

Collection News

NEWS



Collection: All Soul's Day

German artist Pol Cassel (1892 – 1945) created this painting during some of the most turbulent years of the Weimar Republic. In the wake of World War I, newly erected monuments and cemeteries became a common, often controversial subject matter for artists who sought to make visible the social, cultural, and political anxieties of the day. Cassel's *Cemetery*, which depicts an ostentatious, well-to-do couple visiting a small village cemetery on All Soul's Day, offers a biting form of social critique characteristic of many artists working during this volatile period in German

history. While the painting purports to focus on Germany's fallen soldiers, the artist has carefully rendered the scene to call attention to the couple at the gate: the somber, dark tones are interrupted by a bright blue structure at the couple's back and careful attention has been paid to their refined accessories, including the gentleman's gloves and top hat and the lady's fox-fur stole and muff. The choice to organize the composition in this manner conveys Cassel's discomfort with the ways an affected ritual of mourning the dead had eclipsed true remorse for the conflict that claimed so many lives. This painting is now on view in the exhibition [Clear Picture: Looking at Communities from an Art Museum](#).

Pol Cassel, German, 1892 – 1945

Friedhof (Cemetery), 1921

Oil on canvas

43 x 50 1/4 inches

2000.30

Museum purchase

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art



10.30.14

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