




RENAISSANCE
& REFORMATION

GERMAN ART IN THE AGE
OF DÜRER AND CRANACH

 PRESTEL

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THE BAYERISCHE STAATSGEMÄLDE-SAMMLUNGEN MÜNCHEN

HALF A MILLENNIUM OF PAINTING

All museums experience both unforgettable golden ages and stagnating eras. And yet they ultimately shine with an unmistakable profile and distinctive focuses. That is also true of the Alte Pinakothek (fig. 1), the core of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen (Bavarian state painting collections). Its unique treasures of paintings make it one of the largest German attractions for visitors from all over the world. The Neue Pinakothek, with its rich collection of European painting and sculpture of the nineteenth century, and the Pinakothek der Moderne, with art and design of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, supplemented by changing exhibitions on architecture, prints, and drawings of all periods, continue this collection historically. The Bayerische Staatsgemälde-

sammlungen enjoy a reputation for housing the world's largest self-contained treasury of pictures. With more than 25,000 works in almost twenty locations, the Pinakothek museums in Bavaria offer an immense panorama of the history of art from the Middle Ages to the present. To give a sense of the significance of the modern collection, I mention here only a few names as examples: Munich has four paintings by Vincent van Gogh, a true magnet for audiences, looks after the finest European collection of works by Max Beckmann, and can show a singular collection of Minimalist art from Donald Judd to Dan Flavin. Among the old masters, I mention only Rubens and Rembrandt, who are represented by important groups of works.



FIGURE 1
Munich, Alte Pinakothek, north façade with today's entrance



FIGURE 2
Albrecht Dürer, *Four Apostles*, 1526, painting.
Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen München, Alte Pinakothek

The Bavarian collection began with the commission of works of art: From the year Albrecht Dürer died (1528), who in the nineteenth century was stylized as Raphael's most important pendant north of the Alps, Duke William IV of Bavaria commissioned more and more artists to paint moralizing history paintings and battle paintings for his residence in Munich, including Albrecht Altdorfer's *Battle of Alexander and Darius at Issus*, which is world-famous for the visionary atmosphere of its lighting (see fig. 1, p. 28). This painter was also the creator of the first landscapes in which nature is treated as an autonomous theme and not just as a background

for biblical themes: for example, in his famous *Danube Landscape* in the Alte Pinakothek (see fig. 10, p. 38). Thus the Renaissance resulted not only in the individual being depicted in portraiture, but also the surroundings of human beings were illustrated in the first pure landscape drawings and paintings.

With the building of the *Kunstammer* (Art chamber) from 1563 to 1567 under Duke Albrecht V, the Munich collection was established, apart from the interior decoration. In the sixteenth century, the Wittelsbach dynasty continued to acquire art, both to adorn their residences and to establish their first galleries. In the

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JEFFREY CHIPPS SMITH

GERMAN ART IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

AN INTRODUCTION

In 1865 the painter Wilhelm von Kaulbach completed the last of his six monumental frescoes adorning the grand staircase of Berlin's Neues Museum (1843–55). Each illustrated great moments affecting the course of history, such as *Homer and the Greeks* or *The Destruction of Jerusalem*. The final scene, long a topic of speculation, was *The Age of the Reformation*. Although Martin Luther, Huldrych Zwingli, and Jean Calvin appear in the center, Kaulbach's 106 figures included European scientists, explorers, rulers, scholars, writers, humanists, and artists. He conceptualized this era as a broad cultural landscape. Nicolaus Copernicus, Luther, and Albrecht Dürer were singled out as the transformative embodiments of natural science, religion, and the arts.

Kaulbach's cycle, destroyed in World War II, conceived of the Age of the Reformation as more than the rise of Protestantism and confessional strife. It was a time of discovery about human nature and the world. Likewise, while the current exhibition explores the Reformation, its objects reveal a broader picture of the creativity, technical virtuosity, and thematic interests of artists in the German-speaking lands from ca. 1500 to the mid-sixteenth century.

