

(also 1989 English ed.: 72–73, repro.).

1990 Grimm: 46–49, fig. 40c, 256, fig. 104b, 287, no. 123, repro.

1937.1.71 (71)

Portrait of a Young Man

1646/1648

Oil on canvas, 68 x 55.4 (26¾ x 21⅞)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Inscriptions

At center right: *FHFH*

Technical Notes: The original support is a plain-woven fabric composed of heavy threads irregularly spun with numerous slubs, loose ends, and weave faults. It has been lined with the original tacking margins retained. Pressure upon lining has caused an emphasis of the coarse canvas texture and flattening of impasto. The support was laced onto a temporary strainer for priming. Remnants of the thick laces remain along the left and right edges. Cusping patterns also suggest that the primed fabric was relaced to the strainer for painting before attachment to a stretcher. The support is sound, aside from a small hole to the right of the head.

A warm tan granular ground or imprimatura layer is visible between broad brushstrokes of paint, applied in thin layers worked rapidly wet into wet, and modeled with sharp unblended brushstrokes. The background was applied first, with a reserve left for the face, which was painted next, followed by the clothing. The hair was worked over the face to define its precise contours.

Scattered small losses are found overall, particularly along the edges. The bottom edge is ragged and damaged, with many unfilled losses. Abrasion is slight. The thin, aged varnish layer is slightly discolored and matte. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition at the National Gallery.

Provenance: Sir Robert Walpole, 1st Earl of Orford [1676–1745], Houghton Hall, Norfolk, by 1736; by inheritance to his son Robert Walpole, 2nd Earl of Orford [d. 1751]; by inheritance to his son, George, 3rd Earl of Orford [1730–1791]; Baron A. S. Moussine-Poushkin, agent for Catherine II, in 1779; Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729–1796]; Imperial Hermitage Gallery, Saint Petersburg; sold February 1931 through (Matthiesen Gallery, Berlin; P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London; and M. Knoedler & Co., New York) to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington; deeded 1 May 1937 to The A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh.

IN THIS bust-length portrait, a portly young man rests his elbow on the back of his chair while he turns and looks directly at the viewer. His alert, handsome face is enframed by shoulder-length curly hair and a black hat that rests squarely on his head. His black

jacket is decorated with a flat white collar that is edged with an intricate lace pattern.

Hals seems to have favored this portrait convention because of its relative informality. The momentary, turning pose and the rapid and bold brushstrokes enhance the lifelike quality of the image. As discussed in *Willem Coymans* (1937.1.69), Hals used this pose at many stages of his career, but particularly in the 1640s. Indeed, one of the closest parallels to this image is the National Gallery's *Willem Coymans*, signed and dated 1645. Not only are the poses similar, but also the way in which the faces are more firmly modeled than the broader, more suggestively rendered costumes. On the basis of such relationships Slive has dated this painting about 1645.¹

Minor variations in technique between these portraits, however, suggest that this one must date slightly later than the portrait of Willem Coymans. Hals has animated this sitter's face with rapidly applied light accents over the broad flesh tones that define the nose, cheeks, lower lip, and forehead. These strokes, just as those that articulate the eyebrows and mustache, are less integrated into the structure of the face than those in the Coymans portrait. Similarly, whereas in the Coymans portrait Hals conveys a sense of the translucent material from which the collar and sleeve are made, and of the elegantly brocaded pattern on the jacket, in the abstract rendering of the costume in *Portrait of a Young Man*, neither the material character of the lace collar nor the lace pattern are suggested to such a degree. Finally, the lion-head finial of the chair is depicted with a few wavy strokes that give little information about structure.

The precise period of execution for this work is difficult to determine because Hals' dated so few paintings after 1645. A probable date, however, is 1646/1648. Both the style of the collar and shape of the hat were in fashion in these years, as was shoulder-length hair. Hals' portrait of *Adriaen van Ostade* (1937.1.70), which can be dated about 1646/1648, shows comparable characteristics in the style of costume as well as the abstract way in which it is rendered. That portrait also exhibits the use of highlights to enliven the otherwise firmly structured face and its features.

The double monogram, unique in Hals' work, has never been adequately explained. Slive suggests that a second monogram might have been added after the first one had been painted out for some reason.² The two monograms, however, overlap, and there is no evidence of an intervening paint layer between them. In the eighteenth century the double



Frans Hals, *Portrait of a Young Man*, 1937.1.71

monogram seems to have been interpreted as an indication of both the artist and the sitter. In 1736 Horace Walpole described the painting as a self-portrait of Frans Hals,³ an identification repeated in an engraving (in reverse) after the painting, published in 1777.⁴ This identification was also followed by subsequent Hermitage cataloguers. Later, when it became obvious that the sitter was too young to be Frans Hals, he was identified as Frans Hals the Younger.⁵ Bode speculated, on the basis of the monogram, that the artist might be Frans Hals' son Harmen Hals, but, after Bredius discovered this artist's monogram was different in character, Bode immediately rejected his own hypothesis.⁶ Indeed, whatever the explanation for the double monogram, there is no reason to question the attribution of this expressive portrait.

