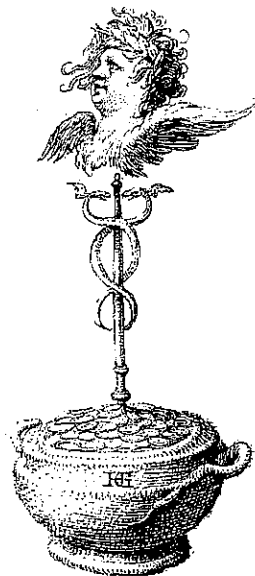


1177
102.2

Hendrik Goltzius

1558 – 1617

*The Complete
Engravings and
Woodcuts*



Edited by Walter L. Strauss

ABARIS BOOKS • NEW YORK

1588

In the early months of this year, Philip of Spain finally decided on an all-out attack on England. Once the British were conquered, he was convinced that the Netherlands would be easily subdued. On May 30, the Armada sailed under the duke of Medina Sidonia. The plan was to anchor the ships off the coast of Calais until Alexander of Parma could cross the Channel with his arm of some 17,000 men. But the Armada was delayed because some vessels had proved unseaworthy and were forced en route to put into port for refitting. The fleet did not sight the English coast until July 28, by which time Elizabeth had gained needed time for more adequate preparations for the defense of the British Isles. By a running attack, the great Armada was defeated. On August 8, the remaining Spanish ships departed. Of 134 vessels, only fifty-three returned to Spain, and many of these were damaged and no longer useful. Parma's flat-bottomed troop ships had never left port. In the absence of the Spanish men-of-war, Dutch vessels had successfully blocked their passage. The combined action of the English and the Netherlands had vanquished Philip.

The resulting elation in the hearts of Dutchmen is evident in Goltzius' sparkling engravings. The four large, round plates of mythological figures who had dared to tempt the gods, and as a consequence had fallen into disgrace, mirror the haughty temperament of the king of Spain and the blow to his power caused by the Armada's defeat. In this connection "Cadmus Killing the Dragon" (no. 261) may well be equally allegorical.

Goltzius now attains the high point in his use of drastically swollen lines: by careful placement of the intersections of lines, he avoids the zebra-stripe effect.¹ At the same time, he develops the *Knollenstil*, a rendering of the musculature in an exaggerated, knobby manner.² The beginning of this new style may be discerned in the 1586 series of Roman heroes (nos. 231-238). It was to reach its climax in the "Large Hercules" (no. 283). Goltzius' drawings of 1588 include the first example of his famous feats of the pen, a rendering of his own crippled hand that might easily be taken for an engraving (R.165).

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1. Hirschmann 1919, p. 53. Reznicek 1961, p. 79.
 2. Reznicek 1961, pp. 71, 217.

Dated drawings and drawings related to dated engravings

R.16	Jael.
R.17	Samson.
R.18	David.
R.19	Judith.*
R.23	Hulda.*
R.69	Saint Mark.*
R.79	A Hermit.
R.81	The Seven Cardinal Virtues.*
R.133	The Three Graces.*
R.134	Minerva and Mercury.*
R.165	Goltzius' Hand.
R.264	Gillis van Breen.
R.360	Head of a Woman.

*Preparatory drawing for the corresponding engraving below.

Engravings after Goltzius

Jael. *HG excud.* This engraving and the three that follow, all picturing Old Testament heroes, are attributed to Jacob Matham and, because of their close resemblance to "Deborah" (q. v.) are placed in 1588. (B.III, p. 195, no. 251).

Samson. (B.III, p. 195, no. 252).

David. (B.III, p. 195, no. 253).

Judith. *HG excud.* (B.III, p. 195, no. 254).

Deborah. *HGoltzius Inuent. Ao. 1588.* This engraving and the two that follow, picturing Old Testament prophetesses, are also attributed to Jacob Matham (B.III, p. 194, no. 245).

Hulda. (B.III, p. 194, no. 246).

Anne. (B.III, p. 194, no. 247).

The Four Elements. *HGoltzius inue. ICVischer excud Ao. 1588.* The first of a series of eight engravings attributed to Jacob Matham but published by Visscher (B.III, p. 200, no. 278).

The Five Senses. *HG Inuent.* (B.III, p. 200, no. 279).

Venus, Bacchus, and Ceres. *HG Inuent.* (B.III, p. 200, no. 280).

Minerva and Mercury. *HG in, excud J.C.V. [isscher].* (B.III, p. 200, no. 281).

The Seven Cardinal Virtues. *HG Inuent.* (B.III, p. 200, no. 282).

Eros and Anteros. *HG Inuent.* (B.III, p. 200, no. 283).

The Three Fates. *HG Inuent.* (B.III, p. 200, no. 284).

The Three Graces. *HG Inuent.* (B.III, p. 201, no. 285).

Saint Mark.

