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VIRGIN AND CHILD, BY LUCAS CRANACH.
PRESENTED BY THE DETROIT MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDERS SOCIETY

FOUNDERS SOCIETY PRESENTS AN IMPORTANT PAINTING

An important recent addition to the Institute's collections is the painting presented by the Detroit Museum of Art Founders Society, the "Virgin and Child" by Lucas Cranach, one of the outstanding figures of the Northern Renaissance who, with Dürer and Holbein, form the trinity of painters who in the late XV and early XVI centuries so forcibly expressed the peculiar genius of the Germanic peoples—a genius differing in so many respects from that of the Latin countries.

And as we turn from the art of the Italian Renaissance to this northern art, we find it necessary to make a quick mental adjustment, as we must do in listening to a Wagnerian concert after having just heard an opera of Verdi's or Rossini's. For the keynote of the Germanic character is emotion, and the ideal of their art not beauty, but expression. Goethe's affirmation that "Gefühl ist alles" (feeling is everything) might almost serve as the pass-word in any attempted interpretation of German art, poetry or music.

We find this expressed in so many ways: in its deep penetration into the inner life of the spirit; in its animation and detail; in its vivid imagination, often approaching the fantastic; and its love for tragic themes.

Cranach comes on the scene at the time of the great spiritual revolution which shook the Northern Countries

at the beginning of the XVI Century. The sudden impetus to learning which had been brought about by the printing press, with the consequent awakened interest in the culture of antiquity; the teachings of the mystics; and the influence of humanistic philosophy which had permeated German universities, now culminated in the movement known as the Protestant Reformation.

Born in 1472 at Cronach in Franconia (whence he received his name), Cranach went at the age of thirty-two to Saxony, where he became Court Painter to the Saxon Elector, Frederick the Wise, taking up his residence in Wittenberg. Here, in addition to his painting, he opened an apothecary shop and later a bookstore. In 1519 he was elected City Treasurer and in 1537 and again in 1540, Burgomaster.

He opened his mind frankly and simply to all the influences of his time and from the first attached himself to the cause of the Reformation, becoming a warm friend of Luther. Much of his best work, both in woodcuts and paintings, was done in exposition of the great Reformer's doctrines.

In his art he belongs wholly to Saxony and the School of Cologne and not in any degree to the intensely dramatic school of his native Franconia. In his landscapes, trees and lighting, the influence of Grüne-

wald and Altdorfer is often evident, but in the types which he portrays as well as in a certain peculiarity of technique, he is closely akin to the early Cologne masters.

He worked with indefatigable energy and zeal and has left an enormous number of religious and allegorical paintings, as well as numerous portraits and drawings for woodcuts. His scenes from classical mythology, the best of which is his "Judgment of Paris," are not interpreted in the accepted classic spirit, but his heroes and heroines are naïve and almost childish, though not without a certain winsomeness and charm, part of which is found in their utter lack of self-consciousness and in their fresh grace, full of the romance of chivalry.

Most of his subjects, however, are Biblical—his favorite themes being Adam and Eve, Judith, Christ Blessing Little Children, scenes from the Passion, and symbolical scenes representing New Testament teachings.

Cranach's human, quite matter-of-fact Madonnas are very different from the formal and more spiritual Italian Virgins. Though graceful in effect, they answer to none of the generally accepted standards of beauty. With their high foreheads, short chins, and the almost Chinese

obliquity of their eyes, they are often positively homely—but what a warmth of mother love they express, and how lovable are the snub-nosed little cherubs!

His manner, like many of the painters of the North, was to underpaint with pure color, and tone or shade by glazing. Though often defective in the rendering of texture, his drawing is sure and his modeling strong yet delicate. His color is always rich and harmonious, in contrast to much of the paler painting of his day. In our "Virgin and Child" the rich, glowing color is the picture's greatest charm. The Virgin is clothed in a gown of exquisite green-blue which contrasts beautifully with the warm deep red of the drapery held as a background by the little cherubs. The flaxen hair of the mother, and the vari-colored wings of the putti, complete the rich color harmony. The attitude of the Child who with raised finger seems already to be explaining his mission to the little John, is original and appealing. Altogether it is the type of painting that gives us a deep and quiet sense of satisfaction and makes us feel that Cranach is a master of high rank, in a way that was thoroughly original and thoroughly expressive of the spirit of his people and his times.

J. W.



APPLE ORCHARD, BY GEORGE INNESS.
PRESENTED IN MEMORY OF HENRY BROCKHOLST LEDYARD
BY HIS CHILDREN

MEMORIAL GIFT OF INNESS LANDSCAPE

Landscape painting in America has earned a place beside the painted masterpieces of the world. An assimilation of the best from the work of many lands and schools, it embodies creative power, and an artistic point of view that is in harmony with the life of our country. Other qualities that enter in are a wholesome spirit and a vigorous technique of painting, and its conceptions are always inspired by high ideals.

