

On signatures on watercolors

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Appendix - the signatures in Adolf Hitler als Maler und Zeichner

Comparison authentic signatures - signatures on Kloss-'Hitlers'

Signatures on authentic Adolf Hitler watercolors



Florence-16, 1910-1913

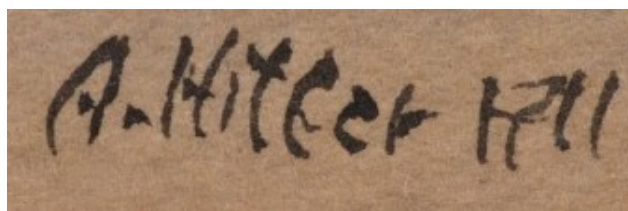


US Army-CNN 2.53.50, 1910-1913

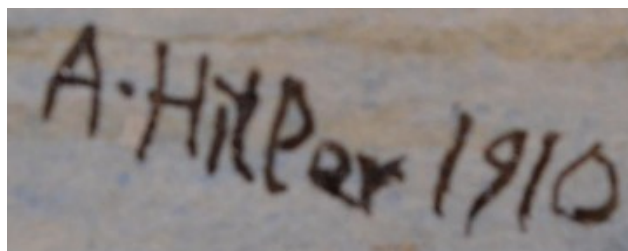


Florence 19, 1913-1914

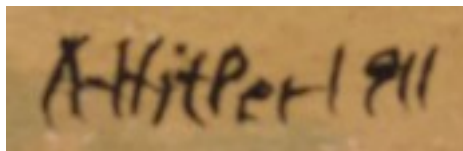
Signatures on watercolors attributed to Adolf Hitler by Kloss Auctions, Berlin



Kloss-286, 2019



Kloss-287, 2019



Kloss-288, 2019

Remarks about signatures on watercolors

Initially¹, we thought that researching the signature on an alleged Hitler watercolor would solve the question if such a work is authentic or not. Unfortunately this is not the case, according to experts we consulted in 2017.

Drs. P.L. Zevenbergen, retired Chief Constable (Hauptkommissar) of the The Hague Police, handwriting expert, formerly working for the 'Judicial Laboratory Rijswijk'² and involved in the investigation of the falsified Hitler diaries in 1983, stated that a signature on a watercolor is not suitable for identification purposes, for several reasons.

"Was ich weiß, ist, dass eine Unterschrift auf einem Gemälde oder Aquarell mit Werkzeugen des Malers erstellt wurde. Daher kann sie definitionsgemäß nicht als Unterschrift oder Handschrift betrachtet werden und eignet sich aus vielen Gründen nicht zur Identifizierung eines Schriftstellers. Mit den Malwerkzeugen (in der Regel ein Pinsel) können Sie nicht Zeichen schreiben, sondern nur Zeichen erzeugen. Eine Bewegung, die auf der Unterschrift eines Gemäldes / Aquarells basiert, kann daher grundsätzlich nicht als Schreibbewegung betrachtet werden. Eine Unterschrift ist kein Schreiben, sondern ein Malerjob. Die Methoden und Techniken des vergleichenden Schreibens können daher nicht angewendet werden!

Darüber hinaus erfolgt das Malen unter der Kontrolle der Augen; Das Schreiben erfolgt unter der Kontrolle des Gehirns. Es geht zu weit, hier die Unterschiede im physiologischen Ursprung beider motorischer Prozesse näher zu erläutern. Wenn eine Bewegung (im Allgemeinen) unter der Kontrolle der Augen stattfindet, ist die (Schreib-) Geschwindigkeit "out", was (unter anderem) dazu führt, dass diese Bewegung (oft leicht und sehr gut) von jedem reproduziert werden kann wer es will.

Dann: Soweit ich weiß, wurde die Echtheit eines Gemäldes (und dergleichen) durch eine Unterschrift nie ausreichend bestätigt."³

1 When researching the alleged Hitler painting presented by NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam, as being an 'almost certain' authentic Hitler watercolor, 25-11-2017.

See: <https://www.bartfindroog.com/droog/niod/persbericht-en-onderzoek.html#en>

2 In Dutch: Commissaris van politie Den Haag and Gerechtelijk Laboratorium Rijswijk, the predecessor of the NFI - Nederlands Forensisch Instituut (Netherlands Forensic Institute); part of the Ministry of Justice and Safety; <https://www.forensischinstituut.nl/>

3 Translation: Jaap van den Born, 2019.

Another expert, Liza Leslie⁴ (of Solfrino) believes that authentication based on signatures is possible: "Signatures are usually identified by comparison with forty or fifty other signatures available from the same hand, using macro photography."

Which means that this method of authentication can't be used for alleged Hitler paintings: no more than around thirty have survived the war, and the authenticity of only two of these has been established. These two are in custody of the US Army Center for Military History.⁵

Possibly one to three of the alleged Hitler watercolors in custody of the Bayerische Hauptstaatsarchiv are authentic - but these have to be researched by experts on Hitler paintings to establish if these are indeed authentic or forged.⁶

Also twenty alleged Hitler paintings are stored in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence (Italy). Yet these never have been studied by art or forgery specialists. We think at least three of these are authentic.⁷

We also consulted Dr. Luc Megens.⁸ He's a.o. involved in the authentication project of paintings attributed to Vincent van Gogh. When we asked him if it could be determined if a signature on a watercolor was added shortly after the completion of the composition, he stated:

"We are engaged in the scientific research of painted objects, especially the pigments on them. On the basis of this, it is therefore almost impossible to say whether a signature on a watercolor has been applied simultaneously or later. On (oil) paintings is sometimes possible - when a signature has been painted on the varnish, and not under the varnish. I doubt whether a conservator can technically see the difference between a hundred or fifty year old signature [on a watercolor]."