Consider Dürer's *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (fig. 2). He compresses the four riders, described in Revelation 6:1–8, 50, into a single scene. War with his bow, Strife or Pestilence with his raised sword, Famine with his balance scales, and Death with his pitchfork race over the earth. This cavalry of horror, galloping in unison, spares no one—including the king, who is swallowed by the hell-mouth accompanying Death. One man turns in vain to shield himself. Urged on by the angel, the horsemen sweep through the world. Our glimpse is momentary as War's steed already races beyond the frame's edge at right. Dürer's skill as a storyteller is matched by his mastery of line. The churning white clouds and clear sky at right give way to the thick horizontal lines of the gathering gloom and lightning flashes. Behind and below Death tight cross-hatching creates even darker passages. His contour and descriptive lines distinguish different textures from the horses' flow-



FIGURE 2
Albrecht Dürer, *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, 1498, woodcut.
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett

ing manes to the riders' clothes to Death's skeletal body. Dürer challenged the expressive potential and artistic limits of woodcut. The print's scale (15 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ in./39.6 × 28.3 cm) rivals the size and ambition of a small painting.

Dürer's *Apocalypse* from 1498 is the first book illustrated and published by an artist. It was available in Latin and German edi-

FIGURE 1
Albrecht Altdorfer, *Battle of Alexander and Darius at Issus*, 1529, painting.
Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen München, Alte Pinakothek



CAT. NO. 7
TILMAN RIEMENSCHNEIDER
SAINT MATTHIAS, c. 1500–1505

Linden, H. 41½ in. (105.5 cm)

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Skulpturensammlung und Museum
für Byzantinische Kunst
Inv. no. 3027

Acquired in Frankfurt am Main in 1905, formerly Savigny collection

An inscription on the border of the cloak identifies this figure as Matthias, who succeeded Judas as the twelfth apostle. The sophistication of the sculptural conception is apparent in the subtle dialogue between quiet and active passages. At first glance, one reads the sculpture as a static form, because of the rooted stance and the long, tubular folds of the robe. But the body is conceived as a series of elements arranged obliquely along a vertical axis: the saint's left foot defines the first oblique accent, with the shoulders countered in the opposing direction, and the head turned toward the right shoulder. The figure's deeply undercut mass of hair, the anatomically accurate right hand, and the pensive face are particularly impressive. Tilman Riemenschneider was the leading sculptor in Würzburg in the decades leading to the Reformation. JC

Chapuis 1999, 257–59; Krohm 2006, 132–35; Kempf 2008, 42–43

CAT. NO. 8
HANS WYDYZ
ANNUNCIATION, c. 1500

Linden, H. 8⅝ in. (22 cm)

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Skulpturensammlung und Museum
für Byzantinische Kunst
Inv. no. 8160

Acquired in 1918, gift of James Simon

This refined group shows the meeting of two kneeling figures. The Virgin Mary interrupts her reading to receive the message that she will give birth to Jesus. She gathers her cloak around her in a protective gesture. By contrast, the angel's billowing drapery suggests that he has just alighted. A symbol of purity, the vase of lilies stands at the center of the composition. JC

Demmler 1930, 160–61; Chapuis 1999, 167





REFORMATION AND POLEMICS

The Reformation in Germany and Switzerland was the world's first large, international, decades-long theological and political conflict conducted on a mass scale by means of satirical and polemical images. The existence of numerous printing houses and trained artisans and artists in the cities of the empire made it possible to underscore and polarize what was initially a spiritual and intellectual dispute fought with the written word by means of consciously employed visual propaganda. Modern visual media such as the woodcut, broadsheet, and copperplate etching duplicated visual arguments and reached broad sections of the population. Over and above the sermon in words and verbal argumentation, the illiterate could be introduced visually to the goals of the Reformers and Protestants. Even apart from the debates over the "removal" or use of images for private devotion and their toleration or even use in churches, the Reformation was thus an important event for visual media.

