

**Musea  
Brugge**

Press File

**Musea Brugge**

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**Jean van Caloen Foundation**



**Kasteel van Loppem**

STICHTING JEAN VAN CALOEN

17 May 2022

## **The Jean van Caloen Foundation transfers the care and administration of 1,920 drawing masterpieces and 25 sketch books to the Bruges Print Room of Musea Brugge**

Musea Brugge entrusted with the administration of a prestigious collection of almost 2,000 drawings by world famous artists like Michelangelo, Jordaens and Boucher.

Musea Brugge welcomes the addition of 1,930 drawing masterpieces and 25 sketch books to its collection. The Jean van Caloen Foundation of the castle estate at Loppem has entrusted the further care and administration of the collection to the Print Room of Musea Brugge, with effect from 17 May.

The drawings date from the late 16th century to the 20th century and were collected primarily by Baron Jean van Caloen (1884-1972).

Amongst other works, the collection contains the drawing of 'The Priest's Blessing' by Jacques Jordaens and a fine depiction of a young woman by the French master François Boucher. The absolute highlight of the collection is the magnificent Stoning of St. Stephen by Michelangelo Buonarroti. It is the only drawing of the celebrated Italian Renaissance artist currently held in Belgium. It is a remarkable piece, not least because it is a composition study: a drawing in which Michelangelo set down some of his ideas on paper. Drawings of this kind were used by artists as preparatory sketches for larger final works, such as paintings or sculptures

In addition to works by Italian and French masters, the Flemish, Dutch and Belgian schools are particularly well represented. Until now, the collection has been a largely hidden but much cherished treasure. Its valuable works were only lent sporadically and in limited numbers. With this new acquisition, the Print Room of Musea Brugge will be able to add almost 2,000 drawings to its existing collection of some 20,000 works on paper.

*“As Foundation, we decided to entrust the further care of our drawing collection to Musea Brugge, because we have the fullest confidence in their expertise and experience to ensure its proper preservation, management and display. It is for this reason that we have also invested significantly for many years in a strengthening of our collaboration with the City of Bruges. As a family, we have a historic connection with the city in general and the site where the Groeninge Museum is now located in particular. With the BRUSK project, Musea Brugge has shown that it wishes to continue investing in its collections in an ambitious manner for the future.”*

**— Jean van Caloen, Chairman of the board of directors,  
Jean van Caloen Foundation**

*“Some years ago, the Jean van Caloen Foundation entrusted 30 illuminated medieval manuscripts from its collection to Bruges Public Library (Biekorf), for further conservation and scientific research. This collaboration has worked exceptionally well and has bred greater mutual confidence and trust. At the start of this year, a number of other folios were added to this arrangement, so that now entrusting the entirety of our collection of valuable drawings to the administration of the Print Room of Musea Brugge seems like the logical next step. In this way, it is the wish of the Jean van Caloen Foundation to further develop and strengthen its centuries-old connection with the City of Bruges in a more intense manner.”*

**— Benoit Kervyn de Volkaersbeke,  
Jean van Caloen Foundation**

*“We feel extremely honoured to welcome the Jean van Caloen Foundation’s magnificent collection of drawings to Bruges. This means, amongst other things, that a number of artists who were not previously included in our collection will now be represented for the first time. Moreover, the Jean van Caloen collection also contains numerous other drawings that relate to works that are already a part of the city’s collection.”*

**— Anne van Oosterwijk,  
Collection Director Musea Brugge**

*“We will thoroughly investigate and study the drawings, in collaboration with leading specialists in their different fields. This research will result in the publication of a scientific catalogue for the collection, with special attention for the most important works. This publication will appear as an accompaniment to an exhibition of works from the collection in the new exhibition space at BRUSK. In addition, we will also make the entire collection digitally available on the Musea Brugge website, so that these magnificent drawing will be freely available to everyone.”*

**— Evelien de Wilde,  
Curator, Print Room, Musea Brugge**

# Sneak Preview

## Presentation of seven of the finest works from the collection

Musea Brugge and the Jean van Caloen Foundation will celebrate this transfer with a small-scale exhibition of seven of the collection's finest works in the Groeninge Museum. These works will be on display from 17 to 22 May, following which they will be given a place with all the collection's other works in the Bruges Print Room. Once there, they will be registered and digitalised in high resolution, before being made freely available to the public via Musea Brugge's digital collection database.

