 *Silbergäule* books were produced in the form of small, staple-bound constructions. In Umland and Sudhalter, *Dada in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art*, 282.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

Schwitters referred to his liminal position in the art world by “placing the words ‘Merz’ and ‘Sturm’ together inside a rectangle with the work ‘Dada’ on the outside.”<sup>55</sup>

Furthermore, when the printing company Edler & Krische first reproduced the portfolio for Paul Steegeman’s *Silbergäule* series, the booklet was sealed with a strip of lithographed paper saying, “*Aus Sanitären Gründen zugeklebt. Vorsicht: Anti=dada. Man weise aufgebrochene Exemplare zurück. K.S. Merz 1920*” (Sealed for sanitary reasons. Caution: Anti-Dada. Return if the seal is broken. K.S. Merz 1920).<sup>56</sup> Schwitters remarked, however, “not to be misunderstood, I have written “Antidada” on the cover for my *Kathedrale*. That does not mean I am against Dada, but that in this world are also currents against Dada. Locomotives roll forwards and backwards. Why shouldn’t a locomotive roll backwards for a change?”<sup>57</sup> Regardless of his statement, the references to Dada appear more passive-aggressive than innocent.

This portfolio perhaps best represents the moments following Schwitters’ rejection by the Berlin Dadaist group in 1918. Although Schwitters’ works appeared to be nonsensical and anti-art like the Dadaists, the group considered Schwitters to be less politically motivated and too sentimental.<sup>58</sup> Facing the opposition of Richard Huelsenbeck, the leader of the Berlin Dada group, Schwitters was never fully welcomed into their circle.<sup>59</sup> Since the two Dadaists were still at odds with one another in 1919, it is therefore curious that Schwitters dedicated the print mentioned above to Huelsenbeck (fig. 13).

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<sup>55</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 42.

<sup>56</sup> Umland and Sudhalter, *Dada in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art*, 281.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.

<sup>58</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 12-13.

<sup>59</sup> Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters*, 7.

In 1921, Schwitters created a purely hand-drawn lithograph for the Weimar Bauhaus' print series "Neue Europäische Graphik (fig. 22)." Specifically, the print was featured in the third installment titled, "Deutsche Künstler," on the eleventh sheet. The print will be discussed more in depth in Chapter Two.<sup>60</sup>

In five lithographs dated 1922/23, Schwitters completely abandoned his earlier hand-drawn elements in favor of pure, fragmented, and layered letters. As seen in *Ohne Titel (ff)*, only a few words are legible, such as "Hannover" and "Gustav" (fig. 23).

Schwitters also noticeably played with the shape of the paper and printed on a rectangular sheet of paper roughly eight by three centimeters. *Ohne Titel (e uis)* and *Ohne Titel (Bügel zu)* show an even greater use of fragmentation and layering of printed material (figs. 24, 25). There is a relationship between the two prints since *Ohne Titel (e uis)* is undoubtedly a cropped negative of *Ohne Titel (Bügel zu)*. They were likely made from the photographic transfer technique described above. Once again, there is no record of the editions made for each of the lithographs from 1922/23, and thus they should be considered monotypes.<sup>61</sup>

This new, highly abstracted and constructivist style correlates with Schwitters' involvement with The New Typography movement, his growing relationship with the Russian Constructivist El Lissitzky, and perhaps foreshadows his decision to work as a professional graphic designer in 1924.<sup>62</sup> In 1923, Schwitters began his own publishing company *Merz Verlag*, and he executed his last print portfolio of six lithographs titled *Merz 3. Merz Mappe. Erste Mappe Des Merzverlages* (figs. 26-29). The portfolio was

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<sup>60</sup> Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 433.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 519-520.

<sup>62</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 186-188. For further reading, also see: Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters*, 179.

featured in the third of twenty-two issues that were published between 1923 and 1932.<sup>63</sup>

The book begins with a hand-bound collage cover on cardboard with the full title, the address of his studio, the artists name, date, and small heart pierced by an arrow.

The title page is also executed as a collage with a lithographed piece of paper comically saying, “6 Lithos: Merzed on the stone.” Each of the leaves, including the cover and title page, are monochromatic in red, brown, blue, light gray, and dark gray.<sup>64</sup> The main sheets illustrate a variety of “lithographed collages” comprised of found pieces of paper with letters, words, sentences, images, or nothing on them. Some of the materials are parts of cigarette wrappers and advertisements, all of which he apparently coated with a greasy base and directly adhered onto the stone to print. Furthermore, he employed the screen printing technique in some areas, such as on sheet five below the two kittens (fig. 29).<sup>65</sup>

The portfolio was supposedly printed in fifty complete copies, but only thirty-one are known. However, there are individual sheets numbered as 48/50 and a few of the final prints are labeled with false impressions. Furthermore, there are five recorded proofs that show minor alterations to the final sheets. Schwitters produced these prints at the A. Molling & Comp. commercial printing facility located in Hannover.<sup>66</sup> This facility was also where Schwitters created his better-known “*i*-drawings.”

### Misprints

Schwitters incorporated over fifty found misprints into his art, titling them as “*i*-

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<sup>63</sup> Umland and Sudhalter, *Dada in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art*, 297.

<sup>64</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters* 148-149.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 433.

drawings,” which he utilized intermittently throughout the 1920s to the late 1930s.<sup>67</sup>

While he produced his lithographs at the Molling commercial printing facility in Hannover, he could be found at times in the cellar of the factory rummaging through the proofs and misprints discarded by the lithography department. His close friend and collaborator, Käte Steinitz wrote:

The Molling factory had a basement room for all the rubbish and wastepaper. All the proofs and misprints from the lithography department were broomed twice a day toward a chute that dumped them down into a cellar. This cellar was a treasure for Kurt. Whenever we couldn't find him when it was time to go home we would finally discover him squatting or kneeling in the midst of discarded paper, carefully sorting out the first or second states of some complicated color separations. He thought they were awful. But he sorted out the unfinished pages that appealed to him as carefully as a connoisseur would have examined the precious prints in a museum collection.<sup>68</sup>

From 1889 to the late 1930s, A. Molling & Comp. was a family-owned business that printed advertisements, packaging, and illustrations for children's books.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, Hannover and the nearby town of Linden were home to the companies Hanomag, Continental, Pelikan, Sprengel, and Bahlsen.<sup>70</sup> As a result, Pelikan logos and illustrations are repeatedly used in Schwitters' *i*-drawings (figs. 30, 31, 32). On the majority of the misprints, Schwitters simply signed his name and titled them as his own creation, but he would also paint on them or use them in collages and lithographs. For example, the

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<sup>67</sup> Schwitters apparently used no misprinted material in the years 1921 and 1924. See Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné 1905-1922 and 1923-1936*.

<sup>68</sup> Isabel Schulz and Leah Dickerman, *Kurt Schwitters: Color and Collage* (Houston: New Haven: The Menil Collection; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2010), 94.

<sup>69</sup> Edel Sheridan-Quantz, "Our Publications Are Available Worldwide: A Forgotten German Printer and His Global Connections 1887-1939," in *Geographical Journal, University College Cork* (Chimera 29, 2014): 38.

<sup>70</sup> Hanomag produced machinery and motorcars, Continental sold rubber products, Pelikan manufactured inks and pens, Sprengel was a chocolate company, and Bahlsen produced biscuits. *Ibid.*, 40.

misprint *Ohne Titel (Katzen)* is seen on folio five of his *Merz Mappe* (fig. 29, 33).<sup>71</sup>

Schwitters could have reactivated the ink by wetting the print and transferring the kittens onto the stone, and most reports agree he did not use a photographic transfer technique.<sup>72</sup>

Leah Dickermann writes that Schwitters would further manipulate the misprint by “erasing forms with an abrasive pumice, and drawing others, aiming, it seems, to replicate the look of readymade commercial images he had appropriated.”<sup>73</sup> Since this process would most likely damage the original misprint, it is possible that he had more than one proof of the kittens. For works such as *Zeichnung I6*, he cropped the areas he felt had “rhythm,” thereby adding his own artistic perspective (fig. 34).<sup>74</sup>

Like the readymades “created” by the New York Dadaist Marcel Duchamp, Schwitters transformed mass produced items into a form of “higher” art.<sup>75</sup> What motivated Schwitters was the concept that the material world is entirely readymade and the artist had the potential to transform any object into a work of art. In 1923, Schwitters said, “here is the artist’s sole task: to recognize and to delimit [*erkennen und begrenzen*]. And this is essentially the only task for which an artist is capable at all: to delimit and recognize.”<sup>76</sup> Schwitters labeled these misprints as *i* to distinguish them from his Merz works. Merz represented the creations he formed alone, whereas *i* was used to recognize the work of another artist.<sup>77</sup> Whether he manipulated the other artists’ discarded lithographs or not, Schwitters’ *i*-drawings can be recognized as a type of original, Dadaist

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<sup>71</sup> Kurt Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné 1923-1936*, 74 and 82.

<sup>72</sup> Schulz and Dickerman, *Kurt Schwitters: Color and Collage*, 93. See also Umland and Sudhalter, *Dada in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art*, 298.

<sup>73</sup> Schulz and Dickerman, *Kurt Schwitters: Color and Collage*, 93.

<sup>74</sup> Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters: Tradition and Innovation*, 140.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Luke, *Kurt Schwitters: Space, Image, Exile*, 25.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

print.

### Conclusion

Schwitters' prints from 1919 to 1923 are a combination of the traditional and the non-traditional. Through Schwitters' stamps and misprints, he used the foundations of relief blocks and lithography and then proceeded to expand the possibilities of those techniques. In his attempt to blur the boundaries of the arts, Schwitters combined stamps with pen-drawn images in order to link printmaking with drawing. Through his lithographs, he collapsed three-dimensional found objects onto two-dimensional prints. Schwitters' misprints similarly represent the playful integration of found objects with lithography. Even in his most traditional efforts, his woodcuts were stylistically different from the Expressionists prints. Schwitters was not a prolific print maker, but his limited-edition prints reveal how he was keenly aware of the potential of mass-produced material. For his woodcuts and lithographs, he cultivated relationships with notable publishers, which allowed him to circulate his original graphic works to the public. Art historian Leah Dickermann has also argued that, "We can read his work as commentary on the precipitously expanded print culture of the modern era."<sup>78</sup> Indeed, Schwitters' multimedia works of his famous literary character, Anna Blume, will demonstrate how the artist fully capitalized on the promotional function of printmaking in the proceeding chapter.

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<sup>78</sup> Schulz and Dickerman, *Kurt Schwitters: Color and Collage*, 95.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ANNA BLUME IN PRINT

This chapter will focus on one lithograph by Schwitters, titled *Ohne Titel (Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil)*, from 1921, about which little has been published.<sup>79</sup> A close study of Schwitters' *Catalogue raisonné* verifies that this print connects to numerous other works, such as his stamp-drawings, and his popular poem *An Anna Blume* from 1919. Kurt Schwitters' stamp-drawings and prints discussed in chapter one revealed that there is a close relationship between image and text within his works. When Schwitters first produced collages and assemblages, he discovered that works on paper could combine media, image, and text in order to create Merz, and to achieve Schwitters' idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

With Schwitters' ideas about the overlap of the arts in mind, this chapter will first discuss Schwitters' literary arts and the broader implications *An Anna Blume* had on his career. Second, this chapter will argue that the fragmented text of the poem was transformed visually into the print *Ohne Titel (Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil)* and many subsequent works based on Schwitters' poem, which will be discussed through comparative formal analyses. Finally, *Ohne Titel (Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil)* will be discussed as a part of the Bauhaus' portfolio series, "Neue Europäische Graphik." The fact that this print circulated socially by way of a print portfolio reveals that while Schwitters' prints had an ideological value, they also had a promotional and commercial

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<sup>79</sup> This chapter began as a case study for the Museum of Art and Archaeology at the University of Missouri in order to research a lesser-known print in their collection by Schwitters from 1921. This particular print is officially untitled, yet is referred to in the museum's label and Kurt Schwitters' *Catalogue Raisonné* as *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*. The print being analyzed in this chapter was acquired by the Museum in 2004 (fig. 22). MAA's official museum label, ACC. NO. 2004.10

function. Schwitters' use of the print medium corresponds to a time in Weimar Germany when post-war print production was booming. Indeed, Schwitters' most prolific years of printmaking between 1919 and 1924 correspond to the years of inflation in Germany, when artists took advantage of printmaking to promote their artwork. This suggests that Schwitters' production of prints during these years was not coincidental, but rather historically situated. His turn to printmaking was determined by economic and political circumstances during the Weimar Republic. The context of Schwitters' print *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* ultimately exposes how he used Anna Blume in print as a tool to advertise his Dadaist works of art during a lucrative print culture period.

### **An Analysis of *An Anna Blume***

*An Anna Blume* first appeared in the periodical *Der Sturm* in August 1919, one month after the first exhibition of Schwitters' "Merz" assemblages.<sup>80</sup> Schwitters had experimented with poetry before the publication of *An Anna Blume*.<sup>81</sup> However, he referred to *An Anna Blume* as his first "Merz" poem (*Merzgedicht 1*).<sup>82</sup> Promptly following the poem's publication in *Der Sturm*, Schwitters produced the book *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* as part of Paul Steegemann's *Die Silbergäule* series. As briefly mentioned in Chapter One, the publisher Paul Steegemann was influential in literary and artistic circles in Hannover, and particularly supported Schwitters' career. Many

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 553.

<sup>81</sup> Schwitters began writing poetry in 1914, which used traditional poetic structures and language. Towards 1918, his poetry became increasingly experimental in structure and grammar. See the poems *Cnudgel* (1918-1920) and *Madd Madd World* (circa 1919) in Kurt Schwitters, *Poems, Performance Pieces, Proses [sic], Plays, Poetics*, translated by Jerome Rothenberg and Pierre Joris (Cambridge, Mass. Exact Change, 2002), 3-14.

<sup>82</sup> Kurt Schwitters, *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* (1st ed. Hannover: Paul Steegemann, 1919), 5.

publishing houses were established during the post-war period, and the Verlag Paul Steegemann was especially popular in Hannover and later Berlin, where Steegemann moved in 1927.<sup>83</sup> *Die Silbergäule* ultimately produced 47 small books, comprised of German poetry and essays by popular novelists such as Heinrich Mann (fig. 41).<sup>84</sup> Schwitters' *An Anna Blume. Dichtungen* was published in the double volume 39/40. It included a cover illustration designed by Schwitters, the original *An Anna Blume* poem from *Der Sturm*, fourteen non-Merz poems, and two additional Merz poems. The publisher Christof Spengemann wrote the introduction to the small book exclaiming, "Who even is Anna Blume? Mind bending! He [Schwitters] painted the portrait of the time and did not know it."<sup>85</sup> Spengemann, like many other German avant-gardists, was fascinated by Schwitters' poem. Indeed, the initial publication of *An Anna Blume* and the subsequent book brought Schwitters immediate public attention, which is arguably one of the reasons he first gained recognition in the art world.

*An Anna Blume* intrigued Schwitters' audience because the language of the poem was unconventional and elusive in meaning:

*An Anna Blume*, 1919

Oh Du, Geliebte meiner 27 Sinne, ich liebe Dir!  
 Du, Deiner, Dich Dir, ich Dir, Du mir, — — — wir?  
 Das gehört beiläufig nicht hierher!

Wer bist Du, ungezähltes Frauenzimmer, Du bist, bist Du?  
 Die Leute sagen, Du wärest.  
 Laß sie sagen, sie wissen nicht, wie der Kirchturm steht.

Du trägst den Hut auf Deinen Füßen und wanderst auf die Hände,  
 Auf den Händen wanderst Du.

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<sup>83</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 21.

<sup>84</sup> The publication of *An Anna Blume. Dichtungen* preceded his *Kathedrale: Merz-Steinzeichnungen* publication in the 41/42 volumes of *Die Silbergäule*. See *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 4. Original text: "...Wer ist überhaupt Anna Blume? Verbogenes Hirn! Er malte das Bildnis der Zeit und wußte es nicht..."

Halloh, Deine roten Kleider, in weiße Falten zersägt,  
Rot liebe ich Anna Blue, rot liebe ich Dir.  
Du, Deiner, Dich Dir, ich Dir, Du mir, --- wir?  
Das gehört beiläufig in die kalte Glut!  
Anna Blume, rote Anna Blume, wie sagen die Leute?

*Preisfrage:*

- 1.) Anna Blue hat ein Vogel,
- 2.) Anna Blue ist rot.
- 3.) Welche Farbe hat der Vogel.

Blau ist die Farbe Deines gelben Haares,  
Rot ist die Farbe deines grünen Vogels.  
Du schlichtes Mädchen im Alltagskleid,  
Du liebes grünes Tier, ich liebe Dir!  
Du, Deiner, Dich Dir, ich Dir, Du mir, --- wir!  
Das gehört beiläufig in die ---Glutenkiste.

Anna Blume, Anna, A---N---N---A!  
Ich träufle Deinen Namen.  
Dein Name tropft wie weiches Rindertalg.  
Weißt Du es Anna, weißt Du es schon,  
Man kann Dich auch von hinten lesen.  
Und Du, Du Herrlichste von allen,

Du bist von hinten, wie von vorne:  
A---N---N---A.  
Rindertalg träufelt STREICHELN über meinen Rücken.  
Anna Blume,  
Du tropfes Tier,  
Ich-----liebe-----Dir!<sup>86</sup>

*An Anna Blume* is clearly a love poem. Schwitters begins the poem by capitalizing “Du,” imitating letter writing. The poem is for Anna and he confesses his love to her in the first verse with the phrase “ich liebe Dir,” which also continues throughout the following stanzas. He persistently proclaims his love for Anna by saying she belongs to him through fragmented lines, such “*Du, Deiner, Dich Dir, ich Dir, Di mir, --- wir?*” He also suggests that he belongs to her, but concludes the phrase with a question mark to create a sense of uncertainty.

Schwitters asks who she is, and asks his readers (“Die Leute”) if they can answer

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<sup>86</sup> Reproduced in Schwitters, *Poems, Performance Pieces, Proses [sic], Plays, Poetics*, 15.

the prize question (“Preisfrage”), like they would in a popular culture magazine.<sup>87</sup>

However, Schwitters’ clues are nonsensical: “1. Anna Blume has a bird, 2. Anna Blume is red, 3. What colors are the birds.” The poem does not provide the reader with a clear image of Anna Blume, and who she represents will be elaborated upon in Chapter Three.

Turning to the structure of the poem, Schwitters played with sense and nonsense by crafting the poem with a combination of conventional rhetorical devices and unconventional grammar. Schwitters used poetic formal elements such as anaphora, or the repetition of the word at every clause, through the line “Weißt Du es Anna, Weißt Du es Schon.” Furthermore, Schwitters used rhyme (Tier – dir), assonance (Sinne – liebe or dir – mir - wir), and alliteration (Du – Deiner – Dich – Dir).<sup>88</sup>

The varying colors of white, red, blue, green, and yellow mentioned in the poem also “stimulate visual and physiological excitement...the colors contribute to the impression of multivalence and enhance the quick cinematic cut from image to image.”<sup>89</sup> These poetic devices provided pleasure and rhythm for the early twentieth-century reader, which they would have been accustomed to in Expressionist poetry published before Dadaist poetry. For example, the Berlin poet Jakob von Hoddis, who was associated with the artists Hugo Ball and Ludwig Meidner, published his works in the popular periodical *Die Aktion*. In the first stanza of Hoddis’ poem *Weltende* from 1911, readers clearly comprehend the poem’s expression of rhyme, “Dem Bürger fliegt vom spitzen Kopf der Hut./In allen Lüften hallt es wie Geschrei./Dachdecker stürzen ab und gehn entzwei,/Und

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<sup>87</sup> Thank you to Professor James van Dyke for suggesting the meaning of the term “Preisfrage.”

<sup>88</sup> Frauke von der Horst, *Anna Blume “Gut Aufgehoben”: A Semiotic Interpretation of Works by Kurt Schwitters* (PhD diss., University of California, 1995), 215-216.

<sup>89</sup> Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters*, 79.

an den Küsten—liest man—steigt die Flut.”<sup>90</sup> The poetic devices mentioned above also prove Schwitters’ knowledge of traditional poetry. In other words, Schwitters could have created a comprehensible poem, but he chose to use unconventional elements to disrupt a reader’s understanding of the poem. For example, Schwitters creates a paradox through the phrase “blau ist die Farbe deines gelben Haars” when he describes Anna Blume’s appearance. Yet the paradox may also confuse the reader, leading them to question whether Anna Blume’s hair is actually blue or yellow. Schwitters used unconventional words (tropfen and 27 Sinne) and played with grammatical cases. The phrase “Ich liebe Dir,” uses the dative case rather than the correct accusative case. By using “Dir,” Schwitters was perhaps either imitating a Berlin dialect or employing the nonsensical style of the Dadaists.<sup>91</sup>

Poetry was, indeed, an extension of Schwitters’ Dada and Expressionist-influenced Merz, which was also intentionally fragmented and nonsensical. In addition to playing with grammar, syntax, and words, Schwitters composed *Anna Blume* of fragments of found text and speech, similar to how he made his collages and misprints. *An Anna Blume* was originally composed from “collecting scraps of conversations and newspaper cuttings” in which Schwitters reformed them to create “verbal nonsense.”<sup>92</sup> In *Anna Blume. Dichtungen*, Schwitters argued that poetry is analogous to Merz because, like poetry, Merz uses words that are “torn from their former context, dissociated, and

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<sup>90</sup> Michael Hamburger, *German Poetry, 1910-1975: An Anthology* (New York: Urizen Books, 1976), 92-95.

<sup>91</sup> I would like to thank Professor Sean Ireton of the German and Russian Studies Department at the University of Missouri for helping me with the translation of *An Anna Blume*, as well as giving me insight into the meaning of the poem.

<sup>92</sup> Schwitters, *Kurt Schwitters: Retrospective: May-June 1965*, 37.

brought into a new artistic context.”<sup>93</sup> Schwitters perhaps formed *An Anna Blume* in this way to equate love to nonsense. The poem becomes an ironic, yet entertaining, commentary on traditional poetry and love once the Dadaist elements are brought into play. Anna Blume’s name especially evokes humor and nonsense. Her name A-N-N-A is palindromic wordplay when Schwitters writes “Du bist von hinten, wie von vorne” in the last stanza. Werner Schmalenbach argued, “The poem could become a real love poem, a love poem in which grammar and vocabulary were tangled up not only because Dada demanded it but because the intoxication of love demanded it.”<sup>94</sup> Therefore, the use of parody and wordplay in *An Anna Blume* suggests that Schwitters is mocking the language of traditional poetry and society’s treatment of love and desire.<sup>95</sup>

As mentioned above, the popularity of *An Anna Blume* was immense for such a relatively unknown artist outside of the Hannover art world. The initial publication of *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* was reprinted ten times within the first year.<sup>96</sup> The poem’s influence spread fast among avant-garde circles and the public, who debated if Schwitters was brilliant or insane. Art historian Elizabeth Burns Gamard has argued, “at the time of its publication, Anna Blume was considered both radical and threatening...many readers granted credence to an ‘irrevocable diagnosis of insanity, mental illness, and dementia praecox.’ The vociferousness of many of the reactions indicates that the poem struck a raw nerve among Germany’s *bürgerliche*.”<sup>97</sup> Indeed, the public either adored or hated

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<sup>93</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 99.

<sup>94</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 205.

<sup>95</sup> Luke, *Kurt Schwitters: Space, Image, Exile*, 5.

