

these scenes represent a specific location as it actually appeared, MacLaren is undoubtedly correct in stressing that many of these views were based on views from gardens behind the houses on the west side of the canal, the Oude Gracht.⁵ This area, near the Binnenwatersloot, is where De Hooch's wife lived before they were engaged and is presumably where De Hooch moved after their marriage.

In this painting, as in other of De Hooch's courtyard scenes, one senses a harmonious relationship between the serving woman and her employers. Although no commissions for these works are known, one wonders if De Hooch's interest in the theme stems from his own experiences working as a servant for the linen merchant Justus de la Grange in the early 1650s. De Hooch's sensitivity to the relationship of women to children may also relate to his own family experiences: a son, born in 1655, and a daughter, born in 1656, would have been approximately the ages of the children he so often represented in his paintings from the end of that decade.

Notes

1. Pigment analysis of ground and paint layers is available in the Scientific Research department (26 October 1978).
2. When this treatment was undertaken a double-fabric lining, attached in 1942, was removed. That lining had replaced an earlier one.
3. HdG 1907–1927, 1: no. 294, noted that he saw the painting with this dealer in March of 1903.
4. First noted by MacLaren 1960, 186.
5. MacLaren 1960, 185.

References

- 1904 Armstrong: 43.
 1907–1927 HdG, 1 (1907): 558–559, no. 294.
 1909 New York: no. 54.
 1913 Rudder: 100.
 1913–1916 Widener, 1 (1913): n.p.
 1923 Widener: n.p., repro.
 1925 Collins Baker: 4–5.
 1926–1927 Valentiner: 45–64, fig. 3; 67–77, no. 13.
 1927 Brière-Misme, no. 15: 361–380; no. 16: 51–79 and 258–286.
 1929–1930 Valentiner: 39, repro., 271 (also 1930 English ed.).
 1931 Widener: 90, repro.
 1942 Widener: no. 630.
 [1945] Van Thienen: 20, 29–30, fig. 17.
 1948 Widener: 62, repro.
 1960 MacLaren: 186.
 1965 NGA: 69, no. 630.
 1968 NGA: 61, repro.
 1975 NGA: 178–179, repro.
 1980 Sutton: 25, 63, note 45, 86, no. 39, repro. no. 42.
 1985 NGA: 206, repro.
 1986 Sutton: 310–311, repro.

1937.1.56 (56)

A Dutch Courtyard

1658/1660

Oil on canvas, 69.5 x 60 (27 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 23 $\frac{3}{8}$)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Technical Notes: The fine, plain-weave fabric support has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. A smooth off-white ground was applied somewhat thickly to the support. The ground is coated with a transparent brown wash imprimatura that becomes thinner in the area corresponding to the sky. With the brown wash used as an undertone, De Hooch applied paint in thin, transparent layers. The impasted highlights are constructed of small dabs of color placed in close proximity, often overlapping. This technique produces a flickering effect, particularly in the flesh tones. Infrared photography reveals artist's changes in the placement of the figures.

The paint is in good condition with little loss and minor abrasion. Inpainting is limited and a slightly discolored aged surface coating is present. The painting was last treated in Holland in the 1930s. No conservation has been carried out since acquisition.¹

Provenance: Cornelis Sebillé Roos [1754–1820], Amsterdam; (sale, Amsterdam, 28 August 1820, no. 51); Isaac van Eyck. Baron Lionel Nathan de Rothschild [1808–1879], Gunnersbury Park, Middlesex, by 1842; by inheritance to Baron Alfred de Rothschild [1842–1918], Halton Manor, Hertfordshire;² by inheritance to Almina, Countess of Carnarvon [née Almina Wombwell Dennistoun, d. 1969], Highclere Castle, Hampshire; (Duveen Brothers, London); sold November 1924 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh.

Exhibited: *Masterworks of Five Centuries*, Golden Gate International Exposition, San Francisco, 1939, no. 81a.

