

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1971)
Heft: 1618

Artikel: Villa on the shore
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-688160>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 03.04.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

The Swiss Observer

7666a
FOUNDED IN 1919 BY PAUL F. BOEHRINGER

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

Vol. 57 No. 1618

FRIDAY, 25th JUNE, 1971



Villa on the shore (1878) by Arnold Böcklin

A soft breeze. The rustle of cypress trees. A grey sky full of foreboding. A lonely villa with arches. Ruins and wild vegetation. A young maiden in solitary dreaming. Emerald waves washing on the rocks. The infinity of the sea. This wonderful picture is an example of what Arnold Böcklin meant when he said that his paintings were to be "dreamt about"!

Seventy years after the death of this important Swiss artist, the conjugated efforts of the Arts Council and Pro Helvetia led to a fascinating exhibition of works by Arnold Böcklin and Ferdinand Hodler. The above painting is typical of the best of Böcklin. It is reminiscent of his famous "Island of

the Dead", of which an example was at the Hayward Gallery Exhibition. Like "Naiads at Play" and "Calm Sea", it is watery, dreamy, mysterious and a little sad. The critics find it hard to make out where to situate Böcklin in the history of art. The Swiss art critic Georg Schmid, who apparently doesn't like him much, says that he is the burden of Swiss Art just as the Pre-Raphaelites are the burden of English Art. It is indeed surprising that an artist who lived like him through the growth and blossom of impressionism should have been left totally uninfluenced by this movement. Not all his paintings have this aquatic quality however. Many are stocky, robust and

Germanic. But most of those we could see at the Hayward Gallery, even the portraits, were paintings inviting their beholder to a dream.

Böcklin was little known for these past 70 years outside Switzerland, where he was born, and Germany, where he worked. This is indeed true of other Swiss artists and the Arts Council have seldom honoured them with an exhibition, although there have on many occasions been exhibitions of Swiss private collections. But Böcklin fascinated surrealists like Giorgio de Chirico and Salvador Dali. Oblivious of the trends of his day, Böcklin remained a mixture of classicism, romanticism and surrealism.