

V. PIETER BRUEGEL (c. 1525-69)

Biographical and background information

1. Pieter Bruegel was born in the village of Brueghel, near Breda, in the southern Netherlands.
2. From 1551-4, Bruegel traveled south through France, the Alps, and parts of Italy, including Rome, Bologna and Sicily. Worked in Antwerp 1555-62 (employed by publisher/engraver Hieronymus Cock, owner of Aux Quatre Vents (At the Four Winds) publishing house); in Brussels 1563-69.
3. Influence of style of previous Netherlandish painter, Hieronymus Bosch; Bruegel imitates style.
4. The role of the connoisseur in collecting prints.
5. Historical background: Northern Europe, Luther and Protestant Reformation; Emperor Charles V, Philip II of Spain, and the Inquisition in the Netherlands.

Selected works

6. The artist as critic: *The Painter and the Connoisseur*, c.1565 (pen and ink, 10' x 8 1/2", Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna)
7. Drawings and engravings
 - a. *Alpine Landscape*, c. 1555 (engraving, 12 5/8" x 16 5/8")
 - b. *Big Fish Eat Little Fish* (drawing: 1556, pen and ink, 10 1/4" x 12 5/8", Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna; engraving: 1557, 9" x 11.8")
 - c. Drawings for series on the Seven Deadly Sins and Seven Virtues engraved by Pieter van der Heyden and published by Hieronymus Cock
 - i. *Sloth*, 1557 (pen and ink, 8 7/8" x 11 3/4")
 - ii. *Justice*, 1559 (pen and ink, 8 3/4" x 11 1/4")
 - iii. *Temperance*, 1560 (pen and ink, 8 3/4" x 11 5/8")
8. Narrative, humor, and irony
 - a. *Fall of Icarus*, c. 1558 (oil transferred from wood panel to canvas, 2'5" x 3'8", Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels)
 - b. *Netherlandish Proverbs* ("*The Blue Cloak*"), 1559 (oil on panel, 3'10" x 5'4", Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin)
 - c. *Battle Between Carnival and Lent*, 1559 (oil on panel, 3.9' x 5.4', Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)
 - d. *Children's Games*, 1560 (oil on panel, 3'10" x 5'3", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)
 - e. *The Tower of Babel*, 1563 (oil on panel, 3.7' x 5.1', Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)
 - f. *Christ Carrying the Cross* ("*Procession to Calvary*"), 1564 (oil on panel, 4'1" x 5'7", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

9. *The Seasons*, commissioned by Antwerp merchant Niclaes Jongelinck, 1565 (all oil on panel)
 - a. *Hunters in the Snow* (3'10" x 5'4", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)
 - b. *Gloomy Day* (3'10" x 5'4", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)
 - c. *Haymaking* (3'10" x 5'3", Prague, National Museum)
 - d. *Wheat Harvest* (3'10" x 5'3", MMA)
 - e. *Return of the Herd* (3'10" x 5'3", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)
10. Late works
 - a. *Flemish Kermesse (Peasant Dance)*. c. 1567-68 (oil on panel, 3'11" x 5'5", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)
 - b. *Peasant Wedding Feast*, c.1567-68 (oil panel, 3'11" x 5'4", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)
 - c. *Parable of the Blind Leading the Blind*, 1568 (oil on canvas, 2'10" x 5'1", Museo e gallerie nazionali di Capodimonte, Naples)
11. Comparisons
 - a. Jan van Eyck, *Madonna in a Church*, 1425 (oil on panel, Berlin)
 - b. Hieronymus Bosch, *Garden of Earthly Delights*, c. 1500, (oil on panel, approx. 7'2" x 6'5", Museo del Prado, Madrid)

Readings and web resources

Primary Source Reader:

Karel van Mander, "Pieter Breughel of Breughel"

Abraham Ortelius, "Tribute to Pieter Breugel"

Ovid, "Fall of Icarus," from *The Metamorphoses*

Francisco da Hollanda, from *Four Dialogues on Painting*

Erasmus, from *The Praise of Folly*

Readings on Butler Reserve

Walter S. Gibson, *Bruegel* (New York: 1977), especially chapters 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8 (chapter 4 available as .pdf)

Arthur S. Klein, *Graphic Worlds of Peter Bruegel the Elder* (New York, 1963) especially the commentary on Justice

Other readings

Svetlana Alpers, "Bruegel's Festive Peasants." *Simiolus* VI/ 3-4 (1972-73): 163-76 (available as .pdf)

David Freedberg, *The Prints of Pieter Bruegel the Elder* (Tokyo, 1989—Avery Reserves)

Keith Moxey, "Pieter Bruegel and Popular Culture," in *The Prints of Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, ed. David Freedberg (Tokyo, 1989), 42-50 (available as .pdf)

Web resources

Website on *Netherlandish Proverbs* at <http://www.learn.columbia.edu/bruegel2>
Detailed explanation (in French) of *Netherlandish Proverbs* at <http://www.pieter-bruegel.com/proverbe/explication.htm>