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| | Object: | Illustration for Imre Madách's Work Entitled The Tragedy of Man: Adam in Space (Scene XII) |
| | Museum: | Magyar Nemzeti Galéria Szent György tér 2. 1014 Budapest (20) 439 7325 |
| | Collection: | Grafikai Gyűjtemény |
| | Inventory number: | GRO_1905-1760 |

Description

The idea of illustrations for The Tragedy of Man by Imre Madách published in 1860 first came up to Mihály Zichy in summer 1885. According to the press of that time, Zichy, living in Moscow at that time, was given leave for two months by the Tsar to produce the illustrations. The first 15 works were exhibited in the Budapest Palace of Arts in autumn 1886. The missing scenes – a few Egyptian, Roman and Byzantine, as well as the two phalanstery scenes – were only published a year later in a new special edition in 1888. Although Zichy's earlier illustrations were extensive and well-known from the 1850s, this was the first time he had made a full series for a Hungarian literary work. Most of the critics were pleased to see the unity of text and image, which was regarded as the main criterion of a good illustration. The work shows the frustrated Adam, wanting to break free from his life on Earth. However, in the icy space, he realises his situation: "Without love, without conflict, what is life?". Lucifer seemingly overcomes man, thrusts Adam away from him into space but the Spirit of the Earth intervenes. Adam therefore returns to continue his struggle for new ideas as "The fight itself the goal the man doth seek".

Basic data

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| Material/Technique: | paper / coal |
| Measurements: | 790 × 503 mm |

Events

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| Drawn | When | 1885 |
| | Who | Mihály Zichy (1827-1906) |
| | Where | |

Keywords

- Graphics