



ARTISTS' COLONY SCHWAAN



Franz Bunke

Franz Bunke was born 3rd December 1857, the son of a mill builder in Schwaan. Thanks to his open-minded parents, he was able to develop his artistic talent from an early age. From 1871 - 1874 Franz Bunke took art classes

with the portrait painter Paul Tischbein in Rostock and, following Tischbein's death, Bunke attended a trade school. In the spring of 1878 he commenced artistic studies at the Berlin Academy but after only one term he moved to Weimar where he remained as a student of Theodor Hagen until 1884. He was then awarded the professorship for landscape painting in Weimar. From 1892 Bunke regularly brought his students to Schwaan, along with his colleagues Paul Baum and Richard Starcke who came for the naturalistic painting. In 1910 the Duke of Sachsen-Weimar honoured Franz Bunke with the title of professor. Bunke was also appointed as an honourable member of the "Thuringian Fine Art Academy" and also of the "Mecklenburg Artistic Alliance". In 1927 Bunke was granted honorary citizenship in Schwaan and a street was named after him. To show his gratitude he presented the Town Council with one of his paintings. As the result of his foundation of and continuing support for the art community in Schwaan as well as his groundbreaking work in open-air painting he will always remain a great figure in Schwaan's history. On the 6th July 1939 Franz Bunke, aged 82, died in Weimar. As can be seen from the following key points, he enjoyed great professional acclaim from an early age and achieved high recognition for his work right into his later years.



Franz Bunke | Moon rising, about 1900, oil on canvas

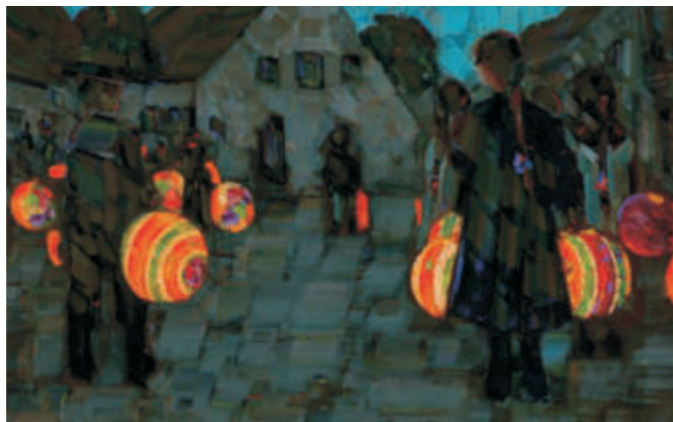


Rudolf Bartels

Rudolf Bartels was born 10th November 1872 in Schwaan. His family were potters who mainly produced stove tiles and crockery for Rostock. In 1887 Bartels began an apprenticeship as a painter and decorator. He travelled through

South Germany and Switzerland. From 1897 to 1900 he studied at the Trade School in Berlin.

In 1900 he was accepted as a student of Theodor Hagen in Weimar and in 1903 he received the "Wilhelm Ernst Medal" for his portrait of a horse's head. During his study leave he painted with Franz Bunke, Peter Paul Draewing and Alfred Heinsohn in Schwaan and exhibited some of his works with them in Rostock in 1904. From 1908 to 1917 Bartels worked as a freelance artist in Schwaan. This was interrupted by his war service. In the hope of higher recognition, he moved to Rostock in 1917 to the University City of Rostock. In 1926 Friedrich Schult organized an exhibition of Bartels' works in Güstrow. The exhibition drew great interest and as a consequence he sold many of his paintings. Following this optimistic start Bartels began to isolate himself more and more into his studio. A nervous illness made him unbearable for most of the time. In 1931 he held his last exhibition and afterwards he isolated himself totally. Rudolf Bartels died on February 16th 1943, an almost forgotten figure, in Rostock.



Rudolf Bartels | Children with lanterns, about 1910, oil on canvas



Alfred Heinsohn

Alfred Heinsohn was born 10th February 1875 in Hamburg. He also trained as a decorator and painter and attended the trade school in Hamburg. Afterwards he received training at the art schools of Karlsruhe and Düsseldorf.

Heinsohn studied with Theodor Hagen and Christian Rohlf in Weimar to whom he owes a major influence on his own work. From Weimar he followed Franz Bunke and fellow students Rudolf Bartels and Peter Paul Draewing to Schwaan. In Schwaan he designed and built a house (following his own ideas) in 1902 on the outskirts of the town between the railway and the River Warnow. In 1910 he sold the house and travelled through Switzerland and France. When his war service commenced, all of his artistic work in Schwaan ceased. After the war he returned to Hamburg and painted mainly landscapes and series of views of the city. Isolated and impoverished Heinsohn chose suicide on November 12th 1927. Until recently his estate was totally unknown because none of his work was in public hands. Heinsohn was a great supporter of expressive art. His works, especially after the war, show the special method of design of one who paints his motives in such an abstract manner. His pictures have a particular formula in which he uses untreated and coarse sack cloth as a basis instead of structured, toned paper. Heinsohn also painted aqua-relles and made coloured drawings, often in smaller sizes. In addition to painting he explored theoretical problems of colour and architectural designs. Alfred Heinsohn was, without a doubt, an artist who, through remarkable individuality, found his way into a more modern form of art.



