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(Hg. / Eds.)

Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und
Kunstbau München

Der Trost der Dinge
The Consolation of Objects
17.05.–13.10.2024

Vitrinen, Istanbul, Dresden, München
Cabinets

ORHAN PAMUK

1 Cabinets, Istanbul – Museum of Innocence

Published in 2008, the Nobel laureate in literature Orhan Pamuk's novel The Museum of Innocence recounts the tragic story of the love between Kemal, the son of a factory owner, and his cousin Füsun. Kemal finds consolation in collecting objects that Füsun has touched or that are linked to her by his memories.

In 2012, Pamuk opened his museum of the same name in Istanbul, where he displays objects that translate the novel into material reality. Interweaving fiction and the real world, the museum is also a panorama of everyday life in Istanbul from the 1950s to the 2000s. By means of art and poetry, it documents the history of the period, evolving gender roles, and encounters between cultures. It won the European Museum of the Year Award in 2014.

The Lenbachhaus presents forty cabinets from the Istanbul museum that Pamuk recreated for this traveling exhibition held by three cooperation partners, the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden; the Lenbachhaus, Munich; and DOX, Prague. The numbered showcases are arranged in a sequence matching the chapters of the novel.

An audio guide accompanying the presentation is also available.

2 Cabinets, Dresden Cabinets, Munich

The second section of the display-case area features dioramas that Orhan Pamuk created from scratch for the traveling exhibition and that are making their public debut in this presentation. Pamuk visited the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen in Dresden and the Lenbachhaus in Munich in 2023 to conduct research in the collections that underlies their design.

The cabinets from the Museum of Innocence in Istanbul refer to the novel of the same title. In the new displays, by contrast, Pamuk engages works of art from the respective museum's collection in dialogue. He is especially interested in the history of the interrelationship between Europe and the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey.

The following texts are excerpts from publications by Orhan Pamuk.

Cabinets, Dresden

Melancholy of the Ruins
2023

Translation of the text in the cabinet:

On his trip to Italy, Montaigne discovered how melancholy one can become at the sight of ancient ruins. I experienced this as a child among Ottoman ruins as hüzün.

From the novel Istanbul. Memories and the City:

So this is how two friends living in Istanbul—one a poet, the other a prose writer—drew upon the work of two friends from Paris—one a poet, the other a prose writer—to weave together a story from the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the nationalism of the early Republican years, its ruins, its Westernising project, its poetry and its landscapes. The result of this somewhat tangled tale was an image in which Istanbulites could see themselves, a thought that they grew accustomed to, and that spread over time. We might call this dream, which grew out of the barren, isolated, destitute neighbourhoods beyond the city walls, the "melancholy of the ruins," and if one looks at these scenes through the eyes of an outsider (as Tanpınar did) it is possible to see them as "picturesque." First seen as the beauty of a picturesque landscape, melancholy also came to express the sadness that a century of impoverishment would bring to the people of Istanbul.

Reference fig. 1

Paul Bril (1554–1626)
View of the Forum Romanum with the Columns of the Castor and Pollux Temples and the Basilica of Maxentius, 1600
Oil on copper panel, 21.5 × 29.5 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 858

The Consolation of Objects
2023

Translation of the text in the cabinet:

Dr. Narin said that things have a memory. "Things question each other, communicate with each other, whisper to each other, and create a secret harmony among themselves that brings into existence the music we call the world."

From the novel The New Life:

There was an odd wish on my mind. I wanted to take a close look at the objects I'd seen in his house when my father and I had last paid him a visit. The canaries in the cage, the barometer

on the wall, the meticulously framed pictures of railroad trains, the breakfront in which cordial sets, miniature railway cars, a silver candy dish, a conductor's punch, the railroad service medals were placed in one half of the showcase [...] Through the half-open curtains, I could see the light emanating from the TV but not the set itself.

Reference fig. 2

Pieter Claesz (1597/98–1660/61)
Still-life with Great Golden Goblet, 1624
Oil on oak panel, 65 × 55.5 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 1370

Eve in the Garden
2023

Translation of the text in the cabinet:
"O Adam! Live with your wife in Paradise and eat as freely as you please, but do not approach this tree, or else you will be wrongdoers!" [Qur'an 2:35]

From the book The Consolation of Objects:
The richly illustrative Islamic miniature painting separates itself from text and history because the painters do not reread and reinterpret the texts for each painting: They prefer to look at what other painters have already done on a subject. Maybe that is why I wanted to

do something with this painting that recalls Adam and Eve and the original sin. In the Qur'an, this scene does indeed occur, but it is told differently than in the Bible. While in the Qur'an, it is only mentioned in passing, every [...] person in our part of the world knows the story of original sin and the expulsion from paradise as told in the Bible, probably because it has been depicted over and over again in paintings and caricatures.

