

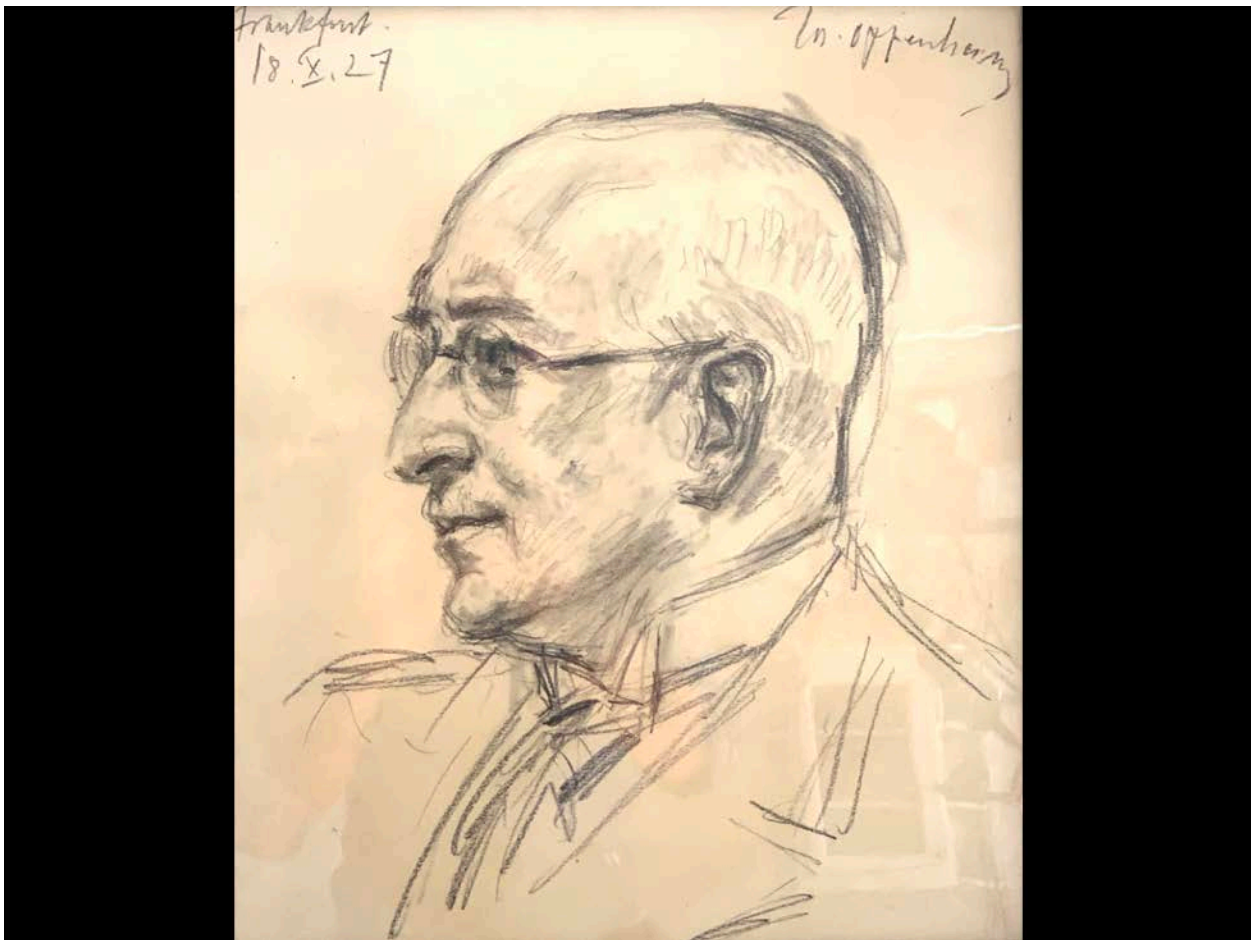
# **Sigmund Morgenroth**

## **Collector and Patron of the Arts**

**Peter Lackner - September 29, 2022**

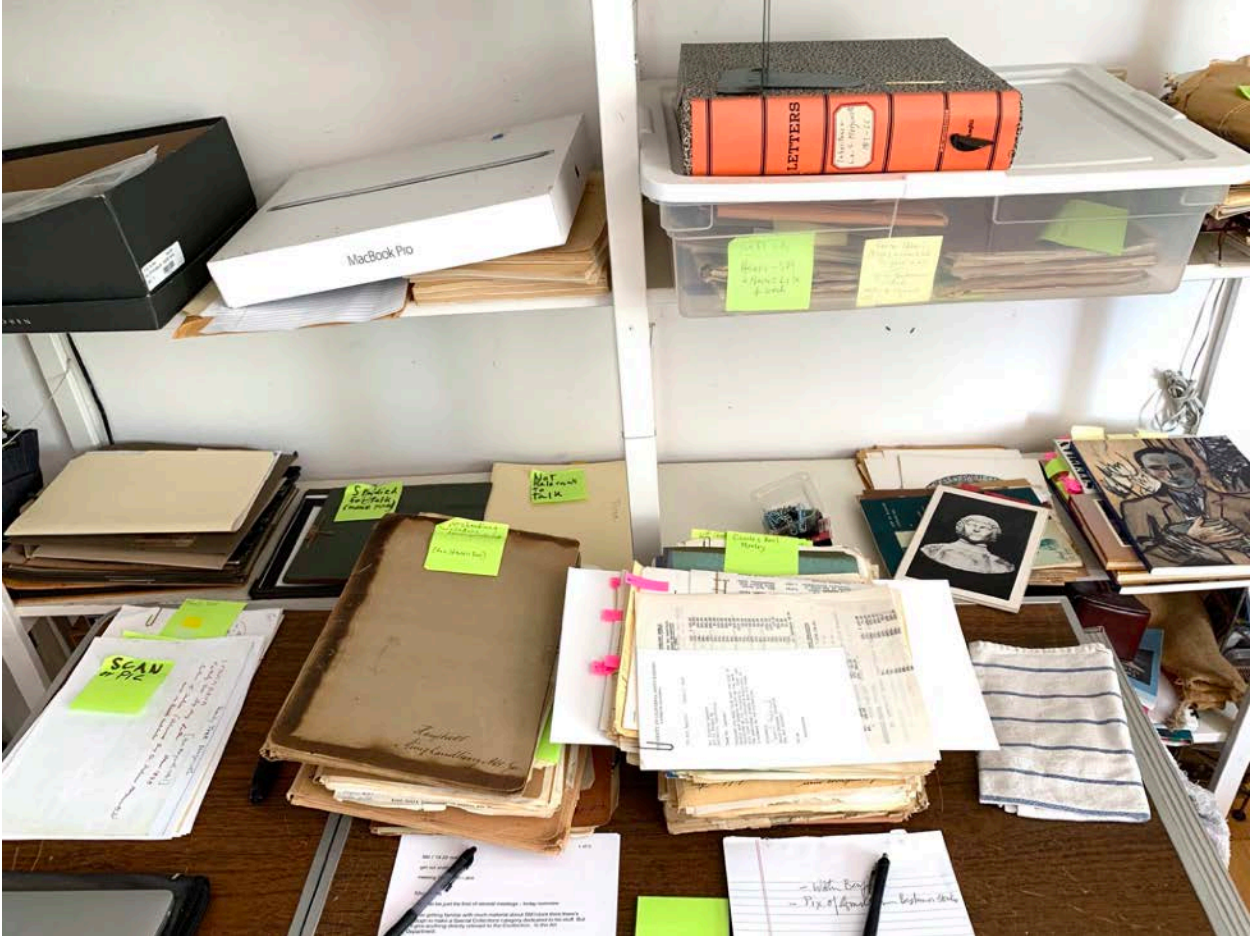
Good Afternoon. Thank you all for coming!

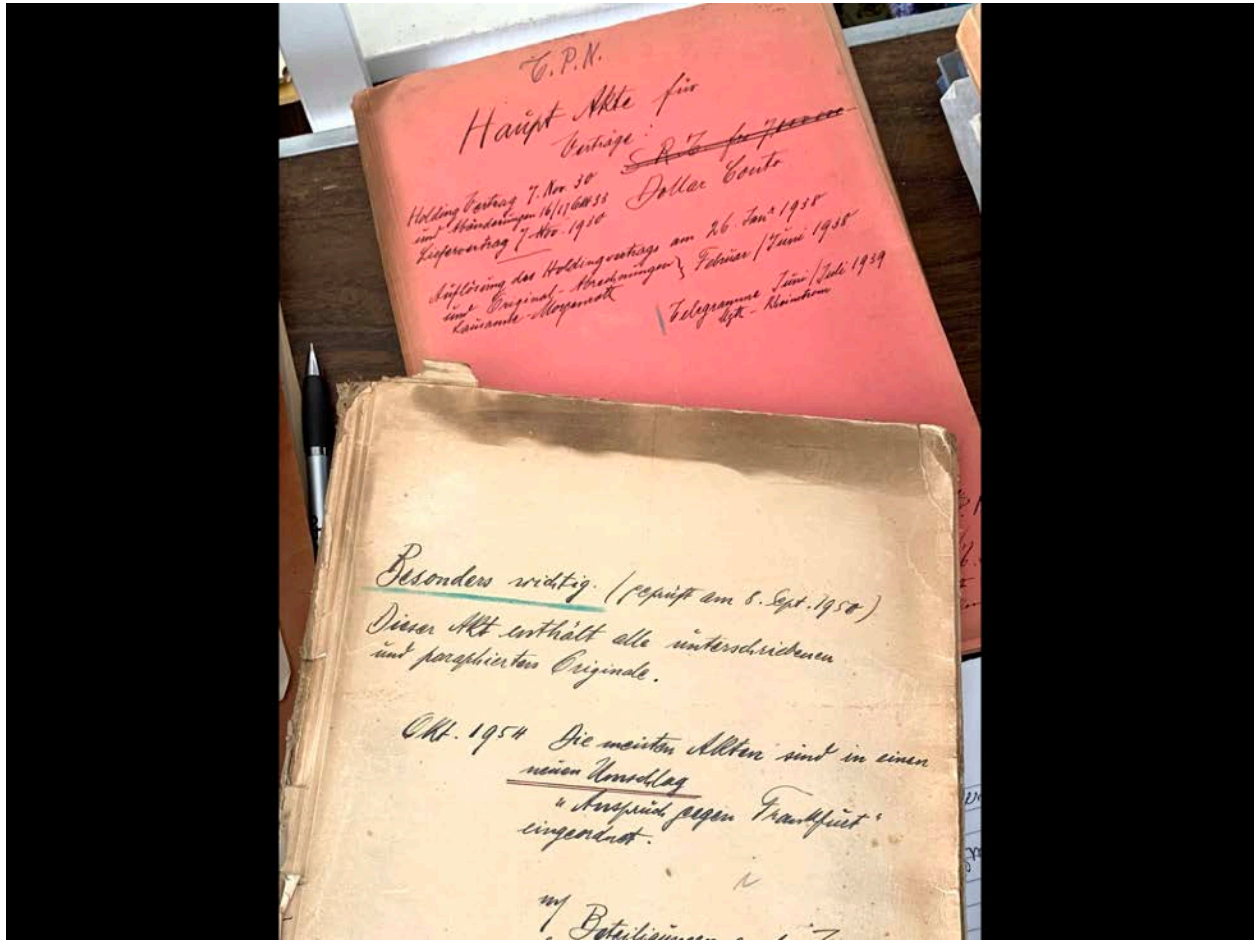
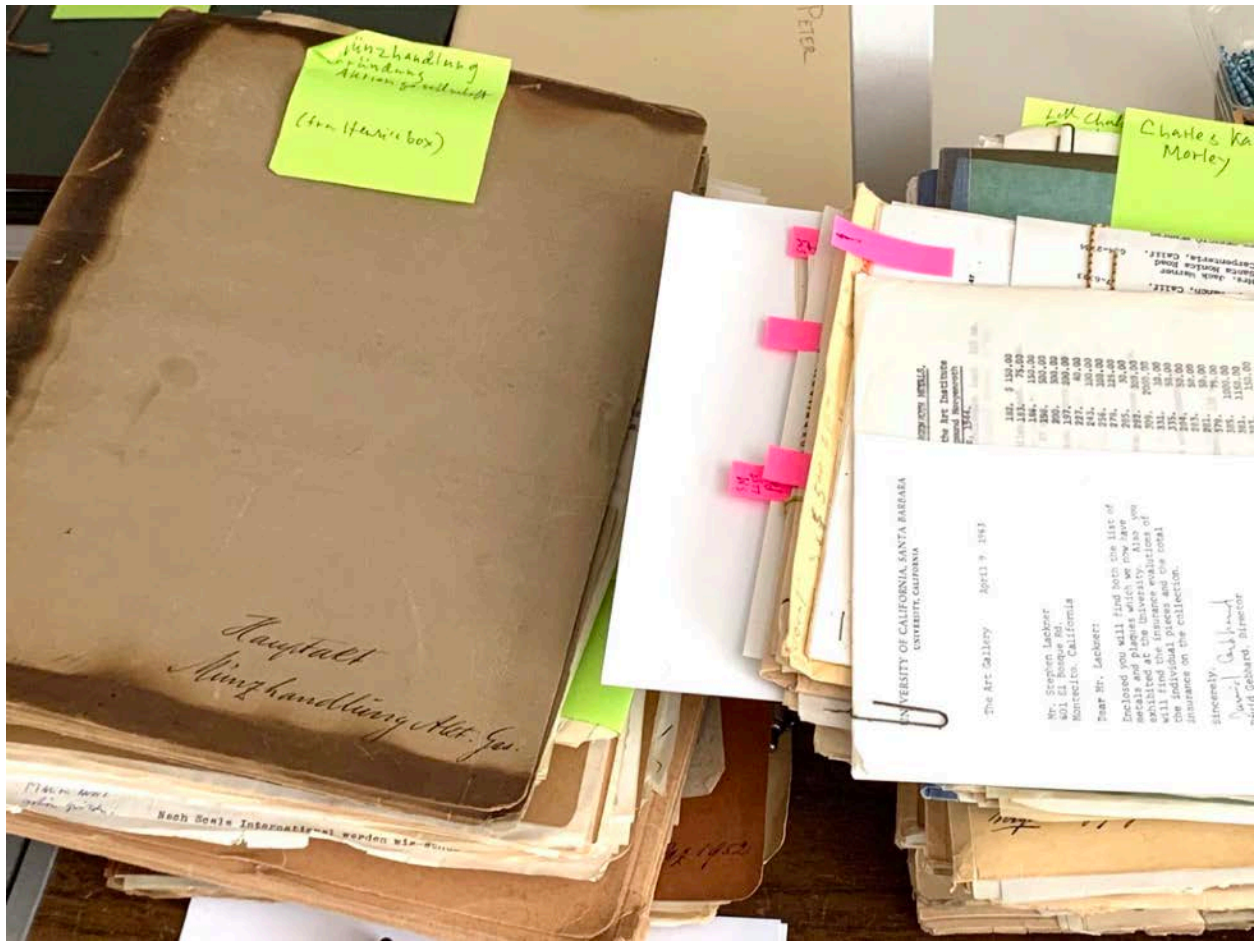
And many thanks to all who created this exhibition. I was thrilled to find out that part of my grandfather's collection would again be presented to the local public, and for such a long run at that! I'm not an expert on Renaissance




antiques - not even the works in Sigmund's collection. But the news about this show made me want to share some personal memories about my grandfather and aspects of his complex personality and life. And to do so I finally had to delve into boxes of family documents stored in our garage for over 20 years, some from Sigmund, some from my parents and uncles. So thanks for the nudge!