### **Presentation of selected works**

**17 - 22.05.2022**

**Groeningemuseum**

**Dijver 12, 8000 Bruges**

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## The Finest Works

Michelangelo - The stoning of St. Stephen, 1525-30



Michelangelo is one of the most famous of all the Italian artists of the Renaissance. Millions of tourists gaze in wonder each year on his magnificent frescos in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican and at his outstanding sculptures, such as the statue of David in Florence. Following his early training under the painter Domenico Ghirlandaio, the young artist focused his interest on the works of the early masters of the Italian Renaissance, like Giotto and Masaccio, and on sculptures from classical antiquity. In addition, Michelangelo (like Leonardo Da Vinci) conducted his own investigations into human anatomy, allowing him to gain a deeper insight into matters such as proportion, musculature, movement and posture. To understand the body's complex forms, he even made studies of dissected corpses. Armed with this knowledge, he was able to make drawings of human figures with remarkably accurate and convincing anatomical features.

Some 600 drawings of Michelangelo have been preserved. This might sound like a lot, but is probably only a fraction of what the master produced during his long lifetime, since it is known that he started sketching during his teenage years and continued until his death at the age of 88 in 1564. The sheet depicting 'The Stoning of St. Stephen' is the only known drawing of Michelangelo in Belgium. It is a remarkable work, not least because it is a composition study, in which the artist put down some of his ideas for future works on paper. Studies of this kind by Michelangelo are extremely rare. Most of his drawings that survive are figure studies, in which a single figure or a number of figures are depicted, or sometimes even just part of a figure. Some academics believe that Michelangelo failed to keep his composition drawings because they no longer had any value for the artist, once he had completed the work of art for which they were initially made. In contrast, he could always make further use of his figure studies whenever he started work on a new composition. In addition, we also know that in 1564, Michelangelo gave instructions that all the drawings in his Roman studio should be burnt, so that many works of this kind, mainly dating from the period 1534 to 1564, were lost forever. 'The Stoning of St. Stephen' therefore dates from before this period, when the artist was still based in his native city of Florence. The drawing is characteristic of the manner in which Michelangelo worked in his paintings and presentation drawings. There is a sharp focus on the foreground, with the background only lightly filled in. In stylistic terms, the drawing closely matches other work by Michelangelo from the 1520s.

The drawing was discovered as a work by Michelangelo by Cécile Kruyfhoofd, who researched and inventoried the drawing collection of the Jean van Caloen Foundation for many years. Her suspicions were confirmed by several experts, including K. Oberhuber, H. Chapman, P. Rosenberg and P. Ioannides.

*Based on: Paul Ioannides, 'On Michelangelo's 'Stoning of St Stephen'' in: Master Drawings 2001, vol. 39 no. 1 pp. 3-11.*

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## Cristoforo Roncalli (Il Pomarancio), Naked running man with an urn



The young man is drawn in red chalk, known as sanguine, on blue paper. The right leg has been depicted in a shortened form to accentuate the figure's sense of motion. This is a difficult and complex artistic technique designed to suggest movement in otherwise static compositions, which Roncalli has here executed brilliantly. The drawing also clearly identifies the artist as a follower of Michelangelo, but the influence of Annibale Carracci is also in evidence. His bold and luxurious frescos in the Palazzo Farnese are known to have been an important source of inspiration throughout Roncalli's oeuvre. Stylistically, this drawing has been linked to Roncalli's study of a 'Fallen Angel', held by the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, and also with the drawing of an 'Angel with an open book' (Paris, Drouot 2001), which is also in red chalk on blue paper.

Roncalli was a Tuscan by origin. His artist's name, Il Pomarancio, refers to his place of birth. He completed numerous commissions for public buildings, principally in Rome. He also made a number of decorative works for churches, such as the altar piece in Santa Andrea della Valle and a mosaic in the Capella Clementina in the Vatican. His patron, Pope Paul, also commissioned Roncalli for the decoration of the basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano. The purpose for which the artist made the collection's drawing is not clear, but it is probably a design piece for a private commission for a decorative fresco in one of the many palaces in Rome.

