

October 1st, 2020 - January 4, 2021  
 Rotonde Sully (north and south)

## Albrecht Altdorfer

### A German Renaissance Master

Painter, draftsman, and printmaker active in Regensburg, Albrecht Altdorfer (around 1480–1538) was a major German artist of the 16th century. Nevertheless, he is less renowned than other masters of his generation, such as Albrecht Dürer, Lucas Cranach and Hans Baldung Grien. The first of its kind in France, and organized in close cooperation with Vienna's Albertina Museum, this monographic exhibition aims to acquaint the public with the rich diversity of Altdorfer's body of work in the context of the German Renaissance.

Closely connected to humanist circles, Altdorfer was at once a highly original artist, prolifically inventive both in form and choice of subject, and thoroughly aware of the work of his German and Italian contemporaries.

Featuring more than 200 pieces—paintings, drawings, prints, sculptures and objets d'art—the exhibition is arranged chronologically and by theme, with sections devoted to major works commissioned by Emperor Maximilian, as well as to gold and silver smithery, and the two genres pioneered by the artist—landscape and architecture.

The first section will reveal the characteristics of Altdorfer's early work (around 1506–1512). While nothing is known about his training, we are aware of the important part played by the prints that acquainted Altdorfer with the work of his German contemporaries Dürer and Cranach, whom he wanted to rival, and of the Italian Quattrocento artists who served as his inspiration—Andrea Mantegna in particular. The artist's true specialty, chiaroscuro drawings—such as the *Departure for the Sabbath*—demonstrate his great expressivity.

Altdorfer produced his mature work between the years 1512 and 1520. The artist's reputation was firmly established in 1512 with the imaginative series of forty small 7x5 cm woodcuts entitled the *Fall and Redemption of Man*, which quickly earned him considerable recognition. For Altdorfer, this print series was a sort of experiment that would lead to a change in style: landscapes from this period and the use of perspective show his art gaining in vibrancy. Around this time, the artist also joined the ranks of the great official artists of Emperor Maximilian I, producing work for imperial commissions: he participated in Emperor Maximilian's *Prayer Book*, made woodcuts for the *Triumphal Arch*, and executed miniatures and engravings for the *Triumphal Procession*. These works are grouped together in a dedicated section.

While completing these prestigious commissions, Altdorfer also worked on major narrative cycles depicting the Life and Passion of Christ and the legend of Saint Florian, which would mark the first apogee of his career as a painter. These works are imbued with a new dramatic power that can also be seen in Altdorfer's drawings and prints from this period.



Albrecht Altdorfer, *Adoration of the Magi*, about 1530–1535, oil on panel, 108.9 x 77.2 cm, Frankfurt, Städel Museum © Städel Museum - U. Edelmann - ARTOTHEK

#### Exhibition curators:

Hélène Grollemund, Collection Manager at the Department of Prints and Drawings, Musée du Louvre; Séverine Lepape, Director of the Musée de Cluny-Musée National du Moyen Âge; Olivia Savatier Sjöholm, Curator at the Department of Prints and Drawings, Musée du Louvre.

**EXHIBITION CATALOGUE:** Copublished by Musée du Louvre Éditions and Liénart Éditions. 384 pages, 275 illustrations, €39.

#### VISITOR INFORMATION

**Opening hours:** Every day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., except Tuesday.

**Admission is free for all EU citizens under the age of 26.**

**Tickets on [ticketlouvre.fr](https://ticketlouvre.fr) – Become a Friend of the Louvre:** [www.amisdulouvre.fr](https://www.amisdulouvre.fr)

**Further information:** [www.louvre.fr/en](https://www.louvre.fr/en)

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