



Albrecht, Dürer 1471-1528



A German painter, engraver, printmaker, mathematician, and theorist from Nuremberg. His high-quality woodcuts (nowadays often called *Meisterstiche* or "master prints") established his reputation and influence across Europe when he was still in his twenties, and he has been conventionally regarded as the greatest artist of the Northern Renaissance ever since. His vast body of work includes altarpieces and religious works, numerous portraits and self-portraits, and copper engravings. The woodcuts, such as the *Apocalypse* series (1498), retain a more Gothic flavour than the rest of his work. His well-known prints include the *Knight, Death, and the Devil* (1513), *Saint Jerome in his Study* (1514) and *Melencolia I* (1514), which has been the subject of extensive analysis and interpretation. His watercolours also mark him as one of the first European landscape artists, while his ambitious woodcuts revolutionized the potential of that medium. Indeed, he is considered to be the greatest printmaker of all time. Dürer liked making prints because he could make many reproductions of the same picture, and it was a lucrative business. He made a good profit from it. He made over 350 engravings and woodcuts. Sixty of his oil paintings

remain. Frequently he signed and dated his works with his trademark signature. He was one of seventeen children born in the family, but only three of them lived to grow up; Albrecht and his brothers Andreas and Hans. His father was a good man who cared about the education of his children. However the elder Dürer was disappointed when his son became more interested in painting than in following the goldsmith trade. Ironically his early training in this art gave his son a unique ability when it came to his print making ie his knowledge of engraving precious metals. We know about this man from his artworks, yet only ten letters survive that he wrote to his friend Willibald Pirckheimer. They remained lost for 200 years until they were discovered hidden in a wall.



Young Hare, 1502 is a 1502 watercolour and bodycolour painting by German artist Albrecht Dürer. Painted in 1502 in his workshop, it is acknowledged as a masterpiece of observational art. The subject is rendered with almost photographic accuracy, and although the piece is normally given the title *Young Hare*, the portrait is sufficiently detailed for the hare to be identified as a mature specimen — the German title translates as "Field Hare" and the work is often referred to in English as the *Hare* or *Wild Hare*. The subject was particu-

larly challenging: the hare's fur lay in different directions and the animal was mottled with lighter and darker patches all over, Dürer had to adapt the standard conventions of shading to indicate the outline of the subject by the fall of light across the figure. Despite the technical challenges presented in rendering the appearance of light with a multi-coloured, multi-textured subject, Dürer not only managed to create a detailed, almost scientific, study of the animal but also infuses the picture with a warm golden light that hits the hare from the left, highlighting the ears and the run of hair along the body, giving a spark of life to the eye, and casting a strange shadow to the right.

