

Akim Monet Fine Arts, LLC



George GROSZ (1893 - 1959)

Hoover

Brush, reed pen and pen and ink

27 ¹¹/₁₆ x 18 ¹/₄ in (70,3 x 46,2 cm)

1932

Annotated lower left

Stamped on the reverse "GEORGE GROSZ NACHLASS" and numbered 2-146-2

PROVENANCE

The Estate of George Grosz

LITERATURE

Eddie Kantor, "Amerika, du hast es auch nicht besser!" (America, you're no better off), illustration for the story "Hoover soll die Amerikaner mehr Bananen essen lassen!" (Hoover should have Americans eat more bananas), UHU, Berlin, January 1932, Booklet 4, p. 54, illustrated

EXHIBITED

Of Mice and Men, October 5 - December 5, 2020, Popcorn Gallery Akim Monet Fine Arts, Los Angeles

AUTHENTICATION

This work will be included in the forthcoming catalogue raisonné of works on paper by George Grosz in preparation by Ralph Jentsch, managing director of the George Grosz Estate.

NOTES

George Grosz's obsessive eye missed nothing and his cutting, razor-sharp line recorded the dangers and problems of his time like no other. His incisive depiction of the 1932 election, which he witnessed first-hand as he took on a temporary teaching position that year, prior to giving-up his German citizenship upon permanently emigrating to the USA in 1933, leaves us with a poignant testimony of the American electoral process.

The present work is a 1932 portrait of soon-to-be-defeated incumbent president Herbert Hoover, America's 31st president, who took office in 1929, the year the U.S. economy plummeted into the Great Depression. He lost the election of 1932, mostly owing to his being widely blamed for the dire state of the economy, while in fact having largely inherited this fiasco from his predecessor Calvin Coolidge, the 30th President of the United States (1923-29), whose silence and dour personality Alice Roosevelt Longworth, a leading Republican wit, underscored:

"When he wished he were elsewhere, he pursed his lips, folded his arms, and said nothing. He looked then precisely as though he had been weaned on a pickle."

So, when George Grosz made a drawing of Hoover in 1932, he depicted him as a bust in a museum, already "history," with, over his head, a pickle, a reference to his predecessor Calvin Coolidge, thanks to whom he was to lose the election.

George Grosz drew this portrait as an illustration for a short story by American entertainment personality Eddie Cantor, published in the Berlin magazine UHU in January 1932. The group of stories for which Grosz contributed the illustrations was entitled "America, you're no better off! An American humorist drafts a five-year plan for the U.S. to resolve the global economic crisis," and this particular work illustrated "Hoover should have Americans eat more bananas!"

In six months, we could have the good times back if we sold bananas instead of apples. Apples are very healthy, of course. But if you eat an apple, the matter is settled. As soon as you peel a banana, it starts. Someone slips on the peel and stains their pants. This gives the cleaning agency work. The chemical cleaning company needs more gasoline, and gasoline consumption increases. More people are needed for drilling, packing, loading, unrolling. More trucks will be required and the automobile industry will have to manufacture cars by the thousands.

The man now eats a second banana, slips, and before he knows it, his pants are torn. Then the tailor appears. The tailor includes his relatives who marry relatives. That helps the furniture industry.

The third time he slipped, the man breaks his leg. That gives the doctor a merit. The doctor takes the matter seriously, so the funeral home gets busy. The man leaves a life insurance policy, that benefits his wife. She has a friend, and that helped too. Now calculate how many millions of bananas instead of apples could have been sold. What the apple was to Newton, the banana could have been to Hoover.



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Hoover soll die Amerikaner mehr Bananen essen lassen!

In sechs Monaten könnten wir die guten Zeiten wiederhaben, würden wir statt Äpfel Bananen verkaufen. Äpfel sind sehr gesund, das versteht sich. Ist man aber einen Apfel, so ist die Sache erledigt. Sowie man eine Banane abzieht, geht es schon los. Jemand gleitet auf der Schale aus und macht sich die Hose fleckig. Dadurch bekommt die Reinigungsanstalt Arbeit. Die chemische Reinigungsanstalt braucht mehr Benzin, der Benzinverbrauch nimmt zu. Mehr Personen werden zum Bohren, Verpacken,



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Verladen, Abrollen benötigt. Mehr Lastautos werden erforderlich, und die Automobilindustrie muß Wagen zu Tausenden fabrizieren.

Mittlerweile ißt der Mann eine zweite Banane, rutscht aus, und ehe er sich versieht, ist seine Hose zerrissen. Da tritt der Schneider in Erscheinung. Der Schneider bezieht seine Verwandten mit ein, die Verwandten heiraten. Das hilft der Möbelindustrie.

