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NELL WALDEN, DER STURM, AND THE COLLABORATIVE CULTURES OF MODERN ART

JESSICA SJÖHOLM SKRUBBE



Nell Walden, Der Sturm, and the Collaborative Cultures of Modern Art

Based on hitherto overlooked archival material, this book reveals Nell Walden's significant impact on the Sturm organisation through a feminist reading of supportive labour that highlights the centrality of collaborative work within the modern art world.

This book introduces Walden as an ardent collector of modern and indigenous art and critically contextualises her own art production in relation to expressionist concepts of art and to gendered ideas on abstraction and decoration. Visual analyses highlight how she collaborated with professional and experimental women photographers during the Weimar era and how the circulation of these photographs served as a means to intervene in the public sphere of culture in interwar Germany. Finally, the book provides an analysis of Walden's continuing work for Der Sturm after her voluntary exile from Germany to Switzerland in 1933 and highlights the importance of women's supportive labour for the canonisation and institutionalisation of modern art in museums and archives.

The book will be of interest to scholars working in art history, visual studies, and gender studies.

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Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe

Cover image: Yva (Else Neulaender), Photograph of Nell Walden and sculpture by William Wauer in double exposure, late 1920s/early 1930s.
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First published 2022

by Routledge

605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

and by Routledge

4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Sjöholm, Jessica, author.

Title: Nell Walden, Der Sturm, and the collaborative cultures of modern art/
Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe.

Description: New York : Routledge, 2022. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2021037735 (print) | LCCN 2021037736 (ebook) |

ISBN 9780367552459 (hardback) | ISBN 9780367566876 (paperback) |

ISBN 9781003098935 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Walden, Nell. | Sturm. | Modernism (Art)—Europe. | Feminism and art—Europe—History—20th century. | Art and society—Europe—History—20th century.

Classification: LCC N7093.W35 S59 2022 (print) | LCC N7093.W35 (ebook) |

DDC 709.04—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021037735>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021037736>

ISBN: 978-0-367-55245-9 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-367-56687-6 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-09893-5 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003098935

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Acknowledgements

This book has paid attention to different forms of collaborations and emphasised the ways in which any creative achievement is dependent upon collective activities for its becoming. The importance of supportive work, collaborations, and affirmative contexts certainly holds true for any research publication too.

Since I first took an interest in Nell Walden I have spent many hours in the Nell Walden archive in the Landskrona museum. I cannot stress enough the importance of the generous welcome and support of the museum staff for the archival work of this book. I am deeply indebted to Birthe Wibrandt and Annelie Ingvarsson, who have shared not only their time and knowledge but also their working spaces at the museum with me. I am equally grateful to Elisabeth Arvidsson, Åsa Karlsson, Carita Hermansson and Ulrika Odénus for their interest in and support of my work. If Christer Strandberg had not shared his notes on Nell Walden's articles in the *Korrespondenten Landskrona Tidning*, my analysis of her undertakings during the First World War had been much more time consuming.

Access to primary sources and archival material has been key in the work with this book. I am grateful to Rainer Enders for sharing findings from his archival research on *Der Sturm* with me. I am deeply thankful to the members of Nell Walden's family, who not only warmly welcomed me in their home but also let me return to the office with a suitcase full of primary sources on loan. I cannot thank enough Andreas Schlothauer, who gave me access to extensive material from his archival research in Switzerland, a generosity of a kind I had never before encountered in the academic world.

I have also benefitted from the professionalism of the staff at the Bundesarchiv, Landesarchiv, and Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum archives, New York, and the archive at Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. At Kunstmuseum Bern, I was generously welcomed by Claudine Metzger and Regina Bühlmann. Regina Bühlmann has also offered vital support as regards archival material in the museum.

The main part of the preparatory archival work for this book was conducted during a previous research project financed by the Swedish Research Council, which also enabled me to contribute to a travelling exhibition on Nell Walden and *Der Sturm* organised by the Mjellby konstmuseum, Halmstad. I am thankful to Karolina Petersson and Annelie Tuvros for inviting me to partake in the exhibition work and catalogue.

Grants from Magn. Bergvalls stiftelse and Stiftelsen Längmanska kulturfonden have secured necessary research travels and the numerous illustrations in the book.

Generous grants from Nell Waldens fond and Osvald Arnulf Olssons donationsfond enabled a research leave and invaluable concentrated writing time.

I am grateful for the professional copy-editing of Doreen Kruger, who helped me phrase my arguments more clearly. I am sincerely thankful to Isabella Vitti and Katie Armstrong at Routledge, whose professionalism I admire and whose patience with postponed deadlines during the pandemic year 2020–2021 have exceeded my expectations. I also would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers, who provided both critical and affirmative feedback on my text, which was very helpful when finalising the manuscript.

During the years of writing this book I have been fortunate to have supportive colleagues at Stockholm University. I am thankful to Anna Dahlgren, who read a draft chapter and invited me to present my research at the Higher seminar for photo research. Malin Holdar, Sabrina Norlander Eliasson, and Anna Bortolozzi have provided me with a truly supportive professional milieu during the last phase of this work. Thank you for being great minds! Malin Holdar, inspiring colleague and generous friend, has read the manuscript on several occasions and provided me with invaluable support and critical comments.

Being part of a family where domestic labour is equally shared has been pivotal for the conclusion of this book. Jens, thank you ever so much, as always, for coffees, dinners, and champagne, and for being a modern husband and present father. My most heartfelt thanks goes to my loving, funny, and brilliant daughters, Hedda and Harriet, who during the hectic time of concluding this book have seen less of their mother than is reasonable. I dedicate this book to my family.

Introduction

In the Margins of the Centre

A 1916 portrait photograph taken by an unknown photographer shows the Swedish-born artist and art collector Nell Walden (b. Nelly Roslund, 1887–1975) seated at the table in the dining room (*Speisezimmer*) of her apartment at Potsdamer Straße 134a in Berlin (Figure 0.1). At the other side of the table is her husband, the musician, writer, and editor Herwarth Walden (1879–1941), at the time one of Europe's most influential critics and dealers of modern art. The photograph, obviously staged, presents an apparently ordinary scene in the Walden couple's everyday life. On the wall behind the Waldens are two large paintings by Marc Chagall, *Half-Past Three (The Poet)* (*Halb vier Uhr*, 1911) and *The Flying Carriage* (*Die fliegende Kutsche*, 1913), stylistically radical, even as black and white reproductions and, at least for the present-day beholder, slightly in discord with the otherwise rather conventional furnishing. The spatial context of the private apartment is a significant feature of the image; the conspicuous display of modern art in the domestic interior is as prominently emphasised as the individuals portrayed. The Waldens, however, pay no attention to the paintings on the wall but direct their gazes at each other. Herwarth Walden leans forward and looks intensely at his partner and wife. Nell Walden, smiling, returns his gaze with a tender look. In other words, the portrait presents them looking at each other in an act of mutual recognition.

Six years prior to this photograph, Herwarth Walden had founded the arts journal *Der Sturm*, distributed through his own publishing house. During the 1910s, *Der Sturm* gradually expanded its business and *Der Sturm* became a collective term for a diversity of activities.¹ In 1912, Nelly Roslund joined the *Sturm* enterprise, and following their marriage in November that same year, she became Herwarth Walden's professional and private partner. Eventually, *Der Sturm* encompassed, among other things, a leading gallery for modern art that produced monthly exhibitions in Berlin as well as travelling exhibitions in Germany and abroad, a major collection of international modern art, an art school, a varying programme of music and theatre performances, lectures, and literature readings as well as social events such as balls and receptions.² The importance of *Der Sturm* for the dissemination and successful establishment of modern art—such as the expressionist art of the Blaue Reiter group, the Italian futurists, and individual artists such as Oskar Kokoschka, Marc Chagall, and Paul Klee—in Germany and beyond, can hardly be overestimated.

In 1916, in spite of the obstacles and hazards caused by the ongoing First World War, *Der Sturm* was paradoxically approaching the peak of its success as a major European promoter and disseminator of international modern art. To those initiated in the modern art world of the time, it would have been apparent that the Walden couple



Figure 0.1 Unknown photographer, Herwarth and Nell Walden in their dining room, 1916. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

had boldly chosen to present themselves and the Sturm organisation by promoting the “enemy artist” Chagall during wartime. From 1917 onwards, *Der Sturm*, aiming to advance the interests of avant-garde art, reproduced and distributed the photograph as part of the postcard series “Sammlung Walden”. Along with the portrait of the Walden couple in their dining room, the series included reproductions of 24 artworks from Nell Walden’s extensive art collection.

This image, then, served *Der Sturm*’s propaganda for international modern art in general by promoting the Walden art collection in particular. The postcard’s essential function was to circulate, and the image it reproduced was fundamentally intended for widespread display, in public and private spaces alike. Thus, the portrait of Nell and Herwarth Walden was not just any image. It was a means for the couple to perform and present their ideal selves for a broader public. In sum, the image served both *Der Sturm*’s commercial advertising and promotion of international modern art and the Waldens’ social self-presentation.

The printed text on the back of the postcard offered the recipients further information about the art collection:

The Walden Collection. Berlin/Potsdamer Straße 134a. 1: Corner of the dining room. Visitors of the art exhibition *Der Sturm* are permitted a visit to the Walden collection every Monday and Thursday at 4 o’clock. The collection is housed

in the private apartment of Herwarth Walden and contains over three hundred paintings, drawings and sculptures of new art.³

Despite her presence in the image, the name of the collector, Nell Walden, is conspicuously absent in the promotional text of the postcard. This is only one of many examples of the way “Herwarth Walden” operated as a subtitle to the trademark *Der Sturm*. The name of the founder and director was on most printed material that left *Der Sturm*’s publishing house, and Herwarth Walden’s name and persona soon became synonymous with the *Sturm* business as a whole. However, through the distribution and circulation of this image, the Walden couple undeniably performed a public persona together, indicating their mutual work in *Der Sturm*—irrespective of the sparsely worded information on the back of the postcard.

A statement by the poet and *Sturm* collaborator August Stramm has often served to naturalise the idea of Herwarth Walden as the solitary embodiment of *Der Sturm*.⁴ Allegedly, Stramm was once asked, “Who is *Der Sturm*?” and is said to have replied, “*Der Sturm* is Herwarth Walden!”. The statement was notably part of the self-image fostered by the *Sturm* organisation from the 1920s onwards.⁵ Nell Walden and her former *Sturm* colleague Lothar Schreyer repeated the quotation in several publications on Herwarth Walden and *Der Sturm*, published in the 1950s and 1960s, and thus consolidated the mythologisation of Herwarth Walden.⁶ Undeniably, as founder of *Der Sturm* magazine and director of most of the *Sturm* activities, Herwarth Walden was an essential figure for the breakthrough of modern art, literature, and drama in Germany and beyond. The exclusive focus on Herwarth Walden, though, has reduced the *Sturm* organisation into a single authorial position and thus simplified the extensive collaborative work that enabled its success.⁷

Eventually, the equation of the individual with the organisation came to dictate the historiography of *Der Sturm*. Herwarth Walden has figured as the personification of the *Sturm* business in research literature, exhibitions, and catalogues. In these contexts, the portrait photograph of the Walden couple has frequently served as an illustration.⁸ Curiously, though, the photograph itself has not been analysed in depth.⁹ Neither has anyone questioned the inconsistent assertions of the image and the text on the back of the postcard and, indeed, Stramm’s oft-repeated statement.

In contrast, this particular photograph—and its afterlife in archives and publications—has helped generate several of the topics around which this book is structured. First, it refers to the collaborative work that inevitably constitutes any large-scale enterprise, *Der Sturm* included. It also indicates that Nell Walden’s art collection and its display in the Waldens’ private home served as an essential resource for *Der Sturm*. Furthermore, the photograph reproduced on postcards and in publications materialises practices of social self-presentation and points to its gendered implications in imperial and Weimar Germany and beyond. Finally, photographs in general not only offer “traces of the subjects producing and being produced by them” but are also “particularly useful to the feminist art historian wishing to recover the lost narratives on women as embodied subjects hidden within the existing frameworks of canonical art histories”.¹⁰ In other words, if photographs such as this one perform and present social selves that have been marginalised in the histories of modern art, they may offer ways of speaking back to canonical art history.

The photograph of the Waldens in their dining room showing off Nell Walden’s art collection has thus been a pivotal image in writing this book.¹¹ In fact, the discrepancy between the narratives on individual male authorship that have dominated

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the Sturm historiography and the collaborative partnership that this image clearly suggests was what prompted me to start a research project on Nell Walden and Der Sturm in the first place. The main objective of this book is to address such contradictory statements and to recuperate a history that has lingered at the margins of the centre, as it were. Even though I limit myself to Nell Walden and Der Sturm, this discrepancy is indicative of a broader inconsistency in the historiography of the European avant-garde, and hence the general argument in the book will be of relevance to a wider field of modernist and avant-garde historiography.

Nell Walden and the Historiography of Der Sturm

The first major works to offer comprehensive histories of Der Sturm were Georg Brühl's *Herwarth Walden und "Der Sturm"* (1983) and Volker Pirsich's published dissertation *Der Sturm. Eine Monographie* (1985). Brühl dedicates a separate chapter to Nell Walden, but does not elucidate on her work for Der Sturm in any detail. Instead, he points to her decisive influence on Herwarth Walden's demeanour in terms of representation and suggests that her flair for bourgeois elegance had an impact on his social conduct and self-presentation.¹² Pirsich, however, clearly posits her as a key figure of the Sturm organisation and as a vital part of the international network of avant-garde artists that the Waldens tried to establish before the outbreak of war.¹³ He does not hesitate to ascribe her work as a writer and translator during the First World War as the true reason for Der Sturm's economic consolidation in the middle of the 1910s.¹⁴ Finally, he implies her importance as he states that the Walden couple's divorce in 1924 was symptomatic of the collapse of the Sturm business in its entirety.¹⁵

In many subsequent exhibition catalogues and scholarly works on Der Sturm, Nell Walden's position within the enterprise has been, at the best, briefly mentioned or, at the worst, completely ignored or blatantly diminished. It is only recently that scholarship on Der Sturm has been revitalised and urgent questions of gender, geographies, and the avant-garde as a complex transnational network have come to the forefront in academic writing. During the last decades, this renewed interest in Der Sturm has brought with it both critical revisions of and crucial addenda to the established Sturm historiography, including reassessments of Nell Walden's role.¹⁶ However, within this recent research effort, an extensive art historical study of Nell Walden is still missing and thus the assessment of her position in the Sturm organisation varies considerably.¹⁷

This book, then, is simultaneously an effort to meet the research desideratum as regards Nell Walden and a contribution to the ongoing rereading of the Sturm organisation in a broader sense. In doing so, I focus on two aspects, already touched upon in Brühl's and Pirsich's seminal publications: Nell Walden's contributions to and involvement in the collaborative work of the Sturm organisation and its transnational network, and her practices of self-presentation and their implications within and beyond Sturm.

Networks and Collaborations

In line with the most recent research on Der Sturm, I argue that Der Sturm is best conceived of as a vast and complex transnational network.¹⁸ The focus here, though, is not so much on the Sturm organisation's networked structure in terms of international exhibitions and social networks, but on Nell Walden's operations within this

context. Describing a historical situation in terms of relations within a network foregrounds a social field of interdependency and reciprocity rather than a hierarchical structure defined in terms of centre–periphery. Importantly, the transformation of one actor—or of the understanding of one actor—inevitably entails an alteration of the network in its entirety.¹⁹ Thus, clarifying and analysing Nell Walden’s collaborations with Herwarth Walden in *Der Sturm* is not simply a matter of adding her operations to an established narrative; it is rather an endeavour that necessarily alters our understanding of *Der Sturm* as a whole.

As pointed out by Howard S. Becker in his seminal publication *Art Worlds*, any artwork is a collective activity that “rests on an extensive division of labor”, perhaps most clearly illustrated in the list of credits that appears at the end of a feature film.²⁰ In this book, I have adapted Becker’s theory of art as *collective activity* to *Der Sturm* as an art organisation. Obviously, *Der Sturm*—including the magazine, publishing house, gallery, art collection, art school, bookstore, and so on—heavily depended on a wide-ranging division of labour among those involved with various aspects of the business. Thus, like any artist, Herwarth Walden, as founder and director of *Der Sturm*, “work[ed] in a center of a network of cooperating people, all of whose work [was] essential to the final outcome”.²¹ In light of Becker’s theory, it is imperative to recognise that it was not only *Der Sturm*’s radical and daring practices in the art world but also the routine and mundane means of doing things within the organisation that enabled its extraordinary achievements. The organisational, supportive, and social labour of Nell Walden as well as the work of many other collaborators is thus paramount in understanding the rapid success of *Der Sturm*.

The Waldens’ professional partnership is of particular importance. The essential features of the work of these two individuals were a joint agenda and a profound interdependence. In the discussions that situate Nell Walden’s art and art collection at the core of the *Sturm* enterprise, collaborative work serves as a key concept. Indeed, without it, the accomplishments of both the *Sturm* organisation and Herwarth and Nell Walden individually would have been decidedly different.

Self-Presentation and Liminal Spaces

The concept of self-presentation figures as a structuring theoretical framework in discussions on Nell Walden’s efforts to socially enact herself as *Sturm* collaborator, collector, and artist. In this book, self-presentation refers to the construction and performance of social identities and public personas through visual and verbal means, but also to the implicit or explicit function of spaces and objects to enact an individual’s social pretensions. The concept of self-presentation aligns to the widely accepted idea that identities are the effect of performative actions. However, the emphasis on linguistic and discursive features that dominate established theories on (gender) performativity only partially reflects the focus on situated social practices and the agency of objects and spaces in this book. Instead, Erving Goffman’s theory on the presentation of self in everyday life has proved more fruitful for my approach.²²

Throughout the book, the concept of liminality—or liminal spaces—serves to highlight Nell Walden’s position at the margins of the centre. Her supportive labour and networking for the *Sturm* organisation as well as her art collecting and journalistic work could conveniently be conducted from within the confines of the domestic sphere. Thus, her premises at Potsdamer Straße 134a in Berlin were liminal spaces where notions of the public and private realms intersected and where gendered

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notions of cultural practices and agency were renegotiated and transgressed through her diligent work for the Sturm organisation. Nell Walden's artistic practices represent liminality in another sense, hovering between amateurism and professionalism, the decorative and the abstract. In a similar way, her practices of self-presentation, particularly during the latter half of the 1920s, are situated on the threshold between avant-garde photography, the fashion press, and popular visual culture. Finally, her migration, from Sweden to Germany and later to Switzerland, has positioned her in a liminal space in between national histories of modern art. Her case thus demonstrates that established practices of art history writing are not compatible with the truly transnational character of the modern art world.

Writing Deviating Histories of Art

It should be stated that the nature of Nell Walden's work for Der Sturm has been difficult to trace, since there are few contemporary sources to substantiate her efforts or clarify the details of her undertakings within the business. Obviously, Nell Walden shares this fate with many other women whose main tasks have been supportive and/or social labour, the outcome of which is ephemeral in comparison to the productive labour that is materialised in books, articles, artworks, official correspondence, and so on. The materiality of productive labour has served as a prerequisite for its preservation in archives, libraries, and museums—those pivotal institutions that offer solid ground for (art) history writing and cultural memory. It is clear that the productive work of the vast majority of men and women never reaches the institutions of cultural memory. The important point here is that the ephemeral character of the organisational work and social networking within Der Sturm—ephemeral in the sense that it is not materialised in objects or artefacts that are easily consecrated into valuable commodities—does not preclude this work as an essential part of the collective activity of the organisation. The gendered division of labour that (still) tends to structure women's and men's work in separate spheres thus underpins the omission of women from historical narratives and cultural memory.²³

The lack of historical sources institutionalised in museums and archives is surely a familiar methodological challenge to any art historian committed to researching cultural pasts beyond the histories of already established cultural elites. Substantiating Nell Walden's ephemeral work and position in Der Sturm has therefore been a troublesome endeavour, as traditional archive materials do not offer extensive traces or insights. I have therefore gathered bits and pieces of diverse empirical data together in order to create a fuller understanding of the nature of her position within Der Sturm. Original materials, such as her guestbooks from Der Sturm, provide rudimentary documentation on the social "flow" but do not offer any insights on the everyday practices and collaborations of the Walden couple. Her personal almanac from 1913 is a rare primary source that offers valuable information on her daily businesses during that particular year, but unfortunately lacks detailed descriptions of her undertakings. Only in exceptional cases have parts of her correspondence from the 1910s through the 1930s found its way into archival institutions.

Material that documents the Sturm enterprise is equally scarce, as the business papers and archive have not survived. In light of this, the importance of artworks, photographs, and other visual material as historical sources in their own right have proved crucial. The portraits of Nell Walden by fellow Sturm artists and prominent

photographers situate her presence and agency in a specific cultural sphere from the 1910s through the 1930s. Thus, if the textual material is lacking, the visual sources offer crucial points of access to her practices and social positions during those years. Most importantly, it is not only the visual material but also Nell Walden's continuous deployment of these paintings and photographs that directed the research process towards the topic of self-presentation that is an essential part of this book.

As well as primary textual and visual sources from this period, I have also consulted Nell Walden's extensive correspondence with former *Sturm* artists, art collectors, museum professionals, and family members during the post-war era and, where useful, memoirs and autobiographies of other key figures of *Der Sturm*. Moreover, I have considered the transformations of *Der Sturm*'s practices precisely at those moments when Nell Walden entered the organisation in 1912 and when she left in 1925 not simply as coincidences but as material traces that suggest her importance for the collective activity that constituted *Der Sturm*.²⁴ In 1912, *Der Sturm* transformed from an art magazine with a clear focus on literature into a vast enterprise with a stronger emphasis on the visual arts. After Nell Walden left *Der Sturm* in 1925, the continuity that had characterised the gallery exhibitions in Berlin immediately collapsed.

Nell Walden's publications on *Der Sturm* and Herwarth Walden, the first one co-edited with Lothar Schreyer, represent the official version of her memories of her collaboration with Herwarth Walden.²⁵ In her correspondence with family members and former *Sturm* collaborators, this idealised narrative is less polished, and she explicitly stated that the ambition with her publications was to hand down the story of the *Sturm* business and not least Herwarth Walden's pioneering work for avant-garde art in as favourable a light as possible to posterity.²⁶ Thus, the correspondence is sometimes more informative when it comes to the hard collaborative work and occasional inner conflicts behind the successful story of *Der Sturm* as presented in her books. It also makes clear that when it comes to the couple's collaborations, it is impossible to draw clear lines between their professional and private partnership. During more than a decade, *Der Sturm* was quite simply their mutual life project.

Obviously, this does not necessarily mean that the correspondence comes closer to some kind of truth of past events. Both the private correspondence and the published works were written in retrospect, and thus represent selective reconstructions and explanations after the events and from the point of view of one, even if particularly crucial, of many *Sturm* collaborators. Also, Nell Walden was most certainly clear about the fact that she was corresponding not only with former and current friends in her letters, but also writing for posterity, as she intended to donate her collections and archives, including the correspondence, to museums for future research. She therefore destroyed letters from time to time in order to avoid the risk that someone might create "mischief" out of "any scrap of paper".²⁷ She also urgently requested Lothar Schreyer to destroy correspondence relating to their collaborative work with the book on *Der Sturm*.²⁸

However, for at least three reasons, the correspondence is important as source material. For one, the letters from the 1940s onwards form the principal empirical data on Nell Walden, and rather than ignoring this extensive material—like previous research on *Der Sturm*, without exception—I wish to make careful use of it. Second, I maintain that even if it is selective and biased, Nell Walden's reconstructions of past events in private letters are valuable per se, as they convey how one of the key figures of *Der Sturm* not only assessed past events but also positioned herself in that context.

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As will become clear, this is also aligned to her manner of social self-presentation from the 1910s onwards. Third, the archive material on Nell Walden from the late 1940s onwards evidence the extent to which she continued her work for *Der Sturm*—as spokesperson, historiographer, and archivist—throughout her life. Following Bruno Latour’s theorisation of group formations, this material has enabled me to trace how she performatively maintained and justified *Der Sturm* as a group formation long after its discontinuation as a formal organisation.²⁹

Finally, it should be noted that privileging early primary sources, that is, material from the 1910s and 1920s, while simultaneously ignoring primary sources of a later date, implies a (misleading) belief in the neutrality and originality of contemporary archival documents. All primary sources are retrospectively processed and arranged in the procedures of institutionalisation in archives, museums, and libraries, whose holdings will always represent selective fragments of the materialised traces of past events. Thus, whether the empirical material is “original”, retrospective, or even fictional is not of relevance per se. More important is a critical reflection on what kind of arguments and assertions different sources make possible. In the end, as we all know, history never equals the past.

This is not to say that historical narratives cannot offer objective accounts of the past. On the contrary, it has been convincingly argued that objectivity even requires a “partial perspective” that is specifically located.³⁰ It should therefore be stressed that this study is explicitly dedicated to a feminist agenda of writing art history. The methodological implication of the feminist perspective has been a deliberate shift in focus from an established key (male) figure to a conceived marginal (female) participant, thus an insistence on the continuing importance of “reclaiming female agency”.³¹ In exploring the situated agency of Nell Walden, this book represents a partial perspective that seeks to avoid both universalism and relativism—the one usually associated with modernist and the other with postmodernist approaches to history writing and knowledge production. It thus ascribes to the assertion of many feminist scholars that “multiple, positioned knowledges refute precisely the forms of totalizing grand narrative which render historical, cultural and economic differences unreadable through gross generalisation and over-simplification”.³² In other words, recovering and researching marginalised subject positions inevitably shift our understanding of canonical modernism and shed light on how established narratives fall short of, for instance, women’s diverse practices within the field of modern art.

However, feminist art history has faced problems owing to its disciplinary alignment to both feminism and art history, whose theoretical and methodological traditions diverge. The necessary compromises stemming from this paradoxical situation have often favoured traditional art historical concepts. As a result, feminist art history has unintentionally reinforced the norms of canonical art history, while at the same time neglecting divergent biographies that would have helped demonstrate that “gender norms do not have omnipotence”.³³ In this book, both canonical art history’s lingering norms of quality, originality, and individuality and feminist art history’s persistent preference for narratives of resistance to and subversion of gender norms—also in historical and visual terms—have proved inadequate as methodological frameworks. Instead, only by focusing on aspects such as collaboration, loyalty, interdependency, and even gender conformism has it been possible to analyse Nell Walden’s professional tactics and social self-presentation. Hers is thus a deviating history that problematises the canons of both traditional and feminist art history.

Nell Walden in *Der Sturm* and Beyond

The focus in this book is Nell Walden's contributions to the *Sturm* enterprise and how she positioned herself within and beyond it through different means of self-presentation. This book offers neither a comprehensive analysis of *Der Sturm* nor a complete biography of Nell Walden; as she once drily commented herself, her involvement with *Der Sturm* was just *one* part of the story of her life.³⁴ In other words, I have tried to read *Der Sturm* *through* Nell Walden while at the same time reading her endeavours within *and beyond* *Der Sturm*. Thus, I do not follow the chronology of the magazine *Der Sturm* between 1910 and 1932 or consider all the activities that *Der Sturm* as a trademark assembled. Nor do I put equal emphasis on Nell Walden's diverse entanglements with the art world from the 1910s until her death in 1975. The focus is on her active years in *Der Sturm* 1912–1925, her practices as an independent artist and collector and her collaborations with women professional photographers during the latter part of the Weimar era, and her continuous work for *Der Sturm* in the post-war period.

The first chapters of the book set out to clarify and substantiate Nell Walden's contributions to the collaborative work of the *Sturm* enterprise during the 1910s and 1920s. Chapter 1 focuses on her elusive status as “companion, friend and fellow combatant” to Herwarth Walden and elaborates on her supportive labour and role as an essential organising node within *Der Sturm*'s international network, including her lucrative work as a translator and political correspondent during the First World War.³⁵ It also discusses her teamwork and loyalty to Herwarth Walden and *Der Sturm* and clarifies the indispensability of collective activities for the *Sturm* enterprise in its entirety. Chapter 2 is dedicated to Nell Walden's art collection, deceitfully labelled “Sammlung Walden” during her years in *Der Sturm*. It offers a characterisation of the collection and an analysis of its essential function within the broader *Sturm* enterprise. It theorises the art collection as a provisional institution and elaborates on its domestic display as a social space that answered to the structure of the modern art market. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the continuing effects of her belated claims to the collection. Chapter 3 introduces Nell Walden as one of the most prominently promoted artists of *Der Sturm* and situates her artistic oeuvre within the specific context of *Der Sturm*'s art theory. It argues that the construction of the artist Nell Walden is yet another example of the Walden couple's collaborative partnership and elucidates on how she positioned and developed her artistic practices beyond the framework of *Der Sturm*. It further discusses the difficulties of assessing a painterly production that hovers between amateurism and professionalism, the abstract and the decorative, thus it elaborates on the gendered rhetoric of art criticism and on the problem of canonical art history's double alignment to both aesthetic judgements and historical scholarship.

Chapter 4 analyses how Nell Walden presented and positioned herself in a broader social and cultural sphere in Weimar Germany. It elaborates on how she remodelled her social and professional network in the 1920s and 1930s and details on her continuing efforts as a collector, thus expanding the narrative on her collection beyond the context of *Der Sturm*. The discussion focuses on Walden's visually mediated self-presentation in photographic portraits. It details on how she employed the interior of her home, her extensive ethnographic collection, or sartorial detail as expressive means in her visual self-articulation. The circulation of the photographs, not least in

the illustrated press, speaks about how she sought to secure visibility and maintain presence in the public sphere of culture after she had left the Sturm enterprise. The analysis pays special attention to her collaborations with women professional photographers, which resulted in several series of photographs that position her visual self-presentation at the intersection of avant-garde art photography and popular visual culture. These collaborations are theorised as expressions of an affirmative women's culture, *Frauenkultur*, thus as part of a broader phenomenon that permeated public life in Weimar Germany.

Chapter 5 traces Nell Walden's efforts to secure her collections from the impending threat of the Nazi's iconoclast politics and locate her endeavours in the context of flight assets in the Swiss art world during the 1930s and 1940s. It shows how her continuing efforts after the Second World War to secure Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm a place in modernist art history prolonged her collaborative work with and for Herwarth Walden, while at the same time presenting an opportunity to implicitly inscribe herself in the narrative of Der Sturm. In other words, her work as Sturm historiographer and archivist was also a means of self-presentation. The overall argument of this last chapter concerns women artists and collectors' contributions to the canonisation of modern art and the importance of the situated materiality of writing art history. In a broader sense, it highlights how the migration and mobility of artists, artworks, and archival material impact art historiography and how national narratives on art's histories inadequately represent the truly transnational contexts of modern art.

Notes

- 1 In the following, *Der Sturm* refers exclusively to the magazine, whereas Der Sturm (without italics) is used as a label for the broader scope of activities organised by and/or connected to the magazine. The magazine is available online: Blue Mountain Project. Historic Avant-Garde Periodicals for Digital Research, <http://bluemountain.princeton.edu/exist/apps/bluemountain/index.html>
- 2 On Der Sturm's vast span of cultural as well as social activities, see Volker Pirsich, *Der Sturm. Eine Monographie*, Traugott Bautz, Herzberg, 1985, 334–387. The catalogues of the gallery exhibitions and further material are available online: Kataloge der Galerie "Der Sturm", Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, München, <https://www.zikg.eu/bibliothek/bestaende/bibliothek-herzog-franz-von-bayern/digitalisierung/kataloge-sturm>
- 3 "Sammlung Walden. Berlin/Potsdamer Straße 134a. 1: Ecke im Speisezimmer. Eine Besichtigung der Sammlung Walden wird den Besuchern der Kunstausstellung Der Sturm jeden Montag und Donnerstag um 4 Uhr gestattet. Die Sammlung befindet sich in der Privatwohnung von Herwarth Walden und enthält über dreihundert Gemälde, Zeichnungen und Bildwerke der neuen Kunst". "Sammlung Walden"-Postkarte 1: Ecke im Speisezimmer, Handschrift 125, Nachlaß Nell Walden, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (StaaBi).
- 4 See, for example, M.S. Jones, *Der Sturm. A Focus of Expressionism*, Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture vol. 16, Camden House, Columbia, 1984, xviii; Barbara Alms, "DER STURM—Corporate Identity für die internationale Avantgarde", *Der Sturm. Chagall, Feininger, Jawlensky, Kandinsky, Klee, Kokoschka, Macke, Marc, Schwitters und viele andere im Berlin der zehner Jahre*, Barbara Alms and Wiebeke Steinmetz (eds), Städtische Galerie, Delmenhorst, 2000, 15; Freya Mühlhaupt, "'Vad är der STURM? Der STURM är Herwarth Walden'. En tysk särting inom modernismen/'Was ist der STURM? Der STURM ist Herwarth Walden'. Ein deutscher Sonderweg der Moderne", *Svenskt avant-garde och Der Sturm i Berlin/Schwedische Avantgarde und Der Sturm in Berlin*, Jan Torsten Ahlstrand et al. (eds), Verlag des Museums- und Kunstvereins Osnabrück, Kulturen, Lund, 2000, 169–196.

- 5 The Sturm artist and collaborator Lothar Schreyer was the first to reference Stramm: "When August Stramm was asked: who is Der Sturm? He answered: Der Sturm is Herwarth Walden" ("Als August Stramm gefragt wurde: Wer ist Der Sturm? Antwortete er: Der Sturm ist Herwarth Walden"). Lothar Schreyer, "Zur Geschichte des Sturm", *Einblick in Kunst*, 10th edn, Herwarth Walden (ed.), Der Sturm, Berlin, (1917) 1924, 168. The first edition of *Einblick in Kunst* (1917) did not include Schreyer's text but a piece by L.H. Neitzel entitled "Was ist der Sturm". Significantly, Neitzel, in the 1910s, emphasised the collective body of Der Sturm and its present and future importance: "One heart and many people. Many artists and one body, where you feel the same pulse beat in all limbs and in every part [...]. Because der Sturm is—above all—a belief. A belief that our future lives in us already today" ("Ein Herz und viele Menschen. Viele Künstler und ein Körper, wo man an allen Gliedern und in jedem Teile den gleichen Pulsschlag fühlt [...]. Denn—und vor allem—ist der Sturm ein Glaube. Der Glaube, daß unsere Zukunft schon heute in uns lebt"). L.H. Neitzel, "Was ist der Sturm", *Einblick in Kunst*, Herwarth Walden (ed.), Der Sturm, Berlin, 1917, 153. Schreyer, in the 1920s, focused on Herwarth Walden as the solitary personification of Der Sturm and rather turned towards the past when he characterised Der Sturm as a phenomenon soon to be "legendary". Schreyer, (1917) 1924, 168.
- 6 Nell Walden and Lothar Schreyer (eds), *Der Sturm. Ein Erinnerungsbuch an Herwarth Walden und die Künstler aus dem Sturmkreis*, Woldemar Klein, Baden-Baden, 1954, 59, 146; Lothar Schreyer, *Erinnerungen an Sturm und Bauhaus. Was ist des Menschen Bild?*, Albert Langen Georg Müller, München, 1956, 7; Nell Walden, *Herwarth Walden. Ein Lebensbild*, Florian Kupferberg, Berlin and Mainz, 1963, 32.
- 7 Obviously, this mythologisation of an individual echoes the basic template of canonical art history. For a discussion on canonical art history as a mythical structure, see Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the Canon. Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art's Histories*, Routledge, London and New York, 1999, 6–9.
- 8 See, for example, Georg Brühl, *Herwarth Walden und "Der Sturm"*, DuMont, Köln, 1983; Freya Mühlahaupt (ed.), *Herwarth Walden 1878–1941. Wegbreiter der Moderne*, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, 1991; Barbara Alms and Wiebeke Steinmetz (eds), *Der Sturm. Chagall, Feininger, Jawlensky, Kandinsky, Klee, Kokoschka, Macke, Marc, Schwitters und viele andere im Berlin der zehner Jahre*, Städtische Galerie, Delmenhorst, 2000.
- 9 To the best of my knowledge the only analysis of the image as such is my own brief discussion in Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe, "The Most Effective Propaganda Stunt?", *Nell Walden & Der Sturm*, Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe et al., Mjellby konstmuseum, Halmstad and Carlsson, Stockholm, 2015.
- 10 Dorothy C. Rowe, *After Dada. Marta Hegemann and the Cologne avant-garde*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 2013, 3.
- 11 I have borrowed the concept of "pivotal images" from art historian Margareta Gynning; see Margareta Gynning, "Transformative Encounters. Prior and Current Strategies of a Feminist Pioneer", *Curating Differently. Feminisms, Exhibitions and Curatorial Spaces*, Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe (ed.), Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2016, 66.
- 12 Brühl, 1983, 51.
- 13 See, for example, Pirsich, 1985, 18, 32, 123.
- 14 Pirsich highlights the fact that *Der Sturm* did not contain, thus did not economically depend upon, advertisements from March 1916 onwards. Pirsich, 1985, 82, 640.
- 15 Pirsich, 1985, 387.
- 16 In 2000, two exhibitions signalled a renewed interest in the history of Der Sturm: Barbara Alms and Wiebeke Steinmetz major exhibition and catalogue, *Der Sturm in Berlin der Zehner Jahre*, and the exhibition and catalogue *Svenskt Avantgarde och Der Sturm i Berlin/Schwedische Avantgarde und Der Sturm in Berlin*, which contributed with an attempt to reconstruct an exhibition of Swedish expressionist painters in the Sturm gallery in Berlin, but mainly drew upon and repeated established "truths" on Sturm as a whole. Alms and Steinmetz, 2000; Jan Torsten Ahlstrand et al., *Svenskt avant-garde och Der Sturm i Berlin/Schwedische Avantgarde und Der Sturm in Berlin*, Verlag des Museums- und Kunstvereins Osnabrück, Kulturen, Lund, 2000. Robert Hodonyi widened the scope of research to include architecture in his *Herwarth Waldens "Sturm" und die*

- Architektur. Eine Analyse zur Konvergenz der Künste in der Berliner Moderne*, Aisthesis, Bielefeld, 2010. Hubert van den Berg and Petra Jenny Vock have published major contributions on the intersection of politics and art within Sturm during the First World War. See, for example, Hubert van den Berg, “Der Sturm als Kunsthandlung und Nachrichtenbüro in der deutschen Propagandapolitik in den neutralen Nachbarländern während des Ersten Weltkriegs”, *Deshima. Revue d’histoire globale des Pays du Nord*, Hors-série 1, 2009 and Petra Jenny Vock, “Der Sturm muss brausen in dieser toten Welt”. *Herwarth Waldens Sturm und die Lyriker des Sturm-Kreises in der Zeit des Ersten Weltkriegs. Kunstprogrammatische und Kriegsliteratur einer expressionistischen Zeitschrift im Kontext*, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2006. Maaïke van Rijn’s dissertation, *Bildende Künstlerinnen im Berliner “Sturm” der 1910er Jahre*, dissertation Tübingen, 2013, focused on five women artists of Sturm, including Nell Walden. Nell Walden was the centre of attention in the travelling exhibition *Nell Walden & Der Sturm* (Sweden and Denmark 2015–2016) and the accompanying catalogue *Nell Walden & Der Sturm*, Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe et al., Mjellby konstmuseum, Halmstad and Carlsson, Stockholm, 2015. Recently, two major exhibitions have offered significant revisions and expansions of the established Sturm historiography. *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde* (Wuppertal 2012) was based on a large-scale research project on Sturm conducted at Düsseldorf University and resulted in an extensive catalogue in two volumes, Antje Birkhölmer and Gerhard Finckh (eds), *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Bd. I, Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012, and Andrea von Hülsen-Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Bd. II: Aufsätze, Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012. The research project also developed into a conference that resulted in a scholarly publication, Henriette Herwig and Andrea von Hülsen-Esch (eds), *Der Sturm. Literatur, Musik, Graphik und die Vernetzung in der Zeit des Expressionismus*, De Gruyter, Berlin and Boston, 2015. In 2015–2016, the major show on *Sturm-Frauen* in Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt am Main, curated by Ingrid Pfeiffer, greatly contributed to a more differentiated history of Sturm; see Ingrid Pfeiffer and Max Hollein (eds), *Sturm-Frauen. Künstlerinnen der Avantgarde in Berlin 1910–1932*, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt / Wienand, Köln, 2015.
- 17 The most exhaustive Sturm research effort of recent years, the catalogues accompanying the major Sturm exhibition in Wuppertal in 2012, is symptomatic in this respect. Here, contradictory statements on Nell Walden’s art collection appear in different contributions and her key position within the Sturm organisation is recognised in varying degrees. See Birkhölmer and Finckh, 2012, and Hülsen-Esch and Finckh, 2012. As regards Nell Walden’s art production, it had not been included in any of the comprehensive Sturm exhibitions of the last decades until it was presented in the major *Sturm-Frauen* exhibition at Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt 2015–2016. The travelling exhibition *Nell Walden & Der Sturm* presented a broader overview of her art to a Scandinavian public in 2015–2016. In 2018, three parallel exhibitions on Nell Walden were shown in Trelleborgs museum, Kulturen Lund, and Landskrona Konsthall.
 - 18 See, for example, Herwig and Hülsen-Esch, 2015, especially the section on “Internationale Vernetzungen”, 337–428.
 - 19 Cp. Bruno Latour, *Re-assembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2005.
 - 20 Howard S. Becker, *Art Worlds*, 25th anniversary edition, updated and expanded, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, (1982) 2008, 7–14, quotation 13.
 - 21 Becker (1982) 2008, 25.
 - 22 Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Anchor Books, New York, 1959.
 - 23 Indeed, the main part of the research for this book was conducted at an art history department where the staff were clearly gendered along these lines. For years, all professors were men, provided with plenty of research time and thus with the opportunity to materialise their research in books, articles, and so on, whereas all women—including myself—were appointed as senior lecturers, thus given the main responsibility for the ephemeral but essential work as teachers at undergraduate level. When concluding this book in 2021, the gendered division of labour in my immediate professional context has been somewhat rectified, but divergent salary levels among women and men professors are still gendered.
 - 24 On following the material traces actors leave behind, see Latour, 2005, *passim*.

- 25 Walden and Schreyer, 1954; N. Walden, 1963.
- 26 This is a recurring comment in Nell Walden's correspondence from the 1950s onwards.
- 27 "Again, one sees how dangerous it is to leave letters behind—From time to time I make fires all the time—one has to... Afterwards too much mischief is done with any scrap of paper". "Wieder sieht man: wie gefährlich es ist Briefe zu hinterlassen [*sic!*]—Von Zeit zu Zeit mache ich immer 'Feuern'—man muss das... Viel zu viel Unfug wird nachher mit jedem Fetzen Papier gemacht". Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, 24 March (?) 1950, NW5A:360, Nell Walden's Archive, Landkrona Museum (NWA/LM). In the 1950s, she started to organise her papers, photos, the Sturm library, and unsorted paper clippings for posterity, and also burnt the private letters Herwarth Walden had sent her. Nell Walden, copy letter to Glenny Lang and Åke Roslund, 2 April 1953, private archive, Örebro.
- 28 Nell Walden, copy letter to Lothar Schreyer, 7 October 1963, NW5A:12A, NWA/LM.
- 29 Latour, 2005, 27–42.
- 30 Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges. The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective", *Feminist Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3, Autumn, 1988, 575–599.
- 31 Here, obviously, I refer to the title of the well-known anthology of 2005 edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrad. This publication offered not only a serious challenge to post-modern theories that have announced the death of the author, and thus denied individual agency precisely at a moment when women intensified their claims to authorship as artists, but also introduced diverse theoretical positions and approaches to historical scholarship that convincingly claimed the agency of women (as artists, patrons, collectors, and beholders). Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (eds), *Reclaiming Female Agency. Feminist Art History after Postmodernism*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2005.
- 32 Marsha Meskimmon, *We Weren't Modern Enough. Women Artists and the Limits of German Modernism*, I.B. Tauris, London and New York, 1999, 11.
- 33 Rachel Mader, "Methodische Fallstricke und disziplinäre Kompromisse—Künstlerinnenforschung zwischen Feminismus und Kunstgeschichte", *Inscriptions/Transgressions. Kunstgeschichte und Gender Studies*, Kornelia Imesch et al. (eds), Peter Lang, Bern, 2008, 63–81, here 76. Mader's critique is exemplified by feminist art history's research on women artists of the late nineteenth century, which has concentrated on gendered representations within the works of the impressionists rather than the successful women representing the official academic art. On the adoption of canonical norms and values in feminist art history, see Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe, "Centripetal Discourse and Heteroglot Feminisms", *Feminisms is Still Our Name. Seven Essays on Historiography and Curatorial Practices*, Malin Hedlin Hayden and Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe (eds), Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2010, 85–104.
- 34 Nell Walden, copy letter to Lothar Schreyer, 26 December 1949, NW5:A 77, NWA/LM.
- 35 Commenting on her divorce from Herwarth Walden in 1924, Nell Walden noted: "However, my friendship, my sympathy and further collaboration on his great STURM work remained undiminished. I wanted to remain what I above all always had been to him: 'companion, friend, and fellow combatant'" ("Meine Freundschaft, meine Anteilnahme und weitere Mitarbeit an seinem großen STURM-Werk verblieben ihm indessen ungeschmälert. Ich wollte bleiben, was ich ihm vor allem immer gewesen war: 'Gefährtin, Freund und Kampfgenossin'"). Nell Walden, "Aus meinen Erinnerungen an Herwarth Walden und die 'Sturmzeit'", *Der Sturm. Ein Erinnerungsbuch an Herwarth Walden und die Künstler aus dem Sturmkreis*, Nell Walden and Lothar Schreyer (eds), Woldemar Klein, Baden-Baden, 1954, 62.

1 Companion, Friend, and Fellow Combatant

When Nelly Roslund and Herwarth Walden first met at his sister's house in Landskrona, Sweden, in June 1911, there was nothing to suggest that within just a few years this young woman would be a key figure within one of the most progressive art organisations in Europe, while simultaneously building a prominent collection of modern art and being promoted as an important expressionist artist. In 1911, she still lived in the parental home in Landskrona and led a rather conventional bourgeois life, permeated by cultural activities and occasional charity work, and with plans to marry and settle down in her home country in the near future.¹ She was a well-educated pastor's daughter, who had graduated from a girl's grammar school in 1904 and then obtained an organist degree in the cathedral city of Växjö in 1908. She had spent some time in Lübeck in 1907 studying the German language, and when she decided to continue her music studies, she headed for Berlin in the spring of 1909 together with her younger sister Stina (Figure 1.1). But she would soon return to her hometown. In Landskrona, she frequented an informal "German club" for young women with a mutual interest in German culture. Among them was her close friend, the Berlin-born Gertrud Schlasberg, married to a Swedish industrialist, and Herwarth Walden's younger sister. In March 1910, the daily papers announced Nelly Roslund's engagement to the future architect Folke Bensow, and shortly thereafter, the young couple made a study tour to Berlin, Dresden, and Prague. However, their mutual plans for the future would soon come to a naught.

Less than six months after Nelly Roslund had been introduced to Herwarth Walden when he was visiting his sister in Landskrona, she had broken her engagement, persuaded her mother to arrange a position for her in Berlin, left her family and hometown for the German capital, and departed from her native country for good, as it turned out.² According to her own romanticised recollections, she met Herwarth Walden by chance on Kurfürstendamm in Berlin in December 1911.³ Two months later, in February 1912, she left her position as a governess and moved to a rented room in Lützowstrasse. She now earned her living by giving piano lessons, teaching Swedish, and doing translations. At the same time, she also joined Herwarth Walden and the Sturm clique. In November 1912, they married in London.

The professional partnership of Nell and Herwarth Walden lasted from 1912 through 1925—Nell divorced Herwarth in November 1924, but continued working for Der Sturm for almost another year—corresponding to the period when Der Sturm's activities were at their most intense in the pan-European art world. As will be clear, this was no coincidence. Herwarth Walden's closest companions in Der Sturm were the actor and reciter Rudolf Blümner, the artist and stage set designer



Figure 1.1 Atelier Kaufhaus des Westens, Portrait of Nell Walden, 1909. Photo © Landskrona museum.

Lothar Schreyer, and Nell Walden. Thus, *Der Sturm*'s gradual expansion, its success as Germany's most important mediator of transnational avant-garde art from 1912 onwards, and its steady declining influence in the art world during the 1920s cannot be fully explained without taking Nell Walden's involvement into account. This chapter offers a re-evaluation of her intangible work within *Der Sturm*, that is her ascribed—and self-identified—position as “companion, friend, and fellow combatant” to Herwarth Walden, contextualising her supportive labour, financial input, and professional networking in terms of an overall collaborative culture in *Der Sturm*.⁴

Supportive Labour

Nell Walden's entry into *Der Sturm* coincided with a change in its direction, which is indicative of the importance of Herwarth Walden's collaborative partnership not only with her but also with his first wife, the acclaimed poet Else Lasker-Schüler. Previous research has emphasised Lasker-Schüler's seminal impact on Herwarth Walden and his publicist endeavours in the early 1900s and her decisive contributions to the journal *Der Sturm* in the period 1910–1912. Allegedly, she provided him with both his *nome de plume* (Herwarth Walden's birth name was Georg Lewin) and the

title of the magazine. More importantly, until 1912, she was his closest companion and a key contributor to *Der Sturm*. Also after Herwarth Walden had divorced Lasker-Schüler, her significance continuously manifested itself, even if implicitly, in the form of literary influence on his writing.⁵ However, during 1912, the magazine *Der Sturm* changed its focus on literature and several authors associated with the early years of the journal stopped contributing, not only Lasker-Schüler, but also Karl Kraus and Kurt Hiller. Gradually, *Der Sturm* showed a new commitment to the visual arts, while simultaneously devoting itself to a deliberate internationalisation and a broadening of its operations in the art world.⁶ In March 1912, *Der Sturm* hosted its first art exhibition, introducing the artist group Der Blaue Reiter to the Berlin public.⁷ An exhibition followed in April, with the Italian futurists Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, and Gino Severini.⁸ With these seminal exhibitions, *Der Sturm* received substantial (negative) press coverage and was publicly positioned as an avant-garde art institution.⁹ From then on, until the end of 1925, *Der Sturm* would organise new exhibitions in Berlin every month and a considerable number of travelling exhibitions in Germany and abroad.¹⁰ At the end of 1913, *Der Sturm* presented the large-scale exhibition *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon* in a temporary rented space in Berlin, displaying major works by more than 80 artists of various nationalities. Besides a memorial exhibition of Henri Rousseau, the show included many by now canonised artists of the avant-garde such as Giacomo Balla, Robert and Sonia Delaunay, Max Ernst, Lyonel Feininger, Natalya Goncharova, Marsden Hartley, Mikhail Larionov, Louis Marcoussis, Jean Metzinger, Piet Mondrian, and Francis Picabia.¹¹ This event consolidated *Der Sturm*'s position as one of the major disseminators and promoters of international modern art in Europe.

Until the First World War, Nell Walden predominantly offered Herwarth Walden the kind of discreet support that rarely is visible and is thus conspicuous by its absence in the archives: all the more important then to pay attention to those rare primary sources that have survived. Part of Nell Walden's work in *Der Sturm* is traceable through her personal almanac of 1913, which documents her continuous involvement in the daily business of the organisation's activities.¹² In 1913, the magazine *Der Sturm* appeared twice a month and the exhibitions in the home gallery in Berlin—that year including shows with Gabriele Münter, Robert Delaunay, Marc Chagall, and Alexander Archipenko—changed monthly. Short notes in her almanac marked “urgent”, “tired tired”, or “tears! tears!” indicate that the pace of life was hectic and work for *Der Sturm* demanding, and sometimes thankless. Most often, her calendar notations are brief, revealing only that she was to “organise everything”, “hang” the artworks in the gallery exhibitions, “work” in the bureau, or “translate”.

Nevertheless, these notes reveal that from the start, she had an important organisational role with regard to the expanding gallery business and the growing internationalisation of *Der Sturm*. Not least, her language skills were an important asset as they facilitated *Der Sturm*'s transnational cooperations in the Scandinavian countries. From 1913 onwards, she provided translations of several literary works by Danish author Aage von Kohl for publication in both *Der Sturm* and in the *Sturm-Bücher* series.¹³ She also translated poems by Swedish author and future Nobel laureate Pär Lagerkvist and reviewed his book *Motiv* for *Der Sturm*.¹⁴

Nell Walden's professional, social, and domestic labour cannot be separated. During 1913, the Walden couple worked hard to establish connections and recruit artists for the *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon*. They were thus travelling nearly every month and, by the end of the year, had visited more than a dozen cities in Germany as well

as Budapest, Paris, Copenhagen, Strasbourg, and half a dozen cities in Switzerland.¹⁵ In between, they were continuously busy preparing for exhibitions and the next issue of *Der Sturm*, attending cultural activities in Berlin and, not least, entertaining guests in their home, where Nell Walden cultivated her role as hostess. Taken together, Nell Walden's personal almanac and the Sturm guestbooks that she introduced in May 1913 give a vivid picture of the large number of visitors that the Waldens received in Berlin and the society that they connected with elsewhere, and thus substantiate the range of their joint professional and personal network.¹⁶ The visitors recorded in the Sturm guestbooks and the appointments noted in her calendar overlap, indicating that there were no clear boundaries between the professional networking for the Sturm business and her private social life. Some of the most frequently noted names in her personal almanac—Robert and Sonia Delaunay, Franz and Maria Marc, Guillaume Apollinaire, F.T. Marinetti, August Macke, and Hans Arp—are a clear reflection of the work of the exhibition programme.

Nell Walden initially provided Herwarth Walden and *Der Sturm* with the kind of discreet labour that is most often omitted from art history. Recent research has convincingly advocated for a theorisation of *Der Sturm* in terms of a networked organisation. This inevitably opens up for a problematisation of the supposedly mundane tasks that Nell Walden and her fellow Sturm collaborators carried out. This supportive labour was indispensable to the organisational infrastructure of *Der Sturm*, and without it would not have emerged in the form that we have come to know.

Playing the Literary Piano

During the hectic period at the beginning of the couple's marriage, Nell Walden learned typewriting and she always took along her portable typewriter while travelling across Europe in 1913. Herwarth Walden would dictate his articles and correspondence while en route and she would handle the Sturm business correspondence forwarded to her from Berlin, running *Der Sturm*'s mobile office from her portable Adler. During the war, Herwarth Walden also dictated several of his dramas and books for her.¹⁷ In this task, she acted as a mediator between a singular authorial voice and the multiple copies of the materialised texts, and thus occupied a space that has been theorised as "the threshold between metaphysical and material understandings of language".¹⁸ In the mid-nineteenth century, male clerks usually performed this kind of work, but from the end of the nineteenth century, clerical staff and labour had become feminised, establishing the female secretary as an iconic figure.¹⁹ The gendered implications of this division of labour are obvious, as the tasks of the female secretary and the male author, respectively, are all too easily dichotomised along gendered lines: body/mind, copying/creating, touching/thinking, plural/singular, and so on.²⁰

In this context, though, it is worth noting that the male intellectual production of literary and other texts remained dependent on and entangled with its female material (re)production. Nell Walden's typing, transcription, and translation serve as examples of the often hidden, but indispensable, material technologies of cultural production that were most often carried out by women. Recent research has pointed out that the embodied writing of the woman in front of the typewriter "is in fact necessary to produce the more familiar figure of the male thinker who is disembodied by technological advancement".²¹ Theorising text production not only as a discursive but also as a material endeavour thus problematises the gendered division of productive and reproductive labour. In a literal sense, Nell Walden's writing brought many of Herwarth

Walden's texts into being. From this perspective, the reproductive labour of the one who performs the typing and transcription is invaluable to the creative labour of the author and crucial for the genesis of the text as a cultural artefact. In other words, the text emerges in a liminal space where discourse and materiality overlap and as the result of what Becker has theorised as a collective activity.²²

The typewriter has been conceptualised as a technology of "excessive, unnatural reproduction" on a par with the phonograph and the camera.²³ It has been argued that it lacked gender connotations when it was first introduced and, like other new technologies, has subsequently fallen prey to the "scholarly tendency to envision technology as gender-neutral, or gender-neutralizing".²⁴ However, typewriting has its own gendered media history, and soon enough typewriting would become thoroughly feminised.²⁵ At the turn of the twentieth century, salesmen believed that "middle-class women [had] a built-in advantage in learning to type, given their usual background in piano-playing"; early typewriters even reminded people of pianos, and by the 1920s, some referred to the typewriter as "the literary piano".²⁶ In other words, this particular reproductive technology was rapidly conceptualised along gendered and classed lines. Obviously, Nell Walden's middle-class upbringing—including experience as an organist—perfectly matched these kinds of presumptions and she effectively internalised the feminisation of the reproductive labour of typewriting. She would explain the fact that Herwarth Walden never typed with reference to his nearsightedness—thus he delegated the labour of the "literary piano" to his business partner-cum-wife and several female secretaries—but simultaneously she failed to see that this precondition did not prevent him from playing the "real piano".²⁷

In sum, at the outset of their partnership, the couple's collaborative work and division of labour echoed familiar narratives about the female assistant or secretary who ended up marrying her male employer.²⁸ Indeed, Herwarth Walden had reportedly insisted on matrimony with particular reference to the enhanced professional support that marriage would entail.²⁹ Nell Walden's marriage thus came with clear expectations. However, her language and typing skills would soon become indispensable in an unexpected way and even enabled her to set her own clear mark on the *Sturm* organisation.

The Only Expressionist Millionaire

With the outbreak of war, Nell Walden's importance for *Der Sturm* would change radically. From 1914 onwards, she was able to reinforce her work with vital economic and further organisational contributions, and thus consolidate her position as a key figure in the organisation. Herwarth Walden was excused from war service due to severe astigmatism and could thus continue his work with the magazine, gallery, and publishing house. Paradoxically, *Der Sturm* went through a period of considerable expansion during the First World War. It was not until the 1950s and 1960s that Nell Walden acknowledged that the relative success of those years was not the result of a flourishing gallery business, but depended on the fact that she had acquired a substantial income by undertaking political journalism and translations for German authorities and companies during the war and contributed a significant amount of funding into the business.³⁰ Herwarth Walden was also active in politics during the war, as revealed in an article by Kate Winskell published in 1995.³¹ It is not my task here to elaborate in detail on the couple's work for the German authorities from 1914 onwards, as this has already been done elsewhere.³² It is sufficient to recall the basic

circumstances and add some further details based on information from hitherto overlooked primary sources.

During the war, *Der Sturm* operated as a political press agency (*Nachrichtenbüro*) and propaganda organisation in close collaboration with the German authorities. Nell Walden translated documents and Scandinavian newspaper reports into German and provided Swedish daily papers with German-friendly articles, while Herwarth Walden distributed documents and information across the borders under the pretence that his travelling concerned *Der Sturm*'s exhibitions in neutral countries, which they, of course, did. As noted by Hubert van den Berg, *Der Sturm* was thus deeply involved both in conventional war propaganda and in the more secret *Kunst- und Kulturpropaganda*. If the *Sturm* gallery and its travelling exhibitions effectively but secretly served the German war propaganda through its seemingly apolitical and autonomous activities in the art world and through international cultural exchange, then the press agency acted more openly in the neighbouring neutral countries.³³ The large number of articles that Nell Walden provided for the Swedish press offers further confirmation of van den Berg's argument.

From September 1914 until the end of the First World War, *Korrespondenten Landskrona Tidning*, the daily newspaper of Nell Walden's hometown in Sweden, published approximately 400 articles signed Nell Walden, N.W., or, most often, Swedish Information Agency *Der Sturm* (Svenska Underrättelsebyrå *Der Sturm*), which was the umbrella term used for her political journalism and translation work.³⁴ In addition, similar articles were published in at least six further Swedish daily newspapers.³⁵ Indeed, during the 1910s, *Der Sturm* far more often appeared as an information bureau than as an art organisation in the Swedish press. As with all her professional endeavours, Nell Walden organised her political journalism and translation work meticulously. She assembled her papers in numbered folders that have survived and are now in the Nell Walden archive in Landskrona museum.³⁶ The folders have "Svenska Underrättelsebyrå *Der Sturm*, Berlin" printed on the cloth binding, suggesting that her working methods were professional and well organised. The printed business card that she used during the war describes her role as representing the editorial staff of Swedish daily newspapers in Berlin, hence indicating that she openly presented her political journalism, at least in the neutral countries.³⁷ For example, when the Walden couple visited Stockholm in 1915, one of the dailies explicitly reported on *Der Sturm*'s information bureau and its interest in providing the Swedish press with "reliable" accounts of the war.³⁸

The Walden couple's double agenda during the First World War proved advantageous. Herwarth's political operations facilitated *Der Sturm*'s travelling exhibitions in neutral Europe—principally in the Scandinavian countries—in spite of the ongoing conflict, whereas Nell's political writing and translation provided a solid financial basis for the *Sturm* enterprise in general and for her own art collecting in particular.³⁹ At the beginning of 1915, she was already reporting to her friend and fellow *Sturm* artist Jacoba van Heemskerck on her substantial profit: "I have received a lot of translation work; it goes well, and above all, it brings the money that keeps the whole business going."⁴⁰ Nell Walden's financial contributions to the business were thus known by the closest *Sturm* collaborators and at least suspected within the wider *Sturm* circle, even though rumours had it that her wealthy parents provided the money.⁴¹ Presumably, the idea of a woman earning a lot of money was perceived as an anomaly that contradicted gendered norms. The artist and writer Doris Hahn, who frequented

Der Sturm in the 1910s, was clearly astonished to hear about Nell Walden's profits in 1915: "I already knew women who studied or painted well, but a woman who made it possible for a whole art business to continue to publish was something new to me."⁴² On another occasion, and obviously insinuating Nell Walden's economic interests in Der Sturm, Hahn asserted that "she was unsurpassed as a businesswoman [...] The only expressionist millionaire!"⁴³

In a similar manner, Hermann Essig in his satirical novel *Der Taifun*, written in 1917–1918 when he frequented Der Sturm, clearly suggests that Nell Walden was more deeply involved in the business matters of the organisation than is usually recognised. Essig's portrayal of the protagonists Oskar and Hermione Ganswind leaves the reader in no doubt about its references to Herwarth and Nell Walden. Throughout the book, Essig elaborates on how the profit-seeking Hermione Ganswind, aka Nell Walden, in fact orchestrates the entire enterprise. As the true leader of the art salon Der Taifun (The Typhoon)—an all too obvious reference to Der Sturm (The Storm)—Hermione Ganswind's name naturally appears in golden brass letters on the black doorplate of the decidedly modern art institution.⁴⁴ Obviously, a fictional narrative on Der Sturm does not confirm any details of the actual life in Der Sturm or the precise division of labour between the Walden couple. Nevertheless, as a contemporary critical portrayal from within the Sturm organisation it cannot be overlooked.⁴⁵ Indeed, in order to fulfil its purpose, any satire must contain a kernel of truth that the reader would easily recognise, even if it is presented in an exaggerated and fictionalised format. Essig's unflattering characterisation of the hard-nosed and aspirational Hermione Ganswind is thus indicative not only of Nell Walden's active engagement in the business but also of the disapproval that this transgression of gendered norms spurred.

Nell Walden's labour within Der Sturm in the 1910s and 1920s was equivalent to the working conditions of many women of the middle classes. While remaining within the domestic sphere, she seemingly conformed to conventional expectations, but she also used the domestic arena as a platform for cultural and journalistic labour that intervened in the public spheres of art and politics. In one of her articles published in the Swedish press in 1914, she commented on the visibility of female workers in urban space in Berlin shortly after the outbreak of the war.⁴⁶ This feminisation of the urban workforce continued throughout the 1920s and the effects of women's novel professional opportunities—not least their shift of workplace from the private domestic sphere to the public labour market—were fiercely debated in the Weimar Republic.⁴⁷ In 1925, more than a third of those gainfully employed in Germany were women.⁴⁸ However, women largely worked in agriculture, home industries, domestic service, and in family businesses.⁴⁹ Their continuous admission to the labour market after the war was thus conditioned by an intimate connection to the domestic sphere. Characteristically, Nell Walden also stayed within a family business, as it were, as one of the most important collaborators side by side with her husband and professional partner. Moreover, her journalistic work for the German authorities allowed her to gain economic independence while remaining within the domestic sphere. Allegedly, she kept two bank accounts in order to separate the funds she put at the disposal of Der Sturm from the money she earmarked for her own expenses for art collecting, interior decoration, and furnishing, which indicates that she consciously looked after her economic interests and independence.⁵⁰ In sum, although she seemed to comply with gendered norms of the middle classes, she was at the same time able to negotiate

and secure a space for independent actions that paradoxically spoke against those same norms.

The business accounts of *Der Sturm* have not survived, thus the exact extent of Nell Walden's financial input cannot be clarified in detail, neither is it possible to reconstruct the full scope of her involvement in the business matters of the organisation. We do know though that apart from earning the money that enabled *Der Sturm*'s expansion during the war, she was responsible for managing at least one of the travelling exhibitions in Scandinavia in 1918.⁵¹ She reportedly also kept the account of *Der Sturm*'s sales of graphic works, and thus to some extent supervised the flow of money.⁵² Moreover, there is an affidavit signed by Herwarth Walden in 1919, which confirms that she had given him 150,000 marks for the *Sturm* business.⁵³ In retrospect, and presumably with some exaggeration, she reported that she had destroyed numerous equivalent promissory notes as they had never been reimbursed.⁵⁴ There are thus several reasons to assume that Nell Walden's contributions to *Der Sturm* were greater than it is now possible to ascertain through primary sources.

Team Performances

Within the *Sturm* research field, there have been diverging opinions about the Waldens' dealings with the German authorities. If Kate Winskell implicitly accused Herwarth Walden of political hypocrisy, Barbara Alms has repeatedly maintained his political innocence.⁵⁵ Yet other scholars have maintained a more nuanced approach to the couple's political operations. Petra Jenny Vock has convincingly shown not only that the experience of modern warfare was an explicit topic in many literary contributions in the magazine *Der Sturm*, but also how deeply *Der Sturm*'s "pro-German foreign propaganda and the concerns of art and art marketing were coupled in a barely separable way".⁵⁶ Finally, Hubert van den Berg has suggested that in the 1910s, a more ambivalent understanding of the concept of internationality—in which cosmopolitanism, as an expression of modernity, could merge perfectly with nationalism—enabled art and politics to operate in tandem within *Der Sturm*.⁵⁷

Adding to van den Berg's historically situated definition of the notion of internationality, I would argue that the Walden couple's political operations appear full of contradictions only within a theoretical framework that conceptualises art and politics as activities that inherently take place in different social spheres. The notion of an autonomous avant-garde, perpetually pushing art in radical directions while simultaneously claiming a sovereign sphere in society, has operated as a "working consensus" within modernist art history.⁵⁸ This conceptual framing not only explains the care with which the *Sturm* historiography has insisted on Herwarth Walden's incompetence in business matters and his blind belief in art as a non-political endeavour, it also reveals the fundamental modernist ideology of the established narrative on *Der Sturm*. The suspicion about the couple's betrayal—that is, they performed a "masquerade" as idealists—contaminates, as it were, *Der Sturm*'s autonomy and status as an avant-garde organisation, in retrospect.⁵⁹ In short, the entanglement of art and politics in *Der Sturm* challenges the modernist belief that only "pure" avant-gardists can sustain avant-garde practices.⁶⁰

Nell Walden was one of the first *Sturm* historiographers to insist on the non-political nature of the *Sturm* enterprise. Indeed, she continued to perform this masquerade

throughout her life and stubbornly claimed in her post-war publications that Der Sturm was not interested in politics:

Perhaps the upcoming war was already apparent for people who were politically interested. Since we were absolutely uninterested in politics in Der Sturm—there was only one thing for us: the struggle for the realisation of new directions in art—, we did not see the threatening clouds. Art and politics have nothing in common, Herwarth Walden decreed, and according to this certainly perfectly correct principle we all lived and worked. All the more so, as Der Sturm was completely international.⁶¹

In light of what we now know about the couple's political operations during the war, this statement might appear as nothing more than a disingenuous reconstruction after the events. However, Der Sturm's pretensions to the status of an avant-garde institution in the art world made it difficult to claim otherwise. More importantly, as Nell Walden later admitted that her journalism during the war was of a political nature, her silence on Herwarth Walden's political operations is a clear demonstration of her devotion to him and to the aesthetic agenda of the Sturm enterprise. In this, she performed the kind of loyalty that is expected of a team performance, as theorised by Erving Goffman.

In social situations where a group of people perform as a team, individuals have to cooperate and adjust their self-presentations in order to meet the social expectations of the group.⁶² Arguably, Herwarth Walden and his closest collaborators in Der Sturm performed precisely as a team, presenting Der Sturm as a single unit. In light of this, the secrecy surrounding Der Sturm's political work as well as Nell Walden's financial input served the idealised team performance. Any cooperative team performance, according to Goffman, creates *interdependence* and implies a certain extent of *intimacy* and *loyalty* between team members.⁶³ Indeed, Herwarth Walden's silence on both Der Sturm's involvement in politics and Nell Walden's financial input implied that he could trust and rely on his closest collaborators. In this context, it is also worth pointing out that when Nell described her relationship with Herwarth in retrospect, she emphasised confidence and dependability as the basis of their collaborative work: "I became his confidante. He consulted with me in everything".⁶⁴

By keeping secret and subsequently admitting responsibility for the compromising political aspects of Der Sturm's operations during the First World War, Nell Walden enabled Herwarth Walden's claims—and consequently the claims of the majority of Der Sturm's historiographers on his behalf—to a "pure" avant-garde status. In this respect, her loyalty to the team was seamless. She minimised the risk that his position in the contemporary art world and later in modernist art historiography might be viewed as corrupted by a suspect nationalist agenda. Ironically, though, she simultaneously undermined her own status and consolidated her ascribed position as merely a bread provider at the margins of the centre rather than an active collaborator. Thus, it is not only the relegation of supportive and reproductive labour from the histories of modern art in general but also the expulsion of politics and economics from the theorisation of Der Sturm as an avant-garde organisation and Nell Walden's own team loyalty in particular that has facilitated her omission from the narrative.

There is no logic in ignoring the inevitable economic considerations of an art organisation that included a commercial gallery and a publishing house, and Kate

Winskell's research has demonstrated the impossibility of maintaining Herwarth Walden's political innocence. But the deconstruction goes both ways, I argue. If it is no longer possible to disregard Herwarth Walden's diverse activities across different cultural, political, and social spheres, then it should be equally difficult to ignore Nell Walden's participation in the *Sturm* enterprise as a whole. The Walden couple's mutual Scandinavian network during the First World War is yet another indication of this and therefore merits a separate discussion.

The Scandinavian Network

Herwarth Walden had already expressed some interest in Scandinavian culture before establishing *Der Sturm* and his 1911 visit to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway—the same journey that brought him into contact with Nell Walden—has been described in terms of a “pilgrimage to some of the holy places of Scandinavian literature, art and music”.⁶⁵ As is well known, *Der Sturm*'s early promotion of *Der Blaue Reiter* and the Italian futurists resulted in several pre-war travelling exhibitions in Copenhagen (1912, 1913), Kristiania (today's Oslo, 1914), Helsinki (1914), Trondheim (1914), and Gothenburg (1914).⁶⁶ During 1913, Herwarth Walden had also tried to establish a Scandinavian platform for *Der Sturm* at the major *Baltic Exhibition* (*Baltiska utställningen*) in Malmö in 1914, but ultimately failed.⁶⁷ Instead, the first appearance of *Der Sturm* in Sweden was in the *International Graphic Exhibition* (*Internationall Utställning af Grafisk Konst*), organised by the Swedish artist Harriet Sundström, in Stockholm early in 1914.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, a growing interest in the Scandinavian art world was apparent in the art journal *Der Sturm*. At the beginning of 1914, the journal reviewed publications on modern art by the leading Swedish art critic August Brunius, the literary critic and scholar John Landquist, and the above-mentioned author Pär Lagerkvist.⁶⁹ The outbreak of war gave *Der Sturm* further enticement to advance the artistic exchange with the neutral Scandinavian countries. *Der Sturm* had established itself as a promoter of international art, thus in order to maintain its international agenda it had to expand its network and focus on those parts of the European art world that were not directly involved in the conflict. Importantly, the neutral Scandinavian countries enjoyed a period of relative prosperity during the 1910s and so provided dealers and artists with an attractive alternative to the declining art market on the continent.⁷⁰

Nell Walden's ability to establish a professional and social network in Scandinavia was decisive and her native Sweden became the main target of *Der Sturm*'s Scandinavian operations during the war.⁷¹ Through her personal contacts, *Der Sturm* made connections with progressive artists who defied the Swedish art establishment and have subsequently been canonised as key figures for the emergence of modernism in Swedish art history. As a first move, *Der Sturm* introduced five artists associated with expressionism—Gösta Adrian-Nilsson, Isaac Grünewald, Edward Hald, Sigrid Hjertén, and Einar Jolin—to the Berlin public in its gallery exhibition of April to May 1915.⁷² On his own initiative, Adrian-Nilsson had visited the Waldens and *Der Sturm* on several occasions before the exhibition and, presumably through Herwarth Walden, had been appointed director for Bruno Taut's *Glashaus* pavilion at the Cologne Werkbund exhibition in the summer of 1914.⁷³

Unlike Adrian-Nilsson, who at this time lived and practised in Nell Walden's home province Scania (Skåne) in the south of Sweden, Grünewald, Hald, Hjertén, and Jolin

were all Stockholm-based artists connected to the leading artist groups The Young (De unga) and The Eight (De åtta). During 1909–1912, the Stockholm exhibitions of these groups garnered critical attention, owing to the artists' aspirations and claims for a radical renewal of Swedish painting. Owing to Nell Walden's personal connections to the Swedish art historian Gregor Paulsson, *Der Sturm* turned its attention towards these four latter artists.⁷⁴

In order to further strengthen *Der Sturm*'s connections to the Swedish art world, Nell Walden advantageously made use of her access to the Swedish press. In an article published in April 1915, she carefully positioned the Swedish expressionist artists in a context of modern art that transgressed national borders and conflicts. She strategically insisted on an international art world by indicating that the modern art production of both warfaring and neutral countries belonged to a global art revolution. Her report served not only *Der Sturm*'s agenda but also the German *Kunst- und Kulturpropaganda*. Utilising *Der Sturm* as a case in point, she indicated that Germany was open-minded in cultural matters in order to counteract the public image of the German people as "barbarians". As a measure of the success of the exhibition, the article also gives an account of acquisitions to "a private modern collection of paintings" on the opening day, but in line with the promotional tone of the text, she neglected to mention that she in fact referenced her own acquisitions for her growing art collection.⁷⁵

The successful connection to radical circles in the Swedish art world through the exhibition *Schwedische Expressionisten* proved particularly advantageous for *Der Sturm*'s wartime expansion. Grünewald, Hald, and Hjertén, together with Pär Lagerkvist, had travelled to Berlin shortly before the opening of the exhibition and established personal contact with the Walden couple.⁷⁶ *Der Sturm* immediately focused particular attention on Hjertén and Grünewald, whose artworks were both reproduced in *Der Sturm* and disseminated through postcards and publications.⁷⁷ A year after the exhibition, *Der Sturm* advertised that the gallery would from then on represent and handle the sale of artworks by both Hjertén and Grünewald on a permanent basis.⁷⁸ Eventually, in the autumn of 1917, Adrian-Nilsson was included in the list of *Sturm* artists.⁷⁹ As is clear from the correspondence between Nell Walden and Hjertén, they had plans for a solo exhibition of Hjertén's work for the *Sturm* gallery in Berlin in 1916, but the artist had to decline due to financial reasons.⁸⁰ Hjertén, Grünewald, and Adrian-Nilsson would, however, reappear in *Der Sturm*'s group exhibitions in Berlin and travelling exhibitions in Germany and abroad.

