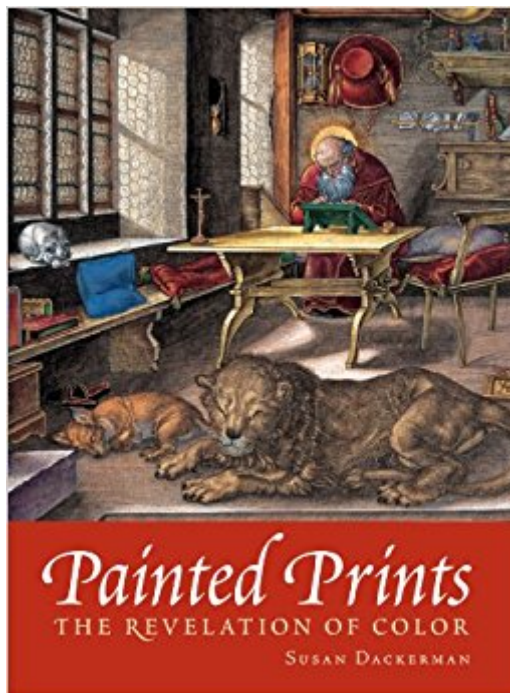




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# Painted Prints: The Revelation Of Color In Northern Renaissance & Baroque Engravings, Etchings & Woodcuts



## Synopsis

An old master print with color is almost invariably regarded as a suspect object because the color is presumed to be a cosmetic addition made to compensate for deficiencies of design or condition. Painted Prints challenges this deeply entrenched assumption about the material and aesthetic structure of old master prints by showing that in many cases hand coloring is not a dubious supplement to a print but is instead an integral element augmenting its expressive power, beauty, and meaning. Published in conjunction with an exhibition at The Baltimore Museum of Art and St. Louis Art Museum, Painted Prints reproduces and discusses a rich variety of hand-colored prints from Northern Europe of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Anonymous woodcuts are juxtaposed with masterworks by such famed artists as Dürer, Holbein, and Goltzius. These prints, secular as well as religious, muted as well as vibrant in tonality, make it clear that hand coloring was a widespread, enduring practice, developed to satisfy the demands of both elite and popular audiences. Painted Prints presents new research into the men and women who specialized in hand coloring and offers numerous insights into the social and economic organization of Renaissance and Baroque printmaking. It also draws on scientific analyses of the materials and techniques of hand coloring to address important questions of authenticity, chronology, and condition. With a catalogue and color illustrations of all the hand-colored prints in the exhibition, this book makes a groundbreaking contribution to the study of old master prints and their pivotal place in the visual culture of early modern Europe. The exhibition, "Painted Prints: The Revelation of Color in Northern Renaissance and Baroque Engravings, Etchings, and Woodcuts," will be at The Baltimore Museum of Art from October 6, 2002, to January 5, 2003 and St. Louis Art Museum from February 14 to May 18, 2003.

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## Customer Reviews

“This fascinating catalogue offers a lucid introduction to a neglected yet basic phenomenon of printmaking. The field has been dominated by normative notions of prints as black and white and long assumed that the coloring of a print is somehow vulgar or a later and unwanted addition, supplied by insensitive collectors or unscrupulous dealers. Dackerman’s study of coloring has the potential to shock us into a sharper consciousness of our inherited biases while also prompting us to look freshly and carefully at these beguiling prints.”

—Larry Silver, Farquhar Professor, University of Pennsylvania

“The hand-colored print has remained largely unmapped territory in the history of art. Both curators and historians of old master prints have tended to favor the graphic purity of black and white and are often reluctant to pronounce on the troublesome matter of whether coloring is original or added at a much later date. By tracing the history of this subject, Painted Prints makes an essential contribution to our knowledge of Northern Renaissance art. It is a history of taste and technique studied in context and with the aid of modern scientific analysis. The catalogue presents a judicious selection of objects loaned from many collections in America and abroad. The experience of these embellished images will enhance and thoroughly reorient our understanding of old master prints and their prior

evaluation.”

