

Design and Description: Renaissance and Baroque Drawings, January 27, 2006-April 9, 2006

Beginning in the early Renaissance (ca. 1400), artists and their patrons sought new ways to make art and its subject matter correspond more directly to the world of their viewers. In the pursuit of increasingly naturalistic art, drawing became a regular part of artistic practice.

The Italian word for drawing, *disegno*, also may be translated as “design.” In artists’ workshops and emerging art academies in Renaissance Italy, young apprentices were taught to follow clearly defined steps in the design of frescos, panel paintings, sculpture, and prints. Artists began with free-form sketches that explored compositional ideas and also with studies from life or antique sculpture. These were followed with drawings that explored the effects of light, shadow, and spatial illusion. Lastly, artists created fully realized drawings to integrate all of these design elements into models (called *modelli*) for the final works.

In Germany and the Netherlands, preparatory drawings became common only in the 1550s. Instead, drawings were presented to patrons as finished works or as contractual agreements. They were also used in instruction: artists often made drawings of completed paintings to use as workshop examples. For these reasons, many early Northern drawings are highly finished, emphasizing the descriptive detail, texture, and reflective effects of light for which Northern painters were known.

By the 17th century (Baroque period), artists from all over Europe traveled to Italy for part of their training. As a result, the Italian tradition of systematic design permeated artistic practice throughout the continent. As well, new genres such as landscape emerged with emphasis upon sketching on site.

The Renaissance and Baroque reliance on drawing carried through to the art academies of later centuries, continuing today at RISD as the foundation upon which students base their artistic training.

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Pieter Jansz. Pourbus, Flemish, 1523/24-1584

The Last Judgment, ca. 1551

Pen and wash with white lead heightening on medium smooth beige paper, glued to medium weight paper, affixed to a blue and gold mount

Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr. 1989.110.2

Pieter Pourbus was the preeminent painter in the city of Bruges in the mid-16th century. He was responsible for integrating Italian style with traditional Netherlandish subject matter. This drawing is a *modello* for a panel painting depicting the Last Judgment that Pourbus completed in 1551 for the Palace of Justice in Bruges (pictured below). Pourbus borrowed the division of heaven and earth and



RISD MUSEUM

arrangement of saints from traditional Netherlandish interpretations of the subject. The continuous, swirling movement and dramatically posed, monumental figures, however, are features reflecting Italian versions of the scene, such as Michelangelo's fresco in the Sistine Chapel, which was known across Europe through printed reproductions.

Anthony van Dyck, Flemish, 1599-1641
Study for Malchus, before 1621
Black chalk on paper
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.443

Van Dyck created this sketch for the figure of Malchus in his painting *Betrayal of Christ*, now in the Prado Museum, Madrid, and reproduced below. Malchus was the servant of the high priest of Jerusalem. According to the Gospel of Luke, Peter severed Malchus's ear with a sword during Christ's capture in the Garden of Gethsemane.



Van Dyck depicted Malchus struggling with Peter, whose hand is visible grasping Malchus's clothing at left. Van Dyck's strong direction of line, most obvious underneath the figure, reinforces Malchus's violent gesture.

Luca Penni, Italian, d. 1556
Daniel Dumonstier, French, 1574-1646
Rosso Fiorentino, Italian, 1494-1540
Venus Riding on a Shell Chariot, ca. 1540-1555
Pen and ink on medium, moderately textured cream laid paper
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.447



In the 16th century, many French, Flemish, and Italian artists were employed by a succession of French kings at Fontainebleau, then the primary residence of the French court. This drawing exhibits the style of Luca Penni, who worked there and also headed a workshop in Paris. The flat and linear rendering suggests that the drawing may have been a study for stuccowork.

