

early years of his career, he painted realistic tonal landscapes and winter scenes inspired by Camp-huysen, Esaias van de Velde (1587–1630) and Hendrick Avercamp (q.v.). By the 1640s, he had begun to specialize in nocturnes, the earliest known of which is dated 1643. It is with his representations of moonlit landscapes that Van der Neer distinguished himself as one of the most important and innovative Dutch landscape painters. The Dutch cities and villages found in his evocative nocturnal scenes appear extremely realistic, but these views, as well as his woodland and winter scenes, are, in fact, fanciful re-creations of the Dutch countryside.

Bibliography

- Houbraken 1753, 3: 172.
HdG 1907–1927, 7 (1923): 323–473.
Stechow 1966: 96–98, 176–182.
Bachmann 1966.
Bachmann 1970.
Bachmann 1982.
Amsterdam 1987: 381–387.
Brown/MacLaren 1992: 275.

1990.6.1

Moonlit Landscape with Bridge

probably 1648/1650
Oil on walnut, 110.2 x 78.4 (43 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 30 $\frac{7}{8}$)
Patrons' Permanent Fund

Inscriptions

At lower right (in ligature): *AvdN*

Technical Notes: The support is a single piece of thin, horizontally grained walnut cut across the entire tree trunk width.¹ All sides of the back are beveled, and the panel is slightly bowed. The wood grain is plainly visible through the smooth, extremely thin white ground. The thick fawn-colored imprimatura is incorporated as a mid-tone in the foreground and sky.

Paint is applied in thin layers. Brushwork is prominent in the sky, and stippling was employed in the foliage and lawn. Slight cupping has formed along the wood grain. Judiciously applied retouching covers scattered small losses and local abrasions.

Provenance: Jacob van Beek Fredsz.; (sale, De Vries, Amsterdam, 2 June 1828, no. 49); Engelberts.² F. Tielens, Brussels. J. Walter, London. Baron Bentinck Thyssen, London;³ (Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna, by 1989).

THIS EVOCATIVE LANDSCAPE is one of the most masterful of all of Van der Neer's night scenes. Here he has captured the subtle atmospheric effects of the

Dutch landscape illuminated by the glow of a moonlit sky. The light of the full moon, somewhat diffused by the varied cloud formations that enliven the sky, is nevertheless intense enough to create strong reflections in the water of the slowly moving river that skirts the city and on the windows of buildings lining the shore. This light brings to life the gnarled tree trunks at the left and accents the uppermost leaves on the graceful trees that arch over the water. It reveals piles, paths, and bridges, picks out the family returning home over the stone bridge with their dog, and highlights the elegant couple standing in the shadows of the trees at the right.

Van der Neer, in conceiving this image, was more interested in creating the mood of nature than in recording an actual setting. The large dwellings to the left are similar to those found in Amsterdam where the artist lived most of his life, but the church adjacent to the dwellings and the houses beyond are reminiscent of those found in smaller cities and towns. The building complex in the background on the opposite shore of the river appears to be (the ruins of ?) an ancient small castle or country house surrounded by a high wall of a type traditionally situated in country settings.⁴ Likewise, the elegant couple on the right stands before a stone gate similar to those that served as entrances to country houses, particularly along the river Vecht. The setting, thus, is a composite of various aspects of city and country life that Van der Neer has brought into a harmonious whole.

Although few of Van der Neer's paintings are dated, broad patterns within his stylistic development suggest that he executed this work near the end of the 1640s. It stands at the culmination of a period when his nocturnal scenes depicted the reflections of a full moon in the quiet waterways of the Dutch countryside.⁵ This painting exhibits a number of remarkable techniques that Van der Neer developed for conveying his atmospheric effects. He suggested the translucency of the clouds, for example, by allowing the reddish ochre ground covering the walnut panel to remain visible through thinly applied bluish gray paint. In the foreground, he has articulated a number of objects with light contours. Sometimes he highlighted them with paint applied with a brush and sometimes by scratching the wet paint with an instrument to reveal the ground layer.⁶

Interest in moonlit landscapes in the Netherlands can be traced to engravings Hendrick Goudt (1585–1648) made after paintings by Adam Elsheimer (1578–1610) in the second decade of the seventeenth century. One of the few Dutch painters to venture into this new domain was Raphael Govertsz. Camp-