Importantly, the Swedish artists promoted by *Der Sturm* not only shared its radical agenda but also confirmed the idea of modern art as an international endeavour. *Der Sturm* cleverly adopted labels of national origin—thus reinforcing rather than dissolving concepts of nationality in relation to art practices—in order to strengthen its self-image and trademark as a pan-European organisation. Hjertén and Grünewald, whose pictorial language related to their former teacher Henri Matisse, were predominantly represented in *Der Sturm*'s travelling exhibitions. Thus, in exhibitions, for instance, in The Hague, Brno, Basel, and Zürich, during the First World War, they contributed to the internationality that *Der Sturm* strove for, due to both aesthetic and political reasons, not only in being of Swedish nationality, but arguably also by exposing a painterly style that could easily be labelled "French".⁸¹ The art of Adrian-Nilsson, however, aligned more clearly with the kind of expressionism ordinarily fostered by *Der Sturm* and therefore, not surprisingly, Nell Walden considered

him the strongest of the Swedish expressionists.⁸² This might also explain why he was more frequently shown in the home gallery in Berlin, where he was granted a show, together with the prominent Sturm artists Paul Klee and Gabriele Münter, in December 1917.

The Waldens made further efforts to expand their network and business in Sweden for both commercial and political reasons. They visited Stockholm in June 1915, shortly after the closing of the Swedish exhibition in Berlin. While conducting cultural propaganda on behalf of the German authorities, they simultaneously explored the possibility of mounting a large international group exhibition with Sturm artists in the Swedish capital. Encouraged by the German authorities and presumably helped by Nell Walden's journalistic network, the Waldens managed to attract the attention of the press and seized the opportunity both to serve the German war propaganda and to advance Der Sturm's interests.⁸³ As is clear from reports in the press, the Waldens were keen to establish Der Sturm in the local art market, a suitable location for their exhibition being the main obstacle. The Swedish newspapers posit Nell Walden as a companion beside Herwarth Walden; occasionally, they highlight her importance for Der Sturm's recent interest in the Swedish art scene and refer to the Swedish Information Agency Der Sturm, which is suggestive of her role within the business in the Scandinavian countries.⁸⁴

As it turned out, the Waldens approached the Swedish art scene at an opportune moment when the market for modernist art was not yet set and several actors took the initiative. In the early 1910s, a few art dealers had occasionally exhibited modernist, predominantly Swedish, art.⁸⁵ The three art galleries that would lead international modernism in Sweden during the 1910s and 1920s only emerged between 1914 and 1918.⁸⁶ In 1914, Carl Gummeson, who had abandoned a career as a bookseller in Sweden and Germany, established the Gummeson Art Gallery (Gummesons Konsthandel) in Stockholm, promoting Swedish and international modern art. In October 1915, only a couple of months after the Walden couple's visit to Stockholm, the Italian painter Arturo Ciacelli, married to the Swedish artist Elsa Ström, and an important figure in the Swedish art scene during the 1910s and 1920s, founded the New Art Gallery (Nya Konstgalleriet). Finally, in 1918, the gymnast and physiotherapist Gösta Olson established the Swedish-French Art Gallery (Svensk-Franska Konstgalleriet), an institution that would contribute to the Francophile inclinations of the Swedish art world. In other words, when the Walden couple visited Stockholm in June 1915 with the intention of advancing on the Swedish art market, their best option was to approach Gummeson's Art Gallery.

Due to strengthening relations with artists from Nell Walden's native country, Der Sturm managed to establish a crucial link to Gummeson's in 1915. The group exhibition with Sturm artists in Stockholm that the Waldens had hoped for failed to materialise, but Der Sturm nevertheless benefited from the connections to Grünwald and Hjertén in its efforts to establish a platform on the local gallery scene. Indeed, Isaac Grünwald organised a Franz Marc solo exhibition on Der Sturm's behalf in the Gummeson Art Gallery in September 1915.⁸⁷ In July 1915, Gabriele Münter's arrival in Stockholm had seemed to offer the Waldens yet another point of access. Münter, who hoped to reunite with her partner and colleague Kandinsky in a neutral country, immediately made connections with the artist circles in Stockholm, where Sigrid Hjertén in particular turned out to be a useful contact.⁸⁸ In October that same year, Münter exhibited her work—without letting her Berlin gallerist Herwarth Walden act

as a mediator—in a group exhibition at Gummesson's.⁸⁹ Herwarth Walden, clearly anxious not to lose the initiative, persisted though and made sure to benefit from Münter's direct access to Carl Gummesson. As a result, *Der Sturm* presented Kandinsky and Münter in two solo exhibitions in Gummesson's in February and March 1916.⁹⁰ In the exhibition catalogues, *Der Sturm* discursively framed Gummesson's presentations of Marc, Kandinsky, and Münter as a series of *Sturm* exhibitions to particularly emphasise its initiation of these exhibitions.⁹¹

During the war, *Der Sturm* also collaborated with the Swedish art magazine *flamman*, edited by the artist Georg Pauli, and thus gained access to one of the few art journals that promoted international avant-garde art in Scandinavia during the 1910s and 1920s.⁹² Pauli was a painter of an older generation who had taken lessons in cubism from André Lhote—30 years his junior—in Paris and with whom he became close friends.⁹³ Pauli had visited the Waldens in Berlin, presumably at the beginning of 1916, and they had already established a connection before he launched his magazine.⁹⁴

It was, in fact, *Der Sturm* along with Amédée Ozenfant's *l'élan* that spurred Pauli to create his own forum for modern art upon his return to Sweden.⁹⁵ Pauli's interest in recent international art had a decisive impact on his editorship. As a result, *flamman* not only became an essential forum for Scandinavian avant-garde artists but also published articles on international avant-garde movements, thanks to Pauli's contacts in Paris, Vienna, and Berlin. André Lhote was among the regular contributors to the magazine and Pauli continuously drew his readers' attention to *Der Sturm* and the Walden collection.⁹⁶ Moreover, Nell Walden, writing in her native language, could use *flamman* as a forum to present artists promoted by *Der Sturm* and represented in her art collection to a Swedish readership, to which I shall return in Chapter 2.

Nell Walden's personal contacts in Sweden and her position as a correspondent and political journalist enabled *Der Sturm* to establish connections with leading critics, journalists, and intellectuals who appeared in the most important Swedish dailies, including *Aftonbladet*, *Dagen*, *Dagens Nyheter*, *Göteborgs Aftonblad*, *Stockholms Dagblad*, *Stockholms-Tidningen*, and *Svenska Dagbladet*. These connections of different though predominantly conservative political standpoints must have served the Waldens' cultural and political propaganda well.⁹⁷ Indeed, writers attached to Nell Walden's personal and professional network penned the most well-informed, positive, and extensive reviews of *Der Sturm*'s exhibitions in Sweden, both during and after the war. The most important figures in this context, all of whom wrote favourable articles related to *Der Sturm*, were Henning von Melsted, Gregor Paulsson, Sandro Malmquist, and Harald Wägner.

The connection with Nell Walden's journalist colleague, the lawyer and author Henning von Melsted, was advantageous for the Waldens not only because he paid attention to *Der Sturm* in his writing but because he also shared their political agenda. Von Melsted was the editor of the conservative *Dagen* 1914–1915 and he defended a pronounced German-friendly opinion during the First World War.⁹⁸ In fact, *Dagen* was one of the papers that Nell Walden wrote for during the war. *Dagen* had reported on the Walden couple's visit to Stockholm in 1915 and they most likely contacted von Melsted while in the Swedish capital. Less than a month later, he visited them in Berlin.⁹⁹ While there, von Melsted gained a certain insight into the *Sturm* organisation and its promotion of modern art. Not surprisingly, then, when *Der Sturm* presented Franz Marc in Gummesson's a couple of months later and thus made its first major

public appearance in Stockholm, von Melsted provided the most enthusiastic and positive review of the exhibition.¹⁰⁰

The art historian Gregor Paulsson had not only provided the Waldens with names of important Stockholm-based artists for the exhibition *Schwedische Expressionisten*, but also wrote favourably on Der Sturm in the Swedish press on several occasions. Paulsson, a pioneer within the discipline of art history in Sweden, was on the permanent staff of Nationalmuseum, the country's major art museum, from 1913 onwards and an art critic for *Svenska Dagbladet* and *Stockholms Dagblad* during the 1910s. Thus, he had already reported on Der Sturm's *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon* in 1913, and during Der Sturm's Kandinsky exhibition in Stockholm in 1916, he provided an extensive review of the show and several further articles defending the artist's aesthetic attitude.¹⁰¹ From a progressive and well-informed standpoint, Paulsson assessed and explained Kandinsky's work and he returned with a review of Der Sturm's Münter exhibition in Gummesson's the following month.¹⁰²

The connection to Sandro Malmquist, a young emerging theatre director and scenographer whose stepfather was one of Nell Walden's journalistic colleagues, proved to be of great importance for the very last travelling exhibition of Der Sturm in Scandinavia, the group show *Expressionists and Cubists (Expressionister och Kubister)* in Gothenburg in 1923.¹⁰³ Malmquist contributed with no fewer than five articles in *Göteborgs Aftonblad*, where he introduced the theoretical standpoint fostered by Der Sturm and vehemently defended the artworks on display against the generally harsh criticism in the Swedish press. Indeed, he was the only one who publicly advocated for Der Sturm in the debate following the opening of the exhibition.¹⁰⁴

Nell Walden's personal and professional network was intimately related to the journalistic and intellectual elite in Sweden, not least through the author and journalist Harald Wägner. Wägner was a foreign correspondent for *Aftonbladet* in Berlin during the First World War, and while in the German capital, he visited the Waldens and reported in *Aftonbladet* on both Nell Walden's art collection and one of her solo exhibitions in the Sturm gallery. He was married to the author, translator, and journalist Ellen Rydelius, who wrote for *Dagens Nyheter* and who would later recount one of her visits to Der Sturm in her memoirs. Rydelius was a member of a professional network for women journalists The League (Ligan) that included the most progressive women writers of the time, such as Célie Brunius and Gerda Marcus, who published interviews with Nell Walden in the 1930s, to which I shall return in Chapter 4. In fact, the Wägners' vast network included many of the leading voices in public debate in Sweden at the time and several prominent artists and authors.¹⁰⁵

In sum, during the First World War, Der Sturm initiated collaborations with key figures among Swedish artists, gallerists, and art critics and had direct connections with leading journalists and intellectuals in the country. The Franz Marc solo show in 1915 had marked the beginning of a fruitful mutual exchange between Der Sturm and Gummesson's. Clearly, the Waldens to a large extent depended on local actors to access the Swedish art scene. However, the Sturm shows received more critical attention than had other exhibitions in the gallery and Carl Gummesson thus advanced as the most important mouthpiece for Russian and German art in the country.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, Der Sturm's exchange with *flamman* was a cooperation that was advantageous to both, as it favoured international exchange in spite of the war.

Der Sturm's Scandinavian network naturally declined in importance when the borders opened after the war, but images of pieces in the Walden collection continued

to appear in *flamman*, and Herwarth Walden also used its pages as a forum for his newly awakened interest in left-wing politics.¹⁰⁷ After the *succès de scandale* with the group exhibition that toured Kristiania, Copenhagen, and Gothenburg in 1923—and which was paralleled in the Berlin gallery with the September exhibition *Die jungen Dänen*—Der Sturm's travelling exhibitions to the Scandinavian countries were terminated. From then on, Der Sturm had no further extensive artistic exchanges with the Scandinavian countries and soon enough Nell Walden would leave the Sturm enterprise. Its connections to the Scandinavian art world therefore weakened considerably from 1925 onwards.

Reports in the Swedish press indicate that Herwarth Walden—obviously without Nell Walden's support—tried to re-establish Der Sturm's presence on the Swedish gallery scene in the late 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s, but did not succeed.¹⁰⁸ Decades later, Nell Walden resumed the promotion of Der Sturm in Sweden through the exhibition *Der Sturm: Collection Nell Walden* (*Der Sturm: Samling Nell Walden*), which travelled in her native country during 1954 and to which I shall return in the last chapter of this book.

Previous research has suggested that Herwarth Walden's international network collapsed with the outbreak of the First World War.¹⁰⁹ In light of Der Sturm's expanded Scandinavian operations, it is more relevant to speak of the Waldens' mutual network, as Nell Walden's personal and professional contacts proved important for the continuation of Der Sturm's international activities. Importantly, although the network ceased to exist in its pre-war form, it did not disappear but rather transformed, with the couple turning to other artistic, journalistic, and political contacts.¹¹⁰

Der Sturm as Collective Activity and Collaborative Culture

Nell Walden's lucrative work not only secured Der Sturm's finances, the business even prospered and expanded at a conspicuous pace in the middle of the war. Apart from the magazine and the many exhibitions, Der Sturm now opened a bookstore and started an art school, hosted an ambitious programme of art evenings, lectures, and other cultural events, enlarged its publishing business, and launched a World Press Office (*Weltpressestelle*). The latter was a reading room in the Sturm premises that was open daily and offered the public access to some 30 foreign, even enemy, daily newspapers, ostensibly as a token of German impartiality. It thus substantiates how Der Sturm's engagement in both cultural and political spheres would overlap in Berlin.

During the war, the Waldens started to cultivate further interests. From 1916 onwards, Herwarth published a number of novels, dramas, and books on art and art theory at Der Sturm's publishing house.¹¹¹ Nell, for her part, ventured into a career as an artist and assembled an impressive art collection. Obviously, further collaborators had to be recruited.

An expanding enterprise like Der Sturm required substantial administrative support to manage day-to-day business and fundamentally relied on a secretarial culture.¹¹² The women who carried out this seemingly mundane work, for example, Elli Hirsekorn, Miss Richart, Miss Hermann, Miss Kuring, Mrs. Erdmann, Edith Schamberg, and Eva Spector, have remained more or less anonymous, with one exception.¹¹³ At the beginning of 1915, Herwarth Walden appointed the poet Sophie van Leer as his private secretary.¹¹⁴ In April 1916, she took over the management of

the World Press Office and became supervisor for the secretaries working for *Der Sturm*'s publishing house.¹¹⁵ Van Leer's status as a poet, her relatively short-lived but very dedicated work for *Der Sturm*, and the fact that she was involved in the Waldens' political work during the war granted her a prominent place in the inner circle of *Der Sturm* and thus also a (marginal) position in the *Sturm* historiography.¹¹⁶

In 1916, Herwarth Walden recruited further crucial collaborators; he appointed Lothar Schreyer as editor of *Der Sturm*, Rudolf Blümner as publishing and managing director, and the painter Georg Muche as administrative assistant and "exhibition secretary" (*Ausstellungssekretär*), as Nell Walden put it.¹¹⁷ The following year, the painter and future photographer Paul Citroën was employed as director for the newly opened *Sturm* bookstore. When the *Sturm* art school was founded, additional collaborators were engaged as teachers, even though not all of them fulfilled the commission. The correspondence between Muche and van Leer, who mediated between Herwarth Walden and Muche about the latter's appointment is particularly informative about *Der Sturm*'s increasing demand for additional support. In a letter of 1916, van Leer detailed Muche's initial tasks: "For the time being your work in *Der Sturm* is: proof reading, delivering letters, managing the books in stock, promotional blurbs and technical matters".¹¹⁸ Van Leer's description of Muche's responsibilities defines the diverse practices and technologies required to keep the *Sturm* business running.

Theorising *Der Sturm* as the result of a collective activity, in Becker's sense, inevitably redirects the attention from the perspective of one individual to a vast network of collaborators. This very brief overview of *Der Sturm*'s personnel is evidence that Herwarth Walden and *Der Sturm* not only relied on the work of its office staff, but depended heavily on the supportive labour of other associates and companions who acted as "the hidden technicians" in order to enable the daily business of the *Sturm* enterprise. Thus, the organisation was fundamentally sustained by a collaborative culture. The collective activity that instituted the *Sturm* enterprise in its entirety relied on a much wider group of contributors. Suffice it to say that the huge number of writers and artists who chose to publish and exhibit with *Der Sturm* as well as the individual and institutional actors—including the Scandinavian network—contributed to the material and discursive dissemination of the diverse outcomes of the *Sturm* enterprise.

The relational perspective, inherent in Becker's theory on collective activity and in the concept of a collaborative culture that I propose here, also emphasises the mutual dependency of the actors involved. Nell and Herwarth Walden, together with a core group of *Sturm* collaborators, helped a large number of artists to gain professional recognition by supporting and promoting them via the magazine, the gallery, the art collection, and the publishing house. However, the *Sturm* business would never have achieved any success as an avant-garde institution had not prominent artists and writers chosen to collaborate with them. Herwarth Walden's obvious anxiety over Gabriele Münter's independent contacts with local galleries in Stockholm in 1915 is a case in point that highlights *Der Sturm*'s reliance on prolific artists. In fact, *Der Sturm*'s dependency on the collaborative labour of various actors helps explain not only its rapid success but also its gradual disintegration.

Volker Pirsich has noted that the endurance of *Der Sturm* was attributable to a core troupe of artists who were regularly shown in the gallery over several years; significantly, this continuity came to an end in the 1920s.¹¹⁹ Already in 1916, Oskar Kokoschka—who had made major contributions to the visual identity of the art

journal and acted as a kind of house portraitist for the organisation—had left Der Sturm for the rival gallery of Paul Cassirer.¹²⁰ In 1921 and 1922, respectively, Marc Chagall and Wassily Kandinsky turned their backs on Der Sturm and eventually even issued legal proceedings against Herwarth Walden.¹²¹ The death of one of the most prominent Sturm artists, Jacoba van Heemskerck, in 1923 contributed further to Der Sturm's decline. Yet other key artists, for example, Lyonel Feininger, Johannes Itten, Klee, László Moholy-Nagy, Muche, Oskar Schlemmer, and Schreyer, left Der Sturm and moved on to Bauhaus. Thus, in the early 1920s, Der Sturm had lost a significant number of its poster names, as it were.

By 1918, the Waldens were facing severe administrative problems, which left the daily business of the Sturm enterprise in a precarious situation as the staff, for unknown reasons, reportedly threatened to hand in their notice.¹²² During the 1920s, several key members of the core group finally left the organisation, notably Nell Walden, Muche, Blümner, and Schreyer. Pirsich does not hesitate to point to the couple's divorce as symptomatic of the gradual breakdown of Der Sturm as a whole.¹²³ In fact, Nell Walden's departure from the organisation in 1925 clearly marked the beginning of the end for Der Sturm's exhibition programme. The travelling exhibitions were abruptly terminated when she left the enterprise and it is doubtful that Der Sturm organised any exhibitions outside Berlin at all after the two shows inaugurated in Dessau and Dresden during the first half of 1925.

The exhibitions in the home gallery in Berlin continued after Nell Walden's departure, but not with the same regularity, until 1928–1929. Exhibition catalogues from 1926 onwards are conspicuously absent from the archives, which leads one to suspect that the catalogues might have ceased to appear or that they were not published with the same consistency as before. This sudden gap in material traces is yet another indication of the importance of supporting administrative labour for Der Sturm. Two solitary Sturm exhibitions in 1930 and 1931 seem to have been the very last shows organised by Herwarth Walden. The rapid decline of Der Sturm's exhibition programme not only points to a general breakdown of the business in its entirety, but also suggests that the support of Nell Walden as well as Muche, Blümner, and Schreyer had been imperative for the continuance of the gallery.

Naturally, there were further, both internal and external, factors that contributed to the decreasing relevance of Der Sturm as an avant-garde gallery. Nell Walden had lost her lucrative appointment for the German authorities after the end of the First World War, which must have severely impacted the financial situation of the enterprise. With reference to her apparent strive for success in business matters, it has been suggested that Der Sturm's impending commercial collapse might have been yet another reason for Nell Walden to leave the sinking ship.¹²⁴ During the 1920s, Herwarth Walden turned to radical left-wing politics, which not only affected his work with Der Sturm but also led to political disagreements between the couple and eventually to divorce. The decreasing exhibitions in the mid-1920s thus coincided with a general reduction of Der Sturm's activities for economic reasons as well as with a shrinking focus on art in the magazine *Der Sturm*.¹²⁵

By the beginning of the 1920s, Der Sturm's claim to internationalism was apparently being questioned and occasionally perceived as a mere marketing device.¹²⁶ Moreover, Der Sturm seems to have lost its relevance in the art world after the First World War due to its theoretical position. Herwarth Walden's insistence on intuition and irrationality in the creative process had not resulted in objectivity in art, but in

what was understood as highly subjective artworks. In the context of an increasing focus on objectivation, depersonalisation, and rationality in the art world of the 1920s, *Der Sturm* gradually became irrelevant.¹²⁷ Indeed, from at least the middle of the 1920s, the exhibitions no longer attracted the attention of leading art journals such as *Der Cicerone* or *Kunstchronik*.¹²⁸ During the 1910s, *Der Sturm*'s exhibition programme had been remarkable in frequently promoting women artists, with the ardent marketing of van Heemskerck providing the most prominent example.¹²⁹ Among the 335 artists that exhibited with the Sturm gallery, 13 per cent were women. Similarly, 11 per cent of the artists represented in Nell Walden's art collection were women. Obviously, "frequent promotion" in the 1910s would not meet contemporary standards of gender equality. Nevertheless, in relation to the historical and social context, the visibility of female artists in *Der Sturm* was somewhat extraordinary. However, the social and political context of the Weimar Republic deprived *Der Sturm* of its unique position as a gallery where men *and* women artists were promoted.¹³⁰

In sum, due to Nell Walden's declining income after the First World War, *Der Sturm* lost its financial footing and the organisation was inadequately prepared for the difficulties in the art market during the inflationary period of the 1920s. Most importantly, though, the withdrawal of essential Sturm artists and the departure of Nell Walden and other core collaborators severely damaged the organisational infrastructure that was an indispensable part of the Sturm business. Following the loss of these crucial partners, Herwarth Walden, as the leader of *Der Sturm*, did not succeed in recruiting sufficient new members of equivalent quality to enable the organisation to remain at the forefront of current events in the art world throughout the Weimar Republic. As the collective activity that had been essential for *Der Sturm* disintegrated, so too the organisation collapsed.

Notes

- 1 The most detailed archival material on Nell Walden's biography up to 1947 is: Nell Walden, "Biografische Daten", NW31, NWA/LM. See also Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe, "Nelly (Nell) Anna Charlotta Walden", *Svenskt kvinnobiografiskt Lexikon*, 2018, www.skbl.se/sv/artikel/NellWalden.
- 2 Nelly Roslund's mother Hilda turned to the Fredrika Bremer Association, a leading organisation for women's rights and emancipation, in order to find a position for her oldest daughter. Nelly Roslund stayed with the German-Swedish family Collosseus at Kurfürstendamm in Berlin, where she was a governess to the family's two daughters, whom she taught Swedish. Transcription of Nell Walden interviewed by Margareta Alin, 20 September 1970, NW23; Nell Walden, "Biografische Daten", NW31, NWA/LM.
- 3 Nell Walden, "Aus meinen Erinnerungen an Herwarth Walden und die 'Sturmzeit'", *Der Sturm. Ein Erinnerungsbuch an Herwarth Walden und die Künstler aus dem Sturmkreis*, Nell Walden and Lothar Schreyer (eds), Woldemar Klein, Baden-Baden, 1954, 10.
- 4 "Gefährtin, Freund und Kampfgenossin". N. Walden, 1954, 62.
- 5 Tobias Kurwinkel, "'Herwarth! Du kannst folgendes im Sturm veröffentlichen'—Else Lasker-Schüler, Herwarth Walden und die *Wochenschrift für Kultur und die Künste*", *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal 2012, 77–85. On Lasker-Schüler, see, for example, Sigrid Bauschinger, *Else Lasker-Schüler. Ihr Werk und ihre Zeit*, Stiehm, Heidelberg, 1980.
- 6 Volker Pirsich, *Der Sturm. Eine Monographie*, Traugott Bautz, Herzberg 1985, 61ff.
- 7 The exhibition *Der Blaue Reiter/Franz Flaum/Oskar Kokoschka/Expressionisten* contained 108 artworks by 24 artists from six countries. Among the Blaue Reiter artists were Wassily Kandinsky, Gabriele Münter, August Macke, and Franz Marc. The artists

referred to as expressionists included Georges Braque, Robert Delaunay, André Derain, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Maurice de Vlaminck, and Henri Rousseau, which is symptomatic of the broad definition of expressionism which would characterise the aesthetic standpoint of *Der Sturm*.

- 8 Works by Robert Delaunay, André Derain, Maurice de Vlaminck, Wassily Kandinsky, Georges Braque, Auguste Herbin, Raoul Dufy, and Oskar Kokoschka were also shown. To accompany the actual exhibition, *Der Sturm* published a futurist manifesto in no. 103, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's futurist manifesto in no. 104, and Valentine de Saint-Point's "Manifest der futuristischen Frauen" in no. 108, 1912.
- 9 Pirsich, 1985, 346. Nell Walden later reported that the futurist exhibition attracted a large public in spite of the press railing against it. N. Walden, 1954, 11f.
- 10 For a chronological list of the exhibitions of the Sturm gallery in Berlin and a documentation of preserved catalogues, see Rainer Enders, "Galerie Der Sturm—Ausstellungen in der Berliner Galerie", *Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte*, München, 2017, http://digital.bib-bvb.de/webclient/DeliveryManager?custom_att_2=simple_viewer&pid=14239037. Georg Brühl estimates that apart from the exhibitions shown in the Berlin gallery, Sturm organised 250–300 exhibitions in other German cities and abroad. Georg Brühl, *Herwarth Walden und "Der Sturm"*, DuMont, Köln, 1983, 109. According to recent documentation and research, a more accurate estimation is c. 175 exhibitions, reaching not only many European cities, but also the USA and Japan. See Rainer Enders, "Galerie Der Sturm—Ausstellungen außerhalb der Berliner Galerie", *Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte*, München, 2017, http://digital.bib-bvb.de/webclient/DeliveryManager?custom_att_2=simple_viewer&pid=14269024. Notably, *Der Sturm* organised approximately 20 exhibitions in the Scandinavian countries between 1912 and 1924. Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe, "Das Ehepaar Walden und die Vernetzung des Sturms in Schweden", *Der Sturm. Literatur, Musik, Graphik und die Vernetzung in der Zeit des Expressionismus*, Henriette Herwig and Andrea von Hülsen-Esch (eds), De Gruyter, Berlin and Boston, 2015, 401–428. See also, Marit Werenskiöld, "Herwarth Walden. Ekspresjonismens apostel i Skandinavien 1912–1923", *Kunst og kultur*, LXIII, 1980, 143–158.
- 11 *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon* was modelled on the Parisian *Salon d'Automne* and was conceptualised as an answer to the *Internationale Kunstausstellung des Sonderbundes Westdeutscher Kunstfreunde* 1912 in Cologne—chaired by Karl Ernst Osthaus and carried out in collaboration with Alfred Flechtheim—which showcased not only the youngest generation of European modern artists, but also already established impressionists and painters such as Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, and Paul Gauguin. Barbara Alms, "Der Sturm vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Fanal des Neuen", *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012, 264. A further precursor of the *Erste Deutsche Herbstsalon* was the exhibition *Bubnovyj valet* which opened in January 1912 in Moscow and exhibited representative works by the European avant-garde, for example, Kandinsky, Marc, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Robert Delaunay, Georges Braques, and Fernand Léger. Marina Dmitrieva, "Russische Künstler und *Der Sturm*", *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012, 444.
- 12 Nell Walden's personal almanac, 1913, NW40, NWA/LM.
- 13 On Aage von Kohl and *Der Sturm*, see Martina King, "Vom Erzählen zur Wortkunst. Der dänische Autor Aage von Kohl im *Sturm*", *Der Sturm. Literatur, Musik, Graphik und die Vernetzung in der Zeit des Expressionismus*, Henriette Herwig and Andrea von Hülsen-Esch (eds), De Gruyter, Berlin and Boston, 2015, 125–140.
- 14 Nell Walden, "Neuschwedische Lyrik" [review of Swedish Pär Lagerqvist's *Motiv*], *Der Sturm*, vol. 6, no. 3–4, May 1915, 23. Pär Lagerkvist, "Dichtungen", transl. Nell Walden, *Der Sturm*, vol. 6, no. 5–6, June 1915, 32f.
- 15 Nell Walden's 1913 almanac documents the itineraries of the Walden couple. In a vivid and partly romanticised manner, she further describes the journeys in N. Walden, 1954, 13–22.
- 16 The first entry in the guestbook is from 10 May 1913. The guestbooks are in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (StaaBi), Nachlaß Nell Walden, Gästebuch der Sturm-Galerie, Handschrift 119 and Gästebuch der Sturm-Galerie/Nell Walden, Handschrift 120.

- 17 N. Walden, 1954, 13f.
- 18 Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell, "Introduction. Invisible Hands", *Literary Secretaries/Secretarial Culture*, Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell (eds), Ashgate, Aldershot and Burlington, 2005, 6.
- 19 Price and Thurschwell, 2005, 4ff. See also Ivan Kreilkamp, "Speech on Paper. Charles Dickens, Victorian Phonography, and the Reform of Writing", *Literary Secretaries/Secretarial Culture*, Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell (eds), Ashgate, Aldershot and Burlington, 2005, 13–31.
- 20 Cp. Price and Thurschwell, 2005, 2f.
- 21 Jennifer L. Fleissner, "Dictation Anxiety. The Stenographer's Stake in *Dracula*", *Literary Secretaries/Secretarial Culture*, Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell (eds), Ashgate, Aldershot and Burlington, 2005, 69.
- 22 Becker, Howard S., *Art Worlds*, 25th Anniversary Edition, Updated and Expanded, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, (1982) 2008, 7–14.
- 23 Fleissner, 2005, 63.
- 24 Fleissner, 2005, 68.
- 25 This feminisation not only applied to literary work and the business world but arguably also had an impact on academic work for a long time. Suffice it to remind readers of the sheer number of prefaces in which male scholars have paid tribute to their wives for typing their manuscripts.
- 26 Fleissner, 2005, 70f.
- 27 N. Walden, 1954, 13f.
- 28 According to Jennifer L. Fleissner, this narrative "was already piquing the popular imagination by the late nineteenth century". Fleissner, 2005, 71.
- 29 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Georg Muche, 14 February 1961, NW1B:183, NWA/LM.
- 30 N. Walden, 1954, 8–41; Nell Walden, *Herwarth Walden. Ein Lebensbild*, Florian Kupferberg, Berlin and Mainz, 1963, 21f.
- 31 Kate Winskell, "The Art of Propaganda. Herwarth Walden and 'Der Sturm', 1914–1919", *Art History*, vol. 18, no. 3, September, 1995, 315–344. In the newly opened former East German archives, Winskell accessed primary sources that had hitherto gone unnoticed by the Sturm research.
- 32 See Winskell, 1995; Hubert van den Berg, "... wir müssen mit und durch Deutschland in unserer Kunst weiterkommen". Jacoba van Heemskerck und das geheimdienstliche Nachrichtenbüro 'Der Sturm', "Laboratorium Vielseitigkeit". *Zur Literatur der Weimarer Republik*, Festschrift für Helga Karrenbrock zum 60. Geburtstag, Petra Josting and Walter Fähnders (eds), Aisthesis, Bielefeld, 2005; Petra Jenny Vock, "Der Sturm muss brausen in dieser toten Welt". *Herwarth Waldens Sturm und die Lyriker des Sturm-Kreises in der Zeit des Ersten Weltkriegs. Kunstprogrammatik und Kriegsliteratur einer expressionistischen Zeitschrift im Kontext*, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2006, 69–195; Hubert van den Berg, "Der Sturm als Kunsthaltung und Nachrichtenbüro in der deutschen Propagandapolitik in den neutralen Nachbarländern während des Ersten Weltkriegs", *Deshima. Revue d'histoire globale des Pays du Nord*, Hors-série 1, 2009, 135–152; Sjöholm Skrubbe, "Das Ehepaar Walden", 2015, 419–424.
- 33 Berg, 2009, 137ff.
- 34 To the best of my knowledge, her first contribution was a conversational article published in September 1914. In this article, she captures the daily life in the German capital in a favourable light by describing the Berliners as firmly confident of victory. In her description, the war situation is seemingly only discernible through the transformed gendering of the city; she notes that women were now working as ticket collectors on trams and in the underground. There can be no doubt of the political inclination of the author, who tries to convince her readers of a German-Scandinavian kinship by concluding the article with an emotional address: "We are all Teutons" ("Vi äro alla germaner"). Nell Walden, "Berlin i krigstid", *Korrespondenten Landskrona Tidning*, 18 September 1914. I would like to thank Christer Strandberg for sharing his notes on Nell Walden's articles in *Korrespondenten Landskrona Tidning* with me.
- 35 *Skånska Aftonbladet*, *Helsingborgs Tidningen*, *Karlskrona Tidningen*, *Gävleposten*, *Dagen*, and one of the Gothenburg dailies. N. Walden, 1963, 42. The texts can be roughly

34 *Companion, Friend, and Fellow Combatant*

- divided into two categories: those that are summaries, comments on, and/or translations of propaganda articles published elsewhere, often in other European daily papers; and those that are conversational articles, offering reviews of cultural events or observations of everyday life in Berlin at the time.
- 36 Unfortunately, the contents of the folders have not survived. In the 1930s, Nell Walden burned most of the journalistic material she had saved—fearful that its political nature might have put her at risk during the Nazi regime—thereby, in part, preventing any deeper knowledge of the specific nature her work. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Per Sandén, 10 June 1969, NW2B:185, NWA/LM. As far as I can see, there is nothing in the *political* content of her pro-German articles that would have put her at risk during the Nazi regime; however, the positive assessments of avant-garde art in some of the articles clearly made her a spokesperson of precisely the kind of *entartete Kunst* that the Nazis campaigned against.
 - 37 Her business card with the address Potsdamer Straße 134a presents her as belonging to the “Berliner Redaktion schwedischer Tageszeitungen”. Private archive, Örebro.
 - 38 Maurice, “‘Der Sturm’-utställning i Stockholm”, *Stockholms Dagblad*, 29 June 1915.
 - 39 As Petra Jenny Vock has reminded, neither civilians nor documents or goods—including, of course, artworks—could cross the German border without protection from government offices during the First World War. Vock, 2006, 82.
 - 40 “Ich habe eine Menge Übersetzungs-Arbeit bekommen; Es geht gut, und vor allem Ding, es bringt Geld dass das ganze Betrieb sich halten kann”. Nell Walden, letter to Jacoba van Heemskerck, undated (in the beginning of) 1915, Sturm-Archiv I, Herwarth Walden, StaaBi.
 - 41 The rumours pursued and prompted Nell Walden to include an explicit rebuttal in her publication on *Der Sturm*. N. Walden, 1954, 42ff.
 - 42 “Frauen die studierten oder gut malten, d a s kannte ich bereits—aber eine Frau, die es einem ganzen Kunstbetrieb möglich machte, weiter zu veröffentlichen, das war mir neu”. Doris Hahn, letter to Nell Walden, 5 March 1961, Ausstellungskritiken III, NWA/LM.
 - 43 “Als Geschäftsfrau war sie unübertrefflich [...] Einzige Expressionismus Millionärin!”. Doris Hahn on Sturm, Stiftung Archiv der Akademie der Künste, Archivabteilung Literatur, Mynona-Archiv, Dhwe, Inv. no. 44/72/1043. Quoted from Rainer Enders, *Arnold Topp. Ein Lebensbild*, VDG, Weimar, 2007, 61.
 - 44 Herman Essig, *Der Taifun*, Weidle, Bonn, (1919) 1997, 17.
 - 45 Essig’s novel has indeed already been referenced as a source in research on *Der Sturm*, see, for example, Pirsich, 1985; Maaïke van Rijn, *Bildende Künstlerinnen im Berliner “Sturm” der 1910er Jahre*, diss. Tübingen 2013; Johanna Kaus, “Sturm im Taifun. Hermann Essigs Schlüsselroman im Kontext”, *Der Sturm. Literatur, Musik, Graphik und die Vernetzung in der Zeit des Expressionismus*, Henriette Herwig and Andrea von Hülsen-Esch (eds), De Gruyter, Berlin and Boston, 2015, 161–187; Jenny Anger, *Four Metaphors of Modernism. From Der Sturm to the Société Anonyme*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London, 2018.
 - 46 N. Walden, 1914.
 - 47 Marsha Meskimmon, *We Weren’t Modern Enough. Women Artists and the Limits of German Modernism*, I.B. Tauris, London and New York, 1999, 171.
 - 48 Atina Grossmann, “Berufswahl—ein Privileg der bürgerlichen Frauen”, *Fotografieren hieß teilnehmen. Fotografinnen der Weimarer Republik*, Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Richter, Düsseldorf, 1994, 9.
 - 49 Meskimmon, 1999, 172. For a more detailed account of women’s work in Weimar Germany, see Renate Bridenthal, “Beyond Kinder, Küche, Kirche. Weimar Women at Work”, *Central European History*, vol. 6, no. 2, 1973, 148–166.
 - 50 N. Walden, 1963, 44.
 - 51 Letter from Prof. Dr. Sievers, Auswärtiges Amt (Foreign Office) to Kgl. Polizeipräsidentium Abt. 5, 2 November 1918, Ausstellung von Herwarth Walden in Skandinavien, R 901/72859, Bl. 34, Auswärtiges Amt, Zentralstelle für Auslandsdienst (1912–1923), Propaganda, Bundesarchiv, Berlin.

- 52 The graphic works on sale were produced in editions of 20–25 and sold for 20 marks. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Leopold Reidemeister, 1 December 1961, NW8, NWA/LM.
- 53 Affidavit signed by Herwarth Walden, 15 April 1919, NW40, NWA/LM.
- 54 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, 9 November 1948, NW5A:365; Nell Walden, copy of letter to Gertrud Schlasberg, 28 February 1953, Ausstellungskritiken III, NWA/LM.
- 55 See, for example, Barbara Alms, “DER STURM—Corporate Identity für die internationale Avantgarde”, *Der Sturm. Chagall, Feininger, Jawlensky, Kandinsky, Klee, Kokoschka, Macke, Marc, Schwitters und viele andere im Berlin der zehner Jahre*, Barbara Alms and Wiebeke Steinmetz (eds), Städtische Galerie, Delmenhorst, 2000, 17; Alms, 2012, 256.
- 56 “[...] prodeutsche Auslandspropaganda und die Belange von Kunst und Kunstvermarktung auf eine kaum trennbare Weise verkoppelt waren”. Vock, 2006, 78.
- 57 Hubert van den Berg, “‘Berlin ist die Hauptstadt der Vereinigten Staaten von Europa’. Zur Internationalität von Herwarth Walden, Agent für Kunst und Kaiserreich”, *literaturkritik.de*, no. 9, September, 2010, Schwerpunkt: 100 Jahre Expressionismus, https://literaturkritik.de/public/rezension.php?rez_id=14768.
- 58 Here, I have metaphorically transferred Erving Goffman’s theory of “working consensus” in social situations to the modern art world and modernist art historiography. Goffman defines working consensus as “a kind of interactional *modus vivendi*”, which secures that those participating in a social situation “are sufficiently attuned to one another” and thus in agreement about the definition of the situation. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Anchor Books, New York 1959, 9.
- 59 Goffman notes that a working consensus is nothing but a “surface of agreement [...] to which everyone present feels obliged to give lip service”. Goffman, 1959, 9. When “masquerading” as idealists, the Waldens thus gave lip service, as it were, to the working consensus of the political autonomy of avant-garde organisations.
- 60 Cp. Goffman, 1959, 18, n. 1.
- 61 “Der kommende Krieg zeichnete sich vielleicht schon ab, für Leute, die politisch interessiert waren. Da wir im STURM aber an der Politik absolut uninteressiert waren—für uns gaben es ja nur eines: Den Kampf um die Durchsetzung der neuen Kunstrichtung—, sahen wir die drohenden Wolken nicht. Kunst und Politik haben nichts gemeinsam, so dekretierte Herwarth Walden, und nach diesem sicherlich vollkommen richtigen Prinzip lebten und arbeiteten wir alle. Das um so mehr, als der STURM ganz international eingestellt war [...]”. N. Walden, 1954, 35f. See also N. Walden, 1963, 29.
- 62 Goffman, 1959, 77–80.
- 63 Goffman, 1959, 82–85.
- 64 “Ich wurde seine Vertraute. Er beriet alles mit mir”. N. Walden, 1954, 10.
- 65 Hubert van den Berg, “The Early Twentieth Century Avant-Garde and the Nordic Countries. An Introductory *tour d’horizon*”, *A Cultural History of the Avant-Garde in the Nordic Countries 1900–1925*, Hubert van den Berg et al. (eds), Brill, Amsterdam and New York, 2012, 25. The first volumes of *Der Sturm* occasionally included contributions by Scandinavian authors or on Scandinavian culture, see for example, Hjalmar Söderberg, “Aus der Vergessenheit” (I), *Der Sturm*, vol. 2, no. 70, July 1911 and “Aus der Vergessenheit” (II), *Der Sturm*, vol. 2, no. 71, August 1911.
- 66 For an analysis of Sturm’s early Scandinavian exhibitions, see Sjöholm Skrubbe, “Das Ehepaar Walden”, 2015, 402ff.; Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe, “Der Sturm and Sweden”, *Nell Walden & Der Sturm*, Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe et al., Mjellby konstmuseum, Halmstad and Carlsson, Stockholm 2015, 186ff. See also, Werenskiöld 1980; Dorthe Aagesen (ed.), *Avantgarde i dansk og europæisk kunst 1909–19*, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, 2002. On the Scandinavian locations of the Blaue Reiter tour, see Heike Daase, “Oslo”, “Helsinki”, “Trondheim”, “Göteborg”, *Der Blaue Reiter*, Christine Hopfengart (ed.), Kunsthalle Bremen / DuMont, Köln 2000, 79–82.
- 67 Herwarth Walden lost the initiative to represent modern German art to his rival Paul Casirer. Artist Alexei von Jawlensky was appointed for the selection of modern Russian art at the exhibition. See Werenskiöld, 1980; Sjöholm Skrubbe, “Das Ehepaar Walden”, 2015.

- 68 Der Sturm was represented in the exhibition by 29 woodcuts by 12 artists. Franz Marc, represented with 10 works, dominated Der Sturm's display. On Der Sturm in this exhibition, see Sjöholm Skrubbe, "Das Ehepaar Walden", 2015, 406f.
- 69 Sch., "Die neue Kunst im Norden", *Der Sturm*, vol. 4, no. 202–203, March 1914, 206f. The year before, the author and critic Brunius had published the first Swedish survey on modern art, *Färg och form. Studier af den nya konsten* (*Colour and Form. Studies in New Art*), Norstedts, Stockholm, 1913. John Landquist, who was the husband of the leading feminist author and journalist Elin Wägner, wrote for one of the major Swedish dailies, *Dagens Nyheter*. Lagerkvist wrote on modern art and literature in his *Ordkonst och bildkonst. Om modern skönlitteraturs dekadans. Om den moderna konstens vitalitet*, med ett förord av August Brunius (*Literary Art and Pictorial Art. On the Decadence of Modern Literature. On the Vitality of Modern Art*, with a preface by August Brunius), Bröderna Lagerström, Stockholm, 1913. The critical edge of the article in *Der Sturm* not surprisingly concerned the lack of accurate descriptions of modern German art in the writings of Brunius, Landquist, and Lagerkvist.
- 70 Bengt Lärkner, *Det internationella avantgardet och Sverige 1914–1925*, diss., Frank Stenvall, Malmö, 1984, 157.
- 71 See Sjöholm Skrubbe, "Das Ehepaar Walden", 2015 and Sjöholm Skrubbe, "Der Sturm and Sweden", 2015.
- 72 On the exhibition, see Jan Torsten Ahlstrand et al. *Svenskt avant-garde och Der Sturm i Berlin/Schwedische Avantgarde und Der Sturm in Berlin*, Verlag des Museums- und Kunstvereins Osnabrück, Kulturen, Lund, 2000.
- 73 Adrian-Nilsson was a personal friend of Nell Walden's sister and brother-in-law in Sweden and would thus have known about Der Sturm at least since Nell Walden joined the organisation in 1912. He visited the *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon* in 1913 and got in touch with the Waldens; at the beginning of 1914, he returned to the Waldens. Cp. Gästebuch der Sturm-Galerie, StaaBi. Adrian-Nilsson again visited Nell Walden in Berlin at the end of the 1920s, on which occasion he also paid a visit to the declining Sturm business, relocated at Kurfürstendamm and described by Adrian-Nilsson as "a not very cheerful confrontation". Gösta Adrian Nilsson, letter to Nell Walden, 10 December 1960, NW1B:75–5, NWA/LM. On Adrian-Nilsson's appointment at Taut's *Glashaus* pavilion at the *Werkbund* exhibition in Cologne in 1914, see Jan Torsten Ahlstrand, "Der 'künstlerischer Erklärer' im Glashaus. Gösta Adrian-Nilsson", *Kristallisationen, Splitterungen. Bruno Tauts Glashaus*, Birkhäuser, Basel, 1993, 150–155.
- 74 Grünewald, Hjertén, Hald, and Jolin had been suggested to Der Sturm by Gregor Paulsson who was a relative of Nell Walden. Paulsson and his wife Ester Wägner, who had long since befriended Nell Walden's family, were based in Berlin in the early 1910s. Gregor Paulsson, "Min väg till konstvetenskapen", *Uppsala universitets konsthistoriska institution femtio år*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis 16, Uppsala, 1968, 32. The personal connection between Ester Wäger and the Roslund family is documented in the guestbook of Nell Walden's father, Frithiof Roslund, Private archive, Örebro.
- 75 N.W. [Nell Walden], Svenska Underrättelsebyrån Der Sturm, Berlin, "Om de svenska målarnas utställning i Berlin", *Korrespondenten Landskrona Tidning*, 29 April 1915.
- 76 Lagerkvist, Hjertén, Grünewald, and Hald signed the Sturm guestbook on 7 April 1915. Gästebuch der Sturm-Galerie, StaaBi. Pär Lagerkvist's presence at the opening of the exhibition in Berlin proved rewarding, in so far as he published a review of the exhibition in the major Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet*, in which he praised the work of Hjertén in particular. Pär Lagerkvist, "Svenska expressionister i Berlin. En trots kriget mycket uppmärksammas utställning", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 1 May 1915.
- 77 See, for example, *Der Sturm*, vol. 6, nos 3–4, May 1915: Isaac Grünewald, *Zeichnung*, titlepage, and *Zeichnung*, 17; *Der Sturm*, vol. 6, nos 7–8, July 1915: Sigrid Hjertén-Grünewald, *Zeichnung*, titlepage. Hjertén's painting *Children (Kinder)*, which was on display in the exhibition, was included in the postcards series on Sturm artists and later appeared as an illustration in Herwarth Walden's publication *Einblick in Kunst*.
- 78 *Der Sturm*, vol. 7, no. 1, April 1916, 12. Already from July onwards, Grünwald had provided the Sturm gallery with graphic works for sale, cp. letters from Isaac Grünewald to Herwarth Walden 24 July and 3–5 September 1915, transcribed in Per Sandén, "Herwarth Walden und Skandinavien", lic.diss., Stockholm University, 1969, 123ff.

- 79 *Der Sturm*, vol. 8, no. 5, August 1917, 80.
- 80 Letter from Sigrid Hjertén to Nell Walden, 1 July 1916, transcribed in Sandén, 1969, 126f. For recent research on Sigrid Hjertén, see Görel Cavalli-Björkman, *Kvinna i avant-gardet. Sigrid Hjertén. Liv och verk*, Bonnier, Stockholm, 2017. On the exhibition in *Der Sturm* and Hjertén's relation to *Sturm* artists and German expressionism, see 113–122.
- 81 Hjertén and Grünewald exhibited with *Der Sturm*'s travelling exhibitions in The Hague and Brno in 1916 and in Basel and Zürich in 1917.
- 82 In her correspondence, Nell Walden repeatedly claimed that Adrian-Nilsson was the best of the Swedish artists to exhibit with *Der Sturm*. Cp. for example, Nell Walden's letters to Leopold Reidemeister 29 June 1960 and 22 January 1961, NW8, NWA/LM.
- 83 Upon his return to Berlin, Herwarth Walden reported to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Auswärtiges Amt*) on his success: "I have been interviewed by all the Stockholm newspapers. I have attached the interviews from *Dagens Nyheter* and *Dagen*. My statements about Bernhardi were desired from the German side". ("Ich bin von sätmlichen [*sic!*] Stockholmer Zeitungen interviewt. In der Anlage überreiche ich die Interviews von *Dagens Nyheter* und von *Dagen*. Ueber Bernhardi waren meine Aeusserungen von deutscher Seite aus erwünscht".) Herwarth Walden, "Stockholm", report to Zentralstelle für Auslandsdienst, 5 July 1915, Beschaffung von Presseartikel des feindlichen und neutralen Auslandes durch Herwarth Walden, R 901/72399, Bl. 78, Auswärtiges Amt, Zentralstelle für Auslandsdienst (1912–1923), Propaganda, Bundesarchiv, Berlin. "Bernhardi" almost certainly refers to the German general Friedrich von Bernhardi, whose 1912 controversial publication *Deutschland und der nächste Krieg* advocated for war as a legitimate means for Germany to gain influence and power and thus seemed to verify German national aggressive intent. In the interview, Herwarth Walden, hoping to alleviate the aggravating effects of the publication and, as is clear from the above-cited report, upon particular request from the German authorities, fiercely denied that Bernhardi had any influence in Germany. Anon., "De modernas tyska ledare i Stockholm", *Dagens Nyheter*, 29 June 1915.
- 84 Anon., "De modernas tyska ledare i Stockholm", 1915; Maurice, 1915; anon., "Tyskt konstnärspår på Stockholmsbesök", *Dagen*, 30 June 1915.
- 85 Among them were Hallin's art gallery (Hallins konsthandel) and Salon Joël (Salong Joël). Lärkner 1984, 154. Isaac Grünewald et al. in the artist group The Young (De unga) had rented Hallin's locality for their group exhibitions in 1909–1911 and Hjertén had debuted with *The Eight* (De åtta) in Salon Joël in 1912. In 1913, the Salon Joël exhibited paintings and graphic art by Edvard Munch and a futurist exhibition by the Italian painter Arturo Ciacelli.
- 86 Lärkner, 1984, 154–158.
- 87 Cp. letters from Isaac Grünewald to Herwarth Walden, 22 July 1915 and 3–5 September 1915, transcribed in Sandén, 1969, 121ff.
- 88 Annika Öhrner, "A Northern Avant-garde. Spaces and Cultural Transfer", *A Companion to Modern Art*, Pam Meecham (ed.), Wiley Blackwell, Hoboken and Oxford, 2018, 361.
- 89 Annika Öhrner, "'Ich lebte im Prophetenstand jetzt bin ich Weltkind geworden' Gabriele Münter och Skandinavien", *Gabriele Münter 1877–1962, Retrospektivt*, Annegret Hoberg, and Helmut Friedel (eds), Swedish edition, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, München, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, Liljevalchs konsthall, Stockholm, and Prestel, München, 1992, 70f.
- 90 Annika Öhrner has pointed out that Münter's negotiations in Stockholm had been a key factor that secured these shows. Öhrner 1992, 70f. and Annika Öhrner, "Delaunay and Stockholm", *O Circulo Delaunay/The Delaunay Circle*, Ana Vasconcelos e Melo (eds), Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, 2015, 236.
- 91 The catalogue to the Kandinsky exhibition was printed in at least two editions. Both editions emphasise *Der Sturm* "ownership" of the exhibition by explicitly labelling the show "*Der Sturm*'s art exhibition" ("*Der Sturms konstutställning*") and adding the artist's name only as a subtitle. The catalogue also constructed the Kandinsky show as one of three in a series of *Sturm* exhibitions together with the preceding Marc show and the following Münter show. The catalogue for the Münter exhibition repeats *Der Sturm*'s claims to authorship. The Kandinsky catalogues are digitally available through the Bibliothèque Kandinsky, Centre Pompidou, Paris. The Münter exhibition catalogue is digitally available through the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, Munich.

- 92 For a brief discussion on *flamman*, see Claes-Göran Holmberg, “*flamman*”, *A Cultural History of the Avant-Garde in the Nordic Countries 1900–1925*, Hubert van den Berg et al. (eds), Brill, Amsterdam and New York, 2012, 379–389. *flamman*, together with the art journals *Ultra* in Finland and *Klingen* in Denmark, with which *Der Sturm* was connected during the 1910s, became the most important forums for avant-garde art in the Scandinavian countries.
- 93 On the relationship between Lhote and Pauli, see Anna Meister, “Att förstå det nya som skall fram’ Georg Pauli och prins Eugen—de första svenska Lhoteeleverna”, *Form och färg. André Lhote och svensk kubism*, Anna Meister and Karin Sidén (eds), Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde, Stockholm 2017, 77–115.
- 94 Nell Walden reported that Pauli visited Sturm in Berlin during the First World War. Nell Walden, copy of letter to H. Elovsson, 20 September 1962, NW1B:73–73B; Nell Walden, copy of letter to J.P. Hodin, 11 July 1963, NW1C:121, NWA/LM. This was probably at the beginning of 1916 when Pauli travelled through Germany and Switzerland on his way to Paris. Meister, 2017, 102.
- 95 Lärkner, 1984, 92ff.
- 96 Pauli published advertisements for *Der Sturm* and repeatedly reported that *flamman* had received *Der Sturm*’s publications. From the summer of 1917 onwards, *Der Sturm*, in turn, provided the German public with sales and subscriptions of *flamman* in Berlin. Cp. announcement in *flamman*, no. 6, July to September 1917. As *flamman* published in Swedish, its German readership must have been minimal.
- 97 By the turn of the nineteenth century, the liberal *Stockholms-Tidningen* was the largest daily published north of Berlin and preserved its dominant position in Sweden throughout the 1910s and 1920s. In the 1910s, the conservative dailies *Aftonbladet*, *Dagen*, and *Svenska Dagbladet* represented a German-friendly standpoint, whereas the liberal *Dagens Nyheter* was strictly neutral and condemned Swedish activism in favour of Germany. *Göteborgs Aftonblad* and *Stockholms Dagblad* were both conservative papers.
- 98 On Melsted’s biography, see Sven Lagerstedt, “Henning F Melsted, von”, *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/19113>.
- 99 He registered in Nell Walden’s Sturm guestbook on 24 July 1915. Gästebuch der Sturm-Galerie, StaaBi.
- 100 H.v.M. [Henning von Melsted], “Expressionistutställningen”, *Dagen*, 3 September 1915. In his review, von Melsted proved to be familiar with the artist’s theories and referenced essays published by Marc in the German journal *Pan*.
- 101 Gregor Paulsson, “Tysk höstsalong”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 13 November 1913; Gregor Paulsson, “Modern konst. Kandinskyutställningen hos Gummesons”, *Stockholms Dagblad*, 2 February 1916; Gregor Paulsson, “Fallet Kandinsky”, *Stockholms Dagblad*, 10 February 1916; Gregor Paulsson, “Fallet Kandinsky”, *Stockholms Dagblad*, 23 February 1916.
- 102 Gregor Paulsson, “Konstrevy. Gabriele Münter. Futurister i Nya konstgalleriet”, *Stockholms Dagblad*, 13 March 1916.
- 103 Nell Walden added Malmquist’s stepfather, the Swedish journalist and author Tage Aurell, to her professional network and he reportedly visited the Waldens in Berlin during the war. Nell Walden, copy of letter to H. Elovsson, 20 September 1962, NW1B:73–73B, NWA/LM. After the war, Aurell visited the Waldens in 1921 together with his wife, artist Kaja Widegren-Malmquist, who had exhibited at Gummesons in Stockholm in 1916, just when collaboration between *Der Sturm* and the Stockholm gallery was at its most intensive. Sandro Malmquist was Widegren-Malmquist’s son from a previous marriage. He resumed contact with *Der Sturm* in the middle of the 1920s. In a special issue on theatre, *Der Sturm* printed some of his stage figure designs, among them four characters from Herwarth Walden’s drama *Kind*, and advertised his participation in the gallery’s exhibition of July 1926. *Der Sturm*, vol. 17, no. 3, 1926, 30, 35ff.
- 104 Sandro Malmquist, “Blixtturné”, *Göteborgs Aftonblad*, 4 August 1923, “Den dramatiska människan”, *Göteborgs Aftonblad*, 11 August 1923, “Sturm-utställningen öppnas först i oktober. Herwarth Walden har i dagarna besökt Göteborg. Berättar för Göteborgs Aftonblad om den märkliga utställningen”, *Göteborgs Aftonblad*, 17 September 1923, “Till Sturm-utställningen. En orientering”, *Göteborgs Aftonblad*, 20 October 1923, “Sturm igen. Svar till Nln”, *Göteborgs Aftonblad*, 25 October 1923.

- 105 Harald Wägner's sisters were Ester Wägner, a professional gymnast and physiotherapist, married to art historian Gregor Paulsson, and the very influential feminist author and journalist Elin Wägner, who was assistant editor-in-chief for the weekly paper *Idun* during the 1910s. Her husband was the leading literary critic and scholar John Landquist who wrote for *Dagens Nyheter*. During the war, Landquist visited the Waldens in Berlin and published in *Der Sturm*. Landquist contributed with a critical article on the translation into German of August Strindberg's "Le plädoyer d'un fou": John Landquist, "Die Rechtfertigung eines Irren", *Der Sturm*, vol. 6, nos 1–2, April 1915, 10f. Landquist is not recorded in the Sturm guestbooks, but Nell Walden claimed to have received him as a guest during the war. Nell Walden, copy of letter to H. Elovson, 20 September 1962, NW1B:73, NWA/LM. Célie Brunius' husband was the art critic August Brunius, who emerged as the leading spokesperson for modernist art in the Swedish press. *Der Sturm* had already drawn attention to his writing early in 1914. Célie Brunius' sister was the artist Agnes Cleve, who together with her husband John Jon-And became acquainted with Gabriel Münter and Wassily Kandinsky in 1914. The Swedish couple hosted both Münter during her Scandinavian sojourn in the 1910s and Kandinsky when he visited Sweden 1915–1916. Cleve and John-And connected personally with the Waldens in the 1920s. Margareta Wallin Wictorin, "Expressionisms in Sweden. Anti-Realism, Primitivism, and Politics in Painting and Print", *The Routledge Companion to Expressionism in a Transnational Context*, Isabel Wünsche (ed.), Routledge, New York and London, 2018, 212; Anneli Tuveros, "Nya ideal och radikalt måleri", *Agnes Cleve. Svensk modernist i världen*, Mjellby konstmuseum, Halmstad, 2014, 37.
- 106 Lärkner, 1984, 157.
- 107 In its 1919 issue, *flamman* published a short excerpt from an article by Herwarth Walden on the socialisation of art, originally published in the German newspaper *Der Arbeiter-Rat*, edited by Ernst Däumig. Walden's ideas would have been of particular interest for the editor of *flamman*, Georg Pauli, who in 1915 had published a booklet presenting his own concept of the socialisation of art as part of a broader process of democratisation. See Georg Pauli, *Konstens socialisering. Ett program*, Bonnier, Stockholm, 1915.
- 108 Herwarth Walden visited Stockholm together with the author Reinhard Goering in 1927, Walden apparently aiming to continue the Sturm propaganda in Scandinavia and to reconnect to the Swedish art scene. The Swedish daily paper *Dagens Nyheter* reported that the two men were travelling with their "suitcases full of propaganda and all sorts of peculiar pictures with angles, cones, cubes, and people from strange planets" ("[d]e ha kappsäckarna fulla med propaganda och allehanda besynnerliga tavlor med vinklar, koner, kuber och människor från främmande planeter") and that Herwarth Walden hoped to arrange yet another Sturm exhibition in Stockholm. Ab., "Tyska anden behöver Der Sturm! Herwarth Walden och Goering på besök. Utställning här?", *Dagens Nyheter*, 24 September 1927. See also the satirical verse and drawing of a man obviously bewildered by the artworks just unpacked from a suitcase and a wooden case that appeared in *Dagens Nyheter*, 25 September 1927. In the end, the plans for yet another Sturm exhibition in Stockholm failed and the artistic exchange saw a reversal, as an exhibition with works by Arturo Ciacelli and Elsa Ström-Ciacelli in the Stockholm gallery *Svensk-franska konstgalleriet* travelled to the Sturm gallery in Berlin in March 1928. Cp. announcements in the Swedish daily papers *Aftonbladet*, *Dagens Nyheter*, and *Svenska Dagbladet*, 22 February 1922. In 1932, Herwarth Walden migrated to the USSR and for a brief period at the end of that year he was assigned as correspondent in Moscow for the *Aftonbladet*. To the best of my knowledge, only three articles appeared: Herwarth Walden, "Moskva firar Gorki en vecka i sträck. Museer och gator få diktarens namn. Moskvas kammarteater under Tairovs regi", *Aftonbladet*, 9 October 1932; "Sovjetunionen jubilerar", *Aftonbladet*, 27 November 1932; "På zigenarteater i Ryssland", *Aftonbladet*, 18 December 1932. Herwarth Walden resumed contact with the Swedish press during a pleasure trip in Stockholm in 1934, resulting in a short interview: Anon., "Liten intervju med rysk högskolerektor", *Dagens Nyheter*, 6 August 1934.
- 109 Alms, 2012, 266.
- 110 Cp. Becker's theorisation of the functionalism of collective actions. Becker (1982), 2008, xiv.

- 111 Novels: *Das Buch der Menschenliebe* (1916) and *Die Härte der Weltenliebe* (1917); dramas: *Weib* (1917), *Erste Liebe* (1918), *Die Beiden* (1918), *Sünde* (1918), *Letzte Liebe* (1918), *Glaube* (1918), *Kind* (1918), *Trieb* (1918), and *Menschen* (1918); books on art (theory): *Gesammelte Schriften. Band I. Kunstmaler und Kunstkritiker* (1916), *Einblick in Kunst* (1917), and *Die neue Malerei* (1919).
- 112 I have borrowed the concept “secretarial culture” from Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell’s edited volume on secretaries as “the hidden technicians” in the production of modern writing and adapted it to my theorisation on “collaborative cultures” in order to highlight the collective but often unrecognised labour that brought *Der Sturm* into being. Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell (eds), *Literary Secretaries / Secretarial Culture*, Ashgate, Aldershot and Burlington, 2005.
- 113 In her correspondence with the Waldens, Jacoba van Heemskerck mentions Elli Hirsekorn, Miss Richart, and Miss Hermann as being secretaries in *Der Sturm*. Jacoba van Heemskerck, letters to Herwarth and Nell Walden, 7 February 1916 and 19 May 1916, and letter to Herwarth Walden, 27 February 1917, transcribed in A.H. Huussen jr., “Brieven van Jacoba van Heemskerck en Marie Tak van Poortvliet aan Herwarth en Nell Walden en anderen 1911–1923”, *Cahiers uit het Noorden X*, Haren, 2006, 75f., 102f., 131. Miss Hermann is also mentioned in the letters of Sophie van Leer; see, for example, Sophie van Leer, letters to Georg Muche, 31 March 1916 and 1 April 1916, Nachlaß Georg Muche, StaaBi. In 1918, Sophie van Leer further mentions a Miss Kuring from *Der Sturm*, who probably was yet another secretary or assistant. Sophie van Leer, letter to Georg Muche, 3 March 1918, Nachlaß Georg Muche, StaaBi. Nell Walden stated that Herwarth Walden commissioned a Mrs. Erdmann as secretary for many years. Nell Walden, manuscript, 28 January 1955, NW40, NWA/LM. Furthermore, it is known that Edith Schamberg, née Däubler, was engaged as *Sturm* secretary from 1913 to 1918. Yet another secretary, Eva Spector, with whom Nell Walden was in contact after the Second World War, also bought works from the gallery. Nell Walden copy of letter to Eva Spector, Tel Aviv NW2A:258, NWA/LM.
- 114 A.H. Huussen jr., *Sophie van Leer. Een expressionistische dichteres. Leven en werk 1892–1953*, Knoop, Haren, 1997, 19.
- 115 Sophie van Leer, letter to Georg Muche, 2 April 1916, Nachlaß Georg Muche, StaaBi.
- 116 Sophie van Leer left Berlin in January 1917 in order to help the art collector Franz Kluxen to sort his papers and library in München. When Herwarth Walden did not grant her further time off, she chose to terminate her contract and left *Sturm* for Kluxen. Huussen, 1997, 14, 26. Her successor as private secretary was Frä. Hirsekorn. Jacoba van Heemskerck comments on Sophie van Leer’s departure in terms of a dismissal in a letter to Herwarth Walden 27 February 1917, transcribed in Huussen, 2006, 131. On Sophie van Leer’s political cooperations with the Walden couple, see Vock, 2006.
- 117 Nell Walden and Hs. Urech-Walden, Schinznach, Öppet brev, “Betrifft: ‘Verrufene Malerei’ von Walter Mehring”, 19 February 1959, NW8, NWA/LM.
- 118 “Deine Arbeit im *Sturm* ist vorerst: Korrekturen lesen, Post ablegen, das Bücherlager verwalten, Streifbänder und Technisches”. Sophie van Leer, letter to Georg Muche, undated (April or May 1916), Nachlaß Georg Muche, StaaBi.
- 119 Pirsich, 1985, 368.
- 120 From 1916 onwards, *Der Sturm* offered folders with line etchings after Kokoschka’s series of 15 drawings of prominent cultural people for sale, several of which had already appeared as reproductions in *Der Sturm*. The majority of the drawings portrayed persons connected with *Der Sturm*; apart from Herwarth and Nell Walden, the series included portraits of Adolf Loos, Richard Dehmelt, author Paul Scheerbart, Alfred Kerr, Karl Kraus, Hermann Essig, Rudolf Blümner, and Adolf Knoblauch. Cp. advertisement in *Der Sturm*, vol. 7, no. 9, December 1916. That same year, though, Cassirer offered Kokoschka a more favourable contract and the artist left *Der Sturm*. Andrea von Hülsen-Esch, “Das Unternehmen *Der Sturm* und Herwarth Walden als Unternehmer”, *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012, 204.
- 121 Pirsich, 1985, 362f. The conflicts between *Der Sturm* and Chagall and Kandinsky were related to the collapsing art market during the years of inflation. Obviously, the

devastating financial context was yet another setback not only for Der Sturm but also for artists in general. As for the conflict between Herwarth Walden and Chagall, Nell Walden arranged for a settlement with the artist in 1926, two years after divorcing Herwarth Walden, and reportedly unknown to him. She offered Chagall several of his own works in her collection in exchange for his withdrawal of the summons issued against Herwarth Walden. The artist thus regained the oil paintings *Halb vier Uhr*, *Ich und das Dorf*, *Russland*, *den Eseln und den Anderen*, and some ten gouache paintings. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Dr Meyer-Chagall, 4 April 1959, NW3:23, NWA/LM.

- 122 Sophie van Leer, letter to Georg Muche, 14 Oktober 1918, Nachlaß Georg Muche, StaaBi.
- 123 Pirsich, 1985, 387.
- 124 Enders, 2007, 61.
- 125 Freya Mülhaupt (ed.), *Herwarth Walden 1878–1941. Wegbreiter der Moderne*, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin 1991, 12.
- 126 This is clear from the correspondence between the poet and critic Paul van Ostaijen and the artist Floris Jespers. With reference to Der Sturm's international character, the former soberly stated that "he uses it for advertising purposes". ("Damit macht er Werbung"). Paul van Ostaijen quoted in Peter J.H. Pauwels, "Je vous recommande bien fort d'inviter pour votre salon un peintre moderne de grande talent 'Tour Donas'", *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012, 370.
- 127 Anita Beloubek-Hammer, "DER STURM von Herwarth Walden—Kampfplatz der internationalen Avantgarde für die 'Kunstwende'", *Der Sturm. Chagall, Feininger, Jawlensky, Kandinsky, Klee, Kokoschka, Macke, Marc, Schwitters und viele andere im Berlin der zehner Jahre*, Barbara Alms and Wiebke Steinmetz (eds), Städtische Galerie Delmenhorst Haus Coburg, Delmenhorst, 2000, 41.
- 128 Pirsich, 1985, 369, n. 82.
- 129 van Heemskerck clearly valued Herwarth Walden's open-minded approach: "he is the only man you can really trust. Most artists I do not trust at all; they prefer it if a woman does not succeed" ("er ist der einzige Mann die man ganz vertrauen kann. Die meisten Künstler vertraue ich gar nicht; die finden es besser das eine Frau nicht weiter kommt"). Jacoba van Heemskerck, letter to Herwarth Walden, 30 July 1914, transcribed in Huussen, 2006, 18. Maaike van Rijn has claimed that Der Sturm was exceptional in its promotion of women artists, however, without presenting empirical data substantiating her statement. Maaike van Rijn, "'Ich arbeite viel und denke viel über die Portraits nach'—Jacoba van Heemskerck und andere Künstlerinnen beim Sturm", *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012, 343, 345. More recently, Ingrid Pfeiffer has presented a comparison between the Sturm gallery and contemporary art dealers and galleries in Berlin, Munich, and the Rhineland and thereby offering a brief account of the number of women artists represented. Pfeiffer's account makes it plausible that Der Sturm indeed was exceptional in this respect. Ingrid Pfeiffer, "Sturm-Frauen. Oder wie Herwarth Walden in großem Stil die Künstlerinnen der Avantgarde gefördert hat", *Sturm-Frauen. Künstlerinnen der Avantgarde in Berlin 1910–1932*, Ingrid Pfeiffer and Max Hollein (eds), Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt/Wienand, Köln, 2015, 16–20.
- 130 van Rijn, 2013, 50.

2 The Walden Art Collection

In the *Handschriftenabteilung* of the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin is a photograph of Herwarth Walden's study in the couple's apartment at Potsdamer Straße 134a, Berlin (Figure 2.1). In the centre of the picture is a writing desk on which ink and a pen, paper and notepad, a clock, and several framed photographs of family and friends are neatly arranged. At either side of the writing desk there are simple wooden cupboards. To the left in the foreground is a leather armchair; an obscure object in the right foreground suggests yet another one. The desk chair is placed slightly at an angle as if to give the impression that the writer and editor has just left the room. On the wall behind the desk are several paintings that Nell Walden had acquired for her art



Figure 2.1 Unknown photographer, Herwarth Walden's study, n.d. (after 1912). Photo © bpk/Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

collection. Among them, Franz Marc's *Sheep* (*Schafe*, 1912) (Figure 2.2) and, cropped by the picture plane, one of his signature paintings, *The Yellow Cow* (*Die gelbe Kuh*, 1911) (Figure 2.3). Oskar Kokoschka's portraits of actor and writer Rudolf Blümner and Herwarth Walden (Figure 2.4), respectively, in turn frame Marc's work. Marc, Kokoschka, and Blümner were all key protagonists of *Der Sturm* and both Marc and Kokoschka were prominently represented in Nell Walden's art collection.

The photograph of Herwarth Walden's study presents a scene in which the paintings, writing desk, and framed photographs are staged as carefully selected and arranged attributes or references to the occupier of the room. It suggests that these were not random objects but were entangled and embedded in how he made use of this particular space.¹ The photograph thus not only draws attention to Herwarth Walden's professional practice, promoting the avant-garde arts, but also to the *Sturm* business as lived experience in daily life. The artworks that are visible on the walls suggest how Nell Walden's art collection constituted a visual backdrop for his work and enabled him to present himself in a certain way.

Feminist art historians have convincingly argued that modernist art history has marginalised women's artistic production and concealed the extent to which men's practices in the art world might have depended on women's supportive work. The historiography of *Der Sturm* is no exception here. As suggested in Chapter 1, the collaborative culture of *Der Sturm*—that is, the division of labour between Herwarth and Nell Walden and their companions and supportive personnel—enabled Herwarth Walden to focus on his work at the writing table or in the gallery, while other spaces and other forms of labour have served “as a backdrop or relay for the flows of causal efficacy”,



Figure 2.2 Franz Marc, *Sheep* (*Schafe*), 1912. Oil on canvas, 49.5 × 77 cm. Saarlandmuseum, Saarbrücken (NI 1238). Photo © bpk/SSK/Tom Gundelwein.



Figure 2.3 Franz Marc, *Yellow Cow (Die gelbe Kuh)*, 1911. Oil on canvas, 140.5 × 189.2 cm. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (49.1210), Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection. Photo © The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation/Art Resource, New York/Scala, Florence 2021.

to speak with Bruno Latour.² The photograph of Herwarth Walden’s study metaphorically represents the disembodied male author through his writing desk, but excludes the technologies and embodied labour that materialised his creative work. In contrast, the focus in this chapter is on practices and spaces that have hitherto often been pushed into the background. It presents Nell Walden as a major, if rarely discussed or properly credited, collector of modern art. In addition, it discusses the domestic spaces and social practices that turned her art collection into an essential asset for *Der Sturm*.