Reference fig. 3

Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472–1553)
Eve, 1531
Oil on lime wood panel, 170.5 × 69.5 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.-Nr. 1912

The Crow and the Cemetery
2023

Reference fig. 4

Frans Floris (ca. 1519/20–1570)
Portrait of Two Children, 1563
Oil on oak panel, 120 × 88 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 849

Translation of the text in the cabinet:
From Reşad Ekrem Koçu's Istanbul Encyclopedia, as well as from old books I read like fairy tales, I know that graves and cemeteries have always been part of everyday urban life. The crooked Ottoman tombstones, between which children play soccer and people lie down in the shade, remind Istanbulites of the transience of life, like the vanitas still lifes that people in the West used to hang on their walls at home. The crows flitting between the tombstones and cypresses, on the other hand, suggest to me, who was nicknamed "Crow" as a child, that efforts at modernity are in vain, as if they were warning me of a mortal sin.

Rilke and the Angels in Islam
2023

From the book The Consolation of Objects:
The following verses, which begin Rainer Maria Rilke's (1875–1926) Duino Elegies, are one of the starting points for my lyrical, politically tinged novel The New Life:

"Who, if I cried out,
would hear me among the Angelic Orders?"

In my novel, I grappled with what Rilke probably meant when he said that the angels in his elegies had more in common with the angelic figures of Islam. In the thirty years since the novel's publication, this question has also been discussed by numerous literary scholars. Reference is often made to Rilke's letters and to the fact that he read the Qur'an. In particular, the question is raised as to how exactly the angels of Christianity and Islam, which Rilke so carefully distinguished, differ from each other. The answer is sought in the Qur'an, in the Bible, in Rilke's poems and letters—in other words, in nothing but texts. In this box, I have rather tried to provide a visual answer.

Reference fig. 5

Francisco de Zurbarán (1598–1664)
The Prayer of St. Bonaventura concerning the Selection of the New Pope, 1628/29
Oil on canvas, 238 × 222 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 696

Principles of Political Economy and Taxation
2023

Translation of the text in the cabinet:
Between the ages of seven and seventeen, when I reverently kissed my grandmother's hand on important holidays, she would always hand me a fresh ten-lira note. On it were depicted Atatürk, the crescent and the star, and various other symbols of state sovereignty, which made me think early on that things like family, belonging, and love are not far removed from concepts like subjugation, power, and money.

From the book The Consolation of Objects:
The all-too-familiar faces of the money changer and his wife did not need to be in "my work;" what was more important to me were the tools used for weighing, the gold coins, the ledgers, the books, the jewelry, the tablecloth. To the diorama I have added mementos of how I was gently introduced to economics in my childhood, namely with coins like the ones my grandmother gave me [...], out-of-circulation coins with a hole in the middle like the ones my grandmother and her friends used when playing cards, and play money like the ones used on New Year's Eve when playing Bingo.

Reference fig. 6

Marinus van Reymerswale (ca. 1490/95–ca. 1546/56)
The Banker and his Wife, 1541
Oil on oak panel, 93 × 111 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 812

Solus Rex
2023

From the book The Consolation of Objects:
"Solus Rex" is a chess term. It means that, in the endgame, a king stands completely alone—that is, all the other pieces have been castled—which can certainly happen in the endgame. The Solus Rex also occurs as a chess problem; or rather, as one solves a chess problem, one gradually realizes that it comes down to a lone king. Here, the black king in Nights of Plague is the protagonist Abdul Hamid II, acting in the background. This vitrine also has something of the impregnable white fortress of Western civilization from my novel of the same name.

In view of the melancholy of the fortress ruins, however, these fantasies have lost their determination and energy. “Solus Rex” is also the title of an unpublished novel fragment by Vladimir Nabokov.

