



ON THE TRAIL OF THE
KRONBERG PAINTERS
A CIRCULAR WALK

cover

Anton Burger, Mädchen im Maien
Stiftung Kronberger Malerkolonie (detail)



Fritz Wucherer, Kronberg vom Thalerfeld aus, Stiftung Kronberger Malerkolonie

THE KRONBERG ARTISTS' COLONY

The Kronberg Artists' Colony is counted among the first and most renowned German artists' colonies. Since the middle of the 19th century artists' colonies have developed throughout Europe in the countryside but still located close to towns that were important for the art business. Barbizon in the Fontainebleau forest near Paris turned into a center of the movement. Artists from many European countries went to see this artists' colony, among them more than a few of the Kronberg colony's painters. During that time the concept of art had undergone a transformation: The middle classes, financially strengthened due to the industrialization, replaced church and princes' courts who so far had been the main buyers of art works. On top of that, an increasing industrialization and consequently changing urban environment caused a desire for naturalness and tranquility that was thought to be lost. That impulse was even reflected in art colleges. Students turned away from strictly structured colleges and restrained idealized stylistic elements used in classicism, and turned toward nature, to "natural light" and rural, "original" motifs, as could also be found in the town of Kronberg which was characterized by small farms and trades. Motifs that also appealed to the new group of buyers.



Nelson G. Kinsley, Johanniskirche im Winter, Stiftung Kronberger Malerkolonie

THE BEGINNINGS

At about the middle of the 19th century painters of Frankfurt discovered their idyllic Taunus scenes in the town of Kronberg, the landscape and the picturesque motifs of Kronberg everyday life.

Jakob Becker had studied at the art college of Düsseldorf, where landscape and genre painting were already taught. In 1842 he was appointed professor to the Städel Art Institute for this newly offered subject at the Städel. Both he and his Düsseldorf fellow student Jakob Fürchtegott Dielmann had a formative influence on the pupils, who starting out from Frankfurt were later to establish the Kronberg Artists' Colony. Jakob Becker's pupils at the Städel included Philipp Rumpf, Anton Burger and Jacob Maurer. They were part of the founding generation of the Artists' Colony. Since the late 1840s first excursions of individual painters have been documented based on the dates on their art works showing Kronberg motifs. Apparently most painters found lodgings at the inn "Zum Adler", which since then has had a legendary reputation as a painters' residence. Apart from serving as a lodge, it was also their meeting place. It was the place where they exchanged views and ideas and celebrated artists' festivals.

At about 1860 the first painters took up permanent residence in Kronberg: Anton Burger, Jakob Fürchtegott Dielmann, Philipp Rumpf, Alfred von Schönberger and Otto Scholderer. Soon after, also Jacob Maurer and Heinrich Winter moved there. Kronberg became a summer residence for several painters who worked or taught in Paris or Frankfurt, such as Peter Burnitz, Adolf Schreyer and Friedrich Steinhardt. The first phase of the Kronberg Artists' Colony was influenced by the close cooperation of former fellow students and was characterized by two personalities: Jakob Dielmann took an integrative approach and Anton Burger was socially active. The artists' colony was also influenced by a continuous exchange of views and ideas with Frankfurt painters who had not settled down in Kronberg.



Wilhelm Trübner, Ansicht von Kronberg, Stiftung Kronberger Malerkolonie

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Since the 1870s until the mid 1890s the artists' colony circle broadened due to the fact that among others Louis Eysen, Richard Fresenius, Ida Braubach, Josephine Schalk as well as the students of Anton Burger, like Philipp Franck, Adolf Chelius and Fritz Wucherer, moved to Kronberg. In addition, there were Burger's female students, who as women were not admitted to colleges and had to resort to private painting lessons as their sole opportunity for professional training such as Minna Roberth, Mathilde Knoop-Spielhagen and Berta Bagge. Around that time also well-known painters moved to Kronberg such as Ferdinand Brütt, the portrait painter Norbert Schrödl much appreciated in court circles and upper classes, and Hans Thoma who was highly esteemed for his paintings full of atmosphere.

