Musée Jenisch Vevey

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Press kit
Vevey, 29 September 2021

Lyonel Feininger The City and the Sea

From October 15, 2021 to January 9, 2022



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Press Release

To mark the 150th anniversary of the celebrated American-German artist and Bauhaus master, Lyonel Feininger's (1871–1956) birth, the Musée Jenisch Vevey presents the first museum exhibition in Switzerland focusing on the artist's graphic oeuvre, with exceptional loans from private collections.

Born in New York, Feininger launched his career in Germany and became a leading figure in the European avant-garde. Beginning in 1906 he produced etchings and lithographs before discovering the medium of the woodcut in 1918, cutting more than 200 woodcuts within only a few years. Working as a draughtsman, painter and printmaker, he translated his formal and conceptual research into a variety of media. The exhibition presents a number of paintings, drawings and three-dimensional objects alongside a wide selection of prints. It highlights two especially important themes in Feininger's work which he explored in multiple variations: urban and maritime subjects.

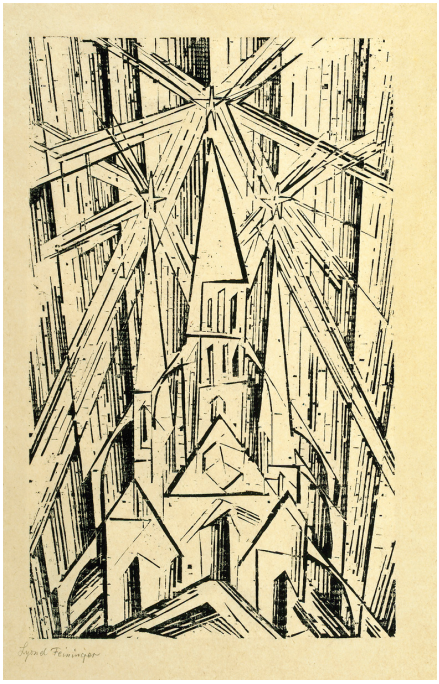
A Cabinet cantonal des estampes exhibition curated by Stéphanie Guex, Anne Drouglazet, and Achim Moeller in the Pavillon de l'estampe.

With the valuable support and partnership of

MOELLER FINE ART

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The Lyonel Feininger Project



Cathedral (large block), 1919
Woodcut on tissue paper
Sheet: 470 x 368 mm
Image: 308 x 191 mm
Private collection
Photo credit: fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
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Exhibition at the Pavillon de l'estampe

The exhibition encompasses the full breadth of Feininger's work and is organized thematically. While the artist began his career as a caricaturist and illustrator, he later worked in all mediums with a focus on the city and the sea. With a selection of works depicting Paris, Thuringian villages, and the Baltic Sea, the exhibition gives an overview of Feininger's urban and maritime works while showcasing his artistic development in a style that became increasingly Cubistic after 1911.

The Beginnings – illustrations

Lyonel Feininger, a tireless draughtsman of the world around him, began his career as a caricaturist in 1890 while still a student at the Royal Academy for Fine Arts in Berlin. His illustrations were published by numerous German humour magazines, such as *Lustige Blätter* [Funny Papers] and *Ulk* [Gag], making Feininger one of Berlin's most popular caricaturists at the turn of the 20th century. In 1906 the Chicago Tribune commissioned Feininger to draw two comic series for its Sunday supplement. This allowed him to move to Paris with his partner Julia Berg (née Lilienfeld), where he also produced illustrations for the satirical periodical *Le Témoin*. These works were inspired by the hurried passersby in the streets of Paris whom Feininger loved to sketch. In 1908, he undertook to illustrate *Norwegian Folk Tales* for a Berlin publisher. The colorful preparatory drawings, reminiscent of Art Nouveau, already evoked a taste for geometric motifs.



