



Berwick Educational Association

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF EMIL NOLDE

A lecture by Jane Pigney

Tuesday 7th August 2018 10 -12noon

William Elder Building, 56 -58 Castlegate, Berwick

Virtually unknown in this country, Emil Nolde (1867 - 1956) features in an exhibition at the National Gallery of Scotland this summer (14th July - 21st October 2018). The exhibition, entitled *Colour is Life*, focuses on Nolde as one of the greatest colourists of the twentieth century. This talk, however, will concentrate on the life and times of the artist, whose long life spanned a most turbulent period.

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Emil Nolde was born in a disputed area of what is now Denmark, but then was part of Germany. He trained as an artist and participated in various German avant garde groups in the first decade of the twentieth century such as Die Bruecke and Der Blaue Reiter and later received a government grant to travel to the South Seas, which influenced his work. He was acclaimed in his country and able to support himself as an artist. After World War I, the area where he was born became Danish again. Nolde was married to a Danish actress and remained Danish even though they eventually lived in northern Germany, just south of the Danish border.

In the 1920s and 1930s Emil Nolde joined the Nazi Party, although there is some ambivalence as to why, and indeed some of his pictures seem to show definite anti-Semitic tendencies. None of this, however, was to prevent the Nazis from declaring him and his art to be degenerate and forbidding him to paint. During the Nazi era and the second world war, Nolde painted his so-called "unpainted pictures" - small works which could be easily hidden. He was active and productive up until his death in 1956, and left a multitude of paintings in his and his wife's north German home.

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(Nolde)