

PRESS



RELEASE



Pontormo, *Study of Two Male Figures Looking into a Mirror*, c. 1520 (detail)
Black chalk (?), white chalk, on blue paper, 422 x 272 mm

Two exhibitions at the Fondation Custodia, Paris

Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo
Italian Drawings from the Städel Museum in Frankfurt
(1430-1600)

Ink Circus
Works on Paper by Gèr Boosten

21 March – 21 June 2015



Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo
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The Fondation Custodia is delighted to present in Paris a selection of drawings by Italian Renaissance masters from the exceptional collection of the Städel Museum, Frankfurt. During three months this spring, the public will have the opportunity to admire almost 90 masterpieces from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo, Correggio and many others, that will be on display in the exhibition rooms of the Hôtel Lévis-Mirepoix at 121 rue de Lille in Paris.



One of the missions of the Fondation Custodia is to bring the very best of the art of drawing to the French public. The little-known collection of the Städel Museum is amongst these treasures that it wishes to share, and contains many magnificent surprises. Following in-depth analysis of the Italian drawings in a recent research project, original interpretations as well as new attributions await the public's discovery in the exhibition catalogue written by Joachim Jacoby.



The core of the collection is formed by the bequest of Johann Friedrich Städel, a banker and great art collector. His will, drawn up in 1815, resulted in the creation of Germany's oldest museum foundation, the Städel Museum. The group of Italian Renaissance drawings was enriched in the mid-nineteenth century by art historian Johann David Passavant, and today forms a collection of the first order that illustrates the different artistic movements of that epoch. Before coming to Paris, this exhibition was presented at the Städel Museum in Frankfurt.

The exhibition will confront visitors with a wide and representative selection of drawings from between 1430 and 1600, some of which are rarely or have never been unveiled to the public.

The show starts with a number of remarkable fifteenth-century drawings: four elegant Gothic standing figures from the circle of Pisanello (c. 1430), a silverpoint study of a live model for a *Crucifixion* (c. 1450), a Venetian drawing of a young man looking upwards (c. 1500), as well as the exceptional mourning scene by Marco Zoppo (c. 1470).





Between 1500 and 1525, Italian art took a completely new direction. This period was dominated by the artists Fra Bartolommeo and Michelangelo in Florence, Raphael in Rome, Correggio in Parma, and Titian in Venice, all represented in the exhibition. This generation of artists working in the early years of the Cinquecento produced pioneering works that would have a fundamental influence on their contemporaries and generations to come.



Alongside Michelangelo's *Grotesque Heads* (c. 1525),



visitors can admire three drawings by Raphael including his *Study of a Rider* that was used for producing a fresco in 1511/12 for the Room of Heliodorus in the Vatican Palace, Correggio's *Seated Prophet with a Book* (c. 1523), and Titian's unique *Study of St Sebastian for the High Altarpiece in SS Nazaro e Celso in Brescia* (c. 1519/20).

The exhibition will also allow visitors to contemplate works from the second half of the sixteenth century from central and northern Italy, covering a wide geographical zone extending from Genoa to Venice.

The drawings from central Italy, especially Florence and Rome, include works devoted to the demonstration of power and the refinement of court life. Among these are drawings by Pontormo, Vasari, Zuccari, Poccetti and Primatice, as well as Bronzino's sketch for a ceiling fresco in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (c. 1539/40).



Meanwhile, the selection from northern Italy will delight visitors with its striking drawings: *Venus Mourning the Death of Adonis* (c. 1560) by Luca Cambiaso of Genoa, *The Adoration of the Magi* (c. 1527/30), the *Portrait of a Man* by the highly influential Parmigianino, as well as the *Study of the Head of Michelangelo's Giuliano de Medici* (c.1545/60?) executed by Tintoretto, presumably after a cast of the well-known sculpture in the Medici Chapel in Florence.



The works on display comprise preparatory drawings for frescoes and paintings, studies *en plein air*, landscapes, as well as portraits and finished drawings, independent artworks such as the black-pen depiction of Narcissus by Giuseppe Cesari, also known as Cavaliere d'Arpino (c. 1595/1600).

The diversity and the quality of the works in the exhibition ***Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo. Italian Drawings from the Städel Museum in Frankfurt (1430-1600)***, provide an opportunity to contemplate all the functions and techniques of drawing in the Renaissance, a period in which this medium enjoyed an unprecedented heyday.



Exhibition by the Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main.
Its presentation in Paris is made possible thanks to the generous support
of the Wolfgang Ratjen Stiftung.



Gèr Boosten, *Tango*, 06/01/2014
Indian ink, 50 x 65 cm

Ink circus
Works on Paper by Gèr Boosten

21 March – 21 June 2015

In parallel with the Städel exhibition, a display of works on paper by the painter, draughtsman and printmaker Gèr Boosten opens on 21 March in the basement of the Hôtel Lévis-Mirepoix. Boosten was born in Maastricht in 1947, and lived there until 1996, when he and his family settled in France. For the last ten years he has lived and worked in a converted hangar in the village of Poilly-lez-Gien, 140 kilometres to the south of Paris. Boosten is a Dutch-born artist with, as he says himself, a French spirit, so an exhibition of his drawings in the Paris house of a Dutch drawing collection seems entirely appropriate.

