

Basic Detail Report



The Rake's Progress 1

Date

1735

Primary Maker

William Hogarth

Medium

Etching and engraving

Description

Plate I. The Young Heir taking Possession 1735. Etching and Engraving. 36.2 x 41.0 cm State 2. Engraver: William Hogarth (1697-1764) Below plate: Invented, Painted, & Engrav'd by Wm. Hogarth, & Publish'd June ye 25, 1735. According to Act of Parliament Poulson 132 PT1102 In the first engraving, Tom Rakewell, the "Rake" of the story has come into a fortune on the death of his miserly farther. While a servant prepares a generous fire, something she could not do while Tom's father was alive. Tom who has returned from Oxford University is being measured for a new suit of clothes unaware that behind his back the family steward is stealing coins from an open bag of money. Tom is attempting to pay off his pregnant lover Sarah Young whom he had promised to marry before his inheritance with a handful of coins, a payment that Sarah and her distraught mother rejects. The scene is full of clues to the wealth of Tom father's and his hording of money. There is a strong box full of silver plate and property deeds and contracts are lying scattered on the floor. A portrait of Tom's late father can be seen above the fireplace in which he can be seen counting coins. A candle-saver is on the mantelpiece (a candle-saver collected the melted wax at the bottom of the candlestick so it could be reused to make new candles). In the cardboard there is a collection of old wigs and boots. We see another servant on a ladder hanging black mourning cloth uncovering a stash of hidden coins. In this engraving Hogarth is setting the scene for the inattentive and spendthrift Tom in his attempt to use his father's money to climb up the social ladder of 18th century England.

Dimensions

Object/Work: 362 x 410 mm