



Ernst Barlach: Sculpture "The Book Reader" (1936), reduction in bronze

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Ernst Barlach's Book Reader - a Milestone of Modernism

The motif of the reader is a key motif in Barlach's work, which he already addressed in the lithograph from 1916, "To whom time is like eternity and eternity is like time, he is freed from all suffering" and in charcoal drawing from 1922. In the spring of 1936, he gave the motif a special density with the sculpture "The Book Reader".

"The Book Reader" is completely absorbed in his reading, radiating concentration and meditative harmony. He lives in his world: "His back, resembling a spherical shell, protects him like a shield from anything distracting, guards the intimacy and solitude of the reader - the prerequisites of all intellectual endeavour".

Bertolt Brecht described Ernst Barlach's masterly depiction of the reading man with enthusiasm: "A seated man, bent over, holding a book in heavy hands. He reads curiously, confidently, and critically. He is clearly looking for solutions to urgent problems in the book [...] I like "The Book Reader" better than Rodin's famous "Thinker", which only shows the difficulty of thinking. Barlach's sculpture is more realistic, more concrete..."

Sculpture directly moulded from the original and reduced in size (reduction). Fine bronze, cast by hand using the Lost-Wax-Process. Size 11 x 24 x 17,5 cm (w/h/d). Limited edition of 980 copies, individually numbered and with the signature "E. Barlach" taken from the original as well as the foundry hallmark. ars mundi Exclusive Edition, published in cooperation with the Ernst Barlach Society. With numbered certificate of authenticity and limitation.

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