



# SALOMON LILIAN

DUTCH OLD MASTER PAINTINGS

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cat. no.

- 1 Samuel van Hoogstraten
- 2 Jan Lievens
- 3 Peter Paul Rubens
- 4 Jan Steen
- 5 Michael Sweerts
- 6 David Teniers the Younger
- 7 Catharina Ykens II



# Samuel van Hoogstraten

1627 – Dordrecht – 1678

*A View From a Villa, with a Child Seated at a Fountain and an Avenue of Statues*

Signed and dated lower left, on the base of the column: S. v. H. 1668.

Oil on canvas

96.1 x 124 cm.

## Provenance:

Possibly United States, collection of Maia R. Gregory (1918-2004)<sup>1</sup>

Probably Ireland (Dublin?), private collection<sup>2</sup>

Sale London, Sotheby's, 8 May 1975, lot 68, where acquired by

United Kingdom, collection Mr. and Mrs. R. Robinson, until 2023

## Literature:

W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 6 vols., Landau/Pfalz 1982-1994, 2 (1983), pp. 1305, 1384, cat. no. 901, ill.

M. Roscam Abbing, *De schilder & schrijver Samuel van Hoogstraten 1627-1678 : eigentijdse bronnen en oeuvre van gesigeneerde schilderijen*, Leiden 1993, p. 136, cat. no. 37

C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion : The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Chicago 1995, pp. 110-111 (fig. 70), 119, 366, cat. no. 98

J. Blanc, *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIIe siècle : la théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Bern 2008, p. 388, cat. no. P155

T. Weststeijn, *The Visible World : Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*, Amsterdam 2008, p. 419, note 197

D. de Witt, 'From Rembrandt's nae 't leven to Van Hoogstraten's zichtbaere werelt', in: S. Pénot (ed.), *Rembrandt Hoogstraten : Colour and Illusion*, exh. cat. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum 2024-2025, pp. 122-151, pp. 133, 139, figs. 65, 65a

D. de Witt, 'Van Rembrandt's nae 't leven tot Van Hoogstraten's zichtbaere werelt', in: L. van Sloten, D. de Witt, *Samuel van Hoogstraten : De illusionist*, exh. cat. Amsterdam, Rembrandthuis 2025, pp. 66-81, pp. 73, 75-76, figs. 58, 58a

## Samuel van Hoogstraten

A true polymath, Samuel van Hoogstraten strived for nothing less than to be a universal artist, and to practice universal knowledge.<sup>3</sup> He was a painter, draughtsman, engraver, he was a traveler and a teacher, he wrote poems and a courtier's manual, arguably authored the first Dutch novels and – last but not least – published a comprehensive

and erudite treatise on the theory of art. Born in Dordrecht in August 1627, Samuel was the eldest of the seven children of the gold- and silversmith Dirck van Hoogstraten (1596–1640) and his wife Maeiken de Coninck (1598–1645), who both belonged to Mennonite families that had left Antwerp for Dordrecht around the turn of the century. Samuel was initially taught by his father, who had taken up





painting, but around 1642 was sent to Amsterdam, to the studio of Rembrandt (1606-1669), where he stayed until 1648. Samuel arrived at a hectic time. Rembrandt was on an artistic highpoint – he had just finished his masterpiece *The Nightwatch* – but had also lost his wife Saskia. It must have been an intense period for Samuel, who stayed with Rembrandt until 1648, when he was back in Dordrecht for his adult Mennonite baptism. Deeply immersed in Rembrandt's lessons and style, Van Hoogstraten's encyclopedic ambitions led him to depart for Italy in May 1651. This five-year journey first brought him to the court of Emperor Ferdinand III (1608-1657) in Vienna, from whom he received important commissions and a gold chain and medallion in recognition of his talents as a painter of *trompe l'oeils*, an incredible honor for Van Hoogstraten, in whose paintings the medal often features. Having spent years in Venice, Naples and Rome, Van Hoogstraten was back in Dordrecht in May 1656, where he assumed the post of master of the Mint of Holland, a position that came with certain privileges and social standing, something he strived for all his life. His marriage to the patrician's daughter Sara Balen three weeks later gave him further access to city's most important political and social institutions. Taken with his adoption of an increasingly worldly lifestyle – among others reflected in the aristocratic fashion of wearing a sword – it also caused his expulsion from the Mennonite community and his subsequent joining the Dutch Reformed Church in January 1657. In high demand as a painter and as a teacher – around 1660 both Godefricus Schalcken (1643-1706) and Arent de Gelder (1645-1727) were his pupils – Van Hoogstraten nonetheless left for London in the summer of 1662, probably lured by lucrative commissions for the court of Charles II (1630-1685). This sojourn, interrupted by a visit to Holland in 1665, lasted until November 1667, when he was recorded back in The Hague where he lived until 1671 and became a member of the painters' confraternity Pictura. From 1671 until his death in 1678 Van Hoogstraten lived in Dordrecht, where his health declined, and with it his pictorial output. The last years of his life he spent on what would become his finest literal achievement, the writing of his art

theoretical treatise *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst, anders de zichtbaere werelt* ('Introduction to the academy of painting, or the visible world'), published just months prior to his death.<sup>4</sup> A second volume, the *Onzichtbaere werelt* ('The invisible world') was never realized.

While Van Hoogstraten's earlier work is strongly Rembrandtesque, and his drawings likewise reflect his time with Rembrandt, many of his paintings from the 1650s on show his ongoing fascination with the act of viewing, be it his innovative perspective boxes, the *trompe l'oeil* letter racks, his interior perspectives, or the mysterious architectural pieces from his English period. In addition, he painted histories, elegant genre works and portraits. Samuel van Hoogstraten's star has been rising for decades, and he is nowadays recognized as a major force not only within Dutch early modern culture, but also in the larger European context. Two major monographic exhibitions in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (2024-2025) and the Rembrandthuis in Amsterdam (2025), underpin this recognition, paying him the tribute that was long due.

