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20TH CENTURY TYPOGRAPHERS

In this roundup, Print breaks down the elite group of typographers who have made lasting contributions to American type. Enter your email to download the full article from PRINT Magazine.

Albert Einstein's Favorite Artist?

By Zachary Pettit | June 1, 2015

In *Print*'s archives, you'll find an array of articles by the usual—and brilliant—suspects: Paul Rand, Saul Bass, Charles Eames, and so on. But *Print* once featured an unexpected contributor from another field entirely: Albert Einstein.

In 1955—the year he died—Einstein wrote a piece for *Print* reflecting on his friend, artist Josef Scharl.

Not familiar with Scharl?

Born 1896 in Germany, Scharl attended the Munich School of Painters before being drafted into World War I. After the war, he studied at the Munich Akademie and embarked on a career as an artist.

He voyaged to France in the 1930s and drew inspiration from the work of the late impressionists he saw there. But when he returned to Germany, a new party had tightened its hold on the country: the Nazis. And painter-at-large Adolf Hitler was not a fan of Scharl's New Objectivity and vibrant color palettes—or, for that matter, any modernist works, with a particular target on the Bauhaus.

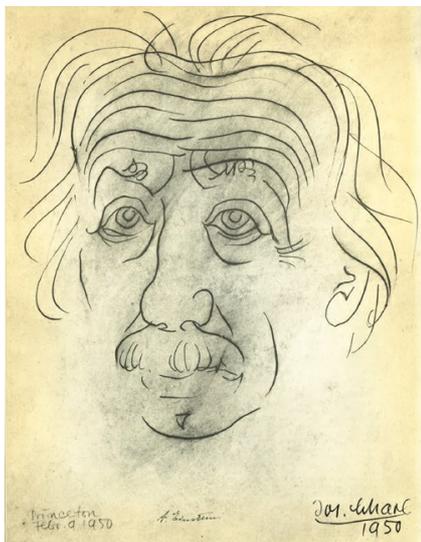
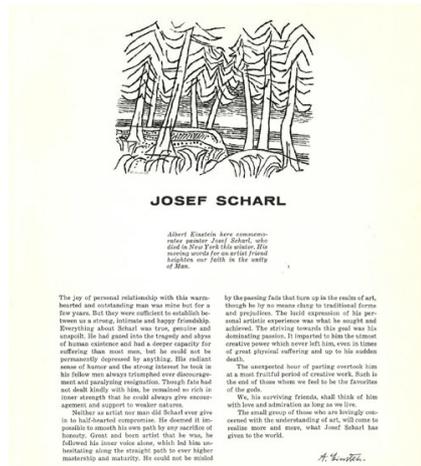
So Hitler began confiscating art across the Reich, and decided to hold an exhibition of "Degenerate Art" in the mid-'30s, featuring thousands of pieces by Scharl, Marc Chagall, Paul Klee, Herbert Bayer and many others. The works were chaotically arranged and housed in a disorienting, overfilled environment designed to showcase their debauched, depraved nature to the public.

As *The New York Times* would later write, Scharl's "paintings were damaged and smeared by Nazi hoodlums." Under Gestapo surveillance and effectively banned from doing what he loved, Scharl emigrated to the U.S. in 1938. Once stateside, he reconnected with Einstein, whom he had painted years earlier in Berlin. The two were close friends, and Einstein touted Scharl's work, promoted his career and backed him with funds.

In 1944/1945, Scharl finally attained a modicum of the recognition he deserved when he contributed 212 illustrations to the first complete English edition of *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. As poet W. H. Auden wrote in *The New York Times Review of Books* in 1944, "Scharl... proves himself here to be one of the very few really good illustrators of our time. He understands, as too many do not, that book illustrating should not be a repetition of what has already been better communicated by the text, for that, as in most comic strips, only enfeebls and corrupts the imagination of the reader. The true function of the illustrator is to rethink the whole historical succession of the verbal story as a single, timeless, visual instant."

Scharl died of heart failure in New York in 1954, and Einstein wrote the eulogy that was presented at his funeral. It bears a resemblance to the piece that follows, in which Einstein reflects on his embattled friend.

(For a larger version of the below images, just give them a click.)



E=mc2 ...

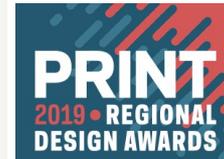


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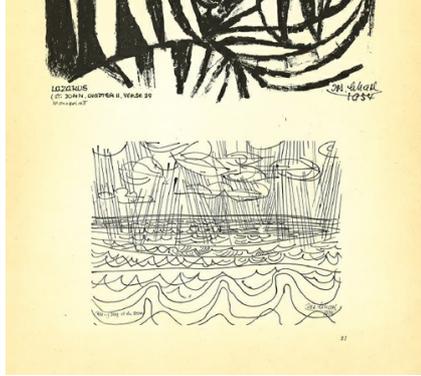
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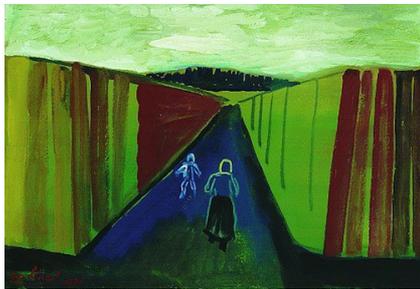




Here's a sampler of Scharf's work, courtesy of auction house [Ketterer Kunst](#), which has sold a number of his pieces:
Also, if anyone has any formal magazine experience naming posthumous contributing editors, do let me know.



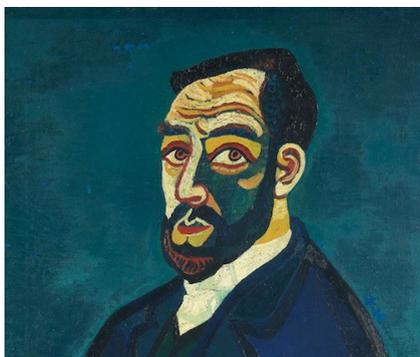
Courtesy Ketterer Kunst



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About Zachary Petit

Zachary Petit (@zacharypetit on Twitter) is a freelance journalist, the editor-in-chief of Design Matters Media, and the former editor-in-chief of PRINT.
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6 thoughts on "Albert Einstein's Favorite Artist?"



akkipanwar
October 3, 2018 at 2:43 am

nice post.

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helixjump
May 28, 2018 at 7:36 pm

Great article about Eistein, a true great man.
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fonsi
May 15, 2018 at 2:42 am

posthumous contributing editors <http://spibio.online>

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schools9
April 5, 2018 at 3:37 am

AP SSC Results name wise and school wise will be declared on the official website of AP education board. District wise results will also be available on the official portal page <https://schools9.xyz/>

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Hossam55
April 4, 2018 at 1:41 pm

Albert einsteins is my perfect man i love this guy is amazing and very smart. Thank you so much for share this beautiful information about this man. <http://www.adventurejeux.com/>

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jennyhannb
November 15, 2017 at 5:45 am

Scharf's "paintings were damaged and smeared by Nazi hoodlums." Under Gestapo surveillance and effectively banned from doing what he loved, Scharf emigrated to the U.S. in 1938. <https://happywheelsnow.com>

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