

ART

APPRECIATING A DUTCH MASTER

Bruce Museum welcomes work of Jan van der Heyden



"Oude Delft Canal."



"City Square."

By Abby Luby

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

If the 17th-century master Dutch painter Jan van der Heyden lived today, he would be adept at the digital imaging program, Photoshop. Woven into his brilliantly painted cityscapes and landscapes of the Dutch Golden Age are buildings and structures never built at the depicted site. Today, van der Heyden would snap a digital photo, download, cut and paste

foreign buildings and random people on the screen at whim until the frame revealed a

perfect life.

Premiering van der Heyden's mastery in the United States is the current show at the Bruce Museum in Greenwich. This first-time, one-man show runs through Jan. 10 — just a four-month window to see the work in this country, after which the show heads for the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

That van der Heyden could visually implant an extra church spire here, an arched bridge there, delights art historians who brand the style fictitious and capricious and devote

volumes of historical analysis in glossy-paged catalogs. But for the 21st-century American viewer, somewhat clueless to what Amsterdam, Delft or Brussels really looked like 300 years ago, the work alternatively offers an intriguing, visceral quality.

Richly gilded, framed canvases of bucolic courtyards and marketplaces lock us into contemplative historical moments. Architectural structures dominate the paintings, showing exquisite detail that noses us closer to detect tiny lines of mortar between bricks, the craggy bark of trees, delicately painted lobed leaves. What may lack in historical accuracy is made up for in meticulous detail.

"Architectural Fantasy," known as one of van der Heyden's most improvised fantasies, Gothic and Classic architecture, oddly coupled, are the backdrop in a sun-blached scene. Stone walls are less functional and more exacting geometric shapes, horizontal lines of steps contrast parallel piles of lumber. In the foreground is a branchless hulk of a dying tree, leafless limbs reaching to billowy clouds. Dotting the scene is a capped man dressed in red walking away in the foreground, a beggar approaching a well-to-do couple, who seem out of place in this sparse, arid place, except for the nearby mansion crowned with

REVIEW



"Architectural Fantasy."



"Dam Square."

Contributed photos



"Firefighting"

a surprise rosette relief. With sandstone walls, parched walkways and buildings angled just so, the eye is drawn to a massive arch, the tallest structure of the piece.

Van der Heyden's familiar cast of characters in most of his work are men in wide-brimmed hats, women in long skirts, children, dogs, beggars, monks; all tiny and faceless, all added as finishing touches by the delicate hand of his artist-partner Adrian van der Velde.

Undeniably, van der Heyden understood the significance of architecture in daily life. As today, a building's shape, size and proximity to natural or created landscapes is integral to how we relate to the outer world. In these paintings, massive churches and solid town buildings are not only spatially placed for balanced, linear perspective and geometric logic, their very architectural stability plays to inhabitants as a fundamentally compatible environment. When viewing "Dam Square" of the Dam Square in Amsterdam, folks are setting about their day in early morning sunlight. The expanse of space allows for a young boy and his dog to run with a rolling hoop to the left side of the canvas while a horse drawing a cart of barrels is headed off to the right, the divergent directions pull our view right up the middle to the church and town hall.

The majority of the work in this show includes canals of Amsterdam and the brick

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te & Greenwich Time, Sunday, September 24, 2006 •

e clock

Any inaccuracies in these listings may be the result of last-minute changes by the movie theaters.
SUNDAY, SEPT. 24

N.Y.
Bayhouse, Route
6:45
4:15, 7

Greenwood Ave.,
2:20, 7, 9:40

1, 9:30
5, 4:55, 7:15, 9:35
2:20, 4:35, 6:50,

DRT
36 Canfield Ave.,
arty Animals: 12:20,
5:20, 7:35, 9:45
12:25, 7:50, 10:15
2:15, 4:25, 6:45,

55, 7:30, 10:05
3:05, 4:10, 6:30,
12:40, 2:50, 5:10
30, 1, 2:45, 3:15, 5,
20
12:25, 3:30, 6:35,