RISD MUSEUM

Jan Josephsz van Goyen, Dutch, 1596-1656

Untitled (Landscape with Gallows), page 26 from a sketchbook, 1627

Black chalk and watercolor on antique cream laid paper

Gift of Drs. Arnold-Peter C. and Yvonne S. Weiss 2000.119

Van Goyen was the student of Esaias van de Velde, whose winter landscape study hangs at left. This page comes from a sketchbook by Van Goyen, now dispersed, consisting of landscape views in the vicinity of Leiden. The quiet setting includes surprisingly grim subject matter: the gallows. Particularly after the period of unrest due to the Protestant Reformation and the Netherlandish revolt against Spain, public displays of punishment were a part of everyday life. This depiction is devoid of the psychological intensity of Ribera's scene of torture at left, yet perhaps just as horrifying because of its seemingly permanent placement within the landscape.



Jan Gossaert, Netherlandish, ca. 1472-ca. 1533

Adam and Eve, ca. 1525

Black chalk, stumped, and black crayon

Walter H. Kimball Fund 48.425

Gossaert was the court artist to Philip of Burgundy at Utrecht and the first Northern Renaissance artist known to have traveled to Rome. Gossaert's depiction of the Fall of Man portrays a psychologically charged moment infused with overt eroticism. Eve reaches simultaneously toward the apple and Adam's groin. Adam is no less culpable, however, as his arms stretch in two directions paralleling those of Eve. Gossaert's muscular bodies reveal his engagement with Italian models; however, his descriptive approach to the texture and details of skin, bark, snakeskin, and hair—achieved through rubbing, or stumping, natural chalk—indicates his immersion in Northern traditions. The ultimate use of this remarkable drawing is unknown. It may have functioned as a workshop model.



Rembrandt van Rijn, Dutch, 1606-1669

Landscape (Farm Buildings at the Dijk) (recto); *Partial Landscape with Trees and Fence* (verso), ca. 1648

Pen and ink, brush and wash, gouache on antique cream laid paper (recto); black chalk (verso)

Jesse Metcalf Fund and Mary B. Jackson Fund 49.134

When drawing landscape, which he did on site, Rembrandt began with fine lines that he then elaborated with heavier ones. This can be observed in the handling of grasses at the drawing's center. Diverse markings, some executed with a half-dry pen, create unexpected depth in the landscape. Rembrandt also made corrections to his own



RISD MUSEUM

drawings with white paint. A possible correction can be viewed at the left, where an area of white paint appears midway up the side of the house.

Jan Brueghel the Elder, Flemish, 1568-1625

Landscape with Two Windmills and a Town, after 1607

Pen and brushpoint with ink, brush and blue and green (faded to blue) washes on antique laid paper

Gift of Henry D. Sharpe 50.297

This sketch is a copy after a painting by Jan Brueghel the Elder probably made by a studio apprentice or relation. The windmills celebrate an important local technology, while the crowded market road indicates the thriving regional economy.



Luca Cambiaso, Italian, 1527-1585

The Descent from the Cross, ca. 1570

Pen and ink, brush and wash

Gift of Miss Ellen D. Sharpe 50.298

The Genoese artist Luca Cambiaso had a prolific career. Perhaps in response to the high number of commissions he received, Cambiaso developed an unusual style of drawing, typified by the shorthand rendering of human forms seen in this study. He has reduced bodies and faces to summary abstraction, emphasizing the overall pyramidal composition.



RISD MUSEUM

Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, Italian, 1609 - 1664

Christ on the Cross Adored by Angels, ca. 1650-60

Brush drawing, brown and red-brown paint with blue, white, and red touches

Gift of Henry D. Sharpe 50.300

Castiglione was a highly innovative artist who may have invented the use of brush drawing with oil on paper, the technique evident here. Like the Cambiaso drawing at left, Castiglione provided the barest of descriptive detail in his sketch. The artist's brushy, colored sketch accentuates, in shorthand form, the emotional power of the subject.