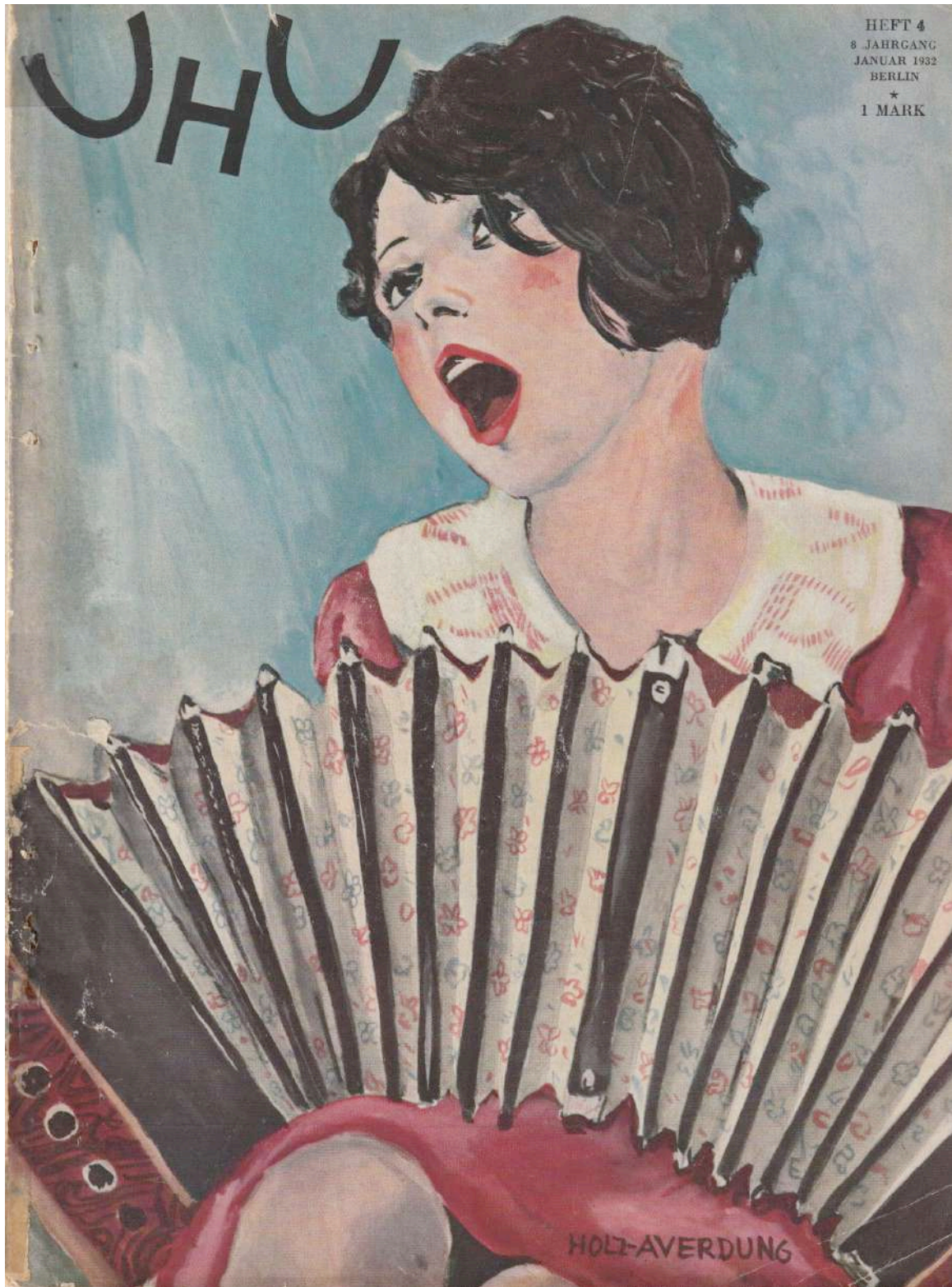
Beim drittenmal Ausgleiten bricht sich der Mann das Bein. Das verschafft dem Arzt einen Verdienst. Der Arzt nimmt die Sache ernst, somit bekommt das Beerdigungsinstitut zu tun. Der Mann hinterläßt eine Lebensversicherung, das kommt der Frau zugute. Diese hat einen Freund, und dem ist auch geholfen. Man rechne sich nun aus, wie viele Millionen Bananen anstatt Äpfel verkauft sein könnten. Was der Apfel für Newton war, hätte die Banane für Hoover sein können.



Besetzt alle Arbeitsplätze doppelt!

Warum besteht eine Fußballmannschaft nur aus elf Mann? Man könnte die Zahl verdoppeln und so noch einmal soviel Leute beschäftigen. Auch Boxkämpfer. Warum sollen nur zwei auf einmal im Ring sein? Warum nicht acht? Ein Jockey auf einem Pferd ist gradezu eine Verschwendung. Auf dem kleinsten Pferd ist Platz genug für zwei, und manche Pferde erstrecken sich so weit nach hinten, daß bequem für vier Platz wäre.

Ueber Nacht würde jede Depression verschwinden, wenn man alles verdoppelte. Zwei Schofföre für jedes Auto, zwei Kapitäne für jedes Schiff, und zwei Präsidenten für jede Präsidentschaftsperiode.



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"George Grosz gave a fantastic testimony of Berlin life during a terrible period, divided between fascism and communism. He was active in the communist party but had an anarchist's fascination for the characters of underground life. Military figures, prostitutes and violence abound, and fascinate the viewer [...] this meant he instinctively rooted his art in the common people. It also explains, I think, why caricature and graphic design in magazines and newspapers held such an appeal for him."

*Quote of Mario Vargas Llosa
'You nourish yourself with everything you hate', George Grosz, in TATE ETC. Magazine (Spring 2007)*