Aert van der Neer, *Moonlit Landscape with Bridge*, 1690.6.1

huysen, with whom Van der Neer may well have studied in Gorinchem during the 1620s.⁷ That Camphuysen's early influence encouraged Van der Neer to develop this genre of painting after he moved to Amsterdam in the early 1630s seems unlikely, but virtually nothing is known of Van der Neer's artistic contacts during the 1630s and 1640s except that Camphuysen was a witness at the baptism of his daughter in Amsterdam in 1642.⁸ Nevertheless, because his scenes appear to be based on excursions he made in and around Amsterdam, it seems that Van der Neer developed his style rather independently. Only one artist comes to mind who explored the transformation of a landscape through light as profoundly as did Van der Neer, Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640). Should Van der Neer have known Rubens' landscapes from the 1630s, either first hand or through the prints of engravers such as Schelte à Bolswert (c. 1581–1659), he succeeded in adapting Rubens' atmospheric effects to a Dutch landscape setting.

Notes

1. See report by Michael Palmer, wood scientist, in the Scientific Research department (25 February 1992).
2. HdG 1907–1927, 7: 406, states that "Engelberts" purchased the picture for fl 200.

3. Galerie Sanct Lucas provided the names of the previous owners Tielens, Walter, and Thyssen.

4. The edifice does not conform to any recognizable structure. Sutton in Amsterdam 1987, 381–383, cat. 59, relates a similar structure in *Moonlit View on a River*, 1647, to the manor house Kostverloren, which stood along the river Amstel not far from Amsterdam. It is indeed possible that Kostverloren provided the inspiration for such castle-like forms in the background of some of Van der Neer's paintings from the late 1640s (see also *Moonlit Landscape with Castle*, 1646, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, inv. 3561–8–55), but, if so, he has so transformed its appearance as to make it unrecognizable.

5. This dating has been proposed by Bachmann 1982, 68–73.

6. For a discussion of Van der Neer's painting techniques from this period see Zeldenrust 1983, 99–104.

7. For an illustration of one of Camphuysen's nocturnal scenes, which probably dates from the mid-1640s (Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, no. 1546), see Bernt 1969, 1: repro. 222.

8. For the relationship of Raphael and his brother Govert Dircksz. Camphuysen (1623–1672) to the early work of Van der Neer see Bachmann 1970, 243–250, and also Bachmann 1975, 213–222. The earliest known dated landscape by Van der Neer is 1635, executed after he had moved to Amsterdam.

References

- 1907–1927 HdG, 7 (1923): 406, no. 347.
 1982 Bachmann: 68–73, repro. no. 66.
 1989 Vienna: no. 4, color repro.

Adriaen van Ostade

1610–1685

BAPTIZED ON 10 December 1610 in Haarlem, Adriaen van Ostade was the third of the eight children of Jan Hendricx van Eyndhoven and Janneke Hendriksdr. Although no documents survive relating to Ostade's training, Houbraken states that he studied with Frans Hals (q.v.). He also says that Adriaen Brouwer (1606–1638), the Flemish painter of low-life and tavern scenes who lived in Haarlem until 1631, was a pupil of Hals at about the same time. Whether or not the two artists were fellow pupils, Brouwer's influence is readily apparent in Ostade's early works.

By 8 June 1632, Ostade was working successfully as an artist. Due to incomplete guild records, the date that he entered the Haarlem guild is unknown. Nevertheless, he was certainly a member by 1634; for one of his paintings was included in a lottery of

guild members' works that Dirck Hals (1591–1656) organized in April of that year. Two years later Ostade is recorded as a member of the Oude Schuts civic guard company. Later in his career, he played an active part in the administration of the Saint Luke's Guild, holding office as *hoofdman* in 1647 and 1661 and as *deken* in 1662. It must have been at about the time he was elected *hoofdman* in 1647 that Frans Hals painted his portrait (1937.1.70).

On 26 July 1638 Ostade married Macheltje Pietersdr. They drew up a will on 8 March 1642, six weeks before she died. Fifteen years later, on 26 May 1657, Ostade married Anna Ingels, a wealthy Catholic woman from Amsterdam. He appears to have converted to Catholicism at this time. His second marriage prompted a change in residence. After living for some years in the house on the Cromme