Alfred Heinsohn | Spring in the lime forest, about 1898, oil on canvas



Peter Paul Draewing

Peter Paul Draewing was, born on 29 June, 1876 in Schwaan, the son of a worker for a cigar manufacturer. Following his apprenticeship as a painter and decorator and his studies at the Rostock trade school, Draewing

received his first artistic training from Franz Bunke. On Bunke's advice Draewing then went to study in Weimar. However his financial situation prevented him from studying for longer than the first term. The opportunity arose for him to help with the painting of the interior of the Hamburg City Hall. This brought him enough money for the continuation of his studies at the Weimar Art School in 1896. In 1904 Draewing moved to the Academy of Art in Kassel in order to improve his skills in the field of drawing and etching. He returned to Weimar in 1907 as a freelance artist. However his income was not sufficient to support his then current family of five. In 1915 he moved to Eisenach and worked as a teacher at the Ernst Abbe School of Drawing. After war services he resumed work at that school, but resigned for personal reasons in 1924. He found new employment as a high school teacher. In 1937 Peter Paul Draewing retired and died three years later on March 9th 1940 in Eisenach.



Peter Paul Draewing | The Warnow bridge in Schwaan, 1927, oil on Canvas



The Art Community of Schwaan

Following the establishment of various European Art Communities inspired by the School of Barbizon, a similar community of painters developed in Mecklenburg in 1890. The small rural town of Schwaan, situated in its attractive river landscape, offered a wide variety of motives for the drawing and painting of nature. Previously, during the 1860's the Schwerin artists Otto Dörr, Eduard Ehrke, as well as the painter Carl Malchin, renowned for his superb landscapes of Mecklenburg, had settled here. However it was primarily due to artist Franz Bunke, a Schwaaner by birth, that the small town developed as a "Mecca" for artists. After his studies at the Weimar School of Painting with Theodor Hagen, he remained there as a professor for landscape painting.

In his early days as professor he spent his holidays, in the company of his colleagues Paul Baum, Arno Metzgeroth and Richard Starke, in Schwaan, where they explored their mutual interest in the natural world. After 1892 his students (especially the female ones!) accompanied him on his holiday artistic ventures.

Two other artists born in Schwaan, Rudolf Bartels and Peter Paul Draewing, followed Bunke's advice and studied with Hagen in Weimar. Thus the community of artists can be justly proud of the great local influence established from those early days. Another Weimar trained artist, Hamburg born Alfred Heinsohn, settled in Schwaan in 1902.



The painters of the Artists' Colony Schwaan in Hotel „Drewes“ in 1900's.

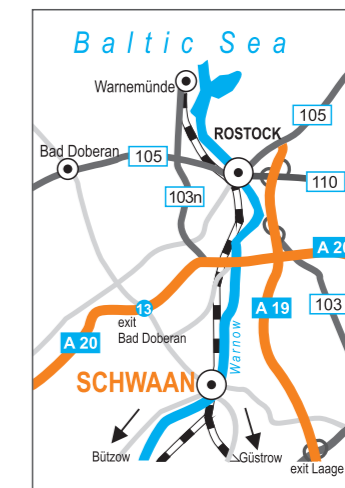
The Weimar training, which emphasized the development of an individual artist's personality, is highlighted in the important works of those early Schwaan artists: Bunke, Bartels, Heinsohn and Draewing. Rudolf Bartels became the most important painter of Mecklenburg during the first half of the 20th century. During this period Franz Bunke was famous as the founder and the central figure in the art community of Schwaan which was notable for its emphasis on painting in the open air.

As well as colleagues and students, Bunke attracted many interested amateur painters to Schwaan. The brothers - Rudolf, Carl and Otto Bartels - were also involved in the community. With the advent of the first world war, the Schwaan community diminished. Bartels, Draewing and Heinsohn were drafted into the army. Franz Bunke continued his holiday trips to Schwaan with just a few of his students. Two of these students, Erich Venzmer and Wilhelm Facklam, were excellent landscape painters.



Kunstmühle Schwaan

The "Kunstmühle Schwaan" is an art gallery which is situated in the historic walls of an old mill of the former artists' colony Schwaan. The building of the old mill is about 200 years old and it is one of the oldest buildings in Schwaan. The art of the former painters are presented to visitors on three floors in an area of 600 m². They belong to the archive of the museum or come from private collections. They are in particular closely linked to landscape paintings, which are put together in a new context.



Opening hours

April - October		November - March	
Mon	closed	Mon	closed
Tue-Fri	10:00 - 17:00h	Tue-Fri	10:00 - 16:00h
Sat	13:00 - 17:00h	Sat	closed
Sun	11:00 - 17:00h	Sun	11:00 - 17:00h

Parking is available.

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