Collecting Sturm Art

Anne Higonnet has noted that, like an artist in relation to their mythical “first” work, “collectors often tell the ‘start’ of their collection to launch its narrative”.³ According to Nell Walden, the foundation for her collection was a group of drawings by Oskar Kokoschka that she received as a wedding present from Herwarth Walden when they married in November 1912. Obviously, a single first acquisition or gift hardly constitutes a collection and the event that represents the starting point is inevitably constructed in retrospect when the collection has achieved a certain volume.⁴ However, by designating the occasion when she replaced—or even “dispelled”, as she puts it—a collection of framed reproductions that she had brought from Sweden with the newer Kokoschka drawings into the starting point of her art collection, Nell Walden retrospectively transformed the



Figure 2.4 Oskar Kokoschka, *Portrait of Herwarth Walden* (*Bildnis Herwarth Walden*), 1910. Oil on canvas, 100 × 69.3 cm. Staatsgalerie Stuttgart (2749). © Fondation Oskar Kokoschka/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © Staatsgalerie Stuttgart.

wedding present into a symbolically charged moment.⁵ The Kokoschka drawings not only constituted the mythical starting point of the collection, but implicitly also marked the beginning of a lifelong commitment to Herwarth Walden and *Der Sturm*. In this context, the gesture of the wedding present symptomatically captures the circumstance that a deep devotion for *die neue Kunst* was the common factor that brought the couple together and inevitably turned their relationship into one where the personal and the professional were always intertwined.⁶

The drawings by Kokoschka, several of them sketches executed on scraps of paper of low quality, may appear a modest start for a prominent art collection, even if they were highly treasured for their artistic excellence by both the Walden couple and subsequent owners. Kokoschka, however, had been a key contributor of visual content in *Der Sturm*'s first year of publication and several of the drawings that Nell Walden received had been reproduced in the journal, among them *Heavenly and Earthly Love* (*Himmlische und irdische Liebe*, 1909–1910) (Figure 2.5) and the illustrations to his drama *Murderer, Hope of Women* (*Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen*, 1909).⁷ Thus, the drawings had a particular symbolic, and perhaps also documentary, value. Soon enough, though, she added to the Kokoschka collection and by her own means acquired a considerable quantity of paintings, sculptures, drawings, and works on

paper—either from the Sturm gallery stock or exhibitions or directly from artists and collectors.

In comparison with other women collectors, the financial basis for Nell Walden's collection is noteworthy. Quite a number of women collectors of modern art—for instance, Ida Bienert in Dresden, Helene Kröller-Müller in The Hague, or Gertrude Stein in Paris—either had access to inherited money and/or depended on the financial support of a successful husband.⁸ It has similarly been noted that it was only women with inherited business fortunes that founded collection museums in Europe and North America.⁹ Obviously, these aspects of art collecting reflect the broader social and ideological contexts that conceptualised and constituted both paid labour and art collecting as gendered and classed practices. Unlike most contemporary women collectors, though, Nell Walden founded her art collection with money she had earned herself.

From the start, she consolidated an intimate connection between her collection and the Sturm gallery by securing artworks by key artists that the gallery promoted. Der Sturm's early reputation as an art gallery as well as its ascribed legacy in art history is closely related to its exhibitions of the Blaue Reiter group and the Italian futurists as well as the major show *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon*. These formative events



Figure 2.5 Oskar Kokoschka, *Heavenly and Earthly Love* (*Himmlische und irdische Liebe*), 1909–1910. Pencil and ink on paper, 32.6 × 24.9 cm. Moderna Museet, Stockholm (NMH 67/1958). © Fondation Oskar Kokoschka/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © Moderna Museet, Stockholm.

had all established Der Sturm as an essential promoter of international avant-garde art. The first documented acquisitions by Nell Walden are from the turn of the year 1913–1914 and include artworks by the futurist painter Gino Severini, the fauvist André Derain, and the Blaue Reiter artists Wassily Kandinsky, Marianne von Werefkin, August Macke, and Alexei von Jawlensky (Figure 2.6).¹⁰ Prior to her acquisitions, Der Sturm had promoted all of them in exhibitions and through the magazine. Yet another important pre-war acquisition was Kandinsky's *Large Study* (*Grosse Studie*, 1914) (Figure 2.7), a painting that materialised both Kandinsky's and Der Sturm's advocacy for abstraction in art, which she purchased directly from the artist in Murnau in the early summer of 1914 shortly after it was completed.¹¹

Occasionally, she managed to acquire artworks that had been exhibited by the Sturm gallery, thus even more firmly marking the connection between the gallery and the collection. For instance, Heinrich Campendonk's *Jumping Horse* (*Springendes Pferd*, 1911) (Figure 2.8) had been part of the very first Blaue Reiter exhibition in the Moderne Galerie Heinrich Tannhauser in Munich in 1911 and reappeared in Der Sturm's first Berlin exhibition in 1912.¹² Likewise, she acquired several paintings by the futurist artists that Der Sturm promoted in its second Berlin exhibition in 1912. These included Umberto Boccioni's *The Forces of a Street* (*Le Forze di una Strada*, 1911) (Figure 2.9), Carlo Carra's *Jolts of a Cab* (*Sobbalzi di fiacre*, 1911), and Gino Severini's *The Black*



Figure 2.6 Sturm postcard, Alexei von Jawlensky, *Head* (*Kopf*). Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.



Figure 2.7 Wassily Kandinsky, *Large Study (Grosse Studie)*, 1914. Oil on canvas, 101 × 79.3 cm. Collection Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2677 MK). Photo © Studio Tromp.

Cat (Il gatto nero, 1910–1911) and *The Milliner (La Modista, 1910–1911)* (Figure 2.10). With these four paintings, additional drawings by Boccioni, sketches for his triptych *States of Minds (Stati d'animo)*, and a pastel and a drawing by Severini, the art collection cemented Der Sturm's formative cooperation with the futurists and made their pictorial pugnacity a permanent feature of the collection display.

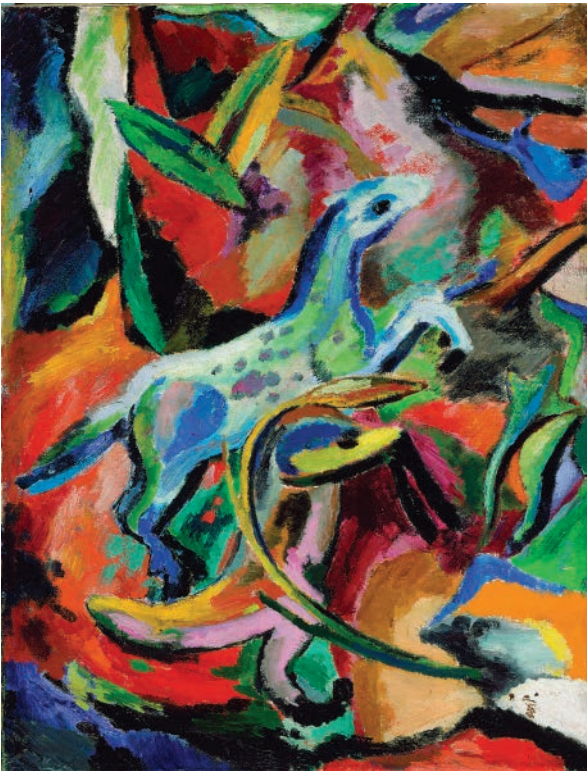


Figure 2.8 Heinrich Campendonk, *Jumping Horse (Springendes Pferd)*, 1911. Oil on canvas, 85 × 65 cm. Saarlandmuseum, Saarbrücken (NI 1234). © Heinrich Campendonk/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © bpk/SSK/Krüger Druck.

If the exhibitions *Der Blaue Reiter* and *Die Futuristen* concentrated on particular artist groups, *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon* sought to capture a comprehensive overview of recent international art. Among the 80 artists listed in the exhibition catalogue, Nell Walden obtained works by nearly 30. Thus, by 1915, works by Hans Arp, Albert Bloch, Robert Delaunay, Albert Gleizes, and Gabriele Münter, to mention just a few, were permanently on display in the Walden apartment. Again, some of the works that she acquired had been exhibited, including two still-life paintings by Vincenc Beneš and two by Emil Filla (Figure 2.11), Otakar Kubín's painting *House by the lake (Haus am See)*, and Paul Klee's drawing *Belligerent Tribe (Kriegerischer Stamm, 1913)* (Figure 2.12). Beneš and Filla were members of the Bohemian artist group Skupina Výtvarných Umělců that promoted cubist styles in art. Otakar Kubín, a Paris-based artist of Bohemian origin, likewise showed an interest in cubism.¹³ With the works by Filla, Beneš, and Kubín as well as two statuettes and a sculpture *Don Quijote* by Skupina member Otto Gutfreund, the collection by 1915 included a representative selection of Bohemian cubism, which not only reflected but also enriched *Der Sturm's* exhibition programme by permanently acknowledging the international spread of modern art. Here, the collection also demonstrated the connection

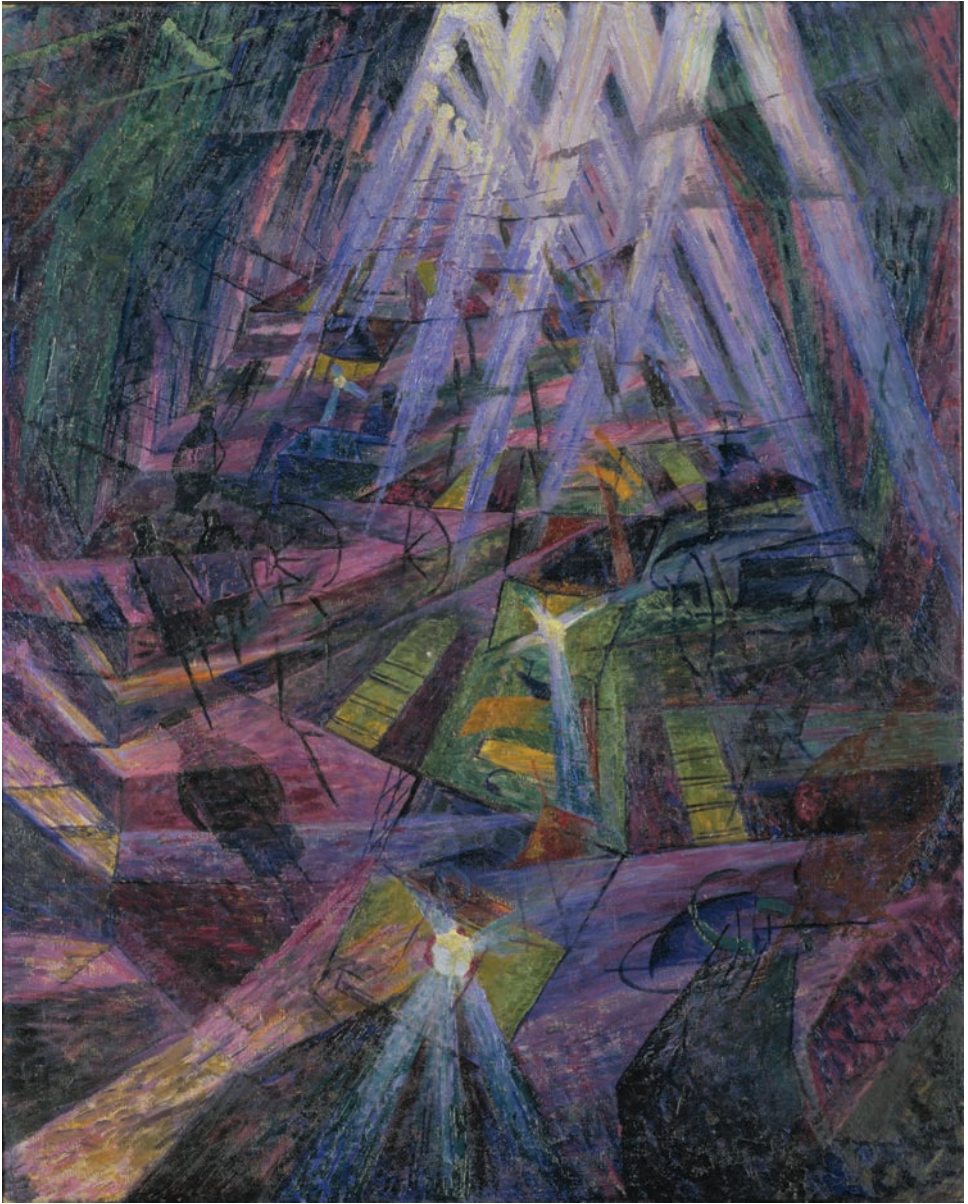


Figure 2.9 Umberto Boccioni, *The Forces of a Street* (*Le Forze di una Strada*) 1911. Oil on canvas, 99.5 × 80.5 cm. Nakanoshima Museum of Art, Osaka. Photo © Nakanoshima Museum of Art, Osaka.

between Der Sturm and Central and Eastern European modern art, a transnational avant-garde exchange that has only recently been discussed in more detail.¹⁴

Nell Walden's sudden access to a considerable income during the First World War enabled her to accumulate artworks with great speed. A series of published collection catalogues enable a broad overview of how rapidly the collection grew during

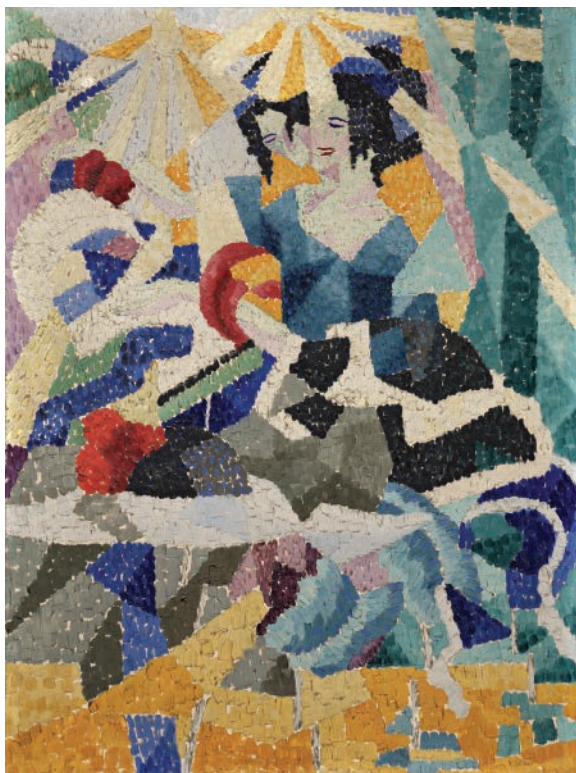


Figure 2.10 Gino Severini, *The Milliner (La Modista)*, 1910–1911. Oil on canvas, 64.8 × 48.3 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art (2004-45-2), Gift of Sylvia and Joseph Slifka, 2004. © Gino Severini/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © The Philadelphia Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York/Scala, Florence 2021.

the second half of the 1910s.¹⁵ The third edition from November 1915, which is the earliest surviving catalogue, reveals that the collection by then included 175 paintings, sculptures, and works on paper by 36 artists representing the varied directions within the contemporary European avant-garde art world. In addition, nine paintings by Nell Walden herself were registered as part of the collection, undoubtedly as a strategic marketing of her own artistic endeavours. The catalogue also contains an old Russian icon, an unspecified number of old Bavarian and Tyrolean icons, and old Japanese woodcuts. In May 1917, the collection comprised 273 pieces, and a little less than two years later, the catalogue from March 1919 lists 320 artworks by 47 named contemporary artists, Nell Walden's own works excluded. Finally, the October 1919 edition of the catalogue accounts for the same number of works (320), implying that the end of the war, and thus the basis for the political and journalistic commissions that had provided her an income, had put a stop for her frequent purchases. However, by then, she was already in the possession of an impressive collection of European modern art, folk art from different parts of the world, and indigenous art from Africa, Oceania, and Asia.

The collection as a whole included 414 pieces, 94 of which were part of her collection of indigenous and folk art. Hence, one-fifth of the collection did not emanate

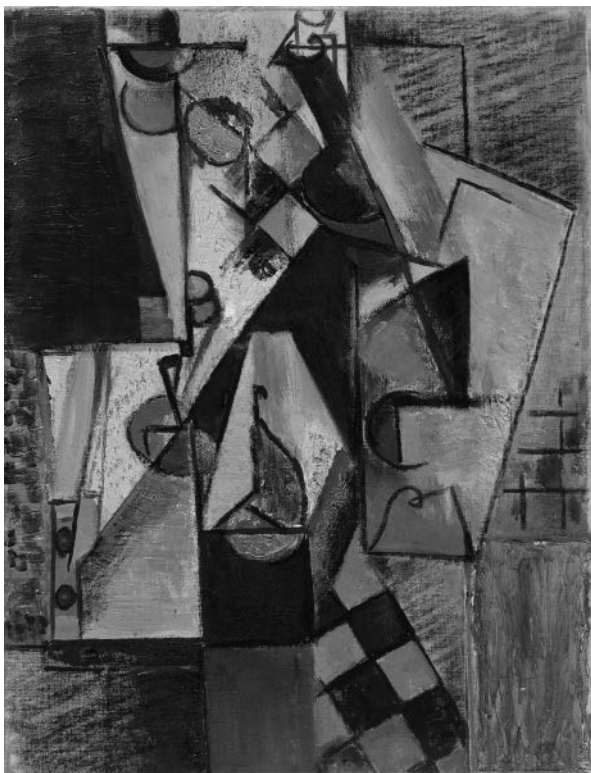


Figure 2.11 Emil Filla, *Still Life II (Stilleben II)*, 1912–1913. Oil on canvas, 37 × 28.5 cm. Kunstmuseum Bern (G 1982). © Emil Filla/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © Kunstmuseum Bern.

from the Sturm artists and gallery shows, but from Nell Walden's purchases elsewhere. This is covered in more detail in Chapter 4, as this focus in her collection would develop further after she had left *Der Sturm* and thus merits a separate discussion.

The published collection catalogues also reveal the focus of the art collection in quantitative terms and three artists clearly stand out: Marc Chagall, Jacoba van Heemskerck, and Oskar Kokoschka. By 1919, works by these three artists comprised 40 per cent of the collection.¹⁶ Other artists that were well represented include Franz Marc, Rudolf Bauer, Heinrich Campendonk, Carlo Mense, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Gabriele Münter, Maria Uhden, and Alexander Archipenko.¹⁷ All of them had frequently participated in Sturm's exhibitions in Berlin and travelling exhibitions in Germany and beyond.

A comparison between the artworks in the collection and those that were exhibited in the Sturm gallery and disseminated by *Der Sturm* through various reproductions casts light on how the growing collection served as a resource for the broader Sturm propaganda. In addition to the printed catalogues and special advertising cards, the artworks in the collection were publicised through illustrations in the magazine *Der Sturm* and through the postcard series and publications brought out by the Sturm



Figure 2.12 Paul Klee, *Belligerent Tribe (Kriegerischer Stamm)*, 1913. Ink on paper, 13.9 × 24.8 cm. Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Graphische Sammlung (C 1954/GL 319). Photo © Staatsgalerie Stuttgart.

publishing house.¹⁸ As I have elucidated elsewhere, *Der Sturm*'s postcards series, *Künstlerkarten*, and other reproductions were strategically employed as a promotional tool that extended, mediated, and enabled multiple encounters with the expressionist aesthetic fostered by *Der Sturm*.¹⁹ The first series reproduced artworks from *Der Sturm*'s seminal futurist exhibition and the *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon*, thus again emphasising these shows as formative events. As expected, given the art collection's scope and content, a postcard series, including reproductions of 24 pieces in the Walden collection, was introduced in 1917.²⁰ The series contained images of artworks both by German artists such as Franz Marc and Rudolf Bauer (Figure 2.13) and, boldly, by artists that was regarded as "enemy artists" due to the war, as for instance Russians Marc Chagall and Alexei von Jawlensky (Figure 2.6) and the Frenchmen Fernand Léger and Jean Metzinger. Eventually, the series was enlarged with the portrait photograph of Herwarth and Nell Walden in their dining room (Figure 0.1), implicitly indicating the authorial agency that had assembled the artworks.

The collection served as a reservoir of artworks that could readily be used for exhibitions in the gallery.²¹ This was particularly important during the First World War, when access to and transfer of international art was limited. As we have seen, Herwarth Walden was able to continue, and even intensify, his work in *Der Sturm* during the war. However, many artists and writers connected to *Der Sturm* were called up for military service and some of them would never return from the battlefields, among



Figure 2.13 Sturm postcard, Rudolf Bauer, *Presto I*. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

them key figures such as Franz Marc and August Macke. In addition, some of the artists that had been particularly promoted by *Der Sturm* in the pre-war years, including Kandinsky, Jawlensky, Werefkin, and Robert and Sonia Delaunay, were now defined as “enemy artists”. Even if the Walden couple’s connections with German authorities secured the travelling exhibitions in neutral countries, closed borders made it difficult to maintain contact with artists outside Germany and impossible to transport artworks by enemy artists to Berlin. However, the closed borders also provided Nell Walden with an exceptional opportunity to acquire works by Marc Chagall.

In June 1914, *Der Sturm* had hosted Chagall’s very first one-man exhibition. The artist was present in Berlin for the opening but departed for his home country Russia two weeks later, leaving about 40 paintings and at least 100 watercolours and drawings behind in *Der Sturm*. The outbreak of war shortly thereafter transformed Chagall into an “enemy artist” in Germany and prevented his work in *Der Sturm* from leaving the country. Paradoxically, this historical circumstance enabled *Der Sturm* to establish Chagall as one of the most important modern artists due to its skilful marketing of the works he left behind in Berlin.²² As a result, among the first major buyers of Chagall’s art were the German art dealer Israel Ber Neumann and the art collectors Sally Falk, Ida Bienert, and Franz Kluxen.²³ To this group, we must also add Nell Walden.

In fact, Nell Walden’s numerous acquisitions of Chagall’s work during the First World War merit her the most prominent place among these early supporters of the artist. By 1917, she had acquired seven of the 40 oil paintings he had left in Berlin, which made her the most significant Chagall collector in Germany in quantitative terms.²⁴ Six of the paintings—*The Cattle Dealer (Der Viehhändler, 1911)*



Figure 2.14 Marc Chagall, *The Cattle Dealer* (*Der Viehhändler*), 1911. Oil on canvas, 97.1 × 202.5 cm. Kunstmuseum Basel (2213). © Marc Chagall/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © Scala, Florence 2021.

(Figure 2.14); *Half-Past Three (The Poet)* (*Halb vier Uhr*, 1911) (Figure 2.15); *To Russia, Donkeys and Others* (*Rußland, den Eseln und den Anderen*, 1911); *I and the Village* (*Ich und das Dorf*, 1911); *The Soldier Drinks* (*Der Soldat trinkt*, 1912); and *The Flying Carriage* (*La calèche volante*, 1913)—are among his most well-known works and are now in public collections in Europe and the USA.²⁵ Apart from these major paintings, he acquired no fewer than 36 watercolours and seven drawings during the 1910s, the majority of which were purchased during the spring of 1917. These artworks secured the permanent visibility of Chagall's art in Berlin and enabled its dissemination through reproductions elsewhere. Nell Walden was thus a key agent who contributed to his early success in Germany. In fact, *Der Sturm*'s promotion of Chagall's art gradually transformed his reception. From 1917 onwards, German art critics no longer scorned his work but dubbed him a modern classic.²⁶

Der Sturm's ardent marketing of Chagall was not restricted to Germany. In 1917, Nell Walden published an article on Chagall in *flamman*, the Swedish art magazine edited by the artist Georg Pauli. Pauli's initial interest in Der Sturm centred on the Walden art collection in particular and he asked for photographs of artworks to be reproduced in the magazine. *flamman* thus introduced Der Sturm for its readers by publishing an announcement that focused on the collection—described as “the most modern of Berlin's art galleries, in which the newest art movements are extraordinarily represented”—rather than the gallery exhibitions or the magazine *Der Sturm*.²⁷ Following this, Pauli specifically asked Nell Walden to write on Chagall and his fellow countryman, the sculptor and painter Alexander Archipenko, for *flamman*.²⁸ Her contributions—illustrated with images of Archipenko's *Female Figure* (*Weibliche Figur, Salome*, 1916) (Figure 2.16) and Chagall's *The Cattle Dealer* (Figure 2.14), both of which were in her possession—exemplify how both the travelling exhibitions and the collection served Der Sturm's cultural and political agenda. These two Russian artists, Chagall and Archipenko, easily lent themselves to the marketing tactics of Der Sturm that emphasised the internationality of modern art in times of war.



Figure 2.15 Marc Chagall, *Half-Past Three (The Poet)* (*Halb vier Uhr*), 1911. Oil on canvas, 195.9 × 144.8 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art (1950-134-36). © Marc Chagall/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © The Philadelphia Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York/Scala, Florence 2021. This particular painting features as the most prominent example of modern art fostered by *Der Sturm* in Herman Essig's satirical novel *Der Taifun*.

Chagall may not have been aware of *Der Sturm*'s marketing during the war, but the Dutch artist Jacoba van Heemskerck would have been, as she was closely connected to the Waldens in a collaboration characterised by mutual dependency. She was among the artists who gained most visibility in exhibitions in the home gallery in Berlin, which showed her work in more than 60 exhibitions, nine of which were solo shows. As with Chagall and Archipenko, Nell Walden would also promote van Heemskerck in her writing. Following a visit to van Heemskerck in The Hague at the beginning of November 1915, she wrote two articles for *Nutiden*. *Uge- og Handelsblad for Danmark*, a Danish paper that was published in Berlin and served the German war propaganda.²⁹ *Nutiden* was a part of the Waldens' involvement with German authorities throughout the First World War. Herwarth Walden had initiated the founding of the paper, and even though it is uncertain to what extent he influenced the content of the paper, it may be concluded that the Waldens occasionally managed to use the paper as a forum for the promotion of the *Sturm* business.³⁰

Nell Walden's articles in *Nutiden* in November 1915 were published as travel reports, dedicated as much to a pro-German view on the current political situation as to



Figure 2.16 Alexander Archipenko, *Female Figure* (*Weibliche Figur*), 1916. Cast stone, H: 102 cm. Museum Rietberg, Zürich (REU 801). Photo © Rainer Wolfsberger, Museum Rietberg, Zürich. As long as the sculpture was in Nell Walden's possession it was titled *Salome*.

accounts of tourist attractions and Dutch art, the latter section evolving into an implicit piece of Sturm propaganda. Introducing modern art in the Netherlands in the second article, Nell Walden carefully noted that “you are extremely mistaken, when you think that everything that is modern, is also art” in order to then establish that “modern art has many practitioners in Holland, but only few can be designated as artists. However,

one single name can be mentioned on a par with the great masters of art: Jacoba van Heemskerck".³¹ The article was illustrated with van Heemskerck's *Bild 15*, which was among the collection of the artist's close friend and patron, Marie Tak van Poortvliet, whose many acquisitions of van Heemskerck's work are also mentioned in the text. The article thus both promoted van Heemskerck's work—and implicitly, Der Sturm's notion of expressionism as the principal manifestation of modern art—and referenced her success in finding buyers in the art market. It therefore indicates the importance of art collections for the early canonisation processes of modernism.

Upon reading Nell Walden's assessment of her work in the paper, van Heemskerck responded with gratitude:

Many, many thanks for your lovely articles; indeed it is a brilliant critique of my art; I am so dearly happy that you understand me so completely; it is always difficult for me to express my deepest thoughts in words; then I rather remain silent, but I feel with such a certainty that I do not need any words for you.³²

On another occasion, responding to a lost letter in which Nell Walden had shared her opinion of the artist's most recent work, van Heemskerck wrote: "I am so happy that you think that I have improved. You have an extremely good eye and your judgement is very important to me".³³ As these letters imply, Nell Walden enjoyed a closer relationship with van Heemskerck than with other well-represented artists in her collection, based on mutual trust and critical exchange in artistic matters. Crucially, the collector's reportedly sharp eye and their mutual understanding of art proved advantageous for the artist. Yet another letter, in which Nell Walden offered to buy several of the pieces van Heemskerck had just shipped to Berlin for an exhibition in Der Sturm, including *Houses in Suiderland*, *Drawing No. 13* (*Häuser in Suiderland*, *Zeichnung Nr. 13*, 1914) (Figure 2.17), is worth quoting at length:

So, your pictures are here. Such a wonderful thing. We were frantic with joy when we saw them. How did you do all that? Wonderful, wonderful. It will be a magnificent exhibition in March. I am so happy about your kind offer, but also ashamed. I am not sure if it is right of me to accept such a gift from you. What you write of lack of space. I would rent a room for your pictures, that is not an exaggeration. You cannot imagine how much I would like to accept a picture from you, if only it would not be too much for you to give me one of these wonderful things. You see, I put in a claim for your kindness anyway. In fact, I am eager to buy 6 of the pieces and wanted to ask if you would let me have them for 300 marks together. Imagine these things in my graphics room!! Oh, wonderful. Please let me know your completely honest opinion whether I can acquire all of this. The drawings have the following numbers: 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20.³⁴

The correspondence between the Waldens and van Heemskerck reveals that the latter also donated artworks to the collection on a regular basis. "By the end of this week I will send 4 woodcuts, each in an edition of 10 pieces, and then, as always, one un-numbered of each for you", she informed her patron, colleague, and friend in March 1915.³⁵ On another occasion, she wrote to Nell Walden:

Together with the woodcuts for the portfolio [i.e. Der Sturm's van Heemskerck portfolio] I send you 10 numbered prints for sale of the woodcut that will be



Figure 2.17 Jacoba van Heemskerck, *Houses in Suiderland, Drawing No. 13* (*Häuser in Suiderland, Zeichnung Nr. 13*), 1914. Coloured ink, 48 × 63 cm. Kunstmuseum Bern (A 8361). Photo © Kunstmuseum Bern. This is one of the works, mentioned in the quoted letter, that Nell Walden acquired from van Heemskerck in 1915.

published in the next issue of *Der Sturm* and included is as usual an *unnumbered* print for your collection.³⁶

In the same letter, the artist commented on the spatial expansion of her work in the collection display: “The time will come when you will fill a room with my pictures in your collection”.³⁷ As van Heemskerck was well aware of the marketing value and public function of the art collection, the regular donations presumably were not simply tokens of gratitude towards the Walden couple’s heavy promotion of her work. Offering unnumbered prints for the collection of the same woodcuts that *Der Sturm* would put on sale in the gallery and reproduce in the art journal was probably yet another strategy to increase her visibility with potential buyers and a broader public in Berlin. Being so prominently represented in the collection brought with it recognition. Moreover, the collection provided an aesthetic context that added to the meaning of the artworks.

A Provisional Institution

In assembling objects representing different artists, aesthetic attitudes, and diverse geographical locations, the collection as an entity communicated specific meanings

about contemporary art practices. Art collecting can thus be theorised as a practice that calls a particular collectivity into being.³⁸ As indicated, the connection between Der Sturm's exhibitions and Nell Walden's purchases was no coincidence, but rather a deliberate strategy to systematically acquire Sturm art. In retrospect, she declared: "I made it a rule—above all from 1914 onwards when I had the necessary resources—to acquire something for the collection from every Sturm-exhibition".³⁹ In a manuscript from the 1940s, she detailed her reasons for buying Sturm art: "firstly out of love of art and the cause—secondly out of inherited instincts for collecting—thirdly to support the Sturm artists who naturally found few buyers at the time and fourthly for propaganda reasons".⁴⁰ Later, she would add that "the purpose of my collecting was also to provide the unknown artists of Der Sturm—who were mostly about my age and also my fellow painters—an economic help", thus indicating that she felt a certain obligation to personally support her artist friends.⁴¹

Almost certainly, these retrospective statements summarised her collecting practices with a certain degree of idealisation and exaggeration. A lack of primary sources makes it impossible to verify purchases from every Sturm exhibition. However, the collection catalogues confirm that as long as she stayed within the Sturm organisation, she only purchased works by contemporary artists who had also participated in Der Sturm's exhibitions in Berlin and/or in its travelling exhibitions elsewhere. This is not to suggest that the collection indiscriminately mirrored what had been shown in the gallery. During her active years in Der Sturm 1912–1925, more than 270 artists exhibited in the home gallery, but only 47 made it into the collection. Her acquisitions therefore not only highlighted key Sturm artists of her own preference but also connected to seminal exhibitions and confirmed Der Sturm's aesthetic agenda through a broader international overview.

For the visitor to the Walden apartment, the content of the collection—a clear focus on a limited number of artists that were particularly well represented side by side with a representative selection of a broad spectrum of artists that overlapped with the Sturm gallery's varied exhibition programme—would have emerged as a manifestation of the essence of Sturm art. In his writing and through the gallery exhibitions, Herwarth Walden made efforts to constitute (Der Sturm's version of) the notion of *Expressionismus* as a collective term for diverse avant-garde art practices, including futurism, cubism, and orphism, a gesture that aimed to secure Der Sturm's position in the transnational field of avant-garde art.⁴² Nell Walden's private art collection, intimately connected with the Sturm enterprise, materialised Der Sturm's conceptualisation of modern art and brought together various directions and key contributors within the framework of the collection. Her art collecting thus performatively constituted the artists in the collection as part of a particular aesthetic community. In other words, the collection was a key feature that called Der Sturm as a collectivity into being.

In its programmatic purposes, then, Nell Walden's art collection functioned as a *provisional institution*, referring to art collecting as "a mode of public engagement modeling future [...] relationships between audience and artwork".⁴³ In fact, the key collectors of modern art not only enunciated and promoted modernism but also contributed to the formation of the modernist canon, a process that started well before public art museums institutionalised modern art.⁴⁴ In this institutional "gap", modern art collections provided temporary institutional spaces and aesthetic frameworks that helped pave the way for the "proper" institutionalisation of modernism in public museums after the Second World War. Jeremy Braddock has pointed

out that the modernist art collection aligned to a broader set of collecting practices, including archiving, display, and anthologisation. Thus, rather than representing a “self-referential world of private consumption” art collecting, Braddock convincingly argues, was “[m]ore typically [...] a means of addressing the work of art to the public, modeling and creating the conditions of modernism’s reception”.⁴⁵ This broader notion of collecting practices further clarifies the importance of Nell Walden’s collection for the Sturm enterprise.

It is well known that the art collection was open to the public several times a week from 1914 onwards, thus acting as a companion exhibit to the gallery shows.⁴⁶ Visitors registered at Der Sturm’s exhibition offices and either Herwarth, Nell, Rudolf Blümner, or the gallery’s exhibition secretary would lead the public through into the private apartment and introduce the artworks.⁴⁷ These demonstrations thus added a discursive framework to the collection display that helped shape the public’s reception of modern art. In this, the Walden collection differed from several major collections of expressionist art in Germany. Quite a few of that generation of art collectors who focused on expressionism kept their collections private and did not usually make their artworks available to the public by making temporary loans to exhibitions.⁴⁸ In contrast, Nell Walden’s collection, and its dissemination through various publications and reproductions, constituted a liminal space between the realm of private property and the official institution of the art museum.⁴⁹ Here, the agency of the collector not only performatively constituted an aesthetic collectivity but also shaped the conceptual and spatial conditions for its public reception.

During the autumn of 1913, Nell Walden became acquainted with the art collector Franz Kluxen, who would become an ardent customer of the Sturm gallery.⁵⁰ She came to an agreement with Kluxen to focus their individual collections on different Sturm artists, in order to be able to donate two complementary but representative art collections to a Berlin museum in the future. Reportedly, Kluxen particularly favoured Franz Marc, and Nell Walden thus stepped aside to give priority to an “external” collector—even if Marc was a favourite of hers as well—and instead focused on Kandinsky, van Heemskerck, and Chagall.⁵¹ Most probably, the Walden couple openly communicated on the future institutionalisation of the collection with their Sturm friends, as indicated by the fact that Hermann Essig in *Der Taifun* noted that the Ganswinds “had bequeathed the galleries in their entirety to the city of Berlin”.⁵²

In 1917, Der Sturm presented a selection of Kluxen’s art collection in the home gallery in Berlin. The exhibition included 60 works by twenty contemporary artists and the catalogue revealed that Kluxen had acquired more than 40 of the pieces precisely from Der Sturm. Thus, the exhibition not only highlighted Kluxen’s remarkable collection, but also marketed the Sturm gallery through the careful selection of works. The most obvious difference between Kluxen’s collection, as far as is possible to discern from the pieces selected for the exhibition in Der Sturm, and Nell Walden’s collection was Kluxen’s predilection for Pablo Picasso. The exhibition included more than a dozen works by the Spanish painter in the possession of Kluxen, while Nell Walden at this point only owned one drawing. Also in other respects, the exhibition operated exactly as a complement to Nell Walden’s collection and vice versa. Where the Kluxen show presented only some few works by Kokoschka and none at all by, for instance, van Heemskerck, Bauer, Campendonk, Mense, or Klee, the visitors to the gallery had the opportunity to encounter numerous works by these same artists in the display of Nell Walden’s collection.

Due to financial difficulties, Kluxen gradually sold off his art collection from the 1910s onwards.⁵³ In 1916, the Waldens explored the possibility of merging the Kluxen collection in its entirety with Nell Walden's collection.⁵⁴ Even if these plans failed, the disintegration of Kluxen's collection still presented Nell Walden with the opportunity to make complementary acquisitions to her own collection. For instance, it was now that she secured one of the collection's most iconic pieces, Franz Marc's *The Yellow Cow* (Figure 2.3).⁵⁵ Even though the idea of transferring the collection to a Berlin museum remained a theoretical project, it nevertheless signals the claims to museum qualities that Nell Walden ascribed to her collection nearly from the start. It also speaks about a desire to impact the history of modern art by securing the art fostered by *Der Sturm* a place in the official culture of public museums.

In 1917, a series of articles by the author and critic Theodor Däubler, published in the daily *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, provided an extensive report on the Walden collection and thus confirmed its status as a provisional institution that offered the public a didactic framework for modern art.⁵⁶ During the 1910s and the beginning of the 1920s, Däubler regularly penned articles in German newspapers in favour of modern art, including reviews of Sturm exhibitions for the *Berliner Börsen-Courier* during 1916–1918.⁵⁷ He also published accounts on other private art collections and reports on sales of collections in the auction houses.⁵⁸ The articles on the Walden collection offered a comprehensive overview of its contents, commenting on the majority of artists represented, but with a clear focus on the “enemy artists” Chagall and Kandinsky. Däubler explicitly designated the two Russian painters as the most important artists represented in the collection and consequently dedicated the two first articles in the series for a discussion on their work only. However, Däubler's articles on the whole testify to the importance of the art collection as a provisional institution that communicated on and added to the meaning of individual artworks within the broader framework of the collection as an entity, an aesthetic context that would also frame the reception of modern art and artists as a collectivity among the public.

According to Braddock's theory on collecting as a modernist practice, the anthology and the art collection were seen as parallel phenomena whose format—exemplary pieces of art or literature constituting an entity that presented a particular aesthetic, cultural, and/or social argument for a broader public—served as modernist interventions in the cultural sphere. In *Der Sturm*, the connection between collecting and anthologisation was manifest most clearly in the anthology *Expressionismus. Die Kunstwende* (1918), edited by Herwarth Walden, and with contributions by the major theorists related to *Der Sturm*: Rudolf Bauer, Rudolf Blümner, Kandinsky, Lothar Schreyer, and William Wauer. Arguably, this was the most important Sturm publication as regards the presentation of its theoretical paradigm. It offered essays on the theory of music, painting, scenography, sculpture, and poetry and reflections on the “cosmic movement” and vision in art. It further included an article presenting a grand historical narrative of “ideoplastic art” by the physiologist Max Verworn, paid tribute to particular artists, and finally provided a selection of poems by writers closely connected to the Sturm group. The content of the book thus theoretically positioned *Der Sturm* in relation to different art forms, presented significant examples of artists and artworks aligned to the said theories, and finally legitimised *Der Sturm*'s advocacy for abstraction in art by tracing its genealogy back to prehistoric times.⁵⁹

The visual and textual contributions seem equally essential for the general argument of the publication. There are more than 100 images in black and white and

four colour plates reproducing works by Rudolf Bauer, Jacoba van Heemskerck, and Arnold Topp spread over the little more than 140 pages of the publication. Some illustrations clearly relate to the content of a specific essay, as for instance the reproductions of Kandinsky's paintings inserted in his essay "Malerei als reine Kunst", others occur apparently at random. Hardly any of the images, though, are the object of analysis or observation in the texts. The publication thus presented a collection of exemplary, one must assume, artworks and poems that were ascribed agency as visual and verbal statements in and of themselves. Nearly half of the illustrations were reproductions of artworks from Nell Walden's collection. Thus, the collector is yet another crucial authorial voice in the publication, even if only implicitly so.

One of the main theoretical arguments in the book is the notion of the artwork as an entity in which each line or patch of colour is indispensable for the work in its entirety. This conceptualisation of the artwork as an organism was applied not just to painting, but to all genres. Clearly, the aesthetic theory presented in the anthology echoed contemporary ideas on the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.⁶⁰ The publication, as such, presented itself as an entity too, where theoretical texts, reproduced artworks, and poems functioned as essential parts of the "organism" designated as *Expressionismus* or *Die Kunstwende*. Put another way, the publication performatively constituted *Der Sturm* as a collectivity in an attempt to position its conceptualisation of expressionism as the preferred mode for contemporary art and thus negotiate the conditions of modernism's public reception. In using Nell Walden's art collection as a repository of representative expressionist art and in employing the format of the anthology, *Expressionismus. Die Kunstwende* brought these modes together. In a broader sense, the various functions of the art collection demonstrate that Nell Walden's art collecting was one of several strategies with which *Der Sturm* intervened in the modern art world.

Potsdamer Straße 134a

Nell Walden's art collection was not only an assemblage of objects, a catalogue of inventories, or a provisional institution that modelled the reception of modern art; in its spatial presentation in the private apartment, it was also a *site* that served as a scene or a backdrop for the Walden couple's private and professional activities. The collection display constituted an interface between the collector's agency and the public image of *Der Sturm*. In fact, through its physical proximity to the gallery and the offices, the collection was intimately connected to the *Sturm* business in a literal sense. The *Sturm* premises, in turn, were strategically located in a part of Berlin that was particularly advantageous for an art gallery. Therefore, I describe in some detail the immediate urban and spatial contexts of *Der Sturm*'s premises and the couple's private apartment before turning to an analysis of the domestic display of the collection and its importance as a site where people socialised.

In 1913, Herwarth and Nell Walden established themselves permanently at Potsdamer Straße 134a in the western part of Berlin and, together, gradually transformed the location into a spatial hub from and around which their professional, social, and personal life would evolve for more than a decade. At the beginning of the year, Herwarth Walden had moved the publishing office for *Der Sturm* from Potsdamer Straße 18 across the street into a larger building at Potsdamer Straße 134a. At the end of May the *Sturm* gallery followed and in August the Walden couple relocated their private residence to a rented apartment in the same house. A couple of years later,

the expanding Sturm business also housed the Sturm art school and the Sturm *Weltpressestelle* at the same address. At its peak, Der Sturm rented no fewer than seven apartments in the building at Potsdamer Straße 134a and additional premises for the Sturm bookstore located further down the street.⁶¹

When the Waldens settled permanently on Potsdamer Straße in 1913, there were numerous art establishments in the area, including the leading art gallery of Paul Cassirer, Berlin's oldest auction house Lepke, and Wolfgang Gurlitt's auction house and gallery.⁶² In fact, Potsdamer Straße had recently become the main street in the gallery district of this part of town, comparable to and competing with the concentration of dealers around the Durand-Ruel gallery on rue Lafitte in Paris.⁶³ The increase in art business in this area at the beginning of the twentieth century has been described as:

a shift of the centre of gravity of the art trade from the old business centre of Berlin to the west, in response to the dynamism of the West end as the centre of consumption and entertainment in the capital.⁶⁴

During the Weimar era, numerous galleries, art dealers, auction houses, and art antiquarians opened or relocated to the area around Potsdamer Straße, including the Berlin branch of the influential Düsseldorf dealer in modern art, Alfred Flechtheim.⁶⁵

In addition, the Sturm premises were close to major urban transport systems and social establishments, enabling the Waldens to entertain their international network of artists, authors, journalists, and dealers. Only a five-minute walk away was Potsdamer Platz and the Potsdamer Bahnhof from where the Wannsee railway and the southwest bound trains to Cologne, Frankfurt am Main, and Paris departed.⁶⁶ During the 1910s and 1920s, Potsdamer Platz itself epitomised urban space in the modern metropolis. Once settled on Potsdamer Straße, Herwarth Walden chose Café Josty as the location for his *Stammtisch*, where the couple would regularly meet Sturm artists from Germany and abroad.⁶⁷ Josty's attracted an important clientele of artists and offered its guests an array of national and international newspapers—Nell Walden described it as a large newspaper café (*Zeitungscafé*)—and it was thus the perfect place for anyone interested in following the critical discourse on art in the daily papers. In summary, the immediate spatial context of the Sturm premises included a decidedly urban and modern infrastructure for transport, social communication, and the dissemination and public sales of art.

The expansion of Der Sturm in the house on Potsdamer Straße reflected the increasing business during the war as well as the need for an appropriate display for the growing private art collection. The building where the Sturm premises and the Walden couple's private apartment were located consisted of a street-fronting house with two adjacent wings, the latter erected in the 1880s and facing a courtyard.⁶⁸ The gallery initially comprised three exhibition rooms on the first floor of the right wing of the house with windows facing the back.⁶⁹ In 1915, the gallery and the offices moved down to the ground floor and Nell Walden's art collection was put on display in the former three rooms of the gallery on the first floor.⁷⁰ The spatial requirements of the expanding art collection probably influenced the decision to relocate the gallery. At the end of 1915, the collection comprised some 200 pieces and the walls of the Walden couple's private apartment, also located on the first floor, cannot have been sufficient for the display of such a vast number of artworks.

The expansion of the collection display into the former gallery rooms not only provided the private apartment with an additional suite of rooms reserved for the art collection, but also enabled the Waldens with better means to employ the collection for promotional purposes. In order to create a unified living space out of several smaller apartments, Nell Walden redesigned the interior by removing doors and using screen walls.⁷¹ Obviously, the private apartment had to be decoratively styled and the collection carefully displayed in order to fulfil its functions, both to serve as a resource for the Sturm business and to support the social self-presentation of the Walden couple.⁷² In 1916, Kokoschka reported that Der Sturm had “three storeys in a noble part of town as office”.⁷³ On the ground floor of the courtyard wing were the offices and the newly expanded gallery rooms,⁷⁴ on the first floor the private apartment and the art collection, and on the second floor the offices of the Sturm publishing house. In June 1917, Der Sturm rented new and considerably larger exhibition rooms in the same building. The gallery thus returned to the first floor, but this time to the main house facing Potsdamer Straße and directly connected to the private apartment and the art collection.⁷⁵ Around this time, a spiral staircase was installed in order to connect the private rooms on the first floor with the offices below.⁷⁶

“How Beautiful Is Our Home Garden”

The art collection was an important feature of the Sturm enterprise, despite or perhaps because it lingered in a liminal space between the private and public spheres. On the one hand, its proximity to the gallery and offices, the regular visiting hours, the collection catalogues, and the postcard series used for marketing purposes clearly connected Nell Walden’s collection to a public cultural sphere. On the other hand, the collection was undeniably a part of their private home and Nell Walden would even display it with a calculated effect of domesticity.⁷⁷

As is clear from contemporary reports and a few preserved photographs, the works of art were packed together on the walls of the private apartment. Likewise, in *Der Taifun*, Hermann Essig lets his character Alfred Bäumlér (a fictionalised portrait of Rudolf Blümner) note that there were images on display everywhere in the Ganswind couple’s (aka the Waldens) home, not only in the salon and adjoining rooms, but also in every corridor and corner—only the lavatory was spared.⁷⁸ Years later, in a review of Nell Walden’s exhibition in Alfred Flechtheim’s gallery in 1927, one critic remembered how “the owner [of the art collection], born in Sweden, previously the wife of Herwarth Walden, stored her treasures, carelessly crowded together, in the rear rooms of Der Sturm on Potsdamer Straße”.⁷⁹ Interestingly, the critic describes the display of the collection in the Waldens’ home as “the rear rooms of Der Sturm”, which clearly suggests that visitors perceived the art collection as an integral part of the Sturm business. However, the critic was mistaken about the “careless” manner of Nell Walden’s methods of display, which were, in fact, carefully calculated according to themes and aesthetic effects.

Nell Walden displayed the artworks according to medium or artist. Thus, the apartment had both a graphics room (*Graphikzimmer*) and a Chagall Hall (*Chagall-Saal*). Surviving photographs show that she employed the same narrow mode of display, with artworks hung together in rows, in the Sturm gallery and in the arrangement of her collection in the apartment (Figure 2.18). However, the scope of the collection required her to improvise with several rows on the walls and additional shelves for the arrangement of smaller pieces; thus the domestic display offered a richer and



Figure 2.18 Unknown photographer, Oskar Kokoschka in the *Graphikzimmer* at Potsdamer Straße 134a, Berlin, 1916. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

denser presentation of artworks than the gallery exhibitions. Indeed, compared to the number of artworks shown in a regular Sturm gallery exhibition, the collection display offered a decidedly broader overview of modern art. Moreover, in the home setting, the artworks appeared against a patterned wallpaper; flowerpots, curtains, and homely cushions on the chairs and sofa emphasise that these rooms were regular living spaces used by the Waldens in their everyday life. In the photographs from the dining room and Herwarth Walden's study, discussed above, the artworks likewise inhabit the rooms together with ordinary household items such as teapots, breadbaskets, and flower vases as well as personal items such as notebooks and photographs of family members (Figures 0.1 and 2.1). In sum, for every visitor to the art collection, the artworks appeared as an integrated part of bourgeois domesticity.

In addition to an appropriate thematic arrangement of the works of art on the walls, Nell Walden carefully calculated the decorative effects of the rooms as coherent aesthetic entities. She reportedly let the pieces on display set the tone for the colour schemes of further decorations and objects furnishing the rooms. One visitor recalled "a visit for tea in your apartment on Potsdamerstrasse, embellished with many objects", and that she had received "an invitation to the Chagall hall, where a large table was covered with beautiful things, the colour arrangement of which you [Nell Walden] had intentionally kept in the colours of the pictures".⁸⁰ Clearly, there is nothing careless in such a display strategy. On the contrary, such an arrangement would have been the result of a deliberate design.

Yet another room in the Walden private apartment suggests the well-devised and studied collection display. In this room, the music room, the only piece of furniture was a black grand piano and on the walls were paintings solely by Kandinsky. Immediately behind the grand piano was Kandinsky's *Painting with white form* (*Bild mit weisser Form*, 1913), which remained in Nell Walden's possession until the middle of the 1920s (Figure 2.19).⁸¹ In *Der Taifun*, Hermann Essig characterised what was obviously intended as a description of this particular space as the "sanctum" of the Sturm premises.⁸² To the best of my knowledge, no photographs have survived of the music room.⁸³ Nevertheless, it is easy to imagine how the arrangement of objects in this room effectively visualised the importance of music in the art theory of both Kandinsky and Der Sturm. When Herwarth Walden played his music here, the physical setting would have been an essential part of the performance. In fact, it would have enabled the synaesthetic effects of modern art and music to come forward in a deliberately didactic arrangement of the domestic interior. Such a performance, a *Gesamtkunstwerk* as it were, may well be described as the result of a creative partnership between Herwarth and Nell Walden.

The decorative scheme of the interior design and collection display was not without effects. In *Der Taifun*, Essig wrote that "[a]s was well known, Ganswind's private salon was marvellously decorated. And many assumptions were made about the origin and purpose of some of the rare furniture".⁸⁴ It is impossible to prove, and of no importance for the argument, if Essig referenced Nell Walden's Swedish furniture and/or the stools from her ethnographic collection. The point is that the fictitious description here comes close to the actual reception of the Walden apartment by contemporary guests. For instance, in his correspondence with Herwarth Walden, the author Adolf Knoblauch, in superlative wording, referred both to the new gallery premises of 1917 and the domestic display of the art collection. He reported that "my wife writes about the opening of your new rooms, of the fairy tale castle in your apartment, which cannot be described" and declared: "I am happy for Mrs. Nell and her art castle".⁸⁵



Figure 2.19 Wassily Kandinsky, *Painting with white form* (*Bild mit weisser Form*), 1913. Oil on canvas, 120.3 × 139.8 cm. Kunstmuseum Den Haag (0334729), long-term loan from the Guggenheim Museum, New York. Photo © Kunstmuseum Den Haag.

The Swedish journalist Harald Wägner expressed similar fascination in an article that particularly highlighted the collection display. Wägner found the collection to be “arranged with an altogether exquisite sophistication, which is never strained” and characterised the private apartment as “a peculiarly refined milieu where everything is art”.⁸⁶ In short, the Walden couple’s home was obviously viewed as a domestic treasury that made a lasting impression on guests.

Crucially, contemporary comments indicate that visitors perceived the domestic display of the art collection as an extension of the gallery, thus blurring the boundaries between spaces traditionally conceptualised as public and private. In a letter to Herwarth Walden in 1915, Arnold Topp, an artist who would frequently exhibit with *Der Sturm*, explicitly described how he perceived the art collection as the node of the *Sturm* enterprise: “How beautiful is our home garden whose name is the ‘Walden art collection’, and the *Sturm* exhibitions in big and small cities that are the plantings from this garden”.⁸⁷ Topp, here, not only signalled how he felt at home in Nell Walden’s “art castle” but also positioned her collection as the family hearth of

Der Sturm—thus, in effect, metaphorically domesticating the Sturm enterprise in its entirety—and the generative force and point of departure for its travelling exhibitions.

While Nell Walden's design of the domestic interior served the Sturm enterprise, and thus constituted a liminal space that conflated public and private domains, it should be noted that the transgressive aspects of this conflation mainly applied to the innovative promotional tactics of the Sturm business. Essentially, the Waldens did not alienate themselves from conventional domestic norms. In contrast to, for instance, Roger Fry and Vanessa Bell of the Bloomsbury group, the Waldens neither considered the domestic interior as a basis for cultural revitalisation nor associated domesticity as such with social or political reform.⁸⁸ If the Bloomsbury group believed in "the home as the primary arena for aesthetic renewal", the Waldens' employed the home as a showroom for modern art and, as we shall see, as a stage where they could performatively produce surplus value to the artistic expressions marketed by the gallery.⁸⁹ Nell Walden later on further explored the possibilities of applying modernist aesthetics to domestic design and consciously employed it as a means in her social and visual self-presentation, to which I shall return in Chapter 4.

"Collector of Spirits and Works"

Contemporary changes in the art market provide an important context to Herwarth and Nell Walden's different positions as critic/dealer and collector/patron, respectively. Der Sturm's competitor Paul Cassirer had played a seminal role in the development of Berlin's gallery scene. He contributed to a change in the German art market where some galleries turned into spaces that did not only sell and display but also propagated and promoted avant-garde art in order to inform and educate the public. Cassirer introduced this kind of art establishment in Berlin in the first decades of the twentieth century when he successfully merged the traditions of the art gallery and the art salon in his gallery and apartment on Victoriastrasse in Berlin.⁹⁰ The emergence of different forums for disseminating art reflected a much broader institutional change in the art world. Since the nineteenth century, critics, dealers, and patrons had provided a new social network for artists as an alternative to the declining academic system.⁹¹ In addition, the rise of the bourgeois collector at the end of the nineteenth century had paralleled the ascendancy of independent exhibitions, through which artists attempted to reach the market on their own terms.⁹² Within this new system, the art market's demand for artworks depended more on a framework of favourable critique and public opinion than on actual prices. It has thus been characterised as a *social* market.⁹³

In Der Sturm, the collector of avant-garde art and the independent exhibition was not parallel phenomena, but conjoined in the same organisation that included further distributions channels and promotional tools. Importantly, with Herwarth Walden as critic and dealer and Nell Walden as collector and patron, Der Sturm was able to assemble the essential mechanisms of the art world system in one single organisation. Thus, in their collaborative work, Herwarth and Nell Walden combined the institution of the gallery, where artworks were commodified and offered as commercial objects, and the art salon, where immaterial desires and structures of belief created the values ascribed to art.

One of the most well-known examples of a social space that had vital importance for the formation and canonisation of modernist cultural production is Gertrude Stein's premises in Paris. Here, Stein not only conducted her own literary work, but also built a

prominent collection of modern art that helped shape the careers of artists such as Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse. In addition, she hosted key figures of the contemporary international avant-garde scene at her Saturday evening salons.⁹⁴ It has recently been pointed out that Stein's practice is only one of many examples that demonstrate that modernist collecting initially "meant the assemblage of artifacts and people around specific movements".⁹⁵ Previous research has pointed out that Nell Walden kept the Sturm network together through diligent correspondence with Sturm artists during her active years in the organisation.⁹⁶ Importantly, this communicative, networking practice paralleled her social and cultural labour on Potsdamer Straße, where she too collected both artefacts and people, as it were, all within the framework of *Der Sturm*.

As we have already seen, the Waldens entertained an extensive professional and social network. Besides occasional visits from family members and friends, a variety of prominent people in society and cultural life regularly frequented the gallery and/or the private apartment. The guests at Potsdamer Straße 134a not only included artists, writers, and musicians but also actors, dancers, film-makers, photographers, art historians, publishers, art collectors, gallery owners, journalists, politicians, and, of course, the general art public. Among Nell Walden's responsibilities was the organisation of tea receptions after the openings of the gallery exhibitions:

After the vernissages on Sunday morning, large tea receptions were often held. Since the exhibition rooms were directly connected to the private apartment and our private art collection, we were able to receive around one hundred people on such an afternoon. The press, society, guests from abroad, and the artists then gladly stayed together with us for many hours. The pictures were contemplated, conversations were held, and connections made. This type of representation was familiar to me—as a Swede from a very hospitable home—and I had no trouble arranging them. Herwarth Walden was delighted, as he regarded these events as the best advertisement for "*Der Sturm*" and the "*Sturm*"-art.⁹⁷

The tea receptions that Nell Walden references here—with some pride—started in 1917 when the couple rented additional apartments at Potsdamer Straße 134a and thus expanded their premises in the house.⁹⁸ On occasions like these, the art gallery and the collection display functioned as a spatial setting for the couple's performative selves and joint public identity as advocates of modern art. Erving Goffman describes the setting of social performances as "the scenery and stage props for the spate of human action played out before, within, or upon it", and suggests that the setting is indeed part of the performance or self-presentation.⁹⁹ In light of Goffman's theorisation, the premises on Potsdamer Straße can be described as a physical space that enabled the Waldens to perform their collaborative teamwork as leader and "fellow combatant" within *Der Sturm* in a particular way. Goffman's concept of the setting of a performance provides a valuable recognition of the interior design and collection display as extended self-presentations and, importantly, implies a certain agency of "the physical layout" in the "background" of a performative self.¹⁰⁰

As is well known, ever since the nineteenth century, predominantly middle-class women had "demonstrated the prosperity that the men they were associated with had achieved" through the fashioning of self and home.¹⁰¹ Well into the twentieth century, Goffman would still note "how husbands in modern society have the job of acquiring socio-economic status, and wives the job of displaying this acquisition".¹⁰² As we have seen, the Walden art collection was conceived of as an act of propaganda on

behalf of the Sturm organisation, but ultimately it was also a way of showing off Herwarth Walden's success as its unquestionable leader. Clearly, then, the Waldens' joint public identity conformed to social expectations and conventional gender norms. In retrospect, Nell asserted that Herwarth "considered [...] our private home, the large tea receptions at the openings of our exhibitions, and, above all, the ever-growing art collection as the best propaganda".¹⁰³ She thus self-assuredly positioned the domestic display of the art collection at the centre of the narrative of the Sturm organisation, but also indicated the importance of conspicuous social self-presentation.

Indeed, contemporary reports from visits to the Sturm premises and the Waldens' private apartment not only highlighted the stunning effects of the collection display but also referenced how the Walden couple would stage themselves with the artworks as backdrop. In her memoirs, Swedish journalist Ellen Rydelius gives an account of a visit to the gallery and the art collection during the spring of 1918, probably on the opening day of Nell Walden's joint exhibition with Arnold Topp and Hans Sittig on 28 April, and thus during one of the tea receptions. The Waldens formally received the guests.¹⁰⁴ Apparently, visitors supported the definition of the situation that their team performance—to reference Goffman—thus offered. This kind of social interaction did not escape Rydelius' sharp eye, when she reported that "[t]he young modernists called the blonde Swedish woman *Madonna*, kissed her hand and treated her with chivalrous adoration".¹⁰⁵ Regardless of whether these were acts of genuine expression or merely polite responses, the guests thus confirmed and co-produced, as it were, the social status and aesthetic self-esteem performed by the Walden couple.

The Waldens would further stress the formal framing of such events by indulging in conspicuous sartorial presentation and adopting fashionable accessories. In 1912, at the opening of a travelling exhibition in Copenhagen, the sartorial formality was even noted in the press, where it said that Herwarth Walden ceremoniously received the guests at the door "solemnly in a black diplomat's tailcoat".¹⁰⁶ In Berlin, Rydelius noted that Nell Walden would use cigarette holders of different shades that matched the colour of her gown, which not only attests to a conscious way of self-presentation but also echoes her approach to the design of domestic spaces as aesthetic entities. Cigarette holders, ashtrays, and cases were, in fact, profitable products that manifested the owner's wealth and consumption of luxury goods.¹⁰⁷ Hermann Essig paid particular attention to this world of commodity culture when he acidly described the conspicuous self-presentation of Hermione Ganswind (aka Nell Walden) in *Der Taifun*: "The elegant shimmer of her appearance resembled the alluring lustre of an illuminated shop window".¹⁰⁸ Essig's characterisation is an ill-concealed critique of Nell Walden's (apparently abortive) aristocratic demeanour, but it also indicates that it was not only the art collection and the richly decorated domestic interior but also self-presentation and decorum that communicated claims to social and cultural distinction in Der Sturm. Essig was not the only one to remark on the Waldens' conspicuous social life. In his memoirs, Walter Mehring wrote about the Waldens' prosperous lifestyle during the First World War: "in the Walden home one still dined, in spite of ration cards for bread and groceries; yes, in the middle of the world war, under paintings by Léger – Severini – Kandinsky – Chagall and other non-German, enemy artworks".¹⁰⁹ Again the richness of the art collection just as much as the possibility of feasting at the Waldens appears to have testified to Der Sturm's prosperity.

The relegation of domestic and social labour to a background position in modern art historiography parallels the omission of (female) secretarial support in narratives on the production of literary and other texts. Women's labour in these contexts has

been theorised as “*work looking like the absence of work*”.¹¹⁰ Part of this labour consisted of creating a domestic atmosphere, more precisely in providing professional spaces with informal domestic qualities that nurtured the social aspects of business life.¹¹¹ By displaying the art collection in an elaborate manner and orchestrating the large tea receptions after the openings of Sturm’s monthly exhibitions, Nell Walden provided something similar for the Sturm organisation. The calculated domestic effect of the collection display and the frequent social events opened up a liminal space that merged the professional and the domestic and, if successful, created precisely those immaterial values that were essential to the social art market. The collection display and the social gatherings, where “pictures were contemplated, conversations were held and connections made”, thus provided an informal but essential context that answered the demands of the art market. Put differently, Nell Walden’s domestic duties and social responsibilities or “work looking like the absence of work” were an integral part of the Sturm business. Indeed, at the end of the 1920s, art critic Oscar Bie praised Nell Walden’s participation in Der Sturm in particular, by emphasising that “in the art world of the young Berlin [she] played an exceptional role, socially and artistically, as collector of spirits and works”.¹¹² Likewise, in retrospect the Sturm artist Paul Busch praised her for having been “the ‘salon d’art international’, the great gift from Herwarth Walden”.¹¹³ Arguably, Bie and Busch, in effect, positioned Nell Walden as a Berlin counterpart to Gertrude Stein in Paris.

“I Collected the Pictures and I Paid for Them”

In the historiography of Der Sturm, Nell Walden’s status as an avid art collector and the collection’s importance for the broader Sturm enterprise has rarely been recognised.¹¹⁴ In fact, most Sturm scholars have routinely ascribed the foundation of the art collection to Herwarth Walden. Paradoxically, the primary source of this misconception was the Walden couple themselves. By deceitfully labelling the collection “Sammlung Walden”, they were able to publicly obscure the identity of the collector until at least the end of the 1920s. With the publication of her 1954 and 1963 books on Der Sturm and Herwarth Walden, Nell described in more detail her art collection and her professional companionship with Herwarth. As mentioned, until then, it had not been commonly known that Nell Walden’s profitable political work during the First World War enabled the expansion of the Sturm organisation and the rapid enlargement of the art collection. Her accounts elucidate on how the Walden couple’s decision to publicly withhold this information was part of a broader “propaganda trick” put forward by Herwarth Walden:

Herwarth Walden thought that it would be the most effective ‘propaganda trick’ if we acted as if Der Sturm was self-sustaining in the difficult times of war. That meant that we kept my immense financial aid for Der Sturm a secret. Only the closest friends knew where the funds came from that made it possible to persevere.¹¹⁵

In their aspiration for a higher status within the art world, the Waldens, as a team, thus performed an idealised view of Der Sturm’s ability to profitably promote and disseminate modern art. In this, the extension of the gallery, the increased number of publications, and the public display of the art collection all served the performance of material wealth associated with a successful business, while at the same time concealing the “improper” economy behind it.¹¹⁶

If art collecting always has been a form of conspicuous consumption, this only implicitly applies to Nell Walden's art collecting in *Der Sturm* as Herwarth Walden's propaganda trick kept her ownership and authorship secret from the wider public.¹¹⁷ Instead, the couple concealed the real economics and origins of the art collection and met social expectations by deceitfully conforming to a gendered division of labour. It is notable that the ease with which Herwarth appropriated Nell's assets and labour for *Der Sturm* was facilitated by her willingness to let him do so: "I gladly gave my consent, because to me the most important thing was Walden's work with *Der Sturm*, and I was happy to be able to help him out".¹¹⁸ However, her loyalty to the greater cause had its limits and she drew the line at the art collection. Here, she was unwilling to be pushed into the background and refused from the start to allow Herwarth Walden to take the credit for the art collection:

But when he labelled our art collection the 'Herwarth Walden Collection' I protested, and Walden realised that it was not correct to refer to the art collection that I had set up with my money as his own, even if he only did so for propaganda reasons. We agreed on the name 'Walden Collection'.¹¹⁹

Indeed, a few publications that the *Sturm* publishing house brought out during the First World War include announcements of "Sammlung Herwarth Walden", even if the collection catalogues already in 1915 used the deliberately ambivalent title "Sammlung Walden", which would soon be adopted as the standard name of the collection.¹²⁰ As Herwarth Walden was the undisputed leader of *Der Sturm*, the couple's misleading labelling led the public and most artists to believe that he was also the art collector. Moreover, as long as Nell Walden stayed within the *Sturm* organisation, she almost certainly used Herwarth Walden as a frequent intermediary when purchasing directly from artists in order to keep her art collecting secret.

Owing to their deliberate obfuscation, the art collection has been misrepresented in many research publications on *Der Sturm*, including the most recent ones, which either falsely assert that Herwarth Walden founded the collection or reference Nell's financial contribution while persisting in ascribing the authorship of the collection to Herwarth.¹²¹ Likewise, major art institutions that have artworks in their collections that once belonged to Nell Walden often provide erroneous information on their provenance. As I have clarified in more detail elsewhere, though, there can be no doubt about Nell Walden's owner- and authorship of the Walden art collection.¹²² Suffice it to say here that her claims to the collection are irrefutably verified by an affidavit, signed in 1919 by Herwarth Walden, which confirms not only that she had contributed a considerable amount of money to the *Sturm* enterprise as a whole but also that the art collection was exclusively her private property.¹²³

Probably, the secrecy did not start until the collection began to grow rapidly during the war, and even after that, some of the Walden couple's closest colleagues and friends were more or less aware of the truth. At the beginning of 1914, Marianne von Werefkin communicated directly with Nell Walden regarding one of her earliest purchases.¹²⁴ Nell Walden also openly acquired paintings by Georg Muche in the 1910s.¹²⁵ The correspondence between the Waldens and Jacoba van Heemskerck likewise reveals that the Dutch artist frequently discussed both sales and donations to the collection. She was thus well aware that Nell Walden was the collector. The correspondence even suggests that van Heemskerck was in agreement with the propaganda trick. Responding to a lost letter from Nell

Walden, in which the latter must have asked for the discretion of her colleague, van Heemskerck assured her loyalty to the public front or team performance of the Walden couple:

that I have sold so much, 8 paintings and then another drawing, 6 handprints and the album; one cannot understand that something like this is possible in Germany in these days. [...] Naturally, I will not tell anyone who has bought the paintings; I do not relate to that at all. That is between Der Sturm and me.¹²⁶

In her letter, van Heemskerck referred to the sales from the ongoing exhibition of her work in the Sturm gallery in Berlin, where Nell Walden was one of the buyers. Thus, the secrecy concerning the buyers of her artworks in this case applied to further collectors too, possibly van Heemskerck's patron and close friend, Marie Tak van Poortvliet, who was also friendly with the Walden couple and supportive of Der Sturm's cultural and political agenda.¹²⁷

When Nell Walden left Der Sturm, there was no longer any need for secrecy. By the end of the 1920s, she publicly acknowledged her authorship of the art collection, which was notably never denied by Herwarth Walden, who would have had ample opportunities to contradict her claims. As regards the art collection, from then on she explicitly and unambiguously rejected the work ethic of Der Sturm's collaborative culture and her team loyalty to Herwarth Walden by emphasising her individual contribution and crediting only herself for the foundation of the collection. Her claims to the collection are repeatedly and most clearly expressed in her private correspondence, for instance, when she discussed the origins of the art collection in a letter to Herwarth Walden's sister Gertrud Schlasberg, alluding to their mutual and intimate knowledge of his character: "You can easily imagine that Herwarth would not have given me a single picture if they had not belonged me. I collected the pictures and I paid for them".¹²⁸

Nell Walden's claim to the collection was, perhaps, most clearly articulated in public when she changed its name immediately after her departure from Der Sturm. The ambiguity of "Sammlung Walden" was now replaced by an explicit proclamation of the individual founder of the collection by including her first name in the title.¹²⁹ In 1927, the rival Alfred Flechtheim gallery in Berlin hosted a major exhibition with Nell Walden's own artworks and her art collections, now correctly labelled and presented as "Sammlung Nell Walden". Not only Flechtheim's catalogue but also several articles on the exhibition in the German press reported how Nell Walden had actively collected and acquired the artworks during her time in Der Sturm.¹³⁰ The critical reception acknowledged her owner- and authorship of the collection, but also referenced her essential position in Der Sturm, sometimes explicitly described as a joint enterprise of the Walden couple:

Again, the importance and achievements of Herwarth and Nell Walden for post-impressionist art becomes clear. [...] The merit of the accomplishments of these two enthusiasts and their "Sturm" for the development of our modern [art], for the encouragement of the artists, and for the education of the public cannot be emphasised enough. [...] One feels that this woman was tied by a very personal relationship to the new artworks that she acquired so early from the magic circle of "Sturm". She selected with a good eye. Did not only buy the "incunabula" of expressionism, but also many classic documents of its philosophy of life and art.¹³¹

As suggested, Nell Walden's private collection and the Sturm gallery's exhibitions complemented each other. The collection constituted a sort of private museum with its permanent display of a representative selection of Sturm art, whereas the gallery exhibitions changed on a monthly basis—as long as Nell Walden engaged in the Sturm business—and varied in focus. Notably, the report explicitly refers to the Walden couple's efforts to educate the public; in other words, their different ways of negotiating the relationship between artist/artwork and the public. Here, Nell Walden's collection features precisely as a provisional institution that affected and co-created the conditions for the reception of modern art in Germany.

In this chapter, more generally, I have tried to highlight Nell Walden's art collecting as a vital practice that acted on the conception and public reception of modern art long before it was canonised and institutionalised in museums and archives. By shifting focus towards the domestic interior and social labour, hitherto in a background position in art history, novel insights on the full extent of Der Sturm's promotion and dissemination of modern art have been gained. This redirection has clarified that Nell Walden's collection display constituted a liminal space that blurred the border between private home and professional premises, and thus provided an avant-garde site that answered precisely to the social art market. In fact, the presentation of the collection in the domestic interior might have helped promote Sturm art for potential buyers precisely because it manifested modern art as the natural part of a properly designed and decorated bourgeois home. The domestic display of the art collection thus (paradoxically) served as an arena for the performative construction of the art collector's private space in public. In addition, as a setting for the Waldens' joint self-presentation in social life, Nell Walden's "art castle" would readily support the claims to social and cultural distinction performed by the Waldens and testify to the prosperity of the Sturm business.

Notes

- 1 Griselda Pollock offers a tentative and suggestive analysis of the entangled relation between a writer—in her case, Sigmund Freud—and the objects that inhabit his creative space in *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum. Time, Space and the Archive*, Routledge, New York, 2007, 67–86.
- 2 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York 2005, 130.
- 3 Anne Higonnet, *A Museum of One's Own*, Prestel, New York, 2009, 75.
- 4 Cp. Mieke Bal, "Telling Objects. A Narrative Perspective on Collecting", *The Cultures of Collecting*, John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (ed), Reaktion Books, London, 1994, 99ff.
- 5 "Ich verbannte nun natürlich die eingerahmten Reproduktionen aus Schweden". Nell Walden, *Herwarth Walden. Ein Lebensbild*, Florian Kupferberg, Berlin and Mainz, 1963, 57.
- 6 The private correspondence of Nell Walden reveals that the common enthusiasm for *die neue Kunst* was the foundation and the key feature of their partnership. See, for example, Nell Walden copy of letter to Gertrud Schlasberg and others, January 1953, NW3; Nell Walden, copy of letter to Georg Muche, 14 February 1961, NW1B:183, NWA/LM.
- 7 *Heavenly and Earthly Love* was on the frontpage of *Der Sturm*, vol. 1, no. 26, 1910. Kokoschka's drama *Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen* was first performed in Vienna in 1909 and subsequently published in *Der Sturm* along with some of the illustrations in 1910. *Der Sturm*, vol. 1, no. 20, July 1910 and *Der Sturm*, vol. 1, no. 24, August 1910.
- 8 See, for example, Henrike Junge, "Vom Neuen begeistert. Die Sammlerin Ida Bienert", *Avantgarde und Publikum. Zur Rezeption avantgardistischer Kunst in Deutschland 1905–1933*, Henrike Junge (ed.), Böhlau, Köln, Weimar and Wien 1992, 29–37; Eva Rovers, "Monument to an industrialist's wife. Helene Kröller-Müller's motives for collecting", *Journal of the History of Collections*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2009, 241–252; Janet Bishop, Cécile Debray, and Rebecca Rabinow (eds), *The Steins Collect. Matisse, Picasso*,

and the *Parisian Avant-Garde*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in association with Yale University Press, San Francisco, New Haven and London, 2011.