Not long after the war of 1812, expeditions to the great west began and left in their train vivid impressions of America's great scenic wonders, objectified in immortal can-

vasses by the artists. Such men as Cole, Bierdstadt, Kensett, Durand and F. E. Church painted the mountains, canyons, waterfalls and other impressive manifestations of nature.

Then George Inness appeared, a keystone between this early work and the present landscape painting which the whole world admires. When the painter achieves almost photographic-like representation, he requires other problems to solve. The brevity of the wise is more effective, intelligible, and pleasing than volubility. George Inness realized and reflected this more and more in his art.

Such is the "Apple Orchard," pre-

sented to the Detroit Institute of Arts in memory of Henry Brockholst Ledyard by his children, Henry Ledyard, Baroness Von Ketteler and Hugh Ledyard. It is signed "G. Inness, 1892," and has all the good qualities of his best late work which, as Samuel Isham writes, "holds together flawlessly."

He was born in Newburgh, New York, in 1825, it almost seemed as if in answer to the call of art. His early training, obtained in a map engraver's office, later served him well. He lived tensely and reasoned exhaustively. His earlier painting, at the age of twenty, was a matter of seeing correctly but with a collaboration of mind and heart.

His second manner dates from about 1853 to 1875. "Peace and Plenty" and the "Evening Medfield" suggest the older manner but with a poetic interpretation. Detail no longer played such an important role as in former days. It was after four years of continuous absorption of European art and atmosphere that in 1875 he came into a more definitely American phase. Corot, Rousseau and Daubigny influenced and strengthened him in the manner which was to mark his later work and which has brought him recognition.

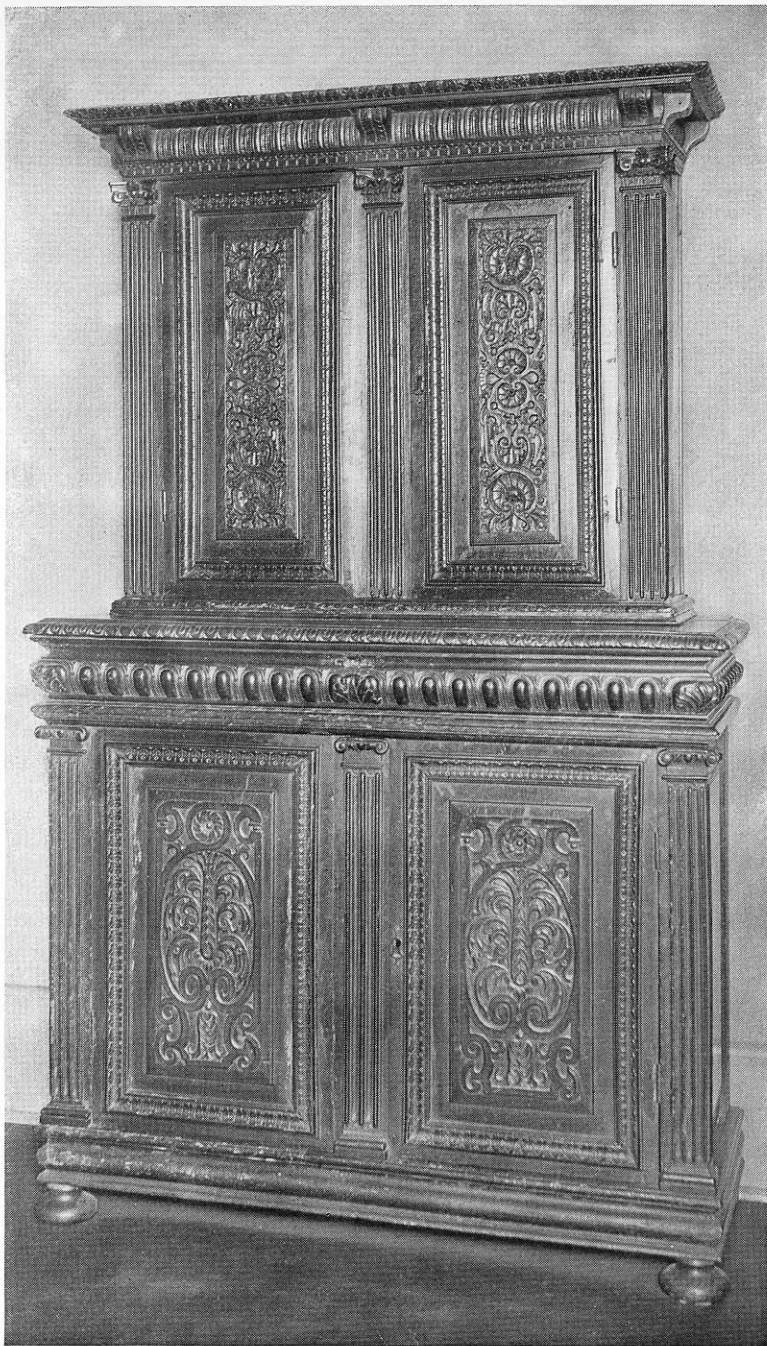
We can do no better than to quote Inness' own statements: "The purpose of the painter is simply to reproduce in other minds the impression which a scene has made on him. A work of art does not appeal to the

intellect. It does not appeal to the moral sense. Its aim is not to instruct, not to edify, but to awaken an emotion. . . ."

