

## Degenerate Art: Wilhelm Lehmbruck's *Large Kneeling Woman* (1937)

### Abstract

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The admonition “They had four years’ time” [“Sie hatten vier Jahre Zeit”] appears on the wall of the gallery featured below. It is presumably an indictment of every “degenerate” artist featured in the show – for, after four years of National Socialist rule, they still hadn’t adapted to the new aesthetic guidelines and cultural policies. In the case of the Wilhelm Lehmbruck, whose *Large Kneeling Woman* (1911) appears in the foreground, such an indictment is curious, given the fact that he had committed suicide in 1919. (Lehmbruck, who had served as a medical orderly during the First World War, never recovered from the cruelties he had witnessed.) Lehmbruck’s sensitive Expressionist rendering of a woman with angular, elongated limbs conveys an air of quiet thoughtfulness. The sculpture in no way conforms to the National Socialist vision of the ideal “Aryan” human form.

### Source

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Source: “Degenerate Art” exhibition in the gallery building at the Hofgarten in Munich (opening on July 19, 1937). In the foreground “Große Knieende” by Wilhelm Lehmbruck. Photo by Arthur Grimm. bpk-Bildagentur, image number 30015282. For rights inquiries, please contact Art Resource at [requests@artres.com](mailto:requests@artres.com) (North America) or bpk-Bildagentur at [kontakt@bpk-bildagentur.de](mailto:kontakt@bpk-bildagentur.de) (for all other countries).

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