

Appendix 1: Permanent programme

Dulle Griet & Twelve Proverbs on Plates

*Dulle Griet* (‘Mad Meg’) is one of Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s most enigmatic works. For 125 years now, the painting has been the star attraction in the collection of Fritz Mayer van den Bergh, who rediscovered it.

At the time Fritz was building up his collection at the end of the nineteenth century, Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s reputation was poor. He was not really known to the public at large and the majority of his forty-five or so paintings were unavailable for viewing. In so far as his work was known at all, it was heavily criticized: Bruegel was widely held to be in poor taste, if not downright coarse.

Fritz, who had been fascinated by Bruegel since an early age, set out systematically to find work by the then little-known and mysterious painter. He purchased a first print after Bruegel as early as 1890, followed three years later by no fewer than twenty-two more. But the best was yet to come: in October 1894, Mayer van den Bergh picked up *Dulle Griet* for just 488 Belgian francs – an absolute bargain when you consider that a work by Rubens changed hands that same year for 45,000 francs. In 1899, five years later, Fritz bought a second painting by Bruegel: *Twelve Proverbs on Plates*.

During his short life, Mayer van den Bergh rekindled interest in Bruegel who, thanks to Fritz’s enthusiasm, has now been studied and coveted for over 100 years. The Mayer van den Bergh Museum is *the* place in Flanders to discover Bruegel. It has two paintings by him and several works by his sons, and testifies to Fritz’s fascination for this mysterious artist.

Practical information

Mayer van den Bergh Museum, Lange Gasthuisstraat 19, 2000 Antwerp

Open Tuesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

[www.museummayervandenbergh.be](http://www.museummayervandenbergh.be)