Here just some of the contents, almost all in German:






 München 12 April 1870  
 Mein geliebter, guter Herr  
 Da ich es nicht anders kann, so  
 muss ich Ihnen schreiben, dass  
 ich mich sehr freuen würde,  
 wenn Sie sich bald bei mir  
 einstellen könnten. Ich habe  
 mich sehr nach Ihnen gesehnt  
 und hoffe, dass Sie bald  
 wieder zu mir kommen werden.  
 Ich bin sehr liebend,  
 Ihr  
 Kaiserin Elisabeth

Bamberg am 20. März 1870  
 Grafen von Hohenhausen  
 Mein sehr geehrter Herr  
 Ich habe Ihre sehr angenehme  
 Briefe erhalten und bin sehr  
 dankbar für die darin enthaltenen  
 Nachrichten. Ich hoffe, dass  
 Sie bald wieder zu mir  
 kommen werden. Ich bin  
 sehr liebend,  
 Ihr  
 Kaiserin Elisabeth

Hoffentlich  
 sind Sie bald  
 wieder zu mir  
 gekommen.  
 Ich bin sehr  
 liebend,  
 Ihr  
 Kaiserin Elisabeth

München, den 12. April 1870  
 Mein sehr geehrter Herr  
 Ich habe Ihre  
 Briefe erhalten  
 und bin sehr  
 dankbar für  
 die darin  
 enthaltenen  
 Nachrichten.  
 Ich hoffe,  
 dass Sie  
 bald wieder  
 zu mir  
 kommen  
 werden.  
 Ich bin  
 sehr liebend,  
 Ihr  
 Kaiserin Elisabeth

All quite challenging to study in detail, especially with some being in obsolete cursive, and many being faded carbon copies.

Now I want to share with you some of the factual and visual gems I found in this treasure trove over a two month period.

But first, you may be wondering why our family branch is Lackner and not Morgenroth - lots of Lackners here this evening! The short version: In Europe during the Third Reich, my father, born Ernest Gustave Morgenroth, was writing articles critical of Hitler and fascism. His father Sigmund demanded he choose a pseudonym to avoid endangering other Morgenroths. My father chose Stephan Lackner and later made it his official name when getting US citizenship.

My parents - Stephan and Puck Lackner- and their three sons - Thomas, Lucas, and myself - lived next door to Sigmund and his wife Lucie in upper Montecito for about 12 years, from 1951 to Sigmund's death in 1963.

Here our Lackner house. As the guest house of the Sigmund's larger home next door, it was too small for a family of five, so a living room and studio were added:



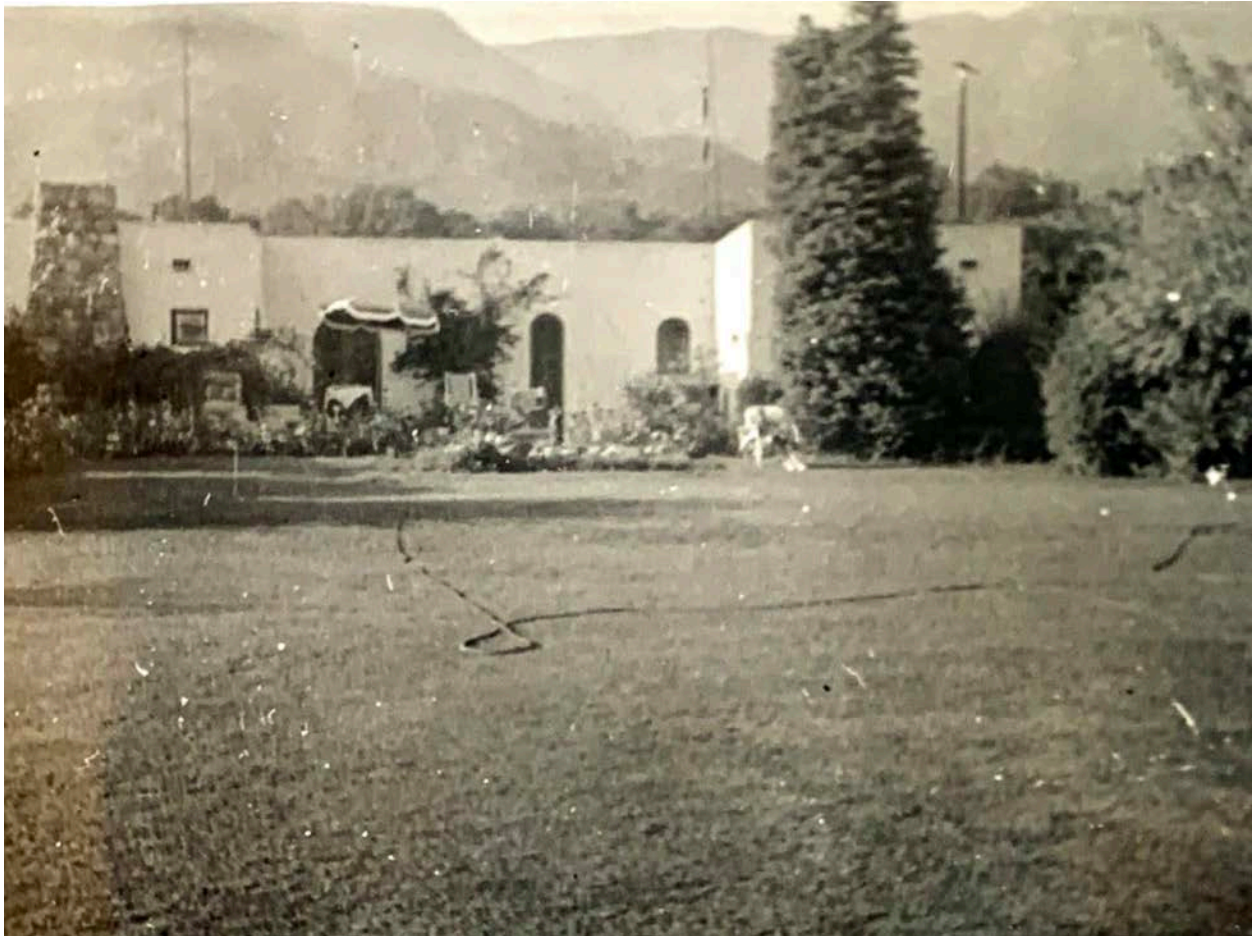
Das Haus Lackner in Santa Barbara 1951, Kat. Nr. 40

My parents saw Sigmund and Lucie almost daily for business and caregiving reasons, but two or three times a week Opapa and Omama came over for tea via a pathway through the hedge, or our family would visit them. We three boys were growing up as California kids, playing Robin Hood and digging underground forts - just boys being boys - and we were often smudged and sweaty:





But the grandparents lived an insular life in both time and space. This is their house, with Montecito Peak in the distance:



They still wore clothing brought along from Europe decades earlier, maintained their Prussian values of tidiness and decorum, and spoke almost only German. They even had a German live-in housekeeper/cook. The only phrase I recall Omama trying in English was “Will you cake?” which she gradually expanded to “Will you chocolate?”

Sometimes they approached our home unannounced. Then Sigmund would bellow a warning at the far edge of our lawn: "Guten Tag!" And as they slowly approached our house, Puck made us quickly change clothing, wash our faces, comb our hair - all with reminders to be polite. And the same ritual preceded our visiting their home. Over there we usually sat outside because their house was too full of antique furniture and art to safely accommodate three fidgety boys.

However, I recall at least one occasion when I was sent to my grandparents alone to deliver a document. Sigmund invited me into the living room which was usually taboo for us kids. He sat down near a chest with many flat drawers and beckoned me to a footstool close by.

He pondered, then pulled out a drawer which revealed rows of metal objects laid out in velvet. He told me to choose one, and when I pointed at a larger piece he smiled and asked me to help him lift it out of its nest, and then he gently left it in my hand.

It was much heavier than I anticipated, and when I seemed nervous about dropping it, he said, "Don't worry, it's hard metal that has survived centuries of travels and wars and will survive us as well. Close your eyes and feel the face as if you were blind. Now turn it over and look at the back side." With quiet enthusiasm he translated some phrases and explained when and where it had been made

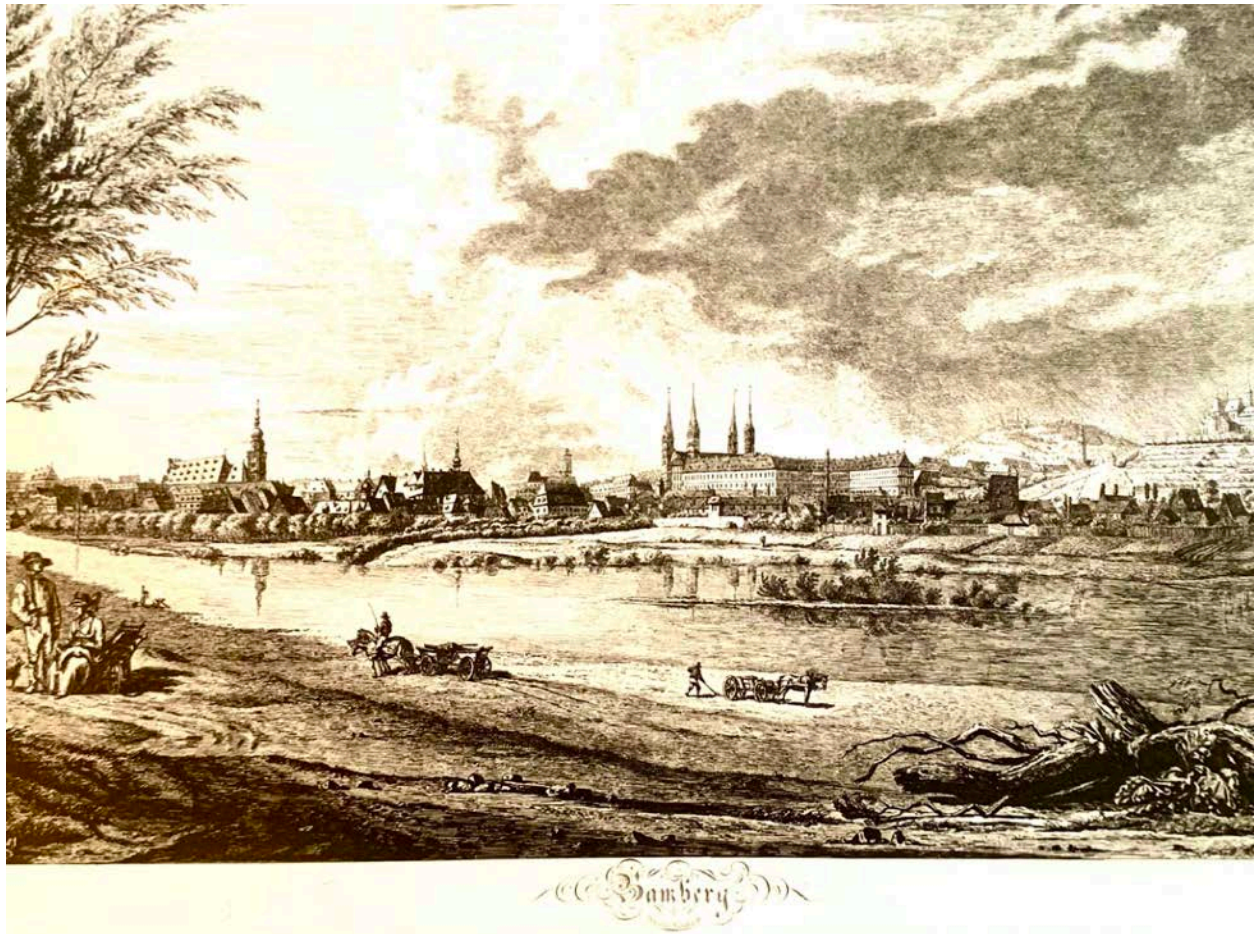
and for what special occasion. I wasn't understanding much, but Sigmund's secretive excitement was contagious and I felt we were two pirates relishing some stolen treasure. And I was relieved that this often stern and imposing elder was in such a playful mood.

We only studied two or three pieces, then he wiped them off with his crisp handkerchief, returned them to their nests and carefully closed the drawer.

But how did Sigmund and Lucie end up in Santa Barbara?  
And how did his collection end up in this museum?

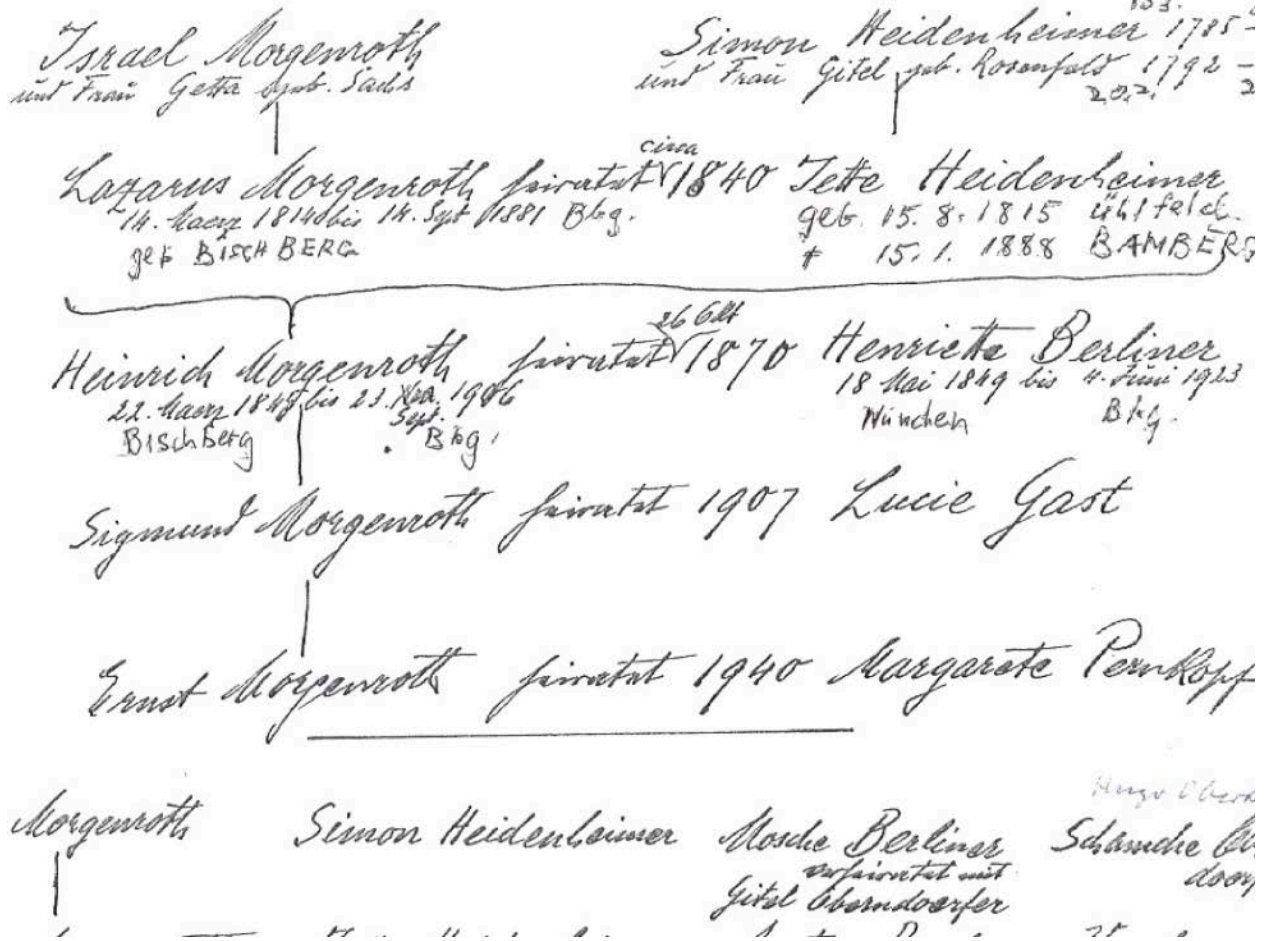
The Odyssey of Sigmund's life has many twists and turns because he and Lucie moved to different cities EIGHT times, sometimes having to start anew, rebuilding their financial foundation and lives.

For centuries, many generations of Morgenroths resided in central Germany in and around Bamberg:



They were mainly hops merchants for that renowned German beer, and some were medical doctors and lawyers. My father wrote in his autobiography: “We were prosperous Jews, fortunate and liberal and involved in community matters.”

