

# BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## BLANTON MUSEUM BRINGS RENAISSANCE PRINTS, DRAWINGS, AND ARTIFACTS FROM THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART TO AUSTIN

### *Imperial Augsburg: Renaissance Prints and Drawings, 1475-1540*

October 5, 2013 – January 5, 2014

AUSTIN, Texas — October 3, 2013 — The Blanton Museum of Art brings to Austin a selection of works from Augsburg, a wealthy German city and center of trade known for its innovative printmaking techniques and its important role in the spread of Renaissance ideas from Italy. It is the first exhibition in the United States to focus on Augsburg's artistic achievements in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and works to advance the scholarship of one of Germany's oldest cities whose rich Renaissance heritage has long been eclipsed. The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. and supplemented with loans from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Library of Congress, and other private and public collections. Emphasizing the rich tradition of paper and metal works produced in Augsburg spanning 1475-1540, the exhibition reveals how, through its commercial ties to Italy, Augsburg was one of the first German cities to emulate the Italian Renaissance style as well as its cultivation of humanism and revival of antiquity.

It also examines the fundamental role of imperial patronage in establishing the city's thriving art market.



“The Blanton’s collaborations with premier institutions such as the National Gallery of Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art provide unique opportunities for audiences to connect with masterworks from some of the finest collections in the country,” remarks Blanton Director Simone Wicha. “Through exhibitions like *Imperial Augsburg*, visitors are able to see beyond their world and discover something unexpected.”

Situated in southwest Bavaria along the Alpine pass into Italy, Augsburg was founded as a Roman military fortress in 15 BCE by Emperor Augustus. During the reign of Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (1459-1519), Augsburg became the location of the Imperial Diet, a regular assemblage of rulers under the authority of the emperor. The patronage of the Habsburg Court and the rise of wealthy banking houses fostered a thriving environment with a diverse artistic community generating a prosperous center of manufacturing, printing, and armory production.



In a rare viewing opportunity, the exhibition will feature over 100 works of art including prints and drawings by Daniel Hopfer, Erhard Ratdolt, Hans Burgkmair and others focusing on religious and secular life in Augsburg during the onset of the Protestant Reformation. Emphasis is placed on the examination of new printing techniques born out of Augsburg. Color printing was pioneered by Augsburg native Erhard Ratdolt (1447–1528), and further developed by Hans Burgkmair (1472-1531) and Jost de Negker (1485-1544). Featured in the exhibition is an impression of Ratdolt's *Christ on the Cross with the Virgin and Saint John*, the earliest extant, multi-figured, color-printed woodcut in the Western world printed with six distinct colors. New scholarship reveals that etching as a printing technique was first explored in Augsburg by armor etcher, Daniel Hopfer (c. 1470-1536). His detailed church interiors and intimate

depictions of the Holy family uncover his advanced experimentations with etching on iron plates. Important works by artists such as Albrecht Dürer, Hans Holbein the Elder, and Leonhard Beck will also be on view.

Alongside works on paper, the exhibition will include a 16<sup>th</sup> century suit of armor etched in the manner of Daniel Hopfer to exemplify the close connection between armor etchers and printmakers. A style of armor, often identified with Emperor Maximilian I, characterized by elaborate fluting and etching became popular during the later half of his reign. A helmet forged in Augsburg in this style, decorated with Italianate foliage will also be on view. In addition, visitors can discover the delicate metalwork of Augsburg artists such as Matthes Gebbel and Hans Schwarz, whose silver, bronze and lead alloy coins feature idiosyncratic portraits reminiscent of those from ancient Rome.



*Imperial Augsburg: Renaissance Prints and Drawings, 1475-1540*, will be on view at the Blanton October 5, 2013 – January 5, 2014.

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### **The Blanton Museum of Art**

The Blanton Museum of Art is one of the foremost university art museums in the country and has the largest and most comprehensive collection of art in Central Texas. The Blanton's permanent collection of more than 17,000 works is recognized for its European paintings, an encyclopedic collection of prints and drawings, and modern and contemporary American and Latin American art.

The museum is located at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Congress Avenue and is open Tuesday through Friday from 10-5, Saturday from 11-5, and Sunday from 1-5. Thursdays are free admission days and every third Thursday the museum is open until 9. Admission Prices: Adults \$9, Kids 12 and under FREE, Seniors (65+) \$7, Youth/College Students (13-21) \$5. Admission is free to members, all current UT ID-holders. For additional information call (512) 471-7324 or visit [www.blantonmuseum.org](http://www.blantonmuseum.org).

### **For more information or high-resolution images, contact:**

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**Image Captions:**

Hans Burgkmair I and Jost de Negker

German, 1473-1531

Dutch, circa 1485-1544

*Emperor Maximilian I on Horseback*, 1508/1518

Chiaroscuro woodcut, Hollstein 5: no. 323, fourth state of seven

Image: 32.5 x 22.7 cm 12 13/16 x 8 15/16 in.)

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection, 1948.11.14

Erhard Ratdolt (printer), German 15th Century (Augsburg)

*Christ on the Cross with the Virgin and Saint John*, 1491

Color woodcut printed in black, red, blue, brown, olive, and yellow, and hand-colored in blue, pinkish-beige, and some touches of red; on vellum

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Lt. Col. and Mrs. William K. Konze

Unknown artist

German, Probably Augsburg

*Portions of a Field Armor*, 1524

Etched steel

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Bequest of Bashford Dean, 1928

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