In 1894 Victoria Empress Friedrich, dowager of Emperor Friedrich III, chose Friedrichshof Castle as her dowager's domicile. She got to know Kronberg due to her contacts to Adolf Schreyer and her visits of the military hospital he had established in his house in 1870/71. After having taken domicile she, being a dedicated and good painter, took lessons with Norbert Schrödl.

In the years following 1880 the spirit of the artists' colony, influenced by the former fellow students' concerted initiative, gradually decreased. Also Kronberg itself had changed: More and more Frankfurt upper-class families, pushed aside due to industrialization from their traditional summer retreats alongside the Main river bank, moved to the Taunus. They spent the summer time in Kronberg that was gradually losing its rural origin. Jakob Fürchtegott Dielmann's death in 1885 had represented a first break for the artists' colony. All the more this applied to the death of Anton Burger in 1905, who was a formative personality in times when the new movements of impressionism and expressionism became predominant. The deaths of Nelson Gray Kinsley in 1945 and Fritz Wucherer in 1948 marked the end of the Kronberg Artists' Colony history.

Bertha Bagge

(1859 Frankfurt – 1939 Frankfurt)

After her professional training under Heinrich Hasselhorst in Frankfurt, Bertha Bagge lived in Kronberg as a student of Anton Burger from 1886 to 1891.

Carl von Bertrab

(1863 Rudolfstadt – killed in action 1914)

After his officer training Carl von Bertrab, as a captain in temporary retirement, turned his attention to painting and pursued his final studies under Ferdinand Brütt at the art college of Düsseldorf. In 1899 he followed Ferdinand Brütt to Kronberg living there until 1909.

Ida Braubach

(1830 Hanau – 1918 Darmstadt)

After her professional training under the painter Léon Coignet in Paris, Ida Braubach followed her husband, whom she had got to know there, to Quebec and Montreal. After his death she returned to Germany and in 1875 she settled in Kronberg. In 1905 Ida Braubach moved to Darmstadt.

Ferdinand Brütt

(1849 Hamburg – 1936 Bergen bei Celle)

After his professional training at the art college of Weimar, Ferdinand Brütt lived and worked in Düsseldorf, devoting his time primarily to genre painting. After he moved to Kronberg in 1898, his work was characterized by religious and historical topics as well as landscape painting. In 1920 he moved to Bergen bei Celle.

Anton Burger

(1824 Frankfurt – 1905 Kronberg)

After his studies under Jakob Becker in Frankfurt and then in Munich and Düsseldorf, in 1858 Burger along with Jakob Fürchtegott Dielmann took permanent residence in Kronberg, that he got to know due to repeated visits to the Taunus. Burger is considered a formative personality of the artists' colony. In his house he hospitably offered lodge to Frankfurt artists he was good friends with and he provided space to his numerous painting students. He was connected to the Kronberg citizens due to his passion for hunting and his socially active nature. He was considered "King of Kronberg". In 1894 he was appointed honorary citizen of the town of Kronberg. His grave can be found at Frankfurter Straße cemetery, in 1908 he was honored by erecting a memorial Burger fountain near the Schiller pond in Victoria park.

Peter Burnitz

(1824 Frankfurt – 1886 Frankfurt)

Having studied law and having worked as an attorney, Dr.iur. Peter Burnitz took to painting, he did his professional training in Paris living there and in Barbizon for several years. Back in Frankfurt, he joined the Kronberg artists' circle and spent the summer months in Kronberg.

Adolf Chelius

(1856 Frankfurt – 1923 München)

After his studies in Berlin and Vienna, Adolf Chelius took classes with Heinrich Hasselhorst at the Städel Art Institute in Frankfurt. From 1879 to 1882 he was a student of Anton Burger in Kronberg until he finally settled in Munich.

Jakob Fürchtegott Dielmann

(1809 Frankfurt – 1885 Frankfurt)

He was a close friend of Jakob Becker, and after his professional training in Frankfurt and at the art college in Düsseldorf in 1841/42 he occasionally lived in the artists' colony Willingshausen. Back to Frankfurt he worked at the Städel, where he got acquainted with Anton Burger. In 1858 Dielmann and Burger took up residence in Kronberg and are counted among the founders of the Kronberg Artists' Colony.