- 9 Higonnet, 2009, 124. On the relation between economic and symbolic capital among women modernist cultural workers and the symbolic difference between inherited money and professional payment, see Bridget Elliot and Jo-Ann Wallace, *Women Artists and Writers. Modernist (im)positionings*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, 19–29.
- 10 Nell Walden's 1913 almanac concludes with a list of artists' names that are obviously notes made upon the acquisition of artworks by the end of the year. The works by Derain, Jawlensky, and Werefkin are easily identified, as she only ever purchased one work by each artist, Derain's drawing *Baum*, Jawlensky's painting *Kopf*, and Werefkin's ditto *Die letzte Stunde*. As for the works by Severini, Macke, and Kandinsky, the printed catalogue of the Walden collection from 1915 lists several works by each artist, which makes it impossible to ascertain which of these were acquired in 1913. Nell Walden's personal almanac, 1913, NW40, NWA/LM.
- 11 She was reportedly so enthused about the painting that she did not want to dispatch it by post but instead removed the stretcher, even though the paint had not yet dried, rolled it up around a broomstick and immediately brought it with her to Berlin. Thus, Kandinsky apparently did not sign it until months later when visiting the Walden couple in Berlin. Nell Walden, "Aus meinen Erinnerungen an Herwarth Walden und die 'Sturmzeit'", *Der Sturm. Ein Erinnerungsbuch an Herwarth Walden und die Künstler aus dem Sturmkreis*, Nell Walden and Lothar Schreyer (eds), Woldemar Klein, Baden-Baden, 1954, 32ff. Despite the anecdotal tone of Nell Walden's retrospective account, it is an important statement as it is one of few reports that details on how she acquired works for the collection.
- 12 Campendonk also showed the painting in exhibitions in the Gereonsclub in Cologne in 1912, and in Galerie Flechtheim in Düsseldorf and the Neue Galerie in Berlin in 1914. Presumably, Nell Walden acquired it in 1914 or 1915.
- 13 In October 1913, while *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon* was still running, *Der Sturm* enhanced their promotion of Bohemian cubism through the group exhibition *Skupina*, shown in the home gallery. Vincenc Beneš and in particular Emil Filla were most prominently exhibited. The exhibition also included works by Otto Gutfreund, Josef Gočár, Pavel Janák, and Antonín Procházka. Kubín reappeared in *Der Sturm* with a solo exhibition in April to May 1914, which included *Haus am See*, already by then in the possession of Nell Walden.
- 14 See, for example, Lidia Gluchowska, "Polnische Künstler unter *Der Sturm*. Enthusiasten und Polemiker. Nationale und transnationale Narrative des postkolonialen Avantgarde- und Modernediskurs"; Krisztina Passuth, "Warum ist *Der Sturm* für tschechische und ungarische Künstler so wichtig?"; Ruzha Marinska, "*Der Sturm* und Bulgarian Modernism"; Vojtěch Lahoda, "Herwarth Walden and the New Art from Prague", *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012.
- 15 Presumably, the first catalogue was published at the beginning of 1915 and two further editions were printed that same year. The preserved catalogues are available online: <https://www.zikg.eu/bibliothek/bestaende/bibliothek-herzog-franz-von-bayern/digitalisierung/kataloge-sturm>.
- 16 Nell Walden was in possession of 50 works by Marc Chagall, 40 by Jacoba van Heemskerck, and 38 by Oskar Kokoschka, including the wedding gift and further drawings and watercolours that would have been less costly to obtain. Maaïke van Rijn erroneously states that the main focus of the collection was the work of Marianne von Werefkin. In fact, though, Nell Walden only ever possessed one single painting by Werefkin (*Die letzte Stunde*). The pieces van Rijn attributes to Werefkin were part of Nell Walden's collection of indigenous art. Maaïke van Rijn, *Bildende Künstlerinnen im Berliner "Sturm" der 1910er Jahre*, diss. Tübingen, 2013, 77f.
- 17 van Rijn notes that Nell Walden did not buy art directly from Franz Marc due to her strained personal relationship with Franz and Maria Marc, who supported Herwarth Walden's first wife Else Lasker-Schüler and her son after he had married Nell Walden. However, van Rijn is mistaken when she claims that Nell Walden only bought "einige

- Arbeiten" after the death of Marc in 1916. van Rijn 2013, 188, n. 676. As is evident from the collection catalogue of 1915, Nell Walden already possessed eleven works by Marc before his death, which at this point made him the fifth most represented artist in her collection, after Chagall, van Heemskerck, Kokoschka, and Carlo Mense.
- 18 An advertising card is reproduced in Georg Brühl, *Herwarth Walden und "Der Sturm"*, DuMont, Köln, 1983, 53.
 - 19 Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe, "Modernism Diffracted. Picture Postcards from The Sturm Gallery and Walden Collection in Berlin", *The Aesthetics of Matter. Modernism, the Avant-Garde and Material Exchange*, Sarah Posman et al. (eds), Walter de Gruyter, Berlin and Boston, 2013, 17–28.
 - 20 The series was announced in *Der Sturm*, no. 1, vol. 8, April 1917. A set of the series is in Handschrift 124, Nachlass Nell Walden, StaaBi.
 - 21 For instance, in April 1916, the Sturm gallery launched an exhibition with Oskar Kokoschka and Otakar Kubín. Nearly half of the works by Kokoschka on display were from Nell Walden's collection and accordingly marked as "not for sale" in the catalogue, including the drawings *Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen I–III*, *Die Kindsmörderin*, *Der erste beste darf der schönen Lilith das Haar kämmen*, *Die schöne Rollschubläuferin*, *Vorüber*, and *Friss Vogel oder stirb*, a portrait painting of Rudolf Blümner (1910), and the aquarelles *Neapel* (1912) and *Venedig* (1913).
 - 22 On Sturm's successful promotion of Chagall, see Karoline Hille, *Marc Chagall und das deutsche Publikum*, Böhlau, Köln, Weimar and Wien, 2005, 19–79.
 - 23 Hille, 2005, 66–75.
 - 24 By comparison, Franz Kluxen acquired five, Ida Bienert three, and Sally Falk two paintings. Hille, 2005, 72, 270–272.
 - 25 The seventh work labelled *Gewitter* in the exhibition catalogue and in the catalogues of the Walden collection might be the painting *Das gelbe Zimmer*, now in a private collection. Hille, 2005, 54, 248 n. 34.
 - 26 That same year saw further promotion of Chagall through Der Sturm. In October, the Berlin gallery hosted yet another one-man show of his work. At the same time, the publishing house Der Sturm introduced a new series of publications, the so-called *Sturm-Bilderbücher*. The first booklet in the series was dedicated to Chagall and comprised sixteen full-page illustrations of his work, including six of the paintings in Nell Walden's possession and five from the Kluxen art collection. In addition, Chagall's work appeared as illustrations in the magazine *Der Sturm* and as reproductions on postcards and in art prints. On the Sturm marketing of Chagall from 1917 onwards, see Hille 2005, 75–79.
 - 27 "Berlin modernaste konstgalleri där de nyaste riktningarne äro förträffligt representerade". *flamman*, no. 2, February, 1917.
 - 28 Cp. Nell Walden, letter to Georg Pauli, 17 February 1917, Georg Paulis brevsamling, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.
 - 29 R. [Nell Walden], "Rejseintryk fra en Tur til Holland under Kriegen", *Nutiden. Uge- og Handelsblad for Danmark*, vol. 1, no. 24, 16 November 1915, n.p.; *ibid.*, "Rejseintryk ra en Tur til Holland under Kriegen. II. Hollandsk Kunst før og nu", *Nutiden. Uge- og Handelsblad for Danmark*, vol. 1, no. 25, 23 November 1915, n.p. Nell Walden used the signature "R.", denoting the first letter of her maiden name Roslund. The articles are easily attributed to Nell Walden as she sent copies to Jacoba van Heemkerck who mentions them in two letters and describes them as "your articles in the Danish newspaper" ("Ihre Artikeln im [sic!] Dänische Zeitung"). Jacoba van Heemskerck, letters to Nell Walden, 26 November and 18 December 1915, transcribed in A. H. Huussen jr., "Brieven van Jacoba van Heemskerck en Marie Tak van Poortvliet aan Herwarth en Nell Walden en anderen 1911–1923", *Cahiers uit het Noorden X*, Haren, 2006, 59f. and 63f. Part of the content in Walden's articles was also published in Sweden: Svenska Underrättelsebyrå Der Sturm, Berlin [Nell Walden], "Intryck från en holländsk resa i krigstider. Holländsk konst förr och nu", *Korrespondenten Landskrona Tidning*, 19 November 1915.
 - 30 A report by Der Polizei-Präsident Abteilung VII, written a few days after the first number of the paper appeared, states that all news was edited by Herwarth Walden, who had excellent contacts in Denmark, and that he was head of the intellectual content

of the paper. However, one year later, the editor-in-chief of *Nutiden*, Carl André, reported to Consul General Thiel that Herwarth Walden had never had any influence on the editorial work of the paper. See copy of report by Der Polizei-Präsident Abteilung VII to the Oberkommando in den Marken sent to the Auswärtiges Amt, 12 June 1915 and Carl André, letter to Consul General Thiel, 2 June 1916, Dänische Wochenzeitung *Nutiden*, Vertrieb durch Herwarth Walden, R 901/72396, Bl. 58 and R 901/72397, Bl. 28, Auswärtiges Amt, Zentralstelle für Auslandsdienst (1912–1923), Propaganda, Bundesarchiv, Berlin. Hubert van den Berg has pointed out that Herwarth Walden used the layout of *Der Sturm* “down to the smallest detail” (“schlichtweg bis ins kleinste Detail”) also for *Nutiden*. Hubert van den Berg, “Der Sturm als Kunsthandlung und Nachricht-enbüro in der deutschen Propagandapolitik in den neutralen Nachbarländern während des Ersten Weltkriegs”, *Deshima. Revue d’histoire globale des Pays du Nord*, Hors-série 1, 2009, 148.

- 31 “man tager overordentlig fejl, naar man tror, at alt, som er modern, ogsaa er Kunst”; “Den moderne Kunst har, som sagt, mange Udøvere i Holland, men kun faa kan staa for Betegnelsen Kunstner. Et eneste Navn kan dog nævnes ved Siden af Kunstens Store: Jacoba van Heemskerck”. R. [Nell Walden], “Rejseinttryk ra en Tur til Holland under Kriegen. II”, 1915.
- 32 “Viel, viel Dank für Deine schöne Artikeln; es ist ja ein glänzende Kritik über meine Kunst; ich [bin] so innig glücklich dass du mir so ganz versteht; in Worte meine tiefen Gedanken aus zu drucken fällt mir immer schwer; dann schweige ich lieber, aber ich fühle so bestimmt dass ich für dir keine Worte brauche”. Jacoba van Heemskerck, letter to Nell Walden, 26 November 1915, transcribed in Huussen, 2006, 59.
- 33 “Ich bin so glücklich dass Sie finden dass ich mich entwickelt habe. Sie haben ein ausserordentlich guten Blick und Ihr Urteil halte ich für sehr wichtig”. Jacoba van Heemskerck, letter to Nell Walden, 8 March 1915, transcribed in Huussen, 2006, 38f.
- 34 “Also Ihre Bilder sind hier. So was wunderbares. Wir waren ausser uns vor Freude als wir sie sahen. Wie haben Sie das nur gemacht. Wundervoll, wundervoll. Es wird eine prachvolle Ausstellund [*sic*] in März. Über Ihr liebes Angebot habe ich mich ja so gefreut, aber auch geschämt. Ich weiss nicht ob es richtig ist von mir ein solchen Geschenk von Ihnen anzunehmen. Was Sie schreiben von Raummangeln. Für Ihre Bilder würde ich ein Zimmer zu mieten, das ist keine Übertreibung. Sie können sich ja nicht denken wie gern ich ein Bild von Ihnen annehme, wenn es nur nicht zu viel wäre für Sie mir eins von diesen wundervollen Sachen zu schenken. Sehen Sie, ich komme so wie so und nehme Ihre Güte in Anspruch. Ich muss nämlich unbedingt 6 von den Blättern kaufen von Ihnen, und wollte fragen ob Sie mir die überlassen würde[n] für 300 Mark zusammen. Denken Sie sich die Sachen für mein Graphikzimmer!! Ah, wunderbar. Schreiben Sie mir bitte ganz Aufrichtig Ihre Meinung ob ich das alles annehmen kann. Die Zeichnungen haben folgenden Nummer: 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20.” Nell Walden, letter to Jacoba van Heemskerck (the end of) February 1915, Sturm-Archiv I, Herwarth Walden, StaaBi.
- 35 “Ende dieser Woche schicke ich die Aufлаг[e] von je 10. Stück von 4. Holzstöcke und dann wie immer von jeder ein nicht nummerierte für Ihnen”. Jacob van Heemskerck, letter to Nell Walden, 8 March 1915, transcribed in Huussen, 2006, 39. In a letter to Herwarth Walden, van Heemskerck made clear that the unnumbered copies were intended for Nell Walden: “please give the 4 unnumbered copies to your wife” (“geben Sie bitte die 4. nicht nummerierte Exemplaren an Ihre Frau”). A couple of days later she repeated with emphasis: “Please remember that your wife *must definitely have a portfolio*” (“Bitte denken Sie daran dass ganz bestimmt Ihre Frau *eine Mappe haben muss*”). Jacob van Heemskerck, letters to Herwarth Walden, 10 and 13 March 1915, transcribed in Huussen, 2006, 39f.
- 36 “Mit die Holzdrücke für die Mappesicke ich 10 nummeriert zum Verkauf von dem Holzstock die [*sic*!] im nächsten *Sturm* veröffentlicht wird und dann ist wie gewöhnlich ein *nicht* nummerierte Druck für Ihre Kollektion dabei”. Jacob van Heemskerck, letter to Nell Walden, 28 February 1915, transcribed in Huussen 2006, 36f. Der Sturm’s Heemskerck-Mappe included six woodcuts and 30 editions were put on sale in March or April 1915, cp. advertisement in *Der Sturm*, vol. 6, nos 1–2, April 1915, 12. The ten numbered copies of the woodcut that was to appear in *Der Sturm* probably refer to one of the three van Heemskerck works that were reproduced in *Der Sturm*, vol. 5, nos 23–24, March 1915.

- 37 “Die Zeit wird kommen dass Sie für meine Bilder in Ihre Kollektion ein Zimmer [füllen]”. Jacoba van Heemskerck, letter to Nell Walden, 28 February 1915, transcribed in Huussen, 2006, 36f.
- 38 Cp. Jeremy Braddock, *Collecting as Modernist Practice*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2012, 157.
- 39 “Ich machte es mir zur Regel—vor allem, nachdem ich seit 1914 die nötigen Mittel hatte—, auf jeder ‘Sturm’-Ausstellung etwas für die Sammlung zu erwerben”. N. Walden, 1963, 59.
- 40 “erstens aus Liebe zur Kunst und Sache—zweitens aus vererbtem Sammel-Trieb- drittens um die Sturmkünstler die damal wenig Käufer naturgemäss fanden zu unterstützen und viertens aus Propaganda-gründen”. Nell Walden, “Zur Orientierung”, manuscript, undated (1945), NW40, NWA/LM.
- 41 “Der Sinn meines Sammelns war also auch, den unbekannten Künstlern des ‘Sturm’—die ja zum Teil meine Altersgenossen und auch meine Malerkollegen waren—eine wirtschaftliche Hilfe zu leisten”. N. Walden, 1963, 59.
- 42 Vittoria Borsò makes a similar point referring to Herwarth Walden promoting the term *Expressionismus* and Guillaume Apollinaire advocating for orphism, respectively. Vittoria Borsò, “Guillaume Apollinaire und Herwarth Walden—eine ‘lison manquée’. Konvergenzen und Divergenzen zwischen der französischen Avantgarde und den Künstlern von *Der Sturm*”, *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012, 310.
- 43 Braddock, 2012, 3.
- 44 Cp. Maria Bucur, *Gendering Modernism. A Historical Reappraisal of the Canon*, Bloomsbury Academic, London and New York, 2017, 53, 64.
- 45 Braddock, 2012, 2f.
- 46 N. Walden, 1963, 71. The opening hours of the private collection varied. Der Sturm’s 23rd exhibition catalogue (Jacoba van Heemskerck, Arthur Segal, Marianne von Werefkin) from March 1914 announced that the private collection was open to the public on a daily basis. The third edition of the collection catalogue from November 1915 advertised that it was open to the public three times a week.
- 47 Nell Walden, “Zur Orientierung”, manuscript, undated (1945), NW40, NWA/LM.
- 48 Wolf-Dieter Dube, “Kunstpolitik, Sammler und Mäzene im 20. Jahrhundert. Mäzenatentum als Ziel der Kunstpolitik? Eine kritische Analyse”, *Mäzenatentum in Berlin. Bürgersinn und kulturelle Kompetenz unter sich verändernden Bedingungen*, Günter and Waldtraut Braun (eds), Walter de Gruyter, Berlin and New York, 1993, 135f. Dube refers to the following art collectors: Carl Hagemann and Ludwig and Rosy Fischer in Frankfurt, Hermann Lange in Krefeld, Josef Haubrich in Cologne, and Markus Krauss in Berlin. *Ibid.*, 136.
- 49 Cp. Braddock, 2012, 12.
- 50 Karoline Hille suggests that the Walden couple probably met Franz Kluxen in connection with *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon* (which opened in September 1913). Hille, 2005, 73. Nell Walden stated in retrospect that Kluxen contacted the Walden couple in November 1913. N. Walden, 1963, 57f. From her 1913 calendar, it is also clear that in December 1913, she stopped off in Hamburg on her way back to Berlin, after having spent Christmas with her family in Sweden, and took the opportunity to arrange yet another meeting with Kluxen.
- 51 N. Walden, 1963, 58.
- 52 “[...] hatten die ganzen Galerien testamentarisch der Stadt Berlin vermacht”. Herman Essig, *Der Taifun*, Weidle, Bonn, (1919) 1997, 71.
- 53 Hille, 2005, 74.
- 54 In a letter to Franz Kluxen, Georg Muche offered Kluxen his help when deciding on the fate of his collection: “[...] even if you do not merge the collection with Mr. Walden’s collection” (“[...] auch wenn Sie die Sammlung nicht mit Herrn Waldens Sammlung vereinigen”). Georg Muche, letter to Franz Kluxen, 11 November 1916, Nachlaß Georg Muche, StaaBi. Whether Muche did not know the whole truth about the collection at this time or whether he was only discreet about the collector in his correspondence is not known. Muche offered Kluxen his help with sales several times until the end of the 1920s. Georg Muche, letters to Franz Kluxen, 25 November 1918 and 18 February 1927, Nachlaß Georg Muche, StaaBi.

- 55 N. Walden, 1963, 58.
- 56 Five articles were published between January and March. As it was not then publicly known that the collection belonged to Nell Walden, the articles refer to “Die Privatsammlung Herwarth Walden”. The articles are reprinted in Friedhelm Kemp and Freidrich Pfäfflin (eds), *Theodor Däubler. Im Kampf um die moderne Kunst und andere Schriften*, Luchterhand, Darmstadt, 1988, 223–239.
- 57 Marina Bressan, “Theodor Däubler. Vermittler zwischen Italien und Deutschland für ‘Der Sturm’ und ‘Die Aktion’”, *Der Aufbruch in die Moderne. Herwarth Walden und die europäische Avantgarde*, Irene Chytraeus-Auerbach and Elke Uhl (eds), LIT, Berlin 2013, 115–135, see especially 133. See also, Kemp and Pfäfflin, 1988, 13.
- 58 For *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, he reported on Sammlung Schmeil, Dresden, Sammlung Marcus Kappel, and Sammlung Kirchhoff, Wiesbaden. He also wrote on Sammlung Ida Bienert, Dresden, in *Das Kunstblatt*. Cp. Kemp and Pfäfflin, 1988, 251–264.
- 59 Verworn traced what he called ideoplastic art back to the Palaeolithic era and described it as art conceptualised as “theoretical fantasy image” (“ein theoretisches Phantasiebild”) as opposed to “physioplasic” art, which represented nature as it was perceived by the senses. As Verworn asserted that the abstract qualities of ideoplastic art represented a more advanced level of development in human creativity than physioplasic art’s “uncritical acceptance of sensory impressions” (“das einfache naive kritiklose Hinnehmen der Sinneseindrücke”), i.e. its mimetic or figurative qualities, his essay readily lent itself as a historical corroboration of Der Sturm’s advocacy for contemporary abstract art. Max Verworn, “Die Entwicklung der ideoplastischen Kunst”, *Expressionismus. Die Kunstwende*, Herwarth Walden (ed.), Der Sturm, Berlin, 1918, 115–122, quotations from 118, 122.
- 60 Interestingly, the cover of the 1918 edition, designed by Sturm artist William Wauer, elaborated precisely on the artwork as an organism. Wauer’s graphic design emphasises the intermediality between text and image, as the letters forming the title *Expressionismus* are just as much visual signs forming a vital part of the cover image as they are textual signs establishing a word.
- 61 N. Walden, 1954, 12.
- 62 Other art establishments in the area included the Casperscher Kunstsalon, the short-lived Neue Galerie, the Kunsthandlung H. Sagert & Co., the art dealer Hugo Moses, the Kunstsalon Keller & Reiner, and the auction house Paul Graupe. In addition, the major department store A. Wertheim, located close to Potsdamer Platz, tried to make an impact on the art market by offering graphic works of art to its clientele.
- 63 Robert Jensen, *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siècle Europe*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994, 70.
- 64 Malcolm Gee, “Modern Art Galleries in Paris and Berlin, c.1890–1933. Types, Policies and Modes of Display”, *Journal of Art Market Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2018, <https://www.fokum-jams.org/index.php/jams/article/view/18/66>.
- 65 The Aktives Museum, Berlin, has compiled the galleries, dealers, art antiquarians, auction houses, and art appraisers registered in the Berliner Adressenbücher between 1928 and 1943. The documentation is available at “Gute Geschäfte. Kunsthandel in Berlin 1933–1945”, Aktives Museum, Berlin: <https://www.aktives-museum.de/ausstellungen/gute-geschaeftel/>.
- 66 In 1913, the location of Potsdamer Straße 134a corresponded to what is presently Marlene-Dietrich-Platz 3, just at the corner of Alte Potsdamer Straße. The *HistoMap-Berlin*, offered by the Landesarchiv Berlin and available online, enables a comparison between Berlin’s former and present street plans. See <http://www.histomapberlin.de/>.
- 67 N. Walden, 1963, 37.
- 68 Cp. the architectural drawings of the building in Bauakte Potsdamer Straße 19 (134a), 1880–1902, Polizeipräsidium Berlin, A Pr.Br.Rep. 030–07, 756, Landesarchiv, Berlin.
- 69 In an exhibition review in 1915, Swedish author Pär Lagerkvist explicitly mentions three exhibition rooms and the possibility to view German and Russian paintings. Pär Lagerkvist, “Svenska expressionister i Berlin. En trots kriget mycket uppmärksammas utställning”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 1 May 1915.
- 70 Sophie van Leer, letter to Maria Uhden, 15 August 1915, Nachlaß Georg Muche, StaaBi. Jacoba van Heemskerck comments on the expansion in letters to Herwarth Walden on 18 and 24 August 1915, transcribed in Huussen, 2006, 51f.

- 71 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Carola Gideon-Welcker, Höja (Wengen), undated, NW1A:113, NWA/LM.
- 72 Cp. N. Walden, 1963, 20.
- 73 “[...] drei Stockwerke in einem noblen Stadtteil als Büro”. Quoted in Régine Bonnefoit, “Kokoschkas Sturm-Jahre (1910–1916)—Vom Wiener ‘Oberwildling’ zur berliner ‘Primadonna’”, *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012, 279.
- 74 Cp. the announcement of the Franz Marc exhibition “in neuausgebauten Räumen”, *Der Sturm*, vol. 6, nos 9–10, August 1915, 60.
- 75 N. Walden, 1954, 30, 32; Nell Walden, copy of letter to Wilhelm Arntz, 14 January 1959, NW1A:11. Cp. also advertisement in *Der Sturm*, vol. 8, no. 2, May 1917, 32.
- 76 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, undated (1950), NW5A:338; N. Walden, 1963, 48.
- 77 I have borrowed the concept of calculated effects of domesticity from Anne Higonnet, Higonnet, 2009, xiv. In contrast to the apparent or even artificial domestic spaces of collections museums in Higonnet’s study, Nell Walden displayed her collection in her actual home. Thus, the home was institutionalised rather than the museum being domesticated as in Higonnet’s examples. Cp. also Higonnet, 2009, Chapter 3, “Homes for History”.
- 78 Essig (1919), 1997, 21.
- 79 “[...] die Besitzerin, Schwedin von Geburt, früher die Gattin Herwarth Waldens, hatte ihre Schätze in den rückwärtigen Räumen des ‘Sturm’ in der Potsdamer Straße, sorglos zusammengedrängt, aufbewahrt”. M.O., “Nell Walden-Heimann. Ausstellung bei Flechtheim”, *Vossische Zeitung*, Berlin, 10 September 1927.
- 80 “einen Thee-Besuch in Ihrer Wohnung Potsdamerstrasse mit vielen Gegenständen, verschönert”; “eine Einladung im Chagall-Saal, wo eine grosse Tafel mit herrlichen Dingen gedeckt war, deren Farben-Anordnung von Ihnen absichtlich in den Farben der Bilder gehalten war”. Maria Dehler (Neukirchen), letter to Nell Walden, 10 October 1958, NW1A:69, NWA/LM. The actress Maria Neukirchen performed in Herwarth Walden’s tragicomedy *Trieb* and William Wauer’s pantomime *Die vier toten der Fiametta* in the 1920s.
- 81 Nell Walden, letter to Hilla von Rebay, 10 February 1949, M0007 0000152 folder 40, Hilla von Rebay Foundation Archive, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. See also, Ellen Rydelius, *Leva randigt*, Bonniers, Stockholm, 1951, 117. Rydelius refers to a visit to Der Sturm in 1918. By this time, Nell Walden had approximately 10 works by Kandinsky in her collection, half of which were oil paintings.
- 82 Essig (1919), 1997, 20. Essig also refers to “the grand piano room” and “the music room”. Ibid., 160, 168, 237.
- 83 A 1921 photograph of the interior of the Sturm gallery with a grand piano is reproduced in Jenny Anger, *Four Metaphors of Modernism. From Der Sturm to the Société Anonyme*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London, 2018, 25. Apparently, then, the grand piano would move in and out of the private apartment.
- 84 “Bekanntlich war Ganswinds Privatsalon aufs herrlichste eingerichtet. Und viele Vermutungen knüpften sich an Herkunft und Zweck mancher seltener Möbel”. Essig (1919), 1997, 236.
- 85 “[m]eine Frau schreibt von der Eröffnung Ihrer neuen Räume, von dem Märchenschloss Ihrer Wohnung, das nicht beschreiben werden kann”; “ich freue mich auf Frau Nell und Ihr Kunst-Schloss”. Adolf Knoblauch, letters to Herwarth Walden, 14 June and 2 November 1917, Sturm-Archiv I, StaaBi.
- 86 “ordnad med ett raffinemang som är alltigenom utsökt, men aldrig sökt”, “en säreget förfina miljö, där allt är konst”. Harald Wägner, “Bortom kriget”, *Aftonbladet*, 22 April 1917.
- 87 “Wie schön ist unserer Heimat Garten, die ‘Kunstsammlung Walden’ heißt, und die Pflanzungen aus diesem Garten, die Sturmausstellungen in großen und kleinen Städten sind”. Arnold Topp, letter to Herwarth Walden, 29 November 1915, cited in Rainer Enders, *Arnold Topp. Ein Lebensbild*, VDG, Weimar, 2007, 139.
- 88 On the Bloomsbury groups’ domestic ideals, see Christopher Reed, *Bloomsbury Rooms. Modernism, Subculture, and Domesticity*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2004.

- 89 Reed, 2004, 128.
- 90 Cassirer, in his turn, had the French dealer of impressionist art, Paul Durand-Ruel, as a role model. Thomas W. Gaetgens, "Die großen Anreger und Vermittler. Ihr prägender Einfluß auf Kunstsinn, Kunstkritik und Kunstförderung", *Mäzenatentum in Berlin. Bürgersinn und kulturelle Kompetenz unter sich verändernden Bedingungen*, Günter and Waldtraut Braun (eds), Walter de Gruyter, Berlin and New York, 1993, 113ff.
- 91 Harrison C. White and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers. Institutional Change in the French Painting World*, with a new Foreword and a new Afterword, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, (1965) 1993, 94f.
- 92 Eva Rovers, "Introduction. The Art Collector. Between Philanthropy and Self-glorification", *Journal of the History of Collections*, vol. 21, no. 2 (2009), 158.
- 93 White and White, (1965) 1993, 94.
- 94 On the Saturday evening gatherings that Gertrude Stein hosted together with her brother Leo, see Emily Braun, "Saturday Evenings at the Steins", *The Steins Collect. Matisse, Picasso, and the Parisian Avant-Garde*, Janet Bishop, Cécile Debray and Rebecca Rabinow (eds), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in association with Yale University Press, San Francisco, New Haven and London, 2011, 49–67.
- 95 Bucur, 2017, 64.
- 96 Cp. van Rijn 2013, for example, 103–107, 169.
- 97 "Nach den Vernissagen am Sonntagvormittag wurden oft große Tee-Empfänge veranstaltet. Da die Ausstellungsräume unmittelbar mit der Privatwohnung und unserer privaten Kunstsammlung verbunden waren, konnten wir an einem solchen Nachmittag gegen hundert Personen empfangen. Presse, Gesellschaft, Gäste von auswärts und die Künstler fanden sich dann gern für viele Stunden bei uns zusammen. Die Bilder wurden betrachtet, es wurden Gespräche geführt und Verbindungen hergestellt. Diese Art der Repräsentation war mir—als Schwedin aus sehr gastlichem Hause—vertraut, und es machte mir keinerlei Schwierigkeiten, sie zu arrangieren. Herwarth Walden war entzückt, denn er betrachtete diese Veranstaltungen als die beste Werbung für den 'Sturm' und die 'Sturm'-Kunst". N. Walden, 1963, 28. The presumed "Swedish" hospitality is a recurring theme in Nell Walden's discursive self-presentation, but the welcoming openness to her house and home was not just an ideal self-image, it was in fact her way of life. Nell Walden's 1913 personal almanac, her guestbooks of 1913–1933, and her private correspondence from the 1940s onwards evidence that she put much effort in actively entertaining a professional network throughout her life and that inviting guests to her home was an important part of it.
- 98 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Wilhelm Arntz, 14 January 1959, 1A:11, NWA/LM.
- 99 Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Anchor Books, New York 1959, 22.
- 100 Goffman, 1959, 22.
- 101 Beverly Gordon, "Woman's Domestic Body. The Conceptual Conflation of Women and Interiors in the Industrial Age", *Winterthur Portfolio*, vol. 31, no. 4, Winter, 1996, 285.
- 102 Goffman, 1959, 103.
- 103 "betrachtete [...] unsere Privaträume, die großen Tee-Empfänge bei unseren Vernissagen und vor allem die stets wachsende Kunstsammlung als die beste Propaganda". N. Walden, 1963, 23.
- 104 Rydélius, 1951, 116ff.
- 105 "De unga modernisterna kallade den blonda svenskan *Madonna*, kysste på handen och behandlade henne med ridderlig dyrkan". Rydélius, 1951, 117.
- 106 "gravhøjtidelig i sort Diplomatfrakke". Anker, "Mellem Futurister og Passéister", *Politiken*, 12 July 1912, cited in Marit Werenskiöld, "Herwarth Walden. Ekspresjonismens apostel i Skandinavien 1912–1923", *Kunst og kultur*, LXIII, 1980, 148.
- 107 Judith Brown, *Glamour in Six Dimensions. Modernism and the Radiance of Form*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2009, 2.
- 108 "Der elegante Schimmer ihrer Erscheinung glich dem lockenden Glanz eines illuminierten Warenhausschaufensters". Essig (1919), 1997, 69.
- 109 "im Hause Walden tafelte man noch, trotz Brot- und Lebensmittelkarten; ja, mitten im Weltkrieg, unter Léger–Severini–Kandinsky–Chagallgemälden und anderen undeutschen,

- feindlichen Kunstprodukten". Walter Mehring, *Berlin Dada. Eine Chronik mit Photos und Dokumenten*, Arche, Zürich, 1959, 28, 30.
- 110 Jennifer L. Fleissner, "Dictation Anxiety. The Stenographer's Stake in *Dracula*", *Literary Secretaries/Secretarial Culture*, Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell (eds), Ashgate, Aldershot and Burlington, 2005, 83. Italics in the original.
- 111 Fleissner, 2005, 82f.
- 112 "[...] man kennt weniger seine [Herwarth Walden's] Frau, die in dem Kunstleben des jungen Berlin eine hervorragende Rolle als Sammlerin von Geistern und von Werken, gesellschaftlich und künstlerisch, spielte". Oscar Bie, "Berliner Kunstbrief", *Breslauer Neueste Nachrichten*, 20 September 1927, reprinted in *Nürnberger Zeitung*, 28 September 1927.
- 113 "der 'salon d'art international', das grosse Geschenk von Herwarth Walden". Paul Busch, letter to Nell Walden, 13 November 1969, NW1D:44, NWA/LM.
- 114 Among the scholars that have recognised Nell Walden as an art collector are Volker Pirsich and Karla Bilang. However, Pirsich only briefly mentions Nell Walden's art collection and Karla Bilang's article partly repeats Nell Walden's own account and includes some inaccuracies. Volker Pirsich, *Der Sturm. Eine Monographie*, Traugott Bautz, Herzberg 1985, 353; Karla Bilang, "Nell Walden", *Sammeln nur um zu bestizten? Berühmte Kunstsammlerinnen von Isabelle d'Este bis Peggy Guggenheim*, Britta Jürgs (ed.), AvivA, Berlin, 2000, 229–255. Recently, Maïke van Rijn, Hubert van den Berg, Karoline Hille, and Andrea von Hülsen-Esch have explicitly credited Nell Walden as the founder of the collection. None of them, though, discusses the Walden art collection in depth. Van Rijn 2013, 28, 43 n. 141, 82; Hubert van den Berg, "wir müssen mit und durch Deutschland in unserer Kunst weiterkommen." Jacoba van Heemskerck und das geheimdienstliche Nachrichtenbüro 'Der Sturm', "Laboratorium Vielseitigkeit." *Zur Literatur der Weimarer Republik*, Festschrift für Helga Karrenbrock zum 60. Geburtstag, Petra Josting and Walter Fähnders (eds), Aisthesis, Bielefeld, 2005, 69f.; Hille, 2005, 58; Andrea von Hülsen-Esch, "Das Unternehmen Der Sturm und Herwarth Walden as Unternehmer", *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Andrea von Hülsen Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012, 216, 218.
- 115 "Herwarth Walden fand, daß es der wirksamste 'Propagandatricks' sei, wenn wir so täten, als könne der 'Sturm' in der schweren Kriegszeit aus eigener Kraft bestehen. Das bedeutete, daß wir meine große finanzielle Hilfe für den 'Sturm' geheim hielten. Nur die allernächsten Freunde wußten, woher die Mittel kamen, die das Durchhalten ermöglichten". N. Walden, 1963, 23. See also N. Walden, 1954, 38–44.
- 116 Cp. Erving Goffman's theorisation of idealised performances. Goffman, 1959, 34–38.
- 117 With reference to Thorstein Veblen's notion "conspicuous consumption", Eva Rovers notes that collecting art obviously has always been associated with (claims to) economic and social status. Rovers, 2009, 158.
- 118 "Ich gab gern meine Einwilligung, denn für mich war die 'Sturm'-Arbeit Waldens das wichtigste, und ich war froh, ihm helfen zu können". N. Walden, 1963, 23.
- 119 "Als er aber unsere Kunstsammlung als 'Sammlung Herwarth Walden' bezeichnete, protestierte ich, und Walden sah ein, daß es nicht korrekt war, die Kunstsammlung, die ich mit meinem Gelde anlegte, als die seine zu bezeichnen, wenn er es auch nur aus Propagandagründen tat. Wir einigten uns auf den Namen 'Sammlung Walden'". N. Walden, 1963, 23. To this statement, Nell Walden added: "This label was probably the right one as long as we were married" ("Diese Bezeichnung war, solange wir verheiratet waren, wohl auch die richtige"), referring to the collaboration that permeated the Sturm enterprise as a whole and possibly also to contemporary legislation concerning married women's proprietorship. Ibid.
- 120 During the 1910s, a few advertisements in Sturm publications referred to "Sammlung Herwarth Walden". See, for example, Rudolf Blümner, *Der Sturm. Eine Einführung*, Der Sturm, Berlin, 1917; *Marc Chagall*, Sturm Bilderbücher I, Der Sturm, Berlin, 1917; *Paul Klee*, Sturm Bilderbücher III, Der Sturm, Berlin, 1918.
- 121 One of the more recent research publications on Sturm includes several essays that routinely ascribe the authorship of the art collection to Herwarth Walden. These contributions are the more bewildering as one of the editors of the book acknowledges that

- Nell Walden was the collector. See contributions in Andrea von Hülsen-Esch and Gerhard Finckh (eds), *Der Sturm. Zentrum der Avantgarde*, Band II: Aufsätze, Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, 2012.
- 122 Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe, “The most effective propaganda stunt?,” *Nell Walden & Der Sturm*, Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe et al., Mjellby konstmuseum, Halmstad and Carlsson, Stockholm, 2015, 41–68.
- 123 Important to note here is that the certificate does not confirm a *transference* of property, that is, the affidavit does not suggest that the collection had ever belonged to Herwarth Walden, but is a *testimonial* of property, which disproves further misreadings. Affidavit signed by Herwarth Walden 15 April 1919, NW40, NWA/LM.
- 124 Werefkin wrote to Nell Walden, who in a now lost letter must have confirmed the deliverance of the painting *Die letzte Stunde*, commenting on the work she had just sold: “I am very happy that the picture pleases you” (“Es freut mich sehr dass Ihnen das Bild gefällt”). Marianne von Werefkin, letter to Nell Walden, postmarked 3 February 1914, Sturm-Archiv I, StaaBi.
- 125 Cp. Georg Muche, letter to Nell Walden, 14 September 1957, NW1A:205, NWA/LM.
- 126 “[...] dass ich so viel verkauft habe, 8. Gemälde und dann noch eine Zeichnung, 6. Handdrucke und das Album; dass in diese Zeiten so etwas in Deutschland möglich ist, kann man nicht verstehen. [...] Natürlich sage ich an niemand wer die Gemälde gekauft hat; dass erzähle ich überhaupt nicht. Dass ist Der Sturm und meine Sache”. Jacoba van Heemskerck, letter to Nell Walden, 12 February 1916, transcribed in Huussen, 2006, 76f.
- 127 Cp. Petra Jenny Vock, “*Der Sturm muss brausen in dieser toten Welt*”. *Herwarth Waldens Sturm und die Lyriker des Sturm-Kreises in der Zeit des Ersten Weltkriegs. Kunstprogrammatik und Kriegsliteratur einer expressionistischen Zeitschrift im Kontext*, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2006, 73–78.
- 128 “Du kannst Dir leicht vorstellen, dass mir Herwarth bestimmt kein einziges Bild mitgegeben hätte, wenn sie nicht mir gehört hätte. Ich habe die Bilder gesammelt und ich habe sie bezahlt”. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Gertrud Schlasberg, 28 February 1953, Ausstellungskritiken III, NWA/LM.
- 129 On the name of the collection as a proclamation of the founding collector, see Higonnet, 2009, 123.
- 130 The exhibition catalogue explicitly asserts: “Nell Walden collected works of the finest quality by all the artists that exhibited in the Sturm premises”. (“Werken von all den Künstlern, die in den Räumen des ‘Sturm’ ausgestellt waren, hat Nell Walden in erlesenster Qualität gesammelt”). A.F. [Alfred Flechtheim], *Nell Walden-Heimann und ihre Sammlungen*, Galerie Alfred Flechtheim, Berlin, 1927, 2. The text was also reprinted as an advertisement in the art magazine, founded by Flechtheim, A.F. [Alfred Flechtheim], “Nell Walden-Heimann und ihre Sammlungen”, *Der Querschnitt*, vol. VII, no. 8, August 1927, 629.
- 131 “Es wird dabei aufs neue klar, was Herwarth und Nell Walden für die nachimpressionistische Kunst bedeutet und getan haben. [...] Das Verdienst das diese beiden Enthusiasten und ihr ‘Sturm’ um die moderne Entwicklung bei uns, um die Ermutigung der Künstler und die Aufklärung des Publikums sich erworben haben, kann nicht hoch genug angeschlagen werden. [...] Man fühlt, daß diese Frau mit den neuartigen Kunstwerken, die sie so frühzeitig aus dem Zauberkreise des ‘Sturm’ erwarb, eine sehr persönliche Beziehung verband. Sie griff mit gutem Blick zu. Kaufte nicht nur ‘Inkunabeln’ des Expressionismus, sondern manche klassischen Dokumente seiner Welt- und Kunstanschauung [...]”. M.O., “Nell Walden-Heimann. Ausstellung bei Flechtheim”, *Vossische Zeitung*, Berlin, 10 September 1927. See also, Franz Markl, “Kunst und Wissenschaft. Kunstchronik. Ausstellung Nell Walden bei Flechtheim. Käte Brauns-Wüstefeld bei Hirzel und Spanier”, *Steglitzer Anzeiger*, no. 211, 9 September 1927; Oscar Bie, “Berliner Kunstbrief”, *Breslauer Neueste Nachrichten*, 20 September 1927, reprinted in *Nürnberger Zeitung*, 28 September 1927; B.A., paragraph in *Tägliche Rundschau*, Berlin, Morgenausgabe, 17 September 1927.

3 Sturm Artist XIV

As a migrating artist, leaving Sweden for Germany and subsequently leaving Germany for Switzerland, Nell Walden has fallen in between three national histories of art. She never practiced as an artist in her native country, and modernist narratives on Swedish art—usually preoccupied by “pioneering” contributions—long overlooked her work with silence, despite the fact that she was among the first Swedish-born artists who created non-figurative paintings, presumably preceded only by Hilma af Klint.¹ Only gradually has Walden been inserted into the margins of the deeply Francophile history of twentieth-century Swedish art, usually as an odd example of continental abstraction influenced by Kandinsky. In Germany, where she debuted and exhibited most frequently, her work has not been able to compete with the native superstars of expressionism and even scholarship dedicated to *Der Sturm* has ignored her artistic production. Only in a few rare cases has her artworks been the object of art historical analysis.² Arriving as an immigrant in Switzerland in the 1930s, she initially stopped painting and concentrated on securing the fate of her collections.³ Health issues caused a complete break in her artistic production from 1939 to 1944. When she resumed painting, eventually with an unprecedented productivity, and started to exhibit her work in Switzerland from the middle of the 1940s onwards, the expressionist context that her work aligned to represented an *arrière-garde*. Add to this the habitual omission of those artists that happened to be women from the normative paradigm of art history, a masculinist construction that feminist art historians have repeatedly challenged.⁴

The main reason for Nell Walden’s absence from the history of modern art, though, relates to aesthetic judgements of her work and a consensus, even if rarely stated explicitly, that it fails to meet prevailing standards of quality.⁵ Thus, it has to be stated from the outset: Nell Walden’s artistic work troubles any art historian trained to appreciate the established version of modernism. Her paintings clearly align to expressionism in its abstract versions, but the formal features of her artworks are often at odds with the modernist canon and the technical execution of her paintings frequently reveals that she had only brief artistic training.

This chapter disregards the divergence of Nell Walden’s work from modernist norms. It maintains that any serious analysis of her work must acknowledge the historical context of its production, where subjective expression, immediacy, and “authenticity” were often valued over formal training, technical skills, and craftsmanship.⁶ The following discussion argues that her work is historically significant for reasons to which stylistic value judgements do not apply. One such reason is that it sheds light on a broader field of artistic production at a point in time when expressionism

and abstraction in painting were still under formation and there was not yet an established, institutionalised, modernist canon. A further reason is that irrespective of the perceived aesthetic quality of the outcome, as it were, Nell Walden's artistic production was exclusively formed within the Sturm organisation and thus provides a unique example of the Sturm art theory's materialisation into artistic practice. Finally, the gap between the ascribed significance of Nell Walden's art in the past—that is, the historical fact that Herwarth Walden and the Sturm gallery promoted her as one of the most important representatives of expressionism—and the omission of her work from the history of Der Sturm and expressionist art in itself raises questions about the methodologies and theoretical approaches of art historical writing.

This latter inconsistency between past art practices and the narratives of art history is important as it relates to broader questions on art historiography. What surfaces here is a difference or perhaps a conflict of interests between art history as aesthetic criticism and art history that emphasises social and historical context. Aesthetic quality or originality are still dominant criteria—even if rarely outspoken—in art historiography (both as the writing of art history and as the study, critique, or revision of written histories). Thus, significance in art historical writing is (too) often the performative effect of aesthetic judgements and a lingering modernist quest for inventiveness. In contrast, art history dedicated to the study of the broader course of events of past art worlds, leaving aesthetic quality aside, allows for more diverse histories of artistic production beyond the myopic value judgements of canonical historiography, including also artefacts that hitherto have been marginalised as average, mediocre, or *arrière-garde*.

Rather than trying to rehabilitate Nell Walden as an artist heroine—which would be to comply with canonical criteria—the following discussion lay stress upon the historical fact that Der Sturm promoted her as one of the “crucial and leading artists of expressionism”.⁷ It thus addresses the gap, or liminal space, between how she was positioned as an artist in the early twentieth century and her subsequent marginalisation in art history writing. In particular, this chapter elaborates on the aesthetic, theoretical, and promotional framework within which Walden could emerge as an artist, crucial elements of which were the Sturm art school and gallery exhibitions. An analysis of some of the paintings that she exhibited in the Sturm gallery and a discussion of her later work offer a characterisation of her artistic production. In this, the liminal position of abstraction in painting, bringing it dangerously close to the feminised categories of decoration and applied arts, is addressed. Finally, this chapter includes a discussion on how Walden aligned herself with the artist group *Die Abstrakten* (The Abstractionists) and negotiated her position as an artist beyond the framework of Der Sturm.

Learning and Unlearning at the Sturm Art School

Nell Walden started painting as an autodidact in 1913 or 1914.⁸ During a visit to Gabriele Münter and Wassily Kandinsky in Murnau in the early summer of 1914, she had been introduced to the large collection of Bavarian reverse glass paintings (*Hinterglasmalerei*) of Johann Krötz, a local brewmaster. Since 1905, Krötz's collection of more than 1,000 reverse glass paintings had been available for an interested public. Among his regular guests were Kandinsky and Münter, who together with further artists of the Blaue Reiter group developed a keen interest in both the painting

technique and the perceived authentic or “primitive” pictorial expression of folk art. Several pieces from Krötz’s collection were included in *Der Blaue Reiter Almanach* of 1912. Münter in particular was interested in the reverse glass painting technique (Figure 3.1). She took lessons from the glass painter Heinrich Rambold and her first reverse glass paintings were copies of his work. She was also the driving force behind the collection of reverse glass paintings that she amassed together with Kandinsky in Murnau from 1908 onwards.⁹

Encouraged by the visit to Münter and Kandinsky, Walden started to elaborate with reverse glass paintings too. The majority of her early works on glass were adaptations or copies of Christian motifs in traditional folk art, including Bavarian reverse glass paintings and folk art from her native Sweden (Figure 3.2). She also painted landscapes and abstract composition employing similar stylistic means. From 1916 onward, abstract paintings, often with references to landscapes, flowers, or nature, dominate her oeuvre, which comprises approximately 100 oil paintings, about 110 reverse glass paintings, and more than 6,000 works of what she inconsistently called coloured drawings (*farbige Zeichnungen*), entailing watercolour, tempera, pastel, touche, and gouache paintings. In addition, she executed sgraffito works, mosaics, and paintings on book covers, furniture, ceramics, and more.

The importance of the reverse glass painting technique should not be underestimated in relation to Nell Walden’s venture into an artistic career. Recent research has emphasised that since reverse glass painting was not part of the standard training at the art academies, it appeared as particularly suitable for technical experiments



Figure 3.1 Gabriele Münter, *The Way out of the Wood (Waldweg)*, 1910–1919. Oil on glass, 10 × 15 cm. Moderna museet, Stockholm (NM 5405). © Gabriele Münter/Bildupphovrsrätt 2021. Photo © Moderna Museet, Stockholm.



Figure 3.2 Nell Walden, *The three Wise Men from the East* (*Die drei Weisen aus dem Morgenlande*), copy after Swedish folk art, 1915. Reverse glass painting, 15 × 20 cm. Kunstmuseum Bern (G 1995). Photo © Kunstmuseum Bern.

in painting. In fact, the technique's inherent tendency towards abstraction, intimate expressiveness, and luminescent qualities turned reverse glass painting into a crucial and widespread artistic practice within modernism and beyond.¹⁰ For academically trained avant-garde artists, the diversion from academic painting techniques and conventions came forward as an experimental possibility. For an autodidact painter as Nell Walden, it crucially offered a creative field where the lack of artistic education seemed irrelevant.

When Nell Walden debuted as an artist in the Sturm gallery in July 1916, she had not yet started her training at the Sturm art school, which only opened on 1 September that same year. It remains unclear for how long she followed the tuition. In retrospect she claimed that the education lasted for several years, but artworks by her hand were absent from the *Kunstschule Der Sturm* exhibition in the Sturm gallery in March 1918, only a year and a half after the school opened its doors. In a biographical account written in 1963, she declared that she studied at the art school between 1912 and 1917. The first year is obviously incorrect as the school did not open its doors until 1916. The latter date indicates that she might have followed the tuition for one year only.¹¹

Primary sources are rare as regards the tuition of the Sturm art school, but a preserved prospectus probably printed and distributed in 1916 gives some brief

information.¹² There were six different departments—stage set design, acting, elocution, painting (including oil painting, drawing, engraving, and wood cut techniques), poetry, and music—each with its own curriculum and director.¹³ The aim of the painting department was to introduce the students in “the essence of form and colour” and to train them in “the expressive means of painting”. Apart from practical work, the course comprised a lecture series that included analytical exercises in front of images. For students in the second year class, the curriculum offered a master course (*Meisterkursus*) where the students would receive corrections from a Sturm artist of their own choice. Even though there were different courses and departments, the prospectus specified that “the unit of art requires knowledge of all arts and consistency in the tuition”. Hence, the students of the painting department were “entitled and obligated to follow the lecture series of all other departments”.¹⁴

When the art school opened in September 1916, it was under the direction of Herwarth Walden and with a restricted personnel. Heinrich Campendonk, Gabriele Münter, Paul Klee, and Jacoba van Heemskerck had initially offered their services, but were not able to fulfil their teaching.¹⁵ Instead of these qualified and more experienced artists, Georg Muche and Rudolf Bauer, who were untried painters in the beginning of their careers, were appointed as main teachers in painting.¹⁶ Muche had a brief education from a preparatory art school. In 1914, he had moved to Berlin, but instead of continuing his own rather modest training, Muche started to give lessons in painting to others in his studio from July 1915 onwards.¹⁷ He stayed at the Sturm art school no more than six months before he was called up for the infantry in February 1917.¹⁸ Bauer’s artistic education was only rudimental and he described himself an autodidact.¹⁹ Following Muche’s departure, he was appointed teacher in painting in 1917 or 1918.²⁰ Apart from the permanent teachers, Muche and Bauer, it is unlikely that the students in the art school received corrections from further Sturm artists at any regularity.²¹ Nell Walden later claimed that Herwarth Walden himself had completely dominated the Sturm art school in the beginning.²²

Among the diverse Sturm organisations, the art school had a salient position as it disseminated the newly consolidated Sturm art theory—predominantly drawn up by Herwarth Walden, Rudolf Blümner, Lothar Schreyer, and William Wauer—and offered a place where the theory was put into artistic practice.²³ Borrowing essential ideas from Wilhelm Worringer’s theory of the psychology of visual style, Kandinsky’s art theory, and Henri Bergson’s philosophy, four main aspects were at the core of Der Sturm’s theoretical position: (1) colour and form as the pure elements of the visual arts, thus an emphasis on abstraction; (2) intuition as the basis for art production and experience; (3) the idea of rhythmic formation in art as a parallel to cosmic events; and (4) the objective and universal character of expressionism.²⁴ Thus, similar to other expressionist theories, the Sturm art theory did not attach great importance to formal training and the particular skills and craftsmanship of different media.²⁵

The Sturm art school was an institution that cultured an *expressionist attitude* to artistic practices. Commenting on the education, Herwarth Walden polemically stated: “Art itself is an act and not the mediation of facts. Hence, instruction in the Sturm art school is negative. Learning is not taught, unlearning is taught. That is to say, the liberation from facts, from imitations, and emulations”.²⁶ The correspondence between Herwarth Walden and van Heemskerck is suggestive of how this theoretical position transformed into a didactic programme based on individualised training. Walden and van Heemskerck agreed on the importance to customise the education in

order to fully develop the artistic potential of each pupil and thus on a far-reaching individualisation of the curriculum.²⁷ This was retrospectively confirmed by Muche, who claimed that he “had no pedagogical methods but let the manner of each individual’s talent direct me”.²⁸ Similarly, Lothar Schreyer maintained that there was a foundational belief within the Sturm organisation that artistic creativity was an inherent human property.²⁹

In sum, the relativisation of craftsmanship, the prioritisation of rhythmic abstraction, and the location of artistic quality not in aesthetic norms but in intuitive, spiritual expression were essential ideas that permeated both the theoretical position and the creative milieu of Der Sturm’s art school. These were not only key aspects of the historical context in which Nell Walden, despite her brief training, could emerge as an artist, but logically also how she would frame her own art production. In an artistic statement towards the end of her career, Walden explicitly and expectedly ascribed to the relativisation of practical skill and emphasised instead individual expression in art and the artist’s function as a medium for a spiritual vision:

ART in itself, I argue, does not originate from KNOWLEDGE—even if artisanal knowledge surley has to be there—ART originates, I believe, in proclamation—annunciation—hence, it is a more or less prophetic announcement of something that rouses—and leads into divine realms. —We artists are only carriers of a vision, which we should mould. —The vision is the grace that is given to us—our obligation: to mould this vision and be grateful when we succeed. —That is how I see it.³⁰

Nell Walden’s declaration was not only in line with the Sturm theory, but reflects a broader understanding of expressionism that consolidated already in the 1910s. For instance, her statement echoes the German art critic and author of the widely distributed publication *Der Expressionismus* (1914), Paul Fechter, who asserted that “art does not only come from proficiency” and emphasised that expressionism’s essential meaning was to articulate spiritual emotion.³¹

Promoting Sturm Artist XIV

Nell Walden’s accounts are sparse when it comes to descriptions of her own artistic practices. She later reported that she painted in her “small study” in the Sturm premises during night hours.³² For the present-day researcher, the lack of time and a proper studio may be suggestive of the (minor) priority ascribed to her creative work. However, the continuous promotion of Nell Walden’s artistic production by the Sturm gallery, which surely depended on Herwarth Walden’s approval, contradicts such a conclusion. It should also be noted that many contemporary artists preferred flexible spaces where borders between daily life and artistic practice were dissolved.³³

In fact, Nell Walden stands out as one of the most frequently exposed Sturm artists.³⁴ From her debut in a group exhibition in the Sturm gallery in July 1916 until her last appearance in the home gallery’s 144th exhibition in September 1925, Walden regularly exhibited her work in Der Sturm’s exhibitions in Berlin and its travelling exhibitions in Germany and abroad. As far as can be reconstructed from preserved exhibition catalogues, she was the main or solo exponent in six exhibitions and her work was shown in at least 54 group exhibitions (*Gesamtausstellungen*) in the Berlin

gallery. Between 1916 and 1924, no less than twenty of Der Sturm's travel exhibitions in Germany and abroad included her work.³⁵ In sum, during the 1910s and 1920s, her work was disseminated and displayed through at least 80 Sturm exhibitions across Europe. When she left the organisation in 1925, virtually her complete art production until that date had been exhibited in the home gallery.

From 1917 onwards, Der Sturm systematically promoted Nell Walden as a leading expressionist artist. Her increasing visibility in Der Sturm's exhibition programme was supplemented by a range of advertising material in order to attract attention. Her artworks were reproduced on postcards, in the journal *Der Sturm*, and in Herwarth Walden's art theoretical publications, where they figured as paintings that materialised the essence of Der Sturm's art theoretical position.³⁶ In 1917, Rudolf Blümner published an introductory booklet on Der Sturm where he defined expressionist painting as "only colours and forms" with Kandinsky as its foremost practitioner. Blümner also brought out Nell Walden and her teachers Bauer and Muche as the leading artists of a younger generation devoted to "absolute painting in an independent manner".³⁷ When Der Sturm introduced a new postcard series with portrait photographs of a limited number of key Sturm artists and writers, she was included as "Sturm artist XIV" (Figure 3.3).

The marketing of Nell Walden was exemplary of Der Sturm's publicity tactics, but also led to public criticism. In a 1919–1921 controversy between Herwarth Walden's *Der Sturm* and rival critic Paul Westheim's *Das Kunstblatt*, the latter, seconded by former Sturm artist Heinrich Campendonk, attacked Der Sturm's promotional



Figure 3.3 Sturm postcard, *Sturm Artist XIV: Nell Walden* (*Sturm Künstler XIV: Nell Walden*), 1916. Unknown photographer (possibly Marta Wolff). Landskrona Museum (LAMF018508). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

apparatus.³⁸ The dispute was a minor part of a larger controversy, but it substantiates that Der Sturm's marketing tactics as regards Nell Walden and other key Sturm artists for some came through as an indiscriminate act of self-promotion. Around the same time, Herwarth Walden's promotion of William Wauer, Nell Walden, and Rudolf Bauer was fiercely criticised by the art historian and architecture critic Adolf Behne, a former contributor to *Der Sturm*.³⁹ Behne reluctantly accepted that their work had served a purpose as a "national Prussian substitute for art" during the war, but argued that despite Herwarth Walden's "polemic terror", he would not succeed in establishing these "imitators" as artists.⁴⁰

If the promotion of Nell Walden as one of the core Sturm artists had an obvious element of self-marketing and partiality to it, this did not radically distinguish her or Der Sturm from other modern artists and associations. As is well known, independent exhibitions had long provided an alternative to official art shows, as is evident from the perhaps most conspicuous self-promoting event of the nineteenth century, Gustave Courbet's *Pavillon du Réalisme* in Paris in 1855. In fact, the practice of establishing alternative organisations and forums (exhibitions, magazines, art schools, et cetera) in opposition to established institutions in order to enable the dissemination and self-promotion of not yet recognised art and artists had been a hallmark of the European avant-garde since, at least, the first impressionist exhibition in Paris in 1874 and was consolidated by the foundation of modern Salons and Secessions across Europe during the 1880s and 1890s.⁴¹ In this respect, both Nell and Herwarth Walden's self-marketing through Der Sturm tapped in to rather than diverged from customary practices among independent organisations for the production and distribution of modern art.

The construction of "Sturm artist XIV Nell Walden" is yet another example of the Walden couple's collaborative partnership and symptomatic of how they both used Der Sturm as a platform to establish themselves in artistic practises that diverged from their primary training. Professionally trained as an organist, Der Sturm's theoretical position and promotional apparatus, supplemented by the modest training in the Sturm art school, provided a framework within which Nell Walden could emerge as an artist and through which the Waldens together created the conditions for the public reception of her work. Similarly, it was the economic support of Nell Walden and her willingness to write at his dictation that enabled Herwarth Walden, who had trained as a musician, to publish and establish himself as a writer of dramas and novels during the First World War.⁴² Just as her art production reached the public through the Sturm gallery, his literary publications were exclusively disseminated by the Sturm publishing house. In sum, the Sturm organisation was an indispensable institutional framework for the Waldens becoming a literary author and an artist, respectively.

"A Colour Space and a Lose Network of Structured Lines"

Any characterisation of how Nell Walden was presented as an artist within Der Sturm can only be partial as the majority of the oil paintings (approximately 30 works) that she exhibited, many of which appeared several times both in the Berlin gallery and in the travelling exhibitions, were lost during the bombings of Berlin at the end of the Second World War. Quite a few of the reverse glass paintings entered private collections, but some twenty of those that were shown in Der Sturm are now in

the collections of Kunstmuseum Bern and Landskrona Museum. A large amount of *farbige Zeichnungen*, predominantly tempera and water colour paintings that were on show in the 1910s and 1920s have not yet been located.⁴³ Only a few have been preserved in public collections. Several works entered private collections in Berlin, Breslau, and Essen. Others went to her fellow collectors Marie Tak van Poortvliet in The Hague, Sally Falk in Mannheim, and Ida Bienert in Dresden. Fritz Stern, a collector whose precise identity I have not been able to establish, brought 15 of her paintings from Berlin to New York, presumably in the early 1930s. Finally, numerous of Walden's early paintings ended up in the possession of her family or artist friends. Her oeuvre catalogues reveal that Rudolf Blümner, Ksenia Boguslavskaya, Jacoba van Heemskerck, Béla Kádár, Mikhail Larionov, Ivan Puni, Hugó Scheiber, Lothar Schreyer, Georg Schrimpf, Kurt Schwitters, and William Wauer had paintings by Walden in their possession. Some of them have turned up on the art market, others have been difficult to trace. The following overview focuses on works that were on show in exhibitions where Nell Walden was the main or solo exponent and is based on works that have been identified and localised by comparisons between the exhibition catalogues and her oeuvre catalogues.

In April 1917, Walden was for the first time presented as the main exponent in an exhibition together with Arnold Topp in the Sturm gallery. The presentation comprised her complete art production from March 1915 onwards: 60 paintings, half of which were reverse glass paintings.⁴⁴ The show documented how she had started out with figurative reverse glass paintings that were either copies after Bavarian or Swedish folk art or landscapes executed with similar stylistic means, but how she almost immediately abandoned figuration, focusing instead on abstract compositions executed in the same technique and colour schemes as the traditional folk art that had first sparked her interest in painting.

The reverse glass painting *The three Wise Men from the East* (*Die drei Weisen aus dem Morgenlande*, 1915) is a copy after Swedish folk art, and as such retains the decidedly naive style of the original's skewed perspectives and proportions (Figure 3.2). In another work, *Vaults* (*Gewölbe*, 1916), unruly colour fields, formed as arches or ovals and occasionally reinforced by thin curved lines in black or white, dominate the pictorial space (Figure 3.4). Despite the suggestive title, the painting elaborates with colour and form as expressive means rather than striving for figurative representation of actual vaults. The awkward execution of the reverse glass paintings—irregular outlines of lines and contours, colour fields apparently bleeding uncontrollably into one another—partly reflects Walden's limited training and is partly due to the reverse glass painting technique. It should also be noted that a naive style and rough technique were desirable qualities that were appreciated as authentic expressions among numerous artists. Similar pictorial elements are visible also in works by fully trained artists such as August Macke, Carlo Mense, and Gabriele Münter (Figure 3.1).⁴⁵

The critical reception of the 1917 exhibition was rather limited, but confirmed Nell Walden's paintings as materialisations of Der Sturm's essential aesthetic arguments, which promoted pure colours as preferable artistic means and located creativity in the artist's imagination. In *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, Theodor Däubler stated that she was "an artist of the flat surface" and appreciatively noted the joyful colours and "the perfect logic in the composition of the most modern mosaic arabesques".⁴⁶ Carl Fries noted that her abstract works "reveal a charming colour imagination that pleases even those indifferent to expressionism".⁴⁷ In the Swedish daily *Aftonbladet*, Harald

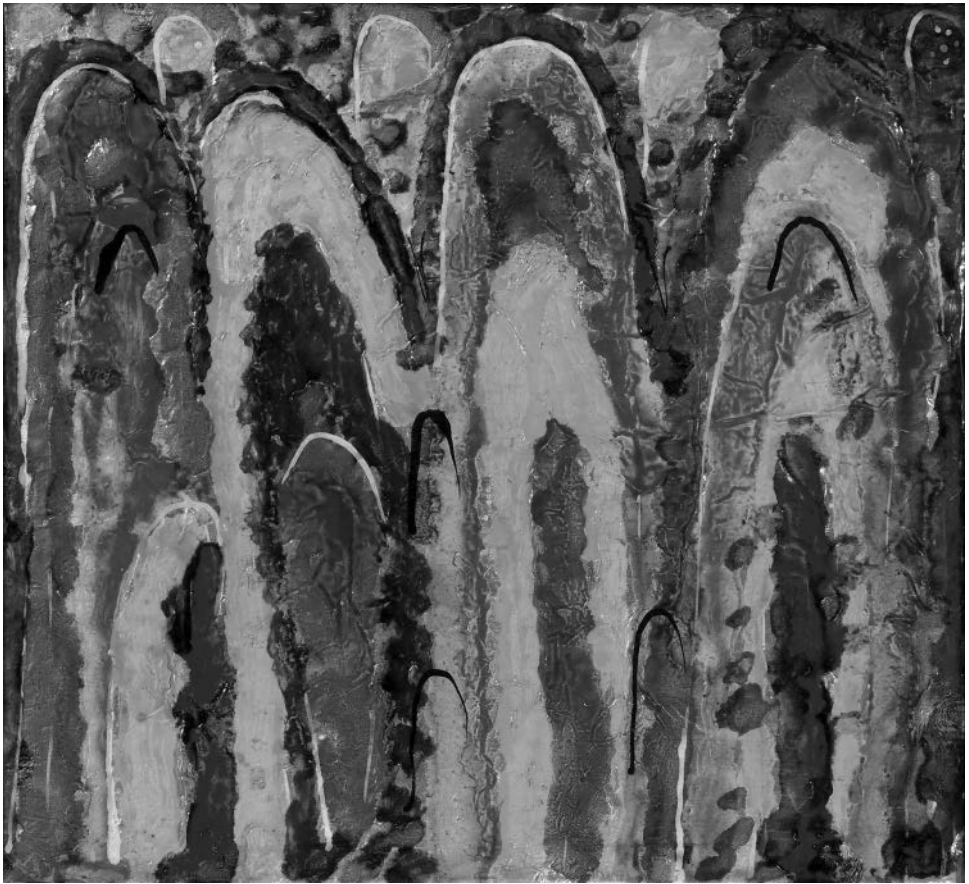


Figure 3.4 Nell Walden, *Vaults (Gewölbe)*, 1916. Reverse glass painting, 14 × 15.3 cm. Kunstmuseum Bern (G 1999). Photo © Kunstmuseum Bern.

Wagner wrote that “[t]here is a peculiar lustre of the colours that these paintings reflect, a limpid diamond splendour that almost bedazzle”.⁴⁸ The recurrent references to her work as “colourful fantasies” and the repeated description of her as “the prominent Swedish artist” suggest that this is how the artist and the paintings were introduced in *Der Sturm*’s promotional material.⁴⁹ Given the vehemently negative critique that had faced several *Sturm* exhibitions in the past, the limited but discreetly approving reception came out as a victorious achievement. In a letter to Herwarth Walden, Jacoba van Heemskerck acknowledged the show as “a great success”.⁵⁰

In May 1918, Nell Walden was again the main exponent in the *Sturm* gallery, this time together with Arnold Topp and Hans Sittig. The exhibition gave an overview of the different expressive means that she elaborated with at the time. A drawing by her hand on the front page of *Der Sturm* foreshadowed the opening (Figure 3.5). Its alternating curved and straight lines and occasional intersection of dots might well have served as an illustration of Rudolf Bauer’s simultaneous definition of expressionist art as “a diagram of the soul”, where intuitively executed rhythmic lines were seen as indexical signs of varying emotions, thus ultimately representing “cosmic



Figure 3.5 Front page of *Der Sturm*, vol. 9, no. 1, 1918, with Nell Walden's *Drawing* (*Zeichnung*). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

movements".⁵¹ The show included some 60 paintings and a selection of hand-painted book covers. Again, Walden's complete production since her last exhibition was put on show.⁵² This time, the critical reception of exhibition was more extensive and several works were sold.⁵³

Few of the oil paintings on display have survived and only one has been located, *Composition* (*Komposition*, 1917) (Figure 3.6). In this work, Walden elaborated with abstract billowing forms in the primary colours supplemented by green, violet, black,

and white. The colour scheme recurred in *Glass Painting 42 – Two Black Forms* (*Glasbild 42 – Zwei schwartze Formen*, 1919), but here the reverse glass painting technique added a lustre to the colouring (Figure 3.7). On the back of the glass plate, she had attached gold foil embossed with a design of flowers which not only provided a coherent gleam to the work but also a sense of spatial relation between the golden background and the coloured glass. Walden had attached shimmering foil on her reverse glass paintings already from the start, and since 1917, she had also painted immediately on glazed paper. In fact, quite a few of the water colour and tempera paintings in the exhibition were either executed on or included elements of silver or gold foil. Among them was *Tempera on Silver* (*Tempera auf Silber*, 1917), a small-sized work painted in bright colours with oval shapes in the corners that structure the composition (Figure 3.8).⁵⁴ The silver foil shines through the colours and is exposed between the abstract forms, creating precisely the “peculiar lustre” that critics had noted already in her previous show.

Several works in the 1918 exhibition are indicative of how Walden expanded her creative practices to further areas. A tempera painting executed on silver foil was



Figure 3.6 Nell Walden, *Composition* (*Komposition*), 1917. Oil on canvas, 65 × 47 cm. Moderna Museet, Stockholm (NM 5410). Photo © Moderna Museet, Stockholm.

listed under the title *Coloured Drawing 52* (*Farbige Zeichnung 52*) in the catalogue, but in her oeuvre catalogue she specified it as a *Design for a mosaic table* (*Entwurf z. Mosaiktisch*).⁵⁵ The hand-painted book covers that were included in the show were executed as florid or abstract compositions on the bindings of Arno Holz's *Die Blechschmiede* (1917) and on six books by Herwarth Walden, all published by Der Sturm.⁵⁶ The painting on Herwarth Walden's *Sünde* (1918) comprised of broader brushstrokes in black and the primary colours alternated with thin black lines and dots distributed against a white background (Figure 3.9). The recurring shapes of the coloured brushstrokes and the black lines seem to elaborate on essential ideas of Der Sturm's art theory as regards the rhythmic movement of the composition and the expressive potential of differently shaped lines, in particular Rudolf Bauer's theorisation on lines signifying doubt, anger, inhibition, or discharge.⁵⁷ In the lower right-hand corner, Walden signed the painting by adding, as she usually did, her initials, which indicates the artistic value she ascribed to the book covers as did, of course, their inclusion in the exhibition.



Figure 3.7 Nell Walden, *Glass Painting 42 – Two Black Forms* (*Glasbild 42 – Zwei schwarze Formen*), 1918. Reverse glass painting and embossed gold paper, 34.9 × 27.9 cm. Private collection. Photo © Museum Penzberg – Sammlung Campendonk. Courtesy of the owner.



Figure 3.8 Nell Walden, *Tempera on Silver* (*Tempera auf Silber*), 1917. Tempera on silver paper, 27 × 23 cm. Landskrona Museum (LAM018032). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

The painted book covers indicate Nell Walden's interest in expanding her painting to other domains, a creative practice that she would further develop after having left *Der Sturm*. Along with the design for a mosaic table, they are also exemplary of how many artists at the time transgressed conventional divisions between fine and applied arts. For instance, at the *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon*, Sonia Delaunay had exhibited numerous painted book covers, including publications by Herwarth Walden, Guillaume Apollinaire, and Blaise Cendrars. One of the exhibition's main exponents had been the collaborative work between Delaunay and Cendrars *Prose on the Trans-Siberian Railway and of Little Jehanne of France* (1913), a paper scroll of 2 metres folded into 22 panels with Delaunay's abstract images and Cendrars' poem printed side by side as to be read simultaneously. Clearly, though, Nell's paintings and Herwarth's literary work were not executed in tandem or aimed for simultaneous reception. Her paintings visually framed rather than entangled with his text.

Der Sturm's dissemination of this kind of artistic production echoes similar initiatives elsewhere. As is well known, Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell, and Duncan Grant of the Bloomsbury group, since 1913, marketed their own design, including painted ceramics and furniture, carpets, textiles, and household items, through the Omega



Figure 3.9 Nell Walden, painting on Herwarth Walden's book *Sünde*, 1918. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

Workshops in London.⁵⁸ There was no equivalent to the Omega's formally structured production and distribution of design products within Der Sturm, but from at least 1914, hand-painted endpapers (*Vorsatzpapiere*) and wrapping papers (*Deckelpapiere*) by Anna Scheerbart were offered for sale at the entrance to the gallery.⁵⁹ In addition, the Sturm bookstore presented a broader supply of applied arts, including hand-knitted cushions by Maria Uhden and lampshades, lampscreens, book covers, cushions, writing cases, and wall coverings by Georg Schrimpf.⁶⁰

For some time, Nell Walden had worked with diagonal or horizontal brushwork forming abstract colour fields completely devoid of mimetic references. Exemplary of the technique is the tempera painting *Arabic Dreams* (*Arabische Träume*, 1919), exhibited in her 1919 Sturm exhibition together with Hans Brass (Figure 3.10). The reds and blues of the painting are formed by diagonal brushstrokes surrounded by golden contours, thus bringing forth some of the lustrous feature of her reverse glass paintings in another medium. The title's reference to Islamic culture has no clear connection to the stylistic means of the painting, but rather reflects ideas about authentic or spiritual qualities that were commonly ascribed to folk art and non-Western art production in general and thus aligning to Der Sturm's ideas on universal artistic expressions connecting artworks across space and time.



Figure 3.10 Nell Walden, *Arabic Dreams (Arabische Träume)*, 1919. Tempera on wood, 50 × 32 cm. Landskrona Museum (LAM014209). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

Nell Walden's next major appearance in the Sturm gallery was her 1920 exhibition together with Marthe Donas. In several paintings that were on show, the diagonal colour fields were clearly bounded by black contours, as exemplified by *Myself* (*Ich selbst*, 1920), finalised shortly before the opening (Figure 3.11). As is well known, the employment of dark contour lines in paintings, echoing the pictorial means of wood cuts, was a favoured visual trope among several expressionist artists. To the best of my knowledge, Walden did not produce graphic artworks herself, but her painting is evocative of the coloured wood cuts that Jacoba van Heemskerck executed a couple of years later. The colour treatment and demarcated black lines of van Heemskerck's *Composition XXIV* (*Compsitie XXIV*, 1921) (Figure 3.12) are particularly reminiscent of Walden's painting and helps locate these two artists in a mutual visual context.

Other paintings in the joint exhibition with Donas show how Walden, leaving her brushwork clearly visible, created abstract shapes vaguely reminiscent of fluttering wings, leaves, or occasionally tendrils that were brought together in animated compositions. The oil painting *Passion* (*Leidenschaft*, 1918) is executed with energetic brushwork in dark red, green, and dominating black with additional white and golden yellow (Figure 3.13). The resulting jagged forms are slightly suggestive of flying birds, but the essential feature of the work, as indicated also by its title, is the almost confrontational collision of colours in sharp-pointed abstract shapes that visually articulate an explosive vigour. Lothar Schreyer later characterised it as exemplary of the "absolute painting" of the Sturm circle and described it as "a single outcry".⁶¹ Evidently, Walden regarded it as one of her major works. It was on show several times in Der Sturm's home gallery and it travelled with Sturm exhibitions to Copenhagen



Figure 3.11 Nell Walden, *Myself* (*Ich selbst*), 1920. Tempera on Pavatex, 48 × 34 cm. Kunstmuseum Bern (G 2005). Photo © Kunstmuseum Bern.