Hastende Leute [Hurrying People], 1907
India ink, graphite pencil and watercolour on vellum paper
276 x 216 mm
Private collection
Photo credit: fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
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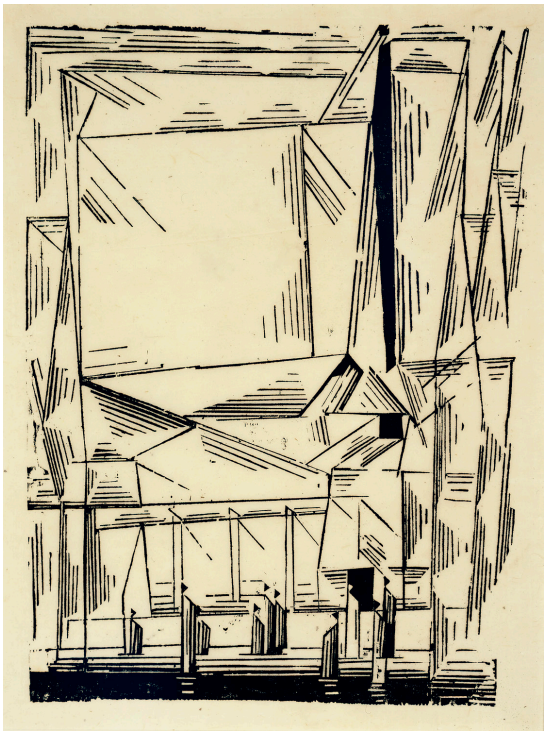
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The City

As a child in New York, Lyonel Feininger developed an interest in architecture. His move to Paris, where buildings from all eras intermingle, in 1906 rekindled his affinity to the subject. Parisian scenes make up the bulk of Feininger's urban representations. Initially populated with figures strolling over bridges and squares, his works became emptied of city dwellers in favor of tall buildings. The discovery of Cubism at the *Salon des Indépendants* in 1911 steered his style towards what he described as "Prismaism." Subsequently, Feininger experimented with the deconstruction of motifs in geometrical shapes as shown in many works with motifs in and around Weimar. Appointed by Walter Gropius as the first "Master" of the Bauhaus in 1919, Feininger became the printing workshop's "Master of Form" in 1921. His excursions to Thuringian villages fed his research into architectural motifs, as the church of Gelmeroda which became one of his leitmotifs



Gelmeroda, 1920
Wood engraving on Japan laid paper
Sheet: 400 x 298 mm
Image: 333 x 235 mm
Private collection
Photo credit: fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
© 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich

The birth of Feininger's three sons in 1906, 1909 and 1910 sparked the artist's creativity even further, as he started using the vocabulary of children's drawings in several woodcuts. Throughout his life, he also used wood to sculpt the small figures of his *City at the Edge of the World*, where the recurring architectural motifs from his other works in numerous media can be found.

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City at the Edge of the World, c. 1925-1955
Hand carved and painted wood
Maximum height: 14 cm
B. and J. Fels collection
Photo credit: Christopher Burke Studio, New York
© 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich

The Sea



Volcano, 1918
Woodcut on Mino copy paper
Sheet: 203 x 241 mm
Image: 79 x 121 mm
Private collection
Photo credit: fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
© 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich

Feininger's affection for maritime subjects originated also in his childhood. In the 1880's, he regularly observed the boats sailing on the Hudson and East Rivers to and from the busy ports of New York. After he moved to Germany in 1887 and discovered the Baltic Sea, his interest in the subject deepened and these motifs found their way into his lithographs and etchings. Inspired by his soon to be wife Juli Berg (née Lilienfeld), his compositions often featured nostalgic figures, echoing the style of his earlier caricatures, as in the etching *Der Reeder* [The Shipowner].

The discovery of woodcutting in 1918 opened up new possibilities for Feininger in the representation of maritime subjects. He focused on the raw and expressive forms of ships. The strength of these images lies in simplicity the medium demanded expressed in the contrasts of black and white. This practice also influenced his oil paintings, like in the *War Fleet* of 1920, where Feininger painted the same type of ships with geometric sails and reproduced a graphic layout with monochrome areas cut by diagonals.

Throughout his career, Feininger depicted the sea, sometimes calm, sometimes turbulent. Above all, he was interested in depicting boats and explored all types of ships, be it the cutters off the coast of the Baltic Sea or the freighters circling the shorelines of the United States.

