

MORE THAN SEVENTY MASTERPIECES FROM SWEDEN'S NATIONALMUSEUM IN STOCKHOLM TO BE EXHIBITED AT THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM

Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin
February 3 through May 14, 2017

New York, NY, December 16, 2016 — The Nationalmuseum, Sweden's largest and most distinguished art institution, is collaborating with the Morgan Library & Museum to bring more than seventy-five masterpieces from its renowned collections to New York in an extraordinary new exhibition opening February 3. The show features work by artists such as Albrecht Dürer, Raphael, Peter Paul Rubens, Rembrandt van Rijn, Antoine Watteau, and François Boucher, and is the first collaboration between the two institutions in almost fifty years. *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin* runs through May 14.

The Nationalmuseum's core holdings were assembled by Count Carl Gustaf Tessin (1696–1770), a diplomat and one of the great art collectors of his day. The son and grandson of architects,



François Boucher (French, 1703–1770), *The Triumph of Venus*, 1740, Oil on canvas; Signed and dated on a rock at lower left, f. Boucher / 1740. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Photo: Cecilia Heisser/Nationalmuseum.



Top: Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755), *The Dachshund Pehr with Dead Game and Rifle*, 1740, Oil on canvas; Signed and dated at lower left, *J.B. Oudry / 1740*. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Photo: Cecilia Heisser / Nationalmuseum. Bottom: Domenico Ghirlandaio (Italian, 1488/89–1494), *Head of an Old Man*, ca. 1490, Silverpoint heightened with white on pink prepared paper. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Photo: Cecilia Heisser / Nationalmuseum.

Tessin held posts in Vienna, Berlin, and Paris, where he came into contact with the leading Parisian artists of the time and commissioned many works from them. By the time he left the city in 1742, he amassed an impressive collection of paintings and drawings.

Among the fourteen paintings in the exhibition are three commissioned by Count Tessin and exhibited at the 1740 Parisian Salon. Chief among these is Boucher's *Triumph of Venus*, which is making its first journey to North America. Other paintings include Jean-Baptiste Oudry's *Dachshund Pehr with Dead Game and Rifle*, and a *Portrait of Count Tessin* by Jacques-André-Joseph Aved, in which the collector is shown among his art, books, and medals. Six works by Jean-Siméon Chardin, notably the *Morning Toilette*, complete the group.

The drawings in the exhibition include works by Italian masters such as Domenico Ghirlandaio, Raphael, Giulio Romano, and Annibale Carracci. Northern European artists are represented by Dürer, Hendrick Goltzius, Peter Paul Rubens, Rembrandt, and Anthony van Dyck, among others. The French drawings begin with Primaticcio and practitioners of the Fontainebleau school and include works by Jacques Callot and Nicholas Poussin, as well as Count Tessin's French contemporaries, Watteau, Boucher, and Chardin.

"We are delighted to host this exhibition of masterworks from the Nationalmuseum," said Colin B. Bailey, director of the Morgan Library & Museum. "The selection of

paintings and drawings is of the highest quality. Fine examples of work from the Italian, French, and Northern European schools are represented, with a group of sixty master drawings forming the heart of the show. We are deeply grateful to the museum's director general Berndt Arell and his curatorial staff for making this collaboration possible.

"The exhibition continues a tradition at the Morgan of partnering with Europe's leading cultural institutions. Over the last several years, the museum has mounted critically acclaimed shows



Left : Jacques-André-Joseph Aved (French, 1702–1766), *Portrait of Count Carl Gustaf Tessin*, 1740, Oil on canvas. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Photo: Cecilia Heisser/Nationalmuseum. Right: François Boucher (French, 1703–1770), *The Milliner*, 1746, Oil on canvas. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Photo: Cecilia Heisser/Nationalmuseum

from the Uffizi in Florence, the Louvre, the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung in Munich, and the Biblioteca Reale in Turin.”

