

**Emilie von Hallavanya, Portrait of a Young Woman, 1913, oil on canvas, 67.5 x 54.8 cm, signed lower left "E. v. Hallavanya 1914", framed (86 x 73 cm).**

Emilie von Hallavanya (1874 Pula - 1960 Munich) was one of the most important female artists of the early 20th century and yet was completely forgotten for a long time. She has only recently been rediscovered, but her works cannot be exhibited today without comment due to her early enthusiasm for National Socialism. Her work is thus divided into a period before 1933 and after, which makes her an exciting personality, as female artists are rarely associated with the Nazi era.

As the daughter of the k. u. k. Major General Karl Hallavanya von Radoičić (1831-1897) and his wife Emilie, née Czeschka Edle von Maehrenthal (1846-1935), Emilie von Hallavanya received artistic training at the Graz Drawing Academy from the age of 14 in 1888 before studying at the Ladies' Academy in Munich under Ludwig von Herterich (1856-1932) from 1893. She then continued her education on trips to Italy and Paris, lived alternately in Munich and Graz, became part of the artists' colony on Fraueninsel in Chiemsee (1909) and moved permanently into an apartment with a studio at Theresienstraße 136/1 in Munich in 1908 until it was bombed out in 1944. She taught at the academy from 1911 to 1920, but also ran a private painting and drawing school, which offered summer courses at various locations. Emilie, who remained unmarried, was buried after her death in the grave of the von Lossow and von Soxhlet families in the old cemetery in Pöcking on Lake Starnberg - a portrait provides information about her connection to the von Soxhlet family (see Kunst und Krempel, BR, 16.03.2013).

She was a member and multiple exhibitor at the Munich Secession, the Vienna Secession, the Kunstverein München, the Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen in Vienna, the Vienna Hagenbund, the Munich Glaspalast, the Grazer and Prager Kunstverein, P. H. Beyer und Sohn in Leipzig, the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Münchner Künstlerinnen and the Galerie Heinemann. Later, during the National Socialist era, she presented works at almost all the major German art exhibitions, the Munich State Art Exhibition, the exhibition of the Kameradschaft Münchener Künstler and similar propaganda shows.

The portrait of an as yet unidentified young woman offered here, who looks at us with a self-confident, inquiring gaze, dates from the most important phase of her work (between 1905 and 1920). While she was initially still strongly influenced by Wilhelm Leibl (1844-1900), after 1900 she also borrowed from the late Impressionist painting of Leo Putz (1869-1940) and other painters from the Munich artists' association *Die Scholle*. This can be seen in the broad, blotchy design of the background and the impasto, sketch-like painting style in the depiction of the person and their garment. Hallavanya is also characterized by her very own, offensive use of colour. The intense red dress with a deep blue ribbon, which reflects the fashion shortly before the First World War, contrasts strongly with the white blouse underneath and the young woman's whitish skin. Both elements are further enhanced by the iridescent dark green background.

This colour offensive is also emphasized in the many media contributions of this highly successful period for the artist, in which the important magazine *Jugend*, among others, illustrated her painting *Im Morgenkleide* on a full page (1917). *Österreichs Illustrierte Zeitung* (1911) raved that her works were "very briskly characterized and captivatingly charming in

their colors." In 1910, the *Münchner neueste Nachrichten* praised Hallavanya as "an artist who possesses a rich sense of color and, without showing that certain painterly power-mongering, grit in the best sense!" However, the strong use of color disturbed some critics, such as Max Glaß in the Viennese Monday paper *Der Morgen* (1914): "Hallavanya goes for a strong color effect, but lacks moderation and toning."

It is typical of these years that the commentators, who were almost always male, sometimes consciously, often unconsciously devalued women's painting through the male gaze in a manner that is often very chauvinistic for us today. For today's readers, for example, it is poisonous praise when the *Münchner neueste Nachrichten* in 1903 claims that "the works of Emilie v. Hallavanya show a masculine, energetic hand". Or when the Vienna *Reichspost* (16.11.1927) wrote: "The Munich artist Emilie v. Hallavanya, whose almost masculine, powerful painting style is astonishing, is dominant. Her brushwork is broad and confident, the compositional structure of the pictures remarkable and her coloring quite interesting; ...none of the female painters can match Emilie v. Hallavanya."

Many articles emphasize that she is an exceptional artist. As late as 1927, the well-known cultural journalist Hermann Menkes stated in the *Neues Wiener Journal* in his article *Die Frau als Malerin (!)*: "The Munich artist Emilie v. Hallavanya shows his painterly culture in her well-balanced compositions. Studio, visit are among the strongest things in the exhibition". As early as 1911, the *Münchner neueste Nachrichten* declared her "one of the most talented of our painting women". And in 1913, the same newspaper stated: "Among the painting women, Emilie v. Hallavanya, as always, claims one of the first places this year. Her color is of cheerful and harmonious richness, the lady in the morning dress and the lady in black with the oranges are of unaffected healthy truth of appearance and a fruit still life of jewel-like, colorful shine."

Alongside the artist's self-portrait in Munich's Lenbachhaus, painted around 1905, which is one of the museum's most popular works and which has been a highlight in prominent exhibitions in recent years, including in Berlin's Alte Nationalgalerie, the portrait on offer here is one of Hallavanya's strongest paintings. It is the work of a painter who is currently being brilliantly rediscovered, but whose later creative phase after 1933 was marred by her adaptation to the style and motif requirements of the Nazis. In contrast to many of her colleagues from the Munich School, she was not a fellow traveler, but joined the NSDAP in 1933 and was very committed to National Socialism until 1945. In this sense, too, she is an - unfortunately negative - exception among women artists, which paradoxically makes her all the more historically relevant.