#### A country house in a parkland

Our painting, only known from its one-time surfacing in a London auction in 1975 and a black and white photo, is a spectacular addition to Van Hoogstraten's oeuvre.<sup>5</sup> Signed and dated 1668 – thus painted in The Hague just after Van Hoogstraten's return from his five year stay in England – it is a feast for the eyes; painted with great care for detail and color, in every direction something else is going on. From the shadows of a classical portico with a large Tuscan column that serves as a *repoussoir*, we overlook a rolling tree-lined summer landscape underneath an intriguing semi-clouded sky. In its wondrous clarity and atmosphere, the painting seems to anticipate the work of the twentieth century master of Dutch magic realism, Carel Willink (1900-1983) by nearly 300 years (figs. 1, 2). The foreground is dominated by a Triton fountain on top of which a putto, seated on a sphere supported by little dogs, spurts water. Leaning on the fountain's ledge, a child in a red gown attentively enjoys the water play. Behind the



Fig. 1 Carel Willink, *Landscape with Seven Statues*, 1941, oil on canvas, 101 x 143 cm., Gorssel, Museum MORE



Fig. 2 Carel Willink, *View on a City*, 1944, oil on canvas, 109.2 x 136 cm. (incl. frame), Nijmegen, Valkhof Museum





Fig. 3 View of Chevening House, Kent, originally designed by Inigo Jones, built c. 1617-1630

fountain a walled avenue with a pond to the left, an ornamental garden to the right and flanked by white classical statues, leads up to a red brick three-story country house, the central element in the painting. Although the house within its grand parkland setting is the product of Van Hoogstraten's fantasy, it seems reminiscent of early English Palladian style country houses such as Chevening House in Kent, which in its initial form (without wings) was completed after a design by Sir Inigo Jones (1573-1652) c. 1630 (fig. 3).<sup>6</sup> At the same time the house in our painting, specifically its signature cupola, recalls current Dutch architecture, e.g. Huis ten Bosch, the Stadtholderly summer palace of Frederik Hendrik (1584-1647) and Amalia van Solms (1602-1675) that was designed halfway the seventeenth century by Pieter Post (1608-1669) and Jacob van Campen (1596-1657) (fig. 4). Whereas these examples boast central portico's,



Fig. 4 Jan van der Heyden, *The Huis ten Bosch at The Hague*, c. 1665-1675, oil on panel, 21.6 x 28.6 cm., London, National Gallery



Fig. 5 Cat. no. 1, detail of a defecating man

the house in the present painting shows a porch with balcony. Sided by two columns, the porch's passageway provides a candid view at a walled garden behind it. Looking further, two bridges on the left side of the house lead to a remarkably Dutch-looking town with a mill, nestled in 'un-Dutch' grassy hills. The landscape expands to the left, where we see a leafy country road, next to which a tiny, easy to miss figure is secretly defecating (fig. 5). To the right of the house, beyond the garden's red fence, a vista opens to a wooded inroad with a traveler, leading to another house with figures. Rising above the trees a fair green hill encloses the composition.

#### A demonstration piece

Celeste Brusati, the only scholar to have discussed the present painting at some length, has characterized it as a 'strange scene, peopled by statues and curious figures [...] carefully contrived to display the supreme artistry of the painter at every turn'.<sup>7</sup> With 'curious figures' she might have not referred to the hidden defecator, but rather to the enigmatic child at the fountain and to the mysterious gardener with his red beany at the balustrade on the right – the servant at the well-run estate – who peeks at us from behind a statue of Abundance with her cornucopia, as if interrupted, observant. Unusual as the painting may appear,

the pictorial tradition of the ornamental garden as a domain of cultivation harks back to sixteenth and early seventeenth-century depictions of the fantastic park landscape, and the cycles of the seasons and the months, in which we recognize many of the elements encountered in our painting: the castle or country house with surrounding gardens, fountains, statues, merry-makers, gardeners, water, walls and bridges, grand landscapes and towns beyond (figs. 6, 7).<sup>8</sup> Likewise, we find similar motifs recurrent in the adjacent theme of the Garden of Love, where the tenure varies from harmonious and courtly to amorous, sensual and voyeuristic, an example of the latter being *The Garden of Love* after Johann Liss (c. 1597-1631), situated in a country house garden with a prominent fountain (fig. 8). Van Hoogstraten was no stranger to the garden of love as a pictorial concept.



Fig. 6 Hans Bol, *Park Landscape with Castle*, 1589, 23.7 x 33.1 cm., Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

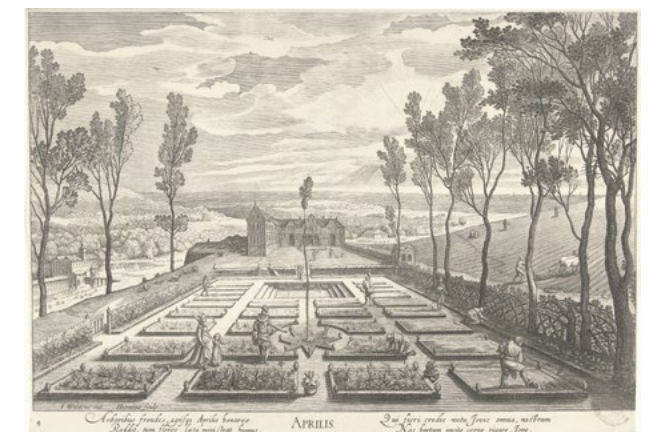


Fig. 7 Hendrick Hondius after Jan Wildens, *April*, 1614, engraving, 29.2 x 41.4 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum





Fig. 8 Nicolas de Son after Johann Liss, *The Garden of Love*, c. 1630, etching, 18.4 x 26.7 cm., London, British Museum

In 1647 he painted the double portrait of Johan Cornelisz Vijgeboom and his wife Anneke Joosten Boogaart in the garden of their 'buitenplaats' or 'hof', their country estate outside Dordrecht (fig. 9). The well-maintained house and the cultivated garden here clearly underscore the couple's harmonious marriage and conjugal affections.