Tessin Collects

Carl Gustaf Tessin is distinguished among his Swedish contemporaries by his extraordinary versatility: he was a politician, courtier, diplomat, public official, artist, writer, historian, collector, and philosopher. Son of the architect Nicodemus Tessin the Younger, Carl Gustaf was an *amateur* of the arts from a young age, an enthusiasm fostered by his early travels through Europe, including a first visit to Paris in 1715–16, a brief return in 1718–19, and another trip with his new wife Ulla in 1728–29. Following his father’s death in 1728, Carl Gustaf inherited a substantial collection of paintings, drawings, and prints and the position of *surintendant* (surveyor) at the royal palace.

Tessin’s longest stay in Paris was from 1739 until 1742, when he served as Sweden’s unofficial ambassador to the French court. Driven by a passion for art and elegant living, he commissioned and purchased paintings and drawings, assembling a notable collection. The costs of maintaining his lifestyle in Paris would, however, leave him with lasting financial difficulty after his return to Stockholm.

Tessin Sells His Collections to the Royal Family

Tessin was forced in 1749 to sell part of his collection of paintings to the royal family of Sweden as his financial situation deteriorated. He sold 243 paintings to King Frederick I, who then presented them to his daughter-in-law, Crown Princess Louisa Ulrika, who considered Tessin a confidant. The following year, in 1750, Tessin was compelled to sell the majority of his drawings to Louisa Ulrika's husband, who had succeeded his father as King Adolf Frederick. This series of sales to the royal family helped form the core of the royal collection of old master drawings and paintings. Most of the collection was kept in the Royal Palace, Stockholm, which Tessin's father designed. Some paintings were kept at nearby Drottningholm Palace, Louisa Ulrika's favored retreat, also designed by Tessin's father.

Gustav III and the Founding of the Nationalmuseum

Adolf Frederick died in 1771 and was succeeded by his son, King Gustav III, who had been tutored by Tessin, and who was an acclaimed patron of the arts. Gustav's ambition was to establish a royal collection open to the public. In 1775, he created the Royal Library, which served as a repository for the king's collection of drawings. After Gustav's assassination in 1792, a Royal Museum—primarily a collection of paintings and sculpture—was founded in his memory. These two collections would eventually form the core of the Nationalmuseum's holdings. In the 1860s, works were inventoried and transferred to the museum: the drawings in 1863, followed by the paintings in 1865. The Nationalmuseum opened its doors in 1866.



Left: Annibale Carracci (Italian, 1560–1609), *Nude Study of a Young Man Lying on his Back*, ca. 1583-85, Red chalk. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Photo: Cecilia Heisser/Nationalmuseum. Right: Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471–1528), *Portrait of a Young Woman with Braided Hair*, 1515, Black chalk and charcoal. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Photo: Cecilia Heisser/Nationalmuseum

The Nationalmuseum Today

Today, the Nationalmuseum houses a wide-ranging collection of paintings, drawings, sculpture, decorative arts, and design, but is renowned for its strength in old master paintings and drawings, especially those of the eighteenth century, largely thanks to Count Tessin. Closed for renovation since 2013, the museum will reopen in 2018 with state-of-the-art climate control throughout its historic 1866 building and expanded space to display more of its collection, offering museumgoers a broader and richer experience.

Additional Information on Artworks Featured in Press Release



Jacques-André-Joseph Aved
French, 1702–1766
Portrait of Count Carl Gustaf Tessin, 1740
Oil on canvas

Tessin commissioned this portrait of himself—seated in his library, surrounded by his collections, in elegant *déshabillé*—to give to his loyal friend Carl Hårleman. Tessin initially considered commissioning the portrait from the more celebrated Nicolas de Largilliere or Hyacinthe Rigaud but chose Aved thinking the cost would be lower. In the end, after long sittings, he lamented to Hårleman that the invoice showed him his mistake. He was frustrated to find that Aved worked slowly, although the artist may have slowed his pace in order to have the painting in Paris to show at the annual Salon exhibition of 1740. The portrait was a noted success and served as a public announcement of Tessin's love of the arts and his role as a major patron and collector.



