

	Object: Boy Sleeping
	Museum: Kunsthalle Bremen Am Wall 207 28195 Bremen (04 21) 3 29 08-0 info@kunsthalle-bremen.de
	Collection: Kupferstichkabinett
	Inventory number: 1937/596

Description

This drawing originally belonged to the Small Mannheim Sketchbook with an upright format, which Caspar David Friedrich used from September 7, 1800, until March 8, 1802. Here, Friedrich depicts an allegory of the growth and decay of man and nature. A bare branch, with a raven perched on it, arches over a boy sleeping on a tree stump. The raven symbolizes death and corresponds to the motif of sleep, the brother of death. The boy's body, tree trunk, and branch likewise describe the cycle of life and death, whereby the branch echoes the pose of the child. The unusual, angularly shaped ax, subsequently added, also conforms to this, fitting in with the broken nature of the theme. The drawing served as a model for a woodcut (Inv. No. 1933/19). It had been used for tracing, as the blackened back of the page, in addition to the outlines of the figure of the boy and the creases in the garments on the front of the page, reveal. The tracing was done with a hard, sharp pencil. In the woodcut, the boy sleeps leaning against a grave with a crucifix. Friedrich opted against the tree here and replaced the raven with a butterfly, which embodies the soul in Christian symbolism. Thus, the message of the Resurrection replaced the symbol of death.

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Pencil, brush in brown, pen in black and brown ink
Measurements:	181.0 x 116.0 mm

Events

Drawn	When	1802
	Who	Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840)
	Where	

Keywords

- Drawing