Cigoli, Italian, 1559-1613

Florence

Bologna

Triumphal Car Depicting the Allegory of Vice, mid 1500s - early 1600s

Pen and ink, brush and wash, over graphite on antique laid paper

Gift of Miss Ellen D. Sharpe 50.301

This sketch depicts a triumphal car in the midst of a procession. The notations in Italian, each referring to a vice such as pride or gluttony, suggest that it was a working drawing, possibly used to design an actual performance. Allegorical triumphal processions were programmatic parts of weddings, balletic interludes, and joyous entries staged privately at court and on public streets. The Renaissance revival of Roman literature and culture contributed to the interest in the triumph motif, also evident in the two drawings at left.



Hendrik de Clerck, Flemish, 1570-1629

David and Abigail, ca. 1610

Pen and ink, brush and wash, over traces of framing lines in black chalk

Gift of Miss Ellen D. Sharpe 50.302

De Clerck's use of pen and wash is mannered and idiosyncratic. The ink, applied in curved, abbreviated strokes, and the tonal wash create an overall rhythm across the drawing with little correspondence to either narrative import (the meeting of David and Abigail, found in the lightened central portion) or a natural source of light. The artist's monogram suggests that this was a finished drawing, intended for a collector who would appreciate the anecdotal detail, various types of figures, and beautifully rendered setting as much as the narrative.



RISD MUSEUM

Marco Tullio Montagna, Italian, fl. 1618-1640
Scenes from the Life of Saint Joseph, ca. 1630-1631
Pen and ink, brush and wash, over graphite
Gift of Miss Ellen D. Sharpe 50.305

Montagna drafted this compositional study for one wall of his fresco cycle depicting the life of St. Joseph, which he executed for the Oratory of S. Giuseppe dei Falegnami in Rome between 1631 and 1637. In the tradition of Renaissance painters such as Michelangelo, Montagna used illusory architectural elements to order the narrative sequence of his composition, which proceeded counterclockwise around the oratory. The narrative vignettes should thus be read from right to left: the Annunciation and Adoration of the Shepherds at right, and Joseph's Dream coupled with the Flight into Egypt at left.



Maerten van Heemskerck, Netherlandish, 1498-1574
Triumph of David, 1559
Pen and ink over underdrawing in black chalk on paper, incised for transfer
Museum Works of Art Fund 51.095

The Haarlem artist Maarten van Heemskerck drew over two hundred designs for prints, of which this drawing is one example. His careful outlines and hatch marks indicate to the engraver the appropriate patterns of shading for the subsequent engraving, reproduced below. The print differs very little from the drawing. To transfer the design, the drawing's contours were incised with a stylus onto a thin ground of wax on a plate or onto intermediary tracing paper. The drawing's indented contours can be seen in the detail at right.



RISD MUSEUM

Baccio Bandinelli, Italian, 1493-1560

Early Design for the Tomb of Pope Clement VII, ca. 1534-1536

Pen and ink with traces of stylus

Museum Works of Art Fund 51.507

Baccio Bandinelli was a Florentine sculptor. His distinctive style of draftsmanship consisted of intricately interwoven hatch marks that emphasize three-dimensionality. This drawing is the artist's first modello for the tomb of Pope Clement VII, which Bandinelli would later complete in sculptural form at the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome. The final version abandoned this design altogether: the somewhat unusual rendering of the human soul (here represented in innocent nudity at the composition's center) was replaced with a more traditional triumphal arch motif.

This drawing bears the elaborate gilt mount of 18th-century English collector John Talman.



Carlo Maratti, Italian, 1625-1713

Luca Giordano

Hercules in the Garden of the Hesperides, ca. 1692

Pen and ink, brush and wash, over graphite

Anonymous gift 52.194

Maratti depicts an episode from Hercules's eleventh labor, in which Hercules stole three golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides (the daughters of Night). Hercules enlisted the help of the Titan Atlas, who was charged with keeping the heavens and earth separate for all eternity. Hercules persuaded Atlas to retrieve the apples for him only after agreeing to bear the weight of the heavens temporarily. Maratti shows three women saddling Hercules with the heavens, represented by clouds, while the globe rests at his feet. The firmament on his back provides the platform for three allegorical figures above, Victory, Honor, and Fame, who represent Hercules Victorious. This and a related drawing at the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, served as designs for an octagonal ceiling at the Villa Visconti, Rome, now destroyed.