While balance and harmony – in juxtaposing nature and culture, countryside and city, and man cultivating and subjecting nature – are certainly overarching and meaningful elements, the aspect of love, at least in its physical manifestation, is absent from our work. Brusati rightly observed that the painting has the quality of a demonstration piece. Van Hoogstraten's England period saw him turning towards grand architectural pieces, in which perspective, classical architecture, design and *trompe l'oeil* were core



Fig. 9 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Portrait of Johan Cornelisz Vijgeboom and his wife Anneke Joosten Boogaart in the Garden of their Country House near Dubbeldam*, 1647, oil on canvas, 102 x 130 cm., Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum



Fig. 10 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Young Man Reading in a Renaissance Palace*, c. 1662/67, oil on canvas, 238.5 x 174 cm., Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum

themes (fig. 10). In our painting, Van Hoogstraten expands his view and treats these concepts within a comprehensive ideal landscape context. Thus, the work reflects the painter's own cultivation, one in which he sets out to expose his knowledge of architecture, of classical statues, garden design and landscape, his mastery over the visible world of nature itself, and his ability as an artist to orchestrate these various elements in a pleasing and captivating manner. In that sense, our painting significantly differs both from Van Hoogstraten's own double portrait of Vijgeboom and Boogaart of 1647 (fig. 9), and from Jan van der Heyden's *The Huis ten Bosch at The Hague* (fig. 4), painted at roughly the same time, but with realistic intent.

### Haegaenveld

With its idealizing aims, the present painting shows affinity with the genre of Dutch country house poetry ('hofdicht'), that emerged in the 1610s and 1620s, and which glorified life at the country house ('hof'),

often referencing classical examples from Homer and Hesiod to Virgil (*Georgica*), Horace (*Beatus ille*) and Cicero.<sup>9</sup> Whereas the nobility had always lived on the land, the city elites of the increasingly urbanized Dutch society – where, moreover, more recently drained lands became available every year – progressively chose to spend the summer months at their newly built estates. Correspondingly, the 'hofdicht' likewise gained popularity, both among the nobility and the elite who could afford this lifestyle. One such poem, Jacob Westerbaen's (1599-1670) 1654 *Ockenburgh*, on his country house near The Hague, is illustrated by a print depicting the estate, which gives an impression of what Van Hoogstraten could have encountered once he settled in The Hague (fig. 11).

In fact, Westerbaen was among those who contributed a dedication to Van Hoogstraten's first literary project after his return, the 1669 'adventure novel' *Haegaenveld*.<sup>10</sup> Given his ambition to fashion his own universal identity and career, and his striving for fame and honor, it is not surprising that Van Hoogstraten's was well acquainted with the georgic, pastoral and country house poetry so popular among his targeted clientele, the nobility and the urban patriciate. *Haegaenveld*'s title page informs us that Van Hoogstraten dedicated his novel to the princesses Elisabeth Maria van Nassau Portugal (1648-1717) and her sister Emilia Louisa (1649-1731). The family of these girls, both around 20 years old at the time, were commissioners of Van Hoogstraten, whose

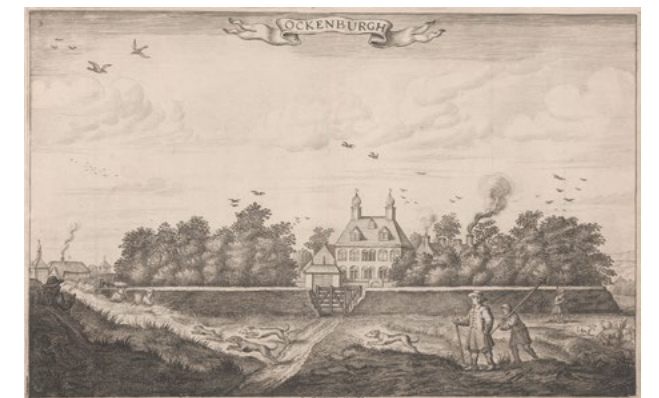


Fig. 11 Adriaen Matham, *Ockenburgh*, 1654, engraving, 24.8 x 38.8 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



novel was thus also a vehicle for self-promotion, and a clever way to maneuver within the circles of the potential buyers of his art.<sup>11</sup> *Haegaenveld* deals with a group of *jeunesse dorée* from The Hague who find themselves amidst adventures, some situated around The Hague's Forest, thus stimulating the readers – the Orange princesses, for instance – to identify with the protagonists. Effortlessly, though, the scenery switches to Eastern Europe, the Ottoman Empire or Scandinavia, alternating pastoral scenes and love ponderings with spectacle, magic and violence. An amalgam, thus, as is our painting. In *Haegaenveld*'s book 5, a man named Lelygaert has invited friends for dinner, and afterwards proudly shows them around in his 'Lusthof':

'through the green galleries [...] in the mild shade, past the plaster statues, cast in Rome. Here one saw the Greek Venus; the Latona with her children, as in the garden of the Medici on Monte Trinita; the Farnese Flora, and the large Hercules, the Laocoön

with his sons, from the Belvedere. The Florentine David, and the Abduction by Giambologna. [...] the garden was square and in its center stood a fountain'. In an adjacent grotto the visitors marvel at a 'large mossy Triton spraying water'.<sup>12</sup>

Given the idea that Van Hoogstraten likely painted the present work while writing *Haegaenveld* – and no doubt had the kind of buyer in mind that would likewise appreciate his literary accomplishments – the parallels between painting and text are conspicuous. The many plaster statues that adorn the balustrades on either side of the entry lane in our painting, including a Hercules, clearly echo the *Haegaenveld* description of Lelygaert's pleasure garden, just as the Triton fountain spraying water, and the child in the red gown admiring it so demonstratively (fig. 12). Van Hoogstraten continues his story by having Lelygaert explaining to his guests the fountain's ingenious mechanism 'thus arranged by the artist', its control over the water and its artistry, reflecting the Dutch



Fig. 12 Cat. no. 1, detail with statues, fountain, girl and gardener

mastery of water: 'we here in this land turn to art; and so this artifice, mechanically driven, reflects the nature and traits of our land [...] For if we do not shut out and control the Ocean and the large waters with dykes, the whole land would be flooded'.<sup>13</sup> This praise of artifice again echoes in our painting, which after all presents a constructed reality, molded by the artist. Moreover, Van Hoogstraten included a typical Dutch town with a windmill, so fundamentally connected with Dutch water engineering, hence referencing the foundation of a new (Dutch) Arcadia, of which the painting seems a fanciful, contrived evocation.