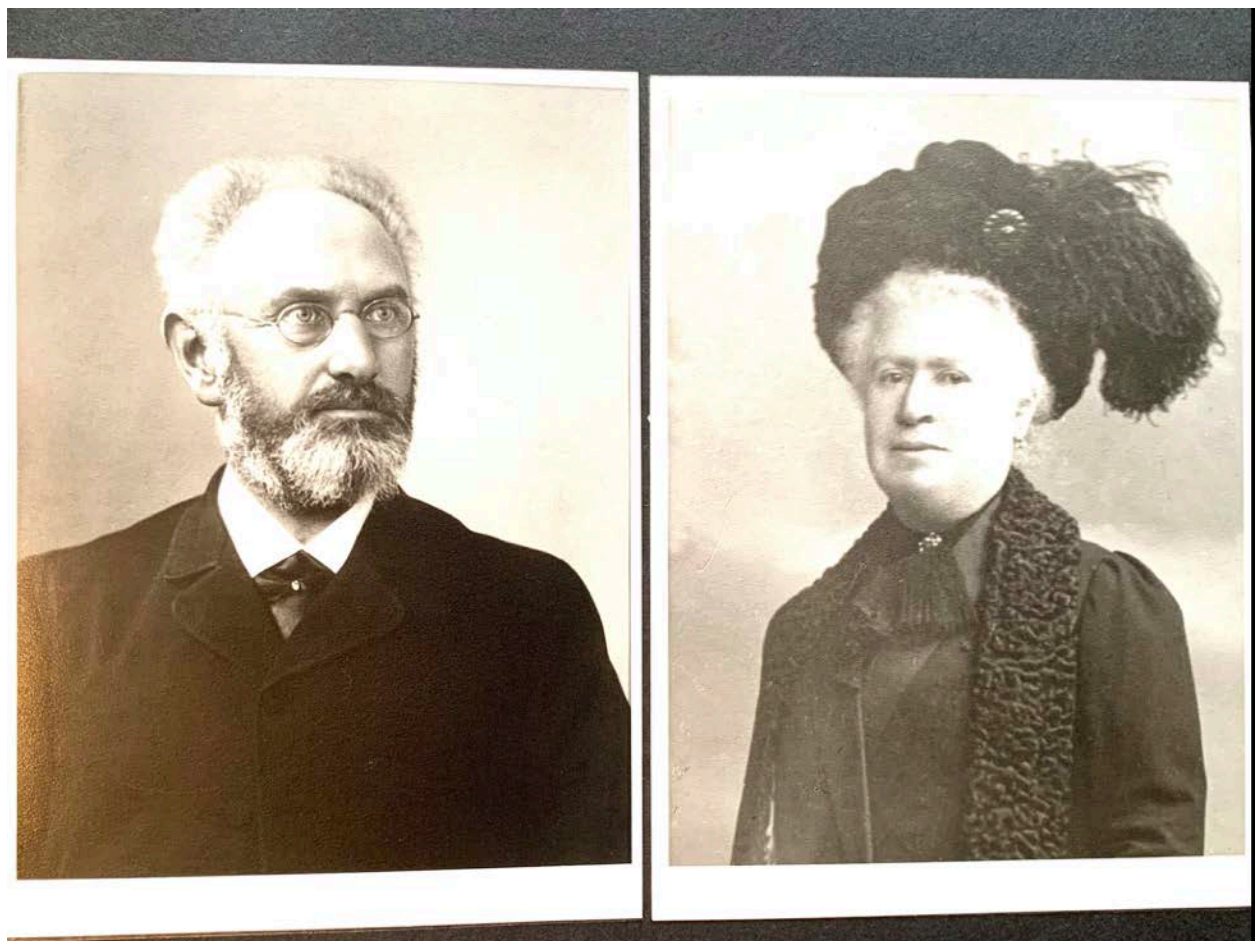
This family tree begins with Sigmund's great-grandparents, my great- great- great- grandparents:



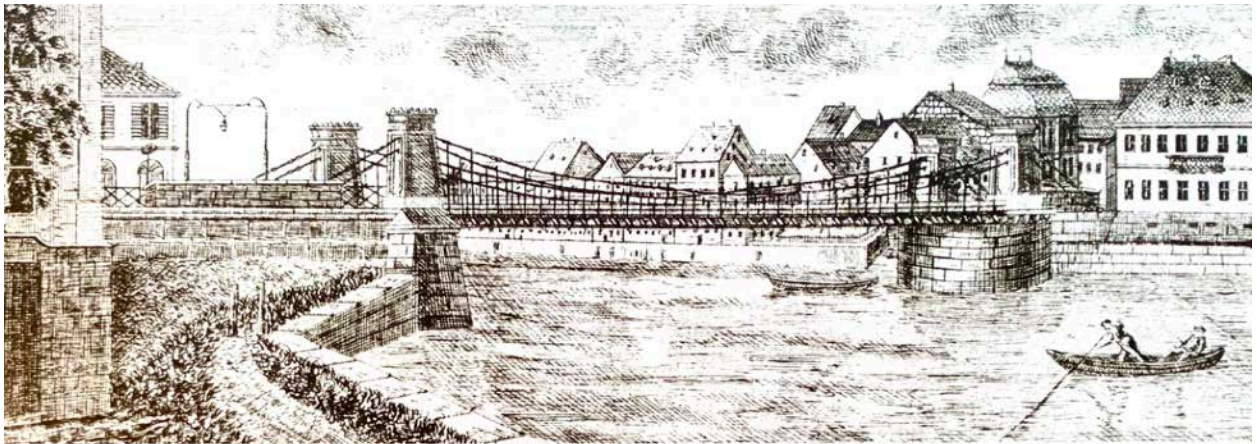
Here Sigmund's grandparents - Lazarus and Jette Morgenroth:



Here Sigmund's parents - Heinrich and Henriette Morgenroth:



Sigmund was born in Bamberg in 1874, one of three boys. In all those documents I found nothing about Sigmund's youth, probably it all was destroyed in World War One.

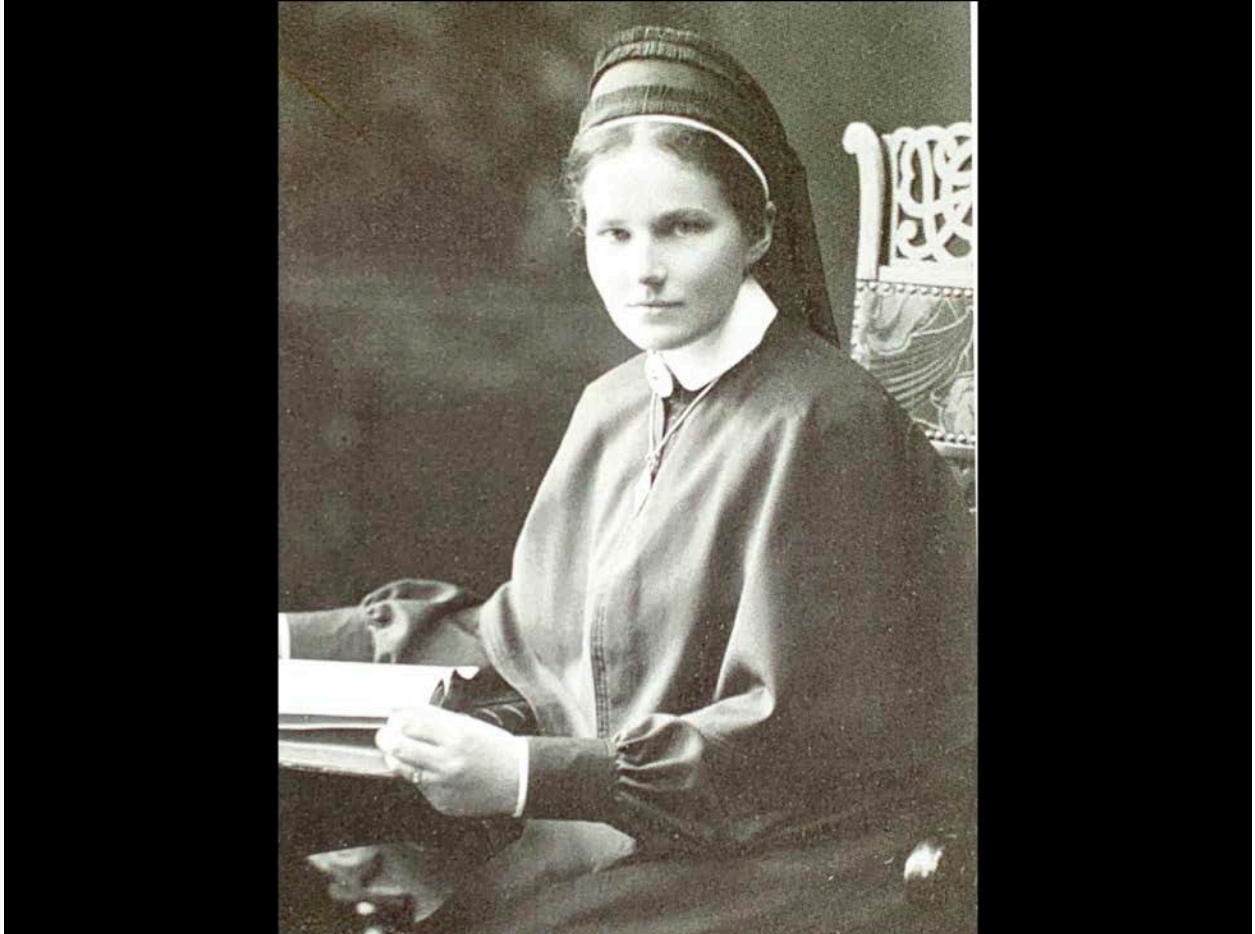




Here the earliest photo I could find of Sigmund, at age 33 in 1906:



In that year, 1906, a nurse named Lucie Gast was brought into his parents' home to take care of the bedridden father with a heart condition.



Sister Lucie was a devout Protestant with strict ethical principles. My father wrote: "There was a giant contrast between the lively, cosmopolitan Morgenroth family and the dutiful nurse who had the misfortune of falling in love with the son of her patient. She was a regal, quiet beauty.

Sigmund compared her to Giorgione's 'Venus', calling her 'My Giorgionele'."



While Sigmund's father was still alive there was no talk about him marrying the Christian Sister Lucie. But shortly after the patient's death in 1907 the wedding took place as a civil ceremony.

Here the marriage license:

Standesamt II. 643 Gültig nur zum Zwecke der Trauung (§ 82 des Gesetzes vom 6. Februar 1875).

**Bescheinigung der Eheschließung.**

Zwischen dem *Samuel Benjamin Morgenroth*  
wohnhaft in *Bamberg*  
und der *Lucia Johanna Frieda Amelia Gast*  
wohnhaft in *Wienberge*

ist vor dem unterzeichneten Standesbeamten heute die Ehe geschlossen worden.

*Charlottenburg*, am *28. September* 190*7*

Der Standesbeamte  
*[Signature]* (Unterschrift)

(Siegel)

Anmerkung: Das Reichsgesetz über die Beurkundung des Personenstandes und die Eheschließung vom 6. Februar 1875 bestimmt im § 82:  
„Die kirchlichen Verbindungen in Beziehung auf Taufe und Trauung werden durch dieses Gesetz nicht berührt.“

A 'mixed marriage' was quite unusual at that time, and in provincial Bamberg, their engagement and wedding stirred up so much spiteful neighborhood chatter - among Protestants and Jews alike - that the newlyweds moved to Paris.

That's their MOVE NUMBER ONE of eight - please keep count.

Blessed with fluent French, an adventurous spirit and entrepreneurial cleverness, Sigmund founded a telephone company which also produced the first office intercoms. The Morgenroths prospered.



Sigmund gained respect as a businessman:



Their sons were born in Paris: Henri and Ernest, in 1909 and 1910:



And Charles was born in 1912:





They enjoyed seaside vacations:



I love this next photo because it captures Sigmund's true nature:



In 1914 the outbreak of World War One abruptly ended the good life. Suddenly France was hostile territory for Germans. As a patriotic German Jew, Sigmund felt his services were needed in the Fatherland, and so they hastily moved to Berlin.

## MOVE NUMBER TWO -



Almost everything left behind in Paris - assets, house, furniture, artworks - was confiscated by the French as enemy spoils. Landing in Berlin with three little children and relatively penniless, Sigmund had to begin anew. He produced grenade fuses and other weapon components for the German military. As the War dragged on for five years, the family's quality of life descended into poverty and hunger. My father later wrote: "We growing boys

wore the same shoes until our toes became painfully bent.”

When the war ended in 1919, Sigmund seized a business opportunity in Bad Homburg. The family moved once again.

MOVE NUMBER THREE -



There he founded a factory for electric clocks, and prosperity steadily returned. Here Sigmund and Lucie in 1924:



Sigmund's desk in Bad Homburg:



Seaside vacations were again possible:



The kids had grown:



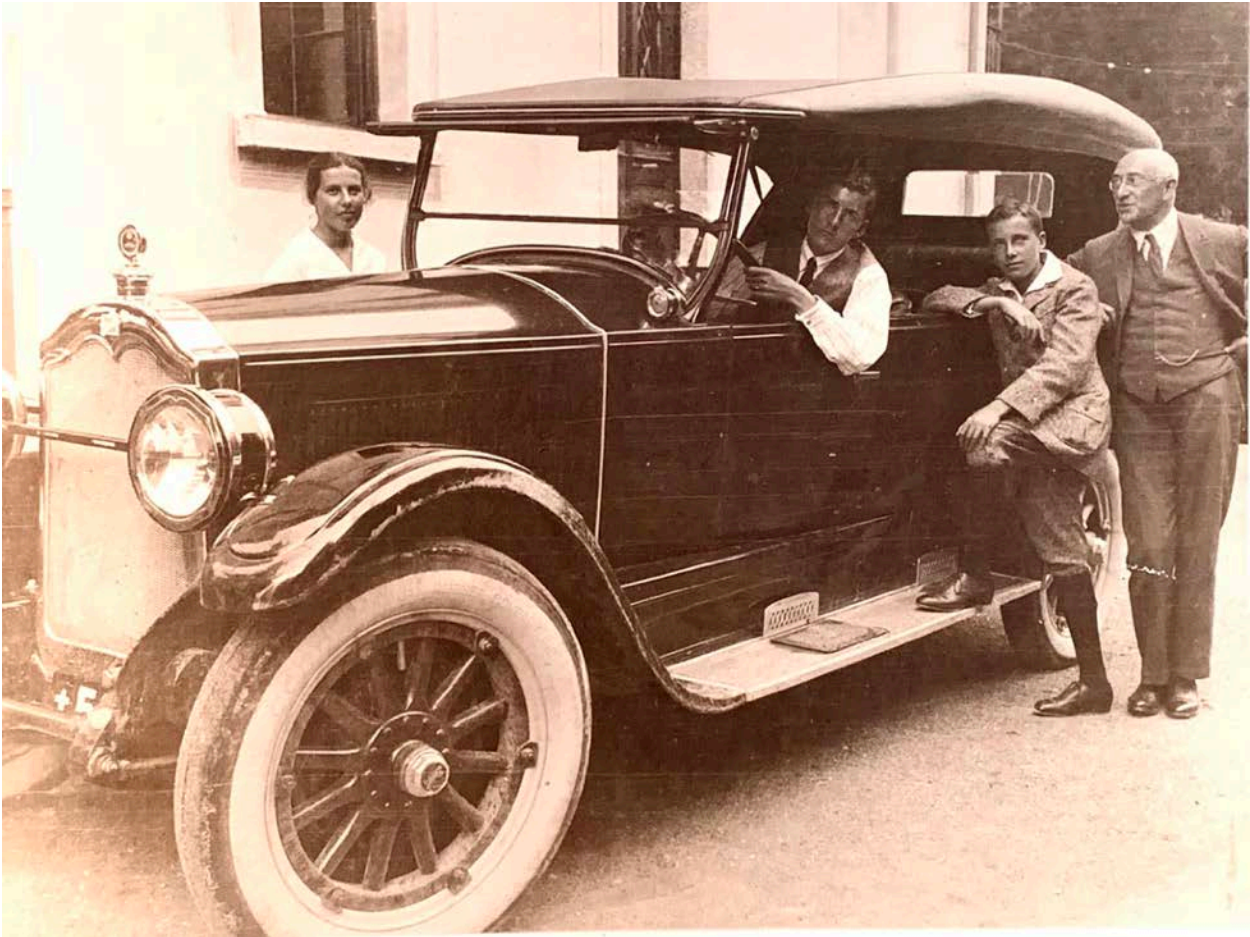


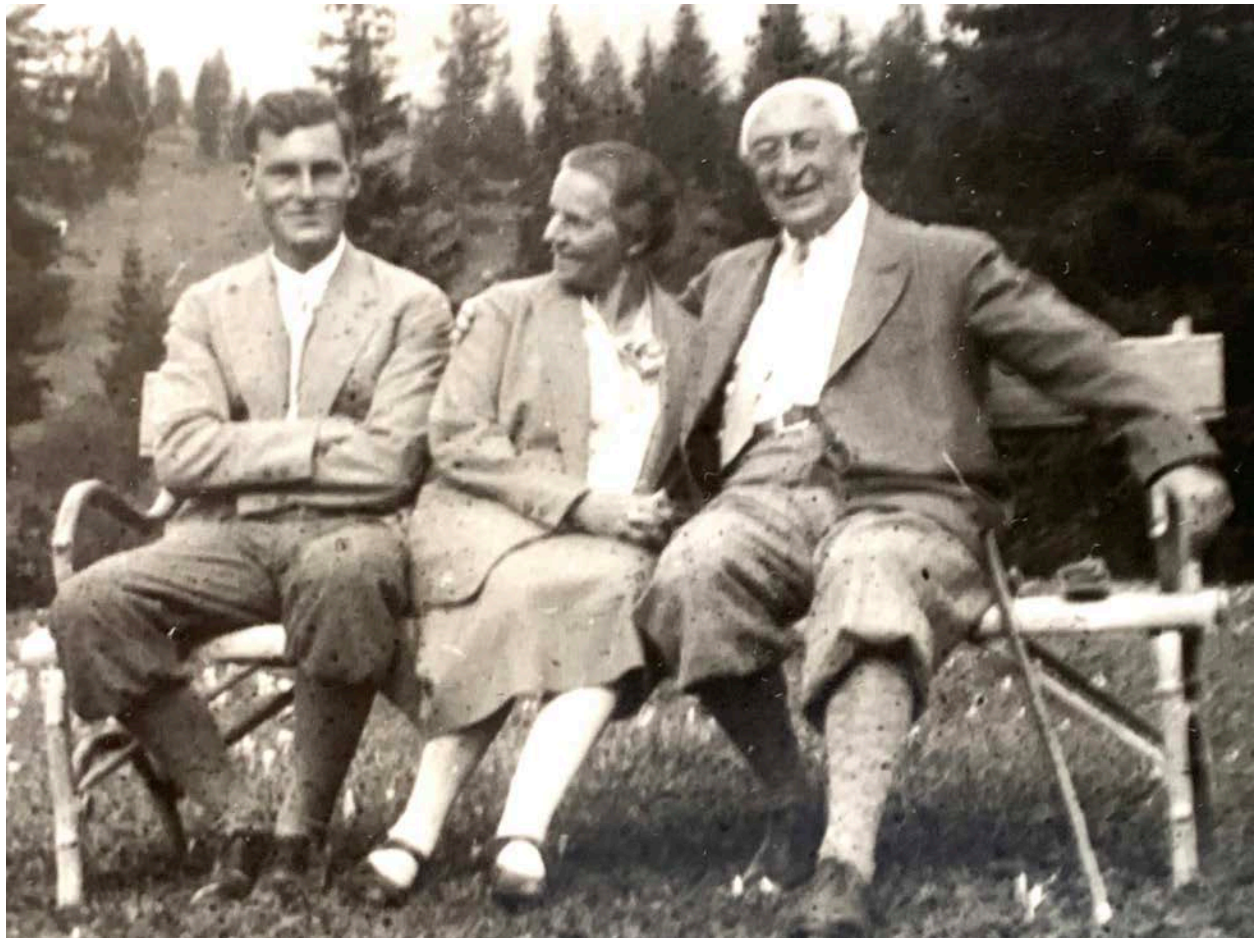
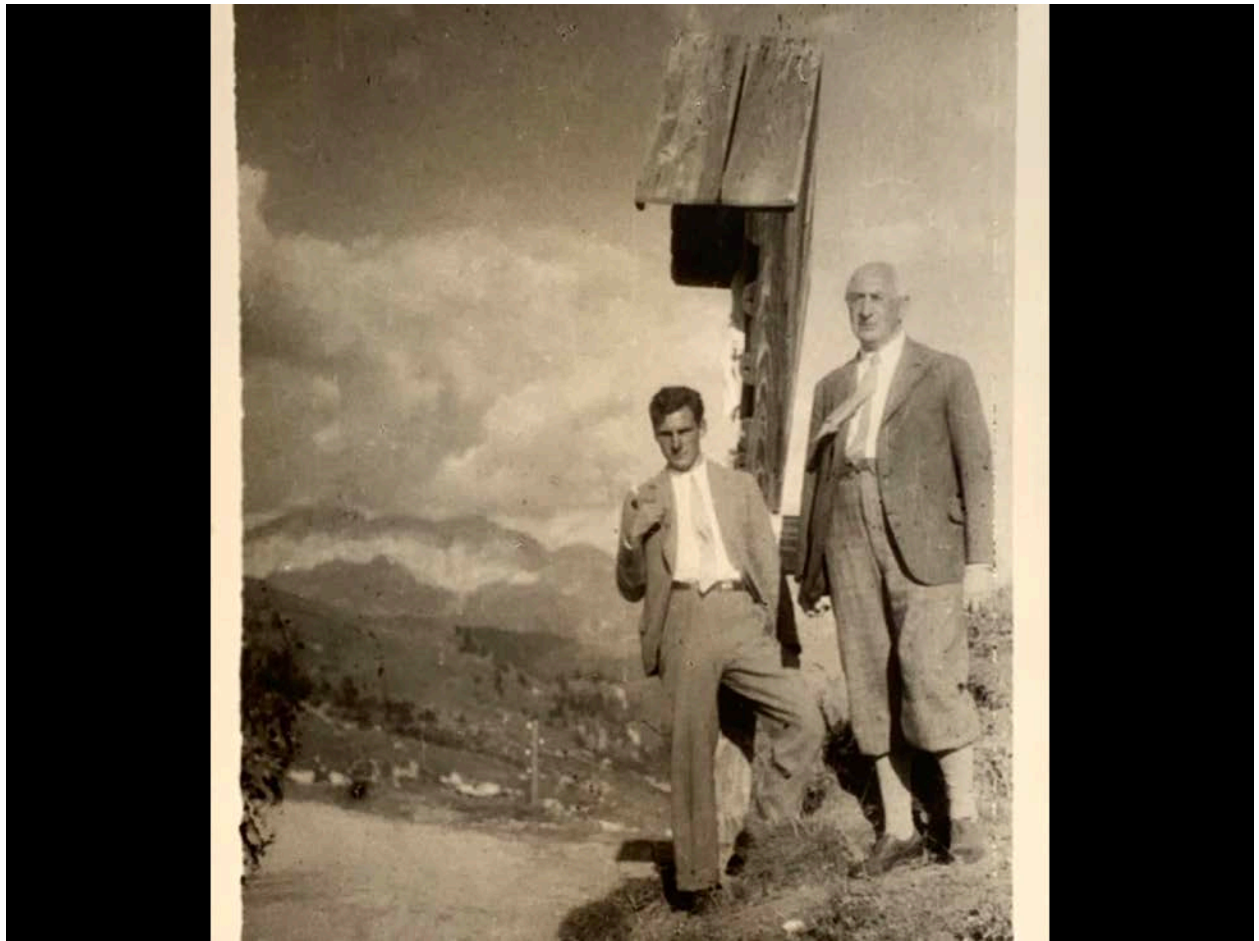
In 1925, the growth of Sigmund's business led them to move to the larger city Frankfurt am Main.

MOVE NUMBER FOUR -



They took mountain vacations in their very own car:





And it was during this longer stable period that Sigmund began collecting medals and plaquettes. This purchase list shows the first piece was bought on May 19, 1926:

<u>1.) Plaketten und Medaillen</u>		<u>Kosten</u>	<u>Spesen</u>
19. Mai 1926	in Frankfurt durch A.E. Cahn aus Versteigerung Waldor von Moltlein Nr. 125 Puttenplakette Rm. 57.60 Nr. 563) drei silberne, ovale Nr. 564) plaketten Rm 282.- Nr. 565)	RM 339.60	
14. August 1926	A.E. Cahn Hans Peiser Charitas	" 220.-	
20. Okt. 1926	Dr. Lederer, Berlin 4 Kinderplaketten, spaet. +	" 1150.-	
6. Nov. 1926	Woreh Bln. Kind und Faunkind Duquenois	" 400.-	
	10 % Provision an Lyon Bln.		+ RM 40.-
9. Nov. 1926	Brueder Lyon Mohn. Silur a. Erd franz., wohl aus Waldor	" 300.-	
9. Nov. 1926	Dr. Lederer, Bln. Amor Fra Ant. da Brassia spaeter getauscht,	" 200.-	
29. Dez. 1926	A.E.C. Plkt. Nympe und Faun, Kind, spaet, franz.	" 400.-	
	15 % Provision an A.E.C.		+ RM 60.-
Dez. 1926	Eugen Weimmer, Bln. d. Lederer + 2 Kinderplaketten nach Dant...		

The list only goes to 1931 but reveals his collection contained around 140 pieces by then, with much more to follow.

13

		<u>Kosten</u>	<u>Spesen</u>
Februar 1931	Paris, Bourgey 6 Floetner und 3 andere deutsche Plaketten, bezahlt durch Marcel Meyer ffrs. 12500.-	RM 2100.-	
Februar 1931	Pini, Bruessel, 9 Medaillen, L 80.-.-	RM 1632.-	
Februar 1931	Bruessel, Fierex 2 Antike Nachb.	RM 120.-	
Februar 1931	Amsterdam, Schulmann Caraffa, Rovere, Jul. II	RM 550.-	

In 1933 the Third Reich was officially declared. Having learned from the 1914 experience of hastily fleeing Paris and losing so much, Sigmund prepared efficiently and thoroughly for the family's second emigration - ironically, back to Paris.

## MOVE NUMBER FIVE -

Stephan described a typically clever strategy of his father: "The Nazis put stringent limits on financial assets that emigrants could take out of Germany, but early on there were no restrictions on personal belongings, furniture and works of art. So Sigmund immediately purchased several coin collections from old aristocratic families as well as more medals and plaquettes."

There's a sweet irony in that the Nazis limiting currency exports resulted in Sigmund's collections being enriched all the more.

And as for Sigmund buying antique coin collections, this thirty-three page list shows 1,766 collectible coins paid for with non-exportable Reich Marks, and all those coins landed in Paris - the first half of an original money laundering scheme.

Griechen

*Prüfung der ...  
...  
...  
...*

1	Taraconensis Osca Denar Heiss i	20.-
2	Polonia Didrachmon BMC 112	20.-
3	Syracusa Denar Sambon 225	10.-
4	Neapolis Didrachmon Ewa- S.365	60.-
5	Taras Didrachmon Evans IV,2	25.-
6	E.VII,61	45.-
7	E.VII,61	40.-
8	E.VII,34 Cotes 499	45.-
9	E.p.177, lo.C.480	17.-
10	Herakleia Trihemiobol BMC-	12.-
11	Hyele Didrachmon BMC- Beizeichen Schlange	65.-
12	92	45.-
13	Metapont Stater 16	35.-
14	Didrachmon lo2	155.-
15	Syracusa Stater BMC 1	65.-
16	Thurium Distater BMC 38	150.-
17	Stater 38	45.-
18	Kroton Didrachmon 30	25.-
19	-	65.-
20	Lokroi Stater 2	75.-
21	Agragas Tetradrachmon BMC 38	70.-
22	Gelas Didrachmon BMC 25	35.-
23	Tetradrachmon 40	100.-
24	Segeste Didrachmon Weber Collection 1514	50.-
25	Syrakusal Tetradrachmon Bähringer 240/41	40.-
26	528	110.-
27	680	x 30.-
28	Tudeer llo	150.-
29	BMC Kocinth 29	30.-
30	Agathokles Tetradrachmon BMC 347	110.-
31	Philistis Tetradrachmon Zu BMC 553 ff	60.-
32	Sikilo-karthagisch, Tetradrachmon Cat.de Luynes 1081	110.-
33	Thrakia Skostokes Tetradrachmon Müller Lysimachos 99	120.-
34	Lysimachos Tetradrachmon Müller fest	40.-
35	Neapolis (Makedonien) Archaischer Stater BMC 2	38.-
36	Thrako-makedonische Stämme Stater Babelon Tr.1745	38.-
37	Philippos II Tetradrachmon (Amphipolis) Müller 33	20.-
38	Alexandros der Grosse Tetradrachmon, M.24	20.-
39	1370	15.-
40	Antigonos Gonatas Tetradrachmon	35.-
41	Larissa Drachme Hermann T.8,1	38.-
42	Perchaibol Trihemiobol BMC 2	22.-
43	Korkyra Stater BMC 122	20.-
44	Dyrrhachion BMC 4	15.-
45	Anaktoron Stater BMC 2	15.-

1736	<u>Lübeck</u>	Med. 1710	20.-
1737		Brömsentaler 1597	20.-
1738		Taler 1745	10.-
1739		Halbtaler 1568	14.-
1740	<u>Lüneburg</u>	Taler 1547	14.-
1741	<u>Magdeburg</u>	Halbtaler 1627	30.-
1748		Viertaltaler 1624	25.-
1749	<u>Neuss</u>	Taler 1556	32.-
1750	<u>Nürnberg</u>	Schautaler 1551	30.-
1751		3 Taler	12.-
1752		Taler 1745	14.-
1753		Halbtaler 1631	10.-
1754	<u>Prag</u>	Halbtalerförm. Medaille	15.-
1755	<u>Regensburg</u>	Taler 1549	55.-
1756		Taler 1603	17.-
1757		Halber Glückstaler 1586	30.-
1758		Halbtaler 1646	12.-
1759		2 Halbtaler	4.-
1760		20 Kreuzer 1755	15.-
1761	<u>Wismar</u>	Taler 1608	25.-
1762	<u>Joachimstal</u>	Med. a. d. Sündenfall H. Reinhardt	75.-
1763		Med. Opferung Jakobs	40.-
1764		Med. Kreuzigung	24.-
1765		Med. Kreuzigung	18.-
1766		Med. von Jakob Stampfer	32.-
			<hr/>
			RM 50.000.-


Here another example of Sigmund's bureaucratic thoroughness: the Frankfurt Police's official document of the Morgenroth change of residence to Paris, dated December 30, 1933. Most Jews fleeing Germany later on certainly did not - or could not - register their 'change of residence' with the police.



Vordruck b (grün)

## Polizeiliche Abmeldung

(Großer Meldeschein)



Neuer Tagesstempel.

für amtliche Vermerke.