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Chronology

1871 Lyonel Feininger is born on July 17 in New York, the first of three children of Karl and Elizabeth Feininger.

1887 Leaves for Germany and begins studying at the General Vocational and Crafts School in Hamburg.

1888 Moves to Berlin and begins studying at the Königlichen akademischen Hochschule für die bildenden Künste (Royal Academy for Fine Arts).

1892 Leaves the Academy and moves to Paris.

1893 Moves back to Berlin and starts working as a freelance caricaturist and illustrator.

1901 Marries Clara Fürst, birth of daughter Eleonora.

1902 Birth of daughter Marianne.

1905 Meets Julia Berg (née Lilienfeld) and separates from his wife.

1906 Moves with Julia to Paris, where their son Andreas is born.
Works on two comic strip series for the *Chicago Sunday Tribune*.

1907 Makes his first oil painting.

1908 Marries Julia in London, returns to Berlin

1909 Birth of son Laurence.

1910 Birth of son Theodore Lux (T. Lux).

1911 Six paintings are shown at the *Salon des Indépendants* in Paris.

1913 Five paintings are shown at the *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon*, organized by the Galerie Der Sturm in Berlin.

1917 First solo exhibition at the Galerie Der Sturm.

1919 Appointed the first master of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar.

1921 Composes first of his 16 fugues.

1926 Moves with the Bauhaus to Dessau as master without teaching duties.

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1929 Works on a series of paintings for the City of Halle (Saale).

1931 Completes his Halle (Saale) series.
Retrospectives in Dresden, Essen, and at the Nationalgalerie in Berlin.

1934 Moves to Berlin-Siemensstadt.

1935 The National Socialists declare his art “degenerate.”

1936 Teaches a summer course at Mills College in Oakland, California.

1937 Leaves Germany.
Replaces Oskar Kokoschka to teach a second summer course at Mills College, then settles in New York City.

1939 Works on murals for the 1939–40 New York World’s Fair.

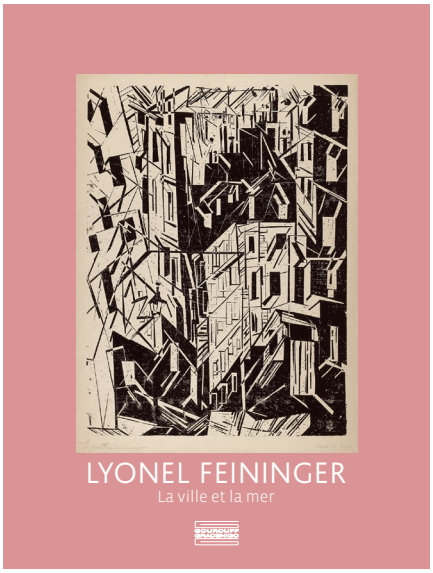
1942 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York awards one of his paintings a purchase prize.

1944 Retrospective with Marsden Hartley at The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

1945 Teaches a summer course at Black Mountain College in Asheville, North Carolina.

1956 Dies on January 13 in his New York apartment and is buried at Mount Hope Cemetery in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York.

Publication



Lyonel Feininger
La ville et la mer
Authors : Anne Drouglazet, Sebastian Ehlert, Gilles Genty et Achim Moeller
Foreword – Nathalie Chaix
Edition Gourcuff Gradenigo, Montreuil
144 pages
French
Dimensions 21,5 × 28,5 cm

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New York gallery owner specialising in 19th and 20th century European and American masters. Founder and President of Moeller Fine Art and Moeller Art Advisory. Founder and Managing Principal of Moeller Fine Art Projects | The Lyonel Feininger Project and author of the Catalogue Raisonné.

Sebastian Ehlert
Project Manager and Senior Researcher, Moeller Fine Art Projects | The Lyonel Feininger Project.

Gilles Genty
An art historian specializing in the 19th and early 20th centuries, former lecturer at the Ecole du Louvre and former director of the Musée du Petit Palais in Geneva.

Anne Drouglazet
Assistant Curator at the Cabinet cantonal des estampes – Musée Jenisch Vevey.