SITUATED in a walled courtyard behind a brick house, two soldiers seated at a table enjoy a moment's banter with a serving woman. While one of the soldiers puffs smoke from his clay pipe, the other, who is holding a Raeren earthenware jug, laughingly watches as the woman drinks from her glass. A young girl on the right brings hot coals for the men's pipes. The open door in the brick section of the back wall reveals a stepped path that leads past a wooded yard to a distant house. The house and the trees around it are also visible above the wall. The tower of the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft rises over the wooden wall on the far left.

The painting is one of the most accomplished of De Hooch's "Delft Style" from c. 1660. The ordered, harmonious arrangement of architectural and figural elements creates a quiet and peaceful



Fig. 1. W. J. Laquy, 1783, *Interior Genre Scene*, 1783, watercolor, The Netherlands, private collection

mood. The soft light that pervades the scene and the careful way in which De Hooch indicates the bricks and mortar of the buildings and courtyard enhance the painting's naturalistic qualities. The painting's measured harmony also comes from De Hooch's sensitivity to color and the way in which he intersperses accents of red, blue, and white throughout the scene. Particularly effective is the satiny sheen of the young girl's blue dress, which he has suggested through the use of yellow highlights.

De Hooch has achieved this sense of order by carefully manipulating the perspective and determining how compositional elements should be placed. An infrared photograph indicates that he strengthened the figural group by adjusting the woman's position and bringing her closer to the table. He also seems to have enlarged the little girl and moved her nearer to the house so that she became superimposed over the juncture of the house and the rear wall of the courtyard. Through her placement and that of the bright orange red window shutter directly above her, De Hooch reduced the strong sense of recession created by the perspective of the building.

The brick wall behind the figures is presumably a section of the old city wall of Delft.³ As in *Woman and Child in a Courtyard* (1942.9.34), this courtyard was probably situated in the area of the city near the Binnenwatersloot. It is, nevertheless, unlikely that De Hooch represented the setting exactly. As can be demonstrated in other of his paintings, including *Woman and Child in a Courtyard*, he frequently combined architectural motifs in an imaginary way for compositional reasons. In this instance, he has also taken liberties in his depiction of the peaked roof on top of the tower of the Nieuwe Kerk: it lacks the small spires that ring the top of the tower.⁴

The theme of soldiers sitting around a table smoking and drinking, attended to by a serving woman, is frequently found in De Hooch's earliest genre scenes, although this painting is the first instance in which he moved the scene outdoors into a middle-class courtyard.⁵ The men and women in his early scenes are frequently quite animated and playfully interact with each other.⁶ While the easy banter between the soldier and maid in this painting continues in this tradition, the sunfilled setting with the distant church tower gives the scene an added sense of good will and optimism, one in which the threat of war that had so recently weighed heavily on the Dutch no longer was felt.

A possible autograph replica of this painting exists in the Mauritshuis, The Hague.⁷ The major compositional difference is that the seated soldier is not present. This figure, however, appears in x-rays of the painting and seems to have been painted out by a later hand. The breastplate worn by this soldier appears in other De Hooch paintings from this period, including *A Soldier Paying a Hostess*, which is dated 1658.⁸

The Washington painting appears in a watercolor of an interior genre scene, dated 1783, by W. J. Laquy (1738–1798) (fig. 1).⁹ Laquy, a German artist, was working at that time in Amsterdam. The drawing is informative in that it illustrates how the painting was then framed. The provenance of the painting is unknown before 1820, and we do not know in whose home Laquy saw it.

Notes

1. Pigment analysis is available in the Scientific Research Department (26 October 1978).
2. See Davis 1884, no. 19.
3. Valentiner 1929–1930, 272.
4. Smith 1829–1842, 9: 573, no. 30, incorrectly identifies it as the tower of the cathedral in Utrecht.
5. See Sutton 1980, cats. 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13.
6. These scenes probably reflect the influence of the Rotterdam artist Ludolph de Jongh (1616–1676), whom De



Pieter de Hooch, *A Dutch Courtyard*, 1937.1.56

Hooch must have known before moving to Delft and joining the guild in 1655.

