

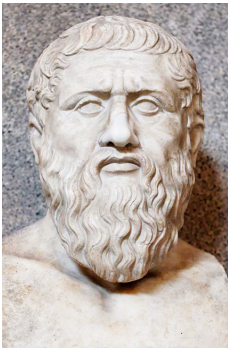
**Win Labuda**

## **Poetry and Prose in Western Painting**

Commentary on the Multitude of Isms

*Your Magnificence, Your Excellencies, Dear Friends,  
It is a great privilege for me to be able to hold this lecture  
in this place that I have come to love, the Institute for the  
History of Medicine and Science of the University of Lübeck,  
on the occasion of the 70th birthday of Manfred Oehmichen,  
a scientist recognized throughout the world, and my personal  
friend. The fact that Manfred Oehmichen devoted himself ent-  
irely to painting after receiving emeritus status in 2005 served  
as inspiration in selecting the topic for this lecture.*

## Introduction



**Fig. 1** Platon,  
428 – 348 B.C.

## What is poetry?



**Fig. 2** Martin Heideg-  
ger, 1889 - 1976

First, I would like to say a few words about how the term poetry has evolved in the course of the history of ideas and contrast it with the term prose. Against the background of the multiplicity of terms used to classify works of paintings and graphic art (Table 1, 2) – a multiplicity which has become unbearably excessive – I will then suggest a simplified system. With this system which consists of only six categories, works of painting and graphic art can be clearly classified and descri-  
bed. On the first level of such a classification structure the three terms representational, expressive abstract and cons-  
tructive abstract shall be applied. In addition, the terms poetic and prosaic shall be assumed and applied on the second level. Before I conclude, I will briefly touch on the mutual enrich-  
ment of painting and lyric poetry. In my closing remarks I will give my views on the meaningfulness of simplified classifica-  
tion systems in the visual arts.

Various encyclopaedias relate the term to the spoken and written word. However, the interpretation of poetry as lyric poetry is not the sole meaning of the term in the understand-  
ing of German-speaking people today. The term poetry is derived from the Greek poiesis which is described by Plato (Fig. 1) in his dialogue "Symposium" [1] as follows:  
"All creation or passage of non-being into being is poetry or making...". Martin Heidegger, 1889-1976 (Fig. 2) also transla-  
ted this passage from Ancient Greek into German:

*"Every occasion for whatever passes beyond the nonpresent  
and goes forward into presencing is poiesis, bringing-forth."  
[2]*

One may conclude from this that poiesis did not merely refer to the art of rhetoric or of poetry, but rather to what was brought forth for the enrichment of the existing in general. And in the art of Greece of that time this included poetry, sculpture and painting. In this sense, in my lecture I would like to share some of my thoughts with you regarding the essence of art, and in particular the essence of painting.

It was the German philosopher Georg Friedrich Hegel, 1770 - 1831 (Fig. 3) who made a categorical separation between the poetic and prosaic thought [3] in his Lectures on Aesthetics



**Fig. 3** Friedrich Hegel, 1770 - 1831

(posthumously published in the years 1835-1838). Here the world of thought, inspired by the holistic, artistic perception, is compared with the world of reality, the world of differentiation, or as Hegel puts it, outwardness and finiteness.

About one hundred eighty years have passed since then. In painting, particularly since the time when the imperative of mimesis was no longer regarded as binding by all concerned as commonly accepted requirement for the creation of the visual arts, there has been an immense variety of different art movements or styles: Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, Futurism, Constructivism, Suprematism, Photorealism, Art Informel and Concrete Art to mention but a few (Table 1). One may ask how such terms for the different art movements of painting could be coined in the past. On the basis of three examples, the origin of the terms (Impressionism, Expressionism and Art Informel) shall be elucidated (Table 2).

Given the multitude of styles of art (Table 1), a sense of insecurity has arisen and continues to linger in the beholder of art regarding the intellectual-emotional origins of paintings, especially those of the 20th and 21st centuries. This particularly applies to the classification of paintings in the diverse styles.

