



Painted Prints: The Revelation of Color in Northern Renaissance & Baroque Engravings, Etchings & Woodcuts

Susan Dackerman

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An old master print with color is almost invariably regarded as a suspect object because the color is presumed to be a cosmetic addition made to compensate for deficiencies of design or condition. *Painted Prints* challenges this deeply entrenched assumption about the material and aesthetic structure of old master prints by showing that in many cases hand coloring is not a dubious supplement to a print but is instead an integral element augmenting its expressive power, beauty, and meaning.

Published in conjunction with an exhibition at The Baltimore Museum of Art and St. Louis Art Museum, *Painted Prints* reproduces and discusses a rich variety of hand-colored prints from Northern Europe of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Anonymous woodcuts are juxtaposed with masterworks by such famed artists as Dürer, Holbein, and Goltzius. These prints, secular as well as religious, muted as well as vibrant in tonality, make it clear that hand coloring was a widespread, enduring practice, developed to satisfy the demands of both elite and popular audiences.

Painted Prints presents new research into the men and women who specialized in hand coloring and offers numerous insights into the social and economic organization of Renaissance and Baroque printmaking. It also draws on scientific analyses of the materials and techniques of hand coloring to address important questions of authenticity, chronology, and condition. With a catalogue and color illustrations of all the hand-colored prints in the exhibition, this book makes a groundbreaking contribution to the study of old master prints and their pivotal place in the visual culture of early modern Europe.

The exhibition, "Painted Prints: The Revelation of Color in Northern Renaissance and Baroque Engravings, Etchings, and Woodcuts," will be at The Baltimore Museum of Art from October 6, 2002, to January 5, 2003 and St. Louis Art Museum from February 14 to May 18, 2003.

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