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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

A History of the Dutch Painting Collection at the National Gallery of Art

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

The National Gallery of Art has one of the finest collections of Dutch art in the world, but its distinctive character reflects the attitudes of the Gallery's founding fathers.[1] When the Gallery opened its doors to the public on March 17, 1941, it was largely through the generosity and foresight of Andrew W. Mellon (1855–1937). Mellon not only donated his European and American masterpieces to the nation but also provided funds for John Russell Pope's grand, neoclassical marble building and for an endowment for the museum. The guidelines that Mellon established for his gift were that the Gallery should be a public/private institution with free access for all. Federal funds would support upkeep and salaries but would not be used for the purchase of works of art. Acquisitions were to be restricted to works of outstanding quality, commensurate with those in Mellon's own collection. Mellon was also insistent that the museum should be called the National Gallery of Art and not the Mellon Gallery, a decision that had important ramifications for its future.

David E. Finley (1890–1977) and John Walker (1906–1995), the Gallery's first director and chief curator, were able to attract other major collectors who also felt that a National Gallery of Art, as envisioned by Andrew Mellon, would be an important cultural and scholarly institution for the "use and enjoyment of the people of the United States."[2] Mellon's gift of 123 paintings and 23 sculptures was hardly enough to fill the spacious new galleries, and a long-standing joke at the Gallery is that the guards' main job on opening night was to direct visitors to the next painting. In fact, Mellon's paintings and sculptures were not the only treasures on view that evening. They were supplemented, and even outnumbered, by Italian Renaissance paintings and sculptures donated by Samuel H. Kress (1863–1955). Kress and his brother, Rush Harrison Kress (1877–1962), who would continue to acquire major works on behalf of the Gallery,

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later expanded the scope of their collection to include French, German, Flemish, and Dutch paintings.

In terms of Dutch art, the most important Gallery benefactor was Joseph E. Widener (1871–1943), who agreed to donate the remarkable collection of European paintings, drawings, and decorative arts that his father, Peter A. B. Widener (1834–1915), had assembled at Lynnewood Hall, the Widener estate near Philadelphia. In 1942, one year after the National Gallery of Art officially opened, Widener donated his collection, which came to Washington the following year. In 1943, Chester Dale (1883–1962) followed suit and donated the Gallery's first Dutch still life and its first painting by Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640). That same year another important donation came to the Gallery from Lessing J. Rosenwald (1891–1979), whose outstanding collection of prints and drawings included many works by Dutch artists, particularly Rembrandt.

Within the span of a just few years, this young institution became an incredible storehouse for treasures of European and American art, worthy of its aspirations to be the nation's premier art museum. It was, however, essentially a collection of collections. While each of these was among the most important of the time, in reality they had vastly different characters. Unlike Mellon's relatively small ensemble of works of very high quality, Kress' collection was extremely large, yet its remarkable overview of Italian art included works that were not always of the level of quality and condition to which Mellon had aspired. Consequently, over the years many adjustments were made to refine the collection.[3] P. A. B. Widener, in a similar fashion, had amassed an enormous collection—consisting of over 400 paintings—but through a combination of judicious pruning and important acquisitions during the 1910s and 1920s, the number of works was reduced and the quality rose. In 1942, when Joseph Widener donated the collection to the nation, it contained about 100 paintings, all of which were considered to be among the best available works of the artists represented.[4]

Time would demonstrate that masterpieces in the eyes of one generation of collectors were not always viewed positively by a later generation. The attribution of a number of Widener's prized Rembrandts would come to be questioned, including the most famous work in his collection, *The Mill* (fig. 1).[5] Even a few of Andrew Mellon's acquisitions were not without critics, and some of his purported Vermeer paintings were later determined to be forgeries.[6] Nevertheless, on

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March 17, 1941, when the National Gallery of Art opened its doors, these issues had not yet surfaced or were of little concern. The twenty-six Dutch paintings from the Mellon collection were received with great public acclaim.

Andrew Mellon developed his interest in collecting old master paintings in the late 1910s, probably inspired by the example of his friend Henry Clay Frick. At that time Mellon had just purchased a new home in Pittsburgh, where he was a successful banker and entrepreneur.[7] After he was named Secretary of the Treasury in 1921, Mellon moved to Washington, where he bought a larger residence and needed more paintings to fill its walls. Two art dealers with whom he had already established a relationship in Pittsburgh, Charles Carstairs from M. Knoedler and Co. and Joseph Duveen, seized this opportunity to offer Mellon old master paintings suitable to his wealth and status.[8] Mellon, who quickly developed strong opinions about the types of paintings he wanted, primarily Dutch and British, and the prices he was willing to pay, became more knowledgeable and decisive about the direction of his collecting interests than is generally recognized.[9]

During the 1920s Andrew Mellon developed his idea about founding a national gallery of art, perhaps with the encouragement of Joseph Duveen.[10] With this plan in mind, Mellon made his most extraordinary art acquisitions while serving as ambassador to Great Britain in the early 1930s. In a complex arrangement with the dealers M. Knoedler, P. & D. Colnaghi, and the Matthiesen Gallery, Mellon acquired, at very high prices, twenty-one masterpieces from the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg, Russia, among them paintings by Rembrandt and Frans Hals. These works were included among the Dutch paintings he donated as part of his gift to the nation, which comprised, in total, nine paintings by Rembrandt and five by Hals, as well as landscapes by Aelbert Cuyp and Meindert Hobbema and genre scenes by Gerard ter Borch, Pieter de Hooch, Nicolaes Maes, Gabriel Metsu, and Johannes Vermeer.

After the Widener Collection was installed at the National Gallery of Art in 1943, the number of Dutch paintings exhibited more than doubled. Many of Mellon's collecting interests had overlapped with those of the Wideners, which resulted in a disproportionate representation of certain artists. For example, combined, these two extraordinary collections contained no fewer than twenty-three Rembrandt paintings, more than a third of the total number of Dutch paintings Andrew

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Mellon and Joseph Widener donated to the Gallery. Among the other artists they both collected were Frans Hals (eight paintings), Meindert Hobbema (six paintings), Aelbert Cuyp (four paintings), and Johannes Vermeer (three paintings). Differences, however, also existed in their taste in Dutch art. P. A. B. Widener admired Jacob van Ruisdael's landscapes and low-life genre scenes by artists such as Adriaen van Ostade, Isack van Ostade, Paulus Potter, and Jan Steen, none of which appealed to Mellon. Neither the Mellon nor the Widener Collection had a still-life painting at the time of the gift. Only one Dutch still life was to be seen at the Gallery during the 1940s and 1950s, a painting by Willem Kalf that came in 1943 as part of the Chester Dale Collection.[11]

During the Gallery's early years, its collection of Dutch paintings was essentially a period piece that reflected the tastes and aspirations of two American millionaire collectors from a narrow period of time—between 1894, when Widener purchased his first Rembrandt, *Saskia van Uylenburgh,* and 1936, when Mellon made his last acquisition of a Dutch painting, Nicolaes Maes' *An Old Woman Dozing over a Book.* Unfortunately, little is known about the considerations that underlay the decisions they made when acquiring specific works of art. Widener and Mellon were not, of course, the only wealthy Americans collecting at that time, and, in general, the types of paintings they purchased were comparable to those that appealed to, among others, Benjamin Altman (1840–1913), Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919), Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840–1924), and J. P. Morgan (1837–1913).[12] Moreover, despite their wealth, one cannot assume that they acquired everything they desired since they were not always the first choice among dealers selling their major old master paintings.[13] Nevertheless, each of their collections has an internal consistency that reveals a point of view, even a collecting philosophy, albeit one that must have evolved over time as their own level of knowledge and aspirations for their collections increased.

The canon that Andrew Mellon and the Wideners followed was one with an English flavor, based largely on John Smith's influential catalogue raisonné of Dutch and Flemish artists, and on the types of Dutch paintings they saw in the Wallace Collection and the National Gallery, London, where celebrated works by the recently rediscovered Frans Hals and Johannes Vermeer could also be found.[14] As far as P. A. B. Widener and Andrew Mellon were concerned, the Dutch Golden Age began in the 1630s and had ended by the late 1660s. If a painting from those decades came from an English collection, or was being sold

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by an English dealer, so much the better. Rembrandt held supreme, but the great overarching appeal of Dutch art for these collectors was its truthfulness to nature, particularly in regards to portraiture (Hals), landscape (Cuyp and Hobbema), and genre scenes (Vermeer, Ostade, Ter Borch). Dutch still lifes may have been of little interest, but neither were paintings by mannerists, Caravaggists, Italianates, *fijnschilders*, or classicists, none of which were included in the Widener and Mellon collections at the time they were given to the Gallery.

The Widener story is particularly important for understanding the character of the Dutch paintings at the National Gallery of Art. Despite his reputation as a wealthy "robber baron" who knew little about art when he began collecting, followed bad advice, and generally made a number of questionable decisions when building his collection, P. A. B. Widener engaged in his collecting activities to a greater extent than is traditionally believed.[15] He learned from his early mistakes, and by the early 1900s he sought expert guidance to correct them.[16] Working with Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (1863–1930) and Wilhelm Valentiner (1880–1958), P. A. B. and Joseph Widener de-accessioned weaker Dutch paintings and those they no longer deemed important or desirable, and they sold or traded a number of paintings to acquire better works of art.[17] As P. A. B. Widener became more concerned about the importance and quality of the works he was buying, he traveled widely, even as far as Russia, in search of masterpieces and to negotiate purchases.[18]

P. A. B. Widener came from humble origins, but he had grown in wealth and political clout through shrewd investments during and after the Civil War. Soon he built a large residence in Philadelphia and, as many of the newly rich of this era, he began to collect paintings, in large part Dutch. He had a sympathetic eye for low-life Dutch genre scenes, an interest that probably derived from his Germanic roots as well as from his modest beginnings. The quest for Dutch art also relates to a broader fascination in the Netherlands then current in late nineteenth-century America.

As Annette Stott has explained, the country was then in the midst of a "Holland Mania," largely stemming from the writings of the historian John Lothrop Motley.[19] In the first of his influential books, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* (1855), Motley wrote about the revolt of the Protestant Dutch against the evil Spanish Empire. He described how the brave, hard-working Dutch

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opposed dogmatism and persecution, courageously resisted foreign despotism, and expressed their love of liberty and desire for self-government. In his text Motley explicitly drew parallels between the Dutch Revolt and the American Revolution, as well as between the leader of both rebellions, the Prince of Orange (William the Silent) and George Washington.[20] In *A History of the United Netherlands* (1867) Motley emphasized how Dutch policies of tolerance, equality, and freedom were models for Americans to follow in their quest to become a world power.

By the early 1890s, when Widener was beginning to collect old master paintings, such sentiments were widely accepted, with some authors asserting that the Dutch system of government had provided precedents for institutions and political concepts fundamental to the United States. [21] The arguments that the Netherlands and the United States shared moral and ethical values came at a time when America was celebrating its heritage and its legacy at the Centennial Celebration in Philadelphia in 1876, and at the World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago in 1893. The World's Fair, in particular, set the stage as the dawn of a new era, and commemorated man's great achievements and aspirations, particularly in art and architecture.

The year after the World's Fair, 1894, was a seminal one for Widener. He significantly raised the level of his collecting aspirations and began to buy important Dutch paintings.[22] Widener's new approach is evident in the quality of the dealers in London and Paris with whom he worked, including P. & D. Colnaghi, Thomas Agnew, and Charles Sedelmeyer. Among the masterpieces he bought in that year were no fewer than five Dutch paintings that later became part of the Widener gift: Rembrandt's *Saskia van Uylenburgh,* Cuyp's *Lady and Gentleman on Horseback*, Hobbema's *The Travelers,* De Hooch's *The Bedroom*, and Van Ruisdael's *Forest Scene*.[23]

Each of these acquisitions of Dutch art helps define Widener's collecting ideals at this crucial moment. Beyond being a beautiful image and a portrait of the artist's wife, *Saskia* was significant in that it was by Rembrandt, and acquiring a Rembrandt defined one as a major collector. Pieter de Hooch's depictions of carefully maintained interiors expressed a positive view of domestic life that would have appealed to Widener with his middle-class Protestant background. Aelbert Cuyp was admired by the English for his atmospheric light effects, but this

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particular painting also came from the distinguished collection of Adriaen Hope. Meindert Hobbema was celebrated for his truthfulness to nature, and Jacob van Ruisdael was one of the heroes of the nineteenth-century romantics because of the poetic grandeur of his landscapes.

What raised Widener's sights to such a level is not certain, but I believe his new approach reflects the influence of the German art historian Wilhelm von Bode (1845–1929), director of the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin, who had come to America in 1893 to visit the World's Fair. After the fair, Bode visited art collectors and museums along the Eastern seaboard, going as far south as Philadelphia. Bode does not identify the collectors he met there, but he certainly would have spoken to John G. Johnson, William Elkins, and Widener, three wealthy Philadelphians who were beginning to acquire old master paintings. He had close contacts with all the dealers from whom Widener acquired his paintings in that year, and probably directed Widener to them.[24]

Bode was, beyond all else, a Rembrandt expert, and his impact on the collecting of Rembrandt paintings in America cannot be overestimated.[25] In the nineteenth century, Rembrandt's fame had risen to extraordinary heights, in part because his life story—his origins as a miller's son, his marriage to Saskia and her untimely death, his fame and subsequent bankruptcy, as well as the sense that he spent his later years as an isolated genius—appealed to those who lived during the romantic era. Rembrandt's expressive manner of painting appealed to artists like J. M. W. Turner, who wrote movingly about the Dutch master's use of light and dark in *The Mill* (fig. 1).[26]

Bode, who also had a romantic view of Rembrandt, admired the Dutch master's broad brushwork and chiaroscuro effects, and introduced a number of unfinished oil sketches into Rembrandt's oeuvre. For Bode, the way in which Rembrandt suppressed surface details allowed him to render "souls rather than . . . existences." While he noted that not all of Rembrandt's works were of equal quality, he attributed their failings to be "merely the defects incidental to his great and original genius."[27] Bode's appreciation of Rembrandt's late style was shared by P. A. B. Widener's advisor, Hofstede de Groot (who had assisted Bode in writing his corpus of Rembrandt's paintings), and his curator, Valentiner (who had been Bode's protégé and Hofstede de Groot's assistant), which helps explain

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the large number of late Rembrandt paintings, including oil sketches, that P. A. B. and Joseph Widener acquired.

It is, thus, not surprising that many of the Widener paintings are connected to Rembrandt's biography. Widener acquired *Saskia* from Sedelmeyer, the very dealer who would publish Bode's corpus of Rembrandt's paintings a few years later. He would have to wait until 1908 to purchase from Agnew the famous *Self-Portrait* from the Rothschild Collection (fig. 2). In 1911 Widener made his most important Rembrandt acquisition,*The Mill* (see fig. 1). Not only was *The Mill* thought to represent Rembrandt's father's mill, but its dark, brooding character was seen to express Rembrandt's "financial worries, social stress, and personal bereavements" at the time of his bankruptcy. When Widener acquired the painting, he sent it to Berlin to be examined by Bode and to be cleaned by Bode's restorer, Professor Hauser.[28] Two years later, when visiting Widener, Bode described this work as "the greatest picture in the world."[29]

Americans' ability to acquire old master paintings was abetted by changes in tax laws, both in England and in the United States. In 1894 the English government introduced death duties, which meant that many aristocratic families were forced to sell their art treasures. Equally important for P. A. B. Widener, and for other wealthy American collectors, was the fact that in 1909 the United States government dropped import duties for art entering the country. For Widener, the timing could not have been better: he was then actively working to improve the quality of his collection. He took advantage of the new tax laws to make a series of significant acquisitions, not only *The Mill,* but also Vermeer's *Woman Holding a Balance,* both of which he purchased in 1911.[30]

The heritage of the Widener/Mellon taste was still very much in evidence when I came to Washington as a David E. Finley Fellow in 1973 and it remained so for many years thereafter. I remember vividly my first walk through the oak-paneled Dutch galleries. They were big, imposing, and austere, and spaciously hung with masterpiece after masterpiece. The Gallery's twenty-three dark and brooding Rembrandts were exhibited in two non-contiguous galleries, one with works from Mellon and the other with the Widener Rembrandts. The division was intentional, and instituted as part of the negotiations that had persuaded Joseph Widener to donate the collection to the Gallery. The galleries were lit primarily by skylights, which did little to penetrate the thick coats of discolored varnish that covered

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the paintings, all of which were framed in ornate, gilded frames. The tenor was somber and hushed, appropriate for the importance of the artists represented, and even the glow of Aelbert Cuyp's light-filled landscapes in adjacent rooms did little to lighten the mood.

John Walker, the Gallery's director from 1956 to 1969, had always felt that the light levels should remain low, and they were. Walker also liked the patina of discolored varnish. Hence, by late afternoon the paintings were particularly difficult to view. Walker's primary art-historical interest was with Italian art, so, as a result, he had paid little attention to the Dutch collection. Only twelve additional Dutch paintings had been added since 1943, eight as a result of gifts and bequests, and four by purchase. Although these works had somewhat expanded the range of artists and types of paintings represented, particularly two important paintings by Pieter Saenredam that Kress had donated in 1961, and Joachim Wtewael's *Moses Striking the Rock,* purchased in 1972, the predominant Mellon and Widener taste, and the exceedingly unbalanced presentation of Dutch art it presented, had changed but little.[31]

In 1973, curatorial research at the National Gallery of Art was still in its infancy. Specialized curators had yet to be appointed, and curatorial records on individual paintings were sparse. Elsewhere, radical new assessments of Dutch art were taking place. For example, Horst Gerson, in his 1969 publication of Abraham Bredius' corpus of Rembrandt paintings, had questioned the attribution of a number of the Gallery's prized Rembrandts, including the 1650 *Self-Portrait* that P. A. B. Widener had so proudly acquired in 1908 (see fig. 2).[32] Gerson's critical assessments cast a pall over the entire collection, but his conclusions were rejected within the Gallery. In 1969, Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, who was then the visiting Kress Professor, helped organize an in-house exhibition to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Rembrandt's death, but he was not given free reign to express his own doubts.[33] The Gallery had remained in a time warp, little interested in reexamining the attributions of the works on its walls.

A change in approach, however, occurred when J. Carter Brown (1934–2002) became director in 1970. Together with his deputy director, Charles Parkhurst (1913–2008), Carter Brown established a conservation department. When I arrived in 1973, none of the Dutch paintings had undergone treatment, yet at least there was interest in discovering more about the works hanging on the walls.

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One of my most vivid memories of that year remains the experience of examining the Rembrandt paintings with Arie Bob de Vries (1905–1983), the former director of the Mauritshuis, who was then the visiting Kress Professor. Together with Kay Silberfeld, one of the Gallery's conservators, we closed the Rembrandt rooms day after day, brought in stepladders, strong lights, ultraviolet lights, and magnifying glasses to learn more about the paint layers and old restorations that lay beneath the discolored varnish that covered all these works.

These sessions evolved into a "Rembrandt project," which I undertook as a part-time "research curator" after my fellowship had ended in April 1974. That project allowed me to research the Gallery's Rembrandts and build up the curatorial files. It also involved travel to examine Rembrandt paintings in other collections. Shortly after I was appointed curator of Dutch and Flemish paintings in the fall of 1975, Kay Silberfeld began her conservation treatment of one of the Gallery's Rembrandts: *Saskia*. Not surprisingly, given the large size of the collection, not all of the Rembrandt paintings turned out to be entirely by the master's own hand. Several had been created in Rembrandt's workshop, often with the master's participation. By the time that the catalog of the Dutch collection was published in 1995, a number of attributions of Rembrandt paintings had been revised—as, for example, the Widener *Self-Portrait,* which is now designated *Portrait of Rembrandt* (see fig. 2).[34] Nevertheless, even though the master's hand is not evident in all of the Gallery's "Rembrandt" paintings, the images remain striking and compelling.

Widener's and Mellon's paintings are at the core of the Gallery's collection of Dutch paintings, but their appearance has changed substantially over the years. The Rembrandts are no longer hung in separate Widener and Mellon galleries but are integrated. Paintings are now carefully lit, and Dutch frames have replaced many of the elegant gold French and English frames that once engulfed the works. Almost all the paintings have been conserved. Relieved of discolored varnish, they have regained a vibrant presence and immediacy that had become dimmed over time. P. A. B. and Joseph Widener and Mellon had selected well—the paintings they acquired were in remarkably good condition, and remain the masterpieces they had believed them to be. Only among the Vermeer and Rembrandt paintings have attribution changes been made. Finally, a number of Dutch and Flemish paintings are hung together to emphasize the interrelated nature of their artistic traditions.

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The construction of three cabinet galleries in 1995 had a huge impact on the presentation of Dutch and Flemish paintings. Because of these newer spaces, the Gallery is now able to acquire and exhibit small paintings that would have been unsuitable in the large oak-paneled galleries. Were it not for the cabinet galleries, for example, it would not have been feasible to acquire Ambrosius Bosschaert's remarkable copper *Bouquet of Flowers in a Glass Vase* (1621) or Adriaen Coorte's evocative *Still Life with Asparagus and Red Currants* (1696), one of many superb paintings acquired in recent years with funds donated by The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund.

The cabinet galleries have also proved to be excellent venues for temporary exhibitions. The ability to display prints, drawings, and decorative arts in the wall cases provides an opportunity to enrich our understanding of the paintings and the context in which they were made. For example, in the Pieter Claesz exhibition of 2005, the ewer that Claesz depicted in one of his still lifes was shown next to that painting. Musical instruments similar to those depicted by Judith Leyster accompanied her paintings in the monographic show of 2009. These exhibitions have also prompted a number of generous donations, as, for example, Judith Leyster's small roundel, *Young Boy in Profile,* that Mrs. Thomas M. Evans gave at the time of the exhibition.

A steady stream of acquisitions has also given the Gallery's collection of Dutch art a different look. In the mid-1970s the collection numbered slightly over seventy works, while it presently consists of more than 130 paintings. Even though the Gallery does not aspire to present a complete overview of Dutch art such as one finds in the Rijksmuseum, many more artists are now represented, and the types and chronological range of paintings are also much greater.[35] As with the Gallery's core collection, these acquisitions have come as a result of generous donations from private collectors, whether as works of art or as funds designated for a specific purchase. Other paintings have been bought with National Gallery of Art acquisition funds, such as the Patrons' Permanent Fund.

In the 1970s purchases of Dutch paintings were not easy to make, partly because of lack of funds, and partly because of an overriding sense that the masterpieces that Mellon and the Wideners had collected reflected the best of Dutch art, and nothing needed to be added. The idea of purchasing Dutch art was complicated by the fact that, other than for Rembrandt, Hals, and Vermeer, Dutch painters

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were commonly described as “little masters.” The National Gallery of Art, I was told, does not collect “little masters.” An effort to introduce some of these painters to the Gallery was made through a loan-exchange program with the Rijksmuseum in the early 1980s: eight “little masters” came to Washington in exchange for a painting by Goya. An increasingly active exhibition program also brought to the Gallery a number of “little masters” as temporary guests. Occasionally, some of these guests stayed, as with Abraham Mignon’s *Still Life with Fruit, Fish, and a Nest*, which John and Teresa Heinz donated to the Gallery in conjunction with the 1989 exhibition of their remarkable collection of Dutch and Flemish still life paintings.

By the mid-1980s it had become clear that the canon of artists that appealed to Mellon and the Wideners was overly restrictive. Moreover, more flexibility in acquisitions became possible after the Board of Trustees decided to allow the Gallery to bid on paintings at auction (up to a certain price level) without requiring that the works be brought physically to the board for prior approval. The first acquisition under this new policy was Ludolf Backhuysen’s *Ships in Distress off a Rocky Coast* (fig. 3), which the Gallery bought at Christie’s in London in 1985. This acquisition of a large painting was significant for a number of reasons. Prior to its purchase, the Gallery had no true Dutch marine painting, and for a collection that featured a country that was so dependent on the sea and so adept at depicting it, this lacuna was enormous. Mellon and P. A. B. Widener, moreover, had a predilection for gentle, arcadian scenes, and this painting introduced a dramatic image of sailors facing death under threatening clouds and in storm-tossed seas.

Other major Dutch paintings acquired at auction have similarly expanded the character of the collection. Among these were Hendrick Goltzius’ *The Fall of Man* (fig. 4), purchased through the Patrons’ Permanent Fund in 1996. Goltzius was not a name familiar to the Wideners and Mellon, or their contemporaries. With the exception of Rembrandt, stories from the Bible or mythology by Dutch artists were of no interest for these collectors: such topics were deemed to be suitable for the sensitivities of Italian or French artists but not the Dutch. Even more radical than purchasing a Goltzius history painting, however, was the fact that it featured two large nudes, which would never have been acceptable to Andrew Mellon. In fact, the classicizing style of *The Fall of Man*, with its large-scale idealized images of Adam and Eve, was unlike any other image in the collection of Dutch and Flemish paintings, except for Peter Paul Rubens’ *Daniel*

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in the Lions' Den. Today, these two masterpieces hang comfortably together in the same room, a telling reminder of the contacts Goltzius and Rubens had in the 1610s.

Most recent acquisitions have focused in areas where the story of Dutch art is not adequately covered by masterpieces of the Mellon and Widener collections. As previously mentioned, Dutch and Flemish still-life painting was severely underrepresented when the National Gallery of Art first opened. Now, through the generosity of private collectors, including Mrs. Paul Mellon, the Gallery is able to exhibit about twenty flower pieces and tabletop still lifes, both large and small. One exceptional painting is Jan van Huysum's sumptuous *Still Life with Flowers and Fruit* (c. 1715), donated in 1996 by Philip and Lizanne Cunningham. A different situation existed with Rembrandt. Even though this master was extremely well represented, his works largely existed in a vacuum since the Gallery had very few works by his close contemporaries. In 2006 this situation was largely rectified by the Kaufman Americana Foundation, which donated Jan Lievens' expressive *Bearded Man with a Beret* in honor of George and Linda Kaufman.

Dutch Italianate painting was another area that needed strengthening. Andrew Mellon and P. A. B. and Joseph Widener liked their Dutch paintings to look Dutch, and were not interested in painters who were inspired by Italy or Italian art. The absence of important Italianate paintings was recognized by Robert H. Smith (1928–2009), who served as president of the Board of Trustees from 1993 to 2003, and who was a great supporter of Dutch art. Not only did he advocate that the National Gallery of Art acquire Jan Both's imposing *An Italianate Evening Landscape,* but he and his wife, Clarice, donated Nicolaes Berchem's luminous *View of an Italian Port*. Recent donations of two works by Cornelis van Poelenburch have further enriched the Gallery's collection of Italianate painting.

A different issue existed with Haarlem portraiture. The combined interest of Mellon and Widener provided the Gallery with an outstanding collection of portraits by Frans Hals. It is also fortunate to have Judith Leyster's engaging *Self-Portrait*, which Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss donated in 1949. Nevertheless, a broader view of Haarlem portraiture only occurred in 1998 with the purchase of Johannes Cornelisz Verspronck's dashing *Andries Stilte as a Standard Bearer* (1640). The story of Haarlem portraiture was further strengthened with the acquisition of Jan de Bray's posthumous *Portrait of the Artist's Parents,*

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Salomon de Bray and Anna Westerbaen (fig. 5), one of several important Dutch paintings that Joseph McCrindle donated to the Gallery. De Bray's stark double profile image has a timeless quality, quite different from the immediacy of Hals' and Leyster's portraits. De Bray stipulated in his will that the painting should be given to the city of Haarlem, an indication of the importance he attached to this commemorative portrait.

The challenge of finding Dutch paintings at the level of those that Mellon and the Wideners collected is great: far fewer important works come to the art market today than did in the early twentieth century. Nevertheless, in recent years, great paintings have come on the market as a consequence of Nazi looting during World War II. After the war, a number of those confiscated masterpieces entered museum collections; many of these have now been returned to their rightful heirs. Some families that received these restituted works have, in turn, sold them. As a result, masterpieces previously thought to have belonged to museums have become available for purchase. Fortunately, through the generosity of donors, and the leadership of the Board of Trustees and the Gallery's current director, Earl A. Powell III, the Gallery has been able to respond to this window of opportunity and acquire two masterpieces that have given new dimensions to the Dutch collection.

The first of these works is Salomon van Ruysdael's *River Landscape with Ferry* (fig. 6). Ever since I first saw this masterpiece hanging in the Rijksmuseum in 1969 I had assumed that it belonged to that great museum. It is, after all, the finest work Van Ruysdael ever painted, as its imposing composition and atmospheric effects are unmatched in his other works. I later learned, however, that *River Landscape with Ferry* had been placed at the Rijksmuseum by the Dutch government, which had assumed possession of the painting after World War II. The painting's pre-war owner was Jacques Goudstikker, a prominent Jewish art dealer in Amsterdam who died in 1940 while fleeing to England with his family. After the Nazis took control of his gallery, the painting was confiscated and sent to Hermann Göring. In 2006, the painting was restituted to Goudstikker's heirs, who then offered it for sale through Christie's. The National Gallery of Art acquired this masterpiece with acquisition funds generously provided by the Patrons' Permanent Fund and The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund.

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Hendrick ter Brugghen's *Bagpipe Player* (fig. 7) was another restituted masterpiece that the Gallery was able to purchase through the combination of Gallery funds—in this instance, the Paul Mellon Fund and the enthusiastic support and generosity of Greg and Candy Fazakerley. Ter Brugghen and other Utrecht Caravaggisti had always been notably absent from the Gallery's collection: such works were not part of the canon admired by Mellon and P. A. B. Widener. They were also not appreciated by John Walker, who could have steered such paintings into the Kress Collection, and hence to the Gallery.[36] Until this painting's restitution from the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne in 2008, I had believed that acquiring one of Ter Brugghen's iconic images would be impossible since they reside in museum collections. The museum in Cologne had acquired the painting at a forced sale of the possessions of the Van Klemperer family in Berlin. After it was restituted to the family's heirs, the painting was offered for sale, and the Gallery acquired it from a consortium of art dealers.

These last two acquisitions involve restituted paintings, but in many ways the most moving story connected to the horrific events of World War II concerns Aelbert Cuyp's *River Landscape with Cows* (fig. 8), which belonged to the Petschek family in Aussig, Czechoslovakia. Aware of Nazi intentions, the family fled their homeland in 1938, leaving behind a painted copy of this work on the walls of their home as a show of defiance against Hitler. The family took the unframed Cuyp painting with them as they made their way through France and Spain, eventually reaching Brazil and finally, in 1940, the United States. After the death of their mother in 1986, Elisabeth de Picciotto and Maria Petschek Smith donated this wonderful painting to the National Gallery of Art in appreciation of all that America had done for refugees, including their family, and for "the freedom and opportunities it has afforded to so many throughout its history."[37]

Their sentiments, so poignantly expressed, have been shared by all of the many donors to the National Gallery of Art since its beginnings in 1941. As one enters John Russell Pope's magnificent building and wanders through elegantly appointed rooms filled with some of the world's greatest art treasures, it is impossible not to feel that sense of pride that accompanied the donation of each of the works hanging in the galleries. Andrew W. Mellon, P. A. B. and Joseph E. Widener, Samuel H. Kress, and the other founding members of the National Gallery of Art provided an extraordinary foundation for this institution, and, as Mellon envisioned, their example of philanthropy has continued to inspire new

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generations to join in this legacy. The institution has grown and matured not only in its collections, but also through its conservation practices, scholarly research, and educational programs, all of which help the Gallery nurture and interpret the treasures entrusted to its care.

Dutch art, of course, is but one component of the story of the National Gallery of Art, but it is an important one. The historical connection between the Dutch and the Americans that so inspired turn-of-the-century collectors remains true and valid today, but the associations are now more nuanced than they were in the past. Cultures have evolved, and our understanding of past societies—including the Netherlands and America—is now quite different than it was. More and a greater variety of Dutch artists painted at an extraordinarily high level than previously imagined. With the introduction of their work into the Gallery's collection, we gain deeper insights into the Netherlands, its people, and their society. The story, however, is not yet finished and will keep evolving as new artistic treasures come to the National Gallery of Art and join the existing collection.

NOTES

[1]This text is based on an essay that appears in the following publication: *Holland's Golden Age in America: Collecting the Art of Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Hals,* edited by Esmée Quodbach (New York, 2014). I am extremely grateful to the Center for the History of Collecting at the Frick Art Reference Library, the Frick Collection, New York, which copublished this volume with the Pennsylvania State University Press, for granting permission to include this essay in *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*.

I would like to thank Henriette Rahusen and Jennifer Henel, my colleagues in the department of northern baroque paintings at the National Gallery of Art, for their assistance in preparing this essay, which I wrote in 2010.

[2] These words were spoken by Paul Mellon at the opening of the National Gallery of Art on March 17, 1941. Andrew Mellon, his father, had died in August 1937, shortly after construction of the Gallery had begun. For a full account of Mellon's gift, and the complex lawsuit over his taxes that unfolded in the latter

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years of his life, see Philip Kopper, *America's National Gallery of Art: A Gift to the Nation* (New York, 1991) and David Cannadine, *Mellon: An American Life* (New York, 2006), 158–160.

[3] Special arrangements made with Samuel Kress allowed the Gallery to de-accession paintings not deemed worthy of being part of the National Gallery of Art collection. These decisions were largely made in consultation with John Walker. In the late 1940s a program was developed to distribute a great number of paintings to regional museums in the United States. See Marilyn Perry, "The Kress Collection," in *A Gift to America: Masterpieces of European Painting from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Raleigh, NC, 1994), 13–35.

[4] From P. A. B. Widener, *Without Drums* (New York, 1940), 57: "Grandfather and Father working together pared the original collection from four hundred and ten pictures of assorted worth down to one hundred outstanding paintings. Each painting in the present collection is the very best which could be obtained of the artist represented. There is no question about any of them."

[5] For information on this painting and all other Dutch paintings in the collection of the National Gallery of Art prior to 1995, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* (Washington, DC, 1995).

[6] Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.,"The Story of Two Vermeer Forgeries," in *Shop Talk: Studies in Honor of Seymour Slive,* eds. C. P. Schneider, W. W. Robinson and A. I. Davies (Cambridge, MA, 1995), 271–275. For an argument that the painter of these forgeries was Han van Meegeren, see Jonathan Lopez, *The Man Who Made Vermeers: Unvarnishing the Legend of Master Forger Han van Meegeren* (Orlando, 2008).

[7] David Cannadine, *Mellon: An American Life* (New York, 2006).

[8] For Mellon's relationship to Joseph Duveen, see Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004). In *Mellon: An American Life* (New York, 2006), David Cannadine notes that Mellon's first acquisitions around 1900, which consisted mostly of nineteenth-century French paintings and British art, were from Knoedler's Pittsburgh office. It was at this time, however, that he bought

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his first seventeenth-century Dutch painting, Aelbert Cuyp's *Herdsman Tending Cattle,* now at the National Gallery of Art.

[9] Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004), particularly pages 299–308.

[10] Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004), 302–305.

[11] According to Maygene Daniels, archivist at the National Gallery of Art, Dale admired French impressionist still-life paintings and wanted to place them within a broader overview of the still-life tradition. The Kalf acquisition, which occurred in 1930, was made in that context. Another still life was added to the collection in 1961 when a flower piece by Jan Davidsz de Heem was purchased.

[12] See Walter Liedtke, "Dutch Paintings in America: The Collectors and Their Ideals," in *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, ed. Ben Broos (The Hague, 1990), 31–54. A desire for social prestige, and a competition among peers, both implicit and explicit, motivated all of these collectors.

[13] An excellent sense of the efforts by dealers to place important paintings with their millionaire clients is found in Cynthia Saltzman, *Old Masters, New World: America's Raid on Europe's Great Pictures 1880-World War I* (New York, 2008).

[14] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London 1829–1842). For John Smith's influence on English collecting taste, and the character of the National Gallery of Art collection around 1900, see Christopher Brown, "Revising the Canon: The Collector's Point of View." *Simiolus* 26 (1998): 201–212.

[15] For an excellent examination of Widener's collection, see Esmée Quodbach, "'The Last of the American Versailles': The Widener Collection at Lynnewood Hall," *Simiolus* 29 (2002): 42–96. Initially, Widener seems to have relied on the advice of his friends William Elkins (1832–1903) and John G. Johnson (1841–1917) as well as that of the British art dealer Charles Fairfax Murray (1849–1919). Widener's initial efforts at collecting, which occurred in the late 1880s, were largely directed toward the Barbizon School and British art, and the results turned out to be decidedly mixed. His collection of Italian paintings was also fraught with

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difficulties and was criticized by Bernard and Mary Berenson in 1904 (see David Alan Brown, *Berenson and the Connoisseurship of Italian Painting* (Washington, DC, 1979).

[16] Widener acquired a number of questionable Dutch paintings from Leo Nardus. (See Jonathan Lopez, "Gross False Pretences," *Apollo* 347 [December 2007]: 76–83). Eventually P. A. B. Widener and his son, Joseph, realized that the attributions of many of these works, including three purported Vermeer paintings, were wrong, and returned them to Nardus. Widener also invited the Dutch art historian Cornelis Hofstede de Groot to come to assess his collection. A catalog of the Widener Collection as it existed around 1900, with annotations Hofstede de Groot dated 1908, is in the library of the National Gallery of Art.

[17] A large number of works were sold in the first decades of the twentieth century, often as part of a trade to acquire better works of art. For example, in 1908, as part of the purchase price for three Van Dyck paintings, Widener traded in fifty-two paintings. See Cynthia Saltzman, *Old Masters, New World: America's Raid on Europe's Great Pictures 1880–World War I* (New York, 2008). According to Widener's later curator, Wilhelm Valentiner, 150 paintings were eventually purged from the collection (see Wilhelm R. Valentiner, "Diary from My First American Years," *Art News* 58 [April 1959]: 51–52). Some of the paintings de-accessioned in these years, including still lifes, may have been sold because they did not conform to the contemporary canon of Dutch art. See also W. Martin, *Alt-Hollandische Bilder (Sammeln/Bestimmen/Konservieren),* 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1921), 18–19, who commends Widener for his willingness to review his collection and improve upon its quality.

[18] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* (Washington, DC, 1995), for Widener's trip to Russia in 1909. See also Cynthia Saltzman, *Old Masters, New World: America's Raid on Europe's Great Pictures 1880–World War I* (New York, 2008), 206, for negotiations in Paris in 1908 for three Genoese Van Dyck paintings.

[19] See Annette Stott, *Holland Mania: The Unknown Dutch Period in American Art and Culture* (New York, 1998) for a fascinating overview of the appeal of the Netherlands for contemporary American artists, and for the artist colonies that

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they visited. See also Annette Stott and Holly Koons McCullough, *Dutch Utopia: American Artists in the Netherlands, 1880–1914* (Savannah, GA, 2009).

[20] John Lothrop Motley, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic: A History*, vol. 1 (New York, 1855).

[21] See Douglas Campbell, *The Puritan in Holland, England and America: An Introduction to American History,* 2 vols. (New York, 1893), and William Elliot Griffis, *Brave Little Holland and What She Taught Us* (Boston and New York, 1894). Annette Stott, *Holland Mania: The Unknown Dutch Period in American Art and Culture* (New York, 1998), 78–89, notes that the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, freedom of education, and freedom of worship were all seen as deriving from Dutch precedents.

[22] At this time Widener also set in motion plans for architect Horace Trumbauer (1868–1938) to design and build Lynnewood Hall, the enormous Georgian revival-style mansion in Elkins Park that would soon house Widener's collection of paintings and decorative arts.

[23] Widener also acquired in that year four other major Dutch paintings that he eventually sold, including a Jan van de Cappelle, an Aert van der Neer, a Jan Steen (which is now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art), a Willem van de Velde the Younger from Colnaghi, and a Simon de Vlieger from Agnew. In that year he also bought a number of important paintings by artists of different schools that were eventually donated to the National Gallery of Art: a Van Dyck (*The Prefect Raffaele Raggi*) from Sedelmeyer, an Édouard Manet (*The Dead Toreador*) from Cottier and Co., a Turner (*The Junction of the Thames and the Medway*) from Wallis and Son, and a Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (*Two Women at a Window)* from Stephen T. Gooden. He also bought a "Velasquez" from Gooden that turned out to be a reduced copy of a painting in the Museo del Prado. This painting was later sold.

[24] Sedelmeyer was at that time sponsoring Bode's efforts to publish a corpus of Rembrandt's paintings (Wilhelm von Bode, *Rembrandt und seine Zeitgenossen: Charakterbilder der grossen Meister der Hollandischen und Vlamischen Malerschule im siebzehnten Jahrhundert* [Leipzig, 1906]). Bode also had close

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ties to Colnaghi, which was transformed as an organization in 1894. In that year a partnership was formed between William McKay, Otto Gutekunst, and Edmond Deprez, and the Gallery began to shift its focus from prints and drawings to old master paintings. For Bode's close relationship with McKay and Goodekunst, see Jeremy Howard, "A Masterly Old Master Dealer of the Gilded Age: Otto Gutekunst and Colnaghi," in *Colnaghi Established 1760: The History,* ed. Jeremy Howard (London, 2010), 12–19.

[25] Wilhelm von Bode, *Mein Leben*, 2 vols. (1910–1929); reprint Thomas W. Gaehtgens and Barbara Paul, eds. (Berlin, 1997).

[26] John Gage, *Color in Turner: Poetry and Truth* (New York, 1969).

[27] Wilhelm von Bode, *Rembrandt und seine Zeitgenossen: Charakterbilder der grossen Meister der Hollandischen und Vlamischen Malerschule im siebzehnten Jahrhundert*(Leipzig, 1906).

[28] For a discussion of this acquisition, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* (Washington, DC, 1995).

[29] P. A. B. Widener, *Without Drums* (New York, 1940).

[30] The fact that the English instituted death duties in 1911 meant that a number of masterpieces were then being sold by British aristocrats.

[31] The other significant acquisitions during this period were Judith Leyster's self-portrait, given by the Bliss family in 1949; a Gerrit Dou from the Timken Collection in 1960; two paintings by Jacob van Ruisdael, one given by Rupert L. Joseph in 1960 and one from the Kress Collection in 1961; a still life by Jan Davidsz de Heem, purchased in 1961; a winter scene by Hendrick Avercamp, bought in 1967; and a landscape by Jan van der Heyden, acquired in 1968.

[32] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings,* rev. by Horst Gerson (London, 1969).

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[33] National Gallery of Art, *Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1969).

[34] Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* (Washington, DC, 1995).

[35] Only two of these acquisitions are paintings by artists represented in the Widener/Mellon gifts, a landscape by Aelbert Cuyp (1986.70.1) and a genre scene by Isack van Ostade (1991.64.1).

[36] Edgar Peters Bowron, "The Kress Brothers and Their 'Bucolic Pictures': The Creation of an Italian Baroque Collection," in *A Gift to America: Masterpieces of European Painting from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Raleigh, NC, 1994), 49–54.

[37] This summary of the history of the Cuyp painting is taken from the personal account of Maria Petschek Smith and Elizabeth de Picciotto, which they wrote in 2010 (NGA curatorial files).

*This text is based on an essay that appears in the following publication: *Holland's Golden Age in America: Collecting the Art of Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Hals.* Edited by Esmée Quodbach. New York: The Frick Collection; University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2014.

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Mill*, 1645/1648, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.62

fig. 2 Rembrandt Workshop, *Portrait of Rembrandt*, 1650, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.70

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fig. 3 Ludolf Backhuysen, *Ships in Distress off a Rocky Coast*, 1667, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 1985.29.1

fig. 4 Hendrick Goltzius, *The Fall of Man*, 1616, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Patrons' Permanent Fund, 1996.34.1

fig. 5 Jan de Bray, *Portrait of the Artist's Parents, Salomon de Bray and Anna Westerbaen*, 1664, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Joseph F. McCrindle in memory of his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Feder, 2001.86.1

fig. 6 Salomon van Ruysdael, *River Landscape with Ferry*, 1649, oil on canvas, Patrons' Permanent Fund and The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund. This acquisition was made possible through the generosity of the family of Jacques Goudstikker, in his memory, 2007.116.1

fig. 7 Hendrick ter Brugghen, *Bagpipe Player*, 1624, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Paul Mellon Fund and Greg and Candy Fazakerley Fund, 2009.24.1

fig. 8 Aelbert Cuyp, *River Landscape with Cows*, 1645/1650, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Family Petschek (Aussig), 1986.70.1

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Issues of Attribution in the Rembrandt Workshop

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

As an introduction to the entries on paintings by Rembrandt and his school it seems appropriate to discuss briefly the history of Rembrandt connoisseurship as it pertains to this collection. This overview is intended to provide a framework for understanding the approach to attributions that is taken in this collection.

That Rembrandt was a genius has never been questioned, yet one of the ironies of Rembrandt scholarship is that each generation has developed its own perception of his genius.[1] This phenomenon is most clearly seen in the different character of the artist's oeuvre described in the literature since the early nineteenth century. In 1836 the English art dealer John Smith, who compiled the first catalog of Rembrandt's paintings, accepted 614 works as by the master, although many of these he knew only from written descriptions or from reproductive prints.[2] Still, Smith was convinced that the qualities of Rembrandt's genius are evident to an "experienced eye." According to Smith, these qualities span beyond manual dexterity to "beauties which emanate from a higher source, such as expression, delicacy of gradation, and harmony of tints, [and] are beyond the reach of all who are inferior to the master himself."[3] Smith, however, knew neither the very early nor the very late paintings by Rembrandt; the latest dated work he knew was Rembrandt's 1664 depiction of Lucretia (fig. 1). As was often the case, Smith saw in Rembrandt's choice of subject reflections of the artist's own life. Lucretia's tragedy, he felt, was painted in reaction to the trouble Rembrandt had experienced during the painful close of his life.[4]

In reality, the nature of Rembrandt's oeuvre and its relationship to events in the artist's life has proved to be far more complicated than Smith anticipated. By the beginning of the twentieth century the great Rembrandt scholar Wilhelm von Bode had rejected a large number of works included in Smith's catalog and added an almost equal number of new discoveries in his eight-volume corpus of

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Rembrandt's works.[5] Many of the fifty to sixty newly discovered works included in the last volume of Bode's corpus were oil sketches, unfinished preparatory works, or boldly executed paintings from the end of Rembrandt's career. One of Bode's major discoveries, for example, was the *Man with a Gilded Helmet* (fig. 2) that he bought for the Berlin Museum.[6] The broad brushwork of paintings like this one epitomized for Bode Rembrandt's stylistic independence and creative genius. Bode, whose outlook was deeply influenced by the romantic movement and its ideals of creative genius, greatly admired Rembrandt's chiaroscuro effects, which suppressed surface details to such an extent that the artist could render "souls rather than existences."[7] For Bode, Rembrandt's art marked "a climax in the development of universal art."

As great an artist as Rembrandt was, Bode maintained that the "thinker and poet in him were still greater than the painter; they even worked occasionally to the detriment of the artist, seducing him into a fantastic handling of simple motives that demanded a purely realistic treatment."[8] Bode noted that not all of Rembrandt's works were of equal quality, attributing any failings to "merely the defects incidental to his great and original genius."[9] Bode believed that Rembrandt had to be "studied as a whole, only thus is he comprehensible and unsurpassable." According to him, it was necessary to study the totality of the master's oeuvre, which includes drawings, prints, and paintings, as well as the coarse, the refined, the elegant, and the harsh elements of his art.

Bode's inclination to incorporate a wide range of styles into his Rembrandt corpus was expanded upon by his protégé Wilhelm Valentiner. Through his numerous publications on Rembrandt in the first decades of the twentieth century, Valentiner also introduced a large number of paintings into Rembrandt's oeuvre.[10] At the turn of the twentieth century, with the inclusive approach of Bode, Valentiner, and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, who had assisted Bode in producing his Rembrandt catalog, and who later compiled his own catalog of Rembrandt paintings,[11] the corpus of Rembrandt's work grew to more than 700 paintings. Yet many of Bode's discoveries and most of Valentiner's have not withstood the test of time.[12] Later twentieth-century scholars, in particular Abraham Bredius, Jakob Rosenberg, and Kurt Bauch, rejected a number of attributions made by Bode and Valentiner.[13] Until Horst Gerson's 1969 revised edition of Bredius' 1935 catalog, art historians had not recognized the degree to which Rembrandt's oeuvre had become bloated with wrongly attributed

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paintings.[14] Gerson's publication, which accepted only 435 paintings as authentic, shocked the art world because he rejected a number of paintings that had long been considered among Rembrandt's major works, including *The Descent from the Cross* (fig. 3) and the 1650 *Self-Portrait* (now called *Portrait of Rembrandt*) in the National Gallery of Art (fig. 4). Gerson attributed a large number of his rejected paintings to Rembrandt's pupils but also maintained that many had been painted by later imitators.

In recent years the issues of Rembrandt attributions have been kept very much alive by the publications of the Rembrandt Research Project (RRP), hereafter referred to as the *Corpus.* This project was organized in 1968 with the intent of studying Rembrandt paintings within a scientific framework.[15] Working first under the leadership of Josua Bruyn and then under Ernst van de Wetering, the RRP has applied even more stringent standards than those of Gerson. Rembrandt's oeuvre, as a result, has once more been radically trimmed: the RRP now accepts around 250 paintings as authentic works by the master.

The RRP has provided a new foundation for subsequent Rembrandt research. Aside from its careful descriptions of the works themselves, which also include the publication of much new technical information, particularly about materials and supports, the project has analyzed anew contemporary documents, including inventories, and examined issues of Rembrandt's workshop. However, the structure of the RRP, the personalities involved, and the art-historical approach evident in the volumes of the *Corpus* have changed dramatically over the years, demonstrating, yet again, the continually evolving character of research on Rembrandt's life and work. To begin with, the first three volumes of the *Corpus*, which were written under the guidance of Josua Bruyn, were organized chronologically; the last two volumes, under the guidance of Ernst van de Wetering, are organized thematically, with volume 4 devoted to Rembrandt's self-portraits and the projected volume 5 devoted to small figure history paintings and landscapes.[16]

The most significant changes between the first three volumes and the later volumes of the *Corpus*, however, are in approach. In the later volumes, the authors are more willing to acknowledge uncertainties in our understanding of the past than was evident at the beginning of the project. In my assessment, the first three volumes of the *Corpus* the RRP made too many precise judgments

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of attribution given our partial understanding of various aspects of Rembrandt's life and work, whether they be his relations to his patrons or the running of his workshop.[17] A number of critics rightly argued, moreover, that the RRP's view of Rembrandt's range of style and technique had been too narrow and had been premised on the idea that his work had progressed in a totally logical manner.[18] As many have noted, the evidence gained from Rembrandt's etchings and drawings indicates that he often radically altered both style and technique to create different effects, sometimes within the same image.

The RRP, in general, has been extremely critical of Rembrandt scholarship that grew out of the romantic era. It has argued that the range of styles of painting that Bode, among others, embraced is too broad. To substantiate its belief, the RRP has given great weight to evidence gained through scientific investigations, particularly in matters of painting technique, including the types and sizes of the supports, composition of the grounds, buildup of paint layers, and individual characteristics of brushwork. While such technical examinations are important, I differ from the approach taken by the RRP in that I believe that nineteenth- and early twentieth-century interpretations of Rembrandt's paintings can provide important insights into understanding the past. I tend to believe that Rembrandt's personal circumstances may well have affected the mood and subject matter of his works. While his career has certainly been over-romanticized, there are usually germs of truth in the myths surrounding his life and art.

One assumption made in the first three volumes of the *Corpus* that is consistent with the tradition of Smith and Bode is that Rembrandt executed paintings without the assistance of members of his workshop.[19] While the discussions of some paintings in the *Corpus* raise the possibility of workshop collaboration in the master's works, such instances have been treated as the exception rather than the rule.[20] Unfortunately, the designations A, B, and C that the RRP has used in its first three volumes to differentiate between "accepted," "do not know," and "rejected" paintings do not provide a framework for works produced collaboratively in the workshop.[21] The precise distinctions the RRP made in these volumes between autograph and non-autograph works, however, does not accord with workshop practice in the seventeenth century, and this approach has been discontinued in volume 4.[22] Despite the opinions of Bruyn, it seems most likely that Rembrandt, like Sir Peter Paul Rubens in Antwerp and Sir Anthony van

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Dyck in England, used studio assistants to help him produce paintings for the market, especially during the 1630s when his work was in great demand.[23]

Despite the research of Van de Wetering, Bruyn, and others, many questions still remain about the practices of the Rembrandt workshop.[24] In 2005, Van de Wetering raised a fundamental question about the nature of workshop production that was not seriously considered by earlier volumes of the *Corpus*: "[D]oes the work betray a genesis which would suggest that the maker was also the person who developed the conception of the work? If the answer . . . is yes, can it be the work of Rembrandt himself or a pupil or an assistant, or was it executed by several people?"[25] Documentary evidence indicates that during the mid-1630s in particular, Rembrandt worked together with pupils and assistants on the same compositions. In other instances he may have encouraged students or assistants to devise compositions based on a conceptual framework he had developed in his own paintings, drawings, or quick oil sketches.

The evidence for such an integrated approach to workshop production comes from many sources: inscriptions on paintings and etchings, reworkings found on drawings, collaborative works listed in his inventory, and, finally, the visual and technical evidence of the works themselves. Indications of workshop collaboration include the series of four etched oriental heads from 1635 that are based on prototypes by Jan Lievens and are signed "Rembrandt geretuckert" (Rembrandt retouched)[26]; the large *Abraham's Sacrifice* in Munich, a version of Rembrandt's painting in the Hermitage that is inscribed "Rembrandt, verandert. En over geschildert. 1636" (Rembrandt, changed. And painted over. 1636); and a number of paintings in the 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's possessions that are described as having been "geretukeert" (retouched) by Rembrandt, and one work that is said to have been "gemodelt" (designed by) Rembrandt.[27]

Much debate exists over the meaning of these inscriptions and terms, but it seems quite clear that they all indicate a form of collaborative undertaking. In some circumstances Rembrandt's intent may have been to correct compositional or design elements in paintings, much as he sometimes did with students' drawings. It also seems probable, however, that he developed various ways to utilize his workshop to increase his own production, particularly during the 1630s, when he received a large number of commissions.

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Although the size of Rembrandt's workshop at various stages of his career is uncertain, a number of artists, including Govaert Flinck (Dutch, 1615 – 1660), came to Rembrandt only after they had received preliminary training with another master. They must have come to learn his style, but presumably they were proficient enough to assist Rembrandt with his own productions. The collaboration in Rembrandt's workshop thus could have taken many forms: Rembrandt could have provided a model in the form of a drawing or oil sketch for an assistant to use as a basis for a painting executed in his style; he could have blocked in the composition on the canvas or panel before it was completed by an assistant;[28] he could have had assistants paint costumes and even hands on commissioned portraits;[29] and finally, he almost certainly retouched and improved upon works produced by students and assistants. One can also imagine that two or more students could have worked on the same painting. Moreover, a frequently overlooked complicating factor in determining attribution questions is that many paintings were probably worked on over a period of time. Whether or not the nature of workshop productions appreciably altered from one decade to the next is difficult to determine, particularly since little documentation about the workshop exists after Rembrandt's financial difficulties of the 1650s.[30]

The hypothesis that Rembrandt worked closely with members of his workshop at various stages of his career accounts for the many Rembrandtesque paintings that are difficult to attribute to a specific member of his workshop. It is also consistent with his documented practice of signing works made by members of his workshop. It helps explain why paintings not executed primarily by Rembrandt were inscribed with the master's name, and, finally, why so many works listed in Rembrandt's inventory as being by his hand appear to have been workshop productions.[31]

This synopsis of the history of Rembrandt connoisseurship in the last century and a half has specific implications for the National Gallery of Art collection. The Rembrandt paintings here, with one exception, came from two major collections: that of the Widener family and that of Andrew Mellon.[32] Both collections were formed at a time when Bode's influence on Rembrandt connoisseurship was at its height. The Wideners collected their Rembrandt paintings from 1894 until the 1920s. Peter A. B. Widener probably met Bode when the German art historian came to Philadelphia in 1893, during his tour of American collections, after viewing the Chicago World's Fair (see "A History of the Dutch Paintings

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Collection").[33] Widener's later advisor, and the advisor of his son Joseph Widener, was none other than Wilhelm Valentiner. Mellon collected slightly after Widener, and he acquired four Rembrandt paintings from the Hermitage during the 1930s. Nevertheless, his generation had also learned to love and appreciate Rembrandt through the eyes of Bode. Thus, as a collection, the Gallery's paintings tend to be the types of paintings Bode and Valentiner most admired, works from the end of Rembrandt's life, when his brushwork is bold and evocative. Following romantic inclinations, these collectors were drawn to paintings that were intimately associated with the artist's life.

Widener's first painting by Rembrandt was a portrait of Saskia (fig. 5) and his most famous work was thought to represent the mill of Rembrandt's father (*The Mill,* fig. 6); each collector owned a self-portrait (fig. 4 and fig. 7). Virtually all the Rembrandt paintings in these collections were covered with discolored and even tinted varnishes to give them that "golden glow" so admired in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A large number of paintings acquired by Widener and Mellon were extremely famous at the time of their purchase, and their acquisitions were highly acclaimed by both the leading experts and the popular press. Nevertheless, as scholars reduced the size of Rembrandt's oeuvre in the second half of the twentieth century, many of these paintings have been viewed critically; some have been attributed to pupils of Rembrandt, some have been called later imitations. Other paintings have entered into an undefined limbo, where vague doubts about the attribution are expressed verbally or in the literature, but where no specific arguments have been advanced to explain why they should not be accepted as authentic.

In trying to determine the attribution of twenty-four paintings to Rembrandt and his workshop for this edition, a wide range of material has been analyzed, from the provenances of the works to old reproductive prints and descriptions in sales catalogs to the opinions of other scholars. Iconographic issues have been explored by looking at both texts available to Rembrandt and probable visual sources. A concerted effort was made, moreover, to examine all of the paintings carefully in the laboratory. Paintings were looked at under the microscope, signatures were studied, x-radiographs were taken, infrared and ultraviolet photographs were made, and panel and canvas supports were analyzed.

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Most of these paintings have been restored so that discolored varnish and old overpaint could be removed. Other information has been acquired from further investigations undertaken in collaboration with members of our scientific department.[34]

The results of the restorations and technical examinations, which are discussed in these objects' entries, have often been dramatic, providing reassessments of the quality of a number of individual works, and, in some instances, leading to proposals for new attributions, as in *The Descent from the Cross*. Nevertheless, as in the example of *Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife*, not all issues of attribution have been fully resolved, generally because a painting's style and technique could not be identified with that of a specific artist from Rembrandt's workshop. In an effort to reflect the complex nature of the Rembrandt school, attributions of these paintings have been designated in the following ways: Rembrandt van Rijn, Rembrandt Workshop, Follower of Rembrandt van Rijn, and Style of Rembrandt van Rijn. The distinctions are in basic accordance with National Gallery of Art practice, as is outlined in "Notes to the User." Within the Rembrandt van Rijn entries, however, are also works designated "Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop," a distinction here used when stylistic evidence indicates that Rembrandt collaborated in the execution of a painting. Collaboration between Rembrandt and members of his workshop may also have occurred in one form or another in paintings designated here simply as "Rembrandt Workshop," but in these paintings, evidence of Rembrandt's own brushwork has not been found in the final image. When a specific artist can be associated with a painting executed in the workshop that was produced to be sold under Rembrandt's name, the name of that artist is indicated in parentheses following the designations "Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop" or "Rembrandt Workshop."

NOTES

[1] For overviews of earlier assessments of Rembrandt, see Seymour Slive, *Rembrandt and His Critics, 1630–1730* (The Hague, 1953); R. W. Scheller, "Rembrandt's reputatie van Houbraken tot Scheltema," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 12 (1961): 81–118; and Jan Ameling Emmens, *Rembrandt en de Regels van de Kunst* (Utrecht, 1968). For a general account of the history of Rembrandt criticism see Jeroen Broomgaard and Robert W. Scheller, "A Delicate Balance: A Brief Survey of Rembrandt Criticism," in *Rembrandt: The Master and*

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His Workshop, ed. Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and P. J. J. van Thiel (New Haven and London, 1991), 106–123.

[2] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French Painters*, vol. 7 (London, 1836).

[3] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 7:244.

[4] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 7:xxiv.

[5] Wilhelm von Bode, with the assistance of Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Works of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (1897–1906).

[6] Despite the enormous fame of this work, the *Man with a Gilded Helmet* is no longer attributed to Rembrandt. See Jan Kelch et al., *Der Mann mit dem Goldhelm* (Berlin, 1986).

[7] Wilhelm von Bode, with the assistance of Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 8:19.

[8] Wilhelm von Bode, with the assistance of Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 8:22.

[9] Wilhelm von Bode, with the assistance of Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 8:30.

[10] Valentiner's publications on Rembrandt are numerous; for the most important see Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt, des Meisters Gemälde,* Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 2, 3rd ed. (Stuttgart, 1908), and Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt: wiedergefundene Gemälde (1910–1920),* Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 27, 2nd ed. (Berlin and Leipzig, 1923). For a full listing

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of his publications, see *Masterpieces of Art: In Memory of Wilhelm R. Valentiner, 1880–1958* (Raleigh, NC, 1959), 297–319.

[11] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, vol. 6 (London, 1916).

[12] See Catherine B. Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship* (Amsterdam 2004), 169–179.

[13] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* (Vienna, 1935); Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA, 1948; rev. ed. 1964); Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde* (Berlin, 1966).

[14] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, rev. ed. by Horst Gerson (London, 1969). For an excellent assessment of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century connoisseurship of Rembrandt's work, see Catherine B. Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship* (Amsterdam, 2004).

[15] Initial funding for this project was provided by the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research (ZWO), later called the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). It also received support from the University of Amsterdam.

[16] See Ernst van de Wetering, ed., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 4, *The Self Portraits* (Dordrecht, 2005), ix–xxii.

[17] A partial listing of the various reviews of the publications of the RRP is as follows: Editorial, *The Burlington Magazine* 125 (1983): 661–663; J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer, "Review of vol. 1," *Akt* 9 (1985): 14–19; Peter Schatborn, "Review of vol. 1.," *Oud-Holland* 100 (1986): 55–63; Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, "The State of Research in Northern Baroque Art," *Art Bulletin* 69 (1987): 510–519, particularly 514–516; Walter Liedtke, "Reconstructing Rembrandt: Portraits from the Early Years in Amsterdam (1631–1634)," *Apollo* (May 1989): 323–331, 371–372; Sylvia Hochfield, "Rembrandt: The Unvarnished Truth?," *Art News* (December 1987), 102–111; Mansfield Kirby Talley Jr., "Connoisseurship and

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the Methodology of the Rembrandt Research Project," *International Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship* 8 (1989): 175–214; Leonard J. Slatkes, "Review of vol. 2," *Art Bulletin* 71 (1989): 139–144. For an excellent overview of the controversies surrounding the RRP, see Anthony Bailey, "The Art World ('The Polish Rider')," *The New Yorker* (5 March 1990), 45–77.

[18] To demonstrate how subjective interpretations of painting technique can be, it is necessary only to compare the results of the research of the RRP in the first three volumes of the *Corpus* with those of Claus Grimm in his *Rembrandt Selbst: Eine Neubewertung Seiner Portraïtkunst* (Stuttgart, 1991). Grimm, who also carefully analyzes artists' painting techniques as a basis for attribution, has arrived at a very different list of paintings he believes were executed entirely by the master than that found in the *Corpus.* He is, in fact, more restrictive in the paintings he attributes to Rembrandt than the RRP.

[19] For an excellent assessment of Rembrandt's workshop practice, examined from the vantage point of the RRP, see Josua Bruyn, "Rembrandt's Workshop: Its Function and Production," in *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop*, ed. by Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and P. J. J. van Thiel (New Haven and London, 1991), 68–89, and in particular pages 83–85: "On the whole, one may say that with Rembrandt design and execution were closely bound up. Instead of making use of sophisticated workshop procedures which could in part replace the share of the master's hand, he seems to have allowed invention and execution to be separated only in the early stages of the assistants' activities. Later, they would be welcome to their own design and only rarely did they intervene with his own work."

[20] See, for example, Josua Bruyn, "Rembrandt's Workshop: Its Function and Production," in *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop*, ed. Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and P. J. J. van Thiel (New Haven and London, 1991), 85.

[21] In *The Burlington Magazine* 135 (1993), 279, J. Bruyn, B. Haak, S. H. Levie, and P. J. J. van Thiel wrote a letter saying that they were no longer involved with the RRP. They indicated that the project would in the future be headed by Ernst van de Wetering, who intended to eliminate the A, B, C categorization in future volumes of the *Corpus*.

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[22] These changes were, in fact, made. Please see Ernst van de Wetering, ed., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 4, *The Self-Portraits* (Dordrecht, 2005), xviii.

[23] For discussions of the workshops of Rubens and Anthony van Dyck, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. in Cynthia P. Schneider, *Rembrandt's Landscapes: Drawings and Prints*, exh. cat. (Boston, 1990), 11–16, and Barnes in Cynthia P. Schneider, *Rembrandt's Landscapes: Drawings and Prints*, exh. cat. (Boston, 1990), 17–25. Josua Bruyn ("Rembrandt's Workshop: Its Function and Production," in *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop*, ed. Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and P. J. J. van Thiel [New Haven and London, 1991], 83), who does not believe that Rembrandt had assistants help him in the manner of Rubens, expressly contrasts the types of commissions Rembrandt and Rubens received and notes that no evidence of workshop participation has been found in the few large-scale commissions Rembrandt did receive, among them *The Blinding of Sampson* (Städelsches Kunstinstitut) and *The Night Watch* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). Bruyn, however, is not consistent in his belief; he argues that the horse in Rembrandt's *Portrait of Frederick Rihel on Horseback,* 1663(?) (National Gallery, London), was executed by an assistant.

[24] See, in particular, Ernst van de Wetering, "Problems of Apprenticeship and Studio Collaboration," in *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (The Hague, Boston, and London, 1982), 2:45–90; Josua Bruyn, "Rembrandt's Workshop: Its Function and Production," in *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop*, ed. Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and P. J. J. van Thiel (New Haven and London, 1991), 68–89; and R. de Jager, "Meester, leerjongen, leertijd. Een analyse van zeventiende-eeuwse Nord-Nederlandse leerlingcontracten van kunstschilders, goud-en zilversmeden," *Oud-Holland* 104 (1990): 69–111.

[25] Ernst van de Wetering, ed., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 4, *The Self-Portraits* (Dordrecht, 2005), xvi.

[26] For a discussion of these works, see Peter Schatborn, *Jan Lievens, 1607–1674: Prenten & tekeningen*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam, 1988).

[27] Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), doc. 1656/12. Inventory numbers 25, 27, 28, 33, 120, and 123 record paintings retouched by Rembrandt, while inventory number 79

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mentions a painting "designed by" Rembrandt. None of these works have been identified.

[28] One large painting that I am certain was executed with the help of assistants is *Belshazzar's Feast,* c. 1635 (National Gallery, London). Although the attribution of this painting solely to Rembrandt's hand has never been questioned in print, the peripheral figures in this composition are executed in a range of styles that are inconsistent with Rembrandt's own manner of painting.

[29] It has been recognized that an assistant painted the hands in one of Rembrandt's most prestigious commissions, his *Portrait of Johannes Uyttettbogaert,* 1633 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). See Wouter Th. Koek and Guido M. C. Jansen, *Rembrandt in a New Light: Presentation of Seven Restored Paintings by Rembrandt* (Amsterdam, 1993).

[30] The large number of unfinished ("onopgemaeckt") paintings listed in the inventory of Rembrandt's estate taken on October 5, 1669, indicates that the artist did not immediately complete paintings that he had commenced. Perhaps he intended some of these to be worked up by assistants. For the inventory, see Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 586–589, doc. 1169/5, nos. 8 and 11.

[31] Josua Bruyn, "Rembrandt's Workshop: Its Function and Production," in *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop*, ed. Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and P. J. J. van Thiel (New Haven and London, 1991), 70–71.

[32] The one exception is *Old Woman Plucking a Fowl,* which was given by Dr. and Mrs. Walter Timme in 1956.

[33] Wilhelm von Bode, "Alte Kunstwerke in den Sammlungen der Vereinigten Staaten," *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst* 6 (1895): 13–19, 70–76, does not explicitly mention visiting Widener, but he does write that he went to Philadelphia. Since he was actively visiting museums and collectors, however, it hardly seems possible that he and Widener did not meet. Widener had been collecting Dutch paintings prior to 1893, but only in 1894 did he begin to acquire major examples (Rembrandt's *Saskia,* for example, from Sedelmeyer in Paris, the dealer who would publish Bode's corpus on Rembrandt). In that same year he also bought

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a number of other important Dutch pictures, including Meindert Hobbema's *The Travelers*, Pieter de Hooch's *The Bedroom*, and Aelbert Cuyp's *Lady and Gentleman on Horseback*. At about this time he also began to sell minor works from his earlier collection.

[34] We have also benefited enormously from discussions with colleagues from other institutions, in particular Ashok Roy, David Bomford, Ernst van de Wetering, and Karin Groen.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Lucretia*, 1664, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.76

fig. 2 Rembrandt School, *Man with a Gilded Helmet*, early 1650s, oil on canvas, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie

fig. 3 Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse), *The Descent from the Cross*, 1650/1652, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.61

fig. 4 Rembrandt Workshop, *Portrait of Rembrandt*, 1650, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.70

fig. 5 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Saskia van Uylenburgh, the Wife of the Artist*, probably begun 1634/1635 and completed 1638/1640, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Widener Collection, 1942.9.71

fig. 6 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Mill*, 1645/1648, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Widener Collection, 1942.9.62

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fig. 7 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait*, 1659, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.72

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Aelst, Willem van

Dutch, 1627 - 1683

BIOGRAPHY

Willem van Aelst grew up in Delft, where his father served as one of the city's notaries. He was a pupil of his uncle, Evert van Aelst (1602–1657), a still-life painter in Delft. Willem joined the town's Saint Luke's Guild on November 9, 1643. Little is known about his personal life, but we know that he lived in France between 1645/1646 and 1651, and subsequently in Italy until 1656. While in Florence, Van Aelst worked for the Medici family, specifically the brothers Cardinal Gian Carlo and Cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici. Van Aelst created at least eleven paintings for them, as well as works for collectors in Bologna and Rome. Ferdinand II de' Medici, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, supposedly gave Van Aelst a gold medal and gold chain for his service.[1] In 1656 Van Aelst returned to the north and, after a short period of time in Delft, moved to Amsterdam, where he remained for the rest of his life. At his death he left a wife and three children.

In 1672 Van Aelst was one of seven Dutch painters, including Otto van Schrieck (1619/1620–1678), who were asked to judge the merits of a collection of Italian paintings sold to the great elector of Brandenburg by the Amsterdam art dealer Gerrit Uylenburgh. They declared the paintings worthless.[2] The flower painter Rachel Ruysch (1664–1750) was a student of Van Aelst, and he influenced a number of other artists, including William Gowe Ferguson (English, 1632/1633 - c. 1690), Elias van den Broeck (c. 1650–1708), and Simon Verelst (1644–1721).

Van Aelst specialized in still-life painting, but within this genre he was quite versatile, painting fruit and flower pieces, fish and forest-floor still lifes, and above all, hunting scenes with dead game and hunting gear. Van Aelst seems to have been particularly influential in the development of this last type of picture, which became very popular after midcentury, and his paintings were greatly praised and fetched high prices.

[1] Tanya Paul, "'Beschildert met een glans': Willem van Aelst and Artistic Self-

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Consciousness in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Still Life Painting," PhD diss. (University of Virginia, 2008), 64–82.

[2] Abraham Bredius, *Catalogus van het Rijksmuseum van schilderijen* (Amsterdam, 1886), 41–46.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Willem van Aelst
Dutch, 1627 - 1683

Still Life with Dead Game

1661

oil on canvas
overall: 84.7 x 67.3 cm (33 3/8 x 26 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower right below table top: Guill.mo van. Aelst. 1661.
Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund 1982.36.1

ENTRY

Van Aelst depicts a number of dead animals hanging above, and resting upon, a blue, gold-trimmed hunter's game pouch that lies on a stone ledge. He painted the animals so precisely that most of them can be identified. The scene is dominated by a European hare (*Lepus europaeus*) and a large white rooster. A European partridge (*Perdix perdix*) hangs before the legs of the hare, while in the upper left an adult kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and a common wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) are suspended from the same string as two falconer's hoods. Another large bird, possibly a black rooster, is partially hidden and cannot be identified. The animals must have been killed by a falcon, as no bullet wounds are visible. [1]

The tightly cropped and carefully orchestrated composition is characteristic of Van Aelst's paintings from the 1650s and 1660s. Through his use of light, color, and texture, Van Aelst focuses our attention on the animals and the game pouch. He carefully records the various textures of the fur, feathers, stone, and satin, and even includes a fly on the rooster's comb. The dark background gives the scene a somber, almost brooding quality. The impact of the painting, however, comes from its extraordinary illusionism, and one wonders whether it was installed in such a way that its trompe l'oeil qualities were enhanced. The trompe l'oeil illusionism of the design is compromised by the way the strap of the game pouch is cut by the lower edge of the painting. Hence, one wonders whether the design was originally intended to be onto its frame or onto the wall itself. One could also imagine that illusionistic nails could have been painted above the composition from which the dead game would have appeared to hang. Despite its exceptional state of preservation, the painting no longer looks today as it did when Van Aelst executed

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it. Technical examinations have revealed that the brilliant blue game bag was initially green in color. Van Aelst painted the bag with a mixture of natural ultramarine and a yellow lake, which proved to be fugitive.

Such paintings may have been collected by rich burghers who owned game parks and hunting lodges. Scott Sullivan has argued that these paintings appealed to the aristocratic aspirations of the Dutch burgher because hunting and falconry traditionally had been pastimes of the Dutch nobility. [2] The diversity of animals indicates that Van Aelst composed the scene from a repertoire of studies that he had made after specific models. Virtually the same kingfisher, hanging in a similar position, occurs in a signed and dated 1664 painting (Nationalmuseum, Stockholm). [3] The game pouch is also found in other Van Aelst paintings, such as *Still Life with Game and Hunting Gear* (Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe). [4]

That Van Aelst's painting was intended to represent the general theme of the hunt rather than the spoils of a specific outing is evident from the relief on the front of the stone ledge depicting Diana, the chaste goddess of the hunt, and Actaeon, a mortal huntsman who surprised her at her bath. Diana, visible between the shoulder straps of the game pouch, leans over to splash water on Actaeon. He recoils, but stag horns are already sprouting from his head as punishment for his intrusion. Van Aelst's relief is based on one of the most famous mannerist compositions, Paulus van Vianen's gilded silver plaquette of 1612 [fig. 1]. [5] The exquisite works of both Paulus and his older brother Adam elicited great admiration in the seventeenth century, and their silver basins and ewers appear frequently in paintings by Dutch artists. Intricate silver vessels, similar to those created by the Van Vianens, occur in a number of Van Aelst's flower still lifes. As Rudiger Klessmann has pointed out, artists included these finely wrought objects in their biblical and mythological paintings as symbols of worldly treasures that should be forsaken for more lasting values. [6] In this instance, because Van Aelst has depicted a stone relief rather than the gilded silver plaquette, he emphasizes instead the thematic relationship of the story of Diana and Actaeon to the hunt. [7]

The juxtaposition of the relief with the dead game may also have been chosen for moralizing reasons. [8] The story of Diana and Actaeon frequently was interpreted in Dutch seventeenth-century literature as a warning against succumbing to sensual pleasure. Actaeon's downfall resulted from his unregulated desires, which led him to overstep the bounds of chastity by peering at Diana. [9] The partridge, hare, and rooster hanging above the relief are all animals that, like Actaeon, are associated with unbridled lust. [10] Thus, the unusual array of animals in this trophy

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painting may have less to do with the specifics of a hunt than with the underlying iconographic content of the painting. The entire scene, painted with such trompe l'oeil illusionism, probably also alluded to the transience of sensual pleasure.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Paulus van Vianen, *Diana and Actaeon*, 1612, gilded silver plaquette, Centraal Museum, Utrecht

NOTES

[1] George E. Watson, curator, Division of Birds, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, letter, July 13, 1982, in NGA curatorial files.

[2] Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece* (Montclair, NJ, 1984), 41–42; and Scott A. Sullivan "Rembrandt's Self-Portrait with a Dead Bittern," *Art Bulletin* 62 (1980): 236–243.

[3] Inventory no. NM 301.

[4] Inventory no. 350.

[5] Inventory no. 14745. The connection with Van Vianen was pointed out to me by Joaneath Spicer. For information on Van Vianen's work, see Th. M.

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Duyvene de Wit-Klinkhamer, "Diana en Actaeon door Paulus van Vianen," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 6 (1955): 185–190; and A. L. den Blaauwen, ed. *Dutch Silver, 1580–1830*, trans. Patricia Wardle (The Hague and Amsterdam, 1979), 42–54.

[6] Rudiger Klessmann, "Ad Tragoedias, non ad Vitam," in *Ars Auro Prior: Studia Ioanni Bialostocki Sexagenario Dicta* (Warsaw, 1981), 367–372.

[7] Van Aelst used this relief in at least four other paintings, including *Still Life with Poultry* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inventory no. A1669) and *Still Life with Game Pouch* (art market, London, 1993).

[8] For the following analysis I am indebted to Pamela Hall, who, as a graduate student at the University of Maryland, analyzed this painting in a seminar report in 1987 (in NGA curatorial files).

[9] See Eric Jan Sluijter, *De "Heydensche Fabulen" in de Noorddederlandse schilderkunst circa 1590–1670* (The Hague, 1986), 168–187.

[10] The most comprehensive assessment of the symbolic implications of dead birds is Eddy de Jongh, "Erotica in vogelperspectief: De dubbelzinnigheid van een reeks 17de eeuwse genrevoorstellingen," *Simiolus* 3 (1968–1969): 22–74. See also Peter C. Sutton, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting* (Philadelphia, 1984), 184–185, 251. For a genre painting with sexual overtones where the same types of dead animals occur, see Hieronymous van der Mij's *A Kitchen with a Servant Girl and Two Boys* (Derekamp, Stichting Adwina van Heek, Huize Singraven), repro. in Eric Jan Sluijter et al., *Leidse fijnschilders: van Gerrit Dou tot Frans van Mieris de Jonge, 1630–1760* (Zwolle, 1988), 171.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a fine-weight, plain-weave fabric that has been lined and the tacking margins have been trimmed. Like many of Van Aelst's works of the 1650's and 1660's was prepared with a double ground: a lower layer of chalk toned with earth and a gray-brown upper ground.[1] The precision of the forms suggests that Van Aelst used some form of preliminary design. There is evidence that most of the composition was underpainted in tones of brown and gray. The handling of the final paint is extremely disciplined, with minute wet-into-wet strokes defining individual fibers in the feathers and building finely textured passages such as the rooster's wattles.

Technical analysis revealed a significant, unintended alteration in the painting. In this work, as in most of Van Aelst's hunt compositions, the game bag originally was

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not blue but green. The green bag was painted with a pigment mixture composed of ultramarine blue and a yellow lake based on a fugitive dyestuff such as weld. The yellow dyestuff has faded leaving only the blue pigment visible.[2]

The overall condition of the painting is excellent, with losses confined to the edges and the hare's muzzle. Thin upper layers and glazes are moderately abraded, particularly in the rooster and partridge feathers, the pouch and strap, bas-relief shadows, and background. The painting was treated in 2010 to remove a discolored varnish and to inpaint the losses and abrasion.

[1] For an overview of Van Aelst's materials and painting practices see E. Melanie Gifford, Anikó Bezur, Andrea Guidi di Bagno, and Lisha Deming Glinsman, "The making of a luxury image: van Aelst's painting materials and artistic techniques," *Elegance and Refinement: The Still-life Paintings of Willem van Aelst,* Houston and Washington, 2012, 66-89.

[2] Analysis of paint cross-sections by light microscopy, SEM-EDX and microspectrofluorimetry was carried out by the NGA Scientific Research department. See Gifford et al. 78-80.

PROVENANCE

Probably (sale, Amsterdam, 14 October 1749, no. 16).[1] Dr. C.J.K. van Aalst, Huis-te-Hoevelaken, by 1939;[2] (sale, Sotheby Mak van Waay, Amsterdam, 18 May 1981, no. 1); (Richard Green, London); sold 8 June 1982 to NGA.

[1] This sale was kindly brought to the attention of Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. by Tanya Paul; see her letter of 30 October 2007, in NGA curatorial files. The sale consisted of works from the collections of Johan Diedrick Pompe van Meerdervoort, Burgemeester of Dordrecht, and the painter Jan van Huysum (1682–1749), although the consignor of individual lots is not specified. The work is described as "Een doode Haan en Haas en verder bywerk, kunstig geschilderd door van Aalst, h 2v. 7 en een half d., br. 2 v. 3 d., in een zwarte Lyst met een verguld binnen Lysje. 18-10," and Paul writes that the NGA painting is the only Van Aelst to her knowledge that depicts both a rooster and a hare. See Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus*

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van schilderyen, reprint, Soest, 1976: 268–269.

[2] [2] J.W. von Moltke, ed. *Dutch and Flemish Old Masters in the Collection of Dr. C.J.K. van Aalst. Huis-te-Hoevelaken, Holland*, foreword by W.R. Valentiner, Verona, 1939: 50, pl. 11.

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2012 Paul, Tanya, et al. *Elegance and Refinement: The still-life paintings of Willem van Aelst*. Exh. cat. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; National Gallery of Art, Washington. New York, 2012: 130-133, no. 15, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Asselijn, Jan

Also known as
Krabbetje
Crabbetje
Asselyn, Jan
Dutch, c. 1610 - 1652

BIOGRAPHY

Jan Asselijn was a prominent landscape painter and draftsman in the Dutch Italianate tradition. Born in the French town of Dieppe, France, as a child Asselijn moved with his family to Amsterdam in 1621. There he studied with Jan Martszen the Younger (c. 1609–after 1647), a specialist in battle scenes, and produced two cavalry scenes, dated 1634 and 1635. Like many Dutch painters seeking to perfect their art, Asselijn traveled to Italy after his early training, probably after November 1635.[1] The experience would influence his painting for the rest of his life.

In Rome, he became a member of the Bentvueghels (Dutch for “Birds of a Feather”), an association of northern artists who painted views of the sun-drenched Roman countryside, as well as picturesque scenes of everyday urban life. The group bestowed the nickname Crabbetje, or “little crab,” on Asselijn because of his deformed left hand.[2] Although no dated paintings survive from Asselijn’s time in Italy, his later works show the influence of the low-life street scenes of Pieter van Laer (Dutch, c. 1592 - 1642), as well as the light-infused landscapes of Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652), both also members of the Bentvueghels. The renowned German writer Joachim von Sandrart praised the many “fine landscapes, small scenes, and animals,” that Asselijn made in Italy, while the Florentine art historian and biographer Filippo Baldinucci praised Asselijn’s renditions of *capricci* (“fantasies”) and his battle scenes.[3] Asselijn was also a prolific draughtsman, and produced many landscape drawings populated with ruins, animals, and peasants during outings in the Roman countryside with his colleagues. These Italian drawings continued to inform his works after he left Italy.

Asselijn returned to the Netherlands by way of Lyon, France, where he married Antoinette Huart around 1644. He also stayed briefly in Paris, and made paintings for the Hôtel Lambert with Herman van Swanevelt (Dutch, c. 1600 - 1655).[4] While there, he also created preparatory drawings for three series of prints of Roman

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ruins by Gabriel Perelle (French, 1603 - 1677). By 1647, Asselijn had returned to Amsterdam, where Rembrandt made a portrait etching of him.[5] Asselijn painted Italianate landscapes for the remaining five years of his short life. He was buried on October 3, 1652.

Asselijn's most innovative contribution to the Dutch landscape tradition was the sweeping scale of his panoramic paintings. His broad views of the Roman countryside and picturesque harbor and river scenes are characterized by a bright palette suffused with silvery tones and rich peach and azure hues. He frequently set his scenes in the early morning or late afternoon, using the play of raking light and shadow to accentuate the monumentality of the Roman ruins that so often anchored his landscapes. Traveling merchants, shepherds, herdsmen, and their animal charges populate Asselijn's views, their theatrical gestures helping to draw the viewer into his scenes. Asselijn also produced a series of four winter landscapes, a rarity among the Italianate Dutch landscape painters.[6]

The Dutch biographer Arnold Houbraken states that Frédéric de Moucheron (Netherlandish, 1633 - 1686) and Willem Schellinks (1627–1678) studied with Asselijn. Asselijn's Roman studies and landscapes would later influence the work of Adam Pynacker (Dutch, c. 1620 - 1673), Thomas Wijck (c. 1616–1677), Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem (Dutch, 1620 - 1683), and Karel Dujardin (Dutch, 1626 - 1678).

Notes

[1] Asselijn was documented in Amsterdam as late as November 4, 1635, and there are no dated paintings between this year and 1647, by which time he had returned to Amsterdam; see Anne Charlotte Steland-Stief, *Die Zeichnungen des Jan Asselijn* (Fridingen, 1989), 12.

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlandtsche Kosntschilders en Schilderessen*, 3 in 1 vol. (The Hague, 1753; repr. Amsterdam, 1976), 2:327

[3] Filippo Baldinucci, *Notizie dei Professori del Disegno...*, 7 vols. (Florence, 1681–1728), 4:331, 5:208.

[4] Peter Schatborn, *Drawn to Warmth: 17th-Century Dutch Artists in Italy*, (Amsterdam, 2001), 101.

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[5] Asselijn is referred to in a deed in Amsterdam that year; Anne Charlotte *Steland-Stief, Jan Asselijn: Nach 1610 bis 1652* (Amsterdam, 1971), 113.

[6] For example, *Frozen Moat Outside City Walls*, about 1647, oil on canvas, Worcester Art Museum, Eliza S. Paine Fund in memory of William R. and Frances T. C. Paine, 1969.24.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

December 9, 2019

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan Asselijn
Dutch, c. 1610 - 1652

The Tiber River with the Ponte Molle at Sunset

c. 1650

oil on canvas
overall: 41.2 × 54 cm (16 1/4 × 21 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right, in monogram: JA
Florian Carr Fund, New Century Fund, and Nell and Robert Weidenhammer Fund 2012.129.1

ENTRY

Jan Asselijn's radiant painting depicts a quiet late afternoon scene unfolding along the Tiber River near the Ponte Molle, also known as the Milvian Bridge. Forming part of the Via Flaminia, which linked Rome to Florence, this bridge spanned the river just north of the Eternal City and was its principal access from the north. [1] The Milvian Bridge gained great fame as the site of Constantine the Great's decisive battle against Maxentius in 312 CE, after which Constantine converted to Christianity. [2] For Asselijn, however, this historic event was of less significance than the bridge's picturesque character and the way it evoked the quiet beauty of the countryside in the Tiber River valley. A herder driving his cattle through the water and two horsemen, who have stopped to converse along the river's bank, activate the painting's foreground, their importance to the scene evident in the vivid accents of light falling on their bodies. At right, a well-dressed gentleman gestures to a boatman, whose small cargo vessel drifts along the current as it passes through one of the bridge's arches. From atop the Ponte Molle, two figures observe the activity below.

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Jan Asselijn, a major figure in the Dutch Italianate tradition, traveled from Amsterdam to Rome in the mid-1630s to join a group of Dutch and Flemish artists known as the *Schildersbent*, or Band of Painters (also often referred to as the *Bentvueghels*, or Brotherhood of Artists). They were primarily interested in depicting scenes of everyday life and views of the Roman *campagna*, and generally fused these two pictorial realms by portraying ordinary people going about their daily activities near buildings, bridges, and ruins dating from antiquity. Asselijn often joined his colleagues from the *Schildersbent* on excursions into the countryside to make drawings, which he executed with brown pen and wash to capture the effects of light and shadow. [3] For example, he and Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652) likely visited the Ponte Molle in the late 1630s, at which time Asselijn drew the west-facing side of the bridge and Both viewed it from the east in preparation for an etching of the site. [4] Many of the locations Asselijn visited had been favorites of earlier members of the *Schildersbent*, such as Cornelis van Poelenburch (Dutch, 1594/1595 - 1667). Close parallels exist in Asselijn's drawings of ancient ruins, among them those of the Palazzo Maggiore on the Palatine Hill, and in those of his predecessor. [5]

Asselijn left Rome for Amsterdam in the early 1640s, stopping for a while in Lyon, where he married. He then traveled to Paris, where he and his Dutch colleague Herman van Swanevelt (Dutch, c. 1600 - 1655) received a joint commission for a series of Italianate paintings for the Hôtel Lambert, an indication that he had already established an international reputation. [6] While in Paris, Asselijn also worked closely with the printmaker Gabriel Perelle (French, 1603 - 1677), who made a series of prints of Roman ruins based on Asselijn's designs. For his preparatory drawings, Asselijn consulted the pen and wash drawings that he had made from life in Italy, among them his imposing *Ruins of the Palazzo Maggiore on the Palatine* (Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin). [7]

Asselijn eventually settled in Amsterdam in 1647, where he found a thriving demand for his evocative Italianate scenes. His greatest period of activity as a painter was, in fact, during the late 1640s and early 1650s, the very years in which he executed the Gallery's painting of the Ponte Molle. The exact chronology of his paintings from this period is difficult to establish because he rarely dated his works. The smooth finish, polished rendering of details, and golden light of this modestly scaled work seem to reflect his manner from the late 1640s, shortly after he returned from Paris. His paintings of the early 1650s, prior to his untimely death in 1652, are often larger in scale and more dramatic in character. His changes in style

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are evident in a comparison of the Gallery's painting to another depiction of the Ponte Molle, now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich. [8] The latter has larger and more dramatic pictorial elements in the bridge and sky, greater human activity, and stronger contrasts of light and dark but lacks the calm serenity of *The Tiber River with the Ponte Molle at Sunset*.

The dating of the Gallery's painting to around 1650 is reinforced by infrared reflectography, which reveals that Asselijn's initial concept depicted ruins similar to those from his Parisian period. Prior to painting the bridge, Asselijn had blocked in the ruins of the Palazzo Maggiore on the Palatine. He based these ruins on the drawing that he had made in Rome, which he had also used for his preparatory drawing for Perelle's print. The infrared reflectogram further reveals that at the left of this earlier composition Asselijn had included two arched wooden structures that probably depict cranes or some type of lifting devices. [9] Unfortunately, no comparable pictorial elements have yet been found in Asselijn's other paintings or drawings with which to identify their function.

As is characteristic for paintings executed after his return to Amsterdam, Asselijn freely adapted the scene's architectural and topographical character to enhance pictorial effects. The rhythmic shadows on the arches of the bridge and the golden light spreading across the sky suggest that the scene transpires in the late afternoon, yet, given Asselijn's viewpoint from the south (the left riverbank) looking north, his golden light effects could not reflect reality. Equally imaginative is the round tower that Asselijn placed at the northern end of the bridge. As seen in both his drawing and Jan Both's etching of the Ponte Molle (see note 4), a square fortified tower actually dominated that end of the bridge. Asselijn based the round tower on another ruin, the Tomb of the Plautii, located in Tivoli next to the Ponte Lucano. [10] It is not known why Asselijn chose to incorporate this round tomb into the structure of the Ponte Molle, but he undoubtedly recognized that the brutal, fortified tower at the north end of the Ponte Molle, built for defensive purposes in the 15th century, was architecturally unsympathetic to the graceful proportions of the bridge, which was built in 109 BCE. Asselijn's decision to replace this tower with the Tomb of the Plautii may have had a historical logic in that the tomb dates from the early 1st century CE. Finally, Asselijn must also have responded aesthetically to the tomb's round shape, noting how it created a pleasing coda to the rhythmic progression of the stone arches spanning the Tiber and a gentle transition to the light-filled Roman *campagna* stretching out to the north.

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NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Henriette Rahusen for her extensive research on this painting. The Ponte Molle crosses the Tiber 3.1 miles north of the 17th-century city gate and about 4.5 miles from the old Roman city center.

[2] According to legend, Constantine had a dream in which a cross appeared in the heavens and a voice told him he would win the Battle of the Milvian Bridge if he used the cross as his standard. After he won the battle, he attributed his victory to the god of Christianity. Once he was emperor, Constantine established Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire.

[3] For Asselijn's drawings, see Anne Charlotte Steland-Stief, *Die Zeichnungen des Jan Asselijn* (Fridingen, 1989), especially 207–208, no. 3, fig. 70, and Peter Schatborn, *Drawn to Warmth: 17th-Century Dutch Artists in Italy* (Amsterdam, 2001).

[4] Asselijn's drawing of the Ponte Molle has at times also been attributed to Willem Schellinks (1627–1678) and Thomas Wijck (1616–1677). Jan Asselijn, *The Ponte Molle*, c. 1640, pen and brush in brown over traces of black chalk, Amsterdam Museum, legaat C. J. Fodor, TA 10315; and Jan Both, *The Ponte Molle*, etching, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 1972.28.23. The Amsterdam Museum dates their drawing to 1647, however by that date Asselijn had long since left Italy and was back in Amsterdam (see Biography).

[5] See Jan Asselijn, *Ruins of the Palazzo Maggiore on the Palatine*, c. 1640, pen and brush in brown over traces of black chalk, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; and Cornelis van Poelenburch, *Ruin of the So-Called Palazzo Maggiore on the Palatine*, 1622, graphite and chalk, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Purchased with the support of the Vereniging Rembrandt, with additional funding from the Prins Bernhard Fonds, the Rijksmuseum-Stichting and the De Ster Holding BV, RP-T-1989-89. Although Cornelis van Poelenburch did not paint a view of the Ponte Molle, Asselijn's luminous painting style owes much to that of his predecessor. For Van Poelenburch's paintings in the collection of the National Gallery of Art, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Cornelis van Poelenburch/*Christ Carrying the Cross*/early 1620s," and "Cornelis van Poelenburch/*The Prophet Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath*/c. 1630," *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, NGA Online Editions, https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-

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page.137505.html and https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.131041.html (accessed September 20, 2018).

[6] These paintings are now in the Louvre Museum, Paris, inv. nos. 984, 985, 986.

[7] This drawing served as a model for a preparatory drawing for the print, now in the Kunsthalle, Hamburg. For illustrations of the print and preparatory drawing, see Anne Charlotte Steland-Stief, *Die Zeichnungen des Jan Asselijn* (Fridingen, 1989), 34–35.

[8] Jan Asselijn, *Italian Landscape with Bridge*, c. 1650–1652, oil on canvas, Alte Pinakothek, Munich, inv. no. 1063. The Alte Pinakothek dates this painting 1647/1650, but Arthur Wheelock disagrees. Acknowledging the difficulties of dating Asselijn's oeuvre, Wheelock believes the Munich canvas was produced c. 1650–1652.

[9] The infrared reflectogram is kept in NGA curatorial files.

[10] As with the Ponte Molle, Asselijn and his colleagues, among them Jan Both, made pilgrimages to Tivoli and depicted this famous tomb and the Ponte Lucano in their paintings and drawings. For one of Asselijn's paintings of the Tomb of the Plautii, see *Southern Landscape with a Rider and Mules Fording a Stream; the Tomb of the Plautii near Rome on the Right*, c. 1651, RKD, Kunstwerknummer 109292, Afbeeldingsnummer 0000129315.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a thin, finely woven plain-weave canvas lined with an aqueous adhesive to a similar fabric. The tacking margins were removed during a previous treatment, and the edges of the painting were covered with brown paper tape.

There is a double ground that consists of a light red earth tone bottom layer and a thicker gray top layer. Microscopic examination of the painting along with infrared reflectography (IRR) and x-radiography helped determine that some, if not all, of the architectural elements were blocked out in brown paint, while the figures and cattle were lightly sketched out in an extremely thin, medium-rich transparent layer (small green and black particles are visible under magnification) on the completed background. [1] It is unclear if each method is used specifically for laying out a particular compositional element (architecture versus figures and animals), because the man in the bottom left corner as well as some of the cattle may have also been blocked out with brown paint.

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The paint layering of the composition is complex due to significant changes made by the artist, most of which are visible with IRR and x-radiography. This earlier version depicted a completely different architectural structure—one that would have dominated the right side of the composition, extending close to the top edge and top right corner and ending near the center. It did not include the bridge or the circular tower in the center of the design. In addition, at least two figures and one bull were lightly sketched out but not painted in the final composition, and the bottom left quadrant (above where the cattle appear in the current painting) included a tree and water well.

Dina Anchin, based on the examination and treatment reports by Michael Swicklik

December 9, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.5–1.8 microns (H filter). X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14 × 17 in.). The parameters were 37–39 kV, 50 mA, 6 seconds, and 40 in. distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

PROVENANCE

(David Ietswaart, Amsterdam); Willem Lormier [1682-1758], The Hague;[1] (his estate sale, A. Franken, The Hague, 4 July 1763, no. 64); De Heer Yves. Gottfried Winkler [1731-1795], Leipzig, by 1768.[2] (anonymous sale, Frederik Müller et Cie at the Hotel de Brakke Grond, Amsterdam, 23 February 1904, no. 1); Joanna Maria Tydeman-VerLoren van Themaat [1861-1954], Ginneken;[3] by descent in the Tydeman family; purchased 7 November 2012 through (Rachel Kaminsky Fine Art, New York) by NGA.

[1] A catalogue of Lormier's collection was published in 1752, and served as a guide for visitors who came to see the 376 paintings. Two copies of the catalogue,

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annotated with purchase, price, and sale information by Lormier himself, are in the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (Netherlands Institute for Art History), The Hague. See: Everhard Korthals Altes, "The Eighteenth-Century Gentleman Dealer Willem Lormier and the International Dispersal of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Paintings," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 28, no. 4 (2000-2001): 251-311.

[2] Franz Wilhelm Kreuchauf, *Historische Erklärungen der Gemälde welche Herr Gottfried Winkler in Leipzig*, Leipzig, 1768: 101-102, no. 255.

[3] According to the dealer's prospectus, in NGA curatorial files; she lent the painting to a 1938 exhibition in Eindhoven. A copy of the 1904 sale catalogue in the NGA library is annotated with F. Müller's name as the buyer; he was perhaps also acting as a buyer's agent at the sale. A label on the painting's stretcher reads "Eigendom van: Mr M. A Tydeman, Amersfoort," and "Tydeman" is also written in black crayon on the stretcher. Joanna Maria's husband (1854-1916) and son (1884-1961) were both named Meinard.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1938 Noord-Brabantsch Kunstbezit, Stedelijk van Abbe-Museum, Eindhoven, 1938, no. 37.

1948 Oude kunst in Brabants bezit: jubileum tentoonstelling, 1898-1948, Paleis-Raadhuis, Tilburg, 1948, no. 3, as *Brug over de Tiber*.

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1768 Kreuchauf, Franz Wilhelm. *Historische Erklaerungen der Gemaelde welche Herr Gottfried Winkler in Leipzig gesammelt*. Leipzig, 1768: 101-102, no. 255.

1971 Steland, Anne Charlotte. *Jan Asselijn nach 1610 bis 1652*. Amstersdam, 1971: 71 fig. 46, 154 no. 183.

2013 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. "Jan Asselijn, The Tiber River and te Ponte Molle." *National Gallery of Art Bulletin* 48 (Spring 2013): 22-23, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Ast, Balthasar van der

Dutch, 1593/1594 - 1657

BIOGRAPHY

Balthasar van der Ast was born in Middelburg. The date of his birth is not recorded, but legal documents indicate that Balthasar reached the age of maturity (twenty-five) between June 30, 1618, and September 13, 1619. He had been orphaned when his father, Hans, a wealthy widower, died in 1609. Balthasar then may have lived with his older sister Maria and her husband, the still-life painter Ambrosius Bosschaert (Dutch, 1573 - 1621), whose work had an impact on the precise technique and symmetrical compositions of Van der Ast's early paintings. Van der Ast seems to have accompanied his brother-in-law when he moved from Middelburg to Bergen op Zoom in 1615 and then to Utrecht the following year.

In 1619 Van der Ast joined the Saint Luke's Guild in Utrecht. While there he probably trained Bosschaert's three sons after their father died in 1621. He also taught Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684). Influenced by the Utrecht painter Roelandt Savery (Dutch, 1576 - 1639), Van der Ast began to paint in a softer, more atmospheric manner and to animate his still lifes with small animals and insects. In 1632 he moved to Delft and joined the Saint Luke's Guild there. Although most of his still lifes are modest in scale, he painted a number of larger canvases during his Delft period that reflect a looser style. Van der Ast married Margrieta Jans van Buijeren in Delft on February 26, 1633; the couple had two children. Van der Ast died in December 1657 and was buried in the Oude Kerk in Delft.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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1960 Bol, Laurens J. *The Bosschaert Dynasty: Painters of Flowers and Fruit*. Translated by A.M. de Bruin-Cousins. Leigh-on-Sea, 1960.

1982 Bol, Laurens J. *'Goede onbekenden': Hedendaagse herkenning en waardering vanverscholen, voorbijgezien en onderschat talent*. Utrecht, 1982: 52-56.

1993 Meijer, Fred J. "Balthasar van der Ast." In *Dawn of the Golden Age: Northern Netherlandish Art 1580-1620*. Amsterdam, 1993: 299.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, D.C., 1995: 5.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Balthasar van der Ast
Dutch, 1593/1594 - 1657

Basket of Flowers

c. 1622

oil on panel
painted surface: 17.8 x 23.5 cm (7 x 9 1/4 in.)
overall (with additions): 18.4 x 24.4 cm (7 1/4 x 9 5/8 in.)
framed: 38.4 x 43.8 x 3.2 cm (15 1/8 x 17 1/4 x 1 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower left: .B.vander.ast...
Collection of Mrs. Paul Mellon 1992.51.2

ENTRY

By the early 1630s, the Prince of Orange, Frederik Hendrik, and his wife, Amalia van Solms, had formed an important collection of contemporary Dutch and Flemish paintings. Their taste led them to collect mythological and allegorical paintings as well as princely portraits. The inventory of their possessions made in 1632 lists only four still lifes, two of which hung in a small room belonging to the princess that also contained two allegorical paintings attributed to Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640) and a portrait of Amalia van Solms by Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669). As described in the inventory, the still lifes were “two small paintings in ebony frames, one a basket with fruit and the other a basket with flowers, by Van der Ast.” [1] These two paintings must be *Basket of Fruits* and *Basket of Flowers*, one of the rare sets of companion pieces created by this early seventeenth-century master. [2] While it is not known when or how Van der Ast’s paintings were acquired by Amalia van Solms, their existence in the princely collection indicates the esteem in which this artist was held by his contemporaries. [3]

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Van der Ast was trained by his brother-in-law, Ambrosius Bosschaert (Dutch, 1573 - 1621), who taught him the fundamentals of painting, in particular the accurate depiction of flowers, fruits, shells, insects, baskets, and Chinese-export ceramics—all subjects of his paintings. [4] It was undoubtedly from Bosschaert that Van der Ast derived the idea of representing a symmetrically placed wicker basket filled with flowers and with shells scattered on the tabletop. [5] Bosschaert may also have taught him the technique of making preliminary drawings or watercolor studies of flowers, fruits, and shells to use as models that could be variously combined. The elegant red-and-white variegated tulip that hangs over the edge of the basket in *Basket of Flowers*, for example, can be found in a number of Van der Ast's compositions. [6]

A clear difference, however, exists between the two artists. Whereas Bosschaert's blossoms are crisp and their colors vivid, Van der Ast's forms are softer, with diffuse contours and more muted colors, as in his *Basket of Flowers*. Light no longer plays evenly over the surface, but selectively highlights the central core of the composition, creating a more dynamic image than any comparable painting by Bosschaert. Van der Ast reinforces this effect by bringing his forms close to the picture plane and compressing the space between the various compositional elements. Finally, he adds variety to his scene, not only with the plethora of flowers in his basket, including tulips, roses, irises, fritillaria, columbine, an anemone, a hyacinth, a carnation, and a cyclamen leaf, but also with the rare and exotic shells and fruit that lie on the table. A dragonfly in the upper right and a hermit crab in the lower left further enliven the scene.

The same richness within a small scale is evident in the companion piece, *Basket of Fruits*. Plums, apples, apricots, three sorts of grapes, a Seville orange, and a quince are arranged in a wicker basket identical to that in *Basket of Flowers*. The table holds many of the same types of fruit as well as medlars and cherries. Two Wan-Li plates that Van der Ast has placed at a slant on each side of the basket add elegance and preciousness to the scene.

As pendants, the two works complement each other in a number of ways. Their compositions are virtually identical: a centrally located overflowing wicker basket with still-life elements grouped around it in a semicircular manner. The combination of fruit and flowers found in these two works creates a sense of appreciation for the abundance and beauty of God's creation, a prevalent theme in early seventeenth-century still-life painting. [7] Van der Ast may have introduced the shells and the Wan-Li china for their exotic appeal, but their presence also allowed

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him to include all four of the natural elements: traditionally, fruit was associated with the earth, flowers with air, shells with water, and fine china with fire.

Van der Ast almost certainly created these works in the early 1620s. The soft, atmospheric character of his painting style reflects the influence of Roelandt Savery (Dutch, 1576 - 1639), who had also joined the Utrecht Saint Luke's Guild in 1619. In the early 1620s Van der Ast painted a number of comparable compositions that feature the same elements. Sam Segal has noted that around 1623 the Batavian rose, visible here in the front of *Basket of Flowers*, was replaced in Van der Ast's repertoire by the Provins rose, further confirmation for the early dating of these paintings. [8]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

NOTES

[1] S. W. A. Drossaers with Cornelis Hofstede de Groot and C. H. de Jonge, "Inventaris van de meubelen van het Stadhouderlijk kwartier met het Speelhuis en van het Huis in het Noordeinde te 's-Gravenhage," *Oud-Holland* 47 (1930): 212, nos. 76, 77: "Twee cleyne schilderikens met ebben lijsten, het een een mandeken met fruyten ende het ander een mandeken met bloemen, door [Balthasar] van der Ast gedaen" ("Two small paintings with ebony frames, the one a basket with fruits and the other a basket with flowers, by Van der Ast"). The inventory was made in August 1632.

[2] The connection between the description in this inventory and these two paintings was first made by Laurens J. Bol, "Een Middelburgse Brueghel-groep," *Oud-Holland* 70 (1955): 146, note 36. Laurens J. Bol, in *The Bosschaert Dynasty: Painters of Flowers and Fruit*, trans. A. M. de Bruin-Cousins (Leigh-on-Sea, 1960), has identified only three other pairs by Van der Ast, none of which answers to the description in the inventory (cat. nos. 43, 44; 51, 52; 53, 80).

[3] A large proportion of the paintings in the princely collection had been executed by artists from Utrecht; thus it may well be that Van der Ast's work was known to Amalia van Solms as a result of his residence in Utrecht during the 1620s.

[4] See Ingvar Bergström et al., *Clarity in Awareness: An Exhibition of Fine and Important Dutch and Flemish XVIIth-Century Still-Life Paintings* (London, 1984), 66–75.

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[5] See Ingvar Bergström, "Baskets with Flowers by Ambrosius Bosschaert the Elder and Their Repercussions on the Art of Balthasar van der Ast," *Tableau* 6 (1983–1984): 66, fig. 1.

[6] Laurens J. Bol, in *The Bosschaert Dynasty: Painters of Flowers and Fruit*, trans. A. M. de Bruin-Cousins (Leigh-on-Sea, 1960), has identified this tulip, known as a “Summer Beauty,” in at least six other compositions (cat. nos. 18, 20, 26, 46, 63, 116).

[7] See Ingvar Bergström, *Still Lifes of the Golden Age: Northern European Paintings from the Heinz Family Collection* (Washington, DC, 1989), 11–25.

[8] Sam Segal, *Flowers and Nature: Netherlandish Flower Painting of Four Centuries* (The Hague, 1990), 190.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a single, horizontally grained wood board, has a slight concave warp. Thin wood strips, are attached to the edges on all four sides. The edges of the panel are beveled on the back. Paint is applied over an off-white ground in thin, opaque, and translucent layers with minimal brushmarking. Inpainting covers scattered minor losses. Abrasion is moderate throughout, particularly in the darks of the shells. No conservation has been carried out since acquisition.

PROVENANCE

Probably Princess Amalia van Solms [1602-1675], The Hague, by 1632.[1] (sale, Philippus van der Schley, Amsterdam, 16 February 1802 and days following, 1st day, no. 55 [with NGA 1992.51.1]); Levij Pakker.[2] Mrs. Beaumont, England; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 19 March 1906, no. 17 [with NGA 1992.51.1]); (Collings).[3] (Fritz Gerstel Gallery, Berlin); (his sale, Kunstsalon Keller & Reiner, Berlin, 21-22 January 1908, no. 36 [with NGA 1992.51.1]). (Kunsthandel Gebr. Douwes, Amsterdam), c. 1938; sold to Dr. Hans Wetzlar, Amsterdam, by 1952;[4] (his sale, Sotheby Mak van Waay, Amsterdam, 9 June 1977, no. 5 [with NGA 1992.51.1]); (John Mitchell & Son, London); sold November 1977 to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia; gift 1992 to NGA.

[1] According to an inventory of the collection of the Prince of Orange and his wife,

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Amalia van Solms, made in August 1632.

[2] This sale was kindly brought to the attention of Arthur Wheelock, Jr., by Sam Segal; see his letter of 12 February 2009, in NGA curatorial files. The buyer is noted in the sale contents section of the Getty Provenance Index Databases, J. Paul Getty Trust (sale catalog N-23).

[3] The Mellon collection records (copy in NGA curatorial files) indicate that the seller at the 1906 sale was a "private English collection (? Mrs. Beaumont)." This information was kindly confirmed, and the buyer's name provided, by Lynda McLeod, Librarian, Christie's Archives, London, in her e-mail of 28 March 2013, in NGA curatorial files.

[4] According to information provided to Paul Mellon at the time of his acquisition (see NGA curatorial files). The painting was published in M.J. Friedländer's 1952 catalogue of the Wetzlar Collection, no. 3.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1955 Jubileumtentoonstelling, Kunsthandel Gebr. Douwes, Amsterdam, 1955, no. 1.

1960 La Nature Morte et son inspiration, Galerie André Weil, Paris, 1960, no. 2.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 3, repro.

1999 From Botany to Bouquets: Flowers in Northern Art, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1999, no. 2, fig. 35.

2015 Asia in Amsterdam: The Culture of Luxury in the Golden Age, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, 2015-2016, no. 45b, repro.

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1955 Kunsthandel Gebr. Douwes. *Jubileumtentoonstelling, 1805-1955* . Amsterdam, 1955: no. 1.

1960 Bol, Laurens J. *The Bosschaert Dynasty: Painters of Flowers and Fruit*. Translated by A.M. de Bruin-Cousins. Leigh-on-Sea, 1960: 38, 74, no. 38, pl. 39b, 102 n. 85.

1990 Segal, Sam. *Flowers and Nature: Netherlandish Flower Painting of Four Centuries*. Exh. cat. Nabio Museum of Art, Osaka; Tokyo Station Gallery; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. Amstelveen and The Hague, 1990: 190, 191 n. 3 (where the reference to Bol 1960 gives an incorrect citation to "no. 32" that should be "no. 38").

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 5, 8, color repro. 7.

1997 Spicer, Joaneath A., and Lynn Federle Orr. *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age*. Exh. cat. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore; National Gallery, London. New Haven, 1997: 362, fig. 1.

1998 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *A Collector's Cabinet*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1998: 65, no. 3, repro.

1999 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *From Botany to Bouquets: Flowers in Northern Art*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1999: 46-47, 83; no. 2, fig. 35.

2007 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr., and Michael Swicklik. "Behind the Veil: Restoration of a Dutch Marine Painting Offers a New Look at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art and History." *National Gallery of Art Bulletin* no. 37 (Fall 2007): 4, 5, fig. 6.

2012 Paul, Tanya, et al. *Elegance and Refinement: The still-life paintings of Willem van Aelst*. Exh. cat. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; National Gallery of Art, Washington. New York, 2012: 39, fig. 2.

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Balthasar van der Ast
Dutch, 1593/1594 - 1657

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Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

NOTES

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[8] Sam Segal, *Flowers and Nature: Netherlandish Flower Painting of Four Centuries* (The Hague, 1990), 190.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single, horizontally grained wood board with thin wood strips attached to edges on all four sides. The edges of the panel are beveled on the back. Paint is applied over an off-white ground in thin, opaque, and translucent layers with minimal brushmarking. Discolored inpainting covers scattered minor losses, particularly in the fruit. The ground is visible through small areas of moderate abrasion. No conservation has been carried out since acquisition.

PROVENANCE

Probably Princess Amalia van Solms [1602-1675], The Hague, by 1632.[1] (sale, Philippus van der Schley, Amsterdam, 16 February 1802 and days following, 1st day, no. 55 [with NGA 1992.51.2]); Levij Pakker.[2] Mrs. Beaumont, England; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 19 March 1906, no. 17 [with NGA 1992.51.2]); (Collings).[3] (Fritz Gerstel Gallery, Berlin); (his sale, Kunstsalon Keller & Reiner, Berlin, 21-22 January 1908, no. 36 [with NGA 1992.51.2]). (Kunsthandel Gebr. Douwes, Amsterdam), c. 1938; sold to Dr. Hans Wetzlar, Amsterdam, by 1952;[4] (his sale, Sotheby Mak van Waay, Amsterdam, 9 June 1977, no. 5 [with NGA 1992.51.2]); (John Mitchell & Son, London); sold November 1977 to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia; gift 1992 to NGA.

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Amalia van Solms made in August 1632.

[2] This sale was kindly brought to the attention of Arthur Wheelock, Jr., by Sam Segal; see his letter of 12 February 2009 in NGA curatorial files. The buyer is noted in the sale contents section of the Getty Provenance Index Databases, J. Paul Getty Trust (sale catalog N-23).

[3] The Mellon collection records (copy in NGA curatorial files) indicate that the seller at the 1906 sale was a "private English collection (? Mrs. Beaumont)." This information was kindly confirmed, and the buyer's name provided, by Lynda McLeod, Librarian, Christie's Archives, London, in her e-mail of 28 March 2013, in NGA curatorial files.

[4] According to information provided to Paul Mellon at the time of his acquisition (see NGA curatorial files). The painting was published in M.J. Friedländer's 1952 catalogue of the Wetzlar Collection, no. 3.

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1960 La Nature Morte et son inspiration, Galerie André Weil, Paris, 1960, no. 1.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 2.

1999 From Botany to Bouquets: Flowers in Northern Art, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1999, no. 3, fig. 36, as Basket of Fruit.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Hendrick Avercamp, *Winter Scene Outside the Walls of Kampen* (detail), c. 1613–1615, oil on panel, private collection

Avercamp, Hendrick

Dutch, 1585 - 1634

BIOGRAPHY

Hendrick Avercamp, born in Amsterdam in a house next to the Nieuwe Kerk, was baptized in the Oude Kerk on January 27, 1585. In 1586 the family moved to Kampen, where Avercamp's father was appointed town apothecary. After his death, his business was taken over by his wife, Beatrix Peters, and by one of their other sons, either Lambert or Pieter. Another son became a physician, and the members of this well-educated family were for many years prominent citizens of Kampen.

For his artistic training, Hendrick went to Amsterdam, where in 1607 he lived with the Danish portrait painter Pieter Isaacks (1569–1625). In that year King Christiaan IV recalled Isaacks to Denmark, and Avercamp appears among the list of buyers at the auction of Isaacks' effects as "de stom tot Pieter Isacqs" (Pieter Isaacks' mute). Various other records testify to Avercamp's disability: a document from 1622 refers to him as "Hendrick Avercamp de Stomme," and his mother's will, drawn up in 1633, instructs that her unmarried, "mute and miserable" son Hendrick should receive, in addition to his portion of the inheritance, an extra annual allowance of one hundred guilders for life from family capital. Avercamp died five months after his mother's remark, so her description of her son as "miserable" may have referred not to his muteness but rather to him being ill at that time.

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In Amsterdam, Avercamp came under the influence of the Flemish painters of mannerist landscapes who were then living in the city, notably Gillis van Coninxloo III (Flemish, 1544 - 1607) and David Vinckboons (Dutch, 1576 - c. 1632). Based on stylistic evidence, it is probable that one or both of these painters was Avercamp's teacher, but no documentation of his apprenticeship exists.

By January 28, 1613, Avercamp was back in Kampen, where he seems to have remained until his death in May 1634.[1] There, in relative isolation from the mainstreams of Dutch art, he devoted himself almost entirely to the painting of winter scenes and specifically to depictions of crowds of people engaging in a wide range of activities on frozen rivers. Avercamp had no important direct followers, although he had several pupils, among them his nephew Barent Avercamp (c. 1612–1679), Arent Arentsz (called Cabel) (1585/1586–1635), and Dirck Hardenstein II (1620–after 1674).

[1] Avercamp must have returned occasionally to Amsterdam, as is suggested by a drawing he made of the Haarlemmerpoort in Amsterdam, which was constructed between 1615 and 1618. See Marijn Schapelhouman and Peter Schatborn, *Tekeningen van oude meesters: De verzameling Jacobus A. Klaver* (Zwolle, 1993), 56, no. 23, repro.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Hendrick Avercamp
Dutch, 1585 - 1634

A Scene on the Ice

c. 1625

oil on panel
overall: 39.2 x 77 cm (15 7/16 x 30 5/16 in.)
framed: 64.8 x 102.2 x 5.7 cm (25 1/2 x 40 1/4 x 2 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower left, in ligature: HA
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund 1967.3.1

ENTRY

The smooth ice of a frozen river or canal was (and is) a source of great pleasure for the Dutch. The sense of freedom it provided created an almost holiday spirit for both young and old, rich and poor. For the upper class it was a time to enjoy the brisk winter air in beautifully crafted horse-drawn sleighs; for the young at heart it offered a chance to skate along holding hands with a loved one; for others it provided a chance to play kolf, to ice fish, or just to watch the array of humanity enjoying their shared experience. Frozen waterways also served as transportation arteries that enabled the movement of people and goods, so winter days spent on the frozen ice may not always have been as carefree as this description would imply; still, the pictorial and literary traditions from the seventeenth century certainly highlight the positive aspects. [1] Primary among those who created this idyllic image of Dutch winters was Hendrick Avercamp. In numerous landscapes such as this one he recorded the experiences of his compatriots as they skated, sleighed, talked, or just quietly observed the open expanse of smooth ice on a frozen waterway.

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Avercamp, who lived in Kampen, far removed from the artistic centers of Haarlem and Amsterdam, worked his entire career in a style that derived from sixteenth century prototypes, where landscape vistas were viewed from above to allow for a panoramic overview of the scene below. The specific type of winter scene favored by Avercamp follows a rich tradition that goes back to Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Flemish, c. 1525/1530 - 1569), such as the latter's *Winter Landscape with Bird-Trap* , 1565 (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Brussels), a composition whose popularity can be measured by the frequent copies made by the Flemish master's son, Pieter Brueghel the Younger (Flemish, c. 1564 - 1637/1638). Similar scenes appeared in prints and drawings by other artists, including Hans Bol Hans Bol (Netherlandish, 1534 - 1593) [fig. 1] and David Vinckboons (Dutch, 1576 - c. 1632). A number of ice scenes, including compositions by Bol and Vinckboons, were conceived as parts of series representing the four seasons of the year. [2] Other depictions of skaters appear in emblematic prints, where the difficulty of staying upright was associated with the slipperiness of human life. [3]

While Avercamp never strayed very far from these traditions, he did develop this subject matter into a specialty with its own distinctive feel. His work differs from that of his predecessors primarily in the attention he pays to the individuality of the figures in his scenes and the prominence he gives them over the surrounding landscape elements. These characteristics are particularly evident in *A Scene on the Ice*, in which landscape elements are rendered almost schematically while differences in the social classes and even the individuality of the figures are emphasized by their activities, costumes, and attitudes. Little vignettes can be identified: the solidly middle-class burghers who watch more elegant members of the upper class glide by in their horse-drawn sleigh; the two friends who skate in tandem; the working-class family unloading barrels from a transport sledge; or the couple in the far distance whom others help to their feet. Avercamp does not appear to have been interested in using his winter scene as a means for expressing abstract concepts, such as those associated with seasons of the year or emblematic images. On the contrary, he delighted in capturing the variety of social interactions that occur when whole communities share the pleasures of the ice.

Avercamp, as is characteristic of Dutch seventeenth-century painters, did not paint such scenes from life; rather, he composed them in his studio on the basis of drawings. One such drawing depicts the standing couple to the right of the sleigh [fig. 2]. Drawings of other individual figures and figure groups also exist. A consequence of this working method is that the same figures continually recur in

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Avercamp's paintings. Sometimes he places them in relatively the same position, but often they appear in new arrangements among a different cast of characters. In a finished watercolor from Berlin [fig. 3], a number of figures similar to those in *A Scene on the Ice* can be found, including the figure in the horse-drawn sleigh, the man leaning down to tie his skate, and, in reverse, the young couple skating hand in hand. [4] A painting that has close compositional relationships to *A Scene on the Ice* is one of Avercamp's masterpieces, his *Winter Scene on a Frozen Canal* in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art [fig. 4]. Not only are the landscape elements identical, but there are no fewer than fourteen figure groups that equate to those in the Washington painting. Certain of these are in comparable locations, while others are repositioned, as in the vignette of the father pushing his wife and their pointing child in a sled, which appears on the right edge of the Washington painting and the left center of the LACMA painting. [5]

The many relationships between the Washington and LACMA paintings suggest that these two works were created in close chronological proximity. Stylistic evidence indicates that Avercamp executed the LACMA painting around 1620, at a time when he favored compositions with relatively small figures and with a loosely structured pictorial organization. [6] A date for the Washington painting around 1620 is also consistent with the dendrochronological examination of the panel, which indicates a felling date for the oak panel between 1606 and 1616. [7] Logic dictates that Avercamp executed *A Scene on the Ice* shortly after the LACMA painting since it is a somewhat simplified variant of that ambitious work. Not only is the landscape more schematically rendered, but the painting also contains far fewer figures and they are not as coherently integrated as they are in the LACMA version.

The LACMA painting is so finely conceived that it seems probable that it was a commissioned piece. The Gallery's painting was most likely painted for the open market; in any event, Avercamp did not give it the same degree of attention that he allotted to *Winter Scene on a Frozen Canal*. [8] The removal of extremely discolored natural resin varnish and old restorations in 2015 has revealed that the condition of *A Scene on the Ice* is far better than had been previously believed [fig. 5]. [9] Although some of the figures have suffered from Abrasion, and a few damages exist in the sky and immediate foreground, the painting has retained its soft atmospheric character to a remarkable degree. While the grain of the wood panel is evident, it does not have a particularly deleterious effect on the appearance of image. Moreover, the misconceptions of a previous restorer's

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Repainting, which had negatively affected the appearance of the painting, were rectified during the painting's recent restoration. For example, a pole with a fish hanging at its tip was previously seen stuck in the ice in the middle of the composition instead of being held by the boy skating hand in hand with a girl, as is the case in the LACMA painting. Another error in an earlier restorer's interpretation was that the man tying on his skate in the lower left was being watched by a small bird. The "bird" was actually the restorer's creation, and was a misinterpretation of the shape of the man's right skate resting before him on the ice.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

June 12, 2015

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Hans Bol, *Winter Landscape with Skaters*, c. 1584/1586, pen and brown ink and wash on laid paper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Robert H. and Clarice Smith, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, 1991.15.1

fig. 2 Hendrick Avercamp, *Standing Couple*, c. 1615, pen and ink and wash, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam, RP-T-1952-344. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

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fig. 3 Hendrick Avercamp, *Scene on Ice*, c. 1620, watercolor, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, KdZ2230. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, NY

fig. 4 Hendrick Avercamp, *Winter Scene on a Frozen Canal*, c. 1620, oil on panel, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Mrs. Edward W. Carter Collection. Digital Image © 2014 Museum Associates / LACMA. Licensed by Art Resource, NY

fig. 5 Hendrick Avercamp, *A Scene on the Ice* (pre-treatment), c. 1625, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 1967.3.1, 1967.3.1

NOTES

[1] See Jan Six van Chandelier, *'s Amsterdammers Winter*, ed. Maria A. Schenkeveld-van der Dussen (Utrecht, 1988).

[2] See, in particular, Hessel Gerritsz's engraving after Vinckboons, *Heyms.*, illustrated in Albert Blankert et al., *Hendrick Avercamp, 1585–1634; Barent*

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Avercamp, 1612–1679: Frozen Silence—Paintings from Museums and Private Collections (Amsterdam, 1982), 150–151, cat. 33.

[3] A print by Johannes Galle after Pieter Bruegel the Elder of an ice scene, dated 1553, is entitled "De slibberachtigheyt van's menschen leven." For a discussion of emblematic literature of ice scenes, see Evert van Straaten, *Koud tot op het Bot* (The Hague, 1977), 43–48. See also the colored drawings of ice scenes by Adriaen van de Venne in Martin Royalton-Kisch, *Adriaen van de Venne's Album* (London, 1988), 326, 336–342.

[4] For other paintings in which figure groups found in the Washington painting occur, see Clara J. Welcker, *Hendrick Avercamp (1585–1634), bijgenaamd "De Stome van Campen" en Barent Avercamp (1612–1679), "Schilders tot Campen"* (Zwolle, 1933; rev. ed. by D. J. Hensbroek-van der Poel, Doornspijk, 1979), pls. 22 and 25. See also: Pieter Roelofs, et.al., *Hendrick Avercamp: Master of the Ice Scene* (Amsterdam, 2009).

[5] The relationship between these two paintings was thoughtfully analyzed in 1986 by Kathleen Pedersen in a graduate seminar paper at the University of Maryland (in NGA curatorial files).

[6] For the chronology of Avercamp's paintings, see: Pieter Roelofs, "The Paintings," in Pieter Roelofs, et.al., *Hendrick Avercamp: Master of the Ice Scene* (Amsterdam, 2009), 48–54. For an excellent analysis of the LACMA painting, see John Walsh Jr. and Cynthia P. Schneider, *A Mirror of Nature: Dutch Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Edward William Carter* (New York, 1981), 3–7

[7] The Dendrochronology was conducted by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg, February 12, 1987 (letter in NGA curatorial files).

[8] Because of somewhat more simplified composition of the Gallery painting in relation to that in LACMA, George S. Keyes doubted its attribution to Avercamp. See: George S. Keyes "Hendrick Avercamp and the Winter Landscape," in Albert Blankert et al., *Hendrick Avercamp, 1585–1634; Barent Avercamp, 1612–1679: Frozen Silence—Paintings from Museums and Private Collections* (Amsterdam, 1982), 55 n. 25.

[9] See the assessment of the painting in the 2014 archived version of this catalog, http://purl.org/nga/collection/catalogue/17th-century-dutch-paintings/2014-04-24.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a single oak panel with a horizontal grain, has been thinned and a cradle attached. Dendrochronology shows the panel to be from a tree felled

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between 1606 and 1616.[1] Triangular wood inserts replace the bottom right and left corners. The wood grain is quite prominent, due to increased transparency of the aged oil paint and moderate abrasion overall. A thin, smooth, white ground layer is followed by a coarse, granular, gray imprimatura. The horizontal, striated strokes of the imprimatura application, visible through the thin sky, are incorporated into the design of the foreground figures.

Paint was applied in thin, smooth transparent layers with more opaque paint used in the details and white highlights. Very fine contours were applied around the figures with liquid black paint. While discrete losses are few, the paint surface has been heavily abraded, most notably in the sky near the right and along all four edges. Some figures in the middle ground were almost totally reconstructed when the painting was restored in the early twentieth century. The horse and most foreground figures have also been reinforced, sometimes quite inaccurately (see text). No conservation treatment has been carried out at the National Gallery.

[1] Dendrochronology by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg, February 12, 1987 (letter in NGA curatorial files).

PROVENANCE

Said to have been at the Imperial Hermitage Gallery, Saint Petersburg.[1] (Firma D. Katz, Dieren), by 1933; J.M.B. Beuker, Heelsum, by 1934;[2] by inheritance to his widow, Mrs. J.C. Beuker [née De Kruyff van Dorssen]; sold 5 April 1967 through (A. Martin de Wild, The Hague) to NGA.

[1] In the catalogues for the 1934 and 1938 exhibitions in which it was included, the painting was described as having been previously in the collection of the Hermitage. However, the picture is not listed in any of that museum's collection catalogues.

[2] Labels from the 1933 and 1934 exhibitions both say that Katz was the "exhibitor," but they give two different names as the "owner" (removed from the

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back of the painting, now in NGA curatorial files). The owner's name on the 1933 label is difficult to decipher, but appears to be two initials followed by "te H." The owner's name on the 1934 label clearly reads "J.M.B. Beuker Heelsum."

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1933 Kunsttentoonstelling van 17e Eeuwsche Schilderijen, Gemeentelijk Museum, Zutphen, The Netherlands, 1933, no. 45.

1934 Tentoonstelling van Schilderijen van Oud-hollandsche Meesters uit de Collectie Katz te Dieren, Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, 1934, no. 45.

1938 Meesterwerken uit Vier Eeuwen 1400-1800, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 1938, no. 52.

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Jakob Houbraken, *Ludolf Backhuysen* (detail), engraving, in Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (The Hague: J. Swart, C. Boucquet, en M. Gaillard, 1753), vol. 2, pl. I, National Gallery of Art Library, Gift of C. Dearhoff

Backhuysen, Ludolf

Also known as
Bakhuysen, Ludolf
Dutch, 1630 - 1708

BIOGRAPHY

Ludolf Backhuysen, whose name appears in the literature in a number of different forms (for example, Bakhuysen, Backhuisen, and Bakhuizen), was born in the German town of Emden on December 18, 1631. He was the son of a scribe, Gerhard Backhaus, and initially followed in his father's footsteps, working as a clerk in the government offices at Emden. After the family moved to Amsterdam in 1649, he held a similar post with the firm of the wealthy merchant Guilielmo Bartolotti van den Heuvel, a fellow native of Emden.

In 1656, while apparently still working for Bartolotti, Backhuysen is recorded as a member of Kalligraphie, a society of those proficient in beautiful penmanship. From 1650 onward he was also working as a draftsman, producing "pen paintings" and grisailles. As late as 1657 and 1660, he is still referred to in documents as a draftsman, and although his earliest dated oil painting was executed in 1658, he did not join the painters' guild until February 1663. By this time any formal training he may have received in the art of painting must have been completed. No contemporary records of any apprenticeship survive, but Houbraken states that Backhuysen studied first with Allart van Everdingen (Dutch, 1621 - 1675) and then with Hendrick Dubbels (1620/1621–1676?).

Despite his late start as a professional painter, Backhuysen rapidly gained widespread fame and patronage. He became the unchallenged leading seascape

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painter of the Netherlands after Willem van de Velde the Elder (Dutch, 1611 - 1693) and his son Willem van de Velde the Younger (Dutch, 1633 - 1707) immigrated to England in late 1672 or early 1673. Even as early as 1665, it was to Backhuysen that the burgomasters of Amsterdam turned when commissioning a large view of the city's harbor to send as a gift to Hughes de Lionne, Marquis de Berny, a minister of Louis XIV of France. For this painting the artist was paid the sizable sum of 1,275 florins.

Backhuysen's clientele is reported to have included a number of other European rulers—among them Peter the Great of Russia, the king of Prussia, the elector of Saxony, and the grand duke of Tuscany—and his works continued to be extremely popular with leading collectors throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. After about 1850, however, his reputation began to wane, and only recently has he once more come to be considered a leading master of Dutch marine painting.

Backhuysen's canvases are often large and frequently depict stormy scenes. His lighting and color schemes are typically more dramatic than those of his contemporary Willem van de Velde the Younger, although some of their works of the 1670s are rather similar and on occasion have been confused. It is not clear if one artist influenced the other at this time or if their stylistic convergence was coincidental. A painter upon whom Backhuysen certainly did exert an influence was Abraham Storck (1644–1708). He also had a number of pupils, including Hendrick and Jan Claesz Rietschoof, Michiel Maddersteg, Jan Dubbels, Pieter Coopse (Dutch, active 1672 - 1677 or after), and Anthonie Rutgers.

In addition to the seascapes for which he is famous, Backhuysen painted some portraits, allegorical compositions, and townscapes. Besides his work as a calligrapher, he was also a printmaker. He married four times, and died after a long illness in Amsterdam, where he was buried in the Westerkerk on November 17, 1708.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Ludolf Backhuysen
Dutch, 1630 - 1708

Ships in Distress off a Rocky Coast

1667

oil on canvas
overall: 114.3 x 167.3 cm (45 x 65 7/8 in.)
framed: 147.3 x 146.1 x 6.4 cm (58 x 57 1/2 x 2 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower center on rock: LBackh / 1667
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund 1985.29.1

ENTRY

Buffeted by violent winds and raging seas, three Dutch cargo ships struggle desperately to stay clear of a rocky coast. The threat of destruction is real, for the remnants of a shipwreck are ominously present in the foreground: a mast from the doomed ship, its Dutch flag still aloft, and cargo floating in the waves. An even more imminent danger for two of these ships is the threat of collision. One ship, its reefed sails filled with wind, races past two rock outcrops and bears down on another cargo ship that has turned into the wind to try to ride out the storm. Anxious sailors, struggling to bring their vessel under control, gesture wildly as spray from a huge wave crashes against its side. The other vessel's rear mast has broken, and the crew has cut down the top portion of its mainmast to prevent further damage. Most of its crew is on deck frantically trying to control the disengaged mast and sail. [1] The outcome of the drama is not known, but Backhuysen creates the impression that man will prevail in this battle against the forces of nature: although massive steel-gray clouds loom overhead, clear skies and a golden light in the upper left signal that the storm is about to pass. [2]

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Backhuysen painted this dramatic scene in 1667, fairly early in his long and successful career as an artist. Most of his paintings from the 1660s depict identifiable ships massed in the waters offshore, whether outside the port of Amsterdam or near the island of Texel north of the Zuider Zee. Although Backhuysen delighted in activating such scenes with billowing clouds, choppy seas, and strong accents of light and dark, nothing anticipates the concentrated drama of this work. Indeed, it is remarkable that this painting, which is both large in scale and assured in concept and execution, is the first known representation of a tempest in his oeuvre. [3]

Arnold Houbraken states that Backhuysen began his career as an artist by drawing boats. [4] The careful, descriptive style of a number of his early drawings and pen paintings suggests that at the outset he was strongly influenced by the preeminent marine painters of the day, Willem van de Velde the Elder (Dutch, 1611 - 1693) and his son Willem van de Velde the Younger (Dutch, 1633 - 1707). Houbraken nevertheless indicates that Backhuysen's first teacher was Allart van Everdingen (Dutch, 1621 - 1675), whose seascapes, with their convincing representations of turbulent seas and rugged terrains, indeed include rocks not unlike those in Backhuysen's painting [fig. 1]. [5] In the end, though, Backhuysen's fascination with the effects of weather in a seascape undoubtedly stemmed from an inherent interest in the sea. According to Houbraken, "nature" was Backhuysen's true teacher. He often sailed to the mouth of the sea to observe changes of light and water along the shore, excursions that provided a vivid impression of natural effects for his paintings and drawings. [6]

The vessels depicted by Backhuysen are flutes (*fluyten*), a type of cargo ship that originated in Hoorn in the late sixteenth century. These ships were at the core of the enormous merchant fleet that was so essential to Dutch commercial prosperity. Merchants used flutes to transport a range of goods on many different maritime routes, including grain and lumber purchased in the Baltic Sea region. Many of the ships in the Baltic fleet came from Hoorn, one of the most important ports on the Zuider Zee, and the seat of one of the chambers of the East India Company. [7] Since the red-and-white striped flag of Hoorn flies from the foremast of the ship to the right, Backhuysen's scene may relate to a specific event in Hoorn's history. [8]

Even if a historic episode lies behind its conception, this tempest scene belongs to a Dutch and Flemish pictorial tradition that reaches back to the late sixteenth century. Artists as diverse as Jan Brueghel the Elder (Flemish, 1568 - 1625), Paul Bril (Flemish, 1554 - 1626), Bonaventura Peeters (1614–1652), Cornelis Willaerts

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(Dutch, active 1622 - 1666), Simon de Vlieger (Dutch, 1600/1601 - 1653), and Jacob Adriaensz Bellevois (Dutch, 1620/1622 - 1676) found a ready market for such works not only because of the inherent drama of their subjects but also because these scenes spoke to a deep-seated fear for all those whose lives depended on the sea. Rocky shores, in particular, had ominous overtones. On a practical level, they were to be feared in the midst of a storm, but they also symbolized inhospitable, foreign lands as opposed to the dunes that predominate the Dutch coast.

Bellevois's *Sea Storm on a Rocky Coast* [fig. 2], which was executed in 1664, only three years before Backhuysen's work, offers a particularly interesting compositional and thematic comparison. As ships are cast about in the stormy sea, some survivors of a wreck have made it to shore and are praying to God. The painting is highly anecdotal, yet its underlying concept is fundamental to this genre of images: these survivors have overcome the turbulence of life and have reached the rock of their salvation through the intervention of God, to whom they offer prayers of thanksgiving. [9] Backhuysen, on the other hand, focuses the entire drama on the ships at sea. He simplifies the image and removes the obvious theological and allegorical messages. For these sailors to survive, they must overcome the forces of nature through their own prowess as well as through the good graces of a deity above.

The painting is in a remarkable state of preservation. All of the details are intact, including the masts, sails, and lines on the ships. Particularly fascinating is the manner in which Backhuysen has indicated the spray from the waves by flicking a brush loaded with white paint against the canvas. This technique gives an immediacy to the scene that is not often found in his later works, when his manner of painting became heavier. Although no preliminary drawing for this painting is known, a drawing of a *Ship in Distress in a Thunderstorm* (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam) has much the same spirit and may have been executed about the same time. [10] There is also an excellent copy of the painting in a Dutch private collection by Hendrick Rietschoof (1687–1746). [11] A native of Hoorn, Rietschoof likely saw Backhuysen's painting in a private residence where he first copied the work on paper (Teylers Museum, Haarlem) and then transferred the image to canvas, departing from the original only in its smaller size.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Allart van Everdingen, *Ships in a Rough Sea*, c. 1645, oil on canvas, Städelsches Kunstinstitut Frankfurt. Photo: Ursula Edelmann

fig. 2 Jacob Adriaensz Bellevois, *Sea Storm on a Rocky Coast*, 1664, oil on canvas, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig

NOTES

[1] George S. Keyes in *Mirror of Empire: Dutch Marine Art of the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis, 1990), 88, interprets the vessel as floundering because it has “suffered terrible damage to its masts.” However, the crew has taken control of the situation by removing the upper portion of the mast. A similar strategy against the forces of a storm can be seen in Backhuysen’s 1694 painting of the Dutch men-of-war *Ridderschap* and *Hollandia* in the midst of a hurricane in the Strait of Gibraltar (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inventory no. A 4856, repro. in P. J. J. van Thiel, *All the Paintings of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam: A Completely Illustrated Catalogue, First Supplement, 1976–1991*, trans. Michael F. Hoyle [Amsterdam, 1992], 20); the *Hollandia* is likewise shown without the top portion of the mainmast because its commander had it cut down to save the ship during the storm. See Rob Kattenburg, *Two Centuries of Dutch Marine Paintings and Drawings from the Collection of Rob Kattenburg* (Amsterdam, 1989), 42.

[2] Lawrence Otto Goedde, “Convention, Realism, and the Interpretation of Dutch and Flemish Tempest Painting," *Simiolus* 16 (1986): 142, views the situation more negatively. He writes that “few of the sailors in Backhuysen’s picture will survive these cliffs.”

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[3] Backhuysen painted a number of tempest scenes in later years, among them actual events (see note 2), imaginary scenes, and a few representations of biblical stories, such as *The Shipwreck of Paul*, c. 1690–1700, Stiftung Henri Nannen, Emden (color repro. in Henri Nannen et al., *Ludolf Backhuysen, Emden 1630–Amsterdam 1708: ein Versuch, Leben und Werk des Kunstlers zu beschreiben* [Emden, 1985], 43).

[4] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen,* 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:237.

[5] Everdingen's tempest views may reflect his own experiences. Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:238, relates that Everdingen had been shipwrecked off the coast of Norway.

[6] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:238. As Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann has noted (personal communication), Houbraken's comments have the character of topoi, rather than statements of fact.

[7] George S. Keyes, *Mirror of Empire: Dutch Marine Art of the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis, 1990), 305.

[8] Rob Kattenburg, letter of October 1, 1987, identifies the flag and adds, "Such a flag flown from the foremast usually signifies the residence of the ship's owner, whereas a flag flying from the rear mast indicates the hometown of the skipper." In the opinion of H. W. Saaltink, former curator of the Westfries Museum, "No special event from the history of Hoorn has been depicted" (letter of November 28, 1991). Both letters are in NGA curatorial files.

[9] For an iconographic assessment of this painting, see Jochen Luckhardt in *Jacob Isaaksz. van Ruisdael: Wasserfall mit Wachtturm—Eine werkmonographische Ausstellung* (Braunschweig, 1991), 28–31. Also relevant to the interpretation of such paintings is a long emblematic tradition in which storm-tossed ships, threatened by rocky shores, are given various allegorical meanings. In Andrea Alciati's *Emblemata* (Leiden, 1556), for example, this motif represented danger to the ship of state, whereas Adriaan Spinniker, in his *Leerzame Zinnebeelden* (Haarlem, 1714), uses it to illustrate the dangers to the soul that result from a life unmindful of God.

[10] Inventory no. H. 209. This connection was noted by George S. Keyes in *Mirror of Empire: Dutch Marine Art of the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis, 1990), 221–222, no. 62 (repro.).

[11] Hendrick Rietschoof, *Two Three-Masters in a Heavy Storm Off a Rocky Coast*, oil on canvas, 26 x 31 in. See Rob Kattenburg, *Dutch Old Master Marine Paintings* (Bergen, 2006), 12–13, repro.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. No reduction of the picture plane has occurred. A cream-colored ground, which covers the fine-weight, plain-woven support, is visible through the thinly applied paint. Thin, fluid, opaque paint layers are blended wet-into-wet with minimally impasted highlights and finely drawn paint lines in the rigging. The paint condition is excellent, with losses confined to the paint edges and only minor abrasion. Discolored varnish and inpainting were removed when the painting was treated in 1985.

PROVENANCE

Arthur George, 3rd earl of Onslow [1777-1870], Richmond, and Clandon Park, near Guilford, Surrey;[1] his heirs; (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 22 July 1893, no. 24); (J.W. Vokins).[2] Siméon del Monte, Brussels, by 1928;[3] sold by his heirs at (sale, Sotheby's, London, 24 June 1959, no. 22); purchased by (P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London); (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 19 April 1985, no. 111); purchased by NGA.

[1] The Arthur George ownership comes from labels that were formerly affixed to the stretcher (now in NGA curatorial files).

[2] The buyer is noted in an annotated copy of the sales catalogue; copy in NGA curatorial files.

[3] Published in Gustav Glück, *La Collection del Monte*, Vienna, 1928: 22, pl. 41. An old label from the back of the painting (now in NGA curatorial files) also refers to the del Monte collection.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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2016 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. " Sea change: The acquisition of Backhuysen's *Ships in distress off a rocky coast* at the National Gallery of Art, Washington." In *Collecting for the Public: Works that Made a Difference. Essays for Peter Hecht*. Edited by Bart Cornelis, Ger Luijten, Louis van Tilborgh, and Tim Zeedijk. Translated by Michael Hoyle. London, 2016: repro. (detail) 114, 115-116, 117 fig. 42, 118-119.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Bega, Cornelis

Also known as
Bega, Cornelis Pietersz
Dutch, 1631/1632 - 1664

BIOGRAPHY

Documents indicate that Cornelis Pietersz Bega was born in either 1631 or 1632 in Haarlem.[1] His grandfather was the renowned history painter Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (Dutch, 1562 - 1638), and his extended family included many other more minor painters, sculptors, and craftsmen. In the spring of 1653 he traveled with the portraitist and still life painter Vincent Laurensz van der Vinne (1628–1702) through Germany, visiting Frankfurt am Main, Heidelberg, Strasbourg, and Basel. Although, like Van der Vinne, he may have intended to continue on to Rome, Bega instead returned to Haarlem in June of that year.[2] He joined the Guild of Saint Luke in 1654.[3] Bega died unmarried in 1664 at the young age of 32, likely a victim of the plague that claimed many lives in Haarlem that year.[4]

Dutch artist biographer Arnold Houbraken wrote that Bega was the “first and best pupil” of Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685), a painter of low-life genre scenes. Bega similarly specialized in paintings of jovial taverngoers, smokers, quack doctors, alchemists, and musicians, but he also created tender and sympathetic images of peasant families and nursing mothers. Like Ostade, he also produced etchings, and he may have been one of the first Dutch artists to experiment with monotypes. Bega was also a confident draughtsman, and made numerous chalk drawings remarkable for their sculptural quality. Houbraken wrote that Bega and his close friend Leendert van der Cooghen (1632–1681) frequently drew from life together.

Early in his career, Bega painted in a loose, rough style similar to Ostade, although his paintings differ from Ostade’s in that they exhibit a greater degree of monumentality and occasionally include classical elements and figures derived from live models. Bega may have been influenced by the classicizing tradition in Haarlem painting, which he would have known both from the extensive art collection he inherited from his grandfather, as well as from contemporary Haarlem painters who had trained there, such as Salomon (1597–1664) and Jan de Bray (Dutch, c. 1627 - 1688). In the late 1650s, Bega began producing smaller paintings

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with fewer figures and highly detailed brushwork, perhaps influenced by Leiden *fijnschilders* (fine painters) such as Gerrit Dou (Dutch, 1613 - 1675) and Frans van Mieris (Dutch, 1635 - 1681). His attentive rendering of materials, along with the emotional sensitivity he brought to his subjects would influence later genre painters like Thomas Wyck (Dutch, c. 1616 - 1677), Jan Steen (Dutch, 1625/1626 - 1679), and Cornelis Dusart (Dutch, 1660 - 1704).

[1] A notarized document from April 16, 1650 states that Bega was 18 years old; see Neeltje Kohler and Pieter Biesboer, *Painting in Haarlem 1500–1850: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum*, (Ghent, 2006), 100–101.

[2] Van der Vinne documented this trip, and Bega's participation in it, in an illustrated diary now in the Haarlem Gemeentearchief (Stell. 21D/171–2 and Stell. 21D/231).

[3] Hessel Miedema, *De archiefsbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem 1497-1789*, 2 vols., (Alphen aan de Rijn, 1980), 2:638.

[4] Houbraken tells a touching, if unverifiable, story of the death of Bega's sweetheart from the same plague. Bega longed to embrace her while she lay dying, but his mother and the doctor had forbid him to touch her. Instead, Bega held out the handle of a broom to her, kissing one end she girl kissed the other. Alas, this sanitary measure would not save Bega from contracting the same disease; Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlandtsche Kosntschilders en Schilderessen*, 3 in 1 vols., The Hague, 1753. (Reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 1:349–50.

[5] Houbraken 1753, 1:350.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Cornelis Bega
Dutch, 1631/1632 - 1664

The Alchemist

1663

oil on canvas mounted on panel
overall: 35 × 28.6 cm (13 3/4 × 11 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right, in gray paint on box: C. Bega Ao.1663
From the Collection of Ethel and Martin Wunsch 2013.34.1

ENTRY

The alchemist, intently hunched over his work in a dark, simple interior, single-mindedly focuses on his chemical experiment. With his felt hat pulled down firmly over his forehead, he heats the fire in a small furnace by squeezing the bellows under his arm. In this engaging painting, Bega provides a fascinating glimpse into the mysterious realm of an alchemist's workshop. He shows the alchemist in mid-experiment as he grasps metal tongs that reach into the fire, its blue-grey smoke billowing up behind the domed alembic. Below this glass distillation vessel is an open-topped vessel containing the material to be distilled. The heated vapor rising into the hooded alembic cools on contact with its glass dome. The liquid created drips from the alembic's spout into a red cloth that filters it before it reaches a receptacle on the earthen floor of the workshop.

Thick tomes, their leather covers worn and torn, their pages, filled with drawings and instructions, rumpled from extensive use, lie within arm's reach. An illustration of this distillation process bearing an undecipherable, alchemical text, perhaps torn from one of these books, is attached to the stone wall directly above the oven. [1] Beautifully rendered earthenware pots, as well as glass, wooden, leather, and metal containers of all shapes and sizes indicate the many ingredients that have gone into the alchemist's concoctions over the years, mixtures that, given the sparse and haphazard character of his workshop, probably never attained the desired results. A particularly intriguing vessel is the glazed earthenware apothecary jar on the furnace that—at first glance – seems to be labeled "silicon." [2] Silicon, however, was not identified until the early eighteenth century; what one sees here is most likely the last part of "basilicon," a curative ointment that was

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often used by alchemists in their efforts to devise new potions for strengthening and healing the body. [3]

The alchemist's labors were intimately bound to the study and early practice of chemistry, and a huge literature evolved in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries explaining the types of physical matter and the processes by which one could conduct experiments to transform one element into another. It was, for many, a respectable profession, and its scholarly component is evident in the list of significant scientists —Bega's contemporaries—who sought to separate the essence of matter from its base components, among them Robert Boyle (1627–1691) and Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727). [4] Many alchemists made significant scientific contributions to the development of, among others, medicines and cosmetics as well as pigments and dyes. Nevertheless, alchemy's ambiguous status at the time derived from the ways theory and practice were intertwined, and from its origins in natural philosophy, metaphysics, and religion. Alchemists were secretive about the processes that allowed them to make their transformations, and their texts and treatises utilized a wide range of occult signs and symbols.

Alchemists conducted many chemical experiments, but the one that resonates most in the public consciousness was the effort to turn base metal, such as lead, into gold. Most alchemists firmly believed that this elusive transmutation could be achieved with the aid of the legendary and elusive "philosopher's stone" (*lapis philosophorum*), said to be the fifth element (besides water, air, fire, and earth), which could separate the physical properties of elements through transmutation. Unfortunately, the quest for the philosopher's stone and, ultimately, for gold led some alchemists astray and they would forget the underlying scientific components of their discipline. Instead, in their futile search for gaining riches through alchemy, some of them lost all of their worldly possessions and drove their families into the poorhouse. As a group they were often depicted as fools and mocked for that futile quest.

Bega and his contemporaries were fascinated by alchemy, a practice that occupied a realm somewhere between science and magic. [5] Aside from this painting, Bega executed at least two other images of an alchemist at work, one in 1661 and another one in 1663 [fig. 1]. [6] Although no evidence indicates that Bega was actively engaged in alchemy, the idea of transforming base materials into different substances through scientific knowledge and intuitive imagination, albeit done somewhat secretly, presumably appealed to his artistic sensitivities. [7] Painters, in fact, effectively transformed minerals and dyes into works of art with illusionistic

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qualities through a mixture of science and imagination. [8] Most of the ingredients for basilicon for example, were used in painters' workshops as well as for making medical ointments (unguents). [9] Bega, moreover, grew up in a world where the crafting of fine objects from precious "noble" metals (as gold and silver were often described) was a matter of daily concern. A number his close relatives were gold- and silversmiths, including his father, Pieter Jansz Begijn (1600–1648), with whom Bega likely trained before entering the workshop of Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685) in 1648. [10]

Aside from whatever interest in alchemy Bega may have gained from his family, the subject clearly struck a chord in Haarlem, where a fertile market for paintings of this subject must have existed. Aside from Bega, a number of other Haarlem painters, including Bega's master, Van Ostade [fig. 2] and Thomas Wyck (Dutch, c. 1616 - 1677) [fig. 3] depicted the subject. [11] Nevertheless, despite their shared interest in the theme, the attitudes and approaches of these three painters are so different that one must conclude that each came to the subject from his own distinctive viewpoint, a phenomenon that reflects the complex place that early chemistry and alchemy held in contemporary thought.

Van Ostade, who only painted the subject once, in 1661, drew upon the negative iconography of the alchemist stemming from the print that Philip Galle (Flemish, 1537 - 1612) engraved in1558 after a design by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Flemish, c. 1525/1530 - 1569) [fig. 4]. [12] In Bruegel's image the alchemist, who is shown dropping his last coin into a crucible, is the cause of his family's ruin, as evidenced by the empty money bags held by his distraught wife and bare cupboards in which their children play. In much the same manner, Van Ostade depicts the alchemist futilely puffing his bellows as his wife wipes her baby's bottom, a not-so-subtle commentary on the worthlessness of his endeavors. This sentiment is reinforced by the text on a sheet of paper beneath a stool. Drawn from Agricola's treatise *De Re Metallica* (1566), it reads: "*oleum et operam perdis*" ('you waste oil and labor'). [13]

Thomas Wijck's numerous scenes of alchemists in their workshops, on the other hand, are devoid of the negative associations found in works deriving from the Bruegel tradition. Wijck's alchemists are scholarly and meditative, and are often shown intently reading treatises rather than actually engaged in conducting experiments. Even though his alchemists conduct their studies in workrooms cluttered with alchemical books and instruments, Wijck's positive view of the profession approaches that of David Teniers the Younger (Flemish, 1610 - 1690),

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who invariably portrayed alchemists as scientists reading or conducting experiments in a carefully appointed laboratory setting [fig. 5]

While Bega's alchemist is not portrayed as a scholar despite the thick tomes lying at his feet, neither is he a fool, despite his humble workshop and plain clothes. Bega's strength as an artist lies in his ability to convey the basic humanity of his figures, no matter how coarse or ill-behaved they might be in their social interactions, and his depiction of this alchemist is consistent with that fundamental characteristic of his artistic approach. Bega's alchemist is not just a type but a real person, whose facial characteristics are beautifully rendered in the half-light of this darkened interior. One empathizes with his efforts and wishes him well, even if the outcome of his experiment remains uncertain. That Bega thoughtfully considered how to render this figure is evident from a preliminary drawing he made of the alchemist . In this black chalk drawing, with white heightening on blue paper, Bega made subtle adjustments to the angle of the man's chin and felt hat to capture the essence of the figure's seated pose, and he carefully drew the angular folds of the alchemist's clothing, even suggesting the textures of different fabrics. [14]

Other preliminary drawings must have existed that are now lost, such as compositional drawings or individual studies of the multiple objects strewn about the alchemist's workshop. Some of the objects reappear in slightly different arrangements in Bega's other painting of an alchemist from 1663 (fig. 1). In that work, the textures and materials of these still-life elements are also beautifully rendered and create an earthy complement to the human drama unfolding in the humble setting of the alchemist's workshop. Despite using a restrained palette, consisting primarily of ochers, umbers, and blue-grays, Bega had a remarkable ability to evoke the physical presence of inanimate objects through his mastery of light. By subtly accenting an edge or indicating a reflection, he made objects glow and glisten within these darkened interiors. Bega's depiction of this alchemist not only offers a fascinating glimpse into a hidden and secretive world, but his painterly genius gives this work a stunning emotional and psychological energy.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

June 14, 2015

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Cornelis Bega, *The Alchemist*, 1663, oil on panel, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, inv. no. 84.PB.56. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program

fig. 2 Adriaen van Ostade, *The Alchemist*, 1661, oil on oak, National Gallery, London. Photo © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY

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fig. 3 Thomas Wijck, *The Laboratory of an Alchemist*, c. 1665, oil on panel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister

fig. 4 Attributed to Philip Galle after Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *The Alchemist*, c. 1558, engraving, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Print Purchase Fund (Rosenwald Collection), 1970.13.3

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fig. 5 Cornelis Bega, *Study of an Alchemist*, c. 1663, black chalk with white heightening on blue paper, Museum Mayer van den Bergh, Antwerp, inv. no. MMB.1049. Photo © Museum Mayer van den Bergh, Antwerpen

fig. 6 David Teniers the Younger, *Interior of a Laboratory with an Alchemist*, c. 1650, oil on canvas, Chemical Heritage Foundation Collections, inv. FA. 00-03-23. Courtesy of Roy Eddleman; photograph by Gregory Tobias.

NOTES

[1] According to Lawrence M. Principe and Lloyd DeWitt, *Transmutations – Alchemy in Art: selected works from the Eddleman and Fisher collections at the Chemical Heritage Foundation,* Philadelphia, 2002, 17, this drawing resembles a woodcut that appears in various editions of the alchemical treatise *Liber fornicum.*

[2] Bega's jar resembles an apothecary jar in the collection of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, inv. BK-NM-10038. For an extensive discussion of apothecary jars, see the website of the Société d'Histoire de la Pharmacie, Paris, and especially the online article by Louis Cotinat, *L'âge d'or des faïences d'apothicaires* (1973), http://www.shp-asso.org/index.php?PAGE=pots%202

[3] Silica was only discovered by Antoine Lavoisier in 1787, and the term "silicon" was first used in 1817 by the Scottish chemist Thomas Thomson. I

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am most grateful to Professor Lawrence M. Principe, Drew Professor of the Humanities, Department of the History of Science and Technology and Department of Chemistry at Johns Hopkins University for identifying this inscription as “basilicon.” The full inscription would most likely have read: “U. BASILICON” or ”UNG.BASILICON”, where the abbreviation U. or Ung. stands for ‘unguentum’. (correspondence with Henriette Rahusen, August 8, 2014).

[4] For this history, see, among others, H.A.M. Snelders, *De geschiedenis van de scheikunde in Nederland*, part 1: *Van alchemie tot chemie en chemische industrie rond 1900*, Delft, 1993, 11-25; Lawrence M. Principe and Lloyd DeWitt, *Transmutations – Alchemy in Art: selected works from the Eddleman and Fisher collections at the Chemical Heritage Foundation*, Philadelphia, 2002; and Lawrence M. Principe, *The Secrets of Alchemy*. Chicago, 2013, especially chapter 5: “The golden age: practicing chymistry in the early modern period.”

[5] In 1663 Bega also painted *The Astrologer* (oil on panel, 36.9 x 29.6; London, National Gallery, inv. NG1481), another subject that occupied a realm that drew upon both science and magic. For an excellent discussion of this painting, see the commentary by Savenaz Ayooghi in Peter van den Brink, and Bernd Wolfgang Lindemann, eds., *Cornelis Bega: Eleganz und raue Sitten* (Exh. cat. Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen; Gemaldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin), Stuttgart, 2012, 233-236, no. 66.

[6] Cornelis Bega, *The Alchemist in his Workshop,* 1661, oil on canvas (36 x 46 cm.), Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Kassel (stolen in 1945). For an illustration, see Peter van den Brink, and Bernd Wolfgang Lindemann, eds., *Cornelis Bega: Eleganz und raue Sitten* (Exh. cat. Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen; Gemaldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin), Stuttgart, 2012, 243.

[7] Several Haarlem artists from earlier generations, most significantly, Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617) and Jacob de Gheyn (c. 1565-1629), did engage in alchemical studies.

[8] This concept is discussed by Jessica Korschanowski (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen) in a lecture at the Rijksdienst voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (RKD), The Hague, 22 May 2014, “Between folly and erudition: The image of *The Alchemist* in seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish genre painting.”

[9] The French edition (1580) of Guy de Chauliac’s *Inventarium Sive Chirurgia Magna* (La Grande Chirurgie), originally published circa 1363, lists them as: *cire* (wax), *mastic* (resin, used in varnishing), *verd de gris* (verdigris, likely as a drying agent), *terebinthine* (turpentine), *litharge* (lead oxide, similar to massicot), and *galban* (resin). My gratitude to Elizabeth Berry Drago for the above information on the link between Basilicum and artists’ materials, and for her insights into the widespread practical and commercial applications of

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proto-chemistry in the seventeenth century in general.

[10] For information on Bega's family, see Pieter Biesboer, "Cornelis Bega (Haarlem, 1631-1664). Eine Biografie," in Peter van den Brink, and Bernd Wolfgang Lindemann, eds. *Cornelis Bega: Eleganz und raue Sitten* (Exh. cat. Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen; Gemaldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin), Stuttgart, 2012, 25-26. Aside from Bega's father, who was both a gold- and silversmith, and a member of the Haarlem Saint Luke's guild, Bega's uncle Dominicus Jansz Bagijn (died 1636) was a silversmith and sculptor; the brother of his paternal grandmother, Dominicus Fredericxz van Lijnhoven (1587-1637), was a noted silversmith, and his sister was married to the silversmith Cornelis Fransz Ebbekin, whose son Pieter Cornelisz Ebbekin (1622-1666) was also a silversmith. I would like to thank Henriette Rahusen for emphasizing the importance of this family heritage in connection to Bega's interest in proto-chemistry.

[11] Hendrik Heerschop (1626/1627-1690) was another Haarlem artist that painted scenes of alchemists. For one such work, see David De Witt, *The Bader Collection : Dutch and Flemish paintings,* Kingston, Ont., c. 2008, 151, no. 88.

[12] See Nadine M. Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints*, (Exh. cat., Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), New Haven 2001, 170-173, no. 60f.

[13] Neil MacLaren and Christopher Brown. *The Dutch school: 1600-1900*. 2 vols. National Gallery Catalogues. Revised and expanded ed. London, 1991, 1: 298-299, no. 846; 2: plate 257. The original Latin phrase '*et oleum et operam perdidi'*, from Act 1, scene 2, of Titus Maccius Plautus' comedy '*Poenulus' (c. 195-189 BC),* was retooled by Georg Agricola in Book 2 of *De re metallica*, Basel, 1556, to the phrase used in the painting. This translation differs slightly from the one used by MacLaren and Brown.

[14] For an excellent discussion of this drawing, see the discussion by Baukje Coenen, in Peter van den Brink, and Bernd Wolfgang Lindemann, eds., *Cornelis Bega: Eleganz und raue Sitten* (Exh. cat. Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen; Gemaldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin), Stuttgart, 2012, 239-240, no. 68.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric mounted to a panel. The panel is made from one plank with a vertical grain. It has been beveled on all four sides. It is unclear if Bega mounted the canvas to the panel or if it was done by a different hand at a later date. The panel is consistent with those used during the period, but

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cusping is visible in the canvas, indicating that it was primed while on a stretcher rather than a panel, and the paint stops approximately 0.7 cm from the bottom edge of the fabric, suggesting that this area was a tacking margin.

The ground is a warm gray color and it is extremely thin. The paint is also sparingly applied, with little to no impasto. In some areas, both the paint and ground are so thin that the canvas is readily visible. The paint was applied mostly wet-into-wet and the ground was used to create the midtones. Bega used small, short, parallel brushstrokes in the face, highlights, and white tablecloth. The varnish is thick and glossy.

Infrared reflectography at 1.5–1.8 microns [1] indicates that the alchemist's head was moved slightly to the right and shows a shape at his lower back. Originally, his back may have projected out further or his proper left elbow may have protruded out behind him. The blue fabric hanging below his thigh and the fabric on his lap initially had different shapes.

The painting is in very good condition. The panel remains in plane and the paint and ground are stable. There is a moderate craquelure network with a few minute losses at the intersections of some of the cracks. There is a larger loss in the figure's belt. The paint has also crizzled in several areas, most notably in the background in the upper left corner. Discreet inpainting is located along the edge in the upper right corner and along the perimeter, approximately 0.5 cm from the edge. There is additional inpainting about 2 cm from the left edge in two locations, which are evenly spaced from each other and from the top and bottom of the painting, dividing the panel in thirds.

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara focal plane array InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filters.

PROVENANCE

Cornelis Backer, Amsterdam;[1] (his sale, Zoeterwoude, 16 August, 1775, no. 13);[2] (Abraham Delfos, Leiden); Jonkheer Menno Baron van Coehoorn [d. 1800], The

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Hague; (his estate sale, Phillipus van der Schley, Amsterdam, 19 October 1801 and days following, no. 6);[3] Louis-Bernard Coders [1741-1817], Amsterdam and Liege; (sale, Maison des Divisions, Paris, 25 January 1802 and days following, no. 16);[4] (Alexandre-Joseph Paillet, Paris); (sale, Maison des Divisions, Paris, 18 April 1803 and days following, no. 28);[5] (Bon-Thomas Henry, Paris). Louis-Chrétien Lorch, Paris; (his sale, Maison des Divisions, Paris, 19 November 1804 and days following, no. 13);[6] (Nodin, Paris); M. Gabory, Rouen; (his estate sale, Hôtel de Bullion, Paris, 15-16 April 1822, no. 5).[7] private collection, England, 1938. Marchese San Pieri Talon, Bologna; (his sale, Franco Semenzato, Venice, 2 June 1985, no. 13);[8] (French & Co., New York); sold October 1985 to Robert H. [1928-2009] and Clarice C. Smith, Bethesda; sold November 1989 to (French & Co., New York);[9] (Bob P. Haboldt & Co., New York), by 1990;[10] purchased 1992 by Mr. and Mrs. Martin Wunsch, New York; gift 2013 to NGA.

[1] The provenance is based on Peter van den Brink et al., *Cornelis Bega: Eleganz und raue Sitten*, exh. cat., Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen; Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Gemäldegalerie, Aachen and Stuttgart, 2012: 283, no. 69, where the association of the NGA painting with the paintings described in the various sale catalogues is deemed to be probable.

[2] The description and size of the painting given in the sale catalogue correspond extremely well to the NGA painting. The measurements, given in Rheinische feet as “hoog 13 ½ breed 11 ½ duim,” are equivalent to 35.3 x 30 cm. The NGA painting is 35 x 28.6 cm.

[3] The painting is listed in the sale catalogue as being on panel, indicating that the canvas support had been mounted on board by this time. The dimensions given are the same as those in the 1775 sale catalogue.

[4] The measurements given in the sale catalogue in French feet equate to 43.3 x 35.2 cm. These are larger than those of the NGA painting, but perhaps they include the frame.

[5] The measurements given in the sale catalogue are 34 x 28 cm.

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[6] The measurements given in the sale catalogue are 34 x 20 cm, but the second measurement is probably an error and should have been 28 or 29 cm.

[7] The measurements given in the sale catalogue in French feet are “L. 13 p., H. 9 p.” These equate to 35.1 x 24.3 cm.

[8] In the catalogue for the last of the sales in which the painting appeared, the measurements are given as 35.5 x 29 cm.

[9] The details of ownership by the Smiths are in their collection records; copies are in NGA curatorial files.

[10] In March 1990 the painting was with Haboldt at TEFAF (The European Fine Art Fair) in Maastricht, The Netherlands.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

2012 Cornelis Bega: Eleganz und raue Sitten, Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen; Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, 2012, no. 69, repro.

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1998 Fredericksen, Burton B., ed.; archival contributions by Ruud Priem; assisted by Julia I. Armstrong. *Corpus of Paintings Sold in the Netherlands during the Nineteenth Century, Volume 1: 1801-1810*. Los Angeles, 1998: 85.

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tableaux vendue en France au XIXe siècle, Volume 1: 1801-1810, Part I: A-N. Los Angeles, 1998: 128, 129.

2004 Franits, Wayne E. *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting. Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution*. New Haven and London, 2004: 140, 282 n. 36.

2012 Brink, Peter van den, and Bernd Wolfgang Lindemann, eds. *Cornelis Bega: Eleganz und raue Sitten*. Exh. cat. Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen; Gemaldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Stuttgart, 2012: 241-243, no. 69, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Bellevois, Jacob Adriaensz

Dutch, 1620/1622 - 1676

BIOGRAPHY

The marine painter Jacob Adriaensz Bellevois was born about 1620 or 1622 in Rotterdam. His teacher is not known, but the influence of Julius Porcellis (c. 1609–1645), who worked in Rotterdam, seems apparent in the monochrome tendencies evident in his style. Bellevois presumably lived and worked in Rotterdam at least until after the death of his first wife, Cornelia Vythoecs [Uithoeks], in 1652. Three years later he married Maria 't Hert from Gouda. A document indicates that he was living in Gouda in 1671. Around 1673 or 1674 he is mentioned as being in Hamburg. He was buried in Rotterdam on September 19, 1676.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1753 Houbraken, Arnold. *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. in 1. The Hague, 1753 (Reprint: Amsterdam, 1976): 3:187.

1891 Haverkorn van Rijsewijk, Pieter. "Bellevois, Jakob." *Oud Holland* 9 (1891): 52-55.

1915 Bredius, Abraham. *Künstler-Inventare: Urkunden zur Geschichte der holländischen Kunst des XVIten, XVIIten und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts*. 8 vols. The Hague, 1915-1922: 5(1918):1648-1650.

1973 Bol, Laurens J. *Die holländische Marinemalerei des 17, Jahrhunderts*. Braunschweig, 1973: 192-196.

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1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr.*Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, D.C., 1995: 19.

1996 Giltaij, Jeroen, and Jan Kelch. *Praise of ships and the sea: The Dutch Marine Painters of the 17th Century*. Exh. cat. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Staatliche Museum zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie im Bodemuseum. Rotterdam, 1996: 239.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Circle of Jacob Adriaensz Bellevois
Anonymous Artist

Jacob Adriaensz Bellevois
Dutch, 1620/1622 - 1676

Dutch Ships in a Lively Breeze

probably 1650s

oil on canvas
overall: 122.5 x 147.8 cm (48 1/4 x 58 3/16 in.)
framed: 143.5 x 168.9 cm (56 1/2 x 66 1/2 in.)
Gift of Mrs. Robert Giles 1947.3.1

ENTRY

Under the billowing clouds of an expansive sky, a large three-master, carrying the Amsterdam coat of arms on its stern, sails in brisk winds through crowded shipping lanes. While no land is visible, the mixture of both large and small vessels sailing in a variety of directions suggests that the setting may be one of the broad river estuaries along the coast of the Netherlands that were so important for fostering the Dutch mercantile empire. Nevertheless, given that the ships seem to be generic in character rather than identifiable, it would appear that the scene is a fanciful construction conceived in the artist's workshop. [1]

The attribution of this painting is difficult to determine, in large part because the condition is poor and the surface is heavily Overpainted. A more essential problem, however, is that the quality of the work is not very high, indicating that the artist was not a master of the first rank. Ships are ill-drawn and do not sit comfortably in the water, the waves are not convincingly rendered, and the composition lacks focus and a sense of cohesion.

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When the painting was accepted by the National Gallery of Art in 1947 it was attributed to Abraham Storck (1644–1708), presumably on the basis of an old label that was once attached to the back of the original canvas that read: “Storck Dietsch 1696—Shipping in the Scheldt.” Storck, however, was a rather talented marine painter, whose style is quite different. Instead of the elongated, insubstantial forms of the vessels found in this painting, he gave his ships a physical presence. [2]

The attribution to Storck was changed in 1964 after Horst Gerson suggested, on the basis of a photograph, that the painting was close to the manner of Hendrick van Anthonissen (1606–after 1660). [3] This Amsterdam marine painter, who studied with his brother-in-law Jan Porcellis (before 1584–1632), was an effective painter of naval battles, but he never developed Porcellis’ compositional sensitivity or achieved the atmospheric qualities that emanate from the older artist’s palette. Anthonissen’s less accomplished style is in many ways quite close to that found in this painting, although his mastery of ship details quite surpasses that evident here. [4]

A closer comparison, however, can be made with the work of another retardataire marine painter, Jacob Adriaensz Bellevois (Dutch, 1620/1622 - 1676). This Rotterdam artist was influenced by Jan Porcellis’ son, Julius Porcellis (c. 1609–1645), who practiced his tonal style in that port city. Just as with Anthonissen, however, Bellevois never did develop into an effective tonal artist, in large part because he remained wedded to earlier pictorial traditions, particularly those of Hendrick Vroom (1566–1640). [5] Whether painting shipwrecks or vessels sailing in a brisk wind along the Dutch coast [fig. 1], Bellevois spread his vessels randomly along the breadth of the picture plane rather than uniting them into an integrated whole. While his palette remained largely limited to monochromes of gray and brown, he differentiated between foreground and middle ground with artificially constructed zones of shadow and sunlight rather than with the diagonal compositional schema developed by Julius Porcellis and his father. Also characteristic of his style is that he painted rather loosely, never softening details of the boats or of the riggings so that they merged atmospherically into the broader tonal character of the image. All of these mannerisms are evident in the Gallery’s painting. Also consistent with his style is the lack of weight felt in the material of the sails and, perhaps most tellingly, the distinctive staffage figures that populate the ships. The figures in Bellevois’ paintings are quite schematically rendered and almost always wear hats with wide, flat brims.

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The one mitigating feature in any effort to attribute this work to Bellevois is that the quality level is perhaps lower than his standard. His whitecaps tend to be more softly rendered and integrated into the waves than they are in this work. Likewise, the three-dimensional qualities of his ships are usually more convincing than they appear here. Whether this range of quality is acceptable within his work is uncertain given our fragmentary knowledge of his life and work. Little is known of the evolution of his style, thus one cannot say whether this painting would date early or late in his career. Perhaps Bellevois had a workshop, or perhaps the problems noticed here are exacerbated by the painting's poor condition. At this time too many unknowns exist to be able to establish a firm attribution for this work.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jacob Adriaensz Bellevois, *Two Warships Bringing in a Capture*, 1660s, oil on panel, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

NOTES

[1] Margarita Russell, in a memo in the NGA curatorial files, suggests that the prominent ship in the foreground is "an East Indiaman."

[2] Margarita Russell, in a memo in the NGA curatorial files, speculates that the

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reference to Dietsch [Dietzsch] on the old label was to a member of a prolific eighteenth-century family of Nuremberg painters and graphic artists who produced paintings in the Dutch manner. For Johann Israel Dietzsch (1681–1754) and his family, see Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, Fred. C. Willis, and Hans Vollmer, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1907), 9:275–277; and Horst Gerson, *Ausbreitung und Nachwirkung der holländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Haarlem, 1942), 98, 327. Russell's hypothesis is that this painting was executed by a member of the Dietzsch family after a now lost painting by Storck that was dated 1696. Since comparative material does not exist to buttress her arguments, and since nothing in the manner of execution suggests that the painting is eighteenth century in origin, it is perhaps more prudent to conclude that the inscription on the old label is not reliable than to try to base an attribution upon it.

[3] Horst Gerson letter to Perry Cott, November 17, 1964, in NGA curatorial files.

[4] Quite close to Van Anthonissen in style is the work of Aert Anthonisz (1580–1620), alias Aert van Antum, an Amsterdam follower of Hendrick Vroom (1566–1640) about whom little is known. For both artists, see Rupert Preston, *The Seventeenth-Century Marine Painters of the Netherlands* (Leigh-on-Sea, 1974), 2, 65–66; and Laurens J. Bol, *Die holländische Marinemalerie des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Braunschweig, 1973), 11–29, 36–40.

[5] For the importance of Vroom for the development of Dutch marine painting, see Margarita Russell, *Visions of the Sea: Hendrick C. Vroom and the Origins of Dutch Marine Painting* (Leiden, 1983).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The picture support is composed of two pieces of fabric sewn with a horizontal seam just below the center. The tacking margins were removed when the painting was lined, but cusping at the edges suggests that the original dimensions have been retained. The fabric support sustained damage in the form of a long tear in the upper right, in the sky. A thin, reddish brown ground was laid overall. The sky, the most thickly painted area of the picture, was painted first, followed by the water, and then the boats. The paint used for the water and boats is thinly applied. The paint is in fairly poor condition, with extensive abrasions and much repaint. Overpaint covers several centimeters on either side of the seam and the tear, and extends beyond the perimeters of the several small but significant losses in the sky. The varnish is very discolored. The painting has not been treated while at the National Gallery of Art.

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PROVENANCE

Mrs. Robert Giles [1862-1947, née Frederica Rodgers], Washington, D.C.; bequest 1947 to NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1954 Extended loan for use by The White House, Washington, D.C., 1954-1960.

1969 Inaugural Exhibition: European Paintings, The Art Museum, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, 1969-1970, no cat.

1972 Extended loan for use by The Supreme Court of the United States, Washington, D.C., 1972-1986.

1986 Extended loan for use by Secretary Richard Lyng, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., 1986-1989.

1989 Extended loan for use by Secretary Samuel Skinner, U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C., 1989-1992.

1992 Extended loan for use by Secretary Andrew H. Card, U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C., 1992-1993.

1993 Extended loan for use by Secretary Federico Pena, U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C., 1993-1998.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Nicolaes Claesz. Berchem, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1660, pen and ink and wash, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam. © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Berchem, Nicolaes Pietersz

Also known as
Berchem, Claes Pietersz
Dutch, 1620 - 1683

BIOGRAPHY

Nicolaes Berchem was one of the most popular and successful Italianate landscape painters of his day. Aside from views of Italy, his extensive oeuvre of paintings, drawings, and etchings consists of depictions of the hunt and biblical and mythological scenes. Born in Haarlem in 1620, Berchem received his early training under his father, the still-life painter Pieter Claesz (Dutch, 1596/1597 - 1660). Houbraken, however, enumerated other teachers, including Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656), Claes Moeyaert (1591–1655), Pieter de Grebber (c. 1600–1652/1653), Jan Wils (c. 1600–1666), and, somewhat improbably, Berchem's younger cousin Jan Baptist Weenix (1621–1660/1661).

Berchem entered the Saint Luke's Guild in Haarlem in 1642 and immediately took on three pupils. He married Catrijne Claes de Groot in Haarlem in 1646. Berchem had an association with Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682), and in 1650 the two artists made a trip to the area around Bentheim, near the German border. They collaborated on several paintings in 1652 and 1653.

Certain works by Berchem in the early 1650s are close in style to Ruisdael's landscapes, yet other paintings demonstrate an awareness of Italianate painters who had returned to the Netherlands in the previous two decades. The most important of these artists for Berchem's work were Weenix, Pieter van Laer (Dutch, c. 1592 - 1642), Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652), and Jan Asselijn (Dutch, c. 1610 -

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1652). While Van Laer was instrumental in formulating Berchem's treatment of figures, the Italianate artist who had the most lasting impact on his landscapes, in particular his harbor scenes, was Asselijn.

Despite the fact that Italianate-style paintings exist in Berchem's oeuvre as early as the late 1640s, it seems unlikely that Berchem had actually visited Italy by this date. It is more probable, as recent scholars have postulated for stylistic reasons that Berchem traveled there between 1653 and 1656. In any case, by the late 1650s he had become one of the most sensitive interpreters of both the pastoral and the exotic character qualities of Italy.

Berchem apparently moved permanently to Amsterdam in 1677, although he is mentioned there as early as 1660. In his later years he also painted a number of allegorical scenes and executed designs for maps. He had many pupils throughout his career, including Karel Dujardin (Dutch, 1626 - 1678), Pieter de Hooch (Dutch, 1629 - 1684), and Jacob Ochtervelt (1634–1682). His students Abraham Begeyn (1637/1638–1697) and William Romeyn (c. 1624–1694) emulated their teacher's style quite closely, while other artists copied the master's work. Even more indicative of Berchem's fame was the large number of prints made after his paintings in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Indeed, by the mid-eighteenth century, he was valued as one of the foremost seventeenth-century Dutch painters.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem
Dutch, 1620 - 1683

View of an Italian Port

early 1660s

oil on canvas
overall: 48 x 59.5 cm (18 7/8 x 23 7/16 in.)
framed: 68.6 x 80 x 5.3 cm (27 x 31 1/2 x 2 1/16 in.)
Inscription: lower right: Berchem
Gift of Robert H. and Clarice Smith, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art 1990.62.1

ENTRY

In this idyllic scene, Berchem captures both the beauty of the Italian landscape and the cool, crystalline light that imbues it with its distinctive atmospheric quality. [1] Situated against a backdrop of towering cliffs that drop straight down to the calm waters below, the exotic character of this harbor setting is defined not by buildings or wharfs but by the various types of figures that have come together at the water's edge. The most prominent of these is the elegant couple who, fresh from the hunt, sit astride their steeds. Wearing wide-brimmed hats with flowing feathers, they talk to a standing gentleman while the woman's falcon airs its wings. The gentleman holding his staff is probably the keeper of the hunting dogs that are seen mingling, two of them being held by a young assistant in the lower left. What has brought them to the harbor is not clear, but they may well be awaiting a ferry to transport them either to one of the ships anchored in deeper water or to the far shore. Behind them two wide-bottomed ferries are already loaded with cargo. In the one filled with cattle, two figures wrestle a recalcitrant goat along a gangplank, while before the other ferry two men in Oriental dress stand and talk, while a third sits in the boat, waiting for it to push off. In the right foreground, a shepherd tending to a

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cow and some sheep also awaits transport.

Although no documentary evidence exists that proves that Berchem actually visited Italy, it seems probable that he traveled there sometime between 1653 and 1656, [2] because it is highly unlikely that he could otherwise have captured the special light and character of this faraway land with such seeming effortlessness. While *View of an Italian Port* does not represent an identifiable location, such details as the characteristic Italian ship anchored offshore, with its long red oars stretching out to either side, point to Berchem's careful observation of what, for a Dutchman, was an unusual type of vessel. Just where Berchem might have seen such cliffs is not known, but similar formations surmounted by large buildings appear in the background of a number of his paintings. Comparable cliffs can be seen in paintings by other artists, as in *Coastal Landscape by Moonlight*, attributed to Aelbert Cuyp, in the Six Collection, Amsterdam.

As with most of his Italianate paintings, Berchem executed *View of an Italian Port* in the Netherlands, probably in the early 1660s. [3] He painted for a Dutch clientele eager for idealized views of the Italian landscape. Judging from the various copies of this painting, the work struck a responsive chord. [4] Its qualities were greatly admired in the mid-eighteenth century, when the image was engraved in 1753 by A. Delfos, [5] and in the early nineteenth century, when the first written descriptions of it appeared. In the 1831 catalog of the famous collection of Chevalier Érard, for example, the catalog entry reads in part: "One admires in this painting . . . all the taste, [and] all the spirit of the celebrated Berchem. Its composition is appointed, [and] its groups are arranged and varied with much thought; air circulates everywhere, [and] the recession into space is perfect. The execution, [and] the preservation leave nothing to be desired." [6]

The classicism of this painting, with its strong horizontal and vertical accents in the landscape and the clear, crystalline light, compellingly places the work in the 1660s. The fluidity of Berchem's brushwork and the elegance of the couple on horseback are also consistent with this date. A comparison of *View of an Italian Port* to another harbor scene by Berchem, *Coastal Scene with Crab Catchers* [fig. 1], datable to about 1658, [7] demonstrates the evolution in style that Berchem's work underwent between the late 1650s and early 1660s. Although one encounters a comparable contrast between foreground figures and a distant vista of cliffs across a body of water in the earlier work, the foreground and background elements are not so closely integrated as they are in the Gallery's painting, while the distinctions of light and color are more pronounced. Another comparative work

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is Berchem's *Wild Boar Hunt* [fig. 2], signed and dated 1659, where a similar grouping of figures on horseback occurs. While the position of the white horse in both paintings is virtually identical, the horse in the Gallery's painting is somewhat more schematically rendered, which is characteristic of Berchem's style of the 1660s. [8]

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem, *Coastal Scene with Crab Catchers*, c. 1658, oil on canvas, York City Art Gallery, presented by F. D. Lycett Green, Esq., through the National Art-Collections Fund

fig. 2 Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem, *Wild Boar Hunt*, 1659, oil on canvas, Mauritshuis, The Hague

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Yonna Yapou for sharing with me the research she did on this painting while it was in the possession of Mr. and Mrs. Smith.

[2] Despite the fact that Italianate-style paintings exist in Berchem's oeuvre as early as the late 1640s, it seems unlikely that Berchem had actually visited Italy by this date. It is more probable, as recent scholars have postulated for stylistic reasons, that Berchem traveled there between 1653 and 1656. In

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any case, by the late 1650s he had become one of the most sensitive interpreters of both the pastoral and the exotic character qualities of Italy.

[3] This date is also suggested by Eckhard Schaar, *Studien zu Nicholaes Berchem* (Cologne, 1958), 86.

[4] Copies and versions include: Collection of the Duke of Devonshire, Chatsworth; sale, Christie's, New York, June 15, 1977, no. 117 (in 1996 with Daphne Alazraki Old Master Paintings, New York); sale, Galerie Le Brun by Bonnefons de Lavialle and George, Paris, June 7, 1853, no. 4; sale, Artaria and others, Vienna, January 12, 1886, no. 8; and possibly sale, P. van den Bogaerde, Amsterdam, March 16, 1778, no. 3.

[5] For a discussion of the print, see F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450–1700*, 72 vols. (Amsterdam, 1949), 1:271, no. 111. It is described as a "Harbour, on the right nobleman and lady on horseback. oblong format."

[6] "On admire dans ce tableau . . . tout le goût, tout l'esprit du célèbre Berchem. La composition en est bien ordonnée, les groupes en sont disposés et variés avec beaucoup d'intelligence; l'air circule partout, la dégradation des plans est parfaite. L'exécution, la conservation ne laissent rien à désirer." *Catalogue des tableaux italiens flamands, hollandais et français: Des anciennes écoles, qui composent la magnifique galerie de M. le Chevalier Érard* (Paris, 1831), 83. The collection was sold the following year, in 1832, and the sale catalog was based on this one.

[7] See Albert Blankert, *Nederlandse 17e eeuwse Italianiserende Landschapschilders* (Utrecht, 1965), 158–159, cat. 81; and the expanded, English edition Albert Blankert, *Dutch 17th-Century Italianate Landscape Painters* (Soest, 1978), 158–159, cat. 81.

[8] The same white horse appears in Berchem's *A Hawking Party Halting at a Farrier's Shop*, formerly in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin, reproduced in Staatliche Museen, Berlin, 1932, cat. 896 (see John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters,* 9 vols. [London, 1829–1842], 5:99, cat. 310), and in a related drawing in the British Museum, London (see Arthur Mayger Hind, *Catalogue of Drawings by Dutch and Flemish Artists Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, 5 vols. [London, 1915–1932], 3:33–34, no. 34, pl. xviii).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, is loosely woven of irregularly spun threads. Part of the original tacking margins were retained at the time of lining

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and incorporated into the picture plane, slightly expanding the dimensions on all four sides. Lining has reinforced the weave texture.

Paint is applied over an off-white ground in thin opaque layers worked wet over dry. Minor losses are confined to the edges. The upper right corner of the sky is abraded, as are the edges. No treatment has been undertaken at the National Gallery.

PROVENANCE

Johan van Lanschot, Leiden, by 1753;[1] by inheritance to his son-in-law, Pieter Cornelis, baron van Leyden [1717-1788, known during his lifetime as the Heer van Leyden van Vlaardingen], Leiden;[2] by inheritance with the paintings in his collection to his son, Diederik van Leyden, [1744-1810/1811], Leiden and Amsterdam;[3] sold, with the rest of his father's painting collection, for 100,000 florins to a consortium formed by L.B. Coclers, Alexander Joseph Paillet, and A. de Lespinasse de Langeac;[4] (sale of the van Leyden painting collection, A. Paillet and H. Delaroche, Paris, 5-8 November 1804, 1st day, no. 8);[5] H. Delaroche. John Parke, Esq., London; (his sale, Peter Coxe, London, 8-9 May 1812, no. 37). (John Smith, London); sold to John Webb, Esq., London. Chevalier Sébastien Érard [1752-1831], Château de la Muette, near the Bois de Boulogne, Paris; (his estate sale, at his residence by Lacoste and Coutelier, 7-14 August 1832 [originally scheduled for 23 April and days following], no. 62);[6] purchased by Alexis-Nicolas Pérignon, Paris, for Jonkheer Johan Steengracht van Oostcapelle [1782-1846], The Hague;[7] by inheritance to his son, Hendrik Steengracht van Oosterland [1808-1875], The Hague; by inheritance to his nephew, Hendricus Adolphus Steengracht van Duivenvoorde [1836-1912], The Hague; (his estate sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 9 June 1913, no. 4); Mr. Boyer.[8] by inheritance from the collector’s grandfather to private collection; (sale, Adar Picard Tajan, Paris, 9 April 1990, no. 82); Robert H. and Clarice Smith, Washington; gift 1990 to NGA.

[1] Van Lanschot is identified by the inscription on an engraving of the painting executed by Abraham Delfos in 1753. Given the family connection between Van Lanschot and Van Leyden, it is probable that the painting engraved was the Gallery’s, although, as Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann has noted, it is possible that one of the copies after *View of an Italian Port* was the model for the print.

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[2] See the description of Sale F-80, by Benjamin Peronnet, in The Getty Provenance Index© Databases, accessed 17 February 2012, and J.W. Niemeijer,"Baron van Leyden, Founder of the Amsterdam Print Collection," trans. Patricia Wardle, Apollo (June 1983): 461-468. As Niemeijer explains, in Van Leyden's own day the title of baron was not actually used; when alive he was known as the Heer Van Leyden van Vlaardingen. He is given the title of baron in later publications, a title that was indeed his, as an ancestor was created a baron of the Holy Roman Empire in 1548.

[3] Niemeijer 1983, 468. While his son inherited the paintings, Van Leyden's large and important print collection was bequeathed to his grandson, after whose death in 1789 it became the property of the young man's mother. Sold in 1806 to Louis Napoleon, it was first housed in The Hague, then Paris, and was eventually returned in 1816 to Amsterdam, where it formed the nucleus of the print collection at the Rijksmuseum.

[4] This information is given in the catalogue for sale 6323 at Christie's, London, 7 July 2000, as part of the provenance for lot 17 (Jan Both, *An Italianate evening landscape with a muleteer and goatherds on a wooded path, a river and mountains beyond*, now NGA 2000.91.1, *An Italianate Evening Landscape*), but no source is cited.

[5] The sale was originally scheduled for 5 July 1804, and rescheduled for 10 September 1804 (the date printed on the sale catalogue), before finally taking place in November.

[6] The catalogue incorrectly described the painting as being on panel.

[7] The information about Parke's ownership through that of Steengracht is found in the 1913 sale catalogue.

[8] An annotated copy of the auction catalogue housed at the NGA library notes that Boyer purchased the picture for Fr 7,900.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1991 Art for the Nation: Gifts in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1991, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Gerard ter Borch II, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1688, oil on canvas, Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague, inv. no. 177

Borch the Younger, Gerard ter

Also known as
Terborch II, Gerard
Borch, Gerard ter II
Dutch, 1617 - 1681

BIOGRAPHY

The most accomplished member of a gifted and well-to-do artistic family, Gerard ter Borch was born in Zwolle in 1617. Probably not long after the death of his mother, Anna Bufken, in 1621, Ter Borch began his training with his father, the draftsman Gerard ter Borch the Elder (1584–1662). He was clearly a precocious pupil: an accomplished drawing he made of a figure seen from behind (Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) is dated September 25, 1625, when he was only eight years old. An inscription on another drawing suggests that he was in Amsterdam by 1632, but in 1633 he was back in Zwolle. The following year he went to Haarlem to study with Pieter Molijn (Dutch, 1595 - 1661) and entered the guild there in 1635. The same year Ter Borch undertook the first of his many trips abroad, traveling to London to work with his uncle, the engraver Robert van Voerst (Dutch, 1597 - 1635/1636). According to Houbraken, the painter later visited Italy, Spain, France, and Flanders. In Spain Ter Borch was so highly esteemed that King Philip IV sat for the artist.

By 1646 Ter Borch was in Münster, Westphalia, where he painted a number of small works and also his famous group portrait *The Swearing of the Oath of Ratification of the Treaty of Münster* (1648, National Gallery, London, inv. no. 896). Arnold Houbraken suggests that Ter Borch subsequently traveled with the Conde

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de Peñaranda to Brussels, where he appears to have been knighted and to have received a gold chain and medal from the king of Spain. Documents place the artist in Amsterdam in November 1648, The Hague in 1649, Kampen in 1650, and Delft on April 22, 1653, when he and Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632 - 1675) were cowitnesses to the signing of an affidavit. On February 14, 1654, Ter Borch married Geertruyt Matthijs, with whom he settled in Deventer, becoming a citizen on February 13, 1655, and a *gemeensman* (city counselor) in 1666. Although documents indicate he again visited Amsterdam in 1674 and The Hague and Haarlem in 1675, he lived in Deventer until his death on December 8, 1681.

In his earliest works, Ter Borch depicted barrack-room scenes similar to those of Willem Duyster (1598/1599–1635) and Pieter Codde (1599–1678). Most of his later genre scenes, however, focused on the more refined elements of Dutch society. These works are generally small and upright in format and typically depict two or three elegantly clad, full-length figures engaged in an activity such as letter writing or music making. They are executed with great sensitivity of touch and show an interest in the psychology of the sitters. Ter Borch also painted many small-scale, full-length portraits. His most important student was Caspar Netscher (Dutch, 1639 - 1684), who learned many of his master's techniques for rendering luxurious textures and who painted, in addition to his original compositions, a number of signed copies of Ter Borch's works.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Studio of Gerard ter Borch the Younger
Anonymous Artist

Gerard ter Borch the Younger
Dutch, 1617 - 1681

The Music Lesson

c. 1670

oil on canvas
overall: 69 x 55.1 cm (27 3/16 x 21 11/16 in.)
framed: 88 x 74.9 cm (34 5/8 x 29 1/2 in.)
Timken Collection 1960.6.10

ENTRY

Intently focused on her music book, an elegantly attired lady strums on her bent-necked theorbo to the beat established by her music instructor. The scene must have been familiar in the homes of well-to-do Dutch burghers, for the playing of music was a popular and socially acceptable activity among unmarried young people, particularly women. Numerous depictions of music lessons exist in Dutch art. Not only did the subject provide an opportunity to depict a leisure activity within a domestic setting, but it also was one in which the many symbolic allusions of music, from harmony to love and seduction, could be thematically exploited. It is not by accident, for example, that Ter Borch depicted an ace of hearts on the floor in a similar painting in the National Gallery, London [fig. 1]. *The Music Lesson*, however, does not include such a motif, nor the bed, the dog, and the young suitor seen in the London painting, indicating that romantic concerns were not the thematic thrust of this work. It focuses instead on the woman's intense concentration as she strives to master the harmonies of the music she is learning to play.

The comparison with the London painting reveals that the woman's pose as well as the general disposition of the room and still-life elements on the table in *The Music Lesson* are virtually identical. While Ter Borch did occasionally repeat compositions and readapt figures in his paintings, stylistic comparisons between the women in the two paintings demonstrate that different hands were at work. The modeling of the woman's face and hands in the London painting creates a greater sense of three-dimensionality than that in the Washington version, and the impression of

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sheen on the satin dress and the soft textural qualities of the fur jacket are more convincingly rendered. Similar comparisons can be made with the outstretched hand of the music master, and with the candlestick and cloth on the table.

Connections between *The Music Lesson* and other Ter Borch paintings also exist. As Gudlaugsson has pointed out, the music master replicates in reverse a figure in the depiction of a music lesson formerly in the Roach Collection. [1] He concluded that *The Music Lesson* is a pastiche, a joining together of motifs from the Roach and London paintings. Just when such a pastiche would have been made is difficult to determine. Since Gudlaugsson brings into his discussion a later mezzotint by Jan Stolker (Dutch, 1724 - 1785) that reproduces the Roach painting in reverse, he seems to imply that *The Music Lesson* must have been produced long after Ter Borch's lifetime. [2] Nevertheless, the quality of the painting is sufficiently high to assume that an artist working under Ter Borch's supervision created it.

Little is known about Ter Borch's studio, but the large number of replicas and versions of his paintings indicates that a widespread demand existed for his works. Caspar Netscher (Dutch, 1639 - 1684), who studied with Ter Borch before going to Italy in 1658 or 1659, made copies of his master's paintings. [3] Ter Borch continued to use assistants and students for such work, even to the extent of encouraging them to create new compositions by combining elements from a variety of his images. It is probable that one of Ter Borch's assistants derived his reversed image of the music master from a counterproof of Ter Borch's preliminary drawing. [4]

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Gerard ter Borch the Younger, *A Woman Playing a Theorbo to Two Men*, 1667–1668, oil on canvas, National Gallery, London. Photo © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY

NOTES

[1] Reproduced by Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–1960), 1:355, no. 221, as being in the collection of Mrs. W. J. Roach. This same figure is also found in at least three other paintings once attributed to Ter Borch (see Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959-1960), 2:203–206, for discussion of these and other paintings).

[2] Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–1960), 2: 203. In addition to his prints after Ter Borch, Stolker also executed mezzotints and drawings after paintings by other Dutch artists, including Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669), Gerrit Dou (Dutch, 1613 - 1675), Jan Steen (Dutch, 1625/1626 - 1679) and Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685).

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[3] Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–1960), 2:288–289, identifies a number of signed copies Netscher made of Ter Borch compositions. As indicated in note 4 in the entry on The Suitor's Visit, Netscher made a signed copy of *The Suitor's Visit*.

[4] Peter Schatborn, *Dutch Figure Drawings from the Seventeenth Century*, trans. by Janine Hamann-Orci (Amsterdam, 1981), 28–29, discusses the use of counterproof drawings by Gerrit Berckheyde and Adriaen van de Velde (Dutch, 1636 - 1672).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a fine-weight, tightly and plain-woven fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Three moderately sized complex tears in the background to the left and right of the man's head have become visible again due to the cleaving and lifting of paint along the tear edges. Thin, fluid paint is applied over a thin, smooth, white ground with little layering and no appreciable impasto or brushmarking. There is some moderate abrasion overall. The contour of the man's proper right shoulder and hair has been reinforced, and there is glazing over his costume, possibly to cover local abrasion. The varnish layer is matte and discolored. No treatment has been undertaken at the National Gallery of Art.

PROVENANCE

(Van Diemen, Berlin and New York), in 1929.[1] William R. Timken [1866-1949], New York; by inheritance to his wife, Lillian S. Guyer Timken [1881-1959], New York; bequest 1960 to NGA.

[1] While no earlier provenance is known for certain, Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert ter Borch*,2 vols., The Hague, 1959-1960: 2:206, proposed that this painting might be the one that was sold at auction in Rotterdam on 3 August 1811, no. 48 (HdG 1907-1927, 5: 55, no. 146). The dimensions (63.5 x 49.5 cm) of this depiction of a music lesson, however, were somewhat smaller than those of NGA 1960.6.10, so it may well have been yet another variant of the composition. In 1935 the Berlin branches of Van Diemen and its affiliated galleries were liquidated by order of the Nazis, with sales organized by Graupe on 25 January and 26 April. This painting

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was not in either of those sales, and thus had been sold from or sent to the New York branch before 1935.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1967 Loan for display with permanent collection, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, 1967-1971.

1979 Loan for display with permanent collection, Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, 1979-1993.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Gerard ter Borch the Younger
Dutch, 1617 - 1681

The Suitor's Visit

c. 1658

oil on canvas
overall: 80 x 75 cm (31 1/2 x 29 1/2 in.)
framed: 110.8 x 106 x 12.7 cm (43 5/8 x 41 3/4 x 5 in.)
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.58

ENTRY

The encounter taking place at the doorway of this elegant, high-ceilinged room, decorated with gilded leather wall covering, seems the height of gentility. [1] A debonair young man, hat in hand, bows slightly as he responds to the alluring gaze of the young woman who has come forward to greet him. She apparently has just risen from her green velvet seat where she had been playing a duet with the woman strumming a theorbo; the former's music book and bass viol can be seen lying on the table. Behind the women stands a man who, in the dimness of the interior light, warms himself before the hearth as he turns to peer at the visitor.

Ter Borch drew upon his surroundings in Deventer for creating a sense of immediacy in his compositions. The objects in this work, including the carpet on the table, the chair, the theorbo, the hearth, and the leather wall covering, were ones he knew well, as they reappear in different contexts in a number of other paintings from the mid-1650s. [2] The model for the suitor was his student Caspar Netscher (Dutch, 1639 - 1684), who also features in other of Ter Borch's paintings from the mid-to-late 1650s. [3] Indeed, Netscher made a copy of this painting before he set sail for Rome in 1659, a date that establishes a *terminus post quem* for this work. [4] Finally, the elegant standing woman, resplendent in her red top and white satin dress, is almost certainly Gesina ter Borch (1631–1690), the artist's beloved half-sister.[fig. 1] Not only did she frequently serve as a model for the artist, [5] but her ideas seem to have had a profound effect on the type and character of the subjects Ter Borch chose to depict during this phase of his career. [6]

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By the mid-1650s Gesina had embarked on her own artistic and literary career with her poetry album, which is filled with arcadian images of love's pleasures and disappointments. [7] Gesina's poetry and pictorial images in this and other albums belong to that important Dutch literary genre, largely influenced by Petrarchan ideals, that both celebrates the delights of love and warns against the dangers of becoming ensnared in ill-advised attachments. [8] In this respect she followed in the path of her father, who, aside from his topographic drawings, was also a poet and who, in the 1620s, helped illustrate an amorous songbook with images of lovers cavorting in the grass.

It is against this background of family interest in art, music, and emblematic literature about love and its complexities that one must consider the nature of the narrative that unfolds in *The Suitor's Visit*. Under the veneer of gentility is a scene that is alive with sexual innuendo. The gazes of the couple at the door are at once enticing and yearning, a private communication that does not go unnoticed by the gentleman standing before the hearth. More explicitly sexual, however, is the nature of their gestures. The young woman clasps her hands in a manner that could be construed as an invitation for intercourse, as the thumb of her right hand protrudes between the index finger and second finger of her other hand in a most unconventional, and expressive, manner. His gesture in response appears to be an assent, for as he bows he forms a circle between the thumb and index finger of his left hand.

Ter Borch does not spell out the outcome of the woman's ploy—for her central position in the composition and the dog's inquisitive gaze clearly indicate she is the initiator of the intrigue. Undoubtedly, however, Ter Borch's circle of acquaintances would have recognized that his composition had remarkable parallels with an image found in Jan Hermanszoon Krul's influential *Eerlycke Tytkorting* (Honorable Pastimes), published in Haarlem in 1634, which contains emblems devoted to the delights and travails of love. [9] The related print [fig. 2] accompanies an emblem entitled "De Overdaed en Doet Geen Baet" (roughly, "The Excess That Brings No Profit"). The thrust of the emblem is a warning that encouragement by a woman is not always to be trusted. Whereas a suitor might feel that love and commitment would follow, all too often the lover is rejected and then belittled. Krul writes of the lover's lament: "If you never intend to have me, why so much courtship? / It would honor you best to send me straight away." [10] The similarities between the painting and the print seem to imply that the outcome of this match will likewise be disappointment. Finally, not unrelated to the

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painting's mood are the colors of the woman's dress. In the list of color symbols Gesina compiled in her poetry album around 1659, white is equated with purity and carnation with revenge or cruelty. [11]

In keeping with the sumptuous details of his subject, Ter Borch incorporated costly ultramarine pigment into the Washington painting in unexpected ways. Not only did he use it to compose the brilliant blue bodice of the female musician seated at the table, he even used it as an underpaint that, together with a layer of green glaze, creates the deep green color of the velvet seat cushion. The blue portions of the patterned rug draped over the table were probably also intended to appear as a green midtone, but the unstable yellow-lake pigment Ter Borch mixed with the ultramarine in those passages has since faded. [12] As Gifford and Glinsman have discussed, such an incremental color shift from the deep green velvet in the foreground to the bright blue lute player would have helped articulate a sense of spatial regression in the scene. [13]

The sophistication of Ter Borch's touch is matched only by the subtlety of his narrative and the gracefulness of his figures. His white satins were celebrated in poetry and emulated by his peers, though no artist could convey as effectively as he the shimmering surface of this costly fabric. Ter Borch painted deep shadows with translucent yellow and gray, and added contrast with pure white highlights. His brushstrokes vary from smooth planes to angular folds and he has softened the transitions with a dry blending brush. [14] Such a subtle effect is also felt in the nuanced psychological interactions he created amongst his figures. Ter Borch's effectiveness in depicting human emotion and a sense of inner life in such genre scenes may stem from his experiences as a portrait painter. Even the poses he used in these works are occasionally similar. For example, the manner in which the suitor holds his wide-brimmed hat is derived from a portrait the artist created in 1656. [15]

Original entry by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., April 24, 2014.

Revised by Alexandra Libby to incorporate information from a new technical examination.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Gesina ter Borch, *Self-Portrait of Gesina in a Gray Cartouche, Crowned with the Ter Borch Arms*, 1659, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam (poetry album, fol. 2r). Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

fig. 2 Jan Hermanszoon Krul, "De Overdaed en Doet Geen Baet" (The Excess That Brings No Profit), from *Eerlycke Tytkorting*, Haarlem, 1634, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, DC

NOTES

[1] This entry was originally published in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Gerard ter Borch* (Washington, DC, 2004), no. 30, and is based largely on Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* (Washington, DC, 1995), 26–28.

[2] The imported table carpet, for example, appeared in at least five of Ter

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Borch's paintings just as he married and settled in Deventer. See E. Melanie Gifford and Lisha Deming Glinsman, "Collective Style and Personal Manner: Materials and Techniques of High-Life Genre Painting," in Adriaan Waiboer et al., *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry* (Dublin, 2017), 73, 281–282, n. 43. Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–1960), 2:148, has carefully indicated other instances in which such objects appear in Ter Borch's works, including the chair in *The Visit* (Bührle Foundation, Zurich) and the mantelpiece in both *A Young Woman at Her Toilet* (Wallace Collection, London, inv. no. P235) and *A Lute Player with a Boy* (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp, inv. no. 349).

[3] See painting from the National Gallery, London, *Officer Dictating a Letter While a Trumpeter Waits*, c. 1658/1659.

[4] For information about Netscher's signed copy on panel, see Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–1960), 2:148, cat. no. 139a, and Marjorie E. Wieseman, *Caspar Netscher and Late Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting* (Doornspijk, 2002), 314–315, cat. no. B2. The composition was also known to Gabriel Metsu. See Everhard Korthals Altes, "The Eighteenth-Century Gentleman-Dealer Willem Lormier and the International Dispersal of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Paintings," *Simiolus* 28 (2000–2001): 266, fig. 16.

[5] See *The Unwelcomed Call*, Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague.

[6] Alison M. Kettering, "Ter Borch's Ladies in Satin," *Art History* 16 (March 1993): 122 n. 66, on the other hand, suggests that the model was Gesina's younger sister Aeltjen (Aleida), who would have been twenty-one years old in 1657. Gesina, who was born in 1631, would have been twenty-six.

[7] See Alison M. Kettering, *Drawings from the Ter Borch Studio Estate in the Rijksmuseum*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1989), 2:416–614. Gesina began this poetry album in 1652, and contributed to it intermittently until the 1660s.

[8] See Alison M. Kettering, "Ter Borch's Ladies in Satin," *Art History* 16 (March 1993) for a discussion of the adaptation of Petrarchan concepts of love in Dutch literary traditions and in Ter Borch's paintings.

[9] The contents of this emblem book were reprinted in Krul's *De Pampiere Wereld* (Amsterdam, 1644), 295. Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–1960), 1:116–117; 2:148, was the first to draw attention to the relationship between Ter Borch's composition and the print from Krul's emblem, which he cited in its republished form in *De Pampiere Wereld*.

[10] Jan Krul, *Eerlyck Tytkorting* (Haarlem, 1634), 16 (author's translation).

[11] Alison M. Kettering, *Drawings from the Ter Borch Studio Estate in the Rijksmuseum*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1989), 2:440, fol. 39: "Wit Suijverheijt" and

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"Incornaet Vraecke or Vreedtheijt."

[12] E. Melanie Gifford and Lisha Deming Glinsman, "Collective Style and Personal Manner: Materials and Techniques of High-Life Genre Painting," in Adriaan Waiboer et al., *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry* (Dublin, 2017), 65–83, place Ter Borch's technique and use of materials in dialogue with his contemporaries (see especially 68–69 on color change among these artists).

[13] Melanie Gifford and Lisha Glinsman, "Innovation, Competition, and Fine Painting Technique: Marketing High-Life Style in the Dutch 17th Century," National Gallery of Art video, 30:12, Feb. 6, 2018, www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/audio-video/video/gifford-glinsman-painting-technique.html

[14] On Ter Borch's technique of painting white satin and his contemporaries' imitation, see E. Melanie Gifford and Lisha Deming Glinsman, "Collective Style and Personal Manner: Materials and Techniques of High-Life Genre Painting," in Adriaan Waiboer et al., *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry* (Dublin, 2017), 77–78.

[15] Gerhard Langemeyer and Hendrik R. Hoetink, *Gerard ter Borch: Zwolle 1617–Deventer 1681* (The Hague, 1974), 136, cat. no. 36a.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The tightly woven, plain-weave fabric support, composed of fine irregularly spun threads, was lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Broad cusping is visible along the left and right edges. Broad arcs visible in the x-radiograph suggest that the tan ground might have been applied with a curved knife.

Ter Borch probably laid out the composition with a brown-black painted sketch. He worked up the design with a freely brushed underpaint, but in a characteristic additional step, he later revised some areas by resketching alternative details onto the completed underpaint. [1] In applying his subtle final paint, he worked wet into wet, often with a stippled touch or feathered edges. In the white satin, he painted deep shadows with translucent yellow and gray contrasted with pure white highlights; his brushwork varied from smooth planes to angular folds, the transitions softened with a dry blending brush. [2] Pigment analysis using x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy and microscopic examination was performed during research for the 2017 exhibition *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting*. [3] The use of ultramarine blue was identified throughout the composition, in both

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upper paint layers as well as in underpainting. Yellow lake was also identified, though this pigment has faded. Probably some blue areas, such as parts of the patterned carpet draped over the table, once appeared green (see Entry).

In changes during the final painting stage, Ter Borch introduced further elegant details, replacing the suitor's original, more sober costume with extravagantly puffed sleeves and a doffed hat. Although the background has probably darkened over time, the painting is in excellent condition, with small abraded losses confined to the thinly applied darks. The painting was treated in 2003–2004, at which time discolored varnish and old inpainting were removed.

Dina Anchin, based on examination and treatment notes by Carol Christenson and examination notes by Cathy Metzger.

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TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] E. Melanie Gifford, "Fine Painting and Eloquent Imprecision: Gabriel Metsu's Painting Technique," in *Gabriel Metsu,* ed. Adriaan E. Waiboer (Dublin, 2010), 154–179.

[2] On Ter Borch's technique of painting white satin and his contemporaries' imitation, see E. Melanie Gifford and Lisha Deming Glinsman, "Collective Style and Personal Manner: Materials and Techniques of High-Life Genre Painting," in Adriaan Waiboer et al., *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry* (Dublin, 2017), 77–78.

[3] E. Melanie Gifford and Lisha Deming Glinsman, "Collective Style and Personal Manner: Materials and Techniques of High-Life Genre Painting," in Adriaan Waiboer et al., *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry* (Dublin, 2017), 65–83.

PROVENANCE

Charles-Auguste-Louis-Joseph, duc de Morny [1811-1865], Paris; (his estate sale, at the Palais de la Présidence du Corps Législatif, Paris, 31 May-12 June 1865, no. 82); Josè Salamanca y Mayol [Marquès de Salamanca, d. 1866], Madrid; (sale, at his residence by Charles Pillet, Paris, 3-6 June 1867, no. 126); Baron Adolphe de

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Rothschild [1823-1900], Paris; by inheritance to his first cousin once-removed, Baron Maurice de Rothschild [1881-1957], Paris; (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); sold July 1922 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Bosschaert, Ambrosius

Dutch, 1573 - 1621

BIOGRAPHY

Ambrosius Bosschaert III (often referred to as Ambrosius Bosschaert the Elder) was one of the pioneers of Dutch still-life painting. Bosschaert was born in 1573 in Antwerp, the son of the artist Ambrosius Bosschaert II and his wife, Johanna.[1] He presumably received his artistic training from his father. It is likely that Bosschaert began his career depicting rare and exotic flowers and fruit in botanical gardens, and some of his drawings may have been made for the botanist Carolus Clusius. It is certain that Bosschaert used such drawings to compose his paintings, which often include identical flowers, sometimes rendered in reverse.

Following Antwerp's reconquest by Spanish forces in 1585 and the subsequent expulsion of all non-Catholics, the Protestant Bosschaert family moved to Middelburg in about 1589. There the artist joined the Saint Luke's Guild in 1593. "Ambrosius Bosschaert" is listed as dean of the guild in 1597, 1598, 1603, 1604, and 1613, but it is unclear whether these dates pertain to Bosschaert or his father. Middelburg, a prosperous trading center and the capital of Zeeland, was renowned for its botanical gardens, the most important of which was established in the 1590s by the great botanist Matthias Lobelius. After Lobelius left for England in 1602, his herb garden was transformed into a flower garden and was almost certainly filled with exotic species imported from the Balkan peninsula, the Near and Far East, and the New World. Collectors at this time particularly admired bulbous plants such as the Dutch iris, the narcissus, the scarlet lily, the fritillaria, and, above all, the tulip—all the flowers whose bright colors and dramatic forms frequently accent early seventeenth-century paintings.

In 1604 Bosschaert married Maria van der Ast, who came from a wealthy Middelburg family. Her younger brother, the painter Balthasar van der Ast (Dutch,

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1593/1594 - 1657), lived with the couple and undoubtedly studied with his new brother-in-law. Bosschaert had an extremely successful career in Middelburg, both as a painter and as an art dealer. He was also an effective teacher, which ensured that his distinctive style of painting was carried on by his talented students, who included not only Van der Ast, but also the artist's sons Ambrosius IV (1609–1645), Johannes (1610–1628), and Abraham (b. 1612/1613–1643).[2]

In 1614 Bosschaert III moved to Amsterdam. He remained there only a short time before moving first to Bergen op Zoom (1615) and then to Utrecht (1615–1619), where he joined the Saint Luke's Guild in 1616. Bosschaert and his wife eventually moved to Breda (1619–1621), where the artist executed this painting in the year of his death. Bosschaert died in The Hague on a trip to deliver a flower painting to a member of the court of Prince Maurits, for which he apparently was paid 1,000 guilders.

[1] In the family tree, Bosschaert is known as Ambrosius III Bosschaert. For the complete genealogy of the Bosschaert family, starting with Ambrosius I, see http://www.bosschaerts.be/genealogy/register.php?personID=I19141&tree=W1-bosschaerts&generations=5 (accessed February 6, 2014). The website includes links to biographies.

[2] Bosschaert's son Ambrosius IV (1609–1645) is known in Dutch art history as Ambrosius Bosschaert the Younger.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Ambrosius Bosschaert
Dutch, 1573 - 1621

Bouquet of Flowers in a Glass Vase

1621

oil on copper
overall: 31.6 x 21.6 cm (12 7/16 x 8 1/2 in.)
framed: 53.3 x 43.8 x 5.7 cm (21 x 17 1/4 x 2 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right in monogram: .AB.1621; across bottom in blue field: C'est l'Angelicq[ue] main du gra[n]d Peinctre de Flore / AMBROISE, renommé jusqu' au Rivage Moré. (This is the angelic hand of the great painter of Flora, Ambrosius, renowned even to the banks of the Moré).
Patrons' Permanent Fund and New Century Fund 1996.35.1

ENTRY

Ambrosius Bosschaert infused his flower bouquets with a sense of wonder. He had an unerring compositional awareness, and delighted in combining an array of flowers of various colors and shapes to create a pleasing and uplifting visual experience. Here, a spectacular yellow bearded iris and a red-and-white striped tulip surmount a bouquet that also contains, among others, roses, a blue-and-white columbine, fritillaria, grape hyacinth, lily of the valley, forget-me-not, globeflowers, and a sprig of rosemary. [1] At the base of the ribbed onion-shaped glass vase lie a pansy and a cyclamen blossom. [2] A damselfly alighting on the iris and a Red Admiral butterfly on the cyclamen further enliven the composition. These flowers could not have all been in bloom at the same time; therefore, and because several of them recur in other paintings by Bosschaert, he must have worked from memory or from drawings he kept in his studio. [3]

At the lower right edge of the stone ledge are the artist's monogram and the date 1621, the year of his death. The picture is made all the more poignant by the French inscription, written in gold lettering on a blue ground, that fills an illusionistic plaque attached to the ledge's front: "C'est l'Angelicq[ue] main du gra[n]d Peinctre de Flore / AMBROISE, renommé jusqu' au Rivage Moré" (This is the angelic hand of the great painter of Flora, Ambrosius, renowned even to the banks of the Moré). [4]

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The inscription offers a moving testament to the artist's enormous reputation, which, as the phrase implies, extended to the farthest reaches of the Dutch commercial empire. [5]

This exceptional painting is the one that Bosschaert took with him in 1621, when he traveled from Breda to The Hague to deliver a *blompot* (flower still-life painting) to Frederick van Schurman (or Schuermans), the *bottelier* of Prince Maurits. [6] For this work Bosschaert received the extraordinary sum of 1,000 guilders. Unfortunately, according to the artist's daughter Maria, Bosschaert fell ill while in The Hague and died in the home of his patron, "to the sorrow of many art lovers." Frederick van Schurman had been ennobled by the Holy Roman Emperor, and Maria Bosschaert referred to Van Schurman as a *joncker* (from the German *Junker*), an honorary title that corresponds to the old inscription "Jonckheere" on the verso of the painting.

The illusionistic plaque was always conceived as part of the composition, although it is not known who actually composed and wrote the celebratory French text. [7] Not only did Bosschaert paint the shadow of the pansy falling over the plaque's upper edge, but Infrared Reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns [8] reveals that he carefully ruled in the plaque with dark lines before he began painting [fig. 1]. Bosschaert, in fact, made detailed Underdrawings of all of his pictorial elements: leaves, blossoms, and insects. He even indicated the painting's central vertical axis with a ruled line. [9] It thus seems probable that Bosschaert's patron specifically commissioned this bouquet of flowers to commemorate the artist and his fame. It is, tellingly, the only painting the artist ever made with such an illusionistic plaque. The importance of this work within Bosschaert's oeuvre is further supported by the fact that Ambrosius Bosschaert the Younger (1609–1645), the artist's son, made three adaptations of the composition, one of which he painted on silver in 1627 [fig. 2].

Bosschaert's carefully balanced composition reflects the naturalistic style of his flower paintings at this late period of his career. Although he surmounted this bouquet with two large flowers, much as he had done throughout his career, he arranged the rest of the flowers more informally than he had done in the previous decade, in part by overlapping individual blossoms. Moreover, his sophisticated glazing techniques allowed him to create soft, velvety textures for flower petals and leaves, an effect quite different from the crisp forms of his earlier style. He also introduced here subtle tonal gradations in the background to enhance the sensation of light flooding the image.

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Floral still lifes became popular in the early seventeenth century, in part because they depicted the exquisite, imported blooms collected by wealthy citizens who wished to admire their colors and rhythmic forms throughout the year. Bosschaert's bouquets capture the fragile beauty of flowers and the sense of hope and joy they represent. They seem so real we almost believe it is their aroma—and not the artist's brush—that has drawn the damselflies and butterflies to their petals. Bosschaert's approach to flower painting, in which blossoms that bloom at different times of the year are assembled into a single sumptuous display, reflects a fundamental theological belief then held by both Catholics and Protestants: that God's munificence was to be found in the extraordinary richness and beauty of the natural world. [10] Thus, even as pictorial accuracy was important in recording God's individual creations—flowers, insects, and shells—an imaginative melding such as that found here was meant to celebrate the greatness of his blessings. It is, however, only through the delicacy of Bosschaert's touch—his "angelic hand"—that this bouquet achieves a lifelike quality analogous to God's own creativity. [11]

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April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Infrared reflectogram, Ambrosius Bosschaert, *Bouquet of Flowers in a Glass Vase*, 1621, oil on copper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Patrons' Permanent Fund and New Century Fund, 1996.35.1

fig. 2 Ambrosius Bosschaert the Younger, *Flowers in a Vase*, 1627, oil on silver , private collection. Photo courtesy Noortman Master Paintings, Maastricht

NOTES

[1] *The Inspiration of Nature* (London, 1976), 24.

[2] *Viola tricolor cultivar* is an annual and is commonly known as heartsease, or wild pansy. See Pat Diehl Scace, *The Floral Artist's Guide: A Reference to Cut Flowers and Foliages* (Albany, NY, 2001), 150.

[3] The yellow bearded iris and the white rose, for example, appear, in slightly different orientations, in Bosschaert's *Bouquet of Flowers on a Ledge*, 1619–1620, Los Angeles County Museum of Art. See John Walsh Jr. and

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Cynthia P. Schneider, *A Mirror of Nature: Dutch Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Edward William Carter* (Los Angeles, 1981), 15–19, no. 4. See also Noortje Bakker et al., *Masters of Middelburg: Exhibition in the Honour of Laurens J. Bol* (Amsterdam, 1984), 32 note 7. Flowers often appear in the same position or reversed, such as the variegated tulip and the lily of the valley in *Bouquet of Flowers in a Stone Niche* at the Statens Museum for Kunst in Copenhagen.

[4] Moré was spelled in a variety of ways, including More, Mourée, Mori, Moure, and Mauri. Fort Nassau, a Dutch fortress on the Gold Coast of Africa, was located on the bank of the river Moré. The indirect reference to the Nassau family, seems even more significant when considering that the person who probably commissioned the painting, Frederick van Schurman, held an official function at the court of the Nassaus in The Hague. I would like to thank Rozemarijn Landsman for correcting the transcription of this text, which had been misinterpreted in earlier literature on this painting. She received helpful assistance from Prof. Dr. Jos A. A. M. Biemans, curator of manuscripts, University of Amsterdam (correspondence October 6, 2009).

[5] Henriette Rahusen discovered that the phrase “rivage Moré” (the banks of the river Moré, in modern-day Ghana) refers to a contemporary song by Dutch composer Jan Pietersz Sweelinck (1562–1621), who put to music the words of a French poem by Philippe Desportes (1546–1606). In the poem, part of his “Les Amours de Diane” (1573), Desportes states that none of the exotic goods merchants acquired on the banks of the river Moré equaled the flawless beauty of his beloved Diana.

[6] Maria Bosschaert, Ambrosius’ daughter, wrote the following about her father: “Mijn vader Ambrosius Bosschaert is gesturven in Schravenhage in ‘t jaer als den 12 jarigen Trebes uut was, doch was woonachtig binnen Breda maer near den Hage getrocken om een blompot te leveren die hij hadde gemaeckt voor de bottelier van Sijn Hoochheyt daervoor hij dusent gulden hadde bedongen ende is aldaer sieck geworden ten huyse van joncker Schuermans, vader van Anna Maria Schuermans ende aldaer gesturven ende in Schravenhage begraven, tot droefheyt van veel liefhebbers.” Abraham Bredius, “De bloemschilders Bosschaert,” *Oud Holland* 31 (1913): 138. For further commentary, see Laurens J. Bol, *The Bosschaert Dynasty: Painters of Flowers and Fruit,* trans. A. M. De Bruin-Cousins (Leigh-on-Sea, 1960), 32–33 n. 75. For a depiction of Van Schurman’s daughter, the famous scholar and artist Anna Maria van Schurman, see Cornelis Jonson van Ceulen’s portrait Anna Maria van Schurman.

[7] The language of the Dutch court was French, and Bosschaert lived in Breda at that time. The combination of these two facts suggests that he may already have had strong connections to the Nassau court. Breda had been the residence of the Princes of Orange in the Netherlands since 1544, and had been the home of Philips Willem of Nassau (1554–1618), who held the

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title of Prince of Orange before his younger half-brother, Maurits of Nassau.

[8] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

[9] The central axis was also discovered through infrared reflectography of the Rijksmusuem painting, *Still Life with Flowers in a Wan-li Vase* (SK-A-1522). See Arie Wallert and Jolanda de Bruijn, *Still Lifes: Techniques and Style* (Amsterdam, 1999), 48–51.

[10] For more on this issue, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *From Botany to Bouquets: Flowers in Northern Art* (Washington, DC, 1999), no. 11, fig. 32.

[11] I would like to thank Perry Chapman and Rachel Pollack for independently advising this point to me. "Ambrosius" derives from the Greek *ambrotos*, meaning "immortal."

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a hammered sheet of copper. At some point, four strips of wood were added along the outer edges, framing the outer edges of the panel with a small wooden border that extends approximately an eighth to a quarter of an inch from the outermost edges of the copper sheet.

The ground appears to be a white or light colored layer, which is followed by a thin layer of yellow-gray paint that was presumably applied as an imprimatura. Infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns[1] revealed the presence of a highly detailed underdrawing. The entire composition is painted with extreme precision using thin layers of paint combined with a subtle layering technique. Bosschaert left several elements in the bouquet in reserve. The bouquet and the surrounding elements are painted with a colorful palette, using a variety of transparent, semi-transparent, and opaque layers. The highlights, the gold inscription, and the signature were most likely added during the final painting stages. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition by the National Gallery of Art.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

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PROVENANCE

Probably painted 1621 for Frederick van Schurman (or Schuermans) [1564-1623], The Hague.[1] (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 7 April 1922, no. 54); private collection, England; (John Mitchell & Sons, London); private collection, England; (Edward Speelman, Ltd., London); purchased 27 June 1996 by NGA.

[1] This painting is probably the one that Bosschaert took with him in 1621, when he traveled from Breda to The Hague to deliver a *blompot* (flower still-life painting) to Frederick van Schurman (or Schuermans), the *bottelier* of Prince Maurits. For this work Bosschaert received the extraordinary sum of 1,000 guilders. Maria Bosschaert, Ambrosius' daughter, wrote the following: "Mijn vader Ambrosius Bosschaert is gesturven in Schravenhage in 't jaer als den 12 jarigen Trebes uut was, doch was woonachtig binnen Breda maer near den Hage getrocken om een blompot te leveren die hij hadde gemaeckt voor de bottelier van Sijn Hoochheyt daervoor hij dusent gulden hadde bedongen ende is aldaer sieck geworden ten huyse van joncker Schuermans, vader van Anna Maria Schuermans ende aldaer gesturven ende in Schravenhage begraven, tot droefheyt van veel liefhebbers." See Abraham Bredius, "De bloemschilders Bosschaert," *Oud-Holland* 31 (1913):138. Frederick van Schurman had been ennobled by the Holy Roman Emperor, and the phrase Maria Bosschaert used to refer to Van Schurman, a *joncker* (from the German *Junker*), is an honorary title that corresponds to the old inscription "Jonckheere ..." on the verso of the painting.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 7, fig. 13.

1998 Copper as Canvas: Two Centuries of Masterpiece Paintings on Copper, 1525-1775, Phoenix Art Museum; Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City; Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1998-1999, not in catalogue (shown only in The Hague).

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1999 From Botany to Bouquets: Flowers in Northern Art, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1999, no. 11, fig. 32.

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2004 Hand, John Oliver. *National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection*. Washington and New York, 2004: 214-215, no. 172, color repro.

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Jean Meyssens and Coen Waumans after Abraham Willers, *Jan Both*, engraving, in Sebastiano Resta, *The True Effigies of the Most Eminent Painters, and Other Famous Artists That Have Flourished in Europe* (London, 1694), pl. 49, National Gallery of Art Library, David K. E. Bruce Fund

Both, Jan

Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652

BIOGRAPHY

Jan Both was born in Utrecht probably between 1615 and 1618.[1] His father, Dirck Both, a glass painter, may have introduced him to the rudiments of the trade, but he almost certainly received training from a different master as well.[2] A record from the Utrecht Saint Luke's Guild, presumably referring to Jan, notes that in 1634–1636 a son of Dirck Both was apprenticed to an unnamed master from the guild. This master was probably Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651), with whom Jan's older brother Andries Both (Dutch, 1611/1612 - 1641) had been apprenticed in 1624 and 1625.[3] Jan left Utrecht for Rome in the mid-1630s, joining his brother, who had gone to Italy in 1633.[4] Jan appears in the records of the Accademia di San Luca on June 12, 1638, in attendance at a meeting of fellow artists.[5] In 1639 and 1641, he is documented as living with his brother on the Via Vittoria in the parish of San Lorenzo in Lucina, a popular district for foreign artists.[6]

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Both's stay in Rome was short-lived. By 1642 he had returned to Utrecht, where he established himself as an independent master, and in that same year he took on his first apprentice, Hendrick Verschuuring (1627–1690).[7] In 1649 Jan was elected overman (regent) of the Saint Luke's Guild in Utrecht, a post he held jointly with Jan Baptist Weenix (1621–1660/1661) and Cornelis van Poelenburch (Dutch, 1594/1595 - 1667).[8] Both remained in the city until his death and he was buried on August 9, 1652, in the Buurkerk.[9]

It was after his return to Utrecht that Both produced the bulk of his work, which consisted of paintings, drawings, and etchings of pastoral, religious, or mythological subjects set in Italianate landscapes. He received his most important commission, however, while still in Italy. In 1640 Both was among a group of artists, including Claude Lorrain (French, 1604/1605 - 1682), Nicolas Poussin (French, 1594 - 1665), Gaspard Dughet (French, 1615 - 1675), and Herman van Swanevelt (Dutch, c. 1600 - 1655), involved in the decoration of Philip IV's newly built summer retreat, the Buen Retiro palace in Madrid. The details of the commission remain obscure, but Both completed at least five large landscape paintings by 1641. His idyllic depictions of the Italian countryside suggest the classicizing influence of Claude, but also that of his fellow northerners in Rome such as Pieter van Laer (Dutch, c. 1592 - 1642), Paul Bril (Flemish, 1554 - 1626), and Poelenburch.

According to Both's earliest biographer, the German artist Joachim von Sandrart I (German, 1606 - 1688), Jan and his brother Andries had collaborated frequently in Rome, with Jan painting the landscapes and Andries the figures.[10] Upon returning to Utrecht, Jan continued the collaborative practice with artists such as Poelenburch and Weenix.[11] One such group effort was a portrait done collectively in 1644 by Jacob Duck (Dutch, c. 1600 - 1667), Bartholomeus van der Helst (c. 1613–1670), and Poelenburch for the Utrecht collector Willem Vincent, Baron van Wyttenhorst, for which Jan was asked to paint the background landscape.[12] In 1648 Both gave a portrait of himself, painted by Poelenburch, to Van Wyttenhorst, a testament to the close relationship he had gained with his collector.

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[1] The date of Jan's birth as first documented by Sandrart has been contested by some scholars. De Bruyn places it at about 1618 or slightly later, while Blankert has argued for an earlier date, c. 1615. The Utrecht municipal archives contain no birth or baptismal records before 1612, and records between 1612 and 1626 exist only for two churches.

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:114.

[3] Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675: Leben der berühmten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister* , ed. A. R. Peltzer (Munich, 1925), 312; Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:114. The Utrecht archives record Andries' apprenticeship with Bloemaert from 1624 to 1625, though they only name a son of "Dirck Bot." Scholars have assumed it could only be Andries, given that he was born around 1611–1612, and would have been of appropriate age to hold an apprenticeship in those years. The document is found in Samuel Muller, *De Utrechtsche archieven, I: schildersvereeingen te Utrecht* (Utrecht, 1880), 118–122.

[4] Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675: Leben der beruhmten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister* , ed. A. R. Peltzer (Munich, 1925), 312; Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:114; Malcolm R. Waddingham, "Andries and Jan Both in France and Italy," *Paragone* 171 (1964): 19; James Burke, *Jan Both: Paintings,*

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Drawings, and Prints (New York, 1976), 34. Andries was first recorded in the French city of Rouen in 1633 and then in Rome in 1635.

[5] G. J. Hoogewerff, B*escheiden in Italië omtrent Nederlandsche kunstenaars en geleerden*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1917), 53.

[6] G. J. Hoogewerff, *Nederlandsche kunstenaars te Rome (1600–1725): uittreksels uit de parochiale archieven* (The Hague, 1942), 108, 110. Jan and Andries are listed in both years under Strada Vittoria, dal Corso mano sinistra: Giovanni But di Olanda and Andrea But, fratello.

[7] Arnold Houbraken, De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:193.

[8] Samuel Muller, *De Utrechtsche archieven, I: schildersvereeingen te Utrecht* (Utrecht, 1880), 129.

[9] James Burke, *Jan Both: Paintings, Drawings, and Prints* (New York, 1976), 35: Gemeente Archief, Utrecht, Begrafenisregister.

[10] Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675: Leben der beruhmten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister* , ed. A. R. Peltzer (Munich, 1925), 312.

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[11] Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675: Leben der beruhmten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister* , ed. A. R. Peltzer (Munich, 1925), 312. This collaboration ended when Andries drowned in a Venetian canal on March 23, 1642, on his return trip to the Netherlands.

[12] C. H. de Jonge, "Utrechtse schilders der XVIIde eeuw in de verzameling van Willem Vincent, baron van Wyttenhorst," *Oudheidkundig Jaarboek*, 4th serv. (1932): 123.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan Both
Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652

An Italianate Evening Landscape

c. 1650

oil on canvas
overall: 138.5 x 172.7 cm (54 1/2 x 68 in.)
Inscription: lower left, JB in monogram: JBoth
Patrons' Permanent Fund 2000.91.1

ENTRY

Jan Both's imposing Italianate landscape invites the viewer to enter into a world that is at once familiar and exotic, where golden evening light floods over distant hills and waterways, and slender foreground trees gracefully reach beyond the very limits of the canvas. [1] No buildings are found in this extensive, mountainous setting, and there is little human activity beyond the leisurely travels of some peasants and a cowherd along a meandering path that stretches into the distance. Two goatherds have stopped by the wayside and, leaning on their staffs, appear to converse with the familiarity of longtime acquaintances.

This large-scale rendering of a sun-drenched and verdant landscape seemingly free from worldly concerns depicts Italy not as it was in reality but as it existed in the artist's imagination. Both's paintings are as much about mood as they are about the specifics of terrain—a quality generated, as Joachim von Sandrart already noted in 1675, from the artist's ability to evoke the differing light effects at various times of the day. [2] Like so many of Both's paintings, this landscape bathed in evening light invites the viewer to settle back and dream.

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Both developed this type of painting upon his arrival in Rome in 1637, shortly before he joined the Accademia di San Luca in 1638. In Rome he was reunited with his brother Andries Both (Dutch, 1611/1612 - 1641), who had already moved there in 1633. According to Sandrart, the two artists probably collaborated, with Andries painting the figures in Jan's landscapes. [3] While in Rome, Jan established friendships with a number of foreign artists who were interested in capturing the Roman Campagna in their works; of particular consequence for the development of Both's approach to landscape painting were Claude Lorrain (French, 1604/1605 - 1682), Herman van Swanevelt (Dutch, c. 1600 - 1655), and Gaspard Dughet (French, 1615 - 1675). Together they went on expeditions into the Italian countryside, where Both made drawings that would continue to be sources of inspiration for his paintings even after he returned to Utrecht in 1642. [4] Details about the circumstances of Both's initial encounter with these artists are not known, although he may have been introduced to the only other Dutch artist in this group, Van Swanevelt, by the Utrecht artist Cornelis van Poelenburch (Dutch, 1594/1595 - 1667). [5]

While in Rome, Both participated in an important commission with Claude, Dughet, and Van Swanevelt to paint a series of twenty-two large landscapes for Philip IV's summer palace in Madrid, the Buen Retiro. [6] He quickly assimilated the stylistic ideals of landscape painting that infused their work, ideals that drew their inspiration not only from the arcadian paintings of Poelenburch, but also from the classicist traditions of Annibale Carracci (Bolognese, 1560 - 1609) and Domenichino (Italian, 1581 - 1641). [7] The paintings made for this commission generally have a prominent repoussoir to one side—usually a tree or group of trees—beyond which one views the distant, light-filled landscape, a compositional schema that Both retained and later perfected in works such as *An Italianate Evening Landscape*. Nevertheless, Both's manner of painting differed from that of his colleagues in Rome in its emphasis on the specific details of naturalistic forms, particularly the rhythms and shapes of branches and leaves. [8] Moreover, presumably with his brother's assistance, he populated his landscapes with contemporary figures, not ones drawn from mythology or shepherds dressed as though they belonged to the Arcadia of classical antiquity. He retained this naturalistic approach to his landscape style and figure type throughout his career. [9]

The exact chronology of the large-scale landscapes that Both created during his latter years in Utrecht cannot be established because only one of these paintings is dated. [10] He probably executed the National Gallery of Art's imposing

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evocation of the Italian Campagna around 1650, when he had mastered his craft. [11] The painting's outstanding qualities have long been admired. The 1804 catalog of the renowned Van Leyden Collection, for example, celebrates the painting as being of "étonnante richesse" (surprising richness). The catalog entry, which stresses the brilliant rendering of the trees and the delicacy of their leaves, concludes with the following assertion: "This first-class and absolutely perfect painting represents without a doubt the masterpiece of its artist, and even of its genre." [12] This enthusiastic assessment of the artistic qualities and "perfection" of this "masterpiece" was later echoed by the German scholar Gustav Friedrich Waagen, who wrote in 1854: "The warm, but not, as sometimes with him, exaggerated, evening light, the more solid impasto, and the more careful execution, make this one of the most beautiful pictures of the master." [13] Indeed, as Waagen intimated, the trees in this painting are particularly lively thanks to their rhythmic shapes and the vigorous accents that articulate their foliage and the bark of their trunks and branches.

No commissions related to Both's large Utrecht-period landscapes are known, but these works probably decorated the houses of upper-class clients, largely in Amsterdam and Utrecht, who had a strong interest in and love for Italy and arcadian ideals. [14] A poem commenting on the visual and psychological appeal of a room filled with works by another Dutch Italianate landscape painter, Adam Pynacker (Dutch, c. 1620 - 1673), captures the impact of such decorative schemes: "The walls of the room are painted with artful parks and green woods, lit by a morning sun which shines down brilliantly from the horizon upon lush vegetation, creating the day, so that he who understands art, stands enraptured, and believes Italy appears before his eyes. . . . Here, worn out by affairs of state, he can unwind again, and enjoy himself in these observations." [15] One can well imagine a comparable tribute being written about a room containing this masterpiece by Jan Both.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Jeptha Dullaart for his assistance in writing this entry.

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[2] Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675*, ed. A. R. Peltzer (Munich, 1925), 185. “Sie [Jan and Andries Both, ed.] mahlten meistens grosse Landschaften, die sie reichlich ordinirten in Ausbildung der Morgenstunden, als wie der Thau noch auf den Feldern ligt und die Sonne über das hohe Gebürge herfür blicket. Also haben sie auch den Mittag, Abend und Sonnenuntergang, den Mondschein bey Nacht und dergleichen in Colorit und anderm dermassen verwunderlich nachgebildet, dass man in ihren Gemälden gleichsam die Stunden des Tages erkennen konte, mit sonst andern eigentlichen Natürlichkeiten der Felder, Berg und Bäumen.”

[3] Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675*, ed. A. R. Peltzer (Munich, 1925), 185.

[4] Peter Schatborn, *Drawn to Warmth: 17th-Century Dutch Artists in Italy* (Zwolle, 2001), 93.

[5] Malcolm R. Waddingham, "Andries and Jan Both in France and Italy," *Paragone* 171 (1964): 28. Poelenburch had known Van Swanevelt in Rome before he returned to Utrecht in the mid–1620s.

[6] Malcolm R. Waddingham, "Andries and Jan Both in France and Italy," *Paragone* 171 (1964): 28–32. The series was commissioned in 1636, thus before Jan Both arrived in Rome. Waddingham argues that Both participated in four of the paintings in this series before he returned to Utrecht in 1641. James David Burke, “Jan Both: Paintings, Drawings and Prints,” PhD diss. (Harvard University, 1976), 81–95, asserts that he was responsible for five paintings in this series.

[7] Malcolm R. Waddingham, "Andries and Jan Both in France and Italy," *Paragone* 171 (1964): 30.

[8] James David Burke, “Jan Both: Paintings, Drawings and Prints,” PhD diss. (Harvard University, 1976), 87–91.

[9] Joaneath A. Spicer, *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age*. (Baltimore, 1997), 42, aptly described Both’s paintings as depicting “Arcadia *from life*.” These same qualities are evident in a few of Both’s late drawings, as, for example, *Landscape with Trees and Travelers*, Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna. See: Peter Schatborn, *Drawn to Warmth: 17th-Century Dutch Artists in Italy* (Zwolle, 2001), 98–99, fig. O.

[10] *Landscape with Mercury and Argus*, 1650, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie, Bayreuth.

[11] This painting can be most closely compared to three other large arcadian landscapes: *Italian Landscape with a Draftsman*, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; *Landscape with Hunters*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; and *Landscape with Bandits Leading Prisoners*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

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[12] “Ce Tableau capital et de la plus perfection, offre sans contredit le chef-d’oeuvre de son Auteur, et même de son genre.” (Translated by Jennifer Henel.) *Catalogue de la célèbre collection de tableau de M. van Leyden* (Amsterdam, 1804), 4–5, no. 6.

[13] Gustav Friedrich Waagen and Algernon Graves, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collections of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, Illuminated Mss.*, trans. Lady Elizabeth Rigby Eastlake, 3 vols. (London, 1854), 2:111.

[14] One of Both’s foremost patrons in Utrecht was the Baron Vincent van Wyttenhorst, a major patron of landscape painting who also owned twenty-three landscapes by Cornelis van Poelenburch, who bought works from Both in 1649 and 1651. Both’s paintings were collected in Amsterdam by, among others, Jan Six and Joseph Deutz, and thus by patrons living beyond Utrecht. See Albert Blankert, *Nederlandse 17e Eeuwse Italianiserende Landschapschilders* (Utrecht 1965; reprint, Soest, 1978), 42, 223, no. 142; Alan Chong, “The Market for Landscape Painting in Seventeenth-Century Holland,” in Peter C. Sutton, *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 110–112; Jonathan Bikker, "The Deutz Brothers, Italian Paintings, and Michiel Sweerts: New Information from Elisabeth Coyman's 'Journael,'" *Simiolus* 26, no. 4 (1998): 283, 309; and Peter C. Sutton, *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 276.

[15] This late seventeenth-century poem was written by Pieter Verhoek (1633–1702) about paintings in the home of a wealthy Amsterdam merchant. I have used Alan Chong’s translation here, with some minor changes; see Alan Chong in Peter C. Sutton, *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 399. Original text is from Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (Amsterdam, 1718–1721; rev. ed., The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 2:97–99: “nu all wanden / Der zaale, stan bemaald met konstige waranden, / En groene bosschen, van een morgenzon bestraalt, / Die glansryk uit de kim op wilde kruiden daalt, / Den Dag schept, dat wie Konst verstaat, staat opgetogen, / En want Italien t’aanschouwen met zyn oogen. . . . Hier kan hy afgeslooft door Staatszorg, weer den boog / ontspannen; zig in dees bespiegeling verlusten.”

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is two pieces of a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, joined with a horizontal seam, which runs through the lower portion of the landscape. It has

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been mounted on a seven-member stretcher, but stretcher-bar cracks indicate that an earlier stretcher, possibly the original, had a single, thin, vertical crossbar. The painting has been lined at least twice and the tacking margins have been removed, but visible cusping on all four sides indicates that the painting probably retains its original dimensions.

The support was prepared with a gray ground. Both used thin layers of paint to create the image. The paint appears to be oil, but an aqueous emulsion may have been used to enhance the texture and depth in the foliage, tree trunks, vines, and other highly textured areas. This emulsion has a beaded-up quality and appears to have been applied with a sponge, rather than a brush. There are some pentimenti in the hills of the middle ground on the left side of the painting.

The support fabric has a large tear in the upper right corner and a vertical split that intersects the seam in the lower left quadrant. There is some weave enhancement, which was probably caused by excessive pressure during one of the linings. The paint is in good condition, though some of the pigments appear to have faded. As a result, the moss on the trees in the foreground appears overly bright. The painting was treated in 2000, at which time several layers of discolored varnish were removed. The treatment involved toning the overly bright moss and the pentimenti.

PROVENANCE

Pieter Cornelis, baron van Leyden [1717-1788, known during his lifetime as the Heer van Leyden van Vlaardingen], Leiden;[1] by inheritance with the paintings in his collection to his son, Diederik van Leyden [1844-1810/1811], Leiden and Amsterdam;[2] sold, with the rest of his father's painting collection, to a consortium formed by L.B. Coclers, Alexander Joseph Paillet, and A. de Lespinasse de Langeac;[3] (sale, Paillet and Delaroche, Paris, 5-8 November 1804, no. 6);[4] purchased by Paillet for Herard. Alexander Baring [later 1st baron Ashburton, 1774-1848], Bath House, London, by 1821;[5] by inheritance to his son, William Bingham Baring, 2nd baron Ashburton [1799-1864], Bath House, London; by bequest 1864 to his wife, Louisa Caroline, Lady Ashburton [née Mackenzie, 1827-1903], Bath House, London; sold by her executor and son-in-law, William George Spencer Scott Compton, 5th marquess of Northampton [1851-1913], to a consortium of (Thos. Agnew & Sons, Charles Davis, Arthur J. Sully, and Asher Wertheimer, all in London);

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presumably retained by Wertheimer until (his sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 18 June 1920, no. 6, as *A Woody Landscape*); (Permain, London).[6] Charles Hubert Archibald Butler [1901-1978], Shortgrove, Newport, Essex; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 26 June 1964, no. 51);[7] (Alfred Brod Gallery, London), until at least December 1965.[8] (Hazlitt, Gooden and Fox, London), 1966-1967; sold to private collection; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, 7 July 2000, no. 17); purchased by NGA.

[1] The provenance is taken from the 7 July 2000 sale catalogue. About the Van Leyden collection, see the description of Sale F-80, by Benjamin Peronnet, in The Getty Provenance Index© Databases, accessed 17 February 2012, and J.W. Niemeijer,"Baron van Leyden, Founder of the Amsterdam Print Collection," trans. Patricia Wardle, Apollo (June 1983): 461-468. As Niemeijer explains, in Van Leyden's own day the title of baron was not actually used; when alive he was known as the Heer Van Leyden van Vlaardingen. He is given the title of baron in later publications, a title that was indeed his, as an ancestor was created a baron of the Holy Roman Empire in 1548.

[2] Niemeijer 1983, 468. While his son inherited the paintings, Van Leyden's large and important print collection was bequeathed to his grandson, after whose death in 1789 it became the property of the young man's mother. Sold in 1806 to Louis Napoleon, it was housed first in The Hague, then Paris, and was eventually returned in 1816 to Amsterdam, where it formed the nucleus of the print collection at the Rijksmuseum.

[3] The sale catalogue does not cite a source for this information.

[4] The sale was originally scheduled for 5 July 1804, and rescheduled for 10 September 1804 (the date printed on the sale catalogue), before finally taking place in November.

[5] Baring lent the painting to an 1821 exhibition at the British Institution.

[6] The 2000 sale catalogue indicates that the painting was "possibly purchased by

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Seligman" at the 1920 sale. However, the annotated copy of the 1920 sale catalogue available on microfiche in the Christie's catalogues from the Knoedler Library gives the buyer as "Permain," who might be the London dealer William Permain.

[7] The painting was erroneously described in the sale catalogue as having come from the collection of his grandfather, Charles Butler of Warren Wood, presumably having been confused with a landscape by Both lent by his grandfather to the British Institution in 1864 (no. 88).

[8] The painting was offered by the Alfred Brod Gallery to the National Gallery of Art in December 1965 (original letter of 13 December 1965 in NGA Photographic Archives, copy in NGA curatorial files).

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1821 British Institution, London, 1821, no. 55, as *Landscape; a View in Italy, with Figures travelling*.

1964 25th Exhibition of Old Master Paintings, Alfred Brod Gallery, London, 1964, no. 41.

1965 Nederlandse 17e eeuwse Italianiserende landschapschilders [Dutch 17th Century Italianate Landscape Painters], Centraal Museum, Utrecht, 1965, no. 57, repro., as *Landschap met muilezelrijder*.

2001 Aelbert Cuyp, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2001-2002, not in catalogue (shown only in Washington for first month of exhibition).

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1829 Smith, John. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*. 9 vols. London, 1829-1842: 6(1835):179, no. 23,199-200, no. 78.

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1964 Alfred Brod Gallery. *25th Exhibition of Old Master Paintings*. London, 1964: no. 41.

1965 Houtzager, Maria Elisabeth, H.J. de Smedt, and Albert Blankert. *Nederlandse 17e eeuwse Italianiserende landschapschilders*. Exh. cat. Centraal Museum, Utrecht, 1965: 126, no. 57.

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1978 Blankert, Albert. *Nederlandse zeventiende eeuwse Italianiserende landschapschilders*. Revised and enlarged ed. Exh. cat. Centraal Museum, Utrecht. Soest, 1978: 126, no. 57.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan de Bray, *The Governors of the Haarlem Guild of Saint Luke* (detail), 1675, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. SK-A-58

Bray, Jan de

Dutch, c. 1627 - 1688

BIOGRAPHY

Jan de Bray was born in Haarlem into a creative, cultured family. His father, Salomon de Bray (1597–1664), with whom he presumably studied, was a painter and architect who helped establish the Saint Luke's Guild in Haarlem in the 1630s. He was also a poet and a member of a rhetoricians' society in the city. Jan's mother, Anna Westerbaen (c. 1605–1663), who came from The Hague, was the sister of the poet and physician Jacob Westerbaen (c. 1600–1670) and of the portrait painter Jan Westerbaen (c. 1600–after 1677), who may well have instructed Jan de Bray in the art of portraiture.[1] Two of De Bray's brothers,Dirck de Bray (Dutch, active 1651/1678) and Joseph de Bray (c. 1632–1664), were also painters.

Tragedy struck the family when both of Jan's parents, whom he represented in an imposing double portrait (see Portrait of the Artist's Parents, Salomon de Bray and Anna Westerbaen), and four of his siblings, including Joseph, died in a plague that ravaged Haarlem from 1663 to 1664. Jan suffered further personal losses when each of his three marriages ended in the untimely death of his wife, all of whom shared the artist's Catholic faith. De Bray lost his first wife, Maria van Hees, in 1669, the year after their marriage. His second wife, Margaretha de Meyer, died in 1673, within a year of their wedding. He married his third wife, Victoria Magdalena Stalpert van der Wielen, in 1678, but he became a widower yet again when she died in childbirth in 1680.[2]

Despite the tragedies of his personal life, De Bray pursued a successful artistic career in Haarlem, where he was named dean of the Saint Luke's Guild several

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times in the 1670s and 1680s. He was one of the foremost Dutch artists working in the classical tradition, a style of painting in Holland that fused naturalism with ideals of beauty that originated in antiquity. De Bray was also an architect and an inventor, but he was foremost a painter of portraits and historical subjects. Often he blended these two genres in what is known as the portrait historié, or historicized portrait. Works of this type portrayed contemporary individuals in the guise of figures from the Bible, mythology, or ancient history and literature, thereby drawing parallels between the virtues of the sitters and those of the historical personages.

In 1686 De Bray moved to Amsterdam and helped design a freshwater reservoir near the Amstel River in 1688. A year later he suffered financial setbacks and was forced to declare bankruptcy. By 1692 his fortunes had sufficiently rebounded for him to be granted citizenship in Amsterdam. Although he remained in that city for the rest of his life, after his death his body was brought back to Haarlem, where he was buried on April 4, 1697.

[1] De Bray painted a portrait of his mother in 1657 (National Gallery, London). See Pieter Biesboer, Friso Lammertse, and Fred G. Meijer, *Painting Family: The De Brays: Master Painters of the 17th Century Holland* (Zwolle, 2008), no. 19, 72–73.

[2] Although no known portraits of Margaretha exist, De Bray depicted Maria in 1668 in a portrait historié of the couple as Ulysses and Penelope that he painted in the year of their marriage. Similarly, in 1678, the year of his third marriage, he portrayed Victoria Magdalena as Mary Magdalene, after whom she was named. For these images, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan de Bray and the Classical Tradition*, exh. brochure (Washington, DC, 2004), nos. 4, 5.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Attributed to Jan de Bray
Jan de Bray
Dutch, c. 1627 - 1688

Head of a Young Boy

c. 1650

oil on copper
overall (oval): 7.5 x 5.9 cm (2 15/16 x 2 5/16 in.)
framed: 16.8 x 15.2 cm (6 5/8 x 6 in.)
Gift of Maida and George Abrams 1995.74.1

ENTRY

Head of a Young Boy engages the viewer through the directness of the young sitter's intense and serious gaze. Light glistening off the boy's flowing locks and eyes and off his lace collar, tassel, and white shirt activates the image and gives it a striking immediacy unexpected in such a small painting. The copper support, along with the portrait's oval shape, smooth application of paint, and deep dark green background color, recalls early seventeenth-century Dutch, English, and French miniatures. The young boy's head does not project a shadow; this stylistic feature is characteristic of such portraits and may relate to the origin of painted miniatures in goldsmith work. [1]

The attribution of miniatures is often difficult, and caution must be exercised when considering the authorship of this work, which has traditionally been identified as a painting by Jan de Bray. [2] The boy, whose identity is unknown, seems to be about six to eight years old. [3] The style of his neatly coiffed shoulder-length hair, lace collar, and fashionable brown doublet, which has been left unbuttoned in its lower part to leave the shirt exposed, can be dated between 1650 and 1655. [4] De Bray did make a number of similar bust-length portraits of young boys during the 1650s and 1660s that are equally sympathetic and direct in their characterization of the sitter, and it is largely for this reason that this painting has been attributed to him. [5] None of these other portraits, however, is as small or refined as this one; furthermore, whereas in this painting the shoulders seem too small to support the size of the boy's head, De Bray's figures usually tend to have a greater sense of three-dimensionality [fig. 1]. De Bray often made bust-length depictions of young boys as elements within family portrait series, and regardless of whether this work

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was painted by him, it too may originally have been part of a series of images of children from a Dutch family.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan de Bray, *Head of a Boy*, c. 1655-–1665, oil on copper, The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, Acquired by Henry Walters 37.270

NOTES

[1] See Torben Holck Colding, *Aspects of Miniature Painting: Its Origins and Development* (Copenhagen, 1953), 88; and Joaneath Spicer in conjunction with Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Small Northern European Portraits from the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore* (Washington, DC, 2000).

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[2] See Joaneath Spicer with Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Small Northern European Portraits from the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore* (Washington, DC, 2000), exhibition brochure no 36.

[3] He appears to be about the same age as the sitter in Jan de Bray, *Portrait of a Boy Aged Six*, 1654, Royal Portrait Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague. See Ben Broos and Ariane van Suchtelen, eds., *Portraits in the Mauritshuis,1430–1790* (Zwolle, 2004), 57, no. 8.

[4] See, for example, Johannes Verspronck, *Portrait of André de Villepontoux (1616–1663)*, 1651, in Ben Broos and Ariane van Suchtelen, eds., *Portraits in the Mauritshuis, 1430–1790* (Zwolle, 2004), 316, no. 948.

[5] The earliest such paintings are pendants of a brother (*Portrait of a Boy Aged Seven*, 1650, formerly in the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, current whereabouts unknown) and sister (*Portrait of a Girl Aged Five*, 1650, Národni galerie v Praze, Prague). See Joachim Wolfgang Von Moltke, "Salomon de Bray," in *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* (Marburg, 1938/1939), 11–12, 482, no. 165, and 483, no. 170.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is an oval copper panel. Thinly painted areas of the background reveal a tan priming layer. The paint was applied with a tight, fine, smoothly blended brushstroke, in a variety of techniques ranging from opaque paint in the face to glazes in the dark clothes and green background. Slight impasto can be found throughout the background and in the highlights of the clothing. Infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns[1] revealed that the hair on the proper right side originally lay behind the boy's collar instead of partially covering it, and it also showed a few lines of underdrawing in the chest and hair.

The copper panel is in plane and the paint is in good condition. There is inpainting in the highlighted side of the collar. The painting was partially cleaned leaving remnants of an old varnish beneath the modern, clear, even varnish. It has not undergone treatment at the National Gallery of Art.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

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PROVENANCE

(Rafael Valls Limited, London); purchased 1960s by Mr. and Mrs. George Abrams, Newton, Massachusetts; gift 1995 to NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1995 Adriaen Brouwer: Youth Making a Face, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1995-1996, not in brochure.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, not in catalogue.

2000 Small Northern European Portraits from The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2000, brochure checklist no. 36.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan de Bray
Dutch, c. 1627 - 1688

Portrait of the Artist's Parents, Salomon de Bray and Anna Westerbaen

1664

oil on panel
overall: 78.1 x 63.5 cm (30 3/4 x 25 in.)
framed: 99.7 x 85.7 x 8.9 cm (39 1/4 x 33 3/4 x 3 1/2 in.)
Gift of Joseph F. McCrindle in memory of his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Feder 2001.86.1

ENTRY

Jan de Bray painted this remarkable double portrait of his parents in 1664, shortly after they had succumbed to the plague that ravaged Haarlem from 1663 to 1664. [1] The stark double-profile pose gives this image a timeless quality that is enhanced by the sitters' simple black dress and the dark, greenish-black cloth hanging behind them. Jan represented his father, Salomon (1597–1664), with his left hand outstretched as though he were about to speak, a rhetorical pose that identifies him as a man who excelled at intellectual pursuits. Such associations are reinforced by the black skullcap, dark mantle, and simple white collar—all common elements of scholarly attire. Anna (c. 1605–1663), the painter's mother, is depicted in similarly sober fashion, wearing a pointed skullcap and a fanciful silk cloak.

Salomon de Bray was a painter, architect, and urban planner who probably learned to paint in his native Amsterdam before moving to Haarlem to study with Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1558 - 1617) and Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (Dutch, 1562 - 1638). Following their teachings, which emphasized a theoretical foundation, Salomon soon took on a leading role in Haarlem as a classicist artist. In the 1630s he was a key player in the reorganization of the Saint Luke's Guild, a reform that rewarded leading painters and architects with positions of authority in the guild. [2] As an architect and urban planner, Salomon sought to bring classical order to buildings as well as to a planned (but never realized) expansion of Haarlem. A

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devout Catholic, he was also a poet and a member of the rhetorician's society. Anna Westerbaen, who married Salomon de Bray in 1625, came from an intellectual and artistic family in The Hague. She was the sister of the poet and physician Jacob Westerbaen (c. 1600–1670) and of the portrait painter Jan Westerbaen (c. 1600–after 1677), who may well have instructed Jan de Bray in the art of that genre. [3]

De Bray presumably painted this work between May 11, 1664, the date of his father's death, and June 17, 1664, when the artist stated in his will that he would bequeath "the likeness of his foresaid deceased father and mother standing in a single piece and painted from the side" to Gaeff Meynertsz Fabritius (1602–1666), who was a goldsmith and, like Salomon, an important member of the Saint Luke's Guild. [4] It is more significant, however, that in 1664 Fabritius served as burgomaster of Haarlem. [5] De Bray stipulated that Fabritius would receive this double portrait, as well as a (now-lost) self-portrait, on the condition that the burgomaster would in turn bequeath the two paintings to the city of Haarlem. [6] This requirement indicates that De Bray saw these works as commemorative portraits to be viewed and admired by future generations of Haarlem's citizens. [7] De Bray outlived Fabritius, however, hence the terms of this bequest were never realized. The painting's subsequent history is unknown until 1868, when it was sold in Paris as part of the J. C. Robinson collection (see Provenance). In 1664 Jan, in collaboration with his brother Dirck de Bray (Dutch, active 1651/1678), who was a printmaker, produced a second commemorative portrait of his father [fig. 1], a woodcut image based on a drawing he had made in 1657 (Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin).

Technical examinations indicate that De Bray initially painted Salomon's left arm hanging at his side: x-radiographs [see X-radiography] reveal a series of vertically angled highlights that accented the inner edge of his upper arm when it was in that position [fig. 2]. In the first stage of the painting Anna wore a dress with a pleated white collar. The important compositional change in the position of Salomon's left arm may have required a modification in the painting's format. De Bray extended the original panel with additions at both the left and the right, presumably to provide more space around the figures. [8]

The profile portrait was a common format on Roman coins, cameos, and celebratory medals depicting individuals of high birth and rank. This tradition was revived in Renaissance portraits of famous men and women and is also found in the seventeenth-century Netherlands, specifically in representations of the Prince

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and Princess of Orange painted in the early 1630s by Gerrit van Honthorst (Dutch, 1592 - 1656) and Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669). [9] Salomon, too, had used the format in a painting of a young woman in strict profile from the 1630s. [10] Jan de Bray's use of overlapping profile portraits, however, is rarely found in seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish painting. Among the few precedents is Agrippina and Germanicus, c. 1614 [fig. 3], by Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640). Rubens, who studied and collected antique cameos and medallions, explicitly adapted this format for this painting of Roman aristocrats. Even more pertinent to the conceptual ideas underlying De Bray's painting is a double portrait of the artist and his wife by the Antwerp master Hendrik van Balen (c. 1574/1575–1632), meant to be placed above their tombstone. [11] The profile format was used often for portraits of the deceased. Whether or not De Bray was familiar with these Flemish evocations of a cameo double portrait, he chose a similar pose to imbue his parents' image with classical ideals of dignity and permanence. [12]

De Bray's restrained brushwork and meticulous modeling of forms perfectly complemented the commemorative nature of this double portrait. He precisely rendered the specific physiognomy of each of his parents, from his mother's high forehead and curved nostrils to the subtle creases around his father's deeply set eyes. With great sensitivity to both line and volume he indicated the glistening strands of Salomon's wavy hair and thin goatee. He captured the differences of texture in the clothes, from the soft, velvety quality of his father's black robe to the smoothness of his stiff white collar, carefully bending up its lower edge to enhance the image's three-dimensionality. Unlike his Haarlem compatriot Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666), whose broadly brushed and freely rendered portraits suggest both physical and psychological movement, De Bray achieved the lifelike character of these posthumous portraits through the sitters' penetrating gazes and the sheen of their skin, and through Salomon's restrained yet rhetorically eloquent gesture. Through these means De Bray sought to keep the dead alive in the memory of the living. [13]

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Dirck de Bray, *Solomon de Bray*, woodcut, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection, 1943.3.3359

fig. 2 X-radiograph composite, Jan de Bray, *Portrait of the Artist's Parents, Salomon de Bray and Anna Westerbaen*, 1664, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Joseph F. McCrindle in memory of his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Feder, 2001.86.1

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fig. 3 Sir Peter Paul Rubens, *Agrippina and Germanicus*, c. 1614, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Fund, 1963.8.1

NOTES

[1] The painting, which is not dated, has also been placed earlier in De Bray's career: Joachim Wolfgang Von Moltke, "Jan de Bray," *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 11–12 (1938–1939): 426, dated it about 1661, and Jeroen Giltaij, in *Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth-Century Painting,* ed. Albert Blankert (Rotterdam, 1999), 276–279, no. 53, dated it around 1660.

[2] Salomon de Bray is mentioned as an assayer (*vinder*) on the board of the Saint Luke's Guild in Haarlem in 1632, 1633, and 1639, and as the head of the guild (*deken*) in 1634 and 1640. Until 1640 he is identified as an architect (*architekt*). In 1640, however, he is mentioned as a painter also (*schilder en bouwmeester*). Hessel Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem: 1497–1798*, 2 vols. (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1980), 2:1057–1058.

[3] De Bray painted a portrait of his mother in 1657 (National Gallery, London).

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See Pieter Biesboer, ed., *Painting Family: The De Brays, Master Painters of 17th Century Holland* (Zwolle, 2008), no. 19, 72–73.

[4] Gaeff Meynertsz Fabritius appears in the records of the guild of gold- and silversmiths (which was part of the Saint Luke's Guild until 1639) as an assayer (*keurmeester*) in 1627 and 1636. (The terms *vinder* and *keurmeester* both mean assayer, a person in charge of quality control.) In 1635 Fabritius was both the head (*deken*) of the board of the gold- and silversmiths and the main assayer as well as the treasurer (*penningmeester*) of the board of the Saint Luke's Guild. In 1634 and 1640, both years that Salomon de Bray was the head of the Guild, Fabritius was part of the board as well (either as assayer or as assayer and treasurer). In the general guild records Fabritius is identified as a goldsmith (*goudsmid*) until 1640, when he is said to be an engraver and sculptor (*graveerder en figuursnijder*). Hessel Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem: 1497–1798*, 2 vols. (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1980), 2:1050–1051, 1057–1058.

[5] See Pieter Biesboer, ed., *Painting Family: The De Brays, Master Painters of 17th Century Holland* (Zwolle, 2008), no. 6, 88.

[6] See Jeroen Giltaij in Albert Blankert, ed., *Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth-Century Painting* (Rotterdam, 1999), 279 n. 4: "het conterfeytsel van sijn voorn. overleden vader ende moeder staende in een stuck ende van ter seyden geschildert."

[7] Jan de Bray also painted two large *portraits historiés* depicting members of his extended family, including Salomon and Anna, as participants at the *Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra* (the first, dated 1652, is at Hampton Court in the collection of her Majesty the Queen; and the second, dated 1669, is in the Currier Museum of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire). These paintings also commemorated the ideals for which the De Bray family stood and the lasting bonds that united parents, children, and spouses. See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan de Bray and the Classical Tradition*, exh. brochure (National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 2004), 10–12, no. 4.

[8] The additional panels measure 4 centimeters at the left and 5.2 centimeters at the right. For further discussion of these changes, see Technical Notes.

[9] See Peter van der Ploeg et al., *Princely Patrons: The Collection of Frederick Henry of Orange and Amalia of Solms in the Hague* (The Hague, 1997), 132–134, nos. 9a–b.

[10] Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo Collection. See Frederik J. Duparc, ed., *Golden: Dutch and Flemish Masterworks from the Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo Collection* (New Haven, 2011), no.13, 100–105.

[11] For an image of this double portrait (Hendrik van Balen, *Self-Portrait with His Wife, Margareta Briers,* c. 1625, Sint-Jacobskerk, Antwerp), see Rudolf

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Ekkart and Quentin Buvelot, eds., *Dutch Portraits: The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals* (London, 2007), 88, fig. 6a, and Pieter Biesbooer, ed., *Painting Family: The De Brays, Master Painters of 17th Century Holland* (Zwolle, 2008), 92, fig. 29a. There is no evidence, however, that De Bray ever traveled to Antwerp.

[12] In this respect, De Bray's double portrait differs from Jacob van Campen's *Double Portrait of Constantijn Huygens and Suzanna van Baerle,* c. 1635 (Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague), because of the momentary quality of Suzanna's pose as she turns and looks out at the viewer. For this portrait, see Ben Broos and Ariane van Suchtelen, eds., *Portraits in the Mauritshuis, 1430–1790* (The Hague, 2004), 63–68.

[13] I would like to thank Perry Chapman for stressing this point to me.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a panel constructed from three boards of vertically grained white oak.[1] The back of the panel is beveled but shims have been attached to the beveled areas to accommodate a cradle. The ground is composed of two layers: a light gray layer under a brownish gray one. Though the green background paint was found to be consistent on all three boards, the layers between the ground and the green paint differ. Both the right and left boards contain a dark gray layer over the ground. This layer is absent from the center plank, but both the center and left boards contain a buff colored layer just below the green background, which is absent from the right plank. Despite these inconsistencies, the pigments of the green paint are consistent on all three boards[2] and the brushstrokes of the green paint continue across the joins, indicating that the two outer boards were added by the artist before the background was painted.

De Bray used a series of short, discrete brushstrokes to apply the paint with low impasto. He built up the flesh tones with opaque paint, but used glazes in the dark areas. The X-radiographs show several artist's changes: the woman's dress was simplified and it originally had a collar that was painted out; the man's arm was not originally raised.

The painting is in good condition. The panel exhibits a few short vertical splits extending down from the top edge and up from the bottom edge. There are minor scattered indentations and chips in the support along the edges. There is old

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damage in the lower right corner adjacent to the join line. The inpainting in this area has discolored. There is additional old inpainting in the man's sleeve, close to his wrist. The painting has not undergone treatment at the National Gallery of Art.

[1] The wood was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated December 29, 2010, in NGA Conservation department files). All three boards were found to be white oak.

[2] Cross-sections from all three boards were taken and analyzed with light microscopy as well as scanning electron microscopy in conjunction with energy dispersive spectroscopy (SEM/EDS) by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated December 29, 2010, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

The artist [c. 1627-1697]; possibly bequeathed to Gaeff Fabritius, former burgomaster of Haarlem.[1] John Charles Robinson [1824-1913], London; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 7-8 May 1868, no. 11); Reiset, for Princess Mathilde [1820-1904, née Mathilde L.M. Bonaparte], Paris;[2] (her estate sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 17-21 May 1904, 1st day, no. 21). Agénor, duc de Gramont [1857-1925], Paris; (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 22 May 1925, no. 7); Joseph Fuller Feder [d. 1944], New York;[3] by inheritance to his daughter, Mrs. George Monroe Moffett [d. 1956, née Odette Feder, formerly the Countess du Bourg de Bozas and Mrs. J. Ronald McCrindle], New York;[4] by inheritance to her son, Joseph F. McCrindle [1923-2008], New York; gift 2001 to NGA.

[1] The artist drew up his first will on 17 June 1664, leaving his entire estate to his younger brother, Dirck, and bequeathing "...to the Honourable Gaeff Fabritius, erstwhile burgomaster of the city of Haarlem, a portrait of his testator and a portrait of his late father and mother, standing and viewed from the side, providing that on the death of the said Gaeff Fabritius both portraits shall pass to the city of Haarlem." ("Ten tweede aen den E. Heere Gaeff Fabritius oudt burgenmeester deser voorn. Stadt Haerlem sijns Testateuren conterfeystel metter pleth, mitsgaders het conterfeytsel van sijn voorn. overleden vader ende moeder staende in een stuck ende van ter seyden geschildert mits dat beyde de voorn.

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conterfeytsels naert overlijden van den voorn. Gaeff Fabritius sullen moeten commen ende vervallen aende voorn. Stadt Haerlem.") The artist eventually drew up six wills, the last in 1683, and after incurring debts he could not pay, applied for a dispossession order and was declared bankrupt in 1689. (See Jeroen Giltaij in *Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth-Century Painting*, ed. Albert Blankert [exh. cat., Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Städtelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt 1999-2000], Rotterdam, 1999: 276-279.)

[2] An annotated copy of the sales catalogue in the NGA Library indicates that the painting was acquired by Reiset for Princess Mathilde. It is not known where or when Robinson, who was curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, acquired the painting.

[3] Annotated copy of sales catalogue, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Feder also acquired Largillierre's *Portrait of a Young Man with His Tutor* (NGA 1961.9.26) at this sale. A photograph in the NGA curatorial files of the Feder apartment in The Sherry-Netherland on Fifth Avenue in New York shows the painting hanging in the living room.

[4] According to the entry in *Dutch and Flemish Paintings from New York Private Collections*, exh. cat., National Academy of Design, New York, 1988: no. 6, which refers to an annotated catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1957 Loan to display with permanent collection, Brooklyn Museum of Art, 1957-1981.

1980 Dutch Seventeenth-Century Portraiture: The Golden Age, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, 1980-1981, no. 13, repro.

1981 Loan to display with permanent collection, The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1981-1999.

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1988 Dutch and Flemish Paintings from New York Private Collections, National Academy of Design, New York, 1988, no. 6, repro.

1999 Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth-Century Painting, Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt; Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 1999-2000, no. 53, repro.

2000 Small Northern European Portraits from The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2000, brochure checklist no. 39.

2005 Jan De Bray and the Classical Tradition, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2005, brochure no. 2, repro.

2007 Dutch Portraits: The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals, The National Gallery, London; Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague, 2007-2008, no. 6, repro.

2008 Painting Family: The De Brays, Master Painters of 17th Century Holland, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, 2008, no. 29, repro.

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repro.

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2004 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Jan de Bray and the Classical Tradition*. Exhibition brochure. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2004: 8-9, no. 2, repro.

2005 Van Wagenberg-Ter Hoeven, Anke A. "A Matter of Mistaken Identity. In Search of a New Title for Rubens's *Tiberius and Agrippina*." *Artibus et historiae* 26, no. 52 (2005): 116, 117 fig. 3, 126 n. 9.

2007 Ekkart, Rudolf E.O., and Quentin Buvelot. *Dutch portraits: the age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals*. Translated by Beverly Jackson. Exh. cat. National Gallery, London; Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague. London, 2007: 88-89, no. 6, repro.

2008 Biesboer, Pieter, ed. *Painting Family: the De Brays: Master Painters of the 17th century Holland*. Exh. cat. Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; Dulwich Picture Gallery, London. Zwolle, 2008: 92-93, no. 29, repro.

2012 Grasselli, Margaret M., and Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., eds. *The McCrindle Gift: A Distinguished Collection of Drawings and Watercolors*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art. Washington, 2012: 5, 14, fig. 2, 19, repro. 184.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Breen, Adam van

Dutch, c. 1585 - 1640

BIOGRAPHY

Little is known about Adam van Breen's early life. Van Breen is identified as a "young man from Amsterdam" in a document recording his wedding in The Hague to Maria Gelle on Feburary 13, 1611.[1] In 1612 he joined the Guild of Saint Luke in The Hague, to which he belonged until 1621. He was in Amsterdam in 1622 to appear before a bankruptcy court, and is documented there again six years later, in 1628.

Van Breen worked in Norway repeatedly, and seems to have split his time between Amsterdam and Oslo for much of his career. In 1624 Van Breen went to Oslo for the first time to paint decorations for the palace of Christopher Urne, Lord of Akershus, after it had been rebuilt following the fire that devastated much of the city that year. He returned in 1636 and again in 1639 to produce more decorations for palaces being rebuilt by King Christian IV. Van Breen apparently worked in Norway until his death; his last signed painting, a portrait, is dated 1642.[2]

Van Breen specialized in paintings filled with figures enjoying wintry landscapes, occasionally depicting views from specific locations in Amsterdam or The Hague. While in Amsterdam he may have trained with the landscape painter David Vinckboons (Dutch, 1576 - c. 1632). In some of his early works Van Breen borrowed both settings and figures directly from Vinckboons's compositions.[3] In Amsterdam Van Breen also would have seen early paintings by Hendrick Avercamp (Dutch, 1585 - 1634), another Dutch artist who presumably studied with Vinckboons and depicted winter scenes with crowded frozen canals. Like Avercamp, Van Breen built up a stock of figural types that appear repeatedly in his landscapes, with minor variations. In The Hague Van Breen appears to have influenced Adriaen Adriaensz Ghibons (active 1605–1639), who also produced icy landscapes.

Yet Van Breen did not focus exclusively on winter views. Several of his paintings show elegant companies picnicking in verdant formal gardens, similar to works by Vinckboons and Esaias van de Velde I (Dutch, 1587 - 1630), who joined The Hague Guild of Saint Luke in 1618.[4] Van Breen also drew figural designs for an illustrated

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book of military exercises and weapons, *Nassaushe wapenhandelinge, van schilt, spies, rapier, ende targe*, published in 1618 in The Hague by Aert Meruis.[5] The illustrations depict armored figures demonstrating stances for readying and using various types of swords, shields, and spears. Notably, in Van Breen's paintings soldiers occasionally appear amid crowds of well-to-do burghers and playing children.

[1] *Allgemeines Kunstlerlexikon* (Munchen, 2007–2009), 64–65.

[2] His 1642 portrait of Ole Bosen (1583–1646), bishop of Akershus, is currently in the Vaar Frelserskirke in Oslo.

[3] Pieter Roelofs, ed., *Hendrick Avercamp: Master of the Ice Scene* (Amsterdam and Washington, DC, 2009), 37.

[4] Edwin Buijsen and Charles Dumas, *Haagse schilders in de Gouden Eeuw: Het Hoogsteder lexicon van alle schilders werkzaam in Den Haag 1600–1700* (The Hague, 1998), 251.

[5] He may have been inspired by the popular success of a similar illustrated manual designed by Jacob de Gheyn (1565–1629) in 1608; Edwin Buijsen and Charles Dumas, *Haagse schilders in de Gouden Eeuw: Het Hoogsteder lexicon van alle schilders werkzaam in Den Haag 1600–1700* (The Hague, 1998), 107–108.

Alexandra Libby

June 30, 2017

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Adam van Breen
Dutch, c. 1585 - 1640

Skating on the Frozen Amstel River

1611

oil on panel
overall: 44.3 × 66.5 cm (17 7/16 × 26 3/16 in.)
framed: 55.88 x 78.74 x 5.08 cm (22 x 31 x 2 in.)
Inscription: on gable of manor house: 16011
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund, in honor of Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. 2010.20.1

ENTRY

In Adam van Breen's engaging painting, people of all ages and classes take to the ice near Amsterdam on a bright, wintry day. In the foreground, a stylish group from the highest echelon of society has gathered. The woman, who is having her skates tied onto her shoes by a young attendant, wears a lemon, hooped skirt known as a farthingale and a raspberry-toned *vlieger*. Her hair is coiffed in high-piled curls, the latest fashion during the first decade of the 1600s. The woman standing near her wears a Brabant *huik*, a popular headdress consisting of a flat, round disc with a small upstanding spike and floor-length black veil. [1] The ladies' equally stylish escorts sport breeches and jerkins, boots and spurs, tall hats bursting with ostrich feathers, and swords hanging from bandoliers. At right, three stately men, more solemnly dressed and without skates, quietly converse, seemingly pleased by the festive ambiance. Nearby, a boy propels himself with sticks on a *prikslee* (small push sled), while an orphan from the Amsterdam Burgerweeshuis, recognizable by his red- and black-paneled shirt, [2] carries a *colf* stick over his shoulder. He greets a couple who glide hand-in-hand on long-bladed skates, dressed in the height of 17th-century Dutch fashion: he with a green jerkin and gold breeches tied at the

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knees with ribbon and she with a black *vlieger*, a long garment worn over her bodice and skirt. Farther back, in front of the large pink windmill, two figures race perpendicular to the rest of the river traffic. Although the leading skater wears a *huik*, his breeches identify him as a man. His quick pace and the presence of the second figure in hot pursuit suggest that the first skater is more likely a thief than a cross-dresser, who is fleeing the scene of the crime.

Skating scenes were highly popular in the Netherlands in the first half of the 17th century, likely in part due to a series of severe winters in the Low Countries known as “the Little Ice Age.” Van Breen, who was active in The Hague, Amsterdam, and Oslo, was particularly adept at such scenes, which belong to a rich tradition that originated in the Southern Netherlands. Much like David Vinckboons (Dutch, 1576 - c. 1632), who immigrated to Amsterdam from Antwerp in the mid-1580s and was likely his teacher, Van Breen relished capturing the rhythms of the skaters, the intricacies of their costumes, and the subtleties of the weather. Indeed, atmospheric conditions permeate *Skating on the Frozen Amstel River* as wind blows smoke from a chimney, causes flags to flutter, and fills the sails of an iceboat.

Unlike many imaginary winter landscapes, *Skating on the Frozen Amstel River* depicts an identifiable location on the Amstel just south of Amsterdam. The profiles of two of the city’s churches visible in the distance also appear in a view of Amsterdam Hans Bol painted in 1589 [fig. 1]: the large, wide building at the left is the Nieuwe Kerk and the distant church to its right with a tall steeple is the Oude Kerk. The third church, which overlaps with the Oude Kerk and is in the southernmost part of town, is the Zuiderkerk. This church does not appear in Bol’s view of Amsterdam because it was not built until 1603–1611. [3] Interestingly, the church spire was not constructed until 1614, three years after Van Breen executed *Skating on the Frozen Amstel River*. It is possible that the deeper blue paint defining the Zuiderkerk’s tower was a compositional revision Van Breen made to the completed painting after the church’s spire had been added.

