Grand Design: Pieter Coecke van Aelst and Renaissance Tapestry

October 8, 2014–January 11, 2015

This international loan exhibition explores the achievements of the great northern Renaissance master, Pieter Coecke van Aelst (1502–1550). As the impressive body of his surviving drawings makes clear, Coecke was a master designer, devising projects across media, from tapestry series to panel paintings, prints, stained glass, and goldsmith’s work. The exhibition unites nineteen of the grand tapestries he designed, woven in the great workshops of Brussels for collectors from Emperor Charles V, France’s François 1er, and Henry VIII of England, to Cosimo de Medici, juxtaposed with a selection of his panel paintings, including a monumental triptych, and more than thirty drawings and prints. Coecke was also the translator and editor of influential Italian architectural treatises that are included in the exhibition. In the midst of this productivity, Coecke traveled extensively, and among the exhibits is the fascinating woodcut frieze over fourteen feet in length that he designed to record his experiences in Constantinople.
MET MUSEUM PRESENTS:
TICKETED EVENTS

SPARK: Ideas That Spread, Art That Monetizes
Elizabeth Cleland, Associate Curator, European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Seth Godin, bestselling author
Monday, December 1, 6:00: $30
The Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium

The glamorous tapestries of Flemish artist Pieter Coecke van Aelst were sought by the most discerning rulers in sixteenth-century Europe, from Henry VIII to the Hapsburgs and Medicis. As his ideas spread through paintings and books, his creations became hot commodities. In this SPARK conversation, host Julie Burstein, author and Peabody Award–winning creator of public radio’s Studio 360, talks with Seth Godin and Elizabeth Cleland about what it takes to be an artist and entrepreneur in both the sixteenth and twenty-first centuries.
See last page for ticketing information.

SHORT COURSE

Making Tapestries in the Renaissance
Thursdays, November 6, 13, and 20, 2:00–4:00
Fee: $150 (includes Museum admission)
Explore the enterprise of tapestry-making during the Renaissance, from design to production to market distribution, through the drawings, prints, paintings, and majestic tapestries featured in the exhibition.

Led by Met experts, this three-session course meets in the Museum’s classrooms and galleries. Space is limited. To register, visit www.metmuseum.org/courses-and-workshops or purchase tickets at the Great Hall box office (see last page for hours). Registration ends at noon on the day before the first session.
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR VISITORS WITH DISABILITIES

Picture This! Workshop—Grand Design: Pieter Coecke van Aelst and Renaissance Tapestry
Thursday, November 13, 2:00–3:30
Ruth and Harold D. Uris Center for Education

Awaken the senses in a workshop for adults who are blind or partially sighted that makes works of art accessible through detailed descriptions, touch, and other activities.

Discoveries—Surrounded by Art
Sunday, November 16
11:00–12:30, for ages 18 and above
2:00–3:30, for ages 5–17
Ruth and Harold D. Uris Center for Education

This workshop is for children and adults with learning or developmental disabilities and those on the autism spectrum, along with accompanying friends and family members. It includes a gallery tour and an art activity.

The Access programs above are free, but registration is required. Please call (212) 650-2010 or email access@metmuseum.org.

Large-Print Labels
Large-print label booklets are available at the entrance to the exhibition.

Audio Guide
The Audio Guide is free for visitors who are hard of hearing, Deaf, blind, or partially sighted. Audio Guide players have volume controls and headsets. Neck loops for hearing aids with T-switches are available upon request. Regular and large-print Audio Guide scripts are also available upon request.

Other Services
The Museum is committed to serving all audiences. Please call (212) 650-2010 or email access@metmuseum.org about programs and services, including Sign Language–interpreted programs, Verbal Imaging Tours, the Touch Collection, and other programs.

STUDIO PROGRAM

Sunday Studio (for all ages)
Tapestry Illustrations: Pieter Coecke van Aelst
Sunday, December 7, 1:00–4:00
Sunday, December 21, 1:00–4:00
The Tisch Galleries, Gallery 899

Try your hand at creating works of art in the galleries. Focus on a different art form each session with family-friendly activities led by an artist. Drop in; art supplies provided.

Start or continue your art-making experience with a family tour in nearby galleries. Tours leave at 2:00 from the Sunday Studio welcome cart. Space is limited; first come, first served.

