

About the artist

Michael Triegel (*1968, Erfurt)

German painter and graphic artist, lives in Leipzig (Germany)

Education: 1990-1995 Academy of Visual Arts (Leipzig)

1995-1997/98 Postgraduate studies with Ulrich Hachulla

Various study trips to Italy

Exhibitions (selection):

1996 Bonn Art Museum

1997 Leipzig Museum of Fine Arts; Nuremberg Germanic National Museum

1998 Art Show New York

2000 Art Frankfurt

2002 Art Cologne; ARCO Milan; Antwerp Maagdenhuis Museum

2007 Frankfurt Giersch Museum

Works:

Leipzig Museum of Fine Arts and Grassi Museum; Würzburg Museum by the Cathedral; Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Triegel works in painting (water colour and oil), graphic arts and prints (drawings and etchings). His subjects include mythological and religious themes, portraits and to a small extent sceneries and still lifes. His style is influenced by the old masters, in particular by Italian examples of the Renaissance and Mannerism. In accordance with the tradition of Italian art, Triegel himself calls his style "Bella Maniera". He strives for a reanimation and analysis of traditional motives that he interprets individually in a personal way.

About the etching

The iconography of "Prometheus" is based on examples from the Renaissance. According to the ancient history titan Prometheus shaped man out of clay against the will of Zeus. When he gives his creatures fire that Zeus withheld from mankind, Zeus gets so enraged that he has Prometheus chained to a rock where an eagle eats his liver every day (the liver grows back overnight). It is Hercules who finally manages to free Prometheus.

In European art Prometheus is seen as tragic hero and benefactor of mankind. Within the myth of creation, he is regarded as a sculptor, whereby the fire from Olympus is a symbol for artistic inspiration as well as a general symbol for awareness and knowledge. While since the baroque era most depictions show the chained and suffering titan, during the Renaissance the myth of creation had its own meaning. This is the tradition Triegel reverts to in his etching. The left half of the divided etching shows Prometheus bringing fire to mankind living in darkness. The right scene portraits him as creator of art: He is sitting on the large head of a sculpture, drawing his own reflection. The Greek inscription on the mirror held by a female figure (probably an allegory of art) alludes to the fact that the god not only gave man technical but also spiritual power of creation.

The Greek inscription reads: "Lógon dídomi" ("I bring the spirit.").

In his music for the ballet "The creatures of Prometheus" op. 43 Beethoven deals with this subject. The Beethoven sculpture (today in the garden pavilion of the Beethoven-Haus) of artist Max Klinger features an eagle as a reference to the story of Prometheus. In the romantic imagination of this time it was particularly Beethoven who became the epitome of a genial artist in contact with the supernatural world of divinity and was as such condemned to suffer.