The specificity with which Van Breen captured the temporal and physical qualities of Amsterdam extends to the two prominent foreground structures: the house on the left bank of the Amstel and the mill on the right. The house is a handsome building replete with a stepped gable facade, four chimneys, and a surrounding fence painted in red, white, and black—the municipal colors of Amsterdam. The mill, painted pink and enriched with gray chevron-patterned bands strikes a festive tone. The vertical position of the uppermost sail signals that the mill is in use.

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The identity of the mill can be determined from a map drawn in 1629 by city surveyor Cornelis Danckertsz de Rij [fig. 2], who indicated a sawmill belonging to the family of Jan Reyersz near a bend of the Amstel River [fig. 3]. [4] The relative position of this mill and the “groene molen” or green mill De Rij identified closer to the city limits on the opposite side of the river is precisely the same as in Van Breen’s painting [fig. 4]. De Rij’s map also indicates that Jan Reyersz’s mill was situated on a small island, which Van Breen suggests with the two skaters engaged in a chase along the small canal perpendicular to the Amstel.

Although De Rij did not survey the west side of the Amstel across from the mill, a document from 1626 indicates that the Borssenburg estate was located at that site. [5] Borssenburg’s history is remarkably well-documented. It is mentioned as early as 1583 as belonging to the patrician Amsterdammers Marie Jacob Dobbesdr (d. 1596) and Jacob Bors (d. 1564), from whom the house took its name. Located only about a kilometer south of the Amsterdam city gates, Borssenburg presumably functioned as a country retreat for the Bors family. After Marie Jacob Dobbesdr died in 1596, the Bors family sold the property to Abraham Verbeeck (d. 1613) and his wife, Anna Broen. [6] Abraham, who was in the arms trade, established a gunpowder manufacturing business on the property. He listed the house, its property, and a “gunpowder mill” as collateral in a business deal in 1603, and in 1609 he described himself as a *bossecruijtmaecker* or gunpowder maker. [7]

When Verbeeck died in 1613 his widow inherited the property, but sold it that same year. The inventory of the house she commissioned just prior to its sales describes it as:

> a well carpentered stone dwelling with a front room, office, side room, and a vaulted basement, separated in two sections, a kitchen, three lower level rooms, each with a fireplace, four upper level rooms of which one also has a fireplace, four attic spaces including a peat storage area without a crawl space, in addition to this two privies, one upstairs and one downstairs, an interior courtyard, a rain barrel, a flower garden on the west side along the two lower rooms all of this surrounded by water, with a drawbridge along the Amstel road, and with a painted fence on the east and south side. [8]

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Not only does the description of rooms, chimneys, courtyard, and drawbridge accord with the house in the National Gallery of Art's painting, but so, too, does the painted fence on the home's south and east sides. [9]

As a "portrait" of a home situated within a lively landscape, *Skating on the Frozen Amstel River* belongs to a well-established graphic tradition. For example, in 1559 and 1561 Hieronymus Cock (Flemish, c. 1510 - 1570) issued two series of prints known as *Small Landscapes* that illustrated the bucolic Antwerp countryside, including its castles and manor houses. [10] About 1608–1609, Claes Jansz Visscher (Dutch, 1586/1587 - 1652) made several drawings and one etching of the country house and orchard of the Amsterdam merchant Jan Deyman [fig. 5]. Circa 1611–1612, Visscher also published a condensed and re-etched version of Cock's *Small Landscapes* called *Pleasant Places*, which integrated identifiable castles and country houses outside the city of Haarlem into scenes of rural life. [11] Remarkably, however, there is only one example of a painting featuring an identifiable country house in a landscape prior to the 17th century: in 1578 the Flemish painter Jacob Grimmer (1525/1526–before 1590) portrayed the rural estate of the prominent Antwerp merchant Cornelis de Schot in a painting of the Kiel Canal near Antwerp. [12] Van Breen's *Skating on the Frozen Amstel River*, thus, may be the earliest 17th-century Dutch example of a country house "portrait." [13]

In *Skating on the Frozen Amstel River*, Borssenburg is part of a broader narrative about winter in Amsterdam and the pleasures to be had when the frozen surface of the Amstel was strong enough to welcome activity. Borssenburg is not simply a backdrop, however, but also a character in this carefully orchestrated composition. It is likely that Abraham Verbeeck commissioned this image of his house and it is tempting to imagine that he and his two brothers, Jacques (1575–1612) and Isaac (d. c. 1607), are those three men portrayed in the right foreground. Much as Visscher's *Pleasant Places*, which contained images, according to its title page, for those "who enjoy the varied view of country houses and the surprising turns in ever delightful roads," [14] Van Breen seems to have conceived *Skating on the Frozen Amstel River* for Verbeeck as a portrait of his home in the festive context of the bustling activities along the frozen Amstel.

Alexandra Libby

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Hans Bol, *Enjoyment on the Frozen Amstel*, 1589, gouache, Miniaturenkabinett, Munich ResideSchlösser, Gärten und Seennz Museum, inv. nr.: ResMü.G 898 (Bucheit 14)

fig. 2 Cornelis Danckertsz de Rij, *Map of the Inner and Outer Amstel from the Kloverniersburgwal to the Windrak with a Design for a New Road along the Weesperzijd*, 1629, black ink and colored pencil on paper, Stadsarchief, Amsterdam, inv. nr.: UZFA00023000001

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fig. 3 Detail, “het molen van Jan Reyersz”, Cornelis Danckertsz de Rij, *Map of the Inner and Outer Amstel from the Kloverniersburgwal to the Windrak with a Design for a New Road along the Weesperzijd*, 1629, black ink and colored pencil on paper, Stadsarchief, Amsterdam, inv. nr.: UZFA00023000001

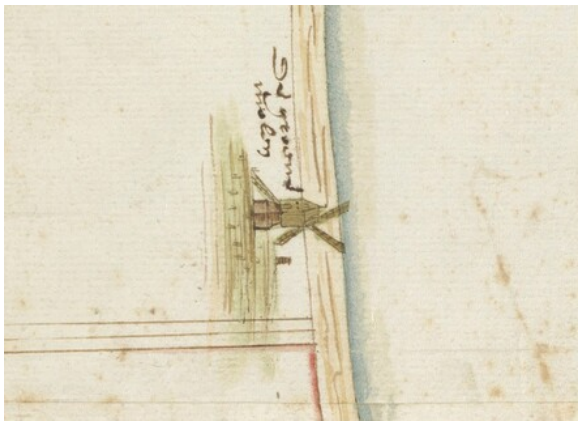

fig. 4 Detail, “de groene molen”, Cornelis Danckertsz de Rij, *Map of the Inner and Outer Amstel from the Kloverniersburgwal to the Windrak with a Design for a New Road along the Weesperzijd*, 1629, black ink and colored pencil on paper, Stadsarchief, Amsterdam, inv. nr.: UZFA00023000001

fig. 5 Claes Jan Visscher, *Country House and Orchard of Jan Deyman*, 1608–1609, etching, Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmusuem, Amsterdam, inv. nr.: RP-P-1888-A-12755

NOTES

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[1] For regional differences between *huiken*, see Bianca M. du Mortier, "Aspects of Costume: A Showcase of Early 17th-Century Dress," in *Hendrick Avercamp: Master of the Ice Scene*, ed. Pieter Roelofs (Amsterdam, 2009), 142–143.

[2] On the dress of orphans in 17th-century Amsterdam, see Bianca M. du Mortier, "Aspects of Costume: A Showcase of Early 17th-Century Dress," in *Hendrick Avercamp: Master of the Ice Scene*, ed. Pieter Roelofs (Amsterdam, 2009), 147.

[3] Van Breen dated *Skating on the Frozen Amstel River* "16011" on the gable of the house. The construction of the date with the "0" inserted in the middle is unusual. However, based on the style of the costumes and the character of the painting, there is no reason to doubt that the painting's date is 1611.

[4] In 1629 the Amsterdam City surveyor Cornelis Danckertsz de Rij drew a map of the inner and outer Amstel from the Kloverniersburgwal to the Windrak as the city was designing a new road along the Weesperzijde. The map, which is located in the Stasdarchief, Amsterdam (inv. nr. UZFA00023000001), identifies the boundaries and owners of all the plots of land on the western side of the South Amstel.

[5] "Quytgescholden te hebben Jan reyersz vyff vee[r-]/tiende parten in een houtsagers molen met huijs entt betimmert en/alle het geene daer op aent ende nagelvast is staende . . . gelegen aen den amstel over borssenborgh." See Noord-Hollands Archief, nr. 184, Oud-Rechterlijke en Weeskamer Archieven, inv nr. 2365, 3e katern, fol. 1. Quoted in Rozemarijn Landsman, "Schilderachtig Borrsenburg: Schaatsen op de Amstel *door Adam van Breen*," *Amstelodamum* 98, no. 1 (2011): 22–24, 29, n. 15.

[6] After Marie Jacob Dobbesdr and Jacob Bors's daughter, Lijsbeth Jacobsdr (1552–1591), married the soap boiler Jacob Frans Oetgens (1540–1595) in 1568, the two first lived at the Oetgens family home "the Gilded Lily" in Amsterdam, then relocated to Borssenburg from 1583–1590. They returned to Amsterdam the following year and spent only summers at Borssenburg thereafter. Their son Jacob Bors (1573–1640) also took up a brief residence at Borssenburg in 1593, the year he married Stijntge Gerritsdr Burgherts (b. 1572), but then relocated to Amsterdam in 1594, again using Borssenburg as a summer retreat. When Marie Jacob Dobbesdr died in 1596, Jacob and Stijntge inherited the property, but they sold it the following year to Abraham Verbeeck (d. 1613) and his wife, Anna Broen. See John Elias, *De Vroedschap van Amsterdam, 1578–1795*, 2 vols. (Haarlem, 1903), 1:101; J. W. Groesbeek, *Amstelveen: Acht eeuwen geschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 1966), 174–175.

[7] J. W. Groesbeek, *Amstelveen: Acht eeuwen geschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 1966), 174–175.

[8] J. W. Groesbeek, *Amstelveen: Acht eeuwen geschiedenis* (Amsterdam,

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1966), 175.

[9] "Een wel betimmert Steenen woonhuijs met een voorhuijs cantoir sijdelcaemerken ende een over gewelffde kelder daer inne twee kelders affgeschut, een keucken, drie Neerkaemers ijder metheure schoorsteen, vier bovenkaemers daer van de eene mede een schoorsteen is hebbende, vier solders soo cleer als turffsolder sonder vlieringe, daer boven, twee secreten, een boven ende een beneden met een binnen plaetse ende een regenback, eenen bloemthuijn int westen lancx de twee beneden caemers tsaemen rontsomme in sijn waeter leggende, met een op treckende brugge aenden amstel wech, ende met een geschildert stacketsel int Oosten ende suijden." Noord-Hollands Archief recht. arch. 2363 fol. 267v; J. W. Groesbeek, *Amstelveen: Acht eeuwen geschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 1966), 175; quoted in Rozemarijn Landsman, "Schilderachtig Borrsenburg: Schaatsen op de Amstel *door Adam van Breen*," *Amstelodamum* 98, no. 1 (2011): 25.

[10] Given the rarity of painted fences in 17th-century Dutch painting, it is not surprising that the story behind the remarkable painted fence with its red, white, and black diamond pattern is unknown. Because the colors accord with those worn by the orphans of the Amsterdam Orphanage, one of whom is shown skating down the Amstel, and the diamond shape appeared on the outer courtyard of the orphanage, there may be a connection between that civic organization and the house. Unfortunately, archival and cartographic research into a possible link between Borssenburg and one of Amsterdam's civic institutions before the Bors and Oetgens families owned the property has been inconclusive. Prosopographic research, in combination with the detailed map by Cornelis Danckertsz de Rij of 1629, reveals that the properties on either side of the Amstel River in the vicinity of Borssenburg were owned by several powerful Amsterdam families, including the Oetgens clan. In the decades around the turn of the 17th century, males of these landowning families served either as *Weesmeester* (regent) of the municipal orphanage or as *Heemraad* (governor) of the Nieuwer-Amstel water board, or both. Whether such offices are related to the painted design on the fence is not known.

[11] Jacqueline Burgers, ed., *In de Vier Winden: De prentuigeverij van Hieronymus Cock 1507/10–1570* (Rotterdam, 1988): cat. nos. 31–32; Walter S. Gibson discusses the Cock and Grimmer images in *Pleasant Places: The Rustic Landscape from Bruegel to Ruisdael* (Los Angeles, 2000), 1–26; Stefaan Hautekeete, "Van Stad en Land: Het beeld van Brabant in de vroege topografische tekenkunst," in *Met passer en penseel: Brussel en het oude hertogdom Brabant in beeld* (Brussels, 2000), 46–57; and Alexandra Onuf, "Local Terrains: The *Small Landscape* Prints and the Depiction of the Countryside in Early Modern Antwerp" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2005).

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[12] Visscher's drawings of the Deyman house are discussed in Jan Peeters and Erik Schmitz, "Belangrijke aanwinst voor Gemeentearchief: Een blad met twee onbekende tekeningen van Claes Jansz Visscher," *Amstelodamum* 84 (1997): 33–44.

[13] Jacob Grimmer, *A View of the Kiel near Antwerp*, 1578, oil on canvas, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp.

[14] Although the tradition of depicting manor homes and castles in northern art dates back at least to the 15th century, when the Limbourg Brothers portrayed royal French castles in the calendar pages of *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* (c. 1412–1416, Musée Condé, Chantilly), there are no known 17th-century Dutch paintings of identifiable homes before 1611. For a discussion of early representations of country houses, see Woueter Kloek, *De kasteeltekening van Roelant Roghman*, 2 vols. (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1990), 2:77–104; Diane Mankin, "Dutch Seventeenth-Century Images of Classicizing Palaces and Villas Inside the Netherlands" (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 1996), 9–10. There are, however, many examples in later 17th-century Dutch art of "portraits" of country homes, for example in the work of Aelbert Cuyp (Dutch, 1620 - 1691) or Jan van der Heyden (Dutch, 1637 - 1712). In Cuyp's *The Avenue at Meerdervoort* (early 1650s, Wallace Collection), we see members of the Pompe van Meerdervoort family riding along the drive of their estate outside Dordrecht. Van der Heyden's *The Château of Goudestein, on the River Vecht, near Maarsen* (1674, Apsley House, Wellington Museum) is just one of five paintings Van der Heyden executed of the home of the Amsterdam burgomaster Joan Huydecoper. On images of and for the Pompe van Meerdervoort family, see Alan Chong, "Aristocratic Imaginings: Aelbert Cuyp's Patrons and Collectors," in *Aelbert Cuyp*, ed. Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. (Washington, DC, 2001), 35–38. Van der Heyden also produced at least seven "portraits" of Huis ten Bosch in The Hague. See Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712* (Amsterdam and Haarlem, 1971), 95–100; Diane Mankin, "Dutch Seventeenth-Century Images of Classicizing Palaces and Villas Inside the Netherlands" (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 1996), 13. For the thematic and iconographic function of representations of country houses in 17th-century Dutch art, see Mankin, "Dutch Seventeenth-Century Images."

[15] Walter S. Gibson, *Pleasant Places: The Rustic Landscape from Bruegel to Ruisdael* (Los Angeles, 2000), 93.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting support is an oak (est.) panel consisting of two quarter-sawn, horizontal boards that are butt-joined along the panel center. Uneven vertical saw

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marks across the center of the reverse indicate the panel likely retains its original thickness of one centimeter, and all four edges are beveled.

There is a thin off-white ground layer, and the paint (est. oil) is applied thinly with only low impasto. An underdrawing was not visible in the infrared reflectogram, but the x-radiograph helped to identify reserves, which were used for sections of the left-hand house, the right-hand windmill, and the bridge. [1] There are areas in the foreground where the ground layer is easily visible, used by the artist as part of the final composition. The sky and landscape were applied broadly and wet-into-wet, while in general the trees, buildings, and figures were painted wet-into-wet over drier layers, and details were built up with small, fine brushstrokes.

The panel, ground, and paint layers are all in good condition. The panel has a slight convex warp, and it is likely the top and right edges of the panel have been slightly trimmed. This possible adjustment does not appear recent, and, based on the composition and size of the bevels, it would have been minor. There is a horizontal split in the upper right quadrant that extends 30.5 centimeters into the panel. There are minor losses to the paint layers and old campaigns of retouching throughout. Some of the dark birds in the sky are not original; they are painted simplistically, delineated by only a few curved brushstrokes, and the pigment mixture used to paint them differs from the birds that are clearly original. Furthermore, these birds are not visible in the infrared reflectogram, whereas those assumed to be original are visible.

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.5–1.7 microns (H filter). X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14 × 17 in.). The parameters were 20 kV, 5 mA, 30 seconds, and 100 inches distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

PROVENANCE

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Foullon de Doué family, Château d'Ancise, Douy, France;[1] probably by inheritance to the d'Estampes family, Château d'Ancise;[2] (sale, at the Château de Cheverny by Philippe Rouillac, 7 June 2009, no. 40); (John Mitchell Fine Paintings, London); purchased 12 March 2010 by NGA.

[1] This information was provided by William Mitchell, e-mail to Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., 22 February 2010, in NGA curatorial files. Douy is a small village in the Eure et Loir province of France, southwest of Paris between Orleans and Le Mans.

[2] The d'Estampes family is given as the consignor in the 2009 sale catalogue. Preliminary research into the connections between the Foullon de Doué and d'Estampes families is documented in NGA curatorial files.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

P. Bodart after G. Hoet, *Portrait of Henricus Ter Brugghen* (detail), from Cornelis de Bie, *Het Gulden Cabinet oft Schat kamer*, engraving, Royal Library, Brussels

Brugghen, Hendrick ter

Also known as
Terbrugghen, Hendrick
Brugghen, Hendrick Jansz. ter
Dutch, 1588 - 1629

BIOGRAPHY

Hendrick ter Brugghen was born in 1588, probably in The Hague. His parents, Jan Egbertsz ter Brugghen and Feysgen Dircx, came from Utrecht but lived for a time in The Hague because of Jan's career as a civil servant. He served as secretary to the court of Utrecht in 1581 and became bailiff of the States of Holland in 1585. By 1603 the family was living in Abcoude, a village midway between Utrecht and Amsterdam. During these years, Ter Brugghen may have been apprenticed to the Utrecht mannerist Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651).

After his training, Ter Brugghen traveled to Italy, though it is not certain when he left the Netherlands. In the spring of 1607 a cadet named "Henrick ter Brugge," probably the artist, was recorded in the army of Count Ernst Casimir of Nassau-Dietz, hence it would seem that his trip did not occur until later that year at the earliest.[1] Cornelis de Bie stated that Ter Brugghen met Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640) in Rome, which means that he must have been there before October 1608, when the Flemish master returned to Antwerp.[2] Ter Brugghen returned to Utrecht in the fall of 1614 and declared that he had spent "several"

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(ettelicke) years in Italy.[3] The only thing known with certainty is that during the summer of 1614 he lived in Milan with the Utrecht artist Thijman van Galen before returning home in the company of Van Galen, the Utrecht painter Michiel van der Zande, and his apprentice Frans van Knibbergen.

In 1616 Ter Brugghen registered as a master painter in Utrecht's Saint Luke's Guild. In October of that same year he married Jacomijna Verbeeck, the stepdaughter of his eldest brother, the innkeeper Jan Jansz ter Brugghen. The marriage took place in the Reformed Church, where at least four of their eight children were baptized. Ter Brugghen himself was not a member, and his wife joined only after her husband's death. For the first ten years of their marriage, Ter Brugghen and his wife lived in rented quarters in the Korte Lauwerstraat, and by 1626 they had moved to the Snippevlucht, a narrow street near the center of town, where they rented a large house from Johan Wtewael, brother of the painter Joachim Anthonisz Wtewael (Dutch, c. 1566 - 1638). Ter Brugghen died on November 1, 1629, at the age of forty-two, during an epidemic of the plague. He was buried in the Burrkerk. His wife, who was pregnant at the time of Ter Brugghen's death, gave birth in March 1630 to a daughter named Henrickgen, after her father.

As the most important of the Utrecht Caravaggisti—the Dutch followers of Caravaggio (Roman, 1571 - 1610)—Ter Brugghen, along with Gerrit van Honthorst (Dutch, 1592 - 1656) and Dirck van Baburen (Dutch, c. 1595 - 1624), was instrumental in bringing the Italian artist's radical stylistic and thematic ideas back to the Netherlands. Ter Brugghen painted biblical and mythological scenes as well as genre works, often with figures playing musical instruments. He is renowned for the boldness of his images and for the subtle tonalities with which he modeled his forms. His broad style, markedly different from the detailed realism of most Dutch painting of his day, allowed him to create a great sense of dignity and grandeur in his figures. Rubens admired these qualities when he visited Ter Brugghen in Utrecht in 1627 and purportedly decreed that Ter Brugghen was the only "real painter" he had met in the Netherlands.[4] Ter Brugghen's religious and genre scenes resonated with Dutch artists, and his influence was felt widely in Utrecht and beyond.

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[1] Joaneath A. Spicer and Lynne Federle Orr, *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age* (New Haven, 1997), 379.

[2] Cornelis de Bie, *Den Spiegel van de verdrayde werelt* (Antwerp, 1708), 277.

[3] Martin Jan Bok and Y. Kobayashi, "New Data on Hendrick ter Brugghen," *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury*, no. 1 (1985): 25, doc. 17. There is a possibility that he may have taken a second trip in about 1620.

[4] Rubens' admiration for Ter Brugghen was recorded by Ter Brugghen's son, Richard, who published a pamphlet in 1707 defending his father's reputation as an artist.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Hendrick ter Brugghen
Dutch, 1588 - 1629

Bagpipe Player

1624

oil on canvas
overall: 100.7 x 82.9 cm (39 5/8 x 32 5/8 in.)
framed: 129.54 × 111.76 × 7.62 cm (51 × 44 × 3 in.)
Inscription: upper right, in brown paint, HTB in monogram: HTBrugghen fecit 1624
Paul Mellon Fund and Greg and Candy Fazakerley Fund 2009.24.1

ENTRY

Hendrick ter Brugghen was unparalleled in capturing the rhythms of music, and he did so in the very way he composed his paintings. [1] His musicians lean into their instruments, their bodies alive with the joy of the sounds they bring forth, whether coaxed from a violin, lute, recorder, or bagpipe. In this remarkable image, a bagpipe player, seen in strict profile, squeezes the leather bag between his forearms as he blows through the instrument's pipe and fingers a tune on the chanter. Two large drones, composed of different wooden sections, rest on his bare shoulder. The interlocking rhythms of this ensemble—the broad, round shapes of the musician's shoulder, beret, and brown bagpipe bag; the flowing patterns of folds in his creamy shirt and taupe robe; the pronounced diagonals of the drones and pipe; and the verticality of the chanter—parallel those of a musical score. In music, broad, fulsome notes, quickly cadenced flourishes, and strong beats not only punctuate melodies with dynamic accents but also culminate in a well-defined and emphatic finale; Ter Brugghen achieves the same effects in this painting.

Though muted in tonality, the *Bagpipe Player* is both bold and forceful in its scale and painting techniques. The musician's larger-than-life-size form fills the picture plane, his passion for his music reflected in the energy of Ter Brugghen's sure, broad brushstrokes, which flow across the canvas. The numerous adjustments the artist made in the folds of the shirt and robe, as well as in the shape of the bagpipes, indicate the freedom with which he approached his subject. [2] Also astonishing is Ter Brugghen's control of light, which falls most strongly on the

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bagpipe player's shoulder, shirt, and fingers while leaving his face in shadow—evidence that the painting focuses primarily on the sensuality of music and not on a specific individual.

The bagpipe player is a muscular, rough-hewn type, hardly an ideal of grace and refinement. His head is large, his nose is round, and he sports a shepherd's mustache and beard. His hands and knuckles are thick, yet from the manner in which he fingers the chanter, leaving the vent hole uncovered, it is clear that he is adept at playing the instrument. The same feeling is evoked in a second depiction of the bagpipe player, also dated 1624 [fig. 1], in which the musician, wearing the identical beret and cap medal, and with his shoulder similarly sensually exposed, looks intently out at the viewer while playing a three-drone instead of a two-drone bagpipe. [3] The turn of his head and the apparent movement of his fingers on the chanter make it the more active of the two images, but both paintings are equally about the player's complete engagement in his music.

Bagpipes were traditionally viewed as folk instruments, played at country dances or by herdsmen and shepherds whiling away their time. These types of portrayals were common throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, appearing in the works of Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471 - 1528), Lucas van Leyden (Netherlandish, 1489/1494 - 1533), Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Flemish, c. 1525/1530 - 1569), David Teniers the Younger (Flemish, 1610 - 1690), and Jan Steen (Dutch, 1625/1626 - 1679), among others. [4] Ter Brugghen's musician, however, is not a local peasant or shepherd the artist might have encountered on a foray into the countryside; it is unlikely that shepherds played their bagpipes with drones resting on a bare shoulder. The loosely draped robes here reflect a manner of dress based on antique fashions. Like the brightly colored, fanciful outfits in Ter Brugghen's depictions of violinists, flutists, and lute players from the 1620s, which derive from sixteenth-century Spanish and French prototypes as well as from Caravaggio (Roman, 1571 - 1610), this all'antica mode of dress alluded to an arcadian ideal of country living that was popular in aristocratic and court circles, and among the urban elite, particularly in Utrecht and The Hague. Essential to this mythology were notions of the purity and bounty of country existence, as well as the romantic ideals of love and beauty that emanated from Renaissance literary and pictorial traditions.

Bagpipes were often included in these odes to pastoral life, which may help

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explain the appeal of paintings of musicians for aristocratic patrons during the early to mid-seventeenth century. [5] In Daniel Heinsius' 1616 poem "Pastorael," the shepherd Cordion sits quietly in the countryside dreaming of his beloved while he soulfully plays his bagpipe and sings his lover's lament [fig. 2]. [6] Two extremely popular pastoral plays of the period, Giovanni Battista Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido*, 1590, and Pieter Cornelisz Hooft's *Granida*, 1615, similarly evoke an arcadian ideal of bucolic existence quite different from the profligate ways of urban and courtly life. [7] Musicians playing bagpipes, flutes, and other pastoral instruments created the auditory ambience for such plays. In 1637, for example, Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641) depicted the engraver and print dealer François Langlois playing a bagpipe and dressed as a *savoyard*, a type of itinerant shepherd-musician found performing in French aristocratic circles [fig. 3]. [8] An anonymous portrait of 1632 portrays a distinguished and well-dressed Dutch gentleman proudly holding his bagpipe, a further indication that the instrument was also played by respectable members of the upper class [fig. 4].

The specific character of *Bagpipe Player*—a single, larger-than-life-sized musician shown against a plain grayish ocher background—owes much to the influence of Gerrit van Honthorst (Dutch, 1592 - 1656) and Dirck van Baburen (Dutch, c. 1595 - 1624), Dutch Caravaggist painters who returned to Utrecht from Rome in 1620. They brought with them stylistic and thematic predilections appropriate for expressing the sensuous, idealized concepts of arcadian subject matter that they adapted from paintings by Caravaggio and his followers, particularly Bartolomeo Manfredi (1582–1622). There were also other significant pictorial sources for half-length depictions of musicians. Marten Jan Bok has persuasively argued that the inspiration for this new subject matter owes much to the existence in Utrecht of an early sixteenth-century Venetian painting of a flute player, which at the time was attributed to Correggio (Parmese, 1489/1494 - 1534) but which was almost certainly painted by Giorgione (Venetian, 1477/1478 - 1510) or Titian (Venetian, 1488/1490 - 1576). [9]

Even though Ter Brugghen had been in Italy earlier and presumably had seen some of Caravaggio's paintings of musicians, these additional pictorial sources probably inspired his initial foray into this subject matter in 1621, when he painted the *Flute Player* and the *Shepherd Flute Player*, both now in Kassel. [10] It was not until 1624, however, the date of the Gallery's *Bagpipe Player*, that Ter Brugghen fully turned his attention to the depiction of musicians. In that year alone he

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painted no fewer than five separate compositions devoted to music, featuring not only bagpipers but also musicians—sometimes singing—who play the lute and the violin. [11] He continued this interest in the years to follow. [12] Just what prompted this output is not known, but the appeal of this subject was such that Ter Brugghen and/or his workshop made replicas of a number of these works, including *Bagpipe Player*. [13]

Similarities in subject matter, style, and size among the canvases have led to the supposition that Ter Brugghen conceived of a number of these paintings as pendants. Indeed, Leonard Slatkes has proposed that the *Bagpipe Player* has a pendant, the so-called *Pointing Lute Player* [fig. 5]. [14] He and Wayne Franits argue that the two works—which are identical in size, are both signed and dated 1624, and have complementary compositions—are also thematically conjoined. [15] They believe that the lute player's laughing demeanor and pointing gesture are meant to mock the bagpipe player as he plays this rustic instrument, [16] an interpretation that draws its bite from ancient mythology, specifically the musical contest between Marsyas, who played Pallas Athena's cast-off *aulos* (which was occasionally depicted as a bagpipe in fifteenth-century publications), and Apollo, who won the contest by playing a lyre.

Even though wind instruments were indeed considered to be less refined and elegant than string instruments [fig. 6], [17] the hypothesis that *Bagpipe Player* and *Pointing Lute Player* were pendants is not convincing and does not take into account the positive connotations of the bagpipe in seventeenth-century Dutch culture discussed above. The composition of *Pointing Lute Player* clearly indicates that it had a pendant, but the *Bagpipe Player* almost certainly was not the companion piece. Visually, the compositional relationships between the two works are not as compelling as they initially seem. The scale and disposition of the figures differ: the bagpipe player is larger than the lute player, higher in the picture plane, and more fully fills the space around him. Most important, the *Bagpipe Player* is an image of quiet grandeur and dignity. Nothing about the figure's pose, expression, or gestures suggests that Ter Brugghen conceived this image as the focus of a lute player's mockery. [18]

Ter Brugghen's *Bagpipe Player*, thus, should be seen as part of a broad cultural interest in the pastoral during the early seventeenth century that evoked the idyllic pleasures of country existence, particularly as experienced through music. Ter

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Brugghen fully embraced this theme in a series of remarkable paintings of musicians and singers that capture both the joy and the sensuality of life. As with this masterpiece, these engaging images invite us into a world where, through the boldness of the artist's brush and the rhythms of his forms, we feel the enduring power of music on the human spirit.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Hendrick ter Brugghen, *Portrait of a Man Playing the Bagpipes*, 1624, oil on canvas, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

fig. 2 Anonymous, *Cordion Playing a Bagpipe*, engraving from Daniel Heinsius, "Pastorael," in Heinsius, *Nederduytsche poemata*, Amsterdam, 1616

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fig. 3 Anthony van Dyck, *Portrait of François Langlois*, probably early 1630s, oil on canvas, National Gallery, London, Bought jointly by the National Gallery and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham, with the assistance of the Heritage Lottery Fund, 1997. Photo © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY

fig. 4 Anonymous, *Musician Holding Bagpipes*, 1632, oil on panel, Concordia University, Montreal

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fig. 5 Hendrick ter Brugghen, *Pointing Lute Player (A Seated Lutanist Pointing)*, 1624, oil on canvas, private collection. Photo © Christie's Images / The Bridgeman Art Library

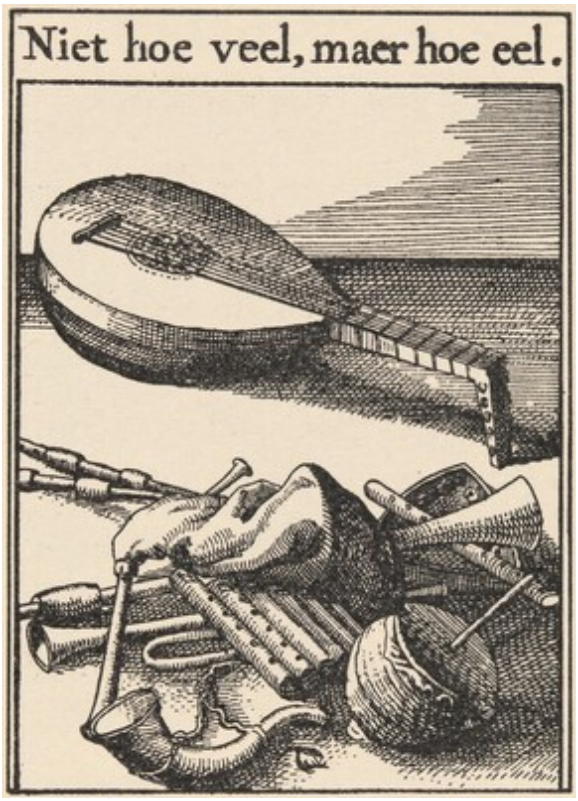

fig. 6 Claes Jansz Visscher, "Niet hoe veel, maer hoe eel" (Not how many, but how fine), 1614, engraving

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Wayne Franits for his thoughtful comments on this entry.

[2] See the Technical Summary of this painting.

[3] For the history of bagpipes, see Emanuel Winternitz, *Musical Instruments and Their Symbolism in Western Art: Studies in Musical Iconology,* 2nd ed. (New Haven and London, 1979), 78, 80; and Anthony Baines, *Bagpipes*, ed. T. K. Penniman and B. M. Blackwood, 3rd ed. by H. T. La Rue (Oxford, 1995), 17, 115–117, fig. 72. I would like to thank Joel Robinson, maker of bagpipes, for his thoughtful observations about the instrument depicted in this painting and the portrayal of the bagpipe player.

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[4] Bagpipes often had negative associations: in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century prints they were frequently associated with fools and given sexual connotations. See, in particular, Marcus Dekiert, *Musikanten in der Malerei der niederländischen Caravaggio-Nachfolge: Vorstufen, Ikonographie und Bedeutungsgehalt der Musikszene in der niederländischen Bildkunst des 16. und 17. Jarhunderts* (Münster, 2003), 214–220. Nevertheless, bagpipes were also included in sixteenth-century images of musical ensembles that had positive overtones. For example, Frans Floris I (Flemish, c. 1519 - 1570) included a bagpipe in an allegorical image of *Musica* for a series of the Seven Liberal Arts, which Cornelis Cort (Netherlandish, 1533 - 1578) reproduced in an engraving (F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450–1700*, 41 vols. [Amsterdam, 1949], 5:59, no. 228). An engraving after Floris by Philips Galle (1537–1612) depicts a musical company scene consisting of string and wind instruments, including the bagpipe (Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts*, 7:83, no. 787). The Latin text beneath the print distinguishes between music that enlivens the spirit (wind instruments) and that which calms the spirit (string instruments). These two prints are illustrated in *In de Vier Winden: de prentuitgeverij van Hieronymus Cock 1507/10–1570 te Antwerpen* (Rotterdam, 1988), 99–100.

[5] Emanuel Winternitz, *Musical Instruments and Their Symbolism in Western Art: Studies in Musical Iconology,* 2nd ed. (New Haven and London, 1979), 78, 80.

[6] Daniel Heinsius, “Pastorael,” in *Nederduytsche poemata* (Amsterdam, 1616), 34–36. “Oock heb ick veel vreucht bedreven, / En mijn lullepijp gestalt / Naer de deunen van het veldt.”

[7] See Alison McNeil Kettering, *The Dutch Arcadia: Pastoral Art and Its Audience in the Golden Age* (Totowa, NJ, 1983), especially 101–113.

[8] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Susan J. Barnes, and Julius S. Held, *Anthony van Dyck* (Washington, DC, 1990), 304, no. 81.

[9] Marten Jan Bok, “On the Origins of the Flute Player in Utrecht Caravaggesque Painting,” in *Hendrick ter Brugghen und die Nachfolger Caravaggios in Holland,* ed. Rüdiger Klessmann, (Braunschweig, 1988), 135–141. As Bok notes, the painting, which has been attributed to both Titian and Giorgione, is probably: Attributed to Titian, *A Boy with a Pipe,* London, Hampton Court (see his fig. 183).

[10] Leonard J. Slatkes and Wayne E. Franits, *The Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen, 1588–1629: Catalogue Raisonné* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 2007), 176–177, nos. A61–A62, argue that the paintings are pendants “with antithetical types rather than two young musicians playing in harmony.”

[11] Leonard J. Slatkes and Wayne E. Franits, *The Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen, 1588–1629: Catalogue Raisonné* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia,

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2007), nos. A63–A72, RA2, W16.

[12] Ter Brugghen's interest in depicting musicians, including bagpipe players, was matched by Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651) and Jan van Bijlert (1597/1598–1671). See Marcel G. Roethlisberger and Marten Jan Bok, *Abraham Bloemaert and His Sons: Paintings and Prints*, 2 vols. (Doornspijk, 1993), 1:267, no. 399; and Paul Huys Janssen, *Jan Van Bijlert, 1597/98–1671: Catalogue Raisonné* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1998).

[13] In the collection of the Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, Houston, Texas. The painting, which measures 89.3 x 83.2 cm, has been trimmed on all sides. See Leonard J. Slatkes and Wayne E. Franits, *The Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen, 1588–1629: Catalogue Raisonné* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 2007), 187, nos. W16, RA2.

[14] Slatkes proposed this pendant relationship in Albert Blankert et al., *Nieuw Licht op de Gouden Eeuw: Hendrick ter Brugghen en tijdgenoten* (Utrecht, 1986), under no. 15; and in "Bringing Ter Brugghen and Baburen Up-to-Date," *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 37 (1996): 210–213.

[15] Leonard J. Slatkes and Wayne E. Franits, *The Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen, 1588–1629: Catalogue Raisonné* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 2007), 184–188, nos. A70–A72, RA2, W16.

[16] For the implications of the pointing gesture, see Albert Blankert, "Heraclitus en Democritus: in het bijzonder in de Nederlands kunst van de zeventiende eeuw," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 18 (1967): 56–57.

[17] In the emblem by Claes Jansz. Visscher, "Niet hoe veel, maer hoe eel" (Not how many, but how fine), which appears in Roemer Visscher, *Zinne-Poppen* (Amsterdam, 1614), a single lute stands in contrast to an array of wind instruments, including a bagpipe.

[18] Significantly, the *Bagpipe Player* has at least one extant workshop replica, and originally had at least two, yet no other version of the *Pointing Lute Player* exists. If thematic connections between the works were crucial to their conceptual underpinnings, one would expect that the various versions of the *Bagpipe Player* would also have had pendants. Indeed, in the only seventeenth-century reference to a Ter Brugghen *Bagpipe Player*, the painting did not have a pendant. See the inventory of Aernout van Lingen, "raad in de Vroedshap," which was made in Utrecht in 1676 and lists: "Een saakpijp van Ter Brugghen." The inventory, first published by Marten Jan Bok ("Hendrick Jansz. ter Brugghen," in Albert Blankert et al., *Nieuw licht op de gouden eeuw: Hendrick ter Brugghen en tijdgenoten* [Utrecht, 1986], 71), is in the Gemeentearchief Utrecht, Stadsarchief II, inv. no. 3146, 1676.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a plain, open-weave fabric, which has been lined. Paper tape covers the edges, making it difficult to determine if the tacking margins are intact, but cusping along all four sides indicates that the painting probably retains its original dimensions. The ground is a fairly thick red layer with large pigment particles. Ter Brugghen applied the oil paint directly, mostly using a wet-into-wet technique. The paint is fairly thin in the background but it is much thicker in the lighter areas and the drapery, especially in the creamy pink shirt. Ground is visible around the edges of the figure indicating that Ter Brugghen left a reserve. He used broad brushstrokes to outline the figure and the folds in the drapery. Examination with visible light, X-radiographs, and infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns[1] revealed numerous changes by the artist in the sitter's drapery and the bagpipes.

The painting is in good condition. It exhibits some weave enhancement, which was probably caused by too much pressure during the lining. The X-radiographs show a small, triangular loss in the lower left corner in the fabric in the sitter's gray cloak. The paint bears a broad craquelure in the lighter areas and a finer craquelure in the darks, which is enhanced by some tenting. In addition to paint loss associated with the hole, there is a vertical area of paint loss in the upper left corner, tiny losses along the bottom edge in the right corner, and small losses associated with old stretcher-bar cracks along the top, left, and right sides. The paint is fairly abraded in the background, especially around the word "fecit" in the inscription. The painting was treated in 2009, at which time discolored varnish was removed and the losses and much of the abrasion were inpainted.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

Possibly Aernout van Lingen, Utrecht, by 1676.[1] probably with (Glenz, Berlin), in 1915;[2] possibly Gustav Klemperer Edler von Klemenau [1852-1926], Dresden; his son, Dr. Herbert von Klemperer [1878-1951], Berlin;[3] (sale, Lange, Berlin, 18-19 November 1938, no. 151); acquired by Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne, inv. no.

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2613; restituted July 2008 to Klemperer's heirs; (sale, Sotheby's, New York, 9 January 2009, no. 40); (Johnny Van Haeften London Ltd., London; Otto Naumann, New York; Bernheimer Fine Art Ltd., Munich); purchased April 2009 by NGA.

[1] The inventory of Aernout van Lingen, "raad in de Vroedshap," which was made in Utrecht in 1676, lists: "Een saakpijp van Ter Brugghen." The inventory, first published by Marten Jan Bok ("Hendrick Jansz. ter Brugghen," in Albert Blankert et al., *Nieuw Licht op de Gouden Eeuw; Hendrick ter Brugghen en tijdgenoten*, exh. cat., Centraal Museum, Utrecht; Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig, 1986-1987: 71), is in the Gemeentearchief Utrecht, Stadsarchief II, inv. no. 3146, 1676.

[2] A. von Schneider, *Caravaggio und die Niederländer*, Marburg-Lahn, 1933; 2nd ed., Amsterdam, 1967: 140.

[3] Dr. Klemperer was forced to surrender the painting when he left Germany in 1938.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Claesz, Pieter

Dutch, 1596/1597 - 1660

BIOGRAPHY

Pieter Claesz, the most important still-life painter in Haarlem in the 1620s, was born in Berchem in 1596 or 1597.[1] He was apparently admitted to the Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke in 1620, but by 1621 he must have been living in Haarlem, where his son, landscape painter Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem (Dutch, 1620 - 1683), was born.[2] Although it is unknown what date he joined the Haarlem Guild of Saint Luke, the 1634 guild register lists him as a master painter.[3] After his first wife died, he married Trijntien Lourensdr on August 8th, 1635, with whom he had two daughters, his only children.[4]

Claesz's teacher is unknown, but his earliest dated works evoke the meticulous laid table scenes of the Antwerp painters Clara Peeters (c. 1594–1657) and Osias Beert the Elder (Flemish, c. 1580 - 1624). Claesz stocked his tabletop images with a wide variety of food and drink, smoking implements, and musical instruments. He painted with tangible detail and carefully observed light effects, and sought to enhance the illusion of reality by arranging objects on the table so that they appear to recede in space. Between 1630 and 1640 Claesz adopted a more subdued, monochromatic palette. After 1640, more dramatic colors and compositions return to his paintings, likely influenced by the sumptuous still lifes of Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684) and Abraham van Beyeren (1620/21–1690). Claesz's later paintings occasionally feature vines and leaves painted by Roelof Koets (1592–1655).

Claesz's innovative compositions and his distinctive ability to recombine the same set of objects into a multitude of original and compelling arrangements influenced artists in Haarlem and beyond. When the Haarlem painter Willem Claesz Heda (Dutch, 1594 - 1680) began producing still lifes in 1628, he looked to Claesz for subjects as well as compositional and stylistic solutions. Samuel Ampzing praised both Claesz and Heda for their still lifes in his 1628 *Beschrijvinge ende Lof der Stad Haerlem*.[5] Constantijn Huygens included Claesz on a 1647 list of painters skilled enough to contribute to the decorations at the Oranjezaal at the Huis ten Bosch, specifically passages depicting gold and silver objects, although it has never been

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confirmed that Claesz participated in this commission.[6]

[1] Documents notarized by Samuel Coesaert on September 29, 1640 and October 2, 1640 describe Claesz as about forty-three years old; see Martina Brunner-Bulst, *Pieter Claesz.: Der Hauptmeister des Haarlemer Stillebens im 17. Jahrhundert: Kritischer Œuvrekatalog* (Lingen, 2004), 134.

[2] A "Pieter Clasen(s)" was admitted as a master in the Antwerp guild in 1620; Ph. Rombouts and Th. von Lerius, *De Liggeren en andere historische archieven der Antwerpsche Sint Lucasgilde*, 2 vols., (Amsterdam, 1961), 1:560–561.

[3] Hessel Miedema, *De archiefsbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem 1497-1789*, 2 vols, (Alphen aan de Rijn, 1980), 2:420.

[4] Claesz's death in late 1660 is confirmed by records of the Haarlem Municipal Orphanage, which took in his daughters on January 3, 1661; see Pieter Biesboer et al., *Pieter Claesz: Master of Haarlem Still Life* (Exh. cat: Haarlem, Zürich, Washington, 2004), 136–137.

[5] Samuel Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland*, (Haarlem, 1628), 372.

[6] J.G. van Gelder, "De schilders van de Oranjezaal," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, vol. 11, 1948/49: 126–7.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

June 14, 2015

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Pieter Claesz
Dutch, 1596/1597 - 1660

Still Life with Peacock Pie

1627

oil on panel
overall: 77.5 × 128.9 cm (30 1/2 × 50 3/4 in.)
Inscription: on the knife blade, initials in monogram: PC 1627
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund

2013.141.1

ENTRY

In this large banquet piece, Pieter Claesz, the most important still-life painter in Haarlem during the 1620s, envisioned a sumptuous feast consisting of the most extravagant foods available in the Netherlands in the early seventeenth century. [1] Dominating the tabletop is a large peacock pie decorated with the fowl's own head and neck as well as wings and tail feathers, a showpiece only served on special occasions. This spectacular presentation, which is given added visual prominence by the pink carnation in the peacock's beak, is complemented by an array of foods, including a roasted pheasant, olives, lemons, breads, shiny red-and-yellow apples, velvety peaches, nuts, and candies. Claesz presented these delicacies, many of which would have been imported from foreign lands, on beautifully rendered pewter platters or in Wan-Li bowls. A small mound of precious salt in a gilded saltcellar provides spice to the meal. Finally, a *berkemeier* filled with white wine that had been poured from a long-spouted pewter pitcher adds to the banquet's festive character.

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The term “banquet piece” (“*een banquetje*”) associated with such paintings refers to the wide array of food stuffs and elegant presentation of the meal depicted on a laid table. Claesz has here depicted a gastronomical feast that celebrates the prosperity and global reach of the Dutch Republic, but he has not portrayed a specific meal or even a combination of foods that would have been found at one time on a Dutch table. With great artistic sensitivity, Claesz chose which items to include in his banquet scene, and carefully arranged them across the tabletop. He placed most of the smaller pictorial elements on a carefully ironed white linen tablecloth and counterbalanced them at the right with the imposing peacock pie and the large Wan-Li bowl, filled with apples and peaches. The colors and textures of the foods help guide the viewer’s progress through the composition, with bright yellows and reds situated primarily in the foreground, and more muted tonalities in the background. The experience is somewhat akin to standing before a buffet, where the meal’s sensory appeal is enhanced by careful presentation of the foods and drinks, each distinct from the other, whether it be a peacock pie, cooked pheasant, fresh apples and peaches, cut lemon, or candies. [2]

The aristocratic character of the Gallery’s painting is particularly evident because of the peacock pie and the cooked pheasant. In the Netherlands game birds only could be hunted by the landed gentry, and, hence such delicacies would only appear on the table of someone who owned, or leased, sufficient land for this activity. [3] Although it seems unlikely that such elaborate game pies were frequently made for banquets, a surprisingly diverse array of them are depicted in seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish still-life paintings, including swan pies, turkey pies, and pigeon pies. [4] Occasionally, such pies appear on the tables of merry company scenes, where elegant revelers enjoy the finer things of life [fig. 1].

Within its decorated crust, a game pie contained a stew made of richly seasoned meat taken from a deboned bird. After cooking the pie, the chef would mount the bird’s wings, tail, and head and neck onto the crust, with the neck held upright by a wooden or wire frame. [5] It seems unlikely, however, that a peacock pie such as this one would have actually been eaten at a banquet. Most likely, it would have remained on the table as a decorative element, surrounded by the other foods, including the centrally positioned roasted pheasant, a much tastier game bird than the peacock.

The large scale of this imposing banquet piece, which Claesz painted in 1627, indicates that it was a commissioned piece, presumably intended for a dining room in a stately home in Haarlem. That same year Claesz painted another, almost

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identically-sized, banquet scene that is compositionally similar but displays an array of different objects and foods, including a turkey pie instead of a peacock pie [fig. 2]. One can only imagine that the success of one of these paintings inspired the creation of the second, which was presumably commissioned by a different patron. [6]

Whatever the circumstances for painting two such similar works, it seems probable that Claesz transferred the design, at least at the broadest compositional level, from one panel to the other. An examination of the edges of the Gallery's panel reveals a number of cuts and notches, particularly along the vertical edges, hinting at a possible transfer system. [7] Three pairs of notches actually line up horizontally. [8] Microscopic examinations reveal that cracks appear in the paint surrounding the notches, indicating that the latter were made after the paint had dried, and hence after the painting had been completed. A few notches, at comparable heights, are found along the right edge of the Rijksmuseum panel, a finding that supports the hypothesis that Claesz used a transfer system (perhaps nothing more than strings crossing the panels at regular intervals) when he created the second version.

Claesz did not invent the banquet piece, for his predecessors in Antwerp, among them Osias Beert the Elder (Flemish, c. 1580 - 1624), and Haarlem, particularly Floris van Dyck (c. 1575–1651) and Nicolaes Gillis (1595–1632), had painted similarly sumptuous tabletop still lifes earlier in the century [fig. 3] and [fig. 4]. However, Claesz subtly transformed the character of such scenes to make them more realistic. By lowering the vantage point of his paintings, objects not only rest comfortably on a table's surface, they also overlap one another, helping to indicate a logical recession into space. Importantly, Claesz harmonized his arrangements with a remarkable sensitivity to light. In this painting, light flooding the scene creates shadows along the folds and creases of the tablecloth. [9] The objects on the table cast shadows of varied weight and density, among them the cream-colored shadows caused by light passing through a translucent glass of wine. Particularly remarkable is the array of reflections Claesz captured on the surface of the bulbous-shaped pewter pitcher, including various images of the sunlit window and even the effect of light passing through the *berkemeier*.

Claesz's most important innovations were the ways by which he strove to connect his still lifes with the viewer. For example, the life-size pictorial elements in *Still Life with Peacock Pie* make the painting seem to be an extension of the viewer's space, an effect made even more pronounced by the tipped-over glass, partially

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eaten flat biscuits (known as *tweeback*), [10] cut lemon, and crumpled napkin, all of which indicate a human presence. The lemon peel, moreover, falls over the table edge at the very front of the picture plane. Claesz's ability to capture a wide variety of textures, whether the white crisply ironed linen tablecloth, rough lemon peels, or the reflective surfaces of polished pewter, further enhances the painting's realistic character.

Claesz proudly signed and dated this painting on the blade of the ivory-handled knife resting in the middle of the composition. [11] The prominence of the diagonally placed knife in this and other of Claesz's paintings from the 1620s seems to have been, in part, a calculated device to draw the eye to a featured element in the composition. Significantly, the knife tip rests on the pewter dish with its cooked fowl, thus simultaneously pointing to this prized offering and providing the means to cut its savory meat. The special character of this central portion of the meal is evident in the decorative arrangement of precious salt crystals on the plate's rim. Claesz utilized the diagonals of the knife, the slender, black leather knife case at the left, [12] and the folds of the tablecloth to draw the eye into the painting, thereby helping to integrate the various round platters, bowls and glasses on the table. [13] These diagonals encourage the viewer's eye to move across the table from one object to another in a measured rhythm, pausing only long enough at each to enjoy its visual delights.

Claesz's tabletop still lifes often contain symbolic associations about the transience of life, but none are evident in this masterpiece. [14] Instead, this glorious work celebrates the prosperity that the Dutch had achieved through their careful nurturing of the land and their extensive trading network to the far reaches of the world. Large and sumptuous in its presentation, this impressive work would have been hung proudly in a burger's home as a demonstration of the burgeoning success of the Dutch Republic.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

June 14, 2015

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Esaias van de Velde, *An Elegant Company in a Garden*, 1614, oil on panel, Eijk and Rose-Marie van Otterloo Collection

fig. 2 Pieter Claesz, *Sumptuous Tabletop Still Life with Turkey Pie*, 1627, oil on panel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

fig. 3 Osias Beert the Elder, *Dishes with Oysters, Fruit, and Wine*, c. 1620/1625, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Patrons' Permanent Fund, 1995.32.1

fig. 4 Floris van Dijck, *Still Life with Fruit, Nuts, and Cheese*, 1613, oil on panel, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem. Photo: Tom Haartsen

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Peter Rose, a specialist in seventeenth-century Dutch foods, and Henriette Rahusen, Research Assistant in the Department of Northern Baroque Painting, for their assistance in preparing this entry.

[2] Peter Rose, in correspondence (January 27, 2014) with Molly Harrington (University of Maryland Museum Fellow in the Department of Northern

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Baroque Painting),identified the fruits and candies on the pewter plate as being “dates, dried apricots, candied almonds, candied cinnamon sticks (in Dutch called *Kapittelstokken* for the stick that is inserted in the Bible to mark where one stopped reading) and molded red and white letter cookies.” The letters may spell v, c and l or i. Peter Rose notes that the white letters are not spiced whereas the red letters are spiced with rode bolus, a brown red coloring agent obtained from “Armenian stone.” She writes: “I was given an 18th century cookbook with a letter recipe in it, which called for “robolis” which is a contraction of “rode bolus.”

[3] Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece* (Montclair, NJ, 1984), 41–42; and Scott A. Sullivan “Rembrandt’s Self-Portrait with a Dead Bittern,” *Art Bulletin* 62 (1980): 236–243.

[4] For other of Pieter Claesz’s paintings depicting pies decorated with a bird’s neck and feathers, see: Pieter Biesboer, et al. *Pieter Claesz: Master of Haarlem Still Life* (Zwolle, 2004), nos. 12, 13, 44.

[5] The neck and head would be dried in the oven before being mounted on the pie.

[6] The two paintings were examined side-by-side in the conservation laboratory of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam in 2009. Unfortunately, questions of chronological sequence could not be answered on that occasion. Correspondence from Anna Tummers, curator at the Frans Hals Museum, to Jim Mullen, February 6, 2009.

[7] There are fifteen notches along the right edge and eight notches along the left edge. Some of these have been filled and inpainted. Only one notch is found on the top edge of the Gallery’s panel, and none on its bottom edge. This information is contained in an email Joanna Dunn sent to the author on October 10, 2014 (curatorial records).

[8] These pairs are located at 23.5cm, 34.6 cm, and 56.1 cm from the bottom. This information is contained in an email Joanna Dunn sent to the author on October 10, 2014 (curatorial records).

[9] A somewhat undefined diagonal between the pewter pitcher and the rose in the muted background may be a suggestion of light falling onto the scene from the upper left. A similar effect is also found in the Rijksmuseum painting, but in that instance a clearer distinction exists between the dark area to the left of the diagonal and the lighter wall to its right.

[10] Julie Berger Hochstrasser, *Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven and London, 2007), 2, 65. Although these biscuits were a common form of daily bread, Hochstrasser emphasizes that the grain for making bread was imported from the Baltic.

[11] The device of including a diagonally placed knife in a tabletop still life has a long history in Netherlandish painting. See, for example, the still life in Joos

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van Cleve and a collaborator, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1525, oil on panel, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection, 1982.60.47.

[12] Knives were often carried around in cases attached to an individual's belt. The presence of the knife case in this painting indicates that an individual has removed the knife case from his/her belt prior to the meal. For images of people wearing knife cases in the mid-1620s, see: M. Royalton-Kisch, *Adriaen van de Venne's Album in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum* (London, c. 1988), for example folios 71, 73, 79, 82, and 94. I would like to thank Henriette Rahusen for identifying this visual source.

[13] Floris van Dijck and Nicolaes Gillis also used diagonals of the folds of a white tablecloth and a diagonal placement of the knife to draw the viewer's eye into their paintings, but they did not integrate these pictorial elements as did Pieter Claesz. In their paintings, the knife's diagonal is opposite those of the folds of the tablecloth, whereas with Claesz they are in the same direction.

[14] For a discussion of *vanitas* images in Claesz's early still-life paintings, see Christian Klemm, "Mors ultima linea rerum: Prehistory and foundations of the Skull Vanitas" in Pieter Biesboer, et al. *Pieter Claesz: Master of Haarlem Still Life* (Zwolle, 2004), 70–90.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a horizontally-grained oak panel [1] comprised of at least three boards. There are two distinct joins, one running through the overturned glass on the table and the other located just below the swell in the top of the pitcher. The original joins were probably attached with an adhesive; however, splines have now been set into the wood to reinforce them. Very likely this reinforcement was added when the wood panel was thinned and attached to a cradle.

Covering the surface of the panel, but not the edges, is a very thin, smooth, off-white ground. The paint consists of layers ranging from transparent to totally opaque. Claesz sometimes applied his paint thinly, allowing the ground to play a role in the final image. He used a variety of brushes and manipulated the paint in a range of techniques to mimic or reproduce the textures of the objects on the table. Claesz often formed the shadows by running paint layers into one another and then pulling a small stiff brush into a scallop or wave pattern across the area. He created the diagonal shadow in the background between the pitcher and the flower in the peacock's beak by moving wet paint aside with his brush. Although

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he applied some paint wet-into-wet, he mostly painted this image wet-over-dry.

Infrared reflectography at 1.5–1.8 microns [2] reveals changes around the pitcher at the left and along the left edge of the table. Claesz also initially painted an object under the glass that looks like a blade of some sort. One can also see that the plate under the poultry was fully realized before the roasted fowl was painted. The patterned tablecloth must have been painted after the fruit, since its diagonal decoration does not extend under the fruit.

The painting is in very good condition. Two cracks stem from the right edge of the panel toward the center and a crack runs across the entire panel just below the edge of the table. Small cuts and notches into the panel and the paint layers are found along the left, right, and top edges, some of which have been filled and inpainted. Fifteen horizontal cuts and notches are found on the right edge, and eight on the left. One notch has been made at the top, but there are no cuts or notches along the bottom edge. These may have related to a design transfer process. The paint is cracked around these notches, indicating that they were made after the paint had dried.

There is inpainting around the edges, along the joins and the cracks, and in scattered other areas. Although there are no major areas of loss or extensive restoration, an L-shaped damage in the paint and ground layers exists on the plate of candies behind the nuts. The varnish layer is somewhat dull here. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition in 2013.

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] The wood was identified by the NGA scientific research department (see report dated November 13, 2015 in NGA conservation department files).

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara InSb Focal Plane Array camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

Acquired, probably in 1827, by private collector, England; by descent in the family;[1] (sale, Sotheby's, London, 8 July 1999, no. 4); (consortium of dealers,

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including Otto Nauman, Ltd., New York); sold to James X. Mullen, Boston; purchased 26 November 2013 through (Otto Naumann, Ltd., New York) by NGA.

[1] This provenance is given in the 1999 sale catalogue, entry by Martina Brunner-Bulst.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

2002 The Poetry of Everyday Life: Dutch Paintings in Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2002, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

2005 Pieter Claesz: Master of Haarlem Still Life, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; Kunsthaus, Zurich; National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2005, not in catalogue (shown only in Washington).

2016 Asia in Amsterdam: The Culture of Luxury in the Golden Age, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, 2015-2016, 263 fig. 1 (shown only in Salem).

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Coorte, Adriaen

Also known as
Coorte, Adrian
Dutch, active 1683 - 1707

BIOGRAPHY

Very little is known about the still-life painter Adriaen Coorte. He belonged to the Coorte family of IJzendijke, a small town near the Dutch city of Middelburg. The Coortes were a relatively well-off family who, according to land registers from the period, owned many of the dikes and polders surrounding the town. Although Adriaen's birth date is not precisely documented, records of his siblings' births and deaths suggest he was born between 1659 and 1664.[1] Information concerning his artistic training is similarly elusive. His earliest known painting dates to 1683, by which time he would have been between 20 and 24 years old.[2] Coorte may well have continued to live in his home town, as he eventually inherited two IJzendijke polders from his parents. Based on the fact that many of his paintings appeared in sale catalogues and inventories in Middleburg in the eighteenth century, it seems probable that he worked in proximity to that city. In 1695–1696, the Middelburg Guild of Saint Luke fined Coorte one Flemish pound for selling paintings as an unregistered master, suggesting he was active within the city, even if he did not keep a permanent residence there.[3] In any event, he must not have been well known within the guild, as guild records misspell his last name and entirely omit his first name. Coorte continued to be associated with the area after his death. An estate inventory from 1783 makes note of "a flower piece by Coorde of Vlissingen," a community located just to the south of Middelburg.[4]

Coorte's paintings, which number about one hundred, consist primarily of high-quality, small-scale still lifes depicting fruit, vegetables, flowers, shells, wild game, and *vanitas* subjects on a ledge or in a niche, arranged against a dark background. His latest known work dates to 1707. Descriptions of his work that survive from the early eighteenth century suggest that he was held in high esteem at the time.[5] In spite of this, Coorte's name was virtually forgotten until the 1950s, when his artistic qualities were newly recognized by the Dutch art historian Lawrence Bol.[6]

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[1] Ton de Jong and Huib J. Plankeel, “Adriaen Coorte of IJzendijke,” *Oud Holland* 128, no. 1 (2015), 58.

[2] Quentin Buvelot, *The Still Lifes of Adriaen Coorte (Active c. 1683–1707): With Oeuvre Catalogue* (The Hague, 2008), 18.

[3] Abraham Bredius, “De Gildeboeken van St. Lucas te Middelburg,” in Fr. D. O. Obreen, *Archief voor Nederlandsche kunstgeschiedenis*, 7 vols. (Rotterdam, 1884–1887), 6:229.

[4] de Jong and Plankeel, 57.

[5] Buvelot, 120–127.

[6] Laurens J. Bol, “Adriaen Coorte, stillevenschilder,” *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 4 (1952–1953): 193–232; Dordrechts Museum and Laurens J. Bol, *Adriaen Coorte: Stillevenschilder Dordrechts Museum, 2 Augustus–28 September 1958* (Dordrecht, 1958).

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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2015 Ton de Jong and Huib J. Plankeel, “Adriaen Coorte of IJzendijke,” *Oud Holland 128*, no. 1 (2015), 58

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Adriaen Coorte
Dutch, active 1683 - 1707

Still Life with Asparagus and Red Currants

1696

oil on canvas
overall: 34 x 25 cm (13 3/8 x 9 13/16 in.)
Inscription: lower left on front of ledge in black paint: A. Coorte. 1696; on reverse: two circular red seals removed from previous stretcher and set into current stretcher, on each, “IRENE” under a crown, and large, embossed fabric monogram on a piece of fabric that may have been cut from a previous lining fabric, under a crown, ornately intertwined letters, possibly “IBK”
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund 2002.122.1

ENTRY

Adriaen Coorte had an ability to endow simple pictorial elements with a sense of grace and poetry, as in this image of a bundle of white asparagus perched at the edge of a stone plinth. [1] The asparagus shoots still have the vigor of live plants, their tips reaching upward and outward, as though striving toward an unseen light source. Recently plucked sprigs of red currants, gracefully resting on the ledge and draped over its side, complement the tightly bunched, long cylindrical forms of the asparagus.

Coorte conveyed the tenderness of the young asparagus shoots and the promised lushness of the currants’ inner core through delicate modeling and subtle nuances of color, but he did so with great restraint. The simplified and idealized shapes of the asparagus and currants give them an enormous presence—something greater than mere morsels to be enjoyed at a meal. Coorte simultaneously emphasized their organic qualities by juxtaposing them against the strongly geometrical shape of the gray stone ledge, in which cracks remind the viewer that life, indeed all matter, is transient.

Depictions of asparagus bunches appear frequently in Coorte’s limited oeuvre. [2] Asparagus and currants were both seasonal delicacies harvested in June and

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grown in Zeeland, the Dutch province where the artist worked most of his life, and both were valued for their nutritional content and medicinal properties. [3] Coorte probably was drawn to this combination for aesthetic reasons, with the freely draped circular forms of the red fruit visually complementing the tautly bound bunch of asparagus with its subtle green, purple, and white colors.

An X-radiograph [see X-radiography] of *Still Life with Asparagus and Red Currants* indicates that Coorte left a rectangular-shaped reserve for the bunch of asparagus slightly above the final placement [fig. 1]. He executed the asparagus and red currants with thin glazes [see Glazing], perhaps following pigment recommendations for painting asparagus that Willem Beurs included in his contemporary treatise. [4] Coorte's careful, almost naive renderings of these natural forms have no obvious precedent in Dutch art, though they do share qualities with the artistic traditions from the early seventeenth century that Coorte would have found in Middelburg, where he presumably lived and worked for most of his life. As the capital of Zeeland, this prosperous trading center gained much of its wealth from an influx of Flemish émigrés, among them artists such as Ambrosius Bosschaert (Dutch, 1573 - 1621). It also benefited enormously from the presence of the Dutch East and West India Companies, both of which established important regional offices in this well-situated maritime city. Middelburg's wealthiest citizens adorned their homes with luxury goods from around the world and their gardens with rare bulbs and plants.

Bosschaert and his followers often painted small-scale images of carefully observed flowers and fruit to create a pleasing and uplifting visual experience. The aesthetic appeal of these works was enhanced by the widespread belief that each of these plants revealed God's infinite power and ingenuity. [5] Although Coorte worked almost a century later and rarely painted flowers, he fully embraced the spirit of Bosschaert's age, when great virtue was attached to the careful depiction of the natural world.

Old estate inventories indicate that Coorte's paintings remained largely in Zeeland during the eighteenth century. The prices for them were modest, and their true artistic merit seems not to have been appreciated until the 1950s, when the Dutch art historian Laurens Bol introduced Coorte's works to a broad public. [6] Bol noted that a number of Coorte's paintings had been sold in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as pendants, and it may well be the case that *Still Life with Asparagus and Red Currants* was paired with another work. When this painting first appeared on the art market in London in 1977, another painting by Coorte of

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identical dimensions and date, *Still Life with a Bowl of Strawberries and Gooseberries,* was offered for sale by the same owner [fig. 2]. [7] As with Coorte's pairing of asparagus and red currants in the present work, the relationship between the two paintings seems to have been primarily aesthetic in nature. Their complementary compositions of sumptuous delicacies arrayed on facing stone ledges perfectly balance each other through their colors and pictorial structures, as well as through their visual and sensual appeal.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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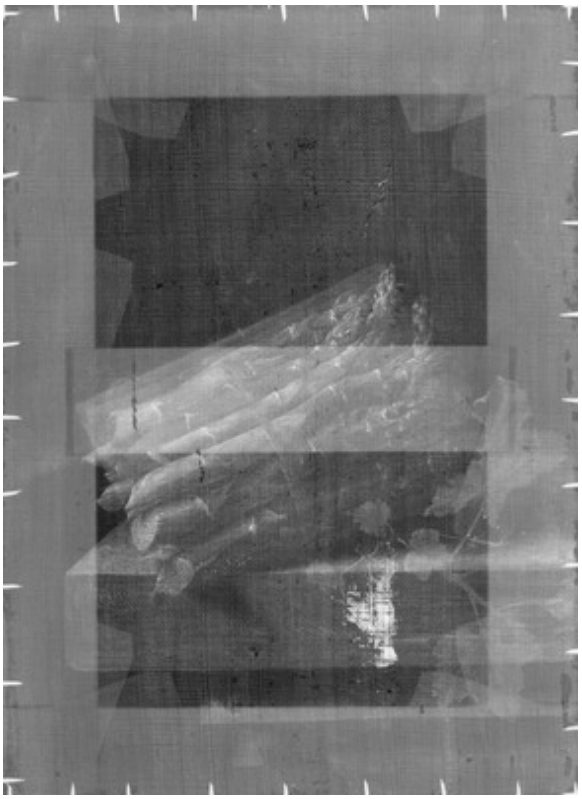

fig. 1 X-radiograph, Adriaen Coorte, *Still Life with Asparagus and Red Currants*, 1696, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund, 2002.122.1

fig. 2 Adriaen Coorte, *Still Life with a Bowl of Strawberries and Gooseberries*, 1696, oil on canvas, private collection

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Molli Kuenstner for her assistance in writing this entry.

[2] Quentin Buvelot, *The Still Lifes of Adriaen Coorte (Active c. 1683–1707): With Oeuvre Catalogue* (The Hague, 2008), 43, notes that asparagus appears in thirteen of Coorte's paintings, one-fifth of his oeuvre.

[3] See Barbara Kruijsen et al., *Asperges in olieverf: een koninklijke groente in de zeventiende eeuw* (Maastricht, 2005), 91. Food historian Peter G. Rose has kindly informed us that asparagus and currants were included in a variety of seventeenth-century Dutch recipes for stews and sauces. Currants

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were also typically used to make juices, syrups, fruit pies, and cakes.

[4] Willem Beurs, *De groote waereld in't kleen geschildert, of schilderagtig tafereel van's Weerelds schilderyen, kortelijk vervat in ses boeken: verklarende de hooftverwen, haare verscheide mengelingen in oly, en der zelver gebruik* (Amsterdam, 1692), 152–153. "En zijn ook de asperges gemakkelijk te schilderen: dog daar dient gemerkt, dat de knoppen boven uit den paarsen moeten geschildert worden met swart, lak en wit, of met lak, indigo, swart en wit, 't geene onder de aarde gestaan heft met de sellery en endivy gemeenschap; gelijk byna 't geen boven d'aarde is in witte asperges." (And asparagus is also easy to paint: there it needs to be noted that in addition to the purple, the knobs must be painted with black, [red] lake, and white, or with [red] lake, indigo, black, and white, the part standing under the earth is comparable to celery and endive [and remains white].) This source is particularly interesting because Beurs based his recipes on his own practical experiences as an artist. For a discussion of Beurs' treatise and Coorte's adaption of his recommendations when painting asparagus, see Arie Wallert, *Still Lifes: Techniques and Style—The Examination of Paintings from the Rijksmuseum* (Amsterdam, 1999), 32–36, 93–94.

[5] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Small Wonders: Dutch Still Lifes by Adriaen Coorte* (Washington, 2003), 7.

[6] See particularly Laurens J. Bol, "Adriaen Coorte, stillevenschilder," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 4 (1952–1953): 193–232; and Laurens J. Bol, *Adriaen Coorte: Stillevenschilder* (Dordrecht, 1958), 16, no. 12.

[7] For this painting, see Peter C. Sutton, *Dutch and Flemish Paintings: The Collection of Willem Baron van Dedem* (London, 2002), 84–87, no. 13, where, in the provenance, the lot number in the 1977 sale is given incorrectly as no. 83 (it was no. 85).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric. It has been lined and the tacking margins have been removed, but cusping around all four edges indicates that it probably retains its original size. The ground is a smooth, off-white layer of medium thickness. The paint is relatively thin and fluid. Coorte used low impasto in the lights and thin glazes to build shadows in the darks. X-radiographs reveal a rectangular shape, roughly the same size as the asparagus, but slightly above and to the left of the asparagus. It seems that the artist blocked in the asparagus as rectangle and then moved it down and to the right during the final execution of the painting.

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The painting is in very good condition. The paint bears a fine crackle pattern with minute losses at the intersections of the cracks. There are two small losses in the left ends of the asparagus and several others in the leaves, currants, and scattered through the background. The painting was treated in 2002 at which time discolored varnish, inpaint, and overpaint were removed. The varnish and inpaint applied during that treatment have not discolored.

PROVENANCE

Baroness Irene von der Becke-Klüchtzner. "property of a gentleman"; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 8 July 1977, no. 84); (David Koetser Gallery, Zurich); private collection; (David Koetser Gallery, Zurich); purchased 7 October 2002 by NGA.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Aelbert Cuyp, *Self-Portrait as a Boy*, c. 1650, oil on canvas, Bredius Museum, The Hague, inv. 157-1946, cat. nr.44

Cuyp, Aelbert

Also known as
Cuijp, Aelbert
Dutch, 1620 - 1691

BIOGRAPHY

Aelbert Cuyp, one of the foremost Dutch landscape painters of the seventeenth century, was born in Dordrecht in October of 1620. His father, Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp (1594–1652), was a successful portrait painter in the city, and from him Aelbert received his earliest training, assisting his father by painting landscape backgrounds for portrait commissions. It is uncertain whether Cuyp had also apprenticed with a landscape painter, but he soon abandoned his father's style and subject matter and turned almost exclusively to landscapes and riverscapes, painting only an occasional portrait in his mature period. Arnold Houbraken, a native of Dordrecht, noted that Cuyp was a man of "irreproachable character" (*onbesproken leven*), and the surviving documents concern his active involvement in the Dutch Reformed Church and the city affairs of Dordrecht, rather than his activities as a painter. His marriage to Cornelia Boschman (1617–1689), the wealthy widow of Johan van den Corput (1609–1650), a representative to the admiralty at Middelburg and a member of an important Dordrecht family, took place on July 30, 1658. After his marriage, Cuyp appears to have painted less frequently, probably owing to a combination of his increased church activity and the absence of financial pressures. He was buried in the Augustinian Church at Dordrecht on November 15, 1691.

Houbraken commented that only the artist's own works were found in his home at the time of his death, proof that nature alone served as his model. The stylistic

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evolution of his oeuvre, however, disproves Houbraken's conclusion. Cuyp's early landscapes are clearly inspired by the compositional approach and monochromatic palette of Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656), but by the middle of the 1640s, the influence of the Utrecht painter Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652) becomes apparent. Cuyp never lived in Utrecht, but probably his parents had met there while his father was studying, and Aelbert apparently visited the city regularly. By the mid-1640s Both had returned from Italy, bringing with him a new style employing the contre-jour effects associated with the work of Claude Lorrain (French, 1604/1605 - 1682). Cuyp soon recognized the possibilities of this new compositional approach and began to employ large foreground elements in his panoramic scenes, infusing them with a warm light and atmosphere. The occasional classical motif and Italianate lighting effects that are found in Cuyp's mature works are not the result of a trip to Italy but of his association with Both, and perhaps other Italianate landscape painters he may have had contact with in Utrecht. Although no documents related to his travels exist, Cuyp's drawn landscapes and townscapes do indicate that he traveled within the Netherlands and along the lower Rhine in Germany.

Cuyp seems to have worked for a number of important Dordrecht families. He was clearly an important artist in the city, although little is known about the organization or production of a workshop. Houbraken mentions only one pupil, Barent van Calraet (1649–1737), whose brother Abraham van Calraet (1642–1722), if not a pupil of Cuyp, was certainly a follower. It appears that many of Abraham van Calraet's works were among those mistaken for autograph Cuyp paintings by the beginning of the twentieth century, when Hofstede de Groot included more than eight hundred entries in his catalogue raisonné of the master. By the late eighteenth century, Cuyp had many other followers and imitators, including Jacob van Strij (1756–1815).

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Aelbert Cuyp
Dutch, 1620 - 1691

Herdsmen Tending Cattle

1655/1660

oil on canvas
overall: 66 x 87.6 cm (26 x 34 1/2 in.)
framed: 88.9 x 109.9 x 3.8 cm (35 x 43 1/4 x 1 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower left: A.cuijp
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.59

ENTRY

This painting of herders and cattle situated along an inland waterway and near an evocative ruin has arcadian rather than agricultural associations. In this respect it parallels a rich literary tradition that glorified the values of country life. These ideals, espoused by P. C. Hooft, J. van Heemskerck, and other Dutch writers and playwrights of the seventeenth century, seemed to have had particular resonance in and around Dordrecht. [1]

As is mentioned in the entry for Cuyp's River Landscape with Cows, the artist's father and teacher, Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp (1594–1652), painted a number of pastoral scenes in the 1630s and 1640s that had a profound influence on his son's early style and choice of subject matter. [2] By the time Cuyp executed this work his style had evolved to the point where the rhythms of the landscape, the foliage, and the clouds had been fully transformed. Even though the theme has Dutch precedents and the ruin in the background is a free adaptation of the Merwede Tower near Dordrecht, one no longer has the sense that the setting is specific to the Netherlands. Cliffs, diffused in golden light, now border the inland waterway;

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clouds hang quietly over the land rather than being swept by winds off the North Sea; and the cowherd in the bright red jacket could just as well be Italian as Dutch. Indeed, in the interim between *River Landscape with Cows* and this picture, the influences of Cuyp's father and of Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656) have been fully replaced by that of artists who had returned from Italy and had adopted the Italianate style, particularly Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652) and Jan Baptist Weenix (1621–1660/1661). From these artists Cuyp also derived his broad, planar technique as well as the elegant and artificial rhythms of the foreground vines and branches one sees here.

Although it seems probable that Cuyp executed *Herdsmen Tending Cattle* in the middle to late 1650s, establishing a precise date for this work is difficult given the dearth of dated paintings in his oeuvre. Many of the components of this work—the *contre-jour* light effects, the atmospheric character of the distant landscape, the abstract shapes of foreground rocks and lacy branches, and even the donkey and its saddle—are similar in character to Horsemen and Herdsmen with Cattle, a painting that probably dates from the same period. The comparison between the works, however, points out that the nuances of light, abstractions of form, and compositional organization are not as developed in *Herdsmen Tending Cattle* as in *Horsemen and Herdsmen with Cattle*, which suggests that this work was executed somewhat earlier, before Cuyp had fully mastered Italianate ideas.

Although *Herdsmen Tending Cattle* has been widely published and praised, its poor appearance prior to its restoration in 1994 when discolored varnish and extensive overpaint were removed, made it difficult to fully appreciate its original qualities. The painting has, nevertheless, suffered various losses, and the surface is moderately abraded [see Abrasion]. [3] The work appears to have been slightly trimmed, which would account for the rather cramped quality of the composition. Its original appearance can perhaps be deduced from an old copy in the collection of Graham Baron Ash in Norfolk, England. [4] In addition to the Ash copy of the composition, a replica is owned by Dr. Wallace B. Shute of Ottawa.

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NOTES

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[1] Lambert van den Bos, for example, the headmaster of a local school in Dordrecht, wrote a book entitled *Dordrechtsche Arcadia* in 1662.

[2] For Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, see Sander Paarlberg, ed., *Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp (1594–1652)* (Dordrecht, 2002).

[3] A large paint loss and a long horizontal tear are present in the upper left sky. The ground is of medium thickness, is pigmented, and has a cool, pale ocher color. Cuyp modified the paint, applied in thin layers with no appreciable texture or impasto, with transparent and translucent glazes and thin opaque scumbles [see Scumbling]. Aside from the loss around the tear, scattered small losses occur in the distant landscape, along the edges, and in a vertical band through the cows. Moderate abrasion is present overall, particularly in the clouds and dark areas in the foreground and cows.

[4] See the 1995 archived version of the catalog, p. 46, fig. 1.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original, plain-woven, medium-weight fabric support has been lined. Tacking margins have been removed, and the remaining paint edges are worn. Cusping is slight on all sides but particularly along the left edge, suggesting that the painting's dimensions may have been slightly reduced along that side.[1] A large paint loss and a long horizontal tear are present in the upper left sky. The ground is of medium thickness, is pigmented, and has a cool, pale ocher color.

The paint, applied in thin layers with no appreciable texture or impasto, is modified with transparent and translucent glazes and thin opaque scumbles. Aside from the loss around the tear, scattered small losses occur in the distant landscape, along the edges, and in a vertical band through the cows. Moderate abrasion is present overall, particularly in the clouds and dark areas in the foreground and cows.

Conservation was carried out in 1958 to adjust inpainting in the sky and in 1978 to consolidate minor local flaking. A complete treatment was undertaken in 1994 in which old inpaint and discolored varnish were removed.[2]

[1] If the painting was reduced in size, the reduction took place prior to 1760. This is the date on a reproductive engraving by Francois Vivares, which shows the identical composition in reverse, except for a pair of birds.

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[2]During this treatment the NGA Scientific Research department analyzed the blue pigment used in the sky using polarized light microscopy and found it to be smalt (see report dated February 17, 1994, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Possibly Gerard Vandergucht [1696-1776], London, c. 1750; possibly (his sale, London, 1757, no. 66); Jennens,[1] possibly for Henry Penton [d. 1806], London;[2] (his sale, Skinner & Dyke, London, 10 June 1800, no. 49); Sir Henry Paulet St. John-Mildmay, 3rd bt. [1764-1808], Dogmersfield House, Hampshire; by inheritance to his wife, Lady Jane St. John-Mildmay [c. 1765-1857], Dogmersfield House; by inheritance to her grandson, Sir Henry Bouverie Paulet St. John-Mildmay, 5th bt. [1810-1902], Dogmersfield House; by inheritance to his son, Sir Henry Paulet St. John-Mildmay, 6th bt. [1853-1916], Dogmersfield House; (M. Knoedler & Co., New York), from 1902; sold April 1905 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] The only source to mention Vandergucht (also written van der Gucht) is the Knoedler prospectus for the painting, in NGA curatorial files, which mistakenly lists the Vandergucht sale of 1777 that did not include any paintings by Cuyp. See instead Frank Simpson, “Dutch Paintings in England before 1760,” *The Burlington Magazine* 95 (January 1953): 41, who lists a "Landscape with Cattle, etc." by Cuyp as being no. 66 in a 1757 Vandergucht sale in London, where it was bought by “Jennens.” The listing appears in one of two manuscript volumes in the Victoria and Albert Museum library, London, that contain transcripts of catalogues of the principal collections of paintings sold in England between 1711 and 1759. Jennens was likely Charles Jennens, whom Simpson describes as having brought together by the mid-eighteenth century the largest collection of Dutch paintings then in England. Without further description or size information in the transcription, however, it is not possible to know whether the painting in question is identical to *Herdsmen Tending Cattle*.

[2] The Knoedler prospectus, in NGA curatorial files, says that Penton acquired the painting at the Vandergucht sale. Penton certainly owned the picture by 1760, the

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date on François Vivares' reproductive engraving, entitled *The Evening*. It depicts the composition in reverse but, with the exception of a group of two birds, it is otherwise identical. This print is listed in Charles LeBlanc, *Manuel de l'amateur d'estampes*, 4 vols., Paris, 1854: 4:141, no. 20; and Andreas Andresen, *Handbuch für Kupferstichsammler...*, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1873: 2:678, no. 17.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Aelbert Cuyp
Dutch, 1620 - 1691

Horsemen and Herdsmen with Cattle

1655/1660

oil on canvas
overall: 120 x 171.5 cm (47 1/4 x 67 1/2 in.)
framed: 164.2 x 214.3 x 17.2 cm (64 5/8 x 84 3/8 x 6 3/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right: A.cuijp.
Widener Collection 1942.9.16

ENTRY

This broad, panoramic view of a river valley has long been considered one of Cuyp's most masterful works. [1] The golden light of the late afternoon sun and the moist air in the broad valley soften the landscape, casting a quiet, peaceful spell over the scene. In the foreground two elegant horsemen, whose exotic costumes indicate that they have come from a distant land, pause to discuss their route. Behind them, in the shade of a group of large trees, two shepherds rest amidst their animals. Another herdsman and his cows appear at the left, while a lone rider on a galloping horse in the middle distance is the scene's only active element.

The pastoral quality of the painting reflects the influence of Dutch artists who had traveled to Italy and brought back images of the Roman *campagna*. Particularly important was the work of Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652), who similarly set off views of distant river valleys with elegant trees grouped to one side. [2] Both also favored the *contre-jour* effects of the late afternoon light and frequently painted long diagonal shadows cast by the setting sun—atmospheric elements particularly apparent in this work. Still, the connections between Cuyp's pastoral scenes and

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Both's Italianate views can be overstated. Peasants with their donkeys pass through Both's mountainous landscapes, whereas in this work, elegant foreigners ride finely bred steeds through a broad, open landscape. The distinctive character of Cuyp's travelers indicates that his approach is fundamentally different from Both's, whose peasants fit comfortably into his landscapes as integral components of the artist's idealized vision of the Roman *campagna*. Cuyp's travelers, on the other hand, do not belong to the land nor do they fit within it. The exotic horsemen provide striking visual accents for the composition, but they also engage the viewer, raising questions about the riders' identities, their travels, and their destination.

Despite the evocative quality of Cuyp's pastoral scene, the landscape is based on a real site: the Rhine valley near the towns of Kleve and Kalkar, not far from the Dutch border. The identifying features are two background hills: the Monterberg, the steep-sided hill on the left with twin towers at its summit, and the Eltenberg, surmounted by the partially ruined monastery of Hochelten. These hills, also depicted in other paintings, [3] are recognizable from drawings of these sites that Cuyp made on his trip to this area of the Rhine in about 1651–1652. [4]

Nevertheless, a comparison of *Horsemen and Herdsmen with Cattle* with these drawings indicates that Cuyp freely interpreted topographic elements in this painting. He depicts the Monterberg as a much higher hill than it is in reality, and the two towers are seen to such advantage only from the opposite viewpoint. [5] Finally, the Monterberg and the Eltenberg do not lie in such close proximity and cannot be seen together in the way that Cuyp has represented them. [6] Given the freedom with which the artist combined these landscape elements, the towns vaguely discernible in the river valley are probably Cuyp's own creations, intended to suggest the character of this beautiful stretch along the Rhine. [7]

Aside from reusing landscape elements, Cuyp also repeated figures and animal motifs in his paintings. The gray horse, for example, is identical to that in Lady and Gentleman on Horseback, [8] and the galloping horse and rider reappear in *Michiel and Cornelis Pompe van Meerdervoort with Their Tutor*. [9] Cuyp's ease with recycling his motifs and the fact that he rarely dated his landscapes make it difficult to establish an exact chronology for his work. Nevertheless, the expansiveness of the panorama; the soft, atmospheric qualities of the river valley, which derive from Cuyp's broad, planar technique of applying paint; and the elegance of the riders are elements associated with paintings he started in the mid-to-late 1650s. An increasing artificiality of light effects and the introduction in

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the foreground of twisted saplings and large decorative leaves are other distinctive characteristics of Cuyp's mature style. This artificiality is particularly striking in this painting, in which diagonal shadows fall across rocks and foliage without any indication of their three-dimensionality. *Landscape with Horse Trainers* [fig. 1], which hung as a pendant to the National Gallery picture when the two paintings were together in the Van Slingeland collection in the eighteenth century, stylistically contains similar characteristics. [10]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Aelbert Cuyp, *Landscape with Horse Trainers*, about 1655 (or 1660), oil on canvas, The Toledo Museum of Art, Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1960.2

NOTES

[1] The auction catalog of the sale held in Dordrecht in 1785 describes the painting as having "an unusually beautiful execution" and as being "one of the best of this master" ("dit Konststuk is van een ongemeene schoone uitwerking, en een der beste van deezen Meester").

[2] See Jan Both, An Italianate Evening Landscape.

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[3] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., ed., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), no. 29.

[4] Also see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., ed., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), nos. 91, 92. Cuyp based another painting on the view from the opposite direction. Several versions of this composition exist, the best of which seems to be that in the Castle Howard Collection, Yorkshire (Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928], 2: no. 71).

[5] Cuyp originally painted the Monterberg as a somewhat lower hill. He seems to have enlarged it for compositional reasons.

[6] Compare with the more topographically accurate depictions produced by Joris van der Haagen (drawing, Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin, inv. no. 11821) or Romeyn de Hooghe (engraving, reproduced in Friedrich Gorissen, *Conspectus Cliviae. Die klevische Residenz in der Kunst des 17. Jahrhunderts* [Kleve, 1964], no. 106).

[7] J. K. van der Haagen, former chief, museum and monuments division, UNESCO, Paris (letter, November 29, 1964, in NGA curatorial files), tentatively identifies the towns as Griethause (to the left) and Emmerich (immediately to the left of the pale horse, partly behind the twigs of the foreground sapling).

[8] See Aelbert Cuyp*, Lady and Gentleman on Horseback*.

[9] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., ed., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), no. 29.

[10] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 5:288, and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. (Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 2: no. 430. Both Smith and De Groot state that the two pictures were hung as pendants in the Van Slingeland collection, information that they would have gained from Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of naamlyst van schilderyen . . .,* 2 vols. (The Hague, 1752/1770), 2:495, who listed *Horsemen and Herdsmen with Cattle* as one of a "pair of landscapes," the other of which was probably *Landscape with Horse Trainers*. The Toledo picture, moreover, came directly after the Washington picture in the 1785 Van Slingeland sale catalog (see note 2 above) and was described as "een Meesterstuk van konst en een weerga van de vorige" ("a masterpiece of art and a pendant of the previous [work]); see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., ed., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), no. 39, 170 and 206.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original, medium-weight, plain-weave fabric support has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping on all sides indicates that the original dimensions have been retained. The ground consists of two layers: a lower layer containing white and red pigments and an upper midtone gray layer.[1] The upper gray layer acts as a middle tone from which the artist worked both up and down, applying lighter tones to create the sky, ships, and buildings and darker tones to define foliage of the middleground.

The paint is applied in thin layers, both opaque and translucent, blended wet-into-wet with minimal brushmarking and no appreciable impasto. When creating the sky, Cuyp appears to have applied a lighter gray blue over the middle tone gray, and then scraped through it with the butt end of his brush to place the outlines of forms against the sky. This indented line is visible under magnification only in the sky, in the following areas: along the outline of the left mounted figure and in parts of the left outline of his horse's head, in the left side of the cloud, and intermittently where the foliage in the trees at the top right meets the sky. This technique may have been used to refine outlines in places rather than as a tool for general placement, since the line is not apparent in all areas. It is also possible that this indented line was once more generally visible, but that it was occasionally covered up by succeeding layers of paint.

Cuyp left large areas of the foreground, the horsemen, the largest tree at right, and the hill with the tower in the left middleground in reserve. The sheep and seated figures at the far right were painted on top of the trees and foliage. In the middleground landscape, the artist painted a foreground sapling before adding the peach-colored tonality to the hills, an unusual sequence of paint application. Cuyp altered the position of the two towers on the Monterberg, the hill in the distant left, and raised the height of the hill.

Numerous scattered tiny losses, particularly along the edges but also in the face of the seated figure at the right, indicate a history of flaking, but abrasion is slight. The painting was lined in 1967. At that time varnish and inpainting were applied over the exhisting discolored varnish. In 1997, the discolored varnish layers and inpainting were removed when the painting underwent a thorough conservation treatment.

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[1] The painting was treated in 1997, at which time the ground layers were characterized by cross-sectional analysis. The analysis was performed by the NGA Scientific Research Department (see report dated August 26, 1997, in NGA Conservation department files). During this same treatment, the NGA Scientific Research department also analyzed the pigments using polarized light microscopy and found them to be consistent with the period (see report dated May 19, 1997, in NGA Conservation department files). The medium was also analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using infrared microscopy and gas chromatography and found to be drying oil (see report dated October 8, 1997, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Johan van der Linden van Slingeland [1701-1782], Dordrecht, by 1752;[1] (his estate sale, at his residence by Yver and Delfos, Dordrecht, 22 August 1785 and days following, no. 71); Fouquet.[2] Albert Dubois, Paris; (his sale, Le Brun and Julliot at Hôtel Bullion, Paris, 20 December 1785 and days following, no. 16, bought in). William Smith [1756-1835], Norwich;[3] sold privately to Edward Gray, who sold it in 1830.[4] Alexander Baring, later 1st baron Ashburton [1774-1848], Bath House, London, by 1834;[5] by inheritance in his family to Francis Denzil Edward Baring, 5th baron Ashburton [1866-1938], The Grange, Northington, Hampshire;[6] sold 1907 with the entire Ashburton collection to a syndicate of (Thomas Agnew & Sons, London; Arthur J. Sulley & Co., London; and Asher Wertheimer, London);[7] sold 1909 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;[8] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderijen. . .*, 2 vols., The Hague, 1752, 2:495.

[2] The entry in the sale catalogue for no. 71 reads as follows: "CUYP (ALBERT) Op Doek, hoog 46, breed 66 duim. Een zeer capitaal Stuk, verbeeldende een ruim

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Landschap in den vroegen Morgenstond; by een aangenaam Zonligt, zeit men, op den Voorgrond, ter regterzyde, twee Heeren te paard, en daar nevens twee Landlieden rustende by hun Vee; ter linkerzyde een Herder by een staande en leggende Koe, waar by een Man die te paard komt aanrennen; verder ziet men een Rivier met Schepen gestoffeerd, en in't verschiet verscheide Gebouwen en hoog Gebergte; dit Konststuk is van een ongemeene schoone uitwerking, en een der beste van deezen Meester." An annotated copy of the auction catalogue at the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague, notes that no. 71 was purchased by "Fouquet".

[3] Cited by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols., London, 1907-1927: 2(1909):131, no. 430.

[4] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 1829-1842: 5(1834):288. Perhaps this was the same Edward Gray, of Harringay Park, Hornsey, whose collections were auctioned at Christie's, London, May 1839.

[5] Smith 1829-1842: 5(1834):288. Baring, who was made Baron Ashburton in 1835, was a notable politician (architect of the 1842 Webster-Ashburton Treaty with the United States), and connoisseur (trustee of the British Museum and of London's National Gallery).

[6] Bath House was sold in 1890 by the 5th baron Ashburton, and he had the orangery at The Grange converted into a picture gallery that doubled as a ballroom.

[7] "Ashburton Collection Sold," *American Art News* (19 October 1907): 1. Hofstede de Groot, in both the German (1908) and English (1909) editions, lists the painting as being with Agnew. The painting is listed among those handled by Asher Wertheimer in Norman L. Kleeblatt, ed., *John Singer Sargent: Portraits of the Wertheimer Family*, exh. cat., The Jewish Museum, New York, 1999: 51.

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[8] Widener collection records, in NGA curatorial files, list the painting as purchased from Sulley.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1990 Italian Recollections: Dutch Painters of the Golden Age, The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1990, no. 28.

2001 Aelbert Cuyp, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; The National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2001-2002, no. 38, repro.

2002 Loan for display with permanent collection , Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen Mauritshuis, The Hague, 2002-2004.

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1854 Jervis-White-Jervis, Lady Marian. *Painting and Celebrated Painters, Ancient and Modern*. 2 vols. London, 1854: 2:217, 325.

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1948 National Gallery of Art. *Paintings and Sculpture from the Widener Collection*. Washington, 1948 (reprinted 1959): 57, repro.

1957 Shapley, Fern Rusk. *Comparisons in art: A Companion to the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC*. London, 1957 (reprinted 1959): pl. 145.

1961 Hutton, William. "Aelbert Cuyp: The Riding Lesson." *Toledo Museum of Art Museum News* 4 (1961): 81, 84, repro.

1965 National Gallery of Art. *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture*. Washington, 1965: 36.

1966 Cairns, Huntington, and John Walker, eds. *A Pageant of Painting from the National Gallery of Art*. 2 vols. Translated. New York, 1966: 1: 246, color repro.

1967 Dattenberg, Heinrich. *Niederrheinansichten holländischer Künstler des 17. Jahrhunderts*. Die Kunstdenkmäler des Rheinlands 10. Dusseldorf, 1967: 72-73, repro. 79a.

1968 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings and Sculpture, Illustrations*. Washington, 1968: 29, repro.

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1992 Chong, Alan. "Aelbert Cuyp and the Meanings of Landscape." Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1992: 405-406, no. 158.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 46-50, color repro. 49.

2001 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Aelbert Cuyp*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington; National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Washington, 2001: no. 38, 28, 39-40, 42, 44, 57, 72, 168-169, 205-206, repro.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Aelbert Cuyp
Dutch, 1620 - 1691

Lady and Gentleman on Horseback

c. 1655, reworked 1660/1665

oil on canvas
overall: 123 x 172 cm (48 7/16 x 67 11/16 in.)
framed: 164.8 x 214 x 16.2 cm (64 7/8 x 84 1/4 x 6 3/8 in.)
Inscription: lower left: A.Cuijp.
Widener Collection 1942.9.15

ENTRY

Although the hunt became a popular pastime for Dutch patricians in the second half of the seventeenth century and numerous representations of the sport exist, Cuyp was the only Dutch artist to create large-scale formal portraits of aristocrats engaged in this activity. *Lady and Gentleman on Horseback*, which is the largest and most imposing of these works, is unique in that it represents an elegant equestrian couple, probably a husband and wife, setting out for the hunt. With an expansive light-filled arcadian landscape stretching behind them, they embark with two types of hounds: tufters to track the deer and follow the scent and greyhounds (under the control of an attendant) to run after the deer and bring them to bay. [1]

The names of the sitters are not known with certainty. [2] Nevertheless, a promising clue to their identity is a bust-length portrait, based on the male rider in this painting, which has been traditionally identified as Adriaen Stevensz Snouck (c. 1634–1671). [3] Alan Chong, who discovered the resemblance between the two heads, has noted that Snouck, originally from Rotterdam, lived in The Hague until his marriage to Erkenraad Berk Matthisdr (1638–1712) in 1654. This marriage would

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have brought Snouck into contact with Cuyp since Erkenraad was the daughter of Matthijs Berk, Raad-Pennsionaris of Dordrecht and an important patron of the artist. This theory may well account for the prominence given to the female sitter, who, resplendent in her gorgeous blue dress, is mounted on a white horse with a brilliant red and gold saddlecloth. [4]

Chong's identification of the sitters accords well with technical examinations of the painting. As is evident in the X-radiographs [see X-radiography] [fig. 1], Cuyp Overpainted and changed major portions of *Lady and Gentleman on Horseback*. The man originally wore a hat and had shorter hair, and his collar lay flat on his shoulders. He also wore a military-style tunic-and-cape combination, adorned with braids and buttons (presumably gold). This costume, the overall color of which was apparently a brilliant red rather than the current brown, was in many respects similar to that worn by Jan Six in Rembrandt's famous portrait of 1654, in the Six Collection, Amsterdam.

The woman's costume was also substantially changed. Her hat was a different shape and its feather sat farther back on her head; her dress fit more loosely and seems to have fallen over the right flank of her horse; and instead of her fairly low, elegantly gathered neckline, Cuyp originally had painted a plain flat collar that covered the woman's shoulders. The costume was comparable to that seen in Bartholomeus van der Helst (1613–1670)'s 1654 portrait of Abraham del Court and Maria del Keerssegieter [fig. 2]. From the stylistic characteristics of the outfits in *Lady and Gentleman on Horsebac*k, one can conclude that Cuyp painted the original version in about 1654–1655. As this probable period of execution coincides with the 1654 date of the marriage of Adriaen Snouck and Erkenraad Berk, it is possible that Cuyp received the initial commission to commemorate that event.

Aside from making changes in the figures' costumes, Cuyp also substantially modified the mood of the painting by altering the woman's pose and the arrangement of figures in the landscape. The woman originally assumed a less demure position, with her right arm extended, presumably to hold the reins tightly. This gesture would have given her a more active appearance than is evident in the final version. The background was also more dynamic. Instead of the two greyhounds and the young attendant walking behind the riders, Cuyp originally included five running greyhounds and a somewhat larger young man in red socks running with them. [5] The juxtaposition of the portraits and the background figures would thus have been similar to that seen in the painting of the Pompe van Meerdervoort family in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. [6] Finally, the landscape

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also sloped in front from the left, and Cuyp may have made changes to the fanciful castlelike building at the far left.

Although no specific symbolism relating to marriage exists in the painting, the hunt as a theme was metaphorically linked with the game of love. [7] Also, the large burdock leaves in the foreground were frequently associated with love. [8] Cuyp had a special fondness for this plant and included it in the foreground of a number of his paintings. [9] In most of these works the symbolic associations of the burdock leaf seem irrelevant to the meaning of the painting, but in this instance, with the dog calling attention to the plant's presence, Cuyp may have intended to convey its symbolic associations.

The remarkable revisions in the painting suggest that the patrons were dissatisfied with the original composition. One may speculate that the activity of the hunt distracts from the formal character of the double portrait. The substantial modifications in costume, however, also indicate that the sitters wanted to update their image. For example, the male rider's dignified brown jacket crossed by a sash and his long, wavy hair worn falling over the shoulders only came into vogue in about 1660. Cuyp's patrons may also have desired a more refined style of portraiture than the artist had provided in his initial version. Indeed, these portraits are remarkably elegant for Cuyp, who is not noted for his nuanced modeling of the human form. Their style reflects that of Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634 - 1693), who after returning to Dordrecht in the mid-1650s initiated a new fashion of portraiture in his native city patterned on the model of Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641). Maes' Dordrecht portraits capture the elegant, aristocratic aspirations of a society that had begun to fashion itself after French styles of dress and decorum, and Cuyp clearly learned from this example.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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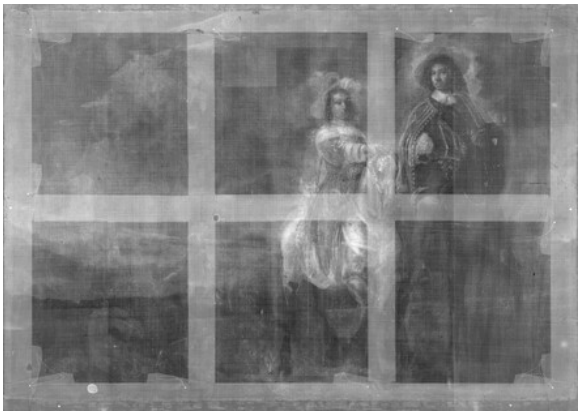

fig. 1 X-radiograph composite, Aelbert Cuyp, *Lady and Gentleman on Horseback*, c. 1655, reworked 1660/1665, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.15

fig. 2 Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Abraham del Court and His Wife Maria de Kaersgieter*, 1654, oil on canvas, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Tromp, Rotterdam

NOTES

[1] Ann P. Wagner, a graduate student at the University of Maryland, provided valuable information about the character of these hounds. For further information, see Anthony Dent, *Horses in Shakespeare's England* (London, 1987), 128.

[2] Stephen Reiss, *Aelbert Cuyp* (Boston, 1975), 165, proposed that the gentleman was “a member of the Pompe [van Meerdervoort] family, perhaps Cornelis Pompe (1639–1680), the younger of the two boys seen in the New York picture” [referring to Cuyp’s *Equestrian Portrait of Cornelis (1639–1680) and Michiel Pompe van Meerdervoort (1638–1653) with Their Tutor and Coachman ("Starting for the Hunt")*, early 1650s, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., ed, *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), no. 29]; but this conclusion rests on the assumption that the star-shaped horse brass in the Washington picture, which resembles that in the

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New York picture, relates to the family crest. On the other hand, in a letter dated February 25, 1984 (NGA curatorial files), Alan Chong noted that the horse brass in the National Gallery's picture is similar to the stylized five-pointed oak leaf that appears in the Berk family crest. In fact, according to the archivist of the Municipal Archives in Dordrecht, these horse brasses were standard decorative elements of Turkish origin and cannot be connected with family crests. Indeed, exactly the same motifs occur on the horse brass in Paulus Potter's 1653 life-size equestrian portrait of Dirck Tulp, in the Six Collection, Amsterdam. The suggestion has also been made in a number of the Widener collection catalogs (see Bibliography) that the woman, because of her younger appearance, may be the man's daughter.

[3] The painting is in the Zeeuws Genootschap van Kunst en Wetenschap, Middelburg. Alan Chong kindly provided this information in a letter, February 5, 1990 (NGA curatorial files).

[4] This identification, however, does not explain the two letters, *JH*, embroidered on the woman's saddlecloth. These initials have not yet been connected with any name.

[5] The red socks can be seen through the somewhat translucent surface paint.

[6] Another connection is the architecture of the building; though not identical, it is similar in character to that in the Washington painting. This structure is probably a fanciful evocation of an ancient fortified chateau such as Cuyp may have seen on his trip along the Rhine.

[7] Eddy de Jongh noted: "The hunt is synonymous with the game of love and it . . . was a current and naturally obvious metaphor." Eddy de Jongh, "Erotica in *vogelperspectief: De dubbelzinnigheid van een reeks 17de eeuwse genrevoorstellingen*," *Simiolus* 3 (1968–1969): 34.

[8] Although the burdock leaf can be a symbol of either virtue and fidelity or vice and lust, the context of the scene clearly points toward the first alternative. See Melinda B. Parsons and William M. Ramsay, "The Scarlet Letter and an Herbal Tradition," *Emerson Society Quarterly* 29 (4th Quarter, 1983): 197–207.

[9] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., ed., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), no. 39.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, a fairly coarse fabric, has been lined with the vertical tacking margins trimmed. Cusping is visible along all edges. Both the top and bottom tacking margins have been unfolded and incorporated into the picture plane. The

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painting is generally in good condition, although tears are found near the top edge, left of center, and the right edge, near the lower right corner. The canvas was prepared with a double ground: an orange-red lower layer covered by a gray upper layer.

Paint is applied in thin opaque layers. Numerous artist's changes are visible as pentimenti and with infrared reflectography at 1.2 to 5 microns [1] and X-radiography. The man had shorter hair and wore a brimmed hat, a decorated tunic, and an embroidered cape tied under his plain collar. The woman, whose proper right arm was raised to hold the reins, wore a large brimmed hat pushed back on her head, a cape, and an ornate dress that fell over the horse's right side. The white horse's decorated martingale was slung lower. The boy in the middleground was running, accompanied by five greyhounds. Contour changes were made in the seated rider at the far left and in the lower left landscape.

The lining canvas was in place when the painting was treated privately in 1942, and records indicate at least two generations of inpainting were present. Prior to acquisition, discolored varnish and earlier inpainting were removed, and a surface coating of varnish applied. The painting was treated in 1998–1999, at which time the 1942 varnish and inpainting, which had discolored, were removed. During that treatment it was determined that faded yellow lake glazes probably caused discoloration of the leaves in the lower left and smalt degradation probably caused discoloration of the man's jacket.[2]

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Kodak 310-21X Focal plane array PtSi camera.

[2] Cross-sections of the painting were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using light microscopy as well as scanning electron microscopy in conjunction with energy-dispersive spectrometry (see report dated June 6, 1998, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

(Thomas Emmerson [c. 1776-1855], London) before 1834.[1] purchased through Henry Artaria by Edmund Higginson [1802-1871], Saltmarshe Castle, near Bromyard,

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Herefordshire, before 1842;[2] (his sale, Christie & Manson, London, 4 June 1846, no. 212, as *The Departure for the Chase*, bought in); (his sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 16 June 1860, no. 34, as *The Departure for the Chase*); (Charles J. Nieuwenhuys, Brussels and London). Adrian John Hope [1811-1863], London; (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 30 June 1894, no. 22, as *Grand Landscape*); (Charles J. Wertheimer, London). (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris); sold 1894 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;[3] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] John Smith describes the painting as "formerly in the possession of Thomas Emmerson, Esq." (John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 1829–1842: 5[1834]: no. 177). Emmerson was apparently a dealer and collector, and the first auction of paintings in which he was the only seller took place in London in 1829. There were several other sales of paintings in his possession, from the 1830s through the 1850s, but the Gallery's painting has not been found in any of the catalogues.

[2] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 1829–1842: 9(1842):664.

[3] Widener Collection records, in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

2001 Aelbert Cuyp, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; The National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2001-2002, no. 40, repro.

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1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 50-56, color repro. 53.

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2004 Hand, John Oliver. *National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection*. Washington and New York, 2004: 189, no. 150, color repro.

2016 Van Eikema Hommes, Margriet, Ruud Lambour, Bianca M. Du Mortier, Marieke de Winkel, Gwen Taurer, Matthias Alfeld, Koen Janssens, and Joris Dik. "The Hidden Youth of Dirck Jacobsz Leeuw: A Portrait of Govert Flinck Revealed." *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 64, no. 1 (2016): 27, fig. 26, 56 n. 67.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Aelbert Cuyp
Dutch, 1620 - 1691

Landscape with Herdsmen

mid-1650s

oil on panel
overall: 47.7 × 81.5 cm (18 3/4 × 32 1/16 in.)
framed: 76.84 × 110.81 × 12.7 cm (30 1/4 × 43 5/8 × 5 in.)
Inscription: lower right: A. cuyp. .
Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.79.707

ENTRY

In this beautifully preserved, luminous work two horsemen have stopped on a small rise overlooking a broad river valley to ask local herdsmen for directions. The moment is one of little narrative significance, yet the low vantage point and the quiet dignity of the figures and cattle silhouetted against the blue sky give the scene a monumental grandeur far greater than the painting's modest scale might seem to warrant. The golden light of the late afternoon sun further enhances the pastoral mood as it softens the landscape in the distance and casts a quiet, peaceful spell over the scene, a veritable Dutch Arcadia. [1]

This evocative landscape is one of several similarly serene scenes depicting herdsmen tending cattle that Cuyp painted in the late 1640s and early 1650s, shortly after the signing of the Treaty of Münster in 1648 that ended the Dutch Revolt. This bucolic image conveys the aura of peace and pastoral well-being that must have been strongly felt after the 80 years of struggle leading to the formation of the Dutch Republic. Dairy cows, whose creamy milk yielded the cheeses and butter that were important to the Dutch economy, represented the wholesome

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prosperity of the Dutch nation, and this concept may underlie the significance Cuyp has given to the herd in this work. [2] Cuyp emphasized the animals' dignity by orienting the group on a horizontal axis along which their overlapping forms become visually connected. The two cows at the left, with their distinctively noble profiles, gaze out over the landscape, almost as guardians of the peaceful and verdant river valley stretching beyond them. Although Cuyp emphasized these pictorial qualities in this carefully considered composition, they are already evident in the chalk drawings of cows that he made in anticipation of paintings such as this [fig. 1]. [3] These drawings, sometimes with small variations, must have served as models for Cuyp's paintings. Here, for example, the resting cow gazing off to the left is also found in Cuyp's *Peasants and Cattle by the River Merwede*, datable to the late 1650s [fig. 2]. [4]

Cuyp's paintings of the early 1640s are often tonal landscapes of the Dutch countryside similar to those made by Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656). Around 1650, however, he began to create landscapes that reflect the influence of Dutch Italianate artists, among them Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652), Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem (Dutch, 1620 - 1683), and Jan Asselijn (Dutch, c. 1610 - 1652), who were then returning to the Netherlands after prolonged stays in Italy. Cuyp adapted not only the golden light and *contre-jour* effects of the late afternoon sun that characterize their works, but also the gentle cloud formations that grace their skies. Following the Italianates' inspiration, he also began rendering distant landscapes in a broadly suggestive manner and started using large, somewhat abstractly rendered shrubs as *repoussoir* elements in his foregrounds. As a result, paintings such as this one often have a generalized pastoral character that defies localization.

The evolution in Cuyp's style is evident in a comparison of this painting of the mid-1650s with his *River Landscape with Cows* from the late 1640s [fig. 3]. Although both paintings portray a realm where man, animal, and nature coexist in peaceful harmony, the impact of the two works is strikingly different. The emphasis of the earlier work is on the dramatic sky, with shafts of light breaking through billowing clouds. In this later painting Cuyp has emphasized the quiet stillness of the air warmed by the sun—an effect he has reinforced by silhouetting the cattle prominently against the golden sky and by using muted tones in the distant river valley. The single puffy cloud formation that floats above the land is more decorative than real, a characteristic that becomes quite pronounced in his Arcadian images of the mid-1650s. [5]

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Despite the evocative quality of *Landscape with Herdsmen*, the setting is based on a real place: the valley of the Rhine River near the towns of Cleves and Calcar, not far from the Dutch border. In the early 1640s, when Cuyp first visited this broad river valley dotted with towns, churches, and windmills, he recorded his impressions in a series of large panoramic drawings that were once part of a sketchbook. Years later, when Cuyp painted *Landscape with Herdsmen*, he referred to one of these drawings: a view of Calcar with Monterberg, a hill on which stood the ruins of the castle of the dukes of Cleves, rising in the distance [fig. 4]. Nevertheless, atmosphere, not topography, was Cuyp's primary concern in this luminous painting, for Monterberg almost disappears from view beyond the gentle haze emanating from the river valley. The quiet, reflective quality of this scene captures the essence of Cuyp's ideals of the Dutch Arcadia, an approach to landscape that characterizes the artist's work throughout the rest of his career. [6]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

June 30, 2017

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Aelbert Cuyp, *A Cow Lying Down*, early 1650s, black chalk, gray wash, private collection, The Netherlands

fig. 2 Aelbert Cuyp, *Peasants and Cattle by the River Merwede*, c. 1658–1660, oil on panel, National Gallery, London, Bequeathed by John Staniforth Beckett, 1889, NG1289. © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY

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fig. 3 Aelbert Cuyp, *River Landscape with Cows*, 1645/1650, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Family Petschek (Aussig), 1986.70.1

fig. 4 Aelbert Cuyp, *View of Calcar on the Lower Rhine near Cleve*, early 1640s, black chalk, grey wash, and watercolor, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, From the Collection of Rita and Frits Markus, Bequest of Rita Markus, 2005, 2005.330.4

NOTES

[1] For a discussion of Aelbert Cuyp and the Dutch Arcadia, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Aelbert Cuyp and the Depiction of the Dutch Arcadia," in *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), 15–33.

[2] Joaneath Spicer, "'De Koe voor d'aede staat': The Origin of the Dutch Cattle Piece," in *Essays in Northern European Art Presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Anne-Marie Logan (Doornspijk, 1983), 251–256. For the symbolism of the cow in Dutch art, see: Alan Chong, "'In 't verbeelden van Slachtdieren,'" in *Meesterlijk Vee: Nederlandse veeschilders, 1600–1700*, ed. C. Boschma (Zwolle, 1988), 56–86.

[3] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), 271, no. 103.

[4] This observation was made by Sjraar van Heugten, "Grazende modellen: Aspecten van het Nederlandse veestuk," in *Meesterlijk Vee: Nederlandse veeschilders, 1600–1700*, ed. C. Boschma (Zwolle, 1988), 23.

[5] Although this author dated this painting c. 1650–1652 in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), 142, no. 25, the exhibition revealed that a later date was more appropriate.

[6] For copies after this work, see Alan Chong, "Aelbert Cuyp and the Meaning

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of Landscape" (PhD diss., New York University, 1992), 373–375, no. 133. See also: sale, Christie, Manson & Woods Ltd., London, July 12, 1985, no. 106.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a horizontally grained oak (est.) panel with the top, bottom, and right edges of the panel beveled on the reverse. In a past treatment by Stephen Pichetto, a cradle was adhered to the reverse after applying fill material and wooden inserts to compensate for the bevels. It is likely that the reverse was slightly thinned prior to the application of the cradle.

The support was prepared with a double ground, with the bottommost layer off-white in color and the top layer tan. The paint is fairly smooth, with only low impasto in the details of the foliage in the foreground. The sky was painted in first, leaving reserves for the figures and animals, which were likely blocked in with black paint, evidenced by the dark shapes visible in the X-radiograph. The paint was applied in stages, wet-over-dry, though some areas such as the landscape and foreground were painted wet-into-wet, overlapping the drier paint of the sky and animals below.

The paint layers are in good condition and the panel is structurally sound. There are a few old damages to the panel, including two horizontal cracks that start at the center of the left edge and extend into the sky, as well as a minor crack in the lower right corner. No instability in the panel is associated with these damages. Overall there are minor scattered losses, most of which have been retouched. The two resting cows and the areas of landscape exhibit a fine craquelure pattern that has associated minor losses.

PROVENANCE

Probably (sale, by J. A. Jolles and H. de Winter, Amsterdam, 23 May 1764, no. 41, bought in). C. Price, London; Frederick Howard, 5th earl of Carlisle [1748-1825], London, and Castle Howard, Yorkshire, by 1771;[1] by descent in the Howard family to George James Howard, 9th earl of Carlisle [1843-1911], London, and Castle Howard; purchased September 1907 by (P. & D. Colnaghi, London), half share with

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(M. Knoedler & Co., London and New York);[2] sold July 1909 to William Andrews Clark [1839-1925], New York; bequest 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

[1] According to Alan Chong ("Aelbert Cuyp and the Meaning of Landscape," Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1992: 374, 375 n. 1), the painting was sold by Price to Howard in 1771 or shortly before. This information comes from an 1865 inventory in the Castle Howard archives of the Earl of Carlisle's house on Grosvenor Place in London, in which the painting is listed as number 92. The earl in 1865 would have been the Reverend William George Howard, 8th earl of Carlisle (1808-1889), who succeeded to the title in December of the previous year.

[2] The painting is stock number 11463 in the M. Knoedler & Co. Records, accession number 2012.M.54, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: Painting Stockbook 5, 8800-12652, 1899 April -1911 December, p. 149; copy in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1822 Probably Pictures of the Italian, Spanish, Flemish, and Dutch Schools, British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1822, no. 136 or no. 138.

1828 Probably Pictures by Italian, Spanish, Flemish, and Dutch Masters, British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1828, no. 83.

1853 Probably Pictures by Italian, Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, French and English Masters, British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1853, no. 7.

1861 Possibly Royal Dublin Society, 1861, no. 61, as Cattle Piece.[2]

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1959 Loan Exhibition. Masterpieces of the Corcoran Gallery of Art: A Benefit Exhibition in Honor of the Gallery's Centenary, Wildenstein, New York, 1959, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

1978 The William A. Clark Collection: An exhibition marking the 50th Anniversary of the installation of The Clark Collection at The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, no catalogue.

2001 Aelbert Cuyp, National Gallery of Art, Washington; The National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2001-2002, no. 25, repro.

EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES

[1] The early exhibition history references are all tentative, as the Earl of Carlisle owned six paintings attributed to Cuyp, several depicting cattle and horsemen, and the exhibition catalogues provide no detailed descriptions or size information.

[2] Lent by George William Frederick Howard, 7th earl of Carlisle (1802-1864), this painting could be the NGA painting; see Alan Chong, “Aelbert Cuyp and the Meaning of Landscape,” Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1992: 375 n. 2.

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244, no. 7.

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1986 Sutton, Peter C. *A Guide to Dutch Art in America*. Washington and Grand Rapids, 1986: 299, fig. 451.

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1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 48, 50 n. 13, as *Five Cows, Herdsmen and Two Riders*..

2001 Coyle, Laura, and Dare Myers Hartwell, eds. *Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art*. Washington, DC, 2001: 22-23, 67, repro.

2001 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Aelbert Cuyp*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington; National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Washington, 2001: no. 25, 142-143, 197-198, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Aelbert Cuyp
Dutch, 1620 - 1691

The Maas at Dordrecht

c. 1650

oil on canvas
overall: 114.9 x 170.2 cm (45 1/4 x 67 in.)
framed: 151.1 x 205.1 x 15.2 cm (59 1/2 x 80 3/4 x 6 in.)
Inscription: on sideboard of ship in right foreground: A.cuyp
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1940.2.1

ENTRY

In the mid-1830s, Gustav Waagen, director of the Royal Gallery at Berlin, made an extensive tour of British private collections, which, following the upheavals surrounding the French Revolution, had become one of the greatest storehouses of Old Master paintings in the world. Cordially greeted everywhere because of his charm and expertise, Waagen had the rare privilege of experiencing firsthand many of the great examples of European painting that were not otherwise accessible to the public. With this knowledge in mind, Waagen took careful notes and in 1838 published an account of the works of art he had seen in English private collections.

He published a revised and better-known edition, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, in three volumes from 1854 to 1857. Aelbert Cuyp's *The Maas at Dordrecht*, in the collection of Sir Abraham Hume, was one of the outstanding masterpieces and Waagen described it as follows:

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> The chief picture, however, of the whole collection is a view of the Maas, with the town of Dort, and numerous ships, by this master, in a moderately warm but extremely clear evening light. The delicacy of aerial gradation in a series of vessels seen one behind the other is not to be described, and, at the same time, all is executed with the greatest ease and freedom. This picture, 3 ft. 10 in. high, by 5 ft. 6 1/2 in. wide, is a proof not only of the extraordinary talent of this master, but also of the astonishing height which the art of painting in general had attained in Holland in the seventeenth century. [1]

Waagen's enthusiastic response to *The Maas at Dordrecht* was widely shared, and the painting was featured in a number of exhibitions of Dutch painting from the time it was first brought to England around 1804. [2] The appeal, as Waagen suggests, has much to do with the extraordinary light effects that Cuyp achieves as the rays of the early morning sun stream across the landscape, creating horizontal shadows in the clouds and striking the tower of the great church of Dordrecht and the sails of the ships at full force. [3] The massive scale of the work gives the scene a dominating presence that is enhanced by the sweep of the clouds and powerfully conceived composition.

Cuyp spent his entire artistic career in Dordrecht, a wealthy urban center proud of its heritage as the oldest city in Holland and blessed with an extremely favorable geographic location in the estuary of the Maas and the Rhine rivers. Dordrecht was an important mercantile center, from which ships could easily sail to Rotterdam, Antwerp, the North Sea, or inland to Arnhem, Nijmegen, and beyond. While its well-protected harbor was lined with stately homes, its distinctive skyline was best viewed from the water, either from the Oude Maas to the west or from the Merwede to the north. From these vantage points one could admire the elegant spire of the Groothoofdspoort, the city's major gate at the water side, and the massive Grote Kerk, the city's symbolic center of power. [4]

Cuyp has portrayed Dordrecht from the northeast, bathed in morning light. From this vantage point, either from a boat anchored in the Merwede or—more probable—from the village of Papendrecht on the far bank of this broad and busy river, an impressive panorama of the city stretches out before the viewer, encompassing not only the Groothoofdspoort and the Grote Kerk, with its massive yet unfinished tower, but also the broad expanse of the Maas as it flows past

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Dordrecht. Cuyp based this view on a panoramic drawing he made in the late 1640s [fig. 1]. Not only are the buildings identical to those in the drawing (even the windmill at the right is included), but so too are the two sailboats to the right of the Groothoofdspoort. [5]

Waagen seems not to have been particularly curious about the event being depicted, but others have been. In 1827 John Burnet identified the scene as "The Embarkation of the Prince of Orange." [6] This identification relates back to an eighteenth-century tradition in which the officer in the sailing ship was misidentified as Prince Maurits, [7] who had died in 1625. Neither the costume nor the physiognomy of the officer, however, resembles either Frederik Hendrik or Willem II, Princes of Orange who might be associated with this scene. The only recorded references to visits to Dordrecht by Frederik Hendrik and his family were in 1638 when they accompanied Maria de' Medici on September 20 during her exile from France, and in 1643 when the Prince of Orange and Amalia van Solms accompanied by their son Willem II and his fourteen-year-old wife, Mary, anchored for the night at Zwijndrecht, on the opposite side of the Merwede from the city of Dordrecht. The style of this work, moreover, is incompatible with of Cuyp's output from the late 1630s and early 1640s.

Another interpretation of the scene was proposed in 1929, when the painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy, London. "The event represented is probably Charles II in the Dordrecht roads, May 26th, 1660, during his journey from Breda, where he had lived sometime, to The Hague and thence to England." [8] Although the association of the scene with Charles' visit to Dordrecht has been repeated frequently in the literature, [9] a number of objections weigh against it. As with the theory of the Princes of Orange, one searches in vain for a figure that resembles the future king of England, Charles II. No English flags or other signs of English royalty are visible. Moreover, the elaborate account of Charles' trip published in 1660 makes it clear that the royal fleet sailed past Dordrecht and anchored only beyond the city, at the river Lek, near the lands of one of the most important dignitaries of the city, Heer van Beverweert. There Charles first heard the dramatic news that he had been restored to the crown, news that quickly changed his plans to spend the night before proceeding to Delft. As the message also indicated that an English fleet was off the coast of Holland ready to bring the royal couple back to London, they embarked immediately.

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Even though the specifics of Cuyp's artistic evolution are difficult to ascertain due to the absence of dated works, stylistic considerations make it highly unlikely that he has represented Charles' visit. Cuyp's paintings from the 1660s are not executed with the same emphasis on the weight and density of materials and with such concern for the characteristics of texture that one sees here. These qualities, which are reinforced here through the application of quite thick impastos, are far more characteristic of works from the late 1640s and early 1650s. Further indicating a date from this period is the style of the costumes, which is comparable to that seen in paintings from the late 1640s. [10]

The event depicted in this painting appears to involve no royalty and probably for that reason has never been properly identified. Margarita Russell, however, has persuasively proposed that the scene depicts the assembling of the Dutch fleet at Dordrecht in July 1646. [11] This remarkable event is extensively described in Mathys Balen's chronicle of the city's history. [12] Balen writes that an enormous transport fleet, consisting of more ships than had ever come together at that location, and some thirty thousand foot soldiers gathered at Dordrecht for two weeks. The city magistrates ordered that free board and lodging should be given to the men. Everything the soldiers needed was provided—beer as well as bacon, bread as well as cakes—all adding to the festive air. Onlookers from Haarlem, Delft, Leiden, Amsterdam, Gouda, Rotterdam, The Hague, and elsewhere crowded into the city.

Balen's description of the ships and their locations is extremely precise. The ships were anchored in the tidal current of the Merwede rather than moored alongside the piers. As is clear from his account, the "fleet" was a disparate group of ships, consisting of warships and also a wide variety of utilitarian and transport boats. Among them were the kitchen boats (*keuken*) used as ancillary "kitchens" and providing sleeping accommodations for the private servants and staff of the princely household; sailing vessels called *uytlegers* that were used for guard and pilot duties in the approaches to the entrances of the internal waterways; and *pleyten*, single-masted, wide-bodied ships that commonly served as ferryboats. Balen concludes his account by noting that the entire fleet set sail on July 12, some for Bergen op Zoom, and others for Sas van Gent. Prince Frederik Hendrik's intent was almost certainly one last show of force against the southern Netherlands at the onset of negotiations for the truce, which would ultimately be signed at Münster in 1648. Nothing ever came of the plan, however, and so this event of such

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significance in the history of Dordrecht was of no consequence in the broader course of Dutch political history. [13]

Balen's description of the locations of the ships carrying the various regiments can be applied to the situation depicted in Cuyp's painting. In the foreground left, a warship flying the Dutch tricolored flag seems under sail in midstream. The large massing of ships beyond it may be those containing the Frisian and English troops that Balen describes as being anchored near the Groothoofdspoort. Beyond these ships, to the right of the Groote Kerk, a large yacht fires a gun salute. This ship, which displays the Orange coat of arms, must be that of the lifeguards (*Lijf-Schut-Bende*) of Prince Frederik Hendrik that Balen indicates was anchored near the Blaupoort.

The focal point of Cuyp's composition is not, however, an elaborate warship but the relatively simple *pleyt* in the right foreground. He painted it with great care. The ship is at anchor, with her bow in an easterly direction, not to the wind, but with the tidal current to the bow. It seems to be slack tide, about high water on the Maas, for the anchor cable hangs loosely and no one is busy with the halyards. The large and wide jib is lowered and the spritsail is in a half-lowered position. As is characteristic of these ships, the wooden hull is broader along the waterline than at the deck level. This profile kept the ship high in the water and allowed it to sail along the shallow inland waterways. One of the sideboards used to stabilize the craft when it was under sail is seen drawn up midway along its side.

Standing in the *pleyt* awaiting the arrival of the dignitaries in the rowboats is a portly officer who wears an orange sash under his brown cloak. Unfortunately, his identity is unknown, but the distinctive flags on the ship—that hanging from the stern with blue-white-blue bars and the smaller orange flag atop the mast—may yet provide a clue, although they are, as of yet, unidentified. [14] In all likelihood the officials who are approaching the *pleyt* are coming to bid farewell just before the fleet's departure. With the exception of the *pleyt*, all the ships have their sails fully raised. They would have waited for the ebb tide to help carry them along the inland waterways to Bergen op Zoom and Sas van Gent. To judge from the slack anchor line, the ripples of water against the bow of the *pleyt*, and the way it rests in the water, the ebb tide has just begun.

The probability is strong that these figures are representatives of Dordrecht

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because the standing young officer in the rowboat near the *pleyt* wears a red-and-white sash, the city's colors. Even though he is given particular prominence in the painting, it seems unlikely that he was the most important emissary. His rowboat is quite undistinguished, particularly in comparison with the other transport boat, at far left, carrying three officials and the bugler. The burgomaster of Dordrecht at that time was Cornelis van Beveren, a distinguished patriarch, who was also the head of a family who were frequent patrons of Aelbert Cuyp. Van Beveren is certainly not the relatively youthful officer standing in the small rowboat, for in 1646 he was fifty-six years old. Van Beveren served with three other officers on the city's *Gecommitterde ten Belevde van Stad* (administrative council): Jacob de Witt, Johann Dionijsz, and Cornelius van Someren. The standing figure is probably not one of these men either; aside from the fact that he is so young, it is unlikely that any one of the three council members would have been distinguished above the others.

The identity of the figure who is so clearly silhouetted against the shimmering water is of some interest because he may well have been the person who commissioned this large, complex painting. One possibility is that he was Matthijs Pompe, Vry-Heer van Slingeland, who in 1646 was twenty-five years old and already held the public office of *shepen* (bailiff, magistrate). It seems quite probable that given his official position and family connections, he could have been granted the honor of being the emissary sent by the city to present the burgomaster and other high-ranking city officials to an officer of the fleet as it was about to set sail. Pompe was married to a daughter of Cornelis van Beveren and was also the brother of Michiel Pompe van Meerdervoort, an important patron of Cuyp. [15] Whether or not a relationship existed between Michiel Pompe, Vry-Heer van Slingeland, and Johan van der Linden van Slingeland, the eighteenth-century Dordrecht collector who is the first documentable owner of this work, is not known, but is certainly quite probable.

The Washington painting, however, should also be considered in relation to a painting at Waddesdon Manor, which may well have been executed as a companion piece [fig. 2]. The two works, which are virtually identical in size and which apparently hung together in the Slingeland collection in 1752, depict a continuous panoramic sweep of this impressive assemblage of ships anchored off Dordrecht in 1646. Here a comparable scene takes place, with distinguished individuals being transported to an awaiting sailing ship. It has been proposed that

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the rowboat contained Prince Frederik Hendrik inspecting the Dutch fleet, an uncertain identification. [16] Frederik Hendrik may have been present at the "Groote Vergaderinge" in Dordrecht, for Balen mentions that his lifeguard was there. It seems, however, that he accompanied the troops by land rather than by water, at least as far as Breda. [17]

While these paintings were almost surely commissioned works related to a specific event associated with Dordrecht, Cuyp's masterful creations stemmed from a long-abiding interest in depicting scenes along the Maas and the Merwede rivers surrounding Dordrecht. In his *Fishing Boat at Anchor*, c. 1644, in the Getty Museum, for example, he depicts a panoramic, light-filled river view that focuses on a sailing boat with its jib lowered, very similar in character to the *pleyt* in the Washington painting. [18] Also preceding the Washington painting is one in the Wallace Collection, which depicts a scene of *Shipping on the Maas*. [19] Here a number of the same compositional elements can be found, including a man drumming in the *pleyt* as a small rowboat approaches its side. In the Wallace painting, however, the clouds in the sky do not take on such an active, compositionally significant role. Such dramatic clouds only begin to appear in Cuyp's work around 1650, probably under the influence of Italianate painters returning to the Netherlands.

While the compositional motif of a ferryboat transferring passengers to small rowboats most likely derives from the example of Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656), Cuyp's depictions of the "Groote Vergaderinge" of 1646 in Dordrecht are more specifically related to the marine "parade" pictures created in the mid-to-late 1640s by Simon de Vlieger (Dutch, 1600/1601 - 1653) and Jan van de Cappelle (Dutch, 1624/1626 - 1679) [fig. 3]. The remarkably imposing yet atmospheric images of the large-scale massing of ships in a calm sea created by these artists probably provided Cuyp with the visual vocabulary necessary to transform his innate concerns with water views into such compositionally complex and yet balanced images. Cuyp, however, differs from these artists in the way he emphasizes the weight and massiveness of his forms, something that gives his scenes a tangibility that no other marine painter achieved to such a degree.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Aelbert Cuyp, *Dordrecht Viewed from the North, with the Grote Kerk*, late 1640s, black chalk and gray wash, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

fig. 2 Aelbert Cuyp, *View on the Maas near Dordrecht*, probably late 1650s, oil on canvas, National Trust, Waddesdon Manor and Courtauld Institute of Art, London. Photo: Pru Cuming Associates © The National Trust, Waddesdon Manor

fig. 3 Jan van de Capelle, *Marine Parade*, 1645, oil on canvas, private collection, Switzerland

NOTES

[1] Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, 3 vols. (London 1854–1857), 2:316.

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[2] In addition to its popularity in exhibitions, a number of copies of the work were executed. They include a signed copy by Jacob van Strij (1756–1815), oil on wood, 59 x 74 cm, with Rob Kattenburg, Aerdenhout, in 1983; a copy formerly in the collection of Matthew Anderson, exhibited in Leeds in 1868, no. 898; and a copy formerly owned by Guy Sebright, oil on canvas, 109 x 165 cm, exhibited at the Royal Academy in London in 1907, no. 57.

[3] Waagen mistakenly believed that the scene was illuminated by a setting sun.

[4] The formidable presence of the Dutch Reformed Church in Dordrecht was instrumental in its being chosen for the site of the important 1618–1619 Synod of Dordrecht. The synod codified Reformed Church worship and launched the translation of the Bible into Dutch. The *Statenbijbel* was published in 1637. The Synod of Dordrecht was also historically important for siding with the Counter-Remonstrants, who preached predestination, rather than with the Remonstrants, who believed in free will as a means to achieve grace.

[5] This drawing was made after 1647, when modifications were made to buildings along the water's edge. Earlier drawings of the same site are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and in the De Boer collection, Amsterdam. See Wouter Kloek in *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), nos. 82–84. Cuyp used the Rijksmuseum drawing as the basis for two other paintings of Dordrecht from the mid-1650s in Kenwood and Ascott. See A. Rüger in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), nos. 35–36.

[6] John Burnet, *A Treatise on Painting: In Four Parts*, 4 vols. (London, 1832), 15.

[7] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderijen*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1752), 2:490. Van Slingeland's inventory describes two paintings as: "Two pieces, being the view of the City of Dordrecht to the Huys Merwede with many yachts and ships, being a rendezvous there [of] Prince Maurits of Orange in a 'Chaloup' with several other Princes from the city brought over to the yacht across from this 'Chaloup' is another in which Oldenbarnevelt stands looking down on Prince Maurits, from life, by Aelbert Cuyp. each h. 43 d. w. 64 1/2 d." ("*Twee stukken, zynde het Gezigt van de Stad Dordrecht tot het huys Merwerde met veele Jachten en Scheepen, zynde een Rendevous daar Prins Maurits van Orange in een Chaloup met eenige andere Prince van de Stad na het jagt wert gevoert tegens over welke Chaloup een andere is waarinne Oldenbarnevelt overend staande op Prince Maurits siet, na het Leven, door Albert Kuyp. ieder h. 43 d. br. 64 en een half d.*") The description and dimensions seem to identify these paintings as Cuyp's *View on the Maas near Dordrecht* at Waddesdon Manor and the Gallery's *The Maas at Dordrecht*. As Oldenbarnevelt was executed

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in 1619 and Prince Maurits had died in 1625, these identifications were clearly fanciful.

[8] *Exhibition of Dutch Art, 1450–1900* (London, 1929), 29.

[9] See, for example, Bernard Berenson and Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections in America* (New York, 1941), no. 209.

[10] See, for example, Govert Flinck's *The Amsterdam Civic Guard Celebrating the Signing of the Peace of Münster*, 1648, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. C.I. See Joachim Wolfgang von Moltke, *Govaert Flinck, 1615–1660* (Amsterdam, 1965), pl. 53.

[11] Margarita Russell, "Aelbert Cuyp, *The Maas at Dordrecht*: The Great Assembly of the Dutch Armed Forces, June–July 1646," *Dutch Crossing* 40 (1990): 31–82. Russell's article is the outgrowth of research she undertook at the National Gallery of Art in 1981 and 1982. It also incorporates a number of observations provided by Commodore C. J. W. van Waning, who undertook an in-depth study of the painting in the fall of 1982. The text of his research, as well as navigational charts he provided, are in National Gallery of Art curatorial files.

[12] Mathys Balen, *Beschrijvinge der Stad Dordrecht* (Dordrecht, 1677), 880–881.

[13] According to Professor Paul Hofsyzer (letter, August 6, 1986, in National Gallery of Art curatorial files), the intent of the expedition was to lay siege to Antwerp. Antwerp, however, was heavily defended, and the campaign became bogged down by autumn.

[14] All efforts to identify these flags have been unsuccessful, despite the kind assistance of T. N. Schelhaas, director of the Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, The Hague (letter, March 5, 1982, in National Gallery of Art curatorial files); H. C. 't Jong, archivist at the Gemeentelijke Archiefdienst, Dordrecht (letter, March 10, 1982, in National Gallery of Art curatorial files); and more recently E. J. Wolleswinkel, of the Hoge Raad van Adel, The Hague (e-mail letter October 26, 2009). One possibility is that the flags are related to Colonel Varik, the only officer mentioned by Balen. Although the exact identity of Colonel Varik is not known, one form of the Varik family crest was a diagonal cross (color unknown) that is not unrelated in shape to the flag at the stern of the *pleyt*. See Jacobus Anspach, *De navorscher, een middle tot gedachtenwisseling en letterkundig verkeer* (Nimegen, 1892), 68–69, 149. Commodore Van Waning (see note 11 above) believed that the small orange flag represented a "banner or regimental colour with its finely carved top and wooden bar along the topside of the flag." He believed that the flag may well represent the "regimental colors of Colonel Varik." Mr. Schelhaas, however, believes that the flag depicts a fleur-de-lis and thus may relate to the coat of arms of the Van Beveren family. Finally, Mr. H. C. 't Jong has suggested that the flag depicts a tower or castle on a red field, which would associate the ship with Middelburg.

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[15] Stephen Reiss, *Aelbert Cuyp* (Boston, 1975), no. 119 (Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928], 2: no. 168); no. 121 (Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis*, 2: nos. 85 and 617); and no. 128 (Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis*, 2: nos. 173 and 174).

[16] Stephen Reiss, *Aelbert Cuyp* (Boston, 1975), no. 106 (Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts,* 10 vols. [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928], 2: no. 36).

[17] F. J. G. ter Raa, *Het Staatsche Leger, 1568–1793*, 8 vols. (Breda, 1918), 4:151.

[18] Stephen Reiss, *Aelbert Cuyp* (Boston, 1975), no. 31 (Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928], 2:648, 649).

[19] Stephen Reiss, *Aelbert Cuyp* (Boston, 1975), no. 93 (Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928], 2:34, 1676). (Reiss dates this work c. 1647.) The attribution of this work, however, has been called into question by John Ingamells and Alan Chong in *The Wallace Collection: Catalogue of Pictures*, 4 vols. (London, 1992), 4:78, no. P138, who call it a later work in the "Manner of Cuyp."

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a single, moderate-weight, plain-weave fabric with threads of various thicknesses, which has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping along all edges indicates that the dimensions are unchanged. The pale ground is thinly applied, and a darker imprimatura is used as a mid-tone in the foreground. Paint is applied in thin layers, at times blended wet-into-wet, at times scumbled wet-over-dry, with thin lines drawn fluidly in brush-applied paint. The X-radiographs show no changes.

The painting is in good condition, particularly for a work of its size. Moderate abrasion to the thin upper paint layers is visible in dark passages of the boats, figures, and seascape. The painting has undergone treatment three times since its acquisition: in 1994, when it was lined, in 1958, and in 2000. During the 2000

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treatment, it was determined that a cloud at the left edge was not original, and it was consequently removed.

PROVENANCE

Johan van der Linden van Slingeland [1701-1782], Dordrecht, by 1752.[1] (his estate sale, at his residence by J. Yver and A. Delfos, Dordrecht, 22 August 1785 and days following, no. 70); "Rens" or "Delfos."[2] (Alexis Delahante, London), c. 1804 to 1814; sold to Abraham Hume, Bart. [1749-1838], Wormley, Hertfordshire, by 1815;[3] by inheritance to his grandson, John Hume Cust, Viscount Alford, M. P. [1812-1851], Ashridge Park, Hertfordshire; by inheritance to his son, John William Spencer, 2nd earl Brownlow [1842-1867], Ashridge Park; by inheritance to his brother, Adelbert Wellington, 3rd earl Brownlow [1844-1921], Ashridge Park and London; (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods London, 4 and 7 May 1923, no. 75); (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[4] by exchange 1940 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1940 to NGA.

[1] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderijen...*, 2 vols., The Hague, 1752, 2: 490. Van Slingeland's inventory describes two paintings as: "Twee stukken, zynde het Gezigt van de Stad Dordrecht tot het huys Merwerde met veele Jachten en Scheepen, zynde een Rendevous daar Prins Maurits van Orange in een Chaloup met eenige andere Prince van de Stad na het jagt wert gevoert tegens over welke Chaloup een andere is waarinne Oldenbarnevelt overend staande op Prince Maurits siet, na het Leven, door Albert Kuyp. ieder h. 43 d. br. 64 en een half d." ["Two pieces, being the view of the City of Dordrecht to the Huys Merwede with many yachts and ships, being a rendezvous there [of] Prince Maurits of Orange in a 'Chaloup' with several other Princes from the city brought over to the yacht across from this 'Chaloup' is another in which Oldenbarnevelt stands looking down on Prince Maurits, from life, by Aelbert Cuyp. each h. 43 d. w. 64 1/2 d."] The description and dimensions seem to identify these paintings as Cuyp's *View on the Maas near Dordrecht* at Waddesdon Manor and the Gallery's *The Maas at Dordrecht*. As Oldenbarnevelt was executed in 1619 and Prince Maurits had died in 1625, these identifications were clearly fanciful.

[2] A margin note in the NGA copy of the sale catalogue gives the buyer as Delfos

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(who was one of the auctioneers and also bought several other paintings in the sale), but a note in a copy at the British Museum Library gives the buyer as "Rens." Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols., London, 1907-1927, 2: 17-18, no. 36, says lot 70, which he mistakenly believed to be the Waddesdon Manor painting (Stephen Reiss, *Aelbert Cuyp*, Boston, 1975: 145, no. 106), was sold to "Reus," and although the note in the copy of the catalogue in the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorisches Documentatie, The Hague, could be read as either "Reus" or "Rens," the one in the British Museum Library is not ambiguous.

[3] William Buchanan, *Memoirs of Painting*, 2 vols., London, 1824: 2:192. The dates for Delahante's ownership are from the Duveen prospectus for the painting, in NGA curatorial files. Hume lent the painting to an exhibition in 1815.

[4] Details about Duveen’s ownership of the painting (it was their inventory number 4870) can be traced in the Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (copies in NGA curatorial files): reel 36, box 108, page from the Paris stockbook for May 1923; reel 45, box 133, folder 5; reel 66, box 186, page from the general stockbook where the painting is number 28069; reel 83, box 228, folders 10 and 11; reel 89, box 234, folder 18; reel 189, box 334, folder 2, correspondence about the "loan" of the painting to the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in 1931 and the possibility of it being exchanged for a work in the Berlin museum's collection.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1815 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1815, no. 67.[1]

1838 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom,London, 1838, no. 37.

1867 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1867, no. 21.

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1878 Nottingham Castle, 1878, no. 78.[2]

1892 Loan Collection of Pictures, The Corporation Art Gallery (Guildhall), London, 1892, no. 85.

1925 Loan Exhibition of Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1925, no. 3.

1926 Inaugural Exhibition, The Art Gallery of Toronto, 1926, no. 143.

1928 Exhibition of Art Treasures, The Grafton Galleries, London, 1928, no. 1424.

1929 Exhibition of Dutch Art 1450-1900, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1929, no. 267.

1935 Cinq Siècles d'Art, Exposition universelle et internationale, Brussels, 1935, no. 714.

1936 Tentoonstelling van Oude Kunst, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1936, no. 37.

1939 Loan Exhibition of Dutch Landscape Paintings. 20th Loan Exhibition of Old Masters, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1939, no. 7.

1939 Rétrospective d'art, Exposition internationale, Liège, 1939, no. 54.

1990 Great Dutch Paintings from America, Mauritshuis, The Hague; The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, 1990-1991, no. 17, color repro., as Ships on the Maas River at Dordrecht.

2001 Aelbert Cuyp, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; The National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2001-2002, no. 28, repro.

2008 Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age, Royal Picture House Mauritshuis, The Hague; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2008-2009, no. 15, repro.

EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES

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[1] As Alan Chong has kindly noted, an 1824 index of the British Institution exhibitions mistakenly dates this exhibition to 1813.
[2] Cited in Hans Schneider, "Aelbert Cuyp: The Maas near Dordrecht," in *Unknown Masterpieces in Public and Private Collections*, ed. Wilhelm R. Valentiner, London, 1930: no. 57. An undated Nottingham Castle label was formerly affixed to the back of the picture; it was removed when the painting was lined in 1944 and is now in NGA curatorial files.

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1822 Burnet, John. *Practical hints on Composition in Painting*. London, 1822: 14-15, pl. 2, fig.4 (etching).
1824 Buchanan, William. *Memoirs of Painting*. 2 vols. London, 1824: 2:192, no. 10.
1829 Smith, John. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*. 9 vols. London, 1829-1842: 5(1834):311, no. 98.
1854 Jervis-White-Jervis, Lady Marian. *Painting and Celebrated Painters, Ancient and Modern*. 2 vols. London, 1854: 2:217, 326.
1854 Waagen, Gustav Friedrich. *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collections of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, Illuminated Mss.*. 3 vols. Translated by Elizabeth Rigby Eastlake. London, 1854: 2:313, 316.
1867 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom. *Catalogue of pictures by Italian, Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, French and English masters: with which the proprietors have favoured the Institution. June 1867*. Exh. cat. British Institution, London, 1867: 17, no. 67.
1880 Burnet, John. "Practical Hints on Light and Shade in Painting." In *A Treatise on Painting in Four Parts*. Reprint. London, 1880: Part 2:14-15, pl. 2, fig. 4 (etching).
1884 Veth, G. H. "Aelbert Cuyp, Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp en Benjamin Cuyp." *Oud Holland* 2 (1884): 284, no. 70.
1891 Cundall, Frank. *The Landscape and Pastoral Painters of Holland:*

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Ruisdael, Hobbema, Cuijp, Potter. Illustrated biographies of the great artists. London, 1891: 96-97, 163.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Aelbert Cuyp
Dutch, 1620 - 1691

A Pier Overlooking Dordrecht

early 1640s

oil on panel
overall: 44.5 × 75.9 cm (17 1/2 × 29 7/8 in.)
framed: 63.5 × 93.66 × 4.45 cm (25 × 36 7/8 × 1 3/4 in.)
Gift of George M. and Linda H. Kaufman 2012.73.1

ENTRY

Aelbert Cuyp's numerous views of river life are extremely varied and demonstrate a remarkable sensitivity to the changing light and water conditions encountered on inland waterways. [1] He could comfortably set boats in the water, even as he visually contrasted water's translucent and changing surface with the physical presence of heavy wooden hulls and weighty canvas sails. Cuyp's pictorial sensitivities were also directed toward human and animal activities revolving around the water, which added visual and thematic interest to the inherent beauty of his river scenes.

This luminous painting, executed in the early 1640s, depicts his native Dordrecht from the west as seen from a pier near the village of Zwijndrecht, situated on the opposite bank of the river Maas [fig. 1]. [2] The three small, wooden fishing skiffs tied up at the rough-hewn pier help give the painting its unpretentious, rustic charm. Across the river Maas rise Dordrecht's city walls, with the thin spire of the Groothoofdspoort, a major gateway into the inner harbor, prominently at the left. Sailboats or rowboats, which operated constantly, provided ferry transportation

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across the river to Dordrecht's neighboring villages.

Through the figures' costumes, Cuyp has effectively captured the differing character of the lands on either side of the Maas. A small rowboat ferrying two burghers, distinguishable by their mode of dress, approaches the Zwijndrecht pier where travelers await the voyage to Dordrecht. Whether rural folk or city dwellers dressed for an outing—the man holding a rifle presumably has gone hunting—those at the pier wear clothing suited for activities in the countryside.

During the early years of his career, Cuyp was particularly intrigued with life along the piers, perhaps because of the variety of scenarios that could be portrayed in this setting. [3] Cuyp's inspiration may have been the Rotterdam painter Simon de Vlieger (Dutch, 1600/1601 - 1653), who also starkly contrasted the architectural forms of piers and adjacent buildings with vigorous skies and sun-filled, distant river views [fig. 2]. [4] De Vlieger, however, never focused as much on the human aspect of the scene as did his Dordrecht counterpart.

The forceful, even monumental character of Cuyp's painting comes largely from the juxtaposition of the boldly modeled foreground forms with the light-filled riverscape beyond them. It is reinforced by the strong emphasis on the horizontal, not only of the pier and the distant horizon, but also of the ripples in the water. With this solid framework firmly established, the sailboats seem to glide effortlessly back and forth, catching the light winds that fill the air. This controlled yet vigorously executed manner of painting is one of Cuyp's most distinctive characteristics, and is unlike that of any of his contemporaries. Given the freshness of his touch, it is always surprising to discover that Cuyp often repeated compositional elements in different paintings. For example, the rowboat and oarsman in this work are identical to the workman and boat hauling peat in Cuyp's *Cattle and Cottage Near a River* from the early 1640s [fig. 3].

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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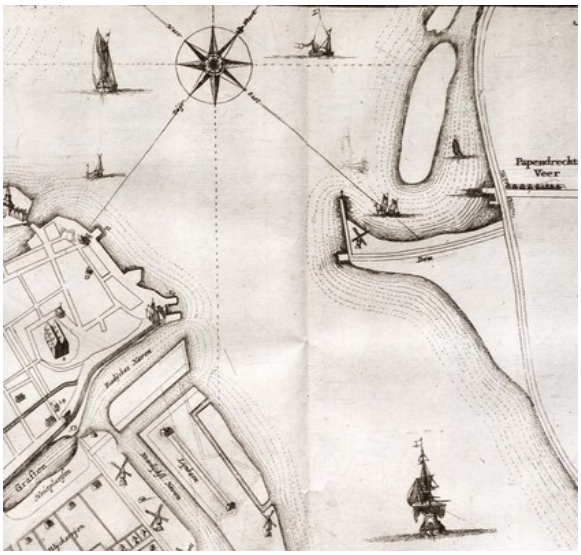

fig. 1 Detail, Romeyn de Hooghe, “Bird's eye view of Dordrecht” in *Beschryvinge der stad Dordrecht* by Matthys Balen, Dordrecht, 1677, fol. 57, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, DC, DJ411.D6 B18

fig. 2 Simon de Vlieger, *View of the Oostpoort*, c. 1640, Hamburg Kunsthalle

fig. 3 Aelbert Cuyp, *Cattle and Cottage Near a River*, early 1640s, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Tromp, Rotterdam

NOTES

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[1] This text is based on Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), no. 8.

[2] In Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, DC, 2001), no. 8, 189, the site is wrongly identified as being a pier near the village of Papendrecht, which is located to the northwest of Dordrecht on the far side of the river Merwede, a branch of the Maas river delta upstream of the city.

[3] See Stephen Reiss, *Aelbert Cuyp* (Boston, 1975), 29, no. 4 for an illustration of Cuyp's earliest known depiction of a pier, *The Melkpoortje on the Dordrecht Harbor*, 1639. For further information about this painting, see Alan Chong, "Aelbert Cuyp" in *Dictionary of Art*, vol. 8 (London, 1996), 268, no. 4.

[4] Stephen Reiss, *Aelbert Cuyp* (Boston, 1975), 56, was the first author to suggest De Vlieger's influence on Cuyp for the depiction of such scenes. However, as Henriette Rahusen has noted (personal communication), Cuyp's view follows a strong cartographic tradition dating back to the late 16th century. See, for example, Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg's *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, Amsterdam, 1572, where the panoramic view of Dordrecht, as seen from across the river, depicts three people in the foreground standing on a spit of land, seemingly awaiting a ferry to take them back to town.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a wood panel made from two boards joined horizontally. It has been backed and cradled. Wooden strips have been added to the edges. The thin, off-white ground does not fully cover the color or the grain of the wood. The paint was applied in various thicknesses, sometimes very thinly so that the wood remains visible, and in other areas, the lighter passages in the foreground, for example, the paint is thicker. The sky has been painted more thinly, and sometimes the texture of the artist's brush is discernible, particularly where he used the end of the bristles to give texture to the clouds. Cuyp applied the paint wet-into-wet, but also manipulated semi-dry layers in some areas, such as the reflections in the water.

The panel is in good condition and is not warped. Some tented paint runs along the grain just above the heads of the figures. Numerous small areas of inpainting are found in the sky, some of which has discolored slightly. It is likely that this inpainting was applied to lessen the dominance of the wood grain, which becomes more pronounced because the paint and ground become more transparent with age. The varnish is even but slightly yellow.

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PROVENANCE

(Sale, by De Vries, Roos, and Brondgeest, Amsterdam, 10-12 May 1853, 2nd day, no. 16); (Lamme).[1] Herman de Kat, Dordrecht; (his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 2-3 May and 7-8 May 1866, no. 17); Louis Viardot [1800-1883], Paris; (his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 30 April 1884, no. 2). Alfred Thieme, Leipzig, by 1889.[2] (Galerie Sedelmeyer, Paris).[3] private collection, Basel;[4] (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 30 November 1973, no. 124); (Brod Gallery, London). (Julie Kraus, Paris), in 1976.[5] private collection;[6] (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 18 April 1985, no. 2); George M. [1932-2001] and Linda H. Kaufman, Norfolk, Virginia; Kaufman Americana Foundation, Norfolk; gift 2012 to NGA.

[1] This might be A.J. Lamme, an auctioneer in Rotterdam, or D.A. Lamme, an art expert in Paris.

[2] Thieme lent the painting to an exhibition in 1889 in Leipzig.

[3] The 1973 sale catalogue lists Sedelmeyer in the provenance, and there is a red wax seal in the bottom right corner on the reverse of the painting impressed with the words "Galerie Sedelmeyer Paris."

[4] The painting is described as "the property of a Basle [*sic*] collector" in the 1973 sale catalogue.

[5] This information is given in *Aelbert Cuyp*, ed. Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2001-2002, New York and London, 2001: no. 8, 189.

[6] The painting is described as "the property of a gentleman" in the 1985 sale catalogue.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1889 Ältere Meister aus sächsischem Privatbesitz, Leipziger Kunstverein, Leipzig, 1889, no. 44.

2001 Aelbert Cuyp, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2001-2002, no. 8, repro.

2008 Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age, Mauritshuis, The Hague; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2008-2009, not in catalogue (shown only in Washington).

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Aelbert Cuyp
Dutch, 1620 - 1691

River Landscape with Cows

1645/1650

oil on panel
overall: 68 x 90.2 cm (26 3/4 x 35 1/2 in.)
framed: 91.1 x 112.7 x 5.1 cm (35 7/8 x 44 3/8 x 2 in.)
Inscription: lower right: A:Cuijp
Gift of Family Petschek (Aussig) 1986.70.1

ENTRY

Near the water's edge of an inland waterway, eight cows quietly chew their cud in the gentle winds of a late afternoon in summer. In the distance, a few sailboats glide along the river, their reflections shimmering in the peaceful water. On the crest of the gentle rise to the right, two herdsmen converse with a rider mounted on a large brown horse. Shafts of light breaking through the billowing clouds not only accentuate the figures' diminutive forms but also seem to provide a spiritual blessing upon their presence. The overriding sense is that this is a blessed land—fertile, prosperous, and at peace.

To the seventeenth-century Dutch, the well-fed cow was more than just a symbol of the nation's prosperity. Milk, butter, and cheese were important components of the Dutch diet, and succulent Dutch cheese was a major export product. Cuyp was not the first Dutch artist to focus on a herd of cows for his subject matter, but in his hands the theme took on a grandeur and dignity lacking in the work of his predecessors. [1] Whether in the hilly, dense forest landscapes of Roelandt Savery (Dutch, 1576 - 1639) or the flatter fields of scenes by Herman Saftleven (Dutch, 1609

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- 1685), cows were portrayed as inelegant, graceless animals that mill together in rather haphazard formations. Cuyp, however, seems to have perceived a certain nobility in the beast, one he emphasized by placing the viewer at a low vantage point and by silhouetting the cattle against a light-filled background. He simplified and purified their forms to give their heads sharp, angular shapes. He further emphasized these ennobled profiles by orienting his herd on a horizontal axis along which their overlapping forms become visually connected. Finally, he projected their heads forward, even those lying in the grass, in a way that suggests a degree of alertness and even intelligence not normally associated with this species.

This painting is one of several similar images that Cuyp painted in the late 1640s and early 1650s; another example is *Landscape with Cows* [fig. 1]. In each of these works the viewpoint is low so that the animals take on added grandeur. The compositions are also linked by the way in which the herd is placed in the immediate foreground, along the bank of an inland waterway, and by the dramatic cloud formations that activate the sky. The stylistic evolution that led Cuyp to this imposing vision of pastoral life is complex. His picturesque scenes of rural life from the late 1630s and early 1640s belong to a tradition first introduced to Dutch art by Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651), and developed by, among others, his pupil Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp (1594–1652), Aelbert Cuyp's father. By the early 1640s, however, Aelbert began to move away from this style and developed a tonal approach to landscape under the influence of Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656). His compositions, painted largely in yellow ochers, became simpler as he eliminated many picturesque elements from his scenes. Van Goyen's interest in vigorous cloud formations, evident in his river landscapes from the late 1640s, also seems to have awakened Cuyp to the possibilities of incorporating such skies in his works. In *River Landscape with Cows*, Van Goyen's influence can be seen in the way Cuyp's free and energetic brushwork in the clouds creates effects that capture the varied atmospheric conditions of a Dutch midsummer day.

By the late 1640s, however, Cuyp also began to incorporate stylistic elements into his paintings that derive from the Dutch Italianate artists who were then returning to the Netherlands, among them Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652), Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem (Dutch, 1620 - 1683), Jan Baptist Weenix (1621–1660/1661), and Jan Asselijn (Dutch, c. 1610 - 1652). Although Cuyp's interest in depicting rural Dutch scenes remained essentially the same as in this work, he began to dramatize his images by portraying large foreground forms, particularly cattle, within a

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generalized, arcadian landscape. [2]

Like other Dutch landscape artists, Cuyp based his painted scenes on two basic types of drawings made from life: extensive landscape drawings and studies of single figures and animals. One of his animal studies, that of a horse seen from behind, may have been the source for the horse on the crest of the hill [fig. 2]. Although a number of Cuyp's studies of cows resemble the animals in this painting, no known drawing served as a direct prototype for any of them.

Although this painting's provenance prior to 1917 is not known, its recent history is remarkable. In 1938, on the eve of World War II, the four sons of Jewish industrialist Ignaz Petschek decided to flee their homes in Aussig, Czechoslovakia, in advance of the impending German invasion of their homeland. To express his contempt for the Nazis, Franz Petschek, who had inherited the Cuyp painting, had a copy made of it, which he left hanging on the wall of his home. The copyist also painted a temporary watercolor landscape over the *River Landscape with Cows*, which Petschek took with him on his family's flight through Switzerland, France, and Spain. After crossing the Atlantic to Brazil aboard a freighter, the family finally arrived in New York City in 1940. Following the deaths of their father, Frank (Americanized from Franz), in 1963 and of their mother, Janina, in 1986, Elisabeth de Picciotto and Maria Petschek Smith donated Cuyp's painting to the National Gallery of Art to express the family's gratitude to the United States of America for the safe haven it gave to refugees, and for the freedom and opportunities it has afforded to so many throughout history. [3]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Aelbert Cuyp, *Landscape with Cows*, oil on panel, Collection of Ilone and George Kremer, Netherlands

fig. 2 Albert Cuyp, *Two Studies of a Lean Horse and a Study of a Dog*, c. 1647-1650, black chalk on cream antique laid paper, Harvard Art Museums / Fogg Museum, Loan from Maida and George Abrams, Boston Massachusetts, TL37360.13. Photo: Imaging Department ©President and Fellows of Harvard College

NOTES

[1] Joaneath Spicer, "'*De Koe voor d'aerde statt*': The Origin of the Dutch Cattle Piece," in *Essays in Northern European Art Presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Bergmann on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Anne-Marie Logan (Doornsijk, 1983), 251–256.

[2] Cuyp's compositional organization, in which a large diagonal form fills the lower right quadrant, is characteristic of the so-called single-wing composition so prevalent in Dutch landscapes from the period. For a full discussion of the changes in the compositional structure of Dutch landscapes, see Wolfgang Stechow, *Dutch Landscape Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, Studies in the History of European Art, no. 1 (Washington, DC, 1966), 38–40, 50–64. For a comparable work, see Stephen Reiss, *Aelbert Cuyp* (Boston, 1975), 76; and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichenis der Werke der herorragensten holländischen Maler des XVII, Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. (Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 2:1909.

[3] I would like to thank Maria Smith and Elisabeth de Picciotto for the information they provided to me about their family history.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a cradled wood panel composed of three, slightly warped, oak boards joined horizontally. [1] The horizontal grain is prominently visible through the extremely thin, off-white ground layer and paint. Paint is applied in thin opaque layers worked both wet-into-wet and wet-over-dry. Small elements, such as the boats, are painted over landscape and sky, while reserves were left for larger elements, such as the cows. Parallel strokes from a dry brush pulled through drying paint give texture to areas such as the distant landscape, while the sky is vigorously brushmarked.

Small losses are found along the edges, the lower panel join, and the foreground, where a caustic liquid dripped on the surface. Dark passages are moderately abraded. In 1987 discolored varnish and retouching were removed. In 2001 the painting underwent conservation treatment again to remove the varnish and inpainting applied in 1987, which had discolored.

[1] The wood was characterized as oak by visual examination.

PROVENANCE

Caroline Anne, 4th marchioness of Ely [1856-1917, née Caroline Anne Caithness], Eversley Park, Winchmore Hill, London; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 3 August 1917, no. 43); (C. Huggins, London);[1] sold 9 August 1917 to (Thos. Agnew & Sons, Ltd., London, and the dealer H.M. Clark); sold September 1919 to Gaston Neuman, Brussels.[2] (sale, Frederik Muller & Co., Amsterdam, 30 November–6 December 1920, 1st day, no. 1024, bought in); (Frederik Muller & Co., Amsterdam), until at least 1922;[3] possibly (Steinmeyer, Lucerne), in 1923;[4] (Paul Cassirer & Co., Berlin), by 1924.[5] Ignaz Petschek, Aussig, Czechoslovakia, by 1927; by inheritance to his son, Frank C. Petschek [d. 1963], Aussig, and New York;[6] by inheritance to his daughters, Elisabeth de Picciotto, New York, and Maria Petschek Smith, Falls Church, Virginia; gift 1986 to NGA.

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[1] Letter, 12 November 1952, Christie, Manson & Woods Ltd. to Frank Petschek, copy in NGA curatorial files.

[2] Many details of the provenance, in particular the specifics of Agnew's ownership and sale of the painting, were researched by Alan Chong, and provided to Arthur Wheelock in letters from 1988 and 1990 (some undated), in NGA curatorial files.

[3] Muller lent the painting to exhibitions in 1921 and 1922.

[4] Steinmeyer's possible ownership is cited in the files at the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague; see their letter of 21 April 1951 to Frank Petschek, copy in NGA curatorial files.

[5] Cassirer lent the painting to a 1924 exhibition.

[6] The picture was removed from Czechoslovakia in, or shortly before, 1938 by Frank Petschek.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Daellen, François van

active c. 1636 - c. 1651

BIOGRAPHY

Very little is known about the life of the still-life painter François van Daellen. He was active in The Hague, joining the Guild of Saint Luke in 1636 as a student of the portraitist Joachim Ottensz Houckgeest (c. 1585–after 1644).[1] Documents indicate that the still-life painter Abraham van Beyeren (1620/1621–1690), who also worked in The Hague, repaid a debt to Van Daellen in 1651.[2]

That little else is known about Van Daellen's life is made more complicated by the fact that his existing oeuvre is not large—about seven paintings—and is relatively uniform. Everyone one of his extant paintings is an intimate vanitas still life that depicts extinguished candles and skulls arranged with books or musical instruments on marble tabletops. Painters from Leiden, among them Jacques de Gheyn II (Dutch, 1565 - 1629), Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684), and Hendrick van Steenwijk the Younger (Flemish, c. 1580 - 1649) similarly juxtaposed literary achievements with reminders of the fleeting nature of human life, which suggests that Van Daellen had some connection to this artistic tradition.[3] Although Van Daellen repeated almost identical combinations of items in all his paintings, he created a unique architectural environment for each one, sometimes setting his arrangements within stone niches or placing them before classicizing columns and courtyards.[4] Two such works, a pair of vanitas arrangements set within stone niches, have been in the Uffizi collections since 1686, suggesting that Van Daellen's works were regarded highly enough in the 17th century to attract the attention of Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici.[5]

[1] Frederik Daniel Otto Obreen, Archief voor Nederlandsche kunstgeschiedenis, 7 vols. (Rotterdam, 1881–1882), 4:32. On Joachim Houckgeest, see Abraham Bredius, "De Haagsche schilders Joachim en Gerard Houckgeest," *Oud-Holland* 6 (1888): 81–86.

[2] Abraham Bredius, *Kunstler-Inventare: Urkunden zur Geschichte der holländischen Kunst des XVIten, XVIIten und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts* (The Hague,

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1915), 1168.

[3] A “Van Daelen” family appears in the Leiden baptismal and burial records in the first decades of the seventeenth century, including one “Francois van Daellen,” who died on February 14, 1601; Stadsarchief van Leiden (Stadsbestuur [SA II]), Leiden, archive 0501A, inventory number 1313.

[4] See his painting in the Musée Municipale Charles de Bruyère-Charles Friry, Remirement; repr. in Revue du Louvre 4 (1994): 76, no. 9.

[5] Cosimo III de’ Medici transferred the paintings from the Pitti Palace to the Villa della Petraia in 1686; inventory 1890, no. 1077 and 1081 from the Uffizi; Uffizi Catologo Generale (Florence, 1979), cat. P1765; Marco Chiarini, I dipinti Olandesi del seicento e del settecento (Rome, 1989), 101–104. It is likely that the pair came to Florence with Cosimo when he returned from his trip to the Netherlands from 1666 to 1669.

Alexandra Libby

June 30, 2017

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

François van Daellen
active c. 1636 - c. 1651

Vanitas Still Life

c. 1650

oil on paper laid down on panel
overall: 20.3 × 16.5 cm (8 × 6 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower left: F.V. Daellen
Nell and Robert Weidenhammer Fund 2014.58.1

ENTRY

This striking *vanitas* still-life painting juxtaposes scholarly and artistic achievements with reminders of the fleeting nature of human life. Daylight streaming into a dimly lit room from an open window at left highlights a marble tabletop adorned with a blue cloth. The cool light illuminates a large skull and femur on the table, softly modeling their smooth, curved shapes. Books and pamphlets of all sizes lie scattered beneath the bones. The books sit neatly shut, their leather covers glinting, while the pages of the pamphlets are curled and bent from frequent use. One of them is filled with small, illegible text. Smoke wafts upward from a just-extinguished candle with a warm ember still glowing at the tip of the wick.

This small panel is one of the finest known works by the Dutch painter François van Daellen. Van Daellen joined the Guild of Saint Luke in The Hague in 1636 after apprenticing with portraitist Joachim Ottensz Houckgeest (c. 1585–after 1644), but little else is known about his life. [1] In other works, such as the *vanitas* still life in Detroit [fig. 1], Van Daellen portrayed the same combination of objects on similarly sized panels, but with less compositional unity. He frequently varied the architectural settings of his scenes. Some show arrangements framed within illusionistic stone niches, while others offer glimpses of grander spaces with columns and courtyards. In this painting, Van Daellen has placed the still life behind an illusionistic archway, creating an intimate interior and suggesting the kind of secluded study in which this small painting may have hung. The bright highlights and streaming sunlight set before a dark background, as well as the distinctive vertical format, suggest a date around 1650.

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Van Daellen probably derived his combination of books, skulls, femurs, candles, hourglasses, and other *vanitas* elements from the examples of artists working in Leiden in the 1630s, including Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684) and Harmen Steenwijck (1612–1656). Leiden boasted an internationally renowned theological university, as well as a branch of the Plantin publishing house, both of which may have made books an especially evocative subject for that city's viewers. [2] Books, whose physical permanence can transcend the span of a human life, often suggest associations with scholarly and creative achievements. Some artists made this association explicit by including mottoes such as "non omnis moriar" (I shall not entirely die), "vita brevis ars lunga" (life is short, art is long), or "finis coronat opus" (the end crowns the work) in their *vanitas* images. [3] These maxims underlined the Christian notion that, for one who has led a virtuous life, death is to be welcomed joyously rather than feared. Worn and tattered books could echo these positive connotations by evoking a life spent in worthwhile study rather than in the vain accumulation and display of worldly goods. An emblem from Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes*, published in Leiden in 1586, advises, "The use, not the reading of books makes us wise" [fig. 2]. Similarly, in many book still lifes painters celebrated Dutch intellectual accomplishments by depicting specific title pages of plays or volumes of poetry, as in De Heem's *Books and Pamphlets* from 1638, in which Gerbrandt Adriaensz Bredero's *Treur-Spel van Rodd'rick ende Alphonsus* is prominent [fig. 3]. [4] No specific texts can be identified in the Gallery's small panel; the issues of scholarly achievement and human transience are broadly expressed rather than identified in a known publication.

Books, however, as with many objects in Dutch still lifes, did not have a single symbolic meaning. Finely bound publications could be seen as objects of vanity, and satirical emblems lambasted profligate book collectors as know-nothings who ostentatiously displayed their books without understanding their contents [fig. 4]. [5] In this painting the tattered pamphlets could also suggest how fugitive and vain are the accomplishments of man in the face of death. [6] As Geoffrey Whitney warns his readers, amassing huge numbers of books, and even perusing them at length, is a vain endeavor if the wisdom printed on the page is not applied to one's daily life**.** [7] Whitney paired this emblem with a second one that depicts a table bearing an hourglass, a candle, and an open tome [fig. 5]. [8] His explanatory text advises that idleness will consign one to oblivion, while studiousness will bring fame, and thus triumph over death.

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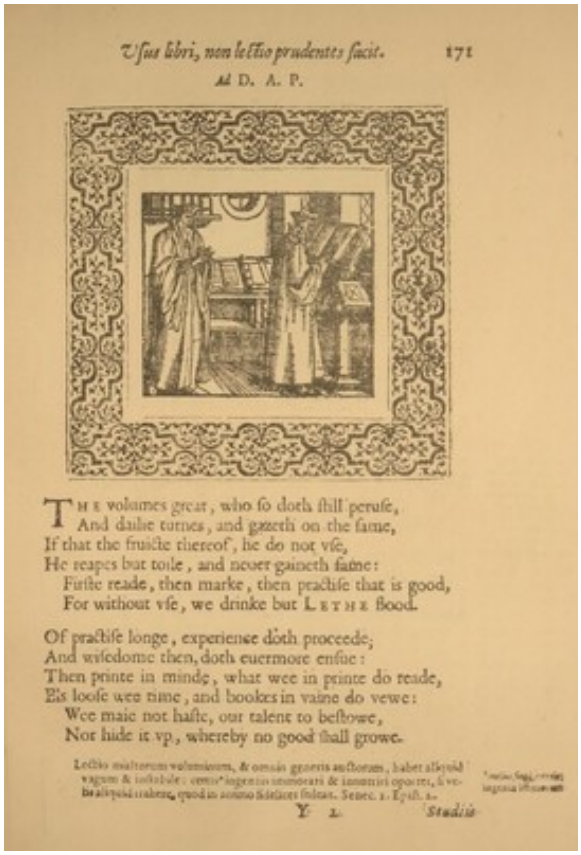
Van Daellen does not prescribe a specific reading of this *vanitas* still life by means of a painted motto, but the concentration of bright sunlight streaming into the study and the placement of the skull as though looking toward the open window evokes the promise of eternal life. One can easily imagine the owner of this small painting contemplating it in his own study, ruminating on his mortality and hopes for salvation.

Alexandra Libby

June 30, 2017

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 François van Daellen, *Vanitas Still Life*, 1692, oil on oak panel, Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Alfred Brod, Ltd. Detroit Institute of Arts / Bridgeman Images



Vsus libri, non lectio prudentes facit. 171

Ad D. A. P.

THE volumes great, who so doth still peruse,
And daihe turnes, and gazeth on the same,
If that the fruicte thereof, he do not vse,
He reapes but toile, and neuer gaineth fame:
Firste reade, then marke, then practise that is good,
For without vse, we drinke but LETHE flood.

Of practise longe, experience doth proceede;
And wisedome then, doth euermore ensue:
Then printe in minde, what wee in printe do reade,
Els loose wee time, and bookes in vaine do vewe:
Wee maie not haste, our talent to bestowe,
Nor hide it vp, whereby no good shall growe.

Lectio multorum voluminum, & omnis generis auctorum, habet aliquid vagum & instabile: cum ingenio immorari & innutriri oportet, si velis aliquid trahere, quod in animo fideliter sedeat. Senec. 1. Epist. 2.

Y 2 Studiis

fig. 2 Geoffrey Whitney, "Usus, non lectio prudentis facit," from *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leiden, 1586), 171, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (90-B15020)

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fig. 3 Jan Davidsz. de Heem, *Still Life with Books*, 1628, oil on panel, Fondation Custodia, Collection Frits Lugt, Acquired in 1918, inv. 183

fig. 4 Sebastian Brant, *Das Narrenschiff: Faksimile der Erstausgabe von 1494 / Sebastian Brant; Mit einem Anhang enthaltend die Holzschnitte der folgenden Originalausgaben und solche der Locherschen Übersetzung, und einem Nachwort von Franz Schultz*, Basel, 1494, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, PT1509. N2 1913

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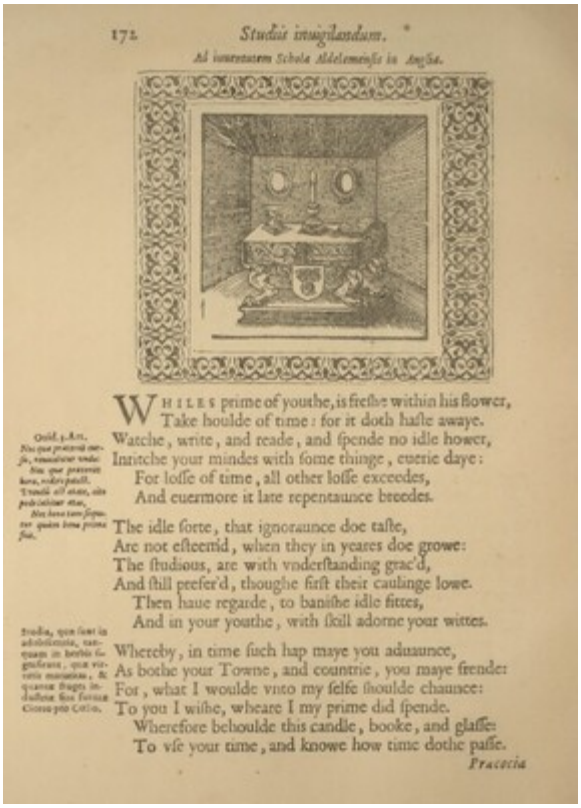

fig. 5 Geoffrey Whitney, "Studiis invigilandum," from *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leiden, 1586), 172, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (90-B15020)

NOTES

[1] Frederik Daniel Otto Obreen, *Archief voor Nederlandsche kunstgeschiedenis*, vol. 4, (Rotterdam, 1881–1882), 32.

[2] Alan Chong, and Wouter Kloek, *Still-Life Paintings from the Netherlands, 1550–1720* (Amsterdam and Cleveland, 1999), 168.

[3] For example, see Hendrick Hondius I, *Vanitas ("Finis Coronat Opus")*, 1626, engraving, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam RP-P-1904-15; see Ruud Priem, *Vermeer, Rembrandt, and the Golden Age of Dutch Art: Masterpieces from the Rijksmuseum* (Vancouver, 2009), 48–49.

[4] Alan Chong and Wouter Kloek, *Still-Life Paintings from the Netherlands,*

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1550–1720 (Amsterdam and Cleveland, 1999), cat. 27.

[5] Sebastian Brant, *Das Narrenschiff* (Basel, 1494; facsimile edition, Strasbourg, 1913), 8.

[6] See Jan Bialostocki, "Books of Wisdom and Books of Vanity," *In Memoriam: J. G. van Gelder, 1903–1980* (Utrecht, 1982), 37–67; Ann Jensen Adams and Sabine Schulze, eds., *Leselust: Niederländische Malerei von Rembrandt bis Vermeer* (Frankfurt am Main, 1993); Jochen Becker, "Das Buch im Stilleben, das Stilleben im Buch," *Stilleben in Europa* (Munster, 1980), 448–478.

[7] Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leiden, 1586), 171; adapted from Johannes Sambucus, *Emblemata* (Antwerp, 1566), 56.

[8] Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leiden, 1586), 172; adapted from Hadrianus Junius, *Emblemata* (Antwerp, 1565), 11. Also see Ann Jensen Adams and Sabine Schulze, eds., *Leselust: Niederländische Malerei von Rembrandt bis Vermeer* (Frankfurt am Main, 1993), 34.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The primary support is paper that measures 19.1 by 14.7 centimeters (7.5 by 5.75 in.) and is adhered to a thin wooden panel. A 0.6-centimeter-wide wooden veneer is glued around the edges of the secondary support to the height of the top layer of paper, possibly as an attempt to hide the edges of the paper and make the painting look as if it were directly on the panel. Two incisions have been made along the top and the bottom edges of the wooden veneer, likely meant to imitate panel joins.

The paper support is covered with an extremely thin, dark, blackish brown layer applied overall. Under magnification, this layer appears as small islands of paint particles that allow the paper support to show through. On top is a thin, transparent, reddish brown imprimatura, which extends throughout much of the composition but was not applied overall. The thickness and transparency of this layer vary throughout. Although infrared reflectography shows no signs of an underdrawing, it appears that the artist planned the composition partly with a thin, dark, blackish brown painted line, as well as leaving reserves in the reddish brown imprimatura for certain compositional elements. [1] The blackish brown painted line was applied on top of the thin blackish brown layer.

The paint medium is estimated to be oil, and the paint is delicately applied in thin glazes with little texture. As a result of thin, semitransparent or transparent paint

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layers, the luminosity of the underlying layers and the paper support play a large role in the overall composition.

The primary support and paint layers are in good condition, although there are several small areas in the top portion of the painting where the paper support is delaminating from its wooden secondary support. There is some inpainting in the dark background and in some of the shadows of the still-life elements. The varnish is thick, glossy, and mildly discolored.

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.1–1.4 microns (J filter).

PROVENANCE

Private collection, United States; (sale, Bonhams, New York, 6 November 2013, no. 15, as Attributed to Frans van Dalen); (Jack Kilgore & Co., Inc., New York); purchased 20 May 2014 by NGA.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Gerrit Dou, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1665, oil on canvas, Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo Collection

Dou, Gerrit

Also known as
Dou, Gerard
Dutch, 1613 - 1675

BIOGRAPHY

Gerrit Dou, considered the founder of the Dutch school of *fijnschilderij*, or fine painting, was born in Leiden on April 7, 1613, the son of Marytje Jansdr van Rosenburg and the glassmaker and engraver Douwe Jansz. According to Orlers, Dou received his first instruction, in the art of glass engraving, from his father. He was apprenticed to the copper engraver Bartholomeus Dolendo (c. 1571–c. 1629) for a year and a half, beginning in 1622 at the young age of nine, and then trained with the glass painter Pieter Couwenhorn (c. 1599–1654) for two years. Because he was a member of the glaziers' guild from 1625 to 1627, it is tempting to make a connection between this youthful career and the smooth, shiny surface effects characteristic of his later panel paintings.

On February 14, 1628, Dou began his apprenticeship with Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669), which seems to have lasted until the master moved to Amsterdam some three or four years later. At the time he entered Rembrandt's workshop Dou was not quite fifteen years old and Rembrandt was only twenty-one. Although there are no dated works by Dou from this period, a number of his pictures are so close in style to those of his teacher that they must have been painted at this time. Indeed, early works by Dou have at times been attributed to Rembrandt himself, a confusion stemming in part from the fact that Dou and Rembrandt shared subjects and models during these years.

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After Rembrandt went to Amsterdam, Dou produced ever more finely wrought, highly finished compositions with increasingly smooth, enamel-like surfaces. He also began to employ a range of cooler, paler colors in preference to the warm, darkish browns of his earlier works.

Dou painted a wide range of subjects, including genre scenes, history paintings, still lifes, portraits, and—unusual for a seventeenth-century Dutch painter—nudes. He also began painting candlelit scenes during the 1650s. His fame quite rightly rests, however, on the meticulously painted, small genre scenes that make up a large portion of his oeuvre. These typically depict one or two figures engaging in some kind of domestic activity, either in an interior or else looking out over a windowsill—a compositional device that Dou was chiefly responsible for popularizing. Many of these works are open to a considerable degree of symbolic interpretation, containing numerous, if sometimes ambiguous, visual references to well-known contemporary proverbs or emblems.

Dou had remarkable success. From his own lifetime until late in the nineteenth century, his work was considered one of the crowning achievements of Dutch art, and his pictures consistently fetched higher prices than those of Rembrandt. By 1648, when he is recorded as one of the founder-members of the Leiden Saint Luke's Guild, his pictures commanded some of the highest prices of their day, and he had already gained a remarkable international reputation. Pieter Spiering, the agent in The Hague of Queen Christina of Sweden, apparently paid 1,000 guilders per year to secure for his queen right of first refusal of whatever Dou produced. In 1660 the States General of the Netherlands included several paintings by Dou amongst their gifts to Charles II of England on the occasion of his restoration to the throne. He subsequently invited Dou to travel to England and work at the royal court, an invitation the artist did not accept.

Indeed, it seems that Dou hardly ever left his native Leiden, where his work was as appreciated as it was in the royal courts of Europe. In 1641 the mayor of Leiden, Jan Jansz Orlers, wrote admiringly of Dou's technique in his general description of the city, *Beschrijvinge der Stadt Leyden*, and in 1665 a local collector, Johan de Bye, rented a room in which he exhibited twenty-seven of the artist's paintings, one of the first recorded occasions of an exhibition devoted to the works of a single painter.

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Dou's enduring fame rests on the fascination for the products of extremely painstaking and skillful labor. The time that went into the creation of Dou's minutely detailed works is legendary: one anecdote relates how, when complimented on the patience with which he had painted a tiny broom the size of a fingernail, he replied that he still had three days' work to do on it. He is also said to have spent five days on the underpainting of a single hand in a portrait. Since he charged six guilders an hour for his services as a portrait painter, it is hardly surprising that these do not constitute a large proportion of his oeuvre.

Dou never married. He was buried in the Pieterskerk at Leiden on February 9, 1675. His pupils included Godefridus Schalcken (Dutch, 1643 - 1706) and Frans van Mieris (Dutch, 1635 - 1681), as well as a number of less well-known painters, such as his nephew Domenicus van Tol (c. 1635–1676), Abraham de Pape (before 1621–1650), Karel de Moor (1655–1738), and Matthijs Naiveu (1647– 1726).

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Gerrit Dou
Dutch, 1613 - 1675

Bust of a Bearded Man

c. 1642/1645

oil on panel
overall (oval): 18.41 × 14.92 cm (7 1/4 × 5 7/8 in.)
framed: 34 x 30.2 x 5.4 cm (13 3/8 x 11 7/8 x 2 1/8 in.)
Inscription: lower right over sitter's left shoulder, "DOV" in smaller letters: GDOV
Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.136.32

ENTRY

With piercing eyes, the bearded man in Gerrit Dou's small painting gazes steadily off to his right, his weathered face brightly illuminated against the dark beret that covers the back of his head. Everything about his physique and body language, from the set line of his jaw and the tight curls of his moustache to the forward tilt of his head, conveys his firm resolve. Dou reinforced this sense of authority through the vigor of his brushwork, which enlivens the figure by capturing the light striking his form. Bright accents bring life to his eyes, help model his forehead and cheek bones, and articulate the strands of his cropped, grey hair. Similar highlights define the folds of his open shirt and the buttons of his black jacket.

Dou's tour de force is an outstanding example of a *tronie*, a type of figure study that Dutch artists frequently employed in the early to mid-17th century. Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) and those connected to his workshop were particularly interested in painting such works, and Dou certainly derived his penchant for depicting them from his master. Rembrandt and Dou made *tronies* of both young and old models, but they were particularly drawn to the elderly, in whom they found "character," whether in the creases that lined a wizened face or in the wisdom that radiated from those who have experienced the vagaries of life. *Tronies* were often sold as independent works, although sometimes they were used by artists as studies for their own genre scenes and history paintings. Although there is very little documentation about these *tronies*, the term was widely used in 17th-century inventories to describe such figure studies. [1]

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A great number of *tronies* were painted in Leiden in the 1620s and 1630s not only by Rembrandt and Dou, but also by Jan Lievens (Dutch, 1607 - 1674). Most of the sitters are anonymous, although some models have been identified, among them Rembrandt's mother. The elderly subjects of Dou's *tronies* have often been identified as his own parents. Occasionally, collectors and dealers even made pendants of Dou's small panels, which tend to be oval in shape and about the same size. Thus it is not surprising that the first likely mention of *Bust of a Bearded Man* in the sale of the Jacques de Roore collection in The Hague in 1747 described the sitter as the artist's father and paired it with a now-lost "portrait of the artist's mother." If this was the Gallery's painting and its purported pendant, they were sold separately in the Johan van der Marck sale in Amsterdam in 1773 (nos. 66 and 67). In 1777, however, when this "portrait of Dou's father" appeared in a sale in Paris, it was paired with a self-portrait of the same dimensions by Dou.

Despite the romantic notion that Dou, Rembrandt, and Lievens depicted their aged parents in such works, most of these identifications—including the notion that this *tronie* was a portrait of Dou's father—have been proven wrong. [2] Dou's *Self-Portrait* in the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum in Braunschweig, which dates from the 1650s, shows the artist holding a small family portrait, presumably his own [fig. 1]. [3]The father of this family has a darker beard and rounder face than the man in this *tronie*, and is without question a different individual. Unfortunately, the identity of the bearded man in the Gallery's painting is unknown. [4]

Dou was renowned for the remarkable detail of his works, and his meticulous manner of execution brought him fame and fortune throughout his life. [5] In Philips Angel's 1641 lecture "In Praise of the Art of Painting," presented in Leiden, the artist and theorist recommended the "never sufficiently praised Gerard Dou" as a model for young painters. He urged artists to emulate Dou's ability to combine a meticulous style with a "curious looseness" of brushstrokes. [6] Angel remarked that a praiseworthy painter should be able, like Dou, to represent the textures of materials with precise yet lively and bold brushstrokes. On the other hand, an artist who allowed his work to become too stiff and lifeless would be mocked rather than praised. [7]

Few of Dou's *tronies* equal the vigor and animation of this small oval panel, which makes this work difficult to date with certainty. Nevertheless, the rough-hewn character of the model, the strong chiaroscuro effects, and the fusion of detailed handling of paint with expressive brushwork suggests a date in the early 1640s. [8] These painterly qualities can be compared to Dou's depiction of a scholar writing

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at his desk from the mid-1630s, a work in which the elderly bearded man has a comparably intense expression, but whose wrinkled forehead is painted in a more delicate manner [fig. 2].

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

June 30, 2017

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Gerrit Dou, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1655, oil on panel, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig

fig. 2 Gerrit Dou, *Man Interrupted at His Writing*, c. 1635, oil on panel, The Leiden Collection, New York. © The Leiden Collection, New York

NOTES

[1] For an excellent discussion of the history of the term *tronie* and the character of such images, see Dagmar Hirschfelder, “Portrait or Character Head? The Term *Tronie* and Its Meaning in the Seventeenth Century,” in

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Ernst van de Wetering and Bernhard Schnackenburg, *The Mystery of the Young Rembrandt* (Wolfratshausen, 2001), 82–91. See also Dagmar Hirschfelder and Leon Krempel, eds., *Tronies: Das Gesicht in der fruhen Neuzeit* (Berlin, 2014).

[2] See Christiaan Vogelaar and Gerbrand Lorevaar, et.al., *Rembrandt's Mother: Myth and Reality* (Zwolle, 2005).

[3] Although no document identifies the sitters, scholars generally agree that the individuals represented in the group portrait are Dou's father (Douwe Janszoon), his mother (Maria Jansdochter), and his brother (Jan). The style of Dou's costume indicates that he painted his self-portrait in the early 1650s, although the costumes of the figures in the painting he holds appear to date from the early 1630s.

[4] Another version of the painting, probably not authentic, was exhibited in Raleigh: Wilhelm Valentiner, *Rembrandt and His Pupils* (Raleigh, 1956). That painting, which measures 7 ½ x 5 inches, is on canvas.

[5] One of Dou's colleagues, Joachim von Sandrart, emphasized Dou's remarkable diligence and patience while executing his works. See Joachim von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie der edlen, Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste* (Nuremberg, 1675–1679; rev. ed. by A. R. Peltzer, Munich, 1925), 195–196.

[6] Philips Angel, *Lof der Schilder-kunst* (Leiden, 1642; facsimile edition, Utrecht, 1969). See also Philips Angel, "In Praise of Painting," trans. Michael Hoyle, *Simiolus* 24 (1996): 227–258.

[7] This issue is discussed in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "A Reappraisal of Gerard Dou's Reputation," *The William A. Clark Collection* (Washington, DC, 1978), 63.

[8] The painting is dated c. 1642–1645 by Ronni Baer in Ronni Baer et al., *Gerrit Dou, 1613–1675: Master Painter in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. (New Haven and London, 2000), 84.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The primary support is a panel with horizontal grain and a very weak convex warp. On the reverse, most of the edges are beveled except for a small portion of the right side. Despite the lack of beveling along the right edge, the painting appears to retain its original dimensions.

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The panel was prepared with a ground layer that is off-white in color and can be seen along the edges in areas of abraded and chipped paint. It is possible there is a second ground layer—a cool, light earth-brown color—exists on top of the off-white layer, but it is unclear if this layer was applied overall or locally. The composition was blocked out with a semitransparent brown layer, which is evident in the lightest folds of the clothing and the cap. It is difficult to determine if the facial features were delineated with this brown sketch layer because the face was brought up to such a high level of finish. There likely is, however, a layer of dead-coloring under the face and neck.

The paint medium is estimated to be oil. The paint in the background and in the figure's clothing was applied in thin, semitransparent layers, allowing the painted sketch to contribute to the final effect. The face was painted wet-into-wet, with tiny, lively strokes that have a slight impasto and help suggest the wrinkles and furrows in the face.

The painting is in excellent condition and the panel is structurally sound. There are a few old pinpoint losses in the figure's forehead and there is some abrasion to the paint along the edges. A few small spots of retouching appear in the figure's forehead and clothing. Last, the painting is covered in a thick layer of discolored varnish that has a very fine craquelure overall.

PROVENANCE

Possibly[1] Jacques Ignace de Roore, Antwerp;[2] (his estate sale, The Hague, 4 September 1747, no. 89, with pendant). possibly Johan van der Marck, Leiden; (his estate sale, by Hendrik de Winter and Jan Yver, Amsterdam, 25 August 1773 and days following, no. 66).[3] possibly (sale, Hôtel d'Aligre by Alexandre Joseph Paillet, Paris, 17 February 1777 and days following, 1st day, no. 79); (Jacques Langlier, Paris).[4] possiby Gilbert Paignon Dijonval [1708-1792], Paris;[5] by descent to his grandson, Charles-Gilbert, vicomte Morel de Vindé [1749-1852]; (his sale, by Charles Paillet and N. Bérnard, Paris, 17 December 1821 and days following, no. 21 bis); (Thomas Emmerson, London). possibly Jeremiah Harman [1763-1844], London, by 1842;[6] (his estate sale, Christie and Manson, London, 17-18 May 1844, no. 33); Robert Clouston [d. 1882], Balrath, near Navan, co. Meath, Ireland; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 18 June 1881, no. 116); James.[7] Gottfried von Preyer [1807-1901], Vienna, by 1901;[8] (sale, 1902); purchased by William A. Clark [1839-

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1925], New York; bequest 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

[1] This provenance puts together chronologically all the histories attached by a number of authors to various paintings that might be identified with the Gallery's painting; hence, through the 1881 sale, many "possiblys" are added to the text. The first author to do this was James Douglas Breckenridge, *A Handbook of Dutch and Flemish Paintings in the William Andrews Clark Collection*, Washington, 1955: 13 note. There is uncertainty identifying the Gallery's painting in the sale catalogue descriptions, in which the painting is often described as a portrait of the artist's father, and the authors sometimes describe separate paintings that might be the same one. See: John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 1829–1842: 1(1829):19, no. 55 [1777 Du Barry collection sale]; 34, no. 99 [Paignon Dijouval *sic* collection bought 1821 *en bloc* by Mr. Emmerson]; 9 (1842):18, no. 58 [Paignon de Dijonval, Emmerson, J. Harman]; Ernst Wilhelm Moes, *Iconographia Batava*, Vol. 1, Amsterdam, 1897: 483, no. 3984/2 [De Roore 1747] and 3 [Coulston *sic* 1881, J. Harman 1844]; Wilhelm Martin, *Het Leven en de werken van Gerrit Dou*, Leiden, 1901: 203, no. 135 [Paignon Dijonval *sic*, Harman 1843]; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*,10 vols., Esslingen and Paris, 1907-1928: 1(1907):431, no. 291 [Paignon Dijonval *sic*, Emmerson, Harman 1844, Coulston *sic* 1881, Von Preyer, Clarke *sic*]; 432, no. 292 [De Roore, 1747, Van der Marck 1773]; 436, no. 319d [Dubarry *sic* 1777, and identified by the author as possibly the same as no. 292].

[2] This is the name as given in the 1747 sale catalogue. He was probably Jacobus Ignace de Roore, 1686-1747, a painter and art dealer in Antwerp.

[3] Yver's name appears beside this lot (and lot number 67, a woman's portrait) in an annotated copy of the sale catalogue in the NGA Library, indicating the painting might have been bought in.

[4] Although some of the paintings in this sale belonged to the comtesse du Barry, and Smith and Hofstede de Groot describe the sale as the Du Barry sale, not all the

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paintings were hers and the Dou was included in this group; see The Getty Provenance Index Databases, description and contents of Sale Catalog F-A450, where the buyer's name is also recorded. Langlier was a dealer; the painting does not appear in his sale, held 24 April 1786 and the following days at the Hôtel de Bullion in Paris.

[5] Smith 1842, 18, no. 58, gives the name as Paignon de Dijonval.

[6] Smith 1842, 18, no. 58.

[7] Ernst Wilhelm Moes (*Iconographia Batava*, 2 vols., Amsterdam, 1897: 1:483, no. 3984, item 3) is the first author to cite this name, but incorrectly spells it "Coulston" and does not provide details about the 1881 sale. The correct spelling of the name, the identification of the 1881 sale, and the names of the buyers at both the 1844 and 1881 sales were kindly provided by Lynda Mcleod, libarian at Christie's Archives, London (e-mail of 17 April 2015, in NGA curatorial files).

[8] Martin 1901, 203, no. 135.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1908 Loan to display with permanent collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 1908-1909.

1978 The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 1978, unnumbered catalogue, fig. 48.

2000 Gerrit Dou (1613-1675): Master Painter in the Age of Rembrandt, National Gallery of Art, Washington; Dulwich Picture Gallery, London; Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, The Hague, 2000-2001, no. 11, repro.

2001 Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001, no. 62, repro.

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2014 Small Treasures: Rembrandt, Vermeer, Hals, and Their Contemporaries, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama, 2014, no. 9, repro.

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1752 Hoet, Gerard. *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderyen*. Supplement by Pieter Terwesten. 2 vols. The Hague, 1752-1770: 2(1770):206, no. 89.

1829 Smith, John. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*. 9 vols. London, 1829-1842: 1(1829):19, no. 55 as The portrait of an old man, with a black velvet bonnet, 34, no. 99, as Portrait of the artist's father; 9(1842):18, no. 58, as The Artist's Father.

1897 Moes, Ernst Wilhelm. *Iconographia Batava*. 2 vols. Amsterdam, 1897–1905: 1(1897): 483, no. 3984 n. 3.

1901 Martin, Wilhelm. *Het Leven en de werken van Gerrit Dou*. Leiden, 1901: 203, no. 135, as Dou's Father.

1902 Martin, Wilhelm. *Gerard Dou*. Translated by Clara Bell. London, 1902: 48, 104, no. 11, as Portrait of Dou's Father (reprint ed. London, 1908).

1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*. 8 vols. Translated by Edward G. Hawke. London, 1907-1927: 1(1907):440, no. 291 and no. 292, both as Dou's Father; 445, no. 319d, as Portrait of an Old Man.

1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*. 10 vols. Esslingen and Paris, 1907-1928: 1(1907): 431, no. 291, as Dou's Father; 432, no. 292, as Dou's Father; 436, no. 319d, as Portrait of an Old Man.

1911 Martin, Wilhelm. *Gérard Dou, sa vie et son oeuvre: Etude sur la peinture hollandaise et les marchands au dix-septième siècle*. Paris, 1911: 51, 174, no. 67, as The Father of the Painter.

1913 Martin, Wilhelm. *Gerard Dou: des Meisters Gemälde in 247 Abbildungen*. Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 24. Stuttgart and Berlin, 1913: 29 repro., 181, no. 29b (rechts), as The Father of the Artist.

1925 Carroll, Dana H. *Catalogue of Objects of Fine Art and Other Properties at the Home of William Andrews Clark, 962 Fifth Avenue*. Part I. Unpublished manuscript, n.d. (1925): 172, no. 170, as Portrait of an Old Man.

1928 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Illustrated Handbook of the W.A. Clark Collection*. Washington, 1928: 41.

1932 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Illustrated Handbook of The W.A. Clark*

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Collection. Washington, 1932: 44, no. 2081, as Portrait of the Artist's Father.

1955 Breckenridge, James D. *A handbook of Dutch and Flemish paintings in the William Andrews Clark collection*. Washington, 1955: 12 repro., 13, as The Artist's Father.

1976 Hoet, Gerard. *Catalogus of naamlyst van schilderyen*. 3 vols. Reprint of 1752 ed. with supplement by Pieter Terwesten, 1770. Soest, 1976: 2:206, no. 89.

1978 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. "A Reappraisal of Gerard Dou's Reputation." In *The William A. Clark Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington*. Exh. cat. Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 1978: 60 fig. 48, 61-67.

1986 Sutton, Peter C. *A Guide to Dutch Art in America*. Washington and Grand Rapids, 1986: 301, as Portrait of a Bearded Man.

1990 Baer, Ronni. "The Paintings of Gerrit Dou (1613-1675)." 3 vols. Ph.D. dissertation, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 1990: 1:39.1-39.4; 2:3, no. 39; 3:repro. 39, as Bust of a Man.

2000 Baer, Ronni, et al. *Gerrit Dou, 1613-1675: Master Painter in the Age of Rembrandt*. Edited by Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Dulwich Picture Gallery, London; Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, The Hague. New Haven, 2000: 84-85, no. 11, 137, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Gerrit Dou
Dutch, 1613 - 1675

The Hermit

1670

oil on oak panel
overall: 46 x 34.5 cm (18 1/8 x 13 9/16 in.)
framed: 60.3 x 50.1 cm (23 3/4 x 19 3/4 in.)
Inscription: lower center on book strap, GD in ligature: GDou 1670; on right page of book, GD in ligature: GDou
Timken Collection 1960.6.8

ENTRY

An old hermit dressed in a Franciscan habit kneels before a crucifix, his clasped hands resting on a well-thumbed page of the open Bible. He is situated in an outdoor setting before a grottolike edifice consisting of large brick arches. The book and crucifix lie on a large rock that is covered by a frayed cloth woven from brightly colored threads. At the base of the crucifix is a human skull and beside it an hourglass. The crucifix itself leans against a large wicker basket, which in turn rests against an old moss-covered tree stump that arches over the scene. The stump appears dead, although sprigs with green leaves emerge from its withered form. Hanging from the stump, above the crucifix, is a lantern, its door opened and the candle within extinguished. In the foreground right a large thistle grows from the marshy soil. Lying on the ground is a water pouch, an overturned earthenware jug, and the remains of a horse's skull.

The intensely spiritual gaze on the hermit's face and the fervor with which he clasps his hands as he stares toward the crucifix indicate that he is contemplating the mysteries of Christ's death and resurrection. Dou has reinforced his message with reminders of the brevity of human life: the skull, hourglass, and extinguished light of the lantern. He has alluded to the hermit's constancy in his devotions with the thistle, a common symbol in Dutch painting for this virtue. [1]

The tree has complex symbolic associations. As Susan Kuretsky has argued, the dead tree in conjunction with the Crucifixion implies life through death. [2] Traditionally the cross was believed to have been constructed of wood from either

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the Tree of Knowledge or the tree that grew from the seeds of the forbidden apple that sprouted from the skull of Adam. Only through Christ's sacrifice on the cross was it possible for man, through death, to gain everlasting life. The symbolism of life through death is reinforced by the living branches that sprout from the dead tree stump.

The basket against which the crucifix leans contains references to the life of Christ that can be understood through its appearance in another painting from Dou's workshop. In *An Artist in His Studio,* formerly attributed to Dou and dated 1635, the same basket, with its lid askew, appears in a scene of the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* that is shown on the aged artist's easel [fig. 1]. Although the basket undoubtedly served as the baby's bed in this scene, it has been argued that, placed as it is in front of a low archway before a dark recess, the empty basket also prefigured Christ's empty tomb. [3] Such religious symbolism for the basket is also appropriate in this painting, for it reinforces the central theme: the hermit's contemplation of the death and resurrection of Christ.

Dou painted this scene near the end of his life, but the subject had occupied him throughout most of his career. Indeed, Martin lists eleven hermit scenes that Dou painted between 1635 and 1670. [4] Examination using Dendrochronology has revealed that Dou used a panel from a tree that had been felled in the early 1630s, a fact that may suggest he kept a supply of panels in his workshop. [5] Since *The Hermit* contains various Pentimenti, it is also possible that Dou began this painting in the 1630s and reworked it in 1670. Too little information, however, is available about his working methods to be certain about the reason for the chronological gap between the felling date and the final year of the painting's execution. Many of the objects found in this painting appear in different combinations in other works, indicating that Dou must have owned them and painted them from life. The horse's skull, for example, also appears in *An Artist in His Studio*. The skull, as well as the water pouch and overturned jug, presumably had specific allegorical meanings in his hermit scenes beyond their obvious generic ones, but they are presently unknown.

Dou's inspiration for his hermit scenes was probably a painting by Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) of *St. Jerome in Prayer* that is known today only through an etching from 1631 by Johannes van Vliet (Dutch, born c. 1610). [6] Although Dou's hermit scenes contain many of the same objects found in this etching, he rarely painted attributes that could identify the figure as a specific saint. His intent was not to represent an actual moment from church history, but to suggest the

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virtue of the *vita contemplativa*, the contemplative life. This subject is frequently alluded to in Dutch seventeenth-century portraits, still lifes, and genre scenes. In numerous paintings Dutch artists called the viewer's attention to the brevity of life and the importance of preparing oneself for the eventual Last Judgment. Although Dou's focus on the spiritual bond between a Franciscan hermit and the crucified Christ would seem to have Catholic overtones, he emphasized the importance of the written word in his scene, a significant component of Protestant belief, and it is unlikely the subject was viewed in specific denominational terms. That the Bible was of considerable importance to him is evident from the x-radiographs [see X-radiography]. Originally the book was turned in a different position, as though supported in the hermit's arms. The initial shape of the Bible is vaguely visible under his arm and can be further distinguished by a change in the Craquelure pattern on the present Bible.

The moralizing function of such a painting in Dutch society can be deduced from a work traditionally attributed to Dou in the Brooklyn Museum, *Burgomaster Hasselaar and His Wife* [fig. 2]. [7] On the back wall of their home hangs a painting of a hermit that is similar in conception to *The Hermit*. The burgomaster, quill in hand, is seated before a table on which lie an open book and a globe. The woman rests her hand on an overturned lute. The objects on the table refer to the arts and letters, humanistic endeavors. The suspended glass sphere was metaphorically meant to represent heaven. [8] The Brooklyn painting, therefore, can be interpreted to mean that humility and prayer, exemplified by the hermit, combined with intellectual endeavor are the means to transcend mortality. Only by balancing humanism with piety can one lead a full and truly virtuous Christian life. [9]

Much of Dou's fame as an artist derives from the exquisite refinement of his painting technique. This work is no exception. The care with which he has painted the hermit's features, hair, and beard as well as the various colored threads of the woven cloth covering the rock is remarkable. Dou's delicate yet spirited touch lends great visual interest to this scene of intense spiritual contemplation.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Leiden school, *An Artist in His Studio*, 1635, oil on panel, Milwaukee Art Museum. Photo: John R. Glembin

fig. 2 Circle of Gerrit Dou, *Burgomaster Hasselaar and His Wife*, c. 1635, oil on panel, Brooklyn Museum

NOTES

[1] For a discussion of the symbolism of the thistle, see Eddy de Jongh and P. J. Vinken, “Frans Hals als voortzetter van een emblematische traditie. Bij het Huwelijksportret van Isaac Massa en Beatrix van der Laen,” in *Oud-Holland* 76 (1961): 117–152; also Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, ed., *Wadsworth Atheneum Paintings: The Netherlands and the German-Speaking Countries, Fifteenth–Nineteenth Centuries* (Hartford, 1978), 1:157, no. 83. The thistle can also relate to the crown of thorns.

[2] Susan Donahue Kuretsky, “Rembrandt’s Tree Stump: An Iconic Attribute of St. Jerome,” *Art Bulletin* 56 (December 1974): 571–580.

[3] Artemis Group, *Ten Paintings by Gerard Dou, 1613–1675* (London, 1980), 15–17. Dou used the basket motif in a complex vanitas painting where it had a comparable meaning: *A Vanitas Still Life with a Boy-Angel Blowing*

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Bubbles, c. 1635–1636 (National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo; inv. no. P1981–1). See Artemis Group, *Ten Paintings by Gerard Dou, 1613–1675* (London, 1980), no. 3.

[4] Wilhelm Martin, *Gerard Dou: Des meisters Gemälde in 274 Abbildungen*, Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben, vol. 24 (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1913), 5–11, repro.

[5] Letter from Peter Klein of the Ordinariat für Holzbiologie, Universität Hamburg, January 28, 1987, in NGA curatorial files. Klein has determined a felling date of 1633.

[6] See Susan Donahue Kuretsky, "Rembrandt's Tree Stump: An Iconic Attribute of St. Jerome," *Art Bulletin* 56 (December 1974): 578.

[7] While universally accepted as by Dou since first published by John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 9:23, no. 76, the attribution of this picture has been rejected by Ronni Baer, who has kindly provided me with a draft of her entry on the painting, which is in the Brooklyn Museum.

[8] Eddy de Jongh, "Pearls of Virtue and Pearls of Vice," *Simiolus* 8, no. 2 (1975–1976): 74.

[9] I would like to credit Ronni Baer for this interpretation of the meaning of this theme for Dutch society. She worked on the painting as a research project when she was an intern at the National Gallery of Art. For her further thoughts on Dou, see Ronni Baer, "The Paintings of Gerrit Dou (1613–1675)" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1990), as well as Ronni Baer, *Gerrit Dou, 1613–1675: Master Painter in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. (Washington, D.C., 2000).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a vertically grained oak[1] panel with an arched top. At a later date it was squared off with a horizontally grained oak board attached with a half-lap join that overlaps the arched area on the back of the original panel. Both the original and extension panel are attached to a cradle. Dendrochronological examination has revealed that the original panel came from a tree that had been felled in the early 1630s.[2]

PROVENANCE

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Probably Kurfürst Karl Albrecht [1697-1745], Munich, by 1742.[1] (Kurfürstliche Galerie, Munich);[2] Alte Pinakothek, Munich, by the mid-eighteenth century; deaccessioned in 1927;[3] sold to (Galerie van Diemen, New York and Berlin);[4] William R. Timken [1866-1949], New York; by inheritance to his wife, Lillian S. Guyer Timken [1881-1959], New York; bequest 1960 to NGA.

[1] On the back of the painting are two wax seals that were detached from the original panel when it was cradled and then reapplied. According to Dr. Susan Neuburger (letter, 6 November 1981, in NGA curatorial files), one of these seals is that of Kurfürst Karl Albrecht, and this seal was used until 1742. The other seal may also be that of Karl Albrecht, or alternatively of Kurfürst Maximillian II Emmanuel (1662–1726).

[2] Franz von Reber, *Katalog der Gemälde-sammlung der kgl. Älteren Pinakothek in München*, Munich, 1884: 86, no. 399 (also reprint, 1904: 93, no. 399).

[3] Dr. Susan Neuburger (letter, 6 November 1981, in NGA curatorial files) wrote that a painting by Dou that appeared in an auction in Amsterdam in 1779 (May 19, no. 49; a sale by Van der Schley, De Winter, Hosteyn, and Yver for a “Mr. V...”), traditionally thought to be The Hermit, was another work, as the NGA painting must have already been owned by the Alte Pinakothek. She also provided the information about the deaccession and sale of the painting.

[4] In 1935 the Berlin branches of van Diemen and its affiliated galleries were liquidated by order of the Nazis, with sales organized by Graupe on January 25 and April 26. This painting was not in either of those sales, and thus had been sold from the Berlin branch or sent to the New York branch before 1935.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure, repro.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 16.

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1999 A Moral Compass: Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Painting in the Netherlands, Grand Rapids Art Museum, 1999, no. 5, repro.

2000 Gerrit Dou (1613-1675): Master Painter in the Age of Rembrandt, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Dulwich Picture Gallery, London; Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, The Hague, 2000-2001, no. 34, repro.

2003 Rembrandt and the Rembrandt School: The Bible, Mythology and Ancient History, The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, 2003, no. 57, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Dutch or Flemish 17th Century

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Dutch or Flemish 17th Century
Dutch 17th Century
Flemish 17th century
Flemish, 1600 - 1699

Trompe l'Oeil of an Etching by Ferdinand Bol

c. 1675

oil on panel
overall: 37.5 × 31.4 cm (14 3/4 × 12 3/8 in.)
Inscription: upper right of the etching depicted in the painting: f. bol. f / 1642
Fund given in honor of Derald Ruttenberg's Grandchildren 2016.3.1

ENTRY

The fascination with illusionism goes back to antiquity, and artists throughout the centuries, particularly 17th-century Dutch and Flemish painters, delighted in creating works that could deceive a viewer into mistaking a painted image for reality itself. Illusionistic paintings are quite varied in character, but among the most successful types are images of relatively flat, inanimate objects, such as this extraordinary trompe l'oeil of an etching attached to a wooden plank with a red-wax seal.

The illusionism of *Trompe l'Oeil of an Etching by Ferdinand Bol* is compelling for a number of reasons. The delicacy of the artist's strokes, particularly the touches of the tiny brush that were used to replicate the etched lines of the print, have remained largely intact due to the painting's exceptional condition. The crinkles and creases in the paper are remarkably convincing, in part because of the subtle range of shadows they cause due to light falling across the irregular surface from the upper left. The success of the illusion also extends to the pine wood panel with its rough grain and knots, which were created with toned glazes, and to the seal, which has been built up with dense red pigments to approximate the proper texture of wax. The etching depicted here, *Old Man with a Flowing Beard and Velvet Beret* [fig. 1], is one of the earliest known prints of Ferdinand Bol (Dutch, 1616 - 1680) and is inscribed with his signature and date in the upper right of the etching: "f. bol. f /1642." Bol executed the etching shortly after leaving the studio of

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Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669), whose influence is evident in Bol's choice of an aged and rough-hewn model, as well as in the delicate etched strokes that animate the man's face and beard.

The attribution of the unsigned *Trompe l'Oeil of an Etching by Ferdinand Bol* has been a problem, but the history of such illusionistic images suggests that it was painted for a courtly patron, likely in the mid-1670s. An important prototype for this type of trompe l'oeil is *Trompe l'Oeil (Galatea)* [fig. 2] by the Alsatian still-life painter Sebastian Stoskopff (1597–1657). In that illusionistic image Stoskopff has depicted the engraving as though it were fixed to a dark-green board by 12 red-wax seals. Much as with the Gallery's trompe l'oeil, Stoskopff has enhanced the illusionism of his image by creating irregularities on the surface of the print, particularly at its corners where the paper appears to curl away from the board to which it seems to be attached. [1]

Stoskopff painted his work for his patron Count Johannes von Nassau-Idstein (1603–1677) in 1651, when the count enlisted the German painter and art theorist Joachim von Sandrart (1606–1688) to present Stoskopff's trompe l'oeil as a diplomatic gift to Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III in Vienna. Sandrart later recounted how the emperor had actually tried to remove the engraving from the board, but, when he discovered the deceit, laughed endlessly about how he had been fooled. [2] The emperor expressed his pleasure by keeping Stoskopff's painting and including it in his *kunstkammer* (cabinet of curiosities) in Prague.

The emperor's delight in Stoskopff's painting was not an isolated occurrence, for Ferdinand III had a comparably enthusiastic reaction to another trompe l'oeil that was presented to him in 1651, this one by the Dutch artist Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch, 1627 - 1678). Similarly pleased that he had been fooled by the skillfulness of the deceit, the emperor decided to "punish" the artist by keeping the painting, while at the same time honoring him with an imperial medal and a gold chain as a token of his esteem. [3] Ferdinand III's love of trompe l'oeil illusionism placed him within a tradition of princes of emperors, including his Habsburg relative Emperor Rudolf II, who had also enjoyed these painterly deceptions, and eagerly included them in their *kunstkammers*. [4] Artists whose works succeeded in fooling such powerful rulers were celebrated for their illusionistic powers. By the late 17th century a number of Dutch artists had travelled to Germany, Austria, and Scandinavia to create trompe l'oeil paintings for courtly *kunstkammers*.

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Of these collections, one of the most impressive was the famed Royal Danish Kunstkammer, formed in the latter part of the 17th century by Kings Frederik III (ruled 1648–1670) and Christian V (ruled 1670–1699). The most important trompe l'oeil artist serving the Danish kings was Cornelis Gijsbrechts (active c. 1659–1675), who served as court painter from 1668–1672. His sojourn in Copenhagen was but one of many stops in a peripatetic career that took him from his native Flanders to various courts and urban centers in the Holy Roman Empire and Scandinavia. Gijsbrechts painted a wide array of trompe l'oeils for the Royal Danish Kunstkammer, including letter racks, boards with musical instruments or hunting trophies, illusionistic cupboards, and trompe l'oeil pictures cut into the shapes of the objects they depict. However, Gijsbrechts was not the only trompe l'oeil artist at the Danish court. H. Drost, about whom little is known, painted two trompe l'oeils for the royal collection that were clearly inspired by Stoskopff's illusionistic image of a print attached to a board. Both of Drost's trompe l'oeil paintings depict an etching by Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685) that seems to be attached to a pine board with red-wax seals [fig. 3].

At first glance, the similarities between the Gallery's painting and these signed works by Drost would seem to suggest that all three were made by the same artist. However, a substantial quality difference separates them, which is particularly noticeable in the complex play of light and dark across the wrinkled rendering of Bol's etching. The illusionism of the pine plank is also far more compelling than in Drost's less refined painted images. Finally, the Gallery's painting was executed on an oak panel, whereas Drost, like Stoskopff, painted his works on canvas.

The artist who made the Gallery's striking object may have lived and trained in the Netherlands. Not only did the Dutch have a strong trompe l'oeil tradition, but the artist also clearly had Ferdinand Bol's print at hand. A chronological framework for the painting is provided by dendrochronological examination, which indicates that the panel dates from the early 1670s. [5] This circumstantial evidence yields a possible candidate for the painter: Franciscus Gijsbrechts. Although little is known about the artist, Franciscus was the son of Cornelis Gijsbrechts and his wife, Anna Moons. He was baptized in Antwerp on February 25, 1649. [6] Franciscus undoubtedly trained with his father and probably accompanied him to Copenhagen during his residency there between 1668 and 1672. [7] In 1672 Franciscus painted a trompe l'oeil—depicting musical instruments hanging on a wooden wall—which the Danish king must have acquired for his Kunstkammer in that very year. [8]

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Franciscus eventually moved to Leiden, where, according to a document dated 1674, he studied with a master from the Guild of St. Luke. [9] The fact that Franciscus trained in Leiden is intriguing, and probably is a result of the city's excellent reputation for refined painting styles and illusionism, qualities that would be essential to his career as a trompe l'oeil artist. One wonders if Gijsbrechts studied in Leiden with Edwaert Collier (1642–1708), a renowned trompe l'oeil artist who was then a master in the artists' guild. Collier also painted similar illusionistic images of prints attached to a board by wax seals. After his training in Leiden, Franciscus returned to his native Antwerp, where he became a master in the painters' guild in 1676/1677. Nothing is known about his subsequent career.

Stylistic evidence for the proposed attribution of this work to Franciscus Gijsbrechts centers around the sophisticated play of light modelling the bends and folds of the etching's surface, which so effectively enhances its illusionistic character. One sees not only deep brownish shadows under the folds along the print's left edge, but also secondary grayer shadows that seem to indicate the presence of multiple light sources. This subtle play of light extends across the print and even picks up the ridge of the etching's plate mark. Finally, the irregularities of the print's surface are also evident through the varied width of the shadows cast by the paper on the pine board. Among the artists creating trompe l'oeil images in the 1670s, none captured these qualities of light as effectively as did this artist. The prime example of his mastery of this aspect of illusionism are his depictions of papers, such as a sheaf of landscape prints draped over a metal rod in his remarkable *Glass Cupboard Door*, c. 1675 [fig. 4]. [10] Here, one also finds a complex array of primary and secondary shadows from multiple light sources that help create the illusion of bent, folded, and rolled pieces of paper. The depiction of the graining and knot holes in the pine boards surrounding the window frame is comparable to the Gallery's trompe l'oeil in its sophisticated illusionism.

Franciscus Gijsbrechts's illusionism in *Glass Cupboard Door*, which has actual metal hinges that allow the glass door to open, extends beyond the surface of this complex object. Most notably, Franciscus created the illusion of seeing the papers through the transparent glass on the verso of the door. Interestingly, on the recto he also created the illusion of a variety of objects inside the cupboard. This phenomenon raises the possibility that the *Glass Cupboard Door* is but a portion of an even more extensive, but no longer intact, trompe l'oeil object, and that, upon opening the glass door, one would discover another illusionistic image to complete the deception. [11]

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This excursus is relevant to the Gallery's *Trompe l'Oeil of an Etching by Ferdinand Bol,* for it, too, was possibly an illusionistic cover for a three-dimensional trompe l'oeil object. The basis for this hypothesis is an early 18th-century painting by the German artist Matthias Zink (1665–1738) that depicts a pine box, seen in perspective, with its front panel slid to the side to reveal a trompe l'oeil of a framed *vanitas* painting [fig. 5]. Although Zink's *A Trompe l'Oeil Vanity* is illusionistic, it clearly depicts an actual trompe l'oeil object. Much like the Gallery's painting, the front panel of the box has on its face a trompe l'oeil of a print attached with red-wax seals, an illusionistic image that portends the experience encountered upon sliding the panel to the side. Nothing is known about the history of Zink's painting nor of the trompe l'oeil object that he depicted, but it is likely that Zink painted that image for the Prince of Eichstätt, in whose court he worked in the early 18th century. [12] In all likelihood he painted his illusionistic image for the very collector who owned the trompe l'oeil box.

The provenance of *Trompe l'Oeil of an Etching by Ferdinand Bol* cannot be traced back before the 20th century, but since this work comes from an old Viennese family, it may have originated in that area. Franciscus Gijsbrechts, like other trompe l'oeil painters of the late 17th century, found his most enthusiastic clientele in courtly settings. He may be the artist who painted a trompe l'oeil box, of which this oak panel was the lid, at one of the courts in present-day Germany or Austria.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

May 7, 2019

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Ferdinand Bol, *Old Man with a Flowing Beard and Velvet Beret*, 1642, etching and drypoint, British Museum, London, S. 14. © The Trustees of The British Museum

fig. 2 Sebastian Stoskopff, *Trompe l'Oeil (Galatea)*, 1651, oil on canvas, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, Vienna. © KHM-Museumsverband

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fig. 3 H. Drost, *Trompe l'Oeil: Board with an Etching of a Baker Sounding His Horn*, 1650–1700, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, inv. KMS3019

fig. 4 Franciscus Gijsbrechts, *Glass Cupboard Door*, c. 1675, oil on canvas, wood, and metal, Collection of Teresa Heinz

fig. 5 Matthias Zink, *A Trompe l'Oeil Vanity*, early 18th century, oil on panel, private collection

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NOTES

[1] The engraving that Stoskopff so accurately rendered was made in 1644 by Michel Dorigny (1617–1665) after a well-known painting by Simon Vouet (1590–1649), who was then at the height of his fame in Paris. Stoskopff may have chosen to depict that engraving for thematic reasons, for its subject reinforced the theme of trompe l'oeil illusionism. The mythological story recounts how the sea nymph Galatea inflamed the passion of the cyclops Polyphemus, but every time he approached her she disappeared into the waves. See Sylvia Böhmer, "Imitation et invention picturale – Les gravures peintes dans les natures mortes de Sébastien Stoskopff," in Michèle-Caroline Heck and Sylvia Böhmer, *Sébastien Stoskopff, 1597–1657: Un maître de la nature morte* (Strasbourg, 1997), 102.

[2] Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Kunste von 1675: Leben der Beruhmten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister,* ed. Arthur R. Petlzer (Nuremberg, 1675–1680; repr., Munich, 1925), 1:310.

[3] Celeste Brusati, "Honorable Deceptions and Dubious Distinctions: Self-Imagery in Trompe l'Oeil," in Olaf Koester, *Illusions: Gijsbrechts Royal Master of Deception* (Copenhagen, 1999), 50. See also Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Hague, 1753; repr., Amsterdam, 1976), 2:157ff.

[4] Celeste Brusati, "Honorable Deceptions and Dubious Distinctions: Self-Imagery in Trompe l'Oeil," in Olaf Koester, *Illusions: Gijsbrechts Royal Master of Deception* (Copenhagen, 1999), 62–64.

[5] The dendrochronological examination, undertaken by Pieter Klein, determined a likely date for the panel of c. 1672. This information was provided by Robert Wald in correspondence to the author dated Apr. 20, 2015, NGA curatorial files.

[6] Information about Franciscus's baptism date was discovered by Anaïs Moyson, who provided the RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History with this information in an email dated July 11, 2011. See https://rkd.nl/en/explore/artists/Gijsbrechts%2C%20Franciscus, accessed Feb. 24, 2017.

[7] Olaf Koester, "Cornelius Norbertus Gijsbrechts – an Introduction," in Olaf Koester, *Illusions: Gijsbrechts Royal Master of Deception* (Copenhagen, 1999), 42–43.

[8] Olaf Koester, *Illusions: Gijsbrechts Royal Master of Deception* (Copenhagen, 1999), 220–221, cat. no. 35. The painting is signed and dated.

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[9] Olaf Koester, “Cornelius Norbertus Gijsbrechts – an Introduction,” in Olaf Koester, *Illusions: Gijsbrechts Royal Master of Deception* (Copenhagen, 1999), 42. The document notes that Gijsbrechts had not paid his dues to his (unidentified) master.

[10] See Anna Tummers’s entry on this painting in Sybille Ebert-Schifferer, *Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe l'Oeil Painting* (Washington, DC, 2002), 253–255, cat. no. 63.

[11] It is unlikely that Franciscus Gijsbrechts was the first to create such a complex object. That honor may reside with Cornelis Gijsbrechts in his *Trompe l’Oeil: A Cabinet of Curiosities with an Ivory Tankard,* 1670, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, which also has real hinges that allow the glass door to open. The glass in this painting similarly allows the viewer to “view” objects within the cupboard. See Olaf Koester, *Illusions: Gijsbrechts Royal Master of Deception* (Copenhagen, 1999), 164–167, cat. no. 12.

[12] The Bishopric of Eichstätt was a small ecclesiastical principality of the Holy Roman Empire located in the present-day state of Bavaria.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting is executed on a support consisting of a 1.1 cm thick single oak panel. On the reverse, all four edges have been beveled to a thickness of 0.5 cm or less, but there is no evidence of alteration to the panel’s size.

The ground consists of a thick white layer that obscures the wood grain. The number of ground layers is unknown. While no underdrawing was detected with infrared reflectography (IRR), a reserve was left for the painted etching. Under magnification, it is clear that the paint layers of the background only extend up to the edges of the painted print. [1]

The paint medium is estimated to be oil, and in general the paints were applied thinly. The red-wax seal was painted slightly thicker, as were the edges of the painted print. The thickness of the paint in these areas helps to create the three-dimensional quality of the objects in the composition. The painted wood-grain background was executed by first applying a warm underlayer, followed by several thin layers of successively cooler tones textured with a brush. Lastly, the lines of the etching were applied in black paint, and under magnification it appears that the painted lines bead up in some areas.

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The support, ground, and paint layers are all in good condition. There are a few large losses to ground and paint in the upper-right corner of the painted etching. There is a fine craquelure in the red-wax seal but not elsewhere. There is dust embedded in the paint, though this must have settled on the surface while the paint was still wet. The painting was treated in 2016. At that time the varnish and some overpaint were removed and a split in the panel was filled and inpainted.

Dina Anchin

May 7, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.5–1.8 microns (H filter).

PROVENANCE

Dr. Friedrich Tröster [d. 1956], Vienna; by inheritance to his daughter, Dr. Sieglinde Kretschmer, Vienna; sold 2015 to (Galerie Nissl, Eschen, Liechtenstein); purchased 19 February 2016 by NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

2005 Loan to display with permanent collection, Liechtenstein Museum, Vienna, 2005-2015.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jakob Houbraken, *Gerband van den Eekhout* (detail), engraving, in Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (The Hague: J. Swart, C. Boucquet, en M. Gaillard, 1753), vol. 1, pl. F, National Gallery of Art Library, Gift of C. Dearhoff

Eeckhout, Gerbrand van den

Dutch, 1621 - 1674

BIOGRAPHY

Gerbrand van den Eeckhout was born in Amsterdam on August 19, 1621, and died in his native city on September 22, 1674. Although his life and artistic career are scantily documented, Arnold Houbraken wrote that Van den Eeckhout was a favorite pupil and long-standing friend of Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669). [1] The dates of his apprenticeship with Rembrandt are unknown, but he most likely studied with the master during the latter half of the 1630s. His first dated paintings are from 1640.

During his long and productive career Van den Eeckhout made history paintings, landscapes, portraits, and genre scenes. He was also an accomplished graphic artist and produced a large number of etchings, drawings, designs for metal objects, and book illustrations. He often varied his painting style according to subject matter. The broad brushwork and powerful chiaroscuro effects of his religious and mythological paintings generally reflect the influence of Rembrandt and also that of his master's teacher, Pieter Lastman (1583–1633), whose paintings and drawings he would have seen in Rembrandt's workshop. Lastman's inspiration is particularly evident in the attention Van den Eeckhout paid to sumptuous attire and in his use of a stagelike platform on which to present his narrative. On the other hand, Van den Eeckhout executed his portraits and genre scenes in a refined

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and elegant manner that reflected a more Flemish pictorial tradition. In addition to his artistic activities he was also an amateur poet of some ability. He served as a tax appraiser of artworks in Amsterdam in 1659, 1669, and 1672.

[1] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:174; 2:100–101.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Gerbrand van den Eeckhout
Dutch, 1621 - 1674

The Levite at Gibeah

early 1640s

oil on canvas
overall: 96.5 x 121.9 cm (38 x 48 in.)
framed: 119.4 x 144.1 x 5.7 cm (47 x 56 3/4 x 2 1/4 in.)
Gift of Emile E. Wolf 1996.99.1

ENTRY

This painting depicts the Old Testament story of the Levite and his concubine (meaning a wife of inferior status) after they stopped to spend the night at the town of Gibeah. As described in Judges 19, a Levite from Ephraim had married a woman from Bethlehem, in Judah. After the couple quarreled, the concubine left her husband to return to her father's house. Four months later the Levite and a servant set off to retrieve her. When they arrived in Bethlehem, they were joyously received by both father and daughter and invited to spend several nights in the father's home. On their return journey to Ephraim, the Levite, his concubine, and the servant sought shelter in Gibeah, a town that belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, but no one would take them in. Van den Eeckhout has here depicted the moment when an aged field laborer, who lived in Gibeah but was from Ephraim, happened upon the travelers and offered them food and lodging, as well as feed for their donkeys.

This story, which begins with an act of charity, soon leads to a gruesome ending. That night, some men from Gibeah surrounded the field laborer's house and demanded that he turn the Levite over to them so that they could abuse him. The

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old man pleaded on his guest's behalf, and offered them instead either his virgin daughter or the Levite's concubine. Finally only the Levite's concubine was given over to the men, who raped her throughout the night. The next morning the concubine crawled back to the threshold of the field laborer's house, where she died. The Levite placed her defiled and lifeless body atop a donkey and returned home. There he cut her body into twelve pieces and sent one piece by messenger to each of the tribes of Israel. The tribes then rose up as one and massacred the Benjaminites (Judges 20).

The moral of this horrific story is difficult to fathom, other than as a condemnation of the evil men of Gibeah. However, in the *Statenbijbel*, the official Dutch translation of the Bible first published in 1637, blame for the atrocities at Gibeah is also placed on the actions of the Levite's concubine. This text asserts that before leaving the Levite, she had defiled her marriage by prostituting herself, hence her sad demise served as a warning against the sin of adultery. [1]

The *Statenbijbel* was not the only literary source for the story, however, and it is probable that Van den Eeckhout based his interpretation primarily on the more sympathetic account of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus in *Antiquitates Judaicae*. [2] Like many Dutch artists, including Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669), Van den Eeckhout responded to Josephus' emphasis on personal relationships in Old Testament stories, which provided a human dimension not always found in the biblical accounts. In Josephus' text, the Levite's companion is described as a wife, not as a concubine, which gives her and the Levite more equal status. Josephus portrays her as a loving and comely young woman, someone unburdened by the specter of guilt stemming from the sin of adultery. In much the same way, Van den Eeckhout projects her as an innocent woman, sitting on the ground at the feet of her husband while affectionately leaning toward him and draping her arm across his leg. On her lap is a small dog, often seen as a symbol of fidelity, which she restrains by placing her thumb through its collar.

Whatever his literary source of inspiration, Van den Eeckhout chose to depict not the grisly aftermath of the story but rather the moment of the field laborer's selfless act of charity in offering to take in and feed the weary travelers. As Volker Manuth has emphasized, this aspect of the biblical story would have been seen as an exemplary expression of the Christian commandment to love one's neighbor. [3] Indeed, the account of the simple yet noble field laborer extending his hand to help the unfortunate belongs fully to the Works of Mercy tradition.

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The story of the Levite and his concubine was rarely depicted in Dutch art, and it is not certain what motivated Van den Eeckhout to paint this scene or when exactly he did so. [4] The earliest known dated depiction of the story was made in 1644 by Jan Victors (1619–c. 1676) [fig. 1], who, along with Van den Eeckhout, was a pupil of Rembrandt from the 1630s. [5] Victors' composition has been cited as the prototype for the National Gallery of Art painting as well as for Van den Eeckhout's other versions of the scene, particularly one in Berlin dated 1645 [fig. 2]. [6] The composition of Van den Eeckhout's Berlin painting is in reverse of Victor's, yet both focus on the moment when the field laborer, with shovel in hand, stands before the Levite and his concubine and invites them to stay with him. In each instance, the Levite is shown seated before the closed door of a house, while his servant stands nearby attending the donkey. In 1658 Van den Eeckhout executed another version of the story that is compositionally similar, albeit in reverse, to the Berlin painting.

The essential compositional components of the Gallery's painting are similar to these works, but they differ enough to suggest that they derive from another pictorial source. For instance, the Washington painting gives greater pictorial weight to the aged field laborer's offer of assistance: he stands facing the viewer with an open gesture that is both compelling in its conviction and welcoming in its expansiveness. The figures, moreover, are situated in a landscape setting and not in front of a closed door of a house. The Gallery's scene is also more exotic, notably in the oriental character of the Levite's feathered turban and long cloak with embroidered trim. Stylistically, the painting is more fluidly executed, not only in the flowing rhythms of the folds in the costumes but also in the organic relationships of the figures to one another. These compositional and stylistic differences make it unlikely that Van den Eeckhout executed the Gallery's painting in the 1650s as has been proposed by recent scholars. [7]

It is more likely that the National Gallery of Art painting dates from the early 1640s, as Wolfgang Stechow already suggested in 1969. Stechow posited that the pictorial inspiration for this work might have been a lost prototype by Rembrandt's master Pieter Lastman (1583–1633). [8] Lastman died in 1633, and his legacy was particularly strong in Rembrandt's circle in the mid to late 1630s, the very years that Van den Eeckhout was training under the master. [9] This hypothesis is particularly compelling when one considers the painting's vivid coloration, the fluidity of the drapery folds, the exotic character of the landscape elements, and the pose of the aged laborer, all of which are strikingly similar to those found in Lastman's paintings. [10] These stylistic qualities thus strongly suggest that this work predates

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the Berlin painting of 1645, which seems to respond more directly to Victors' more restrained narrative approach than to that of Lastman. A date in the early 1640s also supports Werner Sumowski's identification of the servant as the young Van den Eeckhout himself, as is suggested by a comparison of this figure with the artist's drawn *Self-Portrait,* 1647 [fig. 3]. [11]

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan Victors, *The Levite and his Concubine at Gibeah*, 1644, oil on canvas, Art Gallery of Ontario, In memory of Mr. Max Tanenbaum, Gift of Mrs. Max Tanenbaum, 1986, 86/307

fig. 2 Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *The Levite and His Concubine with the Field Laborer in Gibeah*, 1645, oil on canvas, Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, NY

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fig. 3 Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Self-Portrait*, 1647, black chalk, Frits Lugt Collection, Institut Néerlandais, Paris

NOTES

[1] See Volker Manuth, "The Levite and His Concubine," trans. Elizabeth Clegg, *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury*, no. 6 (1987): 21, 24 n. 35. Manuth notes that the Utrecht theologian Franciscus Burmanus (1628–1679), in his exegesis of the story, published in Utrecht in 1675, wrote: "and she having sinned with whoring and adultery, God did punish her right unto death."

[2] Flavius Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae, Books IV–VI,* trans. H. St. J. Thackeray and Ralph Marcus (Cambridge, MA, 1934; reprint, 1998), Book V, 223–229, lines 136–149. See Christian Tümpel, "De receptie van de 'Joodse Oudheden' van Flavius Josephus in de Nederlandse historieschilderkunst," in Christian Tümpel and Jacqueline Boonen, *Het Oude Testament in de schilderkunst van de gouden eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1991), 194–206.

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[3] Volker Manuth, “The Levite and His Concubine,” trans. Elizabeth Clegg, *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury*, no. 6 (1987), 21–22. As noted in Matthew 25:35, such acts of charity will be rewarded on Judgment Day.

[4] See Judith van Gent and Gabriël Pastoor, “Het tijdperk van de rechters,” in Christian Tümpel and Jacqueline Boonen, *Het Oude Testament in de schilderkunst van de gouden eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1991), 82–83.

[5] See Volker Manuth, “The Levite and His Concubine,” trans. Elizabeth Clegg, *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury*, no. 6 (1987): 14–16. Rembrandt does not seem to have made a painting of this story, although he may have made drawings of the subject in the 1640s; see Otto Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt: A Critical and Chronological Catalogue*, 6 vols. (London, 1954–1957; reprint, and enlarged by Eva Benesch, 1973), 3: nos. 554 and 614, which are in the British Museum, London, and the Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt. Aside from Victors (see Volker Manuth, “The Levite and His Concubine,” 18, fig. 9, also shown in Debra Miller, “Jan Victors [1619–76],” PhD diss. [University of Delaware, 1985], 433, no. 66). Manuth also notes that the Amsterdam painter Rombout van Troyen (c. 1605–1650) depicted this subject in a painting dated 1644 (Paris, Musée du Louvre) (see Volker Manuth, “The Levite and His Concubine,” 13, fig. 2).

[6] See Volker Manuth, “The Levite and His Concubine,” trans. Elizabeth Clegg, *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury*, no. 6 (1987): 18. See also, however, Irene Geismeier, *Holländische und flämische Gemälde des siebenzehnten Jahrhunderts im Bode-Museum* (Berlin, 1976), 30–31, no. 1771, who notes the compositional similarities of the Berlin painting with Domenico Feti’s painting *Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard*, 1622, Gemäldegalerie, Dresden. She suggests that Van den Eeckhout may have seen Feti’s painting in Brussels, where it was in the collection of Leopold Wilhelm. Her suggestion is based on the observations of N. J. Romanov, “The Subject of One of Van den Eeckhout’s Pictures,” *Art in America* 21, no.1 (December 1932–1933): 75, who connected the Feti composition to Van den Eeckhout’s later painting of the same subject in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow. See Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 6 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 2: no. 426.

[7] Van den Eeckhout’s 1658 version of the subject is in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow. See Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 6 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 2: no. 426. Both Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 2: 425, and Volker Manuth, “The Levite and His Concubine,” trans. Elizabeth Clegg, *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury*, no. 6 (1987): 18, date the National Gallery of Art painting to the late 1650s. Stylistically, however, these two works are quite different and could not have been executed in the same time period. The Pushkin painting has a greater sense of three-dimensionality and visual complexity than does the Gallery’s painting. Note, in particular, the way folds in the drapery are more

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carefully articulated because Van den Eeckhout modeled the figures with discrete patterns of light and dark.

[8] Wolfgang Stechow, "Some Observations on Rembrandt and Lastman," *Oud Holland* 84, nos. 2–3 (1969): 151, 156, fig. 10. Stechow cites, as a close visual comparison, Lastman's painting *Laban Searching for His Idols*, 1622, in the museum in Boulogne-sur-Mer.

[9] Rembrandt owned a number of paintings by Lastman as well as portfolios with pen and chalk sketches. See Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 1656/12, fol. 30, 353; 1656/12, fol. 32, 361; 1656/12, fol. 36, 377; 1660/1, 455; and 1662/6, 500.

[10] The laborer's gesturing pose, with outstretched hand, is one frequently found in Lastman's works; see, for example, the figure of Jesus in *Christ and the Woman of Canaan*, 1617, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

[11] Sumowski made this suggestion in *Rembrandt and His Pupils* (Montreal, 1969), 84, no. 48, although he later retreated from it in Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 6 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 2:732, no. 425, probably because at that point he dated the painting to the late 1650s.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support consists of a plain-weave, medium-weight fabric. It has been adhered to a coarser, heavier weight fabric and subsequently loose lined to a third piece of fabric. The painting was somewhat crooked on the auxiliary fabric when it was lined, therefore for the painting to be viewed straight, the current stretcher had to be made slightly larger than the dimensions of the painting, resulting in an uneven border of exposed lining fabric. The tacking margins have been removed, but even though there is no sign of cusping, compositionally the painting does not appear to have been reduced in size. The support was prepared with a double ground consisting of a red layer followed by a gray one. The gray ground appears to be intermittently incorporated into the composition of the painting. The paint was applied with a wet-over-dry technique. The background landscape is thinly painted overall, while the figures and drapery are thickly painted as if executed with a heavily loaded brush, with slight impasto in the white highlights.

X-radiographs reveal the presence of numerous old tears, losses, and damages in the fabric. A fabric insert exists in the proper right arm of the figure on the far left and above the shoulder of the dog on the far left of the painting. A complex, cross-

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shaped, branched tear is located across the far left figure's proper right knee and extends into the dog's back. Additional smaller tears are above and to the proper left of the far left figure's head and in the upper center portion of the painting. The paint and ground layers have suffered scattered losses and numerous areas of abrasion. The worst areas of abrasion are located throughout the sky and in the hind legs of the central donkey. The painting was treated in 2009–2011, at which time the loose lining and stretcher were replaced, and discolored varnish and inpainting were removed. During this treatment the abraded areas were inpainted and missing glazes in the sky were replaced.

PROVENANCE

Art market, New York, 1960s;[1] purchased by Emile E. Wolf [1899-1996], New York; gift 1996 to NGA.

[1] In a letter to Arthur Wheelock (15 January 1987, in NGA curatorial files), Emile E. Wolf writes that "Park Bernet sold it as anonynme [*sic*]," which might indicate he purchased the painting at an auction. Many Parke-Bernet sale catalogues for the 1960s have been checked, but as yet an auction that included the painting has not been identified.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1969 Rembrandt and His Pupils, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 1969, no. 48.

1982 The Discovery of the Everyday: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Paintings from the Wolf Collection, Chrysler Museum, Norfolk; Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence; Tampa Museum, 1982-1983, no. 11, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Simon de Passe, *Hendrik Goltzius*, 1614, engraving, Hollstein, vol. XVI, no. 57, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection, 1950.14.533

Goltzius, Hendrick

Also known as
Goltzius, Hendrik
Dutch, 1558 - 1617

BIOGRAPHY

Hendrick Goltzius, who was born in the Lower Rhine region of Germany, came from a long line of artists: his great-grandfather and grandfather were both painters in Venlo, and his father, Jan Goltz II (1534–after 1609), was a glass painter in Duisburg. The art theorist Karel van Mander I (Netherlandish, 1548 - 1606), who is the primary source of information about Goltzius and his work, notes that Goltzius was apprenticed to the printmaker Dirck Volckertz Coornhert (Netherlandish, 1522 - 1590) and moved with his teacher from Xanten to Haarlem shortly after 1576. Goltzius married the widow Margaretha Jansdr in 1579. Margaretha came into the marriage with an eight-year-old son, Jacob Matham (1571–1631), who later studied with Goltzius and became a printmaker in his own right.

Goltzius was renowned as a graphic artist and produced prints and drawings using a variety of techniques, including metalpoint, brush and ink, and chalk. He was also a pioneer in the art of “pen-painting,” a technique he invented in which pen is used directly on canvas to mimic the look of a print. Goltzius impressed his contemporaries with these large, monochromatic works, which were admired for their high degree of detail and innovative process of execution.

Goltzius’ early works from the late 1580s reflect the influence of international mannerism, a style characterized by long, attenuated figures and highly dynamic

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compositions, promulgated by the artist Bartholomaeus Spranger (Flemish, 1546 - 1611), court painter to Emperor Rudolf II in Prague. Goltzius made engravings after Spranger's drawings, which Van Mander brought to him from Prague. In October of 1590, Goltzius traveled to Italy, purportedly to recover from an illness, and he stayed there for six months. While in Rome, Goltzius studied antique sculpture and, as a consequence, his art became much more classicizing in style and grounded in the study of the human body.

In about 1600 Goltzius added painting to his already long list of talents. It has been speculated that the artist's failing eyesight played a part in his decision to begin painting, which did not require the precision of printmaking. It is possible, however, that his decision was prompted by his friend and biographer Van Mander, for whom painting was the highest form of art.[1] In 1612 Goltzius was visited by Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640), who had come to the Haarlem master in search of a reproductive engraver to make prints after his paintings. Rubens hired Lucas Emil Vorsterman (Flemish, 1595 - 1675), one of Goltzius' assistants, to fulfill this role. Rubens' visit had an important impact on Goltzius' painting style, which subsequently became more assured and classical in character.

[1] Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Zwolle, 2003), 265–266.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Hendrick Goltzius
Dutch, 1558 - 1617

The Fall of Man

1616

oil on canvas
overall: 104.5 x 138.4 cm (41 1/8 x 54 1/2 in.)
framed: 128.9 x 163.2 x 10.2 cm (50 3/4 x 64 1/4 x 4 in.)
Inscription: lower left in monogram: HG / AE 1616
Patrons' Permanent Fund 1996.34.1

ENTRY

In this magnificent image, Adam and Eve recline like mythological lovers in the Garden of Eden, portrayed at the very moment they become aware of their mutual desire. [1] Having already taken a bite from the apple, Eve turns toward Adam with a knowing gaze as she tenderly touches his chest. Mesmerized, Adam gently draws Eve toward him with his left arm as he looks into her eyes with intense longing. Adam also holds fruit, a tender fig that he squeezes between the forefinger and thumb of his right hand, a gesture as laden with sensual overtones as is the partially eaten apple. [2] The compelling emotional force of this moment is enhanced by the surrounding plants and animals, which Goltzius has painted in a bewitchingly believable fashion.

Goltzius entices his viewer to become fully engaged in this intimate encounter by placing the life-size figures of Adam and Eve close to the picture plane where one senses the fullness of their physical presence and the power of their mutual attraction. [3] Adam and Eve's bodies are perfectly proportioned, with skin that yields gently to the touch. As they lie there entirely naked except for the ground ivy

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that covers Adam's genitals, light plays across their bodies, modeling Adam's muscular body as well as Eve's softer form with its paler, more transparent flesh tones. Nevertheless, their idealized bodies have a physicality that fully explains their inability to restrain their primal appetites. That failure will lead to their expulsion from Eden and humanity's fall from grace.

So beguiling is this portrayal that one can almost understand how Adam and Eve remained oblivious to the dire consequences of their actions as they discovered these new and unexpected emotions. Yet, as is narrated in the book of Genesis (Genesis 3:1–7), Adam and Eve had been told not to eat the fruit from the tree in the midst of the garden lest they die. The serpent, however, persuaded Eve that eating this fruit would allow them to be like God, knowing good from evil. She partook of the fruit and then passed it on to Adam, who ate as well. Consequently, their eyes were opened, and, realizing they were naked, they sewed together fig leaves to cover themselves. God drove the couple from his earthly paradise, the Garden of Eden, and neither they nor their offspring would ever be allowed to return.

Goltzius' seductive rendering of *The Fall of Man* differs in fundamental ways from the pictorial tradition of this biblical theme. Prior images, including Goltzius' drawing of *The Fall*, c. 1597 [fig. 1], and his large painting of 1608, now in the Hermitage, had depicted the couple standing or sitting at the moment when Eve was either receiving the apple from the serpent or passing it on to Adam. [4] Here, as Adam languidly gazes at Eve, who is eating from the forbidden apple, his pose reflects that of his counterpart in Michelangelo's ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, where Adam awaits the spark of life from God the Father. [5] As exceptional as it was for Adam and Eve to be depicted as lovers reclining in their paradisiacal setting, it was even more unprecedented for a painting of them to focus on their rapt gazes and mutual yearnings rather than on the transfer of the apple.

Little in the demeanor of Adam and Eve indicates the grave consequences of their actions, although Goltzius alludes to the momentousness of the occasion. The animals surrounding the couple in the Garden of Eden provide a symbolic framework for how the viewer ought to respond to the scene. Most important to the biblical narrative, of course, is the serpent that leads Eve astray. Far from the evil and menacing creature that one often finds in such depictions, Goltzius' serpent is sweet-faced and female-headed, a warning about the deceptiveness of appearances. [6] The goat traditionally signified unrestrained lust and the unchaste; as such, it was frequently included in images of *The Fall* (see fig. 1). [7] Karel van

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Mander I (Netherlandish, 1548 - 1606), whose writings Goltzius would have thoroughly known, gave a particularly pointed symbolic interpretation for this animal. For him the goat also signified “the whore, who destructs young men, just [as it] browses and violates the young green shoots,” [8] an interpretation that Goltzius has followed: the goat nearest Eve chomps on young grasses.

The elephant and hare in the far distance have different relationships to Adam and Eve. Both animals have turned their backs on the scene and are departing the area as quickly as possible. The hare probably leaps away in fear of the consequences of Adam and Eve’s actions, since fear is one of the attributes Van Mander gave to this animal. [9] On the other hand, the elephant was traditionally associated with piety, temperance, and chastity, so little wonder that Goltzius depicted it in fast retreat. [10]

The most fascinating and riveting of all the animals in the scene is the cat in the immediate foreground, which is so realistically painted that one can almost hear it breathe. Although the cat was traditionally viewed as a symbol of lust and sensual pleasure, for Van Mander this animal served as a warning to the viewer about being an unjust judge. [11] The cat’s penetrating gaze, from which there is no escape, reminds spectators not to condemn others for the very vices of which they are themselves guilty.

The Fall of Man is among a number of paintings Goltzius executed between 1613 and 1616 that focus on lovers in a landscape, including *Venus and Adonis*, 1614 [fig. 2], which depicts the goddess gently embracing Adonis as she, in vain, urges him to stay with her and avoid the hunt. Much as with Adam and Eve, the two figures gaze into each other’s eyes, with their young, idealized bodies arrayed in the immediate foreground for the visual enjoyment of the spectator. The style and character of *Venus and Adonis*, and all of Goltzius’ subsequent paintings, owe much to the influence of Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640), who visited Goltzius in Haarlem in June 1612 in search of an engraver to make reproductive prints after his paintings. Goltzius, who had turned his attention to painting around 1600 after his successful career as an engraver, had previously sought to master the rendering of flesh, which Van Mander considered to be one of the most difficult things to paint and thus a crucial test of a painter’s skill. [12] It was only after Rubens’ visit, however, that Goltzius learned how to create sensual painted images by blending his brushstrokes to create the luminosity of flesh and by focusing on the emotions of love and longing. [13] It is not known which of this Flemish master’s paintings Goltzius actually saw at that time, but one of them could have been a

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Venus and Adonis that was in the Delft collection of Boudewijn de Man (c. 1570/1575–after 1644), who likely was the first owner of Goltzius' *The Fall of Man*. [14]

Although Rubens had a great impact on Goltzius' painting style in the mid-1610s, no one would ever confuse the works of the two artists. Goltzius never assimilated the lessons of his experiences in Italy in 1590–1591 to the same extent that Rubens had during his prolonged stay there in the first decade of the seventeenth century. The idealization of classically inspired figures in Rubens' paintings was of a different order than the idealization of comparable figures in Goltzius' paintings. For example, even though Adam's pose relates in many ways to that of the antique sculpture of the river god Tiber that Goltzius drew in Rome in 1591 [fig. 3], Goltzius has given Adam's body a sinuous, rhythmic flow reminiscent of the artist's late sixteenth-century mannerist style.

Goltzius must have based this composition on a number of drawings that he made from life. The goat nearest Eve, for example, is practically a mirror image of a metalpoint drawing he made in 1591–1594. [15] Documents indicate that Goltzius also made a drawing of a cat, which was probably similar in character to the goat drawing. [16] Drawings likely served as models for both Adam and Eve since the poses of both figures are found in other paintings. For example, Goltzius used Eve's pose for one of the daughters in *Lot and His Daughters*, 1616, in the Rijksmuseum. [17] Interestingly, by 1616 Goltzius had already used Adam's pose twice when depicting a female figure. In his *Vertumnus and Pomona* of 1613, the goddess of fruit reclines in a landscape just as Adam does, but facing the opposite direction [fig. 4]. In 1615 she appears in mirror image, in the pose that Goltzius would use for Adam one year later. [18] It is testimony to the artist's genius that each of the permutations of this figure seems so compellingly natural and integrated into its narrative.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Hendrick Goltzius, *The Fall*, c. 1597, pen and brown ink, brush in various colors, British Museum, London. Photo © Trustees of the British Museum

fig. 2 Hendrick Goltzius, *Venus and Adonis*, 1614, oil on canvas, Bayerische Staatsgemaldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Alte Pinakothek, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich / Art Resource, NY

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fig. 3 Hendrick Goltzius, *The River God Tiber*, 1591, black chalk on blue paper, heightened with white, Teylers Museum, Haarlem

fig. 4 Hendrick Goltzius, *Vertumnus and Pomona*, 1613, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Lynn Russell and Lieneke Nijkamp for their assistance with this text.

[2] Portrayals of fig trees or figs in emblem books signified abundance as well as the Resurrection of Christ. In this painting, because Adam holds the fig but has not yet eaten from the apple, he is still—at least for now—worthy of the abundance of the Garden of Eden. The fig in his hand could also represent God's promise of mankind's redemption through the future sacrifice and resurrection of his son. See Arthur Henkel and A. Schöne, eds., *Emblemata: Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1967), lx–lxi and 241–242, citing Georgia Montanea, *Monumenta Emblematum Christianorum Virtutum* (1571; reprint, Frankfurt, 1619), 24.

[3] For an excellent discussion of Goltzius' ability to seduce the eye and afford sensual pleasure through the depiction of beauty, see Eric Jan Sluijter, "Venus, Visus and Pictura," in *Seductress of Sight: Studies in Dutch Art of the Golden Age*, trans. Jennifer Kilian and Katy Kist (Zwolle, 2000), 86–159.

[4] Much like his painting of 1616, Goltzius' drawing of 1597 includes a cat and a goat in the foreground. The most important of these prior images of *The Fall of Man* was the engraving *Adam and Eve*, 1504, by Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471 - 1528), which served as the basis for the monumental painting of this subject by Goltzius' colleague in Haarlem, Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (Dutch, 1562 - 1638). Cornelis painted his work for the Prinsenhof in Haarlem in 1592. See Ger Luijten, *Dawn of the Golden Age: Northern Netherlandish*

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Art, 1580–1620 (Amsterdam, 1993), 337–338, no. 7. For Goltzius' painting of 1608 in the Hermitage, see Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2003), 268–269, fig. 102.

[5] I would like to thank Rachel Pollack for this observation.

[6] See Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, vol. 2, pt. 1 of 2 (Paris, 1956), 84. For an overview of Renaissance and baroque prints depicting Adam and Eve, see H. Diane Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints* (Washington, DC, 1990), 113–130.

[7] This goat is in exactly the same pose as that of Goltizus' 1616 painting, indicating that he used the same preliminary drawing for both works.

[8] Karel van Mander, "Wtbeeldinge der figueren . . .," in Karel van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck* (Haarlem, 1604), fol. 129r. "De Geyte beteyckent de Hoere / die de jonghe knechten verderft / ghelijck de Geyt de jonghe groen spruyten afknaeght en scheyndet." The translation is taken from Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2003), 332 n. 156.

[9] Karel van Mander, "Wtbeeldinge der figueren . . .," in Karel van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck* (Haarlem, 1604), fol. 130r. "Met hem wort de vreese beteyckent: want hy een seer vreesachtigh Dier is" (with him fear is meant, since he is a fearful animal). Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2003), 302, no. 111, on the other hand, interprets the rabbit as symbolizing carnality.

[10] The positive assessment of the elephant's virtues goes back to Pliny, who wrote that the animals "possess virtues rare even in man, honesty, wisdom, justice." He also noted that they hate serpents. See H. Rackham, *Pliny Natural History* (Cambridge, MA, 1940), 3, book 8. For Christian symbolism related to the elephant, see Leonard J. Slatkes, "Rembrandt's Elephant," *Simiolus* 11, no.1 (1980): 7–13. Van Mander goes so far as to ascribe the attribute "Godliness" to it. Karel van Mander, "Wtbeeldingeder figueren . . .," in Karel van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck* (Haarlem, 1604), fol. 128r. "Den Oliphant beteyckent den Coningh / en d'Egyptsche hebben hem daer mede beteyckent. Den Oliphant / in een water siende nae een nieuw Maen / beteyckent de Godsdiensticheyt / oft Godsvruchticheyt: want sy alle Maende hun suyveren met de nieuw Maen / die sy schijnen te eeren."

[11] Karel van Mander, "Wtbeeldinge der figueren . . .," in Karel van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck* (Haarlem, 1604), fol. 130r. "De Katte beteyckent een onrechtveerdigh Richter: want sy is dickwils in huys schadigher als de Muysen / die sy als meesten dief / om hun dieverije straffende is."

[12] For the painting of flesh, see Ann-Sophie Lehmann, "Fleshing Out the Body: The 'Colours of the Naked' in Workshop, Practice, and Theory, 1400–1600,"

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in *Body and Embodiment in Netherlandish Art / Lichaam en lichamelijkheid in de Nederlandse kunst*, ed. A. S. Lehmann and H. Roodenburg, *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 58 (Zwolle, 2008): 87–107; Paul Taylor, "The Glow in Late Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Dutch Paintings," in *Looking through Paintings: The Study of Painting Techniques and Materials in Support of Art Historical Research*, ed. Erma Hermens, *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 11 (Delft, 1998): 159–178; and Eric Jan Sluijter, "Goltzius' Painting and Flesh or Why Goltzius Began to Paint in 1600," in *The Learned Eye: Regarding Art, Theory, and the Artist's Reputation—Essays for Ernst van de Wetering*, ed. M. van den Doel (Amsterdam, 2005): 158–177. I would like to thank Perry Chapman for providing me with these references.

[13] For further discussion of Rubens' influence on the pictorial character of *The Fall of Man,* see Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2003), 302, no. 111.

[14] For Boudewijn de Man, see Jaap van der Veen, "Delftse verzamelingen in de zeventiende en eerste helft van de achttiende eeuw," in *Burgers verzamelen 1600–1750: Schatten in Delft* (Delft, 2002), 72–74. The sale of Boudewijn de Man's collection occurred in Delft on March 15, 1644. De Man owned almost seventy paintings, including three by Rubens, among them a *Venus and Adonis.* This work sold for f. 500, and was the most expensive painting in his large collection. *Venus and Adonis*, c. 1612, was probably the painting of that subject in the Mauritshuis (inv. no. 254), which is now considered a studio replica of Rubens' painting in Düsseldorf. De Man owned three Goltzius paintings, among them *Adam and Eve,* which sold for f. 110. One of De Man's other paintings by Goltzius was an "Abel in het verkort" (Abel in foreshortening), which has been identified as *The Dead Adonis*, 1609, in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (inv. no. SK-A-1284). Whether or not De Man commissioned these paintings (he did commission other works), it seems probable that Goltzius would have known his collection. I would like to thank Jaap van de Veen for providing me with a list of the contents of De Man's sale.

[15] This drawing is illustrated in Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2003), 176, no. 60.

[16] Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2003), 176.

[17] Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2003), 304–305, no. 112.

[18] This painting is in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. See Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2003), 300–301, no. 110.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a thin, fine-weight, plain-weave fabric. It has been lined to a coarser fabric and subsequently strip-lined. The tacking margins have been removed. There is slight cusping on the top and the left sides, but none on the right or the bottom. This information, coupled with the proximity of the figures' limbs to the edges of the painting, could indicate that the edges may have been trimmed slightly in the past. The ground is a thin, light brown layer. The paint is thin and fluid in most of the composition, but thicker around the areas of flesh that require greater definition, such as the fingers, toes, and facial features. The paint is thickest in the cat, where Goltzius used rich brushwork to create the texture of the fur.

The X-radiographs show numerous losses to the support along the edges. They are most abundant along the top edge. The paint is tented, but secure and in good condition. There are a few rather small losses scattered throughout the composition in addition to the losses along the edges. There is also a vertical scratch in Eve's neck. The painting was strip-lined and mounted onto a new stretcher in 1998. Discolored varnish and inpainting were also removed at that time.

PROVENANCE

Possibly Boudewijn de Man, Delft; (his sale, Delft, 15 March 1644, no. 2, as *Een Adam ende Eva*).[1] Possibly private collection, Amsterdam, 1671.[2] Probably (anonymous sale, Hubert and Dupuy at Salle des Grands-Augustins, Paris, 3 June 1774 and following days, no. 34, as *Adam & Eve*).[3] (Camillo Davico, Turin), before 1936; purchased 1936 by Prof. Mario Micheletti, Turin; acquired 1972 by private collection, Switzerland;[4] (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, New York, 15 May 1996, no. 51); purchased by NGA.

[1] Owners through 1774, and the accompanying footnotes documenting the sources, are taken from the 1996 Christie's sale catalogue. Boudewijn de Man's ownership of "Een Adam ende Eva van Goltius [florins] 110" is documented in

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Gemeente Archief Delft, Notary archive no. 1861, deed no. 2035.

[2] Hendrik Houmes' annotation "een Adam en Eva op de cingel tot Amsterdam" is in a copy of van Mander's *Het Schilder-Boeck*, fol. 286 recto, preserved in the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam.

[3] Lot 34 in this sale is described as "Adam & Eve de Goltius, Pouc. de haut 40". It therefore measured approximately 100 centimeters in height (the width was not recorded), and it sold for 49.7 francs.

[4] The anonymous Swiss owner provided information about the ownership by Davico and Micheletti to Lawrence W. Nichols in a letter of 6 March 1984. See Lawrence Wells Nichols, "The Paintings of Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617)," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1990: 185.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

2000 Art for the Nation: Collecting for a New Century, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2000-2001, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Carel de Moor after Gerard ter Borch, *Portret van Jan van Goyen*, 1665–1738, etching, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-23.732

Goyen, Jan van

Dutch, 1596 - 1656

BIOGRAPHY

Born on January 13, 1596, Jan Josephsz van Goyen began training as an artist in his native city of Leiden at the early age of ten. The series of teachers with whom he studied included, according to Orlers' near-contemporary account, Isaac van Swanenburgh (c. 1537–1614). Orlers also says that Van Goyen spent a year in France before going to Haarlem, where he is known to have been a student of Esaias van de Velde I (Dutch, 1587 - 1630) in 1617. His early works closely resemble those of Van de Velde.

By 1618 Van Goyen had returned to Leiden, where that same year he married Annetje Willemsdr van Raelst. His name occurs frequently in Leiden documents between 1625 and 1632. In 1625 he bought a house on the Sint Peterskerkstraat, which he sold in 1629 to the marine painter Jan Porcellis (c. 1584–1632). Probably in the summer of 1632 he moved to The Hague, becoming a citizen two years later. Although he also worked in Haarlem in 1634, at the house of Salomon van Ruysdael's brother Isaack (1599–1677), he is thereafter recorded only in The Hague. He bought a house there on the Wagenstraat in 1635 and built another the following year on the Dunne Bierkade, where Paulus Potter (Dutch, 1625 - 1654) is known to have lived from 1649 to 1652. Although a prolific and successful painter, Van Goyen engaged throughout his life in various business ventures, usually unsuccessfully; these included art dealing, auction sales, and speculation in real

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estate and tulip bulbs.

During the 1630s, Van Goyen, along with the Haarlem artists Pieter Molijn (Dutch, 1595 - 1661) and Salomon van Ruysdael (Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670), developed a new approach to the representation of landscape that focused on local subjects and utilized a tonal palette, initiating what has come to be recognized as the golden age of Dutch landscape painting. Van Goyen was a highly respected figure in the artistic community of The Hague. In 1638 and 1640 he was chosen to be *hoofdman* of the painters' guild, and received further official recognition in 1651, when he was commissioned to paint a panoramic view of the city for the burgomaster's room in the Town Hall. In 1649 two of his daughters were married to artists, Margaretha to Jan Steen (Dutch, 1625/1626 - 1679) and Maria to the still-life painter Jacques de Claeuw (c. 1620–1670 or after). Despite his artistic success, Van Goyen died insolvent in The Hague on April 27, 1656.

Original text by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., April 24, 2014.

Revised to change artist image; sitter identification has changed since initial publication.

December 9, 2019

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan van Goyen
Dutch, 1596 - 1656

Ice Scene near a Wooden Observation Tower

1646

oil on panel
overall: 36.5 × 34.3 cm (14 3/8 × 13 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower right on the boat, VG in monogram: VG 1646
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund 2014.35.1

ENTRY

Jan van Goyen was one of the most innovative Dutch landscape artists of the 17th century. He began his career in the early 1620s in his native Leiden by depicting the daily activities of the lower and middle classes, often as they traversed the dunes that protect the country from the North Sea. In the 1630s, following the example of his Haarlem colleague Esaias van de Velde I (Dutch, 1587 - 1630), he developed a "tonal" style of painting that rendered the Dutch landscape in subtle hues of grays and ochers to harmonize atmospheric effects. [1] Gradually, Van Goyen's works took on a greater sense of visual drama, both through his introduction of imposing trees or structures to his foregrounds and through his ability to capture the varied cloud formations that activate the Dutch skies. He also developed an interest in panoramic views, which he often explored by observing a city from across a wide expanse of water. [2] All of these elements are found in this beautifully preserved winter scene, signed and dated 1646.

This painting features a remarkable wooden tower that also served as a beacon to help mariners navigate the country's network of waterways. Ship captains could see this towering structure during the day; then, at dusk or during foul weather, a caretaker could mount the ladders to reach the uppermost platform and light a beacon situated in the small wooden structure to help guide ships. Here, in the dead of winter, this tower is the setting for a communal gathering. While many on the ice are skating, others push small sleds carrying people or cargo. Some just stand and talk in tightly knit clusters. In one particularly engaging vignette, an enterprising young skater hitches a ride behind a horse-drawn box sleigh filled

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with passengers. Beyond the tower is a rustic home with smoke drifting from its chimney. Clouds sweep across the sky, while along the far shore one sees a distant city with a windmill, a massive stone tower, a large church, and a number of ships along the quay.

Van Goyen's painting must be based on reality, but, as is characteristic of the artist, it probably does not precisely record an existing scene. Van Goyen was likely inspired by a tall beacon he observed in the mid-1640s during one of his trips near Dordrecht. [3] The specific location of this structure, which he rendered twice in a sketchbook now in Museum Bredius, The Hague [fig. 1] [fig. 2], is not known, but was likely situated southwest of Dordrecht and on the opposite side of the Oude Maas. [4] This beacon, rising on a single pole from a wooden landing, is comparable in height to the one in the painting. In both instances a small wooden shelter atop the pole protects the beacon from wind and rain. Notably, however, the tower in the drawings is a much simpler structure and lacks the complex arrangement of supporting beams, ladders, and platforms that gives the tower such a dynamic presence in the painting.

The evidence that this wooden structure was the inspiration for Van Goyen's painting stems in part from other pictorial elements in the sketches that relate to the painting. In the first of these sketches, which Van Goyen made to the left of the tower, one sees the same house that appears in the painting, as well as the church. In the second drawing, made to the right of the tower, comparable large structures—including the church, a stone tower, and a windmill—are visible along the far shore. In conceiving *Ice Scene near a Wooden Observation Tower*, Van Goyen elaborated upon and combined motifs from these two drawings, a working process that is consistent with the way he often used drawings as a basis for compositional ideas in his paintings. [5] He also transformed the season from summer to winter, which enabled him to enliven his scene with numerous figures skating and pushing sleds across the frozen water.

Van Goyen's painting has a dramatic character that belies its small scale. This effect is partly the result of the vertical format, rare in his work, which he chose in order to properly feature the verticality of the wooden observation tower. [6] This orientation also allowed him to juxtapose the beacon against the winter sky, where steel-gray clouds swirl overhead and birds circle the tower, reinforcing the sense that humans and nature are intimately intertwined in this frigid landscape. Cold, wintry light pervades the scene, not only in the sky but also in the variety of light effects on the broad sheet of ice covering this stretch of water.

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The painting's freshness is enhanced by its remarkable condition. Van Goyen's vigorous brushwork is evident throughout the painting, whether in his rendering of the wooden structure, the figures, or the branches of the trees. Interestingly, upon close observation one sees that Van Goyen initially blocked in figures and buildings in brownish-ocher paint, and then refined their shapes and gave them color in his final layer. Although he made small adjustments in the scale and position of compositional elements throughout his painting, he seems to have had a clear sense of the pictorial effects he wanted to achieve in this winter scene, which he executed with great verve and surety.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

May 7, 2019

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan van Goyen, *The Bredius-Kronig Sketchbook*, fol. 43, begun 1644, black chalk with brownish red wash, Otto J. G. Kronig Collection, on loan to Museum Bredius, The Hague

fig. 2 Jan van Goyen, *The Bredius-Kronig Sketchbook*, fol. 44, begun 1644, black chalk with brownish red wash, Otto J. G. Kronig Collection, on loan to Museum Bredius, The Hague

NOTES

[1] An excellent example of a tonal landscape is Van Goyen's *View of Dordrecht from the Dordtse Kil* (National Gallery of Art, Washington,

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1978.11.1).

[2] See Van Goyen's *View of Rhenen* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2014.136.33).

[3] The Dutch erected numerous tall warning markers along their inner waterways. Many of them, as seen in Simon de Vlieger's *Estuary at Day's End* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1997.101.1), were simple structures, often with a barrel placed on top of a tall pole. These structures warned sailors of the presence of dangerous sandbars that would not have been visible at high tide. Shorebirds nested in the barrels, and in foggy weather or at twilight, when the markers were not visible, sailors would watch the birds' flight patterns as an indicator of what lay ahead. For paintings by Van Goyen that depict similar wooden structures, see Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656*: *ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*, vol. 2, *Katalog der Gemälde* (Amsterdam, 1973), 321, cat. no. 704; 341, cat. nos. 757 and 759; 356–357, cat. nos. 795, 796, and 798; 367, cat. no. 819; 390, cat. no. 871; 398, cat. no. 885.

[4] See Edwin Buijsen, *The Sketchbook of Jan van Goyen from the Bredius-Kronig Collection* (The Hague, 1993), 1:15–16, 67, fol. nos. 43 and 44. The earliest sheet in this sketchbook dates from 1644. Buijsen notes that these two drawings of a landing with a beacon were probably made near Dordrecht because the large squat building in the background of fol. no. 44 superficially resembles the tower of the Grote Kerk, also known as the Onze Lieve Vrouwe Kerk, in that city. Hans-Ulrich Beck connected these drawings to two paintings by Van Goyen (but not to *Ice Scene near a Wooden Observation Tower*). See Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656*: *ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*, vol. 2, *Katalog der Gemälde* (Amsterdam, 1973), 364, cat. no. 811; 370, cat. no. 825. Should the large structure on the far shore be Dordrecht's Grote Kerk, it is likely that Van Goyen drew this wooden beacon near the village of Lijnde, just south of Zwijndrecht.

[5] For further examples of this approach, see Ilona van Tuinen, "Jan van Goyen," in Ger Luijten, Peter Schatborn, and Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., *Drawings for Paintings in the Age of Rembrandt* (Milan, 2016), 127–129.

[6] Beck only lists three other winter scenes in vertical format. See Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656*: *ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*, vol. 2, *Katalog der Gemälde* (Amsterdam, 1973), 15–16, cat. nos. 27, 28, and 29a.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wooden support consists of one panel with horizontal grain that was cradled during a past treatment. The support is 0.6 cm thick (1/4 in.), and the top edge of

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the reverse is slightly beveled. There is no evidence that the panel's size was altered during any past treatment.

The topmost visible ground layer is off-white in color. Examination using a binocular microscope indicates there is a white layer applied throughout the sky, on top of the ground, but this layer does not extend into the foreground. The paint medium is estimated to be oil, and the layers were applied thinly with little to no impasto. The figures and objects were likely painted in stages on top of an off-white/gray layer, and it appears that the shape and contours of these elements were adjusted as Van Goyen also reworked areas of the foreground. These numerous small revisions are visible in the infrared reflectogram (IRR), but they are also easily visible in normal light; the artist only applied thin off-white/gray strokes on top of the darker paints of the figures and objects in the foreground. [1] Although the paint was applied in stages, wet over dry, many elements were worked up wet into wet during those stages, including the observation tower and the trees on the right side of the composition.

The panel is currently structurally sound, though old woodworm tunnels are visible in the x-radiograph. [2] The ground and paint layers are in very good condition. There are a few pinpoint losses in the foreground and there are several small losses along the edges. There are only minor amounts of retouching on the damages along the edges, as well as a few small, scattered areas throughout. The varnish is even and saturating.

Dina Anchin

May 7, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.1–1.4 microns (J filter).

[2] X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14 × 17 in.). The parameters were 30 kV, 5 mA, 30 seconds, and 40 in. distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

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PROVENANCE

Jacques-Phillippe Le Bas [1707-1783], Paris; (his estate sale, at his residence, Paris, 1-6 December 1783, no. 1);[1] Dulac. (Eugene Slatter Gallery, London), in 1949.[2] (Thomas Agnew & Sons, Ltd., London);[3] purchased 1976 by private collection, United States; (sale, Sotheby's, London, 30 January 2014, no. 37); (Richard Green [Fine Paintings], London); sold 30 May 2014 to NGA.

[1] The painting sold for 340.3 livres; its description in the sale catalogue reads: "...ce Tableau d'une bonne couleur, est un des plus beaux de ce Maitre."

[2] The painting was included in the 1949 summer exhibition at the Slatter Gallery.

[3] On the reverse of the painting is an Agnew's label with number 39446 on it.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1949 Exhibition of Dutch and Flemish Masters, Eugene Slatter Gallery, London, 1949, no. 4, repro., as *Skating Scene*.

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1972 Beck, Hans-Ulrich. *Jan van Goyen 1596-1656, ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*. 4 vols. Vol. 2: Katalog der Gemälde. Amsterdam, 1973: 16, no. 30, repro.

2014 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. "Gifts and Acquisitons: Jan van Goyen, Ice Scene Near a Wooden Observation Tower." *National Gallery of Art Bulletin* no. 51 (Fall 2014): 21-22, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan van Goyen
Dutch, 1596 - 1656

View of Dordrecht from the Dordtse Kil

1644

oil on panel
overall: 64.7 x 95.9 cm (25 1/2 x 37 3/4 in.)
Inscription: lower center on stern of boat: VGoyen 1644
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund 1978.11.1

ENTRY

On a calm day with an overcast sky, a sailboat stops across from the city of Dordrecht to take on passengers from a rowboat. This sailboat, heavily laden with travelers, served as a ferry, one of a number of types of boats that transported people along the many inland waterways of the Dutch Republic. In the foreground another ferry—a rowboat filled with men, women, and children—heads toward Dordrecht across a wide body of water.

Van Goyen has situated the viewer southwest of Dordrecht on the bank of the Dordtse Kil. The spit of land on the left, on which the fisherman tends to his traps, marks the juncture of the Dordtse Kil with a larger river, the Oude Maas. The sailboat, which is behind this spit of land, is on the Oude Maas at the point where it is joined by the Dordtse Kil and begins to flow west, away from Dordrecht.

Dordrecht was an old and extremely important city in the Dutch Republic. By 1644, when Van Goyen painted this view, it had long since been a major mercantile center. Its importance grew as a result of its favorable geographic situation at the juncture of a number of major inland waterways that connected with the German

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and southern hinterlands. The conservative character of the city's rich patrician class was reinforced by the formidable presence of the Dutch Reformed Church that resulted from the victory of the orthodox Calvinists, known as the Counter-Remonstrants, over the more moderate Remonstrants at the Synod of Dordrecht in 1618–1619. [1] The Groote Kerk, the large cathedral with the unfinished spire rising in the distance, was the real and symbolic center of the church's power in the city.

Van Goyen traveled frequently throughout the Netherlands during his long and productive career. On these trips he would fill sketchbooks with scenes that he later expanded into paintings executed in his studio. Working from such sketches he painted more than twenty such views of Dordrecht from the southwest between 1644 and the early 1650s. [2] These paintings contain, in various combinations, many of the same compositional elements: the passenger sailboat, rowboats, the fisherman, and boats sailing along the distant shore, as well as buildings associated with the city's profile itself. Without exception, Van Goyen featured the activities of the ferryboat loading and unloading passengers as it passed the juncture of the Oude Maas and the Dordtse Kil. He seems to have been intrigued as much by the activities associated with the site as by the dramatic view of Dordrecht that it offered.

This painting comes at the beginning of the series and is exceptional in the extraordinary stillness of the water. Reflections of the boats, buildings, and even the sky create subtle patterns across its surface. Van Goyen suggests the translucency of the water in the immediate foreground by allowing the ocher-colored ground to be visible through the thin brownish Glazing on top of it. This painting technique, in which one looks through the surface to an underlying layer, parallels the experience of viewing water in nature.

The thinly painted distant view of Dordrecht is conceived in these same terms. The softly undulating tones and suggestive brushwork create the sense that the buildings, rather than being sharply defined solid masses, are enveloped in a misty shroud. This work, however, is not a pure "tonal" painting such as those executed by Van Goyen in the late 1630s and early 1640s; instead, it marks a transition to his later "classical" style. The sky is relatively densely painted, and areas of blue peek through the cloud cover. Touches of local color—blues, reds, and pinks—appear on the clothes of the figures.

Many elements of Dordrecht's architecture in this painting can be found on contemporary maps. The windmills to the right, the walled bulwark before the

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Groote Kerk, the ships clustered at the Vuylpoort beyond the bulwark, and the round bastion at the south bank of the Sagerspoort, for example, are all visible on the 1646 bird's-eye-view map of Dordrecht [fig. 1] in M. Merian's *Neuwe Archontologia Cosmica* (Frankfurt am Main, 1646). The windmill on the bastion near the north end of the Nieuwe Haven, visible on the map, is seen here along the distant left edge of the Dordrecht coastline. While Van Goyen has accurately recorded the general disposition of the topographical elements, he has exaggerated the distances between them. If one compares this scene with a drawing of Dordrecht found in a sketchbook Van Goyen made around 1648 [fig. 2], [3] one sees that the architectural elements were in reality more compactly grouped when seen from that vantage point. Van Goyen sought to give the view a panoramic character by stretching out the topographical elements, so that the eye scans across the horizon instead of being thrust into depth, and he deliberately situated the large sailboat in the foreground over the natural vanishing point of the scene. Through compositional decisions that minimize the effects of deep recession into space, Van Goyen thus sought to enhance the peaceful nature of the scene, encouraging his viewer to partake of the quiet mood engendered by the delicate atmospheric effects.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 M. Merian, *Map of Dordrecht, from Neuwe Archontologia Cosmica*, 1646, Library of Congress, Washington, Rare Book and Special Collections Division. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress

fig. 2 Jan van Goyen, *View of Dordrecht*, c. 1648, black chalk, white wash, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstich-Kabinett, Dresden. Photo: Herbert Boswank

NOTES

[1] For an account of the Remonstrant/Counter-Remonstrant dispute, see Pieter Geyl, *The Netherlands in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1966), 38–63.

[2] Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656*: *ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1972–1973): 2:141–156, nos. 290–317. In 1987, Beck published the first of two addenda to his two-volume catalogue raisonné: *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656, ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*, vol. 3, *Ergänzungen zum Katalog der Handzeichnungen und Ergänzungen zum Katalog der Gemälde* (Doornspijk, 1987) and vol. 4, *Künstler um Jan van Goyen: Maler und Zeichner* (Doornspijk, 1991).

[3] The Dresden sketchbook is published in full by Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1972–1973), 1: no. 846. An illustration of the comparable view of Dordrecht, no. 846/72, is found on page 278.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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The support is a thin panel composed of three horizontally grained boards of equal width joined horizontally. The support has been mounted onto another thin panel and cradled, with a slight dislevel along the upper join of the original panel. Paint is applied over a thin off-white ground with low, fine brushmarking, in thin semitransparent darks and thicker opaque lights.[1] The sky, the water, and the trees and buildings along the horizon were rapidly painted in an initial stage working wet-into-wet. In a later stage the primary boats and figures were sketched and painted over the dry paint of the water.

Small amounts of inpaint cover the panel joins, edges, and areas of slight abrasion. In a prior restoration, four undamaged areas in the central sky were overpainted to make the clouds appear denser. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition by the National Gallery of Art.

[1] The pigments were analyzed using X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF) by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated August 4, 1982, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

(Eugene Glaenzer, New York and Paris), possibly for (Jacques Seligmann, Paris and New York);[1] sold 1906 to Baron Vladimir de Gunzburg [1873-1932], Paris;[2] by inheritance to his son, Serge de Gunzburg [b. 1911], Geneva;[3] sold 8 February 1978 through (Heim Gallery, Paris) to NGA.

[1] Glaezner managed Seligmann's New York branch.