RISD MUSEUM

Ottavio Mario Leoni, Italian, 1578-1630

Portrait of a Young Girl (Madalena), 1617

Black and white chalk and graphite on faded blue paper

Anonymous gift 52.195

Leoni worked in Baroque-period Rome and was known for both his paintings and his wax portrait relief sculptures. Drawings such as this, which he executed fairly quickly from life, may have functioned as models for his sculptures. This particular drawing depicts his daughter, Madalena, whose name is inscribed at the bottom.



Hans Bol, Netherlandish, 1534-1593

The Resurrection of Christ, ca. 1573

Pen and ink, brush and wash, heightened with white gouache, over traces of black chalk

Museum Works of Art Fund 52.304

This highly finished *modello* relates to the right wing of a triptych (three-part panel painting), as indicated by the shape and structure of the composition. When combined with the drawings for the center and left panels, it may have acted as a contract for promised work between artist and patron.



RISD MUSEUM

Jusepe de Ribera, Spanish, 1591-1652

Inquisition Scene, after 1635

Pen and ink, brush and wash on thin antique white laid paper

Museum Works of Art Fund 56.060

This drawing depicts a gruesome act—a scene of torture in which an Inquisitor tries to coerce evidence from a prisoner by using a device called *la garrucha* (the hoist). Ribera depicted the prisoner's arms in an early state of dislocation. The taste for horrific scenes of martyrdom and punishment was not unusual amongst the Counter-Reform audience of Naples, where Ribera worked.



Esaias van de Velde I, Dutch, 1587-1630

Frozen Canal before a Farm in Winter, ca. 1628

Charcoal, brush and wash on paper

Anonymous gift 61.075

Like many Dutch artists of the 17th century, Esaias van de Velde specialized in naturalistic landscapes without mythological or religious associations, such as this delicate chalk drawing. Taking a low viewpoint, Van de Velde relayed the bitter cold of the European winter and a favorite seasonal pastime, ice skating.



Jan de Beer, Flemish, ca. 1475-1528

The Adoration of the Magi, ca. 1510

Pen and ink with white heightening on olive-brown prepared paper

Museum purchase: gift of the Museum Associates 61.090

Jan de Beer was an Antwerp Mannerist, a name given to a group of artists working in a common style in Antwerp in the early 16th century, who catered to a clientele interested in richly ornamental clothing, luxurious interiors, and fanciful architectural settings. The subject of the Adoration of the Magi was very popular with these middle-class merchant patrons, who may have identified with the story of the traveling Wise Men. The drawing was probably a finished product for the market.



RISD MUSEUM

Giovanni Battista Bertani, Italian, 1516-1576
(recto) Hercules Victorious over the Hydra; (verso) Study of Hercules, roman soldier's head, ornaments, ca. 1558
Pen and ink with traces of red chalk on paper
Helen M. Danforth Acquisition Fund 65.078

This drawing served as the design for an engraving executed by Giorgio Ghisi (shown here). The double-sided sheet gives insight into Bertani's working method. On the reverse, a preliminary sketch for Hercules takes form, accompanied by sketches of a Roman soldier's head, an ornament, and a violin. The artist also wrote notes in Italian, one of which reads "forty-five chemises of the Madonna" (*quarantacinque chemise de Madonna*), referring perhaps to another work of art or a task to complete. On this side, Bertani drew a more fully rendered version of Hercules with sure, reinforced contour lines and delicate, feathery hatching. As if not wanting to waste any paper, the artist sketched additional studies of limbs and the back of a woman in drapery.