Reference fig. 7

Johann Anton Eismann (1613/20 – ca. 1700)
Ruins by the River, ca. 1670/80?
Oil on oak panel, 26.5 × 30.5 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 2014

Train, Tobacco, and Abdul Hamid
2023

Reference fig. 8

Gerrit Dou (1613–1675)
Still Life with Candle and Watch, ca. 1660
Oil on oak panel, 43 × 35.5 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 1708

Translation of the text in the cabinet:

In 1863, after his accession to the throne, Sultan Abdul Hamid embarked on his first great journey, which took him to Egypt. He was accompanied by his three nephews, one of whom, the future Sultan Abdul Hamid II, happily declared after his first train ride from Alexandria and Cairo: “I hope the railroad will also come to us one day!” At that time,

however, Egypt was still part of the Ottoman Empire, at least on paper. Three years later, the wish came true, for after completion of the line between İzmir (Alsancak) and Aydın, the railroad had also reached "us."

The reason for its construction, for which the British Ottoman Railway Company was responsible, was mainly the tobacco trade. Abdul Hamid was a heavy smoker. Anyone who asks whether it is acceptable for the ruler of a vast empire not only to have a childlike devotion to trains, but also to be addicted to cigarettes, should be reminded that neither tobacco nor railroads are forbidden in Islam. Discussions of tobacco's harmful potential were more related to the fear that, in smoky coffeehouses, people could make fun of the sultan and conspire politically. Ottoman harem women spent the whole blessed day smoking long tobacco pipes. Next time, I will explain why Abdul Hamid had the Baghdad Railway built by the Germans and which cigarettes he smoked with his daughter Ayşe. Incidentally, the introduction of the railroad gave rise to the pocket watch among the Ottomans, and the old world with its candelabras and candles came to an end.

Ottomanism
2023

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

While more than half of the attention in painting is paid to the use of color, it is striking that in Turkish dictionaries there are dozens of different terms for horses, depending on the color of their coat. No wonder that when one thinks of traditional Turkish-Ottoman art, horses come to mind rather than sultans. Since the Turks were not interested in portraiture anyway, due to the Islamic ban on images and certain technical difficulties, there were actually more horses depicted than sultans. It thus seems to be no coincidence that, in the tasteful "Turkish Chamber" in Dresden, one finds no depiction of an Ottoman sultan, but rather horses and saddles are exhibited, as well as the tents with which they went to war on horseback.

Reference fig. 9

Cushion Cover
Bursa, ca. 1600
Velvet, brushed gold

Rüstkammer, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Donated by Franz J. Ippoldt von Rozier-en-Donzy
Inv. Nr. Y 0591

I, the Acrobat
2023

From the book The Consolation of Objects:
I took the tightrope walker in this vitrine from that very "surname" (special publication form) and placed it in the composition; the Chinese dog comes from the Dresden porcelain collection, while—inspired by Joannes Fijt and Erasmus Quellinus's painting Boy and Dwarf with a Dog—I had the white Western dog made by the talented woman artist Başak Bugay. In order not to fall into the depths between the different views of art of the West and the East represented by two dogs, the tightrope walker with a pole called THE ART OF THE NOVEL must keep his balance and constantly walk back and forth between the two worlds. This is my conception of art and literature!

Reference fig. 10

Joannes Fijt (1611–1661)
Big Dog, Little Person, and Boy, 1652
Oil on canvas, 138 × 203 cm

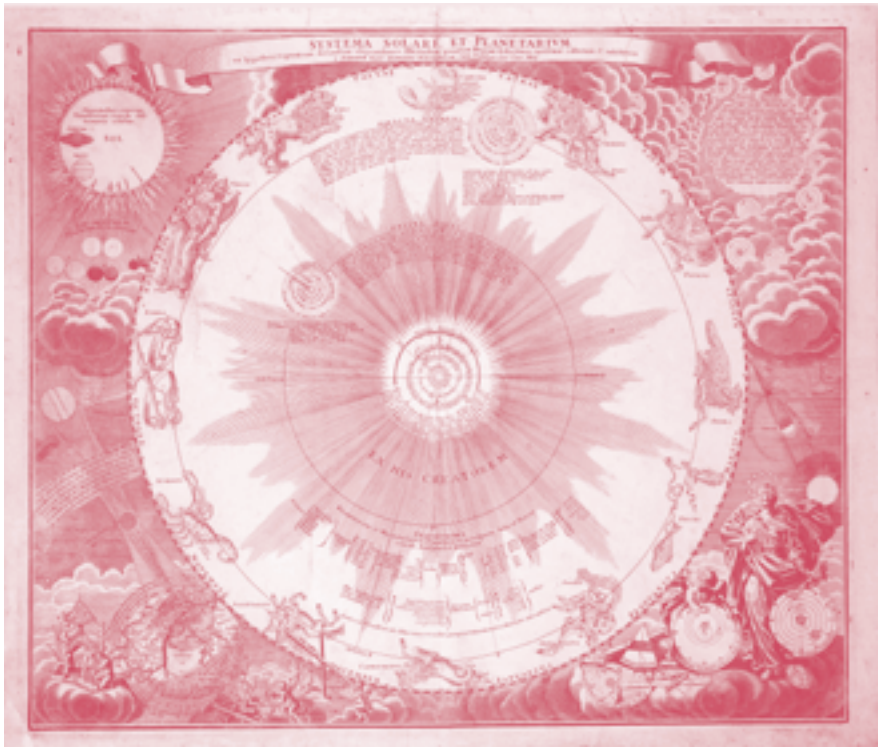
Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 1211

