

The New Criterion

Art

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Exhibition notice

by [Mario Naves](#)

On “The Thaw Collection of Master Drawings: Acquisitions Since 2002” at the Morgan Library, New York, January 23, 2009–May 3, 2009.

Whatever else you can say about it, “The Thaw Collection of Master Drawings: Acquisitions Since 2002” offers instructive examples of how artists have dealt with the challenge of drawing foliage. Do they depict it en masse or one leaf at a time? As impressionistic mélange or botanical artifacts? The forest or the trees? The nineteenth-century German engraver Heinrich Reinhold bridged the gap by honing in on the specificities of this leaf or that vine within a broader orchestration of tangled branches. Adrian Zingg, Reinhold’s Swiss contemporary, codified nature by transforming it into jagged shards of patterning. In a spare and scratchy ink drawing circa 1790, Jakob Philipp Hackert rendered foliage as an electrical current. One hundred years later ...

Mario Naves is an artist and critic who live and works in New York City.

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