Louis Eysen

(1843 Manchester – 1899 München)

After his professional training at the Frankfurt Städel and study visits to Berlin and Munich, Louis Eysen was a student of Otto Scholderer and Leon Bonnat in Paris. Since 1873 he has lived in Kronberg. In 1879 he moved to Meran for health reasons.

Philipp Franck

(1860 Frankfurt – 1944 Berlin)

After his professional training with Heinrich Hasselhorst at the Städel Art Institute in Frankfurt, Philipp Franck lived in Kronberg as a student of Anton Burger from 1879 to 1881. Subsequently he continued his studies in Düsseldorf and finally joined impressionist painters in Berlin. Along with Max Liebermann and Max Slevogt, Franck counted among the co-founders of the "Berlin Secession".

Richard Fresenius

(1844 Frankfurt – 1903 Monaco)

After his professional training to become a lithographer, Richard Fresenius first studied under Jakob Becker at the Städel Art Institute, thereafter at the colleges of Munich and Karlsruhe. Apart from landscape painting his favorite themes were maritime motifs. Since 1872 he has lived in Kronberg.

Wilhelm Friedenberg

(1824 Frankfurt – 1886 Frankfurt)

From 1862 to 1868 Wilhelm Friedenberg attended the Städel Art Institute under Edward von Steinle. In 1867 he moved to Kronberg as a student of Anton Burger, eventually settling there. His favorite motifs were everyday life scenes and portraits. He repeatedly went to Munich, Dresden, Düsseldorf and Berlin for longer study visits. His grave can be found at Frankfurter Straße cemetery.



Heinrich Heimes

(1855 Mayen – 1933 Frankfurt)

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Having completed his studies in Düsseldorf and Karlsruhe and having gone on numerous study tours, Heinrich Heimes settled in Kronberg in 1910. Until the First World War, however, he spent the summers at his house in Katwijk an Zee. In Kronberg he maintained friendly contacts with Ferdinand Brütt and Nelson Kinsley.



Jakob Hertling

(1849 Katzenelnbogen – 1926 München)

After his professional training at the Städel Art Institute with Edward von Steinle Jakob Hertling first was student of Anton Burger in Kronberg until he joined Adolf Schreyer. After studies in Berlin, the landscape painter settled in Munich.

Robert Hoffmann

(1868 Stuttgart – 1935 Urberg bei St. Blasien)

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After his studies in Karlsruhe, at the Académie Julian of Paris, and after numerous study tours he spent several years at Lake Constance. Subsequently, Robert Hoffmann lived in Kronberg from 1900 to 1903, passing most summers in the Eifel area.



Hugo Kauffmann

(1844 Hamburg – 1915 Prien am Chiemsee)

After his professional training with Jakob Becker and Edward Steinle at the Frankfurt Städel, Hugo Kauffmann has lived in Kronberg since 1863, interrupted by stays in Düsseldorf and Paris. In 1871 he moved to Munich.



Nelson Gray Kinsley

(1863 Canton, MA/USA – 1945 Kronberg)

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From 1878 to 1882 Nelson Kinsley was a student of Anton Burger, his later father-in-law, in Kronberg. After study stays in Düsseldorf and Karlsruhe, in 1887 Kinsley who primarily painted landscapes full of atmosphere, returned to Kronberg living there at the former Burger house until his death. His grave can be found at Frankfurter Straße cemetery.



Mathilde Knoop-Spielhagen

(1863 Bremen – 1904 Kronberg)

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In the 1880s Mathilde Knoop went to Kronberg as a student of Anton Burger, in 1885 she married the medical doctor Dr. Friedrich Spielhagen.

Lorenz Maas

(1845 Frankfurt – 1882 Frankfurt)

Lorenz Maas was one of the earliest students of Anton Burger. After his professional training at the Städel Art Institute he lived in Kronberg until he was drafted into the army in 1869. Subsequently he settled in Niederwalluf.