It has become more difficult for the viewer to have unobstructed intellectual access to the content of contemporary art works in the same measure that the pictorial content, over time, has become more cerebral [4]. All of this has led to an extensive decoupling of paintings from the beholder's expect-

Styles of Painting			
Abstract Painting	Hyperrealism	New Factualism (Art)	Socialist Realism
Abstract Expressionism	Impressionism	New Wild Painters	Renaissance
Action Painting	Art Informal	Dutch Renaissance	Rococo
Aeropittura	Japonism	Op Art	Romanism
Old Dutch Painting	Concrete Art	Orphism	Romance
American Realism	Cryptorealism	Paysage Intimate	Roman wall painting
Analytical Painting	Cubism	Fantastic Realism	Salon Painting
Art Brut	Lyrical Abstraction	Pointillism	Signal Art
Russian Avangarde	Painting of the Renaissance	Pop Art	Stuckists
Baroque	Mannerism	Post-Impressionism	Suprematism
Cloisonism	Minimalism (Art)	Preraphaelites	Surrealism
Dadaism	Monochrome Painting	Precisionism	Synthetism
Dnube School	Post-painterly Abstraction	Process Art	Tachism
Drip Painting	Naïve Art	Psychedelic Art	Tingatinga Painting
Expressionism	Naïveté	Quadrature Painting	Tonalism (Art)
Color Field Painting	Naturalism (Art)	Realism (Art)	Transautomatism
Fauvism	Nazarene (Art)	Expressive Realism	Transvanguardia
Figuration Libre	Neoexpressionism	Photorealism	Utrecht Caravaggists
Gothic	Neoprimitivism	Capitalist Realism	Vanitas Still Life
Hard Edge	New Figuration	Magic Realism	Vorticism
Cave Painting			

**Table 1** Styles of Painting

## Impressionism, Expressionism and Informel

### *Impressionism*

A painting of Claude Monet depicting a harbor in the morning light was given the title by the artist in 1872 "Impression, soleil levant". The French critic Louis Leroy (1812-1885) who wrote for the satirical magazine "Charivari" derived the term - which was meant to be deprecating - from the title of the above painting.

Painters: Bazille, Cézanne, Corinth, Degas, Ensor, Liebermann, Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Sinding, Sisley, Slevogt, Turner, Winogradow.

### *Expressionism*

For painting the term was used for the first time in 1910 in a review by the art historian Aby Warburg (1866-1929). It can then be found in the April 1911 catalogue of the 22nd exhibition of the "Berlin Secession". Already in 1911 the term was used by Kurt Hiller (1885-1972) to refer to literature.

Painters: Beckmann, Buffet, Chagall, Ernst, Feininger, Heckel, Jawlensky, Kandinsky, Kirchner, Klee, Marc, Munch, Nolde, Schiele, Schmidt-Rottluff and to a certain extent van Gogh.

### *Informel*

The term "Informel" can be traced back to the Paris exhibition "significance de l'informel" 1951 in the Facchetti Studio. At that time the reviewer Michel Tapié (1909-1987) wrote about the "significance de l'informel".

Painters: Appel, Dubuffet, Fautrier, Frankenthaler, Götz, Gorky, Hartung, Hoehme, Kline, de Kooning, Mathieu, Motherwell, Pollock, Reinhardt, Rothko, Saura, Sonderborg, Soulages, de Stael, Tapiés, Vedova.

**Table 2** The Origins of the Terms "Impressionism, Expressionism and Informel"

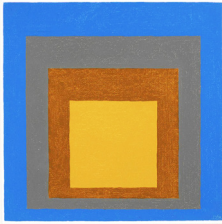
tations. As a result of these conditions, a division in painting has come about: on the one hand, it has degenerated into a beautification machinery which less and less wants to transport intellectual-emotional content; on the other hand it has now become a substrate of intellectual games of new generations of painters, who indeed less and less need their original painting trade, the mimesis of subject and object, and therefore use it less and less. Let us take as examples the squares of Josef Albers (Fig. 6), the ellipses of Robert Mangold (Fig. 7), the white surface paintings of Robert Ryman (Fig. 8) or Daniel Buren's conceptual stripe paintings (Fig. 9). They are all interesting intellectual creations of our time, but none of them imitates the nature surrounding us (mimesis) or gives us the exalted feeling that we experience when viewing a landscape by Rembrandt. Only a small group of painters exist who are able to fulfil the unpretentious needs of the majority of viewers – direct intellectual access to the work of art and a satisfying level of form.