Figure 3.12 Jacoba van Heemskerck, *Composition XXIV* (*Compsitie XXIV*), 1921. Woodcut, 41.2 × 27.6 cm. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (A 2518). Photo © Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

and Dresden. Reportedly, it also travelled Germany with an exhibition dedicated to abstract works during the early years of the Weimar Republic.⁶²

In 1921, the Sturm gallery presented Walden's work in a solo exhibition that seems to have summarised much of the stylistic means that she had explored so far: lustrous non-figurative reverse glass paintings with added silver foil, tempera paintings with abstract colour fields executed with diagonal or horizontal rhythmic brushwork, and oil paintings that either suggested or clearly referenced natural forms. Several of these qualities converge in one of the oil paintings on show, *Forces* (*Kräfte*, 1921) (Figure 3.14). Its animated quality is vaguely reminiscent of *Passion*. But if the focus of *Passion* was on dramatic power, the energetic drive of the diagonal brushstrokes of *Forces* rather evokes a dynamic, almost hypnotic vitality. At first glance, the dark blue lines that divide the painted surface, dominated by green, red, blue, lilac, and notably with added gold, are suggestive of a highly stylised dancing figure. In several other paintings included in the exhibition similar lines occur, but here they were clearly rendered as branches or twigs holding flowers, confirmed also by the titles.⁶³ Hence, the dark blue lines of *Forces* should rather be understood as tendrils. In fact, references to flowers, gardens, or vegetation would soon evolve into a key feature of Walden's painting.



Figure 3.13 Nell Walden, *Passion (Leidenschaft)*, 1918. Oil on canvas, 100 × 80.5 cm. Moderna museet, Stockholm (NM 5183). Photo © Moderna Museet, Stockholm.

As far as can be established from paintings that are now in public museums, Nell Walden arrived at a distinctive pictorial language, a signature style, as it were, in the early 1920s. Her last major appearance in the Sturm gallery, a joint exhibition with László Peri and Ludwig Hilberseimer, who exhibited architectural drawings, in 1924 included several works that are exemplary of what became her preferred means of expression for years to come. Her tempera painting *Seaweed (See-Algen)*, 1923) is exemplary as regards both the abstract pictorial style and the suggestive natural references (Figure 3.15). The painting belongs to a series of works that Walden painted in Copenhagen in 1923, all of them in a similar bright colour scheme. It perfectly captures what one critic later described as the twofold feature of her work: “a color space and a loose network of structured lines”.⁶⁴ There are numerous paintings by her hand that reiterate this easily recognisable trope, most of them executed in tempera or water colours. Usually, she covered or altered fields of parallel brushwork in the background with pictorial scripts, lines, and/or patches of colours in order to create abstract patterns that are mimetically suggestive of natural forms such as flowers, trees, or landscapes, and sometimes discursively framed as such by the way she chose the titles. It hardly needs to be pointed out that these works differ greatly



Figure 3.14 Nell Walden, *Forces (Kräfte)*, 1921. Oil on canvas, 96 × 96 cm. Kunstmuseum Bern (G 2006). Photo © Kunstmuseum Bern.

from mainstream modernism and have contributed to Walden's marginal position in the history of expressionism.

It should again be noted that any analysis of her early paintings must remain incomplete. As noted above, most of Walden's early oil paintings were bombed out in Berlin during the Second World War. Amongst the more than 200 *farbige Zeichnungen* that she painted during the 1910s and 1920s, a majority of them tempera paintings, only some twenty have been preserved in public museums. One-third of the c. 70 reverse glass paintings that she painted during the same period are in public collections. All in all, then, a large part of her early production is not (yet) available for analysis. Gradually, works by her hand that testify to a varied early production have appeared on the art market, others remain in private collections.⁶⁵ In 2020, a previous unknown painting, *Composition*, was sold at an auction in Stockholm (Figure 3.16). This work, presumably executed in the 1920s, indicates how Walden experimented with different pictorial models where she covered the



Figure 3.15 Nell Walden, *Seaweed (See-Algen)*, 1923. Tempera, 32 × 24 cm. Landskrona Museum (LAM018037). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

surface of the image with abstract forms and added black lines, dots, or geometrical shapes. This piece partly differs from the majority of other preserved paintings from the same period. It cannot be ruled out that there are further works of this kind in private ownership that would contribute to a more varied picture of Walden's

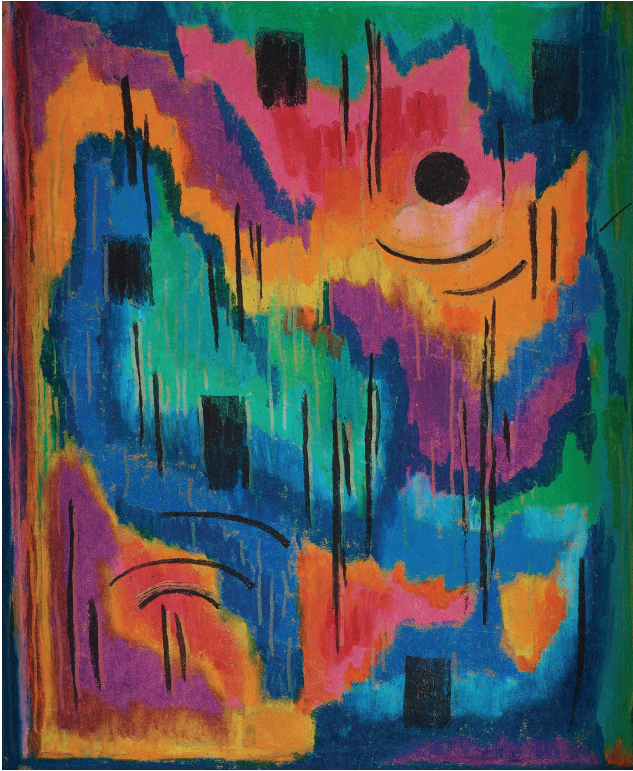


Figure 3.16 Nell Walden, *Composition*, presumably 1920s. Pastel and tempera on paper, 27.5 × 22.5 cm. AKO Kunststiftelse. Photo © Bukowskis, Stockholm. Courtesy by the owner.

artistic practice. It is, of course, also possible that the rare occurrence of similar works on the art market rather indicate that the stylistic means of *Composition* was a parenthesis in her oeuvre.

Abstract—Decorative—Ornamental

The ambivalent status of abstraction in painting and its close connection to the decorative and ornamental qualities of applied arts already from the start contributed to uncertainties as regards the assessment of the florid features and non-figurative patterns of Nell Walden's paintings. Unsurprisingly, the decorative and the ornamental, whether critically acclaimed or denounced, were recurring themes in the critical reception of her art. Let us thus return to her 1918 Sturm show together with Arnold Topp and Hans Sittig. Already the opening sentence of a review in the *Berliner Börsen Zeitung* cogently summarised the critic's position: "We have repeatedly emphasised here, that it is predominantly decorative values that can be attributed to modern art from the camp of cubist expressionism". The author then described Walden's work as "decorative experiments with lines and colours" and characterised the "curly ornamentation" of her painted book covers as naive and kittenish.⁶⁶ The critic Paul

Fechter argued that the “play and rhythm of coloured patches and lines” in her paintings would require a “stronger inner music” on the artist’s part in order “to rise above merely decorative charms”.⁶⁷

A more positive assessment reached the readership in her native country, where Harald Wägner reported that “the new exhibition of *Nell Walden* has been unreservedly approved in many places. Indeed, during one year, the artist has undergone a well-nigh incredible development and is no doubt experiencing an artistic blooming at the moment”. Where Fechter still called for improvement, Wägner established that if Walden’s previous work had been “idyllic colour compositions” lacking “a fundamental artistic idea”—and thus comparable to “pious and ‘beautiful’ needlework”—she had now left “the decorative phase” and “gone the whole way to the free creation of the artist”.⁶⁸ If Wägner had an approving attitude towards Walden’s latest work, his description of her artistic development and its awkward distinction between a “decorative phase” and “free creation” is symptomatic of abstraction’s discursive liminality between the fine and applied arts and of the ambiguous status of abstract painting in the contemporary critical discourse.

Previous research has repeatedly pointed out that even if modernist art historians, critics, and artists themselves came to describe the decorative in derogatory, often feminised, terms, the decorative was a central resource rather than a peripheral phenomenon for the development of modernism in the fine arts in general and of abstraction in painting in particular.⁶⁹ In the decades around 1900, French critics and artists such as Albert Aurier, Félix Fénéon, Maurice Denis, and Henri Matisse established the notion of the *décoratif*—in positive terms—as an emphasis on flatness, surface patterns, and harmonious composition of colour in painting. Around the same time, Austrian and German art theory, particularly the influential writings of Alois Riegl and Wilhelm Worringer, emphasised abstract, linear design or *Ornament* as the essential factor of all artistic creation. Thus, by the early twentieth century, both art theory and artistic practice recognised the decorative in painting as “the integration of the German principle of ornament as meaningful line and the French conception of the *décoratif* as a flat and pleasing arrangement of color”.⁷⁰

This conceptualisation of decorative qualities in art is particularly illuminating as regards Nell Walden’s favoured means of expression. In fact, her signature style oscillates precisely between those pictorial features that the theorisation of the *décoratif* and the *Ornament* sought to capture. The parallel brushstrokes or patches of colours that constitute the colour space in her paintings elaborate on the flatness of the image surface, whereas “the network of structured lines” applied above are equivalent to ornamental tendrils or arabesques.

Even if not always explicitly phrased in terms of the decorative, the Sturm art theory emphasised, as we have seen, colour, line, and the flat surface of the painting. Herwarth Walden repeatedly returned to painting as the art of flat surfaces in his writing.⁷¹ Adolf Behne’s brief definition of painting in the 1917 Sturm publication *Zur neuen Kunst* is yet another example among many: “What I see before me as the work of the painter is a flat surface. On it are groups of colours, red, green, yellow, blue. There are lines—curved, straight, continuous, disrupted”.⁷² Arguably, Behne’s description perfectly captures Walden’s abstract paintings.

Der Sturm’s public presentation of Nell Walden’s art reveals that the ornamentality of her work was essential to the Waldens collaborative effort to performatively produce the “Sturm artist XIV: Nell Walden”, and thus testifies to the Sturm gallery’s

promotion of the *decorative* qualities of abstraction. In fact, numerous of her paintings that were exhibited more than once were overtly decorative works, several of them with florid references. For instance, one of the glass paintings that she most often exhibited in Der Sturm, *Arabesques (Arabesken)*, 1921 speaks directly to Behne's theorisation on painting (Figure 3.17). Distributed on the glass surface are groups of colours and black lines, some of them curved and continuous, others straight and disrupted. The painting presents an irregular decorative pattern suggestive of natural forms. The execution of the work embraces rather than avoids the decorative features of abstraction, an aesthetic attitude that is further underlined by the title, which positions the work within a discursive framework of the ornamental. In this, Nell Walden was certainly not alone. For instance, the decorative had a decisive impact on the artistic production of her fellow Sturm artist Paul Klee and it also informed the critical reception of his work. Jenny Anger has pointed out that Herwarth Walden and Klee together performatively produced the artist's public appearance precisely as "the decorative Klee" by presenting paintings with decidedly decorative or ornamental qualities in several Sturm exhibitions from 1914 onwards.⁷³ Thus, when Klee reached his first public success in 1917, it was through an "ornamental collection" which was specifically appreciated in the press due to its decorative qualities.⁷⁴

The rhetorical feminisation of Nell Walden's work, that is, the critics employing suggestive words such as naïve and kittenish and comparing her paintings with needlework, echoed a broader discursive transformation of the concept of the decorative



Figure 3.17 Nell Walden, *Arabesques (Arabesken)*, 1921. Reverse glass painting, 39 × 29 cm. Landskrona Museum (LAM017057). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

and its relation to modern art. During the 1910s, the general assessment of the decorative gradually became versed in unambiguously negative and feminine terms.⁷⁵ If at the turn of the nineteenth century “the words ornament and decorative were not yet dirty words in the criticism of painting”, as Ernest Gombrich put it, by the time Nell Walden exhibited abstract paintings, they had increasingly become so.⁷⁶ The decorative was placed in a binary discursive framework where the abstract, the masculine, the artistic, and original were fiercely separated from the decorative, the feminine, the commercial, and repetitive.⁷⁷

In light of this, abstraction in art had to be clearly demarcated from the decorative in general and the infectious threat, as it were, of the feminised applied arts in particular. Arguably, what Gombrich described as expressionism’s “shift from the product to the producer as the object of the aesthetic response” served the gendered conceptualisation of abstraction and decoration well because it supported the relocation of this distinction from the art object to the artist subject.⁷⁸ When the ornamental features of the artworks themselves did not offer criteria by which to clearly define the alleged difference between abstraction and decoration in painting, a recourse to the producer, more precisely the gendered artist, has offered critics and art historians an easy shortcut to distinguish between masculine abstraction and feminine decoration.

This is exemplarily evidenced by two influential German publications that consolidated many of the ideas on women’s art production that dominated public discourse during the first decades of the twentieth century: Karl Scheffler’s 1908 *Die Frau und die Kunst*, which turned into “a standard reference for the opposition to women in art and to so-called feminine practices in art”, and Hans Hildebrandt’s 1928 *Die Frau als Künstlerin*.⁷⁹ Both publications essentially captured the tone of argument in the critical reviews of Walden’s art production. Scheffler’s overtly misogynist publication was framed by a notion of an absolute and essential gender dichotomy, whereas Hildebrandt, even if fundamentally in agreement with Scheffler, had a less aggressive approach and acknowledged women’s creative powers. For Scheffler, abstraction was solely an intellectual or logical property firmly located on the male side of his gender binary.⁸⁰ He dismissed women painters with reference precisely to the decorative: “Woman’s talent only suffices for the sonorous, decorative and ornamental; her taste is an infantile incentive and not critically organised”.⁸¹

Hildebrandt located women’s creative practices in a drive to beautify (*verschönen*) often turned into excess.⁸² Writing when abstraction had evolved into a particular formal trope in painting, Hildebrandt still fostered the idea that women had an essential inclination for the decorative and ornamental, but asserted that it resulted in a certain aptitude for abstraction in women’s creative work.⁸³ Notably, both Scheffler and Hildebrandt related women’s art to the creative expressions of children and “primitive” people.⁸⁴ Hildebrandt returned again and again to the idea of an essential playful feature in the creative production of women, linking it to a lack of ability and knowledge that he also ascribed to “primitive” people and children.⁸⁵

The idea of the *Kindfrau* that recurred in Scheffler and Hildebrandt’s writings was not an isolated trope, but part of a broader ideological discourse on women that was not only employed as rhetorical strategy in the critical reception of Nell Walden’s art, but, in fact, seems to have permeated the promotional tactics of *Der Sturm*. Previous research has pointed out that even if in radical opposition against many contemporary norms and prejudices, *Der Sturm* from the start represented a conservative, anti-feminist view on women’s status in society.⁸⁶ The conceptualisation of “Woman”

within Der Sturm, predominantly disseminated through the writings of Herwarth Walden, aligned to the notion of woman as *Kindfrau*. It has been suggested that the relatively large number of women exhibiting with Der Sturm were in fact instrumentalised, because if discursively framed as *Kindfrauen*, they could contribute to Der Sturm's expressionist quest to foster authentic or "primitive" art.⁸⁷

Paradoxically, then, women expressionist artists could benefit from the gendered binary framework that ascribed "primitive", natural, or instinctive qualities to women, as these were essential aspects of the expressionist concept of art.⁸⁸ In the social and cultural context of the early twentieth century, strategic gender conformism could thus be beneficial to women artists' careers. For instance, Gill Perry has shown that the critical reception of Marie Laurencin's portraits of delicate and fashionable women not only approvingly framed these popular paintings as representations of the *femme-enfant*, but also ascribed the same naïve and childlike qualities to the artist. Laurencin herself capitalised on this marketable form of femininity and strategically adopted the *femme-enfant* as self-articulation because it favourably influenced the sales of her work.⁸⁹

Nell Walden maintained an ambivalent attitude towards dominant gender binaries. It has been noted that her self-articulations as an active agent within Der Sturm differed from how her Sturm colleagues recurrently portrayed and positioned her as the delightful and pleasing *Kindfrau*, Herwarth Walden's habit of addressing her with the diminutives Baby and Bambina being exemplary.⁹⁰ This indicates that she was more reluctant than Laurencin to strategically adopt the stereotype of the *Kindfrau*.⁹¹ However, as regards creative practices, she seems to have shared Herwarth Walden's conviction that women owned a stronger sensibility and thus were more receptive in artistic matters.⁹² In the 1960s, she summarised her oeuvre as "light and spontaneous with plant, landscape, and star motifs" resulting in "dreamily buoyant patterns, signs, and atmospheres [...] in playful lightness".⁹³ She thus echoed the gendered discourse within which she had emerged as an artist and which had ascribed women a higher degree of intuition and naïveté. Still, her idea of creative sensibility was intimately connected to spiritual or cosmic domains and thus ultimately to an expressionist concept of art. Towards the end of her life, she declared that the most "fair and apt" assessment of her art had been delivered by a Swiss critic, who in an exhibition review had clearly positioned her as a metaphysical painter.⁹⁴

Negotiating New Positions

It should be noted that Der Sturm not only enabled Nell Walden's emergence as an artist, but also limited her position in the art world. Together with William Wauer, Jacoba van Heemskerck, Georg Muche, Arnold Topp, and Johannes Molzahn, she formed the core troupe of the Sturm gallery. According to Volker Pirsich, these were the "actual Sturm artists" because their work was practically only exhibited in Der Sturm and contemporary art criticism hardly ever discussed them if not in relation to Der Sturm.⁹⁵ On the one hand, then, Der Sturm provided an aesthetic context and a promotional apparatus that was both necessary and sufficient in order for Nell Walden to become an artist. Within this framework, she did not need to seek alliances with, for instance, other women artists whose practices were similarly exposed to contemporary gender prejudice. Significantly, it was only on rare occasions and after having left Der Sturm that Nell Walden appeared in all-women exhibitions.⁹⁶ On the other hand, Der Sturm also limited her sphere of action as her experience of the

broader field of modern art was fragmentary and her position in the art world clearly demarcated by her intimate connection to Der Sturm. In this, Der Sturm offered her a “confining freedom” that entailed both great opportunities and clear limitations.⁹⁷

Nell Walden’s departure from Der Sturm in September 1925, meant that she lost a supportive critical framework and institutional context and had to negotiate a new position in the Weimar art world. In this situation, the Internationale Vereinigung der Expressionisten, Futuristen und Kubisten e.V. offered an alternative. Walden had been one of the Internationale Vereinigung’s founding members in 1919, and during its first years of existence the organisation had been intimately connected to Der Sturm.⁹⁸ Reportedly, William Wauer had initiated the foundation as an attempt to unite divergent fractions within Der Sturm.⁹⁹ The Internationale Vereinigung’s first General Assembly took place in the Sturm premises and its founding members were all key figures of Der Sturm: Herwarth and Nell Walden, Rudolf Blümner, Georg Muche, Jacoba van Heemskerck, Arnold Topp, and William Wauer.¹⁰⁰

The close connection between the organisations abruptly came to an end shortly after Nell Walden had left Der Sturm. In January 1926, the Internationale Vereinigung adopted new statutes that erased all mention of Der Sturm and added *Die Abstrakten* as a prefix to its name, thus signalling a common aesthetic approach among its members.¹⁰¹ *Die Abstrakten* joined the Kartell der Vereinigten Verbände Bildender Künstler Berlins e.V., which enabled the members of the group to participate in a section of their own in the Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung, an opportunity that Der Sturm, as a commercial gallery, had not been able to provide.¹⁰²

Die Abstrakten provided Nell Walden with a promising alternative platform. It was an association that assembled quite a few Sturm artists that were already part of her network, while simultaneously being an independent organisation increasingly beyond the control of Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm. Indeed, from 1926 onwards, when Herwarth had lost influence over the group, Nell readily intensified her engagement. In 1926, *Die Abstrakten* appointed her treasurer and member of the board and she remained in this capacity until 1928.¹⁰³ During the years 1926–1931, she participated yearly as a member of the group in the Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung.

The 1926 Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung marked the first success of *Die Abstrakten*’s efforts to gain public recognition. The group published a separate comprehensive guide over its section in the exhibition, whose four display rooms had been provided with painted designs by members of the Bauhaus in Dessau.¹⁰⁴ The guide included an introductory text by William Wauer, which substantiated the group’s advocacy for abstraction in its expressionist version.¹⁰⁵ His arguments and rhetorical style would have reminded the contemporary art public of the publications disseminated by Der Sturm. Moreover, more than 70 per cent of the c. 60 German and international artists contributing to *Die Abstrakten*’s section had previously exhibited in the Sturm gallery.

Initially, Walden’s participation in the Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung as a member of *Die Abstrakten* provided an apt aesthetic framework for her paintings and led to her getting some works sold. In 1928, she submitted several paintings and two mosaics. The oil painting *Composition in red* (*Komposition in rot*, 1928) is a significant example of the twofold structure of her preferred pictorial style and one of the few oil paintings executed in this mode that has been preserved (Figure 3.18). Against a background of predominantly black and red colour fields are lines in white, yellow, and black, suggestive of natural forms. In this work, the horizontal and diagonal brushstrokes of the background provide an unusual dynamic setting for the scriptural

lines above. One of the mosaics on show in the Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung travelled with the Deutscher Werkbund to an exhibition in New York, where it was sold. The other was acquired by the Berlin Märkisches Museum. In the early 1930s, it was exhibited as an example of expressionism in the permanent collection display of the Ermeler-Haus, alongside works by Käthe Kollwitz and Ernst Barlach.¹⁰⁶

The assessment of expressionism, not least in its abstract versions, as a timely approach in art was rapidly changing in the Weimar art world.¹⁰⁷ Eventually, and despite its name, abstraction in art evolved into a debated issue within Die Abstrakten too. Around 1928, the political commitment of art became a priority for various members of the group who had joined the Communist Party.¹⁰⁸ The shift in focus of Die Abstrakten from a dedication to formal abstraction to a socially and politically engaged content was a fact by the early 1930s and clearly showed in the group's exhibition practices. Before the opening of the 1931 Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung, a couple of contributions by members of Die Abstrakten were banned from the exhibition, which caused public controversy. Among them was Alice Lex-Nerlinger's well-known painting *Paragraph 218* (1931), a feminist protest against the anti-abortion paragraph of the German Penal Code.¹⁰⁹ Lex-Nerlinger's painting was destined for a special exhibition on the theme "Between Iron and Concrete" within the larger show.



Figure 3.18 Nell Walden, *Composition in red* (*Komposition in rot*), 1928. Oil on canvas, 63 × 45 cm. Landskrona Museum (LAM014180). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

Only a few of the members of Die Abstrakten refrained from joining this section and had their work displayed in another room, among them Nell Walden.

In a situation where many members of Die Abstrakten voiced left-wing sympathies and submitted politically committed work, the florid abstraction of Walden's work by now differed from the majority of the group. In the end, Die Abstrakten provided precisely the kind of politicised context that had contributed to Nell Walden's divorce from Herwarth Walden and her departure from Der Sturm. Undoubtedly, this was decisive for her withdrawal from the group. When the Die Abstrakten exhibited at the Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung in 1932, she refrained from participation.

Nell Walden's participation with Die Abstrakten in the Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung was not the only public display of her work in the late 1920s and the early 1930s. In 1927, she was selected for Gustav Hartlaub's major exhibition *Wege und Richtungen der abstrakten Malerei in Europa* at the Städtische Kunsthalle Mannheim. Her participation, along with some 30 international artists, in the show with the large oil painting *Spring of death* (*Todfrühling*, 1918) was an acknowledgement of her position as an abstract painter.¹¹⁰ The painting had been recognised as one of her major works already in Der Sturm. It was dedicated to the Sturm poet Wilhelm Runge who had fallen in battle in 1918, an unusual reference in the work of Walden to the harsh reality of war during which she debuted as an artist. The painting was lost during the bombings of Berlin in 1945, but preserved reproductions and photographs indicate that it was exemplary of her "absolute painting" at the time, characterised by energetic brushwork and suggestive forms (cp. Figure 4.8).

In terms of visibility in the Weimar art world, though, the 1927 exhibition *Nell Walden-Heimann und ihre Sammlungen* in Alfred Flechtheim's Berlin gallery was Walden's greatest accomplishment. It was the first major show of Walden's art after her departure from Der Sturm and the first public event that presented her not only as an artist but also openly manifested her accomplishments as an art collector. Along with her own works, numerous pieces from her Sturm and ethnographic collections were on display. Alfred Flechtheim was a major player on the German gallery scene, thus the venue itself warranted for public attention.

However, the critical reception of her paintings was now clearly versed in gendered and often dismissal terms. The critics unanimously linked the abstract, decorative, and florid features of the paintings to the gender of the artist and repeatedly used it as an argument to disqualify her work as art, arguing instead that they were "suitable for beautiful textile and wall patterns".¹¹¹ What some critics commented as a lack of serious intent and artistic depth and others as a delicate play with colours testify to the difficulty with which the critical discourse approached abstraction in painting.¹¹² Again and again the reviewers emphasised the ornamental features of her work, whether described in terms of a "strong decorative talent" or "a delicate womanly inclination for the decorative".¹¹³ They noted how "flowers trail through the picture plane like a wallpaper pattern" but merely resulted in "a delight for the eye" and characterised the florid ornamentation and "womanlike" features of her work as "unpretentious", or asserted that her paintings "want nothing more than to be beautiful".¹¹⁴ The problematic discursive liminality of abstraction in painting was sometimes explicitly referenced. The *Steglitzer Anzeiger* reported that "Nell Walden's own paintings are peculiarly superpersonal, very womanlike, but no art, just an intermediate border zone. Perhaps this is the extreme limit of applied arts. Her pictures are nothing but flowing ornaments".¹¹⁵

By the 1930s, Nell Walden's artistic career in Germany had for several reasons become stagnant. The lack of an organisational and institutional context that unequivocally supported, exposed, and promoted her, the dismissive feminisation of the decorative in the critical discourse, and the diminished actuality of expressionism and abstraction in the politicised Weimar art world was clearly to her detriment. In the early 1930s, her paintings were included in a couple of shows organised by Alfred Flechtheim and the art dealer Heinz Hagen.¹¹⁶ The journalist and publicist Felix Stössinger was supportive of her creative practices and occasionally acknowledged her in his critical writing. In 1931, he counted her, along with Käthe Kollwitz, Paula Modersohn-Becker, Charlotte Berend, and Renée Sintenis, to a group of modern women artists that "had achieved something".¹¹⁷ In an exhibition review published the following year, he characterised Walden as an artist who maintained abstraction in painting in the manner of Paul Klee.¹¹⁸ However, Stössinger's attention to Walden in the early 1930s were rare occasions of public approval in passing, and in 1933, she voluntarily exiled to Switzerland and was thus completely disconnected from the German art world for years to come.

Walden's migration brought with it a momentary decrease in artistic production and it was only after the Second World War that she returned to painting with renewed energy. In fact, her most productive period started in the late 1960s. During the last five to ten years of her life, she executed more than 5,000 paintings. From the 1950s onwards, she occasionally emphasised the graphic quality of her paintings by thin lines in sgraffito, such as the crisp tendril-like lines of *Mitsou's Fan Dance* (*Fächertanz der Mitsou*, 1955) (Figure 3.19). In an analysis of the work,



Figure 3.19 Nell Walden, *Mitsou's Fan Dance* (*Fächertanz der Mitsou*), 1955. Sgraffito, 47 × 29 cm. Landskrona Museum (LAM018054). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

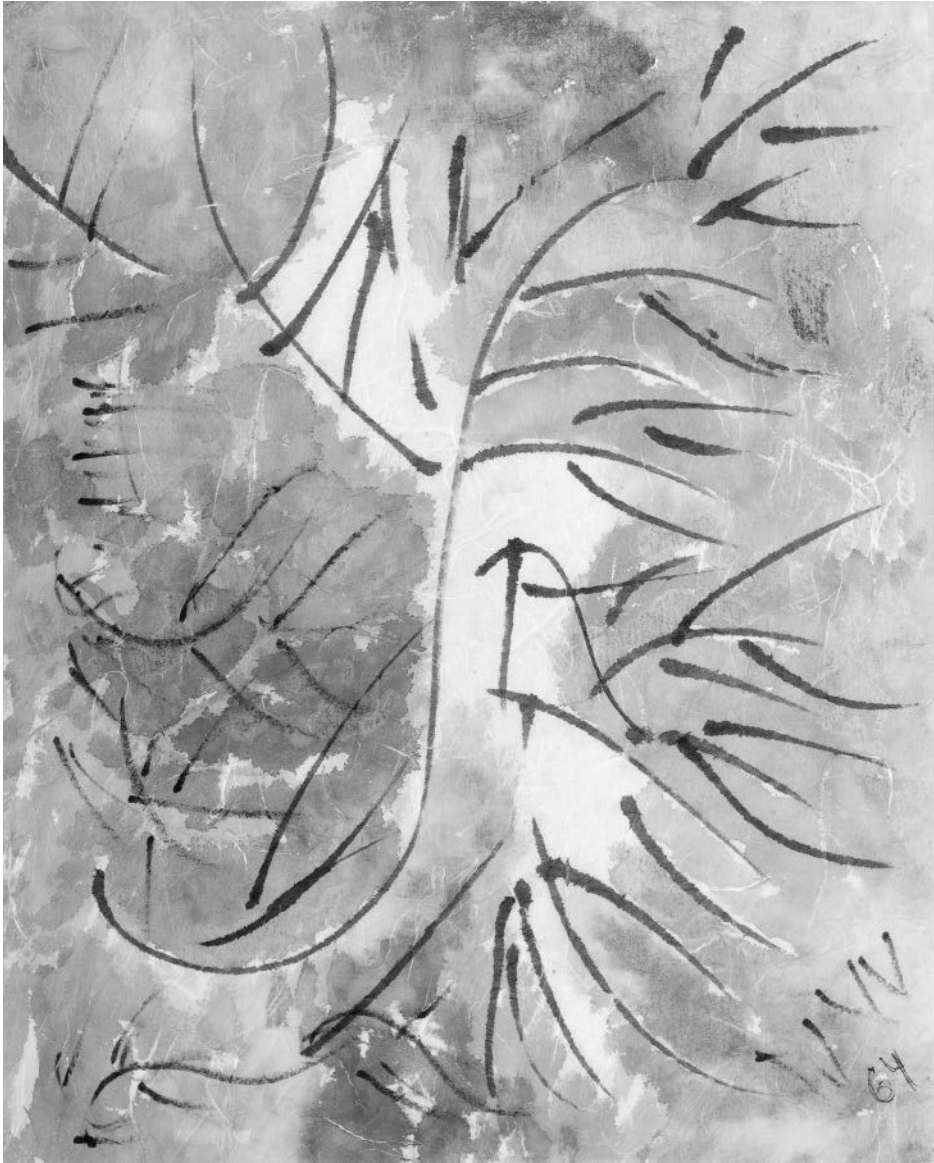


Figure 3.20 Nell Walden, *Japonaise 1*, 1964. Tempera. Landskrona Museum (LAM014177). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

Walden's former Sturm colleague, Lothar Schreyer, defined it as "objective expressionism" as it refrained from mimetically rendering the dancing figure that the title refers to. Notably, he also reverted to the gendered discourse of the *Kindfrau* when he described its expression as a "girlishly oscillating, dancing lightness".¹¹⁹ Mitsou, a Japanese name, relates to a Japonist theme Walden had occasionally elaborated with since the 1910s and early 1920s.¹²⁰ In a series of paintings from the 1960s, she

returned to the subject and now with more pronounced pictorial references to Japanese art and culture. In a painting such as *Japonaise 1* (1964), she emphasised the calligraphic feature of the black lines that appear against colour fields of contrasting warm and cool hues (Figure 3.20). Further paintings in this series allude to Japanese hanging scrolls by their vertically rectangular format and occasionally also by titles such as *Kakemono*.¹²¹ At other times, she let the brushwork dissolve into informal compositions or pure painterly effects, exemplified by the atmospheric background of *Memory of “Tiveden” in Sweden* (*Erinnerung an “Tiveden” in Schweden*), 1964 (Figure 3.21).

As we have seen, Walden had showed an interest in expanding her painting to books, furniture, and household items already during her time in Der Sturm. In the 1920s she designed both mosaic tables and lamps of leaded coloured glass.¹²² Preserved photographs from her home in Switzerland in the 1930s document both the lamps and her decorative painting on furniture. Preserved household items and ceramics with hand-painted patterns indicate that she further developed her interest in exploring painting as design practice from the 1950s onwards. The Landskrona Museum holds several pieces of pottery painted in the distinctive style she had developed in oil and tempera paintings, including a stoneware bowl painted in yellow and blue covered with sweeping brushstrokes in black (Figure 3.22).



Figure 3.21 Nell Walden, *Memory of “Tiveden” in Sweden* (*Erinnerung an “Tiveden” in Schweden*), 1964. Tempera, 27 × 21 cm. Landskrona Museum (LAM014583). Photo © Landskrona Museum.



Figure 3.22 Nell Walden, painted bowl in stoneware, n.d. Landskrona Museum (LAM018279). Photo © Landskrona Museum.

From the middle of the 1940s onwards, Walden occasionally participated in group exhibitions in Switzerland and abroad and she received some attention in the Swiss art world through a couple of solo exhibitions and publications. Her works were shown together with her art collection in Kunstmuseum Bern in 1944–1945 and 1966, in Kunsthaus Zürich in 1945, in Kunsthalle Basel in 1946, and in an exhibition that toured in Sweden in 1954. A solo show of her work accompanied an exhibition of her collections in the Gewerbemuseum Aarau in 1957. Works by Walden were included in a major Sturm show in Berlin in 1961 and in the exhibition *Hinterglasmalerei im XX. Jahrhundert* in the Gutenberg-Museum Mainz in 1962. She had sales and exhibitions in the gallery and auction house Klipstein und Kornfeldt in Bern in 1958 and 1969, and in 1972 there were further shows at Galerie Krebs, Bern, and the Landskrona Museum. Lothar Schreyer and Hannes Urech, her third husband, published the book *Nell Walden. Bilder und Gedichte* in 1957. In 1969, yet another volume with the same title and a preface by former Sturm artist Otto Nebel was published.

From the 1950s onwards, further exhibitions had been in preparation. For instance, the artist and gallerist Eberhard Steneberg wanted to enlist her for a show in the Galerie am Dom in Hamburg at the end of the 1950s and her former Sturm colleague Henryk Berlewski for a Paris exhibition in the early 1960s.¹²³ In 1971, at the age of 83, she was invited to exhibit in the Galerie Gmurzynska-Bargera in Cologne, which by that time started to focus on exhibitions of classical modernism.¹²⁴ Due to

health issues, Walden's participation in these shows was cancelled. In 2015, the first retrospective exhibition of her art was shown in Sweden and Denmark.

The almost explosive increase in Walden's production during the last decades of her life inevitably gave her late oeuvre a repetitive character as many of the paintings were variations of the easily recognised formula she had established already in the 1920s, alternated with a similar trope with abstracted hydrangea. The repetitive dimension of Nell Walden's (predominantly late) art production and the fact that some of her works evoke associations to the discredited genre of flower painting undoubtedly have contributed to the prolonged scholarly disinterest in and critical depreciation of her work, not least as it is predominantly her late production that has been preserved in public collections or has been available on the art market. Throughout her life, the decorative features of her paintings continued to be framed in gendered terms.¹²⁵ Still today, critics employ the recurring undulating organic forms, florid references, and ornamental qualities of her work as derogatory terms.¹²⁶

Notes

- 1 With reference to a lack of quality in Nell Walden's work and because she mainly exhibited in Germany, Jan Torsten Ahlstrand has argued that she does not qualify for the epithet "the first Swedish abstract" painter. Jan Torsten Ahlstrand, "Berlin and the Swedish Avant-Garde—GAN, Nell Walden, Viking Eggeling, Axel Olson and Bengt Österblom", *A Cultural History of the Avant-Garde in the Nordic Countries 1900-1925*, Hubert van den Berg et al. (eds), Brill, Amsterdam and New York, 2012, 212. As I see it, the emphasis on pioneering work and narrow national frameworks in art historiography severely reduces past art production to a group of (almost always white, male, and Western European or North American) artist heroes. Far more interesting than modernist arguments on who was "first" and obsolete reasoning on who qualifies as a native artist in national(ist) art histories, are discussions on the social, historical, and decidedly trans-national contexts in which modern art could emerge. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Ahlstrand was probably wrong when he claimed that Gösta Adrian-Nilsson was the first Swedish artist to exhibit entirely abstract works in Sweden in 1919. In January 1918, Der Sturm arranged a group exhibition at Gummesons in Stockholm, including works by Nell Walden. By this time, she had long abandoned figuration in her work and as Der Sturm always included tokens of her most recent work in exhibitions, as is evidenced also by the non-figurative works she exhibited in Copenhagen in 1917 and 1918, the Stockholm show almost certainly for the first time introduced her abstract paintings for the Swedish audience. Cp. Marcelle [Marta Rydell-Lindström], "Två utställningar", *Aftonbladet*, 18 January 1918.
- 2 As of now, an essay by Annelie Tuveros is the most thorough examination of Nell Walden as an artist: Annelie Tuveros, "Nell Walden the Artist", *Nell Walden & Der Sturm*, Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe et al. Mjellby konstmuseum, Halmstad and Carlsson, Stockholm, 2015, 14–37. Walden's art production is also briefly discussed in Maaïke van Rijn, *Bildende Künstlerinnen im Berliner "Sturm" der 1910er Jahre*, diss. Tübingen, 2013, 71f., 110–115, 195f., 143f.; Karla Bilang, *Frauen im "STURM". Künstlerinnen der Moderne*, AvivA, Berlin, 2013, 105f.; and Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe, "Nell Walden. Muster, Zeichen und Stimmungen/Nell Walden. Patterns, Signs and Atmospheres", *Sturm-Frauen. Künstlerinnen der Avantgarde in Berlin 1910–1932*, Ingrid Pfeiffer and Max Hollein (eds), Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt / Wienand, Köln, 2015, 312–325, 382–383.
- 3 Among the limited number of works from her first years in Switzerland are a number of self-portraits, see, for example, *Self-portrait Nell Walden (Selbst-Bildnis Nell Walden, 1936)*, Landskrona Museum (LAM014219); *Myself (Moi-Même, 1937)*, Kunstmuseum Bern (A 8408).
- 4 A seminal work voicing this critique is Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old mistresses. Women, art and ideology*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1981. An

- extremely valuable corrective to canonical art history is Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*, Thames & Hudson, London, (1990) 2012. As regards modernism in particular, see, for example, Renate Berger, *Malerinnen auf dem Weg ins 20. Jahrhundert. Kunstgeschichte als Sozialgeschichte*, DuMont, Köln, (1982) 1986; Bridget Elliot and Jo-Ann Wallace, *Women Artists and Writers. Modernist (Im)positionings*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994; Gill Perry, *Women Artists and the Parisian Avant-Garde. Modernism and 'Feminine' Art, 1900 to the Late 1920s*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1995; Katy Deepwell (ed.), *Women Artists and Modernism*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1998; Bridget Elliott and Janice Helland (eds), *Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880–1935. The Gender of Ornament*, Routledge, London and New York, (2002) 2018; Katy Deepwell, *Women Artists between the Wars. 'A Fair Field and No Favour'*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 2010; Paula J. Birnbaum, *Women Artists in Interwar France. Framing Femininities*, Ashgate, Farnham and Burlington, 2011.
- 5 van Rijn briefly states that “overall, the works by Nell Walden appear rather unconfident and less refined in composition and execution in comparison to those of her *Sturm* colleagues” (“[i]nsgesamt wirken die Arbeiten Nell Waldens im Vergleich zu denjenigen ihrer *Sturm*-Kolleginnen kompositorisch und von der Ausführung her eher unsicher und weniger raffiniert”). van Rijn 2013, 143. Tuveros notes that “[t]he works are not easy to interpret and do not really seem to fit with our perception of the prevailing of image modernism” and critically adds “[i]s it possible that our reading of the visually imagery of the artist Nell Walden is based on false conjecture?”. Tuveros 2015, 15.
 - 6 In a similar manner, Elliot and Wallace maintain that “[r]ather than dismissing such work, or placing it in a separatist ghetto, we argue that it should be seen as an integral component of larger cultural patterns”. Elliot and Wallace, 1994, 18.
 - 7 Herwarth Walden’s *Die neue Malerei* lists the following painters as the “crucial and leading artists of expressionism”: Kandinsky, Chagall, Marc, Fernand Léger, Albert Gleizes, Jean Metzinger, Boccioni, Carrà, Severini, Francis Picabia, Delaunay, Klee, van Heemskerck, Campendonk, Bauer, Muche, Johannes Molzahn, Nell Walden, Itten, Fritz Stuckenberg, Topp, Fritz Baumann, Filla, Kubin, Uhden, and Kurt Schwitters. Herwarth Walden, *Die neue Malerei*, Der Sturm, Berlin 1919.
 - 8 From 1915 onwards, she meticulously registered her artworks in oeuvre catalogues. The content of the original registers was transferred to two notebooks in the late 1940s and in 1957 that have survived as Nell Walden’s oeuvre catalogue I-II, Nell’s förteckning över sin samling, Ib (p) Nell Walden Archive, Landskrona Museum (NWA/LM). A note in the catalogue states that “a large number of glass paintings with holy motifs were created in 1913/1914/1915 (as the first works by Nell Walden)”. “[e]ine grössere Anzahl Glasbilder mit Heiligen Motiven entstanden in den Jahren 1913/1914/1915 (als erste Werke von Nell Walden)”. In part, these paintings found their way into private collections in Sweden, Germany, and the Netherlands. To the best of my knowledge, no works from 1913 have been preserved. A reverse glass painting from September 1914—an adaptation after a Japanese motif—is probably the earliest work of her hand that has survived. It was presumably acquired by Walden’s second husband Hans Heimann from the Sturm gallery. The painting was sold at Uppsala Auktionskammare, Internationell Kvalitetsauktion, June 2018, auction lot 150. A further rare example of her early work, an abstract oil painting from 1915, was sold at Auktionshuset von Schéele, Kvalitetsauktion, May 2018, auction lot 34656.
 - 9 Constanze Werner, “‘Vor allem wies mir die Volkskunst den Weg’. Gabriele Münter im Kontext von Volkskunst als Inspiration, Sammelgegenstand und Stil”, *Gabriele Münter und die Volkskunst. “Aber Glasbilder scheint mir, lernten wir erst hier kennen”*, Schloßmuseum Murnau and Obergammerau Museum, 2017, 15f., 18ff. See also, Isabelle Jansen, *Gabriele Münter 1877–1962. Painting to the Point*, Lenbachhaus, Munich / Prestel, London and New York, 2017, 139.
 - 10 Gisela Geiger and Simone Bretz, “Hinterglasmalerei. Eine künstlerische Technik der Moderne. Zwei Forschungsprojekte am Museum Penzberg/Sammlung Campendonk”, *museum heute, Fakten, Tendenzen und Hilfen*, Landesstelle für die nichtstaatlichen Museen in Bayern, no. 47, June 2015, 45ff. See also, Gisela Geiger and Simone Bretz,

- Tiefenlicht. Malerei hinter Glas von August Macke bis Gerhard Richter*, Museum Penzberg—Sammlung Campendonk, Penzberg, 2017.
- 11 Nell Walden, "Angaben für das Schweizerische Künstler-Lexikon XX. Jahrhundert", 22 July 1963, NW3, NWA/LM.
 - 12 Prospectus "Kunstschule Der Sturm", Berlin, n.d., Nachlaß Georg Muche, Drucke no. 22, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (StaaBi).
 - 13 Rudolf Blümner, Georg Muche, Lothar Schreyer, and Herwarth Walden are specified as main teachers and directors, Blümner and Walden were responsible for two departments each.
 - 14 "Die Einheit der Kunst erfordert die Kenntnis aller Künste und die Einheitlichkeit im Unterricht". "Die Schüler [...] sind berechtigt und verpflichtet, an den Vortragsreihen aller andern Abteilungen ohne besonderes Entgelt teilzunehmen". Prospectus "Kunstschule Der Sturm", Berlin, n.d., Nachlaß Georg Muche, Drucke no. 22, StaaBi.
 - 15 Volker Pirsich, *Der Sturm. Eine Monographie*, Traugott Bautz, Herzberg, 1985, 383f. Jacoba van Heemskerck was appointed as director for a branch of the art school in The Hague. In October 1919, she went to Berlin for a three-week stay in Sturm, during which time she also corrected in the art school. Jacoba van Heemskerck, letters to Herwarth Walden, 21 August 1919 and 4 October 1919, transcribed in A. H. Huussen jr., "Brieven van Jacoba van Heemskerck en Marie Tak van Poortvliet aan Herwarth en Nell Walden en anderen 1911–1923", *Cahiers uit het Noorden X*, Haren, 2006, 171, 175f.
 - 16 During the last year of the art school's existence, they were supplemented by Arnold Topp and William Wauer (as teacher in sculpture). During 1919, the list of teachers in *Der Sturm's* announcements included William Wauer and Arnold Topp. See, for example, *Der Sturm*, vol. 9, no. 11, February 1919, 148; *Der Sturm*, vol. 10, no. 9, December 1919, 143.
 - 17 From September 1913 onwards, Georg Muche studied painting at the Schule für Malerei und Graphik von Paul Weinhold und Felix Eisengräber vorm. A. Ažbé in Munich, where he stayed less than half a year. During spring 1914, he applied to the Königliche Bayerische Akademie der bildenden Künste in Munich, but did not pass the admission test. He then moved to Berlin, where he attended the studio of the painter Martin Brandenburg for three months. Bauxi Mang, "Biographie Georg Muche", *Georg Muche. Das künstlerische Werk 1912–1927*, Magdalena Droste (ed.), Bauhaus-Archiv und Gebr. Mann, Berlin 1980, 10f.; Magdalena Droste, "Georg Muche als Maler", *ibid.*, 18.
 - 18 Muche voluntarily reported to service in August 1914, but was not enlisted until August 1916 and called to active duty in February 1917. Georg Muche, *Blickpunkt. Sturm, Dada, Bauhaus, Gegenwart*, Langen-Müller, München, 1961, 205.
 - 19 Rudolf Bauer studied at the Kunstakademie in Berlin for a short period in 1905. Susanne Neuburger (ed.), *Rudolf Bauer 1889–1953*, Museum Moderner Kunst/Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts, Wien / Staatliche Kunsthalle Berlin, 1985, 20. See also *Art of Tomorrow*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York 1939, 176.
 - 20 There is divergent information as to whether Bauer took up the teaching position in the art school in 1917 or 1918, cp. Neuburger, 1985, 10, 36 and *Rudolf Bauer*, Galerie Gmurzynska, Köln, 1973, 27.
 - 21 Occasionally, Rudolf Blümner and a Miss von Wedelstaedt seem to have been involved in the education. In a letter to Georg Muche, Bauer asked: "Did you make corrections in the Sturm school while I was away? Or who? Dr. Blümner perhaps, or Miss von Wedelstaedt?" ("Haben Sie während meiner Abwesenheit in der Sturmschule korrigiert? Oder wer? Dr. Blümner vielleicht oder Fräulein von Wedelstaedt?"). Rudolf Bauer, letter to Georg Muche, 4 December 1919, Nachlaß Georg Muche, StaaBi.
 - 22 Transcription of Nell Walden interviewed by Margareta Alin, 20 September 1970, NW23, NWA/LM.
 - 23 Pirsich, 1985, 385; Anita Beloubek-Hammer, "DER STURM von Herwarth Walden—Kampfplatz der internationalen Avantgarde für die 'Kunstwende'", *Der Sturm. Chagall, Feininger, Jawlensky, Kandinsky, Klee, Kokoschka, Macke, Marc, Schwitters und viele andere im Berlin der zehner Jahre*, Barbara Alms and Wiebke Steinmetz (eds), Städtische Galerie Delmenhorst Haus Coburg, Delmenhorst, 2000, 39.
 - 24 Beloubek-Hammer, 2000, 39.
 - 25 Peter Vergo, "The Origins of Expressionism and the notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*", *Expressionism Reassessed*, Shulamith Behr, David Fanning and Douglas Jarman (eds), Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1993, 14.

- 26 “Kunst selbst ist Tat und nicht Vermittlung von Tatsachen. Deshalb ist der Unterricht in der Sturm-Schule negativ. Gelehrt wird nicht das Lernen, gelehrt wird das Verlernen. Nämlich die Befreiung von Tatsachen, von Nachahmungen und Nachbildungen”. Herwarth Walden, “Die Freiheit in der Fachkritik”, *Der Sturm*, vol. 10, no. 4, July 1919, 52.
- 27 See, for example, Jacoba van Heemskerck, letter to Herwarth Walden, 24 July 1916, transcribed in Huussen 2006, 110; Jacoba van Heemskerck, letter to Herwarth Walden, 15 August 1917, transcribed in Huussen 2006, 143.
- 28 “[...] daß ich keine pädagogische Methode hätte und mich ganz nach der Art der Begabung eines jeden einzelnen richte”. Muche, 1961, 164.
- 29 Lothar Schreyer, *Erinnerungen an Sturm und Bauhaus. Was ist des Menschen Bild?*, Albert Langen Georg Müller, München, 1956, 106.
- 30 “An sich meine ich, dass KUNST nicht vom KÖNNEN kommt- wenn auch das handwerkliche Können sicher dabei sein muss- KUNST kommt, glaube ich, vom Kunde geben-Verkünden- ist also eine mehr oder weniger profetische Ankündigung von etwas das aufrüttelt- und in göttliche Gebiete führt.—Wir Künstler sind nur Träger einer Vision, die wir gestalten sollen.—Die Vision ist die Gnade, die uns gegeben wird—unser Verpflichtung: diese Vision zu gestalten und dankbar sein, wenn es uns gelingt.- So sehe ich es”. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Max Bill, 6 March 1970, uncatalogued material, NWA/LM.
- 31 “Kunst nicht nur von können herkommt”. Paul Fechter, *Der Expressionismus*, R. Piper, Munich, (1914) 1920, 21f.
- 32 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Hans Maria Wingler, undated (presumably 1952), NW4A:335–326; Transcription of Nell Walden interviewed by Margareta Alin, 20 September 1970, NW23, NWA/LM.
- 33 Bridget Elliott, “Housing the work. Women artists, modernism and the *maison d’artiste*. Eileen Gray, Romaine Brooks and Gluck”, *Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880–1935*, Bridget Elliott and Janice Helland (eds), Routledge, London and New York, (2002) 2018, 178f. On the studio-cum-home in relation to motherhood, see Marsha Meskimmon, *We Weren’t Modern Enough. Women and the Limits of German Modernism*, I.B. Tauris, London and New York, 1999, 155f.
- 34 Only van Heemskerck, Klee, and Schwitters exhibited as main exponent in *Der Sturm* more often than Nell Walden. Her exposure in the home gallery paralleled artists such as Archipenko, Bauer, Campendonk, Chagall, Gleizes, Kandinsky, Marc, Marcoussis, Molzahn, Muche, Topp, and Wauer. For this chapter’s discussions on Nell Walden’s exhibitions in *Der Sturm*, I am deeply indebted to the foundational research work on the exhibitions of *Der Sturm* conducted by the historian Rainer Enders. Enders has systematically surveyed and documented exhibition catalogues and further records related to *Sturm* exhibitions that are preserved in a vast array of international libraries, museums, and public and private archives. Without this invaluable material, I would not have been able to trace the exhibitions of Nell Walden in *Der Sturm*. Since 2015, Enders’ complete collection is available online through the web page of the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich, see <https://www.zikg.eu/bibliothek/studienzentrum/digitalisierung/kataloge-sturm>.
- 35 Her work was shown in the following cities: Basel, Berlin-Ost, Breslau/Wrocław, Brünn/Brno, Copenhagen, The Hague, Dresden, Gera, Gothenburg, Hamburg, Jena, Kristiania/Oslo, Stettin/Szczecin, Stockholm, Stuttgart, and Zürich.
- 36 See, for example, Herwarth Walden, *Einblick in Kunst*, *Der Sturm*, Berlin, (1917) 1924; Herwarth Walden (ed.) *Expressionismus. Die Kunstwende*, *Der Sturm*, Berlin, 1918; H. Walden, 1919.
- 37 “Unabhängig auf ihm [Kandinsky] haben sich unter den Jüngeren Georg Muche, Rudolf Bauer und Nell Walden dieser absoluten Malerei in selbstständiger Weise zugewandt”. Rudolf Blümner, *Der Sturm. Eine Einführung*, *Der Sturm*, Berlin, 1917, 4.
- 38 On the controversy between *Der Sturm* and *Das Kunstblatt*, see Lutz Windhöfel, Paul Westheim und *Das Kunstblatt*. Eine Zeitschrift und ihr Herausgeber in der Weimarer Republik, Böhlau, Köln, Weimar and Wien, 1995, 87–114.
- 39 Behne occasionally wrote for *Der Sturm* from 1912 to 1916. His book *Zur neuen Kunst* was published by *Der Sturm* in 1915. On Behne, see Bernd Lindner, “Auf diesen Berg...”. Adolf Behne—Vermittler der Moderne”, *Avantgarde und Publikum. Zur Rezeption*

avantgardistischer Kunst in Deutschland 1905–1933, Henrike Junge (ed.), Böhlau, Köln, Weimar and Wien, 1992, 7–15.

- 40 “Als nationalpreußische Ersatzkunst waren die Expressionismen der Wauer, Bauer, Nebel und Nell Walden vielleicht zeitgemäß”. Adolf Behne, “Die Kunst in diesem Augenblick”, *Die Freiheit*, 13 January 1921. “Mit allen Versuchen des polemischen Terrors wird es auch in 10 oder 20 Jahren Herwarth Walden nicht gelingen, aus William Wauer, aus Rudolf Bauer und aus Nell Walden ... Künstler zu machen”. Adolf Behne, “Die 100. Ausstellung des ‘Sturm’”, *Die Freiheit*, 9 September 1921. “Planmäßiges Zurückdrängen der Schöpfer und Vorschieben der Epigonen!”. Adolf Behne, “Expressionismus für Arbeiter”, *Die Freiheit*, 9 August 1919.
- 41 By the last impressionist group show in 1886, the dealer exhibition had turned into the most important alternative forum for showing modern art beyond the official Salon. Cp. Harrison C. White and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers. Institutional Change in the French Painting World*, with a new Foreword and a new Afterword, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, (1965) 1993, 144.
- 42 Cp. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, undated 1950, NWSA:338, NWA/LM.
- 43 The main focus in this chapter has been on historically situating Walden’s emergence as an artist in the particular context of the collaborative culture of Der Sturm, not presenting a comprehensive analysis of her art production. The task of tracing the works in her (immense) oeuvre catalogue would have exceeded the limits of this study.
- 44 Only one of her oil paintings and a few of her reverse glass paintings were not included in the exhibition. Only two of the exhibited oil paintings have survived in public museums, a naive style figurative work prompted by the death of Sturm author August Stramm *The Grave in Russia* (*Das Grab in Russland*, 1915), Landskrona Museum (LAM014173), and an abstract composition, *Depth* (*Tiefe*, 1916), Kunstmuseum Bern (G 2004).
- 45 For informative examples, see, for example, Geiger and Bretz, 2017.
- 46 “Nell Walden ist eine Künstlerin der Fläche [...] Großer Geschmack, aber auch mehr: Vollendete Logik in der Zusammensetzung modernster Mosaikarabesken”. T.D. (Theodor Däubler), “Bildende Kunst. Ausstellung Arnold Topp und Nell Walden im Sturm”, *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 13 April 1917.
- 47 “sie [offenbaren] einen Liebreiz der Farbenphantasie, der auch dem vom Expressionismus Unberührten Freude weckt”. Carl Fries, “Der Sturm”, *Das kleine Journal*, 24 April 1917.
- 48 “Det är en förunderlig glans över de färger, som dessa glasmålningar återkasta, en glasklar diamantprakt, som nästan bländar”. Harald Wägner, “Bortom kriget”, *Aftonbladet*, 22 April 1917.
- 49 See, for example, C[arl] Fries, “Fünzigste Sturm-Ausstellung”, *Das kleine Journal*, 7 March 1917; Anon., “Mellanslag”, *Korrespondenten Landskrona Tidning*, 16 April 1917.
- 50 “Ich bin sehr froh für Nell das die Ausstellung grossen Erfolg hat”. Jacoba van Heemskerck, letter to Herwarth Walden, transcribed in Huussen 2006, 137.
- 51 “Das expressionistische Bild ist also ein Diagramm der Seele”; “dieser kosmischen Bewegungen wird durch die innere Notwendigkeit bestimmt”. Rudolf Bauer, “Die kosmische Bewegung”, *Expressionismus. Die Kunstwende*, Herwarth Walden (ed.), Der Sturm, Berlin, 1918, 53ff., quotations 53.
- 52 The only works missing were two tempera paintings, one of them later in the possession of Kurt Schwitters.
- 53 In her copy of the catalogue, Walden marked the works she sold during the exhibition, two oil paintings and four reverse glass paintings. Ausstellungskritiken I, NWA/LM.
- 54 The painting is listed as *Farbige Zeichnung 23* in the exhibition catalogue.
- 55 Nell Walden, *Design for a mosaic table* (*Entwurf z. Mosaiktisch*, 1918), Landskrona Museum (LAM018033).
- 56 The publications that Nell provided with paintings were Herwarth’s *Die Härte der Weltenliebe* (1918); *Sünde* (1918); *Erste Liebe* (1918); *Glaube* (1918); *Letzte Liebe* (1918); and *Die Beiden* (1918). They are all preserved in the Nachlaß Nell Walden, Drucke, StaaBi, (Sign. 73037, 73038, 73042, 73047, 73043, and 73041) along with the book by Holz (Sign. 73083) and two further painted covers by Nell Walden on Herwarth Walden’s *Trieb. Eine bürgerliche Komitragödie* and *Weib. Komitragödie* (Sign. 73040 and 73046).
- 57 Bauer, 1918, 52–60.

- 58 On the Omega Workshops, see, for example, Christopher Reed, *Bloomsbury Rooms. Modernism, Subculture, and Domesticity*, Yale University Press, New York and New Haven, 2004, chapters 7–9.
- 59 See announcement in *Der Sturm*, vol. 5, no. 6, June, 1914, 48: “Anna Scheerbart / Handgefertigte farbige Vorsatz- und Deckelpapiere für Büchereinbände/Muster im Sturm (Ausstellungskasse), wo auch Bestellungen entgegengenommen werden”. The advertisements for Scheerbart’s work continued until at least October 1916. *Der Sturm* also marketed a limited luxury edition of her husband Paul Scheerbart’s publication *Glasar-chitektur* with painted wrapping and endpaper by Anna Scheerbart. See announcement in *Der Sturm*, vol. 5, no. 3, May, 1914.
- 60 See announcement in the prospectus “Der Sturm”, Berlin, n.d., Nachlaß Georg Mücke, Drucke no. 15, StaaBi.
- 61 “Absolute Malerei”; “Ein einziger Aufschrei”. Lothar Schreyer and Hannes Urech, *Nell Walden. Bilder und Gedichte*, Schinznach-Dorf, 1957, n.p.
- 62 According to Walden, *Passion and Spring of Death* was included in a travelling exhibition arranged by Weimar authorities. Nell Walden, letter to Lars Erik Åström, 28 August 1954, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm. I have not been able to identify the exhibition.
- 63 Cp., for example, *Japanese Blossom (Japanblüte)*, 1920) and *Blue Flowers (Blumen in blau)*, 1921), Landskrona Museum (LAM014149 and LAM014203).
- 64 “[ein] Farbraum und ein lockeres Netz gliedernder Linienzüge”. J. Ch. A., “Ausstellungen. Bern. Nell Walden. Sammlung und eigene Werke. Kunstmuseum”, *Das Werk. Architektur und Kunst / L’oeuvre. Architecture et art*, vol. 53, no. 5, 1966, 109.
- 65 See, for example, *Zig Zag* (1918), reproduced in Sjöholm Skrubbe et al., *Nell Walden & Der Sturm*, Mjellby konstmuseum, Halmstad and Carlsson, Stockholm, 2015, 149.
- 66 “Wiederholt haben wir hier betont, daß es vorwiegend dekorative Werte sind, die der modernen Kunst aus dem Lager des kubistischen Expressionismus zufließen”. “dekorative Experimente aus Linien und Farben”, “kringelartigen Ornamentation”. C.B., “Ausstellung des Sturm”, *Berliner Börsen Zeitung*, 5 May 1918.
- 67 “Um unter Ausschaltung des Gegenständlichen rein aus dem Spiel und Rhythmus farbiger Flächen und Linien über bloß dekorative Reize hinauszukommen, dazu bedarf es einer stärkeren inneren Musik”. [Paul] Fechter, “Berliner Ausstellungen”, *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, Morgen-Ausgabe, 7 May 1918.
- 68 “Nell Waldens nya utställning har på många håll fått ett oförbehållsamt bifall. Konstnärinnan har också under ett år genomgått en hart när otrolig utveckling och står utan tvivel just nu mitt uppe i en blomning av sin konstnärliga skapelse” [italics in the original]. “För ett år sen målade hon mest små [...] idylliska, färgkompositioner [...]. Men de saknade ofta en bärande konstnärlig idé och erinrade en mest om ett, i och för sig mycket berömvärt, fromt och ‘skönt’ handarbete [...]. Nell Walden har från det dekorativa stadiet tagit steget ut till konstnärens fria skapande”. Harald Wägner, “Utställning Nell Walden i Berlin”, *Aftonbladet*, 22 June 1918.
- 69 See, for example, Ernest Gombrich, *The Sense of Order. A Study in the Psychology of Decorative Art*, Phaidon, Oxford, 1979, 62; Nancy Troy, *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France. Art Nouveau to Le Corbusier*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1991; Jenny Anger, *Paul Klee and the Decorative in Modern Art*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004, 1–32. The diverse and gendered understandings of the decorative and its relation to modernism and abstraction have been widely discussed, see, for example, Chadwick, (1990) 2012, 252–278; Perry, 1995, 115–118; Elliott and Helland, (2002) 2018.
- 70 Anger, 2004, 20–32, quotation 31.
- 71 See, for example, H. Walden, (1917) 1924, 97; H. Walden, 1919, 13.
- 72 “Was ich als Werk des Malers vor mir sehe, ist eine Fläche. Darauf sind Farbenkomplexe, rote, grüne, gelbe, blaue. Da sind Linien—geschwungene, gerade, fortlaufende, unterbrochene”. Adolf Behne, *Zur neuen Kunst*, Sturm-Bücher VII, 2nd ed., Der Sturm, Berlin, 1917, 9.
- 73 Anger, 2004, 77.
- 74 Anger, 2004, 91.

- 75 Gombrich noted that “so often, the rights and wrongs of ornament are discussed in terms of feminine adornment”, but failed to explicate on the gendered implications of his statement. Gombrich, 1979, 61.
- 76 Gombrich, 1979, 62. Cp. Anger, 2004, 33.
- 77 Cp. Anger, 2004, chapter 1.
- 78 Gombrich, 1979, 42.
- 79 Anger, 2004, 44f. Both authors had connections with Der Sturm. As an influential art critic, Scheffler had repeatedly reported on exhibitions in Der Sturm and Herwarth Walden occasionally made him the target of his polemics. van Rijn, 2013, 119f. Hildebrandt, a leading art historian, and his wife, the artist Lily Hildebrandt, b. Uhlmann, were personally acquainted with the Walden couple and other artists in the Sturm circle. As is clear from Nell Walden’s guestbooks, the Hildebrandts were guests to the Waldens in the 1910s and 1920s and Nell Walden resumed contact with both Hans and Lily Hildebrandt in the 1950s. Several scholars have commented on expressionist culture and gendered identities with regard to the patriarchal dichotomies advocated by Scheffler and Hildebrandt, see, for example, Berger, (1982) 1986, 66–73; Shulamith Behr, *Women Expressionists*, Phaidon, Oxford, 1988, 5–15; Erich Ranfft, “German Women Sculptors 1918–1936. Gender Differences and Status”, *Visions of the ‘neue Frau’. Women and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany*, Marsha Meskimmon and Shearer West, Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1995, 43f., 46, 48, 52; Shearer West, *The Visual Arts in Germany 1890–1937. Utopia and Despair*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000, 70–73; van Rijn, 2013, 121ff.
- 80 Karl Scheffler, *Die Frau und die Kunst*, Julius Bard, Berlin, 1908, 49f.
- 81 “Das talent der Frau reicht nur aus für das Klanghafte, Dekorative und Ornamentale; ihr Geschmack ist ein Kind der Reizsamkeit und nicht kritisch organisierend”. Scheffler, 1908, 59.
- 82 Hans Hildebrandt, *Die Frau als Künstlerin*, Rudolf Mosse, Berlin, 1928, 22, 30, 34, 143.
- 83 Hildebrandt, 1928, 25, 30, 34, 156.
- 84 See e.g. Scheffler, 1908, 19, 52; Hildebrandt, 1928, 24, 157.
- 85 Hildebrandt, 1928, 123f., 142, 145, 156f.
- 86 Maurice Godé, *Der Sturm de Herwarth Walden ou l’utopie d’un art autonome*, Presses de universitaires de Nancy, Nancy, 1990, 77.
- 87 van Rijn, 2013, 216ff.
- 88 Ranfft, 1995, 44.
- 89 Perry, 1995, 107–111.
- 90 van Rijn, 2013, 187–197.
- 91 It should be noted though that she referenced Herwarth Walden’s infantilising epithets and dedications without rebuttal in her own writing on Der Sturm. Nell Walden, “Aus meinen Erinnerungen an Herwarth Walden und die ‘Sturmzeit’”, *Der Sturm. Ein Erinnerungsbuch an Herwarth Walden und die Künstler aus dem Sturmkreis*, Nell Walden and Lothar Schreyer (eds), Woldemar Klein, Baden-Baden, 1954, 22, 46f. She also did not hesitate to publish a number of Herwarth Walden’s dedications to her, many of which were permeated by the idea of the *Kindfrau*, see Herwarth Walden, “Widmungen an Nell Walden”, *Der Sturm. Ein Erinnerungsbuch an Herwarth Walden und die Künstler aus dem Sturmkreis*, Nell Walden and Lothar Schreyer (eds), Woldemar Klein, Baden-Baden, 1954, 64, 66.
- 92 N. Walden, 1954, 47.
- 93 “Das ganze Werk farbig, leicht u. spontan, mit Pflanzen-, Landschafts-, Sternmotiven [...]. Es entstehen traumhaft beschwingte, in spielerischer Leichtigkeit [...] Muster, Zeichen u. Stimmungen”. Nell Walden, Ausstellungskritiken IV, NWA/LM. The text, written towards the end of the 1960s, is presumably a sketch for an entry in an artist encyclopedia or exhibition catalogue. Occasionally, dreamlike qualities or a mystic relation to colour schemes were also noted in the critical reception of her work, see P.F.A., “Ausstellungen. Bern. Nell Walden. Klipstein und Kornfeld”, *Das Werk. Architektur und Kunst/L’oeuvre. Architecture et art*, vol. 45, no. 3, 1958, 51.
- 94 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Sven B. Ek, 14 May 1972, NW16, NWA/LM. The review she referred to was z. [Jörg Zoller], “Haus Gottes auf goldenem Grund. Nell Walden in der Galerie Krebs”, *Der Bund*, 24 April 1972.

- 95 “eigentliche Sturm-Künstler”. Pirsich 1985, 350.
- 96 In June 1927, she participated in *The creative woman in the fine arts (Die schaffende Frau in der bildenden Kunst)* organised by the sculptor and art dealer Johannes Hinrichsen in the premises of the Verein Berliner Künstler and including notable artist such as Paula Becker-Modersohn, Charlotte Berend-Corinth, Käthe Kollwitz, Gabriele Münter, Emy Roeder, Renée Sintenis, and Milly Steger. Werner J. Schweiger, “Kunsthandlung Johannes Hinrichsen”, manuscript for planned publication “Lexikon des Kunsthandels der Moderne im deutschsprachigen Raum 1905–1937”, 2005–2011, BG-WJS-M-1,34, Kunstarchiv Werner J. Schweiger, Zustiftung Christa M. Schweiger, Wien, und Wolfgang Wittrock, Berlin, 2016, Berlinische Galerie, <https://sammlung-online.berlinischegalerie.de/443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=231156&viewType=detailView>. In 1966, she was specially invited together with Meret Oppenheim and Teruko Yokoi to submit works jury free to the exhibition *Berner Künstlerinnen* in Thun. Gesellschaft schweizerischer Malerinnen, Bildhauerinnen und Kunstgeweblerinnen, Sektion Bern, Memorandum May 1966, NW2B:208, NWA/LM.
- 97 Feminist researchers have argued that the Bloomsbury group provided Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell precisely with a “confining freedom”, enabling “some kinds of work and identifications while limiting others”. Elliot and Wallace, 1994, chapter 3 passim, quotation 57f.
- 98 Vernon Lidtke, “Abstract Art and Left-Wing Politics in the Weimar Republic”, *Central European History*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2004, 51. On the connections between Der Sturm and the Internationale Vereinigung, see also Isabel Wünsche, “Der Sturm und Die Abstrakten—Internationale Vereinigung der Expressionisten, Futuristen, Kubisten und Konstruktivisten e.V.”, *Der Sturm—Literatur, Musik, Graphik und die Vernetzung in der Zeit des Expressionismus*, Henriette Herwig and Andrea von Hülsen-Esch (eds), De Gruyter, Berlin and Boston, 2015, 357–375.
- 99 Schreyer, 1956, 111.
- 100 Lidtke, 2004, 51.
- 101 Lidtke, 2004, 59.
- 102 Wünsche, 2015, 369.
- 103 Wünsche, 2015, 370.
- 104 *Das Wissen um Expressionismus. Führer durch die Ausstellung der Abstrakten*, Das Kunstarchiv, Berlin, 1926.
- 105 William Wauer, “Einführung”, *Das Wissen um Expressionismus. Führer durch die Ausstellung der Abstrakten*, Das Kunstarchiv, Berlin, 1926, 3–28. A substantial part of Wauer’s text had already been published as a series of essays the year before: William Wauer, “Naturalismus und Kunst”, *Kunstwart und Kulturwart*, vol. 38, no. 4, 1925, “Der grosse Irrtum”, *ibid.*, vol. 38, no. 7, 1925, “Wesen und Dinge in der bildenden Kunst”, *Kunstwart*, vol. 39, no. 2, 1925.
- 106 Walden noted the sales in her oeuvre catalogue. It has not been possible to identify the piece acquired by the Märkisches Museum in the museum’s older inventory lists or in the current registrars of the Stadtmuseum Berlin. I am grateful to Dr. Martina Weinland of Stadtmuseum Berlin for trying to locate the mosaic for me. A contemporary guide book for the Ermeler-Haus, a branch of the Märkisches Museum that opened in October 1932, describes its display in the exhibition. Clipping from the *Führer durch das Ermeler-Haus*, Berlin, n.d. [1930s], Nell Walden, Ausstellungskritiken I, NWA/LM. Walden’s *Klebebild* (1924), now in the Kunstmuseum Bern (A 8403), served as a model for the mosaic design. The buyer of the other mosaic has remained anonymous.
- 107 For a detailed study of how expressionism’s ability to serve radical politics was challenged from the November Revolution onwards, see Joan Weinstein, *The End of Expressionism. Art and the November Revolution in Germany, 1918–19*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1990.
- 108 For an in-depth discussion on Die Abstrakten’s move towards a political left-wing profile, see Lidtke, 2004, 64–86.
- 109 Lidtke, 2004, 71ff. For an analysis of this work, see, for example, Rachel Epp Buller, “Alice Lex”, *Alice Lex-Nerlinger. 1893–1975. Fotomonteurin und Malerin*, Rachel Epp Buller and Marion Beckers (eds), Lukas, Berlin, 2016, 57–61.

- 110 Cp. Gustav F. Hartlaub, *Wege und Richtungen der abstrakten Malerei in Europa*, Städtische Kunsthalle, Mannheim, 1927.
- 111 "geeignet zu schönen Textil- und Wandmustern". fms., "Nell Walden und ihre Sammlung", *Der Jungdeutsche*, 1 October 1927.
- 112 B.A., paragraph in *Tägliche Rundschau*, Berlin, Morgenausgabe, 17 September 1927; Oscar Bie, "Berliner Kunstbrief", *Breslauer Neueste Nachrichten*, 20 September 1927, reprinted in *Nürnberger Zeitung*, 28 September 1927.
- 113 "stark dekoratives Talent". Anon., "Berliner Ausstellungen", *Germania, Berlin*, Morgenausgabe, 13 October 1927. "eine feinfühligste Frauenneigung zum Dekorativen". M.O., "Nell Walden-Heimann. Ausstellung bei Flechtheim", *Vossische Zeitung*, Berlin, 10 September 1927.
- 114 "Blumen [...], die tapetenmusterartig die Bildfläche durchranken [...] ein Augenfreude, aber nicht mehr". F. A. Dargel, note on Nell Walden's exhibition in the Flechtheim gallery, *Berliner Nachtausgabe*, 13 September 1927. "Sie sind anspruchlos [...]. Es ist Frauenhaft" B.A., paragraph in *Tägliche Rundschau*, Berlin, Morgenausgabe, 17 September 1927. "nichts weiter wie schön sein wollen". v. B.-Z., "Nell Walden und ihre Sammlungen", *Neue Preussische Kreuzzeitung*, 13 September 1927.
- 115 "Die eigenen Malereien der Nell Walden sind eigenartig überpersönlich, sehr frauenhaft, aber keine Kunst, sonder ein Grenz- und Zwischengebiet. Vielleicht ist es die äußerste grenze angewandter Kunst. Ihre Bilder blaß fließende Ornamentik". Franz Markl, "Kunst und Wissenschaft. Kunstchronik. Ausstellung Nell Walden bei Flechtheim. Käte Brauns-Wüstefeld bei Hirzel und Spanier", *Steglitzer Anzeiger*, No. 211, 9 September 1927.
- 116 In 1931, paintings by Walden were shown during a sculpture exhibition at Alfred Flechtheim's gallery in Berlin. M.O., "Plastik bei Flechtheim", *Vossische Zeitung*, 15 December 1931. See also, Michalina Schwartz, "Aus dem Reich der Frau. Nell Walden-Heimann", *Die Sonntagpost*, Chicago, 17 January 1932. From September through November 1932, her work was exhibited in Heinz Hagen's premises along works by, for example, Annot, Rudolf Jacobi, and Willy Jaeckel. See announcements for the exhibition in *Die Weltkunst*, vol. VI, no. 37, no. 38, no. 39, no. 41, no. 43, and no. 45, 1932.
- 117 Felix Stössinger, "Ausstellungen. Maria Slavona", *Die Weltkunst*, vol. V, no. 48, 1931, 6.
- 118 Felix Stössinger, "Die Unterschätzung der Kunst", clipping from unidentified German newspaper, 1932, in Nell Walden, *Ausstellungskritiken I*, NWA/LM.
- 119 Lothar Schreyer and Hannes Urech, *Nell Walden. Bilder und Gedichte*, Lerchmüller, Schinznach-Dorf, 1957, n.p.
- 120 See, for example, *Japanisches II* (1914), sold at Uppsala Auktionskammare, Internationell Kvalitetsauktion, June 2018, auction lot 150; *Japanblüte* (1920) and *Japanischer Garten* (1926), Landskrona Museum (LAM014149 and LAM014152).
- 121 See, for example, *Japonaise 2* (1965), *Japonaise 8* (1966), *Kakemono* (1966), and *Kakemono-Silbermond* (1966), Landskrona Museum (LAM014156, LAM014155, LAM014145, LAM018087).
- 122 Walden's coloured lamps were mentioned in a news item in the Danish paper *Berlingske Tidene*, 12 December 1924, *Ausstellungskritiken I*, NWA/LM. In 1928, Augusta von Oertzen commented on them in her article "Nell Walden-Heimann die Sammlerin und Malerin", *Die Frauen-Illustrierte*, vol. 31, no. 17, May, 1928, 4.
- 123 Cp. correspondence between Nell Walden and Eberhard Steneberg, 1957–1959, NW1A; Hannes Urech, copy of letter to Henryk Berlewi, 21 August 1960, NW1B:20, NWA/LM.
- 124 In 1969, she reported to have declined participation in three international exhibitions in New York, Rome, and Paris. Nell Walden, copy of letter to (presumably) Ursula and Hans Wauer, 29 October 1969, NW1D:123, NWA/LM.
- 125 See, for example, g., "Ausstellungen. Aarau. Sammlung Nell Walden", *Das Werk. Architektur und Kunst / L'oeuvre. Architecture et art*, vol. 45, no. 1, 1958, 10.
- 126 See, for example, Jan Torsten Ahlstrand, "Udda par i modernismens tjänst", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 2 August 2015.

