



12 etched prints, trimmed to platemark.

THE TWELVE MONTHS

[Twelve Months of the Year with Signs of the Zodiac]

Author

HOLLAR, W[enceslaus]

Publication date

c1629/1630].

Publisher

Jacob van der Heyden,

Publication place

[Strasbourg,

Physical description

12 etched prints, trimmed to platemark.

Dimensions

96 by 130mm. (3.75 by 5 inches).

Notes

Wenceslaus Hollar's earliest published prints were made while he was working in Strasbourg alongside publisher Jacob van der Heyden. They are twelve landscape scenes after Jan van de Velde, a Dutch Golden Age painter and engraver who had produced his series in 1618.

"To make them he first drew accurate copies in pen and ink outlines over graphite, on a smaller

scale than Van de Velde's prototypes. These are preserved in Coburg. The framing borderline must also have been carefully measured and used to fix the design. Significantly the drawing for October is blackened on the verso with chalk for transfer to the plate. Usually when this technique is used, incised lines are apparent - these are barely visible but he must have used a blunt implement and pressed hard following the lines of the image subsequently filling in the detail, such as the clouds in the sky in the finished print" (Turner).

Each print shows a different month of the year in an outdoor setting; some are rural, others in more urban areas with buildings and crowds. Four lines of Latin verse beneath the images describe the months shown. For March, for example, the verse reads:

"At cum terrificis turbidus imbribus,
Auster saeva fugat frigora rusticus
Ramos Arboribus deputat et cito
Vertuntur rigidis arva ligonibus"

'But when with terrible showers the wild wind
chases off the savage cold, the peasant prunes
The branches on the trees, and the fields
Are soon ploughed with stiff hoes'.

Bibliography

NHG Hollar 46 II, 47, 48, 49 I, 50—53, 54 I, 55-57; Pennington 630-41; Turner, S., 'Drawings for prints by Wenceslaus Hollar', Paris, 2012.

Provenance

Price: £12000

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