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PRESS – COMMUNICATION – SPONSORS

Stauffenbergstraße 41
10785 Berlin

MECHTILD KRONENBERG
HEAD OF DIVISION

FIONA GEUSS
PRESS OFFICER NATIONALGALERIE

Tel: +49 30 3978 34-16
Mobile: +49 151 527 51 565

presse@smb.spk-berlin.de
www.smb.museum/presse

PRESS RELEASE
Sammlung Scharf-Gerstenberg
Schloßstr. 70, 14059 Berlin-Charlottenburg
Opening hours: Tue – Fri 10 am – 6 pm, Sat + Sun 11 am – 6 pm

Myth and Massacre. Ernst Wilhelm Nay and André Masson
8 December 2023 – 28 April 2024
A special exhibition of the Nationalgalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

This exhibition focuses on the artistic relationship between the Surrealist Masson, born in 1896 in France, and Nay, born in Berlin in 1902, whose art would soon move away from figurative representation, becoming an icon of Modernist abstraction in post-war West Germany.

André Masson's large-format painting Massacre (today part of the Pietzsch Collection) was produced in 1931. Formally, it exhibits remarkable similarities with works from Ernst Wilhelm Nay's so-called "France and Hecate" period in the 1940s. Thematically, the two artists assume contradicting stances. While in Masson's works (in addition to the painting from the Pietzsch Collection, he also produced a string of paintings on the theme of the massacre, including one in the Sammlung Scharf-Gerstenberg) the memory of the brutality of the First World War is foregrounded, the young soldier sketches a mythologically enchanted world that is juxtaposed to the horrific events of the Second World War that surrounded him.

Curated by Kyllikki Zacharias, head of Sammlung Scharf-Gerstenberg.

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