4 Liza Leslie, principal restorer at Solfrino, Maastricht (NL/Halle (B)). MA in Conservation and Restoration of Easel Paintings, Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp (University of Antwerp) BA in Art History, York University, Toronto (CA) MA in International Economics and Finance, Brandeis University, Boston (USA). Accredited member of APROA-BRK. See: <http://www.solfrino.nl/about-us/>

5 The works CNN 2.53.50 (Ratzenstahl) and 2.54.50 (Alter Hof).

6 Nrs 1885, 1886 and 1887 in Abteilung V "Nachlässe und Sammlungen"/Hitler/Varia, Bayerische Hauptstaatsarchiv München. Courtesy Dr. Johann Pörnbacher, Archivoberrat, 14.01.2019.

7 See: <https://www.bartfmdroog.com/droog/niod/florence.html>

8 Luc Megens. Heritage scientist, working at the Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed (National Service for Cultural Heritage), Amersfoort (NL). See: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Luc_Megens

Beware: catalogs of forgeries - *Schwindlers list*

If you have to believe the information given in *Adolf Hitler als Maler und Zeichner. Ein Werkkatalog der Ölgemälde, Aquarelle, Zeichnungen und Architekturskizzen* (Gallant Verlag, Zug, 1983) there has never been a painter in art history with so many different signatures as Adolf Hitler: on page 17 forty examples are shown - and that is a fraction of the total number of signatures - in the book are 318 watercolors and 45 oil paintings 'made by Hitler' depicted. Of these, only a small number is authentic.⁹

Therefore, the book is quite useless for authentication research. It is however very useful for forgery research.

The same applies to this book: Stephen R. Pastore¹⁰. *The complete paintings of Adolf Hitler*. [Several editions, published by the author; latest edition is dated 2015].¹¹

Conclusion - regarding the Kloss-'Hitler' signatures

It is obvious that the signatures on the three Kloss-Hitlers are totally different than the painted signatures on the few known authentic Hitler watercolors.

Yet this difference is only to be regarded as additional evidence for establishing whether or not these watercolors are authentic or false Hitler paintings.

Other factors are more important, such as: Hitler made and sold only city sights in 1910-1913; Hitler was not talented enough to paint the Kloss-Hitlers; the provenance (a Cologne collector who allegedly bought it from an Austrian legacy) is unverifiable and can't be traced back to the young Hitler.

Additional evidence can be found in the absence of the Kloss-Hitlers in the 1983 forgeries catalog - which might indicate that they were only recently made.

This theory is supported by the only recently issued bogus certificates of authenticity (coa) from Mr. Frank. P. Garo. The absence of older coa's is also an indication that the works were only recently painted.

⁹ <https://www.bartfmdroog.com/droog/niod/price.html>

¹⁰ See: <http://stephenrpastore.com/>

¹¹ <https://www.amazon.com/Complete-Paintings-Adolf-Hitler/dp/1937727599>

Forensic research is needed, but...

If the forger was smart enough to use as primary support material from ca. 1910, than dating the support will be pointless.

If the forger was smart enough to use pigments which were in use in or before 1910, pigment analysis will be pointless.

If the forger was smart enough to buy authentic watercolors painted by an anonymous artist round 1910, and only added 'A. Hitler' on it, with a paint that contains pigments which were in use in or before 1910, forensic research of the painting will provide no answers at all.

But luckily, most Hitler forgers aren't that smart.

They also never had the need to use material from 1910-1914 to forge Hitler's paintings - as none of the hundreds of 'Hitlers' offered on recent auctions were ever properly examined.

Forensic research by the Bayerische Hauptstaatsarchiv, 2013

In 2013 the Bayerische Hauptstaatsarchiv (BHSA) came in the possession of six alleged Hitler paintings - three watercolors and three oil paintings. They originated from the Hitler collection of Dr. Alfred Detig (1896-1974), who had been an ardent Nazi and Hitler paintings collector in the 1930's - after 1945 he became a respected journalist.

In the NSDAP Hauptarchiv (NSDAP-HA) files, nowadays in the Bundesarchiv Berlin, we found documents in which ten works from Detig's collection were described and discussed. From this material¹² we concluded that at least three works in his collection were fakes (three small oil paintings he had bought from a Dr. Schirmer, who appeared to us as a very unreliable source). The others *might* be authentic.

12 NS26/24, Hauptarchiv der NSDAP, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

The NSDAP-HA never properly researched the Detig collection; the BSHA did. But this institute could not establish if the six works were authentic or not.

TAZ reported this about the BSHA-research: "Das Bayerische Hauptstaatsarchiv hat vor einigen Jahren angebliche Hitler-Gemälde gestiftet bekommen. Die Echtheitsprüfung hat Wochen gedauert: Mehrere Experten haben Stil, Inhalt und Pinselstrich untersucht. Das Landeskriminalamt hat mit Ultraschall nach verborgenen Schichten oder Signaturen in den Bildern gesucht. Nichts. Vieles spricht dafür, dass es Originale sind, aber eben nicht alles. „So lange niemand hundertprozentig sicher sein kann, müssen wir davon ausgehen, dass es Fälschungen sind“, sagt Sylvia Krauss, die die Nachlässe im Archiv verwaltet."¹³

¹³ Anne Fromm. Ein echter Hitler. *TAZ*, Berlin, 19-01-2014; <http://www.taz.de/!5050575/>

Appendix - the signatures in Adolf Hitler als Maler und Zeichner

BEISPIELE VON ADOLF HITLERS SIGNIERUNG

mit Angabe der Werkkatalog-Nummer