<sup>96</sup> Michael White, “Dada Migrations,” In *A Companion to Dada and Surrealism*, edited by David Hopkins (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2016), 61.

<sup>97</sup> Elizabeth Burns Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters’ Merzbau: The Cathedral of Erotic Misery*, 1st ed. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000), 54.

Anna Blume, and Schwitters responded, “My Anna Blume went from triumph to triumph. People condemned me and kept out of my way.”<sup>98</sup> Some of his readers recognized that the poem was considered a social commentary piece designed to mock its readers.<sup>99</sup> They believed the experimental language and structure of *An Anna Blume* is how Schwitters ironically criticized the “madness of the period and the misguidedness of modern poets.”<sup>100</sup> The poem also led to a public quarrel with the leader of the Berlin Dada group, Richard Huelsenbeck, who had rejected Schwitters from Club Dada in the previous year. Huelsenbeck openly condemned the poem and thought that the poem revealed “an idealism made dainty by madness” and was “rather silly.”<sup>101</sup> Huelsenbeck’s reaction was primarily due to the fact that *An Anna Blume* led the public to believe that Schwitters was a Dadaist, which the nonsensical poem and fragmented visual depictions of Anna Blume suggested.

### **Depictions of Anna Blume**

An examination of Schwitters’ oeuvre reveals that the print *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* is visually connected to many other works that he produced between 1916 and 1921 (figs. 1, 5-6, 35-39). In fact, the imagery of numbers, windmills, wheels, arrows, hearts, and even the head in profile is seen in nearly a third of the works he produced in 1919.<sup>102</sup> The windmill, heart and wheel forms were initially depicted separately from one another. However, at the beginning of 1919, they steadily began to

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<sup>98</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 41.

<sup>99</sup> Carey and Griffiths, *The Print in Germany*, 256.

<sup>100</sup> Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters*, 75.

<sup>101</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 36, 39, 40.

<sup>102</sup> Kurt Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné 1905-1922 and 1923-1936*, 213, 214, 217, 221, 233, 238, 245, 246, etc.

appear together in the same picture, sometimes with the addition of the arrow and the heart. Schwitters' watercolors are some of the best examples of the works that contained a combination of the forms (figs. 38, 39). It is apparent that many of these works also have titles and scribbles that read "Anna Blume," which is also visible in many of the stamp-drawings mentioned in chapter one (figs. 5, 6). Finally, the cover illustration for Schwitters' book became the public face of *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* when the book was published in 1919. It cements the connection between such works, *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*, and the original poem (fig. 40). Among additional images (i.e. a coffee grinder, locomotives, etc.), Schwitters' poem *An Anna Blume* offers many of these works a context and narrative.

In *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*, the array of fragmented and abstracted forms appears to be nonsensical and illustrate Schwitters' inspiration from the Dadaists. Some forms appear to intentionally stand out more than others. In the center of the composition, viewers see a head in left profile and circling that head is a number of scattered forms with an asymmetrical balance. The forms appear to be arranged in the space of the composition without any relation to one another. Furthermore, they are a combination of representational and purely abstracted images. Starting with the head in left profile, the figure is angular and unadorned but is clearly recognizable as a human being. The outline of the figure's lips seems delicate and thin, which gives the viewer reason to believe that the figure is a woman. The figure's eye is vertical, unnatural, and pointing downward towards the abstracted shape of a heart, seen just below the figure's chin. The figure is wearing a hat-like form, which is attached to an abstracted wheel and perhaps a mechanical gear or a feather plume upon the crown of the head. Also within

this 'hat' there is the shape of a window. The relationship of these simplified, yet representational forms, are unknown. Perhaps the wheel and house are implying a rural or industrial setting. Nonetheless, there are more abstracted forms, such as another "wheel" mounted on an upright post, which is resting upon a large semi-circle that encloses the bottom left-hand corner of the print. This wheel and post are smaller and located just behind the tip of the figure's nose as if they were in the composition's background. This form is perhaps reminiscent of a windmill seen far off into a distant field, which further adds to the impression of a rural setting. On the other hand, it could be a flower in the foreground being sniffed by the central figure. Also scattered around the composition are hatch marks, a box, a numerical four and simplified arrows. Three of the arrows are directly pointing up towards the heart, while another arrow is carried down from the figure's neckline and points directly at Schwitters' signature. His initials, "K.S.," were also drawn onto the lithographic stone, and printed on the bottom left hand corner in the semi-circle. The work is not created with color but is, instead, based upon the weight of lines to create a value of grey to black upon the white, Japanese woven paper. Schwitters most likely drew the work with a lithographic crayon, which gives the composition a hand-drawn quality and control over the tonal variations. Many of these lines are heavy and bold, which intensifies certain areas of the composition, particularly seen in the arrows, number, windmill, inverted eye and the heart.

This formal analysis leads to the conclusion that Schwitters' images of Anna Blume do not simply illustrate the text. While *Komposition mit Kopf im Linkfsprofil* depicts a bold numeral four on the left side of the composition, there is no mention of the number within the poem, although the number could possibly represent the number of

letters used in DADA or ANNA (fig. 22). Furthermore, the sometimes paradoxical aspects of Anna Blume's appearance that are mentioned in the poem do not make their way into this group of prints and drawings. *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*, for example, does not include Anna's red and white dress as the poem suggests. Instead, the connection lies in the abstracted structure of the poem and the abstracted formal elements of each depiction. In other words, works such as the cover of *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* and *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* have translated the concept of Anna Blume into visual form. Similar to Schwitters' prose, the visual representations of Anna Blume blend traditional and untraditional, the representational and the abstract, or art with Dadaist non-art.

The consistent elements within each depiction of Anna Blume also change from one work to another. Although the head in left profile with an inverted eye could definitively be referred to as Anna Blume, *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* shows her wearing a hat and *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* places her on what appears to be a piece of paper (figs. 22, 40). The arrows, while a sign of movement, imply something different when they are directly pointed at the heart in *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*. The arrows are about to pierce the heart as if Cupid had just drawn his bow in order to infect Anna with uncontrollable love and desire, which is particularly significant given the thematic love of *An Anna Blume*. The placement of Schwitters' initials is even positioned in the place of Cupid. Furthermore, the heart is not simply the conventional symbol representing a heart; rather it has specific social and cultural connotations. The heart appears to attach itself to the side of Anna's face and it is pulling her eye downward as well as the corner of her mouth. The lines extending from the heart to her face can be

interpreted as strings. The strings and heart image correspond with a *Lebkuchenherz*, a heart-shaped gingerbread cookie that is to be worn around one's neck by the string like a necklace (fig. 42).<sup>103</sup> The *Lebkuchenherz* is a German gift that is bought at an open-air market or festival to be given to a loved one. The cookies have texts made from frosting, saying "Ich liebe dich" or "Du bist alles für mich". The "Lebkuchenherz" is a very sentimental, or kitsch, form of expression. Rather than enjoying the gift, the *Lebkuchenherz* is used ironically to quite literally weigh her down and create a forlorn facial expression.

This connection, however, is lost on *Anna Blume. Dichtungen*, where there are no arrows pointed at Anna Blume's heart located below her head and behind the bold letters 'd a d a' (fig. 40). The heart located to the right side of the composition is perhaps Schwitters' heart, which is partially pierced by an arrow and encompasses the image of a coffee grinder. In this work, Schwitters is the character torn by love and desire. However, the cover is less about spreading the message of love than *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*. On the *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* cover, the word "dada" takes priority over the figure of Anna Blume by interrupting the composition and by being printed in bright red, which is the only color used in the work. In this variation of Anna Blume, Schwitters is making the statement that "this is dada, and it signifies an artistic concept that refuses conventions of art and proposes an integration of art and non-art."<sup>104</sup> The placement of his signature between the first letters D and A overtly associates

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<sup>103</sup> I am grateful for the insights Professor James van Dyke generously shared with me regarding the direction of this paper. His identification of the *Lebkuchenherz* and its possible connection to the heart form originally led me into the discussion of 'kitsch' forms of expression.

<sup>104</sup> Von der Horst, *Anna Blume "Gut Aufgehoben,"* 211.

Schwitters with the Dadaist group. Schwitters' stunt is intentional, and his audience would have made the connection between Schwitters and Dada when they bought a copy of the book.

Schwitters capitalized on his scandalous success by immediately publishing *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* and then continuing to produce more works featuring his popular female character. By 1922 Schwitters wrote approximately five more poems about Anna Blume and two additional collections of poetry titled *Die Blume Anna* in *Der Sturm* and *Memoiren Anna Blumes in Bleie*.<sup>105</sup> His publisher, Paul Steegemann, printed *An Anna Blume* on posters that he "plastered" all over the streets of Hannover.<sup>106</sup> *An Anna Blume* was also translated into English, French, Dutch, Italian, and Hungarian.<sup>107</sup> Schwitters kept Anna Blume in circulation to the public well after the poem was first published in 1919. Therefore, all subsequent works of Anna Blume after 1919 can be seen as a form of advertisement for the poem and an assertion of Schwitters' success.

### **The Function of the Print in Context**

*Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* is also an example of how prints were circulated and marketed during the Weimar Republic. Schwitters created the lithograph for the Weimar Bauhaus's five-part series of portfolios, "Neue Europäische Graphik." (figs. 43, 44). Specifically, the print was featured in the third installment titled, "Deutsche

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<sup>105</sup> See the poems *Call It Killing You Off* (1919) and *Execution* (1919) in Schwitters, *Poems, Performance Pieces, Proses [sic], Plays, Poetics*, 17-18.

<sup>106</sup> Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, 41.

<sup>107</sup> Schwitters translated the poem into English himself in 1942, under the title "Anna Blossom Has Wheels" with various changes in his word choice. See Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau: The Cathedral of Erotic Misery*, 79. As well as, Schwitters, *Poems, Performance Pieces, Proses [sic], Plays, Poetics*, 16.

Künstler,” on the eleventh sheet.<sup>108</sup> The director of the Bauhaus, Walter Gropius, began the project as one part of an effort “to demonstrate the school’s self-sufficiency and gain financial independence from the conservative Thuringian government.”<sup>109</sup> The state government made numerous attempts to control the Bauhaus’ administration, such as when they refused to grant money for projects. Conservative parties fought to close the institution because they believed that the students and teachers had “Communist and Bolshevik tendencies.”<sup>110</sup> As a result, Gropius published an advertising prospectus and listed the names of invited international artists in order to raise public interest among avant-garde circles.<sup>111</sup> The artists who participated were then divided geographically into five promised portfolios: “Meistermappe des Staatlichen Bauhauses” (I), “Deutsche Künstler” (III and V), “Italienische und russische Künstler” (IV), and “Französisch Künstler” (II) that never was produced once the government succeeded in forcing the school to close in 1924.<sup>112</sup> Before the portfolios materialized, the Bauhaus sold advanced subscriptions to the public at 2200 Marks for one portfolio and 10,000 Marks for the full set of five. A “Vorzugsexemplar,” or luxury version, was also offered for 5000 and 22,500 Marks, respectively.<sup>113</sup>

Under the direction of Lyonel Feininger, the portfolios were printed and bound

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<sup>108</sup> Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 433

<sup>109</sup> Maynes, “Speculating on Paper,” 75.

<sup>110</sup> In particular, the state government refused to fund the architecture department’s plan to build a large-scale housing unit for students. See Magdalena Droste, and Bauhaus-Archiv, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933* (Taschen, 2002), 112-113.

<sup>111</sup> Erin Maynes lists many well-established artists who never responded to Gropius’s Prospect, such as Georges Braque, Pablo Picasso, Wilhelm Lehmbruck, Robert Delaunay, Ludwig Meidner, and Edvard Munch. See Erin Sullivan Maynes, “Speculating on Paper: Print Culture and the German Inflation, 1918 – 1924” (PhD diss. University of Southern California, 2014), 75-79.

<sup>112</sup> Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*, 99.

<sup>113</sup> Maynes, “Speculating on Paper,” 79.

with the school's resources, and the money from the advanced subscriptions helped to fund the remaining budget for materials and production. The distribution of the portfolios was then carried out by the Potsdam publishing firm, Müller and Company.<sup>114</sup> Although Schwitters signed the print with the date "1921", many of the Bauhaus portfolios were retroactively printed between 1921 and 1924.<sup>115</sup> Like most lithographs submitted to the school, Schwitters must have completed the drawing in 1921 on transfer paper, and then the Bauhaus managed the printing process by using either limestone or zinc plates.<sup>116</sup> For the third portfolio, Schwitters was invited to contribute his work along with lithograph and woodcut prints by thirteen other artists such as Max Ernst, August Macke and Franz Marc, to name a few (figs. 45-47).<sup>117</sup> Each of the artists made the prints available to the Bauhaus free-of-charge as a way to support the embattled school.<sup>118</sup>

Print portfolios were widely favored by German artists, collectors, and dealers in the first two decades of the twentieth century for numerous reasons. The Bauhaus' portfolio series and this print reflect the revival of print portfolio culture in the early-twentieth century in Germany. Fine art printmaking originated in Germany, and was widespread by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In subsequent centuries, there had been a continuous rise and fall of the significance of print and print portfolio making. Discussion and debates on the cultural and social status of the print had revolved around

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 75-76.

<sup>115</sup> In fact, every portfolio carries the date "1921." Ibid., 78.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>117</sup> Other artists included in the third portfolio are: Rudolf Bauer, Willi Baumeister, Jacoba van Heemskerck, Arnold Topp, Heinrich Campendonk, Walter Dexel, Oskar Fischer, Johannes Molzahn, Fritz Stuckenberg, and William Wauer.

<sup>118</sup> Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1905-1922*, 434.

whether printmaking should be considered a “vulgar” or “inferior” artistic medium in comparison to painting. Beginning in the late eighteenth century, printed matter permeated everyday life through newspapers, periodicals, pamphlets, and so on. Engravings were also made from paintings and made available as an inexpensive way to collect art. In effect, the value of printmaking was open to question; it was often regarded merely as a reproductive tool. Although artists continued to produce prints, they were persistently viewed as “incidental to their primary work (i.e. paintings).”<sup>119</sup> Ultimately, the production of print portfolios was revived first by the printmaker Max Klinger in the late-nineteenth century, and then, in very different technical and stylistic terms, by the Expressionist group Die Brücke around 1905. Like Schwitters, Klinger was “attracted to the cycle’s possibilities of functioning as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or a total work of art, in which he combined visual imagery with various artistic principles drawn from literature (poetry and drama) and music.”<sup>120</sup> The members of Die Brücke further recognized the benefit of the print medium’s reproductive qualities and its ability to promote ideas and work to as wide an audience as possible.<sup>121</sup>

The creation of a portfolio series like “Neue Europäische Graphik,” demonstrates this renewed interest in sharing artistic ideas with society via print culture. The Weimar Bauhaus allowed their viewers to discover what styles and ideas were emerging and also to see the various graphic media being used at the time (i.e. woodcuts and lithographs). Schwitters’ collaboration with the Bauhaus offered him the means to spread his idea of

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<sup>119</sup> Heller, *Stark Impressions: Graphic Production in Germany*, 7-9.

<sup>120</sup> Robin Reisenfeld, *The German Print Portfolio, 1890-1930: Serials for a Private Sphere* (London: Phillip Wilson; Chicago; David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, 1992), 27.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

Merz, as well as his message of irony and love through his images of Anna Blume.

By the time Schwitters created his first print in 1919, “every major German artist” had begun to make prints.<sup>122</sup> Artists such as George Grosz “embraced the mass-produced print” and saw value in the quick and cost-efficient medium.<sup>123</sup> Grosz, like many other artists, recognized that World War I continued to have an effect on post-war Germany’s economy, which resulted in the dramatic increase of printed material. In a word, the war and its consequences accelerated the wartime inflation of the Germany currency.

According to the historian Detlev Peukert, Germany’s inflation had three defining phases. Inflation and demobilization began during the war from 1918 to 1922. Second, inflation escalated to hyperinflation in August 1922. Finally, hyperinflation ended in November 1923 when the provisional currency, the Rentenmark, was introduced.<sup>124</sup> The combination of inflation and low-cost printmaking led to a greater number of artists to turn to works on paper to create their art. During the first phase of the post-war inflationary period, “printmaking was simply a less expensive undertaking with more immediate potential rewards. Artists could produce prints—particularly lithographs—more quickly than paintings.”<sup>125</sup>

Inflation changed not only the media artists used, but also the way dealers and publishers facilitated prints to be produced and consumed. Art historian Robin Reisenfeld has argued that the rapid industrialization in Germany during the second half of the nineteenth century initially sparked an interest among the rising bourgeoisie to buy and collect prints and print portfolios. She states, “as this new economic class withdrew

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>123</sup> Maynes, “Speculating on Paper,” 27.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 17.

from the public life of the city, collecting art became a means to validate their position in society. Toward the end of the century many businessmen began to acquire contemporary art in all its forms, including prints.”<sup>126</sup> Combined with the inflated economy between 1919 and 1923, art dealers also began to acknowledge the revival of the prints, because the medium was more affordable for the public. People were anxious to invest in luxury goods that they hoped would appreciate in value, unlike Germany’s currency, which was rapidly depreciating. They were desperate, in a word, to buy art, and artists worked to satisfy this market. During the rise of the consumer-oriented market, dealers such as Paul Cassier became publishers and advised their artists to create more prints, which would help them gain recognition among wider audiences.

Print portfolios were especially valued because they offered the public an “instant collection.”<sup>127</sup> For example, Otto Dix’s dealer, Karl Nierendorf, approached Dix and encouraged the artist to make a portfolio in order to promote his art. As a result, Dix even took printmaking classes at the Düsseldorf Academy in order to learn how to etch, and published several portfolios such as the series *Der Krieg* from 1924.<sup>128</sup> It can be argued that the growing collaborations between publishers, dealers, and artists led Schwitters to follow suit and work with publishers like *Der Sturm*, Paul Steegemann, and the Bauhaus. Without the aid of a publisher and dealer giving the artist easier access to the art market, Schwitters’s career may not have launched as quickly as it did.

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<sup>126</sup> Reisenfeld also states that “Die Brücke’s list of subscribers shows that many [of these buyers] were located socially and economically within one or the other of the defined subsets of this new middle class.” Reisenfeld, *The German Print Portfolio*, 27-28.

<sup>127</sup> Maynes, “Speculating on Paper,” 74.

<sup>128</sup> See Ida Katherine Rigby, “The Revival of Printmaking” In *German Expressionist Prints and Drawings. The Robert Gore Rifkind Center for German Expressionist Studies, Vol. 1*, edited by Stephanie Barron, et al (Los Angeles, California: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), 10. As well as Reisenfeld, *The German Print Portfolio*, 28.

In and after 1922, Germany's post-war print boom declined as a result of overproduction and worsening economic conditions. Inflation escalated to hyperinflation, and the Mark was devalued at 4.2 Trillion to the dollar by the fall of 1923.<sup>129</sup> While inflation initially contributed to the rise of print culture, the enormous volume of printed matter being produced "threatened to again devalue the print in a financial and symbolic sense."<sup>130</sup> As paper money became nearly worthless, works on paper increasingly began to be viewed similarly. As a result, the public was no longer interested in or able to afford new prints, including the Bauhaus's *Neue Europäische Graphik* series. Since the Bauhaus sold subscriptions to the portfolios before 1922, the cost of production became more than the school initially sold them for. The school attempted to raise the prices of the portfolios, but the project was "ultimately an economic failure for the Bauhaus."<sup>131</sup> In the end, "Neue Europäische Graphik" probably helped Schwitters more than the school. There is certainly no indication that the failed project hurt his career, and *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* was at least successfully circulated to the people who bought the advanced subscriptions.

Furthermore, the rapid commercialization of graphic works became the subject of debate among the critics Curt Glaser and Walter Ley.<sup>132</sup> In 1922, Glaser argued, "never in the course of the nineteenth century was there so much that was enduring and worthwhile being created in etching, woodcut and lithography as in the course of the last decade. But the bulk of it is not necessary, and is dangerous if it threatens to drown out

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<sup>129</sup> Maynes, "Speculating on Paper," 26.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 24-25.

<sup>132</sup> Reisenfeld, *The German Print Portfolio*, 19.

quality.”<sup>133</sup> By the use of the word “quality,” Glaser implied that the promotional benefits of printed works became far greater of a concern to artists than the skill or content they were producing.

Schwitters’ prints are perhaps a prime example of Glaser’s argument. Schwitters is among the artists who created prints during the post-war boom and then abandoned the medium after 1924, even though the economy began to stabilize.<sup>134</sup> In fact, Schwitters’ 1923 *Merz Mappe* portfolio was the last lithographic work he produced. It should be noted, however, that Schwitters continued to work with misprints and stamp drawings until 1938. Yet Anna Blume was no longer the subject of his traditional or untraditional prints. After the creation of *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*, the heart, wheel, and windmill forms were only represented a handful of times and separately from one another between 1922 and 1948, the year he died.<sup>135</sup> *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* was the start of an end to Schwitters’ fascination with these forms and, ultimately, his love affair with Anna Blume.

### Conclusion

Schwitters’ print *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* can be understood in several ways. The contents of the print shows the comical and ironic views of love expressed in the poem *An Anna Blume*. Formally, the print also embodies the fragmented characteristics of Dada and the goal of “Merz,” which was to achieve the “sum total of art

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<sup>133</sup> Quote translated by Erin Sullivan Maynes in Maynes, “Speculating on Paper,” 19-20.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>135</sup> Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné: 1938-1948*, 113, 174, 178, 332, 358.

in its various forms.”<sup>136</sup> Schwitters developed his poem *An Anna Blume* through different media – performance art, watercolors, assemblages, stamp-drawings, and collages. Through *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*, Anna Blume became a lithograph. Schwitters had exhausted all the possibilities of different media and compositions to portray the same theme almost to the point of obsession. Yet Schwitters’ effort to achieve Merz was strategic and, in effect, draws attention to the print’s function. He understood that the popularity of *An Anna Blume* and print culture could allow him to gain more recognition in the art world, as is evident from the mass of Anna Blume works he proceeded to create after 1919. Like many artists during Weimar Germany, Schwitters was able to use prints as a tool to reproduce his art, spread ideas, promote his name, and also explore alternative ways to create art. These benefits were largely made possible because of the poor economy, which also leads unavoidably to the conclusion that Schwitters’ prints were the historically specific product of the post-war period. When the “golden age of German graphic art” subsided in 1924, so did Schwitters’ experiments with the print medium.<sup>137</sup> Nevertheless, Schwitters’ reputation was established among most avant-garde circles and the print medium was fundamental to his success.

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<sup>136</sup> Schwitters, *Kurt Schwitters: Retrospective: May-June 1965*, 14.

<sup>137</sup> Maynes, “Speculating on Paper,” 16-17.

## CHAPTER THREE

### FEMININE IDENTITIES ON PRINT IN POST-WAR GERMANY

This chapter will return to the question, “Who is Anna Blume?” Chapter Two established that Schwitters expressed particular views of love in his poem *An Anna Blume*, yet the poem never identified who Anna Blume represents as a woman. *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* offered a representation of Schwitters’ fictional character expressing the poem’s message of ironic love and kitsch sarcasm. In contrast, the cover design for *An Anna Blume. Dichtungen* prioritized Schwitters’ Dadaist agenda over the image of the female figure, which was also compositionally different from the Bauhaus print. If each depiction differs from one representation to the next, can there be one Anna Blume? This chapter will present different arguments from art historians who have both questioned if Anna Blume refers to a specific person and ultimately suggested that she is a representation of desire and the modern woman.