Auf dem Ausguck [On The Lookout], 1912
Woodcut on oatmeal-tan carbon paper
Sheet: 265 x 182 mm
Image: 151 x 232 mm
Private collection
Photo credit:
fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
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Excerpts

Feininger's caricatures are [...] charges against society, denouncing the hypocrisy and greed of his contemporaries. [...] Feininger denounced the darker sides of current events with his pencil, as in The Lady of Maxim's, *published in* Lustige Blätter *in 1900, in which he stigmatised the British intervention in the Transvaal during the Boer War by depicting Queen Victoria.*

His caustic drawings were also a laboratory for his painting; the composition and characters of Regrets de M. Hearst, *published in* Le Témoin *in November 1906, were taken up, almost without modification, in the painting entitled* The White Man *(1907, AM-031, Thyssen-Bornemisza collection). The image with its social and political content (the caricature was captioned in the newspaper: "In France, with 1,300,000 francs, I would be President of the Republic...") is transformed into a painting with a radical aesthetic. In a deep blue night sky, the colours clash, the architectures stand out and conflict in warm or cold tones, in a painting that is halfway between Kirchner-like expressionism and pre-Cubist geometrisation*

Gilles Genty, p. 10-11.



The Tall Man, 1909
India ink and watercolour on vellum paper
318 x 242 mm
Private collection
Photo credit:
fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
© 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich

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Feininger's position at the Bauhaus in Weimar reconnected him to his preferred landscape. He took bike rides to nearby villages, making nature studies of barns, churches, and streets, and later turning these sketches into drawings, watercolours, and woodcuts. He frequented Mellingen and Vollersroda, which inspired drawings and watercolours... But it was the village of Gelmeroda that he depicted the most, leading art historian Martin Faass to write: "Again and again Gelmeroda! Again and again the pointed steeple with the domed dial asymmetrically affixed underneath the gutter, sometimes from the east, sometimes from the north... There was no other motif that preoccupied Lyonel Feininger as much as the church in Gelmeroda.

Achim Moeller, p. 19.

For Feininger, the painting is contained "in the study," and his "nature studies" form the basis for the subsequent transformation process that enables him to achieve the artistic expression he desires. In order to ensure the necessary distance between direct experience of nature and the "longing" that emerges, Feininger soon developed a strict division of labor: hile he made sketches and watercolors during the summer, the winter was reservered for painting in oil on canvas in his studio. Thereby motifs from his nature studies could be turned instantaneously into compositions in charcoal, watercolor, and ink on paper or could take him years or decades to rediscover one of his perforated and filed sketches and turn them into a print or painting.

Sebastian Ehlert, p. 25-26.

The sea is one of Feininger's most important sources of inspiration, especially the Baltic Sea, on the shores of which he regularly spent time since his arrival in Germany in 1887. His long transatlantic crossing by liner from New York to Hamburg certainly contributed to his fascination with ships, which are omnipresent in his work. Although he was sometimes interested in coasts, beaches or harbours, the impressive sailing or steam ships account for the lion's share of his compositions. The discovery of wood engraving in 1918 gave a new impetus to the artist's maritime subjects: while he remained faithful to the themes of the past, which he had treated with etching or lithography, he declined his motifs by playing on the possibilities offered by xylography. [...] In 1918, he produced one hundred and seventeen woodcuts made from recycled boards and printed by hand, without a press.

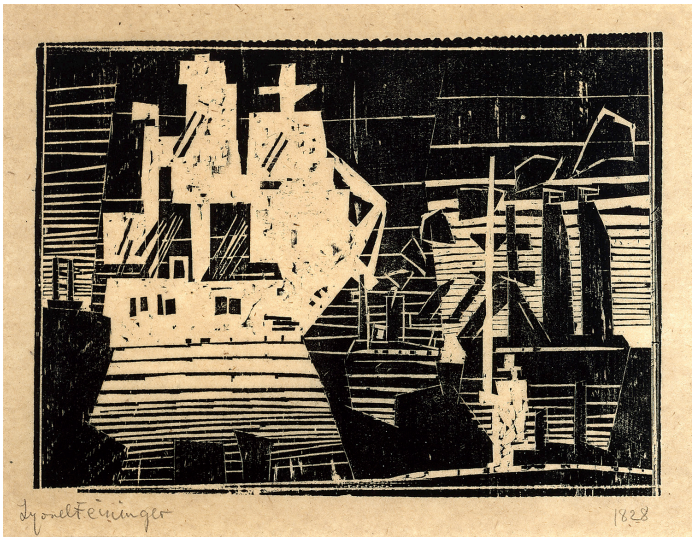
Anne Drouglazet, p. 78.

