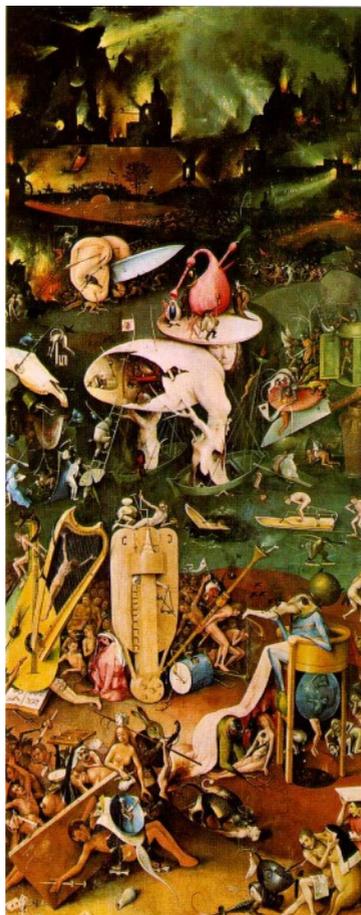


# Jheronimus Bosch

## Background Notes

*Toos de Peyer - 26 Feb 2014*



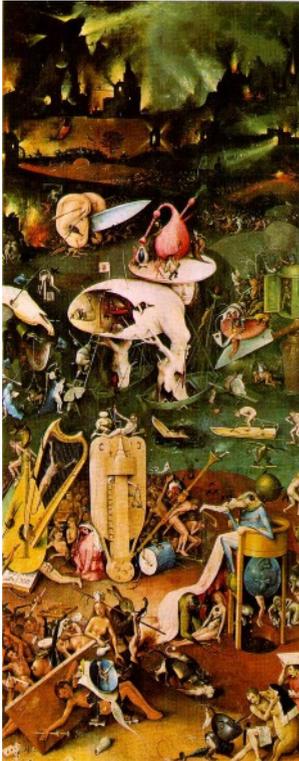
***Hell*** by Jheronimus Bosch



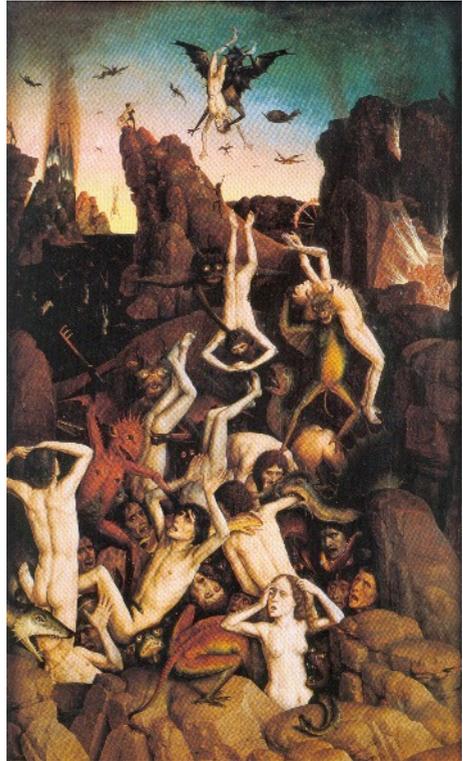
**WAHG**

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JHERONIMUS BOSCH  
 HELL  
 Left panel of the so called  
 Garden of Earthly Delights  
 PRADO, Madrid c.1500



DIRK BOUTS  
 HELL  
 Musée des Beaux Arts, Lille 1468-70  
 (Originally left wing of an altarpiece for  
 the town hall of Louvain)

1. Identify the differences between these two paintings; both in terms of the pictorial language used (i.e, their style), and the way the subject is represented
2. Would Bosch's Hell have been suitable for a church? If not, why?
3. What could have been the reasons that Bosch created this new type of devil and the unusual species they inhabit in his depictions of hell and devilish temptation?
4. Bouts was a so-called 'Flemish Primitive'. Who were the most important artists one can group under this label and what are the main characteristics of their pictorial style and technique?



Jheronimus Bosch **The Pedlar**,  
Boymans van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam

The originality of Bosch's painting is astonishing. His source and inspiration is the medieval margins. But he does not just find fantastic monstrous creatures there, which inspired the devils in his depictions of hell and hellish temptations, so very popular in the decades after his death.

More influential in the long term is the fact that for the first time in history 'low' subject matter, such as beggars, gypsies, quacks and pedlars, enter the central space of a painting. Thus far such subject matter had been only represented in the medieval margins, (i.e. in the margins of manuscripts, on misericords, etc.).