Anna Blume was born from a specific period: at the end of the First World War, during economic instability, and at a time where print and print portfolios pervaded the public sphere. Wartime created a stronger presence of women in the public and in the work force, which lasted throughout span of the Weimar Republic from 1918 to 1933. As a result, gender dichotomy grew and roles of women were critiqued in order to understand the cultural changes of the society at large. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, artistic prints made during the Weimar Republic reinforced certain roles and identities of German women, such as the prostitute, the mother, and the New Woman. Schwitters’ contemporaries, such as Otto Dix, Max Beckmann, Max Pechstein, Käthe Kollwitz, and Hannah Höch, indeed promoted various ideas of woman on print

during the tenuous period. Representing women in prints, or art in general, is far from revolutionary. However, these artists offer variety of feminine identities present during the Weimar Republic; some of which were created as a reaction to the new liberties, roles, and appearances of women. By comparing how Schwitters' treatment of the theme is similar or different from the approaches taken by his contemporaries, this chapter intends to clarify where Schwitters placed himself regarding gender issues and, consequently, the identity of Anna Blume.

### **Anna Blume as the Desirable, Modern Woman**

According to Elizabeth Burns Gamard, *An Anna Blume* expresses the “impudent play between paramour and pursuer: she is at once mercurial, childlike, ageless, wise, rejecting, desirable, difficult, and embracing.”<sup>138</sup> While Anna Blume has many conflicting characteristics, she also takes many forms from text to stamp-drawings, watercolors, collages, assemblages, and to prints. It is therefore difficult to assign Anna Blume an identity. However, the sheer volume of Anna Blume works creates the sense that Anna Blume was Schwitters' “idealized muse.”<sup>139</sup>

A number of scholars, working biographically, have suggested that Anna Blume was modeled on a real individual. Schwitters never stated Anna Blume represents his wife, Helma Schwitters, although she modeled for of his several portraits and genre paintings in 1916 and 1917.<sup>140</sup> *Vision* (1916-17) depicts Helma Schwitters' head in left

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<sup>138</sup> Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau: The Cathedral of Erotic Misery*, 54.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> Dorothea Dietrich, “Love as Commodity: Kurt Schwitters's Collages of Women,” in *Women in Dada: Essays on Sex, Gender, and Identity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 206.

profile, providing a connection between her and every image of Anna Blume rendered in the same view (fig. 35).<sup>141</sup> Nevertheless, Gamard believes Anna Blume might have originated with Schwitters' first love, named Else. In 1937, Schwitters wrote that she was his childhood playmate, and he was not permitted to play with her once he reached puberty. Schwitters remained so consumed by Else that, "on evening walks after dark he would try to get a glimpse of her and, if successful, he would note the event in his diary." One night he had a vision of her in his bedroom in a white-laced gown, and he learned the following morning that she died of blood poisoning at the age of eighteen.<sup>142</sup>

Anna Blume and Else are similar because they are subjects of Schwitters' desire. There is perhaps a deeper connection through the origins of Anna's last name, "Blume." The word "Blume" – or "flower" – is a traditional poetic metaphor for a woman. The flower refers to her feminine body and evokes sexual desire.<sup>143</sup> "Blume" also draws a connection to the early Romantic writings of Novalis (Frederick von Hardenberg), who popularized the mystical concept of the "Blue Flower" in the nineteenth century. Through Novalis' novel, *Heinrich Von Ofterdingen*, the flower became a symbol for desire and unrequited love.<sup>144</sup> Desire is also the consistent factor connecting every variation of Anna Blume. Gamard argues, "collectively or separately, they are women of Schwitters' imagination and thus always the subject of longing."<sup>145</sup> Schwitters' desire

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<sup>141</sup> Most notably seen on the cover illustration of *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* (1919) and *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* (1921).

<sup>142</sup> Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau*, 57, 80. Gamard acknowledges that the connection between Else and Anna Blume was originally argued by art historian, Annegreth Nill. See also Schwitters, Kurt. "Meine erste Liebe," in "Prosa 1931-1948," *Das literarische Werk*, 3, p. 135.

<sup>143</sup> Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters*, 80.

<sup>144</sup> Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau*, 57.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

for Anna Blume is arguably the same as his desire for his childhood friend, Else. Else's death made her an especially unobtainable woman. Through Anna Blume, Schwitters could perhaps imagine Else as a grown woman. While Schwitters may not mention the age of Anna Blume, certain formal elements of the poem and visual works imply there is another constant between the numerous variations of Anna Blume: that she is a modern woman.

Based upon the *An Anna Blume* poem, Dorothea Dietrich argues, "Anna Blume is presented as the embodiment of multiple sensations and thus the new – that is, the modern. As indicated by her adjective "ungezählt," she is difficult to fathom, an impression underscored by the subjective "du wärest" in line 5. She is also definitely contrary to the norm, or tradition. She is contrasted with "die Leute" – the mass of humanity, which does not know "wie der Kirchturm stehe."<sup>146</sup> Dietrich's statement is further strengthened by the idea that Anna Blume is a product of popular culture, and is thus inherently connected to the social and cultural climate of the 1910s. As discussed in Chapter Two, Schwitters makes an overt reference to the language of advertisement and magazines through his "*Preisfrage*."<sup>147</sup> Schwitters' prize question calls attention to his contemporary readers, who would have recognized Schwitters' comical tactic but could not answer his questions. The phrase also carries the connotation of the expanding literature and print world, which was particularly booming after the First World War.

As also mentioned in Chapter Two, the *Lebkuchenherz* attached to Anna Blume's face in *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* refers to popular culture (fig. 22). By the

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<sup>146</sup> Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters*, 80.

<sup>147</sup> Dietrich also suggests that Schwitters' "*preisfrage*" might, "allude to Richard Wagner's prize song in his opera *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (which similarly makes reference to popular culture) and the realm of logic." *Ibid.*, 79.

twentieth century, the mass productions of items, such as the *Lebkuchenherz*, would have been made possible through advancements in industrial technology. When a gift such as the *Lebkuchenherz* is no longer hand crafted, its romantic value arguably decreases to kitsch. Through its additional connection to popular markets and fairs, the *Lebkuchenherz* further represents the modern readers of Schwitters' poem. In the watercolor *Anna Blume und ich* from 1919, Anna Blume is wearing a wheel for a necklace, rather than the *Lebkuchenherz* (fig. 39). Wheels are the most frequently used pictorial elements within Schwitters' representations of Anna Blume, which implies motion and mechanics – signs of modernity.<sup>148</sup> One is clearly recognizable above Anna Blume's head in *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*, as if her head and mind were turning, or that she is modern. Incidentally, locomotives are also seen in several works as an additional symbol of modernity, which again places Anna Blume in a modern environment. For one example, the cover design of *Anna Blume. Dichtungen* depicts a steam engine at the bottom right of the composition, which is moving towards the heart and coffee mill as predicted by the direction of the arrow (fig. 40).

John Elderfield argues that *An Anna Blume* represents the modern culture that has “reduced romantic love to a bourgeois consumer product.” Schwitters writes in the style of Dada, but uses the words of the bourgeois. As John Elderfield puts it, “...the poem is both ironic and idealistic, both avant-garde and bourgeois, like Schwitters himself.”<sup>149</sup> If Anna Blume is the embodiment of such a culture, then she must represent one or many feminine identities from Schwitters' time. Therefore, looking to the status of women in

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<sup>148</sup> Over 100 wheels may be found in Schwitters' works from 1918 to 1920. See Schwitters, *Catalogue Raisonné 1905-1922*, 262-434.

<sup>149</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 39.

the post-war period will help to better understand the meanings and implications of Schwitters' figure Anna Blume in a historical context.

### **World War I and the Cultural Reconstruction of Women**

Following the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, German women from all social classes took part in the war effort. Organizations, such as the Women's League of the German Peace Society, and social democratic women protested and urged the Kaiser to keep the peace. However, the "wave of patriotic fervor" led the majority of women to show their support for the German Imperial government and the war effort. Middle-class women used sweets, flowers, and cigars to bid the soldiers farewell. In Berlin, an estimated forty-thousand middle- and upper-class women immediately volunteered with the Red Cross. Aristocratic women opted to donate money to hospitals. By contrast, working class women fulfilled jobs needed in factories.<sup>150</sup> When the male heads of the household were called to the front, middle-class women were inevitably left to seek new sources of income. By 1918, two million women had joined the work force since the start of the First World War. Women were offered jobs by institutions and organizations that rarely hired women before the war, such as engineering firms and government administration. Manual labor jobs, such as mining, chimney sweeping, window cleaning, and construction, were especially available to women because they offered less training.<sup>151</sup>

Consequentially, women were met with criticism from men at home, at the front,

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<sup>150</sup> Helen Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 14-15.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.

and from the state. As women began to wear uniforms and trousers to fulfill their new duties, men took notice of the “visual masculinization of women, in both musculature and dress.”<sup>152</sup> Women were under scrutiny for abandoning their motherly duties and leaving their children without a chaperone while they were at work. Women were chastised if they complained to their soldier husbands about the lack of food or money at the home front. Some communities even hired watchmen in order to minimize the risk of married women having affairs.<sup>153</sup>

Soldiers and the government never anticipated the involvement of women in the war effort, especially to such a large degree. Men ideally preferred women to “hold out or to subscribe to war bonds.”<sup>154</sup> The greater presence of women in the work force was regarded as a threat to the order of Germany’s social structure; demobilized soldiers were especially afraid that they would have to compete with women for their old jobs. Dorothy Rowe argues that the German woman’s new “economic role as a result of the war gave the illusion that they were gaining access to greater amounts of power.”<sup>155</sup> Yet women to stayed in the work force after the war. Not only were women cheaper to employ, but two million German soldiers had died. Widowed women still needed a source of income, and marriage prospects were scarce.<sup>156</sup>

Gender conflict ultimately set the tone for the cultural atmosphere of the Weimar Republic. Negative criticism towards women grew because many believed “women had

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>155</sup> Dorothy Rowe, “Desiring Berlin: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Germany,” in *Visions of the “Neue Frau” : Women and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany* (Andershot, England: Scolar Press ; Brookfield, Vt., USA: Ashgate Pub. Co., 1995), 152.

<sup>156</sup> Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 40.

suffocated men before the war; they had allowed men to go to war; they did not understand them nor support them sufficiently; they had betrayed them, either sexually or emotionally; they did not fight in the war; they had played a part in Germany's losing the war; and they had feminized German society."<sup>157</sup> In contrast, women were eager to have a greater presence in the work force and gain independence from men in general. While the number of women in the work force and political sphere does not reflect a drastic change, women did gain significant liberties in their personal and political lives.<sup>158</sup>

In the Weimar Republic, smaller families and a greater use of contraceptives became the norm. Sex reform organizations were active before the war, but gained more movement during the post-war period as society began to equate sexual liberties with "a more modern, open, and human society." In July 1919, Berlin opened the first sexual advice clinic in Germany, and 400 more were established by 1924.<sup>159</sup> Women wanted control over the rights of their bodies and sexual intercourse was no longer regarded to be solely for reproduction, but for pleasure. Smaller families also offered the opportunity for women to have a family as well as a professional career. Although women were given the right to vote in the Weimar Constitution of 1919, certain liberties were still not awarded to them. In particular, the laws on abortion adhered to the Articles 218-220 of

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<sup>157</sup> Boak acknowledges that the German historian, Stephen Brockmann, and the German sociologist, Klaus Theweleit, originally noted these seven reasons. *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>158</sup> Katharina von Ankum notes that, "Between 1918 and 1920, female membership of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) rose from only 66k to 207k...and by 1925, only 35.6 percent of all women were working, only 0.7 percent more than in 1907." In Katharina von Ankum, introduction to *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, ed. Katharina von Ankum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 4.

<sup>159</sup> The organization, Society for Sexual Reform (*Gesellschaft für Sexualreform*, Gesex) was founded in 1913. In Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 207-208.

the 1871 Criminal Code throughout most of the Weimar Republic.<sup>160</sup> Left-wing parties especially advocated against the articles.<sup>161</sup> The intense debate on abortion remained relatively in favor of anti-abortionists until 1926, when abortion was lowered from a major crime to a misdemeanor under the new Article 218.<sup>162</sup>

As a result of these cultural changes, the idea of the “New Woman” became more prominent. The image of the New Woman predates the First World War, but the idea reemerged particularly in the 1920s. The Weimar New Woman was viewed as a “sexually liberated, economically independent, self-reliant female, and perceived as a threat to social stability and an impediment to Germany’s political and economic reconstruction.”<sup>163</sup> Women were therefore classified and given particular identities so that society could identify them. For example, in 1927 the Berlin bourgeois newspaper, *8-Uhr-Abendblatt*, describes three types of women, namely as either a Gretchen, Girl, or Garçonne: “The *Gretchen* type is not only the young naïve German girl with braids and a knitting needle horizon, it is also the heroic and militaristic ranting fascist woman...sexually powerless, personally passive. The *Girl*, originating in America as the child of pioneers and immigrants...a daring athlete...she succeeds whenever she

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<sup>160</sup> Article 218 of the 1871 criminal code stated that a pregnant woman and the person performing the abortion could serve a six months to five years sentence in prison; Article 219 could sentence a woman who aborted her child for monetary gain up to 10 years in prison; Article 220 provided a sentence of two or more years to someone who aborted a child without the mother’s consent. See Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 211.

<sup>161</sup> Most notably the Social Democratic Party of Germany (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD), the German Independent Social Democratic Party (Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, USPD), and the Communist Party of Germany (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands, KPD). In Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 71.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 211-212.

<sup>163</sup> Ankum, introduction to *Women in the Metropolis*, 5. See also Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 234.

encounters the sexually bourgeois man of the old school. The *Garçonne* type...her combination of fifty to fifty percent sexual and intellectual potency often gives rise to conflict...the business- and life-artist.”<sup>164</sup> These feminine identities were perpetuated through visual culture, which allowed society to put faces to the names of these women.<sup>165</sup> Advertisements, social critics, scientists, and artists created visual representations of the New Woman, allowing women to construct a new image of themselves, and providing men with a way to comprehend the new identities of women emerging in the post-war period. Indeed, graphic works by Otto Dix and Max Beckmann demonstrate how male artists played upon the notion of the sexually liberated woman and how some female artists, such as Käthe Kollwitz, did not.

### **Prostitutes, Mothers, and the New Woman on Print**

Women and promiscuity were represented widely from a male perspective in the Weimar Republic. Images of prostitutes particularly reflected German society’s growing anxieties about the greater presence of women in urban environments, declining birthrates, and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. The *Sittenpolizei* (Morals Police) were responsible for regulating prostitution in Weimar Germany, but prostitutes greatly outnumbered the officers, and thus they remained active in the public sphere. Dorothea Rowe states, “prostitutes were acceptable to the male bourgeoisie only in

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<sup>164</sup> Lynne Frame, “Gretchen, Girl, Garçonne? Weimar Science and Popular Culture in Search of the Ideal New Woman,” in *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, edited by Katharina von Ankum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 12.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 12-14.

certain urban spaces...they were welcomed at festivals, fairs, and popular bourgeois entertainment establishments, but abhorred during daylight hours if they appeared in public civic contexts.”<sup>166</sup> Urban cities, especially Berlin, were naturally viewed as more modern environments and areas where amoral women exercised their newfound sexual independence. In contrast, it was believed that rural and catholic areas of Germany adhered to more “traditional patterns of behavior.”<sup>167</sup>

As an artist who frequently portrayed modern urban life, prostitutes and prostitution were the subject of many of Otto Dix’s post-war art works. For instance, Dix created the lithograph *Matrose und Mädchen* in 1923, which combined prostitution with the effects of sexual power (fig. 48). In the scene, the woman is identified as a prostitute by her stocking and garter. She is shown reclining and nude on a chaise longue as a sailor encloses the space behind her. The sailor is clutching the prostitute’s waist as an open sign of possession, which expresses “the role of force and power in this transaction of commercialized intimacy.”<sup>168</sup> The facial expression of the sailor shows unbridled enthusiasm and the prostitute is likewise smiling with apparent pleasure. The scene expresses the reality of the prostitute’s role, which is that a woman acts as a commodity for her client. The man seems predatory while the prostitute patiently waits with a sly smile and open body language. In *Matrose und Mädchen*, the sailor also shows no regard for the possibility of contracting a venereal disease from her. Indeed, Dix also frequently depicted prostitutes as unhygienic or clearly infected with syphilis, which suggested that

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<sup>166</sup> Rowe, “Desiring Berlin: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Germany,” in *Visions of the “Neue Frau,”* 146.

<sup>167</sup> Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 219.

<sup>168</sup> Heller, “*Matrose und Mädchen*,” in *Stark Impressions: Graphic Production in Germany, 1918-1933*, 278.

a prostitute's client was a victim.<sup>169</sup> In another print, *Besuch bei Madame Germaine in Méricourt*, from the 1924 series *Der Krieg*, Dix illustrated the interaction between a large prostitute and a one-eyed soldier (fig. 49). The contrasting roles and sizes of these two figures has led art historian Dora Apel to argue, "Dix plays on stereotypes of the prostitute as morally and physically corrupt...the disfigured soldier is not only subordinated to the prostitute but implicitly corrupted by the impurity of the transaction."<sup>170</sup> This print, as well as a print of a soldier raping a nun, was considered so provocative that Dix's dealer, Karl Nierendorf, urged the artist not to include it *Der Krieg* because he feared the government would confiscate Dix's work for defaming soldiers. While Dix complied with the scene of the nun and soldier, he refused to eliminate *Besuch bei Madame Germaine in Méricourt* from the series.<sup>171</sup> As these prints show, Dix's anti-war imagery was as equally pessimistic as his depictions of women. Ultimately his response to post-war gender relations was to document, as many modernists had before him, the consequences of sexual promiscuity through the role of the prostitute.

In some cases a woman's sexual desire was viewed positively, as seen in Max Beckmann's print *Frau in der Nacht* from 1920 (fig. 50). The scene acknowledges a woman's right to express her sexuality and a man's desire to witness her exploring her sexuality, which directly correlates to the cultural environment of the time. The print is filled with allegorical social commentary. Placed within a private room, the scene depicts a woman lounging on a sofa, next to a bottle and glass of wine. One hand is used

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<sup>169</sup> Ute L. Tellini, "Syphilis in Weimar: Prostitution, Disease and Retribution in the Art of Otto Dix and George Grosz" (*Southeastern College Art Conference Review* 13, no. 4, December 1999): 367-8.

<sup>170</sup> Dora Apel, "'Heroes' and 'Whores': The Politics of Gender in Weimar Antiwar Imagery" *The Art Bulletin* 79. 3 (1997): 369.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 372-373.

to prop up her head and the other hand plays with the top of her dress, which she has pulled down to reveal her breasts. There is a slight smile on her face as she admires herself in what appears to be a mirror on the wall opposite from her. While she is giving in to her own sexual desires and beauty, a window in the background reveals the head, eyes, and hand of a man. *Frau in der Nacht* plays with the notion of voyeurism in two ways: once from the man in the window and once again from the viewers of the print. The woman's legs are slightly parted towards the viewers of the print, rather than to the peeping Tom through the window. As a viewer's eyes move around the scene, they inevitably look upon her exposed body, which also allows them to partake in the woman's sexual exploration.<sup>172</sup> Beckmann utilizes the space of the scene to enlarge his figures, which are unnatural compared to the dimensions of the room. Art historian Michael Mackenzie argues that, "as she reclines, she is also trapped, and prey to the stares of the face in the window, close upon her, wide-eyed, a hand raised as if to reach through the window at her, blocking what might otherwise have been a possible escape..."<sup>173</sup> Mackenzie suggests that Beckmann absurdly manipulates the space in order to clarify that the sexual desire of the man and the viewer is wrong. If the woman had been made aware of the peeping Tom, she would arguably feel the fear of entrapment and shock of someone witnessing her sexual pleasure. Yet Beckmann chose not to disturb the sense of feminine empowerment in the scene. By suggesting the woman can do what she pleases and that the gazes of the man and viewer are potentially dangerous, Beckmann implies that a sexually liberated woman is positive.

Sexual liberation was also popular among the pre-war Expressionists, who created

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<sup>172</sup> Mackenzie, "*Frau in der Nacht*," in *Stark Impressions*, 262.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 262.

multi-media scenes of nude women and men in nature. However, there was an obvious line drawn between social power of men and women within Expressionist circles. In both *Die Brücke* and *Der Blau Reiter*, men led the groups' affairs, while the female members were kept on the margins as primarily the men's lovers and muses. This gender hierarchy visually remained even after the war in Max Pechstein's print *Am Strand*, created in 1922-1923 (fig. 51). Pechstein utilized the same Expressionist theme of nudes and nature, as well as the rough and angular rendering of lines. The scene depicts two women standing on the shore of a beach, facing the water, and lifting their arms to completely expose their nude bodies. By contrast, a nude male figure is shown standing in the water, directed towards the viewer, and level with the women's breasts. Although the women dominate the composition, they are submissive to the male figure because they are subject to his gaze and sexual pleasure. These figures recall the Expressionist ideal, primitive world; one where humans embrace nature and women provide pleasure and children for men.<sup>174</sup> Pechstein's scene of a male-driven utopia grants a fully exposed view of the women to the male figure, while the viewers and the women are, in contrast, given exclusive access to his body. Even as the central figure of the composition, the male figure is quite literally the center of every viewer's attention.

Many female artists, such as the print maker Käthe Kollwitz, tended not to represent women as objects of desire. Kollwitz instead offered the perspective of the "unromanticized reality of working-class life" through depictions of mothers and children.<sup>175</sup> In the post-war period, the trauma of death consumed her work. From her 1922-23 series *Krieg*, the woodcut *Die Mütter* depicts a dense grouping of mothers

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<sup>174</sup> Heller, "Am Strand," in *Stark Impressions*, 121.

<sup>175</sup> Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 277.

hugging each other and their children (fig. 52). Two children are seen peeking out of the mothers' skirts. Together they are nervous and anxious to learn the fate of their loved ones in battle.<sup>176</sup> The women of Kollwitz's print do not have sexual desire. Rather, they have the desire to protect their children. The role of the mother in the Weimar Republic was still strong, as exemplified by Kollwitz's artwork. Furthermore, she stated that the *Krieg* series represented her, "struggle to come to terms with that section of life between the years 1914-1918."<sup>177</sup> Like many mothers during wartime, Kollwitz lost a son in battle in October of 1914. Her depictions of women remind viewers that not all women were concerned with transforming their identities during and after the war. Like men, women also had to endure the negative consequences of war.

Finally, the Berlin Dadaist Hannah Höch reveals the perspective of a female artist who did utilize ready-made images of the New Woman to critique politics, gender, technology, and Weimar society. Höch was a supporter of the emancipation of women, but quickly grew disappointed by the illusion of emancipation and mistreatment she received from her male colleagues in the Berlin Dada circle. The male members, especially her lover Raoul Hausmann, excluded her from male Dada events and ridiculed her work. She was regarded as "a quiet girl" who solely made herself "indispensable by providing them with sandwiches, beer, and coffee."<sup>178</sup> In general, the female artists of Dada, "were to be seen not heard, were to be nurturers not usurpers, were to be pleasant

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<sup>176</sup> Erin Hogan, "Die Mütter," in *Stark Impressions*, 68. Also see Elizabeth Prelinger, *Käthe Kollwitz* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 58.

<sup>177</sup> Ingrid Sharp, "Käthe Kollwitz's Witness to War: Gender, Authority, and Reception," *Women in German Yearbook* 27 (2011): 95.