[2] This early provenance is given by Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596-1656* , 4 vols., Doornspijk, 1987-1991: 3(1987):177, no. 296a.

[3] According to Heim Gallery.

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1984 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. Rev. ed. New York, 1984: 297, no. 393, color repro.

1984 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Painting in the National Gallery of Art*. Washington, D.C., 1984: 14-15, repro.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 185, repro.

1986 Sutton, Peter C. *A Guide to Dutch Art in America*. Washington and Grand Rapids, 1986: 305.

1987 Beck, Hans-Ulrich. *Jan van Goyen, 1596-1656: ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*. 4 vols. Vol. 3: Ergänzungen zum Katalog der Handzeichnungen und Ergänzungen zum Katalog der Gemälde. Doornspijk, 1987: 177, no. 296A, repro.

1992 National Gallery of Art. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York, 1992: 125, repro.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 61-64, color repro. 63.

2004 Allen, Eva J. *A Vision of Nature: The Landscapes of Philip Koch: Retrospective, 1971-2004*. Exh. cat. University of Maryland University College, Adelphi, 2004: 13, fig. 4.

2004 Hand, John Oliver. *National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection*. Washington and New York, 2004: 188, no. 147, color repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan van Goyen
Dutch, 1596 - 1656

View of Dordrecht from the North

early 1650s

oil on canvas
overall: 63.1 × 87.2 cm (24 13/16 × 34 5/16 in.)
framed: 92.7 × 116.2 × 12.7 cm (36 1/2 × 45 3/4 × 5 in.)
Inscription: lower right on the bow of the boat: V G 165[illegible numeral]
Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.136.34

ENTRY

Billowing clouds sweeping across the sky help create the dynamic character of Jan van Goyen's engaging portrayal of the lively waterways near Dordrecht. [1] While sailboats and dinghies filled with men and women come and go, the most active elements of the painting are the shifting patterns of light and shade passing over this watery domain. Van Goyen captured these atmospheric qualities by employing quick and fluid brushwork, by silhouetting foreground figures and their boats against sunlit waters beyond, and by juxtaposing the distant city profile against the white clouds nestled against the horizon. While Van Goyen clearly depicted all of the distinctive landmarks along the banks of the river Merwede looking toward Dordrecht, the essence of the painting is not its topography, but rather the character of the air and the human activities occurring at the confluence of rivers surrounding this important and historic Dutch city.

Van Goyen was intimately familiar with the location he depicted; he painted about 70 views of Dordrecht and its environs over the course of his long career. [2] The artist clearly reveled in capturing the city's bustling harbors, filled with tall-masted

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ships, and its distinctive profile. Although he also painted views of other urban centers, including Leiden, The Hague, Rhenen, Arnhem, and Antwerp, none of these cities captured his imagination as much as did Dordrecht. In this view, Van Goyen portrayed all of Dordrecht's major towers and spires, including those of the Groothoofdspoort at the far left; the town hall, which is visible to the right of the foreground sailboat; the Nieuwe Kerk, with its tall pointed spire; the massive Grote Kerk; and, just to its right, the Vuylpoort. [3] These structures, individually and cumulatively, signified Dordrecht's importance within the Dutch Republic as a mercantile, civic, and religious center. Nevertheless, while Van Goyen's arrangement of the individual buildings is essentially correct, he enlarged the scale of the Grote Kerk and stretched out topographical elements to create a more compelling and panoramic image of the city than existed in reality.

This work, painted in the 1650s, is among the last of Van Goyen's many views of Dordrecht. [4] The city, situated at the juncture of two major rivers, the Oude Maas and the Merwede, provided the artist a range of possibilities for depicting patterns of daily life on these prominent waterways. Over the years, the artist visited the area a number of times, and he drew his impressions, often in black chalk, in sketchbooks that he carried with him on his travels throughout the Netherlands. [5] Some of these drawings depict the city as seen from a distance, but occasionally Van Goyen focused on individual buildings, such as the Grote Kerk [fig. 1]. Many of his quickly rendered drawings also feature boats and human activities taking place on and near the water. He judicially selected from and adapted these drawings to enliven his paintings, with the result that his landscapes are composites of his firsthand experiences. They do not record a specific moment in time, no matter how immediate they may seem. Even though one finds, for example, many of the same compositional elements in different paintings, including ferries loading and unloading passengers, dinghies, fishermen, and sailboats gliding past distant shores, Van Goyen always imaginatively rearranged them in new and varied combinations.

Van Goyen had two preferred locations for his views of Dordrecht: one in the southwest, at the juncture of the Oude Maas and Dordtse Kil, as in the Gallery's painting of 1644 [fig. 2], and one in the north, at the juncture of the Oude Maas and the Merwede, as is the case here. [6] From each location, Van Goyen could capture boat traffic passing along this interconnected network of rivers, with Dordrecht serving as the backdrop. Similar ferries operated all over the network of waterways in the Low Countries, transporting people, goods, and animals. The strategic

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location of Dordrecht for waterborne transportation is particularly evident in *View of Dordrecht from the North*, for from this vantage point one clearly sees the rivers flowing by the city both on the left (the Merwede) and on the right (the Oude Maas) [fig. 3] [fig. 4]. From this location Van Goyen could create scenarios that would have occurred on a daily basis, and ones that would have been recognizable to his clientele: large ferryboats filled to the brim with travelers, boarding and discharging passengers at the juncture of these waterways. [7] In this painting, a small rowboat with a man in the bow holding a wooden pole approaches the ferry to deliver some passengers, while a somewhat larger and more fully loaded launch ferries its occupants to their destination, perhaps Zwijndrecht, a nearby village situated along the Oude Maas.

The broad compositional similarities among many of Van Goyen's views of Dordrecht provide a fascinating framework for assessing his stylistic evolution from the 1630s to the 1650s. A comparison between the Gallery's two paintings of Dordrecht, executed about a decade apart, is particularly revealing. In 1644, when Van Goyen painted the first of these two works [fig. 2], he was in the midst of his tonal phase. He chose a panel support, rendered his quiet scene in a muted range of ochers and grays, and used translucencies of paint to create subtle reflections of boats, buildings, and even the sky across the water's surface. By the 1650s, his approach had evolved. Here, using the rougher textures of a canvas support, he applied his paints more thickly and vigorously. Compositional elements have become larger and have more lively rhythms, as in the ferry with its billowing sail. Most importantly, Van Goyen added color to his palette and introduced stronger contrasts of light and dark. The blue sky and clouds have become dynamic elements: not only do they evoke a sense of wind and air, but they also draw the eye into the painting's depth. Van Goyen reinforced this directional thrust by placing the tip of the ferryboat's sail (with its Dutch pennant) at the very juncture of the large diagonal cloud formations receding into the distance, thus directing the eye toward Dordrecht, the boat's destination.

The evolution of Van Goyen's style reflects broader tendencies in Dutch landscape painting around mid-century, particularly as seen in the work of Aelbert Cuyp (Dutch, 1620 - 1691). [8] Not only did these artists know each other's landscapes, but they also painted comparable views in which Dutch cities, particularly Dordrecht, served as backdrops for depictions of daily life. Their images were inevitably positive and often depicted travelers being transported in wooden ferries alongside local fishermen busy in dinghies. As in this view of Dordrecht,

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each of their paintings conveys a great deal of local pride, not only in a city's distinctive character and heritage, but also in the natural beauty of its surroundings.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

May 7, 2019

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan van Goyen, *View of the Grote Kerk, in Dordrecht*, c. 1648, black chalk, pen, and black ink, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, JvG 7

fig. 2 Jan van Goyen, *View of Dordrecht from the Dordtse Kil*, 1644, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund

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fig. 3 Detail, Nicolaas Visscher II, *Hollandiae Pars Meridionalior, vulgo Zuid-Holland (Atlas van der Hagen)*, Amsterdam, before 1680, copper engraving, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague

fig. 4 Joan Blaeu, *Plan of Dordrecht*, 1652, etching, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. RP-P-AO-14-33-1

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Henriette Rahusen for her thoughtful comments on this text.

[2] See Peter C. Sutton, *Reclaimed: Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker* (Greenwich, CT, 2008), 182, for a list of these paintings, which he derived from Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656: ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1972–1973).

[3] Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, "Jan van Goyen in the Corcoran: Exemplars of Dutch Naturalism," in *The William A. Clark Collection* (Washington, DC, 1978), 51–59, particularly 57–58.

[4] The last digit of the date in the inscription is uncertain, but probably is a "2," indicating a date of 1652.

[5] For an image of Van Goyen's black-chalk drawing of Dordrecht, c. 1648, in his so-called "Dresden sketchbook," see fig. 2 in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Jan van Goyen, *View of Dordrecht from the Dordtse Kil,* 1644," *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, NGA Online Editions, https://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/56597. The entire Dresden sketchbook is published in Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656: ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*, vol. 1, *Einführung; Katalog der Handzeichnungen*

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(Amsterdam, 1972), no. 846.

[6] The choice of this location was one that had an important precedent: the massive panoramic view of Dordrecht that Adam Willaerts (1577–1664) painted on commission from the city fathers in 1629. See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, 2001), 23, fig. 8.

[7] For a stylistically similar image of a ferry boat transferring passengers, in this instance from the southwest, at the juncture of the Oude Maas and Dordtse Kil, see Peter C. Sutton, *Reclaimed: Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker* (Greenwich, CT, 2008), 180–183, cat. no. 23. This panel painting, dated 1651, was acquired by the Dordrechts Museum in 2008.

[8] The parallels between Van Goyen's stylistic evolution and that of Aelbert Cuyp are many, particularly in their views of Dordrecht. For Cuyp's stylistic evolution and illustrations of a number of his views of Dordrecht, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Aelbert Cuyp* (Washington, 2001).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The primary support is a plain-weave canvas that was relined onto plain-weave linen with a fiber-mat interleaf using wax-resin adhesive. The lining canvas is secured to an expansion-bolt stretcher with staples along the tacking edges. This non-original secondary support extends beyond the tacking margins and is adhered to the back of the stretcher with the same wax-resin mixture used for the lining. The threads of the primary support are visible in the x-radiograph of the painting, and the canvas has approximately 18 threads per centimeter in the vertical direction and 15 threads per centimeter in the horizontal direction. [1] The original tacking edges have been trimmed, but strong original cusping is present along all the edges, indicating that the painting's dimensions have not been significantly altered.

The ground layer is thin and buff colored. The paint medium is estimated to be oil and was applied thinly without impasto. The artist first painted the sky and water, applying the paints wet into wet. The other elements and details were painted next, wet into wet, on top of the drier paint layers. This is evidenced in the infrared reflectogram, where the cloud formation is easily visible behind the largest sail and the highlights of the water can be seen through the boats. [2] In normal light, the lower paint layers are also easily visible through other compositional elements due to the thin quality of the paint layers.

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Overall, the painting is in good condition. There are scattered small losses and several linear scratches. Most of these damages are covered in retouching, which is heaviest along the edges. The varnish coatings appear even, and under ultraviolet radiation they have a slightly hazy fluorescence. There are green-fluorescent natural-resin residues scattered around the edges and in the foreground.

Dina Anchin

May 7, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14 × 17 in.). The parameters were 20 kV, 5 mA, 40 seconds, and 100.25 in. distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

[2] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.1–1.4 microns (J filter).

PROVENANCE

(Sale, Amsterdam, 24 September 1777, no. 43);[1] Vermeulen.[2] (sale, Amsterdam, 11 July 1798, no. 38); Gruyter.[3] Samuel S. Scheikévitch [1842-1908], Moscow and Paris; (sale, Frederik Muller & Cie, Amsterdam, 30 April-2 May 1907, 1st day, no. 82, as *Vue de Dordrecht*). (Trotti & Co., Paris); half-share sold July 1908 to (M. Knoedler & Co., New York); purchased 22 December 1908 by William Andrews Clark [1839-1925], New York, as *Shipping Scene*;[4] bequest April 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

[1] The early provenance through the 1907 sale is according to Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen and Paris, 1907-1928: 8(1923): 19, no. 50.

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[2] The buyer's name is in an annotated catalogue of the 1777 sale in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York; copy in NGA curatorial files. The buyer was possibly Cornelis Vermeulen (1732-1813), a Dordrecht art dealer, painter, illustrator, and copyist.

[3] A copy from an annotated catalogue of the 1798 sale is in NGA curatorial files. The buyer was probably Willem Gruyter, Sr., a collector and dealer in Amsterdam.

[4] The painting is stock number 11653 in the M. Knoedler & Co. Records, accession number 2012.M.54, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: Painting Stockbook 5, 1899 April – 1911 December, p. 160; Sales Book 9, 1907 May – 1912 January, p. 90; copies in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration: Collection of Paintings by Dutch Masters of the Seventeenth Century, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 19 (three publications; entries in 2 vol. 1909 catalogue and 1910 catalogue include repros. and have the dimensions of no. 18, NGA 2014.136.33).

1978 Romance and Reality: Aspects of Landscape Painting. For the Benefit of the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Wildenstein & Co., New York, October 1978, no. 33.

1978 The William A. Clark Collection: An exhibition marking the 50th Anniversary of the installation of The Clark Collection at The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 1978, catalogue without checklist.

1989 The William A. Clark Collection: Treasures of a Copper King, Yellowstone Art Center, Billings, Montana; Montana Historical Society, Helena, 1989, unnumbered checklist.

2001 Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001-2002, catalogue without checklist.

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1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*. 10 vols. Esslingen and Paris, 1907-1928: 8(1923): 19, no. 50.

1909 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Catalogue of a collection of paintings by Dutch masters of the seventeenth century*. The Hudson-Fulton Celebration 1. Exh. cat. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909: 20, no. 19, repro.

1910 Breck, Joseph. "L'Art hollandais à l'exposition Hudson-Fulton à New-York." *L'Art Flamand et Hollandais* 13 (June-July 1910): 59.

1910 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Old Dutch Masters Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Connection with the Hudson-Fulton Celebration*. New York, 1910: 86, no. 19, repro.

1925 Carroll, Dana H. *Catalogue of Objects of Fine Art and Other Properties at the Home of William Andrews Clark, 962 Fifth Avenue*. Part I. Unpublished manuscript, n.d. (1925): 132, no. 71.

1927 Volhard, Hans. *Die Grundtypen der Landschaftsbilder Jan van Goyens und ihre Entwiklung*. Frankfurt am Main, 1927: 163, 188.

1928 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Illustrated Handbook of the W. A. Clark Collection*. Washington, 1928: 42.

1932 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Illustrated Handbook of the W. A. Clark Collection*. Washington, 1932: 47.

1955 Breckenridge, James. D. *A Handbook of Dutch and Flemish Paintings in the William Andrews Clark Collection*. Washington, 1955: 20, repro.

1973 Beck, Hans-Ulrich. *Jan van Goyen, 1596-1656: ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*. 4 vols. Vol. 2: Katalog der Gemälde. Amsterdam, 1973: 2: 153, no. 311, repro.

1978 Sutton, Denys. *Romance and Reality: Aspects of Landscape Painting. For the Benefit of the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center*. Exh. cat. New York, Wildenstein & Co. New York, 1978: 18-19, nos. 21 and 33, repro.

1986 Sutton, Peter C. *A Guide to Dutch Art in America*. Washington and Grand Rapids, 1986: 299.

1989 Lewis, Hall, ed. *The William A. Clark Collection: Treasures of a Copper King*. Exh. cat. Billings, Yellowstone Art Center, Billings; Helena, Montana Historical Society, Helena. Billings, 1989: 7, 42, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan van Goyen
Dutch, 1596 - 1656

View of Rhenen

1646

oil on canvas
overall: 101.6 × 135.26 cm (40 × 53 1/4 in.)
framed: 127.64 × 161.93 × 5.72 cm (50 1/4 × 63 3/4 × 2 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right, VG in ligature: VGoyen 1646
Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.136.33

ENTRY

This panoramic landscape is so grand and visually compelling that one can almost imagine traveling down the winding road that leads to Rhenen, a medieval walled city on the Rhine River. [1] Jan van Goyen situated the viewer on the Grebbeberg, a small hill to the east of the city—a perfect vantage from which to see Rhenen nestled in the undulating terrain on the north bank of the river as well as the vast sweep of the surrounding Dutch countryside. The Rhine flows past the twin-towered Rijnpoort, one of the city's gates, and continues its meandering course toward the low-lying distant horizon. No less dramatic than the broad sweep of the land is the enormity of the overarching sky, which accounts for almost two-thirds of the painting's composition. Large clouds funneling in from the left toward the majestic tower of the Cunerakerk at the city's core not only enhance the visual impact of this architectural masterpiece but also the atmospheric character of the scene.

View of Rhenen has an understated dynamic energy that allows it to pulsate with life. The distant horizon of this expansive landscape is not flat but slopes gently to

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the left, receding to the point where the Rhine disappears into the distance. Late afternoon light passing through the billowing clouds creates patterns of light and shade throughout the sky and across the land, defining the topography and enlivening the scene. The artist brought depth to the composition by plunging the foreground into shadow and by bathing the water behind it in sunlight. With his vigorous brushstrokes, Van Goyen captured the windblown nature of the grasses and small shrubs that grow along this sandy, arid stretch of land. Finally, he populated the countryside with animals and humans, among them an elegant group of travelers, including two liveried pages preceding a horse-drawn coach and its equestrian escort, who are heading east toward Wageningen. Nearby, a group of men in a wooden skiff transport goods along a quiet inlet of the Rhine.

With its strategic location on one of Europe's major waterways, Rhenen was a center for trade, an important military outpost, and a well-known pilgrimage site. It received its city rights in the mid-13th century and its protective walls in the 14th century. Throughout the Middle Ages, pilgrims streamed into Rhenen to venerate the relics of Saint Cunera, later housed in the massive Cunerakerk, which was constructed in the mid-15th century, its imposing late Gothic tower completed only in 1531. Around 1630 Rhenen gained added prominence after the King and Queen of Bohemia—Frederick V, the Elector Palatine (1596–1632), and Elizabeth Stuart (1596–1662), who lived as royal exiles in The Hague—built a lavish summer residence, the Koningshuys (Royal House), next to the Cunerakerk.

Nicknamed the "Winter King" due to the short duration of his reign, Frederick chose Rhenen because he was keen on the quality of the hunt available in the region, and because the vistas from the top of the Grebbeberg—the very location Van Goyen adopted for this painting—reminded him of his ancestral home along the Rhine in Heidelberg. The large bluestone-covered table he erected at the summit of the Grebbeberg, where he enjoyed the view of the river valley and surrounding countryside, became known as the Koningstafel (King's Table). An 18th-century traveler's pocket atlas specifically recommends visiting this "high mountain" near Rhenen, "which is frequently climbed to gaze at one of the finest views over the Rhine, as well as onto the Neder-Betuwe, and over the Rheensche Veenen." [2] One of the distant towns visible from the Grebbeberg was Lienden, and Van Goyen depicted its large stone church rising above the horizon at the far left of his painting. This church is specifically identified in a panoramic print that Steven van Lamsweerde (c. 1620–1686) made from the same location. [3]

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When Van Goyen made his way to Rhenen from his home in The Hague in the early 1640s, he traveled along the Rhine, a route that other Dutch artists, both before and after him, also followed. Van Goyen; Hercules Segers (c. 1589–c. 1638); Aelbert Cuyp (Dutch, 1620 - 1691), who depicted the Koningstafel in one of his views of the river near Rhenen (c. 1646–1648, private collection); [4] Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682); Lambert Doomer (Dutch, 1624 - 1700); Joris van der Haagen (Dutch, c. 1615 - 1669); and Salomon van Ruysdael (Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670) were all drawn to Rhenen because of the city's pictorial beauty and historic importance. [5] Judging from the number of drawings and paintings they created of Rhenen and its environs, a ready market existed for their works.

Van Goyen painted almost 30 views of the city. [6] He depicted Rhenen from the east and from the west, from the water and from land, but none of the artist's other compositions match this painting in scale and dramatic impact, including his smaller depiction of Rhenen from the Grebbeberg now in the Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge. [7] Part of the appeal of the Gallery's painting is the harmonious character of the scene, particularly in the muted tonalities of the broad landscape, which consists mostly of browns and ochers in the foreground and bluer hues in the distance. The off-center location of the tower of the Cunerakerk provides ample space in the composition for the meandering Rhine. Even though this arrangement may have been strictly intuitive, the placement of the tower accords with the golden mean, a compositional concept important for a number of Dutch artists. [8]

It is not known whether Van Goyen traveled with other artists on his trip to Rhenen in the early 1640s, but he must have spent quite some time in and around the city. [9] He carefully studied Rhenen's character, and the drawings he then made formed the basis of paintings done in that decade. While specific drawings related to the Gallery's *View of Rhenen* have not been identified, Van Goyen's thorough knowledge of Rhenen's architecture is evident throughout this work. Aside from the Cunerakerk and the Rhinepoort, Van Goyen depicted a number of other prominent structures that helped create its distinctive city profile. Among these are the Bergpoort, the eastern city gate; the adjacent Huis Trappenburch; the Binnenmolen (Inner Windmill), situated on the northern ramparts; and the Westmolen (West Windmill), located outside the western city walls, along the road to Utrecht. [10] The double-peaked roofline of the Koningshuys, the imposing Renaissance-style palace that the painter and architect Bartholomeus van Bassen (c. 1590–1652) designed for the Winter King and Queen, is visible just to the right

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of the Cunerakerk.

The distinguished party of travelers in the painting undoubtedly reflects the presence of the court of Elizabeth Stuart in Rhenen. The coach, drawn by four white horses, has an aristocratic appearance, as do the matching liveries of the two pages and the coachman. Their attire, consisting of a distinctive red cape with gold piping, is identical to that worn by the royal couple's staff in The Hague. [11] Elizabeth continued to use her summer retreat and hunting lodge after her husband's death and often entertained guests. She spent time in Rhenen in the 1640s and 1650s, and Van Goyen often depicted elegant carriages such as this traveling along area roads or being ferried across the Rhine. [12] Such visual references to Elizabeth's beloved summer retreat may relate to a buoyant market in The Hague for views of Rhenen, where personal and political connections to the Winter Queen, the sister of King Charles I of England, remained strong. None of Van Goyen's other views of Rhenen, however, have the grandeur of this remarkable painting, which suggests that it may have been commissioned by a patron with close ties to Elizabeth Stuart.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

December 9, 2019

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Henriette Rahusen for her research and thoughtful comments on an earlier draft of this entry.

[2] "Aan de Westzyde [traveling from Wageningen to Rhenen] heeft men een zeer hoogen Berg, welke veeltyds beklommen word, om van daar een der fraaiste Gezichten over den Rhyn, als mede of de Neder-Betuwe, en over the Rheensche Veenen te aanschouwen." Jan Christiaan Sepp, *Nieuwe Geographische Nederlandsche Reise- en Zak-Atlas* (Amsterdam, 1773; facsimile reprint, Alphen aan den Rijn, 1987), 85. For a map that specifically identifies the Koningstafel, see "Map of the Rhine River Valley between Rhenen and Arnhem," from Jan Christiaan Sepp, *Nieuwe Geographische Nederlandsche Reise- en Zak-Atlas* (Amsterdam, 1773; repr. Alphen aan den Rijn, 1987), plate 24. For a depiction of the Koningstafel, see note 4.

[3] Steven van Lamsweerde, *View of the Betuwe and Rhenen*, c. 1660, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-AO-5-51.

[4] Aelbert Cuyp, *Panoramic Landscape with Travelers Standing at the*

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"Koningstafel," c. 1646–1648, oil on panel, private collection.

[5] For views of Rhenen, see H. P. Deys, *Achter Berg en Rijn: Over boeren, burgers en buitenlui in Rhenen* (Rhenen, 1981). For a depiction of the Koningstafel, see note 4.

[6] Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656*: *Ein Oeuvreverzeichnis in zwei Bänden*, vol. 2, *Katalog der Gemälde* (Amsterdam, 1973), 182–194, nos. 374–400A. Beck went on to publish two addenda to his two-volume catalogue raisonné: *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656: Ein Oeuvreverzeichnis*, vol. 3, *Ergänzungen zum Katalog der Handzeichnungen und Ergänzungen zum Katalog der Gemälde* (Doornspijk, 1987), and vol. 4, *Künstler um Jan van Goyen: Maler und Zeichner* (Doornspijk, 1991).

[7] Jan van Goyen, *View of Rhenen,* c. 1640, oil on panel, Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Gift of Peter and Anne Brooke, 2016.240.

[8] For a discussion of the golden mean (or golden ratio) as an organizing principle in Jan van der Heyden's *An Architectural Fantasy* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1968.13.1), see Ger Luijten, Peter Schatborn, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Drawings for Paintings in the Age of Rembrandt* (Milan, 2016), 25.

[9] Van Goyen may also have made an earlier trip there in the 1630s as one of his paintings of Rhenen is dated 1636. Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656*: *Ein Oeuvreverzeichnis in zwei Bänden*, vol. 2, *Katalog der Gemälde* (Amsterdam, 1973): 182, no. 374.

[10] The identity of these buildings is taken from Ariane van Suchtelen's entry on the painting in Ariane van Suchtelen and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age* (Zwolle, 2008), 102.

[11] The Winter King and Queen frequently appear in colored drawings in the album by Adriaen van de Venne (1589–1662), dated 1620–1626, that covers their stay in The Hague. The album, now in the British Museum, London, also includes an image of the carriage of the English ambassador Sir Dudley Carleton. Courtiers or servants in red livery with gold piping are present in several of the depictions of courtly life. See, for example, British Museum inv. 1978,0624.42.10, *Shooting the Popinjay*, and 1978,0624.42.11, *Ambassadeurs*. See also Martin Royalton-Kisch, *Adriaen Van De Venne's Album in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum* (London, 1988), 162–167.

[12] Her presence in Rhenen is indicated by letters she wrote during that decade. She continued to use Rhenen until 1661, when she moved to England following the restoration of King Charles II. After Elizabeth died in 1662, the palace was inherited by her son Prince Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine, who owned it as late as 1679, but who allowed the property to

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deteriorate. For Van Goyen's paintings of Rhenen that include similar horse-drawn coaches, occasionally being ferried across the Rhine, see Hans-Ulrich Beck, *Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656*: *Ein Oeuvreverzeichnis in zwei Bänden*, vol. 2, *Katalog der Gemälde* (Amsterdam, 1973), nos. 382, 383, 385, 386, 392, 393.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The primary support is a moderately coarse plain-weave canvas that was relined onto plain-weave linen. The tacking margins were removed during a previous treatment; however, there is cusping along all four sides, which suggests that the canvas retains its original dimensions.

The ground layer is of medium thickness and is light beige in color. Under magnification, large white, small black, and earth-brown particles are visible in this layer. There is no indication of an underdrawing or other form of preliminary design with magnification or infrared reflectography (IRR). [1] The paint was applied quickly and thinly, especially in the foreground where the ground is visible throughout. While the color of the ground layer does affect the overall tonality of the sky, this is largely due to abrasion from overcleaning during a past treatment; the paint layer is now thinner than originally intended.

Van Goyen first painted the sky directly on top of the ground. This layer extends partway under the landscape, and it is likely that the river in the far distance is an extension of the sky layer. Afterward the middle ground was thinly painted, wet-into-wet, often leaving small parts of the ground exposed. The buildings were painted in a sketchy manner, first in a dark brown-black paint, and at a time when the paint layer(s) of the sky were still slightly soft and could be distorted by brushwork. The next major stage of painting likely included the lighted rise of ground on the right as well as the bottommost portion of the foreground, which was painted over a thin, streaky base tone that the artist laid down in an earlier session. The general shape and positioning of the figures throughout the foreground were blocked out in dark opaque brown paint on top of the dry background/foreground. Once the brown paint was dry, the details of the figures were painted in muted tones, and lastly small highlights and final touches were painted on the dry layer below. The horses were painted quickly and without much elaboration; their form was sketched with a brown-black painted line and then only a thin scumble of off-white/beige paint was applied in selective places, while the

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brown landscape paint layers below play a large role in the final form.

Overall, the painting is in good condition. There is a fine network of cracks throughout and a few scattered small losses. In the bottom left quadrant there is a deep vertical scratch in the paint layers that is approximately 5 centimeters in length. The painting was treated in 2017.

Dina Anchin, based on the examination report and treatment notes by Michael Swicklik and the examination notes and technical entry by Melanie Gifford in *Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 2001).

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TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.5–1.8 microns (H filter).

PROVENANCE

"Collection of a Gentleman of Nottinghamshire;" (his sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 1846).[1] probably acquired 1878 by H. Smith Wright, Nottingham. Thomas Wright [1773-1845], Upton Hall, between Southwell and Newark, Nottinghamshire. Dr. Abraham Bredius. Sir George Donaldson, London; purchased 1906 by William A. Clark [1839-1925], New York;[2] bequest 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

[1] Information about the 1846 sale, which has not yet been positively identified, is given in Dana H. Carroll, *Catalogue of Objects of Fine Art and Other Properties at the Home of William Andrews Clark, 962 Fifth Avenue*, Part II, Unpublished manuscript, n.d. (1925): 219, no. 317; original manuscript in The Corcoran Archives, Special Collections Research Center, George Washington University Libraries, Washington, DC; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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[2] The fact that Clark purchased the painting in 1906 from Donaldson is given in the Carroll manuscript (see note 1). However, in a letter of 18 November 1906 to Corcoran director Frederick B. McGuire, Clark mentions that he has had a letter from the previous owner of the works, "Dr. Bredius" (The Corcoran Archives, Special Collections Research Center, George Washington University Libraries, Washington, DC: COR RG 2.0, Director's Records, transcription and summary in NGA curatorial files). This was Dr. Abraham Bredius, whose name is not mentioned in the Carroll manuscript. The exact nature and chronology of Clark's purchase has still to be determined.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1878 Nottingham, 1878, no. 48.

1906 Loan to display with permanent collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 1906-1909.

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration: Collection of Paintings by Dutch Masters of the Seventeenth Century, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 18 (three publications; entries in 2 vol. 1909 catalogue and 1910 catalogue include repros. and have the dimensions of no. 19, NGA 2014.136.34).

1959 Loan Exhibition: Masterpieces from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, A Benefit Exhibition in Honor of the Gallery's Centenary, Wildenstein Galleries, New York, 1959, catalogue without checklist.

1961 25th Birthday Exhibition: Treasures in America, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, 1961, catalogue without checklist.

1963 Masters of Landscape: East and West, Munson-Williams- Proctor Institute, Utica; Rochester Memorial Art Gallery, 1963, no. 23.

1978 The William A. Clark Collection: An exhibition marking the 50th Anniversary of the installation of The Clark Collection at The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 1978, catalogue without checklist.

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1987 Masters of 17th Century Dutch Landscape Painting, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1987-1988, no. 37.

1991 Great Dutch Paintings from America, Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, The Hague; The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1991, no. 23 (shown only in San Francisco).

2001 Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001-2002,catalogue without checklist.

2008 Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age, Royal Picture House Mauritshuis, The Hague; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2008-2009

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1910 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Old Dutch Masters Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Connection with the Hudson-Fulton Celebration.* New York, 1910: 85, no. 18, repro.

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1928 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Illustrated Handbook of the W. A. Clark Collection*. Washington, 1928: 42.

1932 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Illustrated Handbook of the W. A. Clark Collection*. Washington, 1932: 41, 47, repro.

1955 Breckenridge, James. D. *A Handbook of Dutch and Flemish Paintings in the William Andrews Clark Collection*. Washington, 1955: 21, repro.

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1959 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Masterpieces of the Corcoran Gallery of Art*. Washington, 1959: 11, repro.

1961 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. *A brief chronicle of the 25th Birthday Celebration and Catalogue of the Anniversary Loan Exhibition, Treasures in America, at the Museum from January 13 to March 5 of 1961*. Richmond, 1961: 63, repro.

1963 *Masters of Landscape: East and West*. Exh. cat. Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica; Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester. Utica, 1963: 30, no. 23, repro.

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and Maastricht, 1992: 74-75, no. 10, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jakob Houbraken, *Frans Hals* (detail), engraving, National Gallery of Art Library, Gift of C. Dearhoff

Hals, Frans

Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

BIOGRAPHY

Son of Franchoys Hals, a cloth worker from Mechelen, and Adriana van Geertenryck of Antwerp, Frans Hals was probably born in Antwerp in about 1582 or 1583. Sometime after the fall of Antwerp to the Spanish in August 1585, the family moved to Haarlem, in the northern Netherlands. Dirck Hals (1591–1656) followed in his brother Frans' footsteps and became a painter; a third brother, Joost (died before October 16, 1626), apparently worked as an artist as well, but no works by him have been identified.

According to the posthumous second edition of Karel van Mander's *Het schilder-boeck* (1618), Frans Hals had studied painting with the author (1548–1606); if so, this training probably occurred before 1603, when Van Mander left Haarlem for a country estate outside the city to finish writing his book. Van Mander's teachings, however, did not appear to have much effect on Hals, who rarely depicted the type of subjects that *Het schilder-boeck* urged young artists to choose and whose style bears no obvious resemblance to that of his mentor. Nonetheless, it should also be noted that extremely little is known of Hals' activities prior to his late twenties, and it is conceivable that as-yet unearthed or unidentified juvenilia will necessitate a reappraisal of his early career.

Hals is first documented as an artist in 1610, when he entered Haarlem's Saint Luke's Guild. His wife, Annetje Harmansdr, died in June 1615, leaving him with two

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young children, one of whom, Harmen (1611–1669), became a painter. The next year Hals made his only recorded trip outside Holland, traveling to Antwerp, where he stayed from August until November. He remarried in 1617 to Lysbeth Reynier, a feisty woman who was reprimanded by the city authorities on several occasions for brawling. She bore the artist at least eight children—one baptized nine days after the wedding—including the artists Frans the Younger (1618–1669), Reynier (1627–1671), and Nicolaes (1628–1686). Another artist named Jan or Johannes (active c. 1635–1650) was also probably a child of this marriage, and a daughter, Adriaentje, married the Haarlem genre and still-life painter Pieter Gerritsz van Roestraten (1629/1630–1700), bringing the total number of artists in the family to about a dozen, if one includes Hals' brothers and nephews.

Although Hals specialized in portraiture, he also painted genre scenes and images of the four evangelists. In his early maturity, from 1616 to 1625, he was associated with a Haarlem *rederijkerskamer* (rhetoricians' chamber) called De Wijngaertranken (the Grapevines). Appreciation of his painting skills, to which a number of important group portrait commissions testify, was documented as early as 1628, when Samuel Ampzing's general description of the city of Haarlem included a passage praising Hals' ability to capture the spirit of his portrait sitters. Despite this recognition, Hals was continually plagued by financial difficulties. Even during the 1630s, when his services as a portraitist seem to have been in the greatest demand, he is known to have been sued by his butcher, his baker, and his shoemaker in pursuit of unpaid debts. In 1654 he paid a debt to a baker by surrendering his household goods and several paintings, and from 1662 until his death he received relief from the burgomasters—an initial gift of 50 guilders, plus an annual allowance of 150 guilders per year, increased to 200 guilders in 1663.

Hals died in Haarlem on August 29, 1666, and was buried in the Church of Saint Bavo on September 1. His only documented pupils were his son-in-law Van Roestraeten and Vincent Laurensz van der Vinne (1628–1702). Houbraken states that Adriaen Brouwer (Flemish, 1605/1606 - 1638), Dirck van Delen (1604/1605–1671), Philips Wouwerman (Dutch, 1619 - 1668), Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685), and Hals' sons also trained in his studio. His style can be felt in the work of his brother Dirck and that of Judith Leyster (Dutch, 1609 - 1660) and her husband, Jan Miense Molenaer (c. 1610–1668). Despite his artistic success, Hals was almost totally forgotten after his death. It was not until the 1860s and the rise of realism and then impressionism in the late nineteenth century that the vigorous and free brushwork that brought his portraits of Dutch burghers so vividly to life

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was once again appreciated by critics, collectors, and contemporary artists.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Frans Hals
Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

Adriaen van Ostade

1646/1648

oil on canvas
overall: 94 x 75 cm (37 x 29 1/2 in.)
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.70

ENTRY

This masterful painting by Frans Hals, which is neither signed nor dated, is unrecorded prior to 1919, when it appeared at a London auction as a self-portrait by the Dutch Italianate painter Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem (Dutch, 1620 - 1683). [1] The identity of the sitter as Berchem cannot be sustained any more than can the attribution to that artist. Berchem's self-portrait drawing of about 1660 represents a heavier-set person with a more rounded face than that seen in this portrait [fig. 1]. Instead, the artist whom Hals has portrayed here is Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685), the renowned Haarlem painter of rural life. The connection between this painting and Ostade was made by Claus Grimm, who compared this image to two established likenesses of the artist. [2] The first is a small-scale self-portrait in the background of Van Ostade's group portrait of the De Goyer family (Museum Bredius, The Hague) of about 1650. [3] An even more striking comparison is Jacob Gole's mezzotint portrait of Van Ostade that was executed after a lost painting by the latter's pupil Cornelis Dusart (Dutch, 1660 - 1704) [fig. 2]. [4] As Eduard Trautscholdt recognized, Dusart must have based his portrait on an earlier representation of the artist; Dusart—who was born in 1660, when his master was fifty years old—depicted Van Ostade as a considerably younger man than he could ever have known. [5] Moreover, he portrayed the artist rather anachronistically in a kimono, scarf, and wig, fashionable garb for the late seventeenth century. Grimm convincingly concluded that the National Gallery of Art's painting by Hals was Dusart's model. Its remarkable resemblance to the image in Gole's mezzotint when reversed (thereby reproducing the pose in Dusart's painting) argues for the direct connection between the two works. [6]

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Arnold Houbraken writes that Van Ostade was Hals' pupil for a time. [7] If Houbraken is correct, this apprenticeship must have occurred before 1634, when Van Ostade became a member of the Saint Luke's Guild in Haarlem. Later contacts between the two men are not documented, but they were among the preeminent artists in Haarlem during the middle decades of the century. Hals seems to have had close personal relations with Haarlem's artistic community and he portrayed a number of his colleagues. In addition to this portrait of Adriaen van Ostade, Hals' surviving portraits of identifiable artists are those of Vincent Laurensz van der Vinne (Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto) and Frans Post (Worcester Art Museum). [8]

Hals represents Van Ostade as a gentleman, dressed in fashionable clothes. The pose is similar to one Hals used for the wealthy Rotterdam merchant Paulus Verschuur in 1643 [fig. 3]. [9] Both subjects hold their right glove in their left hand, a variant of a gesture seen frequently in Hals' portraits. While the exact meaning of this motif is not known, the symbolism of gloves was apparently a well-understood aspect of seventeenth-century decorum. Smith writes that to take off one's gloves was a sign of friendship, [10] and it may be significant that in both of these instances the right hand, the one used for greeting, has been ungloved. Its position, with the palm exposed to the viewer, reinforces the quality of openness and forthrightness evident in these works.

Although Seymour Slive dates this work in the early 1650s, an earlier date seems probable. The thematic and compositional relationships already noted between the Washington painting and the portrait of Paulus Verschuur from 1643 are also found with other works of the mid-1640s, specifically the *Portrait of a Standing Man*, c. 1645, in the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh. [11] The looser handling of the paint in the Washington picture, most evident in the abstract, angular brushwork in the gloves but also visible in the broken contour of the silhouetted right arm and in the bold highlights along the nose and under the right eye, suggests, however, a somewhat later date of 1646/1648. [12] These stylistic characteristics can be seen in a number of other works from this period, among them the *Seated Man Holding a Hat*, c. 1648–1650 (Taft Museum, Cincinnati). [13] By the early 1650s Hals' style had become less agitated, as a comparison with the National Gallery of Art's Portrait of a Gentleman demonstrates. At that time he blocked in the silhouettes of his figures with broad, angular strokes rather than with the broken contours that characterize his work from the late 1640s. The explicit virtuosity of his technique for rendering Van Ostade's gloves with rapidly applied diagonal accents later gave way to simpler forms with more measured rhythms.

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A date of 1646/1648 also seems compatible with Van Ostade's age. In 1646 he would have been thirty-six years old, and the image seems to represent a man in his mid-thirties. In 1647 Van Ostade was elected to be one of the headmen of the Saint Luke's Guild in Haarlem, so the portrait may have been intended to commemorate this significant moment in the artist's career. While many of Hals' three-quarter-length standing male figures have a female pendant, no evidence exists that one ever accompanied this portrait. At the time Hals painted it, Van Ostade had no wife: his first spouse had died in 1642, and he did not remarry until 1657. [14]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1660, pen and ink and wash, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

fig. 2 Jacob Gole, *Adriaen van Ostade*, c. 1685, mezzotint after a lost Cornelis Dusart painting, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

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fig. 3 Frans Hals, *Paulus Verschuur*, 1643, oil on canvas, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Archer M. Huntington in memory of his father, Collis Potter Huntington, 1926. Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY

NOTES

[1] An old label from the back of the painting (now in National Gallery of Art curatorial files) reads: "3. Portrait of Berghem, the celebrated Painter. By himself. Small half-length, curved gilt frame." A painted inscription on the back reads "Nicholas Berghem." The identification may have been made by an English owner during the nineteenth century, when Dutch Italianate paintings were in vogue. Since collectors and connoisseurs often associated an artist's appearance with his type of subject matter, the identification of this handsome and refined sitter as Berchem, a painter of elegant views of the Roman campagna, is understandable.

[2] Claus Grimm, "Ein meisterliches Künstlerporträt: Frans Hals' Ostade-Bildnis,"

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Oud-Holland 85 (1970): 170–176.

[3] Albert Blankert, *Museum Bredius: Catalogus van de Schilderijen en Tekeningen* (The Hague, 1978), 95–96, no. 121.

[4] Claus Grimm, "Ein meisterliches Künstlerporträt: Frans Hals' Ostade-Bildnis," *Oud-Holland* 85 (1970): 173.

[5] Eduard Trautscholdt, "Zu einer Bildniszeichnung des Adriaen van Ostade," *Miscellanea I.Q. van Regteren Altena* (Amsterdam, 1969), 153.

[6] It has been proposed that a painting in the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, *Seated Man Holding a Branch* (inv. no. 15, 901), may also represent Van Ostade. The attribution of this work and the identification of the sitter, however, have been debated. The work is attributed to Frans Hals by Seymour Slive (in *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. [London, 1970–1974], 3: no. 155, and in *Frans Hals* [Washington, DC, 1989], 298, no. 59), but to Frans Hals the Younger by Claus Grimm in "Frans Hals und seine Schule," *Münchner Jarbuch der Bildenden Kunst* 22 (1971): 162, no. 15, 171, repro. 25, and to Workshop (Group B) by Grimm in *Frans Hals: The Complete Work*, trans. Jürgen Riehle (New York, 1990), 292. Although the model shares a certain likeness to the sitter in the Washington painting and even more closely resembles the previously mentioned mezzotint by Jacob Gold after a lost painting by Cornelis Dusart, no firm conclusion can be made about the sitter's identity (see Slive, *Frans Hals* [London], 3: fig. 46; Ernst Scheyer, "Portraits of the Brothers Van Ostade," *Arts Quarterly* 2 [1939]: 134–141). If the Ottawa portrait does represent Van Ostade, its proposed date of 1645 presents some difficulties, for Van Ostade was born in 1610 and the figure appears older than thirty-five. Slive, *Frans Hals* (London), 3: fig. 47, discusses a copy of a lost Van Ostade self-portrait by Jan van Rossum (active c. 1654–c. 1673) now in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin; see Homan Potterton, *Dutch Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland: A Complete Catalogue* (Dublin, 1986), 132–133, no. 623, fig. 141. No conclusions about the identification of the Washington sitter can be made, however, from this image.

[7] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (Amsterdam, 1718–1721; rev. ed., The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 1:347.

[8] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: nos. 203, 206. Ironically, Hals' works representing a painter with the tools of his craft have remained unidentified (Art Institute of Chicago, inv. no. 94.1023, see Slive, *Frans Hals* [London], 3: no. 164; and Frick Collection, New York, see Slive, *Frans Hals* [London], 3: no. 186). Unfortunately, his portraits of fellow-painters Jan Miense Molenaer, Judith Leyster, Thomas Wyck, and Jan van de Cappelle, and of the painter-architect Jacob van Campen, are now lost. At a College Art Association meeting on February 11, 2010, Paul Crenshaw

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has, however, proposed that *Portrait of a Painter Holding a Brush* in the Frick Collection is a pendant to *Portrait of a Seated Woman Holding a Fan* in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and that the sitters are Jan Miense Molenaer and Judith Leyster. See Slive, *Frans Hals* (London), 3:96–97, nos. 186, 187.

[9] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: no. 144.

[10] David R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Marriage Portraiture* (Ann Arbor, 1982), 78. See also Berent Schwineköper, *Der Handschuh im Recht, Ämterweisen, Brauch und Volksglauben* (Berlin, 1938), 127–128.

[11] National Gallery Scotland, *Paintings in the National Gallery of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1976), 47, no. 691; Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: no. 156, note.

[12] Claus Grimm, *Frans Hals: Entwicklung Werkanalyse, Gesamtkatolog* (Berlin, 1972), 106, dates the painting 1643–1644; Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: 99, no. 193, dates it 1650–1652.

[13] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: no. 173, fig. 268, note.

[14] I would like to express my appreciation to H. Rodney Nevitt Jr., for his assistance in preparing this entry.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a fine-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping indicates no change in dimensions. Lining has reinforced the impression of the canvas texture in the paint surface. The smooth, white ground layer is visible through the transparent background paint, appearing light brown to the eye.

Paint is applied freely in thin layers defined by broad, distinct, sure brushstrokes. A dark layer was applied first to serve as a color for the background and an underpaint layer for the jacket, with reserves left for the face and hands. The face, collar, hands, and gloves were brought to a higher degree of finish in fuller bodied paint with brushwork blended wet-into-wet. X-radiographs show a minor adjustment to the right half of the collar, which was initially straighter. The entire collar may have been slightly smaller.

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Two small losses are found above and below the mouth on the left side, along with scattered small losses in the lower half of the jacket. The black paint of the jacket is moderately abraded and a 3-centimeter section of hair to the left of the face is severely abraded. The painting was treated in 1990 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting.

PROVENANCE

Buckston family, Sutton on the Hill, Derbyshire; (sale, Sotheby & Co., London, 5-6 May 1919, 2nd day, no. 285);[1] Brown, acting for (Thos. Agnew & Sons, Ltd., Arthur J. Sulley & Co., and Colnaghi & Co., London);[2] purchased 9 May 1919 by (M. Knoedler & Co., London and New York); sold 1 November 1919 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.;[3] deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] In this auction the picture was listed as *Portrait of the Artist* by Nicholas Berghem [Berchem]. The auction catalogue states that the painting was "The Property of a Gentleman". Francis Russell of Christie's kindly provided the name of the family that consigned the painting (letter of 10 March 2003 to Arthur Wheelock, in NGA curatorial files).

[2] The fact that the purchase was by joint account of the three dealers is given in the Public Collections section of The Getty Provenance Index Databases. The painting was Agnew's joint account number J-1817 and Colnaghi's number A-720. Colnaghi also sold one third of their share to H.M. Clark. Christopher Kingzett of Agnew's confirmed Agnew's purchase of the painting at the 1919 sale, but does not mention the joint account with Sulley and Colnaghi (letter, 7 March 1984, to Arthur Wheelock, in NGA curatorial files).

[3] Letter, 14 February 1984, Nancy Little, Librarian at M. Knoedler & Co., to Arthur Wheelock, in NGA curatorial files. Knoedler's recorded their purchase as from Agnew's; the painting was Knoedler stock number 14774.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1925 Paintings by Old Masters from Pittsburgh Collections, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1925, no. 24, as Nicholas Berghen [Berchem].

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1936 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Frans Hals Paintings in America*. Westport, Connecticut, 1936: no. 100, repro.

1941 *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture*. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1941: 95, no. 70, as *Portrait of a Man*.

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1963 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.* New York, 1963 (reprinted 1964 in French, German, and Spanish): 337, 312, repro., as Portrait of a Man.

1965 National Gallery of Art. *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture*. Washington, 1965: 65, as *Portrait of a Man*.

1968 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings and Sculpture, Illustrations*. Washington, 1968: 58, repro., as Portrait of a Man.

1970 Grimm, Claus. "Ein meisterliches Künstlerporträt: Frans Hals' Ostade-Bildnis." *Oud Holland* 85 (1970): 146-178, fig. 24.

1970 Slive, Seymour. *Frans Hals*. 3 vols. National Gallery of Art Kress Foundation Studies in the History of European Art. London, 1970–1974: 1(1970):190-191, fig. 203; 2(1970):fig. 303; 3(1974):78-79, 99-100, no. 192.

1971 Grimm, Claus. "Frans Hals und seine Schule." *Münchner Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst* 22 (1971): 146-178, fig. 24.

1972 Grimm, Claus. *Frans Hals: Entwicklung, Werkanalyse, Gesamtkatolog*. Berlin, 1972: 105-106, 204, no. 122, figs. 136-138, 142.

1974 Montagni, E.C. *L'opera completa di Frans Hals*. Classici dell'Arte. Milan, 1974: 105, no. 72, repro.

1975 National Gallery of Art. *European paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue*. Washington, 1975: 170, repro., as Portrait of a Man.

1975 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York, 1975: 268-269, no. 356, repro.

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1976 Montagni, E.C. *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Frans Hals*. Translated by Simone Darses. Les classiques de l'art. Paris, 1976: no. 72, repro.

1981 Baard, H. P. *Frans Hals*. New York, 1981: 138.

1984 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. Rev. ed. New York, 1984: 268, no. 350, color repro.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 196, repro.

1986 Sutton, Peter C. *A Guide to Dutch Art in America*. Grand Rapids and Kampen, 1986: 308-309.

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1990 Grimm, Claus. *Frans Hals: The Complete Work*. Translated by Jürgen Riehle. New York, 1990: 46-49, fig. 40e, 256, fig. 104b, 287, no. 123, repro.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 79-83, color repro. 81.

2007 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr., and Michael Swicklik. "Behind the Veil: Restoration of a Dutch Marine Painting Offers a New Look at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art and History." *National Gallery of Art Bulletin* no. 37 (Fall 2007): 2, 4, fig. 2.

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Frans Hals
Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

Portrait of a Gentleman

1650/1652

oil on canvas
overall: 114 x 85 cm (44 7/8 x 33 7/16 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.29

ENTRY

This imposing middle-aged gentleman is depicted in a three-quarter-length pose with his right shoulder turned slightly toward the viewer and his left arm akimbo. His shoulder-length, wavy brown hair falls on either side of his face from under a black hat with a moderately wide brim. With his right hand he gently pulls forward a black cape at his back that encompasses his shoulders and arms. Three fingers of a glove he is holding are visible below his left hand.

The dates 1650/1652 generally suggested for the Washington painting seem probable, although as Seymour Slive has cautioned, "[documentary] evidence to establish a firm chronology for the last period of Hals' life is meager." [1] Part of the difficulty in dating Hals' portraits is that he frequently returned to earlier conventions for his poses. He had used the energetic pose of this gentleman, for example, as early as 1625 in his portrait of Jacob Petersz Olycan (Mauritshuis, The Hague). [2] Nevertheless, the style of the costume, the broad brushwork used to articulate it, and the bold silhouette of the figure against the gray background are consistent with other works generally dated to the early 1650s. The features are modeled with broad, bold strokes that have great strength and surety. The closest equivalent among Hals' paintings is the equally impressive *Portrait of a Man* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) that Slive also dates to this same period. [3]

The identity of the sitter is not known, but his fashionable attire and dignified bearing indicate that he was a person of some means. Not unreasonably, the title given to the picture in the nineteenth century was *Portrait of a Burgomaster.* Quite

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possibly, although not necessarily, he was part of a pair. Wilhelm Valentiner suggests that the pendant might be the *Portrait of a Woman* in the Louvre, Paris. [4] Although the dimensions of the Louvre painting are smaller, there is technical evidence that the *Portrait of a Gentleman* was once on a stretcher whose dimensions were identical to that of the Louvre portrait. Nevertheless, sufficient reasons exist to reject Valentiner's proposal. Slive rightly argues against it on grounds of date (he dates the woman about 1648–1650 and the Washington portrait about 1650–1652) and composition (the woman is comparatively small in the picture). To these objections, one could also add costume, for the woman's clothes are unacceptably conservative for a mate to this dashing gentleman.

A number of Pentimenti are visible in the background area around the figure, particularly near the hat, as Hals altered its shape more than once. The hat now has a narrower brim. These alterations are presently visible because the background and, indeed, much of the black jacket and cape are somewhat abraded [see Abrasion]. The face and hands, however, are in excellent condition. Damages exist along all four edges of the painting as a result of its having once been placed on a smaller stretcher. At that point the image was about 2.5 centimeters smaller along both sides and the bottom, and 5 centimeters smaller along the top edge. At the time of this reduction a strip may have been cut off the top. During a later restoration the canvas was restored to its present large stretcher and a strip 2.5 centimeters in width was added to the top to provide some space between the hat and the top edge of the painting area.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

NOTES

[1] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 1:182.

[2] Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis*, The Royal Cabinet of Paintings Illustrated General Catalogue*, trans. G. Kilburn and Gary Schwartz (The Hague, 1977), 103, no. 459 repro.; Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: no. 32.

[3] Inv. no. 91.26.9; Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 2: no. 298, 3: no. 190.

[4] Inv. no. M.I.927, 108 x 80 cm; Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Frans Hal: Des meisters*

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Gemälde, Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 28 (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921), 320; Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 2:252, 254; 3: no. 171.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a loosely woven, plain-weave fabric of medium weight, with the original tacking margins trimmed. A nonoriginal 2.5-centimeter-wide fabric strip was attached to the top edge at an unknown date. Prior to the attachment of the extension, approximately 2.5 centimeters of the painting surface along all four sides was turned over the stretcher edges to form a tacking margin. Regularly spaced damages, presumably former tacking holes, are visible in the X-radiographs along all four edges. Prior to acquisition, the painted edges were restored to the picture plane and the original support and extension were lined. Slight cusping is visible along the top, bottom, and left sides, but absent on the right.

A thin, smooth, white ground layer is visible through the thinly painted background. Fluid paint was applied over thin washes in distinct brushstrokes blended wet-into-wet. Several pentimenti are visible. The hat was reworked several times to a narrower form, and the proper right index finger was raised and repositioned. The upper edge of the proper right shoulder, arm, and collar were initially higher. Light highlights in the sitter's proper left shoulder were also painted out by the artist.

In addition to the edge damages, small- to moderate-sized losses of paint and ground are scattered throughout the costume, background, and proper right hand. The thin background and dark costume are extensively abraded, with slight abrasion to the face. Conservation treatment was carried out in 1984–1985 to remove later repaints and a discolored varnish.

PROVENANCE

Probably bequeathed by Lord Frederick Campbell [1729-1816] to William Pitt Amherst, 1st earl Amherst of Arracan [1773-1857], Montreal, Sevenoaks, Kent;[1] by inheritance to his son, William Pitt Amherst, 2nd earl Amherst of Arracan [1805-1886]; by inheritance to his son, William Archer Amherst, 3rd earl Amherst of

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Arracan [1836-1910]; by inheritance to his brother, Hugh Amherst, 4th earl Amherst of Arracan [1856-1927];[2] (Sedelmeyer Gallery, Paris); sold 13 January 1911 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] According to Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century...*, 8 vols., trans. from the German edition, London, 1907-1927, 3: 294, the painting was bequeathed by Lord Frederick Campbell to an ancestor of Earl Amherst. According to notes of Edith Standen, Widener's secretary for art, in NGA curatorial files, the painting was bequeathed about 1820 by Lord Frederick Campbell to Lord Amherst. The Getty Provenance Index identified this ancestor of Earl Amherst as William Pitt.

[2] Charles Sedelmeyer, *Illustrated Catalogue of the Eleventh Series of 100 Paintings by Old Masters*, Paris, 1911, no. 11, lists the work as "from the collection of Lord Amherst, in whose family it had been for nearly one hundred years," and the transcript of the bill of sale from Sedelmeyer Gallery to Widener (in NGA curatorial files) repeats this information. "The Earl Amherst" lent the painting to exhibitions in London in 1894 and 1910.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1894 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1894, no. 81, as *Portrait of a Burgomaster*.

1910 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters and Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1910, no. 89, as *Portrait of a Burgomaster*.

1911 100 Paintings by Old Masters, Sedelmeyer Gallery, Paris, 1911, no. 11.

1985 Loan for display with permanent collection, Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, 1985.

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1989 Frans Hals, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, 1989-1990, no. 71, repro.

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1914 Bode, Wilhelm von, and Moritz Julius Binder. *Frans Hals: His Life and Work*. 2 vols. Translated by Maurice W. Brockwell. Berlin, 1914: 2:19, no. 247, pl. 156.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Frans Hals
Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

Portrait of a Man

1648/1650

oil on canvas
overall: 63.5 x 53.5 cm (25 x 21 1/16 in.)
framed: 92.4 x 81.3 x 9.2 cm (36 3/8 x 32 x 3 5/8 in.)
Inscription: lower left in monogram: FH
Widener Collection 1942.9.28

ENTRY

The vagaries of Frans Hals' artistic reputation are more extreme than those of most artists. After having been the preeminent portrait painter in Haarlem during his day, he was almost totally forgotten after his death. It was not until the late nineteenth century that the vigorous and free brushwork that brought his portraits of Dutch burghers vividly to life was once again appreciated by critics, collectors, and contemporary artists. Hals' paintings, long relegated to obscurity in back rooms or in attics, were proudly brought forward, sent to exhibitions, and sold to dealers and collectors eager to own works. [1]

This *Portrait of a Man* first became known to the public when it was exhibited in Vienna in 1873. The New York dealer Léonardus Nardus sold it to P. A. B. Widener in 1898. The work was featured in 1908 in an enthusiastic article about acquisitions of Dutch and Flemish paintings in the United States written by one of the foremost authorities of the day, Willem Martin, who in that same year was appointed director of the Mauritshuis in The Hague. He wrote of this work: "It is treated with splendid dash and fluency, without a single *repentir.* Every stroke was absolutely right, and nowhere is there any alteration of the original composition." Martin then proceeded to date the portrait to the years 1640–1645 on the basis of comparisons with other Hals' portraits. [2]

The vagaries of time, however, affect paintings as well as artistic reputations. Despite Martin's claims, this work had been subjected to many changes [fig. 1]. As was first noted by Claus Grimm in 1972, [3] the dim shadow of a hat once worn by the sitter could be seen against the gray background. The long, wavy locks that

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flowed over his collar were later additions, as is evident from a drawing made after the painting by Pieter Holsteyn II (Dutch, c. 1614 - 1673), in which the man's hair is shorter [fig. 2]. [4] Since Holsteyn's drawing does not include a hat, it appears that the portrait had been altered at least twice in its history, once prior to 1673, when the hat was removed, and again at a later date, when the hair was made longer. In 1990 and 1991 National Gallery of Art conservators removed the Repainting of the hair and the Overpaint in the background that covered the remains of the hat, which had been largely lost to Abrasion. Technical examination helped determine that the hat had been an original part of the composition, and the decision was made to reconstruct its appearance. [5] It is not known why the hat was originally removed, although it may have been a question of fashion. [6]

Since Martin's initial assessment that the painting should be dated to 1640–1645, various other dates have been proposed. Wilhelm Valentiner suggested circa 1650, Claus Grimm circa 1648, and Seymour Slive circa 1655/1660. [7] A dearth of dated paintings makes it difficult to determine a precise chronology of Hals' mature works, but the information gained from the conservation of the painting suggests that a date of 1648/1650 is the most probable. The fluid brushwork in the face, on the whites of the collar, and in the blacks of the costume is more broadly executed than comparable areas in Hals' 1645 portrait Willem Coymans. The broad handling of paint is consistent with his style from the end of that decade (see Adriaen van Ostade). A date from the mid-1650s seems less plausible than it once did, now that the overpainting in the hair has been removed. Hals' original brushwork defines the individual strands of hair in a manner that is consistent with his style at the end of the 1640s. Also helpful for narrowing the date is the style of the hat. Similar hats, with cylindrical crowns and raised brims, worn high on the head, are found in a number of Hals' portraits from the 1640s, but they went out of fashion in the 1650s.

The identity of the sitter has not been established. Although Grimm saw a certain resemblance to Michael Willmann, a German artist active in the Netherlands in the 1640s, no evidence of contact between Hals and Willmann has come to light. [8] The idea that the sitter may be an artist, however, is plausible, for Hals represented a number of artists without specific attributes. [9] The manner in which the right hand is brought near the chest, and by implication the heart, is comparable to an established iconographic tradition for artists' portraiture. This rhetorical gesture conveyed not only the sitter's sincerity and passion but also his artistic sensibility. [10]

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Before conservation treatment in 1990–1991, Frans Hals, *Portrait of a Man*, 1648/1650, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.28

fig. 2 Pieter Holsteyn II, drawing after *Portrait of a Man*, c. 1660, black ink, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

NOTES

[1] For an excellent assessment of Hals' reputation, see Frances S. Jowell, "The Rediscovery of Frans Hals," in Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (Washington, DC, 1989), 61–86.

[2] Wilhelm Martin, "Notes on Some Pictures in American Private Collections," *Burlington Magazine* 14 (October 1908): 60.

[3] Claus Grimm, *Frans Hals: Entwicklung, Werkanalyse, Gesamtkatolog* (Berlin, 1972), 24.

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[4] The drawing was first published in Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3:102–103, no. 198.

[5] The restoration of the painting in 1990 and 1991 removed the later Repainting and exposed the original hat, hair, and background. Although there had been significant Abrasion, enough original paint remained to permit reconstruction of these elements.

[6] Another Hals portrait suffered the same fate, his powerful *Portrait of a Man,* c. 1650–1653 (Hermitage, Saint Petersburg); see Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (Washington, DC, 1989), no. 73.

[7] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Frans Hals: Des meisters Gemälde in 318 Abbildungen,* Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 28 (Stuttgart, 1921), 238; Claus Grimm, *Frans Hals: Entwicklung, Werkanalyse, Gesamtkatolog* (Berlin, 1972), 107, no. 137; Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3:102–103, no. 198.

[8] Claus Grimm, *Frans Hals: Entwicklung, Werkanalyse, Gesamtkatolog* (Berlin, 1972), 107. A comparison with Willmann's self-portrait in Breslau is not convincing. See Dietrich Maul, *Michael Willmann: Ein Beitrag zur Barokkunst Schlesiens* (Strasbourg, 1914), frontispiece.

[9] Hals' depictions of artists include Adriaen van Ostade and a half-length bust comparable in format to this work, *Vincent Laurensz van der Vinne,* c. 1655–1660 (Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto) (see Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* [Washington, DC, 1989], no. 76).

[10] On the meanings of such gestures, see Hans-Joachim Raupp, *Untersuchungen zu Künstlerbildnis und Künstlerdarstellung in den Niederlanden im 17. Jahrhundert* (Hildensheim, 1984), 108–115, 132 repro. Henriette de Bruyn Kops has suggested that Hals' unidentified sitter reappears as the central figure in Hals' *Regents of the Old Men's Alms House* (1664), Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, inv. no. OS-I-115.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping is visible in the X-radiographs 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.

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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. The restoration of the painting in 1990 and 1991 removed the later repaints and exposed the original hat, hair, and background.[1] Although abraded, enough original paint remained to permit reconstruction of these elements.

[1] During this treatment the NGA Scientific Research department performed analysis of the pigments using cross-sections and polarized light microscopy (see report dated March 28, 1991, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Remi van Haanen [1812-1894], Vienna, by 1873.[1] (Mssrs. Lawrie & Co., London, by March 1898);[2] (Bourgeois Frères, Paris), in 1898; (Leo Nardus [1868-1955], Suresnes, France, and New York); sold 1898 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;[3] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Remi van Haanen was a Dutch painter who was active in Vienna after he moved to Austria in 1837. He lent the painting to an exhibition in Vienna in 1873. The painting is also cited as being owned by Van Haanen by Wilhelm von Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig, 1883: 89.

[2] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century...*, 8 vols., trans. and ed. by Edward G. Hawke, London, 1907-1927, 3(1910): 89, no. 311.

[3] The 1898 date for Bourgeois and Nardus is according to notes by Edith Standen, Widener's secretary for art, in NGA curatorial files. Stephen Bourgeois of Bourgeois Frères was Nardus' father-in-law. The Widener files and *Catalogue of Paintings Forming the Collection of P. A.B. Widener, Ashbourne, near Philadelphia* , 2 vols., Paris, 1885–1900: 2: 207, list the previous owner as Roo van Westmaas,

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Woortman, Holland, but no supporting evidence has been found for this name, and there is no town of Woortman in the Netherlands. In fact, Hofstede de Groot (or one of his German assistants) annotated a copy of his own work on Hals with a note indicating that Nardus had provided a purely ficticious provenance for the painting: "...die in Katalog angegebene Provenienz aus Sammulungen, die nie exisistiert haben, berucht auf intümlicher von Nardus" (handwritten note, Handexemplaren Hofstede de Groot, Frans Hals #311, Rijksbureau voor kunsthistorische documentatie, The Hague; found and kindly shared with NGA by Jonathan Lopez, per his letter of 24 April 2006 and e-mail of 1 May 2006, in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1873 Gemälde alter Meister aus dem Wiener Privatbesitze, Österreichisches Museum für Künst und Industrie, Vienna, 1873, no. 38.

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 32, repro.

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1908 Martin, Wilhelm. "Notes on Some Pictures in American Private Collections." *The Burlington Magazine* 14 (October 1908): 59-60, pl. 2.

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masters of the seventeenth century. The Hudson-Fulton Celebration 1. Exh. cat. Metropolitan Museum of Art. New York, 1909: 33, no. 32, repro., 154, 161.

1910 Cox, Kenyon. "Art in America, Dutch Paintings in the Hudson-Fulton Exhibition II." *The Burlington Magazine* 16, no. 82 (January 1910): 245.

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1936 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Frans Hals Paintings in America*. Westport, Connecticut, 1936: no. 96, repro.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Frans Hals
Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

Portrait of a Member of the Haarlem Civic Guard

c. 1636/1638

oil on canvas
overall: 86 x 69 cm (33 7/8 x 27 3/16 in.)
framed: 110.2 x 95.3 x 7.6 cm (43 3/8 x 37 1/2 x 3 in.)
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.68

ENTRY

With great bravura, this fashionably clad member of the Haarlem civic guard stands with arm akimbo, staring out at the viewer. His flamboyant character, evident in his stance but reinforced through his arched eyebrows and stylish mustache, beard, and long, flowing locks of hair, conveys the sense of pride the Dutch felt in their military prowess during the formative years of the republic. By the late 1630s, when Hals painted this image, the Dutch had clearly demonstrated their superiority over the Spanish forces that had attempted to stem the revolt against Spanish rule. The citizens of Haarlem, in particular, had proven themselves in the early years of the conflict when they refused to capitulate to the Spanish troops who had besieged the city. Thanks to the fortitude and resistance of the citizenry, when Haarlem finally surrendered in the summer of 1573, the northern forces had gained time to gather enough strength to effectively counter the Spanish threat. Hals, a member of the Saint George civic guard since 1612, made a number of large group portraits of the militia companies, most of which are in the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem. This painting is one of only two known portraits in Hals' oeuvre of an individual soldier. [1] By Hals' time, the military front was sufficiently far to the south that the function of these militias had become more social than martial, which explains the presence of the elegant lace collar and cuffs that embellish this man's iron breastplate. The civic guards nevertheless remained mindful of their role in preserving the peace and harmony of their hometown.

As Arnold Houbraken and countless others have remarked, Hals painted the members of the civic guard "so forcefully and naturally . . . that it is as if they would

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address the onlooker!" [2] Hals, whose broad yet agile brushwork could so effectively suggest the outward exuberance of the sitter, used a pose for the individual guardsman here that he favored throughout his career. Variations of it can be found in single portraits as early as about 1625 in the magnificent full-length *Willem van Heythusysen* (Alte Pinakothek, Munich) [3] and as late as the mid-1650s in the seated *Portrait of a Man* in the Hermitage. [4] Hals used virtually the same pose, but in reverse, in his portrait of the portly *Claes Duyst van Voorhout*, c. 1638 ([fig. 1]), which is datable to about the same time as the *Portrait of a Member of the Haarlem Civic Guard*.

The condition of the Washington picture is much better than has been suggested in past literature. Conservation treatment on the painting in 1991 revealed a vibrancy in the flesh tones and costume that had long been obscured by discolored varnish. The whites of the lace collar and cuffs, the sheen of the metal clasp on the officer's cuirass, and the ocher and oranges of his jacket and sash are vividly rendered. Aside from the gray Glazing that softens the area between the eyes, the face has not suffered Abrasion as Slive thought, [5] nor has the figure been altered by extensive Overpainting as Grimm believed. [6] Finally, the conservation treatment confirmed that the background landscape vista that Grimm called into question is Hals' original concept. While this view onto a distant, evening landscape with its striking orange and blue palette is unusual for Hals, the character of the paint is totally consistent with the rest of the work. [7]

The rich blues in the landscape have in the past been thought to represent the sea, and thus the painting has at various times since the nineteenth century been interpreted as representing an admiral or naval officer. [8] The vista, however, is quite undefined other than the suggestions of trees in the foreground. The flat plain in the background could very well be land, particularly since no boats are visible. Nothing in the costume, moreover, indicates that the sitter is a naval officer, or, for that matter, an officer of any type. He is wearing a standard pikeman's cuirass, such as was worn in Haarlem's civic guard companies or in the army of the Dutch Republic. [9] Given Hals' close ties to the Haarlem civic guard companies of Saint George and Saint Hadrian, the former possibility is the more likely. [10] Each militia battalion was divided into three companies that could be distinguished by the colors of the rebel flag—orange, white, and blue—and the vivid sash around the waist of this unidentified man indicates that he was a member of the orange company. [11] Outfitted as he is in a broad-brimmed black hat and fashionable lace collar and cuffs, he clearly has dressed for the painter's brush and not for battle.

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This portrait has been dated at various periods of Hals' career, but recent scholars have placed it at the end of the 1630s on the basis of comparisons with the artist's civic guard painting *Officers and Sergeants of the Saint George Civic Guard Company* in the Frans Hals Museum, which he executed in about 1639 [fig. 2]. [12]Hals was a member of this company and portrayed himself, standing in the left background, staring at the viewer. His facial features are remarkably similar to those in this *Portrait of a Member of the Haarlem Civic Guard*, so much so that one wonders if this image is, in fact, a self-portrait.

Many stylistic associations exist between this portrait and Hals' last civic guard group portrait. Not only are the tonalities of the ochers and oranges comparable, but so are the slashing diagonal strokes used to indicate the folds in the sleeve and sash. The style of the costume is similar, as well as that of the sitter's hair, mustache, and beard. Nevertheless, the guardsman's face is not as freely executed as those in the group portrait. The features are quite precisely delineated with firm strokes of the brush and modeled with crisp shadows. These stylistic characteristics share much in common with portraits from the mid-1630s, such as the *Portrait of a Man, presumably Pieter Tjarck* in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, which Slive dates 1635/1638. [13] Thus it is probable that this work predates Hals' 1639 civic guard group by a year or two.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Frans Hals, *Claes Duyst van Voorhout*, c. 1638, oil on canvas, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Jules Bache Collection, 1949. Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Frans Hals, *Officers and Sergeants of the Saint George Civic Guard Company*, c. 1639, oil on canvas, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem. Photo: Margareta Svensson

NOTES

[1] The other portrait, *Portrait of an Officer*, is in the Museum of Art, São Paulo, Brazil. See Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974).

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:92; a translation by Michael Hoyle is in Seymore Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (Washington, DC, 1989), 18.

[3] Seymore Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (Washington, DC, 1989), no. 17, ill.

[4] Seymore Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (Washington, DC, 1989), no. 73, ill.

[5] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3:67, no. 125.

[6] Claus Grimm, *Frans Hals: Entwicklung, Werkanalyse, Gesamtkatolog* (Berlin,

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1972), 25, no. 99.

[7] Hals included landscape vistas in only two other portraits of single figures: *Isaac Abrahamsz Massa*, 1626 (Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto), and *Portrait of a Man in a Slouch Hat*, c. 1660–1666 (Hessisches Landesmuseum, Kassel).

[8] The first association of the figure with a naval officer was in the 1863 catalog of the Hermitage, 165, no. 773, where it was termed "Portrait d'un amiral." Most subsequent references continue this designation. Although Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3:67, no. 125, gave the painting the neutral title *Portrait of a Man Wearing a Cuirass*; he wrote: "The view of the sea seen through the opening in the wall suggests that the model may have been a naval officer."

[9] For a comparable pikeman's cuirass, see M. Carasso-Kok and J. Levy-van Halm, eds., *Schutters in Holland: Kracht en zenuwen van de stad* (Haarlem, 1988), 218, no. 35, repro.

[10] Not only did Hals paint the Saint George civic guard company three times and the Saint Hadrian civic guard company twice, he was a member of the former from 1612 to 1624. See Irene van Thiel-Stroman in Seymore Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (Washington, DC, 1989), 375–376, doc. 11.

[11] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 1:41, explains that the civic guards were divided into three companies "designated 'orange' (*oranje*), 'white' (*witte*) and 'blue' (*blauwe*), the colors of the newly established country."

[12] The early catalogs of the Hermitage proposed that this painting was a pendant to the *Portrait of a Man* of the 1650s. This association might have been made if Catherine the Great purchased them together, which seems possible, for in the catalog of 1774 they are listed sequentially as nos. 268 and 269. No information is known about their earlier provenance, despite the statement in National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 94, no. 68, that the *Portrait of a Soldier* was acquired by Catherine the Great from the Walpole Collection. The Hals painting Catherine acquired from that great collection was the Gallery's *Portrait of a Young Man* (1937.1.71). Wilhelm von Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei* (Braunschweig, 1883), 90, no. 131, was the first to note that these works belonged to different periods of Hals' career. He dated them 1635 and 1660 respectively. Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Frans Hals: Des meisters Gemlde*, Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 28 (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921), 222, dated the *Portrait of a Soldier* around 1646–1647. Numa S. Trivas, *The Paintings of Frans Hals* (New York, 1941), 49, no. 74, was the first to date the painting about 1639. He was followed in this dating by Claus Grimm, *Frans Hals: Entwicklung, Werkanalyse, Gesamtkatolog* (Berlin, 1972), 25, no. 99, and Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans*

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Hals, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3:67, no. 125.

[13] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974) 3:59, no. 108.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support consists of a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, with part of the original tacking margin incorporated into the top edge. In a past restoration, the top, left, and right tacking margins were trimmed, and these edges were extended with 1.5-centimeter-wide fabric strips. The paint layer present on the extensions is neither original nor of recent application. The original fabric and extensions have been lined. Cusping is found along all edges of the original support, indicating that the present dimensions have not been greatly reduced.

Paint was applied over a smooth white ground in fluid pastes and thin washes, in unblended brushstrokes, dots, and dabs of low impasto. A red underlayer visible in some areas may be part of an overall or locally applied imprimatura. Colored glazes were used extensively in the drapery. Lining has emphasized the canvas weave and slightly flattened the paint texture. Apart from a small loss in the hat, losses are confined to the edges. The brown glazes of the face and hair and blue green paint of the landscape are moderately abraded, and the darks of the clothing slightly abraded. The painting was restored in 1991.

PROVENANCE

Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729-1796], Saint Petersburg, by 1774; Imperial Hermitage Gallery, Saint Petersburg; sold March 1931 through (Matthiesen Gallery, Berlin; P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London; and M. Knoedler & Co., New York) to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 30 March 1932 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1989 Frans Hals, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1989, not in catalogue.

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1998 Museums of the World: Homage to the Pushkin Museum Centenary, Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, 1998, unnumbered catalogue.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Frans Hals
Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

Portrait of an Elderly Lady

1633

oil on canvas
overall: 102.5 x 86.9 cm (40 3/8 x 34 3/16 in.)
framed: 142.4 x 126.7 x 15.2 cm (56 1/16 x 49 7/8 x 6 in.)
Inscription: center left: AETAT SVAE 60 / ANo 1633
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.67

ENTRY

Although the name of the sitter in this impressive portrait is not known, Hals has inscribed her age, sixty, and the date of the painting, 1633, in the background on the left. The small Bible or prayer book she holds in her right hand and her conservative black costume with its white millstone ruff collar convey a pious nature, yet Hals reveals far more about her through her face and hands than through her costume or book. With broad strokes of the brush he captures her lively, robust personality. The woman's self-confidence is expressed in the twinkle of her eyes, in the firm grasp of her hand on the arm of the chair, and in the strong silhouette of her form against the light gray background.

This painting demonstrates the range in Hals' brushwork for commissioned portraits of the early 1630s. At this stage of his career, projecting the three-dimensionality of the figure through strong modeling of the features was of primary importance. The form of the head is built up in planes of light that are accented with firm strokes in the highlights and shadows. The white lace cap and collar are carefully depicted, as the artist sought to project not only their detail but also their translucence. While he also articulated the design in the black jacket with great care, he indicated the folds of the skirt with comparatively free brushstrokes that suggest the flickering of light off its surface.

The woman's pose is adapted from a portrait Hals had executed two years earlier of Cornelia Claesdr Vooght [fig. 1], [1] but the differences between these paintings are as remarkable as their similarities. By intensifying his light in the Washington painting, Hals has accented the woman's features and given her greater three-

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dimensional presence. He has augmented this effect by flattening the angle of her collar, shifting the position of her right hand so that it is turned more toward the viewer, and placing her in a low-backed chair to allow her form to be silhouetted against a light background. The result of these changes is that the personality of the woman in the Washington painting is projected in a remarkably forceful and direct manner.

Cornelia Claesdr Vooght was the wife of the Haarlem burgomaster Nicolaes van der Meer, whose companion portrait Hals also painted in 1631 [fig. 2]. [2] Following portrait conventions that had been developed by Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640) in the late 1610s, Hals juxtaposed a standing man with a seated woman. [3] The pose of Nicolaes van der Meer, who rests one hand on the back of a chair and holds his gloves with the other, offers a clue to identifying a possible pendant to the Washington painting: it may well be the *Portrait of an Elderly Man* in the Frick Collection [fig. 3], [4] in which the figure assumes a pose similar to Van der Meer's. The proposal that the two works are pendants, first advanced by Wilhelm Valentiner, has been a matter of some dispute. [5] Slive argued against it in 1974, largely because he dated the Frick painting 1628–1630, and also stated that their provenances and dimensions differ (the Frick painting measures 115.6 by 91.4 centimeters). [6] In 1989, however, he noted that neither provenance extends back before the nineteenth century. Both works have actually been reduced in size, the Frick painting along the bottom and left edges and the Washington painting on all four sides. [7] It is possible that the original format of these paintings approached that of the Haarlem ones, which are more vertical in shape.

Stylistically, there are arguments for placing the Frick portrait in about 1633, despite the blond tonality of the painting that Slive rightly associates with Hals' works from the late 1620s. In the Frick's painting, as in the National Gallery of Art picture, the figure boldly faces the viewer as light firmly models his features. His costume, particularly in the shoulder and sleeve design, is similar to that in *Portrait of a Man*, 1633, now in the National Gallery, London. [8] These works are also comparable stylistically, not only in the careful way in which the hair is delineated and in the broad, plain modeling of the face, but also in the bold strokes of the costume with precise additions of final details such as the black brocade pattern in the Washington portrait and the black tufts on the sleeve of the Frick painting. Both the Frick and the National Gallery of Art portraits also used similar materials: the canvases were prepared with a cream-tan Ground lightly tinted with brown earth, both backgrounds were loosely painted over olive-green Underpainting, and the

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dark gray-black paint of the final costume details has developed the same fine drying cracks in both paintings. [9]

Finally, one may also argue for the relationship of the Washington and Frick paintings in the way each of them varies from their prototype in the Haarlem pair. The hierarchical, frontal images of the 1631 portraits of the burgomaster and his wife have given way to more informal poses in which the figures turn toward the viewer and communicate through their direct glances and smiling, open expressions, a suggestion, perhaps, of a different social status. [10]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Frans Hals, *Cornelia Claesdr Vooght*, 1631, oil on panel, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem. Photo: Margareta Svensson

fig. 2 Frans Hals, *Nicolaes Woutersz van der Meer*, 1631, oil on panel, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem. Photo: Margareta Svensson

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fig. 3 Frans Hals, *Portrait of a Man*, c. 1633, oil on canvas, Frick Collection, New York

NOTES

[1] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: no. 78; 2: pl. 1240.

[2] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: no. 77.

[3] Pendant portraits by Peter Paul Rubens of *Peter van Hecke* and *Clara Fourment*, c. 1630, with the man standing and the woman seated, are in the Mauritshuis, The Hague. See Ben Broos and Ariane van Suchtelen, *Portraits in The Mauritshuis 1430–1790* (Zwolle, 2004), 239–243, nos. 53, 54.

[4] *The Frick Collection: An Illustrated Catalogue—Paintings, American, British, Dutch, Flemish and German* (New York, 1968), 1:209, no. 10.1.69; Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: no. 67.

[5] The possible relationship of these paintings was first proposed in Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Frans Hals: Des meisters Gemälde*, Klassiker der Kunst in

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Gesamtausgaben, vol. 28 (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921), 108; and Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Frans Hals Paintings in America* (Westport, CT, 1936), no. 41; it was followed by Numa S. Trivas, *The Paintings of Frans Hals* (New York, 1941), 41.

[6] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: no. 67. Claus Grimm, *Frans Hals: The Complete Work*, trans. Jürgen Riehle (New York, 1990), cat. 44, also dates the Frick painting to about 1628.

[7] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (Washington, DC, 1989), 262, no. 45. The current tacking margins of *Portrait of an Elderly Lady* are covered with original paint. If they were flattened, the dimensions would be 105.6 by 89.4 centimeters. Three of the edges have been trimmed, leaving no unpainted margins. Since very little cusping of threads is visible along the edges, it seems probable that the image was still larger; its original size, however, cannot be determined. Recent technical study of the Frick painting suggests that the left edge has been reduced in addition to the reduction of the lower edge described in *The Frick Collection: An Illustrated Catalogue—Paintings, American, British, Dutch, Flemish, and German*. (New York, 1968), 1:209–210, no. 10.1.69 (see notes dated August 21, 2008, for the National Gallery of Art painting, and September 22, 2008, for the Frick painting in National Gallery of Art conservation department files).

[8] Neil MacLaren, *The Dutch School, 1600–1900* (London, 1960), no. 1251; Seymour Slive. *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3: no. 81.

[9] These remarks are based on examination of the two paintings (as in note 7 above) as well as analysis by the National Gallery of Art scientific research department using microscopic examination of cross-sections from both paintings (see notes dated August 21, 2008, for the National Gallery of Art painting, and September 22, 2008, for the Frick painting in National Gallery of Art conservation department files).

[10] No inscription appears on the Frick painting, and examination did not show evidence that an inscription has been effaced. In Hals' companion portraits *Lucas de Clercq* and *Feyna van Steenkiste*, 1635 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. nos. c 556, c 557; see Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. [London, 1970–1974], 3: nos. 104, 105), only the woman's portrait bears a date.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the original tacking margins trimmed. Part of the painting surface has been turned over all four stretcher edges to form a new tacking margin, reducing the height by at

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least 3 centimeters and the width by at least 2.5 centimeters (see text). The X-radiograph shows only faint cusping along the top and left edges. Above the book at the juncture of the dress and arm is a large repaired hole and adjacent vertical tear.

Paint is applied over a thin, cream-tan ground as a fluid paste, with impasto in thicker passages such as the brocade and book. The face and black dress are freely painted with wet-into-wet handling, and brushstrokes in the skirt and hands are left unblended. The black brocade pattern and final touches in the lace, ruff, and cap, all added in a final painting stage, create an impression of precision and restraint. Adjustments to the silhouette of the black drapery are visible to the naked eye. A cluster of small losses is found in the upper right corner, along with scattered small losses in the background and drapery, and a linear diagonal loss that passes through the proper left thumb. In 2008 the painting was treated to remove discolored varnish and overpaint. [1]

[1] During this treatment the painting was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using microscopic examination of cross-sections (see notes dated August 21, 2008, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Jurriaans;[1] (his sale, Van de Schley, Roos, and De Vries, Amsterdam, 28 August 1817, no. 20); Cornelius Sebille Roos [1754-1820], Amsterdam. Charlotte-Camille, Comtesse Boucher de la Rupelle [née de Tascher, d. 1911], Paris; sold by 1905 to (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris); James Simon [1851-1932], Berlin, by 1906; (Abraham Preyer, The Hague);[2] purchased 12 June 1919 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[3] held jointly with (Thos. Agnew & Sons, Ltd., London), June to November 1919);[4] (Duveen Brothers, Inc.); sold June 1920 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] The name is also inscribed on copies of the 1817 sale catalogue as “Jurjans.” See the description of Sale Catalogue N-298 in The Getty Provenance Index Databases, J. Paul Getty Trust, Los Angeles.

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[2] From The Hague on 4 May 1919, Preyer cabled fellow dealers Scott and Fowles in New York that he had purchased the painting; see Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 229, box 374, folder 7.

[3] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 103, box 248, folder 22. Oddly, the Duveen prospectus, in NGA curatorial files, says the painting was acquired by Duveen in 1927, which is clearly an error.

[4] The painting was Agnew's stock number J1821. This information comes from the Agnew stock books, and is recorded in the Public Collections portion of the Getty Provenance Index® Databases. J. Paul Getty Trust, Los Angeles.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1906 Ausstellung von Werken alter Kunst, Kaiser-Friedrich Museum, Berlin, 1906, no. 49.

1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, 1939, no. 179.

1989 Frans Hals, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, 1989-1990, no. 45, color repro.as Portrait of a Seated Woman.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Frans Hals
Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

Portrait of a Young Man

1646/1648

oil on canvas
overall: 68 x 55.4 cm (26 3/4 x 21 13/16 in.)
framed: 103.2 x 91.4 x 14.6 cm (40 5/8 x 36 x 5 3/4 in.)
Inscription: center right with double monogram: FHFH
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.71

ENTRY

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 round, somewhat pudgy face is framed by shoulder-length curly hair and a black hat that rests squarely on his head. His black jacket is enlivened by a flat white collar with intricate lace edging.

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*, Hals used this pose at many stages of his career, but particularly in the 1640s. Indeed, the National Gallery of Art's *Willem Coymans*, signed and dated 1645, is one of the closest parallels to this image. Not only are the poses alike, but the paintings are also similar in the way that Hals modeled the faces more firmly than the broader, more suggestively rendered costumes. On the basis of such relationships, Seymour Slive has dated this painting about 1645. [1]

Minor variations in technique between these portraits, however, suggest that *Portrait of a Young Man* 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

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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's-head finial of the chair is depicted with a few wavy strokes that give little information about its 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 Adriaen van Ostade, 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 been the subject of multiple interpretations. 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 monogram was seen to indicate both the artist and the sitter. In 1736 Horace Walpole described the painting as a self-portrait of Frans Hals, [3] an identification that was repeated in an engraving (in reverse) after the painting, published in 1777. [4] This identification was followed by subsequent Hermitage catalogers. Later, when it became obvious that the sitter was too young to be Frans Hals, he was identified as Frans Hals the Younger (1618–1669). [5]Although Hals' son would have been the appropriate age for this portrait, no other supporting evidence for this identification exists, so the identity of the sitter and the reason for the double monogram remain mysteries.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

NOTES

[1] Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3:86, no. 167.

[2] Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3:86, no. 167. See also Wilhelm von Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei* (Braunschweig, 1883), 90, no. 128. Bode speculated, on the basis of the

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monogram, that the artist might be Frans Hals' son Harmen Hals, but, after Bredius discovered that this artist's monogram was different in character, Bode immediately rejected his own hypothesis.

[3] Horace Walpole, "A Catalogue of the Right Honble. Sir Robert Walpole's Collection of Pictures," unsigned autograph manuscript (New York, 1736), Pierpont Morgan Library, The Morgan Library and Museum, PML 7586. He identified 430 paintings in his father's various houses. In the list entitled "A Catalogue of Sir Robert Walpole's Pictures at Chelsea," fol. 33–34, appears: "Francis Halls, Master to Godfrey Kneller . . . Francis Halls."

[4] The engraving was made by J. B. Michel. According to Seymour Slive. *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 3:86, the print is inscribed: "FRANCIS HALLS. / In the Common Parlour at Houghton / Size of the Picture 1F[oot] 3 ¼ I[nches] by 1F[oot] 7 1/2 I[nches] high / Published May 1st, 1777 by John Boydell Engraver in Cheapside, London. / F. Halls Pixit. G. Farington del. J.B. Michel sculpsit."

[5] Petr Petrovich Semenoff, *Études sur l'histoire de la peinture néerlandaise*, 2 vols. (Saint Petersburg, 1885), 1:254, and Andrei Ivanovich Somov, *Ermitage Impérial: Catalogue de la galerie des tableaux,* 3rd. ed., 2 vols. (Saint Petersburg, 1901), 2:139–140, no. 770.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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 most of 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 re-laced 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 layer is visible between broad brushstrokes of paint, which was 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. Abrasion is slight. The painting underwent

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conservation treatment in 2007 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting.

PROVENANCE

Sir Robert Walpole, 1st earl of Orford [1676-1745], Houghton Hall, Norfolk, by 1736;[1] by inheritance to his son, Robert Walpole, 2nd earl of Orford [1700-1751], Houghton Hall; by inheritance to his son, George Walpole, 3rd earl of Orford [1730-1791], Houghton Hall; sold 1779 through Count Aleksei Semonovich Musin-Pushkin, Russian ambassador to England, to Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729-1796], Saint Petersburg; 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, D.C.; deeded 1 May 1937 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] Horace Walpole, "A Catalogue of the Right Honble. Sir Robert Walpole's Collection of Pictures," 1736, autograph manuscript unsigned, pp. 33-34, PML 7586, The Morgan Library and Museum, New York.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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2013 Houghton Revisited: The Walpole Masterpieces from Catherine the Great's Hermitage, Houghton Hall, King's Lynn, 2013, no. 12, repro.

2014 Houghton Hall: Portrait of an English Country House, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; California Palace of the Legion of Honor, The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Nashville, 2014-2015, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Frans Hals
Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

Willem Coymans

1645

oil on canvas
overall: 77 x 64 cm (30 5/16 x 25 3/16 in.)
framed: 105.4 x 92.1 x 10.8 cm (41 1/2 x 36 1/4 x 4 1/4 in.)
Inscription: center right: AETA SVAE.22 (second 2 has been changed to a 6) / 1645 [1]

[1] The second numeral of the sitter's age has been changed to a six. Above the inscription is the sitter's coat of arms, consisting of three black cows' heads on a gold field.
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.69

ENTRY

With utmost casualness, Willem Coymans has turned to look out at the viewer while resting his right arm lightly on the back of his chair. He is dressed in an elaborately gold embroidered jacket with slit sleeves over a pleated white blouse. His oversized, flat, white linen collar and his modish, pom-pom-embellished black hat, which is pushed forward at a rakish angle, enframe a handsome face with an alert expression. Long wavy hair that reaches to his shoulders completes the impression of a man confident in himself and in his position in society.

This remarkable portrait, which carries so many of the dynamic qualities admired today in Hals' work, was rediscovered only at the end of the nineteenth century. The coat of arms in the right background was immediately recognized as that of the distinguished Coymans family, but the inscribed age of the sitter, twenty-two, did not correlate with any member of the family then known in genealogical studies. Perhaps to make the sitter's age consistent with that of one of the family's most prominent members, Balthasar Coymans, who was born March 15, 1618, the last digit of the age in the inscription was changed from two to six sometime between 1898 and 1907. [1] This identification was generally accepted in the literature from about 1909 until 1958, when Seymour Slive noted the changes in the inscription and concluded that the sitter could not be Balthasar. [2] The proper

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identification of the sitter as Willem was made only in 1970 by Katrina Taylor on the basis of documents in the archives of Amsterdam and Haarlem. [3]

Willem (Guilliam) Coymans was baptized in Amsterdam on August 20, 1623, and was buried in the Church of Saint Bavo in Haarlem on April 28, 1678. He was the son of Coenraet Coymans and Maria Scheryl van Walhorn, who had been married in Antwerp in 1614. Like other members of this large family, Coenraet immigrated to Amsterdam, perhaps to work in the successful family firm of Balthasar Coymans and Brothers. By the 1640s Coenraet seems to have moved to Haarlem, where he was buried in the Church of Saint Bavo on November 29, 1659. Even less is known about Willem's life, but his name appears on notarized business records in Amsterdam and Haarlem. [4] It seems improbable that he married, for his name is not included in a family genealogy that apparently was based on marriage rather than birth records. [5]

Hals had extensive connections with the Coymans family. In 1644 he painted portraits of Willem's enormously wealthy uncle Joseph Coymans (Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford) and his wife, Dorothea Berck (Baltimore Museum of Art). [6] In the early 1650s he painted striking portraits of Joseph's daughter Isabella (Baronne Edouard de Rothschild Collection, Paris) and her husband, Stephanus Geraerdts (Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts, Antwerp). [7] Finally, in 1660, along with Pieter Molijn (Dutch, 1595 - 1661), Hals appraised the paintings listed in the inventory of Coenraet Coymans' effects. [8]

The worldly success of the family is vividly evident in Willem Coymans' demeanor and French mode of dress. Hals utilizes these attributes to convey his sitter's personality and give his image immediacy. With rapid yet certain strokes of the brush he suggests the rich patterns and flickering light on the elegantly embroidered jacket. In perhaps an even greater tour de force he has captured the translucent qualities of the sleeve by applying dense white strokes of paint over layers of gray. A few firm slashes of black complete the modeling. As is characteristic of Hals, the face is more strongly modeled than is the costume; while the touch is firm and bold around the features, the skin on the nose and cheek is relatively smooth.

Hals used the same pose from the mid-1620s, when it first appeared in the portrait *Isaac Abrahamsz Massa* (Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto), [9] until the end of his career. Although this pose had been used in the Netherlands by the late sixteenth century in group portraits in which an artist was faced with the problem of

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representing figures seated around a table, Hals was the first to recognize its potential for portraits of single figures. It was a perfect device for half-length, relatively informal portraits in which he wanted to project the sitter's personality as directly as possible. Aside from the implied movement in the pose, the man's gesture of resting his arm over the back of the chair allows the figure to seemingly break through the picture frame and enter into the viewer's world.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

NOTES

[1] The inscription reads "22" in Charles Sedelmeyer, *Illustrated Catalogue of 300 Paintings by Old Masters . . .* (Paris, 1898), 66, but "26" in Sedelmeyer, *Catalogue of Rudolf Kann Collection*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1907), 1:13. Ernest Wilhelm Moes, *Iconographia Batava*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1897–1905), 1:205, no. 1779, first identified the sitter as Balthasar, who was Lord of Streefkerk and Nieuw Lekkerland and town councillor of Haarlem. The biographical data on the Coymans family was first published by Johan E. Elias, *De vroedschap van Amsterdam, 1578–1795*, 2 vols. (Haarlem, 1903–1905), 2:762.

[2] Seymour Slive, "Frans Hals' Portrait of Joseph Coymans," *Wadsworth Atheneum Bulletin* (Winter 1958): 20–21 note 7.

[3] Katrina V. H. Taylor, "A Note on the Identity of a Member of the Coymans Family by Frans Hals," in *Report and Studies in the History of Art 1969* (Washington, DC, 1970), 106–108.

[4] Katrina V. H. Taylor, "A Note on the Identity of a Member of the Coymans Family by Frans Hals," in *Report and Studies in the History of Art 1969* (Washington, DC, 1970), 107.

[5] A. A. Vorsterman van Oijen, *Stam-en wapenboek van aanzienlijke Nederlandsche familiën* (Groningen, 1885).

[6] For the portraits of Joseph Coymans and Dorothea Berck, see Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 2: pls. 243, 244; 3: nos. 160, 161. For information on the Coymans family, see Seymour Slive, "Frans Hals' Portrait of Joseph Coymans," *Wadsworth Atheneum Bulletin* (Winter 1958): 12–23.

[7] For portraits of Stephanus Geraerdts and Isabella Coymans, see Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 2: pls. 290, 291; 3: nos. 188, 189.

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[8] Abraham Bredius, “Archiefsprokkels betreffende Frans Hals,” *Oud-Holland* 41, no. 1 (1923–1924): 27.

[9] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 2: pl. 64; 3: no. 42.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a fine, tightly woven, plain-weave fabric with weave irregularities. It has been lined with the original tacking margins trimmed and the edges of the painting turned over to form the present tacking margins. The reduction in size appears minimal, as marked cusping is present on all sides.

A moderately thick tan ground layer lies under a light brown imprimatura layer. Paint was applied thinly, frequently exposing the imprimatura. Both low and high impasto articulate the sleeve and jacket brocade. Although the paint and ground are cupped, there are only minor flake losses, and abrasion is confined to the edges. The painting was treated in 1986.

PROVENANCE

Coymans family, Haarlem. Mrs. Frederick Wollaston, London. (Sedelmeyer Gallery, Paris), before 1894; Rodolphe Kann [d. 1905], Paris, by 1897; purchased 1907 with the entire Kann collection by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); sold to Arabella D. [Mrs. Collis P.] Huntington [c. 1850-1924], New York; by inheritance to her son, Archer M. Huntington [1870-1955], New York; purchased 17 May 1928 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc.);[1] sold 7 May 1929 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 322, box 467, folder 2 (copies in NGA curatorial files).

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 37, as Balthasar Coymans.[1]

1928 1928 International Exhibition of Antiques and Art, Olympia, London, 1928, no. X22, as Portrait of Young Koeymanszoon van Ablasserdam.

1939 Masterworks of Five Centuries, The Golden-Gate International Exposition, San Francisco, 1939, no. 80a, repro., as Portrait of Balthasar Coymans, Alderman of Haarlem.

1989 Frans Hals, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, 1989-1990, no. 61, repro.

2000 Like Father, Like Son? Portraits by Frans Hals and Jan Hals, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, 2000, pl. 1.

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2007 Dutch Portraits: The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals, The National Gallery, London; Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague, 2007-2008, no. 24, repro.

EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES

[1] Wilhelm R.Valentiner, *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Old Dutch Masters Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Connection with the Hudson-Fulton Celebration* (New York, 1910), 1:38, notes that the "identification of the person is uncertain."

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1936 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Frans Hals Paintings in America*. Westport, Connecticut, 1936: no. 82, repro.

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2005 Duffy-Zeballos, Lisa. "Frans Hals' *Willem Coymans*." *Archives of Facial*

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Frans Hals
Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

A Young Man in a Large Hat

1626/1629

oil on panel
overall: 29.3 x 23.2 cm (11 9/16 x 9 1/8 in.)
framed: 46.7 x 40.6 x 5.7 cm (18 3/8 x 16 x 2 1/4 in.)
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1940.1.12

ENTRY

The identity of the impish young man in this oil sketch who turns in his chair and gazes out with a smile at the viewer is not known. Whether Hals' perceptive characterization was exclusively due to his artistic genius or was aided by a personal relationship to the sitter may never be determined. It should nonetheless be noted that Hals' son Harmen Hals (1611–1669) would have been in his middle to late teens when this sketch was painted, 1626/1629. [1] This age seems probable for the sitter, particularly given his fashionable wardrobe and sporty mustache.

That the painting depicts a specific individual can be argued based not solely on the characterization but also on the oval illusionistic frame that surrounds the young man. Hals frequently included such painted framing devices on small-scale portraits in the 1610s and 1620s. An identical painted frame, for example, acts as a foil for the sitter's expressive gesture in Hals' *Portrait of a Man*, 1627 [fig. 1]. Although the dramatic effect of that man's gesture as he reaches through the picture plane is more pronounced than in the Washington painting, the elbow of the young man in this work does extend slightly beyond the painted frame. Hals' use of the oval frame in this painting was more important compositionally, as it reinforces the dynamic spatial character of the pose. A number of Hals' small-scale portraits were engraved, and the theory has been advanced that the painted sketches were intended as *modelli* for that purpose. [2] While it may well be that those who wished to have their portraits engraved, primarily preachers and scholars, specifically requested small-scale portraits to present to reproductive engravers, not all portraits of this scale—among them *A Young Man in a Large Hat*

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—were engraved. Thus it should not be assumed that the sketch's primary function was as an engraver's model. A strong tradition of hanging small-scale painted portraits existed in the Netherlands, particularly in Haarlem, during the 1620s and 1630s. In Jan Miense Molenaer's *Family Portrait Making Music*, c. 1636 (Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, on loan from the Instituut Collectie Nederland), for example, a series of small portraits of family members can be seen on the back wall of the room. [3]

If Hals' small portrait of a young man fits into this tradition, it nevertheless breaks from it in a fundamental way. As the figure turns in his chair and smiles at the viewer, he seems related more to genre scenes than to contemporary portraits, which are more formal. Hals' painting technique, moreover, is extremely free. The closest stylistic parallels in his work are with genre figures, in particular the *Boy Holding a Flute*, c. 1626–1628 (Staatliches Museum, Schwerin), [4] which suggests that in this memorable sketch he sought to merge portrait and genre imagery.

The connections to genre painting are evident in the relationship of the pose of the young man with those of figures in contemporary "merry company" scenes, particularly in the works by Hals' younger brother Dirck. [5] The National Gallery's picture is even closer to Dirck's imagery when one considers the freely executed oil sketches on paper that served as models for figures in such paintings, for example a *Seated Man*, c. 1627, now in Paris (Institut Néerlandais). [6] In another of Dirck's sketches, *Seated Man with a Pipe*, c. 1627 (Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam), the figure leans over exactly the same type of chair as does the young man in the Washington oil sketch. [7] While comparisons with these studies help place *A Young Man in a Large Hat* thematically and chronologically, they also demonstrate the masterful execution of Frans Hals' Washington panel. By contrast, Dirck never developed the ability to suggest the form of a hand with bold, swelling touches of the brush or to soften the modeling of a face with a sequence of short parallel strokes, effects so brilliantly rendered by his older brother in this work. Here, furthermore, Hals used a wide range of quick notations to animate the costume, from the broad angular strokes of the jacket sleeve to the delicate touches of the brush that indicate the white lace.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Frans Hals, *Portrait of a Man*, 1627, oil on copper, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, NY

NOTES

[1] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (Washington, DC, 1989), 375; Harmen, who was baptized in Haarlem on September 2, 1611, followed in his father's footsteps as a painter, although he inherited none of his father's ability. He was buried in Haarlem on February 15, 1669. Slive has kindly drawn my attention to an unpublished drawing in the Haarlem archives that depicts Harmen Hals later in his life. The facial characteristics seen in the drawing are not unrelated to those in the painting.

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[2] Seymour Slive, ed. *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 1:124.

[3] Reproduced in *Frans Halsmuseum Haarlem* (Haarlem, 1969), 69, no. 213b.

[4] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (Washington, DC, 1989), no. 28, repro.

[5] Discussed in Picture Gallery Berlin, *Catalogue of Paintings*, 2nd rev. ed. (Berlin, 1978), 199, no. 816A.

[6] Collection Lugt, inv. no. 1796.

[7] Inv. no. 1965:180. See Peter Schatborn, "Olieverfschetsen van Dirck Hals," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 21 (1973): 107–116.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a single oak panel with a vertical grain set into a 0.5–centimeter-wide collar of oak that does not appear to be original. Dendrochronology dates the panel to an earliest felling date of 1625, with an estimated date for use of 1629.[1] Both panel and protective collar are beveled along all four edges on the back. A check at the top right corner is the only damage to the support. The ground is a thick white layer that leaves the grain pattern visible and extends to the edge of the original panel in all areas save the lower right corner.

Paint is applied thinly in quick fluid strokes with rounded ends. Highlights are applied thickly, worked wet-into-wet in the thin underlayers. The sketchy nature of the painting is enhanced by some intentional rubbing in of thin paint layers. The painting is in excellent condition, with scattered small losses discretely inpainted. An aged but only slightly discolored varnish layer is present. No major conservation treatment has been carried out since acquisition.

[1] Dendrochronology by Dr. Peter Klein, Ordinariat für Holzbiologie, Universität Hamburg (see report in NGA Conservation department files dated May 1, 1987).

PROVENANCE

C.J.G. Bredius, Woerden, by 1918.[1] (M. Knoedler & Co., New York and Paris); sold 30 January 1929 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington; deeded 28

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June 1937 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1940 to NGA.

[1] According to Hans Schneider, "Ein neues Bild von Frans Fals," *Kunstchronik und Kunstmarkt* 30 (1918-1919), 368, Bredius acquired this sketch for 60 florins as part of an inheritance. The painting was at that time attributed to Jan Miense Molenaer. The attribution to Hals was made by Abraham Bredius, who persuaded his relative to lend the painting for a while to the Mauritshuis. Later references to earlier owners Van der Hoop and Slochteren (see Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols., London and New York, 1970-1974, 3: 41-42, no. 66) cannot be confirmed.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1989 Frans Hals, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, 1989-1990, no. 39 (cat. by Seymour Slive).

1995 Adriaen Brouwer: Youth Making a Face, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1995-1996, not in brochure.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 24.

2009 Judith Leyster, 1609-1660, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2009, unnumbered brochure, fig. 6.

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1921: 309, repro. 50.

1923 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Frans Hals: des Meisters Gemälde in 322 Abbildungen*. Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 28. 2nd ed. Stuttgart, Berlin, and Leipzig, 1923: 309, repro. 51.

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Washington, 1995: 66-68, color repro. 67.

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2009 Hofrichter, Frima Fox. *Judith Leyster (1609-1660)*. Exh. brochure. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2009: 4, fig. 6.

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A. Bannerman, *Adriaen Hanneman*, engraving, in Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England* (London, 1762), vol. 2, opposite p. 120, National Gallery of Art Library, Gift of Joseph E. Widener

Hanneman, Adriaen

Dutch, c. 1603/1604 - 1671

BIOGRAPHY

Adriaen Hanneman was born in The Hague in 1603 or 1604. In 1619 he became a pupil of the portrait painter Anthony van Ravesteyn the Younger (c. 1580–1669) and from this point on worked exclusively as a portraitist.

In 1626 Hanneman went to England, where he lived and worked until 1638. In 1630 he married an Englishwoman named Elizabeth Wilson, the first of three marriages, none of which seems to have produced any children. The arrival of Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641) in London in 1632 marked a crucial event in Hanneman's career. The Flemish master's work would have a lasting effect on Hanneman, to the point that in 1661 Cornelis de Bie described him as a counterfeiter of Van Dyck's style. Although such a pejorative assessment is perhaps misplaced, it is certainly true that some of Hanneman's better works, including the Gallery's Henry, Duke of Gloucester, are so strikingly Van Dyckian that their correct attribution has in the past occasionally gone undetected.

In 1640, shortly after his return to The Hague, Hanneman was married for the second time, to Maria, daughter of Jan Anthonisz van Ravesteyn (1570–c. 1657), the elder brother of his teacher. Hanneman entered the city's Guild of Saint Luke in the same year and soon assumed leadership positions. In 1643 he was elected

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hoofdman, and two years later he was named *deken,* the highest position in the guild. In 1656 Hanneman played an important part in setting up a rival guild for painters, engravers, and sculptors—the Confrerie—serving as *deken* and *hoofdman* several times during the 1660s.

Hanneman continued to paint portraits in an aristocratic, Anglo-Flemish manner in The Hague, where a great demand existed for portraits made in the style of Van Dyck. Hanneman's patrons included the exiled members of the English court, a number of whom visited Maria Stuart, the daughter of Charles I and the wife of Willem II, the Prince of Orange.

Hanneman's work was favorably received. By 1641 he was wealthy enough to buy a house in The Hague's fashionable Nobelstraat and to purchase the adjoining property in 1657. After 1668, however, he appears to have had serious financial problems, and it is possible that an illness from which he is known to have suffered in that year left him unable to paint. He was married again in 1669, to Alida Besemer, but died not long after, in July 1671.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Adriaen Hanneman
Dutch, c. 1603/1604 - 1671

Henry, Duke of Gloucester

c. 1653

oil on canvas
overall: 104.8 x 87 cm (41 1/4 x 34 1/4 in.)
framed: 128.91 x 111.13 x 11.43 cm (50 3/4 x 43 3/4 x 4 1/2 in.)
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.51

ENTRY

The splendidly dressed youth in this three-quarter-length portrait looks out assuredly at the viewer. With a commanding gesture, he rests his right hand on a baton before him while he turns to his left and places his near hand over the hilt of a gold-topped rapier. His buff-colored doublet, richly brocaded with gold and silver threads, has split sleeves that reveal a white blouse with large, pleated cuffs. His breastplate is crossed by a blue ribbon that lies under his flat, white collar and tassel. The broadly painted brown rock cliff behind him and the distant landscape vista to the left provide a neutral background for this elegant figure.

The identities both of the sitter and of the artist who painted him have been the subject of much speculation in the literature. [1] Descamps, the first to mention the painting while it was in the possession of Count Heinrich von Brühl (1700–1763) in Dresden, identified the work as a portrait of Willem II by Adriaen Hanneman. [2] Smith cataloged it in 1831 as a portrait by Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641), and most, although not all, subsequent writers followed suit. [3] Just prior to the sale of the painting from the Hermitage in 1930 the attribution issues were so intense that, as Walker recounts, large amounts of money were paid to ensure that scholarly authorities upheld the Van Dyck attribution. [4] Neither the attribution to Van Dyck nor the identification of the sitter as Willem II, Prince of Orange, however, can be supported. As Toynbee has pointed out, other depictions of Willem II are quite different from the youth represented in this portrait. [5] Moreover, while this youth wears the blue sash of the Order of the Garter, Willem II was only made a Knight of the Garter on March 2, 1644, at the age of nineteen. [6] Since the sitter in this painting seems to be about twelve or thirteen years of age, he cannot

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represent this prince. An alternative suggestion that he represents Prince Willem III of Orange (1650–1702) is also unlikely. Judging from the sitter's hairstyle and costume, this portrait was painted in the early 1650s. Although Willem III received the garter in April 1653, he was only two years old at that time. [7]

Toynbee was the first writer to properly identify the sitter as Henry, Duke of Gloucester (1640–1660), on the basis of an inscription on a bust-length copy after this painting in the collection of the Earl Fitzwilliam at Wentworth Woodhouse (see the 1995 catalog entry PDF for this comparative image). [8] Staring suggested that *Henry, Duke of Gloucester* was painted at the time of Henry's investiture as Knight in the Order of the Garter, which took place in The Hague on May 4, 1653. Henry had been appointed to the Order by a decree of his brother Charles, the exiled Prince of Wales, on April 25, 1653. At the time, Henry, the third son of Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria, was twelve years old. He had been a virtual prisoner of the English Parliament from the age of eighteen months until he was given permission to sail to the Netherlands at the end of 1652. The artist called upon to represent this distinguished member of the exiled Stuart family was the most important portrait painter in The Hague at that time—Adriaen Hanneman, a personal favorite of Henry's sister, Maria Henriette Stuart, Princess of Orange. [9]

The attribution disputes that have occurred over this painting are understandable. Not only is the quality extremely high but the elegance of the pose and setting are typical of Van Dyck's English period. Hanneman, who studied with Van Dyck in England and followed his style after returning to the Netherlands, became the most fashionable portraitist of the English and Dutch aristocracy in The Hague around mid-century. Close stylistic comparisons may be made with other of Hanneman's portraits from this period. The portrait of Johan de Witt, 1652 (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam), [10] is painted with the same smooth brushwork in the face and attention to detail in the fabrics. Both portraits also exhibit a curious idiosyncrasy of Hanneman's style: a slight halo effect around the head that comes from applying the darker background tones over the light brown-gray ground only after painting the head from life.

The elegant manner in which Hanneman portrayed Henry, Duke of Gloucester, is more Van Dyckian than is usual for this artist. The pose and bearing specifically refer back to Van Dyck's last known portrait of the future Charles II, painted in 1641 (private collection). [11] A variant of this painting, with Charles dressed in civilian clothes, was etched by Wenceslaus Hollar in 1649 for Van Dyck's *Iconographie*. [12] This three-quarter-length image of Charles may have been known to

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Hanneman when he painted a portrait of Charles II in 1649, and it certainly formed the prototype for the Washington painting. [13] In all probability the iconographic continuity for the pose chosen for *Henry, Duke of Gloucester* was a political as well as a pictorial decision. The Stuart court was at this time in exile and trying desperately to maintain its integrity in the hope of an eventual restoration of the monarchy. In 1653 the future Charles II was living in Paris, but a large contingent of the Stuart court was in The Hague being cared for by Henry's aunt Elizabeth, the exiled Queen of Bohemia, who was the sister of both Charles I of England and Maria Henriette Stuart, Princess of Orange. The family probably desired a style and pose consistent with Van Dyck's official portraits of Henry's older brother, Charles II, to stress the continuity of the Stuart dynasty.

Henry's stay in The Hague after his investiture in April 1653 was comparatively short, for his mother, Queen Henrietta Maria, requested that he join her in Paris. At the Restoration he accompanied Charles II back to England, where they landed on May 27, 1660. Unfortunately, he contracted smallpox shortly thereafter and died in London on September 13, 1660.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

NOTES

[1] Leo van Puyvelde, "Van Dyck and the Amsterdam Double Portrait," *Burlington Magazine* 83, no. 485 (August 1943): 204–207.

[2] Jean-Baptiste Descamps, *La vie des peintres flamands, allemands et hollandais*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1753–1763), 2:187.

[3] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters* (London, 1829–1842), 3:203, no. 712.

[4] John Walker, *Self-Portrait with Donors: Confessions of an Art Collector* (Boston and Toronto, 1974), 116–118.

[5] Margaret R. Toynbee and Leo van Puyvelde, "Van Dyck and the Amsterdam Double" *Burlington Magazine* 83, no. 487 (October 1943): 257–258.

[6] William Arthur Shaw, *The Knights of England*, 2 vols. (London, 1906), 1:33 (as cited in Margaret R. Toynbee and Leo van Puyvelde, "Van Dyck and the Amsterdam Double Portrait [an Exchange of Letters]," *Burlington Magazine*

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83, no. 487 [October 1943]: 257–258).

[7] William III was invested in the following May and was installed by dispensation in 1661; Margaret R. Toynbee and Leo van Puyvelde, "Van Dyck and the Amsterdam Double Portrait (an Exchange of Letters)," *Burlington Magazine* 83, no. 487 (October 1943): 257–258.

[8] The inscription reads "Henry Duke of Glocster 3d sonn to Kg Charles ye 1st." Margaret R. Toynbee, "Adriaen Hanneman and the English Court in Exile," *Burlington Magazine* 92, no. 564 (March 1950): 76. This inscription was probably added to the portrait between 1689 and 1702, during the reign of Willem III. Similar inscriptions on several other portraits from the same collection are written with the same yellow paint and in the same handwriting, one of which refers "William" as the present king of England. For the accuracy of the inscription, see Adolf Staring, "Willem II of III of wie?" *Oud-Holland* 71, no. 3 (1956): 158–161.

[9] Adolf Staring, "Willem II of III of wie?" *Oud-Holland* 71, no. 3 (1956): 153–162. Hanneman was also a favorite artist of Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687), who may well have advised on the commission. In 1640 Huygens had commissioned Hanneman to paint portraits of himself and his five children (Mauritshuis, The Hague).

[10] See inv. no. 1280, from Museum Boymans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

[11] Oliver Millar, *Van Dyck in England* (London, 1982), 103, no. 63.

[12] Richard Pennington, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Etched Work of Wenceslaus Hollar, 1607–1677*, (Cambridge and New York, 1982).

[13] Onno ter Kuile, *Adriaen Hanneman, 1604–1671: Een Haags portretschilder* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1976), no. 14.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, was lined with the tacking margin cropped, but the original dimensions retained. Paint has been applied fluidly over a smooth, moderately thick white ground layer. Dark sketchy glazes were employed to create shadows and broad outlines of forms, and small lumps of impasto were applied to the brocade and highlights. A gap between the background paint and the hair reveals a lighter underpaint layer and creates a halo effect around the head.

X-radiographs reveal minor adjustments by the artist to the folds of the white cuffs. Moderate abrasion and flake losses are found overall, and glazes have been

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thinned around the collar and hands. Losses exist along all edges, but they are more extensive on the top and bottom. The painting was lined in 1931, and treated again in 1996 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting. During the 1996 treatment, extensive pinpoint inpainting was applied in the sky as well as in the figure's tunic and hair.

PROVENANCE

Count Heinrich von Brühl [1700-1763], Dresden; his heirs, until 1769; Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729-1796], Saint Petersburg; Imperial Hermitage Gallery, Saint Petersburg; purchased November 1930, as a painting by Sir Anthony van Dyck, through (Matthiesen Gallery, Berlin; P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London; and M. Knoedler & Co., New York) by Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 30 March 1932 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Heda, Gerret Willemsz

Also known as
Heda, Gerrit Willemsz
Dutch, active 1640s and 1650s

BIOGRAPHY

There is little information concerning the life of Gerret Heda. The earliest document to mention the painter is an entry in the register of the Saint Luke's Guild of Haarlem dated July 7, 1642. In it, Willem Claesz Heda (Dutch, 1594 - 1680) affirms that his second son, Gerret, is one of his pupils, along with Maerten Boelema (c. 1620–after 1664) and Hendrik Heerschoop (1620/21–after 1672). In 1642 Gerret also joined Haarlem's civic guard, which suggests he was at least eighteen years old at that time. That would place his birth in or shortly before 1624. His death date is not known, but it has been postulated that he died in 1649 since a tomb for "a son of Willem Claesz Heda" was opened in that year, though there is no conclusive evidence that the son was Gerrit.[1] What is more certain is that his death must have occurred before 1661, when his parents made a will in which he is not named among the children. Although Gerret is included among a list of artists active in the Haarlem Saint Luke's Guild in the 1650s, no precise membership date appears next to his name, so some have questioned whether he was in fact active in those years.[2] In 1702 Gerret is listed as deceased in a compilation of past members of the Haarlem Saint Luke's Guild.[3]

In style and ability Gerret Heda compares closely to his father, and it is difficult to distinguish between the two artists, which makes determining the date of his death all the more complicated. Gerret made copies of some of his father's breakfast scenes while he was a member of the workshop, and he and his father must have collaborated on paintings. Segal has attempted to distinguish between the signatures of the paintings made by Willem Claesz Heda and his workshop (HEDA) and those painted independently by Gerret (·HeDA·).[4] Many variations of the signatures exist, however, so no firm conclusion can be made on this basis.

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[1] Nicolaas Rudolph Alexander Vroom, *A Modest Message*, 2 vols. (Schiedam, 1980), 1:66, advanced the theory that Gerret Heda died in 1649 on the basis of a document noting that in 1649 a tomb was opened in the cathedral of Saint Bavo in Haarlem for the burial of a son of Willem Claesz Heda. (See Hessel Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem: 1497–1798*, 2 vols., Alphen aan den Rijn, 1980, 2:1035.) The name of the son, however, is not mentioned in the document, and there is no assurance that the tomb was meant for Gerret. As Sam Segal posits in *A Prosperous Past: The Sumptuous Still Life in the Netherlands, 1600–1700*, trans. P. M. van Tongeren, ed. William B. Jordan (Delft, 1988), 136, it is possible that another son was buried in that tomb, perhaps the one who signed paintings "jonge Heda" in the 1640s.

[2] Adriaan van der Willigen and Fred G. Meijer, *A Dictionary of Dutch and Flemish Still-Life Painters Working in Oils, 1525–1725* (Leiden, 2003), 102–103, and Irene van Thiel-Stroman, "Gerret Heda," in *Painting in Haarlem 1500–1850: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum*, ed. Pieter Biesboer and Neeltje Köhler (Ghent, 2006), 190, 194 nn. 139–140, accept the premise that Gerret died in 1649.

[3] See Hessel Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem: 1497–1798*, 2 vols. (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1980), 2:1035.

[4] Sam Segal in *A Prosperous Past: The Sumptuous Still Life in the Netherlands, 1600–1700*, trans. P. M. van Tongeren, ed. William B. Jordan (Delft, 1988), 133–136.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Gerret Willemsz Heda
Dutch, active 1640s and 1650s

Still Life with Ham

1650

oil on panel
overall: 98.5 x 82.5 cm (38 3/4 x 32 1/2 in.)
framed: 123.2 x 108 x 8.9 cm (48 1/2 x 42 1/2 x 3 1/2 in.)
Inscription: on the right edge of the tablecloth: .HEDA. 1650
Gift of John S. Thacher 1985.16.1

ENTRY

This impressive still life, signed and dated “Heda 1650” at the lower right edge of the white tablecloth, came to the National Gallery of Art in 1985 as a work by Willem Claesz Heda (Dutch, 1594 - 1680). Despite its high quality and the many similarities to paintings by Willem Claesz Heda, subtle differences in style and concept pointed to the hand of that artist’s talented son Gerret Heda. The attribution was subsequently changed, with the realization that Gerret, who emulated his father’s style, may well have worked with the elder Heda to produce generic “Heda” paintings for the open market. Complicating such an attribution is the assumption, occasionally found in the literature, that Gerret Heda is the unnamed son of Willem Claesz Heda who died in 1649, a year before this painting was executed. [1] No compelling documentary reason, however, exists for accepting this assumption. Stylistic similarities between signed Gerret Heda paintings from the 1640s and “Heda” still lifes from the 1650s, moreover, are so striking that it must be assumed that Gerret not only remained alive, but was active for at least ten years after this purported death date. [2]

Among the paintings that can be used as a basis for the attribution of this work to Gerret Heda is a comparable still life by him, signed and dated 1645 (see the 1995 catalog entry PDF for this comparative image). This painting, which is likewise on wood and has similar dimensions (98 x 79 cm), also depicts an upright tabletop still life situated against a plain gray background. In each instance an identical tall fluted glass provides a vertical accent to the display of food, plates, pitchers, glasses, and overturned vessels that are placed either on a dark green, fringed tablecloth or on the white linen that covers it.

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Characteristic for Gerret Heda is the relative disarray of the still-life elements, despite the basic pyramidal composition. The white linen is arranged in a haphazard manner so that objects nestle down in its crumpled folds. Even the objects resting on the flat green tablecloth seem slightly askew, in part because Gerret Heda never quite managed to achieve the same mastery of perspective found in paintings by his father (see, for example, *Banquet Piece with Mince Pie*). The distinctive way in which Gerret Heda has bunched the white linen cloth to activate the surface with an array of shimmering folds adds to this effect. By doing so, he sacrificed the stabilizing function that the horizontal and vertical shapes of similar linens perform in his father's paintings. Further comparison with paintings by Willem Claesz Heda also confirms that, as talented as he was, Gerret did not achieve his father's sensitivity of touch: his paint is somewhat denser, reflections are not as nuanced, and distinctions between materials are not as finely wrought. [3]

The objects on the table do not represent a specific meal, as is quite clear when one compares this work to other examples where like elements are found in similar arrangements (see the 1995 catalog entry for this comparative image). Whereas the same fluted glass and pewter pitcher are found in the Frans Hals Museum painting, the identical mustard pot and a similar ham appear in the Pushkin Museum still life. [4] In all three of these still lifes Heda has displayed a sumptuous feast, each of which calls to mind the richness and bounty that the Dutch had come to enjoy around mid-century. In each instance the partial consumption of the food and drink, the disarray of the tablecloth, and the way the vessels are overturned all hint at a human presence.

Given the explicit iconographic programs found in certain paintings by his father (see entry on *Banquet Piece with Mince Pie*), it may well be that in his choices of objects and their arrangement Gerret also strove to provide a moralizing message. Just as his compositional organization lacks the structure of his father's works, however, so too is his message less clear. In the Washington painting the ham, wine, and beer have been only partially consumed, perhaps evidence that the enjoyment of this meal has been undertaken with proper restraint. Nothing in the work seems to hint of the transience of life found in the comparable Pushkin Museum still life, where a snuffed-out candle occupies a corner of the table ([fig. 1]). Whether or not such a warning was included in some other guise in the *Still Life with Ham* cannot be determined with our current knowledge of the significance of the various elements of this composition. Would, for example, the open lid of the

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pewter pitcher have symbolized an idea along these lines to a Dutch viewer of the mid-seventeenth century? Another unanswered question is whether the untouched bread roll in the Pushkin and Washington paintings has eucharistic allusions similar to those found in paintings by Pieter Claesz (Dutch, 1596/1597 - 1660) and Willem Claesz Heda (see *Banquet Piece with Mince Pie*). In neither instance is the evidence compelling, and it may well be that Gerret adapted many of the motifs found in his father's work without providing a comparable intellectual and theological foundation to his still lifes.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Gerret Willemsz Heda, *Still Life with Ham*, 1649, oil on panel, Pushkin Museum, Moscow. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, NY

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NOTES

[1] See note 1 in the Biography of Gerret Willemsz Heda (Dutch, active 1640s and 1650s).

[2] Since Gerret is not named in a 1661 testament made by his parents, it is reasonable to assume that he had died previously.

[3] Fred Meijer, who believes that Gerret Heda died in 1649, attributes the ham in the Gallery's painting to Gerret's father, Willem Claesz Heda. See Fred G. Meijer, Alan Chong, Wouter Kloek, et al*., Still-Life Paintings from the Netherlands 1550–1720/Het Nederlandse Stilleven 1550–1720*, exh. cat., Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; The Cleveland Museum of Art (Amsterdam, 1999); Arie Wallert, ed., *Still Lifes: Techniques and Style; An Examination of Paintings from the Rijksmuseum* (Amsterdam, 2000); and N. R. A. Vroom, *A Modest Message as Intimated by the Painters of the 'Monochrome Banketje*,' Vol. 3," *Oud-Holland* 114, nos. 2–4 (2000): 233. The modeling of this ham, however, is virtually identical to that seen in Gerret Heda's *Still Life with Ham*, 1649, in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow [fig. 1].

[4] The identical salt cellar can be found in Gerret Heda's masterpiece in the Hermitage, *Still Life with Lobster,* signed and dated "Heda 1648," a painting frequently attributed to Willem Claesz Heda. See Nicholaas Rudolph Alexander Vroom, *A Modest Message*, 2 vols. (Schiedam, 1980), 2:77, no. 372.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The panel consists of three vertically grained oak boards.[1] All of the boards are of similar width, and the outer ones are slightly thicker. Dendrochronology gives a use date of 1646 onward.[2] Bevels appear on all sides of the reverse, which was not smoothly finished. A thin, off-white ground is visible through the brushstrokes of the tablecloth and background, giving a warm tonality, while the wood grain is prominent overall.

Paint was applied thinly and smoothly in multiple layers with great transparency, much glazing, and crisp brushwork in the fuller bodied light passages. Impasted highlights are blended wet-into-wet. A pentimento of a plate or tablecloth appears beneath the ham, a short length of fringe was begun and abandoned in the lower left of the tablecloth, and the artist changed the bottom contour of the white cloth. Discolored varnish and inpainting were removed in 2008.

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[1] The wood was analyzed by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg (see report dated May 4, 1987, in NGA conservation files).

[2] Dendrochronology by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg (see report dated May 4, 1987, in NGA conservation files).

PROVENANCE

John S. Thacher [1904-1982], Washington, D.C.; bequest 1985 to NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure, repro.

2002 Matters of Taste: Food and Drink in 17th Century Dutch Art and Life, Albany Institute of History and Art, 2002, no. 23, repro.

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(2000): 233, fig. 7, 236 n. 37, as by Gerret Willemsz Heda and Willem Claesz Heda.

2000 Meijer, Fred G. "Review of three books on still-life paintings " *Oud Holland* 114, no. 2/4 (2000): 233, fig. 7, repro; and 236, note 37, as by both Gerret Willemsz Heda and Willem Claesz Heda.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Heda, Willem Claesz

Dutch, 1594 - 1680

BIOGRAPHY

Documents indicate that Willem Claesz Heda was born in Haarlem on December 14, 1594. This evidence is supported by an inscription designating his age—"aetate 84"—found on a 1678 portrait of Heda by the Haarlem painter Jan de Bray (Dutch, c. 1627 - 1688). Heda spent his entire career in Haarlem. In 1616, at the age of twenty-one, he became a member of the Saint George civic guard, serving as a corporal from 1642 to 1645. He married Cornelia Jacobsdr on June 9, 1619. Heda also took an active role in the Saint Luke's Guild. His name first appears on the guild rolls of 1631, the year in which he assisted Salomon de Bray (1597–1664) in its reorganization.[1] Heda was elected *deken* in 1642 and 1652, and was a *hoofdman* in 1637, 1643, and 1651. In a document dated July 7, 1642, Heda lists one of his sons, Gerret Willemsz Heda (Dutch, active 1640s and 1650s), as an apprentice.

Although he painted some portraits and figural compositions, Heda specialized in still-life painting. He was unquestionably one of the greatest masters of the genre. As is evident from his early *vanitas* still lifes, Heda was influenced by the Haarlem painter Floris van Schooten (active c. 1617–1655). His breakfast pieces—tabletop still lifes displaying an array of food, including cheese, fruit, and bread—likewise grew out of the Haarlem still-life tradition of the early seventeenth century, as was already noted during his lifetime by Haarlem historian Theodorus Schrevelius, who wrote that Heda painted "fruit and all kinds of knick-knacks" in the manner of Floris van Dyck (1575–1651). Heda's paintings evolved from additive compositions to monumental, monochrome breakfast and banquet pieces, executed with delicate brushwork that could vividly convey a wide range of materials and textures.

Heda and Pieter Claesz (Dutch, 1596/1597 - 1660) were the principal still-life artists in Haarlem until well after mid-century. Heda's great influence spread to painters in other artistic centers as well, among them the Amsterdam artist Jan Jansz den Uyl (c. 1595–1640).

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[1] See Ed Taverne, “Salomon de Bray and the Reorganization of the Haarlem Guild of St. Luke in 1631,” *Simiolus* 6 (1972–1973): 50–69.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Willem Claesz Heda
Dutch, 1594 - 1680

Banquet Piece with Mince Pie

1635

oil on canvas
overall: 106.7 x 111.1 cm (42 x 43 3/4 in.)
framed: 143.8 x 147 x 10.5 cm (56 5/8 x 57 7/8 x 4 1/8 in.)
Inscription: lower right on edge of tablecloth: .HEDA.1635.; lower left on edge of tablecloth: (unidentified monogram) [1]

[1] This unidentified monogram is an unusual feature of this painting, as it does not appear to be an artist's monogram. Dr. Pieter Biesboer, former curator at the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, has suggested (verbally) that it is the mark of the linen maker.
Patrons' Permanent Fund 1991.87.1

ENTRY

This imposing painting displays the remains of a feast on a sumptuously laden table. The care with which the precious vessels were arranged prior to the meal is still evident despite the disarray of the white linen tablecloth, the snuffed-out candle, the tipped-over silver tazza and glass *roemer* (glass for white wine), and the broken *roemer* lying on a pewter dish. The focal point of the meal has been the mince pie, which, flavored with currants, raisins, and exotic spices from the Far East, was a special dish reserved for holidays and lavish banquets. Freshly cut slices of lemon added to its flavor. Oysters, seasoned with vinegar from the shell-shaped Venetian glass decanter, complemented the meal. Salt, prominently displayed in the silver salt cellar, and pepper, contained within the paper cone made from an almanac page, were expensive seasonings available to the guests as well. Imported olives and a simple roll rounded out the feast, which would have

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been washed down with ample glasses of beer.

This banquet piece, one of the largest known still lifes by Willem Claesz Heda, may well have been a commissioned work, although nothing is known of its early provenance. Because of its scale, Heda painted it on canvas rather than on a wood support, which was his norm. Partly because the original canvas has never been lined, the remarkable sheen of glass, pewter, silver, and gilded bronze, for which Heda is so admired, is extremely well preserved. The rich impastos of the lemon peel hanging over the table's edge likewise have maintained their character. Adding to the harmonious whole is the soft shimmer of the white linen tablecloth as light catches the nuances of the fabric's texture.

Despite the apparent reality of the scene, which is reinforced by the lifelike scale of the objects, this composition is an artificial construct and does not record the aftermath of an actual meal. By 1635, the date of this work, Heda had already executed a number of similar, albeit smaller still lifes that include many of the same objects in different arrangements and combinations. The silver tazza, for example, appears in three earlier paintings, one dated 1632 and two dated 1634. [1] It also occurs in two still lifes from 1635, including the *Banquet Piece with Oysters* in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam [fig. 1]. [2] The broken *roemer* recurs in one of the still lifes from 1634. [3] The Venetian glass decanter, the salt cellar, the large glass *roemer,* and the pewter pitcher all appear in other works (see especially the *Banquet Piece with Oysters*).

As far as one can determine, Heda intended to bring together food and objects that might be found on a festive occasion and present them in a harmonious and convincing manner. The composition is arranged in a broad triangular form, its apex defined by the magnificent gilt bronze goblet, whose decorative top is surmounted by the figure of Triton. Heda enlivened his scene through the suggestion of light reflecting off the various objects, and gave the whole immediacy by situating the table in the frontal picture plane. By placing the lemon rind, the pewter plates, and the black-handled knife over the table's front edge, he created the illusion that they actually protrude into the viewer's space. Although these compositional ideas had been current in Dutch and Flemish still-life painting from the first decades of the century, Heda utilized them here with unprecedented forcefulness and conviction.

Heda carefully selected the objects in this painting to convey a general thematic message, one frequently encountered in still-life paintings of the time, that the

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sensual pleasures of the feast and the luxuries of the world are only temporary and not eternal. [4] The snuffed-out candle indicates not only the end of the meal, but also the transience of life itself. [5] The same message is expressed by the broken glass and the page of the almanac used to hold the pepper. [6] Theological issues current in both Catholic and Protestant thought underlay these warnings: sensual pleasures threaten to distract man from the message of Christ's sacrifice and from the overriding significance of God's word. Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684), a Catholic artist, explicitly conveyed this Christian message in *Flowers with Crucifix and Skull,* c. 1665 by juxtaposing a crucifix with a luscious bouquet of flowers, and by including a text that laments that man does not observe the "most beautiful flower of all" [fig. 2]. [7] Instead of focusing on the message of Christ's sacrifice, man is distracted by temporal pleasures such as flowers and fruit. [8] Heda expresses the same idea in a more subtle way. Here, while man has enjoyed the delights of exotic spices, rich meats, and oysters, [9] and dined with expensive and finely wrought objects made of rare materials, he has overlooked the most fundamental nourishment of all, the simple bread roll in the foreground. Given bread's traditional eucharistic connotations and its central placement on a plate that extends into the viewer's space, its untouched state is neither accidental nor without iconographical significance. [10]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Willem Claesz Heda, *Banquet Piece with Oysters*, 1635, oil on panel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

fig. 2 Jan Davidsz de Heem and Nicolaes van Veerendael, *Flowers with Crucifix and Skull*, c. 1665, oil on canvas, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Alte Pinakothek, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich / Lutz Braun / Art Resource, NY

NOTES

[1] See Nicholaas Rudolph Alexander Vroom, *A Modest Message*, 2 vols. (Schiedam, 1980), 1: no. 335, fig. 71 (private collection, the Netherlands), signed and dated 1632; no. 340, fig. 74 (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam), signed and dated 1634; no. 341, fig. 67 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam), signed and dated 1634.

[2] The other 1635-dated picture in which the tazza appears was auctioned at Sotheby's, New York, January 10, 1991, no. 66.

[3] Nicholaas Rudolph Alexander Vroom, *A Modest Message*, 2 vols. (Schiedam, 1980), 1: no. 340.

[4] For a discussion of these issues see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Still Life: Its

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Visual Appeal and Theoretical Status in the Seventeenth Century," in *Still Lifes of the Golden Age: Northern European Paintings from the Heinz Family Collection* (Washington, 1989), 11–25.

[5] Jacob Cats, *Proteus, ofte, minne-beelden verandert in sinne-beelden*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1629), 1: section title "Emblemata Moralia et Aeconomica," Emblem XX, "Liceat Sperare Timenti." I would like to thank Quint Gregory for calling my attention to this emblem.

[6] See Sam Segal, *A Prosperous Past: The Sumptuous Still Life in the Netherlands, 1600–1700*, trans. P. M. van Tongeren, ed. William B. Jordan (Delft, 1988), 137.

[7] Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

[8] See the entry on De Heem's *Flowers with Crucifix and Shell* in Beverly Louise Brown and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Masterworks from Munich: Sixteenth- to Eighteenth-Century Paintings from the Alte Pinakothek* (Washington, DC, 1988), no. 33, 136–138.

[9] Oysters were seen as a potent aphrodisiac. For a discussion of the meaning of oysters in Dutch art, see Liana de Girolarni Cheney, "The Oyster in Dutch Genre Paintings: Moral or Erotic Symbolism," *Artibus et Historiae,* no. 15 (1987): 135–158.

[10] This interpretation was first suggested to me by Quint Gregory when he was a doctoral student at the University of Maryland in the early 1990s. See Henry D. Gregory, "Tabletop Still Lifes in Haarlem, c. 1610–1650: A Study in the Relationship Between Form and Meaning" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2003), 3–18 and passim. Similar ideas are found in still-life paintings by Pieter Claesz. See Anne Walter Lowenthal, "Response to Peter Hecht," *Simiolus* 16, nos. 2–3 (1986): 188–190. See also Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Introduction," in Margarita Russell, *Images of Reality, Images of Arcadia: Seventeenth-Century Netherlandish Paintings from Swiss Collections* (Washington, DC, 1989), 26 and also 50, no. 11. See also Henry D. Gregory, "A Repast to Savor: Narrative and Meaning in Pieter Claesz's Still Life," in *Pieter Claesz: Master of Haarlem Still Life*, ed. Pieter Biesboer et al., (Haarlem, 2004), 97–108.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a medium-weight, plain-woven fabric that is heavily textured. It is unlined, but because it was delicate, with small tears and fraying where folded over the stretcher, it was strip-lined when the painting was treated in 2011. Small

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patched holes are found in the upper right corner and in the glass ewer at center. The paint layer continues onto the original tacking margins, suggesting it was painted on a stretching frame.

The support was prepared with a thick mustard-colored ground layer, which is employed as a mid-tone in some passages, namely in the tablecloth. The paint was applied in smooth wet-over-dry layers with impasted highlights. Glazing and fine, opaque scumbling was used to create the transparency of the glass objects. Further texture and definition were given to the reflection of the glass and metallic objects by the application of carefully placed highlights.

The painting is in good condition. A discolored varnish layer was removed during the 2011 treatment. Scattered small losses and areas of slight abrasion were inpainted at that time as well .

PROVENANCE

Private collection, the Netherlands; acquired 1948 by private collection; by inheritance to a subsequent owner;[1] (sale, Ader-Picard-Tajan, Paris, 22 June 1990, no. 39); purchased by (Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna; Bruno Meissner, Zurich; and Otto Naumann, New York); sold 27 February 1991 to NGA.

[1] According to the 1990 Ader-Picard-Tajan auction catalogue.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

2004 Pieter Claesz: Master of Haarlem Still Life, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; Kunsthaus Zürich; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2004-2005, not in catalogue (shown only in Washington).

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jakob Houbraken, *Jan Davidsz. de Heem* (detail), engraving in Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (The Hague: J. Swart, C. Boucquet, en M. Gaillard, 1753), vol. 1, pl. K, National Gallery of Art Library, Gift of C. Dearhoff

Heem, Jan Davidsz de

Dutch, 1606 - 1684

BIOGRAPHY

Jan Davidsz de Heem was born in Utrecht to a Catholic family. In 1626 he moved to Leiden, where he married his first wife, Aletta van Weede, a native of Utrecht. Nearly a decade later, in 1635, De Heem moved to Antwerp and entered its Saint Luke's Guild. A year after the death of Aletta in 1643, the painter married Anna Ruckers, a native of Antwerp. Although he would spend many years in his wife's hometown, De Heem also spent periods of time in the north, including an extended stay in Utrecht in 1649. He also resided in Utrecht between 1667 and 1672, and he rejoined that city's painter's guild in 1669. Following the French invasion of Utrecht in 1672, De Heem returned to Antwerp, where he lived until his death in 1684.

The few works known from De Heem's first Utrecht period resemble those of the still-life painter Balthasar van der Ast (Dutch, 1593/1594 - 1657), who may have been his teacher. While active in Leiden, De Heem painted tonal still lifes with *vanitas* subjects—books, writing and smoking implements, musical instruments, skulls, and hourglasses—that relate to works by contemporary Leiden artists David

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Bailly (1584–1657) and Harmen Steenwijck (1612–after 1656). Following De Heem's move to Antwerp, the work of Flemish still-life painter Daniel Seghers (1590–1661) provided an important model. De Heem's compositions became more elaborate, and he depicted bouquets and garlands of flowers, baskets of fruit, and various motifs such as glasses, insects, and drapery with great illusionistic veracity. Occasionally he incorporated background views to a distant landscape or seascape.

During his long and productive career De Heem was especially admired for the realistic way he painted gold and silver. His paintings vary from small cabinet pieces to large banquet paintings containing luxurious decorative art objects. He is known to have collaborated with other painters, including Jan Lievens (Dutch, 1607 - 1674), whom he knew in Leiden and Antwerp. Among his many students and followers were Abraham Mignon (German, 1640 - 1679), Cerstiaen Luyckx (1623–after 1674), and Joris van Son (1623–1667).

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April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan Davidsz de Heem
Dutch, 1606 - 1684

Vase of Flowers

c. 1660

oil on canvas
overall: 69.6 x 56.5 cm (27 3/8 x 22 1/4 in.)
framed: 90.1 x 77.8 cm (35 1/2 x 30 5/8 in.)
Inscription: lower left on parapet: J.D. De Heem f.
Andrew W. Mellon Fund 1961.6.1

ENTRY

The extraordinary delight the Dutch and Flemish took in the richness of the visual world is nowhere better expressed than in the flower paintings of Jan Davidsz de Heem. In his *Vase of Flowers,* the brightly colored blossoms, fruits, vegetables, and grains that seem to burst forth from the glass vase are painted with such sensitivity that they seem almost alive. Whether it be in the translucency of the petals, the sheen of dew drops on the leaves, or the minute insects that crawl about the stems and blossoms, De Heem has exerted painstaking care to capture the very essence of the still-life elements that make up his composition.

Other still-life painters shared De Heem's concern with illusionism, yet none matched his ability to convey a sense of organic life. Poppies, tulips, roses, wheat, and peas reach out in dynamic rhythms, while insects crawl and flutter about as though the air around them were rife with the varied smells of the richly laden bouquet. Through his artifice, De Heem has allowed the viewer not only to enjoy the beauty of the individual forms but also to imagine the richness of their fragrances. He has done so, moreover, with an arrangement of flowers, fruits, and vegetables that would never have been placed together in the same bouquet, for they grow at different seasons of the year.

While De Heem's ability to seize the full range of one's sensual experiences in appreciating flowers is exceptional, the underlying attitude in his work reflects concerns that had been fundamental to still-life painting since the early seventeenth century. Cardinal Borromeo, the patron of Jan Brueghel the Elder (Flemish, 1568 - 1625), for example, wrote of the pleasure he received from viewing

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the artist's flowers during icy winters and imagining their odors. [1] In 1646 a Dutch poet, Joachim Oudaan, described not only the beauty of the blossoms but also the fragrance of a still-life painting. [2] De Heem's dynamic yet harmonious composition belongs to a long-standing tradition. In the early seventeenth century, Ambrosius Bosschaert (Dutch, 1573 - 1621) painted symmetrically arranged bouquets of flowers that were dominated by a large, centrally placed blossom. Stems of flowers were relatively short and flowers did not overlap. De Heem's work has evolved from this fairly rigid format—he breaks the symmetry, overlaps his blossoms, and, in particular, creates rhythms through his greatly elongated plant stems.

Finally, as did his predecessors, De Heem includes many types of flowers from different seasons of the year. Such artfully constructed compilations of elements that could never be seen together in nature gave still-life painting a status it could never have achieved if the artist had remained servile to the specifics of the natural world. Such a composition as this, while built upon careful observation of God's wonders, emphasized the importance of the role of the artist's imagination. The symbolic associations De Heem brought to the work confirm that such a still life was far more than a mere display of craft. The transient beauty of flowers, for example, was a common metaphor used to remind the viewer of the temporality of life. The bugs and snails that climb about the blossoms were understood allegorically to represent forces that help hasten the demise of temporal beauty. While De Heem clearly wished to convey this concept, by including such a wide range of seasons he also sought to make a statement about the value of art. These flowers will continue to blossom after nature's flowers have withered and died. Indeed, the concept *Ars longa, vita brevis* was fundamental to seventeenth-century Northern still-life painting.

De Heem's flower still lifes often had specific moral, and even religious, connotations. Occasionally this Catholic artist included a skull and the words *memento mori* adjacent to a flower piece [fig. 1]; in other instances he added a crucifix. In such cases, careful analyses of the flowers and grains he has included in his composition indicate that they were chosen because of the religious symbolism associated with them. [3] The question then arises whether the flowers and other plants in paintings with no explicit symbols of death or resurrection still carry similar associations. [4] In the case of the National Gallery's painting the answer is most certainly yes.

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This bouquet was not only a compilation of the beauties of God's creations, a statement of the value of art, and a reminder of the transience of life, but it also put forth the hope of salvation and resurrection. Although no crucifix appears in this work, the allusion to the cross in the reflection of the window on the glass vase serves the same purpose. Within such a context the prominent position of the white poppy upon which a butterfly alights has to be understood symbolically. [5] The poppy, which was associated with sleep and death, often alluded to the Passion of Christ, and the butterfly to the Resurrection. Other flowers, grains, fruits, and vegetables reinforce this message. The morning glory, for example, symbolizes the light of truth, for it opens at the break of day and closes in the evening. The bramble, believed to be the burning bush in which the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses, was associated with divine love that cannot be consumed. Grains of wheat can allude to the bread of the Last Supper, but they can also symbolize resurrection because the grain must fall to earth to regenerate. Like wheat, or peas, man must die and be buried before achieving eternal life.

Vase of Flowers is signed but not dated. Although De Heem's chronology is not easy to reconstruct, he probably executed this painting in Utrecht around 1660. [6] The painting has more elaborate rhythms in its forms and a more complex iconography than does De Heem's similar composition in the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, also entitled *Vase of Flowers*, which is signed and dated 1654. However, it cannot date too much later than the Dresden painting from the mid-1650s [fig. 1], which contains many like elements, including a poppy at the top of the composition and the image of a cross in the reflection on the vase. In any event, the composition must have been known by Abraham Mignon (German, 1640 - 1679) in Utrecht, for after he joined De Heem's workshop in 1669 he executed a *Vase of Flowers* that shares many similar elements. [7]

While the relationship between De Heem and Mignon is clear, the blue hyacinth seen in the upper left of De Heem's *Vase of Flowers* has sparked debate about the possible involvement of another flower painter, Jan van Huysum (1682–1749). Fred Meijer has noted that certain flowers—including the hyacinth, hollyhock, and auricula in the upper left, the red-and-white carnation in the lower left, and the pink rosebud in between—are virtually identical to those found in Van Huysum's *Still Life of Flowers and Fruit in a Niche*, c. 1717, in the Speelman collection (fig. 2), leading him to conclude that they were added by Van Huysum. Recent cross-section analysis of the Washington painting has confirmed the presence of a non-pigmented resinous or oil-resin layer between the blue hyacinth and an earlier

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paint layer, which is not present in cross-sections taken elsewhere. However, while a resinous or oil resin layer in one cross-section may suggest that the flower was added at a later time, there was no dirt layer found on top of it to confirm such a passage of time. [9] It is possible that this non-pigmented layer is an oiling out layer—a technique often used by artists to saturate an area as they work. The broader and more generalized articulation of the petals are, moreover, more characteristic of De Heem's touch than Van Huysum, who employed highly refined brushwork and an exacting attention to detail. Van Huysum also subtly varied the thickness of his paint to create slight relief in his flower petals, thereby giving them their convincing sense of three-dimensionality.

Because these blossoms do not open at the same time of year, artists relied heavily on drawings to build their compositions. It is therefore not impossible that Van Huysum may have come into possession of drawings by De Heem, though no such drawings are known. Indeed, at this time it was common practice for artists to freely borrow discrete elements from each other's work. Although the exact reason for the connection between these two paintings is unclear, close comparison of Van Huysum's and De Heem's flowers reveal how each artist applied their own distinct painting techniques to a shared visual vocabulary.

Original entry by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., April 24, 2014.

Revised by Alexandra Libby to incorporate information from a new technical examination.

December 9, 2019

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Jan Davidsz de Heem, *Memento Mori*, c. 1653, oil on canvas, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden. Photo: Hans-Peter Klut

fig. 2 Jan van Huysum, *Still Life of Flowers and Fruit in a Niche*, c. 1710–1715, oil on panel, The Edward and Sally Speelman Collection, on long term loan to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts

NOTES

[1] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Still Life: Its Visual Appeal and Theoretical Status in the Seventeenth-Century," in *Still Lifes of the Golden Age: Northern European Paintings from the Heinz Family Collection* (Washington, DC, 1989), 14–15.

[2] See Lawrence Otto Goedde, "A Little World Made Cunningly: Dutch Still Life and Ekphrasis," in *Still Lifes of the Golden Age: Northern European Paintings from the Heinz Family Collection* (Washington, DC, 1989), 40.

[3] For an analysis of the *Flower Piece with Shell and Skull* in Dresden, see Sam Segal and Liesbeth M. Helmus, *Jan Davidsz. de Heem en zijn kring* (Utrecht, 1991), no. 28, 181–184.

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[4] For the identification of the plants and animals in this painting, see Sam Segal and Liesbeth M. Helmus, *Jan Davidsz. de Heem en zijn kring* (Utrecht, 1991), 187.

[5] Much has been written on the symbolism of flowers in Dutch art. For an excellent overview of the problem, see Sam Segal, "The Symbolic Meaning of Flowers," in *A Flowery Past: A Survey of Dutch and Flemish Flower Painting from 1600 until the Present* (Amsterdam, 1982), 12–25; see also Sam Segal and Liesbeth M. Helmus, *Jan Davidsz. de Heem en zijn kring* (Utrecht, 1991), 182–184.

[6] For a similar De Heem composition, also undated, see E. U. Fechner, *Hollandskii naturmort XVII weka* (Moscow, 1981), 28, 169, pls. 62–63.

[7] For this painting, see Fred G. Meijer, *Stillevens uit de Gouden Eeuw* (Rotterdam, 1989), no. 23, 94–95.

[8] Fred G. Meijer, "The 'Temptations of Flora': Jan van Huysum (1682–1749)," *Burlington Magazine* 149, no. 1247 (2007): 134–135.

[9] See Technical Summary.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a medium-weight, plain-weave canvas with irregularly spun threads. [1] The painting is lined to a secondary support with the edges covered with brown paper tape. The original tacking margins have been removed. Cusping is visible along all the edges, suggesting that the original dimensions of the painting have been retained. The paint layers are applied over a thin, smooth off-white ground in thin layers blended wet into wet. De Heem took great care with the layering structure of the painting, and each compositional element has been rendered differently to create the desired effect. Reserves were used for some flowers, while in other areas specifically toned underlayers were applied; some flowers and insects were painted directly on top of the dark background.

The support, ground, and paint layers are all in excellent condition. The painting was treated in 2016, during which a grime layer, nonoriginal discolored coatings, and overpaint were removed. There is only minor abrasion throughout the shadowed portion of the marble ledge, the red and white carnation in the bottom left quadrant, and the white flower at the top of the composition, as well as a few scattered pinpoint losses throughout the background. A new varnish was applied

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and abrasion and old losses were compensated for using reversible and stable materials.

Cross-section analysis and scanning electron microscopy-energy dispersive x-ray analysis (SEM-EDX) were also conducted during the 2016 treatment to investigate the possibly that Jan van Huysum added flowers to De Heem's composition (see Entry). One of the cross-sections confirmed the presence of a non-pigmented resin or oil-resin layer between the blue hyacinth and the green leaf below. However this non-pigmented layer was absent from the other two cross-sections. While a resin or oil resin layer in one cross-section may suggest the paint layers above were added later, no dirt layer was found on top of the non-pigmented layer to confirm the passage of time. It is possible that the non-pigmented layer is an oiling out layer, often used by artists to saturate an area while they are working. Clear evidence of paint application postdating the attribution to De Heem was not revealed by the samples examined. [2]

Dina Anchin, based on the examination report by Susanna Griswold.

December 9, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Earlier technical summaries of this work were prepared by Melissa Katz and Catherine Metzger.

[2] See the analysis report in NGA conservation files: Michael Palmer, WA1381_De Heem_Vase of Flowers_1961.6.1, National Gallery of Art, July 28, 2017.

PROVENANCE

Baron Lionel Nathan de Rothschild [1808-1879], London; by inheritance to his son, Leopold de Rothschild [1845-1917]; by inheritance to his son, Lionel Nathan de Rothschild [1882-1942], Exbury, Hampshire; by inheritance to his son, Edmund Leopold de Rothschild [1916-2009], Exbury; sold 1947 to (Frank Partridge and Sons, London).[1] Mr. McIntosh, Bridge Allen, Scotland.[2] (William Hallsborough Gallery, London, 1958). (Fritz Nathan and Peter Nathan, Zurich, 1959); (Paul Rosenberg & Co., New York); purchased 17 May 1961 by NGA.

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[1] The Rothschild provenance information was kindly provided by Michael Hall, curator to Edmund de Rothschild; see his "Rothschild Picture Provenances" from 1999 and letter of 27 February 2002, in NGA curatorial files, in which he cites relevant documents in The Rothschild Archive, London.

[2] The McIntosh name is provided by Nathan and Nathan; see their letter of 24 September 1959, in NGA curatorial files.

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1991 The Age of the Marvelous, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, New Hampshire; North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, 1991-1992, no. 157, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Heyden, Jan van der

Dutch, 1637 - 1712

BIOGRAPHY

Jan van der Heyden was born March 5, 1637, in Gorkum, the third of eight children. His eldest brother, Goris, was a mirror maker by trade, and Van der Heyden's first training in art came from a local glass painter. The difficult—and irreversible—technique of painting images on the back of a sheet of glass enjoyed a certain popularity at the time, and several works of this type by Van der Heyden have survived. On June 26, 1661, in Amsterdam, he married Sara ter Hiel of Utrecht. He is known to have been a practicing artist at this time, and his earliest dated works are two drawn portraits of his brother-in-law Samuel ter Hiel and his bride, Jacquemijntje van der Passe, of 1659; his earliest dated painting is from 1663.

Van der Heyden's oeuvre is composed largely of cityscapes and other depictions of groups of buildings, although he did paint about forty pure landscapes. Some of his works are relatively faithful depictions of an actual location, but many others are entirely imaginary architectural fantasies. Typically, his scenes are bathed in a brilliant, crisp light of almost unnatural clarity and characterized by remarkable attention to detail. Throughout his paintings, minute features are rendered with the greatest precision, and yet the artist seems never to have allowed this technique to interfere with the creation of a balanced and harmonious composition. The great skill with which Van der Heyden distributes areas of light and shade and his general mastery of subtle atmospheric effects are in no small way responsible for the coherence and unity of his works.

Although his artistic output was considerable, most documentary records of Van der Heyden's life concern activities in fields totally unrelated to the arts. In 1670 he was appointed Amsterdam's overseer of streetlights, and in 1673 he assumed responsibility for the city's fire brigade. He was clearly greatly preoccupied with the problem of how to fight fires effectively, and, with his brother Nicolaes, devoted much time between 1668 and 1671 to inventing a new, highly successful water pumping mechanism. In 1679 he bought land on the Koestraat on which to build a house and fire-engine factory. In 1690 he and his eldest son, Jan, published a large illustrated book on the fire pump, entitled *Beschrijving der nieuwlijks uitgevonden*

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en geoctrojeerde Slangbrandspuiten.

When he died on March 28, 1712, Van der Heyden was a wealthy man and had in his possession some seventy of his own paintings. His influence on other seventeenth-century artists was relatively limited, but he was an extremely important source for architectural painters of the following century, both in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan van der Heyden
Dutch, 1637 - 1712

An Architectural Fantasy

c. 1670

oil on oak panel
overall: 49.7 x 70.7 cm (19 9/16 x 27 13/16 in.)
framed: 69.2 x 90.1 x 6.3 cm (27 1/4 x 35 1/2 x 2 1/2 in.)
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund 1968.13.1

ENTRY

This painting evokes the pleasures of elegant country life. Gentle sunlight illuminates the façade of a handsome Palladian villa situated on a small rise in a park. Passing through the magnificent classical gateway, a master and his servant approach a waiting beggar woman with a child on her back. In front of the gate a man seated on a fragment of antique sculpture adjusts the collars of two sleek hunting dogs. The casual poses of the other figures—the two men who in eager discussion lean against the garden balustrade, the servant who lounges in the doorway of the villa, and the various dogs who sniff, urinate, or curl up and doze—contribute to the liveliness of the scene. Much of the painting's appeal arises from the contrast between the easy informality of the figures and the restrained formality of the setting. Although the painting is not signed, its attribution to Jan van der Heyden is not in doubt; the broad areas of light and shadow, the minute detail, and especially the brick walls are hallmarks of his style.

While best known for his cityscapes, Van der Heyden was also the foremost Dutch painter of country houses. [1] His depictions of these houses and their surrounding gardens reflect the importance of country estates in Dutch culture after mid-

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century. By then many, if not most, wealthy city dwellers owned land in the country. [2] A number of Amsterdam burghers owned estates near the river Vecht, some of which Van der Heyden painted in the 1660s and 1670s. He also painted views of country estates in other areas, for example, Elswout outside of Haarlem, one of the grandest nonaristocratic properties in Holland [fig. 1]. Elswout was unusual not only for its elegance and its architectural design, but also because it was built on a high dune. [3] In the late 1660s, Van der Heyden painted the Huis ten Bosch, a small palace outside The Hague built for Amalia van Solms, the Princess of Orange. [4]

The identification of the country estate in the National Gallery's painting has long been a matter of discussion. Smith and Hofstede de Groot both considered the subject to be the Castle of Rozendaal near Arnhem, but the villa bears no resemblance to the building represented in numerous views of Rozendaal. [5] Recent scholars have rightly concluded that the scene, as is so often the case with Van der Heyden, is a fanciful construct, imaginatively created from motifs he had seen in real life and from printed architectural sources. [6]

This assessment is supported by an analysis of the building's architectural elements. The Palladian-style villa is striking for the apparent classicism of the building and the abundance of architectural and freestanding sculpture. [7] While many features of the building are consistent with Dutch classical architecture after mid-century, [8] the extensive sculptural elements are not. These, particularly the sculptured panels on the basement level of the façade, derive from decorative architecture such as tombs, designs for triumphal arches, and, above all, fantastic architectural compositions in book frontispieces. [9]

The combination of paired pilasters and a triangular pediment enclosing an arched opening, used on the villa's façade and repeated in the gateway, may also have been drawn from decorative architecture. A similar combination of elements is seen in an engraving depicting one of the stages erected in Amsterdam in 1642 at the time of the visit of Queen Henrietta Maria of England. [10] This stage setting, with minor alterations, was used again in 1648 on the Dam, the city square, for the celebration of the Peace of Münster [fig. 2]. [11] Finally, the concept for the gateway may well be derived from one of Serlio's designs. [12]

Whatever the source, Van der Heyden sought to render the building and its surrounding features with such extraordinary precision that he took the innovative step of using a printmaking technique to evoke their different textures. For the brick walls, a reddish-brown color was applied on top of the ground, and then the

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outlines of the bricks seem to have been printed onto the underlying paint, carefully registered in order to ensure that the outlines would match up correctly. The grass sprouting at the edge of the trench in the foreground was printed with a softer material, perhaps with sponge or lichen. Pinholes can also be found at the center of the arched gate, the building entrance, and the central window, indicating the use of a compass to create precise arcs. [13] Like most of Van der Heyden's works, this painting is difficult to date precisely. The architectural character of the scene compares closely with his depictions of the Huis ten Bosch, one of which bears the date 1668. [14] Huis ten Bosch is a similarly classical building with a projecting central block situated in the midst of an elegant garden decorated with marble statues. The general compositional arrangement—a sunlit villa in the background, a gateway in the middle ground, and figures in the foreground—resembles Van der Heyden's *Harteveld on the Vecht* from about 1670 [fig. 3]. Finally, the setting for Elswout could have been the source of Van der Heyden's idea to site the house on elevated ground. The staffage figures have been traditionally, and probably rightly, attributed to Adriaen van de Velde (Dutch, 1636 - 1672), an artist with whom Van der Heyden frequently collaborated. It should be noted, however, that they do resemble figures Van der Heyden drew for his book on his invention of water pumps, *Beschrijving der nieuwlijks uitgevonden en geoctrojeerde Slangbrandspuiten,* published in 1690, eighteen years after Van de Velde's death, so it is not inconceivable that they were painted by Van der Heyden himself. [15]The figures, in any event, were painted after the landscape was completed. This is particularly evident in the figures of the beggar woman and the man with his hounds as traces of the architecture have begun to show through their fading forms. Another interesting issue is whether the beggar woman and other staffage figures have thematic implications. Schama has proposed that the beggar woman near the archway provided commentary on the social responsibility of the rich to the poor. [16] The architectural fragments upon which is seated the man tending the dogs may allude to the mutability of earthly possessions.

Original entry by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., April 24, 2014.

Revised by Alexandra Libby to incorporate information from a new technical examination.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 detail of, Jan van der Heyden, *Elswout*, c. 1660, oil on panel, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem

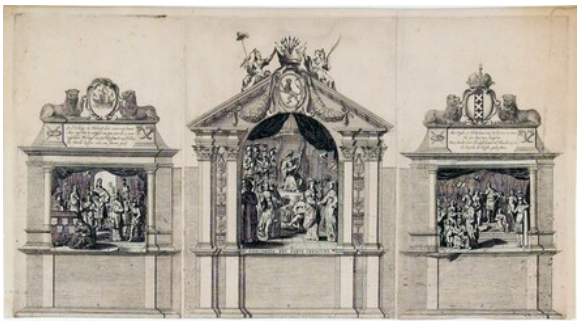

fig. 2 Engraving of a stage erected in 1648 on the Dam in Amsterdam to celebrate the Treaty of Münster, Atlas Van Stolk, Rotterdam

fig. 3 Jan van der Heyden, *Harteveld on the Vecht*, late 1660s, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo © RMN / Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Hervé Lewandowski

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NOTES

[1] Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712* (Amsterdam, 1971), lists 152 views of Dutch and foreign cities and 28 views of country palaces.

[2] Land was not only a safe investment, but on even a small plot one could raise one's own fruit and vegetables and other household provisions. Furthermore, landholdings, from small vegetable plots to large country estates, provided retreats in nature away from the tensions of city life. Finally, landownership in itself had a certain prestige, for during earlier periods it had been the prerogative of the nobility.

[3] Behind the house was a sunken garden carved out of the dune.

[4] Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712* (Amsterdam, 1971), nos. 133–138.

[5] See, for example, the anonymous pencil drawings of *Het Huis Rozendaal, bij Arnhem,* dated 1707, Album L3, Museum Nairac (neg. RKD Top. L. 1670 in the collection of the Afdeling Topografie of the RKD), which show the castle in its medieval state before it was remodeled in the Palladian style. Its appearance after remodeling can be seen in an engraving by Peter Schenk, pl. 9, in the collection of engravings titled *Nederland,* in the Dumbarton Oaks Garden Library collection. This small palace with extensive formal gardens is now destroyed, but it would have been well known in the eighteenth century.

[6] In a letter dated June 13, 1968, J. van der Klooster, keeper of the Topographical Department, RKD, stated that a villa like the one in *An Architectural Fantasy* never existed in the Netherlands (in NGA curatorial files). See also letters in NGA curatorial files from Eric Forssman, director of the Kunstgeschichtliches Institut of the University of Freiburg (February 8, 1981); Wilhelm Diedenhofen (August 12, 1981); and Guido de Werd, director of the Municipal Museum of Cleves (August 8, 1981). Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712* (Amsterdam, 1971), 39, suggests that the villa is based on an engraving or an architectural project for a French château. She entitles the painting "Französisches Gartenschlosschen." The villa differs from seventeenth-century French châteaux in three important respects, however: the gentle pitch of the roof, the absence of dormers and chimneys, and the façade consisting of only three blocks. In contemporary French châteaux, the façade was usually more complex, consisting of five or more blocks, with the central pavilion complemented by projecting end pavilions. See plates in Louis Hautecoeur, *Histoire d'architecture classique en France* (Paris, 1948), 2: parts 1 and 2.

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[7] I would like to thank Sally M. Wages for her research into the architectural character of this château, which has formed the basis for this entry.

[8] The façade reflects the new concept of a building as a symmetrical organization of blocks. Giant orders, statues at the roofline, urns of carved fruit, and panels with festoons were motifs widely adopted by Dutch builders. They were prominently displayed on the Amsterdam Town Hall. While deeply projecting central blocks were rare, they were used on the side façades of Amalia van Solm's country residence, the Huis ten Bosch, and on the front façade of the Amsterdam Town Hall. See Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712* (Amsterdam, 1971), nos. 133–138 for the Huis ten Bosch and nos. 1–4 for the Amsterdam Town Hall. Other architectural elements in the painting, while found in Italian treatises, were not common in Dutch buildings of the time. Steeply pitched roofs with dormer windows and chimneys were still standard in northern Europe. The gently pitched roof without dormers and chimneys here corresponds to Palladio's designs suitable for a mild climate. The stringcourse that continues behind the pilasters was not adopted by Dutch builders, but is a frequent motif in façade elevations by Palladio and his compatriots. See Andrea Palladio, *I Quattro Libri dell' Architettura Universale* (Milan, 1615; facsimile ed., 4 vols., Milan, 1968), 2:iii, 14; Sebastiano Serlio, *I Sette Libri dell' Architettura* (Venice, 1584; facsimile ed., 2 vols., Bologna, 1978), 2: book 7:xlii–xliii, 103, 105; Vincenzo Scamozzi, *L'Idea della Architettura Universale* (1615; facsimile ed., 2 vols., Ridgewood, N.J., 1964), part 1, 2:viii, xiv, 126, 281.

[9] For tombs, see Erwin Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture: Four Lectures on Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini*, ed. H. W. Janson (New York, 1964), esp. fig. 331. For wall decorations see Douglas Lewis, *The Drawings of Andrea Palladio* (Washington, D.C., 1981), fig. 60. For triumphal arches see Joannes Boschius, *Descriptio publicae gratulationis spectaculorum et ludorum, in adventu Sereniss. Principis Ernesti Archiducis Austriae* (Antwerp, 1602), and Jean Gaspard Gevaerts, *Pompa Introitus Honori ... Serenissimi Prinicipis Ferdinandi Austriaci Hispaniarum Infantis* (Antwerp, 1641; facsimile ed., London, 1972), pls. 15, 56, 90, 91. For frontispieces see J. Richard Judson and Carl van de Velde, *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, Part XXI: Book Illustrations and Title Pages*, 2 vols. (London, 1978), 2: pls. 26 and 55.

[10] Reproduced in Dirck P. Snoep, *Praal en Propaganda: Triumfalia in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de 16de en 17de eeuw* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1975), fig. 34. Another unusual architectural component found in this building and in one of the arches for Queen Henrietta Maria's visit to Amsterdam is the stringcourse that continues behind the pilasters. Dirck P. Snoep, *Praal en Propaganda: Triumfalia in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de 16de en 17de eeuw* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1975), figs. 38 and 40, reproduces the design of the stages in Samuel Coster's *Beschrijvinge*

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(Amsterdam, 1642).

[11] Dirck P. Snoep, *Praal en Propaganda: Triumfalia in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de 16de en 17de eeuw* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1975), 78, figs. 42 and 43. The two side stages in fig. 42 incorporate the motif of crossed palms encircled by a wreath, a device that also ornaments the basement of the villa in *An Architectural Fantasy*.

[12] Sebastiano Serlio, *I Sette Libri dell' Architettura* (Venice, 1584; facsimile ed., 2 vols., Bologna, 1978), 2: book 6, fols. 4 *recto,* 7 *recto,* 19 *recto,* 20 *verso,* 26 *verso.* Serlio employs this combination of elements for the centerpiece of only one villa façade, book 7:xvii, 41, which is remarkably similar to that in *An Architectural Fantasy*.

[13] See Technical Summary.

[14] Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712* (Amsterdam, 1971), nos. 133–139.

[15] The earliest record of this painting, the 1816 Paris auction catalogue, states that the figures are by Adriaen van de Velde. Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712* (Amsterdam, 1971), 101, accepts this attribution.

[16] Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York, 1987), 573.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support consists of a single piece of oak with a horizontal grain. [1] The back of the panel bears the inscription Van der Heyden, undoubtedly by another hand at a later date. The wood is covered with a thin white ground, which is presumed to correspond with broadly applied brushstrokes that are only visible with infrared reflectography (IRR). [2] A precise underdrawing composed of ruled lines that often extend past the architectural elements they demarcate is also visible in IRR. Small pinholes have been found in the center of arches throughout the composition, including below the gate and in the door and central window of the building. These holes indicate that a compass was used to create the arcs. In addition, some of the arches are incised. On top of the ground, a brown imprimatura was applied over much, if not all, of the surface

The paint was applied fairly smoothly. It appears Van der Heyden blocked in the colors and then applied the details wet-into-wet on top of the dry layer below. He used a printmaking technique to create the brickwork; the paint does not bear any

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brushstrokes, nor do the lines taper, as strokes made with a brush typically do. For the brick walls, a reddish-brown color was applied on top of the ground, and then the outlines of the bricks were applied in at least two different colors, first the shadow color and then the highlight. These outlines seem to have been printed onto the underlying paint, carefully registered in order to ensure that the outlines would match up correctly. In addition, the very fine lines in the architectural elements, such as the tiled roofs, appear as though they were made with a ruling pen. The grass in the foreground of the composition was printed with a softer material, such as a sponge or lichen, while the leaves in the trees were created by stippling paint. Finally, the figures were painted last, as evidenced by the fact that the brickwork and other compositional elements extend under the figures.

In general, the painting is in good condition. Over time, the panel has developed a moderate concave warp both along and across the grain. There are a number of fairly small cracks in the wood, the edges of the panel have suffered minor damages, and the extreme top left corner is missing. There are small losses of ground and paint associated with these damages to the support. The painting was treated in 2014–2015, and grime and discolored nonoriginal varnish and overpaint were removed from the surface. The heavy and opaque overpaint was discolored and covered many areas of original paint, especially in the sky. An isolating varnish layer was applied and losses were inpainted with stable and reversible materials. A final layer of a stable, non-yellowing varnish was applied.

Dina Anchin, based on treatment notes by Adele Wright and examination reports by Joanna Dunn and Jane E. Tillinghast.

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TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Earlier technical summaries of this work were prepared by Melissa Katz and Catherine Metzger. The wood was analyzed and determined to be oak by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg. He performed dendrochronology on the panel and concluded that the earliest creation date for the painting is 1655 (see report dated February 17, 1987, in NGA conservation department files).

[2] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.5–1.8 microns (H filter) and 2.0–2.5 microns (K

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filter).

PROVENANCE

Woltgraft family, Kampen.[1] Catellan family, Freiburg im Breisgau, before 1816; (sale, by Laneuville and Chariot, Paris, 16 January 1816, no. 6);[2] Maurice Rubichon for Charles-Ferdinand de Bourbon, duc de Berry [1778-1820], Paris;[3] by inheritance to his wife, Marie-Caroline-Ferdinande-Louise de Naples, duchesse de Berry [1798-1870], Paris; (De Berry exhibition and sale, Christie & Manson, London, April-June 1834, no. 112, apparently bought in);[4] (De Berry sale, by Bataillard and Charles Pillet, Paris, 4-6 April 1837, no. 72); Hazard.[5] Charles Heusch [c. 1775-1848], London, probably by 1838;[6] by inheritance to his son, Frederick Heusch [1809-1870], London; acquired 1855 with the entire Heusch collection by Baron Lionel Nathan de Rothschild [1808-1879], London;[7] by inheritance to his son, Alfred Charles de Rothschild [1842-1918], London and Halton House, near Wendover, Buckinghamshire; by inheritance to his nephew, Lionel Nathan de Rothschild [1882-1942], Exbury, Hampshire; by inheritance to his son, Edmund Leopold de Rothschild [1916-2009], Exbury; sold 1968 to (Thos. Agnew and Sons, Ltd., London); purchased 12 June 1968 by NGA.

[1] The coat of arms on one of the two wax seals affixed to the back of the panel displays a stork with an eel in his beak and three stars in the chief. This has been identified by C.W. Delforterie (subdirector, Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, The Hague) as that of the Woltgraft family of Kampen, Overijssel (letter, 25 May 1981, in NGA curatorial files).

[2] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 1829-1842: 5:396, records that the seller in 1816 was "Madame Catalan," a claim that is reinforced by the design of the second wax seal on the back of the panel, which shows a golden castle in a field of gules, surmounted by a crown. Walter Angst, senior conservator, Smithsonian Institution, has confirmed in conversation (10 June 1981 and 15 January 1982) that this coat of arms is consistent with that of the noble family of Catellan, of Freiburg im Breisgau, and so it seems reasonable to assume that the painting was in their possession sometime before 1816. (For reproduction of the Catellan arms see

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Johannes Baptist Rietstap, *Armorial général illustré*, 3rd ed. by Victor and Henri Rolland, Lyon, 1953: 2:pl. 40.) In addition, the title page of one of the copies of the sale catalogue in The British Library, London, is inscribed "de Catalan."

On the other hand, Frits Lugt, *Répertoire des catalogues de ventes*, 4 vols., The Hague, 1938-1964: 1:no. 8797, gave the seller's name as "Le Rouge," which is also written on the copy of the sale catalogue in the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (RKD), The Hague. Several other copies of the sale catalogue are inscribed with variations of the same name; see the description of Sale Catalog F-610 in The Getty Provenance Index Databases. This is possibly the dealer Nicolas Le Rouge; see Patrick Michel, *Le Commerce du tableau à Paris dans la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle*, Villeneuve-d'Ascq, 2007: 55-56. No evidence yet exists to substantiate Le Rouge's ownership of *An Architectural Fantasy*.

[3] Ink notation in copy of the 1816 sale catalogue at the RKD, The Hague; the picture is described as "La vue d'un superbe château..."

[4] The catalogue describes the collection as "...Dutch and Flemish pictures of his late royal highness the Duke de Berri [*sic*]: which formed the celebrated cabinet of l'Elysée Bourbon: and now exhibiting for sale by private contract..." Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712*, Amsterdam and Haarlem, 1971: no. 151, 101, lists this exhibition and sale as simply an exhibition at the British Institution, London. The 1834 British Institution exhibition, however, did not in fact contain any paintings by Van der Heyden. Marijke C. de Kinkelder from the RKD, The Hague, explained the confusion by providing information about the 1834 exhibition and sale (see her letter of 16 December 1987, in NGA curatorial files) .

[5] Ink notation in the NGA library copy of the sale catalogue, in which the subject of the painting is described as "La maison de plaisance." The collection being sold was described as the "Ancienne Galerie du Palais de l'Élysée."

[6] Smith 1829-1842, 9(1842):675, no. 21, describes the painting as a "View of a handsome Chateau" and calls this entry an "improved" version of his earlier text, 5(1834):396, no. 87. In the expanded version, Smith mentions the telling detail of a

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man seated on an architectural fragment, "putting a collar on a dog," which allows the picture he describes to be conclusively identified as *An Architectural Fantasy*. In 1834 he lists the painting as in the collection of the Duchesse de Berry, and by 1842 it is owned by Heusch. It should be noted, however, that by 1842 there was already confusion about the identity of the painting, which appears in the literature under a variety of titles--confusion that must be at least partly due to Van der Heyden's habit of reusing the same genre elements in different works and of painting several versions of the same scene. Smith suggests that his 9(1842): no. 21 is "probably" the same as his 5(1834): no. 21. The latter, titled by Smith *A View of the Château of Rosindal*, corresponds closely to *An Architectural Fantasy* in its dimensions and genre elements, in so far as they are described, but it has a different provenance that Smith traces through sale catalogues. According to the earliest of these (Blondel de Gagny, Paris, 10 December 1776, 59, no. 154), *La vue du Château de Rosindal* was painted on copper. *An Architectural Fantasy*, on the other hand, is painted on wood, and the building in it bears no resemblance to the Château of Rosindal as it was depicted in numerous drawings and engravings. Compounding the confusion, Charles Heusch exhibited a painting entitled *Château de Rosindal* at the British Institution, London, in 1838 (no. 91; see Algernon Graves, *A Century of Loan Exhibitions, 1813-1912*, 5 vols., London, 1913-1915: 4[1914]:1471). While the painting in Heusch's collection may have been the above-mentioned painting on copper, it may equally have been *An Architectural Fantasy* mistitled based on Smith's 1834 entry. Later, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century...*, 8 vols., trans. from the German edition, London, 1907-1927: 8:426, no. 227, proposed that a third entry in Smith 1829-1842, 5(1834):385, no. 49, was a variant description of Smith nos. 21 and 87, undoubtedly because similar genre details, including the gentleman giving alms to a beggar, were described in all three entries. However, Hofstede de Groot's proposal can be rejected, firstly because Smith no. 49 was a vertical painting measuring 18 x 16 inches, and secondly because examination of the sale catalogues Smith lists under his nos. 49 and 21 clearly demonstrate that these were two separate paintings, and both were different from Smith no. 87, the NGA painting. Smith nos. 49 and 21 are now apparently lost and are not included in the catalogue raisonné by Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637-1712*, Amsterdam and Haarlem, 1971.

[7] The description in Charles Davis, *A Description of the Works of Art Forming the Collection of Alfred de Rothschild*, London, 1884, no. 34, is a verbatim copy of

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Smith 1829-1842, 9(1842):675, no. 21. The Rothschild provenance information through the 1968 sale to Agnew was kindly provided by Michael Hall, curator to Edmund de Rothschild; see his "Rothschild Picture Provenances" from 1999 and letter of 27 February 2002, in NGA curatorial files, in which he cites relevant documents in The Rothschild Archive, London.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1838 Possibly British Institution, 1838, no. 91.

1886 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1886, no. 83, as View of a Château.

1952 Dutch Pictures, 1450-1750, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1952-1953, no. 469, as The Gate of a Palace.

1966 In the Light of Vermeer, Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1966, no. 31, as Chateau in a Park.

1969 In Memoriam, Ailsa Mellon Bruce, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, unnumbered checklist.

2006 Jan van der Heyden (1637-1712), Bruce Museum of Arts and Science, Greenwich, Connecticut; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2006 -2007, no. 24, repro.

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1857 Blanc, Charles. *Le trésor de la curiosité*. 2 vols. Paris, 1857–1858: 2(1858):135.

1884 Davis, Charles. *A Description of the Works of Art Forming the Collection of Alfred de Rotchschild*. 2 vols. London, 1884: 1: no. 34, repro.

1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the*

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Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century. 8 vols. Translated by Edward G. Hawke. London, 1907-1927: 8(1923): 397, no. 227.

1969 "Recent Accessions." *Apollo* 89 (February 1969): 155, repro.

1971 Wagner, Helga. *Jan van der Heyden 1637-1712*. Amsterdam, 1971: 39, 61, 101, no. 151, repro.

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1984 Vries, Lyckle de. *Jan van der Heyden*. Amsterdam, 1984: 33-35, repro.

1984 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. Rev. ed. New York, 1984: 295, no. 387, color repro.

1984 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Painting in the National Gallery of Art*. Washington, D.C., 1984: 40-41, color repro.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 201, repro.

1987 Schama, Simon. *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*. New York, 1987: 573, repro.

1992 National Gallery of Art. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York, 1992: 139, repro.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 107-112, color repro. 109.

2003 Waagen, Gustav Friedrich. *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*. Translated by Elizabeth Rigby Eastlake. Facsimile edition of London 1854. London, 2003: 2:256.

2006 Sutton, Peter C. *Jan van der Heyden: (1637-1712)*. Exh. cat. Bruce Museum, Greenwich, Connecticut; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. New Haven and London, 2006: 164-166, no. 24.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan van der Heyden
Dutch, 1637 - 1712

View Down a Dutch Canal

c. 1670

oil on panel
overall: 32.5 × 39 cm (12 13/16 × 15 3/8 in.)
Inscription: lower right on the boat, in ligature: IVH
Gift of George M. and Linda H. Kaufman 2012.73.2

ENTRY

Jan van der Heyden had a remarkable ability to capture the flavor and feeling of Amsterdam and its many canals, even in fancifully conceived images such as this one. He understood the sense of the city one gains by wandering along them: the glimpses of imposing buildings behind trees lining the Herengracht and Keizersgracht; the ever-varied vistas as the canals follow their semicircular course around the city center; and the countless activities found on the quays and on boats along the still waters. He also introduced marvelous effects of light that enliven a city so defined by its topography: billowing clouds that suggest the freshness of the air, bright sunlight accenting the colors and architectural details of the buildings, and reflections in the water that mirror the physical reality above.

The joy of this painting is the quiet rhythm of daily life in this urban setting. The linden trees lining the canals provide shade, greenery, and, most of all, a pleasant ambiance for those who stroll beneath them. [1] In Van der Heyden's world, men and women stand and watch or go about their daily chores, but they do not hurry. Trees soften architectural structures but do not entirely eclipse them: handsome, brick-red buildings, partially obscured by their verdant foliage, provide glimpses of

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dwellings that hint of both the individual wealth and the communal bonds of their inhabitants. The pace of the viewer's eye as it gazes along the gently receding canal is visually slowed by large wooden barges tied along the waterway's brick walls and by a bridge over which passes a horse-drawn carriage.

Van der Heyden's views of Amsterdam canals from the late 1660s and early 1670s often reflect the character of the city without portraying a particular site. [2] Although the three large and imposing buildings at the left are reminiscent of residences designed by Hendrick de Keyser (1565–1621) along the stately Keizersgracht, their imaginatively articulated decorative gables, as well as their windows and doorways, vary from the actual architecture. [3]

Quite remarkably, the massive stone church tower rising just beyond these brick dwellings is not an Amsterdam building at all. Van der Heyden based this tower on that of the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekerk in Veere, a formidable Romanesque structure that Van der Heyden often ingeniously inserted into fancifully conceived city views [fig. 1]. [4] Exactly when Van der Heyden visited Veere and why he developed such a predilection for depicting this church in a small Zeeland town is not known, although Veere was a marquisate of the House of Orange, which meant it had a certain historic significance within the Dutch Republic. Otherwise, no family or business connections to Veere have been identified that would have taken him there. Van der Heyden clearly knew the church well, and must have relied on drawings he made on-site when he came to execute this work or other paintings. One can speculate that the painter found the massive, somewhat squat, stone structure appealing as a visual contrast to the more refined, seventeenth-century dwellings that lined Amsterdam's most prominent canals. This Romanesque church grounds the painting's compositional structure, serving as a firm apex to the receding diagonal that draws the viewer's eye, however slowly, into the distance along the canal banks. [5] Finally, the age and venerability of the church tower provide a sense of historical continuity to this urban landscape that presumably had great attraction for the artist's contemporary patrons.

One of the marvels of Van der Heyden's paintings is the remarkably realistic character of his brickwork. A notable inventor (see his biography), Van der Heyden devised a way of depicting mortar so that it would appear to be part of the buildings' structure. So remarkable was his manner of painting bricks and mortar that his contemporaries wondered about the secret technique he must have devised to create effects that "seem impossible with the customary ways of painting." [6] Even today, the manner in which Van der Heyden achieved these

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effects is not fully understood, although it is clear that he did not represent mortar in the “customary” way, that is, solely with painted lines. Seen under a microscope, the lines of the mortar, which sit on the surface of the red color of the bricks, have a soft, fluid character comparable to that found in counterproofs. It, thus, appears that Van der Heyden devised an offset process to create these lines.

It is possible that Van der Heyden created his offset process by designing mortar patterns on separate supports. He may have painted these patterns on small pieces of paper or wood, or perhaps even etched them into copper plates. [7] It appears that the artist pressed these designs (or impressions of these designs, if he created them as etchings) when still wet, onto the reddish brick color after the paint had dried. [8] The application of these grid patterns came rather late in the artistic process, for mortar lines occasionally lay on top of the foliage of nearby trees [fig. 2]. Where he felt that his offset process needed reinforcing, Van der Heyden selectively applied light gray brush to indicate mortar. [9]

This technique, which has been found in a small number of Van der Heyden’s paintings dating from the late 1660s and early 1670s, was originally thought to provide a means for the artist to paint his brick patterns more quickly than if he executed them solely with a brush. [10] This process, however, must have been very labor-intensive and would not have speeded completion of the painting. s. Van der Heyden clearly thought carefully about the mortar patterns so that they would accurately reflect the perspective and scale of the structures to which he applied them. It is more likely that Van der Heyden invented this process to create very detailed yet diffused lines of mortar that do not appear to sit on top of the red bricks but instead become integral parts of a building’s structure.

Van der Heyden’s inventiveness is not limited to his brickwork. Microscopic examination also raises the possibility that the artist stippled his foliage by dabbing on paint with moss or a sponge rather than with a brush.

Despite the well-deserved fame of Van der Heyden’s remarkably detailed techniques, his paintings ultimately succeed because he successfully integrated architecture and natural forms to create atmospheric scenes. He carefully recorded the reality of the world around him—whether it be the earthy bricks and mortar, the glimmering reflections of water, or the tips of branches flickering in the light of a summer’s day—and brought them to life in a subtly-crafted visual experience that speaks to very basic human emotions of peace and harmony.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan van der Heyden, *The Church at Veere*, oil on canvas, Royal Picture Gallery, Mauritshuis, The Hague

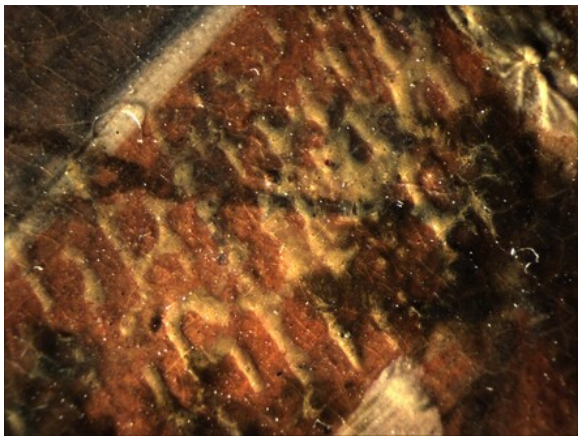

fig. 2 detail of the façade of the second building from the left, Jan van der Heyden, *View Down a Dutch Canal*, c. 1670, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of George M. and Linda H. Kaufman, 2012.73.2

NOTES

[1] Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712* (Amsterdam and Haarlem, 1971), 87-88, convincingly attributes the figures to Adriaen van de Velde, who, prior to his death in 1672, often painted staffage figures in Van der Heyden's paintings.

[2] See Peter C. Sutton, *Jan van der Heyden (1637–1712)* (Greenwich, Conn., and Amsterdam, 2006), 140-141, no. 15.

[3] As noted by Broos in Ben P. J. Broos, *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague and San Francisco, 1990), 281.

[4] Helga Wagner, *Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712* (Amsterdam and Haarlem, 1971), 82-83, nos. 72-76. Sutton, in Peter C. Sutton, *Jan van der Heyden (1637–1712)* (Greenwich, Conn., and Amsterdam, 2006), 140-141, no. 15, identifies six other instances in which Van der Heyden depicted the church at Veere in his paintings. Five of these paintings place the church within Veere, albeit somewhat imaginatively, and one places it in an entirely fanciful construct. This is the only instance in which he incorporated it into a

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view that reflects the architectural character of Amsterdam.

[5] Van der Heyden made a careful underdrawing for this composition, including the position of the boats. He may have worked out the perspective with the aid of a preliminary drawing, but none is known. Only one drawing by the artist still remains, a red chalk counterproof of the composition, in reverse, of *The Oudezijds Voorburgwal and the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam,* c. 1670 (Mauritshuis, The Hague). The counterproof, which is in the Koninklijk Oudheidkundig Genootschap, Amsterdam, is discussed and illustrated by Ariane van Suchtelen in Ariane van Suchtelen and Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., *Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age* (The Hague, 2008), 126-128.

[6] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 3:80 ("Waar omtrent men nu nog gelooft, dat hy een byzondere konstgreep, of middel heeft uitgevonden gehad, om dat het aan allen die het gebruik van 't penceel kennen, onmogelyk schynt dat het op de gewone wyze van schilderen geschieden kan."). The English translation is taken from Arie Wallert, "Refined Technique or Special Tricks: Painting Methods of Jan van der Heyden," in Peter C. Sutton, *Jan van der Heyden (1637–1712)* (Greenwich, Conn., and Amsterdam, 2006), 92. Wallert's excellent article provides much information about Van der Heyden's working methods.

[7] Arie Wallert. "Refined Technique or Special Tricks: Painting Methods of Jan van der Heyden," in Peter C. Sutton, *Jan van der Heyden (1637–1712)* (Greenwich, Conn., and Amsterdam, 2006), 98-99, suggests that Van der Heyden transferred the lines from an impression made on paper from an etched copper plate. Thus, he suggests that the lines are executed in ink, which does not seem to be the case.

[8] See Ariane van Suchtelen in Ariane van Suchtelen and Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., *Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age* (The Hague, 2008), 128, for a close analysis of the technique as it appears in Van der Heyden's *The Oudezijds Voorburgwal and the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam*, c. 1670, in the Mauritshuis, The Hague. The offset lines in that painting differ slightly from those in the Washington work. In the Mauritshuis landscape small globules of concentrated paint that formed along the "mortar" lines help to create the irregular character of real mortar.

[9] There is no evidence that Van der Heyden reused the same offset mortar patterns in multiple areas of the painting; each seems to have been carefully designed for a specific location.

[10] Van der Heyden probably used this technique more frequently than is currently recognized, as undoubtedly will be discovered as more of his paintings are examined with a microscope.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single plank of vertically grained hardwood with a prominent grain. It was prepared with an extremely thin, white ground. The ground has oozed onto the edges of the painting, indicating that the panel retains its original dimensions.

Infrared reflectography at 1.0 to 2.5 microns shows a loose, freehand drawing marking the architecture, the boats, and some of the figures and trees. [1] The bell tower of the large church was drawn shorter than in the final version, and an additional boat is seen in the foreground to the left of center.

The composition was thinly painted with delicate impasto in the highlights and leaves. It appears as though Van der Heyden began by blocking in the various areas of the painting with color. Then he painted the details wet-over-dry on top of the blocked color, and continued adding the details wet-into-wet into one another. Van der Heyden used stippling to create the leaves. He may have made the bricks using some sort of printmaking technique because no brushwork is visible, nor do the lines taper in the manner typical of painted strokes (see this object's entry).

The painting is in excellent condition. A few nicks are found at the edges of the panel, but it remains in plane, with no checks or splits. The ground and paint are stable and secure. An extremely fine craquelure pattern exists throughout, which may be limited to the varnish layer. The paint exhibits very fine shrinkage wrinkling, mostly in vertical lines in the sky. Some discreet, recent inpainting has been applied along the edges, in vertical lines along the wood grain in the sky and water, in the center tree branch where it extends onto the buildings, and in the upper tree branches along the left edge. The varnish is clear and even.

[1] Infrared reflectography was accomplished with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with H, J, and K astronomy filters.

PROVENANCE

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Henry Fitzalan-Howard, 15th Duke of Norfolk [1847-1917], by 1880;[1] by inheritance to his son, Bernard Marmaduke Fitzalan-Howard, 16th Duke of Norfolk [1908-1975]; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 11 February 1938, no. 99); B. de Geus van den Heuvel [1886-1976], Nieuwersluis; (his estate sale, Sotheby Mak van Waay B.V. at Round Lutheran Church, Singel, Amsterdam, 26-27 April 1976, no. 23); (David Koetser, Zurich); private collection, West Berlin; on consignment with (Hoogsteder-Naumann, New York); purchased 1986 by George M. [1932-2001] and Linda H. Kaufman, Norfolk, Virginia; Kaufman Americana Foundation, Norfolk; gift 2012 to NGA.

[1] The painting was lent by the duke to the 1880 Winter Exhibition at the Royal Academy in London. It is not yet known when or where the Dukes of Norfolk acquired it. See the entry on the painting by Ben Broos in *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, exh. cat., Mauritshuis, The Hague; The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, The Hague and Zwolle, 1990: no. 31, 280-284.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1880 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy, 1880, no. 76, as *A Landscape and Buildings*.

1938 Meesterwerken uit Vier Eeuwen, 1400-1800, Museum Boymans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 1938-1939, no. 15, repro.

1951 Schilderijen uit de zeventiende, achttiende, negentiende en twintigste eeuw der nederlandse school uit de verzameling van B. de Geus van den Heuvel, Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam, 1951-1952, no. 22a.

1952 Schilderijen der nederlandse- en franse school uit de verzameling van B. de Geus van den Heuvel, Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum het Prinsenhof, Delft, 1952-1953, no. 35.

1955 Kunstschatten uit Nederlandse Verzamelingen, Museum Boymans, Rotterdam, 1955, no. 74, repro.

1956 Er was eens: ons land gezien door schilders in vroeger tijden, Stedelijk Museum het Prinsenhof, Delft, 1956, no. 164.

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1958 Kunstbezit rondom Laren, 13de-20ste eeuw: schilderijen-beeldhouwwerken, N.H. Singer Museum, Laren, 1958, no. 102.

1960 Collectie B. de Geus-van den Heuvel, Gemeente Museum, Arnhem, 1960-1961, no. 23, repro.

1984 Holländische Malerei aus Berliner Privatbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, 1984-1985, no. 24, repro.

1990 Great Dutch Paintings from America, Mauritshuis, The Hague; The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, 1990-1991, no. 31, repro., as *An 'Amsterdam' Canal* (shown only in The Hague)

2006 Jan van der Heyden (1637-1712), Bruce Museum, Greenwich, Connecticut; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2006-2007, no. 16, repro., as *An Imaginary Canal with the Church of Veere*.

2008 Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age, Mauritshuis, The Hague; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2008-2009, no. 25, repro., as *An Amsterdam Canal View with the Church of Veere*.

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1971 Wagner, Helga. *Jan van der Heyden, 1637-1712*. Amsterdam and Haarlem, 1971: 83, 87-88, no. 91.

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2012 Paul, Tanya, et al. *Elegance and Refinement: The still-life paintings of Willem van Aelst*. Exh. cat. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; National Gallery of Art, Washington. New York, 2012: 42, fig. 6.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Hobbema, Meindert

Dutch, 1638 - 1709

BIOGRAPHY

Meindert Hobbema, viewed today as one of the most characteristic and highly valued Dutch landscape painters of the seventeenth century, is not mentioned in a single seventeenth-century literary source. The earliest reference to his work occurs in Johan van Gool's 1751 lexicon of Dutch artists, where Hobbema is mentioned in passing as having painted "modern landscapes."

Born to Lubbert Meynerts and Rinsje Eduwarts, Hobbema was baptized as Meyndert Lubbertsz in Amsterdam on October 31, 1638. Although he signed his name M. Hobbema on paintings as early as 1658, he used only his baptized name on legal documents until 1660. His reasons for using the name Hobbema are unknown. In July 1660 the landscape painter Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682) testified that Hobbema had "served and learned with me for a few years." The apprenticeship may have begun around 1658, shortly after Ruisdael moved to Amsterdam. Nevertheless, the impact of Ruisdael's work on Hobbema is not apparent until after 1660. Hobbema's earlier work seems more closely related to the lighter and more delicate landscapes of Jacob's uncle Salomon van Ruysdael (Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670).

Hobbema's relationship to Jacob van Ruisdael must have remained close during the 1660s, both personally and professionally. Many of Hobbema's compositions produced during this period evolve from those of his master, and in 1668 Ruisdael was a witness at Hobbema's marriage to Eeltien Vinck. Vinck was a kitchen maid to Lambert Reynst, a burgomaster of Amsterdam, and through this connection Hobbema seems to have been awarded the well-paid position of wine gauger for the Amsterdam *octroi*, or civic tax collectors. After his marriage he painted relatively infrequently. He outlived his wife and five children and was buried a pauper at the cemetery of the Westerkerk, in Amsterdam, at the age of seventy-one.

Although Broulhiet attributes about five hundred paintings to Hobbema in his monograph, many of his attributions cannot be defended. A number of the paintings he gives to Hobbema are by contemporaries who painted in similar

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styles, as for example Jan van Kessel (Dutch, 1641 - 1680). Others are probably nineteenth-century imitations painted at a time when Hobbema's style was extremely fashionable. Nevertheless, a range of quality does exist in paintings whose attribution to Hobbema seems justifiable. Although we have no documentary evidence about his workshop practices, it seems likely that he had assistants working under his direct supervision, producing variations of his compositions. He also may have employed a number of staffage specialists to paint small figures in his landscapes.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Meindert Hobbema
Dutch, 1638 - 1709

A Farm in the Sunlight

1668

oil on canvas
overall: 81.9 x 66.4 cm (32 1/4 x 26 1/8 in.)
Inscription: lower right, remnants of a signature and date: ..bbema .668
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.60

ENTRY

This rural landscape scene has long been esteemed as one of Hobbema's finest paintings. In 1890 Michel described it as one of the artist's most remarkable works and Bode, in the translation of his 1910 catalog, termed it "a masterpiece with which few can compare." [1] Its distinguished provenance dates back to the end of the eighteenth century. From its earliest appearance in the literature, it formed a pendant to Hobbema's famous painting of a watermill, now in the Louvre [fig. 1]. [2] The two works were separated at the Nieuwenhuys sale in 1833.

As in other instances where pendant relationships in Hobbema's work seems to exist, no irrefutable proof exists that these works were originally intended to be hung together, although compositional and stylistic similarities reinforce the historical evidence. In both paintings the focus of the composition is the sunlit farm buildings in the middle ground. The shaded large trees that occupy the foreground have long, flowing trunks surmounted by an open structure of branches and foliage. Their dark brownish green tones act as a foil to the yellow glow of the sunlit distance. Above all, the vertical formats of the paintings, rare among Hobbema's works, argue for the hypothesis that they were pendants. Other artists, including Salomon van Ruysdael (Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670), used this format for companion pieces. [3]

The vertical format was one of the factors considered by Jakob Rosenberg when he assigned this work a date of around or after 1670. Rosenberg also argued for a late date on the basis of the transparency of the upper parts of the trees, the exaggeration of specific Hobbema effects, and the reduction of the corporeality of

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the landscape. [4] However, Rosenberg pushed the date too late, as became evident when remnants of the signature and date of 1668 were revealed during the conservation treatment of the painting in 1992. Although the trees in this work are somewhat elongated and the foliage is relatively transparent, stylistically they do not differ substantially from those in Hobbema's A View on a High Road, signed and dated 1665. The most significant difference between these paintings is the increased complexity of the compositional structure of A Farm in the Sunlight. In this case, the viewer is denied easy access into the background along a meandering road: the foreground path leads out of the composition to the left, and one is forced to retrace and find other routes to the distant vistas.

The watermill in the Louvre painting has been identified as that belonging to the manor house of Singraven near Denekamp in the province of Overijssel. [5] If the two paintings are indeed pendants, one might expect that the Washington composition also represents a precise location. No specific site, however, has yet been suggested for the scene, and it seems unlikely that the buildings here represented, none of which have distinctive characteristics, can ever be identified. Nevertheless, the type of vernacular architecture represented, with the high-peaked roof of the half-timbered barn, is representative of that found in the eastern provinces of the Netherlands, including Overijssel.

Finally, as is typical of Hobbema's paintings, the figural group in the foreground is probably by another hand. The names of Abraham Storck (1644–after 1708) and Adriaen van de Velde (Dutch, 1636 - 1672) have been proposed, but neither suggestion is acceptable. [6]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Meindert Hobbema, *The Mill*, c. 1668, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: Réunion des Musées Nationaux / Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Jean-Gilles Berizzi

NOTES

[1] Émile Michel, *Hobbema et les paysagistes de son temps en Hollande* (Paris, 1890), 49; Wilhelm von Bode, *Die Gemäldegalerie des Herrn A. de Ridder in seiner Villa zu Schönberg bei Cronberg im Taunus* (Berlin, 1910; English ed., trans. Harry Virgin, Berlin, 1913), 14.

[2] Inv. no. 2404. John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 6:129, no. 53; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. (Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 4:401–402, no. 89; Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* (Paris, 1938), 441. The dimensions of the Louvre painting (80 x 66 cm) are similar to those of *A Farm in the Sunlight*.

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[3] Compare his pair of dune landscapes at the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, reproduced in Wolfgan Stechow, *Salomon van Ruysdael: eine Einführung in seine Kunst* (Berlin, 1938), cats. 35, 36, figs. 48, 49.

[4] Jakob Rosenberg, "Hobbema," *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 48, no. 3 (1927): 151.

[5] Karl Döhmann and W. H. Dingeldein, *Singraven: de Geschiedenis van een Twentsche Havezate*, 4 vols. (Brussels, 1934), 3:144–145.

[6] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 6:129 (under no. 53), said the figures are by Storck. Théophile E. J. Thoré (William Bürger), "Hobbema," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 4 (October 1859): 35, said they were "attributed to Adriaen van der Velde, but they are not by him."

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a fine-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with part of the tacking margins folded out and incorporated into the picture plane, slightly enlarging the original dimensions. A dark reddish brown ground layer was applied overall, followed by a light brown underpainting in the foreground, which also serves as a mid-tone. The X-radiographs show a preliminary sketch rapidly executed in rough paint strokes with a loaded brush. Pentimenti are visible in the largest tree, whose trunk initially continued down to the figures and whose foliage extended higher. The figures in the foreground may have been repositioned and an additional figure group may have been removed.[1]

Paint was applied in thin paste layers, with the foreground, middle ground, and background blocked in with vigorous strokes and individual features added with smaller brushes. The sky was painted first, with reserves left for the trees and landscape. Background elements are worked wet-into-wet, while middle-distance reserves were left for barns and trees. Figures lie over the thinly painted foreground. Scattered small losses and abraded areas exist, along with two extremely large horizontal losses across the lower foreground. Conservation was carried out in 1992 to remove discolored varnish, inpainting, and nineteenth-century overpaint in the foreground. At that time foreground losses were inpainted, re-creating missing landscape details.

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[1] The NGA Scientific Research department analyzed the pigments using air-path X-ray Fluorescence spectroscopy and found elements consistent with the pigments used in the figures in the area where the tree trunks are now lying and in the area of the fence to the right of the figures (see report dated January 6, 1992 in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

R. van Smidt, Brussels.[1] Corneille Louis Reijnders [d. 1821], Brussels, possibly by 1788; (William Buchanan, London);[2] purchased 1817 by George Watson Taylor, M.P. [d. 1841], London and later Erlestoke Park, Devizes, Wiltshire;[3] (his sale, Christie's, London, 13-14 June 1823, 2nd day, no. 56, bought in);[4] (Taylor sale, at Erlestoke Park by Robins, 9 July - 1 August 1832, 14th day [July 24], no. 69);[5] (Charles J. Nieuwenhuys, Brussels and London); (his sale, Christie & Manson, London, 10-11 May 1833, no. 128, bought in).[6] (Henri Héris [b. 1790], Brussels); Leopold I, King of Belgium [1790-1865], Palais Royal, Brussels, by 1839;[7] by inheritance to his son, Leopold II, King of Belgium [1835-1909], Brussels; purchased May 1909 with paintings from the royal collection by (F. Kleinberger & Co., Paris and New York); sold 1910 to August de Ridder [1837-1911], Schönberg, near Frankfurt-am-Main;[8] (his estate sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 2 June 1924, no. 26); (M. Knoedler & Co., New York); sold December 1924 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.;[9] deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] According to the 1823 Taylor sale catalogue.

[2] According to the 1833 Nieuwenhuys sale catalogue, which does not include William Buchanan's name, "Reynders" bought the painting in Amsterdam in 1788, and Taylor purchased it in 1817 from him. The Knoedler's prospectus (in NGA curatorial files), prepared at the time of the 1924 sale to Mellon, lists Buchanan as the purchaser from Reijnders in 1817 and the seller to Taylor in an unspecified year. Perhaps Buchanan, a Scottish dealer with agents on the continent, handled the sale from Reijnder to Taylor.

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[3] Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638-1709)...*, Paris, 1938: 437, and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century...*, 8 vols., trans. from the German ed., London, 1907-1927: 4:362. In the general election return of 1826, Taylor's address was given as Erlestoke Park, Wiltshire, while in earlier elections he was said to be from London--Saville Row in 1816, Portland Place in 1818 and 1820 (see the letter from C.C. Pond, House of Commons Information Office, London, 12 May 1986, in NGA curatorial files). He died in Edinburgh.

[4] Different copies (see NGA curatorial files) of the 1823 sale catalogue document varying results for lot 56: sold for 800 guineas to "Seguire" (results sheet bound into the copy in Christie's Archives); sold for 800 guineas with the buyer unrecorded (paper copy in NGA Library); sold for 840 guineas to "Seguire" (photocopy and Lugt Fiche no. 2636, both in NGA Library); sold with its pendant, lot 55, for 1,750 guineas to Lord Grosvenor (Knoedler fiche of British sales in NGA Library; an additional note is difficult to read); both "bot in" and sold to "Seager" for 840 guineas (photocopy in NGA curatorial file, source not recorded). However, because the painting appeared again nine years later in Taylor's 1832 sale on the premises of his residence, it seems likely that it was indeed bought in. "Seguire" and "Seager" probably refer to William Seguier (1771-1843), the dealer, restorer, and first Keeper of the National Gallery, London. When Taylor was forming his collection, Seguier acted as an advisor.

[5] Various sources say that the picture was "sold by his heirs in 1832," but Taylor did not die until 1841 (a date confirmed by the librarian at the House of Commons, and the notice of Taylor's death on 6 June in the Supplement to *The Times* of 12 June 1841). This error may have arisen because the 1832 sale was described as containing the "magnificent property" of George Watson Taylor, a description that could easily be interpreted as signifying the estate of someone who had died.

[6] The painting is recorded as being sold to "Searle" (see George Redford, *Art Sales*, 2 vols., London, 1888: 2:229; Algernon Graves, *Art Sales...*, London, 1921: 2:30; and an e-mail of 8 August 2007 from Marijke Booth of Christie's Archive Department, London, in NGA curatorial files). However, as Geneviève Tellier has pointed out (e-mail of 7 August 2007, in NGA curatorial files), Nieuwenhuys writes

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in 1834 that the painting is still in his possession; see C.J. Nieuwenhuys, *A Review of the Lives and Works of Some of the Most Eminent Painters...*, London, 1834: 138-139.

[7] Henri Héris, "Sur la vie et les ouvrages de Meindert Hobbema," *La Renaissance: Chronique des Arts et de la Littérature* 54 (1839): 7. Geneviève Tellier thinks it is probable that Leopold I purchased the painting from Héris, who sold other paintings to the royal family at this time (see her letter, 12 November 2007, to Arthur Wheelock, in NGA curatorial files, and her dissertation, *Leopold II et le marché de l'art américain: histoire d'une vente singulière*, Brussels, 2010). There are two red wax seals on the painting's stretcher, each depicting two lions and a crown, that are likely seals from the Belgian royal collection.

8] After Ridder's death his collection went on loan to the Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie in Frankfurt, and in 1913 was put on exhibition briefly in New York and made available for private sale through F. Kleinberger Galleries.

[9] Nancy C. Little, librarian, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, says that the painting (Knoedler no. 15993) was bought by Knoedler from Lair Dubreuil, Paris, in June 1924 and was sold to Mr. Mellon in December of the same year (letter, 12 September 1987, in NGA curatorial files.) An annotated copy of the De Ridder sale catalogue in the NGA library does not, however, mention Dubreuil, and gives the buyer as Knoedler.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1818 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1818, no. 84.

1855 *L'Exposition de Tableaux*, Palais de S.A.R. le Duc de Brabant, Brussels, 1855, no. 1 in room B.

1911 Ausstellung der De Ridder Sammlung, Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1911-1913, no catalogue.

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1913 The Collection of Pictures of the late Herr A. de Ridder, Formerly in his Villa at Shönberg near Cronberg in the Taunus, F. Kleinberger Galleries, New York, 1913, no. 60, repro.

1925 Dutch Masters of the Seventeenth Century, Knoedler Galleries, New York, 1925, no. 17, repro.

1994 El Siglo de Oro del Paisaje Holandés [The Golden Age of Dutch Landscape], Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, 1994-1995, no. 32, repro.

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1855 *L'Exposition de Tableaux*. Exh. cat. Palais de S.A.R. le Duc de Brabant. Brussels, 1855: no. 1 in Room B.

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1859 Thoré, Théophile E. J. (William Bürger). "Hobbema." *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 4 (October 1859): 35, 38.

1864 Scheltema, Pieter. "Meindert Hobbema: Quelques Renseignements sur ses Oeuvres et sa Vie." *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 16 (March 1864): 219 n. 3.

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1895 Lafenestre, Georges, and Eugéne Richtenberger. *La Belgique*. Paris, 1895: 132.

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1897 Roberts, William. *Memorials of Christie's: A record of art sales from 1766 to 1896*. 2 vols. London, 1897: 1:106.

1906 Michel, Émile. *Les maïtres du paysage*. Paris, 1906: 207.

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1909 Holmes, Charles John. "Pictures Lately in the Collection of the King of the Belgians." *The Burlington Magazine* 15 (February 1909): 238-243, repro.

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1942 National Gallery of Art. *Book of illustrations*. 2nd ed. Washington, 1942: no. 60, repro. 26, 240.

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1966 Stechow, Wolfgang. *Dutch Landscape Painting of the Seventeenth Century*. Kress Foundation Studies in the History of European Art 1. London, 1966: 78-79.

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1968 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings and Sculpture, Illustrations*. Washington, 1968: 60, repro.

1975 National Gallery of Art. *European paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue*. Washington, 1975: 174, repro.

1975 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York, 1975: 295, no. 396, color repro.

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1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 127-130, color repro. 129.

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2012 Tummers, Anna. *The Eye of the Connoisseur: Authenticating Paintings by Rembrandt and His Contemporaries*. Amsterdam, 2012: 101, 102, color fig. 47.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Meindert Hobbema
Dutch, 1638 - 1709

Hut among Trees

c. 1664

oil on canvas
overall: 96.5 x 108 cm (38 x 42 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower left: M Hobbema
Widener Collection 1942.9.30

ENTRY

Hobbema was a master of rearranging frequently used compositional elements in his paintings. One encounters time and again familiar vistas, houses, groupings of trees, and figures who wander along meandering paths that pass through wooded landscapes. He built his scenes along established compositional principles, which included leading the viewer gently into the distance, either along paths or by means of alternating zones of light and dark. Remarkably, though, Hobbema's delicate touch and ability to suggest the varied light conditions of a partly cloudy day invariably transmit the feeling of a scene painted directly from life.

Three other versions of this composition exist, none of them dated. [1] Slight differences in the shape and position of the houses and in the treatment of light suggest that the Washington painting is the earliest of the four. It is the only instance in which the house on the right is so dilapidated, with large portions of its thatched roof missing. In all the other versions the house is less oblique and lacks the small addition on the side. In these paintings the path swings slightly to the left and a large broken tree trunk in the lower left arches upward, whereas in *Hut among Trees* the path continues diagonally to the right and the tree trunk is less

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substantial.

Because Hobbema's compositions tended to become more open during the course of the 1660s, the comparatively dense band of trees that stretches across the middle ground in this work adds further support to the idea that it is the earliest in this sequence of related scenes. In the version now in the Mauritshuis [fig. 1], the trunks are comparatively thinner and the view into the distance is less obscured than in the Washington example. [2] Since *Hut among Trees* is slightly more open than A Wooded Landscape, which is signed and dated 1663, and less so than A View on a High Road, signed and dated 1665, one can ascribe to it a tentative date of about 1664. To help confirm this date, a similar comparison may also be made among the respective structures of the trees in these three works. The trees in this painting are less compact and dense than the ones in *A Wooded Landscape,* but more so than those in *A View on a High Road.* This approximate date is also consistent with the distinctive light gray green color of the trees that Hobbema used in 1663 and 1664.

The painting is in excellent condition, except for the figure group and the area surrounding them. In 1984 it was discovered during conservation treatment that the mother and child figures as they then appeared were not original and were probably nineteenth-century creations. At that same time, the vestiges of two other figures, slightly larger and somewhat to their left, were discovered under the additions. The old remains were then reconstructed. More figures, including a horse, may once have accompanied them. Why these original figures were at some point physically removed and replaced is not known. The original staffage painter has not been identified.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Meindert Hobbema, *Huts under Trees*, c. 1664, oil on panel, Mauritshuis, The Hague

NOTES

[1] The location of one of these is not known (Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 4:410, no. 114; Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* [Paris, 1938], 209; formerly Robarts Collection, England). The other two are in London (National Gallery; John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. [London, 1829–1842], 6:133, no. 63; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928], 4:427, no. 162; Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* [Paris, 1938], 269) and The Hague (Mauritshuis; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928], 6:434, no. 184).

[2] For a discussion of the Mauritshuis painting and its relationship to *Hut among Trees,* see Ben P. J. Broos, *Meesterwerken in het Mauritshuis* (The Hague, 1987), 208–211.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined twice and the original tacking margins have been removed. The fabric was prepared with a double ground consisting of an upper dark gray layer over a white or off-white layer. Diagonal trowel marks, presumably from the application of the ground, are visible in the X-radiographs.

The paint was applied fluidly with vigorous brushmarking and refined with transparent glazes.[1] After an initial freely painted sketch, more detailed layers were applied. Infrared reflectography (vidicon)[2] shows tree trunks and branches blocked out first, then dense foliage applied, followed by individual outer leaves. Scattered small losses are found overall. The figures were severely damaged at some point by an apparently intentional attempt to remove them.

The painting was treated in 1964 when a lining was added and losses were inpainted. The painting was treated again in 1983-1985, at which time it was discovered that the central foreground, including the two standing figures had been entirely repainted during a previous restoration. Removal of the discolored varnish and repaint/overpaint, revealed vestiges of the original rendering of the woman and child, as well as a ghost image of an additional horse and rider. The figures of the woman and child were reconstructed based on the remnants, but the additional horse and rider were not, because the trace amounts that were found were insufficient.

[1] The pigments were analyzed by the NGA scientific research department using X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy and polarized light microscopy (see reports dated April 4, 1984, May 3, 1984, and August 16, 1984).

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 vidicon camera and a Kodak Wratten 87A filter.

PROVENANCE

Probably Hugh Hammersley [1774-1840]; (his estate sale, Alexander Rainy, London, 21 August 1841, no. 57); (Charles J. Nieuwenhuys, Brussels and London).[1] William Bingham Baring, 2nd baron Ashburton [1799-1864], Grange Park, Hampshire, by

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1854;[2] by inheritance to his brother, Francis Baring, 3rd baron Ashburton [1800-1868], Grange Park; by inheritance to his son, Alexander Hugh Baring, 4th baron Ashburton [1835-1889], Grange Park; by inheritance to his son, Francis Denzil Edward Baring, 5th baron Ashburton [1866-1938], Grange Park; jointly purchased 1907 by (Thos. Agnew & Sons, Ltd., Arthur J. Sulley & Co., and Charles J. Wertheimer, all in London); sold 1909 by (Arthur J. Sulley & Co.) to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] The name is cited as "H. Hammersley" in John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 1829-1842: 9:729; and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, 8 vols., trans. by Edward G. Hawke, London, 1907-1927: 4:433. Although the title page of the sale catalogue does not provide the seller(s) name(s), The Getty Provenance Index Databases record for Sale Catalogue BR-15070 indicates the sellers as Skammers and Hammersley. The sale is listed in Frits Lugt, *Répertoire des catalogues de ventes*, 4 vols., The Hague, 1938: 2:no. 16295, where the seller is given as Skammers. Hammersley (sometimes spelled Hamersley) was a member of a prominent banking family in London. The annotated copy of the sale catalogue held by the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague, provides the buyer's name.

[2] Lady Marian Jervis-White-Jervis, *Painting and Celebrated Painters, Ancient and Modern*, 2 vols., London, 1854, 2:344. The painting is not listed in Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Works of Art and Artists in England*, 3 vols., London, 1838, or Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: being an account of the Chief Collection of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, and Illuminated Mss.*, 3 vols., London, 1854-1857.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1890 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1890, no. 85, as Landscape.

2013 Verso Monet: Storia del paesaggio dal Seicento al Novecento, Palazzo della Gran Guardia, Verona; Basilica Palladiana, Vicenza, 2013- 2014, no. 5, repro.

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1890 Royal Academy of Arts. *Exhibition of works by the old masters and by deceased masters of the British School: including a collection of drawings and models by Alfred Stevens*. Winter Exhibition. Exh. cat. Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1890: no. 85.

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1931 *Paintings in the Collection of Joseph Widener at Lynnewood Hall*. Intro.

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by Wilhelm R. Valentiner. Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, 1931: 56, repro.

1938 Broulhiet, Georges. *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)*. Paris, 1938: 236, 413, no. 268.

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1975 National Gallery of Art. *European paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue*. Washington, 1975: 176, repro.

1983 Wright, Christopher. *Dutch Landscape Painting*. Exh. cat. Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne. Newcastle, 1983: 65.

1984 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. Rev. ed. New York, 1984: 295, no. 386, color repro.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 203, repro.

1986 Broos, Ben P.J., et al. *De Rembrandt à Vermeer. Les peintures hollandais au Mauritshuis de La Haye*. Exh. cat. Galeries nationale du Grand Palais, Paris. The Hague, 1986: 262-275, no. 34c, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
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Meindert Hobbema
Dutch, 1638 - 1709

The Travelers

166[2?]

oil on canvas
overall: 101 x 145 cm (39 3/4 x 57 1/16 in.)
Inscription: lower right: m .hobbema . f 166[2?]
Widener Collection 1942.9.31

ENTRY

This wooded landscape view was formerly titled *A Watermill* because of the picturesque mill in the middle distance on the left. Presumably because many similar watermills exist in Hobbema's oeuvre, a new title was chosen to emphasize the distinctive staffage figures in this work, the two men on horseback who ride along the winding path in the center of the composition. A third traveler in the lower right rests on a fallen log, while others in the distant right walk toward a church whose steeple rises behind a dense group of trees.

This work, which was first published by Charles J. Nieuwenhuys in 1834, has an intriguing history. [1] The painting and its companion, *The Old Oak,* 1662 (now in Melbourne, see [fig. 1]), were discovered in 1829 by the president of the fine arts society of Groningen, P. van Arnhem, in the château of the Alberda van Dyksterhuys family, a fifteenth-century manor house situated in Pieterburen near Groningen. Van Arnhem, a collector of old paintings, was judging a local exhibition of new landscape paintings when he recognized that one of the finest works on show bore a great resemblance to paintings by Hobbema. Upon inquiry, he found out that the artist had copied a painting in the collection at château Dyksterhuys.

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Van Arnhem visited the château and eventually persuaded its owner, Gosen Geurt Alberda van Dyksterhuys, the last member of a family with a long and distinguished history, to sell his two large paintings by Hobbema. Shortly thereafter, however, Gosen Geurt Alberda van Dyksterhuys also received an offer from another "amateur" from Groningen, R. Gockinga. Before any transaction could be completed, Gosen Geurt died. The two interested parties eventually agreed to a joint purchase from the estate of the two paintings, which they then brought to auction in Amsterdam in 1833. At the sale Gockinga bought the present picture outright for himself, while *The Old Oak* was bought by the dealer Nieuwenhuys. [2] Soon afterward the two Hobbema paintings were reunited in the collection of Colonel Biré in Brussels.

According to Gosen Geurt Alberda van Dyksterhuys, the two pictures represented views from the surroundings of the château, and were painted for the family by Hobbema. While the identical size of these extremely large paintings does suggest that they were commissioned pieces, no evidence exists to substantiate this family tradition. In any event, neither work was painted from nature, for both are clearly based on compositions by Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682). *The Old Oak,* signed and dated 1662, is derived from Ruisdael's etching *A Forest Marsh with Travelers on a Bank.* [3] The National Gallery of Art painting, which is also signed and dated, is a close variant of Ruisdael's 166[1?] painting of a watermill, now in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam [fig. 2]. [4] In the Washington painting one not only sees a comparable watermill, but also the same large oak tree rising to the left of the path with its roots clinging to the river bank. Although the last digit of the date is obscured and difficult to read, it appears to be 1662. [5] That date is not only consistent with that of the Melbourne painting, it is also justifiable on compositional and stylistic grounds.

Among Hobbema's other works related to *The Travelers,* the most similar in composition is an undated painting formerly in the collection of the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio [fig. 3]. This painting is also Hobbema's closest adaptation of Ruisdael's *Landscape with Watermill* in the Rijksmuseum. With the exception of the staffage figures, Hobbema has here copied all of the compositional elements, including the cut logs strewn on the path by the woodsman. Since *The Travelers* is a freer adaptation of the Ruisdael composition than is this work, it almost certainly was painted later.

The evolution of this composition for Hobbema does not, however, begin with Ruisdael's work. At least three other paintings have similar compositions, but with a

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simpler mill and a differently shaped tree in the foreground. [6] Hobbema certainly painted the former Toledo and the Washington versions, which were influenced by Ruisdael, after he painted the three scenes with the simpler watermill; nevertheless, since one of these latter works is signed and dated 1662, [7] the time frame in which this evolution occurred must have been very narrow. Hobbema and Ruisdael may both have derived their compositions from an actual site, although Hobbema's earlier watermill compositions may more accurately reflect that site than do Ruisdael's. Ruisdael often freely altered the character of buildings to give his scenes added drama and grandeur. The changes in Hobbema's conception of the scene are thus fascinating evidence of the nature of Ruisdael's influence on his young protégé at this stage of his career.

Despite the relatively old provenance of the two works from the château Dyksterhuys, their attribution to Hobbema was initially called into question. In 1842 Smith wrote that when this painting and its companion appeared in the Amsterdam sale of 1833, they "were then considered by several connoisseurs to be by the hand of some imitator of Hobbema, in which opinion the writer then coincided." He added, however, "lining and judicious cleaning have since so greatly improved them, that he feels no hesitation in now recording them among the works of the master." [8]

Although the attribution of the painting to Hobbema has never been doubted in subsequent years, Smith's initial hesitation is understandable considering that the painting style lacks many of the nuances of touch found in Hobbema's other works from the early 1660s. Brushstrokes are quite regular, and forms are comparatively simplified, particularly in the reeds in the lower left and the foliage in the bushes on the right. As a result, the painting does not exhibit the warmth and seeming spontaneity of Hobbema's more characteristic landscape views.

Various explanations can be advanced for the relative dryness of the painting, and, to judge from photographs, its companion. Primary among them is that both works are exceptionally large in scale for Hobbema and are replicas of smaller variants he made of compositions by Ruisdael. [9] These factors may have affected Hobbema's manner of painting and rendered his style less spontaneous than usual. Although nothing is known of his workshop practices, it is also possible that these paintings were produced in Hobbema's studio under his direct supervision. The staffage figures, in any event, are by another hand, which is a common occurrence in Hobbema's paintings. One nineteenth-century reference plausibly suggests that they are by Barent Gael (before 1635–after 1681). [10]

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Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Meindert Hobbema, *The Old Oak*, 1662, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Felton Bequest 1949/50

fig. 2 Jacob van Ruisdael, *Landscape with Watermill*, 166(1?), oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

fig. 3 Meindert Hobbema, *Landscape with Watermill*, c. 1662, oil on canvas, private collection

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NOTES

[1] Charles J. Nieuwenhuys, *A Review of the Lives and Works of Some of the Most Eminent Painters* (London, 1834), 147–149.

[2] Detailed biographical info on Gosen Geurt Alberda van Dyksterhuys appears in Wiebe J. Formsma, R. A. Luitjens-Dijkveld Stol, and A. Pathuis, *De Ommelander Borgen en Steenhuizen* (Assen, 1987), 35–37, 330–337. (The full family name is Alberda van Dyksterhuys, i.e., the Alberda of the Dyksterhuys estate, to distinguish them from neighboring relatives, the Alberda van Menkema branch.) Gosen Geurt inherited Dyksterhuys in 1790 and proceeded to renovate it in 1791 and 1792. He died in 1830. The family fortunes dwindled; the château was sold in 1902 and was demolished by September 1903. Annotated copies of the 1833 sale catalog and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot give the prices fetched by each picture as fl 3,000, although Henri Héris, "Sur la vie et les ouvrages de Meindert Hobbema," in *La Renaissance: Chronique des Arts et de la Littérature* 54 (1839): 7, says that *A Watermill* fetched fl 4,000 and *The Old Oak* fl 3,225. A price of 3,000 guilders was quite high for a painting by Hobbema at that time.

[3] Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael* (The Hague, 1981), 108.

[4] Pieter van Thiel, ed., *All the Paintings of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam: A Completely Illustrated Catalogue* (Amsterdam, 1976), inv. no. C213, indicates that the Ruisdael painting is signed and dated 1661, but Seymour Slive has informed me that the last digit of the date is no longer legible.

[5] P. A. Koppius, "Meindert Hobbema," *Drentsche Volksalmanak* 3 (1839): 117, described the Washington painting as being dated 1662 in his enthusiastic account of the work's pictorial and aesthetic qualities. Over the years, however, the date has become difficult to read. Cornelis Hofstede de Groot and Wilhelm Reinhold Valentiner, *Pictures in the Collection of P. A. B. Widener at Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania*, vol 1, *Early German, Dutch, and Flemish Schools* (Philadelphia, 1913), acknowledged the ambiguity of the date, stating that the picture is inscribed: "M.Hobbema 1660 (the last figure is uncertain)."

[6] Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* (Paris, 1938), 33; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts,* 10 vols. (Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 4:401, no. 88; oil on canvas, 57 x 72 cm, J. Hage Collection, Nivaa, Denmark, 1908. Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* (Paris, 1938), 34; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts,* 10 vols.

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(Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 4:408, no. 108; oil on panel, 61 x 83 cm, sale *Important Old Master Paintings,* Sotheby's, New York, January 11, 1986, lot 109, as "from the Collection of an East Coast Museum." Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* (Paris, 1938), 35; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts,* 10 vols. (Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 4:403, no. 93; oil on panel, 52 x 66 cm, National Trust, Petworth House, England.

[7] See Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* (Paris, 1938), 34.

[8] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 9:727, no. 25. Although it seems probable that Smith's comments relate to the two Hobbema paintings, it should be noted that provenance information he provides about these paintings is inaccurate.

[9] A smaller version of the Melbourne painting is in Schloss Rohoncz, Lugano (Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* [Paris, 1938], 224).

[10] Barent Gael was a pupil of Philips Wouwerman and sometimes painted staffage figures for Jan Wynants as well. (Walter Bernt, *Die niederländischen Maler des 17. Jahrhunderts*, 3 vols. [Munich, 1948–1960], 1:295.) Although no documentary evidence exists that Gael worked with Hobbema, a collaboration between the two painters would have been possible. The figures in Gael's *Travelers at a Village Well* (sold Christie's, London, February 20, 1986, lot 237) are quite similar to those in *The Travelers.* Gael also painted horses in motion in comparable ways: see *Peasants Merrymaking Outside an Inn* (sold Christie's, London, October 25, 1974, lot 136) and *Horsemen Halting Outside an Inn* (National Trust, Dyrham Park, near Chippenham).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a heavy-weight, loosely and plain-woven fabric. It has been lined and the tacking edges have been removed. The current stretcher is slightly larger than the original fabric and as a result, extends the dimensions by approximately 1 centimeter on all sides. The presence of cusping indicates that the size of the original support was not reduced before the painting was lined. The fabric was prepared with a light tan-colored ground. The paint layer is moderately thick and the somewhat pastose paint was applied with free, clearly defined brushmarks. X-radiographs indicate that the two horses were painted on top of the landscape.

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Small losses are scattered overall, but more are located in the foreground and around the edges. The sky is abraded, particularly in the dark cloud at top left, while the foreground is well preserved. The rear end and left hind leg of the white horse are discolored, possibly due to abrasion of a dark glaze. Prior to acquisition, two linings had been attached to the support. In 1981 a third lining was added. At that time discolored varnish and old inpainting were removed where possible. Aged insoluble inpainting in the sky, the damaged dark cloud and the rear end and hind leg of the white horse were toned.

PROVENANCE

Gosen Geurt Alberda van Dyksterhuys [d. 1830], Château Dyksterhuys, Province of Groningen, by 1829; R. Gockinga and P. van Arnhem, Groningen, after 1829; (sale, Amsterdam, 5 July 1833, no. 11);[1] R. Gockinga, Groningen. Colonel Biré, Brussels;[2] (sale, Bonnefons de Lavialle, Paris, 25-26 March 1841, no. 2); William Williams Hope [1802-1855], Rushton Hall, Northamptonshire, and Paris;[3] (sale, Christie & Manson, London, 14-16 June 1849, no. 124); purchased by Fuller or perhaps bought in;[4] (William Williams Hope sale, Pouchet, Paris, 11 May 1858, no. 2). William Ward, 1st earl of Dudley [1817-1885, created earl 1860], Witley Court, Worcestershire, by 1871; by inheritance to his son, William Humble Ward, 2nd earl of Dudley [1867-1932], Witley Court; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 25 June 1892, no. 9); (P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London);[5] sold 1894 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.[6]

[1] Both Van Arnhem and Gockinga had individually offered to buy the two pictures by Hobbema, including NGA 1942.9.31, that Gosen Geurt Alberda van Dyksterhuys owned. Before either had closed the deal, however, the owner died. It was later arranged that the two would purchase the paintings together; see Charles J. Nieuwenhuys, *A Review of the Lives and Works of Some of the Most Eminent Painters*, London, 1834:147-149.

[2] The catalogue of this sale bears the title *Catalogue d'une riche collection de tableaux des écoles flamande et hollandaise, recueillie par M. Héris de Bruxelles...*

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, but although the collection was "recueillie" (collected/gathered) by Héris and was offered for sale under his name, he may not himself have been the owner of the paintings. In the copy of the sale catalogue at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the words "Recueillie par M. Héris de Bruxelles" in the title are followed by the handwritten addition, "pour M. le Colonel Biré," and alongside the title in the Victoria and Albert Museum's copy is written "mais c'est la collection de M. le Colonel Biré," which suggests that Héris may have been acting as Biré's agent in acquiring and selling the pictures.

[3] The buyer's name is noted in the Philadelphia copy of the sale catalogue as "hoppe," which is probably a misspelling of Hope. (The 1858 Hope sale catalogue states that Hope bought the picture at the Héris sale.)

[4] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century...*, 8 vols., trans. by Edward G. Hawke, London, 1907-1927: 4:406, lists the 1849 sale in the provenance of his no. 100, a painting that may or may not be identical with his no. 94, 4:403-404 (which is definitely *The Travelers*). The compositional descriptions given in both these Hofstede de Groot entries are similar, but the dimensions listed for no. 100, 51 x 54 inches, are impossible for the National Gallery picture. The identity and whereabouts of Hofstede de Groot no. 100 remain unclear; it is possible that Hofstede de Groot was mistaken in the dimensions that he gave for this picture, and that it was indeed the same painting as his no. 94. Hofstede de Groot further confuses the issue by listing part of the provenance of *The Travelers* under no. 94, and part (the 1841 Héris sale) under no. 100. The 1849 Hope sale catalogue does not give dimensions, so it is impossible to establish whether the painting offered there was *The Travelers* or the unknown, and perhaps apocryphal, "Hofstede de Groot 100." The picture in question fetched £367.10, and Hofstede de Groot, citing as his source a handwritten note in Smith's own copy of his *Catalogue Raisonné*, says that it was bought in. (In this copy, which is at the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague, Smith gives the buyer as "Fuller," but this is not necessarily contradictory, as Fuller may have been a Christie's employee.) Smith's statement is probably correct, for the National Gallery of Art's painting remained in the possession of W.W. Hope until 1858, when it was sold in Paris.

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[5] Colnaghi lent the painting to the Royal Academy of Art's 1894 Winter Exhibition, which ran from January to March. The sale to Widener must have occurred later in the year.

[6] A label from the Art Institute of Chicago shipping room, dated 27 January 1943, was removed from the painting's stretcher in 1981, but neither the Art Institute nor the NGA registrar's office records this movement.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1871 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1871, no. 369, as *A Landscape: travellers passing through a wood*.

1894 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1894, no. 60, as *A Watermill*.[1]

1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure.

EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES

[1] The Royal Academy label, removed from the stretcher during conservation in 1981, is now in NGA curatorial files. The label identifies Colnaghi as the lender. A label from the Art Institute of Chicago shipping room, dated 27 January 1943, was also removed from the stretcher at this time, but neither the Art Institute nor the NGA registrar's office records this movement.

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the Most Eminent Painters. London, 1834: 147-149.

1839 Héris, Henri. "Sur la Vie et les Ouvrages de Meindert Hobbema." *La Renaissance: Chronique des Arts et de la Littérature* 54 (1839): 5-7, repro.

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1859 Thoré, Théophile E. J. (William Bürger). "Hobbema." *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 4 (October 1859): 34, 36, 38.

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1864 Scheltema, Pieter. "Meindert Hobbema: Quelques Renseignements sur ses Oeuvres et sa Vie." *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 16 (March 1864): 219 n. 3.

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1891 Cundall, Frank. *The Landscape and Pastoral Painters of Holland: Ruisdael, Hobbema, Cuijp, Potter*. Illustrated biographies of the great artists. London, 1891: 157.

1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*. 8 vols. Translated by Edward G. Hawke. London, 1907-1927: 4(1912):385-386, no. 94, 387-388, no. 100.

1913 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis, and Wilhelm R. Valentiner. *Pictures in the collection of P. A. B. Widener at Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania: Early German, Dutch & Flemish Schools*. Philadelphia, 1913: unpaginated, repro.

1923 *Paintings in the Collection of Joseph Widener at Lynnewood Hall*. Intro. by Wilhelm R. Valentiner. Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, 1923: unpaginated, repro.

1927 Rosenberg, Jakob. "Hobbema." *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 48, no. 3 (1927): 139-151.

1931 *Paintings in the Collection of Joseph Widener at Lynnewood Hall*. Intro. by Wilhelm R. Valentiner. Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, 1931: 78, repro.

1937 Roos, Frank J., Jr. *An Illustrated Handbook of Art History*. New York, 1937: 183, repro.

1938 Broulhiet, Georges. *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)*. Paris, 1938: 71, 381, no. 32, repro., as after Ruisdael, dated 1664.

1942 National Gallery of Art. *Works of art from the Widener collection*. Washington, 1942: 5.

1948 National Gallery of Art. *Paintings and Sculpture from the Widener*

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Collection. Washington, 1948 (reprinted 1959): 59, repro.

1959 National Gallery of Art. *Paintings and Sculpture from the Widener Collection*. Reprint. Washington, DC, 1959: 59, repro.

1959 Stechow, Wolfgang. "The Early Years of Hobbema." *Art Quarterly* 22 (Spring 1959): 3-18.

1965 National Gallery of Art. *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture*. Washington, 1965: 68.

1968 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings and Sculpture, Illustrations*. Washington, 1968: 60, repro.

1975 National Gallery of Art. *European paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue*. Washington, 1975: 176, repro.

1981 Schmidt, Winfried. *Studien zur Landschaftskunst Jacob van Ruisdaels: Frühwerke und Wanderjahre*. Hildesheim, 1981: 156, 198 n.192.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 203, repro.

1987 Formsma, Wiebe Jannes, R. A. Luitjens-Dijkveld Stol, and A. Pathuis. *De Ommelander Borgen en Steenhuizen*. Groninger Historische Reeks 2. 2nd revised ed. Assen, 1987: 35-37, 330-337.

1987 Sutton, Peter C. *Masters of 17th-century Dutch landscape painting*. Exh. cat. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Philadelphia Museum of Art. Boston, 1987: 350.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 113-117, color repro. 115.

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2011 Slive, Seymour. *Jacob van Ruisdael: Windmills and Water Mills*. Los Angeles, 2011: 87, 89 fig. 63, 101 n. 71.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Meindert Hobbema
Dutch, 1638 - 1709

A View on a High Road

1665

oil on canvas
overall: 93.1 x 127.8 cm (36 5/8 x 50 5/16 in.)
framed: 122.6 x 158.4 cm (48 1/4 x 62 3/8 in.)
Inscription: lower left: m. hobbema. / 1665
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.62

ENTRY

Hobbema's style developed very rapidly throughout the 1660s. By the middle of the decade he had opened his compositions to give a light-filled and spacious feeling to his scenes. This painting, signed and dated 1665, is an excellent example of this period of his work. [1] The road that passes through the rural village meanders diagonally into the distance, passing half-timbered houses that sit comfortably within the wooded landscape. The trees, which in earlier works form dense barriers in the middle distance (see *A Wooded Landscape*), rise only to the left of center. Otherwise, Hobbema has kept them low and relegated them to the peripheries of his scene. To judge from the patterns of light and shade, it seems to be midday. Villagers sit and relax beside the road or talk over the front stoop. Two children play with boats at a small pond beside the road, along which a mounted falconer and his attendant pass into the distance. In the center foreground an elegant couple, the man holding a stick, passes near a traveler with his knapsack resting on a cut log.

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Hobbema lived and worked in Amsterdam, yet with only a few exceptions, his paintings represent rural scenes, most of which have never been precisely identified. As in many of his paintings, the half-timbered buildings with their tie-beam construction seen in this small village are characteristic of the vernacular architecture in the eastern provinces of the Netherlands, in the border area between the river Twente in the province of Overijssel and the western part of the German state of Nordrhein-Westfalen. [2] Two paintings by Hobbema containing buildings of this type have been identified as representing watermills that belonged to the manor house of Singraven near Denekamp, a Dutch village in Overijssel. [3] It seems probable that he derived many of his scenes (see also *A Farm in the Sunlight*) from visits to this area in the company of his teacher Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682), who is known to have visited Overijssel on his trip to Bentheim in the early 1650s. [4] It is not known if Hobbema also made separate trips to this region, but buildings of this type first appear in his work around 1662 (as in *The Travelers*).

Part of the difficulty in identifying the exact location of such a view is that Hobbema freely varied architectural motifs and the placements of buildings within his works. Although this painting convinces the viewer of its fidelity to nature through the careful observation of light, gentle flow of the landscape, and attention to architectural detail, a smaller variant in the Frick Collection, New York, from the same year, *A Village among Trees*, differs in many respects [fig. 1]. While the general disposition of elements in the two paintings is extremely close, the relative scale, placement, and structural elements of the buildings are not identical. Both of these paintings, moreover, essentially elaborate upon a composition now in the Louvre, Paris, that Hobbema painted in 1662. [5]

Another similar composition, *A Wooded Landscape with Cottages* [fig. 2], in the Mauritshuis, The Hague, has been traditionally considered a companion piece to *A View on a High Road*. [6] The paintings hung as such in the Fizeau, Agar, and Grosvenor collections until the Washington painting was sold to Alfred Charles de Rothschild at the end of the nineteenth century. It is highly unlikely, however, that they were actually designed as pendants, for the compositions are parallel rather than complementary; the dimensions are also slightly different.

The presence of the elegantly dressed couple strolling on the road through the village is an unusual feature of the Washington painting. Hobbema did not usually include such figures in his paintings. Whether they represent country gentry or city visitors, vast differences exist between their social status and that of the peasants

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seated by the edge of the road. Curiously, given their importance within the composition, these figures are rather poorly painted; they float above the surface of the road and lack physical substance. They were apparently executed by a different staffage painter than the one who depicted the peasants, who have a greater sense of solidity. Although the names Adriaen van de Velde (Dutch, 1636 - 1672) and Johannes Lingelbach (1622–1674) have been suggested, the style of the peasants and the elegant couple does not resemble that of either artist. [7] The figures were present in 1786 when the painting was engraved, in reverse, by James Mason. [8]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Meindert Hobbema, *Village among Trees*, 1665, oil on panel, Frick Collection, New York. Photo © The Frick Collection, New York

fig. 2 Meindert Hobbema, *A Wooded Landscape with Cottages*, c. 1665, oil on canvas, Mauritshuis, The Hague

NOTES

[1] The date is now completely legible below the signature, but may not always have been so clear. Indeed, the first reference to the picture that describes it as being dated is National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 68, although Wolfgang

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Stechow did challenge the statement in National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 97–98, that the picture was "painted probably in 1665," saying "I thought I could read the date quite distinctly below the signature." (Stechow letter, June 9, 1941, in NGA curatorial files.) The date appears to be old, but is painted in a different color from the signature. Its form does not conform with the inscription on the so-called pendant, which reads "M[e]yndert Hobbema." Accounts of the signature itself are also inconsistent: Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collection of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, and Illuminated Mss.*, 3 vols. (London 1854–1857), 2:166, the brochure produced c. 1940 by Duveen Brothers, and National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941) all state that, like the earlier A Wooded Landscape, *A View on a High Road* is signed "Meyndert Hobbema," and Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* (Paris, 1938), 401, and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. (Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 4:413, also say that it is "signed in full." Today the lettering on the canvas clearly reads "m. hobbema," a form of signature that the artist employed more frequently than his full name. It seems likely that all or part of the original signature and date were somehow damaged and subsequently reconstructed. Further changes may have occurred at a later date, perhaps as a result of restoration or cleaning.

[2] See Josef Schepers, *Haus und Hof westfälischer Bauern* (Münster, 1960).

[3] Karl Döhmann and W. H. Dingeldein, *Singraven: De Geschiedenis van een Twentsche Havezate*, 4 vols. (Brussels, 1934), 3:144–145. The paintings are in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (no. M.I. 270; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928], 4:401–402, no. 89; Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema [1638–1709]* [Paris, 1938], 441; cf. fig. 1 under A Farm in the Sunlight), and the National Gallery, London (no. 832; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. [Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928], 4:397, no. 76; Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema [1638–1709]* [Paris, 1938], 220). For the relationship between the buildings painted by Hobbema and the Singraven location, see Ben P. J. Broos, *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague, 1991), 285–290, no. 32.

[4] Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael* (The Hague, 1981), 79, no. 22.

[5] Acc. no. R.F. 1526, 31 x 40 in.; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen*

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Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts, 10 vols. (Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 4:431, no. 173; Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* (Paris, 1938), 192.

[6] 86.4 x 119.4 cm, John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 6:134, no. 64; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. (Esslingen and Paris, 1907–1928), 4:413, no. 120; Georges Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709)* (Paris, 1938), 188.

[7] John Young, *A Catalogue of the Pictures at Grosvenor House, London* (London, 1820), 37, says that the figures were painted by Adriaen van de Velde (Dutch, 1636 - 1672). Several other nineteenth-century writers (John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. [London, 1829–1842], 4:134–135; Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collection of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, and Illuminated Mss.*, 3 vols. [London 1854–1857], 2:166; Émile Michel, *Hobbema et les paysagistes de son temps en Hollande* [Paris, 1890], 50) attribute them to Lingelbach. Ben P. J. Broos has proposed that the elegant figures were added in the eighteenth century, during a period when artists "finished" a number of seventeenth-century landscape drawings by adding figures to their foregrounds. See Ben P. J. Broos, "Improving and Finishing Old Master Drawings: An Art Itself," *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury* 8 (1989): 34–55. This hypothesis is, however, unlikely since the peasant seated on a log is looking at the couple.

[8] The print was published by Boydell, London, February 20, 1786.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a fine-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the top tacking margin trimmed. At some point or points during the painting's history, the painted canvas along the top edge was twice folded over the stretcher to serve as a tacking margin. This edge was then later restored to the picture plane, while the original tacking margins on the bottom, left, and right sides were unfolded and added to the picture plane. The present dimensions are thus slightly expanded at the bottom and sides.

A thin, reddish ground layer is covered by a pale brown imprimatura, which has been incorporated as a mid-tone in the sky and foreground. On top of this base, the design was sketched in thin dark paint, which was allowed to remain visible in

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the shadows. Then the paint was built up in thin pastes. The sky was painted first with reserves left for the houses and trees. The landscape was completed before the foreground figures were added. The gabled house at far right was made smaller, and the tree to the right of the pathway was shifted slightly.

Thin bands of loss occur along fold lines and around tacking holes. The paint is rather abraded in the sky. In 1995 the painting was treated to remove discolored varnish and inpainting. At that time the sky was rather extensively inpainted to cover the abrasion.

PROVENANCE

Mme Jean Etienne Fizeau [née Marie Anne Massé, d. 1790], Amsterdam; (sale, Amsterdam, 27 April 1791);[1] Welbore Ellis Agar [1735-1805], London; by inheritance to his illegitimate sons, Welbore Felix Agar [d. 1836] and Sir Emmanuel Felix Agar [1781-1866]; sold 1806 to Robert Grosvenor, 1st marquess of Westminster [1767-1845];[2] by inheritance to his grandson, Hugh Lupus Grosvenor, 1st duke of Westminster [1825-1899], Grosvenor House, London; purchased 1912 by Baron Alfred Charles de Rothschild [1842-1918], London and Halton House, near Wendover, Buckinghamshire;[3] bequeathed to his illegitimate daughter, Almina Victoria, Countess of Carnarvon [c. 1877-1969, later Mrs. Ian Onslow Dennistoun], London; sold 1924 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[4] sold November 1924 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] The Fizeau (variously spelled Fiseau, Fezeau, or Fiziau) sale was known to Frits Lugt not from an actual example of the catalogue, but because it is listed in Adriaan van der Willigen, *Naamlijst van Nederlandsche kunst catalogi veelal met derzelver prijzen en namen, van af 1731-1861, welke de verzameling uitmakern van A. van der Willigen*, Haarlem, 1873.

[2] The Ellis Agar Collection was to be sold at Christie's, London, 2-3 May 1806, and a sale catalogue was produced, but before the auction could take place the complete collection was instead sold to Lord Grosvenor, for 30,000 guineas

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(George Redford, *Art Sales, 1628-1887*, 2 vols., London, 1888: 1:95). The bill of sale is preserved at the Grosvenor Estate Office Archive; the Hobbema is number 42 on this list (information kindly provided by Michael Hall, curator to Edmund de Rothschild, letter of 5 March 2002, in NGA curatorial files).

[3] The date of Alfred's acquisition of the picture was kindly provided by Michael Hall, curator to Edmund de Rothschild; see his "Rothschild Picture Provenances" from 1999 and his letter of 27 February 2002, in NGA curatorial files, in which he cites relevant documents in The Rothschild Archive, London.

[4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 292, box 437, folders 4 and 5; copies in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1834 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1834, either no. 136 or no. 139.

1845 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1845, either no. 49 or no. 52.

1871 Works of Old Masters, Burlington Fine Arts Club, London, 1871, either no. 35 or no. 41.[1]

1925 A Loan Exhibition of Dutch Paintings, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1925, no. 11.

1925 Paintings by Old Masters from Pittsburgh Collections, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1925, no. 28.

EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES

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[1] Exhibition records for the two paintings are confusing, as two Hobbemas from the Grosvenor collection were lent to exhibitions in London in 1834, 1845, and 1871 (see Algernon Graves, *A Century of Loan Exhibitions, 1813–1912*, 5 vols. [London, 1913–1915], 3:514, 515, 517). In each of the exhibition catalogues the paintings are given nearly identical titles, and there are no descriptions provided. Frank Cundall, *The Landscape and Pastoral Painters of Holland: Ruisdael, Hobbema, Cuijp, Potter* (London, 1891), 158, mentions the 1845 and 1871 exhibitions under his listing for *A View on a High Road* and its pendant. Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), does not mention these exhibitions under either picture.

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separately).

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1930 Rosenberg, Jakob. "Meindert Hobbema: Country Road with Houses and Trees on Either Side." In *Unknown Masterpieces in Public and Private Collections*. Wilhelm R. Valentiner, ed. London, 1930: n.p., pl. 59.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Meindert Hobbema
Dutch, 1638 - 1709

Village near a Pool

c. 1670

oil on canvas
overall: 81 x 107 cm (31 7/8 x 42 1/8 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.32

ENTRY

A sunlit village with half-timbered houses sits nestled among trees beyond a small pond. A dirt road, skirting the pond to the right, passes beneath two large trees and leads out of the painting. A falconer, riding a white horse and accompanied by his helper and four dogs, travels along the road, while a fisherman in a red jacket on the near shore casts his line. Although this idyllic scene is neither signed nor dated, it has always been attributed to Hobbema, an attribution that is justified by the compositional schema, the fall of light in the middle distance, the building types, and the delicate touch evident in the landscape in the distant left. The painting has, indeed, many beautiful passages, but it has also suffered badly over the years, and many of its original qualities are no longer evident.

The most disturbing elements in the painting are the two large trees that rise in the right foreground. Their trunks seem too heavy for their size and the branches lack the rhythms characteristic of Hobbema's work. The leaves are also not as clearly articulated as one would expect. These stylistic problems are the result of old Overpaint that was probably applied to cover Abrasion to the surface as well as Pentimenti that became obvious because of the increasing translucency of the paint. Still evident, because of the dense crackle pattern in the paint, is the original

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form of a large branch that extended out just above the steeple of the church and the large tree rising from the village. The trees, however, are not the only areas that have suffered. General abrasion and old overpaint can be found throughout the composition, with only the sunlit area in the center remaining essentially intact.

When the painting was treated in 1974, it was found that much of this old overpaint was extremely hard and could not be removed for fear of damaging the original paint. The distortions in form due to overpainting have been intensified by the denser and darker character of the additions. As a result, the spatial flow of the composition has been affected, and the contrast between, for example, the silhouetted trees and the sky must be greater now than Hobbema originally intended.

Even with the modifications to the image that have occurred, this work can be placed chronologically around 1670. As with A Farm in the Sunlight, from 1668, Hobbema has focused his attention on the middle ground and has left the foreground in shadow. The painterly touch, however, is here more delicate, and the rhythms less vigorous than in *A Farm in the Sunlight.* The greenish brown tones of the shadows are also darker and more opaque. The scene has, moreover, an open and spacious quality characteristic of Hobbema's work in the early 1670s, a spaciousness that would have been more pronounced before the overpainting. A painting with similar compositional characteristics is the *Wooded Landscape with Watermill* in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, a work that probably also dates around 1670 and that is freely based on the watermill at Singraven (see discussion under A Farm in the Sunlight, and A View on a High Road). The village in the Washington painting has not been identified, although it depicts the type of scene Hobbema could have encountered in Overijssel and the eastern provinces of the Netherlands. The character and function of the large rectangular stone blocks that lie randomly yet prominently in the grassy area between the timbered houses and the pond have yet to be explained.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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The original support is a tightly woven, plain-weave fabric, lined with the tacking margins removed and the original dimensions retained. The double ground consists of a thick pale ocher lower layer covered by a thin black layer. Paint is applied thinly in dark passages, and with more body and visible brushmarks in lighter passages.

Hobbema appears to have reworked several areas of the composition, particularly the trees at the center, where long, low branches were eliminated from the left sides of the left and central trees. The X-radiographs do not show clearly Hobbema's changes, which are easily confused with later repaints to the extensively abraded trees, though cracks in the paint reveal a long low branch that once extended from the large tree on the left. Due to abrasion in the sky, birds painted out by Hobbema have become visible again at left and center. These were later reinforced with overpaint. Most of the foreground is in good condition, although the cow and horse are abraded and part of the rider's hat is lost. Numerous small losses exist in the sky and lower left foreground.

The painting was lined in 1963. Vandalism in 1966 produced large scratches in a regular grid pattern, which were treated locally. Conservation treatment was carried out in 1974 to remove discolored varnish layers and the more obvious repaints in the sky, water, and trees. The overpainted tree trunks were left as is. In 1981 adjustments were made to the inpainting in the sky, and a pigmented synthetic varnish was applied locally to unify the appearance.

PROVENANCE

Count Santar, Lisbon, and around 1850, London.[1] (Hamburger, Paris); sold 1909 to Peter A. B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park. Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeent Century*, 8 vols., trans. Edward G. Hawke, London, 1907-1927: 4:385, no. 47.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Meindert Hobbema
Dutch, 1638 - 1709

A Wooded Landscape

1663

oil on canvas
overall: 94.7 x 130.5 cm (37 5/16 x 51 3/8 in.)
Inscription: lower right: meijndert hobbema / F 1663
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.61

ENTRY

In this idyllic view of the world, the season is summer, the foliage of the trees is dense and lush, sunlight breaks through the billowing clouds in soft pools of light to give warmth to the day, and men and women wander along paths, stopping to converse, or sit idly by a pool of water to fish. Hobbema's view of *A Wooded Landscape,* one of his most harmonious compositions, has been highly praised since Smith first published it in 1835, when it was in the collection of Charles Cobbe. [1] Waagen, for example, wrote in 1854: "Seldom has the power of art in expressing the effect of the low afternoon sun in the light clouds in the sky, on tree, bush, and meadow, been exhibited with such astonishing power, transparency and freshness as in this picture." [2]

Signed and dated 1663, this painting is among the first of Hobbema's fully mature works. Here he has freed himself from the overt dependence on Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682) evident in his compositions from the previous years, for example, The Travelers. The landscape is now open and spacious, the painterly touch more delicate and varied, and the palette considerably lighter than in earlier paintings. Hobbema draws the viewer back into the forest with pools of

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light that accent distant foliage and silhouette tree trunks rising before them, a device he more fully exploits in his later paintings, for example, Hut among Trees. He uses this technique effectively to enhance the recession into space of the small trees growing along the side of the dike in the right middle ground. Stechow has noted that the configuration of these trees, which he terms “tin-soldier trees,” relates back to Hobbema’s earliest compositions (for example, *A River Scene,* 1658, Detroit Institute of Arts). [3] One might thus argue that Hobbema was here sufficiently free of Ruisdael’s influence to reach back and draw upon motifs that were part of his repertoire before becoming Ruisdael’s student. The location of Hobbema’s scene is not known, although the close similarities to a drawing of this wooded glade attributed to Hobbema, formerly in the Emile Wolf Collection, New York (see the 1995 archived version of this entry), suggest that it is based upon an actual site. Hobbema also painted a second, slightly simplified version of the scene, now in the Wallace Collection [fig. 1].

When Smith published the painting in 1835, he indicated that it was a companion piece to the masterful landscape of the same dimensions and date now in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, and formerly in the collection of Sir Alfred Beit [fig. 2]. Both paintings have a distinctive signature in which Hobbema wrote out in full his complete name. At that time the Washington painting was in the collection of Charles Cobbe in Ireland, and the Beit painting was owned by an English politician, the Rt. Hon. Edward John Littleton (1791–1863), who was made 1st Baron Hatherton in 1835. No earlier provenance, however, exists to confirm that the paintings were ever together. [4] Both paintings can stand by themselves as independent creations and compositional parallels are not particularly strong. In the Dublin painting, moreover, the cows appear to be painted by Adriaen van de Velde (Dutch, 1636 - 1672), whereas no such collaboration with a staffage painter is evident in the Washington work. Smith’s statement must therefore be treated with some skepticism. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that we know so little of the types and character of seventeenth-century landscape pendants that his assertion cannot be totally discounted. [5]

The painting was clearly greatly appreciated by its owners, to judge by a fascinating account of the circumstances of its sale by Charles Cobbe in 1839, published by his daughter Frances Power Cobbe in 1894. She wrote as follows: “Though often hard pressed to carry out with a very moderate income all his projects of improvements, [my father] was never in debt. One by one he rebuilt or re-roofed almost every cottage on his estate, making what had been little better

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than pig-styes, fit for human habitation; and when he found that his annual rents could never suffice to do all that was required in this way for his tenants in his mountain property, he induced my eldest brother, then just of age, to join with him in selling two of the pictures which were the heirlooms of the family and the pride of the house, a Gaspar Poussin and a Hobbema, which last now adorns the walls of Dorchester House. I remember as a child seeing the tears in his eyes as this beautiful painting was taken out of the room in which it had been like a perpetual ray of sunshine. But the sacrifice was completed, and eighty good stone and slate 'Hobbema Cottages,' as we called them, soon rose all over Glenasmoil. Be it noted by those who deny every merit in an Anglo-Irish landlord, that not a farthing was added to the rent of the tenants who profited by this real act of self-denial." [6] Hobbema would have been pleased to know that the sale of his painting created new housing for so many families.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Meindert Hobbema, *A Wooded Landscape*, c. 1663, oil on canvas, Trustees of the Wallace Collection, London

fig. 2 Meindert Hobbema, *Landscape with Cows and Travellers*, 1663, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin. Photo © National Gallery of Ireland

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NOTES

[1] Smith's 1835 entry for the painting consisted of only a brief description, but in his 1842 supplement he described the work in great detail and praised it lavishly, saying: "This brilliant epitome of Nature is justly entitled to the highest commendations, and is in truth an example of . . . rare occurrence." (John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. [London, 1829–1842], 9:725).

[2] Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collection of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, and Illuminated Mss.*, 3 vols. (London 1854–1857), 2:203.

[3] Wolfgang Stechow, "The Early Years of Hobbema," *Arts Quarterly* 22 (Spring 1959): 9, 15.

[4] Gregory Rubinstein has pointed out verbally that it is nonetheless possible that both paintings could have been together in Ireland in the early 1830s. Littleton was appointed chief secretary to the lord lieutenant of Ireland in 1833, and must therefore have spent a considerable amount of time there during this period. When it was in the Cobbe Collection, the Hobbema was paired with a landscape by Gaspard Dughet (French, 1615 - 1675). See Alastair Laing, ed., *Clerics and Connoisseurs: An Irish Art Collection through Three Centuries* (London, 2001), no. 40.

[5] A case in point is *The Travelers* and *The Old Oak* (discussed in the entry on *The Travelers*), which are apparently companion pieces, but whose commonality, other than dimensions and date, is essentially that the compositions were both derived from works by Jacob van Ruisdael.

[6] Frances Power Cobbe, Life of Frances Power Cobbe, 2 vols. (Boston and New York, 1894), 1:23–24. For further information on the "Hobbema Cottages" see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. and Alec Cobbe, "'A Better Picture to the Christian Eye': The Sale of Meindert Hobbema's Wooded Landscape from Newbridge," and Charles Sebag-Montefiore, "Collecting in Ireland in the 18th Century: The Historic Cobbe Collection in Context," in Alastair Laing, ed., Clerics and Connoisseurs: An Irish Art Collection through Three Centuries (London, 2001), no. 24.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a medium-weight, tightly and plain-woven fabric that has two lining fabrics attached to it. The original tacking margins were opened up and added to the picture plane, expanding the painting by approximately 0.5 cm on all sides. At some point in the painting's history, this area was inpainted to incorporate it into

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the picture. The remainder of the original tacking margins as well as those of the first lining fabric have been removed. The stretcher is slightly larger than the painting and as a result the dimensions have been extended up to an additional 1.0 cm on all sides. The warm dark gray ground is a moderately thick layer. The paint was applied in a thin paste with vigorous brushwork. Low impasto is found in foliage and figure highlights. The ground continues onto the expanded areas around the edges, but the paint does not. The X-radiographs show a change in the lower left corner, where the artist painted out a small tree trunk.

A small L-shaped tear occurs in the clouds to the right of center. Small losses are confined to the tear and edges, and abrasion is minimal. There is a pronounced craquelure pattern in the sky, which is slightly disfiguring. Old newspaper on the back of the stretcher is dated December 1916. The painting was probably lined at that time. A second lining fabric was added when the painting was treated in 1941. In 1987, the painting was treated again to remove discolored varnish and inpainting, including the non-original paint that had been added to the opened-up tacking margins.

PROVENANCE

Thomas Cobbe [1733-1814], Newbridge House, Donabate, near Dublin, by 1770;[1] gift 1810, with the Cobbe estates and painting collection, to his grandson, Charles Cobbe [1782-1857]; sold 1839 through Michael Gernon to (Thomas Brown, London); sold 4 April 1840 to Robert Stayner Holford, M.P. [1808-1892], Dorchester House, London, and Westonbirt, Gloucestershire;[2] by inheritance to his son, Lieut.-Col. Sir George Lindsay Holford, K.C.V.O. [1860-1926];[3] purchased 1901 through (Charles J. Wertheimer, London) by J. Pierpont Morgan [1837-1913], New York;[4] by inheritance to his son, J.P. Morgan, Jr. [1867-1943], New York; consigned February 1935 to (M. Knoedler & Co., New York); sold 13 December 1935 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 24 June 1937 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;[5] gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] Thomas Cobbe may have acquired the painting by Hobbema upon the recommendation of the Rev. Matthew Pilkington (1701–1774), who was private secretary to Thomas' father, Charles Cobbe (1686–1765), the Archbishop of Dublin. Pilkington wrote enthusiastically about the Hobbema, then in Cobbe's collection, in

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his book *The Gentleman's and Connoisseur's Dictionary of Painters* (London, 1770), 288. The Knoedler prospectus for the painting (in NGA curatorial files) says the painting was owned by the elder Charles Cobbe (Thomas' father) and then inherited by the younger Charles Cobbe, who is incorrectly identified as the elder Charles' grandson, when he was in fact the great-grandson. The prospectus does not name Thomas.

[2] For the painting's early provenance see Alastair Laing, ed., *Clerics & Connoisseurs: The Rev. Matthew Pilkington, the Cobbe Family and the Fortunes of an Irish Art Collection through Three Centuries*, Exh. cat., The Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood House, London, 2001: 9, 50-51, 71, 87-89, 116, no. 24, 373 n. 11 for Wheelock and Cobbe essay.

[3] *The Holford Collection, Dorchester House*, 2 vols., Oxford, 1927, 2: ix, produced by the executors of Sir G.L. Holford's estate, says that the Hobbema that had belonged to "Mr." (i.e. R.S.) Holford was sold to help pay his death duties. Holford also owned another painting that came to the National Gallery of Art by way of the Andrew W. Mellon Collection, Anthony van Dyck's portrait of Marchesa Balbi (1937.1.49).

[4] "In the Sale Room," *Connoisseur* 1 (September-December 1901): 190. The Knoedler prospectus (in NGA curatorial files) says this sale took place in 1905.

[5] The painting was Knoedler no. CA 787. See the letter from Nancy C. Little, librarian, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, to Gregory M.G. Rubinstein, 12 September 1987; the Knoedler bill of sale to Mellon; and Mellon collection records, all in NGA curatorial files.

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1851 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1851, no. 49.

1857 Art Treasures of the United Kingdom: Paintings by Ancient Masters, Art Treasures Palace, Manchester, 1857, no. 767.

1862 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1862, no. 3.

1887 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1887, no. 59.

1900 Exhibition of Pictures by Dutch Masters of the Seventeenth Century, Burlington Fine Arts Club, London, 1900, no. 24.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Meindert Hobbema
Dutch, 1638 - 1709

Wooded Landscape with Figures

c. 1658

oil on panel
overall: 53.34 × 67.31 cm (21 × 26 1/2 in.)
framed: 78.11 × 93.35 × 8.89 cm (30 3/4 × 36 3/4 × 3 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower right, MH in monogram: MHobbema
Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2015.143.13

ENTRY

In this quiet landscape scene, two men converse as they amble along a rutted road atop a low-lying dike that separates a verdant forest from the drainage canal at the edge of a Dutch polder. The substantial buildings, churches, and towers that rise dimly along the horizon may represent Amsterdam, Meindert Hobbema's native city, but they are so distant that they barely intrude on the painting's overriding sense of nature. [1] The pale bluish-green tonality of the foliage is that of late spring, when the trees have filled out but their leaves have not yet reached full maturity. Soft pools of light suggest the freshness of the air as clouds gently flow across the Dutch sky.

The light and delicate quality of this work is characteristic of paintings executed by Hobbema in the late 1650s. Wolfgang Stechow was the first scholar to group this painting with other early works by the artist, including *A River Scene* (1658, Detroit Institute of Arts), largely because of the distinctive character of Hobbema's signature at the beginning of his career: MHobbema (with the M and H joined). [2] These two works are also comparable in the way light falling on tree-lined country

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roads illuminates figures traveling along them.

Although no formal records shed light on Hobbema's early training, Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682) testified in Amsterdam in July 1660 that Hobbema had "served and learned with me for a few years." [3] Nevertheless, the modest character of this landscape is strikingly different from the more robust landscapes Hobbema executed in the early 1660s as a result of Van Ruisdael's influence. Thus, it would seem that Hobbema painted this work before he began his apprenticeship with Van Ruisdael, who had moved to Amsterdam from Haarlem in 1657.

Stechow suggested that the style of Hobbema's early works harkened back to paintings by Jacob's uncle Salomon van Ruysdael (Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670), who worked in Haarlem. [4] Stylistic connections between these artists are particularly evident when viewing Hobbema's *A River Scene*, which resembles in many ways Van Ruysdael's early river views where trees arch over a receding river bank. However, no documentary evidence exists to suggest that Hobbema ever trained in Haarlem, and differences between their painting techniques would seem to preclude a direct artistic relationship. Unlike Salomon van Ruysdael, Hobbema applied rather thick impastos when painting foliage, and he did not articulate individual leaves as carefully as did the older master.

Although Hobbema's earliest teacher is not known, it seems probable that he was from Amsterdam. The underlying concept of the Gallery's *Wooded Landscape with Figures* owes much to the landscape drawings and etchings of the late 1640s and early 1650s by Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) (see, for example, *Landscape with a Road beside a Canal*). Rembrandt often depicted roads skirting wooded areas and waterways, and his drawings inspired a number of Amsterdam artists, including Philips Koninck (Dutch, 1619 - 1688) and Anthonie van Borssom (Dutch, 1629/1630 - 1677), who may have in turn influenced Hobbema's approach to landscape painting at the beginning of his career.

X-radiography and infrared reflectography reveal that Hobbema thought creatively about how to compose his composition and render atmospheric effects, particularly around the trees. Over the ground layer, Hobbema painted an orange-tan imprimatura that served as a midtone throughout the composition. This layer is visible in many areas of the final composition, particularly along the water and in the foliage of the trees. Hobbema left a reserve for the trees when he painted the sky and subsequently sketched in tree trunks and branches in this area with a light

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brown paint. After the sky paint layer had dried, Hobbema added the tree trunks, branches, and foliage. Remarkably, in some areas of the foliage, Hobbema purposely revealed the orange-tan imprimatura by removing small amounts of the semidried paint with a tool, likely to enhance the atmospheric character of the scene and to create a greater sense of depth. Unfortunately, it is not known where Hobbema learned this distinctive painting technique, which has not been observed in the work of other landscape artists. [5]

In *Wooded Landscape with Figures*, Hobbema was more interested in capturing the gentle rhythms of nature than in emphasizing the human presence in this pastoral world. His reticence to include many people, born of his own weakness as a figure painter, seemingly bothered a later, probably early 20th-century restorer who overpainted the foreground. To enliven Hobbema's composition, the restorer added four cows and six sheep as well as a man and dog watching over them. When Russell J. Quandt conserved the painting in 1953, he removed this overpaint only to discover the three people and dog that Hobbema had included in his landscape. [6] Strikingly, Hobbema's figures originally did play an important compositional role. A small figure, barely discernable along the tree line near the curve of the dike, amplifies the suggestion of depth and distance. The two men in the middle of the road, one wearing a red jacket and one carrying a white sack on his shoulder, serve another important function. Not only do they provide an engaging pictorial accent that enhances the scene's pleasant charm, but they also suggest those quiet moments of communication that are crucial in establishing the social bonds essential to human existence.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

December 9, 2019

NOTES

[1] Wolfgang Stechow, "The Early Years of Hobbema," *Art Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (Spring 1959): 2–18, especially 5 (illus.), no. 3. The buildings on the horizon cannot be identified with certainty, but the tower on the right could represent the Montelbaanstoren, built in the early 16th century as part of Amsterdam's eastern ramparts.

[2] Wolfgang Stechow, "The Early Years of Hobbema," *Art Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (Spring 1959): 14.

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[3] Abraham Bredius, “Uit Hobbema’s laatste levensjaren,” *Oud Holland* 28 (1915): 193, no. 1.

[4] See, for example, Salomon van Ruysdael’s *River Landscape* (1643, Detroit Institute of Arts) in George S. Keyes, Susan Donahue Kuretsky, Axel Rüger, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Masters of Dutch Painting: The Detroit Institute of Arts* (Detroit, 2004), 216–217, cat. 88. See also Wolfgang Stechow, “The Early Years of Hobbema,” *Art Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (Spring 1959): 2–18.

[5] This distinctive painting technique has not been found in other paintings by Hobbema in the collection of the National Gallery of Art.

[6] Russell J. Quandt, “Reclamation of Two Paintings,” *The Corcoran Gallery of Art Bulletin* 6, no. 3 (Oct. 1953): 2–9.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single wooden panel that was thinned in a previous treatment to 0.5–0.6 centimeters (approx. 1/4 inch). The reverse and edges are covered with wax-resin-infused fabric.

The preparatory layers include a thin white ground covered by a thin orange-tan upper ground or imprimatura. The latter was used as a midtone throughout the composition and is visible in areas such as the water on the right side of the composition, the shadows at the left edge of the road, and in smaller localized areas throughout the trees and foliage. On top of the imprimatura, Hobbema painted the sky wet-in-wet and likely in one layer down to the horizon line. The overall warm tonality in the sky is due to the thin quality of the paint layer that allows the imprimatura to show through.

The x-radiograph reveals that Hobbema left reserves for the initial placement of trees, branches, and parts of the foliage in the sky paint layer. [1] It is likely that Hobbema next applied a painted sketch using thin brown paint to refine the contours and positioning of the trees and branches, which is visible in the infrared reflectogram (IRR). [2] The IRR better reflects the placement of compositional elements in the final composition compared to the x-radiograph.

After the sky paint layer was essentially dry, the foliage was applied, and then the tree trunks and branches were painted on top of the dry layer below. There was some amount of back-and-forth layering between the foliage and smaller tree branches, but Hobbema left areas of the orange-tan imprimatura peeking through

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the foliage throughout the composition.

In some areas of the foliage, Hobbema used a tool to remove small amounts of paint to reveal the orange-tan imprimatura, which helped create a greater sense of depth. The quality of the edges of the paint in these areas suggests that paint was removed by the artist when the paint layers were semidry, and this effect does not appear to be caused by damage.

The support, ground, and paint layers are in good condition. There are small areas of localized cracks that have a wide aperture throughout the foliage and tree trunks. The craquelure is only in the paint layers and consequently exposing the orange-tan imprimatura below. It is likely that the cracks are associated with the use of a particular brown and/or black pigment. Despite these cracks, the paint layers remain stable. There are small scattered dabs of retouching throughout, especially in the sky, visible under ultraviolet radiation. There is a small check in the panel near the top left corner that is 5.4 centimeters long.

Dina Anchin, based on the examination notes by Carol Christenson and examination notes and technical entry by Melanie Gifford in *Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 2001).

December 9, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14 in. × 17 in.). The parameters were 32 kV, 8 mA, 40 seconds, and 97.5 in. distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

[2] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.1–1.4 microns (J filter).

PROVENANCE

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Sir George Donaldson [1845-1925], London; purchased 1906 by William A. Clark [1839-1925], New York; bequest April 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2015 by the National Gallery of Art.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Honthorst, Gerrit van

Also known as
Honthorst, Gerard van
Gherardo della Notte
Dutch, 1592 - 1656

BIOGRAPHY

Gerrit van Honthorst was born in Utrecht in 1592 to a large Catholic family. His father, Herman van Honthorst, was a tapestry designer and a founding member of the Utrecht Guild of St. Luke in 1611. After training with the Utrecht painter Abraham Bloemaert (1566–1651), Honthorst traveled to Rome, where he is first documented in 1616.[1] Honthorst's trip to Rome had an indelible impact on his painting style. In particular, Honthorst looked to the radical stylistic and thematic innovations of Caravaggio (Roman, 1571 - 1610), adopting the Italian painter's realism, dramatic chiaroscuro lighting, bold colors, and cropped compositions. Honthorst's distinctive nocturnal settings and artificial lighting effects attracted commissions from prominent patrons such as Cardinal Scipione Borghese (1577–1633), Cosimo II, the Grand Duke of Tuscany (1590–1621), and the Marcheses Benedetto and Vincenzo Giustiniani (1554–1621 and 1564–1637). He lived for a time in the Palazzo Giustiniani in Rome, where he would have seen paintings by Caravaggio, and works by Annibale Carracci (Bolognese, 1560 - 1609) and Domenichino (1581–-1641), artists whose classicizing tendencies would also inform Honthorst's style. The contemporary Italian art critic Giulio Mancini noted that Honthorst was able to command high prices for his striking paintings, which decorated both private residences and churches including Santa Maria della Scala and Santa Maria della Vittoria.

Utrecht artists celebrated Honthorst's return to his native city in 1620 with a raucous party held at the inn called "Het Poortgen" (The Little Gate), and quickly established a large workshop.[2] In the same year, Honthorst married Sophia Coopmans and moved into a house on the Snippevlucht, near the home of Hendrick ter Brugghen (Dutch, 1588 - 1629).[3] In 1622 he joined the Utrecht Guild of Saint Luke and served as its dean in 1625, 1626, 1628, and 1629.[5] Honthorst's international reputation was such that in 1621, Dudley Carleton, the British ambassador in The Hague, sent one of Honthorst's paintings to Thomas Howard,

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Earl of Arundel, who praised Honthorst for his mastery of “Caravagioes colouringe.”[4] Joachim von Sandrart (1606–1688), one of his students, wrote that Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640) visited Honthorst’s studio during a trip to Utrecht in 1627.

Honthorstjoined fellow Utrecht painters Ter Brugghen and Dirck van Baburen (c. 1595–1624) in applying the Caravaggesque manner to genre subjects like merry companies and musicians. Honthorst’s paintings, however, tend to exhibit greater classicizing clarity that those of his fellow Utrecht Caravaggisti, and his works are often characterized by even lighting, smooth modeling, and slightly idealized figures.

Honthorst’s smooth and elegant approach to allegorical and portrait painting helped him establish a very successful career as a court painter. He went to London between April and December 1628 to paint for the court of King? Charles I. By 1630, Honthorst had moved to The Hague and working as a court painter for the exiled monarchs of Bohemia, King Frederick and Queen Elizabeth, as well as for the Stadholder Frederick Hendrick and his wife, Princess Amalia van Solms. He purchased a house in The Hague, where he joined the Guild of Saint Luke in 1637.[6] His courtly commissions also extended to King Christian IV of Denmark, for whom he painted a suite of works between 1635 and 1639. In 1649, he contributed to the paintings in the Oranjezaal of the Huis ten Bosch. In 1652, Honthorst returned permanently to Utrecht, where he primarily painted portraits until his death on April 27, 1656.

[1] His earliest signed and dated artwork is a 1616 drawing, now in the Nasjonalgalleriet in Oslo, after Caravaggio’s 1600 *Martyrdom of St. Peter* in Santa Maria del Popolo.

[2] The Utrecht humanist Aernout van Buchell described the event in his diary; *Notae Quotidianae van Aernout van Buchell*, ed. J. W. C. van Campen, Utrecht, 1940, 1, 2.

[3] Joneath Spicer and Lynn Federle Orr, *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht During the Golden Age* (Exh. cat: San Francisco, Baltimore, London, 1997), 88–89.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

[4] William Noel Sainsbury, *Original unpublished papers illustrative of the life of Sir Peter Paul Rubens, as an artist and a diplomatist*, (London, 1859), 290–292.

[5] Samuel Muller, *De Utrechtsche archieven, I: schildersvereeingen te Utrecht* (Utrehct, 1880), 116, 119, 128.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

June 14, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Gerrit van Honthorst
Dutch, 1592 - 1656

The Concert

1623

oil on canvas
overall: 123.5 × 205 cm (48 5/8 × 80 11/16 in.)
Inscription: upper left, GH in monogram: GHonthorst fe 1623
Patrons' Permanent Fund and Florian Carr Fund 2013.38.1

ENTRY

Gerrit van Honthorst's *The Concert*, which measures more than four by six feet, depicts a group of colorfully attired singers and musicians as they bend forward, fully engaged, to follow the musical scores laid out on a large, tapestry-covered table. [1] A bearded concert master, dressed in a black trimmed wine-colored doublet, guides them by pointing the bow of his bass viol at notes in one of the books. So close are the musicians to the front of the picture plane that their joyous song seems to pour into the viewer's space. Behind this group, a cheerful young man raises his glass in celebration while he simultaneously places his finger over his mouth to urge the viewer to listen quietly to the melodious sounds of this musical ensemble. [2] Two other smiling background figures at the far right add to the festive character of the scene.

Honthorst executed this remarkable painting in Utrecht in 1623, shortly after he had returned from a prolonged stay in Rome where he had become enthralled by the revolutionary style of Caravaggio (Roman, 1571 - 1610). [3] The immediacy of Caravaggio's religious and genre paintings inspired Honthorst as well as other painters of his generation in Rome who became known as the "Caravaggisti." [4]

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Like Caravaggio, these artists generally worked directly from models and brought their scenes close to the picture plane as though they were but an extension of the viewer's world. They emphasized the momentary quality of their images through dramatic gestures and pronounced contrasts of light and dark.

In Rome Honthorst often introduced artificial light sources to create the dramatic chiaroscuro effects in his scenes, as in *Merry Company with a Lute Player* in the Uffizi [fig. 1]. Such works were so renowned that he later became known as "Gherardo delle Notti." (Gerrit of the Nights). So esteemed was Honthorst in Rome that he received patronage from important collectors there, including Cardinal Scipione Borghese (1577–1633); Cosimo II, the Grand Duke of Tuscany (1590–1621)' and the Marcheses Benedetto and Vincenzo Giustiniani (1554––1621 and 1564–1637), in whose Palazzo he resided for a significant period of time. [5] When Honthorst returned to Utrecht in 1620 he was a famous man, and a celebratory feast in his honor welcomed him home.

Despite Honthorst's predilection in Rome for painting scenes with dramatic effects of light and dark, often by means of artificial light sources, *The Concert* is bright and airy. He has here fused Caravaggism and classicizing traditions to create an image appropriate for the artistic tastes and expectations of the Dutch Court in The Hague. Natural daylight falls evenly across the composition, illuminating the shimmering fabrics, flowing feathers, and smooth wooden musical instruments. It models the figures' varied flesh tones, which range from the ruddy complexions of male performers to the women's pale breasts and rosy cheeks. It creates realistic shadows, such as those on the music books under the concertmaster's hand and bow that reinforce the significance of individual gestures and help enhance the sense of immediacy. Even with the *repoussoir* figure of the concertmaster, on whom light does not fall as strongly as on his companions, it accents the curls of his hair and brings out the sheen of his glistening wine-colored doublet.

In Rome, Honthorst drew his inspiration primarily from Caravaggio's mature paintings, but for the subject matter and naturalistic light effects of *The Concert* he seems to have turned to that master's early genre scenes, such as *The Musicians*, c. 1595 [fig. 2]. [6] For example, the captivating shadow cast on the face of the instrument by the lute player's right hand as she strums its strings is a pictorial effect he derived from Caravaggio's *The Lute Player*, c. 1595–1596 [fig. 3], versions of which were in both the Cardinal del Monte and Giustiniani collections. Despite this thematic and stylistic similarity to Caravaggio's early depictions of musicians, however, the visual impact of Honthorst's painting is quite different. The reds,

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yellows, blues, greens, and lavender of the musicians' brightly colored satins, some of which are festooned with ostrich feathers dyed to match, lend a remarkably festive air to this gathering. In part he derived this rich palette from other Caravaggisti working in Rome in the 1610s, among them Orazio Gentileschi (Florentine, 1563 - 1639), Simon Vouet (French, 1590 - 1649), and Lionello Spada (1576–1622). Spada's *The Concert*, c. 1615 [fig. 4], moreover, includes various motifs that Honthorst effectively exploited in this painting, including the concertmaster using his bow to direct the musicians' attention to notes in a musical score, and a boy looking out at the viewer while bringing his finger to his lips to encourage silence.