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Marine, 1918
Woodcut on oatmeal-tan carbon paper, mounted on paper
Mounting paper: 251 x 314 mm
Sheet: 219 x 283 mm
Image: 165 x 229 mm
Private collection
Photo credit: fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
© 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich

It was the materiality and careful execution of Feininger's prints that first attracted our collector to him. He began his collection with the artist's woodcuts. After he became more familiar with Feininger's oeuvre, his interest widened. He purchased many works depicting Paris, a city to which he had a special connection. He also focused on Feininger's watercolors, acquiring some of the finest and earliest examples. As a systematic collector, the serial aspect of Feininger's work greatly appealed to him. He was keen to acquire paintings related to works on paper already in his collection [...]

Achim Moeller, p. 33.

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Practical information

Important!
Admission on presentation of Covid certificate.
Programme and dates subject to change due to the health situation
Please refer to our website: museejenisch.ch

Exhibition	**Lyonel Feininger** **The City and the Sea**
Dates	From October 15, 2021 to January 9, 2022
Private viewing	**October 14 2021, at 6.30 pm** Together with the private viewing of *XXL - Le dessin en grand* Free entry Opening Remarks: Alexandra Melchior, Town Councilor for Culture Nathalie Chaix, Director Achim Moeller, Curator
Curators	Stéphanie Guex Anne Drouglazet Achim Moeller
Number of works exhibited	71 works
Publication	*Lyonel Feininger* *La ville et la mer* Authors: Anne Drouglazet, Sebastian Ehlert, Gilles Genty and Achim Moeller Foreword by Nathalie Chaix Édition Gourcuff Gradenigo, Montreuil 144 pages French Format 21.5 × 28.5 cm
Guided tour	Thursday October 28, 2021 at 6.30 pm By Anne Drouglazet, Deputy Curator of the Cabinet cantonal des estampes CHF 3.00 (in addition to the entrance fee), free for “Friends” Registration: info@museejenisch.ch
Your holiday at the museum	Tuesday, October 19, and Thursday, October 21 October, 9 am to 12 pm Creative workshops for children 6 and up CHF 15.00 Registration: info@museejenisch.ch

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Family visits to museums - When the city meets the sea

Saturday, November 6, from 1.30 to 3.30 pm and from 4 to 6 pm
By *Ville en tête*, association for raising awareness of building culture
Activity in pairs, one adult and one child from 6 years old
CHF 20 per family
Registration from November 1 on: 084 886 84 84

Graphic Arts Days

Saturday, November 13, from 2 pm to 5 pm
Demonstration of wood and lino printing
By Terry Fernandez, Aujourd'hui workshop
Free entry

Sunday, November 14, from 2.30 to 3.30 pm
Tamponville
By Sara Terrier, Cultural mediator
Creative workshop for children 6 and up
CHF 5.00
Registration: info@museejenisch.ch

Art & Sons – Musical Rendezvous

Every day at 2 pm
Based on a proposal by Stéphanie-Aloysia Moretti, Artistic Director of the Montreux Jazz Artists Foundation

Booklet for young people

Age 6 and up
Available free of charge at the reception

Guided tours of the exhibition

On request, in French or English.
For groups of adults and children.

Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm
Open until 8 pm on special Thursdays
Monday closed
Open 24 and 31 December from 11 am to 4.30 pm
Closed 25 December and 1 January

Entrance fees

Adults CHF 12.00
Pensioners CHF 10.00
Children and young people up to 18 years free of charge
Students and apprentices CHF 5.00
Free entry on the 1st weekend of the month

Access

Train station 250 m from the museum
Parking in the Old Town and at the nearby Coop
Access for disabled people and stroller

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An exhibition of the Cabinet cantonal des estampes, to be seen at the Pavillon de l'estampe