Further on in *Haegaenveld*, we come across another remarkable typology, when we read that Lelygaert's daughter Leliane sits down in a leafy forest ('t loofrijke Bosch') and, thinking that she is alone, sings a song.<sup>14</sup> This is heard by a hunter who, hiding behind a bush, after the song is finished suddenly replies with a song of his own, causing Leliane to flinch. The illustration accompanying this passage, probably done after Van Hoogstraten's design or instructions, shows the hunter spying on the startled Leliane, in a country estate setting that clearly resembles our painting, the *Haegaenveld* hunter and our peeking gardener seemingly fulfilling similar roles (fig. 13).<sup>15</sup> While voyeurism was part of the Garden of Love iconography – we see it for instance in the print after Johann Liss (fig. 7) – Van Hoogstraten had a special preference for the motif of a person, an animal, or even a statue peeking into the scene, often discreetly or even secretly from behind a corner, as he included it in many of his works (figs. 14-25). In some instances these 'voyeurs' provide a clear narrative contribution, but in most cases their actual role is modest and they mostly add to the sense of observation.<sup>16</sup> While they are nowhere mentioned in his writings, their remarkable recurrence must relate to Van Hoogstraten's ongoing fascination with perspective, *trompe l'oeil* paintings ('bedriegertjes' in Dutch, cheaters), with illusion, and ultimately with art as a seductress of sight.<sup>17</sup> In that sense, the staring of the gardener does not only add mystery and solicitation to the present painting, it appears to be part of an ongoing comment by Van Hoogstraten on painting itself, and a witty invitation to look back.



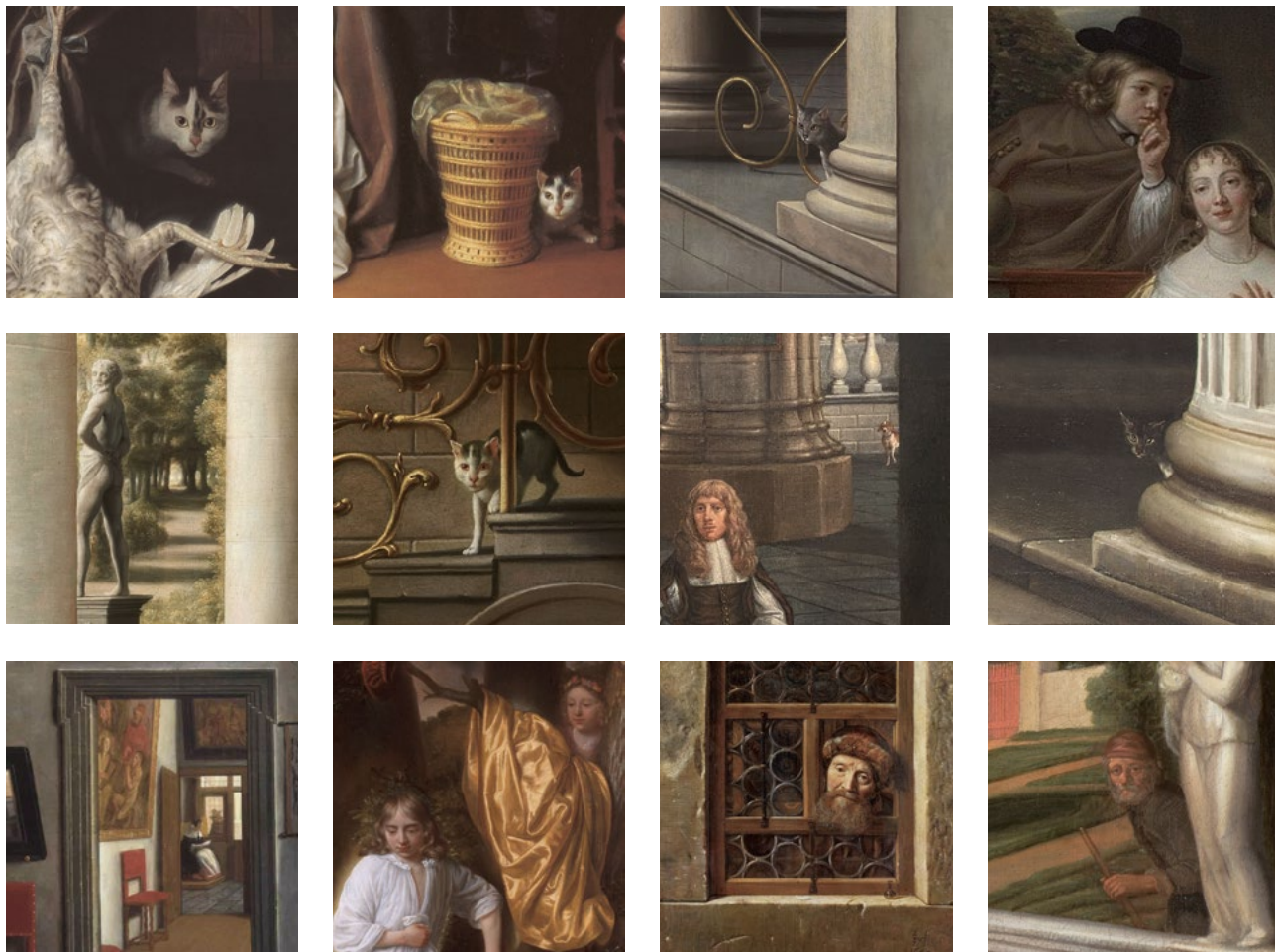
Fig. 13 After Samuel van Hoogstraten (?), *Leliane Spied Upon by a Hunter*, illustration in: S. van Hoogstraten, *Haegaenveld*, Amsterdam 1969, opposite p. 230

#### Erato

In 1678, ten years after painting the work discussed here and at the end of his life, Van Hoogstraten voiced his views on the visible world and the critical role of the artist once more, and most elaborately in his treatise *De Zichtbaere Werelt*. Divided in nine books all named after one of the nine Muses, the treatise's book four, is titled Erato, the muse of lyric poetry and mimic imitation, who charms the sight. The book deals with the depiction of Nature itself, in all its manifestations, and with landscape in particular. As is the case with the other books, it is introduced by a title print and an introduction:

'Erato! [...] Lead us now through delightful buildings [...] and lead us from there, either into leafy foliage, or into the breezy fields [...] show us your gardens and orchards, where you fill your cornucopia'.





