

# THE 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

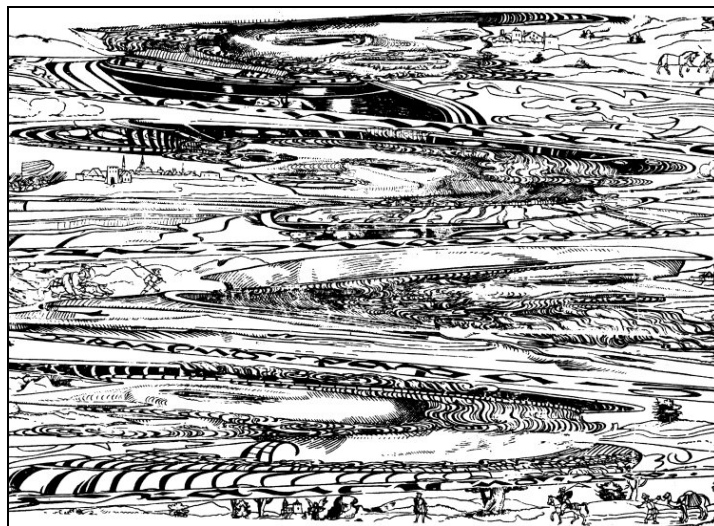
As knowledge of perspective spread northwards from Italy, artists in northern Europe began to adopt the technique, and to experiment with the “distorted perspective” of anamorphosis.

A celebrated example is contained in the portrait painting by Hans Holbein known as *The Ambassadors*. A skull is stretched anamorphically at the feet of the two men (pictured in the full of life, the skull is a traditional symbol and reminder of the inevitability of death).



*“The Ambassadors” by Hans Holbein, 1533*

In Germany, one type of anamorphosis that became popular has distorted forms which are made to appear like something else. In this example by Erhard Schön, a pupil of Dürer, the heads of four European leaders appear as geographical features of landscapes:



*“Anamorphic portraits of Charles V, Ferdinand of Austria, Pope Paul III and Francis I” by Erhard Schön, about 1535*

This is a nice development of the basic anamorphosis technique, because it is harder for the brain to make sense of the distorted forms. As you look around this exhibition, you will find after a while that some of the anamorphoses become easy to un-distort just by thinking about them.