

ALAN WOFSY FINE ARTS



MAX SLEVOGT. The Graphic Work 1890–1914.

Johannes Sievers, Emil Waldmann, Hans-Jürgen Imiela. 240 pages. 816 illustrations. San Francisco: Alan Wofsy Fine Arts, 1991. ISBN 1-5566-075-5

Max Slevogt was born in Landshut, Bavaria in 1868, and studied at the Academy of Arts in Munich from 1885 to 1889. During the nineties he was a member of the Munich Secession, and did work for periodicals such as *Jugend* and *Simplicissimus*, which frequently printed reproductions of his drawings. In 1900 Slevogt moved to Berlin, where he allied himself with the Berlin Secession.

Slevogt had done occasional etchings during his years in Munich. When he took up the technique again in 1904, he produced the cycle *Schwarze Szenen* (Black Scenes), whose atmosphere of dark terror is reminiscent of Goya's etchings. He then began to work intensively at lithography, the technique he used to create his important illustrated works of the following years. Between 1908 and 1914 several books appeared containing original lithographs by Slevogt. These reveal both the artist's development as a book illustrator in the tradition of Doré and Menzel, and also his unique ability to communicate intensity of feeling and action.

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Slevogt's illustrated works were motivated almost entirely by his own artistic goals — as a result of earlier successes, he had no difficulty finding a publisher for any work he wished to do — and are therefore to be seen as autonomous works of art. They provided the most suitable outlet for Slevogt's astonishing wealth of visual ideas — the sketches for the more than 300 illustrations for an edition of James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* were completed in a single night.

The beginnings of the scholarly study of Slevogt's graphic art date from 1910, when Johannes Sievers—together with Max Slevogt—sifted through the material in the *Kupferstichkabinett* in Berlin. The work was interrupted during the First World War, and subsequently continued by Emil Waldmann, director of the Kunsthalle in Bremen. In 1925 he submitted to the publisher Bruno Cassirer a complete catalogue of Max Slevogt's graphic work up to 1914. Because of the economic situation at the time, the work remained unpublished, and the manuscript subsequently disappeared. It resurfaced only in 1956 and was then revised and transcribed by Hans-Jürgen Imiela.

This volume, first published in 1962, contains 816 catalogue entries and their accompanying illustrations, including the important illustrated works *Sinbad the Sailor*, *Leatherstocking Tales*, and *Benvenuto Cellini*. This new edition includes for the first time an English translation of the editor's introduction and notes.