François Boucher
French, 1703–1770
The Triumph of Venus, 1740
Oil on canvas

Boucher's most beautiful mythological painting, still in its original frame, was made for Tessin and exhibited at the Salon of 1740. The ambitious composition comprises complex interlocking figural groups modeled with supreme assurance. Venus emerges from the waves, accompanied by languorous nereids and robust tritons; the nereid at left resting with her eyes closed and stroking the neck of a dove is one of the most carnal figures in Boucher's repertory. *The Triumph of Venus* was the most expensive painting Tessin acquired during his Paris sojourn and one of his most prized acquisitions, but it was among the works he was driven to sell to King Frederick I in 1749.



François Boucher
French, 1703–1770
The Milliner, 1746
Oil on canvas

In this celebration of feminine luxury, adornment, and conspicuous consumption, a fashionably dressed milliner is paying a morning call on her well-to-do client, who is seated in her bedroom having just completed her morning toilette. Tessin commissioned the painting in 1745 on behalf of the twenty-five-year-old crown princess Louisa Ulrika. The picture was to be one of four canvases devoted to the times of day, although the present painting (Morning) was the only one Boucher completed, to Tessin's—and the Princess's—great frustration.



Annibale Carracci
Italian, 1560–1609
Nude Study of a Young Man Lying on his Back, ca. 1583–85
Red chalk

Drawn from a posed model, this impressive study is a record of the life-drawing sessions that were one of the central activities of the academy founded in 1583 by Annibale Carracci, his brother Agostino, and his cousin Ludovico. These resulting studies were made as drawing exercises rather than as preparation for specific paintings, and there are similar studies of the same model by other members of the workshop, presumably made at the same time. Annibale's primary concern in this drawing appears to have been the exploration of light and shadow on the model's body, which he rendered with techniques ranging from a soft chiaroscuro to dense parallel hatchings.



Albrecht Dürer
German, 1471–1528
Portrait of a Young Woman with Braided Hair, 1515
Black chalk and charcoal

One of the most arresting of Dürer's independent portrait drawings, this work demonstrates his painterly use of chalk and charcoal and reveals his remarkable skill at capturing both the physiognomy and the rich inner lives of his sitters. Though the sitter's identity is unknown, the drawing's intimate appearance has led scholars to suggest that she was a member of Dürer's family or social circle. In his catalogue of the Crozat sale, Mariette wrote admiringly of the artist: "There was perhaps never a more universal genius than Albrecht Dürer."



Domenico Ghirlandaio
Italian, 1488/89–1494
Head of an Old Man, ca. 1490
Silverpoint heightened with white on pink prepared paper

This portrait, one of the finest examples of Ghirlandaio's draftsmanship, is a highlight of the Nationalmuseum's graphic collection. With an incredibly modern, naturalistic verve, Ghirlandaio describes the face of an elderly man affected by rhinophyma, a skin disorder that accounts for his bulbous nose. The man's closed eyes suggest that the sitter is deceased, and that the portrait was consequently drawn as a memorial image. Both the calligraphic description of the sitter's face and the three-quarter format of the image suggest the influence of Netherlandish portraiture on Ghirlandaio's art. The elegant drawn frame for the portrait was made when the sheet was mounted in Giorgio Vasari's famous collection of drawings, the *Libro de' Disegni*.



Jean-Baptiste Oudry
French, 1686–1755
The Dachshund Pehr with Dead Game and Rifle, 1740
Oil on canvas

Tessin and his wife had numerous pets, though the count's favorite among his hunting dogs was Pehr, a dachshund given to him by the Swedish king. The dog often accompanied the couple on their travels, including their sojourn in Paris in 1739. The following year, Oudry painted Pehr along with Tessin's preferred hunting rifle. The painting, intended by the artist as a gift but for which Tessin diplomatically gave Oudry a gold box in return, was a success at the Salon of 1740. Tessin was so proud of the painting he commissioned a reproductive print noting that the original was in the *Cabinet de M. le Comte de Tessin*.

