Basic Detail Report



The Rake's Progress 7

Date
1735

Primary Maker
William Hogarth

Medium
Etching and engraving

Description
A Rake's Progress Plate VII Prison Scene 1735. Etching and Engraving. 36.0 x 40.9 cm State 4. Engraver: William Hogarth (1697-1764) Below Plate: Invented, & Painted, by Wm. Hogarth & Published According to Act of Parliament June ye 25, 1735 Plate 7 Poulson 138 PT1105 Tom's life is now nearing collapsed and Hogarth shows Tom in the Fleet Prison for debtors. His once plump wife (the wealthy widow he married in plate 5) is now very thin showing how desperate they have now become. In an attempt to raise some money Tom has written a play that is rolled up on the table next to him. However the letter next to his script is from a theatre owner who has rejected the play, writing, "I have read your Play and find it will not do" This latest failure has made Tom's wife very angry and she clenches her fist in disgust and rage, as he looks into the distance. A boy holds out his hand for payment for the tankard of beer he is holding, and a jail warden standing behind Tom is pointing to his ledger demanding payment of the jail's rent. Tom's rejected lover Sarah Young has fainted, overcome by the sight of Tom in prison and his deteriorating mental state. The young girl next to her is their daughter. Sarah is assisted by a woman who is trying to revive her with smelling salts and another indebted prisoner whose copy of the "New Scheme for paying the debt of a Nation" has dropped onto the floor. Above the bed there are a pair of wings made by the figure at the back of the scene called the "alchemist", but they are also a reference by Hogarth to the fall of Icarus, who flew to close to the sun and Tom who tried too hard to live the life of an aristocrat. The "alchemist is now trying to turn lead into gold in the cell's furnace.

Dimensions
Object/Work: 360 x 409 mm