

KUNST
HISTORISCHES
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MAY 7, 2013 TO
FEBRUARY 2, 2014

EMPEROR CHARLES V CAPTURES TUNIS
Documenting a Campaign

In June 1535, Emperor Charles V set sail from Sardinia at the head of a fleet comprising 400 ships and over 30.000 soldiers to reconquer the Kingdom of Tunis from the Ottomans. In order to document the campaign and his hoped-for victory he was accompanied not only by historians and poets but also by his court painter, Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen. In 1543, eleven years later, the Flemish artist was commissioned to paint the cartoons for a total of twelve monumental tapestries celebrating the campaign. His designs were informed by the countless drawings and sketches he had brought back from North Africa. Cartoons are identical in size to the tapestries woven after them; very few, however, have come down to us. The Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien holds ten of the originally twelve “Tunis Cartoons”. They have survived because they were appreciated as autonomous artworks, and were later even attributed to Titian. Executed in charcoal and watercolour or gouache, they are the work of Vermeyen and another Flemish artist, Pieter Coecke van Aelst. Their topographically exact rendering of the different locations and the detailed depictions bring the turbulent events to life. Each cartoon features one or more events of the campaign.

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The programme was probably devised by the Spanish historian and cosmographer, Alonso de Santa Cruz; although he did not travel to Tunis he wrote a highly-regarded history of the campaign based on eyewitness accounts.

These unique cartoons are the focus of this exhibition. In addition, it comprises a number of relevant artifacts from different collections of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien - among them the Library, the Picture Gallery, the Collection of Arms and Armour, the Kunstkammer Wien, the Coin Collection and Schloss Ambras Innsbruck – that highlight different aspects of the dramatic events of 1535.

Curated by Katja Schmitz-von Ledebur

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PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS



The Emperor Mustering his Troops at Barcelona

Detail

Jan Cornelisz. Vermeyen, 1546-50

(Tunis campaign, first cartoon)

© Kunsthistorisches Museum



First Skirmishes on the Cape of Carthage

Detail

Jan Cornelisz. Vermeyen, 1546-50

(Tunis campaign, third cartoon)

© Kunsthistorisches Museum



The Siege of the Fort La Goulette

Detail

Jan Cornelisz. Vermeyen, 1546-50

(Tunis campaign, fourth cartoon)

© Kunsthistorisches Museum



The Capture of La Goulette

Detail

Jan Cornelisz. Vermeyen, 1546-50

(Tunis campaign, sixth cartoon)

© Kunsthistorisches Museum



The Pitched Battle on the Road to Tunis

Detail

Jan Cornelisz. Vermeyen, 1546-50

(Tunis campaign, seventh cartoon)

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**The Capture and Pillage of Tunis
Detail**

Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen, 1546-50
(Tunis campaign, eighth cartoon)
© Kunsthistorisches Museum



Emperor Charles V (1500–1558)
after Tiziano Vecellio (1488–1576)
Venice, 16th century
© Kunsthistorisches Museum



Gloves of the „Tunis-Armour“ of Emperor Charles V (1500–1558)
Desiderius Helmschmid (1513–1579), armourer
Augsburg, before 1535
© Kunsthistorisches Museum



Armour of Gabriele Serbelloni (1509–1580)
Milan, c. 1570
© Kunsthistorisches Museum

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Turban

Ottoman Empire, 2nd half of the 16th century

© Kunsthistorisches Museum



Posthumous Portrait Medal commemorating Emperor Charles V and the Conquest of Tunis (designed after 1547/before 1620, cast in the 18th century)

Obverse by an anonymous artist, reverse after Giovanni Bernardi da Castel Bolognese

© Kunsthistorisches Museum



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KUNST HISTORISCHES MUSEUM WIEN

OPENING HOURS AND ENTRANCE FEES

Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien

Tuesdays - Sundays, 10 am – 6 pm

Thursdays, 10 am – 9 pm

June through August open every day!

Annual Ticket	€ 34
Adults	€ 14
Vienna Card	€ 13
Concessions	€ 11
Children under 19	free
Group ticket (p.p.)	€ 10
Audio Guide	€ 4

Mille Regretz

An audio tour of the Vermeyen Tapestry Cartoons by Benny Nemerofsky Ramsay

Created especially for the exhibition, *Mille Regretz* leads the visitor on a unique tour of the ten tapestry cartoons. Artist Benny Nemerofsky Ramsay shares historical details and personal impressions, artistic curiosities and musical impulses. By turns factual and poetic, *Mille Regretz* questions how we understand Vermeyen's images as modern-day spectators.

Mille Regretz can be experienced on the museum's audio guide.

PRESS CONTACT

Nina Auinger-Sutterlüty, MAS
Head of Communication & Public Relations
Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien
1010 Wien, Burgring 5

T +43 1 525 24 – 4021

F + 43 1 525 24 – 4098

info.pr@khm.at

www.khm.at