The spectrum of Protestant visual graphic art ranged from portraits of the central figures to harsh visual attacks that criticized or even mocked the teachings and the protagonists of opponents. One finds an unusually large number of portraits, especially of Philipp Melanchthon and Martin Luther, who—both with and without his wife, Katharina von Bora—was one of the most frequently depicted sixteenth-century personalities. Other works were intended to explain the changes to the practice of the faith. They illustrated principles of Protestant faith, such as the allegorical panels on Law and Grace or depictions of appropriate religious services and of the sermon in the manner of the Reformers (cat. no. 34). These were the theological cornerstones of the new doctrine, usually in a restrained visual language, which not infrequently borrowed from the established compositional schemes of the old church.

The Reformation quickly gained an overarching, highly explosive dimension in the politics of the empire that soon even had existential significance. Important sovereigns supported the new doctrine and the emerging reformed, Protestant Church. As a result,

they found themselves in conflict with the Catholic Church and the religious electoral princes, the archbishops of Mainz, Cologne, and Trier—and above all with the emperor. The theological and ecclesiastical conflict led to a profound crisis for the empire. Complicated and long-running processes of the interwoven political and social developments of Church and State during the Reformation ultimately led to confessionalization within the Holy Roman Empire's structure of small states north of the Alps. Against this eminently political background, it is easier to understand the sharp-tongued, drastic messages of the visual satires of Reformation politics, which were not just tolerated but openly desired by certain parties.

In the visual debate of the denominations, the positions were diametrically opposed. Not infrequently, both factions were operating with similar pictorial formulas, for example, when they associated their respective opponents with horrific visions of the Last Days from the visual world of the Apocalypse (cat. nos. 36 and 37). Luther was denigrated as a seven-headed creature, as Satan's lackey, and as a terrible demagogue; by contrast, the Catholic Church was presented as selling indulgences, as a money-grubbing flogger of Christian values and religion (cat. no. 38). In terms of quantity and diversity, the Protestant visual polemic clearly won out over the Roman Church and its supreme representatives.

In contrast to present-day practice, broadsheets of the early modern era were not distributed for free but sold. Their timely polemics and the biting mockery of their images amused and encouraged their buyers but also appealed to their opponents to destroy those visual insults addressed at them when they got hold of the sheets. For those reasons, the broadsheets and polemical woodcuts of the Reformation period are usually rare items today in graphic collections and libraries. Some of the sheets, mostly the more expensive larger prints—usually belonging to wealthier owners—were carefully preserved and often colored (cat. no. 33). Thus they also served as a confirmation of the owners' "true" belief and granted them the rank of autonomous and more or less timeless works of art.



CAT. NO. 25

LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER

MARTIN LUTHER, 1532

Beech, 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (18.6 × 15 cm)

Labeled at right: •1532•; (later) inscription on right, above the year: Obdormivit in año 1560. 19. Aprilis etatis sue 63 et 65 dierum. (passed away in 1560, April 19, aged 63 [years] and 65 days); (later) inscription on right: ([etatis sue?] 30 ([aged?] 30)

PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 1532

Beech, 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (18.3 × 15 cm)

Labeled at right: •1532•; (later) inscription on left: Obdormivit in año 1560. 19. Aprilis etatis sue 63 et 65 dierum. (passed away in 1560, April 19, aged 63 [years] and 65 days); (later) inscription on right: ([etatis sue?] 30 ([aged?] 30)

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister
Gal. nos. 1918; 1919

In the gallery prior to 1826



These head-and-shoulders portraits of the Reformers Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon against a green background were produced as pendants. Luther is depicted wearing a cloak and a beret as a scholar with a book and Melanchthon, the younger man, without a hat and with his hands folded. Lucas Cranach the Elder is regarded not only as an illustrator of the Reformation but also as a portraitist of the Reformers. The many portraits of Luther produced by Cranach and his workshop were always striving for recognizability. The portraits of the protagonists from Wittenberg were in

particular demand after the founding of the Protestant Schmalkaldic League in 1531. Luther and Melanchthon enjoyed the greatest admiration as the new saints of the Reformation. RE

Marx and Mössinger 2005, 474–79, cat. nos. 42.1, 42.2; Schuchardt 2015, 42–45

Unterscheid zwischender waren Religion Christi vnd falschen



CAT. NO. 33

Abgöttischen Lehr des Antichrists in den fürnemsten stücken!