Figs. 14-25

Details, taken from (l-t-r-t-t-b): (14) *Still Life with Birds and a Cat*, 1669, oil on canvas, 76.4 x 64.5 cm., Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum; (15) *Interior with Woman and Dog*, oil on canvas, 55.4 x 47.2 cm., Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum; (16) *Perspective of a Young Man reading in a Courtyard*, oil on canvas, 231 x 165 cm., Clarendon Park, Salisbury, collection A.W.M. Christie-Miller; (17) *A Fortune Teller Reading a Young Woman's Hand*, oil on canvas, 68.3 x 55 cm., sale New York, Sotheby's, 28 January 2010, lot 280; (18) *Perspective with a Woman Reading a Letter*, c. 1670, oil on canvas, 241.5 x 179 cm., The Hague, Mauritshuis; (19) idem.; (20) *Perspective of a Couple in the North Transept of Westminster Abbey*, c. 1665, oil on canvas, 157 x 110 cm., Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum; (21) *Perspective of a Man Reading in a Courtyard*, oil on canvas, 264.2 x 276.8 cm., Gloucester, Dyrham Park; (22) *A Peepshow with Views of the Interior of a Dutch House*, c. 1655/60, oil on panel, 58 x 88 x 60.5 cm., London, National Gallery; (23) *Salmacis and Hermaphroditus*, c. 1671/76, oil on canvas, 95.7 x 75.5 cm., New York, Leiden Collection; (24) *Old Man at the Window*, 1653, oil on canvas, 111 cm x 86.5 cm., Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum; (25) Cat. no. 1

Indeed the title print, its preliminary design depicted here, shows Erato with her Cornucopia, sitting before a classical portico, with behind her an ornamental garden with a fountain and a fence, mountains and a town in the background (fig. 26). While the spatial arrangement and the emphasis on the individual pictorial elements differs, the compositional parallels with the present painting are obvious, nonetheless. Van Hoogstraten's reliance on this specific pictorial framework for his title print thus once more demonstrates his aim, and the present painting's universal appeal, its contrived poetic license and all its visual eloquence – mindful of Horace's *Ut pictura poesis* – mimicking that of the poet. After all, Van Hoogstraten remarks: 'where the Poet plays, the Painter likewise has free rein. Whose Painter's spirit wouldn't splash out in exceptionality, who hears the Poets sing of landscape in such Painterly fashion?'<sup>18</sup>

JH



Fig. 26 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Erato* (preparatory drawing for the title page of book four of *De Zichtbaere Werelt*), c. 1678, black chalk, red chalk, pen in brown, wash in brown, brush in brown on paper, 17.7 x 13.5 cm., Paris, Fondation Custodia

#### Notes

- 1 According to a yellow label on the reverse of the old frame, which merely mentions the handwritten name 'Maia R Gregory'. Maia Gregory was an American actress, who was born in 1918 and starred in the 1953-1956 tv-series 'I Led 3 Lives'. She died in New York in 2004. It cannot be ascertained here that the Maia R. Gregory referred to on the label is identical with the American actress.
- 2 A 20<sup>th</sup> century label on the reverse of the old frame mentions the painting as being framed by Combridge Ltd., 18 & 20 Grafton St., and 1a Duke Street, Dublin, with handwritten number 7438.
- 3 For biographical details, see Roscam Abbing 1993, esp. pp. 9-29; P. Thissen, *Werk, netwerk en letterwerk van de familie Van Hoogstraten in de zeventiende eeuw: sociaal-economische en sociaal-culturele achtergronden van geletterden in de Republiek*, Amsterdam 1994, esp. chap. 3; Brusati 1995, chaps. 2, 3; C. Brusati, 'Samuel van Hoogstraten', in: J. Turner (ed.), *The Dictionary of Art*, 34 vols, New York 1996, 14, pp. 737-742 (see also C. Brusati, in: *Grove Art Online*, <https://doi-org.access.authkb.kb.nl/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T038856> (2003) accessed 5 August 2024); W. Liedtke, *Dutch paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 2 vols., New York 2007, 1, pp. 372-373.
- 4 S. van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst: anders de zichtbaere werelt*, Rotterdam 1669. See further C. Brusati, 'Samuel van Hoogstraten's *Hooge Schoole of de Zichtbaere Werelt*', in: P. Marijnissen et al., *De Zichtbaere Werelt: schilderkunst uit de Gouden Eeuw in Hollands oudste stad*, exh. cat. Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum 1992-1993, pp. 65-71; Weststeijn 2008; C. Brusati (ed.), J. Jacobs (transl.), *Samuel van Hoogstraten's "Introduction to the academy of painting; or, The visible world"*, Los Angeles 2020.
- 5 The only scholar who had previously seen the painting, in the house of the previous owners, the Robinson family, is Celeste Brusati (email correspondence April 2024). The passage on the work in her 1995 book on Van Hoogstraten (see Literature) is a striking observation of the painting's essential qualities.
- 6 A mere 30 miles southeast of London, Van Hoogstraten might have visited this estate, or similar ones during his English years. See J. Bryant, *Chevening: a seat of diplomacy*, London 2017, esp. pp. 61-63, where the attribution of the design to Inigo Jones is underpinned. The estate was owned by the Lennard family, Barons Dacre, and later earls of Sussex.
- 7 Brusati 1995, p. 110.
- 8 See for the development of the garden view in Dutch early modern art: E. de Jong, M. Dominicus-van Soest,