<sup>178</sup> Maria Makela, "The Misogynist Machine: Images of Technology in the Work of Hannah Höch," in *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, edited by Katharina von Ankum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 119.

not rancorous.”<sup>179</sup> In the work *Da-Dandy* from 1919, Höch calls attention her experience and the mistreatment of women as merely an object (fig. 53). Through the method of collage, Höch repurposed printed images of women circulated among the public in periodicals, such as *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*. Fragmented heads and facial features of five different women are shown overlapping one another in the middle of the composition. It appears that some of the women are sporting the *Bubikopf* hairstyle, which would later be recognized as an iconic feature of the New Woman in the 1920s.<sup>180</sup> The grouping of the women form the profile of a man’s head, and thus these women are used as metaphor to reveal what the man is thinking. His thoughts are of these women, and he is objectifying their lips, bodies, and large eyes.<sup>181</sup> As the man distorts images of women in his mind, Höch retaliates by attaching a woman’s legs and shoes to the bottom of his cropped torso. She asserts her own authority by feminizing the man. Through this work, Höch offers the perspective of the New Women by a new woman. *DaDandy* ultimately suggests that it was difficult to be a New Woman during the post-war period, but Höch could use her art to channel her own sense of female empowerment.

### Conclusion

These prints ultimately reveal how artists responded to the changing cultural environment of the Weimar Republic. Women emerged from the war with a greater

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<sup>179</sup> Naomi Sawelson-Gorse, introduction to *Women in Dada: Essays on Sex, Gender, and Identity* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1998), xii.

<sup>180</sup> According to Helen Boak, the New Woman first appeared with her *Bubikopf*, short skirt, and androgynous features in 1924, at the end of the period of hyperinflation. See Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 277.

<sup>181</sup> Makela, “The Misogynist Machine: Images of Technology in the Work of Hannah Höch,” in *Women in the Metropolis*, 120.

presence, resulting in societal changes. Dix's prostitutes exhibit certain fears society had towards women. Beckmann argued it is natural for a woman to explore her identity. Pechstein showed that a man's ideal world was the same before, during, and after the war. By contrast, Kollwitz illustrated the fears of mothers, and Höch personally dealt with the mistreatment of the New Woman. Kurt Schwitters likewise responded by creating numerous pictures that refer to Anna Blume. If she represents the New Woman, then what was his attitude towards her?

What connects Anna Blume to the women by Dix, Beckmann, and Pechstein is the male perspective of the woman as a desirable object. Whether as an unrequited love or for sexual pleasure, *An Anna Blume* makes it clear that he wants her. There are certain elements of *An Anna Blume* and *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* that indeed appear derogatory. Through the poem's line, "Anna Blume hat ein Vogel," Schwitters suggests she is crazy.<sup>182</sup> In *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*, Anna Blume's inverted eye could be interpreted as a female sex organ (fig. 22). These formal and textual elements are then combined with fragmented and comically nonsensical elements. Dorothea Dietrich justifiably states, "Schwitters proclaimed his preference for nonsense. Yet if nonsense stands for femaleness and modernity, Schwitters' preference for both is grounded in a firm belief in male difference and superiority: He is the guarantor of sense

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<sup>182</sup> However, it should be noted that Schwitters translated the poem into English under the title *Anna Blossom Has Wheels* in 1942, which possibly negates the original translation of the poem. Schwitters also translates "Anna Blume" to "Anna Blossom." The German word "Blume" translates to "Flower" instead of "Blossom." The curious word choice would suggest that Anna has not fully bloomed. Once again, thank you to Professor Sean Ireton of the German and Russian Studies Department at the University of Missouri for helping me with the translation of *An Anna Blume*, and directing my attention to the connotations of "Anna Blume hat ein Vogel."

and the actor and manipulator of nonsense.”<sup>183</sup> However, Schwitters also uses nonsense to mock society and thus the world Anna Blume lives in. Schwitters clearly states that Anna Blume is not from an urban environment. Aside from the possible windmill imagery used in *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*, Schwitters proclaimed in another poem from 1923, *The Love Story of Anna Blume*, that Hannover is where she “belongs,” which situates Anna Blume within the rural setting of his bourgeois lifestyle and hometown.<sup>184</sup> If Anna Blume is not from Berlin, then perhaps Anna Blume should have no connection to the women Otto Dix chose to represent through his urban prostitutes. Furthermore, Dix, Beckmann, and Pechstein illustrated sexual desire through the female body. As exemplified through many the profiles of her face, it is important to recognize that Schwitters never represented Anna Blume with a full-figured body. This makes Schwitters’ pictures of Anna Blume very different from his contemporaries, since Anna Blume is not submitted to the male gaze in the same way.

Schwitters never explicitly connected the identity of the New Woman to Anna Blume, as Hannah Höch did through her images of women and their *Bubikopf*. Although, Hannah Höch was evidentially a supporter of Anna Blume since it is known she distributed stickers of Schwitters’ character around Berlin.<sup>185</sup> Nevertheless, Anna Blume was a fictional modern woman, born into the Weimar Republic, and thus an emblem of the gendered context of that period. One thing for certain is that Schwitters, like all Germans, was aware of the new constructs of women during the Weimar Republic. He

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<sup>183</sup> Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters: Tradition and Innovation*, 82.

<sup>184</sup> Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 167.

<sup>185</sup> When the Berlin Dadaists eventually began to invite Schwitters to their events in 1921, Schwitters and Hannah Höch became close friends. Horst, *Anna Blume “Gut Aufgehoben,”* 51.

ultimately played with these concepts and formed them into Anna Blume, perhaps as a social and cultural critique, not necessarily a critique of women.

## CONCLUSION

By centralizing this thesis around Schwitters as a print maker, my thesis arguably offers an alternative perspective on the artist and the impact print culture had on his career. For an artist not primarily considered a print maker, Schwitters' engagement with the graphic arts emerged rather naturally from his early Dadaist works. Schwitters responded to a need for revolutionary art by experimenting with a multitude of media and techniques, which ultimately introduced print making techniques into his oeuvre. While Schwitters' affiliation with the graphic arts was expected, he also transformed the medium to comply with his artistic direction.

As Chapter One showed, Schwitters was able to align the technical aspects of printmaking with the goal of Merz. To effectively blur the boundaries of the arts, Schwitters combined stamps with pen-drawn images in order to link printmaking with drawing. Many of his lithographs were made with found objects such as metal, doilies, and shoe soles. Incidentally, they are objects that could have been used in any of his three-dimensional assemblages. Schwitters' misprints similarly represent the artist's playful unification of found objects with lithography, as well as his commitment to transforming non-art into art. His four-known woodcuts become evidence of how he quickly evolved from Expressionism once he fully embraced the ideas of Merz and of the Dadaists. He may have used a medium associated with the groups Die Brücke and Der Blau Reiter, but the fragmented shapes signify his abandonment of pre-war art concepts. Schwitters' woodcuts, stamp-drawings, and lithographs also offered him the opportunity to forge relationships with avant-garde circles in Hannover and Berlin. He created many of those prints for publications in *Der Sturm*, *Das Kestnerbuch*, and *Die Silbergäule*,

which provided his new career with a relatively wider visual presence.

Indeed, the print medium had a distinct commercial function that many German artists embraced during and after the First World War. Following the success of his love poem *An Anna Blume* in 1919, Schwitters relied on the print medium to advertise visual representations of the text to the public. Anna Blume works also embraced the idea of Merz. From text to a variety of media, those depictions fulfilled Schwitters' need to exhaust every possibility and transform anything into a work of art. In regard to the graphic arts, Schwitters' lithographs were an especially key part of the development of Merz. The print *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil* initially demonstrates how Schwitters transformed the text of *An Anna Blume* into a visual work of art, which utilized the consistently nonsensical and fragmented characteristics of Merz. The print is also situated within the history of German print culture during the early twentieth century. As part of the Bauhaus' portfolio series, *Neue Europäische Graphik*, Schwitters' print tells the story of how prints were distributed in portfolios, used to spread ideas, and build an artist's reputation. Those benefits were made possible because of the poor economy, which also cements the idea that Schwitters' prints were an historically specific product of the post-war period. Once the economy stabilized in 1924, so did Schwitters' career as a print maker.

The final chapter calls attention to the subject matter of Schwitters' print *Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil*. Through the print medium, Schwitters communicated his views of the feminine identities that permeated Weimar culture. The poem *An Anna Blume* and elements within the print, such as the wheels and *Lebkuchenherz*, imply Schwitters' fictitious character is an object of desire and a woman

from modern society. Relevant prints by Otto Dix, Max Beckmann, Max Pechstein, and Käthe Kollwitz offer alternative examples on how artists during the post-war period represented women. A supplementary collage by Hannah Höch shows how a New Woman perceived her male Dadaist colleagues. These works provide clarity to Schwitters' print, and suggest that Schwitters' treatment of the female body is perhaps rather unlike his contemporary male artists. While Anna Blume treated as an object of Schwitters' desire, he represents her feminine identity through mocking society and preserving her body from their gaze.

This thesis shows that artists from across Germany were reacting to the cultural reconstruction of the Weimar Republic. Works on paper throughout the Weimar Republic were seen, created, and used due to the economic circumstances generated by the First World War. Gender conflict was likewise a factor in many of these artist's works. Schwitters was no exception, and combined with the technical and commercial capabilities of print making, the graphic arts played an inevitable role in the history of Schwitters' artistic career.

## FIGURES



Figure 1. Kurt Schwitters, *Mühle an der Leine*, 1918, Oil on canvas  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 135.

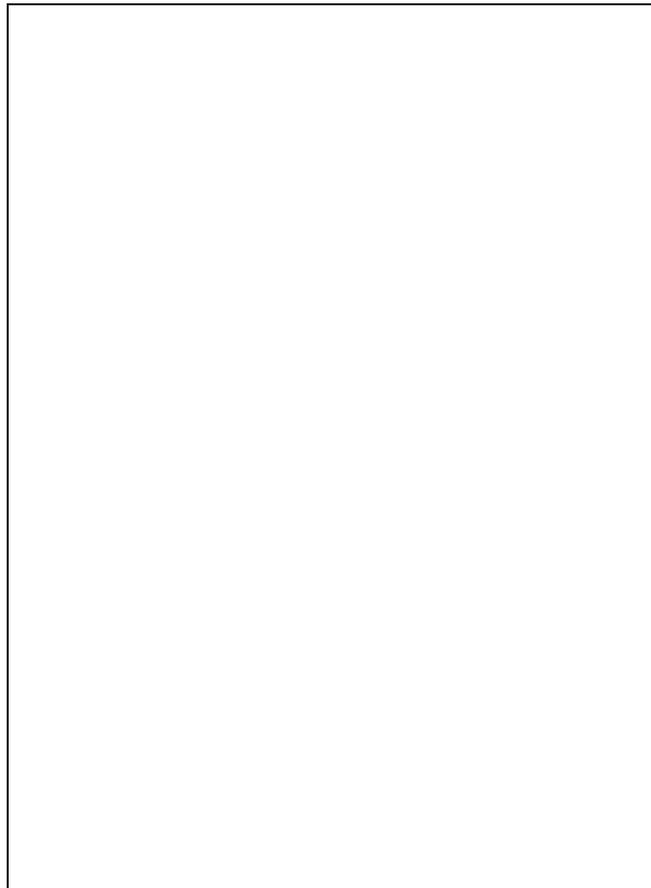


Figure 2. Kurt Schwitters, *Abstraktion No. II (Die Gewalten)*, 1917, Oil on canvas  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 98

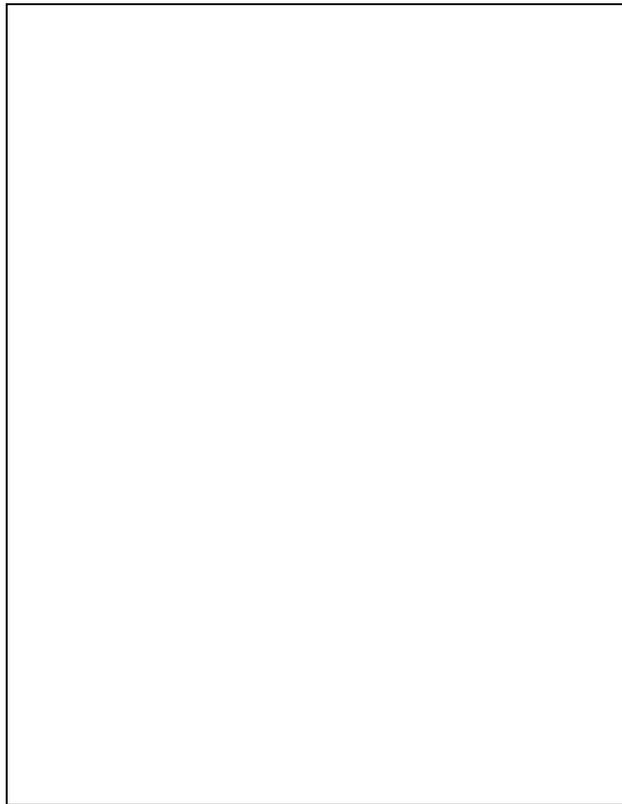


Figure 3. Kurt Schwitters, *Zeichnung A 6*, 1918, Collage, fabric, paper on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 242

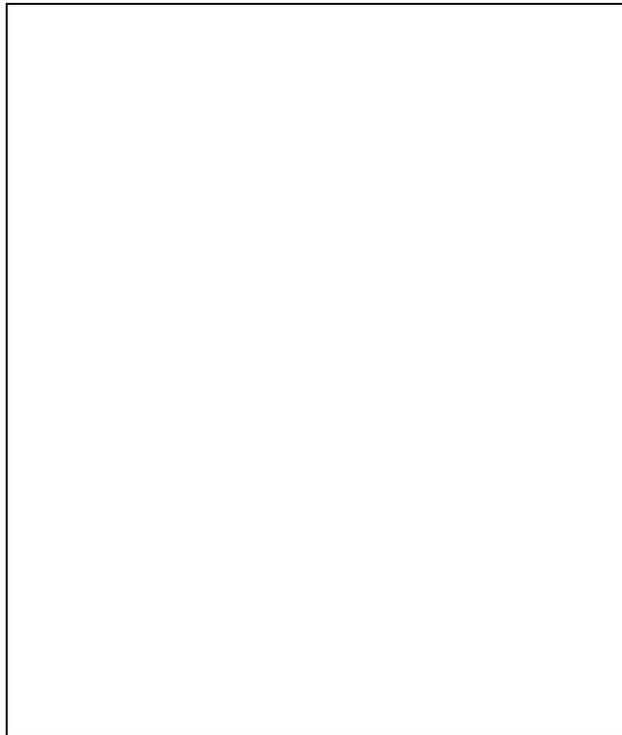


Figure 4. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Title (Mit roter 4)*, 1919, Collage, colored pencil, pencil, stamping ink, paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 241

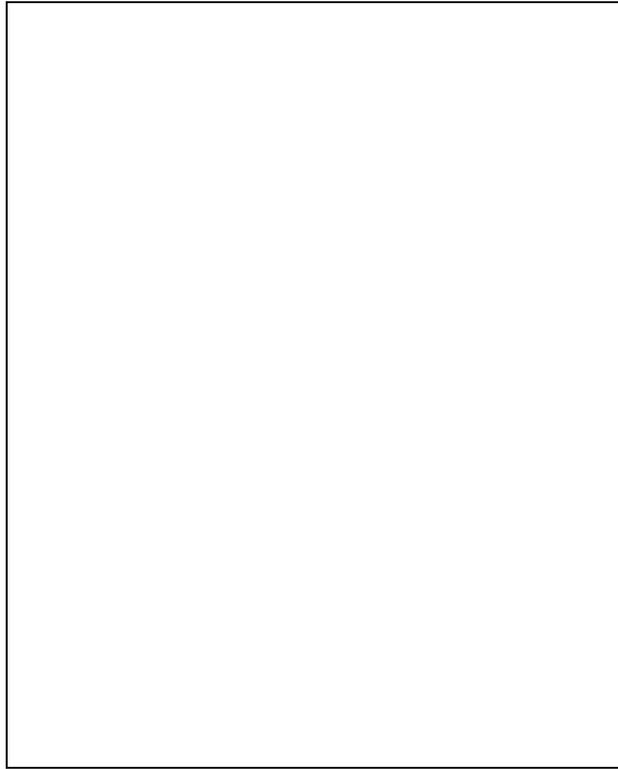


Figure 5. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Title (Anna Blume hat ein Vogel)*, 1919, Collage, colored pencil, pencil, stamping ink, paper on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 242

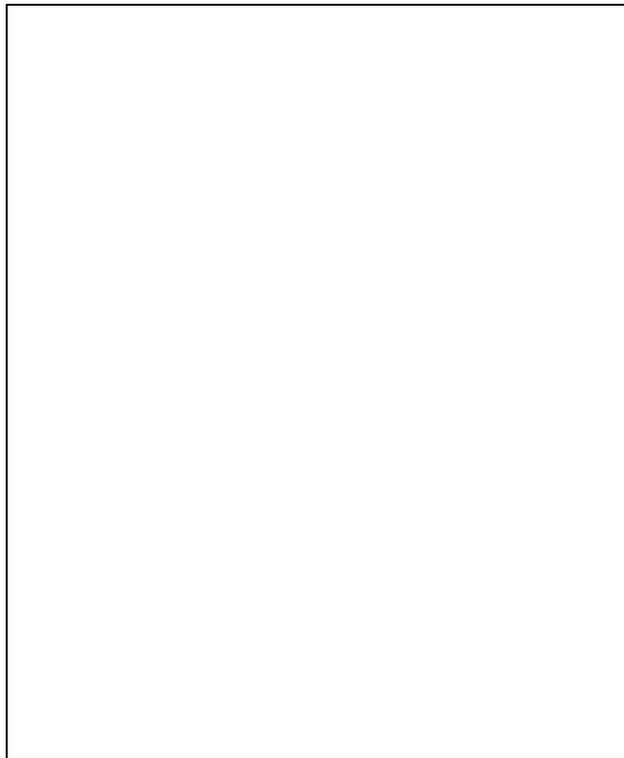


Figure 6. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Title (Wisch)*, 1919, Collage, colored pencil, pencil, stamping ink, paper on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 245



Figure 7. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Title (Berlin-Friedenau)*, 1919, Collage, colored pencil, pencil, stamping ink, paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 241

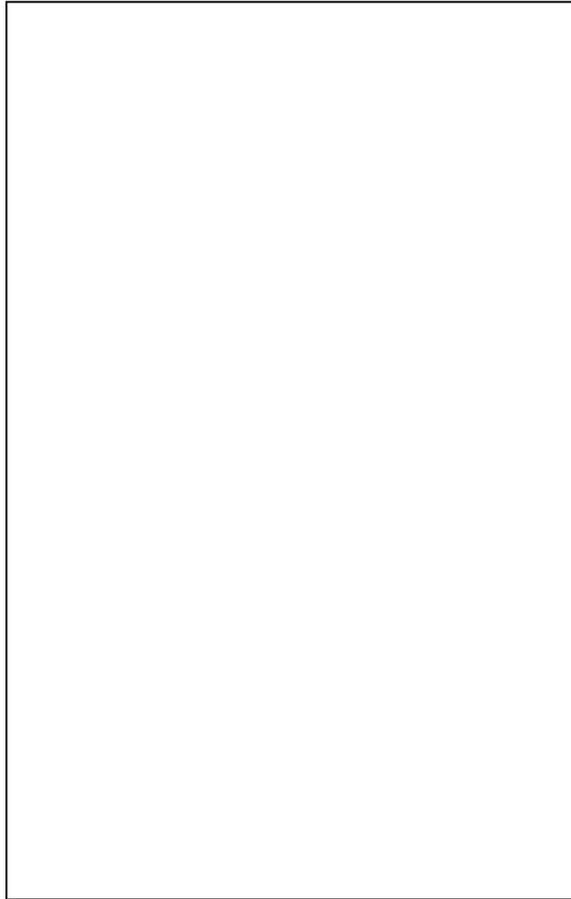


Figure 8. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Zwei Kreise, aus: Das Kestnerbuch, hrzg. Von Paul Eric Küppers, Verlag Heinrich Böhm, Hannover)*, 1919, Woodcut on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 265

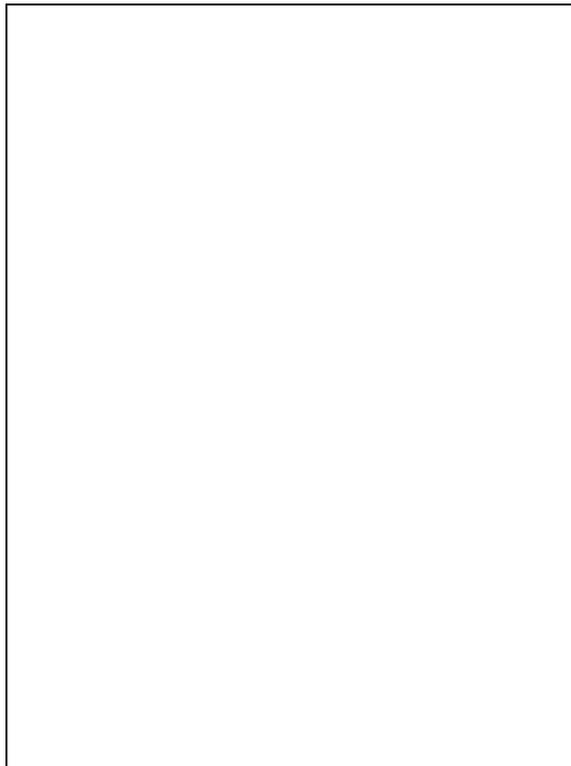


Figure 9. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Zwei Kreise, Probedruck)*, 1919, Woodcut on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 264

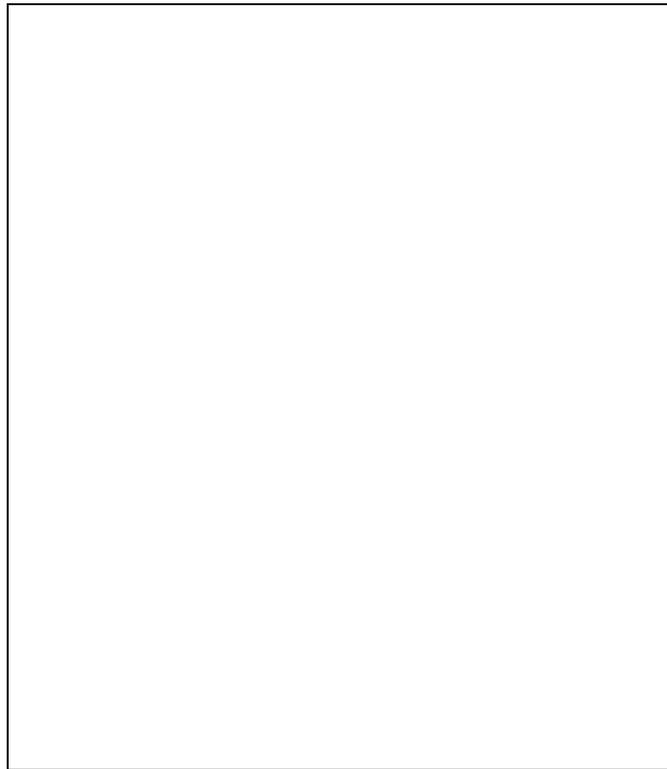


Figure 10. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Holzschnitt/vom Stock gedruckt)*, 1919, Woodcut on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 266