4 Securing Visibility, Maintaining Presence

An important part of the preserved sources on Nell Walden from the 1920s to the early 1930s consists of photographs. These images on the one hand evidence that she continuously collaborated with prominent, predominantly women, photographers and commissioned both portraits in different genres of herself and visual documentation of her collections; their circulation, on the other hand, suggest how they served as a means to secure social and cultural visibility. Walden was not alone in imposing herself, as it were, on the public by circulating photographic images. For many women painters, sculptors, and writers, visual self-articulation was a means to maintain presence or to claim artistic professionalism in the public sphere.¹ To a large extent, this chapter focuses on how Walden secured visibility, literally and figuratively, in a broader public sphere of culture in Weimar Germany.² Through an analysis of portrait photographs of Walden, whose circulation in the illustrated press and beyond presented her in public in a literal sense, it elaborates on diverse modes of self-presentation. As the visibility of Walden's collections in exhibitions and as reproductions in popular media also served as extended visual self-presentations, this chapter also elaborates in some detail on her continuous collecting. Finally, it theorises Walden's cooperations with women photographers and journalists as a part of a collaborative women's culture (*Frauenkultur*) in Weimar Germany, an affirmative social and professional context that for Walden's part was discontinued by her voluntary exile to Switzerland in 1933.

The Heimanns Receive

After a longer period of matrimonial friction and political disagreements, Nell Walden divorced Herwarth Walden in November 1924. She remained within the Sturm organisation for yet another year and only in September 1925 she left the Sturm premises. In March 1926, she married medical doctor and gynaecologist Hans Heimann.³ Little is known about Heimann. He was born into a Jewish merchant family in Berlin and had been a visitor and customer at the Sturm gallery before marrying Walden. There is no documentation of his art collection, but Walden reported that he had acquired some 35 paintings from the Sturm gallery and that he had presented them as a complement to her own collection when they married. Among them were oil paintings by Boccioni and Severini and numerous gouache paintings by Chagall.⁴ Walden's oeuvre catalogue reveals that he had also acquired at least a dozen of her own paintings.

As we have seen, Walden continued painting during her second marriage and she presented herself as a modern married woman, in the sense that she retained Walden or Walden-Heimann as her artist name in public.⁵ She also nurtured other cultural

interests. In 1933, she published the poetry collection *Unter Sternen* at Felix Stössinger Verlag, the 25 first copies provided with hand-painted covers. A reciter included part of it on her standard programme for a Berlin theatre.⁶ Poetry by Walden's hand occasionally appeared in the illustrated press.⁷ She also authored a manuscript for a novel and a yet another poetry collection, both remained unpublished, and wrote texts for musical compositions.⁸ Being a pastor's daughter, religion and spiritual values had always been an important part of Walden's life. In the 1920s and 1930s, she dedicated herself more seriously to astrology and now and then took on pupils.⁹ Her studies in astrology aligned to a broader tendency within cultural circles to explore the mystic and spiritual, or cosmic as some Sturm theorists would have had it, dimensions of art and life.¹⁰ She continued to engage with astrology through the rest of her life, as the daily astrological notes in her personal almanacs testify, and occasionally published on the subject.¹¹ Walden's astrological endeavours only rarely and mainly towards the end of her life affected her painting, but she explicitly connected her own creative practices with a broader concept of spirituality and declared that she only served as a "channel" for a creative force that went through her.¹²

Judging from Nell Walden's lifestyle during her second marriage, Hans Heimann possessed both social and economic capital and his well-respected position was supplemented by the cultural capital and the professional contacts that she maintained. The couple entertained in distinguished circles and Walden was occasionally mentioned in press reports on Berlin's social life. She attended dance evenings or parties that occurred among the aristocrats, diplomats, and people from the world of culture, whose presence and attire the dailies noticed.¹³ In December 1929, the *Berliner Börsen-Courier* reported on a reception at-home by the Heimanns. Even if only a brief social report, the text is suggestive of Walden's social and professional network at the time. Among the guests were the photographer Yva, the artists Franz Heckendorf, Wolf Röhrich, Walter Helbig, Rudolf Belling, and Walden's former Sturm colleague William Wauer, and the collector Arthur Speyer.¹⁴

Walden's guestbook from the end of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s give further information on the social strata of her network.¹⁵ To a high degree, it mirrors the mix of people from the public sphere of culture, as indicated by the press report, and included artists, singers, dancers, musicians, writers, photographers, scholars, art collectors, and dealers. Among her guests were fellow artists such as the painter Anna Ottonie Jacobi (aka Annot), who had founded her own art school in Berlin in 1928, the sculptor Gela Forster (aka Angelika Archipenko), several fellow members of the artist group Die Abstrakten, and Martel Schwichtenberg, who as a graphic artist worked with corporate design and advertising. Schwichtenberg enjoyed her greatest artistic success with a series of portraits of her friends of the Berlin art world—including Nell and Herwarth Walden, the gallerist Alfred Flechtheim, the actress Tilla Durieux, the sculptor Ernst Barlach, and the art historian Adolf Goldschmidt—in the 1920s and early 1930s. In 1931, Schwichtenberg's portrait of Nell Walden was part of her solo exhibition in the Flechtheim gallery (Figure 4.1).¹⁶

Walden remodelled her personal and professional network with some care, as is clear from her connections with key figures of the Berlin art market. She was on friendly terms with the gallerist Karl Nierendorf, the gallerist Alfred Flechtheim and his wife Betti Flechtheim, who sponsored her husband's collecting, and with the art dealer Wolfgang Gurlitt and his wife Julia Gurlitt-Goob, who formally took over his business when he faced financial problems in the 1930s.¹⁷ Walden also connected with the international art world. The collector of indigenous art Georges de Miré and



Figure 4.1 Martel Schwichtenberg, *Portrait Nell Walden*, 1931. Oil painting, 45 × 35 cm. Landskrona museum (LAM014236). Photo © Landskrona museum.

the art critic Marcelle Berr de Turique were among her guests. Berr de Turique ran the Paris gallery *Le Portique* where she promoted artists such as Raoul Dufy, Maurice Utrillo, Suzanne Valadon, and Marc Chagall. Her interest in the latter might well have brought her together with Walden.

A Bubikopf and a “Feminine Touch”

If Walden during her second marriage actively modified her social network, she also intensified her use of photography to visually articulate her social and professional position. From the 1920s onwards, she repeatedly engaged prominent photographers—including Frieda Riess, Wanda von Debschitz-Kunowski, Yva, Alice Matzdorff, and Minya Díez Dührkoop—to take her portrait or to visually document her collection.¹⁸ Notably, Riess and Yva belonged to the very few photographers who exhibited in fine art galleries in Weimar Germany. Usually, photography was shown in special art salons and bookstores only, so presenting a photographer’s work in an art gallery thus implied serious recognition.¹⁹ Walden’s social and professional ambitions may well have influenced her choice to collaborate with well-reputed photographers who possessed a considerable amount of cultural credibility.

Two photographs from the middle of the 1920s by Frieda Riess and Wanda von Debschitz-Kunowski, respectively, reflect Walden's social pretensions. Both photographers were born in Czarnikau (today's Czarńków) and belonged to Jewish families whose histories have been essentially lost.²⁰ Frieda Riess established her own photographic studio, Studio Riess, in Berlin in 1917, and during the early years of the Weimar Republic she specialised in photographs of artists and performers. Her images frequently appeared in the illustrated press and she produced portraits of film stars for the early film industry. In 1925, she had a solo exhibition in Alfred Flechtheim's Berlin gallery with portraits of luminaires from the world of culture, sports, science, and high society.²¹ Among the sitters were several figures from Walden's social network: Gela Forster, Ksenia Boguslavskaya, Tilla Durieux, and Marc Chagall, but presumably it was their mutual connections to Flechtheim and the banker and art collector Eduard von der Heydt that brought Walden and Riess together.²² The Flechtheim show implied a professional breakthrough and further established Riess' reputation as an acknowledged photographer with an international clientele of artists, aristocrats, and diplomats. Frieda Riess turned into *Die Riess*. During the second half of the 1920s, she organised several exhibitions in her by now famous Berlin studio and participated in a number of group shows of photography in Germany, before going into exile to Paris in 1932 where she stayed until her death in the 1950s.²³

Riess' half-length portrait of Nell Walden is set against an indistinct background (Figure 4.2). Elements of the photographer's signature style—approaching her subject



Figure 4.2 Frieda Riess, Nell Walden, c. 1926. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

with compositional proximity, suggesting movement by turning body, head, and eyes in different directions, and elaborating with accessories or the draping of the subject's clothing—characterise the image.²⁴ The composition was of a favoured type that Riess had employed for her *Self Portrait with Parrot* (1922) and that she would return to throughout the 1920s. Walden appears with the torso turned towards the viewer and her head in half profile. She wears a dark sleeveless dress, a shawl with fringes draped over her shoulder, a long pearl necklace, and a stack of bracelets. She wears her hair cut short in what a Berlin paper, in a report on a dance evening in the famous Palais de Danse in Metropol Palast that Walden attended, had described as “an adorable white *Bubikopf*”, the decidedly modern hairstyle that signified the New Woman of the 1920s.²⁵

A series of photographs by Wanda von Debschitz-Kunowski further anchors Walden within the context of popular entertainment in urban modernity. Kunowski studied painting for Karl Gussow in Berlin and Heinrich Nauen in Munich and photography for Frank Eugène Smith, also in Munich. In 1898, she married the designer and painter Wilhelm von Debschitz, who in 1902 had founded a reformist art school in Munich together with the painter Hermann Obrist. In the years 1905–1914, she was the director of the photography class, one of the first of its kind, at the Debschitz School. After her divorce in 1921, von Debschitz-Kunowski, who had operated a workshop for photographic portraiture already in Munich, founded her own photographic studio in Berlin, specialising in portraits of prominent people and photographs of architecture and exhibitions.²⁶

Debschitz-Kunowski took the photographs of Walden in connection with the Reimann Ball in 1927. The ball was organised by the private Berlin fine and applied arts school Schule Reimann. Walden was on friendly terms with one of the teachers at the school, the artist Ludwig Kainer, and his wife the art collector Margret Kainer, a relation that again is suggestive of how she nurtured her social network during her second marriage. The Reimann Ball evidently attracted public attention. Attendants to the ball sometimes documented their costumes in portrait photographs and photographs from the event appeared in the illustrated press.²⁷ Debschitz-Kunowski's photographs of Walden thus aligned to a broader visual culture that reflected Berlin's *Ball- und Gesellschaftsleben* and they were probably intended for public circulation.

One of the photographs in the series is a half-figure portrait of Walden, posing in her elegant ball costume against an indistinct background (Figure 4.3).²⁸ Evidently all dressed up for the event, with marked eyebrows and dark lipstick, Walden is sitting down, resting her elbows on a table while elegantly touching her hands and directing her dreamy gaze out of the picture. She is wearing a silver-glittering hat and a sleeveless dress with shimmering applications that goes well with her jewellery. The dress reveals the naked skin of her arms and chest, but the sartorial excess surpasses the corporeal exposure. The conspicuous splendour of Walden's clothing and jewellery referenced what had become standard protocols in interwar glamour photography. The notion of glamour in early twentieth century paralleled the birth of the media personality. Paradoxically, in the figure of the glamorous celebrity, personality emerged as an impersonal, standardised aesthetic of photogenic beauty.²⁹ In this, glamour photography provided easily identifiable visual modes for the New Woman to adapt, emulate, or reject.

Originally a concept referring to women's claims to legal and social equality during the French Revolution, the *neue Frau* of the Weimar Republic turned into an iconic presence that was “both a media fabrication and a flesh-and-blood individual”.³⁰



Figure 4.3 Wanda von Debschitz-Kunowski, Nell Walden in silver dress, 1927. Landskrona museum (LAMF018492). © Photo Landskrona museum.

The New Woman as pictorial trope in the illustrated press, in fashion and advertising, and in the film industry paralleled scholarly work and debates on the concept of “woman” and an increasingly public presence of actual working women, who saw the radical social changes in Germany after the First World War as a chance to gain independence.³¹ The notion of the New Woman, in Weimar Germany and beyond, thus incorporated diverse, sometimes contradictory, female stereotypes.³²

The portraits of Walden by Riess and Debschitz-Kunowski, simultaneously manifesting social pretensions and mimicking the pictorial language of popular culture, articulate seemingly opposing norms of femininity. The engagement of high-profile photographers, whose clientele comprised cultural celebrities and the social elite and the posing in fashionable *Bubikopf* and elegant dresses, performatively produced Walden as a fashion-conscious modern woman with self-assured claims to a prominent position in social and cultural life. However, the coquettish gestures of Walden’s hands are a defining characteristic of her body language in the images. In both portraits, she is seen touching herself or fingering her necklace. Precisely this kind of “feminine touch” was central to the visualisation of the *Kindfrau* in the illustrated press at the time.³³ As noted in Chapter 3, the *Kindfrau* had been part of an infantilising patriarchal discourse on women for quite some time. Riess’

and Debschitz-Kunowski's photographs of Walden thus manifest an ambiguous negotiation between contradictory tropes of femininity. While articulating the New Woman's way of self-fashioning and self-esteem, they simultaneously conformed to conservative modes of expressing female innocence and subservience.

Collecting the "Primitive" Origins of Expressionism

Feminist art historians have argued that art collecting has presented women with a chance to negotiate and transgress the gendered boundaries of the art world.³⁴ During the fourteen years of collaborations with Herwarth Walden, Nell Walden's collecting had been submerged within the larger Sturm project. Thus, it was only from the late 1920s onwards that she explored the "liberating effect" that art collecting could offer women with access to the necessary financial means.³⁵ From then on, she consistently used the label *Sammlung Nell Walden* in public. In a letter from the 1950s, she explicated on the importance she ascribed to the labelling of the collection, which is worth quoting at length:

You write about the "Walden Collection" [...]. This name is wrong. As long as I was married to Herwarth Walden, I obviously called the artworks I had collected and paid for [...] the "Walden Collection". But from the moment I departed from Herwarth Walden (1925) and left the "Sturm" my art collection [...] was consistently and precisely named the "Nell Walden Collection". [...] With far more right, I could have called the collection the "Nell Walden-Heimann Collection", because before I married Dr. Hs. Heimann, he had, at my suggestion, bought and collected some 35 artworks from the "Sturm". When we married, Dr. Heimann gave me the images he had collected as a supplement and addition to my collection.³⁶

Evidently, including her first name in the title of the collection was a deliberate and explicit proclamation of her being the founding collector and served as a means to claim cultural agency.³⁷

Beyond the framework of Der Sturm, Walden altered the focus of her collecting practices. Recently, she has gained interest as one of the first women collectors in Europe to build a collection of ethnographica.³⁸ Ethnographica as well as alternative terms such as tribal art or "primitive" art are, of course, generalising and vague concepts, originating in a Western colonial discourse. Well aware of the shortcomings, ethnographica and alternatively indigenous art are here used as descriptive collective nouns: the former connoting social and cultural functions, the latter aesthetic qualities. Despite their shortcomings, these concepts reflect the changing cultural identity of the objects when they, as a result of colonial trade, fraud, or theft, were transferred between different contexts and also mirror the discursive renegotiation of their meaning in the historical situation that is in focus here.³⁹

Little is known about the provenances of the objects in Walden's ethnographic collection, by whom they were produced or how and when they were incorporated in the collection. The individuals that created the items have all remained anonymous. In the following, the objects are thus identified by the conventional practice of using ethnonyms or geographical origin when artist names are unknown, however, with the proviso that it cannot be assumed that there is a direct correlation between the style of an object, its function, and the producer's ethnic identity.⁴⁰

Walden had collected ethnographica in the 1910s. Pieces from her collection had been reproduced in printed material from the Sturm publishing house and included in the gallery's group exhibitions. During her time in Der Sturm, her ethnographic collection comprised at least some 100 objects from Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania, including icons, idols, ancestor figures, masks, stools, sculptures, and tapestries. During her second marriage, she significantly enlarged the collection. Hans Heimann shared her interest and together their collections reportedly comprised approximately 700 pieces.⁴¹

Walden made several of her earliest acquisitions in Hamburg, which was a main seaport in Germany and traded in colonial goods. German seamen delivered items they had obtained during overseas travel to the shopkeepers that provided for the sailors and it was in these sailors' shops that she made early purchases. She acquired further works from Paris, Brussels, and Berlin, and eventually she connected with ethnological museums and other collectors, which provided her with opportunities to make exchanges and supplements.⁴² One significant figure with whom she connected was Arthur Speyer, member of a family of important collectors and dealers of indigenous art, from whom she acquired a collection of Peruvian ceramics that Speyer, in turn, had received in exchange from the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin.⁴³

Walden's collection, and its dissemination through exhibitions and reproductions, was part of a broader tendency of aestheticising and redefining non-European indigenous objects as artworks. In the late nineteenth century, European museums started to reclassify "primitive" artefacts, until then regarded as "exotic" curiosities, which discursively transformed them to either artworks or ethnographic objects, a distinction that was only made with difficulty. This conceptual transformation brought with it a taxonomic structure that was institutionalised in the collections of public museums that distinguished between aesthetic objects and artefacts in the service of anthropological studies.⁴⁴ As is well known, by the early twentieth century, artists showed an explicit interest in the stylistic features of "primitive" art and a growing number of collectors acquired indigenous sculptures, masks, religious objects, and utility goods out of an interest in their visual and artistic values. Publications such as Carl Einstein's *Negerplastik* (1915) refrained from an ethnographic outlook and supported the avant-garde's recognition of the aesthetic values of indigenous cultural production.⁴⁵ Symptomatically, it was noted that a characteristic feature of Walden's collection was that she had "intuitively" acquired indigenous artefacts according to her aesthetic preferences and not for the purpose of scholarly study. If the lack of knowledge of the provenances of the artefacts disqualified them as scientific sources, this was compensated for by their artistic quality.⁴⁶ When she exhibited her collections in the Flechtheim gallery in 1927, critics apprehended them as a deliberate manifestation that materialised an expressionist concept of art, in which indigenous art forms constituted a "primitive" origin in the genealogy of art:

The collection is a revision of art history realised in accordance with her personal aims. It is conceivable, that the development of the history of art, from primitive oceanic cult objects to Marc and Picasso, would have unfold this way, had not antiquity and Christianity intervened. The meaning of expressionism [...] is the elimination of this tradition. Nell Walden has experienced the development of art from the perspective of this expressionist idea and has surrounded herself with documents of this interrupted line of development. In this collection, she has put her concept of art into practice with a rare consistency.⁴⁷

The aesthetic kinship between Walden's collections of modern and indigenous art was again emphasised in *Die Frauen-Illustrierte* in 1928:

[...] and if one sees her in her own home, against the backdrop of this strangely bizarre art of indigenous people, in the midst of [...] the works by the strongest representatives of expressionism and cubism, all of which, despite the distance of centuries, even millennia, yet somehow belong together and are related to each other, then one recognises this woman's downright visionary talent for a certain style, which she, raised beyond time and space, "gets a scent of", as it were.⁴⁸

Notably, both the daily and illustrated press acknowledged Walden as an active agent and framed her collecting practices in relation to the broader issue of how the collector intervened in the public reception of the concept of art. In other words, in the 1920s, Walden was acknowledged as one of those women that feminist art historians Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard have described as having "shaped taste and cultural values [...] by articulating new ones as patrons and consumers", but whose interventions in the modern art world for a long time remained marginalised or omitted in modernist art history.⁴⁹

By the end of the 1920s, Walden's ethnographic collection had turned into significant cultural capital that she would employ as a means of gaining recognition in the public sphere of culture. Let me return to the 1929 news report in the *Berliner Börsen-Courier* on the Heimanns' reception at-home. As we have seen, the article was indicative of Walden's social network. In addition, it testifies how her collections made a stir, as is evident also from further media reports, and how visitors to the apartment clearly understood it as a backdrop to her social self-presentation. The Heimanns' premises were located on Rankestrasse at the intersection of Tauntzienstrasse to the east and Kurfürstendamm to the west, just opposite the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtnis-Kirche at August-Victoria-Platz. The article paid some attention to the collection display in the apartment and how in the evening the curtainless windows facing the church allowed "the grotesque world of the exotic" to be incorporated with the artificial light of the illuminated advertisements of the modern metropolis outside. According to the reporter, the "uncanny reality" of the apartment, where modernist artworks and the paintings of the hostess herself harmonised with "the diversity of Asia, Oceania, and Africa", provided "a beautiful foil for the blonde woman of the house, for the extravagance of today's fashion".⁵⁰

A photograph from c. 1926 is suggestive of how the collection served precisely as a spatial setting for Walden's performative self-presentation as a collector.⁵¹ In the photograph, Walden appears alone in the room that served as her studio in the apartment at Rankestrasse (Figure 4.4). The space is lavishly furnished with images, sculptures, ancestor figures, sacrificial bowls, masks, vases, sculpted stools, and more.⁵² Also, the walls are covered by objects, some of which are framed American Indian textiles. The larger textiles on display act as backdrops to hanging dancing staves. Two lamps of her own design are clearly visible at the top of the photograph. According to a contemporary article, the coherent colours of the walls and the obscure light from Walden's lamps made the display come forward as "a grand unified document of human artistic achievement".⁵³

Interestingly, Walden had commissioned the Atlantic Photo-Co to take the photograph. The Atlantic was founded in 1919 by Heinrich Sanden as a hiving off from the



Figure 4.4 Atlantic Photo-Co, Nell Walden in her studio, c. 1926. Photo © bpk/Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

Berliner Illustrationsgesellschaft, which Sanden and two companions had started in 1900 as the first press agency in Germany entirely focusing on providing photographs for the press. Sanden established the Atlantic as one of the largest and leading firms in the business with hundreds of customers and cooperation agreements with equivalent image agencies abroad.⁵⁴ Walden's choice of the commercial press agency Atlantic anchors the photograph in the context of mass media and indicates that it was intended for widespread public circulation. Yet other photographs of her collection were published on several occasions in the late 1920s and early 1930s.⁵⁵ Even if none of them included the collector herself, most of them were published as illustrations to articles on Walden or had captions that informed the reader on who had collected. Several of these photographs were taken by the Berlin photographer Alice Matzdorff.

In Nell Walden's personal photo album, there is a series of some 30 photographs showing individual pieces or groups of objects from her ethnographic collection.⁵⁶ There are no notes in the album that clarifies the photographer, but as several of them are identical to the images by Matzdorff that were published as illustrations to articles on Walden and her collections, the whole series can be attributed to Matzdorff. Detailed information on Alice Matzdorff has not survived. She was born into a Jewish family in Breslau (today's Wrocław), where she studied at the art school for two years. This was followed by studies for a Munich portrait painter and a thorough education in photography. In 1903 or 1905, she founded a studio for art photography on Kantstrasse in Berlin. Her photographs appeared in numerous illustrated magazines, such as *Das Leben*, *Revue des Monats*, *Die Praktische Berlinerin*, *Die Grüne Post*, and

Die Gartenwelt. In 1938, her photo studio was liquidated and expropriated by the Nazis. Presumably, Matzdorff was thereafter deported.⁵⁷

Walden must have engaged Matzdorff in the latter part of the 1920s. The series comprise of two different kinds of images: on the one hand, descriptive photographs presenting individual artefacts or a particular view of the display of the collection in Walden's private home, and on the other, dramatised images of isolated objects in indeterminate pictorial spaces, characterised by careful elaborations with reflections, elongated shadows, and chiaroscuro effects. If the descriptive photographs from Walden's home offer visual accounts of how different kinds of objects representing diverse geographies, functions, and temporalities that originally had served as religious items or utility goods were recontextualised as aesthetic objects within the framework of her collection, Matzdorff's images of isolated artefacts reveal how modernist photography, with its predilection for light effects and unusual themes and angles, aestheticised the objects even more. The strikingly staged compositions of the dramatised photographs indicate that Matzdorff and/or Walden aimed to offer something more than only visual registrars of the artefacts. The careful staging makes manifest that these photographs were conceptualised with an ambition to present visually remarkable images *per se*.

One of the photographs presents a nineteenth-century face mask from the Torres Strait Island, Australia, made by turtle shell, wood, and cassowary feathers (Figure 4.5). The turtle shell masks of the Torres Strait were used in religious ceremonies and ascribed spiritual power. From the middle and late nineteenth century onwards, many of the masks were traded or removed due to increased commerce and the Christianisation of the Torres Strait. No more than 80 masks have survived, none of which remains in the Torres Strait.⁵⁸ Walden must have acquired the mask in the 1920s and it was readily recognised as a *pièce rare* in her collection.⁵⁹ Today, it is presented as an extraordinary artefact in the collection of the Museum Rietberg in Zürich.⁶⁰

In the photograph, the mask is positioned in the lower left corner of the pictorial space. Hanging on a wall it is sharply lit from the lower left. The dramatic lighting creates a markedly extended shadow that stretches to the upper right and dominates the picture plane. The distorted form of the shadow and its large irregular eyes, created by the light that slipped through the hollow eyes of the mask, makes it appear as animated. In an article on Walden's collection, the alleged uncanny energy of some of the objects was emphasised by the author and was also brought forward as an attractive quality by the collector herself. In the text, Walden is quoted describing her understanding of the indigenous artworks she collected:

[...] they live by and with me; they may appear as artworks without life to you now [...], but they are more to me and they have lost none of their mystical and secretive character [...]. I always have the feeling that in my silent and noble friends reside a mystical power.⁶¹

The magical power Walden here ascribed to the artefacts that inhabited her home clearly echoes the way some of the objects were animated by dramatic lighting in the photographs by Matzdorff.

Another photograph shows two wooden figures that have been attributed to Ibibio sculptors in Nigeria (Figure 4.6).⁶² Both figures—one male, one female—are carved in light wood, have movable arms, are placed on low stools, and are painted in black,



Figure 4.5 Alice Matzdorff (attributed to), nineteenth-century face mask from the Torres Strait Island, Australia, late 1920s/early 1930s. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.



Figure 4.6 Alice Matzdorff, Ibibio ancestor figures, Nigeria, late 1920s/early 1930s. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

golden brown, and red. As with most objects in Walden's collection of ethnografica, there is next to no information on the provenance or original function of the figures. Reportedly, they were brought to Europe from Lagos and Walden purchased them no later than 1917.⁶³ In her inventory lists, she most often labelled them "gods" or sometimes just "figures". In the records of Landskrona museum, they are described as ancestor figures that served as vessels for the souls of the deceased and were used as objects of prayer and sacrifices.⁶⁴

When the photograph appeared as an illustration to an article on Nell Walden in *Beyers für Alle* in 1929, the caption did not inform on the figures' exact origin but described them more vaguely as "African wooden gods painted in different colours". In the image, the male figure appears in the profile turning towards his female companion who is captured from the front facing the beholder with raised arms. The figures are presented against an indiscriminate space, only the table on which they are standing and a drapery in the background are vaguely recognisable. The unclear spatial context and the deliberate placement of the sculptures so as to present the beholder with views of the craftsmanship from different sides, inform on nothing more than the figures' purely formal qualities and thus effectively stage them as decontextualised aesthetic objects to be visually contemplated.⁶⁵

Among Matzdorff's photographs of Walden's ethnographic collection, there is also an image of three wooden ancestor figures, *adu zatua*, from Nias, an island to the west of Sumatra (Figure 4.7). The ancestor figures were memorial sculptures that functioned as vessels for the soul of the dead. The sculptures were employed during funerals or used for offerings and protection.⁶⁶ During the Christianisation of Nias



Figure 4.7 Alice Matzdorff (attributed to), ancestor figures, *adu zatua*, Nias, late 1920s/early 1930s. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, ancestor figures, which were kept in private households, became the target of an extensive iconoclasm executed by Christian missionaries. The *adu zatua* were destroyed, buried, or, starting at the beginning of the twentieth century, sold to Western museums or art collectors. By the time Nell Walden acquired her sculptures, missionaries were still removing ancestor figures in large numbers from private homes on Nias.⁶⁷ However, already at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Christian iconoclasm had caused controversy in Germany, and eventually artists and scholars began to revalue the ritual objects from Nias as artworks.⁶⁸ To the best of my knowledge, there are no records that document the provenances of the *adu zatua* that were in Nell Walden's possession, but given the circumstances one has to presume that their transport from Nias to Europe was part of the dispersal of the cultural heritage of Nias executed by Christian missionaries.

In the photograph, the wooden sculptures are standing side by side in half profile on a table set against an indistinct background. The composition is sharply lit from the left, making the volumes of the wooden bodies appear in chiaroscuro and casting lengthy shadows on the wall behind them. In the pictorial space of the photograph, the immaterial presence of the shadows seems to vaguely reference the ancestor figures' function as vessels for the soul of the dead. However, devoid of any references to their intended function or place of origin, these figures, too, are staged as purely aesthetic objects. The deliberate dramatization by means of the lighting echoes a broader interest in shadowplay in modernist art photography and renders an image of almost abstract qualities. In sum, the elaborate formal features of the photograph suggest that the stylistic interplay between objects and shadows rather than a descriptive registrar of the artefacts were at the foreground for both the photographer and the collector.

Matzdorff's photographs indicate an intent to visually communicate particular conceptualisations of the staged objects. The deliberate play with shadow and light parallels the haunting and "exotic" qualities that were articulated when other pieces from the collection appeared in the press, either as narrative topic in articles or as illustrations of practices of collecting. When it figured in the illustrated press, Walden's collection of ethnographica often aligned to the contemporary discourse on "primitive" art, to which Nell Walden herself would contribute at least once. Her 1931 review of the ethnologist and collector Paul Wirz's book *Nias: Die Insel der Götzen* is suggestive of her own understanding of the original cultural context of the ancestor figures in her collection:

Nias, the island of idols, the island of happiness, what desires does not this word arouse! In this way we imagine paradise, heaven. [...] Where no absurd morality, no meaningless laws silence and corrupt people—where life is happiness, and death a beautiful homecoming to the great ancestors that have gone ahead! [...] Carefree and happy, these islanders live a rich life.⁶⁹

As expected, the review is imbued with contemporary ideas of the alleged primitivism of non-European cultures, imagining a primeval place ignorant of the limitations of modern civilisation and including the idea that indigenous people entertained an unconcerned way of life. In a similar manner, art historian and journalist Augusta von Oertzen explained Walden's collection as an effect of "the longing of today's overwrought, nervous man for nature", a desire for "wholeness" and "unity" which might be found in "the art of the exotic".⁷⁰ An exoticising discourse—voicing a continuing colonial understanding of "primitive" artefacts without questioning the

trading of cultural heritage of indigenous people from (de)colonised territories—thus framed Nell Walden’s ethnographic collection. Moreover, Walden’s expanded collecting activities during the latter half of the 1920s onwards and its visual dissemination through photographs in the illustrated press were imbedded in a broader sphere of visual culture, including photographs, advertisements, films, caricatures, and exhibition displays, which fostered what has been described as a colonial nostalgia in decolonial Weimar Germany.⁷¹

Maison d’artiste

A photograph, again taken by the Atlantic Photo-Co c. 1926, shows Nell Walden in her home on Rankestrasse. She sits alone at a small coffee table, laid with a teapot, milk can, sugar bowl, and cups, and turns the head towards the camera as if inviting the beholder to afternoon tea (Figure 4.8). With few exceptions, the artworks inhabiting the room are her own abstract paintings. On the cupboard to the right is one of her few figurative pieces, *Salome* (1915). Against the back wall are cupboards with pots, vases, and candlesticks. The cupboard to the left and a few pieces of the pottery have painted patterns that are typical of Nell Walden’s pictorial style. The ceiling lamp visible at the top of the photograph is one of the glass lanterns she had designed in the middle of the 1920s. The photograph thus not only showcases her easel paintings, but also how she from the 1920s onward let her painting expand on furniture, pottery, ceramics, and



Figure 4.8 Atlantic Photo-Co, Nell Walden in her home, 1926. Photo © bpk / Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. The large paintings on the back wall are *Spring of death* (*Todfrühling*, 1918), to the left, and *Passion* (*Leidenschaft*, 1918), to the right.

household items, thus presenting the interior as an aesthetic whole. The artist herself appears in a fashionable *Bubikopf*, large hanging earrings, a stack of bracelets on her left arm, a patterned gown, and elegant shoes with a heel. The design of the fabric of her dress echoes the visual style of the paintings and the decorations on the cupboard; hence, there is a pictorial compatibility between the artworks and Walden's way of self-fashioning that creates a visual link between the artist and her work.

Obviously, this is a staged photograph, composed as to present a public persona of Nell Walden. The conspicuous display of her own artistic production and the carefully selected attire suggest that the image was conceptualised as a presentation of Walden as an artist. The visual synchronisation of the artworks, painted decorations, and the artist's self-fashioning manifest how sartorial elaboration, careful display of fine and applied arts, and a meaningful spatial backdrop were key elements of her public self-presentation and testify to a conscious way of presenting the interior as a harmonious entity, a modern *Gesamtkunstwerk*, as it were.

Nell Walden's harmonisation of art, design, and fashion echoes Sonia Delaunay's self-fashioning around the same time. The latter's designs for cushions, lampshades, and bookbindings that she showcased in the apartment she shared with her husband Robert Delaunay provided an appropriate domestic framework for the artist couple's paintings. Tag Gronberg has argued that Sonia Delaunay's success as a fashion designer, establishing the simultaneous style also as fabric design, positioned her as a decidedly modern woman, which, in turn, enhanced the modernity of the artist couple's simultaneous paintings.⁷²

Significantly, Walden and Delaunay were not alone in this conscious staging of their private homes in public. For instance, Erika Esau has noted how the artist couples' Oskar and Marg Moll and Anton Räderscheidt and Marta Hegemann used their living spaces as stages for public self-presentation, Räderschmidt and Hegemann with the intention to break down conventional boundaries between intimate and public spheres.⁷³ Similarly, Bridget Elliott has shown how Eileen Gray, Romaine Brooks, and Gluck designed their combined living and working spaces in order to escape the professional art world's separation of work and home and to be able to create apt aesthetic frameworks for their own artworks. Elliott theorises this as "a woman's version of the *maison d'artiste*, strongly marked by the personality of its owner" and reminds that not only male modernists such as Kazimir Malevich, Piet Mondrian, and Kurt Schwitters, but also many women artists—including Vanessa Bell, Sonia Delaunay, Marie Laurencin, and Florine Stettheimer—extended their art practices into everyday life.⁷⁴

Several of the women artists that created their working and living spaces as *maisons d'artistes* encouraged journalists to deal with the subject and circulated photographs of their homes.⁷⁵ Similarly, articles and images that appeared in the press confirm that the coherently designed *maison d'artiste* was an important part of Nell Walden's public self-presentation. In 1932, an article in the German-language Chicago paper *Sonntagspost*, reported on the careful display of artworks in her apartment:

All rooms, including the corridors, are filled to the brim with artworks, especially paintings. Everything is poetically brought together in an innermost coherence [...]. In all and everything, the collector and artist's own personality is mirrored in another, always special touch.⁷⁶

A similar testimony on how the Heimanns' apartment seemed to reflect Walden's character as an artist and collector reached the readership of her native Sweden in

1933. An article in the journal *Idun* described the “unusually harmonic and original home” where Walden’s studio, accommodating rural furniture from Sweden, Polynesian indigenous art, and German modernism, reportedly appeared as “a mirror of her personality and life”.⁷⁷

The journalist’s description of the weekend cottage by the Glienicker Lake outside Berlin that Walden shared with Heimann testifies to the programmatic consequence with which she equipped her housing. As an expression of her Swedish origin, everything in the *Schwedenhütte* (Swedish cottage)—from furniture and textiles to chinaware and bathing suits—were blue or yellow, the colours of the Swedish national flag. A photograph of the interior accompanied the article and reveals how Walden displayed a selection of her own works in the cottage. On one wall, there was an arrangement of eight of her early reverse glass paintings, several of which were figurative works painted in a naive style. At least one of them was a copy after Swedish folk art and thus congenious with the weekend cottage’s aesthetic programme.

Years later, an article reporting on Walden’s practices as an artist and collector in Bern noted that in her apartment she had arranged her suitcase, packed with self-knitted clothes and shoes, in such a manner that it appeared as a still life.⁷⁸ Evidently, then, from the thematic display of her art collection in the Sturm premises to the conscious way of equipping and furnishing the housing she shared with Hans Heimann and later her homes in Switzerland, Nell Walden performed her social self using sartorial detail, artworks, and studied arrangements of furniture, design, and household items.

Simultaneous Self-Fashioning

A portrait photograph by Wanda von Debschitz-Kunowski indicates how Walden knowingly employed fashion and design as part of her visual self-presentation (Figure 4.9). Taken in the latter part of the 1920s, the photograph captures Walden seated at a table, facing the camera with her chin slightly raised so that she gazes down and beyond the beholder with a self-confident expression. Walden is posing in a dress composed of a plain dark top with long sleeves and striped cuffs and a skirt with a striped pattern in different colours. A scarf made of the same striped fabric is resting on her right shoulder. In a companion photograph, Walden is draped in a chequered shawl, whose pattern evidently was of a similar colour scheme as the striped skirt.⁷⁹ As we have seen, Walden’s self-conscious attention to sartorial detail and her way of self-fashioning in accordance with an artfully arranged milieu echoed Sonia Delaunay’s performative staging of herself surrounded by her own artworks and design. In these photographs, the connection between the two artists is more tangible because the clothing Walden is wearing was made of fabric designed by Delaunay. The black and white images reveal how Delaunay’s fabric is characterised by abstract patterns analogous to her simultanist paintings, but can only partly suggest the doubtless vivid colours.

Walden had been familiar with Delaunay’s transgressing aesthetic practices since at least 1913 when they socialised in Paris and Berlin during the arrangements for the *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon*. Delaunay created her first simultaneous dress, along with posters and book covers with similar patterns, during her preparations for the exhibition. She designed the dress for her to wear at the Bal Bullier, the famous tango dance hall where the Delaunays entertained together with Nell and Herwarth Walden



Figure 4.9 Wanda von Debschitz-Kunowski, Nell Walden wearing Sonia Delaunay's simultaneous fashion, c. 1927. Photo © Bibliothèque nationale de France.

during their sojourn in Paris in 1913. Sonia Delaunay also created a large canvas, *Le Bal Bullier* (1913), in which the tango dancing figures only vaguely appear by means of abstract patterns echoing the dress. The painting was included in the Berlin exhibition and Delaunay apparently wore her simultaneous dress at the inauguration, thus,

in effect, presenting it as a performative artwork.⁸⁰ Details of Walden's contacts with Delaunay in the latter part of the 1920s have not survived, but there is no doubt that Walden continued to take an interest in Delaunay's experimental work as an artist and designer and they were in contact at least occasionally also during the post-war period.⁸¹

As Cécile Godefroy has shown, the portraits of Walden wearing simultaneous fashion were part of a larger corpus of hundreds of photographs showing prominent, predominantly women, personalities of contemporary avant-garde culture—including artists, actresses, and authors such as Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Paulette Pax, Violetta Napierska, Gloria Swanson, Nancy Cunard, and Claire Goll—posing in fabric and/or fashion designed by Sonia Delaunay. Even if produced by some 30 photographers—some of them well-known avant-gardists such as Germaine Krull and Florence Henri, others amateurs—the images, assembled by Delaunay, constitute a homogenous visual entity, united by the stylistic features of simultanism and contemporary art deco and an iconography that captured the essential ideals and attitudes of the self-determined New Woman. According to Godefroy, this photographic gallery not only helped establish *Simultané* as a trademark for Delaunay's fabric and fashion design, marketed through the Boutique Simultanée that she ran in Paris from 1924 to 1931, but also manifested Delaunay's position within a transnational artistic and intellectual elite, which, in turn, granted avant-garde status to her production of clothing and applied arts.⁸² In effect, one might add, von Debschitz-Kunowski's photographs of Walden posing in Delaunay's fashion connected Walden to that same cultural elite and are thus indicative of her position in a transnational cultural network.

The portrait testifies to Walden's exploration of the potential of sartorial self-articulation, an awareness she shared with numerous other, both male and female, contemporary artists, who performatively staged themselves by knowingly employing fashion as self-expression.⁸³ There are further amateur and professional photographs showing Walden posing in fashionable clothes, which suggests that she was not only interested in but also found pleasure in staging herself with sartorial means.⁸⁴ Notably, she commissioned the press agency Atlantic Photo-Co also to take photographs of her while posing in stylish fur-brimmed coats and high heels in her apartment, which indicates that these images too were intended for widespread circulation (Figure 4.10).

Bejewelled

In the late 1920s and the early 1930s, Nell Walden repeatedly engaged Berlin photographer Else Neulaender, better known by her artistic name Yva. Yva has belatedly obtained serious recognition for her photographic work.⁸⁵ After a couple of years of photographic training in Berlin, she opened her own photographic studio in 1925. In 1926, she briefly collaborated with the Berlin painter Heinz Hajek-Halke, experimenting with double and multiple exposures—including paintings by Hajek-Halke—until a disagreement about copyright issues resulted in a court case that settled in Yva's favour.⁸⁶

Yva successfully ran her studio with nearly a dozen employees, specialising in providing photographs of a wide variety—experimental photographs, portraits, genre pictures, nude and fashion photography, and advertisement images—for



Figure 4.10 Atlantic Photo-Co, Nell Walden in fur-brimmed coat, late 1920s/early 1930s. Photo © Landskrona museum.

both popular and intellectual magazines, important fashion journals, photographic trade magazines, and the illustrated press.⁸⁷ In 1927, the Berlin gallery Neumann-Nierendorf hosted a solo exhibition with 100 of her photographs. Her work was also included in the groundbreaking exhibitions *Film und Foto*, organised by the Deutscher Werkbund in Stuttgart in 1929, and then touring in Europe and Japan and *Das Lichtbild* in Munich in 1930.

In 1936, Yva, who was born into a Jewish lower middle-class family, formally signed over the studio to her friend, art historian Charlotte Weidler, and she could thus continue the now “Aryanised” business. That same year, she took on young Helmut Newton as an apprentice. In 1938, Nazi regulations banned her from working and her studio was liquidated. Yva and her husband since 1934, businessman Alfred Simon, remained in Berlin. In 1941, Nazi authorities assigned her compulsory work as an X-ray assistant at a Jewish hospital. In June the following year, Yva and her husband were arrested by the Gestapo and deported to Majdanek/Sobibor, where they almost certainly were murdered.⁸⁸

Several preserved photographs reveal that Walden modelled for Yva wearing modern jewellery. In one of them, Walden’s seemingly naked body appears against a dark background; her figure, captured in a half-length portrait in the profile, comes close

to the picture plane in a narrow composition (Figure 4.11).⁸⁹ The light, falling from the upper left, reflects in the jewellery and softens the features of her body, face, and hair. Her left arm, leaning on a table, in part obstructs the view of the upper body. In yet another photograph, Walden's bejewelled hands appear out of complete darkness (Figure 4.12). Devoid of any recognisable spatial context, the image offers the adorned hands as abstracted objects worthy of visual contemplation.

Both images are exemplary of Yva's innovative work that traversed the pictorial language of avant-garde aesthetics, photojournalism, advertising, and fashion press. In photographs of commercial products such as jewellery or silk stockings, she often focused on isolated body fragments, employing a pictorial language that clearly drew inspiration from contemporary avant-garde photography. In narrowly cropped images, she had the models appear veiled, with closed eyes or with their facial features blurred or disappearing in darkness, thus adding a mysterious dimension. Her fashion photography was characterised by a clear pictorial language, strict compositions abstaining from redundant props, and conspicuous staging through ingenuous contrasts between light and shadow.⁹⁰

If the photographs of the bejewelled Nell Walden manifest Yva's unconventional practice of combining different photographic genres and styles, their dissemination is also indicative of how Yva's images travelled different contexts. Photographs similar to those of Walden were employed as selling images in commercial



Figure 4.11 Yva, Nell Walden bejewelled, 1928 or 1930. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.



Figure 4.12 Yva, Nell Walden's hands with jewellery, late 1920s/early 1930s. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

advertising, were put on display in photographic exhibitions, or figured as illustrations in the printed media. Similarly, Walden consciously used her portraits as self-presentation in both public and private contexts. She had the half-length portrait reproduced on postcards and both images also served as illustrations to articles on Walden in the illustrated press.⁹¹ In sum, Yva's photographs of Walden disclose an ambiguous pictorial mode that might be described as a liminal space between consumer culture, avant-garde aesthetics, popular visual culture, and individual self-fashioning.

Comparing and Contrasting

Walden on several occasions engaged Yva to produce portrait photographs in which objects from her ethnographic collection served as visual props, more clearly staging her as a collector when the images were disseminated in the illustrated press. In one of the images, Walden is portrayed in half figure, holding an as of yet unidentified Buddha figure in her hands (Figure 4.13). She is strongly illuminated from the left, creating a striking contrast between light and shadow and making her body disappear in darkness to the right. Walden turns her head towards the sculpture, but does not look at it intently. She has an interiorised gaze, as if contemplating the haptic rather than the visual experience of the sculpture. The image thus calls attention to the collector's tactile engagement with a treasured item.



Figure 4.13 Yva, Nell Walden with statuette, late 1920s/early 1930s. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

Another portrait presents Walden holding the Torres Strait mask, discussed above (Figure 4.14). Walden is shown in half-length figure in the profile with the mask in her left hand, holding it in close proximity to her face. The scene is again set against a dark, indistinctive background with light falling in from the left, leaving part of Walden's face in shadow while the illuminated forehead enhances the whiteness of her skin. The lighting delineates the contours of the mask whose dark surface is pierced only by the sharply lit nose and the bright ovals where the light shines through its hollow eyes, suggesting an animated presence. The photograph is carefully composed and visually focused on the contrasting interaction between shadow and light, black and white, mask and collector. On the one hand, it enhances the formal differences between the dark mask and Walden's blonde hair and white skin; on the other, it indicates a connection between the woman and the mask because both the animated object and Walden's vacant eyes, gazing into the distance beyond the mask, seem to reference spiritual domains beyond the material world.

The visual interplay between Walden and the mask in the image was not an isolated phenomenon. The practice of visually juxtaposing white women with "primitive" masks occurred in both popular visual culture and avant-garde art and photography. The near obsessive juxtapositions of white women and "primitive" masks in Dadaist and surrealist works are a case in point.⁹² Yva's portrait of Walden is visually comparable to Man Ray's photographs of the cabaret performer, painter, and artists' model Alice Prin, called Kiki of Montparnasse, posing with a Baule-style mask from the Ivory Coast, *Noire et blanche* (1926), particularly to the less-known version showing the upper part of Prin's naked body with the mask in her hands.⁹³

Ray, like Yva, transgressed the border between fashion and art photography. His image has been canonised as an iconic example of surrealist art photography, but originally appeared as a fashion photograph in French *Vogue* and was first exhibited in a show of commercial photography.⁹⁴ Likewise, Yva's photograph of Nell Walden appeared in different contexts. In 1928, it was reproduced in the popular women's magazine *Die Frauen-Illustrierte* where it accompanied an article on Walden as artist and collector.⁹⁵ In 1930, the art journal *Das Kunstblatt* organised an exhibition entitled *Drawn or snapped? (Gezeichnet oder geknipst?)* inaugurated in Berlin, and then touring to Frankfurt am Main, Cologne, Wiesbaden, Groningen, and Halle.⁹⁶ The show was structured around comparisons between photographic and drawn portraits. In the exhibition, Yva exhibited a second version of the photograph of Walden and the turtle shell mask as a companion piece to a portrait drawing of Walden by Kokoschka. The photograph also accompanied an article on the show by editor Paul Westheim published in *Das Kunstblatt*.⁹⁷ In addition, Walden distributed copies of the portrait among friends and acquaintances.⁹⁸ The occurrence of this kind of contrasting juxtapositions in both commercial, fashion, and art photography and the varied dissemination of Yva's photograph again highlights the liminality of the pictorial language of Walden's visual self-presentation.

As Whitney Chadwick has noted, Ray's juxtaposition of the fragmented female body and the decontextualized, aestheticised African mask was related to a capitalist and patriarchal visual discourse and thus embedded in an ideological fetishisation that produced and controlled the image of "Woman" and "Other" people.⁹⁹ In Yva's portrait, though, the body of Walden is not fragmented and naked and thus devoid of the eroticism in Ray's photographs of Prin. Moreover, Yva's photographs of Walden and the Torres Strait mask were *portraits* of a particular and named person. In contrast,



Figure 4.14 Yva, Nell Walden with Torres Strait face mask, c. 1928. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

Ray captured Prin as a generic model rather than an individual and the title of his photograph tellingly reduced both the woman and the mask to surface colours.

Still, Yva's portraits of Walden posing with objects from her ethnographic collection relates to the comparative mode of defining the *neue Frau* by way of comparison with various "Other" women, which was a prevailing paradigm in the illustrated press of Weimar Germany.¹⁰⁰ In the monthly illustrated magazines, the practice of contrasting pairs of images that resonated with each other and providing them with ironic captions was a widespread and recurrent phenomenon, not least in the prominent *Der Querschnitt*.¹⁰¹ This kind of Wölfflinian pairing of images was often used to illustrate the fine line between self and "Other" and answered to the need of "a simulated cosmopolitanization of Weimar visual culture", following the country's loss of colonial territories after the First World War.¹⁰² Yva's photograph of Walden with the Torres Strait mask captures the comparison within one and the same image. The mask stands in for the "Other", inviting the beholder to a comparative mode of looking, searching for both differences and similarities.

Double Exposure

Further photographs of Nell Walden by Yva illustrate their continuous collaborations in the late 1920s and early 1930s. One portrait shows Walden in close proximity to the beholder, posing against a dark background. Only her head, in half profile and sharply lit from the left, is rendered clearly visible. She is leaning her head back in a self-conscious pose that clearly adheres to stereotypical images of contemporary film stars in the printed media (Figure 4.15). The superior attitude that the photograph conveys reoccurs in further images of Walden from the 1910s onwards and was, by all accounts, one part of her social self-presentation, as is also suggested by the contemporary reception of her aristocratic demeanour, discussed in Chapter 2. Another photograph shows Walden's bejewelled right hand holding a sculptural portrait (Figure 4.16). The composition is sharply lit and the beaming light partly dissolves the boundaries between hand, sculpture, and background. The fragmentary aesthetic and the blurred features of the hand and sculpture, emerging from an indistinctly defined space, create an enigmatic effect that is exemplary of Yva's photographic practices. The sculpture Walden was holding in her hand reappeared in a portrait by Yva, showing Walden's face and the artwork in a double exposure. The lower part of the sculpted neck, surrealistically elongated as if in motion, emerges from Walden's body and mirrors her like a lost soul behind her (Figure 4.17).

During the mid-1920s, Yva had started to explore simultaneity in photography in order to present different views of an individual or a succession of events in one image. Using one single plate, she made double or multiple exposures, a procedure that related to the technique of superimposition which developed in film at the time. Yva employed the "synoptic" method for diverse subjects and topics, including a well-known self-portrait (in collaboration with Heinz Hajek-Halke, 1926), images of dancers and revue girls, portraits capturing diverse gestures and facial expressions, and in narrative scenes commenting on contemporary social problems. Her "synoptic" images, which were internationally acclaimed, were disseminated in a wide variety of illustrated magazines, but also figured in exhibitions of art photography.¹⁰³



Figure 4.15 Yva, Nell Walden, late 1920s/early 1930s. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

The sculpture figuring in Yva's photographs of Nell Walden had been carefully chosen. It is, in fact, Walden's own likeness made by the Sturm artist William Wauer in the late 1920s.¹⁰⁴ Wauer and Kokoschka were the artists that most frequently had portrayed Nell Walden in different media during their years of collaboration in *Der Sturm* and she repeatedly employed their portraits as visual self-presentation long after leaving the organisation. As a materialisation of a previous act of portrayal, the presence of the sculpture in the photograph manifested Walden's connection with Wauer, and implicitly *Der Sturm*, just as the photograph materialised her more recent collaboration with Yva.

In the process of shooting the photograph, Walden and Yva arguably engaged in a co-creative act of producing an image that manifested their social, cultural, and professional identifications. The double exposure of Walden and Wauer's sculpture emphasised Nell Walden's visual presence by different representational means. The photograph visually articulated her connections with both modernist art and experimental photography, while implicitly also referring to the collector. Simultaneously, the double exposure of the artist/collector and the sculpture decisively manifested the technical skill and transgressive aesthetics that was part of Yva's successful



Figure 4.16 Yva, Nell Walden holding sculpture by William Wauer, late 1920s/early 1930s. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

trademark, and thus the photograph also presented the professional expertise of the photographer. Yva's photograph of Walden may thus be theorised as the result of a collaborative act between sitter and photographer, in which they both presented different but related claims to social and cultural positions by way of visual presence.

Frauenkultur

As we have seen, almost all photographs of Nell Walden and her collections were taken by professional women photographers and she readily used them as visual self-presentations in diverse contexts. Numerous of the photographs appeared as illustrations to articles on Walden written by proficient women journalists, who positioned her as a progressive New Woman in the illustrated press. Thus, the production, utilisation, and circulation of the photographs constitute a contextual framework that may be theorised as a collaborative women's culture that manifested itself through women's mutual affirmation in the public cultural sphere.

Marsha Meskimmon has noted that in the interwar period, women, despite their diverse approaches to the "woman issue", "at all levels, from political and academic treatises to popular books and magazines [...] actively sought out the ideas, images



Figure 4.17 Yva, Nell Walden and sculpture by William Wauer in double exposure, late 1920s/early 1930s. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

and work of other women”, thus participating in what she defines as a *Frauenkultur*.¹⁰⁵ The *Frauenkultur* of Weimar Germany can be described as an confirmatory, cooperative culture where women recognised, interacted with, or paid attention to other women in a joint effort to advance their positions in diverse social, professional,

and cultural contexts. As such, it neither equalled an explicit feminist agenda nor presumed an organised or institutional form, even if women's associations certainly were part of the phenomenon.¹⁰⁶

Photography as a medium was systematically related to the occurrence of modern femininity, not least through the massive number of photographic portraits of women in the illustrated press.¹⁰⁷ The interwar years also saw an increase in professional women photographers.¹⁰⁸ Many of them emerged from the educated middle classes and utilised the medium as a means for conveying their particular concerns.¹⁰⁹ Notably, women photographers in interwar Europe often accepted other women as apprentices or students, thus contributing to a supportive professional culture.¹¹⁰ The diverse functions of photography and the practices of the many women photographers thus offered a material and discursive space for women's self-determination and shifting identifications.

The fact that Nell Walden repeatedly commissioned women photographers may of course be a coincidence or merely an effect of the increasing number of professional women photographers at the time. However, Walden employed these images precisely in order to advance her social and professional position and they repeatedly appeared as illustrations to articles penned by women journalists that were published in women's journals such as *Die Frauen-Illustrierte* and *Idun*, and thus discursively positioned her as part of a women's culture.

Journalists Gerda Marcus and in particular Augusta von Oertzen repeatedly drew attention to Walden as an artist, collector, and author through appreciative articles and interviews. Augusta von Oertzen was an art historian, journalist, and author of noble birth. She studied at the university in Bonn and received a doctor's degree in 1924. She then worked as an assistant at the Pinakothek in Munich for several years. However, von Oertzen's main professional activity was her work as a journalist in Berlin. She wrote for several German magazines, including *Der Querschnitt*, and from 1927 onwards she was the editor of the women's magazine *Die Frauen-Illustrierte*.¹¹¹

Augusta von Oertzen's first article on Walden appeared in *Die Frauen-Illustrierte* in 1928, where she unreservedly presented Walden as a visionary collector and painter.¹¹² The year after, she penned an article on Walden's collection of indigenous art that was published in different versions in at least three illustrated magazines.¹¹³ In all instances, the text was richly illustrated with Alice Matzdorff's photographs, both the descriptive images that showed sections of the collection display in Walden's home and the dramatised modernist photographs of individual objects. von Oertzen also covered Walden's literary endeavours. In 1933, she published a review of Walden's poetry collection *Unter Sternen* in the women's journal *Die Frauen-Tribüne*, where she not only approvingly commented on the poems but also related them to Walden's practices as a painter and astrologist.¹¹⁴

Similar reports on Nell Walden, written by the journalist Gerda Marcus, reached the readership of her native Sweden. Born in Stockholm to Jewish parents, Marcus started her journalistic career as foreign correspondent to the Swedish press in Berlin in 1908. Back in Sweden, she worked for the daily paper *Svenska Dagbladet* during the 1910s, for which she reported on social issues during numerous journeys. In the 1920s, she resumed work as a correspondent in Berlin and Vienna for several Swedish daily papers. She also translated German literature into Swedish, including several best-selling books by Vicki Baum in which the leading character represented the New Woman of Weimar Germany.¹¹⁵ Tellingly, Marcus belonged to an informal network

of progressive women journalists in Sweden, The League (Ligan), which advocated women's equal professional opportunities and offered personal and professional support. Part of this network was also the pioneering feminist Elin Wägner, Ellen Rydelius, Ellen Landquist, and Célie Brunius, all of whom were closely connected to the journalistic network Nell Walden established in Sweden during the First World War.¹¹⁶

In the beginning of the 1930s, Marcus penned several texts on Nell Walden that appeared in publications such as the illustrated magazine *Veckojournalen* and the women's journal *Idun*.¹¹⁷ All articles presented Walden as a multitaled cultural actor; they reported on her former key position in *Der Sturm* and on her work as an artist and collector of modern and indigenous art as well as her activities as an astrologist, poet, and correspondent. A prominent feature in the articles is the appreciative descriptions of Walden as a model New Woman. She is portrayed as an independent woman entertaining a fashionable life in cultural circles, completely at home in the cosmopolitan life of the urban metropolis, successful in all her endeavours, and with an energetic and enterprising personality. The illustrations to Marcus' texts visually confirmed her portrayal of Walden: Yva's portraits of Walden modelling in jewellery or posing with objects from the ethnographic collection, reproductions of Walden's paintings, Matzdorff's photographs of Walden's studio with its rich display of ethnographica or images of individual pieces from the collection, images showing the consistently decorated *Schwedenhütte*, and finally amateur photos showing Walden and Heimann recreating by the Lago Maggiore in Switzerland. The articles' content, pictorial language, and circulation to a mass public thus represent significant aspects of interwar photojournalism and its contribution to the construction of the New Woman.

Notably, the notion of the New Woman encompassed transnational visual discourses and embodied experiences in and of urban modernity.¹¹⁸ It has been argued that she "was as much determined by her self-conscious positioning within the global world as by her look".¹¹⁹ Whitney Chadwick and Tirza True Latimer have shown that the media fabrication of the *femme moderne* in Paris often focused on independent, expatriate women from privileged backgrounds. They point to the presence in French media of Lee Miller, Romaine Brooks, Sonia Delaunay, Germaine Krull, and Tamara de Lempicka and remind that this construction of the modern woman represented neither French-born women nor women (or men) expatriates in general.¹²⁰ The New Woman, then, was visually constructed as an itinerant figure:

La femme moderne, as pictured in the mass media in Paris between the wars, was literally "going places." She was shown at the wheel of an automobile, at the helm of a speedboat, in the cockpit of an airplane. She was in control, self-assured, capable, aggressive, adventurous, independent. As a figure in transit and in transition, she travelled unescorted, distancing herself from her national and/or familial points of origin to migrate or immigrate to cultural capitals like Paris, where she pursued her independence via new vocations.¹²¹

Similarly, the articles by in particular Marcus positioned Nell Walden exactly as an expatriate, independent woman and emphasised her transnational mobility as a crucial feature that defined her modernity, while also constantly referring to her national origin. Marcus described how Walden would often drive her car, adorned with a

Swedish flag, through the urban centre of Berlin and how she herself would sail her boat from Stettin (today's Szczecin) to Sweden in the summer, thus highlighting both freedom of movement as part of her modernity and a strong sense of connection with her original habitat.¹²²

Significantly, Walden dealt with similar issues in her writing at the time. Her unpublished novel *Kit*, which clearly builds on her own experiences during the 1920s and which she described as a "women's novel", presents an all-female social network. In the manuscript, "seven young, alert, modern women", gathered in the *garçonne* club The Seven Stars (*Siebengestirn*), are the centre of attraction. The protagonists manage successful careers in Berlin and Paris and are therefore "independent from the opposite sex".¹²³

The various national backgrounds of the women of the *garçonne* club and their itinerant lifestyle are an essential feature of the narrative. Indeed, the main protagonist of the novel is a notoriously restless individual, whose dispersed family and migratory background positions her in a decidedly global world. Her all-female companions are similarly identified as independent expatriates, cultivating a nomadic way of life between urban metropolises and ski resorts. In a summary of the content, Walden stated that the protagonists' mutual desire to unite people across national borders occasioned the foundation of the women's club The Seven Stars. The novel thus establishes the women's social network as distinctly transnational, but paradoxically, also characterises their personalities as rooted in national or ethnic origins.

The emphasis on professional work, urban experiences, economic independence, youth, and mobility echoes the main ingredients of the formulaic *neue Frau* and indicate how Walden imagined modern femininity. Notably, though, the characters' independence is supplemented by the supportive framework of the *garçonne* club The Seven Stars. Walden explicitly asserted an affirmative *Frauenkultur* as a key aspect of her protagonists' way of life and stated that the New Woman was not (only) about "dances and bars, flirtations and cheap erotic successes, cigarette smoke and schnapps", but insisted that modern women were united by "a warm camaraderie and friendship" and that they "rejoiced at one another's success in the most diverse arenas".¹²⁴

However, in her literary negotiation between contradictory models of femininity, Walden finally made concessions to traditional ideals. The women of her fictional *garçonne* club entered into romantic relationships and thus "of course, the small women's club can no longer survive".¹²⁵ The manuscript thus reflects how women had to negotiate between conflicting hopes and expectations in a period of changing social relations. Previous research has pointed out that even if gendered relations in Weimar Germany certainly were more progressive than before, this new freedom mainly applied to a younger generation.¹²⁶ Walden, born in the late 1880s and thus in her 40s while writing the manuscript, evidently found it hard to let her heroines liberate themselves entirely from conventional gender norms and fully ascribe to the progressive femininity that the stereotype of the New Woman seemingly promised.

During the late 1920s and the 1930s, transnational mobility was an essential part of Walden's own life. For instance, in 1928, she ventured on a longer journey through France and Spain by car together with a fellow American woman painter.¹²⁷ Her companion artist friend has remained unidentified, and apart from a couple of paintings created in Saint-Tropez on the French Riviera, detailed information on their travels together has not survived. However, their unescorted journey in itself indicates that Walden pursued a relatively privileged life at the time and that her second marriage

entailed independence enough for her to embody the notion of the New Woman as a figure on the move, and thus emblematic not only of modern femininity, but of modernity *tout court*.

In the years 1933–1935, Walden repeatedly published travel reports in the local daily of her Swedish hometown Landskrona. The articles reveal how she was regularly travelling in Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Germany, and Scandinavia. Concentrating on detailed reports of visits to museums, art galleries, and churches, theatre and opera performances, concerts and film releases, restaurants and boutiques, health resorts and natural sites, her travel reports only occasionally touch upon the broader context of her mobility. In an article of September 1933, though, she disapprovingly noted that the streets of Berlin had become empty due to emigration and removal in the wake of the Nazi's seizure of power. Once a decidedly international city, characterised by a strong element of expatriates, emigrants, and tourists, Walden noted that Berlin was now "germanised".¹²⁸

Despite this implicit criticism of the Nazi's racial politics, a strong sense of patriotism is a common feature in her reports from Germany. Even if decidedly progressive in artistic matters, Walden had always dissociated herself from left-wing politics, and, as we have seen, her writing served the German nationalist propaganda during the First World War. In retrospect, her tributes to not only infrastructural and urban renewal but also some social policies in Nazi Germany and her explicit admiration for Benito Mussolini may come through as provocatively naïve or ideologically corrupt, and her light-hearted travel reports appear in sharp contrast to other people's forced exile from Germany at the time. It should be noted though that the tone of voice in her writing effectively concealed that some of the journeys covered in her articles were in fact occasioned by the Nazi politics and that she had found no better option than to go into voluntarily exile to Switzerland in 1933.

Apparently, Walden was more pessimistic about the political development in Germany than Hans Heimann.¹²⁹ She had her collections transferred to Switzerland already in 1932, to which I shall return in the next chapter. After the seizure of power by the Nazis, the couple for strategic reasons divorced in May 1933.¹³⁰ Less than a month later, Walden left Germany for her native country and repatriated as a Swedish citizen in July 1933.¹³¹ Heimann did not want to leave Berlin as long as he could be professionally active in Germany and as long as his elderly mother, incapable of moving, was still alive.¹³² For years, Walden and Heimann had spent a couple of months every year in Ascona in Switzerland and in the early 1930s, they built their own house, Casa Svedese, there.¹³³ In October 1933, Walden arrived in Ascona and settled in the Swiss house that had remained in her possession after the divorce.¹³⁴ Already in 1934, a second house, Casa Halla, was built and Walden moved there. Heimann remained in Berlin, but visited her during the summers.¹³⁵

The ensuing fate of Hans Heimann is yet another example of the brutalities of Nazi dictatorship in Germany. Heimann was subjected to an intensified anti-abortion campaign led by the Gestapo in 1937 which strongly increased criminal charges against abortionists.¹³⁶ In November 1937, he was arrested by the Gestapo, accused of having carried out illegal abortions on a commercial basis.¹³⁷ Following the events at a distance from Switzerland, Walden commented on his arrest that "it is no longer a shame these days to be arrested in G[ermany]—almost the opposite".¹³⁸ Heimann was sentenced to four years prison and transferred to the Polizeigefängnis, Zuchthaus Luckau i. d. Niederlausitz in April 1938. The correspondence between Walden and

Heimann is in the Nell Walden archive in Landskrona and painfully documents their hopes, disappointments, and eventually despair during his years in prison. The shocking events affected Walden's health; she gradually lost sight on the right eye and had to go through operations in 1939 and 1940. During her 1940 convalescence, she became acquainted with the director of a youth centre, the Swiss teacher Hannes Urech. After seven years as a divorcée of Heimann, Walden married Urech in July 1940, but remained in frequent contact with Heimann and made herself useful in preparing his planned exile from Germany.

In September 1941, Walden, now actively supported by Urech, finally managed to achieve an entry permit and a six months resident permit in Switzerland for Heimann.¹³⁹ However, only weeks later, Jews were prohibited to emigrate from Germany. On 29 June 1942, Heimann wrote his last letter to Walden. He was soon to be released from prison and without knowledge of his future doom.¹⁴⁰ In a last desperate effort to escape Germany, he seems to have tried to volunteer for the eastern front.¹⁴¹ On 15 August 1942, he was forced to enter the "18. Osttransport" train from Berlin to Riga. Soon after the arrival in Riga three days later, Hans Heimann, together with approximately 1,000 men, women, and children who had also been on the train, were murdered by Nazis in the woods of Rumbula and Bikernieki.¹⁴²

Notes

- 1 Bridget Elliot and Jo-Ann Wallace, *Women Artists and Writers. Modernist (Im)positionings*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, 17; Erich Ranfft, "German Women Sculptors 1918–1936. Gender Differences and status", *Visions of the 'Neue Frau'. Women and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany*, Marsha Meskimmon and Shearer West, Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1995, 44, 50ff.
- 2 Cp. Elliot and Wallace, 1994, 17.
- 3 Hans Heimann registered in Nell Walden's guestbook in February 1920. He was Walden's physician from 1921 onwards. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Wolfgang Mackensen, 28 March 1961, NW2A:153, NWA/LM.
- 4 Nell Walden, *Herwarth Walden. Ein Lebensbild*, Florian Kupferberg, Berlin and Mainz, 1963, 57; Nell Walden, letter to Lars Erik Åström, 3 February 1954, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm. A comparison between the 1919 printed catalogue of Walden's collection and her later collection inventory reveals that Umberto Boccioni's *Modern Idol (Idolo Moderno, 1911)*, now in the Esoterick Collection of Modern Italian Art, London, had been in Heimann's collection. Walden registered the content of her collections in handwritten inventories. The content of the original inventories was transferred to two notebooks in the late 1940s and in 1957 that have survived as Sammlung Walden I–II, Nell's förteckning över sin samling, Ib (p) Nell Walden Archive, Landskrona Museum (NWA/LM). It has not been possible to identify or locate the Severini painting; possibly it was lost in Berlin during the Second World War. According to recent provenance research, Archipenko's watercolour *Portese (Stehende Akte) (1922)*, donated to Kunstmuseum Bern (A 8358) by Walden in 1966, originally belonged to Heimann's collection.
- 5 As German law required married women to take on their husband's name, any deviation from this might have connoted an insubordinate marking. Erika Esau, "The *Künstlerhepaar*. Ideal and Reality", *Visions of the 'Neue Frau'. Women and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany*, Marsha Meskimmon and Shearer West (eds), Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1995, 35.
- 6 Nell Walden, *Unter Sternen*, Felix Stössinger, Berlin, 1933. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Othmar Huber, 1 November 1948, NW1A:136, NWA/LM.
- 7 Poems by Walden appeared in *Die Frauen-Tribüne*, no. 5–6, March, 1933 and no. 8, May 1933. Using the pseudonym Marja Enid, she had published a couple of poems already in *Der Sturm*, vol. 7, no. 3, 1916.