Reference fig. 11

Sitting Dog
China, ca. 1690–1720
Dehua

Porzellansammlung, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
From the collection of Augustus the Strong in the Japanese Palace
PO 9168

Among the Stars
2023



Reference fig. 12

Systema Solare et Planetarium: ex hypothesi Copernicana secundum elegantissimas Illustrissimi quondam Hugenii deductiones / novissime collectum & exhibitum à Iohanne Bapt. Homanno
Johann Baptiste Homann, Nürnberg, ca. 1716
Colored copper engraving

Mathematisch-Physikalischer Salon, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Inv. Nr. G I 158

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

In my childhood, my two grandmothers [...] described the universe to me more or less as it is depicted in these miniatures: On the one hand, there were the moon and the stars and strange, colorful worlds in the infinitely blue or night-dark sky, and on the other hand, among these distant things, there were the familiar names of constellations and strange creatures known from fairy tales. These creatures, like those in the miniatures and those I knew from the books of my childhood, lived beyond the immediate sky, among the stars we see twinkling on summer nights. Thus, to know about astronomy and constellations was to know about these strange creatures and their ways and bad habits.

Reference fig. 13

Pocket Globe,
Concertina Booklet Showing 32 Peoples in their Regional Costumes
Anonym, Nürnberg (?), ca. 1830
Wood, coloured engraving segments, cardboard case covered with green paper

Mathematisch-Physikalischer Salon, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Inv. Nr. E I 46

We, the Wandering Dervishes
2023

Translation of the text in the cabinet:
One hundred and ten years have passed since our death, and forty years since the dissolution of our dervish order. We were supposedly an incorrigible nest of heretics and devils in the service of the Persians, yet you have us before you. And why? Because we were painted in the European way! As you can see in this vitrine, we two dervishes went from town to town in the land of our sultan. Barefoot, with shaved heads, half naked, with deerskin vests on our bodies, belts around our waists, sharpened sticks in our hands, and one of us carrying a lumberjack's axe, the other a spoon to eat what God gave us.

Reference fig. 14

Jan Vermeer Van Haarlem (1628–1691)
View of the Dutch Plain from the Dunes, ca. 1670/90
Oil on oak panel, 33 × 63 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 1388 A

Hunting Memories
2023

Reference fig. 15

August Querfurt (1696–1761)
A Rider on a White Horse with a Falcon
Oil on pine wood panel, 22.5 × 33 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 2091

Translation of the text in the cabinet:
When writing is seeing and painting is writing ... The hunter Avni knows what lovers, hunters, and this falcon are painfully aware of through hunting memories: On the stage, the hunter becomes the game; and in the painting, the game becomes the hunter.

From the book The Consolation of Objects:
Hunting and hunting ceremonies in the Ottoman Empire, as in Europe, gave rise to a convergence of courtly culture with the natural environment and its mythical figures. The Ottoman sultans were very fond of hunting. The hunting obsessed Sultan Mehmed IV, who plays a role in my novel The White Fortress, was called Mehmed the Hunter not only in the vernacular but also by serious Ottoman historians. Mehmed IV even had the Ottoman capital moved from Istanbul to Edirne because the conditions there were more favourable for hunting (another reason for the move was the plague). It is therefore not surprising that one of the most popular Ottoman poets, Avni, who also wrote hunting poems, came from Edirne.

Ut pictura poesis
2023

Reference fig. 16

Caspar Netscher (1635/36–1684)
The Man Writing a Letter, 1665
Oil on oak panel, 27 × 18.5 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 1346

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

Until I was twenty-two, I drew and painted a lot, because I wanted to become a painter. I eventually became a writer, but I never stopped thinking about the relationship between painting and literature. From 2009 to 2013, I taught a seminar at Columbia University in New York in which we tried to get to the bottom of this relationship [...]

