

**Künstlerroman** (G Künstler, 'artist' + Roman, 'novel') A novel (q.v.) which has an artist (in any creative art) as the central character and which shows the development of the artist from childhood to maturity and later. This kind of novel was particularly popular in Germany and dates from very late in the 18th c. and the beginning of the 19th c. It thus coincides with the start of the romantic revival (q.v.), a period when the artist (whatever his *métier*) was held in high esteem, and the man of genius (q.v.) became an exalted figure. This 'exaltation' had been foreshadowed during the Sturm und Drang (q.v.) period by the German concept of the *Kraftgenie* (q.v.). Fictitious artists were often favoured central figures. Goethe was among the first to develop the *Künstlerroman* with Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung (composed c. 1777–85, but not discovered until 1909), the original version of Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre (1795–6), which had a sequel in the shape of Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre oder Die Entsagenden, his last novel, published in 1821. Other well-known examples are: Tieck's Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen (1798); Eduard Mörike's Maler Nolten (1832); Franz Grillparzer's Novelle Der arme Spielmann (1848); Gottfried Keller's Der grüne Heinrich (1854–5); Jakob Wassermann's Das Gänsemännchen (1915); Thomas Mann's Novelle Tonio Kröger (1903) and his Doktor Faustus (1947).

There are also a number of works whose central character is a historical figure. Examples are: Mörike's Novelle Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag (1855); Albert Brachvogel's Friedemann Bach (1858); Walter von Molo's Der Schiller-Roman (1912–16); and Franz Werfel's Verdi (1924).

Fictitious or historical *Künstlerdramen* ('artist plays') were also popular. For instance: Goethe's Torquato Tasso (1807); Grillparzer's Sappho (1818); Hauptmann's Die versunkene Glocke (1896), Michael Kramer (1900) and Gabriel Schillings Flucht (1912).

In English literature the most famous example of a *Künstlerroman* is James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916). The *Künstlerroman* and the *Bildungsroman* (q.v.) are closely associated, and literary historians and critics have put Goethe's Wilhelm Meister in the latter category. See also autobiographical novel.

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