Am 30. Dezember 1933 verzieht — verziehen

von Frankfurt a. Main (Ort, Ortsteil) Paris (Ort, Ortsteil) St. Germain (Ort, Ortsteil) St. Germain (Ort, Ortsteil)

nach Le Chemin de Paris (Ort, Ortsteil) Armees du Blécan (Ort, Ortsteil) Armees du Blécan (Ort, Ortsteil)

Stoße-Plan Nr. 10 Kreis Paris

Stoße-Plan Nr. — Kreis Seine et Oise Staat Frankreich (wenn Ausland)

Stoße-Plan Nr. — Kreis — Staat — (wenn Ausland)

Für Meldepflichtige, die ihren Wohnsitz nicht ausgegeben haben: Zweck und voraussichtliche Dauer des Aufenthalts:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
Fb. Nr.	Familienname (bei Frauen auch Geburtsname und gegebenenfalls Name aus der letzten früheren Ehe)	Vornamen (sämtliche, Rufname ist zu unterstreichen)	Familienstand (ledig, verhe., verw., geschied.)	Beruf (genaue Angabe, ob selbständig oder Angestellter, Arbeiter usw.)	Geburts-			a) Geburtsort b) Kreis c) Staat (wenn Ausland)	Staatsangehörigkeit	Refugion	Wohnung (Ort, Straße, Hausnummer bei der letzten Personenstandsaufnahme (10. Oktober jeden Jahres))	Ob zu letzt eigene Wohnung oder bei wem in Untermiete, Schlafstelle, Dienst oder zu Besuch
					Tag	Monat	Jahr					
1	<u>Morgenoth</u>	<u>Sigmund</u>	<u>wif.</u>	<u>Fabrikanten</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>Bamberg Bayern</u>	<u>mes.</u>	<u>Reente 10</u>	<u>27 an</u>	

Eigenhändige Unterschrift des Abgemeldeten: S. Morgenoth

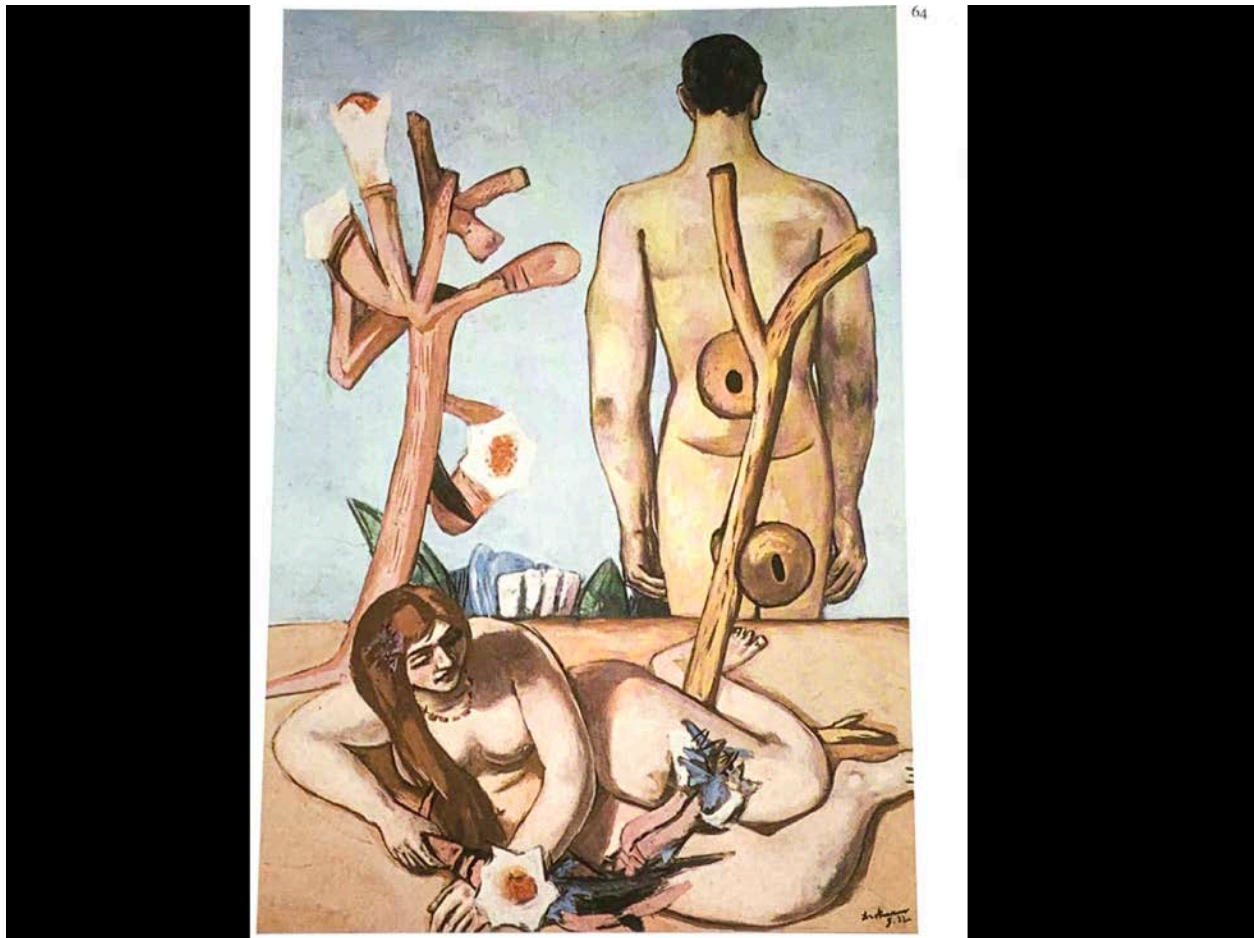
Eigenhändige Unterschrift des Wohnungsinhabers bei Untermietern: Frankfurt a. Main (Ort)

Eigenhändige Unterschrift des Hauseigentümers oder seines Vertreters: den 30. Dezember 1933 (Tag der Abgabe an die Polizei)

Dir A 4.

With the wealth of belongings Sigmund and Lucie brought to Paris, they set up a comfortable home in a small villa near Versailles. Sigmund reconnected with business associates from his first Paris residency two decades earlier and rapidly regained his financial footing.

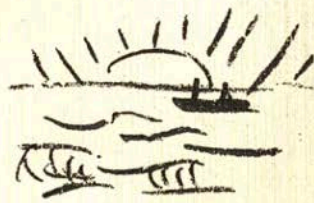
In early 1934 my father Stephan discovered the paintings of Max Beckmann which had just been banned by the Nazis as degenerate art. Stephan later wrote: “I immediately knew this art would determine the direction of my life.” He wanted to purchase one large canvas, entitled ‘Man and Woman’:



But as a 23 year old student, he had no funds, so he asked his father for assistance. Although Sigmund was by no means convinced of the value of Beckmann's paintings, he trusted his son's enthusiasm and financed Stephan's first purchase. And in the following six years he backed the commissioning of no fewer than 21 oil paintings and a set of lithographs for a book Stephan published.

STEPHAN LACKNER

DER MENSCH  
IST KEIN  
HAUSTIER



ILLUSTRIERT VON MAX BECKMANN

STEPHAN LACKNER

DER MENSCH IST  
KEIN HAUSTIER

DRAMA



MIT SIEBEN ORIGINALLITHOGRAPHIEN VON  
MAX BECKMANN

EDITIONS COSMOPOLITES PARIS



One of the commissioned paintings was a portrait of Stephan as a student in Paris:

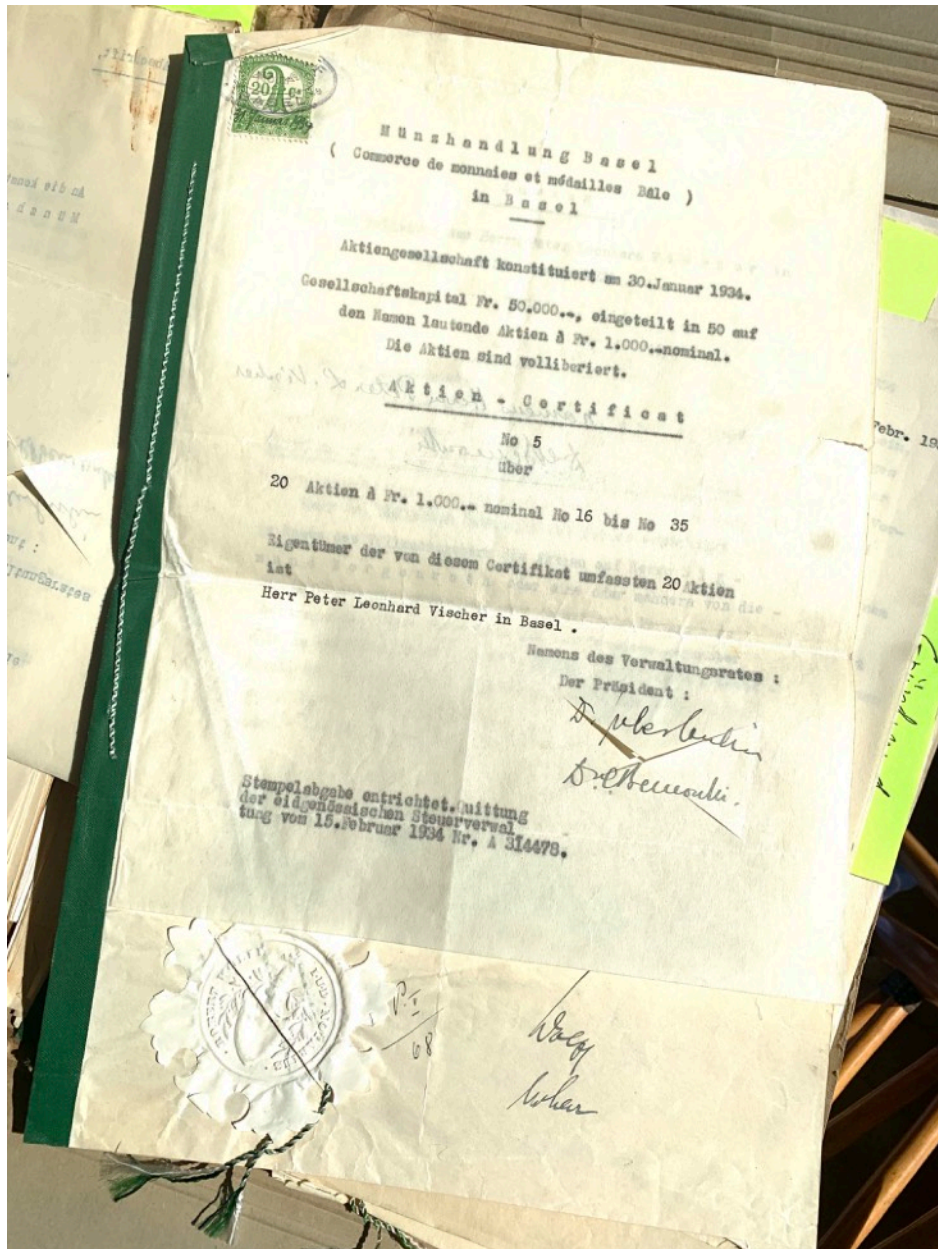


Some time later Sigmund and Stephan even committed to monthly stipends for Beckmann, also in exchange for paintings, but this gave Beckmann the financial and emotional stability to continue his creative life even during his exile in Amsterdam.

Of course Sigmund the businessman assumed Stephan would soon sell many of these works for a profit, but

Stephan's various ambitious efforts seemed cursed for almost two decades.

With the 1,766 antique coins now in Paris, Sigmund wanted to complete his money laundering and transmute the coins back into cash. His business instinct proclaimed: why not found a coin dealership, complete with board of directors and stockholders! He convinced coin experts in Basel, Switzerland, to participate, and, with many lawyers and legal documents involved, in 1933 the Muenzhandlung Basel became an official company.



Being in Switzerland, it was not endangered by Nazi confiscation. Sigmund wisely included his three sons as shareholders. Over time he sold most of the coins through this venue.

Although the Nazis didn't invade France until 1940, Sigmund recognized years earlier that Jews in France would be in increasing danger. Antisemitism within France was becoming more threatening, and Nazi spies and provocateurs were infiltrating French society. So, with his customary courage in anticipating and responding to foreseeable dangers, he convinced his youngest son Charles to move to New York to pursue his ambition of dealing in antiquities, but also to serve as a scout for his parents. Then, on September 17, 1938 Sigmund wrote this letter to his other sons:

S. MORGENROTH  
96, Bd. Maurice Barrès  
Neuilly-sur-Seine, den 17.9.  
51/36

- 3 -

für Herrn Ernst

Liebe Kinder,

Unser gestriger Telefonanruf war leider nã wie ich es gewünscht hätte, denn wir waren wegen der Linie auf 6 Minuten beschrãnkt und wurden da

Durch den Besuch Chamberlains in Berchtsg wenigstens ein Aufschub der Ereignisse erreicht nicht einmal dieser Aufschub ist sicher. Ein Opt er augenblicklich von vielen Leuten gepredigt wi mir keineswegs berechtigt. Ich halte also alle V nahmen, mindestens von kommandem Mittwoch ab, fü und finde es nicht richtig, dass Du, lieber Rins Gedanken spielt, nach Paris zu reisen, während sen sind, so rasch wie möglich nach der Schweiz voraussichtlich in die Gegend von Lausanne, wobei folgende Adressen vorzumerken wären:

Fritz Lein, privat: Lausanne, 1, Chemin de la V

Sociétés E

Edmond Cha

Wir h von Dir, li noch den bl die gute Re Handtasche als Bahnkol

Heute prüfen, was alle Fille Nachmittag sitionen, s Paris 17<sup>o</sup>.

Herr bleiben, de jährigen Di

ja seiner Abstammung werken, und ich freu ren treuer Pflichten: scheinlich stiftete ich portablen Effekten u Seine Adresse ist: M. Favoresson (S.A.O.).

Ausser dies: noch die Adressen me:

Marcel Meyer, 1, R Tel.1

G.A. Tedesco, 80, 1 Beider Geschäftsad: Tel.

Vorsorglich Wolfradt an: 3, Allã leider nicht telefon:

Michels Fra: Sollte Michel eingez positionen.

Bei Finanz: Freunde Meyer und Te:

Eventl. sind die Kinder auch über Trude erreichbar! Adresse Hrs. Ulrich Friedmann, "The Dawn", 491 Steamboat Rd, Great Neck, N.Y., New York.

Ich komme mir etwas vor, als ob ich letzte Dispositionen gebe, aber man ist fast, ob man es will oder nicht, in einer derartigen Stimmung.

Nun noch einige Angaben für Dich, lieber Heini, die ich Dir von Jauch übermittle. Das "Tagebuch für den Autoingenieur" und ein Exemplar der Motorkritik und der A.T.Z. liegen bei Herrn Leppert, 68terstr.249 in Basel, Tel.45945. Ich werde wahrscheinlich die Münzhandlung bitten, die Sachen bei ihm abzuholen. Adresse der Münzhandlung: Münzhandlung Basel A.G., Freie Strasse 74, Basel. Tel. Basel 48.892.

Die Firma Deckel, hat, wie ich bereits gemeldet habe, abgeschrieben. Nun versucht es Jauch bei der Fachschule. Er ist der Meinung, dass er auch die Arbeiten, die die Fachschule nicht durchführen kann, unterbringen kann, besonders nachdem die ganze Situation einwandfrei reguliert ist.

Karl informierte mich noch über Jaschas geschäftliche Anforderungen, die er leider in der Hetze nicht mehr erledigen konnte.

Nun wünsche ich Euch allen Dreian, insbesondere auch der lieben Ira, von Herzen alles Gute und bitte Euch nochmals, auch im Namen der lieben Mama, Eure Dispositionen so vorsorglich wie möglich zu treffen. Ich finde, dass der Aufenthalt an der Riviera keineswegs besonders klug ist. Ich halte es für viel gescheiter, wenn Ihr Euch entschliessen könntet, an den Genfer See in die Nähe von Evian zu übersiedeln oder in die Freisone, wie z.B. in das herrliche Divonne. Es gibt dort in Divonne und sicherlich auch in Gex auch kleinere Hotels, und die Freisone ist an und für sich aussergewöhnlich billig, weil es dort keine Zölle gibt. Ich habe diese Dispositionen wohl überlegt, schon deshalb, weil Ihr doch nur in äussersten Notfälle in die Schweiz gehen wollt, und da wäre uns die Idee der nahen Grenze eine besonders grosse Beruhigung.