The Concert has a classicizing quality that separates it from his strongly Caravaggist works, a stylistic characteristic that becomes increasingly strong over the course of his career, particularly in paintings he made for the Dutch court. Honthorst's classicism, evident in the even light that floods the scene, is apparent in his balanced composition of singers and musicians arrayed behind a table situated parallel to the picture plane. The clarity of the smoothly modelled, slightly idealized figures speaks to that same artistic impulse. This classicistic framework likely stems from the academic training Honthorst received from his teacher Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651), but it was reinforced in Rome by the paintings of Annibale Carracci (Bolognese, 1560 - 1609) and Domenichino (Italian, 1581 - 1641) that he saw in the Giustiani collection. [7] The timing of Honthorst's return to Utrecht in late May or early June of 1620 was undoubtedly tied to the political circumstances in the Netherlands. Honthorst had been in Rome during the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–1621), a period during which hostilities between the United Provinces and Spain had been temporarily halted. With the end of the Truce fast approaching, Honthorst returned home before warfare recommenced and travel became more complicated. His return was celebrated in Utrecht and he was greeted with a feast attended by most of the established artists in town, including his former teacher Bloemaert. [8]

Honthorst's fame quickly spread throughout the Netherlands. In June 1621 Sir Dudley Carleton (1573–1632), the English ambassador to the Dutch Republic, wrote from The Hague to Lord Arundel, his London patron, that Honthorst, who had spent "some yeares at Rome & other parts of Italy to mend his art; wch consisting much in night works...," is "growing into reputacion in these parts." [9] Carleton was so impressed with the artist that he commissioned a painting for Lord Arundel, *Aeneas Fleeing from the Sack of Troy* (now lost). After receiving it, Arundel wrote

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Carleton to say how delighted he was and how he admired Honthorst's ability to emulate the style of Caravaggio. [10]

It is not certain how Carleton came to know of Honthorst and his Caravaggist manner of painting so soon after the artist had returned to Utrecht. The English ambassador may have been advised of Honthorst's abilities from Bloemaert, but Carleton, who had acted as an art agent for English collectors when he lived in Italy in the 1610s, also continued to have his pulse on the Italian art market. [11] Whatever the source of information, Carleton quickly concluded that Honthorst's ability to work in Caravaggio's revolutionary style would be welcome among English and Dutch courtiers who wanted to be *au courant* with international trends.

This history is significant for *The Concert* since all evidence indicates that Honthorst painted this masterpiece for a courtly patron in The Hague. Its life-size scale and its carefully crafted and thoughtfully conceived composition indicate beyond any doubt that it was a commissioned work, probably intended to hang high on a wall to lend a festive atmosphere to a grand room. The large red and green Ushak Star carpet, imported from western Anatolia, carefully rendered to indicate both the four-leaf clover design and the nubs of the pile, was an expensive table covering of a style traditionally intended for a Sultan's court. [12]

The beautifully conceived and expensive musical instruments, including a bass viol, violin, lute and bandora with a gilded figurehead, were of a type played in courtly settings. [13] However, according to the Dutch musicologist Louis Peter Grijp, this combination of instruments, and, in particular, the bandora, is rarely, if ever, represented in Dutch painting. [14] How Honthorst came to depict this distinctive set of instruments is an intriguing question. The combination of instruments resembles that of an "English mixed consort," which may indicate that the work was commissioned by a patron familiar with this musical tradition. The oblong, soft-covered music books, which are similar to those seen in other Dutch paintings of the period, were handwritten: transcribing individual musical parts from a printed source was the responsibility of each musician. The foreground book, partly shaded by the concertmaster's hand, has only musical bars and notes, whereas the book to which he points with his bow also has text for the singers. Unfortunately it is not possible to identify the music in these books even though the notes are quite legible, particularly as preserved in a partial copy of the painting in the Whitaker Museum in England [fig. 5]. [15] Grijp, nevertheless, concluded that the presence of such music books indicates polyphonic singing of a fairly skilled nature. [16] He has also confirmed that the combination of instruments would produce a harmonious

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musical experience. [17]

Evidence that *The Concert* was in a princely collection in The Hague in the early seventeenth century comes from contemporary palace inventories and documents from the Napoleonic era. In early 1795, after French forces had overrun the Netherlands, the Dutch Stadhouder, Prince Willem V of Orange-Nassau (1748–1806), fled the country. On May 16, representatives of the French Republic and the newly formed Batavian Republic signed the Treaty of The Hague, and, shortly thereafter, representatives of the French government in the Netherlands packed up numerous paintings and shipped them to Paris as spoils of war. Among the 191 paintings taken from the Gallery of Willem V in The Hague was: "A concert of several men and women musicians, life size, half-length on canvas by G. Honthorst, 4 feet 5 inches [by] 6 feet 5 inches." [18] The dimensions and description of this concert scene can be associated only with *The Concert*. [19]

Most of the paintings in the collection of Willem V had been assembled by the prince's ancestors in the early-to-mid seventeenth century, and had passed by inheritance to him. *The Concert* is likely the painting described in the inventory made in 1632 of the contents of the Palace Noordeinde in The Hague, the residence of Prince Frederick Hendrick (1584–1647), as: "A painting for the fireplace mantle made by Honthorst, being a music." [20] Since the description is so vague and no dimensions are indicated, one cannot be certain of this identification, nevertheless, hanging above the fireplace in the palace's largest room, the "*groote bovensael*" (upper great hall), this painting would have commanded the most prestigious spot in the chamber, an appropriate location for the Gallery's masterpiece. The same painting must be the one listed in an inventory made in 1702 describing the contents of the Palace Noordeinde after the death of Prince Willem III. [21] In 1791, Honthorst's "A musical company, on canvas" was transferred from Noordeinde to Prince Willem V's cabinet of paintings at the Buitenhof, the very location from which the French removed *The Concert* in 1795. [22]

Surprisingly, when the confiscated Dutch paintings were unpacked in Paris, six of the 191 works sent from The Hague were missing, including *The Concert*. [23] It is not known when these paintings became separated from the others, all of which were destined for the Musée Napoleon at the Louvre, but apparently some French dignitaries were allowed to select a few choice works for their own collections. [24] No further trace of *The Concert* exists until the 1840s, by which time it had entered a French private collection where it remained through the generations, unknown to

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scholars. The only visible trace of the painting is a watercolor made around 1900 by the painter Etienne Azambre (1859–1935), which depicts *The Concert* hanging in the grand salon of the family's country estate [fig. 6]. The reappearance of this masterpiece in 2009, one of the most remarkable discoveries in Dutch art in recent years, demonstrates that Honthorst's stylistic and thematic innovations had an even greater impact among Dutch artistic circles in the early 1620s than had been previously realized.

In 1623, when Honthorst painted *The Concert*, only two courtly patrons in The Hague could have commissioned such a large and imposing work: either Prince Maurits of Orange (1567–1625) or Frederick I (1596–1632) and Elizabeth Stuart (1596-–1662), the exiled king and queen of Bohemia, who had arrived in The Hague in April 1621 just as the Twelve Years' Truce was ending. [25] Since the painting hung in 1632 in the private quarters of Prince Frederick Hendrick, Maurits' half-brother and successor, it seems plausible to assume that Maurits had commissioned *The Concert* to embellish his residence at the Stadhouderlijk Kwartier. After the end of the Twelve Years' Truce, however, Prince Maurits was fully involved in leading the Dutch forces against Spanish troops, and had little time (or interest) to develop a large art collection. [26] Nevertheless, even if Maurits was never was a very active patron of the arts, he did try to enhance the international reputation of his court by expanding his residential quarters in the Binnenhof, improving its interior décor, building impressive gardens, and entertaining lavishly, often with musical entertainment. [27] The paintings he possessed generally came to him as gifts, either from municipalities (often mythological scenes with political implications), admiralties (Maurits was the admiral-general of the Republic, hence he received paintings depicting victorious maritime battles), or other courts wishing to curry favor (mostly portraits). [28]

The other court in The Hague, that of exiled King Frederick I of Bohemia and his consort Elizabeth Stuart (known as the "Winter King and Winter Queen"), was better situated to respond to Sir Dudley Carleton's enthusiastic endorsement of Honthorst in 1621. Frederick I and Elizabeth Stuart were, respectively, the nephew of Prince Maurits and the daughter of King James I, and so they were treated with the highest respect by Carleton, who, as English ambassador, served on behalf of King James. [29] When the Winter King and Winter Queen arrived in The Hague in April 1621, Carleton provided them lodging in his own home until a suitable residence in The Hague could be refurbished for their use. [30] The couple's arrival in the English ambassador's home, thus occurred only a couple of months before

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Carleton's letter to Lord Arundel in which he praised the artistry of Honthorst. No documentation exists that the king and queen of Bohemia developed an immediate relationship with Honthorst at that time. Nevertheless, by the late 1620s they were clearly in close contact for, when Honthorst was invited to paint at the English court in 1628 he took with him, as gifts for Elizabeth's brother, King Charles I, two portraits he had painted of the couple. [31] In 1630, after he returned to the Netherlands, Honthorst became their court painter, and he continued to work for Elizabeth Stuart after Frederick's untimely death in 1632.

Life in The Hague in the 1620s was no hardship for the exiled king and queen, no matter how badly the king's political fortunes in Germany were faring. [32] The couple was treated well by the Dutch, who were determined to honor their royal visitors. When they traveled, generally in elegant horse-drawn coaches and accompanied by attendants dressed in colorful livery, crowds would line the route. Their personal prestige was quite high, particularly in 1623. That year not only marked the tenth anniversary of their wedding, which had taken place in London, but also the tenth anniversary of their arrival by ship in Vlissingen, a stopover on the newlyweds' way to Heidelberg, the seat of Frederick's domain as Elector Palatine. [33] In Vlissingen, the couple had been greeted by Prince Maurits, both because of family connections, but also because the marriage of Frederick, the Elector Palatine, and Elizabeth Stuart had created a political alliance that greatly strengthened the Protestant cause in central Europe.

The events of 1613 had huge political implications in their day, and still resonated in 1623 despite the defeat of Frederick's forces by Catholic armies in 1620, after which he and his consort lived in exile in The Hague [fig. 7]. Even though Frederick's political situation in Bohemia was dire, he continued to be a leader of the Protestants. He firmly believed that he would regain his realm once he received sufficient military and financial support from the Dutch and the English governments, a general perception that seemed reinforced by the couple's sumptuous lifestyle in The Hague. [34] A clear indication of the ongoing popularity of the king and queen is that, in 1623, three different marine painters—Hendrick Vroom (1566 - 1640), Cornelis Claesz van Wieringen (Dutch, c. 1580 - 1633), and Adam Willaerts (1577–1664)—created enormous panoramas depicting the festive arrival of Frederick and Elizabeth Stuart at Vlissingen in 1613. [35] Although it is not known who commissioned these works, they were likely ordered by municipalities (probably, among them, Haarlem) that felt it was politically advisable to demonstrate support for the king and queen of Bohemia in their efforts to regain

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their realm.

The king and queen had a close personal relationship to Prince Maurits, Frederick's uncle. They were also beholden to him and the States General of the Netherlands for the military and financial backing they had already received for their cause, as well as for the generous way in which they had been welcomed in The Hague. In a courtly culture where gift-giving was a means of expressing gratitude for past support but also an accepted mode for strengthening bonds to ensure future backing, it is quite likely that Frederick and Elizabeth Stuart would have followed this tradition and honored Prince Maurits with a substantial gift in 1623 when there was such enthusiasm for them and optimism about their cause. What better gift for Maurits, who was intent upon raising the international reputation of his court, than a celebratory painting by a dynamic young Utrecht artist, just returned from Rome, who was greatly admired by the English ambassador in The Hague, Sir Dudley Carleton?

Even though no document confirms such a scenario, pictorial and iconographic aspects of the painting reinforce this hypothesis. Without question, the musicians in *The Concert* are fully engaged in their song, which, given their smiles and gestures, must be both delightful and uplifting in its rhythms and its lyrics. All the musicians, save one, are the wholesome, full-bodied and vibrant types familiar from Honthorst's other genre scenes from the 1620s. The one unusual figure is the concertmaster with his long hair and full beard. Nowhere else does such a figure appear in Honthorst's early works, an indication that the artist portrayed a specific individual to assume this important role in the composition. As Henriette Rahusen first noted, this individual's distinctive appearance is akin to that of depictions of the Winter King in a manuscript by Adriaen Pietersz van de Venne (Dutch, 1589 - 1662) that portrays various aspects of courtly life in The Hague in the mid-1620s. The foreground player in a folio page depicting the game of balloon is likely the Winter King, and he so resembles the concertmaster that he must be the same individual. [fig. 8]. [36]

The identification of the concertmaster as King Frederick I of Bohemia adds a political dimension to *The Concert*, a not uncommon phenomenon in "genre" paintings from this period. Here, Frederick guides the performers' efforts by directing their attention to the proper notes on the musical score, thereby ensuring that they will play and sing in harmony. The implication is that he would rule in a similar manner, and that peace and harmony would result from his enlightened reign. This message is, in fact, one underlying Julius Wilhelm Zincgref's emblem

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book, *Emblematum Ethico-politicorum Centuria*, 1619, which was dedicated to Frederick, and which celebrated that leader's political and moral ideals. [37] Frederick's concept of leadership, appropriately, is expressly conveyed in the emblem *Concordia Discors* [Harmony from Discord], which features a lute [fig. 9], the most prominent of the musical instrument in *The Concert.* The text reads:

Comme de sons confus s'entonne l'harmonie

D'vn accordant discord, de mesme vne cité

Quoy que d'homes diuers maintiendra l'equite,

Si par des bonnes loix sagement de manie.

[Like confused rhymes sung in harmony

From discord an agreeable sound, the same for a city

Where equity can be maintained among diverse men

If [they are] wisely handled by good laws.]

The Concert's pictorial and iconographic associations with the Winter King make it quite plausible that he commissioned this work as a gift for Prince Maurits. The painting, which presumably hung prominently in the Stadhouderlijk Kwartier, would have provided a striking backdrop to the musical entertainment that Maurits so enjoyed, and would also have served as a constant reminder of the rightness of Frederick's cause and the need to have Dutch support in his efforts to regain his realm.

By 1632, when *The Concert* was listed as hanging over a fireplace in the centrally located *groote bovensael* in Prince Frederick Hendrick's palace at Noordeinde, both Prince Maurits and King Frederick I of Bohemia had died, and while the political overtones of this work were no longer current, the painting's compelling pictorial qualities endured. The musical ensemble was just as vivacious and enthusiastic as before, and the song had not lost its luster. Honthorst's career, likewise, had not dimmed, and his fame had continued on its upward trajectory.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

By the late 1620s Honthorst had become actively engaged in painting for both the English and the Dutch courts, often painting portraits or *portraits historié*. In these *portraits historié,* nobility assumed pictorial guises, generally in the form of mythological, historical or Arcadian personages. To accommodate the large number of commissions he continued to receive, Honthorst established a large and productive workshop that remained active well past mid-century. However, in retrospect, the artist rarely again reached the artistic heights he achieved in this masterpiece of 1623. In *The Concert* Honthorst skillfully infused the artistic knowledge he had gained from his years in Rome with the energy and fresh vision of an artist at the height of his powers, knowing full well that success with this courtly commission would ensure a long and successful career.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

June 14, 2015

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Gerrit van Honthorst, *Merry Company with a Lute Player*, c. 1620, oil on canvas, Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Musicians*, c. 1595, oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1952 (52.81)

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fig. 3 Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Lute Player*, c. 1595–1596, oil on canvas, The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg. Photo © The State Hermitage Museum / Vladimir Terebenin

fig. 4 Leonello Spada, *The Concert*, c. 1615, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. 681. Photo © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY. Photography by René-Gabriel Ojéda

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fig. 5 (style of) Hendrick ter Brugghen, *The Music Lesson*, oil on canvas, The Whitaker (previously Rossendale Museum & Art Gallery), inv. PA-129

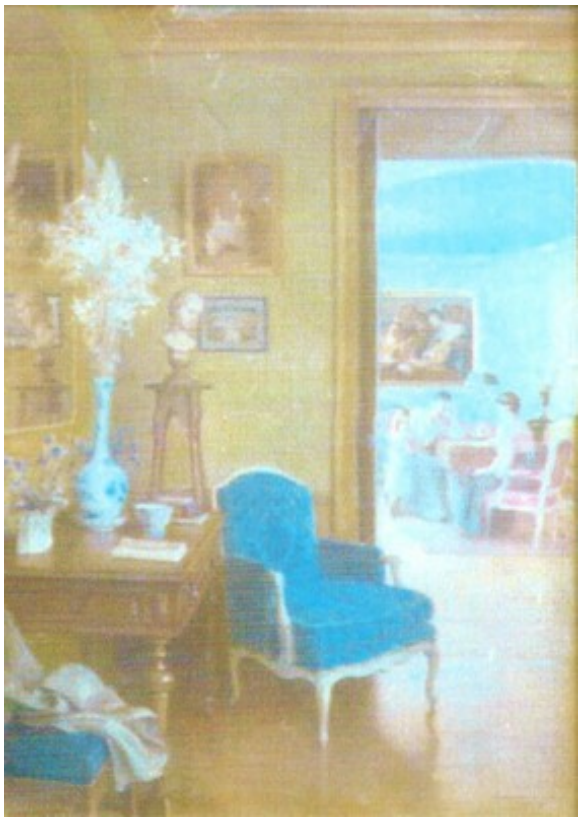

fig. 6 Etienne Azambre, *Interior of a French Country Estate*, c. 1900, watercolor, private collection

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fig. 7 Adriaen van de Venne, "The King and Queen of Bohemia," from Adriaen van de Venne's *Common-Place Book*, c. 1626, watercolor, The British Museum, London. © The Trustees of The British Museum

fig. 8 Detail, Adriaen van de Venne, "A Game of Balloon," from Adriaen van de Venne's *Common-Place Book*, c. 1626, watercolor, The British Museum, London. © The Trustees of The British Museum

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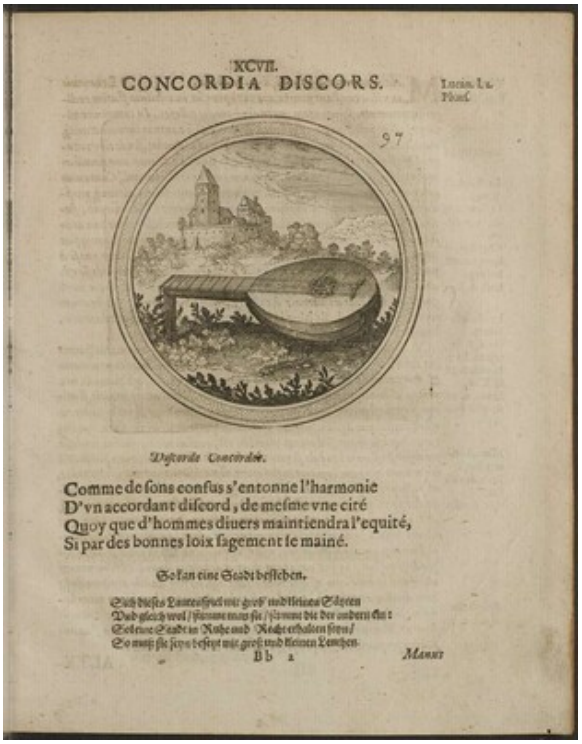

fig. 9 Julius Wilhelm Zincgref, "Concordia Discors," emblem 97 from *Emblematum Ethico- politicorum Centuria*, Oppenheim, 1619, engraving, Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel. © Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, http://digilib.hab.de/inkunabeln/14-Astron/start.htm

NOTES

[1] I am enormously grateful for the extensive research on this painting undertaken by Henriette Rahusen, Research Assistant in the Department of Northern Baroque Painting at the National Gallery of Art, which has provided me with an outstanding framework for writing this entry.

[2] This gesture, meaning “silence,” is illustrated in: John Bulwer, *Chirologia: or the Natural Language of the Hand and Chironomia: or the Art of Manual Rhetoric*, London, 1644, rev. ed., ed. James W. Cleary, Carbondale, 1974, 143, fig. H.

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[3] The date of Honthorst's arrival in Italy is unknown, but it was certainly by 1616, when he made a drawn copy of Caravaggio's *Martyrdom of St Peter* in the Cerasi Chapel of Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome. The drawing, in the National Gallery, Oslo, is illustrated in J. Richard Judson & Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst 1592–1656*, Doornspijk, 1999, pl. 395.

[4] Among the artists in Rome most inspired by Caravaggio at this time were Bartolomeo Manfredi, Orazio Gentileschi, Carlo Saraceni, and Valentin de Boulogne.

[5] A. R. Peltzer , ed., *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Kunste von 1675. Leben der beruhmten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister*, Munich, 1925, 303. Honthorst probably would have received the invitation to live at the Palazzo Giustiniani from Benedetto Giustiniani, whose extensive collection included a large number of works by Caravaggio and the Carracci, as well as by Raphael, Giorgioni, and Titian. After his death in 1621, Benedetto's younger brother, Vincenzo (1564-1637), who also lived in the Palazzo, inherited the property. It seems that other northern artists lived in the Palazzo, which was located near the Church of San Luigi dei Francesi.

[6] He would have seen this painting in the collection of Cardinal Francesco Maria del Monte.

[7] Honthorst's classicism distinguishes his style from that of the other two major Caravaggist artists who flourished in Utrecht in the early-to-mid 1620s, Hendrick ter Brugghen (1588–1629) and Dirck van Baburen (c. 1594–1624), both of whom had been in Rome in the 1610s as well.

[8] For a discussion of this event, see J. Richard Judson & Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst 1592–1656*, Doornspijk, 1999, 14.

[9] W. Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Original unpublished papers illustrative of the life of Sir Peter Paul Rubens, as an artist and a diplomatist. Preserved in H. M. State Paper Office. With an appendix of documents respecting the Arundelian collection; the Earl of Somerset's collection; the great Mantuan collection; the Duke of Buckingham ... etc., etc., etc.,*London, 1859, 290–291. For Carleton, see: M. F. S. Hervey, *The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel*, Cambridge 1921, 297. Carleton, as English Ambassador in Venice and in The Hague, actively sought to find paintings for Arundel's collection.

[10] [1] W. Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Original unpublished papers illustrative of the life of Sir Peter Paul Rubens, as an artist and a diplomatist. Preserved in H. M. State Paper Office. With an appendix of documents respecting the Arundelian collection; the Earl of Somerset's collection; the great Mantuan collection; the Duke of Buckingham ... etc., etc., etc.,* London, 1859, 291-292. On July 21, 1621, Arundel wrote: "I thinke that the painter hath

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expressed ye story wth much arte & both for the postures & ye colouringe, I have seen fewe Duch men arrive unto it, for it hath more of ye Itallian then the Flemish & much of ye manor of Caravaggioes colouringe, wch is nowe soe much esteemed in Rome."

[11] See: Robert Hill, "Sir Dudley Carleton and his relations with Dutch artists 1616–1632," in *Dutch and Flemish artist in Britain 1550-1800, Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, 13, 2003, 255–274.

[12] See Onno Ydema, *Carpets and their Datings in Netherlandish Paintings 1540–1700*, Zutphen, 1991, exp. 41–48. I would like to thank Sumru Krody, Senior Curator at The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum, for identifying this carpet for me. I am also grateful for Rosamond Mack for sharing her observations of the carpet with me in a letter of December 20, 2013. She notes that the carpet "features a distinctive star with 4 spade-shaped lobes attached to the diagonals of the octagonal center." It is a type that was developed commercially in the Ushak region of Ottoman Turkey during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Honthorst's design is roughly accurate, although the green color of the lobes is not otherwise known for such rugs. Generally the lobes are dark blue, and green plays only a minor role in the ornaments within the lobes or on the red grounds. Whether or not Honthorst varied the color palette of the carpet for compositional reasons is not known.

[13] I would like to thank Stephen Ackert, head of the music department at the National Gallery of Art, and the Dutch musicologist Louis Peter Grijp, for helping identify these instruments, and discussing the nature of this musical ensemble. Grijp's observations are contained in an e-mail he sent to the author on Nov. 20, 2014 (curatorial records). The bandora is a type of cittern.

[14] Louis Peter Grijp's comments are contained in an email he sent to the author on Nov. 20, 2014 (curatorial records).

[15] I would like to thank Jackie Taylor for sending me this image of the Whitaker painting, which measures 111.8 x 97.8 cm. This partial replica must have been executed in Honthorst's workshop simultaneously with the Gallery's painting.

[16] Louis Peter Grijp, "Conclusion and Perspectives," in Edwin Buijsen and Louis Peter Grijp, eds., *The Hoogsteder Exhibition of Music & Painting in the Golden Age* (Exh. cat. Hoogsteder & Hoogsteder, The Hague; and Hessenhuis Museum, Antwerp), The Hague and Zwolle, 1994, 120.

[17] Louis Peter Grijp's comments are contained in an email he sent to the author on Nov. 20, 2014 (curatorial records).

[18] "Een Consert, van verscheide speelders en speelsters Leevens groote halverlijf op doek door G. Honthorst, 4 voet 5 duim 6 voet 5 duim." Although the dimensions and proportions of the painting indicated in this inventory

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differ slightly from those of *The Concert*, there is little doubt that it is the painting in question. *The Concert* currently measures 123.5 x 205 cm, and the dimensions given in this document, when calculated in Rijnland feet (current at that time), would be 138.7 x 201.5 cm. Technical examinations of *The Concert* do not indicate that it has been cut at the top or bottom, but it is difficult to judge whether some trimming of the canvas support occurred in the past.

In 1795 a French commission, under the leadership of the botanist André Thouin, decided which paintings to send to Paris take from the Netherlands. The list of paintings taken from the Galerie Willem V in The Hague appears in Beatrijs Brennikmeyer-de Rooy and Arthur Hartkamp, "Oranje's erfgoed in het Mauritshuis," *Oud Holland*, 102, no. 3 (1988), 181-233. The painting by Honthorst is no. 69 on the list. The information in the article is based on a copy of the list of all of the paintings, prints and books taken by the French from the Netherlands to Paris in 1795 and 1811 that was made by Baron A.J.C. Lampsins in March 1814. This document is in the Rijksarchief, The Hague, ARA, Archief Binnenlandse Zaken, Onderwijs, Kunsten en Wetenschappen 1815-1848, dossier no. 4019.

[19] In the past, the painting listed in 1795 has been erroneously identified as *The Concert*, 1624, Musée du Louvre, in which only women and putti are depicted. See, for example, S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, ed., *Inventarissen van de inboedels in de verblijven van de Oranjes en daarmede gelijk te stellen stukken, 1567–1795*, 3 vols., The Hague, 1974–1976, 1 (Inventarissen Nassau-Oranje, 1567-1712) (inventory no. GS147), 207, no. 611, note. See also J. Richard Judson & Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst 1592-1656*, Doornspijk, 1999, 207-208, no. 273. This mistaken identification is partly because Honthorst's 1623 painting of *The Concert* was only rediscovered in 2009.

[20] S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, ed., *Inventarissen van de inboedels in de verblijven van de Oranjes en daarmede gelijk te stellen stukken, 1567-1795*, 3 vols., The Hague, 1974–1976, 1 (Inventarissen Nassau-Oranje, 1567-1712) (inventory no. GS147), 207, no. 611.

[21] S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, ed., *Inventarissen van de inboedels in de verblijven van de Oranjes en daarmede gelijk te stellen stukken, 1567-1795*, 3 vols., The Hague, 1974–1976, 1 (Inventarissen Nassau-Oranje, 1567–1712) (inventory no. GS147), 490, no. 170: [Huis in het Noordeinde (Oude Hof) 1702] "Een schilderij [doeck] voor de schoorsteen, zijnde musicanten van Honthorst." [A painting [canvas] for the chimney, being musicians by Honthorst]. This painting hung on the lower level of the palace, in the "antechamber." Two other inventories of the Oude Hof, one dated 1707 and the other, undated but post-1702, also mention the painting: GS147, p. 543 [Huis in het Noordeinde (Oude Hof) 1707] "*Suyderquartier, (no. 3) Slaepcamer* (Bedroom) *Een Musijcq van Honthorst* (A Music by

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Honthorst)"; and GS147, p. 547 [Huis in het Noordeinde (Oude Hof) (undated), na 1702 (after 1702), *"(no. 4), Slaepcamer* (Bedroom), *Een Musijcq van Honthorst* (A Music by Honthorst).

[22] "Een muziceerend Gezelschap, op doek." S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, ed., *Inventarissen van de inboedels in de verblijven van de Oranjes en daarmede gelijk te stellen stukken, 1567–1795*, 3 vols., The Hague, 1974–1976, 3 (Inventarissen Nassau-Oranje, 1763-1795) (inventory no. GS149), 216, no. 65. The word "Gezelschap" implies a mixed company of men and women.

[23] Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis. *Catalogue raisonné des tableaux et sculptures*. The Hague, 1935, p. XVI, and footnote 2, nr. II: *Catalogus van de schooner verzameling Schilderijen die zig in den Haag bevonden in de Galerij van den voormaligen Stad-houder Willem den vijfden Prins van Orange etc. etc. en die in Frankrijk getransporteerd zijn voor en door de Fransche Natie als gereekend zijnde te behooren onder de geconquesteerde goederen van dien Prins in Mey 1795*, 8o , 36 pages, décrivant 191 tableaux sous 192 nos. (191 paintings under 192 numbers). Significantly, the French "unpacking" list of September 1795 only contains 185 paintings, a discrepancy of six paintings leaving The Hague but not arriving in Paris. See *Tableaux du Stathouder apportés au Musée Central des Arts a Paris (Inventaire dressé par Le Brun et Mazade les 5, 6, 7 et 8 vendemiaire an IV)* (= 27-30 Sept 1795) [Archives national. F. 17, 1276 (dossier no. 6) and F17/1277 "*4eme envoie de la Haye*"] published in: Ferdinand Boyer. "Une Conquete artistique de la Convention: Les Tableaux du Stathouder (1795)" in *Bulletin de la Societé de l'Histoire de l'Art Français* (annee 1970), (Paris, 1972) 149–157.

[24] Louis Gourajod. "La Révolution et les Musées Nationaux, Part II" in *Révue des questions historiques* 24 (Paris, 1878) 203. "[Alexandre Lenoir] trouvait exorbitant que la hautaine administration du Musée [des Arts] ... s'arrogeât le droit de lui enlever les meilleures de ses pacifiques conquêtes, et même les objets précédement refusés ou dédaignés par elle." I would like to thank Henriette Rahusen for this reference.

[25] In 1619 the Protestant leader, Frederick V, the Elector Palatine, accepted the elective crown of Bohemia, and became Frederick I, King of Bohemia. His action incurred the wrath of Ferdinand II, the Holy Roman Emperor, who ousted him after a twelve-month reign. Subsequently, Frederick and his wife Elizabeth Stuart fled to The Hague, where they lived in exile. Because they only reigned for one winter they were derisively called the "Winter King and Winter Queen."

[26] Unfortunately, no inventory of Prince Maurits' collection or estate has survived. In the 1620s, moreover, Maurits suffered from a number of military setbacks, a plot against his life, and deteriorating health, all of which

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hindered his attempt to raise the international reputation of his court.

[27] For an assessment of life at the court of Prince Maurits of Nassau, see, in particular, Kees Zandvliet, “Het hof van een dienaar met vorstelijke allure,” in Kees Zandvliet, *Maurits Prins van Oranje*, exh. cat., Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Zwolle, 2000, 37–63. Frederick Hendrick had a far greater interest in the arts than did Maurits, and, after he became Prince of Orange in 1625, he expanded the cultural character of the Dutch court, partly through the support of his consort Amalia van Solms (1602-1675) and the guidance of his secretary, Constantijn Huygens (1596-–1687).

[28] For the types, and political implications, of gifts that Maurits received, see Wouter Kloek, “Maurits en de beeldende kunst,” in Kees Zandvliet, *Maurits Prins van Oranje*, exh. cat., Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Zwolle, 2000, 147–150.

[29] In 1630, Honthorst became the official court painter of the king and queen of Bohemia, and the exiled couple commissioned at least fifty-eight portraits of family members from the Utrecht master, who ended up opening a second studio in The Hague in order to keep up with the demand for his work.

[30] The States General allotted Frederick of Bohemia a monthly pension of 10,000 guilders and paid for the refurbishment of the Naaldwijk Hof, a home on the Kneuterkijk in The Hague, for the couple’s use (in addition, Elizabeth received a monthly stipend of 26,000 guilders from England). The house had previously belonged to Cornelius van der Mijle, the exiled son-in-law of Johan van Oldenbarneveldt, the senior statesman executed in 1619 after clashing with the politics of Prince Maurits and his supporters. The Winter King and Queen and their growing family would live there for nine years, followed by a move to a palace at Rhenen that the States of the province of Utrecht built on their behalf. This information is taken from Martin Royalton-Kisch, *Adriaen van de Venne’s Album in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, London, 1988, 23.

[31] Willem-Jan Hoogsteder, “De Schilderijen van Frederik and Elizabeth, Koning and Koningen van Bohemen,” Ph.D. diss., Kunsthistorisch Instituut der Rijks Universiteit te Utrecht, Utrecht, 1986, 99.

[32] In 1623, Protestant Union forces fighting on Frederick’s behalf during the Thirty Year’s War had little success against the army of the Catholic League. Nevertheless, in August of that year, King James I granted permission for the leader of the Protestant Union’s army (mercenaries paid with Dutch money) to raise 12,000 men in England, a positive development that Frederick hoped would have an impact on the balance of power. Unfortunately, that was not to be the case, and the political and military situation in Bohemia continued to worsen for the Protestants.

[33] Before Frederick was elected king of Bohemia in 1619, he was Frederick V, Elector Palatine (1610–1623).

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[34] Frederick's optimism about finding financial support for his military campaign is evident from his trip to Haarlem and Amsterdam in June of that year to try to raise funds for that purpose.

[35] For Vroom's painting, see Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea: The Dutch Marine Painters of the 17th Century,* exh. cat., Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Rotterdam, and Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gent, 1996, 86–89, no. 4; for those of Willaerts and Van Wieringen, see: George S. Keyes, *Mirror of Empire: Dutch Marine Art of the Seventeenth Century*, exh. cat., The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The Toledo Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Cambridge, 1990, 201–203, no. 53; 204-–206, no. 54.

[36] Martin Royalton-Kisch, *Adriaen van de Venne's Album in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, London, 1988, 96–97, 132, note 138; 178-–179, fol. 18. Although Royalton-Kisch only tentatively identifies this figure with the Winter King, the visual evidence that he is the Winter King is compelling. (see also 202–203, fol. 31, in which Frederick is identified positively) The game of balloon, moreover, had its origins in German courtly culture, where Frederick would have learned it and presumably brought it to the Dutch court. As with other games depicted in this manuscript, the game of balloon had allegorical implications related to the political issues of the day.

[37] Julius Wilhelm Zincgref*, Emblematum Ethico-politicorum Centuria*, pl. XCVII. Oppenheim, 1619.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is comprised of two pieces of coarse, plain-weave fabric that are sewn together vertically down the center of the composition. The fabric has been lined. Although there is cusping around all four edges, it is more prominent along the top, right, and bottom, indicating that the left side may have been trimmed slightly. The original tacking margins have been removed, but the x-radiographs reveal regularly spaced holes around the edges, which do not correspond to the cusping. This implies that at some point the edges were turned over to create a tacking margin, making the painting smaller, then subsequently opened up again to return the painting to its original dimensions. The current stretcher is slightly larger than the painting, extending the dimensions by approximately 0.5 cm on all sides. These areas have been covered with paper tape and inpainted to incorporate them into the design.

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The support was prepared with a tan ground. Honthorst applied the paint in a series of smoothly blended brushstrokes. He used glazes in the dark areas and slight impasto in the highlights. The x-radiographs and infrared reflectography do not show any artist's changes, but examination of the surface reveals that the lute held by the figure in blue on the right has been enlarged.

The painting's texture has been compromised somewhat by the uneven application of the glue used in the lining, which has created a lumpy surface. The area along the seam is also slightly raised. The paint and ground are in fairly good condition. There is a large triangular area of loss that begins at the top of the purple hat of the center figure and extends to the left along the top of the painting. There is abrasion in the hair of the concert master and in his black cloak; in the hand, hair, and robe of the woman on the far right; and in the dark hat of the man in the right background. There is lighter abrasion scattered throughout the composition, though mostly in the darker portions. The painting was treated when it entered the collection in 2013.

PROVENANCE

Probably Prince Frederick Hendrick of Orange [1584-1647], The Hague, by 1632; by descent to Prince Willem V of Orange [1748-1806], The Hague;[1] requisitioned as a 'spoil of war' by the Revolutionary Government of France, and taken to Paris, May 1795.[2] private collection, Paris and Senan, France, since 1840;[3] purchased jointly 2009 by (Anthony Speelman, London) and (Adam Williams Fine Art, Ltd., New York);[4] purchased 31 July 2013 by NGA.

[1] According to the inventory of the Stadhouderlijk Kwartier (the Stadholder's official residence) made in August 1632: "In the Great Hall: (no. 611) A painting for the fireplace mantle made by Honthorst, being a Music." The inventory covers the collections of both the Prince of Orange and of his wife, Amalia van Solms. The painting was not inherited by (female) heirs of Amalia van Solms, which indicates that in 1632 it was owned by the Prince of Orange and later inherited in the male line. The *Catalogus Kabinet van Schilderijen van Willem V op het Buitenhof* (*Catalog of the Gallery of Paintings of Prince Willem V of Orange*), undated, but no later than 1793, includes: "(No. 65) A company making music, on canvas in [black frame with gilded inside edge] by Honthorst."

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[2] *Catalogus van de schooner verzameling Schilderijen die zig in den Haag bevonden in de Galerij van den voormaligen Stad-houder Willem den vijfden Prins van Orange etc. etc. en die in Frankrijk getransporteerd zijn voor en door de Fransche Natie als gereekend zijnde te behooren onder de geconquesteerde goederen van dien Prins in Mey 1795*. Likely No. 69: "Een Consert, van verscheide speelders en speelsters Leevens groote halverlijf op doek door G. Honthorst, 4 voet 5 duim 6 voet 5 duim" (A concert of several male and female musicians, life size, half length on canvas by Honthorst, 4 feet 5 thumbs). (1814 copy of 1795 original, Rijksarchief, Den Haag, ARA, Archief Binnenlandse Zaken, Onderwijs, Kunsten en Wetenschappen 1815-1848, dossier nr. 4029.)

[3] A set of four interior scenes of the owner's country residence, circa 1900, by French artist Etienne Azambre (1859 -1935) includes a *View of the 'grand salon' as seen from the 'petit salon'* in which the right 2/3 portion of the NGA's painting is visible on the far wall. (Photos of the four paintings are in the NGA curatorial files.)

[4] Permanent French export license no. 111555, issued on 23 July 2009; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Pieter de Hooch, *Self-Portrait of Pieter de Hooch* (?), oil on panel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. SK-A-181

Hooch, Pieter de

Also known as
Hoogh, Pieter de
Hooghe, Pieter de
Dutch, 1629 - 1684

BIOGRAPHY

Pieter Hendricksz de Hooch (occasionally spelled de Hoogh) was baptized in the Reformed Church in Rotterdam on December 20, 1629. His father was a master bricklayer and his mother a midwife. His only recorded teacher was the landscape painter Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem (Dutch, 1620 - 1683), with whom he studied in Haarlem along with fellow pupil Jacob Ochtervelt (1634–1682). The exact dates of this apprenticeship are not known. Berchem's interest in landscape apparently had little effect on De Hooch, whose earliest paintings are almost all barrack-room scenes.

De Hooch is first recorded in Delft on August 5, 1652, when he and another painter, Hendrick van der Burch (1627–after 1666), witnessed the signing of a will. The following year he is documented as a painter and *dienaar* (servant or assistant) to a wealthy merchant named Justus de la Grange, a resident of both Delft and Leiden whose collection contained eleven of the artist's paintings when it was inventoried in 1655. De Hooch witnessed a baptism in Leiden in 1653, but in 1654, when he married Jannetje van der Burch of Delft, he was living in Rotterdam. He and his wife, who was probably the sister of the painter Hendrick van der Burch, had seven children.

De Hooch entered the Delft guild in 1655 and is recorded as having paid dues in 1656 and 1657. He remained in that city until the end of the decade, but sometime between mid-1660 and April 1661 he settled in Amsterdam. Apart from a visit to Delft in 1663, he apparently remained in Amsterdam for the rest of his life. It was long believed that De Hooch died at the age of fifty-four while an inmate at the

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Amsterdam *dolhuis* (lunatic asylum).[1] However, that institution's records shows that the Pieter de Hooch who died in the asylum was the artist's son, also named Pieter.[2]

Between about 1655 and 1662, De Hooch's work rose to the very highest level of achievement. Almost all of his paintings from these years depict interiors or courtyards containing just a few people, engaged either in domestic activities or in some restrained form of entertainment or merrymaking. The atmosphere in these works is characteristically calm, spacious, and airy, effects created through De Hooch's masterly control of light, color, and complex perspectival construction. These are also all essential elements of the style of Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632 - 1675), with whom he must have had contact.

By the end of the 1660s De Hooch's work had lost much of its delicacy and finesse. His later compositions became grander and more contrived, and his color harmonies and light effects harsher. His last dated painting is from 1684. Although De Hooch had no known pupils, artists whose works have been confused with his include Hendrick van der Burch, Ludolf de Jongh (1616–1679), Pieter Janssens Elinga (1623–before 1682), and Esaias Boursse (1631–1672).

[1] Amsterdam, Stadsarchief, Doop-, Trouw- en Begraafregisters 1195/117, 24th March 1684: "Pieter de Hoogh int Dolhuijs." Christopher Brown was the first to publish this archival information in *Art in seventeenth century Holland* (London, 1976), 54.

[2] Frans Grijzenhout, "New Information on Pieter de Hooch and the Amsterdam lunatic asylum," *The Burlington Magazine* (September 2008): 612-613.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Pieter de Hooch
Dutch, 1629 - 1684

The Bedroom

1658/1660

oil on canvas
overall: 51 x 60 cm (20 1/16 x 23 5/8 in.)
framed: 73 x 82.6 x 8.9 cm (28 3/4 x 32 1/2 x 3 1/2 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.33

ENTRY

De Hooch painted this intimate scene of domestic life around 1658 to 1660, during the last years of his Delft period. The painting depicts an everyday occurrence, in which a child opens a door to an inner room, where its mother, busy with her household chores, airs out the bedcovers. The scene, however, is instilled with a sense of intimacy and warmth that transcends the mundane subject matter.

De Hooch achieved this effect through his treatment of light and his sensitive arrangement of the interior space. Light enters the room from two sources: the double windows on the left and the open door and window at the front of the house. As the light streams through the child's hair, it illuminates the youngster with a palpable, radiant glow. It also enlivens the interior space in the way it plays across a variety of surfaces. De Hooch suggests, for example, the different character of light as it passes through an exterior window, through an interior window, and through both an exterior and interior window. He deftly differentiates between the sheen of reflections off the marble floor and the more spectacular highlights on the orange tile floor. He also captures the nuances of tone in the shadows, which vary because of the multiple light sources.

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The extreme naturalism of these optical effects suggests that De Hooch painted this scene, or at least the room, from life. The same room is found in two similar but independent works, *A Woman Delousing a Child's Hair* [fig. 1] and *Kolf Players* [fig. 2], both of which were also painted from 1658 to 1660. The landscape seen through the doorway, however, differs in each example.

Another version of this painting, signed with a monogram, is in the Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe. The only difference between the two is that the mirror on the wall between the figures has ornaments on its top and bottom in the Karlsruhe version that do not appear here. In 1929 Valentiner wrote that the Washington version is an autograph replica of the Karlsruhe painting. [1] Sutton, though he believes that the Karlsruhe painting is the better of the two works, does not feel that one can designate either as the original version. His 1980 assessment that the Washington painting is "of the highest quality" was borne out in 1982 when the darkened varnish that had obscured many of the painting's nuances was removed. [2] X-radiographs [see X-radiography] taken at that time show no significant Pentimenti, although the pattern of light falling on the wall from the window on the left has a more defined rectangular shape than that apparent in the final composition. Little is known about the creation of autograph replicas by seventeenth-century Dutch artists. As yet unanswered is whether such works were painted for commission or for the art market. [3]

Bode sought to identify the woman, who reappears in a number of De Hooch's paintings, as the artist's wife, Jannetje van der Burch, and the child as one of their own. [4] Most authors are quite circumspect when it comes to naming the gender of the child, for distinguishing between young boys and girls is notoriously difficult given the similarity of their dress at this time. In any event, De Hooch and his wife did have both a son and a daughter, born in 1655 and 1656 respectively, either of whom could have served as the model. [5] Given that the same child appears in the Polesden Lacey painting with a slightly older boy in the background, the child in this painting may well be a depiction of De Hooch's daughter, Anna. In the Polesden Lacey painting the child carries a *kolf* stick, used in a popular game at the time, which she has been playing outdoors with the boy. [6] In the Washington painting the child holds a ball, probably a *kolf* ball. De Hooch has situated the child in a doorway flanked by rows of Dutch tiles depicting children's games.

As Broos has emphasized, the traditional title of this painting, *The Bedroom,* is slightly misleading, for it suggests that Dutch homes had rooms with separate

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functions. [7] To the contrary, box beds, situated against one wall, frequently were part of a multifunction room. Nevertheless, the activities of the woman, who straightens the bed and tends the chamber pot, were part of the morning ritual that Dutch housewives faced as they prepared the central room of the house for its daytime functions. The Dutch prided themselves on orderliness and cleanliness, virtues that were seen as metaphors of spiritual purity. [8]

The harmonious character of the scene and the emphasis on the mother's dual responsibilities of child nurturing and caring for the home embody an ideal of Dutch domestic felicity that is nowhere better represented than in the paintings of Pieter de Hooch. These ideals, which had by mid-century been well formulated in the writings of Jacob Cats, [9] are also to be found in many of the moralizing messages in the extensive emblematic literature of the day. While reality may not have lived up to the images evoked by De Hooch and Cats, the Dutch concern for orderliness and cleanliness, as well as their sympathetic manner of child rearing, was often remarked upon by foreign travelers. [10]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman Delousing a Child's Hair*, 1658–1660, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

fig. 2 Pieter de Hooch, *Kolf Players*, 1658–1660, oil on panel, Polesden Lacey, Surrey. Photo: National Trust

NOTES

[1] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Pieter de Hooch: The Master's Paintings*, trans. Alice M. Sharkey and E. Schwandt (London and New York, 1930), no. 59.

[2] Peter Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch: Complete Edition with a Catalogue Raisonné* (Oxford, 1980), 87.

[3] Aside from these two versions, a third version was tentatively listed by Sutton as an autograph and it was auctioned in New York on February 29, 1956, no. 17, repro. The large number of copies of the composition that Sutton lists further attests to its popularity (see Peter Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch: Complete Edition with a Catalogue Raisonné* [Oxford, 1980], 87–88).

[4] Wilhelm von Bode, *Rembrandt und seine Zeitgenossen…*. (Leipzig, 1906), 58.

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[5] For the difficulty of using a costume to determine a young child's gender, see J. B. Bedaux and Rudi Ekkart, *Pride and Joy: Children's Portraits in the Netherlands, 1500–1700* (Amsterdam, 2000), 78–82. De Hooch's eldest son, Peter, was baptized on February 2, 1655, and a daughter, Anna, was baptized on November 14, 1656. Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague and Zwolle, 1990), 303, assumes that the child is a boy and postulates that it may represent Peter.

[6] For the history of *kolf*, see Sten J. H. Van Hengel, *Early Golf* (Vaduz, 1985). Although most depictions of *kolf* players represent boys and men, the game was enjoyed by all. For a portrait of a girl holding a *kolf* stick and ball, see Sten J. H. Van Hengel, *Early Golf* (Vaduz, 1985), 29, fig. 16.

[7] Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague and Zwolle, 1990), 304.

[8] Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague and Zwolle, 1990), 304.

[9] An extremely important and influential expression of Cats' ideal of family existence is found in his *Houwelyck, dat is, de gantsche gheleghentheydt des echten-staets* (Middelburg, 1625). For a particularly insightful quotation from this poetic treatise, see Peter Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch: Complete Edition with a Catalogue Raisonné* (Oxford, 1980), 46.

[10] See Peter Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch: Complete Edition with a Catalogue Raisonné* (Oxford, 1980), 47–48.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric [1] has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping appears along the top, right, and bottom edges but not on the left edge. Paint is applied over a smooth white ground in thin layers followed by thin glazes and scumbles. Lining has flattened the impasted highlights. The paint is in good condition with no abrasion and losses confined to the edges. Discolored varnish was removed when conservation treatment was carried out in 1982.

[1] Average densities of 11.1 threads per centimeter horizontally and 11.6 threads per centimeter vertically were measured by the Thread Count Automation Project of Cornell University and Rice University (see report dated May 2010 in Conservation department files).

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PROVENANCE

Possibly S.J. Stinstra collection, Amsterdam; possibly (sale, S.J. Stinstra, Amsterdam, 1822, no. 86).[1] William Waldegrave, Lord Radstock [1753-1825], Longford Castle, Wiltshire, and Coleshill, Berkshire; (sale, Christie's, 12-13 May 1826, no. 14); George Granville Leveson-Gower, 2nd marquess of Stafford and 1st duke of Sutherland [1783-1833], Stafford House, London; by inheritance to his son, George Granville Sutherland-Leveson-Gower, 2nd duke of Sutherland [1786-1861], Stafford House; (Emery Rutley, London), in 1846;[2] Morant.[3] Robert Field, London; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 6 June 1856, no. 520). Charles Scarisbrick [d. 1860], Scarisbrick Hall, Lancashire; (his sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 10 May 1861, no. 119); (Francis Nieuwenhuys, London);[4] Adrian John Hope [1811-1863], London; (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 30 June 1894, no. 32); (Charles J. Wertheimer, London and Paris); (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris); sold 30 July 1894 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, 8 vols., trans. Edward G. Hawke, London, 1907-1927: 1:498, no. 78, includes a reference to this sale in his provenance of *The Bedroom*. The De Hooch painting in that sale, however, need not necessarily refer to NGA 1942.9.33, since other versions of the composition exist.

[2] According to a note by John Smith contained in Hofstede de Groot's typescript supplement, ad. no. 78, to Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, 8 vols., trans. Edward G. Hawke, London, 1907-1927, in the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague.

[3] The Getty Provenance Index indicates that Rutley purchased the painting from Sutherland for Morant, but also notes that the entry for the painting in Ben P.J.

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Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (Exh. cat., Mauritshuis, The Hague; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1990-1991: no. 35) has Morant buying for Rutley.

[4] According to the Getty Provenance Index, Christie's copy of the 1861 sale catalogue is marked "FN" and Peter C. Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch: Complete Edition with a Catalogue Raisonné*, Oxford, 1980: no. 40B, gives the buyer as "Nieuwenhuys."

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 55.

1990 Great Dutch Paintings from America, Mauritshuis, The Hague; The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, 1990-1991, no. 35, color repro., as The Box Bed.

1998 Pieter de Hooch, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, 1998-1999, no. 21, repro.

1999 Johannes Vermeer: The Art of Painting, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1999-2000, not in brochure.

2000 The Public and the Private in the Age of Vermeer, Osaka Municipal Museum of Art, 2000, no. 23, repro.

2003 Vermeer y el interior holandés, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2003, no. 12, repro.

2009 Loan for display with permanent collection, Gemeente Musea / Stedelijk Museum het Prinsenhof, Delft, 2009.

2012 Vermeer: Il secolo d'oro dell'arte olandese, Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome, 2012-2013, no. 28, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Pieter de Hooch
Dutch, 1629 - 1684

A Dutch Courtyard

1658/1660

oil on canvas
overall: 69.5 x 60 cm (27 3/8 x 23 5/8 in.)
framed: 92.7 x 83.8 x 12.1 cm (36 1/2 x 33 x 4 3/4 in.)
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.56

ENTRY

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, holding a Raeren earthenware jug, laughingly watches the woman drink beer from her pass-glass. The pass-glass was used in drinking games. Each participant had to drink down to a circular line on the glass; failing to reach the exact level, he or she would be required to drink to the next ring down. Only when this was done successfully would the glass be passed on to the next participant. [1] A young girl approaches on the right, bringing glowing embers for the men's pipes. The open door in the brick wall reveals a stepped path that leads past a wooded yard to a distant house, which is also visible above the wall. The tower of the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft rises over the wooden palisade on the far left.

The painting is one of the most accomplished of De Hooch's "Delft Style" works from about 1660. The ordered, harmonious arrangement of architectural and figural elements creates a quiet and peaceful 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. Its measured harmony also comes from the artist'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 achieved this sense of order by carefully manipulating the perspective and the placement of compositional elements. He strengthened the figural group

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by adjusting the woman's position and bringing her closer to the table, which was revealed by Infrared Reflectography at 1.2 to 2.5 microns. [2] 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. Her placement and that of the bright orange-red window shutter directly above her serve to reduce the strong sense of recession created by the receding 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, this courtyard was probably situated in the area of the city near the Binnenwatersloot. It is nevertheless unlikely that De Hooch represented an exact location. As can be demonstrated in his other 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 of the tower of the Nieuwe Kerk: it lacks the small spires that actually ring the top of the tower. [4]

De Hooch's earliest genre scenes frequently depict soldiers sitting around a table smoking and drinking, attended to by a serving woman, a subject he has here moved outdoors into the courtyard of a middle-class home. [5] The men and women in these scenes are quite animated and playfully interact with one another, a pictorial approach also evident in the easy banter between the soldiers and the maidservant seen here. [6] The sun-filled 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 was no longer felt.

A replica of this painting is in the Mauritshuis, The Hague. [7] The major compositional difference between the two works is the absence of the seated soldier. This figure, however, does appear in X-radiographs [see X-radiography] 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 is shown hanging on the rear wall in a watercolor of a Dutch interior, dated 1783, by W. J. Laquy (1738–1798), a German artist then working in Amsterdam (see the 1995 archived version of this entry for the comparative image). [9] The drawing illustrates that the painting was then in a Dutch-style gold frame. The provenance of the painting before 1820 is unknown, thus we do not know in whose home Laquy saw it.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

NOTES

[1] For information on the "pass-glass," see the Rijksmuseum online catalog.

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Mitsubishi M600 PtSi Focal plane array camera.

[3] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Pieter de Hooch: The Master's Paintings*, trans. Alice M. Sharkey and E. Schwandt (London and New York, 1930), 272.

[4] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 9:573, no. 30, incorrectly identifies it as the tower of the cathedral in Utrecht. The tower here varies a bit from the appearance of that of the Nieuwe Kerk, but it must depict that structure.

[5] See Peter Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch: Complete Edition with a Catalogue Raisonné* (Oxford, 1980), nos. 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13.

[6] These scenes probably reflect the influence of the Rotterdam artist Ludolph de Jongh (1616–1679), whom De Hooch must have known before moving to Delft and joining the guild in 1655.

[7] Peter Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch: Complete Edition with a Catalogue Raisonné* (Oxford, 1980), no. 35b.

[8] Marquise of Bute Collection; Peter Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch: Complete Edition with a Catalogue Raisonné* (Oxford, 1980), no. 27.

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

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The medium-weight, plain-weave fabric support[1] 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 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

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tones.

Careful visual examination and infrared reflectography at 1.2 to 2.5 microns[2] reveal a number of artist's changes. The little girl appears to have been raised slightly and moved about one inch to the right of her original position. The head of the standing woman may have been more upright as she raised her glass somewhat higher. An earlier position of her foot was painted out. The fence originally extended between the two seated men. The positions of the arm and the beer stein of the central seated figure were changed. A pronounced pentimento of the stein at the elbow of this man suggests that his arm was originally positioned farther back in space so that the stein covered the view of the elbow. In the background, the courtyard visible through the open door originally contained a second somewhat thinner tree trunk. The arch in the doorway is painted over both tree trunks, so the arch probably came at a late stage in the creative process. Finally the top of the building on the right originally ended lower, so that it did not continue vertically to the top of the picture space.

The paint is in good condition with little loss and minor abrasion, except for the trees in the background and a one-inch band across the top of the sky, which are severely abraded. Other areas of abrasion include the little girl's face, the woman's blue apron, and the cloak of the man seated in the foreground. The painting was treated in 2002, at which time the abraded areas were inpainted to bring them into harmony with the rest of the composition.[3] Records indicated that prior to the most recent treatment, the painting was treated in Holland in the 1930s.[4]

[1] Average densities of 13.9 threads per centimeter horizontally and 14.0 threads per centimeter vertically were measured in the original support by the Thread Count Automation Project of Cornell University and Rice University (see report dated May 2010 in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Mitsubishi M600 PtSi Focal plane array camera.

[3] The NGA Scientific Research department analyzed the pigments using air-path X-ray Fluorescence spectroscopy (see report dated October 26, 1978, in NGA Conservation department files).

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[4] See note in NGA Conservation department files.

PROVENANCE

Cornelis Sebille Roos [1754-1820], Amsterdam; (his sale, R.W.P. de Vries, Amsterdam, 28 August 1820, no. 51); Isaac van Eyck.[1] (sale, Paris); purchased by a Mr. Mason; purchased by Baron Lionel de Rothschild [1808-1879], Gunnersbury Park, Greater London, by 1842; by inheritance to his son, Nathan Mayer Rothschild, 1st baron Rothschild [1840-1915]; by exchange with or sale to his brother, Baron Alfred Charles de Rothschild [1842-1918], London and Halton House, near Wendover, Buckinghamshire;[2] bequeathed to his illegitimate daughter, Almina Victoria, Countess of Carnarvon [c. 1877-1969, later Mrs. Ian Onslow Dennistoun], London; sold 1924 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[3] sold November 1924 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. London, 1829-1842: 9(1842):573, no. 30.

[2] The Rothschild provenance information was kindly provided by Michael Hall, curator to Edmund de Rothschild; see his "Rothschild Picture Provenances" from 1999 and his letter of 27 February 2002, in NGA curatorial files, in which he cites documents in The Rothschild Archive, London.

[3] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 292, box 437, folders 4 and 5, and reel 293, box 438, folders 1 and 2; copies in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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

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1998 Pieter de Hooch, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, 1998-1999, no. 19, repro., as Two Soldiers and a Woman Drinking in a Courtyard.

1999 Johannes Vermeer: The Art of Painting, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1999-2000, not in brochure.

2001 Vermeer and the Delft School, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The National Gallery, London, 2001, no. 33, repro.

2007 Vermeer: La ragazza alla spinetta e i pittori di Delft, Foro Boario, Modena, 2007, no. 10, repro.

2015 The New American Garden: the Landscape Architecture of Oehme, Van Sweden & Associates, National Building Museum, Washington, 2015-2016, not in gallery guide (travelling exhibition of photographs; painting shown only in Washington).

2016 Building the Brafferton: The Founding, Funding and Legacy of America's Indian School, Muscarelle Museum of Art, Williamsburg, 2016-2017, no catalogue.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Pieter de Hooch
Dutch, 1629 - 1684

Woman and Child in a Courtyard

1658/1660

oil on canvas
overall: 73.5 x 66 cm (28 15/16 x 26 in.)
framed: 102.24 × 93.98 × 14.61 cm (40 1/4 × 37 × 5 3/4 in.)
Inscription: lower left on trough: P D Hooch
Widener Collection 1942.9.34

ENTRY

Near the old town wall of Delft, the site of many of De Hooch's courtyard paintings, two gentlemen and a woman are seated in a small wooden arbor, drinking wine. A maidservant carrying an earthenware jug and a basket, covered with a white cloth, and a little girl holding a birdcage cross the courtyard on their way toward a water pump that is attached to the house on the left. The two sets of steps seen through the open doors behind them seem to lead to the city ramparts.

This idyllic view of city life with spacious courtyards, trees, and vines contains compositional elements that are found in two other of De Hooch's paintings of this period. The arbor, the wall, and the steps leading to the door in the wall form the setting for his painting *A Family in a Courtyard*, 1658–1660, in Vienna [fig. 1]. That work reveals that the arbor projects out from the wall and that its columns and capitals are made of flat boards attached to a wooden framework. The same arbor, wall, steps, and water pump are also visible in *A Woman and a Maid in a Courtyard,* c. 1660 (the last digit is illegible), in the National Gallery, London [fig. 2]. In both of those works, however, the relationship of the objects to the site varies, and neither of them contains the building to the left of the doorway. In the London painting, a small garden house is situated just to the right of the arbor, and the pump is in a totally different location. [1]

These variations among the works confirm that De Hooch felt free to alter architectural elements for compositional reasons. Technical imaging reveals that

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he made significant adjustments to features in the present work through successive layers of thinly-applied paint (see Technical Summary). This process became visible to the naked eye after conservation treatment in 2016 removed nonoriginal discolored varnish and overpaint. The building at left, for example, did not initially extend to the top of the composition. Instead De Hooch had envisioned a smaller structure with a gabled roof and a second structure behind it. Visible pentimenti on the right side of the wall also indicate compositional changes that are reminiscent of the architecture in the courtyard scene in London. While it is unlikely that any of these scenes represent an actual location, faint, incised lines along the left wall and at either side of the doorway indicate De Hooch's efforts to produce convincing, illusionistic spaces. 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 Delft's main canal, the Oude Gracht. [2] De Hooch's wife lived in this area, near the Binnenwatersloot, before they were engaged, and presumably De Hooch moved there 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.

Original entry by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., April 24, 2014.

Revised by Alexandra Libby to incorporate information from a new technical examination.

December 9, 2019

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Pieter de Hooch, *A Family in a Courtyard*, 1658–1660, oil on canvas, Akademie der bildenden Künste, Vienna

fig. 2 Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman and a Maid in a Courtyard*, c. 1660, oil on canvas, National Gallery, London. Photo © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY

NOTES

[1] First noted by Neil MacLaren, *The Dutch School* (London, 1960), 186.

[2] Neil MacLaren, *The Dutch School* (London, 1960), 185.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric with an irregular weave pattern. [1] During past treatments, the painting was lined and later mounted to a cradled panel. At some point during these treatments, the original tacking margins were removed.

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The canvas was prepared with a three-layered ground. The two lower layers are warm tan in color, and the uppermost layer is a cooler tan, containing small black particles. Many of the forms within the composition were blocked out with a semitransparent, medium-rich, monochromatic layer that varies from brown to brown-black in color. A thin brown painted line, similar in color to the blocking-out layer, can be seen along the edges of the trees in the bottom right corner of the composition, as well as delineating the shape of the house on the left side of the painting. These visible traces are part of a painted sketch of the composition. The ground, blocking-out layer, and painted sketch are visible throughout and integral to the final composition, used as a highlight, mid-tone, or even shadow in modeling form. Finally, throughout the composition there are a number of incised lines that follow painted forms, mainly the architectural elements. Paint layers were built up thinly on top of the ground or blocking-out layer, with minimal modeling and paint layering. Final highlights are thoughtfully placed small dots and dabs of paint.

Overall, the painting is in good condition. It was treated in 2015–2016, and grime and thick layers of discolored varnish and overpaint were removed. The painting was revarnished and inpainted with stable and reversible materials. During the same treatment, cross-section analysis, scanning electron energy dispersive x-ray spectroscopy, x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy, Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy, and multispectral infrared reflectography (MS-IRR) were performed in order to better understand the painting technique and materials. [2] MS-IRR revealed numerous compositional changes to the architectural structures on the left side of the composition. [3] In an earlier version of this composition, the building on the left was smaller and didn't cover the entire upper left corner. Instead it had a triangular roof that came to a point and another roof could be seen behind it. The details of this other roof suggest that the building is likely the Oude Kerk in Delft. It also appears that the Delft wall extended further to the left, in front of the original positioning of the church. The trellis was originally higher, coming up to the same height as the red gate to the right. Finally, near the right edge of the composition, a garden house originally appeared where the Delft wall currently extends. The top edge of the red roof wasn't thoroughly painted out and can still be seen, extending into the trees above the Delft wall. This structure is also found in another composition by De Hooch: *A Woman and a Maid in a Courtyard* in the collection of The National Gallery, London (see Entry, fig. 2).

Dina Anchin, based on the examination report by Carol Christenson and science reports by Michael Palmer.

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TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Earlier technical summaries of this work were prepared by Melissa Katz and Catherine Metzger.
Average densities of 11 threads per centimeter horizontally and 13.3 threads per centimeter vertically were measured by the Thread Count Automation Project of Cornell University and Rice University (see report dated May 2010 in NGA conservation department files).

[2] The pigments and ground were analyzed by the NGA scientific research department (see NGA conservation department files).

[3] Multispectral infrared reflectography: composite of three registered infrared images, in wavelength bands 1100–1400 nm (blue), 1500–1800 nm (green), and 2100–2400 nm (red). Courtesy of John Delaney, Kate Dooley, and Giorgio Trumpy, scientific research department, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

PROVENANCE

(Mssrs. Lawrie & Co., London, 1903);[1] (Arthur J. Sulley & Co., London); (M. Knoedler & Co., London, Paris, and New York, 1904-1905); sold 1905 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, 8 vols., trans. Edward G. Hawkes, London, 1907-1927: 1 no. 294, noted that he saw the painting with this dealer in March of 1903.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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2011 Human Connections in the Age of Vermeer, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art; The Miyagi Museum of Art, Sendai; The Bunkamura Museum of Art, Tokyo, 2011-2012, no. 19, repro.

2012 Vermeer: Il secolo d'oro dell'arte olandese, Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome, 2012-2013, no. 19, repro.

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repro.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Arnold Boonen, *Portrait of Jan van Huysum*, oil on canvas, Private collection, Courtesy Sotheby's, Amsterdam

Huysum, Jan van

Dutch, 1682 - 1749

BIOGRAPHY

Jan van Huysum was born in Amsterdam on April 15, 1682. His father, Justus van Huysum the Elder (1659–1716), was also an artist, as were Jan's three brothers, Justus the Younger (1685–1707), Jacob (1688–1740), and Michiel (1703–1777). 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.

Jan married Elisabeth Takens (d. by 1651) in 1704, at which time he was living on the Utrechtsestraat in Amsterdam. Two years later the couple moved to a home on the Leidsegracht that Elisabeth had inherited from relatives. The couple had twelve children, only three of whom survived their parents.

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'Orleans, the kings of Poland and Prussia, the elector of Saxony, and Sir Robert Walpole, later Earl of Orford. Van Huysum was, highly praised by contemporary authors; Houbraken described him as "the phoenix of flower-painters." At the time of his death he was a very wealthy man.

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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 had few pupils, one of whom, Margareta Haverman (1690/1700–after 1723), 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 paintings 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 John Flaxman (British, 1755 - 1826), and Wybrand Hendriks (1744–1831). In addition to still lifes, Van Huysum painted a number of Italianate landscapes.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan van Huysum
Dutch, 1682 - 1749

Flowers in an Urn

c. 1720/1722

oil on panel
overall: 79.9 x 60 cm (31 7/16 x 23 5/8 in.)
framed: 99.7 x 80.6 x 8.2 cm (39 1/4 x 31 3/4 x 3 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower left on front of marble tabletop: Jan Van Huysum fecit
Adolph Caspar Miller Fund 1977.7.1

ENTRY

Situated as they are against a pale greenish-ocher background, the subtle colors and organic rhythms of Van Huysum's exuberant floral display create an elegant ensemble. The poppy, morning glory, and ranunculus tendrils that weave in and out of the densely massed rose, vinca, carnation, iris, and tulip blossoms carry the eye throughout the bouquet, so that the viewer takes in the entire arrangement without focusing unduly upon any individual blossom. The image's decorative character is further enhanced by the terra-cotta vase embellished with playful cupids and the precariously perched nest containing three pale blue eggs.

Van Huysum is known to have studied with his father, Justus van Huysum (1659–1716), yet in this work the primary artistic inspiration must have been that of Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684). De Heem, whose realistic depictions of natural forms were greatly admired in the early eighteenth century, [1] similarly organized his flower bouquets with sweeping rhythms that draw the eye in a circular pattern throughout the composition (see Vase of Flowers). His remarkable painting techniques allowed him to create illusionistic images of individual blossoms. De Heem's complex bouquets included flowers that would never be in bloom at the same time, for example, tulips and morning glories, and Van Huysum likewise took pleasure in including such improbable combinations in his paintings. Perhaps following De Heem's lead, Van Huysum similarly depicted both tightly formed blossoms at the height of their beauty and tulips with wide opened petals, indicative of flowers past their prime. Moreover, like De Heem, Van Huysum enlivened his scenes with insects of various types, such as small ants crawling on (and occasionally eating) petals and butterflies alighting on the uppermost

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blossoms. Finally, whether as an artistic conceit or to emphasize the freshness of the bouquet, both artists delighted in depicting dewdrops gathered on the green leaves. The water droplets act as a foil to the delicate colors and shapes of the blossoms and also add small accents of light that further activate the compositions.

Despite the similarities in concept apparent in the works of these two men, great differences also exist. De Heem preferred a dark background against which he could contrast the whites and vibrant colors of his bouquet and concentrate the energy of his composition. Van Huysum, by contrast, chose later in his career to use backgrounds with a light tonality so that he could create a more delicate and, ultimately, more decorative image. De Heem often included nonfloral elements, such as stalks of grain and bean pods, that were instrumental in conveying an underlying religious meaning for his paintings. Van Huysum, on the other hand, does not appear to have chosen specific types of plants for their symbolic associations. Rather, he seems to have designed floral arrangements to suggest both the richness and fertility of nature and, through allusions to the cycle of life, the transience of earthly existence.

The chronological evolution of Van Huysum's style is difficult to determine because of the relative paucity of dated still lifes. This work, however, with its light background, must date shortly after Still Life with Flowers and Fruit and belong to the early part of Van Huysum's mature phase, which began around 1720. Infrared reflectography seems to confirm this, as it reveals in the upper right corner a sharply defined vertical element resembling a pilaster—an architectural element that began to appear in his work in that decade. [2] During the early 1720s he tended to place his flowers in terra-cotta vases decorated with playful putti fashioned after the relief sculptures of François Duquesnoy. [3] This work is more lyrically composed than his early flower still life in Karlsruhe dated 1714 [fig. 1], but is not as complex as, for example, the asymmetrically conceived *Bouquet of Flowers in an Urn*, 1724, at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art [fig. 2]. Other characteristics of the somewhat later style of the Los Angeles painting are the ornately shaped stone ledge and the outdoor setting. [4]

With his technical virtuosity and precise observations of flowers and fruit, Van Huysum was able to convey both the varied rhythms of a striped tulip's petal and the glistening sheen of its variegated surface. Just how he achieved these effects has never been precisely determined because he was a secretive artist who hid his artistic techniques from others. Nevertheless, it would seem that his paintings combine blossoms rendered from life and those derived from drawn models. In a

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letter to a patron in 1742, Van Huysum complained that he could not complete a still life that included a yellow rose until the flower blossomed the following spring. [5] The rose in question was presumably similar to the hybrid known as *Rosa huysumiana* seen in the left center of this painting. Indeed, certain of his paintings carry two dates from consecutive years. [6] While it is not known whether Van Huysum painted this work over an extended period of time, Pentimenti, particularly near the poppies at the top of the bouquet, indicate that he made significant changes in the arrangement of these compositional elements.

Van Huysum's dynamic painting process is further revealed through infrared reflectography, which shows that he both left reserves for flowers and stalks that were never included in the final composition and also painted blooms for which he did not make a reserve, only to paint them out at a later stage. While such alterations and revisions may complicate our understanding of Van Huysum's process, it is precisely the complex evolution of the present work that lends the floral arrangement such vigor and spontaneity.

Original entry by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., April 24, 2014.

Revised by Alexandra Libby to incorporate information from a new technical examination.

December 9, 2019

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Jan van Huysum, *Floral Still Life*, 1714, oil on panel, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe. © Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe 2010. Photo: W. Pankoke

fig. 2 Jan van Huysum, *Bouquet of Flowers in an Urn*, 1724, oil on panel, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Edward William Carter

NOTES

[1] See Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 1:209–211.

[2] See Technical Summary, and also Sam Segal, Mariël Ellens, and Joris Dik, *The Temptations of Flora: Jan Van Huysum, 1682–1749* (Zwolle, 2006).

[3] For Duquesnoy's relief sculpture, see Mariette Fransolet, *François du Quesnoy: Sculpteur d'Urbain VIII, 1597–1643* (Brussels, 1942). John Walsh Jr. and Cynthia P. Schneider, in *A Mirror of Nature: Dutch Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Edward William Carter* (Los Angeles, 1981), 66, believe that although the figures were inspired by Duquesnoy, the vases were actually designed by Van Huysum himself.

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[4] John Walsh Jr. and Cynthia P. Schneider, in *A Mirror of Nature: Dutch Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Edward William Carter* (Los Angeles, 1981), 66 n. 9, have determined that the first dated painting by Van Huysum with an outdoor background is from 1720.

[5] Friedrich Schlie, "Sieben Briefe und eine Quittung von Jan van Huijsum," *Oud-Holland* 18, no. 3 (1900): 141. The letter, dated July 17, 1742, was written to A. N. van Haften, agent for the Duke of Mecklenburg.

[6] Maurice Harold Grant, *Jan van Huysum, 1682–1749* (Leigh-on-Sea, 1954), no. 19, *Vase of Flowers,* 1723/1724; no. 162, *Fruits and Flowers,* 1732/1733.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wood support is a single vertically grained plank that was thinned and cradled during a previous treatment. [1] A thin, white, smooth ground was applied overall. The paint is of a medium paste consistency with slight impasto used to create specific flower petals. The paint layering is complex and varies depending on how much a particular area was reworked by the artist. The background is composed of at least five to six layers. The lighter and more yellow paint in the background was only applied on the right side of the composition and ends at the top center near the stem of the red and white poppy. This partial layer was applied when the composition was close to completion. It was carefully painted up to and around many of the elements in the right side of the bouquet, helping to further define their shape. In comparison, most of the leaves and flowers on the left side of the composition were painted directly on the darker earth-colored layer.

Multispectral infrared reflectography (MS-IRR) helped to reveal numerous changes in the composition. [2] Reserves were left for a number of flowers, stalks, and leaves, but some of these elements were never incorporated into the final composition. Other flowers and leaves, for which no reserve was left in the initial blocking out of the composition, were brought to a more finished state and then painted out, either covered up by another part of the bouquet or incorporated into the background. Several adjustments were made to both the size and shape of the putti on the terra-cotta vase, as well as to the angle and shape of the marble pediment. Many of these changes, especially those to the bouquet itself, resulted in a more vibrant and lively composition, rather than a full, symmetrical bouquet. Also visible in MS-IRR are a number of sharply drawn, bold lines that may have been made using a wet medium such as ink. While two of those lines form the front

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edge of the marble slab, there are a few other lines that don't appear to correlate with any other elements within the final composition. Lastly there is a vertical cylindrical form on the right side of the painting, possibly representing a column or tree trunk, which may indicate Van Huysum was considering a landscape or outdoor scene for the background rather than gradated color.

The support, ground, and paint layers are in good and stable condition. There is a small vertical check in the top edge, left of the center, that has been repaired. There is a fine craquelure pattern throughout, as well as small scattered losses. Previous restorers, in an effort to "reveal" pentimenti, overcleaned and greatly abraded the top background layers. During treatment in 2015, grime and a moderately thick, discolored, nonoriginal varnish layer was removed, as was some old overpaint. The painting was also revarnished and inpainted with stable and reversible materials.

Dina Anchin, based on the examination report by Kay Silberfeld.

December 9, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Earlier technical summaries of this work were prepared by Melissa Katz and Catherine Metzger.

[2] Multispectral infrared reflectography: composite of three registered infrared images, in wavelength bands 1100–1400 nm (blue), 1500–1800 nm (green), and 2100–2400 nm (red). Courtesy of John Delaney, Kate Dooley, and Giorgio Trumpy, scientific research department, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

PROVENANCE

(Jacques Goudstikker, Amsterdam), by 1919 until at least 1920. Vas Diag, before 1924; (Leggatt Brothers, London); acquired 21 July 1924 by Lord Claud Hamilton;[1] by inheritance to his widow, Lady Claud Hamilton; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 28 November 1975, no. 23); (Alexander Gallery, London); purchased 18 February 1977 by NGA.

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[1] The provenance from Vas Diag to Lord Hamilton is given in a letter from Charles Leggatt to Arthur Wheelock, 31 December 1982, in NGA curatorial files. Records of the Leggatt Brothers that might have provided more information about Diag and the purchase from him were destroyed in World War II. “Lord Claud Hamilton” could be one of several people; one possibility is that he was Lord Claud Nigel Hamilton (1889–1975), whose widow (she died 1984) was born Violet Ruby Ashton, and was earlier Mrs. Keith W. Newall.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1919 Collection Goudstikker d'Amsterdam, Pulchri Studio, The Hague, 1919, no. 13.

1920 Collection Goudstikker d'Amsterdam, Kunstkring, Rotterdam, 1920, no. 24.

1976 Spring Exhibition, Alexander Gallery, London, 1976.

1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure, repro.

1998 The Age of Opulence: Arts of the Baroque, Oklahoma City Art Museum, 1998-1999, brochure, repro.

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1920 Goudstikker, Jacques. *Catalogue de la collection Goudstikker d'Amsterdam*. Exh. cat. Rotterdamsche Kunstkring. Rotterdam, 1920: no. 24.

1954 Grant, Maurice Harold. *Jan van Huysum, 1682–1749*. Leigh-on-Sea, 1954: no. 3.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 208, repro.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 144-145, color repro. 143.

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2007 Segal, Sam. *The Temptations of Flora: Jan van Huysum, 1682-1749*. Translated by Beverly Jackson. Exh. cat. Museum Het Prinsenhof, Delft; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Zwolle, 2007: 173, repro.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan van Huysum
Dutch, 1682 - 1749

Still Life with Flowers and Fruit

c. 1715

oil on panel
overall: 78.7 x 61.3 cm (31 x 24 1/8 in.)
framed: 104.1 x 86.4 x 7.6 cm (41 x 34 x 3 in.)
Inscription: lower left: Jan Van Huysum fecit
Patrons' Permanent Fund and Gift of Philip and Lizanne Cunningham 1996.80.1

ENTRY

Jan van Huysum was unmatched in his ability to capture the sheer joy of viewing a profuse array of flowers and fruit. In this superb example, flowers overflow a putti-decorated terra-cotta vase while peaches and grapes spill over the foreground marble ledge, creating a sense of opulent abundance. Woven in and out of the densely packed bouquet of peonies, roses, carnations, and auriculae are the rhythmically flowing stems and blossoms of tulips, veronica, tuberoses, and hops. The large red bud of the opium poppy, flanked by a hollyhock and a tuberose, anchors the crown of the bouquet.

Van Huysum's lasting fame has centered not only on his exuberant arrangements, but also on his technical virtuosity. He could convey both the undulating rhythms of a striped tulip's petal and the glistening sheen of its variegated surface. He skillfully integrated insects into his bouquets and suggested the translucence of dewdrops on the petals and leaves. He delighted in enhancing the flowers' vivid colors—primarily pinks, yellows, oranges, reds, and purples—with striking light effects that add to the visual richness. As in this instance, he often illuminated blossoms situated at the back of the bouquet, against which he silhouetted darker foreground leaves and tendrils.

This painting is especially rich in its profusion of flowers and insects. Sam Segal has identified in this work some forty varieties of flowers, eight types of butterflies, and seven species of other insects. [1] Van Huysum also included both purple and

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green grapes, using their colors, as well as the reds and yellows of the apricot and peaches, to provide a seamless display of visual interest throughout the image. Just how he assembled such a wide variety of specimens and composed them into a complex arrangement has never been fully determined.

Van Huysum derived his compositional ideals and technical prowess from the examples of two important predecessors, Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684) and Willem van Aelst (Dutch, 1627 - 1683). Following De Heem's lead, Van Huysum introduced flowing rhythms to his flowers and rendered their forms and textures with great care and sensitivity to give his bouquets a lifelike appearance. As did De Heem, Van Huysum incorporated a wide variety of plant species in his bouquets, including wheat and fruit, and he grouped together flowers that do not blossom at the same time, for example, tulips and morning glories. From Van Aelst he learned the advantages of concentrating brightly lit flowers to focus the dynamically swirling rhythms underlying his compositions. In this work, he massed his colors and forms to create a sweeping arced flow from the tuberose in the upper right, through the large open tulip, the group of roses, and then back through the array of fruit in the lower right.

The dark background of this painting is characteristic of works the artist produced in the second decade of the eighteenth century, as, for example, a flower piece in Karlsruhe, dated 1714, that depicts a bouquet in a dark niche [fig. 1]. One early critic commented that Van Huysum "painted his flowers and fruit for many years on dark backgrounds, against which, in his opinion, they stood out more, and were better articulated. Everyone praised these pieces as wonderful, as impossible to surpass." [2] Shortly after 1720, in response to the evolving tastes of his patrons, Van Huysum changed his style and situated his floral bouquets against light backgrounds, many of which were outdoor garden settings (see Flowers in an Urn).

Van Huysum was reputedly a secretive artist who forbade anyone, including his own brothers, to enter his studio for fear that they would learn how he purified and applied his colors. [3] Thus, many questions about his painting process remain unanswered. Similarities in the shapes and character of individual blossoms in different still-life paintings indicate that he must have adapted drawn or painted models to satisfy pictorial demands. The auction of his estate in 1749 included "some studies of flower pieces," a "masterful Study of a pot with Flowers," and "Another sketchbook with Studies." [4] Nevertheless, a study of an individual flower made for a specific painting has yet to be discovered. [5] It seems that Van Huysum painted at least some of his flowers from life. In 1742 he wrote a letter to a patron in

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which he explained that he could not complete a still life that included a yellow rose until that flower blossomed the following spring. [6] Indeed, this Amsterdam artist's keenness for studying flowers led him to spend a portion of each summer in Haarlem, then as now a horticultural center. [7]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan van Huysum, *Floral Still Life*, 1714, oil on panel, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe. © Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe 2010. Photo: W. Pankoke

NOTES

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[1] Sam Segal, *The Temptations of Flora: Jan van Huysum, 1682–1749*, trans. Beverley Jackson (Delft and Houston, 2007), 154, no. F5.

[2] This comment by Herman Tollius (1742–1822) was published by Roeland van de Eijnden and Adriaan van der Willigen, *Geschiedenis der Vaderlandsche Schilderkunst* (Haarlem, 1816), 1, 312–313: “Deze schilderde zijne Bloem- en Fruit- stukken lang op donkere gronden, op welke hij meende, dat dezelve beter uitkwamen en spraken. Ieder roemde deze stukken als voortreffelijk, als onverbeterlijk.” Translated in Paul Taylor, *Dutch Flower Painting, 1600–1720* (New Haven and London, 1995), 191.

[3] This information comes from Van Huysum’s biographer, Jan van Gool, *De nieuwe schouburg der Nederlantsche kunstschilders en schilderessen*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1751), 2:31–32. For a thoughtful assessment of this account, see Mariël Ellens and Sam Segal, “Jan van Huysum: His Life and Family,” in Sam Segal, *The Temptations of Flora: Jan van Huysum, 1682–1749*, trans. Beverley Jackson (Delft and Houston, 2007), 21. For information about Van Huysum’s painting techniques, see Joris Dik, “Jan van Huysum’s Painting Technique,” in Sam Segal, *The Temptations of Flora: Jan van Huysum, 1682–1749*, trans. Beverley Jackson (Delft and Houston, 2007), 69–74.

[4] Sam Segal, *The Temptations of Flora: Jan van Huysum, 1682–1749*, trans. Beverley Jackson (Delft and Houston, 2007), 47 n. 29.

[5] Sam Segal, *The Temptations of Flora: Jan van Huysum, 1682–1749*, trans. Beverley Jackson (Delft and Houston, 2007), 47.

[6] Friedrich Schlie, “Sieben Briefe und eine Quittung von Jan van Huijsum,” *Oud-Holland* 18, no. 3 (1900): 141.

[7] According to Segal, “No sources suggest that Jan ever lived anywhere outside Amsterdam, but he maintained contact with flower growers in Haarlem who supplied him with material for his garden (Van Gool). Some authors state that he went to Haarlem every summer for this reason,”. Sam Segal, *The Temptations of Flora: Jan van Huysum, 1682–1749*, trans. Beverley Jackson (Delft and Houston, 2007), 16. Only 19.7 kilometers (12.2 miles) separate Amsterdam from Haarlem, and with documented speeds of 5–7 kilometers per hour, Jan van Huysum would have traveled the distance in 2.45 to 3. 55 minutes.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support panel consists of a single plank of oak[1] with a vertical grain. The panel has been beveled on all four sides and thin wooden strips have been added to the left and right sides. The ground is a buff-colored layer that is very thin and

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allows the wood texture to show through. The paint is also rather thin, but there is very slight impasto in some of the highlights. Van Huysum painted wet-into-wet, allowing his brushstrokes to form the shapes of the flower petals. In some areas he used the ground and the dark background to create the mid-tones and the shadows in the foliage. He did not leave many reserves, and infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 1.8 microns[2] revealed numerous artist's changes.

The painting is in excellent condition. An old vertical check extends from the top edge of the panel down to the tip of the uppermost red and white tulip. A small protruding square area at the top edge of the panel is probably the result of the two vertical checks on either side of it. Several nicks and dents exist near the bottom edge of the panel. The paint exhibits a minute crackle pattern that is more prevalent in lighter colors, but completely absent in the pure whites. Very recent inpainting is evident along the split and scattered throughout the composition. It is particularly heavy near the bottom edge, indicating numerous small losses or abrasion in this part of the painting. Examination with ultraviolet light revealed an old varnish that was thinned in the background and on some of the flowers. A more recent layer of varnish was applied on top of the partially removed one

[1] The characterization of the wood is based on visual examination only.

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focal plane array InSb camera fitted with H and J astronomy filters.

PROVENANCE

Baron Louis de Rothschild [1882-1955], Vienna.[1] his niece, Baroness Reininghaus [née Bettina Rothschild Springer, 1912-1974]; her husband, Baron Kurt Reininghaus [d. 1984]; sold to (Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna); sold c. 1994 to Mr. and Mrs. Philip Cunningham, Alexandria, Virginia; partially sold and partially given 1996 through (Otto Naumann, New York) to NGA.

[1] This painting was confiscated by the Nazis from the Louis de Rothschild collection in Vienna in 1938 and was destined for Adolf Hitler's planned museum in Linz, Austria. It is listed on the 20 October 1939 *Vorschlag sur Verteilung der in*

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Wien beschlagnahmte Gemaelde: Für das Kunstmuseum in Linz prepared by Hitler's curator, Hans Posse, and also Posse's *Verzeichnis der für Linz in Aussicht genommenen Gemälde* dated 31 July 1940 (OSS Consolidated Interrogation Report #4, Linz: Hitler's Museum and Library, 15 December 1945, Attachments 72 and 73, U.S. National Archives RG226/Entry 190B/Box 35, copy in NGA curatorial files). The records of the Allies' Munich Central Collecting Point indicate that the painting was recovered by the Allies and restituted to Austria on 11 May 1948. It was returned to Louis de Rothschild in 1949 (Munich property card #1665; Austrian Receipt for Cultural Property dated 11 May 1948; copies in NGA curatorial files.). The painting is listed and illustrated in Birgit Schwarz, *Hitlers Museum: Die Fotoalben Gemäldegalerie Linz: Dokumente zum "Führermuseum"*, Vienna, 2004: no. V/1. See also Sophie Lillie, *Was Einmal War*, Vienna, 2003: 113-116.

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1999 From Botany to Bouquets: Flowers in Northern Art, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1999, no. 19, fig. 60.

2000 Art for the Nation: Collecting for a New Century, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2000-2001, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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Jean Meyssens and Coen Waumans after Cornelis Jonson van Ceulen, *Cornelis Jonson van Ceulen*, engraving, in Sebastiano Resta, *The True Effigies of the Most Eminent Painters, and Other Famous Artists That Have Flourished in Europe* (London, 1694), pl. 73, National Gallery of Art Library, David K. E. Bruce Fund

Jonson van Ceulen, Cornelis

Also known as
Jonson, Cornelis
Johnson, Cornelius
English, 1593 - 1661

BIOGRAPHY

Born in London to immigrant parents of Flemish-German descent, Cornelis Jonson van Ceulen was baptized in the Dutch Church at Austin Friars on October 14, 1593. Jonson's family, originally from Cologne, had left Antwerp for London around 1568, probably to escape religious persecution from the Duke of Alva. No records indicate where Jonson received his training, but his parents, Cornelis Jonson and Jane Le Grand, may have sent him to the Netherlands for an apprenticeship as a young boy. He was, nonetheless, back in London by 1619 when he attended the baptism of a nephew. On July 16, 1622, he married Elizabeth Beck (who was of Dutch descent); the couple had two sons, James, born in 1623, and Cornelis the Younger, born in 1634. The family lived in the London parish of Saint Anne, Blackfriars, an area popular with immigrant craftsmen, until 1643 when they departed for Middelburg in the Netherlands, a result of both the outbreak of the English Civil War and the subsequent decline in court patronage.[1]

Jonson's career in London was marked by his success as a portraitist for the English aristocracy. In the 1620s and 1630s he painted elegant portraits of varying

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sizes—from miniatures and preparatory works for prints to full-length and group portraits—often set behind trompe l'oeil frames. Although the identities of many of his sitters have been lost, Jonson himself was the first British-born artist to consistently sign and date his works, using the signature "C.J. fecit."[2] His style slowly developed during his years in England under the influence of the Flemish portraitist Daniel Mytens, the Elder (Dutch, c. 1590 - 1648 or before), who also served as a court painter for Charles I, and Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641), who arrived in London in 1632. Jonson's highest honor came that very same year when he was appointed one of the official court painters for Charles I, becoming "his Majesty's servant in the quality of Picture drawer."[3]

After his departure from England, Jonson remained active as an artist in the Netherlands. He joined the Saint Luke's Guild in Middelburg shortly after his arrival and continued to produce portraits throughout the 1640s and early 1650s, receiving commissions from patrons in The Hague and Amsterdam as well as maintaining some English contacts. In 1652 he moved to Utrecht where he would remain until his death in August 1661.

[1] Mary Edmond, "Limners and Picturemakers: New Light on the Lives of Miniaturists and Large-Scale Portrait Painters Working in London in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Walpole Society* 47 (1978–1980): 89; and Karen Hearn, "The English Career of Cornelis Johnson," *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 13 (2003): 113–114.

[2] Karen Hearn, "The English Career of Cornelis Johnson," *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 13 (2003): 113. His first dated work is from 1619.

[3] Ellis Waterhouse, *Painting in Britain 1530 to 1790*, 5th ed. (New Haven and London, 1994): 39; and Karen Hearn, "The English Career of Cornelis Johnson," *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 13 (2003): 120.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Cornelis Jonson van Ceulen
English, 1593 - 1661

Anna Maria van Schurman

1657

oil on panel
overall: 31 x 24.4 cm (12 3/16 x 9 5/8 in.)
Inscription: center left, below the cathedral, in the portrait medallion: Cornelius Ionson / Van Ceulen / fecit / 1657
Gift of Joseph F. McCrindle 2002.35.1

ENTRY

This monochrome panel painting, or grisaille, [1] made in preparation for an engraving by Cornelis van Dalen the Younger (Dutch, 1638 - 1664) [fig. 1], depicts a learned lady of international renown: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678). [2] Van Schurman was born in Cologne on November 5, 1607, to Frederik van Schurman and Eva von Harff, both of whom came from wealthy and noble Protestant families. [3] By 1615 Anna's parents had settled in Utrecht, where she soon demonstrated remarkable talent in embroidery, calligraphy, and the making of intricate paper cuttings. In the 1630s she took lessons in drawing and engraving from Magdalena van de Passe (Dutch, 1600 - 1638), daughter of the engraver Crispijn van de Passe I (Dutch, c. 1565 - 1637). Van Schurman began making small portraits, including self-portraits, in a variety of mediums, among them pastels and oils, and small sculptures made of boxwood or wax. In recognition of her artistic abilities, the Saint Luke's Guild of Utrecht gave her an honorary membership in 1643. [4]

Van Schurman was renowned even more for her intellectual concerns than for her artistic accomplishments. Referred to as the Utrecht "Minerva," she exchanged poems and corresponded with some of the greatest minds of the day, including Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687), René Descartes (1596–1650), and Jacob Cats (1577–1660). [5] In 1637 Cats dedicated his book *Trou-ringh* (Wedding Ring) to her, and he included her engraved self-portrait opposite the frontispiece. [6] When Utrecht University opened its doors in 1636, she attended lectures, thus becoming

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the first woman to go to university in the Netherlands. [7] Not only did she learn twelve languages, even writing a grammar book for the Ethiopian language, but she also became well versed in philosophy, botany, and medicine. Under the guidance of the famous scholar Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676) she studied theology, a subject that preoccupied her during much of her later life. Her many scholarly works include her dissertation, written in Latin in 1641, in which she discussed whether women should have access to higher education. [8] In 1659 this dissertation was translated into English and published in London as *The Learned Maid*. Finally, Van Schurman's personal qualities of piety and virginity became important components of her international reputation.

When Cornelis Jonson van Ceulen arrived in Utrecht in 1652 after a long and distinguished career as a portrait painter in London, he quickly became the principal portrait painter of that Dutch artistic center. [9] Jonson had begun his career in London in the late 1610s, painting portraits that were rather smooth in execution and stiff in appearance. After Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641) came to England in 1632 and befriended him, however, Jonson learned to portray sitters in a more natural and elegant manner. [10] In Utrecht Jonson continued to paint large-scale portraits that reflect Van Dyck's influence, both in the refined poses of the sitters and in the fluent painting techniques he used to render their costumes. [11] These same pictorial qualities characterize this small, monochrome panel painting of Van Schurman. She gazes directly out at the viewer, her features recognizable through comparisons with her self-portraits. [12] She wears a flowing gown with a shawl that wraps gracefully over her left arm as she gently clasps a ribbon on her bodice. In her right hand she holds a book indicative of her erudition. Behind her is a view of the Utrecht cathedral, a backdrop that associates her not only with the city where she spent most of her life but also with the Christian piety for which she was so well known.

The monochrome painting technique that Jonson used here is another reflection of Van Dyck's influence. During the late 1620s Van Dyck used rapidly executed monochrome studies as models for the large series of portrait prints he made of artists, collectors, princes, statesmen, and philosophers that became known as the *Iconography*. [13] Jonson followed Van Dyck's model in creating this monochrome study for a portrait print and also emulated the Flemish master's freedom of touch when rendering highlights along the folds of Van Schurman's costume. Indeed, so close are the stylistic associations between this painting and Van Dyck's monochrome oil sketches that the great nineteenth-century German scholar

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Gustav Waagen, upon seeing this portrait of Van Schurman in the collection of the Reverend J. Fuller Russell, was inclined to reattribute the Van Dyck monochrome portrait sketches in the Duke of Buccleuch's collection to Jonson. [14]

The allegorical elements portrayed in the oval frame surrounding the image of Van Schurman, however, have no associations with Van Dyck but rather belong to earlier Dutch traditions of portrait engravings. In a 1580 portrait of Josina Hamels by Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1558 - 1617), for example, attributes of the sitter are symbolically arrayed within the framing device [fig. 2]. [15] In Jonson's painting, the brushes, palette, and mahlstick at the lower left and the T square, compass, needlepoint of a tulip, and drawing at the upper left refer to Van Schurman's artistic talents. Her erudition is alluded to by the globe and caduceus in the upper right as well as by the open book in the lower right. The lute on the right refers to her musical skills. Below her image two winged putti hold an unfurled banner between them. Although the banner is blank in the painting, an honorific Latin inscription written in 1661 by Constantijn Huygens appears in Van Dalen's engraving of the work, which Clement de Jonghe published in three states in Amsterdam between around 1657 and 1661. [16] Finally, the putto at the left supports a framed oval image of a laurel tree, symbolic of Van Schurman's enduring fame.

In Utrecht Jonson specialized in large-scale portraits, and this small but exceptional monochromatic panel painting is unique in his known oeuvre. Preparatory paintings such as this grisaille are difficult to find; thus, it is challenging to pinpoint this painting's genesis. The explanation for this exceptional work must lie in the artist's desire to create a portrait engraving that celebrated the many talents of this famous sitter. The idea to celebrate this renowned woman could have come from Jonson himself, who had an experienced career in portraiture and printmaking, and who would have been familiar with Van Schurman through fellow artist and ex-patriot in England Jan Lievens (Dutch, 1607 - 1674). [17] Lievens also rendered a portrait of Van Schurman in 1649, and Van Schurman's publications were being translated into multiple languages, including French and English. Jonson may also have felt a special connection with Van Schurman as they both had family roots in Cologne and were Protestants in a city that had a strong Catholic flavor. On the other hand, it may have been a collaborative effort from the start, considering that the National Gallery of Art painting was part of a project that involved at least three other individuals—Huygens, Van Dalen, and De Jonghe.

Regardless of who instigated this engraving, the image was related to one of Van Schurman that appeared in 1657 in Jacob Cats' publication *Alle de Wercken, soo*

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oude als nieuwe (the print introduced the section titled “Proteus of Sinne- en minnebeelden”) [fig. 3]. The artist, Steven van Lamsweerde (c. 1620–1686), a Utrecht engraver, derived his portrait from a bust-length self-portrait that Van Schurman had made in 1640, when she was thirty-three years old. [18] Although Jonson based his monochrome sketch on Van Lamsweerde’s print—including not only the curtain behind the sitter and the distant view of the Utrecht cathedral but also the illusionistic oval frame, a celebratory text, and allegorical elements that allude to Van Schurman’s many and varied scholarly and artistic accomplishments—he clearly sought to improve upon that misleading and mediocre antecedent. In Jonson’s portrait, the sitter, aged fifty, possesses a human dimension lacking in Van Lamsweerde’s print. She is at once more elegant and more thoughtful, a person capable of achieving the extaordinary level of intellectual, artistic, and spiritual inquiry that defined this remarkable woman.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

fig. 1 Cornelis van Dalen after Cornelis Jonson van Ceulen, *Anna Maria van Schurman*, published by Clement de Jonghe, 1661, engraving, Department of Image Collections National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, DC.

fig. 2 Anonymous, *Self Portrait after Anna Maria van Schurman*, engraving, from Jacob Cats, *s'Werelts begin midden en eynde, besloten in den trou-ringh, met den proef-steen van den selven*, Dordrecht, 1637, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, DC, David K. E. Bruce Fund

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fig. 3 Steven van Lamsweerde, *Anna Maria van Schurman*, 1657, engraving, from Jacob Cats, Alle de Wercken, soo oude als nieuwe (Amsterdam, 1700), fol. 31, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, DC, David K. E. Bruce Fund

NOTES

[1] A monochrome painting, or grisaille, was often called a *grauwtje* in Dutch.

[2] I am grateful to Jennifer Henel and Molli Kuenstner for their help in preparing this entry.

[3] Mirjam de Baar and Brita Rang, "Anna Maria van Schurman: A Historical Survey of Her Reception since the Seventeenth Century," in *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*, ed. Mirjam de Baar et al., trans. Lynne Richards (Dordrecht, 1996), 1. Frederik van Schurman had a collection of paintings that included Ambrosius Bosschaert the Elder's Bouquet of Flowers in a Glass Vase.

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[4] See Katlijne van der Stighelen, "'Et ses artistes mains': The Art of Anna Maria van Schurman," in *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*, ed. Mirjam de Baar et al., trans. Lynne Richards (Dordrecht, 1996), 58.

[5] For a list of her treatises, poems, and publications, see Mirjam de Baar et al., ed., *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*, trans. Lynne Richards (Dordrecht, 1996), 155–157.

[6] Jacob Cats, *'s Weerelts begin, midden, ende, besloten in den Trou-ringh, met den proefsteen van den selven* (Dordrecht, 1637).

[7] According to documentation, she did not actually attend as a full student, but was allowed to sit in the back as an "observer." Gisbertus Voetius first invited her to write poems for the inauguration of Utrecht University and then allowed her to attend lectures in a loge that concealed her from other students; thus she was the (unofficial) first female student. See Joyce L. Irwin, "Anna Maria van Schurman and Her Intellectual Circle," in Anna Maria van Schuman, *Whether a Christian Woman Should Be Educated and Other Writings from Her Intellectual Circle,* ed. and trans. Joyce L. Irwin (Chicago and London, 1998), 5.

[8] Her dissertation argued that, indeed, Christian women should have access to higher education, but only if it did not interfere with other womanly duties as a wife and mother, for example. See Anna Maria van Schuman, *Whether a Christian Woman Should Be Educated and Other Writings from Her Intellectual Circle,* ed. and trans. Joyce L. Irwin (Chicago and London, 1998).

[9] Among the highlights of his career in England, he was named a painter in the court of King Charles I in 1632.

[10] For more information on the Van Dyckian portrait style of Jonson, see Hilbert Lootsma, "Tracing a Pose: Govert Flinck and the Emergence of the Van Dyckian Mode of Portraiture in Amsterdam," *Simiolus* 33, no. 4 (2007–2008): 225.

[11] A painting by Jonson from 1660, alleged to portray Anna Maria van Schurman, shows a more formal portrait than that in the grisaille, with Van Dyckian rendering. See *Portrait of a Woman* at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille, inv. no. 103LL. See Hans Buijs and Maria van Berge-Gerbaud, *Tableaux flamands et hollandais du Musee des Beaux-Arts de Lyon* (Paris, 1991), no. 24, 70–72. Prints made after Jonson's paintings, such as the large collection at the National Portrait Gallery in London, one can see that Jonson added faux framing features around his sitters to illustrate their trade or importance. Often, this portrait would be accompanied by poetic or explanatory text, such as that of the resulting print by Van Dalen (see fig. 1).

[12] For reproductions of a number of her self-portraits, see Mirjam de Baar et al., eds., *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*,

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trans. Lynne Richards (Dordrecht, 1996).

[13] See Ger Luijten, "The *Iconography*: Van Dyck's Portraits in Print," in Carl Depauw and Ger Luijten, *Anthony van Dyck as a Printmaker*, trans. Beverly Jackson (New York, 1999), 73–91.

[14] Gustav Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collection of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, and Illuminated Mss.,* 3 vols. (London, 1854–1857), 2:464.

[15] For a discussion of this print, see Huigen Leeflang et al., *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2003), 65–67, no. 17.

[16] The print is listed in J. F. van Someren, *Beschrijvende catalogus van gegraveerde portretten van Nederlanders*, 3 vols. (Amsterdam, 1888–1891), 3:232, no. 4862; and F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450–1700*, 71 vols. (Amsterdam, 1949), 5:120, no. 153. The Latin text reads: "Tanta fides caelo, tanta est fiducia, divae / Hoccine Schurmannae vultus in aere micet? / Disce gravis, Sculptor, quae sit vesaniacaepti: / Haec, ais, haec aevi sideris umbra tui est? / Tun' similem praestis aetas cui nulla secundam / Edidit, et non est ulla datura parem? CONSTANTER."

[17] Lievens may have known Jonson through their work in the English court. Both artists also knew Constantijn Huygens, who corresponded frequently with Anna Maria van Schurman (and who was also the subject of a portrait painting by Lievens in 1628–1629). See Hilbert Lootsma, "Tracing a Pose: Govert Flinck and the Emergence of the Van Dyckian Mode of Portraiture in Amsterdam," *Simiolus* 33, no. 4 (2007–2008): 221–236.

[18] This self-portrait, done in pastels on paper, is in 't Coopmanshus, Franeker. It is signed and dated "29 juni 1640 aetatis suae 33" on the verso. For this work, see Mirjam de Baar et al., eds., *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*, trans. Lynne Richards (Dordrecht, 1996), 42, pl. 5; and Constantijn Huygens, *Gedichten*, 4:310, whose poem is dated April 12, 1661 (reprinted in J. A. Worp, *De gedichten van Constantijn Huygens*, 9 vols. [Groningen, 1892–1899]).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting is on a panel made from a single plank of vertically grained oak.[1] The panel was prepared with a very thin beige ground that leaves the wood clearly visible. The paint layer does not extend to the extreme edges of the support, leaving a 0.5 centimeter border of the beige priming visible. The paint was

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executed entirely in tones of brown. It is thinly applied with loose, sketchy brushstrokes outside the oval border and more highly finished with tight, smoothly blended brushstrokes and glazes in the figure and landscape within the border. There is low impasto in the thicker paint of the cartouche held by the putti. Infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 1.4 microns[2] revealed that the woman's dress originally had a larger collar that was raised above her present proper right shoulder line and covered more of her chest. The X-radiograph suggests that the sitter's head may have been slightly larger originally.

The panel is in plane and in stable condition. The paint layer is not extremely well preserved, containing many tiny losses and areas where the paint is thin enough to make the wood grain visible. Inpainting is visible under ultraviolet light in the sitter's forehead and proper left cheek as well as in the putti. The dark shadows have been reinforced. In 2002 a layer of grime was removed and an additional layer of varnish was applied over the existing one.

[1] The characterization of the wood is based on visual examination only.

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with a J astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

Clement de Jonghe [c. 1624-1677], Amsterdam; (his estate sale, Amsterdam, 15 February 1679 and days following).[1] Jan Six [1618-1700], Amsterdam; (his estate sale, by Jan Pietersz Zomer, Amsterdam, 6 April 1702, no. 111). Joan de Vries; (his sale, The Hague, 13 October 1738, no. 24).[2] Rev. John Fuller Russell [1814-1884], Eagle House, near Enfield, Middlesex, by 1854;[3] (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 18 April 1885, no. 139). Ralph Brocklebank [1840-1921], Haughton Hall, near Tarporley, Cheshire, by 1904;[4] (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 7 July 1922, no. 91). Joseph Fuller Feder [d. 1944], New York; by inheritance to his wife, Edith Mosler Feder [d. 1960], New York; by inheritance to her grandson, Joseph F. McCrindle [1923–2008], New York; gift 2002 to NGA.

[1] Frans Laurentius, *Clement de Jonghe (ca. 1624-1677): KunstverKoper in de*

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Gouden Eeuw, Houten, 2010: 42, 160, 161.

[2] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderyen…*, The Hague, 1752: 561.

[3] Gustav Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, 3 vols., London, 1854: 2:464.

[4] R. Radcliffe Carter, *Pictures & Engravings at Haughton Hall, Tarporley, in the possession of Ralph Brocklebank*, London, 1904: x, 34, no. 26.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jakob Houbraken, *Willem Kalf* (detail), engraving, in Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (The Hague: J. Swart, C. Boucquet, en M. Gaillard, 1753), vol. 2, pl. H, National Gallery of Art Library, Gift of C. Dearhoff

Kalf, Willem

Dutch, 1619 - 1693

BIOGRAPHY

Willem Kalf, baptized in Rotterdam on November 3, 1619, was one of the foremost still-life painters of the seventeenth century. His father, Jan Jansz Calff (Kalf), was a well-to-do textile merchant and town council member who died in 1625. Shortly after the death of his mother, Machtelt Gerrits, in 1638, Kalf settled in Paris, where he was active as a painter until his return to Rotterdam in 1646. Five years later his name appears in the marriage book for the city of Hoorn: “Willem Jansz Kalf, bachelor of Rotterdam, and Cornelia Pluvier, girl of Vollenhoven, both living at Hoorn, on October 22, 1651.” Not long after his marriage he is mentioned as a member of the Saint Luke’s Guild in Amsterdam. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Kalf lived in comfortable circumstances. He seems to have stopped painting around 1680 to concentrate his energies on being an art dealer. He died in Amsterdam on July 31, 1693, and was buried on August 3 in the Zuiderkerk.

Houbraken stated that Hendrik Gerritsz Pot (Dutch, c. 1585 - 1657) was Kalf’s teacher, but there is little in Kalf’s early work to suggest such a relationship. Because of the stylistic and coloristic resemblances between the work of Frans Rijckhals (c. 1600–1647) and Kalf’s early peasant kitchen interiors and his later elaborate (*pronk*) still lifes, it seems that this Rotterdam artist was an important

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influence on the young artist.

Kalf's mature work developed during the 1650s, after his move to Amsterdam. He focused on a few objects, which he organized with great restraint against a dark background, and delighted in depicting the sheen of silver, the translucency of glass, and the rich textures of intricately patterned Oriental rugs. His luminous manner of painting highlights has often been compared to that of Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632 - 1675), and it is entirely possible that Kalf's work influenced the Delft master.

Although Kalf probably had pupils who made replicas of his work, none are documented. His most successful follower was Jurriaen van Streek (1632–1687).

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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Willem Kalf
Dutch, 1619 - 1693

Still Life

c. 1660

oil on canvas
overall: 64.4 x 53.8 cm (25 3/8 x 21 3/16 in.)
framed: 83.8 x 69.9 cm (33 x 27 1/2 in.)
Chester Dale Collection 1943.7.8

ENTRY

A restrained arrangement of sumptuous objects nestled in a luxurious and exotic Oriental carpet is brought to life by the delicate play of light across their surfaces. [1] With deft touches of his paintbrush Kalf invokes the soft texture of wool, the vitreous gleam of Chinese porcelain, the dense rind of lemon, and the transparent sheen of an elegantly wrought Venetian-style goblet. Viewed individually the objects have no logical relationship to one another, yet orchestrated as they are through Kalf's unerring sense of composition, these and the other items he has depicted come together as a harmonious whole.

As is evident from examining the full extent of his oeuvre, Kalf's style developed in quite distinct phases that parallel, to a certain extent, his periods of residence in Rotterdam, Paris, and Amsterdam. Within each phase a precise chronology is difficult to determine as he dated only a few of his paintings. Because Kalf favored a few compositional types and tended to use many of the same objects in various combinations, however, one can often arrive at an approximate chronology.

This painting, with its pyramidal composition set off-center, is one of the purest examples of a compositional format used by Kalf in Amsterdam in the late 1650s and early 1660s. [2] The presence of the Chinese porcelain fruit bowl, tipped at an angle to reveal its decorated interior, is also characteristic of his Amsterdam period. This Wan-Li bowl was a favorite of Kalf's, possibly because the blues and creamy whites of the interior played off so well against the oranges, yellows, and reds of the fruit. [3] Conservation of the painting in 2010 revealed that a glass bird with spread wings surmounting the tall flute and extensive scalloping on the glass

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cup on the right, which were previously visible in the painting, were fanciful additions by an earlier restorer [fig. 1]. [4]

Kalf's paintings were destined for an elite audience, one that not only took pride in the mercantile prosperity of the Dutch Republic but also had been instrumental in creating that wealth. His still lifes from the Amsterdam period do not contain Dutch cheeses, breads, hams, and pies but rather depict items that had been imported from the far reaches of the world—Venetian glass, Oriental carpets, agate-handled knives, Seville oranges, and, above all, Chinese porcelain. [5] He then placed these exotic objects against a dark, contrasting background that allowed him to illuminate their forms with accents of light.

To judge from paintings such as this, Kalf's primary intent must have been to create an arrangement of elegant and luxurious objects that could be enjoyed for their aesthetic appeal. As opposed to earlier Haarlem still-life painters, he seems to have had little interest in instilling moralizing messages into his works. Confirmation of his attitude can be gained from the writings of Gerard de Lairesse (Dutch, 1641 - 1711), an important Amsterdam painter and theorist who knew Kalf personally and admired his work. [6] De Lairesse writes that paintings of the type that Kalf executed, which include "expensive items, such as gold, silver, crystal and other glasses, pearls, rare stones, and pearl necklaces," are commonly called *Vanitassen,* or vanitas paintings. [7] Nevertheless, according to De Lairesse, Kalf did not include objects in his paintings to convey a specific meaning or moral. Indeed, he decided which objects to paint somewhat according to whim and without any preconceived program. [8]Although the rarity and fragility of the objects might call to mind questions of transience associated with vanitas painting, these were merely by-products of Kalf's work, not the driving force behind it.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 before treatment, Willem Kalf, *Still Life*, c. 1660, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Chester Dale Collection, 1943.7.8

NOTES

[1] Such carpets were, and still are, often used by the Dutch as covers for tables. In the seventeenth century, they were probably to be found only in the homes of the wealthy because of their high cost. They were imported to the Netherlands from Persia and India by the Dutch East India Company. Because this particular carpet is only partially visible, and because it is possible that the artist has taken some license in its design, its country of origin is difficult to determine. One carpet expert, Mr. Chester Ellis of Kingston, New York, has indicated that he believes it is an Indian carpet (conversation with Mr. Ellis, September 1980). For a fuller discussion of carpets in Dutch art, see Onno Ydema, "Carpets in 17th-Century Dutch and Flemish Painting," in The European Fine Art Fair (Maastricht, 1988), 15–28; and especially Onno Ydema, Carpets and Their Datings in Netherlandish Paintings, 1540–1700 (Zutphen, 1991).

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[2] Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619–1693* (Berlin, 1974), 114–115, 258, no. 102, uses this painting as the characteristic example of this type of composition. He expressly compares the painting to four other works: three paintings dated 1659, his nos. 95–97, and an undated painting in the Detroit Institute of Arts, his no. 100. The compositional and stylistic characteristics of this work are so similar to those of other Kalf paintings from the early 1660s that I cannot agree with Claus Grimm's assessment that the Gallery's painting is the work of Jurriaen van Streek (1632–1687). See Claus Grimm, *Stilleben: Die niederländischen und deutschen Meister* (Stuttgart, 1988), 223, repro.

[3] Kalf, who seems to have abandoned painting as a profession to be an art dealer in about 1680, may well have collected Wan-Li porcelain, for he depicted many exquisite pieces in his paintings. The bowl in this painting is known as a *clapmuts* in the Netherlands. See T. Volker, *Porcelain and the Dutch East India Company, as Recorded in the Dagh-Registers of Batavia Castle, Those of Hirado and Deshima, and Other Contemporary Papers, 1602–1682* (Leiden, 1954), repro. 4.

[4] These fanciful embellishments were painted out during the 2010 conservation treatment (see the Technical Summary). For Dutch glass, see Ada Polak, "Glass in Dutch Painting," *Connoisseur* 193, no. 776 (October 1976): 121.

[5] Porcelain made in China during the reign of Wan Li (1563–1620) was highly valued in the Netherlands. Most of it was brought by ships belonging to the Dutch East India Company, which had been founded on March 20, 1602. The real craze for Chinese porcelain occurred after the capture of Portuguese ships carrying a large cargo of Wan-Li porcelain in March 1603. When the cargo, consisting of more than one hundred thousand pieces of porcelain, was sold in Amsterdam on August 15, 1604, buyers came from all over Western Europe. See T. Volker, *Porcelain and the Dutch East India Company, as Recorded in the Dagh-Registers of Batavia Castle, Those of Hirado and Deshima, and Other Contemporary Papers, 1602–1682* (Leiden, 1954), 22; and Clare Le Corbeiller, *China Trade Porcelain: Patterns of Exchange, Additions to the Helena Woolworth McCann Collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1974), 1–4.

[6] In a document of 1672 Kalf appeared as a witness before a notary in Amsterdam along with a number of other artists, including Gerard de Lairesse (Dutch, 1641 - 1711). The case concerned the evaluation of Italian paintings. See Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619–1693* (Berlin, 1974), 193, doc. 20. How well De Lairesse and Kalf knew each other is not known, but to judge from De Lairesse's laudatory comments about Kalf in his treatise on painting, one would assume that a friendship existed. See Gérard de Lairesse, *Groot schilderboek*, 2 vols. (Haarlem, 1740; reprint, Soest, 1969), 266–267: "De vermaarde *Kalf,* die veel heerlyke en uitmuntende

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voorbeelden daar van heeft nagelaaten, heeft in deze zeer uitgemunt, en boven allen den hoogsten lof verdiend." (The famous Kalf, who left us many delightful and excellent examples of [still-life painting], greatly excelled in this, and earned the highest praise of them all.) Translated by Henriette Rahusen.

[7] Gérard de Lairesse, *Groot schilderboek*, 2 vols. (Haarlem, 1740; reprint, Soest, 1969), 266: "Het is die welke in allerhande kostelykheden bestaat, als goud, zilver, kristalle en andere glazen, paerlen, edelgesteentens en paerlemoer, gemeenlyk *Vanitassen* genaamd." ([Another type of still-life painting], containing all kinds of precious items, such as gold, silver, crystal- and other glasses, pearls, precious stones and mother-of-pearl, commonly called *Vanitassen*.)

[8] Gérard de Lairesse, *Groot schilderboek*, 2 vols. (Haarlem, 1740; reprint, Soest, 1969), 268: "Hoewel wy hier voor gezegt hebben, dat de vermaarde *Kalf* in de Stillevens boven anderen heeft uitgemunt, heeft hy nochtans, zo min als zyne voorgangers en navolgers, reden van zyne verbeeldingen weeten te geeven, waarom hy dit of dat vertoonde: maar slechts het geen hem in den zin schoot (als een porcelyne pot of schaal, een goude bokaal, een fluit of roemer met wyn, en daar in een citroenschil hangende, een horologie, paerlemoere hoorn op een goude of zilvere voet, een zilvere schaal of bord met persikken, of wel opengesnedene chinaasappelen of citroenen, een tapyt, en diergelyke gewoonlyke dingen) verbeeld, zonder eens zyne gedachten te hebben laaten gaan om iets van belang voort te brengen daar een byzondere zin in stak, of't geen ergens op toegepast kon worden." (Even though we just stated that the famous Kalf was the very best still-life painter, he nevertheless, just as his predecessors and followers never explained the reason for his compositions, why he depicted this or that; but only painted that which fancied him—such as a porcelain pot or bowl, a gold chalice, a flute or roemer with wine, in which dangled a lemon-peel, a pocket-watch, a horn of mother-of-pearls mounted on a gold- or silver base, a silver platter or plate with peaches, or perhaps sliced oranges or lemons, a tapestry, and similar common objects—without ever having considered whether to create something important that had a significant meaning, or that could refer to something.) Translated by Henriette Rahusen.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a fine-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. The X-radiographs show broad cusping along the top edge. The double ground consists of a red lower layer and an opaque beige upper layer.[1]

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Both thin layers are brush applied and leave the weave pattern prominent.

Paint handling varies according to the surface texture being rendered, from thin opaque layers to richly textured pastes, with glazes confined to carpet details and the dark background. Infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 2.5 microns[2] reveals evidence of a fourth glass. Remnants of this glass became visible when overpaint was removed during a conservation treatment in 2010. It is unclear if Kalf intended for this glass to be seen or if he had painted it out and it was subsequently uncovered by a particularly aggressive restoration at some point in the painting's history.

A large complex tear is present in the upper right quadrant and the background is heavily abraded in this area. Scattered small losses are found overall, with a larger loss in the center of the Seville orange. There is also evidence of damage to some of the glassware, namely the center glass, and the glass on the proper left side. During an earlier restoration, the white highlights in these objects were reinforced, and in some cases, such as the winged bird on top of the center glass, completely invented. The X-radiographs reveal that some of the original lead-white highlights were still present beneath these additions.[3] In 2010, the painting was treated to remove discolored varnish, inpaint, and overpaint and to bring the tear back into plane. During that treatment the restoration highlights in the glassware were painted out and the original highlights were reconstructed using the X-radiographs as a guide.

[1] The painting conservation department used cross-sections to analyze the ground when the painting was treated in 2010 (see report dated July 2010 in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with H, J, and K filters.

[3] The additions were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using air-path X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy and confirmed to be of a later date. Some of the other pigments in the painting were also analyzed at this time (see report, dated October 19, 2010, in NGA Conservation department files). The yellow pigment in the lemon had been analyzed previously by the NGA Scientific Research department using air-path X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy and found to be lead-tin yellow (see reports dated October 12, 1983, and October 19, 2010, in

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NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Possibly Joseph Daniel Böhm [1794-1865], Vienna; possibly (his sale, Alexander Posonyi, Vienna, 4 December 1865, no. 1682).[1] (Cottier & Co., New York); sold 1889 to Mrs. Henry Osborne Havemeyer [née Louisine Waldron Elder, 1855-1929], New York; (sale, American Art Association, Anderson Galleries, New York, 10 April 1930, no. 46); Chester Dale [1883-1962], New York; gift 1943 to NGA.

[1] Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619-1693*, Berlin, 1974, 258, no. 102, suggests that the *Still Life* might be identified as the Böhm painting auctioned in Vienna on 4 December 1865. The painting in this sale, however, was probably another composition, for it is described in the auction catalogue as having four pomegranates ("vier spanische Granatäpfel").

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1965 The Chester Dale Bequest, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1965, unnumbered checklist.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 27.

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1968 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings and Sculpture, Illustrations*. Washington, 1968: 63, repro.

1974 Grisebach, Lucius. *Willem Kalf, 1619-1693*. Berlin, 1974: 114-115, 122, 130, 258-259, no. 102, repro. 116.

1975 National Gallery of Art. *European paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue*. Washington, 1975: 184-185, repro.

1984 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. Rev. ed. New York, 1984: 306, no. 404, color repro.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 213, repro.

1985 Pelfrey, Robert H., and Mary Hall-Pelfrey. *Art and Mass Media*. New York, 1985: 99, no. 4.18, repro.

1986 Sutton, Peter C. *A Guide to Dutch Art in America*. Washington and Grand Rapids, 1986: 309.

1988 Grimm, Claus. *Stilleben: die niederländischen und deutschen Meister*. Stuttgart, 1988: 223, repro.

1991 Ydema, Onno. *Carpets and Their Datings in Netherlandish Paintings, 1540-1700*. Zutphen, 1991: 161, no. 455.

1993 Frelinghuysen, Alice Cooney, et al. *Splendid Legacy: The Havemeyer Collection*. Exh. cat. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1993: 351, no. 336, repro. [not in the exhibition].

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 146-149, color repro. 147.

1996 Pelfrey, Robert H. *Art and mass media*. New York, 1985. Reprint, Dubuque, Iowa, 1996: 96-97, fig. 4.16.

1998 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *A Collector's Cabinet*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1998: 35, 66, no. 27.

1999 Brunnenkant, Katja. "Falscher Glanz? Technologische Untersuchung des ‘W. Kalf. 1643’ signierten Prunkstillebens im Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Köln und Vergleich mit Werken aus der Pariser Periode Willem Kalfs (ca. 1619-1693)." *Kunsttechnologie und Konservierung* 13, no. 2 (1999): 264-273, fig. 40, 266, repro. of X-radiography.

1999 Schmied, Wieland. *Harenberg-Museum der Malerei: 525 Meisterwerke*

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aus sieben Jahrhunderten. Dortmund, 1999: 362-363, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

after Willem Kalf
Anonymous Artist

Willem Kalf
Dutch, 1619 - 1693

Still Life with Nautilus Cup

1665/1670

oil on canvas
overall: 68.2 x 58 cm (26 7/8 x 22 13/16 in.)
framed: 90.8 x 80 x 9.5 cm (35 3/4 x 31 1/2 x 3 3/4 in.)
Inscription: probably by another hand, lower left on edge of tabled: W.Kalf
Gift of Robert H. and Clarice Smith 1974.109.1

ENTRY

Kalf's renown as an artist was such that during his lifetime he was eulogized in verse by Jan Vos and Joost van den Vondel; in the early eighteenth century, Gerard de Lairesse (Dutch, 1641 - 1711) and Arnold Houbraken wrote about him enthusiastically. [1] Although these sources provide some insight into the character of his art, they say nothing about his workshop practice. Likewise, no mention is made of students, although some artists, particularly Jurriaen van Streek (1632–1687), come so close to him in style and composition that it seems improbable that they did not spend some time in his studio. [2] The issue is of some consequence because two or three versions exist of certain of Kalf's compositions. While later imitations may also have been made, it would have been consistent with seventeenth-century workshop practice for studio assistants, perhaps with the aid of the master, to make replicas of the master's most successful paintings. Even without documentary evidence to confirm the existence of a Kalf workshop, these replicas suggest that he worked with various assistants, particularly during his Amsterdam years. [3]

Even though *Still Life with Nautilus Cup* has many qualities of a Kalf composition, it must be one of these replicas. [4] A comparison with the Gallery's Still Life, in which a number of the same objects appear, reveals the differences in handling between this work and an authentic painting by the master. The most obvious disparity is in the depiction of the lemon rind in each painting ([fig. 1] and [fig. 2]). In Kalf's own

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hand the rind has a three-dimensional presence as it twists and turns in space. Its edges are carefully wrought to show both the irregular cut of the knife and the thickness of the skin. Finally, Kalf re-created the rough texture of the skin with sure touches of the brush. The illusionism is so complete that the paint seems to take on the character of the skin itself. The lemon peel in *Still Life with Nautilus Cup* exhibits none of these characteristics. Form is simplified, edges give no hint of the rind's thickness, and paint highlights sit on the surface, doing little to create the sense of texture. Comparable differences in technique are evident in the treatment of the Seville orange and the tapestry. [5] Grisebach, who in 1974 was the first to recognize that *Still Life with Nautilus Cup* was a replica, considered Kalf's original composition to be a painting formerly on the art market. [6] That painting, however, is also a replica, but by a different hand. [7] As seems to have happened in a number of instances, Kalf's original is lost. [8]

The compositional elements of the present work indicate that Kalf's original composition must have been executed in the late 1660s. [9] Although the blue-and-white Wan-Li porcelain bowl, decorated with colored biscuit figures representing the eight immortals of Taoist belief, is already found in Kalf's paintings from the early 1660s, most prominently in his *Still Life with Nautilus Cup* of 1662 (Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid), [10] the unusual nautilus cup appears only later in the decade. [11] This cup consists of a polished turban shell mounted on an elaborately wrought, gilded-silver base made in the form of a putto holding a horn of plenty. [12] While the turban shell was especially prized for its mother-of-pearl luminosity, its shape, with the symbolic association with a horn of plenty, made it a particularly appropriate focal point for Kalf's image of wealth and prosperity.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Detail of lemon, after Willem Kalf, *Still Life with Nautilus Cup*, 1665/1670, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Robert H. and Clarice Smith, 1974.109.1

fig. 2 Detail of lemon, Willem Kalf, *Still Life*, c. 1660, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Chester Dale Collection, 1943.7.8

NOTES

[1] For Jan Vos' poem, written in 1654, see Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619–1693* (Berlin, 1974), 21; for Vondel's poem, published in 1663, see Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf*, 32. See also Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 2:218–219; and Gérard de Lairesse, *Groot schilderboeck,* 2 vols. (Haarlem, 1740; reprint, Soest, 1969), 266–268.

[2] Jurriaen's son, Hendrick van Streek (1659–after 1719), also painted in the manner of Kalf. For a discussion of artists working in Kalf's manner, see Ima Blok, "Willem Kalf," *Onze Kunst* 35 (January–June 1919): 143– 145; and Fred G. Meijer, "In der Nachfolge von Willem Kalf," in *Gemaltes Licht: Die Stilleben von Willem Kalf 1619–1693*, ed. Sylvia Böhmer (Munich, 2007), 150–155.

[3] Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619–1693* (Berlin, 1974), attributes 147 paintings unreservedly to Kalf. He also lists various copies of these works, copies of lost originals, questionable works, and wrongly attributed paintings. He does not, however, discuss the workshop problem. Sam Segal, *A Prosperous Past: The Sumptuous Still Life in the Netherlands, 1600–1700*, ed. William B. Jordan, trans. P. M. van Tongeren (Delft, 1988), 180–181, writes that Kalf, "like De Heem, allowed his pupils to make copies of his paintings to which he himself would add the finishing touches."

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Besides numerous copies by others, we also know of contemporary replicas signed by Kalf himself. Segal, however, does not present the evidence for his claim.

[4] Technical analysis shows that the signature was a later addition. Thus it is no assurance of authenticity.

[5] Similar comparisons can be made with other paintings containing identical objects, such as the blue-and-white Chinese bowl in Kalf's *Still Life with Nautilus Cup* in the Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.

[6] Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619–1693* (Berlin, 1974), 279, no. 140a. He gives no reason for having determined this work to be a copy. Doubts about the attribution have also been expressed verbally by Ingvar Bergström, Sam Segal, Claus Grimm, and Fred G. Meijer.

[7] Sir Geoffrey Agnew, in a letter dated January 9, 1976, in NGA curatorial files, indicates that after Agnew's acquired this painting at Sotheby's in 1964 (Sotheby's sale catalog, March 11, 1964, lot 70, repro.), they determined after restoration that it was an "old copy." Agnew's subsequently sold the painting at auction on August 18, 1970. Its present location is unknown.

[8] See, for example, Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619–1693* (Berlin, 1974), 286, nos. B6, B7, B8.

[9] Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619–1693* (Berlin, 1974), 279, however, explained the weakness of the painting that he considered to be the original by dating it to the end of Kalf's career: "Qualitativ stellenweise recht schwaches Spätwerk."

[10] For an illustration, see Ivan Gaskell, *Seventeenth-Century Dutch and Flemish Painting: The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection* (London, 1990), no. 10, 74–77.

[11] See, for example, his *Still Life with Nautilus Cup* (Museum der bildenden Künste, Leipzig). Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619–1693* (Berlin, 1974), 160, 276–277, no. 136, repro. 135, dates this painting to the late 1660s because of the dark tonality and the prevalence of gold tonalities in the work.

[12] Although the bases of the Leipzig and National Gallery of Art paintings are similar, slight differences do occur. The turban shell, for example, sits directly on the head and hand of the putto in the Leipzig painting, whereas in the National Gallery of Art painting it is raised above the putto by three circular forms. Such free adaptations in the shapes of objects are common in Kalf's paintings; a variant of this same base is used as a support for a glass in his *Still Life*, 1663, in the Cleveland Museum of Art (inv. no. 62.292; see Sam Segal, *A Prosperous Past: The Sumptuous Still Life in the Netherlands, 1600–1700* [Delft, 1988], 195, 249, no. 56).

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a medium-weight, tightly and plain-woven fabric, is composed of irregularly spun threads and was originally stretched off-square. It has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed, although cusping present along all edges suggests that the original dimensions have been retained. The paint was applied over a smooth, thin beige ground in thin, fluid layers, with liquid washes and full-bodied pastes employed to simulate surface texture. Smooth surfaces were rendered with highlights blended wet-into-wet, while a thick paint and a fingerprint were used to texture the orange peel.

Dark passages such as the background are moderately abraded, particularly the darker design elements of the rug and sugar bowl. Minor losses are scattered at random. The signature at the lower left crosses over drying crackle but not the age cracks. It was added after the paint had dried, presumably by another hand. No conservation has been carried out since acquisition.

PROVENANCE

Possibly G.L.M. van Es, Wassenaar.[1] Probably Colonel Towers.[2] (Leonard Koetser, London); sold 1946 to (Edward Speelman, London);[3] sold 1950 or 1958 to (Kunsthandel P. de Boer, Amsterdam);[4] sold 1958 to Mr. W. Reineke, Amersfoort; re-purchased 1968 by (Kunsthandel P. de Boer, Amsterdam), with a half-share sold to (Newhouse, London);[5] sold 21 January 1969 by (Newhouse, London) to Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Smith, Washington, D.C.;[6] gift 1974 to NGA.

[1] Noted in Lucius Grisebach, *Willem Kalf, 1619-1693*, Berlin, 1974: 279.

[2] The name of Col. Towers is given in the 1950 De Boer exhibition catalogue.

[3] See the letter dated 31 March 1989 from Edward Speelman to Anke van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven, in NGA curatorial files.

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[4] The letter dated 31 March 1989 from Edward Speelman to Anke van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven gives the date of his sale to P. de Boer as 1950. However, a letter of 17 April 1989 from H. de Boer to Anke van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven says the firm purchased the painting from Speelman in 1958. Both letters are in NGA curatorial files.

[5] The transactions from 1958 to 1969 are described in H. de Boer's letter of 17 April 1989 to Anke van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven, in NGA curatorial files.

[6] The sale date to the Smiths is given in their collection records; copy in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1948 1948 Exhibition of Dutch and Flemish Masters, Eugene Slatter Gallery, London, 1948, no. 13.

1950 Zomertentoonstelling 1950, Pieter de Boer Gallery, Amsterdam, 1950, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

1958 Kunstbezit rondom Laren, Singer Museum, Laren, The Netherlands, 1958, no. 106, repro.

1962 Nederlandse stillevens uit de zeventiende eeuw, Dordrechts Museum, 1962, no. 65, repro.

1979 Extended loan for use by Secretary Michael Blumenthal, U.S. Department of Treasury, Washington, D.C., 1979-1980.

1980 Extended loan for use by Secretary G. William Miller, U.S. Department of Treasury, Washington, D.C., 1980.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 28.

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1950 Pieter de Boer Gallery. *Zomertentoonstelling 1950*. Exh. cat. Pieter de Boer Gallery, Amsterdam, 1950: unnumbered catalogue, repro.

1958 Boer, Rudolf G. de , D. P. R. A. Bouvy, and P. Eilers. *Kunstbezit rondom Laren, 13de-20ste eeuw: schilderijen-beeldhouwwerken*. Exh. cat. Singer Museum, Laren, 1958: no. 106, repro.

1962 Bol, Laurens J. *Nederlandse Stillevens uit de 17e Eeuw*. Exh. cat. Dordrechts Museum, Dordrecht, 1962: 29, 71, no. 65, repro.

1965 "Les cours de ventes." *Connaissance des Arts* 166 (December 1965): 161, no. 12, repro.

1974 Grisebach, Lucius. *Willem Kalf, 1619-1693*. Berlin, 1974: 278-279, as copy of no. 140.

1980 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: Addenda to Summary Catalogue*. Washington, 1980: no. 2676, repro.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 213, repro.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 149-152, color repro. 151.

1998 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *A Collector's Cabinet*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1998: 35, 66, no. 28.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Keyser, Thomas de

Dutch, 1596 - 1667

BIOGRAPHY

Thomas de Keyser was the second son of Hendrick de Keyser (1565–1621), the famed Dutch architect, sculptor, and municipal stonemason of the city of Amsterdam, and his wife Beyken (Barbara) van Wildere, who hailed from Antwerp.[1] The family lived in a house that was part of the municipal stone yard along the Amstel River, between the Kloveniersburgwal and the Groenburgwal.[2] Thomas and his brothers Pieter and Willem were trained by their father in architecture, and each also became a highly regarded master stonemason and stone merchant in his own right. On January 10, 1616, the approximately 19-year-old Thomas became one of his father's apprentices. As he must already have become proficient at the trade while growing up at the Amsterdam stone yard, the formal two-year apprenticeship that followed would have fulfilled the stonemasons' guild requirements.[3]

Thomas, however, achieved his greatest prominence as a painter and became the preeminent portraitist of Amsterdam's burgeoning merchant class, at least until the arrival of Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) in 1632. Nothing is known about his artistic training as a painter, which likely occurred in his younger years. Four Amsterdam portraitists have been considered his possible teacher. Ann Jensen Adams, in her catalogue raisonné of Thomas de Keyser, posits (based on circumstantial evidence) that Cornelis van der Voort (c. 1576–1624) was most likely his master.[4] Similar circumstantial evidence could argue for a formal artistic apprenticeship with Cornelis Ketel (1548–1616), as strong stylistic similarities exist between De Keyser's early bust-length portraits and those of Ketel, who was a good friend of Hendrick de Keyser.[5] Furthermore, in the late 1620s and early 1630s, Thomas de Keyser received six important commissions for full-length group portraits, a type of painting that Ketel had introduced into the Netherlands in 1588.[6]

Thomas de Keyser gained lasting renown for two significant innovations in Dutch portraiture. First, he began to paint the Dutch elite in full-length formal portraits, a format hitherto reserved for the aristocracy, but he drastically reduced the scale of

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such portraits to make them suitable for his patrons' urban homes. He also began to depict subjects in their personal or professional environments, thereby bridging the fields of portraiture and domestic genre scenes.[7] De Keyser created many of his best works on copper panels, whose exceedingly smooth surface allowed him to paint with a great deal of refinement.[8]

Despite his fame as a portraitist, De Keyser produced slightly fewer than one hundred paintings. He created the bulk of his oeuvre in the period between 1624 and 1639, after which his primary focus shifted back to the lucrative international stone trade, yielding the Amsterdam portraiture market to Rembrandt, Govaert Flinck (Dutch, 1615 - 1660), and Bartholomeus van der Helst (1613–1670).[9] De Keyser registered as a master in the stonemasons' guild on May 14, 1640, but never completely abandoned the fine arts. In the last decade of his life, he became known for several finely executed small-scale equestrian portraits. Following in his father's and older brother's footsteps, from 1662 until his death in 1667 he served as Amsterdam's chief city-stonemason (*stads-steenhouwer*), in which capacity he supervised the construction of the cupola atop the new Amsterdam Town Hall (now the Royal Palace) on Dam Square.[10]

[1] This biographical account owes much to Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 1:18–27. See also A. W. Weissman, "Het geslacht De Keyser," *Oud Holland* 22, no. 1 (1904): 65–90. Thomas's youngest brother, Hendrick the Younger, became a stonemason under the tutelage of their brother-in-law, Nicholas Stone, in London. Stone had started his own career as apprentice to Hendrick de Keyser the Elder around the turn of the century.

[2] For a description of the *stads steen-thuyn*, see Tobias van Domselaer, *Beschryvinge van Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1665), 282. The Amsterdam stone yard is clearly visible in Floris Balthasarsz Van Berckenrode's 1625 map of Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).

[3] On the training of Pieter and Willem de Keyser and their entry into the St. Luke's Guild, see W. H. F. Oldewelt, "Het St. Lucasgilde," in *Amsterdam Archiefvondsten* (Amsterdam, 1942), 91; and Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam"

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(PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 1:29.

[4] Adams lists four possible Amsterdam masters, who all primarily produced portraits: Cornelis Ketel, Aert Pietersz (c. 1550–before 1612), Pieter Isaacsz (1569–1625), and Cornelis van der Voort. Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 1:30–35. In 1885 Nicolaas de Roever proposed Pieter Isaacsz. The next year Jan Six expressed his disagreement and suggested that Thomas was taught by Ketel. J. Six, "Nicholaes Eliasz Pickenoy," *Oud Holland* 4 (1886): 101 n. 1. In his catalogue raisonné, Rudolf Oldenbourg also identified Ketel as Thomas's teacher. Rudolf Oldenbourg, *Thomas de Keysers Tätigkeit als Maler: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des holländischen Porträts*, Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien 7 (Leipzig, 1911), 15–16, 15 n. 1, 44–45.

[5] Quentin Buvelot describes Ketel's portraits as showing the sitter "very close to the picture plane, from an unusual angle, and cropped closely by the frame." Rudi Ekkart and Quentin Buvelot, eds., *Dutch Portraits: The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals* (Zwolle, 2007), 180.

[6] Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 1:326, 2:84–94, no. 45. *The Company of Captain Allaert Cloeck and Lieutenant Lucas Jacobsz Rotgans* (1632, Amsterdam Museum, inv. SA 7353) is an excellent example of De Keyser's exquisite brushwork and sensitive renderings of personality. For an extensive description of this militia portrait and its preliminary drawings, see the Thomas de Keyser entries in Ger Luijten, Peter Schatborn, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Drawings for Paintings in the Age of Rembrandt* (Milan, 2016), 132–135, nos. 45, 46. For Ketel's groundbreaking full-length group portrait *The Company of Captain Dirck Jacobsz Rosecrans and Lieutenant Pauw* (1588, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-C-378), see Hessel Miedema and To Schulting, "Het Schuttersstuk van Cornelis Ketel (1588)," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 39, no. 4 (1991): 355–362.

[7] Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985). See also Eric Jan Sluijter, *Rembrandt's Rivals: History Painting in Amsterdam (1630–1650)*, Oculi: Studies in the Arts of the Low Countries 14 (Amsterdam, 2015), 272–284, 437–438 (notes); and Norbert Middelkoop, ed., *Kopstukken:*

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Amsterdammers geportretteerd 1600–1800 (Bussum, 2002), 31–33, 90, no. 4; 140–141, no. 35; 158–159, no. 47; 202–203, no. 72.

[8] Wilhelm Martin, *De hollandsche schilderkunst in de zeventiende eeuw: Rembrandt en zijn tijd* (Amsterdam, 1936), 1:312–318.

[9] The stonemasons' guild records show that Thomas registered as a master in 1640, yet a few paintings executed in the years 1656 to 1661 prove that he never totally gave up on his artistic career. De Keyser also made history paintings, including a copy after Pieter Lastman's stained-glass window in the Zuiderkerk at the time of the window's removal in 1660.

[10] A. W. Weissman, "Het geslacht De Keyser," *Oud Holland* 22, no. 1 (1904): 82; A. W. Weissman, "De Koepeltoren van het Stadhuis te Amsterdam," *Amstelodamum Jaarboek* 2 (1905): 6; and Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 1:418–419, 440. Apart from a design for a triumphal arch, published in Salomon de Bray's *Architectura Moderna ofte bouwinge van onsen tyt* (1631), pl. xliiii, no architectural plans with building designs by De Keyser are known.

Henriette Rahusen

December 9, 2019

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Thomas de Keyser
Dutch, 1596 - 1667

Portrait of a Gentleman Wearing a Fancy Ruff

1627

oil on copper
overall (octagonal): 28 x 22 cm (11 x 8 11/16 in.)
Inscription: center left, in monogram: TDK. ANo 16[2]7
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund 2012.12.1

ENTRY

With his frank gaze, the gentleman in this compelling portrait has a commanding yet sympathetic presence, further enhanced by rosy cheeks and the hint of a smile in his eyes, and by the amazing light effects on the face and ruff that help bring energy and life to the portrait. [1] His appealing countenance suggests strength of character, while the receding hairline and crow's-feet radiating out from his eyes signal maturity. Thomas de Keyser used meticulous brushstrokes to carefully render these features as well as the soft hairs of the sitter's mustache and beard. The realism of the magnificent lace-tipped ruff that frames the man's head is strengthened by a few unruly folds of lace that have popped up to cover small sections of his lower jaw. The brownish-red wool jacket, with rows of beaded buttons down its front and sleeves, reinforces the sense that this man, while stylish, is sensible.

De Keyser created this remarkable portrait in 1627, when he was at the height of his artistic powers. As with many of his finest works, he painted it on a small copper panel and likely chose an octagonal shape as a framing device to increase the visual strength of this bust-length portrait. [2] The copper's smooth surface allowed him to paint with the exquisite refinement for which he was celebrated and to convincingly capture light to model, define, and animate the figure. The sitter's warm engagement with the viewer, evident particularly in the man's eyes, suggests that a personal relationship may have existed between him and the artist, as was the case in several other portraits by De Keyser from the 1620s.

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The second son of Hendrick de Keyser (1565–1621), famed Dutch architect and master stonemason to the city of Amsterdam, Thomas de Keyser grew up in a house that was part of the municipal stone yard. Thomas and his three brothers all became highly regarded master stonemasons and stone merchants in their own right. Only Thomas, however, branched out into painting as a young man and established himself as the most celebrated portraitist in Amsterdam in the 1620s and early 1630s. In addition to tightly focused traditional works such as *Portrait of a Gentleman Wearing a Fancy Ruff* and full-length group portraits, De Keyser gained lasting renown for two significant innovations in portraiture style: small-scale yet full-length formal portraits and depictions of sitters in their personal or professional environments that bridged the fields of portraiture and domestic genre scenes. [3]

The Gallery's painting can be compared to several other early portraits executed in the traditional close-cropped, bust-length style, including De Keyser's drawn portrait of his father, Hendrick, in 1621, the year of the latter's death. While the drawing has not survived, Jonas Suyderhoff's print after the drawing features the same three-quarter pose close to the picture-plane and sitter engagement with the viewer as the Gallery's portrait. [4] De Keyser's appealing *A Young Man with Ruff* (c. 1620–1624, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT) is also comparable to the Gallery's painting in the figure's pose, the refined and evenly applied brushwork, and the intimate depiction of personality. [5] The Hartford portrait could actually be the "likeness of Willem de Keyser" mentioned in a notarial record describing the attempts of Thomas's brother Willem (1603–after 1674) to hide certain family heirlooms from creditors when facing bankruptcy in 1658. [6]

By the mid-1620s, Thomas de Keyser's reputation garnered him patrons among the elite in other towns as well. It is telling that Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687), the personal secretary of Frederick Hendrick, the Prince of Orange, selected De Keyser to paint his portrait in 1627 despite having already expressed his admiration for the work of two young artists in Leiden, Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) and Jan Lievens (Dutch, 1607 - 1674). De Keyser's strong influence on early portraits by Rembrandt, painted in the period after the latter moved from Leiden to Amsterdam around 1632, further confirms the high regard his contemporaries had for his work. [7] Executed the same year as the Gallery's intimate painting, *Portrait of Constantijn Huygens and His (?) Clerk* (1627, National Gallery, London) exemplifies De Keyser's trailblazing fusion of genre painting and full-length portraiture. [8] He depicts Huygens in his study, where he is attended by his clerk and surrounded by attributes of both his professional life as worldly diplomat and

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statesman and his private life, which was filled with music. In the genre portrait De Keyser provides a narrative of Huygens's life and interests, whereas in the Gallery's work he has brought the sitter close to the picture plane, zeroing in on the man's face. The neutral background, the ebullient white ruff, and the man's direct engagement with the viewer enhance this emphasis on likeness and personality. Despite their significant differences, both paintings are superb examples of the artist's skills and versatility in portraiture. The number and variety of portrait commissions De Keyser received testify to his appeal to his contemporaries, and his paintings continue to elicit high praise for their assured handling, original colors, attention to details, and "the firm and delicate modelling and exquisite refinement that mark [De Keyser's] master-pieces." [9]

De Keyser also received several commissions for group portraits of civic guard companies and board members of civic institutions, some of which he executed life-size, others in the same small scale as his genre portraits. In the group portraits, he varied the depiction of his sitters between three-quarter and full-length poses and showed them either seated or standing. [10] Even though he was forced to adjust the final composition of the painting due to space constraints, the life-size portraiture in *The Militia Company of Captain Allaert Cloeck and Lieutenant Lucas Jacobsz Rotgans* (1632, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) is another excellent example of De Keyser's exquisite brushwork and sensitive renderings of personality. [11] The magnificent wavy lace ruff that defines the face of Lieutenant Rotgans, in particular, echoes De Keyser's treatment of face and ruff in *Portrait of a Gentleman Wearing a Fancy Ruff* done five years earlier.

The identity of the sitter in the Gallery's portrait is not certain, although it most likely depicts De Keyser's fellow artist Pieter Lastman (1583–1633). A poem by Joost van den Vondel published in 1628, one year after De Keyser painted this work, celebrates a *Portrait of Pieter Lastman* by Thomas de Keyser. [12] Lastman's estate inventory of 1632 lists a "portrait of [or by] Pieter Lastman in an octagonal frame," which Sebastien Dudok van Heel has identified as the painting mentioned in Vondel's poem. The language in the inventory is ambiguous, in that it describes the portrait as "van" Lastman, which in Dutch can mean "of" as well as "by." There are eleven paintings in the inventory listed as "van Lastman," but ten of these are history paintings or landscapes, thus "van Lastman" must mean "by Lastman." One portrait "van Lastman" is listed, but since Lastman is not known to have made any other portraits, in this case the word "van" presumably means "of" rather than "by." Thus "een contrefeijtsel van Pieter Lastman" probably refers to "a portrait of Pieter

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Lastman." Despite some remaining doubt, this documentary evidence seems to support Dudok van Heel's conclusion that the Gallery's painting depicts Pieter Lastman. [13]

With its fine condition, bravura technique, and sitter's engaging personality, *Portrait of a Gentleman Wearing a Fancy Ruff* embodies the best of De Keyser's lauded technical and observational skills and underscores why he was one of Amsterdam's leading portraitists in the earlier decades of the 17th century.

Henriette Rahusen

December 9, 2019

NOTES

[1] This entry relies heavily on the expertise of Ann Jensen Adams and her catalogue raisonné of De Keyser's oeuvre. Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985). Adams identified 94 works as made by De Keyser over the course of an active but intermittent career that spanned 42 years, from 1619 to at least 1661. In the first catalogue raisonné of De Keyser's work, however, Rudolf Oldenbourg identified 144 paintings by the hand of the master. Rudolf Oldenbourg, *Thomas de Keysers Tätigkeit als Maler: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des holländischen Porträts*, Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien 7 (Leipzig, 1911).

[2] The painting's 17th-century Dutch octagonal frame was a gift of Otto Naumann in 2012.

[3] For biographical information, see A. W. Weissman, "Het geslacht De Keyser," *Oud Holland* 22, no. 1 (1904): 65–91, especially 79–82; and Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), especially 1:18–44, 1:71–94, 2:416–420, 2:439–440.

[4] Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 1:69–70, 3:207–210, no. P-2.

[5] Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 3:16, no. 3, for the Hartford painting, and 1:69 for a description of De Keyser's technique. Adams notes that De Keyser worked

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"in small and evenly applied brushstrokes whose freshness brings to mind the much larger canvases of Frans Hals. This technique creates a rich, warm surface."

[6] Among the items that Willem de Keyser tried to hide in 1658 was "een kontrefeytsel [a portrait] van Willem de Keyser." Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 2:525, appendix B (transcription by S. A. C. Dudok van Heel). Thomas's sensitive and intimate portrayal of the adolescent boy does lend credence to the possibility that the young man in the Hartford painting is indeed his younger brother Willem, who was born in 1603. If so, the portrait should be dated no later than 1620.

[7] See, for example, Rembrandt's *Portrait of a Bearded Man in a Wide-Brimmed Hat* (1633, Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena). Following his move to Amsterdam in 1632, Rembrandt soon became the city's most sought-after portraitist, and De Keyser increasingly turned his attention to the family business of international stone trade and stone masonry. Significant commissions in the 1650s and 1660s prove, however, that De Keyser never completely gave up painting professionally. In addition to portraits, he produced several history paintings and also became known, in the last decade of his life, for several finely executed small-scale equestrian portraits. Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 1:421–477.

[8] For a full description of *Portrait of Constantijn Huygens and His (?) Clerk*, see Ann Jensen Adams, "The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 1:1, 1:16, 3:32–35, no. 13.

[9] William Bürger, who published several versions of De Keyser's monogram TdK, mistakenly called the artist Theodore rather than Thomas, but raved about his assured handling, original colors, and attention to details "without [the painter] ever losing a certain grandeur that stems from a straightforward and honest character." Théophile E. J. Thoré (William Bürger), "Nouvelles Études sur la Galerie Suermondt à Aix-la-Chapelle," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 21, no. 1 (1869): 30. One generation later, Émile Michel added further praise when he noted that Rembrandt's early portraits were rivaled by the bravura of Frans Hals and "the firm and delicate modelling and exquisite refinement that mark [the] master-pieces of De Keyser." Émile Michel, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Work, and His Time*, trans. Florence Simmonds (New York, 1894), 1:142.

[10] See, for example, *Civic Guardsmen from the Company of Captain Jacob Symonszn de Vries and Lieutenant Dirck Jacobszn de Graeff* (1633,

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Amsterdam Museum) (figures in three-quarter length) and *The Burgomasters of Amsterdam Are Informed about the Arrival of Queen Marie de Medici* (1638, Amsterdam Museum) (figures in full length).

[11] For an extensive description of the 1632 militia portrait and its preliminary drawings, see the Thomas de Keyser entry in Ger Luijten, Peter Schatborn, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Drawings for Paintings in the Age of Rembrandt* (Milan, 2016), 132–135, nos. 45, 46.

[12] Lastman's portrait by Thomas de Keyser and Vondel's poem are mentioned in Houbraken's mid-18th-century review of Dutch artists. Houbraken conceded that he had not seen the actual portrait. Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Hague, 1753; Amsterdam, 1976), 1:97–98. Citations refer to the 1976 edition. For the full text of Vondel's poem "Op d'Afbeeldinge van Peter Lastman," see Joost van den Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, vol. 9, *1660–1663* (Amsterdam, 1936), 290, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/vond001dewe09_01/vond001dewe09_01_0055.php (accessed March 26, 2018). Whereas Houbraken uses the first name Pieter, Vondel calls him Peter, perhaps because he compares the artist to Peter Paul Rubens.

[13] The listing in question reads: "Een contrefeijtsel van Pieter Lastman met een achtkante ebbe lijst" (a portrait of [or by] Pieter Lastman with an octagonal ebony frame). Sebastien Abraham Corneille Dudok van Heel, *De jonge Rembrandt onder tijdgenoten: Godsdienst en schilderkunst in Leiden en Amsterdam* (Rotterdam, 2006), 52, 54–55, 101, fig. 25, as "Mogelijk Portret van Pieter Lastman" (possibly the portrait of Pieter Lastman). For the full inventory of Lastman's estate, see pages 100–102. The list contains five portraits (*contrefeijtsels*) by other artists. In his catalogue raisonné of Lastman, Christian Seifert acknowledges Dudok van Heel's identification, but does not include an image of the Gallery's De Keyser portrait as the likeness of his study's subject. Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk* (Petersberg, 2011), 57, 247 nn. 322 and 323. An invoice in the Gallery's records states that *Portrait of a Gentleman Wearing a Fancy Ruff* is De Keyser's self-portrait, yet there is no supporting evidence for this alternative identification. Handwritten invoice from Frederik Muller & Cie to G. J. E. d'Aquin, December 8, 1926, no. 1040, charge of 4,000 guilders for two paintings previously in the Collectie Bischoffsheim: "De Keyser. *Zelfportret*" and "Terborch. *Portret van een Regent uit Deventer*?" Thomas de Keyser file, NGA curatorial records, 2012. Unfortunately, no authenticated portrait of either Lastman or De Keyser exists that could shed a definitive light on this issue.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The primary support is a fairly thick octagonal copper panel that is slightly warped. The ground is gray-brown in color and of medium thickness. This layer was integrated into the final composition, used as shadows on the right side and bottom portion of the lace ruff. It is most easily visible at the intersection of the sitter's ruff and clothing as well as with the background. The paint was thinly applied in small, tight brushstrokes. The background was built up in one to two very thin, semitransparent layers over the ground, while the face and collar were applied using a slightly thicker opaque paint. The flesh tones were built up by applying a buff tone on top of the ground, followed by warm peach-colored paint layers. Low impasto used in the face creates the effect of wrinkles, such as in the crow's-feet around the eyes, as well as the texture of the lace-tipped ruff. Last, a warm, dark earth tone applied directly on top of the ground helped create the luminosity of the darkest shadows.

Through infrared reflectography two small pentimenti were identified: both the sitter's collar and the proper right ear were originally painted a little larger. [1] The support, ground, and paint layers are in good condition. There are scattered pinpoint losses throughout, with some clustered areas of loss in the sitter's mouth and below the ruff as well as along the proper left contour of the sitter's clothing. In addition, there is light abrasion throughout, especially in the proper right side of the sitter's hair. The painting was treated in 2013 to stabilize tented and flaking paint as well as to remove an old, nonoriginal discolored varnish.

Dina Anchin, based on the examination and treatment reports by Michael Swicklik

December 9, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.1–1.4 microns (J filter).

PROVENANCE

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Henri Louis Bischoffsheim [1828-1908], Bute House, London; (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 7 May 1926, no. 48); Martin. (Frederik Muller & Co., Amsterdam); sold 8 December 1926 to Count Gerard Joseph Emile d'Aquin [born 1865], as a self-portrait by De Keyser; by descent in his family; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, New York, 25 January 2012, no. 13); purchased by NGA.

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Kouwenbergh, Philip van

Also known as
Couwenbergh, Philip van
Kouwenberg, Philips van
Dutch, 1671 - 1729

BIOGRAPHY

Philip van Kouwenbergh, the son of Frans van Kouwenbergh, a sculptor, was baptized in Amsterdam in the Nieuwe Kerk on February 25, 1671. On September 11, 1694, he was betrothed to Cornelia van der Mars, whom he married on September 26 that year. The first of their three sons, Wilhelmus (Willem), was born the following spring and baptized in the Nieuwe Kerk on March 6. On January 31, 1721, Philip and Willem became burghers in Amsterdam. Having outlived his wife by almost ten years, Philip was buried in the Noorderkerkhof on March 11, 1729.

The few known paintings by Van Kouwenbergh are either flower pictures or woodland scenes containing ruins, flowers, and insects. Although no information about his artistic training exists, Meijer has suggested that Van Kouwenbergh might have studied with the still-life painter Elias van den Broeck (c. 1650–1708). Van den Broeck, having returned from Antwerp in 1685, was active in Amsterdam at the time Van Kouwenbergh would have been learning his trade. Documents indicate that Van Kouwenbergh's paintings were on the market by 1694, so he had probably become an independent master by the time of his betrothal.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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Philip van Kouwenbergh
Dutch, 1671 - 1729

Flowers in a Vase

c. 1700

oil on canvas
overall: 67 x 51 cm (26 3/8 x 20 1/16 in.)
framed: 85.7 x 68.6 x 10.2 cm (33 3/4 x 27 x 4 in.)
Inscription: lower right: [P] Kouwe[]be[]h
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William Draper Blair 1976.26.2

ENTRY

This decorative still life is one of the few signed works by this relatively unknown Amsterdam painter. The execution is fairly broad, and the colors are deep and rich. Van Kouwenbergh has displayed his floral arrangement around an elaborate earthenware urn situated at the edge of a stone ledge. The composition is organized along a diagonal that is not embellished with intricate rhythms of blossoms or twisting stems. In this respect Van Kouwenbergh belongs to the tradition of late followers of Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684), specifically Elias van den Broeck (c. 1650–1708), who may have been Van Kouwenbergh's teacher, and Rachel Ruysch (1664–1750), with whom his still lifes are sometimes confused. [1] As none of Van Kouwenbergh's few known paintings are dated, it is impossible to establish a meaningful chronology for his work. Nonetheless, because of stylistic similarities to paintings by Van den Broeck, this painting probably dates from early in his career. [2]

Van Kouwenbergh includes many of the plants found in paintings by De Heem and his followers, including roses, poppies, morning glories, white lilacs, and stalks of wheat. He also incorporates a banded grove snail, two centipedes attacking each other, and a butterfly. In De Heem's still lifes—for example, Vase of Flowers—flowers, wheat, and insects are often imbued with symbolic meaning related to the cycle of life or to Christian concepts of death and resurrection. Van Kouwenbergh probably understood the philosophical concepts underlying De Heem's carefully conceived compositions, but too little is known of his oeuvre to be able to judge this with certainty. In this painting the rather whimsical sculptural element surmounting the urn would seem to set a tone quite contrary to the

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weighty messages De Heem sought to convey.

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NOTES

[1] See Fred G. Meijer, "Philip van Kouwenberg," *Oud-Holland* 102 (1988): 319. Meijer has been able to assemble an oeuvre for the artist consisting of fewer than twenty still-life paintings.

[2] Anke A. van Wagenberg-Ter Hoeven, "Nog een bloemstuk van Philip van Kouwenbergh (1671–1729)," *Antiek* 26 (1991): 253–254, has proposed a date at the end of the seventeenth century on the basis of the palette and the appearance of the wheat. She expressly compares this painting with another undated still life at Stourhead House, Wiltshire (National Trust) (her fig. 2).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a heavy-weight, loosely and plain-woven fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins removed. Cusping is visible along all edges. Colored imprimaturas were applied locally over a fawn-colored ground. Thin, fluid paint layers are subtly blended, exploiting darker underlayers, and modified with light glazes and scumbles. The fading of a fugitive yellow pigment may be the cause of the blue tonality to the leaves, which overlap the completed vase.

The bottom edge and lower left corner are extensively damaged and reconstructed. A small loss is found in the red flower at center. Moderate abrasion overall has exposed darker underlayers, altering the tonal balance. The painting was lined and discolored varnish was removed in 1969, prior to acquisition.

PROVENANCE

Probably by inheritance to Viscount de Beughem, Brussels; by inheritance to his niece, Mary Eula Mason Blair [1906 -1983], and her husband, William Draper Blair [1902-1993], Washington, D.C.;[1] gift 1976 to NGA.

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[1] Provenance from notes in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1989 Extended loan for use by Secretary Robert Mosbacher, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 1989-1993.

1993 Extended loan for use by Secretary Ron Brown, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 1993-1997.

1997 Extended loan for use by Secretary William M. Daley, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 1997-1999.

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1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 152-154, color repro. 153.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Judith Leyster, *Self-Portrait* (detail), c. 1630, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, 1949.6.1

Leyster, Judith

Also known as
Molenaer, Judith
Dutch, 1609 - 1660

BIOGRAPHY

Judith Leyster was born in Haarlem and baptized there on July 28, 1609. Her father, Jan Willemsz, owned a brewery called the “Leyster” (lodestar), from which the family took its surname. Little is known of Leyster’s early training, but she clearly made a name for herself at a very young age: she is mentioned as an active artist in Samuel Ampzing’s description of the town of Haarlem, which was published in 1628 when she would have been just nineteen years old.

Not long thereafter, Leyster’s family moved to Vreeland near Utrecht, and many have speculated that at this time she came under the influence of the Utrecht Caravaggisti. Nevertheless, the dramatic effects of indirect, artificial lighting that these painters typically employed are not entirely paralleled in any of her canvases. It seems more likely that the superficial similarities to the style of the Utrecht Caravaggisti came by way of the circle of painters around Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666) in Haarlem. By September 1629, Leyster’s parents had moved to Zaandam, near Amsterdam, although it is not clear how long she remained with them there before returning to Haarlem. She was certainly back in her native town by November 1631 when she was a witness at the baptism of one of Hals’ children.

As with many artists Leyster may have trained with different masters, but documentary evidence of her artistic training is scarce. Samuel Ampzing seems to suggest that she studied with Frans Pietersz de Grebber (1573–1643), who ran a large and active workshop in the 1620s, but the wording of his text leaves the question in doubt.[1] No records survive to prove that Leyster studied with Frans

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Hals, but a number of her works show her to have been one of his closest and most successful followers. She also was influenced by the work of Frans' brother, Dirck Hals (1591–1656). Should Leyster have been in either the De Grebber or Hals studios, it would have been prior to 1629, the year in which she starts to sign and date her paintings, and probably before 1627, when Ampzing implies that she was working as an independent artist.[2]

In the years following her return to Haarlem, Leyster achieved a degree of professional success that was quite remarkable for a woman of her time. By 1633 she was a member of the Saint Luke's Guild of Haarlem, the first woman admitted for whom an oeuvre can be cited, and in 1635 she is recorded as having three students. One of these, Willem Woutersz, subsequently defected to the studio of Hals, presumably without adequate warning, for Leyster went before the Saint Luke's Guild in October 1635 to make a (successful) demand for payment from Woutersz's mother. In 1636 she married Jan Miense Molenaer (c. 1609/1610–1668).

Stylistically, much of her work resembles that of Frans Hals. Her brushwork is quite free and spontaneous, and she favored the same types of subjects and compositions, notably energetic genre scenes depicting one or two figures, often children engaged in some kind of merrymaking. In addition to these compositions, Leyster also painted still lifes. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between her early works and the works of her husband, a problem that is aggravated by the fact that they often shared studio props and models and may even have worked on each other's pictures., a fellow artist and at times close follower of Hals. The couple subsequently moved to Amsterdam, where they lived until 1648. Leyster painted very little after her marriage. In October of 1648 the couple bought a house in Heemstede, near Haarlem, but continued to make regular visits to Amsterdam, where they had another house, and Haarlem. Leyster died in 1660 and was buried in Heemstede on February 10.

[1] See Frima Fox Hofrichter, *Judith Leyster: A Woman Painter in Holland's Golden Age* (Doornspijk, 1989), 14. Ampzing may have included Leyster in his description of the De Grebber workshop to link her with another woman artist of the period, De Grebber's daughter, Maria (c. 1602–1680).

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[2] Ampzing's text is known to have been written prior to February 1, 1627.

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1993 Welu, James A., and Pieter Biesboer. *Judith Leyster: Schilderes in een Mannenwereld*. Exh. cat. Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem. Zwolle, 1993.

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Judith Leyster
Dutch, 1609 - 1660

Self-Portrait

c. 1630

oil on canvas
overall: 74.6 x 65.1 cm (29 3/8 x 25 5/8 in.)
framed: 97.5 x 87.6 x 9.2 cm (38 3/8 x 34 1/2 x 3 5/8 in.)
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss 1949.6.1

ENTRY

As she turns from her painting of a violin player and gazes smilingly out at the viewer, Judith Leyster manages to assert, in the most offhanded way, that she has mastered a profession traditionally viewed as a masculine domain. Although women drew and painted as amateurs, a professional woman painter was a rarity in Holland in the seventeenth century. Leyster was quite a celebrity even before she painted this self-portrait in about 1630. Her proficiency, even at the tender age of nineteen, had been so remarkable that in 1628 Samuel Ampzing singled her out for praise in his *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* some five years before she appears to have become the first woman ever to be admitted as a master in the Haarlem Saint Luke's Guild. [1] Even after 1636, when she moved to Amsterdam with her husband, the artist Jan Miense Molenaer (c. 1610–1668), her artistic reputation never waned in her native city. In the late 1640s another historian of Haarlem, Theodorus Schrevelius, wrote, "There also have been many experienced women in the field of painting who are still renowned in our time, and who could compete with men. Among them, one excels exceptionally, Judith Leyster, called 'the true leading star' in art." [2]

The young artist sits in a remarkably casual manner, with her right arm resting on the back of her chair. As she looks out at the viewer with one hand holding a brush and the other her palette, a large bundle of brushes, and a white painter's cloth, it appears as though she has just been interrupted from her work. Indeed, Leyster has purposely left the figure of the violin player on the canvas in an unfinished state. Nevertheless, she is dressed in quite formal attire, inappropriate for an artist busy working. One could hardly imagine her painting while wearing such a firmly

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starched, broad, lace-trimmed collar.

The inconsistencies can be explained in the dichotomy that existed between the traditional iconography for artists' self-portraits and the relatively new informal concept of portraiture that had developed in Haarlem in the 1620s through the influence of Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666). It had long been accepted for an artist to depict him- or herself dressed in fine clothes before an easel, as did, for example, one of the few successful women artists of the sixteenth century, Catharina van Hemessen (1528–after 1587), in her self-portrait of 1548 (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Basel). [3] This tradition developed as artists sought to raise their social status from craftsmen to members of the liberal arts. The parallel that could be drawn between the noble character of painting and the social position of the artist is also evident in Cesare Ripa's insistence that the personification of "Artificio of Konststuck" should be dressed in expensive and artfully made (*konstigh*) clothes. "He should be dressed ingeniously and nobly because art by itself is noble, which men can also call the second Nature." [4] Leyster abided by this tradition, yet she was also aware of the innovations of the greatest Haarlem portrait painter of the day, Frans Hals. While her brushwork is not as vivacious as that of Hals, the momentary quality of the image, conveyed through informality of pose and open expression, is related to his portrait style of the 1620s. [5]

The exact date of this self-portrait is not known. Hofrichter has argued that Leyster executed it as a presentation piece at the time of her entry into the Haarlem Saint Luke's Guild in 1633. The new regulations, which were established in 1631, required that each new master present to the guild "a painting two feet large" as testimony of skill. [6] Nevertheless, for a number of reasons this attractive hypothesis is probably not correct. First, the costume cannot date that late. This flat, lace-edged style of collar can be found in portraits from the late 1620s but not in the 1630s. [7] The style of the cap, moreover, is extremely close to one in Leyster's *Carousing Couple* (1630, Musée du Louvre, Paris). The smooth modeling of the heads of the women in these two paintings is also extremely close. Their features are somewhat superficially rendered in comparison to the more three-dimensionally conceived genre figures that Leyster painted in the early to mid-1630s. [8] Finally, the painting of a violin player displayed on the easel in the *Self-Portrait* derives from *Merry Company*, which she executed between about 1629 and 1631 [fig. 1]. It seems unlikely that she would have returned to this subject in 1633 to demonstrate her abilities for admission to the guild. All of this evidence suggests a date of about 1630 for this work, when Leyster was about twenty-one years old.

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Leyster did not initially plan to paint the violin player on the canvas, but rather a portrait of a woman, whose face is visible in an infrared photograph and with Infrared Reflectography [fig. 2]. Following the iconographic tradition of portraits depicting an artist at an easel, this woman was probably Leyster herself. [9] She may have decided to depart from that tradition because of the popular success of the *Merry Company* scene from which the violin player derived, or to emphasize her versatility as a painter of both portraits and genre scenes. [10] In any event, the happy disposition of the violin player gives the *Self-Portrait* a joyous character that adds much to its charm. [11] By juxtaposing the bow of the violin player and her own paintbrush, Leyster seems to remind the viewer that, just as the musician has mastered his instrument to produce music, so too has she mastered the tools of her profession to create equally compelling art.

This painting, which is not signed, was long attributed to Frans Hals, in large part because Leyster's own artistic personality was only rediscovered in 1893. [12] The first art historian to identify the painting as a self-portrait by Leyster was Abraham Bredius, who, as editor of *Oud-Holland*, appended his opinion to an article in that journal positing that Hals has here portrayed Leyster. [13] Unfortunately, the painting has suffered from overall abraision and minute pitting of the paint surface (see Technical Summary). X-radiographs [see X-radiography] have also revealed that a long, horizontal rectangle of the original canvas is missing in the lower left and has been replaced by an insert [fig. 3]. The reddish dress in this area, thus, is a reconstruction and not from the hand of Judith Leyster. Nevertheless, after the painting's 1992 restoration, which removed discolored layers of varnish that had severely disfigured the painting, this engaging image of a self-assured young female painter from Haarlem has taken on an iconic status in Dutch art.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Judith Leyster, *Merry Company*, 1629/1631, oil on canvas, private collection, The Netherlands. Photo courtesy Noortman Master Paintings

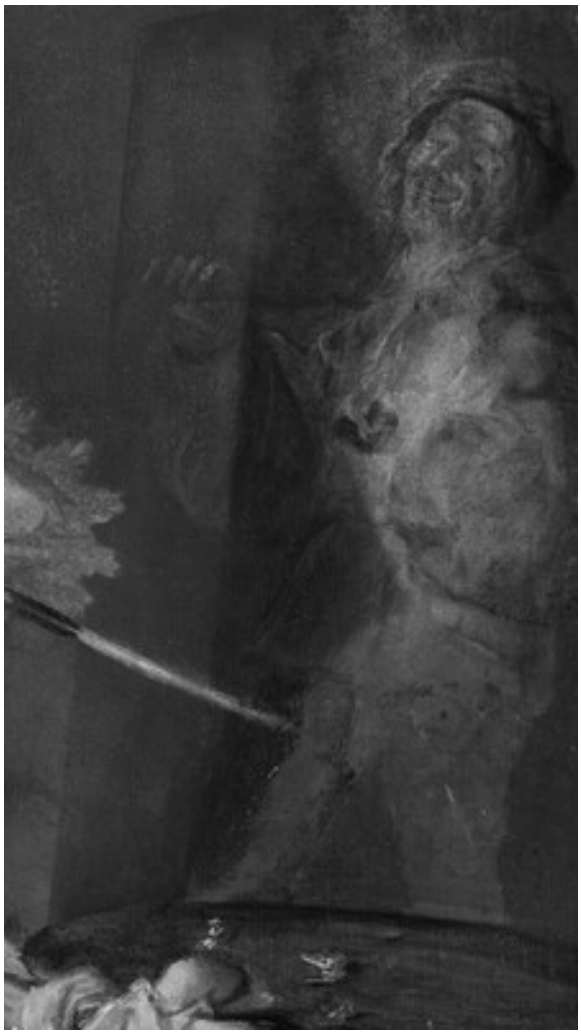

fig. 2 Detail, infrared reflectogram, Judith Leyster, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1630, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, 1949.6.1

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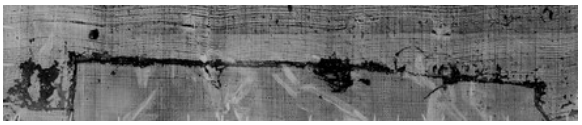

fig. 3 Detail of lower left corner of canvas, showing insert, X-radiograph, Judith Leyster, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1630, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, 1949.6.1

NOTES

[1] Samuel Ampzing, *Beschrijvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* (Haarlem, 1628), 370, praises Leyster's bold hand and mind in the context of a discussion of the De Grebber family, probably because Frans de Grebber's daughter Maria (c. 1602–1680) was also a painter. The rarity of women artists is implicit in Ampzing's rhetorical question concerning Maria: "Who ever saw a painting made by the hand of a daughter?" ("Wie sag oyt schilderij van eene dochtershand?")

[2] Theodorus Schrevelius, *Harlemias, ofte, de eerst stichtinghe der stad Haarlem* (Haarlem, 1648), 384–385. "Daer zyn ook veel Vrouwen gheweest in de Schilder-konst wel ervaren / die voornamelyck by onse tijdt noch vermaert zijn / die met de mans haer soude konnen versetten in de maelkonst / van welcke ceo insonderheydt uytmunt, JUDITH LEISTER, weleer genaemt / de rechte l..eyster inde konst." The English translation has been taken from Frima Fox Hofrichter, *Judith Leyster: A Woman Painter in Holland's Golden Age* (Doornspijk, 1989), 83. The reference to "the true leading star" is a pun on Leyster's name; see Frima Fox Hofrichter, *Judith Leyster: A Woman Painter in Holland's Golden Age* (Doornspijk, 1989), 13.

[3] Illustrated in Hans Joachim Raupp, *Untersuchungen zu Künstlerbildnis und Künstlerdarstellung in den Niederlanden im 17. Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim, 1984), 390, repro. 20.

[4] Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia of uytbeeldingen des verstands*, trans. Dirck Pietersz Pers (Amsterdam, 1644), 259. "Konstigh en eedel wort hy gekleet, om dat de konst door haer selven eedel is, die men oock de tweede Natuyre kan heeten." For a discussion of this type of self-portraiture, see Hans Joachim Raupp, *Untersuchungen zu Künstlerbildnis und Künstlerdarstellung in den Niederlanden im 17. Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim, 1984), 36–38.

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[5] See, for example, Hals' *Isaac Abrahamsz. Massa*, 1626, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, illustrated in Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 2: pl. 64. Although the National Gallery of Art work was attributed to Judith Leyster in 1926, many scholars gave it to Frans Hals during the 1930s (see Exhibition History and Bibliography).

[6] Frima Fox Hofrichter, "Judith Leyster's 'Self-Portrait': 'Ut Pictura Poesis,'" in *Essays in Northern European Art Presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Anne-Marie Logan (Doornspijk, 1983), 106–109. For the guild regulations, see Ed Taverne, "Salomon de Bray and the Reorganization of the Haarlem Guild of St. Luke in 1631," *Simiolus* 6 (1972–1973): 52.

[7] A similar style collar is seen in family portraits of the late 1620s, such as Pieter de Grebber's *Family Portrait at a Meal,* 1625 (Stedelijk Museum, Alkmaar); Paulus Bor's *Portrait of the Family Van Vanevelt,* 1628 (Sint Pietersen Blokland Gasthuis, Amersfoort); and Andries van Bochoven's *The Artist and His Family,* 1629 (Centraal Museum, Utrecht). These paintings are illustrated in Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw: Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Haarlem, 1986), nos. 72, 74, 75.

[8] For example, *Young Flute Player*; see Frima Fox Hofrichter, *Judith Leyster: A Woman Painter in Holland's Golden Age* (Doornspijk, 1989), no. 38.

[9] See, for example, Catharina van Hemessen's *Self-Portrait* of 1548 in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Basel; illustrated in Hans Joachim Raupp, *Untersuchungen zu Künstlerbildnis und Künstlerdarstellung in den Niederlanden im 17. Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim, 1984), 390, repro. 20.

[10] As suggested by Frima Fox Hofrichter, "Judith Leyster's 'Self-Portrait': 'Ut Pictura Poesis,'" in *Essays in Northern European Art Presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Anne-Marie Logan (Doornspijk, 1983), 107.

[11] For a discussion of the symbolic implications of the violin player, see Hans Joachim Raupp, *Untersuchungen zu Künstlerbildnis und Künstlerdarstellung in den Niederlanden im 17. Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim, 1984), 346–347.

[12] See Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Judith Leyster," *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 14 (1893): 190–198, 232.

[13] Gerrit David Gratama, "Het portret van Judith Leyster door Frans Hals," *Oud-Holland* 47 (1930): 75.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a plain-woven fabric with numerous slubs and weave imperfections, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. A large horizontal rectangle of original canvas is missing from the bottom left in an area corresponding to the red skirt, and has been replaced with a fine-weight, tightly woven fabric insert. The X-radiographs show cusping along all edges except the insert, which is also bereft of original paint or ground layers.

A smooth, thin, white ground layer was applied overall and followed by a gray brown imprimatura layer. Paint handling varies from fluid paint applied in loose liquid strokes in the black peplum to thicker pastes blended wet-into-wet in the flesh tones. White cuffs were applied wet-over-dry above the thinly scumbled purple sleeves, and red glazes were laid over opaque pink underpaint in the original passages of the red skirt.

An infrared photograph and infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 1.4 microns[1] reveal a major change in the easel painting, which originally showed a woman's head, with parted lips, turned slightly to the left, which is now partially visible as a pentimento. With the exception of the loss in the lower left, actual paint losses are few: small losses in the top at center and in the proper left cheek. The paint surface, however, is in relatively poor condition, with minute pitting throughout of the type caused by superheating during a lining procedure. This is exacerbated by moderate abrasion overall, and flattening. The unfinished violin player on the easel is heavily abraded.

The painting was treated in 1992 to remove discolored varnish layers and old inpainting. The later insert was retained.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with a J astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

Possibly the painting identified as a painting by Frans Hals depicting his daughter at the easel that appeared in four London sales between 1810 and 1812.[1] E.M. Grainger, Hastings, Sussex; Mrs. Granger, Bexhil-on-Sea, East Sussex;[2] (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 16 April 1926, no. 115); purchased by E. Smith,

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probably for a London dealer.[3] private collection, New York, in 1928.[4] (Ehrich Galleries, New York); purchased 9 May 1929 by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, Washington, D.C.;[5] gift 1949 to NGA.

[1] This suggestion was made by Burton Fredericksen. In a letter of 12 December 2002 to Arthur Wheelock (in NGA curatorial files) Fredericksen writes that the lack of recorded dimensions, the low price at which the painting was bought in, and the fact that it was part of a group of minor paintings prevent a firm conclusion, although paintings by Hals did not bring high prices at the beginning of the nineteenth century. For the first three sales, the painting was described as *The Portrait of F. Hals' Daughter* by F. Hals; for the fourth sale it was *The Painter's Daughter at her Easel*, also by Hals. The sales are as follows: consigned by a Dr. Biam (or Byam) along with four other paintings to Christie's, London, 7 July 1810, no. 161, bought in; the same consignor to Christie's, London, 8 March 1811, no. 65, bought in; consigned by "Pritchard" to Christie's, London, 19 April 1811, no. 157; anonymous consignor to Peter Coxe, London, 3 June 1812, no. 28, bought in.

[2] Lynda McLeod, Librarian, Christie's Archives, kindly provided the name of the consignor; see her e-mail of 1 August 2012, in NGA curatorial files. Despite the slight difference in the spelling of the last name, E.M. Grainger and Mrs. Granger were likely related.

[3] Information on this purchaser is from an annotated copy of the 1926 sale catalogue, and various articles in London papers giving the sale results; copies in NGA curatorial files.

[4] The owner of the painting is identified in this way in Wilhelm R. Valentiner, "Rediscovered Paintings by Frans Hals," *Art in America* 16 (1928): 239, fig. 2.

[5] The purchase date is in the donor's collection records for the painting, in NGA curatorial files.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1933 A Century of Progress Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture, Art Institute of Chicago, 1933, no. 64, as by Frans Hals.

1937 Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century, John Herron Art Museum, Indianapolis, 1937, no. 22, as by Frans Hals.

1937 Frans Hals Tentoonstelling ter gelegenheid van het 75-jarig bestaan van het gemeentelijk Museum te Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, 1937, no. 9, repro., as by Frans Hals.

1937 Paintings by Frans Hals: Exhibition for the Benefit of New York University, Schaeffer Galleries, Inc., New York, 1937, no. 3, as by Frans Hals.

1988 People at Work: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art, Hofstra Museum, Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York, 1988, no. 11.

1993 Judith Leyster: A Dutch Master and Her World, Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem; Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts, 1993, no. 7, repro.

1993 Judith Leyster: "Leading Star," National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C., 1993-1994, brochure, color repro.

1999 Elck zijn waerom: Vrouwelijke kunstenaars in België en Nederland, 1500-1950 [As You Will: Women Artists in the Netherlands and Belgium, 1500-1950], Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp; Museum voor Moderne Kunst, Arnhem, 1999-2000, no. 34.

2001 Face to Face: Portraits from Five Centuries, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, 2001-2002, no. 35, repro.

2002 Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Indianapolis Museum of Art (Columbus Gallery); Currier Museum of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire, 2002-2003, fig. 8 (shown only in Raleigh).

2003 Loan to display with permanent collection, National Gallery, London, 2003-2004.

2005 Self Portrait: Renaissance to Contemporary, National Portrait Gallery, London; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2005-2006, no. 11, repro.

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2009 Judith Leyster, 1609-1660 [Judith Leyster's 400th Anniversary], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, 2009-2010, unnumbered brochure, cover repro.

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color fig.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Judith Leyster
Dutch, 1609 - 1660

Young Boy in Profile

c. 1630

oil on panel
diameter: 19 cm (7 1/2 in.)
Gift of Mrs. Thomas M. Evans 2009.113.1

ENTRY

Judith Leyster possessed a remarkable ability to capture the personalities of her sitters, especially of children. [1] In this small tondo, painted on panel, a boy seen in strict profile gazes thoughtfully outside the picture plane. The gentle curves of his cheeks and button nose suggest that he is no more than 10 years old, but his alert stare and stoic pose convey a seriousness and maturity well beyond his years—a perfect encapsulation of the innocence and oftentimes precociousness of youth.

Despite his quiet demeanor, the young boy possesses an extraordinary liveliness and immediacy, which is owed largely to Leyster's energetic brush and vivid palette. She modeled his round cheeks and plump lips in fluid sweeps of rose that add the ruddy blush of childhood to his creamy complexion. Touches of brown above his head create the sensation that a few wisps of his soft locks have yet to come to rest. Delicate strokes across his eyelids and eyelashes convey a flickering sense of movement that brings life to the boy's youthful visage. Finally, Leyster used some sort of firm tool, perhaps the back of the brush, to scratch fine strands of hair into the wet paint to reveal the light ground below. Leyster used this same scratching technique to render strands of hair in *Last Drop* [fig. 1], which she also executed around 1630–1631.

Given her evident facility with portraiture, it is remarkable that Leyster only rarely painted portraits. Aside from this work, only two other portraits are known: her *Self-Portrait* of about 1630 and a 1635 portrait of a woman in the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem. In both, the sitter's confident gaze and beguiling smile demonstrate Leyster's capacity to create the impression of a moment arrested in

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time. Leyster learned to capture this feeling of spontaneity from the greatest portraitist of the day, Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666), in whose studio she apparently worked in the late 1620s. Her vibrant palette and lively brushwork owe much to Hals' guidance and inspiration.

Initially, it would seem that *Young Boy in Profile* also relates directly to Hals' influence, to his depictions of children smiling impishly out at the viewer, drinking or playing music [fig. 2]. But, these engaging, small panel paintings from the 1620s are *tronies*, or character studies, and they belong to a different pictorial tradition than Leyster's quiet profile, which has all the characteristics of a portrait. [2]

The profile pose of the young boy derives from a classicizing artistic tradition unconnected to Frans Hals. In Haarlem, Frans de Grebber (1573–1649), who, according to Samuel Ampzing, [3] gave Leyster her earliest instruction, espoused, along with Salomon de Bray (1597–1664), a distinctly classicizing style that they hoped would elevate Dutch painting to the luster of antiquity. [4] Much like Leyster's small tondo, De Bray's *Young Woman in Profile* of 1636 relates to ancient Roman coins, cameos, and medals in its strict profile orientation. In Leiden, Jan Lievens (Dutch, 1607 - 1674) painted and etched a number of figures in profile, young and old alike, which may have been known to Leyster. In his *Young Girl in Profile*, c. 1631, Lievens, like Leyster, scratched into the wet paint to indicate the wisps of the girl's hair. Although the pensive, downcast eyes of Lievens' model indicate that this painting is a tronie—it was explicitly described as a tronie in an inventory of 1641—it and its related etching, *Young Girl with Long Hair* of c. 1628–1631 provide a further pictorial context for Leyster's painting. [5]

Leyster may have chosen this classicistic pose to reflect the status of this sitter, which may have been elevated to judge from the delicately painted lovelock and refined attire. The lovelock, a tress of hair worn long and to the left of the face, was said to have been introduced at the Parisian court in the early seventeenth century by Honoré d'Albert (1581–1649), marshall of France, lord of Cadanet, and duke of Chaulnes. [6] The style became particularly fashionable among the nobility in France, England, and Germany, although it never attained widespread popularity in the northern Netherlands. Aside from a few Dutchmen and foreign officers at The Hague in the circle of the Prince of Orange and the exiled king of Bohemia, Frederick V, elector Palatine of the Rhine (1596–1632), few examples of men (or children) sporting the coif are known. [7]

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Aside from his hairstyle, the boy's outfit also has courtly associations. The gold-and-black piping on his plum-colored doublet resembles a decorative feature of the livery and page uniforms worn at court in The Hague. [8] The small, white, linen ruff differs from the unstarched ruffs or flat, rectangular collars fashionable for children at that time, and reflects a more formal, late sixteenth-century style of dress. [9]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Judith Leyster, *Last Drop*, c. 1630–1631, oil on canvas, Philadelphia Museum of Art

fig. 2 Frans Hals, *Drinking Boy*, c. 1626, oil on panel, Staatliches Museum, Schwerin. Photo: Gabriele Broecker

NOTES

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[1] I would like to thank Alexandra Libby for her work on this entry.

[2] Peter C. Sutton, *Pleasures of Collecting: Part I, Renaissance to Impressionist Masterpieces*, exh. cat., Bruce Museum of Arts and Science (Greenwich, CT, 2002): 81.

[3] Samuel Ampzing, *Beschrijvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* (Haarlem, 1628), 370, locates Leyster in Frans de Grebber's studio, possibly because De Grebber also trained Ampzing's daughter Maria (c. 1602–1680) and the author was unsure how to account for Leyster's education as a woman artist.

[4] Even if Leyster did not study with De Grebber, she would have been keenly aware of his efforts to elevate the status of painters through his involvement in the early 1630s in reorganizing the Haarlem Guild of St. Luke on classical academies. E. Taverne, "Salomon de Bray and the Reorganization of the Haarlem Guild of St. Luke in 1631," *Simiolus* 6, no. 1 (1972–1973): 50–69.

[5] Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Lievens: A Dutch Master Rediscovered*, exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington; Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam; Milwaukee Art Museum, (New Haven, 2008): cat. 28, 136. For the etching, see: cat. 59, 191.

[6] Richard Corson, *Fashions in Hair: The First Five Thousand Years* (New York, 1965): 206. In French a lovelock is called a *cadanette* after its founder and in Dutch it is known as a *tutyen*.

[7] Marieke de Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy: Dress and Meaning in Rembrandt's Paintings*, (Amsterdam, 2006): 139, 303, n. 17.

[8] See, for example, representations of liveries in the bound album of Adriaen van de Venne's drawings in the British Museum, *Adriaen van de Venne's Common-Place Book*, which are reproduced in Martin Royalton-Kisch, *Adriaen van de Venne's Album in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum* (London, 1988): 168, no. 13. See also *Alexander van Spaen in Page's Costume*, artist unknown, 1635, Brantsen van de Zyp Foundation, De Canneburch Castel, Vassen, which is reproduced in Marika Keblusek and Jori Zijlmans, eds., *Princely Display: The Court of Frederick Henry of Orange and Amalia of Solms* (Zwolle, 1997): 80, no. 62.

[9] For a similar style ruff, albeit on a young girl, see Jan Claesz, *Six-Year-Old Girl*, 1594, Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Eschede, illustrated in Jan Baptist Bedeaux and Rudi Ekkart, eds., *Pride and Joy*, exh. cat., Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp (New York and Ghent, 2000): 107. The anachronism of the costume prompted Seymour Slive, who had seen the painting only in reproduction, to reject the work as a nineteenth-century imitation of a Frans Hals painting (Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. [London, 1970–1974], 3: cat. D16). However, pigment analysis has found only seventeenth-century materials, reinforcing the stylistic and

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technical evidence cited above.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is an oval, single-member panel with a diagonal wood grain. The reverse is beveled and bears toolmarks. It was prepared with a smooth, thin ground of cream or pinkish tan color. A slightly gray underpainting is evident in some areas. Infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns[1] shows a possible underdrawing as well as some minor artist's changes in the boy's features. The changes are also apparent in the X-radiograph. The paint was applied both wet-into-wet and wet over dry in thin, fluid layers.[2] The paint in the sitter's ruff is slightly more pastose. Throughout the boy's hair the artist scraped away the paint, perhaps with the end of a brush, to create the highlights.

The painting is in good condition. The panel is planar, though there is a small dent in the boy's shirt and one in his hair. Losses in the paint and ground are scattered throughout the composition. Additional losses and abrasion are found around the perimeter. Minor overpaint is found in the boy's ear, cheek, and lips, as well as further inpaint or overpaint along cracks in the wood grain. The varnish has yellowed slightly.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

[2] The pigments were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF) (see report dated June 25, 2009 in NGA Conservation Department files).

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Switzerland. (Kunsthandel P. de Boer, Amsterdam), at least in 1968. (Newhouse Gallery, New York); purchased by Thomas Mellon Evans [1910-1997], New York, and Greenwich, Connecticut; by inheritance to his wife, Mrs. Thomas M. Evans [née Betty Barton, 1923-2013], New York, and Greenwich, Connecticut; gift 2009 to NGA.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

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2014 Small Treasures: Rembrandt, Vermeer, Hals, and Their Contemporaries, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Birmingham Museum of Art, 2014-2015, no. 19, repro. and fig. 9 (detail).

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2014 Wheelock, Arthur K, Jr. "The Evolution of the Dutch Painting Collection." *National Gallery of Art Bulletin* no. 50 (Spring 2014): 2-19, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan Lievens, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1629–1630, oil on panel, private collection, New York

Lievens, Jan

Dutch, 1607 - 1674

BIOGRAPHY

Jan Lievens is among the most fascinating and enigmatic Dutch artists of the seventeenth century. Daring and innovative as a painter, draughtsman, and printmaker, he created character studies, genre scenes, landscapes, formal portraits, and religious and allegorical images that were widely praised and highly valued during his lifetime.

Lievens, whose father, Lieven Hendrickcz, was a skilled embroiderer, began his career in Leiden in the early to mid-1620s. Lievens' initial training, at the age of eight, was with the Leiden artist Joris van Schooten (c. 1587–1653). Between 1618 and 1620 Lievens was in Amsterdam, where he trained with the history painter Pieter Lastman (1583–1633). This child prodigy was said to have "astounded" Leiden art lovers with the skillful paintings he had created by the age of twelve. By the early 1620s, Lastman's influence on Lievens had been largely overshadowed by that of the Utrecht Caravaggisti, particularly Gerrit van Honthorst (Dutch, 1592 - 1656), Dirck van Baburen (Dutch, c. 1595 - 1624), and Hendrick ter Brugghen (Dutch, 1588 - 1629). Much in the manner of these artists, Lievens executed his works with thick impastos, brought his figures close to the picture plane, and dramatized his scenes with strong contrasts of light and dark.

During the late 1620s Lievens and his Leiden colleague Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) had a close, symbiotic relationship that manifested both in the style and the subject matter of their works. They appear as models in each other's

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paintings and may have shared a studio. By the early 1630s their manners became so similar that even contemporaries were unsure of the correct attributions of their paintings. Constantijn Huygens, the secretary to Frederik Hendrik, the Prince of Orange, recognized their precocious abilities and introduced the artists to the Dutch court in The Hague. Huygens probably also introduced Lievens to the exiled king and queen of Bohemia, Frederik and Elizabeth, the so-called Winter King and Queen. Elizabeth, the sister of Charles I, king of England, commissioned Lievens to paint portraits of her oldest son.

Lievens, who aspired to be an internationally renowned court artist, left Leiden for London to paint at the court of Charles I. There he came under the influence of Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641), whom he had previously met in The Hague. Lievens remained in London until 1635, when he moved to Antwerp. No paintings and only a few drawings and prints are known from this period of his career.

In Antwerp Lievens entered into an artistic community that included the genre painters Adriaen Brouwer (Flemish, 1605/1606 - 1638) and David Teniers the Younger (Flemish, 1610 - 1690), and the still-life painter Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684). Lievens joined the Saint Luke's Guild, and took on his first student. In 1638 he married Susanna Colijns de Nole, the daughter of a prominent sculptor, and probably converted to Catholicism. The couple's only surviving son, Jan Andrea, would eventually become an artist. In Antwerp Lievens painted genre scenes, head studies, landscapes, and large-scale religious subjects, varying his style according to the subject matter. For example, he painted in a rough manner inspired by Brouwer when making genre scenes, adapted Van Dyck's elegant style for his religious themes, and emulated the expressive brushwork of Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640) when painting landscapes.

In 1644 the artist moved to Amsterdam, and shortly thereafter his wife died. In 1648 he married Cornelia de Bray, who was also a Catholic. The couple had six children who survived infancy. Lievens' international style of painting was greatly admired in the northern Netherlands, and he received major commissions for the town hall in Amsterdam and the States General in The Hague. He also painted, once again, for the House of Orange, executing an allegorical painting for the Huis ten Bosch, the country house of Amalia van Solms, widow of Prince Frederik Hendrik. Lievens also painted for Van Solms' daughter, Louise Henriette, and her husband, the Elector of Brandenburg, at their country house near Berlin.

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Lievens' services as a portraitist were sought after by Dutch political, cultural, and business leaders, and his landscape paintings and drawings were also highly regarded. The invasion of the Netherlands in 1672 by French and German forces, however, adversely affected his career. Many of his financial problems, though, were partly of his own making. He had a difficult personality, which complicated relationships with both family and patrons, and he had lifelong problems managing his affairs. He died in poverty in June 1674 and was buried in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam.

Lievens' posthumous reputation has never risen to a level commensurate with that during his own lifetime or with the quality of his individual works. This phenomenon is partly explained by the peripatetic character of his career, by the widely ranging styles in which he worked, and by the fact that many of his best paintings have been wrongly attributed to other artists, including Rembrandt.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan Lievens
Dutch, 1607 - 1674

Bearded Man with a Beret

c. 1630

oil on panel
overall: 53.5 x 46.3 cm (21 1/16 x 18 1/4 in.)
Gift of George M. and Linda H. Kaufman 2006.172.1

ENTRY

This old man's aged face, with its irregular features, is alive with emotion as he gazes upward toward the left, his mouth partially open. Light caresses his face, articulating the wrinkled skin of his furrowed brow and glinting off his eyes. [1] Rhythmic strands of hair from his full, flowing beard and moustache further enliven the image. Lievens painted this memorable work in Leiden, at a time when he and Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) were establishing themselves as two of the finest young artists in the Netherlands. They shared an interest in the depiction of *tronies*, or head and shoulder studies of young and old individuals. [2] *Tronies* were character studies rather than portraits of specific people, and these two artists painted them to evoke a wide range of human emotions. Sometimes these works served as models for larger-scale paintings, but more often they seem to have been created, and valued, as independent works of art. [3]

Lievens painted, drew, and etched numerous *tronies* during the late 1620s and early 1630s. He was particularly gifted in this type of work and knew how to exploit his painting techniques to enhance the animated character of a sitter's appearance. As in this instance, he indicated the transparency of the elderly man's skin with thin Glazing, while suggesting the roughness of its texture by applying thick impastos with quick strokes of the brush. He also knew how to articulate the hairs in the man's beard and moustache by scratching through white impastos with the blunt end of his brush. [4] On the other hand, he could paint very broadly, as seen in the gray jacket and beret, which he executed with broad, smooth strokes to provide a subdued but solid visual framework for the focus of the painting, the man's expressive face.

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A contemporary observer would have seen the beret as an outmoded hat style, found primarily in scholarly dress. [5] The beret thus would have enhanced the "thoughtful" disposition of the man's expression—the mien of someone who reflects on the world he sees around him. Both Lievens and Rembrandt found that with age came a remarkable sense of character, not only through the creases that line a wizened face, but also in the inner wisdom of one who has experienced the vagaries of life. [6]

Lievens' *tronies* were highly regarded by his contemporaries. In his autobiographical account of 1629–1631, Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687) wrote that "in painting the human countenance [Lievens] wreaks miracles." [7] Huygens also noted that a number of prominent collectors had already acquired examples of such head studies ("works of inestimable value and unrivaled artistry"), including the stadtholder, Prince Frederik Hendrik; his treasurer, Thomas Brouart; the artist Jacques de Gheyn III (Dutch, c. 1596 - 1641); and the Amsterdam tax collector Nicolaas Sohier. [8] Unfortunately, the name of the collector who was the first owner of this remarkable image is not known.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Virginia Treanor for her assistance in writing this entry.

[2] See Dagmar Hirshfelder, *Tronie und Porträt in der niederländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 2008).

[3] For the connections between one of Lievens' *tronies* and two of his large compositions in which the same figure appears, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Lievens: A Dutch Master Rediscovered* (Washington, DC, 2008), nos. 38, 40, 41.

[4] Rembrandt also used this scratching technique in about 1630 on comparable *tronies* of old men.

[5] Marieke de Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy: Dress and Meaning in Rembrandt's Paintings* (Amsterdam, 2006), 166.

[6] In many of their images, perhaps in this instance as well, they used the same model.

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[7] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Lievens: A Dutch Master Rediscovered* (Washington, DC, 2008), 287.

[8] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Lievens: A Dutch Master Rediscovered* (Washington, DC, 2008), 287.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on an oak[1] panel composed of two vertically grained planks. The planks vary in thickness slightly, and the reverse of the panel is beveled. There are two very thin ground layers: a red one on top of a white one.[2] Infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns[3] and examination with a stereomicroscope revealed that the artist had laid in the basic composition with a brushy sketch in fluid brown paint. The sketch was allowed to show through the paint in places. The final image was executed with rich paint that was blended and smudged using both brushes and fingers. The paint in the sitter's face was applied wet-into-wet with some impasto in the highlights. The artist dragged the back end of his brush through the wet paint and in some places even the ground to create the highlights in the sitter's hair, beard, and eyebrows. Artist's changes are visible in the contours of the figure and at the junction of his hair and face.

The painting is in very good condition. A fine craquelure pattern can be seen in the brown sketch paint. The varnish is slightly uneven in gloss. No conservation treatment has been undertaken since its acquisition.

[1] The characterization of the wood as oak is based on visual observation only.

[2] The two ground layers were confirmed by cross-sections taken by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated March 20, 2007, in NGA Conservation department files).

[3] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

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Estate of Marion Louise Nichols, Cambridge, Massachusetts;[1] private collection, Boston, from 1975; consigned by (Michael Filades, Boston) to (Hoogsteder-Naumann, Ltd., New York);[2] sold 6 June 1986 to George M. [1932-2001] and Linda H. Kaufman, Norfolk; transferred 31 August 2005 to the Kaufman Americana Foundation; gift 2006 to NGA.

[1] According to information provided by Otto Naumann to the Kaufmans (copy in NGA curatorial files), Marion Louise Nichols inherited the painting from her father, who presumably brought it to the United States in the early twentieth century.

[2] Otto Nauman, e-mail to Jennifer Henel, 30 August 2011, in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1990 Great Dutch Paintings from America, Mauritshuis, The Hague; The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1990-1991, no. 39, repro.

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Nicolaes Maes, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1685, oil on canvas, Dordrechts Museum, 1928 Purchase

Maes, Nicolaes

Dutch, 1634 - 1693

BIOGRAPHY

Maes was born in Dordrecht in January 1634, the son of a well-to-do soap manufacturer and merchant. The details and dates of his early career are not precisely known, but Houbraken tells us that Maes' first instruction in drawing came from "an ordinary master" (*een gemeen Meester),* probably a local artist in Dordrecht. At some point in the late 1640s, however, he went to Amsterdam and studied with Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669), becoming one of that master's most accomplished pupils.

By the end of 1653, Maes was back in Dordrecht, where he was betrothed on December 28 to Adriana Brouwers, the widow of a preacher. They were married there on January 13, 1654, and had three children (one of whom died young). The influence of Rembrandt, and specifically the style and subject matter of his work of the 1640s, continued in Maes' work after his return to Dordrecht. This impact is especially apparent in the case of his drawings, which are often difficult to distinguish with certainty from those of Rembrandt. Maes produced almost all of his small-scale paintings of domestic interiors during the mid-1650s, one of the two types of picture for which he is best known.

By 1656 Maes began painting portraits, and he eventually worked exclusively as a fashionable portrait painter. He sought to infuse his depictions of Dutch merchants with an elegance comparable to that found in paintings by Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640) and Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641), and

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Houbraken relates that Maes actually traveled to Antwerp to study the works of Flemish masters. His own portraits, however, always retained a more literal likeness of the sitter than did those of Van Dyck.

Houbraken attributed the stylistic changes evident in Maes' painting during the 1660s to market pressure, saying that Maes abandoned Rembrandt's way of painting "when he took up portraiture and discovered that young ladies would rather be painted in white than in brown."[1] At this time, Maes not only altered his style but also completely changed his signature from block letters to a more elegant form. Were it not for the existence of transitional paintings signed in the earlier manner but showing signs of the artist's later style, one might well conclude that the late portraits were executed by an entirely different N. Maes.

In 1673 Maes moved to Amsterdam, where he died in December 1693.

[1] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753. Reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 2:274.

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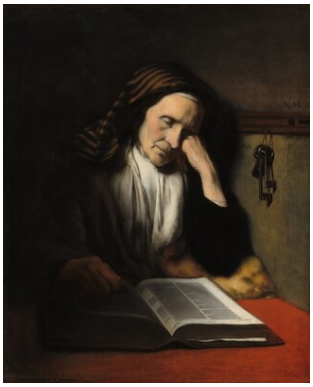

Nicolaes Maes
Dutch, 1634 - 1693

An Old Woman Dozing over a Book

c. 1655

oil on canvas
overall: 82.2 x 67 cm (32 3/8 x 26 3/8 in.)
Inscription: upper right above keys: N. MAES
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.63

ENTRY

Seated at the table in a darkened room, an old woman leans her head on the back of her hand, dozing over her Bible. Her right hand, vaguely distinguishable in the shadow, rests on the book and holds her reading spectacles. Three large keys hang from a nail in the molding on the wall. The mood of the painting is somber and quiet. The light that falls on her face from the upper left also illuminates the keys, book, and red tablecloth, but most of her body and background are thrown into deep shadow.

Maes explored the theme of a sleeping woman a number of times in the mid-1650s, shortly after he left Rembrandt's studio. Invariably these paintings have an admonitory character, for the woman is always shown dozing off instead of fulfilling her duties and responsibilities. In *The Idle Servant* of 1655 (National Gallery, London), Maes made his point by having a second woman gesture reprovingly toward the irresponsible servant. [1] Dirty pots and pans lie at the woman's feet, and behind her a cat steals a chicken. As if the point needed reinforcement, Maes also placed the sleeping maid in a pose that was well known as a representation of *Acedia* (Sloth) [fig. 1]. He clearly intended to convey a comparable message in his representations of women dozing over their books, particularly when the book was the Bible.

The book in the National Gallery of Art painting can be identified as a Bible through comparison with a related painting in Brussels [fig. 2], in which this same Bible lies opened to the first page of the Book of Amos. Throughout most of this passage,

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God declares how he will no longer overlook the misdemeanors of the Israelites and that He intends to punish them the same as everyone else. Reinforcing the message that the woman's behavior cannot be condoned is the fact that her lace work, a symbol of domestic virtue, also goes unattended. [2] Finally, the hourglass that props open the book and the extinguished candle in the niche are symbols of the transience of life. Since life is fleeting, the shirking of responsibilities signifies an unfulfilled existence in the eyes of both man and God. [3]

The message in the Washington painting is less explicit than in the examples from London and Brussels because the iconographic elements have been greatly reduced. Still, the underlying theme is clearly the same. The woman assumes the same pose of sloth; the only accessories, other than the Bible and her spectacles, are the keys hanging on the wall. Traditionally, keys suggest responsibility; left unattended, they indicate her failure to uphold her duties. Keys, however, have many metaphorical associations, among them, by association with the keys of Saint Peter, entry into heaven. Because a key also hangs on the back wall in the Brussels painting, in which themes of sloth and transience of life are both present, the keys here may likewise carry such dual symbolism. Falling asleep over one's Bible is not a means for discovering the keys to heaven. Indeed, in another metaphorical sense of the work, the Bible provides us with keys for understanding life and guiding our salvation; as it lies unread, these keys are therefore neglected. Similarly, spectacles, which serve to improve vision and sharpen our awareness, are effective only when used properly. An old Dutch proverb reads: "What good is the candle or eyeglasses if the owl does not want to see." [4] The devotion with which the woman in a Maes painting in the Worcester Art Museum prays [fig. 3], with her awareness of the transience of life evident in the skull and hourglass on the table before her, is a far more positive exemplar than that seen in either the Brussels or Washington paintings. [5]

Although *An Old Woman Dozing over a Book* is not dated, it must be from around 1655, when the influence of Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) on Maes' style was still strong. The broad touch, the dark palette with the deep reds of the tablecloth, and the strong chiaroscuro lighting are comparable to effects found in Rembrandt's paintings from the mid-1640s.

The moralizing character that is so predominant in Maes' genre paintings of the mid-1650s, however, has no direct prototype in Rembrandt's paintings or in those of his other pupils and followers from the late 1640s and early 1650s, when Maes was in Amsterdam. Indeed, depictions by Rembrandt and his school of old women

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actively reading inevitably invoked the sitter's pious nature. [6] Maes' moralizing images were made after his return to Dordrecht and after his marriage to the widow of a preacher in January 1654. Dordrecht had a strong Calvinist tradition, and themes that stressed moral responsibility may have had a ready market.

Many of the props Maes used in this work reappear in other paintings from this period. So too does the model, who is in both the Brussels and the Worcester paintings, [7] and in the latter wears the identical striped headdress as here. [8] Although the identity of the model is not known, she was in all probability a relative. One wonders if Maes followed Rembrandt's example and used his mother for his representations of old women in these strongly didactic works.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Jerome Weirix, after P. Galle, *Acedia*, engraving, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1953. Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Nicolaes Maes, *An Old Woman Asleep before a Bible*, c. 1655, oil on canvas, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels. © Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels; Photo: J. Geleyns / Ro scan

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fig. 3 Nicolaes Maes, *An Old Woman Praying*, c. 1655, oil on canvas, Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts

NOTES

[1] Maes' painting is at the National Gallery, London, inv. no. 207. For a discussion of this theme see William W. Robinson, "The *Eavesdroppers* and Related Paintings by Nicolaes Maes," in *Holländische Genremalerei im 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. Henning Bock and Thomas W. Gaehtgens, 283–313 (Berlin, 1987).

[2] For a discussion of the symbolism in this work see Eddy de Jongh, *Tot lering in vermaak: Betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstelling uit de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1976), 143.

[3] Eddy de Jongh, *Tot lering in vermaak: Betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstelling uit de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1976), 143, quoting Johan de Brune, *Banket-Werk van goede gedachten* (Middelburg, 1657), 287, no. 728 ("Ledigheyd"): "Aen 't verlies van den tijd hanght het verlies van de eeuwige zaligheyd."

[4] Heinrich Schwarz and Volker Plagemann, "Eule," in *Reallexikon zur*

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deutschen Kunstgeschichte 6 (1973): 267–322 (n.b. 308), fig. 28. “Wat baetes kaers of bril, als den uijl niet sien en wil.” (See Eddy de Jongh, *Tot lering in vermaak: Betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstelling uit de zeventiende eeuw* [Amsterdam, 1976], 247, no. 65.)

[5] Wayne Franits in Ursel Berger and Jutta Desel, *Bilder vom alten Menschen in der niederländischen und deutschen Kunst, 1550–1750* (Braunschweig, 1993), 174, associates the warm clothes the woman wears in the Washington painting with the belief that the body becomes cold and dry in old age as it approaches death. He thus sees the character of the clothing as reinforcing the theme of transience that otherwise exists in the painting. Arguing against this theory, however, is the fact that the very alert woman in the Worcester painting is dressed warmly as well. Without central heating, houses would have been frigid and multiple layers an absolute necessity to stay warm.

[6] In oral communication, Gregory Rubinstein has noted that the theme of a woman reading a book only developed in Dutch painting in about 1630, perhaps as a result of a contemporary increase of literacy among women. In the following decades many painters depicted old women reading; it would be interesting to investigate the reasons for the introduction and popularity of this motif. See, for example, Rembrandt, *Rembrandt’s Mother in the Guise of the Prophetess Anna* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. A 3066); Rembrandt and Workshop, *An Old Lady with a Book,* NGA 1937.1.73; and Gerard Dou, *Old Woman Reading* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. A 2627).

[7] This same model also appears in *A Woman Spinning* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. A246) and *An Old Woman Peeling Apples* (Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, inv. no. 819C).

[8] William W. Robinson, “‘The Sacrifice of Isaac’: An Unpublished Painting by Nicolaes Maes,” *Burlington Magazine* 136 (September 1984): 540 n. 6, has observed that Maes also used this cloth in his *Dismissal of Hagar,* 1653 (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, inv. no. 1971.1.73), and the *Sacrifice of Isaac,* c. 1655–1658 (Alfred Bader Collection, Milwaukee).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a medium-weight, plain-woven fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping visible along all edges indicates the original dimensions have been retained. A smooth off-white ground application was followed by a dark imprimatura layer, applied overall and incorporated into the background.

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Paint was applied thinly in all but the flesh tones with low impasto in light passages and transparent glazing in the darks. Wet-into-wet blending softens the edges of the controlled brushstrokes.

There is a long horizontal tear across the book and some abrasion along the proper left side of the sitter's face and in the sitter's proper right hand. In a restoration that occurred prior to acquisition, the sitter's proper left hand and eye were heavily and awkwardly overpainted.[1] The painting was treated in 2000 to remove the overpaint and discolored varnish. The abrasion was also inpainted at that time.

[1] The paint in these areas was analyzed by the NGA Painting Conservation and Scientific Research departments using cross-sections and air-path X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy to determine that it was not original (see reports dated May 3, 2000, and August 15, 2000, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Antoine Delacoux de Marivault [1771-1846], Paris; (his sale, Salle Desmarets by Le Brun and Jaluzot, Paris, 9-10 June 1806, 1st day, no. 29, probably bought in);[1] (sale, by Pérignon and Chariot, Paris, 28-29 March 1816, 1st day, no. 49, bought in); deposited 1817 with (Frederic Quilliet, Paris);[2] (Quilliet sale, by Henry and Jaluzot, Paris, 15-17 April 1818, 1st day, no. 188). possibly (sale, Edward Foster, London, 7 June 1833, no. 69).[3] (Anonymous sale, Worcester, 1856); Thomas Grove Smith [d. 1879], Rashwood House, Droitwich, Worcestershire; by inheritance to his son, Herbert George Smith [d. 1918], Apsey House, Batheaston, Somerset;[4] (Arthur J. Sulley & Co., London); sold 25 September 1919 to (Thos. Agnew & Sons, Ltd., London); sold 15 January 1920 to (John Levy Galleries, New York).[5] Nils B. Hersloff, East Orange, New Jersey;[6] consigned April 1933-May 1934 and January 1935-April 1936 to (M. Knoedler & Co., New York);[7] purchased 16 April 1936 by The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] The early provenance of the painting, through 1833, was kindly provided by Burton B. Fredericksen in a letter to Arthur Wheelock, dated 18 December 2002, in NGA curatorial files. Marivault's collection was offered for sale *en bloc* in January

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1806; concerning this exhibition/sale, and the June 1806 sale and confusion surrounding its dates, see also Burton B. Fredericksen and Benjamin Peronnet, eds., *Répertoire des tableaux vendus en France au XIXe siècle*, one volume in two parts, Los Angeles, 1998: pt. 1:32-33, 35-36, cats. 96 and 109. William W. Robinson, in a letter to Arthur Wheelock of 12 March 1996 (in NGA curatorial files), noted a sale record in the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (RKD), The Hague, that gives the dates as 10-11 June 1809. However, the description of lot number 29 is identical to the description in the 1806 catalogue, so the 1809 date is likely in error. Frits Lugt (*Répertoire des catalogues de ventes publiques*, 4 vols., The Hague, 1938-1964: vol. 1) cross-references three sales to each other--Lugt numbers 6281, 7604, and 8017--that all likely refer to the 1806 sale, which is Lugt number 7119.

[2] Fredericksen and Peronnet 1998, pt. 1:32, cat. 96.

[3] As Fredericksen points out in his letter (see note 1), the paintings in this sale are described as having been "just imported from France," but the description is brief and the dimensions are not given, so the painting's identity is uncertain.

[4] The provenance from 1856 to 1919 comes from a three-page typewritten pamphlet concerning the work written by W. Roberts in 1919. It was probably produced for Sulley and Co., London, and is in the library of M. Knoedler & Co., New York (copy in NGA curatorial files).

[5] Stockbook no. 5563, Thomas Agnew & Sons, London. A handwritten note by Frits Lugt in a copy of the 1935 Knoedler exhibition catalogue that included the painting (now at the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague) reads: "fraai, heb ick bij Agnew 1920 gemist."

[6] N.B. Hersloff, then resident in Pinehurst, North Carolina, wrote to Duveen Brothers, Inc. on 15 November 1930 to ask if the dealer would be interested in buying the painting. He was told, however, in letter of 20 November 1930, that the firm did not buy works by the artist. (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 321, box 466,

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folder 2; copies in NGA curatorial files)

[7] On 7 April 1933 the picture was received by Knoedler, on consignment from "H. B. Hersloff, Compania De Trafico Y Formento" (no address given, transaction no. CA 513 in the stockbook). It was returned to the consigner on 8 May 1934, but returned again in January 1935 (transaction CA 768, again from "H.B. Hersloff"). However, the painting is listed in the 1935 Knoedler exhibition catalogue as having come from the collection of "Nils B. Hersloff, Esq.," rather than "H.B.," as was entered in the normally reliable Knoedler stockbooks. (The stockbook information was kindly provided by Nancy C. Little, librarian at M. Knoedler & Co., New York).

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1935 Exhibition of Twenty Masterpieces (1400-1800) in Aid of King George V's Jubilee Trust, M. Knoedler & Co., London, 1935, no. 10.

1993 Bilder vom alten Menschen in der niederländischen und deutschen Kunst 1550-1750, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig, 1993-1994, no. 44, repro.

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1984 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. Rev. ed. New York, 1984: 287, no. 374, color repro.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 240, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Nicolaes Maes
Dutch, 1634 - 1693

Portrait of a Lady

1676

oil on canvas
overall: 116 x 91 cm (45 11/16 x 35 13/16 in.)
Inscription: lower right: NMaes 1676
Gift of Joseph F. McCrindle 2001.138.1

ENTRY

Nicolaes Maes portrayed this unknown Dutch matron standing outdoors in a walled garden before a dark yet shimmering golden drape that wraps around a large marble column. The dark sky with its bands of red and orange light near the horizon signifies that it is evening, a time of day when one might imagine a woman presenting herself in such a setting in formal attire. As she gazes out at the viewer, she rests her right forearm on the base of the column while she gracefully fingers the deep folds of her rust-red velvety dress with her left hand. A sweeping diaphanous shawl covers her décolletage and softens her form. A double strand of pearls and elegant dangling earrings reinforce the impression of wealth and good breeding that her stern expression and strict bearing amply convey. [1]

The woman's elegant clothing reflects contemporary fashion in the Netherlands during the 1670s, but is nonetheless generalized and simplified to give the sitter a more timeless, almost classical look, consistent with the idealized setting in which Maes has situated her. Marieke de Winkel has remarked that the sitter's tucked-up white sleeves lack the cuffs and lace that would have been part of a woman's ensemble in those years. [2] Maes has rendered the dress with remarkably free and flowing brushwork, suggestive of the imaginative nature of his design, and with reddish tonalities that echo the evening sky.

The woman's features and flesh tones are rendered far more carefully than are the draperies. One can imagine that Maes' restrained flair in these aspects of the portrait resulted directly from the force of the sitter's no-nonsense personality. She probably also insisted that Maes accurately depict her fashionable headdress, a

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style that was in vogue for a short time in the mid-1670s. She wears a *tipmuts*, a black cap with a point at the forehead made of a transparent, gauzelike material. At the back her hair is done up in a *wrong,* a stiff structure in the form of a crescent (covered in silk the color of the lady's hair) on which the plaits were coiled. The cap was then held on with gold or silver cords tied at the nape of the neck. [3]

Despite the sitter's distinguished appearance and apparent social status, her identity has been lost over the course of time. The Camberlyn family, which owned the painting in the eighteenth century, wrongly identified the woman as Johanna Koerten (1650–1715) when the portrait was exhibited in Brussels in 1886. [4] However Koerten, wife of Adriaan Blok and renowned throughout Europe for her paper cuttings, had a smooth, round face, quite different in appearance from the woman portrayed here. [5] In 1676, moreover, Koerten would have been only twenty-six years old, much younger than Maes' sitter. Although the identity of the sitter remains unknown, it does seem probable that she came from Amsterdam, where Maes had settled in 1673 to take advantage of the strong portrait market in that city. [6] It is possible that this portrait was originally paired with one of the woman's husband, but the fact that she wears no ring probably indicates that she was unmarried.

Houbraken wrote that he knew of no portrait painter before or after Maes who was more successful in depicting a sitter's appearance. [7] This same biographical account also makes clear that Maes was keenly aware of his clients' wishes and was willing to adapt to changing styles and tastes. [8] For example, even though Maes was trained by Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669), Houbraken noted that the artist soon realized that young women preferred to be portrayed in white rather than in brown. [9] Houbraken also stated that to learn a more elegant manner of portraiture, Maes traveled to Antwerp to study portraits painted by Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640) and Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641). [10] Although Houbraken's account has been questioned, [11] his recollections ring true with the radical transformation of Maes' portrait style in the 1660s, from a Rembrandtesque mode to a more elegant and refined portrayal of his sitters, a change that reflected broader cultural patterns in the Netherlands during that period.

Maes' full adaptation of the international Flemish style of portraiture is evident in this elegant and refined portrait, not only in the outdoor garden setting, with streaks of red and orange enlivening the evening sky, but also in the broadly brushed, shimmering drapery wrapped around the marble column signifying the

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sitter's social standing and upright character. Even the woman's pose, as she rests her arm on the base of the column, is drawn directly from Van Dyck prototypes, although this pose is found more often in portraits of men. [12] Maes' palette is, however, quite distinct from that of Van Dyck. Nowhere in the Flemish artist's work does one find the brilliant rust-colored reds seen here in the woman's dress. Maes' careful rendering of her face also differs from Van Dyck's more generalized and idealized portrayals of his sitters. In this strict adherence to reality, Maes remained true to his firm roots in Dutch pictorial traditions.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

NOTES

[1] Similar dangling earrings are found in other portraits of the period. See, for example, a portrait of a young woman dated 1670 by Bernart Vollenhove, reproduced in Hans-Joachim Raupp, ed., *Portraits* (Münster, 1995), 150, no. 57.

[2] I would like to thank Marieke de Winkel for her thoughtful comments about the woman's wardrobe and hairstyle; see correspondence, dated March 11, 2005, in NGA curatorial files.

[3] Marieke de Winkel, in her correspondence dated March 11, 2005, in NGA curatorial files, notes that this fashion lasted only a few years because it was so uncomfortable to sleep with and gave women headaches. See also Marieke de Winkel, "Historische haartooien," *Kunstschrift* 2 (1997): 40–43; see also the hairstyle of Maria van Colve in Maes' portrait of her and her daughter, 1672, in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

[4] See Henri Hymans, "Correspondance de Belgique: L'exposition rétrospective de Bruxelles," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 2 (1886): 434.

[5] For Johanna Koerten, including a portrait engraving, see Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 3:293–308.

[6] The timing of Maes' move from Dordrecht to Amsterdam may also be connected to the void left by the deaths of Amsterdam's premier portrait painters, Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) and Bartholomeus van der Helst (1613–1670).

[7] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche*

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konstschilders en schilderessen, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:274: “ik niet weet dat ’er een Schilder voor of na hem is geweest, die gelukkiger is geweest in ’t wel treffen der gelykenissen van der menschen weezens.”

[8] See, for example, Houbraken’s account of how Maes removed pockmarks from a portrait when the female sitter objected to her appearance. See Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:276–277.

[9] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:274: “de jonge Juffrouwen meer behagen namen in het wit dan in ’t bruin.”

[10] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:275.

[11] William W. Robinson, “Nicolaes Maes: Some Observations on His Early Portraits,” in *Rembrandt and His Pupils*, ed. Görel Cavalli-Björkman (Stockholm, 1993)**,** 112–114. Robinson argues that Maes would have been able to learn Van Dyck’s style of painting in The Hague by viewing portraits by Jan Mijtens (c. 1614–1670) and Adriaen Hanneman (Dutch, c. 1603/1604 - 1671).

[12] See, for example, Van Dyck’s *Portrait of the Abbé Scaglia*, 1634, oil on canvas, National Gallery, London.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric. It has been lined and the tacking margins have been removed, but the X-radiographs show faint cusping along all four edges. The current stretcher is approximately ¼ to ½ inch larger than the painted dimensions in the vertical direction, along the top of the painting. This area has been filled and inpainted to integrate it into the composition, though the current frame conceals it. The ground is a red layer of medium thickness. The paint was applied both wet-into-wet and wet-over-dry. The image was created by building up multiple thin layers of paint. Glazes were used to define the shadows and create the sitter’s red dress. Aside from highlights in the sitter’s jewelry and dress, there is almost no impasto.

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The painting is in fairly good condition. Losses are found in the paint and ground along the bottom edge and a diagonal tear exists in the gold drapery to the left of the sitter's knee. Maes used a fugitive red lake pigment in the sitter's face but not in her neck and décolletage. Unfortunately, this pigment has faded, causing the sitter's face to appear paler than her chest and neck.[1] The painting was treated between 2002 and 2003 at which time discolored varnish and inpaint were removed and a red glaze was applied to the sitter's face to minimize the color discrepancy and return the painting to its original appearance.

[1] This information was obtained through analysis of cross-sections and dispersed pigment samples by the NGA Painting Conservation department in conjunction with the NGA Scientific Research Department (see report dated January 29, 2003, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Possibly Joseph Guillaume Jean Camberlyn [1783-1861], Brussels.[1] Camberlyn d'Amougies collection, by 1886;[2] Dowager Camberlyn d'Amougies, Pepinghen, near Brussels, by 1897 until at least 1915;[3] her son, Joseph Camberlyn d'Amougies; (sale, Frederik Muller, Amsterdam, 13 July 1926, no. 618, as *Portrait de Johanna Koerten, Femme d'Adriaan Blok*); De Haan. (sale, Sotheby's, London, 16 November 1960, no. 90a); (Appleby Brothers, Ltd., London). Mrs. Albert Heyse, Ghent; (Heyse sale, M. Dragonetti, Ghent, 13-15 May 1963, 2nd day, no. 345).[4] Joseph F. McCrindle [1923-2008], New York; gift 2001 to NGA.

[1] Provenance as given by León Krempel, *Stidoem zi dem datoertem Gemälden des Nicolaes Maes (1634-1693)*, Petersberg, 1999: no. 185.

[2] The painting was owned by this collection when it was lent to the 1886 exhibition in Brussels.

[3] She was given as the owner by Ernst W. Moes, *Iconographia Batava*.

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Beredeneerde Lijst van Geschilderde en Gebeeldhouwde Portretten van Noord-Nederlanders in Vorige Eeuwen, Amsterdam, 1897-1905: 523, no. 4246, and by Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und Kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der Hervorragendsten Holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen am Neckar and Paris, 1907-1928: 6(1915):no. 201.

[4] According to the introduction in the sale catalogue, the collection sold in Ghent in 1963 was formed mainly by Albert Heyse, who died in 1955. His widow maintained the collection after his death, and therefore presumably purchased the NGA painting after its appearance in the 1960 sale in London. The 1963 sale was under the direction of Jean Heyse, whose relationship to Mr. and Mrs. Albert Heyse has not been determined.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1886 Exposition de tableaux de maîtres anciens organisée au profit de la Caisse centrale des artistes belges, Academie Royale de Belgique, Brussels, 1886, no. 128, as Portrait de Johanna Koerten Blok.

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Nederlandsche kunst in België." *Oud Holland* 33 (1915): 161-164.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Metsu, Gabriel

Dutch, 1629 - 1667

BIOGRAPHY

Gabriel Metsu was born in Leiden sometime between November 27 and mid-December 1629, about eight months after the death of his father, the Flemish painter Jacques Metsue. In 1644, when fifteen-year-old Gabriel Metsu joined a semiformal group of local artists, he entered the membership rolls as a "painter." Six days after the establishment of Leiden's Saint Luke's Guild in 1648, Metsu paid his membership dues as an independent master. With the exception of short absences in the early 1650s, he remained in Leiden until at least 1654, moving to Amsterdam the following year.[1] On April 12, 1658, he married Isabella de Wolff, a relative of the Haarlem classicist painter Pieter de Grebber (c. 1600–1652/1653). In January of the next year, Metsu became an official citizen of Amsterdam, where he died in 1667 at the young age of thirty-eight.

It has often been assumed that Metsu must have studied with Gerrit Dou (Dutch, 1613 - 1675), Leiden's leading genre painter during the 1640s. This assumption may well be correct but it is not without problems, given that early works from Metsu's Leiden period tend to be executed in a fairly broad and fluid manner, far removed from the meticulously crafted, small-scale paintings of Dou and the other Leiden *fijnschilders*, such as Frans van Mieris (Dutch, 1635 - 1681). Rather than Dou, Metsu may initially have studied under the history painter Anthonie Claesz de Grebber (c. 1622–1691), who was related to Pieter de Grebber and, like Metsu, was also Catholic. Strong links with the work of the Utrecht painter Nicolaus Knüpfer (c. 1603–1655), further suggest that Metsu apprenticed with this master in the early 1650s. Also influential for Metsu's early work was another master from Utrecht, the Italianate landscape painter Jan Baptist Weenix (1621–1660/1661).[2]

Metsu's stylistic and thematic adaptability suggests that he understood the changing character of the art market. For example, after he moved to Amsterdam he began to paint genre scenes that featured upper-class domestic situations. He also began to paint with greater detail and with a refinement associated with Leiden masters. In Amsterdam he also responded to the thematic and stylistic innovations of Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632 - 1675), Gerard ter Borch the

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Younger (Dutch, 1617 - 1681), and Pieter de Hooch (Dutch, 1629 - 1684).

Metsu's facile brushwork and his engaging narrative scenes were highly regarded during his own time, but the height of his fame came in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when he was viewed as one of the supreme masters of the Dutch Golden Age. His paintings were sold for enormous sums of money, and, because of Metsu's fame, no fewer than three of Vermeer's paintings were atrributed to him, among them the National Gallery's Woman Holding a Balance.

In addition to his genre scenes, Metsu painted a few depictions of outdoor markets, religious scenes, portraits, and still lifes. The genre and portrait painter Michiel van Musscher (1645–1705) was his only known pupil.

[1] Adriaan E. Waiboer, "Gabriel Metsu (1629–1667): Life and Work," PhD diss. (New York University, 2007), 45–57.

[2] Adriaan E. Waiboer, "Gabriel Metsu (1629–1667): Life and Work," PhD diss. (New York University, 2007), 78–90.

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April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Gabriel Metsu
Dutch, 1629 - 1667

The Intruder

c. 1660

oil on panel
overall: 66.6 x 59.4 cm (26 1/4 x 23 3/8 in.)
framed: 93.4 x 85.1 x 12.1 cm (36 3/4 x 33 1/2 x 4 3/4 in.)
Inscription: lower center on step to bed: G. Metsu
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.57

ENTRY

Perhaps no Dutch artist was as facile with the brush as was Gabriel Metsu. His ability to capture ordinary moments of life with freshness and spontaneity was matched by his ability to depict materials with an unerring truth to nature. These qualities were particularly admired by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century critics, from Houbraken to Fromentin. In 1754, for example, Descamps, who wrote with great admiration about Metsu's sense of design, softness of touch, and harmony of color, concluded by proposing "Metsu as the greatest model that Holland has produced, for all those who wish to follow or imitate the same genre." [1] By 1821 Metsu's art was so esteemed that it was said to have reached the highest level of "perfection" to which "imitative art is able to attain." [2] Thus it is of some consequence that in 1833, when John Smith described The Intruder in his catalog of Metsu paintings, he termed it "a chef d'oeuvre of the master. The beauty of the composition, the elegance of the drawing, the delightful effect which pervades it, together with the colour, and accomplished execution, fully entitle it to this appellation." [3]

Smith's enthusiasm for this painting has been shared by all subsequent critics, and indeed The Intruder stands as one of Metsu's most finely wrought and carefully conceived works. Despite some losses in the Glazing, all of the fluidity of his touch is evident in the array of fabrics and materials that give such luster to the image: the soft velvet of a morning jacket, the sheen of a silk skirt, the smoothness of carefully laid wooden floorboards, and glistening reflections on the pewter pitcher and candle stand. Moreover, in a painting that displays a wide range of human emotions, Metsu has indicated the gestures and expressions of his figures with

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remarkable ease and naturalness.

All of these qualities show Metsu at his best and confirm the accolades that have always been accorded him. Nevertheless, truthfulness to nature, whether in the depiction of fabrics or human emotions, was merely incidental to the narrative he wanted to portray. For above all, Metsu was a storyteller. In painting after painting he sets up encounters between the sexes, in which individuals respond to interruptions or proposals, unimportant incidents that nevertheless elicit strong emotions. Although his scenes often have an anecdotal character, they appear to be taken from life, especially because he leaves the viewer guessing as to the outcome of the scenario he portrays.

This painting is no exception. While the physical activities of the protagonists are clear, the particular set of circumstances that preceded the event and those that will follow are impossible to fathom. Just why has this handsome young officer burst into the room and which of the two comely young ladies has he come to visit? It is difficult to judge from his gaze. In any event, the woman at her toilet is clearly delighted to see him, and the maid, who gently restrains him, smiles at his impertinence with a good-natured expression. The young woman who emerges from her bed, however, looks at him with undisguised disdain. To judge from the disarray of her clothes and the presence of her fur-lined red jacket and skirt thrown over the chair, she must have been lounging in bed and has quickly tried to dress after hearing the commotion at the door. Her state of relative undress, as well as the fact that she is putting her foot into her slipper as she clambers from the bed, adds a sexual overtone to the unexpected visit. [4] The pewter pitcher and candle, side by side on the floor in the immediate foreground, may have a similar intent, for their shapes have sexual allusions that would have been understood as such by contemporary observers. [5]

Metsu's painting had an afterlife that may help in an assessment of the character of his narrative. In 1675 Eglon van der Neer (1634–1703) painted A Woman Washing Her Hands [fig. 1] in which a suitor in the background is restrained by a maid in much the same way as in The Intruder. In this instance, the object of the suitor's attention is quite clearly the woman leaving the bed rather than the lady at her toilet. In contrast to Metsu's integrated composition, no psychological connection exists between the foreground figures and the background scene. Indeed, Van der Neer apparently juxtaposed the two as thematic opposites rather than intending them to be an integrated narrative: in emblematic literature, hand washing was considered synonymous with purity, a virtue not to be expected from the sexual

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inclinations of the couple in the background. [6] Metsu, in his more subtle composition, may have also incorporated a similar, although less extreme, contrast between domestic virtue and sensual pleasure. The woman at her toilet holds a comb in her hand, which, like the basin and ewer in Van der Neer's painting, was symbolically related to moral cleanliness and purity in Dutch emblematic literature. [7] It is thus not inconceivable that Metsu wanted to suggest in this work those spiritual and sensual choices that continually confront men and women in the course of their daily lives. This interest in depicting individuals in the midst of a moral dilemma is also found elsewhere in his oeuvre. [8]

Metsu was a keen observer not only of everyday life, but also of other artists' works; indeed, few other Dutch artists managed to forge their style from so many countervailing influences. During his early years he was influenced by the Utrecht artist Nicolaes Knüpfer (c. 1603–1655), whose history paintings and freely executed bordello scenes clearly appealed to him. [9] Elements of the style and choice of subject matter of Gerrit Dou (Dutch, 1613 - 1675) also can be found in his work from this period. After Metsu moved from Leiden to Amsterdam in 1657, he responded to other artistic models as well: Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634 - 1693), Gerard ter Borch the Younger (Dutch, 1617 - 1681), Pieter de Hooch (Dutch, 1629 - 1684), and, eventually, Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632 - 1675).

Although The Intruder is not dated, it was almost certainly executed around 1660 when the influences of De Hooch and Ter Borch were strongest. [10] From De Hooch, who moved to Amsterdam in about 1660, Metsu gained an appreciation for the importance of establishing a structural framework for his scene through the spatial clarity of the room. Here, for example, the bond between the woman sitting at her toilet and the suitor is visually enhanced by the way each is enframed by an arch-shaped architectural element. Compositionally, Metsu has used the chair in the right foreground and the bright red robes thrown upon it as a means to separate the intruder from the women's space, which is defined by the clearly articulated floorboards in the foreground.

The nature of the narrative owes far more to Ter Borch than to De Hooch. Ter Borch explored a similar theme of sexual innuendos in The Suitor's Visit, a work that Metsu certainly knew. [11] Indeed, one can see enough subtle compositional and thematic reminders of The Suitor's Visit in the present painting to suggest that Ter Borch's work served as a point of departure for Metsu. Metsu, however, opted for a more anecdotal approach: his narrative is more complex, and the gestures and expressions more specific to the situation described. This narrative style,

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which may well be an outgrowth of Metsu's early attraction to Knüpfer's overtly theatrical compositions, gives his work great sensual appeal, but at a cost. All too often Metsu lets the activities of the moment override the subtle nuances of psychological insight that are at the core of Ter Borch's greatest works.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Eglon van der Neer, *A Woman Washing Her Hands*, 1675, oil on panel, Mauritshuis, The Hague

NOTES

[1] Jean-Baptiste Descamps, *La vie des peintres flamands, allemands et hollandais,* 4 vols. (Paris, 1753–1765), 2:240–241. Deschamps wrote: "Metzu

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comme le plus grand modèle qu'ait fourni la Hollande, à tous ceux qui voudront suivre ou imiter le même genre" (translated by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. and Jennifer Henel).

[2] Christiaan Josi, *Collections d'imitations de dessins . . . commencée par C. Ploos van Amstel* (London, 1821). Josi wrote: "l'art imitatif peut être porté" (translated by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. and Jennifer Henel).

[3] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 4:103. Smith knew the painting well, for he owned it for two brief periods of time between 1830 and 1833. See Provenance.

[4] Even though it is a natural gesture, the placing of one's foot in a slipper often had sexual overtones in Dutch literary and pictorial traditions. See Eddy de Jongh, *Tot lering en vermaak: Betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstellingen uit de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1976), 245, 259–260.

[5] The area around the pitcher shows that Metsu initially placed a lower and wider vessel in that spot, most likely a chamber pot; by inserting the pitcher, he emphasized the scene's sexual allusions.

[6] See Eddy de Jongh, *Tot lering en vermaak: Betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstellingen uit de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1976), 195.

[7] For a related emblem by Jacob Cats, see *Spiegel van den ouden en nieuwen tijdt* (The Hague, 1631), book 3:147, emblem 45. See Eddy de Jongh, *Tot lering en vermaak: Betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstellingen uit de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1976), 197, repro. (in reverse).

[8] See, for example, *The Hunter's Gift,* c. 1658–1660 (City of Amsterdam, on loan to the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, no. C177), discussed in Peter C. Sutton and Jane Iandola Watkins, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting* (Philadelphia, 1984), 250–251.

[9] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Review of Robinson 1974," *Art Bulletin* 58 (1976): 457–458.

[10] This painting can be associated with a few other paintings that must date at about this time. Primary among them is the *Cello-Player* (Royal Collection, Buckingham Palace, London), in which a woman wears a costume identical to that worn by the woman leaving the bed. See Franklin W. Robinson, *Gabriel Metsu (1629–1667): A Study of His Place in Dutch Genre Painting of the Golden Age* (New York, 1974), 139, fig. 69. The same model wears the fur-lined jacket of the woman seated at the table in *Oyster Eaters* (Hermitage, Saint Petersburg). See Franklin W. Robinson, *Gabriel Metsu (1629–1667)*, 183, fig. 137.

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[11] Metsu quoted the figure of the suitor in Ter Borch's *The Suitor's Visit* in his own depiction of *The Visit.* Although Metsu's painting is now lost, the composition is known from an engraving by I. Ch. Lingée. See Franklin W. Robinson, *Gabriel Metsu (1629–1667): A Study of His Place in Dutch Genre Painting of the Golden Age* (New York, 1974), 182, fig. 136. A similar figure appears in *Visit to the Nursery,* 1661 (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, inv. no. 17.190.20). See Franklin W. Robinson, *Gabriel Metsu (1629–1667)*, 178, fig. 130.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, an oak panel with vertical grain, has been thinned, backed, and cradled. An X-radiograph taken in 1940 shows the painting prior to cradling and suggests the panel is composed of a single board. The panel was prepared with a light-tan upper ground over a white lower ground. Metsu laid out the figures with a brown painted sketch, then worked up the composition in an underpainting. In the floor he scratched through the light-colored underpaint to describe the planks. Metsu made some revisions by sketching over the underpaint using black paint that can be seen with infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.7 microns.[1] He revised the proper right hand of the woman at her toilet, and introduced the candlestick and pitcher in the foreground. The vessel was originally sketched as a wide-necked vase and only converted into a pitcher during the final painting.The original shape is visible as a pentimento. [2] As is characteristic of Metsu's technique, the secondary sketch appears throughout, for example, in the figure of the central young woman.[3] Metsu applied the final paint smoothly in the darks and more thickly in the lights, with small brushstrokes blended wet-into-wet. He glazed dark colors such as the green and red garments and handled highlights in low impasto.

Several areas of abrasion were extensively repainted in the past. Much of the repaint was removed during a 1986 conservation treatment. The green jacket at left is somewhat abraded and the upper paint layer has blanched. An upper layer of glaze has also been abraded in the brown skirt of the maid in the right background. Original paint in the deeper shades of the red slippers and red clothing on the chair at right has blanched and the pigment has altered to gray.[4] The area around the pitcher in the foreground was abraded, revealing the earlier shape of the vessel. The painting was treated again in 2010 at which time the abrasion and blanching in the paint and glazes were inpainted.

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[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

[2] In an 1831 letter from Charles Bagot to dealer/collector John Smith, Bagot writes in regards to this painting: "I find no fault with the addition made to it in turning the pot de chamber into a vessel of another description and shall certainly leave it as it is. It is very well done." See Charles Sebag – Montefiore with Julia I. Armstrong-Totten, A Dynasty of Dealers: John Smith and Successors 1801 – 1924: A Study of the Art Market in Nineteenth-Century London. (London, 2013), 77.

[3] E. Melanie Gifford, "Eloquent Imprecision: Gabriel Metsu's Painting Technique," in Adriaan E. Waiboer, Gabriel Metsu (New Haven, 2010), 168–169.

[4] The pigments were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections, polarized light microscopy, and air-path X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (see report dated August 1, 1986, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Possibly William van Huls, London; possibly (his estate sale, at his residence by Wilson, London, 6 August 1722 and days following, no. 129, as *Ladies in their Bedroom*); Edwin.[1] Colonel Gregory Holman Bromley Way [1766-1844], Denham Place, Buckinghamshire;[2] sold to (John Smith [1781-1855], London); sold 26 January 1830 to George John Venables-Vernon, 5th baron Vernon [1803-1866], Sudbury Hall, Derby; (his sale, Christie & Manson, London, 15-16 April 1831, 2nd day, no. 50, as *The Importunate Intruder*); purchased by (John Smith [1781-1855], London) for Sir Charles Bagot [1781-1843];[3] (his sale, Christie & Manson, London, 18 June 1836, no. 56); Albertus Brondgeest [1786-1849], The Hague, buying for Baron Johan Gijsbert Verstolk van Soelen [1776-1845], The Hague; sold 1846 with the Verstolk van Soelen collection through (John Chaplin, London) to a consortium of Samuel Jones Loyd [1796-1883, later 1st baron Overstone], Humphrey Mildmay [1794-1853], and Thomas Baring [1799-1873], London, and Stratton Park, Hampshire;[4] by inheritance to Baring's nephew, Thomas George Baring, 1st earl of Northbrook [1826-1904], London and Stratton Park; by inheritance to his son, Francis George Baring, 2nd earl of Northbrook [1850-1929], London and Stratton

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Park; sold March 1927 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[5] sold November 1927 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] Adriaan E. Waiboer, *Gabriel Metsu (1629-1667): Life and Work*, Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 2007: 762, no. A-130; Frank Simpson, "Dutch Paintings in England before 1760," *The Burlington Magazine* 95, no. 599 (February 1953): 41.

[2] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 1829–1842: 4(1833):103, no. 94; 9(1842):524, no. 29, provides the provenance for the painting from Colonel Way through Brondgeest.

[3] See Charles Sebag-Montefiore with Julia I. Armstrong-Totten, *A Dynasty of Dealers: John Smith and Successors, 1801-1924*, Arundel and London, London, 2013: 21-22, 72, 75-77.

[4] The catalogue of the Verstolk van Soelen collection, annotated with the purchasers of each work, was prepared by Albertus Brondgeest and is dated 29 June 1846. The Metsu painting is number 30 and the purchaser was Baring. See William Henry James Weale and Jean Paul Richter, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Collection of Pictures Belonging to the Earl of Northbrook*, London, 1889: 199, 202-203.

[5] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Getty Research Institute, Research Library, Los Angeles: reel 124, box 269, folders 14-17. Duveen's representative first saw the painting in 1913 in the front drawing room of Lord Northbrook's London house.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1834 The Works of Ancient Masters, British Institution, London, 1834, no. 103.

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1850 Pictures by Italian, Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, French and English Masters, British Institution, London, 1850, no. 48, as *An Interior*.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Willem Jacobsz Delff after Sir Anthony van Dyck, *Michel Miereveld*, probably 1626/1641, engraving on laid paper, New Hollstein, no. 74, State viii/viii, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Arthur and Charlotte Vershbow, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, 1990.125.1.64

Miereveld, Michiel van

Also known as
Miereveld, Michiel Jansz van
Mierevelt, Michiel van
Miereveldt, Michiel van
Dutch, 1567 - 1641

BIOGRAPHY

Michiel van Miereveld was born in Delft on May 1, 1567. His father, Jan Michelz Miereveld (1528–1612), was a goldsmith. Although Michiel was to become one of Holland's leading exponents of formal portraiture during the first decades of the seventeenth century, his earliest training was as a history painter, working in the international late mannerist style. Karel van Mander wrote that Van Miereveld's first teacher was Willem Willemsz and that he then studied with "Augustijn at Delft" for some ten weeks before moving on at the age of about fourteen to the studio of Anthonie van Blocklandt (Netherlandish, c. 1533 - 1583) at Utrecht. There he remained for more than two years; following Blocklandt's death, Van Miereveld returned to Delft and began working as a portraitist.

Van Miereveld registered as a member of the Delft painters' guild in 1587 and served as its *hoofdman* on two occasions, from 1589 to 1590 and again from 1611 to 1612. He frequently traveled the short distance to The Hague to work at the court of the Stadholder, Prince Maurits of Orange. Van Miereveld entered that city's Guild of Saint Luke in 1625, but it is not clear whether he ever lived and worked in

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The Hague on a full-time basis. Both of his marriages took place in Delft, in 1589 and 1633 respectively, and he bought a house there in 1639. He died in Delft on June 27, 1641. Van Miereveld's work was extremely popular and brought him fame and fortune. At the time of his death, he owned two houses and various pieces of land and belonged “to the wealthiest stratum of the bourgeoisie in Delft.”[1] Sandrart claimed that Van Miereveld painted more than 10,000 portraits. While this figure must be an exaggeration, the artist's oeuvre is indeed very large and is further swelled by numerous repetitions and variations of his compositions executed by pupils and followers. Paulus Moreelse (Dutch, 1571 - 1638) and Anthonie Palamedesz (1601–1673) were his most notable pupils. Van Miereveld’s sons Pieter (1596–1623) and Jan (1604–1633) also became portraitists.

[1] John Michael Montias, *Artists and Artisans in Delft: A Socio-Economic Study of the Seventeenth Century* (Princeton, 1982), 129.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Michiel van Miereveld
Dutch, 1567 - 1641

Portrait of a Lady with a Ruff

1638

oil on panel
overall: 70.5 × 57.9 cm (27 3/4 × 22 13/16 in.)
framed: 97.8 x 83.8 x 12.7 cm (38 1/2 x 33 x 5 in.)
Inscription: center right: AEtatis, 26 / Ao 1638 / M. Miereveldt
Gift of the Coe Foundation 1961.5.4

ENTRY

In contemporary considerations of Dutch seventeenth-century portrait traditions, Michiel van Miereveld has the unfortunate distinction of being the foil against which are placed the stylistic innovations of Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666) and Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669). Whereas Hals and Rembrandt introduced a sense of movement and psychological penetration into their portraits, Van Miereveld maintained a preference for formal and formulaic images throughout his long artistic career. In his portraits, whether full length or half length, he excelled in careful descriptions of external features and costume details but, the criticism goes, he provided little feeling for life.

Although *Portrait of a Lady with a Ruff* will do little to dispel the general assessment of Van Miereveld's work, it nevertheless has a quiet charm, evident especially in the understated warmth of the woman's gaze. Van Miereveld painted the portrait in 1638, at the twilight of his career, and was by this time too set in his ways to break free entirely of the formulas that had earned him accolades for more than four decades. The strength of the traditions he followed and the subtle efforts he made to modify them can be seen in a comparable portrait of a younger woman painted some fourteen years earlier [fig. 1], in which the costume and the pose are virtually identical to those in *Portrait of a Lady with a Ruff*. In the later work, Van Miereveld created a more three-dimensional image through the perspective of the collar and stronger modeling of light and dark.

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Although minor changes in Van Miereveld's style can be detected, it is still quite astonishing that he continued to work in this manner through the 1630s, during a period when so much more lively and penetrating images were being created by his younger colleagues in Haarlem and Amsterdam. He must have continued in this vein in large part because there was a market for such images—clearly a conservative market that still abided by the idea that portraits should describe a sitter's features but not expose much psychological character through gesture or expression. Van Miereveld's manner of portraiture may also have retained its hold on a Dutch clientele because it reinforced Neo-Stoicism, a philosophical ideal that was current in the Netherlands. [1] One of the guiding principles of the Neo-Stoic ideal, *tranquillitas*, was achieved by controlling one's inner emotions. Thus, a calm outward demeanor would suggest the sitter's tranquil inner state, attained through rational thought and self-knowledge.

Aristocratic circles in Delft and The Hague, where Van Miereveld worked throughout his long career, remained conservative long after more dynamic attitudes had affected the upper social strata of Amsterdam and Haarlem. The character of the first two cities during the 1620s and early 1630s was determined largely by the presence of the princely House of Orange, whose patriarch, Willem "the Silent" of Orange (1530–1584), had taken as his motto the Neo-Stoic sentiment *saevis tranqvillvs in vindis* (calm in the midst of raging seas). [2] Van Miereveld, who worked extensively for the courts of three consecutive Stadholders—Willem the Silent and his two sons, Prince Maurits (1567–1625) and Prince Frederik Hendrik (l584–1647)—was clearly rewarded for the visual continuity he provided, a continuity that accorded well with the House of Orange's philosophy of hereditary princely rule. [3]

The aristocratic sitters who also patronized Van Miereveld, most of whom were from Delft and The Hague, clearly took their lead from the court and eagerly embraced the portrait style it preferred. Although the identity of this particular sitter is not known, one may judge on the basis of her elaborate costume that she was part of the social elite. Her wide lace-edged ruff, finely fluted lace-edged cuff, and embroidered black garment are remarkable for their craftsmanship and refinement. The elegant embroidery on her stomacher, with its intricate pattern of flowers and birds, may have had some personal significance to the sitter, but the meaning, if it existed, is now lost. [4] Whether or not this portrait of a woman ever had a male pendant is not known.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Michiel van Miereveld, *Portrait of a Young Woman*, 162(4?), oil on panel, Trustees of the Wallace Collection, London

NOTES

[1] The concept of Neo-Stoicism has been related to portraiture of this type, although not specifically to Van Miereveld, by Ann Jensen Adams in a lecture presented at the Rembrandt symposium in Amsterdam in 1992, “The Two Faces of Self-Knowledge in Rembrandt’s Portraits: Neo-Stoic Tranquillitas and Calvinist Worldly Activity,” and in her book, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (New York, 2009), 78–105.

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[2] This motto appears on the verso of a medal struck in his honor in 1568. Ann Jensen Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (New York, 2009), 89.

[3] No better example of Van Miereveld's importance as the creator of the image of Frederik Hendrik can be cited than the commission the prince gave to Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641) when this great Flemish painter came to The Hague in the winter of 1631–1632 to paint his portrait. Instead of being allowed to come up with his own invention, Van Dyck was instructed to follow the model of a painting executed around 1610 by Van Miereveld (Stadhuis, Delft). See Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. et al., *Anthony van Dyck* (Washington, DC, 1990), 238 n. 7.

[4] For an excellent discussion of period costume, see Bianca M. du Mortier, "Costume in Frans Hals," in Seymour Slive et al., *Frans Hals* (London, 1989), 45–60.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The cradled support is a single, vertically grained board with beveled edges on the reverse. Small checks along the right side follow the grain, and a longer check runs vertically from the bottom edge, right of center. A thin, pale warm brown ground layer was applied, followed by a gray imprimatura under the flesh and ruff. Paint is applied thinly and smoothly with slightly impasted highlights. In a letter dated May 12, 1942, William Robinson Coe writes, "Incidentally, when I purchased the portrait the face was that of a young woman."[1] Indeed, the 1914 auction catalogue for the Griscom collection shows a sitter with a very different face.

The background is extensively abraded, particularly at the right. Inpainting covers scattered small losses and abraded areas of the drapery, flesh, and hair. The thick discolored varnish layer is cloudy and matte in patches. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition.

[1] Mr. Coe goes on to say, "The expert I use confirmed my opinion that the face had been painted over and I authorized him to work on it. Some time later he asked me to come to his studio and he showed me the face underneath and insisted that there was still another one, and finally he got down to the original face and also discovered Mierevelt's signature." Letter to David Finley dated May 12,

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1942 (see copy in NGA curatorial files).

PROVENANCE

Possibly Van der Bogaerde collection, 's-Hertogenbosch.[1] possibly L. Baron, Paris; possibly (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 23 November 1901, no. 142); Pollard.[2] Mr. J.C. Bennett; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 20 December 1902, no. 80); (P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., Ltd.).[3] (Eugene Fischof, Paris); purchased 1903 by Clement Acton Griscom [1841-1912], Philadelphia;[4] (his sale, Plaza Art Galleries, New York, 26-27 February 1914, no. 11);[5] William Robertson Coe [1869-1955], Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York; Coe Foundation, New York; gift 1961 to NGA.

[1] This early provenance information was cited in the 1914 auction catalogue for the Griscom Collection.

[2] Lynda McLeod, Librarian, Christie's Archives, London, kindly provided the names of the consignor and buyer at the 1901 sale; see her e-mail of 1 August 2012, in NGA curatorial files. There is no size information in the sale catalogue, and the description is very brief, so it is not certain this is the same painting.

[3] A note in NGA curatorial files indicates that Colnaghi purchased the painting that was no. 80 in the 1902 sale. This was kindly confirmed by Lynda McLeod, Librarian, Christie's Archives, London, who also provided the name of the consignor; see her e-mail of 28 March 2013, in NGA curatorial files.

[4] The 1903 purchase date is in the 1914 sale catalogue.

[5] An annotated copy of the sale catalogue in the NGA library records the buyer as an anonymous bidder. W.R. Coe’s letter of 12 May 1942 to David Finley (copy in NGA curatorial files) confirms Coe’s purchase at the 1914 sale.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1961 Extended loan for use by Ambassador David K.E. Bruce, U.S. Embassy residence, London, England, 1961-1969.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Mignon, Abraham

German, 1640 - 1679

BIOGRAPHY

The son of shopkeepers, Abraham Mignon was born in Frankfurt and baptized in the Calvinist church on June 21, 1640. When his parents moved to Wetzlar in 1649, Mignon was placed under the care and artistic apprenticeship of Jacob Marrel (1614–1681), a still-life painter and art dealer. Marrell was undoubtedly impressed with Mignon's abilities, for he entrusted his affairs to him whenever he was away in Holland on business. Furthermore, Marrell asked Mignon to instruct his stepdaughter, Maria Sibylla Merian (1647–1717), in still-life painting. By 1664 Marrell and Mignon had left Frankfurt for Utrecht, and in 1669 both were registered in the Saint Luke's Guild there. While in Utrecht, Mignon maintained the strong religious beliefs of his upbringing. In 1672 he was elected deacon of the Waalse Kerk of Utrecht, a position he held for five years. He married Maria Willaerts, the cousin of the seascape painter Cornelis Willaerts (Dutch, active 1622 - 1666), in 1675. He died just a few years later, and was buried in Utrecht on March 27, 1679.

Throughout his short career Mignon painted a variety of still-life subjects, but he is best known for his lush compositions of flowers and fruits placed on stone ledges and in niches, or set within ruins and grottos. He developed a distinct style marked by precise detail and drawing. His oeuvre clearly reflects the influence of a number of painters, including Marrell and, most notably, Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684). Mignon entered the Utrecht painters' guild in 1669, the same year that De Heem rejoined the guild after his return from Antwerp. De Heem's influence is best seen in Mignon's use of bright colors, assurance of drawing, and increasingly elaborate compositions, making it likely that he studied with the older artist.

Considering that Mignon died before his fortieth birthday, many of the approximately four hundred still-life paintings that have been attributed to him were undoubtedly executed by workshop assistants or followers. Nevertheless, this enormous following attests to the popularity of Mignon's compositions, which were eagerly sought by collectors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including the Elector of Saxony and Louis XIV of France.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Abraham Mignon
German, 1640 - 1679

A Hanging Bouquet of Flowers

probably 1665/1670

oil on panel
overall: 38.1 x 29.9 cm (15 x 11 3/4 in.)
overall (with additions): 39 x 31.1 cm (15 3/8 x 12 1/4 in.)
framed: 53.3 x 45.1 x 6.4 cm (21 x 17 3/4 x 2 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower left: AB (in ligature) Mignon f.
Collection of Mrs. Paul Mellon 1992.51.5

ENTRY

Abraham Mignon united this decorative floral piece through the free-flowing rhythms of flowers, fruits, and grains that hang from a blue satin bow. With crystalline clarity and an exquisite sense of design, he arranged blossoms in such a way that their various shapes and vivid colors complement one another with an easy naturalness. At the center of the composition are the large forms and pale colors of the white viburnum, the light pink carnation, and the white and red variegated tulip. Smaller orange red poppies, crab apple blossoms, Chinese lanterns (Physalis alkekengi), amaranthus, and long grains of wheat surround these flowers. While the bouquet hangs gracefully, the composition overall has an energetic feel because of the way the various flowers, including the morning glory, yellow rose, and the blue love-in-a-mist (Nigella damascena), turn back upon themselves as they reach up to the light.

Mignon painted a large number of such hanging bouquets, sometimes focused on flowers, sometimes on fruit. [1] Although they are essentially decorative ensembles, complete with requisite insects to add to their illusionistic character, they derive from a tradition that began in a far more serious vein. The origins of such hanging bouquets are to be found at the beginning of the seventeenth century in paintings by Daniel Seghers (1590–1661). By the mid-1620s Seghers had established a specialty in which he painted garlands of flowers hanging from ribbons around a painted image of an altarpiece. [2] Seghers, a devout Jesuit, developed his

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concept from the floral garlands painted by his teacher, Jan Brueghel the Elder (Flemish, 1568 - 1625), but also from the church practice of surrounding altarpieces with garlands of live flowers. [3]

Seghers' innovation was widely emulated in Flemish art. Paintings of flowers and fruits surrounding illusionistically painted sculptures and religious scenes were executed by a number of Flemish artists, among them Joris van Son (1623–1667), Jan Pauwels Gillemans I (1618–c. 1675), Frans Ykens (1613–c. 1679), and, most significantly in this context, Mignon's teacher, Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684). All of these artists, moreover, followed Seghers' practice of choosing flowers and fruits that were imbued with symbolism related to the religious image at the center of their compositions. [4] De Heem expanded upon this genre in two basic ways. Occasionally he depicted a single bouquet of fruit or flowers (or combination thereof) hanging from a stone niche holding various religious objects, thus shifting the focus of the painting from a centrally placed religious image to the floral/fruit arrangement. [5] Sometimes, De Heem would remove the religious component of the scene entirely. A number of his paintings depict garlands of flowers or fruit hanging from blue ribbons before an otherwise empty painted stone niche. [6]

In this painting, Mignon has removed even those vague references to the origins of this pictorial genre that remained in De Heem's garland paintings. *A Hanging Bouquet of Flowers* lacks any reference to the central devotional character of Seghers' paintings, and all references to a niche have been eliminated as well. The blue ribbon that holds the festoon is all that remains from the earlier tradition. Despite this adaptation in the character of the motif, the strong relationship of this work with De Heem's paintings suggests that Mignon probably executed it in the late 1660s, shortly after he left De Heem's workshop. [7]

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NOTES

[1] For a listing of these, see the catalog of Mignon's paintings in Magdalena Kraemer-Noble, *Abraham Mignon 1640–1679* (Leigh-on-Sea, 1973).

[2] Seghers collaborated with a number of other artists in these works, including Cornelis Schut I (Flemish, 1597 - 1655), Gerard Seghers (Flemish,

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1591 - 1651), and Abraham van Diepenbeeck (Flemish, 1596 - 1675).

[3] These observations are made by Ildiko Ember in *Delights for the Senses: Dutch and Flemish Still-Life Paintings from Budapest* (Wausau, WI, 1989), 66.

[4] For an assessment of the symbolic relationships of a number of these paintings, see *Symbolique & botanique: le sens caché des fleurs dans la peinture au XVIIe siècle* (Caen, 1987).

[5] See Sam Segal and Liesbeth M. Helmus, *Jan Davidsz. de Heem en zijn kring* (Utrecht, 1991), no. 27, 177–180. In this painting from the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, signed and dated 1653, a crucifix and a skull rest in the niche from which hangs a garland of fruit. Segal analyzes extensively the symbolic associations of the fruit.

[6] See Sam Segal and Liesbeth M. Helmus, *Jan Davidsz. de Heem en zijn kring* (Utrecht, 1991), no. 23, 171–172. According to Segal, De Heem painted more than ten such paintings. One of these is dated 1675. In 1669, however, Cosimo de' Medici acquired such a garland painting, which hangs today in the Palazzo Pitti, Florence.

[7] There is absolutely no reason to question the attribution, as was done by Kraemer-Noble. See Magdalena Kraemer-Noble, *Abraham Mignon 1640–1679* (Leigh-on-Sea, 1973), 53, no. B142.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single, vertically grained oak[1] board with thin wood strips attached to the edges, which are beveled on the back. The lower right corner is chipped and worn. Thin opaque paint is applied over a thin, smooth, pale gray ground in layers blended wet-into-wet with slightly impasted highlights.[2] Red underpaint is visible in the blue flower near the center and may be present in other areas as well. Abrasion is extensive, particularly in the background. In 1994 the painting underwent treatment to consolidate flaking and remove discolored inpainting and varnish.

[1] The wood was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated August 1993 in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] The pigments were analyzed using X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated August 17, 1993, in NGA Conservation department files).

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PROVENANCE

Private collection, England;[1] (John Mitchell & Son, London); purchased November 1961 by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia; gift 1992 to NGA.

[1] Correspondence from Peter Mitchell, 22 June 1992 (in NGA curatorial files). The painting may have come to Mitchell from a Mr. Phillips, of Hitchin (Antiques) Ltd., for it is noted as having been in Phillips' possession by Sydney H. Pavière, *Floral Art: Great Masters of Flower Painting*, Leigh-on-Sea, 1965: 32.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Abraham Mignon
German, 1640 - 1679

Still Life with Fruit, Fish, and a Nest

c. 1675

oil on canvas
overall: 94 x 73.5 cm (37 x 28 15/16 in.)
framed: 117.5 x 98.4 x 5.1 cm (46 1/4 x 38 3/4 x 2 in.)
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. H. John Heinz III 1989.23.1

ENTRY

The celebration of the richness and fertility of the land is a theme that reappears in different forms throughout the seventeenth century, whether in still-life, landscape, or mythological scenes. This work, painted in the mid-1670s, is an evocative image of abundance in which the fruits of the water are depicted along with the fruits of the land. The catch of the day, still hanging from hooks attached to lines that drape over the edge of the bait box, glistens in the subdued light of this deeply recessed scene. The fishing pole and its case can be seen resting on the fruit piled in the wicker basket. A great tit, perched on a branch of a craggy, moss-covered tree, watches over her nest with its four eggs nestled in the branches of a hibiscus plant. [1] Two European goldfinches, one of which stands alertly on the handle of the basket, further enliven the scene. Frogs by a pool of water in the lower left, snails, caterpillars, and lizards (one of which is dead and has attracted a horde of ants) further enrich this woodland scene.

While the components of this painting belong to an allegorical tradition of abundance, they also seem to represent various stages in the cycle of life. The bird's eggs stand for birth; ripe fruit and blossoming flowers indicate maturity; old age is included in the guise of the gnarled tree; and the fish and the corpse of the lizard represent death. Religious concepts further complement these dual aspects of abundance and the cycles of life. The wheat and grapes, so prominently displayed in this still life, traditionally represent the Eucharist. These varied symbolic associations are fused together in such a way as to create a metaphorically rich image that could be appreciated by the viewer on many levels.

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This flowing composition and the complex symbolism contained within it were clearly inspired by the work of Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684), with whom Mignon studied in Utrecht. A particularly close prototype, *Ruins with Fruit and Bird's Nest* [fig. 1], must have been executed by De Heem during the late 1660s, at a time when Mignon presumably was active in the master's studio. This still life from Dresden, likewise set in a grotto, includes so many of the same elements—luscious fruit, gnarled tree, bird's nest and eggs, live and dead animals, all drawn together by the rhythms of long stalks of wheat—that one wonders whether Mignon had an active hand in its execution. In any event, from this thematic basis, Mignon executed a number of related works that became progressively more decorative and mannered as a result of his luminous colors and crisp articulation of forms. One composition in Budapest is particularly close in concept, the basic difference being that a selection of flowers instead of fruit serves as the primary still-life motif. [2]

The large number of similarly complex compositions still extant confirms Arnold Houbraken's statement that Mignon's paintings were in great demand. Although Houbraken avows that Mignon worked from life, the artist frequently reused motifs, such as the frogs, in various paintings. [3] He also painted variants and multiple versions of his most successful works. At least three other versions of the Gallery's painting exist: a signed version [fig. 2] in the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich; an unsigned version in the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg; [4] and an unsigned version sold on the New York art market (Sotheby's, January 12, 1989, no. 187).

The signed Munich painting is the prime example of this composition, while the Gallery's work is most likely an autograph replica. An extensive, vigorously executed underdrawing that outlines the composition has been revealed by Infrared Reflectography [fig. 3]. Evidence of a grid pattern in the Underdrawing indicates that Mignon transferred the composition from another source, probably a preparatory drawing. [5] Although he had various students who may well have made replicas, and his paintings were also reputed to have been copied after his death, [6] the quality of this version is so high that one must assume Mignon was primarily responsible for its execution. Not only is the brushwork vigorous throughout, the range of textures created, from the soft skin of the peaches to the crisply articulated forms of the grains of wheat, are consistent with those found in Mignon's autograph works. [7] The Gallery's painting, moreover, is not an exact replica of the Munich version; slight variations exist in the positions of the frog and

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the dead lizard in the foreground relative to the other still-life elements. [8]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan Davidsz de Heem, *Ruins with Fruit and Bird's Nest*, late 1660s, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden. Photo: Hans-Peter Klut

fig. 2 Abraham Mignon, *Still Life with Fruit, Fish and a Bird's Nest*, c. 1675, oil on canvas, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich. Photo © Bayer&Mitko - ARTOTHEK

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fig. 3 Infrared reflectogram, Abraham Mignon, *Still Life with Fruit, Fish, and a Nest*, c. 1675, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. H. John Heinz III, 1989.23.1

NOTES

[1] Dr. Stoors L. Olson, curator at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, has kindly identified the birds and the fish (perch, pike, and roach) in this painting. The speckled eggs in the nest are those of a great tit and not of a goldfinch (which are bluish).

[2] *Still Life with Flowers, Fish, and Bird's Nest,* Szépmüvészeti Múzeum, Budapest, inv. no. 3539.

[3] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753) 3:82–83.

[4] *Still Life with Fruit, Fish, and a Bird's Nest in Woodland,* Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, inv. no. 1052.

[5] Magdalena Kraemer-Noble, *Abraham Mignon 1640–1679* (Leigh-on-Sea,

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1973), who did not know of this painting, believes that Mignon only signed paintings he actually executed, a position I believe to be too extreme.

[6] See Sam Segal and Liesbeth M. Helmus, *Jan Davidsz. de Heem en zijn kring* (Utrecht, 1991), 214, 217 n. 2.

[7] The surety of execution is also evident in the x-radiographs [see X-radiography] of the painting. Some studio participation may exist in the area of the basket and the background.

[8] Examinations with Infrared Reflectography indicate that the positions of the frog and lizard were altered during the course of the painting's execution. See Technical Summary.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a fine-weight, plain-weave fabric, has a double lining. The tacking margins have been trimmed, but cusping visible along all edges indicates that the original dimensions have been retained. A smooth, thin, white ground was applied overall, followed by a brown imprimatura that was also employed as the background tone. Infrared reflectography at 2.0 to 2.5 microns[1] reveals a grid layout for the transfer of the precise brush-applied underdrawing in the fish and fruits. It also shows changes in the positions of the lizard and the frog. Thin, smooth paint layers were applied in a slow, deliberate manner with some strokes blended wet-into-wet. Leaves painted transparently over the background incorporate the brown layer as a shadow.

A long horizontal tear in the lower right corner transverses the fish, while a smaller area of damage has occurred along the bottom edge at the left. Abrasion is minimal, and losses are confined to the edges and tears. Remnants of a selectively removed aged varnish layer are found over the background, while a fresher semi-matte varnish is present overall. No conservation has been carried out since acquisition.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with a K astronomy filter.

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PROVENANCE

Private collection, England. private collection, Switzerland; (Peter Tillou Works of Art, Litchfield, Connecticut); purchased May 1986 by Mr. and Mrs. H. John Heinz III, Washington, D.C.;[1] gift 1989 to NGA.

[1] Provenance information was provided by Diane Martz, with the Heinz collection, in e-mails to Arthur Wheelock of 7 and 10 September 2012 (in NGA curatorial files). She writes in her first message that in the papers of Ingvar Bergstrom, who catalogued the Heinz collection, "there is a version of a certification for the picture that lists a private English collection as provenance."

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1989 Still Lifes of the Golden Age: Northern European Paintings from the Heinz Family Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1989, no. 28.

1996 Obras Maestras de la National Gallery of Art de Washington, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, 1996-1997, unnumbered catalogue, 74-75, color repro.

1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure.

2006 Loan to display with permanent collection, Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, 2006-2007, unnumbered brochure, fig. 3.

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1989 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr., and Ingvar Bergström , eds. *Still Lifes of the Golden Age: Northern European Paintings from the Heinz Family Collection*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Washington, 1989: no. 28, color repro. 75.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 174-176, color repro. 177.

2006 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. . *In Celebration of Jan Davidsz. de Heem's Still-*

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Life with Grapes. Exhibition brochure. Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, 2006: fig. 3.

2007 Kraemer-Noble, Magdalena. *Abraham Mignon, 1640-1679: catalogue raisonné*. Studien zur internationalen Architektur- und Kunstgeschichte, vol. 44. Petersberg, 2007: 35, 38, 130, 132, 288 n. 12, as a 17th century copy by an unknown artist.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Molenaer, Jan Miense

Dutch, c. 1610 - 1668

BIOGRAPHY

Jan Miense Molenaer was the oldest son of the tailor Jan Mientsen Molenaer and his second wife, Grietgen Adriaensdr. Molenaer was born in Haarlem around 1610.[1] He may have trained with Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666) or his brother Dirck Hals (1591–1656), as his earliest known works, which date to 1629, favor the same palette and subjects as these two masters, notably energetic scenes of merrymaking.[2] In 1634, Molenaer is mentioned in the register of the Haarlem Guild of Saint Luke.[3]

During the 1630s, Molenaer depicted a wide range of subjects, from merry company scenes to tavern groups, biblical scenes, theatrical subjects, and portraits. His style of painting was quite varied, ranging from precise and refined to loose and free. Above all, Molenaer was able to impart individuality to his figures and convey their relationships with one another. In 1636, Molenaer married his fellow Haarlem artist, Judith Leyster (Dutch, 1609 - 1660). In 1637, the two moved to Amsterdam, where they resided for the next 12 years. Attracted like so many others to the city's bustling art market, Molenaer found professional and personal success in Amsterdam. He continued to paint a variety of subjects, from theatrical scenes and images of the five senses to religious narratives, but he also produced genre scenes of peasant villages and tavern scenes. While in Amsterdam, the couple had four children, all baptized in the Nieuwe Kerk.[4]

Molenaer and Leyster relocated to Heemstede, south of Haarlem, around 1648. Molenaer's output during this last phase of his career is large, though not particularly inspired. During this time he was also contending with mounting debts, difficulties with his forays into real estate investments, and illness.[5] On November 6, 1659, Molenaer and Leyster, both in poor health, drew up their wills. Although Molenaer recovered, Leyster died three months later at the age of 50. Molenaer soon moved back to Haarlem, and spent the last five years of his life in a rented house on the Burgwal, where he died in 1668. He was buried in the Grote Kerk four days later.

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Notes

[1] Molenaer testified on behalf of the Amsterdam art dealer Joannes de Renialme on November 21, 1637, calling himself "about 27 years old." See Irene van Thiel-Stroman, "Jan Miense Molenaer," in *Painting in Haarlem 1500–1850: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum*, ed. Neeltje Kohler (Haarlem, 2006), 243, n. 1.

[2] Dennis P. Weller, "Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age," in *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Dennis P. Weller (Raleigh, 2002), 10.

[3] Hessel Miedema, ed., *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem 1497–1798*, 2 vols. (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1980), 420, 933.

[4] Irene van Thiel-Stroman, "Jan Miense Molenaer," in *Painting in Haarlem 1500–1850: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum*, ed. Neeltje Kohler (Haarlem, 2006), 241.

[5] Dennis P. Weller, "Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age," in *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Dennis P. Weller (Raleigh, 2002), 22.

Alexandra Libby

May 7, 2019

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1993 Welu, James A., and Pieter Biesboer. *Judith Leyster: A Dutch Master and Her World*. Exh. cat. Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem; Worcester Art Museum. Haarlem, 1993.

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2002 Weller, Dennis P. “Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age.” In *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*. Edited by Dennis P. Weller. Exh. cat. North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Indianapolis Museum of Art; Currier Museum of Art, Manchester. Raleigh, 2002: 9–25.

2006 Van Thiel-Stroman, Irene. “Jan Miense Molenaer.” In *Painting in Haarlem 1500–1850: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum*. Edited by Neeltje Kohler. Haarlem, 2006: 241–245.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
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Jan Miense Molenaer
Dutch, c. 1610 - 1668

Self-Portrait as a Lute Player

c. 1636/1637

oil on panel
overall: 38.7 x 32.4 cm (15 1/4 x 12 3/4 in.)
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund 2015.20.1

ENTRY

In this finely wrought self-portrait, Jan Miense Molenaer sits with a lute balanced high on his left thigh, adjusting a tuning peg with one hand and thumbing a string with the other. His furrowed brow and fixed gaze convey the level of concentration needed to coax just the right note from the instrument. A still-life ensemble of food, instruments, and smoking paraphernalia lies beside him: walnuts cracked on a plate, a small violin known as a pochette resting atop a recorder, and coals in a brazier burning low. Together with the soft lighting, the scene exudes a sense of calm and quiet.

Much of the painting's charm comes from the extraordinary naturalism that Molenaer conveyed through his exquisite attention to detail and deftly handled brush. He modelled his fabrics and metals with carefully blended colors, applying quick highlights at curves and contours to give his materials form and substance, as is evident in his creamy gray ensemble with a broad white collar. Molenaer may have even used the blunt end of his brush to scrape away paint to indicate the individual curls of his moustache and leonine mane.

Molenaer's identity as the sitter is confirmed by comparisons with other known self-portraits. One sees the same curly hair, broadly set eyes, bulbous nose, and cleft chin in *The Duet*, the double-portrait he painted of himself and his wife, the artist Judith Leyster (Dutch, 1609 - 1660), around 1635–1636 [fig. 1], and in his *Self-Portrait with Family Members* of c. 1636 [fig. 2]. [1] *Self-Portrait as a Lute Player* has traditionally been dated slightly earlier than these works. [2] However, Molenaer appears to be slightly older in the Gallery's painting, and the somewhat loose

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brushwork, particularly in the handling of the face and drapery, is consistent with the evolution of his style around 1637, when he moved to Amsterdam. [3] Pentimenti visible both to the naked eye and through infrared reflectography reinforce this slightly later dating, as they show that Molenaer originally based the position of his right hand on the self-portrait in *The Duet*. As in that work, he initially pictured himself strumming the lute, but later revised the gesture to show himself tuning its strings instead [fig. 3]. Infrared reflectography also shows that Molenaer signed the work "J M_LE_R" to the left of the lute, a signature configuration that is consistent with his work of the mid- to late 1630s [fig. 4]. [4] Unfortunately, little of this signature is visible to the naked eye because he scratched into the paint layer to reveal the ground beneath, and that scratching has since been filled in with a darker material that could be paint or old discolored varnish residue. [5]

The sensitivity with which Molenaer treated the details of playing versus tuning the lute make it likely that the instrument was a real part of his life. Lutes were an integral component of musical culture in the Dutch Golden Age, and the inventory of the artist's possessions made after his death lists a number of instruments, including a violin, two transverse flutes, and three "*cyters*," which may refer either to cithers or lutes. [6] Additionally, in his musical scenes Molenaer has demonstrated his knowledge of the proper postures and fingering for the lute as prescribed in contemporary instruction. [7] For example, Nicolaes Vallet's *Secretrum musarum* (Amsterdam, 1615), a lute manual with sheet music published not in the scholarly Latin, but rather in the French and Dutch vernacular, describes how musicians ought to extend the pinky finger to support the hand, thereby allowing the middle fingers to easily manipulate the strings. [8] As discussed above, in *The Duet* Molenaer has positioned himself playing the instrument with his left hand on the fret board and his middle fingers curled in the act of plucking, his pinky finger extended for support—just as Vallet recommended. In the Gallery's painting, Molenaer originally followed the same convention, but then altered the composition to demonstrate how one ought to tune the instrument by twisting a tuning peg with the left hand while drawing in the pinky of the right hand and extending the middle fingers, also per contemporary manuals.

Apart from demonstrating his familiarity and facility with the instrument, Molenaer may also have chosen to portray himself as a lute player because of music's many symbolic associations, among which was intellectual activity. As one of the liberal arts, music was highly regarded as an art form in the early modern period and considered an essential component of high education. For painters keen to exalt

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their craft, music and musical instruments became an important touchstone for comparison between the two art forms. [9] Particularly in self-portraiture, painters commonly pictured themselves with or among instruments as well as other emblems of learning—books, globes, plaster casts, *naturalia*—both reflecting the universality of their knowledge and calling attention to the parallels between their professions, such as their shared need to integrate theory and practice in the act of creation. [10]

Along with intelligence, inspiration, and imagination, music, and particularly the lute, was naturally also associated with harmony. The Haarlem printmaker Gillis van Breen (c. 1560–after 1602) articulated the harmonious relationship between men and women through lute imagery in an engraving made circa 1600 after Cornelis Ysbrantsz Cussens's *Allegory of Marriage* (Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) that shows a man playing a lute beside a woman playing a violin. Van Breen added an inscription to the image that likens a strong marital relationship to a successful musical duet: "Just as the slenderest string reverberates around the male string, and the melodious strings of the heavy-voice lyre follow, so you, harmonious strings, must accord to the tone of marriage, in which as the consort accepts the commands of her lord." [11] Even more closely related to Molenaer's scene is Jacob Cats's popular emblem "Quid non sentit amore" (Who does not feel love) that shows how the tuning of one lute causes the strings of a partner lute to vibrate in unison just as two lovers' hearts beat as one [fig. 5].

Shortly before Molenaer painted *Self-Portrait as a Lute Player* he had become a member of the Haarlem painter's guild and had also married Judith Leyster. [12] These developments in his personal life may help explain the focus on the theme of harmony and love in the painting. [13] Not only does the pochette resting on top of the table beside Molenaer relate to the partner instruments described by Cussens and Cats, but Molenaer's fixed gaze and calm demeanor also underscore the notions of love and fidelity symbolically linked to the lute. Significantly, Molenaer pays no attention to the array of sumptuous foods, drinking vessels, and smoking implements on the table beside him—items commonly associated with the temptation of sensual pleasures. Instead, he is focused entirely on the task at hand, assuring the viewer of his unwavering dedication to his professional and personal life.

Alexandra Libby

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan Miense Molenaer, *The Duet*, 1635–1636, oil on panel, private collection

fig. 2 Jan Miense Molenaer, *Self-Portrait with Family Members*, 1635, oil on panel, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, on long-term loan from the Rijksdienst voor de Cultureel Erfgoed

fig. 3 Detail of hand on lute, infrared reflectogram, Jan Miense Molenaer, *Self-Portrait as a Lute Player*, c. 1636/1637, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund

fig. 4 Detail of signature, infrared reflectogram, Jan Miense Molenaer, *Self-Portrait as a Lute Player*, c. 1636/1637, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund

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fig. 5 Jacob Cats, *Quid non sentit amore*, engraving from *Proteus, ofte, Minne-beelden verandert in sinne-beelden* (Rotterdam, 1627), National Gallery of Art Library, David K. E. Bruce Fund

NOTES

[1] According to Dennis P. Weller in personal communication with the author, Sept. 16, 2015, other self-portraits may possibly appear in *Artist in His Studio with an Old Woman*, c. 1632–1633, oil on panel, Private Collection; *Man with a Pipe*, c. 1632–1634, oil on panel, Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt am Main, inv. no. 221; and in the background of *Woman Playing a Virginal*, c. 1635, oil on panel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, on loan from the City of Amsterdam, inv. no. SK-C-140.

