

IN-SIGHT

JOHANN JAKOB HARTMANN

22 January to 29 August 2021

Upper Belvedere

Earth, fire, water, and air: Following the Belvedere's restoration project, after over a century it is now possible to again see all four elements by Bohemian painter Johann Jakob Hartmann. The Belvedere is devoting an exhibition to this artist in its IN-SIGHT series.

Johann Jakob Hartmann was probably born in around 1658 and he lived and worked in Bohemia until at least 1736. He was the first artist in the region to specialize in landscape painting and drew inspiration from Flemish masters, like Jan Brueghel the Elder and Gillis van Coninxloo, who had been active roughly a century before him. Hartmann's art is characterized by his meticulous forest landscapes, which he enriched with a varied staffage. In addition to his allegorical themes, there are also religious and secular subjects by this master.

The new exhibition at the Belvedere focuses on six of his works from the museum's collection, including his series depicting the elements of earth, fire, water, and air. Remarkable in many respects, it is a rare example of a complete ensemble that has survived to this day – during the course of history comparable series were often separated when they changed owners.

Hartmann's series entered the Belvedere's collection in the twentieth century; four of the six works were already exhibited in the late eighteenth century at the Imperial Gallery. Recent restoration by the Belvedere conservation workshop means that now all six can finally be seen together again and are to be presented at an IN-SIGHT show about the artist's life and work.

IN-SIGHT is a series of temporary exhibitions held three times a year at the Upper Belvedere to shine a spotlight on particular aspects of the museum's collection, analyzing artworks from new research perspectives and presenting these to the public.

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