Blod of Ricky Bobby:
25
EN
077 Post Road,
7:30

ELD
1:04 Post Road

255-6255
Accepted: 1:30, 4:30, 7:15
The Ant Bully: 1:30, 4
World Trade Center: 7

Fairfield Cinemas, 41 Black Rock Turnpike, 339-7151
All the King's Men: 1:35, 4:25, 7:20, 10:05
The Black Dahlia: 12:30, 1:25, 3:30, 4:15, 6:40, 7:30, 9:30, 10:10
Flyboys: 12:40, 3:50, 7:55
Hollywoodland: 1:15, 4:10, 7:10, 10

The Illusionist: 1:45, 4:40, 7:40, 10:20
Invincible: 1:10, 3:40, 6:30, 9:10
Last Kiss: 1, 4, 6:50, 9:20
Little Miss Sunshine: 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:50, 10:15

GREENWICH
Clearview's Greenwich Twin, 356 Greenwich Ave., 869-6030
The Black Dahlia: 1, 4, 7
The Covenant: 1:30, 4:30, 7:30
Crown Plaza 3, 2 Railroad Ave., 869-4030
Hollywoodland: 1, 4, 7, 10
The Illusionist: 1:15, 4:15, 7:45, 10:15
Little Miss Sunshine: 1:30, 4:30, 7:15, 9:45

NEW CANAAN
Crown New Canaan Playhouse, 89 Elm St., 966-0600
The Black Dahlia: 2:15, 5:15, 8
Little Miss Sunshine: 2:30, 5, 7:45

NORWALK
Crown Royale 6, 542 Westport Ave., 846-8797
Accepted: 7:45, 9:50
All the King's Men: 1, 4, 7, 10
The Black Dahlia: 1:45, 4:30, 7:20, 9:45
Everyone's Hero: 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:15
Hollywoodland: 1, 3:45, 6:45, 9:30
How to Eat Fried Worms: 1:20, 3:15, 5:15
The Last Kiss: 1:30, 4:15, 7:30, 9:55
Crown SoNo Regent, 64 N. Main St., 899-7979
The Covenant: 1:50, 4:20, 6:50, 9:20

Crank: 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10
Flyboys: 1, 4, 7, 10
Gridiron Gang: 1, 1:40, 3:50, 4:40, 6:40, 7:20, 9:30, 10:10
Invincible: 1:20, 4:10, 6:30, 9:10
Jackass: Number Two: 1:10, 3:20, 5:20, 7:40, 10:20
Jet Li's Fearless: 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:50
The Protector: 9:40

Garden Cinemas, 26 Isaac St., 838-4504
The Boynton Beach Bereavement Club: 2, 4:15, 6:30, 8:40
Half Nelson: 2:30, 4:45, 7, 9:10
The Illusionist: 2, 4:20, 6:40, 9
Little Miss Sunshine: 2:15, 4:30, 6:50, 9
IMAX Theater at Maritime Aquarium, 10 N. Water St., 852-0700
Double Feature: Ocean Wonderland and Ride Around the World: 7
Ocean Wonderland: Noon, 2
Ride Around the World: 11, 1, 3

PORT CHESTER, N.Y.
Loews The Waterfront at Port Chester, 40 Westchester Ave., 914-510-1000
The Black Dahlia: 10:45, 1:30, 4:25, 7:25, 10:25
The Covenant: 11:55, 2:35, 5, 7:30, 10:05
Everyone's Hero: 11:50, 2:15, 4:45, 7:10, 9:40
Gridiron Gang: 11, 1:55, 4:50, 7:50, 10:50
Hollywoodland: 10:50, 1:45, 4:40, 7:40, 10:45
Invincible: 1:05, 5:50, 8:25
Jackass: Number Two: 10:40, 1, 3:20, 5:40, 8:05, 10:40
The Protector: 10:55, 3:40, 11

RIDGEFIELD
The Ridgefield Playhouse, 80 E. River Ave., 438-5795
Little Miss Sunshine: 3, 5:30, 8