In his last manner, that of the late 80's and until his death in 1894, he saw landscape in related masses of color rather than in linear extensions. The color masses were held together with air in a low mysterious light. He clearly understood the beauty and attractiveness of subtle suggestiveness.

"The Apple Orchard," given to the Art Institute, might almost be called a symphony in greens, the color Inness loved so well. It predicts the impressionists. In fact, he and two others of that first great group, Wyant and Martin, were the beginning of a tendency that has reached complete expression in Twachtman and his peers.

The foreground is fresh, light olive-green, with wild flowers adding the right delicate touch. A similar color appears in the trees before the delightful red barn. At the left a somewhat darker green makes a gradual transition to the still darker mass of foliage behind the barn. These tones, though repeating the color, vary enough in value to be interesting, and follow in sequence like a run of musical notes. Behind the trees a light pearl blue sky with clouds of mauve completes the color cycle. It is definite enough to convince as to its reality and suggests to the imagination such landscapes as we love to dream about. R. P.



FRENCH RENAISSANCE CABINET, XVI CENTURY.
PRESENTED BY MRS. GRIFFITH OGDEN ELLIS

GIFTS OF PERIOD FURNITURE

Mrs. Griffith Ogden Ellis has directed that her fund in the Detroit Museum of Art Founders Society be used for the purchase of three important objects of decorative arts as a part of the Institute's permanent collection. These objects consist of a XVI Century Italian cassone with the front panel carved in high relief representing a tournament scene; a Spanish cabinet of the XVI Century, inlaid with bone in the Moorish style and painted and gilded, and a French Renaissance cabinet of the XVI Century, of the characteristic proportion and ornament of the Henri II period.

Mr. Griffith Ogden Ellis has also directed that his fund in the Detroit Museum of Art Founders Society be used for the purchase of similar

objects of decorative arts. His gift comprises the carved and inlaid Italian choir stalls of the late XV Century, a north Italian cassone with raised decoration in polychrome, and two carved walnut chairs from England, circa 1680.

The gift of these objects by Mr. and Mrs. Ellis anticipates the completion of the new Institute of Arts, when objects of this character will be needed for the period rooms planned for that building. Their substantial gift will give them a more possessive interest in the museum and will suitably inscribe their names among its founders, while the objects which they have presented will be a perpetual source of inspiration and encouragement to designers and craftsmen.

A SPECIAL EXHIBITION OF DECORATIVE ARTS, consisting of antique furniture, fabrics, tapestries, Chinese porcelains, bronzes, rugs and other objects of art from the collections of P. W. French and Company, Inc., and Parish-Watson and Company, Inc., of New York City, will open to the public Friday evening, Novem-

ber 9th, from 8:00 to 10:00 o'clock, and will remain on view during the month of November. Incidental music will be provided at the opening of the exhibition through the courtesy of the Chamber Music Society.

This is one of the most important exhibitions that will be held during the year.

LECTURES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

November:

- 2nd, 7:30 P. M.* Free sketch class conducted by the Recreation Commission.
- 4th, 3:30 P. M.* Musical program by the Chamber Music Society.
- 4:30 P. M.* Gallery talk, "The Medieval Spirit in Art," by Mr. R. Poland.
- 9th, 7:30 P. M.* Free sketch class conducted by the Recreation Commission.
- 8:30 to 11:00* Opening view of Exhibition of Decorative Arts lent by P. W. French and Company and Parish-Watson Company of New York.
- 11th, 3:30 P. M.* Lecture in auditorium, "Greece in Retrospect," by The Very Reverend Warren L. Rogers, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral.
- 4:30 P. M.* Gallery talk, "The Renaissance in Italy," by Mr. Clyde H. Burroughs.
- 16th, 7:30 P. M.* Free sketch class conducted by the Recreation Commission.
- 18th, 3:30 P. M.* Lecture in auditorium, "India," by Mr. Edwin S. George.
- 4:30 P. M.* Gallery talk, "The Renaissance in the Northern Countries," by Mr. Clyde H. Burroughs.
- 23rd, 7:30 P. M.* Free sketch class conducted by the Recreation Commission.
- 25th, 3:30 P. M.* Lecture in auditorium, "Decoration of the Home," by Mr. John L. Kolle.
- 4:30 P. M.* Gallery talk, "Northern Europe's Contribution to the Graphic Arts," by Miss Isabel Weadock.
- 30th, 7:30 P. M.* Free sketch class conducted by the Recreation Commission.

December:

- 2nd, 3:30 P. M.* Lecture in auditorium, "Pictures and Their Appreciation," by Mrs. Neville Walker.
- 4:30 P. M.* Gallery talk, "Great French Engravers," by Miss Isabel Weadock.

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

- Nov. 1st to 30th* Exhibition of Peasant Work consisting of textiles, wood-carving and pottery, from Switzerland, the Black Forest, Austria, Russia, and England.