In staging shows like this, the Fondation Custodia turns the spotlight on contemporary artists who know their Classics. They are not nostalgic, but they do have an understanding of the history of drawing. They are artists who have no desire to break with tradition, but seek to continue it; artists for whom the work of the draughtsmen of the Renaissance, the Golden Age and Modernism is still a source of inspiration today. In the recent past the Rue de Lille has hosted, among others, Peter Vos's *Metamorphosis*



drawings, and the Fondation is presently showing works on paper by painter and sculptor Arie Schippers.

For Gèr Boosten, the tradition in which he draws goes much further back than the Renaissance. He feels a kinship with prehistoric cave artists. 'Not that I want to copy them, make prehistoric drawings myself. But in those wall drawings you see for the first time a monumentality, an artistic spiritual force, conveyed in such a way that we are still astounded by it in the twenty-first century. In my own drawings I want to build a magnetic field, too, a tension between the black and the white. An open structure, comparable to the structure of the stars in the night sky. When I go outside in the evening and stand on the plateau near my house and look up at the stars, I understand very clearly what prehistoric man felt. They tried to take what they saw up above and place it down here. Stones with a hole in them have been found in France: this was the lens they looked through. In fact this hole is the rectangle of a drawing. The frame. Two hundred and fifty thousand years ago we were already looking for a frame, and we are still exploring our place in the universe within frameworks like this. I believe that every drawing should be a reflection of the universe.'

Boosten sets the bar high. And not just formally, with that tension between black and white, but with the subjects of his drawings. As a toddler in his father's studio he was already drawing what he imagined when he heard news reports about the disastrous floods in Zeeland and the Korean War. Around 1970 he was an exchange student in Yugoslavia, where he hung around with gypsies, alcoholics and prostitutes. 'Looking back, I can see that that time in Belgrade was the basis of the whole of the rest of my life. It was a harsh world, and I've captured that in my work: the mess, the mud, the poverty, the sharp definition. It lay there for the taking and I thought it was fantastic. Life and death were very close.'

On his return to the Netherlands Boosten graduated with drawings and paintings of crowds of ordinary people, crammed together in buses and trams or smoking and drinking at large tables. He drew people pushing and shoving, mini rebellions and murders. The setting is often stage-like: the figures stand and lie on the wooden planks of a shed floor or on a piece of flat land stretching in perspective to a high horizon. Beds, tables and stoves look like pieces of scenery, curtains and washing lines like stage wings.

After taking his finals at the Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht, Boosten stayed on and took a course in set design. His teacher, the painter, printmaker and set designer Nicolaas Wijnberg (1918-2006), soon became a good friend. In the nineteen-seventies Boosten designed sets for the Groot Limburgs Toneel and the Amsterdam theatre group Globe. His sets for Hugo Claus's plays *Suiker* (Sugar) and *Een bruid in de morgen* (A Bride in the Morning) have a great deal in common with his 'Yugoslavian' etchings and drawings.



Ger Luijten of the Fondation Custodia came across Gèr Boosten's work a decade or so ago, when he was the keeper of the Rijksprentenkabinet in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. The first etchings and drawings by Boosten came into the collection there as part of the Nicolaas Wijnberg bequest. More works were added to the group later in consultation with Boosten.

Last year Boosten gave a series of etchings to the Fondation Custodia. The exhibition at the Fondation includes some of these etchings and other early prints, a selection from Boosten's sketchbooks and a series of large pen and ink drawings he made recently. In these new drawings, men and women are struck by flying chairs and shoes or by stones from space. They are attacked by dogs and wolves or by one another. People are injured, people are killed. Boosten's work is as theatrical as ever and still deals with *la condition humaine*.

'It is very existential,' he says himself. 'It is to do with the plays of Beckett and Ionesco, and Pasolini's films. My work is not an indictment, absolutely not. I don't make these etchings to say just look at what a mess it all is. No, it's a kind of serenity, it's behold mankind. *Ecce homo*. We could all end up in the gutter. You only have to go through a divorce. First you lose your house, then you sleep in your car, and the next thing you know you're in the gutter. It's only too possible. I can put myself in the position of people who commit a crime or are supposedly mad. I don't think I can do anything about the evils in the world, my reach is too short, but I'm an artist and I can do something with that. Like Pasolini or Lars van Trier, like Rembrandt, Grünewald and De Gheyn.'

Ink Circus—Works on Paper by Gèr Boosten opens on 21 March in the basement of the Hôtel Lévis-Mirepoix. A catalogue accompanies the exhibition. The Bonnefantenmuseum in Maastricht and DSM in Heerlen are showing Boosten's recent paintings from 3 April to 7 June.