- 8 Walden's unpublished novel *Kit* and poetry collection *Sieben Sterne schenk ich Dir* are in NWA/LM. Some texts for compositions are attached in Ausstellungskritiken I, NWA/LM.
- 9 Nell Walden, letter to Rudolf Zeller, 28 April 1936, Museumsarchiv, Bernisches Historisches Museum; Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, 6 November 1963, NW5A:5, NWA/LM; Nell Walden, copy of letter to Walter Dexel, 11 June 1964, NW1C:66, NWA/LM.
- 10 Within *Der Sturm*, the strong connection between concepts of abstraction and spirituality was not only evident in Kandinsky's work but encompassed a wider interest in issues of other-worldly dimensions. As noted in Chapter 3, *Sturm* theorists put emphasis on rhythmic formation in art as a parallel to cosmic events. See, for example, Rudolf Bauer, "Die kosmische Bewegung", *Expressionismus. Die Kunstwende*, Herwarth Walden (ed.), *Der Sturm*, Berlin.
- 11 Nell Walden's personal almanacs, 1960s–1970s, uncatalogued material, NWA/LM. Nell Walden-Heimann, "Wesen und Bedeutung der Astrologie und Horoskopie", *Omnibus. Almanach für das Jahr 1932*, Martel Schwichtenberg and Curt Valentin (eds), Verlag der Galerie Flechtheim, Berlin, 1931, 89–100. Cp. Walden's almanacs, NWA/LM.
- 12 Nell Walden, "Der Schöpferische Vorgang in Selbstdarstellungen. Schriftsteller und Dichter. Nell Walden", *Das unbewusste als Keimstätte des Schöpferischen. Selbstzeugnisse von gelehrten, Dichtern und Künstlern*, Otto Kankleit (ed.), with a preface by C.G. Jung, Ernst Reinhardt, München and Basel, 1959, 158f. Some late tempera paintings reveal how Walden's interest in astrology inflected her artistic work, see, for example, *Saturn* (1971), Landskrona museum (LAM018135), and *Planetarium* (1973). The latter contains astrological signs and was on sale in the auction Nell Walden E565, Bukowskis, Stockholm, March 2021, lot nr 1260639. Her unpublished poetry collection *Sieben Sterne schenk ich Dir* includes poems entitled after the signs of the Zodiac.
- 13 Anon., "Gesellschaftsabend der Berliner Secession", *Neue Berliner Zeitung*, 16 January 1925; A. v. (Augusta von) Oertzen, "Der 'Longhi-Ball'. Ein venezianisches Maskenfest im Adlon", *8-Uhr Abendblatt*, 18 February 1928; v. O. (probably Augusta von Oertzen), "Ball der kraftfahrenden Aerzte", *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 5 November 1929; anon., "Frauen auf dem Berliner Presseball", *Die Frau*, supplement to *Münchener Neuesten Nachrichten*, February 1932.
- 14 V.O. (probably Augusta von Oertzen), "Dr. Hans H. Heiman und Nell Walden-Heimann empfangen", *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 16 December 1929.
- 15 Gästebuch der Sturmgalerie/Nell Walden, Handschrift 120, Nachlaß Nell Walden, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (StaaBi).
- 16 In connection with the exhibition, Schwichtenberg's portraits of Nell Walden and Tilla Durieux were reproduced in *Die Dame*, no. 12, February, 1931. On Martel Schwichtenberg, see Frauke Engel, "Eine Wiederbegegnung. Die Malerin Martel Schwichtenberg (1896–1945) zwischen Kunst und Werbegraphik", *Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte*, no. 35, 1996, 183–208; Harmut Bomhoff, "Martel Schwichtenberg", *Wie eine Nielbraut, die man in die Wellen wirft. Portraits expressionistischer Künstlerinnen und Schriftstellerinnen*, 2nd ed., Britta Jürs (ed), AvivA, 2002, 39–53.
- 17 Cp. Ottfried Dascher, "Flechtheim und Die Riess. Annäherungen und offene Fragen", *Die Riess. Fotografisches Atelier und Salon in Berlin 1918–1932*, Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moortgat (eds), Das Verborgene Museum, Berlin and Wasmuth, Tübingen, 2008, 98f.; Axel Drecol and Anja Deutsch, "Fragen, Probleme, Perspektiven—Zur 'Arisierung' der Kunsthandlung Alfred Flechtheim", *Alfred Flechtheim. Raubkunst und Restitution*, Andrea Bambi and Axel Drecol (eds), De Gruyter, Oldenbourg, 2015, 86; Elisabeth Nowak-Thaller, "Leben und Wirken Wolfgang Gurlitts. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion", *Wolfgang Gurlitt Zauberprinz. Kunsthändler-Sammler*, Hemma Schmutz and Elisabeth Nowak-Thaller (eds), Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz and Hirmer, München, 2019, 46.
- 18 Minya Díez Dührkoop's photographs of Walden are known through a drawing William Wauer executed after one of them. William Wauer, *Portrait of Nell Walden (Bildnis Nell Walden)*, n.d., Kunstmuseum Bern (A 8400).
- 19 As far as is known, Karl Blossfeld, Jaro von Tucholka, Lotte Errell, and Francis Brugière were the only photographers—apart from Yva and Riess—who exhibited in an

- art gallery. Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moortgat, "Atelier am Kurfürstendamm", *Die Riess. Fotografisches Atelier und Salon in Berlin 1918–1932*, Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moortgat (eds), Das Verborgene Museum, Berlin and Wasmuth, Tübingen, 2008, 71.
- 20 Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moortgat, "Von Czarnikau nach Berlin", *Die Riess. Fotografisches Atelier und Salon in Berlin 1918–1932*, Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moortgat (eds), Das Verborgene Museum, Berlin and Wasmuth, Tübingen, 2008, 29.
- 21 On the exhibition, see Dascher, 2008, 101–105.
- 22 Walden's connections with von der Heydt are discussed in Chapter 5. On how Riess' connections with von der Heydt brought her customers, see Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moortgat, "Kunst mit Objektiv und Gummiball", *Die Riess. Fotografisches Atelier und Salon in Berlin 1918–1932*, Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moortgat (eds), Das Verborgene Museum, Berlin and Wasmuth, Tübingen, 2008, 116.
- 23 On Frieda Riess' biography and professional career, see Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moortgat (eds), *Die Riess. Fotografisches Atelier und Salon in Berlin 1918–1932*, Das Verborgene Museum, Berlin and Wasmuth, Tübingen, 2008. Riess' exact date of death is not known.
- 24 Beckers and Moortgat, "Atelier am Kurfürstendamm", 2008, 70.
- 25 "Nell Walden in entzückendem weißen Bubikopf fliegt mit charmantem Lächeln vom Arm zu Arm". Anon., "Gesellschaftsabend der Berliner Secession", *Neue Berliner Zeitung*, 16 January 1925.
- 26 Helga Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, "Die Münchener Debschitz-Schule", *Kunstschulreform 1900–1933. Dargestellt vom Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin an den Beispielen Bauhaus Weimar Dessau Berlin, Kunstschule Debschitz München, Frankfurter Kunstschule, Akademie für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe Breslau, Reimann-Schule Berlin*, Hans M. Wingler (ed.), Gebr. Mann, Berlin, 1977, 78; Beckers and Moortgat, "Von Czarnikau nach Berlin", 2008, 29.
- 27 Portraits of the founders of the school, Albert and Klara Reimann, wearing costumes for the 1928 ball were published in *Der Querschnitt*, vol. 8, no. 3, March 1928. Further photographs from the Reimann ball were published in, for example, *Revue des Monats*, vol. 4, no. 4, February 1929/30; *Revue des Monats*, vol. 6, no. 6, April 1931/32; *Der Querschnitt*, vol., no. 2, February 1936; *Der Querschnitt*, vol. 16, no. 3, March 1936. Both journals are available online: *Illustrierte Magazine der Klassischen Moderne*, <https://www.arthistoricum.net/themen/textquellen/illustrierte-magazine-der-klassischen-moderne/die-zeitschriften>
- 28 Further photographs from the series are preserved in Landskrona museum (LAMF018510) and Photo Album Nell Walden, Nachlaß Nell Walden, Handschrift 121, StaaBi.
- 29 Judith Brown, *Glamour in Six Dimensions. Modernism and the Radiance of Form*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2009, 98ff.
- 30 Shearer West, "Introduction", *Visions of the "Neue Frau". Women and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany*, Marsha Meskimmon and Shearer West (eds), Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1995, 1. With reference to Anette Kuhn, Patricia Gozalbez Cantó has reminded on the origin of the concept, Patricia Gozalbez Cantó, *Fotografische Inszenierungen von Weiblichkeit. Massenmediale und künstlerische Frauenbilder der 1920er und 1930er Jahre in Deutschland und Spanien*, transcript, Bonn, 2012, 76f.
- 31 Ute Eskildsen, "Die Kamera als Instrument der Selbstbestimmung", *Fotografieren hieß teilnehmen. Fotografinnen der Weimarer Republik*, Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Richter, Düsseldorf, 1994, 14.
- 32 See, for example, Katharina von Ankum (ed.), *Women in the Metropolis. Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1997; Marsha Meskimmon, *We Weren't Modern Enough. Women Artists and the Limits of German Modernism*, I.B. Tauris, London and New York, 1999; Whitney Chawick and Tirza True Latimer (eds), *The Modern Woman Revisited. Paris between the Wars*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London, 2003.
- 33 On the *Kindfrau* and the feminine touch, see Gozalbez Cantó, 2012, 177–180. For an exposé of the perpetuation of these visual tropes in advertising during the twentieth century, see Erving Goffman, *Gender Advertisements*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1979.

- 34 For instance, Anne Higonnet has asserted that collection museums “offered an exceptional opportunity” for women “[w]hile appearing to conform to accepted models of domestic femininity, women could negotiate a collection museum into a presence for themselves in the public sphere of culture”. Anne Higonnet, *A Museum of One’s Own*, Prestel, New York 2009, xv.
- 35 Dianne Sachko Macleod, *Enchanted Lives, Enchanted Objects. American Women Collectors and the Making of Culture, 1800–1940*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 2008, 2.
- 36 “Du schreibst von der ‘Sammlung Walden’ [...]. Diese Bezeichnung ist falsch. So lange ich mit Herwarth Walden verheiratet war, nannte ich selbstverständlich die von mir gesammelten und bezahlten Kunstwerke [...] ‘Sammlung Walden’. Aber von dem Moment an, wo ich von Herwarth Walden geschieden wurde (1925) und aus dem ‘Sturm’ ausschied wurde meine Bildersammlung [...] konsequent und genau mit ‘Sammlung Nell Walden’ bezeichnet. [...] Mit viel mehr recht hätte ich die Sammlung ‘Sammlung Nell Walden-Heimann’ nennen können, denn, bevor ich Dr. Hs. Heimann heiratete, hatte er auf meine Anregung hin ca 35 Kunstwerke im ‘Sturm’ gekauft und gesammelt. Als wir heirateten, schenkte mir Dr. Heimann diese, von ihm gesammelten Bilder, als Kompletierung [sic] und Ergänzung meiner Sammlung”. Nell Walden, letter to Lars Erik Åström, 3 February 1954, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.
- 37 On the labelling of collections as a claim to cultural agency, cp. Higonnet, 2009, 123.
- 38 Andreas Schlothauer, “Nell Walden—die erste Sammlerin außereuropäischer Kunst?“, *Kunst & Kontext. Außereuropäischer Kunst & Kultur im Dialog*, vol. 4, no. 7, 2014; Andreas Schlothauer, “Die Sammlung Nell Walden in der Schweiz 1932–1945. Genf, Basel, Bern, Zürich—Stationen einer Reise“, *Kunst & Kontext. Außereuropäischer Kunst & Kultur im Dialog*, vol. 6, no. 11, 2016.
- 39 Cp. Raymond Corbey, *Tribal Art Traffic. A Chronicle of Taste, Trade and Desire in Colonial and Post-Colonial Times*, Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, 2000, 11ff.
- 40 Cp. John Warne Monroe, *Metropolitan Fetish. African Sculpture and the Imperial French Invention of Primitive Art*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2019, x–xi.
- 41 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, 19 January 1950, NW5A:374.
- 42 Nell Walden, transcript of speech, Landskrona, 23 September 1973, NW16, NWA/LM.
- 43 Martin Schulz, “Arthur Speyer—drei Generationen Sammler und Händler“, *Kunst & Kontext*, no. 12, 2016, 8. On Speyer and his exchanges with the Ethnologisches Museum, see Markus Schindlbeck, *Gefunden und verloren. Arthur Speyer, die dreissiger Jahre und die Verluste der Sammlung Südsee des Ethnologischen Museums Berlin*, Kettler, Berlin, 2012.
- 44 Corbey, 2000, 23f.; See also Kees van Dijk, “Gathering and Describing. Western Interest in Eastern Nature and Culture“, *Treasure Hunting? Collectors and Collections of Indonesian Artefacts*, Reimar Schefold and Han F. Vermeulen (eds), Universiteit Leiden and National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, 2002, 23–46; Elazar Barkan and Ronald Bush, “Introduction“, *Prehistories of the Future. The Primitivist Project and the Culture of Modernism*, Elazar Barkan and Ronald Bush (eds), Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1995, 9f.; Monroe, 2019, 4.
- 45 Béchié Paul N’Guessan, *Primitivismus und Afrikanismus. Kunst und Kultur Afrikas in der deutschen Avantgarde*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, 2002, 43ff.; Timo Saalmann, *Kunstpoltik der Berliner Museen 1919–1959*, De Gruyter, Berlin, 2014, 81.
- 46 Rudolf Zeller, “Die ethnographische Abteilung“, *Jahrbuch des Bernischen Historischen Museums in Bern*, vol. XV, Bern 1936, 22f, 30. Schlothauer, 2016, 38.
- 47 “Die Sammlung ist eine für ihre persönlichen Zwecke durchgeführte Korrektur der Kunstgeschichte. Es wäre denkbar, daß sich die Entwicklungsgeschichte der Kunst von den primitive ozeanischen Kulddokumenten aus zu Marc und Picasso so vollzogen hätte, wenn— Antike und Christentum sich nicht dazwischengestellt hätten. Sinn des Expressionismus [...] ist ja die Ausschaltung dieser Tradition. So hat Nell Walden unter diesem Gesichtswinkel der expressionistischen Idee die Kunstentwicklung erlebt und sich mit Dokumenten dieser unterbrochenen Entwicklungslinie umgeben. Sie hat mit einer seltenen Konsequenz in dieser Sammlung ihre Kunstanschauung in die Tat umgesetzt“. Franz Markl, “Kunst und Wissenschaft. Kunstchronik. Ausstellung Nell Walden bei Flechtheim. Käte Brauns-Wüstefeld bei Hirzel und Spanier“, *Steglitzer Anzeiger*, No. 211, 9 September, 1927.

- 48 “[...] und sieht man sie dann in ihrem eigenen Heim, vor dem Hintergrunde dieser sonderbar-bizarren Kunst der Naturvölker, inmitten von [...] den Werken der stärksten Repräsentanten des Expressionismus und Kubismus, die alle trotz Zwischenräumen von Jahrhunderten, ja Jahrtausenden, irgendwie zusammengehören und miteinander verwandt sind, so erkennt man eine geradezu visionäre Begabung dieser Frau für einen bestimmten Stil, den sie, über Zeit und Raum erhaben, sozusagen ‘wittert’”. Augusta von Oertzen, “Nell Walden-Heimann die Sammlerin und Malerin”, *Die Frauen-Illustrierte*, vol. 31, No. 17, May, 1928, 4.
- 49 Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, “Introduction. Reclaiming Female Agency”, *Reclaiming Female Agency. Feminist Art History after Postmodernism*, University of California Press, Berkley, Los Angeles and London, 2005, 11.
- 50 “[...] diese groteske Welt der Exoten [...] wirken mit einer unheimlichen Wirklichkeit [...] passen sich harmonisch der Vielfältigkeit Asiens, Ozeaniens und Afrikas an..., das ganze eine schöne Folie für die blonde Frau des Hauses, für die Extravaganz der heutigen Mode”. V.O. (probably Augusta von Oertzen), “Dr. Hans H. Heimann und Nell Walden-Heimann empfangen”, 1929.
- 51 Cp. Goffman, 1959, 22.
- 52 Several of the objects are now in the Landskrona museum, see, for example, ancestor figures, Nigeria (LAM016234, LAM016235), stools, Cameroon (LAM016221, LAM016223); ancestor figures, Nias (LAM016290, LAM016291); painted wooden bird sculpture, Benin (LAM016230); ruler’s throne, Cameroon (LAM016219). Andreas Schlothauer has identified and located further objects, see Schlothauer, 2014.
- 53 “ein großes einheitliches Dokument der menschlichen Kunstleistung”. Oertzen, “Nell Walden-Heimann die Sammlerin und Malerin”, 1928.
- 54 In 1930, Sanden sold the image agency to businessman Friedrich Karl Herrmann, who changed the name to Atlantic Photo-Gesellschaft and soon entrusted the firm to the Nazi propaganda ministry. Diethart Kerbs, “Die Epoche der Bildagenturen. Zur Geschichte der Pressefotografie in Berlin von 1900 bis 1933”, *Die Gleichschaltung der Bilder. Pressefotografie 1930–36*, Diethart Krebs, Walter Uka and Brigitte Walz-Richter (eds), Fröhlich and Kaufmann, Berlin, 1983, 33f., 37f., 68f. Nathalie Neumann, “Pionier der Fotovermarktung. Charles Delius (1977–1962) und sein Fotoarchiv”, *Fotogeschichte*, vol. 36, no. 142, 2016, 64f.
- 55 One image appeared in the catalogue to Walden’s exhibition in the Flechtheim gallery in 1927 and another in *Der Querschnitt* in 1928. The Zürich women’s journal *In freien Stunden* published several photos in 1930. The family magazine *Veckojournalen* and the women’s journal *Idun*, both published in her native Sweden, did the same in 1931 and 1933, respectively. Yet other photos of her indigenous art collection appeared in articles on Walden in numerous German magazines.
- 56 Photo album Nell Walden, Nachlass Nell Walden, Handschrift 121, StaaBi.
- 57 Sources on Alice Matzdorff’s photographic practice are utterly scarce. She is included in Friedrich Jansa, *Deutsche bildende Künstler in Wort und Bild*, Jansa, Leipzig, 1912, 394. Some further information on her business is available on *museum-digital:deutschland*, <https://nat.museum-digital.de/index.php?t=home&cachesLoaded=true>, and in *Die Datenbank jüdischer Gewerbebetriebe in Berlin 1930–1945*, <https://www2.hu-berlin.de/djgb/www/find>.
- 58 Leah Lui-Chivizhe, “Telling Torres Strait History through Turtle”, *Curating the Future. Museums, Communities and Climate Change*, Jennifer Newell, Libby Robin and Kirsten Wehner (eds), Routledge, London, 2016, 121f.
- 59 Inventaire de la collection ethnographique: Nell Walden-Heimann, Ascona, December 1932, 350.A.1.1.1.4/25, Archives de la Ville de Genève, Musée d’ethnographie.
- 60 Museum Rietberg, Zürich, (RME 1).
- 61 “[...] sie leben bei und mit mir; Ihnen mögen sie jetzt noch als Kunstwerke ohne Leben erscheinen [...], für mich aber sind sie mehr und sie haben nichts von ihrem mystischen und geheimnisvollen Charakter verloren [...]. Ich habe immer das Gefühl, als wohne meinen stummen und erhabenen Freunden eine mystische Kraft inne”. Nell Walden quoted in Augusta von Oertzen, “Von Göttern, Demonen und Masken”, unidentified illustrated paper, Ausstellungskritiken I, NWA/LM.

- 62 Both figures are now in the Landskrona museum (LAM016234 and LAM016235).
- 63 The figures are registered in the printed collection catalogue of April 1917. At least the female figure was photographed and reproduced on one of Der Sturm's postcards.
- 64 Cp. *Etnografica*, Landskrona kultur nämnd, Landskrona, 1973.
- 65 In Walden's photo album, there is yet another image of the isolated female figure, suggestively staged and casting dramatic shadows on the wall behind her, a visual trope that was a recurring feature in Matzdorff's series.
- 66 Jerome Feldman, "Nias and its Traditional Sculpture", *Nias. Tribal Treasures. Cosmic Reflections in Stone, Wood and Gold*, Volkenkundig Museum Nusantara, Delft, 1990, 21–38. Cp. description in Landskrona museum inventory, LAM016290 and LAM016291.
- 67 Dominik Bonatz, "Megaliths on Nias. The Retention of Identity", *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol. 30, no. 88, 2002, 268f., 274 n. 19.
- 68 Mai Lin Tjoa-Bonatz, "Idols and Art. Missionary Attitudes toward Indigenous Worship and the Material Culture on Nias, Indonesia, 1904–1920", *Casting, Imperialism and the Transformation of Religion in East and Southeast Asia*, Thomas David Dubois (ed.), Palgrave, New York, 2009, 115f.
- 69 "Nias, Insel der Götzen, Insel des Glücks, welche Sehnsüchte weckt nicht dieses Wort! So stellen wir uns das Paradies, den Himmel vor. [...] Wo keine widersinnige Moral, keine sinnlosen Gesetze die Menschen knebeln und verderben—wo das Leben Glück ist und der Tod ein schöner Heimgang zu den großen Ahnen, die vorausgegangen sind! [...] Sorglos und glücklich leben diese Insulaner ein reiches Leben". Nell Walden-Heimann, "Nias", *Das Tage-Buch*, vol. 12, no. 41, Berlin, 10 October 1931. On Paul Wirz, see Sylvia Ohnemus, "Fritz Sarasin, Paul Sarasin, and Paul Wirz. Their Significance for the Indonesian Collection of the Museum für Völkerkunde in Basle", *Treasure Hunting? Collectors and Collections of Indonesian Artefacts*, Reimar Schefold and Han F. Vermeulen (eds), Universiteit Leiden and National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, 2002, 183–206.
- 70 "Die Sehnsucht des heutigen übersteigerten, nervösen Menschen geht nach der Natur, Natur ohne Reflexion, ohne Reflektiertheit; diese Ganzheit, die Einheitlichkeit, die er verloren und die er wiederfinden möchte, er sucht sie nicht mehr in europäischen Ländern und Künsten, er sucht sie in der Kunst der Exoten...". Augusta von Oertzen, "Von Göttern, Dämonen und Masken—im Besitze einer schönen Frau", unidentified illustrated paper, Ausstellungskritiken I, NWA/LM.
- 71 Brett M. Van Hoesen, "Weimar Revisions of Germany's Colonial Past. The Photomontages of Hannah Höch and László Moholy-Nagy", *German Colonialism, Visual Culture, and Modern Memory*, Volker M. Langbehn (ed.), Routledge, New York and London, 2010, 199f.
- 72 Tag Gronberg, "Sonia Delaunay's Simultaneous Fashion and the Modern Woman", *The Modern Woman Revisited. Paris between the Wars*, Whitney Chawick and Tirza True Latimer (eds), Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey and London, 2003, 109–123.
- 73 Esau, 1995, 33ff.
- 74 Bridget Elliot, "Housing the work: women artists, modernism and the *maison d'artiste*. Eileen Gray, Romaine Brooks and Gluck", *Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880–1935. The Gender of Ornament*, Bridget Elliot and Janice Helland (eds), Routledge, London and New York, 2018 (2002), 176–196, quotation 184.
- 75 Elliot, 2018 (2002), 179, 185f.
- 76 "[A]lle Zimmer, ja auch die Korridore, sind mit Kunstwerken, namentlich Bildern, angefüllt. Alles ist stimmungsvoll in einen innersten Zusammenhang gebracht [...]. In allem und jedem spiegelt sich die eigene Persönlichkeit der Sammlerin und Künstlerin in einer anderen, immer besonderen Note wider". Michalina Schwarz, "Aus dem Reich der Frau. Nell Walden-Heimann", *Sonntagpost*, Chicago, 17 January 1932.
- 77 "ett sällsynt harmoniskt och originellt hem", "Nell Waldens ateljé är som en spegel av hennes personlighet och liv". G.M. [Gerda Marcus], "Prästdottern från Landskrona", *Idun*, no. 32, 1933, 862.
- 78 VBG, "Nell Walden—Künstlerin und Sammlerin in Bern", *Die Tat*, 16 July 1971.
- 79 Copies of both photographs are in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris and in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

- 80 Ann Albritton, "'She Has a Body on Her Dress'. Sonia Delaunay-Terk's First Simultaneous Dress, 1913", *Dress. The Journal of the Costume Society of America*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2005, 7ff., 12 n. 36. Delaunay's painting is in the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (AM 3307 P).
- 81 In Walden's personal photo album, there are photographs documenting Delaunay's costumes and scenery for René Le Somptier's 1926 film *Le p'tit Parigot*. Nell Walden Photo Album, Nachlass Nell Walden, Handschrift 121, StaaBi. In the 1950s, Walden sent the Sturm publication that she had co-edited with Lothar Schreyer to Delaunay and they seem to have communicated through their mutual acquaintance, the artist and gallerist Eberhard Steneberg. Cp. Eberhard Steneberg, letters to Nell Walden, 4 June 1958, NW1A:285, 30 January 1959, NW1A:297, NWA/LM. Still in 1960, Walden described Sonia Delaunay as an artist that she knew very well. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Leopold Reidemeister, 9 August 1960, NW8, NWA/LM.
- 82 Cécile Godefroy, "Images Simultanées. Les photographies de mode de Germaine Krull commandées par Sonia Delaunay", *Histoire de l'Art*, no. 48, June 2001, 99–113; Cécile Godefroy, "La photographie au service du simultanéisme. L'utilisation de l'image de mode par Sonia Delaunay", *Études photographiques*, no. 12, November 2002, 2, available online: <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesphotographiques/322>; Cécile Godefroy, "Sonia Delaunay et la modernité: les images de mode de la boutique simultanée", *Querelles. Jahrbuch für Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung*, vol. 11, Garçonnes à la mode im Berlin und Paris der zwanziger Jahre, Stephanie Bung and Margarete Zimmermann (eds), Wallstein, Berlin, 2006, 68–88, here 73f.
- 83 As indicated in Chapter 2, Herwarth Walden was among them. Another example is the artist couple Sigrid Hjertén and Isaac Grünewald, who participated in the 1915 Sturm exhibition *Schwedische Expressionisten*. Both employed fashion as self-articulation in painting and photographic self-presentations, see Shulamith Behr, "Modernity, Family and Fashion. Performative Strategies and the Artist Couple Sigrid Hjertén and Isaac Grünewald," *Sigrid Hjertén och Isaac Grünewald. Modernismens Pionjärer*, Birgitta Flensburg (ed.), Norrköpings Konstmuseum, Norrköping, 2002, 13–26; Andrea Kollnitz, "'Se på mig!' Mode som uttryck och strategi i Isaac Grünewalds och Sigrid Hjerténs måleri och självscensättning", *Modernism och mode*, Andrea Kollnitz and Louise Wallenberg (eds), Carlsson, Stockholm, 2014, 55–88.
- 84 Cp. Landskrona museum (LAMF027325, LAMF027326, LAMF018442, LAMF018480, LAMF018487, LAMF018509, LAMF027306).
- 85 The most extensive publication on Yva is Marion Beckers and Elisabeth Moorgat, *Yva. Photographien 1925–1938*, Das Verborgene Museum, Berlin and Wasmuth, Tübingen, 2001.
- 86 Beckers and Moorgat, 2001, 238.
- 87 Mila Ganeva, "Fashion Photography and Women's Modernity in Weimar Germany. The Case of Yva", *NWSA Journal*, vol. 15, no. 3, Gender and Modernism between the Wars, 1918–1939, Autumn, 2003, 5f.
- 88 Beckers and Moorgat, 2001, 238f.
- 89 The image has also been attributed to Wanda von Debschitz-Kunowski, but one copy of the photograph in the Nell Walden archive in Landskrona museum bears an inscription in Nell Walden's handwriting specifying Yva as the photographer.
- 90 Eskildsen, 1994, 23; Burcu Dogramaci, "Mode-Körper. Zur Inszenierung von Weiblichkeit in Modegrafik und -fotografie der Weimarer Republik", *Leibhaftige Moderne. Körper in Kunst und Massenmedien 1918 bis 1933*, Michael Cowan and Kai Marcel Sicks (eds), transcript, Bielefeld, 2005, 130.
- 91 A copy of the half-length portrait reproduced on a postcard is in Landskrona museum (LAMF018472). It was also reproduced in *Veckojournalen* in 1931. The photograph of her bejewelled hands was reproduced in *Omnibus* in 1931.
- 92 Cp. Marianna Torgovnick, *Gone Primitive. Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1990, 102.
- 93 There are both positive and negative versions of the photograph in horizontal format showing Prin's face with closed eyes and a vertical version showing her glancing at the mask which she holds close to her face. Among the more than twenty known prints, there

- are differently retouched and cropped versions. A further photograph in the series shows the mask only. Wendy A. Grossman and Steven Manford, "Unmasking Man Ray's *Noire et blanche*", *American Art*, vol. 20, no. 2, 2006, 137, 142ff.
- 94 Grossman and Manford 2006, 140ff.
- 95 Oertzen, "Nell Walden-Heimann. Die Sammlerin und Malerin", 1928. To the best of my knowledge, only two photographs showing Walden and the mask have survived; they are in Photo Album Nell Walden, Nachlaß Nell Walden, Handschrift 121, StaaBi.
- 96 Lutz Windhöfel, *Paul Westheim und Das Kunstblatt. Eine Zeitschrift und ihr Herausgeber in der Weimarer Republik*, Böhlau, Köln, Weimar and Wien 1995, 308ff.
- 97 Paul Westheim, "Gezeichnet oder geknipst? Zur Kunstblatt-Ausstellung Porträt-Zeichnungen, -Grafik und -Fotos im Reckendorfhaus, Berlin. Februar 1930", *Das Kunstblatt*, vol. 14, February, 1930, 33–37; reproductions of the images of Walden by Yva and Kokoschka, *ibid.*, 48.
- 98 Walter Mehring, with whom Walden connected during her time in Der Sturm, reproduced the photograph in his 1958 publication *Verrufene Malerei*, which evidences that several copies of the portrait were circulating.
- 99 Whitney Chadwick, "Fetishizing Fashion/Fetishizing Culture. Man Ray's *Noire et blanche*", *The Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 18, no. 2, 1995, 3–17.
- 100 Brett M. Van Hoesen, "Postcolonial Cosmopolitanism. Constructing the Weimar New Woman Out of a Colonial Imaginary", *The New Woman International. Representations in Photography and Film from the 1870s through the 1960s*, Elizabeth Otto and Vanessa Rocco (eds), University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2011, 95–104.
- 101 Kerbs, 1983, 44. See also, Julia Bertschik, "Janusköpfige Moderne. Der Querschnitt zwischen künstlerischen Avantgarde, Neuer Sachlichkeit und 'Habsburgischem Mythos'", *Verdrängte Moderne—vergessene Avantgarde. Diskurskonstellationen zwischen Literatur, Theater, Kunst und Musik in Österreich 1918–1938*, Primus-Heinz Kucher (ed.), V & R unipress, Göttingen, 2016, 174f.
- 102 Van Hoesen, 2010, 210, 218 n. 40; Van Hoesen, 2011, 111.
- 103 Beckers and Moorgat, 2001, 40–57.
- 104 Wauer exhibited the first version of the sculpture in the Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung in 1927 and sold it to the Nationalgalerie, Berlin, in 1928, where it is still now (B I 491). Hans Heimann commissioned a second version of the sculpture, now in the Kunstmuseum Bern (297). Cp. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Ursula and Hans Wauer, undated (1960s), NW1C:288, NWA/LM. There is also a third version, cast in bronze, in private ownership.
- 105 Meskimmon, 1999, 3ff, quotation 5.
- 106 It has been noted that from the mid-1920s to the mid-1930s, women's art associations in Germany gained increased prominence and that they were particularly prominent in Berlin, where, for instance, the Association of Berlin Women Artists (*Verein der Berliner Künstlerinnen*) peaked c. 1930 with more than 1,000 members. Ranfft, 1995, 47.
- 107 Gozalbez Cantó, 2012, 85.
- 108 On professional women photographers in Weimar Germany, see, for example, Ute Eskildsen, "A Chance to Participate. A Transitional Time for Women Photographers", *Visions of the 'Neue Frau'. Women and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany*, Marsha Meskimmon and Shearer West (eds), Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1995, 62–76. For a general introduction on women photographers in Europe and North America, see, for example, Lena Johannesson and Gunilla Knappe (eds), *Women Photographers. European Experience*, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, Gothenburg, 2004; Naomi Rosenblum, *A History of Women Photographers*, 3rd ed., Abbeville Press, New York and London 2010, chapters 5 and 6.
- 109 Eskildsen, 1995, 65f.
- 110 Rosenblum, 2010, 115.
- 111 From issue 3 1927, she was the editor of *Die Damen-Illustrierte* (renamed *Die Frauen-Illustrierte* from issue 24, 1927). On von Oertzen, see F. von Oertzen, *Taschenbuch des Geschlechts von Oertzen*, Berlin, 1899, 48; P. "Personalien", *Die Kunst und das schöne Heim*, 52, 1954, Anhang, 29; *Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon*, Band 11, Naaff-Pixner, De Gruyter, 1988; Werner Schuder (ed.), *Kürschners Deutscher*

- Literatur-Kalender. Nekrolog 1936–1970*, De Gruyter, Berlin and New York, 1973 (the latter two with erroneous birth date).
- 112 Oertzen, “Nell Walden-Heimann. Die Sammlerin und Malerin”, 1928.
 - 113 August von Oertzen, “Von Göttern, Dämonen und Masken—im Besitze einer schönen Frau”, *Welt und Wissen*, vol. 18, no 37, 1929, 251–254; *ibid.*, “Götter, Dämonen und Masken”, *Beyers für alle*, vol. IV, no. VII, 1929; *ibid.*, “Von Göttern, Dämonen und Masken”, clipping from unidentified illustrated paper, *Ausstellungskritiken I*, NWA/LM.
 - 114 Augusta von Oertzen, “Nell Walden. ‘Unter Sternen’”, *Die Frauen-Tribüne*, March, 1933.
 - 115 Eva Kaijser, “Gerda Marcus—‘den stora tiggerskan’ på Svenska Dagbladet”, *Empati och engagemang. En kvinnolinje i svensk journalistik*, Ami Lönnroth (ed), Tusculum, Enhörna, 2008, 38–51; Ann-Katrin Hatje, “Gerda Fredrika Marcus”, *Svenskt kvinnobiografiskt lexikon*, 2020, <https://skbl.se/sv/artikel/GerdaMarcus>.
 - 116 On Ligan, see Margareta Stål, “Ligan som banade vägen. Kvinnliga journalister i 1910-talets dagspress”, *Kraftfält. Forskning om kön och journalistik*, Birgitta Ney (ed.), JMK, Stockholms universitet, Stockholm, 1998, 46–63.
 - 117 G.M. [Gerda Marcus], “Svenskan som förbluffar Berlin. Nell Roslund—själen och hjärtat i revolutionskottet ‘Der Sturm’”, *Veckojournalen*, no. 13, 29 March 1931, 26–27, 35; G.M. [Gerda Marcus], “Prästdottern från Landskrona”, *Idun*, no. 32, 1933, 862–863, 872. A third article by Marcus appeared in a Swedish magazine c. 1930. The magazine has not been identified, but Nell Walden translated the text into German. Gerda Marcus, “Nell Walden”, manuscript in German translation by Nell Walden, NW31, NWA/LM.
 - 118 Cp. Elizabeth Otto and Vanessa Rocco, “Introduction. Imagining and Embodying New Womanhood”, *The New Woman International. Representations in Photography and Film from the 1870s through the 1960s*, Elizabeth Otto and Vanessa Rocco (eds), University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2011, 1.
 - 119 Van Hoesen, 2011, 94.
 - 120 Whitney Chadwick and Tirza True Latimer, “Introduction”, *The Modern Woman Revisited. Paris between the Wars*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick and London, 2003, xix.
 - 121 Whitney Chadwick and Tirza True Latimer, “Becoming Modern. Gender and Sexual Identity after World War I”, *The Modern Woman Revisited. Paris between the Wars*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick and London, 2003, 3.
 - 122 G.M. [Gerda Marcus], “Svenskan som förbluffar Berlin, 1931.
 - 123 “sieben jungen, aufgeweckten, modernen Frauen”, “vom andern Geschlecht unabhängig”. Nell Walden, *Kit*, unpublished manuscript, NWA/LM.
 - 124 Nell Walden, *Kit*, unpublished manuscript, NWA/LM.
 - 125 “natürlich kann der kleinen Frauenclub nicht mehr weiter leben”. Nell Walden, *Kit*, unpublished manuscript, NWA/LM.
 - 126 Ute Frevert, *Women in German History. From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation*, Berg, Oxford and Washington, (1988) 1995, 201f. Cp. Shulamith Behr, “Anatomy of the woman as collector and dealer in the Weimar period. Rosa Schapire and Johanna Ey”, *Visions of the ‘Neue Frau’. Women and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany*, Marsha Meskimmon and Shearer West (eds), Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1995, 97.
 - 127 Nell Walden, “Biografische Daten”, NW3, NWA/LM.
 - 128 Nell Walden, “Sensommandagar i Sverige och Tyskland. Resebrev till Landskrona Tidning”, *Landskrona Korrespondenten*, 25 September 1933.
 - 129 Correspondence between Nell Walden and relatives in Sweden, April 1969, NW4B, NWA/LM.
 - 130 The marriage certificate of Nell Walden and her third husband Hannes Urech also entails information of her divorce from Hans Heimann. Eheschein Nell Walden und Hannes Urech-Walden, 15 July 1940, NW40, NWA/LM.
 - 131 Certificate of Swedish citizenship, 14 July 1933, *Ausstellungskritiken III*, NWA/LM.
 - 132 Nell Walden, letter to Rudolf Zeller, February 1938, Museumsarchiv, Bernisches Historisches Museum. Hans Heimann’s mother, Anna Heimann, b. Landsberger, died in Berlin in 1940. I am grateful to Mrs Sylvia Kolley, Heideblick, for providing me with this information.

- 133 Nell Walden reported on their spring holidays in Ascona in G.M. [Gerda Marcus], "Svenskan som förbluffar Berlin", 1931 and G.M. [Gerda Marcus], "Prästdottern från Landskrona", 1933. Cp. also Nell Walden, "Biografische Daten", NW3, NWA/LM.
- 134 Nell Walden's passport, NW40; Manuscript "Aus Nell Waldens Leben", NW31, NWA/LM.
- 135 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Swedish relatives, 29 April 1969, NW4B, NWA/LM. Nell Walden, letters to Rudolf Zeller, 26 July 1936 and 17 September 1936, Museumsarchiv, Bernisches Historisches Museum.
- 136 Henry P. David, Jochen Fleischhacker and Charlotte Hohn, "Abortion and Eugenics in Nazi Germany", *Population and Development Review*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1988, 94. According to paragraph 218 in the German Penal Code, which since 1926 consolidated abortion legislation, only life-threatening medical conditions legally permitted abortions. In 1933, the Nazis expanded the anti-abortion legislation and punishments were henceforth increasingly severe. Ibid., 83f., 90.
- 137 Nell Walden, manuscript "Biografische Daten", undated (probably 1947), NW31, NWA/LM. In her personal account of Nell Walden, Margareta Alin Hegelund has published the decision of the district court of 10 March 1938 to open the proceedings against Heimann before the jury court in Berlin. The document specifies that he was accused of carrying out abortions from 1927 to 1937. Margareta Alin Hegelund, *Min Nell. En ung svenska i expressionismens Berlin*, Arx, Malmö, 2018, 194.
- 138 "obgleich es ja heutzutage keine Schande mehr ist in D- verhaftet zu werden- fast im Gegenteil". Nell Walden, letter to Rudolf Zeller, February 1938, Museumsarchiv, Bernisches Historisches Museum.
- 139 Hannes Urech, copy of letter to Hans Heimann, 23 September 1941, Hans Heimann portfolio, NWA/LM.
- 140 Hans Heimann, letter to Nell Walden, 29 June 1942, Hans Heimann portfolio, NWA/LM.
- 141 Nell Walden and Hannes Urech, copy of letter to Hans Heimann, 27 June 1942, and Nell Walden, copy of letter to the lawyer G. von Falkenhayn, Berlin, 1 July 1942, Hans Heimann portfolio, NWA/LM.
- 142 Hans Heimann was forced to enter one of the five deportation trains that were destined for Riga in the summer and autumn of 1942. The trains were part of the last "Großtransporten" of Jews to the Baltic States, none of them aimed to bring people to the Ghetto of Riga but were "reine 'Endlösungstransporte'". Alfred Gottwaldt and Diana Schulle, *Die Judendeportationen aus dem Deutschen Reich 1941–1945. Eine kommentierte Chronologie*, Marix, Wiesbaden, 2005, 250f. There are diverging information on how many people were forced to enter the train that took Hans Heimann to Riga, different sources state 938 or 1,004 people. Gottwaldt and Schulle 2005, 255. I am grateful to Mrs Sylvia Kolley, Heideblick, for pointing this reference out and for providing me with a copy of the transport list.

5 Histories and Archives

In this final chapter, I trace Nell Walden's efforts to secure, display, and institutionalise her collections. As will be clear, this is not only a narrative on an individual art collector and the fate of her collections, but a trajectory that is intimately connected with cultural politics in times of fascism and war, the importance of continuing supportive labour and strategic localisation of collections in the canonisation process of modernism, and, finally, the meaning of presence in public archives and collections for art historiography. The focus in the following is on the transfer, display, dispersal, and institutionalisation of Walden's collections from the 1930s onwards and on her post-war efforts to contribute to the canonisation of Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm while simultaneously trying to position herself in that same narrative.

“Degenerate” Flight Assets

Nell Walden's transfer of her collections and her own subsequent migration to Switzerland was occasioned by the political situation in Germany, and the fate of her collections during the 1930s and 1940s was intimately connected with their precarious status as flight assets. Walden was, of course, not alone in her decision to leave Germany. From 1933 onwards, many art collectors of Jewish descent fled the country and found a haven for their collections in, for example, the Netherlands, France, the UK, and the USA. In 2001, a Swiss commission researching flight assets and looted assets—*Fluchtgut* and *Raubgut*—estimated that at least 25 art collections arrived in Switzerland as *Fluchtgut* in the 1930s and 1940s, that is, were brought over the border by the owners themselves in order to escape seizure by Nazi authorities.¹ Even though Nell Walden transferred her collections already in 1932 and despite the fact that she had divorced Hans Heimann and repatriated as Swedish citizen, and passed as “Aryan” according to the racist politics of the Nazis, her decision to relocate them cannot be separated from the political turbulence in Germany. In 1932, Walden's publicist, Felix Stössinger, published an article in which he argued that the defence of abstract art had become a matter of political urgency in Germany and explicitly warned for the announced iconoclast cultural politics of the Nazis.² Nell Walden evidently recognised the gravity of the political situation too, and as it was the immediate reason why she relocated her collections, the Swiss commission has defined them as “degenerate” flight assets (“*entartetes Fluchtgut*”).³

German collectors of Jewish descent who emigrated to Switzerland and brought their collections as flight assets mostly arrived in the early 1930s. Their choice of refuge usually depended on previously established contacts with museums and collectors.⁴

Walden's relocation was facilitated by the fact that she already had a house there, but it is unclear how well established her contacts with Swiss museums were. The transfer of the Sturm collection was partly due to a fortunate coincidence. In 1932, the director of the Kunsthalle Basel, the painter and professor in modern art education Wilhelm Barth, turned to Nell Walden to ask for a loan. Walden sent some twenty works to the Kunsthalle's exhibition *Moderne deutsche Malerei aus Privatsbesitz*, inaugurated in October 1933. The contact to Barth presented Walden with a timely opportunity to arrange for a long-term deposit and the main part of her Sturm collection was transferred to the Kunsthalle Basel that same year.⁵ Further works from the Sturm collection and most of her own artworks were part of her private move. Yet other works, including the majority of her own early oil paintings, remained with Hans Heimann in Berlin. After his arrest in 1937, his sister arranged for the artworks to be put in storage at the Gurlitt auction house in Berlin, where they were lost during the bombings at the end of the Second World War. Among them were two large works by Rudolf Bauer, an oil painting from Fernand Léger's *Contrastes de forms* series, and presumably Walden's only paintings by Alexei von Jawlensky (Figure 2.6) and Marianne von Werefkin.⁶ It is not known whether all artworks that remained with Heimann were relocated to Gurlitt. At least one painting escaped war damage, Jean Metzinger's *Landscape (Composition Cubiste)* (Figure 5.1), now in the Harvard Art

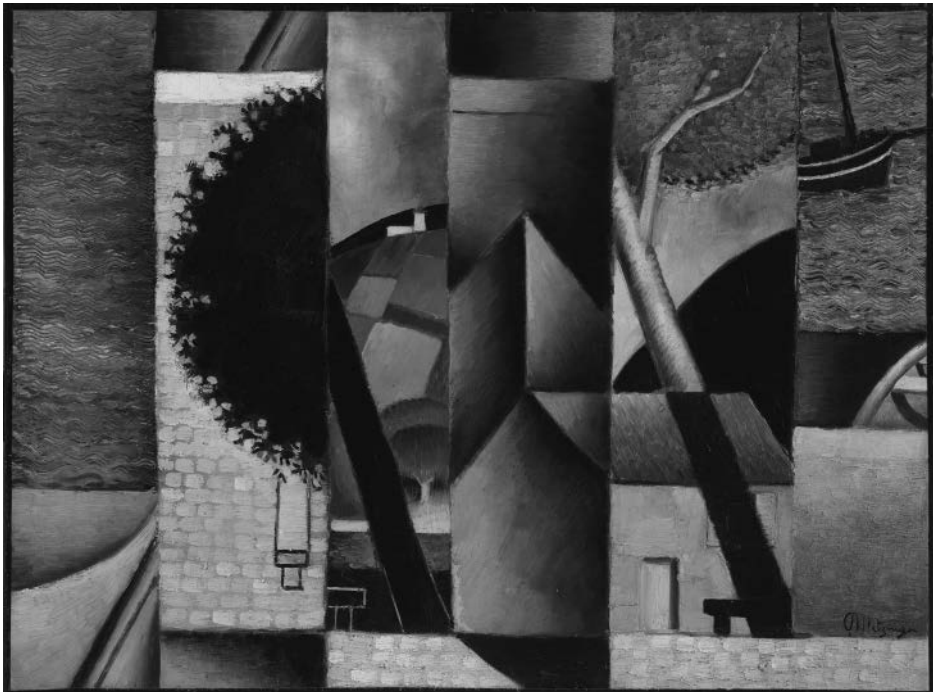


Figure 5.1 Jean Metzinger, *Landscape (Composition Cubiste)*, 1912. Oil on canvas, 51.44 × 68.58 cm. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum (1960.735), Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Hazen. © Jean Metzinger/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © President and Fellows of Harvard College. As long as the painting was in Nell Walden's possession it was titled *Marine or Gemälde*.

Museums. In the 1960s, Walden reported that she had lost this work in Berlin, but did not detail on the circumstances.⁷ Due to a lack of primary sources, it is impossible to determine whether the painting remained in Heimann's apartment and disappeared from there or if it went astray while in storage at the Gurlitt auction house.⁸

With the main part of the Sturm collection secured in Switzerland, Walden hastened to find a similar arrangement for her collection of ethnographica. In the early summer of 1932, Felix Stössinger on her behalf contacted the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève and offered her indigenous art collection for loan. The founder of the museum, the anthropologist Eugène Pittard, responded positively, but, as Andreas Schlothauer has noted, Walden and Stössinger rushed the process and dispatched the collection before the contract had been agreed on. In the end of July, a Berlin transport firm notified the museum that 11 cases with objects were on its way to Geneva.⁹ When the collection arrived in the beginning of August, the museum declined to receive it until formal arrangements were settled and the cases had to remain in the customs warehouse.¹⁰ Pittard, obviously surprised by the shipment, wrote to Stössinger: "I admit that I do not understand this haste. Is it because of the unrest in Germany?"¹¹ Stössinger avoided commenting on the political situation in Germany in his reply, stating only that Walden was just about to leave for Ascona and thus had to empty the apartment in Berlin.¹² Schlothauer has recently shown that she brought 557 ethnographic objects to Switzerland, 327 arrived in Geneva, the rest was part of her private move.¹³

Swiss museums helped facilitate the transfer of *Fluchtgut* by accepting artworks as long-term loans, which relieved immigrant collectors of import duties and, where applicable, emigrant taxes.¹⁴ As Walden's case indicate, the relocation to Swiss museums offered an attractive solution, while at the same time the collector was dependent on successful negotiations with the institutions. As regards the Sturm collection, the Kunsthalle Basel had intervened and saved her from import duties and customs fees by guaranteeing that it would not return the collection to the owner without permission from the customs. When the ethnographic collection arrived in Geneva, Stössinger urged Pittard to save Walden from "this enormous expense" in a similar manner.¹⁵ Pittard successfully negotiated with the customs and eventually suspended the payment until the end of 1934.¹⁶

Walden's connections with the museum in Geneva had been fraught with various difficulties from the very beginning, which possibly contributed to her only being able to secure the ethnographic collection under the museum's protection for a limited time. During the summer of 1934, she and Stössinger, who by this time had fled Berlin for his native Prague, proposed to extend the deposit agreement, but Pittard showed no more than a lukewarm interest.¹⁷ In the beginning of December, Walden travelled to Basel. In her travel reports, published in the daily of her native Landskrona, she informed the readership of how she had visited cultural institutions and entertained with museum professionals and painters, among them her friends Eugen Paravicini, curator at the Museum für Völkerkunde (today's Museum der Kulturen Basel), and two young collectors in his circle, Lucas Staehelin and Theo Meier, the latter a painter.¹⁸ Evidently, it was through these contacts that she had been referred to the director of the Museum für Völkerkunde, Fritz Sarasin.¹⁹ Walden must have begun negotiations with him before arriving in Basel. Already on 4 December 1934, she could inform Pittard that she had reached an agreement with the museum in Basel.²⁰ By the turn of the year, she had both the Sturm collection and the indigenous art collection deposited in public institutions in Basel.

Walden did not imagine her long-term loans as storage solutions, but from the start wanted to secure public display. The contract with the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève had stipulated that the museum should publically display the entire collection, either as an entity or in parts, and with labels clearly informing of the collector.²¹ Already in February 1933, a small part of the collection, predominantly masks from New Guinea, had been presented for the public in the exhibition *Masques océaniens et masques nègres*. Pittard had elucidated on the exhibition in an article in the *Journal de Genève*, which brought further public attention.²²

What Walden perceived as inadequate public presentations of her collections in Basel contributed to her decision to yet again relocate her collections. When she had resumed contact with the Kunsthalle Basel in December 1934, Wilhelm Barth had passed away and she faced an invoice for storeroom costs.²³ Barth had regularly put the Sturm collection on show and also employed it in his lectures on modern art.²⁴ After his death, however, it had remained in storage, which made her explore other possibilities.²⁵ As Schlothauer has noted, she was equally keen to exhibit her ethnographic collection and almost certainly anticipated that larger parts of it would be on show in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Basel. In the end, though, the museum only showed three particularly rare objects, one of them the Torres Strait mask discussed in Chapter 4. Moreover, the museum director, Fritz Sarasin, seems to have tried to persuade her to donate or bequeath precisely the more valuable pieces to the museum in a way that she perceived as tactless.²⁶

The Basel depositions turned out to be temporary solutions and Walden turned to public institutions in Bern. She must have reached an agreement with Rudolf Zeller, curator and vice director of the Bernisches Historisches Museum, regarding a long-term deposition of her ethnographic collection during 1935. In March 1936, the collection was sent as a loan for exhibition purposes to the museum.²⁷ It is not known how Walden came into contact with Zeller, but during the 1930s they were in frequent contact and became close friends. Shortly after she had sent the ethnographic collection to Bern, she turned to Zeller for advice on a suitable location for the Sturm collection. From their correspondence, it is clear that she preferred the collection remained in Switzerland, but she was prepared to send it to Sweden as long as she could avoid shipping it back to Germany.²⁸ Thanks to Zeller's contacts and negotiations with the curator at the Kunstmuseum Bern, Conrad von Mandach, approximately 330 artworks from the Sturm collection, some 30 pieces of folk and indigenous art, and nearly 70 works of her own were transferred to the Kunstmuseum Bern in March 1937 where they remained until March 1945.²⁹ The deposition also entailed a final settlement of import taxes and customs charges. Walden paid the fees while the museum undertook to make a deduction of the equivalent sum in the event of a planned purchase from her collection.³⁰

Like many other collectors that arrived in Switzerland due to the political situation in Germany, Nell Walden strived to keep her collections intact. As soon as she received the news of Hans Heimann's arrest in 1937, though, she considered different options to sell off parts of her collections in order to release capital that would provide for Heimann and his sister should they be able to escape Germany and settle with her in Switzerland. In February 1938 she confided in Rudolf Zeller: "You know that I have property of great value, but no money—and now more than ever, I have to set about to make money out of values even more".³¹

Walden's subsequent negotiations with museum professionals and collectors are indicative of immigrant collectors' relations to Swiss art institutions and of the

mechanisms of the Swiss art market at the time. In the time between the two world wars, the Swiss market for *entartete Kunst* was limited. Recent research has suggested that museums and *Kunsthallen* rather than dealers and galleries played an important part on the art market for both indigenous and modern art, as they organised sales exhibitions.³² Symptomatically, the Kunsthalle Basel's exhibition *Moderne deutsche Malerei aus Privatsbesitz*, to which Walden had contributed in 1933, was precisely a sales exhibition. Even if at that time all works remained in her possession, her contacts with museum professionals and wealthy collectors were decisive when she occasionally sold pieces from her collections during the 1930s and 1940s.

Walden later reported that her priority had been to keep the Sturm collection complete and to avoid the art market. In order "to get on by", she predominantly sold parts of her ethnographic collection to museums.³³ By the time of Heimann's arrest, her Berlin acquaintance, the art dealer Karl Nierendorf, who had left Germany for the USA in 1936, had encouraged her to send her complete collections of Sturm and indigenous art to the USA for him to sell in the gallery he had opened in New York in January 1937. Walden hesitated though and turned to Rudolf Zeller, asking him to help her find a financial contributor that would be willing to secure pieces from her ethnographic collection to the Bernisches Historisches Museum. Zeller suggested another friend of Walden's, the German banker and art collector, baron Eduard von der Heydt.³⁴

Walden first made the acquaintance of von der Heydt in Berlin during the 1910s, but it was only in the late 1920s they became close friends.³⁵ Both had put pieces from their collections at the disposal of Alfred Flechtheim's Berlin gallery and their friendship grew out of their mutual interest in ethnographica. Before having their own house in Ascona, Walden and Heimann had spent their Swiss spring holidays in von der Heydt's hotel on Monte Verità, where Walden both painted and wrote parts of her poetry collection *Unter Sternen* (1933).³⁶ Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the site had gathered different colonies of *Lebensreformern*, artists, and intellectuals. When von der Heydt acquired Monte Verità in 1926, he built a modern hotel and brought parts of his vast collections of modern and indigenous art to the premises. Thus, the Monte Verità was just as much a museum as a hotel and it turned into an international hotspot for art historians, dealers, artists, intellectuals, and prominent people within the culture, society, and politics.³⁷ When Walden settled in Ascona, she thus already had access to the stimulating cultural milieu and international network of von der Heydt's Monte Verità. Even if no details on Walden's social and professional connections during the visits to Monte Verità have survived, it is reasonable to presume that they were an asset when she tried to establish herself in the Swiss social and cultural milieu from the 1930s onwards.

In March 1938, Zeller started negotiations with von der Heydt on Walden's behalf. In order to estimate the value of the 60 objects Walden was ready to let go of, Zeller turned to the collector Arthur Speyer, with whom Walden had traded while still in Berlin.³⁸ Speyer conducted the estimation, but the business with von der Heydt petered out.³⁹ In the end, Zeller arranged that the Bernisches Historisches Museum attained an ancestor stove from Walden's collection in exchange for paying the customs fees. Thus, from December 1939 onwards, Walden could freely dispose also of her ethnographic collection.⁴⁰

Negotiations with von der Heydt were eventually resumed. In 1945, he acquired Archipenko's sculpture *Female Figure* (*Weibliche Figur*, 1916) (Figure 2.16) from

Walden's Sturm collection and 102 pieces from her ethnographic collection and donated them to the Kunstmuseum and Historisches Museum in Bern, respectively.⁴¹ The sculpture and at least half of the ethnographic objects have subsequently been conveyed to the Museum Rietberg in Zürich.⁴² As Schlothauer has shown, Walden also sold some ten objects from her indigenous collection to the Völkerkundemuseum Burgdorf in 1945.⁴³ In 1948, collector and Paul Klee patron Richard Doetsch-Benziger contributed to the payment when she sold Chagall's *The Cattle Dealer* (*Der Viehhändler*, 1911) (Figure 2.14) to the Kunstmuseum Basel, again indicating the importance of connections with museum professionals and fellow collectors as regards the sales in the 1930s and 1940s.

The Exhibition of Twentieth-Century German Art

One has to presume that Walden realised that exhibition visibility would increase the interest in her collections from cultural institutions and art professionals and/or contribute to more favourable prices on the art market should she sell some of the works. However, when she contributed to the *Exhibition of Twentieth Century German Art* at the New Burlington Galleries in London in 1938, there was more at stake than merely marketing values. The exhibition, including at least 314 pieces from some 90 collections, was the most prominent international answer against the Nazi exhibition *Entartete Kunst*—inaugurated in Munich in 1937 and in modified versions touring Germany and Austria 1938–1941—and remains to date among the largest exhibitions of modern German art shown in the UK.⁴⁴ The London exhibition employed “German art” as a broad concept, including artists of diverse nationalities that were or had been practising as artists in Germany, and contained works by artists from Austria, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Sweden, Switzerland, and the USA.

Recent research has confirmed that Nell Walden contributed with the largest amount of works, at least 38 pieces, from a single lender to the exhibition. Moreover, her loans to the exhibition were not only the first major show of Oskar Kokoschka in the UK, but also the first survey display of Sturm artists in the English-speaking art world.⁴⁵ Apart from three of her own paintings, Walden provided prominent works such as Marc's *The Yellow Cow* (*Die gelbe Kuh*, 1911) (Figure 2.3), Kokoschka's *Herwarth Walden* (1910) (Figure 2.4), Kandinsky's *Large Study* (*Grosse Studie*, 1914) (Figure 2.7), and Campendonk's *Jumping Horse* (*Springendes Pferd*, 1911) (Figure 2.8) and *The Yellow Animal* (*Das gelbe Tier*, c. 1914) (Figure 5.2).

The exhibition opened in July 1938 and closed its doors in August. The introduction to the exhibition catalogue clearly reflected the frailty of the political situation in Germany. Even if the catalogue refrained from an explicit political agenda, the exhibition undoubtedly had a political edge as it aimed to “offer the persecuted artists of Germany the prospect of appealing to the unprejudiced eyes of the world”.⁴⁶ On the day of the opening, *The Times* reported that the profits of the exhibition would “be devoted, appropriately, to the relief of refugee artists”, which was clearly understood as a political statement.⁴⁷ The severity of the political crisis further motivated the organisers to particularly stress that “[i]n no case has an artist still living in Germany been asked to participate in the Exhibition: they are represented by works from private collections outside Germany without the artist's knowledge or consent”, thus trying to protect the artists from acts of reprisal in Germany.⁴⁸ Visitors to the exhibition received a free copy of the book *Modern German Art*, which was published by



Figure 5.2 Heinrich Campendonk, *The Yellow Animal* (*Das gelbe Tier*), c. 1914. Oil on canvas, 90 × 80 cm. Kunstmuseum, Den Haag (0333092). © Heinrich Campendonk/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © Kunstmuseum Den Haag.

Penguin to coincide with the opening of the exhibition.⁴⁹ Penned by the Yugoslav art critic Oto Bihalji-Merin under the pseudonym Peter Thoene, the publication was a defence of German modernism and explicitly critical of the Nazi's cultural politics.⁵⁰

Lucy Wasensteiner has shown that despite the exhibition's presentation as a British project—the catalogue listed, for example, the director of the National Gallery Kenneth Clark and renown intellectuals such as Clive Bell and Virginia Woolf as patrons—Swiss and German actors had played a key role for the project. Art historian Herbert Read, who acted as chairman of the organising committee, was engaged in the project only in December 1937. By that time, the majority of exhibits was already secured, predominantly through the work by the Swiss art dealer Irmgard Burchard, who was mentioned only as honorary organiser in the catalogue, and the Jewish art critic Paul Westheim. Although the political demonstration was of essential importance for the organisers, the show was also a professional opportunity for Burchard and Westheim to establish themselves on an international art scene. Burchard was dealing for numerous German and Swiss artists from Zürich at the time and Westheim had left Berlin for Paris in 1933 where he had to start anew.⁵¹

In light of the above, one has to consider the importance of the exhibition as both a political statement and a promotional opportunity also for Walden. As we have seen, the expatriate life in Switzerland had put her in financial distress. At least 24 of the works she provided for the show were marked for sale in the catalogue. The fact that she put major works such as Campendonk's *Jumping Horse* and Kandinsky's *Large Study* for sale on the international art market in 1938 testify that she did not hesitate to partly disperse the Sturm collection in order to release capital, almost certainly intended both to provide for Heimann, once he was released, and to survive herself. In the end, none of the works were sold, but the London show secured public attention both to her own paintings and to major works from her Sturm collection in an international context.

Given the acute political situation during which the exhibition took place and the extent of her contribution to the show, there was surely more at stake than a desire to market the collection. By this time, both her own paintings and the works of her fellow Sturm artists were defined as *entartete Kunst* in Germany. By granting extensive loans to an exhibition that was framed as a critical answer to the *entartete Kunst* campaign, the London show gave her the chance to defy the cultural politics of the Nazis, at least implicitly as she remained anonymous as lender in the exhibition catalogue. In short, her contributions to the show was a political statement of sorts.

Flight Assets on Display

The private collections that arrived as flight assets in Switzerland in the 1930s implied that museums and *Kunsthallen* in the country had an immense quantity of artworks at their disposal for exhibitions free of charge, which turned out to be of huge importance during the Second World War when borders were closed. At the same time, this was advantageous for those collectors who tried to sell individual pieces, as a previous exhibition display testified that the work was of museum quality, which favoured the price formation on the art market.⁵² Several exhibitions of Walden's collections in Bern, Zürich, and Basel from 1944 to 1946 are indicative of the collaborations and reciprocal exchanges between Swiss museums and immigrant collectors during the Second World War.

The exhibition *Der Sturm. Sammlung Nell Walden aus den Jahren 1912–1920* in Kunstmuseum Bern 1944–1945 is exemplary of how Swiss museums benefitted from the availability of *Fluchtgut* collections during wartime. The title was somewhat misleading, as not only pieces from her Sturm collection but also from her ethnographic collection were on display. The exhibition was one of five parallel temporary shows presented in the museum, whose permanent collection had been evacuated due to the war. A reviewer for the *Neue Züricher Zeitung* noted with gratitude that the museum thus could offer the public access to art “across national borders” and was particularly enthusiastic about the “extraordinary Walden collection”, as it not only enabled revealing insights into German expressionism, but in between, among the works of Sturm artists also presented an “excellent arrangement” of indigenous artworks, grouped together in “closed formations”.⁵³

A second exhibition of Walden's Sturm collection confirms the importance of sales exhibitions for the Swiss art market during this time. In 1945, only weeks after the German capitulation, the Kunsthaus Zürich brought together Walden's collection of modern art with that of the Swiss ophthalmologist and art collector Othmar Huber in the exhibition *Expressionisten, Kubisten, Futuristen*. Shortly before the

exhibition, Walden sold three watercolour paintings by Chagall, Klee, and Kandinsky, respectively. The Kandinsky piece, one of his many sketches for *Composition VII* (1913), was acquired by Huber and included in the Zürich exhibition as part of his collection.⁵⁴

Parallel to this, her collection of African art was sent on loan for the exhibition *Afrikanische Kunst aus Schweizer Sammlungen* in the Kunstgewerbemuseum (today's Museum für Gestaltung) in Zürich.⁵⁵ The exhibition was organised by Johannes Itten, since 1938 the director of both the Kunstgewerbemuseum and the Kunstgewerbeschule (today's Zürcher Hochschule der Künste). Walden was acquainted with Itten already in Berlin. She acquired her first watercolour painting by him no later than 1917 and he was one of the former Sturm artists whose work she continued to collect.⁵⁶ From the 1940s onwards, they reconnected in Switzerland and were close friends.

Alongside works belonging to several Swiss ethnographic museums, Itten exhibited pieces on loan from private collectors, predominantly works in the possession of Nell Walden and Eduard von der Heydt.⁵⁷ The critical reception was positive and Itten's curatorial principal to select and display objects "purely from an artistic point of view and without commitment to ethnographic and cultural-historical educational purposes" was praised as a novelty in the press.⁵⁸ The exhibition allowed for a formalist assessment of both sacred and profane items and invited comparisons with equivalent developments in European art history.⁵⁹ Walden's African art collection seems to have made a stir among specialists and collectors, and it was in connection with the exhibition that the negotiations with von der Heydt were resumed and finally resulted in his large acquisition.⁶⁰

In 1946, some 170 works from her Sturm collection returned for a show in the Kunsthalle Basel, where it had first been exhibited in 1933.⁶¹ The Swiss press did not hesitate to appoint it as one of the most important collections of modern painting. Judging from the critics' rhetoric—describing it with epithets such as "well-known", "famous", "excellent", "remarkable", and "extraordinary", while also noting the collector's "pronounced sense for the essence of the expressive means" of the "most important artists in Germany" and beyond—Walden had by then successfully established her Sturm collection as a crucial document of German expressionism in the Swiss art world.⁶²

The display of Nell Walden's collections in different Swiss exhibitions during the war drew considerable public attention in Switzerland and beyond to her achievements as a collector. During the following decades, there were several further exhibitions in Switzerland, dedicated more or less exclusively to her collection, as well as recurring loan requests for exhibitions in Europe and the USA.⁶³ The exposure of her collections in public institutions presumably strengthened their market value, but, as we shall see, Walden primarily sought cultural recognition through permanent institutionalisation.

Guardians of Memory

Previous research has pointed out that a paradoxical feature of modernism was that many of its practitioners themselves participated in the construction of its canon.⁶⁴ As we will see, Nell Walden was one of them. Her post-war efforts to contribute to the historiography of Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm through exhibitions and publications started in the late 1940s and continued for the rest of her life. In effect, she resumed the supportive labour for Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm that she had started in the 1910s.

In 1948, she reconnected with her former Sturm colleague and friend Lothar Schreyer, laconically stating that “[i]t is probably my destiny that I must continue to help Herwarth [*sic*] Walden—even beyond death”.⁶⁵ Immediately, they started planning for a joint publication, and in 1954, their edited “memory book” on Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm was published.⁶⁶ The publication offered a first historiographical overview of the Sturm movement. Apart from two longer essays by the editors, it contained reprinted texts of a diverse character by Herwarth Walden and some twenty Sturm authors and artists, Nell Walden herself included, and a wide range of documentary material, such as lists of contributors to the magazine *Der Sturm*, the gallery exhibitions in Berlin and beyond, the artists represented in the Walden collection, and the books edited by the Sturm publishing house. It was richly illustrated with both black and white reproductions of a broad range of artworks disseminated through *Der Sturm* and colour plates of major works. All in all, the book aimed to testify to Herwarth Walden as a “brilliant champion” and the Sturm organisation’s role as a pivotal protagonist for modern art in Germany and beyond.⁶⁷

If Nell Walden, first and foremost, sought to secure what she considered to be Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm’s rightful place in the historiography of modern art, the publication also provided her the chance to insert herself in the narrative. Fully aware of the risk that her own writing would be perceived as biased, she encouraged Schreyer to write about her work for *Der Sturm*: “Now you pay tribute to the Sturm work—Walden’s work—my share, too—because there are already so many contradicting opinions about it”.⁶⁸ Evidently, Schreyer was willing to comply and readily confirmed her importance, stating that “Herwarth could not have accomplished his work without you”.⁶⁹

While exerting herself to secure the legacy of Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm, Nell Walden communicated with several women artists who, in a similar manner, busied themselves with efforts to document, publish, institutionalise, and exhibit, that is, contribute to the canonisation of, their male peers. In the late 1940s, Maria Marc repeatedly reported to both Nell Walden and the German baroness and artist Hilla von Rebay how the heavy workload with the estate of her late husband Franz Marc, including the publication of his correspondence, taxed her and prevented her from carrying out any artistic work of her own.⁷⁰ Marc made a point of noting down her memories and urged Nell Walden to similarly document her recollections of the years in *Der Sturm*.⁷¹ Some years later, Walden reconnected with Gabriele Münter, who had recently made a spectacular donation to the Lenbachhaus in Munich of works by the Blaue Reiter artists that she had saved from Nazi confiscations and destruction. Writing to Walden, Münter pointed out: “You are, with your art treasures and the responsibility for them, in a situation similar to mine. I had to hold the work together”.⁷²

Walden, Marc, and Münter were not alone. On the other side of the Atlantic, Galka E. Scheyer in the 1920s had founded the association the Blue Four, dedicated to the dissemination of the art by Lyonel Feininger, Jawlensky, Kandinsky, and Klee through exhibitions and lectures; in 1921, Katherine S. Dreier, together with Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, had founded the Société Anonyme, the most important venue for European avant-garde art in the USA during the 1920s, and for decades Dreier ran most of its projects while also taking on the role of Duchamp’s patron; Hilla von Rebay, who resided in the USA since 1927, had brought together an extraordinary collection of abstract art, not least works by Kandinsky and Rudolf Bauer, for Solomon

R. Guggenheim and during the 1930s and 1940s established and directed what she conceived of as a “Temple of the Spiritual in Art”, today’s Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.⁷³

As Isabel Wünsche has noted, Scheyer, Dreier, and Rebay, all of them artists in their own right, belonged to a generation of women patrons, curators, and art educators, who, driven by an idea of spiritual motherhood (*geisterliche Mütterlichkeit*), from the 1920s through the 1950s ardently promoted modern art. This was much to the detriment of their own creative practices, but Wünsche argues that their support of in particular Jawlensky, Duchamp, and Bauer, respectively, was less grounded in conventional gender norms than “a desire for social control and hegemony through acculturation” to patriarchal norms through the realisation of the “useful and flexible” ideal of spiritual motherhood as “a metaphor for a specifically female approach to social reform”.⁷⁴ Put differently, they were “masquerading” motherhood as a strategy to conceal their “masculine” agency in the art world and seemingly comply to feminine norms.⁷⁵

Similar ideas of a spiritual motherhood had been projected onto Walden’s collecting during the 1920s. In a review of her exhibition in the Flechtheim gallery in 1927, one critic asserted that the show testified to her mission in life and alleged that “[a] great deal of maternity may have directed Nell Walden onto this path”.⁷⁶ In 1957, when Walden believed she had secured a donation of her collections to the museum in Aarau, she suggestively wrote to Gabriele Münter “I have now cared for the spiritual children and I am happy about it”.⁷⁷ If Walden—collector and artist of the same generation as Scheyer, Dreier, and Rebay—had adopted similar ideas of maternal responsibility, it is clear that she too was driven by a desire to gain control and influence over the historiography and institutionalisation of *Der Sturm*.

Patricia Holland has noted that “it is largely [women] who have become the historians, guardians of memory, selecting and preserving the family archive”.⁷⁸ Holland certainly refers to a completely different context—the selection and organisation of domestic photography in family albums—but as regards the institutionalisation of modern art, the archival and historiographical work of Walden and fellow women artists are equivalent to the endeavours of the “self-appointed archivist[s]” in Holland’s study.⁷⁹ Writing to Gabriele Münter in the 1950s, Walden matter-of-factly noted: “I collect everything”.⁸⁰ And indeed, she meticulously collected and organised press clippings, exhibition catalogues, books, articles, correspondence, and, to a lesser extent, photographs relating to *Der Sturm* during her entire life.⁸¹

Jeremy Braddock has argued that within modernism archiving, as a collecting practice, was a crucial means for cultural and social intervention, aiming at “institutional representation and future authority”.⁸² Just as the private art collection, then, the private archive was a provisional institution of sorts. Walden’s archive soon turned into an important source material for scholars and curators interested in *Der Sturm*, and she was well aware of its importance: “nobody has such a material anymore – nobody has organised and cared for it as I have done”.⁸³ The fact that she saved copies of her letters and the organisation of her material indicate that she was consciously archiving for the future. The way she structured her correspondence, which has been preserved in the Landskrona museum, is illustrative. Incoming letters and postcards were organised together with copies of outgoing answers and filed in different categories according to a particular taxonomy. For instance, *Künstlerbriefe*, *Kunst*, and *Sturmanfragen* were separated from her private correspondence and from the vast

correspondence with Lothar Schreyer about their mutual Sturm book and with Leopold Reidemeister about the first major Sturm retrospective exhibition in Berlin in 1961, and so on, and thus provided a documentary structure for future research.

In 1963, Nell Walden supplemented her first book on *Der Sturm* with a biography of Herwarth Walden.⁸⁴ The second publication wanted to capture Herwarth Walden's character, but also contained the kind of recollections from *Der Sturm* that Maria Marc had encouraged her to document. Included in the book were sometimes rather anecdotal descriptions of the Walden couple's everyday life, both from *Der Sturm*'s heyday and from the first years of the Weimar republic when Herwarth Walden's interest in left-wing politics had awakened. It also contained a rather unflattering depiction of Herwarth Walden's first wife and collaborator, Else Lasker-Schüler, and a chapter on Nell Walden's art collection. Explaining her inclination towards collecting as "an inherited bad habit" from her maternal grandfather, a merchant and shipowner whose house had been rich with East Asian art objects, she elucidated in some detail on her collecting practices, again taking the opportunity to position herself in the narrative.⁸⁵ Written from a more personal perspective, the publication gave a highly coloured description of Herwarth Walden, which was, in fact, intended. Commenting on a reviewer, who had noted the biased tone of the book, Nell Walden confided in Lothar Schreyer: "So, the Swedish critic [...] thinks that I idealise HW and that is also the case- He is right".⁸⁶ As I have shown elsewhere, her unconcealed idealisation of Herwarth Walden in both publications negatively affected the credibility of her own claims to a position in the Sturm historiography as she unintentionally provided scholars with an easy excuse to dismiss the accounts of her own contributions as exaggerations too.⁸⁷

Nell Walden not only contributed to the Sturm historiography through publications, but continued to draw attention to the organisation through exhibitions in the post-war period. Through personal connections to the Swedish art historian Lars Erik Åström, Walden managed to arrange for a travelling exhibition of her Sturm collection in 1954.⁸⁸ Åström was a curator at the National Association for Fine Arts (*Riksförbundet för bildande konst*), an organisation founded by Swedish museums and art societies in 1930 with the aim of pursuing art education through exhibitions, publications, lectures, and so on. The exhibition opened in Eskilstuna in March 1954, and then toured to the Kunsthalle in Örebro, the art museums in Gothenburg and Norrköping, the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm, and finally to the museums in Linköping and Malmö. The exhibition contained 85 artworks by 35 artists, including works by Walden herself, who in numbers was most prominently represented alongside Chagall and Kokoschka.

Following the preparations at a distance from Switzerland and clearly frustrated by the Swedish exhibition committee's lack of communication, Walden did her best to contribute to the promotion of the show. Åström had visited Walden in Switzerland in May 1953 in order to settle the selection of works to be included in the exhibition, but then paused corresponding with her. With only weeks left to the inauguration, Walden was still kept uninformed about the touring schedule.⁸⁹ Anxious to draw attention to the exhibition, she urged Åström to invite key figures from the professional network she had established in Sweden during the 1910s and 1920s, including art historian Gregor Paulsson and journalists Ellen Rydelius and Gerda Marcus, to the opening in Stockholm.⁹⁰ In the end, none of these wrote about the exhibition, but the show nevertheless gained considerable press coverage when it travelled the country.