Sehet / da habt ihr viel
Römische Catholische vnd
nicht Reuerische wege zur sel-
ligkeit. Ich ME JE JE in ihr
könt leichtlich selig werden.





CAT. NO. 48

LUCAS CRANACH THE YOUNGER
ELECTOR MORITZ OF SAXONY, 1578

Canvas, 47 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 36 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (121.5 × 93 cm)

Date and monogram on left: 1578 and snake with lowered wings

ELECTOR JOHN FREDERICK THE MAGNANIMOUS
OF SAXONY, 1578

Canvas, 46 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 35 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (118.5 × 91 cm)

Date and monogram on right: 1578 and snake with lowered wings

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Rüstkammer

Inv. nos. H 74; H 73

Probably since being painted at Schloss Torgau; since 1670 in the Kunstammer
(Inventory of the Kunstammer after 1732)



The two portraits were commissioned at the request of Archduke Ferdinand II of Tirol by Elector Augustus of Saxony in June 1578, along with five other paintings as pendants, from Lucas Cranach the Younger in Wittenberg. Earlier portraits studies by the Cranach workshop were probably used to depict the prince, who had died either thirty-one or twenty-four years earlier. They were intended to represent the transfer of the rank of elector that followed victory in the Battle of Mühlberg in 1547. For that reason, too, victorious Moritz was depicted in precious armor while his older but defeated cousin, John Frederick, was in simpler, old-fashioned armor.

The portraits of the two opponents in armor were not transferred to Innsbruck but remained in Saxony for reasons unknown. DS

Marx and Mössinger 2005, 506–11, cat. nos. 48.1, 48.2; Syndram, Wirth, and Wagner 2015, 115–16, cat. nos. 55a, 55b



CAT. NO. 60
PAULUS TULLNER
 TURBAN SNAIL GOBLET, c. 1559–70

Silver-gilt, turban snail shell, height: 6¾ in. (17.2 cm)
 Master's mark: PD
 Hallmark: N in a circle (for Nuremberg)

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Grünes Gewölbe
 Inv. no. III 181

First mentioned in the inventory of precious objects in 1725 as a transfer from the Kunstammer in 1724

Vessels with precious, exotic materials such as mollusk shells (nautilus, turban snails) played an important role in the Kunstammer in Dresden. Tullner's goblet is striking for its etched Moorish decorations on its lip and numerous cast elements. Two of the three figures above the mount—Faith and Hope—can be traced back to plaques from the circle of Peter Flötner or of Wenzel Jamnitzer. UW

Sponsel 1925–32, 1:174, plate 50; Metropolitan Museum of Art 1978, 150, cat. no. 243; Germanisches Nationalmuseum 2007, 1:421, no. 904.03

CAT. NO. 61
**PROBABLY FROM THE WORKSHOP OF WENZEL
 JAMNITZER**
 JEWELRY BOX, c. 1560

Copper, brass, and silver-gilt, 16½ × 14½ × 11 in. (41 × 37 × 28 cm)