In the seminar, I placed particular emphasis on the text by Horace (65–8 BCE) known as Ars Poetica, from which comes the quotation "ut pictora poesis" (as painting is, so is poetry) [...] "Poetry resembles painting. Some works will captivate you when you stand very close to them and others if you are at a greater distance. This one prefers a darker vantage point, that one wants to be seen in the light since it feels no terror before the penetrating judgment of the critic. This pleases only once, that will give pleasure even if we go back to it ten times over."

Reference fig. 17

Gerrit Dou (1613–1675)
The Painter in his Workshop, 1647
Oil on oak panel, 43.5 × 34.5 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 1704

This is a Bridge
2023

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

With his painting La trahison des images (The Treachery of Images), René Magritte drastically put in a nutshell the problem that has always preoccupied me in my literary and artistic existence, thus creating one of the most important classics of modern art. Let us not forget his corresponding theoretical text Les mots et les images, published in December 1929 in La Révolution surréaliste. In this cabinet, I have taken words from a "kıyafetname," a lexicon from the second half of the eighteenth century (exact date unknown) written by a Western

hand, and used the words describing Ottoman professions in a cheerful transliteration jumble, placing them under each figure in the same script that Magritte uses in his painting also known as This is not a pipe, and in each case "This is not a Janissary" and "This is not a coolie" came to mind.

Reference fig. 18

Jakob Philipp Hackert (1737–1807)
Civita Castellana, 1775
Oil on canvas, 71.5 × 59 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 2183 A

Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose
2023

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

The hand holding the rose is from a nineteenth-century painting from the Mughal Empire. While the Turks studied and were influenced by the paintings in the Iranian manuscripts in the Topkapı Palace Museum, the Mughals learned a "different way" of painting through the Portuguese culture that spread from Goa to India, and in time discovered a style very different from the Iranian paintings.

On the second branch of writing that grows from the rose, there are verses by the poet Mahir from Eğribozlu:

"Where is the time when the rose came laughing? Now, when I think about how we laughed, I must cry."

On the edge of the picture frame is written the most famous and incomprehensible verse by the poet Gertrude Stein (1874–1946):

"Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose."

The first frame is from the work Holy Family in a Wreath of Flowers by Frans Francken and Jan Brueghel in the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister. The second frame is from an eighteenth-century Iranian manuscript.

Reference fig. 18

Jan Brueghel der Jüngere (1601–1678)
Frans Francken der Jüngere (1581–1642)
Holy Family in a Wreath of Flowers, ca. 1630/40
Oil on copper panel, 51.5 × 38 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 915

Israfil's Trumpet
2023

Reference fig. 20

Willem Van Mieris (1662–1747)
The Trumpeter, 1700
Oil on oak panel, 30 × 25 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 1769

Translation of the text in the cabinet:
"The Last Judgment! The Last Judgment!" my grandmother would shout when there was suddenly a lot of noise in the house or on the street. Before the Last Judgment, Isrāfīl blows his horn: the first time to make us fall asleep, the second time to make us come to life. Since funeral processions accompanied by music and military bands used to pass by our house from the Teşvikiye Mosque, the thought of the horn of the Last Judgment and Judgement Day is not foreign to me.

The Girl on the Swing
2023

From the book The Consolation of Objects:
The source of the happy girl on the swing is a miniature created in the nineteenth century under the Qajar dynasty. The Qajar miniatures evolved from the encounter of Iranian miniatures with Western art, and perhaps for this very reason they appear more childlike and naïve compared to the earlier Safavid or Herat miniatures, which is probably due to the fact that the Qajar artists, on the one hand, gradually abandoned their mastery of the old style under Western influence and ventured into Western themes such as perspective and portraiture, but on the other hand, had not yet sufficiently mastered Western technique. However, this childlike inadequacy is not really a weakness, as it has developed into a very unique and impressive style [...]

The Qajars were great artists. If you visit a souvenir shop in any city in Iran today and see not only copies of Safavid and Herat miniatures (Herat is now in Afghanistan) but above all Kajar works, especially lacquered pencil cases, imitations of imitations, you will realise that even these are still beautiful.