Figure 11. Kurt Schwitters, 2. Probedruck [Von: *Ohne Titel (Holzschnitt vom Stock gedruckt)*],  
1919, Woodcut on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 265

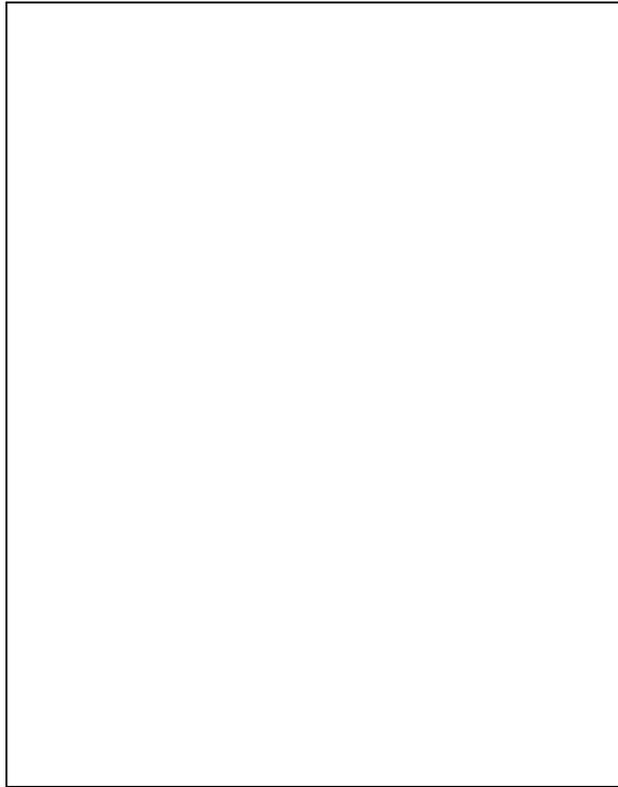


Figure 12. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Lithographie, mit Nietenlöchern)*, 1919, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 266

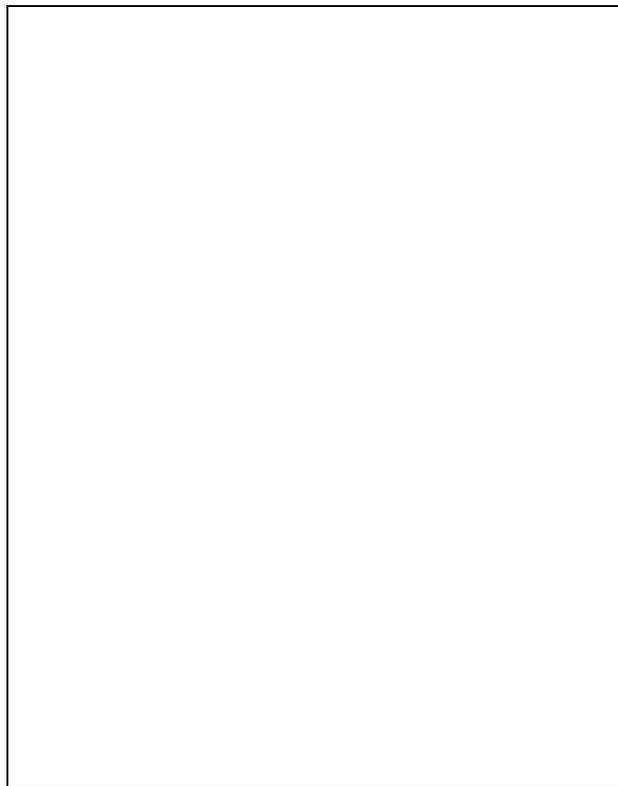


Figure 13. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Lithographie, mit Nietenlöchern)*, 1919, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 266

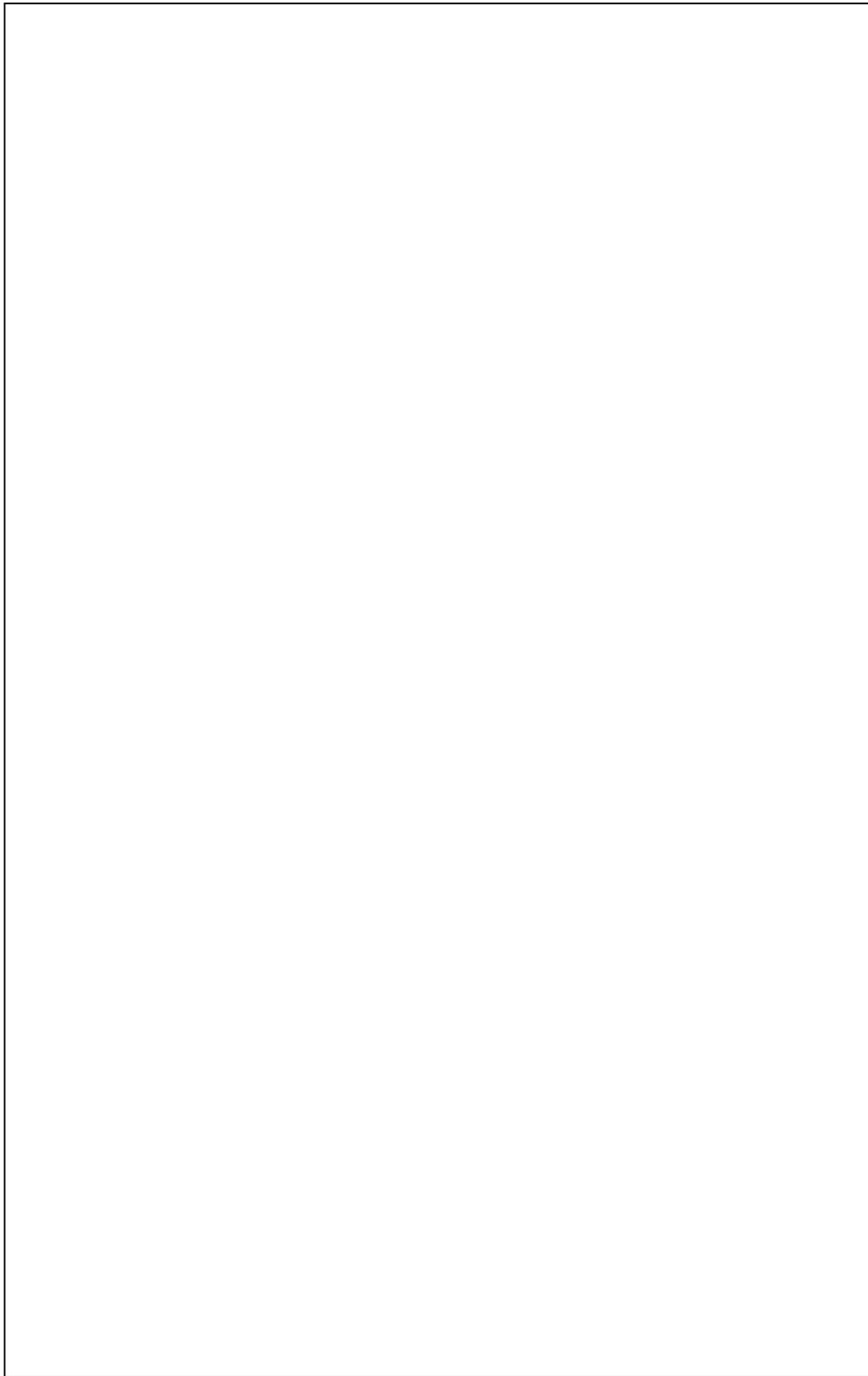


Figure 14. Kurt Schwitters, *Die Kathedrale*, 8 Lithos von Kurt Schwitters, *Die Silbergäule* 41/42, Paul Steegeman Verlag, Hannover, 1920, Cardboard cover, stapled paperback booklet with nineteen lithograph leaves  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 368

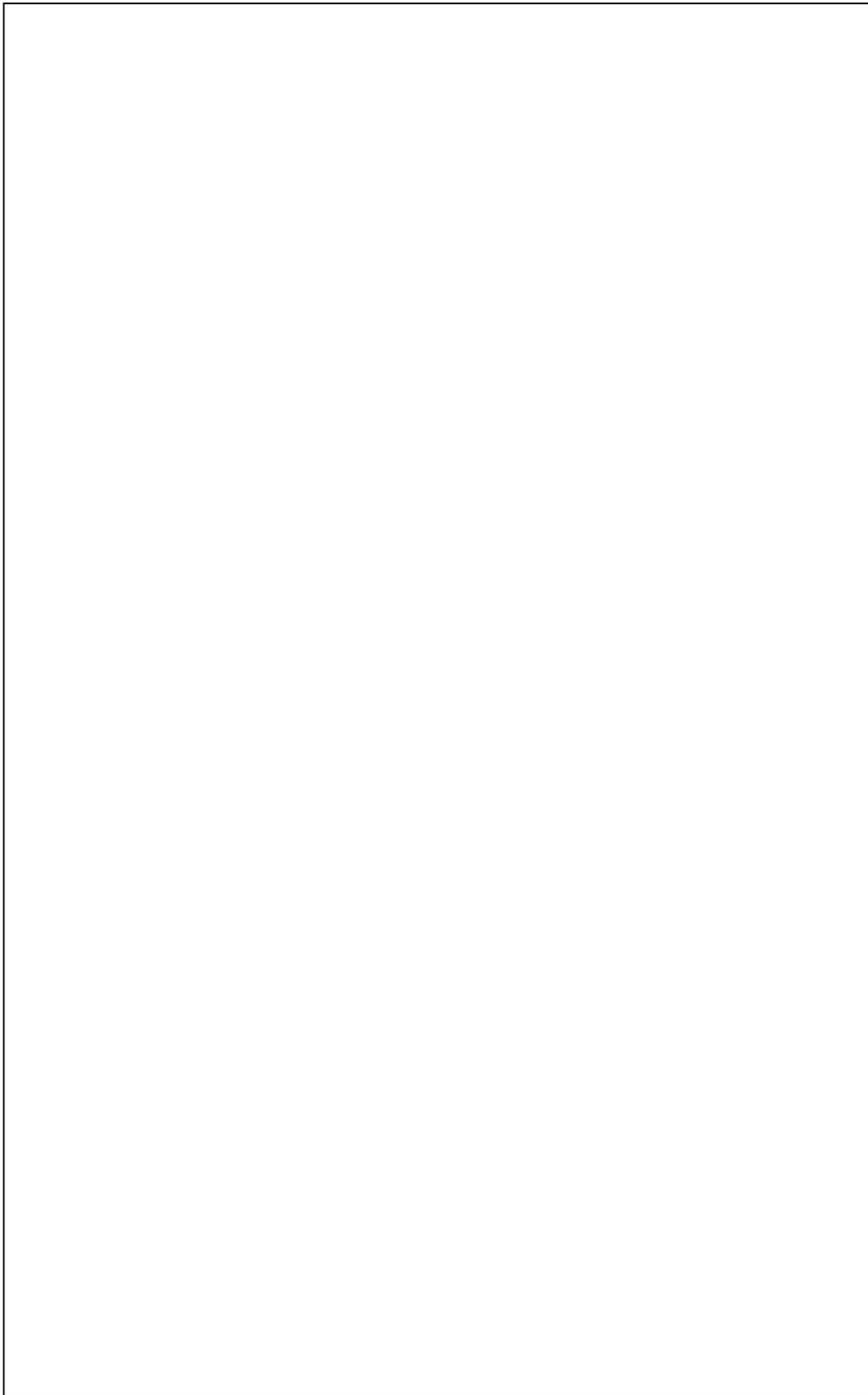


Figure 15. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Mit Kreisformen, Blatt 2 aus: Die Kathedrale, 8 Lithos von Kurt Schwitters)*, 1920, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 369

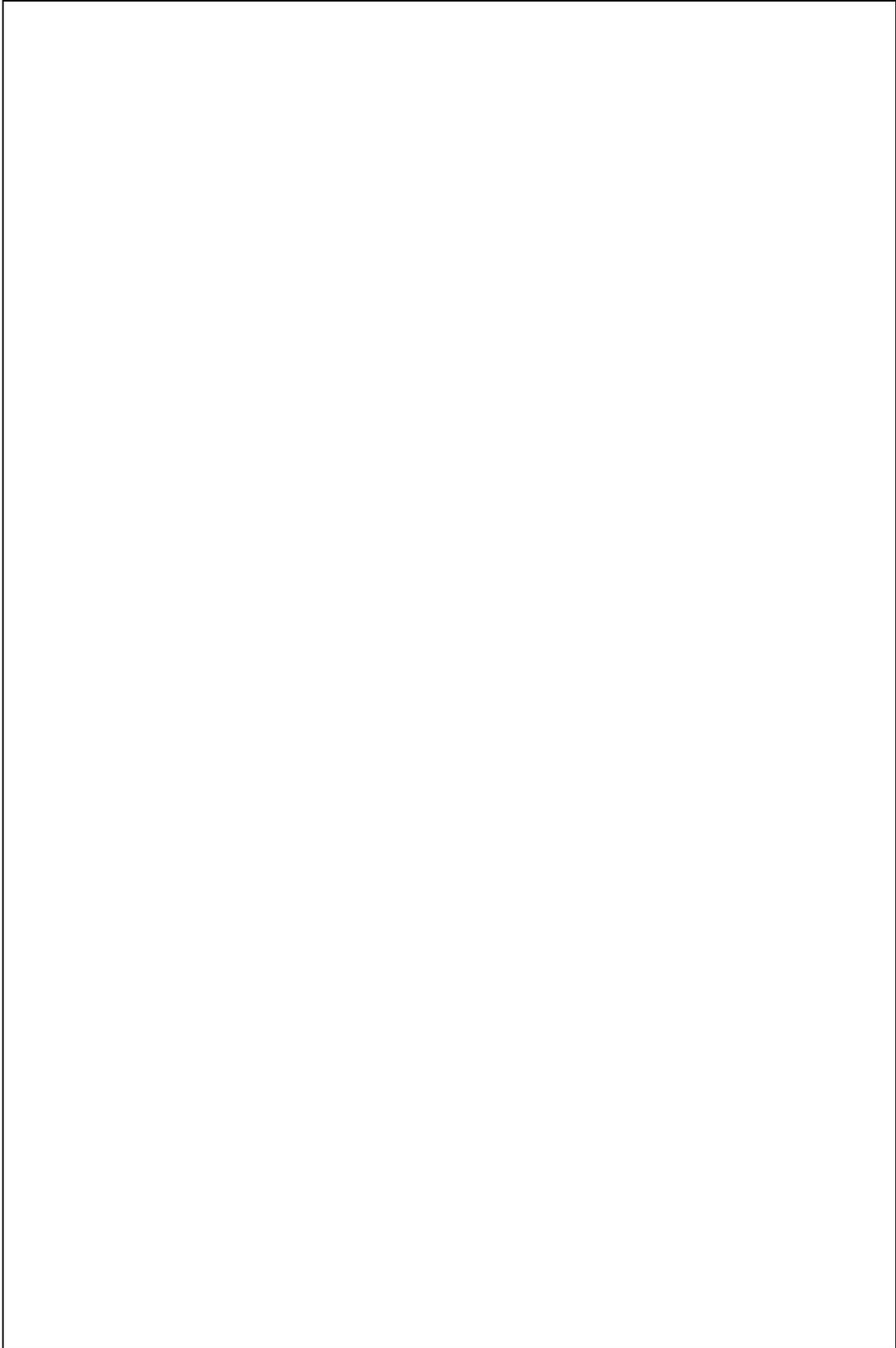


Figure 16. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (10 Acetylen, Blatt 3 aus: Die Kathedrale, 8 Lithos von Kurt Schwitters)*, 1920, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 369



Figure 17. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Oval, Blatt 4 aus: Die Kathedrale, 8 Lithos von Kurt Schwitters)*, 1920, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 370

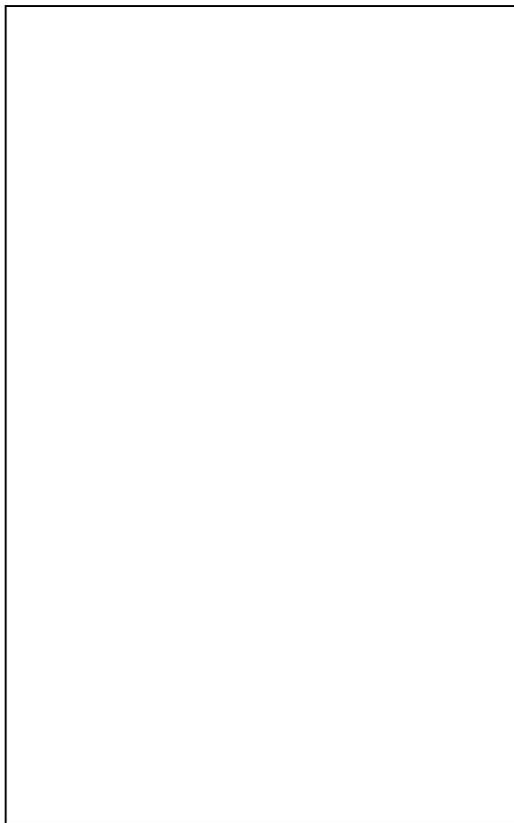


Figure 18. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Merz 8, Blatt 5 aus: Die Kathedrale. 8 Lithos von Kurt Schwitters)*, 1920, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 370



Figure 19. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Die Osteuro, Blatt 6 aus: Die Kathedrale. 8 Lithos von Kurt Schwitters)*, 1920, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 370



Figure 20. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (75 9 x heim, Blatt 7 aus: Die Kathedrale. 8 Lithos von Kurt Schwitters)*, 1920, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 371

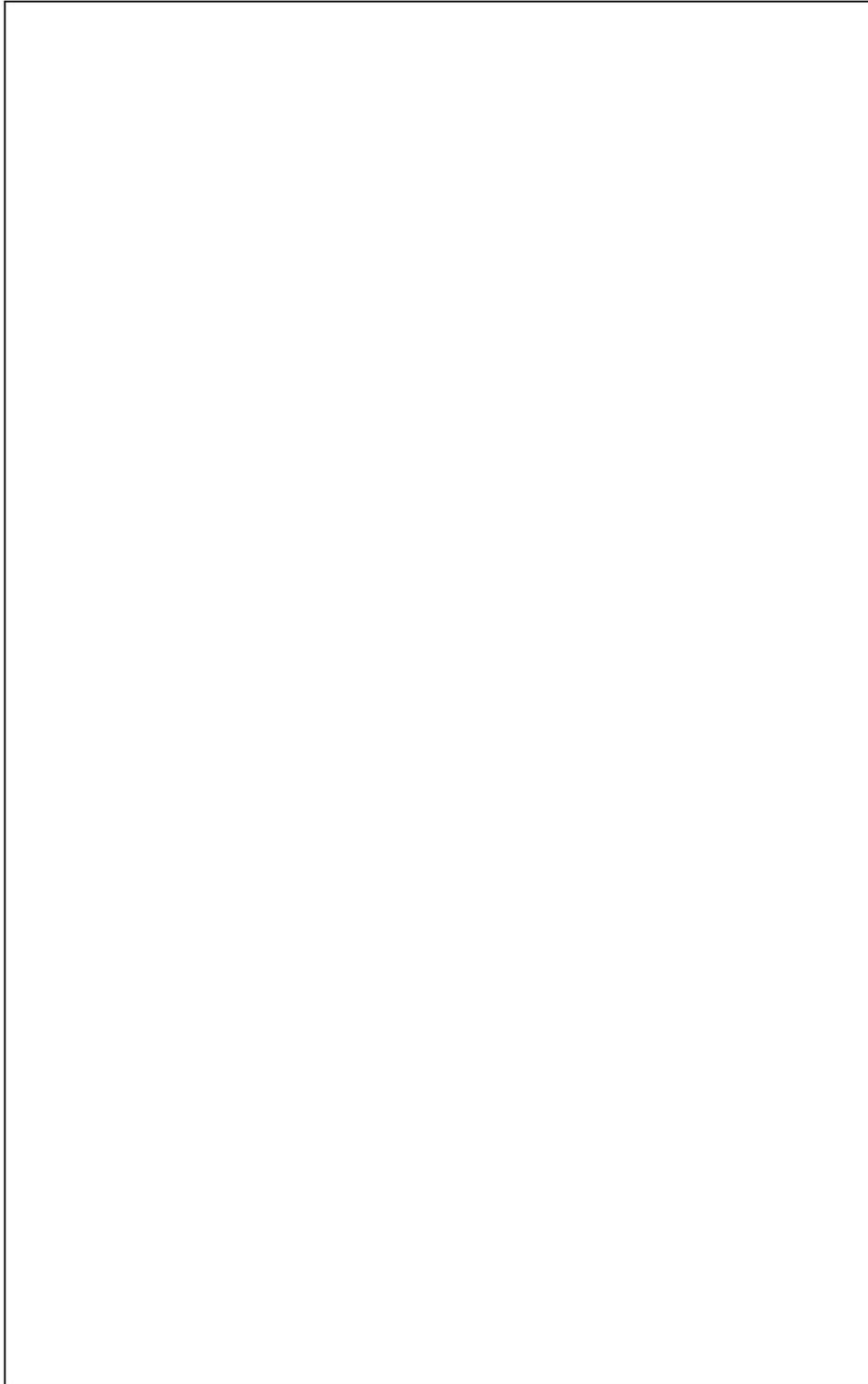


Figure 21. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Valori Plastici, Blatt 8 aus: Die Kathedrale. 8 Lithos von Kurt Schwitters)*, 1920, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 371