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Press images

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Hastende Leute [Hurrying People], 1907
India ink, graphite pencil and watercolour on vellum paper
276 x 216 mm
Private collection
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Die grüne Brücke [The Green Bridge], 1909
India ink, graphite pencil and watercolour on vellum paper
Image: 250 x 200 mm
Private collection
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The Disparagers, 1911
Etching on light grey laid paper
Sheet: 311 x 333 mm
Dish: 219 x 260 mm
Private collection
Photo credit: fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
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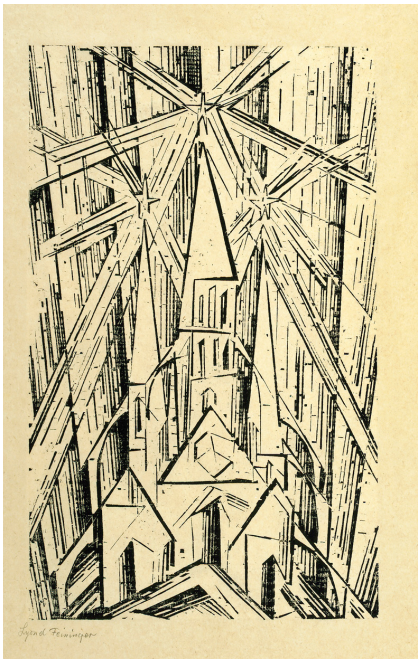
Strasse in Paris [Street in Paris], 1918
Woodcut on cream wove paper
Sheet: 681 × 500 mm
Image: 547 × 412 mm
Private collection
Photo credit: fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
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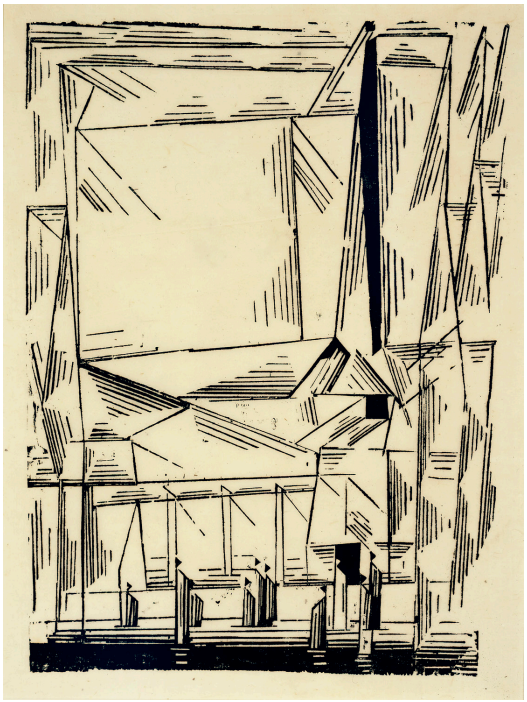
Das Tor [The Gate], 1920
Woodcut on Japanese laid paper
Sheet: 484 x 568 mm
Image: 408 x 415 mm
Moeller Fine Art, New York
Photo credit: Alistir Alexander, Camerarts, Inc.
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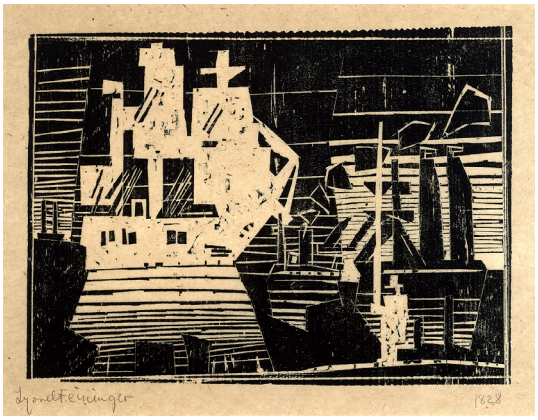
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Volcan, 1918
Woodcut on Mino copy paper
Sheet: 203 x 241 mm
Image: 79 x 121 mm
Private collection
Photo credit: fotoatelier Peter Schälchi
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City at the Edge of the World, c.1925-1955
Hand carved and painted wood
Maximum height: 14 cm
Collection B. and J. Fels
Photo credit: Christopher Burke Studio, New York
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