

My name is Anne-Kathrin Sors, I am an art historian and curator of the Göttingen University Art Collection.

When I look at these four paintings, I notice that certain weather phenomena can be seen everywhere. Cloud studies in the small objects and weather phenomena with clouds and storms in the 17th-century painting by Simon de Vlieghe. In the expressionist painting by Max Pechstein, you can see what is probably a hot day, so there are actually no clouds to be seen, but you can still sense these weather phenomena everywhere.

As an art historian, I always ask about the function of objects, not just paintings. I'll start with the two small oil sketches, which are oil sketches that an artist, in this case Carl Oesterley, made in nature in the 19th century, perhaps to use them later in his painting studio for large historical paintings or other paintings. These small oil studies were never intended to be shown in an exhibition, and they are now on display here because they provide a good illustration of weather phenomena.

Max Pechstein's painting is an expressionist painting from the 1920s, and in expressionism it is particularly important to the artist not to depict nature or what he sees as he sees it, but as he feels it. In the painting, which Simon de Vlieghe painted in the Netherlands in 1637 and which is signed and dated on a small barrel floating in the water at the bottom left, the artist's primary concern is to tell the story from the Bible about Christ and his disciples on the lake and to depict it in the painting.

But you can see that Simon de Vlieghe does not set this story on the lake where it takes place in the Bible, but embeds it in a North Sea landscape, a seascape, with weather phenomena that you are guaranteed to encounter when you travel to the German North Sea coast or to the Netherlands, and which the artist saw every day in his surroundings, because he was Dutch. That's why I particularly like this painting, because it beautifully illustrates what was so important to Dutch artists in the 17th century, namely depicting nature as they saw it, distinguishing its materialities as precisely as possible.

You can see very clearly the different textures of the sail and the clothing of the disciples and Christ. But above all, you can see the materiality of the clouds and the sea depicted in an extremely fascinating way. When you stand in front of the painting and look at how the spray rises on the boat, you immediately feel transported to the sea and perhaps even notice and hear how the sea water splashes against the boat.