RYE BROOK, N.Y.
Clearview's Rye Ridge Cinemas, Rye

Ridge Shopping Center, 914-939-8177
All the King's Men: 1:15, 4, 7
The Illusionist: 1, 3:45, 7:15

STAMFORD
Avon Theatre, 272 Bedford St., 967-3660
Confetti: 3:30, 7:30
Little Miss Sunshine: 12:55, 3:10, 5:25, 7:40
Quinceanera: 1:30, 5:30
Crown Landmark 9, 5 Landmark Square, 324-3100
The Covenant: 2:20, 4:40, 7:15, 9:30
Crank: 2:35, 7:25
Everyone's Hero: 1, 3:05, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25
Flyboys: 1, 3:50, 6:45, 9:45
Gridiron Gang: 1, 1:30, 3:40, 4:10, 6:30, 7:10, 9:10, 9:50
Jackass: Number Two: 1, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10
Jet Li's Fearless: 1:50, 4:25, 7:15, 9:35
The Last Kiss: 2, 4:30, 7, 9:30
Crown Majestic, 118 Summer St., 323-1690
All the King's Men: 1:10, 1:40, 4, 4:30, 6:50, 7:30, 9:50, 10:20
The Black Dahlia: 1:50, 2:20, 4:20, 5, 7:10, 7:40, 9:40, 10:10
Hollywoodland: 1:30, 4:10, 7, 10
The Illusionist: 2:10, 4:40, 7:20, 9:45
State Cinema, 990 Hope St., 325-0250
The Ant Bully: 3:10
Barnyard: The Original Party Animals: 1:20, 5
The Devil Wears Prada: 6:40
Invincible: 1:30, 6:40
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest: 3:50, 6:40
Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby: 8:50

TRUMBULL

Openings

Dutch

Continued from Page D3

houses, churches, streets and squares not only of van der Heyden's native Holland but those in Germany and the Spanish Netherlands. Hardly the starving artist, van der Heyden, who lived from 1637 to 1712, was also a famed inventor, engineer and public administrator. Adept at mechanics, van der Heyden invented a fire pump and hose that became the standard in Europe for nearly two centuries. He also became the director of the firemen's company at Amsterdam. Spicing up the exhibition is one of van der Heyden's small, compact hose fire engines that used leather fire hose to effectively jet stream the water. Nearby is a drawing called "Firefighting," subtitled, "A Comparison of Old and New Firefighting Methods." It shows the old methods of fire fighting using leather buckets, large heavy tubs with pumps, ladders, protective clothes and long hooks. An inset conversely shows the new and improved equipment invented by van der Heyden. Among the painter's other noteworthy inventions was perfecting Amsterdam's street lamp system, enabling the city to set up a sprawling municipal lighting system run on gas.

Toward the end of his life, van der Heyden painted just a few still-life paintings. "Still Life in a Study" is an exquisite work exemplary of "vanitas painting," a genre

that splays out cherished objects of one's life that, in death, are left behind. This work is perhaps van der Heyden's solemn but triumphant farewell. Painted two years before his death in 1711, when van der Heyden was 74, an elaborately stitched, red-flowered Oriental tablecloth is the resting place for a large open atlas and three globes. A thick, red curtain is partially drawn, revealing a well-stocked bookshelf; large, rolled-up maps lean against the wall. A walking stick with an ivory knob is eerily left leaning against a chair, its owner has either left the room, his possessions, the painting, or the Earth.

The real triumph of this show is that 37 paintings, 16 drawings and inventions have come together under one roof. Borrowing a masters' work from such prominent halls as the Rijksmuseum, the Louvre, the Hague, Uffizi Gallery, the National Gallery of Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Detroit Institute of Arts, among others, is notable for curator and Bruce Museum Executive Director Peter Sutton. Sutton also authored the exhibition catalog — a mighty volume for those of us whose curiosity about this Dutch master painter has evolved into fascination.

"Jan van der Heyden" runs through Jan. 10 at the Bruce Museum. Admission is \$7, \$6 for seniors and children 5-12, free for children younger than 5. Hours are Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, 1-5 p.m. 1 Museum Drive, Greenwich. 869-0376 or www.brucemuseum.org.