FAMILY PROGRAMS

How Did They Do That? (for all ages)
European Tapestries
Saturday, December 13, 1:00–4:00
Sunday, December 14, 1:00–4:00
The Tisch Galleries, Gallery 899

Peek at technique and learn—through handling tools and materials—how works of art were created.

Family Performance: Weave a Tale
(for families with children of all ages)
Sunday, December 21, 1:00–4:00
Carson Family Hall, Ruth and Harold D. Uris Center for Education

Join shadow puppet artist Caroline Borderies for a performance that animates characters and stories from the exhibition. Take part in a family tour or art activity before or after the performance.
TEEN PROGRAM

Art Explore—Woven Tales (for ages 11–14)
Sunday, December 7, 1:00–3:00
Ruth and Harold D. Uris Center for Education

Talk with other teens about works of art from around the world while traveling through the Museum’s galleries. Free, but online reservations are encouraged. To reserve, go to www.metmuseum.org/events/programs/teen-programs.

PUBLICATION

Grand Design: Pieter Coecke van Aelst and Renaissance Tapestry
By Elizabeth Cleland, Associate Curator, European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; with Maryan W. Ainsworth, Curator, European Paintings, Stijn Alsteens, Curator, Drawings and Prints, and Nadine M. Orenstein, Curator, Drawings and Prints, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

This lavish and comprehensive volume—the first devoted to this Renaissance master in fifty years—introduces Pieter Coecke van Aelst to a contemporary audience and explores his substantial contribution to the body of great Renaissance art. It features the magnificent tapestries he designed, and also examines the full range of his work, including panel paintings, drawings, designs for stained glass and prints, and the architectural treatises he translated and edited. It offers a thorough appraisal that justifies Coecke’s placement as one of the great artists of the Northern Renaissance.

412 pages including a checklist, bibliography, and index; 350 color illustrations. Hardcover: (80024654). Learn more about the publication at www.metmuseum.org/research/metpublications. Available from The Metropolitan Museum of Art Store and online at store.metmuseum.org.

RELATED EXHIBITION

Examining Opulence: A Set of Renaissance Tapestry Cushions
Antonio Ratti Textile Center, Gallery 599

Art and science meet as Examining Opulence unveils the roles of museum curators and conservators in the investigation, conservation, and decoding of art objects. The installation provides a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the fascinating and indispensable work necessary to prepare objects for display by exploring the different questions curators and conservators pose when presented with six luxurious, late Renaissance tapestry-woven cushion covers. Never-before-seen images of these objects, captured with microscopes and X-ray technologies, provide visitors with an intimate glimpse of the sumptuous materials, such as silk and gilded threads, that comprise the pieces. The rarely seen and complex backs of these tapestries, scarcely ever exposed to sunlight and therefore more colorful than their fronts, are also on view.

AUDIO GUIDE

Explore the achievements of the great Netherlandish master Pieter Coecke van Aelst and learn about his impressive career in tapestry design, panel paintings, prints, and stained glass. Curators Elizabeth Cleland, Nadine M. Orenstein, Maryan W. Ainsworth, and Stijn Alsteens discuss the monumental scale, stunning palette, and daring designs of Coecke’s work and how he contributed to the artistic development of the Northern Renaissance.

The Audio Guide is available for daily rental at the Museum: $7.00 for the general public; $6.00 for Museum Members; $6.00 for groups of 14 or fewer; $5.00 for children under 12; $4.00 for groups of 15 or more. Sales tax included.

Supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.
NOLEN LIBRARY IN
THE RUTH AND HAROLD D. URIS CENTER FOR EDUCATION

Nolen Library has information about the Museum’s collection and special exhibitions, and a Teacher Resource Center with a circulating collection for educators. The Children’s Reading Room in the library is designed for families and young readers. For hours and further information please call (212) 570-3788 or visit www.metmuseum.org/nolen.

WEBSITE

For further information about our programs, visit the Museum’s website at www.metmuseum.org/events.


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For ticketed programs, visit www.metmuseum.org/tickets or call (212) 570-3949, daily, 9:00–9:00. You may also visit the Great Hall box office, Monday–Saturday, 11:00–3:30.