

Eugenie von Schacky, Cacti, um 1925, oil on canvas, 65 x 80 cm, signed lower right "E. von Schacky", verso on the frame a label inscribed with "E. v. Schacky / Kakteen" and a label in Art Nouveau style of the frame shop "Emil Plesko / Vergolder / München / Barerstrasse 67 / Anfertigung von Ausstellungsrahmen / Kirchliche Kunst: / Renovierungen etc.", framed (77 x 90.5 cm).

Eugenie Mattes Freiin von Schacky auf Schönfeld (1884 Passau (?) -1965 Munich) was the daughter of the successful architect, engineer and civil servant Dr. Eugen Freiherr von Schacky auf Schönfeld (1848-1912) and his middle-class wife Natalie, née Gutmayr (1851-1925), and was born into a noble Bavarian family of northern Italian origin (Sacco), whose members repeatedly held prominent positions at court, in the administration and military, but also in the sciences and architecture. As a person and artist, she is not very tangible today - we know nothing about her artistic training, for example - which may also be due to her origins.

After her marriage in 1928 to the important sculptor Georg Mattes (1874-1942), professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, and the birth of her daughter Maria in 1929, she ended her artistic career. The family now lived in the villa colony in Obermenzing (Rubensstrasse 1) in a magnificent villa, equipped with a studio. Eugenie, her husband and her daughter were buried in the Schacky family grave on Schönfeld in the St. Severin cemetery in Passau. Eugenie's estate, as well as that of her husband, can be found in the Munich City Archives.

Before she married at the then advanced age of 44, Eugenie von Schacky had already successfully left her artistic mark. She exhibited frequently at the Munich Kunstverein and several times at the Munich Glaspalast and the Augsburg Kunstverein, but also at more distant institutions such as the Schlesischer Kunstverein in Breslau. Some of her paintings were subsequently sold as postcard motifs. She also produced designs for Bavarian stamps, among other things, for which she received prizes in 1920, for example.

The large-format still life offered here, entitled *Cacti*, was exhibited in 1925 at the Munich art exhibition in the Glaspalast, which is described in the accompanying catalog (no. 1483). The magazine *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* subsumed von Schacky's approach as "...a very representational flower painting that will become modern again" (56.1925). It was a time when Expressionist painting was being challenged by the New Objectivity. This still life also shines in sober representationalism. Against a neutral background, the composition is reduced to a few small terracotta pots with succulents on a simple wooden table, a medium-sized pot with a prickly pear cactus, in whose overturned green glass bell a window is virtuously reflected, and a large pot with a Christmas cactus. In contrast to the tonal color scheme of brown, beige and green, its bright red cactus blossoms stand out all the more impressively. In this still life, Eugenie von Schacky shows herself to be a master of lighting, but also of attention to detail. It is therefore all the more regrettable that she ended her artistic career after her marriage - a fate she shared with many female artists of the time.