

Gallery

3

Late Gothic & Renaissance Art in Northern Europe, 1350-1550

The large area of Europe roughly equivalent to modern Belgium, Germany, and Holland had a vital and distinctive artistic tradition in the 15th and 16th centuries. Commissioned by various religious and secular institutions, the works of art displayed here reflect the growing diversity in the patronage of the day. At this time, one of the greatest changes in artmaking came with the Protestant Reformation in the early 16th century, and the subsequent reforms brought on by the Catholic Counter-Reformation. While the established Gothic style persisted, it mingled with the modern tendencies of the Renaissance, initially in form and technique, and then in subject and theme. Artists excelled at the realistic depiction of every detail and compositional facet in their pictures, sensibilities that were aided by the advent of oil painting. Many of the wood sculptures derive their style from the sculptures of the Gothic cathedrals, while the paintings follow precedents found in manuscript illumination and Italian art.

In 1928, John Ringling acquired an important collection of Medieval and Renaissance art originally formed by Emile Gavet of Paris. Several works in Galleries 3 and 4 were part of this collection, including the reliquary head, the triptych by Pieter Coecke van Aelst, and some of the sculptures.

The doorways and wainscoting in this gallery were originally fixtures in the Villa Palmieri in Florence, the home of Matteo Palmieri (d. 1475), the historian and poet of the famous poem, “La Citta della Vita” (The City of Life). The villa is also famous for the description of its medieval gardens by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375). In 1873, the villa was purchased by Alexander William Crawford Lindsay (1812-1880), the 25th Earl of Crawford. John Ringling acquired the interior decorations when American businessman James W. Ellsworth purchased and renovated the building.



Robert Campin, after
Early Netherlandish, 1378-1444

Virgin and Child in an Apse, c. 1500
Oil and tempera on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 196

This panel is one of the finest surviving copies of one of the most admired pictures, now lost, by Robert Campin, the Tournai painter who is also known as the Master of Flemalle. Of particular reference to his style are the subtle effects of brushwork and illusionism and the manner in which the light illuminates the drapery, hair, and skin of the Virgin and angels. During the 15th century, several famous pictures were copied because they were believed to possess miraculous powers. The presentation of the Madonna and angels in an apse is based upon a medieval metaphor of the Church as the image of heaven.



Adrien Isenbrandt
Early Netherlandish, c. 1500-before 1551

The Descent from the Cross, c. 1525
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 199

Isenbrandt became a master in Bruges in 1510 and was singled out by early historians as the successor to Gerard David (active 1484-1523). For this reason most of the later, David-inspired works produced in Bruges are ascribed to his authorship. The Deposition was a popular subject in painting even though it is not prominently recounted in the Gospels. The conspicuous display of Christ's dead body is an appropriate subject for an altarpiece as an aid to devotion and to meditation on his sacrifice.



Quentin Matsys (and workshop)
Early Netherlandish, 1466-1530, active in
Antwerp

Madonna of the Cherries, c. 1525
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 200

Matsys was the first major painter of the city of Antwerp, and he remained a favorite of collectors and succeeding generations of Antwerp painters. Thought by some scholars to be a copy of one of Matsys' final compositions, the Ringling panel was likely produced in the master's workshop, perhaps under the hand of Matsys himself. This picture makes clear the predominant qualities of Matsys' latest period, including the glossy skin tones revealing an almost

oily surface. The physical intimacy and fullness of the forms of the Madonna and Child represent a new Flemish adoption of Italianate forms and gestures.



Jan Mostaert
Early Netherlandish, born c. 1475, died
1555 or 1556, active in Haarlem and
Malines

*Portrait of a Lady with a Standard, c.
1515*
Oil on linen

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 204



Cornelis van Cleve

Early Netherlandish, 1520-after 1570,
active in Antwerp

Nativity, c. 1540

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 201

Cornelis was the son of the famous Antwerp painter, Joos van Cleve (d. 1540), and his painting style follows the lead of his father. What is perhaps most important about the Ringling picture is its assimilation of Italian motifs, in this case the circle of Raphael. In the early 16th century, a trip to Rome was de rigueur for an aspiring Flemish artist, although it is uncertain whether van Cleve traveled there. In this depiction of the Nativity, the gleaming figures of the Madonna and Child are contrasted with the darkened, shadowy forms of the onlookers surrounding them.