## Question

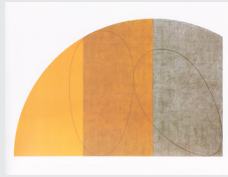
In this context one may ask what the occasional viewer of art – not the specially educated art connoisseur – expects of paintings. I believe that the viewer has the following primary subconscious expectations of paintings, which can be divided into three categories:

*information, confirmation and promise.*

All paintings originate in a more or less deliberate intention of



**Fig. 4** Josef Albers  
"Homage to the Square", 1961



**Fig. 5** Robert Mangold  
"Curved Plane / Figure VIII", 1995



**Fig. 6** Robert Ryman  
"Untitled", 1963



**Fig. 7** Daniel Buren  
"Fiche technique", 1972

satisfaction of one or more of these categories of expectation. The successful painters of the past have instinctively attempted to meet these expectations. At the same time the categories must be regarded as polarities.

Information and emptiness – mean on the one hand the visual transmission of understandable but also enigmatic content, on the other hand the omission of pictorial elements in the sense of a focus on selective information areas.

Confirmation and denial – mean the pictorial deepening of well-known facts, personal knowledge and beliefs or the questioning of the same.

Promise and despair – combine with mimetic or emblematic content, which promise aspired conditions and illusions or question the same.

For example, looking at such seemingly different works as Rembrandt's landscapes and the art works of Sam Francis, Paul Jenkins und Joan Miro, we notice in spite of all the differences their common artistic intention based on the principle promise of moments of happiness of beholding. On the same level, however at the other end of this polarity, we now also experience Francis Bacon, Alfred Hrdlicka and Käthe Kollwitz, partly also Francisco de Goya, who question happiness.

## Orientation

Such a situation quite literally calls for orientation. A possible, even obvious classification system for paintings has thus far been ignored, as far as I know. It is the distinction between poetic and prosaic painting. This Hegelian distinction has apparently seldom been reflected upon until now. [5] To give this notion the dynamics it deserves, the term poetry requires a wider definition encompassing all of the visual arts and perhaps even music. I will thus attempt a definition in this sense:

**Poetry** is a form of expression of reality-averted, creative intention and inwardness which is based on narrative proclamation. It enshrines, inspires and delights.

**Prose** in contrast to poetry stands for a simpler communication oriented on factual or intellectual content without the sentiments of inspiration and joy characteristic of poetry.

I will now try to illuminate the terms used:

- *creative intention* means the wish to create something new
- *narrative proclamation* means the recital of lyric poetry, and likewise the language of sound in music or, for example, the narrative pictorial content in painting.



**Fig. 8** (Poetic) cave paintings, Irangi near Konda, ca. 15000 B.C.



**Fig. 9** (Prosaic) rock engraving, Bronze Age, Map of Bedolina (traced)

- *inwardness* here means contemplative recourse to existential, consciousness-expanding thoughts and sentiments.

How does a transfer of poetic content take place from the artist through the painting to the beholder? I view poetry as the higher octave of hope – namely for a world in which peace has been restored: Poetry embodies a world of its own, and makes its content accessible exclusively only to those of shared disposition. Occasionally it is useful, in the sense of a deepening of understanding for the phenomena of art, without the usual timidity to refer to the fundamentals of the natural sciences: In this sense, and to explain the transmission of poetry, I would like to mention the physical phenomenon of resonance. We speak of resonance when the string of a musical instrument starts to vibrate, and then without any further action the corresponding string of a second musical instrument also begins vibrating.

The described phenomenon of resonance, I think, can be transferred without much effort to the relationship between the artist and the beholder of poetic works of art. We behold a picture of poetic character while at the same time our inner being responds to the viewed object by entering into a state of resonance, and our affective involvement exceeds an ordinary interest by far. At best, we see ourselves as sustained, inspired and delighted. Not so with a prosaic painting, however, whose intellectual sources go back e.g. to the criteria information, instruction, comparison or acclamation. When beholding a prosaic painting we might experience spiritual enrichment according to the above mentioned definition of prose, however, it does not inspire or delight us in the sense described earlier. There is certainly no clear-cut dividing line between the two groups, but it can be assumed that the emotional effects as well as the depth of impressions of the described poetic-prosaic qualities can be appreciably different in the beholder.

