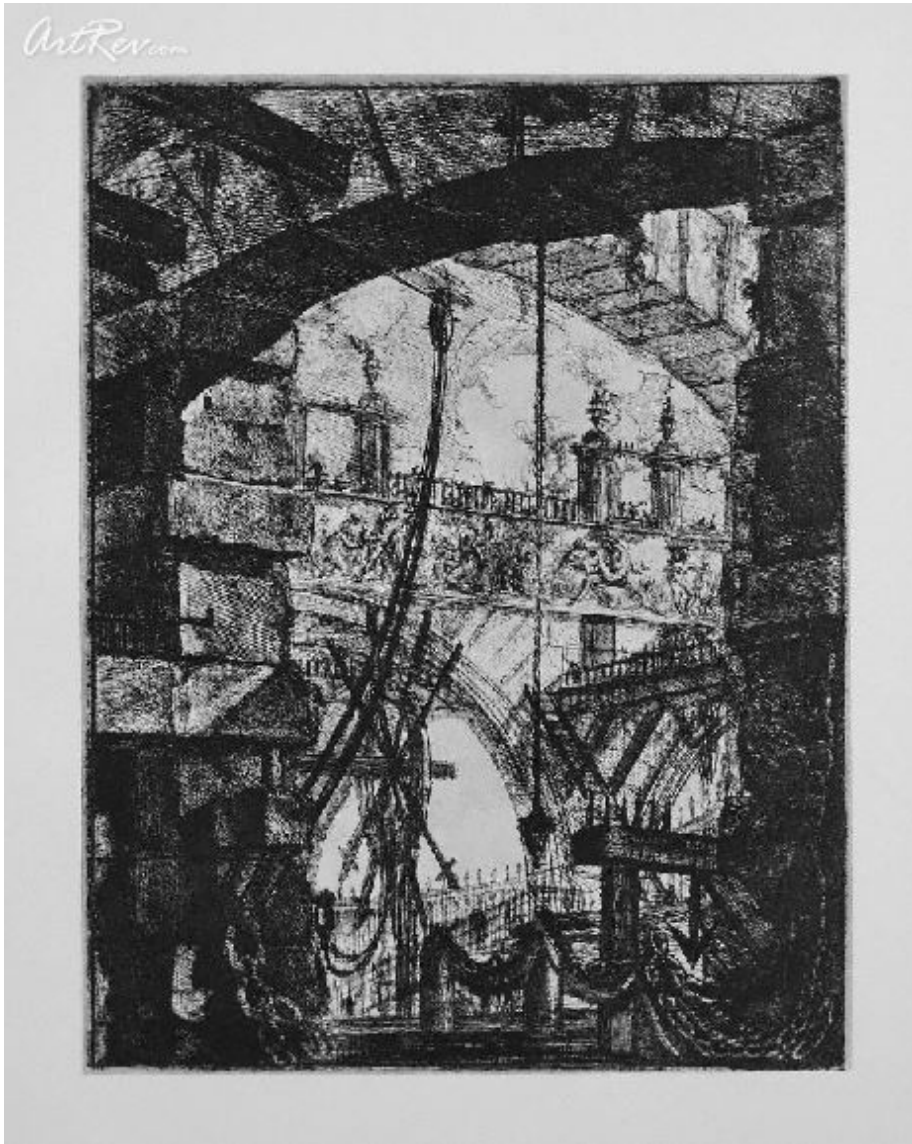


[The Prisons](#) by [Giovanni Battista Piranesi](#)

Original Lithographic Bookplate - Main Subject: Architecture



Item Number

1517897731

Retail Value

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Dimensions (As Shown)

7.5W x 10H Inches

19.05W x 25.4H cm

Medium

Original Lithographic Bookplate

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About Giovanni Battista Piranesi

Born in Venice and was active in Rome from 1740. He was famous for his poetic views of Rome and also his fantastic imaginary interiors. Trained in Venice as an engineer and architect, his studies had included perspective and stage design. These skills, allied to his deep knowledge of archaeology, provided the substance for his Vedute (Views), a series of 135 etchings of ancient and contemporary Rome, published from 1745 onwards, which established the popular mental image of the city. Piranesi's image was a thoroughly romanticized one, with effects of scale exploited to make the buildings appear larger and grander and exaggerating the contrasts of light and shade to invest them with drama. His most remarkable etchings are perhaps those of imaginary interiors, the Carceri d'Invenzione (Imaginary Prisons), a series of plates issued in 1749-50 and reworked in 1761.

Piranesi was also an outspoken architectural polemicist who believed absolutely in the supremacy of Roman over Greek architecture, an argument he expounded most forcefully in his Della magnificenza ed architettura dei Romani (On the Magnificence of Roman Architecture, 1761). In his other major treatise, the Parere sull'architettura (Observations on Architecture, 1765), he advocated an imaginative use of antique Roman models to produce a new style of architecture. Only one building was ever erected to his designs, the rather unexceptional church of S. Maria del Priorato, Rome (1764-1766).

Piranesi's influence as an architect may have been negligible, but his romanticized views and imaginary interiors had a profound effect on stage designers, painters of capricci such as Hubert Robert, and even writers: William Beckford, the author of the Gothic novel, Vathek (1786) wrote, 'I drew chasms, and subterranean hollows, the domain of fear and torture, with chains, racks, wheels and dreadful engines in the style of Piranesi.' In the 20th century his imaginary interiors have been admired by the Surrealists and provided source material for horror film set designers.

Original Lithographic Bookplate

Sorry. No information about this medium is available.

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