Dein letzter Brief, lieber Ernst, wegen des Waschzettels, ist wohl inzwischen überholt. Ich konnte selbst konstatieren, dass bereits der Gesamtindruck fertig war, und Du hast sicherlich in der Zwischenzeit das ganze Buch zur Korrektur erhalten. Dr. Kessel ist zweifellos ein Fumaler, aber allerbesten Willens. Im Übrigen dürften die Verzögerungen auch zum Teil davon herühren, dass keine klaren Adressangaben vorlagen.

Mit herzlichen Grüssen

*Yves Pige  
V. von Jauch Morgenst  
S. M. (M. M.)*

It basically informed Henri and Stephan about the growing danger and that he and Lucie were taking a steamship to the USA within months. He most urgently recommended that the sons also leave France, either by moving to Switzerland or joining Sigmund and Lucie on board. Stephan and Henri joined their parents' exodus, booking passage on the same ship to New York for April 19, 1939.

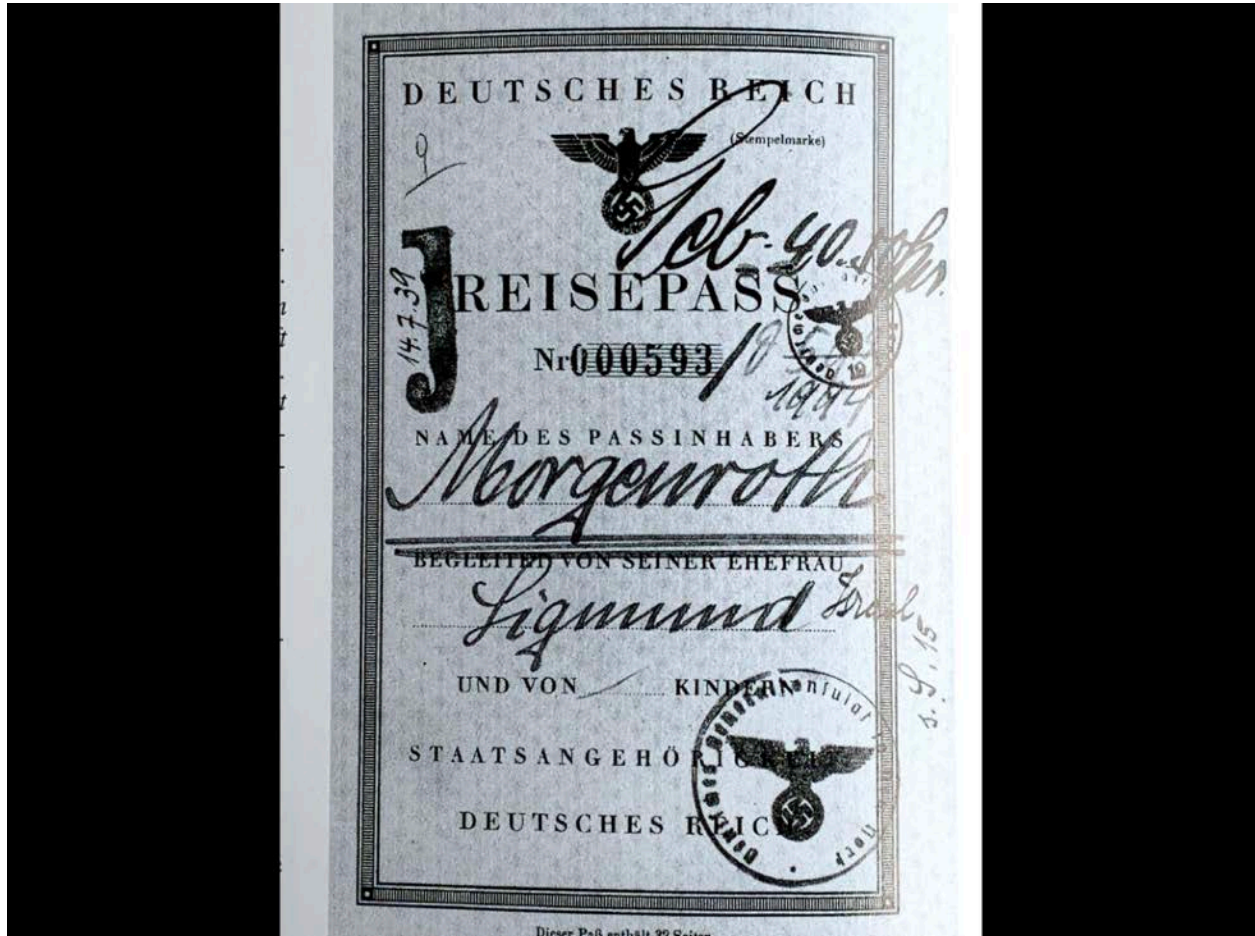
Half a day before departure the family heard on the radio that their ship had been destroyed by a fire in the harbor of Le Havre. All their belongings - including antiques, furniture, and the collection - were on that ship, as well as Stephan's 21 Beckmann paintings.

Imagine the despair felt by the family at this point. However, soon they were informed that all their possessions had not yet been loaded on board and were safely stored on the pier. Fortuitous incompetence! A few days later they boarded another ship, the Champlain, and made it to New York.

MOVE NUMBER SIX -



Imagine having to show this passport going through customs:



Thanks to Charles' diligent preparations, the family went directly to reserved hotel rooms on Central Park West.

And the crates with Stephan's twenty-one paintings were transported directly from the ship to the prominent New York art dealer Curt Valentin.

Charles soon introduced his brothers to other German speaking refugees involved in arts and literature. At a

soirée Stephan met the Austrian Elizabeth Pernkopf, nicknamed 'Puck' -who would fairly soon become his wife:



From his hotel room desk, Sigmund established transatlantic postal relationships with friends and business partners in Europe.

One such correspondence involved the cultural philosopher Walter Benjamin. Stephan had befriended him in 1936 in Paris.



financial assistance, but he had remained indecisive. Now in New York in June 1939, both Stephan and Sigmund received newsy letters from Benjamin in Paris. After an update about his struggles came the apologetic request for more survival funds. Sigmund wired funds to Paris. After Germany invaded Poland in September 1939 Benjamin wrote again, finally requesting funding for fleeing to the US. Sigmund emphatically confirmed his willingness to assist, but Benjamin fled over the Pyrenees to Spain, and then committed suicide. Sigmund and Stephan were very saddened that their many efforts and offers had been in vain.

The Morgenroth's first New York autumn grew bitter cold. They decided to spend the Winter in Florida.

MOVE NUMBER SEVEN -

The sons rented them a Victorian style house with spacious garden in the Gulf of Mexico:



There, Stephan and Puck got engaged. I couldn't resist showing this photo:



Sigmund swam in the warm ocean almost daily. One day Puck saw Sigmund floating lifelessly far from shore. She swam out, pulled him onto the beach and pumped his chest free of water. A doctor determined a heart attack. When Sigmund got up and slowly ascended the house

steps, Stephan asked the doctor if that was wise. He shrugged and said “It makes no difference, he won’t survive the night anyway.” That was in March 1940. Although Sigmund’s heart never fully recovered, with his pulse never higher than 32 to 40 beats per minute, he lived another 23 years, until 1963. Pacemakers hadn’t yet been invented.

In mid-1940 the Nazis invaded Belgium and France. Beckmann, still hiding in Amsterdam, continued exchanging letters with Stephan, and Sigmund wired monthly payments to Holland, although doubting that Stephan would ever receive the commissioned paintings. The last money transfer on May 8th still reached Beckmann, two days before the German invasion of Holland. And then the connection was cut off. For five years the Morgenroths didn’t even know if the artist was still alive.

After a year in the USA, Sigmund sent Stephan and Puck - now newlyweds - on a mission to find a place where the Morgenroths could enjoy settling down. They explored and rejected options in Texas, Colorado, Idaho, Los Angeles, then discovered Santa Barbara and lived there for half a year before successfully convincing Sigmund and Lucie to move there as well.

MOVE NUMBER EIGHT -

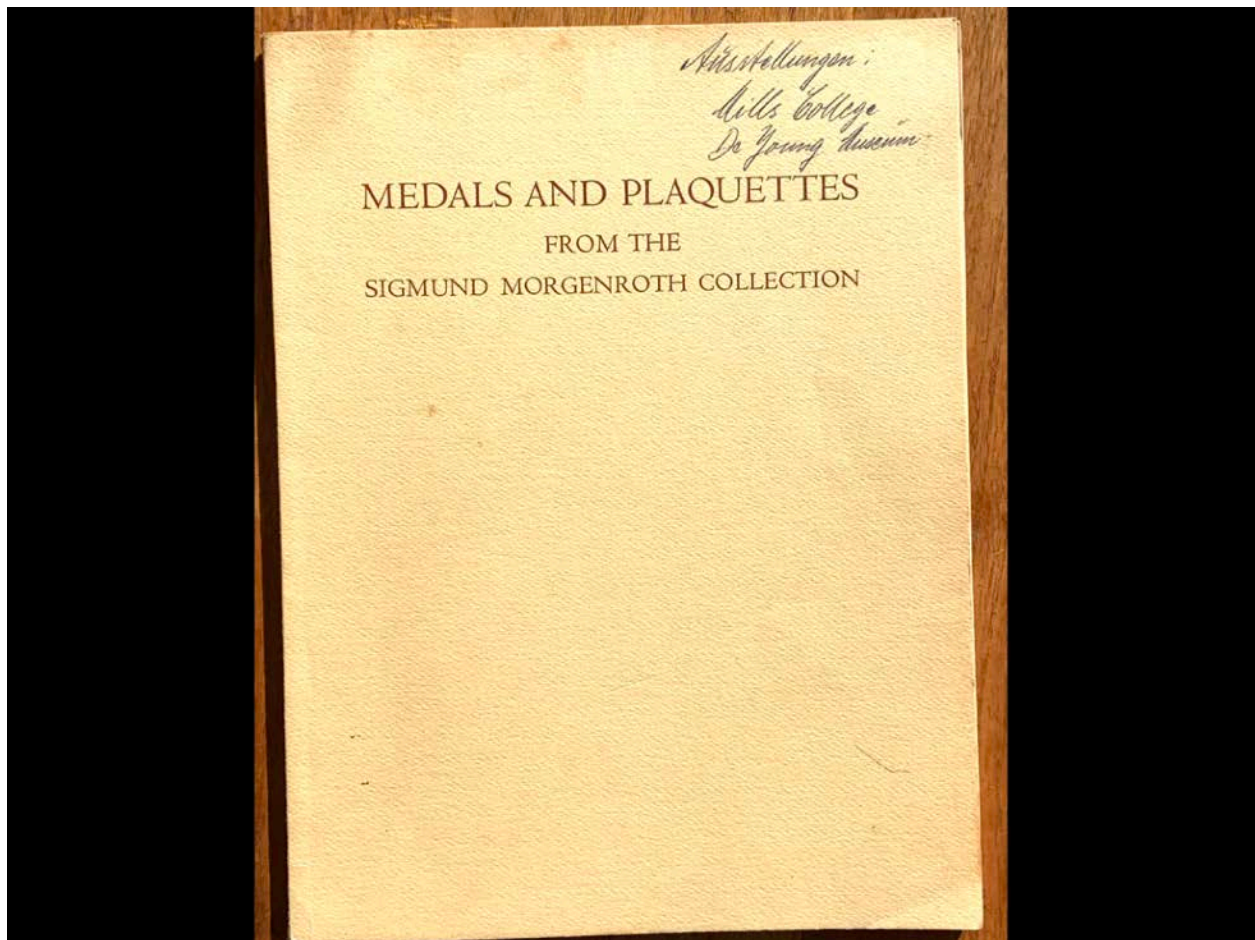
After the four day train ride from New York to Santa Barbara, Sigmund left the train on a stretcher lifted through the wagon window. He seemed weak and confused, and his family thought he wouldn't live long. But the Santa Barbara climate and peaceful environment were to grant him and Lucie more than two decades of relatively good health. They were never to travel again.

They rented a modest house in the sleepy suburb Montecito. With Puck and Stephan living in Santa Barbara proper and Henri in Los Angeles, Sigmund and Lucie received visits almost daily.

In 1942, Sigmund arranged the first US exhibition of his medal and plaque collection - at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, running from January to March, 1943. A second showing followed, at the Art Institute of Chicago, in April and May 1944.

The catalog produced for the Chicago exhibition became a useful reference work for the collection. Sigmund's handwritten note on this copy says "Exhibitions: Mills College and de Young Museum."





And the pages are marked to show which works were lent to each institution. I couldn't find any more details about those shows.

# MEDALS

## Italy

### PISANELLO (Antonio Pisano)

C. 1395-1455. Active in Verona, Ferrara, Mantua, Milan, Rimini, Naples and Rome.

- 1 JOHN VIII PALAEOLOGUS, Emperor of Constantinople (1390-1425-1448)

Rev. The Emperor on horseback in rocky landscape, behind him mounted page

Lead. 110mm. Large margin

Hill 19. Dreyfus 1

From the Pini Collection, Florence

Signed. The medal was made between February 29, 1438, and January 10, 1439, at Ferrara where the Emperor attended the Oecumenical Council.

- 2 THE SAME

Lead. 104mm. One hole at top

From the Whitcombe Greene Collection

(Cat. 1)

- 3 FILIPPO MARIA VISCONTI, third Duke of Milan (1391?-1412-1447)

Rev. The Duke riding to left, behind him mounted page, a third horseman in the background, rocky landscape

Lead. 103mm. One hole at top

Hill 21. Dreyfus 3

From the Whitcombe Green Collection

(Cat. 2)

Signed. C.1441. The only other specimen of 103 mm. which Hill mentions is in the Museo Correr in Venice (Hill 21j).

- 4 NICCOLÒ PICCININO of Perugia

most famous citizens of the town, the Condottiere Braccio da Montone and his pupil Piccinino. When found the medal was coated with a mortarlike substance.

Pl. I

- 5 LIONELLO D'ESTE, second Marquis of Ferrara (1407-1441-1450)

Rev. A head with three infant faces; on either side a kneepiece suspended from an olive branch

Bronze. 66mm. Brown patina

Hill 24. Dreyfus 6

From the Grandprey Sale (Paris, Ciani, Feb. 20-22, 1935)

Signed. C. 1441-1443. The three-faced head probably means: Prudence as the defender of Peace and Property.