Reference fig. 21

Antoine Watteau (1684–1721)
Pleasures of Love, ca. 1718/19
Oil on canvas, 60 × 75 cm

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 781

Pleasures of Pyromania
2023

From the novel Istanbul. Memories and the City:

Although fires were many and frequent through the five hundred years of Ottoman rule, it was during the 19th century particularly that people began to prepare for them. The residents of wooden houses in Istanbul's narrow streets did not think of fires as avoidable disasters so much as grim certainties they had no choice but to face.

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

In my childhood soul, the excitement of trying to save lives and belongings from a fire must have been mixed with the fear of the angels of punishment felt in hell; in any case, I added Islamic angels of punishment, devils, and demons to the work from the Old Masters Picture Gallery entitled A Burning City.

Reference fig. 22

Claude-Joseph Vernet (1714–1789)
A Burning City, 1740/50
Oil on canvas, 235 × 170 cm

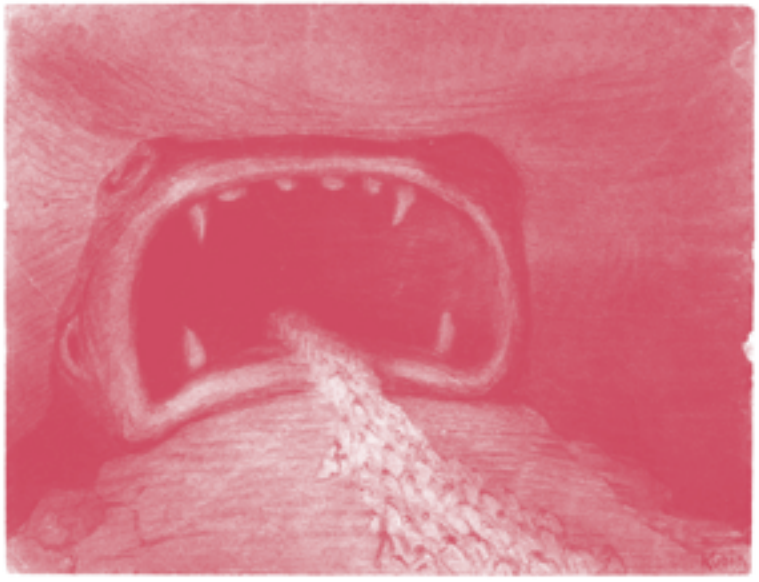
Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden
Gal.- Nr. 790

Cabinets, Munich

Who Comes Out of Me
2024

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

Alfred Kubin is primarily known as a graphic artist, but he also wrote a novel (The Other Side). In an inverse symmetry, I might similarly say about myself: I am primarily a writer, but from time to time I feel the urge and I paint [...] Kubin's pictures are not about individuals, he is more interested in humankind as such. He shows us the absurd, tragic, ridiculous, dramatic, and irrational aspects of man [...] The Great Maw, an imposing picture at the Lenbachhaus, exudes a pessimism that I wanted to invert into optimism in a diorama. In this display case, no foolish humans stream into the maw of the ceramic hippopotamus that Başak Bugay so compellingly translated into the third dimension. On the contrary, the people who have most impressed me throughout my life with their intelligence and creativity are marching toward us. Life may well resemble more closely what Kubin shows us in his fabulous pictures, but art and creativity ought to lead us not into hell but toward the richness of life.



Reference fig. 23

Alfred Kubin (1877–1959)
The Great Maw, um 1903
Pen, ink, sprayed, pencil, chalk on paper,
24.7 × 32.3 cm

Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau München
© Eberhard Spangenberg, München
Kub 199

Nights of Plague
2024

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

Contemplating Kubin's picture Epidemic transported me back to the days during the corona-virus epidemic when I was finishing my novel Nights of Plague. To revive my feelings from back then, I decided to create another diorama inspired by the picture [...] I believe that the loneliness during an epidemic is the subject of Kubin's picture, and it is also the feeling that this display case is meant to elicit. For the pictures in the cabinet, I took inspiration from photographs taken in the Ottoman Empire around the turn of the century, the pictures in the

photo albums of Sultan Abdul Hamid II showing scenes from his empire, and medical posters. Also included are reproductions of letters and numerical symbols of Islamic provenance that were used back in the day to fight the black death and that I had encountered in old books as I was writing the novel.