Northern France

16th century

Chest with Panels Depicting Saints, c.

1550

Wood and metal

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1523



Jan de Beer, circle of
Early Netherlandish, c. 1504-1515, active in
Antwerp

Massacre of the Innocents, c. 1515
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 202

The artist of this panel is clearly linked to the Antwerp Mannerists who were active in the early 16th century, and may have worked in the circle of Jan de Beer. These painters worked in the Flemish port city for an international clientele, and examples of their work could be found throughout Europe. Characteristic of their style are the crowded foreground, repeated facial

expressions, and ornate costumes. In this passage from the New Testament Book of Matthew, King Herod observes the massacre of all male children in his kingdom, initiated upon his orders, while the flight of the Holy Family to Egypt is visible in the distance.



Austria
15th century

*A Family Group Adoring the Veil of
Veronica*,
c. 1490
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 304

This panel painting depicts a family, flanked by their patron saints, Peter and Jacob, in a church interior, venerating the Veil of Veronica, a cloth considered to show the first true likeness of Christ. In the background an altarpiece with the Passion cycle is visible, and the veil covers what is most likely a scene representing the Raising of the Cross.

The painting may have been commissioned to commemorate the death of the matriarch of the family, of which the white cross in her hand is an indication.



Pieter Coecke van Aelst, circle of
Early Netherlandish, 1502-1550, active in
Antwerp

*Christ Arrested in the Garden; The
Adoration of the Magi; Christ Carrying
the Cross (l-r); The Annunciate Mary;
The Angel of the Annunciation (verso, l-
r)*, c. 1520

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 203

This small altarpiece is associated with the oeuvre of Pieter Coecke, one of the leading Antwerp painters in the 16th century. Like other triptychs by Coecke, the Ringling panels feature a fragmented classical ruin through which a hillside landscape can be seen. This setting was a staple for Adoration scenes of the Antwerp Mannerist painters, and this work juxtaposes scenes from the beginning and end of the life of Christ.



Marcellus Coffermans

Early Netherlandish, active 1549, died after 1575

The Lamentation, c. 1560-1575

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 205

Marcellus Coffermans' paintings are composed of elements taken from works by masters of the 15th century Netherlandish tradition and by major German printmakers. His oeuvre appears to date from a much earlier period and is not reflective of the styles of his contemporaries in 16th-century Antwerp. In this painting, the atmosphere, hazy effects, rose-and-green color scheme, small size, and religious narrative are all characteristics of Coffermans' work. The

votive display of Christ in Mary's arms among mourners is set against a landscape of both Golgotha and Jerusalem.



Frans Pourbus the Elder, attributed to Flemish, 1545-1581, active in Bruges and Antwerp

Portrait of a Man, c. 1570-80

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 206

This compelling portrait has been attributed to a number of Netherlandish painters, including Anthonis Mor, Adriaen Thomasz. Key, and Michiel Coxie; however, the most plausible candidate is Frans Pourbus the Elder. If the blurred and strengthened inscription is to be believed, Pourbus would have been just nineteen years old when he

executed this work. The son of the painter Pieter Pourbus, Frans was known for his religious paintings and portraits, a tradition also carried on by his son, Frans Pourbus the Younger.



Franconian Painter of the Nuremberg School

Active late 15th century in Nuremberg

Christ before Caiaphas, c. 1490

Cradled pine panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 305

Caiaphas was the Jewish high priest to whom Jesus, also a Jew, was taken after his arrest in the garden of Gethsemane, where Judas betrayed him with a kiss. Wanted by the Jewish authorities for his apparent religiously blasphemous words and actions, Jesus was brought first before the Jewish authorities and then the Roman authorities,

namely Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea. Subsequently, through a combination of the religious leaders and the political ones, it was decided that Jesus should be crucified.