[2] The painting has previously been dated to 1635 in *Gemalde Alter Meister*, auction catalog, Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna, Autumn 1996, no. 32; and Dennis P. Weller, "Self-Portrait as a Lute Player" in *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Dennis P. Weller (Raleigh, 2002), 130–132.

[3] Dennis P. Weller, "Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age" in *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Dennis P.

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Weller (Raleigh, 2002), 17–24.

[4] Dennis P. Weller, personal communication with the author, May 14, 2016.

[5] See Technical Summary.

[6] For the complete inventory of Molenaer's possessions recorded on Oct. 10, 1668, see Frima Fox Hofrichter, *Judith Leyster: A Woman Painter in Holland's Golden Age* (Doornspijk, 1989), 85–103.

[7] For a discussion of lute music and manuals, see especially Jan W. J. Burgers, *The Lute in the Dutch Golden Age: Musical Culture in the Netherlands 1580–1670* (Amsterdam, 2013), 89–140; Burgers also discusses the celebrity of lutenists in *The Lute in the Dutch Golden Age: Musical Culture in the Netherlands 1580–1670* (Amsterdam, 2013), 51–64.

[8] Vallet's music and playing instructions are discussed in Louis Peter Grijp, "The Ensemble Music of Nicolaes Vallet," in *Proceedings of the International Lute Symposium Utrecht 1986*, ed. Louis Peter Grijp and Willem Mook (Utrecht, 1988), 64–85; Louis Peter Grijp, ed., *The Complete Works of Nicolaes Vallet*, vol. 3, *Secretum Musarum I* (Amsterdam, 1615; repr., Utrecht, 1992), xxx; and Jan W. J. Burgers, *The Lute in the Dutch Golden Age: Musical Culture in the Netherlands 1580–1670* (Amsterdam, 2013), 140–144.

[9] See Ivan Gaskell, "Gerrit Dou, His Patrons, and the Art of Painting," *The Oxford Journal* 3 (1980): 15–23; Ignacio Lamarque Moreno, "Music and Its Symbolism in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 1990), 53–54.

[10] Notable self-portraits that follow such a model include Gerrit Dou, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1665, Private Collection, Boston; Jan Steen, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1663–1665, Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid; and Frans van Mieris, *Self-Portrait of the Artist Holding a Small Painting*, c. 1677, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. For the Dou self-portrait, see Ronni Baer, "Self-Portrait," in *Gerrit Dou, 1613–1675*, ed. Ronni Baer (New Haven, 2000), 122, no. 29. Musical instruments are also a staple of images of artist studios. See, for example, Jan Miense Molenaer, *The Artist's Studio*, 1631, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; Quiringh van Brekelenkam, *The Artist in His Studio*, c. 1659, State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg; Frans van Mieris, *A Connoisseur in the Artist's Studio*, c. 1655–1657, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden; Gabriel Metsu, *Artist Painting a Woman Playing a Cello*, whereabouts unknown; Jan Steen, *The Drawing Lesson*, c. 1665, Getty Museum, Los Angeles; and Johannes Vermeer, *The Art of Painting*, c. 1666, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. For the Metsu self-portrait, see Franklin W. Robinson, *Gabriel Mestu (1629–1667)* (New York, 1974), fig. 42.

[11] Quoted in Dennis P. Weller, "The Duet," in *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of*

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the Dutch Golden Age, ed. Dennis P. Weller (Raleigh, 2002), 137.

[12] Molenaer became a member of the Guild of St. Luke in 1634, though he had been signing and dating works since 1629. He and Leyster posted their wedding bans in Haarlem on May 11, 1636, and were married three weeks later on June 1. For Molenaer's biography, see Dennis P. Weller, "Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age," in *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Dennis P. Weller (Raleigh, 2002), 9–25.

[13] Molenaer had also used the musical motif to suggest a concordant and balanced existence before. In *The Duet* Molenaer pictures himself and Judith Leyster seated together in a well-appointed interior playing string instruments—he a lute and she a cittern (fig. 1). Dressed in their finest attire with a lap dog curled up at their feet, they gaze out at the viewer as they strum their instruments in unison. In *Self-Portrait with Family Members*, his brothers and sisters engage in a musical performance that includes voice, cittern, lute, violin, and cello. The group performs in the shadow of two large portraits hanging on the back wall that depict the deceased patriarch and matriarch of the family, Molenaer's parents, Jan Mientsen and Grietgen Adrianes (fig. 2). The message in both paintings is clear: music expresses the harmonious bond that unites family.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single oak (estimated) panel with vertical grain. The right side is more tangential than the left, but the panel remains quite flat. [1] All four edges of the panel are beveled on the reverse. The center of the panel is approximately 1 cm thick, and the beveled edges decrease to 0.3–0.5 cm thick. The top bevel has been adjusted, and the appearance of the top edge suggests that it could have been reduced, but any alteration was minor.

The ground layer is off-white, and under magnification, blue shard-like pigments can be seen scattered throughout the layer. An underdrawing is not visible with infrared reflectography (IRR). However, when painting the background, the artist appears to have left parts of the central compositional elements in reserve, including the sitter's face and hat, and the central part of the lute. [2] The paint medium is estimated to be oil. The paints were applied thinly, so that the texture of the panel is easily visible, and predominantly wet into wet. Some objects within the composition, as well as highlights, appear to have been applied over drier paint. Overall, the paint stratigraphy is complicated, but examination under magnification

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and with IRR indicates that objects on the table as well as parts of the figure and chair were applied over the background.

The artist depicted some details by scratching through upper paint layers with a thin tool, which in most instances reveals the ground layer. These elements include the sitter's hair and moustache, a lute-string loop, the lute tuning pegs, a line on the red plate at the left of the table, and the signature. A few letters of the signature are visible under normal light, including the "J" and "R" but there are small islands of a darker nonoriginal material, possibly overpaint or old discolored varnish residue, within the lines of the characters. This embedded material is more transparent than the surrounding paint, but also appears to be composed of fine particles, making the signature difficult to distinguish. With IRR, the complete signature is visible.

Some pentimenti are just visible under normal light. The most noticeable is that of the proper right hand, where the artist changed the positioning of the sitter's fingers. Examination with IRR reveals that the hand was first painted much like the lute player's hand in Molenaer's *The Duet* (Private Collection), with the little finger extended and the other fingers more curved. [3]

The panel and paint layers are in good condition. There are minor indentations in the wood and there is a crack at the upper left that has been retouched. There is also scattered retouching, particularly within the background and tablecloth. The natural resin (estimated) varnish saturates the paints and is fairly even.

Dina Anchin

May 7, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Restoration materials cover much of the panel edges. However, most of the growth rings appear to be oriented approximately 45 degrees to the panel surface, except near the right edge where the board becomes more tangential. This shift on the right can be seen in the x-radiograph of the painting.

[2] Infrared reflectography images were captured using the following: a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera with J filter (1.1–1.4 microns), a Si CCD with 55 mm Nikon macro lens and a spectral band of .85–1.0 microns, and a

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Xenics 640 × 512 InGaAs camera with 55 mm Nikon macro lens and J filter (1.1–1.4 microns).

[3] See Entry, fig. 1.

PROVENANCE

Private collection; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 11 July 1980, no. 112); exported to Switzerland; (Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna), by 1981; private collection; (Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna); purchased 1996 by Philip and Lizanne Cunningham, Alexandria, Virginia; (Christie's, New York); purchased 2015 by NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1996 Gemälde Alter Meister, Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna, 1996, no. 13, repro.

2001 Loan to display with permanent collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001-2015.

2002 Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Indianapolis Museum of Art; Currier Museum of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire, 2002-2003, no. 22, repro.

2009 Judith Leyster 1609-1660, National Gallery of Art, Washington; Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, 2009-2010, unnumbered NGA brochure, fig. 12 (shown only in Washington).

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2013 Burgers, Jan W.J. *The Lute in the Dutch Golden Age: Musical Culture in the Netherlands 1580-1670*. Amsterdam, 2013: 12, pl. 5.

2015 Libby, Alexandra. "Jan Miense Molenaer, *Self-Portrait as a Lute Player*." *National Gallery of Art Bulletin*, no. 53 (Fall 2015): 38, repro.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Molijn, Pieter

Also known as
Molyn, Pieter
Molijn, Pieter de
Dutch, 1595 - 1661

BIOGRAPHY

Pieter Molijn, born in London of Flemish parents, was baptized on April 6, 1595. It is not known when he left England or where and with whom he studied painting. There is no evidence to support the tradition that he was a pupil of Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666), although it is quite likely that he received his instruction in Haarlem.

In 1616 Molijn joined the Saint Luke's Guild in Haarlem. Two years later he was in Rome where he left a drawing and inscription in the *album amicorum* of the portrait painter Wybrand de Geest: "Pieter Molijn in Rome 6 June 1618." Although the exact year he returned to the north is unclear, in 1624 Molijn had joined a Haarlem civic guard company, and from 1630 to 1649 he also served as a prominent figure in the administration of the Saint Luke's Guild. He held office as either *hoofdman* or *deken* in 1630, 1633, 1637, 1638, 1645, and 1649. Little else is known of his professional career, except that he seems to have remained in Haarlem until his death in 1661. His pupils included the genre painter Gerard ter Borch the Younger (Dutch, 1617 - 1681) and probably also the landscapist Allart van Everdingen (Dutch, 1621 - 1675).

During the course of Molijn's long career, Dutch landscape painting underwent rapid and dramatic changes. Until 1625 his work was inspired by the mannerist Flemish tradition of landscape painting practiced in the Netherlands by artists such as Roelandt Savery (Dutch, 1576 - 1639). Perhaps through the inspiration of his fellow Haarlem painter Esaias van de Velde I (Dutch, 1587 - 1630), however, Molijn helped forge the way for a new mode of landscape during the latter half of the 1620s with compositions unified by a sweeping diagonal. These small landscape views, executed with a limited palette, anticipate the tonal style refined during the late 1630s and 1640s by Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656) and Salomon van Ruysdael (Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670). Molijn was also a talented draftsman and graphic artist.

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Pieter Molijn
Dutch, 1595 - 1661

Landscape with Open Gate

c. 1630/1635

oil on panel
overall: 33.6 x 47.9 cm (13 1/4 x 18 7/8 in.)
framed: 53.6 x 67.6 x 2.5 cm (21 1/8 x 26 5/8 x 1 in.)
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund and Gift of Arthur K. and Susan H. Wheelock 1986.10.1

ENTRY

This small work, so evocative of the windswept terrain near the dunes along the Dutch coast, captures the essence of early seventeenth-century landscape painting. With free and fluid strokes, Molijn has created a vigorous and animated scene, where sea breezes, which have molded the craggy form of the dead, vine-covered oak tree and the wood slats of the gate and fence, rustle the leaves of trees surrounding the farm. The painting does not have a composed feeling, but appears as though it were a view along a sandy road that we suddenly happened upon. From the low vantage point, nature rather than man takes precedence. The road, gate, and craggy tree are boldly depicted, while the only figures, a shepherd returning with his sheep just over the rise and a man behind the fence, are small and insignificant. [1]

Landscape with Open Gate is not signed, but the attribution to Pieter Molijn is without doubt. Comparisons with his painting *Dune Landscape with Trees and Wagon,* signed and dated 1626 (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig), [2] and with his signed pen drawing of the late 1620s, *Road between Trees near a Farm* [fig. 1], demonstrate the same approach to landscape. [3] In each instance,

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this Haarlem artist has dramatically broken with pictorial tradition and situated the viewer below the horizon. Within vistas limited by low viewpoints, the roads that pass through the rolling, windswept landscapes have no beginning and no end. Only the small, insubstantial figures traveling just behind the crests of the rises suggest the world beyond. Stylistically, a particularly interesting comparison can be made between the vigorous rhythms of the pen lines in the drawing and the black chalk Underdrawing in *Landscape with Open Gate,* which is visible with Infrared Reflectography [fig. 2].

Molijn was one of the most adventurous landscape artists of his day, one who instilled his scenes with an unprecedented sense of realism. Not only did he limit his range of motifs and color tonalities, he also organized his compositions with powerful diagonal accents that were reinforced through strong effects of light and dark. Through these means he gave his paintings both a specific visual focus and a unifying path into the distance. By 1626 his bold and vigorous brushwork had already attracted the attention of Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666), who asked Molijn to paint the landscape in the celebrated portrait *Isaac Abrahamsz Massa* (Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto). [4] As early as 1628 Samuel Ampzing praised Molijn for these same qualities in his chronicle of Haarlem. [5] At about the same time, Molijn's influence in both style and subject matter is evident in the work of his Haarlem contemporary Salomon van Ruysdael (Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670) and in paintings by the Leiden artist Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656).

Molijn's distinctive style of landscape painting owed much to the drawings and etchings of three artists who already had been active in Haarlem at the time he joined the Saint Luke's Guild in 1616: Esaias van de Velde I (Dutch, 1587 - 1630), Willem Buytewech (Dutch, 1591/1592 - 1624), and Jan van de Velde II (Dutch, 1593 - 1641). The restive character of Molijn's line, however, indicates that he also drew inspiration from other artists, including Jacques de Gheyn II (Dutch, 1565 - 1629) and Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651), whose landscape drawings often focused on old barns and rugged trees. [6] While Molijn's historical importance lies in his ability to translate these precedents into painted images, ones that helped usher in the tonal phase of Dutch landscape painting, he may have translated thematic concepts as well. Dilapidated farms and starkly silhouetted dead trees would have been understood in moralizing terms by some of his contemporaries. [7] The dead tree in *Landscape with Open Gate* may have called to mind Roemer Visscher's emblem "Keur baert angst" ("Choosing causes anxiety") [fig. 3], which juxtaposes a rotten and a healthy tree to stress that false appearances and lack of

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knowledge often lead one to make wrong choices in life. [8] This tree could also have been seen as a reminder of the transience of life, an idea taken up with even greater force somewhat later in Haarlem by Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682) (see Forest Scene).

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Pieter Molijn, *Road between Trees near a Farm*, 1626, pen and ink on blue paper, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

fig. 2 Infrared reflectogram, Pieter Molijn, *Landscape with Open Gate*, c. 1630/1635, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund and Gift of Arthur K. and Susan H. Wheelock, 1986.10.1

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fig. 3 Roemer Visscher, "Keu baert angst," emblem from *Zinne-poppen*, Amsterdam, 1614

NOTES

[1] Two small, out-of-scale figures in front of the fence have been added by a later hand; they are in the shadows so they do not detract very much from the overall impact of the painting.

[2] See inventory no. 338, from the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig.

[3] For a discussion of this drawing, see Marijn Schapelhouman and Peter Schatborn, *Land and Water: Dutch Drawings from the 17th Century in the Rijksmuseum Print Room* (Zwolle, 1987), 26, where a date from "the second half of the twenties" is postulated.

[4] Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974) 3:25–26, no. 42, where the attribution of the landscape to Molijn is first made.

[5] Samuel Ampzing, *Beschrijvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* (Haarlem, 1628), 372: "En van het stout pinzeel en hand'ling van Molijn, die in de schilder-konst twee dapp're meesters zijn" ("And of the bold brush and handling of Molijn, that—in the art of painting—are two accomplished masters"; translation by Henriette de Bruyn Kops). That Molijn would have been so well regarded by 1628 is surprising, for no paintings exist that are dated before 1625. For an assessment of Molijn's artistic evolution, see Eva Jeney Allen, "The Life and Art of Pieter Molyn," PhD diss. (University of Maryland, 1987).

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[6] See, for example, Bloemaert's drawing *A Shepherd with Sheep near a Dead Tree* (Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam, inv. no. 11898 A 3740), illustrated in Marijn Schapelhouman and Peter Schatborn, *Land and Water: Dutch Drawings from the 17th Century in the Rijksmuseum Print Room* (Zwolle, 1987), 3.

[7] For a rather controversial assessment of the moralizing character of Dutch landscapes see Josua Bruyn, "Toward a Scriptural Reading of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Paintings," in Peter C. Sutton et al., *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 84–92.

[8] Roemer Visscher, *Zinne-poppen* (Amsterdam, 1614), 11, as discussed in Peter C. Sutton et al., *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 15.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a single, horizontally grained oak board, has several minor cracks parallel to the grain. Dendrochronology has determined a felling date between 1628 and 1634, with the most plausible date being 1630.[1] The back is wax-coated and the edges beveled. The double ground consists of a lower white layer and an upper light brown layer. The smooth, thin ground masks the wood grain and is extensively incorporated into the design. The fluid, brush-applied strokes of the extensive underdrawing, which is more agitated and oblique than the final composition, are readily visible to the naked eye as well as with infrared reflectography at 1.5 – 1.8 microns.[2] The two small foreground figures, which do not appear in the underdrawing, seem to be later additions.

Translucent paint is applied thinly and rapidly, with slightly impasted highlights and stiff brushwork in the sky. Frequently the ground is merely glazed over lightly or highlights applied to exposed underdrawing lines, as in a quickly executed sketch. Discolored inpainting covers scattered small losses and reinforces lines in the gate and the figures to its right. Remnants of aged varnishes indicate selective cleaning in the past. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition.

[1] Dendrochronology was performed by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg (see report dated January 7, 1987, in NGA curatorial files).

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[2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focal plane array InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, France; (art dealer, Lille); purchased 1980 by Arthur K. and Susan H. Wheelock, Washington, D.C.; acquired 1986 by gift and partial purchase by NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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Neer, Aert van der

Also known as
Neer, Aernout van der
Dutch, 1603/1604 - 1677

BIOGRAPHY

Aert (Aernout) van der Neer was probably born in Amsterdam. Documents from later in his life indicate that he was born in 1603 or 1604. He spent his youth near Gorinchem in the south of the Netherlands, where he worked, likely as a steward, for Wilhelmina van Arkel, the widow of the city's highest town official. It is not known when Van der Neer left the Gornichem area or where and with whom he trained. However, by 1629 he was living in Amsterdam and identified as a painter, according to his marriage certificate to Lysbeth Goverts, who he married in Amsterdam's Nieuwe Kerk on March 16 of that year. The couple's six children were all born in Amsterdam. One son, Eglon van der Neer (1634–1703), became a painter.

Although there is no record of an amount paid for even a single painting by Aert van der Neer, it has long been believed that he did not command high prices, as in 1659 the artist began to supplement his income by working as the proprietor of an Amsterdam tavern called "de Graeff van Hollant." His career as a *wyntapper* failed three years later, and on December 12, 1662, he declared bankruptcy. The inventory of his possessions made at the time indicates that most of his paintings were appraised at the low price of five guilders or less. He lived in impoverished conditions during the last years of his life and died in Amsterdam on November 9, 1677.

Van der Neer's earliest known painting, dated 1632 (Národní Galerie, Prague), is a genre scene, a type of subject to which he never returned. During the early years of his career, he painted realistic tonal landscapes and winter scenes inspired by Rafael Govertsz Camphuysen (1597/1598–1657), Esaias van de Velde I (Dutch, 1587 - 1630), and Hendrick Avercamp (Dutch, 1585 - 1634). By the 1640s Van der Neer had begun to specialize in nocturnes, the earliest known of which is dated 1643. It is with his representations of moonlit and snowy 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

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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.

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Aert van der Neer
Dutch, 1603/1604 - 1677

Moonlit Landscape with Bridge

probably 1648/1650

oil on panel
overall: 78.4 x 110.2 cm (30 7/8 x 43 3/8 in.)
framed: 101.6 × 132.7 × 6.4 cm (40 × 52 1/4 × 2 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower right, in ligature: AvdN
Patrons' Permanent Fund 1990.6.1

ENTRY

This evocative landscape, in which Aert van der Neer has captured the subtle atmospheric effects of the Dutch landscape illuminated by the glow of a moonlit sky, is one of the master's most compelling night scenes. 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 the gnarled tree trunks at the left to life and accents the uppermost leaves on the graceful trees that arch over the water. It reveals 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.

In conceiving this image, Van der Neer was more interested in creating the mood of nature than in recording an actual setting. The large houses 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 beyond recall those found in smaller cities and towns.

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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 more rural settings. [1] Likewise, the elegant couple on the right stands before a stone gate similar to those that served as entrances to country houses, particularly those situated 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. [2] This painting exhibits a number of remarkable techniques that Van der Neer developed to convey his atmospheric effects. He suggested the translucency of the clouds, for example, by allowing the reddish ocher imprimatura covering the walnut panel to remain visible through thinly applied bluish gray paint. In the foreground, he articulated a number of objects with light contours, sometimes highlighted with paint applied with a brush and sometimes by scratching the wet paint with an instrument to reveal the ground layer. [3]

Interest in moonlit landscapes in the Netherlands can be traced to engravings made by Hendrik Goudt (1585–1648) 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 Rafael Govertsz Camphuysen (1597/1598–1657). [4] That Camphuysen's early influence encouraged Van der Neer to develop this genre of painting, however, seems unlikely. 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. [5] Nevertheless, because Van der Neer's scenes appear to be based on excursions he made in and around Amsterdam, it seems that he developed his style rather independently. Only Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) explored the transformation of a landscape through light as profoundly as did Van der Neer. If Van der Neer was in fact familiar with Rubens's landscapes from the 1630s, either firsthand or through the prints of engravers such as Schelte Adams Bolswert (c. 1586–1659), he succeeded in adapting the Flemish master's atmospheric effects to a Dutch landscape setting.

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NOTES

[1] The edifice does not conform to any recognizable structure. Sutton in Peter C. Sutton et al., *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 381–383, no. 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. no. 3561-8-55), but, if so, he has so transformed its appearance as to make it unrecognizable.

[2] This dating has been proposed by Fredo Bachmann, *Aert van der Neer* (Bremen, 1982), 68–73.

[3] For a discussion of Van der Neer's painting techniques from this period see Manja Zeldenrust, "Aert van der Neer's Rivierlandschap bij maanlicht opgehelderd," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 31 (1983): 99–104.

[4] For an illustration of one of Camphuysen's nocturnal scenes, which probably dates from the mid-1640s (Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, no. 1546), see Walther Bernt, *Die niederländischen Maler des 17. Jahrhunderts. 800 Künstler mit 1470 Abbildungen*, 3rd ed. (Munich, 1969), repro. 222.

[5] For the relationship of Rafael and his brother Govert Dircksz Camphuysen (1623–1672) to the early work of Van der Neer see Fredo Bachmann, "Die Brüder Rafel und Jochem Camphuysen und ihr Verhältnis zu Aert van der Neer," *Oud-Holland* 85 (1970): 243–250, and also Fredo Bachmann, "Die Herkunft der Frühwerke des Aert van der Neer," *Oud-Holland* 89 (1975): 213–222. The earliest known dated landscape by Van der Neer is 1635, executed after he had moved to Amsterdam.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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

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foreground and sky.

The paint was applied in thin layers. Brushwork is prominent in the sky, and stippling was employed in the foliage and lawn. Highlights were sometimes created by the application of light-colored paint, and sometimes by scratching into the dark paint to reveal the lighter imprimatura below. Slight cupping has formed along the wood grain. Judiciously applied inpainting covers scattered small losses and local abrasions. No conservation has been carried out since acquisition.

[1] Wood analysis was performed by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated February 25, 1992, in NGA Conservation files).

PROVENANCE

Jacob Frederikszn van Beek, Amsterdam; (his sale, Jeronimo De Vries et al., Amsterdam, 2 June 1828, no. 49); Engelberts.[1] F. Tielens, Brussels. J. Walter, London.[2] Possibly August Thyssen [1842-1926]; his son, Baron Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza [1875-1947), Schloss Rohoncz, Hungary, Amsterdam, and Villa Favorita, Lugano, by at least 1930; by inheritance to his daughter, Gabrielle Thyssen-Bornemisza [1915 or 1917-1999] and her husband, Baron Adolphe Bentinck van Schoonheten [1905-1970], Paris and London.[3] (Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna), by 1989; purchased 29 January 1990 by NGA.

[1] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, 8 vols., trans. Edward G. Hawke, London, 1907-1927: 7:406, states that "Engelberts" purchased the picture for 200 florins. An annotated copy of the sale catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York, records the same information (copy in NGA curatorial files).

[2] The names of Tielens and Walter were provided by the Galerie Sanct Lucas.

[3] According to the Galerie Sanct Lucas, the picture had been in the Thyssen family for three generations before its sale; the Galerie included Baron Bentinck's name in the provenance. Ownership by Thyssen-Bornemisza is also given in

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Wolfgang Schultz, *Aert van der Neer*, Doornspijk, 2002: no. 528. Although August Thyssen did collect art in his later years, the main Thyssen-Bornemisza collection was formed by his son, Heinrich, at whose death the collection was divided among his four children. The Dutch diplomat Baron Bentinck van Schoonheten married Gabrielle Thyssen-Bornemisza in 1938. The painting was exhibited in Munich in 1930 in an exhibition of works from Schloss Rohoncz, and the painting was on loan as part of the Bentinck-Thyssen collection to the Gemäldegalerie of the Kunstmuseum, Düsseldorf from 1974 until August 1984 (e-mails of 18 and 23 May 2012, in NGA curatorial files).

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Aert van der Neer
Dutch, 1603/1604 - 1677

Winter in Holland: Skating Scene

1645

oil on panel
overall: 55 × 70.8 cm (21 5/8 × 27 7/8 in.)
framed: 32.25 × 38.25 × 4 cm (12 11/16 × 15 1/16 × 1 9/16 in.)
Inscription: lower left, in monogram, first and last two letters in ligature: AV DN / 1645
Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.136.37

ENTRY

Aert van der Neer possessed a remarkable ability to convey the activities and atmosphere of a winter's day. In this bright scene, men and women, young and old gather on a winding, frozen river. Nestled between the snow-dusted cottages and tall, gnarled trees lining the riverbanks, they skate, sled, ride in horse-drawn sleighs, and socialize under a cloudy, light blue sky. Among the most amusing vignettes is an intense game of *colf* (or *kolf*, a cross between modern-day hockey and golf) underway in the foreground, in which one of the players, hunched over and gripping his club, attempts to hit his target with his friends watching closely. In another charming moment, a handsome couple dressed in their finest—he with a copper-colored ensemble and a sword hanging from his belt, she in her Brabant *huik*, an old-fashioned headdress consisting of a flat, round disc with a small upstanding spike and floor-length black veil—greet equally elegant friends standing at the riverbank nearby. While the rutted, icy terrain of the riverside path indicates that winter is well underway, the sentiment of the scene is convivial and carefree—a testament to the enormous pleasure being on the ice gave to people

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of all ages during the 17th century.

Signed and dated 1645, *Winter in Holland: Skating Scene* belongs to a transitional moment in Van der Neer's career. [1] Although he had been active as a landscape painter since the early 1630s, his first dated winter landscape came only in 1642. [2] Van der Neer's early paintings (most of whose whereabouts are unknown) bear remarkable compositional similarities to winter scenes by Hendrick Avercamp (Dutch, 1585 - 1634) and his closest follower, Anthonie Verstraelen (1594–1641). [3] Like the works of Avercamp and Verstraelen, they tend to feature a frozen river receding into the distance with groupings of diversely dressed figures scattered across the picture plane. [4] Seen from a high vantage point but with a low horizon line, the early paintings take a broad view over the river with cottages and churches stretching along both sides, though usually only one of the banks is visible in the immediate foreground. [5]

What inspired Van der Neer to begin painting winter landscapes similar to those of Avercamp and Verstraelen is not clear, but it may have been a simple matter of opportunity. Van der Neer had been living in Amsterdam since at least 1629, having relocated from the small town of Gorinchem not far from Rotterdam. [6] When he arrived in Amsterdam, the influence of Avercamp, who had been active there before returning to his hometown of Kampen around 1613, was still quite strong. Indeed, Verstraelen, who also moved from Gorinchem around 1628, immediately began working in Avercamp's manner and quickly established himself as his successor, soon becoming one of the city's most sought-after winter landscape painters. [7] Verstraelen's career, however, was short-lived. He died in 1641, which was, as far as we know, around the time Van der Neer began painting winter landscapes. With the absence of Verstraelen, Van der Neer may have seen an opportunity to make his foray into the winter genre.

Van der Neer's earliest winter landscape of 1642 adhered more closely to the tradition established by Avercamp and continued by Verstraelen. However, *Winter in Holland: Skating Scene* signals the beginning of a shift away from their formulae. The painting maintains the single-bank view in the foreground, but the recession of space is achieved more gradually, and the figures are more numerous and densely grouped. They have also been distributed horizontally across the foreground, effecting a gentler integration of the human presence within the space of the landscape.

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Infrared reflectography reveals that these compositional changes did not come easy to Van der Neer, in particular the effort to realize figural harmony. Although an overall underdrawing is not visible, there are several changes to the staffage, including a group of figures around the short, craggy tree that he either painted out or never completed. [8] By omitting these figures, Van der Neer opened the path in the left foreground, which helps lead the eye into the depth of the painting more organically.

While *Winter in Holland: Skating Scene* reveals Van der Neer's evolving effort to more naturally incorporate the human presence in nature, it also betrays his fascination with light. His selection of a bright, wintry day enabled him to experiment, for example, with how he might use selective layering of paints to convey sunlit forms and textures. Van der Neer prepared his panel with an off-white ground, which he then coated with an extremely thin tan layer. [9] Using this layer as a base color, Van der Neer articulated trees and the paneled sides of cottages with only touches of brown, while indicating the snow atop their forms using white accents. His incredibly economic painting technique also allowed him to capture various atmospheric effects. Brushing a thin, pale blue-gray across the tan layer on the near stretch of the river as well as the rutted dirt path, he conveyed the shimmery translucency of ice and frost as they catch the light. Selective touches of white impasto give texture and depth to patches of untrodden snow along the riverbank.

Around the time Van der Neer executed *Winter in Holland: Skating Scene*, he was also developing a specialty in nocturnes, or night scenes, evidently advancing his keen interest in light and atmosphere. [10] Although the Gallery's winter scene portrays a bright, midday view totally unlike the mysteriously dark, moonlit pictures that would follow, it represents an important focus in this artist's innovative and productive career.

Alexandra Libby

December 9, 2019

NOTES

[1] Wolfgang Stechow, *Dutch Landscape Painting of the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1966), 93; and Wolfgang Schulz, *Aert van der Neer* (Doornspijk,

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2002), 81–82.

[2] Wolfgang Schulz, *Aert van der Neer* (Doornspijk, 2002), 82.

[3] I would like to thank Arthur Wheelock for bringing Verstraelen's work to my attention. Hardly any of Van der Neer's early paintings can still be traced. However, many are reproduced in Schulz's catalogue raisonné. See Wolfgang Schulz, *Aert van der Neer* (Doornspijk, 2002), 146, 193, 16–177, 183; nos. 75, 244, 171, 200; illustrations 1, 2, 3, 5.

[4] See, for example, Hendrick Avercamp, *A Scene on the Ice*, c. 1625, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 1967.3.1.

[5] Wolfgang Stechow focused on the single- versus double-bank construction in particular as a marker of Van der Neer's artistic maturation. Wolfgang Stechow, *Dutch Landscape Painting of the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1966), 93.

[6] Van der Neer was first documented in Amsterdam on March 16, 1629, the date of his civic marriage to Lijsbeth Govaertsdr. Schulz has argued that because Van der Neer was listed as a painter on his certificate of marriage, a process that required a three-year apprenticeship that may have occurred in Amsterdam, it is possible that he had lived in that city since 1626. Wolfgang Schulz, *Aert van der Neer* (Doornspijk, 2002), 10.

[7] Verstraelen was first documented in Amsterdam on November 11, 1628, when, at the age of 34, he married Magdalena Bosijn. A. D. de Vries, "Biografische aanteekeningen betreffende voornamelijk Amsterdamsche schilders, plaatsnijders, enz. en hunne verwanten" *Oud Holland* 4 (1886): 215–224.

[8] I would like to thank Dina Anchin and Sarah Gowen Murray for sharing their observations on the painting's technical aspects with me. See Technical Summary for this entry. The infrared reflectogram is kept in NGA curatorial files.

[9] See the Technical Summary for this entry.

[10] See Aert van der Neer, *Moonlit Landscape with Bridge*, probably 1648/1650, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Patrons' Permanent Fund, 1990.6.1.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting support consists of two quarter-sawn oak (est.) panels with horizontal grain, butt-joined along the center of the panel, and there is a weak convex warp.

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[1] The support appears to be of original thickness (0.8 to 1 cm) and very near its original dimensions based on the tool marks on the reverse, all four edges of the reverse are beveled, and there is paint that extends over the edges. The appearance of the top edge suggests that it could have been trimmed in the past; however, any alteration does not appear recent and would have been minor.

There is a double ground that consists of a lower off-white layer and a yellow-tan upper layer. Each layer is thin and applied overall. [2] On top of the tan layer, the artist applied a cool gray layer overall, which is incorporated into much of the final image; the color serves as the midtone in the ice of the middle ground, the background buildings, and the lighter tones in the clouds.

Examination with infrared reflectography (IRR) reveals that while an overall underdrawing is not visible, the artist first delineated most of the figures in black paint on top of the landscape and then incorporated the black lines into the figures as he painted. [3] These black lines can be seen best using IRR, but are also visible under normal light. There are also several artist changes, including painting out and/or not completing four figures near the left bank of the ice.

The paint medium is estimated to be oil and was applied thinly and predominantly wet-into-wet. The darker colors of the sky and ice, the earth tones of the land and trees, and the figures were painted on top of the cool gray layer. For the sky, the lighter cloud tones had already been applied, and so the darker colors were painted around the cloud formations. After these layers were dry, the trunks and branches of the larger trees on the right side of the composition as well as additional white highlights and the details of the figures were painted over the essentially completed landscape.

The painting is in good condition. There are several small cracks in the wood, but the panel is structurally sound. There are minor ground and paint losses, several accretions, and areas of abrasion. The latter is most prevalent in areas of thin dark paint. The current varnish is clear and saturating. There are minor areas of retouching within the sky and along the panel edges.

Dina Anchin, based on the examination report by Sarah Gowen and the examination notes and technical entry by Melanie Gifford in *Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 2001).

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TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] X-radiographs of the painting indicate that the boards are butt-joined. The x-ray images show the change in the grain along the joint. X-radiography was carried out with a Comet technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube. The image was captured digitally using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14 in. × 17 in.). The x-radiographs were taken using 25kv, 5mA, 25 seconds, with 100.25 in. distance from the source to the plate. The digital x-radiograph captures were mosaicked using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

[2] In an examination report dated May 2002, Melanie Gifford speculated that the panel might have been commercially prepared with these two ground layers.

[3] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.1–1.4 microns (J filter).

PROVENANCE

Sir George Donaldson [1845-1925], London, by 1902;[1] (his sale, London, 1906); purchased 1907 by William A. Clark [1839-1925];[2] bequest 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

[1] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen and Paris, 1907-1928: 7(1918):501, no. 568. J.A. Viccars, who explains his reasoning in correspondence with the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1967 and 1984/1985 (five letters in NGA curatorial files), suggests that Hofstede de Groot's numbers 551 and 567, as well as 568, are all the same painting. No. 551 is noted as being no. 69 in the Van Leyden sale in Paris on 10 September 1804. No. 567 is noted as being no. 118 in Madame de Falbe's sale at Christie's in London on 19 May 1900; Viccars writes that the painting was bought at this sale by the London dealer P. and D. Colnaghi.

[2] Dana H. Carroll, *Catalogue of Objects of Fine Art and Other Properties at the*

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Home of William Andrews Clark, 962 Fifth Avenue, Part I, Unpublished manuscript, n.d. (1928): 130, no. 65.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1959 Loan Exhibition. Masterpieces of the Corcoran Gallery of Art: A Benefit Exhibition in Honor of the Gallery's Centenary, 1959, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

2001 Antiques to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001-2002, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*. 10 vols. Esslingen and Paris, 1907-1928: 7(1918):501, no. 568.

1925 Carroll, Dana H. *Catalogue of Objects of Fine Art and Other Properties at the Home of William Andrews Clark, 962 Fifth Avenue*. Part I. Unpublished manuscript, n.d. (1925): 130, no. 65.

1928 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Illustrated Handbook of the W. A. Clark Collection*. Washington, 1928: 49.

1932 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Illustrated Handbook of the W. A. Clark Collection*. Washington, 1928: 52.

1955 Breckenridge, James. *D. A Handbook of Dutch and Flemish Paintings in the William Andrews Clark Collection*. Washington, 1955: 32, repro.

1959 Corcoran Gallery of Art. *Masterpieces of the Corcoran Gallery of Art*. Washington, 1959: 12, repro.

1966 Stechow, Wolfgang. *Dutch Landscape Painting of the Seventeenth Century*. Kress Foundation Studies in the History of European Art 1. London, 1966: 93, 95, 485, no. 182. repro.

1969 Bachmann, Fredo. *Das Leben des Aert van der Neer*. Weltkunst, 1969: 1348-1349.

1982 Bachmann, Fredo. *Aert van der Neer*. Bremen, 1982: 48-49, no. 34, repro.

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1986 Sutton, Peter C. *A Guide to Dutch Art in America*. Washington and Grand Rapids, 1986: 299-300, no. 452.

1987 Sutton, Peter C., et al. *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting*. Exh. cat. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Philadelphia Museum of Art. Boston, 1987: 39-40, fig. 54

1992 Sutton, Peter C. *Dutch & Flemish Seventeenth-century Paintings: The Harold Samuel Collection*. New York, 1992: 127, 129, no. 1, repro.

1994 Sutton, Peter C., and John Loughman. *El Siglo de Oro del Paisaje Holandés/The Golden Age of Dutch Landscape Paintings*. Exh. cat. Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, 1994: 152, no. 1, repro.

2001 Coyle, Laura, and Dare Myers Hartwell, eds. *Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art*. Washington, DC, 2001: 23, 69, repro.

2001 Janson, Anthony F. "Note on the Permanent Collection: An Unpublished Nocturne by Aert van der Neer." *The Picker Art Gallery Journal* 6, no. 1 (2001-2002): 6-12, no. 5, repro.

2001 Suchtelen, Ariane van, ed. *Holland frozen in Time: the Dutch Winter Landscape in the Golden Age*. Exh. cat. Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague. Zwolle, 2001: n.p., no. 16, fig. 1.

2002 Schulz, Wolfgang. *Aert van der Neer*. Translated by Kristin Lohse Belkin. Doornspijk, 2002: 142, nos. 7, 59, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Nooms, called Zeeman, Reinier

Also known as
Zeeman, Reinier
Zeeman
Seeman
Nooms, Reinier
Dutch, 1623 or 1624 - 1664

BIOGRAPHY

Reinier Nooms was a highly respected painter, draftsman, and internationally renowned graphic artist who specialized in maritime subjects during a period when the Dutch commercial empire spanned the globe. He was born in either 1623 or 1624, presumably in Amsterdam, to parents whose names are unknown.[1] Nooms probably received his artistic training in Amsterdam, but we do not know the name of his teacher. His earliest known work is a drawing dated 1643 made at the age of 19 or 20 that depicts the rear of Amsterdam's Old City Hall (Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg).[2]

Nooms's artistic speciality and the fact that he signed his paintings *R. Zeeman* or *Reinier Zeeman* (*zeeman* = sailor or seaman) make it virtually certain that he was both a professional sailor and an artist. Nooms drew on his intimate knowledge of ships to create images that are so accurate that settings, specific vessels, and the activities taking place in ports and aboard ships can be exactly identified. His paintings usually have a blue-gray tonality that he enlivened with a sensitive use of light and a restrained use of bright colors, including occasional touches of gold on his ships. White highlights animate his figures and activate the undulating surfaces of water. Nooms also preserved an overall clarity of form while subtly drawing the eye to a painting's focal point.

Nooms appears to have spent time in Paris in the late 1640s or early 1650s, when he published two series of lively etchings depicting views of the French capital and its surroundings: *Receuil de plusiers Nauires, et Païsages faits après le naturel par R. Zeeman 1650* and *Quelque Nauires desseigner & graver par Remy Seeman Ao1652*. It is possible that he learned the art of etching and printmaking in the workshop of the Flemish marine artist and engraver Matthieu van Plattenberg (also known as Plattemontaigne; 1607/1608–1660), who had settled in Paris.[3]

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After his return to Amsterdam in 1652, Nooms started a fertile collaboration as a printmaker with the publisher Cornelis Danckerts and his son, Dancker Danckerts. During the 1650s he designed a number of compelling print series that provide much information about Amsterdam, its busy harbor, Dutch waterways and the types of boats plying those waters, and views of other ports.[4] Nooms was back in Amsterdam in time to witness the fire that destroyed the Old City Hall on July 7, 1652. He commemorated the dramatic event with a beautiful etching that he signed with the following statement: “R Zeeman Inventoor et fecit e x. | op dee ovde here graft | after dee geesondee broeder” (R Zeeman inventor and c[reator] and executor [engraver] | at the old Herengracht | behind the [house or tavern called] Gezonde Broeder).[5]

On April 6, 1653, Nooms married Maria Jansdr Moosijn from Bruges, the sister of Michael Moosijn, an engraver with whom Nooms collaborated on two popular engravings of Maerten Harpersz Tromp, a famous admiral who died in battle in 1653. The couple had two daughters, Neeltjen (born in 1653) and Lisbet (born in 1655). Nooms’s married life seems to have been as stormy as some of the seas he depicted. A notarial record of January 6, 1656, relates statements made by his wife on December 27, 1655, that her husband had fallen in with bad company, was visiting houses of ill repute, stayed out until the wee hours of the morning, and had even begun to hit her on occasion.[6]

Nooms probably returned to Paris in 1656 and then traveled around the Mediterranean basin, where he made a number of evocative drawings and etchings of coastal areas and ports. He also may have visited Berlin around 1657 to work for the elector of Brandenburg.[7] From 1661 to 1663 Nooms accompanied the celebrated Dutch admiral Michiel de Ruyter on an expedition to eradicate piracy along the coast of North Africa.[8] Upon his return from the Mediterranean, Nooms painted four large canvases for the Admiralty of Amsterdam that depict the port cities Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli on the Barbary Coast, and Valetta on Malta (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). It is not certain, but very likely the Board of the Admiralty specifically recruited Nooms to accompany De Ruyter to create a visual record of the expedition.

Nooms was a prolific artist: more than 80 paintings and 177 etchings from his hand are known.[9] His career spanned about 14 years, from around 1650 to his death in 1664. Most of his oeuvre depicts his two main artistic interests: marine subjects—including ships, naval battles, and foreign ports—and cityscapes

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featuring his hometown of Amsterdam and its bustling harbor in the IJ estuary. Aside from the accuracy of his renderings of ships and harbor activities, he was also attuned to the impact of variable weather patterns on the water and on sailing conditions, and he excelled at conveying a range of atmospheric qualities. His paintings and prints found eager buyers among Amsterdam's merchant community and others who derived their living from maritime pursuits.[10] Nooms died in Amsterdam in 1664, at age 40 or 41. When his widow remarried in 1667, her dowry included several paintings by Nooms as well as books on navigation.

[1] We know approximately when he was born because of a much later notarial record that states he was 34 on March 5, 1658. See Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea: The Dutch Marine Painters of the 17th Century* (Rotterdam, 1996), 277 and n. 1.

[2] Amsterdams Historisch Museum and Art Gallery of Ontario, *The Dutch Cityscape in the 17th Century and Its Sources = Opkomst en bloei van het Noordnederlandse stadsgezicht in de 17de eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1977), 164–165, no. 73. The dated drawing of the Old City Hall is in the collection of the Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, inv. 22760.

[3] For the discussion about Nooms's stay in Paris, see Jeroen de Scheemaker and Dieuwke de Hoop Scheffer, "Reinier Zeeman," *The New Hollstein: Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450–1700,* vols. 56–57 (Rotterdam, 2001), 56:xv–xvii. In 1918, William Aspenwall Bradley noted that "Nooms's etchings are widely acclaimed, as they have 'a truth of observation and rendering, coupled with a charm and purity of linear style that puts him in the very front rank of craftsmen on copper.'" William Aspenwall Bradley, *Dutch Landscape Etchers of the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven, 1918), 90.

[4] Nooms created etchings for the following print series: *The Four Elements,* 1651–1652*; Stadts-Poorten van Amsterdam* (Town Gates of Amsterdam); *Verscheijde Schepen en Gesichten van Amstelredam* (Various Ships and Views of Amsterdam), in three parts of 12 prints each, c. 1652–1656; *Verscheyde Binne-waters* (Various Inland Waterways), 1654; *Quelques Ports de Mer* (Various Seaports), 1656; *Nieuwe Scheeps Batalien* (Naval Battles), 1652–1654; *The Views in Amsterdam*, c. 1659/1662; and *Vues de Paris et ses environs* (Views of Paris and the Surrounding Area), c. 1667–1677.

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[5] Jeroen de Scheemaker and Dieuwke de Hoop Scheffer, "Reinier Zeeman," *The New Hollstein: Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450–1700* , vols. 56–57 (Rotterdam, 2001), 56:40–41, no. 9. The plate for this etching is the only one that Nooms did not sell to a publisher.

[6] Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea: The Dutch Marine Painters of the 17th Century* (Rotterdam, 1996), 277.

[7] Jeroen de Scheemaker and Dieuwke de Hoop Scheffer, "Reinier Zeeman," *The New Hollstein: Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450–1700* , vols. 56–57 (Rotterdam, 2001), 56:xiii.

[8] Friso Lammertse, "Reinier Zeeman en notaris Gerard de Jager schilderen Algiers," in J. R. Ter Molen and Michiel Nijhoff, *Vorm geven aan Veelzijdigheid* (Rotterdam, 1993), 46–47. A drawing of Tripoli is the single surviving sketch from this voyage. Nooms did produce a series of finished drawings derived from his sketches that has survived as a complete set (*Atlas Van der Hem*, vol. 35, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna).

[9] According to the database of the Rijksdienst voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague (RKD), 63 of 87 paintings by Nooms are on canvas, 22 are on panel, and 2 are on canvas transferred to panel.

[10] In addition to the Admiralty Board and merchant families like the Bickers, at least one of his publishers, Cornelis Danckerts, and several tavern keepers owned paintings by Nooms. See the Montias Database of 17th-Century Dutch Art Inventories, search for “Zeeman,” http://research.frick.org/montias/recordlist.php, accessed March 1, 2011.

Alexandra Libby

July 6, 2017

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Reinier Nooms, called Zeeman
Dutch, 1623 or 1624 - 1664

Amsterdam Harbor Scene

c. 1658

oil on canvas
overall: 61 x 81.8 cm (24 x 32 3/16 in.)
framed: 81.9 × 102.2 × 5.72 cm (32 1/4 × 40 1/4 × 2 1/4 in.)
Inscription: center right on the flag: R.Zeeman
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund 2011.3.1

ENTRY

Amsterdam Harbor Scene is a beautiful example of Reinier Nooms's skill in combining first-hand knowledge of maritime life with artistic excellence, enabling him to create highly realistic depictions of not only the ships and the myriad activities enlivening this busy port, but also the changing atmospheric character of the sky and water. [1] Amsterdammers were justifiably proud of their city and its harbor—the source of the city's prosperity. Then, as now, visitors were taken on boat tours of the bustling port; and the crest of Amsterdam on the canopied sloop in the foreground of this painting indicates that its well-dressed passengers were guests of the municipal government. [2] Billowing clouds, fluttering flags, and slightly choppy water all add to the immediacy of the visual experience.

The distinctive line of wooden breakers that delineates the harbor proper, with openings at regular intervals to allow ships to enter and exit, identifies this scene as Amsterdam's harbor in the IJ estuary. Each opening was barricaded at night by a guard who placed a floating tree trunk (*boom*) or chain across it; correspondingly, the guard sheds flanking each opening were called *boomhuisjes*. [3] On the far left,

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two warships, their gun ports open to air out the decks, are moored along the outside of the breakers. Two men standing in front of a *boomhuisje* observe the departure of a small sailing sloop toward the broad waters of the IJ. [4]

Inside the harbor, oceangoing vessels, including a warship and three merchant ships, are undergoing maintenance and repairs. To the left of center, two men on a temporary platform suspended from a railing are using fibers and pitch to caulk the hull of a large three-master. A workman on the large raft below tends to the vat of hot pitch suspended above a fire. A couple of small boats are tied to the raft: a man in a blue jacket seems to lower a fish trap into the water, while two women lean over the side of their skiff to do laundry in the waters of the IJ. Nooms's careful depiction of the rigging on these ships epitomizes his expert eye for nautical details. For example, he carefully records the complex system of masts on each ship. Square-rigged sailing vessels generally had three masts (spars) consisting of at least a lower mast and a topmast, but larger ships required a third section, the topgallant mast. In port (or in stormy weather), an upper spar could be struck so that its yard rested on the cap of the mast below it, after which the spar was lashed to the lower section, as is the case with the three-master that is being caulked. [5] Lashed spars are even more visible on the careened ship in Nooms's *Caulking Ships at the Bothuisje on the Y at Amsterdam* [fig. 1], while the jumble of masts, spars, and rigging on its warship at anchor inspire awe for the expertise of Holland's mariners.

Anchored behind the three-masted merchantman in *Amsterdam Harbor Scene*, is a *fluyt* bearing small white-and-red flags is a *fluyt*. With maximum cargo space and minimal crew requirements, the *fluyt* was the workhorse of the Dutch Republic's renowned commercial fleet. [6] The vessel in the center background has been careened (hauled onto its side) in order to expose the hull so that it can be caulked below its waterline. The open water of the IJ beyond the breakers is dotted with other ships.

Nooms enlivened the blue-gray tonality of the overall scene with a sensitive use of light and restrained use of brighter colors, preserving an overall clarity of form while subtly drawing the eye to the warship that is moored in the sunlit section of the harbor at the right. [7] Touches of gold give the decorations on the ship's stern a wonderful three-dimensionality, while delicate white highlights animate the numerous figures and activate the undulating surface of the water. The remarkable triangular cloud formation that seems to rise up from the horizon is likely *zeevlam* (sea flame), a fog bank that develops very suddenly above coastal waters, in this

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case the waters of the Zuiderzee, the inland sea just northeast of Amsterdam. [8] Nooms used a similar triangular cloud in the background of *Two Ships Careened for Caulking the Hulls*, an engraving published in 1650 as part of a series of harbor views [fig. 2].

This harbor scene was in all likelihood commissioned by a member of the powerful Amsterdam regent family Bicker. The image of a castle on the warship's *tafferel* (or taffrail, the painted panel on the stern) identifies the ship as the *Huis te Swieten,* an important warship in the fleet of the city's Admiralty [fig. 3]. The warship was named after Castle Swieten (or Zwieten), since 1632 the country estate of Cornelis Bicker (1592–1654). In 1646, the artist Roelant Roghman (Dutch, 1627 - 1692) made four drawings of the castle for his large series on castles and country estates in the provinces Holland and Utrecht. One of these four drawings was almost certainly the model for the warship's *tafferel* [fig. 4]. [9]

The *Huis te Swieten* (sometimes *Huys te Zwieten*) was an impressive warship with a fascinating history. The Admiralty of the Italian port city of Genoa had commissioned the vessel from the shipyard of the Amsterdam Admiralty. However, following the ship's launch in 1653, it was not delivered to the Genoese. At that time the Dutch Republic was embroiled in the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–1654), so Amsterdam's Admiralty requisitioned the state-of-the-art vessel for its own fleet. [10] Soon after the vessel's launch, the celebrated marine painter Willem van de Velde the Elder (Dutch, 1611 - 1693) included the *Huis te Swieten* in a series of drawings depicting naval ships participating in that war [fig. 5]. [11] A few years later Willem van de Velde the Younger (Dutch, 1633 - 1707) also depicted the *Huis te Swieten*, incorporating it into the left-hand background of *A Dutch Flagship Coming to Anchor with a States Yacht Before a Light Air*, 1658 (National Maritime Museum, Greenwich). [12] The Admiralty of Amsterdam owned the warship from its launch in 1653 until 1661, when it was sold to the Amsterdam chamber of the Dutch East India Company (known by its acronym VOC). [13] The crossed anchors to the right of the rudder denote the Admiralty, while Amsterdam's city crest (three vertical crosses) can be seen above the rudder. Given the presence of the Admiralty crest and the absence of the initials of the VOC, Nooms must have painted this work prior to 1661. [14]

At first glance, the carved figure of a very old man atop the stern [fig. 6] would seem to symbolize Neptune, however it is rather unlikely that the sea god would be represented as an elderly man without a trident. A more likely explanation is that the stern figure actually depicts the greatest Genoese mariner of all time, the

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famous *condottiere* Admiral Andrea Doria (1466–1560). Not only had the municipal government of Genoa commissioned the ship, but it was actually known in the Dutch fleet by its nickname, "The Great Genoan." [15] The model for the carved figure was probably Agnolo Bronzino's famous portrait *Andrea Doria as Neptune* [fig. 7].

Andrea Doria, however, is not the only admiral with a connection to the warship. Once commandeered into the fleet of Amsterdam's Admiralty, the state-of-the-art *Huis te Swieten* served as the flagship of one of Holland's greatest naval heroes, Michiel de Ruyter, when he led an armed convoy to the Mediterranean in 1653–1654. As Lieutenant Admiral of Holland and Westfriesland, De Ruyter captained the *Huis te Swieten* on several other missions, including an expedition to eradicate piracy along the coast of North Africa in 1661–1662. None other than Reinier Nooms accompanied Admiral de Ruyter on that voyage, and upon his return from the Mediterranean, Nooms painted four large canvases for the Admiralty depicting the port cities of Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli on the Barbary Coast, and Valetta on Malta. It is not certain, but it is very likely that the Admiralty of Amsterdam specifically recruited Nooms to create a visual record of the expedition.

It is highly probable that *Amsterdam Harbor Scene* was commissioned by Cornelis Bicker or one of his brothers. Throughout the second quarter of the 17th century the Bicker clan occupied the pinnacle of Amsterdam's political and economic life. The four Bicker brothers—Andries (1586–1652), Jacob (1588–1647), Jan (1591–1653), and Cornelis—dominated Amsterdam's municipal government to the extent that they, together with their inner circle, were known as the "Bickers' League." Building on the groundbreaking international ventures of their father, Gerrit Bicker (1554–1604), the commercial activities of the four brothers spanned the globe. [16] They were initiators, chief participants, and directors of various joint-stock companies, such as the Dutch East India Company, the Levant Company, the Dutch West India Company, and several others. The Bickers' economic success led Holland's most celebrated poet to write the following ode in their praise:

How widely did the Bickers' banner
cast a shadow over the great ocean,
slicing through it with richly laden ships
that hauled the world's golden harvest onto Holland's bosom. [17]

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Each of the four brothers dedicated himself to trade with a distinct part of the world, a division of labor that in all likelihood was intentional. Cornelis Bicker—who purchased the castle and country estate Swieten in 1632—was one of the cofounders of the Dutch West India Company, which focused on trade with Africa and the Americas. Cornelis thrice served as burgomaster of Amsterdam, most importantly in 1650, the year that Prince Willem II of Orange overstepped his prerogatives as stadholder when he tried to enter the city by force. Acting decisively, Cornelis and his brother Andries—a director of the Amsterdam chamber of the Dutch East India Company, a very wealthy trader with Russia, commissioner of the city's Admiralty, and a 10-time burgomaster—ordered the defenses of Amsterdam to be readied for action. Faced with closed gates and primed cannons on the city walls, Prince Willem was forced to withdraw his troops; Amsterdam's firm stance under Bicker leadership is considered a significant moment in Dutch republicanism. [18]

Cornelis and his country estate in Swieten are not the only connections between Nooms's painting and the Bicker family. Cornelis's brother Jan focused on trade with the Levant (the eastern part of the Mediterranean) and operated a thriving shipbuilding enterprise on a new man-made island off Amsterdam's shoreline that he purchased in 1631, an island known ever since as Bicker's Island. [19] Reinier Nooms included a view of Bicker's Island and the harbor of Amsterdam in his compilation of engravings *Verscheijde Schepen en Gesichten van Amstelredam* (Various Ships and Views of Amsterdam) published in 1654.[fig. 8] Bicker's shipyard personnel also would have taken care of the routine maintenance and repair of ships, as shown in the Gallery's painting. Nooms's engraving of Bicker's Island includes a *boomhuisje* at the entrance of the harbor section known as the Nieuwe Waal, with Jan Bicker's shipyard on the left. In *Amsterdam Harbor Scene*, another guardhouse farther out along the same row of breakers allows us to determine Nooms's exact viewpoint: the northeastern shore of Bicker's shipyard, looking across the IJ.

Reinier Nooms specialized in maritime subjects at the height of Dutch maritime, commercial, and artistic supremacy. Well-traveled and perhaps even a professional sailor, Nooms signed his works with his nickname "R. Zeeman" (sailor), often, as here, on a flag proudly fluttering from the top of a mast. Drawing on his intimate knowledge of ships and maritime life, Nooms created engravings and paintings that are so accurate that the settings, activities, and specific vessels can be identified. With its excellent condition, stunning light effects, and pleasing

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composition, *Amsterdam Harbor Scene* embodies the best of Nooms's astute observations of daily life in this bustling port.

Henriette Rahusen

June 30, 2017

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Reinier Nooms, *Caulking ships at the Bothuisje on the Y at Amsterdam*, 1650–1668, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. SK-A-759

fig. 2 Reinier Nooms, *Two Ships Careened for Caulking the Hulls*, engraving from *Diverse inschepingen en dergelijken* (Amsterdam, 1651–1652), fol. 4, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. RP-P-OB-20.588

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fig. 3 Detail, the stern of warship Huis te Swieten, Reinier Nooms, called Zeeman, *Amsterdam Harbor Scene*, c. 1658, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund, 2011.3.1

fig. 4 Roelant Roghman, *Schloss Swieten*, 1646–1647, pen in brown and brush in gray, Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna, inv. 15130

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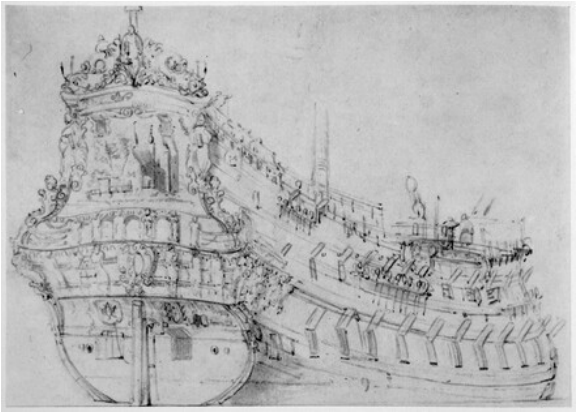

fig. 5 Willem van de Velde the Elder, *Huis te Swieten*, 1653, black chalk, present location unknown

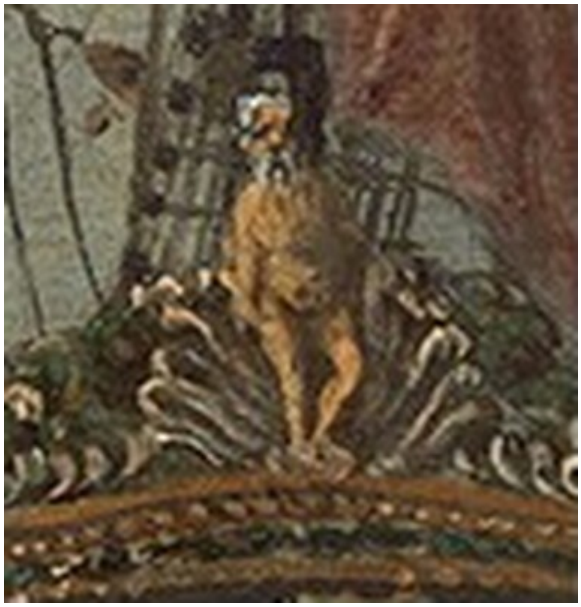

fig. 6 Detail, the carved figure on the stern of the Huis te Swieten, Reinier Nooms, called Zeeman, *Amsterdam Harbor Scene*, c. 1658, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund, 2011.3.1

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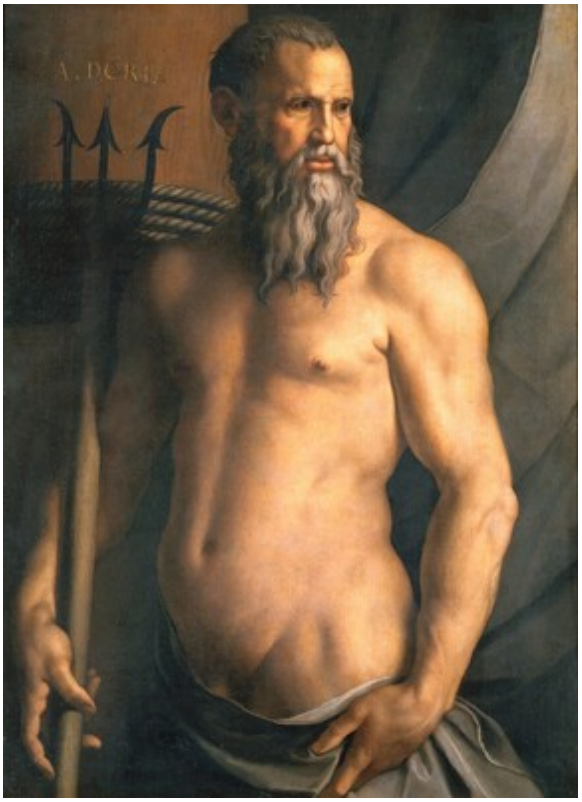

fig. 7 Agnolo Bronzino, *Rittrato di Andrea Doria in veste di Nettuno (Andrea Doria as Neptune)*, c. 1540–1550, oil on canvas, Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan. Scala / Art Resource, NY

fig. 8 Reinier Nooms, *Bicker's Eylandt*engraving from *Verscheyde Schepen en Gesichten van Amstelredam*, Amsterdam, 1654, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. RP-P-OB-20.527

NOTES

[1] Literature on the career of Reinier Nooms is exceedingly sparse. For a brief discussion of his work, see Laurens J. Bol, *Die holländische Marinemalerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Braunschweig, 1973), 289–296. See also Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea: The Dutch Marine Painters of the 17th Century* (Rotterdam and Berlin, 1997), 277.

[2] The city crest denotes municipal ownership, so the people in the larger sloop are likely dignitaries treated to a harbor tour.

[3] Old maps and profile views of Amsterdam clearly depict the breakers in the IJ estuary and the *boomhuisjes*. See, for example, Justus Danckert's *Profiel*

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van Amsterdam of c. 1685.

[4] The artist Roelant Roghman made a nice drawing of a *boomhuisje* in 1645. See Stadsarchief Amsterdam (Collectie van Eeghen), image no. 010055000046.

[5] John H. Harland, *Seamanship in the Age of Sail* (Annapolis, 1984), 20, 114, 117, and 119.

[6] Nooms included this particular *fluyt* in one other painting, but unfortunately in neither work is the decoration of the stern sufficiently clear to positively identify the ship. The second painting, in a private collection, was exhibited in 2010 in the Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, and was reproduced in Martina Sitt, "Schiffbau im Dienste der Nation," in *Segeln, was das Zeug hält!: Niederländische Gemälde des 17. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Martina Sitt and Hubertus Gassner (Munchen, 2010), 123 repro.

[7] The flag on the main mast of the warship bears the artist's signature (in gold): "R. Zeeman," the nickname meaning "sailor" with which Nooms signed his paintings.

[8] The phenomenon tends to occur on balmy days in late spring or early summer, when much warmer air hits seawater that is still relatively cold. For a description of *zeevlam*, see the website of the Dutch Royal Meteorological Institute, http://www.knmi.nl/cms/content/36735/zeevlam, accessed December 9, 2011.

[9] An engraving of Castle Swieten (or Zwieten) as it appeared in 1606 (but that was only published in the early 18th century) further confirms the ship's identity. See Abraham Rademaker, *Kabinet van Nederlandsche en Kleefsche Outheden: Geteckent en in't Koper gebragt door A. Rademaker* (Amsterdam, 1725), fol. 95.

[10] The 786-ton ship was armed with four cannon that shot 24-pound balls, 22 18-pounders, 20 8-pounders, and 14 4-pounders; its crew at the time consisted of 106 seamen and 80 marines. The warship had a draught of 15 feet. In battle against the English in 1665, about 300 marines were crammed aboard. In 1653, the Amsterdam Admiralty requisitioned a second ship commissioned by the Genoese; christened *Huis te Kruiningen*, it was nicknamed "the Small Genoan" in contrast to *Huis te Swieten*, which was known as "the Great Genoan" (http://koti.mbnet.fi/felipe/Netherland/Netherland_ships_1648-1659/netherland_ships_1648-1659.html, accessed March 9, 2011).

[11] In Van de Velde's drawing, Castle Swieten on the *tafferel* is clearly identifiable. The drawing was at Sotheby's, London, December 10, 1968, lot 59. My gratitude to Gregory Rubenstein, Sotheby's London, who graciously provided this reference and the 1968 catalog image.

[12] George S. Keyes, *Mirror of Empire: Dutch Marine Art of the Seventeenth*

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Century (Cambridge, 1990), 172–174. For Van de Velde the Younger's canvas in the collection of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, see http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12402.html, accessed February 4, 2011.

[13] Under the ownership of the VOC, the ship departed for Ceylon (Sri Lanka) on April 11, 1661. As part of the VOC fleet, the *Huis te Swieten* provided convoy protection to the company's large cargo ships during the risky return voyage from Asia, when they were loaded to the brim with precious goods. See http://www.vocsite.nl/schepen/detail.html?id=11996, accessed December 9, 2011.

[14] Frank L. Fox, *The Four Days' Battle of 1666* (Andover, 2009), 113. At the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1664–1666), the VOC lent the *Huis te Swieten* back to the fleet of the Dutch Republic. In September 1665, at the height of the war, the English navy captured the ship in battle, after which it was incorporated into the English fleet as the *House of Swedes*. Fox calls *Huis te Swieten* the best ship captured by the English in the Second Anglo Dutch War. In 1667 the warship came to an ignominious end when the English scuttled it at the mouth of the River Thames to prevent the Dutch fleet from sailing upriver. See also J. J. Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy: The Complete Record of All Fighting Ships of the Royal Navy*, 4th ed., revised and updated by Ben Warlow (Philadelphia and Newberry, 2010), 188. Colledge lists the warship as *House de Swyte*.

[15] Andrea Doria, despite his long career as a mercenary in the employ of King François I of France and Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, always gave precedence to the affairs of his home town. As "Liberator et Pater Patriae," Doria refused the appointment to become Doge of Genoa, settling instead for the title "Censor for Life." In this role he firmly ruled Genoa until his death at age 94. See the biography of Andrea Doria, http://www.britannica.com/biography/Andrea-Doria-Genoese-statesman.

[16] For biographical information on the Bicker family, see Johan Elias, *De vroedschap van Amsterdam, 1578–1795*, 2 vols. (Haarlem, 1903), 1:173–175. In 1653, the year the *Huis te Swieten* was launched, Jan Bicker served as one of Amsterdam's four burgomasters and Andries Bicker had just finished a term as Raad (commissioner) of the Admiralty. Cornelis Bicker was burgomaster in 1646, 1650, and 1654, and Andries held that post 10 times between 1627 and 1649.

[17] "Zoo wyt als Bickers vlagh den grooten Oceaen Beschaduwde, en doorsnee met ryck gelade schepen Die 's weerelts gouden oegst in Hollants boezem slepen." See Joost van den Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, vol. 5 (1645–1656; reprint Amsterdam, 1931), 842, see http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/vond001dewe05_01/, accessed March 3, 2011.

[18] Erlend de Groot, 'A Touch of Exoticism: Foreign Coastal Scenes in Dutch

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Marine Painting' in *Turmoil and Tranquillity: The sea through the eyes of Dutch and Flemish masters, 1550–1700*, Jenny Gaschke, ed. Greenwich, 2008, 33–36.

[19] Bicker's Island is one of three islands that was developed in the waters of the IJ estuary as part of the city expansion of 1610.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The primary support is a medium-weight, plain-weave canvas that was lined to multiple layers of fabric and attached to a modern stretcher. The original tacking margins were cut away unevenly; consequently, the original canvas is not square. Original cusping along all four edges can be seen in the x-ray images and is strongest along the top and bottom edges. This indicates the dimensions of the painting were not significantly altered when the tacking margins were removed, although the sides may have been reduced more than the top and bottom edges.[1]

The lowest lying visible paint layer is gray but it is unclear if this is the ground layer. An underdrawing was not visible using infrared reflectography.[2] The paint medium is estimated to be oil and the layers were thinly applied. The sky and water were painted broadly, wet-into-wet, and the figures, ships, and other elements were also painted wet-into-wet but generally appear to be over drier layers.

The painting is in good condition. Due to the nature of the rigid lining, the canvas weave is enhanced, and there is an overall prominent craquelure pattern. There is a mended and retouched compound tear located in the cloud directly above the ships that overlap the careened vessel. There are additional retouched damages in the sky, scattered throughout the water, and along the edges. In general, the retouching is slightly discolored. The extent of old varnish discoloration is unclear under both natural light and ultraviolet radiation; however, the overall restoration varnish is even and saturates the paint.

[1] X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14" × 17").The parameters were 20 kV, 5 mA, 25

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seconds, and 100 inches distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

[2] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.1–1.4 microns (J filter).

PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned by the Bicker family, Amsterdam.[1] Pieter Locquet [d. 1781]; (his estate sale, Amsterdam, 22-24 September 1783, no. 448); Mi[...]er.[2] Private collection, England; (sale, Bonhams, London, 12 September 2009, no. 82); (Johnny Van Haeften, Ltd., London); purchased 19 January 2011 by NGA.

[1] The painted panel on the stern of the warship in the painting bears an image of a castle, which identifies the ship as the *Huis te Swieten*, an important warship in the fleet of Amsterdam's Admiralty. The warship was named after Castle Swieten (or Zwieten), since 1632 the country estate of Cornelils Bicker (1592-1654), a member of the most powerful family in Amsterdam at the time. One of the four Bicker brothers--Andries (1586-1652), Jacob (1588-1647), Jan (1591-1653), and Cornelis--likely commissioned the painting from Nooms, who executed other paintings as well as engravings that included views of Bicker family property.

[2] A copy of the sale catalogue, annotated with buyers names and prices, is available on the Internet Archive: https://ia800800.us.archive.org/18/items/catalogusvaneenu00locq/catalogusvaneenu00locq.pdf (accessed 26 June 2017). The middle letters of the buyer's name are not clear.

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2011 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr., and Daniëlle H.A.C. Lokin. *Human Connections*

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in the Age of Vermeer. Exh. cat. Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art; Miyagi Museum of Art, Sendai; Bunkamura Museum of Art, Tokyo. London, 2011: 13, fig. 2.

2012 Bruyn Kops-Rahusen, Henriette de. "De Thuishaven van de Familie Bicker." *Maandblad Amstelodamum* 1 (2012): 34-43, 35 fig. 1, 36 fig. 2 (detail), 38 fig. 5 (detail).

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Ochtervelt, Jacob

Dutch, 1634 - 1682

BIOGRAPHY

Jacob Ochtervelt, one of the leading specialists of aristocratic genre paintings in the 17th century, was born in Rotterdam in 1634. His father, Lucas Hendricksz Ochtervelt, was a bridge worker who earned a modest annual salary and was not, therefore, able to raise his family in the luxurious patrician manner that would become the principal subject of Jacob's work.[1] The only known reference to Ochtervelt's artistic education comes from the scholar Arnold Houbraken, who noted that Ochtervelt and Pieter de Hooch (Dutch, 1629 - 1684), also from Rotterdam, had been pupils of the Haarlem master Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem (Dutch, 1620 - 1683) at the same time.[2] If Ochtervelt had been a student of Berchem, it would probably have been in the late 1640s or early 1650s and he would presumably have been trained in the Dutch Italianate landscape tradition. Indeed, his earliest works are of landscapes with figures. However, Ochtervelt soon abandoned that style and subject matter and turned almost exclusively to aristocratic genre scenes and portraiture, with which he enjoyed great success.

Documents concerning his life focus entirely on his activities as a family man and member of the community. In 1655, Ochtervelt married Dirkje Meesters in the Reformed Church of Rotterdam. The couple never had children of their own, but from 1666 they served as guardians to the orphaned children of Ochtervelt's brother Jan.[3] From 1661 to 1672, Octhervelt appears 14 times in the Rotterdam archives as a witness to christenings, will signings, and property settlements. In 1667, Octhervelt was nominated to be master of the Guild of Saint Luke, but lost the election to Cornelis Saftleven (1607–1681). In 1674, Ochtervelt was drawn, like so many other artists, to Amsterdam because of the city's bustling art market. He remained there until his death in 1682.

Nearly all of Octhervelt's surviving oeuvre of 130 paintings depict the life and leisure of the upper class: men and women reading and writing letters, eating and drinking, making music, and playing games. The subject matter, which owes much to the refined images of the wealthy bourgeoisie by Gerard ter Borch the Younger (Dutch, 1617 - 1681), allowed Ochtervelt to demonstrate his fine technique and

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sensitive handling of light and shadow. In particular, he relished depicting different colors and textures of materials, thereby also betraying the influence of Frans van Mieris (Dutch, 1635 - 1681), whose elegant works are marked by smooth execution, invisible brushwork, and extraordinary attention to detail.

Notes

[1] Susan Kuretsky, *The Paintings of Jacob Ochtervelt (1634–1682)* (Oxford, 1979), 4.

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*, 3 vols. in 1 (The Hague, 1753; reprinted, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:34–35.

[3] Susan Kuretsky, *The Paintings of Jacob Ochtervelt (1634–1682)* (Oxford, 1979), 4.

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May 7, 2019

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jacob Ochtervelt
Dutch, 1634 - 1682

A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer

1663

oil on canvas
overall: 81.5 × 66.8 cm (32 1/16 × 26 5/16 in.)
Inscription: lower right on the floor: J. Ochtervelt f. / 1663
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund 2015.68.1

ENTRY

In this radiant painting, Jacob Ochtervelt pictures a tender moment unfolding between a young patrician boy and a ragged beggar who has come to his family's door asking for alms. [1] As the young beggar sets his foot cautiously on the hall floor with outstretched hat in hand, his mother stands outside nursing an infant. The patrician youth, elegantly robed, coiffed, and standing next to the family maid, drops a coin in the boy's hat while his parents, visible in the adjacent room, proudly observe their son's charity. Just outside the home on the doorstep, two girls play a game with knucklebones, while indoors a brown-and-white spaniel barks excitedly at the strangers.

Ochtervelt brings remarkable intimacy to this scene of 17th-century life. The forthright gaze and spotless attire of the patrician boy suggest a maturity beyond his years. However, the gesture of holding his nursemaid's hand belies his aloof demeanor and reveals the sense of assurance he receives from her touch. The young beggar similarly seems to possess self-confidence in his approach. Yet his total fixation on the coin as it drops into his hat and the presence of his mother looking on carefully beside him temper his bold gesture and remind us that he, too, is only a child. Although the two youths do not make eye contact, their exchange establishes a meaningful connection between their two worlds.

A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer, which is signed and dated 1663, is traditionally placed within Ochtervelt's corpus of genre work. He was best known as a painter of high-life genre scenes, his most innovative of which were those

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which took place in the front hall (or *voorhuis*). As in the Gallery's painting, he used the threshold of the home to stage interactions between individuals from different social worlds. [2] Typically, such works depict itinerant street musicians offering entertainment or food vendors hawking fish or produce to members of a bourgeois family [fig. 1]. [3] *A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer* similarly juxtaposes the privileged world of an aristocratic family with the uncertain life of the poor, thereby endowing it with the feel of Ochtervelt's other genre scenes. However, it differs from his other *voorhuis* paintings in that the scene is a demonstration of a virtue (charity) and shows the patrician boy and his parents gazing out of the picture—qualities that suggest the painting may not be strictly a genre scene, but rather an idealized, genre-like portrait of a wealthy family.

In the same year that Ochtervelt painted *A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer*, he executed *Portrait of a Family,* now at Harvard Art Museums [fig. 2]. The family's refined clothing and handsomely appointed surroundings—particularly the adjacent room, replete with a large marble fireplace, gold-framed painting, and gilt leather wall covering—recall the decor in *A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer*, as does the conception of this portrait as a demonstration of the family's value system. The father turns the pages of a large book as a symbol of his erudition while the young child coaxes a dog to sit on its hind legs, symbolically indicating the importance of education and discipline. To this family, such training required a constant reiteration of rules, which also meant that the child possessed the virtue of industriousness. [4]

Ochtervelt's *Portrait of an Unknown Family* in the Szépmvészeti Múzeum, Budapest [fig. 3], similarly pictures a family in elegant attire in a richly appointed room. He brought remarkable liveliness to the family members through their different gestures and glances, thereby naturalizing their interaction. Similar to the painting at Harvard, in this scene one of the children tends to a spaniel dancing obediently on its hind legs. The girl's bright smile and warm eyes convey her pride at her ability to control the dog, who patiently waits for the treat she holds in her hand.

A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer may belong to this tradition of portraiture that demonstrates a family's moral underpinnings through seemingly everyday activities undertaken by children. Although family portraiture accounts for but a small percentage of Ochtervelt's oeuvre, [5] the artist consistently pictured parents observing their child's behavior, thereby underscoring their role in transmitting social values and moral character to their offspring. [6]

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If *A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer* represents historical persons, their identity remains unknown. The child can be recognized as a boy because of the character of his skirt's hemline and the way he wears his medal. [7] However, further attempts to identify the family based on its setting have proven unsuccessful, and, given the extraordinary sumptuousness of the interior, it may be imagined. Multispectral infrared reflectography confirms that Ochtervelt orchestrated the image with great care. Using precisely drawn, ruled lines, he demarcated the door frames, floor tiles, picture frames, and the fireplace. Underdrawing is also visible in the contours of the maid's face, areas of the patrician boy's costume, and throughout the fireplace's entablature, as well as in the two large Italianate landscape paintings hanging over the door and fireplace [fig. 4]. Despite its verisimilitude, marble flooring was very expensive in the 17th century, and to have it in two adjacent rooms was unusual. [8] The level of gilding on the fireplace's columns, entablature, and cornice, not to mention on the leather wall and the frame around the large landscape painting in the room occupied by the parents, would also have been rare. [9] The rounded building visible through the open door that contains arrow loops, the vertical slits characteristic of medieval towers from which archers shot arrows at attackers, also appears to be fanciful.

Whether the interior Ochtervelt represented in *A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer* is real or exaggerated, the sitters would have had to be extraordinarily wealthy if the work is indeed a family portrait. The shimmering attire of the household's inhabitants, from the boy's satin leading strings and ribbons to the mother's and father's velvet and fur-trimmed outfits, belong to a family of high means. Perhaps no accoutrement conveys this message better than the large gold medal and chain draped over the boy's shoulder. [10] Shining against his bright white apron, it stands out as an important visual focus in the painting. Modeled with delicate strokes and in exceptional detail, though not enough to identify the profile figure represented or assist in an identification of the family, it is not only a symbol of the family's wealth and rank, but also a reflection of the boy's maturity and good breeding. [11]

A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer represents Ochtervelt at his artistic height. His brushwork is exquisite, his textures are dazzling, and the colors of the composition are disarmingly radiant. Moreover, it combines the keen understanding of human relationships that Ochtervelt gained from his work as a genre painter with his insights into the messages individuals wish to convey about themselves provided by his work as a portrait painter. Intimate and tender, *A Nurse*

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and a Child in an Elegant Foyer brings to life the concerns, ambitions, and, ultimately, virtues of this elegant, if unknown, family.

Alexandra Libby

May 7, 2019

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jacob Ochtervelt, *Street Musicians at the Door*, 1665, oil on canvas, Saint Louis Art Museum, Gift of Mrs. Eugene A. Perry in memory of her mother, Mrs. Claude Kilpatrick, inv. no. 162:1928

fig. 2 Jacob Ochtervelt, *Portrait of a Family*, 1663, oil on canvas, Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Frederic Fairchild Sherman in memory of his brother, Frank Dempster Sherman, inv. no. 1922.135

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fig. 3 Jacob Ochtervelt, *Portrait of an Unknown Family*, 1670, oil on canvas, Szépmuvészeti Múzeum, Budapest, inv. no. 4286

fig. 4 Multispectral infrared reflectogram rendered in color, Jacob Ochtervelt, *A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer*, 1663, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Arthur Wheelock and Henriette Rahusen in the department of northern baroque paintings, National Gallery of Art, Washington, for sharing their thoughtful comments in the preparation of this essay.

[2] Susan Kuretsky, who was unaware of the Gallery's *A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer* at the time she published her catalogue raisonné of Ochtervelt's work, counts 14 *voorhuis* paintings in *The Paintings of Jacob Ochtervelt (1634–1682)* (Oxford, 1979).

[3] Susan Kuretsky discusses the general trends related to Ochtervelt's *voorhuis* scene in *The Paintings of Jacob Ochtervelt (1634–1682)* (Oxford, 1979), 34–39.

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[4] During the 17th century, educational literature routinely called on Plutarch's *De liberis educandis*, a treatise on education in which he recalls the parable of the Spartan king Lycurgus, who raised two dogs, one through habit and discipline and the other without any training at all. The first dog became an obedient hunter through the constant reiteration of rules, and the second dog became an unruly glutton. The story, which Plutarch used metaphorically to illustrate the importance of training children to ensure their future good behavior as adults, was reprinted, translated, and adapted throughout the 17th century. See Jan Baptist Bedaux, "Introduction," in *Pride and Joy: Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500–1700*, ed. Jan Baptist Bedaux and Rudi Ekkart (New York and Ghent, 2000), 19–22. On 17th-century children's education in the Netherlands more broadly, see Jeroen Dekker, Leendert Groenendijk, and Johan Verberckmoes, "Proudly Raising Vulnerable Youngsters: The Scope for Education in the Netherlands," in *Pride and Joy: Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500–1700*, ed. Jan Baptist Bedaux and Rudi Ekkart (New York and Ghent, 2000), 43–60.

[5] Kuretsky also catalogs a total of 12 portraits in Ochtervelt's oeuvre, seven of which are signed and dated. See Susan Kuretsky, *The Paintings of Jacob Ochtervelt (1634–1682)* (Oxford, 1979).

[6] Charity was a Christian virtue taught in the home and of great importance to the Dutch. On its importance in 17th-century Dutch education, see Mary Frances Durantini, *The Child in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting* (Ann Arbor, 1983), 109–113.

[7] See Saskia Kuus, "Drie aperocken van tieren taij en ander kindergoed uit Wendela Bickers rekeningenboek, 1655–1668," *Kostuum* (1997): 45–62; Saskia Kuus, "Children's Costume in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Pride and Joy: Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500–1700*, ed. Jan Baptist Bedaux and Rudi Ekkart (New York and Ghent, 2000), 73–83.

[8] For a discussion of marble flooring as a painterly technique rather than a realistic representation of 17th-century decor, see Marjorie E. Wieseman, "Acquisition or Inheritance? Material Goods in Paintings by Vermeer and His Contemporaries," in *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry*, ed. Adriaan E. Waiboer (Dublin, 2017), 52–53; C. Willemijn Fock, "Semblance or Reality? The Domestic Interior in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting," in *Art & Home: Dutch Interiors in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Mariët Westermann (Zwolle, 2001), 86–91.

[9] Marjorie E. Wieseman, "Acquisition or Inheritance? Material Goods in Paintings by Vermeer and His Contemporaries," in *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry*, ed. Adriaan E. Waiboer (Dublin, 2017), 53–54.

[10] It is unclear whether the object hanging from the gold chain is a medal or a

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coin. Tom Eden, a numismatist at Morton & Eden in London, believes that it could be a 10-ducat coin, as large gold coins were often used as presentation pieces and are often found mounted or with traces of mounting. Tom Eden, personal communication with author, Nov. 18, 2015.

[11] One often finds gold medals hanging around the necks or across the chests of children in 17th-century Dutch portraiture. Since the Renaissance, gold medals on chains were given as gifts from political figures to individuals in their service as a means of rewarding loyalty. Although such medals would have been given to adults and not to children, around 1600 Dutch artists began to portray children wearing medals around their necks or at their hips, hanging from double and sometimes triple gold chains. Such medals indicate the honor and integrity of the children's parents, who presumably received the medal, as well as their own promise to possess such virtues. In the Gallery's painting, the medal serves as an analogy for the patrician boy's good breeding, underscoring the message of his charitable deed as a demonstration of his already strong moral compass. For a thoughtful analysis of the meaning of medals, see Ann C. Claxton, "Medals in Portraits of Children in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting," *The Medal* 27 (1995): 12–23.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The primary canvas support is a fine, plain-weave canvas that has a slightly irregular weave. Strong cusping is visible in the x-radiograph around all four sides of the composition. [1] The tacking margins were removed during a previous treatment and the painting was lined to a canvas with a tight, regular plain weave.

A thick, tan ground is visible at the intersection of objects throughout the composition; under magnification, the ground appears as a yellow-brown matrix with large white particles and smaller black and earth-brown particles of varying size. On top of the ground is a thin, semitransparent red-earth imprimatura that was locally applied under the black and white marble tiles and the red and white marble tiles in the adjacent room.

Examination with multispectral infrared reflectography reveals an extensive underdrawing, though it is also visible with the aid of magnification in the form of thin black lines along the edges of objects and architectural elements. [2] In addition, in normal light, black lines that do not correspond to the painted image are faintly visible under the marble floor. The underdrawing was applied directly on top of the ground or imprimatura if present. It is unknown which medium Ochtervelt

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used for the underdrawing; however, the black lines appear slightly blended into the paint layers above, indicating that the upper paint layers were applied when the black lines were only partially dry. The underdrawing is composed of both ruled lines, which were used to delineate the architectural elements (the door frames, the marble tiles, the straight elements of the fireplace, and the picture frame), and freehand sketching, which was used for the decorative elements (on the fireplace, the putti on the mantel, and the landscape composition). While there are a few drawn lines in the patrician boy's clothing and one contour indicating the maid's jawline, no underdrawing is visible in the other figures in the multispectral infrared reflectogram or through microscopic examination.

Numerous pentimenti are visible in the multispectral infrared reflectogram, including changes to the angle and placement of some perspective lines, as well as several smaller adjustments to the shape and positioning of the figures' heads, arms, and clothing.

There is a pinhole on the right side of the composition, near the proper left elbow of the seated man in the background, visible in the paint layer in normal light (under magnification), as well as in the x-radiograph. Most of the perspective lines of the architectural elements and marble tile floor all recede to the identified pinhole.

The paint medium is estimated to be oil and was finely applied so that no brushstrokes are visible. The crisp quality of the marble floor is partly due to Ochtervelt incising the paint with a tool along the edges of the tiles when the paint was still semi-wet. There are fingerprints in the paint layers on the right edge, near the top and middle of the doorway. Under magnification, it is clear that the paint layers, rather than the varnish layer, were disrupted while still wet.

The support, ground, and paint layers are all in excellent condition. There are some small scattered areas of retouching throughout, a larger cluster of retouching in the top left corner, as well as some reinforced lines on the lintel above the front door, and in the shadow of the dog.

Dina Anchin

May 7, 2019

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TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14 × 17 in.). The parameters were 35 kV, 8 mA, 40 seconds, and 97.5 in. distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

[2] Multispectral infrared reflectogram rendered in color of Ochtervelt's *A Nurse and a Child in an Elegant Foyer*; composite of three registered sets of false-color spectral images, in wavelength bands 1100–1400 nm (blue), 1500–1800 nm (green), and 2100–2400 nm (red), courtesy of John Delaney and Kate Dooley, scientific research department, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

PROVENANCE

Thomas Theodore Cremer [1742-1815], Rotterdam; (his estate sale, at his residence by Nozeman, Van der Looy, W. van Leen, and W.A. Netscher, Rotterdam, 16-17 April 1816, 1st day, no. 84); Sérafin Lambert Louis Malfait [1775-1827], Lille. Charles Piérard, Valenciennes; (his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 20-21 March 1860, no. 53). Comte de M*****; (his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 29 December 1860, no. 23). acquired c. 1982 by private collection, Europe; (sale, Sotheby's, New York, 20 January 2014, no. 38); (Johnny Van Haeften, London); sold 10 September 2015 to NGA.

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Frans Hals, *Adriaen van Ostade*, 1646/1648, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.70

Ostade, Adriaen van

Dutch, 1610 - 1685

BIOGRAPHY

Baptized on December 10, 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 Van Ostade's training, Arnold Houbraken states that he studied with Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666). 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 studied together, Brouwer's influence is readily apparent in Van Ostade's early works.

By June 8, 1632, Van Ostade was working successfully as an artist. Due to incomplete guild records, the date that he entered the Haarlem Saint Luke's Guild is unknown, but he was certainly a member by 1634, when 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 Van 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 (Adriaen van Ostade).

On July 26, 1638, Van Ostade married Macheltje Pietersdr. They drew up a will on March 8, 1642, six weeks before she died. Fifteen years later, on May 26, 1657, Van

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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 Elleboochsteech that he had purchased in September 1650, he settled first in the Koningstraat and then, by August 1663, moved to the Veerstraat. The couple had one child, a daughter named Johanna Maria. In 1655 Van Ostade became guardian of his sister Maeyeken's five children, and from 1668 he was also responsible for the children of his brother Jan. After the death of Anna late in 1666, Van Ostade inherited considerable sums both from her and from her father. His prolific output must also have provided a substantial income, for by 1670 he was living in relative comfort on the Ridderstraat. In 1672, at the time of the French invasion of the Netherlands, he temporarily fled Haarlem and moved to Amsterdam.

On April 21, 1685, Van Ostade was a signatory to his daughter's marriage settlement. He died six days later and was buried in Saint Bavo's on May 2. According to an announcement placed by his daughter in the Haarlem Courant on June 19, the contents of the artist's studio were to be sold at auction on July 3 and 4; a second sale is known to have taken place on April 27, 1686.

Van Ostade's productivity was remarkable. His known works include more than eight hundred paintings, about fifty etchings, and numerous drawings, some of which are worked up with watercolor. The vast majority of this oeuvre consists of genre scenes, but he also produced a small number of portraits and history paintings.

It is likely that Van Ostade's younger brother Isack van Ostade (Dutch, 1621 - 1649) was an early pupil, and other artists who may have studied with him include Jan Steen (Dutch, 1625/1626 - 1679), Cornelis Bega (Dutch, 1631/1632 - 1664), Michiel van Musscher (1645–1705), and Cornelis Dusart (Dutch, 1660 - 1704).

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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Adriaen van Ostade
Dutch, 1610 - 1685

The Cottage Dooryard

1673

oil on canvas
overall: 44 x 39.5 cm (17 5/16 x 15 9/16 in.)
framed: 74.3 x 69.2 x 7.6 cm (29 1/4 x 27 1/4 x 3 in.)
Inscription: lower center: Av. Ostade 1673 (Av in ligature)
Widener Collection 1942.9.48

ENTRY

Situated within the earthen courtyard of a vine-covered cottage is a tender vignette of domestic harmony and tranquility. The mother at the center of the family group busily cleans mussel shells in preparation for the evening meal. While the husband watches from the doorway of the wooden wall at the rear of the courtyard, an older sister cares for her youngest sibling as two other children play with the family dog. No comings or goings, no exceptional confrontations or other unusual circumstances provided motivation for this scene; rather, Adriaen van Ostade seems to be celebrating the peaceful existence of this family tending to daily life.

When writing about Van Ostade in the early eighteenth century, Arnold Houbraken marveled at the lively and spirited nature of the artist's peasant scenes. To emphasize Van Ostade's remarkable naturalism and tender view of country life, Houbraken compared his images of rural folk to those found in an early eighteenth-century pastural poem about a country *kermis* (fair). [1] In his associations between poetry and Van Ostade's image Houbraken emphasized the artist's imaginative interpretation of reality. In this painting, for example, Van Ostade captured not only the various attitudes of the members of the peasant family but also the sense of their home environment, whether it be the earthenware pots scattered here and there, the clothes hanging over the line, the dovecotes, the beehives, or the broken panes of glass in the upper windows. Their world seems real and tangible; the textures of the bricks, mortar, wood, glass, and cloth are convincingly indicated through subtle nuances of Van Ostade's brush. Finally, his organization of light and shadow helps unify the scene while his selected color accents enliven the image.

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Van Ostade almost certainly composed this work from various studies made from life; it was his practice throughout his career to make drawings of figures that he then used as points of departure for his paintings and etchings. [2] Although no preliminary drawings have been associated with this work, specific evidence that he composed this painting in the studio comes from a comparison with a finished drawing from the same year entitled *Pig Slaughtering in Peasant Village* [fig. 1]. Many elements in the two compositions are identical, including the wash hanging on the line, but the artist has modified the building and setting in subtle ways: he changed the leading in the windows and opened the vista to the background to create the sense of a village street rather than a courtyard. One motif, however, has remained the same: the vine clinging to the cottage, a traditional image of fertility and conjugal felicity. [3]

Van Ostade painted *The Cottage Dooryard* near the end of a long and illustrious career during which he created numerous drawings and etchings of rural life as well as paintings (see Tavern Scene). As his style evolved from a relatively dark to a light palette, his attention shifted from depictions of rowdy peasants to those whose lives embodied family values centered on mutual caring and sharing of domestic responsibilities. Country folk in his late work no longer occupy hovels, but rather more substantial structures, which are rustic in appearance and simply furnished.

The stylistic evolution, in many ways gradual and quite understandable in the broader context of Dutch art, does, nevertheless, raise questions about the changing nature of the artist's image of country life. If, following Houbraken's lead, one views Van Ostade's images of peasants as poetic evocations of rural life that he has "thought up" rather than as descriptive reality, then it is important to try to understand his attitudes toward his subject matter. [4] The shift in style and concept may be sociological as well as artistic. Whereas during the 1630s and 1640s there seemed to be widespread assumptions that lower-class people were bestial or vulgar, by the 1670s the rural Dutch, unaffected by the influx of foreign influences and the pursuit of wealth that was so evident in city life, came to embody the ideal virtues at the foundation of Dutch culture. These, in large part, had been codified in the prolific writings of Jacob Cats, whose work was frequently republished throughout the century, and would continue to be so until the mid-nineteenth century. The domestic tranquility and homey virtues found in Van Ostade's depictions of lower-class households during the latter part of his career thus represent a view of peasant existence seen through a veil of nostalgia for a

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simpler, less complex way of life, one that incorporated values that had been at the essence of Dutch society. In this regard, it is interesting that Van Ostade created this idyllic scene the year after he had fled Haarlem because of the French invasion of the Netherlands. [5]

One also wonders whether the exquisite watercolors [fig. 2] Van Ostade made after this and other similar late paintings spoke to the same need. [6] The positive response to these late paintings and their related watercolors was immediate and lasting and may explain much about the widespread appeal of mid-seventeenth-century Dutch art in the Netherlands at the beginning of the eighteenth century. [7]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Adriaen van Ostade, *Pig Slaughtering in Peasant Village*, 1673, pen and ink and watercolor, British Museum, London. Photo © Trustees of the British Museum

fig. 2 Adriaen van Ostade, *The Cottage Dooryard*, 1673, watercolor, Amsterdams Museum, Museum Fodor, Legacy Collection, Amsterdam

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NOTES

[1] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:348. The poem by L. Rotgans, *Boerekermis* (Country Fair), was published in 1708. The identification of the poem was made by Broos in Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague, 1990), 359.

[2] The drawings have been cataloged by Bernhard Schnackenburg, *Adriaen van Ostade, Isack van Ostade: Zeichnungen und Aquarelle: Gesamtdarstellung mit Werkkatalogen*, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1981). For a discussion of Van Ostade's use of drawings see Peter Schatborn in Douglas Lewis, *The Drawings of Andrea Palladio* (Washington, DC, 1981), 79–80.

[3] As Robinson has noted in Peter C. Sutton and Jane Iandola Watkins, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting* (Philadelphia, 1984), 289 n. 4, the image was inspired by Psalm 128: "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the side of thine house: thy children like olive plants round thy table."

[4] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:347–348. "Als ook de beeltjes in hunne bekleeding, en allerhande bedryven, zoo natuurlyk boers en geestig, dat het om to verwonderen is; hoc hy 't heft weten to bedenken."

[5] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:347. Houbraken writes that Van Ostade left Haarlem for Amsterdam in 1662, but the explicit mention of the French invasion in his sentence makes it clear that he meant to write 1672.

[6] Bernhard Schnackenburg, *Adriaen van Ostade, Isack van Ostade: Zeichnungen und Aquarelle: Gesamtdarstellung mit Werkkatalogen*, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1981), 1:41, 73 n. 111a, lists more than fifty such watercolors from the period between 1672 and 1684, and suggests that Van Ostade's technique was influenced by the watercolors of Hendrick Avercamp (1585–1634). Broos in Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague, 1990), 359, has noted that Constantijn Sennepart (1625–1703), the art dealer with whom Van Ostade stayed in Amsterdam after he had fled Haarlem and who purportedly suggested to Van Ostade that he make such watercolors, owned drawings by Avercamp.

[7] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche*

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konstschilders en schilderessen, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:347.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a moderately coarse-textured fabric, tightly woven in a plain weave. It has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed, but cusping visible in the X-radiograph indicates the dimensions have not been altered. The fabric weave is visible through the thick, smooth white ground.

The paint was applied in thin layers with no appreciable brushmarking or impasto. The vehicular pastes of the figures, architecture, and sky give way to fluid opaque washes in the foreground. Lean granular yellows and transparent green glazes were employed in the foliage. A pentimento is visible in the upper left tree.

The condition of the painting is excellent. Abrasion is slight, and losses are confined to the edges and an area of flaking around the foreground figures at right. In 1975 a double lining was removed and the support was relined. An aged surface coating was removed.

PROVENANCE

Adriaen Swalmius [1689-1747], Schiedam;[1] (sale, Rotterdam, 15 May 1747, no. 2); Jacques Ignace de Roore [1686-1747], Antwerp; (his estate sale, The Hague, 4 September 1747, no. 84);[2] Pieter Bisschop [c. 1690-1758] and Jan Bisschop [1680-1771], Rotterdam; purchased 1771 with the Bisschop collection by Adrian Hope [1709-1781] and his nephew, John Hope [1737-1784], Amsterdam; by inheritance after Adrian Hope's death to John Hope, Amsterdam and The Hague; by inheritance to his sons, Thomas Hope [1769-1831], Adrian Elias Hope [1772-1834], and Henry Philip Hope [1774-1839], Bosbeek House, near Heemstede, and, as of 1794, London, where the collection was in possession John's cousin, Henry Hope [c. 1739-1811]; by inheritance 1811 solely to Henry Philip Hope, Amsterdam and London, but in possession of his brother, Thomas Hope, London; by inheritance 1839 to Thomas' son, Henry Thomas Hope [1808-1862], London, and Deepdene, near Dorking, Surrey; by inheritance to his wife, Adèle Bichat Hope [d. 1884], London and Deepdene; by inheritance to her grandson, Henry Francis Hope

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Pelham-Clinton-Hope, 8th duke of Newcastle-under-Lyme [1866-1941], London; sold 1898 to (Asher Wertheimer, London); sold 1899 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] For a detailed discussion of the provenance, see Ben Broos, *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, exh. cat. Mauritshuis, The Hague; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Zwolle and The Hague, 1990: 355-359.

[2] The seller's name in the 1747 sale catalogue is given as Jaques de Roore; he was a painter and art dealer in Antwerp. There are many variants of his name in the literature.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Adriaen van Ostade
Dutch, 1610 - 1685

Tavern Scene

early 1660s

oil on panel
overall: 23.8 x 20.4 cm (9 3/8 x 8 1/16 in.)
framed: 30.1 x 26.3 x 4.7 cm (11 7/8 x 10 3/8 x 1 7/8 in.)
Inscription: lower left: Av Ostade / 166[?]
Gift of John Russell Mason 1977.21.1

ENTRY

Within the dark confines of a spacious tavern country folk have gathered to pass the evening hours warming themselves by the fire, playing cards or backgammon, or just kibitzing while enjoying the soothing effects of tobacco and beer. The trees silhouetted against the moonlit sky, seen through the leaded-glass windows, situate the tavern in a rural setting. One senses that this scene is a recurring evening ritual, in which residents from the local community play out familiar roles night after night.

Much of the appeal of this small painting comes from the sense of atmosphere that helps unify the composition. One can imagine the quiet din of conversation within the dark recesses of this smoke-filled space. Light from various sources—the fire, the candle attached to the hearth, and the hidden candles on the tables—gives a warmth to the scene that is reinforced by the attitudes and expressions of the figures themselves.

Adriaen van Ostade, perhaps more than any other Dutch artist, devoted himself to the depiction of the lower echelons of Dutch society. Almost certainly influenced by Adriaen Brouwer (Flemish, 1605/1606 - 1638) in his early years, Van Ostade initially executed images of peasant life that were far from flattering. By the 1660s, when he executed this small panel, his images had changed considerably. Instead of behaving raucously in taverns that look more like barns than public structures, the people here enjoy their leisure hours with exemplary deportment. Despite the presence of beer, tobacco, playing cards, and a backgammon game, none of these men has succumbed to vices so often associated with those who have yielded to

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sensual pleasures: no one has passed out, vomited, or threatened a fellow cardplayer with a knife or jug. The tavern itself is substantial and well kept, with a large fireplace, immaculately clean leaded windows, and sturdy ceiling beams.

As the character of his peasant subjects changed during the course of Van Ostade's career, so did his style of painting. By the 1660s his technique had become more refined as he sought to develop a more subtle use of light and dark. This evolution in style might have developed in conjunction with his extensive work in etching during the 1640s and 1650s. Many of his etchings of interior scenes, for example, explore the subtle effects of various light sources to establish mood. Certainly the smallness of this painting and the delicacy of his touch bring to mind the scale and character of his etchings.

Because the last digit of the date is illegible, it is not certain when during the 1660s this scene was painted. The general disposition of the interior, however, is comparable to Van Ostade's 1661 *Peasants in an Interior* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). [1] Not only are the architectural elements similar, but the inn's patrons are likewise organized into two groups, one situated before the hearth and the other around a table set in the background beneath the leaded-glass windows. It thus seems probable that this work also dates from the early 1660s.

Van Ostade must have composed his scenes with the aid of individual figure studies, of which many exist. [2] Although no such study from the 1660s matches exactly any of the figures in this composition, a watercolor from the 1670s, part of a series by Van Ostade in which he recorded earlier studies, depicts the seated man before the fireplace [fig. 1]. [3]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Adriaen van Ostade, *Seated Peasant*, 1670s, watercolor, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

NOTES

[1] See inventory no. C200, from Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

[2] See Bernhard Schnackenburg, *Adriaen van Ostade, Isack van Ostade: Zeichnungen und Aquarelle: Gesamtdarstellung mit Werkkatalogen*, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1981). For a discussion of Van Ostade's use of drawings, see Peter Schatborn, *Dutch Figure Drawings from the Seventeenth Century* (The Hague, 1981), 79–80.

[3] Bernhard Schnackenburg, *Adriaen van Ostade, Isack van Ostade: Zeichnungen und Aquarelle: Gesamtdarstellung mit Werkkatalogen*, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1981), 1: no. 336 (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, inv. no. P.I. 170/7). Bernhard Schnackenburg, *Adriaen van Ostade, Isack van Ostade:*

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Zeichnungen und Aquarelle: Gesamtdarstellung mit Werkkatalogen, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1981), 1:42, makes the point that a characteristic of Van Ostade's late drawings is that they depict motifs from his earlier work.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The cradled panel support is composed of a single oak board with the grain running vertically. There is a slight convex warp. Dendrochronology estimates a felling date of 1650 for the tree and a period of 1655–1670 for the panel use.[1] A thin, off-white ground layer prepared the panel to receive thin paint layers whose low-covering power left the wood grain visible.

Moderate flaking in the past has occurred overall, and damage across the center of the painting has left a series of seven horizontal losses in the hat of the man farthest to the left and in the cardplayers (at the same height), as well as a vertical scratch through the arm of the central standing figure. The figures are slightly abraded, although the faces are free of loss or abrasion. Discolored varnish and old inpaint were removed when the painting was treated in 1978. The ground is somewhat crizzled, an effect that has transferred to the paint, making it difficult to saturate the paint and achieve an even coating of varnish. Many layers of varnish were applied in 1978 in an effort to achieve a satisfactory finish. By 2012, these layers of varnish had turned hazy and were no longer saturating the paint. Therefore, the varnish and inpainting were removed and replaced with new inpainting and a thinner layer of varnish..

[1] Dendrochronology by John Fletcher, Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, Oxford University (see report dated November 16, 1979, in NGA Conservation files).

PROVENANCE

Probably private collection, Belgium; purchased c. 1930 in Europe by Mrs. Edwin M. Watson [d. 1971, née Frances Nash], Washington, D.C., and Charlottesville, VA; by inheritance to her niece and nephew, Ellen V. Nash [d. 1993] and Edward Nash, Charlottesville, VA; by gift to John Russell Mason [1900-1981], Washington, D.C.;[1]

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gift 1977 to NGA.

[1] The provenance information was provided by Mr. Mason in his letter of 29 March 1977 to J. Carter Brown (copy in NGA curatorial files).

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Ostade, Isack van

Dutch, 1621 - 1649

BIOGRAPHY

Isack van Ostade, the youngest of the eight children of Jan Hendricx van Eyndhoven and Janneke Hendriksdr, was born in Haarlem and baptized there on June 2, 1621. He became a member of the Haarlem painters' guild in 1643 and died in 1649, at the age of twenty-eight.

Van Ostade's first surviving dated painting is from 1639, a mere ten years before his early death. Despite a very short career, his output was prodigious, and his creativity and originality striking. According to Houbraken, Isack was a pupil of his more famous brother Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685), and his early paintings of low-life interiors and peasant scenes are indeed extremely close in style to the work of his brother.

It was not long, however, before Isack began to develop his own distinctive artistic personality. His paintings of outdoor peasant and village settings combine elements of genre scenes with an evocative treatment of the landscape. These compositions, which typically show travelers or peasants resting in front of inns or houses, are executed with subtle atmospheric and seasonal effects. Isack van Ostade also excelled at depicting winter scenes.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Isack van Ostade
Dutch, 1621 - 1649

The Halt at the Inn

1645

oil on panel transferred to canvas
overall: 50 x 66 cm (19 11/16 x 26 in.)
framed: 72.4 x 88.6 x 6 cm (28 1/2 x 34 7/8 x 2 3/8 in.)
Inscription: lower right: Isack van Os... / 164[?]
Widener Collection 1942.9.49

ENTRY

Isack van Ostade lived in Haarlem, yet little of his work reflects his native cityscape. Rather, he took delight in depicting life outside the city, much as a traveler passing through one of the small villages in the region would have experienced it. In this painting, the artist portrayed the bustle of activity outside a village inn as two well-dressed travelers arrive and dismount from their horses. [1] A plainly clad woman with a child strapped to her back stands to watch while other figures converse with one of the travelers. The main street of the village is filled with other groups, among them, men smoking pipes on a bench before the inn, a child playing with its mother's apron, and a man talking to a woman who spins yarn. Van Ostade creates a sense of conviviality by the apparent informality of these human contacts and the inclusion of an array of animals within the scene. He added to the picturesque character by emphasizing the aged brick and mortar of the inn and the vines that grow over its weathered tile roof.

This sympathetic view of village life is an outgrowth of attitudes evident in various series of landscape etchings published in Haarlem and Amsterdam in the second

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decade of the seventeenth century during the Twelve-Year Truce (1609–1621). [2] Prints by Claes Jansz Visscher (Dutch, 1586/1587 - 1652), Willem Buytewech (Dutch, 1591/1592 - 1624), Esaias van de Velde I (Dutch, 1587 - 1630), and Jan van de Velde II (Dutch, 1593 - 1641) depicted meandering roads on which travelers pass from one village to the next, occasionally resting before an inn, as in Jan van de Velde's etching *Ver* (Spring), 1617. [3] Title pages to these series emphasized that these views were of "pleasant places" in the vicinity of Haarlem and that they were made for the enjoyment of city viewers. Except for occasional depictions of specific inns or ruins, precise locations were of less consequence than the sense of delight one would receive traveling through the landscape and its villages.

Van Ostade began painting such "halt before an inn" scenes as early as 1643, the year he entered the Haarlem Saint Luke's Guild. [4] While the delight he took in depicting peasant life, already evident in paintings from the early 1640s, may have derived from the inspiration of his older brother Adriaen, this particular subject matter was his own invention. Not only did the varied activities before an inn give him an opportunity to exploit his talents as a genre painter, such scenes also suited his abilities as a landscapist. As is evident from this example, he was particularly adept at depicting landscape elements and atmospheric effects. Part of what makes this scene so vivid are the nuances of light on the buildings and figures that have filtered through the overcast sky and the suggestions of smoke that rise from the inn's chimney.

To judge from a large number of surviving drawings, Van Ostade seems to have frequently traveled along such roads and to have carefully observed the buildings and people he encountered on his journeys. [5] None of the motifs in the drawings, however, relate specifically to the paintings, which suggests that he used his drawings as a point of departure and freely elaborated on his observations when he came to compose his paintings. Interestingly, the buildings in the painting seem somewhat more dilapidated than those he drew, which indicates that he purposely sought to create this picturesque effect.

While Van Ostade's village may be understood as a fanciful creation based on his experiences traveling south of Haarlem, the church tower rising in the background seems to be based on the Oude Kerk at Warmond. A print by Abraham Rademaker (Dutch, 1675 - 1735), based on an image from 1600, shows the ruins of this parish church as it appeared after it had been set on fire by the Spanish in 1573 [fig. 1]. [6] Van Ostade may have included this church tower, which was restored in 1597 through the efforts of a victorious admiral of the rebel Dutch navy, to orient the

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scene topographically. Just as the print series of the 1610s was intended to demonstrate the fruits of the Twelve-Year Truce by stressing that people could once again travel in the countryside without fear of attack, so this rebuilt tower, topped by a weather vane in the form of an admiral's ship, served as a reminder that the freedom to travel in peace had been gained only through the efforts of those who had fought so valiantly against foreign oppression. [7]

The painting, when sold in 1837 from the De Berry collection, was identified as being on canvas. In fact, it originally had been on a wood support [see Support, panel] and had been transferred to canvas prior to that date (see Technical Summary). When the old lining fabric was removed and the painting backed by an aluminum panel during restoration in 1982–1983, the old panel-induced Craquelure returned, much improving the appearance of the painting. During the restoration it was found that the signature and date, which had read 1645, had been partly reconstructed. Since 1645 seems appropriate for stylistic reasons, this date probably reflected the one originally inscribed on the painting.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

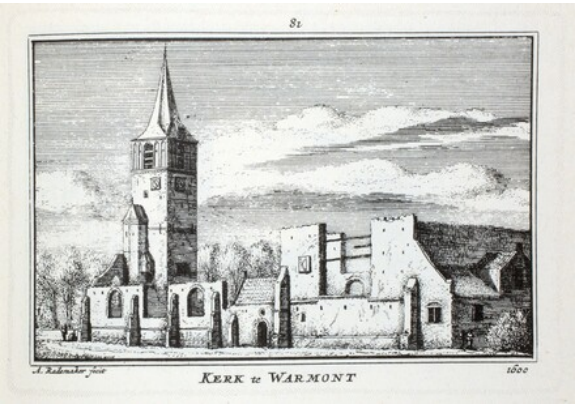

fig. 1 Abraham Rademaker, *Oude Kerk at Warmond*, 1725, etching, pl. 81 from Kabinet van Nederlandsche Outheden en Gezichten, Amsterdam

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NOTES

[1] A replica of *The Halt at the Inn,* entitled *A Village Scene,* is in the Wallace Collection, London (inv. no. P21). It is described in the 1992 catalog of the Wallace Collection as a "weak copy."

[2] For a discussion of these prints, see David Freedberg, *Dutch Landscape Prints of the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1980), 28–38.

[3] See F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, c. 1450–1700*, 41 vols. (Amsterdam, 1949), 33:18, no. 26; and 34:20, repro.

[4] *Country Inn with a Horse at the Trough* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. A303).

[5] See Bernhard Schnackenburg, *Adriaen van Ostade, Isack van Ostade: Zeichnungen und Aquarelle: Desamtdarstellung mit Werkkstalogen*, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1981), 1:52–54.

[6] Abraham Rademaker, *Kabinet van Nederlandsche Outheden en Gezichten* (Amsterdam, 1725), pl. 81. This tower is the only one depicted by Rademaker that has a central arched window flanked by two blind arches. Distinctive also is the turret attached to its side.

[7] For the funding of the church's restoration by Admiral Johan van Duvenvoorde in 1597 and the placement of the weather vane in the shape of his ship, see Kustgids.nl tab *Plaatsen* tab *Bollenstreek* tab *Warmond*, tab *Cultureel Erfgoed no. 5: Oude Toren* (accessed November 20, 2013).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support was a horizontally grained wood panel composed of two boards joined horizontally just above the grouped figures. A horizontal check extended from the right edge through several of the figures and the head of the brown horse. Prior to 1837, when the painting was in the sale of the collection of the Duchess de Berry, it was transferred from wood to a fine-weave fabric and lined with the dimensions expanded. The transfer canvas has a small vertical tear in the foreground near the gray horse's tail. In 1982 the lining was removed and the transfer canvas was relined and marouflaged to a honeycombed aluminum solid support panel consistent with the original panel dimensions.

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The artist incorporated a smooth, off-white ground layer into the light tones of the design. He applied paint in thin layers with minimal impasto. Transparent glazes were laid over opaque layers in the upper sky in the dark foreground. The paint craquelure is characteristic of paintings on both wood and fabric supports, although the solid support mounting minimizes the impression of the weave texture.

A thin line of loss exists along the panel join and check and adjacent to a canvas tear that occurred in 1979. Scattered small losses found overall include losses in the signature and date, the beggar woman, and the structures at right. Dark gray stains in the sky were minimized through inpainting when the painting was treated in 1982.

PROVENANCE

Marie-Caroline-Ferdinande-Louise de Naples, duchesse de Berry [1798-1870]; (De Berry sale, by Bataillard and Charles Pillet, Paris, 4-6 April 1837, no. 19). Charles-Auguste-Louis-Joseph, comte de Morny [1811-1865, later duc de Morny], Paris; (his sale, Phillips, London, 20-21 June 1848, 2nd day, no. 108). Mrs. Stephen Lyne-Stephens [1812-1894, née Pauline Duvernay or Yolande-Marie-Louise Duvernay], Lynford Hall, Mundford, near Thetford, Norfolk, London (Roehampton), and Paris; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 9 May 1895, no. 340); (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris), in 1895.[1] (Eugene Fischhof, Paris); sold 1898 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Reproduced in Charles Sedelmeyer, *Illustrated Catalogue of the Second Hundred of Paintings by Old Masters, Sedelmeyer Gallery*, Paris, 1895: 34, no. 28.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 70.

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1913 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis, and Wilhelm R. Valentiner. *Pictures in the collection of P. A. B. Widener at Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania: Early German, Dutch & Flemish Schools*. Philadelphia, 1913: unpaginated, repro.

1923 *Paintings in the Collection of Joseph Widener at Lynnewood Hall*. Intro. by Wilhelm R. Valentiner. Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, 1923: unpaginated, repro.

1931 *Paintings in the Collection of Joseph Widener at Lynnewood Hall*. Intro. by Wilhelm R. Valentiner. Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, 1931: 92, repro.

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1984 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. Rev. ed. New York, 1984: 291, no. 383, color repro.
1984 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Painting in the National Gallery of Art*. Washington, D.C., 1984: 16-17, color repro.
1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 296, repro.
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2004 Franits, Wayne E. *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting. Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution*. New Haven and London, 2004: 204, fig. 190.
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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Isack van Ostade
Dutch, 1621 - 1649

Workmen before an Inn

1645

oil on panel
overall: 66 x 58.4 cm (26 x 23 in.)
framed: 94.9 x 86.7 x 7 cm (37 3/8 x 34 1/8 x 2 3/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right: Isack van Ostade / 1645
Gift of Richard A. and Lee G. Kirstein, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art 1991.64.1

ENTRY

Although Isack van Ostade frequently represented travelers halting before an inn (The Halt at the Inn), the focus on the activities of workmen restocking an inn, as in this painting, is exceptional. Here a horse-drawn sledge has stopped before the mottled, brown brick façade of a rustic inn where two laborers strain under the weight of a keg of beer they are lifting with the aid of a yoke. The innkeeper stands in the doorway ready to direct them inside. Above him hang traditional Dutch symbols of welcome and promised conviviality for an inn: a beer jug and two barrel staves adorned with a grapevine. [1] Perched on the chimney is a stork, whose presence, as a traditional emblem of the traveler, was encouraged by innkeepers. [2] Around the building are sights that would have greeted visitors to such a village. A woman seated under a canopy sells her wares, probably pancakes, to an eager clientele of men and children. Near this group a lame man hobbles along supported by his cane and stick. Farther down the road a quack, standing before a large bulletin board, tries to convince his audience of the wonders of his cures. Adding to the picturesque character of the scene are the animals that occupy the foreground: a hen and a rooster scratch and peck, and two dogs lap up the water that has spilled over the edge of the trough, while a third dog, anxious to join them, is restrained by his youthful master.

Inns were the social meeting point for all facets of Dutch society. Whether a welcome wayside in the midst of the coastal dunes, an imposing building on a city square, or a modest structure in one of the villages that dotted the countryside, inns provided food, drink, a setting for business transactions, and occasional

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lodging. More important, however, inns served as a forum for entertainment, whether it be conversing, gaming, or relaxation during the celebration of a *kermis* or other holiday. As is suggested in Van Ostade's painting, the environment might have been picturesque, but it was seldom genteel. John Ray, an English traveler who visited the Dutch Republic in 1663, described innkeepers as being "surly and uncivil." Ray also found the food hardy—stews, beef, pickled herrings, cheeses, bread—but rather basic and quite expensive: "Their strong Beer, (thick Beer they call it, and well they may) is sold for three Stivers the Quart, which is more than three pence *English*." [3]

In contrast to the horizontal format of The Halt at the Inn, which he probably also painted in 1645, Van Ostade chose a vertical format for this work. As a consequence this painting is composed along a single diagonal that recedes to the left rather than with the counterbalancing diagonals found in *The Halt at the Inn.* This dynamic composition reinforces the sense of activity and enlivens the streetscape. As seems to have been his standard procedure, Van Ostade must have composed this painting in his studio on the basis of drawings he made from life. A comparison with his *Halt at the Inn* of 1646 in Vienna [fig. 1] suggests how he may have freely adapted his models from one painting to the next: the hobbling man in the Washington painting certainly derives from the same prototype as does the man carrying a bucket at the left in the Vienna painting. Presumably similar modifications occurred with building and animal studies as well.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Isack van Ostade, *Halt at the Inn*, 1646, oil on panel, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Photo: De Agostini Picture Library / G. Nimatallah / The Bridgeman Art Library

NOTES

[1] See Linda A. Stone-Ferrier, *Dutch Prints of Daily Life: Mirrors of Life or Mask of Morals?* (Lawrence, 1983), 216.

[2] The stork always returns to the same nest, so innkeepers hoped that travelers would likewise return to their particular inn. There seems to have been no scarcity of storks in the Netherlands if one is to judge from the comments of John Ray in his *Observations Topographical, Moral, and Physiological; Made in a Journey Through Part of the Low-Countries, Germany, Italy, and France* (London, 1673), 56.

[3] John Ray, *Observations Topographical, Moral, and Physiological; Made in a Journey Through Part of the Low-Countries, Germany, Italy, and France* (London, 1673), 50–51.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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The painting is on a single-board panel with a vertical grain. The original chisel marks are visible on the back. The ground is a smooth, light brown layer of medium thickness. It is allowed to show through the thinly applied paint layers. In the sky the paint was applied more thickly, with low impasto and strong brushwork.

The painting is in very good condition, although small, scattered losses are visible in ultraviolet light. Minor pentimenti in the large tree in the center of the painting and the dogs in the foreground are visible to the naked eye. The painting has not been treated since acquisition.

PROVENANCE

Van Tol collection; (sale, Souterwoude [near Leiden], 15 June 1779, no. 13);[1] Wubbels. Jean Etienne Fiseau (variously spelled Fiseau, Fezeau, or Fiziau), Amsterdam; his widow, Mme Jean Etienne Fiseau [née Marie Anne Massé, d. 1790]; (her estate sale, by Philippe van der Schley et al., Amsterdam, 30-31 August 1797, no. 165); (Jan de Bosch, Jeronimusz, Amsterdam). Guillaume-Joseph, baron de Brienen van de Grootelindt [d. 1839], Amsterdam, by 1842; by inheritance to his son, Arnold-Willem, baron de Brienen van de Grootelindt [d. 1854]; by inheritance to his son, Guillaume-Thierry-Arnaud [or Arnold or Armand]-Marie, baron de Brienen van de Grootelindt [d. 1863], Amsterdam;[2] (his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 8-9 May 1865, no. 23); (Nieuwenhuys).[3] Marquis H. de V., Paris;[4] (his sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 5-6 June 1871, 2nd day, no. 218); Comte Henri Greffulhe [1848-1932], Paris; (his estate sale, Sotheby & Co., London, 22 July 1937, no. 74); (Roland & Delbanco, London); sold 1939 to Adolf Mayer, The Hague. (Edward Speelman, London). private collection, England. (Duits Gallery, London); sold 1968 to (Christian Humann, Paris and New York); sold 1973 to Dr. Claus Virch, Paris; sold July 1977 to (Brod Gallery, London);[5] purchased by Richard A. and Lee G. Kirstein, Washington, D.C.; gift 1991 to NGA.

[1] In 1779, Hendrick Meyer (1744-1793) made a drawn copy of the painting (Amsterdam Historisch Museum, inv. no. A 10716), either when it was in Van Tol's collection or at the time of the painting's sale. See Ingrid Oud and Leonoor van Oosterzee, *Nederlandse Tekenaars geboren tussen 1660 en 1745*, Amsterdam and Zwolle, 1999: 120.

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[2] The lacquer seal on the rear of the panel carries the heraldic crest of the De Brienen van de Grootelindt family. Genealogical information on the family was provided by the Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, The Hague.

[3] According to an annotated copy of the sale catalogue in the NGA Library. This could have been either C.J. Nieuwenhuys, who was based in Brussels (and later London), or his brother, François Nieuwenhuys, who was in Paris.

[4] This was possibly Antoine-Marie-Albert Héron de Villefosse (1845-1919).

[5] Dr. Virch, in his letter to Arthur Wheelock of 4 June 1991 (in NGA curatorial files), provided the provenance of the painting from the Duits Gallery to the Brod Gallery. However, his information is at odds with the Duits Gallery Records, according to which Duits sold the picture on 30 July 1970 to “Mertens” (Box 38, no. 1946, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles).

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1948 A Loan Exhibition of Dutch and Flemish Painting: The Collection of the Late Adolf Mayer, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio, 1948, no. 9.

1968 Loan to display with permanent collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1968-1973.

1977 Old Master Paintings: Exhibition of Recent Acquisitions, Brod Gallery, London, 1977, no. 20.

1991 Art for the Nation: Gifts in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 1991, 72-73, color repro.

1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure, repro.

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2015 Class Distinctions: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt and Vermeer, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, 2015-2016, no. 51, repro.

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1977 *Jan van Goyen, 1596-1656: Poet of the Dutch Landscape*. Exh. cat. Alan Jacobs Gallery, London, 1977: no. 20.

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1999 Oud, Ingrid, and Leonoor van Oosterzee. *Nederlandse tekenaars geboren tussen 1660 en 1745*. Oude tekeningen in het bezit van het Amsterdams Historisch Museum, waaronder de collectie Fodor 5. Edited by Hinke J. Wiggers. Zwolle, 1999: 120, fig. a.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Pierson, Christoffel

Dutch, 1631 - 1714

BIOGRAPHY

Christoffel Pierson was born in The Hague on May 19, 1631, the son of Paulus Pierson, a soldier, and Anneke Abrahams.[1] According to Houbraken, he came from a “good family” and was educated in Latin, French, and the art of drawing.[2] He received his artistic training with Bartholomeus Meyburg (1625–1708/1709), from whom he learned portrait and history painting. In 1652, after his period of training, he moved to Schiedam, where he married Maria Willems. In the following year he went with Meyburg to Germany, where Pierson’s portrait skills were admired by Queen Christina of Sweden, who asked him to work for her.

Pierson declined the Queen’s offer so that he could return to Schiedam to be with his wife and young daughter. In the following year, the young couple moved to Gouda, where they lived until Maria’s death in 1679. Pierson was lieutenant in the Gouda militia company between 1673 and 1676, and served as regent in the house of correction between 1674 and 1680. During these years Pierson was active not only as a portraitist and history and still-life painter but also as a poet, playwright, and translator of Virgil and Racine. In 1674, he received a commission to make copies of seven stained-glass windows from the Sint Janskerk in Gouda.

In 1680, Pierson returned to Schiedam, where he married Joppina Hodenpijl that same year. As he had in Gouda, Pierson served as a member of the town’s militia company. Curiously, he did not join the Schiedam artist’s guild until 1685, even though he had continued to paint during the five years since his arrival. Joppina died in 1687, and three years later Pierson married again, this time to Maria Paeuw. In 1692 Pierson moved back to Gouda, where in 1696 the church fathers commissioned him to oversee the stained-glass windows at the Sint Janskerk. In 1710 Pierson once again became a widower, and, in 1714, at the age of 83, he was buried in the Sint Janskerk.

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[1] This biographical information is taken from the account of J. M. M. Jansen in *Josine Bokhoven, Leven en werk van Christoffel Pierson (1631–1714)*: *"den kloeken rijmer en konstrijken schilder"* (Schiedam, 1986), For further biographical information, see Frederik Daniel Otto Obreen, *Archief voor Nederlandsche Kunstgeschiedenis*, 7 vols. (Rotterdam, 1884–1887), 6:71–74.

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:259.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Christoffel Pierson
Dutch, 1631 - 1714

Niche with Falconry Gear

probably 1660s

oil on canvas
overall: 80.5 x 64.5 cm (31 11/16 x 25 3/8 in.)
framed: 94 x 77.8 x 4.5 cm (37 x 30 5/8 x 1 3/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right: Chr.Pierson.f
Patrons' Permanent Fund 2003.39.1

ENTRY

In this striking painting, Christoffel Pierson has created the vivid illusion of hunting equipment placed in and around an arched, light-filled niche set into a white stucco wall. The red-plumed falcon's hood resting atop the wooden birdcage is the visual focus of the painting. Two different types of whistles hang from the birdcage, while other types of hunting equipment, including a hunting horn, a net, and a bow and arrow, lie near it. Flanking the niche are *trompe l'oeil* nails from which hang, on the left, a powder bag and powder horn, and, on the right, a shoulder bag for carrying game.

The equipment shown here was appropriate for a variety of types of hunting, including riflery, archery, trapping with nets and decoy, and falconry. Falcons were used mainly to catch small birds living near rivers and swamps. Round leather hoods or bonnets were placed over the falcons' heads, covering their eyes, to keep the birds calm during transport to and from the hunt. As in this painting, falconry hoods were often decorated with colored leather, gold braids, or plumes. Small birds could also be caught using snap nets. After the hunter arranged his nets on the ground he would attract game birds with small decoy whistles or with live song birds in wooden cages. [1]

Hunting, and falconry in particular, was a popular pastime reserved for Dutch aristocrats, notably those at the Dutch court in The Hague. [2] Shortly after mid-century, this interest encouraged the development of painted game pieces and depictions of hunting implements. Two artists from The Hague who specialized in such images were the brothers Anthonie (1630/1631–1671/1673) and Johannes

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(1633–1688) Leemans, both of whom painted large-scale illusionistic depictions of hunting equipment displayed symmetrically on a white stucco wall, an arrangement that probably reflected actual practice. [3] Pierson, who was trained as a portraitist and history painter in The Hague, is generally described as having been inspired by the Leemans brothers to begin painting comparable *trompe l'oeil* images. Arnold Houbraken wrote that Pierson followed "Leemans" in depicting "hunting implements, bird cages, and shooting weapons" because of the high esteem and good prices artists received for such works. [4] The Leemans, however, probably did not begin to paint *trompe l'oeil* images of hunting implements before the late 1650s, by which time Pierson had left The Hague and was living in Gouda. Houbraken may have had a different Leemans in mind when he referred to Pierson's source of inspiration, possibly Leendert Leman, who is reported to have painted illusionistic hunting scenes in Gouda. [5]

Houbraken was enthusiastic about Pierson's ability to trick the eye in his *trompe l'oeil* paintings of hunting implements. He remarked that no one had ever been able to match the naturalism of Pierson's works, in which every object appears to hang on the wall so convincingly that most people are fooled by the deception. [6] In *Niche with Falconry Gear*, Pierson has effectively exploited the niche motif to enhance his *trompe l'oeil* effects: objects seem to exist both behind and in front of the picture plane, and thereby enter into the viewer's space. [7] The illusionism benefits further from the artist's ability to convey the varied textures of the materials from which the hunting implements were made, whether horn, wood, metal, or leather, and from his sensitivity to light, whereby subtle shadows are cast onto the stucco wall and concave surface of the arched niche. It is easy to imagine how a viewer might be momentarily deceived when encountering this painting for the first time, and the delight one would feel when that deception was revealed.

Fewer than ten illusionistic hunting pieces by Pierson are known, and none of these are dated, so the chronology of his still lifes cannot be established with any certainty. [8] Many of the same hunting implements reappear in these works so it is probable that Pierson painted most of them for the open market rather than for a specific patron. *Niche with Falconry Gear*, however, differs in its focus on a niche, and in this instance Pierson might have conceived his painting for a specific location in the home of a Dutch aristocrat. The success of its illusionism is contingent on the painting being seen from the proper vantage point to make its perspective work and on having a natural light source on the left so that the shadows have a basis in reality.

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NOTES

[1] See Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece* (Montclair, NJ, 1984), 37, for a discussion of decoy whistles. For nets, see Joost van den Vondel, *Vorstelijcke Warande der Dieren* (Amsterdam, 1682), no. 66.

[2] Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece* (Montclair, NJ, 1984), 36, notes that Prince Maurits restricted the use of falcons, hawks, and other birds of prey to the nobility and that these restrictions continued throughout the seventeenth century.

[3] For information about Anthonie and Johannes Leemans, see Fred G. Meijer in Edwin Buijsen, *Haagse Schilders in de Gouden Eeuw: Het Hoogsteder Lexicon van alle Schilders Werkzaam in Den Haag 1600–1700* (The Hague, 1998), 180–184.

[4] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:261. “Ziende ook dat het Jachttuig, Vogelkouwen, en Schietgeweer geschildert door *Leemans* toen in byzondere agting was en wel betaald werd, begon hy deze wyze van schilderen meê ter hand te nemen, ’t geen hem zoo toeviel, dat nooit iemant hem daar in gelyk geweest is, als by de stukken in handen van vele Konstkenners blykt, die zoo natuurlyk geschildert zyn dat yder ding in ’t byzonder schynt van den wand af te hangen, waar door menigte van menschen bedrogen zyn geworden.”

[5] See Abraham Bredius, “Het schildersregister van Jan Sysmus,” *Oud-Holland* 8 (1890): 298, for the notation from 1664 in the painting register of the Amsterdam doctor Jan Sysmus that a Leendert Leman in “Ter Gouw” (Gouda) “floreerde in ‘vogelkoytjes etc. met schaduwen te schilderen.’” No paintings by Leendert Leman are known, so stylistic connections to Pierson cannot be confirmed.

[6] See Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:261. See note 4 for the transcription of this text.

[7] The use of a niche motif for the depiction of hunting implements is unique in Pierson’s oeuvre, and is rarely, if ever, found elsewhere, though a number of still-life specialists active in The Hague—such as Cornelis Lelienbergh (1626–1676), William Gowe Ferguson (English, 1632/1633 - c. 1690), and

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Hendrick de Fromantiou (c. 1633–c. 1690/1994)—did use niches in illusionistic paintings of dead game.

[8] For two of these, see J. Bokhoven, *Leven en werk van Christoffel Pierson (1631–1714): "Den Kloeken rijmer en Konstrijken Schilder"* (Schiedam, 1986), nos. 9 and 12.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric. It has been lined and the tacking margins are no longer extant. Cusping indicates that the painting has not been cropped, but the current stretcher is slightly larger than the painting's original dimensions and the edges have been filled and inpainted to incorporate them into the picture, expanding the painting slightly. A dark brown underlayer is visible in the craquelure. It is unclear if this is the ground layer or an underpainting. The paint layer is applied with smoothly blended, tight brushstrokes and multiple layers of glazing. The X-radiographs and examination with infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.7 microns[1] revealed that the large horn on the left was originally reversed, so that the wide side of the horn was closest to the edge of the painting.

The painting is in fairly good condition, though the X-radiographs reveal a complex tear at the top of the arch, just to the right of center, and an irregular, vertical damage on the left side, extending through the horn. The paint is slightly cupped along the moderate craquelure pattern, and many small losses have occurred in the intersections of the cracks. Inpainting exists around the perimeter of the painting, where it masks abrasion, as well as in a series of small damages in the bottom right corner. The painting has been partially cleaned in the past, with remnants of an earlier varnish remaining in the netting and the shadowed areas around it. The varnish is only very slightly yellow, and it remains clear and evenly glossy. The painting has not been treated since acquisition.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a FLIR Indigo / Alpha VisGaAs camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

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PROVENANCE

Capitain Page.[1] Temple Hargrove, Sr.; his estate; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, New York, 3 October 2001, no. 61); (Berenberg Fine Art, Lugano); purchased 12 March 2003 through (Rob Smeets, Milan) by NGA.

[1] This name appears on a label on the back of the painting.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

2002 Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe l'Oeil Painting, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2002-2003, no. 62, repro.

2008 The Deluded Eye. Five Centuries of Deception, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, 2008-2009, no. 33, repro.

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2002 Ebert-Schifferer, Sybille. *Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe l'Oeil painting*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2002:250, no. 62, 380, repro.

2003 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. "Christoffel Pierson: Niche with Falconry Gear." *National Gallery of Art Bulletin* 30 (Fall 2003): 18, color repro.

2008 Sidén, Karin. *Lura Ögat: Fem sekelrs bländverk*. Stockholm, 2008: 125, repro., 201, no. 33.

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Jean Meyssens and Coen Waumans after Cornelis van Poelenburch, *Cornelis van Poelenburch*, engraving, in Sebastiano Resta, *The True Effigies of the Most Eminent Painters, and Other Famous Artists That Have Flourished in Europe* (London, 1694), pl. 64, National Gallery of Art Library, David K. E. Bruce Fund

Poelenburch, Cornelis van

Also known as
Poelenburgh, Cornelis van
Poelenburg, Cornelis van
Dutch, 1594/1595 - 1667

BIOGRAPHY

Cornelis van Poelenburch, one of the most important of the first generation of Dutch Italianates, was born in Utrecht in the winter of 1594–1595.[1] His father, Simon van Poelenburch (d. 1596), was a canon of the Utrecht cathedral chapter. By 1610 Poelenburch was apprenticed to Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651), a leading Utrecht mannerist.[2] He was also influenced by the Amsterdam Pre-Rembrandtists, Jan (1581–1631) and Jacob Pynas (c. 1592–after 1650). After completing his training, he traveled to Rome, where he is first recorded in 1617. In Rome he was inspired by the paintings of fellow northerners Adam Elsheimer (German, 1578 - 1610) and Paul Bril (Flemish, 1554 - 1626), as well as by Raphael (Marchigian, 1483 - 1520) and antique sculpture.

Poelenburch's small-scale paintings of arcadian, biblical, or mythological subjects, which featured figures in an Italianate landscape, often with Roman ruins, were much admired by Cosimo II de' Medici, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and in 1620–1621 Poelenburch lived in Florence and worked for the duke. After returning to Rome, Poelenburch helped found the Schildersbent, an unofficial group of

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Netherlandish artists in Rome whose members were known as Bentveughels (birds of a feather). His fellow members gave him the nickname “Satiro” (Satyr).

In the mid-1620s Poelenburch returned to Utrecht, where he married Jacomina van Steenre two years later. He had an extremely successful career, and his small religious and mythological scenes were avidly sought after by both courtly patrons and private collectors in Utrecht and beyond. The inventory of the Utrecht collector Willem Vincent, Baron van Wittenhorst (d. 1674), for example, indicates that he owned at least fifty-five of the master’s paintings.[3] Poelenburch served as hoofdman and deken of the local painters’ society, and often collaborated with other artists, including Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652).

In the spring of 1627 the States of Utrecht acquired one of Poelenburch’s paintings and presented it to the Prince of Orange, Frederik Hendrik, as a gift for his consort Amalia van Solms. Poelenburch subsequently worked in The Hague, both for the court of the Prince of Orange and for the court of the exiled King and Queen of Bohemia, Frederik and Elizabeth.[4] In 1637 Poelenburch was appointed court painter to King Charles I, and he lived in London between 1637 and 1641. After he returned to Utrecht he was quite wealthy and acquired a number of properties, which allowed him to develop a large workshop. Among his many pupils was Johan van Haensbergen (1642–1705).

[1] See M. J. Bok, “The Date of Cornelis van Poelenburch’s Birth,” *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury* 2 (1985): 9–11. Poelenburch is recorded as being six years of age in the treasury ledger for the city of Utrecht on January 21, 1601.

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 1:129.

[3] M. J. Bok in Joaneath A. Spicer and Lynn Federle Orr, *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age* (Baltimore, 1997), 387.

[4] The States of Utrecht purchased Poelenburch’s *Banquet of the Gods on Earth* now in Anhaltische Gemäldegalerie Schloss Georgium, Dessau, inv. no. 801.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

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Cornelis van Poelenburch
Dutch, 1594/1595 - 1667

Christ Carrying the Cross

early 1620s

oil on copper
overall: 44.2 x 62.3 cm (17 3/8 x 24 1/2 in.)
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund 2007.49.1

ENTRY

Cornelis van Poelenburch, one of the most famous Dutch painters of his time, had a remarkable ability to convey atmospheric effects evocative of a distant past, whether in the Holy Land or the Italian countryside near Rome. [1] In these works, a silvery light, softened and diffused by clouds that spread across blue skies, quietly floods the gently rolling countryside, giving it an aura of age and venerability. With carefully selected pictorial elements such as ancient ruins, Poelenburch provided a visual and historical framework for the small-scale mythological and biblical figures that populate his landscapes.

Christ Carrying the Cross, which Poelenburch probably executed soon after his arrival in Rome, is a rare example of the artist's expressive biblical scenes from the very beginning of his career. It portrays that poignant moment when Christ, wearing a purple robe and a crown of thorns, and struggling under the weight of the cross as he is being dragged forward by a muscular and foreboding executioner, looks back at the kneeling Veronica. [2] Veronica holds out a linen cloth, the *sudarium*, on which Christ's true image, or *vera icon*, was miraculously imprinted when she wiped the sweat from his brow. [3]

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The large band of figures massed near these protagonists includes not only Christ's tormentors but also, more important, friends and family who were with him as he began his slow and sorrowful march to Golgotha, the distant hill where the Crucifixion would take place. Among these are Simon of Cyrene, the rough-hewn man with a red cloak over his shoulders, whom the Roman soldiers forced to carry the cross after Christ stumbled under its weight (Luke 23:26); the Virgin Mary, distinguishable by her white cowl and blue robe, quietly communing with Mary Magdalene; and behind them John the Evangelist, who covers his eyes in grief with the sleeve of his red robe. The elderly men with blue hats in the middle of the crowd are most likely Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, both of whom would help remove the body of Christ from the cross and assist at his burial.

The mounted armed Roman soldier leading the procession to Golgotha is Longinus, the centurion who would pierce Christ's side to verify his death at the Crucifixion and who exclaimed: "Indeed, this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54). In the lower left, curiosity seekers turn and run as they are confronted by Longinus' fierce gaze and threatening steed. Equally intimidating are the stern, bare-chested soldiers who control the procession; the disproportionably large executioner dragging the cross; the menacing figure who threatens Christ with a clenched fist; and the young man at the right who carries a lance and a basket filled with hammer, nails, and ropes. Another soldier clasps the arm of one of the two bound men near the front edge of the large stone ruin at center. Walking with heads bowed, they are the good thief and the bad thief, whose crosses already await them at Golgotha.

Poelenburch's interpretation of *Christ Carrying the Cross* belongs to a long pictorial tradition, yet its character is surprisingly different from earlier examples in northern and Italian art. With the exception of the large, panoramic engraving of this subject from the late fifteenth century by Martin Schongauer (German, c. 1450 - 1491), most artists, including Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471 - 1528), Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1558 - 1617), and Raphael (Marchigian, 1483 - 1520), created vertical compositions that focused closely on Christ and the figures immediately surrounding him. [4] Poelenburch, on the contrary, chose to depict relatively small figures in an extensive landscape, thereby stressing the great distance that this sorrowful band had to traverse to reach its destination at Golgotha. In this respect, he followed the lead of Adam Elsheimer (German, 1578 - 1610) and Paul Bril (Flemish, 1554 - 1626), artists whose small-scale biblical and mythological paintings on copper he would have encountered in Rome after he arrived there in 1617. [5]

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Nevertheless, as neither Elsheimer nor Bril depicted this particular subject, Poelenburch's vision of the pictorial narrative in this painting was largely his own.

Aside from emulating the way these masters focused the narrative flow on foreground figures, Poelenburch clearly admired how they depicted light spreading across wide open landscapes and the delicacy with which they rendered their scenes. Poelenburch, adapting a technique utilized by Elsheimer, applied a silver-colored coating, most likely an alloy of tin and lead, over his copper panel. [6] He allowed this silver-coating to give a luminous tonality to the landscape by painting a thin, somewhat modulated but translucent layer of earth tones over it.

Northern artists who traveled to Italy sought out the artistic heritage of antiquity and the Renaissance as inspiration for their own works, and Poelenburch was no exception. His paintings and drawings from his years in Rome and Florence are filled with visual references to the architectural and figural sources he found in Italy. [7] As Joachim von Sandrart I (German, 1606 - 1688) noted, Poelenburch was greatly inspired by Raphael's figures, and, indeed, the general disposition of the carefully proportioned figures in *Christ Carrying the Cross* was clearly based on the Dutch artist's close study of Raphael. [8] The clearest example of his borrowing from the Italian master in this work is the figure of the centurion Longinus, whose Roman armor and rearing steed are taken directly from the mounted Roman soldier in Raphael's *The Meeting between Leo the Great and Atilla,* 1514, in the Stanza di Eliodoro in the Vatican [fig. 1]. The stance of the young man carrying a spear at the right in Poelenburch's painting is also borrowed from this work, although the primary prototype may have been a sculpture based on Polykleitos' *Doryphorus,* or *The Lance Bearer* (450–440 BC). Another ancient Greek sculptural source that may have inspired Poelenburch was the *Torso Belvedere* (first century AD), a figure whose muscular back has been brought to life in the figure of the central executioner. [9]

Poelenburch's most significant reference to an antique source was his adaptation of the Tomb of Cecilia Metella on the Appian Way for the large ruin at the right of the painting. This travertine structure was built around 50 BC as the tomb of Cecilia, the daughter of Metellius, conqueror of Crete, and wife of Crassus, Caesar's general in Gaul and the wealthiest man in Rome. Its dramatic shape and historical significance made it a favorite subject for foreign artists to study as they traveled along this early and well-preserved Roman road [fig. 2]. Even though Poelenburch elaborated on the ruins of the walls surrounding the sepulcher, he accurately rendered the tomb's distinctive cylindrical shape, its frieze of festoons

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and *bucranes* (ox-head motifs), and the marble plaque with its engraved inscription.

Poelenburch chose this particular structure for its symbolic effect. He exploited the association with death to enhance the power of his narrative by having the procession pass through the tomb's large arched doorway on the way to Golgotha, just as darkness starts to settle over the land. Moreover, by cropping the ruin tightly to the picture frame, he created the impression that the structure was part of an urban mass and that the procession was passing through a city gate. That Poelenburch depicted the procession as taking place near Rome and not outside Jerusalem was of little consequence. Romans ruled the world in which Christ lived and taught, and he died at their hands.

Determining the chronology of Poelenburch's early works is difficult because he rarely dated his paintings. Nevertheless, the artist probably created this ambitious work soon after he arrived in Rome, in the late 1610s. By that time he would have seen paintings by Elsheimer and Bril, would have had a chance to study works by Raphael, and would have encountered Cecilia Metella's tomb on one of his expeditions to the surrounding countryside to make landscape drawings. [10]

Another argument for this early date, which would place this painting at the very beginning of his known oeuvre, is the awkwardness of scale evident in the figures, particularly in the mounted figure of Longinus, which is too small in relation to the muscular executioner near him. [11] Poelenburch, moreover, made a number of changes to this work, including the elimination of two figures in the lower left and the alteration of the position of the executioner's legs, which suggests the difficulties he encountered in finding a satisfactory compositional solution for the narrative [fig. 3]. Finally, despite the many stylistic and thematic connections to Poelenburch's Roman stay, the costumes of the group of peasants in the lower left bear striking similarities to those depicted by Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651), Poelenburch's teacher, a further indication that Poelenburch had not yet entirely left behind his earlier training in Utrecht when he came to paint this work [fig. 4].

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Raphael, *The Meeting between Leo the Great and Attila*, 1514, fresco, Stanza di Eliodoro, Palazzi Pontifici, The Vatican. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Claude Lorrain, *The Tomb of Cecilia Metella*, c. 1638, black chalk, pen and brown ink with brown and gray wash on white paper, The British Museum, London, RD283. Photo © Trustees of the British Museum

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fig. 3 Detail, infrared reflectogram, Cornelis van Poelenburch, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, early 1620s, oil on copper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund, 2007.49.1

fig. 4 Cornelis Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, *Pastorals*, c. 1627 or 1630, etching from the complete suite of 16 etchings, The New York Public Library, Kennedy Fund

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Afiena van Zanten and Molli Kuenstner for their assistance in preparing this entry.

[2] According to the Gospels, the Roman soldiers dressed Christ in a purple robe and placed a crown of thorns on his head before mocking him (John 19:2–3).

[3] Although Christ's Crucifixion is mentioned in all four of the Gospels, the legend of Veronica does not appear in the Bible but in the *Legenda Aurea*, or *The Golden Legend*, which was published in the thirteenth century. See: Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993), 1:212.

[4] See Martin Schongauer, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, c. 1475–1480, engraving, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (35.27).

[5] Joachim von Sandrart remarked upon the importance of Elsheimer's inspiration for Poelenburch. Sandrart wrote that after traveling to Rome and Florence, Poelenburch painted "his landscapes after the incomparable Adam Elsheimer, the figures, however, he made his figures after Raphael's manner." Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Kunste von 1675: Leben der beruhmten Maler, Bildhauer*

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und Baumeister, ed. Arthur R. Peltzer, 4 vols. (Munich, 1925), 175. Albert Blankert, in *Dutch 17th-Century Italianate Landscape Painters* (Soest, 1978), 63–64, emphasizes that Poelenburch would have been familiar with Elsheimer's compositions in Utrecht prior to his trip to Italy in 1617, as he would have seen prints after Elsheimer's paintings by Hendrik Goudt (Dutch, 1585 - 1648), who had returned to Utrecht in 1611. A contemporary source also links Poelenburch and Bril. In letters written in 1621 and 1622 by the Utrecht canon (*kanunnik*) Johan de Wit to his friend in Utrecht Arnold van Buchel, Poelenburch's and Bril's names are mentioned together.

[6] See Technical Summary. For Elsheimer's use of a silver-colored ground layer over copper, see Keith Andrews, *Adam Elsheimer: Paintings, Drawings, Prints* (Oxford, 1977), 170; and Rüdiger Klessmann, *Adam Elsheimer 1578–1610* (Edinburgh and London, 2006), 102–115, no. 20. On copper as a support, see Isabel Horovitz, "The Materials and Techniques of European Paintings on Copper Supports" in *Copper as Canvas: Two Centuries of Masterpiece Painting on Copper, 1575–1775* (New York, 1999), 63–92.

[7] See, in particular, Eckhard Schaar, "Poelenburgh und Breenbergh in Italien und ein Bild Elsheimers," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 9, no.1 (August 1959): 25–54; and Alan Chong, "The Drawings of Cornelis van Poelenburch," *Master Drawings* 25, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 3–62, 85–116.

[8] Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Kunste von 1675: Leben der beruhmten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister*, ed. Arthur R. Peltzer., 4 vols. (Munich, 1925), 175.

[9] For the Polykleitos *Doryphorus*, see the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow; for the *Torso Belvedere*, see the collection at the Museo Pio-Clementino at the Vatican Museum.

[10] The earliest dated of these drawings is 1619. See Alan Chong, "The Drawings of Cornelis van Poelenburch," *Master Drawings* 25, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 24–25, nos. 1–9. No drawings of Cecilia Metella by Poelenburch, however, are known.

[11] Poelenburch frequently had difficulties in establishing spatial relationships between figures, but the discrepancies are more extreme in this work than usual.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a thin, copper panel. Tool marks are visible on the reverse. On top of the copper is a silver colored layer, which X-ray fluorescence

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spectroscopy analysis indicated is probably a lead-tin alloy.[1] Over this there may be a lead white priming layer.[2] A toned imprimatura layer is visible in the transparently painted landscape. The paint was thinly and smoothly applied. Poelenburch left reserves for the figures, but painted the details of the landscape last, sometimes over the figures. Examination with infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns[3] revealed that the artist painted out two additional figures in the group on the left. It also showed compositional changes to the figure guiding Christ by a rope.

The copper panel is slightly bent, but it is mostly in plane. There are two small dents at the right edge. Paint losses are scattered throughout the painting, but especially in the sky and along the edges. Examination with ultraviolet light revealed that an old varnish was only partially removed at some point. Remnants remain in the greens and browns.

[1] X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF) analysis was performed by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated December 27, 2006, in NGA Conservation files).

[2] This layer is not readily visible, but its presence was revealed by XRF analysis performed by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated December 27, 2006, in NGA Conservation files).

[3] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Paris;[1] (Galerie Claude Vittet, Paris); purchased 11 April 2007 by NGA.

[1] Claude Vittet, in an e-mail of 14 January 2007 to Molli Kuenstner (in NGA curatorial files), writes that the painting had "not been seen on the market since probably the beginning of the XVIIIth century."

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Cornelis van Poelenburch
Dutch, 1594/1595 - 1667

The Prophet Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath

c. 1630

oil on panel
overall: 35.6 x 47 cm (14 x 18 1/2 in.)
framed: 51.1 x 62.1 x 5.1 cm (20 1/8 x 24 7/16 x 2 in.)
Gift of Joseph F. McCrindle in honor of John Thomas Rowe, Jr. 2004.101.2

ENTRY

The Prophet Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath illustrates the passage in 1 Kings 17:8–24 that recounts how the Lord led the prophet Elijah to Zarephath, where he met a widow and her son gathering sticks. [1] Elijah asked the widow for some water and bread, and although she was destitute because of the draught that had plagued the land for more than three years, she used her last bit of flour and oil to cook for him. Elijah then blessed her and her child and assured them that their supplies of flour and oil would never be diminished. Shortly thereafter the widow's son died, and Elijah prayed that the Lord would return the child to life. The Lord heard Elijah's prayer and returned the boy's soul to his body. This Old Testament story was often interpreted as exemplifying the power of faith to achieve miracles. It also portends New Testament accounts of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. The way the widow's son clutches a large bundle of sticks anticipates Christ's carrying of the cross on the way to Golgotha, and because the boy was brought back from the dead, he was also seen as alluding to the resurrected Christ. [2]

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Significantly, when this painting appeared at auction in Paris in 1752, it was sold as a pendant to a painting by Poelenburch of Abraham and Isaac, another Old Testament story that was considered to embody the power of faith and to prefigure Christ's death and resurrection. [3]

In Poelenburch's painting the meeting of the prophet, shown wrapped in a red robe, and the widow, who kneels before him, occurs near the end of the day under cerulean blue skies. Light spreading across the parched and barren terrain illuminates their forms, as well as those of other, more distant travelers who pass through a landscape dotted with clusters of ancient ruins atop small hills or nestled against rock outcroppings. Although most of these structures are imaginary evocations of ruins Poelenburch had seen on his travels through the Roman campagna, the large shaded ruin in the foreground left, with its precariously balanced pediment, is based on the Temple of Castor and Pollux from the Roman Forum, a ruin that Poelenburch depicted often in his works. [4] He used these ruins to establish a sense of time and place, but he also carefully situated them for compositional effect. They not only help create scale and enhance spatial recession, but they also reinforce the narrative. By framing Elijah's upper body within the circular vault of a distant ruin, for example, Poelenburch gave the prophet added visual prominence in the scene.

Poelenburch continued to paint biblical scenes in Italianate landscapes even after he returned to Utrecht in the mid-1620s, making it difficult to date his paintings. The restrained poses and gestures of the figures in this work, which reflect the influence of Raphael (Marchigian, 1483 - 1520), the blue and ocher tonalities, and the soft atmospheric effects in the distant landscape are all characteristic of Poelenburch's paintings executed around 1630. The oak panel support is also typical of works he painted in Utrecht at that time. Moreover, the subject seems to have appealed to Dutch patrons. The closest pictorial prototype for Poelenburch's interpretation of the story is a now-lost painting by Poelenburch's teacher, Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651), known through a 1604 engraving by Jan Pietersz Saenredam (Dutch, 1565 - 1607), in which the widow is similarly shown kneeling and gathering sticks with her son [fig. 1]. [5]

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan Pietersz Saenredam after Abraham Bloemaert, *Elijah with the Widow of Zarephath*, 1604, engraving, The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. David C. Ruttenberg, 1982.434. © AIC

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Sohee Kim for her assistance in researching this entry.

[2] I would like to thank the Reverend Steven Rich for his explanations about the biblical significance of this story (correspondence December 8 and 9, 2009, in the NGA curatorial files). See Christian Tümpel, *Het Oude Testament in de Schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1991), 101.

[3] It is not known whether this painting still exists.

[4] Poelenburch first depicted this ruin in *Shepherds with their Flocks in a Landscape with Roman Ruins,* c. c. 1620, oil on copper, 12 ½ x 15 ¾ in.,

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Royal Collection. See: *Treasures from the Royal Collection: The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace* (London, 1988), 72, no. 54.

[5] Bartholomeus Breenbergh (1598–1657) followed the same pictorial tradition in his *Landscape with Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath*, 1656, oil on panel, 69.5 x 92 cm, The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (inv. 6158).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support consists of a single-planked panel with horizontal grain. On the reverse, all four edges are beveled and tool marks are visible along the left edge. A thin, white ground covers the panel, but allows the wood grain to show through. Microscopic examination showed several incised diagonal lines in the ground, which may be compositional or perspective guides. The paint is smoothly and precisely applied in fine detail.

The painting is in very good condition. A wooden insert in the panel in the top left corner was probably added to replace an area damaged by insects. Short checks and small chips in the panel are found along the edges. The paint and ground bear some groupings of small losses that follow the wood grain in the foreground figures at lower right, in the clouds, and in the center of the sky. The painting was treated in 2006 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting.

PROVENANCE

Cottin collection; (his sale, by Pierre Remy and Sieur Helle, Paris, 27 November-22 December 1752, 1st day, no. 382);[1] purchased by Le Brun. (sale, Sotheby's, London, 21 February 1962, no. 66); (Thos. Agnew and Sons, Ltd., London); sold 29 May 1963 to Joseph F. McCrindle [1923-2008], New York;[2] gift 2004 to NGA.

[1] The painting was sold as a pendant to Poelenburch's "Abraham conduissant son Fil Isaac au lieu du Sacrifice, 12 pounces de haut sur 15 1/2 de large." On the verso of the panel are some unidentified wax seals.

[2] Also on the verso is an Agnew's label with the number 24022 stenciled on it.

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Venetia Harlow, Agnew's archivist, confirmed in an e-mail of 21 December 2009 to Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. (in NGA curatorial files) that this label number corresponded to Agnew's stock number 3792, and provided the details of their acquisition and sale of the painting.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Portrait of the Painter Paulus Potter*, 1654, oil on canvas Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague, inv. no. 54

Potter, Paulus

Dutch, 1625 - 1654

BIOGRAPHY

Paulus Potter came from a family of artists. His father, Pieter Simonsz Potter (c. 1600–1652), was a practicing artist, and his mother, Aaltje Paulusdr Bartsius, was the sister of the painter Willem Bartsius (born c. 1612). Paulus was baptized in Enkhuizen, on November 20, 1625. In 1631 the family moved to Amsterdam, where, according to Houbraken, Potter studied painting under his father. Other writers, however, have argued that Potter studied with the Amsterdam painter Claes Moeyaert (c. 1590/1591–1655), whose style was similar to that of Pieter Potter. Since a "P. Potter" was registered in 1642 as a student of the Haarlem artist Jacob de Wet (1610–c. 1675), it seems probable that Potter would also have been familiar with artistic currents in that city during the early 1640s.

By 1646 Potter was living in Delft, where he joined the painters' guild on August 6 of that year. In 1647 the family seems to have moved to The Hague, for in that year his father registered with the guild in that city and his sister was baptized there. Potter himself is first mentioned in guild records there in 1649. On July 3, 1650, he married Adriana Balcken Eynde, the daughter of the city architect. From 1649 to 1652 Potter rented a house on the Dunne Bierkade owned by the landscape painter Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656).

It may have been through his father-in-law, who worked on royal building projects, that Potter came to receive commissions from Amalia van Solms, widow of Frederik

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Hendrik, Prince of Orange. Potter executed at least one picture for her, now in the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, but apparently he did not fulfill other obligations: in 1651 he was sued by the royal court for failure to deliver paintings.

By May 1, 1652, Potter had returned to Amsterdam, according to Houbraken at the urging of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp. In the following year he painted the impressive life-sized equestrian portrait of Nicolaes Tulp's son, Dirck Tulp (Six Collection, Amsterdam). Potter died from tuberculosis shortly thereafter, at the young age of twenty-eight. He was buried in the Nieuwezijdskapel on January 17, 1654. Despite his short life, Potter produced a body of original and influential works. From very early in his career, he accorded animals an extremely important position in his compositions and was one of the first artists to depict them as subjects in their own right. He also produced some two dozen etchings of animal subjects.

Although he had no documented pupils, Potter may have influenced Karel Dujardin (Dutch, 1626 - 1678), for landscapes the latter produced around the time of Potter's death are quite similar in style.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
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Paulus Potter
Dutch, 1625 - 1654

A Farrier's Shop

1648

oil on panel
overall: 48.3 x 45.7 cm (19 x 18 in.)
framed: 71.12 × 68.58 × 7.62 cm (28 × 27 × 3 in.)
Inscription: center left in transom frame above doorway: paulus potter f. 1648
Widener Collection 1942.9.52

ENTRY

According to Paulus Potter's widow, the artist would put a small sketchbook in his pocket whenever he had time to take a walk. When he saw something that was intriguing or enjoyable and that might serve his purpose, he immediately sketched the subject. [1] This anecdote about Potter's working process may well help explain how he came upon the idea to depict this intense little drama between man and animal outside a farrier's shop, a subject no other Dutch artist ever depicted. One can only imagine that Potter, on one of his walks near the fields outside of The Hague, was attracted by the commotion caused by a horse having its teeth filed, or floated. A large metal instrument, known as a twitch, pinched the animal's muzzle so that it would keep its mouth open. [2] On such an occasion Potter must have seen the horse rearing back and pawing the air with its left foreleg. He would have noted the intense concentration of the old, bespectacled farrier as he braced himself to work the rasp, and the open-mouthed expression of his younger accomplice holding the restraint. He also may have witnessed the slack-jawed gaze of the young bystander, who, with hands stuffed in his pockets, looks up at the operation in amazement. Inside the shop, hard at work at his anvil, the blacksmith takes no more interest in the proceedings than do the dogs or the chickens scratching for food. Whether Potter recorded his impressions in his sketchbook or merely carried them home in his head, the subject was so vivid in his mind that he was able to create a work that captures the emotional intensity of the moment.

Although the basic compositional scheme is one that Potter had developed in the previous year, particularly in *Figures with Horses by a Stable,* signed and dated

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1647 (Philadelphia Museum of Art), [3] this painting is unique in its vivid characterization of a scene. To enhance the dramatic effect Potter situated the action along a shaded diagonal wedge formed by the farrier shop and the small wooden structure attached to it, known as the brake. Long shadows on the ground and the brightly illuminated white horse behind the central group of figures accentuate the chiaroscuro contrasts between foreground and background. Gray smoke from the blacksmith's fire rises from the chimney and merges into the dark clouds of the windswept sky.

It is not known what influences inspired Potter to develop this compositional scheme, although enough similarities exist between it and paintings by Pieter van Laer (Dutch, c. 1592 - 1642) and Isack van Ostade (Dutch, 1621 - 1649) to suggest that Potter might have been familiar with works by those artists (see, for example, Van Ostade's The Halt at the Inn and Workmen before an Inn). Indeed, Potter apparently spent some time in Haarlem in the mid-1640s. It was only after he joined the Saint Luke's Guild in Delft in 1646, however, that he began to incorporate *contre-jour* light effects, which he would have learned from Italianate painters. [4]

As is evident from the anecdote about his walks with his sketchbook, and also from his drawings [fig. 1] and etchings, Potter observed the world carefully and recorded his impressions without idealization. A comparison of the study of a horse in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts and the white horse in *A Farrier's Shop* suggests that he composed his paintings on the basis of such drawings. Presumably, comparable studies from life also existed for other figures in this painting.

The intense realism of Potter's style was particularly appreciated in the nineteenth century, and his works commanded enormous sums of money. [5] This painting, for example, fetched 15,000 francs in the Perregaux sale of 1841, perhaps in part because of the enthusiastic, and extensive, description in the sale catalog. The special place reserved for the painting within this esteemed artist's oeuvre is particularly evident in the concluding sentence of the catalog entry: "En dernière analyse, c'est un tableau de Paul Potter aussi parfait de coloris, de faire, de sentiment, de verité, que les plus beaux qu'il ait jamais enfantes, avec l'avantage inappreciable d'une composition plus savante, plus variée et plus animée." [6]

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Paulus Potter, *Study of a Horse*, pencil, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham

NOTES

[1] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 2:129. Houbraken received this information in a letter written by Nicolaas van Reenen, the son of Potter's widow. The full text quoted by Houbraken is: “Dat hy zyn Moeder dikwerf heeft hooren zeggen: Dat zy haar Man nooit ledig heeft gezien; dat hy zelf wanneer hy een uur voor haar over had om een zyn zak by zig droeg; om als hy iets zag dat geestig was, en in zyn kraam konde dienen, staks dat voorwerp af te schetsen.”

[2] Much confusion has existed in old references about the exact operation being undertaken by the old man in the red shirt. In the Clemens sale of 1777 in Ghent it was thought that he was giving a cure to the horse (“fait une cure à un cheval”). In the Johan Philip de Monté sale, the action was described as “bettering the teeth” (“de tanden te verbeteren”). The catalog text in the Perregaux sale of 1841 described the man as examining the

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horse's mouth with an iron probe ("examiner, avec une sonde de fer, la bouche à demi ouverte de l'animal"). When the painting was exhibited as part of the Rudolphe Kann collection in Paris in 1907 (see Charles Sedelmeyer, *Catalogue of Rodolphe Kann Collection*, 2 vols. [Paris, 1907]), it was thought that the man was extracting a tooth, an interpretation that was maintained in the Widener catalogs. Amy L. Walsh ("Paulus Potter: His Works and Their Meaning," PhD diss. [Columbia University, 1985], 92) has noted that horses' teeth are filed or floated because they continue to grow as the animals age. She interprets this farrier and his apprentice as swindlers who are filing the horse's teeth to make the animal appear younger than it is. Filing a horse's teeth is, however, a standard bit of care for the animal as the uneven wear of unfloated teeth can cause disruptions in proper digestion and thus lead to malnutrition.

[3] See inventory no. E1924–3–17, from Philadelphia Museum of Art.

[4] Potter first used *contre-jour* light in his *Cows Driven to Pasture,* 1647, in the Residenzgalerie, Salzburg. For an illustration of this work see Peter C. Sutton et al., *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 418, fig. 1.

[5] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 5:117, noted the high prices that Potter's paintings commanded.

[6] Perregaux sale, Paris, November 25, 1841, 52 (see Provenance). ("In the final analysis, this is a painting by Paul Potter that is as perfect in its colors, its execution, its mood, [and] its veracity as the most beautiful he ever created, with the invaluable advantage of a more erudite, varied, and animated composition.")

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The cradled-panel support consists of a single board with a vertical grain. Worm tunnels are visible in the X-radiograph and on the back of the panel, and a small vertical hairline crack is found along the bottom edge, just right of center. Vertical striations are visible from the brush application of the moderately thick white ground. Opaque paint is applied in light passages with impasted highlights, while dark passages are thinly glazed in a series of translucent layers.

Pentimenti of a chicken and a stick are visible in the lower right corner, and minor changes were made in the legs of the standing dog. The sky and dark passages are moderately abraded, and there are scattered small losses and local abrasions,

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particularly along the right edge in a vertical band. The painting was treated in 1981 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting, although insoluble overpaint was left in place in some areas.

PROVENANCE

Dominique Bertrand Clemens, Ghent; (his sale, Salle de la Confrerie de Saint George, Ghent, 23 September 1777 and days following, no. 49; bought in). his brother, Jacques Clemens, canon of St. Bavo's Cathedral [1713-1779], Ghent; (his sale, Maison Mortuaire, Ghent, 21 June 1779 and days following, no. 212); Neijman, Amsterdam. Johan Philip de Monté, Utrecht; his widow; (her sale, A. Lamme, Rotterdam, 4-5 July 1825, no. 1); (Lambert Jean Nieuwenhuys, Brussels).[1] Comte François-Alexandre-Charles Perregaux [1791-1837], Paris; (his estate sale, Galerie Le Brun, Paris, 8-9 December 1841, no. 26); George. Madame Autran, Marseille, by 1867. (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris), in 1898. M. Rodolphe Kann [d. 1905], Paris and Marseilles, by 1900; purchased 1907 with the entire Kann collection by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); sold 1909 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] An annotated copy of the De Monté sale catalogue states that Nieuwenhuys purchased the picture for 7,100 guilders. For a discussion of the sale and L.J. Nieuwenhuys' purchase of the work, see Charles J. Nieuwenhuys, *A Review of the Lives and Works of Some of the Most Eminent Painters*, London, 1834, 186-188.

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Jakob Houbraken, *Adam Pynacker* (detail), engraving, in Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (The Hague: J. Swart, C. Boucquet, en M. Gaillard, 1753), vol. 2, pl. D, National Gallery of Art Library, Gift of C. Dearhoff

Pynacker, Adam

Also known as
Pijnacker, Adam
Dutch, c. 1620 - 1673

BIOGRAPHY

Pynacker's approximate date of birth can be deduced from a document of January 22, 1652, in which he is recorded as being thirty-one years old. He was almost certainly born in Schiedam. He appears to have first had a career as wine merchant, like his father, Christiaen Pynacker. In this capacity he traveled to Delft where he met the Delft innkeeper, painter, and art dealer Adam Pick (c. 1622–before 1666), who became a close associate of Pynacker's family. Only one painting by Pick survives, making it impossible to establish any stylistic influence he may have had on Pynacker, though he presumably helped him establish his career as a painter. Pynacker is recorded in Delft from 1649 to 1651 and again in 1657. He seems to have worked frequently in that city, although he may have continued to live in Schiedam, where documents mention him in 1651, 1652, and 1658. In 1654 and 1655 Pynacker worked for the Brandenburg royal court at Lenzen in Germany. Several of his paintings appear in Delft inventories of the early 1650s, and in about 1653 the Delft painter Leonard Bramer (Dutch, 1596 - 1674) sketched copies of three of his landscapes.

On September 20, 1658, Pynacker married Eva Maria de Geest, the daughter of the portrait painter Wijbrand de Geest (1592–after 1660). Upon his marriage he converted to Catholicism, and his two children were baptized as Catholics in

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Schiedam in 1660 and 1661. During the 1660s Pynacker moved to Amsterdam, where he is recorded in 1669 and 1671, although he is also documented in Schiedam again in 1670, the year of his last dated painting. He died in Amsterdam in March 1673.

Houbraken states that Pynacker spent several years in Italy. Although his atmospheric, idyllic landscapes have a strongly Italianate character, there is no documentary evidence from the 1640s and 1650s to prove that he did indeed travel to Italy. He may have learned about the Italian campagna through the works of other artists, particularly Jan Asselijn (Dutch, c. 1610 - 1652), Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652), and Herman Saftleven (Dutch, 1609 - 1685), whose works seem to have been a source of inspiration. Nevertheless, Pynacker's landscapes are compositionally quite imaginative and adhere only rarely to the classical principles of composition favored by other Italianizing Dutch landscape painters. He also executed a few series of large landscapes that were commissioned by wealthy merchants as decorative ensembles to adorn their town houses and country properties.

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April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Adam Pynacker
Dutch, c. 1620 - 1673

Wooded Landscape with Travelers

late 1640s

oil on canvas
overall: 57 x 48 cm (22 7/16 x 18 7/8 in.)
framed: 77.2 x 69.4 cm (30 3/8 x 27 5/16 in.)
Gift of Ruth B. Benedict and Bertha B. Leubsdorf in memory of Sophie and Carl Boschwitz 1979.27.1

ENTRY

In this densely wooded landscape, dappled light draws the eye to the various figural groups that help enliven the scene. In the foreground four resting travelers quietly converse while in the distance a man and a woman tend a fire on the bank of a stream, perhaps to prepare a repast for the travelers resting in a nearby boat. Light not only picks out figural groups, but also illuminates pockets of grass and accents tree trunks and the lively rhythms of branches, even those growing from broken logs lying on the ground.

This landscape, which is neither signed nor dated, has been attributed to Adam Pynacker by Bode, Nieuwstraten, and Harwood. [1] An early work, it probably dates to the late 1640s. [2] In style and character, this painting relates closely to *Wooded Landscape with a Ford* in the Museum Bredius [fig. 1], which Harwood dates about 1648. [3] The stump in the foreground of that latter work, with its high projecting branch on the left and a lower branch on the right, is strikingly similar to the stump on the far bank in the *Wooded Landscape with Travelers*. The horizontal log with its lacelike branches also resembles the boughs of the dead tree enclosed in the underbrush in the National Gallery of Art painting. More significantly, the handling of space in these works is much the same: in both paintings the artist composed his scene with a series of planes approximately parallel to the picture plane.

Pynacker's setting is undoubtedly imaginary, although the roughness and untamed character of this hilly terrain, the types of trees, as well as their ocher tonalities,

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reflect the character of the eastern region of the Netherlands. Indeed, the figures are dressed in contemporary clothes similar to those one would expect from Dutch travelers. Whether or not Pynacker did go to Italy, as Houbraken asserts, [4] there is little evidence in this early work that he was influenced by Italianate landscapists he would have seen there, except for the use of *contra-jour* light to accent figures and foliage. [5]

The prominence of the broken tree trunk in this work suggests, as Harwood has already postulated, that Pynacker looked beyond his native Schiedam for artistic inspiration and turned to the far more active community of painters in nearby Rotterdam. [6] There he would have met, among others, Herman Saftleven (Dutch, 1609 - 1685), who painted in 1647 a comparable forest scene with resting travelers that is similarly dominated by a huge broken tree stump (see the 1995 catalog entry PDF for the comparative image). This motif, however, was not unique to Saftleven, and, indeed, it gained great prominence in landscape paintings of the late 1640s. For example, it is also seen in paintings as diverse as Jacob van Ruisdael's *A Blasted Elm with a View of Egmond aan Zee,* 1648 (The Currier Gallery of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire), and Salomon van Ruysdael's *River Landscape with Ferry*. Whether the broken tree trunk had specific symbolic associations, such as the transience of life, or whether artists were attracted to it for other pictorial reasons is not known.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Adam Pynacker, *Wooded Landscape with a Ford*, c. 1648, oil on panel, Museum Bredius, The Hague

NOTES

[1] Wilhelm von Bode, director of the Prussian Royal Museums, 1906–1920, in a label attached to the back of *Wooded Landscape with Travelers,* probably written in 1925: “Die vorstehend abgebildete Landschaft ist ein tüchtiges u. charakteristisches Bild der Adam Pynacker, von beste Erhaltung, W. V. Bode.” See letter to purchaser Carl Boschwitz from Dr. Eduard Plietzsch, director, Galerie van Diemen, Berlin, September 24, 1925, in NGA curatorial files; J. Nieuwstraten, director, Rijksbureau von Kunsthistorische Documentatie, letter, April 26, 1979, also in National Gallery of Art curatorial files; and Laurie B. Harwood, *Adam Pynacker (c. 1620–1673)* (Doornspijk, 1988), 113, no. 9.

[2] This date is also proposed by J. Nieuwstraten, director, Rijksbureau von Kunsthistorische Documentatie, letter, April 26, 1979, in National Gallery of Art curatorial files. Laurie B. Harwood, *Adam Pynacker (c. 1620–1673)* (Doornspijk, 1988), 113, no. 9, proposes c. 1649. Pynacker’s earliest dated painting is 1650. See Laurie B. Harwood, *Adam Pynacker (c. 1620–1673)* (Doornspijk, 1988), 18, no. 15.

[3] Laurie B. Harwood, *Adam Pynacker (c. 1620–1673)* (Doornspijk, 1988), 101, no. 4. Reproduced in Albert Blankert, *Museum Bredius: Catalogus van de Schilderijen en Tekeningen* (The Hague, 1978), 102, where, however, Blankert suggests a date of 1650/1655.

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[4] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976): 2:96. Houbraken does not indicate when Pynacker went to Italy, and the possibility exists that Pynacker travelled to Italy at a later stage of his career.

[5] See, for example, An Italianate Evening Landscape by Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652). Although Both painted this work after he returned to Utrecht, it reflects the style of paintings he made in Italy.

[6] Laurie B. Harwood, *A Golden Harvest: Paintings by Adam Pynacker,* exh. cat., Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute (Williamstown, MA, 1994), 25.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the right, left, and top tacking margins trimmed and the bottom tacking margin turned out and incorporated into the picture plane. A hard, brittle layer of sizing is discernible below the thin, tan ground layer. Paint is applied as fluid pastes and stippling in the foliage.

The condition of the painting is only moderately good. The greens in the landscape, moreover, have darkened over time. Discrete inpainting covers scattered small losses, and later repaint is found along the bottom edge. In 1978 the painting was lined and discolored varnish and inpainting were removed.

PROVENANCE

(Galerie van Diemen, Berlin); sold 1925 to Carl Boschwitz, New York; [1] by inheritance 1977 to his daughters, Dr. Ruth B. Benedict [1913-1993], Washington, D.C., and Bertha B. Leubsdorf, New York; gift 1979 to NGA.

[1] See the letter dated 24 September 1925 from Dr. Eduard Plietzsch of the Galerie van Diemen to Carl Boschwitz, in NGA curatorial files.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1994 A Golden Harvest: Paintings by Adam Pynacker, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown; John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, 1994, no. 2, repro.

2002 Extended loan for use by Attorney General John Ashcroft, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., 2002-2005.

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1994 Harwood, Laurie B. *A Golden Harvest: Paintings by Adam Pynacker*. Exh. cat. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown; John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota. Williamstown, 1994: 40-41, no. 2, repro.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 201-202, color repro. 203.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait*, 1659, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.72

Rembrandt van Rijn

Also known as
Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn
Rembrandt
Rijn, Rembrandt Harmensz. van
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

BIOGRAPHY

Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn, born in Leiden on July 15, 1606, was the son of a miller, Harmen Gerritsz van Rijn, and his wife, Neeltgen van Zuytbrouck. The youngest son of at least ten children, Rembrandt was not expected to carry on his father's business. Since the family was prosperous enough, they sent him to the Leiden Latin School, where he remained for seven years. In 1620 he enrolled briefly at the University of Leiden, perhaps to study theology. Orlers, Rembrandt's first biographer, related that because "by nature he was moved toward the art of painting and drawing," Rembrandt left the university to study the fundamentals of painting with the Leiden artist Jacob Isaacsz van Swanenburgh (1571–1638). After three years with this master, Rembrandt left in 1624 for Amsterdam, where he studied for six months under Pieter Lastman (1583–1633), the most important history painter of the day.

After returning to Leiden, Rembrandt quickly developed a reputation as a history painter and portraitist. By 1628 his work, together with that of his Leiden colleague Jan Lievens (Dutch, 1607 - 1674), was enthusiastically praised by Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687), the secretary to the Prince of Orange. Huygens particularly admired Rembrandt's uncanny ability to convey feeling through gesture and expression and through dramatic contrasts of light and dark. That same year, Rembrandt, at the age of twenty-two, took on his first pupils, Gerrit Dou (Dutch,

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1613 - 1675) and Isaac Jouderville (1612–1645/1648). Documents indicate that Jouderville paid Rembrandt one hundred guilders a year to study with him.

By 1631 Rembrandt had become financially involved with the Amsterdam art dealer Hendrik van Uylenburgh (c. 1587–1661). The nature of Van Uylenburgh's enterprise, which was called "an academy" in its day, is not entirely understood, but it appears that he orchestrated an active art studio that specialized in portrait commissions. In any event, in about 1632 Rembrandt moved to Amsterdam, where he lived with Van Uylenburgh and ran his "academy" until 1635. Rembrandt achieved tremendous success in his lifetime. He received many commissions and attracted a number of students who came to learn his method of painting. Artists who had previously been trained elsewhere, including Jacob Backer (1608–1651), Govaert Flinck (Dutch, 1615 - 1660), and Ferdinand Bol (Dutch, 1616 - 1680), worked during these years at Van Uylenburgh's studio under Rembrandt's guidance.

In 1633 Rembrandt became engaged to Van Uylenburgh's niece Saskia, daughter of a wealthy and prominent Frisian family. They married the following year. In 1639, at the height of his success, Rembrandt purchased a large house on the Sint-Anthonisbreestraat in Amsterdam for a considerable amount of money. To acquire the house, however, he had to borrow heavily, creating a debt that would eventually figure in his financial problems of the mid- 1650s. Rembrandt and Saskia had four children, but only Titus, born in 1641, survived infancy. After a long illness Saskia died in 1642, the very year Rembrandt painted *The Night Watch* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).

During the 1640s life became more unsettled for Rembrandt. Geertje Dirckx soon entered the household as a nurse for Titus and became a companion to Rembrandt. In 1649 he dismissed her and entered into a relationship with Hendrickje Stoffels that would last until her death in 1663. While Hendrickje seems to have been a warm and caring companion for Rembrandt, the early 1650s were fraught with personal turmoil. Rembrandt and Geertje Dirckx became embroiled in a number of contentious lawsuits that suggest he treated his former companion quite badly. Rembrandt and Hendrickje never married because of a stipulation in Saskia's will that he was bound to transfer half of his and Saskia's joint assets to Titus should he remarry.[1] After Saskia's death, the net value of their assets was determined to be more than forty thousand guilders. Presumably in the early 1650s Rembrandt did not have twenty thousand guilders to give to Titus. Being unmarried caused Hendrickje public humiliation when she became pregnant in 1654. She was called before a council of the Dutch Reformed Church and censored for having

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"lived with Rembrandt like a whore." The couple's daughter, Cornelia, was baptized on October 30, 1654.

Perhaps as a result of the public outrage over his domestic situation or his treatment of Geertje Dirckx, Rembrandt lost favor with many of his patrons and became burdened by financial difficulties during these years. In 1656 he was forced to declare bankruptcy, which led to the auctioning off of his estate, including his large art collection, in 1657 and 1658. He then moved to an artist's quarter in the Jordaan district of Amsterdam, eventually renting a relatively small house on the Rozengracht where he lived for the rest of his life. Hendrickje and Titus subsequently formed a business partnership to protect Rembrandt from further demands of creditors.

Although Rembrandt still received a number of important portrait commissions during the late 1650s and early 1660s, stylistic trends had veered away from his deeply personal manner of painting. He became more and more isolated from the mainstreams of Dutch art. No students are documented as having worked with him during the latter half of the 1650s, and only one student, Aert de Gelder (1645–1727), is known to have come to study with him in the 1660s.

Rembrandt's financial situation remained poor during the 1660s. He owed a substantial amount of money, in particular to the art dealer and collector Lodewijk van Ludick, a debt he hoped to repay with the money he would receive from his large painting for one of the lunettes in the Amsterdam Town Hall, *The Conspiracy of Claudius Civilis* (Nationalmuseum, Stockholm). Rembrandt's composition, however, was rejected by city authorities in 1662. To raise funds he was then forced to sell Saskia's grave in the Oude Kerk. He never regained financial solvency and ended up living on the savings of his daughter, Cornelia.

Although Rembrandt remained famous as an artist, there seems to have been little to lighten the burdens of his life during his last years. In 1663 the plague ravaged Amsterdam and claimed the life of Hendrickje. Four years later Titus married Magdalena van Loo, but in 1668 he also died, the victim of another epidemic. When Rembrandt died on October 4, 1669, he was buried in a rented grave, which has long since disappeared, in the Westerkerk, Amsterdam.

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[1] Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 320, doc. no. 1654/15; Dudok van Heel in Josua Bruyn, *Rembrandt's Workshop: Its Function and Production* (Berlin, 1991), 57.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn (and Workshop?)
Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669
Anonymous Artist

The Apostle Paul

c. 1657

oil on canvas
overall: 131.5 x 104.4 cm (51 3/4 x 41 1/8 in.)
framed: 177.8 x 150.5 x 13.3 cm (70 x 59 1/4 x 5 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right on desk: Rembrandt f
Widener Collection 1942.9.59

ENTRY

Sitting before a table in the recesses of his prison cell, Saint Paul has brought his hand to his head as he ponders the words he is about to write in the large tome that lies before him. The weighty expression of his strong features underscores the depth of his belief and the purposefulness of his mission to spread Christianity to the heathen. The sword visible above the book is as much the "sword of the Spirit," the term he used to describe the word of God in his letter to the Ephesians (6:17), as it is the symbol of his military might before his conversion or the foreboding of his eventual martyrdom.

This large and imposing painting from the late 1650s depicts a figure that preoccupied Rembrandt throughout his life, from his 1627 *Saint Paul in Prison* [fig. 1] to his moving 1661 representation of himself in the guise of Saint Paul [fig. 2]. As is evident from these three paintings, Rembrandt's concern with Paul, or Saul, was not the dramatic moment in the apostle's life when he was converted to Christianity on the road to Damascus. Rembrandt apparently never depicted, as did so many before him, Saul felled from his horse by a blinding light from heaven, nor Saul and his companions traveling to Damascus, where, after Saul's sight was restored, he was baptized and had his name changed to Paul. Paul the apostle, however, fascinated Rembrandt, perhaps because his writings were the most important source for Reformation theology, or, perhaps, because he personified the Christian ideal of grace received independently of merit. As Rembrandt grew older and experienced the pain and shame of his unfortunate relationship with

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Geertje Dirckx and the financial crises of the 1650s, the latter associations must have been strongly felt. Certainly, by the mid-1650s, Rembrandt began to focus on the frailty and the strength of the man, both as Saul—in the artist's moving depiction of Saul and David in the Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague, [1]—and as the apostle Paul in such paintings as this work and Rembrandt's portrait *An Elderly Man as Saint Paul* of 1659 (National Gallery, London). [2]

The 1627 representation of Saint Paul in Stuttgart (see [fig. 1]) offers a fascinating point of comparison with the Washington painting, for it demonstrates differences in attitude characteristic of Rembrandt's stylistic and iconographic evolution. Whereas the Rembrandt of 1627 placed Paul in an identifiable environment, where bricks and mortar, wood and straw have been carefully delineated, and where the light source can be specifically identified, the Rembrandt of the late 1650s suppressed such references to time and place. In this later representation he created the sense of the prison cell rather than its specific character. The gentle light that illuminates Paul's head, hand, and epistle, for example, has no defined point of origin. The late Rembrandt has also brought the viewer closer to the figure of the saint. He depicted Paul at half length rather than full length to allow the viewer to experience more fully the intensity of the saint's expression.

Paul's expression is also markedly different in the two works. Whereas in the Stuttgart painting Paul brings his hand to his mouth and stares into the distance, seemingly uncertain of the meanings of the words inscribed in the tomes surrounding him, in the Washington painting Paul's hand has come to his forehead as though he is pondering the significance of Christ's life. As he stares toward his sword, his demeanor is pensive rather than bewildered. The differences are in part due to the broadness of Rembrandt's mature painting technique, which emphasizes the structure of form without focusing on the specifics of veins, wrinkles, and hair, and in part due to the way light strikes Paul's head, which leaves his eyes obscured in shadow.

Paul's distinctive facial features—his flowing beard, long nose, and deep-set, slightly sad eyes—are those of a model whom Rembrandt occasionally depicted in the 1650s and early 1660s. While this model is most directly represented in two portrait studies, *A Bearded Man in a Cap*, 165(7) [fig. 3], and *A Bearded Man*, 1661, The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, [3] Rembrandt adapted the model's features in 1653 for another contemplative, historicizing painting, *Aristotle Contemplating a Bust of Homer*, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and for The Philosopher, c. 1653, by a member of the Rembrandt Workshop (see The

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Philosopher). In *The Apostle Paul*, Rembrandt slightly generalized upon the model's facial characteristics, both to suggest the historical nature of the subject and to enhance the contemplative mood of the scene. Rembrandt would also have adapted his painting techniques for modeling the face so that they would relate better to the broad handling evident in rest of the composition.

The paints are applied in a somewhat dryer, thinner manner than are those in *A Bearded Man in a Cap* (see [fig. 3]), which may well be a function of Paul's larger scale and the probability that it was meant to be viewed from a more distant vantage point. Nevertheless, the general painting techniques in the two works are comparable. [4] In each instance Rembrandt drew his brush across the canvas with economical strokes that suggest but do not define form. He applied flesh tones without careful blending over a warm, underlying layer, and indicated features such as the eyes and nose with planes of color instead of accentuating them with sharp contour lines. He suggested the beard and hair with long, flowing strokes, in which a few lightly colored strands stand out against the darker forms of the rest.

X-radiographs [see X-radiography] reveal that Rembrandt may have conceived of *The Apostle Paul* at the outset as an oval composition that extended somewhat below and substantially above the present confines of the composition ([fig. 4] and [fig. 5]). [5] The fact that this large composition may originally have been oval raises the possibility that the painting was done for a specific commission. One can imagine, for example, that this broadly executed image could have been planned for an architectural setting, to be seen from a distance and from below. [6] If so, the commission must have not have been fulfilled, and the painting was subsequently reduced in size and reconceived as a rectangular composition, with corners added at the top left and bottom edges. The current inserts most likely are not the original ones, however.

Apparently a major compositional change accompanied the change in format: the large tome on the desk before Saint Paul was initially propped on a slanted surface at the level of Paul's left elbow. As originally conceived, the apostle was leaning his elbow on the desk in a pose not unlike that of David in Rembrandt's pen and wash drawing *Nathan Admonishing David* of 1654–1655 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). [8] By lowering the surface of the desk, Rembrandt effectively changed the meaning of the gesture of Paul's left hand. Rather than providing physical support for the apostle's head, it emphasizes the spiritual intensity of Saint Paul's thoughts as he ponders the mysteries about which he writes. The X-radiographs also give the impression that in the original concept the apostle was staring at the

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text before him. In any event, the transformations in the composition, which emphasize the psychological over the physical, give a particularly fascinating insight into Rembrandt's creative process during this period of his career.

An extensive conservation treatment of the painting in 1999–2002 confirmed that *The Apostle Paul* had a complicated paint structure in many areas. With the removal of the darkened varnish layers and later overpainting [see Overpaint], it has become evident that at least two layers of paint are to be found in certain areas, in particular on the cloak covering Paul's right shoulder. The relatively murky paint applied with extremely free brushstrokes in this area seems to lack the clarity of the master's hand, which raises questions about when, why, and by whom this intervention was made. The sword is another area where an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop may have worked on this painting. Its careful modeling differs from Rembrandt's freer manner of painting. Paint analysis also indicates that the sword was introduced at a second stage in the artistic process. The sword's shape and the relatively smooth painting technique used to model it are comparable to the sword in *Man in a Military Costume*, a painting dated 1650 and executed by an unknown member of Rembrandt's workshop [fig. 6]. This artist may also have painted Rembrandt's signature, which seems to have been added after the underlying paint had dried. Painted in lead white, it is not brushed in Rembrandt's characteristic fluid manner. [7]

In terms of scale and iconography, *The Apostle Paul* relates closely to *Saint Bartholomew* in the Timken Museum of Art, which is signed and dated 1657 [fig. 7]. Saint Bartholomew, who leans forward and almost aggressively stares out of the picture with an alert, inquisitive expression enlivening his rugged features, holds before him a knife signifying his martyrdom. His active, dynamic personality contrasts with Paul's more contemplative one, perhaps indicating that the adjustments to Paul's image, including changing the format to a rectangular shape, were made in relationship to this work. [9]

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Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Saint Paul in Prison*, 1627, oil on panel, Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait as the Apostle Paul*, 1661, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

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fig. 3 Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Bearded Man in a Cap*, 165(7), oil on canvas, National Gallery, London. Photo © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY

fig. 4 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn (and Workshop?), *The Apostle Paul*, c. 1657, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.59

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fig. 5 Diagram of X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn (and Workshop?), *The Apostle Paul*, c. 1657, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.59

fig. 6 Unknown follower of Rembrandt, *Man in a Military Costume*, 1650, oil on panel, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. Photo: The Bridgeman Art Library

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fig. 7 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Saint Bartholomew*, 1657, oil on canvas, Timken Museum of Art, Putnam Foundation, San Diego

NOTES

[1] For the most reasoned assessment of the attribution of the Mauritshuis painting, with which I agree, see Ary Bob de Vries, Magdi Tóth-Ubbens, and W. Froentjes, *Rembrandt in the Mauritshuis: An Interdisciplinary Study* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1978), 148–165. The authors argue that the painting was executed at two distinct periods, about 1655 and about 1660–1665.

[2] See inventory no. 243, from National Gallery, London.

[3] See inventory no. 751, from Hermitage, Saint Petersburg.

[4] For the technique of *A Bearded Man in a Cap*, see David Bomford, Jo Kirby, Ashok Roy, Axel Rüger, and Raymond White, *Rembrandt, Art in the Making* (London, 2006).

[5] This diagram differs from the one illustrated as fig. 6 in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* (Washington 1995), 245,

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which was drawn with the mistaken assumption that the white oval shape was a Ground layer applied on the recto of the canvas support. The new diagram is made with the understanding that the oval relates to the shape of a ground or paint layer applied to the verso of the canvas. This layer would have covered the exposed area of the support and, hence, could have ended at the curved inner edge of the stretcher. The oval shape in this diagram, consequently, is broader in shape, as it also incorporates the width of the stretcher.
No other large-scale paintings depicting apostles or evangelists are known to have been painted in an oval format. Rembrandt's *The Risen Christ,* 1661 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich, inv. no. 6471; Br. 630), was cut into an oval form at some point in its history, but was probably conceived as a rectangular painting. The central portion of Rembrandt's *Christ* in the Hyde Collection, Glens Falls, New York (Br. 628), was also cut into an irregular oval before being reattached to the original canvas.

[6] No commission for such a work is known.

[7] The signature was painted over a later paint layer that had covered damaged areas. An intervening varnish layer was also found between the paint layers. I would like to thank Susanna Griswald and Melanie Gifford for discussing these issues with me.

[8] See inventory no. Ben. 948, from Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

[9] Otto Benesch, "Worldly and Religious Portraits in Rembrandt's Late Art," *Art Quarterly* 19 (1956): 338–339, first noted the complementary relationship of the two paintings.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric. Triangular fabric inserts have been added to the upper left, lower left and lower right corners. The two inserts in the lower corners appear to be cut from one fabric, which is coarser than the original fabric, and the one in the upper corner is from a third fabric, which is slightly finer than the original. The bottom corner inserts appear much lighter in the X-radiograph, indicating they were prepared with a ground consisting of denser pigments than the original and they may have been cut from a previously painted composition. The support and inserts have been lined and the tacking margins have been removed. No cusping is visible.

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The original canvas was prepared with a brownish quartz-based ground, of the type that is thought to be specific to Rembrandt and his workshop.[1] A faint white area in a roughly oval form is visible in the X-radiographs. [2] In the lower part of the painting, where the oval shape is most clearly visible, it is significantly narrower than the present confines of the composition, though it extended beyond the top and bottom edges of the current canvas.

A number of artist's changes were observed in the X-radiographs and during microscopic examination. The painting seems to have been executed in two stages. In some areas of the painting cross-sections show an intervening layer typical of varnish or "oiling out" between the first and second stages.[3] Initially the apostle's elbow rested on a book lying on an inclined lectern and the background to the right was laid out with buff-colored paint. Significant revisions carried out in the second stage replaced the lectern with a flat surface and introduced the arm of the chair on which the saint leans his elbow. The sword at the right also may have been introduced at this stage.

Paint was applied thinly in dark passages and thickly in light passages, with brushes and a palette knife. Flesh tones are heavily impasted and were blended wet-into-wet. Severe abrasion in thinly painted passages has exposed the ground layer, and thicker passages are moderately abraded. Discolored varnish and inpainting were removed during a conservation treatment that was completed in 2002. Early restorations had altered the original background, introducing forms that vaguely suggested architectural features. Removal of old repaint returned the background to the original simple wall. Paint on the front of the lectern, including the signature, is not original; microscopic examination confirms that it was applied over age cracks. This repaint was not removed, but was retained for historical documentation.[4]

[1] The ground was analyzed by Karin Groen using cross-sections and energy dispersive X-ray analysis (see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project,A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering [Dordrecht, 2005], 666–667). Groen studied the grounds on 153 paintings by Rembrandt and his workshop. She also studied sixty paintings created in Amsterdam in the seventeenth century by artists who were not associated with Rembrandt and his workshop and numerous other Dutch paintings that originated

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outside Amsterdam in the seventeenth century. She found quartz only in the paintings from Rembrandt and his workshop.

[2] In the 1995 catalogue of the National Gallery of Art's Dutch paintings collection, the white oval shape was mistakenly identified as a "moderately thick, off-white ground." Cross-sections of the recto analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department during the conservation treatment on the painting in 1999–2002, however, did not reveal differences in the ground layers within and without the oval shape visible in the X-radiographs. It is possible that the X-ray dense material is on the reverse, hidden beneath the lining fabric (cross-sections on file with the NGA Scientific Research department).

[3] Cross-sections were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated October 3, 2002, which summarizes the revisions to the painting, in NGA Conservation department files) and Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project,A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering (Dordrecht, 2005) 318–334, including the Analytical Table on page 324.

[4] The paint was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections (see report dated October 2002 in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Johan van Schuylenburg, The Hague; (his sale, The Hague, 20 September 1735, no. 31); Backer. Pierre-Louis Éveillard de Livois [1736-1790], Angers;[1] (his estate sale, by Sentout, Angers, unknown date in 1791, no. 65); Gamba;[2] (his sale, by Paillet and Geoffroy, Paris, 17-18 December 1811, 1st day, no. 26, bought in); purchased soon after this sale by Ferdinando Marescalchi [1754-1816], Bologna.[3] Sir George Hayter [1792-1871], London, by 1841;[4] (his sale, Christie & Manson, London, 3 May 1845, no. 82, as *Portrait of Cornelius Von Schrevellier [Schrevellius Translater(sic) of Homer*); (Nieuwenhuys).[5] James-Alexandre, comte de Pourtalès-Gorgier [1776-1855], Paris; (his sale, at his residence, Paris, 27 March-4 April 1865 [this lot 31 March], no. 182); purchased by (Otto Mündler, Paris) for Ivor Bertie Guest, 1st baron Wimborne [1835-1914], Canford Manor, Dorsetshire.[6] (Arthur J. Sulley & Co., London); Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, by

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1912; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Burton Fredericksen brought to the Gallery's attention details of the provenance from Livois through Marescalchi; see his 14 February 1991 letter to Suzannah Fabing, in NGA curatorial files. Further details have been found in the The Getty Provenance Index© Databases.

[2] This was possibly Bartolomeo Gamba (1776-1841), bibliographer, publisher, and librarian of the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice.

[3] An 1813 inventory of Marescalchi's collection includes the painting: "Una mezza figura in grande rappresentante una Persona in meditazione o studiosa, di grande maniera, comprata alla vendita di Monsieur Gamba negozio di Parigi, come dal suo Catalogo. Quadro grande in piedi" (Monica Proni, "Per la ricostruzione della quadreria del Conte Ferdinando Marescalchi (1753-1816)," *Antologia di Belle Arti*, nos. 33/34 [1988]: 39). It is also included in later inventories of the Marescalchi collection made in 1817 and 1824 (Monica Preti Hamard, *Ferdinando Marescalchi (1754-1816): Un collezionista italiano nella Parigi napoleonica*, 2 vols., Bologna, 2005: 1:384, fig. 48; 2:131-132).

[4] Hayter lent the painting an exhibition in 1841.

[5] The dealer's name is written below lot 82 in a copy of the sale catalogue annotated by Lord Northwick, now at Yale University (copy in NGA curatorial files).

[6] *A Catalogue of the Pictures at Canford Manor in the Possession of Lord Wimborne*, Edinburgh, 1888: 63-64, no. 154.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1841 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1841, no. 71, as Portrait of Cornelius Pietersz Hooft.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 17, 27, repro.

2005 Rembrandt's Late Religious Portraits, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 2005, no. 2, repro.

2005 Rembrandt's Saint Bartholomew, Timken Museum of Art, San Diego, 2005-2006, no cat.

2008 Rembrandt: Pintor de Historias [Rembrandt: Painter of History], Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2008-2009, no. 36, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

The Circumcision

1661

oil on canvas
overall: 56.5 x 75 cm (22 1/4 x 29 1/2 in.)
framed: 81.3 x 99 x 8.2 cm (32 x 39 x 3 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right: Rembrandt. f. 1661
Widener Collection 1942.9.60

ENTRY

The only mention of the circumcision of Christ occurs in the Gospel of Luke, 2:15–22: “the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem.... And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.... And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus.” This cursory reference to this most significant event in the early childhood of Christ allowed artists throughout history a wide latitude in the way they represented the circumcision. [1]

The predominant Dutch pictorial tradition was to depict the scene as though it occurred within the temple, as, for example, in Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1558 - 1617)’ influential engraving of the *Circumcision of Christ*, 1594 [fig. 1]. [2] In the Goltzius print, the *mohel* circumcises the Christ child, held by the high priest, as Mary and Joseph stand reverently to the side. Rembrandt largely followed this tradition in his two early etchings of the subject and in his 1646 painting of the *Circumcision* for Prince Frederik Hendrik (now lost). [3]

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The iconographic tradition of the circumcision occurring in the temple, which was almost certainly apocryphal, developed in the twelfth century to allow for a typological comparison between the Jewish rite of circumcision and the Christian rite of cleansing, or baptism. Integral to this tradition was the assumption that shortly after the circumcision, Christ was presented in the temple. A close reading of Saint Luke, however, reveals that a period of time lapsed between the two events. After Luke describes the naming of Jesus at the rite of circumcision, he continues: “And when the [forty] days of [Mary’s] purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord.” Rembrandt’s beautifully evocative painting, which places the scene before the stable, thus reflects far more accurately the circumstances of Christ’s circumcision than do representations of the event within the temple.

Rembrandt must have reassessed the iconography of the circumcision sometime between 1646 and 1654, the year in which he made his intimate etching *The Circumcision in the Stable* as part of a series of etchings of the life of the Christ child [fig. 2]. [4] Rembrandt’s break from Dutch pictorial traditions may have resulted from a closer reading of the text or from discussions with Jewish scholars. It may also have been a conscious attempt to shift the theological implications of the story itself. Representations of the circumcision in the temple emphasized the importance of adherence to Jewish law. The circumcision was the ritual act that cleansed the sins of the parents and was the moment that a name was given to the child. [5] By depicting the scene in the humble surroundings of the stable, however, Rembrandt shifted the emphasis of the story to stress its implications for Christian beliefs.

In this painting of 1661 Rembrandt added a new component to his scene by having Mary, rather than Joseph or another male, hold the Christ child. In this way he suggests the fundamental association between the circumcision and Christ's final shedding of blood at his Crucifixion. Mary holds her son tenderly in her lap before the ladder of the stable, just as she will do some thirty-three years later near a ladder leaning against the cross. A canopy, placed over her head, reinforces the sacramental character of the scene and offers a further reminder of the significance of this, the first of Mary’s Seven Sorrows. [6]

The circumcision is performed by a *mohel*, dressed in yellow ceremonial robes, who kneels before the Christ child in a gesture of serving and obeisance. The features of the priest are closely connected to those of Rembrandt’s *Head of a Man in a Turban (Study for a Rabbi?)* in the Alfred and Isabel Bader Collection,

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Milwaukee [fig. 3]. [7] Mary, who wears a red dress, gazes lovingly down at her son. Visually, her body and that of the *mohel* form a triangular shape that reinforces their shared sense of responsibility. While the bright colors of their clothing and centrally placed forms draw the viewer's attention to this sacred rite, the onlookers in the painting peer not at the Christ child but at the scribe who writes the name of the child in a large book he holds in his left hand. The excitement and anticipation of the onlookers who crane forward to learn the name of the young Messiah, however, places the scene within a Christian context. Joseph is almost certainly the bareheaded, bearded man who stands nearest the Virgin and child. Among the witnesses, on the far left, appears to be Rembrandt himself. [8]

The innovative and subtle interpretation Rembrandt has given to the scene has confused observers in the past. Hofstede de Groot, for example, believed that Rembrandt initially portrayed the Adoration of the Magi. He argued that during the course of execution Rembrandt changed one of the Magi into the priest performing the circumcision. He also suggested that Rembrandt changed the priest's retinue into the observing crowd. Alternatively, he argued, the scribe might have originally been Zacharias and the scene initially the circumcision of John the Baptist. [9] While Hofstede de Groot's theories did not receive widespread acceptance, a number of writers in ensuing years have used his ideas as a point of departure for assessing Rembrandt's interpretation of the circumcision in this painting. [10]

Hofstede de Groot might have been mistaken in the types of changes he believed Rembrandt had made in this work, but X-radiographs [see X-radiography] have revealed a notable pentimento [see Pentimenti]: the yellow cloak of the high priest performing the circumcision was enlarged and given a bolder form at some point during the course of the work [fig. 4]. This change, which enhances the prominence and stateliness of the figures, is compositionally significant. Historically it is of even greater interest, however, for it confirms that this painting is one of two works, the other a *Nativity*, acquired from Rembrandt for 600 guilders by the Amsterdam collector and art dealer Lodewijk van Ludick. In a document dated August 28, 1662, Van Ludick stated that he was returning *The Circumcision* to Rembrandt to have him "repaint the circumciser." [11] Since Van Ludick referred to his painting as being on a small panel (*bortie*), some have questioned whether the Gallery's *Circumcision*, which is on canvas, was the painting in his possession. [12] The discovery of the alterations to the robes of the circumciser, however, should dispel all doubts. The small scale of this work, which is comparable to that of a panel

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painting, may well have created the confusion in Van Ludick's mind.

This document also raises the question as to whether the *Nativity* and *The Circumcision* Rembrandt sold to Van Ludick were pendants. One price is listed for both works. One could imagine that the quiet, reverential mood of the scene in *The Circumcision* might have been consciously conceived to complement a depiction of this thematically related episode from Christ's life. [13] Nevertheless, technical evidence indicating that Rembrandt reduced the size of *The Circumcision* on all four sides makes it unlikely that he initially composed this work as a pendant to another composition. [14] How much the canvas was reduced is not certain, but the absence of distortions in the weave of the canvas on all sides suggests it was a substantial amount. [15]

The broadly expressive, painterly character of this intimate scene has long been admired, but questions have been raised as to whether the work was actually executed by Rembrandt. [16] Both Schwartz and Tümpel have doubted the attribution, with Schwartz proposing that Rembrandt's assistant at that time, Aert de Gelder (1645–1727), may have painted the scene. [17] The splotchy character of the paint on many of the figures' faces (particularly that of the scribe), the poor articulation of hands, and the general lack of firm structure evident in many areas of the painting are, indeed, reminiscent of De Gelder's later manner of painting. Associations between *The Circumcision* and De Gelder are not new. In 1883 Bode noted that "in the cursory treatment, in the bright colors (the bright robe of the priest in front of Mary) and in the carelessness of expression the painting very much recalls Rembrandt's student at that time Aert de Gelder." [18]

De Gelder, who is well known as the only Rembrandt pupil to continue in the master's style into the early eighteenth century, was born in Dordrecht in 1645. Houbraken relates that after having been grounded in the fundamentals of art by Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch, 1627 - 1678), De Gelder studied with Rembrandt in Amsterdam for two years. [19] The exact dates that he was with Rembrandt are not known, but because of stylistic and thematic connections with Rembrandt's works during the early 1660s, it seems probable that he was in the workshop between 1661 and 1663. [20] It is, in any event, highly unlikely that this recently arrived sixteen-year-old student would have been entrusted with the execution of a painting for a patron who knew Rembrandt's work so well. [21]

Judging this work on the basis of the manner of execution, however, is extremely difficult because of the painting's poor state of preservation. [22] Indeed, much of

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the apparently free handling of paint is a direct result of the severe abrasion and pronounced craquelure that covers the surface. The area surrounding the Virgin, for example, is quite worn, perhaps because a strong solvent was at one time used to clean this area. Large portions of the background, particularly on the right, are extremely thin and almost impossible to read properly. Complicating a critical evaluation of the quality of execution are the old overpaints that have muddied certain forms, such as the Virgin's canopy, and have made a spatial reading even more difficult.

The conservation treatment of the early 1990s, while greatly improving the appearance of the painting, revealed that the paint had been severely flattened when too much heat and pressure were applied during an earlier lining. [23] In certain areas, as for example in the head of the scribe and the figures near him, it also appears that the heat has softened the black underlying layer, causing it to ooze out around the overlying flesh tones. Even with careful technical analysis, it has proven impossible to determine the original appearance of the paint surface.

Because of the poor condition of the painting, judgments of attribution cannot be based primarily on questions of technique. Nevertheless, in certain areas, particularly in the modeling of the priest's robes, the surety of Rembrandt's touch is evident. Comparison of technique can also be made between the figures of witnesses to the event, particularly the young woman at the upper left, and the small-scale figures in Rembrandt's *Anna and Tobit*, 1659 [fig. 5]. Iconographic, compositional, and documentary evidence, moreover, all point strongly to Rembrandt's authorship. The unusual and evocative iconography was clearly conceived by someone conversant with both Jewish and Christian traditions. Compositionally, the juxtaposition of the quiet group performing the rite of circumcision and the expressive energy of the crowd peering at the book is persuasively conceived in a manner that enriches the meaning of the story. Finally, the fact that a substantial amount of money was paid for this painting by a dealer who knew Rembrandt's work well, and who was in the midst of complex financial arrangements with him, makes it virtually certain that *The Circumcision* was executed by the master and not by a member of his workshop.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Hendrick Goltzius, *Circumcision of Christ*, 1594, engraving, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Buitenhof, The Hague

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Circumcision in the Stable*, 1654, etching, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection

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fig. 3 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Head of a Man in a Turban (Study for a Rabbi?)*, around 1661, oil on oak panel, Collection of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Alfred and Isabel Bader Collection, 50-001

fig. 4 Detail of high priest, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Circumcision*, 1661, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.60

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fig. 5 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Tobit and Anna*, 1659, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Tromp, Rotterdam

NOTES

[1] I am greatly indebted to Judith K. Lyon, a former University of Maryland graduate student, for the extensive research she undertook on this painting, which has provided the foundations for this entry.

[2] Goltzius' composition derives from Albrecht Dürer's woodcut *The Circumcision*, 1504 (Adam Bartsch, *Le Peintre-graveur*, 21 vols. [Vienna, 1803–1821], 86), which was part of his series devoted to the *Life of the Virgin*.

[3] Although the arrangements of the protagonist vary in all three representations, they share a common tradition in that the Christ Child is held by a male figure rather than by Mary. In his 1626 etching (Ludwig Münz, *A Critical Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings*, 2 vols. [London, 1952], 2: no. 187, pl. 208), Rembrandt depicted the high priest performing the operation; in his etching of c. 1630 (Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt*..., 2 vols. (Vienna, 1797), 1: no. 48) he represented the priest as standing behind the altar; and in his 1646 painting, as can be judged in a workshop replica in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig (inv. no. 241), the priest holds the Christ child.

[4] Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt*..., 2 vols. (Vienna, 1797), 1: no. 47.

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[5] Hans Aurenhammer, *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* (Vienna, 1959), 356, indicates that this textually incorrect interpretation of the circumcision in the temple was forbidden during the Counter-Reformation.

[6] Judith K. Lyon has stressed in her research that a medieval tradition exists in which Mary is shown holding the Christ child while the priest or *mohel*, either bending or kneeling, performs the rite. Two primary examples are found in the *Nicholas of Verdun* altarpiece, Klosterneuberg Monastery (completed 1181), and in an illumination by the Master of the Berthold Sacramentary, from the Benedictine Abbey of Weingarten. A fifteenth-century example of this tradition is in a Book of Hours by the Master of Mary of Burgundy (see J. J. G. Alexander, *The Master of the Mary of Burgundy* [New York, 1970], no. 78). Whether Rembrandt knew of this tradition is not certain, but highly probable.

[7] David de Witt, *The Bader Collection: Dutch and Flemish Paintings* (Kingston, 2008), 267–269, echoes the suggestion by Ernst van de Wetering that Rembrandt painted the Bader panel as a study for *The Circumcision*. See Ernst van de Wetering, *Rembrandt: Quest of a Genius* (Amsterdam and Berlin, 2006), 182–185.

[8] In this respect Rembrandt follows Goltzius, who likewise depicted himself in the background in his 1594 engraving of the same subject (see fig. 1).

[9] See Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Die Rembrandt-Ausstellungen zu Amsterdam (September–October 1898) und zu London (January–March 1899)," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 22 (1899): 159–166, no. 5; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 6:68, no. 82.

[10] Douglas Lewis in *Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art* (Washington, 1969), 31, no. 22, emphasizes Rembrandt's departure from artistic convention by placing the scene in the stable at Bethlehem. He notes as well that Rembrandt's 1654 etching of the same subject (fig. 2) also represents the scene as having taken place in the stable. Finally, he suggests that Rembrandt may have been inspired to give such prominence to the scribe through the description of the circumcision of John the Baptist in Luke 1:59–63. Christian Tümpel, "Rembrandt, die Bildtradition und der Text," in *Ars Auro Prior: Studia Ioanni di Bialostocki Sexagenario Bicata* (Warsaw, 1981), 431–433, gives the best critique of Hofstede de Groot's assessment and correctly argues that Rembrandt had always intended to depict the circumcision of Christ in this work. Not only does he point out the close reading of the biblical text evident in Rembrandt's painting, he also traces the evolution of the imagery and iconography of Christ's circumcision.

[11] Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*

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(New York, 1979), doc. 1662/6, 499–502. The circumstances concerning Rembrandt and Van Ludick's financial arrangements are quite complicated. *The Circumcision*, along with a *Nativity*, was acquired by Van Ludick as part of an arrangement to satisfy debts that Rembrandt had incurred with the art dealer-collector. The translation of the relevant passage is as follows: "Furthermore, they also settled and canceled the completion and delivery of two [other] paintings, a 'Nativity' and a 'Circumcision,' which van Rhijn had sold to van Ludick for 600 guilders in exchange for prints and small pictures, which were delivered to van Rhijn personally after he had purchased them at van Ludick's [Dutch] auction. However, with the proviso that van Rhijn is to receive 118 guilders; this being the difference between 600 guilders and the sum of his purchase, but van Rhijn shall be obliged to repaint the circumciser in the aforementioned panel and improve it as is proper."

[12] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 6:68, no. 82, for example, did not believe that this painting was the "Circumcision" listed in this document because it was allegedly on panel.

[13] There is strong evidence that the two episodes from the life of Christ were connected in Rembrandt's mind. In 1646 Rembrandt delivered to Prince Frederik Hendrik an *Adoration of the Shepherds* and a *Circumcision* as part of his Passion series. In 1654 he included both scenes in a loose cycle of six etchings illustrating scenes from the childhood of Christ (Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt*..., 2 vols. (Vienna, 1797), 1: nos. 45, 47).

[14] It could well be that the *Nativity* was painted as a pendant to this work in its reduced format.

[15] Craquelure [see Craquelure] conforming to what must have been a vertically placed stretcher bar can be found to the right of the center. This information suggests that the canvas may have been cut at the right more than at the left.

[16] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 7:28, no. 69, called it "an admirably finished study, remarkably brilliant and effective"; Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Works of Art and Artists in England*, 3 vols. (London, 1838), 3:336, considered it: "Very spirited, and of striking effect"; Wilhelm von Bode, assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 7:13, mentioned its "sketchy handling"; and Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 611, no. 596, wrote that "Rembrandt's picture is a superb example of

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his late style, when he was turning away from a too emphatic and powerful construction of form to a looser, more sensuous, even picturesque rendering of the subject."

[17] Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings* (New York, 1985), 324, no. 376; Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt*, Translated by Jacques and Jean Duvernet, Léon Karlson, and Patrick Grilli (Paris, 1986), 420, A12, removes this work from Rembrandt's oeuvre and lists it as "Atelier de Rembrandt."

[18] Wilhelm von Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei* (Braunschweig, 1883), 525: "in der weichen, flüchtigen Behandlung, in der hellen Färbung (der Priester vor der Maria trägt ein hellgelbes Kleid) und der Vernachlässigung im Ausdruck errinnert das Bild sehr an Rembrandt's damaligen Schüler A. de Gelder." Bode, however, never questioned the attribution to Rembrandt. It is interesting to note that when Aert de Gelder turned to the theme of Christ's circumcision (*Circumcision of Christ*, c. 1700–1710, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna), he followed the tradition found in the composition Rembrandt painted for Frederik Hendrik (see note 12). Therefore it is unlikely that De Gelder had anything to do with the execution of the Gallery's painting.

[19] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 3:206–207. Houbraken mistakenly wrote that De Gelder came to Rembrandt in 1645 (the year of his birth), so it is impossible to pinpoint his date of arrival in Amsterdam.

[20] One particularly telling bit of evidence that De Gelder was in Amsterdam in 1663 is that he made a free adaptation of Rembrandt's *Homer*, 1663 (Mauritshuis, The Hague, inv. no. 584), many years later (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, inv. no. 39.45). Since Rembrandt's painting was sent to Messina after its completion, De Gelder would not have had a chance to see it at a later date. It is unlikely that De Gelder based his painting on Rembrandt's preliminary drawing for *Homer* (Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, inv. no. 1677/1875 [Otto Bensch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt (A Critical and Chronological Catalogue)* 6 vols. (London, 1954–1957) 5: no. 1066] as Rembrandt had presumably sent the drawing to his patron in Messina, Antonio Ruffo, for approval. For a discussion of the drawing's early history in Italy, see Börje Magnusson's catalogue entry in *Rembrandt och Hans Tid* (Stockholm, 1992), 361, no. 160.

[21] Josua Bruyn, "Rembrandt's Workshop: Its Function and Production," in Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and Pieter van Thiel, *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop: Paintings* (New Haven and London, 1991), 85, notes that De Gelder's hand has not been identified with any painting from Rembrandt's workshop during the early 1660s, with the possible exception

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of one portrait of Rembrandt.

[22] The poor state of preservation was already remarked upon by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Die Rembrandt-Ausstellungen zu Amsterdam (September–October 1898) und zu London (January–March 1899)," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 22 (1899): 163.

[23] I am greatly indebted to Sarah Fisher from the Gallery's Conservation department, Michael Palmer and Melanie Gifford from the Scientific Research department, and Karen Groen from the Rembrandt Research Project for their helpful observations about the complex paint layers in this work.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, a medium-weight, loosely woven, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins unevenly trimmed. The absence of cusping and the presence of old, off-center stretcher-bar creases suggest the dimensions may have been substantially reduced. The double ground consists of a dark brown lower layer and a lighter brown upper layer. Both layers contain quartz.[1] The upper layer is translucent and has a rough texture to give it "tooth." A nearly pure black imprimatura or underpainting lies under the main figural groups and the left side of the design. The extreme solubility of this imprimatura may have contributed to the overall degree of damage.

The paint is applied in richly mixed and swirled layers, blended both wet-into-wet and wet-over-dry as glazes and scumbles. A number of cross-sections have been made to identify and locate the many complicated paint layers.[2] The X-radiographs show changes in the upper paint layers to enlarge the circumciser's robe at the left, to expand the tent canopy horizontally, to alter the highlighting and positioning of the heads at the left, and to shade a once bright background area at the left.

The paint layers are quite damaged and areas of extensive repainting have been applied at various intervals. Old overpaint, which was not possible to remove during treatment of the painting in the early 1990s, is found over the circumciser's robe, the tent canopy, the heads and adjacent background of figures in the middle distance at left, Mary's headdress, and other areas of abrasion. The abraded portions include the shadows to the right of Mary and the Infant Jesus, much of the right side, the dark figures and shadows in the lower left, Mary's and the

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circumciser's draperies, and the heads of the figures at center left.

[1] The grounds were analyzed by Karin Groen using cross-sections and energy dispersive X-ray analysis (see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings. IV, the Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering and Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project [Dordrecht, 2005], 668–669).

[2] Pigment and medium analysis of paint and ground layers was performed by the Scientific Research department using cross-sections studied with scanning electron microscopy in conjunction with energy dispersive spectroscopy (see report dated December 3, 2008, in NGA Conservation files).

PROVENANCE

Lodewijck van Ludick [1607-1669], Amsterdam, by 1662.[1] Probably Ferdinand Bol [1616-1680], by 1669.[2] Probably Isaak van den Blooken, The Netherlands, by 1707; (his sale, Jan Pietersz. Zomer, Amsterdam, 11 May 1707, no. 1). Duke of Ancaster; (his sale, March 1724, no.18); Andrew Hay; (his sale, Cock, London, 14-15 February 1745, no. 47);[3] John Spencer, 1st earl Spencer [1734-1783], Althorp, Northamptonshire; by inheritance through the earls Spencer to John Poyntz, 5th earl Spencer [1835-1910], Althorp;[4] (Arthur J. Sulley & Co., London); Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, by 1912; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] On 18 August 1662 Rembrandt and Van Ludick drew up a contract to address the artist's debts, in the second part of which is revealed that sometime earlier Rembrandt had sold the painting to Van Ludick. See: Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*, New York, 1979: doc. 1662/6, 499–502; Paul Crenshaw, *Rembrandt's bankruptcy: the artist, his patrons, and the art market in the seventeenth-century*, Cambridge and New York, 2006: 30, 84, 107, 179 n. 200.

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[2] Albert Blankert, *Ferdinand Bol (1616-1680): Rembrandt's Pupil*, translated by Ina Rike, Doornspijk, 1982: 76-77, no. 14 in an inventory of 8 October 1669.

[3] For the Ancaster and Hay sales, see Frank Simpson, "Dutch Paintings in England before 1760," *The Burlington Magazine* 95 (January 1953): 41. The Duke of Ancaster who sold the painting in 1724 would have been Peregrine Bertie, 2nd duke of Ancaster and Kesteven (1686-1742); it is possible he was selling paintings that had been in the collection of his father, Robert Bertie, the 1st duke, who had died the year before (he lived 1660-1723).

[4] The painting is listed in Spencer collection catalogues and inventories in 1746, 1802, and 1822, and was lent by the earls Spencer to exhibitions in 1868, 1898, and 1899.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1868 National Exhibition of Works of Art, Leeds Art Gallery, England, 1868, no. 735.

1898 Rembrandt: Schilderijen Bijeengebracht ter Gelegenheid van de Inhuldiging van Hare Majesteit Koningin Wilhelmina, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1898, no. 115.

1899 Exhibition of Works by Rembrandt. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1899, no. 5.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 22, repro.

1986 Rembrandt and the Bible, Sogo Museum of Art, Yokohoma; Fukuoka Art Museum; National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, 1986-1987, no. 11 (shown only in Fukuoka and Kyoto, 1987).

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 46, repro.

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2004 Rembrandt, Albertina, Vienna, 2004, no. 134, repro.

2006 Rembrandt - Quest of a Genius [Rembrandt - Zoektocht van een Genie] [Rembrandt - Genie auf der Suche], Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam; Kulturforum, Berlin, 2006, fig. 209 in Amsterdam catalogue (not in Berlin catalogue).

2008 Rembrandt: Pintor de Historias [Rembrandt: Painter of History], Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2008-2009, no. 39, repro.

2017 Ferdinand Bol: het huis, de collectie, de kunstenaar [Ferdinand Bol: the house, the collection, the artist], Museum Van Loon, Amsterdam, 2017-2018, no. 22, repro.

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1893 Michel, Émile. *Rembrandt: Sa vie, son oeuvre et son temps*. Paris, 1893: 462-463, 555.

1894 Michel, Émile. *Rembrandt: His Life, His Work, and His Time*. 2 vols. Translated by Florence Simmonds. New York, 1894: 2:237.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

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Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse)
Dutch 17th Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Constantijn van Renesse
Dutch, 1626 - 1680

The Descent from the Cross

1650/1652

oil on canvas
overall: 142 x 110.9 cm (55 7/8 x 43 11/16 in.)
framed: 181 x 147.3 cm (71 1/4 x 58 in.)
Inscription: falsely signed and dated, lower center: Rembrandt f. 1651 (this inscription removed during conservation treatment in 1991-1992)
Widener Collection 1942.9.61

ENTRY

After spirited bidding between Mr. Lesser of New Bond Street and the Parisian dealer F. Kleinberger on July 2, 1909, Kleinberger paid 7,800 guineas for *The Descent from the Cross.* Although the painting had not been cited in the literature and was unknown to Rembrandt scholars until just before the sale, the price was a record for a Rembrandt painting sold in a London auction house. Aside from the excitement surrounding the discovery of a new Rembrandt, the high price was undoubtedly influenced as well by the positive opinion given about its authenticity the previous week by the leading Rembrandt authority of the day, Dr. Wilhelm von Bode. [1]

The painting, then signed and dated 1651, was recognized by Bode and, subsequently, by other scholars as a free variant of Rembrandt's earlier representations of *The Descent from the Cross,* his 1633 painting for the Passion series that was intended for Prince Frederik Hendrik [fig. 1], and, more specifically, his large-scale depiction of this subject, signed and dated 1634, in the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg [fig. 2]. Hofstede de Groot, Stechow, and Rosenberg, among others, noted how Rembrandt had in this work reduced the number of compositional elements that had appeared in the earlier examples. They also wrote movingly about how the changes had enhanced the scene's pictorial

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expression and emotional content. [2] Scholars also identified the 1651 *Descent from the Cross* as one of the two paintings of this subject listed in the inventory of Rembrandt's possessions in 1656. [3]

The positive assessment given to the painting for the sixty years after it appeared at auction in London in 1909, however, came abruptly to an end in 1969 when Horst Gerson wrote that the painting was the work of a pupil. As far as he was concerned, "the gestures are lame, the expression sentimental and the composition as a whole lacks concentration." He suggested that the painting may have been executed by a "pupil like B. Fabritius or S. van Hoogstraten." [4] Since Gerson's publication no Rembrandt authority has accepted the work as autograph. In 1984 the attribution of the painting at the National Gallery of Art was changed to "After Rembrandt van Rijn." The Rembrandt Research Project (RRP) later listed *The Descent from the Cross* as a copy of the Hermitage painting, the attribution of which they also reject. [5] The RRP suggested that the Gallery's painting "may very well have been produced in his circle." It further allowed that Rembrandt may have permitted "variants done by pupils to be included in the 1656 inventory of his belongings as being his own work." [6] Finally, Sumowski placed the painting among those executed by anonymous members of the Rembrandt school. [7]

Heavily discolored varnish and extensive repainting [fig. 3] have profoundly affected earlier assessments of the emotional content of the work and even its attribution, including that of the RRP. [8] To try to come to a clearer understanding of the place of this work within Rembrandt's workshop, removal of the Overpaint was undertaken in 1991–1992. [9] Although this conservation treatment helped resolve some of the questions about the complex genesis of this work that were first raised when the painting underwent technical examination in 1978, many questions still remain. [10] The following text examines the painting's original appearance and the character of the extensive revisions that were made to it in the mid-seventeenth century. It will also discuss the probability that the painting was treated again prior to being sold in London in 1909. This text will then examine the attribution of the work and its place within Rembrandt's workshop.

The compositional connections between the painting and *The Descent from the Cross* in the Hermitage, which have been noted ever since the time of Bode, are even closer than one would assume from looking at the surface. X-radiographs [see X-radiography] [fig. 4], which are admittedly difficult to read because of the unusual striations across the image caused by an uneven application of Ground, [11] but they do reveal much about changes both in design and in the shape of the

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canvas. Although slight distortions in thread patterns in the canvas at the top and right indicate that these edges may have been trimmed a small amount, no such scalloping patterns are evident along the left or the bottom, an indication that the canvas has most likely been reduced substantially along these edges. Also evident in the X-radiographs is a vertical seam to the left of center where two canvases have been joined. [12] If one hypothesizes that this unusually situated seam originally marked the central axis of the painting, then it is clear that two-thirds of the left half of the original image have been eliminated. The original format thus would have been comparable to that of the Hermitage painting in that Christ was centrally placed in the composition. It is also probable that the proportions of the two compositions would have been comparable. The Washington painting would then have been substantially larger than the Hermitage version (the Hermitage painting measures 159.3 x 116.4 cm; the proposed width of the Gallery painting would have been approximately 160 cm, or the double of 80 cm, with a proportional height of about 220 cm). [13]

The hypothesis that the Washington painting was once a larger-scale version of the Hermitage painting is reinforced by the character of the design changes evident on the X-radiographs. The clearest of these is the change in the position of the man on the ladder who holds the torch that illuminates the scene. This middle-aged man [fig. 5] has been painted over a younger figure whose head, in a position identical to that in the Hermitage painting, can be seen in the X-radiographs at about the man's chest level [fig. 6]. Although the image of Christ is difficult to read because of the density of the lead white paint, his legs were initially bent back in a position comparable to that in the 1634 composition. Also vaguely visible in the X-radiographs are the profiles of two figures found in the Hermitage painting that were subsequently eliminated from the Washington version—that of the bearded man standing just below the youth with the candle and that of one of the male onlookers crowded to his right. Finally, the arm of the Virgin was originally illuminated as it is in the Hermitage painting.

Cross-sections have provided corroborating evidence that the paint layers are quite complex and that the colors underlying the surface paint are similar to those in the Hermitage painting. The most striking instance is a bright orange that can be found in exactly the same area one finds the bright orange costume to the right of the turbaned man in the foreground of the Hermitage painting. The cross-sections also suggest that the extensive changes in the National Gallery of Art painting were made only after the first composition had been blocked out with a thin, dark

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layer of paint. This layer has been found in every cross-section with the exception of the neck of the Virgin. Indeed, the head of the Virgin does seem to be the only part of a figure in the painting not extensively reworked, although the broadly executed highlights on her face may have been added to the preexisting form to tie in to the handling of the other figures. Interestingly, associated with this pervasive layer of dark paint is an unpigmented layer. While this layer generally appears to lie on top of the dark layer, sometimes it seems to pass through it and sometimes to lie below it. [14] The layer is probably varnish, which may indicate that a short lapse of time existed between the execution of the underlying image and the final composition.

Evidence indicates that *The Descent from the Cross* must have undergone further treatment prior to its sale in July 1909. A letter from June 26, 1909, states, “the Rembrandt has been very badly treated, having apparently been hung against a hot flue, which has blistered the picture all up the left side.” No evidence of such blisters [see Blistering] is currently found on the painting, thus it seems probable that the painting was trimmed along the left and bottom to remove them. Reinforcing this hypothesis is the fact that when the painting was sold in July 1909 (55 x 42 inches) its dimensions were smaller than they had been when it was sold in April 1840 (5’ x 4’5”, which equals 60” x 53”). Just when this reduction took place is unknown, but it was probably not long before the July sale. [15]

The individual who restored the painting prior to the 1909 sale did his best to solidify the Rembrandt attribution. It was probably at that time that the signature and date were added, and that the head, shoulders, and turban of the figure in the foreground were overpainted. When these later additions were removed during the treatment of 1991–1992, it was revealed that the paint surface below that figure had been badly abraded. Although various underlying layers of paint are difficult to interpret with certainty, it appears that the repainted turbaned figure in the foreground covered a comparable figure that had been scraped down. Beneath that earlier figure, however, was yet another one: remnants of his black, flat-shaped hat still exist in an underlying paint layer. It may be that the earlier restorer scraped away the head and shoulders of the turbaned man because he saw evidence of a different figure beneath it. Eventually, it seems, he concluded that so few remnants of the earlier head with the flat-shaped hat existed that it behooved him to repaint the turbaned figure he had just removed. [17]

One further compositional change (probably made by a different restorer) was the shape of Joseph of Arimathea’s red coat. This restorer, who made the addition of

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the tempera paint, must have felt that this aged man's body should have been more massive than it had been painted, and he added significantly to its bulk. With this repaint removed, the rigid angularity of the seventeenth-century image is now visible.

With the removal of the discolored varnish and later overpaint, it has become apparent that the seventeenth-century changes to *The Descent from the Cross* were undertaken with a great deal of sensitivity. Indeed, a comparison of the Hermitage painting and this work demonstrates that profound differences exist between the two works despite their apparent similarities. The Gallery's composition is far more focused than is the Hermitage version. Not only is the cross brought forward and the figures given greater prominence, but light is concentrated on two major areas of activity: that surrounding the lowering of Christ's body by the aged Joseph of Arimathea and the swooning figure of the Virgin. Because the figure holding the torch stands higher on the ladder and Christ's legs have been brought forward, light focuses more broadly on the central figure group. These changes furthermore reduce the diagonal thrust seen in the Hermitage composition: the disposition of forms is more balanced, and gestures, including the arm holding Christ's waist, have a predominantly horizontal emphasis.

The feeling evoked by the Washington painting is more reverential than that in the Hermitage version. Joseph of Arimathea seems to present Christ to the viewer, while the figures below wait quietly to assist. In the Hermitage painting, on the other hand, Joseph of Arimathea struggles with the weight of Christ's body as others labor to pull out the nail that secures Christ's left hand to the cross. The emphasis there on the physical activity of removing Christ's body from the cross is reinforced by the angular gestures, the strong diagonal shadows on the white shroud, the ungainly position of Christ's body, and the press of the crowd around the foot of the cross.

The total rethinking of the composition in the National Gallery of Art painting speaks strongly for the participation of Rembrandt in the process, particularly because the emotional content of the work is so sympathetic with his approach to religious imagery during the 1650s. Nevertheless, while Rembrandtesque, the execution is not that of the master. Heavy impastos on the face of the man holding the torch, for example, are coarsely applied, while the white sheet wrapped around Christ is painted in flat planes of color that only superficially suggest folds in the material. Many questions thus remain: what was the date of the original composition of the Washington *Descent from the Cross*; who painted it; how and

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why were the later reworkings undertaken; and who was the artist responsible?

Dating the underlying image is quite difficult. Technical evidence gained from examinations of the canvas or paints used has not yet provided precise correlations with other works. [16] On the basis of the compositional similarities with the Hermitage *Descent,* it would seem logical to assume that the Washington version would have been executed at approximately the same period of time. Just when that was, however, is a matter of some dispute. Although the Hermitage *Descent* is signed and dated 1634 and apparently was painted on the same type of canvas as that used for Rembrandt's *Flora,* 1634, also in the Hermitage, the RRP has not only rejected the attribution to Rembrandt but has also argued on stylistic grounds that the painting was executed in Rembrandt's workshop around 1640. Nevertheless, the existence of the date, the evidence of the canvas weave, and the close compositional similarity to the 1633 *Descent from the Cross* from the Passion series makes it seem most probable that the Hermitage *Descent* was conceived in the mid-1630s. During these years Rembrandt was particularly fascinated with the drama and emotional intensity of this story, something he explored in comparable ways in oil sketches, prints, and drawings. It is unlikely that in the 1640s he would have entrusted a student in his workshop to recreate a composition that resonated so distinctly with a compositional idea first developed in 1633.

If the Hermitage *Descent* were, indeed, first conceived in the mid-1630s, it then is probable that the Washington painting was as well. Perhaps both large-scale works were made in anticipation of forthcoming commissions that never materialized. An added incentive may have been Rembrandt's desire to compete with Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640). Rembrandt, who based his 1633 *Descent from the Cross* for the Passion series on Lucas Vorsterman's reproductive engraving after Rubens' altarpiece *The Descent from the Cross,* now in the Antwerp Cathedral, may have decided to emulate not only Rubens' composition but also the large scale in which Rubens worked. Although the degree to which Rembrandt was involved in the execution of either of these works cannot be determined, he may well have blocked in the composition for at least one of them. The final execution may then have been left to a student or students. In any event, there seems to be no stylistic or technical evidence by which to conclude that one of these works was a direct copy of the other.

Although the signature and date 1651 on the Washington *Descent* were determined to be later additions and removed during treatment in 1991–1992, the

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date is not inconsistent with the style of the figures painted over the earlier composition. As mentioned above, moreover, the artistic concept is also consistent with Rembrandt's work from this period. Although no documents provide information to explain why such extensive reworkings were undertaken at this time, the reason may once again have been the hope that a commission for such a scene would materialize. Rembrandt may have decided that the very large size of the original composition made the work particularly difficult to sell. He may also have felt that the original composition provided the foundation for a particularly fascinating challenge, and thus he reconceived a dramatic story by subtly changing the positions of the figures, the lighting effects, and even the moment depicted to create a painting with a different mood and emotional impact.

Rembrandt was undoubtedly closely involved in the rethinking of this composition and may well have blocked in forms to serve as a compositional guide, but no evidence of his own brushwork exists in the final image. Just who may have been responsible for the execution is difficult to judge. Nevertheless, sufficient stylistic connections can be found between this work and the paintings and drawings attributed to Constantijn van Renesse (Dutch, 1626 - 1680) to make a tentative attribution of *The Descent from the Cross* to this fascinating Rembrandt student.

Van Renesse, about whom very little is known, seems to have been with Rembrandt between 1649 and 1652. [18] Rembrandt must have taken a great deal of interest in his work, if one is to judge from the drawings by Van Renesse that he corrected. [19] Van Renesse had a preference for biblical scenes, many of which focused on the life of Christ. [20] Stylistically, Van Renesse's figures compare closely to those in the Washington *Descent.* In Van Renesse's drawing of *Doubting Thomas* (Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich), Christ's elongated proportions and anatomical structure are the same as those in the *Descent.* [21] Similar figure types also occur in paintings convincingly attributed to Van Renesse. In his *The Good Samaritan* [fig. 7], for example, the crossed legs of the wounded man have much the same structure as do those of Christ in the Washington painting. [22] Finally, Van Renesse's painting technique combines the smooth, flat planes of color and rough impastos found in *The Descent from the Cross.* This combination of techniques is particularly evident in his *Conviviality near the Inn* in the Corcoran Gallery of Art [fig. 8]. Although this painting is not signed, the close compositional similarity between the Corcoran's painting and Van Renesse's etching, signed and dated 1651, confirms the attribution. [23] Despite the different nature of the subject, the manner in which a number of figures in this work have

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been executed has distinct parallels in *The Descent from the Cross* (see [fig. 4]).

This painting thus is a fascinating document about the complexities that sometimes exist with works produced in Rembrandt's workshop. [24] The evidence suggests that it was initially larger in size, with a composition that resembled that of the Hermitage *Descent from the Cross.* The exact date of the first period of execution cannot be precisely determined, but it probably was during the mid-1630s. Around 1650, or shortly thereafter, it was severely cropped at the left and bottom, and virtually the entire composition was reworked. Although Rembrandt was probably involved in the rethinking of the composition, he does not seem to have had any part in the final execution. Stylistic evidence suggests that the artist responsible was Constantijn van Renesse. If this hypothesis is correct, one could then argue that Van Renesse was a far more central figure in Rembrandt's workshop in the early 1650s than has hitherto been believed. It may well be that he was involved in a number of other large-scale religious paintings from this period that were produced by unidentified members of Rembrandt's workshop. [25]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Descent from the Cross*, 1633, oil on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Alte Pinakothek, Bayerische Staatsgemäldegalerie, Munich / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Descent from the Cross*, 1634, oil on canvas, Hermitage, Saint Petersburg. Photo © The State Hermitage Museum. Photographers: Vladimir Terebenin, Leonard Kheifets, Yuri Molodkovets

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fig. 3 before treatment, Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse), *The Descent from the Cross*, 1650/1652, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.61

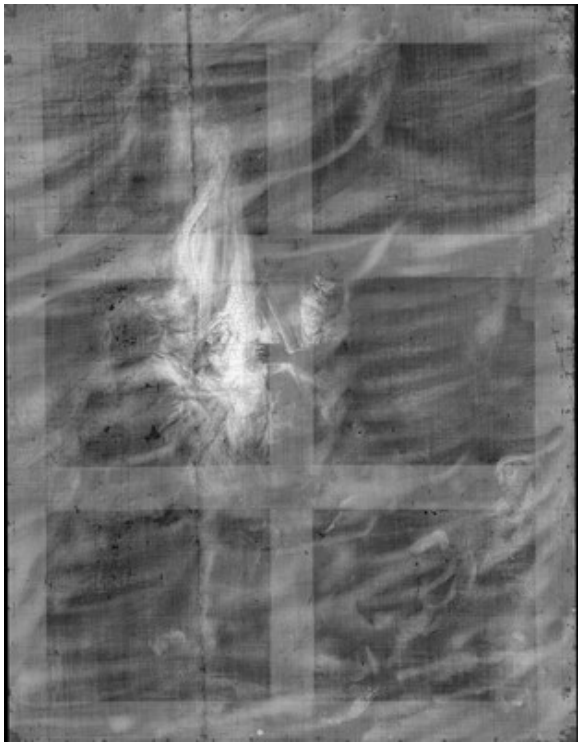

fig. 4 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse), *The Descent from the Cross*, 1650/1652, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.61

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fig. 5 Detail of head of the middle-aged man, Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse), *The Descent from the Cross*, 1650/1652, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.61

fig. 6 Detail of the head, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse), *The Descent from the Cross*, 1650/1652, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.61

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fig. 7 Constantijn van Renesse, *The Good Samaritan*, 1648, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: RMN / Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Jean-Gilles Berizzi

fig. 8 Detail of seated figure at right, Constantijn van Renesse, *Conviviality near the Inn*, oil on canvas, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, William A. Clark Collection

NOTES

[1] This information is taken from a clipping from an unidentified English newspaper, dated July 3, 1909, on file at the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorisches Documentatie (RKD). The title of the article was: "7,800Gs. for a Rembrandt." The commentator's response to the high price is also worth noting: "The explanation is simple enough, the ordeal by auction is not necessary to resolve the value of a great Rembrandt. If an owner wishes to release a famous masterpiece nowadays he knows dealers ready to give him his price straightway."

[2] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 6:102, finds the differences between this painting and the Hermitage version so extensive that he considers the work to be a new representation of the same subject. Wolfgang Stechow,

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"Rembrandts Darstellungen der Kreuzabnahme," *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 50 (1919): 229, places the painting within the broad tradition of Rembrandt's paintings, drawings, and etchings. Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), 1:134–135 (also reprint, *Rembrandt: Life and Work* [Greenwich, Conn., 1964], 220–221), emphasizes that while the action has been reduced, the emotional content has been enriched through the stability of the composition and the breadth and vigor of the paint handling.

[3] The inventory of Rembrandt's possessions taken on July 25–26, 1656, is listed as document 1656/12 in Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 353, no. 37 ("A large 'Descent from the Cross' by Rembrandt, with a handsome gold frame by the same"); and 379, no. 293 ("The 'Descent from the Cross' by Rembrandt"). It has also been assumed that one of these paintings is the 1634 version in the Hermitage.

[4] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 610, no. 684.

[5] Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 2, *1631–1634*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and Lancaster, 1986), 617–627, C49. The authors of the *Corpus* emphasize the complexities of the problems of attribution associated with this work. Despite the date on the painting and the use of a canvas available in 1634 they have concluded that the work could only have been painted around 1640 in Rembrandt's workshop. They discount the possibility that Rembrandt may have laid in the composition in about 1634 and that the work was completed later by another hand. Such a theory, however, seems quite plausible, particularly given the fact that a number of changes do exist between the X-radiograph [see X-radiography] and the final image (for example, the head of a man is visible in the X-radiograph between Christ's right arm and leg that does not appear in the final painting). The only member of Rembrandt's workshop they mention as the possible artist is Ferdinand Bol (Dutch, 1616 - 1680). See also comments in note 8.

[6] Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 628–630, C49, copy 2.

[7] Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau i.d. Pfalz, 1983), 4:2961, no. 1972.

[8] While Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), 1:135, admired the painting's "colouristic warmth," which had largely resulted from the accumulation of discolored varnish, Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 610, no. 584, responded with surprise that Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde*

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(Berlin, 1966), 6, 84, supposed (rightly) that the turbaned figure in the foreground of the painting was overpainted. Indeed, this figure must have been a later addition. Not only did the paint on the turban cover existing Craquelure, but X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy performed by the NGA Scientific Research department showed it contained antimony, an element found in Naples yellow, a pigment not commonly used before the mid-eighteenth century (see report dated July 1978 in NGA Conservation department files). Another major change was the overpainting of the red cloak of Joseph of Arimathea, which substantially altered the shape of the figure's body. The overpaint must have resulted from a different restoration because gas chromotography analysis performed by the NGA Scientific Research departent indicated that it was executed in tempera (see report dated November 15, 1991, in NGA Conservation department files). The RRP's assessment of the painting, Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 628–630, C49, is quite flawed. The information the RRP relates about the painting being transferred onto a new canvas in Russia in 1854 is false. The RRP also criticizes the attribution most severely precisely in areas that have been Overpainted without recognizing that these areas are overpaint. Finally, the RRP never examined the X-radiographs and did not discuss the extensive compositional changes they reveal. See also comments in note 5.

[9] New technical examinations, including the taking of cross-sections, were made at that time by the NGA Scientific Research department and Karin Groen (see Technical Summary).

[10] The examinations in 1976 were undertaken with the assistance of Kay Silberfeld and Barbara Miller. A report on their findings was written by Cynthia P. Schneider, who was at the Gallery then as a summer intern. The problems of the genesis of the painting as understood at that time were published in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "The Art Historian in the Laboratory: Examinations into ... 17th-Century Dutch Painting," in *The Age of Rembrandt: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting*, ed. Roland Fleischer and Susan S. Munshower, Papers in Art History from the Pennsylvania State University, 3 (Pittsburgh, 1988), 218–220.

[11] Similar effects are found in the X-radiographs of Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait with Saskia,* Gemäldegalerie, Dresden. See the illustration in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 134, no. A 111.

[12] The piece to the left is approximately 37.9 cm wide and that to the right approximately 73 cm wide.

[13] This calculation is based on the existing width of the right-hand piece of

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canvas (about 73 cm) with an addition of about 7 cm for the apparent reduction along the right edge. This reduction is calculated by noting that, with the exception of his left hand, the man who supports Mary in the Hermitage painting was eliminated in the Gallery *Descent* when the canvas was cut.

[14] In one instance it seems as though the unpigmented layer fills cracks in the dark layer.

[15] See Technical Summary, note 2, for further information about the letter of June 26, 1909.

[16] See Technical Summary.

[17] The head of the turbaned man was reconstructed in 1992 on the basis of the remnant of painting left from the original image.

[18] For Van Renesse's life, see Karel Vermeeren, "Constantijn Daniël van Renesse, zijn leven en zijn werken," *De Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 30 (1978): 3–23, and Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau i.d. Pfalz, 1983), 4:2469–2470. Van Renesse was born on September 10, 1626, in Maarssen, near Utrecht. His father, Ludovicus (Lodewijk) Gerardus van Renesse, was a preacher. After his father moved to Breda in 1638, Constantijn entered the University of Leiden, where he was inscribed for literary studies, although he later, in 1642, changed to philosophical studies. He may well have begun his artistic studies in Leiden, although nothing is known about his apprenticeship. An inscription on the back of a drawing, *Daniel in the Lion's Den,* in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (inv. no. MB 200), indicates that he had made the drawing in 1649, "the second time that he had been with Rembrandt." His artistic career was short-lived, presumably ending by 1654 when he was named secretary of the city of Eindhoven. In the same year he married a daughter of the burgomaster of Breda. He died on December 12, 1680.

[19] See G. Falck, "Über einige von Rembrandt übergangene Schülerzeichnungen," *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 45 (1924): 191–200.

[20] Particularly interesting in relation to the Washington *Descent from the Cross* is his drawing of the *Lamentation of Christ on the Cross.* See Werner Sumowski, *Drawings of the Rembrandt School*, ed. and trans. Walter L. Strauss, 10 vols. (New York, 1979–1992), 9: no. 2166a. Although executed around 1650, this scene is likewise a free adaptation of a Rembrandt composition from the mid-1630s, his grisaille oil sketch of c. 1635 (National Gallery, London, inv. no. 43). The main conceptual difference is that whereas Rembrandt depicted the dead Christ lying prone in the Virgin's lap to emphasize the profound emotional reactions of the Virgin and the various bystanders to Christ's death, Van Renesse raised up the body of Christ so that the viewer focuses on Christ himself. In so doing Van Renesse not only

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changed the arrangement of the main figure group, but he also cropped the scene dramatically. It is exactly the same thought process that occurs in the Washington *Descent from the Cross.*

[21] Illustrated in Werner Sumowski, *Drawings of the Rembrandt School*, ed. and trans. Walter L. Strauss, 10 vols. (New York, 1979–1992), 9: no. 2188xx.

[22] See Jacques Foucart, *Peintres rembranesques au Louvre* (Paris, 1988), 108–113; Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau i.d. Pfalz, 1983), 4: no. 1658a.

[23] For a reproduction see F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, c. 1450–1700* 66 vols. to date (Amsterdam, 1949–), 20:12, no. 5.

[24] It also reminds us of the complex conservation issues that often confront our assessments of paintings by Rembrandt and his workshop.

[25] One such painting is the life-size *Lamentation* in the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, inv. no. SN252, which is signed “Rembrandt f. 1650.” The composition of this work resembles that of Van Renesse’s drawing of the same subject (see note 19). The figure of Christ, as well as the old woman at his feet, is reminiscent of comparable figures in *The Descent from the Cross.* For a discussion of this painting, see Franklin W. Robinson and William H. Wilson, *Catalogue of the Flemish and Dutch Paintings, 1400–1900* (Sarasota, Fla., 1980), no. 116

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a medium-weight, plain-woven fabric consisting of two pieces seamed vertically to the left of center through the Christ figure.[1] The painting has been lined with the tacking margins removed. Slight cusping is visible along the top and right edges, but not at the left or bottom. Both the seam and the figure of Christ would typically be in the center of the composition, as in The Descent from the Cross in the Hermitage Collection. Consequently, it seems apparent that the painting was significantly reduced along the left and the bottom. It is probable that the painting was cropped on two different occasions, once in the seventeenth century and a second time in the early twentieth century. Nevertheless, the extensive compositional changes noted below indicate that most of the cropping occurred in the seventeenth century.

Evidence that the canvas was trimmed in the early twentieth century is based on a letter dated 26 June 1909 that states: "the Rembrandt has been very badly treated,

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having apparently been hung against a hot flue, which has blistered the picture all up the left side." [2] Since no blisters are visible along the left edge today, and there is no evidence that they once existed, it seems that the painting was trimmed prior to its sale in London in July 1909. At the time of the sale the painting's dimensions (55 x 42 inches) were approximately the same as those today. A set of tacking holes and crease marks along all four edges within the picture plane indicate that the edges were turned over a smaller stretcher at one time. The edges were subsequently returned to plane when the painting was lined.

The paint was applied over a double ground composed of a thick, light gray lower layer followed by a thin, brown gray upper layer.[3] The paint handling varies from rich opaque layers to thin glazes, with complex layering and dramatic brushmarking in light passages. The X-radiographs show artist's changes to the figures supporting Christ's body, the legs of which were once bent backward to a greater degree. Initially a young man stood where the older man with a torch is placed. Two profiled figures, visible just below the younger figure's head, were also painted out. The original composition was painted out with a thin layer of dark paint.[4] Upon removal of later repaint in 1992, it was determined that the turbaned foreground figure had been painted over another figure that had been intentionally scraped down. It is unknown when and why this change was made.

The seam and creases protrude slightly. Scattered small tears are visible in the X-radiographs, notably along the top edge at center and in the background right of center. Numerous small paint losses are scattered overall, and abrasion is light, save in the turbaned figure. The painting underwent treatment in 1991–1992 to remove discolored varnish and overpaint. It was inpainted in 2000, including reconstruction of the foreground figure's head and face. These were reconstructed on the basis of the remnants of paint left from the original head.

[1] This vertical seam is located 37.9 cm. from the left edge and 73 cm. from the right edge.

[2] The information about the condition of the painting in the letter was provided by "an artist friend" of E.W. Parker's solicitor. It is not known when the "artist friend" saw the painting in its deteriorated condition. The text continues, "The sky also shows signs of having been tampered with. But there can be no doubt of its authenticity although it strangely resembles (and yet differs from) another

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Rembrandt "Descent" of a date about 20 years earlier, at St. Petersburg." Records of the Parker family of Skirwith Abbey, Warwick Hall, and Newbiggin Hall; Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle; WD PKR, box 4, bundle 18, document 12; copies in NGA curatorial files.

[3] The ground and paint were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections, Fourier Transform Infrared spectroscopy, polarized light microscopy, X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy, and gas chromatography in conjunction with mass spectrometry (see reports dated July 1978; July 8, 1991; August 10, 1991; August 14, 1991; October 8, 1991; November 15, 1991; December 2, 1991; plus undated cross-section studies, 1991, in NGA Conservation department files). The ground was further analyzed by Karin Goen using cross-sections (see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project,A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering [Dordrecht, 2005], 664-665). Groen found quartz in the lower ground layer.

[4] This layer was confirmed by cross-sections taken and analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated October 8, 1991, in NGA Conservation department files). The cross-sections also showed an unpigmented layer, presumably varnish or oil, directly on top of the dark layer.

PROVENANCE

Harriet, viscountess Hampden [née Burton, 1751-1829], London;[1] (her estate sale, Christie & Manson, London, 19 April 1834 [originally 18 April], no. 83); Fuller. John A. Beaver, Green Heys, Lancashire; (his sale, T. Winstanley and Sons [of Liverpool], Manchester, 15-16 and 18 April 1840, no. 87, bought in); (his sale, Christie & Manson, London, 20 June 1840, no. 102, bought in). Probably William Parker [died 1856], Skirwith Abbey, Cumberland; by inheritance to Edward Wilson Parker [1853-1932], Skirwith Abbey;[2] (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 2 July 1909, no. 99); (F. Kleinberger & Co., Paris); sold to Fritz von Gans [1833-1920], Frankfurt-am-Main, by 1915.[3] (Bachstitz, The Hague), by 1921;[4] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park,

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Pennsylvania, after purchase 1922 by funds of the estate; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] It is possible that the painting was originally in the collection of the viscountess' father-in-law, Robert Hampden Trevor (1706-1783), 1st viscount Hampden, who was British minister at The Hague. He was succeeded by his elder son, Thomas, 2nd viscount (1746-1824), and then by the viscountess' husband, John, 3rd viscount (1748-1824).

[2] William Parker was one of four nephews who were left large fortunes by their uncle, Robert Parker, of Manchester. An invoice to William Parker from the Manchester framemaker Joseph Zanetti, dated 20 October 1841, mentions the “cleaning and repairing [of a] large fluted frame for picture by Rembrandt.” Correspondence between Christie’s and Edward Parker’s solicitors just prior to the July 1909 sale indicates that Parker had inherited the paintings. (Records of the Parker family of Skirwith Abbey, Warwick Hall, and Newbiggin Hall; Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle; WD PKR, box 2, bundle 14, document 213; WD PKR, box 4, bundle 18, documents 4-6, 8, 11-12; copies in NGA curatorial files.)

[3] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen, 1907-1928: 6(1915):81-82, no. 133.

[4] The Bachstitz Gallery, preface by G. Gronau, 3 vols., Berlin, 1921: 1:5, pl. 31.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 12, repro., as by Rembrandt.

2011 Rembrandt in America, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Cleveland Museum of Art; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2011-2012, no. 43, pl. 45.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt Workshop (Possibly Carel Fabritius)
Dutch 17th Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Carel Fabritius
Dutch, c. 1622 - 1654

A Girl with a Broom

probably begun 1646/1648 and completed 1651

oil on canvas
overall: 107.3 x 91.4 cm (42 1/4 x 36 in.)
framed: 143.5 x 127.3 x 14 cm (56 1/2 x 50 1/8 x 5 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower left on rim of well: Rembrandt f. 1651
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.74

ENTRY

As she leans over the gate of a wooden fence a young girl stares directly at the viewer. In her left hand is a broom. The fence appears to surround a well, whose dark, round form is visible in the foreground. The well is flanked by a large overturned bucket on the right and a dark object, perhaps a trough, on the left. While the girl's form is lit strongly from the left, the dark background and even the area around the well remain relatively undefined and obscured in shadow. [1]

A Girl with a Broom, in large part because of the appealing features of the young girl and the genre-like character of the subject, has long been admired as one of Rembrandt's most sensitive depictions of figures from his immediate environs. This attractive model has been identified repeatedly as a young servant girl in Rembrandt's household, but her identity remains unknown. [2] Geertje Dirckx could not have served as the model; having been born around 1610, she would have been too old to be this sitter, who is probably about twelve to fifteen years old. Hendrickje Stoffels, who was born in 1626, and who entered Rembrandt's household around 1647, would also have been too old. The model who posed for *Girl with a Broom* probably also posed for *Girl at the Window,* 1645 [fig. 1]. The girls have comparable hairstyles; they have relatively broad faces with widely separated eyes and low, flat eyebrows; their noses, the tips of which have a slightly bulbous appearance, are similar; and finally, their broadly formed lips are virtually identical.

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[3]

Whether this work was meant as a portrait or as a genre scene has been a matter of some discussion. Should it have been possible to identify the girl, the painting would almost certainly be classified as a portrait because of the frontal pose and careful depiction of the features. [4] Nevertheless, the setting and accoutrements give the painting the character of a genre scene, albeit one that is not fully explained to the viewer. Why, for example, is the girl holding the broom while leaning over the wall surrounding the well, and does the prominently placed bucket have any iconographic significance? [5]

Recent scholars have doubted the attribution to Rembrandt and some have even speculated that the painting is eighteenth century in origin. [6] Because *A Girl with a Broom* has a distinguished provenance that reaches back to 1678, when it is almost certainly listed in the inventory of the collection of an acquaintance of Rembrandt's, Herman Becker, the latter suggestion is clearly unacceptable. Even though the painting was attributed to Rembrandt when it was in Becker's collection, its style differs in enough fundamental ways from that of Rembrandt's authentic paintings to warrant the doubts mentioned in the literature.

The primary reason that *A Girl with a Broom* has been associated with eighteenth-century images is its physical appearance. The surface is deformed in areas, particularly in the face and hands, by pronounced Wrinkling of the paint similar to that found in certain English paintings of the eighteenth century [fig. 2]. [7] This effect had, until the painting's conservation treatment in 1991–1992, been exacerbated by the thick layers of pigmented varnish. Technical analysis undertaken at the time of the treatment indicated that the wrinkling in the surface resulted from the interference of an underlying paint layer that had not sufficiently dried. The X-radiographs [see X-radiography] reveals that the girl's face was painted over an earlier head looking upward to the right [fig. 3]. To judge from the X-radiograph, the lead white modeling around the nose and cheek of the underlying head is quite dense. Little or no wrinkling appears on the surface image covering these areas of the underlying image. The wrinkling on the surface is most pronounced where it overlaps transparent areas of the underlying images, such as eye sockets. It thus appears that these shaded areas were modeled in dark, medium-rich glazes that had not yet dried at the time the top layers were applied. [8]

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Although the existence of an earlier form beneath the girl's head is fairly easy to distinguish in the X-radiographs, evidence of an underlying layer is more difficult to discern for the rest of the body. Nevertheless, an earlier shape for the blouse, blocked in with paints with little density, can be distinguished in various places. [9] The most obvious of these is along the outer contour of the girl's right sleeve. An earlier layer, probably the same, can also be made out under the handle of the broom both in the X-radiographs and with the naked eye. Also visible through the brown color of the broom handle is the full extent of the girl's thumb. [10] Since the girl's hands have surface distortions much as those found in the head, underlying paint layers here must have had paint characteristics similar to those in the shaded portions of the earlier head.

Whatever the explanation for the unusual nature of the paint in the flesh areas, neither technical nor visual evidence provides an argument for removing *A Girl with a Broom* from the immediate orbit of Rembrandt. [11] Not only is the image appealing in subject matter, the modeling of the features is sensitively rendered, and the folds in the girl's white blouse are executed with great bravura.

Notwithstanding the inherent qualities of *A Girl with a Broom*, a close comparison of it with two comparable paintings by Rembrandt—*Girl at a Window,* 1645, in Dulwich [fig. 1] and *Servant Girl at a Window,* 1651, in Stockholm [fig. 4]—points out differences that clearly call into question the attribution to Rembrandt. The centrally placed figure remains isolated in the composition and does not activate the surrounding space as do the girls in the Dulwich and Stockholm paintings. Specifically, in comparison to the Dulwich painting, the modeling of the blouse in *A Girl with a Broom* is much freer, even in the folds of her right sleeve that are similar in character. Whereas in *Girl at a Window* Rembrandt created the illusion that the cloth actually rises and turns over upon itself, the folds in *A Girl with a Broom* have been formed with distinctive brushstrokes highlighting the uppermost ridges of the fabric. Nothing in the Dulwich painting is comparable to the extremely expressive brushwork in the left sleeve, where chiaroscuro effects are achieved by highlighting illuminated folds with slashing strokes of white impasto. Finally, while the blouse is more freely rendered here, the girl's features are not modeled with the same degree of plasticity as they are in the Dulwich painting. There, Rembrandt boldly modeled the eyes, nose, and mouth with nuanced strokes that clearly convey the structure of the girl's head. In the subject's face in *A Girl with a Broom,* as well as in her blouse, paint is more at the service of light than of structure. Accents effectively highlight the hair, forehead, nose, and upper lip, but they are

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not used to create underlying form. The difference in approach is most distinctly seen in the area of the right eye, where a general halftone shadow does little to suggest three-dimensional character. Instead, the eye's structure, particularly the upper eyelid, is created with painted lines.

Significant stylistic differences also exist between *A Girl with a Broom* and Rembrandt's *Servant Girl at a Window* [fig. 4], even though the two works are dated the same year. The young woman represented in this latter painting is possibly, although not necessarily, the same; the pose, however, like that of the girl in the Dulwich painting, appears more natural and organic than in the Washington painting, where the girl's head seems too large for her body. The subject's face in the Stockholm *Servant Girl* is more freely brushed than that in the Washington painting and modeling is achieved with quick and certain strokes. Accents of light help enliven her form, particularly around the eyes, in a way that is absent in *A Girl with a Broom.* The blouse, red jacket, and right hand of the servant girl in the Stockholm painting are also modeled with broad strokes that are quite consistent throughout and help create the painting's harmonious effect. In the Washington painting, on the other hand, while the brushwork of the sleeves is bold and vigorous, that of the face and hands is relatively restrained, and that used to paint the broom is comparatively timid.

The contrasts in manner of execution between *A Girl with a Broom* and both of these related paintings are so intrinsic to an artistic approach that it seems improbable that *A Girl with a Broom* was executed by the same hand. The differences between the Washington and Dulwich paintings are such that it does not seem possible to account for them by differences of date, even if the Dulwich painting were executed in 1645 and the Gallery's painting in 1651. It is even more improbable that Rembrandt would have created such different images as the Washington and Stockholm paintings in the same year. The signature and date of *A Girl with a Broom,* moreover, are certainly suspect. Although there is no evidence to suggest that they have been added at a later date, they are written in an uncharacteristic form, placed, as they are, around the circular inner edge of the well. [12] Should there have been no date inscribed on the painting, the similarity in the age, hairstyle, and general appearance of the girl in the Washington and Dulwich paintings would have called for a projected date for *A Girl with a Broom* of 1646/1648, only a few years after the Dulwich *Girl.* [13] One possible explanation for the discrepancies of date and style, given the existence of an earlier image, is that the painting was begun in the late 1640s and only finished in 1651. This work,

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thus, may be one other example of a painting executed over an extended period of time (see, among the Rembrandt paintings in the Gallery's collection: *Saskia van Uylenburgh, the Wife of the Artist*, *The Apostle Paul,* and *The Descent from the Cross*.

Few specifics are known about the nature of Rembrandt's workshop in the late 1640s and early 1650s. Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627–1678), in his *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst* (Rotterdam, 1678), indicates that he was active in the master's workshop before he returned to his native city of Dordrecht in April 1648. The fellow students he mentions were Carel Fabritius (Dutch, c. 1622 - 1654) and Abraham Furnerius (c. 1628–1654). Among other artists working with Rembrandt in the late 1640s were Karel van der Pluym (1625–1672), Constantijn van Renesse (Dutch, 1626 - 1680), and Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634 - 1693). It seems probable that Willem Drost (Dutch, active c. 1650 - active 1655) and Abraham van Dijck (1635/1636–1672) also became Rembrandt pupils around 1650, although nothing certain is known about their relationship to Rembrandt. Indeed, many questions remain about paintings from Rembrandt's workshop around 1650 (see, for example, *Portrait of Rembrandt*) because it is extremely difficult to establish the independent identities of Rembrandt's pupils during these years. Nothing in the oeuvres of artists known or thought to have been working with Rembrandt in the early 1650s can be effectively compared either thematically or stylistically to this work. A more probable date, in terms of the manner of execution, appears to be the late 1640s.

Although no documentary proof has survived that clarifies the different roles of student and assistant in Rembrandt's workshop during the 1640s, the more advanced of his students, for example Hoogstraten and Fabritius, would have worked as assistants in the workshop after they finished their apprenticeship. [14] In all likelihood they continued to help execute paintings that would be sold under Rembrandt's name, even after they had begun working independently and signing their own works. [15] Paintings created for Rembrandt's workshop, to judge from those that have recently been attributed to these artists, would often be free adaptations of Rembrandt's own compositions. These works, once accepted by the master as worthy of his production, would be inscribed with his signature and the date.

A Girl with a Broom fits into this scenario. It is one of a number of paintings loosely derived from Rembrandt's *Girl at a Window* in Dulwich. Hoogstraten was particularly fond of this compositional type, if one is to judge from his late 1640s

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Young Man in a Hat, at a Half-Door in the Hermitage. [16] The quality of this work, however, is comparatively mediocre, and it is impossible to reconcile the simplistic handling of paint seen here with that found in *A Girl with a Broom.* A much finer painting of a comparable type that has been attributed to Hoogstraten, *Young Woman at an Open Half-Door,* signed and dated Rembrandt 1645 [fig. 5], is also executed in a manner distinctively different from that of *A Girl with a Broom.* [17] As is evident in comparisons of the hands ([fig. 6] and [fig. 7]), the forms in the Chicago painting are executed in a far crisper manner, with flatter planes of color and fewer nuances of shading. Differences in character between the white sleeves of the girl in the Washington painting and the white shirt of the girl in the Chicago painting also point out that the Gallery's *A Girl with a Broom* was executed by an artistic personality that favored a freer, more painterly approach.

The artist in Rembrandt's circle during this period who was most capable of both the nuanced modeling of the face and hands and the rough bravura brushwork found in the sleeves was Carel Fabritius, but specific comparisons with other works by him are difficult to make because few paintings can be firmly attributed to him during the mid-1640s. Thus only a tentative attribution to him is suggested. [18] One of the few comparisons to Fabritius' work that can be made is to his evocative *Self-Portrait,* c. 1645–1648 [fig. 8]. Although the modeling of the face of the girl in *A Girl with a Broom* is more nuanced than that of the *Self-Portrait*, where modeling is achieved with vigorously applied broken impastos, these differences may well relate to different artistic intents. The boldly uncompromising application of paint in the *Self-Portrait* was clearly intended to help characterize the artist's personality, whereas the careful modeling in the girl's face was appropriate to her sex and age. The character of the brushwork in the faces of these two paintings, indeed, is far more comparable than one might initially suspect. In both instances paint is densely applied with broad, interlocking brushstrokes that model facets or planes of the face. Similarly placed accents, moreover, help define the cheekbone and nose. A specific point of comparison is in the structure of the eyes: in each instance the upper portions of the relatively large, flat, almond-shaped eyes are defined by a black line rather than by modulations in tone. This particular manner of articulating eyes is not found in paintings by other artists in Rembrandt's circle.

One other painting can be brought into this discussion, a *Portrait of a Woman* attributed to Fabritius by the Rembrandt Research Project (RRP). [19] Although this painting is signed and dated "Rembrandt.f/1647," the RRP has concluded that it was executed by Fabritius around 1642. Whether or not such a redating is justified,

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and I would maintain that the date on the painting reflects the period of its execution, the attribution of this portrait to Fabritius is convincing. The differences in style between the carefully modeled head of this woman and Fabritius' more broadly and roughly executed Rotterdam *Self-Portrait*, however, demonstrate the range of techniques Fabritius was capable of during these years. The girl's head in *A Girl with a Broom* falls somewhere between these two works. The hands of the woman in Fabritius' *Portrait* and those of the subject in *A Girl with a Broom* also show marked similarities. In both instances they are modeled with interlocking planes of color that are generally brushed across the forms, particularly the fingers, rather than along their length. [20]

The hypothesis that *A Girl with a Broom* could have been created during the mid-to-late 1640s by Fabritius in response to Rembrandt's *Girl at a Window,* however, needs to remain extremely tentative because of the 1651 date inscribed on the painting. Fabritius almost certainly would not have added the signature and date because he had moved to Delft in 1650. It is possible, however, that the image was reworked and brought to completion by another artist at this date. The basis for this hypothesis is the stylistic discrepancy that exists between the execution of the broom, the bucket, and even the fence surrounding the well, and that of the figure. Neither the broom nor the bucket is executed with the same surety as the figure itself. The tentative brushstrokes do not model the forms with bold accents comparable to those found on the girl's blouse. The relationships of scale between the girl and these objects are also peculiarly discordant.

Technical evidence seems to support the hypothesis that the broom may have been worked up after the initial blocking in of the figure had occurred. As has been mentioned, an earlier form of the blouse and the girl's left thumb were painted under the broomstick. Whether or not the broom was part of the original concept is of some debate. In the X-radiographs (see [fig. 3]) there is the appearance of a reserve left for the broom. The area of little density within the costume, however, would not have been blocked in with dense paints since it conforms to the position of her red shoulder strap. To the right of the broom this red is painted over a dark layer, while to the left of the broom the red is painted over the white shirt, which may be an indication that it was applied as a result of a design change. Immediately above the shoulder is a dark area in the X-radiographs that seems to conform to the shape of a portion of the broomstick. Whether this diagonal shape is a reserve is also difficult to determine, in part because it abuts another dark area adjacent to the girl's head that has no logical relationship to the final image. [21] In

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any event, the definition of the “reserve” that seems to correspond to the shape of the broom has been enhanced on the left by the paints containing lead white that were used at the last stage of execution to silhouette the figure against the dark background (and to cover Pentimenti in the girl’s shirt).

One bit of technical evidence that links the signature and date, the broom, and the bucket concerns their distinctive reddish orange accents, which have a vermilion component. Similar accents also appear on the girl’s curls and on her shoulder to the left of the broom, indicating that these other areas of the painting may have been finalized at this time as well. [22] Just why *A Girl with a Broom* would have been worked on at two different stages is not known, although it may well be that the painting was not originally brought to completion because distortions in the surface from the wrinkling paint had quickly developed.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Girl at a Window*, 1645, oil on canvas, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London. Photo reproduced by permission of the Trustees of Dulwich Picture Gallery

fig. 2 Raking light, Rembrandt Workshop (Possibly Carel Fabritius), *A Girl with a Broom*, probably begun 1646/1648 and completed 1651, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.74

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fig. 3 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt Workshop (Possibly Carel Fabritius), *A Girl with a Broom*, probably begun 1646/1648 and completed 1651, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.74

fig. 4 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Servant Girl at a Window*, 1651, oil on canvas, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm

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fig. 5 Rembrandt van Rijn (or follower), *Young Woman at an Open Half-Door*, 1645, oil on canvas, Mr. and Mrs. Martin A. Ryerson Collection, 1894.1022. Photo © 1994, The Art Institute of Chicago. All Rights Reserved

fig. 6 Detail of hands, Rembrandt Workshop (Possibly Carel Fabritius), *A Girl with a Broom*, probably begun 1646/1648 and completed 1651, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.74

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fig. 7 Detail of left hand, Rembrandt van Rijn (or follower), *Young Woman at an Open Half-Door*, 1645, oil on canvas, Mr. and Mrs. Martin A. Ryerson Collection, 1894.1022. Photo © 1994, The Art Institute of Chicago. All Rights Reserved

fig. 8 Carel Fabritius, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1645–1648, oil on canvas, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Tromp, Rotterdam

NOTES

[1] This entry is a revised version of the text that appeared in the Nationalmuseum catalog of *Rembrandt och Hans Tid* [Rembrandt and His Age] (Stockholm 1992), no. 83, and the symposium papers published thereafter (Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "*A Girl with a Broom*: A Problem of Attribution," in Görel Cavalli-Björkman, ed., *Rembrandt and His Pupils* [Stockholm, 1993], 142–155). I have benefited greatly from my many conversations with Susanna Pauli Griswold about the issues discussed in this entry. I would also like to thank Dennis Weller and Melanie Gifford for their helpful comments.

[2] This identification was first proposed by Émile Michel, *Rembrandt: Sa vie, son oeuvre et son temps*, 2 vols. (New York, 1893), 1:75. It was reiterated by,

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among others, Otto Benesch, "The Rembrandt Paintings in the National Gallery of Art," *Art Quarterly* 6 (Winter 1943): 26.

[3] Computer examinations of the physical characteristics of the heads in these two paintings have been undertaken at the National Gallery of Art. The results have reinforced the notion that the model was identical. I am particularly indebted to Ambrose Liao and Donna Mann for their enthusiastic research on this project.

[4] See, for example, Rembrandt's *Titus at His Desk,* 1655 (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, inv. no. 512), which would probably be classified as a genre scene where the sitter not known.

[5] Susan Koslow, "Frans Hals's *Fisherboys*: Exemplars of Idleness," *Art Bulletin* 57 (September 1975): 429, has associated the crossed-arm pose of the girl with idleness. This interpretation, however, is not convincing. The type of well depicted appears to be similar to that in *The Village Holiday* by Daniel Teniers the Younger (1610–1690) (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, no. 56–23). In this painting a broom and a bucket stand adjacent to the well.

[6] Virtually all scholars since Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 580, no. 378, have doubted the attribution to Rembrandt.

[7] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 580, no. 378 wrote: "The surface is composed of small particles of paint curling slightly at the edges, such as one observes on pictures which have been exposed to extraordinary heat or on pictures of the eighteenth century. The latter possibility, in the present state of Rembrandt research, should not be excluded." The issue was further taken up by Hubert von Sonnenburg, "Maltechnische Gesichtspunkte zur Rembrandtforschung," *Maltechnik-Restauro* 82 (1976): 12. Von Sonnenburg associated the "gerunzelte Farbschicht" with that found in eighteenth-century English paintings. This effect, he wrote, resulted from an excess of drying oil or from the character of the medium itself. He questioned whether the painting had been made by a follower of Rembrandt and called for a serious scientific analysis of the work.

[8] I would particularly like to thank Karin Groen, who analyzed a group of samples taken from this painting and confirmed the assessment of the problem developed by the Scientific Research department at the National Gallery of Art (letter, December 4, 1992, in NGA curatorial files). She specifically noted that medium-rich paint (high oil content) can be observed in many of the layers. A dark brown underlayer, sandwiched between medium-rich layers, contains manganese, probably in the form of umber, which promotes a fine type of wrinkling. Layers near the surface contain cobalt, which promotes surface drying. Once the surface dries prior to the drying of the underlying layers, wrinkling of the paint occurs. She also noted

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the presence of vermilion near the proper right hand that belonged to the later change in the composition.

[9] The X-radiographs [see X-radiography] measure only the relative density of metal-based paints, hence other components of the initial paint layer could exist that cannot be read with this examination procedure. More information could possibly be gained through examination with neutron autoradiography.

[10] The thumb is also visible in the X-radiographs.

[11] Although a comparable wrinkling effect is not found in the impastos of paintings by Rembrandt, similar problems do exist in the backgrounds of at least two of his works, *Abduction of Proserpine* (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin; Br. 463), and *Alexander* (City Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow; Br. 480).

[12] The signature appears to be integral with the paint surface, and no varnish has been found between it and the underlying paint.

[13] It is a curious coincidence that the Stockholm *Servant Girl at a Window* is also dated 1651. Both paintings were in France in the eighteenth century, as was the Dulwich painting. One of these three paintings may have been the work described by Roger de Piles in the preface to his *Cours de Peinture par Principes* (Paris, 1708), 10–11, as quoted in Seymour Slive, *Rembrandt and His Critics, 1630–1730* (The Hague, 1953), 129: "Rembrandt diverted himself one day by making a portrait of his servant in order to exhibit it at his window and deceive the eyes of the pedestrians. . . . While in Holland I was curious to see the portrait. I found it painted well and with great strength. I bought it and still exhibit it in an important position in my cabinet."

[14] Fabritius seems to have studied with Rembrandt in the early 1640s before returning to Midden-Beemster in 1643. Virtually nothing is known about him during the late 1640s, but it seems unlikely that he remained in Midden-Beemster the entire time without continuing his contact with Rembrandt in Amsterdam. Midden-Beemster is only about thirty kilometers from Amsterdam and was a community that had many ties with Amsterdam. In 1648 or 1649 Fabritius painted the portrait of a wealthy Amsterdam silk merchant, Abraham de Potter (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. A1591). By 1650 he had moved to Delft. For further information on Fabritius see Christopher Brown, *Carel Fabritius* (Oxford, 1981), and Frederik J. Duparc, *Carel Fabritius, 1622–1654* (The Hague and Schwerin, 2004).

[15] In this respect their relationship to Rembrandt would have been much the same as that of Anthony van Dyck to Peter Paul Rubens during the late 1610s. In those years Van Dyck simultaneously painted in Rubens' style when working in Rubens' studio and in his own personal style when painting in his own workshop.

[16] *Young Man in a Hat, at a Half-Door* is not signed. It was first attributed to

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Hoogstraten by Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau i.d. Pfalz, 1983), 2:1339, no. 856. The painting was also cataloged as by Hoogstraten in Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and Pieter van Thiel, *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop: Paintings* (New Haven and London, 1991), 356, no. 74.

[17] The painting was included in Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and Pieter van Thiel, *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop: Paintings* (New Haven and London, 1991), 350, no. 72, as by Hoogstraten. I would like to thank Martha Wolff at the Art Institute for her observations about the differences in technique between these two paintings and for sending me detailed photographs of the Chicago painting. In addition to the Chicago painting, another Rembrandt School painting from this period, depicting a young boy leaning against a metal railing, is in the Cincinnati Art Museum. See Mary Ann Scott, *Dutch, Flemish, and German Paintings in the Cincinnati Art Museum* (Cincinnati, 1987), 107–110, no. 38.

[18] In 1993, at my suggestion, the attribution of this painting was changed from "Rembrandt van Rijn" to "Carel Fabritius and Rembrandt Workshop," and the painting was exhibited as such in Stockholm (*Rembrandt och Hans Tid* [Rembrandt and His Age] [Stockholm, 1992], no. 83). The Fabritius attribution, however, was not generally accepted. A number of colleagues felt that insufficient comparative material existed to make a firm attribution. Walter Liedtke, "Stockholm: Rembrandt and His Age" (review of the exhibition *Rembrandt och Hans Tid*), *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (December 1992): 829–830, believes that the artist of the Chicago painting (fig. 5), which he attributes to Samuel van Hoogstraten, also executed *A Girl with a Broom.* Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann (personal communication, 1993) would prefer to leave the attribution of the Washington painting as "anonymous."

[19] Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), C107. The painting and its pendant (Br. 251), which are traditionally identified as portraits of Adriaentje Hollaer and her husband, the painter Hendrick Martensz Sorgh, are in the collection of the Duke and Duchess of Westminster. See also Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 291, no. 370.

[20] For a detail photograph of the hands of the *Portrait of a Woman* see Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 677, fig. 4.

[21] The only possibility that I can come up with is that the combined forms may have been a reserve for an implement with a horizontal piece at the end of

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the handle.

[22] This observation has been confirmed through Karin Groen's analysis of the paint layers. See note 8.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a fine, tightly woven, plain-weave fabric, lined with the tacking margins removed. Lining has exaggerated the canvas texture in the paint layer. Cusping on all edges indicates that the dimensions have not been reduced. There are long vertical tears in the fence in the lower left quadrant and at the bottom center to the right of the broom.

The double ground consists of a quartz-type brown lower layer and a thick, translucent brown upper layer.[1] The upper ground is not employed as a mid-tone compositionally. Paint in the figure was applied thickly in broad, short strokes with vigorous brushwork and low impasto, while thin washes define the background. At least two distinct design layers of paint are apparent, with variations in handling. Underneath the present composition, as seen in the X-radiographs and with raking-light examination, is a head, placed directly under the girl's head, looking upward. The X-radiographs also show minor changes in the girl's sleeves. Her proper left thumb is visible in the X-radiographs under the broom handle. (For a further discussion of these changes see the entry.)

The upper paint layer was applied within a short time of the first, before the underlying paint had fully dried and without intermediate varnish application. An excess of medium and an improper drying of the paint layers have caused pronounced wrinkling in the upper paint layers, especially in the face and hands.

The paint has suffered abrasion throughout, and many of the glazes in the face have been lost. The painting was treated in 1991–1992 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting.

[1] The ground and paint were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using polarized light microscopy, X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy, gas chromatography, cross-sections, and scanning electron microscopy in conjunction with energy dispersive X-ray analysis (see reports dated March 24, 1992, and April

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27, 1992, in NGA Conservation department files). The ground and paint were further analyzed by Karin Groen using cross-sections and energy dispersive X-ray analysis (see letter dated December 4, 1992, in NGA Conservation department files, and Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project,A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering [Dordrecht, 2005], 668–669). Groen found the ground to contain quartz.

