

Student Guide

World War I: War of Images, Images of War

Section: Aftermath

Max Beckmann fought in the German military until 1915, when he suffered a mental breakdown. He continued to have nightmares of his experiences, however.



The Way Home, 1919, Max Beckmann (German, 1884–1950), Lithograph, *Die Hölle* (Berlin, 1919), pl. 2, St. Louis Museum of Art

Explore

- › How is this image composed? What do you notice about the lines?
- › Identify how the two main characters in the image are different.
- › Citing evidence from the artwork, reflect on what the artist could have wanted the viewer to focus on.
- › This image was created after the war. Why is it important to have post-war work in the exhibition?

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Section: Apocalypse

At the outbreak of war, Frans Masereel did not live in his native Belgium, but in Paris, where he avoided a draft. After seeing the devastation that the war caused with families who stayed at home, he created a series of images to capture those experiences.



Soldiers on Barbed Wire 1917, Frans Masereel (Belgian, 1889-1972),
Woodcuts, Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 94-135804

Explore

- › Pick one image from the group. Describe its elements (line, color, shape, texture, value [light and dark], space).
- › Why did you choose this piece? What made it stand out to you?
- › What shapes do you see? What objects could they be in reality?
- › Consider the action of the character(s) in the piece you chose. Are they passive or active? Why do you think Masereel made these choices?

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Section: War of Cultures

This poster is an example of American propaganda. Propaganda was a way in which artists waged a cultural war with their enemies. The United States entered the war after Germany's resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917.



Destroy this Mad Brute—Enlist Harry R. Hopps (American, 1869–1937), ca. 1917, Color lithograph, Modern Graphic History Library, Washington University Libraries.

Explore

- › What point of view do you, as a viewer, have of this piece? What is the first thing you notice?
- › What do you notice about the background?
- › Why do you think there is a space between the background and foreground?
- › Who do you think the “mad brute” represents?
- › What is the function of this piece?