Franconian Painter of the Nuremberg School

Active late 15th century in Nuremberg

The Miracle of Saint Vitus, c. 1490

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 306

Saint Vitus was a 4th-century Sicilian martyr, and he was one of the group called the Fourteen Holy Helpers in 14th-century Rhineland. These holy healers were grouped together by virtue of their alleged healing powers both during and after their lifetimes. Vitus's name is invoked against various nervous disorders, particularly

epilepsy, which for a time was in fact called "Saint Vitus's Dance." In this painting, we see Vitus tugging at a tie or part of a shirt of another man who appears distraught. No doubt this painting represents Vitus at work healing a man suffering from some sort of mental illness.



Master of Saint Severin

German, active c. 1485-1515 in Cologne

A Legendary Scene, c. 1480-1520

Oil on canvas affixed to panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 307

In the foreground, a noble couple enjoys a banquet before the entrance to a Carthusian monastery. One monk holds his hand to his chest in a gesture of affection, seemingly enthralled with the young wife. The unhappy resolution of the tale plays out in the background, where the same monk and woman are attacked by large bears, perhaps as a punishment for adultery. The repetition of the same figure within one work to illustrate a story developing over time, known as continuous narrative, was one method of depicting multiple scenes from a tale within a single panel.



Northern France

17th century

Chest with Vines and Figures, 17th century

Oak and metal

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1524



Lucas Cranach the Elder

German, 1472-1553

***Cardinal Albrecht of Brandenburg as
Saint Jerome, 1526***

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 308

Like Cranach's other portraits of this sitter, this work is based on an engraving by Dürer, and the composition is a mirror image of Dürer's print of St. Jerome. Cardinal Albrecht, a humanist who corresponded with Erasmus, was Martin Luther's principal foe, and for Albrecht, St. Jerome was the epitome of the religious scholar, having translated the Bible into the Vulgate. The presence of the lion announces Albrecht's identification with the saint. Cranach was a convert to Protestantism; however, he accepted commissions from Catholic patrons.



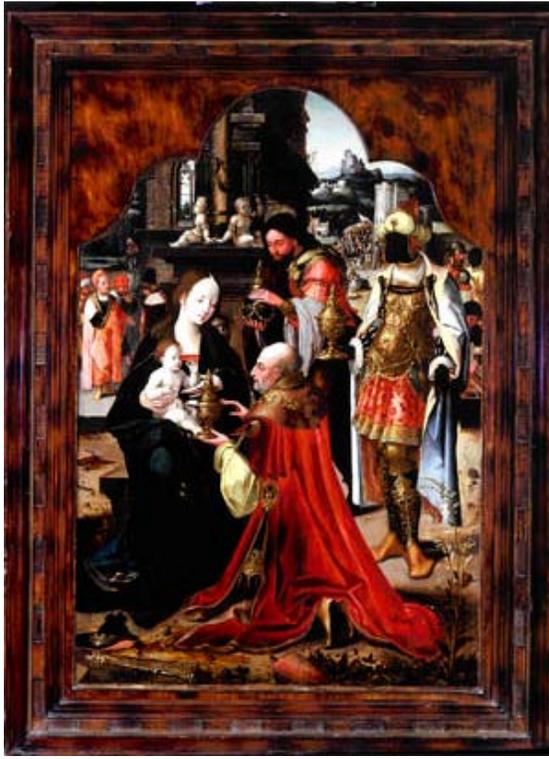
Germany

17th century

***Hanging Lamp in the Form of a
Mermaid, 1665***

Polychromed and gilded wood

Museum purchase, 1949, SN 1225



Jan Mertens

Early Netherlandish, c. 1470-c. 1527,
active in Antwerp

***Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1520-27**

Oil on panel

Gift of Mr. Karl Bickel, 1973, SN 927

The Adoration of the Magi was a favorite subject of Early Netherlandish artists who favored the elaborate style of painting now called “Antwerp Mannerism.” This painting shows the influence of the Italian Renaissance on Flemish art and demonstrates Mertens’ ability to evoke the Roman past in the ornate classical architecture and in the detailed costumes and armor. The difference between this work and earlier styles in the Netherlands is evident in the idealized face of the Virgin compared with her plainer features in the *Virgin and Child in an Apse*, a painting by a follower of Robert Campin, which is also displayed in this gallery.