7. Sutton 1980, cat. 35b.

8. Marquise of Bute Collection; Sutton 1980, cat. 27.

9. Laquy's drawing was kindly brought to my attention by C. J. de Bruyn Kops, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

References

1829–1842 Smith, 9 (1842): 573, no. 30.

1854–1857 Waagen, 2: 130.

1879–1881 Havard, 3 (1881): 128.

1884 Davis, 1: no. 15, repro.

1907–1927 HdG, 1 (1907): 559, no. 295.

1913 Rudder: 61, 65.

1925 Collins Baker: 6–7.

1926–1927 Valentiner: 45–64, fig. 4; 67–77.

1927 Brière-Misme, no. 15: 361–380; no. 16: 51–79, 258–286.

1929–1930 Valentiner: xiv, xv, 44, repro. (also 1930 English ed.).

1939 New York: 97.

1939–1940 San Francisco: no. 81a.

1965 NGA: 69, no. 56.

1968 NGA: 61, repro.

1975 NGA: 178–179, repro.

1976 Walker: 288, no. 384, ill. 289.

1980 Sutton: 85, no. 35a.

1981 Wheelock: 22, ill. 16. (also 1988, 20, fig. 16).

1984 Wheelock: 28–29, repro.

1984 Sutton: 219.

1985 NGA: 205, repro.

1992 NGA: 132, color repro.

Jan van Huysum

1682–1749

JAN VAN HUYSUM was born in Amsterdam on 15 April 1682. His father, Justus van Huysum the Elder (1659–1716), was also an artist, as were his three brothers, Justus the Younger, Jacob, and Michiel. Justus the Elder was a prolific painter of large flower pieces—often as part of complete decorative schemes that he designed for patrons' houses—and also seems to have been active as an art dealer, so the early training that Jan received from his father was in the context of a flourishing art business. Among the few facts known about his life is that he married Margrieta Schouten in Amsterdam in 1704.

Van Huysum rapidly established a reputation as the leading still-life painter of his time. Auction records indicate that his paintings sold for as much as 1,450 guilders during his lifetime, and his noble patrons included Prince William of Hesse, the duc d'Orléans, the kings of Poland and Prussia, the elector of Saxony, and Sir Robert Walpole, later Earl of Orford. He was, furthermore, highly praised by contemporary authors; Houbraken described him as "the phoenix of flower-painters."

Van Huysum is reputed to have been fiercely secretive about his techniques, forbidding anyone, including his own brothers, to enter his studio for fear that they would learn how he purified and applied his colors. He only had one pupil, Margaretha Haverman (1720–1795), whom he apparently took on only in response to great pressure from his uncle. It is widely reported that Haverman's

work soon inspired such jealousy in her teacher that she had to leave his studio.

Unlike most Dutch still-life painters, Van Huysum produced a large number of drawings, mostly compositional studies for entire flower paintings but also some detailed depictions of individual blooms. His keenness for studying flowers from life led him to spend a portion of each summer in Haarlem, then as now a horticultural center. He probably also executed at least some elements of his easel painting from life, rather than from drawings. This method of working may explain why some of his paintings bear two different dates.

Van Huysum's reluctance to teach anyone else his techniques did not prevent the perpetuation of his popular style of painting by numerous followers and imitators, both during and after his lifetime. Some of the most notable were Jan van Os (1744–1808), his son Georgius Jacobus Johannes van Os (1782–1861), the brothers Gerard (1746–1822) and Cornelis van Spaendonck (1756–1840), and Wybrand Hendriks (1744–1831). In addition to still lifes, Van Huysum painted a number of Italianate landscapes.

Bibliography

Smith 1829–1842, 6 (1835): 465–491; 9 (1842): 786–789.

Grant 1954.

Bergström 1956: 226–228.

White 1964.

Brown/MacLaren 1992: 207–208.