Not only since the Greek cultural epoch around 500 B.C. but for as long as humans have articulated themselves through painting and drawing, we find examples for the above-mentioned distinction between poetic and prosaic. In this context, the cave paintings and rock engravings (Figures 8, 9) are of interest, in which the phenomenon can be seen already in the early Bronze Age. Evidently the characteristic features poetic-prosaic are so deeply rooted in human nature that we encounter them already in the art of Ancient History.

As with every simplifying system of complex relationships, the one I present for discussion with the criteria poetic-prosaic with regard to the visual arts also has its inherent problems: For instance, in which category does Surrealism belong? Is the creative imagination characteristic of Surrealism narrative, or is its existence essentially based on unanswerable picture-immanent questions?

## Terms and Overview

We see in the following table (Table 3) an attempt to create order. First of all we find the well-known movements in Western painting representational and nonrepresentational. The current of nonrepresentational painting in turn divides into the branches expressive and constructive abstraction.

In the second table (Table 4) I now suggest making a distinction between two groups of painters, one of which is in accordance with my definition of poetry that I explained earlier, and a second group for which this definition does not apply. The first I will call poetic formation, in contrast to prosaic formation.

Whereas the branches depicted in the first table (Table 3) are arranged in groups virtually by themselves in accordance with the poetic and prosaic world of thought denoted by Hegel, the viewers of representational paintings have to define the boundaries themselves. But this applies equally to possible boundaries drawn between impressionist and expressionist art or

The Great Currents of Western Painting					
Representational Painting		Nonrepresentational Painting			
The Origins					
Rock Painting 30,000 - 15,000 B.C. Carves of Lascaux and other Greek and Roman fresco Painting		Ornaments and Signs William Turner Wassily Kandinsky Kasimir Malewitsch Robert Delaunay		since 4000 B.C. 1775 - 1851 1866 - 1944 1878 - 1935 1885 - 1941	
		Expressive Abstraction		Constructive Abstraktion	
Cimabue	1240 - 1302	Mark Rothko	1903 - 1970	Piet Mondrian	1872 - 1944
Michelangelo	1475 - 1564	Hans Hartung	1904 - 1989	Auguste Herbin	1882 - 1960
Rembrandt	1606 - 1669	Willem de Kooning	1904 - 1997	Theo van Doesburg	1883 - 1931
Paul Cézanne	1839 - 1906	Barnet Newman	1905 - 1970	Georges Vantongerloo	1886 - 1961
Vincent van Gogh	1853 - 1890	Franz Kline	1910 - 1962	Josef Albers	1888 - 1976
Pablo Picasso	1881 - 1973	Nicolas de Staël	1914 - 1955	Ad Reinhardt	1913 - 1967
Well-Known Painters of our time					
Lucian Freud	1922...	Paul Jenkins	1923...	Viktor Vasarely	1906 - 1997
Roy Lichtenstein	1923 - 1997	Cy Twombly	1928...	Max Bill	1908 - 1994
Mimmo Paladino	1928...	Gotthard Graubner	1931...	Agnes Martin	1912 - 2004
Anselm Kiefer	1945...	Gerhard Richter	1932...	Donald Judd	1928 - 1994
Neo Rauch	1960...	Frank Stella	1936...	Bridget Riley	1931...
Daniel Richter	1962...	Bernd Zimmer	1938...	Peter Halley	1953...

**Table 3** The Great Currents of Western Painting



## Examples for the Great Currents of Western Painting

### Representational Painting



- 10** Rembrandt "The Mill", 1645
- 11** Pablo Picasso "The Kidnapping of the Sabinas", 1961
- 12** Anselm Kiefer "Nuremberg", 1982
- 13** Neo Rauch "The Next Move/The Next Draw", 2007

This group also includes:  
Photorealism

### Nonrepresentational painting

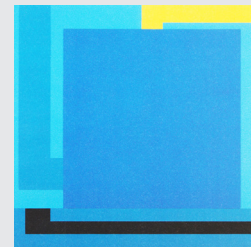
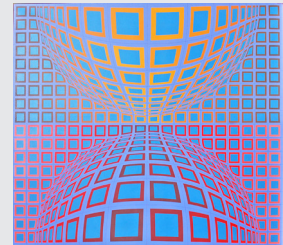
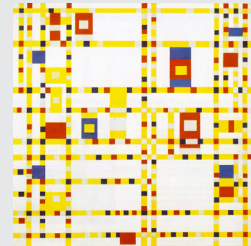
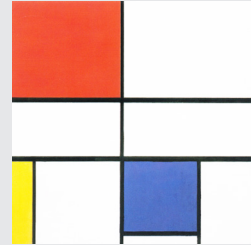
#### Expressive Abstraction



