

COLNAGHI

PRESS RELEASE

FLEMISH GOVERNMENT ACQUIRES MAJOR JACOB JORDAENS DRAWING THROUGH COLNAGHI

The Triumph of Minerva to Enter the Collection of the Flemish Community and Go on Permanent Loan to the Plantin-Moretus Museum, Antwerp

Colnaghi is delighted to announce the **acquisition by the Flemish Government** of *The Triumph of Minerva*, an important large-scale drawing by **Jacob Jordaens** (1593–1678), one of the most significant Flemish artists of the seventeenth century. Following its acquisition, the work has entered the Flemish Community Collection and is now on permanent loan to the Plantin-Moretus Museum in Antwerp, where it is currently on view until 5 July 2026.

The drawing was a highlight of Colnaghi Brussels' inaugural exhibition and represents an exceptional example of Jordaens's mature graphic practice. Executed in red and black chalk with watercolour and opaque watercolour over charcoal, the monumental composition depicts Minerva, goddess of wisdom and protector of peace, triumphing over Mars, the god of war. Rich in allegorical symbolism, the work celebrates the prosperity and stability brought about by peace, themes of particular resonance in the decades following the Treaty of Münster in 1648.

Upon the death of Peter Paul Rubens in 1640, Jordaens emerged as the leading painter in Antwerp, producing an extraordinary body of work for civic, religious and private patrons. Dated stylistically to around 1655–1660, *The Triumph of Minerva* belongs to this mature period and is widely understood as a preparatory design for a larger decorative project, now lost. The scale and ambition of the composition suggest a commission of considerable importance, possibly connected to one of the major public decorative schemes undertaken by the artist in Antwerp during the final decades of his career.

The drawing possesses an exceptional provenance. It bears the collector's mark of Sir Joshua Reynolds, the celebrated eighteenth-century painter and first President of the Royal Academy, and later formed part of the collection of Professor Roger-Adolf d'Hulst, whose pioneering scholarship remains foundational to the study of Jordaens today. The work has also been exhibited in a number of landmark exhibitions dedicated to the artist, including major presentations at the Museum Plantin-Moretus and the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp.

Its acquisition represents an important addition to Belgium's public collections and reunites the drawing with Antwerp, the city in which Jordaens lived and worked throughout his career. The Plantin-Moretus Museum already holds one of the most important collections of Jordaens drawings in the world, making it a particularly fitting home for this rediscovered masterpiece.

Colnaghi is proud to have facilitated the return of this significant work to public ownership and warmly welcomes the decision of the Flemish Government and the Topstukken Committee to secure its future accessibility for both Belgian and international audiences.



Jacob Jordaens (1593–1678), *The Triumph of Minerva*, c. 1655–1660, red and black chalks, watercolour and bodycolour over charcoal on a sheet composed of three subsidiary sheets on laid paper, 38 × 60 cm (15 × 23 5/8 in.), with the collection mark of Sir Joshua Reynolds lower right.