*Based on: Pascal Ruys-Raquez in: exhibition catalogue 'De Giorgione à Tiepolo. Dessins Italiens du 15e au 18e siècle dans les collections privées et publiques de Belgique', Musée communal d'Ixelles, Brussels 1993, pp. 112-113; and Pascal Ruys-Raquez in: exhibition catalogue 'European Master Drawings Unveiled. Van der Goes, Michelangelo, Van Goyen, Fragonard and other masters from Belgian collections', Kunsthal Rotterdam 2002, pp. 192.*

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## Johannes Stradanus, Sol (Apollo) and Mars, ca. 1595



Sol



Mars

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Sol (Apollo as the sun god) and Mars were probably designed for prints that were never engraved and published. The drawings are part of a 'planets' series, similar to the *Septem Planetæ* series executed by Hans Collaert. The drawings were originally part of the d'Aigremont private collection, which was auctioned in 1866. There are known to be two other drawings from the same series, depicting Venus and Jupiter. The drawing of Jupiter bears the date 1595 and it is thought that the drawings of Apollo and Mars were probably made that same year. The Plantin-Moretus Museum has another Stradanus drawing of Mercury, dated 1587. This suggests that the artist designed two planetary series, the first in 1587 and a second one just a few years later in 1595.

Stradanus (Jan van der Straet) was one of the few artists from Northern Europe who was able to make a long and successful career in Italy. Cosimo I de Medici took him under his wing and it was thanks to the patronage of Cosimo that he was commissioned to decorate the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence in collaboration with Giorgio Vasari. This was just one of the many prestigious projects in which he was involved. In addition, he was also instrumental in the foundation of the very first European academy of art, the *Accademia del Disegno*. Stradanus acquired fame not only as a painter, but also as a designer of tapestries. From the 1570s onwards, he also began to design prints, for which Sol (Apollo) and Mars were probably drawn.

As a celebrated Bruges artist of the Renaissance, Stradanus is an important spearhead figure in the collection of Musea Brugge. In 2008-2009, an exhibition of his works was held in the Groeningemuseum.

*Based on: Cécile Kruyfhoofd et al., 'Keuze uit de Vlaamse en Hollandse tekeningen van de Stichting Jean van Caloen', Loppem 1997, pp. 13-14.*

## François Boucher – Young woman with a lace cap, ca. 1730



The young woman is depicted in a seated position, wearing a lace cap. The drawing is thought to be one of Boucher's early works, made during the 1730s. The air of voluptuousness that characterises much of the artist's secular work is here missing. Instead, he has made an honest and elegant portrait of his subject. She is clearly a member of the rising bourgeoisie, a social class that is only infrequently represented in Boucher's oeuvre. In fact, he painted relatively few portraits, for most of which his sitters were members of the upper classes or aristocracy.

There is no surviving painting of Boucher for which this drawing might have been a preliminary study and its nature suggests that it is more likely to have been a 'stand-alone' piece than a preparatory work. Because the drawing dates from around 1730 and given the young woman's social position, it is possible that the portrait is a depiction of a young Marie-Jeanne Buseau, daughter of Jean-Baptiste Buseau, who Boucher married in 1733. However, this identification has not been confirmed.

Boucher was known for his subtlety of style, which finds good expression in this drawing. His skilled touch and restrained pallet can clearly be seen in the flowing lines of the composition and the careful integration of minimal colour. The lightly yet tellingly sketched hands of the woman are also typical of Boucher's style.

*Based on: Pascal Ruys-Raquez in: exhibition catalogue 'Esquisses, pastels et dessins de François Boucher dans les collections privées', Musée Lambinet, Versailles 2014, p. 50; Pascal Ruys-Raquez in: exhibition catalogue 'European Master Drawings Unveiled. Van der Goes, Michelangelo, Van Goyen, Fragonard and other masters from Belgian collections', Kunsthal Rotterdam 2002, pp. 257; and Alastair Lang, 'The Drawings of François Boucher', New York 2003, pp. 158-159.*

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## Hermanus Fock, Dune landscape with an artist, ca. 1800



There are 120 known engravings and aquatints of the Northern Netherlands artist Hermanus Fock, but only a small number of drawings. He was known in particular for his production of charming and intimate landscapes. However, this large sheet depicting a Dune landscape with artist is not only unusual within Fock's own oeuvre, but is also a seminal work in the drawing art of the Northern Netherlands in the 18th and 19th centuries. The drawing gives us a glimpse into the world of the senses and emotions, which seldom played a role in the landscape depictions of the period.

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During the 17th century, dune landscapes were frequently depicted by Dutch masters like Jan van Goyen and Pieter Molijn. These scenes often gave a panoramic view of a landscape that was crowded with people. The 18th century masters, such as Pieter Barbiers and Carel Lodewijk Hansen, preferred to place the accent on areas of rougher woodland adjacent to the dunes, although Jacob Ernst Hansen continued to focus on the more picturesque aspects of landscape. The dune landscape as depicted here by Fock concentrates on the wildness and majesty of the setting, so that the artist figure pales into insignificance and only becomes apparent when you view the scene for the second or third time.

