

Winter 2019

A French Affair: Drawings and Paintings from The Horvitz Collection Intro Panel

Fairfield University Art Museum

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A French Affair

Drawings and Paintings from The Horvitz Collection

The Horvitz Collection, one of the most distinguished private collections of French art in the world, comprises over two thousand drawings, paintings, and sculptures dating from the late fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries. *A French Affair* presents two complementary exhibitions drawn from its peerless holdings. The centerpiece is *Imaging Text: French Drawings for Book Illustration*, on view in the main gallery. Produced by a slate of gifted draftsmen that includes Charles Le Brun, court painter to King Louis XIV, and Jean-Honoré Fragonard, luminary of the French Rococo style, the seventy drawings featured here (some shown with the related prints) are all illustrations made to accompany written texts. In addition to the Bible, the subject matter includes poetry, drama, history, and mythology—high-minded, moralizing, or erudite content geared primarily to a cultivated audience—as well as the occasional comic interlude or frivolous snippet redolent of everyday life. Together, the drawings offer an enlightening survey of this specialized category of graphic production. They also testify to the rich and varied literary traditions of France, the vibrant book publishing industry they spawned, and the fruitful collaborations between artists and publishers that contributed to this extraordinary flourishing.

The presentation continues in the back gallery, where a selection of ten eighteenth-century paintings from the Horvitz Collection is on view. These depict some of the same subjects and genres treated in the drawings, and include portraits of both artists and authors.

Generous support for the exhibition is provided by the Robert and Mercedes Eichholz Foundation.

Town Vibe is the exclusive media sponsor of the 2018-19 season in the Bellarmine Hall Galleries.