

Major exhibition of Rembrandt original prints opens in Birmingham

Thursday 6 March, 2025

- **Rembrandt: Masterpieces in Black and White – Prints from the Rembrandt House Museum** opens at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery on 6 March
- It is the first time that the artist's prints have been brought out of the Netherlands as a collection and is the only opportunity to see the exhibition in the UK
- Co-organised by the American Federation of Arts and the Rembrandt House Museum, the exhibition will be on display until 1 June 2025.

A major exhibition of original prints by Rembrandt which showcases his mastery of the medium opens at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery on 6 March.

Rembrandt: Masterpieces in Black and White – Prints from the Rembrandt House Museum highlights the artist's centuries-long impact on the field of printmaking.

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (1606-1669) is widely regarded as one of the greatest artists of all time. Apart from his atmospheric paintings, he also produced more than 300 prints.

This is the first time that this body of work has been brought out of the Netherlands as a collection and it is the only opportunity to see the exhibition in the UK.

It features 58 prints on loan from the Rembrandt House Museum in Amsterdam, alongside Rembrandt prints from Birmingham's own collection, as well as 20th century prints from two Midlands' artists, Harry Eccleston and Raymond Cowern. Like Rembrandt, Cowern and Eccleston were both skilled painters and printmakers.

Born and brought up in Birmingham, Cowern made etchings of the countryside of the Midlands, including scenes of Kings Norton and a Handsworth allotment, while Black Country-born Eccleston was inspired by the region's industrial landscapes including Bilston Steelworks. Eccleston also has a claim to fame as the first full-time banknote designer for the Bank of England, putting his art into everyone's pockets.

Many artists before Rembrandt used printmaking primarily as a means of reproducing existing compositions, making them available to a wider audience. Rembrandt, however, valued printmaking as an art form in its own right.

This exhibition explores Rembrandt's strengths as an experimental etcher, in particular his visual storytelling and focus on drawing 'from life'.

It shows how Rembrandt grew to be arguably the most creative print artist of the seventeenth century and highlights how his graphic work has served as a source of inspiration for artists in the centuries since.

During the exhibition, visitors will be able to get close up to the prints to appreciate the intricacy of Rembrandt's art with the aid of small magnifying glasses.

Epcó Runia, head of collections at the Rembrandt House Museum, said:

"We at the Rembrandt House Museum are delighted to bring Rembrandt's fascinating prints to Birmingham. With this exhibition we hope to demonstrate that each of Rembrandt's prints is a work of art in its own right. If you take the time to look at them closely, a whole world opens up to you: a world in black and white, but with enormous visual richness."

Sara Wajid and Zak Mensah, co-chief executives of Birmingham Museums Trust, said:

"We are delighted to be working with the American Federation of Arts and the Rembrandt House Museum to host this significant exhibition of Rembrandt's etchings. We are looking forward to welcoming visitors to Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery for this exclusive opportunity to see such an important collection in the UK."

Pauline Forlenza, director & chief executive of the American Federation of Arts, said:

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"Touring *Rembrandt: Masterpieces in Black and White* in collaboration with the Rembrandt House Museum, the only institution devoted entirely to the artist's life and work, is an incredible honour. Our partnership with the Rembrandt House Museum will allow us to bring these momentous etchings out of the Netherlands for the first time as a collection, for the benefit of audiences in the United States and the United Kingdom so that they can experience Rembrandt's work directly."

Co-organised by the American Federation of Arts and the Rembrandt House Museum, the exhibition will be on display at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery until 1 June 2025. Tickets are available on the Birmingham Museums [website](#).

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