

Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn (1606–1669) is famous not just as a painter and draughtsman, but also for his prints. At times, these were the most famous items in his oeuvre.

The master's preferred technique was etching. It allowed him to develop his temperament as a draughtsman: rapidly and sensitively he drew the stylus across the thin layer, exposing the metal for the etching process in clear flourishes or vivaciously contrasting hatching patterns. It is true that the artist also used the "dry-point" technique, where the needle scratches the surface of the plate and no acid is used, and sometimes he even used the burin, which is actually intended for the far more austere structures of the copper-plate engraving.

In a work like "The Three Crosses" we can see how Rembrandt used all these techniques together. In the process the work evolved. This dynamic compositional technique matched his forceful creativity: the master took the bold step of undertaking a number of farreaching revisions. And each time, the suggestive effect was enhanced. By the end, there has hardly anything left of the original state. We feel we are being dragged into a dramatic creative process. What a vehement confrontation of forms! What a tension-filled pattern of light and dark!

Rembrandt's graphic work is marked by this "handwriting", and in it are reflected all the themes of his oeuvre. Prints were a very personal form of expression – and, as they were already being collected by his contemporaries, they represented an important economic factor for him. Observe Rembrandt's joy in variation, the freshness of expression, the variety of his strokes, the atmosphere ...

Our exhibition "Rembrandt, A Boy's Dream" includes three plates by Rembrandt.