

	<p>Object: The Child and Death</p> <p>Museum: Kunsthalle Bremen Am Wall 207 28195 Bremen (04 21) 3 29 08-0 info@kunsthalle-bremen.de</p> <p>Collection: Künstlerkolonie Worpswede, Paula Modersohn-Becker und die Kunst der Moderne, Gemälde und Skulpturen</p> <p>Inventory number: 377-1918/2</p>
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Description

Edvard Munch was confronted with death early on. When he was six years old, his mother passed away, and his sister died a few years later. The death of his father, in 1889, plunged him into a deep crisis. Before this background, it seems logical that Munch repeatedly dealt with death and themes such as fear and grief. In old age, he wrote of the traumatic years of his childhood: “My home was the home of illness and death. I have never gotten over the calamity there. It has also influenced my art.” The painting *The Child and Death* is one of Munch’s most searing testimonies to the thematic complex of dying, death, and grief. It shows a small girl looking out of the picture and holding her ears closed. In the background, we see her deceased mother. It is typical of Munch that he does not deal with the person who dies, but with the psychological condition of those who remain. The main theme of this painting is the girl’s pain. But rather than expressing it in tears, the child appears terrified. Whereas the figure portrayed in Munch’s famous painting *The Scream* also holds her ears closed, and lets out a scream, the small child here is not able to do this. In 2005, the painting was examined more closely following a request by the Munch-Museet in Oslo. What had hitherto been regarded as a supporting canvas turned out to be a further painting by the artist. It shows a naked girl seated in profile as well as three threatening, mask-like heads of men. The work may be viewed in connection with Munch’s treatment of the subject of puberty. Known today as *Girl and Three Male Heads*, it is still not clear why Munch cast off this work shortly after he had created it. However, he did not simply overpaint it, but stretched a new canvas over it, producing an entirely new painting.

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Oil on canvas
Measurements:	100.0 x 90.0 cm

Events

Painted	When	1899
	Who	Edvard Munch (1863-1944)
	Where	

Keywords

- Painting