The style of the drawing, with its long and flowing chalk lines and broad areas of space, is reminiscent of the style of the 17th century. Because the design was carefully finished with white highlighting, it is assumed that it was made for sale to collectors. The scene in question is probably somewhere in the vicinity of Overveen or Zandvoort, close to the North Dutch city of Haarlem.

*Based on: Robert-Jan te Rijdt in: exhib. cat. Langs velden en wegen. De verbeelding van het landschap in de 18de en 19de eeuw, Amsterdam 1997, pp. 176-177.*

## Jacques Jordaens, The priest's blessing



Jacques Jordaens, together with Peter Paul Rubens and Antoon van Dyck, was one of the most important artists in the Southern Netherlands during the Baroque period. He was a member of the so-called Antwerp School and is famed for his imposing historical scenes, genre pieces and portraits. The drawing of 'The Priest's Blessing' depicts a figure in alb and stole. He is facing towards the right and is making the sign of the blessing with his right hand.

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There are two other drawings by Jordaens with a similar subject: a study of a priest and a study of a monk. The former is part of the collection at the Minneapolis Institute of Art; the latter at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België (Royal Belgian Library). Expert Brecht Vanoppen thinks that all three drawings were created during the same period around 1650.

The purpose of the Jordaens' drawing in the collection of the Jean van Caloen Foundation is not clear but it was possibly a preparatory piece for a larger work. His altarpiece depicting 'The miracles of St. Dominic' contains cleric in a similar dress and pose. This altarpiece also dates to around 1650.

*Based on: Brecht Vanoppen in: exhibition catalogue 'Bruegel and Beyond. Netherlandish Drawings in The Royal Library of Belgium, 1500-1800', Veurne 2022, pp. 276-277 (not yet published).*

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## About the Jean van Caloen Foundation

In 1856, Baron Charles van Caloen and his wife, Countess Savina de Gourcy Serainchamps, commissioned Edward Welby Pugin and Jean Baptiste Bethune to build them a romantic castle at Loppem.

The castle is now home to a rich art collection, most of which was compiled by Baron Jean van Caloen (1884-1972), the grandson of Charles. He was a passionate collector with a wide range of interests: medieval sculpture, Flemish painting, stoneware from Raeren and Westerwald, Mechelen alabaster, Portuguese ivory, illuminated manuscripts, prints and drawings. These collections are now largely housed in specially renovated rooms on the first floor of the castle, where they are presented as part of a museum-like display.

In 1951, Baron Jean van Caloen set up the foundation that still bears his name and which is responsible for the administration not only of the castle, its surrounding park and ancillary buildings, but also of all the castle's contents. The purpose of the foundation is to preserve and maintain the entire castle complex for future generations, as well as to extend its various collections and make them more widely known. Because of its outstanding historical and artistic value, the castle was classified as a protected monument in 1985. Since then, it has been thoroughly renovated and its facilities upgraded. The castle grounds and maze are also listed as a protected landscape and are open to the public.

### Van Caloen and Bruges: a historic connection

The collection of drawings was compiled by Baron Jean van Caloen (1884-1972). He was the grandson of Baron Charles van Caloen and his wife, Countess Savina de Gourcy Serainchamps, who in 1856 commissioned Edward Welby Pugin and Jean Baptiste Bethune to build them a romantic castle at Loppem. The family spent the winter in their city mansion at Dijver 11, which now houses the Europa College. Louis van Caloen, brother of Charles, was a Jesuit and the founder of the Archbrotherhood of St. Francis Xavier. Charles was chairman of the provincial board of the brotherhood and a benefactor of the wards in Bruges and Loppem. He financed the building of the Neo-Gothic chapel that now serves as the entrance to the Groeninge Museum, through which hundreds of visitors pass each day. The upper floor regularly hosts lectures, receptions and events organised by Musea Brugge.

### Jean van Caloen and Louis Reckelbus

The purchases of Jean van Caloen, which were largely made in the period between the two world wars, were to some extent determined by his friendship with Louis Reckelbus (1864-1958). This local Bruges artist was also the first curator of the Municipal Museum for Fine Arts in the Groeninge Museum and, consequently, is an important figure in the history of Musea Brugge. Jean and Louis bought works of art at the same auctions and often shared or exchanged their acquisitions.

## About Musea Brugge

Musea Brugge connects its rich and diverse collection with people and society, with the past, the present and the future.

Musea Brugge is internationally known and respected for the richness of its collections and, in particular, for its outstanding collection of 15th and 16th century masterpieces from the Southern Netherlands.