Exhibition Catalogue

In conjunction with this exhibition, the Morgan Library & Museum has published a fully illustrated, 268-page hardcover catalogue, authored by Colin B. Bailey, Carina Fryklund, John Marciari, Magnus Olausson, and Jennifer Tonkovich, with the assistance of Giada Damen and Ilona van Tuinen. *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin* is a richly-illustrated volume, featuring 203 images and in-depth exploration of the collections amassed by Count Carl Gustaf Tessin, which today form the core holdings of European art at the Nationalmuseum of Sweden. During several extended stays in Paris, Tessin acquired paintings and drawings by contemporary masters such as Boucher and Chardin, as well as a rich and extensive group of old master drawings, with works by artists such as Raphael, Dürer, Rubens, and Rembrandt. This catalogue studies both the works themselves and Tessin's relationships with contemporary collectors and artists, offering a vivid picture of how he formed his celebrated collection.

Public Programs

LECTURE **A Connoisseur's Eye: Carl Gustaf Tessin and Transformations In Taste and Collecting in 1740's Paris**

Magnus Olausson

The art collection of Count Carl Gustaf Tessin in the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, is a unique example of the prevalent taste during the rococo period in Paris. Magnus Olausson, Director of Collections and Research at the Nationalmuseum, explores the ideals that shaped Tessin's collecting.

Friday, February 3, 6:30 pm*

Tickets: \$15; free for members and students with valid ID. Tickets include free museum admission for the day of program.

*The exhibition *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin* will open at 5:30 pm for program attendees.

GALLERY **Count Tessin's Dutch and Flemish Drawings**

TALK Ilona van Tuinen, Annette and Oscar de la Renta Assistant Curator, Drawings and Prints

Friday, February 10, 1 pm

Tickets: Free with museum admission; no tickets or reservations necessary.

ADULT **Sketching in the Gallery**

WORKSHOP *Simon Levenson, Artist and National Arts Club instructor*

Spend two hours sketching, drawing inspiration from the masterpieces featured in *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin*. Professional artists and educators will be available to assist you. Open to artists of all levels.

Saturday, February 11, 11 am–1 pm

Tickets: Free with museum admission.

This program is limited to 12 people on a first come, first served basis. Stools, boards, a selection of pencils, and drawing paper will be provided. While personal sketchbooks are allowed, ink, paint, markers, charcoal, chalk, pastels, folding stools, and easels are not permitted in the galleries.

LECTURE **"Cospetto! Che bella cosa!" My what a beautiful thing: Boucher's *Triumph of Venus* in the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm**

Colin B. Bailey

It is generally acknowledged that Boucher's *Triumph of Venus*, painted in the summer of 1740 for Count Carl Gustaf Tessin, is the artist's greatest mythological painting. Brilliant and ambitious in conception and organization, its complex interlocking figures modeled with supreme assurance, this large-scale cabinet picture constitutes Boucher's signal achievement. Colin B. Bailey, Director of the Morgan Library & Museum, traces Boucher's process in the elaboration of his masterpiece, examines the tradition of marine mythologies from Raphael to Poussin and beyond, and considers some of the textual and pictorial sources which may have inspired the painter. He will also focus on

Boucher's relationship with his urbane patron Tessin, their shared interest in rococo ornament, and their passion for conchology—the collecting and display of shells.

Wednesday, March 1, 6:30 pm*

Tickets: \$15; \$10 for members; free for students with valid ID.

*The exhibition *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin* will open at 5:30 pm for program attendees.

CONCERT **Three Centuries of Swedish Music**

Per Tengstrand, piano

Pianist Per Tengstrand performs Swedish music from the eighteenth through the twenty-first centuries, intertwined with more known composers whose music inspired the Swedish works. This concert coincides with the exhibition *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin* and is co-presented with The American-Scandinavian Foundation/Scandinavia House.

Franz Berwald, Fantasy on two Swedish folk-melodies

Brahms, Three Intermezzi Op. 117

Wilhelm Stenhammar, Fantasy in B minor Op. 11

Albert Schnelzer, *Dance with the Devil*

Liszt, "Après une lecture du Dante – Fantasia Quasi Sonata"

Thursday, March 16, 7:30 pm*

Tickets: \$25/\$20 for Morgan and The American-Scandinavian Foundation members.

*The exhibition *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum, Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin* will open at 6:30 pm for concert attendees.

ADULT **Sketching in the Gallery**

WORKSHOP *Simon Levenson, Artist and National Arts Club instructor*

Spend two hours sketching, drawing inspiration from the masterpieces featured in *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin*. Professional artists and educators will be available to assist you. Open to artists of all levels.