## INTRODUCTORY BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Reindert Falkenburg - The Land of Unlikeness, Waanders Zwolle 2011  
This text focuses on Bosch's most important painting, the so-called 'Garden of Earthly Delights' and explores its meaning with reference to texts, images and ideas at the time.
- Walter Gibson - Hieronymus Bosch, Thames and Hudson, London (1973) 2005  
This is still one of the most perceptive introductory texts.
- Jos Koldeweij, Paul Vandebroek and Bernard Vermet - Hieronymus Bosch, 2 volumes, Ludion, Ghent/ Amsterdam, 2001  
This is the exhibition catalogue of the latest exhibition of Bosch's work to date.
- Larry Silver - Hieronymus Bosch, Abbeville Press, New York/London 2006  
Lavishly illustrated introductory, yet scholarly text. Explores Bosch's paintings with reference to his predecessors in the Northern and Southern Netherlands and also briefly discusses his influence.

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- A useful resource is also the website of the Jheronimus Bosch Art Center: [www.jheronimusbosch-artcenter.nl](http://www.jheronimusbosch-artcenter.nl)
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### **Beware!**

Bosch's work is so strange that it is very attractive to crackpots and their weird theories. He was most definitely not mad or a Cathar or an alchemist (This is the reason why I am not recommending Laurinda Dixon's text published by Phaidon)

<p>THOUGHT PROVOKING FACT: <b>LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519)</b> <b>JHERONIMUS BOSCH (c. 1450-1516)</b> were almost exact contemporaries</p>
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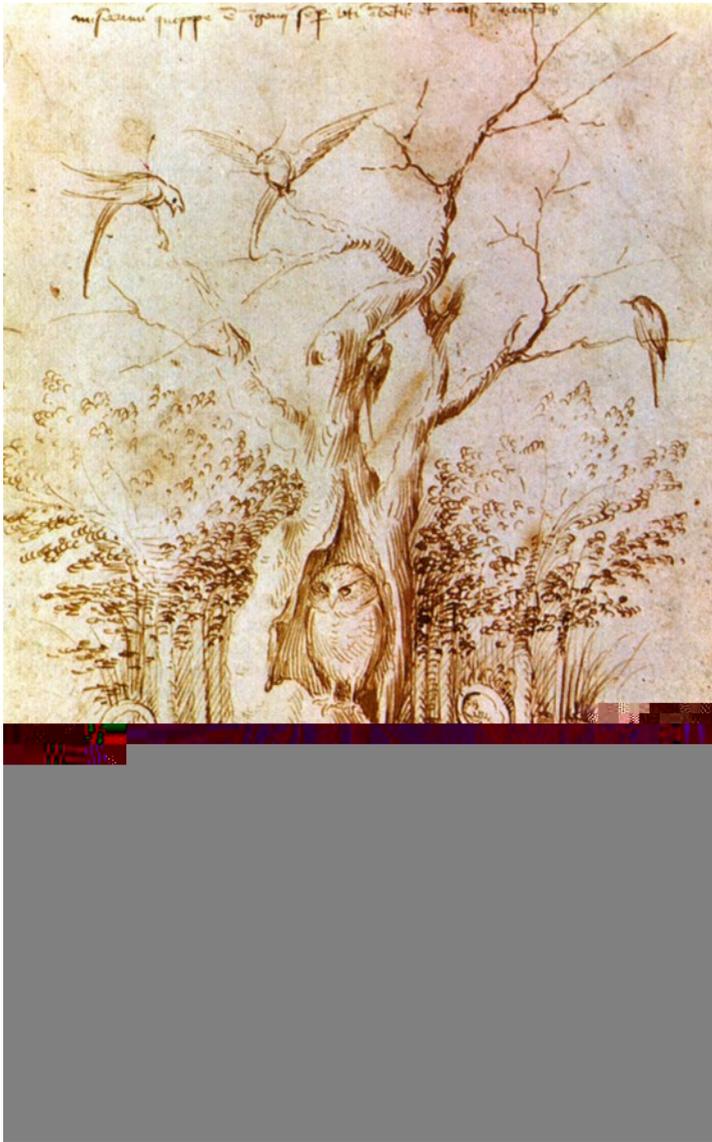
The Cathedral of St John, 's-Hertogenbosch



The miraculous statue of Our Sweet Lady of 's-Hertogenbosch



The famous cloth market in the central square of 's-Hertogenbosch. Jheronimus Bosch lived in one of the houses on the right, the most prestigious side of the square. The family workshop is behind the viewer.



**miserrimi quippe est ingenii semper uti inventis et nunquam inveniendis**

(impoverished is the spirit who always uses the inventions of others and never invents anything himself)

# JHERONIMUS BOSCH



Was a 16th Century

**SURREALIST**

**DISCUSS**