Highlight of the Groeninge Museum – one of the very finest Musea Brugge locations – is unquestionably the collection of painting by the Flemish Primitives. This collection contains works of supreme quality by the most important masters of the 15th and 16th centuries: Jan van Eyck, Hans Memling, Hugo van der Goes, Gerard David, Hieronymus Bosch and their contemporaries. It is one of the most outstanding collections anywhere in the world and contains paintings that are landmarks in the history of European art.

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### Visuals

All images can be downloaded from <https://www.museabrugge.be/en>.

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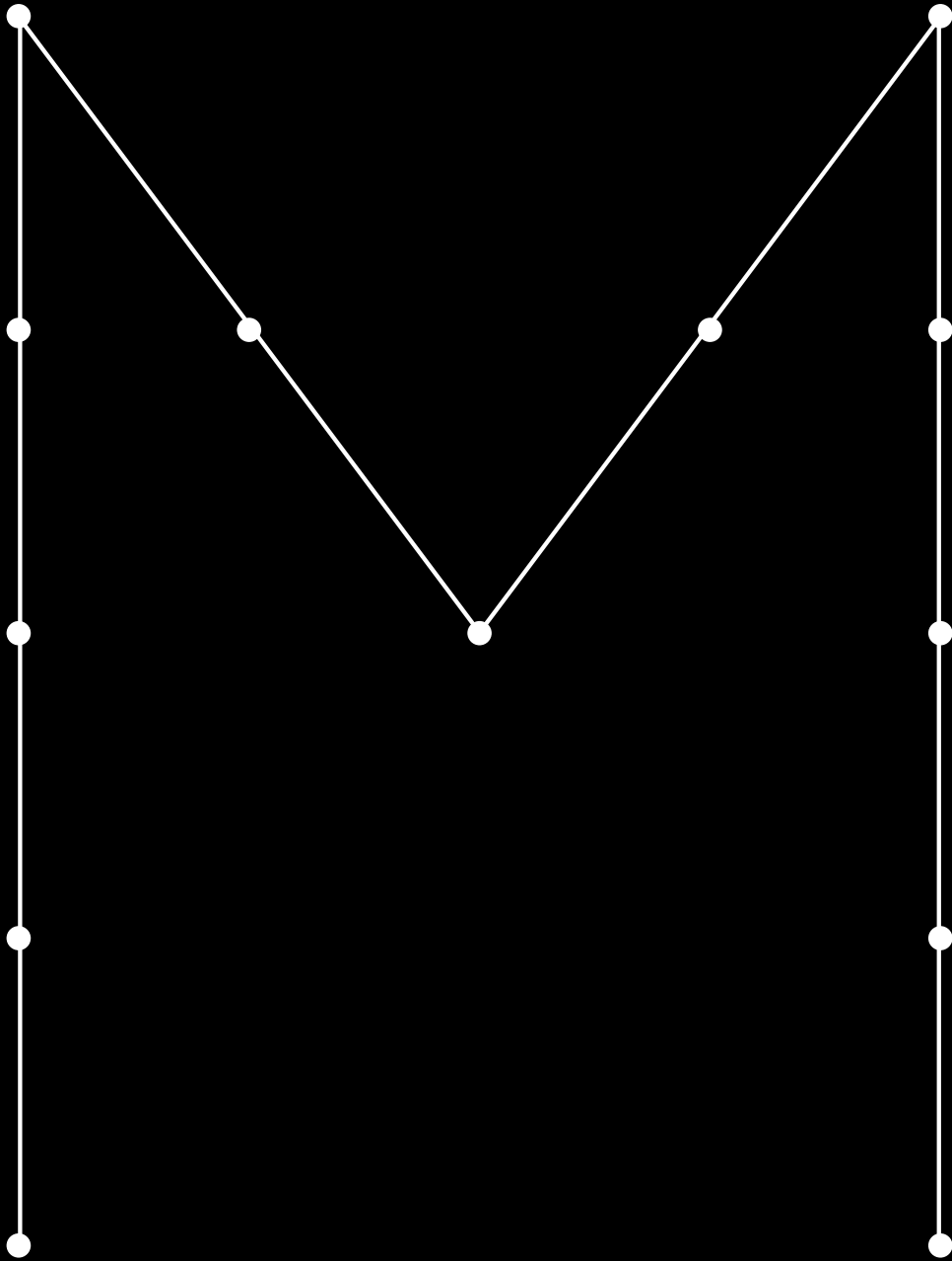


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