Jacob Maurer

(1826 Obereschbach – 1887 Kronberg)

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After his professional training at the Städel, finally with Jakob Becker, Maurer studied at the art college of Düsseldorf. Being friends with Anton Burger and Jakob Fürchtegott Dielmann since their shared college days, Jacob Maurer lived in Kronberg from 1869 until his death. His works focus on forest, mostly Taunus landscapes. His grave can be found at Frankfurter Straße cemetery.

Minna Roberth

(1851 Frankfurt – 1920 Wiesbaden)

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For several years Minna Roberth has taken classes with Angilbert Göbel and subsequently, still resident in Frankfurt, with Anton Burger in Kronberg. From 1909 to 1919 she lived in Kronberg.



Philipp Rumpf

(1821 Frankfurt – 1896 Frankfurt)

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Philipp Rumpf studied at the Städel in Frankfurt under Jakob Becker along with Anton Burger. From 1844 to 1860 he ran a school of arts in Frankfurt for daughters of middle-class families. Having frequently spent the summers in Kronberg, Rumpf who focused on genre and landscape painting, moved his main residence from Frankfurt to Kronberg where he lived from 1873 to 1886.



Emil Rumpf

(1860 Frankfurt – 1948 Kronberg)

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Emil Rumpf was taught by his father, Philipp Rumpf, and has lived in Kronberg since 1905. Most of his works show animals, portraits of children and women, but also military scenes. His grave can be found at Frankfurter Straße cemetery.



Karl Schäffer

(1821 Frankfurt – 1902 Kronberg)

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After his professional training under Jakob Becker at the Städel, Karl Schaeffer took up residence in Kronthal in 1854 with the spa doctor Dr. Ferdinand Küster, his later father-in-law. In 1856 he traveled to Mexico returning to Kronberg in 1859. He painted mainly landscapes, until he had to terminate his painting activities because of an eye condition.



Ernst Schalck
(1827 Frankfurt – 1865 Frankfurt) ⁹
The son of the painter Heinrich Schalck studied at the Städel Art Institute, finally with Jakob Becker. During the March revolution in 1848 he returned to Frankfurt from Düsseldorf, where he had been shortly before. In the late 1850s Ernst Schalck, resident in Frankfurt, spent several summers in Kronberg with Philipp Rumpf and Adolf Schreyer.



Josefine Schalk
(1850 Trier – 1919 Kronberg) ²⁵
Josefine Schalk was taught by Heinrich Hasselhorst in Frankfurt. She often went on study tours to Munich, to Upper Bavaria and Tyrol, later to the surroundings of Frankfurt. In 1902 Josefine Schalk settled in Kronberg spending her last years in a house community with the Wucherer family. Her works consist mainly of portraits. Her grave can be found at Frankfurter Straße cemetery.



Friedrich Philipp Schmöle
(1844 Frankfurt – 1924) ²⁸
In 1904 the Frankfurt merchant Friedrich Philipp Schmöle resigned from his profession to devote his time primarily to painting and traveling. As early as in 1872 he presumably was resident in Kronberg. There are documents evidencing that he owned a house in Kronberg from 1897 to 1906.



Alfred von Schönberger
in fact Julius Alouis Karl Ditterich (1855 München – 1910 Königstein) ¹⁶
Having at first started a military career, Ditterich/von Schönberger finally turned to painting and he studied in Munich. Since the end of 1873 he has traveled throughout the world. In 1880 he settled in Kronberg, a town he had already got to know in previous years, and lived here for about 20 years. His real identity, name, place and date of birth can be found in a supplement to the death certificate of Alfred von Schönberger.



Otto Scholderer
(1834 Frankfurt – 1902 Frankfurt)
Otto Scholderer studied at the Städel Art Institute among others under Jakob Becker. Back in Frankfurt after a study stay in Paris, he counted among the first painters who moved to Kronberg. There he lived from 1859 to 1868. Scholderer, a close friend of Hans Thoma, frequently changed his domicile and moved between Frankfurt, Kronberg and the Black Forest. Staying in England for almost 30 years, he returned to Frankfurt a few years before he died.