- 6 LIONELLO D'ESTE

Rev. Youth and Age, and impresa of mast and sail

Bronze. 68mm. Blackish brown patina

Hill 26

Signed. C. 1441-1444

Pl. I

- 7 LIONELLO D'ESTE

Rev. Blindfolded lynx

Bronze. 66mm. One hole at top. Blackish brown patina

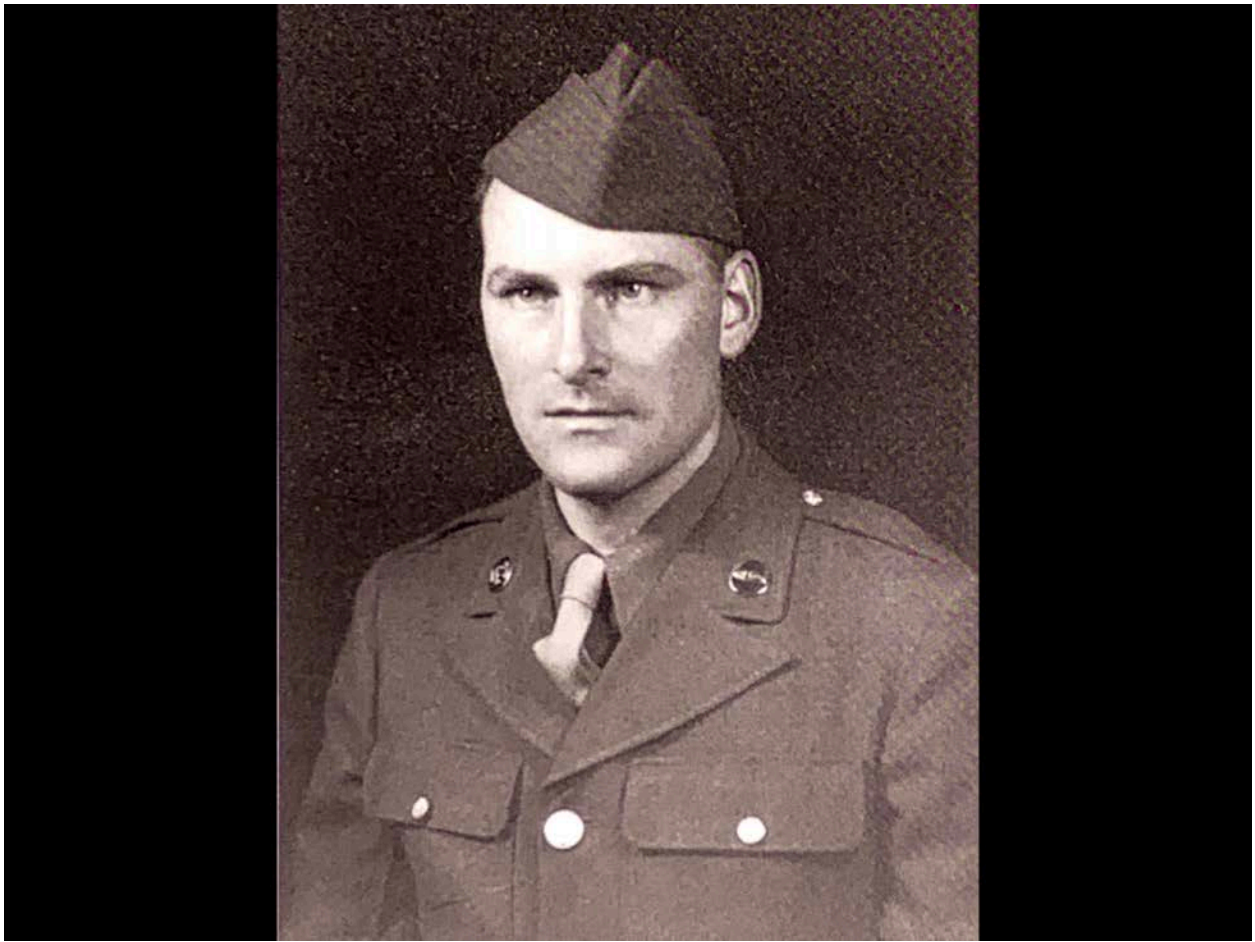
Hill 28. Cf. Dreyfus 8

From the Whitcombe Greene Collection

(Cat. 3b)

Signed. C. 1441-1444. The animal on the reverse signifies statecraft.

November 1943: as the Third Reich became a global threat, Stephan was drafted and sent off to Europe as US soldier, leaving Puck and Henri to take care of Sigmund and Lucie. Understandably, they all worried a great deal about Stephan, who served as an interpreter and reconnaissance expert in France and Germany.



But when World War Two ended in May 1945, he returned to Santa Barbara alive, to everyone's great relief.

The Morgenroths wrote friends and relatives to see who had survived the war and the Third Reich. Many letters remained unanswered. Beckmann, who had hidden in Amsterdam throughout the Nazi occupation, did respond, with the news that he intended to emigrate to New York. Soon thereafter he succeeded, with Sigmund's and Stephan's support.

Stephan had promised Puck that they could have a child after Hitler was defeated, and the promise was promptly fulfilled: in June 1946 Peter was born. That's me.  
Here being held by my Omama:



During the new era of peace, the Morgenroths had several family gatherings:



Henri, with second wife Ruth and daughter Michelle, drove up to Santa Barbara from Los Angeles. Charles and his wife Marion lived in New York but took the train to California.

About these reunions Stephan wrote: “My father gave patriarchal speeches and magnanimously solved all problems in the world.”

In 1947 my parents moved back to Europe with me still a baby. But after three years, letters from Sigmund and Lucie revealed their increasing loneliness and declining

health. So in late 1950 Puck and Stephan returned to Santa Barbara to take care of them, bringing along their newborn son, Tom - and of course me.

Sigmund and Lucie had purchased a two-parcel property in Montecito, with two older houses. They lived in the larger house and wanted us Lackners to move in next door, which we did.



I already shared something about this period of being neighbors. It was the largest block of time we all had together.



My father described this era as follows: “My parents needed reliable caregiving. Papa still had heart blockages. When his pulse was very low or he was feeling ill, Puck had to run over and give him an injection - sometimes even at night. The parents were happy when we took them to the beach or on short walks. We wanted to respond to their every wish - which was sometimes hard

with us having three small children. Papa had hired Puck as his secretary, she took dictation and typed his extensive correspondence.”

Occasionally my mother came home from working with Sigmund, exhausted and close to tears - usually after I had heard - even through the hedge - Sigmund's voice, Prussian and scolding. When I tried to comfort her, she would comfort me instead, explaining that Opapa hadn't been angry with her, but rather with the recipient of the letter being dictated. So his shouting at Puck was a variation of 'kill the messenger', due to his frustration about being so distant from his businesses, and a letter taking weeks to arrive in Europe. But my poor mother also accepted Sigmund's wrath because our family really needed the money. To be fair, Sigmund usually was very sweet with Puck, thankful for how much she was assisting him. And, after all: Puck had once saved his life.

A few weeks ago I asked my brothers Lucas and Tom to share memories about life with the grandparents. They were seven and four years younger than me, respectively, and both understood very little German, so their perspective is interesting: First from Lucas, an abridged excerpt:

“I recall the musky smell and Victorian formality of their dim house filled with paintings and antiques, the mocha pastries dipped in coffee, the gurgling stone fishpond, the



wiring strung tree to tree connected to the alarm bell at our home to alert us to any emergency at Sigmund's, the juniper sentinels along the walkways, the family photo sessions on the lawn, with our backs turned to the house and mountains, and with Omama and Opapa surrounded by their progeny..."

Here such a family photo session from the 1953 reunion:



And the next family reunion about four years later, in 1957:



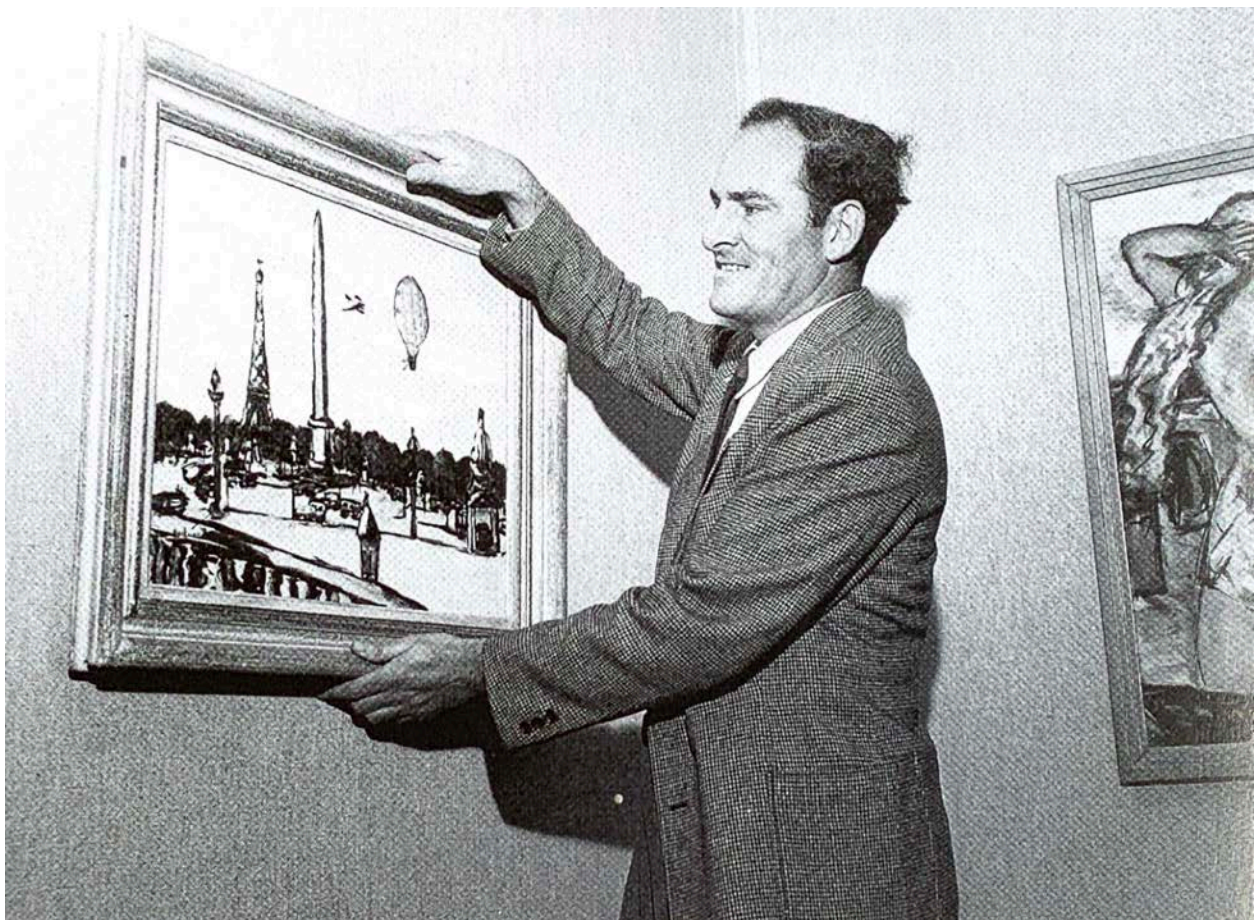
And now brother Tom's statement, also abridged:

“In my young mind, Sigmund and Lucy embodied a Europe that was equal parts romantic beauty and frightening menace. I have to say they did little to dissuade me of these extremes, not through any concerted effort, but more by the formality of our relationship. Although our family owes its existence to my grandfather's shrewd perception and his resources, Sigmund and Lucy remained stubbornly European in a place, California, that at the time embodied positive change and optimism.

Our compound was a perfect microcosm of the duality of our worlds. Growing up in my parents' house, I was enthralled with the contemporary art on all our walls, .. and the forward leaning music from Stravinsky to Woody Guthrie. I was in love with all of it despite my shyness.... My grandparents dwelled in the house adjacent to ours. They lived about 100 feet and a continent away.... I inherited a portrait of my grandparents painted by local artist Don Freeman. I look at it with bemusement, because Mr. Freeman had the astute eye of a caricaturist combined with a very gentle view of human nature. I love it for what my grandparents could have been.”



In the 1950's and 60's Stephan arranged various Beckmann exhibitions both in the US and abroad. Finally Sigmund's enormous overall investment in Stephan's collection began to bear financial fruit.



At first the sales had a tragically small profit margin. My father later wrote: “We were anything but wealthy. Today one can’t believe how little my Beckmanns were worth and how difficult it was to sell them. But it had to be, even though my heart bled with each sale, when I had to sacrifice my favorite for an amount hardly higher than the original purchase price.”

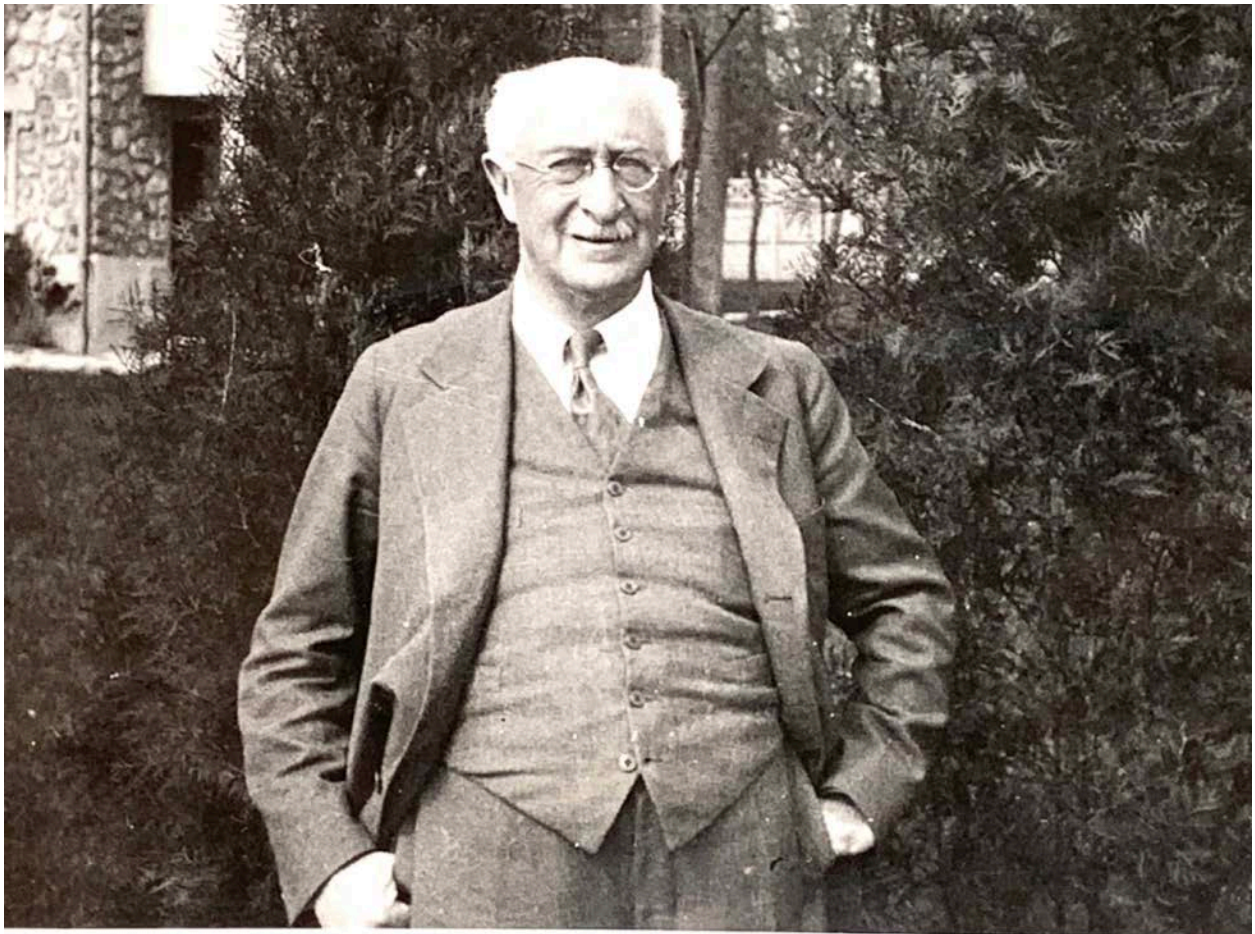


But Sigmund did live to see the prices rise exponentially and was relieved the sales at last were giving his 'starving writer' son financial stability. Of course, had he lived several more decades to see how high the prices ultimately were heading, he would have had another heart attack in amazement.

In 1961 the endgame began. Here an entry from Stephan's diary: "August 26: Yesterday my mother died - Sigmund and I were in the hospital with her. That afternoon she begged 'Don't leave me', and then the battle with death began - the battle for death, not against death."



And in his autobiography Stephan wrote: “As a widower my father deserved great pity. Outwardly he bore the loss with composure. He was truly happy when studying his art treasures. ... He sat in his easy chair, holding one of the bronze portraits and stroking it lovingly. Often he studied the pertinent historical literature and made notes. Seeing him immersed in such intellectual fascination with an almost physical abandonment is how I best remember him.”







On the back side, successful peace negotiations are taking place, with friendly words such as “I am pleased if you are pleased”:



Sigmund gave me the medal for my 16th birthday. I guess he didn't find it appropriate for his formal collection. And I apologize if my sharing it now also seems inappropriate. But I still cherish the gift because this image often comes to mind when I see headlines about today's politicians negotiating national or international agreements.

During his final years, Sigmund dealt with diminished income from Europe and rising expenses in Montecito. Many letters between Sigmund and his sons in 1962 involve liquidating antiques, paintings, furniture and even the collection. Charles, as an art dealer and curator at the Metropolitan, helped his father find buyers and secure sales. But when it came to the medals and plaquettes, profit was not the crucial factor. Early on, Sigmund and his three sons agreed the collection should not be dissolved for maximum total profit.

