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Rare Netherlandish Drawings on Loan From Rotterdam Unveiled at National Gallery of Art, Washington; Drawings by Hieronymus Bosch Among Stunning Works



Hieronymus Bosch, *The Owl's Nest*, c. 1505/1515
pen and brown ink on paper, laid down
Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

Washington, DC—Rotterdam's historic Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen holds one of the finest collections of Netherlandish master drawings. In a special presentation of this collection at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, some 100 works explore the many functions of drawings, from preparatory studies for paintings and designs for prints to finished works of art. On view from October 8, 2017, through January 7, 2018, ***Bosch to Bloemaert: Early Netherlandish Drawings from the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam*** includes landscapes, portraits, biblical scenes, and historical and mythological scenes that will be exhibited in the United States only in Washington.

"This exhibition presents a stunning selection of Netherlandish drawings," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art, Washington. "The National Gallery of Art has a nearly 50-year tradition of presenting drawing exhibitions that focus on specific treasures from other collections around the world, and we are delighted to be able to introduce our visitors to this selection of rare, innovative, and distinctive sheets from this distinguished Rotterdam institution. As the final venue for the exhibition's tour, we are delighted to be the only U.S. museum presenting these works to our millions of visitors in the nation's capital."

Organization

The exhibition is organized by the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

The exhibition premiered at the Fondation Custodia, Paris, from March 22 through June 22, 2014, and traveled to the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, where it was presented in three parts from November 1, 2014, through July 26, 2015.

About the Exhibition

While the exhibition features the remarkable skill and virtuosity of masters such as Hieronymus Bosch, Abraham Bloemaert, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, and Hendrick Goltzius, several key examples also reveal the variety of functions served by drawings across the 15th through 17th centuries.

In the 15th-century artist's workshop, meticulous studies recorded compositions and motifs for reuse in later works. Several drawings on view likely served this purpose, including a newly discovered sheet of the crucifixion dating from around 1440 to 1450, from the workshop of Jan van Eyck (c. 1390–1441). A selection of 16th-century drawings includes a number of preliminary studies, such as a rare complete set of preparatory

drawings for a print series by Hans Bol (1534–1593). Two very different figure studies for a painting by Abraham Bloemaert (1566-1651) offer a glimpse into artistic practices in the early 17th century.

The exhibition also traces the major artistic developments of the time. Among the most important was the emergence of landscape as a genre, a movement marked in the exhibition by several panoramic mountain views by the great master Pieter Bruegel the Elder (c. 1525/1530–1569). Studies of local and faraway scenes by later artists include *Flooded Valley with Trees* by Pieter's son, Jan Breughel (1568–1625), and *Landscape with Horsemen out Hawking*, by Joos de Momper (1564–1635).

This period reflects a shift in attitudes toward drawings themselves, as both artists and collectors began to view them as autonomous works of art. *The Owl's Nest* (c. 1505/1515) by Hieronymus Bosch (c. 1450–1516) is a spectacular early example of this trend. Decades later, the innovative painter and printmaker Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617) made independent drawings in a variety of media. The exhibition includes 14 works by Goltzius, drawings that range from tiny metalpoint portraits to elaborate pen studies. His work also exemplifies the increasingly international character of Netherlandish art, as Goltzius absorbed the influence of the classical and Renaissance works he saw in Italy and adapted the sophisticated style his counterparts brought home from the imperial court in Prague.

Curators and Catalog

The exhibition is curated by Albert J. Elen, senior curator of drawings and prints, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Stacey Sell, associate curator, department of old master drawings, National Gallery of Art, Washington, is the coordinating curator for the presentation in Washington.

Published by the Fondation Custodia and Uitgeverij THOTH, Bussum, the fully illustrated exhibition catalog is the result of a long-term research project into this unique collection of drawings at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. Some 400 old master drawings have been cataloged in recent years, and a selection of 140 of the finest works is presented in full-page format and color in this catalog, together with explanatory texts and supporting illustrations. The 296-page catalog will be available in softcover at shop.nga.gov/, or by calling (800) 697-9350 or (202) 842-6002; faxing (202) 789-3047; or emailing mailorder@nga.gov.

Related Programs

Exhibition Gallery Talks

October 11, 12, 13, 20 at noon

Meet in the West Building Rotunda

A 60-minute tour of the exhibition is presented by Eric Denker, senior lecturer, National Gallery of Art.

Pomerium: Flemish Musical Mastery in the Age of Bosch and Bloemaert

October 29 at 3:30

West Building, West Garden Court

Just as the Netherlandish visual arts enlisted symbolism to express complex moral messages, as in Hieronymus Bosch's famous *Haycart*, c. 1485, so did Netherlandish polyphonic music. "Pomerium: Flemish Musical Mastery in the Age of Bosch and Bloemaert" traces Netherlandish musical style from its beginnings in the music of Guillaume Du Fay, a contemporary of Rogier van der Weyden, to its final flowering in the works of Orlande de Lassus and Giaches de Wert.

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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 at 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. For information call (202) 737-4215 or visit the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt, Twitter at www.twitter.com/ngadc, and Instagram at <http://instagram.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.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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