Cesare Nebbia, Italian, ca. 1536-1614
Roman Soldier, ca. 1580
Pen and ink, brush and wash, over graphite
Bequest of Lyra Brown Nickerson, by exchange 82.037



Jacopo da Empoli, Italian, ca. 1554-1640
Figure Study, late 1500s- early 1600s
Red chalk on antique laid paper
Gift of the Fazzano Brothers 84.198.1008



RISD MUSEUM

Italian

Studies of Skulls (recto); *study of Drapery* (verso), 1500s

Red chalk on antique laid paper (recto); red, white, and black chalk on grey prepared paper (verso)

Museum Works of Art Fund 58.195



Albrecht Dürer, German, 1471-1528

Buttercups, Red Clover, and Plantain, 1526

Watercolor and gouache on vellum

Gift of Mrs. Brockholst Smith in memory of her mother, Jane W.

Bradley 38.053



Cesare Pollini, Italian, ca. 1560-ca. 1630

Federico Zuccaro, Italian, 1540/43-1609

Workshop of an Artist, late 1500s - early 1600s

Pen and ink, brush and wash, heightened with white on paper prepared with a red wash

Gift of Miss Ellen D. Sharpe 50.307



This sketch by the Perugian artist Cesare Pollini offers a rare glimpse into the late Renaissance workshop. A master painter sits at center right, at work upon a large canvas depicting the Virgin and Child in Glory above saints. The canvas is positioned diagonally from the picture plane. On the other side of the canvas, to the left of center, sit the students, who practice sketching from antique sculpture, represented by the numerous plaster, wax, or bronze casts shown on the upper level of the studio.

RISD MUSEUM

Hieronymus Bosch, Netherlandish, ca. 1450-1516

Sheet of Grotesque Figures, ca. 1510

Pen and ink on paper

Gift of Mrs. Murray S. Danforth in memory of her father, Stephen O. Metcalf 51.069

A close follower (perhaps a student) of the Northern painter Hieronymus Bosch executed this sheet. Four of the grotesques depicted are copies from a drawing attributed to Bosch, now in Berlin. Neither this nor the Berlin drawing is related to a known painting, suggesting that the student used Bosch's drawing as a model, a common workshop practice. Bosch's works were filled with devilish creatures, highlighting his theme of the conflict between good and evil in the human soul.



Pierre Jacques, French, 1520 - 1596

Polidoro da Caravaggio, Italian, 1495/1500-ca. 1543

Domenico Piola I, Italian, 1627-1703

Sheet of Studies after the Antique. Recto: *Studies of legs*. Verso: *Satyr, Lyres, Galloping Horses, Architectural Elements*, mid 1600s-early 1700s

Pen and ink on antique white laid paper

Museum Works of Art Fund 56.197

This sketch sheet is surely the work of a student who was studying and recreating, in schematic form, finished works by master artists. The variety of subjects and perspectives indicates that the artist was looking at many different models.



Pieter Withoos, Dutch, 1654-1693

Study of Four Butterflies and a Bumblebee, late 1600s

Watercolor and gouache over graphite on vellum

Ernest and Pearl Nathan Fund 82.025



RISD MUSEUM

Moretto da Brescia, Italian, 1498-1554

Madonna and Child with Saint Roch, mid 1500s

Red chalk on antique laid paper, squared for transfer in red chalk

Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.465

Red chalk was a medium often employed to sketch from life. Its use here suggests that this figural grouping was a preliminary sketch to be transferred not to a final work, but to a larger sheet of paper for additional modeling and completion of the setting.



Valentin Lefebvre, Flemish, ca. 1641-ca. 1680

Adoration of the Shepherds, 1600s

Pen and ink and wash over graphite, squared in red chalk for transfer

Gift of Miss Ellen D. Sharpe 50.304

Although the squaring indicates the artist's intention to transfer the composition to a larger format, Lefevre was still fine-tuning his final composition. He abandoned a figure at the right, where an unfinished arm and drapery may be discerned.