PROVENANCE

Almost certainly Herman Becker [c. 1617-1678], Amsterdam.[1] Pierre Crozat [1665-1740], Paris, before 1740; by inheritance to his nephews, first to Louis-François Crozat, marquis du Châtel [1691-1750], Paris, and then [on Louis-François' death without a male heir] to Louis-Antoine Crozat, baron de Thiers [1699-1770], Paris; the latter's heirs; purchased 1772, through Denis Diderot [1713-1784] as an intermediary, by Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729-1796], for the Imperial Hermitage Gallery, Saint Petersburg; sold February 1931, as a painting by Rembrandt, through (Matthiesen Gallery, Berlin; P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London; and M. Knoedler & Co., New York) to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 1 May 1937 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] For Becker's collection, see Hugo J. Postma, "De Amsterdamse verzamelaar Herman Becker (c. 1617-1678) Nieuwe gegevens over een geldschieter van Rembrandt," *Oud-Holland* 102 (1988): 1-21. The painting appears in the 1678 inventory (fol. 285r as "Een vrouwtje aende put van Rembrandt van Rijn").

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 11, repro., as by Rembrandt.

1992 Rembrandt Och Hans Tid [Rembrandt and His Age], Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, 1992-1993, no. 83, as by Carel Fabritius and Rembrandt Workshop.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt Workshop
Dutch 17th Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Head of an Aged Woman

1655/1660

oil on panel
overall: 21.1 x 17.5 cm (8 5/16 x 6 7/8 in.)
Inscription: center left by a later hand: Rembrandt / f.1657
Widener Collection 1942.9.64

ENTRY

Informal bust-length figure studies, called *tronies* in the seventeenth century, were frequently painted by Rembrandt and members of his workshop. [1] This small oil sketch of a wizened old woman is a painting of this type. The sitter stares out from under a white headpiece, her black cape fastened at the neck. The woman's wrinkled visage is expressed with dense paints applied vigorously with a stiff brush. At the edge of the strokes are crisp and definite ridges, a characteristic of *alla prima* painting, which is also evident in the X-radiographs [fig. 1] [see X-radiography]. This technique is particularly apparent along the decorative pattern at the lower edge of the headpiece, which has been created by pushing a firm object, perhaps even a brush, into the wet paint. In contrast to the thick impastos on the face and headpiece, the black cape is thinly painted and summarily indicated. Surprisingly, the background is vigorously painted, particularly in the upper region. The paint in the background around the head is actually thicker than that of the thinly executed black cape.

The attribution of this painting to Rembrandt dates to at least 1765, when it was engraved in reverse by J. H. Bause. At that time it and a male pendant were in the Gottfried Winkler Collection in Leipzig. [2] Nevertheless, despite the expressive character of the *tronies* of this old woman, its attribution seems impossible for stylistic reasons. As Edith Standen implied in her notes on the painting when it was in Widener's collection, the compositional arrangement is rather awkward. Standen wrote: "Lower part unconvincing; head does not seem to join body, set of

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shoulders seems wrong." [3] As noted in the catalog of the Gallery's 1969 exhibition, the painting "differs markedly from the rest of Rembrandt's work, and it has not yet been possible to relate this study to any of his other paintings." [4] Stechow questioned the authenticity of the signature and date in 1937, [5] and Gerson, in 1969, published that they were forged. [6] Gerson also thought that the painting did not resemble "the style of Rembrandt's authentic oil sketches."

While the signature and date, 1657, differ markedly from Rembrandt's own, there is no technical evidence that they were applied after the execution of the painting. In any event, it would appear that the sketch was executed in the latter half of the 1650s. Dendrochronological examination [see Dendrochronology] has established the felling date for the tree from which the panel was made as between 1637 and 1643. Thus one can with some assurance conclude that the work was painted during Rembrandt's lifetime. The large number of such *tronies* that have survived from Rembrandt's workshop indicates that he encouraged his students to paint such studies directly from the model. This direct manner of painting helps explain the bold brushwork and intense scrutiny of the aged woman's expressive face that is evident in this work. Rembrandt's paintings of old women from the mid-1650s, among them *An Old Woman in a Hood,* 1654 (Pushkin Museum, Moscow), and *An Old Woman in an Armchair,* 1654 (Hermitage, Saint Petersburg), would also have served as pictorial models. [7]

The old woman depicted in this painting also appears in a number of works by Abraham van Dijck (1635/1636–1672), in particular his *The Old Prophetess,* c. 1655–1660, now in the Hermitage. [8] Although the harsh angular style of the oil sketch is not characteristic of the more finished works by this artist, it is entirely possible that he could have painted in such a manner when executing a preliminary oil sketch. Until more information is known about the full range of his work, however, it is not possible to offer more than an initial suggestion of this artist, who seems to have studied with Rembrandt in the early 1650s. If the painting were, in fact, executed by Van Dijck, then it almost certainly was painted after he had left Rembrandt's workshop and had begun painting on his own.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt Workshop, *Head of an Aged Woman*, 1655/1660, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.64

NOTES

[1] Several of these appear in the 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's collection. See Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 349–388, especially nos. 105, 115, 118, and 294.

[2] Although the painting is described as being in the Gottfried Winkler Collection in Leipzig, Bause, for some reason, dedicated his print to Johann Jacob Haid of Augsburg. See this object, Provenance note 1.

[3] Handwritten notes by Edith Standen (Widener's secretary for art), from the Widener Collection records, in NGA curatorial files.

[4] *Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary*

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of the Artist's Death] (Washington, 1969), no. 18.

[5] Stechow's verbal comments were recorded by Edith Standen (Widener's secretary for art) in her notes (in NGA curatorial files).

[6] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 581, no. 392.

[7] See Br. 383 from the Pushkin Museum, Moscow; and Br. 381 from the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg. An earlier prototype that might also have been influential is Rembrandt's etching *Sick Woman with a Large White Headdress,* c. 1640–1641 (B. 359).

[8] Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler,* 5 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 1:671, no. 367. Van Dijck was probably a pupil of Rembrandt's in the early 1650s, although nothing definite is known about the exact period of his apprenticeship. Sumowski dates the Hermitage painting 1655/1660 on the basis of comparisons with Van Dijck's few dated works. The same model appears frequently in his oeuvre: see Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 1: nos. 370, 372, 375, 377. An oil sketch on panel (23.8 x 20 cm) representing the same model in a similar headpiece was in a private collection in Ontario in 1973 (photograph in NGA curatorial files).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single, uncradled oak board with a vertical grain, cut from a tree felled between 1637 and 1643.[1] A vertical split caused a dislevel in the panel at the top edge in the center. A small, 1.3 x 0.5 cm, loss of paint and ground layers occurred there when the wood surface was mechanically planed. The left and right edges appear to have been planed, slightly reducing the panel's horizontal dimensions.

A thin, smooth, white ground layer covering the panel lies under a reddish brown locally applied layer. This layer, which must have been left as a reserve for the woman's robe, is still visible in that area. The paint was applied freely with very loose brushwork, considerable impasto, and rapid scumbles. The paint was worked wet-into-wet in rapid succession, with the face painted first, followed by the background. Small losses are found in the dark background at the right and along the edges, and mild abrasion has occurred in the thin, dark passages. The painting was treated in 1992 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting. At that time overpaint removed from the dark right background revealed a pentimento in the

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placement of the woman's shoulder.

[1] Dendrochronology was performed by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg (see report dated September 28, 1987, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Probably H. Verschuring, The Hague, by 1751. Gottfried Winkler [1731-1795], Leipzig, by 1765.[1] Possibly with (Stéphane Bourgeois [Bourgeois Frères], Paris), in 1893/1894.[2] Rodolphe Kann [1845-1905], Paris, by 1898;[3] purchased 1907 with the entire Kann collection by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[4] sold to (F. Kleinberger & Co., Paris);[5] by exchange to (Leo Nardus [1868-1955], Suresnes, France, and New York); by exchange early 1909 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;[6] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderijen...*, 2 vols., The Hague, 1752, 2: 482, lists in the collection of H. Verschuring "Een Oud Vrouwtje door Rembrandt. h.9d., br. 8d." The next painting listed was a pendant of an old man. Both paintings were then catalogued in the Winkler collection in 1768: Franz Wilhelm Kreuchauf, *Historische Erklaerungen der Gemaelde welche Herr Gottfried Winkler in Leipzig gesammelt*, Leipzig, 1798: nos. 495 and 496. Three years earlier, in 1765, the painting had been engraved in reverse by J.H. Bause, who for some reason dedicated his print to Johann Jacob Haid of Augsburg. Bause also engraved the pendant (no. 496 from Winkler's catalogue); the description of the latter work is: "Der Kopf eines betagten Mannes, mit dickaufgeschwollener Nase, kurzem Haare und Barte." This painting has disappeared but is listed in Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century...*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols., London, 1907-1927: 6(1916):no. 461. A photograph of Bause's engraving of the old man is in the NGA curatorial files.

[2] Émile Michel, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Work, and His Time*, Trans. Florence Simmonds, 2 vols., New York, 1894: 2:238, gives the following description of a

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painting in the possession of "M. Steph. Bourgeois": "Bust Portrait of a Woman, three-quarter to the front, small size. About 1640. W[ood]. 7 7/8 x 6 1/2 inches." It is possible that this painting is in fact *Head of an Aged Woman*, and that Rodolphe Kann obtained it from Bourgeois, but so far no direct evidence has come to light that supports this theory. Bourgeois was the father-in-law of Leo Nardus, the dealer from whom Peter A.B. Widener received the painting in 1909.

[3] Kann lent the painting to an exhibition in Amsterdam in 1898.

[4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reels 38 and 39, boxes 115-118, Stock books, Paris Ledger, and Sales Book for the Kann Collection.

[5] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 39, box 117, Paris Ledger, no. 1, Kann Collection.

[6] Nardus received this painting and NGA's *Head of Saint Matthew* (1942.9.58) from Kleinberger in exchange for a portrait of a lady by Hans Memling. The same two paintings, along with ten others, were sent to Widener in early 1909, as replacements for a dozen paintings Nardus had sold to and then took back from the collector, after they were deemed by art historians of the day to be modern copies of "Old Masters."

These two transactions involving Nardus are revealed in correspondence between Widener, his lawyer, John G. Johnson, Nardus, and Nardus' assistant, Michel van Gelder, now in the John G. Johnson Collection Archives at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (box 5, folders 5 and 6, especially a letter, Michel van Gelder to John G. Johnson, 29 January 1909). The correspondence was found, transcribed, and kindly shared with the NGA by Jonathan Lopez (letter, sent with transcriptions, 24 April 2006, to Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., in NGA curatorial files). See also Jonathan Lopez, "'Gross False Pretenses': The Misdeeds of Art Dealer Leo Nardus," *Apollo*, ser. 2, vol. 166, no. 548 (December 2007): 80–81, fig. 9.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt Workshop
Dutch 17th Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Head of Saint Matthew

probably early 1660s

oil on panel
overall: 25 x 19.5 cm (9 13/16 x 7 11/16 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.58

ENTRY

This freely brushed sketch of a bearded old man wearing a beret is one of four oil studies on panel that depict the same model. [1] Traditionally these works have been considered autograph sketches that Rembrandt made in preparation for his painting *Saint Matthew and the Angel,* 1661, now in the Louvre, Paris [fig. 1]. [2] In the last fifty years, however, only one of these sketches, in the collection of Alfred Bader, has been generally accepted as by Rembrandt. [3]

The broad, impressionistic handling of the paint in *Head of Saint Matthew* was considered a hallmark of Rembrandt's late style when this sketch first entered the Rembrandt literature in the 1880s. Indeed, during the last years of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth, a large number of sketches attributed to Rembrandt's later years were added to his oeuvre, particularly by Wilhelm von Bode and Wilhelm Valentiner. Scholars now recognize that many of these works, including this one, lack the structure of form that underlies Rembrandt's own creations. An X-radiograph [see X-radiography] of the painting [fig. 2] confirms that the Rembrandtesque characteristics of the image derive from broad brushstrokes across the surface of the image and that the head lacks the firm modeling so typical of the master's works.

The first scholar to reject the attribution to Rembrandt in print was Bauch in 1966. [4] Van Regteren Altena concluded that the broad handling had characteristics of nineteenth-century imitations of Rembrandt. [5] Gerson agreed that this work was "an imitation of a later period." [7]

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Dating such studies can be extremely difficult, because followers of Rembrandt from his own time through the nineteenth century have emulated his work with little variation in style. In this instance examinations of the paints and panel have not yielded information that helps provide a specific chronological framework for the painting. Although the character of the paints is consistent with seventeenth-century studio practice, similar materials are also found on later paintings. The only unusual feature for Rembrandt is the presence of verdigris under the beard, but verdigris is found in seventeenth-century paintings. Although Dendrochronology could not date the oak panel, the irregular beveling is similar to that found in seventeenth-century paintings. There thus are no technical grounds for questioning the work's seventeenth-century origin.

Because of differences in the figure's expression and in the character of the beret, it is unlikely that this study is a copy of the head of Saint Matthew from *Saint Matthew and the Angel.* It seems more probable that it and the other *tronies* depicting this figure were made in Rembrandt's workshop while the master was occupied with the Louvre painting. [6] From the evidence of drawings it is known that Rembrandt, as part of his teaching process, encouraged his students to work from live models. This painting could have been such a study piece, executed by an unidentified student around 1661.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

© National Gallery of Art, Washington

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Saint Matthew and the Angel*, 1661, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo © RMN

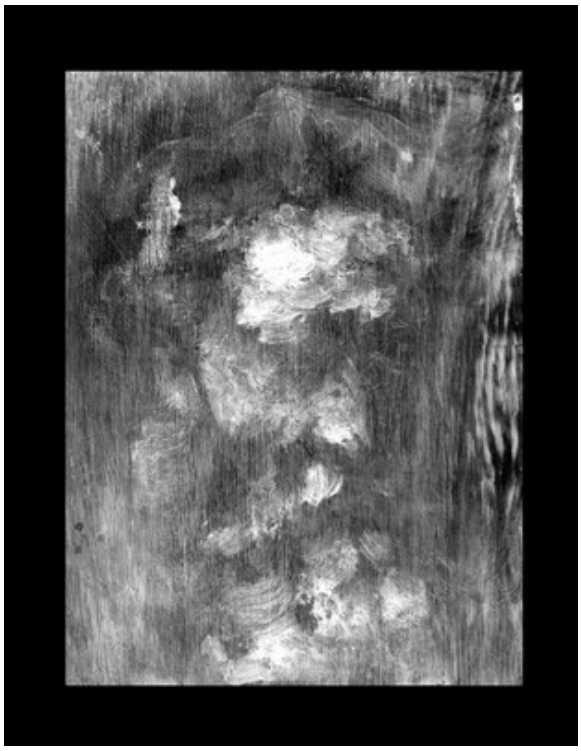

fig. 2 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt Workshop, *Head of Saint Matthew*, probably early 1660s, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.58

NOTES

[1] The other three studies are: *Head of an Old Man,* panel, 25 x 22 cm, Musée Bonnat, Bayonne (Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* [Vienna, 1935], 303; *Head of an Old Man,* panel 24.5 x 20 cm, Alfred and Isabel Bader Collection, Milwaukee (David de Witt, *The Bader Collection: Dutch and Flemish Paintings* [Kingston, 2008], 273–274, no. 165, repro.); and *Head of an Old Man,* panel, 27 x 22 cm, formerly William McAneeny, Detroit (Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* [Vienna, 1935], 305). Another study of the same man, also attributed to Rembrandt, is in the Museo Nacionale de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (oil on paper set down on panel, 22 x 16 cm).

[2] The opinion was most recently expressed by Jakob Rosenberg, Seymour

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Slive, and E. H. ter Kuile, *Dutch Art and Architecture: 1600–1800* (Baltimore, 1966), 78.

[3] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 573, no. 304.

[4] Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde* (Berlin, 1966), 48, suggested that this sketch was based on another similiar sketch (Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* [Vienna, 1935], 13, no. 304), rather than on the painting *Saint Matthew and the Angel* in the Louvre, Paris, as Bredius proposed.

[5] J. Q. van Regteren Altena, review of Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde* (Berlin, 1966), *Oud-Holland* 82 (1967): 70–71.

[6] The only other instance for which there exists a number of studies from the same model by both Rembrandt and his workshop is *Head of a Young Jew* from the 1640s (Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* [Vienna, 1935], 620–627). See also Lloyd DeWitt, ed., *Rembrandt and the Face of Jesus* (New Haven, Conn., 2011).

[7] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), no. 305.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a vertically grained, thin, oak panel beveled on the back on all sides. It is not quarter sawn, resulting in an irregular grain pattern, and contains no sapwood, precluding the dating of the panel by dendrochronology.[1] The paint was applied over a granular gray ground. Pastose paint was used in the head and thin glazes were employed in the background. Many areas were worked wet-into-wet. Analysis indicates that the pigments are consistent with those found in seventeenth-century studio practice.[2] The painting, which is in excellent condition, was treated in 1994 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting.

[1] Dendrochronology report by Dr. Joseph Bauch, Universität Hamburg (see report dated November 29, 1977, in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] Pigments were analyzed by the Scientific Research department using X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (see reports dated June 29, 1994, and August 1, 1994, in NGA Conservation department files).

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PROVENANCE

Alfred Buckley, New Hall, England, by 1882.[1] Rodolphe Kann [1845-1905], Paris, probably after 1893 but by 1900;[2] purchased 1907 with the entire Kann collection by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[3] sold to (F. Kleinberger & Co., Paris);[4] by exchange to (Leo Nardus [1868-1955], Suresnes, France, and New York); by exchange early 1909 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;[5] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Buckley lent the painting to the 1882 Winter Exhibition at the Royal Academy in London.

[2] Émile Michel, *Rembrandt: sa vie, son oeuvre et son temps*, Paris, 1893: 432-433, lists the picture as still in Buckley's possession. It was catalogued with the Kann collection by Wilhelm von Bode, *Gemälde-Sammlung des Herrn Rudolf Kann in Paris*, Vienna, 1900: no. 7, repro.

[3] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reels 38 and 39, boxes 115-118, Stock books, Paris Ledger, and Sales Book for the Kann Collection.

[4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 39, box 117, Paris Ledger, no. 1, Kann Collection.

[5] Nardus received this painting and NGA's *Head of an Aged Woman* (1942.9.64) from Kleinberger in exchange for a portrait of a lady by Hans Memling. The same two paintings, along with ten others, were sent to Widener in early 1909, as replacements for a dozen paintings Nardus had sold to and then took back from the collector, after they were deemed by art historians of the day to be modern copies of "Old Masters."

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These two transactions involving Nardus are revealed in correspondence between Widener, his lawyer, John G. Johnson, Nardus, and Nardus' assistant, Michel van Gelder, now in the John G. Johnson Collection Archives at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (box 5, folders 5 and 6, especially a letter, Michel van Gelder to John G. Johnson, 29 January 1909). The correspondence was found, transcribed, and kindly shared with the NGA by Jonathan Lopez (letter, sent with transcriptions, 24 April 2006, to Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., in NGA curatorial files). See also Jonathan Lopez, "'Gross False Pretenses': The Misdeeds of Art Dealer Leo Nardus," *Apollo*, ser. 2, vol. 166, no. 548 (December 2007): 80–81, fig. 8.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1882 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1882, no. 99.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 9, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt Workshop
Dutch 17th Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife

1655

oil on canvas transferred to canvas
overall: 105.7 x 97.8 cm (41 5/8 x 38 1/2 in.)
framed: 130.8 x 123.2 cm (51 1/2 x 48 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower right: Rembrandt. f.1655.
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.79

ENTRY

This painting depicts an episode in the life of Joseph described in the Book of Genesis, chapter 39. Joseph, who had been sold to Potiphar, an officer of the pharaoh, came to be trusted and honored in Potiphar's household. He was, however, falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, Iempsar, of trying to violate her, after her attempts at seduction had failed. When he fled from her, she held on to his robe and eventually used it as evidence against him. In this painting Iempsar recounts her tale to Potiphar as she gestures toward Joseph's red robe draped over the bedpost. While Potiphar listens intently to the story, Joseph, dressed in a long brown tunic and with the keys denoting his household responsibilities hanging from his belt, stands serenely on the far side of the bed.

The story of Joseph must have fascinated Rembrandt, for he devoted a large number of drawings, prints, and paintings to the life of this Old Testament figure. Although his primary source of inspiration was undoubtedly the Bible, he also drew upon other literary traditions to amplify his understanding of the biblical text. Tümpel has argued that, in particular, Flavius Josephus' *Of the Antiquities of the Jews* was extremely important for Rembrandt's interpretations of Old Testament scenes. [1] Rembrandt owned an expensive German edition of Flavius Josephus, which is listed in the 1656 inventory of his possessions, the year after the execution of this painting. [2] Tümpel sees the pronounced focus on the bed in *Joseph*

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Accused by Potiphar's Wife as a direct response on Rembrandt's part to the emphasis placed on the bed in Josephus' account of this scene. In the text found in *Of the Antiquities of the Jews,* Potiphar's wife accuses Joseph with the following words: "O husband, said she, mayst thou not live a day longer, if thou dost not punish the wicked slave, who has desired to defile thy bed." [3]

In one important respect the confrontation depicted in this painting varies from both Josephus' account and the biblical text: all three protagonists are present at the time of the accusation. In neither account is Joseph's presence mentioned. Rembrandt often took such liberties with biblical texts to enhance the emotional poignancy of the scene. [4] Here the setting has been carefully conceived to reinforce the essential drama of the accusation. Potiphar's wife is the main protagonist, for it is around her accusation that the drama revolves. Strongly lit and centrally placed, she gestures across the white sheets of the bed to Joseph's red robe as she turns toward her husband to recount her story. At the same time she brings her left hand to her chest, holding up her chemise in a gesture that implies at once innocence and modesty. On the far side of the expansive bed, Joseph appears isolated and vulnerable as he stares toward the red robe and involuntarily raises his hand in protest to Iempsar's accusation. Potiphar, dressed in a turban and an oriental costume, leans toward Iempsar, resting his hand on the back of her chair and listening attentively. While he has directed his gaze at Joseph's robe, his relaxed pose makes it apparent that he has not yet fully grasped the import of her story.

It is difficult to determine whether Rembrandt invented this compositional concept purely from his own imagination or derived it from a pictorial or theoretical source. As was first mentioned by Bauch, Jan Pynas (c. 1581–1631) included Joseph in his 1629 depiction of the same scene, but the compositional connections are not strong. [5] Pynas does not include the bed and depicts a member of Potiphar's household holding Joseph. A more probable source of inspiration is Joost van den Vondel's play *Joseph in Egypten,* first performed in 1639/1640, in which all three protagonists appear on the stage at the time of Iempsar's accusation. [6] Schwartz, who has also emphasized this connection with Vondel's play, has further noted that the production held in 1655 was a particular success, with a woman in the role of Iempsar. [7] Even though Joseph appears onstage at the end of Iempsar's accusation rather than at the beginning, as would seem to be the case in the painting, the theatrical character of the image suggests that the play may have been an important source of inspiration for this work. The theme of false

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accusation also arises in Andrea Mantegna's drawing *Calumny of Apelles,* which Rembrandt owned and copied at about this time. [8]

There seems good reason, however, to believe that the choice of subject matter was not entirely the result of external influences. The decision to paint in 1655 this image of false accusation speaks too closely to Rembrandt's personal circumstances to be entirely coincidental. Rembrandt may have been drawn to the subject because he was beset at this time by accusations from a woman scorned, his former companion Geertje Dirckx. In 1649 she sued Rembrandt for breach of promise, a suit that was followed by years of litigation. [9]

Complicating any assessment of this work, however, is the existence of a comparable *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife* painting in Berlin that is also signed Rembrandt and dated 1655 [fig. 1]. In this version the three protagonists are placed in relatively the same position, although the drama here is expressed at a higher pitch. Joseph responds vigorously to Iempsar's accusation by looking upward and raising his left hand near his head. Iempsar accuses Joseph directly rather than indirectly through the medium of the discarded robe. As though to emphasize her disdain for Joseph she steps on the robe as it lies strewn over a step on the floor. Her body language is more active than in the Washington version: she turns at an angle in her chair, she has her legs crossed, and her facial expression seems quite agitated. Whereas the Iempsar of the Washington painting, dressed in jewelry and an ermine-lined orange robe, appears composed, the Iempsar in the Berlin version seems more disheveled: she wears no jewelry, and the richly brocaded surface of her robe is broken by numerous folds. Finally, the surface of the Berlin version is further enlivened by the elaborate gilded bedpost near Joseph.

The date inscribed on *Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife* was a matter of great dispute in the early literature on the painting. Waagen in 1864 read the date of the Washington painting (when it was in the Hermitage) as 1657. [10] The Hermitage catalog of 1870, however, interpreted the date as reading 1654, which would mean that this version predated the one presently in Berlin. Bode in 1883 and again in 1901 also agreed that the Hermitage version was originally dated 1654, but he believed that Rembrandt changed the "4" to a "5" when he reworked the painting the following year. [11] Despite the opinions of Michel and later Somof, in his 1901 catalog of the Hermitage paintings, that the date should read 1655 and that the so-called 4 was a misreading due to accidental effects on the surface, Bode's suggestion continued to be accepted by most scholars until Bredius' 1935 catalog of Rembrandt paintings. [12]

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The subtle yet profound differences in concept in the Washington and Berlin paintings were, as a consequence of this confusion about the date, explained in relation to Rembrandt's chronological evolution. As late as the 1970s, for example, Kauffmann argued that the earlier double-dating hypothesis should not be ignored in considering which of these two paintings came first. He felt that it would have been unlikely for Rembrandt to have painted the emotionally charged Berlin version and then to have proceeded to the less dramatic, and to his mind, less successful Washington version. [13]

Opinions about the relative success of the two compositions that Kauffmann raised had concerned art historians ever since the late nineteenth century. Most argued that the Berlin version, in Michel's words, was "not only more dramatic in composition . . . , [but] more brilliant in colour, and in better condition" than the Hermitage [Washington] example. [14] Bode, who considered the Berlin version to be later, saw in it "slight, but essentially advantageous alterations," but felt that, in the end, both "pictures are of the highest excellence in such qualities as the choice of the colours, splendour of harmony, and vigour of illumination." [15] Neumann, in 1905, preferred the Berlin version, as later did Rosenberg, who wrote that it was "superior to the one in Washington, its general effect being both richer and more striking." [16] The Washington painting, however, has had its defenders. In 1936, the year after the painting had been exhibited at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the museum's director, Frederik Schmidt-Degener, was reported to have remarked that the painting was "infinitely superior to the Berlin picture" and to have begun even to "doubt the latter as being altogether by Rembrandt." [17] Benesch wrote in 1943 that the Washington version "surpasses that of Berlin in depth of psychical expression. But the Berlin version seems to be a step further in pictorial refinement, so we may regard it as the later." [18]

Since the 1960s, however, the general consensus has been not only that the Berlin version is superior but also that the Washington painting is a workshop replica. This opinion was first expressed in 1966 when Bauch proposed that the comparatively muted depiction of the scene in the Washington painting was the creation of a good student who was following the Berlin example. He argued as well that Rembrandt subsequently reworked the painting and then signed it. [19] Gerson allowed that Bauch might be proved correct in his assessment, but stressed that the quality of the picture was difficult to assess because of the heavy varnish and "curious 'craquelure'" that covered the surface. [20] While Schwartz accepted both versions as by Rembrandt, Tümpel removed the Washington

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painting from Rembrandt's oeuvre, calling it "nur eine schwachere Werkstattwiederholung" (merely a weak workshop copy). [21]

Although the conservation treatment of the painting in 1979–1980 did not resolve issues of chronology and date, the removal of several layers of pigmented varnish with pronounced Craquelure that had obscured the image did allow a clearer assessment of the pictorial qualities of the Washington version. [22] Two significant Pentimenti were revealed, changes that were intended to strengthen the narrative [fig. 2]. Iempsar originally gestured toward Joseph's robe with her fingers cupped. Only later was the index finger extended to direct the eye's attention to this significant item of clothing. At the same time the robe itself was enlarged to give it more presence within the composition.

The treatment confirmed that the surface had suffered from numerous small losses and general Abrasion, particularly in the blue drapes behind the bed. In part the damages may have resulted when the painting was transferred from an old canvas to a new one by E. Sivers in 1854 in Saint Petersburg. [23] Because of the transfer, much information about ground layers and paint structure has been irretrievably lost. Nevertheless, X-radiographs [see X-radiography] do reveal that the original support consisted of three pieces of canvas: a large center piece with a 6 cm strip along the left side and a 6 cm strip across the bottom [fig. 3]. [24] Evidence of the seams along these additions is also seen in the pattern of losses on the surface of the painting, which are easily identifiable in a photograph taken during restoration.

Technical examinations of the available ground layers and paint provide no evidence to suggest that these strips were later additions, yet it is most unlikely that the composition was originally conceived on a support with this unusual configuration. The decision thus must have been made during the course of execution that the composition should be enlarged in the foreground and to the left of Joseph. Perhaps it was thought that the floor did not recede properly under the feet of Potiphar's wife and that Joseph appeared too cramped on the far side of the bed. Whatever the reasons for the additions, the result is that the figures are set back more into space and the dim half-lights of the bedchamber take on a greater atmospheric role in the presentation of the drama. They seem, in fact, to reinforce the subtle, understated interpretation of the accusation by Potiphar's wife that is depicted.

Whether or not the change in the shape of the composition provides evidence about the chronological relationship of the Washington and Berlin versions is

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difficult to determine. The Washington painting, before the strips were added to the left side and the bottom, measured approximately 98.8 x 90.6 cm, whereas the Berlin canvas measures 113.5 x 90 cm. Thus the widths of the two paintings appear to have been originally the same although the vertical dimensions differ. [25] Before the strip was added to the left of the Washington support Joseph would have been quite near the left edge, rather as he is in the Berlin painting. The addition along the bottom coincides almost exactly to the placement of the step in the Berlin painting, a device that is effectively used to place the figures back in space. [26] On the one hand, it would seem illogical, given the similarity in the positions of Joseph in the original composition and in the Berlin painting, to assume that the Washington painting, with its additions, preceded the Berlin version; on the other hand, it could also be argued that the change in composition along the bottom edge should not have been necessary had the Berlin painting been available as a point of reference. The most plausible conclusion appears to be that the paintings were being conceived simultaneously and that arguments about chronological precedence are essentially irrelevant to the compositional solutions arrived at in these works. Indeed, while these paintings obviously have many similarities, each is also consistent unto itself, not only in the way the story is presented but also in the textures, colors, and painting techniques used to characterize the scene. [27]

Should the two paintings have been created at more or less the same time, one must wonder whether it would have been likely for Rembrandt to have executed both works. He may have done so to demonstrate how, with essentially the same composition, one could render quite disparate representations of the scene. More likely, however, is that two different artists painted these works. Indeed, close comparisons of the painting techniques in these works demonstrate distinct approaches to modeling. An excellent point of comparison is the wife's left hand, which in the Washington version is softly modeled with extended strokes of the brush, while in the Berlin version it is more boldly formed with a rougher, more broken technique. Similar comparisons can be made in the modeling of her face and robes.

Comparisons indicate that a more adept hand executed the Berlin version. With a close examination of technique in the Washington painting comes an awareness that the anatomical forms, the hand and eyes, for example, and the folds in the robes are, in fact, not modeled with a convincing sense of three-dimensional form. [28] This weakness is also evident in the figures of Potiphar and Joseph. Although

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Joseph's attenuated form is sympathetically rendered, it remains quite flat. In the end, despite the many Rembrandtesque characteristics of this work, one must conclude that Rembrandt did not execute it. There is also no evidence that he reworked the painting, as proposed by Bauch, although he may well have suggested the additions and the change in the wife's gesture. Whether or not Rembrandt was responsible for the Berlin version is a different matter. Perhaps he was, but I believe that this work was executed by an assistant, with both artists working from a common source. [29] At the very least it would seem that models, assuming the poses of the protagonists, must have been arranged in the studio. In the Washington painting the model for Joseph was almost certainly Titus, Rembrandt's fourteen-year-old son [fig. 4].

Willem Drost (Dutch, active c. 1650 - active 1655) and Constantijn van Renesse (Dutch, 1626 - 1680) are two artists capable of painting such sensitive religious images. Van Renesse's style is indeed rather close to that seen in the Washington *Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife.* [30] His forms tend to lack strong three-dimensional characterization, and his figures are often attenuated in a manner quite similar to that of Joseph in his *Good Samaritan* in the Louvre, Paris ([fig. 5], also mentioned in *The Descent from the Cross*). Nevertheless, it is very possible that Van Renesse had already left Rembrandt's workshop by 1654, for in that year he was named secretary of the city of Eindhoven. Too little, however, is known of the character of Rembrandt's workshop in 1655 to assess what type of working arrangements actually existed at that time. Van de Wetering has argued that Rembrandt's paintings often served as prototypes for derivative works painted by his students, which he has termed "satellite" paintings. He has cited the Berlin painting (which he argues was painted primarily by Rembrandt) and the Washington version of *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife* (which he ascribes to a member of Rembrandt's workshop) as prime examples of this workshop practice. [31] Whichever Rembrandt pupil actually executed this work, it does seem clear that, at the very least, the choice of subject and composition was determined by the master himself.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife*, 1655, oil on canvas, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Detail of hand and robe, infrared reflectogram, Rembrandt Workshop, *Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife*, 1655, oil on canvas transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.79

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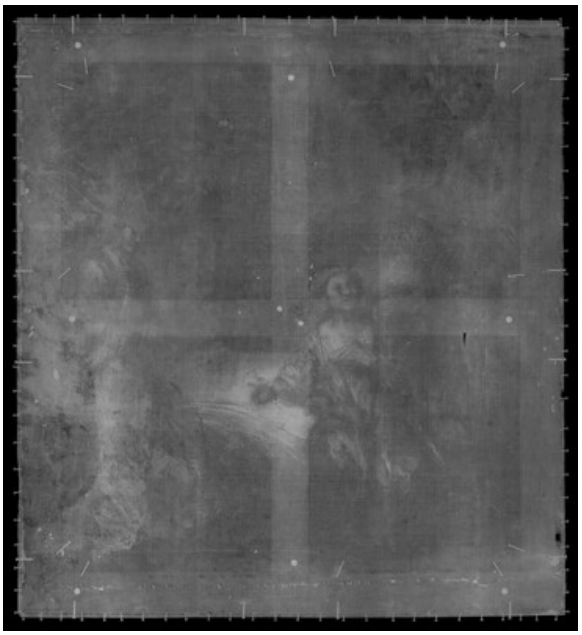

fig. 3 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt Workshop, *Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife*, 1655, oil on canvas transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.79

fig. 4 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Titus at His Desk*, 1655, oil on canvas, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Tromp, Rotterdam

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fig. 5 Constantijn van Renesse, *The Good Samaritan*, 1648, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: RMN / Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Jean-Gilles Berizzi

NOTES

[1] Christian Tümpel in H. Vekeman and J. Müller Hofstede, eds., *Wort und Bild in der niederländischen Kunst und Literatur des 16. u. 17. Jahrhunderts* (Erfstadt, 1984), 173–204, and reissued in an abbreviated form in Christian Tümpel and Jacqueline Boonen, *Het Oude Testament in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw* (Zwolle, Amsterdam, and Jerusalem, 1991), 194–206. Flavius Josephus, who was born in Jerusalem shortly after Christ's death, based his text not only on the Old Testament but also on Jewish legends and antique writers. His work was translated into many languages and widely distributed.

[2] Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 379, no. 284: "Een hoogduijtsche Flavio Fevus gestoffeert met figueren van Tobias Timmerman" (a 'Flavius Josephus' in High German profusely illustrated by Tobias Stimmer).

[3] Flavius Josephus, *Of the Antiquities of the Jews,* book 2, chapter 4, section 5, in *The Genuine Works of Flavius Josephus,* trans. William Whiston, 4 vols. (London, 1755), 1:82–83.

[4] In his *The Visitation,* 1640 (Detroit Institute of Arts, inv. no. 27.200), for example, Rembrandt depicted the aged Zacharias descending the stairs to

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greet Mary, although Elizabeth's husband is not mentioned in this biblical episode.

[5] Kurt Bauch, *Der frühe Rembrandt und seine Zeit: Studien zur geschichtlichten Bedeutung seines Frühstils* (Berlin, 1960), 258, note 96. Pynas' painting, which is in the Alfred Bader Collection, now at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston, Ontario, is also mentioned in this context by Christian Tümpel, "Religious History Painting," in Albert Blankert et al., *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt* (Washington, 1980), 51, fig. 6.

[6] Joost van den Vondel, *Joseph in Egypten,* act. 5, verse 1348: "daer komt die fraeie gast," as quoted in Hans Kauffmann, "Anmerkungen zu Rembrandts Potipharbildern," in Otto von Simson and Jan Kelch, eds., *Neue Beiträge zur Rembrandt-Forschung* (Berlin, 1973), 52. The connection between this painting and Vondel's play appears to have first been made by Rudolf Wustmann, "Die Joseph-geschichte bei Vondel und Rembrandt," *Kunstchronik* 18 (November 23, 1906): 81–84.

[7] Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: zijn leven, zijn schilderijen* (Maarssen, 1984), 274–275. Schwartz identifies the actors as Adriana van den Bergh (Iempsar), her husband, Gillis Nooseman (Potiphar), and Cornelis Laurensz Krook (Joseph).

[8] Hans Kauffmann, "Anmerkungen zu Rembrandts Potipharbildern," in Otto von Simson and Jan Kelch, eds., *Neue Beiträge zur Rembrandt-Forschung* (Berlin, 1973), 53–57.

[9] Geertje Dirckx was released from the Gouda house of correction on May 31, 1655, after having spent five years confined in the "Spinhuis." Rembrandt purportedly tried to prevent her release and wanted to keep her there for another eleven years. For documents relating to this matter see Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 327, doc. 1655/2; 340, doc. 1656/5.

[10] Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Die Gemäldesammlung in der kaiserlichen Ermitage zu St. Petersburg nebst Bemerkungen über andere dortige Kunstsammlungen* (Munich, 1864), 179, no. 794. In this dating he follows Baron B. de Köhne, *Ermitage Impérial, Catalogue de la Galerie des Tableaux* (Saint Petersburg, 1863), no. 794.

[11] Wilhelm von Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei* (Braunschweig, 1883), 508, 599, no. 319; Wilhelm von Bode assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt,* trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 6:34, no. 401.

[12] Émile Michel, *Rembrandt: Sa vie, son oeuvre et son temps*, 2 vols. (New York, 1893; English trans., 1894), 2:80; Andrei Ivanovich Somof, *Ermitage Impérial. Catalogue de la Galerie des Tableaux*, 2 vols. (Saint Petersburg,

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1901), 2:308, no. 794. “Il se peut, du reste, que ce trait soit simplement l’effet du hasard, et qu’il soit produit bien plus tard, lors du nettoyage ou du rentoilage du tableau.” Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* (Vienna, 1935), no. 523, dated the painting 1655 without further comment.

[13] Hans Kauffmann, “Anmerkungen zu Rembrandts Potipharbildern,” in Otto von Simson and Jan Kelch, eds., *Neue Beiträge zur Rembrandt-Forschung* (Berlin, 1973), 50–51.

[14] Émile Michel, *Rembrandt: Sa vie, son oeuvre et son temps*, 2 vols. (New York, 1893; English trans., 1894), 2:80.

[15] Wilhelm von Bode assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt,* trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 6:3.

[16] Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), 1:137.

[17] From M. Knoedler & Co., letter, March 10, 1936, in NGA curatorial files. Schmidt-Degener’s reactions seem to have been inspired by a recent restoration of the painting. Nothing is known about the restoration other than that the painting was relined in Amsterdam in 1935 by C. M. Jenner (an inscription in Dutch indicating this information is on the inside of the stretcher).

[18] Otto Benesch, “The Rembrandt Paintings in the National Gallery of Art,” *Art Quarterly* 6 (Winter 1943):27. Benesch’s opinion about the chronological precedence of the Washington version was influenced by the relationship he saw between this painting and a drawing in the Graphische Sammlung, Munich (inv. 1448). He felt that the drawing was a preparatory study for this work. See Otto Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt: A Critical and Chronological Catalogue,* 6 vols. (London, 1954–1957), 5:277, no. 958. The drawing, however, belongs to a notorious group of forgeries of Rembrandt drawings in Munich and cannot be considered within this context. See Jakob Rosenberg, review of Otto Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt: A Critical and Chronological Catalogue,* 6 vols. (London, 1954–1957), *Art Bulletin* 41 (March 1959): 108–119.

[19] Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde* (Berlin, 1966), no. 33.

[20] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 601, no. 523.

[21] Christian Tümpel in *Wort und Bild in der niederländischen Kunst und Literatur des 16. u. 17. Jahrhunderts*, ed. H. Vekeman and J. Müller Hofstede (Erfstadt, 1984), 189; Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt*, trans. Jacques and Jean Duvernet, Léon Karlson, and Patrick Grilli (Paris, 1986), 419–420, no. A2; and Christian Tümpel in Christian Tümpel and Jacqueline Boonen, *Het Oude Testament in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw* (Zwolle, Amsterdam, and Jerusalem, 1991), 200.

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[22] The “curious ‘Craquelure’” that Gerson had complained about in 1969 (see Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson [London, 1969], 601, no. 523) was from the heavy varnish layers. These have since been removed.

[23] The information comes from an inscription on the back of the painting.

[24] It cannot be determined whether further alterations were made to the size of the original support.

[25] The figures in the Washington painting are closer to the top edge than they are in the Berlin version. The possibility that the Washington painting has been trimmed along that edge should not be excluded.

[26] The step, however, makes no logical sense in that it runs under the bed; thus the bedposts at the foot of the bed rest on a lower level than do those at the head of the bed. This illogical arrangement is one reason for doubting the attribution of the Berlin version of this composition to Rembrandt (see also note 29).

[27] For an assessment of the different character of the interpretations of the story in these two paintings see Mieke Bal, *Reading "Rembrandt": Beyond the Word-Image Opposition* (Cambridge and New York, 1991), 105–108.

[28] I would like to thank Ernst van de Wetering for sharing with me his observations about these areas when he examined the painting in 1989, contained in an e-mail correspondence dated December 15, 2009.

[29] The overly dramatic gesture of Joseph as he looks heavenward is quite uncharacteristic for Rembrandt in the mid-1650s. It is a gesture, however, that does appear in Willem Drost’s drawing of *The Lament for Abel* (see Werner Sumowski, *Drawings of the Rembrandt School*, ed. and trans. Walter L. Strauss, 10 vols. [New York, 1979–1992], 3:1204, no. 553x, repro.). This coincidence, as well as the relatively bold brushwork with thick impastos, which relates to Drost’s known works, suggests that he may have been responsible for the Berlin version. Ernst van de Wetering, on the other hand (Ernst van de Wetering, “'Principaelen' and Satellites,” in Lene Bøgh Rønberg and Eva de la Fuente Pedersen, *Rembrandt?: The Master and His Workshop* [Copenhagen, 2006], 120), has argued that the Berlin painting is primarily by Rembrandt but that a student executed the figure of Joseph.

[30] For an analysis of Van Renesse’s style and biographical information on the artist, see the entry on *The Descent from the Cross*.

[31] Ernst van de Wetering, “'Principaelen' and Satellites,” in Lene Bøgh Rønberg and Eva de la Fuente Pedersen, *Rembrandt?: The Master and His Workshop* (Copenhagen, 2006), 120.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original fabric support, consisting of a large piece (98.8 x 90.6 cm) with strips (6 cm wide) sewn onto the left and bottom edges, was transferred by E. Sivers in Saint Petersburg in 1854 to fabric with an open-weave, gauzelike interleaf.[1] In 1935 the transfer fabric was removed and the painting relined, with the interleaf retained.[2] Sanding of the back of the original fabric during transfer removed the weave and cusping patterns and may have removed an original ground layer, if a double ground had been employed. Only a single original layer is evident, a tan ground present on the main fabric and edge strips, situated above a white ground that was presumably added during transfer.[3] A black underlayer was found beneath the figures of Joseph and the wife, and the tan ground was employed as a mid-tone in the wife's hair.

Paint was applied in complex, thin layers of medium-rich paint, creating a heavily textured surface enriched with transparent glazes. The X-radiographs and examination with infrared reflectography at 1.1 – 1.4 microns [4] reveal changes, often visible as pentimenti, above Potiphar's proper right wrist, in the red cape, which was extended to the right, and in the wife's proper right sleeve and index finger. Originally, her index finger was not extended. Abrasion in the background reveals remnants of a canopy, visible with infrared reflectography, that initially was between Joseph and Potiphar.

Moderate abrasion is found in the background and in the dress of Potiphar's wife, along with moderate-sized losses, particularly in Potiphar and the background. Losses exist on all edges and along the seams of the narrow edge strips, where the paint application is original and consistent with the handling in the larger fabric piece. The painting was treated in 1979 to remove discolored varnish and retouching.

[1] The information comes from an inscription on a piece of linen, which was attached to the back of the stretcher.

[2] Nothing is known about this treatment other than that the painting was relined in Amsterdam in 1935 by C. M. Jenner (an inscription in Dutch indicating this information is on the inside of the stretcher).

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[3] The ground, consisting of iron oxides, Van Dyck brown, and quartz, is apparently the same on both the main fabric and the edge strips. The ground and paint were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections and X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (see reports dated April 17, 1979; April 18, 1979; August 6, 1979; and November 26, 1979, in NGA Conservation department files). The ground was further analyzed by Karin Groen using cross-sections (see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by his Contemporaries," in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering [Dordrecht, 2005], 666–667).

[4] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with a J astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

Gerard Hoet, Jr. [d.1760], The Hague; (his sale, by Arnoldus Franken, The Hague, 25-26 August 1760, no. 44).[1] Johann Ernst Gotzkowsky [1710-1775], Berlin; acquired in 1763 by Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729-1796], Saint Petersburg; Imperial Hermitage Gallery, Saint Petersburg; sold January 1931, as a painting by Rembrandt, 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;[2] gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderijen...*, 2 vols., The Hague, 1752, supplement by Pieter Terwesten, 1770, reprint ed. Soest, 1976, 3: 225, no. 44. The painting, which was described as a "kapitaal en uitmuntend stuk," sold for 100 florins.

[2] The Mellon purchase date and the date deeded to the Mellon Trust are according to Mellon collection records in NGA curatorial files and David Finley's notebook (donated to the National Gallery of Art in 1977, now in the Gallery Archives).

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In 2012 The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, acquired the M. Knoedler & Co. records (accession number 2012.M.54), and in 2013 processed portions of the archive were first made publicly available. An entry from a January 1931 Knoedler sales book confirms the sale to Mellon (on-line illustration of the sales book page, in Karen Meyer-Roux, "Treasures from the Vault: Knoedler, Mellon, and an Unlikely Sale," *The Getty Iris* [http://blogs.getty.edu/iris/author/kmeyerroux/], 30 July 2013).

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1933 Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Rembrandt, Knoedler Galleries, New York, 1933, no. 10.

1934 A Century of Progress: Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1934, no. 105, repro.

1935 Rembrandt Tentoonstelling, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1935, no. 17.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 13, repro.

1980 Gods, Saints & Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; The Detroit Institute of Arts; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1980-1981, no. 28, repro.

1984 In Quest of Excellence: Civic Pride, Patronage, Connoisseurship, Center for the Fine Arts, Miami, 1984, no. 52, repro.

1993 Painting the Bible in Rembrandt's Holland, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 1993, no. 161, repro. (catalogue titled Rembrandt's Holland).

1994 Im Lichte Rembrandts: Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der niederländischen Kunst [Rembrandt and the Old Testament], Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Münster, 1994, no. 25, repro.

2003 Rembrandt and the Rembrandt School: The Bible, Mythology and Ancient History, The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, 2003, no. 14, repro.

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2006 Rembrandt : Quest of a Genius [Rembrandt - Zoektocht van een Genie] [Rembrandt - Genie auf der Suche], Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam; Kulturforum, Berlin, 2006, no. 63, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Lucretia

1664

oil on canvas
overall: 120 x 101 cm (47 1/4 x 39 3/4 in.)
framed: 159.1 x 139.4 x 16.5 cm (62 5/8 x 54 7/8 x 6 1/2 in.)
Inscription: center left: Rembrandt / 1664
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.76

ENTRY

In a moment of inner anguish Lucretia stands, with arms outstretched, just prior to her act of suicide. Although her body faces the viewer, she looks down toward the sharply pointed dagger clenched in her right hand. She holds her left hand open at the same height as the right, as though part of her resists completing the self-destructive act. The tension surrounding that awful moment emphasizes the human drama of a woman caught in the moral dilemma of choosing between life and honor, a choice that would take on symbolic connotations.

The tragedy of Lucretia's impending suicide is intensified in the contrast Rembrandt develops between her elegant attire and the poignancy of her gesture and expressions. Richly adorned with golden diadem, pearl earrings, pearl necklace, and a chain with a golden pendant from which hangs a tear-shaped pearl, she is a regal figure. Her golden dress with a cape that falls over her out-stretched arms adds to her splendor. Rembrandt, however, arranged her robes so as to emphasize her vulnerability. The clasps that hook her dress at the bodice hang unfastened. With her dress parted, her chest covered only by the white chemise that fits so gracefully, she is about to thrust the dagger into her heart.

The tragic story of Lucretia, recounted by Livy, took place during the reign of the tyrannical ruler Tarquinius Superbus in Rome in the sixth century BC. While away during the siege of Ardea, Lucretia's husband, Collatinus, boasted that her loyalty and virtue were greater than that of his compatriots' wives. Taking up the challenge, the men at camp rode immediately to Rome where they discovered Lucretia alone with her handmaidens, spinning wool while other wives were idly

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enjoying their leisure. Lucretia's very virtue, however, inflamed the desire of Tarquinius' son, Sextus Tarquinius, who returned without Collatinus' knowledge a few days later. Having been received as an honored guest, he later stole secretly to Lucretia's chamber, drew his sword, and threatened to kill her if she did not yield to him. She resisted, but when Sextus Tarquinius threatened to kill his own slave as well and place their naked bodies together to give the appearance that they had been killed in the act of adultery, she yielded to his demands rather than die in such disgrace.

The next day Lucretia summoned her father and husband to her side and related what had happened, stressing that only her body had been violated, not her heart. Despite their protestations of her innocence, she was determined to make the moral choice that fate had forced upon her, saying: "Never shall Lucretia provide a precedent for unchaste women to escape what they deserve." Livy relates that with these words Lucretia drew a knife from under her robe, drove it into her heart, and fell forward, dead. [1]

Overwhelmed by grief, Lucretia's father, her husband, and two accompanying friends swore to avenge her death. Her suicide helped rouse the anger of the populace against the tyrannical rule of Tarquinius Superbus, who was forced into exile. Sextus Tarquinius, who was also driven from Rome, was assassinated shortly thereafter. In Livy's account Lucretia embodied chastity, but her tragedy assumed wider political dimensions because she was also considered a metaphor for Rome itself. Lucretia's rape came to symbolize the tyrannical subjugation of the city by Tarquinius Superbus and his family. [2] Her rape triggered the revolt that led to the overthrow of tyranny and the creation of political freedom in the form of a republican government.

Rembrandt painted at least three images of Lucretia in his later years. The earliest of these is known only through an inventory of the possessions of Abraham Wijs and Sara de Potter, made on March 1, 1658. The inventory lists: "A large painting of *Lucretia*, by R: Van Rijn." [3] The two extant images date from the last decade of Rembrandt's life: the Washington *Lucretia*, 1664, and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts' *Lucretia*, 1666 [fig. 1]. In the Gallery's haunting image, Rembrandt has evoked both Lucretia's profound sadness and her resignation to the fate forced upon her. In the Minneapolis version, Rembrandt has portrayed Lucretia just after she has stabbed herself, her chemise already stained by blood from the mortal wound. The two images complement each other not only because their compositions and painterly qualities are similar, but also because they explore Lucretia's emotions as

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she readies herself prior to her self-sacrifice and then responds to the consequences of her action. Nevertheless, they do not seem to have been conceived as a pair. The models Rembrandt used are different and their robes and jewelry, though similar in type, are not identical. [4]

As Stechow has demonstrated, three traditions exist for the representation of the Lucretia story: “narrative combinations of various scenes pertaining to the legend; dramatic scenes concentrating entirely on Tarquinius’ misdeed; and single figures of Lucretia stabbing herself.” [5] Rembrandt's image belongs to the last. He certainly knew a number of earlier representations of Lucretia through prints and engravings, although only one has been suggested as a prototype for the Washington painting: Marcantonio Raimondi’s engraving after a Raphael design [fig. 2]. [6] The essential transformation of the idealized statuesque figure into the emotionally evocative image of Rembrandt’s *Lucretia*, however, argues that the relationship is more superficial than real. Far closer in spirit to Rembrandt, however, are half-length depictions of Lucretia by Titian and his school that represent the heroine dressed in loose-fitting robes and poised at the moment before she thrusts the dagger into her heart. [7] Rembrandt, who was profoundly influenced by Venetian art during his later years, may have known of such depictions of Lucretia, for a number of such paintings ascribed to Titian or Paolo Veronese were in Archduke Leopold Wilhelm’s collection in Brussels during the 1650s. [8] The painting of this compositional type that Rembrandt certainly knew, and used as a basis for other paintings in the 1640s and 1650s, was Titian’s *Flora* [fig. 3], which was auctioned in Amsterdam in 1639. [9] The similarities in the general disposition of Lucretia’s head in the Washington painting and that of *Flora* suggest that this work continued to exert its influence on Rembrandt into the mid-1660s. Even supposing such antecedents could have helped provide the visual vocabulary for the rich pictorial effects and iconic composition of Rembrandt’s painting, the psychological characterization of Lucretia’s emotional state is entirely personal.

No record of commissions exists for these works, nor other information concerning Rembrandt’s motivation for painting them. Schwartz has suggested that the paintings have political overtones. [10] Because Lucretia’s suicide precipitated the revolt that helped institute the Roman Republic, she had traditionally been viewed, among her other qualities, as a symbol of patriotism. That such an attribute was associated with her in Rembrandt’s time is clear from a poem written by Jan Vos in 1660, quoted by Schwartz, about a *Lucretia* painted by Govaert Flinck (Dutch, 1615 - 1660) in the collection of Joan Huydecoper, one of the most influential patrons of

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the day: “In the red ink [of her blood] she writes a definition of freedom.” Lucretia, then, may well have assumed particular allegorical importance in the parallels that were being drawn around 1660 between the foundations of the Roman and Dutch Republics, as did Claudius Civilis, the first-century rebel leader of the Batavian revolt and the subject of Rembrandt’s 1661 painting for the Amsterdam Town Hall. [11]

The forceful impact of Rembrandt’s paintings of Lucretia, however, seems also to have resulted from personal associations the artist made between experiences in his life and the emotional traumas that he projected onto Lucretia at the time of her suicide. Only thus can we explain the essential transformation of the pictorial traditions for portraying this legendary Roman heroine that occurs in the two majestic paintings in Washington and Minneapolis.

Lucretia, in maintaining her honor through death, come to be revered as a symbol of chastity, honor, and faithfulness. Knuttel speculated that the 1664 Lucretia may have served as a psychological catharsis for Rembrandt after the death of his companion, Hendrickje, the previous year. Indeed, parallels can be found between Lucretia’s faithfulness and self-sacrifice and the indignities Hendrickje suffered as a result of her commitment to Rembrandt. [12]

The mythology surrounding Lucretia, however, was complex. While she was honored for her faithfulness she was also criticized by later Christians for having taken her own life, which was seen as a greater evil than adultery and a life of shame. As Garrard has written: “In Roman terms, Lucretia killed herself not out of guilt, but out of shame, concerned for her reputation and for the precedent of pardon that she might set for voluntary adulterers. Christian writers, schooled in a religion that placed the highest premium on the innocence of one’s personal conscience, regarded such values as excessively concerned with appearances and the opinion of others.” [13] Rembrandt, as he so often did, fused here the pagan and Christian worlds to create an exceptionally profound image of the psychological moment just prior to Lucretia’s fatal decision to thrust the knife into her heart. With her arms raised in a gesture that echoes that of Christ on the cross, she looks down toward the weapon of her destruction with an expression of one who, in her decision to commit suicide, must weigh issues never described by Livy: Rembrandt’s Lucretia is not the assured tragic heroine who has determined her punishment and dies for honor, but one who hesitates at that crucial moment because of an awareness of the moral dilemma that she faces.

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It may be, as Held has remarked, that Rembrandt drew upon a theatrical tradition to give added poignancy to the moment, for Lucretia, whose mouth is partially open, seems to address the dagger as though giving the closing monologue of this tragic drama. [14] Shakespeare did exactly that in his *Rape of Lucretia* when she asks:

Poor hand, why quiver'st thou in this decree?
Honour thyself to rid me of this shame;
For if I die, my honour lives in thee,
But if I live, thou livest in my defame. [15]

Rembrandt's late paintings, whether portraits, biblical accounts, or mythological stories, often take on an almost sacramental character in the way that the artist confronts the viewer with his images. His broad execution, rich colors, impressive use of chiaroscuro, and iconic compositional structure give these works unparalleled forcefulness. In *Lucretia*, all of these elements of his late style are evident. Particularly remarkable in this painting is his use of chiaroscuro to transform an essentially symmetrical and static pose into an active one. Lucretia is lit not from the front but from the left. Light thus strikes her head, right arm, and shoulder. The dagger blade glistens against her white cuff. Although her left arm is thrown into shadow, her outstretched left hand catches the light. Through these subtle means of emphasis, which until the mid-1980s had been hidden by thick, discolored layers of varnish, Rembrandt heightened the drama by reinforcing the psychological and physical tension of the scene. [16]

Rembrandt painted this image using a broad range of techniques. He modeled the face quite densely by applying a sequence of paint layers. Some layers, such as the soft lavenders that model the shaded portions of the lower cheeks and chin, are quite smooth. Others, such as the pinks and oranges that highlight the cheekbones and the yellowish-whitish areas on the nose and forehead, are brushed on more vigorously. The eyes, nose, and mouth are broadly rendered. Specifics of eyebrows, eyelids, pupils of the eyes, nostrils, and lips were of little concern to the artist; instead he heightened and accented them with deft touches of rust-colored paint. One particularly bold stroke of ocher paint defines the upper left edge of the top lip.

Rembrandt varied his painting techniques in Lucretia's cape and dress according to the play of light falling across her figure. Where light hits her right arm, Rembrandt cast a golden tone with a rich mixture of yellow, white, red, and salmon-

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colored paints. Under the lightest areas of the shoulder, he first laid in a light gray layer to give an added luminosity to the paints. On the shaded left sleeve, the paint is much less dense. A deep brown and reddish brown layer covering the Ground in this area forms the basis for the sleeve's tonality. Over it, Rembrandt, often with a dry brush, applied yellow, greenish yellow, red, and white highlights. In certain instances, for example, in a series of black strokes that shade part of the sleeve, he clearly used a palette knife as well as a brush.

Rembrandt utilized the palette knife even more frequently in the white of the left sleeve. Here he applied a rather dry paint onto the underlying brown layer to suggest the material's transparency. More extensive use of the palette knife is seen in the dress near Lucretia's waist. Here he spread broader areas of light-ocher paint with the knife to suggest the luminous character of the fabric. In general, the treatment of this area of the dress resembles that of the left sleeve where the underlying dark brown paint becomes an important ingredient in the overall color tonality. The one area with thick highlights in the dress is the belt, but even here Rembrandt did not really overlap paints. The accents of yellow, orange, and white are loosely applied and do not define the belt to any great degree. [17]

Stylistically, this painting resembles the so-called *Jewish Bride* in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. The head of Lucretia is extremely close in type and in concept to that of the bride: both are built up in a comparable fashion. Remarkably similar are the ways in which the features are modeled with dense and somewhat roughly brushed strokes of paint. The similarities extend to the technique for the modeling of the pearls and even for indicating the gold diadem in the back of the hair. While most of the robes in the *Jewish Bride* are more densely painted than those of *Lucretia* and are built up almost exclusively with a palette knife, in the shaded area under the collar of the man Rembrandt used a modeling technique very similar to that seen in Lucretia's left arm. Here he also used a brownish Imprimatura layer for the base collar of the robe and accented it lightly with a series of thin strokes of red paint applied with a palette knife. [18]

Similarities in painting technique also exist between this figure of Lucretia and that in Minneapolis, even though the latter work was painted two years later, in 1666. As is appropriate to its starker concept, Rembrandt applied his paints in a more angular fashion in the Minneapolis version than he did in the Washington painting. Still, the modeling of the facial features is once again comparable. One notices in particular the way the top lip is defined with a bold stroke of flesh-colored paint along its upper edge. Also similar is the use of an Imprimatura layer as a base color

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of the left sleeve, and finally, the structure of the hand holding the dagger.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Lucretia*, 1666, oil on canvas, Minneapolis Institute of Arts

fig. 2 Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael, *Lucretia*, c. 1511–1512, engraving, Harvey D. Parker Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Photo © 2014 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

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fig. 3 Titian, *Portrait of a Woman, Called "Flora"*, c. 1520–1522, oil on canvas, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Photo: Uffizi-Photo Index/Vasari, Florence

NOTES

[1] Livy, *The Early History of Rome,* trans. Aubrey de Sélincourt (Aylesbury, 1973), book 1, LIX, 99.

[2] Ian Donaldson, *The Rapes of Lucretia: A Myth and Its Transformation* (Oxford, 1982), 9, stresses the political significance of this point.

[3] Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), doc. 1658/8, 418. "In 't Voorhuijs Een groot stuck schilderij van Lucretia van R: Van Rijn."

[4] The features in the Washington *Lucretia* resemble Rembrandt's companion Hendrickje Stoffels, as she is seen in Rembrandt's paintings from the mid-1650s (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, inv, no. 828B). Hendrickje, who appears much older in the portrait of 1660 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New

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York, had died in July 1663. The model Rembrandt used for the Minneapolis *Lucretia* is not found in other of Rembrandt's paintings.

[5] Wolfgang Stechow, "Lucretia Statua," in *Essays in Honor of Georg Swarzenski* (Chicago and Berlin, 1951), 114.

[6] First suggested by N. Beets (see N. Beets, "Een 'print van Rafel' en Rembrandt's Lucretia," *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* [January 1, 1914], I). Northern prints and paintings of Lucretia have a quite different character and do not seem to have influenced Rembrandt in his depictions of Lucretia; for the prints see Ilja M. Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies: A Selection of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Dutch Prints," *Simiolus* 16 (1986): 113–127.

[7] The most profound sixteenth-century images of Lucretia were created in Venice. In two memorable paintings, *Tarquin and Lucretia* (Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste, Vienna) and *Tarquin and Lucretia* (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge), Titian focused on the dramatic confrontation between Tarquin and Lucretia, capturing the animal energy of Tarquin blindly driven by lust.

[8] For paintings attributed to Titian see Harold E. Wethey, *The Paintings of Titian*, 3 vols. (London, 1975), 3:215, cat. no. x-24, 219, cat. no. x-33. For Veronese's *Lucretia* see Kunsthistorisches Museum, *Katalog der Gemäldegalerie I, Italiener, Spanier, Franzosen, Engländer* (Vienna, 1965), 169, cat. no. 750.

[9] Harold E. Wethey, *The Paintings of Titian*, 3 vols. (London, 1975), 3:154–155, cat. no. 17.

[10] Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: zijn leven, zijn schilderijen* (Maarssen, 1984), 330, no. 382, repro. (English trans., *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings* [New York, 1985], 330). It seems unlikely, however, that there is any pro-Orange or anti-Orange sentiment implied in these works, as Schwartz suggests.

[11] For the parallels drawn between the story of Claudius Civilis and the foundation of the Dutch Republic as seen in the decorations of the Town Hall in Amsterdam see H. van de Waal, "The Iconographical Background to Rembrandt's *Civilis*," in H. van de Waal, *Steps towards Rembrandt: Collected Articles 1937–1972*, ed. R. H. Fuchs, trans. Patricia Wardle and Alan Griffiths (Amsterdam, 1974), 28–43.

[12] In 1654 Hendrickje, who lived with Rembrandt but was not married to him, had been publicly disgraced when a tribune of the Dutch Reformed Church condemned her for "living in sin like a whore" with the artist. After Hendrickje's death in 1663, Rembrandt may have linked the tribulations she had suffered and the emotional traumas he projected onto Lucretia. The resemblance of *Lucretia* to Hendrickje as she appeared in the mid-1650s (see note 4) seems to reinforce this hypothesis. For his part, Rembrandt

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identified himself with a historical figure in his *Self-Portrait as the Apostle Paul* of 1661 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam), in which the sword of Paul's martyrdom protrudes from Rembrandt's chest.

[13] Mary D. Garrard, *Artemisia Gentileschi: The Image of the Female Hero in Italian Baroque Art* (Princeton, 1989), 219.

[14] Julius Held, "Das gesprochene Wort bei Rembrandt," *Neue Beiträge zur Rembrandt Forschung*, ed. Otto van Simson and Jan Kelch (Berlin, 1973), 123. The theatrical character of the image is reinforced by the suggestion of curtains hanging behind Lucretia. These may have been more apparent before the paint darkened and the background suffered from Abrasion. Lucretia's theatricality, however, has not always met with favor. Wilhelm von Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei* (Braunschweig, 1883), 524, found the theatricality unconvincing given the portraitlike character of the image. The art dealer René Gimpel was more outspoken. When *Lucretia* was on the market in 1921 he wrote: "She is stabbing herself in her terror, with a ridiculous gesture. Neither realism nor idealism. A terrible lack of taste" (René Gimpel, *Diary of an Art Dealer*, trans. John Rosenberg [New York, 1966], 161).

[15] This quotation was first associated with Rembrandt's 1664 *Lucretia* by Jan Veth, "Rembrandt's Lucretia," *Beelden en Groepen* 25 (1914): 25.

[16] The discolored varnish also had the effect of flattening the three-dimensional character of the image, which reduced the emotional impact of the scene by making the spatial relationships more difficult to decipher. One such critique against the painting was levied by Alfred Gold, "Die Sammlung Hielbuth," *Der Cicerone* 13 (March 1921): 93.

[17] While I find the painting techniques described here characteristic for Rembrandt, Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann (personal communication, 1993) is quite critical of the manner in which these areas are executed. He feels that the "paint has an abstract, unfunctional quality, and makes the impression of a method applied without regard for its reason." He rejects the attribution to Rembrandt and notes that the painting has "strong similarities with works by Aert de Gelder." This opinion is shared by Ernst van de Wetering, who argued in a lecture at the National Gallery of Art in January 2005 that *Lucretia* was painted by Aert de Gelder.

[18] The similarities in technique in this area have become even more evident since the 1993 restoration of the *Jewish Bride*.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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The original coarse, plain-weave fabric, composed of heavy, unevenly spun threads, has been lined. The top, right, and left edges have been trimmed slightly, leaving worn and ragged edges. The bottom was at one time used as a tacking margin, but has now been returned to the picture plane. Slight cusping present along the top and sides, but not the bottom, suggests a reduction in that dimension.

The double ground consists of a thick, gray lower layer and a moderately thin, dark brown upper layer.[1] In the dark areas, particularly the background, the dark brown upper ground layer was incorporated into the design, and in the upper left and lower right quadrants the upper ground was deliberately scraped away to expose the gray lower ground layer as part of the composition. In the richly impasted details on the dress, paint was applied thickly and freely with broad brushwork. Paint was both blended wet-into-wet and scumbled with a dry brush to exploit the coarse canvas texture. Extensive use of the palette knife can be recognized in the proper left cuff and in the lower portion of the dress. Incisions with the butt end of the brush are found in the proper left cuff and on the neck.

Several pentimenti have become visible over time. The dagger was once 3.5 cm longer, and the sitter's proper right sleeve has been altered. Stray brushmarks cross the dress and white blouse at right, suggesting alterations to the neckline.

The paint is in good condition with few losses. Wide-aperture drying crackle has formed on either side of the head. Moderate abrasion has occurred in the darks, and the bottom tacking margin has been overpainted to incorporate it into the design. Conservation treatment was carried out in 1985 to remove an aged, discolored varnish layer and discolored inpainting.

[1] The ground composition was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections (see report dated May 8, 1985, in NGA Conservation files).

PROVENANCE

Jean-Joseph-Pierre-Augustin Lapeyrière [1779-1831, known as Augustin Lapeyrière, then de Lapeyrière], Paris; (his sale, Galerie Le Brun, Paris, 19 April 1825 and days

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following [originally scheduled for 14 March 1825 and days following], no. 143). Michael M. Zachary [d. 1837], London;[1] (sale, Phillips, London, 14-15 April 1826, 1st day, no. 64, bought in); (Zachary sale, Phillips, London, 31 May 1828, no. 25); purchased by Sir Thomas Lawrence [1769-1830] for Hugh Andrew Johnstone Munro [1797-1864], London, and Novar House, near Evanton, Ross-shire, Scotland.[2] Paul Pavlovich Demidoff [1839-1885], Prince of San Donato, near Florence; (his sale, at his residence, Florence, 15 March-10 April 1880, no. 1146). (Léon Gauchez, Paris); (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 13 July 1889, no. 56, bought in); (Léon Gauchez, Paris), until at least 1893.[3] (Bourgeois & Cie., Paris); (Leo Nardus [1868-1955], Suresnes, France, and New York);[4] Matthew Chaloner Durfee Borden [1842-1912], New York, by 1906;[5] (his estate sale, American Art Association, New York, 13-14 February 1913, 1st day, no. 28); (M. Knoedler & Co., New York and Paris);[6] sold 1913 to (Frederik Müller and Co., Amsterdam); sold 1913 to August Janssen [1863-1918], Amsterdam;[7] his estate; sold 1919 with the entire Janssen collection to (Jacques Goudstikker, Amsterdam).[8] Hermann Heilbuth [1861-1945], Copenhagen, by 1920.[9] (Ehrich Brothers, New York), in 1921.[10] (M. Knoedler & Co., New York and Paris); sold November 1921 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] Although the main seller at the April 1826 sale was Lord Berwick, there were also other consignors. One annotation in the Wallace Collection (London) Library's copy of the sale catalogue indicates that Zachary was the consigner of the NGA painting; another annotation next to the Lucretia entry reads "Sir T Lawrence." The Getty Provenance Index© Database, Sale Catalogs, lot 0064 from sale catalog Br-2806, identifies the latter annotation as indicating a previous owner.

[2] This information is given by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen and Paris, 1907-1928: 6(1915):120, no. 218 (also English edition, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols., London, 1907–1927: 6(1916):143-144, no. 218). However, the Wallace Collection (London) Library's copy of the sale catalogue is annotated with the name "Woodin" as the buyer (The Getty Provenance Index© Database, Sale Catalogs, lot 0025 from sale catalog BR-3135). Munro acquired a significant

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collection that was dispersed in sales both before and after his death, but the painting has not been located in any of the sale catalogues. Hofstede de Groot lists a Munro sale in London on 26 March 1859 (given as 26 March 1851, in the 1920-1921 exhibition catalogue), which has not been identified; the painting does not appear in a sale of Munro's English pictures held in London on 26 March 1860.

[3] Although Algernon Graves, *Art Sales from early in the eighteenth century to early in the twentieth century (mostly old master and early English pictures)*, 3 vols. London, 1918-1921: 2:383, gives the buyer at the 1889 sale as Wontner, the painting was in fact bought in and returned to the consignor, Gauchez. This information was kindly provided by Lynda McLeod, Librarian, Christie's Archives, London, in her e-mail of 28 March 2013 (in NGA curatorial files). Émile Michel (*Rembrandt: Sa vie, son oeuvre et son temps*, Paris, 1893: 489) saw the painting in Paris, but did not identify the owner, who is named by Malcolm Bell (*Rembrandt Van Rijn and His Work*, London, 1899: 157).

[4] Jonathan Lopez kindly provided this information (oral communication, 13 October 2006). See also Jonathan Lopez, "'Gross False Pretences': The Misdeeds of Art Dealer Leo Nardus," *Apollo*, 2nd ser., vol. 166, no. 548 (December 2007): 78, 80, 82 nn. 25, 26.

[5] Wilhelm von Bode and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt: History, Description and Heliographic Reproduction of All the Master's Pictures, with a Study of His Life and His Art*, translated by Florence Simmonds, 8 vols., Paris, 1897-1906: 8(1906):152, no. 595.

[6] Newspapers speculated that Knoedler's might have been buying for the New York collector Henry Clay Frick; copies of various articles are in NGA curatorial files.

[7] The 1913 sales are described by Ben Broos, *Great Dutch Paintings from America* , exh. cat. The Hague and Zwolle, 1990: 69-70. See also Gerhardus Knuttel, "De Lucretia En Andere Werken Van Rembrandt Bij De Firma Fred. Muller & Co. Amsterdam," *Elsevier's Geïllustreerd Maandschrift* 47, no. 2 (January-June 1914):

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137-144.

[8] “Janssen Paintings Sold in Holland,” *The Milwaukee Journal* (3 August 1919): 10; Otto Hirschmann, “Die Sammlung August Janssen,” *Der Cicerone* 12 (January 1920): 17-18.

[9] The painting was included in a 1920-1921 exhibition of Heilbuth’s collection in Copenhagen.

[10] René Gimpel, *Journal d’un collectionneur: marchand de tableaux*, Paris, 1963: 184-185.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1832 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1832, no. 44.[1]

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 105.

1920 A Collection of Paintings [H. Heilbuth], Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, 1920-1921, no. 63.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 23, repro.

1991 Rembrandt's Lucretias, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1991-1992, brochure.

2001 Rembrandt's Women, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh; Royal Academy of Arts, London, 2001, no. 141, repro.

2006 Rembrandt?: The Master and his Workshop, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, 2006, no. 18, repro.

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2014 Rembrandt: The Late Works, National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2014-2015, no. 115, repro.

EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES

[1] In 1833 Alfred Joseph Woolmer (1805-1892) painted a fanciful view of the exhibition of 1832 in which *Lucretia* can be seen hanging prominently to the right of an arched doorway (Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, inv. no. B 1981.25.694). Celina Fox, *London World City, 1800-1840* (London, 1992), 447, repro. no. 383.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop (Probably Govaert Flinck)
Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669
Dutch 17th Century
Govaert Flinck
Dutch, 1615 - 1660

Man in Oriental Costume

c. 1635

oil on linen
overall: 98.5 × 74.5 cm (38 3/4 × 29 5/16 in.)
framed: 128.91 × 104.78 × 9.53 cm (50 3/4 × 41 1/4 × 3 3/4 in.)
Inscription: center left: [R]embrandt ft
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1940.1.13

ENTRY

In this imposing half-length portrait a bearded man wearing an elaborate, bejeweled turban stares out at the viewer, his features strongly modeled by light streaming in from the left. A fur-lined cape, loosely clasped at the neck with a gold chain, covers his shoulders. His right hand grasps the sash that wraps around his waist, while his other hand rests upon a wooden staff.

During the 1630s Rembrandt depicted in his paintings, drawings, and etchings numerous figures who wear Middle Eastern attire. While the commercial enterprises of the Dutch Republic had reached the Middle East by the early seventeenth century and Levantines were to be seen in the streets and marketplaces of Amsterdam, Rembrandt's images are not portraits of these people. [1] Rather, they are imaginative evocations of a distant culture that have as their basis Dutch models, including Rembrandt himself, dressed in exotic costumes.

The reasons for this fascination with the Middle East are many. There existed a great interest in exotica in the Netherlands during this period, which was also manifested in the collecting patterns of wealthy patricians. Objects from all parts of the world, including shells, swords, musical instruments, and costumes, were avidly sought by collectors. Rembrandt's own collection was a *kunstkamer* of this type. Scheller has demonstrated that Rembrandt's motivation for his encyclopedic

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collection of art and artifacts was that he wanted to be recognized as a member of this class of gentlemen-virtuosi. [2]

Rembrandt's interest in the East, however, had deeper significance than mere exoticism. His aspiration as an artist was to be a history painter—a painter of biblical and mythological subjects who would not only portray the stories that comprised his cultural heritage but would also evoke the essential character of those whose lives and actions had had such an impact upon mankind. [3] The particular appeal of the Middle East to Rembrandt stemmed largely from the fact that the stories of the Bible had taken place in that distant region. The images of Levantine patriarchs that appear in his paintings, etchings, and drawings of the early 1630s evoke the character of those people, their inner strength and dignity.

The sitter in this painting has no attributes to indicate that he represents a specific person. It is not even possible to determine whether Rembrandt considered this mode of dress to be that of a contemporary or of a biblical figure. Given the presence of similarly dressed figures in his biblical scenes from the early to mid-1630s, the latter seems more probable. Particularly close to *Man in Oriental Costume* is the frontally posed oriental figure on horseback in *The Raising of the Cross,* 1632 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich), which Rembrandt painted as one of a series of the Passion scenes for Prince Frederik Hendrik. The model for *Man in Oriental Costume,* dressed in a similar although more elaborate costume, is also seen as the main protagonist in Rembrandt's dramatic *Belshazzar's Feast,* c. 1635 [fig. 1]. [4] Comparisons with this latter work, and with a number of etchings of similar oriental figures dated 1635, suggest an approximate date of 1635 for this painting. [5]

As seen today, *Man in Oriental Costume* is not what Rembrandt originally intended: X-radiographs reveal that the canvas has been cut on all four sides. No evidence of thread distortions appears at either the right or bottom, and only traces of them appear along the left side and top. One may speculate that the original dimensions approached those of a comparable painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the three-quarter-length portrait *Man in Oriental Costume,* 1632 [fig. 2]. Just when the Gallery's painting was cut down is unknown, although it occurred after the signature was applied (the *R* of Rembrandt has been cut off) and before G. F. Schmidt's etching of the painting (in reverse) in 1756 [fig. 3]. [6]

The image seems never to have been completed. The lower half of the body has been blocked in, in thinly applied paints: gray for the cloak, maroon for the undergarment, and ochers for the hands. Only the chain attaching the cloak has

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some impasto. None of the final modeling tones, which would have given this portion of the torso volume and density, have been applied. The head, in contrast, is fully defined with densely applied paints that carefully delineate the features, the beard, the turban, and the wrinkles around the eyes. The contrast between the treatment of the head and turban and the lower torso is unique among Rembrandt's paintings. Because it serves no logical stylistic or iconographic purpose, one can only conclude that the painting has been left in an unfinished state, and that the paint on the lower torso represents the underpainting, or, as it was known in the seventeenth century, dead-coloring, that was intended to serve as a basis for the final modeling of the form. [7] Since the painting appears to be unfinished, it seems curious that it is signed. The signature may have been added somewhat later. The straight stem on the *b,* unusual for the early to mid-1630s, is similar to that on etchings later in the decade. [8]

The extent to which the treatment of the torso and head differ had long been obscured by layers of discolored varnish. With the 1987 conservation treatment, this remarkable phenomenon, which can now be studied more precisely than was previously possible, provides much information about Rembrandt's working procedure. The ground layer upon which he worked was light gray and seems to have been uniform across the whole surface. [9] He then added a deeper gray color for the background, modeling it slightly to indicate the play of light against the backdrop. The area in which he intended to place the figure was left in reserve, although he extended the background color slightly beyond the proposed contour of the figure's form. [10] The extent of this layer, as it defined the general parameters of the figure, can be seen in the X-radiograph [see X-radiography] of the head [fig. 4].

After completing this process, Rembrandt blocked in the form in muted colors that related to his eventual color scheme. He modeled the right hand more completely than he did the left because it was illuminated by light and the other was not. He depicted the chain with a few rapid strokes of lead-tin yellow, but only sketchily indicated its form.

In its surety and similarity to other, more completed images by Rembrandt, this underpainted layer is totally convincing as being the work of the master. The right hand of *Man in Oriental Costume,* for example, is remarkably similar in structure to that of *A Polish Nobleman*. The relatively finished execution of the face and turban, however, is problematic. [11] Although bold strokes around the eyes suggest the wrinkles and folds of the skin, the eyes lack that sense of life so characteristic of

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Rembrandt's images. An excellent comparison is the 1633 painting in Munich, *A Man in Oriental Costume* [fig. 5], in which Rembrandt's characterization of the face through the eyes is unmistakable. The treatment of the beards in these two paintings is also different: whereas the curls of the hair of the Gallery's *Man in Oriental Costume* have a quite regular rhythm, a variety of waves animate the beard of the figure in the Munich painting. Finally, the yellow highlights in the colorful turban in the Gallery's picture sit on the surface of the cloth and do not become part of its structure as they do in the Munich painting.

A similar comparison can be made with the head of Belshazzar in Rembrandt's large-scale *Belshazzar's Feast* (see [fig. 1]). In this instance the similarities in the brushwork on the face, particularly in the modeling around the left eye, are extremely close, so much so that it would seem to confirm an attribution to Rembrandt. Nevertheless, the comparison also points out the relative lack of vitality in the man's face. The technique used to paint Belshazzar's turban and crown, moreover, is much freer. Whereas dense paint seems to have been applied with broad and rapid strokes of the brush in *Belshazzar's Feast,* in *Man in Oriental Costume* the paint is more carefully applied to distinguish the various colors and patterns of the turban.

The range of techniques Rembrandt used to execute his works during the mid-1630s is extremely broad. Since nothing is known about the circumstances of this painting—whether it was a commissioned piece or why it was left unfinished—one must be cautious in discussing attribution issues. Nevertheless, this work appears to be an instance where Rembrandt blocked in a composition to provide a foundation for a particularly talented assistant, one who had mastered the techniques Rembrandt had devised for painting such fanciful portraits. In this case that assistant worked up the turban, head, and shoulders before the final execution was abandoned for some reason. It may well be that at a final stage Rembrandt would have returned to the painting to add accents that would enliven the image. Such a process, which admittedly is not documented by contemporary sources, would help explain why it is so difficult to distinguish the hands of talented assistants such as Govaert Flinck (Dutch, 1615 - 1660) and Ferdinand Bol (Dutch, 1616 - 1680) while they were active in Rembrandt's workshop. After they left the workshop and began to provide their own compositional foundations, the individualities of their styles became quite obvious.

Although the identity of the assistant who worked on *Man in Oriental Costume* is not known, it may well be the same artist who executed *The Apostle Paul* in

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Vienna [fig. 6]. This painting, which must date to about 1634, is executed with much the same bold modeling in the face, and the gentle flow of the rhythms of Paul's beard and hair are comparable. Also similar in the two paintings are the simplified contour of the shoulders and the broad zigzag pattern of folds in the robe of the oriental figure and on Paul's right sleeve. The Vienna painting has been convincingly attributed to Govaert Flinck; thus it may be hypothesized that he was also responsible for the finished portions of *Man in Oriental Costume*. [12]

Flinck, who came to Rembrandt in 1633 after having studied with Lambert Jacobsz (c. 1598–1636) in Leeuwarden, must have been particularly suited for working as an assistant on such historicizing paintings, for he would have been trained in such works by his teacher. Indeed, Lambert Jacobsz painted the large *Saint Paul in Prison* in 1629 (Frisian Museum, Leeuwarden), [13] which is quite close in concept to the Vienna painting.

Whether or not Flinck was the assistant on the Gallery's painting, the type of involved collaboration between Rembrandt and an assistant that seems to be demonstrated in this piece serves as a reminder to those who would try to separate too narrowly Rembrandt's work from paintings produced in the studio. The fundamental question that needs to be asked is whether Rembrandt perceived collaborative paintings such as *Man in Oriental Costume,* which were executed in the workshop, as fundamentally different from those executed totally by his own hand. Thus far there is no indication to that effect. Indeed, given the fact that the imagination had priority over execution in contemporary art theory, it seems virtually certain that he would have understood such works as forming an integral part of his artistic production.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Belshazzar's Feast*, c. 1635, oil on canvas, The National Gallery, London. Photo © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Man in an Oriental Costume*, 1632, oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of William K. Vanderbilt, 1920

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fig. 3 Georg Friedrich Schmidt after Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Persian*, 1756, etching, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of the Estate of John Ellerton Lodge, 1964.18.12

fig. 4 Detail of head, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop (Probably Govaert Flinck), *Man in Oriental Costume*, c. 1635, oil on linen, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1940.1.13

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fig. 5 Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Man in Oriental Costume*, 1633, oil on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY

fig. 6 Govert Flinck, *The Apostle Paul*, c. 1634, oil on canvas, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

NOTES

[1] Such oriental figures are seen in street and market scenes by, for example, Gerrit Berckheyde (1638–1698), in addition to many by Rembrandt. See also Leonard J. Slatkes, *Rembrandt and Persia* (New York, 1983).

[2] R. W. Scheller, "Rembrandt en de encyclopedische kunstkamer," *Oud-Holland* 84 (1969): 81–147.

[3] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Rembrandt and the Rembrandt School," in Albert Blankert et al., *Gods, Saints, and Heroes: Dutch Paintings in the Age of Rembrandt* (Washington, 1980), 137–141.

[4] This recurrence of the model was pointed out to me by Gregory Rubinstein.

[5] Illustrated in Ludwig Münz, *A Critical Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings*, 2

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vols. (London, 1952), 2:58–61.

[6] The painting may also have been reduced in stages. One can imagine that it could have been changed initially from a three-quarter-length to a bust-length portrait that included the signature. The signature could have been cropped when the painting was lined.

[7] See Ernst van de Wetering, *Studies in the Workshop Practice of the Early Rembrandt* (Amsterdam, 1986), 23–29, for further discussion of Rembrandt's use of dead-coloring in his early work.

[8] See, for example, *Rembrandt Leaning on a Stone Sill,* 1639 (Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt*..., 2 vols. [Vienna, 1797], 1: no. 21).

[9] Ernst van de Wetering, *Studies in the Workshop Practice of the Early Rembrandt* (Amsterdam, 1986), 42, notes that grounds on Rembrandt's canvas paintings are generally gray during the early phase of his career, whereas he used an ocher-colored ground when he painted on wood. The ground on canvas paintings generally consists of two layers, an underlayer composed of red ocher and an upper layer consisting of a mixture of white lead and a black pigment.

[10] The process is characteristic of Rembrandt's work in his early period. See Ernst van de Wetering, *Studies in the Workshop Practice of the Early Rembrandt* (Amsterdam, 1986), 25–31.

[11] In Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 2, *1631–1634*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and Lancaster, 1986), B8, 581–588, the attribution to Rembrandt is considered uncertain. They date the painting about 1633.

[12] J. W. von Moltke, *Govaert Flinck, 1615–1660* (Amsterdam, 1965), 18–19, no. 71; Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau i.d. Pfalz, 1983), 2: no. 643. The attribution to Flinck, however, was rejected by the RRP (Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. [Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989], 28), which compared this work to the admittedly tame execution of Flinck's earliest dated paintings, his *Rembrandt as Shepherd* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) and *Saskia as Shepherdess,* 1636 (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig). These paintings, however, were executed after Flinck had left Rembrandt's workshop and were neither built on a foundation provided by Rembrandt nor executed in a manner intended to pass as his style.

[13] See inventory no. 2463, from Frisian Museum, Leeuwarden.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a fine-weight, tightly and plain-woven linen fabric[1] that has been lined to two additional fabrics at separate intervals. The original tacking margins have been removed, and 1 cm of the original support and design layers has been turned over the stretcher edges. Cusping is absent along the right and bottom edges and slightly visible on the top and left edges, indicating that in all probability, the painting's dimensions have been reduced more extensively along the right and bottom than along the top and left side. In any event, the R from the signature has been cropped along the left edge. The X-radiographs show a long horizontal tear in the background in the upper right.

The double ground is made up of a thin, red-earth lower layer and a thicker, light gray upper layer composed largely of lead white.[2] The X-radiographs indicate that the gray layer was smoothed with a broad sharp-edged tool in diagonal strokes. The thin, sketchy underpainting, applied with a wide brush in short strokes, is visible in the unfinished lower third of the painting and between the wide brushstrokes of the finished area.

The paint was applied wet-into-wet in layers of moderate thickness with impasto in the turban. The medium has been identified as oil and the pigment mixtures are complex.[3] The paint in the turban was intentionally scraped away in areas to expose the gray ground before design details were added, and lines in the feather were incised with the butt end of a brush. The hands are painted with a thin, semitransparent layer over the gray ground, and, like the lower half of the costume, are unfinished. Long, thin, broken lines of losses occur on either side of the head, in the background and turban, and below the proper left hand. Numerous small areas of abrasion are scattered overall.

The painting had been varnished and inpainted in 1931 by Louis de Wild. De Wild's notes state that it had been treated in Holland in 1930.[4] It was treated again in 1987, at which time discolored varnish and disfiguring overpaint were removed. Remnants of an aged, discolored oil coating remain on the light background,[5] and sections of the upper paint layer of the drapery have blanched.

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[1] The fabric was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections (see report dated February 4, 1988, in NGA Conservation files).

[2] The ground was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections (see report dated February 4, 1988, in NGA Conservation files).

[3] The pigments and medium were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF) and gas chromatography in conjunction with mass spectrometry (see reports dated August 21, 1987, April 1, 1987, and February 4, 1988, in NGA Conservation files).

[4] See note dated February 2, 1968 in NGA Conservation files.

[5] This layer was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using gas chromatography and found to be oil (see report dated August 21, 1987 in NGA Conservation files).

PROVENANCE

Johan Ernst Gotzkowsky [1710-1775], Berlin, by 1756 until at least 1766;[1] sold to Heinrich, prince of Prussia [1726-1802];[2] sold to Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729-1796], Saint Petersburg, by 1773;[3] Imperial Hermitage Gallery, Saint Petersburg; sold between June 1930 and April 1931, as a painting by Rembrandt, through (Matthiesen Gallery, Berlin; P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London; and M. Knoedler & Co., New York) to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington; his estate; deeded 8 March 1938 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1940 to NGA.

[1] Gotzkowsky originally bought the picture on behalf of Friedrich II (the Great), king of Prussia (1712-1786). Due to the financial straits of Prussia during the Seven Years' War (1756-1762), the painting remained in Gotzkowsky's hands. The inscription on a reproductive etching of the painting (in reverse) by Georg Friedrich Schmidt notes that it was in Gotzkowsky's collection in 1756, and Burton Fredericksen kindly brought to the Gallery's attention two catalogues of the Gotzkowsky collection that include the painting and thus extend Gotzkowsky's ownership (see letter of 2 January 2003 to Arthur Wheelock and e-mails of 2 April and 14 July [first message] 2003 to Molli Kuenstner, in NGA curatorial files). The

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first catalogue is Matthieu Oesterreich's *Description de quelques tableaux de différens Maîtres* (published 1757), in which the painting is number 33. The second, also compiled by Oesterreich, is *Catalogue d'une très-belle collection de tableaux de différens Maîtres italiens, flamands, allemands et françois laquelle se trouve dans la maison de Mr. Ernest Gotzkowsky* (Berlin, 1766). Fredericksen determined that the second catalogue includes paintings that Gotzkowsky had not sold to Catherine II, empress of Russia, which is confirmed by the fact that there is only a single Rembrandt painting included, number 146, the NGA painting, whereas Catherine had acquired more than a dozen Rembrandt paintings from Gotzkowsky in 1764. Fredericksen writes of the 1766 Gotzkowsky catalogue: "...in general [the paintings] do not appear to be of comparable importance to those we know had been sold. So we are undoubtedly dealing with the remnants of the collection as it appeared after the transaction of 1764."

[2] Gerd Bartoschek and Christoph Frank have located the painting in inventories of the Prince's collections. See: Gerd Bartoschek, *Flämische Barockmalerei in der Bildergalerie von Sanssouci*, Potsdam, 1985: 79-80; Christoph Frank, "Die Gemäldesammlungen Gotzkowsky, Eimbke und Stein: Zur Berliner Sammlungsgeschichte während des Siebenjährigen Krieges," in Michael North, ed., *Kunstammeln und Geschmack im 18. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 2002: 117-194; Christoph Frank, "Un ours, un suicide et quelques tableaux. Le rôle de Berlin dans la constitution des collections rembranesques en Russie, à l'époque de Catherine II," in *Rembrandt et son école: Collections du musée de l'Ermitage de Saint-Pétersbourg*, exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon, Paris, 2003: 51-63. Burton Fredericksen brought Frank's research to the Gallery's attention (see e-mails of 14 July 2003 [both messages] and 23 February 2004, to Molli Kuenstner, in NGA curatorial files).

[3] [Ernst von Münnich.] "Catalogue raisonné des tableaux qui se trouvent dans les Galeries, Sallons et Cabinets du Palais Impérial de S. Pétersbourg, commencé en 1773 et continué jusqu'en 1785." 3 vols. Manuscript, Fund 1, Opis' VI-A, delo 85, Hermitage Archives, Saint Petersburg,1773-1785: 1:no.124.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1932 Art Treasures, Christie's, London, 1932, no. 1367.

1932 Rembrandt Tentoonstelling, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1932, no. 5.

1933 Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Rembrandt, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 1933, no. 3.

1935 A Collection of Old Masters, The Wilmington Society of the Fine Arts, Delaware, 1935, no. 9.

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1988 A Question of Rembrandt, Marion Koogler McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, 1988, no catalogue.

1996 Obras Maestras de la National Gallery of Art de Washington, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, 1996-1997, unnumbered catalogue, color repro.

2002 Rembrandt Rembrandt, Kyoto National Museum; Städelsches Kunstinstitut Frankfurt am Main, 2002-2003, no. 20, repro.

2003 Loan for display with permanent collection, Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Frankfurt am Main, 2003-2004.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

The Mill

1645/1648

oil on canvas
overall: 87.6 x 105.6 cm (34 1/2 x 41 9/16 in.)
framed: 125.1 × 142.24 cm (49 1/4 × 56 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.62

ENTRY

Of all the paintings by Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art, none has provoked stronger feelings over the years than has *The Mill.* The enormous fame accorded it in the nineteenth century, when it was admired by artists and critics alike, culminated when it was sold in London in 1911 for the extraordinary sum of £ 100,000. [1] The purchaser was Peter A. B. Widener, the millionaire collector from Philadelphia. Before *The Mill* left England, it was brought to the National Gallery in London to be put on public exhibition for two brief days. Newspaper reports indicate that some eleven thousand people visited the painting each day [fig. 1]. Somewhat later, Wilhelm von Bode, director of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin, and the greatest Rembrandt scholar of his day, visited Widener's son at his residence in Philadelphia, Lynnewood Hall, and pronounced the painting "the greatest picture in the world. The greatest picture by any artist." [2] The prominent status of the painting at Lynnewood Hall was upheld at the National Gallery of Art after the Widener bequest of 1942. It has always been viewed as the most important Rembrandt painting in the collection. When John Walker retired as director of the Gallery in 1969, he posed for photographers in front of *The Mill.*

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Despite the painting's renown, which can be traced back to the eighteenth century when it was in the collection of the Duc d'Orléans, and the enthusiastic endorsement of Bode, the attribution of *The Mill* has been a matter of great dispute throughout the twentieth century. The expert who seems to have first questioned the attribution was Woldemar von Seidlitz. Although Seidlitz had raised the question in newspaper articles since 1902, his first serious analysis of the stylistic problems concerning the attribution of *The Mill* appeared in the art journal *Kunst und Künstler* just after the sale of *The Mill.* [3] Seidlitz objected that the concept of this painting was different from other Rembrandt landscapes, that its low horizon, its lack of multiplicity, and above all, the strong contrasts of light and dark were uncharacteristic of Rembrandt. Seidlitz suggested that Aert de Gelder (1645–1727) might be considered as the artist, seeing that De Gelder preferred the warm transparent colors found in *The Mill.* Seidlitz, however, also admitted that landscapes by De Gelder were not known.

Almost simultaneously with the appearance of Seidlitz's article were newspaper reports that a recent cleaning of *The Mill* had uncovered the signature of Hercules Seghers (Dutch, c. 1590 - c. 1638), an account that encouraged further speculation about the attribution. [4] Subsequent clarification of these reports revealed that the painting in question was not *The Mill* but another landscape. The associations between Seghers and *The Mill,* however, remained strong for many years. [5] As a result of these attacks on the attribution of *The Mill* (including the quite unfeasible idea that the painting was a nineteenth-century English forgery), Wilhelm von Bode, Abraham Bredius, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, Woldemar von Seidlitz, and Jan Veth wrote a series of short essays on *The Mill* in the October 1912 issue of *Kunst und Künstler.* [6] Bode, Bredius, Hofstede de Groot, and Veth all emphatically defended the Rembrandt attribution and rejected the arguments advanced by Seidlitz in his previous article. Seidlitz agreed that *The Mill* could not have been painted by Seghers but continued to question the attribution to Rembrandt.

After the flurry of excitement in 1911 about the sale of *The Mill* and the issues of attribution, the painting, interestingly enough, was not again seriously discussed in the literature for more than sixty years. Although the painting continued to be admired in the United States and was accepted as a Rembrandt by scholars working in this country, primarily Jakob Rosenberg and Wolfgang Stechow, a number of important Rembrandt scholars working in Europe quietly eliminated the painting from the artist's accepted oeuvre. [7] Bredius, after having defended the attribution of *The Mill* in 1911, omitted it in 1935 from his corpus of Rembrandt

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paintings. Neither Kurt Bauch (in 1966) nor Horst Gerson (in 1969) included the painting in his catalog of the oeuvre. [8]

Interest in *The Mill,* however, peaked once again in 1977 when the decision was made at the National Gallery of Art to conserve the painting. *The Mill* was found to be structurally unsound, reason enough for the proposed conservation treatment, but an added incentive was the issue of attribution. Only by removing the heavy layers of discolored varnish that had come to obscure the surface of the painting could anything be learned about the existing color tonalities and painting techniques—information, it was hoped, that could help determine whether or not the image had been executed by Rembrandt. [9]

The decision to treat *The Mill,* however, unleashed a storm of controversy in the United States that eventually even threatened the existence of the conservation program at the National Gallery of Art. [10] The main point of contention for those who believed in the Rembrandt attribution was that the removal of the varnish would alter irreparably the emotional impact of the image. [11] What became clear during the controversy was the unique position this work occupied among Rembrandt's paintings. *The Mill* was greatly admired for its inherent drama, while, at the same time, its darkly brooding character was central to the mythology surrounding Rembrandt's life. At issue was not just concern about the appearance of the painting but also the way changes in its appearance would threaten fundamental beliefs about the artist.

The myths that so integrally linked this painting to Rembrandt's life grew in the romantic era, when the dramatic lighting and stark silhouette of the mill against the stormy sky struck a particularly responsive chord. [12] An old tradition that the painting represented the mill of Rembrandt's father added a personal aspect to the work that appealed to nineteenth-century sensibilities. [13] A number of descriptions of the painting interpreted the foreboding mood of the stormy sky as an indication of the personal traumas many believed Rembrandt experienced late in his life. One writer saw in the "dark, forbidding clouds . . . the symbols of his financial worries, social stress, and personal bereavements." [14] Another critic wrote: "Dating from the late 1650's, when Rembrandt had drunk to the dregs the cup of sorrow, *The Mill* is by general consent, alike in conception and treatment, the most profoundly impressive landscape in Western art." [15]

Such interpretative assessments of *The Mill* were encouraged by the layers of discolored and darkened varnish that had accumulated on the painting. These

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thick layers of varnish, which had given the painting a golden tone, also obscured many landscape details, allowing for a more generalized effect. The chiaroscuro effects so admired by nineteenth-century critics were enhanced in 1911 when *The Mill* was cleaned selectively to bring out the contrast of the dark mill against the light sky. [16]

Just how distorted this image had become over time is evident by comparing the painting as it appeared before its restoration with an etching of it in reverse in the 1786 catalog of the Duc d'Orléans' collection [fig. 2]. Whereas in the print the mill is the dominant motif, other elements, including the surrounding buildings, little figures on the hillside and near the water, the cows on the far shore, and the church steeple beyond the dense profile of the distant trees, are clearly articulated. In the accompanying description, *The Mill* is found to be picturesque rather than dramatic:

> This painting, as all those of this master, is of a vigourous and animated effect which has the principal interest of a site copied faithfully after nature. This simple composition does not owe to Rembrandt any other richness than that of harmony, and the magical effect which nourishes and revives everything. He possessed to an eminent degree this portion of picturesque genius, above all so essential in the genre of landscape [painting] where nature herself dictates the disposition of the scene, in determining the planes, the masses, and creates the borders that the fire of enthusiasm is unable to go beyond without risking to disfigure it. [17]

Neither the description nor the engraving emphasizes the effects of light and dark—the deep brooding, almost mysterious mood—so admired throughout most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In 1793 the painting was acquired for £500 by William Smith, a prominent politician from Norwich and friend of the artist Joseph Mallord William Turner (British, 1775 - 1851). [18] Its subsequent impact on English art and aesthetics was enormous. By 1806 *The Mill* was included in an exhibition of old master paintings at the British Institution. It was also among those works selected from the exhibition for artists to copy, as is evident in a drawing by Alfred Edward Chalon (1780–1860), which depicts three artists copying *The Mill* [fig. 3]. [19] The artist wearing a top hat in this

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drawing is none other than Benjamin West (American, 1738 - 1820).

The numerous copies, variants, and descriptions of *The Mill* in the early to mid-nineteenth century provide further information about its appearance during these years. A watercolor copy probably made between 1806 and 1811 by William Marshall Craig (British, active 1788/1828) emphasizes, as does the Duc d'Orléans catalog, the picturesque qualities of the scene. [20] The blue sky in Craig's watercolor, as well as the vividly blue sky in a free derivation of *The Mill* painted byJames Ward (British, 1769 - 1859) around 1806, *Ashbourne Mill* (on loan to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts), also demonstrates how different the color tonalities were before the accumulation of discolored and perhaps tinted varnish, affected the appearance of the painting.

It is with Turner that the first truly romantic interpretation of *The Mill* is to be found. His notes on Rembrandt's "celebrated" picture stress Rembrandt's forceful use of extreme contrasts of light and shade in the painting rather than its picturesque qualities: "But the sails of the mill are touched with the incalculable(?) ray, while all below is lost in inestimable(?) gloom without the value of reflected light, which even the sky demands, and the ray upon the Mill insists upon." [21] The strikingly different appreciation of the painting may have to do with Turner's mindset, but the actual appearance of *The Mill* was also changing as the result of discolored or tinted varnish. In 1834 the painting was described by C. J. Nieuwenhuys in the following manner: "It is toward the approach of evening, when the remaining light of day illumines the horizon, and with the reflection of the water, throws the surrounding scenery into solemn gloom. The mysterious tone of the whole conveys to the mind a poetical effect." [22] By midcentury writers had begun to attribute much of the poetic charm of the painting to its rich golden tone, a legacy that continued unabated for 130 years. [23]

Not surprisingly, the conservation treatment of 1977–1979 revealed that much of the painting's somber mood was the result of darkened varnish. [24] The most dramatic changes were in the sky, where the golden tonalities had been so prominent. The sky is now blue on the right and steel gray on the left and along the top edge. White clouds swirl across the sky behind the mill, creating a sweep of movement that adds drama to the setting. The water in the lower right is gray and blue, reflecting the color of the sky.

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The land changed as well, although the transformations were not as dramatic as in the other areas. Instead of a large undifferentiated mass of brown in the foreground, a rich range of earth tones and blacks articulates the ground, the foliage, and the bricks that form the wall of the bulwark. The figures have emerged from the darkness, in particular a man climbing the hill on the left, who was virtually indistinguishable in the painting's former state. On the far shore are two cows and what appears to be a herd of sheep. The reflections in the distant water are soft and lucid and add to the greatly enhanced feeling of depth that the painting now has.

Finally, the appearance of the classic post-mill itself changed: it does not appear as massive as it formerly did. It is painted in a wide range of earth tones that culminate in a soft salmon color at the ends of the sunlit sails. The mill, moreover, is clearly not situated in the foreground plane, but in the middle ground, behind the bulwark rising above the water. Just below the mill, fences help integrate its architectural character with the surrounding landscape.

The changes that occur after a painting has been cleaned are often dramatic. In this instance, they carried even added weight. Few paintings have been revered in the way that *The Mill* has for qualities that were derived from darkened varnish. Many feared that the impact this painting created would be destroyed if the varnish were removed, that it somehow could lose its sense of mystery. Fortunately, that fear was groundless, and the painting continues to impress the viewer with the profundity of its conception. The drama is still present, only it is richer, more varied, and less somber. The appearance is now quite comparable to that found in early nineteenth-century copies and variants of *The Mill,* although it is probable that viewers then were able to see even more detail in the landscape than is presently possible. [25] These areas of relatively thin paint may well have darkened over time as a result of linings that affected the color and texture of the support and ground.

Although the 1977–1979 conservation treatment of *The Mill* did much to correct the misinterpretations of the mood of the scene, it did not immediately solve the controversy about the attribution. While this author and Cynthia Schneider firmly supported the attribution to Rembrandt, neither Gary Schwartz nor Christian Tümpel included the painting in their monographs on Rembrandt, and Josua Bruyn, in an essay for the Rembrandt Research Project, attempted to attribute *The Mill* to Rembrandt's pupil Ferdinand Bol. [26] Over time, however, a broad consensus has arisen that the attribution to Rembrandt is correct, with Ernst van de Wetering

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writing about the painting in 2006 in words that echo the enthusiasm of Wilhelm von Bode. [27]

The problem of attribution was partly due to the fact that *The Mill* departs from other Rembrandt landscape paintings. It focuses quite dramatically on a single motif, rather than integrating a number of smaller elements as do both his fantasy landscapes of the late 1630s and his small *Winter Landscape* of 1646 (Gemäldegalerie, Kassel). [28] Furthermore, *The Mill* is painted on canvas rather than on wood, Rembrandt's normal support for his landscapes. Nevertheless, neither of these differences is reason to exclude the landscape from Rembrandt's oeuvre. The use of a canvas support here is related to the painting's large size, larger than that of other Rembrandt landscapes. The paint is applied more thickly in *The Mill* than in Rembrandt's panel painting *Landscape with a Castle,* c. 1640–1642 (Louvre, Paris), [29] for example, but in a manner that is consistent with his paintings on canvas. Rembrandt invariably painted quite fluidly and thinly on panel, using glazes to create translucent effects. He utilized a canvas support differently, particularly by dragging a fully loaded brush across its rough surface to create variety in his textures. This technique is used effectively in *The Mill* where Rembrandt's loosely painted water left the black sketch visible [see Sketching], suggesting the broken ripples circling out from where the woman is washing her clothes at the water's edge. Despite this fundamental difference of paint application, the two paintings share other techniques. The sequence of brown and then black painted sketches in the bulwark below the mill is comparable to Rembrandt's definition of the dark architectural forms in *Landscape with a Castle*. [30]

Although *The Mill* was consistently dated in the 1650s by earlier scholars, particularly those who wanted to associate the somber character of the image with Rembrandt's hardships during that decade, the color tonalities that emerged after the restoration are more consistent with his work in the 1640s. Compositionally, moreover, the combination of dramatic elements (swirling clouds and silhouetted mill) with prosaic ones (figures washing clothes at the water's edge) has its closest parallel in Rembrandt's etching *The Three Trees* of 1643 [fig. 4], in which a multitude of figures go about their daily lives within a landscape threatened by dramatic storm clouds. Also reminiscent of Rembrandt's work of the 1640s are the Adam Elsheimer–like qualities of the reflections of trees and animals along the distant shore, effects that Rembrandt developed most explicitly in his *Rest on the Flight into Egypt,* 1647 [fig. 5]. [31] Comparable as well in the two paintings are the

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blocky, somewhat generalized forms of the staffage figures. The figure types in *The Mill* are the same as those found in Rembrandt's drawings from the mid-1640s. The old man walking along the path is similar to his *Three Studies of an Old Man,* c. 1643–1644 (British Museum, London), while the man rowing the boat is reminiscent of *Two Men Rowing* from the Szépmüvészeti Múzeum, Budapest [fig. 6]. [32]

The painting as we see it today is not how it was originally conceived. In an initial stage of the painting (revealed by X-radiography) a landscape mass rose behind the mill and a stone bridge on large piers spanned the water before the bulwark [fig. 7]. [33] The reflection of the bridge can even be seen in the calm water below. The information gained from the X-radiographs provides a number of clues about the nature of this image. To begin with, the changes in composition required that the artist paint over the right part of the sky as well as the distant landscape and water above the level of the boat, reworkings that added to the dense quality of paint in these areas.

The X-radiographs have also revealed that no thread distortions in the weave of the canvas exist along either side or the top of the painting, an indication that the support may have been trimmed in these areas, but particularly along the top and left edges (see Technical Summary). Ernst van de Wetering has examined the proportional relationships of width to height in Rembrandt's other landscapes and has convincingly proposed that *The Mill*"s original dimensions may have been approximately 90 by 120 centimeters. He rightfully notes that the mill would then have been more to the right of center and that the drama of the light and dark contrasts in the sky would have had an even greater visual and emotional impact than it has today. [34] Just how much time elapsed before the changes were made cannot be said with certainty, but distortions to the underlying paint layers suggest it was not long, and it may well be that Rembrandt himself reduced the size of the painting (see Technical Summary).

Such major compositional changes demonstrate that Rembrandt was not attempting to paint a topographically accurate view, although he may well have been inspired by windmills situated on bulwarks outside of Amsterdam or Leiden. The shape and isolated character of the mill in this painting call to mind the bastion "Het Blauwhoofd" on the outskirts of Amsterdam, a site Rembrandt drew frequently in the 1640s and early 1650s. [35] Another possible visual source is the Pelikaansbolwerk in Leiden. As is seen in a 1649 drawing byJan de Bisschop (Dutch, 1628 - 1671) [fig. 8], a stone bridge supported on arched piers joined the

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bulwark with the tree-lined far shore, much as it appeared in the initial stage of *The Mill.* The mill on the Pelikaansbolwerk was, in fact, the mill of Rembrandt's father, thus Smith's romantic associations may well have more validity than one might expect. [36]

Whether or not his father's mill was one of Rembrandt's sources of inspiration, the compositional changes he brought about during the course of the painting's evolution served to give the mill an imposing grandeur. As it stands by itself on a rise just beyond the walled bastion, the mill becomes an almost iconic image, imbued with symbolic significance. In this respect, as well as for the compositional reasons mentioned above, *The Mill* is comparable to the etching *The Three Trees,* which almost certainly is a symbolically conceived landscape. [37] Whereas the symbolism traditionally associated with *The Mill* has been personal to Rembrandt and seen as a reflection of the tragedies that so affected his life in the 1650s, a closer examination of the painting in its cleaned state makes it clear that the symbolism is positive rather than negative. [38] The storm clouds have passed, and the salmon-colored sails face clear skies. Beneath the mill's reassuring presence, a male figure leans over the bastion's wall to gaze at the water and pastoral landscape beyond while others meander along the path in the foreground or go about their daily tasks on and near the water.

As Hans Kauffmann has persuasively argued, the windmill had numerous associations in Dutch literary traditions, ranging from temperance to religious imagery. Zacharias Heyns, for example, in his emblem book of 1625, draws a parallel between the mill, which turns only when the wind blows, and man, who is dead in his heart until the spirit gives him life and makes him whole. [39] Another emblematic interpretation of the windmill that Kauffmann does not mention, however, may have more direct relevance to *The Mill*. Roemer Visscher, in his extremely important emblem book *Zinne-poppen,* published in Amsterdam in 1614, gave political, rather than religious, symbolism to the mill. His emblem "Ut emergant" (That they may rise up) depicts a post-mill quite similar to the one in Rembrandt's painting [fig. 9]. His text compares a windmill, which endures the onslaught of winds and harnesses them to remove the water from the land to make it viable for the populace, to a good prince who works tirelessly for the greater good of his people. [40] One cannot help but sense that Rembrandt's painting conveys something of this same sentiment. Whether or not he associated the mill with Prince Frederik Hendrik or, in a broader sense, with a strong, watchful government cannot be said, but the mill does seem to act symbolically as a

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guardian. Silhouetted dramatically in the evening light, it faces a calm sky and still waters as storms threaten the landscape behind it. With its image comes a reassurance that peace and prosperity are at hand, and people can go about their daily lives without fear of war or uncertainty.

Political associations are often found in Rembrandt's work, most explicitly so in his allegorical painting *The Concord of the State* (Museum Boymans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam), which he probably completed in the early 1640s. [41] Although the exact meaning of that painting is not understood, the issues of unity and concord that he addressed there are related to the same underlying concerns for peace and prosperity evident in *The Mill.* These concerns were of particular interest in the 1640s as efforts were being made to finalize a treaty with Spain. Indeed, the years in and around the Treaty of Münster of 1648 saw a great number of paintings by Dutch landscape artists that seemed to celebrate their cultural and political heritage. [42] *The Mill,* in its imaginative re-creation of a characteristic Dutch landscape feature, is one of the most profound of all of these works.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 *The Illustrated London News*, vol. 274, March 25, 1911

fig. 2 Etching in reverse of *The Mill*, from the 1786 catalog of the Duc d'Orléans Collection

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fig. 3 Alfred Edward Chalon, *Study at the British Institution*, 1806, pen and ink and wash, British Museum, London. Photo © Trustees of the British Museum

fig. 4 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Three Trees*, 1643, etching, with drypoint and burin, on japan paper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of R. Horace Gallatin, 1949.1.39

fig. 5 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, 1647, oil on panel, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin. Photo © National Gallery of Ireland

fig. 6 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Two Men Rowing*, c. 1645, pen and ink, Szépmüvészeti Múzeum, Budapest, inv. 1871

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fig. 7 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Mill*, 1645/1648, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.62

fig. 8 Jan de Bisschop, *Pelikaansbolwerk, Leiden*, 1649, pen and ink, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

40 HET EERSTE SCHOCK

XL

Vt emergant.

EEn Prince die zijn ampt wel bedient, doet alle vlijt ende neerstigheyd dat zijn onderdanen ende burghers welvaren, ende goede neeringhe hebben: overleggende dagh en nacht in zijn herte, om alle hinder en ongheluck af te wenden, met den meeſtē oorboor en minſte ſchade: ghelijck de Watermeulen lijde den aenſtoot van alle winden, om deur kracht van dien het water met zijn ſchepraden uyt te werpen, met het woordt *ut emergant*, (dat is:) op datſe op komen te weté, de landen die ſonder behulp van dien, onder water ſouden blyven gantſch vruchteloos ligghen.

Vt emergant.

fig. 9 Roemer Visscher, "Ut emergant," emblem from *Zinne-poppen*, Amsterdam, 1614

NOTES

[1] The National Gallery of Art curatorial files contain seventy pages of typed excerpts from English newspapers and magazines from the period of its sale

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in 1911.

[2] Peter A. B. Widener, *Without Drums* (New York, 1940), 55–56, as quoted by John Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington* (New York, 1963; French, German, and Spanish eds., 1964), 274.

[3] Woldemar von Seidlitz, "Rembrandts Mühle," *Kunst und Künstler* 9, no. 10 (July 1911): 550–552.

[4] Arthur J. Sulley, the dealer who bought *The Mill* for Widener, alluded to such reports in London newspapers in a letter dated July 24, 1911 (National Gallery of Art curatorial files), which he wrote to A. Hauser, the restorer who cleaned *The Mill* in 1911.

[5] Ellis K. Waterhouse, "Mr. Hind on Rembrandt," *Burlington Magazine* 61, no. 356 (November 1932): 238–239, notes: “the sight of *The Mill* has always given me a Hercules Seghers feeling, and I think Mr. Hind seems also to have wondered.”

[6] Wilhelm Bode, Abraham Bredius, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, Woldemar van Seidlitz, and Jan Veth, “Rembrandts Mühle,” *Kunst und Künstler* 10, no. 1 (October 1912): 21–27.

[7] Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt* (Cambridge, MA, 1948), 30–31; reprint, *Rembrandt: Life and Work*, 2 vols. (Greenwich, CT, 1964), 1:978; and Wolfgang Stechow, *Dutch Landscape Painting of the Seventeenth Century*, National Gallery of Art Kress Foundation Studies in the History of European Art (London, 1966), 137.

[8] Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde* (Berlin, 1966); Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, rev. ed. by Horst Gerson (London, 1969). Although the attribution of *The Mill* was not questioned in the 1969 exhibition of Rembrandt paintings at the National Gallery of Art (*Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist’s Death]*, exh. cat. [Washington, DC, 1969], no. 6), Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, who curated that exhibition, has indicated to me (personal communication, 1993) that he did not believe in the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt at that time. He said that he did not express this opinion in the catalog because he “was a guest of the National Gallery (Kress Professor).” He did, however, admit to a reporter from *Newsweek* (March 10, 1969) that “chances are remote that ‘The Mill’ is a Rembrandt” (p. 88).

[9] Prior to the restoration, I also had serious doubts about the attribution of *The Mill* to Rembrandt.

[10] The controversy about the restoration of *The Mill* lasted about two years and involved a large number of museum directors, curators, and conservators. Indeed, the issues were quite complex emotionally, philosophically, and politically, but neither the extent of the controversy nor

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its level of intensity would have existed had another painting been at issue. For Paul Mellon's recollections of the controversy see Paul Mellon, with John Baskett, *Reflections in a Silver Spoon: A Memoir* (New York, 1992), 311–313.

[11] An article on the restoration in the *Washington Post* (September 16, 1977) by Paul Richard, for example, had as a heading: "The Mystery of 'The Mill': Is It a Rembrandt? And When They Clean It, Will the Mood Go Along with the Varnish?" John Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington*, rev. ed. (New York, 1984), 274, wrote a postscript on *The Mill* after the restoration: "In my opinion, it has gained in colorfulness but has lost in sublimity. The patina of time often adds to the beauty of a work of art, but how this painting looked when Rembrandt finished it we shall never know."

[12] For a fuller treatment of this subject than offered in this entry see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "De Geschiedenis en Bekoring van 'De Molen,'" *De Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 29 (1977): 20–32.

[13] William Buchanan, *Memoirs of Painting*, 2 vols. (London, 1824), 1:195, seems to have been the first to write that Rembrandt had depicted "a view of his Father's Mill on the banks of the Rhine." John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 7:189, no. 601, gave the painting the title *Rembrandt's Mill.* Smith (7:xiii) placed special significance on the mill in Rembrandt's training, writing: "having acquired a knowledge of the rules of art, he retired to his father's mill, and from the somber interior of this mill, he is supposed to have first caught the hint of that powerful opposition of light and shade, which he subsequently carried to such high perfection in his works, and hence he may be said to have created a new Era of painting."

[14] Lucking Taverner, "Rembrandt's 'The Mill,'" *Christian Life*, April 1911.

[15] "100,000 Rembrandt. Huge Offer for 'The Mill'" to Lord Lansdowne. National Gallery's Position," *London Daily News*, March 1, 1911.

[16] On April 8, 1911, Arthur Sulley, the dealer who had bought *The Mill* for Widener, sent a letter to Dr. Bode in Berlin to inform him that he had just sent *The Mill* by special messenger to Berlin to have the painting examined by Professor Hauser, Bode's restorer. He asked Bode to consult with Hauser as to whether the picture should be cleaned. He wrote, in a manner that mirrors the concerns expressed during the conservation controversy of 1977–1979: "I have the feeling that if it is cleaned right down that the picture may lose some of the poetic charm which it has, and which is perhaps intensified by the old and discoloured varnish." Bode, however, was in Italy at the time, so the decision about the nature and extent of the cleaning was left entirely in the hands of Professor Hauser. He telegrammed Sulley on April 10: "it would spoil the picture to clean off all the varnish. It is enough to remove the yellow patches on the right side of the sky and water to

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heighten the effect." Sulley telegrammed his permission for partial cleaning that same day. As Sulley wrote to Widener on April 11, he felt that Hauser knew "more about the cleaning of Rembrandt pictures, and of Rembrandt's manner of painting, than everyone else put together." (This correspondence is in National Gallery of Art curatorial files.)

[17] Abbé de Fontenai (Louis-Abel de Bonafons), *Galérie du Palais Royal gravée d'après les tableaux des differentes écoles qui la composent: Avec un abrégé de la Vie des Peintres & une description historique de chaque tableau*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1786), 1: unpaginated repro: "Ce tableau, comme tous ceux de ce Maître, est d'un effet vigoureux et piquant qui fait le principal interêt d'un Site copié fidelement d'après Nature. Cette composition simple ne doit à Rembrandt d'autre richesse que celle de l'harmonie, et la Magie d'effet qui feconde et vivifie tout. Il possedoit à un dégré eminent cette portion de génie Pitoresque, si essentielle surtout, dans le genre du Paysage où la Nature dicte elle même l'Ordonnance de la Scêne, en détermine les Plans, les Masses, et pose des bornes que le feu de l'enthousiasme, ne peut franchir sans risquer de la défigurer."

[18] The Duc d'Orléans sold his Dutch, Flemish, and German paintings to an English speculator, T. M. Slade, in 1792 in the midst of the French Revolution. The selling price was 350,000 francs. Slade, who secreted the paintings out of France, exhibited them for sale the following spring at the Old Academy Rooms in Pall Mall. *The Mill* was bought by Smith at this exhibition.

[19] I would like to thank Ernst van de Wetering for bringing this drawing to my attention.

[20] The watercolor, which measures 27.2 by 32.4 centimeters, is in the Boston Athenaeum. Craig, who in 1812 was appointed Water-Colour Painter to Queen Charlotte, frequently exhibited at the British Institution. This watercolor was made as part of an ambitious attempt to publish a series of books containing engraved reproductions of Old Master paintings then in England. Only one volume was completed *(Tresham's British Gallery of Pictures,* London, 1818), in which *The Mill* was not included. This information was kindly provided to me by Harry Katz, Art Department, Library of the Boston Athenaeum (letter, July 15, 1983, in National Gallery of Art curatorial files).

[21] As quoted in John Gage, *Color in Turner: Poetry and Truth* (New York and Washington, DC, 1969), 198–199. See also David H. Solkin, ed., *Turner and the Masters* (London, 2009), 162. Solkin quotes Turner's admiration for Rembrandt's ability to create "that veil of matchless colour, that lucid interval of Morning dawn and dewy light on which the Eye dwells so completely enthrall'd, [that] it seeks not for its liberty, but as it were, thinks it a sacrilege

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to pierce the mystic shell of colour in search of form."

[22] Charles J. Nieuwenhuys, *A Review of the Lives and Works of Some of the Most Eminent Painters* (London, 1834), 12.

[23] Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collections of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, and Illuminated Mss*., trans. Lady Eastlake, 3 vols. (London, 1854–1857), 3:158, wrote: "The contrast between the warm gleams of the setting sun, with the deep, golden, transparent tones of the foreground, the luminous evening sky, and dark rain-clouds are as finely conceived as they are splendidly executed." John Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington*, rev. ed. (New York, 1984), 274, wrote: "And this melancholy sentiment, this mood of sublime sadness, which Rembrandt conveys through the stark simplicity of a windmill silhouetted in the fading light against the mist-filled sky, is indescribably moving."

[24] The painting was conserved once again in 2001 because the varnish was no longer sufficiently saturating the paint. The changes in the painting's appearance after that treatment, however, were minimal compared to those that occurred in 1977–1979.

[25] The amount of detail described in *The Mill,* however, may also have been exaggerated as a result of the aesthetic of the picturesque that was current in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

[26] Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "De Restauratie van 'De Molen'," *De Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 31, no. 1 (1979): 9–13, repro.; Cynthia P Schneider, *Rembrandt's Landscapes* (New Haven, 1990), 44–46, no. 6, 183–190. Seymour Slive (personal communication, 1993) also accepts the attribution of *The Mill* to Rembrandt. Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings* (New York, 1985), and Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt*, trans. Jacques and Jean Duvernet, Léon Karlson, and Patrick Grilli (Paris, 1986), omit *The Mill* from their oeuvre catalogs. Josua Bruyn, in *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 3:49, attributes *The Mill* to Bol and dates it around 1650. Bruyn's primary point of comparison, Bol's only known landscape painting, *River Landscape with Cattle* (art market, 1992), is not convincing. Albert Blankert, the author of the Bol monograph, also does not believe Bol painted *The Mill.* (He expressed this opinion at the Rembrandt Symposium in Amsterdam in 1992. Blankert, however, also doubts the Rembrandt attribution for this painting.) In 1993, Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann (personal communication) remained emphatic in his belief that *The Mill* was not by Rembrandt (see note 8 above).

[27] Ernst van de Wetering, "The Mill," in *Rembrandt's Landscapes*, ed. Christiaan Vogelaar and Gregor J. M. Weber (Leiden, 2006), 75–90. On Bode, see note 6 above.

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[28] See inventory no. 242, from the Gemäldegalerie, Kassel.

[29] See inventory no. R.F. 1948–35, from the Musée du Louvre, Paris.

[30] On Rembrandt's use of brown and black painted sketches in the landscapes, see E. Melanie Gifford, "Evocation and Representation: Rembrandt's Landscape Painting Technique," in *Rembrandt's Landscapes*, ed. Christiaan Vogelaar and Gregor J. M. Weber (Leiden, 2006), 120–143.

[31] The relationship of the color tonalities in these two paintings is particularly close.

[32] The London drawing is illustrated in Otto Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt: A Critical and Chronological Catalogue*, 6 vols. (London, 1954–1957), 4: no. 668. Benesch (2: no. 361) dates the Budapest drawing "about 1637." In my opinion, however, his date is too early. The blocky forms of the figures are more consistent with those of the early to mid-1640s (see Benesch, 4: no. 659).

[33] The shape of the hill was also revealed by Infrared Reflectography at 1.2 to 2.5 microns. A cross-section taken through the sky area in front of the bulwark has shown that a layer of blackish painted sketch once defined the shape of the bridge (see report dated May 9, 1979, in National Gallery of Art Conservation department files).

[34] See Ernst van de Wetering, "The Mill," in *Rembrandt's Landscapes*, ed. Christiaan Vogelaar and Gregor J. M. Weber (Leiden, 2006), 83–84. In another, less convincing reconstruction, which postulates that Rembrandt would have used the full width of the canvas support, Van de Wetering has also suggested that the composition originally could have been much larger, measuring 105 by 140 centimeters. He also argues that the painting was irregularly cut to fit on a stretcher and that the image is therefore slightly tilted to the right.

[35] See Cynthia P. Schneider, *Rembrandt's Landscapes* (New Haven, 1990), 91–92, no. 10. Boudewijn Bakker, "An Amsterdam Windmill in Washington," in *Rembrandt 2006: Essays*, ed. M. Roscam Abbing (Leiden, 2006), 74–84, fig. 5a, as by Rembrandt(?), argues that the Blauwhoofd bulwark remains the prime candidate as *The Mill*'s model, but concedes that Rembrandt's childhood memories of his father's mill on the Pelikaans bulwark in Leiden "undoubtedly play[ed] a role in his artistic imagination" (p. 83).

[36] For information on Rembrandt's family in Leiden, see P. J. M. de Baar and Ingrid W. L. Moerman, "Rembrandt van Rijn en Jan Lievens, inwoners van Leiden," in *Rembrandt & Lievens in Leiden*, ed. Christiaan Vogelaar (Leiden, 1991), 24–38. Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann (personal communication, 1993) has brought to my attention the fact that De Bisschop's drawing *Rembrandt's Mill* was reproduced by means of an etching by Flameng (as *Le vrai moulin de Rembrandt*) in Charles Blanc*, L'oeuvre complet de*

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Rembrandt, 2 vols. (Paris, 1859–1861), 1:15.

[37] For a discussion of the religious symbolism of *The Three Trees,* see Cynthia P. Schneider, *Rembrandt's Landscapes* (New Haven, 1990), 240–242, no. 75.

[38] Hans Kauffmann, "Jacob van Ruisdael: 'Die Mühle von Wijk bij Duurstede,'" in *Festschrift für Otto von Simson zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Lucius Grisebach and Konrad Renger (Frankfurt, Berlin, and Vienna, 1977), 382, is the only author to interpret the scene in a positive manner: "Eine Komposition, die die Mühle himmelan hebt, aufsehenerregend, als hätte der Maler Jugenderinnerungen verklären und glorifizieren wollen."

[39] Zacharias Heyns, *Emblemata, Emblemes Chrestienes et Morales* (Rotterdam, 1625): "De mensch is doot in syn gemoet/Den Geest verquict en leven doet."

[40] Roemer Visscher, *Zinne-poppen* (Amsterdam, 1614), emblem XL: "Een Prince die zijn ampt wel bedient, doet alle vlijt ende neerstigheyd dat zijn onderdanen ende burghers welvaren, ende goed neeringhe hebben: overleggende dagh en nacht in zijn herte, om alle hinder en ongheluck af te wenden, met den meesten oorboor en minste schade: ghelijck de Watermeulen lijdt den aenstoot van alle winden, om deur kracht van dien het water met zijn schepraden uyt te werpen."

[41] See inventory no. 1717, from Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, rev. ed. by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 593, no. 476, repro.

[42] For a discussion of this issue see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "History, Politics, and the Portrait of a City: Vermeer's *View of Delft*," in *Urban Life in the Renaissance*, ed. Susan Zimmerman and Ronald F. E. Weissman (Cranbury, NJ, 1989), 165–184.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a fine-weight, tightly woven, plain-weave fabric, lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping, which extends 7 cm into the painting, is present along the bottom edge, indicating that it is original. No cusping exists along the top or sides of the painting, which could indicate that these edges have been cut. The right edge, however, has a puzzling characteristic: the paint ends approximately 1 cm short of the edge, although the ground extends until the edge. The abrupt edge of the paint along the right side of the painting probably indicates that it is the original edge despite the fact that no cusping exists along the right

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side of the canvas support.[1]

The canvas was prepared with a double ground consisting of a reddish brown lower layer followed by a yellowish gray upper layer.[2] The composition was laid out first with a brown painted sketch under both landscape and sky and then further developed in a broadly handled black painted sketch. Black strokes, some from a wide, splayed-out brush, can be seen with infrared reflectography at 1.2 to 2.5 microns[3] where they laid out landscape forms, the figures and the mill, and the concentric ripples in the water. In the mill this sketch is also visible with the naked eye.[4] The paint was applied in two stages: the bright colors of a brush-marked first stage were muted by more restrained colors and smooth-textured paint in the final stage.[5]

Numerous changes and reworkings by the artist are evident. The painted sketch originally placed the mill between a hill on the left and, on the right, a bridge crossing from the promontory to the edge of the composition and reflected in the water below.[6] Reserves visible in the X-radiographs show that the sky and water first were painted up to these sketched forms. Soon after, the profile of the hill was lowered and the bridge and its reflection were eliminated; the sky, the shore, and the water were reworked. Disruptions to the underlying paint indicate that the revisions were made soon after the first image was laid out. At the same time a large standing figure on the promontory was replaced by the small figure leaning over the wall and the boat with oarsman was introduced.

The painting is in excellent condition, with only minor flake losses along the edges and a small loss and abrasion in the upper left corner. Dark gray stains in the sky may be due to the discoloration of the pigment smalt.

In 1976 a small slit in the lower left corner was repaired. Treatment was carried out in 1977–1979 to consolidate flaking paint, remove the old lining and replace it, and remove discolored varnish and retouching. The painting was treated again in 2001, at which time the 1979 varnish was removed because it was no longer saturating the dark paint.

[1] See Ernst van de Wetering, "The Mill," in Rembrandt's Landscapes, ed. Christiaan Vogelaar (Leiden, 2006), 83.

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[2] The paint and ground layers were analyzed by the Scientific Research department using cross-sections and polarized light microscopy (see reports dated September 26, 1978, and May 9, 1979 in NGA Conservation department files).

[3] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Mitsubishi M600 PtSi focal plane array camera.

[4] For a similar handling of brown and black painted sketches, see the probably unfinished Landscape with a Castle (Louvre, Paris). On both paintings see E. Melanie Gifford, "Evocation and Representation: Rembrandt's Landscape Painting Technique," in Rembrandt's Landscapes, ed. Christiaan Vogelaar and Gregor J. M. Weber. Exh. cat. Staatliche Museen Kassel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Kassel; Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden. (Zwolle, 2006), 120-143.

[5] E. Melanie Gifford, "Evocation and Representation: Rembrandt's Landscape Painting Technique," in Rembrandt's Landscapes, ed. Christiaan Vogelaar and Gregor J. M. Weber. Exh. cat. Staatliche Museen Kassel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Kassel; Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden. (Zwolle, 2006), 120–143.

[6] The use of the painted sketch in these areas was confirmed by microscopic examination, cross-sections, and infrared reflectography at 1.2 to 2.5 microns. The infrared reflectogaphy was performed using a Mitsubishi M600 PtSi focal plane array camera.

PROVENANCE

Philippe II, duc d'Orléans [1674-1723], Paris; by inheritance to his son, Louis, duc d'Orléans [1703-1752], Paris; by inheritance to his son, Louis Philippe, duc d'Orléans [1725-1785], Paris; by inheritance to his son, Louis Philippe Joseph, duc d'Orléans [1747-1793], Paris; acquired 1792 with the Dutch, German, and Flemish paintings of the Orléans collection by Thomas Moore Slade, London, for an English syndicate;[1] (exhibition and sale [by private contract], The Great Rooms, Pall Mall, London, April-June 1793, no. 91); William Smith, M.P. [1756-1835], until at least 1815;[2] Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, 3rd marquess of Lansdowne [1780-1863], Bowood House, Wiltshire, by 1824;[3] by inheritance to his son, Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, 4th marquess of Lansdowne [1816-1866], Bowood House; by inheritance to his son, Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice, 5th marquess of Lansdowne [1845-1927], Bowood House; sold April 1911 through (Arthur J. Sulley & Co., London) to Peter

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A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] For the story of the dispersal of the Orléans collection in the 1790s, see William Buchanan, *Memoirs of Painting*, 2 vols., London, 1824: 1:9-216, and Denys Sutton, "Aspects of British Collecting, Part III: XIII The Orléans Collection," *Apollo* 119 (May 1984): 357-372.

[2] Smith lent the painting to an exhibition at the British Institution in 1815.

[3] Buchanan 1824, 1:195, 196.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1793 The Orleans Gallery, The Great Rooms, Pall Mall, London, 1793, no. 91, as Landscape with a mill (twilight).

1806 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1806, no catalogue (special exhibition of paintings displayed for copyists).

1815 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1815, no. 37.

1864 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1864, no. 112.

1878 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1878, no. 172.

1888 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1888, no. 74.

1899 Exhibition of Works by Rembrandt. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1899, no. 40.

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1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 6, repro.

2006 Rembrandts Landschaften [Rembrandt's Landscapes], Schloss Wilhelmshöhe, Staatliche Museen Kassel; Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden, 2006-2007, no. 5, repro.

2009 Turner and the Masters, Tate, London; Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris; Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2009- 2010, no 58 (London and Madrid), no. 70 (Paris), repro.

2018 Rembrandt: Britain's Discovery of the Master, Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh, 2018, no. 8, fig. 91.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop
Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669
Dutch 17th Century

An Old Lady with a Book

1637

oil on canvas
overall: 109.7 x 91.5 cm (43 3/16 x 36 in.)
framed: 147.3 x 128.9 x 13.9 cm (58 x 50 3/4 x 5 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower left: Rembr[an]dt. / f.1[63]7.
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.73

ENTRY

The identity of this formidable woman is not known, but her black cap indicates that she is in mourning and is probably a widow. Her stern demeanor, the wide-wheel ruff collar she wears, and the Bible she holds in her lap all suggest that she was a conservative member of Dutch society and dedicated to her religious beliefs. Despite the bold execution, the portrait is remarkably subdued. The sitter does not communicate directly with the viewer through a gaze or gesture, but rather appears lost in thought as she ponders the words of the Bible she has just read. [1] She stares outward but looks inward, gently touching the clasp of the Bible with one hand while holding her spectacles between the fingers of the other.

Because such black, fur-trimmed costumes are found in Dutch painting from the mid-1630s until the late 1650s, the dating of this imposing canvas has been particularly problematic. Until a date was discovered in the lower left at the beginning of the twentieth century, it was generally described in an all-inclusive way as belonging to Rembrandt's "best period." First read as 1643, the date was later believed to be 164[7]. [2] The confusion is understandable because damage in this area of the painting obliterates a portion of both the signature and the date. The conservation treatment of the painting in 1983, however, revealed that the date should be read as 1637. While the damage does affect both the "6" and the "3," enough of each number survives to identify them (see this painting's inscription). The signature and date are integral with the paint structure and are of

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a type characteristic of the late 1630s.

This information is of some consequence when discussing the attribution of the work, which has been rejected in recent years by both Gerson and Schwartz. [3] Indeed, while the execution does not relate easily with Rembrandt's paintings from the late 1640s, close comparisons can be made with other women's portraits from the late 1630s, in particular *Alotte Adriaensdr.* of 1639 in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam [fig. 1]. [4] Not only are the costumes worn by both women similar, but the sure modeling of features in both portraits is achieved through a variety of short, unblended brushstrokes. Among those areas of the face that best bear the characteristics of artistic approach are the articulation of the eyes, the modeling of folds just below the eyes, the formation of the mouth, and the way the pulled-back hair is indicated with thin black strokes drawn from the forehead to the hair. Since the features of the somewhat older woman in the Washington painting are rougher and the thrust of light on the face stronger, the brushwork is freer than in the Rotterdam portrait. In both works, nevertheless, Rembrandt used his paint to suggest at once the structure of the face and the patterns of light and dark that accent the form.

The woman's hands and the Bible in *An Old Lady with a Book* are likewise modeled with bold strokes and great surety. Their forms are quite geometric and their positions carefully conceived, yet Rembrandt has suggested the nuances of texture and modeling with great sensitivity. The sheen of the flesh as it is accented by the light seems to glow from within, while the metallic corners of the book glisten with specular reflections. Also remarkable is the subtle translucence of the eyeglasses, which reveal the diffused images of the thumb and finger beneath them.

The surety of Rembrandt's modeling of form is particularly evident in the X-radiographs [fig. 2] [see X-radiography]. Here also the distribution of lead white is compatible with that of other portraits from the middle to late 1630s. No Pentimenti are evident as Rembrandt seems to have worked directly on the canvas with great confidence of his intent. As is evident from the surface but also from the X-radiographs, the collar is painted very densely. Technical analysis indicates that it was executed in two layers. This technique was probably developed to help convey the translucent quality of the material. Folds along the edges of the material were articulated with strokes of gray for the shadows and strokes of white for the accented portions.

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Despite stylistic connections with Rembrandt's work from the late 1630s, the figure is unusually stiff and formal in its presentation. Gerson complained that the hands were "without expression," but the same criticism could be more aptly applied to the upright position of the woman as she sits rigidly in the armchair. [5] Indeed, compared to most Rembrandt sitters, she seems rather remote. In part, Rembrandt's characterization must be seen in response to the personality of the patron, an intangible in the process of portrait painting that can never be adequately assessed. The woman's restrained demeanor must also be understood within the iconographic content of this work. Unlike most of Rembrandt's subjects the woman does not make eye contact with the viewer. His intent was to emphasize how the word of the Bible has made an impact on the woman's state of being rather than to enliven her form with momentary expression or gesture.

The fascinating conceit of depicting the woman contemplating a written text is consistent with Rembrandt's interest in extending the limits of portraiture during the late 1630s and early 1640s. Just how remarkable the concept is can be seen through a comparison with Solomon Koninck's *Portrait of an Elderly Lady,* 1634 [fig. 3]. Here, even though all of the components of the painting are comparable, the woman has posed as though interrupted from her text rather than immersed in her thoughts. Rembrandt's interest in demonstrating the effect of words on a sitter's mind can also be found in his graphic work from the 1630s and early 1640s, in particular his etched portrait of Jan Cornelis Silvius, 1633, and his etching *Man at a Desk Wearing a Cross and Chain,* 1641. [6] In painting, this conceit culminated in 1641 in his magnificent *Portrait of Anslo and His Wife,* 1641 (Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz), [7] where he conveyed the impact of the preacher's words through the quiet, reflective mood of the woman.

Despite the inventiveness of the portrait concept and the painterly qualities evident in the face, it seems probable that Rembrandt relegated the costume, chair, and background to a studio assistant. The brushwork in those portions of the painting is comparatively uninspired. A close comparison of the treatment of the millstone ruff on this portrait and that of *Alotte Adriaensdr.* ([fig. 1]), for example, reveals that this collar is executed with less sensitivity to the delicate nuances of light and form. The result is that the translucency of the material is rendered less illusionistically than it is in the Rotterdam portrait. A small but telling detail confirms that the collar was executed after the head was completely finished: a stroke of white paint overlaps the woman's right cheek.

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It may well be, then, that Rembrandt, after devising the concept for the portrait, blocked in the form in his customary manner, executed the head and the hands, and then passed on the unfinished canvas to an assistant to bring it to completion. Although this pupil cannot be identified, a strong candidate would be Ferdinand Bol (Dutch, 1616 - 1680), a trained artist who had moved from Dordrecht to Amsterdam to work as an apprentice and assistant with Rembrandt between the years of about 1636 and 1641. [8] While it is difficult to determine which works Bol actually executed during those years, in his later career he painted a large number of portraits as well as biblical and mythological scenes. One portrait that has been convincingly attributed to him from the 1640s, and which is comparable to *An Old Lady with a Book,* is *Portrait of Elizabeth Jacobsdr. Bas* [fig. 4]. [9] Although the brushwork in the costume is somewhat rougher and bolder in the Washington painting because of the need to paint in Rembrandt's style, the bodies of both women have a massive yet static character that is quite similar, for example, in the way the fur-edged jackets fall across the women's laps. Similar also is the manner in which the shadows fall across the women's mill ruffs. Finally, the oblique perspective of the circular form of the chair arm is identical.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Alotte Adraensdr.*, 1639, oil on panel, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

fig. 2 Detail of head, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop, *An Old Lady with a Book*, 1637, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.73

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fig. 3 Solomon Koninck, *Portrait of an Elderly Lady*, 1634, oil on panel, Hopetoun House Preservation Trust, near Edinburgh

fig. 4 Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Elizabeth Jacobsdr. Bas*, c. 1640, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

NOTES

[1] It is clear that she has finished reading the Bible since the back cover is on top, the normal position of a book when one closes it.

[2] See, for example, respectively, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, 8 vols., trans. Edward G. Hawke (London, 1907–1927), 6:401, no. 876, and Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), 1:45.

[3] Abraham Bredius and Horst Gerson, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings* (London, 1969), 578, no. 362, suggest associations with Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout (1621–1674). Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings* (New York, 1985), 380, rejects the painting in his concordance without explanation. Ernst van de Wetering (personal

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communication, 1991) has indicated to me that he does not accept the attribution of this painting to Rembrandt.

[4] Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 321–327, A132. The painting is generally in a poor state of preservation with the exception of the area around the face. The signature and date of 1639 are not considered by the RRP to be authentic, but the date is accepted as appropriate on the basis of style.

[5] Abraham Bredius and Horst Gerson, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings* (London, 1969), 578, no. 362.

[6] For illustrations of these two etchings, see Ludwig Münz, *A Critical Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings*, 2 vols. (London, 1952), 2:54 and 61.

[7] See inventory no. 828L, from Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz.

[8] For an excellent overview of Bol's work see Albert Blankert, *Ferdinand Bol (1616–1680): Rembrandt's Pupil*, (Doornspijk, 1982), and also Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau i.d. Pfalz, 1983), 1:282–425

[9] For an extended discussion of the various attributions that have been given to this painting and convincing reasons for the attribution to Bol, see Van Thiel in Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and Pieter van Thiel, *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop: Paintings* (New Haven and London, 1991), 322–327, no. 65.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a medium-weight, tightly and plain-woven fabric, has been lined and the tacking margins have been removed. Cusping is present on all sides, suggesting the original dimensions have been retained. The double ground consists of a thin, red lower layer followed by a very thin, gray upper layer.[1] Paint was applied as thin pastes in dark passages and thicker paste in the lights, with individual brushstrokes blended wet-into-wet. Visible in the X-radiographs surrounding the head are the limits of a rather large reserve left for this area.

Losses are found in the signature and date, to the left of the head, and along the edges. Minor flaking has occurred at junctures in the craquelure, and the pale halo around the figure is moderately abraded. The painting underwent treatment in 1981–1983 at which time early linings were removed, the painting was relined, and

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discolored varnish and inpainting were removed.

[1] The pigments and ground layers were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using polarized light microscopy, X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF), and cross-sections (see reports dated July 17, 1981, July 31, 1981, August 3, 1981, August 7, 1981, and May 18, 1983).

PROVENANCE

Johan van der Marck [1695-1770], Leiden; (his estate sale, by Hendrik de Winter and Jan Yver, Amsterdam, 25 August 1773 and days following, no. 259); purchased by (Fouquet), probably for Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Le Brun [1748-1813], Paris;[1] (his sale, by Pierrre Remy, Paris, 20-23 December 1773, no. 11); Alexandre-Joseph Paillet. Armand, marquis de Brunoy; (his sale, by François Charles Joullain, Paris, 2 December 1776 and days following, no. 26 [paired with a portrait of Admiral de Ruyter]); (Fournel). Thélusson collection, Paris; (his sale, by Folliot and Mabille, Paris, 1 December 1777, no. 17). probably (Antoine-Charles Dulac) or possibly La Chaise collection; (sale, by Paillet and Chariot at Hôtel d'Aligre, Paris, 30 November 1778 and days following, no. 346, as *Le portrait de la Mere de Rimbrand*); Claude Billard de Belisard.[2] Marquis de Anne-Pierre Montesquiou-Fezensac [1739-1798], Paris; (his sale, by J.B.P. Le Brun, Paris, 9 December 1788 and days following, 1st day, no. 45); purchased by Le Brun.[3] Charles-Alexandre, vicomte de Calonne [1734-1802], Paris and London; (his sale, Skinner and Dyke, London, 23 March 1795 and days following, 4th day [28 March], no. 38); John Julius Angerstein [1732-1823], London; gift immediately to Sir Thomas Lawrence [1769-1830], London.[4] John Allnutt [1773-1863], London; (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 18-20 June 1863, no. 502); (François Nieuwenhuys, Paris).[5] Alfred Louis Lebeuf de Montgermont [1841-1918], Paris, by 1900;[6] his son-in-law, Prince Louis Antoine Marie de Broglie [1862-1958], Paris; sold 1920 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[7] sold November 1924 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] This information, along with details about the 1773, 1776, and 1778 sales was

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kindly provided by Burton Fredericksen (e-mail, 1 September 2013, to Arthur Wheelock, in NGA curatorial files). Fouquet's name is sometimes recorded as Foucquier or Foucquer.

[2] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 829-1842, 7:163, no. 505, includes a provenance listing: "Collection of an Artist, 1783." This reference, however, has not yet been verified.

[3] This buyer information is provided by Burton Fredericksen, then director of the Getty Provenance Index, in his letter of 5 February 1988 to Arthur Wheelock, in NGA curatorial files.

[4] It is not certain the painting in the Calonne sale that was bought by Angerstein and given to Lawrence is the NGA painting. The description in the Calonne sale catalogue is extremely brief ("An Old Lady's Portrait, half length, with a Bible, very uncommonly high finished, with a force of colouring the true character of his finest works") and no dimensions are given. Further, the account of Angerstein's gift to Lawrence describes the painting as depicting the sitter with "a Bible hanging to her waist by a chain" (D.E. Williams, *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Thomas Lawrence, Kt.*, 2 vols., London, 1831, 1:129, brought to the NGA's attention by Burton Fredericksen in his letter of 5 February 1988, to Arthur Wheelock, in NGA curatorial files.

[5] The buyer is indicated in various ways in annotated copies of the sale catalogue: "FN," "Nieuwenhuys," and "Normanhays."

[6] Wilhelm von Bode, assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, translated by Florence Simmonds, 8 vols., Paris, 1897-1906: 4(1900):35, 168, no. 288, repro.

[7] Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 477.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1861 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1861, no. 123.

1925 Paintings by Old Masters from Pittsburgh Collections, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1925, no. 60.

1930 The Thirteenth Loan Exhibition of Old Masters: Paintings by Rembrandt, The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1930, no. 36.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 4, 14, repro.

1989 Loan for display with permanent collection, Cincinnati Art Museum, 1989-1990.

2011 Rembrandt in America, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Cleveland Museum of Art; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2011-2012, no. 23, pl. 4.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Follower of Rembrandt van Rijn
Anonymous Artist

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Old Woman Plucking a Fowl

1650/1655

oil on canvas
overall: 133 x 104.7 cm (52 3/8 x 41 1/4 in.)
framed: 162.6 x 136.2 cm (64 x 53 5/8 in.)
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Walter Timme 1956.1.1

ENTRY

The early history of *Old Woman Plucking a Fowl* is not known with certainty. Traditionally this painting has been associated with a work listed in the 1734 sale of paintings owned by Willem Six, where “Een Hoenderwyf, van Rembrant” was purchased by Wilkins for 165 fl. (see Provenance). [1] Wilkins may have brought it to England, for a “woman plucking a fowl” by Rembrandt appeared in the Blackwood sale of 1757. [2] The first secure reference to the painting is from the mid-eighteenth century when Richard Houston (Irish, 1721 - 1775) made his mezzotint with an inscription indicating that the painting was in the collection of Francis Charteris, Earl of Wemyss (1723–1808) [fig. 1]. [3]

Viewed today, this painting would never be confused with a work by Rembrandt; yet an attribution to the master was strongly defended when the painting surfaced in a Paris sale in 1912. It had previously been known only to the most important Rembrandt scholars of the day, Wilhelm von Bode, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, and Abraham Bredius, through reproductive mezzotints, among them the one made by Houston. The painting’s appearance generated much interest, and it was acquired by the Paris dealer Francis Kleinberger for a substantial price. Of the three scholars mentioned above, only Bredius demurred at the attribution, arguing that the painting was a workshop production, one of those paintings listed in Rembrandt’s 1656 inventory as being retouched by Rembrandt. [4] He wrote that the woman “with the strange wrinkles above her left eye and underneath her right

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eye, with the monotonously painted fur coat and the oddly shaped hands" had nothing to do with Rembrandt, but that the fowl was by the master. "You feel his genius in the light he gave to its wings and how the touches in its head make it perfect."

Bredius' comments initiated an exchange of letters in *The Burlington Magazine* with Kleinberger, who vigorously defended the attribution to Rembrandt. [5] He pointed out that large areas of the painting had been overpainted by an eighteenth-century restorer before the mezzotint had been made by Houston. Kleinberger added that shortly after acquiring the *Old Woman Plucking a Fowl* he had sent the painting to Berlin to be restored by Professor A. Hauser. Hauser removed Overpaint in the background, which revealed the windowsill and the gun leaning against it. As Hofstede de Groot also noted, Hauser discovered that the fowl's left wing was overpainted, as were both of the woman's hands. [6] Her costume had also been overpainted. Hofstede de Groot was quite enthusiastic about the changes that had been wrought by Hauser: not only had the woman's expression improved, but so too had the overall lighting and color harmonies. He compared the painting to Rembrandt's *Still Life with Two Dead Peacocks and a Girl* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) and the *Dead Bittern Held High by a Hunter* (Gemäldegalerie, Dresden), [7] and concluded that this painting likewise must date c. 1638–1640.

Just what transpired in Hauser's studio is unknown. No records have been preserved that allow any judgment about the layers of paint he removed and the extent of overpainting he then added. [8] Valentiner later wrote that Hauser had been forced to reconstruct "essential parts" of the painting, but just what these were has never been determined. [9] If one were to judge the painting as it appears today, it is hard to imagine how anyone, let alone experts of the stature of Bode, Hofstede de Groot, and Valentiner, could have reacted positively to Hauser's restoration. A close comparison with the photograph of the painting published in 1912 after the restoration, however, indicates that a second restoration must have been undertaken before the painting was given to the National Gallery of Art in 1956. Not only has the shape of the headdress once again changed, the costume has lost definition in the folds, and the face and right hand have been heavily overpainted. The Rembrandt signature is also far less visible today than it was in 1912. With all of these layers of restoration, it is virtually impossible to determine the original character of the image. The sole exception is the dead fowl on the woman's lap, which seems to have survived fairly well intact.

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The vigorous execution of this animal does reveal a boldness of touch that provides a glimpse of the qualities that the rest of the painting may originally have possessed. [10] While the dry brushwork used to suggest the feathers on the bird's body is, in fact, quite different in character from Rembrandt's handling of similar areas in the Rijksmuseum painting of dead peacocks, a similar technique is found in the work of one of Rembrandt's pupils and followers from the early 1650s, Karel van der Pluym (1625–1672). A particularly close comparison is found in the brushwork on the armor of *Mars* in Liechtenstein, a painting convincingly attributed to Van der Pluym by Sumowski and dated to the early 1650s, after the artist had left Rembrandt's workshop and returned to Leiden. [11] If one were to extrapolate, moreover, from the general compositional format, large scale, and figure type, what the image might originally have looked like, a painting generally attributed to Van der Pluym, *Woman Cutting Her Nails* [fig. 2], once again serves as an excellent point of reference. [12] Here one finds the same deep-set eyes, square face, and blocky hands. Even the thick, heavy, fur-lined cloak is comparable.

The information available, however, is not sufficient to attribute this heavily overpainted work to Van der Pluym. Neither of the comparative works mentioned above is signed or dated, so their attributions to Van der Pluym should be understood as tentative. Moreover, other artists in the Rembrandt circle during the 1650s, including Gerrit Willemsz Horst (1612–1652), Abraham van Dijck (1635/1636–1672), Heyman Dullaert (1636–1684), and Willem Drost (Dutch, active c. 1650 - active 1655), also painted large-scale, blocky figures that are comparable to the woman in *Old Woman Plucking a Fowl*. Indeed, a painting of this subject by Drost belonged to an Amsterdam collector in the 1670s. [13] Despite the admirable efforts of Sumowski and others to construct a body of works for these painters, too little is presently known about their artistic personalities to make a precise judgment about the attribution of this work. [14]

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Richard Houston, engraving of *Old Woman Plucking a Fowl*, mid-18th century, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

fig. 2 Style of Rembrandt, *Old Woman Cutting Her Nails*, 1655–1660, oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913, 14.40.609. Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Quint Gregory for helping reconstruct this provenance.

[2] Frank Simpson, "Dutch Paintings in England before 1760," *The Burlington Magazine* 95 (January 1953): 42.

[3] The provenance of this painting was confused by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 6:176–177, no. 298, with that of another work owned by the Marchese Riccardi in Florence, where it was exhibited in 1737 and

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1767. A description of the Riccardi painting in 1764 by Edward Gibbon clearly indicates that the composition was different. Edward Gibbon, *Gibbon's Journey from Geneva to Rome: His Journal from 20 April to 2 October 1764*, ed. Georges A. Bonnard (London, 1961), 205, visited the Riccardi Palace in Florence on August 10, 1764, and saw, among other paintings he describes: "*4. Un Rembrandt.* Une Vielle femme qui deplume une poule. Quel sujet mais quelle veritè dans l'execution. La Nature elle meme ne rendroit pas mieux la Vielle-elle-meme, les plumes de la poule, la corbeille où elle les recoit et le chauderon où elle doit la cuire, et assurèment dans la nature je les verrois avec bien moins de plaisir."
The Riccardi painting may have been acquired by Sir William Forbes, who bought many of his paintings in Italy. In the sale of his collection on June 2, 1842, he lists *An Old Woman Plucking a Fowl* by Rembrandt that had come from the collection of Count Lecchi at Brescia. The painting's dimensions were listed as 5 ft. 9 in. by 5 ft. 1 in. (175.3 x 154.9 cm), substantially larger than the painting in the National Gallery of Art. This painting then may have passed into the collection of Lord Clinton, who exhibited a work of this description in Edinburgh in 1883. This painting's current location is not known.

[4] Abraham Bredius, "On Two Paintings Usually Ascribed to Rembrandt," *The Burlington Magazine* 11 (June 1912): 164. None of the paintings so listed in the inventory, however, can be specifically identified with this work. See Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 349–388, doc. 1656/12. For the dispute between Bredius and Charles Sedelmeyer about the attribution of this painting, see Catherine B. Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship* (Amsterdam, 2004), 233–234, 252, 367 note 75, 370 note 27.

[5] F. Kleinberger, letter to the editor, *The Burlington Magazine* 11 (July 1912): 296–297.

[6] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Nieuw Ontdekte Rembrandts, II," *Onze Kunst* 22 (December 1912): 178–180.

[7] See inventory no. A 3981 from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; see inventory no. 1561 from the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden.

[8] Partial X-radiographs of the painting exist (head, left hand, and dead fowl) [see X-radiography]. They reveal that the surface is very worn, suggesting that the eighteenth-century overpainting was necessitated by reasons of condition rather than of aesthetics.

[9] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt: Wiedergefundene Gemälde (1910–1920)*, 2nd ed., Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben (Berlin and Leipzig, 1923), pl. 50: "dabei wurden einzelne wesentliche Teile erganzt."

[10] As late as 1966 Jakob Rosenberg still maintained that the dead fowl had been painted by Rembrandt (letter, April 25, 1966, in NGA curatorial files).

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[11] Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 4:2364, no. 1592b, 2374 repro.

[12] Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 4:2365, no. 1595, 2377 repro. Bernhard Schnackenburg, in Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and Pieter van Thiel, *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop: Paintings* (New Haven and London, 1991), 371, however, argues that the painting is too good for Van der Pluym, and attributes it toNicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634 - 1693) with a date of c. 1650. I find the attribution to Maes unconvincing.

[13] Abraham Bredius, "Darf die Kritik sich nicht mit Bildern in Privatbesitz befassen?" *Kunstchronik* 24, no. 20 (February 1913), noted that in 1676 "een hoenderwyff van *Drost*" was in the Spaaroogh Collection in Amsterdam.

[14] Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 2:1387–1417, discusses Horst; Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 1:666–711, discusses Van Dyck; and Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 1:652–665, discusses Dullaert.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The medium-weight, plain-weave fabric support consists of two pieces seamed vertically at the left. It has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Diagonal marks from a tool used to apply the thick white ground are visible in the X-radiographs. The paint was applied both thickly and thinly in dry opaque pastes, with colored glazes applied over lighter base tones. Dry brushstrokes of varying length create impasto in light areas, such as the feathers. Extensive glazing was employed in the dark passages to model forms and shadows, and impart a dark, glowing appearance.

Thin paint layers and glazes, particularly in the dark passages, are severely abraded and covered by discolored inpainting. The extent of repaint is difficult to determine precisely due to the heavy, discolored surface coating. An old lining was removed and the painting was relined, varnished, and inpainted in 1956-1957. The painting had previously been treated by Professor A. Hauser in 1912 and, based on photographs, possibly one other time between 1912 and its acquisition in 1956.[1] It is interesting to note that in a mezzotint of the painting from the mid-eighteenth century both of the woman's hands are visible above the fowl, but in photographs taken after the 1912 restoration, the woman's proper left hand is no longer

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depicted. Hofstede de Groot wrote that Hauser noted that both of the woman's hands were overpainted.[2] Presumably, the woman's left hand was entirely a later fabrication and, consequently, Hauser removed it.

[1] See the entry text for more information about the restorations prior to 1956.

[2] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Nieuw Ontdekte Rembrandts, II," Onze Kunst 22 (December 1912): 178–180.

PROVENANCE

Possibly Willem Six [1662-1733], Amsterdam;[1] possibly (his estate sale, Amsterdam, 12 May 1734, no. 170); possibly Wilkins. Possibly John(?) or W.(?) Blackwood; possibly (his sale, Mr. Prestage, London, unknown dates in 1757, 2nd day, no. 70).[2] Francis Charteris, de jure 7th earl of Wemyss [1723-1808], Gosford House, Longniddry, East Lothian, Scotland; Ralph Willett [1719-1795], Great Canford, Dorset; bequeathed to his cousin, John Willett Adye [d. 1815], who later assumed the surname Willett in lieu of Adye; (his sale, Peter Coxe & Co., London, 31 May-2 June 1813, 2nd day, no. 62, bought in); (sale, Christie's, London, 8 April 1819, no. 124); Anthony Stewart [1773-1846], London; sold to Andrew Geddes [1789-1844], London, by December 1820; (sale, Christie & Manson, London, 23 May 1835, no. 94, bought in); by inheritance to his wife, Mrs. Andrew Geddes; (Geddes estate sale, Christie & Manson, London, 8-12 and 14 April 1845, 5th day [12 April], no. 646, bought in); (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 30 November 1867, no. 53); (Alimonde).[3] Étienne-Edmond Martin, baron de Beurnonville [1825-1906]; (his sale, by Paul Chevallier, Paris, 3 June 1884 and days following, no. 295). Madame Levaigneur, Paris; (her estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 2-4 May 1912, no. 29); (F. Kleinberger & Co., Paris and New York); (Kleinberger sale, American Art Association, New York, 18 November 1932, no. 50); (L.J. Marion); Dr. and Mrs. Walter Timme, Cold Spring, New York; gift 1956 to NGA.

[1] Francis Kleinberger, letter to the editor, *The Burlington Magazine* 11 (July 1912): 296–297, reconstructs much of the earlier provenance of the painting, through the 1912 sale, based on "the researches of Mr. W. Roberts." His account does not include the 1757 Blackwood sale, and instead speculates that Charteris might have

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acquired the painting on the continent during his tour from 1739 to 1744.

[2] This information comes from a two-volume manuscript in the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, containing transcripts of collection and sale catalogues from the years 1711 to 1759; these volumes are partially examined by Frank Simpson, "Dutch Paintings in England before 1760," *The Burlington Magazine* 95 (January 1953): 42.

[3] Helen Smailes, *Andrew Geddes, 1783–1844, Painting-Printmaker, "A Man of Pure Taste"*, Edinburgh, 2001: 49–50, 113 n. 76.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1861 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1861, no. 17.

1930 The Thirteenth Loan Exhibition of Old Masters. Paintings by Rembrandt, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1930, no. 31.

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1881 Dutuit, Eugène. *Tableaux et dessins de Rembrandt*. Paris, 1881: 3, no. 385.

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1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*. 8 vols. Translated by Edward G. Hawke. London, 1907-1927: 6(1916):176-177, no. 298.

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1912 "A Rembrandt Controversy." *Boston Evening Transcript* (21 August 1912): 15.

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1912 Bredius, Abraham, and Francis Kleinberger. "Letters to the Editor. 'The Old Woman Plucking a Fowl' from the Levaigneur Collection." *The Burlington Magazine* 22, no. 116 (November 1912): 121-122.

1912 Bredius, Abraham. "Letter to the Editor. 'The Old Woman Plucking a Fowl' from the Levaigneur Collection." *The Burlington Magazine* 21, no. 114 (September 1912): 359–360.

1912 Bredius, Abraham. "On Two Paintings Usually Ascribed to Rembrandt." *The Burlington Magazine* 21, no. 111 (June 1912): 164–169, repro. 165.

1912 Dell, Robert E. (R.E.D.). "Art in France." *The Burlington Magazine* 21, no. 109 (April 1912): 113.

1912 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. "Nieuw Ontdekte Rembrandts, II." *Onze Kunst* 22 (December 1912): 174, 178-181, pl. 2.

1912 "Illustrated Catalogues of Sales in May." *The Burlington Magazine* 21, no. 110 (May 1912): 122.

1912 Kleinberger, Francis. "Letter to the Editor. 'The Old Woman Plucking a Fowl' from the Levaigneur Collection." *The Burlington Magazine* 21, no. 112 (July 1912): 296-297, repro. 248.

1912 Kleinberger, Francis. "Letter to the Editor. 'The Old Woman Plucking a Fowl' from the Levaigneur Collection." *The Burlington Magazine* 22, no. 115 (October 1912): 49-50.

1912 "Rembrandt's 'Woman Plucking a Fowl'." *The Connoisseur* 33 (June 1912): 138.

1913 Bredius, Abraham. "Darft die Kritik sich nicht mit Bildern in Privatbesitz befassen?" *Kunstchronik* 24, no. 20 (February 1913): 273–276.

1913 Graves, Algernon. *A Century of Loan Exhibitions, 1813–1912*. 5 vols. London, 1913-1915: 3(1914):1008, no. 17.

1921 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Rembrandt: wiedergefundene Gemälde (1910-1922)*. Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 27. Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921: x, xix, 45, repro.

1923 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Rembrandt: wiedergefundene Gemälde (1910–1920)*. Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 27. 2nd ed. Berlin, 1923: x, xix, 45, repro. (also 1923 2nd ed: xv, xxiv, 50, repo.).

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1930 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *The thirteenth loan exhibition of old masters, paintings by Rembrandt*. Exh. cat. Detroit Institute of Arts, 1930: no. 31, repro.

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1953 Simpson, Frank. "Dutch Paintings in England before 1760." *The Burlington Magazine* 95, no. 599 (January 1953): 40, 42.

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1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 335, repro.

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2004 Scallen, Catherine. *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship*. Amsterdam, 2004: 233-234, fig. 56, 252, 367 n. 75, 370 n. 27.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Philemon and Baucis

1658

oil on panel transferred to panel
overall: 54.5 x 68.5 cm (21 7/16 x 26 15/16 in.)
framed: 81.3 x 95.9 x 8.3 cm (32 x 37 3/4 x 3 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower left: Rembrandt f. 1658
Widener Collection 1942.9.65

ENTRY

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* provided Dutch artists with a wide range of mythological subjects, most of which contain underlying moralizing messages on human behavior. Surprisingly, the story of the visit of Jupiter and Mercury to the aged couple Philemon and Baucis, described by Ovid in the eighth book of his commentaries, was only rarely depicted. [1] For those artists who preferred to depict subjects in Ovid that allowed them to represent sensual scenes of love, betrayal, or deceit, the story had no appeal. The story of deities quietly revealing themselves to humble and devoted individuals, however, struck a responsive chord for Rembrandt that allowed him to penetrate the essence of the myth as no artist ever had.

The moral of the story, as interpreted by Karel van Mander at the beginning of the seventeenth century, is that hospitality and openness to strangers are virtues that are always rewarded. [2] Rembrandt evoked the warmth of the old couple's personality and suggested much of Ovid's vivid description of their humble abode, including the fire over which Baucis had cooked the cabbage and bacon for their

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meal. Yet, Rembrandt's interest was not in portraying the eventual rewards of the couple's generosity but in the moment of revelation. Ovid writes that Philemon and Baucis recognized that they were in the presence of gods when their bowls of food and decanters of wine kept replenishing themselves. In fear, they raised their hands in prayer. Then, in an effort to offer better fare, they tried to catch their only goose, which escaped their grasp and fled to the strangers for refuge. The moment Rembrandt has depicted is that in which Jupiter both commands them not to kill the goose and blesses their offering with a firm yet comforting gesture.

Early in his career, Rembrandt had painted a number of episodes from Ovid, including the *Abduction of Proserpina,* now in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, but the dramatic characterization of their narratives is totally different in kind from this quiet, reverent scene. [3] The differences in subject matter and presentation, between the dynamic theatricality of one and the subdued, evocative nature of the other, are characteristic of Rembrandt's artistic evolution. Throughout his life, he carefully considered textual sources, whether they were biblical or mythological, but he also drew on others' interpretations of comparable scenes for his inspiration. [4] When he first turned to Ovid around 1630, he did so under the influence of Rubens and, for example, clearly derived his inspiration for the *Abduction of Proserpina* from a print by Pieter Claesz Soutman (Dutch, 1580 - 1657) after a Rubens composition. [5] For *Philemon and Baucis,* painted in 1658, the visual sources are entirely different. They reflect a fusion of mythological and biblical images that helps account for the intense spirituality of the scene.

Adam Elsheimer (German, 1578 - 1610)'s painting *Philemon and Baucis,* 1608 (Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, inv. no. 1977), known to Rembrandt through Hendrik Goudt (Dutch, 1585 - 1648)'s engraving of 1612 [fig. 1], was a primary source of inspiration. [6] One sees here the gods lounging in the corner of the dimly lit, humble home of the old couple who are busy preparing the meal. Elsheimer, however, depicted an earlier moment of the episode, before Philemon and Baucis had become aware of the divinities' identities. Rembrandt switched the relative positions of Jupiter and Mercury so that Jupiter, the primary deity, faces the viewer. Dressed in exotic, loosely draped robes, he dominates the scene and takes on a Christ-like appearance that strongly echoes that from the *Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci (Florentine, 1452 - 1519). Rembrandt knew of this composition from a number of sources and made at least three drawings after it, the most extensive of which he executed around 1635 [fig. 2]. Leonardo's composition had a profound impact on Rembrandt's art for the rest of his life, and

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he adopted it for a number of different subjects in prints, drawings, and paintings. [7] In his 1654 etching, *Christ at Emmaus,* for example, he depicted Christ in a pose comparable to that seen in the *Last Supper.* [8] As Stechow and others have emphasized, Jupiter in *Philemon and Baucis* partakes of much the same spirit. [9]

Rembrandt's appreciation of the thematic connections between Ovid's story and *Christ at Emmaus,* however, did not just develop at the end of his life. [10] His earliest depiction of the biblical story, in 1628 [fig. 3], used as its compositional basis Goudt's *Philemon and Baucis* print [fig. 1]. [11] Here, however, Rembrandt transformed the light of the oil lamp into a mystical aureole of light behind Christ that frightens and astonishes the apostles. Rembrandt remembered this dramatic effect when he painted a comparable glow of light behind Mercury. Although the light here is more subdued, it serves to give a mysterious radiance to the darkness and to illuminate Jupiter's golden raiment.

As in Rembrandt's depictions of Christ at Emmaus [fig. 3], light, rather than symbolic attributes, signifies the revelation of divinity. Rembrandt also uses light to help accent important compositional elements. He reinforces the significance of Jupiter's gesture, for example, by placing it on axis with a vertical board on the rear wall that is illuminated by Mercury's aureole. He uses other elements of the dwelling to reinforce his figural composition: the diagonal beams and rope draped over the table both draw the group together and suggest the subdivision within it.

This work is the only extant Philemon and Baucis painting in Rembrandt's oeuvre. Quite possibly, however, he included this subject within the series of scenes from Ovid that Baldinucci reports he painted for a Dutch merchant/magistrate. [12] Baldinucci probably learned of this series from Bernhard Keil (1624–1687), a Danish artist and Rembrandt pupil who traveled to Italy after being in Amsterdam from about 1642 to 1651. Although no dates for this series of paintings are known, it may belong to the period of Keil's residence in Amsterdam. Two drawings in the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin have frequently been considered preliminary drawings for the Washington painting. [13] The episodes from the story of Philemon and Baucis depicted in the drawings, however, are so different that they have to be understood as independent creations. Closer in concept is Rembrandt's sympathetic drawing *Saint Peter's Prayer before the Raising of Tabitha*, c. 1654/1655 (Musée Bonnat, Bayonne), in which Saint Peter's pose resembles, in reverse, that of Philemon. [14]

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The painting is in poor condition. Perhaps as a result of the transfer process, which was probably undertaken in the nineteenth century, there are losses in many of the thinly painted areas of the painting. A good deal of old Overpaint exists on the surface. The awkward lower portions of Mercury's torso almost certainly result from such reconstructive work. [15] A mezzotint by Thomas Watson (British, 1743 or 1748 - 1781) of 1772 [fig. 4] provides an impression of the painting's appearance at that time.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Hendrik Goudt after Adam Elsheimer, *Jupiter and Mercury in the House of Philemon and Baucis*, 1612, engraving, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of W.G. Russell Allen, 1941.1.162

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn after Leonardo da Vinci, *The Last Supper*, c. 1635, red chalk, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975. Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY

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fig. 3 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Christ at Emmaus*, 1628, oil on panel, Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris. Photo © Institut de France–Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris

fig. 4 Thomas Watson, mezzotint after *Philemon and Baucis*, 1772, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

NOTES

[1] See Eric Jan Sluijter, *De "heydensche Fabulen" in de Noordnederlandse schilderkunst circa 1590–1670* (The Hague, 1986), 100. Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings* (New York, 1985), 323, notes that Jan Vos mentions a painting of Philemon and Baucis by "Van Zorg" in a poem published in 1662. He interprets this reference to mean Hendrick Martensz Sorgh (1611–1670).

[2] Karel van Mander, *Wtlegghingh op den Metamorphosis Pub. Ovidii Nasonis,* in Karel van Mander, *Het Schilder-boeck* (Haarlem, 1604). For an English translation of the story of Philemon and Baucis see Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* trans. Rolfe Humphries (Bloomington, IN, 1958), 200–204.

[3] For an illustration, see Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), no. 463.

[4] Christian Tümpel, "Studien zur Ikonographie der Historien Rembrandts: Deutung und Interpretation der Bildinhalte," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 20 (1969): 107–198.

[5] See Kenneth Clark, *Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance* (New York, 1966), 6, 8.

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[6] Keith Andrews, *Adam Elsheimer: Paintings—Drawings—Prints* (New York, 1977), 153–154, cat. 24. The painting may also have been known to Rembrandt if, as seems possible, it was in the collection of Jan van de Cappelle (Dutch, 1624/1626 - 1679).

[7] This phenomenon has been extensively discussed in the literature. See in particular Joseph Gantner, *Rembrandt und die Verwandlung klassischer Formen* (Bern, 1964); Kenneth Clark, *Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance* (New York, 1966); *Leonardo's "Last Supper": Precedents and Reflections* (Washington, DC, 1983), under nos. 15–20.

[8] Ludwig Münz, *A Critical Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings*, 2 vols. (London, 1952), 1:265, repro.

[9] Wolfgang Stechow, "The Myth of Philemon and Baucis in Art," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 4 (January 1941): 103–113. Stechow also stresses a connection between Rembrandt's concept and Rubens' composition of this scene (probably known to Rembrandt through a print by Meyssens). The relationship, however, is very tenuous. See also Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1948), 1:185 (also 1964 ed., 300).

[10] Wolfgang Stechow, "The Myth of Philemon and Baucis in Art," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 4 (January 1941): 103, emphasizes that the story of Philemon and Baucis was easily given a Christian interpretation. The old couple epitomized Christian virtues through their gentleness and willing sacrifice of worldly possessions. The story has Eucharistic connotations because of the importance of wine in it. Finally, the story parallels a number of biblical stories in which gods reveal themselves to mortals, among them Abraham entertaining the angels, a subject depicted by Rembrandt in his memorable etching of 1656 (Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt . . .*, 2 vols. [Vienna, 1797], 1: no. 29).

[11] Wolfgang Stechow, "The Myth of Philemon and Baucis in Art," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 4 (January 1941): 111.

[12] Seymour Slive, *Rembrandt and His Critics, 1630–1730* (The Hague, 1953), 109. Filippo Baldinucci's comments appeared in his treatise *Cominciamento, e progresso dell'arte dell'intagliare in rame, colle vite di molti de' più eccellenti Maestri della stessa Professione* (Florence, 1686), 78.

[13] Illustrated in Otto Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt: A Critical and Chronological Catalogue*, 6 vols. (London, 1954–1957), 5: no. 958, figs. 1170–1171; and 6: no. A76, fig. 1668.

[14] Otto Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt: A Critical and Chronological Catalogue*, 6 vols. (London, 1954–1957), 5:263, no. 949, fig. 1226. I owe this observation to Christine Boeckl.

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[15] So many losses exist in the painting that it was determined that it would be best to merely consolidate the painting when it was treated in 1977, despite the presence of extensive Overpaint and severely discolored varnish. When the painting was treated again in 2008, some of the old varnish and overpaint was reduced or removed. See the Technical Summary for a discussion of the glass on the table between Mercury and Jupiter.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting has been transferred and is now on a cradled, horizontally grained wood panel with a layer of gauze between the panel and paint layer. The original support also appears to have been wood. No ground layer is present; it was probably removed during the transfer.

The paint was applied in successive, medium-rich layers of varying thickness, with broad and free brushmarking giving way to finer strokes in the faces. X-radiographs indicate that Mercury's right arm was originally higher and extended farther from his body. The upper edge of this underlying arm is now visible on the surface as a thin, white line. The nature of this line was mistaken by a previous restorer, who used it to form the upper edge of the glass on the table between Mercury and Jupiter. The paint has suffered severe abrasion, particularly in the darks where, as a result, the gauze interleaf is visible. Extensive repainting and reinforcement is found throughout. The losses were consolidated in 1977, and in 2008 the painting was treated to reduce the significantly discolored varnish and remove some of the old overpaint, but the majority of the overpaint was left in place.

PROVENANCE

Captain William Baillie [1723-1792], London; (his sale, Langford & Son, London, 1-2 February 1771, 2nd day, no. 73). possibly English private collection, by 1772.[1] Major Stanton; (Earl of Essex sale, Christie & Ansell, London, 31 January-1 February 1777, 2nd day, no. 75); Moris.[2] (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris); Charles T. Yerkes, Jr. [1837-1905], Chicago and New York, by 1893;[3] (his sale, American Art Association, New York, 5-8 April 1910, no. 1160); (Scott and Fowles, New York); Otto H. Kahn [1867-

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1934], New York, by 1914 until at least April 1922; sold 1922, perhaps through (Scott and Fowles, New York) to Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;[4] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, after purchase by funds of the estate; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] A mezzotint of the composition was executed in 1772 by Thomas Watson (John Charrington, *A Catalogue of the Mezzotints After, or Said to Be After, Rembrandt*, Cambridge, 1923:151, no. 182).

[2] The title page of the 1777 sale catalogue describes the collection as that of the Earl of Essex; however, in a copy of the catalogue at Christie's, London, the consignor's name is written in the margin as "Maj. Stanton." A handwritten results sheet bound into the same volume gives the following result: "75. 32/11/- Moris."

[3] *Catalogue from Collection of Charles T. Yerkes, Chicago, U.S.A.*. Chicago, 1893: no. 45.

[4] *American Art News* (9 December 1922):1 reported that the seller of the picture to Widener was Scott and Fowles. However, the journal also reported that Scott and Fowles had owned the painting since 1910, and various other sources, including Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century...*, 8 vols., London, 1907-1927: 6:141, indicate that the owner during the mid-1910s was Otto H. Kahn. In addition, Kahn lent the painting to exhibitions in both 1920 and 1922, the latter a Rembrandt exhibition at the Fogg Art Museum, and although no checklist or catalogue exists for this exhibition, the museum's records show that the picture entered the museum on 26 March 1922, and left on 13 April 1922. Perhaps Scott and Fowles simply handled the sale for Kahn.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1920 Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1920, unnumbered catalogue.

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1922 Rembrandt Paintings, Drawings and Etchings, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1922, no catalogue.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 18, repro.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 47.

2000 Greek Gods and Heroes in the Age of Rubens and Rembrandt, National Gallery and Alexandros Soutzos Museum, Athens; Dordrechts Museum, 2000-2001, no. 62, repro.

2004 Rembrandt, Albertina, Vienna, 2004, no. 133, repro.

2011 Rembrandt in America, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Cleveland Museum of Art; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2011-2012, no. 46, pl. 41.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt Workshop (Possibly Willem Drost)
Dutch 17th Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Willem Drost
Dutch, active c. 1650 - active 1655

The Philosopher

c. 1653

oil on panel
overall: 61.5 x 49.5 cm (24 3/16 x 19 1/2 in.)
framed: 105.4 x 92.4 x 9.2 cm (41 1/2 x 36 3/8 x 3 5/8 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.66

ENTRY

With piercing, deep-set eyes, this bearded man leans forward and stares off to his right. He wears a wide, floppy beret and a red-and-yellow patterned robe draped over his shoulders. While this mysterious and intense figure has traditionally been identified as “The Jewish Philosopher,” this designation is undoubtedly fanciful. Nevertheless, the image clearly depicts a concerned individual who seems to be actively brooding over his thoughts.

From 1639 until 1656 Rembrandt lived in a large house on the Jodenbreestraat on the edge of the Jewish quarter in Amsterdam. During those years, and particularly from the late 1640s, he frequently depicted Jewish models in his paintings. As Rosenberg has suggested, Rembrandt probably found in the picturesque faces of the Ashkenazi Jews an intense spirituality that suggested to him the spirit of the people who populated the ancient world. [1] At a time when he was searching for a deeper emotional understanding of biblical and historical figures, he found in these care-worn faces an underlying philosophical awareness of human existence. Although a painting such as this was undoubtedly executed from life, it was not considered a portrait in the conventional sense, but rather a *tronie,* a bust-length figure study that was an imaginative evocation of the model.

This man, with his sad eyes and sharply chiseled features, is seen again in one of Rembrandt’s most memorable figure studies, *A Bearded Man in a Cap* from 165[7]

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(National Gallery, London) [fig. 1]. He was also the model Rembrandt used for his 1653 masterpiece, *Aristotle Contemplating a Bust of Homer* [fig. 2], as well as for *The Apostle Paul* from about 1657.

Thus, although this work is neither signed nor dated, it must have been created in the mid-1650s, and, perhaps somewhat earlier, because the figure looks slightly younger. In all three of these other paintings, moreover, Rembrandt has given the figure a fuller beard than is apparent in *The Philosopher.* The differences between *The Philosopher* and these other works, however, are more profound than those of age and beard size. In the latter paintings Rembrandt has suggested a more thoughtful individual both by emphasizing the wrinkles in his forehead and by throwing the upper portion of his face into shadow. In contrast to *Aristotle*, in particular, the expression of *The Philosopher* lacks subtlety and psychological understanding. The differences are in part ones of intent, but they also suggest that the works were created by different artistic personalities.

A close examination of the painting techniques in *The Philosopher* indicates that this work, though executed with great sensitivity, cannot be by the master. The primary difference between it and comparable works by Rembrandt from the early 1650s is that here the features are more sharply defined and articulated. The eyes are particularly distinctive because of the pink accents along the lower portion of the lid. The nose, likewise, is forcefully modeled, with thick impastos along the bridge and thin translucent paints that reveal the ocher ground beneath in the shadow. Other areas, particularly the beard, are painted with feathery strokes that are unlike Rembrandt's brushwork. Also unusual in the beard is the way that the edges have been softened with strokes of white from the white shirt beneath it.

A more marked difference in handling from that seen in Rembrandt's own works is the rather superficial indication of the colored pattern of the man's robe. The contour of the robe, moreover, is not sensitively conceived. Not only does it not define a logical form, but the nuances of shading that one finds along such a contour in Rembrandt's paintings are absent. Finally, the hands lack structure.

The awkward appearance of the hands must have bothered an early collector or restorer. From the time that the painting first entered the Rembrandt literature in 1905 until it was treated in 1983–1984, the hands were covered by two layers of overpaint, a gray layer with a dark brown resinous one over it [fig. 3]. Just when the hands had been overpainted could not be determined by technical examination, but it was clearly done at a relatively late date because the overpaint covered old-

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age crackle and paint losses. Quite possibly the overpaint was applied during the eighteenth century, for in 1772 a larger version of the composition without the hands was auctioned in Paris. [2]

Although no trace of the painting from this sale has ever been found, another version of *The Philosopher,* also without hands but on canvas, appeared on the art market in London at about the same time that the Washington painting appeared in Paris. In 1911 this version passed through the collection of Maurice Kann in Paris, the same collector who had owned *The Philosopher* in 1905, the year before P. A. B. Widener bought it. In 1914 Kann sold the recently discovered version to the Berlin collector Marcus Kappel, whose collection was cataloged by Wilhelm von Bode. Bode, who had published *The Philosopher* in his corpus on Rembrandt paintings in 1906, reversed himself in his catalog of the Kappel Collection and argued that the Kappel painting was the original. [3] Bode's assessment of the Kappel version has found little support in the literature. [4] The Kappel painting changed hands three more times and is now in the collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art as "attributed to Rembrandt van Rijn" [fig. 4]. The National Gallery of Art painting was accepted as a Rembrandt by all Rembrandt scholars until it was rejected in 1969 by Gerson. [5]

The questions concerning the hands are of interest because *The Philosopher* is painted on two different panels. While most of the image is painted on a walnut panel, joined to it along the bottom edge is an oak strip measuring approximately five centimeters in width on which the hands are painted. Although no difference in execution or in pigments is evident in the treatment of the hands on the main panel and on the strip, the grounds are not identical. In the Ground of the main panel appear the elements mercury and tin, indicating the presence of vermilion and possibly lead-tin yellow, elements that are missing on the smaller strip. The differences in the grounds suggest that the bottom strip was added after the composition had been planned on a smaller scale, and thus, presumably, without hands. [6] Along with this alteration are a number of other design changes. The artist raised the model's right shoulder slightly and changed the shape of the hat at least three times. Initially he painted it substantially larger, then reduced it to the size of a skullcap, before painting it in its present size.

A number of stylistic similarities exist between this work and paintings by Willem Drost (Dutch, active c. 1650 - active 1655), who, according to Houbraken, was a pupil of Rembrandt's. [7] Although the dates of his apprenticeship to Rembrandt are not known, a number of signed and dated works from the early 1650s indicate

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that in these years he was strongly influenced by the master. [8] This period corresponds to the time this work was probably executed. One characteristic of Drost's paintings of male sitters that parallels the pose of the man in *The Philosopher* is that his figures often stare very intently out of the picture plane. [9] Facial features tend to be firmly modeled, although he frequently had problems depicting hands. Not only do many of them lack structure, but the wrists join awkwardly with the foreshortened arms. [10] Finally, he favored red and orange colors and patterned robes such as that worn by the subject in *The Philosopher.* A comparable example is his painting *A Young Woman* in the Wallace Collection, from about 1654 [fig. 5]. The stylistic connection between his works and *The Philosopher* seems sufficiently strong to suggest that he may have depicted this striking image. [11]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Bearded Man in a Cap*, 165(7), oil on canvas, National Gallery, London. Photo © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Aristotle Contemplating a Bust of Homer*, 1653, oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchased with special funds and gifts of friends of the Museum, 1961. Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY

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fig. 3 Before the 1983–1984 conservation treatment, Rembrandt Workshop (Possibly Willem Drost), *The Philosopher*, c. 1653, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.66

fig. 4 Rembrandt Workshop, *The Philosopher*, c. 1650–1655, oil on canvas, Haggerty Museum of Art, Museum Purchase, 2003.18

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fig. 5 Willem Drost, *Young Woman in Brocade*, c. 1654, oil on panel, Trustees of the Wallace Collection, London

NOTES

[1] Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), 1:59–63.

[2] Louis-Michel Van Loo sale, Paris, December 14, 1772, no. 29. The painting, which measured "2 pieds 8 pouc. sur 2 pieds 2 pouc.," is fully described, and the image is also known through a summary sketch by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, who attended the sale. See Emile Dacier, *Catalogues de ventes et livrets de salons illustrés par Gabriel de Saint-Aubin*, 11 vols. (Paris, 1909–1921), 5:1911.

[3] Wilhelm von Bode, *Die Gemäldegalerie Marcus Kappel in Berlin* (Berlin, 1914), 6–7.

[4] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* (Vienna, 1935), 11, no. 260, writes about the Kappel version: "I am not convinced either by the authenticity of the signature, or by the attribution." One notable exception is the opinion of R. Langston Douglas, "Three Pictures by Rembrandt from the Van Loo

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Collection," *Art in America* 36 (April 1948): 69–74, who wrote that the Kappel version (then being offered for sale by Duveen in New York) was the original. See also Jonathan Bikker, *Willem Drost (1633–1659): A Rembrandt Pupil in Amsterdam and Venice* (New Haven and London, 2005), no. R 24, 154–156, 155, repro. The two paintings hung together briefly at the National Gallery of Art in the late 1990s. Although they were remarkably similar in appearance, a comparison of the X-radiographs of the two paintings indicated that they had been built up in entirely different manners and, thus, that they had been created by different artists.

[5] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 569. Gerson notes that the Kappel version was in the H. John Collection, Milwaukee, in 1962. Gerson is misleading when he writes: "Bredius was unwilling to attribute either version to Rembrandt." Bredius did reject the Kappel version (see this entry, note 5) but merely noted the existence of the National Gallery of Art (then Widener) painting.

[6] See pigment analysis undertaken in August 1984 by Barbara Miller (NGA curatorial files).

[7] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 3:61.

[8] Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 6 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 1:608–651.

[9] See, for example, Drost's *Sitting Man with a Plumed Hat,* formerly Baron Alphonse de Rothschild Collection, Paris, illus. in Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler,* 6 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 1: no. 331.

[10] See Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 6 vols. (Landau in der Pfalz, 1983), 1: no. 329.

[11] Jonathan Bikker, *Willem Drost (1633–1659): A Rembrandt Pupil in Amsterdam and Venice* (New Haven and London, 2005), 154–156, no. R 24, on the other hand, finds the stylistic connections to be insufficiently close to attribute the painting firmly to Drost.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The cradled panel support is composed of two vertically grained boards of wood joined horizontally through the figure's hands. The join is 5.5 cm from the bottom edge. The main board is walnut, and the lower extension is oak.[1] Edging strips

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have been added to the top and sides.[2]

A thin white or beige ground layer is present on both upper and lower panel boards, with variations in composition. Density in the X-radiographs indicates the presence of a small amount of white lead in the ground in the main panel but not in the extension. A thin, dark, translucent red layer was laid directly on both panel boards, but there are variations in the pigment composition between the two areas.[3]

The paint was applied thickly in the light passages, with low impasto and loose brushmarking, and more thinly in the dark passages and the background. The imprimatura color was incorporated into the radiating lines on the hat, and into the flesh tones, where mid-tones were created by thinly glazing the red underlayer.

Several changes are visible as pentimenti, in infrared reflectography,[4] and in the X-radiographs. The contour of the proper right shoulder was raised slightly, and the hat was initially larger. The gray background was then drawn over the hat to decrease its size, followed by a repainting of the hat in its present size. The painting was treated in 1983-1984 to remove discolored varnish and overpaint that covered the lower part of the sitter's arms and his hands.

[1] The characterization of the wood was accomplished by Dr. Peter Klein. (See note dated March 1986 in Conservation department files.)

[2] The exact method used to encase this painting is difficult to determine because of the presence of the cradle. Dating the panel was not possible because of the complex construction. (See report from Dr. Joseph Bauch, University of Hamburg, dated November 29, 1977 in NGA Conservation department files).

[3] The ground and paint in the main panel and the bottom extension were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections and X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (see resports dated August 22, 1984; August 24, 1984; April 24, 1986, in NGA Conservation department files). The analysis indicated the presence of vermilion in the ground on the main panel but not on the extension.

[4] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Hammamatsu c/1000-03 vidicon camera fitted with a lead sulphide tube.

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PROVENANCE

(Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris, 1905). Maurice Kann, Paris, by 1906;[1] (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris); sold 20 December 1906 to Peter A. B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Sedelmeyer Gallery, *Catalogue of 100 Paintings by Old Masters*, Paris, 1905, 36, does not mention that the painting came from the Kann Collection. Since provenance was generally cited in Sedelmeyer's catalogues, and Maurice Kann bought almost all of his paintings from Sedelmeyer, it seems reasonable to infer that *The Philosopher* had not yet been owned by Kann when Sedelmeyer offered it for sale in 1905. When the picture was catalogued in 1906 (Wilhelm von Bode, assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols., Paris, 1897-1906, 8: 39, 126, 378), Bode noted on page 126 that the painting was in the Kann Collection and then on page 378 that it had changed hands and was with Sedelmeyer.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 96.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 5, 15, repro., as by Rembrandt.

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1905 Sedelmeyer, Charles. *Illustrated Catalogue of the Ninth Series of 100*

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1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*. 8 vols. Translated by Edward G. Hawke. London, 1907-1927: 5(1916):233, no. 449.

1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*. 10 vols. Esslingen and Paris, 1907-1928: 6(1915):203, no. 449.

1908 "P.A.B. Widener Collection, February 1st, 1908." Typescript, 2 vols., Library, National Gallery of Art, 1908: 212.

1908 Rosenberg, Adolf. *Rembrandt, des Meisters Gemälde*. Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben, 2. 2nd ed. Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1908: 365, repro.

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1910 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. "Die Ausstellung holländischer Gemälde in New York." *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft* 3 (1910): 9.

1913 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis, and Wilhelm R. Valentiner. *Pictures in the collection of P. A. B. Widener at Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania: Early German, Dutch & Flemish Schools*. Philadelphia, 1913: unpaginated, intro., no. 34, repro., as by Rembrandt van Rijn.

1914 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *The Art of the Low Countries*. Translated by Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer. Garden City, NY, 1914: 247, no. 56.

1923 Meldrum, David S. *Rembrandt's Painting, with an Essay on His Life and Work*. New York, 1923: 110, 197, pl. 283.

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1931 *Paintings in the Collection of Joseph Widener at Lynnewood Hall*. Edited by Wilhelm R. Valentiner. Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, 1931: 70, repro., as by Rembrandt.

1931 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. *Rembrandt Paintings in America*. New York, 1931:

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no. 108.

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1948 Douglas, R. Langton. "Three Pictures by Rembrandt from the Van Loo Collection." *Art in America* 36 (April 1948): 73-74, fig. 3.

1948 National Gallery of Art. *Paintings and Sculpture from the Widener Collection*. Washington, 1948: 41, repro., as by Rembrandt van Ryn.

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1959 National Gallery of Art. *Paintings and Sculpture from the Widener Collection*. Reprint. Washington, DC, 1959: 41, repro., as by Rembrandt.

1963 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.* New York, 1963 (reprinted 1964 in French, German, and Spanish): 313, repro., as by Rembrandt van Rijn.

1964 Rosenberg, Jakob. *Rembrandt: Life and Work*. Revised ed. Greenwich, Connecticut, 1964: 111, fig. 98.

1965 National Gallery of Art. *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture*. Washington, 1965: 110, as by Rembrandt.

1966 Bauch, Kurt. *Rembrandt Gemälde*. Berlin, 1966: 12, no. 214, repro.

1968 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings and Sculpture, Illustrations*. Washington, 1968: 96, no. 662, repro., as by Rembrandt.

1969 Bredius, Abraham. *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*. Revised by Horst Gerson. 3rd ed. London, 1969: repro. 539, 569, no. 260A.

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1975 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York, 1975: 273, no. 362, color repro.

1984 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. Rev. ed. New York, 1984: 273, no. 356, color repro., as by Rembrandt van Ryn.

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Ideals." In *Great Dutch Paintings from America*. Edited by Ben P.J. Broos. Exh. cat. Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. The Hague and Zwolle, 1990: 43 fig. 30.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 309-314, color repro. 311.

2000 Dunn, Nicola. *Old Masters*. Exh. cat. Salomon Lilian Gallery, Amsterdam, 2000: 22-23, fig. 2.

2004 Wagstaff, Sheena, et al. *Edward Hopper*. Exh. cat. Tate Modern, London; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2004-2005. London, 2004: 17, fig. 7.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

A Polish Nobleman

1637

oil on panel
overall: 96.8 x 66 cm (38 1/8 x 26 in.)
Inscription: upper right: Rembrandt.f:. / 1637
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.78

ENTRY

One of Rembrandt's most powerfully evocative paintings from the late 1630s, *A Polish Nobleman* displays a richness of conception and technique that is unmatched by any other painting by the master in the Gallery's collection. As this imposing figure stares out beneath his tall beaver hat, he at once confronts the viewer with directness and draws him in with his introspective gaze. His confident stance as he grasps a gold-topped wooden staff, his broad mustache, and the gold chain and pendant that hang over the broad fur collar that covers his jacket give him an air of authority and exotic grandeur. At the same time, the shaded eyes, furrowed brow, and partially opened mouth suggest a caring and thoughtful individual, far more approachable than the pose and costume would initially imply.

Largely because of the individualized character of the sitter, but also because of the obvious care with which Rembrandt modeled the forms, scholars have since the nineteenth century sought to identify this sitter with a specific individual, despite the fact that no suggested identifications are given in the earlier eighteenth century references to the painting. The earliest, and most persistent, of these identifications is the one mentioned by John Smith in 1836: Jan III Sobieski (1629–1696), who was king of Poland from 1674 until his death. [1] Since Sobieski was only eight years old in 1637, such an identification is clearly impossible. Stefan Batory, the other Polish king whose name was mentioned in the nineteenth century in connection with this painting, is likewise mistaken, for he died in 1586. [2]

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A more recent proposal that the figure represents the Polish nobleman Andrzej Rej would seem to have more merit. [3] Rej, who was well traveled, well educated, and well bred, had a close and cordial relationship to the royal court in Poland. As one of the most influential and trusted Protestants in the country, he was chosen by King Wladyslaw in 1637 to act as a special envoy to England and to the Netherlands at a time when relations between Poland and these countries were rather frosty. [4] His diplomatic ventures, first in England, where Charles I would not even receive him, and then in the Netherlands, were not successful. After leaving The Hague on December 19, 1637, he seems to have traveled to Amsterdam where his son, Mikolaj, was enrolled as a student at the Amsterdam "Athenaeum Illustre." Although Rej must not have stayed long—he was documented in Hamburg by January 19, 1638—he did take time to have his portrait painted. In a document from 1641, Mikolaj acknowledges that he owes Hendrik van Uylenburgh fifty guilders "for portraying my father." [5]

The coincidence of Rej's presence in Amsterdam in 1637 and Rembrandt's portrait of a Polish nobleman of that date would lead one to hypothesize a connection even if a document did not exist confirming that a portrait was in fact painted. Since Hendrik van Uylenburgh, who was of Polish descent, had had a business connection with Rembrandt in the early 1630s, one might assume that Van Uylenburgh would have arranged for Rembrandt to paint a portrait of Andrzej Rej. Nevertheless, the evidence is not compelling enough to make a convincing connection. To begin with, Rembrandt is not mentioned in the document. Secondly, the price for the portrait would have been extremely low for such a large-scale, fully worked-out painting of this date by the master. [6] Moreover, despite their earlier business relations, it is unlikely that in 1637 Van Uylenburgh was actively procuring commissions for Rembrandt or administering his financial affairs. Finally, the costume is not one that a Polish nobleman on an official diplomatic mission would have worn at that time. Although the elements of the costume are essentially Polish, they had been in fashion some twenty years earlier. [7]

Rather than depicting a specific individual, *A Polish Nobleman* is very likely part of the same tradition of fanciful portraits of figures in oriental costumes to which *Man in Oriental Costume* belongs (for a discussion of this type of portraiture see the entry on *Man in Oriental Costume*). [8] The models for such paintings seem to have been people close to Rembrandt, among them his wife, Saskia, his mother, possibly his father, and his brother Adriaen. [9] Rembrandt also used himself as a

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model for figures in his etchings and paintings. Quite frequently he radically changed his appearance with different hairstyles, beards, and mustaches. The penetrating expression of *A Polish Nobleman* and the striking resemblance of the sitter's features to Rembrandt's, particularly in the area around the eyes and nose, make one wonder if this painting is not, in fact, a fanciful self-portrait. The main objection to this hypothesis is that Rembrandt had not yet developed such a jowled countenance at this date. However, X-radiography clearly indicates that the pronounced jowls were not part of the initial concept but were an adaptation done when Rembrandt altered the right contour of the face [fig. 1]. [10] At that time he also eliminated the earlobe and a pearl earring. [11]

The extraordinary power of *A Polish Nobleman,* which is painted on a single, large oak panel, is all the more enhanced because it has been so well preserved. Rich impastos on the face, which can be seen in the photograph of the painting taken in a raking light [fig. 2], reinforce the three-dimensional presence of the image. Similar impastos accent the gold medallion falling over his shoulder. The brown collar and reddish brown sleeve of the jacket, however, are painted thinly to suggest the softer textures of fur and cloth. In these areas the ocher ground, which is allowed to show through the surface paint, provides a unifying tone. Rembrandt has consciously sought to reveal this tone by wiping his wet paint with a cloth or, as in the beaver hat, by scratching the surface with the butt end of his brush. Even the background, which because of the painted crack must represent a wall, has been carefully modeled. Since the restoration of the painting, the care with which Rembrandt modulated his paints over the entire surface is once again visible. Indeed, he even left a thumbprint along the lower edge.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Detail, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Polish Nobleman*, 1637, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.78

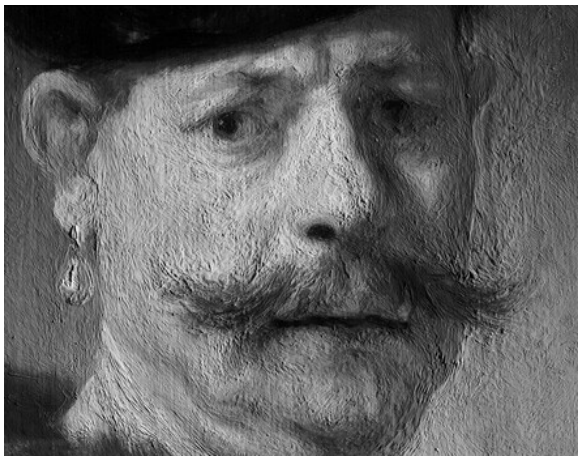

fig. 2 Detail of face, raking light, Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Polish Nobleman*, 1637, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.78

NOTES

[1] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 7:310: "A Military Gentleman, styled 'Sobieski.'" Although the tradition was already questioned in *Livret de la Galerie Impérial de l'Ermitage de Saint-Pétersbourg* (Saint Petersburg, 1838; "n'est justificée par aucun des documents que nous avons à notre déposition"), the identification continued to be proposed as an option throughout most of the nineteenth century.

[2] Wilhelm von Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei* (Braunschweig, 1883), 464.

[3] First proposed by Otaker Odlozilik, "Rembrandt's Polish Nobleman," *Polish Review* 7 (Autumn 1963): 3–32. This identification was supported by Ben P. J. Broos, "Rembrandt's Portrait of a Pole and His Horse," *Simiolus* 7, no. 4 (1974): 210–213.

[4] King Wladyslaw had just gone back on his highly controversial plan to marry the niece of Charles I of England. The niece was Elizabeth, daughter of Frederick V, king of Bohemia and elector of the Palatinate, and his consort

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Elizabeth Stuart. The king and queen of Bohemia, the so-called Winter King and Winter Queen, were also intimates with the Prince of Orange, Frederik Hendrik, and his wife, Amalia van Solms. Not only was Frederik Hendrik the uncle of Frederick V, but when the Bohemian king and queen had come to The Hague in exile in the 1620s, Amalia van Solms came with them as one of Elizabeth's ladies-in-waiting.

[5] Ben P. J. Broos, "Rembrandt's Portrait of a Pole and His Horse," *Simiolus* 7, no. 4 (1974): 213, note 49. The document was published by Abraham Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* . . . , 8 vols. (The Hague, 1915–1922), 5:1688.

[6] As Henriette Rahusen has noted (oral communication), however, the fifty guilders that Mikolaj Rej owed on the painting in 1641 may not represent the full price, but rather the balance remaining from the original commission.

[7] I am indebted for this information to Dr. Julius Chroscicki, from the University of Warsaw, who, as a fellow at the NGA Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts, studied the problem of Rembrandt's depictions of Polish subjects.

[8] Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 247, considers this work a *tronie,* a term that seems inappropriate for such a large, fully conceived three-quarter-length figure. Although the meaning of the term as used in the seventeenth century is not clear, it seems most probable that *tronies* were bust-length studies of heads rather than finished paintings. The prices paid for *tronies* were quite low, as noted in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 23, "a relatively cheap product." See also Dagmar Hirschfelder, *Tronie und Porträt in der niederländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 2008), cat. 430.

[9] Kurt Bauch, *Der frühe Rembrandt und seine Zeit: Studien zur geschichtlichten Bedeutung seines Frühstils* (Berlin, 1960), 168, suggested that Adriaen van Rijn was the model for *A Polish Nobleman*. No identifiable portraits of Adriaen, however, are known.

[10] The connections to Rembrandt's own physiognomy in the original concept for the portrait are particularly evident in a comparison of the X-radiographs with those of other Rembrandt self-portraits from the late 1630s. See in particular the X-radiographs of *Bust of Rembrandt with an Architectural Background,* Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. no. 1746, reproduced in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 499.

[11] A few other minor changes, such as those on the staff and the gold medallion on the hat, are evident in the X-radiograph and upon close

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observation of the painting itself.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The panel is composed of a single piece of oak with a vertical grain and has been cradled. Dendrochronology dates the tree felling to about 1633.[1] Old repaired vertical splits are found at top center and bottom left. Moderate-sized losses of splintered wood have occurred in the panel edges.

The ground consists of two layers, a lower white layer of medium thickness covered by a very thin ocher layer.[2] A rich paste paint layer of moderate thickness has been applied with a dry brush producing a highly textured surface, with thick impasted accents on the jewels and staff. The tan ground layer is visible between the broad, opaque brushmarks and is incorporated into the structure of the cloak. Individual fur hairs have been rapidly painted with a broad, fanned-out brush. The fur hat has been incised with the butt end of a brush to expose the ground layer. Glazing is minimal, employed chiefly in the dark shadows of the face and hand.

Several pentimenti are visible with the naked eye and in the X-radiographs. Slight color variations in the background to the sitter's right were occasioned by the artist's repainting of the facial contour to slim the profile. The X-radiographs confirm alterations as well that reshape the lower portion of the head and show that the thumb was once inclined downward at a sharper angle and the index finger was more tightly curved. This original position of the hand corresponds to the grip necessary to hold the staff in its initial position, inclined away from the sitter, as evidenced by a reserve left in the background. Once adjusted to its more upright position, the staff was longer than it now appears. Its earlier form is visible through the gray covering paint of the background. A pearl drop, which once hung from the hat jewel, and a pearl earring attached to the proper left earlobe were both painted out.

The paint layer is in excellent condition, with minimal abrasion and only minor losses in the face and around the edges. A conservation treatment was carried out in 1985 to remove an aged varnish as well as discolored inpainting and overpaint.

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[1] Dendrochronological examination by Dr. Joseph Bauch of Universität Hamburg in 1977 has determined that the wood comes from a tree felled around 1633 (see report dated November 29, 1977, in NGA Conservation files). Panels from the same tree were used for two other paintings by Rembrandt at the end of the 1630s, the Concord of State (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam) and River Landscape with a Windmill (Staatliche Kuntsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie, Kassel). See Dr. Peter Klein letter, dated September 25, 1987, in NGA curatorial files.

[2] The pigments and media were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using polarized light microscopy, X-ray diffraction (XRD), X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF), and cross-sections in conjunction with stains (see reports on dated December 1984 and February 25, 1985, in NGA Conservation files).

PROVENANCE

Possibly Harman van Swol; possibly (his sale, Jan Pietersz. Zomer, Amsterdam, 20 April 1707, no. 15).[1] Acquired 1765 in Rotterdam by (Philippus Florentinus Vergeloo, Antwerp) for Count Johan Carl Philipp Cobenzl [1712-1770]; sold 1768 to Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729-1796], Saint Petersburg;[2] 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 30 March 1932 to The A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] In the 1707 sale in Amsterdam, a painting described as "Een Ambassadeur van Moscovien, van Rembrandt kragtig geschildert" (An Ambassador of Moscow, powerfully depicted by Rembrandt) may have been this work; the association of this painting with *A Polish Nobleman* was first made in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al., Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989: 247.

[2] On the identification of Cobenzl as the collector who sold the painting to Catherine II, and of Vergeloo as his source, see Catherine Phillips, "The Provenance of Rembrandt's 'Polish Nobleman' (1637) in the National Gallery of Art,

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Washington," *The Burlington Magazine* 151 (February 2009): 84-85. When *A Polish Nobleman* was first described in the catalogue of Catherine II's collection, compiled between 1773 and 1785, it bore the title "Portrait d'un Turc."

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 3, 13, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves

c. 1656/1658

oil on canvas transferred to canvas
overall: 99.5 × 82.5 cm (39 3/16 × 32 1/2 in.)
framed: 132.08 × 114.94 × 13.97 cm (52 × 45 1/4 × 5 1/2 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.67

ENTRY

The early history of *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves* and *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan* [fig. 1] is shrouded in mystery, although it seems likely that they were the pair of portraits by Rembrandt listed in the Gerard Hoet sale in The Hague in 1760. [1] They had entered the Yusupov collection by 1803, when the German traveler Heinrich von Reimers saw them during his visit to the family's palace in Saint Petersburg, then located on the Fontanka River. [2] Prince Nicolai Borisovich Yusupov (1751–1831) acquired the core of this collection on three extended trips to Europe during the late eighteenth century. In 1827 he commissioned an unpublished five-volume catalog of the paintings, sculptures, and other treasures (still in the family archives at the Arkhangelskoye State Museum & Estate outside Moscow) that included a description as well as a pen-and-ink sketch of each object. The portraits hung in the "Salon des Antiques." His only son and heir, Prince Boris Nicolaievich Yusupov (1794–1849), published a catalog of the collection in French in 1839. [3] An 1864 publication by the director of the Berlin Museum, Gustav Waagen, included a discussion of the Yusupov collection, and his comment about the pair of Rembrandt portraits, that they were "von ausserordentlicher Energie" (of extraordinary energy), was the first of many subsequent positive responses to these works. [4]

The paintings remained secluded and unavailable to most Americans and Europeans until they were shown at the great Rembrandt exhibition in Amsterdam in 1898. There they made a tremendous impact. [5] By 1911, when Roger Fry

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reviewed a publication describing an exhibition of old master paintings from Russian private collections held in Saint Petersburg in 1909, he singled out these portraits as follows: “There are, it is true, many interesting and curious works, but very few masterpieces—none indeed of the first rank, if we except the already well-known Rembrandt portraits of the Youssoupoff collection. These, indeed, are of unsurpassed beauty; the woman especially must count, I think, among the greatest of all Rembrandt creations.” [6]

For those who had not had the opportunity to view the paintings in Amsterdam in 1898, engravings of the works in the commemorative volume of that exhibition or in Dr. Wilhelm von Bode’s monumental catalog of Rembrandt’s paintings, published in 1902, provided excellent visual images. [7] Perhaps it was through Bode’s publication that the paintings became known to Peter A. B. Widener, who, according to his grandson, made a special effort to visit Saint Petersburg to see these two works. Widener apparently managed to see the paintings, probably in 1909, even though Prince Felix Yusupov was reluctant to show them to visitors. “The minute [Widener] saw them, he wanted them. He made an offer, but it was promptly rejected. . . . He was very much disappointed.” [8]

Peter A. B. Widener had not as yet developed into the remarkable collector of Rembrandt paintings he was to become, but it was clear that these works made a lasting impression on him. After having been rebuffed by Yusupov, Widener turned to his London dealer, Arthur J. Sulley, to ask him to find a way to convince the prince to part with his treasures. On April 7, 1911, Sulley wrote to Widener saying that he would try to approach Yusupov in the same way that he had approached the Marquis of Lansdowne concerning Rembrandt’s *The Mill*: “That is to say that my friend is getting an introduction to the owner from one of his personal friends, and is trying to get him to name a price. If the owner will not name any price, I propose (if you agree) to offer him one million rubles, which is about £100,000.” [9] Apparently, though, negotiations proved to be more difficult than Sulley had expected; in a subsequent letter of May 12, 1911, he wrote to Peter’s son, Joseph Widener, that “as far as it is possible to understand anything if anyone gets the Russians we will but as I wrote you last week it is very difficult. I do not think Agnew or anyone else is working at that business now. It has been tried so often without success that people are discouraged. If I do not succeed it will not be because I have left any stone unturned.” [10] The elder Widener died in 1915 without having succeeded in purchasing the paintings.

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Although the allure of Widener's money did not in and of itself convince Prince Yusupov to sell his paintings, these offers clearly pointed out to him the immense value collectors placed upon his two Rembrandt portraits. Thus, when the Russian Revolution forced the Prince's family to leave Russia, his son, Prince Felix Felixovich Yusupov (1887–1967), took with him, among other personal possessions and family jewels, the two Rembrandt paintings. [11] When the younger Yusupov, notorious as the assassin of Rasputin, arrived in London in April 1919, stories of his dramatic escape quickly spread, enhancing the appeal of the Rembrandt paintings. [12] Yusupov sought to exploit his circumstances by offering the paintings for sale at extraordinary prices. Newspapers reported an asking price of £500,000.

In the fall of 1920, Joseph E. Widener (a collector in his own right, as well as caretaker of his father's collection) received a letter from a Mr. Harold Hartley offering him Yusupov's paintings for £210,000. Hartley indicated that the prince preferred to sell to an "approved buyer" rather than to a dealer, and also mentioned that the "Prince considers both paintings far superior to 'The Mill' and of greater value." [13] Apparently Widener did not agree to the price, for on July 26, 1921, he received a letter from Francis Tarbox offering him the paintings. "These are being offered for sale at a very low cash price and I am in a position to negotiate same at much lower figure than they can ever again be obtained." [14]

Joseph Widener arrived in London during the summer of 1921 and examined the paintings in a bank vault where they were being kept as collateral for a loan to the prince. Perhaps totally in good faith, or perhaps as a way to purchase the paintings for a lower price, Widener offered to pay the prince £100,000 with the stipulation that Yusupov could repurchase them within three years at eight percent interest should his financial situation improve to the point where he could once again "keep and personally enjoy these wonderful works of art." [15] After a series of negotiations, including transatlantic cables, Yusupov agreed, and the paintings were shipped to Lynnewood Hall with much public acclaim. The £100,000 was paid to the prince by Widener's London agent, Arthur J. Sulley, some ten years after the dealer had begun negotiations to acquire them for Widener's father.

The story of Joseph Widener's acquisition of these extraordinary paintings does not, however, end with the events of 1921. Shortly after Widener acquired them, the collector Calouste Gulbenkian was told by the dealer Joseph Duveen that he had "just lost the two best Rembrandts in the world to Widener. He bought them both for a hundred thousand pounds, and each of them is worth that." [16] Gulbenkian, knowing of Widener's arrangement with Yusupov, then offered to lend the prince

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£200,000 to allow him to reestablish his financial position, an offer Yusupov found hard to resist. He thus tried to force Widener to return the paintings. Widener refused, and from this ensued a notorious lawsuit in 1924–1925 over the nature of the arrangement between Widener and Yusupov. Eventually, the case was decided in Widener's favor, and the paintings remained, along with *The Mill,* at the core of the collection of Rembrandts at Lynnewood Hall, the Widener estate in Elkins Park outside Philadelphia. [17]

Neither painting appears to be signed or dated, although Valentiner in his 1931 catalog of the Widener Collection noted that the portrait of the woman was signed, *"Rembrandt f.* 166' [the last figure illegible]." [18] Dates given to the paintings have all been in the 1660s. When the portraits were exhibited in Amsterdam in 1898, they were dated c. 1660. Bode placed them c. 1662 in his catalog of 1902. Valentiner redated the paintings in 1921 to c. 1668, probably because he tried to identify the figures as Rembrandt's son Titus and Magdalena van Loo, who were married in that year. [19] Although Valentiner's identification found little approval, a date of c. 1667 was retained for the paintings in the catalog of the Widener Collection of 1923. Valentiner revised his dating to the first half of the 1660s in his 1931 publication. [20] Bredius, however, returned to the c. 1667 dating in his 1935 edition of Rembrandt's paintings, [21] a dating that was followed by Bauch and Gerson. [22]

One exception to the consistently late dates given the paintings since the 1930s occurred in the catalog of the Rembrandt exhibition at the National Gallery of Art in 1969. Here it is noted that neither the costumes nor the painting techniques indicate such a late date for the works. [23] Although these observations are not elaborated upon, the suggestion for an earlier dating than traditionally suggested is a valid one. The woman's hairstyle, costume, and use of ornate jewelry are all datable to the 1650s rather than to the late 1660s. The translucent lace collar that covers her shoulders and whose elaborate lower edge continues horizontally across her body is seen in a number of portraits from this period, including *Abraham del Court and His Wife Maria de Kaersgieter,* 1654, by Bartholomeus van der Helst (c. 1613–1670 [fig. 2], and *Portrait of a Young Woman,* 1656, by Isaak Luttichuys (1616–1673) (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). [24] Finally, the plain white cuffs edged with lace are similar to those in Rembrandt's *A Woman Holding a Pink* of 1656. Also similar in these examples is the manner in which the collar is fastened by an ornate bow and decorated with a circular pin or pendant.

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The hairstyle and costume of the man are more difficult to date than are those of the woman, partly because the collar and cuffs have been altered (see Technical Summary). [25] To judge from the X-radiographs ([fig. 3]) [see X-radiography], the simple rectangular shape of the collar the man originally wore was also comparable to styles in the mid-1650s. After the early 1660s, fashions changed, and men began to wear collars that extended farther down their chest (see, for example, *Portrait of a Man in a Tall Hat*). Just when Rembrandt provided the sitter with a more decorative lace collar is not known, but the alteration probably occurred in the late 1650s. [26]

Costume styles are usually only a rough measurement of date because old styles were frequently worn after new ones were introduced, particularly by older and more conservative people. These sitters, however, appear to be in their late thirties or early forties, and, judging from the woman's jewelry, wealthy. It seems unlikely that they would have had themselves portrayed in outmoded fashions, which, on the basis of costume analysis, would suggest a date for these portraits in the mid-to-late 1650s.

Stylistically, such a date for these paintings is also compatible with Rembrandt's other works. In no painting of his from the mid-1660s does one find the careful modeling of the woman's hands and face, the suggestions of texture as seen in her features, jewelry, and lace, or the broad planar way in which forms are illuminated by the light. No hint of the palette knife is to be found in either work. Similarities of style and technique, however, do exist in paintings from the late 1650s, in particular between the woman and Rembrandt's portrait of *Catherine Hooghsaet,* signed and dated 1657 (Penrhyn Castle, Wales). [27] The left hand of each sitter, for example, is depicted in a similar manner.

The portrait of the man is more boldly executed than that of the woman in that the modeling does not have the same restrained, planar quality. Brushstrokes on the man's face are broken and roughly juxtaposed as Rembrandt modeled his sharply illuminated features with sure strokes of varying tones of pinks and ochers. The boldness of Rembrandt's touch originally must have been even more pronounced, for X-radiographs demonstrate that both of the man's cuffs and hands were more abstractly rendered than they now appear. The fact that the gloves held by the gentleman in his left hand are cut at the bottom edge of the composition suggests that the paintings were once slightly larger. One could imagine that the figures were initially situated in a more spacious setting, which suggests that they have been trimmed on all sides. The dimensions of the pendant portraits in the Hoet

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sale of 1760 loosely correspond to the paintings' current sizes, so any reduction in size must have occurred at an earlier date. [28]

The bold manner with which *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves* is executed is related to Rembrandt's painting technique in male portraits of the late 1650s. In earlier portraits, such as *Jan Six,* 1654 [fig. 4], Rembrandt firmly modeled the face with similar short, bold strokes, but his approach in these two instances is slightly different. Whereas the short strokes in the face of the Six portrait join to form distinct planes of light and color, those in the Washington portrait are more roughly executed and loosely blended. In this respect they approach the technique he used in his *A Young Man Seated at a Table (possibly Govaert Flinck)*, which dates to c. 1660. Particularly close in these two portraits are the techniques used to model the nose, where strokes from the flesh tones are drawn over a darker color that defines the shadowed edge of the nostril. Similar techniques occur in the shadowed areas around the eyes [fig. 5] and [fig. 6].

An unusual technical feature reinforces the probability that Rembrandt executed these two portraits in the late 1650s: they were both originally painted on a herringbone-weave canvas, a support Rembrandt is not known to have used earlier in his career. The paintings were removed from these supports and transferred onto finely woven canvases. Presumably, this transfer was made in Russia in the nineteenth century. [29]

There seems little question that these works were conceived as companion portraits. Not only were they together in the Yusupov collection by the beginning of the nineteenth century, but the poses assumed by the figures are comparable to those in pendant paintings by other masters. Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641), for example, painted pendant portraits of Peeter Stevens and Anna Wake in 1627 and 1628 (Mauritshuis, The Hague), in which Stevens gestures to his bride, who holds an ostrich-feather fan in her hand. [30] In 1641 Johannes Cornelisz Verspronck (Dutch, 1606/1609 - 1662) painted a standing couple in much the same way: he holding his gloves (Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Enschede), [31] she an ostrich-feather fan (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). [32] In Rembrandt's portraits the subtle interaction of the two, he gesturing toward her while looking at the viewer and she glancing in his direction and holding the fan so that it inclines toward him, is restrained yet poignant. Their expressions have qualities of warmth and trust that convey much about the nature of human relationships.

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The question that remains unanswered is the identity of the sitters. The circle of wealthy friends and acquaintances at that period of Rembrandt's life who might have ordered portraits was rather small. Valentiner's hypothesis that they represented Rembrandt's son Titus and his wife, Magdalena van Loo, has long since been rejected. A suggestion by Dr. I. H. van Eeghen that they represent Jacob Louysz Trip (1636–1664) and his wife, Margarita Hendricksdr Trip (1637–1711), is doubtful. [33] Van Eeghen's premise was primarily that the Trip family was one of the few rich families in Amsterdam that continued to give portrait commissions to Rembrandt during his later years. Nevertheless, these sitters appear to be in their late thirties or early forties and not in their twenties, as Jacob and Margarita would have been in the late 1650s. [34] None of these possible identities can, however, be verified, which is particularly unfortunate because so little is known about Rembrandt's patrons at this stage of his career.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan*, c. 1656/1658, oil on canvas transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.68

fig. 2 Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Abraham del Court and His Wife Maria de Kaersgieter*, 1654, oil on canvas, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Tromp, Rotterdam

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fig. 3 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves*, c. 1656/1658, oil on canvas transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.67

fig. 4 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Jan Six*, 1654, oil on canvas, Six Collection, Amsterdam

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fig. 5 Detail of eyes, Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves*, c. 1656/1658, oil on canvas transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.67

fig. 6 Detail of eyes, Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Young Man Seated at a Table (possibly Govaert Flinck)*, c. 1660, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.77

NOTES

[1] This entry text was written for the pair of paintings *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves* and *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan*.

[2] Heinrich Christoph von Reimers, *St. Petersburg, am Ende seines Ersten Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Saint Petersburg, 1805), 2:373.

[3] Frederick R. Andresen, through his colleague Evgeny Maksakov, kindly provided the NGA library with a photocopy of this catalogue (*Musée du Prince Youssoupoff* [Saint Petersburg, 1839]). See also: Oleg Yakovlevich Neverov, *Great Private Collections of Imperial Russia* (New York and Saint Petersburg, 2004), 89–98.

[4] Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Die Gemäldesammlung in der kaiserlichen Ermitage zu St. Petersburg nebst Bemerkungen über andere dortige Kunstsammlungen* (Munich, 1864), 414: “Ein männliches und ein weibliches Bildniss, fast Kniestücke. Pendants. Von ausserordentlicher Energie. Der kühle Ton der Lichter, wie der Schatten. die sehr breite Behandlung, beweisen, dass diese Bilder der spateren Zeit angehören.” The Rembrandt paintings were not mentioned in Louis Viardot, *Les musées d'Allemagne et de Russie* (Paris, 1844); however, as Viardot only listed a few works, many of

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which were the same as those discussed by Waagen some twenty years later (see Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Die Gemäldesammlung in der kaiserlichen Ermitage zu St. Petersburg nebst Bemerkungen über andere dortige Kunstsammlungen* [Munich, 1864]), one wonders if he saw the total collection. According to later reports, the family had always been quite reluctant to show off their treasures, so it is possible that Viardot was not given access to them. An article on Joseph Widener's acquisition of the paintings *(American Art News* 20 [December 10, 1921], 4) quoted a *London Times* article in which it was written that: "The grandfather of the present Prince was a man of parsimonious disposition who guarded his picture gallery from all ordinary mortals and sightseers. At a ball given in the palace to the Imperial Court, Czar Alexander III wished to see the Rembrandts. Prince Youssoupoff (*sic)* personally conducted the czar and two Grand Dukes to see his gallery but kept out all other guests." Peter A. B. Widener (Joseph Widener's son, given his grandfather's name), *Without Drums* (New York, 1940), 61, writes that the czar was allowed to see the collection only after he *ordered* Youssoupoff to unlock his picture gallery. Did the prince fear a request by the czar to transfer some of the paintings to the imperial collection at the Hermitage?

[5] The *London Times* (September 15, 1898), for example, described "the immortal, unchanging interest" of these two portraits. See Catherine B. Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship* (Amsterdam, 2004), 136, who cites the comments of the art critic Jan Veth, who considered these portraits "true touchstones for questions of authenticity, with their beautiful execution and powerful chiaroscuro."

[6] Roger Fry, "Review and Notices," *The Burlington Magazine* 19 (September 1911): 353.

[7] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Die Rembrandt-Ausstellungen zu Amsterdam (September–October 1898) und zu London (January–March 1899)," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 22 (1899), nos. 34–35. Wilhelm von Bode assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 7: nos. 489–490. The high quality of the reproductions in Bode's publication was remarked upon by Roger Fry in 1921 when he had the occasion to publish photographs of the paintings in his article, "Two Rembrandt Portraits," *The Burlington Magazine* 38 (May 1921): 210.

[8] Peter A. B. Widener, *Without Drums* (New York, 1940), 60–64. The date of Widener's purported trip is not known. His grandson writes that he went to Russia "around the turn of the century." According to Dr. Ronald Moe (author of *Prelude to the Revolution: The Murder of Rasputin* [Chula Vista, CA, 2011]), a more probable date is 1909, the year the Kiel Canal opened, which would have provided access to Saint Petersburg for Widener's yacht *Josephine*. In that year also the paintings were on public exhibition in Saint

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Petersburg for the first time since being lent to Amsterdam in 1898. The "Prince Yusupov" with whom the negotiations were carried out during those years was Felix, count Sumarokov-Elston (1856–1928), husband of Princess Zinaide Yusupova, the last surviving representative of the Yusupov family. He was given the right to take his wife's name and title, but the art collection was actually hers.

[9] Letter in NGA curatorial files.

[10] Letter in NGA curatorial files. Sulley may indeed have traveled to Saint Petersburg to try to arrange for the purchase prior to the start of World War I in 1914. An article in *American Art News* 20 (December 17, 1921), 4, says that "the late P. A. B. Widener before the war sent an emissary to Russia and arranged for their purchase, the price being $500,000. Prince Youssoupoff backed out of the deal by cable, after the emissary had returned to England."

[11] Felix Felixovich, according to Dr. Moe, was a student at Oxford from 1909 to 1912. He was not given the title Prince Yusupov until 1914.

[12] According to Dr. Moe and Dr. Idris R. Traylor (who, before his death, was researching the Yusupov family for a planned book), the Yusupov family sailed from Yalta in the Crimea on the British warship *Marlborough,* which had been sent by King George V to take his aunt, the Dowager Empress Maria Federovna, to London in April 1919. Yusupov and his wife disembarked in Malta and traveled via Brindisi and Paris to London. The report by Sir Francis Pridham, a British naval officer who participated in the evacuation (*Close of a Dynasty* [London, 1956]), includes a photograph of young Felix Yusupov aboard the *Marlborough*. Contemporary reports about Yusupov's escape from Russia, however, raise the possibility that he may have dramatized the circumstances of his flight. Charles John Holmes, *Self and Partners (Mostly Self): Being the Reminiscences of C. J. Holmes* (New York, 1936), 376, writes, for example: "In 1919 Prince Youssoupoff suddenly appeared with his two famous Rembrandt portraits, still concealed by the 'Modernist' canvases under which he had contrived to bring them out of Russia. Thrilling as was his account of the death of Rasputin, the story of his own escape, in the disguise of an art student, with the family jewels swathed around his body in long, painful chains, was no less vivid. Trying indeed must the moment have been when a *kommissar,* much interested in the arts, took a fancy to one of the Prince's first experiments in painting, and wanted to buy it, in ignorance of the fact that it covered a Rembrandt masterpiece." Variants of this story appeared in news reports in 1921 (see NGA curatorial files). The artist who painted over the two Rembrandt paintings was a friend of Yusupov, Gleb W. Derujinsky, who later immigrated to the United States and became a successful sculptor. I would like to thank Andrea Derujinsky for providing me with biographical information about her grandfather and his relationship to Yusupov (personal communication, July

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2013).

[13] Letter, October 20, 1920, in NGA curatorial files.

[14] Letter in NGA curatorial files.

[15] Samuel N. Behrman, *Duveen* (New York, 1952), 18 (also 1972 ed., 16). According to Dr. Moe, Behrman's implication that Yusupov's reacquisition of the paintings was contingent upon a restoration of the old regime in Russia is inaccurate. A cable from Joseph Widener dated September 19, 1922, says that the purchase contract "provides that re-purchase can be made only for Prince Youssoupoffs [sic] personal enjoyment of the pictures and that I am to receive satisfactory assurances and guarantees that pictures or title to same will not pass out of his possession for ten year period." The cable is in the Duveen Brothers records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 383, box 528, folder 4 (see also copies in NGA curatorial files).

[16] Samuel N. Behrman, *Duveen* (New York, 1952), 18 (also 1972 ed., 16).

[17] Transcripts from the trial (kindly provided by Frederick Andresen) and copies of the newspaper coverage of it by the *New York Times* are in NGA curatorial files. See also Samuel N. Behrman, *Duveen* (New York, 1952), 22–24 (also 1972 ed., 20); John Walker, *Self-Portrait with Donors: Confessions of an Art Collector* (Boston and Toronto, 1974), 244.

[18] *Pictures in the Collection of Joseph Widener at Lynnewood Hall*, *Elkins Park, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1931), 74–77.

[19] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt: wiedergefundene Gemälde (1910–1920)*, Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben, 27 (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921), 484–485.

[20] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt Paintings in America* (New York, 1931), nos. 171–172. Valentiner dates them "slightly after paintings dated 1662."

[21] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* (Vienna, 1935), no. 327, 14 note.

[22] Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde* (Berlin, 1966), nos. 446 and 528, 23 note 446, 26 note 528; Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 255, 313, 575 note 327, 582 note 402.

[23] *Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art* (Washington, 1969), 25.

[24] See inventory no. C1477, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

[25] Pierre Paul von Weiner et al., *Les anciennes écoles de peinture dans les palais et collections privées Russes* (Brussels, 1910), 8, lament the damage that had occurred to the Yusupov paintings as a result of poor restoration: "Cette collection est restée intacte, on plutôt seulement complète, car la restauration du professeur Prakhoff y causa tout récemment un dommage

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irréparable: un certain nombre de toiles . . . en a cruellement souffert." Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann (letter January 8, 1985, NGA curatorial files) has kindly provided information about the twentieth-century restoration: "I spoke with C. F. Louis de Wild who checked his notes. The paintings were brought to his father's home by Duveen in 1922. His father was mortally ill at the time, and only cleaned the man, with the help of his son (Louis), but did not retouch, inpaint or complete the restoration in any way. Louis does not remember what the painting looked like at the time. The woman was not touched. What this means is that De Wild Sr. and Jr. started cleaning the man in 1922, then gave up because of personal circumstances. Neither he nor I know who did carry out the cleaning."

[26] The billowing cuffs are more elaborate than the normal flat cuffs, but they do resemble those seen in Bartholomeus van der Helst's *Portrait of a Young Man*, 1655 (Toledo Museum of Art), inventory no. 76.12; see *The Toledo Museum of Art: European Paintings* (Toledo, Ohio, 1976), 247, no. 101, repro.

[27] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), no. 391, repro.

[28] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of naamlyst van schilderijen...,* 2 vols. (The Hague, 1752), with supplement by Pieter Terwesten (1770) (reprint, Soest, 1976), 3:225, nos. 49 and 50, where they are described as being "hoog 39, breet 30 ½ duimen."

[29] Inscribed in Russian on the back of the *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves* is: "Painting transferred from an old canvas onto a new canvas. I. Sidorov." Translation kindly made by Dauphine Sloan.

[30] See inventory nos. 239, 240, Mauritshuis, The Hague. Discussed by Wheelock in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. et al., *Anthony van Dyck* (Washington, 1990), 196–200.

[31] See inventory no. 515, Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Enschede.

[32] See inventory no. A3064, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. For both, see Rudolf E. O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck* (Haarlem, 1979), 158, no. 32, repro., 161, no. 33, repro.

[33] I. H. van Eeghen, "De familie Trip en het Trippenhuis," in *Het Trippenhuis te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, Oxford, and New York, 1983), 71–73, 121 note 105.

[34] Henriette Rahusen has suggested (personal communication, 2010) that the man bears great similarity to Aernout van der Mye (c. 1625–1681), the second man from the left in Rembrandt's *Syndics of the Cloth Drapers' Guild* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, on loan from the city of Amsterdam, see the entry on *Portrait of a Man in a Tall Hat*, fig. 1), which the master executed in 1662. Aernout van der Mye was a Roman Catholic cloth merchant whose home on the Nieuwendijk 186 housed one of Amsterdam's "hidden" Catholic churches in 1656. If the male sitter proves to be Van der Mye, *Lady*

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with the Ostrich-Feather Fan would be a portrait of his wife, Johanna Vloots. For information on Van der Mye, see S. A. C. Dudok van Heel, *Van Amsterdamse Burgers tot Europese Aristocraten*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 2008), 1:303.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

An inscription in Russian on the reverse of the present support fabric records the painting's transfer in the nineteenth century.[1] At that time, the original fabric support was removed and the painting was transferred to a fine, plain-weave fabric with a gauzelike fabric interleaf. The X-radiographs show a herringbone pattern that probably indicates the original canvas weave. Because the painting has been transferred, it is impossible to determine if the painting's dimensions have been altered from an assessment of the support. The original, yellowish, quartz-containing ground layer was retained at the time of transfer and reinforced with an additional, thick white layer that contains zinc white, a pigment available only after 1840.[2]

The paint is applied thinly in the dark background and costume, with glazed shadows and blended contours. Lighter areas are painted more thickly with pronounced brushmarking and low impasto in the face and collar. The X-radiographs (fig. 1) reveal that the white collar was changed somewhat during painting; it was enlarged and given a lace border. The X-radiographs also reveal vigorously underpainted hands and cuffs that differ slightly from those presently visible. The transfer procedure has flattened the impasto and brushwork.

In 1993 some overpaint was removed from the hands and cuffs of the sitter during a localized conservation treatment. The painting underwent a complete treatment in 2007 that involved removal of extensive overpaint, which had covered abrasion in the hat and small losses in the background. This overpaint was probably applied when the painting was treated in 1922[3] and possibly during a nineteenth-century treatment as well. During the 2007 treatment, it was determined that Rembrandt's final paint in the sitter's proper left hand had been damaged, partially exposing the broad brushwork and bright colors.[4] The damages were inpainted to restore the shadowed effect of the hand.

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[1] The inscription reads: "Painting transferred from an old canvas onto a new canvas. I. Sidorov." Translation kindly made by Dauphine Sloan.

[2] The ground was analyzed by Karin Groen using cross-sections and energy dispersive X-ray analysis (see Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project,A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering [Dordrecht, 2005], 666).

[3] A letter from Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, dated January 8, 1985, in NGA curatorial files discusses a 1922 treatment that was begun by Louis de Wild and his son, but completed by someone else. See note 25 in NGA 1942.9.68.

[4] The paint was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections (see report dated May 29, 2007, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Possibly Gerard Hoet, Jr. [d. 1760], The Hague; possibly (sale, by Ottho Van Thol, Huibert Keetelaar, and Pierre Yver, The Hague, 25 August 1760, no. 49).[1] Prince Nicolai Borisovich Yusupov [1751-1831], Saint Petersburg and Moscow, by 1803;[2] by inheritance to his son, Prince Boris Nicolaiovich Yusupov [1794-1849], Moscow and Saint Petersburg; by inheritance to his son, Prince Nicolai Borisovich Yusupov [1827-1891], Saint Petersburg; by inheritance to his daughter, Princess Zinaida [Zenaida] Nikolaievna Yusupova [1861-1939], Saint Petersburg, Yalta, and London;[3] sold 1921 by her son and heir, Prince Felix Felixovich Yusupov [1887-1967],[4] to Joseph E. Widener; inheritance from Estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, after purchase by funds of the Estate; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderijen...*, 2 vols., The Hague, 1752, supplement by Pieter Terwesten, 1770, reprint ed. Soest, 1976, 3: 225, no. 49. The painting is listed as: "Een Mans-Pourtrait, met twee Handen, door *denzelven*; hoog 39, breet 30 1/2 diumen."

[2] On the formation and history of the Yusupov collection see: Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, *A Scholar's Whim: Collection of Prince Nicolai Borisovich*

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Yusupov, 2 vols., Moscow, 2001; Oleg Yakovlevich Neverov, *Great Private Collections of Imperial Russia*, New York and St. Petersburg, 2004: 89-102; State Hermitage Museum, *Collectors in St. Petersburg*, exh. cat., Hermitage Amsterdam, Zwolle, 2006: 23, 37-47. The German traveller Heinrich Christoph von Reimers (1768-1812) visited the collection in 1803 when it was housed in the family's palace on the Fontanka River in Saint Petersburg; his description of it, published in 1805, mentions the Gallery's painting, and its pendant NGA 1942.9.68. See Heinrich Christoph von Reimers, *St. Petersburg, am Ende seines Ersten Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols., Saint Petersburg, 1805: 2:373.

The spelling of the family name takes a variety of forms in the literature, reflecting different transliterations of the Cyrillic letters; among them are: Youssoupoff, Yussupov, Jussupov, and Yussupoff.

[3] The princess was the wife of Felix Felixovich, count Sumarokov-Elston (1856-1928), but she was the last surviving representative of the Yusupov family, and her husband was given the right to take his wife's surname and title. The Yusupov art collection, however, was hers, and, after the death in 1908 of her first son, Nicolai, the heir to it became her second son, Felix.

[4] The Yusupov collection, including the two portraits by Rembrandt, was moved in 1811 from Saint Petersburg to the family's Arkhangelskoye estate near Moscow, where it survived Napoleon's invasion of Russia during 1812, and was returned again to Saint Petersburg in 1837 to a new family palace on the Moika River. It remained there until sometime after the Russian Revolution of 1917, when much of the collection was seized by the Bolshevik government. The two Rembrandt paintings, however, were smuggled out of the Moika Palace at some point prior to April 1919, when Prince Felix Felixovich Yusupov, his wife and parents, and other members of the Russian nobility left Yalta aboard a British ship. The paintings were taken by the prince to London, where negotiations for their sale began.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1898 Rembrandt: Schilderijen Bijeengebracht ter Gelegenheid van de Inhuldiging van Hare Majesteit Koningin Wilhelmina, Stedelij Museum, Amsterdam, 1898, no. 110.

1909 Les anciennes Ecoles de Peinture dans les Palais et Collections privées Russes, Saint Petersburg, Russia, 1909, no. 291.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 14, 24, repro.

1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure, repro.

2001 A Scholar's Whim: The Collection of Prince Nicolai Borisovich Yusupov, Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow; State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, 2001-2002, no. 120, repro. (shown only in Moscow).

2014 Rembrandt: The Late Works, National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2014-2015, no. 37, repro.

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1828 Le Cointe de Laveau [Lecointe de Laveau], G. "Description d'Arckhangelsky [Arkhangelsky]." *Bulletin du Nord* 3 (March 1828): 284.

1835 Le Cointe de Laveau [Lecointe de Laveau], G. *Description de Moscou: contenant tout ce que cette capitale offre de curieux et d'intéressant*. 2 vols. Moscow, 1835: 2:282.

1839 *Musée du Prince Youssoupoff: contenant les tableaux, marbres, ivoires et porcelaines qui se trouvent dans l'hôtel de son excellence à Saint Pétersbourg*. Saint Petersburg, 1839: 43, no. 203.

1864 Waagen, Gustav Friedrich. *Die Gemäldesammlung in der kaiserlichen Ermitage zu St. Petersburg nebst Bemerkungen über andere dortige Kunstsammlungen*. Munich, 1864: 414.

1883 Bode, Wilhelm von. *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*.

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Braunschweig, 1883: 530, 604, no. 357.

1885 Dutuit, Eugène. *Tableaux et dessins de Rembrandt: catalogue historique et descriptif; supplément à l'Oeuvre complet de Rembrandt*. Paris, 1885: 54.

1893 Michel, Émile. *Rembrandt: Sa vie, son oeuvre et son temps*. Paris, 1893: 567.

1894 Michel, Émile. *Rembrandt: His Life, His Work, and His Time*. 2 vols. Translated by Florence Simmonds. New York, 1894: 2:246.

1897 Bode, Wilhelm von, and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot. *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*. 8 vols. Translated by Florence Simmonds. Paris, 1897-1906: 7:4, 40, no. 489, repro.

1898 Stedelijk Museum. *Rembrandt: Schilderijen bijeengebracht ter gelegenheid van de inhuldiging van Hare Majesteit Koningin Wilhelmina*. Exh. cat. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1898: no. 110.

1899 Bell, Malcolm. *Rembrandt van Rijn and His Work*. London, 1899: 84, 182.

1899 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. "Die Rembrandt-Ausstellungen zu Amsterdam (September–October 1898) und zu London (January–March 1899)." *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 22 (1899): 159-166, no. 34, repro.

1904 Rosenberg, Adolf. *Rembrandt: des Meisters Gemälde*. Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 2. Stuttgart, 1904: 231, repro.

1906 Rosenberg, Adolf. *Rembrandt, des Meisters Gemälde*. Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 2. 2nd ed. Stuttgart, 1906: repro. 346.

1907 Bell, Malcolm. *Rembrandt van Rijn*. The great masters in painting and sculpture. London, 1907: 81, 152.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan

c. 1656/1658

oil on canvas transferred to canvas
overall: 99.5 × 83 cm (39 3/16 × 32 11/16 in.)
framed: 132.08 × 115.25 × 13.97 cm (52 × 45 3/8 × 5 1/2 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.68

ENTRY

The early history of *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves* [fig. 1] and *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan* is shrouded in mystery, although it seems likely that they were the pair of portraits by Rembrandt listed in the Gerard Hoet sale in The Hague in 1760. [1] They had entered the Yusupov collection by 1803, when the German traveler Heinrich von Reimers saw them during his visit to the family's palace in Saint Petersburg, then located on the Fontanka River. [2] Prince Nicolai Borisovich Yusupov (1751–1831) acquired the core of this collection on three extended trips to Europe during the late eighteenth century. In 1827 he commissioned an unpublished five-volume catalog of the paintings, sculptures, and other treasures (still in the family archives at the Arkhangelskoye State Museum & Estate outside Moscow) that included a description as well as a pen-and-ink sketch of each object. The portraits hung in the "Salon des Antiques." His only son and heir, Prince Boris Nicolaievich Yusupov (1794–1849), published a catalog of the collection in French in 1839. [3] An 1864 publication by the director of the Berlin Museum, Gustav Waagen, included a discussion of the Yusupov collection, and his comment about the pair of Rembrandt portraits, that they were "von ausserordentlicher Energie" (of extraordinary energy), was the first of many subsequent positive responses to these works. [4]

The paintings remained secluded and unavailable to most Americans and Europeans until they were shown at the great Rembrandt exhibition in Amsterdam in 1898. There they made a tremendous impact. [5] By 1911, when Roger Fry reviewed a publication describing an exhibition of old master paintings from

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Russian private collections held in Saint Petersburg in 1909, he singled out these portraits as follows: “There are, it is true, many interesting and curious works, but very few masterpieces—none indeed of the first rank, if we except the already well-known Rembrandt portraits of the Youssoupoff collection. These, indeed, are of unsurpassed beauty; the woman especially must count, I think, among the greatest of all Rembrandt creations.” [6]

For those who had not had the opportunity to view the paintings in Amsterdam in 1898, engravings of the works in the commemorative volume of that exhibition or in Dr. Wilhelm von Bode’s monumental catalog of Rembrandt’s paintings, published in 1902, provided excellent visual images. [7] Perhaps it was through Bode’s publication that the paintings became known to Peter A. B. Widener, who, according to his grandson, made a special effort to visit Saint Petersburg to see these two works. Widener apparently managed to see the paintings, probably in 1909, even though Prince Felix Yusupov was reluctant to show them to visitors. “The minute [Widener] saw them, he wanted them. He made an offer, but it was promptly rejected. . . . He was very much disappointed.” [8]

Peter A. B. Widener had not as yet developed into the remarkable collector of Rembrandt paintings he was to become, but it was clear that these works made a lasting impression on him. After having been rebuffed by Yusupov, Widener turned to his London dealer, Arthur J. Sulley, to ask him to find a way to convince the prince to part with his treasures. On April 7, 1911, Sulley wrote to Widener saying that he would try to approach Yusupov in the same way that he had approached the Marquis of Lansdowne concerning Rembrandt’s *The Mill*: “That is to say that my friend is getting an introduction to the owner from one of his personal friends, and is trying to get him to name a price. If the owner will not name any price, I propose (if you agree) to offer him one million rubles, which is about £100,000.” [9] Apparently, though, negotiations proved to be more difficult than Sulley had expected; in a subsequent letter of May 12, 1911, he wrote to Peter’s son, Joseph Widener, that “as far as it is possible to understand anything if anyone gets the Russians we will but as I wrote you last week it is very difficult. I do not think Agnew or anyone else is working at that business now. It has been tried so often without success that people are discouraged. If I do not succeed it will not be because I have left any stone unturned.” [10] The elder Widener died in 1915 without having succeeded in purchasing the paintings.

Although the allure of Widener’s money did not in and of itself convince Prince Yusupov to sell his paintings, these offers clearly pointed out to him the immense

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value collectors placed upon his two Rembrandt portraits. Thus, when the Russian Revolution forced the Prince's family to leave Russia, his son, Prince Felix Felixovich Yusupov (1887–1967), took with him, among other personal possessions and family jewels, the two Rembrandt paintings. [11] When the younger Yusupov, notorious as the assassin of Rasputin, arrived in London in April 1919, stories of his dramatic escape quickly spread, enhancing the appeal of the Rembrandt paintings. [12] Yusupov sought to exploit his circumstances by offering the paintings for sale at extraordinary prices. Newspapers reported an asking price of £500,000.

In the fall of 1920, Joseph E. Widener (a collector in his own right, as well as caretaker of his father's collection) received a letter from a Mr. Harold Hartley offering him Yusupov's paintings for £210,000. Hartley indicated that the prince preferred to sell to an "approved buyer" rather than to a dealer, and also mentioned that the "Prince considers both paintings far superior to 'The Mill' and of greater value." [13] Apparently Widener did not agree to the price, for on July 26, 1921, he received a letter from Francis Tarbox offering him the paintings. "These are being offered for sale at a very low cash price and I am in a position to negotiate same at much lower figure than they can ever again be obtained." [14]

Joseph Widener arrived in London during the summer of 1921 and examined the paintings in a bank vault where they were being kept as collateral for a loan to the prince. Perhaps totally in good faith, or perhaps as a way to purchase the paintings for a lower price, Widener offered to pay the prince £100,000 with the stipulation that Yusupov could repurchase them within three years at eight percent interest should his financial situation improve to the point where he could once again "keep and personally enjoy these wonderful works of art." [15] After a series of negotiations, including transatlantic cables, Yusupov agreed, and the paintings were shipped to Lynnewood Hall with much public acclaim. The £100,000 was paid to the prince by Widener's London agent, Arthur J. Sulley, some ten years after the dealer had begun negotiations to acquire them for Widener's father.

The story of Joseph Widener's acquisition of these extraordinary paintings does not, however, end with the events of 1921. Shortly after Widener acquired them, the collector Calouste Gulbenkian was told by the dealer Joseph Duveen that he had "just lost the two best Rembrandts in the world to Widener. He bought them both for a hundred thousand pounds, and each of them is worth that." [16] Gulbenkian, knowing of Widener's arrangement with Yusupov, then offered to lend the prince £200,000 to allow him to reestablish his financial position, an offer Yusupov found hard to resist. He thus tried to force Widener to return the paintings. Widener

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refused, and from this ensued a notorious lawsuit in 1924–1925 over the nature of the arrangement between Widener and Yusupov. Eventually, the case was decided in Widener's favor, and the paintings remained, along with *The Mill*, at the core of the collection of Rembrandts at Lynnewood Hall, the Widener estate in Elkins Park outside Philadelphia. [17]

Neither painting appears to be signed or dated, although Valentiner in his 1931 catalog of the Widener Collection noted that the portrait of the woman was signed, "*Rembrandt f. 166*' [the last figure illegible]." [18] Dates given to the paintings have all been in the 1660s. When the portraits were exhibited in Amsterdam in 1898, they were dated c. 1660. Bode placed them c. 1662 in his catalog of 1902. Valentiner redated the paintings in 1921 to c. 1668, probably because he tried to identify the figures as Rembrandt's son Titus and Magdalena van Loo, who were married in that year. [19] Although Valentiner's identification found little approval, a date of c. 1667 was retained for the paintings in the catalog of the Widener Collection of 1923. Valentiner revised his dating to the first half of the 1660s in his 1931 publication. [20] Bredius, however, returned to the c. 1667 dating in his 1935 edition of Rembrandt's paintings, [21] a dating that was followed by Bauch and Gerson. [22]

One exception to the consistently late dates given the paintings since the 1930s occurred in the catalog of the Rembrandt exhibition at the National Gallery of Art in 1969. Here it is noted that neither the costumes nor the painting techniques indicate such a late date for the works. [23] Although these observations are not elaborated upon, the suggestion for an earlier dating than traditionally suggested is a valid one. The woman's hairstyle, costume, and use of ornate jewelry are all datable to the 1650s rather than to the late 1660s. The translucent lace collar that covers her shoulders and whose elaborate lower edge continues horizontally across her body is seen in a number of portraits from this period, including *Abraham del Court and His Wife Maria de Kaersgieter*, 1654, by Bartholomeus van der Helst (c. 1613–1670) [fig. 2], and *Portrait of a Young Woman*, 1656, by Isaak Luttichuys (1616–1673) (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). [24] Finally, the plain white cuffs edged with lace are similar to those in Rembrandt's A Woman Holding a Pink of 1656. Also similar in these examples is the manner in which the collar is fastened by an ornate bow and decorated with a circular pin or pendant.

The hairstyle and costume of the man are more difficult to date than are those of the woman, partly because the collar and cuffs have been altered (see Technical Summary). [25] To judge from the X-radiographs [fig. 3] [see X-radiography], the

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simple rectangular shape of the collar the man originally wore was also comparable to styles in the mid-1650s. After the early 1660s, fashions changed, and men began to wear collars that extended farther down the chest (see, for example, Portrait of a Man in a Tall Hat). Just when Rembrandt provided the sitter with a more decorative lace collar is not known, but the alteration probably occurred in the late 1650s. [26]

Costume styles are usually only a rough measurement of date because old styles were frequently worn after new ones were introduced, particularly by older and more conservative people. These sitters, however, appear to be in their late thirties or early forties, and, judging from the woman's jewelry, wealthy. It seems unlikely that they would have had themselves portrayed in outmoded fashions, which, on the basis of costume analysis, would suggest a date for these portraits in the mid-to-late 1650s.

Stylistically, such a date for these paintings is also compatible with Rembrandt's other works. In no painting of his from the mid-1660s does one find the careful modeling of the woman's hands and face, the suggestions of texture as seen in her features, jewelry, and lace, or the broad planar way in which forms are illuminated by the light. No hint of the palette knife is to be found in either work. Similarities of style and technique, however, do exist in paintings from the late 1650s, in particular between the woman and Rembrandt's portrait of Catherine Hooghsaet, signed and dated 1657 (Penrhyn Castle, Wales). [27] The left hand of each sitter, for example, is depicted in a similar manner.

The portrait of the man is more boldly executed than that of the woman in that the modeling does not have the same restrained, planar quality. Brushstrokes on the man's face are broken and roughly juxtaposed as Rembrandt modeled his sharply illuminated features with sure strokes of varying tones of pinks and ochers. The boldness of Rembrandt's touch originally must have been even more pronounced, for X-radiographs demonstrate that both of the man's cuffs and hands were more abstractly rendered than they now appear. The fact that the gloves held by the gentleman in his left hand are cut at the bottom edge of the composition suggests that the paintings were once slightly larger. One could imagine that the figures were initially situated in a more spacious setting, which suggests that they have been trimmed on all sides. The dimensions of the pendant portraits in the Hoet sale of 1760 loosely correspond to the paintings' current sizes, so any reduction in size must have occurred at an earlier date. [28]

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The bold manner with which *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat* and Gloves is executed is related to Rembrandt's painting technique in male portraits of the late 1650s. In earlier portraits, such as *Jan Six*, 1654 [fig. 4], Rembrandt firmly modeled the face with similar short, bold strokes, but his approach in these two instances is slightly different. Whereas the short strokes in the face of the Six portrait join to form distinct planes of light and color, those in the Washington portrait are more roughly executed and loosely blended. In this respect they approach the technique he used in his A Young Man Seated at a Table (possibly Govaert Flinck), which dates c. 1660. Particularly close in these two portraits are the techniques used to model the nose, where strokes from the flesh tones are drawn over a darker color that defines the shadowed edge of the nostril. Similar techniques occur in the shadowed areas around the eyes [fig. 5] and [fig. 6].

An unusual technical feature reinforces the probability that Rembrandt executed these two portraits in the late 1650s: they were both originally painted on a herringbone-weave canvas, a support Rembrandt is not known to have used earlier in his career. The paintings were removed from these supports and transferred onto finely woven canvases. Presumably, this transfer was made in Russia in the nineteenth century. [29]

There seems little question that these works were conceived as companion portraits. Not only were they together in the Yusupov collection by the beginning of the nineteenth century, but the poses assumed by the figures are comparable to those in pendant paintings by other masters. Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641), for example, painted pendant portraits of Peeter Stevens and Anna Wake in 1627 and 1628 (Mauritshuis, The Hague), in which Stevens gestures to his bride, who holds an ostrich-feather fan in her hand. [30] In 1641 Johannes Cornelisz Verspronck (Dutch, 1606/1609 - 1662) painted a standing couple in much the same way: he holding his gloves (Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Enschede) [31], she an ostrich-feather fan (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). [32] In Rembrandt's portraits the subtle interaction of the two, he gesturing toward her while looking at the viewer and she glancing in his direction and holding the fan so that it inclines toward him, is restrained yet poignant. Their expressions have qualities of warmth and trust that convey much about the nature of human relationships.

The question that remains unanswered is the identity of the sitters. The circle of wealthy friends and acquaintances at that period of Rembrandt's life who might have ordered portraits was rather small. Valentiner's hypothesis that they represented Rembrandt's son Titus and his wife, Magdalena van Loo, has long

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since been rejected. A suggestion by Dr. I. H. van Eeghen that they represent Jacob Louysz Trip (1636–1664) and his wife, Margarita Hendricksdr Trip (1637–1711), is doubtful. [33] Van Eeghen's premise was primarily that the Trip family was one of the few rich families in Amsterdam that continued to give portrait commissions to Rembrandt during his later years. Nevertheless, these sitters appear to be in their late thirties or early forties and not in their twenties, as Jacob and Margarita would have been in the late 1650s. [34] None of these possible identities can, however, be verified, which is particularly unfortunate because so little is known about Rembrandt's patrons at this stage of his career.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves*, c. 1656/1658, oil on canvas transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.67

fig. 2 Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Abraham del Court and His Wife Maria de Kaersgieter*, 1654, oil on canvas, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Tromp, Rotterdam

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fig. 3 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves*, c. 1656/1658, oil on canvas transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.67

fig. 4 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Jan Six*, 1654, oil on canvas, Six Collection, Amsterdam

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fig. 5 Detail of eyes, Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan*, c. 1656/1658, oil on canvas transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.68

fig. 6 Detail of eyes, Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Young Man Seated at a Table (possibly Govaert Flinck)*, c. 1660, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.77

NOTES

[1] This entry text was written for the pair of paintings *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves* and *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan*.

[2] Heinrich Christoph von Reimers, *St. Petersburg, am Ende seines Ersten Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Saint Petersburg, 1805), 2:373.

[3] Frederick R. Andresen, through his colleague Evgeny Maksakov, kindly provided the NGA library with a photocopy of this catalogue (*Musée du Prince Youssoupoff* [Saint Petersburg, 1839]). See also: Oleg Yakovlevich Neverov, *Great Private Collections of Imperial Russia* (New York and Saint Petersburg, 2004), 89–98.

[4] Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Die Gemäldesammlung in der kaiserlichen Ermitage zu St. Petersburg nebst Bemerkungen über andere dortige Kunstsammlungen* (Munich, 1864), 414: “Ein männliches und ein weibliches Bildniss, fast Kniestücke. Pendants. Von ausserordentlicher Energie. Der kühle Ton der Lichter, wie der Schatten. die sehr breite Behandlung, beweisen, dass diese Bilder der spateren Zeit angehören.” The Rembrandt paintings were not mentioned in Louis Viardot, *Les musées d'Allemagne et de Russie* (Paris, 1844); however, as Viardot only listed a few works, many of

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which were the same as those discussed by Waagen some twenty years later (see Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Die Gemäldesammlung in der kaiserlichen Ermitage zu St. Petersburg nebst Bemerkungen über andere dortige Kunstsammlungen* [Munich, 1864]), one wonders if he saw the total collection. According to later reports, the family had always been quite reluctant to show off their treasures, so it is possible that Viardot was not given access to them. An article on Joseph Widener's acquisition of the paintings *(American Art News* 20 [December 10, 1921], 4) quoted a *London Times* article in which it was written that: "The grandfather of the present Prince was a man of parsimonious disposition who guarded his picture gallery from all ordinary mortals and sightseers. At a ball given in the palace to the Imperial Court, Czar Alexander III wished to see the Rembrandts. Prince Youssoupoff (*sic)* personally conducted the czar and two Grand Dukes to see his gallery but kept out all other guests." Peter A. B. Widener (Joseph Widener's son, given his grandfather's name), *Without Drums* (New York, 1940), 61, writes that the czar was allowed to see the collection only after he *ordered* Youssoupoff to unlock his picture gallery. Did the prince fear a request by the czar to transfer some of the paintings to the imperial collection at the Hermitage?

[5] The *London Times* (September 15, 1898), for example, described "the immortal, unchanging interest" of these two portraits. See Catherine B. Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship* (Amsterdam, 2004), 136, who cites the comments of the art critic Jan Veth, who considered these portraits "true touchstones for questions of authenticity, with their beautiful execution and powerful chiaroscuro."

[6] Roger Fry, "Review and Notices," *The Burlington Magazine* 19 (September 1911): 353.

[7] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Die Rembrandt-Ausstellungen zu Amsterdam (September–October 1898) und zu London (January–March 1899)," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 22 (1899), nos. 34–35. Wilhelm von Bode assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 7: nos. 489–490. The high quality of the reproductions in Bode's publication was remarked upon by Roger Fry in 1921 when he had the occasion to publish photographs of the paintings in his article, "Two Rembrandt Portraits," *The Burlington Magazine* 38 (May 1921): 210.

[8] Peter A. B. Widener, *Without Drums* (New York, 1940), 60–64. The date of Widener's purported trip is not known. His grandson writes that he went to Russia "around the turn of the century." According to Dr. Ronald Moe (author of *Prelude to the Revolution: The Murder of Rasputin* [Chula Vista, CA, 2011]), a more probable date is 1909, the year the Kiel Canal opened, which would have provided access to Saint Petersburg for Widener's yacht *Josephine*. In that year also the paintings were on public exhibition in Saint

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Petersburg for the first time since being lent to Amsterdam in 1898. The "Prince Yusupov" with whom the negotiations were carried out during those years was Felix, count Sumarokov-Elston (1856–1928), husband of Princess Zinaide Yusupova, the last surviving representative of the Yusupov family. He was given the right to take his wife's name and title, but the art collection was actually hers.

[9] Letter in NGA curatorial files.

[10] Letter in NGA curatorial files. Sulley may indeed have traveled to Saint Petersburg to try to arrange for the purchase prior to the start of World War I in 1914. An article in *American Art News* 20 (December 17, 1921), 4, says that "the late P. A. B. Widener before the war sent an emissary to Russia and arranged for their purchase, the price being $500,000. Prince Youssoupoff backed out of the deal by cable, after the emissary had returned to England."

[11] Felix Felixovich, according to Dr. Moe, was a student at Oxford from 1909 to 1912. He was not given the title Prince Yusupov until 1914.

[12] According to Dr. Moe and Dr. Idris R. Traylor (who, before his death, was researching the Yusupov family for a planned book), the Yusupov family sailed from Yalta in the Crimea on the British warship *Marlborough,* which had been sent by King George V to take his aunt, the Dowager Empress Maria Federovna, to London in April 1919. Yusupov and his wife disembarked in Malta and traveled via Brindisi and Paris to London. The report by Sir Francis Pridham, a British naval officer who participated in the evacuation (*Close of a Dynasty* [London, 1956]), includes a photograph of young Felix Yusupov aboard the *Marlborough*. Contemporary reports about Yusupov's escape from Russia, however, raise the possibility that he may have dramatized the circumstances of his flight. Charles John Holmes, *Self and Partners (Mostly Self): Being the Reminiscences of C. J. Holmes* (New York, 1936), 376, writes, for example: "In 1919 Prince Youssoupoff suddenly appeared with his two famous Rembrandt portraits, still concealed by the 'Modernist' canvases under which he had contrived to bring them out of Russia. Thrilling as was his account of the death of Rasputin, the story of his own escape, in the disguise of an art student, with the family jewels swathed around his body in long, painful chains, was no less vivid. Trying indeed must the moment have been when a *kommissar,* much interested in the arts, took a fancy to one of the Prince's first experiments in painting, and wanted to buy it, in ignorance of the fact that it covered a Rembrandt masterpiece." Variants of this story appeared in news reports in 1921 (see NGA curatorial files). The artist who painted over the two Rembrandt paintings was a friend of Yusupov, Gleb W. Derujinsky, who later immigrated to the United States and became a successful sculptor. I would like to thank Andrea Derujinsky for providing me with biographical information about her grandfather and his relationship to Yusupov (personal communication, July

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2013).

[13] Letter, October 20, 1920, in NGA curatorial files.

[14] Letter in NGA curatorial files.

[15] Samuel N. Behrman, *Duveen* (New York, 1952), 18 (also 1972 ed., 16). According to Dr. Moe, Behrman's implication that Yusupov's reacquisition of the paintings was contingent upon a restoration of the old regime in Russia is inaccurate. A cable from Joseph Widener dated September 19, 1922, says that the purchase contract "provides that re-purchase can be made only for Prince Youssoupoffs [sic] personal enjoyment of the pictures and that I am to receive satisfactory assurances and guarantees that pictures or title to same will not pass out of his possession for ten year period." The cable is in the Duveen Brothers records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 383, box 528, folder 4 (see also copies in NGA curatorial files).

[16] Samuel N. Behrman, *Duveen* (New York, 1952), 18 (also 1972 ed., 16).

[17] Transcripts from the trial (kindly provided by Frederick Andresen) and copies of the newspaper coverage of it by the *New York Times* are in NGA curatorial files. See also Samuel N. Behrman, *Duveen* (New York, 1952), 22–24 (also 1972 ed., 20); John Walker, *Self-Portrait with Donors: Confessions of an Art Collector* (Boston and Toronto, 1974), 244.

[18] *Pictures in the Collection of Joseph Widener at Lynnewood Hall*, *Elkins Park, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1931), 74–77.

[19] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt: wiedergefundene Gemälde (1910–1920)*, Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben, 27 (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921), 484–485.

[20] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt Paintings in America* (New York, 1931), nos. 171–172. Valentiner dates them "slightly after paintings dated 1662."

[21] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* (Vienna, 1935), no. 327, 14 note.

[22] Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde* (Berlin, 1966), nos. 446 and 528, 23 note 446, 26 note 528; Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 255, 313, 575 note 327, 582 note 402.

[23] *Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art* (Washington, 1969), 25.

[24] See inventory no. C1477, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

[25] Pierre Paul von Weiner et al., *Les anciennes écoles de peinture dans les palais et collections privées Russes* (Brussels, 1910), 8, lament the damage that had occurred to the Yusupov paintings as a result of poor restoration: "Cette collection est restée intacte, on plutôt seulement complète, car la restauration du professeur Prakhoff y causa tout récemment un dommage

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irréparable: un certain nombre de toiles . . . en a cruellement souffert." Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann (letter January 8, 1985, NGA curatorial files) has kindly provided information about the twentieth-century restoration: "I spoke with C. F. Louis de Wild who checked his notes. The paintings were brought to his father's home by Duveen in 1922. His father was mortally ill at the time, and only cleaned the man, with the help of his son (Louis), but did not retouch, inpaint or complete the restoration in any way. Louis does not remember what the painting looked like at the time. The woman was not touched. What this means is that De Wild Sr. and Jr. started cleaning the man in 1922, then gave up because of personal circumstances. Neither he nor I know who did carry out the cleaning."

[26] The billowing cuffs are more elaborate than the normal flat cuffs, but they do resemble those seen in Bartholomeus van der Helst's *Portrait of a Young Man*, 1655 (Toledo Museum of Art), inventory no. 76.12; see *The Toledo Museum of Art: European Paintings* (Toledo, Ohio, 1976), 247, no. 101, repro.

[27] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), no. 391, repro.

[28] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of naamlyst van schilderijen...,* 2 vols. (The Hague, 1752), with supplement by Pieter Terwesten (1770) (reprint, Soest, 1976), 3:225, nos. 49 and 50, where they are described as being "hoog 39, breet 30 ½ duimen."

[29] Inscribed in Russian on the back of the *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves* is: "Painting transferred from an old canvas onto a new canvas. I. Sidorov." Translation kindly made by Dauphine Sloan.

[30] See inventory nos. 239, 240, Mauritshuis, The Hague. Discussed by Wheelock in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. et al., *Anthony van Dyck* (Washington, 1990), 196–200.

[31] See inventory no. 515, Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Enschede.

[32] See inventory no. A3064, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. For both, see Rudolf E. O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck* (Haarlem, 1979), 158, no. 32, repro., 161, no. 33, repro.

[33] I. H. van Eeghen, "De familie Trip en het Trippenhuis," in *Het Trippenhuis te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, Oxford, and New York, 1983), 71–73, 121 note 105.

[34] Henriette Rahusen has suggested (personal communication, 2010) that the man bears great similarity to Aernout van der Mye (c. 1625–1681), the second man from the left in Rembrandt's *Syndics of the Cloth Drapers' Guild* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, on loan from the city of Amsterdam, see the entry on *Portrait of a Man in a Tall Hat*, fig. 1), which the master executed in 1662. Aernout van der Mye was a Roman Catholic cloth merchant whose home on the Nieuwendijk 186 housed one of Amsterdam's "hidden" Catholic churches in 1656. If the male sitter proves to be Van der Mye, *Lady*

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with the Ostrich-Feather Fan would be a portrait of his wife, Johanna Vloots. For information on Van der Mye, see S. A. C. Dudok van Heel, *Van Amsterdamse Burgers tot Europese Aristocraten*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 2008), 1:303.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Presumably, this painting was transferred in Russia in the nineteenth century at the same time as Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves. The original fabric support was removed and the painting was transferred to a fine, plain-weave fabric with a gauzelike fabric interleaf. A herringbone pattern in the background paint probably indicates the original canvas weave. Because the painting has been transferred, it is impossible to determine if the painting's dimensions have been altered from an assessment of the support. The original yellowish quartz-type ground layer was retained at the time of transfer and reinforced with an additional, thick white layer that contains zinc white, a pigment available only after 1840.[1]

The paint handling varies from thin glazes to rich, blended strokes with stiff paste accents in a broad range of brushwork and layering. The painting is in excellent condition. It may have been restored in 1922 at the same time as its companion, Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves.[2] It was treated in 2006–2007 to remove discolored varnish and overpaint. The treatment revealed only small losses along the edges and a cluster of losses in the background on the left side.

[1] The ground was analyzed the by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections.

[2] A letter from Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, dated January 8, 1985, in NGA curatorial files discusses a treatment of Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves, which was begun by Louis de Wild and his son, but completed by someone else. Though Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan was not treated by the De Wilds, it was probably treated by the person who completed the treatment of its companion. See note 22 of this object's entry.

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PROVENANCE

Possibly Gerard Hoet, Jr. [d. 1760], The Hague; possibly (sale, by Ottho Van Thol, Huibert Keetelaar, and Pierre Yver, The Hague, 25 August 1760, no. 50).[1] Prince Nicolai Borisovich Yusupov [1751-1831], Saint Petersburg and Moscow, by 1803;[2] by inheritance to his son, Prince Boris Nicolaiovich Yusupov [1794-1849], Moscow and Saint Petersburg; by inheritance to his son, Prince Nicolai Borisovich Yusupov [1827-1891], Saint Petersburg; by inheritance to his daughter, Princess Zinaida [Zenaida] Nikolaievna Yusupova [1861-1939], Saint Petersburg, Yalta, and London;[3] sold 1921 by her son and heir, Prince Felix Felixovich Yusupov [1887-1967],[4] to Joseph E. Widener; inheritance from Estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, after purchase by funds of the Estate; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderijen...*, 2 vols., The Hague, 1752, supplement by Pieter Terwesten, 1770, reprint ed. Soest, 1976, 3: 225, no. 50. The painting is listed as: "Een dito Vrouws-Pourtrait: de weergaa, door denzelven; van de eige groote."

[2] On the formation and history of the Yusupov collection see: Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, *A Scholar's Whim: Collection of Prince Nicolai Borisovich Yusupov*, 2 vols., Moscow, 2001; Oleg Yakovlevich Neverov, *Great Private Collections of Imperial Russia*, New York and St. Petersburg, 2004: 89-102; State Hermitage Museum, *Collectors in St. Petersburg*, exh. cat., Hermitage Amsterdam, Zwolle, 2006: 23, 37-47. The German traveller Heinrich Christoph von Reimers (1768-1812) visited the collection in 1803 when it was housed in the family's palace on the Fontanka River in Saint Petersburg; his description of it, published in 1805, mentions the Gallery's painting, and its pendant NGA 1942.9.67. See Heinrich Christoph von Reimers, *St. Petersburg, am Ende seines Ersten Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols., Saint Petersburg, 1805: 2:373.

The spelling of the family name takes a variety of forms in the literature, reflecting different transliterations of the Cyrillic letters; among them are: Youssoupoff, Yussupov, Jussupov, and Yussupoff.

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[3] The princess was the wife of Felix Felixovich, count Sumarokov-Elston (1856-1928), but she was the last surviving representative of the Yusupov family, and her husband was given the right to take his wife's surname and title. The Yusupov art collection, however, was hers, and, after the death in 1908 of her first son, Nicolai, the heir to it became her second son, Felix.

[4] The Yusupov collection, including the two portraits by Rembrandt, was moved in 1811 from Saint Petersburg to the family's Arkhangelskoye estate near Moscow, where it survived Napoleon's invasion of Russia during 1812, and was returned again to Saint Petersburg in 1837 to a new family palace on the Moika River. It remained there until sometime after the Russian Revolution of 1917, when much of the collection was seized by the Bolshevik government. The two Rembrandt paintings, however, were smuggled out of the Moika Palace.at some point prior to April 1919, when Prince Felix Felixovich Yusupov, his wife and parents, and other members of the Russian nobility left Yalta aboard a British ship. The paintings were taken by the prince to London, where negotiations for their sale began.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1898 Rembrandt: Schilderijen Bijeengebracht ter Gelegenheid van de Inhuldiging van Hare Majesteit Koningin Wilhelmina, Stedelij Museum, Amsterdam, 1898, no. 111.

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1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure, repro.

2001 A Scholar's Whim: The Collection of Prince Nicolai Borisovich Yusupov, Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow; State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, 2001-2002, no. 121, repro. (shown only in Moscow).

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2014 Rembrandt: The Late Works, National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2014-2015, no. 38, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Portrait of a Man in a Tall Hat

c. 1663

oil on canvas
overall: 121.3 x 94 cm (47 3/4 x 37 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.69

ENTRY

The identity of this imposing sitter has long been lost, but his dress and demeanor indicate that he was a well-to-do burgher, probably an Amsterdam merchant. The date of the portrait is also unknown, but similarities between this work and Rembrandt's *Syndics of the Cloth Drapers' Guild* of 1662 [fig. 1] suggest that the two paintings are not far removed in date. The sitter's hairstyle and costume, particularly his wide, flat collar with its tassels, are similar, as is the dignified gravity that he projects as he focuses his eyes on the viewer from beneath his wide-brimmed black hat. Even the herringbone canvases that Rembrandt used for these paintings are comparable. [1]

The vigor and surety of Rembrandt's brushwork are particularly evident in the head. He has modeled the man's face with broad strokes heavily loaded with a relatively dry paint. Since it is mixed with little medium, the paint has a broken character that enhances the sitter's rough-hewn features. Stylistically, this manner of execution is broader than that found in the Gallery's *A Young Man Seated at a Table (possibly Govaert Flinck)*, with which it is often compared, [2] and, to a certain extent, even broader than that of the *Syndics of the Cloth Drapers' Guild,* an evolution of style that suggests a date of execution subsequent to these works, perhaps 1663.

Unfortunately, aside from the well-preserved face and the relative disposition of the figure, it is extremely difficult to make precise assessments about this painting. The basic problem is that the original character of the painting has been distorted through flattening, Abrasion, and discolored varnish. [3] Infrared examination [see

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Infrared Reflectography] reveals that extensive abrasion in the reddish brown background has been heavily restored. The degree to which the massive black form of the man's robes has been damaged by abrasion and/or reworking, however, cannot be determined. Presumably, this illegible mass once had some definition of form that would have related to the three-dimensionality of the man's body.

The issue about the condition of the robe is of some consequence because the X-radiographs [see X-radiography] reveal significant Pentimenti in the figure's body. Rembrandt originally had depicted the gentleman with an even longer collar and with his hands in quite different positions. The sitter initially held his left hand higher, at waist level [fig. 2]. His cuff was visible, and he held a pair of gloves. The right hand, clasping the armrest of a chair, is harder to read, but it appears as though it used to extend downward in front of the sitter, perhaps resting on or holding some object. To judge from the X-radiographs, these hands were fully modeled. Sharp ridges of lead white paint along their forms indicate that Rembrandt used a palette knife in creating them, a technique not otherwise evident in this painting, but one that Rembrandt began exploiting during the mid-1660s. [4]

As is also clear from the X-radiographs, the different placement of the hands affected the position of the arms. As a result the contour of the body is now much larger than it was originally. It may well be that the sitter initially did not have a cloak draped over his shoulders. X-radiographs also indicate that the crown of the hat was slightly smaller and was silhouetted against a lighter background than at present. At the time that the composition was changed, it is likely that the dimensions of the painting were also reduced. [5]

These changes may have been undertaken to give the sitter a greater presence and added austerity. Moreover, by minimizing the activity of the hands, the head received added emphasis. Unfortunately, large portions of the figure in its present appearance are without visual interest. Because of the thick layers of discolored varnish, it is virtually impossible to determine whether the lack of modeling in the robes results from the condition of the painting or from the quality of the artistic representation. One should not exclude the possibility that someone other than Rembrandt made these changes. In the hands, the only area of the body that can be seen properly, the evidence is not conclusive. The portrayal of the right hand is particularly unsuccessful, and the arm of the chair floats disconcertingly in the midst of the robes surrounding it. [6] Nevertheless, the sitter's left hand is firmly

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modeled in a manner not unlike that of the face, so an ultimate judgment as to who executed these changes of composition must be reserved until the painting is restored.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Syndics of the Cloth Drapers' Guild*, 1662, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

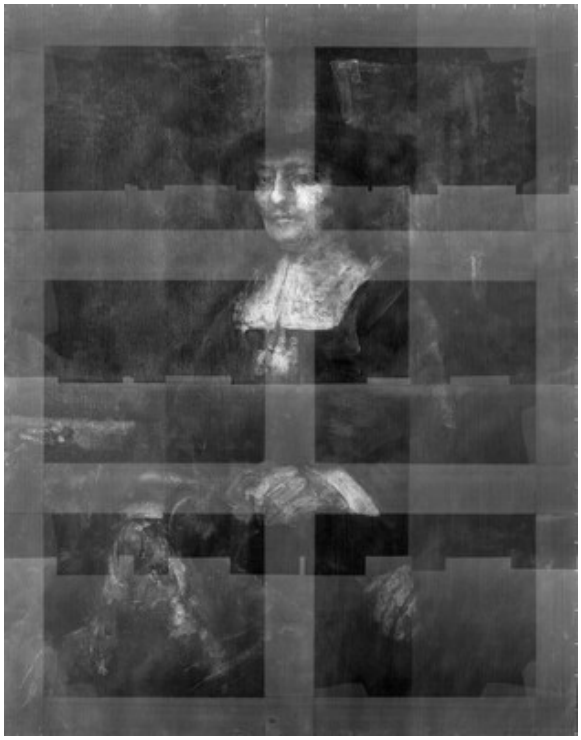

fig. 2 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Man in a Tall Hat*, c. 1663, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.69

NOTES

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[1] Rembrandt used herringbone canvas in a number of paintings from the 1660s, including the *Claudius Civilis* (Nationalmuseum, Stockholm), *Family Portrait* (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig), *Man with a Magnifying Glass*, and *Woman Holding a Pink* (both Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). See also discussion of the pendants *Portrait of a Gentleman with a Tall Hat and Gloves* and *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan*.

[2] Wilhelm von Bode assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 7:3.

[3] See Technical Summary.

[4] See the discussion of Rembrandt's *Lucretia*.

[5] No thread distortions are found along any edge, which is evidence that the painting was once larger on all sides. It is rather unusual for a portrait of this size to have a horizontal seam, a fact that may indicate that the painting was initially quite a bit larger. *Syndics of the Cloth Drapers' Guild* has a similar construction (its dimensions are 191.5 x 279 cm).

[6] This area is so confusing that Bode thought that the sitter was holding a letter (Wilhelm von Bode assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. [Paris, 1897–1906], 7:36, no. 487). He titled the painting *Portrait of a Man in a High Hat Holding a Letter in His Right Hand*. This same reading was continued in Cornelis Hofstede de Groot and Wilhelm Reinhold Valentiner, *Pictures in the Collection of P. A. B. Widener at Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania*, vol. 1, *Early German Dutch and Flemish Schools* (Philadelphia, 1913); Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 6:365, no. 781; and Bernard Berenson, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, William Roberts, and Wilhelm Reinhold Valentiner, *Paintings in the Collection of Joseph Widener at Lynnewood Hall* (Elkins Park, Penn., 1923).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a medium-weight, herringbone-weave fabric consisting of two pieces seamed horizontally at center, 65 cm from the top. The seam protrudes slightly. The support has been double lined using a gauze interleaf, which is visible in the X-radiographs. The tacking margins have been removed. Absence of cusping on all sides suggests a reduction of the original dimensions. Although a

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thin ground is present, the color could not be determined because it is obscured by a thin, black layer, which is probably a painted sketch. An additional reddish brown underpainting occurs in selected areas such as the face.

Paint was applied as thick pastes with complex layering and lively brushmarking in the features. Brushes and a palette knife were used to apply the paint, and lines were incised with the butt end of a brush. The figure was painted after the background. The red paint of the table continues underneath the black cloak. Several artist's changes are visible in the X-radiographs. The proper left arm was originally lower at the shoulder, but bent sharply at the elbow with the hand resting just above the sitter's lap holding a pair of gloves. The proper right arm originally extended downward, ending in a hand that grasped some draped object. White cuffs were eliminated from both sleeves, the left collar tassel was moved to the right, the collar was shortened, and the hat was slimmed.

Numerous small losses have occurred in the white collar and scattered minor losses are located overall. The face is intact save minute flake losses. Severe abrasion in the background and costume has been inpainted. The paint texture has been flattened, probably due to an aggressive lining procedure. A thick, discolored varnish layer covers the surface.

