

The Trinity College Dublin Art Collections

Artist:	Johnny Friedlander/ Johnni Friedlaender
Title:	<i>Counterpoint</i>
Medium:	lithograph
Edition:	44 of 85
Framed Dimensions:	109.5cm x 123cm

b. 1912, Upper Silesia (Poland) d. 1992, Paris

Johnny Friedlander was best known as a painter and etcher. As a student in secondary school, he applied to the Academy of Fine Art in Breslau, he falsified his birth document for his application and submitted just a couple of sketches and one painting. Much to his surprise, his application was successful and he began his studies at the academy under Otto Mueller of the "Die Brücke" group and Carlos Mense, a follower of the Neue Sachlichkeit movement.

From Breslau, Friedlander moved to Dresden where he was a member of the Assoziation Revolutionärer Bildender Künstler Deutschlands (ASSO). In 1935, he moved to Czechoslovakia in order to escape the Nazis. Friedlander's first exhibition, a collection of his watercolours and prints, was held two years later in the Hague. The strongly defined lines of his etchings, as well as his realistic choice of subject, placed his work within the long tradition of German printmaking, perhaps best characterised by the work of sixteenth century printmaker, Albrecht Durer.

During the war years, Friedlander live in the South of France and worked with the French Resistance. The effect of this war could be felt in the mysterious, melancholic atmosphere of his later etchings. Though Friedlander's main subjects had been animals and the human figure, from the 1950s onwards, his works became rather more loose and abstract in both composition and colour, appearing to suggest landscapes, or symbolic forms. Some of the titles of these works (such as the work listed above in Trinity College's Collection) suggested music and thus his pictorial representations, the placement of colour and line, could be seen as being organised in a manner similar to a musical composition.

Information in this article has been taken from the Grove Dictionary of Art online and johnnyfriedlaender.eu

This information has been compiled by Art Collections assistants, interns, and volunteers
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