OLD MASTERS

2012

SALOMON LILIAN

OLD MASTERS

2012

Rue Etienne-Dumont 14
CH - 1204 Geneva
Switzerland
Telephone +41 22 702 9230
Fax +41 22 702 9239
E-mail: salomonlilian@aol.com

Website: www.salomonlilian.com

Exhibition and research:
Spiegelgracht 5
1017 JP Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Telephone +31 20 6206307
Fax +31 20 6246018
E-mail: info@salomonlilian.com

Acknowledgements

In our nineteenth year of producing an annual catalogue of Dutch and Flemish Old Master Paintings, we are delighted to have been able, once again, to present a fine collection of paintings that are fresh to the market.

In recent years, it has become stylish to refer to art as an investment. As the stock markets struggle because of the latest crisis, rates on saving accounts are low, and government bonds are no longer an option, investors are moving towards the art market. The auction prices in November and December 2011 as well as January 2012 showed a very healthy art market. While the art markets are not as deep and fluid as others, it seems safe to say that the financial turmoil is, and has been, an incentive, rather than a barrier, for investors to buy art. One type of art that has unfailingly stood the test of time is Old Master painting. Collectors of Old Master paintings know that these works will retain the greater part of their value through thick and thin, as they have weathered stormy financial markets and the vagaries of fashion for centuries.

In our recent collection, we have a *Marriage of Tobias and Sarah* by Jan Steen. This large canvas, painted between 1668 and 1672, is an important work by the artist. We also show an early *Book Vanitas Still Life* by Jan Davidsz de Heem. This painting is a significant addition to the *Book Vanitas* still life cluster by the artist. A beautiful copper by Frederik van Valkenborch, an early landscape by Meindert Hobbema, *The Three Graces* by Cornelis van Haarlem, and a sunny landscape by Jan Both make this catalogue a very interesting addition to our annual catalogues.

I am thankful to Natasha Broad who edited all entries and wrote one, to Jasper Hillegers who wrote the majority of the entries and conducted thorough art historical research on our paintings, and I would like to thank Wendela Burgemeister, who has written and researched seven entries and conducted the whole project.

Salomon Lilian
March 2012

cat. no.

1 Jan Both
2 Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem
3 Frans Francken the Younger
4 Abraham van den Hecken
5 Jan Davidsz de Heem
6 Meindert Hobbema
7 Pieter de Grebber
8 Lambert Jacobsz
9 Johannes Leemans
10 Gabriël Metsu
11 Joos de Momper
12 Adriaen van Ostade
13 Hendrick Gerritsz Pot
14 Jan Steen
15 Matthias Stom
16 Lodewijk de Vadder
17 Frederik van Valckenborch

cat. no. 1

Jan Both
(*c.* 1615 – Utrecht – 1652)

Italianate River Landscape with Cattle and Travellers

Signed lower right *JBoth* (JB interlaced)
Oil on panel
76.8 x 101 cm.

Provenance:
Gainsborough and London, Collection of Sir Hickman Bacon (1855-1945)
London, Collection of Sir Nicholas Bacon (1857-1947), by descent
London, Collection of Sir Edmund Bacon (1903-198-----*2), by descent[1]
Turin, Galleria Luigi Caretto
Austria, Private Collection

Literature:
C. Hofstede De Groot, *Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragensten Holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen 1907-1928, 9 (1926), p. 485, no. 225 (erroneously as on canvas and measuring 101.5 x 76.3 cm.)
B. Eclercy (ed.), *Nahe und Fern : Landschaftsmalerei von Brueghel bis Corinth*, exh. cat. Hanover, Landesmuseum, Hanover/Cologne 2011, cat. 30

Exhibited:
London, Guildhall, 1890, no. 56
Nahe und Fern : Landschaftsmalerei von Brueghel bis Corinth, exh. Hanover, Landesmuseum 2011, cat. 30

Although there has been some debate about Jan Both's exact year of birth, there is good reason to believe that he was born in Utrecht, in around 1615.[2] He first studied with his father, the glass painter Dirck Joriaensz Boot, and subsequently with Abraham Bloemaert (1564-1651). According to the painter and artist's biographer Joachim von Sandrart (1606-1688), who recalls having met Jan several times in the Utrecht studio of Gerrit van Honthorst (1592-1656), the young painter left for Italy together with his older brother, the genre painter Andries Both (1611/12-1642), possibly in around 1635. In any case he is recorded as being in Rome in 1638. In 1641 he was back in Utrecht. During the years following his return Both matured rapidly, and became the foremost representative of the second generation of Dutch Italianate landscape painters. He died an untimely death in his town of birth, in 1652.

In his description of the life of Jan and Andries Both, the artist's biographer, Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719), remarks that Jan, whom he calls 'The Phoenix of the landscape painters of his time', worked in the style of his friend and colleague Claude Lorrain (c. 1604/5-1682). While this statement, which Houbraken had reiterated from Sandrart, may be somewhat of a misconception, there is a definite affinity in both artists' spectacular rendering of southern light. Indeed, Houbraken especially expands his prose as he muses on Jan's use of colouring: 'Clearly distinguishable in his work are the divisions in the day, by means of the different modifications of the paints. One sees the morning [...], the afternoon [...], and the dusk tanning the green fields, trees and grounds with its saffron-paint glow.'[3] A more suitable way to describe the overwhelming effect of the lighting in the present painting is hard to find. Evening is about to fall over this grandiose Italian river landscape, and the sun, already hidden behind the trees on the hill to the right, suffuses the entire landscape in a truly saffron-like, golden warmth. Still, a playful opening in the foliage admits the intense yellow light to the viewer's eye.



Jan Both must have held ambitious aims with this work. To start with, it is his largest work on panel. From a painterly point of view, he ingeniously applied a rather complex double perspective, yet at the same time succeeded in combining a seemingly effortless sense of unity in his spatial arrangement with a wealth of detail. Following the diagonal from the rocky hill on the left, the path beneath the trees, with its *staffage* of herdsmen and approaching cows, invites the viewer's attention first. In the dark, shadowed area of the foreground, the warm brown colouring of the earth, rocks and shadows nevertheless reveals plenty of differentiation in the rendering of the moulds of the roots of the trees and the thin, orange-ochre branches and boughs of the undergrowth. A shepherd pointing to the left (an effective pictorial device often employed by Both) seems to draw the viewer's attention to the opposite side of the painting. To the left of the triangular *repoussoir* of a rocky mound in the middle foreground a second trail, over which a mule driver languidly proceeds with his two animals, forms a diagonal counter-balance through the picture plain. The mule driver and his animals seem based on Both's drawing now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Besançon.[4] Both deliberately heightened the top of the *repoussoir*, thus interrupting the view of the track, and embellished it with some bushes. While their twigs and sprigs sparkle jauntily in the golden light, a generous view of the distant, light-filled river scape opens up behind them.

Both seems to have based the river scape on an etching he made in the second half of the 1640s as part of a series of six landscapes depicting the environs of Rome. *View on the Tiber* (fig. 1), whose composition is to be found mirrored in a work now in the Rijksmuseum[5], Amsterdam, features a similar curve in the river, and the same submontane, fortified edifice as the one in the present work. While in the etching this building is accompanied by the remains of a bridge protruding into the water, in the present painting a boat is anchored before it. Although it is difficult to chronologise Both's *oeuvre*, due to an almost complete absence of dated works, the mature and fully developed style of the present *Italianate River Landscape with Cattle and Travellers* seems to suggest a date somewhere in the late 1640s, during the final period of his career. As has been noted by scholars, Both increasingly tended towards a careful, individual detailing of overgrowth, rocks, trunks and foliage.[6] The execution of such details in this painting is very similar to that of the *Italian Landscape with Mule driver* in the Rijksmuseum (fig. 2), datable to *circa* 1647[7], also on panel, measuring exactly one fourth of the present



Fig. 1 Jan Both, *View on the Tiber*, etching on paper, 19.8 x 27.6 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-BI-4211



Fig. 2 Jan Both, *Italian Landscape with Muledriver*, signed *JBoth* (JB interlaced), oil on panel, 37.5 x 50.5 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-C-110

panel and signed identically. Moreover, one of the approaching cows in this work (fig. 3) is almost an exact version of the foremost cow in the Lilian painting (fig. 4), testifying to the close affiliation of these works. Given the overall simplicity of the Rijksmuseum panel, as well as its more modest spatial construction, size, and less developed system of lighting, in contrast to the monumental splendour and self-confidence of the Lilian work, it would seem that the former was the earlier of the two, indicating a date of around 1648 for the present painting.



Fig. 3 Detail fig. 2



Fig. 4 Detail cat. 1

1 *Italianate River Landscape with Cattle and Travellers* was once in the collection of Sir Hickman Bacon, Premier Baronet of England and an avid art collector. After Sir Hickman's death in 1945, the painting was presumably bequested to his younger brother Nicolas, who succeeded him as Baronet of Bacon. When Nicolas died in 1947, the painting was inherited by his son, Sir Edmund Bacon.

2 For biographical references, see A. Blankert, in: *Saur Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon : die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, vols. 1-, Munich 1992-, 13, pp. 241-243; L. Trezzani, in: J. Turner (ed.), *The Dictionary of Art*, 34 vols., New York 1996, 4, pp. 485-489. For a detailed description of the sources regarding Both's year of birth, see Both's biography in: A. Blankert et al., *Nederlandse 17e eeuwse Italianiserende landschapschilders*, exh. cat. Utrecht, Centraal Museum, Utrecht 1965, pp. 112-115, esp. pp. 113-114, n. 2.

3 A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols., The Hague 1718-1721, 2, pp. 114-117, p. 115: 'Duidelyk zyn de verdeelingen van den dag aan de verschillige temperinge der Verwen, in de zelve te bespeuren. Men ziet den morgenstond, de Velden met een blaau floers overkleeden: de klaren middag de voorwerpen duidelyk ontdekken; en den Avondstond door zynen safferaanverwigen gloed groene Velden, Boomen, en Gronden taanen.'

4 Besançon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. 806.

5 Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-52.

6 See, for instance, Blankert, in: Utrecht 1965, p. 113; W. Stechow, *Dutch Landscape Painting of the Seventeenth Century*, London/New York 1966, p. 155.

7 See Blankert, in: Utrecht 1965, cat. 53, where is stated that the Rijksmuseum painting should be dated somewhat later than a work from the early mature period of c. 1645.

cat. no. 2

Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem
1562 – Haarlem – 1638

The Three Graces

Signed lower left on a rock *CH . 1622*
Oil on canvas
89 x 81 cm.

Provenance:
Clementin Collection, Schleissheim Galerie
Sale Cologne, Lempertz, Malmedé and Geissendorfer, 26 November 1931, lot 669
Cologne, Malmedé art trade, 1934-1935
Amsterdam, P. de Boer Gallery, c. 1965-1969
Wolverhampton, Mrs. D.E., since 1969

Literature:
Cat. 21e Oude Kunst- en Antiekbeurs, Delft 1969, p. 131, illus.
P.J.J. van Thiel, *Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem 1562-1638 : A monograph and catalogue raisonné*, Doornspijk 1999, pp. 138, 345, cat. no. 133, pl. 265

Following the Spanish siege and occupation of Haarlem in 1572, Cornelisz van Haarlem's parents moved elsewhere and left their son and house in the protection of Pieter Pietersz (1540/41-1603), who became Cornelis's first teacher. At the young age of about 17, Cornelis travelled to France and Antwerp for a year or so, from 1579 until about 1580 or 1581. Whilst in Antwerp he was taught the skills of handling paint by the artist Gillis Coignet (1542-1599), who had visited Italy, through the practice of painting flower still lifes from nature. In 1581 Cornelis returned to his native Haarlem, where in 1583 he received his first commission from the city to paint a militia company portrait, now in the Frans Hals Museum in that city. Many commissions followed. In the same year the artist became acquainted with Karel van Mander (1548 -1606), who encouraged him to renew his studies. Van Mander taught him the philosophy of art that he had acquired in Rome during the 1570s, which asserted the idea that true artistry is shown by the ability to emulate nature through selecting and improving upon the most beautiful parts of creation. Van Mander urged the artist to study antiquities and works of famous Italian masters which exemplified these ideas. Van Mander was the earliest art historian to write about Cornelis in his *Het Schilder-Boeck*, a three volume work on painters, which included a translation of Giorgio Vasari's *Lives,* biographies of German and Netherlandish painters, as well as an interpretation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and a short tract on how to depict the ancient gods.[1] When writing on mythological subjects, Van Mander's interpretations often drew from a number of classical and Renaissance sources.[2] Although his *Schilder-Boeck* was published in 1604, Van Mander must have been working on his *opus* during his years in Haarlem (1583-1603).

Cornelis also became acquainted with the important engraver Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617) in these years, and together with Van Mander the three formed the so-called Haarlem Academy. The art of the academy evolved into Haarlem Mannerism, which rapidly gained fame throughout Europe, mostly through the dissemination of prints, executed by Goltzius and his pupils.[3] The Haarlem mannerists preferred religious and mythological subjects which allowed them to fully exploit the potential of the human figure, particularly the nude, such as the *Baptism of Christ, The Massacre of the Innocents* and *Bathseba at her Bath.*[4]
The subject of the present painting may serve as a good example. Homer was the first to describe the Three Graces in the Iliad. Following Homer, the Greek poet Hesiod described these mythical figures in his *Theogony*,



naming them as follows: *Aglaia*, meaning radiance; *Euphrosyne*, meaning joy; and *Thalia*, meaning flowering. The parentage of the graces is variously described. They were pure virgins who resided with the gods, served at their banquets and enlivened Olympus with their *joie de vivre*. In early antiquity the Graces were represented dressed, but subsequently they were mostly shown in the nude. Examples from antiquity of both dressed and naked depictions of the Graces are still extant; they are presented as guileless maidens in the full bloom of life, usually in the act of embracing one another. Their attributes differ according to the divinities upon whom they attend; as the companions of Apollo they often carry musical instruments, while as the companions of Aphrodite they often carry myrtles, roses, or dice, the favourite game of youth. The earliest preserved representations of the theme of the Three Graces are reliefs from the Hellenistic period, depicting a trio of three standing nudes. Famous Renaissance descendants of this composition are represented by Botticelli's *Primavera* in the Uffizi, Florence, and Raphael's painting of *The Three Graces* in the Musée Condé in Chantilly, France. The most famous Northern European proponent of the theme is Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), who painted his *Three Graces* in 1639, now in the collection of the *Museo del Prado*, Madrid. However, in contrast to other mythological scenes such as *The Wedding of Peleus and Tetis*, *The Judgement of Paris* and *Vertumnus and Pomona*, the subject of the Three Graces in Dutch seventeenth-century art is scarce.

The present painting by Cornelis van Haarlem is probably the earliest depiction of *The Three Graces* by a Northern artist, and he painted the subject only once. The treatment of the three graces is closely dependant upon the classical conception, the three elegantly drawn figures standing together in a closed circle with their arms interlocked. Their pale bodies gleam in a strong light. In this challenging composition the Three Graces are, according to Pieter van Thiel, writer of the impressive monograph on the artist, portrayed amidst their family. Above the Graces, their presumed father Zeus, accompanied by his eagle and other gods, appears seated within a radiant opening in the dark cloudy sky, looking down upon the scene below. The female nude figure reclining on a cloud underneath this group is interpreted by Van Thiel as the Graces' mother, Eurynome. In the lower left foreground, the reclining figure acting as a *repoussoir* and holding a terracotta urn is, Van Thiel argues, the brother of the Three Graces, the river god Asopos, accompanied by the Graces' grandfather Oceanos. In the distance beyond them, a group of faint



Fig. 1 Master of the Die after Raphael, *Jupiter and Ganymede*, engraving, 189 x 220 mm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet, inv. no. RP-P-OB-38.547

figures is seen in the dark background, one appearing to make an offering towards Zeus. When this painting was in the possession of Kunsthandel de Boer in 1969, the subject was recognized as *The Marriage of the daughter of the river God Oceanus*.[5]

However, these explanations of the figures' identities cause a problem of interpretation. The woman in the mid ground described by Van Thiel as Eurynome, lies in a scallop shell and is accompanied by a winged figure with doves, which can hardly be described as being anyone other than Eros. Since there is no literary source which combines Eurynome and Eros, one may question van Thiel's interpretation of the figure as Eurynome, and assert that she is rather Aphrodite, the goddess of love and fertility and Eros' mother. The scallop shell clearly refers to Aphrodite's birth from the sea, and furthermore, the Graces' attributes of diaphanous veil and mirror are traditionally associated with Aphrodite, all of which suggests the presence of Aphrodite rather than that of Eurynome. The presence of Aphrodite together with the Three Graces in both paintings and prints was not unusual. The most famous example in which the Three Graces are found together with Aphrodite is Sandro Botticelli's *Primavera*, of *circa* 1477. In an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael of 1518-19, Eros and The Three Graces can also be seen together. Notably, one finds them together in an engraving somewhat reminiscent of the present composition, by the Master of the Die after Raphael (datable to 1530-1560), in which Jupiter is riding a horse- drawn carriage at left, while Ganymede, in the form of an eagle, bears a woman aloft in the upper centre, and Aphrodite is seated with the Three Graces to her right (fig. 1).[6]

According to Van Thiel, the reclining figure on the left holding an urn is Asopos, but taking the presence of Aphrodite into account, he seems to be another river-God. Since the grey-headed god on his left was clearly freely copied from one of his earlier paintings depicting the closely related subject of *The Judgement of Paris* of 1597, it seems likely that these figures were merely adopted to serve as a *repoussoir*. Euphrosyne, the Grace seen from the back, forms another example of a figure deriving from *The Judgement of Paris*. Cornelis was to paint the same figure again in 1623, 1624 and 1628.[7] The artist thus integrated stock figures from paintings in other settings, and ambitiously combined a complexity of sources. His assimilation of Italian Renaissance figural forms learned from Goltzius, as well as his finesse as a colourist, is clearly evident here.

WB

1 J.L. McGee, *Cornelis Corneliszoon van Haarlem (1562-1638) : patrons, friends and Dutch humanists*, Nieuwkoop 1991, p. 21.
2 McGee, op cit, p. 194.
3 Cornelis's inventory lists a number of prints, among them engravings after work of Lucas van Leyden, Hendrick Goltzius, Albrecht Dürer and Michelangelo, showing the growth of the print market.
4 McGee, op cit, p. 20.
5 Delft 1969, p. 131.
6 *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. I-, New York 1979ff, 29, *Italian Masters of the sixteenth century* (1982), p. 182, no. 25, Master of the Die after Raphael, *Jupiter and Ganymede*, 189 x 220 mm.
7 See Van Thiel 1999, cat. nos. 275, 280 and 284.

cat. no. 3

Frans Francken the Younger
1581 – Antwerp – 1642

The Judgement of Midas

Signed lower right *Dov ffranck IN*
Oil on panel
32 x 44 cm.

Provenance:
France, private collection

Frans Francken the Younger (1581-1642) descended from an Antwerp family of painters. In 1605, at the age of about twenty-four, the artist became a master of the Guild of St. Luke in Antwerp, serving as a deacon in 1616. During the course of his career he collaborated with a number of colleagues including the landscape painters Abraham Govaerts (1589-1626), Joos de Momper II (1564-1635) and Tobias Verhaecht (1561-1631), as well as the architectural painters Bartholomeus van Bassen (c.1590-1652), Pieter Neeffs (c.1578-1656/61) and Paul Vredeman de Vries (c.1567-1630). To distinguish himself from his painter father, he added to his signature the abbreviation 'D.J.,' which stood for *den jongen*, 'the younger.' When his father died in 1617 and as his son Frans (1607-1667) began to paint, the artist began to sign with 'Den ouden Fr. Francken' or 'D.o. Ffranck', standing for *den ouden*, 'the elder'.

The present unrecorded work depicts *The Judgement of Midas*, a story from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Book XI.146). During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Ovid's book served as an inexhaustible source of inspiration for Northern artists, to the extent that it was commonly called 'de schildersbijbel', the 'Painter's Bible.' Francken too must have been well aquainted with it. In fact, a copy of the *Metamorphoses* illustrated by Antonio Tempesta (1555-1630) is mentioned as being in the estate of his father Frans Francken the Elder, when he died in 1617.[1] As Ovid tells the story, Tmolus, God of the Tmolus Mountain in Lydia, was asked to decide whether Pan's boast that the music of his reed-pipe was superior to Apollo's lyre was justified. Tmolus told Pan to begin. King Midas, who happened to be present, liked Pan's music well. Then Apollo played on the lyre and was declared victor by Tmolus, to the satisfaction of all who were present - except Midas, who contested the outcome and proclaimed Pan the winner. Apollo punished Midas by providing him with asses' ears, as can be seen in the present work. Everyone, including Tmolus who holds the wreath of oak leaves to crown Apollo with in his left hand, is listening to Apollo playing the lyre. Francken gave Apollo a dominant role here, which is further empasized by the golden aureolesymbol for the god of light and the sun, surrounding him.

The subject's pictorial tradition leads back to sixteenth century print production. The earliest example, a woodcut for Aneau's *Picta Poesis*, dates from 1552, after which several images of the subject by Ovid's illustrators followed.[2] One of these is a woodcut dating from 1557 by Bernard Salomon in his *Cycle for Ovid* (fig. 1). Other well known representations of this subject are an engraving by Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617) dating from 1590[3], and Antonio Tempesta's print for the aforementioned *Metamorphoses* of 1606. Clearly the subject was favoured among painters as well; the earliest example seems to be a joint effort of 1588 by the landscape painter Gillis van Coninxloo (1544-1607) and Karel van Mander (1548-1606), now in the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden.[4] A later depiction of the myth by Francken's famous Flemish contemporary Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678) is in the collection of the Museo del Prado in





Fig. 1 Bernard Salomon, *The Judgement of Midas*, woodcut illustration for G. Borluyt, *Excellente figueren ghesneden vuyten oppersten poëte Ovidius*, Lyon 1557

Madrid, datable to 1637.[5] For this painting, Jordaens had carefully looked at the earlier oil sketch by Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), now in the Museum of Fine Arts in Brussels.[6]

That Francken, who painted the subject at last four times[7], was well aware of these pictorial traditions becomes eminently clear from other versions of *The Judgement of Midas*. While one version follows the Tempesta print, another version datable c. 1620, painted in collaboration with the landscape painter Abraham Govaerts, closely follows the Goltzius engraving of 1590.[8] The present colourful painting, executed with a vivid brushstroke, can be dated to that same period. While Francken's signature indicates that the panel was completed after the death of his father in 1617, the woman holding the urn on the left side of Apollo was repeated in the Francken/Govaerts work, thus testifying to their proximity in time. However, this time Francken seems to have relied on the Bernard Salomon composition from 1557. Francken placed Tmolus seated in the middle of the composition and depicted several onlookers beside the key players, just as Salomon had in his woodcut.

Furthermore, in 1636, Frans Francken the Younger painted the *Allegory of Painting*, which is now in a private collection (fig. 2). In this work, a personification of painting at work, *Pictura*, is seated behind her easel, painting *The Judgement of Midas*. The story of the judgement of Midas added further meaning to the painting as it was a well known way of illustrating the condemnation of ignorance. King Midas can be regarded as the model for the lack of knowledge of art when he declared Pan as victor. *Pictura* here symbolises reflection upon the arts, which is also enacted by Music and Poetry (seated at the table next to *Pictura*) and by the collectors and connoisseurs in the background of the painting. Through painting *The Judgement of Midas* and the 1636 *The Allegory of Painting* Francken thus presented himself as a learned painter with knowledge of the arts and literature.