Apparently, the exhibition was an advantageous career opportunity for Åström, but it presumably served its purpose for Walden too.⁹¹

However, the Swedish touring exhibition could not secure public attention to Der Sturm in the German-speaking world, which had been the epicentre of the Sturm movement. A couple of years later, though, Nell Walden played a key role for the conceptualisation of the first retrospective exhibition in Germany that focused on the artists that had been promoted by the Sturm gallery. In September 1961, *Herwarth Walden und die Europäische Avantgarde, Berlin 1912–1932*, organised by the Nationalgalerie in Berlin, opened in the princely premises of the orangery of the Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin. The curator of the exhibition, the director of the Nationalgalerie Leopold Reidemeister, had shared his plans for an exhibition during a visit to Nell Walden in Switzerland in November 1959 and she had readily offered to assist him.⁹² Walden and Reidemeister corresponded intensively during the preparations. The letters reveal that she not only shared information on historical facts but also provided valuable contacts to former fellow artists and collectors of Sturm art. Occasionally, she negotiated on loans on Reidemeister's behalf, and upon his explicit request, she coordinated the events programme with him.⁹³

Evidently, Walden envisioned an exhibition that presented the transnationalism and artistic diversity of Der Sturm. In fact, she seems to have had an agenda of her own, trying to persuade Reidemeister not only to focus on the established luminaries of expressionism, but also to pay attention to several less known artists of Der Sturm.⁹⁴ From her own collection, she provided him with the only works in the exhibition by Carlo Mense, Maria Uhden, and Georg Schrimpf as well as Vincenc Beneš and Emil Filla. She lobbied for László Peri, Stanisław Stückgold, and her fellow Swedish artist Gösta Adrian-Nilsson.⁹⁵ She also repeatedly insisted that Marthe Donas should be part of the show, an artist she evidently had a predilection for and whose work has only recently gained scholarly interest.⁹⁶

Apparently, Walden was anxious to maintain the exceptional position that the frequent contacts to Reidemeister granted her during the preparations. In 1960, Henryk Berlewi had suggested the formation of a committee of former Sturm artists that could assist Reidemeister in his work with the exhibition. Berlewi had been a co-founder of the Polish constructivist artist group and magazine *Blok* in 1923–1924 and Herwarth Walden had invited him for a one-man show in the Sturm gallery in July 1924. Berlewi was thus introduced into the Sturm circle shortly before Nell Walden decided to leave. In a letter to Berlewi, Walden not only dismissed his suggestion, presumably because she was eager to keep the interpretive precedence of past events to herself, but also emphasised her own unique position as regards knowledge and information on Der Sturm.⁹⁷

In fact, Reidemeister's cooperation with Walden clearly put its mark on both the exhibition and the catalogue. Reidemeister included works by most of the artists that Walden suggested in the show.⁹⁸ The catalogue listed 29 works that she sent on loan, including six of her own paintings. The exhibition catalogue's information on the provenance of some twenty further works revealed that they had been in her possession. At least ten more works that were on show can be traced to her collection, including Severini's *Tango argentino* and Béla Kádár's *The Cow/Composition (Die Kuh/Komposition, c. 1917)* (Figure 5.3). In effect, almost one-third of the exhibition comprised of artworks that was or recently had been in her possession. In other words, the exhibition display to a substantial part overlapped with artworks that she



Figure 5.3 Béla Kádár, *The Cow/Composition* (*Die Kuh/Komposition*), c. 1917. Oil on canvas, 68 × 104 cm. Saarländmuseum, Moderne Galerie (NI 1237). © Béla Kádár/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © bpk/SSK.

had acquired in the 1910s and 1920s, and thus Walden's collecting to a high degree impacted this first important retrospective show on *Der Sturm* in Germany after the war. The prominence of artworks from Walden's collection in the show also reminded of the historical importance of her decision to transfer her collections to Switzerland in 1932. Obviously, any curator has to negotiate about artworks to be included in an exhibition and to compromise with her/his wish list according to the availability of works for loan. But as Reidemeister noted in the preface to the catalogue, the two world wars, which had resulted in both the destruction and the dispersal of artworks of interest all over the world, had made his task particularly challenging.⁹⁹

Finally, the catalogue design also gave Nell Walden a certain prominence. Kurt Schwitters' collage *Dem Sturm gewidmet* (1919), which had been in her possession until 1954, was reproduced on the cover (Figure 5.4). The work was one of Schwitters' *Merzzeichnungen*, for which he cut out pieces from *Der Sturm*'s printed material. To the upper left and right are clippings reading "Der Sturm" and "Herwarth Walden Expressionismus. Die Kunstwende". Distributed over the surface are further clippings with the names of nine *Sturm* artists, including Nell Walden, Klee, Chagall, and Kandinsky. In this way, Walden got her name side by side with former fellow artists immediately on the cover, which positioned her as one of the main figures of *Der Sturm*.

Through the publications and exhibitions discussed above, Walden, in effect, appointed herself the foremost spokesperson of *Der Sturm*. As Bruno Latour has pointed out, group formations are always provisional products in continuous need of people who performatively keep up the group, define what it is, and justify its existence.



Figure 5.4 Cover of the exhibition catalogue *Der Sturm. Herwarth Walden und die Europäische Avantgarde, Berlin 1912–1932* with Kurt Schwitters' collage *Dem Sturm gewidmet* (1919). Photo © bpk/Nationalgalerie, SMB.

A durable group also depends on the historiographer or scholar in order not to disappear or discontinue as a group formation.¹⁰⁰ In Latour's sense, Walden's written narratives and her participation in and influence over the preparations for the exhibitions were attempts to define, justify, and maintain *Der Sturm* as a group formation and presumably welcome opportunities to influence its historiography. In addition, the Berlin exhibition provided Walden with the prospect of showcasing an extensive part of her collection for the Berlin public for the first time since her voluntary exile.

Obviously, Walden sought to consolidate her own narrative on *Der Sturm* and her collaborations with Herwarth Walden through both the exhibitions and the publications. However, canonisation to a large extent equals institutionalisation. Previous research has pointed out that "[w]hat has often been taken to be a natural transition from private ownership to a public representation of modernist art obscures a field of struggle for cultural authority".¹⁰¹ Given the intensified institutionalisation of modernism in art museums during the post-war period, Walden's continuous negotiations with public institutions about sales and donations of her collections, archive, and library now transformed her into an actor in this international fight for the canonisation of modern art.

The Dispersal of the Collections

By the end of the 1940s, Nell Walden started the process of trying to consolidate the provisional institution of her collection into a proper institution of art, as it were. Already during the exhibitions of her *Sturm* collection in Bern, Zürich, and Basel from 1944 to 1946, critics had positioned *Der Sturm* as a historical phenomenon and Walden's collection as a documentation of a bygone era. When it was on show in Bern 1944–1945, one critic pointed out that even if the *Sturm* collection offered insights in the radical force of many of the artworks, the contemporary beholder looked upon the majority of the works with historical distance.¹⁰² In other words, even if the artworks *per se* still captured the interest of the public, the status of the collection as a whole inevitably had transformed; it was no longer a means for interventions in the contemporary art world, but an archive of past events.

In the late 1940s, Walden negotiated with actors both in Europe and the USA about purchases and/or donations from her collections. She had remained in contact with art dealer Karl Nierendorf, who had offered to dispose of her collection in the USA in the end of the 1930s and who visited her in Switzerland in 1947. Upon his return to the USA, Nierendorf wrote to Walden and again offered his services, should she decide to sell from her collection.¹⁰³ Only days thereafter, though, Nierendorf passed away and Walden decided to reconnect with a former acquaintance from the *Sturm* circle, the above mentioned German baroness and artist Hilla von Rebay.

Hilla von Rebay had brief contacts with *Der Sturm* in the late 1910s. She participated in two group shows in the Berlin gallery and was granted a separate show together with the painter Hugo Händel in 1919. In the early 1920s, she founded the artist association *The Crater (Der Krater)* together with Rudolf Bauer—one of the most ardently promoted *Sturm* artists with whom she was closely connected since 1916—and the artist and author Otto Nebel. Nebel participated in several exhibitions in *Der Sturm* in 1920 and 1925 and contributed to the journal *Der Sturm*. In 1933, he emigrated to Switzerland, where he and Nell Walden resumed contact. It was Nebel who drew Walden's attention to Rebay's work with the Museum for Non-Objective Painting in New York and the projected Solomon R. Guggenheim museum.¹⁰⁴ When Walden contacted Rebay in 1948, the latter had just arranged for the Guggenheim Foundation's acquisition of the entire Nierendorf estate, including some 730 artworks.¹⁰⁵

Walden saw in her contact with Rebay the prospect of a lasting monument of both *Der Sturm* and her own collecting activities. In her first letter to the baroness in 1948, she disclosed her wish: "If possible, I would like to keep the main works—that is the core—together as a single document of time—it is, after all, *my* lifework—and to secure it in a museum or art institute forever" and proposed to partly sell and partly donate the collection, including her *Sturm* library, to Rebay's museum project.¹⁰⁶ Walden must have felt that she needed to motivate the suggestion and it seems that the uncertain situation in Europe after the war influenced her decision to turn to the USA:

Just three years ago, I wrote to a museum man in the USA that in my opinion my collection belongs to Europe—because the *Sturm* movement was European—Today [...] there is no Europe in this sense any more—there is only East and West [...] in [19]32, I was able to save my collection [...] from the Nazis over to Switzerland—don't I have to do that again - and bring the collection to the USA???

Hilla von Rebay made it clear from the start that she was not interested in acquiring the collection as a whole.¹⁰⁸ Nevertheless, Walden sent the list of the collection in its entirety, hoping for further acquisitions and granting Rebay priority over other presumptive buyers.¹⁰⁹ She also wrote directly to Solomon R. Guggenheim, full of praise for his work for modern art, and emphasised that she wanted to convey the works in her collections to museums during her lifetime.¹¹⁰ In the end, Rebay obtained five paintings for the Museum of Non-Objective Painting: Franz Marc's *The Yellow Cow* (Figure 2.3), Marc Chagall's *The Soldier Drinks* and *The Flying Carriage*, and Wassily Kandinsky's *On Gray* (*Auf Grau*, 1923) and *Large Study* (Figure 2.7). After securing these key works in a public institution, Walden reported to Maria Marc:

I take my responsibility very seriously for the pictures that, since about 35 years now, I have been entrusted with, saved from Nazi destruction - kept together no matter how miserable I was - I have now made a start with very important pictures- and continue the work of housing them in museums.¹¹¹

Walden repeatedly sought to donate the bulk of her collections as a cohesive unit. During the late 1940s and 1950s, she negotiated about donations to the Kunstmuseum Basel, the Kunsthaus Zürich, the museum in Lenzburg, and the art museum under construction in Aarau.¹¹² However, Walden's donation offers came with demands for the impossible: guaranteed permanent visibility of the collection in the locations of the receiving institutions, which is indicative of her conviction that the collection as a coherent entity was a crucial document. Unsurprisingly, her conditions were perceived as obsolete and authoritative.¹¹³ The institutionalisation of an individual collection appeared as too personal and could thus discredit the museum's professional integrity.¹¹⁴ Add to this a lingering reserve among Swiss museums against the modernist movements represented in Walden's collection.¹¹⁵ In all cases, her donations were rejected.

We can only speculate about Walden's reasons for not offering the collections to German institutions. Her intention during the 1910s had been to donate the collection to a Berlin museum—as noted in Chapter 2, she had an agreement with Franz Kluxen that would secure that their art collections complemented each other—but when the Nazis seized power in 1933, she reportedly tore the letter of bequest apart.¹¹⁶ Presumably, both the Nazi dictatorship that had affected her personal life and her practices as an artist and collector and the division of Germany during the post-war period discouraged her to consider a German institution at that time.

Nell Walden's unsuccessful attempts to donate the collection on her conditions finally resulted in her decision to put a large part of it on sale at the Stuttgarter Kunstkabinett in 1954. During two days in November, she sold more than 140 works, sculptures, paintings, and works on paper, sometimes at prices that were surprisingly high at the time. The director of the Stuttgarter Kunstkabinett, Roman Norbert Ketterer, published an unusually lavish catalogue; it was richly illustrated, in large format, and intended as "a valuable document for anyone who collects modern art".¹¹⁷ Walden's collection was only one part of the auction, but it carried the subtitle "Sammlung Nell Walden ('Der Sturm')" and the catalogue had Boccioni's *Forces of a Street* (Figure 2.9) as cover illustration, which singled out her collection as particularly prominent.

The collection was on show for some weeks before the sale and the auction attracted museum professionals, art dealers, and collectors from across Europe and the USA. Presumably, the interest in the auction was not only related to Walden's holdings

of unusual early works by some of the poster names of expressionism, cubism, and futurism. Reporting on the results of the auction, Hans Hildebrandt declared that Nell Walden's recent promotion of Herwarth Walden and *Der Sturm* through her joint publication with Lothar Schreyer had contributed to the auction being a success.¹¹⁸ As we have seen, the book positioned *Der Sturm* as a key promoter of modern art in Germany and several of the reproduced artworks in the book were now up for sale.

Apparently, a sensation had been anticipated from the start, but the outcome seems to have exceeded the most sanguine expectations.¹¹⁹ One art collector later remembered that "for the first time, this legendary auction brought high prices for the artworks by the founders of modern painting".¹²⁰ Indeed, some of the paintings from Walden's collection, including Boccioni's *Forces of a Street*, Jean Metzinger's *Landscape*, 1912 (Figure 5.5), and Klee's *Memory of a Garden* (*Erinnerung an einen Garten*, 1914) (Figure 5.6) were sold for double the estimated catalogue prices, as did all four works by Severini she put on sale (Figure 5.7). Campendonk's *Yellow Animal* (Figure 5.2) and Macke's *With Yellow Jacket* (*Mit gelber Jacke*, 1913) (Figure 5.8) scored more than three times the estimated prices.¹²¹

Nell Walden had high expectations of the auction, but for her it ended in disappointment. Even if she had refrained from donations to German museums, she had



Figure 5.5 Jean Metzinger, *Landscape*, 1912. Oil on canvas, 59.2 × 73 cm. Art Institute of Chicago (1977.505), gift of Mrs. Sigmund W. Kunstadter in memory of Sigmund W. Kunstadter. © Jean Metzinger/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © The Art Institute of Chicago/Art Resource, New York/Scala, Florence 2021.



Figure 5.6 Paul Klee, *Memory of a Garden* (*Erinnerung an einen Garten*), 1914. Water-colour and pencil on paper and cardboard, 62.3 × 52.3 cm. Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf. Photo © bpk/Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf.

anticipated that the auction would result in a “return of German cultural property (saved by me) to Germany”, thus representing “a worthy end” of her “vocation for art”.¹²² She was well aware of the museum quality of many of the pieces and had hoped to see a larger number of works going to public institutions. Many works went to private collectors, though, and have subsequently spread to art institutions and galleries all over the world, yet others remain to be traced of their current location.¹²³ Several Swedish art museums had been anxious to acquire some of the more prominent works by Kandinsky, Boccioni, Severini, and Gleizes when the collection travelled the country months before the auction.¹²⁴ At that point, Walden referred to the upcoming sales in Stuttgart, presumably as it promised both higher financial gain and a greater chance of seeing her artworks incorporated into more significant art museums on the continent.¹²⁵ In the end, the pronounced interest from the Swedish institutions came to naught. The most active German museum during the auction was the Saarland-museum in Saarbrücken, which acquired quite a number of works, including Marc’s *Sheep* (Figure 2.2), Campendonk’s *Jumping Horse* (Figure 2.8), Béla Kádár’s *The Cow/Composition* (Figure 5.3), and Albert Gleizes’ *Montreuil Landscape* (*Paysage*

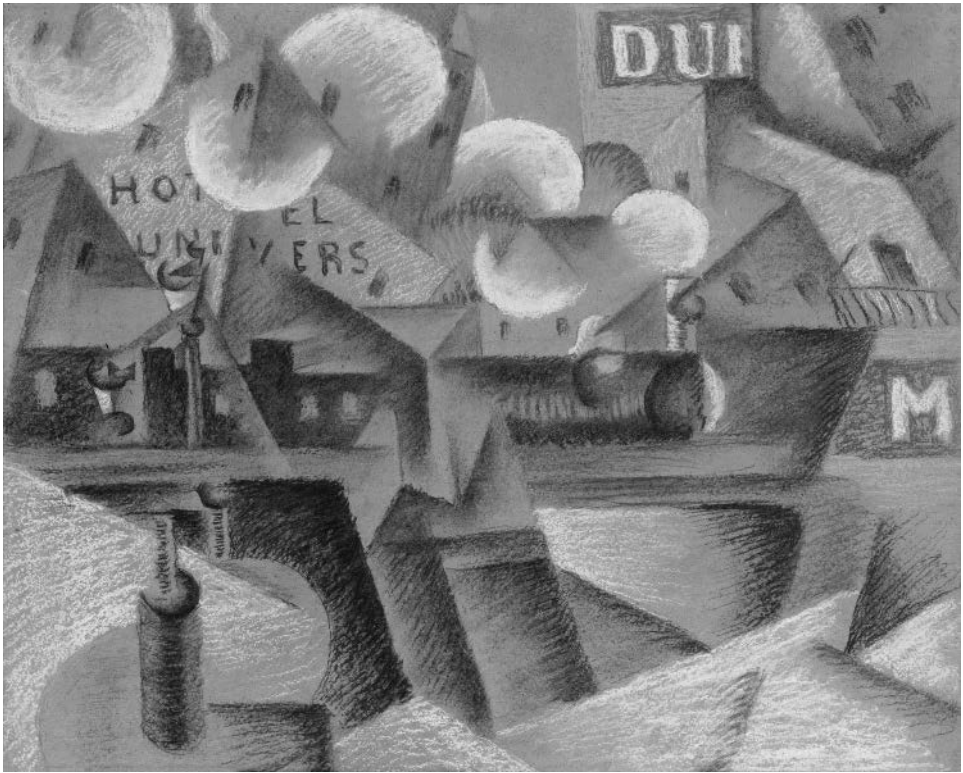


Figure 5.7 Gino Severini, *The Train between the Houses (Study No. 2)* (*Der Zug zwischen den Häusern (Studie Nr. 2)*), 1912–1913. Pastel and charcoal on paper, 52.5 × 64.5 cm. Hamburger Kunsthalle, Kupferstichkabinett (1954–228). © Gino Severini/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © bpk/Hamburger Kunsthalle/Elke Walford.

de Montreuil, 1914) (Figure 5.9). Saarbrücken's acquisitions, however, did not fulfil the anticipated extensive return of artworks to Germany.

In April 1956, Walden again turned to Roman Norbert Ketterer in Stuttgart and put up about 130 objects from her ethnographic collection for sale, predominantly items from different parts of Africa, Oceania, and South America. This time though, her collection was clearly overshadowed by the sale of two important collections of Chinese art, the owners of which were given special presentations in the auction catalogue. As Walden's inventory of the ethnographic collection has not survived, it is difficult to estimate how many pieces were actually sold, but at least some of them were returned to their owner and later ended up in the Landskrona museum.¹²⁶

After the auctions in Stuttgart, Walden's prospects of institutionalising the remaining collection as a cohesive unit diminished. From the 1950s onwards, she donated her collections, archives, and library in parts to several institutions. Her resumed contacts with the Swedish art world resulted in a donation to the projected new branch of the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm.¹²⁷ When the Moderna Museet was inaugurated in 1958, it could add to its collections some 40 artworks from her Sturm collection.



Figure 5.8 August Macke, *With Yellow Jacket* (*Mit gelber Jacke*), 1913. Watercolour and pencil (preliminary sketch), 29.8 × 45 cm. Museum Ulm, Modern Art Collection (1954.2165). Photo © Museum Ulm, Bernd Kegler, Ulm.

Many of the works were on paper—almost always less valued, both economically and aesthetically, than paintings by the art world and its diverse institutions—among them Kokoschka's *Heavenly and Earthly Love* (Figure 2.5), which was one of the drawings Nell Walden had received as a wedding gift from Herwarth Walden in 1912. The donation covered a broad range of the artistic expressions that *Der Sturm* had launched in the 1910s. Comprising not only works by modernist poster names such as Archipenko, Campendonk, Chagall, Klee, and Marc, but also Carlo Mense's *Horsemen at a Watercourse* (*Reiter am Strom*, 1912) (Figure 5.10), Joseph Poberechsky's *Nature morte*, 1923 (Figure 5.11), and Maria Uhden's *Cirkus* (Figure 5.12), it reflected the diversity of artists that *Der Sturm* had promoted.

Walden's donation would have been a welcome addition to the Moderna Museet, whose holdings was considered to have such serious gaps that the museum launched a fund raising campaign a couple of years later in order to enable an enlargement of its collection of international modern art.¹²⁸ It was noted in the press that Walden's donation to some extent rectified an irreparable lacuna in the modern art collections of Swedish museums: their lack of artworks representing the development of modern art in central Europe. If in Germany, these gaps were due to the Nazi's confiscations and destruction, the Francophile inclination of leading modern artists and curators had caused a similar situation in Swedish museums.¹²⁹

In the end of the 1950s, Walden finally turned to public institutions in West Germany. In December 1959, Leopold Reidemeister, on behalf of the Nationalgalerie in Berlin, negotiated about an acquisition of 36 works by Kokoschka, Klee, Chagall, and



Figure 5.9 Albert Gleizes, *Montreuil Landscape (Paysage de Montreuil)*, 1914. Oil on canvas, 73.5 × 90 cm. Saarlandmuseum, Moderne Galerie (NI 1273). © Albert Gleizes/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © bpk/SSK/Carsten Clüsserath.

others still in her possession. Walden could not accept the modest sum offered, and in the end Reidemeister changed his mind.¹³⁰ He motivated his decision in a letter to Walden:

I fear that we will not be able to find a common denominator as regards our old affairs, the acquisition of your collection for the Nationalgalerie. I do not deny that part of the remaining collection might still be of interest from an art dealer's perspective. However, in my capacity as the director of the Nationalgalerie it is decisive that the collection no longer contains anything that could be displayed as representative within the context of the Gemäldegalerie. I was really too late.¹³¹

If Walden's negotiations with the Nationalgalerie thus came to a naught, she was more successful as regards her documentary material. In 1960, she sold part of her Sturm library and archival material to the Westdeutsche Bibliothek in Marburg, which already hosted a Sturm archive that Herwarth Walden had sold in 1926. All material from Herwarth and Nell Walden in Marburg was later transferred to the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.¹³²



Figure 5.10 Carlo Mense, *Horsemen at a Watercourse* (*Reiter am Strom*), 1912. Oil on canvas, 98.5 × 76.3 cm. Moderna Museet, Stockholm (NM 5403). Photo © Moderna Museet, Stockholm.

Shortly thereafter, Walden donated 90 works mainly by Sturm artists from her collection and nearly 50 of her own works to the Kunstmuseum Bern. The donation comprised several of her early reverse glass paintings as well as paintings from the 1930s executed during her first years of voluntary exile in Switzerland; the latter

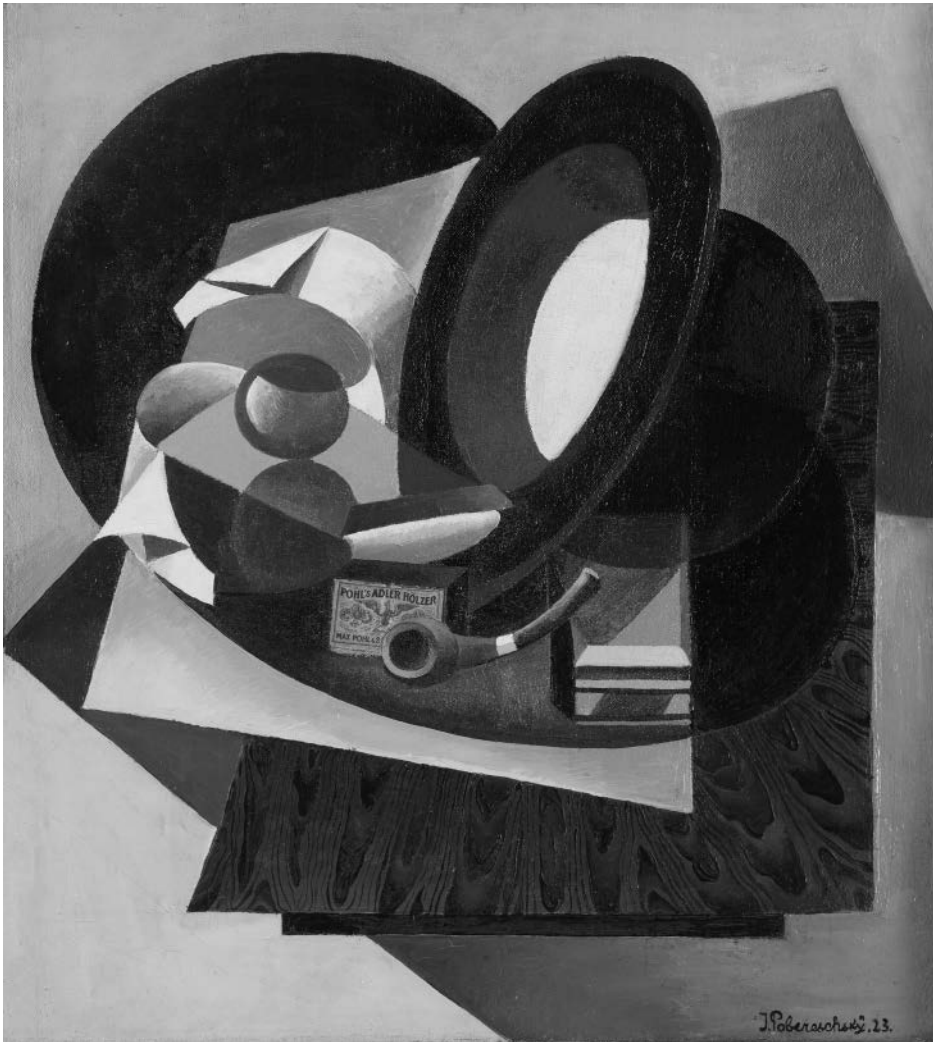


Figure 5.11 Joseph Pobereschsky, *Still Life (Nature morte)*, 1923. Oil on canvas and collage, 54 × 49 cm. Moderna Museet, Stockholm (NM 5407). Photo © Moderna Museet, Stockholm.

were thus locally anchored, as it were. The museum paid contribution to the gift with the exhibition *Nell Walden. Sammling und eigene Werke* in 1966 and a published catalogue.¹³³

What now remained of Walden's collections and archives went to the museum in her native town Landskrona in Sweden through five major donations during the years 1969–1974, and as she had made the museum the sole beneficiary of her will, the donations were further supplemented after her death in 1975.¹³⁴ The Landskrona Museum thus received approximately 300 of Walden's own artworks, equally as many by other modern artists and folk artists, and more than 150 objects from her remaining



Figure 5.12 Maria Uhden, *Cirkus*, n.d. Wood cut, 23.4 × 19.1 cm. Moderna museet, Stockholm (NMG 111/1958). Photo © Moderna Museet, Stockholm.

ethnographic collection. The archive included not only her vast correspondence, but also scrapbooks with newspaper clippings, manuscripts, numerous photographs, and the complete remains of her library. The museum presented the donations in a series of smaller publications and through exhibitions that received quite some attention in the press. Several of the paintings by Sturm artists included in the donation, such as Paul Busch, Johannes Itten, Rudolf Jahns, and Lothar Schreyer, were works from the post-war period that she consciously acquired in order to secure institutional representation for her peers.¹³⁵ With her original Sturm collection diminished, she

acquired a number of contemporary artworks that she considered be produced in the spirit of *Der Sturm*, also destined for the Landskrona museum.¹³⁶ Including these artworks in the donation, among them pieces by Max Bill, Richard Paul Lohse, and Meret Oppenheim, was a gesture that clearly signalled her conviction of the continuing relevance of the aesthetic ideals of *Der Sturm*.

Presence in the Archives

As part of the bibliography of secondary literature in his 1985 monograph on *Der Sturm*, Volker Pirsich offered a list of “contemporary testimonies and memoirs of persons involved in *Der Sturm*”.¹³⁷ Pirsich’s list interestingly not only included the usually expected scholarly works, critical accounts, and memoirs, but also representations of *Der Sturm* and *Sturm* artists in literature and art. He thus rendered explicit both artworks and literary fiction’s function as historical sources. Symptomatically, the majority of contemporary testimonies with references to Nell Walden were visual sources, that is, Nell Walden literally and figuratively portrayed by fellow *Sturm* artists.

As indicated by Pirsich’s list and as explicitly pointed out by Georg Brühl, Nell Walden seems to have attracted much admiration and affection within the *Sturm* circle.¹³⁸ Paintings, drawings, photographs, poems, letters, and dedications substantiate the attention she provoked from fellow artists and colleagues and indicate the character of the projections that were directed towards her. The fact that fellow, exclusively male, artists repeatedly portrayed her during her years in *Der Sturm* is suggestive of how she was fetishised, as it were, and thus metaphorically deprived of subjectivity and agency.

The notion of Walden as merely an object of art followed her through life and beyond and was presumably nurtured by the conscious social and visual self-presentation she had maintained since the 1910s. In the middle of the 1960s, Hans Maria Wingler wanted to arrange an exhibition on Nell Walden for the recently founded Bauhaus-Archiv in Darmstadt. In his invitation letter, he declared: “I would like to show your paintings, but also how you, as the human epicenter of *Der Sturm*, were acknowledged by different artists: Nell Walden as adored model, as personality”.¹³⁹ A couple of years before her death, a newspaper article reminded that she had once been “a celebrated beauty that has been painted, drawn, and worshiped by many artists”.¹⁴⁰ As late as 2012, in the grand-scale exhibition on *Der Sturm* in the Von der Heydt-Museum in Wuppertal, Nell Walden still figured as image only. Although she had been a crucial collaborator and frequently promoted artist of the *Sturm* gallery, she was only indirectly represented in the exhibition via portraits by fellow *Sturm* artists, whereas none of her own works were on display. Even if she was occasionally acknowledged in the catalogue, the show, in effect, diminished or even concealed her diverse contributions to *Der Sturm*.

Arguably, Walden consciously tried to exploit the fetishising impulse of her peers. In her collection, she had assembled more than 30 portraits of herself—as well as a plaster cast of her hand—created by fellow artists in different media. Already in the 1910s, she used portraits as mediated self-presentations. A portrait drawing by William Wauer—modelled on a series of photographs he took of her in 1918 posing as a “film star” according to her own inscription on one of the copies—was reproduced as her ex-libris and circulated in diverse contexts (Figures 5.13 and 5.14).¹⁴¹ Several



Figure 5.13 Nell Walden's signed ex-libris, n.d. Landskrona museum (LAMF1005981). Photo © Landskrona museum.

portraits were recurrently on display in exhibitions and reproduced in illustrated magazines, catalogues, and books throughout her life. Add to this the numerous photographic portraits by professional photographers that she herself engaged in the 1920s and 1930s in order to maintain visibility in the Weimar public sphere of culture.

Assessing Walden's efforts to institutionalise her collections in the post-war period, it is clear that during this process too, she strategically employed her own image to manifest her position as a key actor of *Der Sturm*. The portraits in the collection turned into a means of imposing her presence by way of the representations when she sold or donated her archives and collections to public institutions.¹⁴² The donation to the Moderna Museet in Stockholm contained three portraits of her by *Sturm* artists. The archival material she sold to the Westdeutsche Bibliothek in Marburg, now in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, included numerous photographic portraits that document her collaborations with women professional photographers in Weimar Germany. Some ten portraits, among them Kokoschka's often reproduced drawing (Figure 5.15) and portraits by Béla Kádár (Figure 5.16), went to the Kunstmuseum Bern in 1966. Kokoschka had been a crucial contributor to *Der Sturm* in the early 1910s, whereas Kádár exhibited in the gallery from the middle of the 1920s; their portraits thus chronologically framed her active years in the organisation. Finally, Walden's



Figure 5.14 William Wauer, Nell Walden, 1918. © William Wauer/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

donations to the Landskrona Museum in the 1970s included at least fourteen further portraits in different media and numerous copies of the ex-libris with her portrait by Wauer recur on the books and other material in the archive.

In sum, in the archives and collections in Stockholm, Berlin, Bern, and Landskrona, the portraits of Nell Walden are not only aesthetic objects, but also documents of past encounters that materialise her connections with prominent Sturm artists and professional photographers such as Kokoschka and Wauer, Yva and Riess, and thus situate her in key contexts of avant-garde art and visual culture.

Undoubtedly, Walden not only used her donations to mark her presence via mediated self-presentations, but also as opportunities to manifest herself as an active agent, not least as an artist. During the 1950s and 1960s, she probably realised that she only occupied a marginal position, if none at all, in the historiography of Der Sturm and expressionism. When communicating with the museum director Sven B. Ek regarding a catalogue on one of her donations to Landskrona, she explicated her frustration:

It is always my connection with Sturm—my collecting activity—my fight with H.W. for modern art et cetera, that dominates. There is really too little space for my own art. [...] In the long run, it is tiring to constantly—my whole life,



Figure 5.15 Oskar Kokoschka, *Portrait of Nell Walden* (*Bildnis Nell Walden*), 1916. Blue chalk on paper, 46 × 33 cm. Kunstmuseum Bern (A 8379). © Fondation Oskar Kokoschka/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © Kunstmuseum Bern.

actually—work for others. For Sturm—Walden—write books about Sturm, about Walden—buy artworks by the colleagues—hang them up—donate them to museums et cetera et cetera.¹⁴³

Evidently, she wanted to secure the fate of her own artistic production. Generously offering parts of her art collections, it would almost certainly have violated *decorum* if the museums had not shown an interest also in Walden's own artworks. This was suggested by the curator of Moderna Museet, Bo Wennberg, who later recalled that when the museum received her donation it had had to “gratefully accept” Walden's paintings too.¹⁴⁴

As places for interaction between researchers and the material remnants of the past, museums and archives are, of course, not mute containers or neutral frameworks, but localised spaces with “structuring templates” that houses objects carrying traces of “dislocated actions”.¹⁴⁵ Archival institutions have agency in any research situation in which they are utilised. It should be reminded that the divergent contents and scattered locations of Walden's artworks, collections, and archives have had implications for how the material has been employed or disregarded as historical sources. The material from her archives that are in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, not least her guestbooks, has often supported research on Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm, but



Figure 5.16 Béla Kádár, *Portrait of Sleeping Nell Walden* (*Bildnis Nell Walden schlafend*), n.d. Kunstmuseum Bern (A 8370). Coloured crayon on paper, 38 × 24.7 cm. © Béla Kádár/Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo © Kunstmuseum Bern.

hardly ever spurred an interest among scholars for Nell Walden herself. The part of her collections that entered public museums in Switzerland has only recently been studied by scholars with specialised interests in flight assets or indigenous art. The fact that the largest portion of the archival material on Nell Walden herself is located in the regional museum of Landskrona, located in the semi-periphery of the European or, indeed, even the Swedish geography of cultural institutions has until now contributed to the marginalisation of and scholarly disinterest in her contributions to the Sturm enterprise.

As this final chapter has indicated, the material that Nell Walden secured in diverse public institutions not only serve as historical sources for narratives for others to construct but also constitute a narrative force *per se*. As material traces of how Nell Walden performatively maintained, defined, and justified Der Sturm as a group formation they “carry [her] actions in absentia” to speak with Bruno Latour.¹⁴⁶ Walden was almost certainly aware of the fact that she consolidated a monument of sorts over herself while donating her collections and archives, not least as regards the major donations to the Landskrona museum in the 1970s. Her self-narration through archiving and institutionalisation may also be regarded as an intervention in modernist

historiography with possible feminist effects. Obviously, it has not been my task to uncritically reflect the narrative that Walden constructed for herself and she would probably not agree with all parts of the narrative that I have presented in this book. It should be noted though that without her insistence on including herself into the histories and archives of Der Sturm, the history of her practices as an artist and collector would almost certainly have remained in oblivion and the masculinist narrative on Der Sturm would certainly have been harder to challenge.

Notes

- 1 Georg Kreis, Esther Tisa Francini and Anja Heuß, *Fluchtgut—Raubgut. Der Transfer von Kulturgütern in und über die Schweiz 1933–1945 und die Frage der Restitution*, Unabhängige Expertenkommission Schweiz—Zweiter Weltkrieg—Commission Indépendante d'Experts Suisse—Seconde Guerre Mondiale, Band 1, Chronos, Zürich, 2001. See also, Esther Tisa Francini, "Der Wandel des Schweizer Kunstmarkts in den 1930er- und 40er-Jahren. Voraussetzungen und Folgen einer internationalen Neuordnung", *Traverse. Zeitschrift für Geschichte. Revue d'histoire*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2002, 113. The differentiation between looted art (Beutekunst), Nazi-looted art (NS-Raubkunst), and flight assets (Fluchtgut) is discussed by Daniel Spanke in "Flight Assets (*Fluchtgut*)", "Looted Art (*Beutekunst*)", and "Nazi-Looted Art (NS-Raubkunst)", Matthias Frehner and Daniel Spanke (eds), *Modern Masters. "Degenerate" Art at the Kunstmuseum Bern*, Kunstmuseum Bern and Prestel, Munich, London and New York, 2016, 47ff., 52ff.
- 2 Felix Stössinger, "Die Unterschätzung der Kunst", clipping from unidentified German newspaper, 1932, Ausstellungskritiken I, NWA/LM. Stössinger had been an editor of the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (USPD) daily paper *Die Freiheit* and its illustrated weekly *Die freie Welt*. From the 1920s onwards, he also wrote for *Die Weltbühne* and for the revisionist periodical *Sozialistische Monatshefte*. Cp. Istvan Deak, *Weimar Germany's Left-Wing Intellectuals. A Political History of the Weltbühne and Its Circle*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968, 271.
- 3 Kreis, Tisa Francini and Heuß, 2002, 82.
- 4 Kreis, Tisa Francini and Heuß, 2002, 165.
- 5 Nell Walden, "Zur Orientierung", manuscript, 1945, NW40, NWA/LM; Nell Walden, *Herwarth Walden. Ein Lebensbild*, Florian Kupferberg, Berlin and Mainz, 1963, 60.
- 6 Nell Walden, letter to Hilla von Rebay, 25 October 1948, Hilla von Rebay Foundation Archive, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum Archives, New York (HRFA/SGMA). The location of Jawlensky's *Head (Kopf)* and Werefkin's *The Last Hour (Die letzte Stunde)*, both acquired by Walden c. 1913–1914, is unknown and it thus is to be presumed that they were lost during the bombings.
- 7 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Harold Spencer, 14 December 1960, NW2A:262, NWA/LM.
- 8 Walden explicitly stated that she had *lost* Metzinger's work, not sold it or left it behind, in Berlin. It is thus unlikely that she relinquished the painting in Der Sturm already in the 1920s. Ibid.
- 9 Andreas Schlothauer, "Die Sammlung Nell Walden in der Schweiz 1932–1945. Genf, Basel, Bern, Zürich—Stationen einer Reise", *Kunst & Kontext. Außereuropäischer Kunst & Kultur im Dialog*, vol. 6, no. 11, 2016, 36. Gustave Knauer, letter to Musée d'ethnographie de Genève, 27 July 1932. Documents concernant le prêt de la collection de Madame Nell Walden-Heimann, Archives de la Ville de Genève, Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève (MEG). I am deeply indebted to Andreas Schlothauer, who has shared his archival research from the Archives de la Ville de Genève with me.
- 10 D., assistant at the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Genève to Felix Stössinger, 4 August 1932, Documents concernant le prêt de la collection de Madame Nell Walden-Heimann, MEG.
- 11 "J'avoue que je ne comprends pas cette hâte. Est-ce à cause des troubles en Allemagne?". Eugène Pittard, letter to Felix Stössinger, 2 August 1932, Documents concernant le prêt de la collection de Madame Nell Walden-Heimann, MEG.

- 12 Felix Stössinger, letter to Eugène Pittard, 4 August 1932, Documents concernant le prêt de la collection de Madame Nell Walden-Heimann, MEG.
- 13 Schlothauer, 2016, 39f.
- 14 Kreis, Tisa Francini and Heuß, 2002, 165f.
- 15 “Je vous prie instamment, très cher Directeur, de bien vouloir employer votre grande influence pour épargner à Mme. Walden Heimann cette énorme dépense”. Felix Stössinger, letter to Eugène Pittard, 2 February 1933, Documents concernant le prêt de la collection de Madame Nell Walden-Heimann, MEG.
- 16 Correspondence between Felix Stössinger and Eugène Pittard, February and March 1933; Eugène Pittard, letter to Nell Walden, 13 January 1934, Documents concernant le prêt de la collection de Madame Nell Walden-Heimann, MEG.
- 17 Felix Stössinger, letter to Eugène Pittard, 29 July 1934; Eugène Pittard, letter to Felix Stössinger, 1 October 1934; Eugène Pittard, letter to Nell Walden, 3 December 1934, Documents concernant le prêt de la collection de Madame Nell Walden-Heimann, MEG.
- 18 N.W. [Nell Walden], “Vinterbev från Schweiz”, *Korrespondenten Landskrona Tidning*, 2 February 1935; N.W. [Nell Walden], “Berlin-brev på vårsidan”, *Korrespondenten Landskrona Tidning*, 2 May 1935.
- 19 Later, Walden wrote that Staehelin and Meier had put her on to Sarasin, but surely her connection to Paravicini must have been beneficial too. Nell Walden, letter to Rudolf Zeller, 29 February 1936, Nell Walden correspondence, Museumsarchiv, Bernisches Historisches Museum (BHM). I am deeply indebted to Andreas Schlothauer, who has shared his archival research from the Bernisches Historisches Museum with me.
- 20 Nell Walden, letter to Eugène Pittard, 4 December 1934, Documents concernant le prêt de la collection de Madame Nell Walden-Heimann, MEG.
- 21 Contract between Musée d’Ethnografie de la Ville de Genève and Nell Walden, October 1932, Documents concernant le prêt de la collection de Madame Nell Walden-Heimann, MEG.
- 22 E.P. [Eugène Pittard], “Masques océaniens et masques nègres”, *Journal de Genève*, 12 February 1933.
- 23 N. Walden, 1963, 60.
- 24 Nell Walden, manuscript “Zur Orientierung”, undated 1945, NW40, NWA/LM; Nell Walden, letter to Hilla von Rebay, 25 October 1948, HRFA/SRGMA.
- 25 Nell Walden, letter to Rudolf Zeller, 6 March 1936, Museumsarchiv, BHM.
- 26 Schlothauer, 2016, 37f.; Nell Walden, letter to Rudolf Zeller, 29 February 1936, Museumsarchiv, BHM.
- 27 Schlothauer, 2016, 37.
- 28 Nell Walden, letter to Rudolf Zeller, 6 March 1936, Museumsarchiv, BHM.
- 29 Inventarbuch Leihgaben, Museumsarchiv, Kunstmuseum Bern, B-001-005. Rudolf Zeller, letters to Conrad von Mandach, 24 March 1936 and 19 April 1936, Museumsarchiv, BHM.
- 30 Correspondence between Nell Walden and Conrad von Mandach, 2–23 November 1937, Kunstmuseum Bern, Dossier Sammlungen Nell Walden, B-062-022, Museumsarchiv, Kunstmuseum Bern.
- 31 “Du weisst ich habe lauter Werte, aber kein Geld- und nun muss ich noch mehr als je daran gehen aus Werten Geld zu machen”. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Zeller, February 1938, Museumsarchiv, BHM.
- 32 Esther Tisa Francini, “Der Kunstmarkt in der Zwischenkriegszeit. Deutsche Sammler, Händler und Künstler in der Schweiz”, *La marché de l’art en Suisse. Du XIX siècle à nos jours*, Paul-André Jaccard and Sébastien Heux (eds), SIC-IKSEA, Zürich and Lausanne, 2011, 163–174.
- 33 “um weiter zu können”, Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, 19 January 1950, NW5A:374, NWA/LM.
- 34 Zeller, letter to Nell Walden, 18 February 1938, Museumsarchiv, BHM.
- 35 Von der Heydt signed her guestbook in 1915 and again in 1930 and 1932. Gästebuch der Sturmgalerie/Nell Walden, Handschrift 119 and 120, Nachlaß Nell Walden, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. Walden comments on their friendship in a letter to Rudolf Zeller, 20 February 1938, Museumsarchiv, BHM.

- 36 There are several paintings in her oeuvre catalogue from Monte Verità. A subsection of Walden's *Unter Sternen* bears the heading Ascona and includes the poem "Monte Verità 1928", which she dedicated to von der Heydt. Walden's visits to Ascona are mentioned in G.M. [Gerda Marcus], "Svenskan som förbluffar Berlin. Nell Roslund—själen och hjärtat i revolutionskottet 'Der Sturm'", *Veckojournalen*, no. 13, 29 March 1931, and G.M. [Gerda Marcus], "Prästdottern från Landskrona", *Idun*, no. 32, 1933.
- 37 Antje BIRTHÄLMER, "August und Eudard von der Heydt—Zwei Mäzene und ihr Lebenswerk", *Avantgarde und Publikum. Zur rezeption avantgardistischer kunst in Deutschland 1905–1933*, Henrike Junge (ed.), Böhlau, Köln, Weimar and Wien 1992, 161.
- 38 Rudolf Zeller, letter to Arthur Speyer, 26 March 1938, Museumsarchiv, BHM.
- 39 Rudolf Zeller, letter to Arthur Speyer, Easter 1938, Museumsarchiv, BHM.
- 40 Schlothauer, 2016, 39; Rudolf Zeller, letters to Nell Walden, 4 December 1938 and 3 December 1939, Museumsarchiv, BHM.
- 41 Quittung, Geldbetrag von Baron von der Heydt für Ankauf Archipenko aus der Sammlung Nell Walden, 22 May 1945, B-062-009-005, Museumsarchiv, Kunstmuseum Bern. Schlothauer, 2016, 40ff. In Museum Rietberg, the sculpture is registered as *Weibliche Figur* (REU 801). Walden titled it *Salome*.
- 42 Schlothauer, 2016, 41f.
- 43 Schlothauer, Andreas, "Nell Walden—die erste Sammlerin außereuropäischer Kunst?", *Kunst & Kontext. Außereuropäischer Kunst & Kultur im Dialog*, vol. 4, no. 7, 2014, 53.
- 44 Lucy Wasensteiner, *The Twentieth Century German Art Exhibition. Answering Degenerate Art in 1930s London*, Routledge, New York and London, 2019, 1, 15.
- 45 Wasensteiner, 2019, 43.
- 46 *Exhibition of Twentieth Century German Art*, New Burlington Galleries, London, 1938, 7.
- 47 Anon., "German Art in London. Expressionism and the Nazi Régime. Reaction from Events", *The Times*, 7 July, 1938.
- 48 *Exhibition of Twentieth Century German Art*, 1938, 7. Italics in the original.
- 49 Wasensteiner, 2019, 2.
- 50 Tanja Zimmermann, "Oto Bihalji-Merin and the Concept of the Naïve" in the 1950s. Bridging Socialist Realism and Non-Figurative Art", *Acta Historiae Artis Slovenica*, vol. 23, no.1, 2018, 192.
- 51 Wasensteiner, 2019, 22–34.
- 52 Kreis, Tisa Francini and Heuß, 2002, 166f.
- 53 "außergewöhnlichen Sammlung Walden"; "so ist man doch sehr dankbar für die Möglichkeit, wieder einmal einen Blick über die Landesgrenzen tun zu können"; "in ausgezeichnete Anordnung als geschlossene Gruppe". Anon., "Kunst in Bern", *Neue Züricher Zeitung*, 20 November 1944.
- 54 Walden noted the sales in her personal copy of the catalogue to the exhibition in Bern 1944–1945, NW2A, NWA/LM. The Kandinsky piece is now in the Kunstmuseum Bern (A 1979.222). Chagall's watercolour *Gebet unter dem Mond* was sold to a Dr. Pasternack in Lausanne and Klee's *Gestirne über bösen Häusern* (1916) to an unidentified buyer. The latter is now in the Merzbacher Kunststiftung, Küsnacht.
- 55 E[rnst] Rohrer, "Sammlungsberichte. IV. Die Ethnografische Abteilung", *Jahrbuch des Bernischen Historischen Museums in Bern*, vol. XXV, Bernisches Historisches Museum, Bern, 1946, 188.
- 56 In the post-war period, Walden purchased at least fourteen of his later works. Twelve of them are now in the Landskrona museum, one in the Moderna Museet, Stockholm, and in one in Kunstmuseum Bern. Bern holds a second work by Itten from Walden's collection, presented to her as a gift from the artist in 1962.
- 57 Apart from objects from the Museum for Decorative Arts in Zürich, the ethnographic museums in Geneva, Neuenburg, Bern, and St. Gallen contributed to the show.
- 58 "nach rein künstlerischen Gesichtspunkten und ohne Bindung an ethnografische und kulturgeschichtliche Belehrungszwecke". r., "Afrikanische Kunst", *Neue Züricher Zeitung*, 25 June 1945. See also E. Br., "Ausstellungen. Zürich. Afrikanische Kunst", *Das Werk. Architektur und Kunst/L'oeuvre. Architecture et art*, vol. 32, no. 9, 1945, 103–105.
- 59 One critic specifically noted the occurrence of predominantly three stylistic systems, described as constructivist, naturalist, and ornamental. H. Gr., "Afrikanische Kunst", *Basler National-Zeitung*, 10 July 1945.

- 60 Cp. Rohrer, 1946, 188.
- 61 Francis Picabia. *Sammlung Nell Walden*, 12 January to 3 February 1946, Kunsthalle Basel, 1946. When the exhibition closed, the artworks from Walden's collection were transferred to the Kunstmuseum Basel as a long-term loan. A couple of years later, the deposition was complemented with 40 further works from her Sturm collection. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Georg Duthaler, Kunstmuseum Basel, 8 November 1948, NW2A:4, NWA/LM.
- 62 Anon., "Die Sammlung Nell Walden in der Kunsthalle", *Basler National-Zeitung*, 11 January 1946. n.t., "Vernissage der Ausstellungen 'Sammlung Nell Walden' und Werke Francis Picabia in der Kunsthalle", *Basler National-Zeitung*, 14 January 1946. "mit ausgeprägtem Sinn für das Wesen jener Ausdrucksarten", "die bedeutendsten Künstler auf deutschem Gebiet (und nicht nur auf deutschem)". ie, "Die Sammlung Nell Walden", *Basler Nachrichten*, 17 January 1946.
- 63 Among the exhibitions in Switzerland after the war were *Moderne Graphik*, Grund, 1951, *Sammlung Nell Walden*, Aarau, 1957, and *Sammlung und Eigene Werke*, Bern 1966. Walden contributed with loans to several exhibitions in Basel and Munich on the artists of Der Blaue Reiter. Additionally, documentary material from her archive and library was shown in exhibitions. She lent Kokoschka's portraits of Herwarth Walden and Rudolf Blümner to several exhibitions, including one that toured Boston, New York, Washington, St. Louis, and San Francisco in 1948. For the exhibition *Oskar Kokoschka. Aus seinem Schaffen 1907–1950* that toured Munich, Hamburg, and Mannheim in 1950–1951, she lent several early works on paper by Kokoschka. During transportation, the following works in Walden's possession went missing: *Die Kindsmörderin* (1910), *Wintergarten* (Archie A. Goodale) (1910), *Die schöne Rollschuhläuferin* (1910), *Gesindel in der Sternennacht* (1910), *Friss Vogel oder stirb* (1910), *Ausruhende Tänzerin* (1910), *Sphinx und Strohmann* (1910), *In Gedanken* (1910), *Porträt Alma Mahler* (1910), *Zwei Figuren* (1910), *Kopf Hermann Essig* (1910), and *Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen, II* (1916), the latter with a dedication to Nell Walden. None of the works have been found. The 1946 Marc Chagall exhibition in the Museum of Modern Art in New York included several works that was or had been in Walden's possession. For the 1950 Venice biennale, she sent works by Boccioni, Carrà, and Severini on loan.
- 64 Bridget Elliot and Jo-Ann Wallace, *Women Artists and Writers. Modernist (Im)positionings*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, 2.
- 65 "Es liegt wohl in meiner Bestimmung dass ich Herwath [sic] Walden auch weiter helfen muss- auch über den Tod hinaus". Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, 9 November 1948, NW5A:387, NWA/LM.
- 66 Nell Walden and Lothar Schreyer (eds), *Der Sturm. Ein Erinnerungsbuch an Herwarth Walden und die Künstler aus dem Sturmkreis*, Woldemar Klein, Baden-Baden, 1954.
- 67 "genialer Vorkämpfer". Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, 9 November 1948, NW5A:365, NWA/LM.
- 68 "Nun kommst Du mit einer Würdigung der Sturmarbeit—Waldens Arbeit—auch mein Anteil—denn darüber herrschen so viele sich widersprechende Meinungen bereits". Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, 30 March 1949, NW5A:386B, NWA/LM.
- 69 "ohne Dich hätte Herwarth nicht sein Werk schaffen können". Lothar Schreyer, letter to Nell Walden, 26 February 1950, NW5A:364, NWA/LM.
- 70 Maria Marc, letters to Hilla von Rebay, 9 February 1949, 9 April 1949, and undated (1950 or 1951), HRFA/SRGMA. Maria Marc, letters to Nell Walden, 1 December 1948, NW1A:156; 20 January 1949, NW1A:178; 7 February 1949, NW1A:179; undated February/March 1949, NW1A:181, 24 April 1949, NW1A:183, NWA/LM.
- 71 Maria Marc, letter to Nell Walden, 20 January 1949, NW1A:178, NWA/LM.
- 72 "Sie sind ja mit Ihren Kunstschatzen u. der Verantwortung dafür in ähnlicher Lage, wie ich. Ich mußte das Werk zusammenhalten". Gabriele Münter, letter to Nell Walden, 27 March 1957, NW1A:212, NWA/LM.
- 73 Isabel Wünsche, "In Pursuit of a Spiritual Calling. Katherine S. Dreier, Galka E. Scheyer, and Hilla von Rebay", *Gender, Sexuality and Museums. A Routledge Reader*, Amy K. Levin (ed.), Routledge, London and New York, 2010, 215–223, quotation 223.

- 74 Wünsche, 2010, 224.
- 75 On “masquerading” femininity, see Joan Riviere, “Womanliness as a Masquerade”, *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, vol. 10, 1929, 303–313.
- 76 “Viel Maternität mag Nell Walden auf diesen Weg gewiesen haben”. Franz Markl, “Kunst und Wissenschaft. Kunstchronik. Ausstellung Nell Walden bei Flechtheim. Käte Brauns-Wüstefeld bei Hirzel und Spanier”, *Steglitzer Anzeiger*, No. 211, 9 September 1927.
- 77 “ich [habe] nun für die geistigen Kinder gesorgt und bin froh darüber”. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Gabriele Münter, 2 February 1957, NW1A:211, NWA/LM. Cp. also Maria Marc, letter to Nell Walden, undated February/March 1949, NW1A:181; Nell Walden copy of letter to Maria Marc, 19 March 1949, NW1A:182, NWA/LM.
- 78 Patricia Holland, “Introduction. History, Memory and the Family Album”, *Family Snaps. The Meanings of Domestic Photography*, Jo Spence and Patricia Holland (ed.), Virago Press, London, 1991, 9.
- 79 Holland, 1991, 7.
- 80 “ich sammle alles”. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Gabriele Münter, 2 September 1958, NW1A:215; Nell Walden, copy of letter to Georg Muche, 2 May 1959, NW1A:208, NWA/LM.
- 81 During her time in Der Sturm, Walden organised some twenty large scrapbooks with press clippings that documented the critical reception of the organisation’s endeavours and folders containing copies of Herwarth Walden’s letters to artists. This material would certainly have provided the Sturm historiography with invaluable primary sources, had it been preserved. The extensive documentation naturally remained in Der Sturm when she left the business in 1925 and was probably destroyed during the bombings of Berlin in 1945. Nell Walden, copies of letters to Maria Marc, 31 January 1949, NW1A:180 and Hans J. Kleinschmidt, 5 January 1969, NW1C:161, NWA/LM; Nell Walden, “Aus meinen Erinnerungen an Herwarth Walden und die ‘Sturmzeit’”, *Der Sturm. Ein Erinnerungsbuch an Herwarth Walden und die Künstler aus dem Sturmkreis*, Nell Walden and Lothar Schreyer (eds), Woldemar Klein, Baden-Baden, 1954, 16.
- 82 Jeremy Braddock, *Collecting as Modernist Practice*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2012, 2.
- 83 “keiner hat ein solches [Material] mehr- keiner hat es so geordnet und gepflegt wi[e] ich”. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Ellen Walden, February 1959, NW3:107, NWA/LM.
- 84 N. Walden, 1963.
- 85 “ein vererbtes Laster”. N. Walden, 1963, 56.
- 86 “Der schwedische Kritiker [...] meint also, dass ich HW idealisiere und das ist ja auch der Fall- Er hat Recht”. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Lothar Schreyer, 2 July 1963, NW5A:32, NWA/LM.
- 87 On Nell Walden’s publications of Herwarth Walden and how they have negatively affected her own position in the Sturm historiography, see Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe, “The most effective propaganda stunt?”, *Nell Walden & Der Sturm*, Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe et al., Mjellby konstmuseum, Halmstad and Carlsson, Stockholm, 2015, 52ff.
- 88 The daughter of Walden’s childhood friend Gertrud Schlasberg and thus Herwarth Walden’s Swedish niece Irma Schlasberg was married to Lars Erik Åström.
- 89 See correspondence between Nell Walden and Hannes Urech and Lars Erik Åström and Fritz H. Eriksson in Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.
- 90 Nell Walden, letter to Lars Erik Åström, 14 February 1954, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.
- 91 The exhibition exceeded the framework for the regular exhibitions produced by the National Association for Fine Arts and its realisation depended on a special government grant. *Der Sturm. Samling Nell Walden. Expressionister, futurister, kubister*, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Stockholm, 1954, 4. Walden repeatedly referred to the exhibition as a prestige project for Åström in their correspondence. See correspondence between Nell Walden and Lars Erik Åström, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.

- 92 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Leopold Reidemeister, 1 June 1961, NW8, NWA/LM.
- 93 See, for example, negotiations concerning Umberto Boccioni's *The Forces of a Street* (*Le Forze di una Strada*, 1911), Nell Walden, copy of letter to Paul Hänggi, 15 June 1961, NW8, NWA/LM. In the end, the loan request was denied. Regarding the programme, see, for example, Leopold Reidemeister, letter to Nell Walden, 12 May 1961, NW8, NWA/LM.
- 94 See, for example, Nell Walden, copy of letter to Leopold Reidemeister, 22 January 1961, NW8, NWA/LM.
- 95 Nell Walden, copy of letters to Leopold Reidemeister, 29 June and 9 August 1960 and 22 January 1961, NW8, NWA/LM. Quotation from 22 January 1961.
- 96 See, for example, Nell Walden, copy of letter to Leopold Reidemeister, 9 August 1960, NW8, NWA/LM: "She is a magnificent painter" ("Sie ist eine grossartige Malerin"). The Marthe Donas Foundation, which preserves and promotes the work of Marthe Donas, was founded in 2003. The first monograph, published in French and Dutch, on Donas was Kristien Boon, *Marthe Donas*, Stichting Kunstboek, Oostkamp 2004. Recently, the first English monograph on the artist appeared: Peter J.H. Pauwels, with the collaboration of Kristien Boon, *Marthe Donas. A Woman Artist in the Avant-Garde*, Ludion, Antwerp, 2015.
- 97 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Henryk Berlewi, August 1960, NW1B:25, NWA/LM.
- 98 The most notable exception is the five Swedish artists that exhibited in *Der Sturm* in 1916, all of whom Walden had recommended for the show.
- 99 Leopold Reidemeister, "Zum Geleit", *Der Sturm. Herwarth Walden und die Europäische Avantgarde Berlin 1912–1932*, Nationalgalerie, Berlin, 1961, 6.
- 100 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2005, 31ff.
- 101 Braddock, 2012, 15.
- 102 W.A., "Ausstellungen. Bern. Die Sammlung Nell Walden", *Das Werk. Architektur und Kunst/L'oeuvre. Architecture et art*, vol. 32, no.1, 1945, 3–4. See also, for example, me., "Sturm im Kunsthaus", *Die Tat*, no. 144, 28 May, 1945; "a documentation that to some extent has become historical" ("als gewissermaßen historisch gewordenenes Dokument"), ie, "Die Sammlung Nell Walden", *Basler Nachrichten*, 17 January 1946.
- 103 Karl Nierendorf, letters to Nell Walden 12 July 1947, NW1A:246, 16 October 1947, NW1A:245, NWA/LM.
- 104 Nell Walden, letter to Hilla von Rebay, 28 September 1948, HRFA/SGMA.
- 105 On Hilla von Rebay and her contacts with Karl Nierendorf, see, for example, Joan M. Lukach, *Hilla Rebay. In Search of the Spirit in Art*, George Braziller, New York, 1983, 238–249.
- 106 "ich möchte wenn möglich jedenfalls die Hauptwerke—also der Kern—als einziges Zeitdokument zusammenhalten—, schliesslich ist es ja m e i n Lebenswerk—und in einem Museum oder Kunstinstitut für immer wissen". Nell Walden, letter to Hilla von Rebay, 28 September 1948, HRFA/SGMA.
- 107 "noch vor drei Jahren schrieb ich einmal einem Museumsman in USA, dass meiner Meinung nach meine Sammlung nach Europa gehört—denn die Bewegung des Sturms war eine europäische [sic]— Heute [...] gibt es k e i n Europa in diesem Sinne mehr— es gibt nur Ost- und West [...] ich habe 32 meine Sammlung [...] in die Schweiz herüberretten können vor den Nzis [sic]— muss ich nicht noch einmal das tun - und die Sammlung nach USA bringen???" Nell Walden, letter to Hilla von Rebay, 28 September 1948, HRFA/SGMA.
- 108 Hilla von Rebay's answer has not survived, but in her second letter to Rebay, Walden writes: "But I am ever more convinced that I will not be able to see the collection—that is, the main part of it—(around 40–50 objects [...]) held together in a museum" ("Doch bin ich immer mehr davon überzeugt, dass es mir nicht gelingen wird, die Sammlung—das heisst immer wieder den Hauptteil davon—(cirka 40–50 Objekte [...]) in einem Museum zusammengehalten zu sehen"), which indicates that Rebay had declined the offer to acquire a larger part of the collection. Nell Walden, letter to Hilla von Rebay, 25 October 1948, HRFA/SGMA.
- 109 Nell Walden, letter to Hilla von Rebay, 24 December 1948, HRFA/SGMA; Nell Walden, "Sammlung Nell Walden (Aus der Kunstbewegung 'Der Sturm' Berlin)", 1949, HRFA/SGMA.

- 110 Nell Walden, letter to Solomon R. Guggenheim, 14 January 1949, HRFA/SRGMA.
- 111 "ich nehme es sehr ernst mit der Verantwortung der Bilder gegenüber die ich nun seit circa 35 Jahren betraut habe hierher gerettet vor Nazizerstörung- zusammengehalten wie elend es mir auch ging – Nun habe ich den Anfang gemacht mit sehr wichtigen Bildern- und setze das Werk des Unterbringens in Museen fort". Nell Walden, copy of letter to Maria Marc, 19 March 1949, NW1A:182, NWA/LM.
- 112 The donation offers are repeatedly referred to in Walden's correspondence, see, for example, correspondence between Ortsbürgerkommission Lenzburg and Nell Walden and Hannes Urech, March–June 1952, NW2A; Nell Walden, copy of letter to Otto and Hildegard Nebel, 31 July 1954, NW1A: 227; correspondence between Nell Walden, Alfred Bolliger, Aargauischer Kunstverein, and Guido Fischer, Aargauischer Kunstsammlung, 11–15 December 1957, NW2:A; correspondence with Georg Duthaler, January to February 1971, NW1D, NWA/LM.
- 113 Walden repeatedly commented on the difficulty to find a museum director that would accept a gift and grant visibility for it, see, for example, Nell Walden, copy of letter to Georg Muche, 12 April 1957, NW1A:203, NWA/LM. In the 1970s, Walden was negotiating about donations to museums in Israel, still demanding visibility. Her middleman pointed out the "absurdity" to require permanent display of a donation. Georg Duthaler, letter to Nell Walden, 9 February 1971, NW1D:54, NWA/LM.
- 114 Cp. Anne Higonnet, *A Museum of One's Own*, Prestel, New York, 2009, xv.
- 115 Tisa Francini, 2011, 165.
- 116 N. Walden, 1963, 58.
- 117 "ein wertvolles Dokument für jeden, der moderne Kunst sammelt". Norman Robert Ketterer, letter to Birgitta Nisser, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, 20 September 1954, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.
- 118 Hans Hildebrandt, "Stuttgarter Kunstchronik", *Das Werk. Architektur und Kunst/L'oeuvre. Architecture et art*, vol. 42, no. 2, 1955, 17.
- 119 Hildebrandt, 1955, 17.
- 120 "Diese Legendäre Auktion brachte erstmals hohe Preise für die Bilder der begründet der modernen Malerei". Ludwig Steinfeld, "Auf der Suche nach dem Ursprung", *Georg Muche. Das künstlerische Werk 1912–1927*, Magdalena Droste (ed.), Bauhaus-Archiv and Gebr. Mann, Berlin 1980, 50.
- 121 "Erzielte Preise der 20. Kunst-Auktion des Stuttgarter Kunstkabinetts vom 24. bis 27. November 1954", printed list of realised prices, Stuttgarter Kunstkabinett, 1954. Private archive, Stockholm.
- 122 "meine Rückführung des deutschen Kulturgutes nach Deutschland (von mir gerettet)"; "ein würdiger Abschluss meiner Kunstmission". Nell Walden, letter to Lars Erik Åström, 28 August 1954, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm. See also, Nell Walden, copy of letter to Oskar Kokoschka, 9 September 1954, NW1A:172, NWA/LM.
- 123 It has not been my task here to systematically establish the current location of all works that were once part of Nell Walden's collections as such an endeavour would require a separate research project. I have traced some of the more prominent paintings in her collection and Andreas Schlothauer has made fruitful efforts to trace her collection of indigenous art. See Schlothauer, 2014 and 2016.
- 124 The Nationalmuseum in Stockholm was interested in Kandinsky's watercolour painting *Composition with Red-Blue Stripes* (*Komposition mit rot-blauen Streifen*), 1913, and Boccioni's oil painting *The Forces of a Street* (*Macht der Strasse*), 1911. The art museum in Gothenburg wanted to buy Severini's *The Black Cat* (*Der schwarze Kater*), 1910–1911, and the museum in Eskilstuna Gleizes' *Composition*, 1921. Lars Erik Åström, letters to Nell Walden, 11 and 21 August 1954, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.
- 125 She offered Gleizes' *Composition*, which would not to be included in the Stuttgart auction, to the museum in Eskilstuna for SEK 700, but nothing came out of it. Nell Walden, letter to Lars Erik Åström, 28 August 1954, Riksförbundet för bildande konst, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm. Cp. also Bo Wennberg, "Nell Walden och Moderna Museet", manuscript, 21 September 2000, Bo Wennbergs efterlämnade handlingar, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.

- 126 Among them, a Chinese vase and some Cameroonian stools.
- 127 Already in connection with the Swedish travelling exhibition in 1954, she had donated one of her own oil paintings and some few artworks by Swedish artists that had participated in the 1915 *Swedish Expressionists* exhibition in Der Sturm, thus returning them to their national habitat, as it were. The Nationalmuseum in Stockholm received Nell Walden's, *Passion (Leidenschaft)*, 1918, Isaac Grünewald's, *Harbour Image (Hamnbild)*, and Sigrid Hjertén's, *Playing Child (Iván) (Lekande pojke)*, the National Association for Fine Arts, Isaac Grünewald's *Girl (Mädchen)*, and the art museum in Norrköping Gösta Adrian-Nilsson's, *Composition (Komposition/Farbige Zeichnung)*, 1915.
- 128 The gender bias of the resulting acquisitions—all 36 artworks purchased by the museum for a special allocation from the Swedish government in 1964 were by men artists—has been debated and there have recently been efforts to rectify the imbalance by acquisitions of women artists. See, John Peter Nilsson (ed.), *The Second Museum of Our Wishes*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 2010. For a critical assessment, see Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe and Malin Hedlin Hayden, "A Serious Suggestion. Give up the Goat. Art Collections and Feminist Critique in Sweden", *Politics in a Glass Case. Feminism, Exhibition Cultures and Curatorial Transgressions*, Angela Dimitrakaki and Lara Perry (eds.), Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 2013, 66–83.
- 129 K. R-e [Kristian Romare], "Bättre sent än aldrig. Moderna museet får konstdokument från isernas stormcentrum i Berlin", *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten*, 4 May 1958. Attitudes towards Walden's donation differed considerably among the curators of Moderna Museet, cp. Bo Wennberg, "Nell Walden och Moderna Museet", 2000; Bo Wennberg, "Om mina relationer med Otte Sköld", manuscript, 1993, Bo Wennbergs efterlämnande handlingar, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.
- 130 Reidemeister had been granted DM 25,000 in order to acquire works of interest for the museum. Leopold Reidemeister, letter to Nell Walden, 3 December 1959, NW8, NWA/LM. Many of the works Reidemeister put on his wish list were works on paper, but Walden nevertheless estimated that she would receive four times the offered sum should she sell the works on the art market. Nell Walden, copy of letter to Erich Buchholz, 7 December 1959, NW1B:36, NWA/LM. While communicating with Walden about the acquisition to the Nationalgalerie, Reidemeister also helped her negotiate with the Völkerkundemuseum in Berlin as regards an acquisition of her Bavarian reverse glass paintings and parts of her ethnographic collection. Cp. correspondence between Nell Walden and Leopold Reidemeister, November to December 1959, NW8, NWA/LM.
- 131 "Was nun unser altes Anliegen, den Ankauf Ihrer Sammlung für die Nationalgalerie angeht, so fürchte ich doch, daß wie hier keinen gemeinsamen Nenner werden finden können. Ich verkenne nicht, daß kunsthändlerisch ein Teil des jetzigen Restbestandes immer noch von Interesse sein wird. Für mich als Direktor der Nationalgalerie ist aber ausschlaggebend, daß die Sammlung nichts mehr enthält, was sich im Rahmen der Gemäldegalerie repräsentativ zeigen könnte. Ich bin eben wirklich zu spät gekommen". Leopold Reidemeister, letter to Nell Walden, 15 February 1960, NW8, NWA/LM.
- 132 Rechnung für Westdeutsche Bibliothek, Marburg, 16 February 1960, NW2A:216B. The material that Nell Walden sold is preserved as the Nachlaß Nell Walden, Handschrift 118–126 and Drucke. It comprises a broad range of material: postcards, guestbooks, photo albums, copies of correspondence, and publications, the latter included the books by Herwarth Walden that Nell Walden provided with hand-painted covers. On the Sturm archive, see Walther Gebhardt, "Das 'Sturm-Archiv' Herwarth Waldens", *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Schillergesellschaft*, Alfred Kröner, Stuttgart, 1958, 348–365; Bernhard Andergassen, *Bibliothek—Museum—Digital. Die Präsentation von Exponaten aus Bibliotheken in realen und digitalen Räumen am Beispiel des Sturm-Archivs. Eine vergleichende Studie*, Institut für Bibliotheks- und Informationswissenschaft der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 2014, <http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/series/berliner-handreichungen/2014-367>.
- 133 *Schenkung Nell Walden zur Erinnerung an Hannes Urech (1895–1963)*, Berner Kunstmuseum, Bern 1967.
- 134 The donations are documented in NW11A-B, NW15, NW16, and NW18, NWA/LM. They were presented by the museum in a series of smaller publications: *Nell Walden. Introduction till Nell Waldens donation i Landskrona museum*, Landskrona

- kulturnämnd, Landskrona, 1970; *Sturmkonstnärer och schweizisk nutidskonst*, Landskrona kulturnämnd, Landskrona, 1971; *Bondemålning på glas och modernt måleri*, Landskrona kulturnämnd, Landskrona, 1972; *Etnografica*, Landskrona kulturnämnd, Landskrona, 1973. See also, Birthe Wibrand, “Nell Walden & Landskrona”, *Nell Walden & Der Sturm*, Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe et al., Mjellby Konstmuseum, Halmstad and Carlson, Stockholm, 2015, 226ff.
- 135 See, for example, correspondence between Nell Walden and Rudolf Jahns, January to April 1970, NW1D, NWA/LM.
- 136 Nell Walden, copy of letter to Sina Walden, 14 August 1970, NW1D:171, NWA/LM.
- 137 “Der Sturm in Zeugnissen der Zeitgenossen und in Erinnerungen der Beteiligten”. Volker Pirsich, *Der Sturm. Eine Monographie*, Traugott Bautz, Herzberg, 1985, 732–755.
- 138 Georg Brühl, *Herwarth Walden und “Der Sturm”*, DuMont, Köln, 1983, 51.
- 139 “Ich möchte Deine Bilder zeigen, dazu aber auch, wie Du als menschlicher Mittelpunkt des ‘Sturm’ von verschiedenen Künstlern gewürdigt worden bist: Nell Walden als verehrtes Modell, als Persönlichkeit”. Hans Maria Wingler, letter to Nell Walden, 23 December 1965, NW1C:279, NWA/LM.
- 140 “eine gefeierte Schönheit, die von vielen Künstlern gemalt, gezeichnet und verehrt wurde”. VBG, “Nell Walden—Sammlerin und Malerin in Bern”, *Die Tat*, 16 July 1971.
- 141 The inscription is on one of the copies in the Landskrona museum.
- 142 Anne Higonnet has suggested that portraits of collectors functioned as mediated self-representation when installed within collections. Higonnet, 2009, xiv.
- 143 “Mest blir det ju alltid mitt sammanhang med Sturm— min samlaretätighet [sic]— min kamp med H.W. för den moderna konsten osv, som tager största utrymmet. Det blir egentligen för lite plats för min egen konst. [...] Det är i längden mattsamt [sic] att alltjämt— egentligen hela mitt liv—arbeta för andra.—För Sturm—Walden—skriva böcker om Sturm, om Walden—köpa konstverk av kollegerna [sic] hänga upp dem—skänka dem till museen [sic] osv osv—”. Nell Walden, letter to Sven Ek, 14 May 1972, uncatalogued, NWA/LM.
- 144 Bo Wennberg, “Nell Walden och Moderna Museet”, 2000, Bo Wennbergs efterlämnande handlingar, Nationalmuseums arkiv, Stockholm.
- 145 Latour, 2005, 196.
- 146 Latour, 2005, 195.

Conclusion

Collaborative Cultures

While mainly following the traces of one historical actor, the notions of collaboration, teamwork, mutual dependency, and supportive collective activity have been key features of this book. Even if the focus has been on Nell Walden, I have sought to avoid the kind of single authorial narratives that permeate modernist art history by emphasising instead how most of her endeavours in the art world and beyond were characterised by cooperation, co-creation, or affirmative collaboration.

In the first two chapters, this was made manifest through her supportive labour and art collecting, which were constitutive and imperative for the Sturm enterprise, evidencing its success as a result of collective activities carried out by a distinct teamwork by a core troupe and supportive labour by several other collaborators. Discussing Nell Walden's own art production, it has been similarly clear that her emergence as an artist in the 1910s and the 1920s was facilitated by the collective activity of Der Sturm's art school, gallery exhibitions, and promotional apparatus.

Beyond the framework of Der Sturm, Walden still navigated the Weimar public cultural sphere through co-operations with both individuals and organisations. As an independent artist, she positioned herself in an organisational context, Die Abstrakten, which, at least initially, promised a supportive institutional framework. Her recurrent collaborations with women photographers, which helped her secure visibility and maintain presence in the public sphere of culture and were additionally strengthened by the women journalists who repeatedly paid attention to her in the illustrated press, have been theorised as part of an affirmative *Frauenkultur* in Weimar Germany. The very last chapter has shown not only how she continued her supportive labour for Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm and established a narrative and material foundation for the Sturm historiography during the post-war period, but also how her efforts to secure, disseminate, and institutionalise her collections and archives were part of an international struggle for cultural authority during the canonisation processes of modern art. Taken together, then, the supportive labour, teamwork, and collective activities of Der Sturm, the affirmative women's culture of Weimar Germany, and Nell Walden's archival and historiographic work of the post-war period, in many senses make manifest what I have theorised as the collaborative cultures of modern art.

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