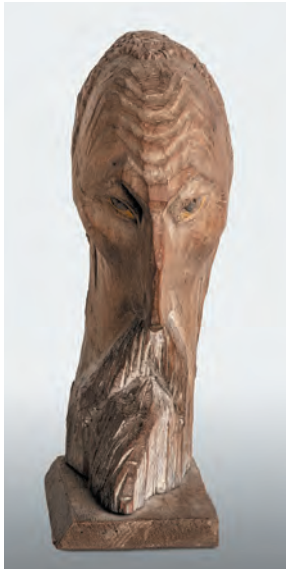


## The Work

His work is extremely diverse: comprehensive architectural sculptural projects in Cologne and other cities, interiors of museums and breweries, monuments and fountains, tombstones, architectural works for churches and culture, remarkable portraits, small sculptures, plaques and medals. His portraits and sculptures are characterized by a tremendous tension that extends to the expressionistically exaggerated. The characteristics of the depicted people, metaphorical figures or religious or mythological motifs are clearly revealed in its detailed elaboration. Grasegger seizes the moment via plaster, bronze or woodwork, in almost cinematic quality – with his vibrant and perfect craftsmanship. It often seems as if his figures have stopped in the middle of their inner and outer movement, massive and delicate at the same time, like snapshots of real life. Standout features are a series of character studies in his monumental busts, a highly unusual, expressive group of carved works, which he calls “*Stegreifholzereien*” (“*impromptu woodcarving*”) and his Bavarian themes, wildly dancing couples and no less wildly brawling young men.

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For our video projection, we were able to draw on the contemporary photographic documentation of his work, to which the artist had attached great importance throughout his life. Together with the numerous surviving models and exhibits from the estate, it has been possible to display and rediscover his extensive oeuvre. Furthermore, via touching portraits, such as that of the *mountain guide Pitzner*, the design of the *King Ludwig II monument* by the St. Anton pilgrimage church or the *war memorial in Farchant*, Georg Grasegger has left his mark here in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and the district – his home, for which he never stopped longing for throughout his life.

9



7 „*Stegreifholzerei*” *Thawing weather*, pine wood, 1918

8 „*Stegreifholzerei*” *Fanciful*, pine wood 1919

9 Georg Grasegger between his late works, 1926

Title left: *Devotion*, Cast basalt, 1919

Title right: *Waltz*, oak, 1922

Publication: Gerhard Dietrich, „... *die Welt ins Bildhafte zu reißen...*“ – *Georg Grasegger 1873–1927. A Bavarian Sculptor in Cologne*, Cologne 2020, 511 pages, almost 1000 illustrations, available during the special exhibition at the special price of 28 euros.

### Museum Werdenfels

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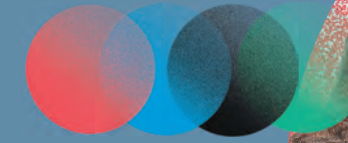
Opening times: Tuesday–Sunday, 10am–5pm

Also open on Mondays that are public holidays

Parking is available in the underground car park in Badgasse.

museum  
werdenfels

DAS LANDKREISMUSEUM  
GARMISCH PARTENKIRCHEN



Design: Andrea Sorg

“...to capture  
the world in  
imagery...”

Georg Grasegger (1873–1927)  
rediscovery  
of an expressionist sculptor

16.3. – 3.11.2024

## A Focus on Sculpture in the District of Garmisch Partenkirchen

The Museum Werdenfels invites you to rediscover and explore the work of the expressionist sculptor Georg Grasegger. Enjoy more than 100 exhibits from the Partenkirchener artist's work. A video projection across all three floors of the museum tells the story of the diversity of these works, many of which have been lost or damaged.

The presence of two important institutions in one district, where wood sculpture has been taught for over 100 years - the Schools for Wood and Design in Garmisch Partenkirchen and the State School for Wood Sculptors in Oberammergau - is unique in Germany. This regional dedication to the art of sculpture led to the emergence of numerous well-known sculptors in the 19th and 20th centuries some of whom were famous in their time. Most of them are forgotten in our time, yet they created exciting and original artworks which still resonate with us today. This is due to the Nazi era, but also to two world wars. After 1945, much was destroyed and urban development in the second half of the 20th century no longer followed the traditions of the 1920s, in which sculptural elements were an important part of architecture. Not least, Grasegger's work reflects his view of the profession of a sculptor, which changed after 1945 and ultimately split into several professions: he was also a stonemason, carver, artist and designer.

1



## The Life of Georg Grasegger – Success and reputation

Georg Grasegger was born in Partenkirchen in 1873 as the second child of master carpenter Bernhard Grasegger and his wife Anna. He attended the district carving and drawing school from 1886 to 1890. After attending the Royal School of Applied Arts in Munich from 1890 to 1893, he received a scholarship to the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. He studied here from 1894 to 1900. In 1901, he went to Cologne and taught sculpture as a successful professor at the arts and crafts school, where he worked until his early death in 1927. The importance of this first full-time, urban sculptor for Cologne and for the art history of the Rhineland was already being recognised during his lifetime.

- 1 *To the folk festival*, oak, 1923
- 2 *Portrait of Johann Georg Bernhard Grasegger*, plaster 1919, private
- 3 *Fortuna*, bronze, gold-plated
- 4 „*Stegreifholzerei*“ *little Prince*, pine wood, 1919
- 5 Monumental sculpture *Father Rhine*, shell limestone 1924,
- 6 *October morning*, bronze, before 1900

2



## A Search for Traces

After the Second World War, large parts of his sculptural work were destroyed and the majority of the mobile works were lost, “the expressionist who immigrated from Bavaria” was largely forgotten. Thanks to the research work of the art historian Gerhard Dietrich and Georg Grasegger's descendants, we are now able to tell a retrospective story of this incredibly productive and creative sculptor, who mastered all the techniques and materials of his art with virtuosity.

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