257 TANTALUS (The Four Disgracers)

Round. Ø 332 mm.

With monogram. Dated 1588.

B.258; H.306.

Each of the Four Disgracers in this series had offended the gods and was cast down to earth from a great height. Basing his conceptions on the paintings by Cornelis Cornelisz., Goltzius shows the Disgracers tumbling in space, which permits the artist to render movement in an unprecedented manner. In this first sheet of the series, Tantalus, who offended his father Zeus, is in free fall from the heights of Mount Sipylus.

The story of Tantalus is told in several variations by classical authors.¹ However, the English word "tantalizing" derives from his ultimate punishment: being condemned to live near a pool of water that receded whenever he attempted to drink, and beneath a tree laden with fruits that receded whenever he reached out for food.

Here Tantalus is pictured upside down against a dark background. Swelling lines are employed to the utmost, their narrow ends being augmented by dots to enhance the effect of three-dimensionality.² Goltzius used the same technique in the famous pen drawing of his own hand (R.165), which is also dated 1588.³

1. Pindar *Olympus* 1. 56; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 4. 457; Horace *Satires* 50. 1; Hygin *Fabula* 82.
2. Hirschmann 1919, p. 53.
3. Reznicek 1961, p. 79.
- Broeder 1972, no. 52.
- Museum Boymans-van Beuningen 1972, no. 38.

States:

- I. C. C. *Pictor Inue. HGoltzius sculpt. Ao. 1588.*
Watermark: Coat of Arms with Tower.
- II. *ICVisscher Excudebat.*
- III. *I. Ottens Excudebat.*

Copies:

- A. In mirror image. With the address of Conradus Goltzius (Ø 180 mm).
- B. In mirror image. With the address *Jo. Theo. et Ioys de bry excud.*
- C. In mirror image. With the address *I. honervogt excudit.*
- D. Without the peripheral inscription. Imprinted C. J. N. 1832.
- E. In mirror image. Imprinted *grave per Feigl / autricien.*

Repositories:

- I. Amsterdam, Berlin, Haarlem, Leningrad, London, New York (MM),
New York (NYPL), Princeton.
- III. Rotterdam.



258 ICARUS (The Four Disgracers)

Round. Ø 331 mm.

With monogram. [1588.] Marked 2.

B.259; H.307.

The second of the Disgracers, Icarus was the son of Daedalus, the famous inventor and architect of the labyrinth of Crete. Father and son were confined to the labyrinth because they had given Ariadne the clue with which she guided Theseus out of the maze. But both Daedalus and Icarus escaped on wings made of wax. Icarus made the mistake of soaring too close to the sun, the wax melted, and he dropped into the sea.

Goltzius pictures Icarus somersaulting through the air. Grasping the opportunity to depict unlimited movement, the artist combines his technique of using swelling lines with extreme foreshortening. See the remarks for the preceding print.

States:

Hirschmann knows of only one state.