- De tuin in de Nederlandse kunst 15de tot 18de eeuw (Aardse Paradijzen 1)*, exh. cat. Den Bosch, Noordbrabants Museum, Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum 1996.
- 9 See for the 'hofdicht': P.A.F. van Veen, *De soeticheydt des buyten-levens, vergheleschapt met de boucken*, The Hague 1960; A. McNeil Kettering, *The Dutch arcadia : pastoral art and its audience in the Golden Age*, Montclair 1983, esp. pp. 71-75; W.B. de Vries-Schenkeveld, *Wandeling en verhandeling : de ontwikkeling van het Nederlandse hofdicht in de zeventiende eeuw (1613-1710)*, Hilversum 1998.
- 10 S. van Hoogstraten, *De gestrafte ontschaking of zeeghafte herstelling van den jongen Haegaenveld versiert met wonderlyke bejegeningen der Hollandsche nimfen*, Amsterdam 1669. See for a discussion: A. de Jager, 'Man en maag. – Eerlang. – Hagendeveld.', in: *De taalgids : Tijdschrift tot uitbreiding van de kennis der Nederlandsche taal* 1 (1895), pp. 72-82, esp. pp. 79-82; Brusati 1995, pp. 110-111; T. Weststeijn, 'Samuel van Hoogstraten, the First Dutch Novelist?', in: T. Weststeijn (ed.), *The Universal Art of Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678) : Painter, Writer, and Courtier*, Amsterdam 2013, pp. 183-207. Westerbaen's dedication is the last of eight.
- 11 See Thissen 1994, pp. 179-181.
- 12 Van Hoogstraten 1669, pp. 190-192.
- 13 Van Hoogstraten 1669, p. 193.
- 14 Van Hoogstraten 1669, pp. 230-234.
- 15 The etchings in *Haegaenveld* are not considered autograph. See Weststeijn 2013, pp. 187, 204, note 38, with reference to Blanc 2008, pp. 399-400, who does not include the prints in his oeuvre overview. I thank Celeste Brusati, Michiel Roscam Abbing and Stephanie Dickey for sharing their view that the etchings are not by Van Hoogstraten himself.
- 16 In Van Hoogstraten's 1669 *Still Life with Birds and a Cat* in Dordrecht (here fig. 13, detail) the cat is clearly after the foil. In the *Salmacis and Hermaphroditus* in the Leiden Collection of c. 1671/76 (here fig. 22, detail) voyeurism is the main theme.
- 17 See on the various aspects of this theme E.J. Sluijter, *Seductress of sight : studies in Dutch art in the Golden Age*, Zwolle 2000.
- 18 Van Hoogstraten 1669, p. 138: '[...] en daer den Poët speelen gaet, heeft ook den Schilder vryen toom. Wiens Schildergeest zouw niet tot wat ongemeens uitspatten, die de Poëten zoo Schilderachtich van lantschap hoort zingen'.



Detail of cat. no. 1



cat. no. 2

**Jan Lievens**

Leiden 1607 – 1674 Amsterdam

*A Tronie of a Bearded Old Man in Profile, Facing Left*

Oil on panel

56.3 x 45.8 cm.

**Provenance:**

Cologne, collection Paul Esch (1875-1950), 1922<sup>1</sup>

Cologne, private collection for generations, until 2024

**Literature:**

H. Schneider, *Jan Lievens: Sein Leben und seine Werke*, Haarlem 1932 (rev. ed. H. Schneider, R.E.O. Ekkart, Amsterdam 1973), p. 134, under cat. no. 165 (panel, 60 x 50 cm., signed with Rembrandt's monogram and dated 1631, copy after the work in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg)

W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandtschüler*, 6 vols., Landau/Pfalz 1983-1994, 3 (1983), p. 1805, under cat. no. 1278 (repeating Schneider 1932)

B. Schnackenburg, *Jan Lievens : friend and rival of the young Rembrandt : with a catalogue raisonné of his early Leiden work 1623-1632*, Petersberg 2016, p. 396, under cat. no. 198 (repeating Schneider 1932)

I. Sokolova, *The State Hermitage Museum : Dutch painting seventeenth - eighteenth centuries : catalogue of the collection*, 5 vols., St. Petersburg 2017, 2, p. 308, under cat. no. 686 (repeating Schneider 1932)