Saturday, March 25, 11 am–1 pm

Tickets: Free with museum admission.

This program is limited to 12 people on a first come, first served basis. Stools, boards, a selection of pencils, and drawing paper will be provided. While personal sketchbooks are allowed, ink, paint, markers, charcoal, chalk, pastels, folding stools, and easels are not permitted in the galleries.

SPECIAL **Swedish Festival**

EVENING

Join us for an evening celebration! Flugelhorn player Oskar Stenmark will perform Swedish jazz and folk music with Billy Test on piano in Gilbert Court. Enjoy a prix-fixe Swedish tasting plate and old fashioned Glögg in the Morgan Café, and curatorial gallery talks at 6 pm and 7:15 pm on the exhibition *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden*.

Friday, March 31, 6:00–8:30 pm

Tickets: No Tickets or reservations required. Food and drink available for purchase. Free with Museum admission 6–7 pm and Free 7–8:30 pm.

**GALLERY
TALK**

Something Old and Something New: Count Tessin and His Collections

Jennifer Tonkovich, Eugene and Clare Thaw Curator, Drawings and Prints
John Marciari, Charles W. Engelhard Curator and Department Head, Drawings
and Prints

Friday, March 31, 6 pm & 7:15 pm*

**Tickets: Free with museum admission; no tickets or reservations
necessary.**

*Presented in conjunction with the Morgan's Swedish Festival.

**ADULT
WORKSHOP**

Sketching in the Gallery

Susan Stillman, Artist and Parsons The New School for Design faculty member

Spend two hours sketching, drawing inspiration from the masterpieces featured
in *Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count
Tessin*. Professional artists and educators will be available to assist you. Open to
artists of all levels.

Saturday, April 29, 11 am–1 pm

Tickets: Free with museum admission.

*This program is limited to 12 people on a first come, first served basis. Stools, boards, a selection of
pencils, and drawing paper will be provided. While personal sketchbooks are allowed, ink, paint,
markers, charcoal, chalk, pastels, folding stools, and easels are not permitted in the galleries.*

**FAMILY
PROGRAM**

Spring Family Fair

Celebrate art and literature at our annual Spring Family Fair! Inspire your family's
love of books with a visit to Mr. Morgan's historic library, dress-up for a 19th
century photo-shoot, write your own poetry on our family poetry wall, create
crafts inspired by hand-cut silhouettes, and explore our spring exhibitions *I'm
Nobody! Who are you? The Life and Poetry of Emily Dickinson* and *Treasures
from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin*.

Sunday, April 30, 2–4:30 pm

Tickets: Free with museum admission. Appropriate for ages 3–14.

Organization and Sponsorship

Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin is organized
by Colin B. Bailey, Director of the Morgan Library & Museum, John Marciari, Charles W.
Engelhard Curator of Drawings and Prints, and Jennifer Tonkovich, Eugene and Clare Thaw
Curator of Drawings and Prints.

Treasures from the Nationalmuseum of Sweden: The Collections of Count Tessin is made
possible by a lead gift from the Michel David-Weill Foundation, major funding from The Gilbert
and Ildiko Butler Family Foundation and the Jerome L. Greene Foundation, and generous support
from the Johansson Family Foundation, Katharine J. Rayner, the Christian Humann Foundation,
the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, and The American-Scandinavian Foundation.





The programs of the Morgan Library & Museum are made possible with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

The Morgan Library & Museum

A complex of buildings in the heart of New York City, the Morgan Library & Museum began as the private library of financier Pierpont Morgan, one of the preeminent collectors and cultural benefactors in the United States. Today it is a museum, independent research library, music venue, architectural landmark, and historic site. A century after its founding, the Morgan maintains a unique position in the cultural life of New York City and is considered one of its greatest treasures. With the 2006 reopening of its newly renovated campus, designed by renowned architect Renzo Piano, and the 2010 refurbishment of the original library, the Morgan reaffirmed its role as an important repository for the history, art, and literature of Western civilization from 4000 B.C. to the twenty-first century.

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