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## National Gallery of Art Presents First U.S. Exhibition to Explore Renaissance Augsburg's Rich Traditions and Innovations in Works on Paper



Hans Burgkmair I

*The Archbishop Blessing the Child after the Baptism from the Weisskunig*,  
woodcut on laid paper

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection

Washington, DC—The National Gallery of Art presents the first exhibition in the United States to focus on Augsburg's artistic achievements in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. ***Imperial Augsburg: Renaissance Prints and Drawings, 1475–1540*** will be on view in the West Building Ground Floor galleries from September 30 through December 31, 2012. The last major exhibition on this subject was mounted more than three decades ago in Augsburg—one of Germany's oldest cities—whose Renaissance heritage has long been eclipsed in America by Albrecht Dürer's Nuremberg.

While focusing on prints, drawings, and illustrated books, the exhibition also includes medals and one etched set of armor. Of the 103 works presented, 86 are from the National Gallery's own collection, with additional loans from the Metropolitan Museum of

Art, New York; the Morgan Library and Museum, New York; the Library of Congress; Andrea Woodner; and several private collections.

"It is truly remarkable that the rich and varied history of works on paper in Renaissance Augsburg can be told almost entirely through the Gallery's extensive collection of German prints, drawings, and illustrated books—thanks in large part to the contributions of donors over the course of many decades," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We are indebted to the private collectors and public institutions who have so generously lent to this exhibition, and we extend our deep appreciation to the Thaw Charitable Trust, and to Gene and Clare Thaw, for making this exhibition and catalogue possible."

The exhibition will travel to the Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin (October 5, 2013–January 5, 2014), and then to the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College (September 19–December 14, 2014). The accompanying catalogue—the first of its kind in English—serves as an introduction to Augsburg, its artists and its cultural history, during this period.

### **Exhibition Organization and Support**

The exhibition was organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington. It is supported in part by a generous grant from the Thaw Charitable Trust.

### **About the Exhibition**

The city of Augsburg, in southwest Bavaria, was founded as a Roman settlement in the reign of Emperor Augustus in 15 BCE. Located on the north-south trade routes to Italy, the city in the late 15th and early 16th century was a prosperous manufacturing center that gave rise to the great banking houses of the Fugger and the Welser. Together, these circumstances fostered an important and diverse artistic community, with an established tradition in the printing and metalworking industries. During the reign of Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (1493–1519), Augsburg became the location of an Imperial Diet (council) and the center from which the emperor organized all of his print and armor commissions. As Augsburg's artists benefited from the patronage of the Habsburg court they also created works for the city's thriving art market.

The exhibition emphasizes the rich and varied works of art on paper produced in Augsburg from 1475 to 1540, paying particular attention to innovative printmaking techniques as well as the fundamental role of imperial patronage. The first part of the exhibition focuses on devotional prints and illustrated books representing the Christian contemplative life. This section also examines Augsburg as a center for new printing techniques: Color printing was pioneered there by the native printer Erhard Ratdolt (1447–1528) and further developed by Hans Burgkmair (1472–1531). And etching as a print medium was first explored in Augsburg by Daniel Hopfer (c. 1470–1536). The second section presents the active life: everyday morality is illustrated through biblical, historical, and mythological tales and Augsburg is depicted through genre scenes and portraits of famous and obscure residents. The third section, which is devoted to the patronage of the imperial court, examines Augsburg as the focal point of Emperor Maximilian's print projects and armor productions.

### **Exhibition Curators, Catalogue, and Related Activities**

The exhibition was curated by Gregory Jecmen, associate curator of old master prints and drawings at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and Freyda Spira, assistant curator of drawings and prints at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Published by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, in association with Lund Humphries, the exhibition catalogue includes an introduction to the exhibition as well as essays by Jecmen and Spira. The 120-page catalogue includes 52 full-color illustrations and is available in hardcover for purchase in the Gallery Shops. To order, please visit the Gallery's website at [www.nga.gov/shop](http://www.nga.gov/shop) (<http://www.nga.gov/shop>) ; call (800) 697-9350 or (202) 842-6002; fax (202) 789-3047; or e-mail [mailorder@nga.gov](mailto:mailorder@nga.gov).

On Sunday, October 7, at 6:30 p.m., guitarist Mak Grgic will perform music by Isaac, Kohaut, Weiss, and Kagen in honor of the exhibition in the West Garden Court. On Sunday, October 21, at 2:00 p.m., Jecmen and Spira will present a lecture entitled *Imperial Augsburg: A Flourishing Market for Innovative Prints* in the East Building Auditorium; a book signing for the exhibition catalogue will follow. Admission for both programs is free and available on a first-come, first-seated basis. In late October and

November, National Gallery of Art lecturer Eric Denker will present gallery talks on the exhibition; see [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov) for more information.

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## General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit [www.nga.gov/renovation](http://www.nga.gov/renovation) (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) and on Twitter at [twitter.com/ngadc](http://twitter.com/ngadc).

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

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