WB



Fig. 2 Frans Francken the Younger, *Allegory of Painting*, signed and dated 1636, oil on panel, 93.5 x 123.3 cm., Belgium, private collection



Detail of cat. no. 3

1 U. Härting, *Frans Francken der Jüngere (1581-1642) : die Gemälde : mit kritischem Oeuvrekatalog* , Freren 1989, p. 390.
2 E.J. Sluijter, *De 'heydensche fabulen' in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw*, Leiden 2000, pp. 42-44, 400-407; p. 225, note 37: engraving by Claes Jansz Clock after Karel van Mander and etchings by Pieter van der Borcht and Antonio Tempesta.
3 Illustrated in Sluijter 2000, p. 402, no. 114.
4 Gillis van Coninxloo, *Landscape with The Judgement of Midas*, oil on panel, 120 x 204 cm., Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, inv. no. 857.
5 Jacob Jordaens, *The Judgement of Midas*, oil on canvas, 181 x 267 cm., signed *J.JOR.FEC.*, inv. no. 1551.
6 Peter Paul Rubens, *The Judgement of Midas*, oil on panel, 26.5 x 38 cm., inv. no. 4128.
7 Härting 1989, p. 333, cat no. 322, oil on panel, 54 x 74 cm., inv. no. 305; sale Stockholm, Bukowski, 15-18 April 1970, lot 141, oil on panel, 21 x 30 cm. See U. Härting, K. Borms, *Abraham Govaerts : der Waldmaler (1589-1626)*, Essen 2003, p. 166, no. 182.
8 Härting/Borms 2003, p. 166, cat. 182.

cat. no. 4

Abraham van den Hecken
Antwerp c. 1615 – in or before 1669 Amsterdam (?)

A Scholar in his Studio

Oil on canvas
121.8 x 106.7 cm.

Provenance:
England, Mrs. G.A. Berners
Sale London, Christie's, 6 February 1976, lot 75

Literature:
O. Ydema, *Carpets and their Datings in Netherlandish Paintings 1540-1700*, Zutphen 1991, pp. 84, 178, cat. no. 681.

Abraham van den Hecken was the son of the Antwerp painter Samuel van den Hecken, and brother of the painter Magdalena van den Hecken. Sometime after 1619, when Samuel had a pupil in Antwerp, the Van den Hecken family emigrated to the Northern Netherlands.[1] In 1629 Samuel is recorded in Leiden, and in 1635 both father and son are mentioned as being in Amsterdam, where on 7th July Abraham married the twenty year old Catharina Lundens, sister of Gerrit Lundens (1622-1686), a painter best known for his small replica of Rembrandt's *Night Watch*. At the time of his marriage, Abraham was about twenty years old, was known as a painter, and lived in the Herenstraat. Though still recorded as being in Amsterdam in 1645, Abraham was living in The Hague in 1647. He seems to have travelled to and fro, for during the following years he is mentioned in both cities. In 1652 he was in London, and he is last documented in The Hague in 1655. In 1669 his widow was living in Amsterdam. As a painter Van den Hecken is known for the diversity of his œuvre, including still life, peasant genre scenes, portraits and history pieces. In addition, Abraham seems to have been active as an engraver and goldsmith,[2] his designs being published by Christoffel van Sichem, his mother-in-law's brother. He also tried his luck in the wine business, possibly in collaboration with Gerrit Lundens, who was active in that field as well. High prices for his work, and the fact that he was living on the Amsterdam Prinsengracht by 1651, indicate that he was fairly successful.[3]

The present work depicts a bearded scholar in his study, accompanied by his faithful dog lying at the foot of his chair. The man is fancifully dressed with a plumed hat, a fur-lined velvet cloak and an opulent golden chain. He is seated beside a table covered with books, a wreathed skull and a globe, all traditional *vanitas* motifs. Two spears lean against the globe on the left, while to the right side of the table a shining, ornate sword hilt hangs from a nail on a pillar. It is the elaborately detailed and richly coloured Indian carpet covering the table, however, which is the composition's true focus, immediately attracting the viewer's eye. The study, lit from the window on the left, is adorned with some cushions and a silken drape, partially veiling a niche in which an eastern oil lamp



stands, from which an arabesque of smoke drifts into the air. All these pictorial motifs successfully contribute to an exotic atmosphere.

Van den Hecken presumably started painting this specific type of painting in the late 1640s, as a comparable work is reportedly dated to 1647.[4] However, the subject of the scholar in his study was clearly not something new in Dutch art. In the 1620s and 1630s in particular, Rembrandt and his school had taken up the theme, varying scholars with philosophers, saints, orientals, musicians and painters. The work of Gerrit Dou (1613-1675), especially, comes to mind in this respect. Dou's *The Artist in his Studio* of c. 1632, his *Man Interrupted at his Writing* of c. 1635 or the *Interior with Young Violinist* of 1637 in essence contain most of the above mentioned pictorial elements – including ornate swords hanging from pillars.[5] A *Scholar at his Writing Desk* from Dou's circle, once in the collection of Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (1863-1930), depicts his figure in a position comparable to that of the scholar discussed here, with a similar plumed hat.[6]

During the 1640s and 1650s other artists from Rembrandt's circle, such as Salomon Koninck (1609-1656) and Karel van der Pluym (1625-1672), took up the theme. But whereas these artists often deliberately chose the 'Rembrandtesque' manner, Van den Hecken developed his own pictorial scheme, with a pronounced emphasis on the lavish carpet as a recognisable trademark. Apparently much at ease with this scheme, he used it for several distinct genres. In addition to portraits such as that of the water engineer Cornelis Jansz Meyer, now in the Rijksmuseum, one comes across it in a history painting, *The Repentant Judas Returning the Silver Pieces*, once in the Hermitage.[7] However, Van den Hecken mostly employed it in genre pictures. Apart from an early *Woman at her Toilet*[8], these are all of the *Scholar* type under discussion here, at least ten of which, including the present painting, have survived.[9] Not surprisingly, some of these 'Scholars' (or 'Philosophers') have in the past been wrongly attributed to Dou.

The pictorial scheme of this cluster of 'Scholars', all with a vertical format, invariably follows the pattern of the present painting, minor alterations like the absence of a window on the left, the scholar not leaning on the table or the occasional absence of a skull or globe aside. With the exception of one canvas, measuring 80 x 60 cm., the sizes of the works vary between 54 and 64 cm. in length. In contrast, the present



Fig. 1 Abraham van den Hecken, *A Scholar in his Studio*, oil on canvas, 58 x 52 cm., present whereabouts unknown

work roughly doubles that, thus being by far the largest and most deferent of the entire group. Interestingly, some of the smaller sized 'Scholars' seem to depend on the present work. One painting whose present whereabouts are unknown, once attributed to Dou, repeats the present work almost entirely, but lacks several of its elaborate details, such as the spears, the sword, the cushions and the lamp (fig. 1). Another of the smaller works reiterates the present scholar at his table, but largely omits the spatial context of the present scholar's study (fig. 2). Just like its imposing size, it is precisely derivations like these that allude to the status of the present *Scholar* as the *primo inter pares* of the entire cluster. Given the mature character of *Scholar in his Studio*, and the fact that two of the cluster's more sophisticated works are dated 1651 and 165(3 or 5), a dating of around 1655 is proposed here.

JH



Fig. 2 Abraham van den Hecken, *A Scholar in his Studio*, oil on canvas, 60 x 52 cm., Herdringen, Fürstenberg collection, inv. no. 320

1 See for biographical references A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare : Urkunden zur Geschichte der holländischen Kunst des XVIten, XVIIten und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts* (*Quellenstudien zur holländischen Kunstgeschichte* 5-7, 10-14), 8 vols., The Hague 1915-1922, 7 (1921), pp. 100-104; J. Briels, *Vlaamse schilders en de dageraad van Hollands Gouden Eeuw*, Antwerp 1997, p. 335.

2 A. von Wurzbach, *Niederländisches Künstler-Lexikon : auf Grund archivalischer Forschungen bearbeitet*, 3 vols., Vienna/Leipzig 1904-1911, 1, pp. 652-654. Wurzbach distinguishes two artists (Abraham van der Heck(en) and Abraham Heckius). No doubt they refer to the same individual.

3 See Bredius, op. cit., g.) and h.).

4 *An Old Man Sitting at a Table*, oil on panel, 53 x 44 cm., sale Brussels, J. De Meyer, 12 March 1928, lot 46. Supposedly signed and dated 1647 (see RKD, Van den Hecken), although the auction catalogue mentions the year as 1657. See also Ydema 1991, p. 176, cat. no. 676 (as 1647 or 1657).

5 See R. Baer et al., *Gerrit Dou 1613-1675 : Master Painter in the Age of Rembrandt*, exh. cat. Washington, National Gallery of Art, London, Dulwich Gallery, The Hague, Mauritshuis 2000/2001, cat. nos. 1, 4 and 8.

6 Circle of Gerrit Dou, *Scholar at his Writing Desk*, oil on panel, 45 x 39 cm. (oval), Groningen, Groninger Museum, inv. no. 1931.0101, bequest Cornelis Hofstede de Groot. See W. Martin, *Gerard Dou : des Meisters Gemälde in 247 Abbildungen*, Stuttgart/Berlin 1913, p. 67, as Gerrit Dou.

7 See Ydema 1993, p. 176, no. 678.

8 Oil on panel, 74 x 90 cm., signed and dated *164[1] AB...*, Antwerp, Gallery Rudi Heselmans (2002).

9 Oil on panel, 54.5 x 44.5 cm., monogr. on the book, Berlin, collection E. Burg-Berger (1936); oil on panel, 55 x 45 cm., signed *A. v.d. Hecken*, sale Mr. Th. Christomannos et al., Vienna, 24 November 1913, lot 643 (?); oil on canvas, 58 x 52 cm., Amsterdam, collection De Vos (1943, see also sale Amsterdam, Van Braam, 1 July 1943, lot 7), as Gerrit Dou; oil on canvas, 60 x 52 cm., Herdringen, collection Fürstenberg, inv. no. 320; oil on canvas, 64 x 50 cm., Sale Zurich, Koller, 22 September 2004, lot 3044 (see P. Godet, *Musée des Beaux-Arts Neuchâtel : exposition maîtres anciens hollandais, collection Galerie Baszanger Genève*, exh. cat. Neuchâtel, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire Neuchâtel 1945, cat. 12, as Gerrit Dou); oil on canvas, 62 x 57 cm., signed and dated 1651, Hilversum, Wisseloord, Kunstzaal Olthoff, 7-13 February 1950, lot 114a; oil on canvas, 80 x 60 cm., signed and dated *AB van der Heck/ 1655* (or 1653?), Amsterdam, Salomon Lilian (1994); see further note 4 and the present work. A tenth work without specifications is in the Salomon Lilian archive.

cat. no. 5

Jan Davidsz de Heem
Utrecht 1606 – 1683/84 Antwerp

Vanitas Still Life with Books, a Globe, a Skull, a Violin and a Fan

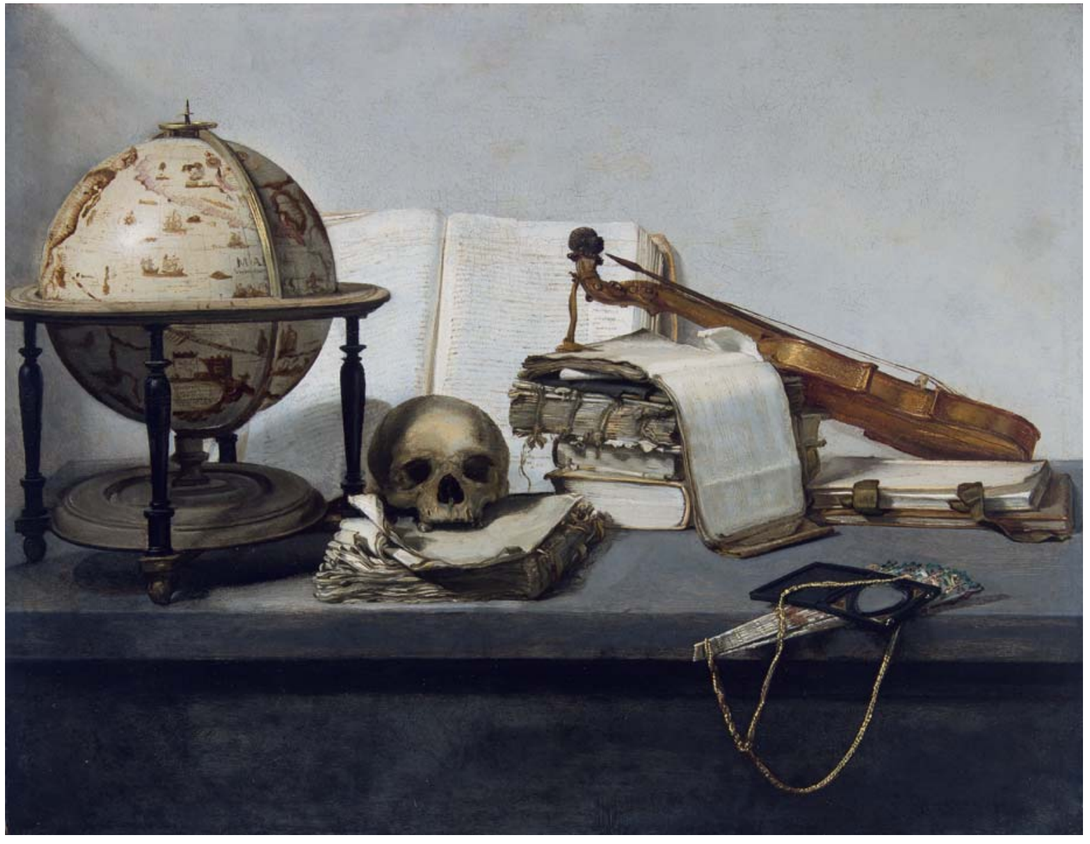
Signed on the book *heem*
Oil on panel
32.5 x 41.8 cm.

Provenance:
France, private collection
Paris, Bob Haboldt & co., 2002 (as Jacob Westerbaen)
New Rochelle, private collection

Literature:
B. Schnackenburg, '*Knabe im Atelier* und *Bücherstilleben*, zwei frühe Gemälde von Jan Lievens und ihr Leidener Kontext: Rembrandt, Jan Davidz. de Heem, Pieter Codde', in: *Oud Holland* 117 (2004), pp. 37-44, p. 46, n. 34 (questioned attribution to Jacob Westerbaen)
J. Hillegers, in: D. Bakhuÿs et al., *Tableaux flamands et hollandais du Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen*, exh. cat. Paris, Fondation Custodia 2009, under cat. no. 48, pp. 184-185, fig. 48b (as anonymous)

The present *Book Vanitas* still life depicts a careful arrangement of objects on a dark stone tabletop, rendered in a beautiful clear light and set against a grey, diagonally lit chalk wall. On the left, a globe produced by the Amsterdam firm Blaeu dominates the composition.[1] Its shadow falls on a large folio standing up against the back wall. Centrally placed is a ragged quarto volume with a jawless human skull on top of it. To the right, a violin rests on a pile of daub books – one of which is an open-folded oblong music book. The instrument is topped by a distinctive, dark wood human head, which contrasts beautifully against the folio's white page. On the right of the ledge, a fan with a cord and a mirror protrude over the table edge into the foreground. The work was painted with a refined delicacy and finesse, yet in some parts it also offers boldly applied layers of paint. In some areas, in particular the lower part of the globe, the left end of the table and the bottom of the violin, the artist seems to have been searching for the proper perspective. A few visible *pentimenti* (in the right leg of the globe's stand and under the violin) attest to this. Further, some under drawing can be noticed under the diagonal shadow in the upper left corner and around the globe's curve. The recent restoration of the work revealed that the area under the table edge, and likewise the background wall, were completely overpainted for no clear reason. After treatment these areas have now fully regained their former transparency.

Shown at Tefaf 2002 with an attribution to the almost unknown artist Jacob Westerbaen (1600/05–1650/60),[2] the painting was first published in 2004 by Bernhard Schnackenburg in a note to an article on two early paintings by Jan Lievens (1607-1674) and their Leiden context of stylistic cross-fertilisation between some young and ambitious painters practising the *Vanitas* genre: Rembrandt (1606-1669), Pieter Codde (1599-1678) and Jan Davidsz de Heem (1606-1683/84). Schnackenburg, while mentioning the attribution to Westerbaen, calls attention to the painting within the context of two other still lifes, which depict exactly the same objects as the present work: one, virtually identical in size and composition in the Museum of Fine Arts in Montreal, as by Jan Davidsz



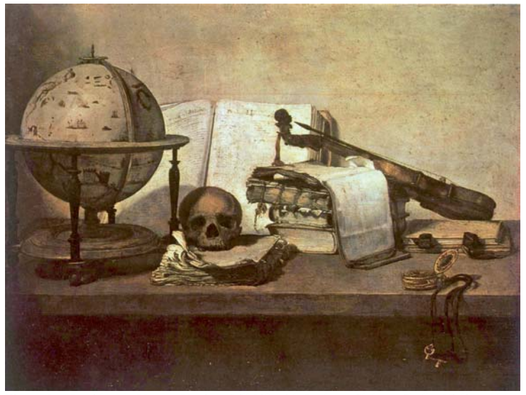


Fig. 1 Jan Davidsz de Heem, *Vanitas Still Life with Books, a Globe, a Skull a Violin and a Watchcase*, oil on panel, 32.7 x 42.5 cm., formerly Montreal, Museum of Fine Arts (stolen in 1972)



Fig. 2 Jan Davidsz de Heem, *Vanitas Still Life*, signed on the book *J He[e]*, oil on panel, 50 x 64.5 cm., Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. no. 1907.1.125

de Heem (fig. 1), the other, somewhat larger, in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Rouen, and at the time of Schnackenburg's article attributed to David Teniers the Younger (fig. 2). Schnackenburg (who hadn't seen the works in real life) states first that the opposing attributions of this remarkable trio cannot convince in its opposing attributions and, secondly, that the works should be further investigated in its relation to Lievens and De Heem.

Attribution

Schnackenburg rightfully signals a crucial problem. For notwithstanding the different attributions the three works were – and at this point there is a general consensus[3] – painted by the same hand, as will be further demonstrated. Moreover, the direction proposed by Schnackenburg is correct. The three works display all the features of a renowned cluster of – up until now – seven *Book Vanitas* still lifes by Jan Davidsz Heem, painted in the second half of the 1620s in Leiden, where he lived from 1625 until c. 1631/32.[4] As is argued here, the Rouen/Montreal/Lilian trio was painted by De Heem as well, and belongs to this cluster. Although the Lilian painting is the work under discussion here, the trio's cohesion demands an integrated survey of its characteristics. Thwarting in this respect is the fact that the Montreal work is known only from photographs, since it was stolen from the museum in 1972.[5] Fortunately, it was possible to closely investigate the Rouen work. As will be demonstrated, the Rouen picture is in fact the key link into understanding the correlation between the trio and the accepted cluster.

In the following, all the elements and arguments that have led to the stated conclusion, some with a more subjective, connoisseurial character, others provided by objective evidence, will be discussed. Without doubt the most evident (though arguably not even the most insistent) argument in the case of the present painting is that the work turns out to be signed – wet in wet – *heem* on the large folio. Just as spectacular, and of equally major importance, is the recent finding of De Heem's signature on the Rouen work. I will first briefly discuss the Montreal and Rouen works and re-evaluate their historiographical paths, thus providing an insight into prior scholarly opinion. Secondly, after briefly introducing De Heem's accepted cluster, the trio will be investigated in terms of their mutual similarities, followed thereafter by the analysis of the signatures and a more detailed comparison of the trio with the cluster's individual works.

Montreal

The Montreal work (fig. 1), on panel and with almost identical measurements (32.7 x 42.5 cm.), is closest to the painting under discussion here. Some miniscule alterations aside, it only differs compositionally from the present work in a watchcase replacing the fan and mirror on the table edge. As can be observed from old photos, the Montreal work seems to bear a monogram left of the middle below the table edge, commonly read as *dH* or *JH*.[6] The painting's provenance seems to trace back to nineteenth century Bordeaux, where it was part of the Binaud collection.[7] It was, however, first published when in the possession of Lucy Adaline van Horne (1868-1941).[8] In 1933 the Art Association of Montreal organised an exhibition dedicated to the Van Horne collection. The show was accompanied by a modest catalogue, in which the painting was included as by Jan Davidsz de Heem.[9] Apparently the famous Dutch scholar, collector and art dealer Frits Lugt (1884-1970), founder of the Fondation Custodia in Paris and the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) in The Hague, visited the exhibition. The RKD preserves a unique copy of the Montreal catalogue with handwritten, critical comments by Lugt, on both the quality of the works on display, attributions and condition.[10] Lugt's comment on the De Heem *Vanitas* is significantly positive, as it reads 'vroeg, grijze tonaliteit, fraai', 'early, grey tonality, beautiful'. Lugt's appreciation of the work and his endorsement of the attribution is all the more noteworthy, given the fact that he himself owned, since 1918, one of the few other early *Book Vanitas* still lifes by De Heem, dated 1628 and still today in the Custodia collection.[11] Lugt thus knew exactly what he was talking about. After Adeline van Horne's passing, her collection was bequeathed to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in 1945. In the following years the painting was subsequently published various times, and by international experts, as De Heem[12] and featured as such in the major 1969 exhibition *Rembrandt and his Pupils*.[13]

In 1970 the art historian A.P. de Mirimonde, in his article on music and symbolism in the work of the De Heem family, is the first to notice the strong similarities between the Montreal stilllife and the work in Rouen.[14] Puzzled by the different attributions – the Rouen work is at that point ascribed to David Teniers the Younger – he proposes the provisional neutral 'école de Leyde vers 1630' for both works. Apart from a small aside in a 1977 catalogue, in which the work was again cited as closely corresponding with the painting in Rouen[15], this was the work's last appearance in the literature for a long time, no doubt due to its tragic expropriation from the museum in 1972. It was only published again by the present author in 2009 as a supporting image to the Rouen work, a bit too carefully as 'anonymous'.[16]

Rouen

The Rouen panel (fig. 2) was donated to the museum in 1907 by the French collector Jules Paul Ernest Hédou, and is of a significantly larger format (50 x 64.5 cm.) than the Lilian and (former) Montreal works. Its composition loosely resembles the latter's. The Blaeu globe is one-third cut-off from the picture plane, but still occupies the same spot and is now placed on a large book, likely the folio against the wall in the present work. The painter must have intended this unusual, cut-off framing, for the reverse of the panel is completely unimpaired. Compared to the two other works, with their careful yet static arrangement of objects, the composition in the Rouen work seems to have collapsed. The books are in disarray, the skull (with its characteristic cavity in the right upper jaw) has rolled over and the music book hangs from the table edge. The distinct violin, now seen from above, lies on top of the books. A watchcase, comparable to the one in the Montreal work, lies on the table's edge. The painter also added a new pictorial element. A wrinkled map, seemingly of the Adriatic Sea and carrying the words 'Vanitas vanitatum et om[n]i[a] Vanitas', adorns the back wall. The overall diagonal



Fig. 3 Jan Davidsz de Heem, *Still Life with Books and a Lute*, signed *J. de. heem*, oil on panel, 26.5 x 41.5 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-2565

inclination of the Rouen work, and its increasing tendency towards what might be called a controlled chaos, seem to indicate a step further in the thought process of a young, talented artist experimenting with compositions. This sequencing of the Rouen work just after the Lilian and Montreal works is confirmed by technical and stylistic details, to be dealt with later.

