

	Object:	Mice
	Museum:	Kunsthalle Bremen Am Wall 207 28195 Bremen (04 21) 3 29 08-0 info@kunsthalle-bremen.de
	Collection:	Alte Meister, Gemälde und Skulpturen
	Inventory number:	177-1928/17

Description

Jacques de Gheyn II came from a Dutch family of artists, and was a student of Hendrik Goltzius. Today, he is known above all for his engravings and drawings. His work is closely connected with Leiden, the city he moved to in 1596, which had developed into the academic center of the Netherlands after the university had been founded in 1575. Here, de Gheyn was also in close contact with a professor of law, Hugo Grotius, as well as with the physician and botanist Carolus Clusius, who had established the famous Hortus Academicus at the University of Leiden. For the latter, de Gheyn also engraved scientific illustrations, rendering detailed depictions of plants and animals. A study in which de Gheyn drew a mouse from four different viewpoints has come down to us. Mice may strike us as being somewhat unusual as a motif for a panel painting. In its composition and its symbolism, however, the work is much more than a mere study. Both of the mice gnawing away at the breadcrumbs, the piece of bread, and the stump of the candle have been arranged in stringent symmetry. What is more, the rodents, as embodiments of the “ravages of time,” and the candle that has burned down, indicating a light that has gone out, are to be understood as symbols of transience (vanitas).

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Oil on oak
Measurements:	12.0 x 20.0 cm

Events

Painted	When	1600
	Who	Jacob de Gheyn II (1565-1629)
	Where	

## Keywords

- Painting