‘The Haywain’ by Hieronymus Bosch Back in the Netherlands after Centuries

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Hieronymus Bosch’s ‘The Haywain’ is coming back from Madrid to the Netherlands for the first time in 450 years. The large triptych, a key work in Bosch’s oeuvre, will remain in the Netherlands for more than six months. Thanks to a special museum collaboration the public will be given the unique opportunity to see the work in two spectacular exhibitions. This autumn the masterpiece will dazzle visitors in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in the major exhibition titled ‘Uncovering Everyday Life: From Bosch to Bruegel’ in Rotterdam and then from the beginning of 2016 the triptych will be seen in the Noordbrabants Museum in the retrospective ‘Jheronimus Bosch: Visions of Genius’. This unique loan marks the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the death of Hieronymus Bosch, the most important late-medieval artist that the Netherlands has produced.

‘The Haywain’ is one of the masterpieces in the collection of the Museo Nacional del Prado in Madrid. King Philip II of Spain was an avid collector of Bosch’s work and bought this triptych for his private collection in 1570. The work, which has not left Spain since it was acquired, is coming to the Netherlands in superb condition after restoration some years ago. In the painting a procession of people walks behind a haywain, a metaphor for materialism, straight into hell. In the foreground we can see medieval scenes with drunken monks, teeth-pullers, merry musicians and fortune-telling gypsies. A pair of lovers sits atop the haywain, an angel and a demon on either side: existing and new traditions come together.

‘The Haywain’ is one of the first paintings in art history to depict everyday scenes. Painters in subsequent generations made these scenes the main subjects of their paintings. In his work Hieronymus Bosch showed worlds his contemporaries had not thought possible. His characteristic panels and triptychs, full of illusions and hallucinations, extraordinary monsters and nightmares, present an unequalled picture of the major subjects of the time – temptation, sin and accountability.

Uncovering Everyday Life: From Bosch to Bruegel
Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen - 10 October 2015 to 17 January 2016
In the early sixteenth century Hieronymus Bosch was one of the first to start painting everyday life. Following in his footsteps, other artists like Lucas van Leyden, Quinten Massys and, above all, Pieter Bruegel the Elder also tackled daily life. For the first time Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen will show the origins of genre art with a selection of paintings and prints of the highest standard.

Jheronimus Bosch: Visions of Genius
Het Noordbrabants Museum - 13 February 2016 to 8 May 2016
With an expected twenty paintings and nineteen drawings this is the largest Hieronymus Bosch retrospective ever staged. In a once-only event the lion’s share of his oeuvre is returning to Den Bosch, the city where he was born Jheronimus van Aken, where he painted his masterpieces and from which he took his artist’s name of Bosch. The exhibition will be the high point of National Event Year Bosch 500, which will be celebrated in 2016.
With thanks to:

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

Het Noordbrabants Museum
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