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| Segal, Arthur (1875-1944) |
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| Arthur Segal was a Romanian artist born to Jewish parents as Aron Sigalu. He turned from a post-impressionist modernism around 1900 to radical avant-garde stances in the early 1920s, and then back to a classicising modernism in the 1940s. His work moved from traditional art-craft (painting, engraving) to modern and avant-garde practices (political engagement, teaching, curatorship, manifestos, theoretical writings, art-therapy). From 1892 to 1900 he studied in Berlin, Paris, and Munich. Segal was a student of Adolf Hölzel (founder of the art colony *Neues Dachau*); his work was shaped by Hölzel’s colour theory ­– formally structuring landscapes as decorative grids rather than phenomenal transcripts of ocular perception. In 1902-03 he visited Italy and France. There he was influenced by the work of Van Gogh and Segantini, whose naturalism and light-seeking divisionism he appropriated. He exhibited with the *Berliner Secession* from 1909 onward, and co-founded the *Neue Secession* in 1910. Segal remained connected to the Romanian art scene, exhibiting with the *Tinerimea Artistica* group in 1910-13. His 1910 Bucharest exhibition was heralded as ‘the first exhibition of modern art’ in Romania. In 1914 Segal moved to Ascona, Switzerland, where he met Hans Arp, Hugo Ball, and Alexei Jawlensky – linked with the *Monte Verita* community; there he began to focus on natural harmony in art and life. In 1916 Segal exhibited at *Cabaret Voltaire* alongside fellow Romanian Dadaists Tristan Tzara and Marcel Janco. In 1919 he joined the *Novembergruppe,* becoming one of its leaders. |
| Arthur Segal was a Romanian artist born to Jewish parents as Aron Sigalu. He turned from a post-impressionist modernism around 1900 to radical avant-garde stances in the early 1920s, and then back to a classicising modernism in the 1940s. His work moved from traditional art-craft (painting, engraving) to modern and avant-garde practices (political engagement, teaching, curatorship, manifestos, theoretical writings, art-therapy). From 1892 to 1900 he studied in Berlin, Paris, and Munich. Segal was a student of Adolf Hölzel (founder of the art colony *Neues Dachau*); his work was shaped by Hölzel’s colour theory ­– formally structuring landscapes as decorative grids rather than phenomenal transcripts of ocular perception. In 1902-03 he visited Italy and France. There he was influenced by the work of Van Gogh and Segantini, whose naturalism and light-seeking divisionism he appropriated. He exhibited with the *Berliner Secession* from 1909 onward, and co-founded the *Neue Secession* in 1910. Segal remained connected to the Romanian art scene, exhibiting with the *Tinerimea Artistica* group in 1910-13. His 1910 Bucharest exhibition was heralded as ‘the first exhibition of modern art’ in Romania. In 1914 Segal moved to Ascona, Switzerland, where he met Hans Arp, Hugo Ball, and Alexei Jawlensky – linked with the *Monte Verita* community; there he began to focus on natural harmony in art and life. In 1916 Segal exhibited at *Cabaret Voltaire* alongside fellow Romanian Dadaists Tristan Tzara and Marcel Janco. In 1919 he joined the *Novembergruppe,* becoming one of its leaders.  In addition to his own readings of Goethe and Hölzel’s colour theories, cubism, orphism, and futurism; the *Monte Verita* eco-sophic gnosis; and dadaist upheavals all contributed to Segal’s aesthetic-speculative synthesis – an ‘optical equivalence’ (*optische Gleichwertigkeit*) – which he developed around 1917. Facing anarchy and the chaos of WWI, he responded with his theory of hierarchy and dominance in art and society. Segal opposed individualist, subjective art springing from a central point of power as anti-collectivist and anti-social symbol. His leftist ideals permeated the very structure of his works, although the iconography remained traditional (landscapes, interiors). In his work, Segal set a raster onto the canvases, ‘democratically’ distributing the colours as prismatic tonal units in a glissando of contrasts, from darkness to light, as derived from Schopenhauer’s equivalence theory.  After settling in Berlin in 1920, Segal founded his own painting school. As a member of groups such as *Die Autonomen* and *Die Juryfreien,* Segal favoured social engagement. He participated in *Asso* (or *ARBKD*) and, along with Grosz, Kollwitz, and Dix, supported the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and Trade Union’s actions in defence of ‘*Achtstundentag*’ (eight hours work day). In 1925 his work was included in *Die Kunstismen*, and he declined a teaching position at the Bauhaus. In his work of the late 1920s, he advocated a ‘new naturalism,’ applying divisionism in figurative canvases. Bordering proto-photorealism in the late 1930s, he saw this as a ‘synthesis of constructivism and neue sachlichkeit.’ In 1933 Segal immigrated to Mallorca, finally setteling in London 1936, where he opened the *Arthur Segal Painting School for Professionals and Non-Professionals*. Influenced by Freud and other psychoanalysts and psychiatrists, he pioneered art as a psychotherapeutic contribution in handling mental disorders. He died on 23 June 1944 in London.  [File: Segal.jpg]  Figure Arthur Segal, Strasse auf Helgoland II, 1924, oil on board with painted frame, 98.4 x 80 cm, The Metropolitan Museum New York.  <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/493694> |
| Further reading:  (Herzogenrath and Liška)  (Sandquist)  (A. Segal, The Objective Principles of Painting)  (Segal and Braun, Lichtprobleme der Bildenden Kunst)  (E. Segal) |