

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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FIRST EXHIBITION OF DRAWINGS BY JACQUES DE GHEYN AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

WASHINGTON, D.C. Feb. 3, 1986. The National Gallery of Art will host the first exhibition ever devoted exclusively to the Drawings of Jacques de Gheyn, a master who is generally recognized as the finest Dutch draftsman before Rembrandt. The exhibition features 100 of De Gheyn's most important works and will be on view March 9 through May 11, 1986 in the Gallery's East Building.

J. Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery of Art, said, "Although De Gheyn has long been appreciated by art historians and collectors, until now his work has been seen only in general exhibitions of Dutch 17th-century art. The full range of his subject matter and stylistic development is, in fact, little known in both the United States and Europe. Thus, it is with great pleasure that the National Gallery joins with the Musuem Boymans-van Beuningen of Rotterdam to present the finest exhibition of De Gheyn drawings ever assembled."

Jacques de Gheyn (1565-1629) began his training in Haarlem with Hendrik Goltzius, who at that time was the most important graphic artist in Holland. From 1590 when he arrived in Amsterdam until his death in 1629, De Gheyn produced a constant flow of drawings covering a variety of subjects in a wide range of media. His legacy includes portraits, allegories, study-sheets, and designs for his own prints, all of which are represented in this exhibition.

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The drawings of De Gheyn were strongly influenced by personal interests and immediate life experiences. His concern for nature inspired drawings of plants, animals and landscapes that are remarkable both for their scientific realism and intensely expressive personality. De Gheyn's fascination with witchcraft inspired a group of strikingly vivid drawings depicting witches' sabbaths.

De Gheyn's move to The Hague around 1600 brought him into contact with the court of the ruling monarchy, as well as a vibrant university community. Both associations influenced the works of his later years, a period during which he made designs for the famous book The Exercise of Arms (1606).

The exhibition has been organized by the National Gallery of Art and the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen in Rotterdam. An illustrated scholarly catalogue has been written and edited by A.W.F. Meij, curator of drawings at the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, with additional essays by Dutch and American scholars. The exhibition has been jointly selected and coordinated by Andrew Robison, senior curator at the National Gallery of Art, and is supported by an indemnity from the United States Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities.

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