The Kneeling Woman is an eerie, spiritual work; although its "limb architecture," the attenuated representation of a figure kneeling, seems its most prominent feature, it is Lehmbrock's theoretical conceptualization that was so revolutionary. This has been characterized as an attempt to "express thought and emotion through movement and expressive distortion...; here, tallness is combined with exaggerated slenderness, [and] the mood becomes otherworldly, introspective, even melancholy."12

The large scale and uneasy pose of the Kneeling Woman suggest not only external movement but also the contained activity of growth.13 Such nuance might necessarily seem lost in the smaller Head, although the reduction was carefully conceived by Lehmbrock to create "a concentrated variation on the melancholy, contemplative, ethereal existence of the full figure."14

R. B. S.

Notes:
2. On this work, see as well Eduard Trier, introduction to Wilhelm Lehmbrock: Die Knieende, Reclams Werkmonographien, 32 (Stuttgart, 1958).
5. Hommage à Lehmbrock, 44.
7. Ritchie, Catalogue of Contemporary Paintings and Sculpture, 186, 211. The Buffalo example was the one exhibited at the Armory Show.
9. Acc. no. 39.406; illustrated in the Art Institute of Chicago Bulletin (March 1940):41-42. I wish to thank Ian Wordropper of the Art Institute for his assistance in obtaining information on this example.
11. Heller, Art of Wilhelm Lehmbrock, no. 23 (ill.), for the Duisberg bronze; inv. no. 4371 for the Vienna example.
12. Ritchie, Catalogue of Contemporary Paintings and Sculpture, 186.

Paul Speck was born in 1896 in the Swiss town of Hombrechtikon.1 From 1914 to 1924 he lived in Munich, until 1919 as a student of the painter Stanislaus Stückgold. He began working in ceramics about the age of sixteen and became quite proficient in subsequent years. By 1924 he was teaching ceramics at the State Majolica factory in Karlsruhe and sculpture at the Badischen Landeskunstschule. In 1934 he returned to Switzerland; the year before he had received a major commission for the altarpiece in white majolica of St. Karls Kirche in Lucerne. From 1956 until his death ten years later he lived in Tegna (Tessin) and Zurich.

Speck was a sculptor, ceramicist, and draftsman of some distinction, but his fame has been largely local. His style can be generically termed "semirepresentational," incorporating as it does figural elements into massive, abstract forms. He worked in a variety of media—as a sculptor, largely in plaster, granite, and bronze.

Death Mask of James Joyce, After Paul Speck, bronze
AFTER PAUL SPECK
Death Mask of James Joyce  [77.10]
Bronze, 12 x 7 x 6 1/2 in. (30.5 x 17.8 x 16.5 cm).
Unsigned.

Provenance: Collection of Mr. Paul J. Polansky; his gift to the University. 1977.

References:
Paul Polansky, in a letter (1978), as taken from the original plaster cast by Paul Speck and cast in bronze by sculptor John Beehan.

James Joyce died in the Red Cross Hospital of Zurich on January 13, 1941. The task of taking a death mask of the writer was given to Paul Speck. From the direct casting of Joyce's features, the sculptor then finished the head, completing and refining minor details such as the hair and ears.

Sculptors have traditionally taken death masks from the noted and noble, often to serve as models for subsequent portraits. Speck's mask of Joyce is a relatively straightforward translation of his subject's final visage, but one that is, for those familiar with Joyce's features, nonetheless unexpected:

The death mask of James Joyce, taken by the sculptor Paul Speck, at first surprises one, the face seems so unfamiliar. This is because the thick glasses, which he seldom removed, are no longer there. The face is that of a weary man; the two lines of his forehead are deep, the cheeks are sunken; the face is not relaxed in death, but about the tightly closed lips there seems to be the faint flicker of a smile.

The Marquette bronze was taken from the original plaster mask owned by Dublin architect Michael Scott, who with John Houston founded the James Joyce Museum (Martello Tower) in Dublin. [The Museum and its contents were subsequently sold to the Ireland Eastern Regional Tourism Organization, and it is not known whether the original mask was included in the sale.]

Apparently very few casts of Joyce's death mask exist today. Two masks were done by Speck at the time of Joyce's death. Joyce's son, Georgio, has one, as does his grandson Stephen. Other existing casts are located at the Abbey Theater in Dublin; the private collection of Carla Gideon; and the Crossman Collection of the University of Southern Illinois Library. Another cast is reproduced as the frontispiece to the memorial volume that appeared shortly after his death.

R. B. S. / C. L. C.

Notes:
2. The history of death masks is treated in Ernest Benkard, Das Ewige Antlitz (Berlin, 1926), and Rosemarie Clausen, Die Vollendeten (Stuttgart, 1941).
5. Ibid.
7. In Memoriam: James Joyce (Zurich, 1941).