Notes

1. Slive 1970–1974, 3: 86, no. 167.
2. Slive 1970–1974, 3: 86, no. 167.
3. Walpole 1736. He identified 430 paintings in his father's various houses. In the list entitled "A Catalogue of Sir Robert Walpole's Pictures at Chelsea," pp. 33–34, appears: "Francis Halls, Master to Godfrey Kneller... Francis Halls."
4. The engraving was made by J. B. Michel. According to Slive 1970–1974, 3: 86, the print is inscribed: "FRANCIS HALLS./In the Common Parlour at Houghton/Size of the Picture 1F 3¼ l[nches] by 1F 7½ l[nches] high/Published May 1st, 1777 by John Boydell Engraver in Cheapside, London./F. Halls Pixit. G. Farington del. J.B. Michel sculpsit."
5. Semenoff 1885, 1: 254.
6. Bode 1883, 90, no. 128.

References

- 1736 Walpole.
 1747 Walpole: 40 (also 1752 2nd ed.: 40).
 1809 Gilpin: 69.
 1838 Hermitage: 2: 254, no. 26 (as *Self-Portrait*).
 1863 De Köhne: 2: 165, no. 770 (as *Portrait of Frans Hals*) (also 1870 2nd ed., 2: 123, no. 770; 1895 3rd rev. ed. A. Somof, 2: 122–123, no. 770, repro.; and 1901 ed., 2: 139–140, no. 770, repro.).
 1864 Waagen: 172, no. 770.
 1883 Bode: 90, 101, no. 128.
 1885 Semenoff: 1: 254 (as portrait of *Frans Hals the Younger*).
 1896 Knackfuss: 52, repro. 37 (also 1923 ed.: 64, repro. 45).
 1902 Davies: 144, no. 770 (also 1908 rev. ed.: 139, no. 770).
 1907–1927 HdG, 3 (1910): 88.
 1909 Moes: 108, no. 180 or 182.
 1909 Wrangell: 145 repro. (also 1923 German rev. ed. by P. P. von Weiner: 117 repro.).
 1912 Péladan: 89–90, repro. opposite 162.
 1914 Bode and Binder: 2: 62, no. 213, pl. 136 (also English ed., 2: 15, no. 213, pl. 136).
 1921a Valentiner: 320, no. 219, repro. (also 1923 rev. ed.: 320, 234, repro.).
 1930 Dülberg: 186.

- 1936 Valentiner: no. 91, repro.
 1941 Trivas: 55, no. 92, repro. no. 123.
 1941 NGA: 95–96, no. 71.
 1946 Gratama: 98, repro.
 1965 NGA: 65, no. 71.
 1968 NGA: 58, no. 78, repro.
 1970–1974 Slive, 1 (1970): 52, 160–161; 2 (1970): fig. 256; 3 (1974): 86–87, fig. 60 (monogram).
 1972 Grimm: 107, 205, no. 134., repro. no. 150.
 1974 Montagni: 105, no. 171 repro. (also 1976 French ed.).
 1975 NGA: 170, no. 71.
 1976 Walker: 268, no. 352 repro.
 1976 Gerson: 422–424.
 1981 Wheelock: 14–15, repro. (also 1988, 100, fig. 6).
 1985 NGA: 197, repro.
 1985 Washington: 324.
 1990 Grimm: 241–242, 257, fig. 105a, 288, no. 129 repro.

1942.9.28 (624)

Portrait of a Man

1648/1650
 Oil on canvas, 63.5 x 53.5 (25 x 21)
 Widener Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left along the edge: *FH*

Technical Notes: The original support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping is visible in the x-radiograph along the left, right, and top edges. Striations are visible from the brush used to apply the thin white ground. Paint is applied in opaque layers, thinly in the sketchy background, and with more body in the figure. Lively brushstrokes are applied wet into wet but left distinct and unblended. Losses are small and scattered, and moderate abrasion is present, particularly in the black hat and adjacent background.

Prior to 1883, when the painting appeared in the art market in Vienna, the background had been overpainted to cover up the hat, and the hair repainted in a longer style (fig. 1).¹ The restoration of the painting in 1990 and 1991 removed the later repaints and exposed the original hat, hair, and background. Although abraded, enough original paint remained to permit reconstruction of these elements.

Provenance: Remi van Haanen, Vienna, by 1883.² (Laurie & Co., London), by March 1898;³ (Bourgeois, Paris, in 1898); (Léonardus Nardus, New York, in 1898); Peter A. B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;⁴ inheritance from Estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park.

Exhibited: *Gemälde alter Meister aus dem Wiener Privatbesitze*, Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie, Vienna, 1873, no. 38. New York 1909, no. 32, repro.