We Fight, 03/06/2010
Indian ink, 76 x 56 cm



Two exhibitions at the Fondation Custodia, 21 March – 21 June 2015

Practical Information:

EXHIBITIONS

Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo. Italian Drawings from the Städel Museum in Frankfurt (1430-1600)

Ink Circus. Works on paper by Gèr Boosten

DATES

from 21 March to 21 June 2015

PRESS OPENING

Friday 20 March from 10 to 11.30 a.m.

LOCATION

Fondation Custodia

121, rue de Lille · 75007 Paris

www.fondationcustodia.fr

PUBLIC OPENING

Friday 20 March from 6 to 8.30 p.m.

TRANSPORT

Metro stops Assemblée Nationale (line 12) or Invalides (lines 8 and 13, RER C)

Bus stop Assemblée Nationale (lines 63, 73, 83, 84, 94)

OPENING HOURS

All days except Mondays, from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.

TICKET PRICES

Full-price 6 € / Reduced-rate 4 €

CATALOGUES

Raffaël bis Tizian. Italienische Zeichnungen aus dem Städel Museum – Joachim Jacoby
Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main,
Michael Imhof Verlag, Petersberg, 2014
303 pp, 23 x 28 cm, ca. 200 pl., paperback with
flysheets, ISBN 978-3-941399-38-9
Price : 34,90 €

Cirque d'encre. L'œuvre sur papier de Gèr Boosten –
Gijsbert van der Wal
Fondation Custodia, Paris – De Weideblik,
Varik, 2015

Both catalogues are available at the Fondation Custodia

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Available press images

Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo *Italian Drawings from the Städel Museum in Frankfurt (1430-1600)*



1. Pontormo, *Study of Two Male Figures Looking into a Mirror*, c. 1520

Black chalk (?), white chalk, on blue paper,
422 x 272 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



2. Titian, *Sketch of St Sebastian for the High Altar in Santi Nazaro e Celso in Brescia*, c. 1519/20

Pen and brown ink, brown wash, on grey blue paper,
182 x 115 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



3. Venice (?), c. 1450 (?)

A Bad Thief, Study for a Crucifixion

Metalpoint, on light grey prepared paper,
185 x 129 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



4. Venetian, c. 1500

Head of a Man Looking Upward

Black chalk (charcoal?), on grey-brown
prepared paper, 353 x 255 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



5. Michelangelo, *Grotesque Heads and Other Studies*,
c. 1525 (?)

Red chalk (various shades), 260 x 410 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



6. Raphael

Study of a Horseman, c. 1511/1512

Silverpoint, heightened with lead white,
on grey prepared paper, 198 x 144 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



7. Francesco Primaticcio

The Dance of the Horae (Hours of the Day), c. 1547/48

Red chalk, red and white wash, heightened with
lead white, 358 x 335 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



8. Parmigianino

Head of a Bearded Man Facing Right, c. 1523/25 (?)

Red chalk, 189 x 131 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



9. Giuseppe Cesari, called Cavaliere d'Arpino
The Metamorphosis of Narcissus, c. 1595/1600
Black chalk (charcoal?), test lines in red chalk,
266 x 389 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



10. Jacopo Robusti (Comin), called Tintoretto
Study of the Head of Michelangelo's Giuliano de' Medici,
c. 1545/60 (?)

Charcoal (?), heightened with white, on blue-grey
paper, 373 x 267 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



11. Giovanni Antonio Dosio (?)
A Palace and a Row of Houses behind a Town Wall,
c. 1560/70 (?)

Pen and brown ink, over black chalk (charcoal?),
179 x 285 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



12. Antonio Allegri, called Correggio
Seated Prophet with a Book Facing Right, c. 1523

Brush (and pen?) and brown ink, brown wash,
over red chalk, on red tinted paper, 98 x 128 mm

© Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main



Available press images

Ink Circus *Works on Paper by Gèr Boosten*



1. *Tango*, 06/01/2014
Indian ink, 50 x 65 cm
© Gèr Boosten



2. *Blinding*, 08/04/2009
Indian ink, 50 x 65 cm
© Gèr Boosten



3. *Star Rain*, 15/03/2013
Indian ink, 50 x 65 cm
© Gèr Boosten



4. *Charity*, 29/7/2008
Sketchbook page, Indian ink, 26 x 40 cm
© Gèr Boosten



5. *We Fight*, 03/06/2010
Indian ink, 76 x 56 cm
© Gèr Boosten



6. *Self-Portrait*, 23/02/1999
Sketchbook page, Indian ink wash,
29,2 x 22,2 cm
© Gèr Boosten



7. *Sugar* (from a play by Hugo Claus), 1974
Indian ink over etching, 58 x 70 cm
© Gèr Boosten



8. *My Father's Deathbed*, 08/04/1986
Black chalk, 38,5 x 56 cm
© Gèr Boosten



9. *Much Ado About Nothing*, 31/12/1995
Sketchbook page, gouache, 27 x 43,5 cm
© Gèr Boosten