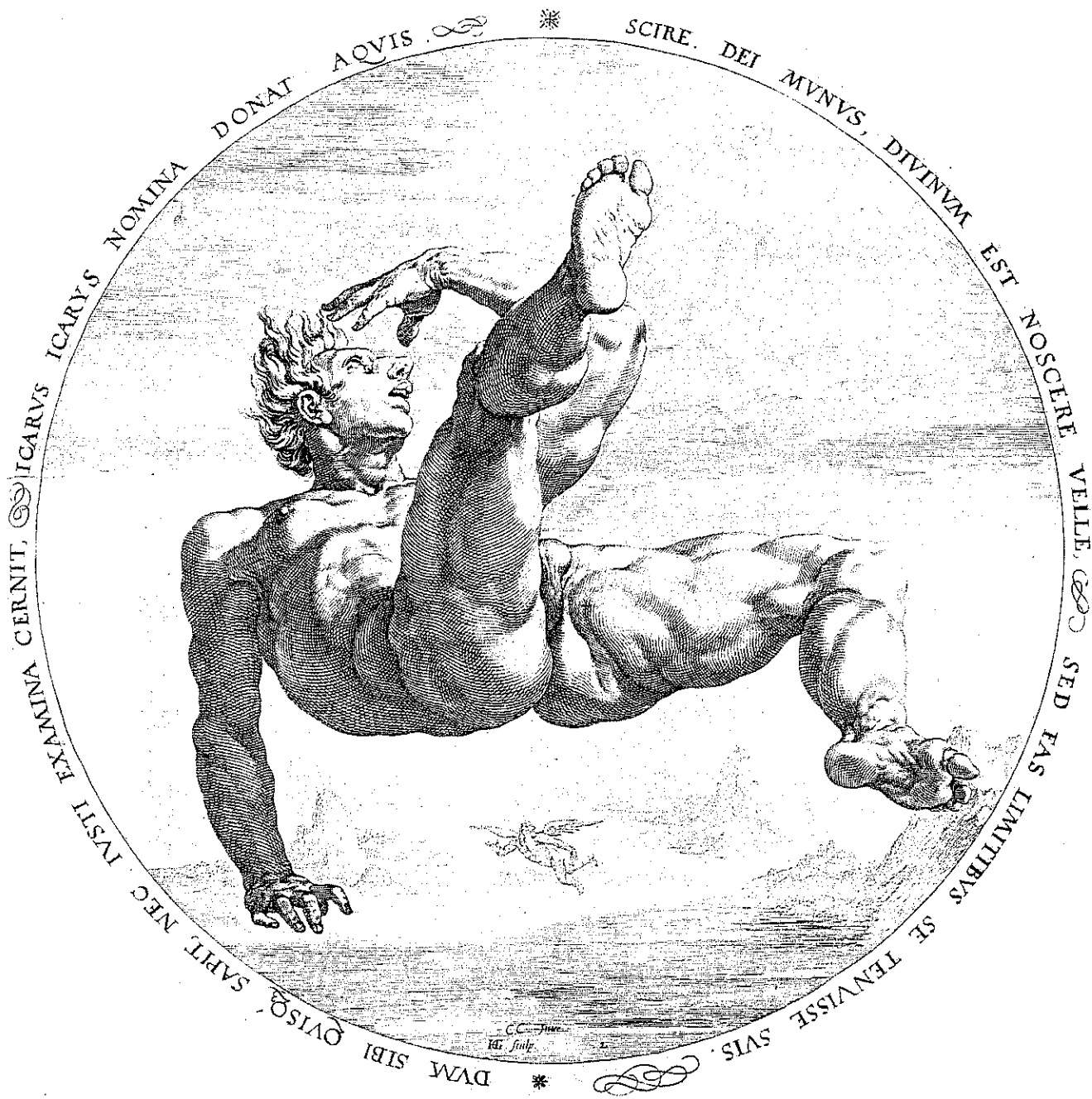
Watermark: Fleur-de-Lis on Escutcheon with the attached letters WR.

Copies:

As in "Tantalus" (no. 257), except for copy B, which is merely imprinted
de Bry excud.

Repositories:

- I. Amsterdam, Berlin, Haarlem, Leningrad, London, New York (MM), New York (NYPL), Princeton, *Rotterdam*.
- II. Berlin.



259 PHAETON (The Four Disgracers)

Round. Ø 329 mm.

With monogram. [1588.] Marked 3.

B.260; H.308.

Phaeton, the third Disgracer in Goltzius' series, obtained permission from his father, Helios, to drive the chariot of the sun across the heavens for one day. The boy was too weak to check the reins, and his horses left their usual course, coming so close to earth that they almost set it on fire. Zeus stopped Phaeton with a bolt of lightning and flung him down into the river Eridanus.

In the engraving, Phaeton is still tumbling in the air. His fall is rendered so that he seems to be coming through the picture plane, at any moment to collide with the beholder. The masterful illusion owes its effect to the severe foreshortening and highly effective shading. The river Eridanus is shown below; the horses and parts of the chariot are scattered in the sky. See the remarks for "Tantalus" (no. 257).

States:

Same as for "Tantalus."

Watermark: Fleur-de-Lis on Escutcheon with the attached letters WR.

Copies:

Same as for "Tantalus."

Repositories:

- I. Amsterdam, Berlin, Haarlem, Leningrad, London, New York (MM), New York (NYPL), Princeton, *Rotterdam*.
- II. Berlin.
- III. Berlin.



260 IXION (The Four Disgracers)

Round. Ø 331 mm.

With monogram. [1588.] Marked 4.

B.261; H.309.

The last of the Four Disgracers, Ixion is shown plummeting from Olympus down to Hades. In what is probably a myth of great antiquity, Zeus is said to have punished Ixion for repeated violations of the sacred relationship between host and guest when he learned of Ixion's lust for Hera.¹

As in "Tantalus," Goltzius has rendered Ixion against a black backdrop, i.e., night. By contrast, the fates of Icarus and Phaeton, which are related to the heat of the sun, are pictured in bright surroundings. See the remarks for "Tantalus" (no. 257).

1. The story of Ixion is also the subject of a poem by Robert Browning (in *Jocoseria*) as well as of a burlesque by Benjamin Disraeli.
- Stechow 1970, no. 35.
- Broeder 1972, no. 53.

States: Same as for "Tantalus."
Watermark: Fleur-de-Lis on Escutcheon with the attached letters WR.

Copies: Same as for "Tantalus."

Repositories: I. Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leningrad, London, New York (MM), New York (NYPL), Princeton, Rotterdam.



242 x 310 mm.

With monogram. Dated 1588.

B.262; H.310.