Germany

16th century

***Scourger*, c. 1525**

Polychromed and gilded wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 7060



Anthonis Mor, follower of
Dutch, c. 1512-1576, active in Utrecht,
Antwerp, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and England

Portrait of a Nobleman, 1565
Oil on panel

Bequest of Karl A. Bickel, SN 928

Anthonis Mor became an internationally famous portraitist, depicting important nobles and clerics in the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and England. While he was influenced by Titian's portraits, Moro's approach was typically northern in his love for detail and formality. The Ringling panel has all the characteristics of a typical Mor portrait with

highly detailed lace, buttons, and fabric accenting a smoothly painted, slightly elongated face, and eyes that make direct contact with the viewer.



Northern Europe (Franco-Flemish or German)

15th century

Head Reliquary, c. 1400
Copper-gilt and semi-precious stones

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1099

Reliquary busts were made as containers for sacred relics, and in this example from the Lowlands or France, the face would have been originally painted in tempera in pale flesh tones over a foundation layer of green. The bust is made from three plates of repoussé metal with the third plate shaped to form the shape of the head and hinged to open to the interior (for the relics). The open foliate fillet around the brow is set with colored glass in imitation of precious

stones, and the center heart-shaped stone at the breast is a cabochon of hollowed-out rose quartz which once contained a small relic.



Germany
16th century

Male Angel as Acolyte, 16th century
Wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1054



Germany
16th century

Male Angel as Acolyte, 16th century
Wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1055



Germany
16th century

Male Angel as Acolyte, 16th century
Wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1056



Germany
16th century

Male Angel as Acolyte, 16th century
Wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1057



Germany
16th century

God the Father, 16th century
Wood relief

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1058



Germany
16th century

Pedestal, 16th century
Carved teakwood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1145



Northern Europe (Franco-Flemish or German)
19th century

Pedestal, 19th century
Wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1191



Austria (probably Tirol)
15th century

Two Warrior Saints, c. 1480
Polychromed and gilded wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1518
and SN 1520

The two warrior saints are bareheaded and clad in Gothic style defensive armor designed to protect knights on horseback. Fine details such as the outside hinges of the arm and leg pieces, gauntlets, knuckle joints, and buckles are faithfully represented. Both warriors carry stiff, diamond-sectioned thrusting swords designed to penetrate weak points in plate harness. The figures possess the gentle expression and graceful stance which are typical of Tyrolean and German carving of the late 15th century, and they were likely once part of an altarpiece.



Germany
15th century

Bust of a Female Saint, c. 1450
Polychromed and gilded wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1586



Daniel Mauch, attributed to
German, 1477-1540

Saint Catherine, c. 1500
Polychromed and gilded limewood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN
1572



Southern Netherlands

16th century

The Virgin Fainting at the Deposition,
c. 1525

Polychromed and gilded wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN
1580



Southern Netherlands

16th century

*The Presentation of Christ in the
Temple,* c. 1525

Polychromed and gilded wood

This sculpture rests on a 16th c. Flemish
gilded wood socle.

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN
1583, SN 1585



Northern Europe

16th century

Madonna and Child in Niche, c. 1520

Polychromed and gilded wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1581,
SN 1790



Northern Europe
16th century

Madonna and Child in Niche, c. 1520
Polychromed and gilded wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1582,
SN 1791



Germany (Hildesheim or Brunswick)

16th century

Figures from a Sculpted Altarpiece: Saints Anthony of Egypt, Barbara, John the Baptist, and John the Evangelist, c. 1525-30

Polychromed and gilded wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1590, SN 1592, SN 1593, SN 1601



Germany (Hildesheim or Brunswick)

16th century

Figures from a Sculpted Altarpiece: Saints Catherine, Andrew, Anne, and Saint Martin of Tours, c. 1525-30
Polychromed and gilded wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1594-1596 and SN 1602



Southern Netherlands

16th century

Mary Magdalene, c. 1590

Polychromed and gilded limestone

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 5028



Germany
15th century

Saint Gregory, c. 1475
Polychromed and gilded wood in an
elaborate niche

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 5030