- 14** Wassily Kandinsky "Picture with White Form", 1913
- 15** Willem de Kooning "Pastorale", 1963
- 16** Bernd Zimmer "Fading, Feld", 1983
- 17** Gerhard Richter "Cage [897-2]", 2006

This group also includes:  
Dadaism

#### Constructive Abstraction



- 18** Piet Mondrian "Composition with red, yellow and blue", 1935
- 19** Theo van Doesburg "Broadway Boogie Woogie", 1942/43
- 20** Viktor Vasarely "HIUOZ-A.", 1975/76
- 21** Peter Halley "The Secret City", 1991

This group also includes:  
Concept Art



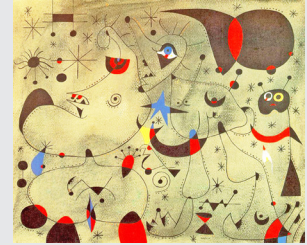
## Examples for Poetic Formation



- 22** Rembrandt "Stormy Landscape", 1637  
**23** Mark Chagall "Noah's Ark", ca. 1961

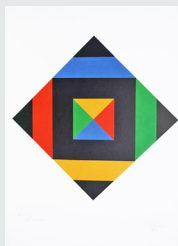
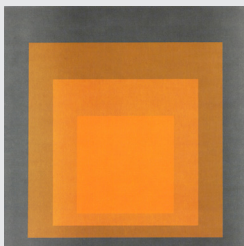


- 24** Caspar-David Friedrich "Evening Landscape with Two Men", 1830/35  
**25** Paul Klee "Fata Morgana at Sea", 1918



- 26** William Turner "Procession of Boats with Distant Smoke, Venice", ca. 1845  
**27** Joan Miro "Nocturne", 1940

## Examples for Prosaic Formation



- 28** Albrecht Dürer "Twelve-year-old Christ among the Pharisees", 1506  
**29** Josef Albers Study for "Hommage to the Square", 1963

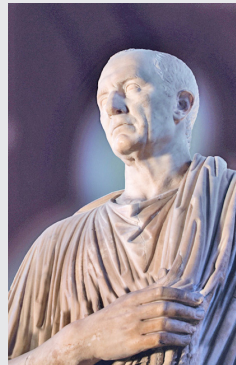
- 30** Giovanni Canaletto "London: Northumberland House", 1752  
**31** Max Bill "Hommage à Picasso", 1972

- 32** Max Beckmann "Night", 1918/19  
**33** Ellsworth Kelly Study for "Yellow White", 1951

## Painting and Poetry



**Fig. 34** Johann Joachim Winckelmann, 1717 - 1768



**Fig. 35** Horace, 65 to 8 B.C

tachist, informal and lyrical-abstract art, which only a person with an artistic disposition is aware of. Only an individual with these qualities feels the internalisation on the basis of narrative proclamation, only such an individual is aware of the fine difference in the border area between impression and expression, and thus the controversy remains an internal part of the boundaries drawn between the worlds of thought.

Let me now turn to the mutual enrichment of painting and poetry. Millennia have passed in which the connections among the diverse arts in general, particularly, however, between poetry and painting have been strengthened time and again. Let us bring to mind the "ut pictura poesis" of Horace, 65 – 8 B.C. (Fig. 39), (as is painting, so is poetry), which has engaged art for almost two millennia. Let us also bring to mind the relations between words and pictures of the early Nazarenes through the painter Johann Friedrich Overbeck, 1789-1869 (Fig. 41) who is closely connected to our city of Lübeck.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (Fig. 40), who despite all of his criticism was an intellectual disciple of Johann Joachim Winkelmann 1717-1768 (Fig. 42), refers to two categories of viewing the respective unique characteristics of painting and poetry: poetry which is committed to time, succession, i.e. the storyline, and painting which is committed to space, juxtaposition, and the corpus. Johann Gottfried Herder, 1744-1803 (Fig. 43) later expands Lessing's level of knowledge by formulating that the impact of painting lies in colour and figure, i.e. relating to seeing, music as tonal art relating to hearing, and poetry relating to the imagination. Thus, Herder establishes space, time and imagination as a functional system of art.