Cadmus, the son of the king of Phoenicia, set out with two of his brothers to find his sister Europa, who had been carried away by Zeus. During these travels, the companions of Cadmus were devoured by a monster while they were fetching water at a well. Cadmus then slew the dragon. As the legendary founder of Thebes, Cadmus is credited with bringing the alphabet from Phoenicia to Greece (Ovid *Metamorphoses* 3: 28-49). According to van Mander, Cadmus' companions here represent youthful aspirations that are destroyed by wisdom.¹ But, given the political situation at the time in the Low Countries, the dragon may just as well stand for Spain.

In Goltzius' engraving, the winged dragon is about to devour Cadmus' brothers. In the background Cadmus is slaying the beast. Detached heads are strewn upon the ground. Another head appears in the upper left. The figures are foreshortened in the manner of Cornelis Cornelisz. Hirschmann² notes the effortless use of the burin, the illusionistic buttocks, and the remarkable rendering of the human skin. A year later Goltzius made another drawing of this subject, preparatory for his series of illustrations of Ovid.³

1. Cited in Reznicek 1961, p. 194.

2. 1919, pp. 53-54.

3. R.102.

- Broeder 1972, no. 54.

States:

I. With Goltzius' address

Watermark: a. Grapes; b. Fleur-de-Lis on Escutcheon with the attached letters WR; c. Six-pointed Star in Circle.

II. With the address *ICVisscher Excudit.*

III. With the address *C. Danckerts, excudit.*

IV. With the address *I. de Ram Excudit.*

Repositories:

I. Amsterdam, Berlin, Haarlem, Leningrad, London, New York (MM), Princeton, Rotterdam.

II. Berlin.

III. New York (MM).



Ubi sunt proventus Eurydice?
Vixit, Morte, Juppiter, D. Ance, Remigio
Inquit, Pueri, Morte, Juppiter, D. Ance, Remigio

Diris Agenorida laniat socia agmina Serpens, Ultor adest Cadmus pernaq[ue] reposcit ab hoste.

425 x 326 mm.

With monogram. Dated 1588.

B.276; H.321.

The rather uninterested putti have pulled aside the curtain of the bed to reveal Mars, the god of war, unarmed and caught off balance in his embrace of the goddess of love. In the background, Helios is guiding the chariot of the sun above a seascape. As the revealer of all things done on earth, he will tell Vulcan, the husband of Venus of this intrigue (see Appendix, pl. 5).

The engraving is inscribed *B. Spranger Inuentor HGoltzius sculptor Ao. 1588*. It therefore belongs to the group of prints executed by Goltzius after designs by Bartholomaeus Spranger, Court Painter of Emperor Rudolph II. The verses in the lower margin are not signed.

States:

- I. With Goltzius' address.
Watermark: Twin-Headed Eagle.
- II. With the dedication to Baron Octavio Spinola.
Watermark: Fleur-de-Lis on Escutcheon with the attached letters WR.
- III. With the address *ICVisscher excud.*
- IV. With the address *t'Amsterdam by Gerard van Keulen.*
Watermark: Fool's Cap.

Repositories:

- I. Amsterdam, Leningrad, London, New York (MM), Rotterdam.
- II. Amsterdam, Berlin.
- III. New York (MM).
- IV. Amsterdam.



Mundi radius Phœbus, mundi Jux, omnia cerat,
Sub nitido unanimum est Sole, latensq; nubil.

Martis adulterum blanda cum Cypride, nexu
Mithibers: ductis prebet abunde fidem.

Vindus rursus iacet: nil sic celatur, et arva
Nax oporè, perduc quon, refectisq; dies.

Oval. 347 x 260 mm.
With monogram. Dated 1588.
B.141; H.131.

The halolike inscription identifies Apollo as the god of the sun and of light who dispels darkness on earth. By the graceful stride and the harp at his feet, Apollo is shown to be the patron of the arts. This engraving, which was executed during the artist's thirtieth year, is perhaps an idealistic self-assessment.

The knobby, muscular surface of the elongated figure continues a style that began in the series of Roman heroes (nos. 230-39). The lengthening of the human figure reflects the influence of Bartholomaeus Spranger, but the emphasis on the musculature derives from Netherlandish artist, like Maertin van Heemskerck, who had been inspired in this regard by Michelangelo.¹

As an engraving, this subject stands on its own. It corresponds, however, in size, format, signature, and especially in its chiaroscuro treatment, to the six clair-obscure woodcuts of deities (nos. 419-24).² Cf. Appendix, pl. 2.

1. Reznicek 1961, pp. 72, 217.
2. See the remarks for "Helios" (no. 419).
- Broeder 1972, no. 25; 1972a, p. 51.

States: Only one state is known.
Watermark: Crescent Moon.

Repositories: Amsterdam, Berlin, Haarlem, London, New York (MM), Rotterdam.