The museum's 1911 catalogue lists the Rouen painting as 'inconnu', anonymous. In 1956, the art historian Edith Greindl attributes the work to David Teniers the Younger.[17] Although the painting lacks any similarity with secured works by Teniers, the clearly incorrect attribution was nevertheless maintained in the museum catalogues of 1967 and even 1992. In the museum's 2009 catalogue, the present author arrived at a conclusion similar to that of De Mirimonde, listing the work as anonymous, Dutch, c. 1630. Although stressing the work's affinity with the De Heem *Book Vanitas* group, I could not at that point formulate the valid leads for De Heem's actual authorship.[18] However, a recent revisiting of the Rouen painting has taught decidedly otherwise. To further investigate, as Schnackenburg proposed, the possible correlations between the three works discussed here and works from the secured cluster of *Book Vanitas* paintings by De Heem, the Rouen painting was inspected on 21 June 2011 with both ultra violet light and in broad daylight.[19] The outcome was more spectacular than expected. Apart from numerous significant technical and stylistic details, the most unexpected find was the irrefutable remnant of a signature. Unnoticed for more than at least 104 years, the signature, reading surprisingly clear *J He[e]*, was found on the ochre binding of the book to the far right.

De Heem's cluster of early *Book Vanitas* pictures

Until so far a cluster of seven early *Book Vanitas* paintings by Jan Davidsz de Heem has been acknowledged by scholars, all part of reputed institutions' collections: the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum (fig. 3); the Paris Fondation Custodia (fig. 4); the Mauritshuis in The Hague; the Leiden Lakenhal; the Oblastní Galerie in Liberec; the Leipzig Museum der bildenden Künste; and one formerly in the Aachen Suermondt-Ludwig Museum (now in Simferopol, as Second World War loot).[20] These works share with each other several consistencies that as a whole define them as a cluster. This is not to say that every consistency applies to every independent work; rather, these works engage in an overall unified iconography; they interact by means of a fabric of partially shared



Fig. 4 Jan Davidsz de Heem, *Still Life with Books*, signed and dated *Johannes. de / Heem Fecit /A° 1628*,
oil on panel, 31.2 x 40.3 cm., Paris, Fondation Custodia

pictorial motifs, similarities in technical and stylistic approach, and similar measurements. Before matching the trio with this accepted cluster, it is necessary to look at the trio's interdependencies once more.

The trio

Given the identical objects depicted on the three works under discussion here, one can safely assume that they share – as mentioned there has been no discussion about that – a singular origin. This origin was, as is argued here, Jan Davidsz de Heem's Leiden studio during the second half of the 1620s. This dating is backed by empirical scientific evidence. As is confirmed by leading specialists, the specific objects in the painting – the Blaeu globe, the violin and the fan and mirror – were all current in Holland in the 1620s.[21] Even more substantial, recent dendro-chronological examination of the Lilian panel carried out by professor Peter Klein from Hamburg University indicates that the tree of which the panel was fabricated could have been felled as early as 1611, resulting in a plausible date of creation of the painting from 1623 onwards.[22] This conclusion is right away consistent with that of Klein's dendro-chronological examination of the Rijksmuseum panel, which proved to be from a tree of which the



Fig. 5 Lilian, detail



Fig. 6 Rouen, detail

youngest heartwood ring was formed in 1610.[23] In addition, the width of the panel, when measured with the Rhineland inch, the current unit in Leiden at the time, exactly equals 16 inches, while the length equals 12 inches 2 'lijn' (the Rhineland inch was made up of 12 'lijn').[24]

The evident talent of their maker speaks from the trio, yet the works also reveal the exciting sense of an artistic personality in the process of seeking for balance and boundaries. De Heem, an aspiring, hugely talented master in his early twenties, not known to have had any pupils before 1638, fits this profile neatly.[25] The trio's single-handedness is once more confirmed when studying the works' similarities in style and paint treatment. A few examples can clarify this. If one looks at the violin in the Lilian and Rouen works, the basic ochre brown on the side of the instrument is, in exactly the same manner, highlighted with a horizontally applied pasty yellow to suggest a glimmering reflection (fig. 5, Lilian, fig. 6, Rouen). The same appliance of paint can be observed on old pictures from the Montreal work. The painter of the Rouen work highlighted the cheekbone of the skull with three little strokes, just as he highlighted the nose bridge of the skull in the Lilian work. Although the small book's dog ears in the Rouen work have worn a bit thin through the ages, one can still see the technique that the painter used to create depth: oval spots of black paint at the end of the pages, set against the whites and ecrus of the curled pages, suggest shadows (fig. 7). These spots are evenly recognisable in the Lilian work (fig. 8). The bigger dog ears springing out behind the Rouen violin are similar in form to the larger dog ears of the book in the Lilian work. But not only in form are they comparable. In both works the artist accentuated the pages on the side with dark khaki, olivetoned stripes, thus giving a distinct volume to the paper.

Many other smaller or bigger similarities ask for attention, yet experiment and change are just as noticeable. In the Rouen work one finds little ridges of paint in a pattern that sometimes takes the form of a row of 'Y's' (figs. 9 and 17). This effect, no doubt meant to convey relief in the suggested surface (deliberately working as a physical device to capture and reflect light), is also detectable in the Lilian work, but to a lesser extent. Nonetheless, the technique seems very particular to the painter, and as will be shown it is found even more significantly in works belonging to the established cluster. In the same vein, the painter suggested the pages of the books in the Rouen work by scratching in the



Fig. 7 Rouen, detail



Fig. 9 Rouen, detail



Fig. 8 Lilian, detail



Fig. 10 Rouen, detail



Fig. 11 Rouen, detail

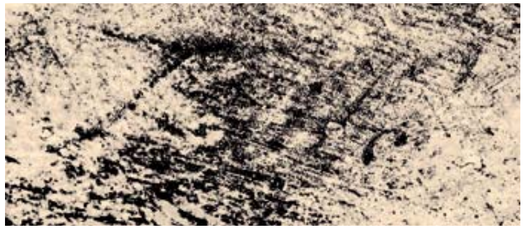


Fig. 12 Rouen, detail



Fig. 13 Fondation Custodia, detail

wet paint with the end of his brush (fig. 17), a technique also found in the works of the cluster and to be discussed later on. Yet the Lilian work lacks this technique altogether. It is observations like these that allude once again to the experimental nature of the paintings, and to a sequencing in which the Lilian and Montreal works seem a starting point for an artistic investigation into a genre – the *Book Vanitas* still life – virtually without precedent, the Rouen painting being a further step in the artist's exploration of possibilities.

The signatures

A paramount and objective argument in admitting the three works under discussion here to the cluster of De Heem *Book Vanitas* paintings, thus raising its total from seven to ten, is the fact that at least two of them are signed. The alleged Montreal monogram will not be considered here further, because it was impossible to make a clear judgement from the existing photos. The Lilian and Rouen signatures supply more solid insights. Overlooked for so long, the Rouen signature was painted with dark paint on the brown surface of the creased booklet to the right of the painting (fig. 10). Most readily recognisable are the distinctive 'J', the 'H'



Fig. 14 Lilian, detail



Fig. 15 Rijksmuseum, detail



Fig. 16 Lilian, detail

and the first 'e', whereas the second 'e' hides under an old re-touching (fig. 11). The right t-junction of the uppercase 'H' is also covered with an old re-touching, but the letter is nonetheless unmistakable, as might best be seen on a computer-saturated photo (fig. 12). The Rouen signature thus keeps in line with those on the works in the Fondation Custodia (fig. 13), the Lakenhal and the Mauritshuis, which are signed on the title page of a book, as if the signatures had been calligraphed on the pages. Like the signatures on these paintings, the Rouen 'H' is written as a capital.

The signature on the Lilian work, measuring no more than five millimetres, is also rendered as an illusion, in the sense that it was painted as if it were handwritten. To secure the viewer's attention, De Heem rendered his name the only readable word in the suggested text in the folio. By placing the signature on top of the page, next to the strongly contrasting violin's head, De Heem maximised its visibility, yet at the same time he preserved the casualness to be expected from a handwritten text. Studying the signature under floodlight makes clear that it reads *heem*, the two 'ee's' and the 'm' to be seen most distinctly (fig. 14). Remarkable is the absence of a centre leg in the 'm', no doubt due to the signature's minimal size. The 'h' is less readily recognisable, partly because of a minimal loss of paint above the letter, there where

once the curl of the letter must have been. This can be seen in photographs taken during treatment (figs. 14 and 16). The vertical outset of this curl, though, is still visible on the right. The slightly sharp-edged curve of the actual letter starts diagonally from the curl's outset, seems a bit pointed on the top, and then goes down again. The signature seems comparable to the one on De Heem's *Vanitas* in the Rijksmuseum (fig. 15), although that signature is much bigger and more completely preserved. In the case of the Lilian work, De Heem placed his signature with thin, fluid ochre in the still wet paint (wet in wet, fig. 16), of which the ridges around the strokes testify (figs. 14, 16).

The trio within the context of the cluster

Just like the trio considered here, all of De Heem's established *Book Vanitas* still lifes are painted on panel. These panels range in size from 26.5 x 35 cm. (Liberec) to 36.1 x 48.5 cm. (The Hague). Six of these works are between 26.5 and 33.7 cm. in height, and four of them vary in width between 40.3 and 41.5 cm. The measurements of the Montreal and Lilian works (30.8 x 40 and 32.5 x 41.8 cm.) thus closely correspond to those of the cluster. The Rouen painting is considerably larger (50 x 64.5 cm.), but turns out to be nearly identical in size to an *Old Scholar in his Study*, a work on panel painted by De Heem in 1629 (48.5 x 65 cm).[26] This painting displays pictorial elements known from De Heem's *Book Vanitas* cluster, such as books, a globe, the paper adorning the back wall reading 'Vanitas Vanitatis' (Liberec) and the painter's palette hanging on the wall, known from the Rijksmuseum work.

These recurring pictorial elements are a trademark of the works belonging to the cluster, which all elaborate at the outset on a still life of books and other assorted objects, arranged in seeming disarray on a table, set against a wall. The light invariably comes from the left, and by means of a wooden partition (visible in the Liberec work) a diagonal shadow is cast on the back wall. When fitting in the trio within this compositional scheme, one readily sees that it must be, as concluded before, the more disorderly orientated Rouen work that furnishes the continuation between the cluster and the relatively neat composition of the Lilian and Montreal works. The cluster's works mainly display the common *Vanitas* motifs used also by De Heem's colleagues, such as skulls, globes, books and musical instruments. On several occasions one recognises identical objects. In the Mauritshuis and Custodia works, for instance, two books (Bredero's *Rodd.rick ende Alphonsus* and Jacob Westerbaen's *Kusiens Clachten*) reappear, just as a dented inkwell does, which is again to be found in the Lakenhal painting. This is not to say that De Heem therefore always used the same props. Comparable, though different inkwells are to be found in the Liberec and former Aachen paintings. Likewise, the map adorning the back wall in the Rouen work is a variant of the piece of paper used by De Heem in the Aachen and Liberec works, where it bears the text 'Vanitas vanitatis'. The objects depicted in the trio are not conclusively recognisable in the cluster's works (this, in fact, goes too for the Liberec and Leipzig works, which display no objects to be found in the other works). The two books at the bottom of the pile in the Lilian and Montreal works resemble two books in the Lakenhal painting, but this could be a coincidence. The fact, however, that the objects depicted in the Lilian and Montreal works partially reappear in the compositionally different Rouen work is immediately consistent with De Heem's approach, as seen in the cluster.

On technical and stylistic levels there are many similarities as well. The typical 'Y' shaped ridges of paint found specifically in the Rouen work, and to a lesser degree in the Lilian work, also appear in the cluster, for instance in the Rijksmuseum and Custodia works. Especially in the latter work, this technique was applied with masterly bravura (figs. 13, 19). Another characteristic technique briefly touched upon above, one which



Fig. 17 Rouen, detail



Fig. 18 Rijksmuseum, detail



Fig. 19 Fondation Custodia, detail



Fig. 20 Fondation Custodia, detail



Fig. 21 Lilian, detail

De Heem might well have picked up from his Leiden colleague and friend Jan Lievens, is the scratching in the still wet paint with the back of the brush in order to suggest the pages in the books. De Heem would have applied this technique for the first time in the Rouen work (fig. 17), after which it occurs in the cluster, most notably in the Rijksmuseum and Custodia works (fig. 18, Rijksmuseum, fig. 19, Fondation Custodia). It is remarkable to see that the relatively hesitant scratches in the Rouen work still resemble the modest indicative incisions of the Rijksmuseum painting, whereas in the Custodia work they have become broad grooves. The fact that one doesn't find this particular technique in the Lilian work again points to that work's earlier conception in the young artist's development. The slight alteration of approach in the rendering of the dog ears of the pages, noticeable when comparing the trio with the cluster, is another example of this sometimes colliding development. Whereas the dog ears in the trio are expressively shabby and might remind one of Lievens' *Book Vanitas* still lifes, such as the 1627 dated *Still life with Skull* in Heino[27], they become somewhat more uniform and swift in the 1628 and 1629 works of the cluster. Then again, one immediately sees the close affinity with the cluster in the rendering of the Lilian work's folded pages (fig. 20, Fondation Custodia, and fig. 21, Lilian). Further resemblances are to be found in the depiction of the written text in the folio of the Lilian work and the words on the letter protruding over the table edge in the Rijksmuseum work. The way the painter treated the ragged books with their torn backs in the Montreal and Lilian works, but also the treatment of the fan at the edge of the table corresponds clearly with the backs of the books in, for instance, the Custodia and Lakenhal works, in which the basic attitude towards the rendering of the materials remains unchanged.

Conclusion

A point has been made here to at once attribute three paintings – one of them unfortunately lost – to Jan Davidsz de Heem. In an article on the newly discovered *Rembrandt Laughing* (coincidentally also a work presumably made in Leiden in the second half of the 1620s by an aspiring young artist – Rembrandt – of exactly the same age as De Heem), professor Ernst van de Wetering analyses the methodology of attributing paintings, specifically attending to the principle notion of probability of argumentation, as formulated by the English mathematician Thomas Bayes (1701-1761).[28] Elaborating Bayes' theory, Van de Wetering contends that 'if several weak pieces of evidence support the belief that a painting could be by Rembrandt, the evidence becomes stronger to the extent that each piece of evidence tends to eliminate an alternative possibility'. He further states that 'He [Bayes] also observed that a variety of evidence provides better confirmation than an equal amount of homogeneous evidence. [...] it is, though, a gradually woven fabric of a 'variety of evidence' (in Bayesian terms) that can lead to a probability bordering on certainty for the attribution of the painting.' In accordance with this eloquent line of reasoning, a varied spectrum, or 'gradually woven fabric' of argumentation and (empirical) evidence has been brought about in the discussion above. From it one can conclude that the trio should be placed in the early years of De Heem's Leiden career, at the crossroads of Leiden's artistic trajectory. One can see the trial and error of *pentimenti*, the experiments with different approaches to painting objects such as books and their specific texture, the shifting dynamics of the spatial arrangement, and the artist appropriating motifs and techniques from a colleague. Interestingly, these tendencies can be noticed in the Heem's flower and fruit still life production from those years too. Various works, among them a 1628 dated fruit piece of virtually identical dimensions as the present work, testify to this.[29] This investigative, studious attitude of De Heem might provide the answer for the unique fact that the Lilian and Montreal work look so much alike, while the Rouen piece again depicts the same objects. The painter was laboriously studying the possibilities of the *Book Vanitas* still life for the first time. Given the visible changes in the Lilian work it might be assumed that this was the first version, but the absence of the Montreal work rules out a definite answer. In the Rouen work De Heem was revisiting familiar objects, while endeavouring new ideas. Given the dates of the cluster (dated works from 1628 and 1629), the trio should be dated 1627 or early 1628.

JH

1 Depicted is the 9 inch (23 cm.) terrestrial globe by Willem Jansz Blaeu, first produced in 1602. See P. Van der Krogt, *Globi Neerlandici: The production of globes in the Low Countries*, Utrecht 1993, pp. 501-503, BLA III. I thank Dr. Van der Krogt (Universiteit Utrecht) for his positive identification, email 29 april 2011.

2 With Bob Haboldt, Tefaf 2002. Only one signed painting by him is known. Jacob Westerbaen, *Vanitas with Books, a Skull and a Lute on a Table*, signed and dated *Jacob Westerbaen f/anno 1629*, oil on panel, 34 x 47 cm., Rotterdam, collection Ph. L. van der Lee (1970). See I. Berström et al., *IJdelheid der ijdelheden : Hollandse Vanitas-voorstellingen uit de zeventiende eeuw*, exh. cat. Leiden, Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden 1970, cat. no. 35.

3 See the following historiography of the works. Further, this is also concluded by Mr. Fred G. Meijer of the RKD (letter to the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen, 22 September 1994, and email conversation with the present author 24/27 September 2009).

4 S. Segal, *Jan Davidsz de Heem en zijn kring*, exh. cat. Utrecht, Centraal Museum, Brunswick, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, The Hague 1991, p. 61.

5 Email 3 April 2009, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts to the Fondation Custodia, Paris.

6 See J. Steegman, *Catalogue of paintings : Montreal Museum of Fine Arts*, Montreal 1960, p. 74, no. 882, where read as *dH*; J. Bruyn, D.G. Carter, *Rembrandt et ses élèves / Rembrandt and his Pupils*, exh. cat. Montreal, The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario, London 1969, p. 94, cat. no. 73, ill., where read as *dH*; A.P. de Mirimonde, 'Musique et symbolisme chez Jan-Davidszoon de Heem, Cornelis-Janszoon et Jan II Janszoon de Heem', in: *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (1970), pp. 241-296, p. 257, where read as *JH*.

7 De Mirimonde 1970, p. 257, n. 27.

8 Lucy Adaline van Horne inherited the work as part of the famous collection assembled by her father, the late Canadian Pacific Railway tycoon and avid collector Sir William Cornelius van Horne (1843-1915).

9 *Exhibition : A selection from the collection of paintings of the late Sir William van Horne, K.C.M.G. 1843-1915*, exh. cat. Art Association of Montreal, Montreal 1933, p. 7, cat. no. 34a.

10 E.g. a presumed Vermeer is written off as Matthieu Lenain, a portrait attributed to Nicolaes Maes cannot pass the test and three of the four works attributed to Velázquez are deemed unconvincing.

11 See Q. Buvelot, in: idem., H. Buijs, *A Choice Collection : Seventeenth- Century Dutch Paintings from the Frits Lugt Collection*, exh. cat. The Hague, Mauritshuis, Zwolle 2002, cat. no. 14.

12 R.H. Hubbard, *European Paintings in Canadian Collections : Earlier Schools*, Toronto 1956, p. 151; Steegman 1960, loc. cit.; B. Bowman Turner, *The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts : paintings : sculpture : decorative arts*, Montreal 1960, p. 63 (as c. 1635); H. Seifertová-Korecká, 'Stilleben von Jan Davidsz. de Heem in der Gemäldegalerie der Stadt Liberec (Reichenberg)', in: *Oud Holland* 77 (1962), pp. 58-60, p. 60, n. 6; Leiden 1970, p. 14, cat. no. 15 (the Leiden exhibition catalogue was furnished by Lakenhal director Maarten Wurfbain and stilllife specialist Professor Ingvar Bergström, author of the landmark study *Dutch Still-Life Painting in the 17th Century* and several articles on De Heem's early years).

13 Montreal/Toronto 1969, cat. no. 73. Interestingly, this exhibition, commemorating the 300th anniversary of Rembrandt's passing, was realised with the aid of the Dutch art historical élite at that time, some providing 'critical suggestions in the selection of the works.' Montreal Director David G. Carter, in his foreword to the catalogue (p. 7), explicitly acknowledges Josua Bruyn (University of Amsterdam, Rembrandt Research Project), A. van Schendel, P.J.J. van Thiel, C.J. de Bruyn-Kops (Rijksmuseum), J.C. Ebbinge-Wubben and H.R. Hoetink (Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum), S.H. Levie (Amsterdam Historical Museum, later Rijksmuseum), A.B. de Vries (Mauritshuis),and Horst Gerson (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, later director RKD), who 'was also most generous in his critical suggestions while the selection of works was still in a formative phase. For similar suggestions we wish to thank Dr. K. Martin and Dr. J.R. Judson.'

14 De Mirimonde 1970, pp. 257-263.

15 Jean Lacambre, in: J. Foucart et al., *Le siècle de Rubens dans les collections publiques françaises*, exh. cat. Paris, Grand Palais, Paris 1977, cat. no. 179.

16 J. Hillegers, in: D. Bakhuÿs et al., *Tableaux flamands et hollandais du Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen*, Paris 2009, under cat. no. 48, pp. 184-185, fig. 48a (as anonymous).

17 E. Greindl, *Les peintres flamands de nature morte au XVIIe siècle*, Brussels 1956, pp. 129, 190. Attribution on the basis of a disputed likeness with a work presumably by that artist in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Brussels.

18 The decision not to attribute the painting to De Heem was in part catalysed by a letter dated 22 September 1994 in the museum archive written by De Heem expert Fred Meijer, in which additional commentary is provided on certain works in the Rouen collection, among them the Teniers-attributed *Vanitas*. In his letter Meijer states correctly that the attribution to Teniers is untenable, that the work is of high quality and under the influence of De Heem's early *Vanitas* paintings. He then points to the Montreal work, in his opinion by the same hand and incorrectly attributed to De Heem. I wish to thank Fred Meijer for repeated communication on this topic.

19 Inspected in the presence of the museum's director Dr. Diederik Bakhuÿs, Salomon Lilian, Wendela Burgemeister and myself.

20 Oil on panel, 26.5 x 41.5 cm., signed *J. de. heem*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-2565; oil on panel, 31.2 x 40.3 cm., signed and dated *Johannes. de / Heem Fecit /A° 1628*, Paris, Fondation Custodia; oil on panel, 36.1 x 48.5 cm., signed and dated *Johannes. de. / Heem. / .1628.*, The Hague, Mauritshuis, inv. no. 613; oil on panel, 28.1 x 33.3 cm., signed and dated *Johannes / de Heem / fecit Anno / 1628*, Leiden, Museum de Lakenhal, on loan from the Fondation Aetas Aurea (Kremer Collection); oil on panel, 26.5 x 35 cm., signed and dated *JDHeem F: A° 1629*, Liberec, Oblastní Galerie, inv. no. 69; oil on panel, 33.7 x 40.3 cm., signed and dated *Johannes de Heem 1628, Leipzig*, Museum der bildenden Künste, inv. no. 1022; oil on panel, 31 x 40 cm., signed and dated *Johannes de Heem fecit 1625*, Simferopol (before: Aken, Suermondt Ludwig-Museum, inv. no. GK 190). See Utrecht/Braunschweig 1991, p. 130 as dated 1629. Another version of the Leipzig *Vanitas*, now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Caen, oil on panel, 31 x 41 cm, is disputed by Segal. See Utrecht/Braunschweig 1991, p. 131, no. 12. See further A. Tapié, *Les vanités : méditations sur la richesse, le dépouillement et la rédemption dans la peinture au XVIIe siècle*, exh. cat. Caen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Ghent, Musée des Beaux-Arts 1990, cat. no. O.18 (as De Heem).