### Well-Known Painters Grouped According to Poetic and Prosaic Formation

Poetic Formation		Prosaic Formation	
Raphael (Stanzén)	1483 - 1520	Bosch, Hieronymus	ca. 1450 - 1516
Rembrandt	1606 - 1669	Dürer, Albrecht	1471 - 1528
Friedrich, Caspar-David	1774 - 1840	Velasquez, Diego	1599 - 1660
Turner, William	1775 - 1851	Beckman, Max	1884 - 1950
Sisley, Alfred Arthur	1839 - 1899	Albers, Josef	1888 - 1976
Munch, Edvard	1863 - 1944	Schiele, Egon	1890 - 1918
Kandinsky, Wassily	1866 - 1944	Lohse, Richard Paul	1902 - 1988
Nolde, Emil	1867 - 1956	Newman, Barnett	1905 - 1970
Klee, Paul	1879 - 1940	Vasarely, Viktor	1906 - 1997
Chagall, Mark	1887 - 1985	Bill, Max	1908 - 1994
Miro, Joan	1893 - 1983	Martin, Agnes	1912 - 2004
Poliakoff, Serge	1900 - 1969	Kelly, Ellsworth	1923...
Marini, Marino	1901 - 1980	Riley, Bridget	1931...
Schumacher, Emil	1912 - 1969	Richter, Gerhard	1932...
Jenkins, Paul	1923...	Mangold, Robert	1937...
Dorazio, Piero	1927 - 2005	Scully, Sean	1945...

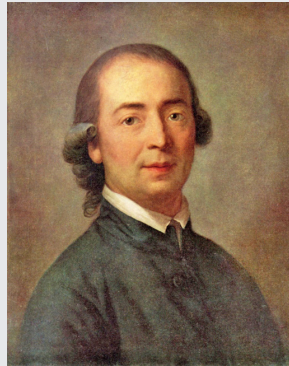
**Table 4** Famous painters, grouped according to poetic and prosaic formation



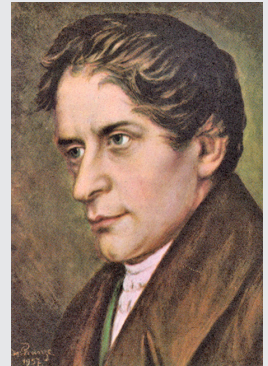
**Fig. 36** Gotthold-Ephraim Lessing, 1729 - 1781



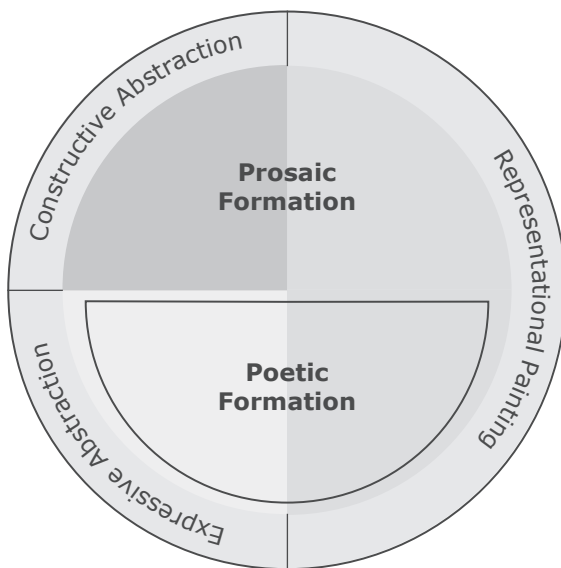
**Fig. 37** Johann-Friedrich Overbeck, 1789 - 1869



**Fig. 38** Johann Gottfried Herder, 1744 - 1803



**Fig. 39** Joseph von Eichendorff, 1788 - 1857



**Diagramme 1** Illustration of the poetic formation within the scope of the great currents of Western painting.

But is there a characteristic trait in the sphere of poetry that painting might have and poetry not have? This might be the question asked by proponents of a separate further development of the arts, e.g. Lessing and Goethe? Indeed, there is such a trait. It is evident in the dependency of poetry on the respective individual language. I hope the translators will forgive me. By contrast, the situation with painting – like with music -- is quite different. It is universally understood and therein lies its border-transcending communicative power, especially in our time of migrations. The famous misrepresentation of Goethe's poem *Wanderers Nachtlied* – which our honourable friend and moderator Dietrich von Engelhardt occasionally recites for the general amusement in a translation back into German, after it was first translated into Japanese and then into French – is therefore unlikely in the realm of painting.