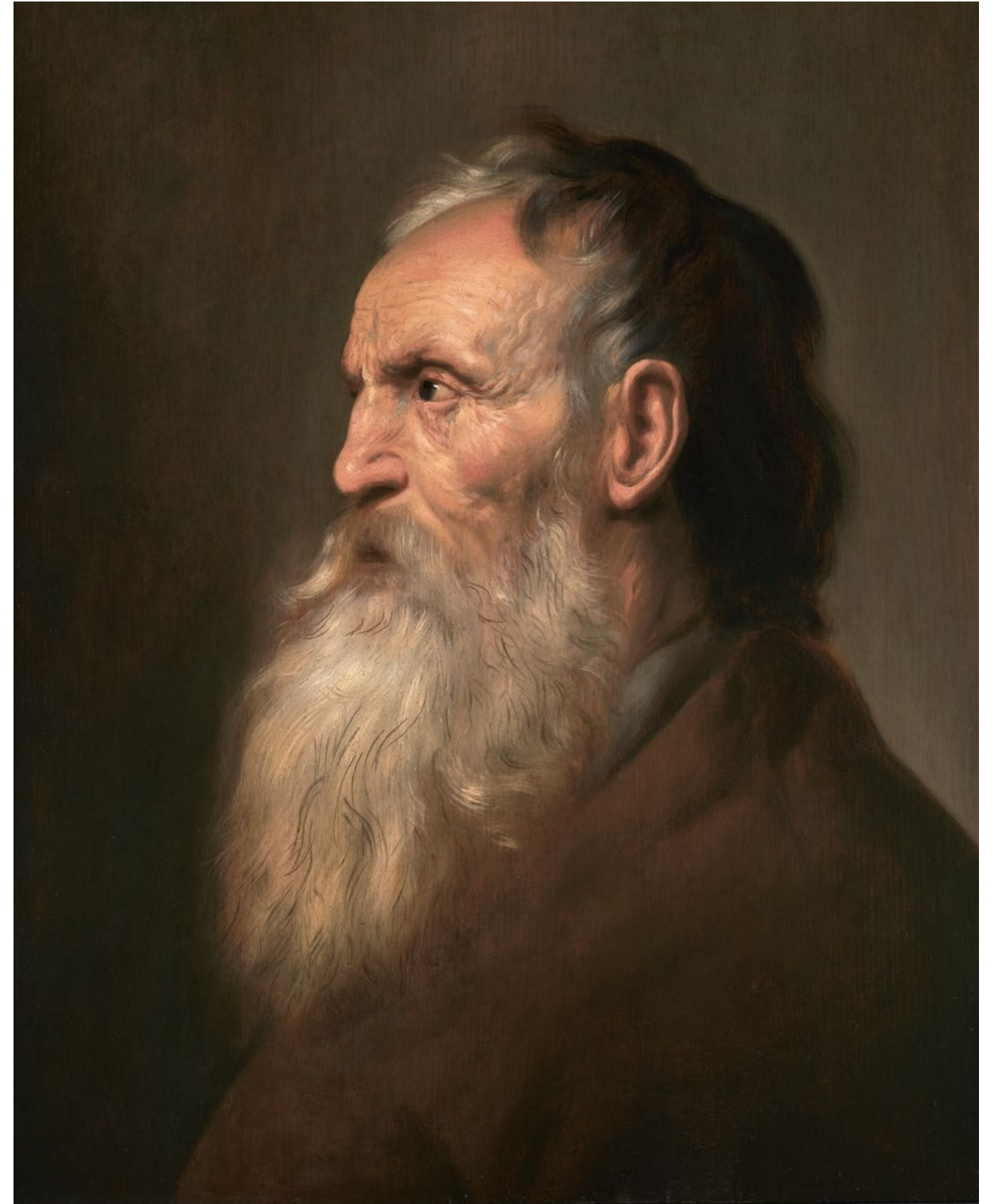
**Related work:**

Jan Lievens, *Bust of a Greybeard Facing Left*, oil on panel, 62 x 50.5 cm., St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. GE-736<sup>2</sup>

**Jan Lievens**

Jan Lievens' biography and critical fortune are well known.<sup>3</sup> A widely admired child prodigy from Leiden, he teamed up with his peer Rembrandt (1606-1669), with whose name and fame he became inescapably intertwined, not always to his advantage. Lievens was born on 24 October 1607 to the tapestry weaver Lieven Hendricx and his wife Machteld Jansdr van Noortsant. Recognising their son's exceptional talent, they apprenticed him at the age of eight to Joris van Schooten (c. 1587-1651). In the winter of 1617/18 Lievens was sent to Pieter Lastman (1583-1633) in Amsterdam, then the

most renowned Dutch history painter. Returning home in c. 1619/20, he set up his own studio in his family home and soon found eager patrons amongst the astonished Leiden art connoisseurs. While still documented in Leiden in 1622, it proves difficult to locate Lievens during the next years. Judging from his work, he must have been well aware of the artistic developments in Utrecht, though an apprenticeship with one of the Utrecht masters has never been established.<sup>4</sup> In the latter half of the 1620s, Lievens and Rembrandt – the latter back in Leiden after his own apprenticeship with Lastman – engaged in a notorious artistic competition. Famous is the visit





of Constantijn Huygens, secretary to the Prince of Orange Frederik Hendrik, who showered the young masters with the utmost praise, only critiquing Lievens' stubbornness 'which derives from an excess of self-confidence.' Still, Huygens granted Lievens the commission of painting his portrait and proved to be instrumental in his obtaining commissions from the court. Lievens' inclusion in Anthony van Dyck's (1599-1641) prestigious *Iconography* series of famous artists and patrons (among them Huygens, but not Rembrandt!) is illustrative of his fame at the beginning of the 1630s.

Following Rembrandt's move to Amsterdam, Lievens left for London in 1632, where he again met with success, receiving portrait commissions from the King and court nobility. Three years later he moved to Antwerp, where he developed a more international style, combining elements of Flemish and Venetian painting. He married the daughter of sculptor Andries Colijns de Nole, Susanna, and teamed up with such artists as Adriaen Brouwer (1605/06-1638), David Teniers the Younger (1610-1690), and his former Leiden contact Jan Davidsz de Heem (1606-1684). More successes followed, but in 1644 monetary issues caused Jan, Susanna and their son, the future painter Jan Andrea Lievens (1644-1680), to move to Amsterdam. There, Susanna soon died, after which Jan re-married Cornelia de Bray. Participations in illustrious projects such as the decoration programs of the Oranjezaal (1648/50), Schloss Oranienburg near Berlin (1653/54) and Amsterdam's new City Hall (1656/60), as well as important portrait commissions, solidified Lievens' status. Still, the last period of his life was full of sorrow. While Cornelia died in 1668, Lievens' debts mounted. He stayed in The Hague and Leiden but finally ended up – like Rembrandt – at Rozengracht in Amsterdam, where he died in poverty in June 1674.

### Out of the shadow

A painting's fate can be sealed for generations by one scholar's early judgement. In his encompassing monograph and catalogue raisonné *Jan Lievens: Sein Leben und seine Werke*, published in 1932, the Swiss



Fig. 1 Jan Lievens, *Bust of a Greybeard Facing Left*, oil on panel, 62 x 50.5 cm., St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum

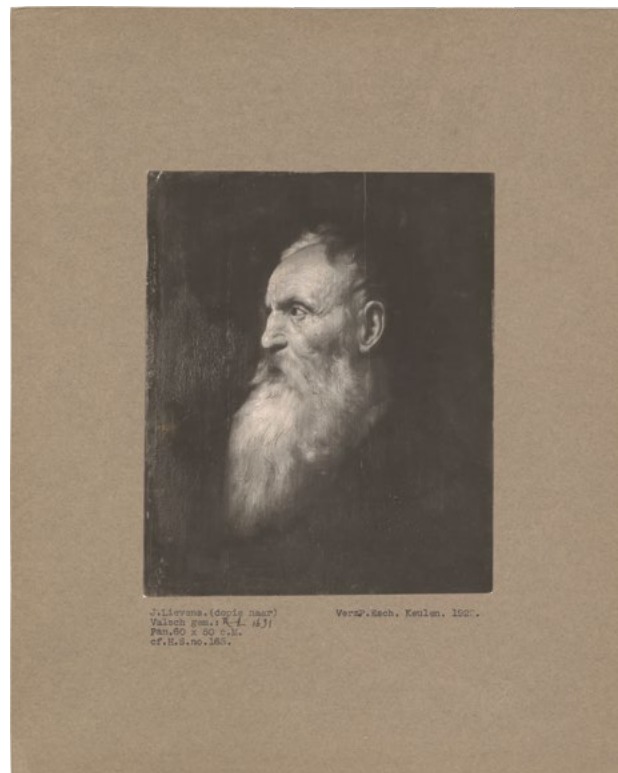


Fig. 2 RKD mount with the old black/white photo of the present work, mistakenly as 'copy after'