21 I would like to thank the following specialists: Dr. Peter van der Krogt for his identification of the Globe (see no. 1); Dr. Karel Moens, director of the musical instruments museum De Vleeshal in Antwerp for dating the violin to the early 17th century (see Paris 2009, cat. no. 48); Dr. Bianca Du Mortier, curator of costumes and accessoiries 1550-1950 at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, for confirming the existence of fans like the one on the Lilian *Book Vanitas* during the 1620s in Holland. Du Mortier points out various examples of such fans in contemporary art, such as a costume print by Jacob Matham after Dirck Hals, depicting a woman with a similar fan, datable to c. 1620 (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-9478).

22 Dendrochronological report Prof. Dr. P. Klein, Universität Hamburg, Centrum Holzwissenschaft, 25 January 2012. Report available on request.

23 Report by E. Smeenk-Metz, made up after technical examination dated 18 March 2010.

24 I am grateful to Dr. Eddy Schavemaker for pointing this out, email dated 11 October 2011, after first hand inspection 10 October 2011.

25 Utrecht/Braunschweig 1991, p. 29. See also J. de Maere, M. Wabbes, *Illustrated Dictionary of 17th Century Flemish Painters*, 3 vols., Brussels 1994, I, p. 387.

26 See: F.G. Meijer, 'An Interior with an Old Scholar from 1629 by Jan Davidsz. de Heem (1606-1683/84)', in: A.K. Sevcík (ed.), *Hane Seifertové k 75. narozeninám*, Prague 2009, pp. 46-51.

27 Jan Lievens (attributed to), *Still life with Skull*, oil on panel, 59 x 96 cm, dated 1627, Heino, Museum De Fundatie, Kasteel Het Nijenhuis. Note also the alliance with a *Book Vanitas* still life in Munich attributed to Lievens by Bernhard Schnackenburg. See Schnackenburg 2004, p. 35, fig. 3.

28 E. Van de Wetering, 'Rembrandt Laughing, c. 1628 – a painting resurfaces', in: *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 2007, pp. 18-40, esp. p. 23.

29 See for De Heem's early flower andf fruit still lifes F. Meijer, 'Jan Davidsz de Heem's earliest paintings, 1626-1628', in: A. Blankert (ed.), *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury 7* (1988), pp. 29-36, and I. Bergström, 'Another Look at De Heem's Early Dutch Period, 1626-1635', in: A. Blankert (ed.), *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury 7* (1988), pp. 37-50. Most notably, the somewhat dull compositioning of the early, Balthasar van der Ast inspired works from 1626 and 1627 (Meijer, figs. 2, 4, 5 and 8) branches out in a work from early 1628 (Bergström, fig. 2, signed and dated *Johannes de Heem fecit A° 1628*, oil on panel, 32.5 x 40.5 cm., formerly Gothenburg, private collection) in which De Heem clearly explores the possibilities of the diagonal, and experiments with the protruding of a bunch of grapes over the table edge. The work also incorporates motifs clearly borrowed from David Bailly (see Bergstrom, figs. 3 and 4).

cat. no. 6

Meindert Hobbema
1638 – Amsterdam – 1709

Figures on a Track in a Village

Oil on panel
28.5 x 40.9 cm.
With a red wax seal (on the reverse)

Meindert Hobbema, the son of the Amsterdam carpenter Lubbert Meyndertsz, adopted the surname Hobbema at an early age.[1] When he was 15 years old, Meindert and his younger brother and sister were taken into the care of the Amsterdam orphanage. Apparently Hobbema didn't stay there too long, for in around 1655 he entered the studio of Jacob van Ruisdael (1628/29-1682), who had just moved from Haarlem to Amsterdam. On the 8th July 1660, Ruisdael stated that Hobbema had 'served and learned with him for some years.' Nonetheless, Hobbema's earliest painting, a *River Landscape* of 1658 now in Detroit, does not clearly show much debt to his teacher, and it was not until the beginning of the 1660s that the results of the apprenticeship became fully recognisable in his work. During the years 1663 to 1668 Hobbema's talent fully evolved, as he produced numerous large-scale, monumental landscapes. When Hobbema married Eeltje Pieters Vinck in 1668, Jacob van Ruisdael was his witness. That same year Hobbema became a wine gauger for the Amsterdam customs, probably the reason for a drastic decline in his artistic production. Nonetheless, he was still able to produce a masterpiece, as is proven by his *Avenue of Trees at Middelharnis* of 1689, now in the National Gallery, London. Hobbema's last years must have been difficult. Surviving his wife and two children, he was buried in 1709 in a pauper's grave.

The present work, a rare new addition to the painter's early *oeuvre*, shows a small, leafy hamlet on what seems to be – judging from the colour of the foliage – a late summer's day. Hidden between the trees, a modest church building seems to be the only stone structure amidst the wooden huts and cottages. Its tower unassumingly thrusts through the contours of the trees, into the blue and grey of the lightly clouded sky. Following the curve of rough track with its loose sand, a horseman and his servant, accompanied by two dogs, slowly proceed into the village. *Figures on a Track in a Village* was undoubtedly painted during Hobbema's formative years, when he was in his early twenties. Hobbema experts Dr. Christopher Wright and Dr. Frederic Duparc, having both inspected the painting first hand, date it to around 1659-1660.[2] As such, it is fairly comparable with a work once with Johnny van Haeften, London (fig. 1), also datable to around that time.[3] Apart from telling similarities in theme and solidity of composition, it is the shared use of colour – brown and green – and the likeness in detail that draws one's attention. One recognises such pictorial motifs as the thatch on the right, the loose rendering of the sandy areas, with bright touches of ecru, and the darker, contrasting areas of undergrowth beside the track.





Fig. 1 Meindert Hobbema, *A Wooded Landscape with Figures Near a Church*, signed, oil on panel, 39.5 x 57 cm., present whereabouts unknown

Another dated work of 1660, *Cottages in a Wood* in the National Gallery, also furnishes a point of reference. Like the present work, its composition, showing a path leading inwards to a small village, gives the impression of a casual, everyday snapshot. Yet it was carefully composed as such. In addition, these works share an affinity in their intuitive, spontaneous, though utterly recognisable attention Hobbema gives to the leafage, while maintaining a distinct sense of individual, never dull articulation of forms. In these works, Hobbema's lingering *staffage* plays a modest, yet crucial part. Tranquil horsemen seen in the middle distance, like the one in the work discussed here, evoke exactly the desired atmosphere. One comes across them in several of Hobbema's paintings.[4] It seems that during this formative part of his career, Hobbema found inspiration in some of his former master's works from around 1650, such as *Cottages and Trees by a Road* or *Village Street with Cottage Under a Small Tree*.[5] However, in contrast to Ruisdael's often dramatic pathos, Hobbema deliberately chooses an overall intimate feeling, and it is exactly this painterly quality which brings about the uniquely quiet, introspective temperament in the present painting.

JH

1 For further biographical data, see J. Loughman, in: J. Turner, *The Dictionary of Art*, 34 vols., New York 1996, 14, pp. 600-603.

2 Inspected by Dr. Wright in London, July 2011; inspected by Dr. Duparc in Amsterdam, October 2011. We thank Dr. Wright and Dr. Duparc for their expertise.

3 See C. Wright, in: *Dutch and Flemish Old Masters : Johnny van Haeften* 10, London 1997, cat. 21: '1660 more or less exactly.'

4 Sale New York, Sotheby's, 26 January 2006, lot 24. See G. Broulhiet, *Meindert Hobbema (1638-1709)*, Paris 1938, cat. no. 84, illus.. See also C. Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen 1907-1928, 4 (1911), cat. no. 115.

5 S. Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael : A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings, Drawings and Etchings*, New Haven/London 2001, cat. nos. 553, 556. See further cat. nos. 571, 586, 589, 590.



Detail cat. 6

cat. no. 7

Pieter Fransz de Grebber
c. 1600 – Haarlem – 1652/53

Bust of a Lady in a Blue Gown

Oil on panel
62.9 x 48.9 cm.

Provenance:
Wales, private collection

Pieter Fransz de Grebber was probably born in around 1600 as the oldest of the ten children of the esteemed Haarlem painter, Frans de Grebber (1573-1649) and his wife Hillegont van Lijnhoven.[1] The family was Catholic. Pieter's sister Maria, and brother Albert, also became painters. After first studying with his father, Pieter was apprenticed to Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617). When his father, who befriended Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), travelled to Antwerp in 1618, Pieter accompanied him and visited Rubens' studio. By 1621 he must have been active as a painter, for in that year he is referred to as such by the minister Samuel Ampzing in his description of Haarlem. In his 1648 *Harlemias* of 1648, the poet Theodorus Schrevelius makes mention of Pieter's subsequent stay in Denmark, where he seems to have had various commissions. In 1628, however, he was back in Haarlem, working in his father's studio. In 1630 he was active independently as a painter, only to become a Guild member however in 1632. In 1634 the devout Catholic Pieter bought a house on the Begijnhof. He never married, and seems to have been fairly prosperous. As an artist, Pieter – pioneer of Haarlem classicism – is known primarily as a painter of large history works, portraits and figure studies. His colleague Philips Angel (1616-1683) specifically praised him for his mastering of human anatomy. In addition to numerous public commissions, Pieter collaborated on prestigious painting projects for the palaces of Stadtholder Frederick Henry, among them the famous decoration cycle for Huis ten Bosch (c. 1648-1650). The artist died between 29 September 1652 and 29 January 1653, when his house was sold.

The present work, a study of a young woman, depicts the sitter in a blue gown. Beneath the gown she wears a white blouse. Her elongated neck and hair, loosely gathered behind her neck, accentuate her elegant refinement. As she regards the beholder, the light shines upon the right side of her face. The left side remains in the shadow, starkly contrasting against the bright, illuminated background. The folds of her lighted right shoulder are indicated with some deft strokes of beige paint. The woman's stern glance, the work's basic composition and the absence of further attributes give the work a distinctly austere, Renaissance monumentality. Until recently *Bust of a Lady in a Blue Gown* was given to the Amersfoort painter Paulus Bor (c. 1601-1669). The attribution to Pieter de Grebber, however, is doubtlessly correct. The work fits neatly within the artist's oeuvre.[2]

In her thorough study *Tronie und Porträt*, Dagmar Hirschfelder pays special attention to De Grebber's *tronies*, the seventeenth century Dutch term for anonymous head studies, depicting models and not intended to portray the actual individual.[3] The present work could rightly be defined as such. Hirschfelder concludes that De Grebber often kept his *tronies* in the studio, using them as preparatory studies for his large history paintings. In this respect she points to a *Bust of a Young Woman* by De Grebber, now in the Weldon collection (fig. 1).[4] As Hirschfelder argues, De Grebber implemented the girl's head in his *Moses Striking Water From the Rock* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tourcoing, datable to around 1630. The Weldon work – in its conception of *tronie* portraiture, the treatment

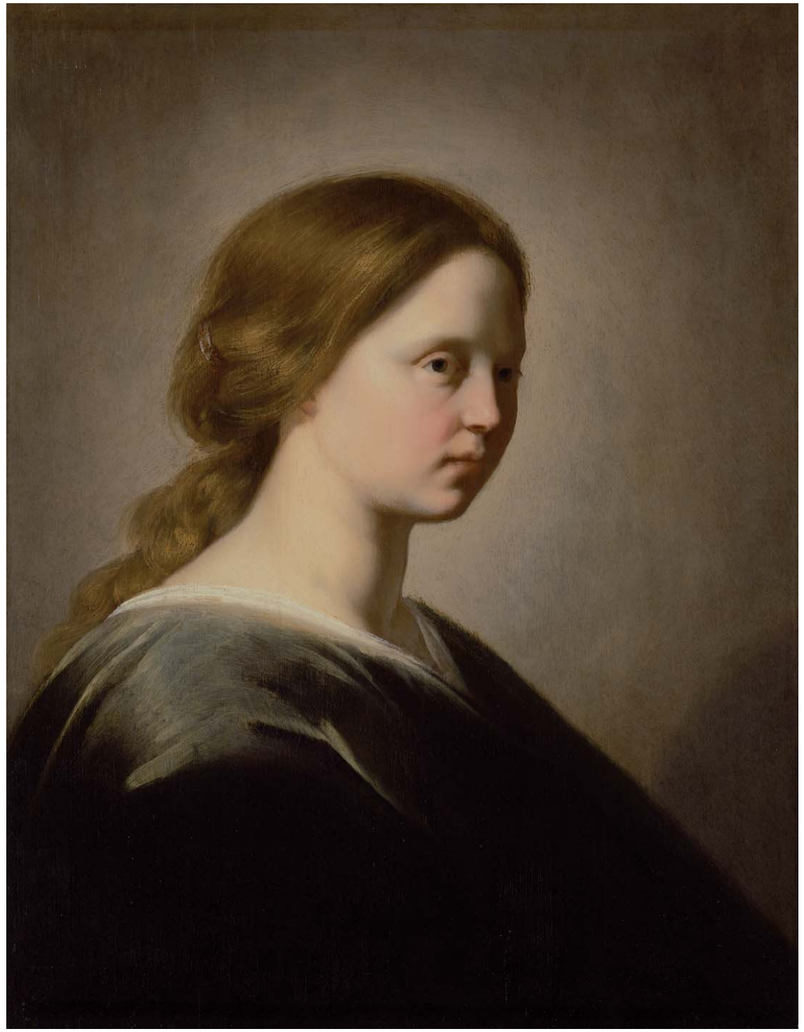




Fig. 1 Pieter de Grebber, *Bust of a Young Woman*, oil on panel, 39.1 x 34 cm., New York, Weldon collection

of the light on the woman's clothes and on the wall behind her, in its colouring and the increasing darkness towards the corners of the picture plane – furnishes a solid comparison with the present work. While the Weldon woman's face is lit from another angle, a *Study of a Youth* by De Grebber, almost identical in size with the Weldon painting, distributes the lighting in a manner which is clearly reminiscent of the present work.[5] Especially close to our painting is the rendering of the shadow under the right eye of the young man, who regards the viewer with cool aloofness, like the lady under discussion here. Again, the model's head is surrounded by a strong light, which fades towards the edges of the picture.

Like his contemporaries, De Grebber produced portrait studies in the printed medium. An etched *Bust of a Young Woman with a Book*, once erroneously attributed to Jan Lievens (1607-1674), has long since been associated with De Grebber, and rightfully so.[6] Hirschfelder, too, lists the etching under De Grebber.[7] In full accordance with De Grebber's demonstrated recycling of his figure studies, the woman depicted in the etching appears as a shepherdess on the left of De Grebber's *Adoration of the Shepherds* of 1633, now in the Utrecht Catharijneconvent.[8] This would establish a date for the etching to the beginning of the 1630s. Of special interest here are not merely the compositional similarities between the etching and the present painting, but rather the artist's equal interest in the lighting of the woman's face and the characteristic shadow cast in the background. What's more, as in the present work, the etching, like the present *tronie*, likewise features De Grebber's predilection for the remarkable, stretched moulding of women's necks. Similarly pronounced women's necks in De Grebber's oeuvre may be observed on various occasions, among them the Mary figure in the Utrecht *Adoration*, and an engraved Mary Magdalene.[9]

Unfortunately, no direct use of the present work in one of the Grebber's history paintings has yet been established. One last argument in favour of De Grebber's authorship is the size of the work. At least six other works by his hand, two canvases and four panels, dating from 1625 to 1631, have virtually identical measurements.[10] Given the dates of the works of art provided here as an artistic context for the present work, which range from 1625 to 1633, a suggested dating of around 1630, when the artist was just establishing himself as an independent Haarlem painter, seems plausible.

JH

1 For an extensive, up to date biography on the artist, see I. Van Thiel-Stroman, in: N. Köhler et al. (ed.), *Painting in Haarlem 1500-1850 : The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum*, Ghent 2006, pp. 168-172. See also P.C. Sutton, in: A. Blankert et al., *Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth Century Painting*, exh. cat. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut 1999/2000, pp. 116-118.

2 See also P.C. Sutton, 'Rembrandt and Pieter de Grebber', in: C.P. Schneider et al. (eds.), *Shop talk : studies in honor of Seymour Slive : presented on his seventy-fifth birthday*, Cambridge 1995, pp. 241-244, p. 241: 'Also dating from the early 1630's are a series of dramatically lit half- and bust-length portraits and anonymous figure studies by De Grebber.'

3 D. Hirschfelder, *Tronie und Porträt in der niederländischen Malerei de 17. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 2008, chapter 1.7 ('Troniemaler Haarlems: Pieter de Grebber und Salomon de Bray'), pp. 152-158.

4 Oil on panel, 39.1 x 34 cm., New York, Weldon collection. See Hirschfelder 2008, cat. no. 183. See further: N.T. Minty, J. Spicer, *An Eye for Detail : 17th-century Dutch and Flemish paintings from the Collection of Henry H. Weldon*, Baltimore, exh. cat. Walters Art Gallery, 1999, cat. no. 21.

5 Oil on panel, 43 x 34.1 cm., London, Sotheby's, 3 December 1997, lot 43.

6 Listed as Lievens in F.W.H. Hollstein et al., *Dutch and Flemish etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts c. 1450-1700*, 72 vols., Amsterdam 1949-2007, 11, p. 46, no. 48. As De Grebber at the RKD.

7 Hirschfelder 2008, p. 157 and cat. no. 197, as 'De Grebber (?)', with reference to the RKD. Hirschfelder compares the etching with De Grebber's *Young Woman with a Plumed Beret*, monogr. *P.DG*, oil on panel, 63 x 56 cm., Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, inv. no. 1373.

8 Pieter de Grebber, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1633, oil on panel, 154.5 x 153.5 cm., Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent, inv. no. stccs38. See P. Dirkse, 'De *Aanbidding der herders* van Pieter de Grebber en het daarop afgebeelde *Gloria*', in: idem., *Begijnen, pastoors en predikanten : Religie en kunst in de Gouden eeuw*, Leiden 2001, pp. 137-142, fig. 105, and colour illus. p. 76.

9 Engraving on paper, 360 x 244 mm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-11.945.

10 With a maximum of 7 cm. difference in total length and width: *St. Paul Reading*, monogr. and dated *P DG 1625*, oil on canvas, 63 x 49 cm., New York, sale, Sotheby's, 5 June 1986, lot 30; *The Repentant Peter* (pendant to the previous), monogr. *P DG*, oil on canvas, 63.5 x 49.5 cm., Turin, Galleria Caretto, catalogue 1989, no. 25 (see also sale, New York, Christie's, 26 March 1987, lot 57); *Archer*, monogr. and dated *P DG 1631*, oil on panel, 63 x 56 cm., Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, inv. no. 1374 (cat. 1930); *Young Woman with a Plumed Beret*, monogr. *P.DG*, oil on panel, 63 x 56 cm., Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, inv. no. 1373; *Christ on the Cross*, oil on panel, 63.5 x 48 cm., sale, London, Phillips, 28 October 1997, lot 44; *Young Man with a Fur Hat*, monogr. *P. DG*, oil on panel, 62 x 46.5 cm., Amsterdam, J.A. van Dongen Collection. A work by Pieter's sister Maria also falls within this category: *Portrait of Augustinus de Wolff*, signed and dated 1631, oil on panel, 69 x 48.5 cm., Haarlem. Statie H. Bernardus in de Hoek.

cat. no. 8

Lambert Jacobsz
Amsterdam ca. 1598 – 1636 Leeuwarden

Elisha and Gehazi

Apocryphally signed lower centre *A Bloomart*
Oil on canvas
82 x 103 cm.

Literature:
M.G. Roethlisberger, M.J. Bok, *Abraham Bloemaert and his sons: paintings and prints*, 2 vols., Doornspijk 1993, I, p. 503, no. H147, II, H152
J. Hillegers, 'Lambert Jacobsz (c.1598-1636) en zijn werkplaats. Atelierpraktijk in Leeuwarden rond 1630', in: *Jaarboek De Vrije Fries* 89 (2009), pp. 67-91, pp. 78-79, 81, illustrated

Provenance:
Adelaide Annabella Tuite Dalton, Lady Lisgar of Bailieborough, by bequest to her niece[1]
Collection of Mrs. Mary Entwisle
Collection of Mrs. F. Entwisle
London, Christie's, 27 March 1953, lot 74 (as Abraham Bloemaert, *Saint John and the Thief*)
London, Arcade Gallery
Paris, Drouot, 21 March 1980, lot 56 (as School of Abraham Bloemaert, *Education of David*)
Paris, private collection

The exact year of birth of the Mennonite painter Lambert Jacobsz is unknown.[2] His father, Jacob Theunisz, was a cloth merchant originating from the Frisian town of Leer, who became an Amsterdam citizen on 9 April 1592. Two days later he married Pietertgen Lubbertsdr, the daughter of the Mennonite preacher Lubbert Gerritsz. The couple's oldest child was the well-known physician and Mennonite teacher Anthonie Roscius, born in or just after 1593, who died tragically in January 1624, after falling through the ice of the river IJ in Amsterdam with his second wife and daughter. Lambert, who must have been the third son[3], is first documented on 8 July 1620, when he married the local Aechje Thonisdr in Leeuwarden, where he settled shortly afterwards.[4] The celebrated poet Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679), a friend of Lambert's family, wrote a poem for the occasion. Since Lambert's name does not appear in the baptismal registers of the Amsterdam Mennonite community, it appears that he must have been baptised in Leeuwarden shortly after his marriage. Given the fact that his younger brother Isaac was born in around 1600 and Mennonite custom prescribed baptism at the age of around 20 to 22 years old, one can place Lambert's year of birth in around 1598. Although no documentary evidence survives, there are indications that Lambert was taught in the Amsterdam studio of the 'Pre-Rembandtist' Mennonite painter Jan Pynas (c. 1581/2-1631).[5] A suggested apprenticeship in the Antwerp studio of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) remains uncertain.[6]

Once in Leeuwarden, Lambert built up his own career as a painter. His earliest dated work, a landscape on copper dated 1622, was mentioned at a sale in 1783.[7] In addition, Lambert established himself as a well-respected preacher in Mennonite circles, delivering sermons even beyond the borders of the Republic. While continuing to work in the small figure style of Pynas and the Amsterdam history painters throughout his career, Lambert started producing large figure and half figure history paintings, all of biblical subject matter, in 1628.[8] It was probably at around that time when Jacob Backer (1608-1651) entered his studio, followed in 1629 by the equally talented Govaert Flinck (1615-1660).[9] During the five years or so of their presence there, the Lambert Jacobsz workshop produced many large figure paintings, some of them



outstanding and idiosyncratic works of art, and among the best of the period. Various Frisian painters seem to have been connected with the Jacobsz workshop as well.[10] Lambert's last dated works are from 1635;[11] a year later, he and his second wife Hillegont Dircks Velius, daughter of the well-known historian Teodorus Velius, unexpectedly died of the plague. From his estate inventory, compiled in 1637, it becomes clear that Lambert was active as an art dealer, selling works by such painters as Rembrandt (1606-1669), Jan Lievens (1607-1674), Pieter de Grebber (c. 1600-1652/4) and Cornelis van Poelenburch (1594/5-1667), as well as copies after their work. He was no doubt in business with the Amsterdam Mennonite art dealer Hendrick Uylenburgh (1584/9-c.1660), since each held paintings by the other in their stock. Lambert's son, Abraham van den Tempel (1622/3-1672), embarked on a prosperous career as a painter himself.

