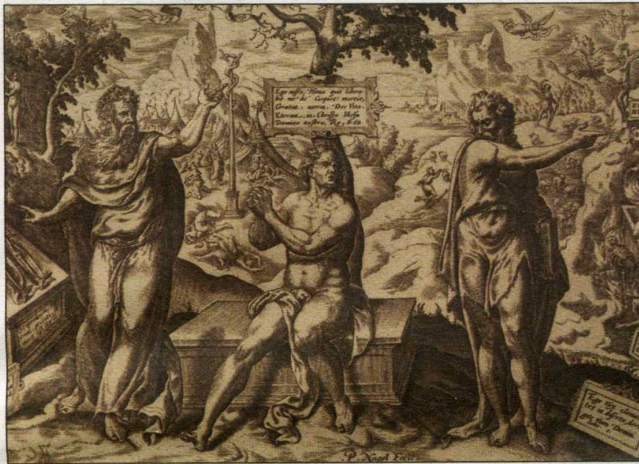


## Picturing the Scriptures



Pieter Nagel, "Man Between the Old and New Covenant," 1567.



Jan Swart, "Jesus Preaching from the Ship," 1525.

By PRIYANKA SINHA

**S**cripture for the Eyes: Bible Illustrations in Netherlandish Prints of the Sixteenth Century" will give museum visitors a sense of how "pictorial images gave people new ways to access and interpret the word of God," says Walter Melion, Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Art History. Melion is curator of the Carlos Museum's newest exhibition, on view until Jan. 24, 2010.

Pictorial images, whether illustrating Bibles or as independent prints, played a profound role during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation movements in Europe. The rise of the great print publishing houses brought a proliferation of biblical texts and images in the 16th century that made interpretation of Scripture available to a broad audience. In this period the Low Countries were a crossroads of confessional beliefs.

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Carlos Museum staff make final adjustments to the "Scripture for the Eyes" exhibit before its Oct. 17 opening.

BRYAN MELTZ

# EXHIBIT: Religious tension in art's context

Continued from the cover

Melion explains: "You have Lutherans, Roman Catholics and the Reformed... you have tensions between these groups and also a great deal of negotiation, and one of the instruments of interreligious negotiation was biblical imagery."

This is the historical context of "Scripture for the Eyes," an exhibition of 80 engravings and woodcuts gracing the claret red walls of the Carlos Museum's third floor galleries.

Melion notes that, "No one had taken this rich source material and organized it around functional rather than iconographic categories — now one can see how, and to what ends, viewers used these prints

during the 16th century."

Visitors can enjoy works by Dutch and Flemish masters such as Lucas van Leyden, Maarten van Heemskerck and Hieronymus Wierix, among others. One especially interesting series is Hendrick Goltzius' "Life of the Virgin," in which he imitates the styles of great masters like Federigo Barocci and van Leyden, virtually transforming his hand into theirs.

"I find these pieces magnificent," Melion says. "The imitation is protean — Goltzius even varies his ink to perfect his mimicry of each artist."

Illustrations are on loan from 13 institutions around the world. Also included are key items from Emory University Libraries, including five

rare volumes of the Antwerp Polyglot Bible — side-by-side translations of biblical text in several languages including Latin and Hebrew.

Together the Candler School of Theology and the Department of Religion provide a ready audience for the exhibition, which should also interest scholars and students of early modern Europe, curators say.

Melion felt it important to stage the exhibition — which first debuted at the Museum of Biblical Art in New York — in the Southeast. "The South is often called the Bible Belt, and it often presupposes a culture of biblical literalism. We wanted to bring to the South an exhibition focusing on the complex and varied act of reading and viewing Scripture in the 16th

century," he says.

"Not only is it a marvelous scholarly exhibition," says Margaret Shufeldt, Carlos Museum curator of works on paper, "but it allows us to showcase several of the masterpieces in our own collection." The "Old Master Highlights of the Works on Paper Collection" currently in the museum's John Howett Gallery features portraits of the master engravers — Philips Galle, Dirck Coornhert and Goltzius — whose works are also on view in the third floor exhibition.

For upcoming programs related to "Scripture for the Eyes," please visit [www.carlos.emory.edu](http://www.carlos.emory.edu).