After the theoretical premises in this lecture, what is now called for is a direct contrasting of lyrical and visual poetry: Please read the poem "Moonlit Night" by Joseph von Eichendorff and then look at the painting "Starry Night" by Vincent van Gogh (Fig. 47).

Afterwards you should become aware of which form of poetry made a stronger impression on you – the poem or the painting.

## **Moonlit Night**

*by Joseph von Eichendorff*

It was like Heaven's glimmer  
caressed the Earth within  
that in Her blossom's shimmer  
She had to think of Him.

The breeze was gently walking  
through wheatfields near and far;  
the woods were softly talking  
so bright shone ev'ry star.

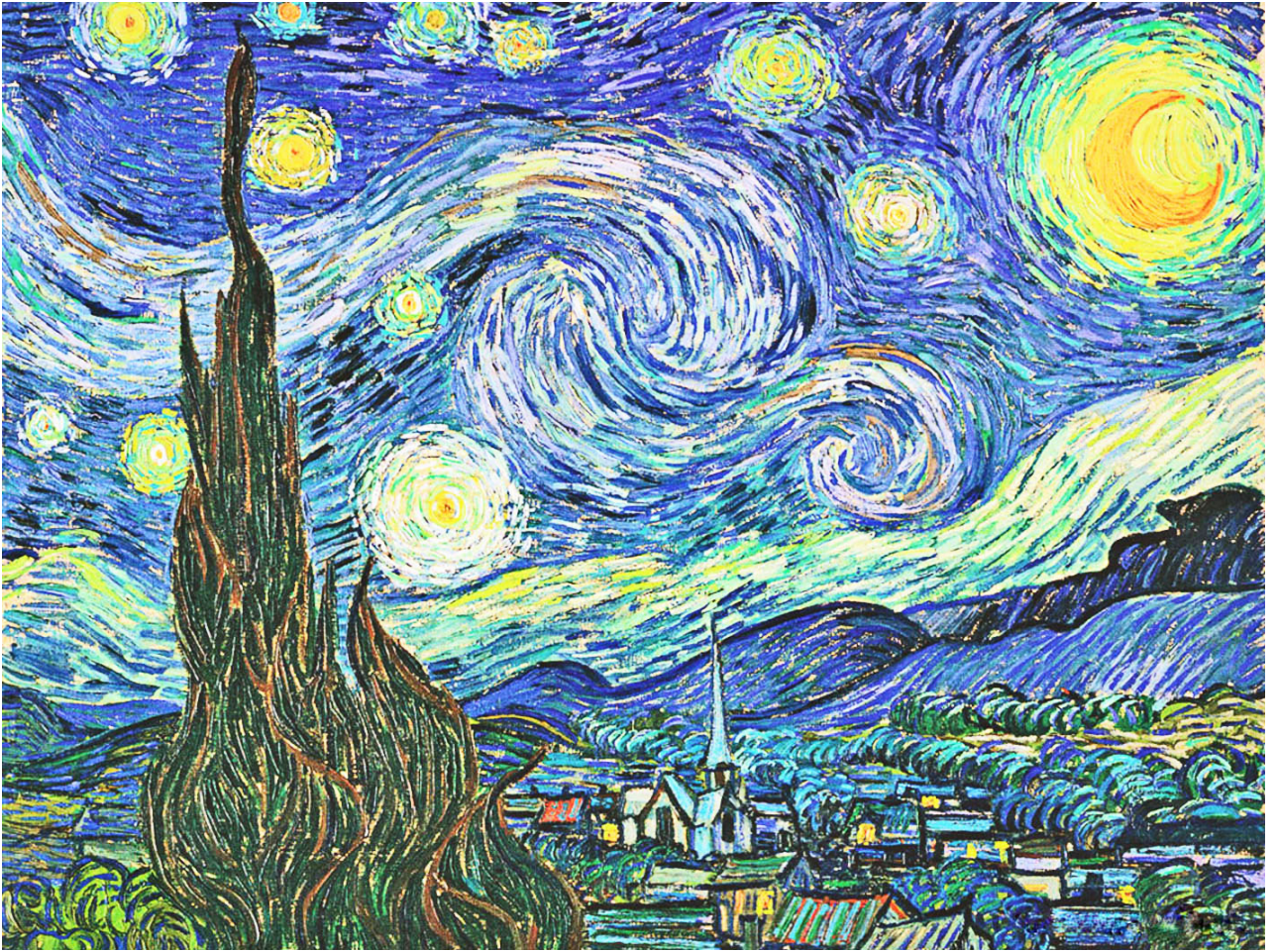
Whereas my soul extended  
its wings towards skies to roam:  
O'er quiet lands, suspended,  
my soul was flying home.

