

Artist Resources – Lucas Cranach the Elder (German, 1472 – 1553)

[Cranach at the National Gallery of Art](#)

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Lucas Cranach the Younger
Lucas Cranach the Elder, portrait at age 77, c. 1550
 Oil on panel
 Uffizi Gallery, Florence

The Grunewald Hunting Lodge has a permanent display entitled [Cranach in Grunewald: Masterpieces by Lucas Cranach the Elder, The Younger, and Their Workshop](#), featuring nearly thirty masterpieces that document the Berlin royal court in the sixteenth century.

Read a [review](#) of the 2011 exhibition, *Cranach and His Time*, which was on display at the Musée du Luxembourg, Paris.

[The Cranach Family: between Renaissance and Mannerism](#) was on display at the Hermitage Museum in 2016, with more than 80 works by the artists' studios and those connected with their names.

[The National Museum of Art, Osaka](#) and the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna organized *Lucas Cranach the Elder: 500 Years of the Power of Temptation* in 2017, the artist's first exhibition in Japan. Read a review of the exhibition in the [Japan Times](#).

In 2022, the [Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien](#) and the [Oskar Reinhart Collection](#) installed *Cranach the Untamed: The Early Years in Vienna*, which explored the artist's early years producing artwork in Austria before becoming the court painter for the Elector of Saxony. Read a review in [The Art Newspaper](#).



Lucas Cranach the Elder
Portrait of Frederick III, Elector of Saxony, c. 1530-1535
 Oil on beech, with letterpress-printed paper labels
 Metropolitan Museum of Art



Lucas Cranach the Elder (German, 1472-1553)

Melancholia, ca. 1533

Oil on panel

Private Collection; L2023:103.4

Lucas Cranach the Elder was a German Renaissance painter and printmaker who served as a court artist for the Electors of Saxony during the Protestant Reformation. Though he was often commissioned to paint political and religious portraits, Cranach was also interested in mythology and religious allegory. **Melancholia** is an exploration of the Renaissance understanding of melancholy, personified as a gloomy winged woman who carves a wooden cane while watching over fifteen naked babies. She is surrounded by other references associated with melancholy from the time, including carpentry, witches in a black cloud, and an army of soldiers falling from their horses. Though the feminine personification of melancholy can be found in other works by Cranach and Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), the ideal of the “gloomy intellectual” became a fashionable masculine trait later in the 16th century.

On view January 31 – May 5, 2024