The present work, most typical of Lambert's output of around 1630, depicts a standing boy on the left, his back turned towards the viewer and averting his eyes as a seated greybeard raises an admonishing forefinger to the right. The latter stands behind a table covered with two large volumes, one of which he holds open in his left hand. Illustrated here is the rarely encountered Old Testament story of Elisha confronting his servant, Gehazi (2 Kings 5: 25-26). Lambert painted the episode twice, the other version, dated 1629, presently in the museum of Hanover.[12] Naaman, an Aramese army general, suffered from leprosy, for which he was recommended to consult the prophet Elisha. Elisha advised Naaman to bathe seven times in the river Jordan. Although sceptical, Naaman was convinced to do as Elisha had counselled him, and he was cured. Out of gratitude he offered Elisha six talents of silver, but the prophet refused. His servant Gehazi, on the other hand, considered that Elisha may have insulted Naaman by his refusal, followed him and asked for two Talents and some clothes, which he was duly given, and hid in his house. When questioned by Elisha he denied everything, infuriating his master, who saw through his servant and struck him down with Naaman's disease. The story must have met with approval within the Mennonite community, known for its sobriety. Lambert must have favoured it too, for he also painted two small-figure depictions of *Elisha Refusing the Gifts of Naaman*, one of them now in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg.[13] In addition to this, a *Landscape with Gehazi Talking to Naaman* by Lambert is mentioned in his stock inventory in 1637.[14]

As mentioned above, Lambert started to paint large scale figures in his paintings in the year 1628. The painter must have visited Leiden that year, where he saw the work of Jan Lievens. Evident parallels in subject, composition and scale between works of both painters bear witness to this.[15] The present painting also seems to testify of Lambert's encounter with Lievens' work. Lambert's sturdy figures and the broad folds of their garments show a clear debt to Lievens' early half figures, like his *Evangelists* in Bamberg.[16] Interestingly, Lambert also adopted Lievens' specific technique of inscribing into the wet paint with the end of the brush, used in this painting to render the individual hairs in the beard and page edges in the books. In effect, the thin rims of paint give relief to the work and reflect the light, thus enhancing its three-dimensionality. Particularly striking is the monumentality of form and colour, a trademark of Jacobsz. The somewhat unusual purple used for the old man's robe seems to have been in favour in his studio on several occasions. One comes across it, for instance, in Lambert's *St. Paul* of 1629, and in the *Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard*, now in the museum of Rouen.[17] The hue perfectly complements the orange ochre of the cloak, the green of the tablecloth and the boy's red coat. By restricting the number of figures in the painting, Lambert emphasised the drama between the protagonists, Elisha's hand gesture opening up the narrative possibilities of the story. Lambert, a successful preacher who was well acquainted with the art of rhetoric, employed similar hand gestures in many of his works, such as the *Disobedient Prophet*, now in the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.[18] In this work, the narrative again takes place across a table, and an accusation is made.

In 1993 Marcel Roethlisberger hesitantly published the present work in his catalogue of Abraham Bloemaert (1566-1651) and his sons as a doubtful work by Hendrick Bloemaert (1601/2-1672). Its inclusion was based on an old, apocryphal signature reading *A Bloomart*, probably made in England given the odd spelling.[19] Roethlisberger, who had not actually seen the painting, noted that 'in Hendrick's calligraphy, H can easily be misread for A'. However, he too concluded that 'surprising as it may seem, Hendrick and Jacobsz are on some occasions similar. A point in case is this work, that shares stylistic elements with both. Hendrick within a few years after 1630 seems conceivable, but Jacobsz seems in the end more likely.' Indeed, there seems to have been some contact between Leeuwarden and Utrecht. Not only do the works of Lambert's studio clearly remind one of the Utrecht school (it is not a coincidence that they were a huge inspiration for Lievens as well), various Utrecht paintings appear in Lambert's stock.[20] Moreover, several of the paintings listed by Roethlisberger as works by Hendrick originated in actual fact from the Lambert Jacobsz studio, for example a set of four evangelists now in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, which partially replicates Lambert's impressive evangelist series in the museum of Rouen, and was undoubtedly produced in his Leeuwarden studio.[21] Another specific characteristic of Jacobsz's work was his repeated use of the same models. The prophet Nathan reprimanding King David in the monumental *Nathan Rebukes David* by Lambert is likely to be the same model as the present prophet Elisha.[22]

JH

1 A paper on the reverse of the painting reads: '[...] is picture was left to Mary / [...] isle by her aunt, Lady Lisgar / [...] d Lisgar of Bailieborough / [...] Cavan, who married secondly / Sir Francis Turville of Bosworth Hall, / Rugby.' Lady Lisgar married John Young, first Baron of Lisgar (18-7-1876) in 1835. She re-married Francis Fortescue-Turville in 1881.

2 For biographical references, see H.L. Straat, 'Lambert Jacobsz, schilder', in: *De Vrije Fries* 28 (1928), pp. 52-76; H.F. Wijnman, 'Nieuwe gegevens omtrent den schilder Lambert Jacobsz, I', in: *Oud Holland* 47 (1930), pp. 145-157; H.F. Wijnman, Nieuwe gegevens omtrent den schilder Lambert Jacobsz, II', in: *Oud Holland* 51 (1934), pp. 241-255; P. Bakker, *De Friese schilderkunst in de Gouden Eeuw*, Zwolle 2008, p. 197.

3 Wijnman 1934, pp. 243-245.

4 'Lambert Jacobs, schilderer Jongman geboren ende wonachtich binnen Amstelredamme ende Aechtien Thonisdr. geboren ende wonachtich binnen deser stede', Leeuwarden City Archive, marriage ledgers 1618-1623, 1620, fol. 85. Quoted from M. van der Meij-Tolsma, 'Lambert Jacobsz. (c. 1598-1636) : Kunstschilder en doopsgezind leraar te Leeuwarden', in: *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen : nieuwe reeks* 15 (1989), pp. 79-96, p. 85.

5 S.A.C. Dudok van Heel, *De jonge Rembrandt onder tijdgenoten*, diss. Radboud University, Nijmegen 2006, pp. 136-137.

6 Hillegers 2009, pp. 83, 89, n. 64.

7 Sale The Hague, Mr. P. Steijn int. al., 7 October 1783, *Landscape*, oil on copper, 26 x 50.1 cm., 1622.

8 The earliest examples, A *Penitent Mary Magdalen* and a *Contrite Peter*, both dated 1628, are mentioned in a sale Alkmaar, Horstok, 27 July 1802, lots 44 and 45. Lugt no. 6484.

9 Various dates for Backer's arrival have been proposed by different authors. Von Moltke suggested 1622, Sumowski 1625/30, and Van den Brink and Van der Veen 1626. See Hillegers 2009, p. 75, where a date of c. 1628 is suggested.

10 See P. Bakker, 'Een schilder en zijn netwerk : Lambert Jacobsz en een nieuw beeld van de zeventiende-eeuwse schilderkunst in Friesland', in: *De Vrije Fries* 88 (2008), pp. 31-64.

11 *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well*, signed and dated *Lambert Jacobsz 1635*, oil on panel, 40.7 x 55 cm., Johannesburg, Art Gallery. See W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandtschüler*, 6 vols., Landau/Pfalz 1982-1994, I, pp. 141, nos. 8, 147; *Elisha Refusing the Gifts of Naaman*, signed and dated *Jacobs fecit 1635*, oil on canvas, 133 x 160 cm. See V.F. Levinson-Lessing (ed.), *Gosudarstvennyj Ermitaz : otdel zapadnoevropejskogo iskusstva* (*Musée de l'Ermitage, département de l'art occidental. Catalogue des peintures*), 2 vols., Leningrad 1958, 2, p. 288.

12 *Elisha and Gehazi*, oil on canvas, 62 x 84 cm, dated 1629, Hanover, Niedersächsiches Landesmuseum (Bakker 2008, p. 140, fig. 122). The subject was first identified by Werner Sumowski. See Sumowski 1982-1994, I, p. 141, n. 5.

13 For the Hermitage painting, see note 11. The other work was once in the Porkay collection in Munich. See Sumowski 1982-1994, I, p. 141, n. 7, p. 146, illus.

14 Straat 1928, p. 74: '37 Noch een ander landschap met een groote ruine ende een rivire daer op de voorgront staet Naomi [Naaman] sprekende met Gehasij des propheten Elisei knecht die hem naegelopen compt ende carosse int verschiet hem verwachtende. L.J.' ('37. Yet another landscape with a huge ruin and a river; there on the foreground stands Naaman talking to Gehazi, the servant of the prophet Elisha, who has followed him and a coach in the distance awaiting him.').

15 See Hillegers 2009, pp. 70-73.

16 Jan Lievens, *Series of the Four Evangelists*, oil on panel 91 x 78 cm., c. 1626-1627, Museen der Stad Bamberg, Historisches Museum, Bamberg.

17 *St. Paul*, oil on canvas, 45 x 100 cm., signed and dated 1629, sale New York, Christie's, 27 January 2000, lot 56; *The Labourers in the Vineyard*, oil on canvas, 158 x 174 cm, Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. no. 999.4.1

18 *The Prophet from Bethel and the Disobedient Prophet*, oil on canvas, 107 x 136 cm., Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, inv. no. NM 6880. See Sumowski 1982-1994, VI, pp. 3718, 3914, no. 2316.

19 Roethlisberger/Bok 1993, incorrectly states that the signature reads *A Bloemaert*.

20 See Straat 1928, pp. 71-76. Works are mentioned by and after Honthorst, Poelenbuch and Saftleven.

21 See Hillegers 2009, pp. 72-73, on Roethlisberger/Bok 1993, nos. H.150-153. Roethlisberger's no. H.163 also derives from the Lambert Jacobsz studio (by Backer?). See Hillegers 2009, p. 77.

22 *Nathan Rebukes David*, oil on canvas, 100 x 134 cm., sale Stockholm, Bukowski's, 10 October 2003. See Hillegers 2009, pp. 81-82, illus.

cat. no. 9

Johannes Leemans
c. 1633 – The Hague – 1688

Still Life with Dead Birds and Hunting Paraphernalia

Signed and dated lower left *J. Leemans: 1677*
Oil on canvas
108 x 134 cm.

Provenance:
Sale Paris, Drouot (Étude Laurin, Guilloux, Buffetaud, Tailleur), 10 March 1976, lot 51

Literature:
La revue du Louvre et des musées de France 26/1 (1976), illustrated announcement for above mentioned auction

The painting of game and hunting equipment became a still life speciality in Holland during the second half of the seventeenth century. Hunting was a widespread bourgeois pastime in Holland at that time, and the gentleman hunter was therefore a valuable client to painters of the subject. The *trompe l'œil* with hunting guns, horns, nets and other sporting paraphernalia was first introduced by Cornelis Brizé (1622-1670) in 1658, and quickly proved a popular theme amongst a number of artists, such as Philip Angel (1616-after 1682) and Jacob (1633-1681) and Cornelis Biltius (1653-c.1686). Those working in this genre often selected large canvases in order to depict the hunting equipment on a life-size scale.

Johannes Leemans, born in The Hague, was recorded as an artist working in Amsterdam in 1671, and subsequently in The Hague from 1673 to 1684. Dated examples of his work are known from 1664 to 1686.[1] He was the younger brother of the painter Anthonie (c. 1630-1673), and both specialised in hunting still lifes. They chose not to focus on the hunt itself, nor on the trophies, but on the actual implements involved in trapping and killing the game. Produced as 'over-doors' paintings, their *trompe l'œil* works appeared to provide the would-be hunter with his equipment, hanging ready for use. The genre acquired particular popularity in The Hague in the mid-seventeenth century, probably owing to its forested surroundings, which were fashionable hunting grounds.

Still Life with Dead Birds and Hunting Paraphernalia is signed and dated 1677, and can be regarded as a hunting trophy. Against a light-coloured plastered wall, hunting paraphernalia is elegantly arranged. Through well observed effects of light and shadow and meticulous attention to the smallest detail, the artist gives the painting a deceptively natural look. In the centre, a dead partridge hangs from a nail, its claw fastened with a blue ribbon, before a large game pouch; it is flanked by two suspended ducks, one from its neck, the other from its leg. Above the game, an upturned flintlock-sporting gun, rests upon two protruding nails. Further hunting supplies adorn the wall, including a hunting horn inlaid with gold suspended beneath the partridge, while a powder-flask and shot-flask are symmetrically arranged on either side of it. Leemans may have received first-hand knowledge about weapons from his grandfather, who is mentioned in The Hague archives as an armourer. In the same year that the present work was executed, the artist painted a pair of *trompe l'œils* similar to the Lilian painting which were in the collection of The Sporting Gallery in Middleburg, Virginia, in 1969.[2] In this pair, however, the hanging birds are painted on each side before a small niche, in which small dead birds are gathered, probably included to expand the illusion of depth in the painting.

WB

1 A. van der Willigen, F.G. Meijer, *A Dictionary of Dutch and Flemish Still-life Painters Working in Oils, 1525-1725*, Leiden 2003, p. 129.
2 See advertisement in *The Connoisseur : an Illustrated Magazine for Collectors*, London, November 1969.



cat. no. 10

Gabriël Metsu
Leiden 1629 – 1667 Amsterdam

A Woman Feeding a Pancake to a Dog[1]

Oil on canvas
43.2 x 35.6 cm.
Verso: A shipping label and two red wax seals on the back on the stretcher, one of Baron François-Marie Delessert, the other one unidentified

Provenance:
Amsterdam, Johannes Lodewijk Strantwijk
His sale, Amsterdam, De Winter . . .Yver, 10 May 1780 (Lugt no. 3139), lot 148, *f* 675 to De Wilde
Sale Amsterdam, Van der Schley . . .Yver, 5 December et seq. 1785 (Lugt no. 3959), lot 55, *f* 780 To dealer Pierre Fouquet, Jr., Amsterdam
Sale Paris, Lebrun, May 1803, no. 18[2]
Paris, Baron François-Marie Delessert, by 1833[3]
His sale, Paris, Petit, C.P.: Pillet, 15-18 March 1869 (Lugt no. 31073), lot 49, FF 8,400
Paris, Kleinberger Galleries[4]
Paris, collection Maurice Kann, before 1909
Schönberg (near Cronberg, Taunus), collection August de Ridder, acquired not long before his death in 1911
His sale, Paris, Petit, C.P.: Gervex Féral, 2 June 1924 (Lugt no. 87000), lot 40, FF 280,000
To dealer Knoedler, by whom sold to a private collector
Paris, private collection, by inheritance[5]

Literature:
J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French painters*, 9 vols., London 1829-1842, 4 (1833), pp. 108–9, nos. 115, 9 (1842, suppl.), p. 521, no. 18
B. Delessert, F. Delessert, *Notice sur la collection de MM. Delessert*, Paris 1844, pp. 31-32, no. 76
B. Delessert, F. Delessert, *Notice sur la collection de MM. Delessert*, Paris 1846, p. 44, no. 114
F. Delessert, *Catalogue des tableaux de F. Delessert*, Paris 1855, p. 48, no. 118
C. Blanc, *Histoire des Peintres de toutes les écoles : école hollandaise*, 2 vols., Paris 1861, 1, p. 336
C. Blanc, 'La Galerie Delessert', in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 11 (1869), pp. 105-127, 201-222, pp. 206-207
C. Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen 1907-1928, 1 (1907), no. 104
A. Marguillier, 'Collection de feu M. Maurice Kann', in: *Les Arts* 8/88 (April 1909), pp. 2-32, pp. 20-22, illus. on p. 12
E.A. Benkard, 'Die Sammlung De Ridder : Bemerkungen zur Kunst der Holländer des 17. Jahrhunderts', in: *Kunst und Künstler* 10 (1912), pp. 602-609, p. 603
W. Bode, *Die Gemäldegalerie des weiland Herrn A. de Ridder in seiner Villa zu Schönberg bei Cronberg im Taunus*, Berlin 1913, p. 8, no. 25, illus.
R. Claude Catroux, 'La Galerie A. de Ridder', in: *L'Amour de l'Art* 5 (1924), pp. 126-130, p. 129
F.W. Robinson, *Gabriel Metsu (1629-1667) : a Study of his Place in Dutch Genre Painting of the Golden Age*, New York 1974, p. 33, fig. 56
E. Bénézit (ed.), *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs de tous les temps et de tous les pays*, 10 vols., Paris 1976, 7, p. 359
A.E. Waiboer, *Gabriel Metsu (1629-1667) : Life and work*, diss. New York University, Institute of Fine Arts 2007, pp. 174-175, cat. no. a-88



Exhibited:
The Collection of Pictures of the Late Herr A. de Ridder, New York, F. Kleinberger Galleries, 24 November – 15 December 1913, no. 25

Copies:
Sir James Hawley, his sale, London, Christie's, 22 June 1839 (Lugt 15495), lot 81, as 'Metzu: Interior, with a lady seated receiving a pancake from a servant', bought in at £28.7[6]
Anonymous after Gabriel Metsu, *A Maid Serving Pancakes to a Woman, Seated by a Fireplace in an Interior*, signed lower right *GMetsu*, watercolour and bodycolour on paper, 430 x 350 mm., sale Amsterdam, Christie's, 29 September 1998, lot 21

Gabriël Metsu, probably a Catholic, was the son of two immigrants from Flanders, the painter Jacques Metsu (1587/9-1629) and his wife Jacquemijntje Garniers.[7] He was born in Leiden, about eight months after his father died. Not much is known about his upbringing. He probably studied first with the silversmith Claes Pietersz de Grebber, uncle of the Haarlem painter Pieter de Grebber (c. 1600-1652/4), thereafter spending the remainder of his training with Claesz' son, the painter Anthonie de Grebber. Gabriël is mentioned as a painter as early as 1644, and in 1648 he joined the newly established Leiden guild of St. Luke. Another period of study with Nicolaus Knupfer is assumed. His first works are mainly history pieces. Probably in the spring of 1654, the young artist relocated to Amsterdam, prompting him to change subject matter because of strong competition from accomplished painters in the field. Metsu found a niche in producing small everyday genre works, modelled on the work of such painters as Gerard Dou (1613-1675) and Gerard Ter Borch (1617-1681). After marrying Isabella de Wolff, daughter of the painter Maria de Grebber (Pieter de Grebber's sister) in 1658, the technically talented Metsu gradually moved from low life scenes to depicting the interiors of the social élite, although never abandoning the former. His ability to work in different styles prompted one scholar to describe Metsu as 'a somewhat protean artist who absorbed the styles and themes of the leading genre painters of his generation and forged them into something distinctive.'[8] As a painter Metsu was very successful and was able to afford a house on the Prinsengracht, where he was still living in 1664. At the artist's death in 1667, he was living in the newly built, stately neighbourhood around the top of the Leidsestraat.

When describing the present work in the collection of the late collector August de Ridder, the renowned German art historian and museum director Wilhelm Bode states the following:
'Shortly before his death mister De Ridder added to these small pictures by Gabriël Metsu a masterpiece: a young lady, feeding her toy dog, a characteristic work from the later, most accomplished years of the artist. In its masterly rendering of texture, in the refinement of tone and delicacy of execution Metsu competes with the best of Ter Borch's group studies, but he surpasses them in the richer, more lively motif and the pleasurable atmosphere.'[9]
Bode's analysis is striking in it's simplicity and accurateness. A lady dressed in a grey jacket trimmed with white fur, and a beautiful orange of shot silk dress sits on a small chair in a semi-lit interior before a fire place on the right, while she holds a plate in her left hand.[10] She smiles at the toy Spaniel on her lap, which, tongue protruding, leans towards the plate as a maid servant places on to it the pancake that she has just cooked on the bright fire beside her. Indeed, Metsu seems to have painted the present work in his mature, accomplished years after his move to Amsterdam, around 1660-1661. As Adriaan Waiboer remarks, the work recalls Metsu's earlier *Old Couple with a Dog*, from c. 1656-1657. By the time of the present picture, however, Metsu changed his subject matter drastically, choosing instead the elegance of the élite as a favoured topic. This, of course, had everything to do with the artist's move to Amsterdam, the taste of the wealthy clientele and his subsequent position in the capital's competitive art market. Metsu's main example would have been, as Bode rightfully reminds his reader, the work of Gerard Ter Borch.[11] Although Ter Borch was living in Deventer since 1654, he had resided in Amsterdam before that, and must have stayed in close contact with patrons and art dealers alike.[12]

Ter Borch's refined élite interiors of the 1650s must have been readily available in Amsterdam for Metsu to study. Within the context of the present work some of Ter Borch's interiors depicting ladies and their maid servants come to mind, such as *Lady Sealing a Letter* from c. 1659 in a private collection in New York, *Lady Washing her Hands* datable to c. 1655 in Dresden, or the slightly earlier *Young Woman at her Toilet with a Servant*, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and with similar measurements.[13] The delicacy of Ter Borch's satin dresses is echoed by Metsu's deft rendering of the textile, and it might not be a coincidence that Metsu chose, for his lady's dress, exactly the same subtle orange that Ter Borch had used for the dress in the Metropolitan work. Metsu must have liked the colour, for he used it again in slightly later masterworks such as *A Man and a Woman at a Virginal* in the National Gallery in London, *Lady Reading a Letter* in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, and *The Doctor's Visit* in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg.[14] What's more, Metsu's servant seems to share a certain likeness with Ter Borch's maid, suggesting that he might have seen the latter's painting.

Ter Borch's depictions of ladies with their servants share a deliberate display of a limited sense of interaction between the characters, thus emphasizing their class distinction. This distance is most apparent in the Metropolitan work, in which the maid even faces her mistress' back, but also in the somewhat later *Lady Sealing a Letter* and *Lady Washing her Hands*. Notably, the dogs accompanying the ladies in these latter paintings are not participating at all in any of the action. In contrast, Metsu chose to make the dog the central point of focus for his scene. He might have taken as a specific point of departure for this idea the work of a famous colleague from his town of birth, Frans van Mieris' (1635-1681) famous *The Puppy*, of c. 1660, now in the Hermitage.[15] Van Mieris' picture shows a woman who seems to feed or train a similar toy Spaniel, while a maid in the background observes the proceedings. Van Mieris created an extremely charming image, but refrains from breaking the social barrier within the painting, as Metsu does. Metsu converted the feeding of the dog into a link between lady and servant, facilitating an intimate, harmonious activity in which both women could enjoyably partake, thus momentarily transcending class distinction. In doing so, Metsu stretched the boundaries of the genre, both socially and in its attractive appeal. It is exactly this unprecedented, carefree joy that gives the painting its light-hearted tenderness (a word already used for it in Dutch eighteenth century descriptions of the work)[16], which surpasses the framework set out by Ter Borch, and this is exactly what Bode underlined in his comment on the work.