PROVENANCE

Stanisaw August Poniatowski, king of Poland [1732-1798]. (Mr. Noe, Munich). Gasser collection, Vienna. Prince Klemens Wenzel von Metternich [1773-1859]; purchased by (Otto Mündler, Paris); sold 1865 to Ivor Bertie Guest, 1st baron Wimborne [1835-1914], Canford Manor, Dorsetshire.[1] (Arthur J. Sulley & Co., London); Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, by 1912; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] The painting was first published by Wilhelm von Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig, 1883: 530, 579–580, no. 148. The early provenance is given in *A Catalogue of the Pictures at Canford Manor in the Possession of Lord Wimborne*, Edinburgh, 1888: 62, no. 153, but it has not yet been confirmed through other sources. The painting does not appear in Tadeusz

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Mankowski's reconstruction of the 1795 inventory of the Polish king's collection, *Galerja Stanisawa Augusta*, Lwów, 1932. Gasser, described in the 1888 catalogue as "the sculptor of Vienna," was perhaps Hans Gasser (1817-1868), an Austrian sculptor and painter who also built up an art collection (see Walter Krause, "Gasser, Hans," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols., New York, 1996: 12:172.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt Workshop
Dutch 17th Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Portrait of Rembrandt

1650

oil on canvas
overall: 92 x 75.5 cm (36 1/4 x 29 3/4 in.)
framed: 125.1 x 107 x 11.4 cm (49 1/4 x 42 1/8 x 4 1/2 in.)
Inscription: center right: Rembrandt f. / 1650
Widener Collection 1942.9.70

ENTRY

For an artist whose face is so well known through his numerous painted, drawn, and etched self-portraits, it is quite remarkable that Rembrandt's image in this painting was not recognized by early nineteenth-century critics. While it was in the possession of Chevalier Érard and William Williams Hope, two important and discerning collectors, the sitter was thought to be the important Dutch admiral Maerten Harpertsz Tromp (1598–1653). One wonders what prompted this unexpected belief since Tromp's known portraits look totally different. [1] To judge from the commentary in the Érard catalog, the theory seems to have been based partially on the outmoded costume: the pleated white shirt, the dark overdress with its rich impastos bordering the front and slashed purple sleeves lined with yellow, and the brown beret worn at a jaunty angle over the elaborate yellow-and-red skullcap. The theory that the portrait depicted an admiral was reinforced by the gold-handled staff upon which the sitter rests his hand. But primarily, it seems, the depiction of the sitter's character fit what was thought to be Tromp's assured, noble, and philosophical nature. [2]

While the sitter's expression, created through subtle effects of lighting on the face as well as the unusual, sidelong glance, has continued to intrigue writers, entirely different interpretations of its character have been advanced by critics who recognized that the painting represented Rembrandt. [3] Bode found little evidence of a philosophical mind in the image. He wrote that the "somewhat leering

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expression, half weary, half watchful, . . . is by no means favourable to his appearance." [4] Valentiner, on the other hand, saw in the face "a forehead already deeply lined, melancholy, almost despondent of aspect, indicating how early he had experienced the tragic side of life." [5] While Rosenberg described the same expression as "critical and deeply questioning," [6] Pinder, reflecting more closely the sentiments of Valentiner, felt that the portrait expressed the cares and worries that were beginning to beset Rembrandt. [7] Contrary to these interpretations of the image as representing a despondent and questioning individual was that of Goldscheider, who described the Rembrandt portrayed here as "a handsome, distinguished adventurer without the slightest resemblance to a humble Mennonite." [8]

While the reading of the emotional impact of the image may have varied markedly among these and other authors, they had in common a conviction that this painting was an exceptional work by the master. [9] Thus the shock that greeted Horst Gerson's 1969 pronouncement that the painting was an "18th- or 19th-century imitation, combining light effects typical of Rembrandt's early work with a composition and mood characteristic of the later period" was felt throughout the world of Rembrandt scholarship. [10] With that statement Gerson altered once again the way the painting has been viewed. For just as nineteenth-century critics had to reassess their interpretations of the figure's mood when the identification of the sitter changed, it is necessary to raise the more fundamental question as to whether the expressive character of the painting is, after all, consistent with Rembrandt, and even with seventeenth-century sensibilities.

Technical analyses have shown that Gerson's assertion that the painting is a later imitation is wrong. The character of the paint mixtures, the types of pigments used, and the presence of a double Ground—a red lower ground covered by a dark gray upper layer—are all totally consistent with Rembrandt's workshop practices (see Technical Summary). [11] There also appears to be nothing unusual in the type of canvas used or in the buildup of the image. The initial blocking-in of the form, which can be seen in the waist and unfinished right hand, is also consistent with Rembrandt's manner of painting. Finally, X-radiographs [see X-radiography] reveal that modifications to the shape of the hat were made during the execution of the painting [fig. 1], a phenomenon that is commonly found in Rembrandt's own paintings (see his Self-Portrait). Originally, the plaid-patterned skullcap under the beret extended out behind the head more than it presently does. [12]

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The conservation treatment of the painting in 1993, however, revealed that Gerson was correct in his intuition that the execution was somehow at variance with that found in Rembrandt's own works around 1650. [13] Although the general disposition of the figure, standing at an angle to the picture plane and looking quizzically at the viewer over his near shoulder, is consistent with Rembrandt self-portraits [fig. 2], the brushwork used to model the figure lacks both Rembrandt's sensitivity and vigor. The most obvious instance where the modeling is at variance with Rembrandt's style is the hand resting on the staff. Its superficially rendered form has nothing to do with his manner of modeling hands.

The modeling of the face, likewise, lacks firmness and conviction. While the play of light across the features is sensitively rendered, the restrained brushstrokes only vaguely suggest the underlying form, whether it be the shape of the eyelids or the contour of the nose. The weakness of character conveyed through Rembrandt's questioning expression is also the result of the irresolute contours defining his features.

Another unusual aspect of this painting is that the costume is executed in a manner quite different from the face. Whereas the features are modeled with delicate nuance, the costume is indicated with a variety of bold techniques. [14] Broad, flat planes of purple and yellow enliven the surface of the split sleeve; thick impastos, mixed with a variety of bright colors and then toned with a dark brown glaze, create the appearance of an embroidered frontispiece across the chest; and, finally, the plaid pattern of the skullcap is painted with vigorous, and quite specific, strokes of red and yellow. The attribution problems raised here are threefold. First, Rembrandt generally did not use such markedly different techniques in the face and costume of a portrait. Second, by the 1650s, he had developed a manner of painting that would allow him to suggest a wide range of textures in materials without significantly altering the techniques that he used to depict them. Finally, his paint always worked toward creating structure. In this costume, most of the accents of color, as for example on the sleeve or in the skullcap, do not work effectively to convey the nature of the material. This problem is also particularly evident in the superficial black strokes that define the collar of the costume.

Although these stylistic considerations are sufficient to remove the painting from Rembrandt's own oeuvre, the identity of the artist who actually executed this portrait cannot be determined. The signature and date, while apparently not written by Rembrandt, appear to be integral to the surface and probably indicate that the painting was executed by a member of the workshop in about 1650 to be

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sold on the open market. It may well be that Rembrandt, after having posed for this painting, approved its concept and manner of execution before allowing its sale. To judge from the number of self-portraits Rembrandt painted and etched, and from the numerous portraits of him painted by members of his workshop, there must have been a ready market for images of the artist.

None of the painters known to have been in Rembrandt's workshop around 1650, including Willem Drost (Dutch, active c. 1650 - active 1655), Jacobus Leveck (1634–1675), Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634 - 1693), and Constantijn van Renesse (Dutch, 1626 - 1680), can be convincingly associated with this work. The differences in the handling of the paint in the head and the costume are so pronounced in this work that I have wondered whether two artists might have executed the painting. No technical evidence, however, suggests that the painting was a collaborative effort. The stylistic discrepancies are probably the result of a workshop assistant basing his style for modeling the head on Rembrandt's work of the mid-1630s and his manner of painting drapery on Rembrandt's style of the early 1650s. Close stylistic comparison can be made to *Man with a Gilded Helmet* [fig. 3], an unsigned and undated work from the Rembrandt workshop that is datable to the early 1650s. [15] In this work, too, the face and costume are rendered in strikingly different manners. In the Berlin painting a marked contrast exists between the relatively delicate modeling of the face and the thick impastos in the helmet, a contrast in techniques quite similar to that found in the *Portrait of Rembrandt.* While various attributions have been suggested for *Man with a Gilded Helmet,* including the artists Karel van der Pluym (1625–1672) and Heyman Dullaert (1636–1684), none is convincing. [16] As noted by the Rembrandt Research Project, an even closer correlation exists between *Portrait of Rembrandt* and two pendant portraits from 1650 by an unknown artist from Rembrandt's workshop: *Man in a Military Costume,* Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge [fig. 4], [17] and *Woman in a Fanciful Costume,* John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida. [18] They reached their conclusions on the basis of technical analyses of the paint layers, and a comparable contrast between carefully modeled faces and freely rendered historicizing costumes as seen in *Portrait of Rembrandt*. [19] Whether or not the same unknown artist painted all of these historicizing portraits is a puzzle yet to be solved.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt Workshop, *Portrait of Rembrandt*, 1650, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.70

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait as the Apostle Paul*, 1661, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

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fig. 3 Rembrandt School, *Man with a Gilded Helmet*, early 1650s, oil on canvas, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, NY

fig. 4 Unkown follower of Rembrandt, *Man in a Military Costume*, 1650, oil on panel, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. Photo: The Bridgeman Art Library

NOTES

[1] Since the provenance for this painting is not known prior to the mention in the Érard Collection, it is not known whether the identification was based on an even older tradition. For an image of Tromp from the early 1650s, see Jan Lievens' *Portrait of the Vice-Admiral, Maerten Harpertsz Tromp* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. A 838).

[2] Sébastien Érard estate sale, Paris, August 7–14, 1832 (rescheduled from April 23 and following days), no. 119, 136–137, includes the following description:
Des traits mâles, une contenance assurée, de la noblesse unie à beaucoup

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de simplicité, donnent une grande expression à ce beau portrait. Dans la demi-teinte qui l'enveloppe et qui va si bien à sa gravité, on pourrait voir une pensée philosophique, une allusion dont Rembrandt était bien capable. Martin Tromp, indifférent pour les titres, honorifiques, pour les choses d'apparat, modeste au plus haut point, ne dut trouver du plaisir à se montrer que quand il était en présence des ennemis de sa nation. Au surplus, quelqu'ait été l'intention du peintre, cette ombre répandue sur la figure d'un tel homme sied bien à son caractère.

[3] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 7:86–87, no. 211, was the first to correctly identify the painting as a portrait of Rembrandt.

[4] Wilhelm von Bode assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 5:15.

[5] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt Paintings in America* (New York, 1931), introduction.

[6] Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), 1: 28.

[7] Wilhelm Pinder, *Rembrandts Selbstbildnisse* (Munich, 1950), 81–82.

[8] Ludwig Goldscheider, *Rembrandt Paintings, Drawings and Etchings* (London, 1960), 174, cat. 65.

[9] Ludwig Goldscheider, *Rembrandt Paintings, Drawings and Etchings* (London, 1960), 174, cat. 65, considered it "one of the finest portraits ever painted."

[10] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 550, cat. 39. The reaction can be judged by the fact that Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, "The Present State of Rembrandt Studies," *Art Bulletin* 53 (March 1971): 93–94, listed this work first among what he considered Gerson's "five or six spectacular 'disattributions' of well-known and admired paintings, in some cases never previously doubted." Haverkamp-Begemann noted in 1993 that he continued to believe in the attribution to Rembrandt (personal communication).

[11] I would like to thank Barbara A. Miller (former conservation scientist at the National Gallery of Art, who first analyzed the painting in 1981), Michael Palmer, and Melanie Gifford for their help in interpreting the technical data.

[12] Its form can also be seen with the naked eye.

[13] The conservation treatment was undertaken in 1992–1993.

[14] For a careful analysis of the sitter's historicizing costume, which "is reminiscent of German or Netherlandish attire of the first half of the 16th century," see Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 4, *Self-Portraits*, ed. Ernst van de Wetering

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(Dordrecht, 2005), 399–400.

[15] For an excellent discussion of this work, including information about its restoration, see Jan Kelch et al., *Der Mann mit dem Goldhelm*, Bilder im Blickpunkt (Berlin, 1986).

[16] The attribution of this painting to Van der Pluym was made by Henry Adams, "If Not Rembrandt, Then His Cousin?" *Art Bulletin* 66 (September 1984): 427–441. Claus Grimm, "Handschrift, schildertechniek en beeldstructuur. Bijdrage tot het onderzoek naar toeschrijvingen, I, de helmen van Rembrandt," *Tableau* 5 (1982–1983): 242–250, attributed the painting to Dullaert.

[17] See Br. 256, from the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

[18] See Br. 380, from the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota.

[19] Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 4, *Self-Portraits*, ed. Ernst van de Wetering (Dordrecht, 2005), 400–401.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, a plain-woven fabric composed of tightly spun, irregular, fine threads, has been lined with the left and right tacking margins trimmed. The bottom and top tacking margins, which contain original selvages, have been opened flat and incorporated into the picture plane, slightly enlarging the dimensions. Cusping is pronounced along the top and bottom edges, slight along the right edge, and absent at the left. Original ground layers extend onto both tacking margins. Most likely, a large piece of canvas with full selvage-to-selvage width was primed on a stretching frame then cut to size.

The double ground layer consists of a thick, red lower layer covered with a thin, dark gray upper layer.[1] The ground layer is not incorporated as a mid-tone in the painting. The paint was applied thinly in broad, fluidly blended brushstrokes, with impasto in the beret and skullcap and the white and dark trim of the costume.[2] Layering is complex, resulting in some wide-aperture crackle, especially in the dark trim where dark paint was applied over thick, lighter-colored underlayers. The proper left hand is not as highly finished as the face. The background consists of a light paint layer overlaid with thin glazes.

Several artist's changes are found in the X-radiographs. The skullcap once continued farther beyond the rear of the head, and the hair farther outward on the

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left. The beret appears to have been repositioned several times, or perhaps reshaped. The X-radiographs also show an area of confusing brushwork to the front of the beret, and sharp-edged marks that may be scrapings of a former lining adhesive.

A small loss is found in the upper right background, and slight abrasion in thin, dark passages such as the lower jacket. The painting was treated in 1992 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting, including a later black overglaze.

[1] The paint and ground layers were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy and cross-sections (see reports dated July 6, 1981, August 18, 1981, October 20, 1981, and May 14, 1991, in NGA Conservation department files). The ground was further analyzed by Karin Goren using cross-sections and X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project,A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering [Dordrecht, 2005], 664-665). Groen found quartz in the lower ground layer.

[2] Technical examination and pigment analysis by Ashok Roy and David Bomford, National Gallery, London, May 1988, confirmed the use of smalt as an extender in impasted areas of red and yellow paint.

PROVENANCE

Chevalier Sébastien Érard [1752-1831], Château de la Muette, near the Bois de Boulogne, Paris; (his estate sale, at his residence by Lacoste and Coutelier, 7-14 August 1832 [originally scheduled for 23 April and days following], no. 119, as *Portrait de Martin-Kappertz-Tromp*). William Williams Hope [1802-1855], Rushton Hall, Northamptonshire, by 1836;[1] (his sale, Christie & Manson, London, 14-16 June 1849, 2nd day, no. 116, as a *Portrait of Admiral Van Tromp*); Sir Anthony Nathan de Rothschild, 1st bt. [1810-1876], London, and Aston Clinton House, near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire; by inheritance to his wife, Lady Anthony de Rothschild [née Louise Montefiore, 1821-1910], London and Aston Clinton House; (Thos. Agnew & Sons, London); sold 13 May 1908 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;[2] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through

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power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 1829-1842: 7(1836):86-87, no. 211.

[2] A transcript of Agnew's bill, from the Widener Collection records, is in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Saskia van Uylenburgh, the Wife of the Artist

probably begun 1634/1635 and completed 1638/1640

oil on panel
overall: 62.5 × 49 cm (24 5/8 × 19 5/16 in.)
framed: 88.6 x 75.6 x 11.4 cm (34 7/8 x 29 3/4 x 4 1/2 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.71

ENTRY

Saskia van Uylenburgh, baptized on August 12, 1612, was raised in Leeuwarden, the principal city of the province of Friesland. Her family members were leading patricians of Leeuwarden, and her father, Rombertus Rommertsz van Uylenburgh, served as the city's burgomaster. Two of Saskia's cousins, Aaltje Pietersdr van Uylenburgh and Hendrik van Uylenburgh, lived in Amsterdam, and it was presumably on a visit there that Saskia met Rembrandt, who had moved from Leiden to live in the house of Hendrik van Uylenburgh in 1632. Van Uylenburgh was a painter and flourishing art dealer who developed an art "academy" that specialized in painting portraits. Rembrandt, who as early as 1631 invested in the business, initially lived with Van Uylenburgh and ran his "academy" until 1635. [1]

Rembrandt and Saskia were betrothed on June 8, 1633. Married a year later on June 22, 1634, they had nine years together until Saskia's death on June 14, 1642. The couple had four children, but only one, Titus, born in 1641, survived infancy.

Rembrandt's many drawings, etchings, and paintings of Saskia have preserved an incredibly varied image of this intriguing woman. One sees through them her warmth and tenderness [fig. 1], but also a certain haughtiness; her robust energy and zest for life, but also the debilitating illnesses that frequently weakened her after the mid-1630s. One senses that a strong bond existed between Rembrandt and Saskia, but at the same time her upper-class upbringing and character seem to have made it difficult for her to fully conform to the kind of life she was expected to lead as the wife, and occasional model, of this extraordinary painter.

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In this painting the personal nature of Rembrandt's representation is enhanced by Saskia's pose. Glancing over her right shoulder she looks out at the viewer. With her head tilted slightly forward she has a gentle yet engaging appearance. Nevertheless, one senses even in this appealing portrait the duality of Saskia's nature. While she wears a fashionable, albeit conservative dress appropriate to her upbringing, the diaphanous shawl that covers her head and falls gently over her shoulders was not customary for a woman of her social standing. Its associations are arcadian, and similar veils are seen in representations of shepherdesses. [2] Rembrandt almost certainly draped Saskia with the veil to achieve a softer, more intimate portrayal than a conventional bonnet would have allowed.

This painting, which is neither signed nor dated, was probably begun by Rembrandt around 1634–1635, shortly after his marriage to Saskia. The idealization of Saskia's features, which derived from Rembrandt's attempt to impart an arcadian quality to the portrait, makes it difficult to date this work by comparing her features to securely dated portraits of her. [3] She is decidedly more attractive here than she appears in other paintings, as is evident in a comparison with Rembrandt's portrait of Saskia in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, signed and dated 1633 [fig. 2]. In the Gallery's painting Rembrandt has minimized Saskia's double chin and softened her features. A close comparison, however, can be made between her features in this work and in the double portrait with Rembrandt, which was almost certainly executed in 1635 [fig. 3]. In both paintings Saskia looks out at the viewer in such a way that the similarities in the shapes of her wide eyes and fully rounded nose are particularly evident.

The remarkably varied techniques that Rembrandt used to convey different textures in this painting are also difficult to date precisely. The paint on the highlighted portion of the face is applied in a dense, enamel-like fashion with diagonal strokes of the brush. Underlying this dense layer is a thinner layer of a slightly darker flesh color, visible on the shaded side of her face, that must have defined, almost as an Imprimatura layer, the form of Saskia's head. Over this layer Rembrandt placed freely executed strands of hair and the diaphanous shawl, which he highlighted with strokes of green, yellow, and orange. The shawl also overlays the elaborate form of Saskia's collar, the diamond-shaped design of which was created with a rich variety of strokes executed wet-into-wet. Finally, Rembrandt indicated the gold chain she wears with a succession of rapid angular strokes that were deftly applied to suggest both the shapes of the links and the light reflecting off them.

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The surety of the execution is characteristic of Rembrandt, particularly the sensitivity to the various effects of light as it illuminates the face, passes through the translucent veil, and reflects off the gold chain. Despite the painting's qualities, its attribution to Rembrandt has been disputed by the Rembrandt Research Project (RRP), which considers the painting to be the work of a pupil in the workshop from around 1640. [4] Because of the late date ascribed to the work, the RRP has also concluded that the figure does not represent Saskia. The RRP therefore identified the painting as a *Bust of a Young Woman.* The RRP has buttressed its arguments for a late date for this work by comparing the technique involved with that in other paintings dated between 1639 and 1641. At the same time, the RRP pointed out differences in technique between this work and paintings from around 1640 to justify its rejection of the Rembrandt attribution.

The circular nature of these arguments is difficult to counter, in part because the extremely rigid interpretation of Rembrandt's oeuvre found in the first volumes of the RRP has eliminated so many works from this period that seem acceptable within the parameters of his style. The RRP, for example, has rejected all bust-length portraits from Rembrandt's oeuvre between 1635 and 1639 that might have served as points of comparison for an earlier dating. The one bit of technical evidence that might reinforce a date of about 1640 is that the wood support is poplar rather than oak; Rembrandt painted a few other paintings on poplar between 1639 and 1641. [5] If, however, one studies the pattern of his use of other exceptional woods, including walnut and mahogany, it is clear that he used them over an extended period of time.

The X-radiographs taken in the mid-1970s [see X-radiography] provide interesting information about the genesis of this work that was not adequately considered by the RRP in their assessment of the painting [fig. 4]. They demonstrate that Saskia's appearance in this portrait initially resembled the image in the Rijksmuseum painting (see [fig. 2]) to a greater extent than it does now. Not only did she originally have a pronounced double chin, she also had a bare neck, which was illuminated by a strong light below her hair, and a wide white collar that extended below the present edge of her black clothing. The background in the lower right was built up with lead white, and the contour between the background and the dress was different from what it is now. It would thus seem that Rembrandt substantially revised this image by reworking the face, changing the collar, and adding the veil. [6]

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The complex creative process of this painting helps explain some of the anomalies of this image that raised doubts about its attribution. While the character of the image clearly relates to images of Saskia from 1633 to 1635, the diversity of painting techniques evident in the final image is admittedly unusual for that period. Nevertheless, definite comparisons can be made between certain techniques found in this work and those in other of Rembrandt's paintings from around 1635, in particular the use of white and pink accents for highlighting the nose and a strong black line to articulate the opening of the mouth. These comparisons, as well as the physiognomic relationship to images of Saskia from around 1633 to 1635, place the initial execution of this work in the mid-1630s. Rembrandt's reworking of the image may well have occurred toward the end of the 1630s to judge from the freely executed veil, which has parallels in other works by him from about 1640. [7] The style of her collar, moreover, relates to that found on the *Bust of Rembrandt*, signed and dated 163[8], in the Norton Simon Collection, Pasadena. [8] A similar lozenge-shaped pattern on the collar can be found in Rembrandt's etched *Self-Portrait* of 1638. [9]

This painting is of particular interest within the Gallery's collection because it was the first Rembrandt acquired by Peter A. B. Widener. He purchased it from Charles Sedelmeyer in 1894, perhaps at the recommendation of Wilhelm von Bode. The provenance of the painting has been confused with another portrait of Saskia in the earlier literature. [10] The earliest documented owner of this painting is Bourchier Cleeve of Foots Cray Place, Kent, who died in 1760. Given the importance of Saskia in the life of Rembrandt, both during their marriage and through the confining stipulations of her testament, the presence of her portrait among the works by her husband in the National Gallery of Art heightens our appreciation of Rembrandt's story.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Saskia van Uylenburgh*, 1633, silverpoint, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Saskia van Uylenburgh*, 1633, oil on panel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

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fig. 3 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Rembrandt and Saskia*, c. 1635, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden. Photo: Elke Estel / Hans-Peter Klut

fig. 4 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *Saskia van Uylenburgh, the Wife of the Artist*, probably begun 1634/1635 and completed 1638/1640, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.71

NOTES

[1] Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 75, doc. 1631/4.

[2] M. Louttit, "The Romantic Dress of Saskia van Ulenborch: Its Pastoral and Theatrical Associations," *The Burlington Magazine* 65 (May 1973): 317–326. A surprising number of portraits of Saskia throughout the 1630s by Rembrandt and his school depict Saskia in arcadian guise (Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* [Vienna, 1935], nos. 92, 93, 94, 98, 104, 105, 106, 108, 634).

[3] Nevertheless, with the exception of the Rembrandt Research Project (RRP), which rejects the painting and believes that it was executed about 1640 (see

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Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. [Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989], 651–656, C103), all significant Rembrandt scholars have dated this work about 1633–1634. Claus Grimm, *Rembrandt selbst: Eine Neuhewertung seiner Porträtkunst* (Stuttgart, 1991), 57, who accepts *Saskia* as entirely by Rembrandt's hand, dates the painting about 1638 to 1640.

[4] Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 651–656, C103.

[5] J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, "Woodbiological Investigations on Panels of Rembrandt Paintings," *Wood Science and Technology* 15, no. 4 (1981): 251–263.

[6] The veil covers freely executed strokes representing strands of Saskia's hair. These are visible above the ribbons from which the pearl hangs.

[7] See the arguments defending the Rembrandt attribution by Ernst van de Wetering in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 656.

[8] This comparison is also made in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 655. The RRP unconvincingly proposed that the painting was executed by Carel Fabritius (c. 1622–1654) instead of Rembrandt. See Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 617–624, C97. The RRP rejected the authenticity of the signature and date, which read "Rembrandt f/ 163[8]," and dates the painting about 1641, the year of Fabritius' arrival in Rembrandt's workshop. This assessment was revised in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 4, *Self-Portraits*, ed. Ernst van de Wetering (Dordrecht, 2005), 605, where the painting was fully accepted as being by Rembrandt.

[9] Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Vienna, 1797), 1: no. 20.

[10] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 6:297, no. 615, includes in his provenance for this painting three sales that refer to a lost painting, the latter appearing in John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 7: no. 502. The sales are: De Gaignat, Paris, 1768; De Calonne, Paris, 1788; and De Choiseul-Praslin, Paris, 1793.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The cradled wood support consists of a single poplar board with a vertical grain, with a 2.1 cm L-shaped wood strip added along the left and bottom edges, and a 5.1 cm square insert at the lower right.[1] The dimensions of the original panel are 60.4 x 46.9 cm. The frame hides the added strip. A thin chalk and lead white ground covers the surface.[2] A preliminary sketch in black paint is visible under the features.

The paint was applied fluidly in the background and figure, with slight impasto in the chain and collar. The X-radiographs show changes in the design, some of which are visible with the naked eye. The white collar and dark neckline were originally lower, exposing more of the neck. The dress was slightly fuller, as were the chin and cheek profile. The paint is in good condition, with little inpainting or abrasion.

The date of cradling is not known, nor is the date of the attachment of the L-shaped strip. The painting was cleaned in 1930 by Herbert Carmer. In 1976 the painting was treated again to remove discolored varnish. A lower varnish layer was left in place, along with a hardened, pigmented varnish layer on the dress.

[1] Dendrochronology cannot be used to date poplar panels (see report by Dr. Joseph Bauch, Universität Hamburg, dated November 29, 1977, in NGA Conservation files).

[2] The paint and ground layers were analyzed by Dr. Robert Feller at the Carnegie Mellon Institute of Research using polarized light microscopy and cross-sections (see memos and letters of various dates in 1976 and 1977 in NGA Conservation files).

PROVENANCE

Bourchier Cleeve [d. 1760], Foots Cray Place, Kent; by inheritance to his daughter, Elizabeth; by marriage 1765 to her husband, Sir George Yonge, Bart., London; (his

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sale, at his residence by Mr. White, London, 24-25 March 1806, 2nd day, no. 79); Foster. William Wells [1760-1847], Redleaf, near Penshurst, Kent, by 1831;[1] by inheritance to his grandnephew, William Wells [1818-1889], Redleaf; (his granduncle's estate sale, Christie & Manson, London, 12-13 May 1848, no. 67, probably bought in for or by Wells); (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 10 and 12 May 1890, no. 93); (P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London); Henry Bingham Mildmay [1828-1905], Shoreham Place, Kent, and Flete House, Devon; (his sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 24 June 1893, no. 58); (Wertheimer, London). (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris); sold 30 July 1894 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Wells lent the painting to an 1831 exhibition at the British Institution.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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2013 Amsterdam DNA, Amsterdam Museum, 2013-2015, no catalogue.

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1913 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis, and Wilhelm R. Valentiner. *Pictures in the collection of P. A. B. Widener at Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park,*

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Pennsylvania: Early German, Dutch & Flemish Schools. Philadelphia, 1913: unpaginated, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Self-Portrait

1659

oil on canvas
overall: 84.5 x 66 cm (33 1/4 x 26 in.)
framed: 122.9 x 104.1 x 8.9 cm (48 3/8 x 41 x 3 1/2 in.)
Inscription: center left: Rembrandt f. 1659
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.72

ENTRY

The face is familiar, as is the penetrating gaze with which the sitter stares directly out at the viewer. No question, it is Rembrandt, late in his life, at a time when he has suffered through the cruel indignities of failure after so many years of success. Indeed, this portrait, painted in 1659, dates to the year after Rembrandt's possessions and his house on the Sint-Anthonisbreestraat had been auctioned as a result of his insolvency. It may well have been one of the first works he painted in the small house on the Rozengracht, in the painters' quarter of Amsterdam, where he had moved when his fortunes and his prospects were at low ebb. In the following year Rembrandt set up a business agreement with his son Titus and Hendrickje Stoffels, the artist's companion in the last decades of his life, that prevented him from being sued by any of his dissatisfied creditors for recovery of debts. [1]

Rightly or wrongly it seems almost impossible to ponder this work without interpreting it in light of what is known about Rembrandt's life. This inclination is felt in part because of the extensive biographical information that has come down to us, through which we we are able to feel a closer contact with the man and his life than we do with most artists of this period. It also seems possible to interpret Rembrandt's mood in such paintings because he painted, drew, and etched so many self-portraits that changes in his appearance can be measured and analyzed by comparing one to another. Even more significantly, however, we read these images biographically because Rembrandt forces us to do so. He looks out at us and confronts us directly. His deep-set eyes peer intently. They appear steady, yet heavy and not without sadness. As Hofstede de Groot remarked in reference to

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this painting when it was shown in the 1898 Rembrandt exhibition in Amsterdam, “It would be difficult to find in any of his paintings a pair of eyes that peer at us more sharply or penetratingly.” [2] Émile Michel, in his review of the exhibition, was even more expressive about the forcefulness of Rembrandt’s gaze through the heavy wrinkles that had come to age his face so prematurely. [3]

While the observations of Hofstede de Groot and Michel seem entirely appropriate to the image, too often this painting has been subjected to overly romantic interpretations, in which authors have tried to read into this somber image Rembrandt’s own reflections upon the profound tragedy of his life. [4] Interpreting paintings on the basis of an artist’s biography is dangerous, particularly with an artist whose life has been romanticized to the extent that Rembrandt’s has been. [5] In this instance the inclination to interpret this image as a tragic one was reinforced by the thick layers of discolored varnish that had given the portrait a heavy, brooding quality. With the removal of the discolored varnish during restoration in 1992, the fallacy of such interpretations became particularly apparent. With the rich range of pinks and other flesh tones on his face once again visible, Rembrandt’s state of mind seems to have improved remarkably. While the thick impastos and bold strokes he used to model his face still create the dynamic vigor of the head, apparent now as well is the economy with which Rembrandt handled his paint: he has allowed a greenish gray Imprimatura layer to read as the shadowed area around the eyes. Finally, the firmness of his touch is accented by the wiry rhythms in his mustache and in the hair protruding from under his beret, which he has delineated by scratching the wet paint with the blunt end of his brush.

An added benefit from the restoration was the removal of Overpaint that had flattened the appearance of Rembrandt’s torso. With the three-dimensional character of this portion of the painting restored, the head seems far more firmly planted on the body than it had previously. The light that so effectively illuminates the head now also accents Rembrandt’s left shoulder and, to a lesser extent, his broadly executed clasped hands. The X-radiograph [see X-radiography] of the head, which reveals the vigorous, almost sculptural character of Rembrandt’s handling of paint, also indicates, through the density of the paint in the beret, that Rembrandt initially painted the beret a different color [fig. 1]. It may well have been white, for the upper ridges of a whitish paint layer can be seen through the overlying black paint.

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Although Rembrandt's pose seems so appropriate to the forcefulness of his gaze, quite surprisingly, it was inspired by Raphanel's portrait of Balthasar Castiglione [fig. 2]. The memory of Castiglione's direct gaze and clasped hands, which Rembrandt first saw when the painting appeared in an auction in Amsterdam on April 19, 1639, must have remained deeply ingrained in his mind for the intervening twenty years. [6] This famous work had made a tremendous impact on Rembrandt, for he even made a rough sketch after it at the sale (Albertina, Vienna). [7] In that same year, 1639, Rembrandt etched a self-portrait that was in part inspired by Raphael's image and in part by Titian's portrait, then known as *Ariosto,* which was in Amsterdam in the Alfonso Lopez Collection (National Gallery, London). [8] In the following year, 1640, Rembrandt painted a self-portrait (National Gallery, London) [9] that reflected in composition and intellectual concept both the Raphael's *Balthasar Castiglione* and Titian's *Ariosto.* In this 1640 *Self-Portrait,* Rembrandt, dressed in a fanciful historicizing costume, portrayed himself with all of the elegance and dignity of the renowned Renaissance men of letters thought to have been depicted by Raphael (Marchigian, 1483 - 1520) and Titian (Venetian, 1488/1490 - 1576). [10]

In Rembrandt's 1659 *Self-Portrait,* all compositional references to Titian's portrait have disappeared, particularly the stone parapet upon which the artist rests his arm in the 1639 etching and the 1640 painting. [11] Perhaps at this later moment of his life he was drawn to Raphael's painting because of its self-contained composition, which he must have felt appropriate for expressing the quiet intensity with which he wished to imbue his self-portrait; perhaps he remembered the subdued colors of Castiglione's costume or the effective way in which Raphael used the beret to frame his head. Clearly Rembrandt has adapted all of these aspects of Raphael's painting in his self-portrait, while at the same time transforming the nature of his image through dramatic light effects and the rich impastos of his paint.

Most fundamentally, however, Rembrandt returned to Raphael's prototype because he found in it a vehicle for expressing his perception of himself as a learned painter, a theme that in one way or another underlies a number of his late self-portraits, particularly his magnificent paintings in the Frick Collection, c. 1658, [12] and in the Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood, c. 1665. [13] In all three of these works Rembrandt projects a strikingly positive self-image, in which allusions to his self-esteem as an artist are conveyed through pose, costume, and expression. [14]

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

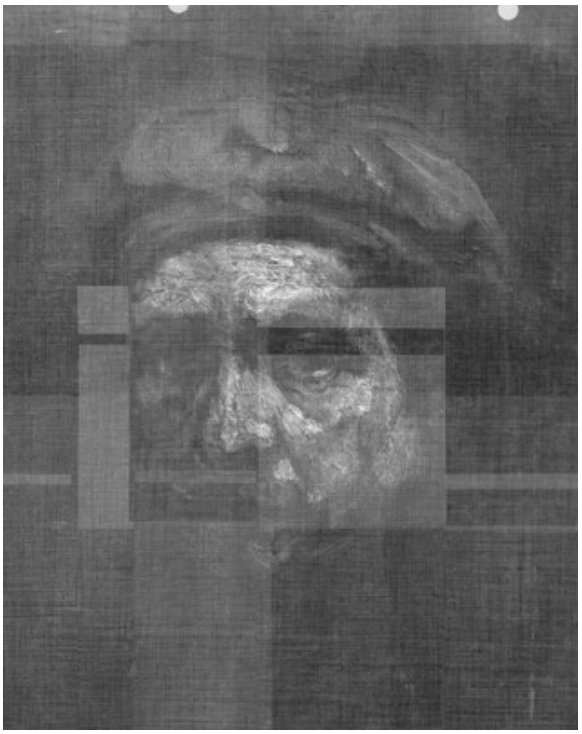

fig. 1 Detail of head, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait*, 1659, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.72

fig. 2 Raphael, *Balthasar Castiglione*, c. 1514–1515, oil on panel, Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: © RMN / Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Jean-Gilles Berizzi

NOTES

[1] Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 462–465, doc. 1660/20.

[2] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt. Collection des oeuvres des maîtres réunies, à l'occasion de l'inauguration de S. M. la Reine Wilhelmine* (Amsterdam, 1898), 13. “Het zou moeilijk wezen in al zijn schilderijen een

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paar oogen aan te wijzen, die ons scherper en doordringender aanzien."

[3] Émile Michel, "L'Exposition Rembrandt à Amsterdam," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 20 (December 1898): 478–480. "Sous l'influence d'une vie trop casanière, une graisse malsaine envahit les chairs flasques et boursouflées; des rides nombreuses et profondes sont creusées sur son large front.... Avec leur paupières épaissies, les yeux, devenus plus petits, ont conservé leur étincelle et sous les sourcils en broussaille, le regard interrogateur et pénétrant du peintre persiste, obstiné, ardent comme le charbon sous la cendre. Sans l'abattre, les soucis et les malheurs n'ont fait qu'épurer en lui la passion de son art qui le soutient et cet amour de la nature qui lui permet de découvrir des trésors de beauté et de poésie là où les autres passent indifférents."

[4] Perhaps the most insupportable claims about this painting were suggested by John Walker (John Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington* [New York, 1976], 270), who wrote, in part: "[Rembrandt] saw a mouth and a chin weak, infirm of purpose, manifesting that flaw in his character which had ruined his life. His hands are grasped as though in anguish at the spectacle of a self-ruined man. There exists no painting more pitiless in its analysis or more pitiful in its implications."

[5] For the nature of these myths see Seymour Slive, *Rembrandt and His Critics, 1630–1730* (The Hague, 1953) and Jan Ameling Emmens, *Rembrandt en de Regels van de Kunst* (Utrecht, 1968).

[6] The painting was acquired by Alphonso Lopez, a Portuguese Jew who lived in Amsterdam from 1636 to 1640. See Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 177, doc. 1639/8. Lopez had a large collection that included Titian's *Ariosto* and *Flora* (see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. and George Keyes, *Rembrandt's Lucretia* [Washington, 1991]). He was also known to Rembrandt since he bought directly from the artist his early *Balaam and the Ass* (Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 1, *1625–1631*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. [The Hague, Boston, and London, 1982], A2).

[7] See Ben. 451, from the Albertina, Vienna.

[8] See inventory no. 1944, from the National Gallery, London. For the etching, see: Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt*..., 2 vols. (Vienna, 1797), 1: no. 21.

[9] See inventory no. 672, from the National Gallery, London.

[10] For a discussion of the relationship of Rembrandt's self-portraits from 1639 and 1640 to Raphael and Titian, see Eddy de Jongh, "The Spur of Wit: Rembrandt's Response to an Italian Challenge," *Delta: A Review of Arts, Life and Thought in the Netherlands* 12 (1969): 49–67; and H. Perry Chapman,

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Rembrandt's Self-Portraits: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Identity (Princeton, 1990), 72–78.

[11] J.L.A.A.M. van Rijckevorsel, *Rembrandt en de Traditie* (Rotterdam, 1932), 150, however, did suggest the additional influence of Titian's *Portrait of "Ariosto"* (National Gallery, London, inventory no. 1944) on Rembrandt's 1659 *Self-Portrait.* The illusionistic format of self-portraiture was put in the context of the northern portrait tradition by Stephanie Dickey during a Rembrandt symposium held at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, in January 1992.

[12] See inventory no. 06.1.97, from the Frick Collection, New York.

[13] See inventory no. 57, from the Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood.

[14] For a discussion of various interpretations of these paintings see H. Perry Chapman, *Rembrandt's Self-Portraits: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Identity* (Princeton, 1990), 94–95, 97–101.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, a tightly, plain-woven fabric with fine threads, has been lined. The tacking margins have been removed and a coating of white lead has been applied to the back of the lining. The double ground consists of a thick, reddish brown lower layer and a very thin, light gray layer.[1] The design was then sketched in a transparent brown underpaint layer intentionally left visible in the proper right sleeve and in the nostrils, mouth, and neck bordering the collar. The exposed areas of the brown sketch are abraded, which has diminished their significance.

The figure was painted with opaque, broad, flat brushstrokes, while the background and hands were thinly painted. The hair has been articulated by fine brushstrokes and lines incised with the butt end of a brush into the still-wet paint. The highlights of the face were first created overall with heavy short strokes of richly impasted paint, with individual brushstrokes swirled wet-into-wet rather than blended. Once dry, the paint was reworked with unblended, short, distinct strokes of darker colors following the initial brushwork pattern. These were softened with half-shadow mid-tones. Strokes of white paint under the beret indicate that Rembrandt initially planned a lighter color beret than the present black one.

While the face and hands are largely intact, much of the figure and the background at the left have suffered from abrasion. The painting underwent treatment in 1992 to remove discolored varnish and overpaint. The blackish paint to the left of the

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figure and a patchy semi-opaque coating, applied in a prior restoration to disguise abrasion, were left in place.

[1] Cross-sections were analyzed by the Scientific Research department (see report dated November 13, 1992, in NGA Conservation files).

PROVENANCE

Purchased by George Brudenell, 4th earl of Cardigan [1712-1790, later George Montagu, duke of Montagu (new creation)], Montagu House, Whitehall, London, by 1767;[1] by inheritance to his daughter and sole heiress, Elizabeth, duchess of Buccleuch [1743-1827, née Lady Elizabeth Montagu, wife of Henry Scott, 3rd duke of Buccleuch and 5th duke of Queensberry, 1746-1812], Montagu House; by descent through the dukes of Buccleuch and Queensberry to John Charles Montagu, 7th duke of Buccleuch and 9th duke of Queensberry [1864-1935], Montagu House; sold 1928 to (P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., New York), on joint account with (M. Knoedler & Co., New York);[2] sold January 1929 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] The Knoedler prospectus for the painting (in NGA curatorial files) states that the painting was purchased by Brudunell in 1740. However, the first firm evidence for his ownership is a mezzotint after the self-portrait, dated 1767 and published by R. Earlom (1743-1822), which is inscribed as "From the Original Picture...In the Collection of his Grace the Duke of Montagu" (see John Charrington, *A Catalogue of the Mezzotints After, or Said to Be After, Rembrandt*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1923: 34-35, no. 49. According to an inventory of Montagu House, Whitehall, made in 1770, this painting and Rembrandt's *An Old Woman Reading* (still at the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry's Drumlanrig Castle in Dumfriesshire, Scotland) were purchased together for 140 pounds; see Francis Russell's entry on *An Old Woman Reading* in Gervase Jackson-Stops, ed., *The Treasure Houses of Britain: Five Hundred Years of Private Patronage and Art Collecting*, exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., New Haven and London, 1985: 363-364, no. 292. See also Burton B. Fredericksen, "Leonardo and

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Mantegna in the Buccleuch Collection," *The Burlington Magazine* 133 (February 1991): 116.

[2] Nicholas H.J. Hall, ed., *Colnaghi in America: A Survey to Commemorate the First Decade of Colnaghi New York*, New York, 1992: 24, fig. 24. According to the Getty Provenance Index® Database of Public Collections (J. Paul Getty Trust, Paintings Record 17095), there is no regular entry in Colnaghi's stockbooks, but transactions for the painting are documented in Colnaghi's Private Ledger; the painting was Knoedler's number A-409. The 1928 sale of the painting by the 7th duke is also confirmed by a letter of 28 November 1928, from Charles J. Holmes, then director of the National Gallery, London, to Otto Gutekunst of Colnaghi (in NGA curatorial files, received at the time of the 1937 gift). Gutekunst had shown Holmes the painting "in confidence" and Holmes wrote to ask if it could be lent briefly to the Gallery "before it crosses the Atlantic."

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1872 Exhibition of the Works of the Old Masters. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1872, no. 181.

1898 Rembrandt. Collection des oeuvres des maîtres réunies, à l'occasion de l'inauguration de S. M. la Reine Wilhelmine, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1898, no. 102.

1899 Exhibition of Works by Rembrandt. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1899, no. 6.

1930 A Loan Exhibition of Sixteen Masterpieces, Knoedler Galleries, New York, January 1930, no. 8.

1930 The Thirteenth Loan Exhibition of Old Masters: Paintings by Rembrandt, The Detroit Institute of Arts, May 1930, no. 62.

1935 Loan Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings and Etchings by Rembrandt and His Circle, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1935-1936, no. 6.

1935 Rembrandt Tentoonstelling, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1935, no. 26.

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1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, 1939, no. 307.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 19, repro.

1989 Masterpieces of Western European Painting of the XVIth-XXth Centuries from the Museums of the European Countries and USA, State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, 1989, no. 13, repro.

1992 Dutch Art and Scotland: A Reflection of Taste, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1992, no. 53, repro.

1996 Rembrandt: His Pupils and Followers, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, 1996, unnumbered brochure, repro.

1999 Rembrandt By Himself, The National Gallery, London; Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1999-2000, no. 73, repro.

2002 Rembrandt: Dipinti, incisioni e riflessi sul '600 e '700 italiano, Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome, 2002-2003, no. 6D, repro. on title page.

2009 Rembrandt's People, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, 2009-2010, brochure no. 3, repro. and cover.

2011 Rembrandt in America, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Cleveland Museum of Art; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2011-2012, no. 34, pl. 9.

2014 Rembrandt: The Late Works, National Gallery, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2014-2015, no. 2, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Follower of Rembrandt van Rijn
Anonymous Artist

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Study of an Old Man

probably late 17th century

oil on panel
overall: 28 x 21.5 cm (11 x 8 7/16 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.63

ENTRY

This study of an old bearded man with a sad, forlorn expression was acquired as a Rembrandt by Peter A. B. Widener from the London art market in 1905. When Wilhelm Valentiner cataloged Widener's paintings in 1913, he dated it about 1645 and emphasized the painting's "broad, powerful brushwork and deep thoughtful expression which characterize the artist's later style." [1] Ensuing assessments, however, have been less enthusiastic. In most subsequent catalogs of Rembrandt's paintings the picture has been doubted, rejected, or omitted entirely. Martin questioned the attribution as early as 1921, and, though Bredius included the picture in his 1935 catalog, he expressed his doubts in a note: "The picture is known to me only from a photograph, and I am not entirely convinced of its authenticity." [2] Bauch subsequently rejected it, as did Gerson. [3] Rosenberg is the only modern Rembrandt scholar to accept it as authentic. [4] The National Gallery of Art changed its attribution to "Style of Rembrandt" in 1984.

This painting is one of a large number of rapidly executed oil sketches that Valentiner introduced into Rembrandt's oeuvre in the early years of the twentieth century. Most of these attributions have now been rejected. Indeed, the painting has only the vaguest resemblance to Rembrandt's work. The figure type is uncharacteristic for Rembrandt: the anatomy of the head is not understood, and the superficial modeling of the skin and hair is foreign to his style.

A date of execution for the painting is difficult to establish. Dendrochronological examination [see Dendrochronology] has determined that the tree from which the panel was made was felled in 1666 plus or minus five years. [5] The head, however,

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is painted over another rendering of a head of a man. This figure, visible in the upside-down X-radiographs [see X-radiography], is seen in profile and wears a hat [fig. 1]. Because the handling of paint in this figure is quite different from that in the surface image [fig. 2], it seems unlikely that both heads were painted by the same artist. Almost certainly, the head we see today was executed on an old panel after Rembrandt's death, in emulation, or imitation, of the master's work.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Upside down X-radiograph composite, Follower of Rembrandt van Rijn, *Study of an Old Man*, probably late 17th century, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.63

fig. 2 Follower of Rembrandt van Rijn, *Study of an Old Man*, probably late 17th century, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.63

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NOTES

[1] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot and Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Pictures in the Collection of P. A. B. Widener at Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania: Early German, Dutch & Flemish Schools* (Philadelphia, 1913), no. 32.

[2] Wilhelm Martin, "Rembrandt Rätsel," *Der Kunstwanderer* 3 (September 1921): 30–34; Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* (Vienna, 1935; English ed., Oxford, 1942), 11, 243, repro.

[3] Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde* (Berlin, 1966), 47, no. 243; Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 568, no. 243, repro.

[4] Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), 1:242 (also rev. ed., *Rembrandt: Life and Work* [Greenwich, Conn., 1964], 371), in his concordance of paintings agrees with the conclusion reached by Bredius in Abraham Bredius, *The Paintings of Rembrandt* (Oxford, 1942), 11, 243, repro. (also reprinted from 1935 ed. *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* [Vienna, 1935], no. 243).

[5] Report from Dr. Josef Bauch of the Ordinariat für Holzbiologie, Universität Hamburg, November 29, 1977 (in NGA curatorial files).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a vertically grained oak panel composed of a single beveled board fitted with its original strips of wood to square off the beveled edges. Dendrochronology gives the panel a felling date of 1666.[1] A small vertical check in the bottom edge has been repaired. A thin off-white ground is visible through thinly painted passages.[2]

The X-radiographs reveal the presence of another portrait, turned 180 degrees, lying below the present portrait (fig. 1). The earlier portrait is partially visible through the sketchy unfinished beard. Raking light reveals the outlines of the image, a head with a cap, smaller in size than in the current portrait. Cross-sections show no intermediate ground layer between the two paintings.

The paint in the present portrait was applied thinly, with impasted highlights, and hair curls incised with the butt end of a brush. The background was painted first with a reserve left for the head. Paint loss is minimal: inpainting is confined to the

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edges and abrasion is minor. A moderately discolored varnish is present. No conservation work has been carried out since acquisition.

[1] Dendrochronology was performed by Dr. Josef Bauch, Universität Hamburg (see report dated November 29, 1977, in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] The paint and ground layers were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections and X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (see report dated July 1991 in NGA Conservation department files). Pigments identified in the upper painting were available during the seventeenth century.

PROVENANCE

(Dowdeswell and Dowdeswell, London); sold 1905 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;[1] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Widener collection records, in NGA curatorial files.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

A Woman Holding a Pink

1656

oil on canvas
overall: 103 x 86 cm (40 9/16 x 33 7/8 in.)
framed: 132.1 x 116.2 cm (52 x 45 3/4 in.)
Inscription: upper right: Rembrandt. / f.1656
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.75

ENTRY

In writing about Rembrandt's classicism of the mid-1650s, Sir Kenneth Clark juxtaposed illustrations of *A Woman Holding a Pink* and Rembrandt's 1658 *Self-Portrait* in the Frick Collection [fig. 1]. [1] The comparison is striking, for the nobility of both figures has much to do with their frontal poses and direct gazes. Whether or not the foundation of Rembrandt's classicism of the mid-1650s derives from Titian, as Clark maintained, there is no question that Rembrandt increasingly sought to capture the essence of a sitter's presence by means of the triangular geometry of a frontal, seated pose.The simplicity of concept, the forcefulness of execution, and the nobility of character of *A Woman Holding a Pink* are qualities that have become even more pronounced after the painting was conserved in 2007–2008. The removal of the yellowed, pigmented varnish and old retouches revealed highlights in the face and the bold brushwork in the costume that greatly enhanced the figures' sense of liveliness and three-dimensionality. The changes are so striking that I now fully endorse the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt, an attribution I doubted in the 1995 catalog of the collection of Dutch paintings in the National Gallery of Art. [2]

The questions about the painting's attribution expressed in the 1995 catalog were not the first raised about this handsome portrait. Despite Sir Kenneth Clark's enthusiastic endorsement and the painting's clear relationship to Rembrandt's portrait style of the mid-1650s, Horst Gerson postulated in 1969 that *A Woman Holding a Pink* was executed by an artist trained by Rembrandt rather than by the master himself. He wrote: "Its solid structure combined with a smooth surface . . . are more characteristic of the school of Rembrandt than of the master himself. It

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could be a work of Bol or Maes." [3] In 1995 I agreed with Gerson that the relatively smooth modeling suggested that the painting had been executed by a student of Rembrandt's workshop hailing from Dordrecht, such as Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634 - 1693) or Ferdinand Bol (Dutch, 1616 - 1680), but suggested that the artist in question could have been Jacobus Leveck (1634–1675). However, this hypothesis no longer seems valid: much as with Bol and Maes, Leveck was not in the Rembrandt workshop in 1656. He had returned to Dordrecht by 1655, at which time he had joined the Dordrecht Saint Luke's Guild. [4]

Aside from his concerns about the relative smoothness of the modeling, Gerson was skeptical of the authenticity of the signature and date. Technical examination, however, has found no evidence that they are later additions. Moreover, the handwriting of the letters in Rembrandt's name is consistent with those of other signatures on paintings from the mid-1650s. [5] Finally, the date, 1656, is perfectly appropriate for the simple, unadorned character of the woman's costume. [6] A particular telling comparison is with Rembrandt's *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan*, also in the National Gallery of Art [fig. 2]. Even though the woman depicted in *A Woman Holding a Pink* wears a relatively modest outfit, her plain white cuffs edged with lace are remarkably similar to those worn by the more elegantly attired woman holding the ostrich-feather fan. Their flat white linen collars, fastened in the center with a clasp or pin, are comparably edged in lace.

The many compelling visual and stylistic connections between these two paintings are now far more evident than they were in 1995 because *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan* also underwent conservation treatment in recent years. [7] Beyond the comparable edging of the cuffs and collars, similarities in the bold manner in which the materials are rendered are now particularly striking. In each work, Rembrandt has modeled the collar and cuffs in broad planes with vigorously applied, bold strokes. A similar approach is also found in the blacks, where light highlights define sharp folds in the material.

The removal of thick, discolored layers of varnish has also revealed striking similarities in the handling of flesh tones in these two works that had previously been obscured. The women's hands are extremely close in character, not only in their shapes, but also in the freely brushed modeling of their forms that consists of a rich overlay of colors, some smoothly and some roughly applied. Comparable approaches to modeling also exist in the women's faces. Much as in the hands, the flesh tones in the faces consist of a subtle array of ochers, pinks, and whites that are brushed in complex layers. Accents on the foreheads of each woman are

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modeled with carefully brushed parallel strokes. Instead of what appeared to be a rather bland application of paint, the face of *A Woman Holding a Pink* has an engaging visual richness consistent with Rembrandt's manner.

Despite the compelling similarities in these two portraits, certain differences do exist in the definition of the women's features, which are more robustly defined in *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan* than in *A Woman Holding a Pink.* The distinctions are partially due to different physiognomies, but also to the softer light that plays over the woman's face in *A Woman Holding a Pink* as she gazes directly at the viewer rather than in the direction of her mate. The relatively soft modeling of her form, consistent with the classicism of the image, is also evident in the X-radiographs [see X-radiography], which reveals broad concentrations of lead white in the modeling of her face but few individual brushstrokes defining her features [fig. 3].

Although the young woman has a quietly restrained pose, she has slightly turned her body in space, resting one arm on a carpeted table and the other on her chair. As she sits in this dignified yet relaxed manner, she delicately holds in her right hand a pink carnation, a flower that is often associated with the sacrament of marriage. [8] Although an allusion to a marriage or betrothal may explain its presence here, such an interpretation seems unlikely given that no reinforcing marriage symbolism is present. However, the carnation also has another symbolic attribute that is probably more relevant to this image. This flower, which in Dutch is called *nagelbloem* (nail flower), is often associated with Christ's Crucifixion. [9] Thus, when appearing in family portraits, the carnation alludes to true conjugal love and the inspiration provided by the divine love of Christ's Passion. In conjunction with the still life on the tabletop to the woman's left, the carnation the woman holds would appear to have similar associations. The large book with its metal clasps probably represents the Bible and the apples the legacy of original sin that the woman must strive to overcome through her faith.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait*, 1658, oil on canvas, Frick Collection, New York. Photo © The Frick Collection, New York

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Lady with an Ostrich-Feather Fan*, c. 1656/1658, oil on canvas transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.68

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fig. 3 Detail of head, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Woman Holding a Pink*, 1656, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.75

NOTES

[1] Kenneth Clark, *Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance* (New York, 1966), 127–130, fig. 120.

[2] Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, Washington, 1995, 321–326 [available as an Archived Text, Online Editions Toolbar].

[3] Horst Gerson in Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings,* revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 581, no. 390.

[4] Leveck is identified as a student of Rembrandt in a document dated September 16, 1653, when he and another pupil (*dissipelen*) acted as witnesses for Rembrandt. Houbraken, who later studied briefly with Leveck in Dordrecht, mentions that Leveck had studied under Rembrandt, but he also writes that "[Leveck] still had a painting in his house from his first period in which Rembrandt's handling was so truthfully done that one would have

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taken it for a work of Rembrandt." This "first period" must have lasted at least until 1655, the year Leveck entered the Saint Luke's Guild in Dordrecht. In 1995 I postulated (note 9, this entry) that Leveck may have painted this work while he was with Rembrandt and that Rembrandt signed it after he had left for Dordrecht, but this proposal now seems to me to be quite unrealistic. For a further discussion of Leveck, see Peter Marijnissen et al., *De Zichtbaere Werelt* (Zwolle and Dordrecht, 1992), 220–225.

[5] The signature, for example, conforms in most respects to Rembrandt's *Jacob Blessing the Children of Joseph,* 1656 (Gemäldegalerie, Kassel, inv. no. 249). In this comparison only the *B* with its upper loop differs from the signature in the Kassel painting.

[6] See Willem L. van de Watering, "On Jacob van Loo's *Portrait of a Young Woman*," *Minneapolis Institute of Arts Bulletin* 63 (1976–1977): 38. Van de Watering emphasizes that, except for elderly or particularly conservative women, fashion began to change shortly after 1655–1656.

[7] The conservation treatment of that painting occurred in 2006–2007.

[8] Fernand Mercier, "La Valeur symbolique de l'oeillet dans la peinture du moyen-age," *Revue de l'Art* 71 (1937): 233–236.

[9] Robert A. Koch, "Flower Symbolism in the Portinari Altarpiece," *Art Bulletin* 46 (March 1964): 70–77.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a tightly woven, fine-weight fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping is visible along all edges in the X-radiographs, indicating the original dimensions have been retained. The painting was prepared with a double ground consisting of a brown, quartz-type lower layer, followed by a yellow layer.[1]

The paint is a mixture of layers of paste consistency and glazes, worked both wet-into-wet and wet–over-dry with low brushmarking.[2] The background layer extends under the figure, which was initially sketched in broad brushstrokes. The hands, face, and tablecloth are thickly painted and finished with transparent glazes. Some texture has been lost by lining. Scattered minor losses have been retouched as have losses along the edges. The background and the figure's dress are moderately abraded. The painting was treated in 2007-2008 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting and to inpaint the abrasion.

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[1] The ground was analyzed by Karin Groen using cross-sections and energy dispersive X-ray analysis (see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project,A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering (Dordrecht, 2005), 666–667).

[2] The paint layers were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-section and polarized light microscopy (see report dated November 4, 2010, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Pierre Crozat [1665-1740], Paris, before 1740; by inheritance to his nephews, first to Louis-François Crozat, marquis du Châtel [1691-1750], Paris, and then [on Louis-François' death without a male heir] to Louis-Antoine Crozat, baron de Thiers [1699-1770], Paris; the latter's heirs; purchased 1772, through Denis Diderot [1713-1784] as an intermediary, by Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729-1796], for the Imperial Hermitage Gallery, Saint Petersburg; sold March 1931, as a painting by Rembrandt, through (Matthiesen Gallery, Berlin; P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London; and M. Knoedler & Co., New York) to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 30 March 1932 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 16, repro.

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1773 Imperial Hermitage Museum [probably Ernst von Münnich, ed.] "Catalogue raisonné des tableaux qui se trouvent dans les Galeries, Sallons et Cabinets du Palais Impérial de S. Pétersbourg, commencé en 1773 et continué jusqu'en 1785." 3 vols. Manuscript, Fund 1, Opis' VI-A, delo 85, Hermitage Archives, Saint Petersburg,1773-1783 (vols. 1-2), 1785 (vol. 3): probably no. 1722, as *Portrait d'une jeune femme*.

1774 Imperial Hermitage Museum [probably Ernst von Münnich, ed.]. *Catalogue des tableaux qui se trouvent dans les Cabinets du Palais Impérial à Saint-Pétersbourg*. Based on the 1773 manuscript catalogue. Saint Petersburg, 1774: probably no. 1722, as *Portrait d'une jeune femme*.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

A Young Man Seated at a Table (possibly Govaert Flinck)

c. 1660

oil on canvas
overall: 109.9 x 89.5 cm (43 1/4 x 35 1/4 in.)
framed: 149.2 x 131.1 x 17.8 cm (58 3/4 x 51 5/8 x 7 in.)
Inscription: center right: Rembrandt 166[?]
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.77

ENTRY

This painting of a stylish young man, posed with one arm akimbo and the other gracefully resting on the table beside him, is one of Rembrandt's most sympathetic late portraits. The sitter's handsome features and gentle expression, framed by the long locks of his hair, suggest warmth and sensitivity. At the same time, the understated simplicity of his dress, from the plain white collar, left open at the neck, to his black costume and hat, reinforces the sense of self-assurance so evident in the pose.

The name of the sitter is not known. The traditional designation that he is a "young man" seems based more on his elegant pose than on the nature of his face or hands. [1] With his angular features and somewhat heavy eyes, the sitter seems more mature, probably in his early to mid-forties. Uncertainty has also surrounded the date of the painting, despite the fact that it is signed and dated in the middle right background. When the signature and date were first noticed at the end of the nineteenth century they were read as: "Rembrandt f. 1662". [2] By 1935 scholars interpreted the date as "1663". [3] Indeed, the signature and date are extremely difficult to decipher, and today the last digit of the date is no longer legible. Whether it was more legible in 1893 or in 1935 and whether the reading "1662" or "1663" was correct are impossible to determine. Although such dates are stylistically plausible, the face is more delicately modeled than one would expect

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after the boldly executed heads found in Rembrandt's paintings Jacob Trip and Margaretha de Geer (National Gallery, London) of around 1661 [4] and *The Syndics of the Cloth Drapers' Guild* [fig. 1], which he executed in 1662. The impact of these works on his portrait style is evident in the impastos and rough execution of the face of the subject depicted in *A Young Man*, a portrait said to be dated 1663 (Dulwich Picture Gallery, London), [5] or in Portrait of a Man in a Tall Hat, which must have been executed in the mid-1660s.

In *Young Man Seated at a Table* Rembrandt's brushwork is relatively smooth, as is appropriate for the youthful appearance of the sitter. While he has used rapid strokes of the brush in the impastos on the forehead to suggest highlights and has painted the hair wet-into-wet, the features are not built up with striking juxtapositions of dense impastos and revealed underlying layers of paint. Instead, Rembrandt has modulated his forms with carefully nuanced strokes that capture the play of light on the sitter's face. Subtle accents along the eyelids, in the lower portions of the whites of the eyes, and in the irises help bring the man's face to life. Because the style falls somewhere between the more densely painted and carefully articulated portraits from the late 1650s and the roughly executed portraits of the early 1660s, it seems appropriate to propose, as others have done, a date of about 1660 for this work. [6]

The attribution of this painting has never been questioned, and there is no reason to do so. Indeed, Horst Gerson considered it "one of the most beautiful of the late commissioned portraits." [7] Much of its beauty stems from the subtle fusion of Rembrandt's vigorous brushwork with a graceful pose reminiscent of portraits by Sir Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599 - 1641). Unfortunately, as Gerson also mentioned, the work has suffered, most particularly in the thinly painted hands. The character of the left hand, however, is confusing, for brushstrokes belonging to an initial concept are visible through the fingers. This earlier hand, which is more fully visible in the X-radiographs [see X-radiography], was lower and may have had a stronger accent of light upon it than does the current hand [fig. 2]. Another change evident in the X-radiographs is that the white collar originally jutted higher and covered a bit of the sitter's face, just to the left of his chin.

Behind the figure a large rectangular form, read in the 1935 Rijksmuseum exhibition catalogue as a window opening with a beveled windowsill, can be vaguely discerned. A bluish black curtain was thought to be to the left of this window. [8] Jeroen Giltaij also interprets this rectangular form as an open window. [9] The right edge of the shape curves slightly outward near the bottom in such a

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way as to suggest that the form is not a window but a stretched canvas. With such a backdrop the painting could well depict a painter seated before a canvas. Indeed, the relaxed, informal pose of the sitter speaks to such an interpretation. Rembrandt had already depicted the artist Jan Asselijn (Dutch, c. 1610 - 1652) in such a manner, seated before one of his paintings in an etching of about 1647 [fig. 3]. [10] Comparable as well is the *Portrait of Paulus Potter*, 1654 (Mauritshuis, The Hague), by Bartholomeus van der Helst (c. 1613–1670). [11]

Should the Gallery's portrait represent an artist, an unexpected but probable sitter is Govaert Flinck (Dutch, 1615 - 1660)—if one is to judge from the engraved portrait of him, here shown in reverse, included in Arnold Houbraken's *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* of 1753 [fig. 4]. [12] Although the source for Houbraken's print is not known, the image he depicts resembles to a remarkable degree the sitter in Rembrandt's portrait. Not only are the shapes of the eyes, nose, and mouth similar, Flinck had a similar mustache and also long, flowing hair. If the portrait does represent Flinck, Rembrandt would presumably have painted it before February 2, 1660, the date of Flinck's unexpected death at the age of forty-four, unless it was a posthumous portrait. [13]

Whether Govaert Flinck would have asked Rembrandt for a portrait at this stage of his career is, of course, a legitimate question. Flinck was at the height of his fame in 1660. He had long since left the orbit of Rembrandt, with whom he had studied in the mid-1630s, to become a successful portrait and history painter in a classicizing style admired by the important patrons he associated with in both Amsterdam and his native Germany. He was wealthy and well connected, and had a remarkable collection with a heavy concentration of sculpture and paintings by Italian and Flemish masters, including Anthony van Dyck. In 1659 Flinck had received the most prestigious commission of his life: he was asked by the burgomasters to create twelve large paintings for the gallery of the Town Hall of Amsterdam. The world in which he operated seems so different from the one in which Rembrandt moved.

Nevertheless, Rembrandt's genius as a portrait painter was still widely acknowledged by certain segments of Amsterdam's population, including artists and art collectors. A number of his late portraits, both etched and painted, were indeed of artists or art collectors, and Flinck could qualify on both accounts. More important, this portrait has an immediacy that suggests personal as well as professional contacts between the sitter and the painter. That the aging master, who had been overlooked for the enormous commission to decorate the town hall,

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produced such an affectionate portrait of his former protégé, either just prior to his unexpected death or in reaction to it, is perhaps too much to ask. Yet the evidence, such as it is, allows for this possibility. [14]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Syndics of the Cloth Drapers' Guild*, 1662, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

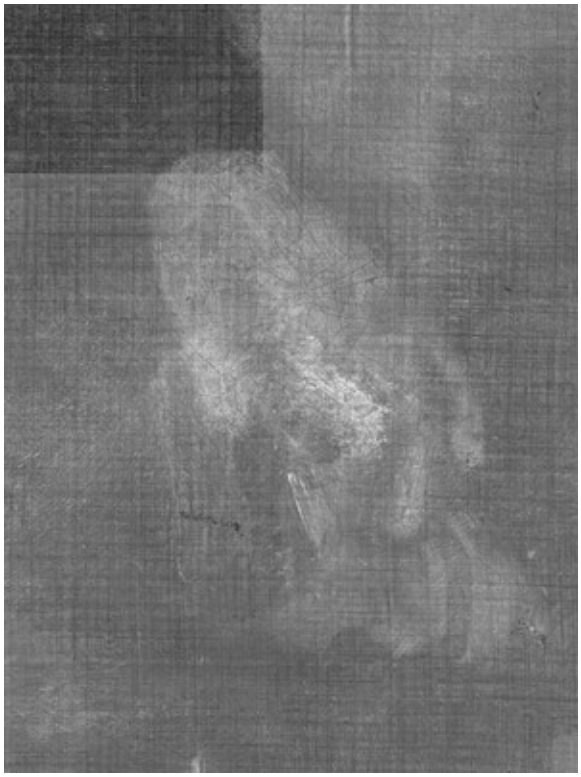

fig. 2 Detail of left hand, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Young Man Seated at a Table (possibly Govaert Flinck)*, c. 1660, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.77

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fig. 3 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Jan Asselijn*, c. 1647, etching, drypoint and burin, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection, 1943.3.7137

fig. 4 Arnold Houbraken, *Govert Flinck*, shown in reverse, from *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, The Hague, 1753

NOTES

[1] Ben P. J. Broos in Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague and Zwolle, 1990), 392, proposed, on the basis of quite circumstantial evidence, that the sitter was Jacob Louysz Trip (1636–1664) and that the portrait was commissioned on the occasion of his marriage in 1660. It is unlikely, however, that this portrait represents a sitter who was only twenty-four to twenty-eight years old. Jeroen Giltaij, in *Rembrandt Rembrandt* (Frankfurt, 2003), 202–205, no. 39, follows Broos in arguing that the portrait depicts Trip, noting that the sitter and his family were quite wealthy.

[2] The date was first mentioned in Olof Granberg, *Katalog ofver Utställningen af åldre Mästares taflor ur Svenska privatsamlinger* (Stockholm, 1893); it was repeated by Wilhelm von Bode and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The*

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Complete Work of Rembrandt, trans. Florence Simmonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 6:3-4. The exact inscription was given by Olof Granberg, *Inventaire général des trésors d'art ... en Suède*, 3 vols. (Stockholm, 1911–1913), 1:125. Jeroen Giltaij, in *Rembrandt Rembrandt* (Frankfurt, 2003), 202–205, no. 39, interprets the last undecipherable digit of the date as a "2" and compares the style of the portrait to that of Rembrandt's *Syndics of the Cloth Drapers' Guild*, 1662 (see fig. 1).

[3] Frederik Schmidt-Degener, *Rembrandt Tentoonstelling* (Amsterdam, 1935), 60–61, no. 29; Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt, Schilderijen* (Vienna, 1935), 14, no. 312.

[4] See inventory nos. 1674 and 1675, National Gallery, London.

[5] See inventory no. 221, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London.

[6] *Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art* (Washington, 1969), 30, no. 20; Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: zijn leven, zijn schilderijen* (Maarssen, 1984), 339, no. 396 (English trans., *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings* [New York, 1985]).

[7] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 574, no. 312.

[8] Frederik Schmidt-Degener, *Rembrandt Tentoonstelling* (Amsterdam, 1935), 61: "Hij is gezeten voor een vaag aangegeven venster-opening met afgeschuind kozijn. Links een blauwig-zwart venster-gordijn."

[9] Jeroen Giltaij, *Rembrandt, Rembrandt* (Frankfurt, 2003), 202–205.

[10] As Seymour Slive has pointed out to me (personal communication, 1993), Rembrandt may have posed Asselijn in this manner to hide his crippled left arm.

[11] See inventory no. 54, Mauritshuis, The Hague.

[12] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753), 2:18.

[13] Rembrandt had made other posthumous portraits, including his painting of Saskia, 1643 (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin; Br. 109), and his etched portrait of Jan Cornelis Sylvius, 1646 (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin; B. 280).

[14] As Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann notes (personal communication, 1993), the portrait could have been commissioned by someone other than Flinck himself even if it represents Flinck.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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The support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the original tacking margins trimmed. A row of later tacking holes along the left and top edges of the original support suggests a prior reduction in size, although cusping at right and bottom indicates that the present dimensions are close to or slightly smaller than the original dimensions. The double ground consists of a thick, red brown lower layer followed by a slightly thinner gray-tan layer.[1] The paint was applied in two stages over the gray-tan upper ground.[2] Rembrandt laid in the figure with broad strokes in black for the garment, and brighter paints for the accents and the skin color. While the facial features were worked out with some detail, the first paint strokes for the hands were quite sketchy and with some different details. The paint was applied as dry to fluid pastes, with glazes and scumbles, occasionally incised with the butt end of a brush. Brushstrokes have been worked wet-into-wet or drawn over dry impasto to create texture, although a past lining procedure has flattened the texture. The X-radiographs show changes in both hands, with the proper right hand loosely sketched and the proper left hand either lower or reconfigured, or both. The X-radiographs also show that the sitter's white collar originally covered part of the sitter's face, on the proper right side of his chin.

Large complex tears in the original support fabric are found in the lower right background and between the hands. Paint loss is confined to the tears and the edges, where sections of the original fabric have been torn away. There is some abrasion in the black garment, especially in the sitter's sleeves and vest, where a long tear is located. The painting was treated in 2001-2002, at which time discolored varnish and inpainting were removed.

[1] The ground was analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections (see report dated May 15, 2002, in NGA Conservation department files). An additional sample was analyzed by Karin Groen using energy dispersive X-ray analysis (see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project,A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering [Dordrecht, 2005]. 668–669).

[2] The painting's structure was confirmed by analysis of cross-sections. The analysis was performed by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated May 15, 2002, in NGA Conservation department files).

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PROVENANCE

Possibly acquired between 1768 and 1772 by Gustaf Adolf Sparre [1746-1794], Sahlgren-Sparre Palace, Göteborg, and, after 1775, Kulla Gunnarstorp Castle, near Helsingborg, Sweden; by inheritance to his wife, Elisabet Sofia Amalia Beata Sparre [née Ramel, 1753-1830], Kulla Gunnarstorp Castle; by inheritance to her grandson, Gustaf Adolf Frederik De la Gardie [1800-1833], Kulla Gunnarstorp Castle; by inheritance to his father, Jacob Gustaf De la Gardie [1768-1842], Kulla Gunnarstorp Castle; sold a few years after 1837 [when De Geer had purchased Kulla Gunnarstorp Castle] with the entire Sparre collection to Carl De Geer of Leustra [1781-1861]; placed 1855 into a family trust under care of his granddaughter, Elizabeth Wachtmeister [née von Platen, 1834-1918], Castle Wanås, near Kristianstad, Sweden;[1] sold 1926 by the Wachtmeister Trust to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); sold December 1926 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] This possible provenance and the preceding chain of ownership are outlined in Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, The Hague and Zwolle, 1990: 387, 390. For information about the Sparre collection, see Ingmar Hasselgren, Konstsamlaren Gustaf Adolf Sparre, 1746-1794: hans studieresa, va°ning och konstsamling i Go¨teborg. Ph.D. diss., University of Göteborg, 1974. The painting was first published in 1884, when it was “discovered” in the Wachtmeister collection by Olof Granberg; see his article: "Drei unbekannte Gemälde von Rembrandt," *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst* 19 (1884): 30-32.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1893 Utställningen af äldre Mästares taflor ur Svenska privatsamlinger, Bukowskis, Stockholm, 1893, no. 161.

1929 Exhibition of Dutch Art 1450-1900, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1929, no. 83.

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1935 Loan Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings and Etchings by Rembrandt and His Circle, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1935-1936, no. 7.

1935 Rembrandt Tentoonstelling, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1935, no. 29.

1939 Masterworks of Five Centuries, Golden Gate International Exposition, San Francisco, 1939, no. 88a, repro.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 20, repro.

1976 Chefs-d'oeuvre de musées des États-Unis: de Giorgione à Picasso, Musée Marmottan, Paris, October-December 1976, no. 17, repro. (organized by the Armand Hammer Foundation).

1976 Zapadnoevropeiskaia i Amerikanskaia zhivopis is muzeev ssha [West European and American Painting from the Museums of USA], State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad; State Pushkin Museum, Moscow; State Museums, Kiev and Minsk, 1976, unpaginated and unnumbered catalogue.

1990 Great Dutch Paintings from America, Mauritshuis, The Hague; The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, 1990-1991, no. 53, color repro.

1997 Rembrandt: A Genius and His Impact, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1997-1998, no. 19, repro.

2002 Rembrandt Rembrandt, Kyoto National Museum; Städelsches Kunstinstitut Frankfurt am Main, 2002-2003, no. 39, repro.

2003 Loan for display with permanent collection, Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Frankfurt am Main, 2003-2004.

2011 Rembrandt in America, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Cleveland Museum of Art; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2011-2012, no. 36, pl. 35.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Renesse, Constantijn van

Also known as
Renesse, Constantijn Daniel van
Dutch, 1626 - 1680

BIOGRAPHY

Constantijn van Renesse was born in Maarsen, near Utrecht, on September 10, 1626. His father, Lodewijk Geradus van Renesse, a theologian and minister in Maarsen, was a learned man who spoke a number of languages. In 1634 he was appointed military chaplain for Prince Hendrik of Nassau, stadtholder of Friesland, in 1634. In 1638, the year of his wife's death, Lodewijk moved his three sons and daughter to Breda so he could be with the troops during the siege of Breda and help institute the Reformed Church in that area. Shortly after his father's second marriage in 1639, Constantijn enrolled in the University of Leiden, where he studied languages and mathematics.

Constantijn seems to have been skilled as a draughtsman, and apparently began his artistic career in Leiden simultaneously with his studies at the University. Although the nature of his early artistic training is not known, he did study with Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 - 1669) in Amsterdam in the late 1640s and early 1650s. A number of drawings of religious subjects from this period survive, some of which Rembrandt appears to have corrected, that demonstrate Van Renesse's ability to assimilate Rembrandt's style. Van Renesse probably assisted Rembrandt in the execution of a number of large-scale religious paintings in the early 1650s (see *The Descent from the Cross*). Van Renesse also learned to make etchings with pronounced chiaroscuro during his apprenticeship with Rembrandt. Among the genre scenes and portraits Van Renesse etched in the early 1650s is a self-portrait dated 1651.

Van Renesse probably had become an independent artist by 1651, when he depicted his father, his siblings, and himself in *Family Concert Party* (Salzburg, Residenzgallery). His artistic career, however, soon was eclipsed by civic responsibilities. In 1653 he was named town clerk of Eindhoven, probably as a result of the good contacts his father had with the States General, which was intent on placing protestants in important posts in this region of the Netherlands. In the following year he married Christina Drabbe, with whom he had an unknown

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number of children. Although Constantijn's official position, which he kept throughout his life, must have hindered his artistic career, he continued to produce drawings and paintings into the 1660s.

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August 4, 2016

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse)
Dutch 17th Century

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

Constantijn van Renesse
Dutch, 1626 - 1680

The Descent from the Cross

1650/1652

oil on canvas
overall: 142 x 110.9 cm (55 7/8 x 43 11/16 in.)
framed: 181 x 147.3 cm (71 1/4 x 58 in.)
Inscription: falsely signed and dated, lower center: Rembrandt f. 1651 (this inscription removed during conservation treatment in 1991-1992)
Widener Collection 1942.9.61

ENTRY

After spirited bidding between Mr. Lesser of New Bond Street and the Parisian dealer F. Kleinberger on July 2, 1909, Kleinberger paid 7,800 guineas for *The Descent from the Cross.* Although the painting had not been cited in the literature and was unknown to Rembrandt scholars until just before the sale, the price was a record for a Rembrandt painting sold in a London auction house. Aside from the excitement surrounding the discovery of a new Rembrandt, the high price was undoubtedly influenced as well by the positive opinion given about its authenticity the previous week by the leading Rembrandt authority of the day, Dr. Wilhelm von Bode. [1]

The painting, then signed and dated 1651, was recognized by Bode and, subsequently, by other scholars as a free variant of Rembrandt's earlier representations of *The Descent from the Cross,* his 1633 painting for the Passion series that was intended for Prince Frederik Hendrik [fig. 1], and, more specifically, his large-scale depiction of this subject, signed and dated 1634, in the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg [fig. 2]. Hofstede de Groot, Stechow, and Rosenberg, among others, noted how Rembrandt had in this work reduced the number of compositional elements that had appeared in the earlier examples. They also wrote movingly about how the changes had enhanced the scene's pictorial

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expression and emotional content. [2] Scholars also identified the 1651 *Descent from the Cross* as one of the two paintings of this subject listed in the inventory of Rembrandt's possessions in 1656. [3]

The positive assessment given to the painting for the sixty years after it appeared at auction in London in 1909, however, came abruptly to an end in 1969 when Horst Gerson wrote that the painting was the work of a pupil. As far as he was concerned, "the gestures are lame, the expression sentimental and the composition as a whole lacks concentration." He suggested that the painting may have been executed by a "pupil like B. Fabritius or S. van Hoogstraten." [4] Since Gerson's publication no Rembrandt authority has accepted the work as autograph. In 1984 the attribution of the painting at the National Gallery of Art was changed to "After Rembrandt van Rijn." The Rembrandt Research Project (RRP) later listed *The Descent from the Cross* as a copy of the Hermitage painting, the attribution of which they also reject. [5] The RRP suggested that the Gallery's painting "may very well have been produced in his circle." It further allowed that Rembrandt may have permitted "variants done by pupils to be included in the 1656 inventory of his belongings as being his own work." [6] Finally, Sumowski placed the painting among those executed by anonymous members of the Rembrandt school. [7]

Heavily discolored varnish and extensive repainting [fig. 3] have profoundly affected earlier assessments of the emotional content of the work and even its attribution, including that of the RRP. [8] To try to come to a clearer understanding of the place of this work within Rembrandt's workshop, removal of the Overpaint was undertaken in 1991–1992. [9] Although this conservation treatment helped resolve some of the questions about the complex genesis of this work that were first raised when the painting underwent technical examination in 1978, many questions still remain. [10] The following text examines the painting's original appearance and the character of the extensive revisions that were made to it in the mid-seventeenth century. It will also discuss the probability that the painting was treated again prior to being sold in London in 1909. This text will then examine the attribution of the work and its place within Rembrandt's workshop.

The compositional connections between the painting and *The Descent from the Cross* in the Hermitage, which have been noted ever since the time of Bode, are even closer than one would assume from looking at the surface. X-radiographs [see X-radiography] [fig. 4], which are admittedly difficult to read because of the unusual striations across the image caused by an uneven application of Ground, [11] but they do reveal much about changes both in design and in the shape of the

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canvas. Although slight distortions in thread patterns in the canvas at the top and right indicate that these edges may have been trimmed a small amount, no such scalloping patterns are evident along the left or the bottom, an indication that the canvas has most likely been reduced substantially along these edges. Also evident in the X-radiographs is a vertical seam to the left of center where two canvases have been joined. [12] If one hypothesizes that this unusually situated seam originally marked the central axis of the painting, then it is clear that two-thirds of the left half of the original image have been eliminated. The original format thus would have been comparable to that of the Hermitage painting in that Christ was centrally placed in the composition. It is also probable that the proportions of the two compositions would have been comparable. The Washington painting would then have been substantially larger than the Hermitage version (the Hermitage painting measures 159.3 x 116.4 cm; the proposed width of the Gallery painting would have been approximately 160 cm, or the double of 80 cm, with a proportional height of about 220 cm). [13]

The hypothesis that the Washington painting was once a larger-scale version of the Hermitage painting is reinforced by the character of the design changes evident on the X-radiographs. The clearest of these is the change in the position of the man on the ladder who holds the torch that illuminates the scene. This middle-aged man [fig. 5] has been painted over a younger figure whose head, in a position identical to that in the Hermitage painting, can be seen in the X-radiographs at about the man's chest level [fig. 6]. Although the image of Christ is difficult to read because of the density of the lead white paint, his legs were initially bent back in a position comparable to that in the 1634 composition. Also vaguely visible in the X-radiographs are the profiles of two figures found in the Hermitage painting that were subsequently eliminated from the Washington version—that of the bearded man standing just below the youth with the candle and that of one of the male onlookers crowded to his right. Finally, the arm of the Virgin was originally illuminated as it is in the Hermitage painting.

Cross-sections have provided corroborating evidence that the paint layers are quite complex and that the colors underlying the surface paint are similar to those in the Hermitage painting. The most striking instance is a bright orange that can be found in exactly the same area one finds the bright orange costume to the right of the turbaned man in the foreground of the Hermitage painting. The cross-sections also suggest that the extensive changes in the National Gallery of Art painting were made only after the first composition had been blocked out with a thin, dark

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layer of paint. This layer has been found in every cross-section with the exception of the neck of the Virgin. Indeed, the head of the Virgin does seem to be the only part of a figure in the painting not extensively reworked, although the broadly executed highlights on her face may have been added to the preexisting form to tie in to the handling of the other figures. Interestingly, associated with this pervasive layer of dark paint is an unpigmented layer. While this layer generally appears to lie on top of the dark layer, sometimes it seems to pass through it and sometimes to lie below it. [14] The layer is probably varnish, which may indicate that a short lapse of time existed between the execution of the underlying image and the final composition.

Evidence indicates that *The Descent from the Cross* must have undergone further treatment prior to its sale in July 1909. A letter from June 26, 1909, states, “the Rembrandt has been very badly treated, having apparently been hung against a hot flue, which has blistered the picture all up the left side.” No evidence of such blisters [see Blistering] is currently found on the painting, thus it seems probable that the painting was trimmed along the left and bottom to remove them. Reinforcing this hypothesis is the fact that when the painting was sold in July 1909 (55 x 42 inches) its dimensions were smaller than they had been when it was sold in April 1840 (5’ x 4’5”, which equals 60” x 53”). Just when this reduction took place is unknown, but it was probably not long before the July sale. [15]

The individual who restored the painting prior to the 1909 sale did his best to solidify the Rembrandt attribution. It was probably at that time that the signature and date were added, and that the head, shoulders, and turban of the figure in the foreground were overpainted. When these later additions were removed during the treatment of 1991–1992, it was revealed that the paint surface below that figure had been badly abraded. Although various underlying layers of paint are difficult to interpret with certainty, it appears that the repainted turbaned figure in the foreground covered a comparable figure that had been scraped down. Beneath that earlier figure, however, was yet another one: remnants of his black, flat-shaped hat still exist in an underlying paint layer. It may be that the earlier restorer scraped away the head and shoulders of the turbaned man because he saw evidence of a different figure beneath it. Eventually, it seems, he concluded that so few remnants of the earlier head with the flat-shaped hat existed that it behooved him to repaint the turbaned figure he had just removed. [17]

One further compositional change (probably made by a different restorer) was the shape of Joseph of Arimathea’s red coat. This restorer, who made the addition of

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the tempera paint, must have felt that this aged man's body should have been more massive than it had been painted, and he added significantly to its bulk. With this repaint removed, the rigid angularity of the seventeenth-century image is now visible.

With the removal of the discolored varnish and later overpaint, it has become apparent that the seventeenth-century changes to *The Descent from the Cross* were undertaken with a great deal of sensitivity. Indeed, a comparison of the Hermitage painting and this work demonstrates that profound differences exist between the two works despite their apparent similarities. The Gallery's composition is far more focused than is the Hermitage version. Not only is the cross brought forward and the figures given greater prominence, but light is concentrated on two major areas of activity: that surrounding the lowering of Christ's body by the aged Joseph of Arimathea and the swooning figure of the Virgin. Because the figure holding the torch stands higher on the ladder and Christ's legs have been brought forward, light focuses more broadly on the central figure group. These changes furthermore reduce the diagonal thrust seen in the Hermitage composition: the disposition of forms is more balanced, and gestures, including the arm holding Christ's waist, have a predominantly horizontal emphasis.

The feeling evoked by the Washington painting is more reverential than that in the Hermitage version. Joseph of Arimathea seems to present Christ to the viewer, while the figures below wait quietly to assist. In the Hermitage painting, on the other hand, Joseph of Arimathea struggles with the weight of Christ's body as others labor to pull out the nail that secures Christ's left hand to the cross. The emphasis there on the physical activity of removing Christ's body from the cross is reinforced by the angular gestures, the strong diagonal shadows on the white shroud, the ungainly position of Christ's body, and the press of the crowd around the foot of the cross.

The total rethinking of the composition in the National Gallery of Art painting speaks strongly for the participation of Rembrandt in the process, particularly because the emotional content of the work is so sympathetic with his approach to religious imagery during the 1650s. Nevertheless, while Rembrandtesque, the execution is not that of the master. Heavy impastos on the face of the man holding the torch, for example, are coarsely applied, while the white sheet wrapped around Christ is painted in flat planes of color that only superficially suggest folds in the material. Many questions thus remain: what was the date of the original composition of the Washington *Descent from the Cross*; who painted it; how and

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why were the later reworkings undertaken; and who was the artist responsible?

Dating the underlying image is quite difficult. Technical evidence gained from examinations of the canvas or paints used has not yet provided precise correlations with other works. [16] On the basis of the compositional similarities with the Hermitage *Descent,* it would seem logical to assume that the Washington version would have been executed at approximately the same period of time. Just when that was, however, is a matter of some dispute. Although the Hermitage *Descent* is signed and dated 1634 and apparently was painted on the same type of canvas as that used for Rembrandt's *Flora,* 1634, also in the Hermitage, the RRP has not only rejected the attribution to Rembrandt but has also argued on stylistic grounds that the painting was executed in Rembrandt's workshop around 1640. Nevertheless, the existence of the date, the evidence of the canvas weave, and the close compositional similarity to the 1633 *Descent from the Cross* from the Passion series makes it seem most probable that the Hermitage *Descent* was conceived in the mid-1630s. During these years Rembrandt was particularly fascinated with the drama and emotional intensity of this story, something he explored in comparable ways in oil sketches, prints, and drawings. It is unlikely that in the 1640s he would have entrusted a student in his workshop to recreate a composition that resonated so distinctly with a compositional idea first developed in 1633.

If the Hermitage *Descent* were, indeed, first conceived in the mid-1630s, it then is probable that the Washington painting was as well. Perhaps both large-scale works were made in anticipation of forthcoming commissions that never materialized. An added incentive may have been Rembrandt's desire to compete with Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640). Rembrandt, who based his 1633 *Descent from the Cross* for the Passion series on Lucas Vorsterman's reproductive engraving after Rubens' altarpiece *The Descent from the Cross,* now in the Antwerp Cathedral, may have decided to emulate not only Rubens' composition but also the large scale in which Rubens worked. Although the degree to which Rembrandt was involved in the execution of either of these works cannot be determined, he may well have blocked in the composition for at least one of them. The final execution may then have been left to a student or students. In any event, there seems to be no stylistic or technical evidence by which to conclude that one of these works was a direct copy of the other.

Although the signature and date 1651 on the Washington *Descent* were determined to be later additions and removed during treatment in 1991–1992, the

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date is not inconsistent with the style of the figures painted over the earlier composition. As mentioned above, moreover, the artistic concept is also consistent with Rembrandt's work from this period. Although no documents provide information to explain why such extensive reworkings were undertaken at this time, the reason may once again have been the hope that a commission for such a scene would materialize. Rembrandt may have decided that the very large size of the original composition made the work particularly difficult to sell. He may also have felt that the original composition provided the foundation for a particularly fascinating challenge, and thus he reconceived a dramatic story by subtly changing the positions of the figures, the lighting effects, and even the moment depicted to create a painting with a different mood and emotional impact.

Rembrandt was undoubtedly closely involved in the rethinking of this composition and may well have blocked in forms to serve as a compositional guide, but no evidence of his own brushwork exists in the final image. Just who may have been responsible for the execution is difficult to judge. Nevertheless, sufficient stylistic connections can be found between this work and the paintings and drawings attributed to Constantijn van Renesse (Dutch, 1626 - 1680) to make a tentative attribution of *The Descent from the Cross* to this fascinating Rembrandt student.

Van Renesse, about whom very little is known, seems to have been with Rembrandt between 1649 and 1652. [18] Rembrandt must have taken a great deal of interest in his work, if one is to judge from the drawings by Van Renesse that he corrected. [19] Van Renesse had a preference for biblical scenes, many of which focused on the life of Christ. [20] Stylistically, Van Renesse's figures compare closely to those in the Washington *Descent.* In Van Renesse's drawing of *Doubting Thomas* (Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich), Christ's elongated proportions and anatomical structure are the same as those in the *Descent.* [21] Similar figure types also occur in paintings convincingly attributed to Van Renesse. In his *The Good Samaritan* [fig. 7], for example, the crossed legs of the wounded man have much the same structure as do those of Christ in the Washington painting. [22] Finally, Van Renesse's painting technique combines the smooth, flat planes of color and rough impastos found in *The Descent from the Cross.* This combination of techniques is particularly evident in his *Conviviality near the Inn* in the Corcoran Gallery of Art [fig. 8]. Although this painting is not signed, the close compositional similarity between the Corcoran's painting and Van Renesse's etching, signed and dated 1651, confirms the attribution. [23] Despite the different nature of the subject, the manner in which a number of figures in this work have

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been executed has distinct parallels in *The Descent from the Cross* (see [fig. 4]).

This painting thus is a fascinating document about the complexities that sometimes exist with works produced in Rembrandt's workshop. [24] The evidence suggests that it was initially larger in size, with a composition that resembled that of the Hermitage *Descent from the Cross.* The exact date of the first period of execution cannot be precisely determined, but it probably was during the mid-1630s. Around 1650, or shortly thereafter, it was severely cropped at the left and bottom, and virtually the entire composition was reworked. Although Rembrandt was probably involved in the rethinking of the composition, he does not seem to have had any part in the final execution. Stylistic evidence suggests that the artist responsible was Constantijn van Renesse. If this hypothesis is correct, one could then argue that Van Renesse was a far more central figure in Rembrandt's workshop in the early 1650s than has hitherto been believed. It may well be that he was involved in a number of other large-scale religious paintings from this period that were produced by unidentified members of Rembrandt's workshop. [25]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Descent from the Cross*, 1633, oil on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Alte Pinakothek, Bayerische Staatsgemäldegalerie, Munich / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Descent from the Cross*, 1634, oil on canvas, Hermitage, Saint Petersburg. Photo © The State Hermitage Museum. Photographers: Vladimir Terebenin, Leonard Kheifets, Yuri Molodkovets

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fig. 3 before treatment, Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse), *The Descent from the Cross*, 1650/1652, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.61

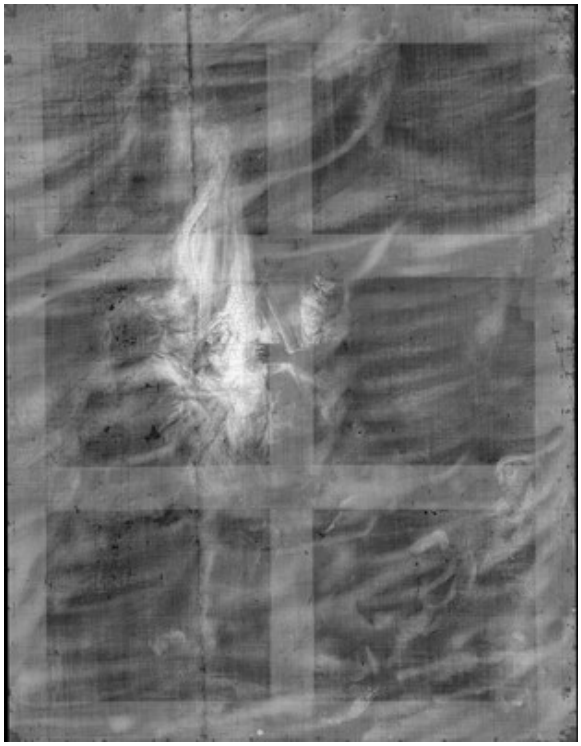

fig. 4 X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse), *The Descent from the Cross*, 1650/1652, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.61

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fig. 5 Detail of head of the middle-aged man, Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse), *The Descent from the Cross*, 1650/1652, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.61

fig. 6 Detail of the head, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt Workshop (Probably Constantijn van Renesse), *The Descent from the Cross*, 1650/1652, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.61

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fig. 7 Constantijn van Renesse, *The Good Samaritan*, 1648, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: RMN / Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Jean-Gilles Berizzi

fig. 8 Detail of seated figure at right, Constantijn van Renesse, *Conviviality near the Inn*, oil on canvas, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, William A. Clark Collection

NOTES

[1] This information is taken from a clipping from an unidentified English newspaper, dated July 3, 1909, on file at the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorisches Documentatie (RKD). The title of the article was: “7,800Gs. for a Rembrandt.” The commentator’s response to the high price is also worth noting: “The explanation is simple enough, the ordeal by auction is not necessary to resolve the value of a great Rembrandt. If an owner wishes to release a famous masterpiece nowadays he knows dealers ready to give him his price straightway.”

[2] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 6:102, finds the differences between this painting and the Hermitage version so extensive that he considers the work to be a new representation of the same subject. Wolfgang Stechow,

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"Rembrandts Darstellungen der Kreuzabnahme," *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 50 (1919): 229, places the painting within the broad tradition of Rembrandt's paintings, drawings, and etchings. Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), 1:134–135 (also reprint, *Rembrandt: Life and Work* [Greenwich, Conn., 1964], 220–221), emphasizes that while the action has been reduced, the emotional content has been enriched through the stability of the composition and the breadth and vigor of the paint handling.

[3] The inventory of Rembrandt's possessions taken on July 25–26, 1656, is listed as document 1656/12 in Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York, 1979), 353, no. 37 ("A large 'Descent from the Cross' by Rembrandt, with a handsome gold frame by the same"); and 379, no. 293 ("The 'Descent from the Cross' by Rembrandt"). It has also been assumed that one of these paintings is the 1634 version in the Hermitage.

[4] Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 610, no. 684.

[5] Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 2, *1631–1634*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and Lancaster, 1986), 617–627, C49. The authors of the *Corpus* emphasize the complexities of the problems of attribution associated with this work. Despite the date on the painting and the use of a canvas available in 1634 they have concluded that the work could only have been painted around 1640 in Rembrandt's workshop. They discount the possibility that Rembrandt may have laid in the composition in about 1634 and that the work was completed later by another hand. Such a theory, however, seems quite plausible, particularly given the fact that a number of changes do exist between the X-radiograph [see X-radiography] and the final image (for example, the head of a man is visible in the X-radiograph between Christ's right arm and leg that does not appear in the final painting). The only member of Rembrandt's workshop they mention as the possible artist is Ferdinand Bol (Dutch, 1616 - 1680). See also comments in note 8.

[6] Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 628–630, C49, copy 2.

[7] Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau i.d. Pfalz, 1983), 4:2961, no. 1972.

[8] While Jakob Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), 1:135, admired the painting's "colouristic warmth," which had largely resulted from the accumulation of discolored varnish, Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 610, no. 584, responded with surprise that Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde*

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(Berlin, 1966), 6, 84, supposed (rightly) that the turbaned figure in the foreground of the painting was overpainted. Indeed, this figure must have been a later addition. Not only did the paint on the turban cover existing Craquelure, but X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy performed by the NGA Scientific Research department showed it contained antimony, an element found in Naples yellow, a pigment not commonly used before the mid-eighteenth century (see report dated July 1978 in NGA Conservation department files). Another major change was the overpainting of the red cloak of Joseph of Arimathea, which substantially altered the shape of the figure's body. The overpaint must have resulted from a different restoration because gas chromotography analysis performed by the NGA Scientific Research departent indicated that it was executed in tempera (see report dated November 15, 1991, in NGA Conservation department files). The RRP's assessment of the painting, Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 628–630, C49, is quite flawed. The information the RRP relates about the painting being transferred onto a new canvas in Russia in 1854 is false. The RRP also criticizes the attribution most severely precisely in areas that have been Overpainted without recognizing that these areas are overpaint. Finally, the RRP never examined the X-radiographs and did not discuss the extensive compositional changes they reveal. See also comments in note 5.

[9] New technical examinations, including the taking of cross-sections, were made at that time by the NGA Scientific Research department and Karin Groen (see Technical Summary).

[10] The examinations in 1976 were undertaken with the assistance of Kay Silberfeld and Barbara Miller. A report on their findings was written by Cynthia P. Schneider, who was at the Gallery then as a summer intern. The problems of the genesis of the painting as understood at that time were published in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "The Art Historian in the Laboratory: Examinations into ... 17th-Century Dutch Painting," in *The Age of Rembrandt: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting*, ed. Roland Fleischer and Susan S. Munshower, Papers in Art History from the Pennsylvania State University, 3 (Pittsburgh, 1988), 218–220.

[11] Similar effects are found in the X-radiographs of Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait with Saskia,* Gemäldegalerie, Dresden. See the illustration in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642*, ed. Josua Bruyn et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London, 1989), 134, no. A 111.

[12] The piece to the left is approximately 37.9 cm wide and that to the right approximately 73 cm wide.

[13] This calculation is based on the existing width of the right-hand piece of

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canvas (about 73 cm) with an addition of about 7 cm for the apparent reduction along the right edge. This reduction is calculated by noting that, with the exception of his left hand, the man who supports Mary in the Hermitage painting was eliminated in the Gallery *Descent* when the canvas was cut.

[14] In one instance it seems as though the unpigmented layer fills cracks in the dark layer.

[15] See Technical Summary, note 2, for further information about the letter of June 26, 1909.

[16] See Technical Summary.

[17] The head of the turbaned man was reconstructed in 1992 on the basis of the remnant of painting left from the original image.

[18] For Van Renesse's life, see Karel Vermeeren, "Constantijn Daniël van Renesse, zijn leven en zijn werken," *De Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 30 (1978): 3–23, and Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau i.d. Pfalz, 1983), 4:2469–2470. Van Renesse was born on September 10, 1626, in Maarssen, near Utrecht. His father, Ludovicus (Lodewijk) Gerardus van Renesse, was a preacher. After his father moved to Breda in 1638, Constantijn entered the University of Leiden, where he was inscribed for literary studies, although he later, in 1642, changed to philosophical studies. He may well have begun his artistic studies in Leiden, although nothing is known about his apprenticeship. An inscription on the back of a drawing, *Daniel in the Lion's Den,* in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (inv. no. MB 200), indicates that he had made the drawing in 1649, "the second time that he had been with Rembrandt." His artistic career was short-lived, presumably ending by 1654 when he was named secretary of the city of Eindhoven. In the same year he married a daughter of the burgomaster of Breda. He died on December 12, 1680.

[19] See G. Falck, "Über einige von Rembrandt übergangene Schülerzeichnungen," *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 45 (1924): 191–200.

[20] Particularly interesting in relation to the Washington *Descent from the Cross* is his drawing of the *Lamentation of Christ on the Cross.* See Werner Sumowski, *Drawings of the Rembrandt School*, ed. and trans. Walter L. Strauss, 10 vols. (New York, 1979–1992), 9: no. 2166a. Although executed around 1650, this scene is likewise a free adaptation of a Rembrandt composition from the mid-1630s, his grisaille oil sketch of c. 1635 (National Gallery, London, inv. no. 43). The main conceptual difference is that whereas Rembrandt depicted the dead Christ lying prone in the Virgin's lap to emphasize the profound emotional reactions of the Virgin and the various bystanders to Christ's death, Van Renesse raised up the body of Christ so that the viewer focuses on Christ himself. In so doing Van Renesse not only

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changed the arrangement of the main figure group, but he also cropped the scene dramatically. It is exactly the same thought process that occurs in the Washington *Descent from the Cross.*

[21] Illustrated in Werner Sumowski, *Drawings of the Rembrandt School*, ed. and trans. Walter L. Strauss, 10 vols. (New York, 1979–1992), 9: no. 2188xx.

[22] See Jacques Foucart, *Peintres rembranesques au Louvre* (Paris, 1988), 108–113; Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 5 vols. (Landau i.d. Pfalz, 1983), 4: no. 1658a.

[23] For a reproduction see F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, c. 1450–1700* 66 vols. to date (Amsterdam, 1949–), 20:12, no. 5.

[24] It also reminds us of the complex conservation issues that often confront our assessments of paintings by Rembrandt and his workshop.

[25] One such painting is the life-size *Lamentation* in the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, inv. no. SN252, which is signed “Rembrandt f. 1650.” The composition of this work resembles that of Van Renesse’s drawing of the same subject (see note 19). The figure of Christ, as well as the old woman at his feet, is reminiscent of comparable figures in *The Descent from the Cross.* For a discussion of this painting, see Franklin W. Robinson and William H. Wilson, *Catalogue of the Flemish and Dutch Paintings, 1400–1900* (Sarasota, Fla., 1980), no. 116

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a medium-weight, plain-woven fabric consisting of two pieces seamed vertically to the left of center through the Christ figure.[1] The painting has been lined with the tacking margins removed. Slight cusping is visible along the top and right edges, but not at the left or bottom. Both the seam and the figure of Christ would typically be in the center of the composition, as in The Descent from the Cross in the Hermitage Collection. Consequently, it seems apparent that the painting was significantly reduced along the left and the bottom. It is probable that the painting was cropped on two different occasions, once in the seventeenth century and a second time in the early twentieth century. Nevertheless, the extensive compositional changes noted below indicate that most of the cropping occurred in the seventeenth century.

Evidence that the canvas was trimmed in the early twentieth century is based on a letter dated 26 June 1909 that states: "the Rembrandt has been very badly treated,

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having apparently been hung against a hot flue, which has blistered the picture all up the left side." [2] Since no blisters are visible along the left edge today, and there is no evidence that they once existed, it seems that the painting was trimmed prior to its sale in London in July 1909. At the time of the sale the painting's dimensions (55 x 42 inches) were approximately the same as those today. A set of tacking holes and crease marks along all four edges within the picture plane indicate that the edges were turned over a smaller stretcher at one time. The edges were subsequently returned to plane when the painting was lined.

The paint was applied over a double ground composed of a thick, light gray lower layer followed by a thin, brown gray upper layer.[3] The paint handling varies from rich opaque layers to thin glazes, with complex layering and dramatic brushmarking in light passages. The X-radiographs show artist's changes to the figures supporting Christ's body, the legs of which were once bent backward to a greater degree. Initially a young man stood where the older man with a torch is placed. Two profiled figures, visible just below the younger figure's head, were also painted out. The original composition was painted out with a thin layer of dark paint.[4] Upon removal of later repaint in 1992, it was determined that the turbaned foreground figure had been painted over another figure that had been intentionally scraped down. It is unknown when and why this change was made.

The seam and creases protrude slightly. Scattered small tears are visible in the X-radiographs, notably along the top edge at center and in the background right of center. Numerous small paint losses are scattered overall, and abrasion is light, save in the turbaned figure. The painting underwent treatment in 1991–1992 to remove discolored varnish and overpaint. It was inpainted in 2000, including reconstruction of the foreground figure's head and face. These were reconstructed on the basis of the remnants of paint left from the original head.

[1] This vertical seam is located 37.9 cm. from the left edge and 73 cm. from the right edge.

[2] The information about the condition of the painting in the letter was provided by "an artist friend" of E.W. Parker's solicitor. It is not known when the "artist friend" saw the painting in its deteriorated condition. The text continues, "The sky also shows signs of having been tampered with. But there can be no doubt of its authenticity although it strangely resembles (and yet differs from) another

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Rembrandt "Descent" of a date about 20 years earlier, at St. Petersburg." Records of the Parker family of Skirwith Abbey, Warwick Hall, and Newbiggin Hall; Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle; WD PKR, box 4, bundle 18, document 12; copies in NGA curatorial files.

[3] The ground and paint were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections, Fourier Transform Infrared spectroscopy, polarized light microscopy, X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy, and gas chromatography in conjunction with mass spectrometry (see reports dated July 1978; July 8, 1991; August 10, 1991; August 14, 1991; October 8, 1991; November 15, 1991; December 2, 1991; plus undated cross-section studies, 1991, in NGA Conservation department files). The ground was further analyzed by Karin Goen using cross-sections (see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project,A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, vol. 4, Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering [Dordrecht, 2005], 664-665). Groen found quartz in the lower ground layer.

[4] This layer was confirmed by cross-sections taken and analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department (see report dated October 8, 1991, in NGA Conservation department files). The cross-sections also showed an unpigmented layer, presumably varnish or oil, directly on top of the dark layer.

PROVENANCE

Harriet, viscountess Hampden [née Burton, 1751-1829], London;[1] (her estate sale, Christie & Manson, London, 19 April 1834 [originally 18 April], no. 83); Fuller. John A. Beaver, Green Heys, Lancashire; (his sale, T. Winstanley and Sons [of Liverpool], Manchester, 15-16 and 18 April 1840, no. 87, bought in); (his sale, Christie & Manson, London, 20 June 1840, no. 102, bought in). Probably William Parker [died 1856], Skirwith Abbey, Cumberland; by inheritance to Edward Wilson Parker [1853-1932], Skirwith Abbey;[2] (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 2 July 1909, no. 99); (F. Kleinberger & Co., Paris); sold to Fritz von Gans [1833-1920], Frankfurt-am-Main, by 1915.[3] (Bachstitz, The Hague), by 1921;[4] inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park,

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Pennsylvania, after purchase 1922 by funds of the estate; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] It is possible that the painting was originally in the collection of the viscountess' father-in-law, Robert Hampden Trevor (1706-1783), 1st viscount Hampden, who was British minister at The Hague. He was succeeded by his elder son, Thomas, 2nd viscount (1746-1824), and then by the viscountess' husband, John, 3rd viscount (1748-1824).

[2] William Parker was one of four nephews who were left large fortunes by their uncle, Robert Parker, of Manchester. An invoice to William Parker from the Manchester framemaker Joseph Zanetti, dated 20 October 1841, mentions the "cleaning and repairing [of a] large fluted frame for picture by Rembrandt." Correspondence between Christie's and Edward Parker's solicitors just prior to the July 1909 sale indicates that Parker had inherited the paintings. (Records of the Parker family of Skirwith Abbey, Warwick Hall, and Newbiggin Hall; Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle; WD PKR, box 2, bundle 14, document 213; WD PKR, box 4, bundle 18, documents 4-6, 8, 11-12; copies in NGA curatorial files.)

[3] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen, 1907-1928: 6(1915):81-82, no. 133.

[4] The Bachstitz Gallery, preface by G. Gronau, 3 vols., Berlin, 1921: 1:5, pl. 31.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 12, repro., as by Rembrandt.

2011 Rembrandt in America, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Cleveland Museum of Art; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2011-2012, no. 43, pl. 45.

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1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*. 8 vols. Translated by Edward G. Hawke. London, 1907-1927: 6(1916):102, no. 133.

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1935: nos. 584 and 585 (detail), repros.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Ruisdael, Jacob van

Also known as
Ruysdael, Jacob van
Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682

BIOGRAPHY

The exact date of Jacob van Ruisdael's birth is not known, but a document from June 1661 gives his age as thirty-two. His father, Isaack (c. 1599–1677), and uncles Jacob (c. 1594–1656) and Salomon van Ruysdael (Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670), were born in Naarden, at which time his family's surname was De Gooyer. After the death ofJacob's grandfather Jacob Jansz de Gooyer in 1616, his father and two uncles changed the family name to Van Ruysdael after the country estate 'Ruysdael' (or Ruisschendaal) near De Gooyer's hometown Blaricum.[1]

On November 12, 1628, Isaack van Ruysdael, by then a widower, was married for the second time, to Maycken Cornelisdr. His son Jacob may have been the child of this marriage. In addition to his documented activities as a picture dealer and a maker of ebony frames, Isaack van Ruysdael was also a painter. Jacob van Ruisdael's earliest works, dated 1646, were made when he was only seventeen or eighteen. He entered the Haarlem Saint Luke's Guild in 1648. It is not known who his early teachers were, but he probably learned painting from his father and from his uncle, Salomon van Ruysdael. Some of the dunescapes that he produced during the late 1640s clearly draw on the works by Salomon, while his wooded landscapes of these years suggest he also had contact with the Haarlem artist Cornelis Vroom (c. 1591–1661).

Arnold Houbraken writes that Ruisdael learned Latin at the request of his father, and that he later studied medicine, becoming a famous surgeon in Amsterdam. Two documents appear to support the latter claim. The first is a register of Amsterdam doctors that states that a "Jacobus Ruijsdael" received a medical degree from the University of Caen, in Normandy, on October 15, 1676. This entry in the register has been crossed out—it is not clear when—and one wonders whether, at this late stage in his artistic career, Ruisdael would have gone to France to get a medical degree. Nonetheless, as the second document attests, a landscape with a waterfall was sold in 1720 as the work of "Doctor Jacob Ruisdael," thus the possibility that the artist Jacob van Ruisdael was also a practicing doctor

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cannot be entirely dismissed.

During the early 1650s, Ruisdael traveled to Westphalia near the Dutch-German border with Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem (1620–1683), whom Houbraken identifies as “een groot vrient” (a great friend) of Ruisdael. Among the sites they visited was the castle Bentheim, which appears in both artists’ work from this period.

About 1656 Ruisdael settled in Amsterdam, where on July 14, 1657, he was baptized into the Reformed Church (he had been brought up a Mennonite). In 1659 he was granted citizenship in Amsterdam, and his name appears again in the records the next year when he testified on July 8 that Meindert Lubbertsz, who later changed his name to Meindert Hobbema (Dutch, 1638 - 1709), had been his pupil. In Amsterdam, Ruisdael must have known the work of Allart van Everdingen (Dutch, 1621 - 1675), who resided in that city from about 1652. Everdingen had traveled to Scandinavia in the 1640s and painted views of pine forests and rocky waterfalls, subjects that Ruisdael explored in the mid-1660s. From about 1670, Ruisdael lived over the shop of the Amsterdam art and book dealer Hieronymous Sweerts, located just off the Dam, Amsterdam’s main public square. He was buried in his birthplace of Haarlem on March 14, 1682, but may well have died in Amsterdam, where he is recorded in January of that year.

Among the greatest and most influential Dutch artists of the seventeenth century, Ruisdael was also the most versatile of landscapists, painting virtually every type of landscape subject. His works are characterized by a combination of almost scientific observation and a monumental, even heroic compositional vision, whether his subject is a dramatic forest scene or a panoramic view of Haarlem. Early in his career he also worked as an etcher. Thirteen of his prints have survived, along with a considerable number of drawings.

Ruisdael had numerous followers, the most important of which were Hobbema and Jan van Kessel (Flemish, 1626 - 1679). In addition, several other artists are associated with him by virtue of their having contributed figures to his landscapes. Among these are Nicolaes Pietersz Berchem (Dutch, 1620 - 1683), Philips Wouwerman (Dutch, 1619 - 1668), Adriaen van de Velde (Dutch, 1636 - 1672), Johannes Lingelbach (c. 1622–1674), and Gerard van Battem (c. 1636–1684).

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[1] The De Gooyer family may have been tenants of one of the houses on the Ruysdael estate. See Neeltje Köhler and Pieter Biesboer, *Painting in Haarlem 1500–1850: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum* (Ghent, 2006), 291, note 4. A fourth uncle, Pieter (born c. 1596), continued to use the family name De Gooyer.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jacob van Ruisdael
Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682

Country House in a Park

c. 1675

oil on canvas
overall: 76.3 x 97.5 cm (30 1/16 x 38 3/8 in.)
framed: 98.4 x 118.4 x 6.7 cm (38 3/4 x 46 5/8 x 2 5/8 in.)
Inscription: lower left: J v Ruisdael (JvR in ligature)
Gift of Rupert L. Joseph 1960.2.1

ENTRY

Depictions of elegant country houses came into vogue in the latter half of the seventeenth century as increasing numbers of wealthy Dutch merchants built homes along the river Vecht and in other picturesque locations in the Netherlands. Artists who specialized in architectural painting, among them Jan van der Heyden (Dutch, 1637 - 1712), depicted the houses and gardens in great detail. Surprisingly, however, not all of these seemingly accurate representations portray actual structures; sometimes the scenes were purely imaginary, intended to project an ideal of country existence rather than its actuality (see Van der Heyden's *An Architectural Fantasy*). Ruisdael, who painted views of country houses only rarely during his long career, was not an artist who felt constrained to convey a precise record of an actual site, and it seems probable that this view of a country estate is an imaginative reconstruction of one he had seen.

The elegant classicist villa standing beyond the informal, almost wilderness garden in this painting contains architectural elements characteristic of country houses from the period. [1] The façade of the yellow two-story structure in the National

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Gallery of Art's painting is articulated by pilasters, a stringcourse, and a balustrade. A triangular pediment, flanked by vases and small dormers, crowns the central bay. While no known structure in the Netherlands or in the western part of Germany is identical, the façade that most resembles this villa is Vredenburgh, designed by Pieter Jansz Post (Netherlandish, 1608 - 1669) and constructed on Frederick Alewijn's estate in the Purmer polder near Westwijk in 1652. Long since destroyed and known today only through a contemporary engraving, the façade of Vredenburgh differs in that it has giant pilasters rising the whole height of the building and no stringcourse or balustrade. [2]

Far more important for the composition than the villa, however, is the garden. The tall Norwegian spruces that soar above the other trees would have been seen by Ruisdael's contemporaries as exotic specimens imported from Scandinavia. [3] They have been somewhat randomly placed within a form of pleasure garden, whose natural and artificial components are enjoyed by the various groups of people that meander through the grounds. On the far right figures gather near the entrance of a large vaulted pavilion covered with foliage. On the opposite side of the garden three figures gaze at an elaborate fountain, which is surmounted by a small sculpted figure of a *manneken pis* (peeing boy). An even more dramatic fountain is situated in the right center. Balanced in the waterspout high above the base is a small ball. Just beyond this fountain two figures gesture in surprise as they are suddenly caught within a trick fountain spurting up around them.

Although the form of the pavilion and trick fountains were garden elements that existed by the late seventeenth century, [4] Ruisdael does not seem to have based his scene on any particular site. [5] It would be most unusual for formal garden elements, such as pavilions and fountains, to be placed within such a wilderness garden. Wilderness gardens, moreover, were generally not placed adjacent to classicist villas where formal gardens, geometrically designed and meticulously groomed, were to be found at both the front and back of the house. Indeed, given the existence of the broken pine lying in the left foreground and the architectural fragment, perhaps a broken cornice, lying in the lower right, it would seem that Ruisdael's intent was more didactic than topographic. These two elements, symbolic of the passage of time and the transience of existence, serve as a framework against which to measure the frivolous activities of the pleasure garden. [6]

In part because the painting lacks the heroic drama of Ruisdael's scenes from the middle of his career and in part because the brushwork is quite restrained, scholars

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have always placed *Country House in a Park* at the end of Ruisdael's career. The restoration of the painting in 1993, however, has revealed that the brushwork and color tonalities are far more vibrant than had been believed, which suggests that the painting may date from the mid-1670s rather than around 1680 as had previously been thought. The style of the costumes worn by the staffage figures would also be possible for the mid-1670s. The painting, in any event, certainly predates two related, but weaker, late works by Ruisdael, *Country House in a Park* in Berlin [fig. 1] and *Chateau in the Park* (Fisher Gallery, University of Southern California, Los Angeles). [7]

Ruisdael often collaborated with artists who executed staffage figures in his compositions, particularly at the end of his life. Similar figures in other paintings by Ruisdael from the 1670s appear to have been executed by the Rotterdam artist Gerrit van Battem (c. 1636–1684). The figures in this work, however, lack the solidity characteristic of Van Battem's style. [8] Indeed, there is neither technical nor stylistic evidence to indicate that anyone other than Ruisdael executed them.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Jacob van Ruisdael, *Country House in a Park*, late 1670s, oil on canvas, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, NY

NOTES

[1] The type of house and setting, for example, vaguely resemble those in a scene Ruisdael painted in collaboration with Thomas de Keyser around 1660 that depicts *The Arrival of Cornelis de Graeff and Members of His Family at Soesdijk, His Country Estate* (National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin; repro. in Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings, Drawings, and Etchings* [New Haven, 2001], no. 80. The house in the National Gallery's painting, however, is far more elegant than that at Soesdijk, which, because it is part of a portrait commission, may be considered to be an accurate portrayal.

[2] See W. Kuyper, *Dutch Classicist Architecture: A Survey of Dutch*

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Architecture, Gardens and Anglo-Dutch Architectural Relations, from 1625 to 1700 (Delft, 1980), 159, 219, fig. 321.

[3] Norwegian spruce, however, had been used in Dutch gardens at least since the 1640s. Constantijn Huygens, for example, had them at his country estate, Hofwijck, which was built about 1640. (See W. Kuyper, *Dutch Classicist Architecture: A Survey of Dutch Architecture, Gardens and Anglo-Dutch Architectural Relations, from 1625 to 1700* [Delft, 1980], 20, 153, fig. 314. The engraving there illustrated was probably made after drawings by Pieter Post and published about 1653.) By the latter decades of the seventeenth century, Norwegian spruce can be found in a number of representations of Dutch gardens. One of the most interesting of these is a print made by I. Moucheron of a bird preserve on a large estate in Heemstede where a number of spruce trees can be seen. This print is included in a bound collection of prints at Dumbarton Oaks called *Nederland.* I would like to thank Sally Wages for bringing this print to my attention.

[4] J. van der Groen, *Le jardinier hollandois* (Amsterdam, 1669). As gardener for the Prince of Orange, Van der Groen was quite influential in the Dutch Republic. Plate number 10 in his book depicts a comparable fountain in which a copper ball is suspended in the waterspout. Around the base of the fountain in the plate, moreover, waterspouts are shown spurting out of a rocky path. The accompanying text explains how these devices work and how they can be set off to “surprendre les spectateurs.” I would like to thank Sally Wages for bringing this reference to my attention.

[5] Friedrich Gorissen, *Conspectus Cliviae, Die klevische Residenz in der Kunst des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Kleve, 1964), 102, no. 62, and Heinrich Dattenberg, *Niederrheinansichten holländischer Künstler des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Düsseldorf, 1967), no. 312, associate this scene and Ruisdael’s related view of a country house and garden in Berlin (fig. 1) with Prince Johan Maurits of Nassau’s Villa Vreugdenberg (Haus Freudenberg) near Kleve. This proposition, however, cannot be supported by any documentary evidence. Since Johan Maurits’ country house burned down in 1669 and the painting dates from the late 1670s, the image could only represent the house after it was rebuilt in 1678, the year before the prince’s death. An engraving of the site, executed about 1685 (Friedrich Gorissen, *Conspectus Cliviae, Die klevische Residenz in der Kunst des 17. Jahrhunderts* [Kleve, 1964], fig. 68), however, includes neither buildings nor a roofline that can be related to either the villa in the Berlin painting or that in *Country House in a Park.* Although the gardens surrounding Johan Maurits’ villa contained tiered fountains, Roman ruins, and spruce, those elements were not found together at one site.

[6] These associations with transience are also noted by E. John Walford, *Jacob van Ruisdael and the Perception of Landscape* (New Haven, 1991),

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168.

[7] See Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings, Drawings, and Etchings* (New Haven, 2001), no. 554 (Berlin) and no. 576 (Fisher Gallery).

[8] For staffage by Van Battum see, for example, Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael* (New York, 1981), 154.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, a fine-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the damaged, yet original, tacking margins retained. A thin, smooth white ground layer was applied overall followed by a warm light brown imprimatura under the foreground and trees. Infrared reflectography[1] shows a brush-applied underdrawing that notes sketchily the position of the fountain and some trees and shrubs. An oval-shaped pentimento is found between the house and fountain, and the roofline of the house was originally higher.

Paint was applied in thin layers with scumbles and glazes. The sky was painted first with reserves left for the foreground and most trees. Scattered small losses exist, mostly confined to the edges, with moderate abrasion found overall, particularly in the sky. The painting was treated in 1993 to consolidate flaking and remove discolored varnish and inpainting.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 vidicon camera fitted with a lead sulphide tube and a Kodak Wratten 87A filter.

PROVENANCE

Savile family, Rufford Abbey, Nottinghamshire, possibly Sir John Savile, 1st baron Savile [1818-1896], or his nephew John Savile Savile-Lumley, 2nd baron Savile [1853-1931]; the latter's son, George Halifax Lumley-Savile, 3rd baron Savile [1919-2008], Rufford Abbey; (Savile family sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 18 November 1938, no. 123); Rupert L. Joseph [d. 1959], New York;[1] bequest 1960 to NGA.

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[1] Labels on the stretcher indicate that the painting was lent by Mr. Joseph to the Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, in 1942 and the Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1948. The loan to the museum in Springfield lasted at least until 1955; see the letter of 23 May 1955 from Frederick B. Robinson, director of the museum, to Mr. Joseph, to which was attached a list of the objects currently on loan from the collector (Rupert L. Joseph Papers, MssCol 1598, Manuscripts and Archives DIvision, New York Public Library: box 2, folder 1; copy in NGA curatorial files).

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1942 Loan to display with permanent collection, Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, 1942-1948.

1948 Loan to display with permanent collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1948-1955.

1981 Jacob van Ruisdael, Mauritshuis, The Hague; Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981-1982, no. 54.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jacob van Ruisdael
Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682

Forest Scene

c. 1655

oil on canvas
overall: 105.5 x 123.4 cm (41 9/16 x 48 9/16 in.)
Inscription: lower right: J v Ruisdael (JvR in ligature)
Widener Collection 1942.9.80

ENTRY

Ruisdael's majestic forest landscape overpowers the viewer with its large scale and the forcefulness of the image. The view is across a broad waterfall to a forest glade, in which a small flock of sheep grazes. In the middle distance, a man and a woman travel along a path that crosses the rolling hillside. The figures, however, seem all but insignificant in comparison to the massive trees and rocks that surround them. The broad, rocky ledge with its waterfall and gigantic, broken birch trees in the foreground is at once forbidding and foreboding. [1] On a rock outcropping to the right, a huge oak tree, its roots grappling for support and nourishment, towers above the forest. The stark, gray, cloudy sky and deep greenish hues of the foliage underscore the painting's somber mood.

Ruisdael painted such forest scenes of water roaring over a rocky ledge many times during his long and productive career. As suggested by the half-timbered house visible in a similar landscape in Frankfurt [fig. 1], he may have encountered such landscape elements on his travels along the Dutch-German border in the early 1650s. The National Gallery of Art's painting also shares compositional characteristics with a landscape with a waterfall by Ruisdael in the Uffizi, Florence

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[fig. 2], including the diminutive figures and sheep. [2]

Few of Ruisdael's paintings after 1653 are dated, so a precise chronology of his work is not possible. The general evolution of his style and range of interests, though, is now understood, and a framework exists for placing his works within certain time periods. The Uffizi painting, with its loose brushwork and more open composition, belongs to the 1670s, while the National Gallery's landscape with its closed composition and densely painted trees, is characteristic of works from the mid-1650s. Also distinctive for this earlier period of Ruisdael's career is the combination of the scene's rather heavy and somber mood and the delicacy of the artist's painterly touch. In this work, for example, he carefully articulated individual blades of grass and leaves, patterns of bark, and the flow of the water cascading over the rocks.

In many respects *Forest Scene* shares characteristics with *The Jewish Cemetery* in Dresden [fig. 3]. Although the subject and lighting effects are more dramatic in the Dresden painting than in *Forest Scene,* the mood, the closed composition, and the descriptive character of Ruisdael's technique for rendering details are comparable. The two paintings even share certain motifs, such as the presence of wild viburnum growing along the edge of the forest. The date of *The Jewish Cemetery* has been much debated, with suggestions ranging from 1653/1655 to 1679. [3] A broad consensus, however, places it and the Detroit version of the same subject in the mid-1650s, a date likewise appropriate for the National Gallery's work. [4]

Given the compositional and stylistic similarities between *Forest Scene* and *The Jewish Cemetery,* one must also ask whether thematic ones exist as well. As has been frequently discussed, the presence of tombs, ruins, broken tree trunks, dead birches, and rainbows in the two versions of *The Jewish Cemetery* have explicit allegorical significance. They allude to the transience of life, particularly the temporal nature of man's endeavors, and also to the hope for renewed growth. [5] Similar symbolic allusions to the power and force of the cycle of nature were almost certainly attached to the compositional elements of the National Gallery's painting. The dramatic forms of the tree stumps and the fallen birch trees establish the scene's tenor, [6] but directly behind them grow the viburnum bushes that flower in the spring, the time of life's renewal. The stream itself, which also has a symbolic function in *The Jewish Cemetery,* traditionally has served as a metaphor for the continuum of the forces of nature.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jacob van Ruisdael, *Forest Scene with Waterfall*, mid-1650s, oil on canvas, Städelsches Kunstinstitut Frankfurt. Photo: Ursula Edelmann

fig. 2 Jacob van Ruisdael, *Landscape with Waterfall*, 1670s, oil on canvas, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

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fig. 3 Jacob van Ruisdael, *The Jewish Cemetery*, mid-1650s, oil on canvas, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden. Photo: Elke Estel / Hans-Peter Klut

NOTES

[1] The identification of the foreground trees as birches was made by Dr. Henry M. Cathey, director, U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, DC, in conversation on September 25, 1985. According to Peter Ashton, Alice Davies, and Seymour Slive, "Jacob van Ruisdael's Trees," *Arnoldia* 42 (1982): 2–31, Ruisdael depicted beeches rather than birches. For the purposes of this entry the trees will be referred to as birches.

[2] Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings, Drawings, and Etchings* (New Haven, 2001), 244, no. 296. Slive also identifies a related composition from the mid-1650s in a New York private collection, 219, no. 243.

[3] Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael* (New York, 1981), 68. Here, in the bibliography to his catalog entry for the Detroit version of *The Jewish Cemetery,* Slive lists the dates that various authors have ascribed to each of Ruisdael's two treatments of the subject. (Slive places both paintings in the mid-1650s.) E. John Walford, *Jacob van Ruisdael and the Perception of Landscape* (New Haven, 1991), 95, dates the two versions of *The Jewish Cemetery* to "about 1653/4."

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[4] A much later date for *Forest Scene* is not likely because by the mid-1660s Ruisdael had begun to paint his large vertical Scandinavian waterfall scenes that were derived from the example of Allart van Everdingen (Dutch, 1621 - 1675). In these works Ruisdael developed a greater looseness of touch, particularly in representing the spray of water falling over rocks, than is evident in *Forest Scene*.

[5] See Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael* (New York, 1981), 34; also Yuri Kuznetsov, "Sur le symbolisme dans les paysages de Jacob van Ruisdael," *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 14 (1973): 31–41.

[6] The visual power and symbolism of the dead birch captured the imagination of the art critic Sanford Schwartz in 2006: "the fallen, broken bough of a huge white birch, trapped between rocks and the waterfall, and set off to the side of the scene, has the presence of the painting's chief actor of conscience. Presenting an image of loss and pain but also of virility, anger, and gracefulness, the tree is like one of Rembrandt's people. . . . In its stark, chalky white and black bark, the birch is at once a victim, a hero, and a figure who stands outside the drama, thinking about it." Sanford Schwartz, "White Secrets," *New York Review* (February 9, 2006), 8.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a medium-weight fabric with a somewhat uneven weave. The painting was lined to two pieces of fabric in 1942, at which time an old lining was removed, as was a discolored varnish.[1] The tacking margins have been flattened, inpainted, and incorporated into the picture plane, extending the painting's dimensions by approximately one inch on all four sides. The support was prepared with a thin, white ground. The paint was applied thinly in areas such as the water and some of the clouds, but thicker with some impasto in other areas such as the foliage and the highlights. The X-radiographs reveal that the artist originally painted the top of the waterfall to extend all the way to the large rock on the left side of the painting.

Minute paint losses are scattered throughout the painting, particularly in the tall tree on the left and the large tree on the right. The paint has blistered in the top left and top center of the painting.[2] Although the painting is in relatively good condition, there is a fair amount of abrasion in the sky. The painting was treated again in 2000 to remove the then discolored varnish and inpainting from the 1942 treatment. Dark stains in the clouds were inpainted at this time.

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[1] This treatment is documented in an unsigned report from M. Knoedler & Company, Inc. (see report dated April 9, 1942, in NGA Conservation files). Presumably this treatment was performed by Louis de Wild, a New York restorer who worked on paintings for Knoedler & Company (see notes dated February 2, 1968, in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] This was probably caused by a previous lining procedure during which too much heat was used. The blisters were already present at the time of the 1942 treatment, and they are documented in the April 9, 1942, report (see Technical Summary note 1).

PROVENANCE

Probably owned by Francis Nathaniel, 2nd marquess Conyngham [1797-1876], Mount Charles, County Donegal, and Minster Abbey, Kent.[1] Sir Hugh Hume-Campbell, 7th bart. [1812-1894], Marchmont House, Borders, Scotland, by 1857;[2] (his estate sale, Christie, Manson, & Woods, London, 16 June 1894, no. 48); (P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London); sold 1894 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] The only source of information concerning the picture's whereabouts prior to 1857 is Hofstede de Groot, whose listing of the painting is extremely confusing (Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols., London, 1907-1927: 4(1912):92, no. 285, possibly also 119, no. 367, 134, no. 418, 203, no. 643c). It seems that any or all of his four entries (nos. 285, 367, 418, and 643c) may contain information that relates to the *Forest Scene*, but these entries also contain additional and contradictory provenance listings, which must refer to at least one other painting. It nonetheless seems likely that before the *Forest Scene* was acquired by Sir Hugh Hume Campbell, it was indeed owned by a member of the Conyngham family of Ireland, most probably the 2nd marquess, but also possibly his father, Henry, 3rd baron and 1st marquess Conyngham (1766-

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1832).

[2] Gustav Friedrich Waagen, Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collections of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures and Illuminated Mss., 3 vols., London, 1854-1857, supplement: 441-442.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1866 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1866, no. 59 (possibly also 1855, no. 54, and 1857, no. 9).[1]

1877 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1877, no. 199.

EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES

[1] Hugh Hume Campbell lent a Ruisdael painting to three British Institution exhibitions, in 1855, 1857, and 1866. None of the three exhibition catalogues, however, gives any description of the pictures exhibited, making positive identification difficult. By the time Gustav Waagen wrote his *Treasures of Art in Great Britain* in 1854-1857, Campbell owned three Ruisdaels, and so it is not necessarily correct to assume that the Ruisdael painting Campbell lent to the 1855 exhibition (*Landscape*), or to the 1857 exhibition (*Landscape with Figures*), was *Forest Scene*. In the case of the 1866 exhibition, however, the more specific title of *Rocky Landscape with Waterfall* does not fit either of the other two Campbell Ruisdaels described by Waagen. Assuming that Campbell did not acquire another comparable Ruisdael painting between 1857 and 1866, it seems certain that *Forest Scene* was the painting shown in 1866.

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1854: supplement 441.

1855 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom. *Catalogue of pictures by Italian, Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, French and English masters with which the proprietors have favoured the Institution*. Exh. cat. British Institution. London, 1855: possibly no. 54, as *Landscape*.

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1975 National Gallery of Art. *European paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue*. Washington, 1975: 316, repro.

1975 Walker, John. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York, 1975: 292-293, no. 391, color repro.

1979 Watson, Ross. *The National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York, 1979: 77, pl. 64.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jacob van Ruisdael
Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682

Landscape

c. 1670

oil on canvas
overall: 53.2 x 60 cm (20 15/16 x 23 5/8 in.)
framed: 78.7 x 85.1 x 9.5 cm (31 x 33 1/2 x 3 3/4 in.)
Inscription: lower center on rock to left: J v Ruisdael (JvR in ligature)
Samuel H. Kress Collection 1961.9.85

ENTRY

In this landscape Ruisdael has depicted a view across a small waterfall that transforms a smoothly flowing river into a turbulent stream. As the water rushes toward the lower left foreground it passes under a wooden bridge that is traversed by a mother and child and their dog. The path they follow enters a densely forested, somewhat hilly terrain, passing by three large oak trees that dominate the center of the composition. One of these trees is almost dead, and another has a dramatically broken branch hanging precariously over the falls.

Ruisdael often composed his scenes to limit the viewer's easy access into the landscape. In this painting the land across the river can be reached only by way of the bridge, but the juncture of the bridge and the near shore does not occur within the picture. The effect is to make the landscape unapproachable and forbidding, a mood intensified by the dense forest on the far shore and the steel gray clouds overhead. As in Ruisdael's painting *The Jewish Cemetery* [fig. 1] and his *Forest Scene*, the juxtaposition of dead and broken trees with a stream flowing turbulently through a rocky landscape is probably an allegorical reference to the transience of

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life. [1]

Despite Ruisdael's compositional schema and the presence of these allusions to metaphysical elements, the mood of the painting is less ominous than in comparable scenes. In large part the difference is one of scale. Not only is the painting relatively small, but also the forms themselves are not as massive and overpowering as in, for example, the *Forest Scene*. The landscape elements, moreover, are delicately painted. The branches of the trees are not formed with the contorted rhythms of those in Ruisdael's paintings from the early part of his career. Nuances of light on the leaves and branches of the trees are softly indicated with deft touches of the brush. These qualities, consistent with those of Ruisdael's later period, suggest that he probably executed this work around 1670, when he turned from the turbulent, vertical waterfall scenes of the preceding decade to more peaceful compositions in a horizontal format.

Ruisdael often adapted and modified motifs from one work to another. A landscape with a similar waterfall occurs in a painting of almost identical dimensions, also dated around 1670, that was formerly in a private collection in Oklahoma City. [2] The bridge is of a type found often in his works, for example, in his landscapes in the Frick Collection, New York, and the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts. [3] The figure group on the bridge also appears in a different setting in his *Wooded and Hilly Landscape* in the Cleveland Museum of Art. [4]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Jacob van Ruisdael, *The Jewish Cemetery*, mid-1650s, oil on canvas, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden. Photo: Elke Estel / Hans-Peter Klut

NOTES

[1] See Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael* (New York, 1981), 34, and also Yuri Kuznetsov, "Sur le symbolisme dans les paysages de Jacob van Ruisdael," *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 14 (1973): 31–41.

[2] Christopher Wright, *Catalogue of Old Master Paintings from a Private Collection in the United States* (Bradford and London, 1984), no. 7, and Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings, Drawings, and Etchings* (New Haven, 2001), no. 247.

[3] *Landscape with a Footbridge* (Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings, Drawings, and Etchings* [New Haven, 2001], no. 511) and *Landscape with Bridge, Cattle, and Figures* (no. 523

[4] Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings, Drawings, and Etchings* (New Haven, 2001), no. 463.

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The picture support is a moderate-weight fabric from which all tacking margins have been removed in the process of lining. The surface of the fabric was prepared to receive paint with a thin, cream-colored ground over which a grayish brown imprimatura, sparsely pigmented and transparent, was laid. The landscape is modeled with paint applied in moderately thick layers, with slight impasto.

The painting was treated in 2005 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting. The treatment revealed a substantial vertical loss in the sky to the right of the large cloud formation and a significant amount of abrasion surrounding the loss and throughout the sky.

PROVENANCE

Baron Etienne Martin de Beurnonville [1789-1876], château de la Chapelle, Labbeville, Val d'Oise; (his estate sale, by Pillet, Paris, 9-14 and 16 May 1881[12 May], no. 453); (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris). Prince Johann II of Liechtenstein [1840-1929], Vienna and later Vaduz, by 1896;[1] (Frederick Mont, New York); purchased 18 October 1951 by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[2] gift 1961 to NGA.

[1] The first reference to the existence of the painting in the Liechtenstein Collection is in 1896 (see Wilhelm von Bode, *Die Fürstlich Liechtenstein'sche Galerie in Wien*, Vienna, 1896, 99). Waagen's account of a Ruisdael *Landscape with a Bridge* in the Liechtenstein Collection (Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Die vornehmsten Kunstdenkmäler in Wien*, Vienna, 1866, 287), must refer to a different work because the Washington painting was sold by the Baron de Beurnonville only in 1881. The provenance given in Strohmer's 1943 catalogue of the Liechtenstein Collection (Erich V. Strohmer, *Die Gemäldegalerie des Fürstern Liechtenstein in Wien*, Vienna, 1943) is incorrect; in the 1948 Lucerne exhibition catalogue (*Meisterwerke aus den Sammlungen des Fürsten von Liechtenstein*, Kunstmuseum), this painting's provenance was associated with the wrong painting.

[2] The bill from Frederick Mont to the Kress Foundation for three paintings from the Liechtenstein collection, including this one, is dated 18 October 1951; payment was made four days later (copy of annotated bill in NGA curatorial files).

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1948 Meisterwerke aus den Sammlungen des Fürsten von Liechtenstein, Kunstmuseum, Lucerne, 1948, no. 175.

1997 Rembrandt and the Golden Age: Dutch Paintings from the National Gallery of Art, The Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1997, unnumbered brochure.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Ruysdael, Salomon van

Also known as
Ruisdael, Salomon van
Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670

BIOGRAPHY

The Haarlem landscapist Salomon van Ruysdael, who was born in Naarden, was the youngest of four sons and one daughter born to Jacob Jansz de Gooyer, a Mennonite joiner from Blaricum. After his father's death in 1616, Salomon and two of his brothers, Isaack and Jacob, changed the family name to Van Ruysdael after the country estate 'Ruysdael' (or Ruisschendaal) near Blaricum.[1] Salomon, along with his brother Isaack and his nephew Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682),[2] established themselves as artists in Haarlem, while Pieter, the only brother to keep the De Gooyer name, settled in Alkmaar as a cloth merchant. Jacob Jacobsz continued his father's cabinet-making business in Naarden. Salomon married Maycke Willemsdr Buyse sometime before 1627; the couple had four children, one of whom, Jacob Salomonsz (1629/1630–1681), also became a painter.

Although Salomon van Ruysdael's training is unknown, his early paintings were influenced by Esaias van de Velde I (Dutch, 1587 - 1630), who worked in Haarlem from 1609 to 1618. Ruysdael joined the Saint Luke's Guild in 1623, and not long thereafter produced his earliest dated painting, from 1626.[3] As early as 1628 he was already praised for his abilities as a landscapist by the Haarlem chronicler Samuel Ampzing.[4] In 1637 Hendrick Pietersz de Hont became his apprentice, and Cornelis Decker is mentioned as a pupil in 1646.[5] Ruysdael may also have been responsible for the training of his son and his nephew. He remained active in the guild throughout his career, serving as a *vinder* in 1647, a *deken* the following year, and a *vinder* again in 1669. Later in his life, he became involved with civic affairs, serving as district master on the Kleine Houtstraat from 1659 to 1666.

Aside from being a painter, Ruysdael was also involved with several other activities during his career. He dealt in blue dye for Haarlem's bleacheries and was a member of the Guild of Cloth Merchants from 1658 to 1670. A document from 1657 also mentions him as being a participant in a tanning mill in Gorinchem. Furthermore, as Houbraken chronicles, Ruysdael even invented a process for

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creating imitation marble.[6] Such varied activities, in addition to his career as an artist, brought him considerable wealth; he owned several houses in Haarlem throughout his lifetime.

Like his father, Ruysdael was a Mennonite, and in 1669 he was listed among the members of the United Mennonite Church of Haarlem when he was living on the Kleine Houtrstraat.[7] His faith prohibited him from bearing arms, and as a result he had to pay an annual fee to be excused from his civic guard duty.

Although Ruysdael lived and worked in Haarlem throughout his life, his paintings, which depict views of various cities, including Alkmaar, Arnhem, Dordrecht, Leiden, Nijmegen, Rhenen, and Utrecht, suggest that he made several trips throughout the Netherlands. Along with Pieter Molijn (Dutch, 1595 - 1661) and Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656), Ruysdael became one of the leading landscape painters of his generation, ushering in the remarkable “tonal” landscapes that are the hallmark of early Dutch realism. He often depicted river views, in which light and atmosphere pervade the scene. His paintings of the 1640s helped lay the foundation for the “classical” period of Dutch landscape painting that followed, led by a generation of artists that included his nephew Jacob van Ruisdael, Meindert Hobbema (Dutch, 1638 - 1709), and Aelbert Cuyp (Dutch, 1620 - 1691). Aside from his river views and landscapes, Ruysdael also painted seascapes and still lifes. He died on November 3, 1670, and was buried in Haarlem’s Saint Bavo’s Church.

[1] The De Gooyer family may have been tenants of one of the houses on the Ruysdael estate. See Neeltje Köhler and Pieter Biesboer, *Painting in Haarlem 1500–1850: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum* (Ghent, 2006), 291, note 4.

[2] Jacob was the only member of the family to spell his name differently.

[3] Hessel Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem 1497–1789*, 2 vols. (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1980), 2:420. In that year, however, Salomon still registered as “Salomon de Gooyer” (see 2:1039).

[4] Samuel Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* (Haarlem, 1628), 372.

[5] Hessel Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem 1497–1789*, 2 vols. (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1980), 2:455, 933, 1033, 1041.

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[6] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 2:124, 3:66.

[7] Peter C. Sutton, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 466–467.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Salomon van Ruysdael
Dutch, c. 1602 - 1670

River Landscape with Ferry

1649

oil on canvas
overall: 101.5 x 134.8 cm (39 15/16 x 53 1/16 in.)
Inscription: on the ferry below the white horse: Salomon v. Ruysdael. 1649
Patrons' Permanent Fund and The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund. This acquisition was made possible through the generosity of the family of Jacques Goudstikker, in his memory. 2007.116.1

ENTRY

Salomon van Ruysdael delighted in depicting the rhythms of daily life along the banks of the Dutch waterways. Such scenes included boats sailing gently across placid waters, fishermen casting nets under the shadow of overarching trees, and travelers packed tightly into a ferryboat, sharing their ride with wagons, horses, and cattle. One often finds a small village nestled on the distant shore, replete with a large church towering over the gabled homes surrounding it. In *River Landscape with Ferry* Salomon chose to depict a massive turreted stone castle, indicative of the historic role that prominent Dutch families played in establishing the political and social structure of this proud land.

Ruysdael painted this masterpiece in 1649, when the full scope of his artistic personality had come to maturity. [1] The work is imposing in scale and visually compelling, both for its harmonious composition and for the rich variety of its pictorial elements. It has wonderful atmospheric qualities, subtle reflections in the water, and delightful figures crowded into the ferry. The large clump of trees, accented by the rugged white trunk of a broken birch in its midst, centers the

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composition and, silhouetted against the sky, provides a sturdy framework for the people and animals activating the scene. Furthermore, Salomon effectively used this clump to create a deeper sense of space, for not only does the ferry pass in front of the trees, but wagons loaded with passengers also travel behind them.

In this painting one can almost sense the gentle breezes moving across the water and the rustling of leaves under the splendidly fresh, windswept skies. The relatively low-level cumulus clouds passing overhead are of a type found on cool, refreshing days in mid-to-late spring when leaves still have the yellow-green tonalities of new growth. [2] This is also the season of mating for many animals, a strong and compelling instinct that Ruysdael vividly rendered amidst the cattle awaiting a ferry ride. The scene is further enlivened by other entertaining staffage elements, including a boy hitching a ride on the back of the open carriage passing the castle, and the fat and happy Dutch travelers in the carriage on the ferry who share their ride with, among others, a woman clutching a child in her lap. Ferries carried people from all levels of society, and scenes such as this suggest the broad sense of community among the Dutch population during this period. [3]

The painting's fine state of preservation adds to the freshness of the scene. Still visible are vigorous striations left by Ruysdael's brush where it swept across the canvas to create the low clouds near the horizon, striations that disappear in areas where he subsequently inserted buildings, boats, or trees over the wet paint. The delicacy of his touch is also remarkable in the foreground trees, where blue green, pale green, and yellow capture the sparkle of light illuminating the foliage. [4] Ruysdael enhanced this quality of airiness by painting the trees' thin, rhythmic branches with a stiff brush. Strokes of paint applied with this tool are thicker at their edges, and in this way they create a modulated range of color across the width of a branch, an effect that not only gives the trees great visual interest but also creates the appearance of light reflecting off their surfaces.

River Landscape with Ferry has a visual force that reflects the pride they felt in the Dutch Republic around 1648, when the signing of the Treaty of Münster formalized the independence of the Dutch Republic following the Eighty Years' War with Spain. In no other painting, however, does Ruysdael express the sense of well-being as fully as he does in this work. The Dutch could travel throughout their peaceful and prosperous realm by carriage and boat to explore its myriad visual delights without fear of marauders or foreign troops. Many went east, along the Rhine River, to see historic cities such as Nijmegen and Rhenen that had been so important to the formation of the Dutch Republic. Ruysdael may have passed along

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the same routes, for he depicted cities in the eastern part of the Netherlands around mid-century; yet, unlike the case of Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656), no drawings from his hand survive to document any such journey. [5] The large crenulated castle in this painting is a fanciful construct, but it is reminiscent of fortresslike structures situated along the Rhine in the eastern region of the Dutch Republic. [6]

When creating this painting in 1649, Ruysdael built upon a framework developed in a number of his earlier works from that decade. [7] Pictorial precedents exist in paintings by Dutch and Flemish artists of a previous generation, including Jan Brueghel the Elder (Flemish, 1568 - 1625) [fig. 1]. Ruysdael's genius lay in his ability to make each work, even if conceived from his imagination and painted in the studio, seem to be a fresh and direct encounter with nature. The grandeur of this particular image, however, is unmatched by his earlier works and, more than any of his other landscapes, it emphatically introduces the "classical" period of Dutch landscape painting. This type of Dutch art was made famous by a generation of artists that, in addition to Ruysdael, includes Aelbert Cuyp (Dutch, 1620 - 1691), Meindert Hobbema (Dutch, 1638 - 1709), and Salomon's nephew Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, c. 1628/1629 - 1682), a group remarkably well represented in the National Gallery of Art collection.

Beyond its outstanding artistic qualities, *River Landscape with Ferry* has had a fascinating place in the complex history of the Nazi and postwar eras that adds to the work's cultural significance. In 1930 Jacques Goudstikker, a prominent Jewish dealer of Old Master paintings in Amsterdam, acquired this painting at a Christie's sale in London (see Provenance). Goudstikker was a great admirer of Ruysdael's work at a time when his importance for the development of Dutch landscape painting was little understood. [8] Goudstikker even organized the first monographic exhibition on the artist in 1936, in which this painting featured prominently. [9] In 1940, however, Goudstikker fled Amsterdam just days prior to the Nazi invasion of the Netherlands in May of that year, but he died tragically on the ship that was taking him and his family to safety in London. The Nazis seized Goudstikker's gallery in Amsterdam; this painting and many other works were eventually acquired by Hitler's second-in-command, Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring. [10]

After the war, the Allies recovered the painting and turned it over to the Dutch authorities in 1946. A special Dutch Recuperation Commission decided against returning the painting to the family despite years of protest by Goudstikker's

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widow, Desirée. In 1960 the painting was placed on view at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, where it hung in pride of place until 2006. The complex story of the Goudstikker case was reexamined by a special restitution committee in 2005, which recommended that the Dutch government reverse its earlier decision. The painting was returned to the Goudstikker heirs, who sold it privately to the National Gallery in 2007.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan Brueghel the Elder, *River Landscape*, 1607, oil on copper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Patrons' Permanent Fund and Nell and Robert Weidenhammer Fund, 2000.4.1

NOTES

[1] This work is one of fourteen paintings by Salomon van Ruysdael that are dated 1649. See Wolfgang Stechow, *Salomon van Ruysdael: Eine Einführung in seine Kunst* (Berlin, 1938; rev. ed., 1975), 140.

[2] I would like to thank David O'C. Starr, Head, Mesoscale Atmospheric Processes Branch, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, for his observations about weather and cloud formations in this painting (correspondence in NGA curatorial files, April 10, 2009).

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[3] I would like to thank Perry Chapman (personal communication) for this observation. Ferryboats also occasionally served as the setting for dialogues found in contemporary political pamphlets. See Craig Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture in the Early Dutch Republic* (Dordrecht, 1987).

[4] Ruysdael may have, in part, created the light, flickering character of the foliage by applying paint with a sponge or lichen (see Technical Summary). A comparable technique is seen in the foliage in paintings by Jan van der Heyden (see An Architectural Fantasy and View Down a Dutch Canal).

[5] For Ruysdael's *The Valkhof at Nijmegen*, 1652, and his view of *Rhenen at Sunset*, 1660, see Ariane van Suchtelen and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age* (The Hague, 2008), 164–165, no. 38; 47, fig. 35.

[6] As is often the case in Ruysdael's work, the castle probably derives from the artist's imagination, in this case perhaps inspired by the castle at Wijk bij Duurstede. See Wolfgang Stechow, *Salomon van Ruysdael: Eine Einführung in seine Kunst* (Berlin, 1938; rev. ed., 1975), 51. Recognizable buildings in imaginary settings are also found in his paintings. See: J. W. Niemeijer, "Het topografisch element in enkele riviergezichten van Salomon van Ruysdael nader beschouwd," *Oud-Holland* 74 (1959): 51–56; H. J. J. Scholtens, "Salomon van Ruysdael in de contreien van Holland's landengte," *Oud-Holland* 77 (1962): 1–10; and Peter C. Sutton, *Reclaimed: Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker* (Greenwich, CT, 2008), 172–175, no. 21.

[7] See Peter C. Sutton, *Reclaimed: Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker* (Greenwich, CT, 2008) 178, fig. 1, which depicts a painting by Ruysdael, dated 1641, with a comparable composition.

[8] See Wolfgang Stechow, *Salomon van Ruysdael: Eine Einführung in seine Kunst* (Berlin, 1938; rev. ed., 1975), 9, who, in his foreword, laments that Ruysdael's artistic significance in the history of Dutch landscape had been so overlooked by the end of the nineteenth century. He expressly states that he hopes his book will help return the artist to his justified place in the hierarchy of Dutch painters.

[9] *Tentoonstelling van Werken door Salomon van Ruysdael,* Kunsthandel J. Goudstikker N.V., Amsterdam, January–February 1936, no. 34, as *De Veerpont*.

[10] For fuller accountings of this complex story, see Pieter den Hollander, "Recht op de Bocht," in *De Gouden Bocht van Amsterdam*, ed. Milko den Leeuw and Martin Pruijs, (The Hague, 2006), 296–307; Lynn H. Nicholas, "A Long Odyssey: The Goudstikker Collection," in the catalog of the Goudstikker sale, Christie's New York (April 19, 2007), 9–11; and Peter C. Sutton, *Reclaimed: Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker* (Greenwich, CT, 2008).

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting is on a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric. The tacking margins have been removed and the painting has been lined. Moderate cusping exists along the sides and top edge. The ground is a thick, white layer and the paint has been vigorously applied using a wet-into-wet technique. Low impasto and clear brushstrokes are found throughout the composition. The tree foliage appears to have been applied with a sponge as well as a brush.

The painting is in fairly good condition. A long tear is found in the upper left section of the sky and there are numerous tiny craters in the paint, which are most notable in the sky. These craters may have been caused by overheating in a past lining process. The paint and ground have suffered from tenting and flaking in the lower quarter of the painting, resulting in a fair amount of small losses in this area. The painting was treated between 2007 and 2008 to consolidate the paint in this area and to remove discolored varnish and overpaint.

PROVENANCE

Possibly Major Hugh Edward Wilbraham, M.B.E. [1857-1930], Delamere House, near Northwich, Cheshire; by inheritance to his son, George Hugh de Vernon Wilbraham [1890-1962], Delamere House; (his sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 18 July 1930, no. 33); (Jacques Goudstikker, Amsterdam);[1] restituted 6 February 2006 to his daughter-in-law, Marei von Saher, Greenwich, Connecticut; purchased 5 November 2007 through (Christie's, New York) by NGA.

[1] The dealer Jacques Goudstikker fled Amsterdam with his wife and son in May 1940, and died in an accident on board the ship on which he left. He left behind most of his gallery's stock of paintings, including the Ruysdael, and with the rest of the Goudstikker paintings, it was confiscated by the Nazis later the same year and delivered to Hermann Göring; see *Rapport inzake de Kunsthandel v.h J Goudstikker NV in oprichtung per 13 September 1940*, Beilage III, Staat van Schilderijen, gekocht M Goering van de "oude" Goudstikker, Access no. 1341, inv. 103, Gemeentearchief, Amsterdam. The painting was recovered by the Allies at the

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end of World War II and held at the Munich Central Collecting Point (where it was no. 5324), before being returned to the Netherlands in 1948. In the Netherlands, ownership was transferred among several museums, during which time the painting maintained the identifying inventory number NK 2347: Stichting Nederlands Kunstbezit, The Hague, in 1948; Dienst voor's Rijks Verspreide Kunstvoorwerpen, The Hague, 1948-1975; Dienst Verspreide Rijkscollecties, The Hague, 1975-1985; Rijksdienst Beeldende Kunst, The Hague, 1985-1997; and Instituut Collectie Nederland, Amsterdam, in 1997. Physical custody of the painting was transferred in 1960 to the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, where it had the inventory number SK A 3983 and where it remained until 2006. In 2005, the Dutch Advisory Committee on the Assessment of Restitution Applications for Items of Cultural Value and the Second World War recommended in favor of the Goudstikker family's claim for the return of this and other paintings that had been confiscated in 1940. The surviving heirs were Marei von Saher, the widow of Goudstikker's son, Edward, and her daughters, Charlène and Chantel, who received the restituted paintings in early 2006.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1930 Nouvelles Acquisitions de la Collection Goudstikker, Kunsthandel J. Goudstikker, Amsterdam; Kunstkring, Rotterdam, 1930-1931, no. 65, repro.

1935 Cinq siècles d'art, Exposition Universelle et Internationale, Brussels, 1935, no. 767, under Paintings, as Le bac.

1936 Tentoonstelling van Oude Kunst, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, April 1936, no. 34, under Paintings, as De Veerpont.

1936 Tentoonstelling van Oude Kunst uit het bezit van den Internationalen Handel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1936, no. 142, repro., as De Veerpont.

1936 Tentoonstelling van Schilderijen en Antiquiteiten, Kunsthandel J. Goudstikker N.V., Rotterdamschen Kunstkring, December 1936-January 1937, no. 57, repro., as De Veerpont.

1936 Tentoonstelling van Werken door Salomon van Ruysdael, Kunsthandel J. Goudstikker N.V., Amsterdam, January-February 1936, no. 34, as De Veerpont.

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1937 Dutch Paintings, Etchings, Drawings, Delftware of the Seventeenth Century, John Herron Art Museum, Indianapolis, 1937, no. 65, repro., as The Ferry Boat.

1946 Herwonnen Kunstbezit, Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1946, no. 55.

1946 Paintings Looted from Holland Returned through the Efforts of The United States Armed Forces, multi-venue tour in the United States and Canada, 1946-1948, nos. 36 and 39 (two editions of catalogue), as A Ferry.

1953 Holländer des 17. Jahrhunderts, Kunsthaus Zürich, 1953, no. 134, as Landschaft mit Fähre.

1954 Dutch Painting: The Golden Age. An Exhibition of Dutch Pictures of the Seventeenth Century, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Toledo (Ohio) Museum of Art; Art Gallery of Toronto, 1954-1955, no. 73, repro., as The Ferry Boat.

1954 Mostra di Pittura Olandese del Seicento, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome; Palazzo Reale, Milan, January-April 1954, no. 133 (Rome catalogue), no. 136 (Milan catalogue).

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1959 Podestà, Atillio. *Pittura oladese del Seicento*. Bergamo, 1959: 84, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jacob van Campen, *Portrait of Pieter Saenredam*, 1628, black chalk on paper, The British Museum, London, inv. PD1854,0628.2. © Trustees of the British Museum

Saenredam, Pieter Jansz

Dutch, 1597 - 1665

BIOGRAPHY

Pieter Jansz Saenredam was born in the village of Assendelft on June 9, 1597. His father, Jan Pietersz Saenredam (Dutch, 1565 - 1607), an important late mannerist engraver and draftsman, died young in 1607, after which the family moved to nearby Haarlem. Pieter began his artistic training on May 10, 1612, in Haarlem in the studio of Frans Pietersz de Grebber (1573–1649). After a ten-year apprenticeship, Saenredam became a master in the Saint Luke's Guild in Haarlem on April 24, 1623. He was an officer in the guild in 1635 and 1640, and a *deken*, or board member, in 1642.

Although Saenredam is not recorded as ever having studied with a specialist architectural painter, his interest in architecture may have been encouraged by various painter-architects active in Haarlem, most notably Salomon de Bray (1597–1664), Jacob van Campen (1595–1657), and Pieter Jansz Post (Netherlandish, 1608 - 1669). A further contact that must have been important to the young artist was the mathematician and surveyor Pieter Wils. Soon after his apprenticeship with De Grebber, Saenredam began to produce the precise and restrained architectural compositions for which he is famous. Cornelis de Bie wrote in 1661 that from about 1628 the artist "devoted himself entirely to painting

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perspectives, churches, halls, galleries, buildings, and other things from the outside as well as the inside, in such a way, after life, that their essence and nature could not be shown to a greater perfection."[1] The date that De Bie mentions in this passage is also that of Saenredam's earliest surviving church interior.

The two main churches of Haarlem—Saint Bavo and the Nieuwe Kerk—were among Saenredam's favorite subjects, although he also painted churches and cathedrals in a number of other cities, including 's-Hertogenbosch, Assendelft, Alkmaar, Utrecht, Amsterdam, and Rhenen. His representations of these and other buildings have a portraitlike quality. They were based on preliminary drawings made at the site and elaborate construction drawings made subsequently with the help of straightedge rulers and compasses. In these drawings Saenredam worked out the proportions of columns and arches and the overall perspective system. Interestingly, his paintings often date years later than the drawings upon which they are based. As in the instance of his painting of the *Church of Santa Maria della Febbre, Rome*, Saenredam also occasionally worked from drawings done by other artists of buildings and places he had never seen. His relatively small oeuvre consists of about fifty paintings, some 150 drawings, and a few prints executed early in his career.

Saenredam married Aefje Gerritsdr on December 5, 1638, at Bloemendael. He and his wife had one daughter. Saenredam, who had extensive archaeological interests, owned an impressive library of scholarly works as well as a collection of paintings and drawings, which included an album of views of Rome by the sixteenth-century Haarlem artist Maerten van Heemskerck (Netherlandish, 1498 - 1574). He had only a few students, among them Claes Cornelisz van Assendelft (1627–1668) in the early 1640s and Claes Heerman the Younger (dates unknown) in the early 1650s. It has often been argued that Saenredam asked other artists to paint figures within his architectural compositions, among them Pieter Jansz Post (Netherlandish, 1608 - 1669), Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685), and Jan Both (Dutch, 1615/1618 - 1652). Saenredam was buried in Haarlem on May 31, 1665.

[1] Cornelis de Bie, *Het Gulden Cabinet van de edele vry schilderconst* (Antwerp, 1661), 246: "ende bagaf hem eyndelijck ontrent den jaere 1628. gheheel tot

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schilderen van perspectiven / kercken /saelen / galderijen / ghebowen / en andere dinghen soo van buyten als van binnen soo naer het leven ende natuer gheen meeder volmaecktheydt en konnen bethooen als hy met Pinceel seer constich weet uyt te drucken."

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Pieter Jansz Saenredam
Dutch, 1597 - 1665

Cathedral of Saint John at 's-Hertogenbosch

1646

oil on panel
overall: 128.9 x 87 cm (50 3/4 x 34 1/4 in.)
framed: 168.3 x 127 cm (66 1/4 x 50 in.)
Inscription: lower left on choir stall: Ao.1646 / pieter Saenredam dit geschildert / de sintjans kerck in shartogenbosch; center on right escutcheon behind altar: AL.BERTO AVSTRIA CO / 1621 / PATRI PATRIAE / SILVA-DVCIS / DICAT CONSECRAT.; on left escutcheon behind altar: 1598
Samuel H. Kress Collection 1961.9.33

ENTRY

In this depiction of the *Sint Janskathedraal* (Cathedral of Saint John), [1] one of Saenredam's grandest paintings, the artist has brought the viewer into the apse of this great cathedral to experience the full majesty of the soaring architecture towering above. He achieved this sensation in many ways: through careful compositional arrangement that reinforced the dynamic character of the architecture; through subtle use of linear and atmospheric perspective that helped open the space and fill it with light and air; and, finally, through his choice of a vertically proportioned, large panel that allowed him to paint on a scale suitable for such an imposing setting.

The Sint Janskathedraal is the largest Gothic cathedral in the Netherlands. When Saenredam painted this image in 1646 he conceived it in such a way as to include the full scope of the late-fifteenth-century choir. From this low vantage point just inside the crossing, the pilasters that rise without interruption from their bases to the light-filled, vaulted ceiling give the space a dynamic, vertical thrust. As the central ribs of the pilasters arch out to form the ribs that support the vault, their color changes from light ocher to delicate pink. Saenredam has placed the keystone of the vault at the very top of the painting in a way that pulls together the richly ornate architectural elements. Despite the apparent reality of the scene,

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however, the relationship of this image to the actual site is quite complicated. Saenredam has shifted certain forms for compositional reasons. The two arches in the arcade on the right, for example, are rounded rather than pointed, an adjustment undoubtedly made because pointed arches would have appeared quite distorted in this perspectival arrangement. [2] He has also lowered the position of the central window of the clerestory to emphasize the central axis of the apse. One other change, the introduction of the *Adoration of the Shepherds,* 1612, by Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651), into the high altar, was made for different reasons, ones that relate to the complex issues surrounding the creation of this work that are discussed below.

The origins of the story actually predate the execution of the painting by seventeen years and are intimately connected with one of the most important military exploits during the reign of Prince Frederik Hendrik: the siege of ’s-Hertogenbosch in 1629. With the capitulation of the city to the forces of the States General on September 14 of that year, Frederik Hendrik had achieved his greatest victory in the long struggle against the Spanish forces of the southern Netherlands. Efforts were immediately made to cleanse this Catholic stronghold of papist influence. Catholic services were forbidden in the city, priests were forced to leave, and the churches were confiscated. Indeed, two days after he had entered ’s-Hertogenbosch, Frederik Hendrik, along with his wife, Amalia van Solms, attended a Reformed Church service in Sint Janskathedraal. [3]

As part of the articles of capitulation, the northern forces did not hinder the clergy from taking with them objects from the churches. The bishop of ’s-Hertogenbosch, Michael Ophove (Ophovius), recorded in his diary how the clergy removed most of the precious objects from the treasury, which were packed and transported in carts, provided, interestingly enough, by the Prince of Orange. Among the sculptures taken for safekeeping was the miracle image of *Onze Lieve Vrouw van Den Bosch* (Our Virgin Mary of Den Bosch), the most sacred icon in the church, one that had made Sint Janskathedraal a mecca for pilgrims since the fourteenth century. Even the large altarpiece, Bloemaert’s *God with Christ and The Virgin as Intercessors,* 1615, was removed from the high altar and transported to the southern Netherlands. [4]

Given the political situation, it seems unlikely that Saenredam had ever traveled to ’s-Hertogenbosch prior to Frederik Hendrik’s successful siege in 1629, thus he never would have actually visited the cathedral when it was a Catholic shrine. When he did arrive at the end of June 1632, not all remnants of the Catholic past

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had been removed from the cathedral; the apse, however, obscured from the sight of worshipers by an enormous choir screen, was no longer used for services. [5] As is evident from Saenredam's drawing of the high altar, which is dated July 1, 1632, the altar lay abandoned, stripped of all its liturgical objects [fig. 1]. A large green curtain covered the void left by the removal of Bloemaert's altarpiece.

Although there is little doubt that this drawing served as a preliminary study for the painting, which is dated fourteen years later in 1646, it is remarkable that Saenredam has reconstituted the interior as though it were still a Catholic cathedral. Candles and flowers have been returned to the altar, and a small gilt crucifix occupies the altar niche. Saenredam has filled the high altar not with a curtain but with Bloemaert's *The Adoration of the Shepherds* [fig. 2], a painting he would have seen in 's-Hertogenbosch in the Convent of the Poor Clares. [6] Behind the sculptural elements at the top of the altar, depicting the Virgin and Child with two adoring angels, hang two large plaques surmounted by flags. The one on the right is dedicated to Philip II of Spain, and the one on the left to his daughter, the Infanta Isabella, regentess of the southern Netherlands. Although no clergy or parishioners are depicted, the polychrome sculpture of the kneeling Bishop Masius, to the left of the altar, adds a note of reverence to the scene. That Saenredam sought to create this effect through the sculpture is evident not only in the way he emphasized the startlingly realistic appearance of the figure, but also through the private space he created for Masius by choosing a low vantage point near the choir stall.

Saenredam's extraordinary painting, made so long after his visit to 's-Hertogenbosch, is remarkable in a number of ways. To begin with, it is difficult to see how the artist managed to convey the architectural details of the church so accurately on the basis of his drawing of the high altar. Although Saenredam often painted scenes long after he had made his preliminary studies, his painting of the choir of Sint Janskathedraal includes more of the church than does his drawing. [7] Perhaps a construction drawing once existed that he used as his model. His working procedure often included such studies, and examination of the painting with Infrared Reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns reveals an extensive Underdrawing similar to his carefully proportioned and ruled working drawings. [8] The painting follows the underdrawing almost exactly, with one important exception: Saenredam elongated the proportions of the apse in his final composition. In the underdrawing the ribs join the keystone slightly below rather than at the top edge of the painting [fig. 3].

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Particularly remarkable for a painting of 1646 is its emphasis on the Catholicism of the cathedral and the attention drawn to both Philip II of Spain and the Infanta Isabella. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that Saenredam was deliberately trying to re-create the character of Sint Janskathedraal as it looked before the overthrow of Spanish authority in ’s-Hertogenbosch, that is, prior to the events of 1629. [9] Just why he did that is not at all clear, but the large scale of the panel indicates that the painting was commissioned. To try to understand who might have commissioned this Catholic representation of Sint Janskathedraal and why Saenredam painted it in 1646, one has to return to 1632 and examine the circumstances surrounding Saenredam’s visit to ’s-Hertogenbosch.

It has been suggested that Saenredam went to ’s-Hertogenbosch to visit Jan Pietersz de Jonge (Johannes Junius), the son of the artist’s childhood guardian and a Calvinist preacher who had been sent from his native Assendelft to help steer the local populace away from the Catholic religion. It seems probable, however, that he had a different reason for making this trip. Junius was at that time the preacher in another of the local churches, Sint Pieterskerk, which Saenredam also depicted during his visit that summer. His work at Sint Pieterskerk did not begin until he had finished his campaign at Sint Janskathedraal, hence it is likely that the visit was primarily to examine the cathedral and only secondarily to visit Junius. Moreover, Saenredam’s painting of the *Choir of the Sint Pieterskerk* (private collection), which he executed in 1632, also emphasizes the Catholic heritage of the church rather than its then-Protestant character, a surprising focus given the emphasis of Junius’ ministry. [10]

One can thus assume that Saenredam came to ’s-Hertogenbosch for the purpose of painting Sint Janskathedraal. This hypothesis is backed up by a surprising discovery from dendrochronological examination of the panel Saenredam used for his painting. The tree from which the panel was made was cut down around 1630. [11] It thus seems probable that Saenredam ordered this large and unusually shaped panel at the time of his visit to ’s-Hertogenbosch in 1632 rather than in the mid-1640s. This bit of technical evidence reinforces the sense that a Catholic patron must have induced Saenredam to make the trip, a supposition further strengthened by the nature of the drawings he made of the interior of the cathedral.

Saenredam’s drawing of the high altar was but one of four imposing drawings he made of the interior of Sint Janskathedraal between June 30 and July 3, 1632. [12]

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Chronologically, the first of these drawings was of the *Tomb of Bishop Gisbertus Masius* [fig. 4], the tomb of the energetic bishop of ’s-Hertogenbosch that is visible to the left of the altar in the painting. Masius was an important figure in that city in the first decades of the seventeenth century, responsible for instilling the strong Jesuit presence there. Under the patronage of the Archduke Albert and the Archduchess Isabella, Masius established a Jesuit college in town. After the beginning of the Twelve Year’s Truce in 1609 he began an ambitious campaign to revitalize the cathedral. In 1610 an elaborate new choir screen was commissioned for the cathedral that contained a large number of sculptures and two altars. [13] After Masius’ death in 1614, the new bishop, Nicolaus Zoesius, oversaw the construction of Masius’ tomb, a new organ, and, most important, the high altar, which was dedicated in 1620. [14] As Saenredam’s other two drawings of the interior of the cathedral focused on the choir screen, all four of his renderings—the high altar, Masius’ tomb, and the two of the choir screen—depicted important architectonic and sculptural elements added to the cathedral during the tenure of recent Jesuit bishops. [15]

Although no documents exist that identify Saenredam’s patron, it may well have been a very powerful organization within the church structure known as the *Illustere Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap* (Illustrious Brotherhood of the Virgin Mary). This brotherhood, founded in the early fourteenth century, had begun in the sixteenth century to add a number of honorary, nonreligious members, called Zwanenbroeders (“Swan brothers,” since they were supposed to supply a swan each year for a banquet). Among them was Willem of Orange, who joined in 1566. All subsequent Princes of Orange were members *ex officio*, therefore Frederik Hendrik was also a member of this body. It may well be for this reason that Frederik Hendrik was so considerate of Catholic interests after his victory in 1629, at a time when the Reformed Church was doing all it could to purge ’s-Hertogenbosch of papist influence. In any event, special dispensation was given to the brotherhood, and it was the only Catholic organization in the city that was not forced to disband after the capitulation. [16]

Before Saenredam visited ’s-Hertogenbosch he seems to have worked closely with Catholics in Haarlem who wanted to perpetuate the memory of bishops who served at the Church of Saint Bavo when it was a Catholic cathedral. [17] Perhaps members of the brotherhood in ’s-Hertogenbosch heard of these endeavors and requested that Saenredam come work with them in a comparable fashion. Just

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why Saenredam did not complete the painting right away is not known, but it may well have been judged politically imprudent to do so. During the 1630s leaders of the Reformed Church objected strenuously to the existence of this Catholic organization, particularly Gijsbert Voet (Voetius), a minister in Utrecht. Many heated discussions were held, and finally a compromise was reached whereby the brotherhood could continue its existence as long as its membership was limited to thirty-six members, half Protestant and half Catholic. This issue was of such consequence that the final decision was made by the States General, in 1646, the year in which Saenredam finally executed this painting. [18] Thus, the commission for this depiction of the Sint Janskathedraal as it had appeared when it was a Catholic cathedral seems to have come to fruition only after this important issue had been resolved. [19]

No record of this painting has been found in seventeenth-century archives, hence it is not yet possible to trace its early provenance. Just how the painting ended up in a small provincial church in southern France before it entered the art market in 1937 suggests a fascinating story that it is hoped some day will come to light. [20]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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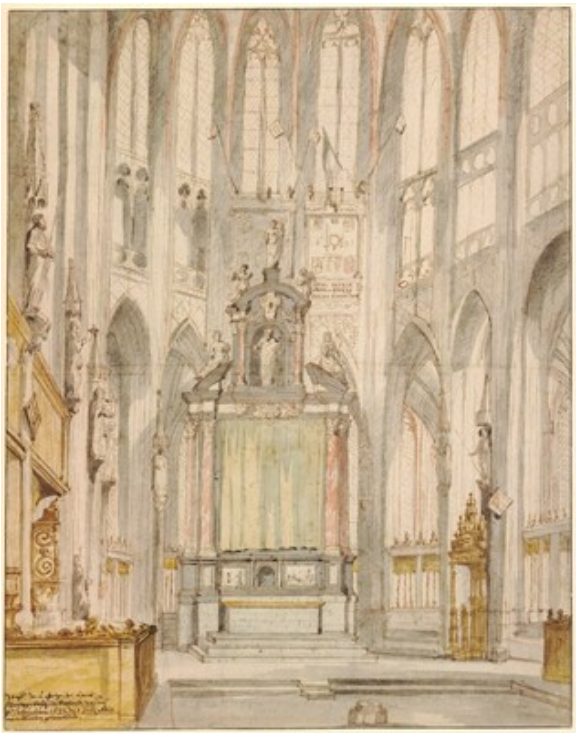

fig. 1 Pieter Jansz Saenredam, *The Choir of Saint-Jan to the East*, July 1, 1631, pen and ink, watercolor, and black chalk, British Museum, London. Photo © Trustees of the British Museum

fig. 2 Abraham Bloemaert, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1612, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: RMN / Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Hervé Lewandowski

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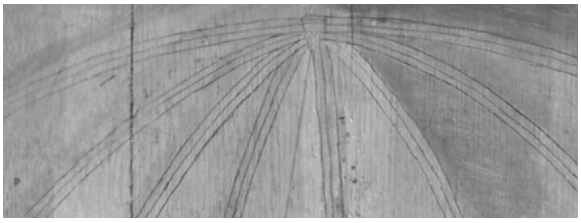

fig. 3 Detail, infrared reflectogram, Pieter Jansz Saenredam, *Cathedral of Saint John at 's-Hertogenbosch*, 1646, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection, 1961.9.33

fig. 4 Pieter Jansz Saenredam, *Tomb of Bishop Gisbertus Masius*, June 30, 1632, pen and ink and watercolor, Noordbrabants Museum, 's-Hertogenbosch

NOTES

[1] The Sint Janskathedraal is also known as the Sint Janskerk.

[2] It seems unlikely, as some have argued, that these changes were made for religious considerations. See E. Jane Connell, "The Romanization of the Gothic Arch in Some Paintings by Pieter Saenredam: Catholic and Protestant Implications," *Rutgers Art Review* 1 (January 1980): 30.

[3] For a brief synopsis of the events from this period see Peter-Jan van der Heijden and Henry Molhuysen, *Kroniek van 's-Hertogenbosch: acht eeuwen stadsgeschiedenis* ('s-Hertogenbosch, 1981), 50–61.

[4] This painting, executed by Bloemaert in 1615 and installed in the high altar in 1620, was returned to Sint Janskerk in 1845. After the destruction of the high altar in 1869, the painting was removed to the baptismal chapel. See H. van Bavel, "Het Bossche altaar in Heeswijk," *Berne* 33 (April 15, 1980): 33 and Marcel G.Roethlisberger, *Abraham Bloemaert and His Sons: Paintings and Prints*, 2 vols. (Doornspijk, 1993), 1:210.

[5] For an excellent summary of the situation in the cathedral at the time of the capitulation see Ivan Gaskell, "Pieter Jansz. Saenredam and the Great

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Church of 's-Hertogenbosch," *Wolfenbütteler Forschungen* 46 (1990): 249–261. Gaskell (page 256) also discusses the ongoing "purification" of the church through the gradual removal of sculptures that continued until 1649.

[6] Despite the information given in *Catalogue Raisonné of the Works by Pieter Jansz. Saenredam* (Utrecht, 1961), 142, this altarpiece was not made by Bloemaert for the high altar in Sint Janskerk. Rather, in 1612 Bloemaert painted *The Adoration of the Shepherds* for the Franciscan convent of the Poor Clares in 's-Hertogenbosch. (Bloemaert's younger sister had joined the convent of the Poor Clares in 1606.) The painting was in 's-Hertogenbosch in 1632, when it could have been seen by Saenredam. Although *The Adoration of the Shepherds* was much smaller than *God with Christ and The Virgin as Intercessors* (which was actually Bloemaert's largest painting), Saenredam must have deemed it suitable for the purposes of this work, since he may have never seen *God with Christ and The Virgin as Intercessors.* It is also possible that an altarpiece from the convent was chosen because Saenredam's patron knew of the Infanta Isabella's close associations with the Poor Clares (she was raised by them in Madrid). Bloemaert's *The Adoration of the Shepherds* altarpiece has survived and is now in Paris at the Louvre (inv. no. 1052). See fig. 2. Saenredam's depiction of it is mostly accurate, although he has omitted some figures, and he may well have based his image on a print made after the painting (in reverse) by Boëtius Bolswert in 1618 (for a reproduction of this print, see A. M. Koldeweij, *In Buscoducis 1450–1629: Kunst uit de Bourgondische tijd te 's-Hertogenbosch de cultuur van late Middeleeuwen en renaissance* [Maarssen, 1990], 312).

[7] For discussions of Saenredam's working procedure see Walter A. Liedtke, "Saenredam's Space," *Oud-Holland* 86 (1971), and Rob Ruurs, *Saenredam: The Art of Perspective,* Oculi—Studies in the Arts of the Low Countries, vol. 1 (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1987).

[8] See J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer, "De ondertekening bij Pieter Saenredam: twee voorbeelden," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 19 (1971): 25–31.

[9] With the realization, of course, that Bloemaert's altarpiece from the Convent of the Poor Clares had been substituted for *God with Christ and The Virgin as Intercessors.* See note 5, this entry.

[10] Saenredam made one drawing of the Sint Pieterskerk on July 9 and two drawings on July 13. For a discussion of these issues and illustrations of his views, see Gary Schwartz, Marten Jan Bok, and Loekie Schwartz, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York, 1990), 85, 90–91, 96.

[11] The dendrochronological examination was undertaken by Dr. Peter Klein from the Universität Hamburg in 1986 (see letter of January 27, 1987, in NGA

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curatorial files).

[12] Before Saenredam began with his views of the interior he made a groundplan of the cathedral on June 29, 1632. For an illustration of this drawing see Gary Schwartz, Marten Jan Bok, and Loekie Schwartz, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York, 1990), 55.

[13] The choir screen, constructed by the sculptor Coenraad van Norenborch, was removed from the church in 1866. It is presently in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

[14] The high altar was built between 1617 and 1620 by the Antwerp sculptor Hans van Mildert. Between 1617 and 1622 the organ case was built by François Symons from Leiden and decorated by Georg Schysler from the Tyrol. The organ was not functional, however, until 1634, after Saenredam's visit. See Jan van Oudheusden, *De Sint Jan van 's-Hertogenbosch* (Zwolle, 1985), 91–94; and Willem Bergé in A. M. Koldeweij, *In Buscoducis 1450–1629: Kunst uit de Bourgondische tijd te 's-Hertogenbosch de cultuur van late Middeleeuwen en renaissance* (Maarssen, 1990), 439–463.

[15] Saenredam made two drawings of the choir screen, one from the nave and one from the choir. Although he did not make a separate drawing of the organ, it is visible in the drawing of the choir screen seen from the choir. For illustrations of these drawings see Gary Schwartz, Marten Jan Bok, and Loekie Schwartz *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York, 1990), 86 and 87.

[16] The nuns, however, were allowed to remain in their convents for the rest of their lives. See Ivan Gaskell, "Pieter Jansz. Saenredam and the Great Church of 's-Hertogenbosch," *Wolfenbütteler Forschungen* 46 (1990): 253.

[17] For a discussion of this interesting issue see Gary Schwartz, Marten Jan Bok, and Loekie Schwartz, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York, 1990), 64, 65, 67, 71, 74.

[18] See G. C. M. van Dijck, *De Bossche optimaten. Geschiedenis van de Illustere Lieve Vrouwebroederschap te 's-Hertogenbosch, 1318–1973* (Tilburg, 1973), 317–381; Ton Kappelhof, *De Illustere Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap van 's-Hertogenbosch* ('s-Hertogenbosch, 1985).

[19] For a further discussion of these issues see Gary Schwartz, Marten Jan Bok, and Loekie Schwartz, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York, 1990), 204–206.

[20] For a probable scenario, see Provenance Note 1.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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The cradled support panel is composed of three vertically grained oak boards. Dendrochronology gives a felling date of approximately 1630 for all three boards.[1] Board widths are roughly equal at left and center and slightly narrower at right. Several checks exist at top and bottom, and gouges, some fairly deep, are found along the edges and in an intermittent horizontal band across the center.

Infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns[2] reveals a detailed fine-line underdrawing apparently based upon a preliminary construction drawing. Minor changes appear in the spear held by the sculpted figure at the far right, in the statue to the right of center, and in the arc of the ribs in the vault.

Paint was applied in transparent washes, glazes, and fine brushwork that leave the thin off-white ground layer and architectural underdrawing plainly visible. Scattered small losses indicate a history of flaking. Abrasion is found overall, particularly in the stone floor, the pilaster and engaged statue to the right of the altar, and the pilaster to the left of the altar. A conservation treatment was carried out in 1987–1990 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting and accurately reconstruct abraded passages.

[1] Dendrochronology was performed by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg (see report dated January 27, 1987, in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane array InSb camera fitted with an H filter.

PROVENANCE

Possibly Pierre Daguerre, Bayonne and Amsterdam, in the early eighteenth century; possibly by inheritance to his daughter, Marie-Anne Daguerre Harader, Itxassou, near Bayonne, mid-18th century; parish church, Itxassou;[1] (D.A. Hoogendijk, Amsterdam), by 1937.[2] J.A.G. Sandberg, Wassenaar; (Wildenstein & Co., New York); sold February 1954 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[3] gift 1961 to NGA.

[1] This early provenance was provided by Robert Poupel, Cambo-les-bains, France (letter, 13 June 1970, in NGA curatorial files). He writes that during the seventeenth

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century Bayonne carried on a thriving sea trade with the Netherlands. Pierre Daguerre, who married Elisabeth de Papenbroeck, the daughter of one of the Dutch settlers in Bayonne, lived for a period in Amsterdam where he acted as the "King's agent in the City of Amsterdam." Poupel believes that Daguerre purchased the painting and then passed it to his daughter Marie-Anne Daguerre. In the 1720s she married Jacques de Harader, squire of Lassale-Vignolles, who owned extensive landed estates at nearby Itxassou. Although no written records exist, he believes that the Daguerre-Harader couple presented the painting to the local parish church.

[2] The painting was lent by Hoogendijk to the 1937-1938 exhibition held in Rotterdam and Amsterdam.

[3] The bill of sale (copy in NGA curatorial files) is dated 10 February 1954, and was for fourteen paintings, including Saenredam's *Interior of St. John's Cathedral at Bois-le-Duc*; payments by the Foundation continued to March 1957.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Pieter Jansz Saenredam
Dutch, 1597 - 1665

Church of Santa Maria della Febbre, Rome

1629

oil on panel
overall: 37.8 x 70.5 cm (14 7/8 x 27 3/4 in.)
framed: 51.4 x 84.4 x 5.7 cm (20 1/4 x 33 1/4 x 2 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower center on paper attached to base of obelisk: P. Saenreda.fe. / Ao 1629
Samuel H. Kress Collection 1961.9.34

ENTRY

A fascinating development in the Netherlands in the early seventeenth century was the appearance of city histories: books recounting the important events and personalities that had determined the character of the community and brought it fame. One of the most important city histories was Samuel Ampzing's *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland,* published in Haarlem in 1628. Among the factors that inspired a justifiable sense of civic pride in Ampzing were the painters whose works brought glory to their native city even after their deaths, including Maerten van Heemskerck (Netherlandish, 1498 - 1574), Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1558 - 1617), and Jan Pietersz Saenredam (Dutch, 1565 - 1607), Pieter Saenredam's father. Ampzing illustrated his book with prints related to Haarlem's history that were based on drawings by various contemporary artists, including Pieter Saenredam. Saenredam's designs, which are among his earliest works, range from maps depicting the history of the siege of Haarlem to a detailed rendering of the Town Hall beyond the Great Market Place [fig. 1]. As is

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characteristic of Ampzing's approach, the Town Hall print provides more than just visual documentation of an important building: the poem inscribed beneath it stresses the building's historical and symbolic importance, both for Haarlem and for the Netherlands at large. [1]

Ampzing's book was but one manifestation of a broader need felt by the people of this newly formed country to trace their roots, to emphasize their cultural heritage, and to build a mythology that could define their place in history. Saenredam experienced this impulse keenly: throughout his career he carefully recorded, with annotated drawings and paintings of public buildings, both the world he saw around him and the one he could reconstruct from careful examination of physical and documentary evidence.

It must have been in large part because of this desire to immerse himself in his own heritage that Saenredam, at the very beginning of his career, turned so enthusiastically to Heemskerck's drawings of antiquities. *Church of Santa Maria della Febbre, Rome* is one of the most visible manifestations of Saenredam's interest in the earlier artist's work. Saenredam based his scene on a drawing from Heemskerck's famous Roman sketchbook, which was filled with images of antiquity that the Haarlem artist had executed in Italy almost a century before. [2] The sketchbook had remained in Haarlem and was at this time in the proud possession of one of the foremost painters of the day, Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (1562–1638). [3] Saenredam probably had access to the sketchbook, which he would eventually acquire, possibly because of family connections to this important artist. [4]

As is evident later in Saenredam's life, from the contents of his large library, the artist had broad humanistic interests, ranging from the history and development of the Netherlands to the literature of antiquity. [5] Heemskerck's sketchbook provided him with a fascinating glimpse of Rome, a city he had never and would never visit. Studying the sketchbook also gave him an opportunity to learn from the earlier master's sense of line and composition, components of his own work that were of particular concern to him. Saenredam based at least four paintings on this sketchbook and executed them over a fifteen-year period. The earliest, *Church of Santa Maria della Febbre, Rome,* is dated 1629, while the last was painted in 1643. [6]

The drawing in the sketchbook that Saenredam took as his point of departure for his depiction of Santa Maria della Febbre [fig. 2] records a building complex

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situated at the Vatican in the center of Rome. [7] In the foreground rises the Vatican obelisk (*agulia Sancti Petri*), distinguishable by the bronze ball at the top. [8] Behind the obelisk is the round structure of a second-century Roman mausoleum, which in the sixth century became known as the Church of San Andrea and later as Santa Maria della Febbre. After 1506 it was converted into the sacristy of Saint Peter's, a function it served until it was demolished in 1776. [9] Looming behind Santa Maria della Febbre is the towering structure of Saint Peter's, showing its state of construction in the 1530s. Visible here from the southeast are the huge pillar and coffered vault of the crossing as well as the coffered vault that connects to the façade of the sacristy. The irregularly shaped buildings to the right enclose chapels built along the southern aisle of Old Saint Peter's. One of these, Cappella del Coro, is located just to the right of the arched entrance to the complex. Its apse corresponds to the projecting circular shape of its roof. On the adjacent structure hangs a reminder of the pope's presence: the papal tiara displayed with ribbons from which are suspended two keys.

The drawing is a fascinating historical document, for it depicts a stage during the construction of Saint Peter's that has been difficult to reconstruct. By the time Saenredam laid eyes on the Heemskerck sketchbook, the situation had changed radically, not only through the construction of the imposing dome designed by Michelangelo, but also through the relocation of the obelisk to Saint Peter's Square. [10] Saenredam, however, made no effort to update the architecture or to represent the dynamic character of Rome. Quite to the contrary, he placed the buildings in a country setting and depicted foliage growing from the structures, as though Santa Maria della Febbre were an abandoned building or Saint Peter's an ancient ruin. He reinforced this feeling by modulating the surfaces of the buildings with subtle touches of pinks and oranges that suggest age.

It would seem that Saenredam, given his humanistic leanings, would have recognized the buildings in Heemskerck's drawings. Nevertheless, it is telling that he did not paint the circular roof defining the apse of the Cappella del Coro, which is clearly delineated in the drawing. Such an omission indicates that he was unaware of the character of that building. That he did not follow Heemskerck's design slavishly is also evident from Infrared Reflectography, which reveals the initial Underdrawing [fig. 3]. As it turns out, Saenredam made a number of adjustments in his composition, from eliminating windows to changing the perspective of the round structure of Santa Maria della Febbre itself. The pattern of changes suggests that he was interested in simplifying the structure and flattening

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the image.

One senses that Saenredam saw in Heemskerck's stark drawing images of architecture he associated with antiquity. Saenredam apparently sought to emphasize the ancient venerability of the architectural setting while at the same time suggesting the continuity of the Catholic presence in Italy through the staffage figures and the papal tiara attached to the wall of one of the buildings. This approach seems to be a visual counterpart to the literary historicizing to which he had been exposed through his involvement in Ampzing's *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland.* The evocative power that this painting thus assumes makes it one of the most fascinating of Saenredam's early works.

One unresolved issue is whether the staffage figures—the cardinal riding in a horse-drawn wagon and the two accompanying gentlemen dressed in seventeenth-century costumes—were actually executed by Saenredam or by Pieter Jansz Post (Netherlandish, 1608 - 1669), an artist-architect who joined the Saint Luke's Guild in Haarlem in 1628. [11] Although the figures in this work are not inconsistent with Post's style, an attribution to him must remain tenuous since his first known dated paintings are not until 1631. [12] That a relationship between Post and Saenredam existed seems probable because of the broad, simplified character of the distant landscape, which is consistent with Post's work of the early 1630s.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Pieter Jansz Saenredam, plate from Samuel Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland*, Haarlem, 1628

fig. 2 Maerten van Heemskerck, *Santa Maria della Febbre*, c. 1532, pen and ink, 79 D 2, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Volker-H. Schneider / Art Resource,NY

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fig. 3 Detail, infrared reflectogram, Pieter Jansz Saenredam, *Church of Santa Maria della Febbre, Rome*, 1629, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection, 1961.9.34

NOTES

[1] The poem emphasizes both the historical importance of the Town Hall as the palace and home of Willem II, Duke of Holland, and the honor it had brought to the city as a symbol of justice. The poem ends with a broad statement on the importance of justice as a foundation for the country.

[2] See Christian Hülsen and Hermann Egger, *Die römischen Skizzenbücher von Marten van Heemskerck im königlichen Kupferstichkabinett zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1913–1916; reprint, 1975). Heemskerck was in Rome between 1532 and 1536. Not all of the drawings in this sketchbook are now believed to be by Heemskerck. At least two other hands have been identified. See, in particular, Ilja M. Veldman, "Heemskercks Romeinse tekeningen en 'Anonymus B,'" *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 38 (1987): 369–382.

[3] When Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem died in 1638, he had in his estate "het treffelyck getekent boeckie van Mr. Maertyn Heemskerck nae alle de fraiste antique van Roma." See Abraham Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* . . . , 8 vols. (The Hague, 1915–1922), 7:83; and Gary Schwartz, Marten Jan Bok, and Loekie Schwartz, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York, 1990), 324 n. 26.

[4] For a discussion of the relationship of Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem to

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Saenredam, see Gary Schwartz, Marten Jan Bok, and Loekie Schwartz, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York, 1990), 23. That Saenredam eventually acquired the drawings seems probable given the announcement for the sale of his collection of graphic art after his death in 1669, which included "many drawings by Maerten van Heemskerck . . . made . . . from life in Italy." For a hypothesis on how this acquisition came about, see Schwartz, Bok, and Schwartz, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time*, 185.

[5] The contents of his library are described in the catalog for the sale of his collection, which was held on April 20, 1677. The catalog, discovered by Bert van Selm, has been analyzed, in part, by Gary Schwartz, Marten Jan Bok, and Loekie Schwartz, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York, 1990), 181–187.

[6] The other paintings based on this sketchbook are: *The Colosseum, Rome,* signed and dated 1631 (Girardet Collection, Kettwig-Ruhr); *View from the Aracoeli, Rome, towards the Colosseum in the South,* signed and dated 1633 (formerly Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orleans, but destroyed in 1940); and *Portico of the Pantheon, Rome,* signed and dated 1643 (private collection). These paintings are included in Gary Schwartz, Marten Jan Bok, and Loekie Schwartz, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York, 1990) as, respectively, cat. nos. 114, 113, and 112.

[7] The first art historian to connect the painting with the drawing, which is fol. 72r in the sketchbook, was J. Q. van Regeteren Altena, "Saenredam Archeoloog," *Oud-Holland* 48 (1931): 1–3. He argued, on the basis of this information, that Saenredam had never traveled to Italy. Ilja M. Veldman, "Heemskercks Romeinse tekeningen en 'Anonymus B,'" *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 38 (1987): 369–382, attributed the drawing in the Heemskerck sketchbook to another, anonymous hand. For the purposes of this entry the designation "Heemskerck" will be used when referring to this drawing.

[8] The following description of the buildings is based largely on Christian Hülsen and Hermann Egger, *Die römischen Skizzenbücher von Marten van Heemskerck im königlichen Kupferstichkabinett zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1913–1916), 7 (from the description of the plates in the second volume).

[9] This information has been gleaned from Horst W. Janson, *The Sculpture of Donatello: Incorporating the Notes and Photos of the Late Jenö Lányi* (Princeton, 1963), 97.

[10] For a depiction of the site from a similar point of view in the early 1580s, showing the dome under construction, see Henry A. Millon, *Michelangelo Architect: The Façade of San Lorenzo and the Drum and Dome of St. Peter's* (Milan, 1988), 101, fig. E.

[11] Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, "Aanvullingen omtrent Pieter Post's werkzaamheid

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als schilder," *Oud-Holland* 69 (1954): 59–71.

[12] *Mauritshuis: Hollandse schilderkunst—landschappen 17de eeuw* (The Hague, 1980), 77–79, nos. 765–766.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a beveled, horizontally grained oak panel with a slight concave warp.[1] Narrow oak strips, possibly original, are attached to the edges. The vertical strips are sawn at regularly spaced intervals to counteract splitting of the wood. Neither the smooth, thin, white ground layer nor the paint extends onto the strips. Infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns reveals a loosely executed underdrawing that delineates the church architecture.[2] Minor changes in two of the windows and some architectural details are visible between the drawn and painted stages.

Paint, applied thinly with small brushes, leaves both the wood grain and the individual brushstrokes plainly visible. The sky was laid in first, followed by the buildings, with the figures painted over the completed background, in an economical technique employing opaque wet-into-wet layering and thin scumbles and glazes. Figures and landscape were handled similarly and appear contemporaneous.

Abrasion is minimal. Discolored inpainting covers small losses found primarily along the bottom edge, in the church architecture, and in the sky. In a selective cleaning, prior to acquisition, a layer of discolored, aged varnish was left over the dark foreground in the lower left and over a clump of bushes rising from the building at the left. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition.

[1] Dendrochronology provides a felling date between 1627 and 1634. Dendrochronology was performed by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg (see report dated January 7, 1987, in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara focal plane array InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

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PROVENANCE

Friedrich, king of Prussia.[1] (sale, Frederik Muller and Co., Amsterdam, 25 November 1924, no. 60); Anton W.M. Mensing [1866-1936], Amsterdam;[2] (his estate sale, Frederik Muller and Co., Amsterdam, 15 November 1938, no. 96); (D.A. Hoogendijk, Amsterdam); J.A.G. Sandberg, Wassenaar, in 1950; private collection, The Netherlands; (D.A. Hoogendijk, Amsterdam), by 1953; (Frederick A. Stern, Inc., New York); sold 1954 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York; gift 1961 to NGA.

[1] This information is in the 1924 sale catalogue; it has not yet been determined which of the Prussian kings by this name owned the painting. There are two seals on the reverse of the panel, but neither has a legible imprint.

[2] An annotated copy of the 1924 sale catalogue cites Huber as the buyer. If this is true, he may well have been acting as an agent for Mensing.

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1937 Pieter Jansz. Saenredam 1597-1665, Museum Boymans, Rotterdam; Museum Fodor, Amsterdam, 1937-1938, no. 1.

1950 Le Paysage Hollandais au XVIIe Siècle, Orangerie des Tuileries, Paris, 1950, no. 82.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jean Meyssens after Abraham Willers, *Roelandt Savery*, engraving, in Sebastiano Resta, *The True Effigies of the Most Eminent Painters, and Other Famous Artists That Have Flourished in Europe* (London, 1694), pl. 41, National Gallery of Art Library, David K. E. Bruce Fund

Savery, Roelandt

Also known as
Savery, Roeland
Savery, Roelant
Dutch, 1576 - 1639

BIOGRAPHY

Roelandt Savery was born in the Flemish city of Kortrijk (Courtrai). During the religious upheavals of the 1580s his family made their way to the northern Netherlands, finally settling in Haarlem, where his older brother Jacques (Jacob, c. 1565–1603) entered the painters' guild in 1587. Roelandt studied with Jacques and accompanied him to Amsterdam where Jacques became a citizen in 1591. Roelandt's early landscapes indicate that he also had contact with Hans Bol (Netherlandish, 1534 - 1593), who came to Amsterdam in 1591, and with Gillis van Coninxloo III (Flemish, 1544 - 1607), who settled there in 1595. In 1604 Roelandt traveled to Prague to work for Emperor Rudolph II, likely because the Emperor wanted him to work in the tradition of Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Flemish, c. 1525/1530 - 1569), an artist he admired and collected. Following Rudolph's death in 1612, Roelandt continued to work for his brother, Matthias.

Roelandt was sent by Rudolph in 1606–1607 to the Tyrolean Alps to record the "marvels of nature." By 1613 or 1614 Savery had returned to Amsterdam. He was to move one more time, however, for in 1619 he settled in Utrecht and joined its

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painters' guild. The twenty years spent in Utrecht until his death proved to be very successful for the artist. In 1626, for example, the city of Utrecht paid him 700 guilders for a painting of "all the animals of the air and earth," to be presented to the wife of the Prince of Orange, Amalia van Solms. Among Savery's pupils were Allart van Everdingen (Dutch, 1621 - 1675), Willem van Nieuwlandt II (Dutch, 1584 - 1635/1636), and Gillis d'Hondecoeter (c. 1575–1638).

Savery's dramatic rocky landscapes often served as the setting for religious, mythological, or allegorical scenes populated by animals and figures carefully drawn from nature. Savery also painted flower still lifes strongly influenced by the work of Jan Brueghel the Elder (Flemish, 1568 - 1625).

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Roelandt Savery
Dutch, 1576 - 1639

Landscape with the Flight into Egypt

1624

oil on panel
overall: 54.3 x 91.5 cm (21 3/8 x 36 in.)
framed: 71.1 x 107.6 x 5.7 cm (28 x 42 3/8 x 2 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower left: .ROELANT / SAVERY FE / 1624
Gift of Robert H. and Clarice Smith, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art 1989.22.1

ENTRY

A spring-fed watering trough nestled among ancient ruins high in a mountainous pass has drawn to it both man and animal, seeking nourishment from its refreshing waters. As cattle drink eagerly from the trough and sheep rest in the surrounding sun-drenched glade, activity abounds on all sides. Two travelers dressed in exotic red and green costumes gesture expansively as they talk together near the base of an adjacent ruin. Wild deer and goats in the deeply shadowed foreground react to the commotion caused by a cowherd trying to lead his cattle and goats away from the spring. The sky above is filled with large birds circling the vine-covered, circular ruins, while others head off into the distance flying in a V formation.

Almost lost in this plethora of human and animal life is a group of travelers led by camels. The travelers have already nourished themselves and are departing along a path that leads through an old stone archway to the rear. Small in scale and depicted only in ochers, the figures seem the least significant of all those present, yet the man, who has turned to look back at the scene, and the woman riding the donkey and holding her child, could be none other than the Holy Family on the

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Flight into Egypt. No episode from the Bible, or from other accounts of the traumatic days during which Joseph, Mary, and the young Jesus fled Bethlehem, corresponds with this scene, but Savery's imaginative mind has here conceived a scenario for the family's traversal of the rugged terrain. As they fled, their identity remained unknown to most of those whom they met, but occasionally the story of their flight preceded them and the Child's divinity was then revealed to those who truly believed. Here, the three shepherds near the watering trough have doffed their caps because they have realized that they are in Christ's presence. One of them kneels, but the other two stare upward as though the light shining down were a miraculous one, just as on that day when an angel appeared before shepherds to announce the birth of the Child. The two gesturing figures near the Holy Family, less content than the shepherds to pause in simple adoration, may well be discussing excitedly the revelation that has just occurred. For the rest, particularly the cowherd tugging his cow's ear to lead his herd away from the water and the light, Christ's presence has gone unnoticed.

Savery painted this scene during an extremely productive and successful period following his move to Utrecht in 1619. By the 1620s his style had been well formed and clearly had great appeal. During these years he received major commissions from the city of Utrecht, and his paintings were collected in courts throughout Europe. Although his work could no longer be called innovative, patrons still valued Savery's superb mastery, and Utrecht's international flavor allowed him to continue to paint in his mannerist style long after artistic trends in other centers had begun to focus on naturalistic images of the Dutch countryside. As in this example, Savery divided his fanciful landscapes into distinct zones of alternating light and dark to provide a framework for the multiple activities he invariably included in his scenes.

The exotic character of Savery's mountainous landscapes reflects his own travels in the Tyrolean Alps and in Bohemia when he was working at the court of Rudolph II, but the landscape formations and the ruins in his paintings are essentially creations of his own imagination. Likewise, though Savery drew animals from life, those in his paintings are arranged in ways that have little to do with everyday reality. Drawing from the inspiration of his older brother Jacques, with whom he studied before the latter's death in 1603, Savery delighted in bringing together in the same composition a wide range of animals such as might have lived in the Garden of Eden or listened to the harmonies of Orpheus' lyre. [1] Thus, his paintings have a fascinating sense of being built on carefully perceived reality,

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despite their fanciful and rather decorative character.

The *retardataire* style of *Landscape with the Flight into Egypt* is particularly evident as its compositional prototypes are paintings Savery made during the 1610s. The earliest known of these is a fanciful landscape, signed and dated 1616, which is also the setting for a biblical subject, in this instance, the reconciliation of Jacob and Laban. In this work a comparable rounded ruin rises in the middle ground, at the base of which congregate cattle, cowherds, and the gesticulating figures of Jacob and Laban [fig. 1]. [2] Another version of this composition, now in Kortrijk, entitled *The Drink*, is also datable to about 1616. [3] Here, Savery has added a water trough from which cattle drink, similar to a that in *Landscape with the Flight into Egypt*.

The transformation of this scene from a fanciful landscape vista to a setting for an episode from the Bible, as seen in the *Landscape with the Flight into Egypt*, is consistent with the way Savery has elaborated all aspects of his composition. Compared with the Kortrijk version, the scene here includes more animals and activity. To help structure the added pictorial elements, Savery has separated more distinctly than previously the various zones within the landscape. The scene, as a result, takes on a more artificial character, which is exacerbated by Savery's painting style in the 1620s, in which landscape elements are somewhat harder and less delicately rendered than in earlier years. Despite such tendencies toward a decorative style in Savery's artistic evolution, this work is an impressive landscape, and one that has been beautifully preserved.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Roelandt Savery, *A Rocky Landscape with a Stream and Classical Ruins, with the Reconcilliation of Jacob and Laban*, 1616, oil on panel, Courtesy of Christie's. Photo © Christie's Images / The Bridgeman Art Library

NOTES

[1] For examples of such themes in Jacques Savery's work, see *Roelant Savery in seiner Zeit (1576–1639)* (Cologne, 1985), nos. 93, 94.

[2] Kurt J. Müllenmeister, *Roelant Savery: Kortrijk 1576–1639 Utrecht, Hofmaler Kaiser Rudolf II, in Prag: die Gemälde mit kritischem Oeuvrekatalog* (Freren, 1988), 272, no. 168, repro.

[3] This scene does not appear to depict a historicizing subject. See Kurt J. Müllenmeister, *Roelant Savery: Kortrijk 1576–1639 Utrecht, Hofmaler Kaiser Rudolf II, in Prag: die Gemälde mit kritischem Oeuvrekatalog* (Freren, 1988), 278, no. 169.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support consists of two horizontally grained oak boards joined horizontally at center. The panel has a slight convex warp, and a long check runs horizontally from the upper left comer. A thin, granular white ground was brush-applied overall except along narrow bands at the vertical edges. A dark reddish brown imprimatura was applied under the foreground. Infrared reflectography reveals brush-applied underdrawing, with the composition outlined and shadows

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crosshatched. [1]

Paint was applied in thin, smooth layers modified by glazes and scumbles. Brushmarks are visible in the sky, and tiny flecks of impasto highlight the animals. Minimal amounts of inpainting, of two distinct applications, cover gray stains in the sky, minor losses at left, and losses along the edges, check, and panel join. No conservation work has been carried out since acquisition.

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Hamamatsu c/1000–03 vidicon camera fitted with a lead sulphide tube and a Kodak Wratten 87A filter.

PROVENANCE

(Anthony Speelman, London);[1] Robert H. Smith, Washington, D.C., by 1988; (sale, Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, 14 January 1988, no. 86, bought in); Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Smith, Washington, D.C.; gift 1989 to NGA.

[1] In a letter of 7 September 1993 (in NGA curatorial files), Anthony Speelman wrote to Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr.: "The only provenance that I have on the Savery is that it was bought in c. 1890 in Berne by the previous owner's family..."

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1991 Art for the Nation: Gifts in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1991, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 54.

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1998 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *A Collector's Cabinet*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1998: 68, no. 54, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

John Smith after Godefridus Schalcken, *Portrait of Godfried Schalcken*, c. 1694, mezzotint on laid paper, Chaloner Smith 1884, no. 226, State only, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Paul Mellon Fund, 2001.118.45

Schalcken, Godefridus

Also known as
Schalcken, Godfried
Schalcken, Gottfried
Schalken, Gottfried
Dutch, 1643 - 1706

BIOGRAPHY

Godefridus Schalcken was born in Made, a town south of Dordrecht, where his father, Cornelis Schalcken, was a minister. Schalcken's father and his mother, Aletta Lydius, moved their family to Dordrecht in 1654 when Cornelis was appointed principal of the Latin school.[1] Between 1656 and 1662 Schalcken was apprenticed to the artist and theorist Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch, 1627 - 1678). After Hoogstraten left Dordrecht for England in 1662, Schalcken studied in Leiden with Gerrit Dou (Dutch, 1613 - 1675), probably for a year or two. Schalcken most likely returned to Dordrecht by the mid-1660s.[2] In 1679 Schalcken married Françoise van Diemen (b. 1609) from Breda. They had seven children, but only one, Françoise, is known to have survived into adulthood.

Schalcken's biographer, Arnold Houbraken, who probably knew the artist personally, admiringly described him as one of the few who made a good living from his painting.[3] In 1691 Schalcken paid dues amounting to eighteen guilders to The Hague painters' guild, Pictura, which gave him the right to sell his work in the city without actually living there.[4] In 1692, however, Schalcken and his wife left the Netherlands for England.[5] According to Houbraken, the English had lured Schalcken to their country, where he was able to earn his fortune.[6] The couple

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resided at Windsor, at the court of William III, where Schalcken painted the king's portrait as well as the portraits of other English aristocrats. By 1699 Schalcken had returned to the Netherlands and settled in The Hague. Except for a period of work in Düsseldorf (1701) at the court of Johann Wilhelm, the Elector Palatine, he remained in The Hague for the rest of his life. He died November 13, 1706, at the age of sixty-three.

Schalcken is known primarily for his delicate night scenes, which he painted in the style of his master, Dou. He also painted portraits, as well as genre scenes and biblical and mythological subjects. Not much is known about his working methods, although Walpole describes how Schalcken "placed the object and a candle in a dark room, and looking through a small hole, painted by day-light what he saw in the dark chamber."[7] Schalcken had several pupils, among them his sister Maria (b. c. 1647–1650), his cousin Jacobus Schalcken (c. 1683/1686–1733), Anthony Vreem (1660–1681), Arnold Boonen (1669–1729), Simon Germijn (b. 1650), Karel de Moor (1655–1738), and Rachel Ruys (1664–1750).

[1] Thierry Beherman, Godfried Schalcken (Paris, 1988), 23–29, and G. H. Veth, "Aanteekeningen omtrent eenige Dordrechtse schilders," *Oud-Holland* 10 (1892): 1–16.

[2] Matthys van Balen, *Beschryvinge der stad Dordrecht...* (Dordrecht, 1677), 688. In his extensive article on Schalcken, G. H. Veth, probably by mistake, writes that Schalcken was back in Dordrecht by 1665 because in that year he was was the standard bearer for the 7th Company Dordrecht Civic Guard (G. H. Veth, "Aanteekeningen omtrent eenige Dordrechtse schilders," *Oud-Holland* 10 [1892]: 2, note 5). However, Van Balen dates Schalcken's role as standard bearer to 1675. It is, nevertheless, probable that Schalcken returned to Dordrecht by the mid-1660s (information kindly provided by Guido Jansen).

[3] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 3:176: "aangezien zyne penceelkonst van den beginne af tot het einde van zyn leven rykelyk betaald wierd, zoo dat hy de vrichten van zyn arbeyd by zyn leven gemaait heeft, dat zeer weinigen gebeurt."

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[4] Abraham Bredius, “De Boeken der Haagsche schildersconfrerie,” in Frederik Daniel Otto Obreen, ed., A*rchief voor Nederlandsche Kunstgeschiedenis* 5 (1882–1883): 138. For the painters’ guild Pictura see: Johan Gram, De Schildersconfrerie Pictura (The Hague, 1882). According to rule 2, painters from outside The Hague could join for eighteen guilders in order to sell their work in that city (pp. 12 and 19).

[5] According to Walpole and Vertue, Schalcken made two trips to England before settling there. See Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England with Some Account of the Principal Artists; and Incidental Notes on Other Arts; Collected by the Late Mr. George Vertue,* 5 vols. (London, 1826–1828), 3:264; and George Vertue, Notebooks 1, [V.7, B.M. 9], in *Walpole Society* 18 (1929–1930): 29.

[6] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 3:176. “toen de Engelsen . . . hem in hun land lokten, daar hy verscheiden jaren gewoont en veel geld vergaart heeft.”

[7] Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England with Some Account of the Principal Artists; and Incidental Notes on Other Arts; Collected by the Late Mr. George Vertue*, 5 vols. (London, 1826–1828), 3:263.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Godefridus Schalcken
Dutch, 1643 - 1706

Woman Weaving a Crown of Flowers

c. 1675/1680

oil on panel
overall: 26.7 x 20.3 cm (10 1/2 x 8 in.)
framed: 37.6 x 31.4 x 5.1 cm (14 13/16 x 12 3/8 x 2 in.)
Inscription: lower left: G. Schalcken
The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund 2005.26.1

ENTRY

This charming painting of a woman lost in thought while weaving a crown of flowers is an excellent example of Schalcken's refined manner of painting and also of the way he infused abstract ideas into his genre scenes. [1] The woman's distinctive features—her long nose and high cheekbones—are elegant and refined. She has a delicacy, even fragility, that is also suggested in the wispy strands of her hair and the bluish cast of her thin skin near her temple. These physical characteristics lend great poignancy to her gaze, which suggests a yearning for love and companionship. The wreath of flowers she sews onto a circular band alludes to this theme, as does the standing cupid atop the marble fountain on which she rests her elbow. As though providing the physical manifestation of her thoughts, Schalcken has depicted lovers embracing in the distant garden. The crack in the stone base of the fountain offers a subtle reminder, however, that love and life, even when built upon a firm foundation, are fragile and transient.

In Dutch emblematic traditions the wreath of flowers was symbolically associated with love and virginity. [2] In Cesare Ripa's emblem book, the personification of Virginity (*longhvrouwschap, Maeghdelijcke Staet*) wears a wreath of flowers to signify that a young woman is as a blossom to be plucked before its beauty and appeal are lost. [3] However, the specific flowers in the woman's wreath—the exquisite blue flax, the lighter blue cornflower, the delicate white baby's breath, the bell-shaped white morning glory, and the yellow and orange daisylike flowers, probably marigolds—are not symbolically associated with joy and hope, but with

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constancy, loss, and mourning. [4] The wistful mood of the *Woman Weaving a Crown of Flowers*, therefore, may reflect an unmarried woman's desire for love at a time when she fears that intimate companionship, such as that enjoyed by the couple in the distant garden, may well pass her by.

Schalcken featured the same model in a painting he executed around 1680, *Préciosa Recognized*, in which she posed for the figure of Giomaer, Préciosa's mother [fig. 1]. [5] Her presence in that painting helps establish a chronological framework for *Woman Weaving a Crown of Flowers* and furthermore affirms the visual impression that she is not young. The woman's delicate gold necklace and elegant dangling earrings, as well as her placement next to the elaborately carved stone fountain, indicate that she was a member of the Dutch elite.

The woman's distinctive costume, particularly her brown jacket with its striped decorative pattern, also indicates a date from the mid-to-late 1670s. According to costume expert Marieke de Winkel, it reflects French styles that came into fashion in those years. Such jackets were, however, generally worn with lace at the neck and sleeves rather than with a loosely tied translucent shawl. [6] Schalcken's imaginative changes to the woman's wardrobe give her a timeless quality, consistent with the generically classical forms of the distant buildings and garden fountain. Enhancing the arcadian quality of the image are the woman's straw hat, colored blue under its wide brim, and the red shoulder piece, or *kletje*, she wears under her shawl, clothing items generally associated with shepherdesses. Arnold Houbraken indicates that Schalcken went to Leiden in 1662 to study with Gerrit Dou (Dutch, 1613 - 1675) after his first teacher, Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch, 1627 - 1678), left Dordrecht for England. [7] Nevertheless, the refined elegance of this work is more closely connected to Frans van Mieris (Dutch, 1635 - 1681) than to Dou. [8] Van Mieris and Schalcken were both fascinated with issues related to the psychological states of women, which they explored in their genre paintings and allegorical scenes. In these works, the gaze takes on great significance, becoming the fulcrum around which all of the surrounding pictorial accoutrements must be understood. [9]

Many of Schalcken's and Van Mieris' paintings deal with lost innocence or with the balancing of human and spiritual values, as in a remarkable pair of pendant paintings that these artists made together in 1676: *Allegory of Virtue and Riches* (also called *Lesbia Weighing Her Sparrow against Jewels*) by Schalcken [fig. 2], and *The Flown Bird: Allegory on the Loss of Virginity* (also called *Lesbia Allowing Her Sparrow to Escape from a Box*) by Van Mieris. [10] Compositionally, the focus

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on a single female situated near a garden sculpture and before an arcadian landscape in Schalcken's *Allegory of Virtue and Riches* is comparable to *Woman Weaving a Crown of Flowers*. Stylistically, however, the modeling of the two women is different, with the young woman in the allegory being far more idealized and generalized than is the woman creating her wreath, who has a more portraitlike character.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Godefridus Schalcken, *Préciosa Recognized*, 1665–1670, oil on panel, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin. Photo © National Gallery of Ireland

fig. 2 Godefridus Schalcken, *Allegory of Virtue and Riches*, c. 1667, oil on copper, National Gallery, London, no. 199. Photo © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY

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NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Anneke Wertheim for her assistance in writing this entry.

[2] See Alison McNeil Kettering, "Rembrandt's *Flute Player*: A Unique Treatment of Pastoral," *Simiolus* 9, no. 1 (1977): 35–38. For further discussion of the symbolism of the wreath of flowers, see Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van echt in trouw—huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Haarlem, 1986), 254.

[3] Jacob Cats, *Maechden-Plicht ofte Ampt der Ionck-vrowen, in eerbaer Liefde, aen-ghewesen door Sinne-Beelden* (Middelburgh, 1618), 1; Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia Uytbeeldinghe des Verstands* (Amsterdam, 1644; reprint, Soest, 1971), 223.

[4] I would like to thank Genevra Higgenson for identifying the flowers and indicating their symbolism (correspondence of April 25, 2005, in NGA curatorial records). Flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) can connote the linen in which Christ was swaddled as a babe; cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*) was associated with loyalty, constancy, and celibacy; baby's breath (*Gypsophila*) denotes self-reliance; morning glory (*Convovulvus* genus) is linked to wisdom, but as it closes at night, it has sad connotations; marigold (*Calendula officinalis*) often adorned the Virgin Mary and symbolizes grief.

[5] The date of c. 1680 for this painting, which is in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, can be postulated through its stylistic similarities to Frans van Mieris' *The Death of Lucretia*, 1679 (see Otto Naumann, *Frans van Mieris [1635–1681], the Elder*, 2 vols. [Doornspijk, 1981], 2:120, no. 116), a connection noted in Thierry Beherman, *Godfried Schalcken* (Paris, 1988), 142, no. 49. The subject of the Dublin painting is based on a short novel by Miguel de Cervantes, *La Gitanilla,* which was published in 1613 in *Novelas ejemplares* (Madrid, 1613) and translated into Dutch in 1643.

[6] Marieke de Winkel, correspondence dated April 3, 2005, in NGA curatorial files. Winkel expressly associates the jacket with one seen in the doll house of Petronella Dunois, dated 1676.

[7] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 3:175

[8] For stylistic and thematic connections between Schalcken and Van Mieris, see Otto Naumann, *Frans van Mieris (1635–1681), the Elder*, 2 vols. (Doornspijk, 1981), 1:72. A further point of contact between the two artists was apparently Karel de Moor (1655–1738), who became a student of Schalcken's in Dordrecht after having studied with Van Mieris in Leiden

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around 1670.

[9] See, for example, Van Mieris' *The Broken Egg,* c. 1655–1657, oil on copper, Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (see Otto Naumann, *Frans van Mieris [1635–1681], the Elder*, 2 vols. [Doornspijk, 1981], 2:19–20, no. 17); and *A Woman Before a Mirror*, c. 1662, oil on panel, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin (see Otto Naumann, *Frans van Mieris [1635–1681], the Elder*, 2 vols. [Doornspijk, 1981], 2:56, no. 46).

[10] These works—Schalcken's *Allegory of Virtue and Riches* in the National Gallery, London, and Van Mieris' so-called *Lesbia Allowing Her Sparrow to Escape from a Box,* 1676, oil on panel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam—were listed as pendants in the collection of the Greffiers Fagel from The Hague in 1752. See Otto Naumann, *Frans van Mieris (1635–1681), the Elder*, 2 vols. (Doornspijk, 1981), 1:82, 2:116, no. 108; Thierry Beherman, *Godfried Schalcken* (Paris, 1988), 145, no. 50; and Neil MacLaren, *The Dutch School, 1600–1900*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1991), 1:416, no. 199, where the title of Van Mieris' painting is given as *Allegory of Virtue and Riches*. Other connections between Schalcken and Van Mieris exist during the 1670s, as in *Préciosa Recognized*. In *Frans van Mieris (1635–1681), the Elder*, 2 vols. (Doornspijk, 1981), 1:82, Otto Naumann argues that Schalcken's painting slightly postdates that of Van Mieris.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The small painting is on a vertically grained, single-member oak panel,[1] which is finished with beveled edges on the back. Narrow, nonoriginal wood strips have been nailed to the panel's perimeter. The panel has an off-white ground layer. Both the ground and the paint are rather thin and as a result, the panel's wood-grain texture is visible. The paint was applied in multiple overlapping opaque and transparent layers. The foliage is painted with a low-impasted paint that stands proud of the surface. Details such as the sitter's blonde tendrils and her black snood were painted wet-into-wet, while other details, including the sprigging on her dress and the splashing water, were painted wet-over-dry. There is a visible pentimento in the sitter's neck where the artist widened it slightly.

The painting is in excellent structural and visual condition. Areas of tiny traction cracks in the paint, due to the artist's technique, have been finely inpainted. The blue foliage at the lower right suggests the presence of a faded yellow pigment or glaze. The varnish is thin and even, but slightly hazy. The painting has not been treated since acquisition.

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[1] The characterization of the wood is based on visual examination only.

PROVENANCE

Graf Lothar Franz von Schönborn [1655-1729], Schloss Weissenstein, Pommersfelden, from at least 1719;[1] by descent in the Schönborn family; (Schönborn sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 17-18 and 22-23 May 1867, no. 111); purchased by De l'Espine. Comte de L*** [Lambertye or Lépine], Paris; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 15 April 1868, no. 57). Goldschmidt collection, Paris; (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 14 and 16-17 May 1898, no. 97); purchased by Fischer. Gabriel Cognacq [1880-1951], Paris; (his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 11-13 June 1952, no. 87); Princess Ermina Tonsson, Washington, D.C.; (sale, Christie's East, New York, 19 November 1980, no. 197); (P. de Boer, Amsterdam); purchased c. 1981 by private collection, New Rochelle, New York; (sale, Sotheby's, New York, 22 January 2004, no. 25); (Colnaghi, London); sold 16 March 2005 to NGA.

[1] The painting is listed in catalogues of the Schönborn collection published in 1719 (*Fürtrefflicher Gemählde-und Bilder-Schatz / So in denen Gallerie und Zimmern / des Churfürstl. Pommersfeldischen...*, Bamberg, 1719: no. 57); 1746 (*Beschreibung des Fürtreflichen Gemählde- und Bilder-Schatzes...*, Würzburg, 1746); and 1857 (*Katalog der Gräflich von Schönborn'schen Bilder-Gallerie zu Pommersfelden*, Würzburg, 1857: no. 96).

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1988 Adams, Ann Jensen. *Dutch and Flemish Paintings from New York Private Collections*. Exh. cat. National Academy of Design, New York, 1988: 11, no. 46.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan Steen, *The Dancing Couple* (detail), 1663, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.81

Steen, Jan

Also known as
Steen, Jan Havicksz
Dutch, 1625/1626 - 1679

BIOGRAPHY

Jan Steen was born in Leiden, where his father was a brewer and grain merchant. The date of his birth is not known, but the artist was twenty years old when he enrolled at the University of Leiden in 1646. Two years later he is recorded as one of the founding members of Leiden's newly formed Saint Luke's Guild. Arnold Houbraken states that Steen's artistic education came from Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596 - 1656), the Leiden-born landscape painter who had settled in The Hague. According to Jacob Campo Weyerman, Steen had previously studied with Nicolaes Knüpfer (c. 1603–1655) in Utrecht and with Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685) in Haarlem.

Steen married Van Goyen's daughter Margaretha in September 1649, and he appears to have remained in The Hague until 1654. In that year he is recorded on several occasions back in Leiden. From 1654 until 1657 Steen's father leased a Delft brewery by the name of "The Snake" on his son's behalf, and it seems that the artist lived in Delft during those years. From 1656 to 1660 Steen lived at Warmond, a small town near Leiden. The increased interest in still life details and careful finish of the paintings he produced during this period suggest his contact with the work of the Leiden *fijnschilders* (fine painters).

By 1661 Steen had moved to Haarlem, where he entered the Saint Luke's Guild in that year. During the nine years he spent in Haarlem, Steen created many of his greatest paintings, including a number of large, complex scenes of families and merrymakers containing witty evocations of proverbs, emblems, or other moralizing messages. His pictures, which are marked by a sophisticated use of

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contemporary literature and popular theater, often depict characters from both the Italian *commedia dell'arte* and the native Dutch *rederijkerskamers* (rhetoricians' chambers), although Steen was not a rhetorician himself. In addition to genre subjects, he depicted historical and religious subjects during the 1660s and 1670s. He remained a Catholic all his life.

In 1670, one year after the death of his wife, Steen moved to Leiden, having inherited his father's house. Two years later, he received a license to open an inn, a fact that has contributed to his traditional reputation as a dissolute drunkard. Although he sometimes included his self-portrait in this guise in scenes of apparent immorality and chaos, there is no incriminating evidence—beyond his possession of an acute sense of humor—to suggest that his real life mirrored his art.

In 1673 Steen married Marije Herculens van Egmont, who survived him by eight years. In 1674 he was elected *deken* of the Leiden guild, having served as an officer at the rank of *hoofdman* for the previous three years. There is no record of his having had any pupils, although a number of artists, notably Richard Brakenburg (1650–1702), imitated his style.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan Steen
Dutch, 1625/1626 - 1679

Ascagnes and Lucelle (The Music Lesson)

1667

oil on canvas
overall: 63 × 53.7 cm (24 13/16 × 21 1/8 in.)
framed: 86.04 × 75.57 × 10.16 cm (33 7/8 × 29 3/4 × 4 in.)
Inscription: lower right, on music book, J and S entwined: JSteen / 1667
Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.136.45

ENTRY

Jan Steen's delightfully suggestive painting about love and desire is played out in a courtship ritual that is both universal in its human dynamics and distinctive in the way it unfolds. [1] Music serves here as a metaphor for love, as an infatuated young woman strumming her lute looks imploringly at her companion while he reaches over to pluck the strings of her instrument. The sexual meaning of his gesture is reinforced not only by the recorder protruding from his pocket but also by the gesture of his left hand, which forms a circle between thumb and index finger as he holds his hat in his lap. That this encounter takes place within the elegant confines of the woman's private chamber is evident from the bed, its curtains pulled back to reveal two pillows, one above the other. The small sculpture of Cupid above the doorway reinforces the amorous nature of the scene.

Steen's painting has traditionally been called *The Music Lesson*, and the young man perched on the table has been seen as a music instructor teaching the woman how to play her lute. [2] A music lesson, however, is not the couple's main concern, as is clear from the music book that lies unattended and forgotten on the wooden bench next to the man's foot. The presence of an older woman standing behind them and a man peering in mischievously from the half-opened door indicates that Steen's painting is not a generic genre scene but is based on a literary source: Bredero's tragicomedy *Over-gesette Lucelle* (translated as *Lucelle*), first published in Amsterdam in 1616 and reprinted frequently throughout the 17th century. [3]

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Gerbrand Adriaensz Bredero (1585–1618) was the first important Dutch poet, songwriter, and playwright to focus upon everyday reality, matching his insights about human nature with a gentle warmth and humor. With a keen eye for detail and a sharp ear for language, Bredero enlivened his poetry and plays with words drawn from local dialects rather than from classical prototypes. As he explained in the preface to his widely read *Groot lied-boeck* (*Large Songbook*), published posthumously in 1622, “The only book from which I learned is the book of use.” [4] Bredero, who was a painter as well as writer, also wrote, “The best painters are those who come closest to life.” [5]

Lucelle belongs to the genre of tragicomic plays that developed in Italy and France in the 16th century. [6] A subplot generally encountered in these plays features lovers from different social classes trying to overcome the restrictions placed on their love through ruse and deceit. Inevitably, the lovers are betrayed, leading to a dramatic denouement, but things always work out well in the end. It frequently turns out that the protagonist from the lower social class actually has a royal or princely heritage, a startling development that solves all of the lovers’ problems in a delightful and engaging way.

Steen greatly admired Bredero’s humor and pictorial language, and the thematic content of his paintings, as in *Ascagnes and Lucelle (The Music Lesson)*, often reflects the playwright’s influence. [7] In this painting, Steen focused on the most intimate and transformative moment in Bredero’s play, which occurs in act 3, when the two lovers try to overcome the obstacles they face in pursuit of their happiness. The heroine, Lucelle, and her lover, Ascagnes, have come together in the privacy of her room on the pretext that he will give her a music lesson. [8] This ruse is necessary because Lucelle’s wealthy father has forbidden her to associate with Ascagnes, his clerk, owing to the young man’s humble background. The gilded leather wall covering and expensive oriental carpet on the table in Steen’s painting clearly indicate that the elegant bedchamber in which they meet is that of a wealthy young woman. Undoubtedly taking a cue from theatrical productions, Steen also contrasted the difference in the social status of the lovers through their wardrobes, juxtaposing Lucelle’s shimmering white satin dress with Ascagnes’s plain ocher-colored jerkin, baggy red trunk hose, and floppy white socks. [9] The ploy is the brainchild of Lucelle’s maid, Margriet, who, looking somewhat like a procuress, is the older woman staring at the lovers in the painting. Music lessons were a common occurrence in upper-class Dutch homes, where musical proficiency for a young woman was highly valued and indicative of social status.

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[10]

The key to identifying the scene's literary source as Bredero's *Lucelle* is the man peering through the half-opened door. He is the comic character Lecker-Beetje (Juicy Bit), the servant of Lucelle's father who spies on the lovers and overhears them as they vow eternal love. [11] Steen depicts Lecker-Beetje with his finger resting on his cheek, a gesture often associated with troublemaking fools in his paintings. [12] Indeed, Lecker-Beetje betrays the lovers to Lucelle's father, who, in order to avoid a scandal, promptly arranges for his daughter and Ascagnes to be poisoned. Just as the couple is about to die, however, a messenger arrives to announce that Ascagnes is actually the son of the king of Poland. Fortunately, the poison turns out to be merely a sleeping potion, and the lovers are revived. Bredero's play ends, fittingly, with the celebration of their marriage.

Steen's vignette from *Lucelle* is filled with light-hearted sexual innuendo that only a master storyteller like him could convey. Gestures and body language seem carefully observed from life and, were it not for the presence of Margriet and Lecker-Beetje, one would never guess that Steen derived this narrative from a literary source. Many of the painting's pictorial components are comparable to those that appear in Steen's genre scenes with musical subjects. For example, in *Acta Virum Probant (Actions Prove the Man)* of 1659 in the National Gallery, London (there titled *A Young Woman Playing a Harpsichord to a Young Man*), music similarly serves as a device for exploring complex human relationships of love and harmony. [13] As in *Ascagnes and Lucelle (The Music Lesson)*, Steen depicted two main protagonists around a musical instrument, an elegant interior, and a figure peering through a doorway in the back of the room.

Eight years separate *Acta Virum Probant (Actions Prove the Man)* and *Ascagnes and Lucelle (The Music Lesson).* By 1667, Steen's compositions had become more organic and his brushwork had loosened, as seen, for example, in Lucelle's shimmering white satin dress. The fact that Steen had by then moved to Haarlem from Leiden, thereby leaving the orbit of the *fijnschilder* (fine painting) techniques of his friend Frans van Mieris (Dutch, 1635 - 1681), partly accounts for these differences. Also important for Steen's stylistic evolution was his renowned contemporary Gerard ter Borch the Younger (Dutch, 1617 - 1681). Steen not only responded to the subtle brushwork with which Ter Borch rendered fabrics but also to the informal character of his intimate genre scenes, including those featuring music. One particularly compelling comparison is between *Ascagnes and Lucelle (The Music Lesson)* and Ter Borch's *A Woman Playing the Theorbo-Lute and a*

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Cavalier (c. 1658, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), where a young admirer similarly sits on a table as he listens to a love-struck woman playing a stringed instrument.

Only a few drawings by Steen have survived, yet it seems likely that he made many figure drawings that are now lost. He probably adapted the poses and gestures of these figure drawings to accord with the different narratives he wanted to express. Ascagnes's gesture of reaching out with bent wrist, for example, is akin to that of Cleopatra in Steen's *The Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra* (Georg-August-Universität, Göttigen), which he also executed in 1667. [14] Similar associations can be made between Lucelle's pose and other figures in Steen's oeuvre. [15]

Steen returned to the subject of Lucelle and Ascagnes in a painting in the Bute Collection (Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute), this time with a more theatrical approach, not only in terms of the anachronistic costumes of the figures but also the ample drapes hanging from a fanciful architectural setting. [16] In this latter version, however, Steen radically rethought his narrative and moved away from the scene described in Bredero's play. Lecker-Beetje, dressed as a fool and with finger raised to his cheek, looks on while Ascagnes rather than Lucelle plays the lute. She, with hand on cheek, gazes adoringly at him, as though any pretense of a lesson had disappeared. Steen envisioned a different moment than even Bredero had anticipated, an indication of how freely and imaginatively this great master could reinterpret renowned literary sources.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

December 9, 2019

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Henriette Rahusen for her thoughtful comments about this entry.

[2] The current title was adopted by the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1997 at the recommendation of Mariët Westermann (see correspondence in the NGA curatorial files).

[3] The first scholar to associate this painting with Bredero's play was S. J. Gudlaugsson in his article "Bredero's Lucelle door eenige zeventiende-eeuwsche meesters uitgebeeld," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 1 (1947): 177–195. Bredero's plays were performed regularly at the Amsterdam

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Schouwburg (Theater), and it is possible that Steen would have traveled from nearby Haarlem to Amsterdam in the mid-1660s to see a production of *Lucelle*. Other Dutch artists were also inspired by Bredero's play, although none chose the scenario that Steen depicted in this work.

[4] "Ick heb anders geen Boeck geleert als het boeck des gebruycx." G. A. Bredero, *Groot Lied-boeck* (Amsterdam, 1622), 17, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/bred001groo01_01/bred001groo01_01_0005.php (accessed March 18, 2018).

[5] "Het zijn de beste Schilders die 't leven naast komen." G. A. Bredero, *Groot Lied-boeck* (Amsterdam, 1622), 18, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/bred001groo01_01/bred001groo01_01_0005.php (accessed March 18, 2018).

[6] Bredero based his play on a French text written by Louis Le Jars, which was first published in Paris in 1576. This text was frequently reprinted, and C. A. Zaalberg has determined that Bredero likely consulted the version published in Paris in 1600. For an excellent overview of Bredero's text and the ways in which it differs from the French edition, see Zaalberg's introduction in G. A. Bredero, *Lucelle*, ed. C. A. Zaalberg (Culemborg, 1972), 7–49, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/bred001luce01_01/index.php (accessed March 18, 2018).

[7] See Baruch D. Kirschenbaum, *The Religious and Historical Paintings of Jan Steen* (New York, 1977); and Ariane van Suchtelen, *Jan Steen's Histories* (The Hague, 2018).

[8] G. A. Bredero, *Lucelle*, ed. C. A. Zaalberg (Culemborg, 1972), 131–141, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/bred001luce01_01/index.php (accessed March 18, 2018).

[9] C. A. Zaalberg notes that Bredero's play was frequently performed throughout the 17th century in Amsterdam. G. A. Bredero, *Lucelle*, ed. C. A. Zaalberg (Culemborg, 1972), 46–47, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/bred001luce01_01/index.php (accessed March 18, 2018).

[10] See Marjorie E. Wieseman, *Vermeer and Music: The Art of Love and Leisure* (London, 2013), particularly 14–17.

[11] C. A. Zaalberg notes that one of the ways in which Bredero added humor to the original French text was to have the protagonists, particularly Lecker-Beetje, speak in dialects. Bredero, in fact, changed the French name for this character, Philippin, to Lecker-Beetje, a name with far more humorous connotations. G. A. Bredero, *Lucelle*, ed. C. A. Zaalberg (Culemborg, 1972), 23, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/bred001luce01_01/index.php (accessed March 18, 2018).

[12] See, for example, the gesture of the fool at the right in Steen's *Esther,*

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Ahasuerus, and Haman (c. 1668, Cleveland Museum of Art). For this painting, see Ariane van Suchtelen, *Jan Steen's Histories* (The Hague, 2018), 114–119, no. 9.

[13] For a discussion of this painting, see H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido Jansen (Washington, DC, 1996), 129–131, no. 10.

[14] See Ariane van Suchtelen, *Jan Steen's Histories* (The Hague, 2018), 154–157, no. 18.

[15] For a discussion of Steen's probable adaptation of drawn models, see Wouter Th. Kloek, "Jan Steen, His Repertoire of Motifs and History Painting," in Ariane van Suchtelen, *Jan Steen's Histories* (The Hague, 2018), 33–54.

[16] For a discussion of this painting in the Bute Collection at Mount Stuart, see Ariane van Suchtelen, *Jan Steen's Histories* (The Hague, 2018), 166–169, no. 21.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The primary support is a medium-weight plain-weave canvas that was wax-resin lined to plain-weave linen. The original canvas threads are visible in x-radiographs of the painting, and the canvas has approximately 12 threads per centimeter in the vertical direction and 14 threads per centimeter in the horizontal direction. [1] The original tacking margins have been cut away, but original cusping along the canvas edges suggest that the image dimensions were not significantly reduced when the tacking margins were removed. The lining canvas is secured along the tacking edges with tacks and on the reverse by heating the excess wax-resin-infused canvas to the stretcher.

There is a double ground that consists of an upper, warm tan layer over a thinner, red-toned layer. [2] Infrared reflectography did not reveal an underdrawing, but Steen blocked out the composition using a monochrome sketch in brownish-black paint, which serves as shadows in the final composition. [3] The paint medium is estimated to be oil, and paint was generally applied thinly and wet-into-wet. Typical of Steen's technique, he painted from the back of the composition toward the front, though there are a few instances in this composition where that does not hold true. [4]

The painting is in good condition. It is taut and, due to the lining, rigid and has some weave enhancement. The painting was last treated in 1954, and there are

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tiny scattered brushstrokes of retouching and old varnish residues. The largest areas of retouching are in the upper right, above Lucelle's proper right shoe, and in the proper left arm of each of the two main figures. There are also tiny scattered losses and areas of mild abrasion. The overall synthetic varnish is even and saturates the paint.

Dina Anchin, based on the examination report by Sarah Gowen and the technical entry by Melanie Gifford in *Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 2001).

December 9, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14 in. × 17 in.). The parameters were 25 kV, 5 mA, 40 seconds, and 40 in. distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

[2] The ground coloring on this painting is rare in Steen's oeuvre, but the canvas may have been prepared by a professional primer, which was suggested by Melanie Gifford in an examination report from September 2008. A commercially prepared canvas would also explain the lack of strong cusping along the right and left edges: a professional primer would have stretched and applied the ground to a wider canvas that was later cut into smaller sections. Also see Michael Palmer and E. Melanie Gifford, "Jan Steen's Painting Practice: *The Dancing Couple* in the Context of the Artist's Career," *Studies in the History of Art* 57 (1996/1997): 127–155.

[3] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.1–1.4 microns (J filter).

[4] Michael Palmer and E. Melanie Gifford, "Jan Steen's Painting Practice: *The Dancing Couple* in the Context of the Artist's Career," *Studies in the History of Art* 57 (1996/1997): 127–155.

PROVENANCE

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Richard M. Foster, Clewer Manor, near Windsor, Berkshire;[1] his son, Edmund Benson Foster [1830-1862], Clewer Manor; (Richard Foster's estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 3 June 1876, no. 1, as *The Guitar Lesson*); Samuel Addington [1806-1886], London; (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 22 May 1886, no. 107, as *The Guitar Lesson*); Davis.[2] Sir Julian Goldsmid [1838-1896]; (his sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 13 June 1896, no. 82, as *The Guitar Lesson*). (Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris). Baron Michael Ephrussi [1845-1914], Paris; purchased 1900 by William A. Clark [1839-1925], New York; bequest 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

[1] According to William Roberts (*Memorials of Christie's: A Record of Art Sales from 1766 to 1896, Volume 1*, London, 1897: 253), the Clewer Manor collection was "formed by three generations of the Foster family."

[2] Samuel Addington to Davis is recorded by C. Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII Jahrhunderts*, Esslingen am Neckar, 1907: 96, no. 415. A copy of the sale catalogue in the NGA Library is annotated with the name "Davis" (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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1959 Loan Exhibition. Masterpieces of the Corcoran Gallery of Art: A Benefit Exhibition in Honor of the Gallery's Centenary, Wildenstein, New York, January-March 1959, unnumbered catalogue, repro., as The Music Lesson.

1989 The William A. Clark Collection: Treasures of a Copper King, Yellowstone Art Center, Billings; Montana Historical Society, Helena, 1989, unnumbered checklist, as Music Lesson.

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2001 Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001-2002, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Jan Steen
Dutch, 1625/1626 - 1679

The Dancing Couple

1663

oil on canvas
overall: 102.5 x 142.5 cm (40 3/8 x 56 1/8 in.)
framed: 131.4 x 171.8 cm (51 3/4 x 67 5/8 in.)
Inscription: lower left, JS in ligature: JSteen. 1663
Widener Collection 1942.9.81

ENTRY

Arnold Houbraken begins his discussion of the life of Jan Steen with a general assessment of the relationship between an artist's personality and the nature of his creativity:

> One whose nature is inclined toward farce and jest is more qualified to represent something seriously than is a dry-spirited man able to paint some droll activity; . . . The one who is jocular in spirit uses all sorts of objects . . . that he represents and models naturally, sadness as well as joy, calmness as well as wrath, in a word, all bodily movements and expressions that result from man's many emotions and passions. [1]

Although Houbraken's musings about the relationship between an artist's character and his works of art may have no factual basis, they do offer an appealing explanation for Steen's empathy for the remarkably wide range of

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character types that populate his paintings. Whether or not, as Houbraken would like us to believe, Steen's "paintings are as his manner of living, and his manner of living is as his paintings," [2] the artist must have felt comfortable among the young and the old as well as the wise and the foolish. In paintings such as *The Dancing Couple,* he could depict with equal ease the tender warmth of a mother's love and the raucous laughter of an inebriated country peasant. His empathy for people is evident not only through the conviction with which he represented such figures and their emotions but also in the way he included himself as a participant in the scene. For who should be sitting at the banquet table in the midst of this outdoor celebration but Steen, grinning widely as he reaches over to chuck a woman's chin as she drinks from her wine glass.

To judge from the span of ages and social classes enjoying the festivities in *The Dancing Couple,* Steen must have intended the viewer to understand that the celebration was taking place under a vine-covered arbor outside a country inn. The crowds surrounding the tents visible in the background suggest that a local village fair, or *kermis*, occasioned this party. One visitor to the *kermis*, the young girl with a white cap seen talking over the porch railing, holds a pinwheel, a child's toy of the type sold at booths associated with such fairs. Another trinket that may well have been sold at the *kermis* is the delightful hammer toy proudly held by the young child on her mother's lap. [3]

The *kermis*, however, was not only for children. People of all ages and social classes enjoyed the festivities, and they traveled from miles around to do so. Country and city folk alike marveled at the quacks who showed their wares, watched intently as traveling theatrical groups performed, and, most of all, ate, drank, and made merry. Proscriptions for proper behavior were temporarily put aside. In *The Dancing Couple,* the celebrants gather, intent upon enjoying sensual pleasures to their fullest, to eat, drink, smoke, and flirt with abandon. Indeed, all five senses are represented in the scene as well as all ages of man. To the enormous delight of onlookers, a young country ruffian has even led a comely and seemingly shy city lass to dance. Lasciviously bedecked in a beret decorated with cock feathers, he robustly kicks his feet in time with the music while she demurely ventures forth, uncertain, but not unwilling to join in the fun.

Steen was a marvelous narrative artist, in large part because of the way he could exaggerate expressions, attitudes, and even his figures' costumes to help tell his story. X-radiography [fig. 1] and Infrared Reflectography [fig. 2] indicate that after Steen had laid in his initial monochromatic sketch, he made a number of

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compositional changes to accentuate the contrast between the two main protagonists. [4] Initially, the male dancer was bareheaded. He held a rather ordinary hat, with no feathers, and wore a smaller collar. His pose, in reverse, approached that of the comparable figure in a smaller-scale depiction of the scene on panel, which may well have been Steen's first essay with this composition [fig. 3]. [5] By placing the beret with its cock feathers on the man's head and by enlarging the collar to the point where it becomes inappropriate for the rest of his costume, Steen emphasized that this villager was playing the role of a dandy in search of sensual pleasure.

A comparable change occurred with the laughing peasant standing outside the porch. Steen initially depicted him thrusting aloft a tall beer glass instead of holding the caged fowl on his head. [6] The transformation of the peasant from a celebrant to a passerby who has stopped to observe the scene may well have been made to emphasize the unusual character of this pair of dancers. By making the peasant into a poultry seller, however, Steen changed not only the nature of the man's participation but also his thematic impact. The Dutch verb *vogelen* means both "to bird" and "to have sexual intercourse," and a number of Dutch paintings of poultry sellers play upon the pun. [7] The poultry seller, thus, was almost certainly intended to highlight the sexual undertone of the dance taking place directly before him.

No matter how humorous or empathetic Steen's narratives might be, they were rarely conceived without some comment on the foibles of human behavior. In so doing he drew upon his wide-ranging familiarity with Dutch proverbs, as well as literary and emblematic traditions. A Dutch viewer, for example, would have recognized in the centrally placed empty barrel a reference to a well-known folk saying adapted as an emblem in Roemer Visscher's *Zinne-poppen:* "Een vol vat en bomt niet" (A full barrel doesn't resound) [fig. 4]. Visscher's emblem implied that ignorant people fill the air with words, but wise, sensible people deport themselves in a quiet, capable manner. [8] While this reference can be seen as a general commentary on the foolishness of the dancing couple performing just behind the barrel, Steen also emphasized the transient character of the illicit pleasures being sought and enjoyed by including other motifs that carried certain symbolic connotations. The most obvious of these are the broken eggshells and cut flowers that have fallen onto the floor, motifs that have traditional *vanitas* associations in Dutch art. The same theme is more subtly indicated with the boy blowing bubbles, a visual reference to *homo bulla,* the idea that man's life is as a bubble. [9] Although it looks wondrous and glistening at its best, it can disappear in an instant.

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[10]

With the tenuous relationship of the ill-matched dancing couple Steen certainly sought to provide a warning about the transience of sensual pleasures. As a contrast he included other couples whose attachments are built upon firmer foundations. Seated around the table are three pairings in which the love between the figures can be construed only in a positive sense: the mother who playfully holds her child on her lap, the old couple who have grown together over the years, and the young adults, whose tender love is evident in the way the man reaches over to touch his partner. [11] To emphasize the disparity between the dancing couple and these groups Steen has once again included objects from daily life that have associations with images from emblem books. Above the old couple, for example, hangs a cage with two birds, which resembles an emblematic image in P. C. Hooft's *Emblemata Amatoria,* first published in Amsterdam in 1611. The emblem "Voor vryheyt vaylicheyt" (Instead of freedom, safety) [fig. 5] stresses that love is strengthened when limits are placed upon it, and that with freedom comes danger. [12] The contrasts in meaning between this cage with birds and the cage held by the poultry seller could not be more extreme.

Finally, the toy that is held so prominently by the young child in her mother's lap may well have been chosen by Steen as a means for commenting on the importance of harmony in human relationships. [13] As the slats of this toy are moved to and fro, two men hammer in unison at a stake between them. In character the toy relates to an emblem in Jacob Cats' *Spiegel van den Ouden ende Nieuwen Tijdt* (The Hague, 1632), in which a number of men work in timed unison as they hammer on an anvil [fig. 6]. [14] Cats' commentary broadens the theme of teamwork by emphasizing that to live together in harmony each person must contribute his or her own special quality. In particular he notes that when the husband honors his wife and the wife her spouse, the household lives in peace. [15]

The large scale of this work is characteristic of Steen's paintings during the years that he lived in Haarlem. While the refined technique in which he painted during the mid-to-late 1650s, when he was active in Leiden and Warmond, is still evident in the sheen of the fabrics worn by the women, the brushwork here is quite free and expressive. It would appear that the artistic climate in Haarlem, where both Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666) and Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610 - 1685) were active, encouraged such loosening in his painterly technique. It may also be that the traditionally strong bonds between Haarlem artists and Flemish traditions

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reinforced Steen's predilection to look back to Flemish prototypes for his composition.

Scenes devoted to dancing at a *kermis* occur in works by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Flemish, c. 1525/1530 - 1569), and were frequently represented by other artists working in the Bruegel tradition. [16] The closest in concept are the *kermis* paintings by David Teniers the Younger (Flemish, 1610 - 1690) [fig. 7], in which festive peasants of all ages come together to enjoy the celebrations. Teniers' paintings were well known to the Dutch, and one of his compositions may have inspired Steen to produce this memorable work. The figure of the man seated at a table near the dancers who reaches over to chuck a woman's chin in *The Dancing Couple* is a motif that Teniers used often. Teniers also delighted in dressing his rakish peasants in berets decorated with cock feathers. Should Steen have looked at a painting by Teniers for inspiration, he transformed his Flemish prototype into a specifically Dutch idiom, in which visual delight in the sensuality of the image is tempered by a provocative intellectual and moralizing framework. To ensure that the human issues involved would be brought home, Steen confined his narrative to the foreground, where the pictorial world seems almost to mingle with the real, and the moral issues confronting the players become ones the viewer must consider as well. [17]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

August 30, 2017

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

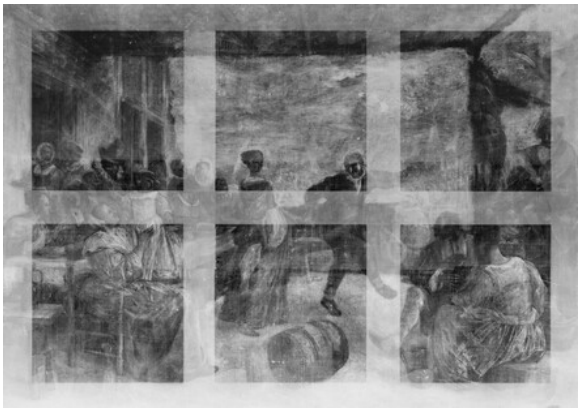
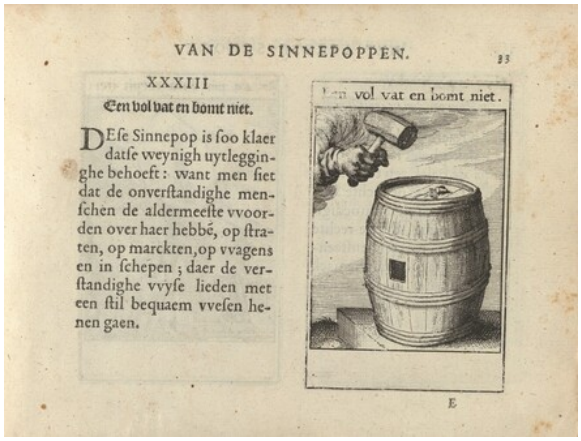


fig. 1 X-radiograph composite, Jan Steen, *The Dancing Couple*, 1663, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.81

fig. 2 Infrared reflectogram, Jan Steen, *Dancing Couple*, 1663, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.81

fig. 3 Jan Steen, *A Terrace with a Couple Dancing to a Pipe and Fiddle, Peasants Eating and Merrymaking Behind*, c. 1663, private collection (Sotheby's, London, 4 July 2007, lot 36) . Photo courtesy of Sotheby's Picture Library


VAN DE SINNEPOPPEN. 33

XXXIII

Een vol vat en bomt niet.

DEse Sinnepop is soo klaer datse weynigh uytleggin-ghe behoeft: want men siet dat de onverstandighe men-schen de aldermeeste vvoor-den over haer hebbé, op stra-ten, op marckten, op vvagens en in schepen; daer de ver-stándighe vvyse lieden met een stil bequaem vvesen he-nen gaen.

E

fig. 4 Roemer Visscher, "Een vol vat en bomt niet," emblem from *Zinne-poppen*, Amsterdam, 1614

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fig. 5 P. C. Hooft, "Voor vryheyt vaylicheyt," emblem from *Emblemata Amatoria*, Amsterdam, 1611

fig. 6 Jacob Cats, *Spiegel van den Ouden ende Nieuwen Tijdt*, The Hague, 1611

fig. 7 David Teniers the Younger, *The Village Feast*, 1651, oil on copper, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Tromp, Rotterdam

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NOTES

[1] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 3:12–13: “Een, welks natuur geneigt is tot klugt, en boertery, is bekwamer om iets ernstig te verbeelden, dan een droefgeestige om potsige bedryven door ‘t penceel te malen; . . . die boertig van geest is, bedient zig van allerhande voorwerpen . . . dat men alles even natuurlyk, zoo wei droefheid als vreugt, bedaarthheid als toorn, met een woort, alle Lichaams bewegingen, en wezenstrekken, die uit de menigerhande gemoedsdriften ontspruiten, weet te verbeelden, en na te bootsen.”

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 3:13: “zyn schilderyen zyn als zyn levenswyze, en zyn levenswyze als zyne schilderyen.”

[3] According to Nynke Spahr van der Hoek from the Speelgoed- en Blikmuseum, Deventer (letter of July 27, 1989, in NGA curatorial files), this toy is probably German in origin. It appears to be the oldest representation of this type known. Such toys were sold only by peddlers or at fairs because toy shops did not exist in this era.

[4] Other compositional changes in this painting are discussed in the Technical Summary. For a careful examination of Steen’s painting technique in this work, with particular emphasis on the sequence of paint layers, see Michael Palmer and E. Melanie Gifford, “Jan Steen’s Painting Practice: *The Dancing Couple* in the Context of the Artist’s Career,” *Studies in the History of Art* 57 (1997): 127–155

[5] This smaller version was sold at auction in 2007 as *A Terrace with a Couple Dancing to a Pipe and Fiddle, Peasants Eating, and Merrymaking Behind* (Sotheby’s, London, July 4, 2007, lot 36). This painting (oil on panel, 55.7 x 77.2 cm) is indistinctly signed "JSteen." Since it depicts, in reverse, the initial composition of *The Dancing Couple*, it must be by the artist’s hand and predate the National Gallery of Art’s version. It is the only known instance in which Steen created a reversed image of one of his works, and the only time he created an enlarged second version. Nothing is known about the circumstances surrounding the execution of either work, and no convincing explanation for the unique relationship between these two paintings in Steen’s oeuvre has been proposed.

[6] The arm and beer glass are visible to the naked eye on the surface of the painting.

[7] Eddy de Jongh, “Erotica in vogelperspectief: De dubbelzinnigheid van een reeks 17de-eeuwse genrevoorstellingen,” *Simiolus* 3 (1968–1969): 22–74.

[8] Roemer Visscher, *Sinnepoppen* (Amsterdam, 1614). The full text of the

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emblem is as follows: “Dese Sinnepop is soo klaer datse weynigh uytlegginghe behoeft: want men siet dat de onverstandighe menschen de aldermeeste woorden over haer hebben, op straten, op marckten, op wagens en in schepen; daer de verstandighe wyse lieden met een stil bequaem wesen henen gaen.”

[9] Hendrick Goltzius (after?), *Quis Evadet* (The Allegory of Transitoriness), 1594, engraving; see Walter L. Strauss, ed., *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 1 (New York, 1978), 292, no. 10 (97).

[10] For a discussion of this theme in Dutch art and literature see Eddy de Jongh et al., *Tot Lering en Vermaak: betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstellingen uit de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1976), 45–47.

[11] This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that the model for the man is Steen, and the woman has been identified as his wife. The identification was first made by Ben Broos, in Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague, 1990), 422, on the basis of a comparison with an image of a woman who has been tentatively identified as Steen’s wife, Grietje van Goyen, in a painting in the Mauritshuis, *As the Old Sing, So Pipe the Young*.

[12] P. C. Hooft, *Emblemata Amatoria* (Amsterdam, 1611), 66, emblem 28: “Voor vryheyt vaylicheyt. In vancknis vordert my de Min; en was ick vry/Het ongheluck had onghelijck meer machts op my.” See also the *Emblemata Amatoria* online text at http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/hoof001embl01_01/hoof001embl01_01_0033.php, which interprets the emblem as follows: “Door de Min gevangen ben ik tegen dood beschut” (Captured by Love, I am safe from death, like a bird kept in its cage).

[13] For an excellent article that examines the ways in which children’s games could provide commentaries on adult life see Sandra Hindman, “Pieter Bruegel’s *Children’s Games*, Folly and Chance,” *Art Bulletin* 63 (1981): 447–475.

[14] I would like to thank E. L. Widmann for calling my attention to this relationship in her seminar paper at the University of Maryland in 1990, “Jan Steen and the Philosophy of Laughter: Rederijkers and the Theatre of Genre.”

[15] Jacob Cats, *Spiegel van den Ouden ende Nieuwen Tijdt* (The Hague, 1632), 14–15: “Die moeten yder mensch het sijne leeren geven, De man die vier’ het wijf, het wijf haer echten man, Soo isset dat het huys in vrede blijven kan.”

[16] Lyckle de Vries, “Jan Steen, ‘de kluchtschilder,’” Ph.D. diss. (Rijksuniversiteit, 1977), 130, note 91, suggests that the composition is based on a composition by Pieter Brueghel the Younger (1564/1565–1637/1638) (see G. Marlier

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[posthumous, revised and annotated by Jacqueline Folie], *Pierre Breughel le Jeune* [Brussels, 1969], 440, 442, nos. 1, 2, and 3). Broos, in Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague, 1990), 423, on the other hand, suggests a painting by Pieter Aertsen (1507/1508–1575).

[17] As noted in *Jan Steen* (The Hague, 1958), no. 18, S. J. Gudlaugsson associated the subject of the painting with a scene from a play by Dirk Buysero, *De bruilof van Kloris en Roosje* (*The Wedding of Kloris and Roosje*). The play was not written until 1688, however, so this theory cannot be supported.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting is executed on a medium-weight, plain-weave canvas with a thread count of nine threads per centimeter in the horizontal direction and eleven threads per centimeter in the vertical direction. The tacking margins were trimmed on all four sides, and while cusping is visible on the top and bottom edges, only slight cusping is evident on the right edge and even less on the left edge. This suggests that the image area may have been slightly trimmed on the sides.

The canvas was prepared with a double ground consisting of an off-white, semitranslucent calcium-carbonate-based lower layer and a more opaque, warm gray upper layer containing lead white, calcium carbonate, quartz, charcoal, bone black, and earth pigments. A warm pink imprimatura was applied to the sky region and a light, cream-colored paint was used to block out significant areas in the upper right quadrant. Both of these layers were applied directly on top of the ground layer. A monochromatic sketch, loosely applied in brown-black to red-brown paint, was then used to establish the composition. The sketch is visible along the contours of figures, objects, the foreground, and the background, and contributes to the finished image by defining forms.

The paint was applied in thin opaque layers of rich-paste blended wet-in-wet with lively brushwork. The sky was painted in first, with reserves left for the dancing couple, barrel, trellis, musicians, and seated foreground figures. The major figures were completed next; the man holding the basket on his head was sketched in over the pink underpaint, as were the dancing couple, but the sketch of this man was then covered with blue sky paint, suggesting an early change of composition. Next, the subsidiary figures were painted in a back-to-front sequence, with the poultry vendor and trio behind the fence executed over the underpaint layer. The

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final sequence of painting included background and foreground details. As Steen worked out this composition, he frequently returned to complete elements, as well as to revise details and contours.

Steen used a palette typical of Dutch seventeenth-century artists, which was identified through analysis of cross-sections and dispersed samples**[1]**. Three blue pigments were used extensively throughout the composition and include smalt, azurite, and indigo. The pinkish quality of the imprimatura is due to both a red iron oxide pigment and red lake. Vermilion was identified in the child's orange dress. The yellow pigments identified include lead-tin yellow, yellow iron oxide, and yellow lake. While the color green is prominent throughout the composition, no green pigment was identified; the green paints are complex mixtures of the different blue and yellow pigments listed above.

A number of pentimenti are visible in the x-radiograph and infrared reflectogram **[2]**. In the preliminary sketch the dancing man originally wore a smaller collar and was portrayed hatless, with an upraised proper left arm. Next he was painted with his arm lowered but still holding the hat. Finally the hat in his hand was painted out and replaced by a feathered hat on his head. The opened door was added over the sky, and changes were made in the hat of the man slouched against it. The church steeple was taller and the poultry vendor held a tall glass in his raised left hand.

[1] For a more detailed explanation of Steen's palette and painting technique for *The Dancing Couple*, see Michael R. Palmer and E. Melanie Gifford, "Jan Steen's Painting Practice: *The Dancing Couple* in the Context of the Artist's Career," in *Monograph Series II: Conservation Research 1996/1997*, National Gallery of Art, Studies in the History of Art, vol. 57 (Washington, 1997), 126–155.

[2] X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14" × 17"). The parameters were 25 kV, 5 mA, 15 seconds, and 102 inches distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera. Two separate images were captured, one filtered to 1.1–1.4 microns (J filter) and the other filtered to 1.5–1.8 microns (H filter. The final image was mathematically calculated using both the J and H filtered images.

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PROVENANCE

Possibly (sale, The Hague, 24 April 1737, no. 7). probably Graf van Hogendorp; probably (his sale, The Hague, 27 July 1751, no. 6).[1] Pieter Bisschop [c. 1690-1758] and Jan Bisschop [1680-1771], Rotterdam, by 1752; purchased 1771 with the Bisschop collection by Adrian Hope [1709-1781] and his nephew, John Hope [1737-1784], Amsterdam; by inheritance after Adrian's death to John, Amsterdam and The Hague; by inheritance to his sons, Thomas Hope [1769-1831], Adrian Elias Hope [1772-1834], and Henry Philip Hope [1774-1839], Bosbeek House, near Heemstede, and, as of 1794, London, where the collection was in possession of John's cousin, Henry Hope [c. 1739-1811], London; by inheritance 1811 solely to Henry Philip, Amsterdam and London, but in possession of his brother, Thomas, London; by inheritance 1839 to Thomas' son, Henry Thomas Hope [1808-1862], London, and Deepdene, near Dorking, Surrey; by inheritance to his wife, Adèle Bichat Hope [d. 1884], London and Deepdene; by inheritance to her grandson, Henry Francis Hope

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Pelham-Clinton-Hope, 8th duke of Newcastle-under-Lyme [1866-1941], London; (P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. and Charles J. Wertheimer, London), 1898-1901; (Thos. Agnew & Sons, Ltd., London); sold 1901 to Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] Mariët Westermann kindly brought the 1751 sale to the attention of Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. For a discussion of the provenance of this painting, including the 1737 sale, see Ben Broos, *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, exh. cat., Mauritshuis, The Hague; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Zwolle and The Hague, 1990: 419-423.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1818 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1818, no. 138, as Merrymaking.

1849 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1849, no. 84, as A Merrymaking.

1866 Possibly British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, London, 1866, no. 33, as A Dinner Party.

1881 Exhibition of of Works by the Old Masters, and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1881, no. 124, as A Village Fête.

1891 The Hope Collection of Pictures of the Dutch and Flemish Schools, The South Kensington Museum, London, 1891-1898, no. 25.

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 126.

1925 Loan Exhibition of Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1925, no. 26.

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1990 Great Dutch Paintings from America, Mauritshuis, The Hague; The Fine Arts Musuems of San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, 1990-1991, no. 59, color repro., as Dancing Couple at an Inn.

1996 Jan Steen: Painter and Storyteller, National Gallery of Washington, D.C.; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1996-1997, no. 20, repro.

2003 Loan for display with permanent collection, The National Gallery, London, 2003-2004.

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1818 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom. *Catalogue of pictures of the Italian, Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, and French schools*. Exh. cat. British Institution. London, 1818: no. 138.

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1829 Smith, John. *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*. 9 vols. London, 1829-1842: 4(1833):50, no. 150.

1838 Waagen, Gustav Friedrich. *Works of Art and Artists in England*. 3 vols. Translated by H. E. Lloyd. London, 1838: 2:334.

1849 British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom. *A catalogue of the works of British artists placed in the gallery of the British institution*. Exh. cat. British Institution, London, 1849: no. 84.

1854 Waagen, Gustav Friedrich. *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collections of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, Illuminated Mss.*. 3 vols. Translated by Elizabeth Rigby Eastlake. London,

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Vallée, Louis

Dutch, died 1653

BIOGRAPHY

The first and only document that refers specifically to Louis Vallée is the register that records his burial in Amsterdam's Oude Kerk on May 28, 1653. According to the register, he had been living in the Warmoesstraat in Amsterdam.[1] Beyond this, nothing is known of Vallée's biographical details. He seems to have worked mainly in the province of Holland. Between 1646 and 1652, when he signed and dated a portrait of the Druyvesteyn children of Haarlem (private collection, the Netherlands),[2] Jan Sysmus, an Amsterdam physician, mentions another group portrait that Vallée painted, comparing its style to works by Govaert Flinck (Dutch, 1615 - 1660). [3]

Although nothing is known about Vallée's training, his rare works, most of which are portraits or history paintings, suggest the influence of the Amsterdam painter Jacob Backer (1608–1651), and it is possible that he studied with this older master.[4] Vallée's family origins are most likely French, as was the case with architect Simon de la Vallée (c. 1590–1642), who emigrated from Paris to The Hague, where he worked for Prince Frederik Hendrik from 1633 to 1637. It is unclear whether Louis Vallée was related to Simon de la Vallée.

[1] Amsterdam Municipal Archives, inv. no. 1046, fol. 129v. Cited in Maarten Wurfbain, *M. L. Wurfbain Fine Art, B.V.*, IV (Oegstgeest, 1992), 187.

[2] Maarten Wurfbain, *M. L. Wurfbain Fine Art, B.V.*, IV (Oegstgeest, 1992), 187.

[3] Abraham Bredius, "Het Schilderregister van Jan Sysmus, Stads-Doctor van Amsterdam," *Oud-Holland* 8 (1890): 297.

[4] His works are also stylistically similar to other Amsterdam history painters, such as Bartholomeus van der Helst (c. 1613–1670) and Abraham van den Tempel (c.

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1622/1623–1672).

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
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Louis Vallée
Dutch, died 1653

Silvio with the Wounded Dorinda

165(1)?

oil on canvas
overall: 105.1 x 175.2 cm (41 3/8 x 69 in.)
Inscription: lower right to left of arrow sheaf: Loiy[s] Vallee. / f [1]65[1?]
Gift of Patricia Bauman and the Honorable John Landrum Bryant 2000.114.1

ENTRY

Louis Vallée drew this subject from Giovanni Battista Guarini's late sixteenth-century tragicomedy *Il Pastor Fido*, a pastoral play that glorified arcadian life and had far-ranging effects in art and literature in France, Flanders, and the Netherlands. [1] Its intricate plot focuses on the love between the shepherd Mirtillo and the nymph Amarillis, who, by paternal arrangement, was betrothed to Silvio. The scene Vallée has depicted, however, is the culmination of the subplot, which centers on the nymph Dorinda's love for Silvio, Amarillis' intended. In the play, Silvio shows nothing but disdain for Dorinda and cares only for the hunt. Dorinda, not showing the best judgment, decides to disguise herself with a wolf skin and follow her beloved on the hunt. Silvio, mistaking Dorinda for an animal, inadvertently shoots and wounds her with an arrow. Vallée depicts the moment when Dorinda, having emerged from the bushes where she had been hiding, has fallen into the arms of the aged Linco, who always cared for her as a second father. In Guarini's telling, the distraught Silvio, suddenly realizing he is in love with Dorinda, gives her the arrow so that she can exact revenge by taking his life in return. Happily, as befitting a tragicomedy, Dorinda's wound is only superficial and

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she spares her beloved Silvio. To the great joy of the assembled company, the couple marries that very day.

Vallée emphasizes the emotional drama unfolding between Silvio and the wounded Dorinda, rather than the play's broader narrative sweep, by filling the picture plane of this large canvas with the three protagonists. Dorinda, dressed in a classicizing manner with a red satin skirt, white blouse, and strand of pearls in her hair, reclines sensuously in the arms of Linco, her pale skin amply exposed to reveal the bloody wound in her breast. The wolf skin that served as her ill-fated disguise is beneath and behind her, while Silvio's gold and black quiver of arrows and polished hunting horn lie abandoned next to her recumbent body. With a loving gaze, Silvio leans forward and offers the fateful arrow, its tip still wet with her blood, to Dorinda so that she can exact revenge by plunging it into Silvio's chest. In Guarini's text, Silvio says:

Behold with bended knees I show thee rev'rence.
O grant me pardon, and deny me life!
Behold my arrows, and my bow I give;
Ah do not wound, but spare these eyes, these hands,
Which were the guilty ministers because
By an unguilty will they were directed.
Here strike my breast, that enemy to love,
Foe to all tenderness, this cruel heart
Which was so harsh to thee. My breast is open. [2]

Dorinda, whose wound is superficial, wisely rejects Silvio's offer, all the while giving him a sidelong glance as though gauging the sincerity of his intentions. In its emotional and pictorial impact, Vallée's interpretation of the scene is in keeping with the character of the tragicomedy. As Guarini defined it, tragicomedy is "the mingling of tragic and comic pleasure, which does not allow hearers to fall into excessive tragic melancholy or comic relaxation." [3]

The most important visual prototype for Vallée was a painting of the same subject that Herman Saftleven (Dutch, 1609 - 1685) executed in 1635 for the influential Il Pastor Fido cycle at the palace at Honselaarsdijk, the hunting lodge of Prince Frederik Hendrik and his wife, Amalia van Solms [fig. 1]. Despite the differences in the scale of the protagonists and in their relationship to the surrounding landscape, the disposition of Vallée's figures is remarkably similar to those in Saftleven's painting, although in reverse. The compositional connections between these works

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are so strong that one wonders if Vallée had an opportunity to see Saftleven's painting in Amalia's private quarters at Honselaarsdijk. [4]

Silvio with the Wounded Dorinda is one of only a handful of paintings attributed to Vallée, most of which are portraits. [5] The painting's large scale, its idealized figures, and the sensual subject matter are characteristic of mid-seventeenth-century Dutch classicism, particularly as it developed in Leiden, Haarlem, and Amsterdam. [6] The few paintings known by the artist, which date between 1646 and 1653, are stylistically similar to works by Jacob van Loo (1614–1670), Bartholomeus van der Helst (c. 1613–1670), and Abraham van den Tempel (1622/1623–1672). Unfortunately, nothing is known about Vallée's training or where he primarily worked, although documents indicate that he painted for clients in Leiden, Haarlem, and Amsterdam. [7] He lived in the Warmoesstraat in Amsterdam at the time of his death and was buried in that city, but he does not seem to have owned property there.

The Amsterdam painter Jacob Backer (1608–1651) apparently influenced Vallée, as he did Van den Tempel, and it is possible that Vallée studied with this older master. Backer's mature history paintings, such as his *Cimon and Iphigenia*, c. 1640 [fig. 2], were greatly admired and avidly collected by Amsterdam patricians. The close similarities in the sensual poses of Vallée's Dorinda and Backer's Iphigenia indicate that Vallée knew this work. [8] Similarities also exist in the rhythms of folds and in the highlights modeling the drapery. Not surprisingly, *Silvio with the Wounded Dorinda* was formerly attributed to Backer. [9] Wouter Kloek, who was able to interpret the badly abraded signature below the arrow sheaf and connect it to known signatures by the artist, has correctly and definitively attributed this painting to Vallée. [10]

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Herman Saftleven, *Silvio and Dorinda*, 1635, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, NY

fig. 2 Jacob Backer, *Cimon and Iphigenia*, c. 1640, oil on canvas, Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig

NOTES

[1] W. W. Greg, *Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama* (London, 1906), 196–200. See also Alison McNeil Kettering, *The Dutch Arcadia: Pastoral Art and Its Audience in the Golden Age* (Totowa, NJ, 1983), 107–113; Peter van der Ploeg and Carola Vermeeren, *Princely Patrons: The Collection of Frederick Henry of Orange and Amalia of Solms in The Hague* (The Hague, 1997), 216–225.

[2] *The Faithful Shepherd: A Translation of Guarini's "Il Pastor Fido,"* trans. Thomas Sheridan, ed. Robert Hogan and Edward A. Nickerson (Newark, DE, 1989), 143.

[3] As quoted in the introduction to *The Faithful Shepherd: A Translation of Guarini's "Il Pastor Fido,"* trans. Thomas Sheridan, ed. Robert Hogan and Edward A. Nickerson (Newark, DE, 1989).

[4] It raises the question, for example, as to whether Louis Vallée was related to Simon de la Vallée, a French architect who worked for Prince Frederik Hendrik between 1633 and 1637, a connection that could have provided the painter with access to the palace of Honselaarsdijk. Maarten Wurfbain, in a letter to Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., May 8, 2003, suggested that, like

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Saftleven's *Il Pastor Fido* cycle, Vallée's painting may have been intended for an architectural setting. Its dimensions are roughly those of the Golden Section, a ratio often used for paintings in architectural settings.

[5] See Maarten Wurfbain, *M. L. Wurfbain Fine Art B.V., IV* (Oegstgeest, 1992), 185. He attributes *Portrait of a Child* to Louis Vallée.

[6] For Dutch classicism of this period see Albert Blankert, *Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth-Century Painting* (Rotterdam, 1999).

[7] See Maarten Wurfbain, *M. L. Wurfbain Fine Art B.V., IV* (Oegstgeest, 1992), 186–187.

[8] See Peter van den Brink, "De schilder en Tekenaar Jacob Adriaensz. Backer," in Peter van den Brink and Jaap van der Veen, *Jacob Backer (1608/9–1651)* (Zwolle, 2008), 54–55. In this same exhibition catalog is a drawing of a young man holding an arrow (no. 43) from the Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt (inv. no. 15227) that depicts, in reverse, the young man who posed for Silvio in Vallée's painting. The similarities in pose and facial features raise the question as to whether this drawing is by Vallée rather than by Backer, to whom it has been traditionally attributed.

[9] This painting was offered to the National Gallery of Art as a work by Jacob Backer. It had previously been attributed to Jacob van Loo; see Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 6 vols. (Landau, 1983), 6:3731, 3983, no. 2373**.**

[10] When Wouter Kloek examined the painting in 1996 the signature had been interpreted as reading "Loiy.. V..../f. [1]65[1?]." Kloek connected these letters with Vallée's signature illustrated in "Louis Vallée: The Man with Only Three Paintings to His Credit," in Clifford Duits, ed., *Duits Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (1964): 16.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting is on a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, which has been lined. The tacking margins are extant, but the painting has been reduced in size along the left edge, where approximately 1.5 cm of the pictorial surface has been folded over to serve as part of the tacking edge. The support is covered by a thin red ground layer; the paint is fluid and layered with extensive glazes. The artist used the ground as a base tonality in the flesh colors, sky, and landscape. The X-radiographs show a change in Dorinda's proper right foot, and examination with infrared reflectography at 1.5 – 2.0 microns[1] indicates that the artist originally painted Silvio's proper left ring finger outstretched and touching the arrow.

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The painting is in fairly good condition, though there is a pattern of wrinkles through the paint probably caused by a past lining procedure. The X-radiographs show a tear through the left side of Dorinda's chest, as well as one through the shepherd's head. In addition to paint losses associated with the tears, small losses exist in the upper right corner, scattered in the drapery just below Silvio's shoulder, in his proper right hand, and along the edges of the composition. Examination with ultraviolet light reveals a fair amount of inpainting covering abrasion in the sky; the shepherd's head; Dorinda's face, shoulder, chest, and drapery; and Silvio's face and drapery. The signature and date are abraded.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Kodak 310-21X PtSi camera.

PROVENANCE

(Alex Wengraf, London), by 1983;[1] purchased 1990 by by Patricia Bauman and the Honorable John Landrum Bryant, Washington, D.C.; gift 2000 to NGA.

[1] The painting was with Wengraf when it was published in Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrand-Schüler*, 6 vols., Landau,1983: 6:3731, no. 2373, image 3983, as by Jacob van Loo.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

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W. Bond after Kneller, *Willem van de Velde the Elder*, engraving, in Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England* (London, 1827), vol. 3, opposite p. 105, top, National Gallery of Art Library, Gift of Joseph E. Widener

Velde, Willem van de, the Elder

Also known as
Velde, Willem van de, I
Dutch, 1611 - 1693

BIOGRAPHY

The marine draughtsman Willem van de Velde the Elder was born in Leiden in 1611, the son of the master of a transport vessel, Willem Willemsz van de Velde. As a boy, Willem may have accompanied his father on sea expeditions, which likely influenced his career as a marine artist.[1] Van de Velde married Judith van Leeuwen in Leiden in 1631; the couple had three children: a daughter, Magdalena, and two sons who would become painters, Willem van de Velde the Younger (Dutch, 1633 - 1707) and Adriaen van de Velde (Dutch, 1636 - 1672). The family moved to Amsterdam in the mid-1630s. By 1646 they were living in the Nieuwe Waelseliant near the waterfront by the Montelbaanstoren, where they would remain until 1672.

Van de Velde's earliest drawings from the 1630s and 1640s depict individual ships and the Dutch fleet at rest. For most of his career, however, he portrayed contemporary naval battles, usually made under the employ of the Dutch admiralty. He frequently traveled with the Dutch navy to witness events firsthand, making drawings as points of reference that he would develop into meticulously detailed pen paintings, or penschilderijen, back in the studio. Although in the latter years of his life he also worked in oils, he predominantly kept to this specialized art form.[2] Indeed, documents refer to Van de Velde as a "draughtsman," "ship draughtsman,"

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and “artist and ship draughtsman,” but rarely as a “painter.”[3]

During the First Anglo-Dutch War of 1652–1654, Van de Velde sailed in the company of Admiral Marten Tromp, making a number of drawings of both the Dutch and the English fleets, most notably at the Battle of Scheveningen.[4] In 1658 Van de Velde accompanied the Dutch navy to Copenhagen when Admiral Jacob van Wassenaer defended the Danes’ right of way into the Baltic against Charles X’s Swedish forces; the drawings that Van de Velde produced of this battle earned him the praise of the Danish king. His representation of major naval battles continued with the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Dutch War in 1665. One of his largest commissions, from Admiral Michiel de Ruyter, was to record the Four Days’ Battle in 1666. The twenty-four drawings that survive represent moments from the battle itself as well as the individual vessels that gathered around De Ruyter’s flagship. De Ruyter employed the artist again during the Third Anglo-Dutch War, to record the Battle of Solebay on June 7, 1672.

During the winter of 1672, Van de Velde left Amsterdam for England, joining his son Willem the Younger, who had probably arrived several weeks earlier. The exact reasons for his departure remain uncertain, though the threat of the French invasion and the prospect of greater professional opportunities in England, as well as troubles at home, might have encouraged him to move.[5] In England, Charles II awarded him a salary of 100 per annum for “taking and making Draughts of Sea Fights,” while Willem the Younger was responsible for “putting the said Draughts into Colours.”[6] He was also to receive a promised annual stipend of 50 from James, the Duke of York.[7] Together with his son, Van de Velde established a studio in the Queen’s House in Greenwich, where they carried out royal commissions, including a series of designs for a suite of tapestries representing the Battle of Solebay.