Adolf Schreyer
(1828 Frankfurt – 1899 Kronberg) ⁷
During his studies at the Städel Art Institute under Jakob Becker, Adolf Schreyer had made friends with the "Kronbergers" Burger, Maurer and Rumpf. Being resident in Frankfurt, he spent the summers in Kronberg already in the beginnings of the artists' colony. In 1852 he traveled to Paris for the first time. Schreyer's favorite motifs were horses that he studied during numerous trips to Southern Europe and Asia Minor. In 1871 he returned to Kronberg. After the end of the war in 1872, however, he continued to work in Paris during the winter months. In 1895 he was appointed honorary citizen of the town of Kronberg. His grave can be found at Frankfurter Straße cemetery.



Norbert Schrödl
(1842 Wien – 1912 Kronberg) ⁶
Norbert Schrödl began his professional training at the art college of Paris, changing to Jakob Becker in Frankfurt in 1855. Back in Paris, he gained reputation as a portrait painter. Also in Berlin, his subsequent domicile, and in Frankfurt he was much appreciated as a portraitist in court circles and by public figures. Initially, Schrödl chose the former house of the painter Karl Peter Burnitz as his summer residence, finally settling there in 1896.



Friedrich Karl Steinhardt
(1844 Frankfurt – 1898 unbekannt)
After his studies at the Städel Art Institute under Jakob Becker, Friedrich Karl Steinhardt lived in Kronberg until 1866. He subsequently worked in Paris with Scholderer, Kauffmann, Winter and Eysen.



Hans Thoma
(1839 Bernau – 1924 Karlsruhe) ¹
Hans Thoma studied at the art college of Karlsruhe, he then stayed in Düsseldorf, Paris and Munich and repeatedly went on study tours to Italy. He maintained friendly contacts to the Kronberg Artists' Colony, and he lived in Frankfurt again and again. In 1898 he took up residence in Kronberg. As early as in 1901, however, he left again being called to Karlsruhe as director of the gallery and professor of the art college.



Wilhelm Trübner
(1851 Heidelberg – 1917 Karlsruhe)
Wilhelm Trübner studied in Karlsruhe, Stuttgart and Munich, subsequently he went on various study tours. He lived mainly in Munich, however he maintained contact with Hans Thoma, Norbert Schrödl and Philipp Franck in Kronberg. From 1896 to 1903 he taught at the Städel Art Institute. There he even ran an artist's workshop. In 1897 Trübner wrote his paper "Über die Verwirrungen der Kunstbegriffe (Concerning the Confusions of the Concepts of Art)" in Kronberg.

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Heinrich Winter

(1843 Frankfurt – 1911 Kronberg)

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After his professional training with Jakob Becker in Frankfurt, Heinrich Winter moved to Kronberg in 1864. In 1867 he went to Paris, where he shared an artist's workshop with Friedrich Karl Steinhardt. Contacts with each other were maintained by visits of artists from Frankfurt and Kronberg. The motifs of his works are characterized to some extent by his participation in the German-French War in 1870/71 and by his trips to Hungary, Romania and to the Orient. Back in Kronberg in 1874, Heinrich Winter lived there until his death. His grave can be found at Frankfurter Straße cemetery.

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Fritz Wucherer

(1873 Basel – 1948 Kronberg)

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Fritz Wucherer lived in Kronberg from 1892 to 1895 as a student of Anton Burger. Having stayed in Paris, he temporarily resided in Frankfurt and then returned to Kronberg in 1898. With him died one of the last artists of the Kronberg Artists' Colony founded in the middle of the 19th century. His grave can be found at Frankfurter Straße cemetery.

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Victoria Kaiserin Friedrich

(1840 London – 1901 Kronberg)

The spouse of Friedrich III, German Emperor and King of Prussia, has been an active painter and drawer since her childhood. At the age of 11 already she took classes with the painter Edward Henry Corbould, frequently renowned. In 1894 she took up residence at Friedrichshof Palace in Kronberg that she had constructed as her dowager's domicile. In Kronberg she took classes with Schrödl.