

# LES ENLUMINURES

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Life and Passion of Christ, Series of 30 Woodcuts (of 32) from *Passional des gantzen bitteren leiden und sterben unnsers Herren unnd Säligmachers Jhesu Christi...* (Passional of the whole bitter suffering and death of Our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ)

In German, woodcuts on paper

Germany (Augsburg), 1557, printed by David de Negker

*Thirty hand-colored woodcuts on paper, all thirty impressions in remarkably good condition, with some staining to the edges of each sheet, and small holes in the lower quadrant of all (remnants of worming), unbound, but archivally matted, housed in modern archival box. Dimensions c. 260 x 181 mm.*

Rare series of hand-colored woodcuts (one of only three known copies), that tell the story of Christ's ministry and Passion. Many of these prints are based on Albrecht Dürer's *Small Passion* of 1511, but are here inverted, presented in a much larger format within elaborate architectural borders, and paired with text in German verse. The publisher, David de Negker, took over in Augsburg his father's business, the latter responsible for major projects for Emperor Maximilian, and inherited his father's blocks.

## PROVENANCE

1. Rare set of thirty colored woodcuts with decorative borders printed in 1557 by woodblock cutter and publisher David de Negker (1525-1587).
2. Private collection.

## TEXT AND ILLUSTRATION

A rare set of thirty colored woodcuts with decorative borders by woodblock cutter and publisher David de Negker (c. 1525-1587). The volume from which these woodcuts are taken was published in Augsburg in 1557, with the title, *Passional, des gantzen Bittern Leiden vnd Sterben vnnsers Herren, vnnnd Säligmachers Jhesu Christi auß den vier Euangelisten gezogen, mit schönen Figuren geziert, vnnnd solches mit hüpschen Carmina Reymes weiß, allein dem Text nach geordnet, Lustig, vnd Nutzlich allen Christen zu lesen, hören, vnnnd Wissen* (Passional of the whole bitter suffering and death of Our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ drawn from the four Evangelists, adorned with beautiful illustrations, and those made known with beautiful rhyming poems, arranged according to the Text, joyful and useful for all Christians to read, hear, and know) with thirty-two woodcuts (VD 16 B 4804; Online Resources). Two woodcuts are lacking from the present set (E i and E vi), as are the title page and five pages of text (the forward and concluding verses).

Text is printed on the reverse of each sheet, telling the story of the life of Christ and the Passion in German verse, beginning with his public ministry when he was thirty years old, and concluding with the Resurrection and Last Judgement. Each text page includes a decorative border inhabited by birds and animals. Only two copies of this series of woodcuts are recorded, both bound, one in Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, and a second, Munich, Bayerische

Staatsbibliothek, Res/4 Asc. 1252 q (Online Resources, acquired in 2012). Single leaves, uncolored, are said to be in Augsburg, Basle, and Berlin. No monograms or initials apparent.

## ILLUSTRATION

The prints include scenes from the life and passion of Christ, many directly modeled after Albrecht Dürer's *Small Passion*, but here inverted. The *Small Passion*, completed and published in 1511, included a title page and 36 woodcuts. Of these, at least 19 were used as models for the prints in our series. David de Negker (also Denecker or Dannecker) was the son of Jost de Negker, a woodblock cutter (*formscheider*) and well-documented innovator of colored woodblock printing. The blocks from which the present series were printed might have been inherited by David after his father's death. The same elaborate borders were used to frame a series of woodcuts of a *Women's Wile* (*Weiberlisten*) volume, with prints designed by Hans Burgkmair (1473-1531) and borders by Hans Weiditz the Younger, dated to around 1522-1536 (Falk, 1973). An impression of "Bathesheba Bathing," from *Women's Wile*, is now New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 20.64.23 (recorded as Hollstein V.29.2iia; Bartsch VII.201.5; Dodgson II.101.169).

Subjects as follows:

1. Ministry of Christ;
2. The Raising of Lazarus;
3. Pharisees in the Temple;
4. Mary Magdalene washing the feet of Jesus;
5. Jesus in Bethany at the house of Mary and Martha (?);
6. Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday);
7. Expulsion of the Money Changers;
8. Judas receiving the thirty pieces of silver (?);
9. Last Supper;
10. Christ washing Peter's feet;
11. Agony in the garden;
12. Arrest of Christ;
13. Christ before Caiaphas;
14. Mocking of Christ;
15. Christ before Pontius Pilate;

16. Buffeting of Christ;
17. Christ before Herod;
18. Christ clothed in a robe;
19. Christ before Pontius Pilate(?);
20. Flagellation of Christ;
21. Christ shown to the People;
22. Pilate washing his hands;
23. Christ nailed to the cross;
24. Crucifixion; piercing of the side of Christ;
25. Crucifixion;
26. Descent from the Cross;
27. Descent into Purgatory;
28. Resurrection;
29. Three Marys at the Tomb;
30. Last Judgement.

#### LITERATURE

Falk, Tilman. *Hans Burgkmair, 1473-1973: das Graphische Werk*, Städtische Kunstsammlung, Augsburg, Augsburg, 1973, no. 117 (ill. 85), no. 113, and no. 119 (on the borders, attributed to Hans Weiditz the Younger).

Landau, David and Peter Parshall. *The Renaissance Print*, London and New Haven, 1994.

Roth, Friedrich. "Zur Lebensgeschichte des Augsburger Formschneiders David Denecker und seines Freundes, des Dichters Martin Schrot," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 9 (1912), pp. 189-230

#### ONLINE RESOURCES

VD 16 B 4804 (listing only two copies)

<http://gateway-bayern.de/VD16+B+4804>

Bayerische Staats Bibliothek, Res/4 Asc. 1252 q

<https://bildsuche.digitale-sammlungen.de/index.html?c=viewer&bandnummer=bsb00083652>

"Bathesheba Bathing," from *Women's Wile*, is now New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, 20.64.23

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/430606>

Albrecht Dürer's, *The Small Passion* (Exhibition, Bridwell Library)

<https://www.smu.edu/Bridwell/SpecialCollectionsandArchives/Exhibitions/Durer2011/The-Small-Passion>

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