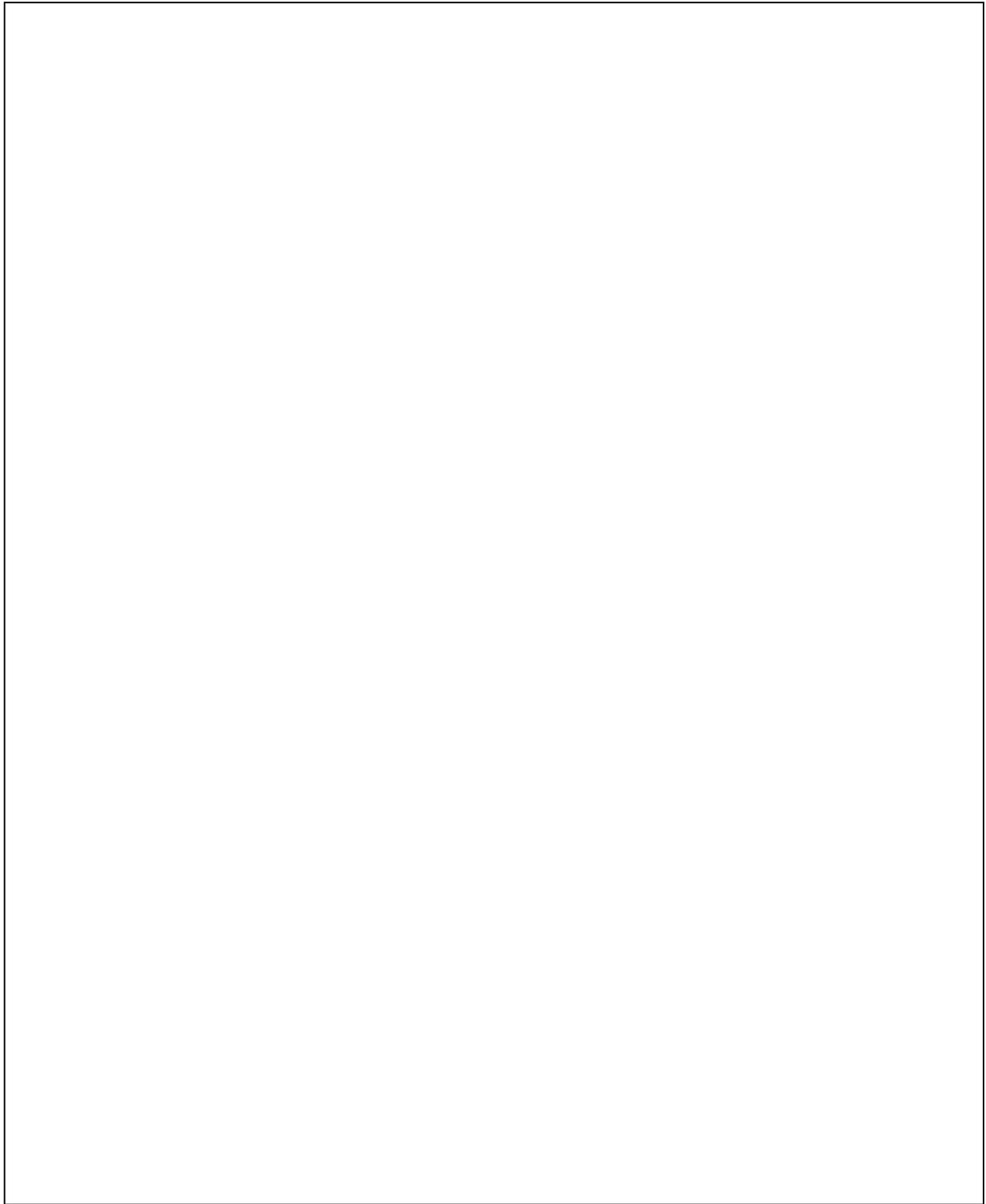


Figure 22. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Komposition mit Kopf im Linksprofil, Blatt 11 der Mappe Bauhaus-Drucke „Neue Europäische Graphik“, Mappe III, Deutsche Künstler)*, 1921, Lithograph on paper  
Image courtesy of Jeff Wilcox, University of Missouri, Museum of Art and Archaeology

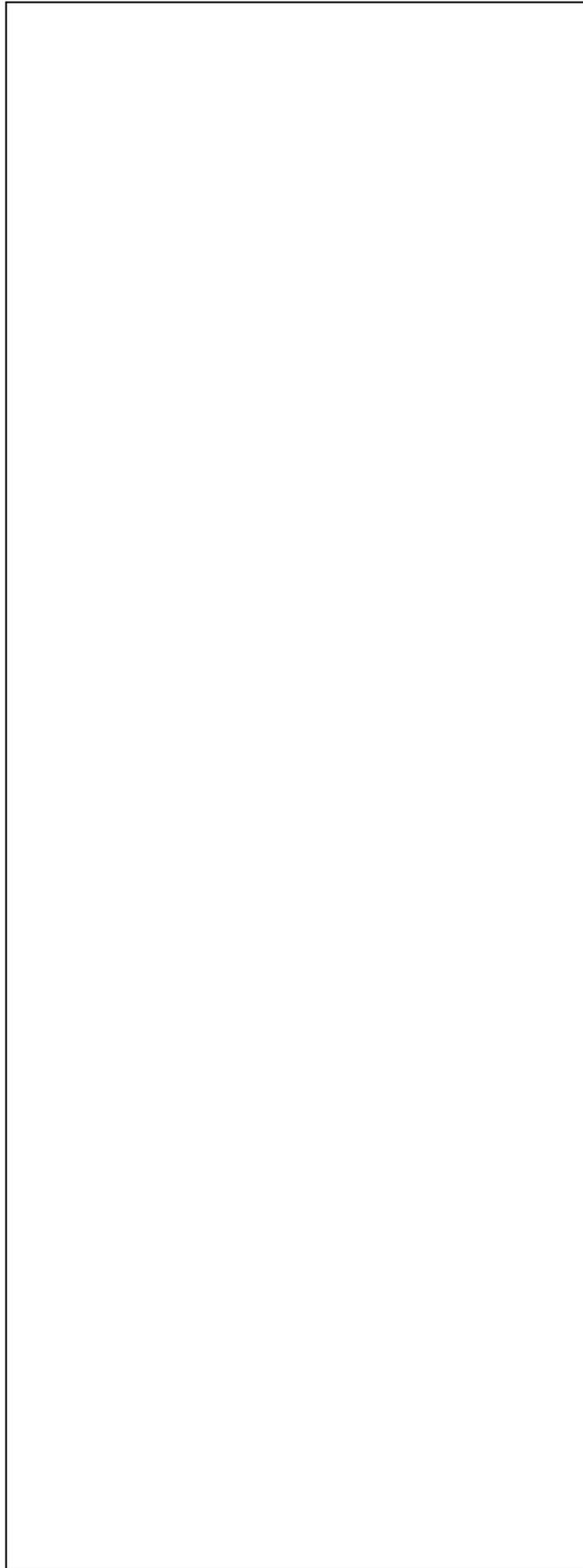


Figure 23. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (ff)*, 1922/23, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 519

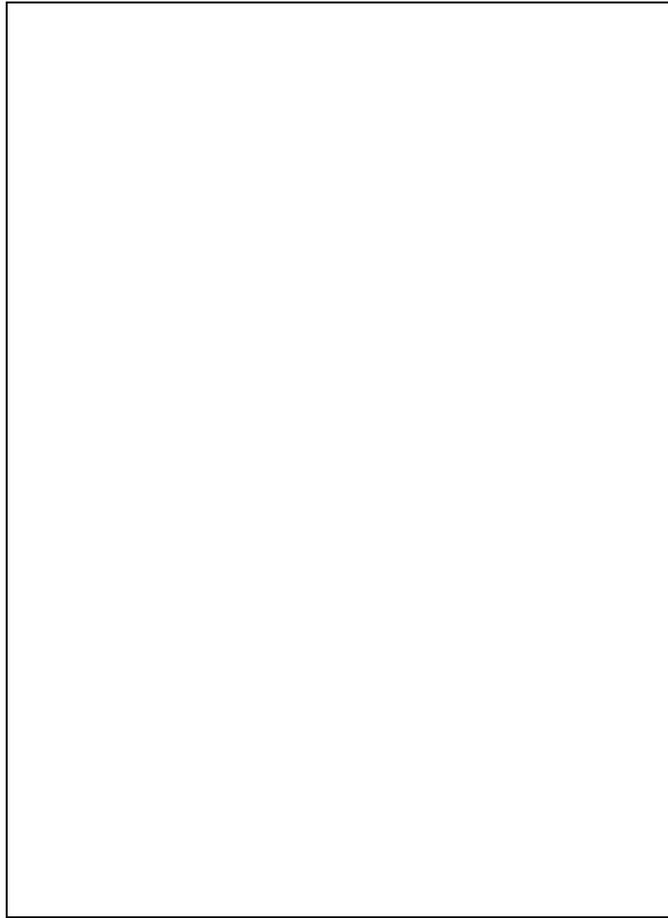


Figure 24. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (E uis)*, 1922/23, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 519

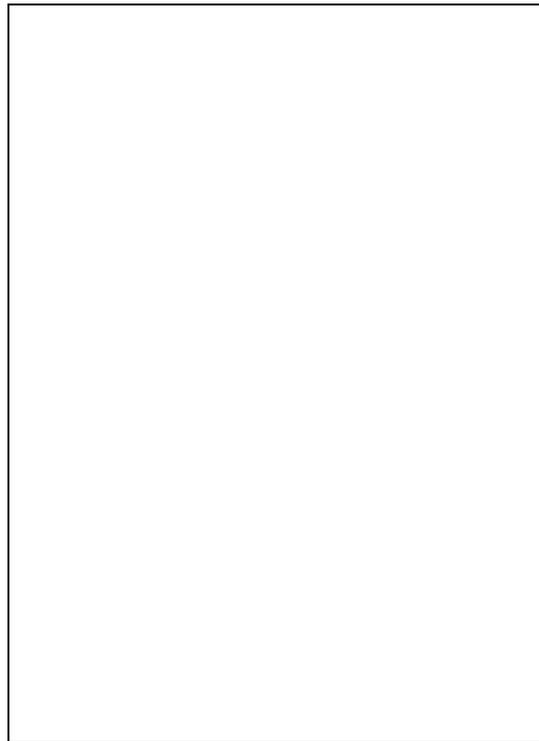


Figure 25. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Bügel zu)*, 1922/23, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 519

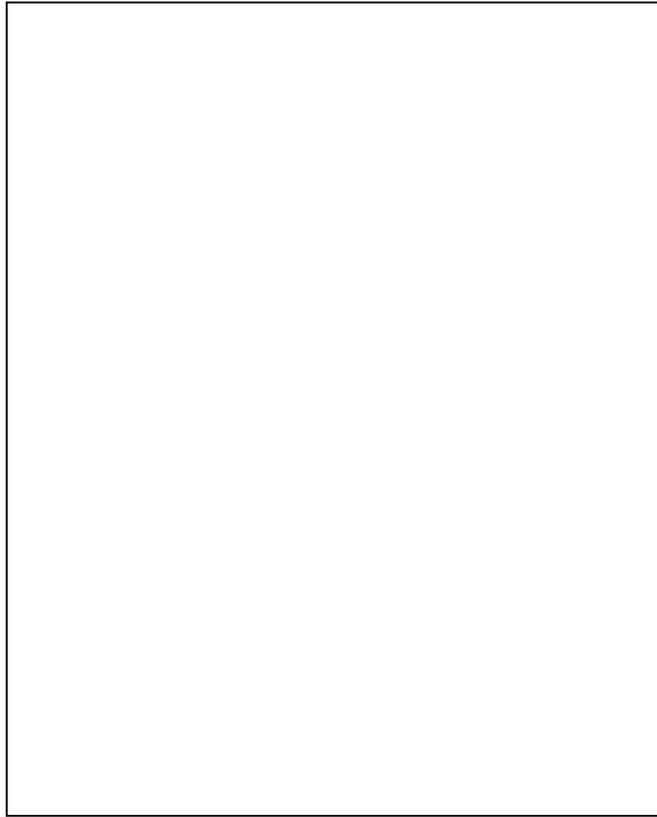


Figure 26. Kurt Schwitters, *MERZ 3. MERZ MAPPE. ERSTE MAPPE DES MERZVERLAGES. 6 LITHOS*, 1923, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1923-1936*, pg. 79

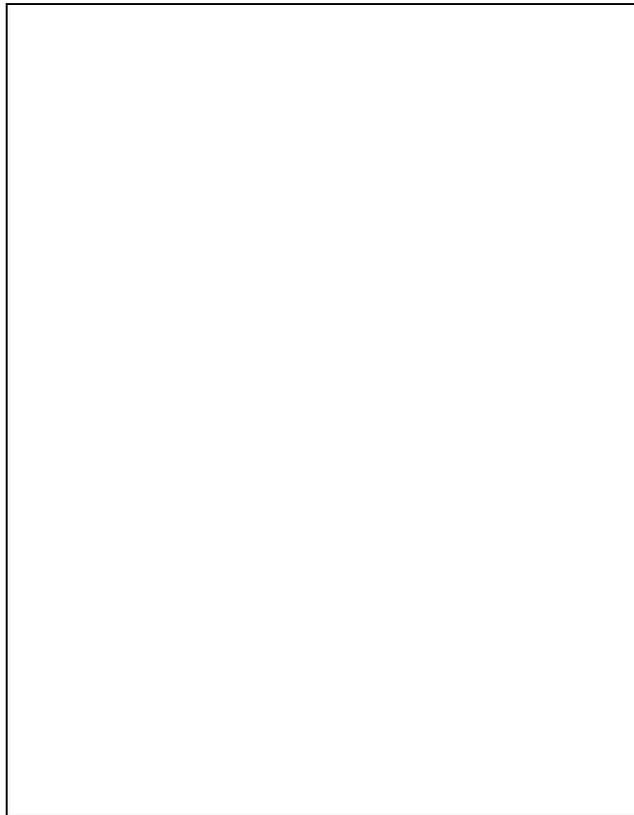


Figure 27. Kurt Schwitters, Innentitel von: *MERZ 3. MERZ MAPPE ERSTE MAPPE DES MERZVERLAGES. 6 Lithos*, 1923, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1923-1936*, pg. 79

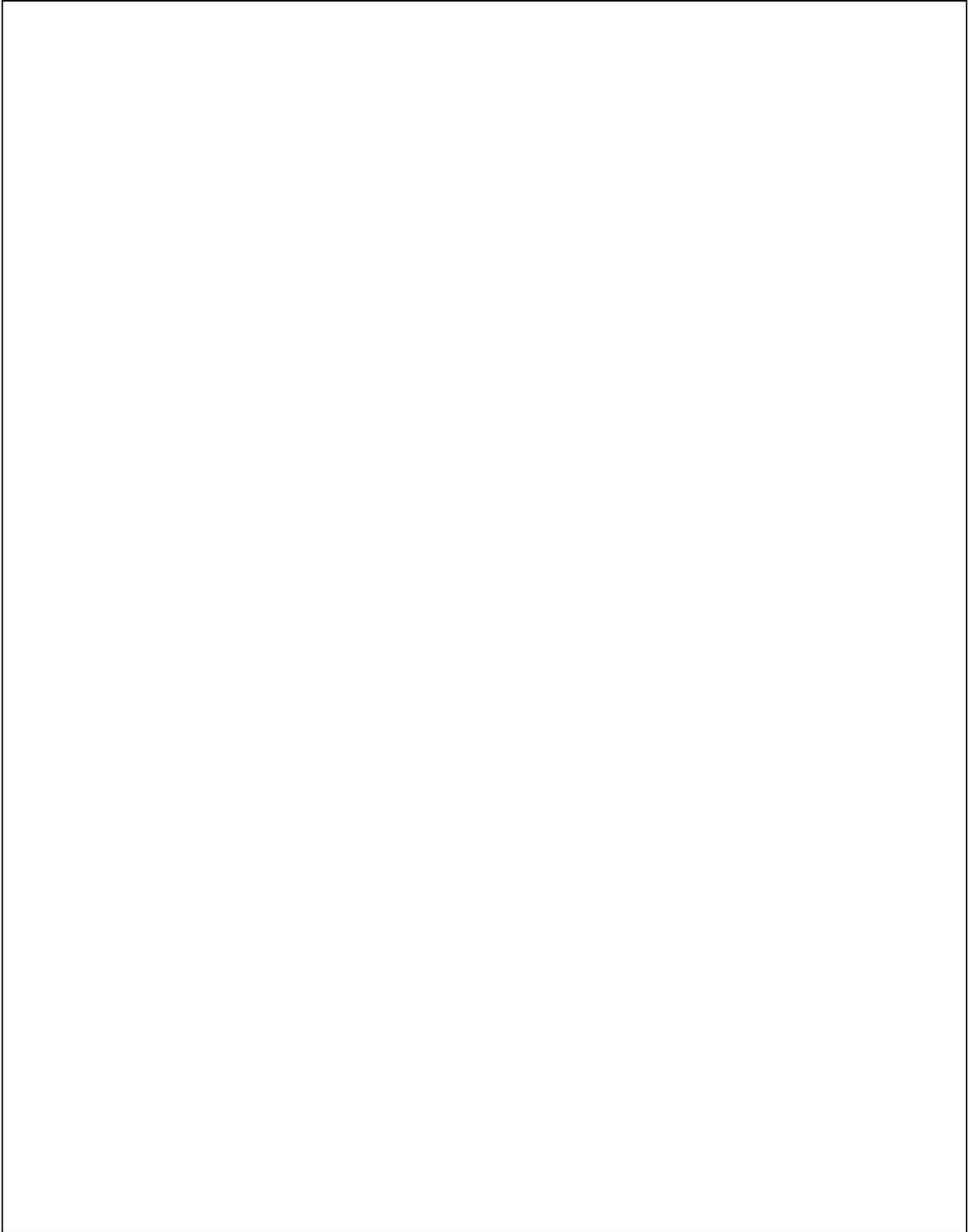


Figure 28. Kurt Schwitters, Blatt 1 aus: *MERZ 3. MERZ MAPPE ERSTE MAPPE DES MERZVERLAGES. 6 Lithos*, 1923, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1923-1936*, pg. 80

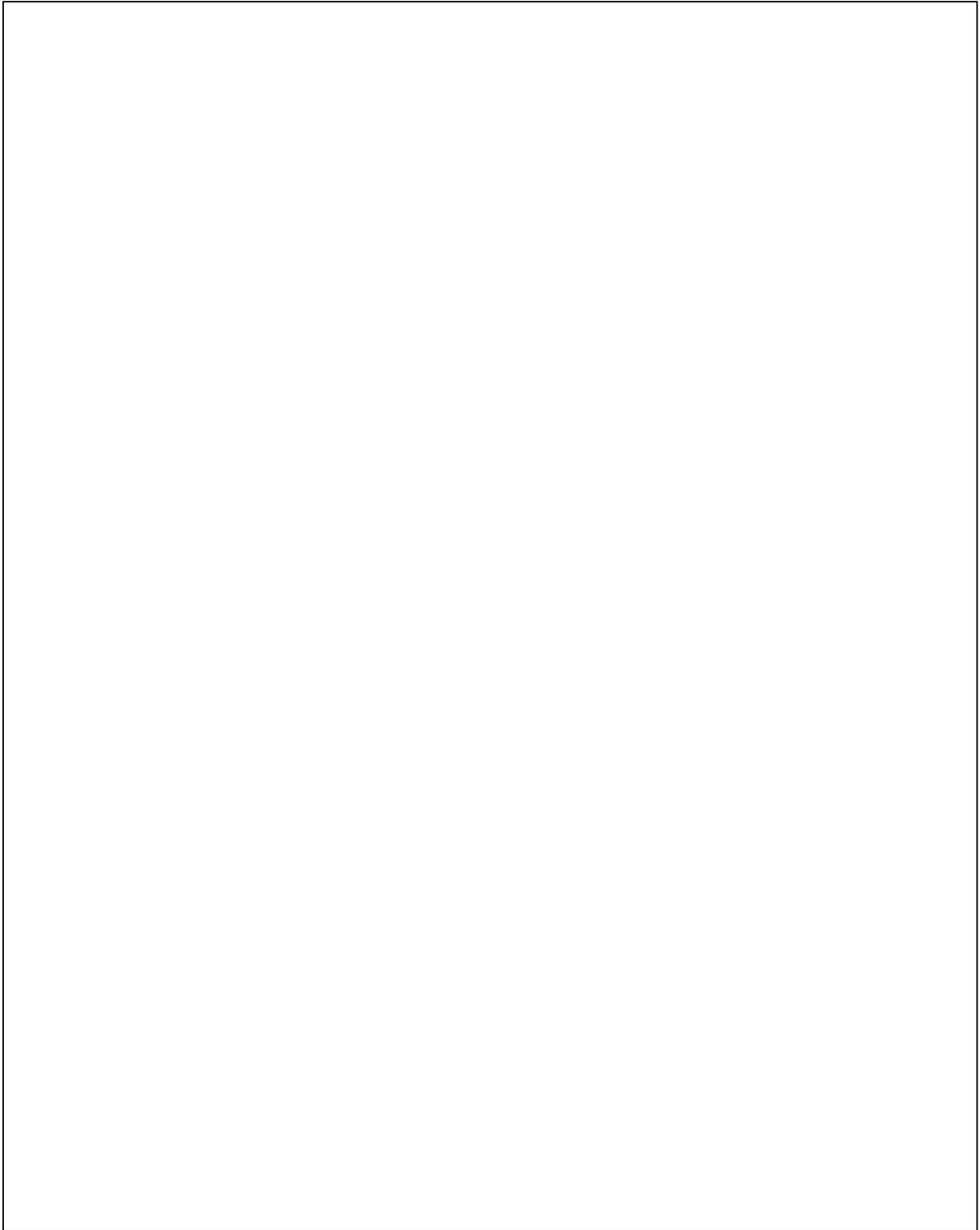


Figure 29. Kurt Schwitters, Blatt 5 aus: *MERZ 3. MERZ MAPPE ERSTE MAPPE DES MERZVERLAGES. 6 Lithos*, 1923, Lithograph on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1923-1936*, pg. 82

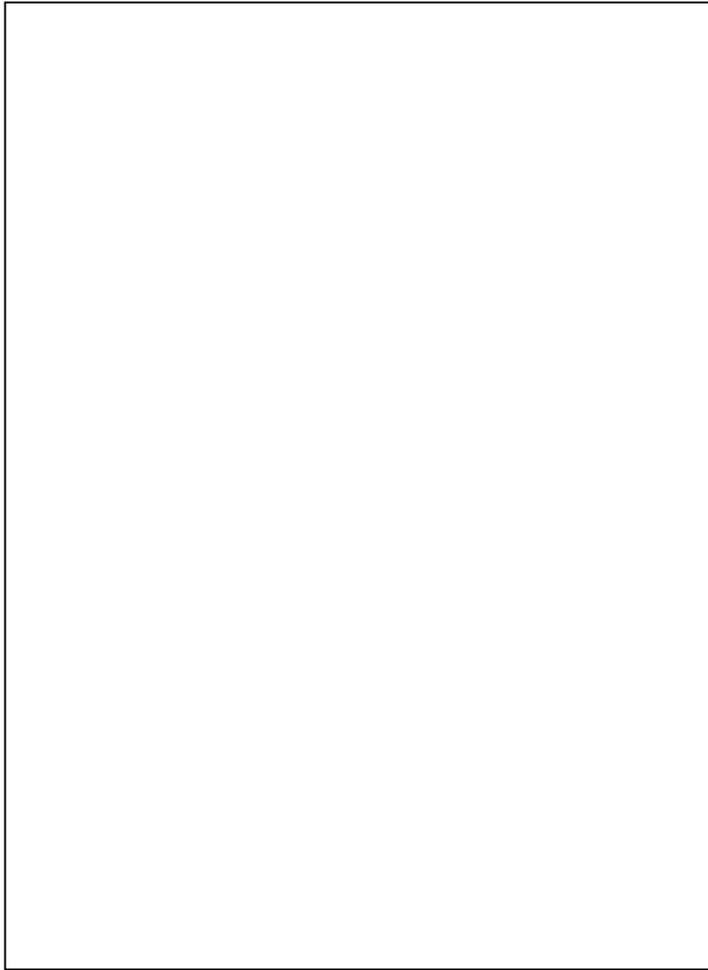


Figure 30. Kurt Schwitters, *Z. i 22 Likan*, 1926, Misprint  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1923-1936*, pg. 221

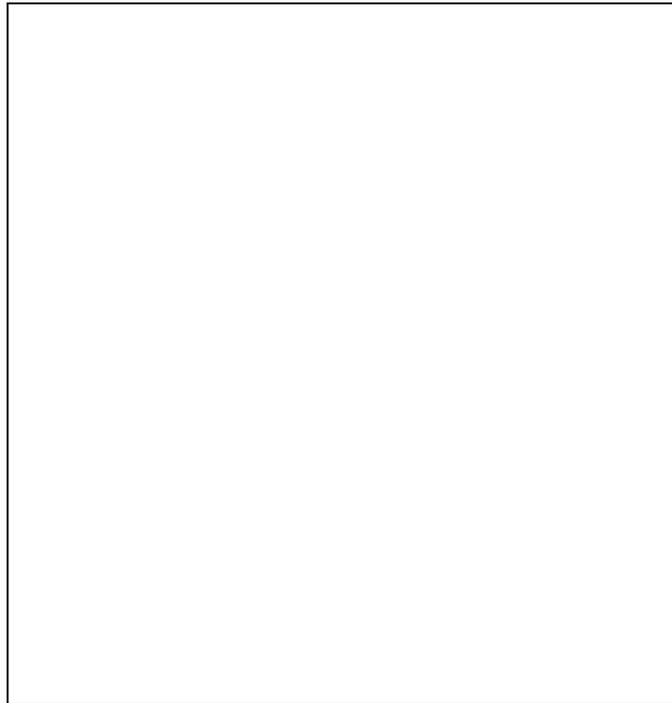


Figure 31. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Title (PELIKAN)*, 1925, Misprint  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1923-1936*, pg. 171