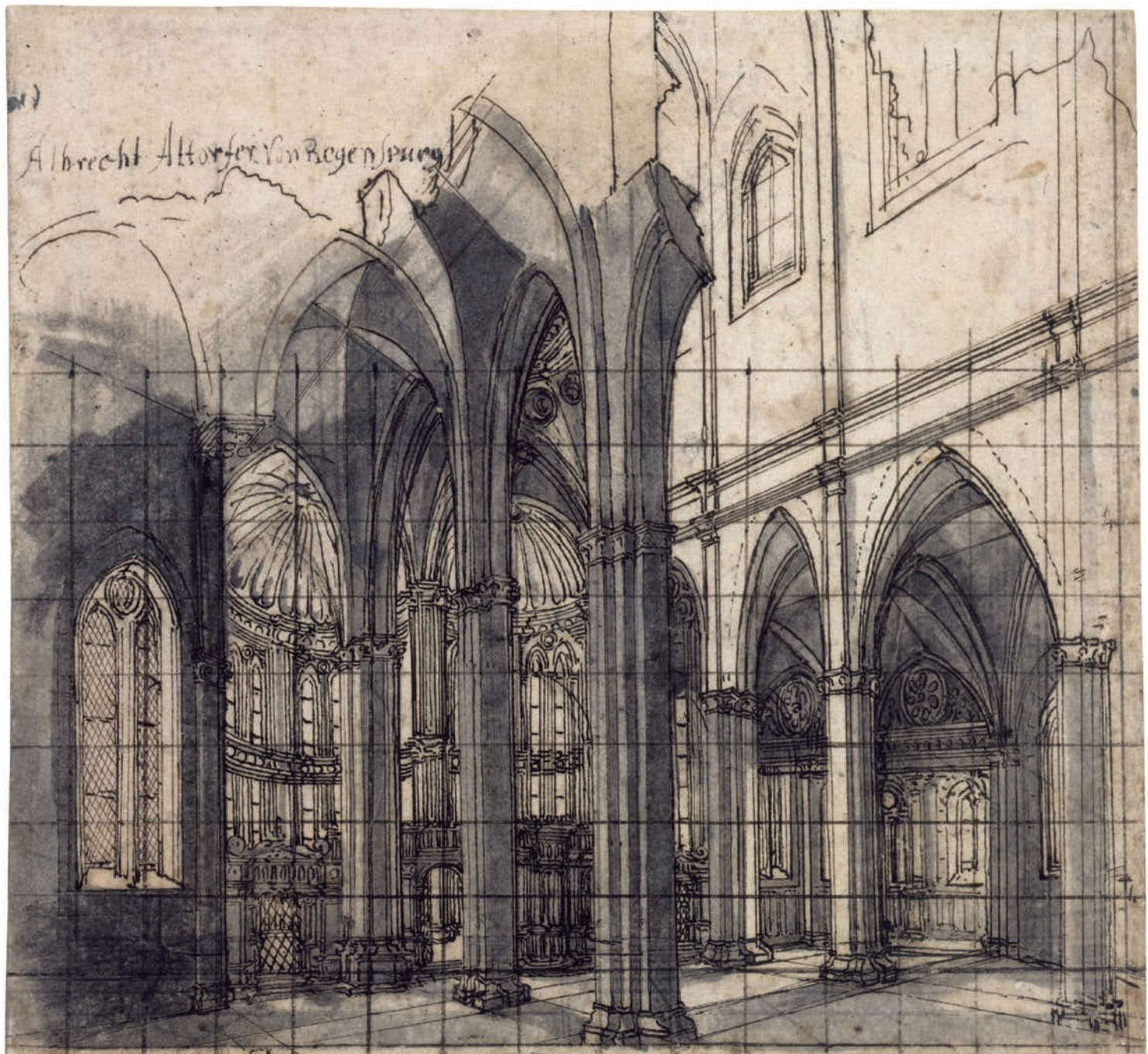
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Grünes Gewölbe
 Inv. no. IV 33

First mentioned in the inventory of the Schatzkammer after 1586

This magnificent jewelry box is distinguished by its architectonically articulated structure with reliefs of the Passion of Christ and is crowned by a figural sculpture group of the Resurrection. Several examples of this type have still survived (Metropolitan Museum, New York; Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon, among others). A drawing in the treasury book of the Jesuit Church of Saint Michael in Munich documents that there was once another example there. The group may have been commissioned by Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria as an intended gift. The use of largely base metals distinguishes these boxes from more expensive secular examples, but they are by no means inferior to them in terms of artistic quality and extensive pictorial program. UW

Sponsel 1925–32, 1:126, plate 26; Menzhausen 1968, 88, no. 89, fig. 61; Metropolitan Museum of Art 1978, 83, cat. no. 40





CAT. NO. 82

ALBRECHT ALTDORFER

INTERIOR OF A CHURCH, before 1520

Pen and black ink, gray wash, 7¼ × 7⅞ in. (18.5 × 20.1 cm)

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett
KdZ 11920

Destailleur Collection, acquired in 1924

Altdorfer's interests as an architect and as a painter came together in this drawing. Constructed with meticulous precision and squared for transfer, he designed an impressive church in preparation for a painting: *The Birth of the Virgin with the Round Dance of Angels* is now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich.

