

Dallas Museum of Art Announces Transformative Addition to European Art Collection with the Acquisition of Monumental Panel by the German Master Derick Baegert

Inaugural Acquisition with the Marguerite and Robert Hoffman Fund for Pre-1700 European Art and Marks the First Work by the Artist to Enter a US Museum

Dallas, TX—May 31, 2018—The Dallas Museum of Art today announced its acquisition of *The Descent from the Cross* by the German master painter Derick Baegert (c. 1440 - c. 1509). Painted around 1480-1490, the monumentally-scaled panel is an exceptional example of Baegert's distinctive style, which reflects the transitional period between medieval and Renaissance painting. As the inaugural acquisition of the Marguerite and Robert Hoffman Fund for pre-1700 European Art, this masterpiece of Northern European painting is the first work of its kind to enter the DMA's holdings and is the first work by this artist to enter a US museum. Established in 2013, the Marguerite and Robert Hoffman Fund was conceived to expand and enhance the Museum's collection of European art, primarily of the Renaissance and Baroque eras, through the establishment of a \$17 million endowment.

"This remarkable and rare painting by Baegert will be a cornerstone of the Old Master European holdings at the DMA," said Agustín Arteaga, the DMA's Eugene McDermott Director. "With this extraordinary acquisition, the Museum can now illustrate the development of art history from the Gothic period to the Renaissance through the DMA's permanent collection. We are deeply grateful to Marguerite Hoffman for the remarkable gift she bestowed on the Museum in her name and that of her late husband Robert with the endowment of the fund, which has made possible this truly transformative addition to the Museum's permanent collection."

"Derick Baegert was a master of late Gothic painting, and *The Descent from the Cross* is a spectacular example of the technical and artistic acumen for which he was renowned during his lifetime and beyond," said Nicole R. Myers, The Lillian and James H. Clark Curator of European Painting and Sculpture. "Beautifully preserved and stunning in its palette and details, *The Descent* drastically expands the ways we can share the history of medieval and Renaissance art with our audiences. It will be a



powerful anchor in the galleries around which the Museum will continue to build its Old Master collection.”

Successful throughout his lifetime, Baegert was the head of a family of painters and became the master of a large workshop in the Rhineland area of Germany during the last third of the 15th century and first third of the 16th century. While he borrowed elements from Netherlandish art, his style remained close to that of the late Gothic and reflects a transition from the late medieval period to the early Renaissance. *The Descent from the Cross* was likely inspired by models produced by such Northern Renaissance masters as Rogier van der Weyden (Brussels, 1400-1464) to whom the work was mistakenly attributed in the early 19th century. At over five feet tall and three feet wide, this impressive, monumentally-scaled oil on panel painting illustrates the lowering of Christ’s body from the cross, a subject the artist painted many times. The panel is thought to be the inside right wing of a large altarpiece of unknown origin that depicted scenes from the Passion of Christ.

A master of illusionistic realism, Baegert is known for highly expressive facial depiction and keen attention to minute details, which are evident in *The Descent’s* protagonists. Their faces possess the detail and individualism associated with portraiture. *The Descent* also features Baegert’s distinctive organization of space, in which figures are frequently placed on a shallow stage against a distant landscape without a middle ground. Renowned for his great technical virtuosity, Baegert adeptly used compositional elements, such as sharply outlined figures and vibrant, contrasting colors, to convey narrative drama and the emotional mood of the scene. In *The Descent*, luminous jewel-tones contrast with Christ’s pale body to heighten the dramatic impact of the scene.

Baegert’s paintings reside today in such major international institutions as the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, Alte Pinakotek in Munich, Musée royal des Beaux-Arts de Belgique in Brussels, Museum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Dortmund, and LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur in Münster, which now holds the largest collection of his work. *The Descent from the Cross* will be on view late this summer in the DMA’s European art galleries, providing a focal point and context for additional new installations of 15th and 16th century paintings and sculpture.

About the Dallas Museum of Art

Established in 1903, the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) is among the 10 largest art museums in the country and is distinguished by its commitment to research, innovation, and public engagement. At the heart of the Museum and its programs is its global collection, which encompasses more than 24,000 works and spans 5,000 years of history, representing a full range of world cultures. Located in the nation’s largest arts district, the Museum acts as a catalyst for community creativity, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse spectrum of programming, from exhibitions and lectures to concerts, literary events, and dramatic and dance presentations. Since the Museum’s return to free general admission in 2013, the DMA has welcomed more than 3.2 million visitors. For more information, visit DMA.org.

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