1 I wish to thank Adriaan Waiboer, who was kind enough to share his knowledge and insights on the present work with me.
2 Sale not mentioned in Lugt; GPI, Sale Contents, BBF no. F-52. See B. Fredericksen, B.B. Peronnet et al., *Repertoire des tableaux vendus en France au XIXe siècle: Volume 1: 1801-1810*, 2 vols., Los Angeles 1998–, 1, p. 686.
3 See Smith 1829-1842, 4 (1833), p. 109, no. 115.
4 Hofstede de Groot 1907, no. 104.
5 Information on the back of a photograph at the RKD lists the painting as being for sale at art dealer Robert Schmidt, Paris, in July 1988 (no. A. 3848). The owner may have consigned the painting with Schmidt, but it did not sell.
6 GPI, Sale Contents, BBF no. Br-14743.
7 For a complete survey on Metsu's life, see A. Waiboer, 'Gabriël Metsu : Zijn leven, werk en reputatie', in A. Waiboer et al., *Gabriël Metsu*, exh. cat. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Washington, National Gallery of Art 2010/2011, pp. 1-27. See further J. Briels, *Vlaamse schilders en de dageraad van Hollands Gouden Eeuw*, Antwerp 1997, p. 359.
8 W. Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth Century Genre Painting : Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution*, London/New Haven 2004, p. 180.
9 Bode 1913, p. 8: 'Zu diesen beiden kleinern Bildern von Gabriel Metsu hatte Herr de Ridder nicht lange vor seinem noch ein Meisterwerk hinzuerworben; eine junge Dame, ihr Hündschen fütterend, ein charakteristiches Werk aus der späteren, vollendesten Zeit des Künstlers. In meisterhafter Wiedergabe des Stofflichen, in Feinheit des Tons und Delikatesse der Ausführung wetteifert Metsu in Solchen Bilder, deren leider nur wenige Dutzend erhalten sind, mit Terborchs besten Gesellschaftsstüden, aber er übertrifft sie durch das reichere, lebendigere Motiv und durch die behagliche Stimmung.'
10 The lady seems to be the same model as the woman depicted in *Young Woman Reading a Letter*, signed *G Metsu*, oil on panel, 25.5 x 21 cm., private collection (1974). See Robinson 1974, p. 170, fig. 118.
11 See on Metsu's appropriation of Ter Borch's themes A. Waiboer, in: Dublin/Amsterdam/Washington 2010/2011, pp. 13-16.
12 Franits 2004, p. 100. This is, for instance, indicated by the listing of two of his paintings in the 1657 inventory of the prominent Amsterdam art dealer Johannes de Renialme. See S.J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert Ter Borch*, 2 vols., The Hague 1959-1960, 2, p. 25, 17 June 1657.
13 C. 1659, oil on canvas, 56.5 x 43.8 cm., New York, private collection; c. 1655, oil on panel, 53 x 43 cm., Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister; c. 1651, oil on panel, 47.6 x 34.6 cm., New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, donation J. Pierpont Morgan (1917). See A.K. Wheelock, Jr. et al., *Gerard ter Borch*, exh. cat. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Detroit, Detroit Institute of Art 2004/2005, cat. nos. 17 (*Young Woman at her Toilet with a Servant*, and p. 86 fig. 3, *Lady Washing her Hands*), 33 (*Lady Sealing a Letter*).
14 C. 1664-1666, oil on panel, 38.4 x 32.2 cm., London, National Gallery, inv. no NG 839; ca. 1664-1666, oil on panel, 52.5 x 42.2 cm., Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland, Beit collection, inv. no. 4537; c. 1664-1667, oil on canvas, 61 x 48 cm., St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum. See Dublin/Amsterdam/Washington 2010/2011, p. 34, fig. 28, p. 39, fig. 32, p. 109, fig. 77.
15 C. 1660, oil on panel, 51.5 x 40 cm., St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum. See Q. Buvelot et al., *Frans van Mieris 1635-1681*, exh. cat. The Hague, Mauritshuis, Washington, National Gallery of Art 2005/2006, cat. no. 21. As was noted by Waiboer 2007, p. 175, it is not clear who was first, but it can't be a coincidence that these two pictures were created in the same period.
16 The 1780 sale catalogue of the Strantwijk collection uses the word 'smeltent', melting, while the 1785 sale catalogue describes the work as 'teder, uitvoerig en delicaat behandelt', tender, elaborate and delicately treated. See provenance.

cat. no. 11

Joos de Momper the Younger
1564 – Antwerp – 1635

A Winter Landscape with a Bird Trap and a View of Antwerp

Oil on panel
47 x 63 cm.

Provenance:
France, private collection

Joos de Momper, the son of the Antwerp artist and art dealer Bartolomeus de Momper (1535-after 1597), was the most talented member of a large family of artists. Having been trained by his father, Joos entered the Guild of St. Luke as a master in 1581. During the 1680s, he is assumed to have made a trip to Italy. Whatever the case, the artist was back in Antwerp by September 1590, when he married Elisabeth Gobyn. Joos's works were highly valued in his own lifetime. His work was the subject of Karel van Mander's praise in 1604, and such contemporary painters as Frans Francken the Younger (1581-1642) and Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568-1625), included his landscapes in their paintings of collector's cabinets. Working in the tradition of late Mannerist landscape painting, de Momper characteristically used aerial perspective to give a sense of depth to his landscapes.

For the present painting, Joos de Momper drew his inspiration from the wooded countryside surrounding Antwerp.[1] According to Ertz, author of the monograph on De Momper, the painting can be dated to the end of the first decade of the seventeenth century, which is early in the artist's career and one of his first winter landscapes. The view depicted here shows an extensive snow-covered landscape, with a panoramic view of Antwerp Cathedral and other town buildings as well as church spires, seen from across the Scheldt River, painted in pale grey tones to convey their distance. In the left foreground a *repoussoir* is formed by an earthy hillock on which a path, cleared of snow, leads to a little chapel. With its dark tones and bare trees, silhouetted against the wintry sky and spanning the height of the painting, this feature of the landscape dominates the painting, leading the viewer's eye to the bird trap attached by a cord to the cottage in the mid-ground, to the hamlet in the middle distance and the distant view beyond. The artist focuses on the forlorn atmosphere of a wintry day in the painting. In contrast to all of his other winter landscapes, the present work is not populated. However, the presence of footsteps in the snow around the shutter (serving as the bird trap), which lead towards the cottage from where smoke billows from the chimney, suggests recent activity.

The theme of the bird trap derives from De Momper's painter colleague and best friend, Jan Brueghel the Elder, although it was formerly presumed to have been first treated by the latter's father, Pieter Brueghel the Elder (c. 1520-1569).[2] The first winter landscape by Jan Brueghel the Elder with the motif of a bird trap is datable to *circa* 1600, and the theme was often repeated until about 1625, the year of Jan Brueghel the Elder's death. The latter painted approximately 200 landscapes in collaboration with Joos de Momper, including 28 winter landscapes.[3] These were all executed in the years between *circa* 1608 and 1625.

An example of a winter landscape by De Momper in which Brueghel painted numerous figures and horse-drawn wagons is a *Winter Landscape with the Antwerp Cathedral* of *circa* 1620.[4] In this painting the focus is on the many figures in action, while in the distance the beautiful silhouette of Antwerp can be seen. Quite probably Brueghel was supposed to add some staffage in the present painting as well, but, on the other hand, the absence of figures contributes to the sense of wintry desolation, and perhaps De Momper considered it to be perfect and complete as it was.[5]

WB

1 We are grateful to Dr. Klaus Ertz for confirming the attribution to the artist following his first hand inspection on 4 October 2011. The written certificate by Ertz is available.
2 K. Ertz, C. Nitze-Ertz, *Jan Brueghel der Ältere (1568-1625) : kritischer Katalog der Gemälde*, 4 vols., Lingen 2008-2010, 4, pp. 1634-1641.
3 Ertz 2008-2010. The Landscapes by Brueghel/De Momper are catalogued under cat. nos. 604-810.
4 Ertz 2008-2010, p. 1595, cat. no. 780, oil on panel, 44.2 x 74.7 cm.
5 Cf. a drawing by Joos de Momper with a similar distant view of Antwerp without figures, pen and brown ink on paper, 277 x 375 mm., Essen, Kunsthandel Glass, 1998. Photo RKD.



cat. no. 12

Adriaen van Ostade
1610 – Haarlem – 1685

A Man Seated by a Table

Signed on the wall *Av Ostade*
Oil on panel
18 x 14.3 cm.

Provenance:
London, with Horace Buttery
A.E. Digby Collection, 1951
Helsinki, Zachariassen collection

According to Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719), the Haarlem painter and etcher Adriaen van Ostade became a pupil of Frans Hals (1582-1666), together with Adriaen Brouwer (1605-1638). It was Brouwer, however, who exerted the most decisive influence on the evolution of Adriaen van Ostade's portrayal of peasant life. In 1634, Van Ostade entered the Guild of St. Luke in Haarlem, where he was elected a *hoofdman* (leader) in 1647 and 1661, and *deken* (dean) in 1662.

Van Ostade's interior spaces and the figures within them blend within an atmospheric treatment of light. His carousing peasants, dressed in colourful clothing, are depicted smoking, drinking, gambling, dancing, and amorous, often in barn interiors. It is Bernhard Schnackenburg's view that our painting can be dated to 1655-1665, the middle period of the artist's career. It was at the end of the 1650s that van Ostade's treatment of paint became smoother and more delicate, as is evident in the present painting, while his works of the early 1660s are characterised by a fully-fledged 'Fine' painting technique as practised by the group of artists from Leiden, known as the *Fijnschilders*, or 'fine painters'.

In the present painting a peasant in a beautiful blue coat stands out powerfully against the tonal interior setting. The custom of smoking tobacco, still a novelty in Van Ostade's time, elicited diverse responses from seventeenth century Dutchmen. It is uncertain whether paintings of this kind were intended to convey an underlying message; although some ascribed medicinal properties to the weed and composed songs and poems praising its powers, most condemned it as a harmful intoxicant, and equated smoking with excessive drinking. Images of smokers held various associations, such as the sense of smell in images representing the Five Senses. Dissipating smoke juxtaposed with a human figure also signified as a *memento mori*, and pictures of lowlife types in tobacco dens, like the closely related tavern scenes with drinkers, satirised the immoderate pursuit of sensual gratification.[1]

The present painting can be stylistically related to the *Old Man Smoking a Pipe* (fig. 1).

WB



Fig. 1 Adriaen van Ostade, *Old Man Smoking a Pipe*, signed lower right, oil on panel, 23 x 18.5 cm., present whereabouts unknown

1 W. Robinson, in : P. Sutton et al., *Masters of Seventeenth Century Dutch Genre Painting*, exh. cat. Philadelphia, Berlin, London 1984, p. 164.



cat. no. 13

Hendrick Gerritsz Pot
c. 1580 – Amsterdam – 1657

Portrait of a Young Man

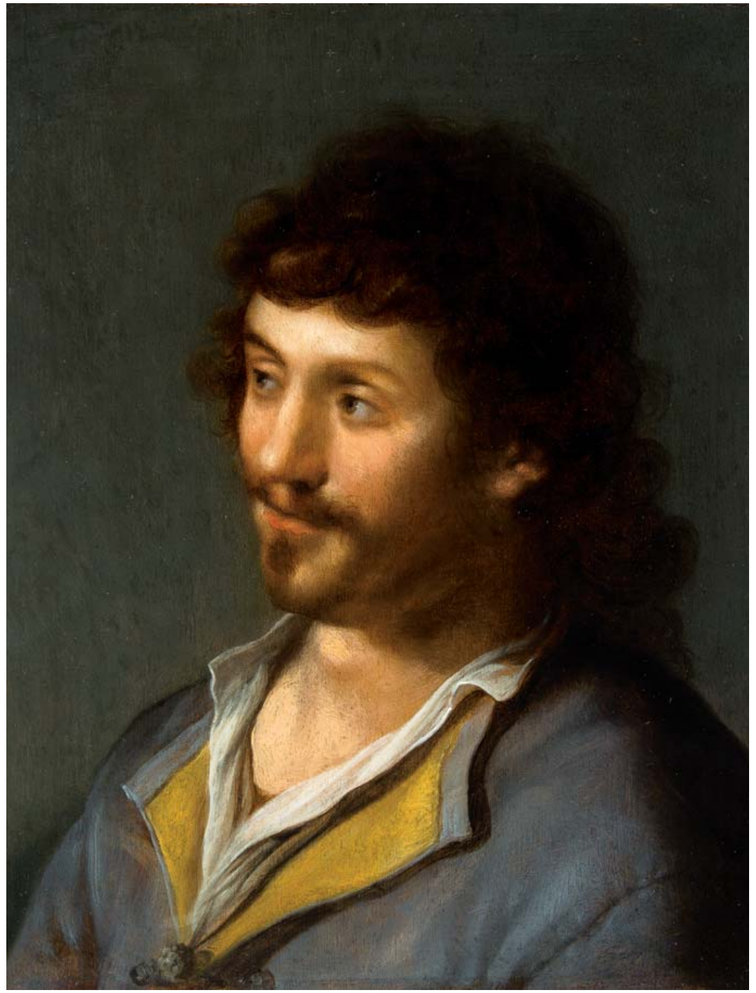
Signed (apocryphally?) on the back *HPot*
Oil on panel
34 x 26.5 cm.

Provenance:
Germany, private collection

Although Hendrick Gerritsz Pot's date of baptism is unknown and his age is not alluded to in any document, it is thought that he was probably born in Amsterdam in around 1580, to parents whose names are unknown.[1] The artist is recorded as being in Haarlem from 1606, when he was registered as a member of the calivermen as 'Hendrick Gerritsz, painter.' He was possibly trained under Karel van Mander (1548-1606), since his anonymous biographer refers to 'Hendrick Gerritsz East-Indian' as his pupil, a nickname by which Pot was also known. Pot must have joined the Reformed Church in Amsterdam at some point, since he registered in Haarlem with a certificate from his birth place in 1609. He became warden of the Guild of St. Luke in the city in 1626, 1631, 1634 and 1648, and dean in 1635. On 31 October 1610 Hendrick, then living on the Korte Begijnestraat, posted the banns of his marriage to Janneken Theunisdr de Ram from de Zijlstraat. Their three children were all buried three years later. In 1632 Pot was employed by the court of Charles I, whose portrait he painted in that year (Paris, Louvre). He also painted the group portrait of Charles I, Henrietta Maria and Charles Prince of Wales (London, Buckingham Palace, Royal Collection). He was commemorated for this by Schrevelius in his *Harlemias* of 1648 as an 'eminent painter, a man with a pleasant manner, who had the good fortune of portraying His Serene Highness the king of Great Britain and his consort as well as other gentlemen and princes of that court.' Janneken bore him a daughter in England, in November of 1632. The family was back in Haarlem by the following year, when the artist was portrayed as a lieutenant in Frans Hals *Officers and Sub-Alterns of the Calivermen's Civic Guard* of c. 1633, now in the Frans Hals Museum.

During Pot's long period in Haarlem, he is known to have received several public commissions. In 1620, one of two paintings of *The Glorification of Prince Willem I* was bought for the impressive amount of 450 guilders by the city, to be hung in the dining hall of the Prinsenhof. Pot was evidently successful as a painter, investing 2000 guilders at 5 per cent interest in Haarlem city funds on 4 May 1628, a considerable sum at the time. He was ranked as one of the most praiseworthy Haarlem artists by the minister Samuel Ampzing in the same year: 'And then Hendrick Pot too should rightfully wear his crown. It is a miracle what he creates in these times with his fine hand [...]'. Shortly after 1648, Hendrick left to settle in his city of birth, Amsterdam, where he became a citizen on 7 June 1650. According to Houbraken, Willem Kalf (1619-1683) was his pupil there. At the time of his death, Pot was renting rooms from his nephew in Amsterdam, Pieter Goos (c. 1616-1675). His death inventory records five incomplete paintings by his hand, including a *tronie*, a history painting, and a portrait,[2] confirming that the artist worked right up until the time of his death. The artist is generally known for his production of small portraits, as well as biblical subjects, allegories and genre subjects in the style of Dirck Hals (1591-1656).

The present painting is an example of a *tronie*, an expressive head study taken from the life. The work depicts a bust-length, three-quarter view of a young man against a dark grey background, his face tilted towards the picture plane, while looking towards his right. Lit from the left, the front of his face and top of his chest are bathed in light, whereas his left cheek and side of his neck remain in shadow. An open white shirt collar is seen beneath his blue jacket, lined in yellow. In terms of painterly execution, lighting, composition and size, the present work – though surely representing another model – can be securely related to three signed works by Pot traditionally said to depict the famous Dutch poet Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679), although there is no ground whatsoever for this identification. One of them, known today as *Portrait of a Man Dressed as a Shepherd* in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum, is generally dated c. 1630 to c. 1645.[3] Both the Lilian painting and the Rijksmuseum work are strikingly painterly. The latter is similarly lit from the left, and the presumed poet's



head, in nearly complete profile, is in a comparable attitude, but his head this time is tilted away from the picture plane. Both sitters are similarly shaded on the left cheek and side of the neck, and both their illuminated faces contrast against the sombre, monochromatic background. Both models share, too, affinities in expression and physical attributes, each having long, curling locks of hair and a small beard, and each wearing a pensive air as they fix their gaze on some unknown object, while a smile plays about their lips.

Still, the Rijksmuseum figure, rendered three-quarter length, fits differently within the picture plain. Compositionally more alike are the two other 'Vondel' portraits, half-length busts like the present work, again of a very similar format. The first of them was in once in the Bekkers collection, Wassenaar (fig. 1). The physiognomy of this portrait clearly relates it to the Rijksmuseum *Shepherd*, while the lighting, the angle of the tilted head and specifically the sitter's gaze are identical to that of the Lilian work. The third work, with J.F. Minken, London in 1954, once more features similar characteristics of lighting and positioning of the figure, yet doesn't resemble the distinctive features of the model in the 'Vondel' portraits discussed above.[4]

Noteworthy in all three 'Vondel' portraits and the Lilian work alike are the corresponding highlights on the noses of the sitters, the catch lights in their eyes, and the similar treatment of the curling hair and beard, which appears to be drawn on with the brush in fine lines; furthermore, paint strokes are applied horizontally across the necks of all sitters in a manner which is markedly similar. In all four works the model wears the same type of open-necked white shirt, showing the upper part of the bared chest. Looking closely, one can see that the folds of the translucent white material have been painted in the same, loose manner. Further, the collar of each sitter shares a specific feature, typical for Pot, in common, in that it is clearly outlined with a thin line of white pigment to define its edge. In view of these striking affinities, one could propose that the Lilian *tronie* could also be dated to between about 1630 and 1645.

Pot is known to have made numerous *tronies*, all of them on panel, and several in the format of the present work, which the artist clearly favoured, given the at least eleven works corresponding closely in size found after a brief survey.[5] There is some documentation on the artist's *tronie* production during his lifetime. In 1636, 'two tronies' (*twee tronyen* [two heads]) were valued at a worthy 60 guilders for the two. Ot the



Fig. 1 Hendrick Gerritsz Pot, *So-called Portrait of The Poet Joost van den Vondel*, monogr. *HP*, oil on panel, 32 x 24 cm., Wassenaar, collection Bekkers (1974?)

occasion of returning – as a former dean – the Guild box and four coats of arms on 30 July 1637, Pot is recorded as having presented *een troonj* to the Haarlem guild of St Luke.[6] And, as mentioned earlier, Pot's death inventory records an unfinished *tronijtje*, indicating he was producing them until his death.[7] Post dating the artist's death, numerous paintings of head studies or *tronies* are recorded in death inventories listing the estates of Haarlem residents: a *twee tronien* or double head study was recorded in the inventory of Adrien Crommelingh, living in the Barteljorisstraat, on 4 February 1662; a *tronie* belonging to Josina van Nesten and Claes Claesz Maenbeeck is mentioned in an inventory dated 4 September 1662; a *mannetie* (male figure), belonging to Pieter van den Hove and Maria Schatter, in an inventory of 30 November 1666; and another *troonij* belonging to the Crommelingh family (possibly the same one as in 1662), left by the eponymous Joost to Jacomina, recorded in 22 October 1682.[8] Although it is impossible to further determine such rather undefined sources, these works were no doubt comparable to the *tronies* discussed here.

NB/JH

1 For an extensive, up-to-date biography on the artist, see I. Van Thiel-Stroman, in: N. Köhler et al. (ed.), *Painting in Haarlem 1500-1850 : The collection of the Frans Hals Museum*, Ghent 2006, pp. 273-276.
2 See The Montias Database (www.frick.org), death inventory Hendrick Gerritsz Pot, inv. no. 418.
3 Monogr. *HP*, oil on panel, 33.3 x 26.1 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-2135.
4 So-called *Portrait of The Poet Joost van den Vondel*, monogr. *HP*, oil on panel, 37 x 30 cm., London, collection J.F. Minken (1954).
5 Listed are works with a maximum total difference in length and width combined of 5 cm. In addition to the present work and the already mentioned Rijksmuseum *Shepherd* and the 'Vondel' portrait once in the Bekkers collection, these are: *Portrait of a Young woman with Golden Coins*, monogr. *HP*., oil on panel, 33 x 27 cm., St. Petersburg, Hermitage, inv. no. 2868; *Portrait of a* Woman, oil on panel, 33 x 27 cm., sale Amsterdam, Frederik Muller, 2-5 december 1941, lot 405; *Young Woman in Arcadian Dress*, monogr. *HP*, oil on panel, 33.4 x 26.8 cm., Amsterdam, Salomon Lilian; *Young Woman in Arcadian Dress*, monogr. *HP*, oil on panel, 33.5 x 27 cm., Amsterdam, art trade M. Wolff (1938); *Young Woman Holding a Flower*, oil on panel, 33.5 x 27.5 cm., Amsterdam, ICN, inv.no. NK2910 (on loan The Hague, Galerij Willem V, inv. no. 83); *David Carrying a Sword*, monogr. *HP* on the sword, oil on panel, 34 x 26.5 cm., collection William Berry, Lord Camrose (1928); *Portrait of an Unknown Woman*, oil on panel, 35 x 28 cm., Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, inv. no. H659; *Portrait of a Man*, monogr. *HP*, oil on panel, 36 x 29.5 cm., Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland, inv. no. 443; *Young shepherd with Garland and Staff*, oil on panel, 36.5 x 28.5 cm., sale Amsterdam, Sotheby's Mak van der Waay, 15 November 1976, lot 43
6 Van Thiel-Stroman, in: N. Köhler et al. 2006, p. 174. With reference to H. Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem*, 2 vols., Alphen aan den Rijn 1980, I, p. 259.
7 See note 2.
8 See The Getty Provenance Index Databases (www.getty.edu.org), Archival Inventories, archival inv. N-3676 (Crommelingh), p. 5, Item 23; arch. inv. N-2477 (Nesten), p. 3, item 28; arch. inv. N-3632 (Hove), p. 3, item 29; arch. inv. N-3104 (Crommelingh), p. 11, item 26.

cat. no. 14

Jan Steen
1626 – Leiden – 1679

The Marriage of Tobias and Sara

Signed lower left *JSteen* (JS interlaced)
Oil on canvas
80 x 103.2 cm.

