Over the past decade, the collection of Dutch and Flemish drawings at the National Gallery of Art has enjoyed steady growth, thanks largely to the generosity of many donors. This exhibition presents more than twenty of these recent acquisitions, spanning nearly five centuries, from the mid-fifteenth century to the early twentieth. Executed in a variety of media and covering a range of subjects, including landscapes, seascapes, portraits, still lifes, and history, the drawings convey the richness and originality of Dutch and Flemish draftsmanship. Though not a true survey, the selection offers a glimpse of the broad stylistic changes that took place over the centuries, from the classical rhythms of the Renaissance and the elegant distortions of the mannerist period that followed to the bold expressiveness of the early twentieth century.

A few special treasures punctuate the selection. The earliest sheet, dating from about 1442, is one of only nine surviving pages from a fifteenth-century manuscript with illustrations by Barthélemy van Eyck. Unusual in a different vein and of a particularly jewel-like beauty is a painted miniature of the Adoration of the Magi from the mid-1520s by Simon Bening. Dating from a century later are two rare studies by one of the most important Dutch followers of Caravaggio, Gerrit van Honthorst. A number of other visual delights round out the selection, including a highly refined pen drawing from 1562 by Maerten van Heemskerck, made in preparation for a print; a vibrant floral still life of the 1720s by Jan van Huysum; and a striking self-portrait by the twentieth-century painter and designer Lodewijk Schelfhout, made in 1907 — when he was just twenty-six years old.

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SIMON BENING
Flemish, 1483/1484 – 1561

The Adoration of the Magi
mid-1520s

tempera heightened with gold on vellum
Woodner Collection, Gift of Dian Woodner, 2013

ABRAHAM BLOEMAERT
Dutch, 1564 – 1651

Acis and Galatea

C. 1590

pen and ink with wash and traces of white heightening over chalk
Woodner Collection, Gift of Andrea Woodner, 2006
BARTHÉLEMY VAN EYCK
Netherlandish, active c. 1435–1470

Seven Famous Figures from Ancient History

c. 1442
pen and ink with watercolor,
heightened with white, on vellum
Woodner Collection, Gift of Andrea Woodner, 2006

This is one of nine surviving pages from an illustrated chronicle that originally depicted more than three hundred personages of ancient, biblical, medieval, and legendary importance. The famous figures were presented in quasi-chronological order, beginning with the creation of Adam. The seven on this page are from the sixth century BC. The two figures in the top row are Brutus Lucius Junius, a founder and consul of the Roman Republic, and Peisistratus, an autocratic ruler of ancient Athens. Next, the Persian king Cambyses stands before the city of Babylon, which, according to the Latin inscription below it, he had saved from Egypt. He is paired with the Hebrew heroine Judith, who beheaded the Babylonian general Holofernes. Standing in the last row are the Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras; Darius the Great, Cambyses’s successor to the Persian throne, and the Old Testament prophet Haggai.

ABRAHAM GENOELS II
Flemish, 1640–1723

Landscape with a Natural Arch

c. 1718
pen and ink with wash and watercolor
over traces of graphite and chalk
Joseph F. McCrindle Collection, 2009
HENDRICK GOLTZIUS
Dutch 1558–1617

_Ignis_
c. 1586
pen and ink with wash and white heightening
on paper washed pink
Gift of Ruth Cole Kainen, 2012

JAN GOSSAERT
Netherlandish, c. 1478–1532

_Two Kings and a Woman Leaving an Elaborate Palace_
1503/1508
pen and ink
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund and
Gift of Dian Woodner, 2008

JORIS VAN DER HAAGEN
Dutch, 1615–1669

_Woods at Night with Travelers_
wash heightened with white gouache on blue paper
Purchased as the Gift of Diane A. Nixon, 2006
MAERTEN VAN HEEMSKERCK
Netherlandish, 1498 – 1574

_Satan Challenges God to Remove His Protection from Job_

1562
pen and ink over traces of graphite, incised for transfer
Joseph F. McCrindle Collection, 2010

One of a series of eight designs for prints depicting the biblical story of Job, this sheet shows Satan daring the Lord, at center with his hand on the globe, to rescind his protection over his most faithful servant. God accepts the challenge, allowing Satan to cause Job to suffer from a number of depredations and trials, but Job’s faith never wavers. He is shown at the lower right, his hands folded in prayer and acceptance; his wife stands beside him, urging him — without success — to curse God.

GERRIT VAN HONTHORST
Dutch, 1590 – 1656

_Diana and Two Nymphs Receiving Gifts from a Satyr_

1620s
pen and ink over chalk, heightened with white, on brown paper
Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund, 2015
GERRIT VAN HONTHORST
Dutch, 1590 – 1656

Diana and Four Nymphs Receiving Gifts from a Satyr
c. 1630
pen and ink with wash over chalk, heightened with white gouache, on brown paper
Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund, 2015

JAN VAN HUYSUM
Dutch, 1682 – 1749

Bouquet of Spring Flowers in a Terracotta Vase
1720s
oiled charcoal and watercolor
Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund, The Ahmanson Foundation Fund, Linda H. Kaufman Fund, and Mr. and Mrs. Louis Glickfield Fund, 2011

JOHAN BARTHOLOD JONGKIND
Dutch, 1819 – 1891

Countryside near Brezins, between Grenoble and Vienne
1880s
chalk and watercolor on two joined sheets of paper
Purchased as the Gift of Joan and David Maxwell, 2006
CIRCLE OF HUGO VAN DER GOES
Netherlandish, 15th century

*Jacob’s Dream*
1480/1490
pen and ink, heightened with white gouache
on brown paper
Gift of Beatrix von Hoffmann, 2016

JAN MULLER
Dutch, 1571 – 1628

*Angels in Glory*
1590
chalk and ink with wash,
heightened with white gouache
Ruth and Jacob Kainen Memorial Acquisition Fund, 2013

NETHERLANDISH SCHOOL
16th Century

*View of the Janiculum Hill in Rome, Seen from the Tiber*
1553
pen and ink over chalk
Gift of Ladislaus and Beatrix von Hoffmann, 2011
JAN PEETERS I
Dutch, 1624 – c. 1677

*Beaulne (Beaune)*
c. 1650
pen and ink with wash over graphite
Purchased as the Gift of Diane A. Nixon, 2014

ROELANDT SAVERY
Dutch, 1576 – 1639

*Mountainous Landscape with Castles and Waterfalls*
c. 1606
chalk with traces of white heightening
on gray-green paper
Woodner Collection, Gift of Dian Woodner, 2011

LODEWIJK SCHELFHOUT
Dutch, 1881 – 1943

*Self-Portrait*
1907
pen and ink
Purchased as the Gift of Vincent J. Buonanno, 2012
PETRUS JOHANNES SCHOTEL  
Dutch, 1808 – 1865

*Ships in a Stormy Sea*

c. 1840
pen and ink with wash
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 2014

CORNELIS STEFFELAAR  
Dutch, 1795 – 1861

*A Giant Oak at the Edge of a Forest*

1840s(?)
pen and ink with wash
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 2014

JACOB VAN STRIJ  
Dutch, 1756 – 1815

*Man Sitting on a Wheelbarrow with a Beer Keg*

c. 1787
gray wash over graphite
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 2016
MICHAEL SWEERTS
Flemish, 1618 – 1664

Jan van den Enden
c. 1651
chalk
New Century Fund, 2012

GASPAR VAN WITTEL
Dutch, 1652/1653 – 1736

The Ruins of an Ancient Amphitheater
c. 1701
pen and ink with wash over chalk
Wolfgang Ratjen Collection,
Patrons’ Permanent Fund, 2007