—Peter Parshall, Curator of Old Master Prints, National Gallery of Art

“If Great Altarpieces punctures a modern prejudice about what a painting must look like, Painted Prints: The Revelation of Color (Pennsylvania State University Press, \$35), the catalogue of a fascinating exhibition currently at the Baltimore Museum of Art, manages to shake up some very old assumptions about the nature of the graphic arts. Susan Dackerman begins with Erasmus’s attack on the coloring of Dürer’s prints, and suggests that this belief in the fundamental purity of black and white—which was reaffirmed some four hundred years later when Erwin Panofsky saluted Erasmus’s view in his book on Dürer—has kept us from fully appreciating a whole range of chromatic possibilities. Dackerman’s book is no mere postmodern reaction to what she seems to suggest is Panofsky’s purism. She demonstrates that hand-coloring has been an integral element in printmaking since the fifteenth century. Beginning with the attractively rough-and-ready patches of hue that were applied to fifteenth-century woodcuts, Dackerman pursues the subject all the way to the seventeenth century and Hercules Seger’s exquisitely tinted landscape etchings. Painted Prints shows us the many ways in which applied color has been set in

a rich, frequently subtle, and complex dynamic with the monochrome of the print.

•Jed Perl, *The New Republic*—“Dackerman and Primeau deserve our warm thanks for restoring an entire category of prints to our history of these media and for opening our eyes to the startling and striking qualities of a neglected phenomenon.

•Larry Silver, *CAA Reviews*—“This catalog accompanies an intriguing exhibit of painted Northern Renaissance and Baroque prints mounted by the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and then moving to St. Louis. Dackerman, who is a curator at BMA, and Thomas Primeau, a conservator there, present an intriguing overview of the hand application of paint after black-and-white prints were made. . . . Their provocative and unique thesis is that these prints have not been appropriately valued by later sensibilities, which hold more highly the aesthetics of black-and-white prints, and that the hand-colored prints deserve to be reevaluated.

•Kathryn Wekselman, *Library Journal*—“This exhibition catalog, gorgeously and lavishly illustrated, presents the argument that coloring, even with stencils, was distinctly not *d’f*, particularly in Germany during the 16th century. . . . Beautifully produced, the book will remain useful long after the exhibition’s run because the research it presents challenges our normal ways of thinking about the early maturity of printmaking.

•P. Emison, *CHOICE*—“Beautifully produced, the book will remain useful long after the exhibition’s run because the research it presents challenges our normal ways of thinking about the early maturity of printmaking.

•P. Emison, *CHOICE*—“Dackerman and her colleagues are nonetheless to be highly commended for opening up new and colorful vistas on the world of early modern prints.

•Donald McColl, *Historians of Netherlandish Art Newsletter*

Susan Dackerman is Curator of the Department of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs at The Baltimore Museum of Art. Thomas Primeau is Associate Paper Conservator at The Baltimore Museum of Art.

This extraordinary work is suitable for a limited group of readers--those who are willing to contemplate the thesis that not all great "art prints" must be in a black and white or otherwise monochromatic format. To this end the authors provide examples of prints by artists as great as Albrecht Duerer in stunningly beautiful color which was applied at the time of issuance of the prints. To be sure the authors strain a bit to find sufficient examples of prints which confirm their thesis, resorting to familiar illustrations from books which have been widely known for hundreds of years to

have been colored in large quantities upon publication or later, of which an example is the 15th century Nuremberg Chronicle. It is a common phenomenon--wealthy Dutch families in the 17th century had Bibles extravagantly colored and heightened in gold while ordinary citizens made do with uncolored examples. Nonetheless the book contains sufficient surprising examples to fascinate those who study or collect prints or maps from the 15th and 16th centuries and who desire more information concerning when and under what circumstances color was applied to many of these materials. And for the professional colorist or art curator there is extensive information concerning the availability of color pigments in different time periods to assist in the task of determining when a specific work was colored or determining how to color an old work in black and white in a manner which is consistent with the period in which the work was created. Those who puzzle over such issues will give this volume a prominent place in their library while others will likely find it of little interest. I bought a number of copies of this book when it appeared and gave them to friends who collect or professionally color old maps and prints and they have all told me they found the work of great interest.

I like it

Very scholarly and well produced book. I am thrilled to own a hard to find book at a reasonable price

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