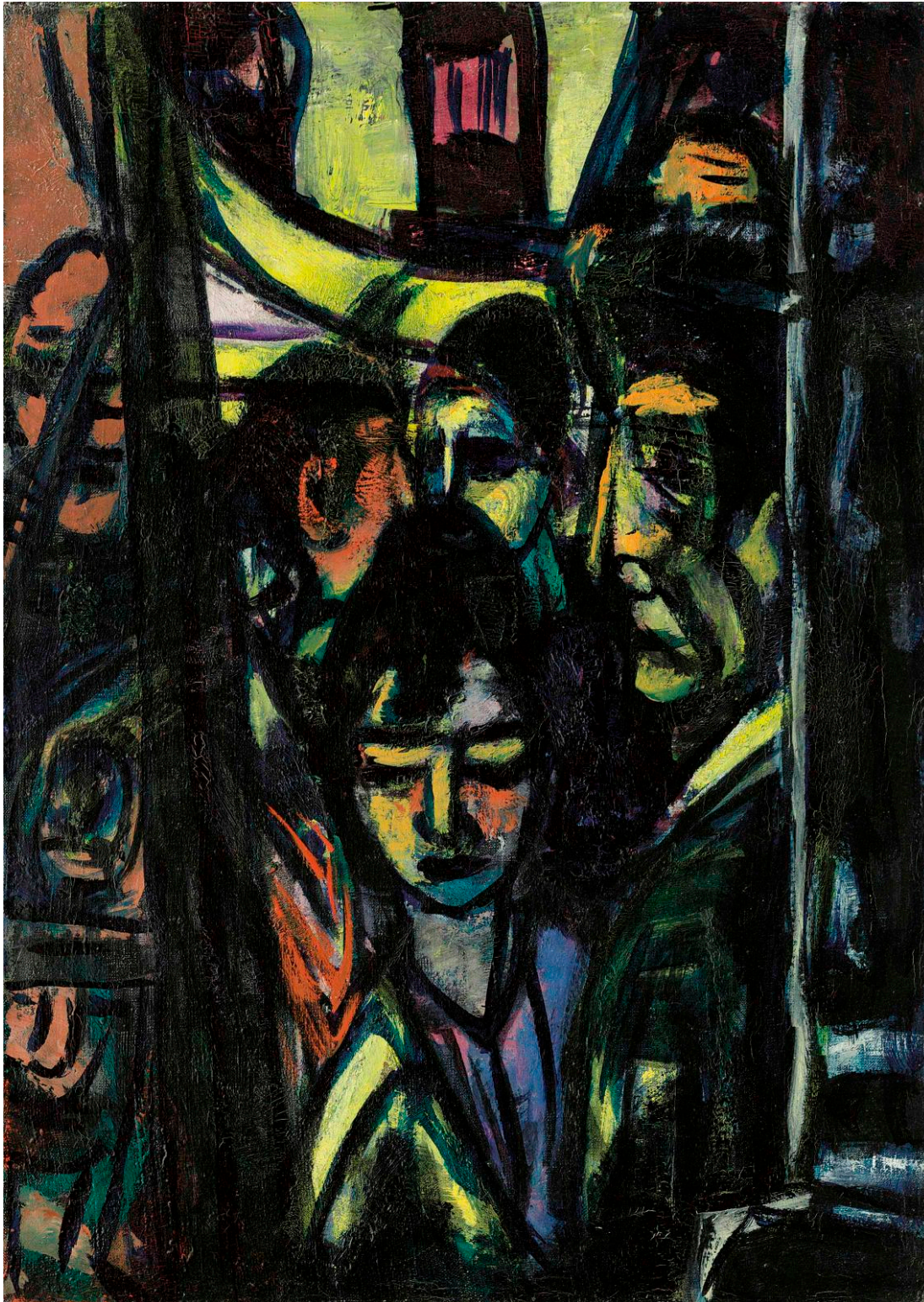


# Human Discourse

by [Guy Walker](#) (January 2020)



*Café (Hotel de l'Europe)*, Max Beckmann

**Behind plate windows,** and beneath large skylights,  
Thick woollen scarves and coats and autumn twilight.  
“Technologies in art are superseded,  
Egg tempera gave way to oils. What’s needed  
Now’s modern media.” And the crowd of French  
Girls laugh and murmur; fidget on the bench.  
“The lemon chia seed cake’s lovely, will  
You have another latte?” Seeing light spill  
Across the Common, passers-by steal glances,  
“You can’t dispute that my device enhances.”  
Professor Croce cleans his glasses, blinks,  
Begins another peroration, thinks  
Conception matters more than tools. A dog  
Skitters on wooden laminate. “You’ll jog  
The waitress, fooling ‘round!” “ . . . used orpiment,  
Lead white and cinnabar.” A hatstand meant  
For fewer coats slews drunkenly, till caught,  
And ‘busboys’ stack up plastic racks now brought  
To steaming scullery door. The street-doors yawn,  
Black revenant wind intrudes with dry leaves drawn  
From gardens. Later on, and side by side,

The Prof and Eugene cough, their legs astride  
And rocking back, sequestered maleness grasped;  
They study walls and ceiling tiles while fast  
Around white streaming bowls, they let careen  
Their urine's curtain, slewed on porcelain's sheen.

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