MR

Mielke 1988, 264, cat. no. 169; National Gallery of Art 1999, 288–90, cat. no. 128



CAT. NO. 83

ALBRECHT ALTDORFER

YOUNG MAIDEN STANDING OVER A DEMON, 1509

Pen and black ink, white highlights on prepared light-brown paper,
6¼ × 4½ in. (15.9 × 10.4 cm)

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett
KdZ 4446

Klinkosch Collection, acquired in 1910 (gift)

The main theme of Altdorfer's playful pen drawings is the unity of human beings and nature. This sheet shows a girlish saint next to a tree in front of a distant landscape. She is standing over an extremely foreshortened figure. Like the conquered dragons in depictions of Saint George or Saint Michael, the devil seems like a laughable figure—as helpless as a beetle on its back.

NS

Mielke 1988, 90–91, cat. no. 36



CAT. NO. 89

MONOGRAMMIST JZ (JERG ZIEGLER?)

HEAD OF A ROEBUCK WITH MONSTROUS ANTLERS
(THE SO-CALLED WIG BUCK), c. 1570

Brush and watercolors and gouache, white heightening, 18¼ × 12 in.
(46.3 × 30.6 cm)

Monogram at bottom right JZ [ligature]; dated beneath it: 157[?] [cut off]

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett
Inv. no. C 2318

Old inventory, first listed in the inventory in 1865

Abnormally formed antlers were sought-after hunting trophies and found their way into court collections as curiosities. The wig-like growths result on male deer with insufficient testosterone. Hans Hoffmann, the court painter to Rudolph II, drew the same motif on precious parchment in Prague in 1589 to produce a showpiece (Kupferstichkabinett Berlin). CS

Manz 2003–4, 92–102, cat. no. 23; Kolb, Lupfer, and Roth 2010, 40, cat. no. 36

CAT. NO. 90

LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER

FOUR DEAD PARTRIDGES, c. 1530–32

Brush with watercolors and gouache, white heightening, over a brush preliminary drawing in gray, 17¾ × 12½ in. (45 × 32.1 cm)

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett
Inv. no. C 1193

Old inventory, first listed in the inventory in 1865

This nature study by Cranach belongs to a portfolio of drawings of birds and game animals among the models to be used in his workshop. Its charms are its naturalistic depiction and plasticity. The drawing belongs to the tradition of hunting still lifes, a genre known only since Jacopo de' Barbari. Before Cranach became court painter to Frederick the Wise in 1505, de' Barbari had been active for the Saxon elector since 1503. His painting of a partridge, gauntlets, and a crossbow bolt of 1504 (Munich, Alte Pinakothek) is regarded as the earliest surviving still life of the modern era. Cranach's partridges appear as symbols of sensual love in the paintings *Hercules and Omphale* (formerly Munich, Kunsthandel Scheidwimmer) and *The Payment* (see fig. 11, p. 39) of 1532. CS

Lewerken and Siebel 2004, 112, cat. no. 2.21; Westheider and Philipp 2010, 82–83, cat. no. 9; Maaz 2013, 82





CAT. NO. 100
BARTHOLOMÄUS BRUYN THE ELDER
PORTRAIT OF A MAN AND PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN,
1534

Oak, 16½ × 11¾ in. (42 × 30 cm) each

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

Cat. nos. S. 20; S. 21

Acquired in 1904 as a donation from James Simon, Berlin

Bruyn helped portraiture achieve a breakthrough in Cologne. Although the city remained Catholic, the portrait became the most important brief for a painting in the first half of the sixteenth century. With tasteful but expensive clothing, the unknown couple emphasized it belonged to the upper class of the bourgeoisie. The calm poses and relaxed facial expressions of both sitters express dignity. The carnation in the woman's hand is a symbol of marital affection. SK

Gemäldegalerie, Berlin 1929, 18; Westhoff-Krummacher 1965, cat. nos. 29, 30