Reference fig. 24

Alfred Kubin (1877–1959)
Epidemic, 1900/01
Pen and ink, washed, sprayed, framing line on cadastral paper,
24.7 × 32.3 cm

Lenbachhaus Munich, restituted to the rightful heirs in 2019 after proactive research into the provenance © Eberhard Spangenberg, Munich
formerly Kub 198

The perfect human being
2024

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

Two other pictures by Paul Klee at the Lenbachhaus reminded me of the pleasure of composing pictures out of letters, which, in The Black Book, I embedded in a crime plot: Wild Berry, a picture he created in 1921, reminds me of the image of Adam as the "perfect man" formed out of letters, a frequent motif in Hurufism [...] The main character in The Black Book, the journalist Celâl Salik, sends secret messages to readers who have been initiated into the mysteries of Hurufism. In the history of modern Turkish Hurufism and the culture of religious representations, tragedy struck in 1928, when Atatürk's alphabet reform mandated that the state and the entire population switch from the Arabic to the Latin alphabet. Atatürk's cultural reforms promoted painting after Western models, while the traditional religious visual art and the craft of calligraphy based on the Arabic letters faded.

Reference fig. 25

Paul Klee (1879–1940)
Wild Berry, 1921, 92
Watercolor and pencil on paper, cut and rearranged, with gouache and pen and ink, mounted on cardboard, approx 1/2" strip added to the bottom by the artist, 35.7 × 27 cm

Lenbachhaus Munich
G 15694

In the Garden of Paul Klee
2024

Reference fig. 26

Paul Klee (1879–1940)
Cacti, c. 1912
Oil on cardboard, 52 × 41.5 cm

Lenbachhaus Munich
G 12840

From the book The Consolation of Objects:
In Cacti, meanwhile, a painting from 1912, I see a garden, in which I placed birds and a pear shaped out of Arabic letters in space and time [...] In my novel The Black Book, I delve into the teachings of Hurufism, which the Bektashi Order of dervishes espoused as well. Hurufism ascribes a second, esoteric meaning to the letters and lets them coalesce into human faces and figures [...] What is a religious act in the perspective of classical Hurufism—making a picture out of letters—is to our contemporary eyes also an art form.

Archangel
2024

Reference fig. 27

Paul Klee (1879–1940)
Archangel, 1938, 82 (G 2)
Oil, paste on cotton, on jute, on stretcher, 100 × 65 cm

Lenbachhaus München, on permanent loan from The Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner Foundation, Munich
AK 9

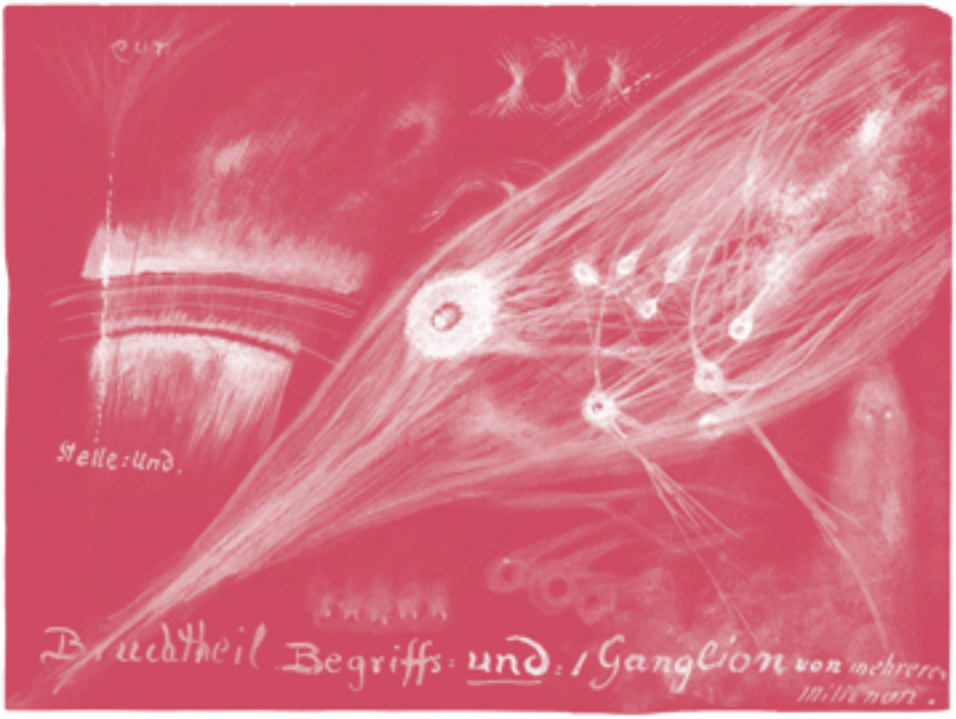
From the book The Consolation of Objects:
Before I go into why and how Islamic Hurufism entered into Paul Klee's garden, a few remarks on the subject of "Klee and the angels." Connoisseurs know that Klee made reference to angels time and again throughout his life as a painter and in some instances directly painted angels in his very specific way; there is not likely to be anyone who has never seen Klee's most famous picture of an angel, Angelus Novus. Walter Benjamin, who owned the picture for a while, called the retreating figure the "angel of history" in an essay that exerted