Provenance:
Possibly Amsterdam, 18 April 1676, Barent van Lin delivering a picture of this subject to the notary Dispontijn in payment of a dept (Hofstede de Groot 1907, no. 25a)
Possibly Amsterdam, anonymous sale 6 March 1708 (fl. 205,-) (according to Kirschenbaum 1977 and Braun 1980)[1]
Dresden, collection Count Heinrich von Bruhl (1700-1763)
Paris, collection Meffre ainé
Valenciennes, Galerie Piérard (purchased from Meffre ainé for 1400 fr.)
Sale Paris, Piérard, 20/21 March 1860, lot 78
Paris, collection Levesque
Sale Paris, Drouot, 27/28 March 1914, lot 15 (Kirschenbaum 1977, erroneously as lot 13)
Berlin, collection Czempin
Berlin, Pictura GmbH
Berlin, Haberstock gallery (purchased April 1928 from Pictura GmbH)
Niendorf (near Lübeck), collection Buchenau, 1930's
Barcelona, collection Buchenau (Kirschenbaum 1977: through descent to the grandson; Braun 1980: through Buchenau's son-in-law, 1958)
Kettwig, collection Girardet, 1959-1963
London, Duits gallery, 1965 (acquired from Girardet)
London, private collection



Literature:
Recueil d'estampes gravées d'après les tableaux de la galerie et du cabinet de S.E. Mr. le Comte de Brühl: 1. partie contenant 50 pièces, Dresden 1754, no. 62[2]
M. Huber, *Notices générales des graveurs divisés par nations, et des peintres rangés par écoles : précédées de l'histoire de la gravure et de la peinture*, Dresden, Leipzig 1787, p. 536
J. Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French Painters*, 9 vols., London 1829-1842, IV (1833), no. 155; IX (Supplement, 1842), under no. 73
T. van Westrheene, *Jan Steen: Étude sur l'art en Hollande*, The Hague 1856, under no. 167
C. Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century: based on the Work of John Smith*, 10 vols., London 1907-1928, I (1907), p. 15, possibly no. 25a; possibly no. 25b (according to Kirschenbaum 1977 and Braun 1980); p. 122, twice under no. 457
C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Jan Steen and his Master Nicolaes Knüpfers', in: *Art in America and Elsewhere* XVI (1928), pp. 249-253, p. 253
E. Trautscholdt, in: U. Thieme, F. Becker, *Algemeines Lexicon der bildenden Künstler* XXXI (1937), pp. 509-515
'The Marriage of Tobias and Sara by Jan Steen', in: *Duits Quarterly* 7 (Spring 1965), pp. 4-9 N.H. Domela Nieuwenhuis et al., *Jan Steen*, exh. Cat. The Hague, Royal Picture Gallery, The Mauritshuis 1958-1959, under cat. no. 44
B.D. Kirschenbaum, *The Religious and Historical Paintings of Jan Steen*, Oxford 1977, pp. 123, 209, cat. no. 25b, fig. 77, under cat no. 2a/457
K. Braun, *Alle tot nu toe bekende schilderijen van Jan Steen*, Rotterdam 1980, p. 131, no. 309, under cat. no. 281, no. I
O. Ydema, *Carpets and their Datings in Netherlandish Paintings 1540-1700*, Zutphen 1991, p. 187, cat. 837
H.P. Chapman et al., *Jan Steen: schilder en verteller*, exh. cat. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum 1996-1997, under cat. nos 32 and 45, pp. 205, n. 4, 247, n. 7

Exhibited:
Bremen, Kunsthalle 1931

Other Versions:
Jan Steen, *The Marriage of Tobias and Sara*, c. 1667/68, oil on canvas, 131 x 172 cm., signed lower left *JSteen* (JS interlaced), Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Brunswick

Engraved:
Jean Charles Baquoy after Jan Steen, *The Marriage Contract*, etching and engraving, 309 x 371 mm., inscribed in the lower margin: '*Le contract de mariage / d'Après le Tableau Original de Jean Steen, Peint sur Toile, qui se trouve dans la Galerie de S.E.M. le Premier Ministre Compte de Bruhl à Dresde large de 3. pieds 9. Pousse haut de 2. Pieds 10. Pousse*', included in Dresden 1754, no. 62[3]



Detail of cat. no. 14

Jan Steen, son of the Catholic beer brewer Havick Jansz Steen (1602-1670) and his wife Elisabeth Capiteyn (†1669)[4], was born in Leiden in 1626. The relative prosperity of his family allowed Steen to attend Latin school, and in 1646, at the age of twenty, he enrolled in Leiden University. However, Steen left the university two years later, without a degree, to become a master of the Leiden guild of Saint Luke, suggesting that he had been trained as a painter before that time. According to Steen's earliest biographer, Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719), the artist studied with Jan van Goyen (1596-1656) in The Hague. Jacob Campo Weyerman (1677-1747) adds that the painters Nicolaes Knüpfer (1603-1655) working in Utrecht, and Adriaen van Ostade (1610-1684) in Haarlem, were his teachers respectively. Since Steen married Van Goyen's daughter Margriet in 1649 – after becoming a master painter – it seems likely that he was not merely a pupil whilst in Van Goyen's workshop, but was rather the older master's assistant. Steen, although paying his yearly contribution to the Leiden guild of Saint Luke, remained in The Hague for at least six years. In 1654 he moved to Delft, where his father leased a brewery for him. After 1657, however, Steen seems to have left the brewery business and headed back to Leiden, where he made his contributions to the local guild in 1658. That same year he left town, probably to nearby Warmond, where he is documented as living in 1660. This sojourn was again short-lived, for in August 1660 a son Havick was baptised in Haarlem, where Steen joined the guild in 1661. The following years turned out to be his most productive. After the death of his wife Margriet in 1669, Steen moved back permanently to his native Leiden in 1670. His function as foreman and dean of the guild testifies to his privileged status in the last decade of his life.

The present painting depicts an episode from the apocryphal Old Testament book of Tobit, the signing of the marriage contract between Sara and Tobias (Tobit 7, 12-13). Tobias was travelling with the Archangel Raphael, who advised him to visit the house of his father's cousin Raguel and his wife Edna, and to ask for the hand of their wise and extraordinarily beautiful daughter, Sara. As Tobias fearfully replies that Sara has been married seven times already, and that every husband died during the wedding night because of an evil spirit protecting Sara's chastity, Raphael bids him not to worry, for he knows a way to exorcise the demon, and Tobias puts his trust in the angel. Tobias is welcomed enthusiastically in his uncle's house, and before dinner asks Raguel for the hand of his daughter. The old man agrees, calls Sara and Edna, and asks for writing materials. After the marriage contract is drawn up, the company enjoys the wedding feast together.



Fig. 1 Jan Steen, *The Marriage of Tobias and Sara*, ca. 1667/68, oil on canvas, 131 x 172 cm., signed lower left *JSteen* (JS in ligature), Brunswick, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum.

Steen has depicted the story quite literally.[5] Beneath a so-called marriage-crown, a garland of foliage and flowers suspended from the ceiling, the bride and groom form the central couple; Sara looks up towards Tobias, while he places his hand over his heart in a gesture of piety. Behind them stands Raphael, recognisable by his partially visible left wing, making a gesture of blessing. To their right a smiling servant looks over his shoulder at the couple, as he fills a pewter flagon with wine from a barrel. Left of the newlyweds the old Raguel and Edna sit at a table, while a notary draws up the contract. Before the table, in the foreground, stands a beautiful, ornate stool, on which, as a token of love, lies a rose. In the left background several figures seem to be occupied with the decoration of the room. To the right another room is visible behind a curtain, where dinner is being prepared. Steen, as has been often noted, probably found inspiration for the rare subject in the work of Dutch statesman and poet Jacob Cats (1577-1660), whose poem *Houwelick* ('Marriage') is illustrated by woodcuts after designs by Adriaen van de Venne (1589-1662). The print embellishing the title page of the section 'Bruyt' ('Bride') depicts the signing of a marriage contract, and would undoubtedly have been known to Steen. [6]

The story of Tobias and Sara was clearly favoured by Steen and his clientele. A rendering of the marriage contract episode in a composition

reminiscent, yet clearly different from that of the work discussed here, is in the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, while the couple's actual wedding night is depicted in a painting now in the Bredius Museum, The Hague.[7] It is, however, specifically the present composition of which several versions are known, differing in detail and yet all based on the same pictorial design. A famous, larger variant of the picture discussed here, in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Brunswick (fig. 1),[8] was long believed to bear the date 1667, which in actual fact it lacks. It was once in the collection of Steen's aforementioned biographer Arnold Houbraken, who described the work as simply depicting the signing of a marriage contract, a title it held until 1926, when the actual biblical subject was recognised.[9] In addition, a somewhat confusing number of copies and other versions, probably with considerable overlap, has been listed by the early compilers of Steen's oeuvre John Smith (1833, 1842), Tobias van Westrheene (1856) and Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (1907). None of these works can presently be located. Remarkably, a print datable to between 1754 and 1763 by the Parisian printmaker, Jean Charles Baquoy (1721-1777), after an autograph Steen painting depicting a *Marriage*



Fig. 2 Jean Charles Baquoy after Jan Steen, *The Marriage Contract*, etching and engraving on paper, 309 x 371 mm., in: *Recueil d'estampes gravées d'après les tableaux de la galerie et du cabinet de S.E. Mr. le Comte de Brühl: 1. partie contenant 50 pièces*, Dresden 1754, no. 62, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Library, no. 13 A 10

Contract – which was at that time in the collection of the extremely influential and wealthy Heinrich Count von Bruhl (1700-1763) in Dresden – is mentioned by all three authors (fig. 2). However, all three mentioned it in a rather inaccurate fashion, giving either incorrect measurements, spelling Baquoy's name wrongly or suggesting erroneously that the print was made after a copy of the Brunswick picture. Their misconceptions were subsequently perpetuated for some 150 years, thus obscuring the print's value for art history.[10] In any case, the print has never been taken into consideration before, yet the design turns out to be exactly identical to the composition of the present work, in such a way that one can fairly conclude that it was made after the present painting which was therefore the one in Von Bruhl's famous collection, containing works by such masters as Titian (c. 1485/90-1576), Rubens (1577-1640), Rembrandt (1606-1669) and Poussin (1594-1665).[11] All the figures in the print (except for Raphael, who is missing[12]) are rendered in the same way, in the same positions, and even the branches on the ground match those on the painting. In addition, the measurements of the painting, given in the lower margin of the engraving, exactly match those of the present work once calculated with the Dresden foot ('*large de 3. pieds 9. Pousse haut de 2. Pieds 10. Pousse*', equivalent to 80.2 x 106.1 cm.).[13]

All of Steen's versions of the story of Tobias and Sara belong to the same period of his career, the years immediately before and after the final move to Leiden. The Bredius *Wedding Night*, initially thought to belong to an earlier period due to its strong resemblance to a work of the same subject dated 1654 by Steen's teacher, Nicolaes Knüpfer, is nowadays considered to have been painted in *circa* 1668. Whereas the San Francisco work is generally interpreted as the latest version of the three autograph *Marriages*, datable to c. 1671-1673[14], the Brunswick and Lilian works seem to be datable a few years earlier, to around 1667-1668. However, the question as to whether the larger Brunswick or the present Lilian canvas is the prime version has not so far been answered conclusively. Apart from its presence in the volumes compiled by Smith and Westrheene, to which it has not been linked until now, the present Lilian work was first mentioned in 1907 by Hofstede de Groot, who knew the work solely from the (un-illustrated) 1860 Piérard sale catalogue and therefore, at that point, assessed it as a copy after the famous Brunswick picture. In 1928 the same author, when discussing the Bredius painting, notes the similarities with the Brunswick and Lilian works, now calling the latter a 'small version [...] which, in point of date, is undoubtedly close to the Brunswick painting.' Kirschenbaum notes that the Lilian work was



Fig. 3 Jan Steen, *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia*, 1671, oil on canvas, 134.6 x 172.7 cm., New York, private collection, detail

once accompanied by certificates of authenticity by the art historians Eduard Plietsch and Walther Bernt, dating from 1958. In these certificates both Plietsch and Bernt state that the Lilian work is an earlier version of the Brunswick painting. Unfortunately these certificates are lost. By 1965 the Lilian work was in the Duits gallery in London, where it was presented as an autograph repetition of the Brunswick work. Kirschenbaum agrees with this sequencing, arguing that the work shares elements with both the Brunswick (the composition) and San Francisco (for instance the luscious use of foliage in the house) paintings, thus drawing from one while anticipating the other. Finally, Braun also lists the Lilian work as an autograph repetition.

Bernt's and Plietsch's lines of thought in support of the present work as the prime version can no longer be traced. Some points in support of their opinion are nonetheless discussed here. It seems that the only scholar presenting an actual argument in favour of the Brunswick work as the earlier version is Kirschenbaum. In general, however, the considerations underlying the identification of the Brunswick work as the prime version seem to be based on that picture's pre-eminent reputation over the present work, mainly due to its impressive provenance, size, and traditional place in the literature. One finds comparable cases in Steen's oeuvre, of larger, famous paintings that turn out to be repetitions of smaller works.[15] Clearly similar in artistic conception, the Brunswick and Lilian works display some marked differences in their individual composition. In the Lilian work, Steen depicts his figures with more space surrounding them, especially in the foreground, whereas in the larger Brunswick painting the figures are brought to the front.[16] One of the group of three figures standing behind the table in the Lilian work is missing in the left background of the Brunswick work, while a painting of the *Creation of Eve* is added above them in the latter; the foliage so prominently present in the picture discussed here is left out altogether in the Brunswick painting. The rose on the stool has disappeared as well. Further, the Brunswick view towards the dining room in the right background has opened up completely.

Still, these differences do not imperatively put forward one of the two as the earlier version. Some other differences, however, seem to do so more clearly. Firstly, as has been remarked above, Steen based himself on the only pictorial example of the theme of the signing of the marriage contract in Dutch art prior to his own works, Adriaen van de Venne's design used in Cats' *Houwelick*. As we can see, Van de Venne depicts the bride and groom before a wedding crown, suspended from the ceiling to their right. The Lilan work also displays the couple before a leafy marriage crown, while in the Brunswick version the crown is replaced by a mirror. Secondly, the beautiful drapery Tobias is wearing in the present work is a piece of Indian Sitsen cloth. Steen must have been very fond of this specific cloth, for he used it as a studio prop, depicting it in at least six of his most important history paintings from the period, such as the famous *Anthony and Cleopatra* in the Binnenhof, The Hague, *The Imprisoning of Samson* in the Walraff-Richartz Museum, Cologne, the San Francisco version of *The Wedding of Tobias and Sara* and *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia* in a New York private collection (fig. 3).[17] All these works are sole, prime versions. Yet in the Brunswick version the cloth is simply rendered as black velvet. To a lesser extent the same goes for the tablecloth on the Lilian painting, which one also finds in several important works from the period.[18] Thirdly, the angel Raphael is depicted with a wing in the Lilian work, thus pointing to the work's biblical



Detail of cat. no. 14

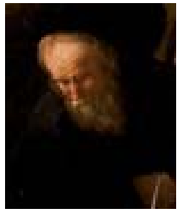


Fig. 4 Jan Steen, *The Marriage of Tobias and Sara*, signed lower left *JSteen*, oil on canvas, 80 x 103.2 cm., Amsterdam, Salomon Lilian, detail

character. The same goes for the version in San Francisco, where Raphael is depicted with wings as well. Yet in the Brunswick painting, the angel's wings are left out. Rather than to interpret this as a gradual sequence starting from the Brunswick, via the Lilian work to San Francisco (as Kirschenbaum asserted with regards to the foliage), it is the Brunswick work that should be seen as a deviation from the original rendering. Fourthly, the dog in the right corner is to be found in exactly the same position in the Brunswick canvas. But whereas in the Lilian work it is sniffing the petal in front of him, it is not sniffing anything in the Brunswick work, indicating that the motif was repeated without its former context. Finally, the figure of Sara's father Raguel (fig. 4) is no doubt based on an etching by Johannes van Vliet in collaboration with Rembrandt (fig. 5) after Rembrandt's painting of an *Old Man*.[19] That this is not a mere coincidence is indicated by the fact that Steen included images from Rembrandt's prints several times in his oeuvre, thus paying tribute to his great colleague and predecessor. Examples may be found in Steen's famous *Village Wedding* in the Rotterdam Boijmans van Beuningen Museum, in which he repeated the figure of a little boy derived from Rembrandt's etching *The Pancake Woman* (Bartsch 124), or in the imposing *Village Fair*, now in a private collection in New York, which features a peeing woman, taken from Rembrandt's etching *Woman Pissing* (Bartsch 191).[20] The fact that Steen in all likelihood worked from the Van Vliet/Rembrandt etching and not from the painting, and that this print mirrors the figure of Raguel in the Lilian work, is in keeping with the way Steen worked in the Rotterdam *Village Wedding*, in which the boy is also a mirrored repetition of the boy in Rembrandt's print. The overall likeness of the Lilian Raguel with the etching after Rembrandt's *Old Man* is substantially more accurate than its resemblance to Raguel in the larger version in Brunswick, thus indicating that the Lilian work stands closer to the source. It is yet another clue that it was not the Brunswick canvas that was painted first, but rather the present one.

JH

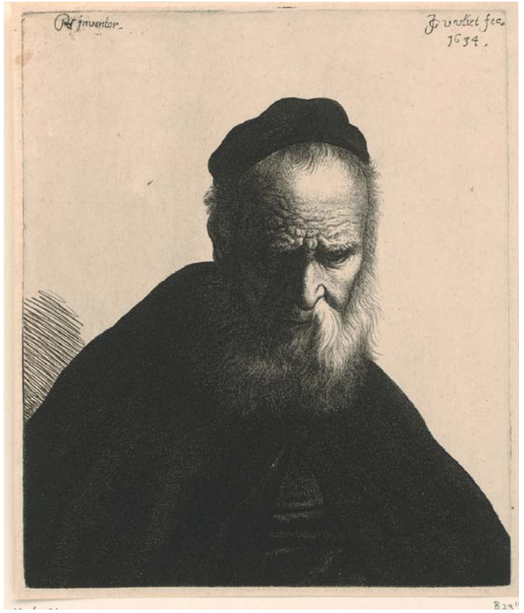


Fig. 5 Johannes Gillisz van Vliet after Rembrandt, *Head of an Old Man With a Cap*, signed *RH inventor. / JG v Vliet fec. 1634*, etching, 213 x 178 mm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet, inv. no. RP-P-OB-61.791

1 Sale Amsterdam, Jan Pietersz Zomer, 6 March 1708 (Lugt no. 210), lot 4: ''t Huwelyk sluyten van Tobias (heel goet) van ditto [Jan Steen]' ('The Concluding of the Marriage of Tobias (very good) by the same [Jan Steen]'). While the description cannot refer to Steen's *Marriage of Tobias and Sara* currently in Brunswick (Braun 1980, cat. 281), which was in the possession of Arnold Houbraken at the time, it does not necessarily refer to the present work either. Nor can it, though, refer to *The Wedding Night of Tobias and Sara* now in the Bredius Museum in The Hague (inv. no. 112-1946), as has been suggested by Trautscholdt 1937, p. 510 and repeated consequently (e.g. Kirschenbaum 1977, cat. 25c; Braun 1980, cat. 303 A-B), for the Bredius picture clearly depicts another episode of the story.

2 The print is included in the copy of the Rijksmuseum Library, no. 13 A 10, as part of a second, unfinished print series of 18 works from the Bruhl collection.

3 For Dresden 1754, see literature. Also in London, Wellcome Library, inv. no. 28397i. The print is further mentioned in Ch. Le Blanc, *Manuel de l'amateur d'estampes, contenant un dictionnaire des graveurs de toutes les nations*, Paris 1854, p. 139, no. 122 (under Baquoy).

4 For an extensive biography, see: M.J. Bok, 'The Life of Jan Steen', in: Washington/Amsterdam 1996/97, pp. 25-37.

5 See for instance Washington/Amsterdam 1996/97, cat. no. 32.

6 First noted by C.W. de Groot, *Jan Steen : beeld en woord*, diss. Nijmegen, Radboud University, Utrecht/Nijmegen 1952, pp. 30-31. See also Washington/Amsterdam 1996/97, cat. no. 32, fig. 2.

7 Inv. no. 112-1946. See Braun 1980, cat. no. 303 A-B; The work was once cut up in two separate pieces, which were reunited in 1996.

8 Braun 1980, cat. no. 281; Washington/Amsterdam 1996/97, cat. no. 32.

9 A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilderse en schilderessen*, 3 vols., The Hague 1718-1721, III, pp. 16-17. August Fink was the first to recognise in the Braunschweig picture the story of Tobias and Sara. See A. Fink, 'Jan Steens Hochzeit des Tobias', in: *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 60 (1926/27), pp. 230-233.

10 Smith 1829-1842, IV (1833), no. 155, describes the Bruhl painting from the print, erroneously giving the wrong dimensions (2 ft. 9 in. x 2 ft. 10. in.), and the engraver's name as Baguoy. He is also mistaken when he mentions the presumed correspondence between the print and a painting believed by him to be in the Hoffman collection in The Hague (Smith IX (1842, supplement), no. 73). This is in fact the current San Francisco work, at that point in the Hoofman collection in Haarlem. Westrheene 1856, no. 167, wrongly links his description of the Brunswick picture to the print by Baquoy (apparently only known to him through the description by Smith), whom he calls Bacquoy. He further adopts Smith's erroneous suggestion regarding the correspondence between the print and the current San Francisco work. Hofstede de Groot 1907, cat. no. 457, lists the Bruhl painting as 'probably a copy', while again giving the wrong dimensions, and the name of the engraver as C. Bagnoy. This incorrect information is still repeated by Kirschenbaum 1977, cat. no. 25a/457 and Braun 1980, cat. no. 281.

11 Heinrich, count von Bruhl was, for thirty years, the prime minister and prime confidante of Augustus III (1696-1763), Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. He was an avid collector of paintings, drawings and other artefacts. Two series of prints were made after the highlights of his collection of more than 600 paintings, further including Dou, Wouwerman, Van Mieris, Boucher, Watteau, Bellotto, Correggio, Caravaggio and Carracci, the first of which was ready in 1754. (See Dresden 1754.) The print by Baquoy belonged to the second series, which was, due to war and the death of the Count in 1763, never finished. See C.H. von Heinecken, *Idée générale d'une collection complètte d'estampes*, Leipzig, Vienna 1771, pp. 85-86. In 1769 the greater part of the collection was bought by Catherine the Great from Russia, forming the nucleus of the St Petersburg Hermitage collection. Remarkably, the print after the present work is not in reverse, as one would expect. This occurs more often. See for instance the print after an *Old Scholar*, presumably by Ferdinand Bol (no. 16 from the 1754 series), now in the Hermitage as by Salomon Koninck.

12 Raphael was apparently over-painted somewhere during the eighteenth century, most likely to subdue the work's religious connotations. It explains why, like the Brunswick work, the painting was known simply as *The Wedding Contract*.

13 As measured with the Dresden foot (28.3 cm.). The print shows a tiny bit more of the branch to the left, explaining the three centimetres difference in width.

14 Kirschenbaum 1977, cat. no. 25c, as 1673; Braun 1980, cat. no. 355, as c. 1673; Washington/Amsterdam 1996/97, cat. no. 45 as c. 1671-1673.

15 In 1995, for instance, Steen's notorious *Dancing Couple* dated 1663, in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, turned out to be a variant repetition of a smaller and undated original version now in a Dutch private collection, while the Washington work was named already by Smith in 1833 as the prime version. See Braun 1980, cat. no. 181 and Washington/Amsterdam 1996, cat. no. 20. See also J. Hillegers, in: A. Tummers (ed.), *Celebrating in the Golden Age*, exh. cat. Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum 2011/2012, cat. no. 5.

16 This can also be observed in the two versions of *The Dancing Couple*, see previous note.

17 *The Marriage of Tobias and Sara*, Amsterdam, Salomon Lilian (Braun 1980, cat. no. 309); *Samson and Delilah*, 1668, Los Angeles, L.A. County Museum (Braun 1980, cat. no. 297); *The Imprisoning of Samson*, c. 1667/68, Cologne, Walraff-Richartz Museum (Braun 1980, cat. no. 298); *Anthony and Cleopatra*, c. 1668/69, The Hague, RBK (Braun 1980, cat. no. 306); *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia*, 1671, New York, private collection (Braun 1980, cat. no. 342); *The Marriage of Tobias and Sara*, c. 1671-1673, San Francisco, The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco (Braun 1980, cat. no. 355).

18 *The Marriage of Tobias and Sara*, Amsterdam, Salomon Lilian (Braun 1980, cat. no. 309); *The Wrath of Ahasverus*, c. 1671-1673, Birmingham, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham (Braun 1980, cat. no. 299); *The Imprisoning of Samson*, c. 1667/68, Cologne, Walraff-Richartz Museum (Braun 1980, cat. no. 298); *Twelfth Night*, 1668, Kassel, Staatliche Museen Kassel (Braun 1980, cat. no. 296); *The Doctor's Visit*, c. 1668-1670, The Hague, Royal Picture Gallery, The Mauritshuis (Braun 1980, cat. no. 318). In the Brunswick work this tablecloth is replaced by another one, which appears less often in Steen's oeuvre.

