



FERNAND LEGER (1881-1955)

Untitled

Signed lower right, "F.L. 30"

charcoal on paper

8 1/4 x 11 3/4 in. (17 1/4 x 21 1/4 x 7/8 in.)

20.96 x 29.85 cm (43.82 x 53.98 x 2.22 cm)

1930

43366

PROVENANCE:

Katharine Kuh Gallery, Chicago

Private Collection, acquired from the above, 1941

Private Collection, by descent from above

A veteran of the battle of Verdun, Fernand Leger witnessed the horror and staggering loss of over 1 Million of his fellow countrymen during World War I. This horrific experience of fighting in the trenches of Europe left an indelible mark on the artist. The modern and mechanized aspects of this new form of warfare, with tanks, modern artillery, and gruesome tactics, inspired Leger to create some of his greatest masterpieces.

The Present drawing, executed in 1930, is a relic from the decade following the First World War. Untitled (1930) was purchased from the Katherine Kuh gallery in Chicago and has been impeccably preserved by the family of the original purchaser. It is exceedingly rare to find drawings like Untitled outside of Museum collections.

Fernand Léger was among the most prominent artists in Paris in the first half of the 20th century. He embraced the Cubist principle of dissecting objects into geometric shapes, yet continued depicting the illusion of three-dimensionality. He gradually evolved his brand of Cubism into a figurative, populist style that was sometimes regarded as a forerunner of Pop art because of its bold and simplified use of modern subject matter. He was deeply influenced by modern industrial technology and became known for his "machine art," a style characterized by mechanistic forms rendered in bold colors. His focus on cylindrical form and use of robot-like human figures, which expressed harmony between humans and machines, distinguished his style. In the mid-1920s, he was associated with the French formalist movement called Purism, which sought to strip Cubism of its decorative aspects. Léger adopted flatter colors and bold, black outlines in his work. From then on, his art was essentially figurative. He also experimented in other media, directing a nonnarrative film and designing sets for ballets and motion pictures.

The information and material herein represents Gallery's best efforts and understanding of the current history and scholarship with respect to the provenance of the Work(s) of Art described and is not part of any warranty.

