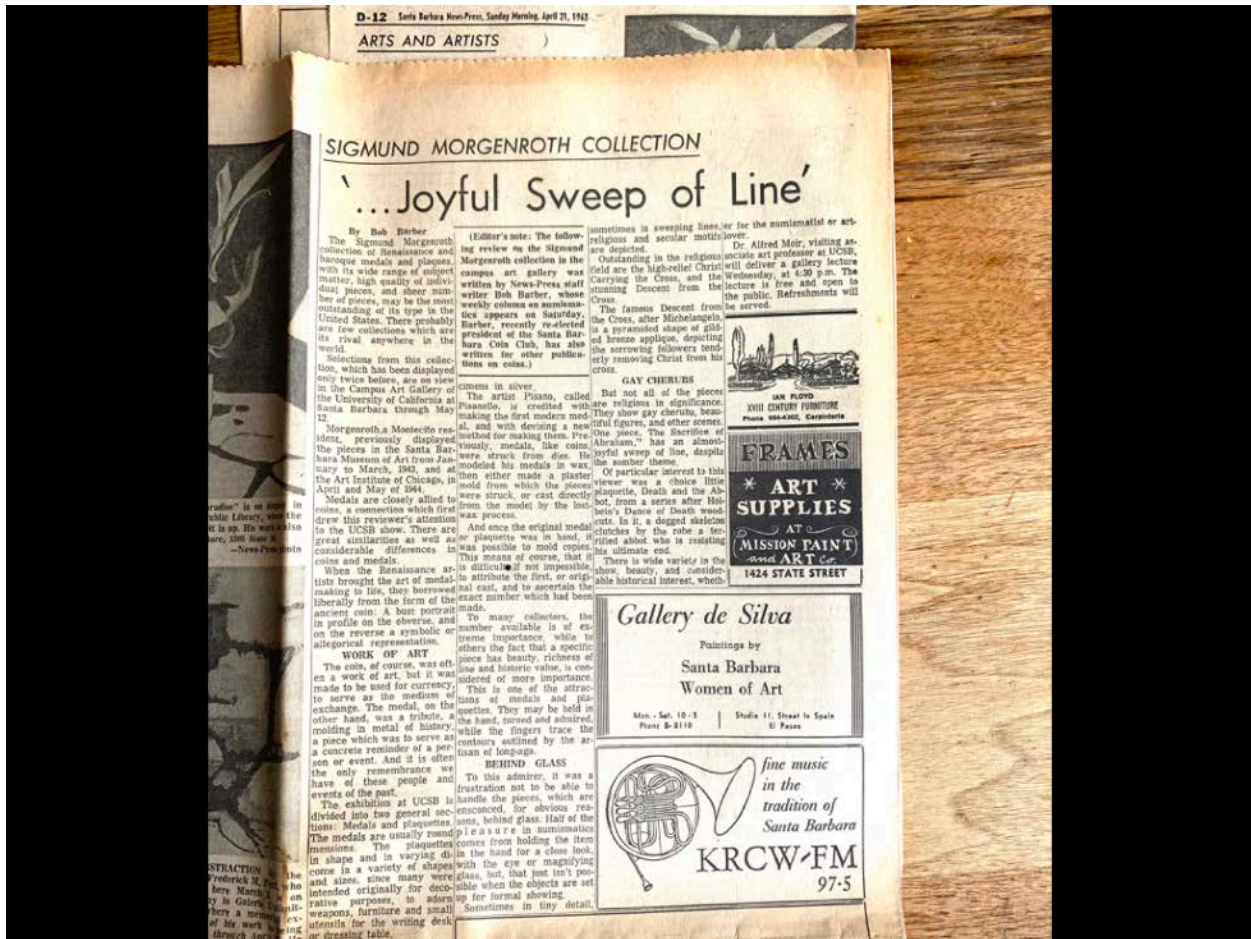
Henri and Charles negotiated with several candidates interested in the full collection, including the Cleveland Museum of Art, The Kress Foundation and the newly founded LACMA.

However, Stephan, Puck and Henri were personal friends with faculty of this department, including David Gebhard, Alfred Moir, Howard Warshaw and William Dole. So a discussion about a purchase for this museum developed quite organically. Of the three museums in the running, the difference in the offers was secondary. Various factors were weighed, such as the larger museums having a higher public profile and their being more specialized in antiquities. But the decisive factor was the deep understanding of and respect for the collection that the faculty here revealed, so that Sigmund and all three sons chose UCSB as their clear preference.

Before a purchase became concrete a major exhibition of Sigmund's collection took place in these rooms, with 102 objects on display.

Here articles in the Santa Barbara News Press:





The opening reception was on Tuesday, April 16th 1963. Four days later, on April 20th, Sigmund Morgenroth passed away.

I'd like to think that Sigmund died in contentment, knowing that over one hundred pieces of his dear collection were being shared with the public in his beloved second home town - and knowing that his collection would most likely be acquired by this museum.

And so it came to pass: On May 22nd '63 the department signed a six month option because the UC Regents and UCSB Affiliates first had to approve the purchase and secure funds.

And almost six months later, on November 3rd, the Santa Barbara News Press reported the collection being, quote, 'acquired by the Art Gallery at UCSB':

D-10 Santa Barbara News-Press, Sunday Morning, Nov. 3, 1963  
ARTS AND ARTISTS

### Morgenroth Medal Collection at UCSB

By Harriette Von Breton  
The Sigmund Morgenroth Collection of Medals and Plaquettes is going to reside permanently in Santa Barbara at the University of California Art Gallery. The acquisition of this famous collection is another artistic feather in the University's cap. It is one of the five greatest collections of its kind in the world and it was very much desired by many other Museums and Galleries.

The collection consists of a large number of works of Renaissance Art, (medals and plaquettes), which are of the highest aesthetic quality and unusual historical interest. The exquisite craftsmanship and beauty of the pieces simply has to be viewed and enjoyed. The unique human interest stories they tell make them most fascinating to study.

Most of them date from the 15th through the early 18th centuries. They cover a wide range of personalities and historical events: John VIII Paleologus, Emperor of Constantinople (1390-1445-1448); the "Tyrant of Rimini," Sigismondo Pasdollo Malatesta; Isotta Dugliatti of Rimini, his mistress and later his wife; the Castle of Rimini, numerous members of the De'Medici family, Savonarola and so on.

The medals preserve the likenesses of the great princes, statesmen, soldiers, philosophers, churchmen, hierals, and artists of the Renaissance, and describe, in the images and inscriptions on the reverse, their philosophies and achievements, their ambitions and wishes, their loves and hatreds.

They are first hand historical documents. Their purpose was to establish a permanent memorial of a person or an event. A remarkable example (No. 99) was made by Bertoldo, Michelangelo's master. It tells the story of the escape of Lorenzo De'Medici from death, and the assassination of his brother, Giuliano De'Medici, 1492.

Most of the medals are made of bronze, some of lead, and a very few of other

was selected, to quote Mr. Silva for "subjective painting as opposed to non-objective abstract painting." This terminology could be fine fodder for an endless semantic argument; as-be-

The six young artists deal with a wide variety of subject matter and are individual stylists. Victor Maccasa, a San Francisco resident, is probably the most mature painter of the group. He is a Spanish immigrant and deals realistically with the human scene. His strange palette is peculiarly adapted to the forceful emotional content of his paintings.

Joyce Resendes, a Santa Barbara resident, shows landscapes with blazing, arbitrary colors. In both her pastels and oils she lays color on with a vigorous, uninhibited brush. Her paintings are strong and interesting, much of her color is beautiful.

James Armstrong, also a local artist, has recently shown at the De Silva Gallery. His paintings tend to be monochromatic in overall tone, moving forms building depth and tension. "Haunting of Hill House," is a blue monochrome, structural and moody.

Milton Garner of Oakland works in materials that have their own dimension. He uses pieces of petrified wood, small watch wheels, stones and other things to build heavy surfaces. He overlays these objects with paints and creates new volumes and surface textures.

Gerry Paltewa, also of Oakland, has shown recently at Gallery de Silva with her more famous husband, Lundy Siegrist, and her father-in-law, Lewis Siegrist. This is a new series of paintings. She uses asphalt emulsion and natural pigments. Her best pictures have dimension and sensitivity but these are repetitions and uneven.

Donald Berwick is a clever satirist. He is a talented draftsman and uses a mixed media. His paintings are pictorial and provocative. They are nearly all commentaries on the human scene and he is very

THIS MEDAL, in the collection of Sigmund Morgenroth now acquired by the Art Gallery at the University, is a likeness of the mistress of the "Tyrant of Rimini."

### Thannhauser Presents 75 Paintings to N.Y.

Justin K. Thannhauser, noted New York art collector and dealer who has been a summer resident of Santa Barbara over many years, has made a gift of 75 of his valued paintings in the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City. The gift will be transferred to the Museum after the donor's death, the Museum announced.

The collection, of superb quality, covers a period beginning about 100 years ago and extends into the recent past.

The Impressionists represented in the collection are Manet, Degas, Renoir and Pissarro. The Post-Impressionist group has important examples by the great initiators — Cezanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin. Also included are paintings and drawings from the generation associated with the early part of the century, such as Vuillard, Soutine and Rouault.

Twentieth Century painters included are Braque, Derain, Matisse and Modigliani.

The most important portion of the collection is 34 works by Picasso, tracing every phase of his development from 1896 to 1960. When these are added to the Picasso now owned by the Guggenheim Museum it will constitute one of the most comprehensive collections by this artist of any museum in the world.

Mr. Thannhauser is a close personal friend of Picasso and visits him frequently when in Europe.

There will be additional rooms especially designed to house the collection which will follow the original plans of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Mr. Thannhauser and his late wife spent their summers in Santa Barbara for many years, since that, took an active interest in local cultural activities, were patrons of the Music Academy of the West and of the Santa Barbara Art Museum. They left several hundred paintings by Picasso and other masters to the Museum. They also developed a special Spanish Exhibition in 1953, and in 1954, has now taken on

### Affiliates Plan Mexico Art Bus

The Art Affiliates of the University of California at Santa Barbara are planning a Mexico Art Bus. The bus will be a 1955 Chevrolet with a 1955 Chevrolet motor. It will be used for a tour of Mexico. The bus will be used for a tour of Mexico. The bus will be used for a tour of Mexico.

### Treasure Hunters At Museum

The Thursday Treasure Hunt will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Santa Barbara Art Museum. The hunt will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Santa Barbara Art Museum.

### Producer Two-Part

The producer of the two-part series will be Jack W. S. The producer of the two-part series will be Jack W. S.

### Music Gets New Lease; Due in April

The musical once known as "Picked a Daisy," which Richard Rodgers and Alan Jay Lerner planned to write, has lost its title but has a new lease on life.

Rodgers dropped out of the picture last July when it was obvious that Lerner wasn't going to complete his part of the work in time to meet contracted opening dates for this fall.

Lerner, who wrote this original libretto about the adventures of a girl with back for a developed extra-sensory perception, has now taken on

Here UCSB Chancellor Cheadle with Puck and Stephan:



And here a commemorative gift from this department to my parents, slightly damaged in storage, depicting Alfred Moir, Chairman Art Department, Stephan Lackner, and David Gebhard, Director, Art Gallery:





Stephan represented the Morgenroth family, since his father could no longer attend in person. Sigmund was reunited with his Giorgionelle Lucie in the cemetery in Montecito:





I'm certain Sigmund was greatly enamored of and inspired by the spirit of the Renaissance, when families like the Medicis sponsored artistic freedom and productivity as a central component of life and civilization. Sigmund's generosity of spirit reflected that world view in many ways. He was a true businessman, but ultimately he did business for the sake of the arts.

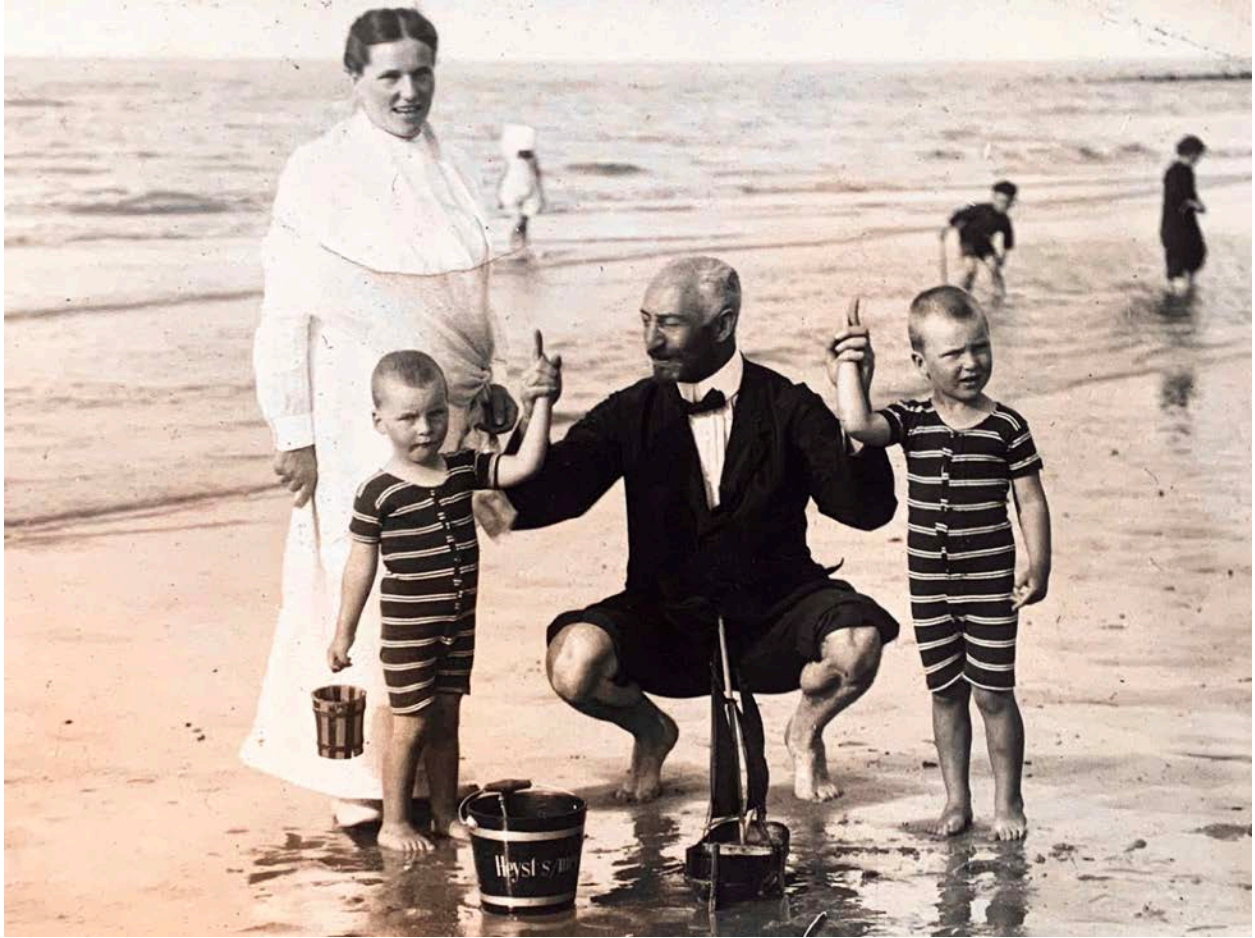
For many reasons, Sigmund's collection is much greater than the sum of its parts. One primary reason is that in its entirety it embodies a tremendous dedication and devotion to the world of art, especially considering the foreboding

obstacles Sigmund surmounted in building the collection, and keeping it whole while saving it from the realm of fascist Europe, and then making sure it found a safe home in this bastion of the Liberal Arts.

To end with another quote from my father Stephan's autobiography:

"A few months later the entire collection went to the University of California in Santa Barbara, where it can be the subject of seminars and dissertations. Here the name Sigmund Morgenroth is finally being kept alive."

I and the Lackner/Morgenroth clan thank you for that.



The end