19 Rembrandt, *Head of an Old Man in a Cap*, monogr. upper right *RHL*, oil on panel, c. 1630, 24.3 x 20.3 cm., Kingston, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, gift of Alfred and Isabel Bader, 2003, inv. no. 46-031.

20 See J. Hillegers, in: Haarlem 2011/12, cat. nos. 4, 8.

cat. no. 15

Matthias Stom
Amersfoort (?) 1599/1600 – in or after 1652

The Feast of Absalom

Oil on canvas
129.9 x 172.4 cm.

Provenance
France, private collection

That the painter Matthias Stom, also known as Stomer, was born in Amersfoort near Utrecht was first remarked upon in 1942 by the director of the Dutch Historical Institute in Rome, G.J. Hoogewerff (himself from Amersfoort), who apparently based himself on a document he was, according to H. Pauwels, unable to retrieve later.[1] Still, there is some plausibility in this. In a document of 1630, 'Mattheo Sthom, fiamengo pittore, d'anni 30' is recorded as residing in a house on the Strada dell'Olmo, in the Roman parish of Santa Nicola in Arcione.[2] Some five years earlier, the Amersfoort artist Paulus Bor (c. 1601-1669) had lived in the same house, suggesting a possible connection between the fellow townsmen. Although nothing is known about Stom's Dutch period, it becomes clear from his early paintings that he had intimate knowledge of the work of the Utrecht Caravaggisti, most notably Gerrit van Honthorst (1592-1656) and Dirck van Baburen (1595-1624), who returned to Utrecht from their Roman sojourn in 1620 and 1621 respectively, and might have encouraged Stom to go to Italy too. Unlike most Northern masters however, Stom did not return to his homeland again. His presence is detectable in Rome until 1632, after which he seems to have moved to Naples in or after 1633. From 1641 onwards, Stom was to be found in Sicily. A *Saint Isidore Agicola* from that year – his only dated painting – is still *in situ* in the Augustinian church of Caccamo. From 1646 to 1649, the artist received three documented commissions from Antonio Ruffo, Duke of Messina, who subsequently was to commission works by Rembrandt (1606-1669). In 1652 we hear the last of Stom, when he is paid for an *Assumption of the Virgin with Three Saints*, commissioned by the church of Santa Maria Assunta in Chiuduno, near Bergamo. It remains unclear if this means that the artist spent his last years in Northern Italy.

Stom mainly painted large canvases with Caravaggesque scenes from the Bible and ancient history. The present work depicts the violent climax of the Old Testament story of two sons of King David, Absalom and his older half-brother, Amnon (2 Samuel 13: 28-29). Absalom developed a profound hatred towards his brother, after the latter had simulated illness in order to lure Absalom's sister Tamar into his bedroom, and subsequently rape her. Two years after the incident, Absalom invited all of David's sons for a feast. Beforehand he instructed his servants to murder Amnon upon his sign, after the wine had gotten to him. Stom has depicted the story in a monumental pictorial arrangement, strongly enhanced by the marvellous colouring. On the left the standing Absalom gives his servants the sign to stab his brother, who, in fright, looks up to his assassins, as he vainly attempts to ward them off. While the food and the wine are still on the table, the servants act upon their master's word with horrendous vigour.

Stom endows *The Feast of Absalom* with an impressive, all encompassing dramatic quality, yet its composition is largely dependent on another artist's rendering of the same subject. In 1628, the Bolognese patron Lorenzo Fioravanti commissioned a *Feast of Absalom* from the painter Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, better known as Guercino (1591-1666).[3]





Fig. 1 Guercino, *The Feast of Absalom*, oil on canvas, 139 x 176 cm., Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale, inv. 932, licenced by Ministero Beni e Attività Culturali - Archivio fotografico Soprintendenza BSAE-Bologna, reproduction or duplication

Guercino's painting, still described in a manuscript dating from the 1770s as being in the Casa Fioravanti in Strada Maggiore, Bologna, seems to be untraceable today. However, at least five preserved copies testify to its popularity, one of which is now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna (fig. 1).[4] In addition, numerous of Guercino's sketches for the commission survive, and are now in important collections all over the world.[5] In one form or another, Stom must have seen Guercino's composition, possibly in Bologna while travelling south to Rome. His *Feast of Absalom* thus presents for that reason alone an interesting case, since it throws new light on the artist's sources of inspiration, and points to the extent to which he relied on other artists' work, even if he may only have seen it years before.

Benedict Nicolson, in his article 'Stomer Brought Up-to-date' of 1977, attempted to construct a chronology of Stom's oeuvre within the four geographical 'periods' of his career: Utrecht (c. 1625-1629), Rome (c. 1630-1632), Naples (1633-1639) and Sicily (c. 1640-1650).[6] With Nicolson in mind, it has recently been argued, mainly on a stylistic basis, that the work discussed here belongs to Stom's Sicilian period, after 1640.[7] A few observations can be made in this respect. Indeed, Nicolson lists among the characteristics of the Sicilian period that 'Gesture is frozen and stylised in mid-air'. This is obviously true of the present work. Yet one ought to keep in mind that its composition does not stem from Stom's own artistic imagination at the time. On the contrary, it fully cites the Guercino work from 1628. The most profound change between the two works is in the gesture of Stom's Amnon. The positioning and gesture of Amnon is echoed by that of Stom's *Saint Gregory* in Basel, which Nicolson firmly places in the Naples period, while the model for Amnon seems, certainly in type, close to a *St. Sebastian* in Munich, also datable to Naples.[8] Furthermore, the present work seems to hold strong affinities with a *David with the Head of Goliath*, also dated by Nicolson to the Naples period, both in the chosen subject matter (a gruesome event involving a sword), the smooth rendering of the figures, and especially the clouded sky in the background.[9]

Probably the most important characteristic of the Sicilian period is the rendering of the faces and hands, which, according to Nicolson, are 'treated as though they were baked clay with ridges and furrows, sometimes pitted, sometimes faceted.' This hardly seems to be the case in the present work, certainly not in the polished faces of the protagonists, Amnon and Absalom. Again, a model from another work strongly comes to mind. Absalom's features (fig. 2) are so closely identical to those of the angel in *The Angel Joining the Flight Into Egypt* in the Longhi Collection, Florence (fig. 3), that in all probability the artist used the same model, who appears to be somewhat younger in the latter work. Nicolson lists the Longhi painting 'for the sake of convenience' in Stom's Roman period, along with some other works of a distinct character. 'I assume they are painted earlier', Nicolson continues, 'although there is no external evidence to link them with Rome. This group differs from the Stomers I have discussed in that the draperies tend to be crinkly rather than tubular, the colouring is light – clear hues of blue, red, pink and yellow – locks of hair are wavy like tinfoil for the young men, boys and angels, flesh surfaces smooth rather than pitted.'[10] This description seems entirely applicable to the present work too. Yet, as Nicolson himself indicates, there really is no factual reason for dating the Longhi work to the Roman period. Instead, as the model was not presumably travelling along with the artist, one might rightfully place it in the early Naples years, in full accordance with the argued dating of the present work.

Finally, the provisionally suggested Neapolitan dating for the work discussed here can be corroborated by the existence of a hitherto



Fig. 2 Detail cat. 15



Fig. 3 Mattias Stom, *The Angel Joining the Flight into Egypt*, 99 x 124.8 cm., Florence, Longhi collection, detail

unnoticed work in Stom literature, in the collection of the Museo Civico Gaetano Filangieri, Naples (fig. 4).[11] This autograph work, listed in the museum's 1961 catalogue simply as *The Fight* (*La Rissa*), but actually depicting *The Feast of Absalom*, clearly derives in essence from Stom's present composition. It is, though, farther removed from the Guercino original, and would therefore in all probability have been painted at a later stage. But again, the absence of the aforementioned, characteristic 'baked clay' Sicilian faces points to a pre-Sicilian, thus Neapolitan origin. It seems that these two paintings by Stom might well have inspired some painters working in Naples, for, given the theme's relatively obscure status, its popularity in that city is striking in the years after Stom's departure. A *Feast of Absalom* by Bernardo Cavallino (1616-1656), datable to the first half of the 1640s and with a Neapolitan provenance dating back to the beginning of the eighteenth century, seems to further elaborate on the present composition.[12] And could not Stom's Gaetano Filangieri work have been the source for one of Mattia Preti's (1613-1699) versions of the theme, now in Ottawa? The Ottawa work was presumably executed in Malta in around 1665, post-dating the painter's departure from Naples. In any case, Preti is never documented as having visited Sicily, thus excluding the option that he saw Stom's work on that island.

JH



Fig. 4 Matthias Stom, *The Feast of Absalom*, oil on canvas, 100 x 130 cm., Naples, Museo Civico Gaetano Filangeri, inv. no. 83

1 G.J. Hoogewerff, *Nederlandsche kunstenaars te Rome (1600-1725): uitreksels uit de parochiale archieven*, The Hague 1942, p. 279, no. 2, and H. Pauwels, De schilder Matthias Stomer', in: Gentse bijdragen tot de kunstgeschiedenis 14 (1953), pp. 139-192, p. 142, no. 15. For further biographical references, see M.J. Bok, in: A. Blankert, L. Slatkes, *Nieuw Licht op de Gouden Eeuw : Hendrick ter Brugghen en tijdgenoten*, exh. cat. Utrecht, Centraal Museum, Brunswick, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Brunswick 1986/87, and L. Slatkes, in: J. Turner (ed.), *The Dictionary of Art*, 34 vols. New York 1996, 29, pp. 696-698.

2 Hoogewerff 1942, p. 279.

3 See L. Salerno, *I dipinti del Guercino*, Rome 1988, p. 215, cat. no. 122. See further D. Mahon, N. Turner, *The Drawings of Guercino in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle*, Cambridge 1989, p. 29, under cat. no. 53. I thank Marije Osnabrugge from the University of Amsterdam, who is currently preparing her dissertation on four Dutch painters in Naples in the seventeenth century, including Stom, for focussing my attention upon Guercino's composition.

4 Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale, inv. no. 932 (J. Brooks, *Guercino : Mind to Paper*, exh. cat. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, London, Courtauld Institute Gallery 2006-2007, p. 50, fig. 14.1). A version once at the London Heim Gallery presumably comes closest to Guercino's original. See *The Baroque in Italy : Paintings and Sculptures 1600-1720*, exh. cat. Heim Gallery, London, 1978, cat. no. 8, illus., where it is stated that after studying the painting, Guercino expert Sir Denis Mahon thinks it probable that 'on account of its superiority to the other known versions', the Heim version might be the prime original. A third version is in Padua, Casa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo (Salerno 1988, cat. no. 122, illus.). See further Mahon/Turner 1989, p. 29, where two other versions are mentioned, without specifications.

5 Drawings in: London, The Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery, inv. no. D.1952.RW.1344; Savile Gallery, London (1929); Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera, inv. no. 614; The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (on loan from the Mahon collection); Albertina, Vienna, inv. no. 34-529; Royal Library, Windsor Castle, Windsor, inv. nos. RL.2398, RL.2399. See for illustrations and references Los Angeles/London 2006-2007, pp. 49-51, cat. no. 14; Mahon/Turner 1989, cat. nos. 52, 53, figs. 54, 55; T. Borenius, *Drawings by Old Masters [Savile Gallery]*, London 1929, p. 13, no. 35, fig. 35. A. Emiliani, *Mostra di disegni del seicento Emiliano nella Pinacoteca di Brera*, exh. cat., Palazzo di Brera, Milan, 1959, p. 53, cat. no. 72.

6 B. Nicolson, 'Stomer Brought Up-to-date', in: *The Burlington Magazine* 119 (1977), pp. 230-245. Nicolson's method was principally based on 'internal' (i.e. stylistic and technical) and 'external' evidence, namely the (known or likely) provenance of certain works.

7 P. Mason, in: *Dutch and Flemish Old Master Paintings : Johnny van Haeften*, London 2011, cat. no. 29.

8 Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinacothek, inv. no. 13068. See Nicolson 1977, cat. no. 75, fig. 11.

9 Oil on canvas, 110.5 x 78.7 cm., bearing a fake monogram *HTB* (Hendrick Ter Brugghen). See Nicolson 1977, cat. no. 30 (Naples period). In 1976 Federico Zeri suggested that the work was painted by Domenico Gargiulo, called Micco Spadaro. See: F. Zeri, 'Un Ritratto di Salvator Rosa dipinto da Micco Spadaro', in: idem., *Diari di Lavoro*, 2 vols., Bergamo 1971/1976, 2 (1976), pp. 109-111. To my mind this attribution is incorrect. Nicolson again published the work as Stom in 1979 (B. Nicolson, *The International Caravaggesque Movement*, Oxford/New York 1979, p. 93) and posthumously in 1990 (B. Nicolson, L. Vertova, *Caravaggism in Europe*, 3 vols., Florence 1990, 1, p. 180). See further sale London, Sotheby's, 8 July 1992, lot 27, as Gargiulo. The attribution to Gargiulo is further questioned by S. Schütze, in: *The Burlington Magazine* 137/1110 (sept. 1995), p. 625: 'rather by a Northern painter.' However, even if the work were by Gargiulo, this would not affect the argument stated here, namely that the painting provides a Neapolitan context for the present work. Zeri also dates the work to Naples, c. 1633-1635.

10 Nicolson 1977, p. 239.

11 See F. Acton, *Il Museo Civico Gaetano Filangieri di Napoli : Catalogo delle Collezioni*, Naples 1961, fig. 100 (donated by Luca Montalto). The painting seems identical to a work with slightly different given measurements in a sale, Milan, Galleria Geri, 29 April 1929, lot 103, as *La Rissa*, oil on canvas, 98 x 123 cm., and as by the Neapolitan painter Giuseppe Bonito (1707-1789), illus. (photo RKD, pre-selection Stom).

12 A.T. Lurie et al., *Bernardo Cavallino of Naples 1616-1625*, exh. cat. Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland 1984, cat. no. 17.



Detail of cat. no. 15

cat. no. 16

Lodewijk de Vadder
Grimbergen 1605 – 1655 Brussels

Travellers at the Edge of the Sonian Forest

Oil on canvas
138 x 217 cm.

Provenance:
France, private collection

Lodewijk de Vadder (1605-1655), together with Jacques d'Artois (1603-1686) and Lucas Achtschellinck (1626-1699), were the leading Brussels landscape artists of the seventeenth century. This group of artists – known as the 'Sonian forest painters' – developed an individual landscape style to convey the characteristic appearance of the thickly forested area surrounding their city. The artists lived and worked in this forest, producing large and elegant wooded landscapes in oils, with a rich and daring palette and bold brushwork recalling that of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640). The staffage in their paintings is typically dwarfed by the great, dark bodies of trees and the abundance of nature which fills their compositions, as is the case in the present painting. Their landscapes have something of the character of tapestries, and probably had a corresponding decorative function since these artists also gained success and recognition as painters of designs for tapestry production in Brussels. Indeed, this ornamental sensibility is a feature of De Vadder's landscapes.

De Vadder was the first Flemish artist to paint sand dunes as the primary feature of his landscapes, and they became his trademark. Their relative bareness imparted a sense of heightened naturalism to his works, especially when compared to the work of his main predecessor in Brussels, Denis van Alsloot (before 1573-1625/6). De Vadder's dune landscapes represent a radical departure from Alsloot's manneristic and densely wooded forests. Although no record documents De Vadder's travels to the north, the parallels between his early work with the development of dune landscape painting as practised by Pieter Dircksz Santvoort (1603-35), Pieter de Molijn (1595-1661) and Jan van Goyen (1596-1656) in Holland during the late 1620s, cannot be mere coincidence. The artist's restrained palette further echoes the tonal, monochromatic landscapes of his Dutch contemporaries, as opposed to the more vivid colouring of the Flemish tradition. In Brussels this break with the past was considered startling and revolutionary, and made De Vadder, along with Jacques d'Arthois, the most important painter of the period.

In the lower centre of our painting, a gentleman on a horse has halted amongst a group of standing figures on the path running alongside the river, and appears to ask them the way, as he points to his right. The group is engaged in conversation in the shade of a great tree looming above them, while a peasant with a staff sits rests upon a grassy dune by the river's edge, as his dog drinks the river water. Behind him another figure releases his dog. The eye is led to the left, along the path, to a mother and child, walking along the river. Behind the figures rise the towering trees, their truncation by the upper edge of the canvas accentuating their stature. The castle seen in the distance to the right is no doubt inspired on the Castle Van De Graven Van Henegouwen in Mons (Belgium). De Vadder's style is characterised by long, dense brushstrokes and a warm palette, emphasising the golden light reflected on the dunes. The reflection in the water beautifully echoes the full colour scheme.

The present hitherto unpublished painting can, due to its size and subject, be related to *The Sonian Forest*, in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in Ghent.[1] This painting has up until now been the only known large painting by De Vadder.[2]

WB

1 Lodewijk de Vadder, *The Soignes Forest*, oil on canvas, 175 x 230 cm., inv. no. 1965-B.
2 Y. Thiery, M. Kervyn de Meerendre, *Les Peintres Flamands de Paysage au XVIIe siècle*, Brussels 1987, p. 120.



cat. no. 17

Frederik van Valckenborch
Antwerp 1566 – 1623 Nuremberg

Mountain Landscape with Watermills

Signed with monogram and dated lower centre *F.V.V. 1612*
Oil on copper
30 x 38 cm.

Provenance:
Germany, Von Groote collection

Frederik van Valckenborch, son of the painter Marten van Valckenborch (1534-1612), and the younger brother of Gillis van Valckenborch (1570-1622), was born and raised in Antwerp. Like many other artists, the Protestant family moved from Antwerp to escape religious persecution in around 1586, and settled in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. In the 1590s Frederik and his brother Gillis probably left for Italy. Until 1592 they lived in Venice, where Frederik must have come under the influence of the Italo-Flemish landscape painter Lodewijk Toeput (c. 1550-c. 1605), and where both studied paintings by Titian and Tintoretto. In 1592 Frederik is recorded in Rome, where he would have associated with Flemish landscape painters residing there, such as Paul Bril (c. 1554-1626) and Jan Brueghel I (1558-1625). By the beginning of 1597, the artist was back in Frankfurt am Main, where he became a citizen on 24 February of that year. Presumably he married in the same year, and in 1598 his twin sons, Frederik and Wilhelm, were baptised in Frankfurt. Frederik went on to have two more sons, Moritz and Nicolaus, both of whom became painters. In 1602 Frederik left Frankfurt to settle in Nuremberg, where he lived for the rest of his life. The group of Flemish Protestant landscape painters who settled in Frankenthal and its surroundings in Germany, between around 1586 until *circa* 1620, came to be known as the Frankenthal School.

Stylistically, Frederik van Valckenborch was influenced by an important painter from this group, Gillis van Coninxloo (1544-1607), as well as by Pieter Schoubroeck (1570-c.1608). The influence of Van Coninxloo is especially visible in the artist's detailed execution of the green, wooded areas in his paintings. In 1612, the year of the present work, Frederik was commissioned by the Nuremberg authorities to design an arch for the Triumphal Entry of Archduke Matthias, governor of the Netherlands. The artist painted views of towns, markets and fairs, which he filled with a great many lively and animated figures, characterised by their picturesque qualities and their elaborate poses in the mannerist style. However, he mainly specialised in fantasy landscapes. It is in this very particular genre that he shows the full measure of his talent, particularly in his treatment of space, constructed in successive planes and often covered with rocks, leaning buildings and shady forests, bathed in a trembling light painted on in small strokes. Only a small number of paintings fully signed or monogrammed by him are known.

In the present colourful, mountainous landscape, beautifully monogrammed and dated on a stone '*F.V.V. 1612*', Frederik depicts numerous figures and animals gathered around two watermills in the foreground, at the foot of a mountain; while towering, rocky crags,





Fig. 1 Frederik van Valckenborch, *Mountain Landscape*, oil on copper, 27 x 35 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-1506

topped with dark spruces and other green hued trees, dominate the mid ground. A mountain torrent tumbles down from the heights of the rocky precipice to the watermill at the lower left, and, diverging behind the dark rock in the foreground, the torrent gushes down to the lower right and lower edge of the painting. In the background, the blue sky harmonises with the bluish mountain, the blue tones fading into the pink of the fantastical castle at its summit, and into the paler greens of the sunlit trees and grass of the lower slopes.

The watermills in this rocky landscape were built to wash copper ore. This theme, which gave the artist a perfect opportunity to paint a mountain landscape, had already been the subject of sixteenth century paintings by Henri met de Bles (c. 1510-1550) and Lucas Gassel (1500-1570).[1] Although in the present painting the washing of the copper remains unseen, the watermills and the baskets filled with heavy weight borne on the backs of the figures standing in the right foreground, suggest the presence of copper. The daily activities in this mountain village speak of prosperous times. The numerous animals in the foreground – cows, geese, hens, mules, a dog and a pig – also enliven the scene, providing much anecdotal interest. A cowherd, seated on the ground, plays the flute beside his cattle, while beside him a standing goose herd, leaning on a stick, keeps an eye on the birds. Three travellers in the lower right corner are engaged in conversation with a resting copper bearer, her basket beside her, while other women, baskets on their backs, start their ascent. Other figures can be seen beyond them, making their way up the rickety, wooden footbridge spanning the cascading waters on the right. In the middle foreground, in front of the watermill, a man is seen holding a mule, while peeing.

In the mid ground, behind the cascading mountain torrent, figures are seen seated in front of an inn whose pinkish sign bears a white swan; the innkeeper can be seen approaching his guests with a flagon. A tall wooden maypole in front of the inn alludes to the annual celebration of Mayday in the village, when the villagers would dance around it.[2] Further up, high in the mountains, pilgrims are leaving a little wooden shrine, in which Christ is seen on a cross. Other pilgrims are seen above the inn, starting their ascent to the shrine on the winding wooden walkway.

Whereas Valckenborch's drawings were often descriptive and topographically accurate, his paintings were characteristically imaginative landscapes, with a dominant interest in nature in all its aspects. One example which clearly demonstrates Frederik's interest in the forces of nature is the *Shipwreck of Aeneas*, dated 1603, now in the collection of the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam. Another example, of the same high quality as the present painting, but in contrast depicting a dramatic scene, is *Mountain Landscape*, dated 1605, now in the collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (fig. 1). In this painting soldiers at the lower left are attacking travellers, while a gallows in the mid ground and the threatening light in the sky and on the rocks reinforce the frightening mood of the scene. While the primitive forces of nature prevail in his work of the first decade of the seventeenth century, from the second decade onwards the artist's treatment of movement and light effects became less extreme, his choice of subjects less overtly dramatic, and the paintings more realistic.

WB

1 See for example: Henri met de Bles, *Landscape with Mine*, oil on panel, 39.2 x 73 cm., Graz, Universalmuseum Joanneum, inv. no. 101, and Lucas Gassel, *Coppermine*, oil on panel, 56.5 x 105.6 cm., dated 1544, Brussels, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 3171.

2 Primarily found within the nations of Germanic Europe and the neighbouring areas which they have influenced, its origins remain unknown.



Detail of cat. no. 17

Colophon

Texts by:
Jasper Hillegers
Wendela Burgemeister
Natasha Broad

Catalogue Editor:
Natasha Broad

Design:
Annelies Mikmak

Photography:
Pieter de Vries, Texel

Printed by:
Eco drukkers

© Authors and Salomon Lilian, Amsterdam