

Friedrich Perzyński**1877–1965****Traveler, Art Collector, and Dealer**

Friedrich Perzyński was born in Berlin, Germany. The failure of his father's business forced Perzyński to leave school at age seventeen and go to work for a dealer in books and prints. Developing an interest in Asian art, Perzyński taught himself Japanese. In 1903 he published a book on Japanese ukiyo-e, followed the next year by a monograph on Hokusai. In 1905 Perzyński was commissioned by the director of the Kunsthalle Bremen to visit Japan and buy prints and related books for the museum. This enabled Perzyński to establish himself as a dealer in Asian art, selling to private collectors and institutions.

In 1912 and 1913 Perzyński traveled extensively in China. While he lived in Beijing, he discovered the location of a group of life-size Buddhist figures, now known as the Yizhou Luohan. He wrote extensively about the figures and acquired a number of them for museums in Europe and North America. During World War I, Perzyński worked for the Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient (German Intelligence Bureau for the East). After the war he was a founding member of the Workers' Art Association formed by Bruno Taut (1880–1938) and Walter Gropius (1883–1969).

Perzyński lent works to the 1929 Chinese Art Exhibition held in Berlin. With the rise of the Nazi regime, Perzyński chose to leave Germany and in 1942 resettled in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he died in 1965.

Literature:

Writings by Perzyński:

Der japanische Farbenholzschnitt: Seine Geschichte—Sein Einfluss (Berlin, 1903).*Hokusai* (Bielefeld and Berlin, 1904).*Weltstadtseelen* (Munich, 1904).*Korin und seine Zeit* (Berlin, 1907).*Von Chinas Göttern—Reisen in China* (Munich, 1920).*Die Masken der japanischen Schaubühne—Nō und Kyōgen* (Hamburg, 1925).

Ausstellung Chinesischer Kunst, Veranstaltet von der Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst und der Preußischen Akademie der Künste, January 12–April 2 (Berlin, 1929), loans 315, 432, 442, 448–53.

Helmut Walravens, *Friedrich Perzyński, Leben, Werk, Briefe* (Melle, 2005).