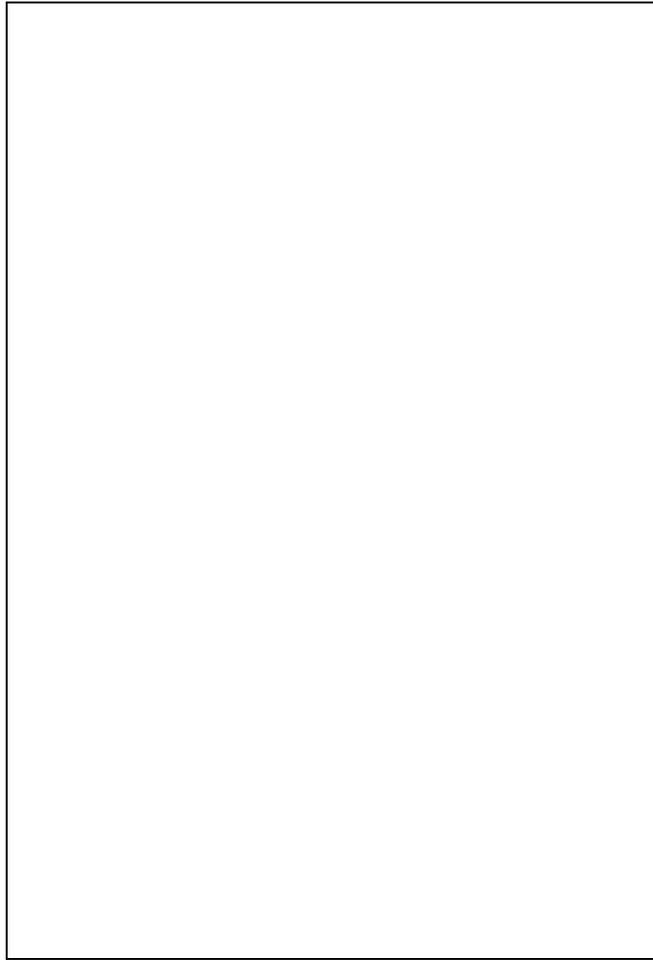


Figure 32. Kurt Schwitters, *Z. i. 24. Spielendes Kind nach Boccioni*, 1926, Misprint  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1923-1936*, pg. 222

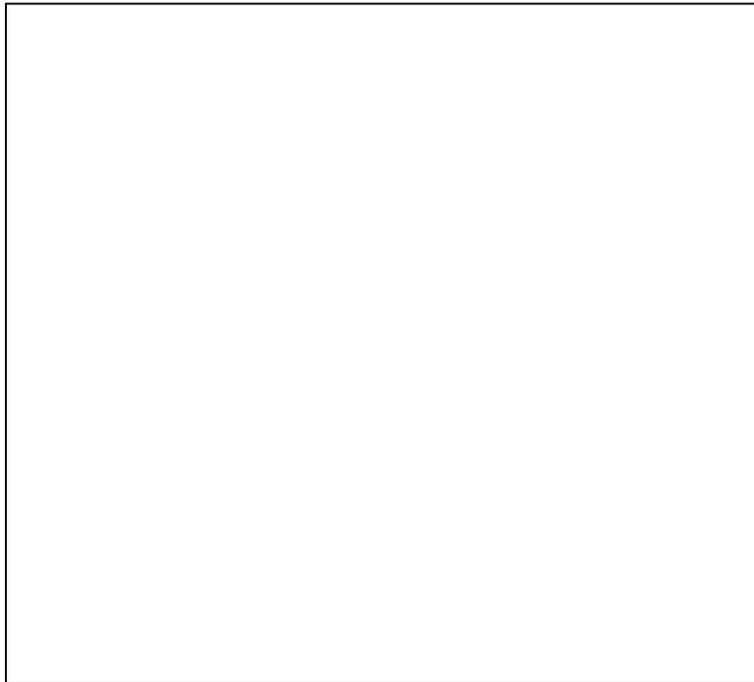


Figure 33. Kurt Schwitters, *Ohne Titel (Katzen)*, 1923, Misprint on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1923-1936*, pg. 74

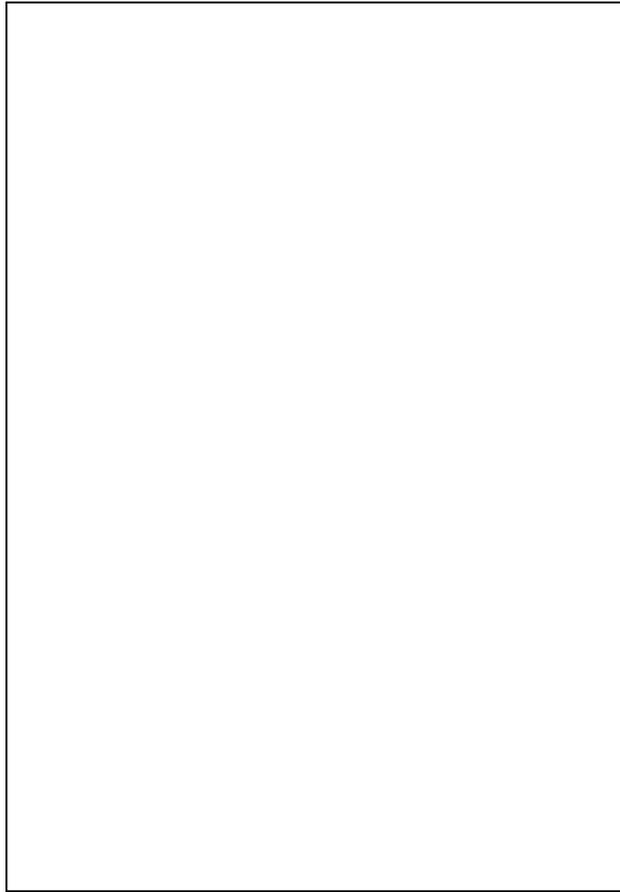


Figure 34. Kurt Schwitters, *Zeichnung I 6 Mode I*, 1920, Misprint on paper  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 359

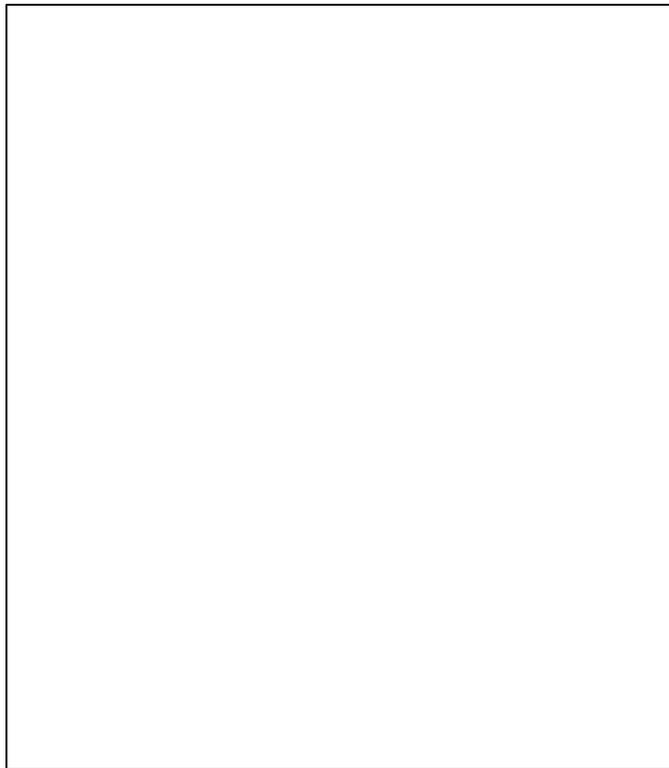


Figure 35. Kurt Schwitters, *Vision*, 1916-17, Oil on cardboard  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 95

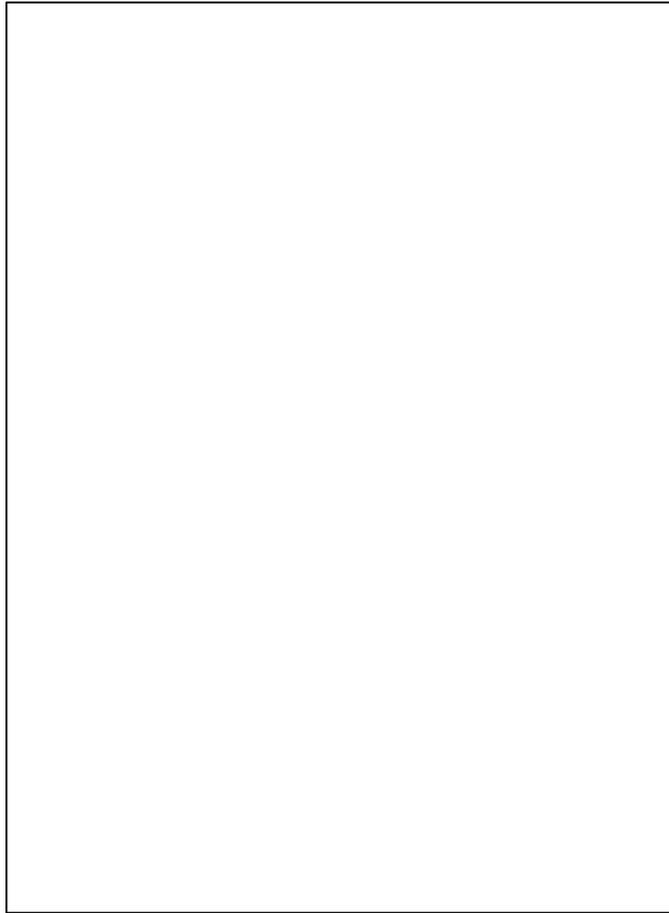


Figure 36. Kurt Schwitters, *Merzbild 5 B (Bild rot Herz-Kirche)*, 1919, Collage  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 214

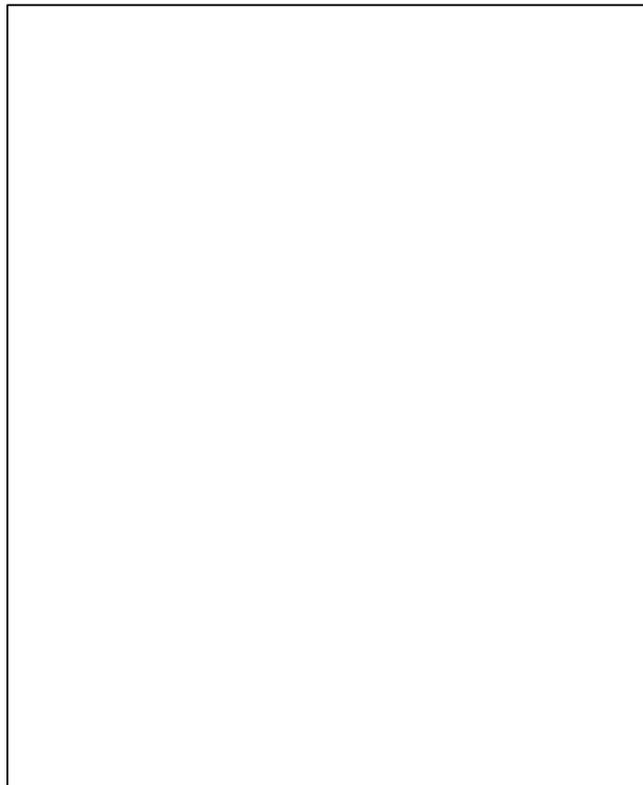


Figure 37. Kurt Schwitters, *Merzbild 10 A (Konstruktion für edle Frauen)*, 1919, Assemblage  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 216.

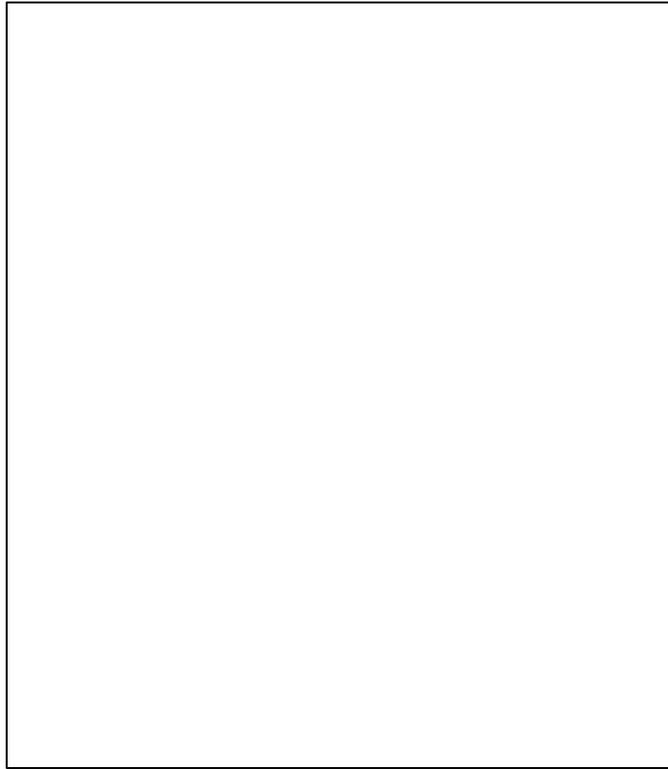


Figure 38. Kurt Schwitters, *Das ist das Biest, das manchmal niest*, 1919, Watercolor  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 255.

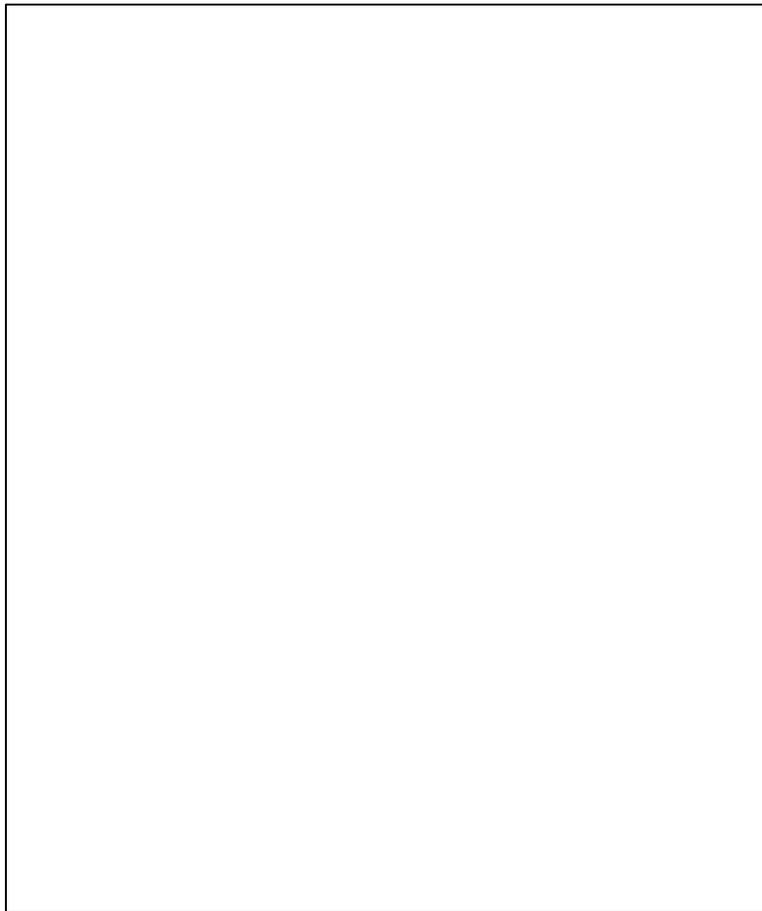


Figure 39. Kurt Schwitters, *Anna Blume und ich*, 1919, Watercolor  
Image reproduced in: *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné, 1905-1922*, pg. 253

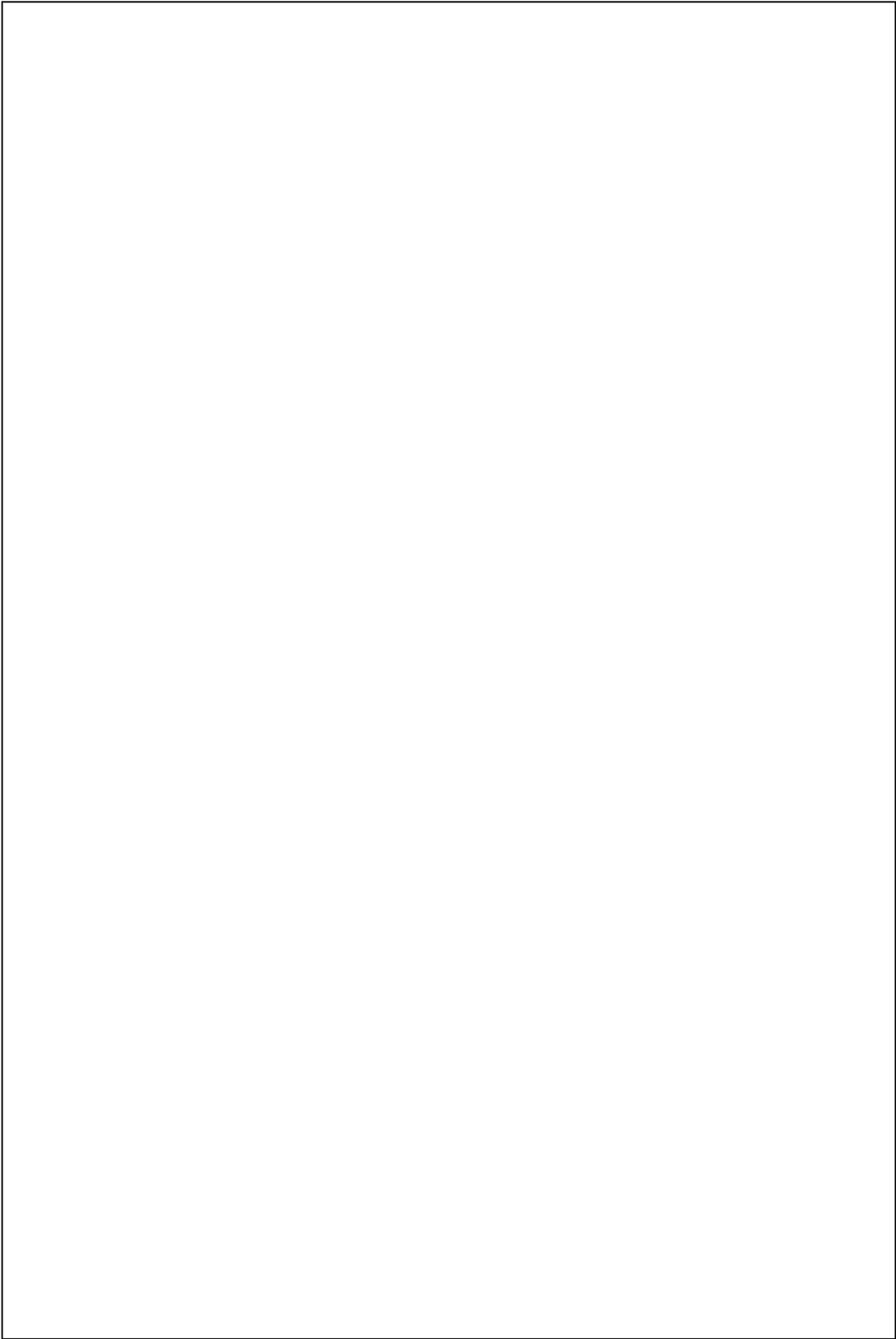


Figure 40. Kurt Schwitters, Cover design of *Anna Blume. Dichtungen*, 1919

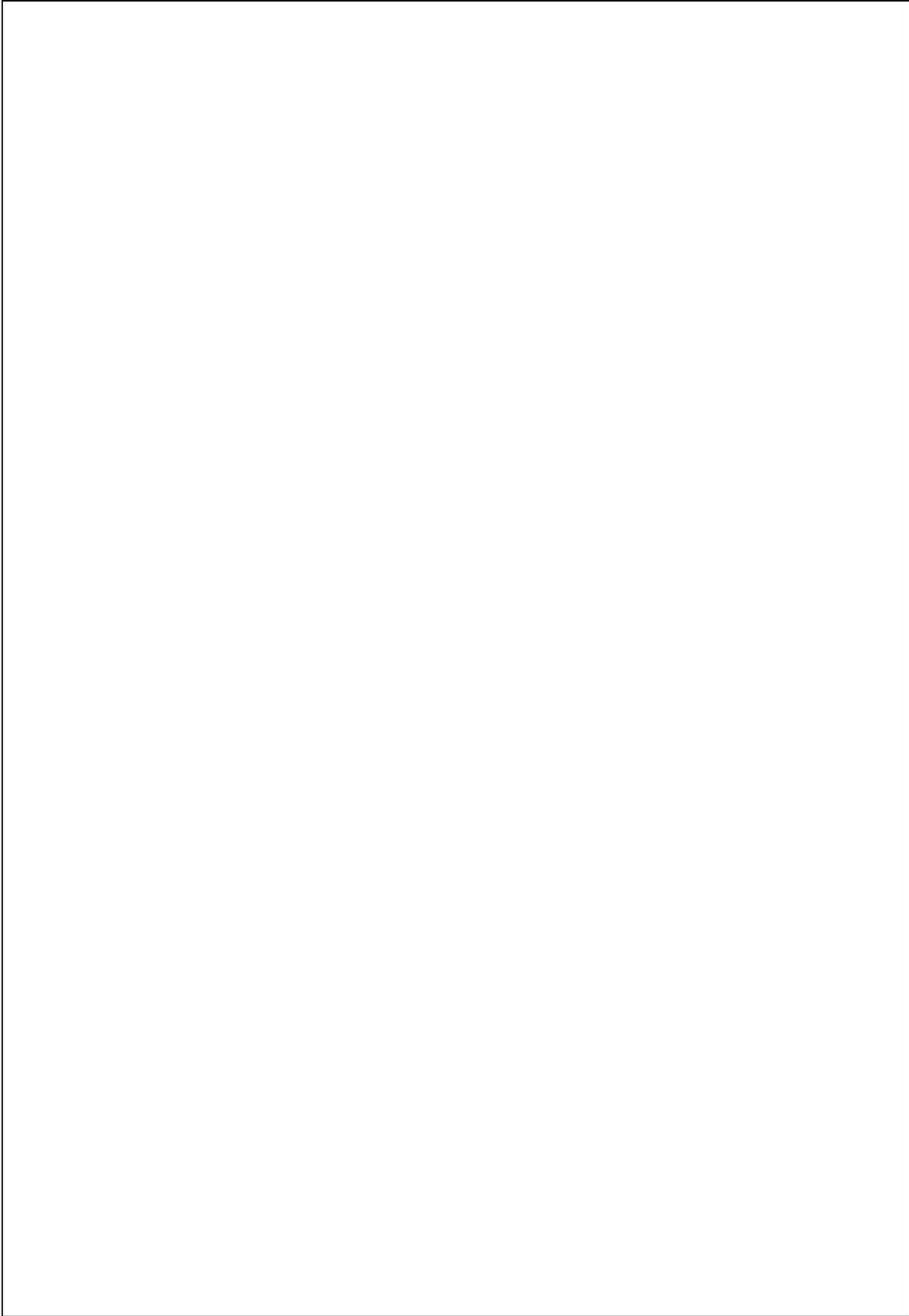


Figure 41. Kurt Schwitters, Intro page of *Anna Blume: Dichtungen*, 1919

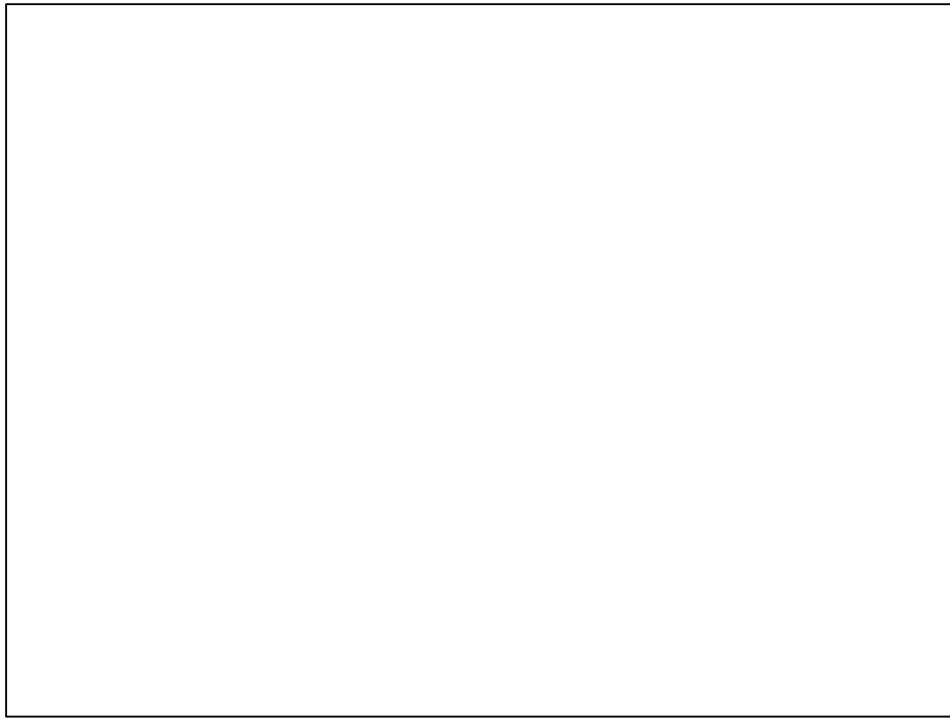


Figure 42. Unknown, *Lebkuchenherz*, ca. late twentieth to early twentieth century