After this direct contrast, each of you who has read "Moonlit Night" and has looked at the adjacent picture (Fig. 47), will have gained somewhat more access to these two forms of poetry: lyrical poetry and painting. Moreover, almost all of you will have noticed a fundamental relationship to both forms. We know well that poetry in the course of the centuries has had a significant impact on painting and related forms of art such as woodcuts, etching, and lithography – for instance within the framework of illustrations or joint works of book art. Moreover, countless pictures have been painted based on the theme of the legend of Prometheus and on biblical themes in many variations.

A German painter and engraver who became well known in this context was Franz Riepenhausen (1786 – 1831). In 1820 he presented a large painting (103 x 187 cm) together with his brother Johannes based on the poem "The Singer" by Goethe. Today the painting is on display in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg (Fig. 46). It therefore seems meaningful to ascertain what impact painting has had on poetry.

In the mid-18th century, as mentioned earlier, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's treatise *Laocoon* initiated and caused a discourse concerning the relationship between the arts. The result was a multitude of descriptions of paintings by famous authors, among them Diderot, Heinse, Goethe, August W. Schlegel, Friedrich Schlegel, Heinrich Heine and Baudelaire. In the years 1802-1804 Friedrich Schlegel published a whole series of descriptions of paintings from Paris and the Netherlands in his journal *Europe*. Painting has thus influenced literature and literature has influenced painting, against the background of the unifying power of poetry, which is the great treasure of every culture.





**Fig. 40** Vincent van Gogh, "Starry Night"



**Fig. 41** Gerhard v. Kügelgen, Drawing "Saul and David"

**Saul and David.**

(2nd Sonnet after Kügelgen's Painting)

Lost in gloom and with despondent brow,  
the ruler sits with glassy stare,  
unable to escape the dark spectres  
of his heart's torment and despair.

But lo, the boy's sweet playing of the lyre,  
the voice hovering in holy harmony,  
the lilting song and glowing heavenly sound  
unfold the soul toward the light of day.

Suddenly, the ruler awakens from his reveries  
and is seized by a long-absent yearning.  
A ray of love traverses his heart.

The delicate blossom blooms from the tender bud;  
consoled by the faithful tears of youth,  
the anguish in the old man's soul disappears.

**Fig. 42** "Second Sonnet after Kügelgen's Painting" by Karl Theodor Körner

**Epilogue**

What can the purpose of such a lecture be, if not merely a cause for reflection and stimulating discussion? I think the main benefit of such a lecture lies in the creation of an interface between the cultures. If, with regard to migration, we also want to reach the intellectuals to a greater extent, we have to offer this group something that makes us attractive to them. Simplifying systems of understanding, like the one presented here, can make a contribution to the transmission of values of our culture. Especially painting is to some extent a controversial field. For example, there is the Mosaic prohibition of images, and even though the Koran does not forbid images, you will look in vain for a pictorial representation of living beings in mosques. With the canonical Hadith collections a dislike of the Prophet Mohammed toward pictorial representation came to light, and has since determined the reception of pictorial art in Islam. The demolition of the Buddha statues at Bamiyan is but one of the iconoclastic assaults upon sacred works of art of people of other faiths. Against this background, very interesting ornamental painting has developed in the course of the centuries, in addition to the famous Arabic calligraphy. Here, an interface is opening up to Western non-representational painting and graphic art capable of bringing our cultures closer together and perhaps even facilitating mutual enrichment [6, 7]. I would be delighted if this lecture could contribute to this development.



**Fig. 43** Franz Riepenhausen "The Singer", 1820



## Bibliography



**Fig. 44** Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein "Johann Wolfgang von Goethe", 1786



**Fig. 45** Islamic Calligraphy



**Fig. 46** Calligraphy from the USA

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