Aside from his royal appointments, Van de Velde attracted other prominent patrons during his career, including Pieter Blaeu, the son of the great publisher Johannes Blaeu, and Cardinal Leopold de Medici, who once visited the artist’s studio. Van de Velde’s patrons must have admired his ability to capture the energy and complexity of the events he witnessed. His drawings, which were executed in chalk, pen, or wash, demonstrate his keen observation, which resulted in the precise historical records that were his final pen paintings. Although he was not the only artist to use this technique, he developed it to a degree that exceeded the rest of his contemporaries. Van de Velde died in England on December 13, 1693.

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[1] Michael Strang Robinson, V*an de Velde Drawings: A Catalogue of Drawings in the National Maritime Museum Made by the Elder and Younger Willem van de Velde* (Cambridge, UK, 1958), ix.

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 1:355.

[3] Pieter Haverkorn van Rijsewijk, "Willem van de Velde de Oude: Zijn leven en zijn werk," *Oud-Holland* 16 (1898): 67–68.

[4] The States General had invited him on this expedition to record the events; he was given unrestricted access to the entire fleet "in the interests of his drawing." Michael Strang Robinson, V*an de Velde Drawings: A Catalogue of Drawings in the National Maritime Museum Made by the Elder and Younger Willem van de Velde* (Cambridge, UK, 1958), 1–29.

[5]Van de Velde and his wife had agreed to legal separation in 1662, but seemed to have remained together because on September 12, 1672, he demanded that she produce evidence to support her claims of his marriage infidelity. Further doubts about their separation result from his return to Amsterdam in 1674 to bring his wife back to London.

[6] Michael Strang Robinson, *Van de Velde Drawings: A Catalogue of Drawings in the National Maritime Museum Made by the Elder and Younger Willem van de Velde* (Cambridge, UK, 1958), xx.

[7] Westby Percival-Prescott,*The Art of the Van de Veldes: Paintings and Drawings by the Great Dutch Marine Artists and Their English Followers* (London, 1982), 14.

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April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Willem van de Velde the Elder
Dutch, 1611 - 1693

Dutch Ships near the Coast

early 1650s

oil and ink on panel
overall: 59.4 x 83.5 cm (23 3/8 x 32 7/8 in.)
framed: 68.6 x 93.4 x 3.2 cm (27 x 36 3/4 x 1 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right: W.V.Velde
Gift of Lloyd M. Rives 1994.61.1

ENTRY

The Dutch Republic was a great seafaring nation, whose military might, economic prosperity, and international prestige were intimately entwined with its ability to sail the high seas and to control its own coastlines. [1] The Netherlands had a flourishing shipbuilding industry, which produced boats that could sail faster and maneuver more easily than those of its prime competitors, particularly Spain, England, and Sweden. Its boats were able to fish the shallow waters near the coast, carry cargo across the stormy Baltic and North Seas, and even travel thousands of miles to the Far East and the West Indies in search of exotic spices. The pride the Dutch people felt for their country's fleet is particularly evident in the enormous expense that was directed toward the decoration of vessels both large and small. Elaborate coats of arms that were sculpted, painted, and gilded on ships' sterns identified the vessels and their owners, whether warships belonging to the Dutch admiralty, merchant ships sailing under the auspices of the East India or West India Companies, or any number of other seafaring craft owned by cities or private investors.

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Willem van de Velde the Elder was a prolific and skilled draughtsman renowned for his numerous drawings in chalk, pencil, and wash of the Dutch fleet, from detailed renderings of individual vessels to panoramic views of ships at anchor or in the midst of battle at sea. The admiralty thought so highly of his work that he was asked repeatedly to sail with the fleet and record what he saw. Not only was Van de Velde able to grasp the complex movements of ships in the midst of battle, but he knew the size and structure of particular vessels, which he represented with unerring accuracy and clarity. His careful drawings and paintings of the activities and appearance of individual ships and sea battles have often enabled their identification by historians, making his oeuvre one of the most important visual sources of information on the Dutch navy from this period.

Aside from his renown and legacy as a draughtsman, Van de Velde was a pioneer in the art of pen painting (*penschilderij*), a technique of working with pen on prepared panel or prepared canvas. [2] In the early 1650s Van de Velde, along with a few other marine painters, in particular Heerman Witmont (c. 1605–after 1683) from Delft and Experiens Sillemans (c. 1611–1653) from Amsterdam, perfected this remarkable manner of painting in which the composition is created with the linear vocabulary of engraving in its controlled organization of lines and use of cross-hatching. [3] The illusionistic conceit of paintings that looked like prints appealed enormously to collectors of the day, and they were highly valued.

In *Dutch Ships near the Coast*, large ships flying Dutch flags rest at anchor in choppy waters near a broad, sandy beach, seeming to await the arrival of travelers coming from shore in wooden rowboats. Van de Velde probably made this work in the early 1650s, before he began to create more complex pen paintings that included larger and more elaborate ships. [4] In its scale and character this pen painting is extremely close to *A Sea-piece with a Dutch Merchant Ship and a Swedish Flute,* in the National Gallery of Scotland, which is signed and dated 1650 [fig. 1]. Aside from the appearance of dark-finned porpoises in the foreground of both scenes, the position of the large vessels near a sandy shore is quite similar. Van de Velde may have used the same preparatory drawing in rendering the fully manned rowboat in the lower left of both works, although the size of the boat in the two paintings is not identical.

These compositional and chronological similarities may indicate that the subjects of these paintings are also comparable. The Edinburgh painting, which depicts a boat with the Swedish flag in the Dutch port of West Terschelling, seems to feature trade between The Netherlands and Sweden. [5] In the mid-seventeenth century,

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merchant fleets sailing to Scandinavia from Terschelling were often escorted by warships because of the ongoing maritime conflicts between Sweden and Denmark. Unfortunately, even though a number of the ships' coats of arms in the National Gallery of Art painting are visible on their sterns, neither the ships nor the port have been identified. The yacht at the left, for example, has a tree on her taffrail, while the large armed frigate in the center has two rampant lions holding the coat of arms of the House of Orange. In spite of these visual markers, it cannot be determined whether a specific place or event inspired Van de Velde to create this work. [6]

As is characteristic of his early pen paintings, Van de Velde has here prepared an oak panel with a white chalk Ground, which he allowed to dry thoroughly. [7] He covered the ground with two thin layers of lead white oil paint before creating his design. The technique by which he did so, however, is not entirely clear. Visually, it would appear that Van de Velde drew his composition with a reed pen, carefully weighing his pen lines from dark to light to enhance the sense of depth. Microscopic examination, however, has revealed that many of the lines are characteristic of printed lines rather than those drawn with a pen. [8] It may well be that Van de Velde, much like Experiens Sillemans in his pen paintings, utilized a counterproof technique when creating this image. [9] He probably first made pen drawings on paper and then, with the ink still slightly wet, pressed the designs against the panel. It is likely that he composed his scene by combining a number of drawings of individual ships. The visual evidence indicates that he then reinforced the design with careful pen strokes since many of the counterproof lines were pale and/or had gaps in them because of the irregularity of the panel surface. These pen lines are particularly evident in the foreground boats. [10]

The removal of varnish during the conservation process in 2011 provided a visual surprise that is still not completely understood. Without the layers of discolored varnish, microscopic examinations revealed that the white surface beneath each and every pen line was raised. Strikingly, even where the black lines of a ship's rigging or sail had been totally abraded away, their prior existence could be confirmed through such raised lines in the underlying layer [fig. 2]. This phenomenon allowed the conservator to redraw the missing parts of the design accurately by following these raised lines with a sharp pen. [11]

This unexpected discovery seemed to raise the possibility that the previously observed printed lines were not the result of a counterproof technique, but were made by placing an engraved plate directly on the panel and passing them

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through a printing press. Ad Stijnman, however, carefully reviewed the visual evidence, and has convincingly determined that the lines were not the result of an intaglio process. [12] Crucial to his conclusion was the fact that the lines were not made with an oil-based ink but with a lamp-black ink in a water-based binding medium. [13] He also noted that subtle brush marks were evident in the white under layer, and that these would have been flattened if the panel had been subjected to the pressure of a printing press. Stijnman suggested that raised lines may have been created by the ink causing the ground to swell, or, conversely, by the shrinking of uncovered ground layer.

The rationale for devising this extraordinary technique must have been economic. Van de Velde must have determined that the effort and expense involved in making a pen painting on panel would yield a substantial return on his investment. He almost certainly kept the technique a secret so that he would not diminish the viewer's amazement at his tour-de-force ability to draw in the detailed manner of a print. [14] Indeed, he was correct, and the wonder of these remarkable paintings still resonates today.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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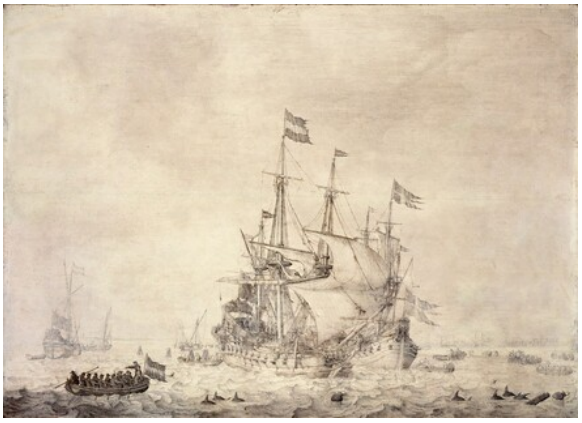

fig. 1 Willem van de Velde the Elder, *A Sea-piece with a Dutch Merchant Ship and a Swedish Flute*, 1650, pen and brush on panel, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, Presented by Hew Hamilton Dariymple 1906 (NG 933)

fig. 2 Detail photograph of raised lines, Willem van de Velde the Elder, *Dutch Ships near the Coast*, early 1650s, oil and ink on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Lloyd M. Rives, 1994.61.1

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Pien Brocades Zaalberg and Lelia Packer, former interns in the department of northern baroque painting, for their assistance in preparing this entry.

[2] These paintings are sometimes referred to as grisailles. See, for example, Michael Strang Robinson, *Van de Velde: A Catalogue of Paintings of the Elder and Younger Willem van de Velde*, vol. 1 (London, 1990).

[3] The first artist to employ the pen-painting technique was Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1558 - 1617) at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Goltzius' contemporary and friend, Karel van Mander, praises three of Goltzius' pen paintings of mythological subjects, only two of which are known today: *Sine Cerere et Libero friget Venus* (1599–1602, Philadelphia Museum of Art) and *Sine Cerere et Libero friget Venus* (c. 1606, Hermitage). Van Mander considered Goltzius' technique well suited for the master's grand intentions and talent. See Karel van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters . . .* , ed. Hessel Miedema (Doornspijk, 1994–1999). The actual initiator of this manner in the field of marine painting is not known, although Van de Velde the Elder was, by far, the finest and most renowned of the artists who made pen paintings.

[4] The angular, choppy character of the waves is remarkably similar to that

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seen in Van de Velde's prints from the 1630s and 1640s, which further suggests an early date for this painting. For more information on these prints, see P. Haverkorn van Rijsewijk, "Willem van de Velde de Oude: zijn leven en zijn werk," *Oud-Holland* 16 (1898): 70–75; see also Willem van de Velde the Elder's etching *The "Aemilia," Admiralty Ship of Holland*, c. 1639 (Museum Mr. Simon van Gijn, Dordrecht), in George S. Keyes, *Mirror of Empire: Dutch Marine Art of the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis, 1990), 318–319, no. 121. By the mid-1650s Van de Velde was creating works such as *The Dutch Ship "Oosterwijk" under Sail near the Shore in Two Positions,* 1654, oil on panel, National Maritime Museum, London, illustrated in Westby Percival-Prescott, *The Art of the Van de Veldes: Paintings and Drawings by the Great Dutch Marine Artists and Their English Followers* (London, 1982), 57, no. 10.

[5] Michael Strang Robinson, *Van de Velde: A Catalogue of the Paintings of the Elder and Younger Willem van de Velde*, 2 vols. (London, 1990), 1:55, no. 644.

[6] I would like to thank Friso Lammertse (correspondence of February 14, 1997) for his observations about the decorations on the taffrails of these ships.

[7] For an excellent assessment of his general technique for creating these works, see Westby Percival-Prescott, "The Art of the Van de Veldes: Aims Methods and Materials," in *The Art of the Van de Veldes: Paintings and Drawings by the Great Dutch Marine Artists and Their English Followers* (London, 1982), 23–25.

[8] These printed lines were first discovered by Bart J. C. Devolder, Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Painting Conservation at the National Gallery of Art in 2007. The distinctions he drew between printed and drawn lines were confirmed by Kimberly Schenck, head of paper conservation at the National Gallery of Art.

[9] See David Freedberg, Aviva Burnstock, and Alan Phenix, "Paintings or Prints? Experiens Sillemans and the Origins of the Grisaille Sea-piece: Notes on a Rediscovered Technique," *Print Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (September 1984): 149–172.

[10] It is also possible that Van de Velde added ink washes to help model the composition, particularly in the sky, but no traces of washes were found during the conservation of the painting.

[11] Kristin de Ghetaldi, Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Painting Conservation at the National Gallery of Art, used these raised lines to re-create design elements that had been completely abraded. Working under high-powered magnification, she reconstructed these lines by using fine-tipped pigment pens. I would like to thank Kristin for the many enlightening discussions I

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had with her after the discovery of these raised lines.

[12] I am very grateful to Ad Stijnman for our discussions about this issue and for his careful assessment of this material. His comments, dated September 22, 2013, are in the curatorial files at the National Gallery of Art.

[13] Stijnman noted that there is no discoloration of the white ground underneath the ink, something that would have occurred if the lines had been made with an ink in an oil-based medium.

[14] Van de Velde probably used this technique in other comparable pen paintings on panel from the 1650s, such as *Dutch Ships Coming to Anchor*, 1654, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (38-1657), illustrated in George S. Keyes, *Mirror of Empire: Dutch Marine Art of the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis, 1990), 48, fig. 34, or the closely related painting in Edinburgh (see detail photograph of raised lines on *Dutch Ships near the Coast* during conservation of the panel).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support consists of an oak panel made from two planks with horizontal grain. All four edges are beveled on the reverse. Dendrochronological analysis indicates that the earliest possible creation date for the panel is 1636.[1] The panel was prepared with a white ground. The white ground and the white paint layer on top of it[2] were both carefully applied with a brush and are relatively thin, causing the horizontal wood grain to be visible. Many of the lines in this work, particularly the delicate lines in the background, are extremely faint or almost entirely lost. They were reconstructed during a conservation treatment that began in 2011.

The panel is generally in very good condition except for a number of small chips at the edges, probably caused by frame abrasion. There is also a gash in the panel in the upper right corner of the sky. Blisters and cupping, and flake losses in the lower part of the painting, all of which had developed because of an adhesion problem between the ground layer and the white paint layer, were addressed during the current treatment.

[1] Dendrochronological analysis also showed that the wood was oak from the Baltic/Polish Region. The analysis was performed by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg (see letter dated August 4, 1998, in NGA Conservation department files).

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[2] The paint and ground layers were studied by the NGA Painting Conservation department with the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections (see report dated March 21, 2011).

PROVENANCE

(Sale, Frederik Muller, Amsterdam, 25 April 1911, no. 198). Whitney Warren [1864-1943]; by inheritance to his daughter, Mrs. Reginald B. Rives [née Gabrielle Warren, 1895-1971]; by inheritance to her son, Lloyd M. Rives [1921-2011], Newport;[1] gift 1994 to NGA.

[1] The provenance in the donor's family was provided by Mr. Rives in his letter to Arthur Wheelock of 9 September 1986, in NGA curatorial files.

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Lodewijk van der Helst, *Portrait of Willem van de Velde II*, c. 1660–1672, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Purchase November 1906, inv. no. SK-A-2236

Velde, Willem van de, the Younger

Also known as
Velde, Willem van de, II
Dutch, 1633 - 1707

BIOGRAPHY

The son of marine artist Willem van de Velde the Elder (Dutch, 1611 - 1693), Willem van de Velde the Younger was baptized in Leiden on December 18, 1633. The family moved to Amsterdam in the mid-1630s and lived in a house on the Nieuwe Waelseliant near the waterfront by the Montelbaanstoren until 1672. On March 13, 1652, Willem the Younger married Petronella le Maire of Weesp. The marriage lasted no more than fifteen months, and on June 20, 1653, Van de Velde began proceedings against his wife to initiate a separation. On December 23, 1656, he married his second wife, Magdalena Walravens. Of their six children, the three boys—Willem (b. 1667), Cornelis (active 1675–1729), and Peter —would also become painters.

Van de Velde probably received his earliest training from his father before undertaking a period of study with the marine painter Simon de Vlieger (Dutch, 1600/1601 - 1653) in Amsterdam.[1] The length of this study is uncertain, and by 1656 he was documented as “living in Leiden, aged 34, painter, assistant to his father Willem van de Velde in Corte Coninckstraat (in Amsterdam).”[2] In 1672 Van de Velde left the Netherlands for London, followed several weeks later by his father. The move may have been a result of the threat of the French invasion, as well as the prospect of better professional opportunities abroad.

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Both father and son received royal appointments from Charles II, as well as from James, the Duke of York. On January 12, 1674, Willem the Elder was appointed for "taking and making Draughts of Sea Fights" with an annual stipend of 100, while Willem the Younger also received 100 per annum for "putting the said Draughts into Colours."[3] That same year they established a studio in the Queen's House at Greenwich. After his father's death in 1693, Van de Velde continued to oversee the studio, along with his sons Willem and Cornelis, and, among others, Isaac Sailmaker (1633–1721), Jacob Knyff (1639–1681), and Peter Monamy (1681–1749). Van de Velde died on April 7, 1707, and was buried next to his father in Saint James' Church, Piccadilly.

Van de Velde's paintings, the earliest of which date from the 1650s, demonstrate the influence of his father's precise drawings and pen paintings of ships and battle scenes as well as De Vlieger's atmospheric coastlines. Van de Velde often depicted beach scenes and boats along the coast with an attention to the movement of light and clouds over calm or stormy waters. His subject matter evolved over the course of his career as he received more commissions to record Dutch and English naval battles. Van de Velde's sensitive renderings of the ships and sea made him one of the most influential marine painters of the seventeenth century.

[1] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 2:325.

[2] Aart de Vries, "Biografische aanteekeningen betreffende voornamelijk Amsterdamsche schilders," *Oud-Holland* 4 (1886): 217.

[3] Michael Strang Robinson, *Van de Velde Drawings: A Catalogue of Drawings in the National Maritime Museum Made by the Elder and Younger Willem van de Velde* (Cambridge, UK, 1958), 1:12.

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1990 Robinson, Michael Strang. *Van de Velde: A Catalogue of the Paintings of the Elder and the Younger Willem van de Velde*. 2 vols. Greenwich, 1990.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Willem van de Velde the Younger
Dutch, 1633 - 1707

Ships in a Gale

1660

oil on panel
overall: 72.4 x 108 cm (28 1/2 x 42 1/2 in.)
framed: 91.1 x 126.1 x 5.7 cm (35 7/8 x 49 5/8 x 2 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower center on rock: W.V.V. / 1660
Patrons' Permanent Fund 2000.72.1

ENTRY

Ships in a Gale is one of Van de Velde's early, and excellently preserved, masterpieces, a work filled with the drama of ships struggling to avoid menacing rocks in a storm-tossed sea. [1] A fierce wind howling across the sky and whipping the water has created huge white-capped waves that relentlessly buffet two sailing ships, one flying a Dutch flag and the other an English flag. Their crews, having taken down the ships' upper masts and furled their sails, desperately try to ride out the storm.

The English ship to the right is in a particularly perilous state. Not only is it dangerously close to the looming, angular rocks rising from the deep, but it also flounders broadside to waves that crash violently over its gunwales. A mainsail has come unfurled and flaps wildly in the wind. Human tragedy seems imminent, particularly for the sailor who hangs precariously over the waves from a line attached to the bowsprit. In the foreground victims of the storm try desperately to save themselves. Some row through the turbulent surf in a small dinghy, while one sailor swims toward a large rock onto which two of his companions have already

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managed to scramble.

Van de Velde enhanced the physical and emotional drama of this scene with his fluid brushwork, cool palette, and focused light effects. Cold, steel-gray clouds seem to move before one's eyes, flowing diagonally across the sky, their dark thick forms at once overlapping and merging with lighter cloud masses. Pockets of light stream down on the foaming whitecaps, boats, and rocks below, accentuating and enlivening their forms. With great pictorial sensitivity Van de Velde juxtaposed the English ship against dark clouds while silhouetting the Dutch ship against a lighter and calmer portion of the sky.

Simon de Vlieger (Dutch, 1600/1601 - 1653), with whom Van de Velde studied for about two years around 1650, greatly influenced the artist's compositional ideas with his depictions of ships in distress in stormy seas near rocky coasts [fig. 1]. [2] De Vlieger's paintings, however, are more tonal in character and do not have the dramatic light effects that give Van de Velde's painting such poignancy. Van de Velde's ships and the ways they move in the water, moreover, are remarkably accurate, the result of the thorough training he received in the workshop of his father, Willem van de Velde the Elder (Dutch, 1611 - 1693).

Rocky coastlines do not exist in the Netherlands, and, aside from the inherent drama of ships floundering in storms near huge outcroppings, such scenes generally alluded to the danger of sailing in foreign seas. Paintings of ships in distress, moreover, often had allegorical associations referring to the uncertainties of human existence. [3] While Van de Velde's painting would fit within this iconographic tradition, the concurrence of a Dutch and an English ship raises the possibility that this work alludes to an actual maritime event that took place during the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–1654), when a four-day storm in the Gulf of Lyon in December 1653 caused the shipwrecks of a squadron of Dutch vessels and their English prizes. [4] In the mid-1680s Van de Velde depicted this maritime disaster in a comparable painting of English and Dutch ships thrashing along a rocky coast. [5] Unlike the latter work, none of the ships in the National Gallery of Art painting can be specifically identified, but it seems probable that the same incident served as the inspiration for both scenes.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Simon de Vlieger, *Ships in Distress off a Rocky Coast*, c. 1645, oil on panel, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Gift in memory of Estelle Burpee Chambers and David L. Chambers, Jr. from their family and friends, 1997.85

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Asher Kohn for his assistance on this entry.

[2] Van de Velde's earliest dated painting is in the style of De Vlieger: *A Dutch Merchant Ship Running between Rocks in Rough Weather,* 1651, oil on panel, National Maritime Museum, London. See Westby Percival-Prescott, *The Art of the Van de Veldes: Paintings and Drawings by the Great Dutch Marine Artists and Their English Followers* (London, 1982), 66–67, no. 18.

[3] For an excellent study of this theme in Dutch art see Lawrence O. Goedde, *Tempest and Shipwreck in Dutch and Flemish Art: Convention, Rhetoric, and Interpretation* (University Park, PA, 1989). The theme of storm-tossed ships threatened by rocky shores appears in various emblem books. In Andrea Alciati's *Emblemata* (Leiden, 1556), for example, this motif represented danger to the ship of state, whereas Adriaan Spinniker, in his *Leerzaame Zinnebeelden* (Haarlem, 1714), used it to illustrate the dangers to the soul that result from a life unmindful of God.

[4] Michael Strang Robinson, *Van de Velde: A Catalogue of the Paintings of the Elder and the Younger Willem van de Velde*, 2 vols. (London, 1990), 2:1036, suggested that the painting was commissioned to commemorate the "wreck

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of an English ship and the presumed saving of the Dutch ship" in 1653 after the Dutch had captured the English ship in the Mediterranean.

[5] Westby Percival-Prescott, *The Art of the Van de Veldes: Paintings and Drawings by the Great Dutch Marine Artists and Their English Followers* (London, 1982), 117, no. 123. This painting depicts the Dutch ship *Jupiter*, which was one of the vessels lost on that occasion.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting is executed on a thin, oak panel[1] consisting of three boards with horizontal grain, which are joined horizontally. The top plank is thicker than the other two making up the support. The reverse of the panel is beveled at the edges. The panel was prepared for painting with a medium thick, creamy white ground layer. A brown imprimatura exists beneath the water. In general the painting was executed in thin layers of paint with little texture. The paint in the sky was applied with a relatively large brush. The boats were executed in a more exacting fashion with smaller brushes. The highlights are generally executed with thicker paint showing low impasto.

The X-radiographs show many changes including several sailboats that are much larger in scale than the current boats, as well as some figures and a different sky.

The condition of the painting is excellent. Inpainting scattered throughout the composition seems to cover slight stains, wood grain, and tiny losses. The inpainting is concentrated along the edges and the upper join. The varnish is even and fairly clear.

[1] The characterization of the wood is based on visual examination only.

PROVENANCE

Probably Proley (or Proly) collection, Paris;[1] (sale, Hôtel de Bullion by Paillet and Boileau, Paris, 20 March 1787 and days following, possibly no. 114).[2] brought to England 1823 by (Thomas Emmerson, London). Jeremiah Harman [1763-1844], Higham House, Woodford, by 1835;[3] (his estate sale, Christie & Manson, London,

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17-18 May 1844, 2nd day, no. 106, as *A Storm and Shipwreck*); Edmund Higginson [1802-1871], Saltmarshe Castle; (his sale, Christie & Manson, London, 4-6 June 1846, no. 218, as *A Storm and Shipwreck*); purchased by Brown.[4] Edmund Higginson, Saltmarshe Castle; (his sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 16 June 1860, no. 32, as *A Storm and Shipwreck*); purchased by Turner.[5] Edward Sholto, 3rd baron Penrhyn [1864-1927], London; (sale, Sotheby's, London, 3 December 1924, no. 79, as *Rocky Coast with choppy sea and shipping*). possibly with (Hand, London); sold to private collection, United States, possibly Samuel Borchard [d. 1930], New York; his estate; (his estate sale, Parke-Bernet, New York, 9 January 1947, no. 38, as *A Shipwreck in a Storm off a Rocky Coast*);[6] private collection, South America;[7] (Otto Nauman, New York); purchased 16 June 2000 by NGA.

[1] The following provenance is given in the prospectus prepared by Otto Naumann at the time of the sale in 2000, in NGA curatorial files.

[2] This sale included more than twenty works by Van de Velde. See the description of Sale F-A1806 in The Getty Provenance Index Databases.

[3] John Smith, *A Complete Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French Painters*, 9 vols., London, 1829-1842: 6(1835):327-328, no. 26.

[4] A copy of the sale catalogue at the Getty Research Library is annotated "Brown," and a newspaper clipping pasted in the same catalogue reads "Lot 218...bought for 300 guineas by Mr. Brown." (Copies in NGA curatorial files.)

[5] According to a handwritten note in John Smith's sale catalogue, the painting was bought by Turner for 153 pounds, 6 shillings. A copy of the sale catalogue at the Getty Research Library is also annotated with the same information (copy in NGA curatorial files).

[6] Stuart Borchard, Samuel's son, lent the painting to a 1942 exhibition at the Detroit Institute of Arts. The 1947 sale of the "Samuel Borchard Collection" was, according to the sale catalogue, "by order of Stuart Borchard." Michael Strang

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Robinson, *Van De Velde: A Catalogue of the Paintings of the Elder and the Younger Willem van de Velde*, 2 vols., Greenwich, 1990: 2:1036-1038, no. 391, incorrectly states that the painting was sold by "Stuart Borchard's son" at the 1947 sale.

[7] The dealer's prospectus indicates that the private owner in South America probably acquired the painting at the 1947 sale.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1942 Five Centuries of Marine Paintings, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1942, no. 35.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Verbeeck, Cornelis

Also known as
Verbeecq, Cornelis
Verbeeck, Cornelius
Dutch, 1590/1591 - 1637

BIOGRAPHY

Originally from Amsterdam, Cornelis Verbeeck spent the majority of his life in and around the city of Haarlem. The earliest documentation pertaining to Verbeeck appears in a statement the artist gave to a Haarlem notary on April 2, 1609, in regard to his involvement in a tavern brawl. The statement provides his place of residence as just outside of the city walls and his age as eighteen.[1] In December of the same year, Verbeeck married Haarlem native Anna Pieters.[2] The couple had two daughters, Elgen, born on October 20, 1613, and Janneke, born on April 7, 1619.[3]

In 1628 Haarlem chronicler Samuel Ampzing described Verbeeck as “very fine and exquisite in ship painting.”[4] The artist had, however, already been active for many years in Haarlem, where he first appeared in the records of the Saint Luke’s Guild in 1610, and again in 1634 as a master painter.[5] Verbeeck’s name also frequently appears in the archives in Haarlem, mostly in connection with tavern brawls. Only two weeks after his marriage, Verbeeck inflicted a “simple flesh wound under the diaphragm, or midriff” on a bleacher named Pieter Bossu.[6] The Bossu matter continued in the courts until 1611, with another incident occurring on May 8, 1610, when Verbeeck threatened Bossu with a knife.[7] On October 31, 1612, Verbeeck was sentenced on two charges for inflicting serious injuries, stab wounds, and lacerations on the brothers Huybert and Jan Huybertsz.[8] And again, in 1628, the artist was banished from a tavern with a warning not to “offend, injure or molest” the proprietor.[9]

Despite his many run-ins with the law, Verbeeck enjoyed success as a painter in Haarlem. He primarily created small-scale scenes of naval battles, ships floundering off rocky coasts, and beach scenes, as well as a few large-scale paintings of historical events.[10] Although there is no evidence that Verbeeck studied with the Haarlem marine painter Hendrick Cornelis Vroom (Dutch, c. 1563–1640), he was clearly influenced by him, especially in his treatment of choppy

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waves with white, hairlike spray and deep troughs. Verbeeck's later paintings move away from Vroom's influence and include more complex compositions and a naturalistic rendering of waves. Verbeeck's seascapes fetched some of the highest prices among that genre and his paintings appear in multiple inventories of middle- and upper-class patrons in Haarlem.

[1] Laurens Johannes Bol, *Die holländische Marinemalerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Braunschweig, 1973), 47. There was another Cornelis Verbeeck living in Haarlem at the time who was the father of the horse painter Pieter Verbeeck. See also A. Bredius Archive, Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), The Hague.

[2] Laurens Johannes Bol, *Die holländische Marinemalerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Braunschweig, 1973), 47. The Haarlem marriage register lists Verbeeck as "a bachelor from Amsterdam."

[3] Laurens Johannes Bol, *Die holländische Marinemalerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Braunschweig, 1973), 48.

[4] Samuel Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* (Haarlem, 1628), 372.

[5] Adriaan van der Willigen, *Les artistes de Harlem; notices historiques avec un précis sur la Gilde de St Luc* (Haarlem and The Hague, 1870), 20; Hessel Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem: 1497–1798*, 2 vols. (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1980), 2:419.

[6] Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea* (Rotterdam, 1996), 137. See note 3 in Giltaij and Kelch, which cites the A. Bredius Archive, Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), The Hague: "Een aantal Chirurgyns moeten de wond onderzoeken. Het is een simpele vleyswonde onder de diaphragma ofte middelriff."

[7] Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea* (Rotterdam, 1996), 137.

[8] Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea* (Rotterdam, 1996), 137.

[9] Laurens Johannes Bol, *Die holländische Marinemalerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Braunschweig, 1973), 48; Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea*

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(Rotterdam, 1996), 137.

[10] One of these paintings, Cornelis Houghtman's Fleet Setting Sail for the East Indies, 1623, Cheltenham Art Gallery, is his only dated work. Verbeeck signed his paintings in various ways, including: "CVB," usually located on a ship's flag; "Kornelio," which Giltaij (Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea* [Rotterdam, 1996], 138) suggests is the Italian version of the artist's name; "Cornelis VB H," the H presumably standing for Haarlem; and "CVB H."

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Cornelis Verbeeck
Dutch, 1590/1591 - 1637

A Naval Encounter between Dutch and Spanish Warships

c. 1618/1620

oil on panel
overall (sight size): 47.63 x 141.61 cm (18 3/4 x 55 3/4 in.)
framed: 66.68 x 159.39 cm (26 1/4 x 62 3/4 in.)
Inscription: on the Dutch flag: Cornelis VB
Gift of Dorothea V. Hammond 1995.21.1-2

ENTRY

In 1995 two paintings of seemingly distinct maritime events, *Dutch Warship Attacking a Spanish Galley* [fig. 1] and *Spanish Galleon Firing Its Cannons* [fig. 2], were bequeathed to the National Gallery of Art from the estate of Dorothea Villard Hammond. [1] Although the Dutch and Spanish warships depicted on these panels were barely visible under layers of old discolored varnish, dendrochronological analysis [see Dendrochronology] of the panels determined that they were, remarkably, two unequal halves of a larger work. [2] Correspondences between the wood grain and between the cloud and wave patterns on the two segments provide evidence that *Spanish Galleon Firing Its Cannons* was the left part of the original panel and *Dutch Warship Attacking a Spanish Galley* was at the right. After removal of discolored varnish and careful inpainting of old losses, the two panels have now been framed together to reestablish the original painting's continuous composition, under the title *A Naval Encounter between Dutch and Spanish Warships*. [3]

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In the slightly smaller panel on the right-hand side, a Dutch warship under full sail proudly flies an outsized red, white, and blue Dutch flag (on which the artist has signed his first name plus the initials of his last name). A solid red flag, signifying the ship's intent to engage in combat, flies defiantly at its stern. The warship has already successfully attacked a small Spanish galley, which is sinking into the stormy sea. Whereas the Spanish boat is awash in misery, the Dutch ship is alive with triumphant activity, from the commander and trumpeter standing on the poop deck beneath the red flag to the sailors scurrying up the rigging and the soldiers reloading their muskets. As Spanish oars fly overhead from the impact of cannonballs, Dutch sharpshooters poised on the bow of their ship take no mercy as they fire down at their enemies. One Spanish soldier raises his hands in terror while another tries to leap over the ship's gunwale into the sea. A Catholic penitent wearing an ocher-colored *nazareno* holds out a small crucifix as a sign of his faith, and a red-robed turbaned figure, perhaps a Moor wearing a *djellaba*, kneels on a piece of driftwood and pleads for his life. [4]

The larger segment on the left-hand side features a Spanish galleon with its red royal standard flying from its main mast. [5] As with the Dutch warship in the other panel, its deck is alive with armed soldiers, already fighting a partially hidden, much smaller Dutch warship close to its starboard side. Verbeeck articulated the rigging of these vessels with great clarity, and carefully depicted the gestures and brightly colored costumes of each crew member. Although he included a secondary vignette in the far distance, where a Dutch warship has set fire to a Spanish galley, his clear focus in both segments was on the large foreground ships.

The pictorial narrative of the reconstructed painting is vastly different from that gleaned by looking at the individual segments separately. This much enlarged painting reveals a significantly more intense naval engagement, with the Spanish galleon in combat with two Dutch warships, one close to its starboard side and the other to its stern. Even though the outcome of this battle remains uncertain, the secondary vignette in the distant left, where the Dutch ship is clearly victorious over a burning Spanish galley, would have given a Dutch patron assurance of a Dutch victory. The painting is not known to represent an actual event or even specific ships; nevertheless, Verbeeck almost certainly intended it to be a political metaphor for the victory of the Dutch over the Spanish.

Successes at sea against the Spanish were a matter of tremendous pride for the Dutch people. As is evident in a diagram made of Verbeeck's original composition

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[fig. 3], Dutch ships were generally smaller than their Spanish counterparts but could sail closer to the wind and were more maneuverable in the treacherous shallows of river estuaries along the Dutch coast. Against seemingly overwhelming odds, the skilled commanders and seamen of these Dutch ships were able to defeat their heavily armed adversaries. To help combat this Dutch advantage, the Spanish would bring small Mediterranean-style galleys to the North Sea. While these vessels, which were propelled chiefly by oars, adapted easily to shifting wind conditions, they were too lightly armed to be effective against Dutch warships.

Verbeeck must have learned his trade, if not directly then by example, from the most important marine painter of the day, Hendrick Vroom (1566–1640). Vroom lived in Haarlem but received important public commissions from guilds and admiralties throughout the Netherlands. [6] From this master Verbeeck derived his calligraphic manner of rendering the troughs and foamy crests of waves, and learned to portray specific ships and their rigging in remarkable detail. Nevertheless, Verbeeck's artistic personality and the nature of his patronage were different from those of Vroom. The latter usually painted on a large scale and used a high vantage point to present the grand narrative sweep of important naval battles and historic events; by contrast, Verbeeck's paintings are more modest in scale and focus on one or two ships rather than on a whole flotilla [fig. 4]. Furthermore, Verbeeck painted his marines with a much lower vantage point than did Vroom. As a consequence, in scenes such as this one, the human element—whether soldiers combating an enemy or confronting a raging storm or treacherous rocks—takes on enormous visual interest and pictorial significance.

Exactly when Verbeeck painted this marine battle scene is difficult to determine because he rarely dated his compositions. Nevertheless, the structure of the large Dutch warship, with its open gallery at the stern, and the weblike character of the rigging on the Spanish galleon suggest a date in the late 1610s. This dating is consistent with the costumes of the sailors and with the color of the Spanish flag, which was gradually changed from a red to a white field during the reign of King Philip III (1598–1621). [7] The distinctive rhythms Verbeeck used to depict the crests of the waves also suggest a relatively early date in the artist's career. In the 1620s he began to soften his manner of rendering water in response to the increased naturalism of marine painting in Haarlem. A dating of circa 1618/1620 is also consistent with information derived from dendrochronological examinations, which indicate that the oak panel supports were available for Verbeeck's use after 1610. [8]

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Verbeeck's original painting was probably cut down early in its history, long before the two parts were acquired in the 1880s by the renowned journalist and railroad magnate Henry Villard. [9] National Gallery of Art frame conservator Richard Ford concluded that the profile of the black frames that surrounded the two individual panels and the manner in which they were built were consistent with seventeenth-century Dutch framing. One can only surmise that Verbeeck's painting was divided in two because the large, horizontal composition (measuring 18 ¾ inches high by 55 3/4 inches wide) was difficult to fit into most seventeenth-century Dutch domestic settings.

The reconstruction of this work is important not only for the appreciation of Verbeeck's artistic achievements but also for our understanding of early seventeenth-century images of dramatic naval encounters between the Dutch and their adversaries. These skirmishes and outright battles were fought by valiant seamen maneuvering their formidable ships into combat with canons blazing. Verbeeck, who generally worked for private patrons, probably made this painting for a collector from Hoorn, as the red and yellow striped flag flying from the mizzenmast of the Dutch warship is the flag of that port city. [10] This vivid image would have reminded its owner of the travails and the valor of those seamen who helped free the Dutch from the oppression of the Spanish yoke. The billowing sails, complex rigging, and brilliantly colored flags of these great ships as they fired upon each other presented an unmatched visual spectacle; victor and vanquished were there for all to see.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Cornelis Verbeeck, *Dutch Warship Attacking a Spanish Galley*, c. 1618-–1620, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Dorothea V. Hammond

fig. 2 Cornelis Verbeeck, *Spanish Galleon Firing Its Cannons*, c. 1618-–1620, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Dorothea V. Hammond

fig. 3 Kristin Grubb, Diagram of Cornelis Verbeeck's *A Naval Encounter between Dutch and Spanish Warships* (*Dutch Warship Attacking a Spanish Galley* and *Spanish Galleon Firing Its Cannons*

fig. 4 Cornelis Verbeeck, *Ships off the Coast*, c. 1620, oil on panel, Frans Hals Museum , Haarlem

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Kristin Grubb, a volunteer in the department of northern baroque paintings, who provided invaluable research on the history and character of Verbeeck's paintings, as well as Larry Goedde, professor of art history at the University of Virginia and a renowned specialist in Dutch marine painting, who carefully examined these works in the summer of 2006.

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[2] Dendrochronological studies by Dr. Peter Klein from Universität Hamburg provide conclusive evidence that *Dutch Warship Attacking a Spanish Galley* and *Spanish Galleon Firing Its Cannons* originally had been portions of one larger composition (see letter dated April 14, 1998, in NGA Conservation department files). Each panel is composed of two horizontal boards of identical widths. While the top and bottom boards came from different trees, the pattern of wood grains in each of the boards is identical in the two paintings. Hence, the boards initially were continuous. Dr. Klein determined that the trees used for these panels were cut down in the mid-1610s.

[3] It should be noted that the two segments have been abutted together, not physically "joined." The cut between the two halves has been covered by a thin strip of wood attached to the frame.

[4] A *nazareno* is a robe with a cone-shaped hood; a *djellaba* is a long, loose-fitting robe with a hood often worn by Arabic-speaking people along the Mediterranean.

[5] The flag consists of the Burgundian Saltire with the Spanish royal arms of Castile and Leon in the center. This information was kindly provided by Roger Quarm and Barbara Tomalson of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England (email, May 25, 2007, in NGA curatorial files).

[6] Vroom began his career in the mid-1590s designing tapestries of marine subjects, including a suite of ten tapestries depicting the English defeat of the Spanish Armada that were commissioned by the admiral of the English fleet. Vroom received major public commissions from guilds and city magistrates, some of which were among the largest and costliest paintings of the early seventeenth century. He painted not only battle scenes but also depictions of the arrival or departure of dignitaries at Dutch seaports, as well as the spectacular return of Dutch ships laden with costly spices from the Far East.

[7] This information was kindly provided by Carmen Zamarrón Moreno, Conservadora, Museo Naval de Madrid (email, May 31, 2007, in NGA curatorial files).

[8] See note 3, this entry.

[9] It is not known from whom Henry Villard, Dorothea Hammond's grandfather, acquired these works.

[10] This information was kindly provided by Rob Kattenburg, a Dutch authority on marine painting in a letter of October 1, 1987.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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Each section is executed on an oak panel consisting of two boards joined horizontally. Dendrochronological analysis revealed that the upper boards of both panels came from one tree and that the lower boards of both panels came from a second tree.[1] This information, coupled with the compositional evidence, indicates that the two panels were originally one long painting, which was cut in half to form two paintings. Wood veneers and cradles have been applied to the backs of both panels.

The ground on both panels is a thin, white layer. Thin layers of paint were built up to form the sky and water. The boats were then added by applying thin, dark paint followed by lighter, thicker paint. The finer details, such as the rigging, were added next, followed lastly by the atmospheric effects of smoke and fire.

The panels are in fairly good condition. The supports are stable and in plane, but the paint has suffered from blistering and flaking. In addition, the paint has been somewhat abraded in the rigging, the dark passages in the ships, the clouds, the blue in the sky, and the shadows in the water. The panels were treated between 2008 and 2010 to consolidate the areas of blistering and loss, to remove discolored varnish and overpaint, and to inpaint the losses and abrasion.

[1] Dendrochronology was performed by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg (see letter dated April 14, 1998, in NGA Conservation department files). The analysis also confirmed that the wood is oak and the earliest possible felling date for the trees was 1610.

PROVENANCE

Henry Villard [1835-1900], New York, by the 1880s; by descent to his granddaughter, Dorothea Villard Hammond [1907-1994], Washington, D.C.; bequest 1995 to NGA.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Johannes Vermeer, *The Procuress* (detail), 1656, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden

Vermeer, Johannes

Also known as
Vermeer, Jan
Vermeer van Delft
Dutch, 1632 - 1675

BIOGRAPHY

The life and art of Johannes Vermeer are closely associated with the city of Delft. He was born in Delft in 1632 and lived there until his death in 1675. His father, Reynier Vermeer, was a silk weaver who produced caffa, a fine satin fabric, but in 1631 he also registered in the Saint Luke's Guild in Delft as a master art dealer. By 1641 he was sufficiently prosperous to purchase a large house, the "Mechelen," which contained an inn on the market square in Delft and from which he probably also sold paintings. When Reynier died in 1652 Johannes apparently inherited his business. By that time he must have already decided on a career as a painter. It is assumed that he trained in Delft, perhaps with Leonard Bramer (Dutch, 1596 - 1674), who seems to have had close associations with Vermeer's family, or with Carel Fabritius (Dutch, c. 1622 - 1654). No documents, however, exist about his artistic training or apprenticeship, and he may have studied elsewhere, perhaps in Utrecht or Amsterdam.

Vermeer, who was baptized on October 31, 1632, in the Reformed Church in Delft, was raised a Protestant. In April 1653, however, he married into a Catholic family and seems to have converted to Catholicism shortly before that date to placate his future mother-in-law, Maria Thins, who lived in the so-called *Papenhoek* (Papists' Corner) of Delft, adjacent to the Jesuit church on the Oude Langendijck, one of two hidden churches where Catholics could worship. Vermeer and his wife, Catharina Bolnes, eventually moved into her house. They named their first daughter Maria and their first son Ignatius, after the patron saint of the Jesuit order.

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Vermeer became a master in the Saint Luke's Guild on December 29, 1653. His early aspiration was to be a history painter, and his first works were large-scale mythological and religious paintings. Shortly thereafter he began to paint the genre scenes, landscapes, and allegories for which he became so renowned. Although Vermeer's subject matter changed in the mid-1650s, he nevertheless continued to imbue his later works with the quiet, intimate moods he had preferred in his early history paintings.

Very little is known about Vermeer's relationships with other painters who might have influenced the thematic and stylistic directions of his art. He apparently knew Gerard ter Borch the Younger (Dutch, 1617 - 1681), with whom he cosigned a document in 1653. Another artist who may well have had an impact on his work during the 1650s was Pieter de Hooch (Dutch, 1629 - 1684), who painted comparable scenes in Delft during that period. Vermeer remained a respected artist in Delft throughout the rest of his life. He was named hoofdman of the Saint Luke's Guild in 1662, 1663, 1670, and 1671.

Vermeer's few works—they number about thirty-five—were not well known outside of Delft. It has been postulated that many of his paintings were concentrated in the collection of a patron in that city who seems to have had a special relationship with the artist.[1] When Vermeer died, however, he was heavily in debt, in part because his art-dealing business had suffered during the difficult economic times in the Netherlands in the early 1670s. He was survived by his wife and eleven children, ten of whom were minors. His wife petitioned for bankruptcy the following year. Antonie van Leeuwenhoek, the famed Delft microscopist, was named trustee of the estate.

Vermeer's works were appreciated during the eighteenth century, but his fame did not develop until the late nineteenth century, partly a result of enthusiastic appraisal by the French critic Théophile Thoré, whose pseudonym was William Bürger.[2]

[1] John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Millieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton, 1989), 246, has proposed that Pieter Claesz van Ruijven (1624–1674) may have been Vermeer's patron.

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[2] Théophile E. J. Thoré (William Bürger), "Van der Meer de Delft," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 21 (October–December 1866): 297–330, 458–470, 542–575.

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April 24, 2014

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Attributed to Johannes Vermeer
Johannes Vermeer
Dutch, 1632 - 1675

Girl with a Flute

probably 1665/1675

oil on panel
painted surface: 20 x 17.8 cm (7 7/8 x 7 in.)
framed: 39.7 x 37.5 x 5.1 cm (15 5/8 x 14 3/4 x 2 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.98

ENTRY

In 1906 Abraham Bredius, director of the Mauritshuis in The Hague, traveled to Brussels to examine a collection of drawings owned by the family of Jonkheer Jan de Grez. [1] There he discovered, hanging high on a wall, a small picture that he surmised might be by Vermeer of Delft. Bredius asked for permission to take down the painting, which he exclaimed to be “very beautiful.” He then asked if the painting could be exhibited at the Mauritshuis, which occurred during the summer of 1907. Bredius’ discovery was received with great acclaim. In 1911, after the death of Jonkheer Jan de Grez, the family sold the painting, and it soon entered the distinguished collection of August Janssen in Amsterdam. After this collector’s death in 1918, the painting was acquired by the Amsterdam art dealer Jacques Goudstikker, and then by M. Knoedler & Co., New York, which subsequently sold it to Joseph E. Widener. On March 1, 1923, the Paris art dealer René Gimpel recorded the transaction in his diary, commenting: “It’s truly one of the master’s most beautiful works.” [2]

Despite the enthusiastic reception that this painting received after its discovery in the first decade of the twentieth century, the attribution of this work has frequently been brought into question by later scholars. [3] Partially because of their wood supports and similarly small scale, and partially because of subject matter, *Girl with a Flute* and *Girl with the Red Hat* [fig. 1] have frequently been cited as companion pieces and accepted or rejected together. They may even have been considered companion pieces in the Dissius sale in Amsterdam in 1696. [4] Slight differences in the size of the panels, in the compositional arrangement of the figures, and in the quality of execution have led me to argue in previous publications that the

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paintings are not companion pieces and that the attribution of the *Girl with a Flute* to Vermeer could not be maintained. [5] Subsequently, I have concluded that removing the *Girl with a Flute* from Vermeer's oeuvre was too extreme given the complex conservation issues surrounding this image.

A number of factors point to seventeenth-century origins for the *Girl with a Flute* and, indeed, relate the work intimately with Vermeer's other paintings. Technically, examination of the panel using Dendrochronology has determined a felling date in the early 1650s. [6] A paint sample taken from a yellow highlight on the girl's left sleeve, moreover, indicates the use of seventeenth-century pigments characteristic of Vermeer's paintings: natural ultramarine, azurite, and lead-tin yellow. [7] Stylistically, the jacket worn by the girl is comparable to jackets seen in other works from the late 1650s to the mid-1660s, for example, Woman Holding a Balance in the National Gallery of Art and*The Concert* in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston. Other artists, particularly Gerard ter Borch the Younger (Dutch, 1617 - 1681), Gabriel Metsu (Dutch, 1629 - 1667), and Frans van Mieris (Dutch, 1635 - 1681), also depict women in similar costumes.

One unusual aspect of the girl's wardrobe is the hat she wears. No exact equivalent exists in any other painting of the period, although similar wide-brimmed hats are found frequently in Dutch prints and drawings of working-class women. [8] This hat, however, has an oriental character that may relate to a vogue for oriental dress apparent in the latter decades of the seventeenth century. [9] Chinese hats were generally constructed of woven bamboo. This one appears to have been modified by the addition of a gray, white, and black fabric covering, presumably to enhance its appearance. [10] Indeed, this strange hat actually reinforces the argument that the origins of this painting are seventeenth-century. It would be extremely unlikely for an artist of a later period to include such a hat in a painting that purported to be a Vermeer.

The *Girl with a Flute* and the *Girl with the Red Hat* are so close in concept that one must assume that they were conceived at approximately the same time, most likely in the mid-to-late 1660s. In each painting the young woman looks toward the viewer with an expectant expression, her eyes alert, her mouth half open. Each wears an exotic hat, sits in a chair with lion finials, and leans on one arm. Behind each of them hangs a tapestry of which only a fragment is visible. In each picture, light entering from the sitter's left, an unusual feature in Vermeer paintings, strikes the girl's left cheek, nose, and chin.

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The manner in which optical effects of color are exploited in the two works is also comparable and characteristic of Vermeer. In each painting the face is shaded with a thin green glaze pulled over the flesh tones, a technique Vermeer developed more extensively in his later works. Colored highlights are a distinctive characteristic of Vermeer's style, and in the *Girl with a Flute* the mouth is accented with a turquoise green highlight in a manner comparable to the pink highlight Vermeer applied to the mouth of the *Girl with the Red Hat*. The actual color of the highlight is similar to the green accent in the eye of the *Girl with the Red Hat*. Finally, the sunlit blue jackets worn by the two girls are similarly animated by numerous yellow highlights.

Despite the many stylistic and technical similarities between these paintings, significant differences in quality do exist. To begin with, the *Girl with a Flute* is a less successful composition. Whereas the pose of the girl in *Girl with the Red Hat*, as she turns and rests her arm over the back of her chair, subtly integrates suggestions of movement and stability, the frontal pose of the girl in *Girl with a Flute* is relatively flat and immobile. Her hat, left shoulder, and right hand are awkwardly cut by the edge of the panel. [11] The flute she holds, which is actually a recorder, is curiously undefined and seems inaccurately rendered. [12]

The handling of the paint in the *Girl with a Flute* is also less assured than in the *Girl with the Red Hat*. In particular, the integration of tones and color in the *Girl with a Flute* lacks the cohesiveness characteristic of Vermeer. Flesh tones in the girl's face are not modulated with the same degree of refinement. Transitions between the shadow of the eye and the sunlit cheek, between the shaded and unshaded portions of the chin, and the areas between the nose and mouth are rather abrupt. [13] The thumbnail of the girl's ill-proportioned hand is indicated by a uniformly dense paint whereas during the mid-1660s Vermeer generally would accent only a portion of a nail with a light highlight. Finally, the uniformly thin necklace has none of the modulations of accent and tone that Vermeer delighted in rendering.

Comparisons of the lion finials in the *Girl with a Flute* [fig. 2] and the *Girl with the Red Hat* [fig. 3] also point out the relatively unrefined brushwork of the former. The lion finial in the *Girl with the Red Hat* is modeled wet-into-wet by subtle variations in the weight and thickness of the strokes, whereas the finial in the *Girl with a Flute* does not have the same degree of articulation. The essential vocabulary of thin diffused strokes superimposed by opaque highlights is the same, but the lines necessary to create a sense of volume and form are less successfully integrated. [14]

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Finally, although in both instances the girls' blue jackets are animated with diffused yellow highlights, in the *Girl with the Red Hat* the diffused highlights are grouped with a certain optical logic lacking in this work. To heighten the blue color on the shoulder of the *Girl with the Red Hat*, for example, Vermeer first highlighted the area with light blue strokes and then superimposed a sequence of yellow strokes over the blues. He painted the ridges of the highlighted folds with opaque yellow strokes. The jacket of the girl in *Girl with a Flute* is painted in a similar technique, but surety of the execution is lacking.

Despite such distinctions in quality it seems unadvisable to remove *Girl with a Flute* from Vermeer's oeuvre, since painting techniques are similar to those in the *Girl with a Red Hat* and other Vermeer's paintings. The soft modeling of the yellow highlights on girl's blue jacket, for example, is similar to the character of the blue and yellow edging on the yellow material that hangs from the turban in *The Girl with a Pearl Earring* from the mid-1660s (Mauritshuis, The Hague). [15] By the end of the 1660s, moreover, Vermeer began to create more abrupt transitions in his modeling that are not unrelated to the way in which the face in this painting is handled.

One complicating factor in trying to come to a determination about the attribution of this painting is that its surface is not in good condition (see Technical Summary). More important, however, the X-radiograph [fig. 4] [see X-radiography] and the infrared reflectogram [fig. 5] [see Infrared Reflectography] and andindicate that the composition was reworked in the seventeenth century. The patterns of the collar folds on both shoulders were altered, the size of the left cuff reduced, and the contour of the right arm changed. Other alterations include the addition of the fur trim on the front of the jacket and a reduction in the size of the hat. Finally, the girl's finger that rests on the recorder was also apparently added, a change that may have occurred when the position of the flute was moved to the left. This change is evident in the reflectogram [fig. 5].

It appears that when the painting was reworked, the initial composition was still largely at the blocking-in stage. [16] The reworkings slightly altered the woman's pose by lowering her left shoulder and adjusting the position of the cuff. As a consequence, she no longer appears to lean to such a degree on her left arm. Although the reasons for the reworking of this painting are not known, they suggest that the painting was not brought to completion and that damages subsequently occurred to the original design layer. [17] The x-radiograph reveals

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that quite defined losses exist under the white collar on the girl's left shoulder [fig. 4]. Other losses exist below her left eye, between her nose and mouth, and on her cuffs and right hand. Just why these losses occurred is not known. Perhaps some inherent problem of adhesion existed between the paint layers and the ground. This latter explanation might account for some of the peculiar alligator crackle pattern that occurs in the paint on the woman's cuff and in the thin blues of her jacket.

Technical evidence indicates that the alterations were made soon after Vermeer blocked in the initial composition since paint characteristics on the surface reflect those of the underlying layer. It is conceivable and, indeed, probable that the alterations were made by someone other than Vermeer, perhaps to prepare the work for sale after his death, even though the artist is not known to have had students or other close followers. Montias suggests that the revisions were the work of Jan Coelenbier (1600 or 1610-1677), who purchased paintings in 1676 from Catharina Bolnes soon after Vermeer's death. [18] As these paintings were to be auctioned the following year, Coelenbier may have tried to bring the work to completion to secure a higher price. Whether Montias' hypothesis proves true, the artist who reworked *Girl with a Flute* certainly knew Vermeer's paintings from the late 1660s and early 1670s, for he incorporated a number of stylistic features from this period of the artist's career.

The complex issues surrounding the attribution of this little painting can be summarized as follows: the general character, appearance, and even painting techniques found in the *Girl with a Flute* relate closely to Vermeer's work, specifically to the *Girl with the Red Hat*, but the quality of execution does not appear to be of the same high level expected from this master. While it seems that Vermeer initially blocked in the painting, which was executed in the mid-1660s, the image was extensively revised at a somewhat later date, probably by another hand. The unsatisfactory condition of the painting, largely as a result of Abrasion, is not only detrimental to the appearance of the image but also complicates any assessment of the work's attribution. It seems appropriate to indicate the uncertainty surrounding the work's attribution by designating it "Attributed to Vermeer."

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with the Red Hat*, c. 1665/1666, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.53

fig. 2 Detail of lion-head finial, Attributed to Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with a Flute*, probably 1665/1675, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.98

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fig. 3 Detail of lion-head finial, Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with the Red Hat*, c. 1665/1666, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.53

fig. 4 X-radiograph composite, Attributed to Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with a Flute*, probably 1665/1675, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.98

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fig. 5 Infrared reflectogram, Attributed to Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with a Flute*, probably 1665/1675, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.98

NOTES

[1] This summary of the discovery of the painting and early reactions to it is taken from Ben Broos' account in the entry on the painting in Ben Broos and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Johannes Vermeer* (Washingon DC, and The Hague, 1995–1996), 207. See also Ben Broos, "Vermeer: Malice and Misconception," in *Vermeer Studies*, ed. Ivan Gaskell and Michiel Jonker (Washington, DC, 1998), 25.

[2] René Gimpel, *Diary of an Art Dealer, 1918–1939,* trans. John Rosenberg (New York, 1987; first published in 1963), 216.

[3] The attribution of this painting to Vermeer was first rejected by P. T. A. Swillens, *Johannes Vermeer: Painter of Delft, 1632–1675* (Utrecht, 1950), 64–65. Albert Blankert, Rob Ruurs, and Willem L. van de Watering, *Johannes Vermeer van Delft, 1632–1675* (Utrecht and Antwerp, 1975), 108–110, 168, considered the work to be a nineteenth-century imitation.

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Blankert restated this view in Albert Blankert, *Museum Bredius: Catalogus van de schilderijen en tekeningen* (The Hague, 1978), 172, and again in Gilles Aillaud, Albert Blankert, and John Michael Montias, *Vermeer* (Paris, 1986), 200–201. A similar opinion is held by Yvonne Brentjens, "Twee meisjes van Vermeer in Washington," *Tableau* 7 (February 1985): 54–58. Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., review of Albert Blankert, Rob Ruurs, and Willem L. van de Watering, *Johannes Vermeer van Delft, 1632–1675* (Utrecht and Antwerp, 1975), *Art Bulletin* 59 (September 1977): 439–441, argued for the seventeenth-century origin of the painting, placing the work in the circle of Vermeer. He expanded on this theory in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Zur Technik zweier Bilder, die Vermeer zugeschrieben sind," *Maltechnik-Restauro* 84 (1978): 242–257, and in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Vermeer* (New York, 1981), 156. John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton, 1989), 265, note 2, proposed that "the painting was begun by Vermeer and finished after his death by an inferior painter, perhaps by Jan Coelenbier, who bought paintings from Vermeer's widow soon after his death." Walter Liedtke in Ben P. J. Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America* (The Hague and Zwolle, 1990), 43, on the other hand, defends the attribution to Vermeer. For his more recent support for the attribution to Vermeer, see Walter A. Liedtke, *Vermeer: The Complete Paintings* (Ghent, 2008), no. 25, 140–143. In the 1995 exhibition catalog *Johannes Vermeer,* organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Mauritshuis, The Hague, the attribution of this painting as "Circle of Vermeer" reflected the divergent opinions of the National Gallery of Art and the Mauritshuis. Benjamin Binstock, *Vermeer's Family Secrets: Genius, Discovery, and the Unknown Apprentice* (New York and London, 2009), 249–257, considers this painting and *Girl with a Red Hat* to be self-portraits painted by Vermeer's daughter, Maria Vermeer.

[4] The *Girl with a Flute* measures 20 by 17.8 centimeters; the *Girl with the Red Hat* measures 23.2 by 18.1 centimeters. In John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton, 1989), 363–364, doc. 339, items 38, 39, and 40 are described, respectively, as "a *tronie* in antique dress, uncommonly artful"; "Another ditto Vermeer"; and "A pendant of the same." The unusual costumes in the *Girl with the Red Hat* and the *Girl with a Flute* may well have been seen as depicting "antique dress" by the compiler of the catalog.

[5] See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Zur Technik zweier Bilder, die Vermeer zugeschrieben sind," *Maltechnik-Restauro* 84 (1978): 242–257, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Vermeer* (New York, 1981), 156, where the painting was designated "Circle of Vermeer."

[6] See Technical Summary for *Girl with a Flute.*

[7] Hermann Kühn, "A Study of the Pigments and the Grounds Used by Jan Vermeer," in *National Gallery of Art Report and Studies in the History of Art*,

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vol. 2 (Washington, DC, 1968), 194. These pigments were prevalent in the seventeenth century but not at later dates. Natural ultramarine, one of Vermeer's favorite pigments, is produced from the semiprecious stone lapis lazuli. It was an expensive pigment, prized as much for its intrinsic value as for the luminosity of its blue hue. Around 1830 an artificial means of producing ultramarine was invented in France, which soon supplanted the more expensive natural ultramarine in artists' palettes. Azurite never disappeared as completely as did natural ultramarine from artists' palettes, but it is infrequently found after the seventeenth century. Lead-tin yellow, another pigment frequently found in Vermeer's paintings, was replaced by Naples yellow after the seventeenth century. It seems to have been unknown from the mid-eighteenth century until it was rediscovered in 1940.

[8] A. M. Louise E. Mulder-Erkelens, keeper of textiles, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, has suggested (letter of May 7, 1974, to A. B. de Vries, copy in NGA curatorial files) that the hat may have been intended to suggest some "archaic or exotic characteristics." She related it to hats seen on gypsies and shepherdesses in works by Abraham Bloemaert (1566–1651) and Karel van Mander (1548–1606). She also noted that artists often kept unusual headgear in their studios that could assist in giving chiaroscuro effects to the model's face. See Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Ikonographische Studien über die holländische Malerei und das Theater des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1938), 21. Similar wide-brimmed hats are found frequently in works by Rembrandt and his school. See Julius S. Held, *Rembrandt's "Aristotle" and Other Rembrandt Studies* (Princeton, 1969), 11–12.

[9] See Seymour Slive, "A Family Portrait by Nicolaes Maes," *Fogg Art Museum Annual Report* (1957–1958): 32–39.

[10] Thomas Lawton, formerly assistant director, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, has been most helpful in analyzing the nature of this hat.

[11] There is no indication that the panel has been trimmed, as was first suggested by Wilhelm Martin, "La Jeune Fille à la Flute de Vermeer de Delft," *L'Arte Flamand e Hollandais* 8 (July 1907): 20–23, and Wilhelm Martin, "Jan Vermeer van Delft. Het Meisje met de Fluit," *Onze Kunst* 12 (1907): 20, who thought the painting to be a fragment. Not only is the back of the panel beveled along all four edges, but also the paint along the edges does not appear fractured in a way that would suggest it had been trimmed.

[12] I am most grateful to Helen Hollis, formerly of the Division of Musical Instruments, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, for her observations on the nature of musical instruments in Vermeer's oeuvre and on the specific character of the "flute" in this painting. Although its fipple mouthpiece is correctly indicated by the double highlight, the air hole below the mouthpiece is placed off-line. As seen in the recorder hanging on the

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wall in a painting by Judith Leyster (Dutch, 1609 - 1660), it should lie on an axis with the upper lip of the mouthpiece (Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, inv. no. NM 1126). The finger holes seen below the girl's hand are turned even farther off this axis, although such a placement would be allowable if the recorder were composed of two sections.

[13] These abrupt transitions between areas are accentuated in the X-radiograph of the *Girl with a Flute* [fig. 4].

[14] Microscopic examination of the chair finial reveals that the surface is filled with small particles of foreign matter embedded in the paint. This foreign matter, whether it be dust, brush hairs, or wood splinters, is found throughout the paint. In only one other work by Vermeer have I noted similar foreign matter embedded in the paint: *The Guitar Player* (Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood, London, datable about 1672).

[15] See inventory no. 670, c. 1665, from the Mauritshuis, The Hague.

[16] The thinness of the execution on the figure's proper right shoulder and arm is probably indicative of the level to which the painting was initially brought.

[17] It is unclear whether these damages occurred before or after the painting was reworked.

[18] John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton, 1989), 338, doc. 362.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single, vertically grained oak panel with beveled edges on the back. Dendrochronology gives a tree felling date in the early 1650s.[1] A thin, smooth, white chalk ground was applied overall, followed by a coarse-textured gray upper ground. A reddish brown painted sketch exists under most areas of the painting and is incorporated into the design in the tapestry.[2]

Full-bodied paint is applied thinly, forming a rough surface texture in lighter passages. In many areas, particularly in the proper left collar and cuff, a distinctive wrinkling, which disturbs the surface, seems to have been scraped down before the final paint layers were applied. Still-wet paint in the proper right cheek and chin was textured with a fingertip, then glazed translucently. The X-radiograph shows extensive design modifications: the proper left shoulder was lowered and the neck opening moved to the viewer's left; the collar on this side may have been damaged or scraped down before being reworked in a richer, creamy white. The earring was painted over the second collar. These adjustments preceded the completion of the

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background tapestry. The proper left sleeve was longer, making the cuff closer to the wrist. Probably at the same time, the fur trim was added to the front of the jacket, covering the lower part of the neck opening. Infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 1.8 microns [3] shows that changes also were made to the shape of the hat and contour of the arm on the figure's proper right side.

The panel has a slight convex warp, a small check in the top edge at the right, and small gouges, rubs, and splinters on the back from nails and handling. The paint is rather abraded in several areas including the decoration of the hat, the sitter's proper left arm, and the girl's necklace. There are a number of small losses and areas of abrasion in the background and there is a large loss in the upper portion of the sitter's proper right collar. The painting was treated in 1995 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting. It had last been treated in 1933 by Louis de Wild.[4]

[1] Joseph Bauch and Peter Klein of the Universität Hamburg gave earliest possible felling dates of 1653 and 1651, respectively (see reports in NGA Conservation department files: Bauch, November 29, 1977; and Klein, September 29, 1987).

[2] Hermann Kühn, "A Study of the Pigments and the Grounds Used by Jan Vermeer," Studies in the History of Art (Washington, D.C., 1968), 194, analyzed the pigments. Robert L. Feller, Carnegie Mellon University, found chalk with perhaps a trace of yellow ocher in the ground (see report, dated July 12, 1974, in NGA Conservation department files).

[3] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara focal plane array InSb camera fitted with H and J astronomy filters.

[4] According to a memo dated February 2, 1968, in NGA Conservation files, Louis de Wild "retouch[ed], put down blisters, and revarnish[ed]."

PROVENANCE

Possibly Pieter Claesz van Ruijven [1624-1674], Delft; possibly by inheritance to his wife, Maria de Knuijt [d. 1681]; possibly by inheritance to her daughter, Magdalena van Ruijven [1655-1682], Delft; possibly by inheritance to her husband, Jacobus Abrahamsz. Dissius [1653-1695], Delft;[1] (sale, Amsterdam, 16 May 1696, probably

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no. 39 or 40).[2] possibly the van Son family; Jan Mahie van Boxtel en Liempde and his wife, Geertruida van Boxtel en Liempde [née van Son, d. 1876], 's-Hertogenbosch; purchased from the estate by their daughter, Jaqueline Gertrude Marie de Grez [Dowager de Grez, née Mahie van Boxtel en Liempde, d. 1917], Brussels, wife of Jonkheer Jan de Grez [1837-1910]; sold by 1911 to (Antiquar E. Jonas, Paris);[3] sold 16 June 1911 to (Thos. Agnew & Sons, Ltd., London); half-share sold June 1911 to (M. Knoedler & Co., New York, and P. & D. Colnaghi, London); Agnew's half-share sold 21 November 1913 to (M. Knoedler & Co., New York);[4] Knoedler's three-quarter share sold July 1915 to (P. & D. Colnaghi, London). August Janssen [1863-1918], Amsterdam, after August 1916;[5] his estate; sold 1919 with the entire Janssen collection to (Jacques Goudstikker, Amsterdam);[6] purchased jointly April 1921 by (M. Knoedler & Co., New York, and Frederick Muller & Co., Amsterdam);[7] sold February 1923 to Joseph E. Widener; inheritance from Estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, after purchase by funds of the Estate; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] The 1683 inventory of goods accruing to Jacob Dissius after the death of his wife Magdalena van Ruijven lists twenty paintings by Vermeer. For the complete transactions between her husband Jacob Dissius and his father Abraham Dissius following her death, see John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History*, Princeton, 1989, 246-257, 359-361, docs. 417, 420.

[2] For this sale see John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History*, Princeton, 1989: 363-364, doc. 439. Item no. 38 in the sale is described as "a tronie in antique dress, uncommonly artful"; item no. 39 as "Another ditto Vermeer"; and item no. 40 as "A pendant of the same."

[3] The exact date when the painting was sold by the De Grez family is uncertain; it seems to be either 1911 or 1914. The 1911 date used in the Provenance comes from three sources. The first is a letter of 18 May 1995 from Melissa De Medeiros, librarian at M. Knoedler (in NGA curatorial files) that says "Under Knoedler #12403 we purchased a 1/2 share in the painting from Thos. Agnew & Sons in June 1911 and sold it in July 1915 to P&D Colnaghi, London." A follow-up letter of 31 May 1995 clarifies the fact that the half share purchased from Agnew's was actually split with Colnaghi. The second is a letter of 25 July 1995 from Fred Bancroft, director of Agnew's Inc., New York (in NGA curatorial files), that says: "According to our stock

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books, the Vermeer was purchased from E. Jonas on June 16, 1911 and then sold outright to Knoedler on November 21, 1913. There seems to be no record of shares being sold to other dealers." The phrase "sold outright," however, hints that there may have been shares involved, as evidenced by Knoedler's records. The third is a letter of 30 May 1996 from Stephen Rudge, Colnaghi, London (in NGA curatorial files), indicating that, despite the lack of a stock book record, "there is an old record card that confirms both the purchase with Knoedler and the fact that we took it over in July 1915." From these records, it appears that the painting had left the De Grez family by 1911, since Agnew's purchased it from E. Jonas in June of that year.

However, correspondence in the NGA curatorial files from Dr. J. B.V. M.J. van de Mortel, a relation of the Dowager de Grez, consistently relates the story that his father, Henri van de Mortel, who was the Dowager's nephew and handled her affairs, sold the painting for her in 1914 to Antiquar Jonas in Paris (letters to David Finley of 31 October 1946 and to John Walker of 18 November 1946). Because it was his father who was handling the Dowager's affairs, it is possible that Dr. Van de Mortel had the year of the sale wrong. The dealers' records would imply so.

[4] At this point, it appears Knoedler held a three-quarter share and Colnaghi a one-quarter share in the painting.

[5] According to a letter of 30 May 1996 from Stephen Rudge, Colnaghi, London (in NGA curatorial files), the old record "card does mention that it was still present [with Colnaghi] in August 1916."

[6] “Janssen Paintings Sold in Holland,” The Milwaukee Journal (3 August 1919): 10; Otto Hirschmann, “Die Sammlung August Janssen,” Der Cicerone 12 (January 1920): 17-18.

[7] Letter of 18 May 1995 from Melissa De Medeiros, librarian at M. Knoedler (in NGA curatorial files). This letter also provides the date of sale to Joseph Widener.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1907 Loan for display with permanent collection, Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1907.

1919 La Collection Goudstikker d'Amsterdam, Pulchri Studio, The Hague, 1919, no. 131, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Johannes Vermeer
Dutch, 1632 - 1675

Girl with the Red Hat

c. 1665/1666

oil on panel
painted surface: 22.8 x 18 cm (9 x 7 1/16 in.)
support: 23.2 x 18.1 cm (9 1/8 x 7 1/8 in.)
framed: 40.3 x 35.6 x 4.4 cm (15 7/8 x 14 x 1 3/4 in.)
Inscription: upper center of tapestry in ligature: IVM
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.53

ENTRY

Girl with the Red Hat has a curious status among Vermeer scholars. Although this small panel painting is widely loved and admired, its attribution to Vermeer has been doubted, and even rejected, by some. [1] The attribution of this work has often been discussed in conjunction with the only other panel painting in Vermeer's oeuvre, *Girl with a Flute* [fig. 1], which has been often wrongly viewed as a pendant. [2] The emotional response elicited by *Girl with the Red Hat* is, indeed, different from that found in other of his paintings, for as the girl turns outward, with her mouth half opened, her eyes seem lit with expectancy. The lushness of her blue robes, the almost passionate flaming red of her hat, and the subtle interplay of green and rose tones in her face give her a vibrancy unique in Vermeer's paintings. Unlike most of his figures, she does not exist in a cerebral, abstract world. Situated before a backdrop of a figured tapestry, [3] she communicates directly with us, both staring out and drawing us in.

The pose of a girl looking over her shoulder at the viewer is commonly found in Vermeer's oeuvre, although in no other instance does she lean an arm on the back of a chair. Nevertheless, similar poses are found in the works of Vermeer's contemporaries. [4] As he did in other works, including *Woman Holding a Balance*, Vermeer adjusted his forms to accommodate his composition. In actuality, the lion-head finials of the chair are too close to each other and are not correctly aligned. The left finial is much larger than the right one and is angled too far to the right. The top of the chair, if extended to the left finial, would intersect it above the bottom of the ring that loops through the lion's mouth. The finials, moreover, face

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toward the viewer, whereas if they belonged to the chair upon which the girl sits, they should face toward her. [5] As in Frans Hals' *Portrait of a Young Man*, only the back of the lion's head should be visible.

The questions raised by the position of the chair and its spatial relationship to the girl have bothered observers of the painting in the past. [6] Interestingly, the spatial discrepancies are not really noticeable until one begins analyzing the painting very closely. Visually, the spatial organization works; Vermeer succeeded in integrating his figure with the chair and at the same time in using the chair to help establish the specific mood he sought. [7]

Despite similarities in the way Vermeer adjusted his forms for compositional emphasis, the *Woman Holding a Balance* and this painting are undeniably different. Whereas the *Woman Holding a Balance* is an involved composition, imbued with complex forms and symbolism, the *Girl with the Red Hat* is no more than a bust, portrayed with a feeling of spontaneity and informality that is unique in the artist's oeuvre. It is as though this small painting were a study, or an experiment. Particularly striking are the light reflections on the right lion-head finial, which have the diffused characteristic of unfocused points of light in a photograph, called "halation of highlights." It is highly unlikely that Vermeer could have achieved this effect without having witnessed it in a camera obscura. [8] Indeed, it may well be that in this painting Vermeer actually attempted to capture the impression of an image seen in a camera obscura.

The hypothesis that Vermeer might have used a camera obscura while painting the *Girl with the Red Hat* was convincingly argued by Charles Seymour. [9] He demonstrated, with the aid of excellent experimental photographs, the close similarity of Vermeer's painterly treatment of the lion-head finial and an unfocused image seen in a camera obscura ([fig. 2] and [fig. 3]). Vermeer exploited this effect to animate his surface and to distinguish different depths of field. [10]

One of the many misconceptions about Vermeer's painting style that has affected theories regarding his use of the camera obscura, including that of Seymour, is that Vermeer was a realist in the strictest sense, that his paintings faithfully record models, rooms, and furnishings he saw before him. [11] As is evident in all his other mature works, the compositions are the product of intense control and refinement. Figures and their environments are subtly interlocked through perspective, proportions, and color. This same mentality must have dictated his artistic procedure, whether he viewed his scene directly or through an optical device such

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as a camera obscura. As has been seen, even in this small *Girl with the Red Hat*, which perhaps of all of Vermeer's images most closely resembles the effects of a camera obscura, he shifted and adjusted his forms to maintain his compositional balance. Thus, even though he must have referred to an image from a camera obscura when painting *Girl with the Red Hat* and sought to exploit some of its optical effects, including the intensified colors, accentuated contrasts of light and dark, and circles of confusion, it is most unlikely that he traced the image directly on the panel. [12] The possibility that he traced his more complex compositions is even more remote.

Vermeer's handling of diffused highlights in his paintings, including *View of Delft* (Mauritshuis, The Hague) [13] suggests that he used them creatively as well, and not totally in accordance with their actual appearance in a camera obscura. In *Girl with the Red Hat* he has accentuated the diffuse yellow highlights on the girl's blue robes, whereas in a camera obscura reflections off unfocused cloth create blurred images. He even painted some of his diffused highlights in the shadows, where they would not appear in any circumstance.

The actual manner in which he applied highlights is comparable to that seen in *The Art of Painting*, c. 1667 (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna). [14] Not only do the specular highlights on the finial share similarities with those on the chandelier in the latter work, but also the diffused highlights on the robe in *Girl with the Red Hat* are comparable to those on the cloth hanging over the front edge of the table in the Vienna painting. These similarities, as well as the comparably generalized forms of the girls' heads in the two paintings, argue for a close chronological relationship. It seems probable that both works were executed around 1666 to 1667, slightly before *The Astronomer* (Louvre, Paris), which is dated 1668.

Vermeer usually painted on canvas, and it is interesting to speculate on the rationale behind his decision to paint on panel in this particular instance. [15] The explanation may simply be that for such a small study panel was a more appropriate support than canvas. The choice of support, however, may also relate to the use of the camera obscura. He may have chosen a hard, smooth surface to lend to his small study the sheen of an image seen in a camera obscura as it is projected onto a ground glass or tautly stretched oiled paper.

Vermeer selected for his painting a panel that had already been used. The image of an unfinished, bust-length portrait of a man with a wide-brimmed hat lies under *Girl with the Red Hat*. It is visible in the X-radiograph [see X-radiography] of the

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panel ([fig. 4]) and with Infrared Reflectography ([fig. 5]). Because the man is in the reverse position of the girl, it is possible to examine his face in the X-radiograph without too much interference from the surface image ([fig. 6] and [fig. 7]). The painting style of this face is very different from that of Vermeer. The face is modeled with a number of bold rapid strokes that have not been blended together. The infrared reflectogram composite reveals a great flourish of strokes to the right of the face that represented the man's long curly hair.

Although it is impossible to attribute a painting to an artist solely on the basis of an X-radiograph, certain characteristics of the handling of the paint in the underlying image are remarkably similar to those seen in paintings by Carel Fabritius (Dutch, c. 1622 - 1654). The small scale of the panel, the subject matter of a male bust, and the rough bold strokes and impasto with which the head is painted are all features found in studies by Fabritius from the late 1640s, such as *Man with a Helmet* in the Groninger Museum, Groningen. [16] At his death Vermeer owned two *tronies* by Fabritius. [17] Considering that Vermeer was an art dealer and may have studied under Fabritius, he could well have owned others during his lifetime. [18]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Attributed to Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with a Flute*, probably 1665/1675, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.98

fig. 2 Detail of lion-head finial, Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with the Red Hat*, c. 1665/1666, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.53

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fig. 3 Experimental photograph, lion-head finial. Photo: Harry Beville

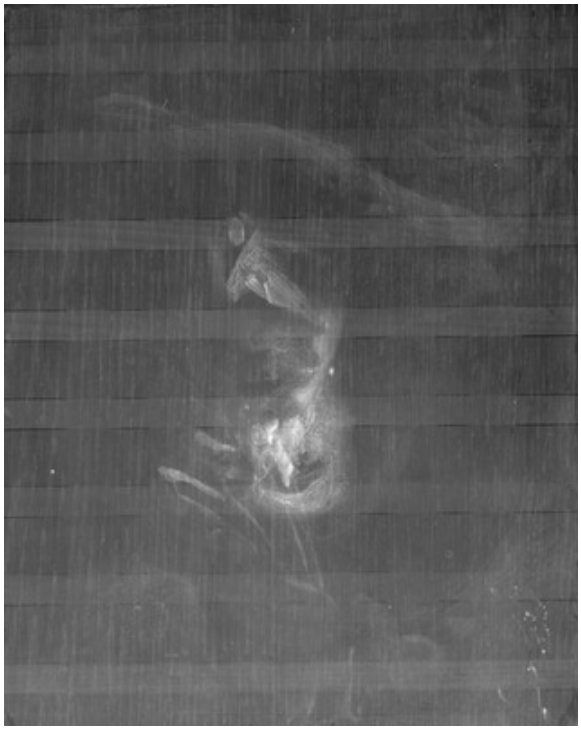

fig. 4 X-radiograph composite, Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with the Red Hat*, c. 1665/1666, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.53

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fig. 5 Infrared reflectogram, Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with the Red Hat*, c. 1665/1666, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.53

fig. 6 Upside-down X-radiograph composite, Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with the Red Hat*, c. 1665/1666, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.53

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fig. 7 Upside-down infrared reflectogram, Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with the Red Hat*, c. 1665/1666, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.53

NOTES

[1] The attribution of *Girl with the Red Hat* to Vermeer has been doubted by Frithjof van Thienen, *Jan Vermeer of Delft* (New York, 1949), 23. The painting was rejected by P. T. A. Swillens, *Johannes Vermeer: Painter of Delft, 1632–1675* (Utrecht, 1950), 65; Albert Blankert, Rob Ruurs, and Willem L. van de Watering, *Johannes Vermeer van Delft 1632–1675* (Utrecht, 1975; English ed., Oxford, 1978), 167–172; Yvonne Brentjens, "Twee meisjes van Vermeer in Washington," *Tableau* 7 (February 1985): 54–58; and Gilles Aillaud, Albert Blankert, and John Michael Montias, *Vermeer* (Paris, 1986), 200–201. For reactions to Blankert's rejection of this painting, see the reviews by Christopher Brown (Christopher Brown, review of Albert Blankert, Rob Ruurs, and Willem L. van de Watering, *Johannes Vermeer van Delft 1632–1675* [Utrecht, 1975], *Simiolus* 9 [1977]: 56–58) and Arthur K.

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Wheelock Jr. (Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., review of Albert Blankert, Rob Ruurs, and Willem L. van de Watering, *Johannes Vermeer van Delft 1632–1675* [Utrecht, 1975], *Art Bulletin* 59 [September 1977]: 439–441). Benjamin Binstock has attributed *Girl with a Red Hat* to Vermeer's daughter Maria Vermeer; see Benjamin Binstock, *Vermeer's Family Secrets: Genius, Discovery, and the Unknown Apprentice* (New York, 2009), 247–257, 253 repro.

[2] For a comparative analysis of the paintings, see the entry on *Girl with a Flute*.

[3] Although only a portion of the tapestry is visible, it appears that two rather large-scale figures are depicted behind the girl. The patterned vertical strip on the right is probably the outer border. A. M. Louise E. Muler-Erkelens, keeper of textiles, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, relates this format to late sixteenth-century tapestries of the southern Netherlands. She also notes that the tapestries in Vermeer's paintings belong to the same period (see her letter of May 7, 1974, to A. B. de Vries, copy in NGA curatorial files).

[4] For example, Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666), who apparently invented the pose, used it often. It is employed in his *Portrait of a Young Man*, to capture an informal, momentary impression of the sitter. He drapes the figure's arm over the chair, subordinating the horizontal for a more active diagonal emphasis. Vermeer minimized the diagonal thrust of the girl's arm by partially obscuring it behind the lion finials of the chair. It is possible that the girl was not sitting on the lion finial chair at all and that Vermeer placed it in the foreground to act as a foil. See Charles Seymour Jr., "Dark Chamber and Light-Filled Room: Vermeer and the Camera Obscura," *Art Bulletin* 46 (September 1964): 323–331.

[5] The first art historian to note this discrepancy was Reginald Howard Wilenski, *An Introduction to Dutch Art* (New York, 1929), 284–285. He hypothesized that the peculiar arrangement of the finials arose as a result of Vermeer's use of a mirror. His reconstruction of Vermeer's painting procedure, however, is untenable.

[6] Albert Blankert, Rob Ruurs, and Willem L. van de Watering, *Johannes Vermeer van Delft 1632-1675* (Utrecht, 1975; English ed., Oxford, 1978), 109, in particular, emphasizes the position of the finials in his arguments against the attribution of the painting to Vermeer.

[7] The idea that Vermeer adjusted forms in such a manner is incompatible with those who believe that he totally and faithfully recorded his physical environment. P. T. A. Swillens, *Johannes Vermeer: Painter of Delft, 1632–1675* (Utrecht, 1950), was the foremost proponent of this interpretation of Vermeer's manner of painting. This attitude also underlies the writings about Vermeer by Albert Blankert.

[8] The literature on Vermeer and the camera obscura is extensive. See in

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particular Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Vermeer* (New York, 1981), note 41.

[9] See Charles Seymour Jr., "Dark Chamber and Light-Filled Room: Vermeer and the Camera Obscura," *Art Bulletin* 46 (September 1964): 323– 331.

[10] He may also have recognized that the peculiarly soft quality of these unfocused highlights would beautifully express the luminosity of pearls. Thus even in paintings such as *Woman Holding a Balance,* whose genesis probably has little to do with the camera obscura, these optical effects are apparent.

[11] This misconception lies at the basis of the interpretation of Vermeer's use of the camera obscura advanced by Daniel E. Fink, "Vermeer's Use of the Camera Obscura: A Comprehensive Study," *Art Bulletin* 53 (December 1971): 493–505. See Charles Seymour Jr., "Dark Chamber and Light-Filled Room: Vermeer and the Camera Obscura," *Art Bulletin* 46 (September 1964): 323–331.

[12] As suggested by Charles Seymour Jr., "Dark Chamber and Light-Filled Room: Vermeer and the Camera Obscura," *Art Bulletin* 46 (September 1964): 323– 331.

[13] See inventory number 92, from Mauritshuis, The Hague.

[14] See inventory number 9128, c. 1667, from Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

[15] The only other panel painting attributed to Vermeer is the National Gallery of Art's *Girl with a Flute*.

[16] Oil on panel, 38.5 x 31 cm, illustrated in Christopher Brown, *Carel Fabritius* (Oxford, 1981), pl. 3.

[17] John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton, 1989), 339, doc. 364. The term *tronie* had various meanings in the seventeenth century, but generally it denoted a small, relatively inexpensive bust-length figure study. Although such studies could have been commissioned portraits, most were probably figure types, or character studies, produced for the open market.

[18] For another small painting in the National Gallery of Art collection where one artist has reused a panel previously painted by another artist by turning the image 180 degrees, see Follower of Rembrandt van Rijn, *Study of an Old Man*.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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The support is a single wood plank, probably oak, with a vertical grain. A cradle, including a wooden collar around all four sides of the panel, was attached before the painting entered the collection. A partially completed painting exists underneath the present composition oriented 180 degrees with respect to the girl. The X-radiograph reveals the head-and-shoulders portrait of a man wearing a white kerchief around his neck and a button on his garment. Infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 2.5 microns[1] shows a cape across his shoulder, a broad-brimmed hat, locks of long curling hair, and vigorous brushwork in the background.

The panel was initially prepared with a light tan double ground.[2] The male bust was executed in a dark brown painted sketch, before flesh tones were applied to the face and white to the kerchief. The portrait of the young girl was painted directly over the underlying composition, with the exception of the area of the man's kerchief, which Vermeer apparently toned down with a brown paint.

The paint used to model the girl was applied with smoothly blended strokes. Layered applications of paint of varying transparencies and thicknesses, often blended wet-into-wet, produced soft contours and diffused lighting effects. The paint in the white kerchief around the girl's neck has been scraped back to expose darker paint below.

The painting was treated in 1994 to remove discolored varnish and inpaint. The treatment revealed the painting to be in excellent condition with just a few minor losses along the edges. The painting had been treated previously in 1933, probably by Louis de Wild, and in 1942 by Frank Sullivan.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara focal plane array InSb camera fitted with H, J, and K astronomy filters.

[2] The lower ground consists of calcium carbonate, the upper ground of white lead lightly toned with earth and black (see Melanie Gifford, "Painting Light: Recent Observations on Vermeer's Technique," in Vermeer Studies, ed. Ivan Gaskell and Michiel Jonker [Washington, D.C., 1998], 185–199).

PROVENANCE

Possibly Pieter Claesz van Ruijven [1624-1674], Delft; possibly by inheritance to his wife, Maria de Knuijt [d. 1681]; possibly by inheritance to her daughter, Magdalena

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van Ruijven [1655-1682], Delft;[1] possibly by inheritance to her husband, Jacob Abrahamsz. Dissius [1653-1695], Delft; (sale, Amsterdam, 16 May 1696, probably no. 39 or 40).[2] Lafontaine collection, Paris; (his sale, Hôtel de Bouillon, Paris, 10-12 December 1822 [postponed from 27-29 November], no. 28). Baron Louis Marie Baptiste Atthalin [1784-1856], Colmar; by inheritance to his nephew and adopted son, Louis Marie Félix Laurent-Atthalin [1818-1893], Colmar and Paris; by inheritance to his son, Baron Gaston Marie Laurent-Atthelin [1848-1912], Paris and Château des Moussets, Limay, Seine-et-Oise; by inheritance to his wife, Baroness Marguerite Chaperon Laurent-Atthalin [1854-1931], Paris;[3] (M. Knoedler & Co., New York and London); sold November 1925 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 30 March 1932 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] Perhaps the *Girl with the Red Hat* was one of the *tronien* listed in the April 1683 inventory of possessions accruing to Jacob Dissius after the death of his wife, Magdalena van Ruijven, on 16 June 1682. See John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History*, Princeton, 1989: 359, doc. 417.

[2] John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History*, Princeton, 1989: 363-364, doc. 439. Item no. 38 in the sale is described as "a tronie in antique dress, uncommonly artful"; item no. 39 as "Another ditto Vermeer"; and item no. 40 as "A pendant of the same."

[3] Bernard Roulier, the Baroness' great-grandson, related the family's history of their ownership of the painting in a letter of 6 October 1983 to J. Carter Brown (copy in NGA curatorial files). Roulier suggests that Baron L.M.B. Atthalin might have purchased the painting at the 1822 sale, while his mother related to mutual friends of hers and J. Carter Brown that the baron bought the painting after seeing it in a shop window (letter, 28 June 1977, Brown to Mme Denise Kagan Moyseur, copy in NGA curatorial files).

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1925 Loan Exhibition of Dutch Masters of the Seventeenth Century, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 1925, no. 1.

1927 [Loan exhibition for the opening of the new building], Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, 1927, no catalogue.

1928 A Loan Exhibition of Twelve Masterpieces of Painting, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 1928, no. 12.

1995 Johannes Vermeer, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1995-1996, no. 14, repro.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 60.

1999 Johannes Vermeer: The Art of Painting, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1999-2000, brochure, fig. 11.

2001 Vermeer and the Delft School, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The National Gallery, London, 2001, no. 74, repro.

2003 Vermeer y el interior holandés, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2003, no. 37, repro.

2012 Vermeer: Il secolo d'oro dell'arte olandese, Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome, 2012-2013, no. 49, repro.

2014 Small Treasures: Rembrandt, Vermeer, Hals, and Their Contemporaries, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Birmingham Museum of Art, 2014-2015, no. 43, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Johannes Vermeer
Dutch, 1632 - 1675

A Lady Writing

c. 1665

oil on canvas
overall: 45 x 39.9 cm (17 11/16 x 15 11/16 in.)
framed: 68.3 x 62.2 x 7 cm (26 7/8 x 24 1/2 x 2 3/4 in.)
Inscription: center left on frame of picture on back wall: IVMEER (IVM in ligature)
Gift of Harry Waldron Havemeyer and Horace Havemeyer, Jr., in memory of their father, Horace Havemeyer 1962.10.1

ENTRY

Vermeer, to a greater extent than any other Dutch artist, was able to capture the delicate equilibrium between the physical stillness of a setting and a transient moment of an individual arrested within it. As in *Woman Holding a Balance*, he has focused here on a psychological moment by subordinating all physical action. A woman, dressed elegantly in a lemon-yellow morning jacket bordered with ermine trim, sits before a table. She holds a quill pen loosely in her right hand, while her left hand secures the paper. She looks up from her writing and regards the viewer with a slightly quizzical expression. As in so many of his masterpieces, Vermeer gives no explanation for the significance of her gaze. This characteristic has led to criticism that his paintings lack psychological penetration, but it is also an essential ingredient in the poetic suggestiveness of his images.

A Lady Writing is signed with a monogram on the lower frame of the picture on the back wall, but like most Vermeer paintings, it is not dated. The painting style and technique, as well as the woman's costume and hairdo, however, relate to other works that appear to belong to the artist's mature phase, in the mid-to-late 1660s. The woman's elegant yellow jacket is almost certainly the one mentioned in the inventory of household effects made after Vermeer's death. [1] It is found in three other of his paintings from this period: *Young Lady Adorning Herself with a Pearl Necklace* in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; *Lady with a Lute* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and *Mistress and Maid* in the Frick Collection, New York [fig. 1]. [2] The inkwells and the decorated casket on the table are similar to those in the Frick painting. The hairstyle, with the braided chignon on the back of the head

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and the ribbons tied in bows formed like stars, was popular in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, particularly after the early 1660s. [3]

Conceptually, this painting relates to *Woman Holding a Balance*, for in both works Vermeer has explored a moment in which the central figure has paused in the course of her activity. The woman's image in *A Lady Writing*, however, is weightier. The delicate equilibrium between stillness and implied movement found in *Woman Holding a Balance* has shifted toward stillness. Likewise, Vermeer's concern for the woman's physical appearance—for her costume, hairstyle, and expression—has taken on greater importance. Such differences may be relevant chronologically, for they are characteristics found in a number of Vermeer's later works. Seen in conjunction with the refined elegance of the woman's appearance, they suggest that *A Lady Writing* dates slightly after the *Woman Holding a Balance*.

Vermeer has here significantly reduced the number of compositional elements and focused intently on the woman's figure and a few objects in her environment. Not only is she proportionally larger and fuller than the woman holding the balance, she and the table on which she writes are quite close to the picture plane, a proximity emphasized by the directness of her gaze. Although in both paintings light enters from the left, no light source is shown in *A Lady Writing*. The light illuminating the tabletop, the woman's face, and her rich lemon-yellow morning jacket is softer and more diffused than that of *Woman Holding a Balance*.

Vermeer limited his composition here to a few select elements that reinforce the central motif of a woman writing. He has clustered all the small objects in the painting on the table. This concentration of small shapes contrasts with the broad forms of the rest of the composition, which create a geometric framework for the figure. The picture on the back wall, for example, covers two-thirds of the width of the composition. The width of the wall to the right of the picture is equal to the height of the table, or one-half the distance from the bottom of the picture to the bottom edge of the painting itself. The width of the table, moreover, is approximately one-half the width of the painting. Such proportional relationships help balance and harmonize the essentially asymmetrical composition.

In much the same manner that Vermeer has refined his composition by eliminating extraneous elements, so has he eliminated anecdotal elements that give clues to the meaning of the painting. While he has depicted a woman, pen in hand, looking directly at the viewer, he has not indicated whether she is contemplating her

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message or directing her attention outward. Unlike other of Vermeer's depictions of letter writers such as the *Mistress and Maid* (Frick Collection, New York), no maid delivers a letter or awaits a reply. One possible indication of the general theme of the painting may be given by the picture hanging on the back wall. This dark and barely distinguishable image appears to be a still life with musical instruments. [4] The only recognizable instrument is a bass viol. Musical instruments often carry implications of love, and thus it may be understood that the letter is directed to an absent lover. [5] Such an interpretation is supported by relating *A Lady Writing* to the iconographic tradition found in the works of many of Vermeer's contemporaries, particularly Gerard ter Borch the Younger (Dutch, 1617 - 1681), Gabriel Metsu (Dutch, 1629 - 1667), and Frans van Mieris (Dutch, 1635 - 1681). Many of these paintings of letter writers have explicit love connotations and can be related to emblematic literature. Metsu, for example, in his painting *A Young Woman Composing Music* in the Mauritshuis [fig. 2], has depicted a woman sitting at a table contemplating the music she is writing. [6] Behind her stands an attentive man, before her another woman playing a lute. Above the fireplace hangs a painting of a ship in a stormy sea. Aside from the sensuous connotations of the man and the music of the lute, the painting above the fireplace relates to emblems commenting upon the perils of love. [7]

Vermeer must have known Ter Borch's *Letter Writer* (c. 1655, Mauritshuis, The Hague), the first Dutch depiction of this subject, as well as Metsu's slightly later adaptation, *Elegant Lady Writing at Her Desk* (c. 1662–1664, Leiden Collection). [8] Ter Borch's model, his half-sister Gesina (also depicted in The Suitor's Visit), is clearly absorbed in her writing, while Metsu's writer stops mid-gesture as she lifts her quill from the ink well, turning to meet the viewer's eye. [9] The narrative immediacy of those images seems qualitatively different from the motionless moment of Vermeer's painting. Technical examination with x-radiography and infrared reflectography has clarified Vermeer's process. He first painted the quill pen in an upright position—his writer, like Ter Borch's, was actively engaged in writing—but he later altered the quill so it would rest at an angle as the writer pauses, lost in thought. [10]

One possible explanation for the woman's striking pose is that *A Lady Writing* is a portrait. The letter-writing theme would have allowed Vermeer to achieve a convincing sense of naturalism that formal portraits often lack. Although no documentary evidence confirms that Vermeer painted portraits, certain compositional characteristics in this work seem to reinforce this hypothesis. He has

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posed the woman in the foreground of the painting, thereby enhancing her physical and psychological presence. Her distinctive features—a large forehead and a long, narrow nose—are portraitlike characteristics that resemble those of *Study of a Young Woman* (c. 1666–1667, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), and are not as idealized as those of women in his other genre scenes of the same period. Finally, her form is modeled with delicate brushstrokes and subtle nuances of color that articulate her features with unusual clarity.

The identity of the sitter has not been established. One possibility is that she is Vermeer's wife, Catharina Bolnes. Born in 1631, she would have been in her early-to-mid thirties when Vermeer painted this work. Although it is difficult to judge the age of models in paintings, such an age does seem appropriate for this figure, and she does wear Catharina's yellow jacket. [11] Her physical features, however, differ from those of the model for *Woman Holding a Balance*, who is likely Catharina Bolnes. [12]

Original entry by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., April 24, 2014.

Revised by Alexandra Libby to incorporate information from a technical examination.

December 9, 2019

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Johannes Vermeer, *Mistress and Maid*, c. 1667–1668, oil on canvas, Frick Collection, New York. Photo © The Frick Collection, New York

fig. 2 Gabriel Metsu, *A Young Woman Composing Music*, c. 1662-1663, oil on panel, Mauritshuis, The Hague

NOTES

[1] John Michael Montias, *Recent Archival Research on Vermeer*, Studies in the History of Art (Washington, DC, 1998), 339, doc. 364: "a yellow satin mantle with white fur trimming."

[2] See inventory no. 912B from the Staatliche Museen, Berlin; inventory no. 25.110.24 from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and inventory no. 19.1.126 from the Frick Collection, New York. For the dating of the Frick painting, see *The Frick Collection: An Illustrated Catalogue: Paintings, American, British, Dutch, Flemish and German* (New York, 1968), 296–297.

[3] This information was kindly supplied by A. M. Louise E. Mulder-Erkelens, keeper of textiles, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (see her letter of May 7, 1974, to A. B. de Vries, copy in NGA curatorial files).

[4] Keil Boström, "Jan Vermeer van Delft en Cornelis van der Meulen," *Oud-*

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Holland 66 (1951): 117–122, suggests that the painting depicted may be one by Adam Frans van der Meulen (French, born Flanders, 1632 - 1690). The evidence, however, is not sufficient to sustain an attribution. A painting depicting “a bass viol with a skull” is listed in the inventory of Vermeer’s possessions after his death in 1676. See John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton, 1989), 340, doc. 364.

[5] This thematic association was first suggested by Albert P. de Mirimonde, “Les Sujets musicaux chez Vermeer de Delft,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 57 (January 1961): 40. For emblematic literature relating musical instruments to love see Eddy de Jongh, *Zinne- en Minnebeelden in de schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1967), 50–51.

[6] See Gabriel Metsu, *A Young Woman Composing Music*, c. 1662–1663 (Mauritshuis, inventory no. 94). Franklin W. Robinson, *Gabriel Metsu (1629–1667): A Study of His Place in Dutch Genre Painting of the Golden Age* (New York, 1974), 64–65, dates this painting to around 1667.

[7] Eddy de Jongh, *Zinne- en Minnebeelden in de schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1967), 50–51.

[8] Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., “Pen to Paper,” in *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting* (Dublin, 2017), 122–127.

[9] On Ter Borch’s approach to temporality see Alexandra Libby, *Time and Temporality in 17th-Century Dutch Genre Painting*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, https://www.nga.gov/research/in-depth/themes-ideas-dutch-genre-painting/time-temporality-17-century-dutch-genre-painting.html (accessed Mar. 22, 2019).

[10] E. Melanie Gifford, public lecture at symposium for the exhibition *Johannes Vermeer*, January 20, 1996.

[11] John Michael Montias, *Recent Archival Research on Vermeer*, Studies in the History of Art (Washington, DC, 1998), 339, doc. 364: “a yellow satin mantle with white fur trimming.”

[12] See Ernst Gunther Grimme, *Jan Vermeer van Delft* (Cologne, 1974), 54. For my identification of the model in *Woman Holding a Balance* as Catharina Bolnes, Vermeer’s wife and the mother of his fifteen children, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675): Sainte Praxède–Saint Praxedis* (Monaco, 1998), 28.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The fabric support has a moderately fine weave. [1] It has been lined, and only fragments remain of the original tacking margins. The support was prepared with a

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warm gray ground, which extends onto the tacking margin on the right and lower edges. [2] Examination has not revealed evidence of an underdrawing or painted sketch, but Vermeer may have laid out the composition with white chalk, as seen in his *The Art of Painting* (c. 1666/1668, Kunsthistoriches Museum Wien, Gemäldegalerie).

Vermeer worked with a colored underpaint characterized by stronger contrasts of light and dark than the final paint and a rougher texture. The contrast of smoothly blended final paint over the vigorous underpaint creates a variety of textural and light effects. In the yellow jacket, for example, vigorous folds described in the underpaint were smoothed by fluid strokes, followed by rounded highlights touched into wet paint to form specular reflections on the fabric. Contours are softened by blending adjacent paint areas wet-into-wet, or by leaving a small area of ground or underpaint exposed along the edges of the forms. [3] Magnified examination of the paint surface, as well as x-radiography and infrared reflectography shows that Vermeer first depicted the pen in a more upright position. [4] This small change—from a hand actively engaged in writing to a quill that falls back loosely in the distracted writer's hand—conveys a moment of stillness characteristic of Vermeer's works.

A few flake losses exist, mostly on the edges. Small, regularly spaced holes along the left and right edges penetrate the paint and ground layer but do not align with the cusping pattern or appear to be tack holes from a dimensional change. There is some abrasion in the still life hanging on the wall, but overall the painting is in excellent condition. It was treated in 1935 by Louis de Wild. [5] In 1994 and 1995 the painting was treated again at the National Gallery of Art to remove De Wild's varnish and inpainting, both of which had discolored considerably.

Dina Anchin, based on the examination report by David Bull.

December 9, 2019

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Earlier technical summaries of this work were prepared by Melissa Katz and Catherine Metzger.
Average densities of 14.5 threads/cm horizontally and 12.1 threads/cm vertically were measured by the Thread Count Automation Project of

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Cornell University and Rice University (see report dated May 2010 in NGA conservation department files).

[2] Robert L. Feller, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, has identified chalk, lead white, black, and red and yellow iron oxide pigments in the gray ground (see report dated June 26, 1974, in NGA conservation department files).

[3] Melanie Gifford, "Painting Light: Recent Observations on Vermeer's Technique," in *Vermeer Studies*, ed. Ivan Gaskell and Michiel Jonker (Washington, DC, 1998), 185–199.

[4] Infrared reflectography was carried out using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera filtered to 1.5–1.8 microns (H filter). X-radiography was carried out with a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube, and the images were digitally captured using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537 (14 × 17 in.). The parameters were 43 kV, 8 mA, 30 seconds, and 98.5 in. distance (from source to plate). The resulting digital images were composited and processed using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

[5] See memo dated February 2, 1968, in NGA conservation department files.

PROVENANCE

Possibly Pieter Claesz van Ruijven [1624-1674], Delft; possibly by inheritance to his wife, Maria de Knuijt [d. 1681]; possibly by inheritance to her daughter, Magdalena van Ruijven [1655-1682], Delft; possibly by inheritance to her husband, Jacobus Abrahamsz. Dissius [1653-1695], Delft;[1] (his sale, Amsterdam, 16 May 1696, no. 35).[2] J. van Buren, The Hague; (his sale, Bernardus Scheurleer, The Hague, 7-12 November 1808, 6th day [12 Nov.], no. 22 of the paintings). Dr. Cornelis Jan Luchtmans [1777-1860], Rotterdam; (his sale, by Mierop, Muys van Leen, and Lamme, Rotterdam, 20 and 22 April 1816, 1st day, no. 90); J. Kamermans, Rotterdam; (his sale, by A. Lamme, Rotterdam, 3 October 1825, no. 70); Lelie.[3] Hendrik Reydon; (his sale, by J. de Vries, A. Brondgeest, E.M. Engelberts, and C.F. Roos, Amsterdam, 5-6 April 1827, no. 26). François-Xavier, comte de Robiano [1778-1836], Brussels; (his estate sale, Hotel du Défunt, Brussels, 1 May 1837 and days following, no. 436); purchased by Héris for François-Xavier's son. Ludovic, comte de Robiano [1807-1887], Brussels; by inheritance to Ludovic's heirs, possibly his daughter and only child, Jeanne [1835-1900] and her husband, Gustave, baron de Senzeilles de Soumagne [1824-1906], until 1906;[4] (J. & A. LeRoy, Brussels); purchased 1907 by J. Pierpont Morgan [1837-1913], New York; by inheritance to his

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son, J. P. Morgan, Jr. [1867-1943], New York; consigned 1935-1939 to, and purchased 1940 by (M. Knoedler & Co., New York); sold 1940 to Sir Harry Oakes [1874-1943], Nassau, Bahamas; by gift or inheritance to his wife, Lady Eunice Myrtle McIntyre Oakes [c. 1894-1981], Nassau, Bahamas; consigned 1946 to (M. Knoedler & Co., New York);[5] sold 1946 to Horace Havemeyer [1886-1956], New York; by inheritance to his sons, Harry Waldron Havemeyer [b. 1929], New York, and Horace Havemeyer, Jr. [1914-1990], New York;[6] gift 1962 to NGA.

[1] The 1683 inventory of goods accruing to Jacob Dissius after the death of his wife Magdalena van Ruyven lists twenty paintings by Vermeer. For the complete transactions between her husband Jacob Dissius and his father Abraham Dissius following her death, see John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History*, Princeton, 1989: 246-257, 359-361, docs. 417, 420.

[2] For this sale see Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History*, Princeton, 1989: 363-364, doc. 439.

[3] This name is recorded in an annotated copy of the sale catalogue in the NGA Library.

[4] This is suggested by the Getty Provenance Index© Databases, Public Collections, record 17464.

[5] The Knoedler's consignment numbers were CA 1503 (from Morgan) and CA 2758 (from Lady Oakes), per the Getty Provenance Index© Databases, Public Collections, record 17464.

[6] Harry W. Havemeyer (correspondence 12 August 2010) indicated that Vermeer's painting hung over the fireplace in the library of their residence at 720 Park Avenue, but emphasized that the fireplace, therefore, was never used. He wrote that his father probably had first admired the painting at the Hudson-Fulton exhibition in 1909, and was pleased to be able to acquire it from Knoedler's when it was offered to him in 1946. Harry and Horace Havemeyer decided to donate the painting to the National Gallery of Art because of their father's admiration for the

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Gallery and its director John Walker.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1873 Exposition de tableaux et dessins d'anciens maîtres, La société néerlandaise de bienfaisance à Bruxelles, Brussels, 1873, no. 264.

1908 Loan to display with the permanent collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1908 and 1909-1913.

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 136.

1935 Vermeer, Oorsprong en Invloed, Fabritius, de Hooch, de Witte, Museum Boymans-van-Bauningen, Rotterdam, 1935, no. 86a.

1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, 1939, no. 399. repro.

1940 Loan Exhibition of Allied Art for Allied Aid for the Benefit of the Red Cross War Relief Fund, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 1940, no. 6.

1941 Loan Exhibition in Honor of Royal Cortissoz and His 50 Years of Criticism in the New York Herald Tribune, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 1941, no. 71.

1942 Paintings by the Great Dutch Masters of the Seventeenth Century, Duveen Galleries, New York, 1942, no. 68, repro.; Art Institute of Chicago, no. 42, repro.

1943 An Exhibition of Paintings by Living Masters of the Past, Baltimore Museum of Art; The North Carolina State Art Society Gallery, Raleigh, 1943, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

1946 Loan Exhibition of 24 Masterpieces, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 1946, no. 15, repro.

1976 Chefs-d'oeuvre de Musées des États-Unis de Giorgione à Picasso, Musée Marmottan, Paris, 1976, no. 18, repro.

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1976 Zapadnoevropeiskaia i Amerikanskaia zhivopis is muzeev ssha [West European and American Painting from the Museums of USA], State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad; State Pushkin Museum, Moscow; State Museums, Kiev and Minsk, 1976, unnumbered catalogue.

1987 Space in European Art: Council of Europe Exhibition in Japan, National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, 1987, no. 86.

1989 Masterpieces of Western European Painting of the XVIth-XXth Centuries from the Museums of the European Countries and USA, State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, 1989, no. 14, repro.

1990 Great Dutch Paintings from America, Mauritshuis, The Hague; The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, 1990-1991, no. 67, color repro., as A Girl Writing a Letter.

1993 Leselust: Niederländische Malerei von Rembrandt bis Vermeer, Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, Germany, 1993-1994, no. 85, repro.

1995 Johannes Vermeer, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1995-1996, no. 13, repro.

1999 Johannes Vermeer: The Art of Painting, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1999-2000, not in brochure.

1999 Masterpieces from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art; Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, 1999, no. 83, repro.

2001 Art and Home: Dutch Interiors in the Age of Rembrandt, The Newark Museum; Denver Art Museum, 2001-2002, no. 108, fig. 108 (shown only in Denver).

2003 Love Letters: Dutch Genre Paintings in the Age of Vermeer, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin; Bruce Museum of Arts and Science, Greenwich, Connecticut, 2003-2004, no. 38, fig. 55, repro. 181 (shown only in Dublin).

2004 Senses and Sins: Dutch Painters of Daily Life in the Seventeenth Century, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Frankfurt, 2004-2005, no. 69, repro.

2008 Loan for display with permanent collection, Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, 2008-2009.

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2011 Human Connections in the Age of Vermeer, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art; The Miyagi Museum of Art, Sendai; The Bunkamura Museum of Art, Tokyo, 2011-2012, no. 42, repro.

2015 Class Distinctions: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt and Vermeer, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, 2015-2016, no. 31, repro.

2016 Loan for display with permanent collection, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 2016.

2017 Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry, Musée du Louvre, Paris; National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin; National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2017-2018, no. 2.3, repro.

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1908 "Recent Loans." *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 3 (April 1908): 76.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Johannes Vermeer
Dutch, 1632 - 1675

Woman Holding a Balance

c. 1664

oil on canvas
painted surface: 39.7 x 35.5 cm (15 5/8 x 14 in.)
stretcher size: 42.5 x 38 cm (16 3/4 x 14 15/16 in.)
framed: 62.9 x 58.4 x 7.6 cm (24 3/4 x 23 x 3 in.)
Widener Collection 1942.9.97

ENTRY

The young woman standing before a table in a corner of a room gazes toward the balance she is holding gently in her right hand. As though waiting for the delicate modulations of the balance to come to rest, she stands transfixed in a moment of equilibrium. She is dressed in a blue morning jacket bordered with white fur; seen through the parting of her jacket are vivid stripes of yellow and orange, perhaps ribbons or part of her bodice. Her white cap falls loosely to either side of her neck, framing her pensive yet serene face. Diffused sunlight, entering through an open window before her, helps illuminate the scene. The light, warmed by the orange curtain, flows across the gray wall and catches the fingers of the woman's right hand and the balance before resting on her upper figure.

Behind the woman looms a painting of the *Last Judgment*, [1] which acts as a compositional and iconographic foil to the scene before it. The *Last Judgment*, its proportions echoing those of the overall painting, occupies the entire upper right quadrant of the composition. Its rectangular shape establishes a quiet and stable framework against which Vermeer juxtaposes the figure of the woman, whose white cap and blue morning jacket contrast with the dark painting. Her figure is aligned with the central axis of the *Last Judgment*: her head lies at the middle of its composition, directly beneath the oval mandorla of the Christ in majesty. Her right hand coincides with the lower corner of the frame, which happens also to be the vanishing point of the perspective system. Her head and the central gesture of her hand are thus visually locked in space, and a seeming moment of quiet contemplation becomes endowed with permanence and symbolic associations.

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The visual juxtaposition of the woman and the *Last Judgment* is reinforced by thematic parallels: to judge is to weigh. As Christ sits in majesty on the Day of Judgment, his gesture, with both arms raised, mirrors the opposing direction of the woman's balance. His judgments are eternal; hers are temporal. Nevertheless, the woman's pensive response to the balance suggests that her act of judgment, although different in consequence, is as conscientiously considered as that of the Christ behind her. What then is the thematic relationship between her act and the painting on the wall behind her?

This question has been asked time and again, and, indeed, the actual nature of her act and its significance have been variously interpreted. Most earlier interpretations of this painting focused on the act of weighing and were premised upon the assumption that the pans of the woman's balance contain certain precious objects, generally identified as gold or pearls. Consequently, until recently the painting had been alternately described as the *Goldweigher* or the *Girl Weighing Pearls*. [2]

Microscopic examination, however, has revealed that the apparent objects in the scales are painted in a manner quite different from the representation of gold or pearls found elsewhere in this painting [fig. 1]. The highlights in the scale certainly do not represent gold, for they are not painted with lead-tin yellow, as is the gold chain draped over the jewelry casket. The pale, creamy color is more comparable to that found on the pearls, but while the point of light in the center of the left pan of the balance looks initially like a pearl, Vermeer's technique of rendering pearls is different. As may be seen in the strand of pearls lying on the table and in those draped over the jewelry box, he paints pearls in two layers: a thin, underneath (grayish) layer and a superimposed highlight. This technique permits him to depict their specular highlights and at the same time to suggest their translucent and three-dimensional qualities. In the band of pearls draped over the box, the size of the pearl (the thin, diffused layer) remains relatively constant although the highlights on the pearls (the thick, top layer) vary considerably in size according to the amount of light hitting them. The highlight in the center of the left pan is composed of only one layer—the bright highlight. Lacking the underlayer, the spot is not only smaller but also less softly luminescent compared to the pearls. The more diffused highlight in the center of the right pan is larger, but it is not round and has no specular highlight. These points thus appear to be reflections of light from the window rather than objects unto themselves. Reinforcing the sense that the scales are empty is the fact that the pearls and gold on the boxes and table are bound together and none lie on the table as separate entities as though waiting to

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be weighed and measured against one another.

Even so, the jewelry boxes, strands of pearls, and gold chain on the table must be considered in any assessment of this painting's meaning. As riches they belong to, and are valued within, the temporal world. They have been interpreted in the past as temptations of material wealth and the woman as the personification of Vanitas. [3] Pearls, however, have many symbolic meanings, ranging from the purity of the Virgin Mary to the vices of pride and arrogance. As the woman concentrates on the balance in her hand, her attitude is one of inner peace and serenity. The psychological tension that would suggest a conflict between her action and the implications of the *Last Judgment* does not exist.

Although the allegorical character of *Woman Holding a Balance* differs from the more genrelike focus of comparable paintings by Vermeer of the early to mid-1660s, the thematic concerns underlying this work are similar: one should lead a life of temperance and balanced judgment. Indeed, this message, with or without its explicit religious context, is found in paintings from all phases of Vermeer's career and must represent his profound beliefs about the proper conduct of human life. The balance, the emblem of Justice and eventually of the final judgment, would seem to denote the woman's responsibility to weigh and balance her own actions, [4] a responsibility reinforced by the juxtaposition of her head over the traditional position of Saint Michael in the *Last Judgment* scene. Correspondingly, the mirror, placed near the light source, and directly opposite the woman's face, was commonly referred to as a means of self-knowledge. [5] As Otto van Veen (Flemish, 1556 - 1629) wrote in an emblem book Vermeer certainly knew, "a perfect glasse doth represent the face, lust as it is in deed, not flattring it at all." [6] In her search for self-knowledge and in her acceptance of the responsibility of maintaining the balance and equilibrium of her life, the woman would seem to be aware, although not in fear, of the final judgment that awaits her. Indeed, in the context of that pensive moment of decision, the mirror also suggests the evocative imagery of 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Vermeer's painting is thus a positive statement, an expression of the essential tranquility of one who understands the implications of the Last Judgment and who searches to moderate her life in order to warrant her salvation.

The character of the scene conforms closely to Saint Ignatius of Loyola's recommendations for meditation in his *Spiritual Exercises,* a devotional service with which Vermeer was undoubtedly familiar through his contacts with the Jesuits.

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As Cunnar has emphasized, Saint Ignatius urged that, prior to meditating, the practicer first examine his conscience and weigh his sins as though he were standing before God on Judgment Day, and then "weigh" his choices and choose a path of life that will allow him to be judged favorably in a "balanced" manner. [7]

> I must rather be like the equalized scales of a balance ready to follow the course which I feel is more for the glory and praise of God, our Lord, and the salvation of my soul. [8]

The many different interpretations of this painting that have appeared over the years, nevertheless, are a reminder of how cautious one must be in proposing a given meaning for this work. In addition to questions concerning the contents of the balance, there has been speculation as to whether the woman is pregnant or whether her costume reflects a style of dress in fashion during the early to mid-1660s, when this painting seems to have been executed. [9] If she is pregnant, does her pregnancy have consequence for the interpretation of the painting? [10] Is she, as some have suggested, a secularized image of the Virgin Mary, who, standing before the Last Judgment, would assume her role as intercessor and compassionate mother? [11] Cunnar has argued, for example, that the image of a pregnant Virgin Mary contemplating balanced scales would have been understood by a Catholic viewer as referring to her anticipation of Christ's life, his sacrifice, and the eventual foundation of the Church. [12] Such theological associations were made in the seventeenth century and may have played a part in Vermeer's allegorical concept. [13]

This painting offers one of the most glorious examples of Vermeer's exquisite sense of balance and rhythm from the early to mid-1660s. The woman, her right hand gently holding the scale, is poised with her small finger extended, which gives a horizontal accent to the gesture. The left arm, gracefully resting on the edge of the table, closes the space around the balance and establishes an echo to the gentle arch of boxes, blue cloth, and sunlight sweeping down from the other side. The scales themselves, perfectly balanced but not symmetrical, are situated against the wall in a small niche of space created especially for them. Although no Pentimenti are visible in the X-radiograph [fig. 2] [see X-radiography], an infrared reflectogram reveals that the balance was enlarged and lowered. Vermeer has also taken the liberty of raising the bottom left edge of the picture frame behind the woman to allow sufficient room for the balance. Throughout, his interplay of

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verticals and horizontals, and of both against diagonals, of mass against void, and of light against dark, creates a subtly balanced but never static composition.

Restoration performed in 1994 provides further insights into Vermeer's extraordinary sensitivity to light and color [fig. 3]. With the removal of old inpainting and discolored varnish, one can, for example, more fully appreciate the delicate flesh tones in the woman's face and the subtle modeling of the blue robe on the table. Most startling, however, was the discovery of extensive overpaint covering the black frame of the *Last Judgment*. The gold trim now revealed creates an accent in the upper right that visually links with the yellow curtain and the yellow and deep-orange accents on the woman's costume, thereby restoring Vermeer's original, and more dynamic, compositional intent. At the same time, the X-radiograph reveals that the tacking margins had been opened out and overpainted. With the removal of this overpaint, the image is now smaller than it had previously appeared, and its size reflects Vermeer's original intention. [14]

The degree of Vermeer's sensitivity can best be illustrated by comparing this scene with a close counterpart by Pieter de Hooch (Dutch, 1629 - 1684), *A Woman Weighing Gold* [fig. 4]. [15] Although De Hooch probably painted this scene in the mid-1660s after he left Delft for Amsterdam, it is so similar to Vermeer's that it is difficult to imagine that they were painted without knowledge of each other or of a common source. [16] Nevertheless, the refinements and mood of the Vermeer are lacking in the De Hooch. The woman in De Hooch's painting is not gazing serenely at her scales; she is actively engaged in placing a gold coin or weight into one of the pans. By her active gesture she separates herself from the quiet rhythms and geometrical structure of the room. [17]

Woman Holding a Balance has a distinguished provenance that can be traced in a virtually unbroken line back to the seventeenth century. The enthusiastic descriptions of the work in sales catalogues as well as in critics' assessments attest to its extraordinary appeal to each and every generation. Perhaps the most fascinating early reference to this work comes from the first sale in which it appeared, the Dissius sale in Amsterdam of 1696. It is the first painting listed in that sale, which included twenty-one paintings by Vermeer, and is described in the following terms: "A young lady weighing gold, in a box by J. van der Meer of Delft, extraordinarily artful and vigorously painted." [18]

The protective box in which *Woman Holding a Balance* was framed was probably related to the painting's special thematic character. Much as with the boxes that

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Gerrit Dou (Dutch, 1613 - 1675) occasionally placed around his paintings, one would be able to see *Woman Holding a Balance* only after opening two little doors attached to the box in which it was placed. [19] The painting, thus, was not conceived as a work to be viewed every day, as one passed back and forth while occupied with mundane activities. Rather, the decision to contemplate this painting would have been consciously made, reserved for those quiet moments when one yearns for inner peace and is in search of spiritual guidance. Upon encountering this radiant image after opening these doors, the viewer's eye, located directly opposite the vanishing point, would have been drawn to the symbolic core of the composition. The experience would have been a private one, a timeless moment for both visual and spiritual enrichment as one contemplated the allegorical themes of balance and harmony that underlie this work. That the painting was listed first in the sale and contained in a protective box indicates the extraordinary value placed on this work, an appreciation that has never diminished. [20]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

August 30, 2017

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Detail, Johannes Vermeer, *Woman Holding a Balance*, c. 1664, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.97

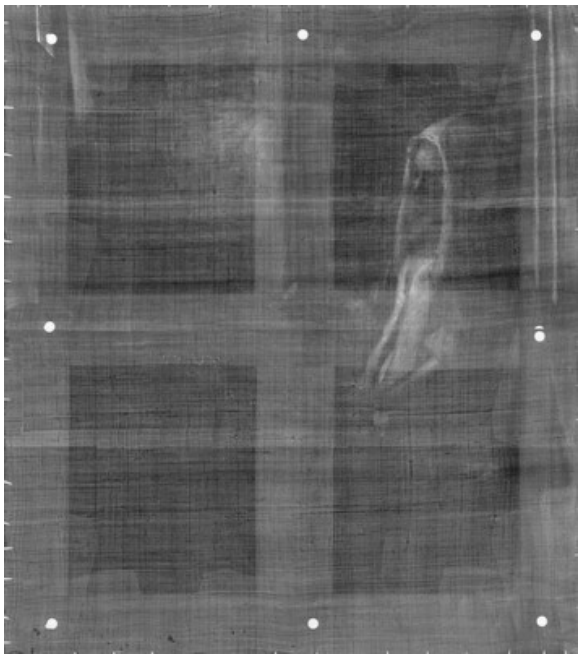

fig. 2 X-radiograph composite, Johannes Vermeer, *Woman Holding a Balance*, c. 1664, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.97

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fig. 3 Before the 1994 conservation treatment, Johannes Vermeer, *Woman Holding a Balance*, c. 1664, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.97

fig. 4 Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman Weighing Gold*, mid-1660s, oil on canvas, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, NY

NOTES

[1] The author of this painting has remained an enigma. No exact prototype for this composition of the *Last Judgment* is known. It appears, however, to be the work of a late sixteenth-century mannerist painter, probably of Flemish origin. One distinct possibility, kindly suggested by Dr. Pieter J. J. van Thiel, is Jacob de Backer (c. 1555–c. 1585), a student of Frans Floris I (Flemish, c. 1519 - 1570) and an artist who specialized in similar Last Judgment scenes. A distinctive characteristic of this composition, found often in De Backer's works, is that Christ sits in judgment with both arms raised. Vermeer probably owned this painting of the Last Judgment. He dealt in works of art and seems to have used works from his own collection in his paintings. In the instances where we know the actual painting Vermeer owned, as, for example, *The Procuress,* 1622 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, inv. no.

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50.2721), by Dirck van Baburen (Dutch, c. 1595 - 1624), a painting that appears in two Vermeer compositions, his depictions remain rather faithful to the actual painting. He apparently modified the color schemes and the scale of the painting only to satisfy the needs of his composition. He probably made similar adjustments in the *Last Judgment.* For documents relating to the Baburen painting see A. J. J. M. van Peer, "Jan Vermeer van Delft: drie archiefvondsten," *Oud Holland* 88 (1968): 220–224. For other instances of Dutch artists altering the dimensions of paintings within paintings see Wolfgang Stechow, "Landscape Painting in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Interiors," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 11 (1960): 165–184.

[2] A review of the diverse interpretations in the earlier literature on this painting is enlightening. It reinforces the notion that Vermeer often chose motifs and moments that have dual implications, ones which the protagonists, as well as the observer, must struggle to resolve.
Théophile Thoré (William Bürger), to whom we owe so much for his enthusiasm and research of Vermeer, cataloged the painting as *La Peseuse de perles* in Théophile E. J. Thoré (William Bürger), "Van der Meer de Delft," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 21 (October–December 1866): 555–556, cat. 27. Although some confusion existed in his mind as to the objects she was weighing in her balance ("La main droite en l'air tient la balance soulevée; dans les plateaux sont des perles et des pièces d'or [?]"), he recognized immediately that a relationship existed between the painting behind the girl and her actions: "–Ah! tu pèses des bijoux? tu seras pesée et jugée à ton tour!" (Ah, you weigh jewelry? You too will be weighed and judged!).
Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (*A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. [London, 1907–1927], 1:586), on the other hand, described the painting as *A Woman Weighing Gold*: "In an interior a woman, wearing a dark blue velvet jacket trimmed with fur, stands weighing gold at a table with a blue cover." Later, in "A Newly Discovered Picture by Vermeer of Delft," *Burlington Magazine* 18 (December 1910): 134, Hofstede de Groot offered a somewhat more complex interpretation of the scene: "Her attention is concentrated on weighing gold, or possibly on testing the accuracy of her scales, for the purpose of weighing the pearls lying before her on the table; thus the picture is also mentioned by the title of *A Woman Weighing Pearls.*" Philip L. Hale, *Vermeer* (Boston and New York, 1937), 140–142, returned to this idea in his monograph on Vermeer. He cataloged the painting as "*A Woman Weighing Gold* sometimes called *A Woman Weighing Pearls*." In his description of the painting he wrote: "Either weighing gold or testing the weights of her scale to weigh some pearls lying nearby, a lady stands close to an open window."
Perhaps the most extensive analysis of the symbolism of this painting was in Herbert Rudolph, "'Vanitas.' Die Bedeutung mittelalterlicher und

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humanistischer Bildinhalte in der niederländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts," in *Festschrift für Wilhelm Pinder zum sechzigsten Geburtstage* (Leipzig, 1938), 405–412. He reemphasized the observation of Thoré (Bürger) on the thematic importance of paintings within paintings in the Dutch and Flemish traditions, extending back to Jan van Eyck and the Master of Flémalle. Rudolph saw the scene of the Last Judgment as a central clue to the hidden symbolism of this painting, which he entitled *The Pearlweigher.* To help interpret the symbolism he emphasized that pearls and mirrors often had *vanitas* connotations, ones that were strengthened in the context of a scene of the Last Judgment. Indeed, he saw the woman as a personification of Vanitas. Rudolph noted, however, that the scales that the woman was holding were empty.
P. T. A. Swillens, *Johannes Vermeer: Painter of Delft, 1632–1675* (Utrecht, 1950), 105, also called the painting *Girl Weighing Pearls* but did not emphasize the *vanitas* nature of the scene as explicitly as did Rudolph. He wrote: "She endeavours to adjust her small scales, and is concentrating on this matter. . . . The thought of 'The Judgment' compels her to adjust the balance to accuracy." Lawrence Gowing, *Vermeer* (London, 1952), 135, offered yet another interpretation. Entitling the painting *A Lady Weighing Gold,* he wrote: "In this painting a connection between the lady, who seems to be weighing pearls against gold, and the painting that hangs on the wall behind her turns the incident into a fanciful allegory of the Last Judgment." He then added: "she takes on something of the character of Saint Michael, the weigher of souls in the part of the Last Judgment which is hidden."
Albert P. de Mirimonde, "Les Sujets musicaux chez Vermeer de Delft," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 57 (January 1961): 29, wrote about the symbolism of this painting:
Now, in the case of the pearl weigher, Vermeer became moralist. Behind the beautiful woman, he placed a large painting whose meaning is full of threats: a *Last Judgement*. Who knows if these beautiful necklaces from the East will not be weighing very heavily in the balance of the Archangel? [translated by Jennifer Henel, 01/23/2012, from the French: Or pour une fois, dans la peseuse de perles, Vermeer s'est fait moraliste. Derrière la jolie femme, il a placé un grand tableau dont la signification est pleine de menaces: un jugement dernier. Qui sait si ces colliers d'un si bel orient ne seront pas d'un poids bien lourd dans la balance de l'Archange?]
Ludwig Goldscheider, *Jan Vermeer: The Paintings* (London, 1958), 38, searching for the symbolism of the painting wrote: "If pearls can be the embodiment of earthly, transient beauty, how are we to interpret the picture of the *Last Judgment* behind the *Lady Weighing Pearls?* Vermeer's symbolism is not hard to understand."

[3] This was proposed by Herbert Rudolph, "'Vanitas.' Die Bedeutung mittelalterlicher und humanistischer Bildinhalte in der niederländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts," in *Festschrift für Wilhelm Pinder zum*

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sechzigsten Geburtstage (Leipzig, 1938), 409. Actually since Christian iconography treats the pearl, the most precious jewel, as a symbol of salvation, it would be unusual for it to have strong *vanitas* connotations. See George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (New York, 1959), 23.

[4] Cesare Ripa (*Iconologia of Uytbeeldingen des verstands . . .,* trans. Dirck Pietersz Pers [Amsterdam, 1644], 144, 432) describes how the balance is one of the attributes of equality, *Vgvalita* or *Gelijckheyt* ("Door de Weeghschaele wort verstaen de oprachte en waerachtige recht vacrdigheyt, die een ygelijck geeft, dat hem toebehoort"), and of Justice, *Giustitia* or *Gerechtigheyt.*

[5] The mirror is frequently considered the attribute of *Prudentia* and Truth. For a discussion of the various connotations of the mirror in emblematic literature of the mid-seventeenth century, see G. Langemeyer et al., *Gerard ter Borch: Zwolle 1617–Deventer 1681* (The Hague, 1974), 98.

[6] Otto van Veen, *Amorum emblemata* (Antwerp, 1608), 182. The full verse is:
Fortune is loues looking-glas
Eu'n as a perfect glasse doth represent the face,
Iust as it is in deed, not flattring it at all.
So fortune telleth by aduancement or by fall,
Th'euent that shall succeed, in loues luck-tryed case.
For further discussions of Vermeer's use of *Amorum emblemata* see Eddy de Jongh, *Zinne-en Minnebeelden in de schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1967), 49–50.

[7] Eugene R. Cunnar, "The Viewer's Share: Three Sectarian Readings of Vermeer's Woman with a Balance," *Exemplaria* 2 (1990): 518.

[8] Anthony Mottola, ed., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* (Garden City, NY, 1964), 85.

[9] As seen in numerous paintings by Vermeer's contemporaries, Dutch fashions in the mid-seventeenth century seem to have encouraged a bulky silhouette. The short jacket the girl wears, called a *pet en lair,* covered a bodice and a thickly padded skirt. This fashion created the impression of a forward-thrusting stomach, which was evidently a desirable one. The opinion that she is not pregnant but wearing such a bulky outfit, which this author expressed in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* (Washington, DC, 1995), is shared by Albert Blankert in Gilles Aillaud, Albert Blankert, and John Michael Montias, *Vermeer* (Paris, 1986), 181, and by Marieke de Winkel, "The Interpretation of Dress in Vermeer's Paintings," in *Vermeer Studies*, ed. Ivan Gaskell and Michiel Jonker (Washington, DC, 1998), 327–339, particularly 330–332. Nevertheless, I now consider it probable that the woman is pregnant. This change of opinion is based in part on the woman's posture and in part on the belief that the model is Vermeer's wife, Catharina Bolnes. See Arthur K.

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Wheelock Jr., *Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675): Sainte Praxède—Saint Praxedis* (Monaco, 1998), 28.

[10] The theory that the woman is pregnant was first proffered by Richard Carstensen and Marielene Putscher, "Ein Bild von Vermeer in medizinhistorischen Sicht," *Deutsches Ärzteblatt-Ärtzliche Mitteilungen* 68 (December 1971): 1–6. The authors concluded that the woman, following an old folk tradition, was weighing pearls to help her divine the sex of the unborn child. Since then, many authors have accepted her pregnant state as fact, including John Walsh Jr., "Vermeer," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 31 (Summer 1973): 79, and Ernst Günther Grimme, *Jan Vermeer van Delft* (Cologne, 1974), 54, who, as a consequence of the supposed pregnancy, identified the model as Vermeer's wife, Catharina Bolnes, mother of his fifteen children. I identified the model, on a different basis, as Catharina Bolnes in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675): Sainte Praxède—Saint Praxedis* (Monaco, 1998), 28. Nanette Salomon, "Vermeer and the Balance of Destiny," in *Essays in Northern European Art Presented to Egbert Haverkamp Begemann on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Anne-Marie Logan (Doornspijk, 1983), suggested that a pregnant woman holding scales would have been interpreted as a Catholic response to disagreements about the moment a Christian soul obtains grace and salvation. Instead of the predetermined state of grace accepted by the followers of Arininius or one gained through the efficacy of good works as preached by Gomanus, a Catholic, Salomon argued, would have understood that the state of grace of the unborn child was as yet undetermined. This opinion was also accepted by Sutton, in Jane Iandola Watkins, Peter C. Sutton, and Christopher Brown*, Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting* (Philadelphia, 1984), 342–343.

[11] Kimberley Jones, "Vermeer's *Woman Holding a Balance*: A Secularized Vision of the Virgin Mary," unpublished lecture delivered at the Mid-Atlantic Symposium, National Gallery of Art, 1989; Eugene R. Cunnar, "The Viewer's Share: Three Sectarian Readings of Vermeer's Woman with a Balance," *Exemplaria* 2 (1990): 501–536.

[12] Eugene R. Cunnar, "The Viewer's Share: Three Sectarian Readings of Vermeer's Woman with a Balance," *Exemplaria* 2 (1990): 501–536, corrects a number of misconceptions about the theological arguments advanced by Salomon and focuses on the meditative character of the image. He then analyzes the ways in which a Catholic, a Protestant, and an Arminian viewer might have responded to this work in light of their beliefs. He also accepts as fact that the woman is pregnant and attempts to relate the image to biblical texts, specifically Genesis 3:15, by interpreting the support underneath the table as the vision of a dragon described by John in Revelation 12. While one may question the likelihood of this latter interpretation, Cunnar's assessment of the various possible theological

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responses to the painting is particularly useful.

[13] For an argument that Vermeer represented here "the divine truth of revealed religion," see Ivan Gaskell, "Vermeer, Judgment and Truth," *Burlington Magazine* 126 (September 1984): 558–561. To support his argument Gaskell refers to one of the personifications of Truth described by Cesare Ripa in the 1644 Dutch edition of the *Iconologia*.

[14] The painted surface now measures 39.7 × 35.5 cm (15 5/8 × 14 in.), whereas, prior to the 1994 restoration, the painting measured 42.5 × 38 cm (16 3/4 × 14 15/16 in.).

[15] See *Picture Gallery Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin: Catalogue of Paintings 13th–18th Century*, trans. Linda B. Parshall, 2nd rev. ed. (Berlin-Dahlem, 1978), 212. The comparison of this painting with Vermeer's *Woman Holding a Balance* is not new. For comparisons with slightly different emphases see Wilhelm von Bode, *Die Meister der holländischen und vlämischen Malerschulen*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1919), 86–89, and Herbert Rudolph, "'Vanitas.' Die Bedeutung mittelalterlicher und humanistischer Bildinhalte in der niederländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts," in *Festschrift für Wilhelm Pinder zum sechzigsten Geburtstage* (Leipzig, 1938), 405–412.

[16] A possible source for such a motif is Gerrit Dou (Dutch, 1613 - 1675). Although Dou's painting style is far more minute than Vermeer's, many of the genre scenes painted by Vermeer have precedents in Dou's oeuvre. See Keil Boström, "Peep-show or Case," *Kunsthistorische Mededelingen van het Rijksbureau van kunsthistorische documentatie* 4 (1949): 21–24.

[17] The thematic complexities of Vermeer's composition are also lacking in De Hooch's work. De Hooch's woman weighs her gold before a wall richly decorated with a gilded-leather wallcovering and a half-open door leading into a second room. Neither of these elements reinforces the thematic gesture of a woman with a balance as strongly as does the painting of Vermeer's *Last Judgment*.

[18] Albert Blankert, with contributions by Rob Ruurs and Willem van de Watering, *Johannes Vermeer van Delft, 1632–1675* (Utrecht, 1975), 136, doc. 62. "Een Juffrouw die goud weegt in een kasje van J. van der Meer van Delft, extraordinaer konstig en kragtig geschildert." It sold for fl 155, the third highest price in the sale. Nothing more is known of the box in which it sat, but at the very least it was a protective device designed to keep light and dust away from the painting's delicate surface. In the 1683 inventory of goods accruing to Jacob Dissius after the death of his wife, Magdalena van Ruijven, three of Vermeer's paintings are listed as being in boxes (*kasies*). See John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Millieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton, 1989), 359, doc. 417. Presumably one of these was *Woman Holding a Balance*.

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[19] Wilhelm Martin, *Gerard Dou* (London, 1902), 145–147. See also: Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "The Framing of a Vermeer," in *Collected Opinions: Essays on Netherlandish Art in Honour of Alfred Bader*, ed. Volker Manuth and Axel Rüger (London, 2004), 232–239.

[20] Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "The Framing of a Vermeer," in *Collected Opinions: Essays on Netherlandish Art in Honour of Alfred Bader*, ed. Volker Manuth and Axel Rüger (London, 2004), 232–239.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support is a very fine, tightly woven fabric.[1] When the painting was lined, the format was enlarged about one-half inch on all sides by opening out and flattening the tacking margins. The composition was extended by overpainting these unpainted edges. Regularly spaced tacking holes and losses in the ground layer along the folds of fabric bent over the original stretcher confirm that these smaller dimensions were the original format.

A moderately thick, warm buff ground is present overall, and extends onto the tacking margins.[2] Examination has not shown evidence of an underdrawing but does show a brown painted sketch describing the forms with fine lines and indicating shadows with areas of wash. Microscopic examination shows a pinhole in the back wall near the balance, where the artist probably pinned strings to establish the orthogonals of the perspective system.[3] Both the ground color and the brown sketch influence the final image, the ground color warming the thinly painted flesh tones and hood and the brown sketch contributing shadows to the blue jacket. Vermeer blended finely ground, fluid paint with imperceptible brushstrokes and added rounded, thicker touches to create specular highlights. He softened some contours by overlapping paints and suggested others by leaving a thin line of brown sketch between two edges. No pentimenti are visible in the X-radiograph; an infrared photograph reveals a change in the position of the balance.

Small losses are found in the figure, small areas of abrasion in the dark passages. Discolored inpainting and varnish were removed in 1994. During this treatment, black overpaint covering the frame of the Last Judgment on the wall behind the woman was removed, revealing two vertical bands of yellow paint along the right side of the frame.[4] Overpaint that had been applied along the opened-out tacking margins when the painting was restretched on a larger stretcher has been removed. The painted image, now smaller, reflects Vermeer's original intention.

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[1] Average densities of 20.5 threads/cm horizontally and 16.5 threads/cm vertically were measured by the Thread Count Automation Project of Cornell University and Rice University (see report dated May 2010 in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] For pigment analysis of the paint layers see Hermann Kühn, "A Study of the Pigments and the Grounds Used by Jan Vermeer," in National Gallery of Art Report and Studies in the History of Art 2 (1968): 191–192. Kühn's conclusion that the yellow of the curtain is Indian yellow is based on a sample taken from the overpaint near the edge of the painting. Subsequent pigment analysis of the ground was undertaken on June 26, 1974, by Robert L. Feller, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, and by the NGA Scientific Research department using X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy and X-ray powder diffraction and optical microscopy (see reports dated September 30, 1994, and October 12, 1994, in NGA Conservation department files). See also Melanie Gifford, "Painting Light: Recent Observations on Vermeer's Technique," in Vermeer Studies, ed. Ivan Gaskell and Michiel Jonker (Washington, 1998), 185–199.

[3] For this practice in Vermeer's paintings see Jørgen Wadum, "Vermeer in Perspective," in Johannes Vermeer, ed. Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. (New Haven and London, 1995), 66–79.

[4] The paint and ground layers in this area were studied by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross-sections (see report dated July 11, 1994, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

Possibly Pieter Claesz van Ruijven [1624-1674], Delft; possibly by inheritance to his wife, Maria de Knuijt [d. 1681], Delft; possibly by inheritance to her daughter, Magdalena van Ruijven [1655-1682], Delft; possibly by inheritance to her husband, Jacobus Abrahamsz. Dissius [1653-1695], Delft;[1] (his sale, Amsterdam, 16 May 1696, no. 1);[2] Isaac Rooleeuw [c. 1650-1710], Amsterdam; (his bankruptcy sale, Amsterdam, 20 April 1701, no. 6); Paolo van Uchelen [c. 1641-1702], Amsterdam; by inheritance 1703 to his son, Paolo van Uchelen the Younger [1673-1754], Amsterdam; by inheritance to his daughter, Anna Gertruijda van Uchelen [1705-1766], Amsterdam; (her estate sale, B. Tideman, Amsterdam, 18 March 1767, no. 6); Kok.[3] Nicolaas Nieuhoff [1733-1776], Amsterdam; (his estate sale, Arnoldus

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Dankmeyer, Amsterdam,14 April 1777 and days following, no. 116); Van den Bogaard.[4] Maximilian I Joseph, King of Bavaria [1756-1825]; (his estate sale, Munich, 5 December 1826, no. 101, as by Gabriel Metsu); Louis Charles Victor de Riquet, duc de Caraman [1762-1839], Paris; (his sale, Salle Lebrun by Lacoste, Paris, 10-12 May 1830, no. 68). Casimir Pierre Péreir [1777-1832], Paris; his heirs; (his estate sale, Christie & Manson, London, 5 May 1848, no. 7);[5] purchased by Péreir's son, probably Auguste C.V.L. Périer, later Casimir-Périer [1811-1876];[6] probably by inheritance to Auguste's daughter, Marie Thérèse Henriette Jeanne, comtesse de Ségur [1844-1916, née Périer];[7] purchased 1910 by (P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London); one-quarter share purchased October 1910 by (M. Knoedler & Co., New York); sold 11 January 1911 to Peter A. B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;[8] inheritance from Estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] The 1683 inventory of goods accruing to Jacob Dissius after the death of his wife, Magdalena van Ruyven, lists twenty paintings by Vermeer. For the complete transactions between her husband, Jacob Dissius, and his father, Abraham Dissius, following her death, see John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History*, Princeton, 1989: 246-257, 359-361, docs. 417, 420.

[2] For this sale see John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History*, Princeton, 1989: 363-364, doc. 439.

[3] The archival sources in the Gemeentearchief, Amsterdam, for the painting’s provenance from Rooleeuw through the Van Uchelen family are detailed in Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., and B.P.J. Broos, *Johannes Vermeer*, exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen Mauritshuis, The Hague, New Haven and London, 1995: no. 10, 143, 145 nn. 19-22.

[4] The 1995 systematic catalogue of Dutch paintings in the NGA published the following information at this point in the provenance: "PP. [initials of consignor]; (sale, Ph. van der Schley, Amsterdam, 11 May 1801, no. 48); bought for Ph. van der Schley by M[errem]." This had been provided by The Getty Provenance Index, but was in error. The painting in the 1801 sale was one of the same subject by Pieter de

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Hooch, now in Berlin, according to a letter dated 27 October 1997 from Burton Fredericksen, then director of the Getty Provenance Index, Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., in NGA curatorial files.

[5] The 1848 sale catalogue says the painting came “from the Delapeyriere collection,” but this information is not correct. This collection is probably that of Augustin Lapeyrière (1779-1831), who owned at least two Vermeers, but neither was the Gallery’s painting.

[6] Théophile E. J. Thoré (William Bürger), "Van der Meer de Delft," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 21 (October-December 1866): 555-556.

[7] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "A Newly Discovered Picture by Vermeer of Delft," *The Burlington Magazine* 18 (December 1910): 133-134. The author incorrectly identifies the comtesse de Ségur as the sister of Casimir Périer.

[8] The painting is number 12167 in Painting Stock Book 5, stock numbers 8800-12652, April 1899-December 1911, p. 204, and in Sales Book 9, May 1907-January 1912, p. 287 (M. Knoedler & Co. Records, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles; copies from digitized records in NGA curatorial files). In both entries the painting is listed as by "Jan Ver Meer."

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Verspronck, Johannes Cornelisz

Also known as
Sprong, Gerard
Dutch, 1606/1609 - 1662

BIOGRAPHY

The scarcity of documents relating to the life of the portraitist Johannes Cornelisz Verspronck has made securing his date of birth difficult. Though it was long believed that he was born in Haarlem in 1597, recent archival research suggests a date of about a decade later, between 1606 and 1609.[1] Theodorus Schrevelius, the only contemporary author to mention Verspronck, referred to him as Gerard Sprong, thereby contributing to the confusion surrounding the artist's biography.[2] Nonetheless, some facts about Verspronck's life remain clear. He was the son of the Haarlem-born painter Cornelis Engelsz (c. 1575–1650), who had trained with Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (Dutch, 1562 - 1638) and Karel van Mander I (Netherlandish, 1548 - 1606). Verspronck probably received his first training from his father, though he may have spent a brief period of time in the studio of Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666). He became a member of the Saint Luke's Guild in Haarlem in 1632, and shortly thereafter, in 1634, produced his first dated painting.

Verspronck never married and lived with his parents for most of his life until he bought a house on the Jansstraat in 1656, where he lived with his brother and sister. Verspronck became quite wealthy as a successful portraitist for Haarlem's patrician families. He also painted group portraits for civic organizations.[3] Even though Verspronck was a Catholic, he obtained commissions from Calvinist, as well as Catholic, patrons.[4] The only portrait for which the price is known is that of the Catholic priest Augustijn Alsthenius Bloemert, Verspronck's last known work, dated 1658, for which he received a payment of 60 guilders.[5] Verspronck died in June 1662 and was buried on June 30 in Haarlem's Saint Bavo Church.

[1] Rudolf E. O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck: leven en werken van een Haarlems portretschilder uit de 17de eeuw* (Haarlem, 1979), 14–15.

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[2] Theodorus Schrevelius, *Harlemias, of, Eerste stichting der stad Haarlem* (Haarlem, 1648), 382.

[3] Among Verspronck's prominent patrons in Haarlem were the Colterman family, Johan van Schoterbosch, Pieter Jacobsz Schoudt, and Cornelis Montigny de Glarges. See Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (London, 1989), 33.

[4] Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals* (London, 1989), 32–33.

[5] Rudolf E. O. Ekkart, J*ohannes Cornelisz. Verspronck: leven en werken van een Haarlems portretschilder uit de 17de eeuw* (Haarlem, 1979), 19, 121, no. 98. The portrait is in the Frans Hals Museum, on loan from the Haarlem Broodkantoor.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Johannes Cornelisz Verspronck
Dutch, 1606/1609 - 1662

Andries Stilte as a Standard Bearer

1640

oil on canvas
overall: 104 x 78.5 cm (40 15/16 x 30 7/8 in.)
framed: 137.2 x 111.8 x 8.9 cm (54 x 44 x 3 1/2 in.)
Inscription: lower left: :1640:
Patrons' Permanent Fund 1998.13.1

ENTRY

With great bravura, this fashionably clad member of one of the Haarlem civic guards stands with one arm akimbo, staring out at the viewer. [1] His proud character, reinforced by the panache of his brilliant pink, silver-lace-trimmed satin costume and jauntily placed hat with its brightly colored feathers, conveys the outward confidence prized by the Dutch during the formative years of the republic.

This remarkable life-sized, half-length portrait depicts Andries Stilte, a wealthy burgher in Haarlem whose identity is confirmed by the family coat of arms in the upper left. [2] Verspronck portrayed Stilte in his role as standard bearer, or ensign, of Haarlem's *Kloveniers* (or Saint Hadrian) militia company, which had been formed in 1519. [3] Civic guard companies in the Netherlands had played an important military role in the early phases of the Dutch Revolt, but by the mid-seventeenth century their martial significance had waned as the fight against Spanish forces shifted, toward the end of the revolt, to the southern part of the United Provinces. [4] Indeed, by 1640, when Verspronck painted this work, the Haarlem civic guards had become more like social clubs, serving only the occasional ceremonial or symbolic function. [5]

Officers of the Haarlem militia companies were chosen from wealthy regent families and their positions held great social status. Andries Stilte proudly bears the blue sash and standard of his company (the blue company) that was part of the *Kloveniers*. He wears a sword hanging from his bandolier, which, like the rest of the

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ensign's wardrobe, was traditionally determined by the individual's family background, taste, and wealth. [6] His bright pink outfit is exceptional in its elegance and refinement, and was probably worn only to a banquet or other ceremonial gathering. The idea that an ensign's outfit should be colorful goes back to the prestigious but also dangerous historical function of a standard bearer within the civic guard. Along with the captain and the lieutenant, the ensign traditionally stood at the front of the infantry, where he held aloft the company's standard. His brightly colored clothing was meant to bring attention to his person, making the commanders less of a target. Because the position involved a high risk of being shot, standard bearers were required to be bachelors. [7]

Although Stilte was probably elected ensign in 1639, he served in this position only until 1640, when he became engaged to his first wife, Eva Reyniers, and therefore had to resign as ensign. [8] After his marriage, Stilte would no longer be allowed to wear his elegant and brightly colored finery, so he must have commissioned this portrait to commemorate his status, and his wardrobe, before he assumed another position in the company that required a more sedate attire. [9] Although life-sized portraits of individual standard bearers are rare in Dutch art, the pose—a standing figure holding the flag over one shoulder with the other arm akimbo—is one traditionally found in group portraits of militia companies. [10]

In commissioning this portrait Stilte probably chose Verspronck over his more famous contemporary Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666) for two essential reasons. Verspronck already had portrayed Andries' brother Mattheus in 1636, and Stilte would have known that Verspronck was able to create an accurate and engaging likeness of his sitters. [11] He also would have appreciated the artist's mastery at rendering fabrics with his smooth and modulated manner of painting. Stilte had clearly spared no expense when ordering his wardrobe, and he must have been determined to have it shown to best effect. He would have wanted the artist to show off the sheen of his satin jacket as well as the various types of expensive lace that helped give his outfit such glitz: the Flemish bobbin lace tied with a lime-green bow around his neck and the silver lace edging on his split-sleeve jacket. No less significant were the gold trim on his blue sash and the brightly colored ostrich-feather plumes decorating his beaver-skin hat. Indeed, if one is to judge from Pentimenti in the painting, the hat and feathers were even larger in reality than they now appear. [12]

This depiction of Stilte is exceptional because during Verspronck's long and successful artistic career he generally painted half-length portraits of middle-class

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burghers in relatively subdued attire. [13] Stilte's animated pose, whereby he looks out at the viewer over his shoulder, however, does relate to a small-scale, full-length portrait of an unknown gentleman standing in an architectural setting that Verspronck painted in 1639 (private collection). [14] The character of this latter work seems to have appealed to Stilte, for he commissioned Verspronck to make a small-scale variant of his half-length portrait in the same format as that painting [fig. 1] . [15] In this variant Stilte wears an elegant but far more subdued outfit, appropriate for a wealthy Dutch burgher.

Verspronck's painting has been trimmed slightly at the left: the end of the flagstaff is slightly cut at the edge of the painting. [16] The artist's signature, which was originally to the left of the date, 1640, in the lower left corner of the painting, is no longer evident. [17]

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April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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fig. 1 Johannes Cornelisz Verspronck, *Portrait of Andries Stilte*, c. 1641, oil on canvas, Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Lynn Russell for her help in preparing this entry.

[2] Andries Stilte was the son of Mattheus Stilte and Hester Monnicx. His year of birth is not known, but he died after 1675. Biographical information is taken from R. E. O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck. Leven en werken van een Haarlems portretschilder uit de 17-de eeuw* (Haarlem, 1979), 78, no. 18.

[3] There were two militia companies in Haarlem in the seventeenth century, the Saint Hadrian company (*Kloveniers*) and the Saint George, also referred

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to as the *Oude Voetboog* (Old Cross-Bow) company. In the sixteenth century there had also been a third group, the Saint Sebastian Guild, for men who could afford only a hand bow. This militia company was disbanded in 1560. By the seventeenth century the militia companies had lost their original religious character and were under the control of city authorities. For an overview of the militia companies in Haarlem, see Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970), 1:39–49. For the history of the building, referred to as the *Kloveniersdoelen*, which still exists in the center of Haarlem, see: P. T. E. E. Rosenberg, "Doelengebouwen en doelenterreinen in de Hollandse steden," in *Schutters in Holland: Kracht en zenuwen van de stad*, ed. M. Carasso-Kok and J. Levy-van Halm, (Haarlem, 1988), 60–67.

[4] Haarlem militia companies had fought against Spanish forces in defense of the city in 1572–1573.

[5] Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970), 1:42. Throughout the period, Dutch militia companies continued to be responsible for guarding their respective towns. See Egbert Haverkamp Begemann, *Rembrandt, the Nightwatch*, Princeton Essays on the Arts 12 (Princeton, 1982). See also M. Carasso-Kok and J. Levy-van Halm, eds., *Schutters in Holland: Kracht en zenuwen van de stad* (Haarlem, 1988).

[6] Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970), 1:41, notes that the officer corps of the two civic guard groups consisted of eleven officers: a colonel, a provost, three captains, three lieutenants, and three ensigns. Each civic guard group was divided into three companies, designated orange, white, and blue, the colors of the Dutch flag. Stilte, thus, belonged to the "blue" company of the *Kloveniers*.

[7] The municipality of Haarlem established this stipulation so it would not be encumbered with the expense of supporting an ensign's widow and their children.

[8] Eva died in 1645, and Stilte later married the widower Lijsbeth Valck.

[9] Stilte subsequently became a lieutenant in the *Kloveniers*. He was portrayed in this role in 1642 in a militia company painting by Pieter Claesz Soutman (Dutch, 1580 - 1657), at the Frans Hals Museum, in which he stands at the far left (and, interestingly, carries a flag even though he was no longer a standard bearer). This motif hints at the possibility that Soutman could have used the Verspronck portrait as his model.

[10] For the tradition of the depiction of standard bearers in group portraits of militia companies, see the figure at the left in Frans Hals' 1616 depiction of the Saint George militia company in the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem (Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. [London, 1970], 2:5–7, no. 7). For individual portraits of standard bearers, see the full-length portrait of a standard bearer from The Hague, 1617, by Everard Quirijsz van der Maes (1577–1656), in M. Carasso-Kok and J. Levy-van Halm, eds., *Schutters in*

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Holland: Kracht en zenuwen van de Stad (Haarlem, 1988), 386, no. 196. Thomas de Keyser (Dutch, 1596 - 1667) painted a full-length but smaller than life-sized depiction of *Loef Vredericx as a Standard Bearer* in 1626. See Rudi Ekkart and Quentin Buvelot, eds., *Dutch Portraits: The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals* (London, 2007), 148, no. 33.

[11] Rudolf E. O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck. Leven en werken van een Haarlems portretschilder uit de 17-de eeuw* (Haarlem, 1979), 71, no. 6. The portrait is in the Museu Nacional, Havana. One often finds that Dutch families retained strong relationships with individual artists over the years.

[12] Over the centuries, the top layers of paint have become more transparent so that today traces of the plumes' original placement are visible. See Technical Summary.

[13] See Rudolf E. O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck. Leven en werken van een Haarlems portretschilder uit de 17-de eeuw* (Haarlem, 1979).

[14] See Rudolf E. O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck. Leven en werken van een Haarlems portretschilder uit de 17-de eeuw* (Haarlem, 1979), 38–39, 77, no. 16. Ekkart believes that this painting is stylistically connected to works by the Utrecht painter Jacob Duck (Dutch, c. 1600 - 1667), and suggests that Duck may have been in Haarlem in these years.

[15] See Rudolf E. O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck. Leven en werken van een Haarlems portretschilder uit de 17-de eeuw* (Haarlem, 1979), 39–40, 82, no. 26.

[16] W. Martin, *Alt-holländische Bilder* (Berlin 1921), 172–173, noted, however, that at that time the painting had suffered badly from lifting paint, and recommended that it be relined.

[17] W. Martin, ed., *Königliche gemälde Galerie Mauritshuis: Kurzgefasster Katalog der Gemälde- und Skulpturensammlung* (The Hague, 1920), 84, notes that the dimensions of the painting were then 103 x 77.5 cm, and that the remnants of a signature ". . . onck 1640" were then to be found. Verspronck generally signed his name: "J. vSpronck" followed by the date. Perhaps Martin had only measured the painting inside the frame, which would account for the discrepancy with the current dimensions.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a coarse, plain-weave fabric, which has been lined. The tacking margins have been removed and the X-radiographs reveal strong cusping on the right side, fainter cusping on the left, and very faint cusping along the top and bottom edges. The cusping is often stronger in one direction due to the warp and

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weft of the fabric, which could explain the shallower cusping on the top and bottom, but the faint cusping on the left side indicates that this edge was cut down slightly. This theory is supported by the fact that the handle of the standard is cut off on this edge and the painting bears a date, but no signature. It stands to reason that the artist's signature would have preceded the date, as it often does in his paintings.

Verspronck used a thin, white or buff-colored ground to prepare the support. Infrared reflectography at 2.0-2.5 microns[1] revealed thin lines of underdrawing, which are most noticeable in the face, hair, hat, and flagpole. The thin paint was applied mostly using a wet-into-wet technique. Verspronck used some glazes, mostly in the red areas. He employed the butt end of his brush to scrape away the paint to create the details in the sitter's lace and gloves. Numerous pentimenti are visible in normal light and with infrared reflectography, most notably: Stilte's hat was moved up and to the right but the feathers were moved down and to the left; his face was moved to the left; and the angle of the standard was originally more vertical.

The painting is in good condition. The paint exhibits a heavy craquelure pattern, which has tented slightly, and minute losses are found at the intersections of the cracks. The paint is somewhat abraded in the shadows of the sitter's hair and his hat, as well as his proper left thumb. Inpainting occurs in the sitter's hair, in the curtain along the sitter's proper left shoulder, and along the edges. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with a K astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

(Jacques Goudstikker, Amsterdam), before 1917. Dr. Walter von Pannwitz [1856-1920], Berlin, by 1917;[1] by inheritance to his wife, Catalina von Pannwitz [1876-1959, née Roth], Heemstede; by descent in the Pannwitz family; (Otto Nauman, Ltd., New York); purchased 1988 by Mr. and Mrs. Michal Hornstein, Montreal; (sale,

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Sotheby's, New York, 30 January 1998, no. 69); purchased through (Bob P. Haboldt & Co., New York) by NGA.

[1] The Pannwitz family lent the painting to the Mauritshuis, The Hague, from 1917 to 1923. Walter von Pannwitz was a Munich lawyer who, with his second wife Catalina Roth, relocated to Berlin in 1910. He acquired an extensive collection of paintings and applied arts in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1917 Loan to display with permanent collection, Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1917-1923.

2000 Art for the Nation: Collecting for a New Century, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2000-2001, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Verwer, Abraham de

Also known as
Verwer van Burghstrate, Abraham de
Dutch, 1585 - 1650

BIOGRAPHY

Abraham de Verwer was probably born in Haarlem, which was where he was living with his wife, Barbara Sillevorts, in 1607. Her will, which a Haarlem notary drew up for her in that very year, identifies her husband as a cabinet maker.[1] When Abraham de Verwer appeared before an Amsterdam notary on January 9, 1617, however, he was identified as a painter.[2] Thus, De Verwer must have learned the art of painting between 1607 and 1617, probably by studying with the famous Haarlem marine painter Hendrick Vroom (1563–1640) before moving to Amsterdam. De Verwer's early marine paintings of the 1620s reflect the large, brightly colored, and highly detailed depictions of marine battles that characterize Vroom's work of the 1610s.[3] De Verwer's son, Justus de Verwer (c. 1625–c. 1685), who was also a marine painter, presumably trained with his father.

De Verwer was extremely successful as an artist, and his large battle scenes soon graced the collections of the Amsterdam Admiralty, the Burgerweeshuis (Amsterdam's civic orphanage), and the collection of the House of Orange. In the late 1630s he traveled to France, where he made a number of paintings and drawings of French ports and at least four paintings of the Louvre in Paris. In 1638, with the assistance of Constantijn Huygens, secretary to the Prince of Orange, De Verwer sent a number of drawings of French ports to Prince Frederik Hendrik, and in the following year sold him four paintings of French subjects, including two views of the Louvre. In 1642, identifying himself as "Seigneur Abraham de Verwer van Burghstrate," he acquired a house called "De vergulde Fonteyn" on the Prinsengracht in Amsterdam for 6,500 guilders. He later moved to a house on the Warmoesstraat. He was buried on August 19, 1650.

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[1] “Barbara Sillevort, huysvrouwe van Abraham de Verwer, schrijnwercker, wonende te deser stede” (Barbara Sillevort, wife of Abraham de Verwer, cabinet maker, living in this city). This reference, taken from Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea: The Dutch Marine Painters of the 17th Century* (Rotterdam, 1996), 133, is based on information obtained from the A. Bredius Archive, Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), The Hague.

[2] “Abraham de Verwer, schilder, als man en voocht van Barbara Silvers” (Abraham de Verwer, painter, as husband and guardian of Barbara Silvers). See Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea: The Dutch Marine Painters of the 17th Century* (Rotterdam, 1996), 133, which is based on information obtained from the A. Bredius Archive, Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), The Hague.

[3] Laurens Johannes Bol, D*ie holländische Marinemalerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Braunschweig, 1973), 84–88.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Abraham de Verwer
Dutch, 1585 - 1650

View of Hoorn

c. 1650

oil on panel
overall: 51.1 x 94.6 cm (20 1/8 x 37 1/4 in.)
framed: 70.8 x 113.7 x 5.7 cm (27 7/8 x 44 3/4 x 2 1/4 in.)
Fund given in honor of Derald Ruttenberg's Grandchildren 2008.32.1

ENTRY

This atmospheric painting depicts the city of Hoorn from the south, the view that greeted sailors as they crossed the Zuiderzee toward this important North Holland port, a major center for trade to the Baltic, the West Indies, and the East Indies. A bank of clouds stretches across the late-afternoon sky, with only the water's ripples and a gliding sailboat to suggest the gentle breezes passing over the broad roadstead. From the viewer's low and distant vantage point, Hoorn's distinctive city profile is barely distinguishable, with, from right to left, the towers of the Noorderkerk (the North Church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary), the Grote Kerk (the Great Church, dedicated to Saint John the Baptist), and the Oosterkerk (the East Church, dedicated to Saint Anthony) barely visible above the buildings facing the water. The steepled tower in the center of the painting, behind the stern of the East Indiaman, the large ship flying the Dutch flag, is the Hoofdtoren (Head Tower), a large stone defensive structure that marked the entrance to the harbor. A contemporaneous bird's-eye-view map of Hoorn by Joan Blaeu shows the harbor filled with the masts of moored ships [fig. 1]. [1]

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Abraham de Verwer rendered the distant city with great delicacy, carefully articulating the individual buildings while at the same time blending their forms together with a brownish glaze. With thin black strokes of his brush he deftly silhouetted the dark masts of boats in the harbor against the blue-gray sky. He suggested the water's expanse by modulating the way light reflects on its surface. Subtle tonal gradations from dark to light gently lead the eye back into the distance, while a remarkable and unusual combination of colors—reddish-ocher underlying an olive glaze—gives a translucent quality to the water in the foreground.

The only activity of note in this serene image occurs on the deck of the large sailing ship—a *fluit*, recognizable by its high, round sternpost—at the left, where a group of sailors grasp lines from a block and tackle attached to the yard of the square rigging. They, and a group of workmen to their right, appear to be raising or lowering cargo into the ship's hold, presumably cargo that has been brought, or will be taken, by the smaller boat (*wijdschip*) moored alongside. Why this transfer of cargo is being made outside of Hoorn's harbor is uncertain, although it may well have been for economic reasons: ships had to pay a fee when they entered the harbor. [2] The activity on the ships, while seemingly mundane and certainly to be expected in such a setting, is in fact exceptional in Dutch paintings of the period, as very few artists depicted the actual loading and unloading of cargo.

Hoorn gained its importance as a trading center from its fortuitous location at the juncture of a number of roads and waterways in West-Friesland, the area north of Amsterdam. The Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the West India Company (WIC) both had chambers there, hence, in the first half of the seventeenth century, before the harbor began to silt up, ships sailed to Hoorn from all over the world. Fishing and shipbuilding were particularly important industries, which meant that lumber, shipped in large quantities from Norway, Sweden, and the Baltic countries, was one of the major commodities entering and leaving the port.

Hoorn's prominence as a port in the early seventeenth century is compellingly depicted in a large panoramic view of the harbor that Hendrick Vroom (1563–1640) painted for the burgomasters' chamber of the town hall in 1622 [fig. 2]. Although De Verwer must have known Vroom's *View of Hoorn*, with its high horizon, bright colors, and astonishing detail, his painting is strikingly different. De Verwer chose a low vantage point, emphasized tonal qualities over distinctive colors, and minimized rather than exaggerated the scale of the buildings. De Verwer's depiction of Hoorn also differs markedly from his own earlier manner of painting,

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which was fully within the Vroom tradition. [3] The atmospheric qualities of this work reflects the influence of Simon de Vlieger (Dutch, 1600/1601 - 1653) who, like De Verwer, lived and worked in Amsterdam during the later half of the 1640s. [4] Nevertheless, it also differs from De Vlieger's paintings in the draftsmanlike delicacy evident in the rendering of the boats and distant cityscape as well as the strict horizontality of the composition. In these respects, the closest prototypes for the painting are to be found in the pen-and-wash drawings of port cities in France and the Netherlands that De Verwer made in the 1630s and 1640s [fig. 3]. [5] Indeed, stylistic comparisons with these drawings largely serve as the basis of attribution for this unsigned painting. [6]

The differences between Vroom's and De Verwer's depictions of Hoorn are not just stylistic. The two paintings record a significant change in the city's distinctive profile, namely in the appearance of the bell tower on the Hoofdtoren. In De Verwer's painting the Hoofdtoren has a tall, pointed spire, quite different from the old squat, angled roofline visible in Vroom's depiction of the city. This topographical change provides a framework for the date of De Verwer's painting, for a seventeenth-century chronicle of Hoorn indicates that this new bell tower was constructed in 1651. [7]

The construction date of the clock tower raises questions about the attribution of this painting to Abraham de Verwer, since the artist died in August 1650, a year before it was completed. This seeming chronological inconsistency, however, does not preclude De Verwer's authorship of this work. Plans for the new clock tower had been underway for some time (the bell that rang on the hour was cast in 1646 and the one that rang on the half-hour was cast in 1647), and therefore it is probable that the structure itself had also been started prior to 1651. In fact, it seems likely that the new tower, which would have such a transforming effect on Hoorn's skyline, was the motivating factor for the commission of this painting from De Verwer, an artist who was renowned for his delicate and refined renderings of Dutch ports, each of which is identifiable through the distinctive profiles of its towers and spires against the sky. De Verwer died soon after painting this work, so he would never have been able to build upon its success. The painting remains a unicum in Dutch art. No other marine painting matches its purity and luminosity, which seems to anticipate, in so many ways, comparable views executed centuries later and on different shores by artists such as the American painter Fitz Henry Lane (American, 1804 - 1865) .

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Joan Blaeu, *View of Hoorn in Novum ac magnum theatrum vrbium Belgicae regiae*, 1649, engraving on paper, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, DC, J. Paul Getty Fund in Honor of Franklin Murphy

fig. 2 Hendrick Vroom, *View of Hoorn*, c. 1622, oil on canvas, Westfries Museum, Hoorn

fig. 3 Abraham de Verwer, *Shipping on a Calm Sea*, mid-1640s, pen and brown ink, brush in brown and gray ink on paper, Peck Collection, Boston

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NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Liesje Schram from Hoorn and Rob Kattenberg from Amsterdam for information about the view and the ships De Verwer has depicted.

[2] I would like to thank Dr. Larry Goedde of the University of Virginia for this suggestion.

[3] Early in his career De Verwer painted large, horizontal marine battles in the manner of Vroom, who presumably taught him the art of painting (see Laurens J. Bol, *Die holländische Marinemalerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* [Braunschweig, 1973], 84–88, and A. Blaaw, “Over de Waterlands doopsgezinde schilder Abraham de Verwer van Burchstraete, over zijn vrouw Barbara van Sillevoirt, en iets over zijn vroegste werken,” *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 31 [2005]: 75–91). De Verwer was commissioned to paint such scenes by, among others, the Amsterdam Admiralty and the East India Company. In these brightly colored and highly detailed paintings, De Verwer generally chose a relatively high viewpoint so that the full panorama could be portrayed. Even in these works, however, De Verwer depicted distant cityscapes in an understated manner and more atmospherically than did Vroom.

[4] De Verwer’s panoramic views were highly regarded, and he was paid handsomely for his work. In 1642 he acquired an expensive home in Amsterdam (see De Verwer Biography). It is probable that he would have known De Vlieger, who moved to Amsterdam in 1643. A painting by an anonymous Dutch artist, *A View of Naarden*, formerly attributed to De Vlieger, has been stylistically compared to the *View of Hoorn*. Wurfbein rejected an attribution of that painting to De Verwer because he felt that "analogies with signed paintings by De Verwer seem [to be] superficial." See Maarten Wurfbain, *M. L. Wurfbain Fine Art B.V., IV* (Oegstgeest, 1992), 180–182.

[5] In the late 1630s De Verwer traveled to France where he made a series of drawings of French ports, possibly at the behest of Prince Frederik Hendrik. De Verwer may have depicted these ports for military reasons. See Stijn Alsteens and Hans Buijs, *Paysages de France: Dessinés par Lambert Doomer et les artistes hollandais et flamands des XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 2008), 247–256. While in France, De Verwer also painted seven townscapes in Paris, including four of the Louvre, two of which he later sold to the prince. See Madeleine Charageat, “Une vue du Louvre et de L’Hôtel de Nevers par Abraham de Verwer," *Bulletin du Musée Carnavalet* 2, no. 1 (April 1949): 3. He also sold the Frederik Hendrik two other views. See Abraham Bredius, “Het schildersregister van Jan Sysmus,” *Oud-Holland* 8

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(1890): 218.

[6] The attribution was made by Laurens Bol. See Laurens J. Bol, *Die hollandische Marinemalerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Braunschweig, 1973), 88, fig. 87.

[7] I would like to thank Meindert Kok from Hoorn for bringing this architectural change to my attention (e-mail correspondence of April 12, 2009, in NGA curatorial records). This information makes it clear that the date of c. 1645 that I proposed in *Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age* (The Hague, 2008), 190–191, no. 46, is too early. For this chronicle account, see Theodorus Velius, *Chronyk van Hoorn* (Hoorn, 1740), 237.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on an oak panel,[1] which is composed of two horizontally grained boards. On the back of the panel the edges are shallowly beveled. The ground is a very thin, white or off-white layer that does not fully hide the wood grain. The paint is also very thin, especially in the darks. There is no impasto but brushmarks are visible in the areas of thicker paint, such as the sky and water. It appears as though the artist may have left a reserve for the thickest part of the cityscape and the two large boats on the left when he painted the sky and water.

The panel has a slight horizontal convex warp and several horizontal splits stemming from the right edge. There are also small horizontal cracks in the paint that do not form a complete crackle pattern. These are most prominent in the sky. Examination with ultraviolet light revealed delicate inpainting in the sky, presumably because the paint became more translucent with time, allowing the prominent wood grain to become visible. Damage caused by the frame rabbet has been inpainted along the top, left, and right edges. The varnish remains clear and glossy. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition.

[1] The characterization of the wood is based on visual examination only.

PROVENANCE

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Mr. and Mrs. Arnoud Waller [he 1873-1953], Utrecht and Lunteren, by 1938; by descent in their family; (Johnny van Haeften, London); sold May 2008 to NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1938 Oude Kunst, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, 1938, no. 91.

1964 Zee- Rivier- en Oevergezichten: Nederlandse schilderijen uit de zeventiende eeuw, Dordrechts Museum, 1964, no. 1, fig. 92, as Dutch 17th Century.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
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Vlieger, Simon de

Dutch, 1600/1601 - 1653

BIOGRAPHY

The marine painter Simon de Vlieger was born in Rotterdam in about 1601, judging from a document dated May 16, 1648, in which he described himself as forty-seven years old.[1] On January 10, 1627, he married Anna Gerridts van Willige. The couple, who would return to Rotterdam throughout their lives, moved in 1634 to Delft, where De Vlieger joined the Saint Luke's Guild on October 18 of that year. Though he may have continued to work in Delft, in 1637 he and his wife bought a house on the Schilderstraat in Rotterdam. De Vlieger's stay in his hometown was brief: on July 19, 1638, he was cited as a resident of Amsterdam, where he became a citizen on January 5, 1643.

De Vlieger's decision to move to Amsterdam was undoubtedly related to a commission he received to provide two designs for the festivities honoring the arrival of Marie de Medici into the city on August 31, 1638. Between 1638 and 1645 De Vlieger also fulfilled commissions from the city of Delft for tapestry designs, as well as a commission to paint the organ doors for the Grote Kerk in Rotterdam, for which he received the considerable sum of 2,000 guilders on January 7, 1645.[2] Although he may have lived in Rotterdam sporadically during these years, in September 1644 he sold his house there. Early in 1648 he received a commission to design the stained-glass windows for the south side of the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam, a project that earned him 6,000 guilders.[3] In January 1649 De Vlieger left Amsterdam and bought a house in Weesp, a small town ten miles southeast of the city. He died there in 1653.

De Vlieger's varied commissions reflect his considerable success as an artist, but they do not sufficiently reveal his place as one of the most important and influential Dutch marine painters of the seventeenth century. His early training remains undocumented, but he is often described as the best-known link between the tonal paintings of Jan Porcellis (c. 1584–1632), likely his first teacher, and the sun-filled, tranquil images of Willem van de Velde the Younger (Dutch, 1633 - 1707), who may well have been his pupil.[4] De Vlieger's interest in the depiction of stormy seas and fantastic rocky sea coasts faded over the course of his career in favor of

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calmer coastlines with an emphasis on the atmospheric effects of water and sky along the North Sea. He produced several portraits and genre scenes and was also active as a printmaker.[5]

[1] Abraham Bredius, *Kunstler-Inventare; Urkunden zur Geschichte der holländischen Kunst des XVIten, XVIIten und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts* (The Hague, 1915), 356–358.

[2] Peter C. Sutton, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 511.

[3] Pieter Haverkorn van Rijsewijk, “Simon Jacobsz. De Vlieger.” *Oud-Holland* 9 (1891): 224.

[4] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 in 1 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 2:325–326.

[5] Peter C. Sutton, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston, 1987), 512.

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Simon de Vlieger
Dutch, 1600/1601 - 1653

Estuary at Day's End

c. 1640/1645

oil on panel
overall: 36.8 x 58.4 cm (14 1/2 x 23 in.)
framed: 50.2 x 72.4 x 6.7 cm (19 3/4 x 28 1/2 x 2 5/8 in.)
Inscription: lower right: S DE VLIEG[ER]
Patrons' Permanent Fund and The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund in memory of Kathrine Dulin Folger 1997.101.1

ENTRY

By the mid-seventeenth century the Dutch Republic was the greatest sea power in the world. Dutch ships sailed the seven seas, from the Caribbean to the Indian Ocean, assuring not only military security but also wealth. Indeed, the Republic's far-reaching trade brought to its shores everything from exotic spices to rare flower bulbs. The Dutch fleet also carried more essential goods such as lumber from Poland, used for the construction of buildings and ships, and provided wood for artists' panel paintings such as this one.

Simon de Vlieger, who lived and worked at various times in Rotterdam, Delft, and Amsterdam, was one of the most important and influential Dutch marine artists. Active from the 1620s to the1640s, he created works that established a link between the turbulent tonal paintings of his teacher Jan Porcellis (1584–1632) and the sun-filled, tranquil images of his student Willem van de Velde the Younger (Dutch, 1633 - 1707). De Vlieger was a versatile artist who was equally comfortable painting dramatic storms or stately parade pictures, all of which he enlivened with small figures carefully situated within the pictorial context.

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De Vlieger knew the sea and the ships that sailed it. He accurately recorded the distinguishing features of the various types of boats, from large warships to small fishing boats and cargo vessels, and set them convincingly in the water. But it was his sensitivity to the atmospheric effects of water and sky along the North Sea that separated him from most other marine painters. He was unmatched in his ability to effectively capture the subtle ranges of grays and gray-blues found along coastal waters.

De Vlieger's most innovative paintings, including this *Estuary at Day's End*, convey the flavor of daily life along the Dutch coast. In this restrained and sensitive composition, he has shown two workers applying pitch to the hull of a small cargo ship, probably a *galjoot*, resting on a sandbar at low tide, while near the boat gray smoke rises from the fire that heats a pot containing the pitch. Directly behind the *galjoot* clouds of smoke billow from the sides of a *fluit,* the large square-rigger, as it fires a salute. [1] The most dramatic atmospheric effect, however, is created by the crepuscular rays radiating outward through the vigorously painted clouds. Such rays are typically observed at the beginning or at the end of the day, when the sun is low and clouds obstruct the light. Since the billowing clouds in this painting are more likely to be found in the afternoon than in the morning, this scene probably depicts activities taking place as twilight approaches. [2]

The maintenance of ships was of utmost importance for this seafaring nation, and De Vlieger's focus on workmen caring for the hull highlights one of the most essential responsibilities of a ship's owner. As depicted in this image, the operation frequently was undertaken at water's edge by beaching a boat on a sandbar, which would have become exposed at low tide. The tall pole with a barrel at the top behind the breakwater to the right of the *galjoot* is, in fact, the equivalent of a seventeenth-century lighthouse, there to warn sailors of the dangerous sandbar, which would not have been visible at high tide. Shorebirds nested in the barrels of such structures, and in foggy weather or at twilight, when the marker itself was not visible, sailors would watch the birds' flight patterns as an indicator of what lay ahead.

De Vlieger, who spent much of his career as a marine painter, would certainly have witnessed such maintenance operations, and he probably would also have been aware of earlier artists' depictions of similar scenes. Porcellis' *Fishers on the Shore* , c. 1622–1625 [fig. 1], might have been one such prototype. The motif would appear later in paintings by Van de Velde the Younger, in particular his *Ships on a*

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Calm Sea from the early 1660s [fig. 2]. Nevertheless, it is striking that De Vlieger does not seem to have returned to this subject.

De Vlieger was fascinated with perspective and with the difficulty of suggesting spatial recession across a flat body of water. He wanted to create a system with which he could accurately situate boats of different sizes and at varied distances from the foreground plane. A sheet of ten perspective drawings he made in 1645, about the time he painted this work, demonstrate different approaches to solving these problems [fig. 3]. One of the means he used to calculate relative scale was to establish a modular system, largely based on the size of an adult male. Because De Vlieger knew the sizes of boats relative to the average height of a man, he could then determine how far below the horizon he should situate the boat to make it appear to float at the proper level. De Vlieger used this method when determining the placement of the small transport boat at the left of this painting. Moreover, by silhouetting the boat, the rowers, and their cargo of barrels against the distant light-filled waters he further used this pictorial element to reinforce the sense of special recession.

Although De Vlieger's great renown is as a marine painter, he also painted religious subjects that had a connection to the sea, such as *Christ on the Sea of Galilee* (Kunstsammlung der Universität Göttingen). In addition, he designed stained-glass windows for cathedrals in Delft and Amsterdam. His religious interests raise the possibility that De Vlieger found spiritual inspiration in the natural world about him, which might explain his remarkable decision to include the dramatic crepuscular rays. Today, such rays are sometimes referred to as "God rays" or the "fingers of God," and such associations may also have been made in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century. One can easily imagine that their presence here would have signified that God is looking out for, and blessing, the Dutch people as they go about their lives and work to maintain their livelihood. Whether or not there is a symbolic component, the effects of light and atmosphere in this quiet scene, which remain in a remarkable state of preservation, give the painting a tremendous sense of drama.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan Porcellis, *Fishers on the Shore*, c. 1622–1625, oil on panel, Hessisches Landsmuseum, Darmstadt. Photo: Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt

fig. 2 Willem van de Velde the Younger, *Ships on a Calm Sea*, early 1660s, oil on panel, private collection

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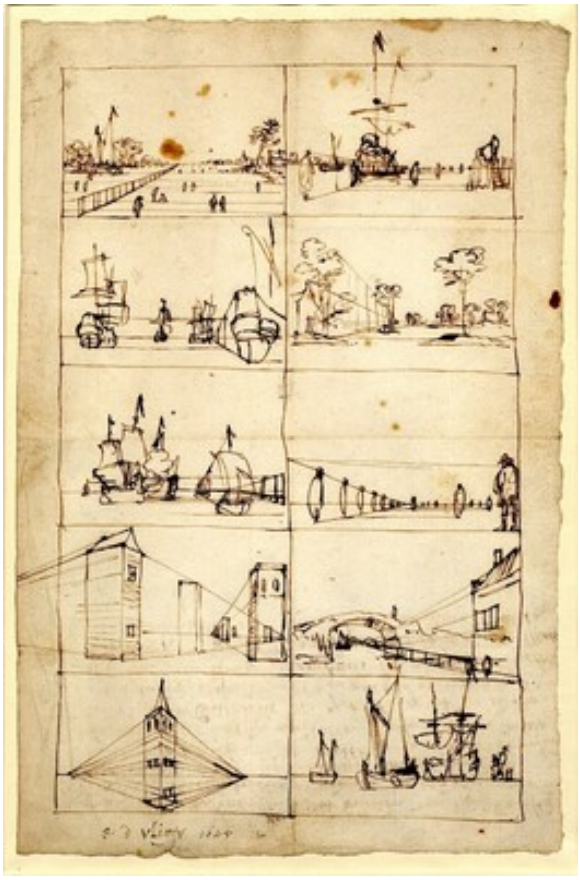

fig. 3 Simon de Vlieger, *A Sheet of Ten Studies in Perspective*, 1645, pen and brown ink, The Trustees of the British Museum, London

NOTES

[1] For these ship types, see Leo M. Akeveld in Jeroen Giltaij and Jan Kelch, *Praise of Ships and the Sea: The Dutch Marine Painters of the 17th Century* (Rotterdam, 1996), 21–35.

[2] I would like to thank Mr. David O'C. Starr, head of Mesoscale Atmospheric Processes Branch, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Maryland, for his observations about these atmospheric effects (see e-mail dated April 30, 2009, in NGA curatorial files).

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a horizontally grained oak panel. According to dendrochronology, the earliest possible creation date for the panel is 1627.[1] All four sides have been beveled, but the bevel is by far the widest along the top edge. The other edges are narrower because the back of the panel has been planed unevenly with a pointed toothing plane. As a result of this uneven planing, the panel is significantly thicker at the top. There is a horizontal split at the top right corner of the back of the panel. The thinly applied ground is light gray. Thin paint is applied wetintowet with glazes forming the dark shadows and more pastose paint creating the highlights. A reserve was left for the large boat in the foreground and its sail, but not for the masts or the smaller boats. Infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 2.5 microns[2] reveals that there was originally another fairly large boat on the right side, where the breakwater's poles now stand. The painting is in excellent condition. A few acute paint losses are found in the sky and some of the glazes in the foreground are abraded. The largest area of abrasion is located just below and to the right of the ship in the left foreground. All of the losses and abrasion have been inpainted fairly recently. A fairly even, slightly yellow layer of varnish covers the surface. The painting has not been treated since its acquisition.

[1] Dendrochronology was performed by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg (see report dated April 8, 1998, in NGA Conservation department files).

[2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with H, J, and K astronomy filters.

PROVENANCE

Edward Donner, Hurstbourne Park, Hampshire, England, by 1990; sold 1997 through (Gurr-Johns, London) to NGA.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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1990 Loan for display with permanent collection, National Gallery, London, 1990-1995.

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 64, fig. 25.

2000 Art for the Nation: Collecting for a New Century, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2000-2001, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

2000 The Glory of the Golden Age: Dutch Art of the 17th Century, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2000, exhibition catalogue in two volumes, no. 85 (of Painting, Sculpture and Decorative Art catalogue), repro., as Seascape in the Morning.

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2000 National Gallery of Art. *Art for the Nation: Collecting for a New Century*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2000: 36-37, color repro.

2004 Hand, John Oliver. *National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection*. Washington and New York, 2004: 211, no. 167, color repro.

2007 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr., and Michael Swicklik. "Behind the Veil: Restoration of a Dutch Marine Painting Offers a New Look at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art and History." *National Gallery of Art Bulletin* no. 37 (Fall 2007): 4, fig. 4.

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Walscapelle, Jacob van

Dutch, 1644 - 1727

BIOGRAPHY

Little is known about the still-life painter Jacob van Walscapelle. He was born in 1644 in Dordrecht, where he was baptized under the surname of his father, Elias Cruydenier. For unknown reasons, however, Jacob, along with his sister Antonia, later changed their name to Van Walscapelle after their paternal grandmother.[1] In 1660 Antonia moved to Amsterdam to marry Ottmar Elliger (1633–1679), a painter of flower still lifes and portraits. Jacob probably followed his sister not long thereafter, becoming a pupil of the still-life painter Cornelis Kick (1635–1681).[2]

Van Walscapelle's abundant still lifes, however, reflect the influence of Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684) more than that of his Amsterdam master. His flower and fruit pieces, as well as several breakfast and vanitas scenes, display the same monumentality and vibrant color evident in De Heem's works. Van Walscapelle's still lifes fetched high prices on the market, but relatively early in his career the artist decided to pursue public affairs in addition to painting. Beginning in 1673, he held various public offices in Amsterdam, and in 1682 received a municipal appointment in the Saaihal.[3] His last known painting, a vanitas still life, is dated 1685. He died in Amsterdam on August 16, 1727.

[1] Jan Knoef, "Jacob van Walscapelle," *Oud-Holland* 56 (1939): 262.

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 2:334.

[3] Jan Knoef, "Jacob van Walscapelle," *Oud-Holland* 56 (1939): 262.

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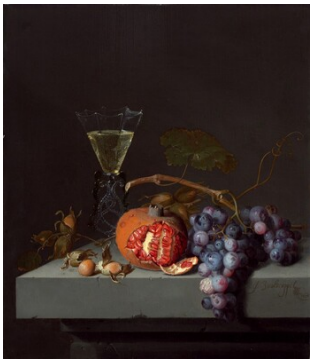

Jacob van Walscapelle
Dutch, 1644 - 1727

Still Life with Fruit

1675

oil on panel
overall: 40 x 34.7 cm (15 3/4 x 13 11/16 in.)
framed: 58.7 x 53 x 5.7 cm (23 1/8 x 20 7/8 x 2 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right on ledge, in brown paint: J:Walscappel / 1675
Juliet and Lee Folger/The Folger Fund 2001.71.1

ENTRY

Though modest in size and compass, Jacob van Walscapelle's *Still Life with Fruit* has a remarkable sensuality and monumentality of presence. The artist's touch is fresh, his brushstrokes fluid, and his color sense unerring, making the image both inviting and accessible. Bathed in soft light, every figural element quietly asserts its essential properties. The elegant eight-sided *façon de Venice* glass filled with white wine sparkles against the dark background, as light accents its complex, delicate form. One can almost taste the ripe pomegranate bursting with red seeds, the hazelnuts, and the purple grapes that seemingly spill over the edge of the stone table into the viewer's space.

Van Walscapelle clearly took great care in the creation of this arrangement, for iconographic as well as compositional reasons. All of the pictorial elements have associations with Christian ideas of death and resurrection. Grapes and wine are infused with the symbolism of the Eucharist. The symbolism of the partially opened pomegranate is more complex but no less profound. The red arils represent Christ's suffering, but when planted they grow, and hence they also have associations with the Resurrection. The many arils contained within an outer skin also represent the unity of the Christian church. By carefully wrapping the stem of the grape vine around the pomegranate, Van Walscapelle suggested the overarching theme of death and resurrection as conveyed by these various compositional elements. The filberts (hazelnuts) at the lower left edge of the stone table—one within its husk, one partially within its husk, and one with its husk removed—carry other important associations. As Sam Segal has noted, medieval exegetes gave the three components of this nut—its husk, its shell or pod, and its

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edible inner core—symbolic significance. The husk was compared to Christ's suffering on the cross, the shell to the strength of his all-embracing divinity, and the sweet kernel to the eternal truths of his teachings. [1] Van Walscapelle's painting thus would have encouraged the viewer not only to contemplate Christ's sacrifice and eventual rebirth but also to ponder the essence of the Christian message.

Little is known about the trajectory of Van Walscapelle's artistic career, but he seems to have been influenced by the paintings of Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606 - 1684), even though the latter painted in Utrecht whereas Van Walscapelle worked in Amsterdam. Whether or not the two artists had direct contact, their works are similar in the choice of objects depicted and the religious symbolism that infuses them (see De Heem's *Vase of Flowers*). Van Walscapelle also shared De Heem's ability to harmonize his tabletop compositions through light and color while simultaneously suggesting the varied textures of his pictorial elements; here, for example, Van Walscapelle painted both the smooth, translucent skin of lush grapes and the wrinkly, blemished surface of those past their prime. [2] *Still Life with Fruit* nevertheless differs from De Heem's mature paintings in its elegant and restrained simplicity.

Many of the objects in this painting, including the wineglass, pomegranate, and grapes, are found in other of Van Walscapelle's works, although generally in the midst of a more complex arrangement. The artist may have made studies of these objects that he reused in different combinations, and he almost certainly purchased the glass as a prop, since it appears in another of his paintings. [3] The delicate and refined wineglass was probably manufactured in Amsterdam in emulation of the famed Venetian glassware. In 1664 Filips von Zesen wrote in his *Beschreibung der Stadt Amsterdam* that a manufacturer on the Rozengracht had succeeded in making glass "quite as beautiful as the glasses made in Venice." [4]

A fascinating element of this painting is the bubbly appearance of the white wine. Whether or not this quality was Van Walscapelle's original intent, however, is difficult to determine. Many of the apparent "bubbles" are created by small pits in the paint, possibly caused by lead soap aggregation, a condition that may have developed years after Van Walscapelle painted this work. [5]

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NOTES

[1] Sam Segal, *A Fruitful Past: A Survey of the Fruit Still Lifes of the Northern and Southern Netherlands from Brueghel till Van Gogh* (Amsterdam, 1983), 36.

[2] Creating a harmonious composition was highly valued in the seventeenth century and reflected an artist's ability to conceive a work with *houding*. See Paul Taylor, "The Concept of *Houding* in Dutch Art Theory," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 55 (London, 1992): 210–232.

[3] The identical glass and a similar bunch of grapes appear, for example, in a tabletop still life (oil on canvas, 49 x 41.5 cm) in Silvano Lodi, *Ausstellung Alter Meister* (Munich, 1969), no. 4.

[4] Pieter C. Ritsema van Eck and Henrica M. Zijlstra-Zweens, *Glass in the Rijksmuseum*, 2 vols. (Zwolle, 1993), 1:15, note that "visitors could see glasses *welche den Venedischen mit nichten weichen*" or just as beautiful as the glass made in Venice. See Filips von Zesen, *Beschreibung der Stadt Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1664), 211.

[5] For a discussion of lead soaps in a painting by Jan Davidsz de Heem, see Arie Wallert and Joris Dik, "The Scientific Examination of a Seventeenth-Century Masterpiece," *Zeitschrift für Kunsttechnologie und Konservierung* 21, no. 1 (2007): 38–51, and Leslie Carlyle and Maartje Witlox, "Historically Accurate Reconstructions of Artists' Oil Painting Materials," *Tate Papers*, Spring 2007 (http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/tatepapers/07spring/carlyle.htm).

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a panel made from a single board of oak[1] with a vertical grain. The back of the panel is beveled along all four edges. The ground is rather thin and does not fully obscure the heavy wood grain. It appears white through most of the cracks and losses, but under the fruit it looks gray. The gray color may indicate an underpainting, or Walscapelle could have painted the gray stone ledge without leaving reserves for the fruit. The paint was applied mostly wet-into-wet, but details and highlights were applied wet-over-dry. Impasto is located only in the brightest highlights.

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The painting is in excellent condition. Tiny pitting is visible in the paint, especially in the wine. This may have been caused by lead soap aggregation. A few small, flake losses are located in the paint of the pomegranate. Inpainting is found along the front edge of the stone table, and along the right edge of the glass of wine. Under ultraviolet light, remnants of an earlier varnish can be seen along the top and left edges and in the wine glass.

[1] Steve Wilcox, head of frame conservation at the National Gallery of Art, characterized the wood based on visual examination of the panel and the X-radiographs.

PROVENANCE

(Etienne Le Roy, Brussels). William Tilden Blodgett [1823-1875], New York.[1] (L. Souty Fils, Paris).[2] (Julius H. Weitzner, Inc., New York).[3] G. Huntington Hartford, II [1911-2008], New York;[4] (sale, Parke-Bernet, New York, 12 December 1956, no. 34); (Newhouse Galleries, New York); sold to Jean McGrail, New York;[5] by inheritance to her daughter; (sale, Sotheby's, New York, 25 January 2001, no. 219); (Berenberg Fine Art Limited, Isle of Man); purchased 11 June 2001 through (Rob Smeets, Milan) by NGA.

[1] The names of Le Roy and Blodgett are given as former owners in the catalogue of a 1938 exhibition at the Wadsworth Atheneum that included the painting. Blodgett was a businessman and varnish manufacturer as well as a collector, who became one of the founders of The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Le Roy (1808-1878) was a restorer, dealer, and expert advisor to the Musée Royal de Peinture et de Sculpture in Brussels, and one of two dealers who in 1870 sold to the New York museum what became its first painting acquisitions, a purchase approved by the museum trustees the following year. It is possible that Blodgett purchased the Walscapelle painting for himself when he was in Europe for several months in 1870 negotiating on the Metropolitan's behalf. On the two men's dealings at that time see: Katharine Baetjer, "Buying Pictures for New York: The Founding Purchase of 1871," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 39 (2004): 161-245. The painting did not appear in Blodgett’s estate sale on 27 April 1876, held at

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Chickering Hall in New York.

[2] The 2001 Sotheby's sale catalogue lists this owner. The company was a successor business to Maison Souty, well-known framemakers during the 19th century in Paris.

[3] Weitzner, whose name is given in the 1956 sale catalogue, was possibly the dealer from whom Hartford acquired the painting.

[4] Hartford was the lender of the painting to the 1938 exhibition at the Wadsworth Atheneum. He was an heir to the A&P supermarket fortune, and owned an extensive art collection.

[5] The information about Newhouse's purchase and sale of the painting is provided by Meg Newhouse Kirkpatrick, of Newhouse Galleries, in her letter of 17 September 2001 to Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., in NGA curatorial files. The 2001 Sotheby's sale catalogue indicates that Newhouse owned the painting with the dealer Frederick Mont, and the 1969 and 1980 references to the painting associate it with Mont, but the Newhouse records do not reveal any information about Mont's ownership.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1873 Probably Exposition de tableaux et dessins d'anciens maîtres, La société néerlandaise de bienfaisance, Brussels, 1873, no. 339 (supplement of the catalogue's second edition).

1938 The Painters of Still Life, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, 1938, no. 24, as The Pomegranate.

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1873 Decamps, Louis. "Correspondance". *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 8 (September 1873): 278 (probably the NGA painting).

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1969 Bol, Laurens J. *Holländische Maler des 17. Jahrhunderts nahe den grossen Meistern Landschaften und Stilleben*. Braunschweig, 1969: 377 n. 488.

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Weenix, Jan

Dutch, 1642 - 1719

BIOGRAPHY

Jan Weenix was born in Amsterdam in 1642, the son of the Italianate painter Jan Baptist Weenix (1621–1660/1661) and Josina de Hondecoeter.[1] He spent his early childhood in Amsterdam without his father, who left for an artistic sojourn in Italy just fourteen months after Jan's birth. Jan Baptist returned to Amsterdam in 1647, and shortly thereafter the family moved to Utrecht. By 1657 they had settled in a large house outside of the city, the "Huis ter Mey," where the younger Jan became a pupil in his father's studio.

After Weenix joined the Utrecht painter's guild in 1664, he painted Italianate genre scenes in the manner of his father.[2] He probably moved to Amsterdam in the early 1670s, although the first official record of him in that city was not until October 1679, when he married.[3] In Amsterdam Weenix abandoned the painting of Italianate scenes in favor of extravagant game pieces, a genre that had gained popularity since the 1650s, thanks in part to Weenix the elder's success in painting such scenes.[4] Jan Weenix had only one known pupil, Dirk Valkenburg (1675–1721), who closely imitated his master's style.

Weenix's paintings, which were sought after by wealthy Amsterdam burghers, typically depict dead game set against lush landscapes with dramatic views into the distance. He often combined these scenes with classical elements, including antique urns and statues. At the turn of the century, his reputation attracted the attention of Johann Wilhelm von der Pflaz, the German Elector Palatine in Düsseldorf, for whom he produced numerous game pieces and large still lifes from 1702 until about 1714.[5]

[1] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 2:78.

[2] Christine Skeeles Schloss, "The Early Italianate Genre Paintings by Jan Weenix," *Oud-Holland* 97 (1983): 71, as cited in S. Muller, *De Utrechtsche Archieven, I.*

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Schilders-Vereenigingen te Utrecht, Bescheiden uit het Gemeente-Archief (Utrecht, 1880), 33.

[3] Adrianus Daniel de Vries “Biografische Aanteekeningen betreffende Voornamelijk Amsterdamsche Schilders,” *Oud-Holland* 4 (1886): 300. “Ondertr. 7 Oct. 1679. Johan Weenix, van ouders doot, geass. Abram Hondecoeter, syn oom, en Pieternelle Backer, van A., out 2- jaren, op de Fluwelen Burghwal, geass. Haer vader Jan Pietersz Backer.” Christine Skeeles Schloss, “The Early Italianate Genre Paintings by Jan Weenix,” *Oud-Holland* 97 (1983): 71, states that the Gemeentelijke Archiefdienst van Amsterdam lists the date as October 13. Weenix became a burgher of Amsterdam on March 23, 1688.

[4] Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece* (Montclair, NJ, 1984), 62. The genre had also gained popularity as a result of the works of Elias Vonck (1605–1652), Willem van Aelst (Dutch, 1627 - 1683), and Melchior d’Hondecoeter (1636–1695).

[5] Peter Eikemeier, “Der Jagdzyklus des Jan Weenix aus Schloss Bensberg,” *Weltkunst* 48 (1978): 296–298.

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Jan Weenix
Dutch, 1642 - 1719

Still Life with Swan and Game before a Country Estate

c. 1685

oil on canvas
overall: 142.9 x 172.4 cm (56 1/4 x 67 7/8 in.)
framed: 173.4 x 202.3 x 14.9 cm (68 1/4 x 79 5/8 x 5 7/8 in.)
Patrons' Permanent Fund 2004.39.1

ENTRY

This imposing game piece features the lifeless bodies of a large white goose and a reddish-brown hare arrayed with an almost aristocratic elegance in the left foreground of an expansive formal garden. [1] In addition to being larger than other pictorial elements, the goose and the hare are also more brilliantly illuminated and rendered with extraordinary care and sensitivity. [2] Indeed, the goose's downy feathers and the hare's soft fur seem so real that one could imagine their supple forms yielding to the touch. [3] Weenix extended the sweeping flow of their large bodies across the foreground and enlivened the scene with a confrontational exchange between a dove and a small dog (a papillon). The dove, standing before the dead game, has sharply turned its head and thrown back its wings in defiant response to the dog's sudden intrusion (and barking?), while the dog reacts defensively to the dove's angry posture. As though startled by the sudden commotion below, another dove flies aloft in the evening sky.

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Jan Weenix learned the art of painting game pieces in the 1650s and 1660s in the studio of his father, Jan Baptist Weenix (1621–1660/1661). [4] Following a Flemish tradition established by Frans Snyders (Flemish, 1579 - 1657), Weenix's father generally situated his game pieces, including the large *Still Life with a Dead Swan* in Detroit [fig. 1], in interior settings, often animating his scenes with narrative elements such as snarling cats and dogs. [5] When Jan Weenix moved to Amsterdam in the late 1670s, he developed a new genre of game piece that features dead game gracefully arrayed before formal outdoor gardens.

The National Gallery of Art's work is neither signed nor dated, but Weenix probably painted it in the mid-1680s. The general disposition of dead game in the foreground of a formal garden, the delicacy of touch in rendering the fur, and even the position of the hare's upper body (in reverse) are comparable to Weenix's *Still Life with a Dead Hare*, 1682 (or 1683), in Karlsruhe [fig. 2]. By the 1690s Weenix's style had changed noticeably: his compositions became more complex, the poses of the animals more mannered, his modeling slicker, and his touch somewhat harder.

Weenix painted his game pieces at a time when wealthy Dutch burghers were building country houses with formal gardens outside of urban centers, such as those along the river Vecht. [6] Many of his patrons came from Amsterdam and Utrecht, near the manor house Huis ter Mey where the artist used to live with his father. [7] As is reflected in *Still Life with Goose and Game before a Country Estate* , French architectural and garden designs were greatly admired in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and their influence is seen in the country homes and richly decorated gardens constructed by the Dutch in that period. [8] Sumptuous villas with elegant gardens containing sculptures, reflecting pools, follies, and trellises were precisely the types of estates that called for Weenix's game pieces, although many of these paintings were also commissioned for the owners' urban homes. [9] Although it is not known for whom Weenix painted the Gallery's work, the Amsterdam merchant Gerret Braamcamp, whose internationally renowned collection included numerous masterpieces of Dutch art, acquired it in the middle of the eighteenth century. [10] Subsequently, it was bought by John Hope, in whose family it remained for five generations (see Provenance).

Prince William III (1650–1702) was passionate about both hunting and gardening at his estates in Dieren, Soestdijk, and Apeldoorn, and an admirer of French fashion and garden design, inspiring a number of his courtiers to follow suit during the 1670s and 1680s. [11] Nevertheless, as Scott Sullivan has convincingly argued, most

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of Weenix's Dutch patrons were not aristocrats—of which there were few in the Dutch Republic—but rather wealthy burghers, who were actually prohibited from hunting game such as wild geese, ducks, and swans. [12] Indeed, no guns, nets, or other hunting paraphernalia, other than a knife made from a deer antler, are depicted in *Still Life with Goose and Game before a Country Estate*. Such paintings, whether displayed in country houses or urban dwellings, allowed burghers to associate themselves with an aristocratic lifestyle and to enhance their own social prestige. [13] As Sullivan has stressed, these works were not "mementos of the aristocratic hunter's catch." [14]

Little is known about Weenix's painting techniques and working procedures. Judging from his accurate depictions of animals, which have allowed zoologists to identify specific species, he must have carefully studied their anatomy and the appearance of their fur and feathers. Because identical animals appear in different paintings—the papillon in the Gallery's painting, for example, is also seen at the far right of Weenix's portrait of Agnes Block and her family [fig. 3]—it is probable that he based his images of animals on drawings or oil sketches made from life. [15] Like Melchior d'Hondecoeter (1636–1695), another master of the game piece genre during this period, Weenix seemingly worked, at least in part, from stuffed birds and animals, which would have enabled him to depict them from different angles. [16] The angry dove, with wings outspread, for example, appears from different points of view in other of Weenix's paintings. [17] Although Weenix occasionally represented actual garden settings, as in the background of his portrait of Agnes Block and her family, most of the gardens he depicted were imaginary. [18] He probably based many of the sculpted urns, plinths, fountains, and trellises in his paintings on prints of French and Italian gardens and garden ornaments, which were readily available in the Dutch Republic at that time. [19]

Weenix generally based the sculptural imagery in his game pieces on classical prototypes. The Gallery's painting, however, is unusual, if not unique, in that the relief sculpture on the large foreground plinth depicts the Holy Family. The sunlit portion of the relief reveals Mary and Joseph gazing down in quiet reverence at the Christ Child lying before them in deep shadow. The style and character of these figures owe much to Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651), an artist whose work Weenix would have known from his years in Utrecht (Bloemaert was also his father's master). [20] Weenix intended this game piece to express Christian ideas about death and resurrection, as is evident from the disposition of the Holy Family on the relief sculpture, the pattern of light and dark falling across the figures, and

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the emblematic associations of the flowers growing in front of the plinth: drooping yellow calendula, known as the “death flower” (*dodenbloem*) in Dutch, and roses, which symbolize the sorrows of the Virgin. In this context, the dove flying away from the dead goose is not just a narrative element enlivening the scene, but an essential iconographic motif symbolizing the Christian belief in the immortality of the soul.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Jan Baptist Weenix, *Still Life with a Dead Swan*, c. 1650, oil on canvas, Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Ralph Harman Booth. Photo: The Bridgeman Art Library

fig. 2 Jan Weenix, *Still Life with a Dead Hare*, 1682 (or 1683), oil on canvas, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe . Photo © Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe 2010. Photo: W. Pankoke

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fig. 3 Jan Weenix, *Agnes Block, Sybrande de Flines and Children in their Garden at Vijverhof along the Vecht*, c. 1694, oil on canvas, Amsterdams Historisch Museum

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Anke van Wagenberg and Afiena van Zanten for their research on this painting.

[2] I would like to thank Gary Graves, research scientist and curator in the Department of Vertebrate Zoology at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, for identifying the animals in this painting (correspondence, April 6, 2005, in National Gallery of Art curatorial files).

[3] In 1774 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) saw the wall decorations that Weenix painted between 1710 and 1714 for the Elector Palatine Johann Wilhelm von der Pflaz of Düsseldorf and described his impressions as follows: “What enchanted me there beyond measure were the wall decorations by Weenix. All animals that hunting can procure were lying there, well ordered, as on the dais of a large columnar hall; above them one looked into a vast landscape. To reanimate these inanimate creatures, this extraordinary man had marshaled his whole talent, and in rendering the greatest variety of animal textures: bristles, hair, feathers, antlers, claws, he had equaled and, with regard to effect, surpassed nature.” This text is quoted from Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece* (Montclair, NJ, 1984), 65.

[4] Jan Weenix’s early works are primarily genre scenes in Italianate settings

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that follow his father's model. See Christine Schloss, "The Early Italianate Genre Paintings by Jan Weenix (ca. 1642–1719)," *Oud-Holland* 97 (1983): 69–97.

[5] See Alan Chong and Wouter Kloek, *Still-Life Paintings from the Netherlands 1550–1720* (Amsterdam, 1999), 198–200, no. 41. The narrative element in the Detroit painting is lacking since it has been trimmed at the left and bottom. It is, however, evident in the painting's probable pendant, *Dead Roebock*, c. 1650, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (see Chong and Kloek, fig. 41b). Chong and Kloek also illustrate one of Jan Baptist Weenix's outdoor game pieces, *Landscape with a Huntsman Cutting up a Dead Deer,* c. 1650 (National Gallery, London), fig. 41a.

[6] Erik de Jong, "'Netherlandish Hesperides': Garden Art in the Period of William and Mary, 1650–1702," in "The Anglo-Dutch Garden in the Age of William and Mary," ed. John Dixon Hunt and Erik de Jong, special issue, *Journal of Garden History* 8, nos. 2–3 (April–September 1988): 15–40, provides an excellent overview of the appeal of country houses for Dutch aristocracy in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

[7] Jan Weenix purchased this manor house in Vleuten, just outside of Utrecht, in 1657.

[8] The garden of the Clingendael estate near The Hague was particularly important for incorporating French formal garden designs into Dutch traditions. This garden was constructed in the 1670s and 1680s by the owner of the estate, Philips Doublet, who was married to Susanna Huygens, Constantijn Huygens' daughter. Doublet traveled regularly to France to study gardens with his brother-in-law, Christiaan Huygens, who worked in Paris. Huygens provided Doublet with prints after French gardens, which he used when designing his own gardens. Prince William III, impressed by Doublet's knowledge and abilities, employed Doublet to supervise changes in the garden at Huis ten Bosch. For more information about the Clingendael estate, see "The Anglo-Dutch Garden in the Age of William and Mary," ed. John Dixon Hunt and Erik de Jong, special issue, *Journal of Garden History* 8, nos. 2–3 (April–September 1988): 180–184.

[9] See Remmet van Luttervelt, *De buitenplaatsen aan de Vecht* (Lochem, 1970).

[10] The fame of the artist and the quality of the painting are stressed in M. de Bastide, *Le temple des arts ou le cabinet de M. Braamcamp* (Amsterdam, 1766), 88: "Ce Tableau est peint avec cet art que possédoit, comme on le sait, ce grant Artiste, dont le mérit est trop connu en ce genre de représentation, pour en parler ici."

[11] For Prince William III and the hunt, see Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece* (Montclair, NJ, 1984), 35–39.

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[12] Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece* (Montclair, NJ, 1984), 34.

[13] Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece* (Montclair, NJ, 1984), 40.

[14] Scott A. Sullivan, "Jan Baptist Weenix: *Still Life with a Dead Swan*," *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 57, no. 2 (1979): 69.

[15] See, for example, Weenix's oil sketch of *A Squirrel Monkey*, c. 1700 (oil on canvas, 29.9 x 25.9 cm [11 3/4 x 10 ¼ in.]), which was with the art dealer Jean-Luc Baroni, London, in 2010–2011.

[16] Marrigje Rikken, *Melchior d'Hondecoeter, Bird Painter*, trans. Michael Hoyle (Amsterdam, 2008), 51.

[17] See Weenix's *A Monkey and a Dog beside Dead Game and Fruits, with the Estate of Rijksdorp near Wassenaer in the Background,* Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (no. A 462), in which both the standing and the flying dove appear in different orientations.

[18] Agnes Block (1629–1704) was a renowned cultivator of plants at her estate on the river Vecht, Vijverhof. For further information about Agnes Block, see "The Anglo-Dutch Garden in the Age of William and Mary," ed. John Dixon Hunt and Erik de Jong, special issue, *Journal of Garden History* 8, nos. 2–3 (April–September 1988): 121–122.

[19] In his early genre scenes Weenix occasionally incorporated Italian sculptures that he found either in his father's paintings or in prints; see Christine Schloss, "The Early Italianate Genre Paintings by Jan Weenix (ca. 1642–1719)," *Oud-Holland* 97 (1983): 76–77. Specific borrowings from prints of garden designs or garden sculpture, however, have yet to be identified in his later game pieces. For the type of French prints that Weenix could have seen, see "The Anglo-Dutch Garden in the Age of William and Mary," ed. John Dixon Hunt and Erik de Jong, special issue, *Journal of Garden History* 8, nos. 2–3 (April–September 1988).

[20] As Jaap Bolten has noted in correspondence to Afiena van Zanten (August 6, 2007), no exact prototype from Bloemaert is known, but the style and disposition of the figures in the Holy Family are entirely in the manner of this Utrecht master.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, which has been lined. The tacking margins have been removed but the X-radiographs show cusping along all four edges. The ground appears to be a thin, reddish-brown layer. Infrared reflectography at 2.0 – 2.5 microns[1] reveals a brushy underpainting

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marking the contours of some of the birds and animals. Such contours are especially noticeable in the hare, the large dead duck lying next to the hare, the dove, and the small ducks in the background near the statue.

The paint was applied wet-into-wet and is fairly thin. In some areas of the background the artist left the ground visible to serve as the mid-tones of the painting. In other areas, he only applied a glazelike layer of paint, allowing the ground to show through. Weenix employed some slight impasto in the highlights and to represent the coagulated blood near the hare and the goose. Examination with infrared reflectography revealed, in addition to the underdrawing, a number of artist's changes: the dove in the sky was shifted up and to the right; the head of the rock dove in the foreground was moved to the right, as were the goose's bill and the hare's head.

The painting is in very good condition. The paint exhibits a fine craquelure pattern that is hardly visible from normal viewing distances. Some traction crackle exists in the darkest darks, and several of these areas have been abraded. Examination under ultraviolet light reveals that the dark areas in the trees and along the path in the background, as well as in the base of the statue on the right, have been reinforced. The varnish is somewhat glossy and uneven and it is not saturating some of the darks well.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with a K astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

Gerret Braamcamp [1699-1771], Amsterdam, by 1752;[1] (his estate sale, Philippe van der Schley, Amsterdam, 31 July 1771 and days following, no. 257); John Hope [1737-1784], Amsterdam;[2] his estate, Amsterdam and London; by inheritance to his youngest son, Henry Philip Hope [1774-1839], London;[3] by inheritance to his nephew, Henry Thomas Hope [1808-1862], London and Deepdene, near Dorking, Surrey;[4] by inheritance to his widow, Adèle Bichat Hope [d. 1884], London and Deepdene; by inheritance to her grandson, Henry Francis Hope Pelham-Clinton-Hope, 8th duke of Newcastle-under-Lyme [1866-1941], London, Deepdene, and Clumber Park, Nottingham.[5] (Galerie Charles Brunner, Paris), by 1923.[6] Mme G.

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Brière, 1928. acquired c. 1930 by private collection, Paris; by descent in this family;[7] (sale, Sotheby's, New York, 23 January 2003, no. 21, as *A Still Life of Game by a Stone Monument, including, a Swan, a Hare, Game Birds, a Spaniel, a Jay and a Pigeon in Flight, an Extensive Water Garden Beyond*, bought in); purchased 10 March 2004 by NGA by private contract with (Sotheby's).

[1] Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of naamlyst van schilderyen, met derzelver pryzen. . .* 3 vols., The Hague, 1752: 2:511.

[2] For a detailed account of the Hope Collection and the family history, see J.W. Niemeijer, "De kunstverzameling van John Hope (1737-1784)," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 32 (1981): 127-232; see also Marten G. Buist, *At Spes Non Fracta: Hope & Co. 1770–1815: Merchant Bankers and Diplomats at Work*, The Hague, 1974: 42-43, 49. John Hope's estate, which was left to his three sons--Thomas (1769-1831), Adrian Elias (1772-1834) and Henry Philip (1774-1839)--was administered by the children's mother, Philippina Barbara van der Hoeven and their father's cousin, Henry Hope (c. 1739-1811), who ran the family firm. After the mother's death in 1789, Henry Hope assumed control of the collection of paintings in Amsterdam. In 1791 the three sons received the division of their mother's estate and a partial division of their father's estate. The collection of paintings was not divided, however, but remained in the estate. On 18 June 1794, Thomas Hope, having attained his legal majority, received his inheritance, but he received no part of the collection, which continued to remain in his father's estate, and which was taken by Henry Hope to London in 1794 when he and other members of the family fled the invading French army. In London, Henry Hope maintained possession of the collection, and on 17 December 1795 he signed insurance lists of "Pictures in the House No. 1 the corner of Harley Street, belonging to Mr. Henry Hope."

[3] It is not clear when, and for what reason, Henry Philip Hope became the sole heir of the paintings, but he seems to have inherited the collection no later than 1819. After Henry Hope's death in 1811, possession of the collection presumably went to Thomas Hope, with whom it remained because of Henry Philip Hope's peripatetic life (see: Niemeijer 1981, 169). Thomas kept most of the paintings in his two London residences; first at 2, Hanover Square and, after 1819, off Portland Place in Duchess Street, where he designed and built a special gallery to house the collection (see: David Watkin, *Thomas Hope 1769-1831 and the Neo-Classical*

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Idea, London, 1968: 93). NGA 2004.39.1 was seen in Thomas Hope's cabinet by C.M. Westmacott (*British Galleries of Painting and Sculpture...*, London, 1824: 237).

[4] Henry Thomas Hope maintained the property and its collections on Duchess Street until 1851, when he moved to a new residence in Piccadilly (see: Niemeijer 1981, 170; and Ben Broos et al., *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, exh. cat., Mauritshuis, The Hague; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, The Hague, 1990: 422.)

[5] Lord Pelham-Clinton-Hope lent the painting to the South Kensington Museum in London from 1891 to 1898. The 2003 Sotheby's sale catalogue indicates that the painting was sold at a Christie, Manson & Woods sale in London, 25-27 July 1917, as lot no. 292. However, this sale (one of several Hope sales in 1917) was a sale of the Hope library, and lot no. 292 was a book by Sir H.C. Englefield, *Walk through Southampton*. The Hope sale at Christie's on 20 July 1917, of "pictures by old masters and family portraits," included only 127 lots and no painting by Weenix is listed in the catalogue.

[6] The date is according to a photograph in the Witt Library fiche. There is a red wax seal on the reverse of the painting's stretcher, embossed "GALERIE BRUNNER."

[7] According to the provenance in the 2003 Sotheby's sale catalogue.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1891 Pictures of the Dutch and Flemish Schools lent to the South Kensington Museum by Lord Francis Pelham-Clinton-Hope, South Kensington Museum, London, 1891, no. 46.

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1981 Niemeijer, J. W. "De kunstverzameling van John Hope (1737–1784)." *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 32 (1981): 148, 203, no. 292.

2003 Waagen, Gustav Friedrich. *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*. Translated by Elizabeth Rigby Eastlake. Facsimile edition of London 1854. London, 2003: 2:124.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Witte, Emanuel de

Dutch, c. 1616 - 1691/1692

BIOGRAPHY

Emanuel de Witte was born in Alkmaar in about 1616, the son of Pieter de Wit, a local schoolteacher, and his wife, Jacomijntge van der Beck. According to Arnold Houbraken, De Witte studied with Evert van Aelst (1602–1657), a still-life painter in Delft.[1] In 1636 De Witte joined the Saint Luke's Guild in Alkmaar but he soon moved to Rotterdam before returning to Delft in 1641. In October of that year a daughter of his was baptized in Delft; one year later, on October 4, 1642, he married the child's mother, Geertgen Arents. De Witte joined Delft's Guild on June 23, 1642, and was regularly documented in the city during the next several years; in March 1650 he rented an inexpensive house on the Nieuwe Langendijk for a year.

De Witte probably moved to Amsterdam in 1651, although he was first recorded there in January 1652. Geertgen died soon after, and De Witte married Lysbeth Lodewyck van de Plass in 1655; the couple had a daughter, born in February 1656. In 1658, however, Lysbeth was banished from Amsterdam for robbery, and she took their daughter with her. In addition to his personal troubles, De Witte suffered financial difficulties during the latter years of his life and was forced to indenture himself on numerous occasions. He was known to experience severe bouts of depression, and it is believed that he committed suicide in the winter of 1691–1692 in Amsterdam.[2]

Although De Witte started out as a painter of biblical and mythological scenes, after 1650 he turned increasingly toward the depiction of church interiors. He often incorporated the pulpit or other church furniture in his views of Delft or Amsterdam churches. Along with his Delft contemporaries Gerard Houckgeest (1600–1661) and Hendrik Cornelisz van Vliet (Dutch, 1611 - 1675), De Witte was an influential painter of architectural settings. Unlike Houckgeest and Van Vliet, however, who concentrated on the accurate rendering of space and perspective, De Witte rendered fanciful church interiors. He also demonstrated a greater interest in the contrasts of light and shadow and emphasized figures and animals in his interior spaces. In addition, he painted market scenes and several portraits.

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[1] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:283.

[2] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:286–287.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., Lara Yeager-Crasselt

April 24, 2014

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1982 Liedtke, Walter A. *Architectural painting in Delft: Gerard Houckgeest, Hendrick van Vliet, Emanuel de Witte*. Doornspijk, 1982: 76-96.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Emanuel de Witte
Dutch, c. 1616 - 1691/1692

The Interior of the Oude Kerk, Amsterdam

c. 1660

oil on canvas
overall: 80.5 x 100 cm (31 11/16 x 39 3/8 in.)
framed: 122.6 x 141.1 x 7.3 cm (48 1/4 x 55 9/16 x 2 7/8 in.)
Patrons' Permanent Fund 2004.127.1

ENTRY

This large and boldly executed representation of the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam is one of Emanuel de Witte's most impressive architectural paintings. [1] From the viewer's low vantage point at the west end of the nave, the broad sweep of the church's spacious interior is both imposing and inviting. Tall cylindrical columns flanking the nave, and three enormous brass chandeliers hanging from the wooden vaulted ceiling recede in rhythmic patterns to the distant choir. Bands of light stream dramatically across the dimly lit interior, illuminating the columns and the arches they support, the dark gray stone floor, and two groups of figures within the nave: a pair of elderly gentlemen who are engaged in an emphatic discussion before an open tomb in the foreground, and a young mother who sits on a wooden bench nursing her child.

The Oude Kerk, the earliest parish church in Amsterdam, traces its origins to the early fourteenth century. [2] Initially it was a Catholic church consisting of a central nave and two aisles. By the mid-sixteenth century, however, its appearance had

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been greatly transformed through the addition of a large choir, transepts that reached to the height of the central nave, and multiple chapels. In the late sixteenth century it became a Protestant church. At that time the thirty-eight altarpieces that once graced its interior were removed, and whitewash was applied to the walls and stone columns lining the nave and apse. The stained-glass windows, however, were retained, as was the decorative painting on the wooden vaulted ceiling.

After De Witte moved to Amsterdam in the early 1650s, the Oude Kerk became one of his favorite subjects, not only because of the majesty of its large interior but also because of the important and dynamic role the church played in the lives of Amsterdam's citizens. The church was a center of communal life, where people of all ages, the devout and the would-be devout alike, felt free to enter and congregate, whether or not they were seeking spiritual guidance. De Witte relished in the depiction of that human presence, in all its variety, and in his paintings of the Oude Kerk one finds all types: top-hatted gentlemen talking animatedly with one another; parishioners sleeping unabashedly in church pews; quiet, obedient children as well as those playing hide-and-seek in the stalls; young women nursing; and older matrons listening intently to sermons. Dogs roam freely in De Witte's depictions of the Oude Kerk, sometimes behaving properly, sometimes not; in this instance, a dog is urinating on a column in the left foreground. [3]

For De Witte, the Oude Kerk was more than just a social milieu; it was also the site where one marked the defining moments in the cycle of life: birth and death. The Oude Kerk was, in fact, a sacred burial place, and this facet of its broad social and spiritual responsibility within the community was the focus of many of De Witte's paintings. In the National Gallery of Art's canvas, as in so many of De Witte's works, the artist juxtaposed a mother nursing a newborn child with an open tomb, presumably to symbolize life's journey as it unfolds within the framework of the Christian tradition. [4]

The imagery De Witte incorporated in the painting emphatically reinforces this message. In the dim recesses of the church, a funeral procession of gentlemen clad in somber black makes its way slowly along the north aisle to the nave where the freshly dug open tomb awaits. [5] The skull of the tomb's former occupant lies near the gravedigger's tools, emphasizing the finality of death, while other pictorial elements symbolically offer the promise of Christian salvation. The spade, with its T-shaped handle, stands vertically in the tomb's reddish-brown soil, a striking motif, meant to signify the cross on which Christ was crucified. At the same time, the

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heavy stone rolled back from the tomb provides a visual reminder of the biblical account of Christ's Resurrection. [6] Finally, to purify and simplify his composition and to enhance the universality of his message, De Witte eliminated the banners, plaques, and heraldic shields that hung from the nave's columns. He did not make this painting to commemorate a specific burial, but to comment upon the broader significance of this passage of life in Christian belief. The fact that De Witte oriented this grave in a north-south direction rather than on an east-west axis, as all graves in the church are actually oriented, reinforces the sense that his intention was not to depict an actual event, but rather to provide this scene with a broader allegorical statement about death.

De Witte painted more than twenty views of the interior of the Oude Kerk, which range from quite accurate representations to fanciful re-creations of its architectural character. [7] In this instance, he elongated the columns, adjusted the position of piers and church furniture, and widened the nave to enhance the dynamic quality of the scene. He also altered the character of the light streaming into the building through the windows. In other paintings of the nave De Witte allowed light to shine through the apse windows and carefully rendered the design and color of their stained-glass panels [fig. 1]. [8] Here, however, he darkened the apse windows to give the scene a somber character appropriate to the solemnity of the funeral procession. He indicated, with broad touches of the brush, the glowing reds and deep oranges of the stained glass, but allowed no light to shine through them. At the same time he eliminated a stained-glass panel in the middle of the large window in the south transept to provide a light-filled, unobstructed vista to the city rooftops beyond the window's leaded panes. [9] Indeed, De Witte imaginatively controlled the lighting throughout the composition for dramatic effect. Light passing through the windows at the right, for example, strikes the arches on the south side of the nave in a consistent fashion, whereas only one column on the north side of the nave is brightly illuminated.

Arnold Houbraken indicated that De Witte made numerous drawings of architectural interiors in preparation for his paintings, although none are known today. [10] He must also have made figure studies that he then used to populate his interiors. The seated woman breast-feeding her baby, for example, appears often in his works, as do the two gentlemen (and their dog) in animated conversation (see [fig. 2]). Whatever his visual sources, De Witte freely adapted them to impart both mood and narrative content to his architectural paintings. In this ability he had no equal, as Houbraken rightly attests. [11]

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Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Emanuel de Witte, *Interior of the Oude Kerk, Amsterdam, with Townsfolk Gathered for a Service*, c. 1660–1665, oil on canvas, Eijk and Rose-Marie van Otterloo Collection

fig. 2 Emanuel de Witte, *The Oude Kerk, Amsterdam*, 1659, oil on canvas, Kunsthalle Hamburg. Photo: bpk, Berlin / Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg / Elke Walford / Art Resource, NY

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Molli Kuenstner for her extensive research on this painting.

[2] The church, dedicated to Saint Nicholas, was built on the foundations of a small, thirteenth-century, wooden chapel and cemetery. See H. Janse, *De Oude Kerk te Amsterdam: Bouwgeschiedenis en restauratie* (Zwolle, 2004), for the history of the construction of the Oude Kerk.

[3] The dog had been painted out when the painting was illustrated in Ilse Manke, *Emanuel de Witte, 1617–1692* (Amsterdam, 1963), no. 65.

[4] This theme has been discussed by, among others, Timothy Trent Blade, "Two Interior Views of the Old Church in Delft," *Museum Studies* 6 (Art

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Institute of Chicago) (1971): 34–50; and Beverly Heisner, "Mortality and Faith: The Figural Motifs within Emanuel de Witte's Dutch Church Interiors," *Studies in Iconography* 6 (1980): 107–122. The interpretation of the mother nursing her child as a symbol of charity, as is sometimes found in the literature (see Timothy Trent Blade, "Two Interior Views," 34–50), is not convincing, partially because of the context in which these figures appear, but partially also because Charity (*caritas*) traditionally is shown nursing two infants.

[5] De Witte included many of the same elements (the nursing mother, the open tomb, and the funeral procession) in his *Oude Kerk in Amsterdam,* c. 1655, oil on panel, Musée des Beaux Arts, Strasbourg. See Ilse Manke, *Emanuel de Witte, 1617–1692* (Amsterdam, 1963), no. 66.

[6] The gravestone in De Witte's painting is located at the site of the grave marked with the number 19 in the Oude Kerk.

[7] For these paintings, see Ilse Manke, *Emanuel de Witte, 1617–1692* (Amsterdam, 1963).

[8] For an analysis of the subjects of these apse windows, which were donated to the Oude Kerk by King Philip II of Spain, see Wim de Groot, "Bloei en teloorgang van de Bourgondisch-Habsburgse glazen in de Oude Kerk van Amsterdam," *Amstelodamum: Maandblad voor de kennis van Amsterdam* 92, no. 6 (November–December 2005): 17–32.

[9] The stained-glass panel on this window indicated the names and family crests of Amsterdam burgomasters. For an image of its probable appearance at this time, see De Witte's *Interior of the Oude Kerk, Amsterdam, with Townsfolk Gathered for a Service* (fig. 1).

[10] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:283: "De meeste Kerken binnen Amsterdam heeft hy van binnen op verscheiden wyze naar't leven afgeteekent, geschildert, met Predikstoel, Orgel, Heere- en gemeene gestoelten, Grafsteden en andere daar vercierseen, zoo dat dezelve te kennen zyn."

[11] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 1:283: "Dog hy begaf zig naderhand geheel met'er woon tot Amsterdam, en tot het schilderen van Kerkjes, waar in niemant hem gelyk was, zoo ten opzigt van de geregelde bouwkonst, geestighe verkiezinge van lichten, als welgemaakete beeldjes."

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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The support is a coarse, open-weave fabric that has been lined. The tacking margins are no longer extant, but cusping is present on all four sides of the painting, indicating that it probably retains its original dimensions. The fabric was prepared with a double ground. The lower layer is red and the top layer is dark gray, both are rather thick. Infrared reflectography at 1.5 – 1.7 microns[1] revealed some preliminary drawing in the architectural elements. De Witte carefully layered his brushstrokes to allow the lower layers to show through the upper ones.

The painting has some small losses and minor abrasion, but overall it is in good condition. The fine overall crackle pattern is most visible in the white columns. The crackle in this area has been minimized with inpainting. The gold at the ends of the vaulted ceiling ribs may be restoration.

[1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a FLIR Indigo/Alpha VisGaAs camera.

PROVENANCE

(Sale, Philippus van der Schley et al. at Arnoldus Dankmeyer & Son, Amsterdam, 14-15 August 1793, no. 215); Fouquet, Amsterdam; (sale, Philippus van der Schley et al. at Huis van Trip, Amsterdam, 7-8 May 1804, no. 194). E.W. Walker;[1] (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 10 April 1883, no. 123); Lesser.[2] John Femor-Hesketh, Towcaster, Northamptonshire. (Mortimer Brandt, New York), by 1951/1952 until at least 1963. (Noortman & Brod, New York), by 1981. Saul P. and Gayfryd Steinberg, New York; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, New York, 12 January 1996, no. 197); private collection, New York; purchased 17 November 2004 through (Gurr-Johns, London) by NGA.

[1] E.W. Walker is the vendor's name originally written under stock number 332R in Christie's daybook for the 1883 sale, but it is crossed out and "Miss Maples" is written above it, so it is not certain who the seller was. This information was kindly supplied by Marijke Booth of Christie's Archives Department (e-mail of 13 December 2005, in NGA curatorial files).

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[2] The name of the buyer, originally given to the NGA as "Legge," was kindly corrected by Marijke Booth of Christie's Archives Department (e-mail of 8 December 2005, in NGA curatorial files).

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1981 Inaugural Exhibition of Fine Paintings and Drawings, Noortman & Brod, New York, 1981, no. 15, repro.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Philips Wouwerman, *Self-Portrait*, 1634–1668, red chalk, touched with black chalk, on buff paper, The British Museum, London, inv. 18,360,811.59. © Trustees of the British Museum

Wouwerman, Philips

Also known as
Wouwermans, Philips
Dutch, 1619 - 1668

BIOGRAPHY

Philips Wouwerman, a prolific painter of equestrian scenes, hailed from Haarlem, where he was baptized on May 24, 1619. The eldest of three sons born to the painter Pouwels Joosten and Susanna van den Bogert, Pouwels' fourth wife, Wouwerman probably first learned to paint from his father. According to his earliest biographer, Cornelis de Bie, he was then apprenticed to Frans Hals (Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666).[1] Wouwerman also may have received some training in the representation of horses from the Haarlem artist Pieter Verbeeck (1610/1615–1652/1654).[2]

In 1638 Wouwerman briefly left the Netherlands for Hamburg. According to Matthias Scheits (c. 1625/1630–c. 1700), a student of the artist, Wouwerman fled the Netherlands in order to marry a Catholic girl, Annetje Pietersz van Broeckhof, against the wishes of his Protestant family.[3] Although no records of the wedding exist in the marriage register of Hamburg's Catholic community, the fact that Scheits knew Wouwerman personally argues for the validity of his account. Wouwerman's journey to Hamburg, however, involved more than just a wedding; he also spent some time working in the studio of the obscure German history painter Evert Decker (d. 1647).

By 1640 Wouwerman and his wife had returned to Haarlem, where the artist was admitted into the local Saint Luke's Guild on August 8 of that year. In early 1642

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Koert Witholt, a Swedish artist, served as his apprentice for a few short weeks. Later that same year Nicolaes Ficke and Jacob Warnars, both from Amsterdam, were also recorded as his pupils. Wouwerman was an active member in Haarlem's artistic and civic communities. In 1646 he was elected one of the six vinders of the Saint Luke's Guild, and between 1642 and 1655 he served as a member of the militia company of Sint Joris. He and his wife had many children, of which seven survived. Wouwerman died at the age of forty-eight on May 19, 1668. He was buried four days later in Haarlem's Nieuwe Kerk.

Wouwerman was an extraordinarily productive artist. More than a thousand paintings bear his name, though only a small number are dated, making it difficult to establish a chronology of his work. Attribution issues also exist because a number of studio works and copies were made by his brother Pieter Wouwerman (1623–1682). Wouwerman's oeuvre consists predominantly of small cabinet paintings of equestrian subjects, such as battle or hunting scenes, army camps, and smithies. He also painted several genre pieces as well as some mythological and religious subjects. Despite the Italianate quality of much of his work, it is extremely unlikely that he ever traveled to Italy. His style was greatly influenced by Pieter van Laer (Dutch, c. 1592 - 1642), a fellow Haarlem artist who spent fourteen years in Italy from 1625 to 1639; according to Houbraken, after Van Laer died, Wouwerman acquired some of his sketches and studies.[4]

[1] Cornelis de Bie, *Het gulden cabinet vande edel vry schilder const* (Antwerp, 1662), 282.

[2] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 2:249.

[3] Birgit Schumacher, *Philips Wouwerman: The Horse Painter of the Golden Age* (Doornspijk, 2006), 16.

[4] Arnold Houbraken, De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen. 3 in 1 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 2:73–75.

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April 24, 2014

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Philips Wouwerman
Dutch, 1619 - 1668

Battle Scene

c. 1645/1646

oil on panel
overall: 48 x 82.5 cm (18 7/8 x 32 1/2 in.)
framed: 62.9 x 97.3 x 6 cm (24 3/4 x 38 5/16 x 2 3/8 in.)
Inscription: lower right, PH in monogram: PH.W.
Gift of Joseph F. McCrindle in memory of Frederick A. den Broeder 2000.159.1

ENTRY

Early in his career Philips Wouwerman specialized in expressive depictions of military encounters; he was not, however, a romantic who idealized warfare. [1] Even though he included all of war's heroic accoutrements in this painting—trumpet, drum, flags, and colorful sashes worn by brave soldiers—he portrayed the battlefield as a deadly and messy milieu where clear divisions between friend and foe are impossible to establish. This skirmish unfolds on the side of an ordinary sandy dune, so undistinguished in appearance that it reinforces the impression that such human slaughter occurs without any significance or relevance to the larger course of human affairs. Smoke and dust billowing from the tumult largely obscure the distant landscape and the mounted soldiers who are arriving to join the battle from beyond the crest of the hill. To judge from the Dutch flag at the right and the red sash worn by the central rider brandishing his trumpet in the air, the skirmish is between Dutch and Spanish soldiers. Nevertheless, the immediate circumstances that have pitted these forces against each other, the eventual outcome of the battle, and the consequences for the victor and the vanquished are unknown and of no apparent interest to the artist.

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The battle rages right before us, and there is no escape from its furor. As the horses of the mounted soldiers rear their hoofs over the dead and maimed, armed combatants grimace as they try to subdue their enemy. With swords and knives raised to cause yet more bloodshed, and rifles and pistols firing to kill, there is no end in sight to the carnage. Wouwerman focused his composition on four riders and their steeds struggling for survival in the vortex of the battle: a horseman wearing a red sash who holds aloft his trumpet; a rider with an orange sash on a white mount that jumps over a third horse whose rider has fallen onto the ground with a gaping wound on the back of his head; and, most menacing of all, a fierce warrior who is about to decapitate his Dutch adversary with his drawn sword. At the far left is a lone figure of a wounded drummer, clutching the profusely bleeding stump of his right arm. With his now useless drum lying abandoned on the ground before him, he fearfully tries to escape from the violence. [2]

Wouwerman's ability to capture the heat of battle was one of the most celebrated aspects of his extensive oeuvre. Cornelis de Bie wrote in 1661 that Wouwerman's battle scenes were so lifelike that Nature could not make them any more perfect. [3] At the beginning of the following century Arnold Houbraken was even more enthusiastic in his admiration of Wouwerman's ability to paint "fiery passion flashing from the eyes of man and rider, fear in those who flee, pain in the maimed, and the hue of death painted on the lips of the slain." [4] Whether Wouwerman conceived such battle scenes entirely from his imagination or actually witnessed such human brutality is not known. By the mid-1640s, when he painted this work, Spanish and Dutch forces were no longer fighting in the Province of Holland. [5] Perhaps the young artist had witnessed battles when he was in Germany in 1638–1639, as conflicts between these enemies were still actively being waged there at that time. Whatever the source of his inspiration, Wouwerman's battle scenes greatly appealed to Dutch and Flemish collectors, who paid high prices for these works. [6]

This painting is one of a number of comparable works Wouwerman made relatively early in his career. In each of them he situated a skirmish on the side of a sandy dune, a diagonal terrain that added to the battle's dynamic intensity. Although these paintings are largely monochromatic, Wouwerman gave pictorial focus to his images with a few carefully positioned accents of color and light. In this instance, he drew attention to the three central riders circling one another, the fallen wounded soldier, and the dead man dressed in red and blue. He probably composed his paintings with the aid of now-lost preliminary drawings, for similar,

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although never identical, figures and horses appear in a number of his works. [7] The rearing horse carrying the trumpeter in this painting, for example, is comparable to one in Wouwerman's *Attack on a Convoy,* 1644 [fig. 1]. He must also have made counterproofs of these drawings: a mirror image of the white steed in the National Gallery of Art's painting appears as a bay horse with a white blaze in a comparable battle scene in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art [fig. 2].

A long tradition of battle scenes in Dutch art gave Wouwerman a pictorial framework for his own compositions. Nevertheless, when one compares *Battle Scene* with depictions of skirmishes by the Haarlem master Esaias van de Velde I (Dutch, 1587 - 1630) or by Palamedes Palamedesz (1607–1638) from Delft, it is evident that Wouwerman introduced an entirely new intensity to the battlefield genre. [8] Whereas the action in these earlier scenes seems stilted and frozen, Wouwerman made it come alive, not only through his compositional mastery but also through his ability to depict the sense of movement in both horses and humans.

It seems probable that Wouwerman's dynamic vision of men and horses in the midst of battle drew heavily from non-Dutch pictorial sources, which he would have known primarily through prints. Chief among these predecessors was Antonio Tempesta (Florentine, 1555 - 1630), whose etchings of battle scenes featuring rearing horses and close combat were widely circulated and enormously influential during the early seventeenth century. A number of specific prototypes for Wouwerman's horses appear in these prints, including the steed carrying the trumpeter in the National Gallery's painting [fig. 3]. Another probable source for the dramatic poses of man and beast that characterize Wouwerman's battle scenes was Sir Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577 - 1640), whose compositions he could have known through prints. [9] Finally, Houbraken notes that Wouwerman acquired a suitcase full of "models, drawings and sketches" from the estate of his fellow painter in Haarlem, Pieter van Laer (Dutch, c. 1592 - 1642). [10] Van Laer, also known as Bamboccio, had spent fourteen years in Rome before returning to Haarlem in 1639. Shortly before Wouwerman died, he purportedly burned Van Laer's drawings along with his own, so it is impossible to know the extent of Van Laer's impact on Wouwerman's art. Nevertheless, the presence of a strongly foreshortened dead soldier in the foreground of this painting raises the possibility that one of Van Laer's drawings was a copy of Andrea Mantegna (Paduan, c. 1431 - 1506)'s *Dead Christ*, c. 1490, in the Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan. Another possible source for this striking image is Dead Adonis, 1609, by Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch,

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1558 - 1617) [fig. 4].

While the earlier provenance of *Battle Scene* is not known, intriguing hints of its history exist in earlier sale records and from labels on the verso of the panel. [11]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Philips Wouwerman, *Attack on a Convoy*, 1644, oil on panel, Sammlungen des Fürsten von und zu Liechtenstein, Vaduz-Vienna

fig. 2 Philips Wouwerman, *Battle Scene*, c. 1645, oil on canvas, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

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fig. 3 Antonio Tempesta, *David Kills Goliath*, 1613, etching, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 1974.55.33

fig. 4 Hendrick Goltzius, *Dead Adonis*, 1609, oil on canvas, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam,. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank Henriette Rahusen for her assistance with this entry.

[2] Michel P. van Maarseveen et al., *Beelden van een strijd: Oorlog en kunst vóór de Vrede van Munster 1621–1648* (Delft, 1998), 122, notes that commands for infantry were relayed by a drummer, whereas commands for cavalry were passed on by bugle players. As Wouwerman includes both a drummer and a bugle player in this work, it would seem that the skirmish is between two such groups, perhaps on reconnaissance missions.

[3] Cornelis de Bie, *Het Gulden Cabinet van de Edel Vry Schilderconst* (Antwerp 1661), 281: “soo aenghenaem net en near het leven datter inden Natuer gheen meerder volmaecktheyt in’t leven en can bethoont oft bewesen worde[n]/oft t’is daer in door d’eelheyt van sijn Pinceel al te sien.”

[4] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 2:72: “men ziet het driftvuur Paerd en Ruiter uit de oogen schitteren, in de vlugtigen de vrees, in de verminkten de pyn, en in de afgemaaiden de doodverf op de lippen geschildert.”

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[5] Wouwerman only signed his works with the monogram "PH.W" between 1642 and 1646. After that time he signed his paintings "PHIL.W" or "PHILS.W." See Frederik Duparc and Quentin Buvelot, *Philips Wouwerman, 1619–1668* (The Hague, 2009), 22.

[6] Frederik Duparc and Quentin Buvelot, *Philips Wouwerman, 1619–1668* (The Hague, 2009), 104.

[7] Wouwerman's drawings are extremely rare, and no such individual studies of animals have survived. Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 2:73, wrote that the rarity of Wouwerman's drawings stemmed from his deathbed decision to burn all of his "models and drawings." The validity of Houbraken's account, however, has been questioned in Frederik Duparc and Quentin Buvelot, *Philips Wouwerman, 1619–1668* (The Hague, 2009), 38 and 138. These authors note that later collectors owned substantial numbers of Wouwerman's drawings, which, however, have not survived to the present day.

[8] For the Dutch tradition of battle scenes, see Michel P. van Maarseveen et al., *Beelden van een strijd: Oorlog en kunst vóór de Vrede van Munster 1621–1648* (Delft, 1998), 107–132.

[9] See, for example, the horse at the right in the engraving by Schelte Adamsz Bolswert (c. 1586–1659), which he made after Rubens' *The Conversion of Saint Paul.*

[10] Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*. 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint: Amsterdam, 1976), 2:73–75.

[11] See this painting's Provenance, note 1, for more information.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support, an oak[1] panel made from a single board, is beveled on the back around all four edges. The ground is a white layer of medium thickness. The artist applied a thin, brushy, yellowish brown wash over the ground prior to the paint. The paint was applied in thin layers that blend together. It is thicker and more detailed in the foreground figures and thinner and less detailed in the background. Impasto is found only in the brightest highlights.

The painting is in good condition. Small losses in the paint and ground exist around the edges, especially in the lower right corner. The paint and glazes are somewhat abraded in the area of the gray smoke billowing from the battlefield. The painting

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was treated in 2001 to remove discolored varnish and inpainting and to restore the abraded glazes.

[1] The characterization of the wood is based on visually examination only.

PROVENANCE

(Carlo Sestieri, Rome);[1] purchased 1960s by Joseph F. McCrindle [1923-2008], New York; gift 2000 to NGA.

[1] Although the earlier provenance of the painting is not known, hints of its history exist in earlier sale records and from labels on the verso of the panel. This work may be the painting identified as “Cavalry fight on a Hill” that was sold by J. H. van Heemskerk in The Hague in 1770 (sale of 29 March 1770, no. 142, sold for 461 florins to Deodati). The dimensions recorded for that work, 20 1/2 by 34 1/2 inches, are only slightly larger than those of this painting. See: Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century, translated by Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols., London, 1907-1927: 2(1909):498, no. 770e. One of the old handwritten labels on the verso reads: “N:XXVII / Une bataille par Phillippe Wouwerman.” The other label, which indicates that the painting was at one point in Sweden, reads: “Österby-samlinger / Söderfors.”

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1983 Haarlem: The Seventeenth Century, The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1983, no. 137, repro.

1997 In Celebration: Works of Art from the Collections of Princeton Alumni and Friends of the Art Museum, Princeton University, The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1997, no. 166, repro.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Joachim Wtewael, *Self-Portrait*, 1601, oil on panel, Centraal Museum Utrecht, inv. 2264

Wtewael, Joachim Anthonisz

Also known as
Uytewael, Joachim Anthonisz
Wttewael, Joachim Anthonisz
Utenwael, Joachim Anthonisz
Wtenwael, Joachim Anthonisz
Wtewael, Joachim Antonisz
Dutch, c. 1566 - 1638

BIOGRAPHY

Born in about 1566, this artist (whose surname is also recorded in such variant forms as Wttewael, Uytewael, Utenwael, and Wtenwael) was the son of Anthonis Jansz Wtewael, an Utrecht glass painter. Karel van Mander I (Netherlandish, 1548 - 1606) records that Joachim worked for his father until the age of eighteen, when he began to study oil painting with the Utrecht artist Joos de Beer (d. 1591).[1] Abraham Bloemaert (Dutch, 1566 - 1651) was also a pupil of De Beer.

In 1586, after two years with De Beer, Wtewael traveled to Italy in the retinue of Charles de Bourgneuf de Cucé, bishop of Saint Malo. He worked for the bishop for the next four years—two of them in Padua and two in France—before returning to Utrecht. In 1592 Wtewael joined the Utrecht Saddlers' Guild, because at that time the city had no artists' guild. When one was established in 1611, Wtewael was a founding member. He was also active in various spheres unrelated to the arts, notably local politics, serving on Utrecht's city council in 1610, and again from 1632 to 1636. A Calvinist and staunch patriot, he assisted in 1618 in the overthrow of the Remonstrant magistracy of Utrecht and its replacement with a Calvinist administration loyal to the House of Orange. Other activities included running a flax and linen business, to which, Van Mander complained, Wtewael devoted more energy than he did to his art.

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Nonetheless, as Van Mander acknowledged, Wtewael found time to produce a considerable number of paintings. Surviving works range in date from the early 1590s to 1628 and vary considerably in size, support, and subject. Although the majority represent biblical and mythological subjects, Wtewael also executed portraits and genre scenes. Stylistically, he was influenced by a number of different schools, from Venetian and Tuscan to Dutch, notably the work of the Haarlem mannerists Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1558 - 1617) and Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (Dutch, 1562 - 1638). Wtewael was one of the few Dutch artists who did not abandon mannerism after the early 1600s, and his oeuvre demonstrates no clear stylistic evolution.

Wtewael died in Utrecht on August 1, 1638, having survived his wife, Christian van Halen, by nine years. The couple had four children, one of whom, Peter (1596–1660), was a painter who worked in his father's style.

[1] Karel van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck waerin voor eerst de leerlustighe lueght den grondt der edel vry schilderconst in verscheyden deelen wort voorghedraghen* (Haarlem, 1604), 296–297.

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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Joachim Anthonisz Wtewael
Dutch, c. 1566 - 1638

Moses Striking the Rock

1624

oil on panel
overall: 44.6 x 66.7 cm (17 9/16 x 26 1/4 in.)
framed: 58.7 x 80.7 cm (23 1/8 x 31 3/4 in.)
Inscription: lower left, JO in ligature: JO Wtt / wael fecit / Anno.1624
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund 1972.11.1

ENTRY

This highly evocative painting by Joachim Wtewael captures a dramatic miracle that was crucial to the successful outcome of the Israelites' strenuous voyage to the Promised Land. The people of Israel had grown disgruntled during their long exodus from Egypt because they had no water to drink. When Moses and his brother, the high priest Aaron, appealed to the Lord for help, Moses was told to take the rod he had used to part the waters of the Red Sea and strike the rock at Horeb, from which water would come out so "that the people may drink" (Exodus 17:6). "And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his rod twice, and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their cattle" (Numbers 20:11). Wtewael depicts the moment when Moses, accompanied by Aaron, has just struck the rock. The stream of water has already created deep pools from which the Israelites and their animals drink and refresh themselves.

Wtewael's emphasis in this exquisitely refined painting, however, is not on the miraculous nature of the event, but rather on the life-sustaining character of the water that Moses and Aaron have released. [1] Except for the agitated pose of a

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man in the background who directs a caravan to the pools of water, no one seems in the least astounded by the miracle. A woman in the left foreground lies languidly on her side while her child sips contentedly from a small cup. Most of the Israelites are intent on scooping up water from the ground with pails and pitchers: two mothers, each grasping her child with one arm, hold dishes under the stream of water coming from the rock; others drink the refreshing liquid from hats, cups, and pitchers. Despite the array of elegantly and brightly clothed figures, the wide variety of animals, and the plethora of utensils in the setting, the mood is surprisingly quiet and subdued as man and beast alike pause to accept the goodness of God's bounty.

Traditionally, the water that poured from the rock and refreshed the Israelites was understood symbolically as the gift of God's salvation, salvation granted through the actions of their leader, Moses. The rock was likened to Christ, and the water that flowed from it was seen as the blood flowing from the wounds suffered at his Crucifixion. Thus the episode was typologically associated with the Eucharist and with Christ's forgiveness and man's redemption. [2]

The story also had specific significance to the Dutch, who often found historic parallels between their own history and biblical narratives, associating the tribulations of the early Jews with their own struggles for independence against Spanish domination. The leader of their revolt, William I, known as William the Silent, was likened to Moses in that he personified the identity of the nation yet also failed to reach the "promised land" he had envisioned. [3] Even before William's assassination in 1584, however, an association had been established between him and Moses, which became part of Dutch mythology. In 1581 Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1558 - 1617) surrounded his portrait of the Prince of Orange with scenes from the life of Moses, including the pillars of clouds and fire, the burning bush, and the passage through the Red Sea [fig. 1]. The latter image, as with the miraculous scene depicted here by Wtewael, focused on the powerful symbolism of water in the Moses legend. For the Dutch, whose land was both nourished and protected by water, the imagery suggested that God's beneficence had guided their destiny just as it had that of the Israelites.

The allegorical associations contained in this work are consistent with Wtewael's own religious and political convictions. Although born a Catholic, Wtewael became a fervent Calvinist and firm advocate of the House of Orange. He felt strongly that the Dutch Republic, under the leadership of the House of Orange, ought to continue the struggle to fulfill William the Silent's original goal of a United

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Netherlands and should not accept the compromise solution manifested in the Twelve-Year Truce of 1609, whereby the southern provinces would remain under Spanish domination. Wtewael expressed these concerns in both his art and his political activities. [4] As early as 1595 he designed a stained-glass window for the Cathedral of Gouda that depicted allegorically Holland's Chariot of Freedom of Conscience victorious over Spain and Idolatry. In 1605 he engraved a cycle of scenes of *Thronus Justitiae,* which depicted historical exempla of justice that had clear propagandistic overtones. Shortly after the Twelve-Year Truce was signed, Wtewael designed a series of political allegories that focused on many of the famous patriotic incidents in the Eighty Years' War, personified by the maid *Belgica* , an allegorical figure symbolizing a united Netherlands. Finally, in 1618 he participated in a revolt of Calvinist and Roman Catholic burghers against the domination of Arminian (also known as Remonstrant) officials in Utrecht's municipal government, which earned him a seat on the city council for the remainder of his life.

Wtewael's decision to paint this scene in 1624 may reflect an effort on his part to revitalize the allegorical connections between Moses and the House of Orange after the conclusion of the Truce in 1621, at a time when Prince Maurits and Prince Frederik Hendrik were renewing their military efforts against Spanish aggression. One may assume from the complexity of the scene and the refinement of the image that the painting was commissioned by, or at least was painted for, a specific patron. No surviving documents, however, elucidate this matter. [5]

Not much is known of Wtewael's working procedure, but in this instance a fragment of an elaborate preparatory drawing for the painting is preserved in the Albertina in Vienna [fig. 2]. [6] Surprisingly, given his penchant for reusing elements from his own works, none of the motifs in this richly varied painting appear to be exact quotations from his earlier images, although Lowenthal has identified close prototypes in a number of instances. [7] Lowenthal also suggests that Wtewael adapted the child in the lower left from a painting by Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (Dutch, 1562 - 1638). [8]

Although Wtewael apparently derived his scene from careful readings of both biblical texts in which this story appears (Exodus 17:1–7 and Numbers 20:2–13), he carefully constructed his composition along mannerist principles outlined by Karel van Mander I (Netherlandish, 1548 - 1606) in *Den grondt der edel vrij schilder-const,* a long didactic poem on the rules of art that Van Mander published in his *Het schilder-boek* of 1604. [9] In the chapter entitled "Van der ordinanty ende

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inventy der historien" (On the Composition and Invention of History Pieces), Van Mander describes how the corners of the composition should be filled with large *repoussoir* figures, while the composition should be arranged in a circular fashion around a central focal point "in such a way that a number of figures encircle the focus of the story, which remains standing as the center of the picture." The painting should also have variety: "a profusion of horses, dogs and other domestic animals, as well as beasts and birds of the forest; but it is particularly pleasing to behold fresh youths and beautiful maidens, old men, matrons, and children of all ages." Finally, Van Mander recommends discreetly introducing witnesses who appear behind and to the side of the central event and comment upon it. In every respect Wtewael has followed Van Mander's recommendations, enlivening them still further with striking colors and effective use of light and shade. [10] Particularly remarkable in this work is Wtewael's delicate touch, seen in the way he has articulated the textures and people's expressions. The surface shimmers with light and color, adding to the visual pleasure of the complex narrative unfolding before us. [11]

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

fig. 1 Hendrick Goltzius, *William, Count of Nassau, Prince of Orange*, 1581, engraving, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 1950.14.1231

fig. 2 Joachim Wtewael, *Moses Striking the Rock*, 1624, preparatory drawing, Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna

NOTES

[1] This observation was first made by Christian Tümpel, “Die Reformation und die Kunst der Niederlande,” in *Luther und die Folgen für die Kunst*, ed. Werner Hofmann (Munich, 1983), 314.

[2] Anne Walter Lowenthal, “Wtewael’s Moses and Dutch Mannerism,” *Studies in the History of Art* 6 (1974): 134–135.

[3] For a full discussion of the symbolic relationships the Dutch felt between their history and the story of Moses see Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York, 1987), 87–101.

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[4] For Wtewael's political attitudes see Elizabeth McGrath, "A Netherlandish History by Joachim Wtewael," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 38 (1975): 209–217.

[5] Anne Walter Lowenthal, "Wtewael's Moses and Dutch Mannerism," *Studies in the History of Art* 6 (1974): 135, speculates that the painting was commissioned for a "private chapel or a clandestine Catholic church." Because of Wtewael's fervent Calvinist beliefs, however, it seems unlikely that he would have received a commission for such a location.

[6] The drawing (inv. no. 8132) measures 9 3/4 x 12 in. (24.6 x 30.5 cm). It seems to have been trimmed on all sides; the four corners are all later additions.

[7] Anne Walter Lowenthal, "Wtewael's Moses and Dutch Mannerism," *Studies in the History of Art* 6 (1974): 137–138.

[8] Anne Walter Lowenthal, *Joachim Wtewael and Dutch Mannerism* (Doornspijk, 1986), 151.

[9] The following English translations of this text are taken from Ben P. J. Broos, "Rembrandt and Lastman's *Coriolanus*: The History Piece in 17th-Century Theory and Practice," *Simiolus* 8 (1975–1976): 202–203.

[10] Anne Walter Lowenthal, "Wtewael's Moses and Dutch Mannerism," *Studies in the History of Art* 6 (1974): 136, identifies compositional similarities between this work and Venetian paintings by Leandro Bassano (Italian, 1557 - 1622) and Jacopo Tintoretto (Venetian, 1518 or 1519 - 1594) that Wtewael might have seen when he was in Italy in the 1580s. These Venetian connections, however, seem more generic than specific.

[11] I would like to thank Karen Lee Bowen for her assistance in compiling this entry.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single member, horizontally grained oak panel, beveled on the back, with narrow, oak strips attached to edges.[1] Paint is applied over an exceedingly thin, smooth white ground in small, precise fluid strokes blended wet-into-wet, with slightly impasted highlights. A history of flaking has resulted in scattered small losses throughout the paint layer, particularly in the trees, distant and shadowed figures, and horse. Losses are inpainted and design elements are reinforced with later repaint. No major conservation has been carried out since acquisition.

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[1] The wood was identified as oak by Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg, but he was unable to date the panel using dendrochronology (see report dated October 29, 1987, in NGA Conservation department files).

PROVENANCE

(Sale, Foster, London, 29 November 1833, no. 29, as by J. de Wael); Thomas Chawner, Esq. [d. 1851], London and Addlestone, near Chertsey, Surrey; (his estate sale, Foster, London, 16 June 1852, no. 97); Chance.[1] H. Charles Erhardt, Esq., London, by 1892; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 19-22 June 1931, no. 273, as by J.B. de Wael); "Leffer" or "Lepper."[2] Francis Howard, Esq., Dorking, by 1955; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 25 November 1955, no. 52, as by J.B. de Wael); (Arcade Gallery, London); sold to Vincent Korda, London; repurchased 1967 by (Arcade Gallery, London);[3] sold 1967 to (Edward Speelman, London);[4] purchased 31 January 1972 by NGA.

[1] Burton Fredericksen (letter of 2 January 2003 and e-mail of 17 July 2003, in NGA curatorial files) has kindly provided the information about the Foster sales of 1833 and 1852, and the buyers at each sale, Thomas Chawner and "Chance." A label on the back of the painting, which reads "J. de Wael / 29 Moses striking the Rock," matches the information from the 1833 sale catalogue.

[2] Christie's in London no longer has its records from 1931 and thus was not able to help clarify the buyer's name. See correspondence from 25 September 1986 and 7 November 1986, in NGA curatorial files.

[3] The Arcade Gallery, in a letter of 3 March 1987 in NGA curatorial files, says that they sold the painting "almost immediately" to Korda after they purchased it at the 1955 sale, repurchased it in 1967, and then sold it during the exhibition in November and December of the same year, in which the painting appeared.

[4] A letter from Anthony Speelman of 23 January 1987, in NGA curatorial files,

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indicates that the Edward Speelman firm had bought *Moses Striking the Rock* from Vincent Korda prior to their selling it to the National Gallery of Art.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1892 A Loan Exhibition of Pictures, Art Gallery of the Corporation of London, Guildhall, 1892, no. 99, as by Jan Baptist de Wael.

1967 Recent Acquisitions: Mannerist and Baroque Paintings, Arcade Gallery, London, 1967, no. 23.

1980 Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Detroit Institute of Arts; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1980, fig. 1 (shown only in Washington).

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 66.

2000 Landscape of the Bible: Sacred Scenes in European Master Paintings, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 2000-2001, no. 13, repro.

2015 Pleasure and Piety: The Art of Joachim Wtewael (1566-1638), Centraal Museum, Utrecht; National Gallery of Art, Washington; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2015-2016,

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1967 The Arcade Gallery. *Recent Acquisitions: Mannerist and Baroque Paintings*. Exh. cat. Arcade Gallery, London, 1967: no. 23.

1974 Lowenthal, Anne Walter. "Wtewael's Moses and Dutch Mannerism." *Studies in the History of Art* 6 (1974): 124-141, fig. 1.

1975 Lowenthal, Anne Walter. "The paintings of Joachim Anthonisz. Wtewael: (1566-1638)." Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, New York, 1975: 322-324, A-66.

1975 National Gallery of Art. *European paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue*. Washington, 1975: 358, repro.

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1980 Blankert, Albert, et al. *Gods, Saints, and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington; Detroit Institute of Arts; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Washington, 1980: 46-47, fig. 1.

1982 Sutton, Peter C. "The Life and Art of Jan Steen." Special edition of *Bulletin of the Philadelphia Museum of Art* 78, no. 337-338 (Winter-Spring 1982/1983): 18.

1983 Tümpel, Christian. "Die Reformation und die Kunst der Niederlande." In *Luther und die Folgen für die Kunst*. Edited by Werner Hofmann. Exh. cat. Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg. Munich, 1983: 314-315, fig. 15.

1984 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Painting in the National Gallery of Art*. Washington, D.C., 1984: 5, 8, 9, repro.

1985 Bosque, Andrée de. *Mythologie et Maniérisme aux Pays-Bas, 1570–1630: Peinture, dessins*. Antwerp, 1985: 94, 95, repro.

1985 National Gallery of Art. *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. Washington, 1985: 440, repro.

1985 Waterhouse, Ellis K. *Around 1610: The Onset of the Baroque*. Exh. cat. Matthiesen Fine Art, London, 1985: 90.

1986 Lowenthal, Anne Walter. *Joachim Wtewael and Dutch Mannerism*. Doornspijk, 1986: 41, 50-51, 55, cat. A-88, 151-152, color pl. 22.

1986 Sutton, Peter C. *A Guide to Dutch Art in America*. Washington and Grand Rapids, 1986: 454.

1986 Wansink, Christina J. A. "A 'Mercury, Argus and Io' from Utrecht." *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury* 4 (1986): 3, 4, fig. 2.

1992 National Gallery of Art. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York, 1992: 122, repro.

1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 394-398, color repro. 395.

1998 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. *A Collector's Cabinet*. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1998: 68, no. 66.

2000 Pessach, Gill. *Landscape of the Bible: sacred scenes in European master paintings*. Exh. cat. Muzeon Yisrael, Jerusalem, 2000: 19, 72-73, no. 13, repro.

2012 Tummers, Anna. *The Eye of the Connoisseur: Authenticating Paintings by Rembrandt and His Contemporaries*. Amsterdam, 2012: 204, 205, color fig. 128.

2014 Wheelock, Arthur K, Jr. "The Evolution of the Dutch Painting Collection." *National Gallery of Art Bulletin* no. 50 (Spring 2014): 2-19, repro.

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Writing the catalog of this outstanding collection of Dutch paintings is one of my great joys as curator. It is a privilege and a learning experience to spend time with the nation's treasures, to examine them in the laboratory, to observe them on loan in relationship to other works, to discuss them with a friend, a student, or a colleague, and to see them through new eyes. They never fail to provide new possibilities for discovery and understanding—the learning never ends.

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Guiding this catalog and exploring the opportunities offered by the online format has been an adventure into a world that was at first as unfamiliar to me as I suspect the seventeenth-century Netherlands can be for the general public. I am enormously grateful to the Getty Foundation for including the National Gallery of Art in its groundbreaking Online Scholarly Catalogue Initiative (OSCI) and allowing us to embark on this digital adventure with eight other museums. We have benefited greatly from the shared ideas of our OSCI colleagues worldwide as we determined the tools and experiences that suited our collection and our institution.

The breadth of skills and talents required to bring this catalog to your screen has been enormous, and I am grateful to all those who made *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* possible. I wish to thank, in particular, Judy Metro, editor in chief, who has supported this project from its inception; Karen Sagstetter, former senior editor for the permanent collection, who, until her retirement in 2012, led the initial efforts to transform a printed catalog into an online publication; and Jennifer Henel, who, with extraordinary dedication and great skill, has subsequently guided the project to its successful conclusion.

Lastly, I would like to express my appreciation to my wife, Perry, as well as to Tobey, Laura, Matthew, Sarah and Louisa, for ways in which they listened, shared their ideas, and encouraged me over the years.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Notes to the User

Contents

This catalog first launched in 2014, uniting a long tradition of authoritative, peer-reviewed content with the flexibility of online publishing. The initial online presentation included all of the seventeenth-century Dutch paintings belonging to the National Gallery of Art as of 2009. Subsequent updates have added additional entries for works added to the collection after 2009. Newly acquired paintings appear as part of The Collection, with provenance, exhibition history, and some bibliography; they will be added to this catalog as entries and technical summaries are written. Each artist is given a short biography and selected bibliography. Each painting is discussed briefly in an overview, and at length in a full entry that includes technical information, inscriptions, provenance, exhibition history, notes, and bibliography.

In the 1995 edition of *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* there were a few works that originally entered the Gallery's collection as seventeenth-century Dutch but have been found to belong to other schools or periods, and are thus not included in this grouping. These "special collection" works include *The Lacemaker* and *The Smiling Girl*, both of which were attributed to Johannes Vermeer when they entered the gallery in 1937 as part of the original Mellon bequest, but were subsequently determined to be twentieth-century imitations.

Dates

Dates use the following conventions:

1650	Executed in 1650
c. 1650	Executed sometime around 1650
1650–1655	Begun in 1650, completed in 1655
1650/1655	Executed sometime between 1650 and 1655
c. 1650/1655	Executed sometime around the period 1650–1655

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Object Numbers, Dimensions

Accession numbers are noted after the credit line. This is a unique number assigned to every object in the National Gallery of Art's collection. It is composed (first) of the four-digit year in which the object officially entered the Gallery collections; (second) a number that represents the donation or purchase "lot" within the year of acquisition; and (third) a number recording the object within the lot. If necessary, these three parts are followed by a fourth letter or number, as, for instance, by ".a" for an obverse and ".b" for a painted reverse.

Dimensions are given in centimeters, height preceding width, followed by dimensions in inches within parentheses.

Provenance

The Provenance section gives the names of all known owners. A semicolon between two names indicates a direct transfer of ownership of the painting, whereas a period indicates uncertainty about the chain of ownership and the whereabouts of the object between two documented owners. The names of dealers, agents, and auction house sales are given in parentheses. Notes provide sources, details of research, and discussion of outstanding questions.

Attribution

The following attribution terms are used to indicate the nature of the relationship to a named artist:

Attributed to: Indicates that a degree of uncertainty surrounds the attribution of the painting to the named artist. The basis for the uncertainty may be stylistic or iconographic, but it may also be as a result of the physical condition of the work.

Studio or *Workshop*: Indicates that the painting was produced in the named artist's workshop or studio, by students or assistants, possibly with some participation by the named artist. It is important that the creative concept is by the named artist and that the work was meant to leave the studio as the artist's.

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Follower of: Indicates that the work was created by an unidentified artist working specifically in the style of the named artist, who may or may not have been trained by the named artist. Some chronological continuity or association or a time limit of about a generation after the named artist's death is implied.

Circle of: Indicates an unidentified contemporary of the named artist, working in a similar style, who could be either a follower or an independent master who had contact with the named artist.

Style of: Indicates a stylistic relationship only, possibly vague, in which there need not be an implied chronological continuity of association.

Signatures and Inscriptions

If present, signatures and/or inscriptions on the paintings are recorded as accurately as possible. In these transcriptions, a slash with a space on either side of it indicates a new line; a slash without these spaces indicates that the slash is included in the text being recorded. All references to right and left with regard to the location of the signatures and inscriptions are to that of the viewer.

Exhibition Histories

Exhibition Histories record the presence of the paintings in special exhibitions from the time they were painted. They are as complete as available information has made possible and include catalog numbers, unless it is indicated that there was no catalog or the catalog was unnumbered, and a note as to whether the painting was reproduced. We continue to update this information as our objects are included in new exhibitions.

Bibliography

Each object page contains a list of references, in chronological order, which includes only those texts that specifically discuss the piece in the National Gallery of Art collection). Catalogs for the exhibitions listed in Exhibition Histories are now included in these references.

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Technical Summaries

Each entry includes a Technical Summary, which documents the materials and techniques used by the artists in the creation of the paintings, as well as any changes and any documented treatments. They are based on the contents of the examination reports prepared by members of the National Gallery of Art department of painting conservation. The technical notes published in the 1995 edition of this catalog were revised for this edition by Joanna Dunn, who also wrote the technical summaries for the paintings acquired after the 1995 catalog was published. Technical terms can be found throughout the entry text, and the glossary of technical terms can be accessed here,

Energy dispersive spectrometry (EDS)

Small samples were examined with energy dispersive spectroscopy using an Oxford Inca 300 spectrometer with a Super ATW Si(Li) detector on aJEOL 6300 SEM.

Fourier-transform infrared (micro)spectroscopy (FTIR)

A Thermo Nicolet Nexus 670 instrument was used, fitted with a Continuum microscope. Spectra were collected in transmission mode at 4 cm-1 resolution. The samples were compressed between two windows of a Diamond Cell (Spectratech).

Gas chromatography/Mass spectrometry (GC-MS)

The samples were methylated with TMTFTH (TCI America, 0.5M in MeOH) or hydrolyzed using 6N HCl for 24 hours under vacuum. After removal of the HCl, the amino acids were silylated with MTBSTFA/TBDMCS. Samples were examined by gas chromatography/mass spectrometry on a 30 meter DB-5 column, a Varian Saturn CP3900 gas chromatograph and Saturn 2100T ion trap mass spectrometer.

Infrared examination

When infrared examination is designated as “Vidicon,” a vidicon camera system was used, which included a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 vidicon camera fitted with an N2606-10 or N214 lead sulphide tube and a Kodak Wratten 87A filter. When infrared examination is designated by microns, one of four cameras was used: a Kodak 310-21X PtSi camera configured to 1.5–2.0 microns, a Mitsubishi M600 PtSi camera configured to 1.2–2.5 microns, an Indigo/FLIR Alpha Visible-InGaAs

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camera, and a Santa Barbara Focalplane SBF187 InSb camera. The latter two cameras were configured with various band filters between 1.1 and 2.5 microns. For the Kodak and Mitsubishi cameras, the images were captured using a ScionPCI framegrabber card in a Macintosh computer with Scanalytic's IP-Lab software. For the Indigo/FLIR camera, the images were captured onto a Dell computer with an IMAQ capture board housed in a Magma external PCI box, and IRVista software. For the Santa Barbara Focalplane camera, the images were captured using a Windows Empower tower computer and WinIR software. Nikon 55mm macro, 50mm macro lens, and 35mm lenses were used with the various cameras, as were Astronomy J, H, and K filters. The scanned x-ray radiographs films and infrared reflectograms were automatically mosaicked and registered to a reference color imaging using a novel registration algorithm developed by George Washington University and the National Gallery of Art. For more information see Damon M. Conover, John K. Delaney, Murray H. Loew, "Automatic Registration and Mosaicking of Conservation Images," in *Optics for Arts, Architecture, and Archaeology IV,* Luca Pezzati and Piotr Targowski, editors, Proceedings of SPIE Vol. 8790 (SPIE, Bellingham, WA, 2013), 87900A (2013). The registration was performed by K. Dooley, D. Conover, and J. Delaney.

Optical microscopy of cross-sections

Small paint samples (c. 0. 25mm2) were removed using a scalpel and were mounted in polyester-type resin blocks. The samples were cut at right angles to the layer structure and polished using silicon carbide papers and examined using a Leica DRMX microscope.

Polarized light microscopy (PLM)

Transmitted polarized light microscopy of dispersed samples was conducted using Leitz Orthoplan and Leica DMRX microscopes. Particle identification was accomplished by comparing characteristic features—including particle size, color, refractive index and relief, birefringence, extinction characteristics, pleochroism, and anomalous polarization colors of the unknown—to those of reference materials in the Forbes Pigment Collection and other reference collections.

Scanning electron microscopy (SEM)

Small samples were prepared for optical microscopy and examined with a JEOL 6300 scanning electron microscope at magnifications 100x–10000x. A Tetra backscatter electron detector was used to obtain BSE images.

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X-radiography

X-radiography was carried out with equipment consisting of a Eureka Emerald 125 MT tube, a Continental 0-110 kV control panel, and a Duocon M collimator or a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube. The image was captured on Kodak X-OMAT film or digitally using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537. The scanned x-ray radiographs films or digital x-radiograph captures were automatically mosaicked and registered to a reference color imaging using a novel registration algorithm developed by George Washington University and the National Gallery of Art. For more information see Damon M. Conover, John K. Delaney, Murray H. Loew, "Automatic Registration and Mosaicking of Conservation Images," in *Optics for Arts, Architecture, and Archaeology IV,* Luca Pezzati and Piotr Targowski, editors, Proceedings of SPIE Vol. 8790 (SPIE, Bellingham, WA, 2013), 87900A (2013). The registration was performed by K. Dooley, D. Conover, and J. Delaney.

X-ray diffraction (XRD)

The Philips x-ray generator XRG 3100 was used with a tube with a copper anode and nickel filter. The paint sample was mounted on a glass fiber in a Gandolfi camera. Data were collected on film, and line spacings and intensities were estimated using acalibrated rule.

X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF)

This is a non-invasive analytical technique, which was carried out using one of two systems. The first system used a secondary emission Kevex 0750A spectrophotometer equipped with a rhodium tube with either a barium chloride secondary target or a molybdenum secondary target using a variety of excitation conditions and a silicon lithium Si(Li) detector with a resolution of approximately 155eV @Mn Kα. For this system the range of Rh tube excitation was 40kV-60kV and 0.4mA-2mA. The second system used a Bruker ArtTAX Pro µXRF Spectrometer, which uses primary excitation and is equipped with a helium (He) flush, a rhodium (Rh) x-ray tube, and a capillary optic lens with an analysis area of approximately 75µm. In this system the x-ray tube voltage was 50kV, the current was 200µA, and the accumulation time was 200 seconds.

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Concordance of Old–New Titles

As of initial publication April 24, 2014

Titles changed since the publication of *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* (Washington, 1995).

Artist	Accession Number	Old Title	New Title
Attributed to Jan de Bray	1995.74.1	*Head of a Small Boy*	*Head of a Young Boy*
Aelbert Cuyp	2012.73.1	*A Pier in Dordrecht Harbor*	*A Pier Overlooking Dordrecht*
Jacob van Ruisdael	1960.2.1	*Park with a Country House*	*Country House in a Park*
Salomon van Ruysdael	2007.116.1	*Ferry on a River*	*River Landscape with Ferry*
Cornelis Verbeeck	1995.21.1	*Dutch Warship Attacking a Spanish Galley*	*A Naval Encounter between Dutch and Spanish Warships*
Cornelis Verbeeck	1995.21.2	*Spanish Galleon Firing Its Cannons*	*A Naval Encounter between Dutch and Spanish Warships*
Simon de Vlieger	1997.101.1	*Estuary at Dawn*	*Estuary at Day's End*

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
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Concordance of Old–New Attributions

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Attributions changed since the publication of *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* (Washington, 1995).

Old Attribution	Accession Number	New Attribution
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Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

Glossary of Technical Terms

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Selected technical terms that appear throughout NGA Online Editions.

abrasion	*A gradual loss of material on the surface. It can be caused by rubbing, wearing, or scraping against itself or another material. It may be a deteriorative process that occurs over time as a result of weathering or handling or it may be due to a deliberate attempt to smooth the material.*
beveling	*Angling along the edge of a panel or a stretcher bar.*
blistering	*The bubbling or bulging of the paint surface. Blisters are caused by excessive heat, insufficient adhesion to the layers beneath, or trapped pockets of air, liquid, or solids.*
cradling	*Attaching a wooden grid to the reverse of a panel to prevent the panel's warping.*
craquelure	*The network of cracks in the paint and ground. Also sometimes referred to as crackle pattern.*
cusping	*Distortions near the edges of the canvas caused by tension from the nails or tacks that hold it to the stretcher or strainer. Also sometimes referred to as scalloping.*
cupping	*Distortion of the paint surface resulting in raised areas along the cracks.*
dendrochronology	*A method of dating wood by examining the annual growth rings.*
flaking	*Loss of pieces of paint and/or ground.*

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glazing	*Applying transparent layers of paint that influence the colors or tonalities of the layers below.*
ground	*The layer or layers used to prepare the support to hold the paint.*
imprimatura	*A colored priming layer used to establish the tonality of the painting.*
infrared reflectography	*A photographic or digital image analysis method that captures the absorption/emission characteristics of reflected infrared radiation. The absorption of infrared wavelengths varies for different pigments, so the resultant image can help distinguish the pigments that have been used in the painting or underdrawing.*
inpainting	*Application of restoration paint to areas of lost original paint to visually integrate an area of loss with the color and pattern of the original, without covering any original paint.*
lining	*A second piece of fabric attached to the back of a painting's original support fabric for physical reinforcement.*
overpaint	*A layer of paint that covers original paint.*
palette knife	*A long, thin, flexible spatula used for mixing paint, for transferring paint to the palette, and occasionally used to apply paint to the canvas.*
pen painting	*A method of painting in which one draws in black ink on top of a substrate prepared with an oil ground.*
pentimenti	*An alteration made by the artist to an area that was already painted.*
planing	*The smoothing or finishing of a wood surface.*

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retouching	*Application of restoration paint to areas of loss in order to visually integrate them with the color and pattern of the orginal. Retouching can refer to inpainting or overpainting.*
repainting	*Paint applied after a work is finished.*
scumbling	*Applying opaque or semi-opaque, dry paint so that it partially covers and modifies the color below.*
scraping	*An decorative technique that requires the artist's deliberate removal of paint.*
sketching	*Drawing quickly to record a composition or the most significant features of a subject.*
splintering	*The splitting or breaking of a wooden panel into sharp, slender pieces.*
support, canvas	*The fabric on which a painting is executed.*
support, transfer	*The removal and reattachment of the paint and sometimes the ground layer to a new support.*
support, panel	*The wooden panel on which a painting is executed.*
tacking margins	*The border of a canvas that is wrapped around the stretcher or strainer and tacked or stapled to the wood.*
tearing	*The deterioration or ripping of canvas.*
underdrawing	*A drawing executed on a ground before paint is applied.*
underpainting	*An initial layer of paint applied to a ground that begins to define shapes and values.*

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warping	*Distortion in wood caused by instability.*
workshop	*The apprentices and employees who work within an artist's studio.*
wrinkling	*Small furrows and ridges in paint or fabric due to shrinkage, folding, or compression.*
X-radiography	*A photographic or digital image analysis method that visually records an object's ability to absorb or transmit x-rays. The differential absorption pattern is useful for examining an object's internal structure as well as for comparing the variation in pigment types.*
Ultraviolet light (examination)	*Using the part of the light spectrum to study the fluorescence of varnishes and repaint.*

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