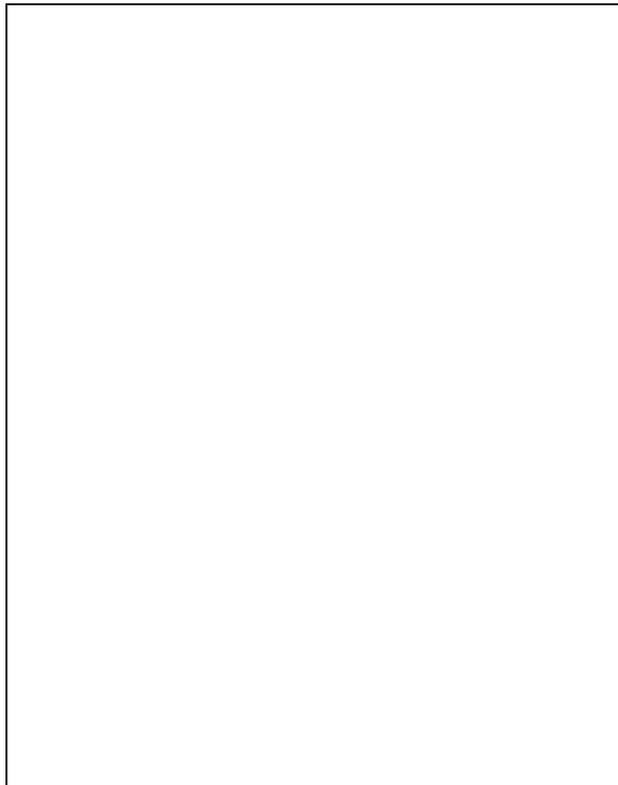


Figure 43. Cover page for *Neue Europäische Graphik: Deutsche Künstler*, Mappe 3, 1921, Lithograph on paper  
Photo courtesy of Harvard Art Museums – Busch-Reisinger Museum

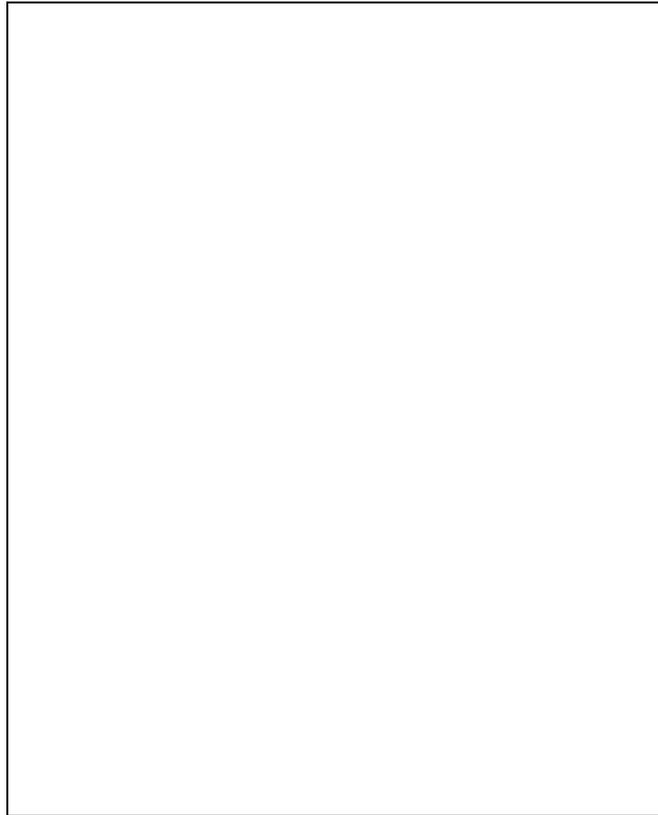


Figure 44. Binding of *Neue Europäische Graphik: Deutsche Künstler*, 1921  
Photo courtesy of Harvard Art Museums – Busch-Reisinger Museum



Figure 45. Introduction page for *Neue Europäische Graphik: Deutsche Künstler*, 1921  
Photo courtesy of Harvard Art Museums – Busch-Reisinger Museum

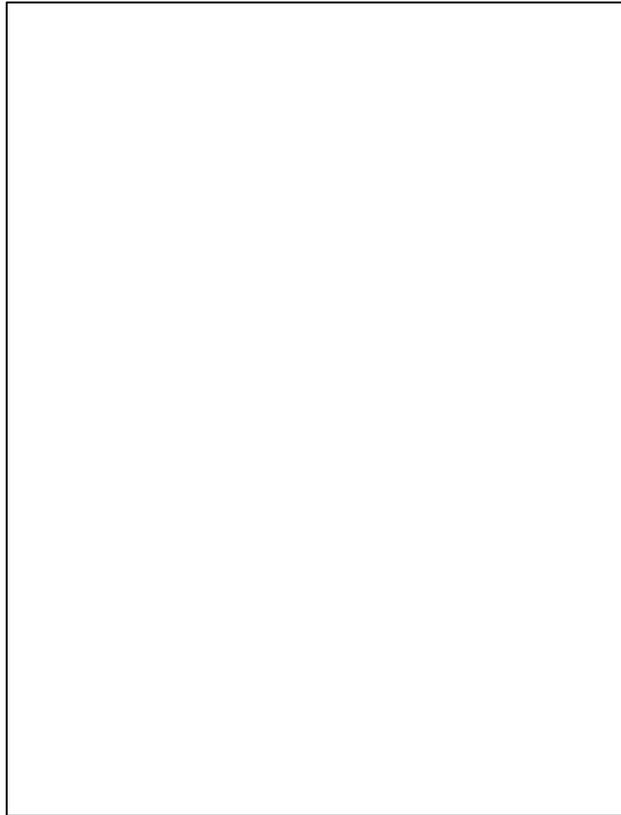


Figure 46. Franz Marc, *Genesis* in *Neue Europäische Graphik: Deutsche Künstler*, printed 1921, created in 1914  
Photo courtesy of Harvard Art Museums – Busch-Reisinger Museum

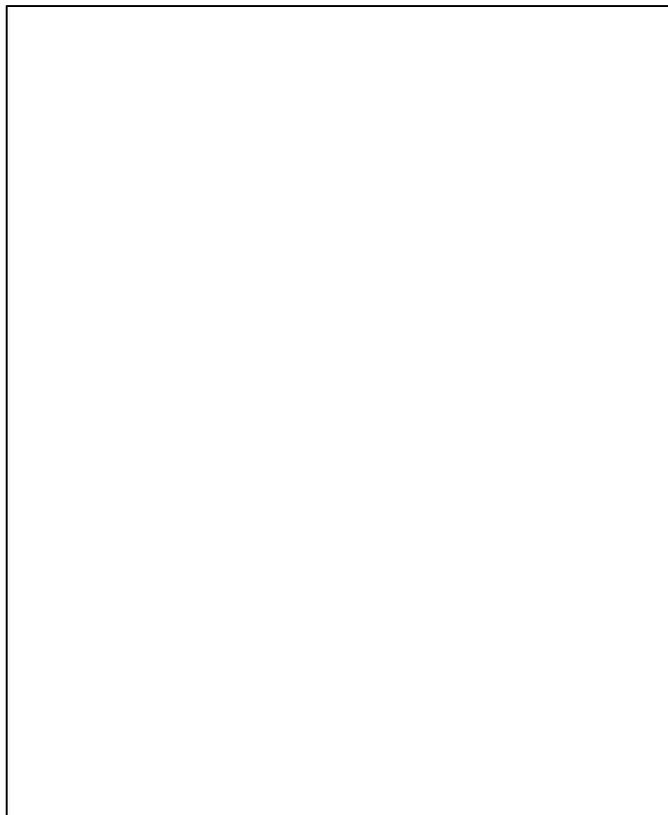


Figure 47. August Macke, *Greeting*, in *Neue Europäische Graphik: Deutsche Künstler*, printed c. 1921, created in 1912  
Photo courtesy of Harvard Art Museums – Busch-Reisinger Museum

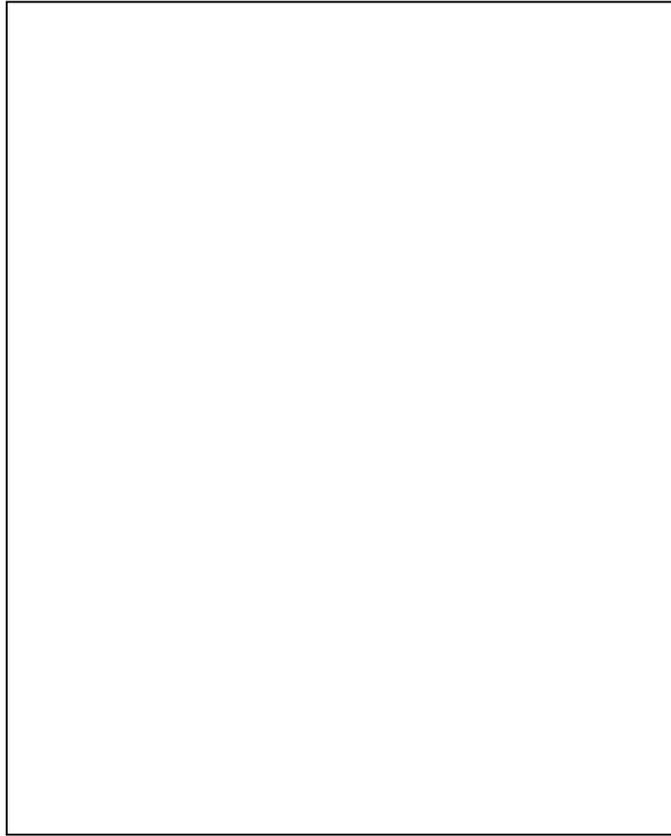


Figure 48. Otto Dix, *Matrose und Mädchen*, 1923, Colored lithograph  
Reproduced in Heller, *Stark Impressions: Graphic Production in Germany, 1918-1933*, 279.

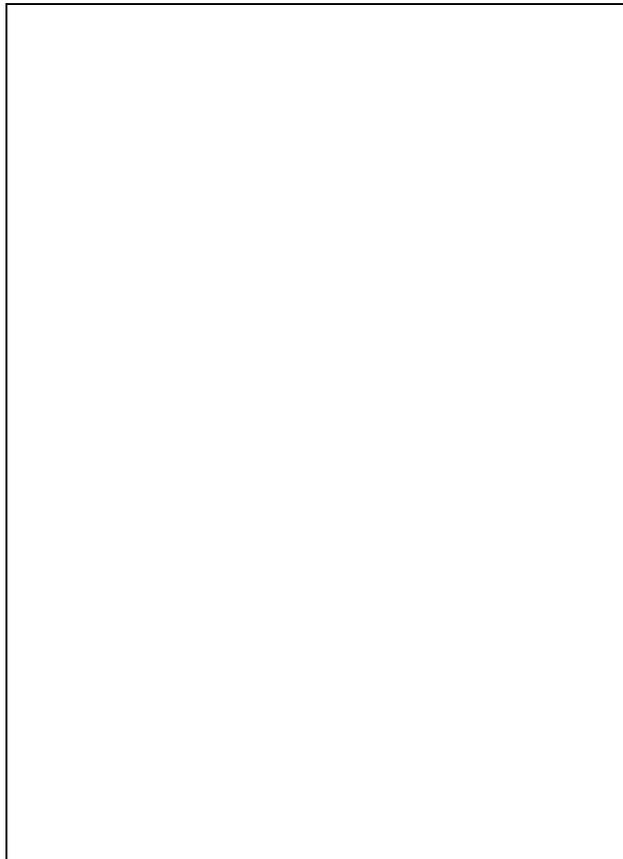


Figure 49. Otto Dix, *Besuch bei Madame Germaine in Méricourt*, aus *Der Krieg*, 1924, Etching

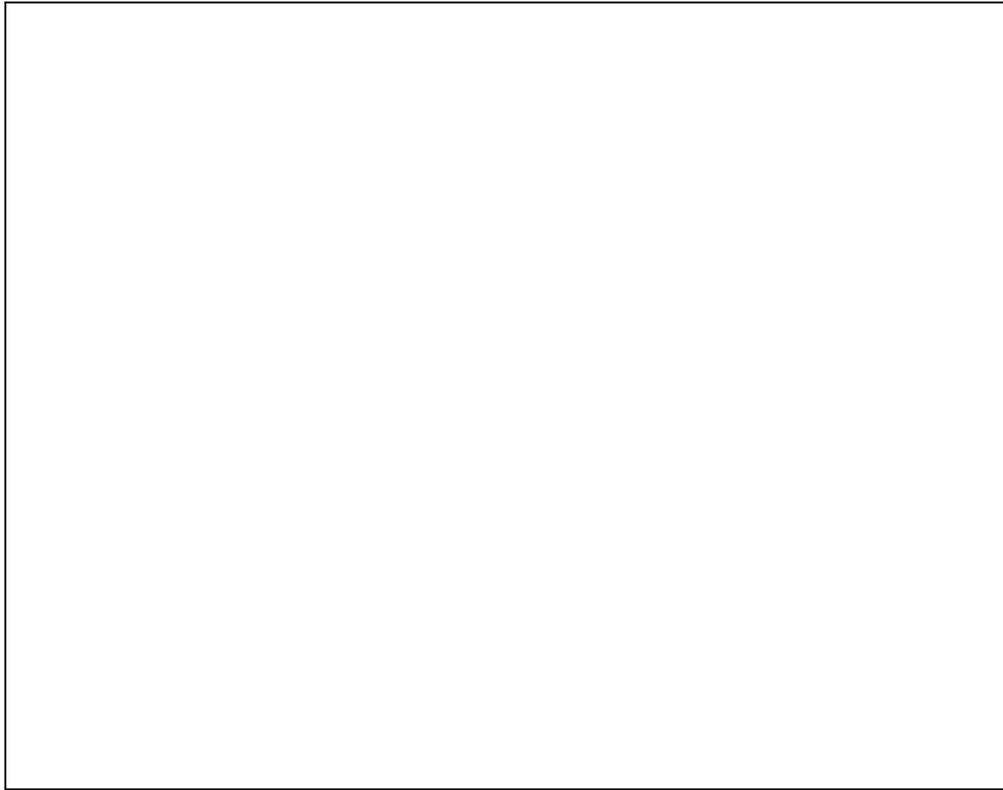


Figure 50. Max Beckmann, *Frau in der Nacht*, 1920, Drypoint  
Photo courtesy of the Saint Louis Art Museum

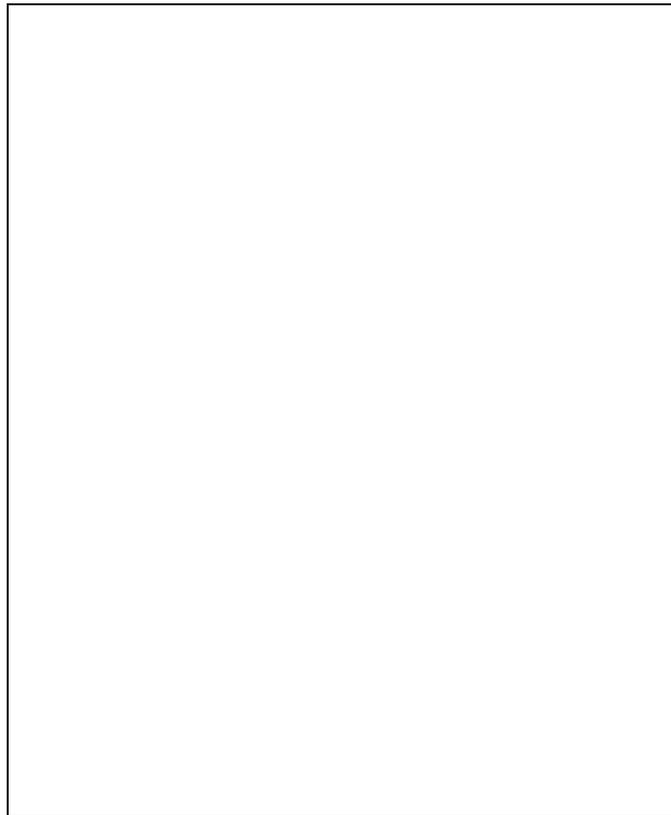


Figure 51. Hermann Max Pechstein, *Am Strand*, c. 1922-23, Drypoint  
Reproduced in Heller, *Stark Impressions: Graphic Production in Germany, 1918-1933*, 308.

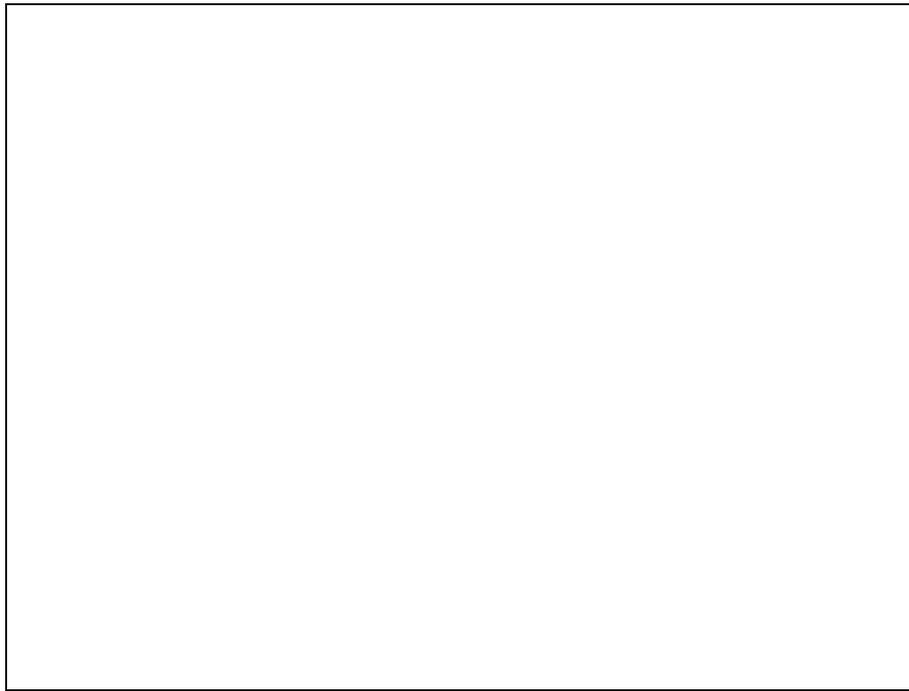


Figure 52. Käthe Kollwitz, *Die Mütter*, Blatt 6 aus: *Der Krieg*, 1922-23, Woodcut  
Reproduced in Heller, *Stark Impressions: Graphic Production in Germany, 1918-1933*, 69.

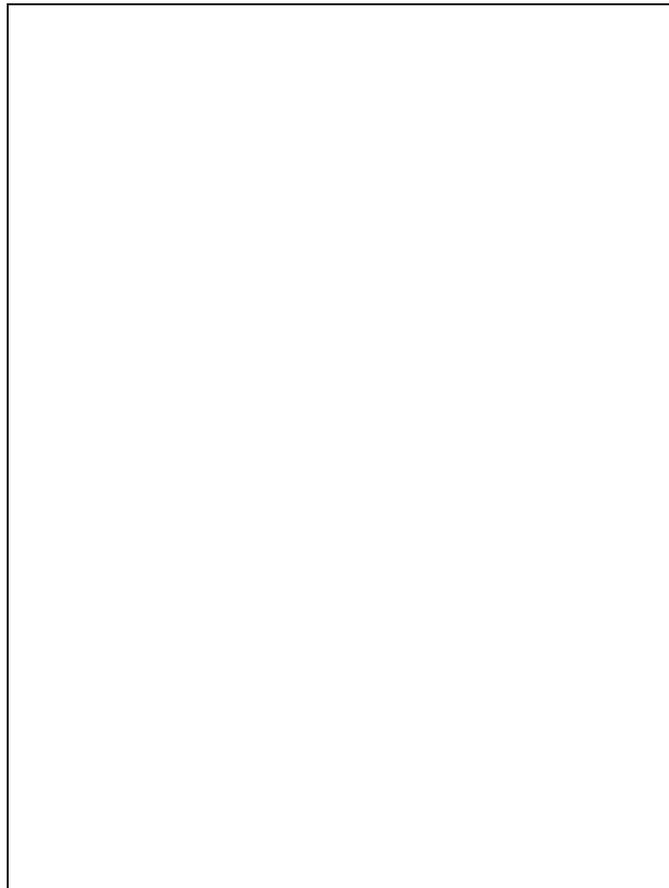


Figure 53. Hannah Höch, *Da-Dandy*, 1919, Collage

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