considerable influence over Marxist theorists of culture and history [...] Which details about the Archangel [at the Lenbachhaus] suggest an angel is a question that remains disputed among art historians [...] To my mind, [a connection between the face and Arabic letters] emerges from the pictures that Klee created under the influence of his voyage to Tunisia in 1914. For several years, I went to the Metropolitan Museum in New York every Friday evening; it was there that I saw Klee's pictures from the Berggruen Collection, which led me to read the painter's travel diary. In the town of Hammamet near Tunis, he drew in a cemetery. I imagine that the Arabic letters might have prompted associations in Klee similar to the ones I had as a child, when a Muslim cemetery seemed to me like a forest drawn with Arabic letters.

Ganglia
2024

From the book The Consolation of Objects:

This display case was inspired by a fascinating picture by the painter Gabriel von Max. The Darwinist, spiritualist, and dabbler in natural science wrote the word "Ganglion" on it. The mere fact that he wrote something on a picture makes me very fond of it. I am a fairly nervous person, with rather many knots in his soul, and so I imagine the fabric of the soul to be something like this red textile ribbon manufactured in a weaving mill. For that matter, let us think of the whole world as a fabric made in an old-fashioned weaving mill out of subtle nerve fibers [...] The old photographs of Ottoman factories and workshops in which non-Muslim women are working remind us that our lives and the entire world are made of the knots and threads of nerve fibers. Not just the factories, but also the bobbins, the sewing machines, the nerve fibers, and the fabrics, in short, everything and all those women are working to manufacture the red textile.



Reference fig. 28

Gabriel von Max (1840–1915)
Untitled (Cosmic Scene), undated
White opaque paint on brown coloured paper, 21.5 × 29 cm

Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus and Kunstbau Munich,
donated by Dr. Wolfgang Honsig-Erlenburg
G 18402/29

Bingo II
2024

From the book The Consolation of Objects:
A New Year's Eve tradition in our house was to play Bingo, and the entire extended family joined in, from the grandmother down to the grandchildren. Wooden numbers (later replaced by plastic) were drawn from a pouch, and if one of the numbers appeared on the card in front of you, you marked it with a bean. Whoever was first to complete a row called out "çinko" and received a gift from my grandmother [...] My grandmother's gifts led me to the discovery that there is a particular magic in objects; indeed, that they lead a life of their own, independent of us. This also helped me to better understand the European tradition of the still life. Inspired by the Bingo cabinet in the Museum of Innocence and a still life by Eduard von Grützner, I designed this display cabinet, which is meant to express that magic.

Reference fig. 29

Eduard von Grützner (1846–1925)
Still Life, 1898
Oil on canvas, 54 × 43.5 cm

Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus and Kunstbau München,
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FH 184/2

Impressum / Colophon

Orhan Pamuk. Der Trost der Dinge /
Orhan Pamuk. The Consolation of Objects

Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und
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17. Mai – 13. Oktober 2024 /
May 17 – October 13, 2024

Wanderausstellung des Museum der Unschuld, Istanbul, und der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Lenbachhaus München und dem DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Prag. / Exhibition tour co-organised by the Museum of Innocence, Istanbul, and Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, in cooperation with Lenbachhaus Munich and DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Prague.

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20–21

Die neuen Kunstwerke, die im Zwiegespräch mit den Dresdner Sammlungen entstanden sind, wurden mit der großzügigen Unterstützung von MUSEIS SAXONICIS USUI – Freunde der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden e. V. im Jahr 2023 produziert. / The new artworks, which were created in dialogue with the Dresden collections were produced with the generous support of MUSEIS SAXONICIS USUI - Freunde der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden e. V. in 2023.

Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau München
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Orhan Pamuk, 4213 Zigarettenkippen, Installation im Museum der Unschuld, Istanbul / Orhan Pamuk, 4213 Cigarette Stubs, installation at the Museum of Innocence, Istanbul
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