art historian and director of the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) in The Hague Hans Schneider (1888-1953) notes under his catalogue number 165, Jan Lievens' *Bust of a Greybeard* in the Hermitage (fig. 1) the existence of 'a copy (panel, 60 x 50, signed with Rembrandt's monogram and dated 1631) in the collection P. Esch in Cologne, 1922'. Although the measurements given by Schneider differ slightly, and the (false) Rembrandt monogram and the date 1631 are no longer present, the painting Schneider described in the collection of the Cologne lawyer and writer Adam Paul Esch (1875-1950) is in fact the present Lilian work. Quite possibly Schneider never saw the painting in real life – his judgement was likely based on a black/white photo of the present work at the RKD (fig. 2)<sup>5</sup> – but his opinion nevertheless remained current for nearly a century. Despite the detailed RKD photo always being publicly accessible, the authors of two subsequent authoritative publications on Lievens' oeuvre, Werner Sumowski in his *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler* (1986) and Bernhard Schnackenburg in his *Jan Lievens : friend and rival of the young Rembrandt : with a catalogue raisonné of his early Leiden work 1623-1632* (2016) both limited themselves to repeating Schneider's 1932 statement, and thus let pass the opportunity to assess the present work with fresh eyes.

Quite possibly, the psychological precedence of Lievens' *Greybeard* in the Hermitage, one of the world's most esteemed art collections, played a significant part in the *a priori* valuation of the one work over the other. Moreover, the unsigned Hermitage *Greybeard* had been attributed to Rembrandt from the eighteenth until the turn of the twentieth century and always enjoyed great renown as a masterpiece by him, as is testified by the various prints after the work from the eighteenth century on (figs. 3-6).<sup>6</sup> These 'Rembrandt' prints were no doubt the inspiration behind the apocryphal Rembrandt monogram and date 1631 that were apparently added to the present work at some point.<sup>7</sup>

As the better-known painting in the Hermitage was thus embraced as Lievens' original, the present work was – with precious little motivation – all too easily

deemed a 'copy'. However, in Lievens we find a young and notoriously restless artist, whose endlessly curiosity led him to sometimes revisit earlier efforts, in part to speed up production and meet client demand, but just as much to experiment with variant styles, techniques and compositional adjustments, producing creative reinterpretations with alternate results. The notion of autograph versions wasn't too current with Schneider or Sumowski, but more recently other scholars, such as David de Witt in 2008 and Schnackenburg in his 2016 catalogue have in fact listed numerous examples of this practice in Lievens' early production, pointing out different approaches, varying from preparatory studies, near identical versions, renderings in different styles and emphasis, and variant compositions (figs. 7, 8).<sup>8</sup> Following the surfacing of the present work, both Schnackenburg (2022) and De Witt (2025) inspected the work firsthand, and independently concluded that it concerns a fully autograph rendering, datable around the same period as the Hermitage painting, c. 1630/32.<sup>9</sup>



Fig. 3 Georg Friederich Schmidt after Jan Lievens, *Old Man with Beard*, 1756, 12.3 x 9.7 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



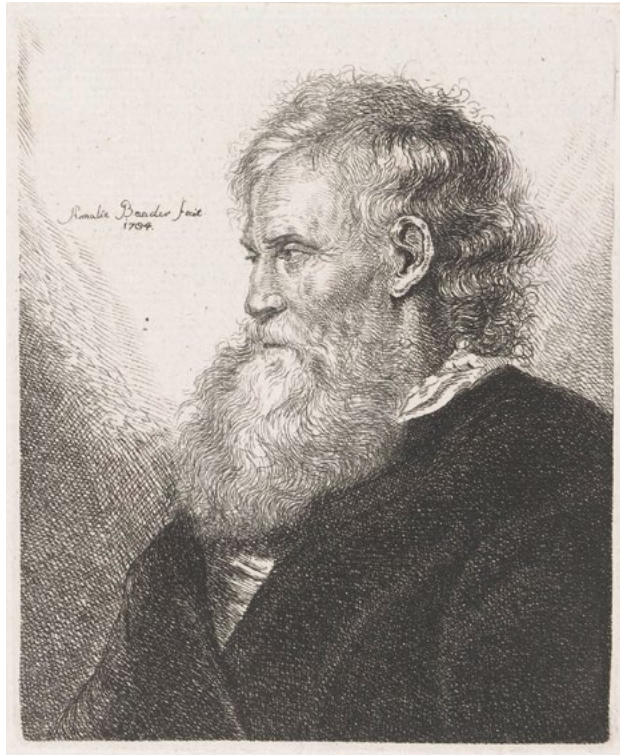


Fig. 4 Amalie Baader after Georg Friederich Schmidt after Jan Lievens, *Old Man with Beard*, 1784, 12.1 x 10.1 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



Fig. 5 Johannes Mock after Georg Friederich Schmidt after Jan Lievens, *Old Man with Beard*, 1824, 12.4 x 10.2 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

#### Variations, rather than versions

Indeed, looking at both works it is clear that although the model is likely the same individual, the two paintings differ so significantly, and on various levels, that one might best regard them as variations, rather than versions. For one, while the busts themselves are similar in size, the present panel is slightly smaller, causing the figure to appear more forward within the picture plane, an effect emphasised by the well-chosen contrast between the dark back of the head and the lighter sand coloured background, lacking in the Hermitage variant. In the present work the model wears a simple brown cloak over a grey undergarment, whereas in the Hermitage he painting wears a black velvet cloak over a white chemise. And whereas the man in the Lilian work is depicted in near profile – only his right brow bridge remains partly visible – with a clear view of his back, in the Hermitage painting we see him from a slightly lower, towering perspective, his bust turned towards the beholder, showing the right arm, the left shoulder and the opened cloak. The face and the incarnate in the Lilian painting were executed with coloristic bravura – white,

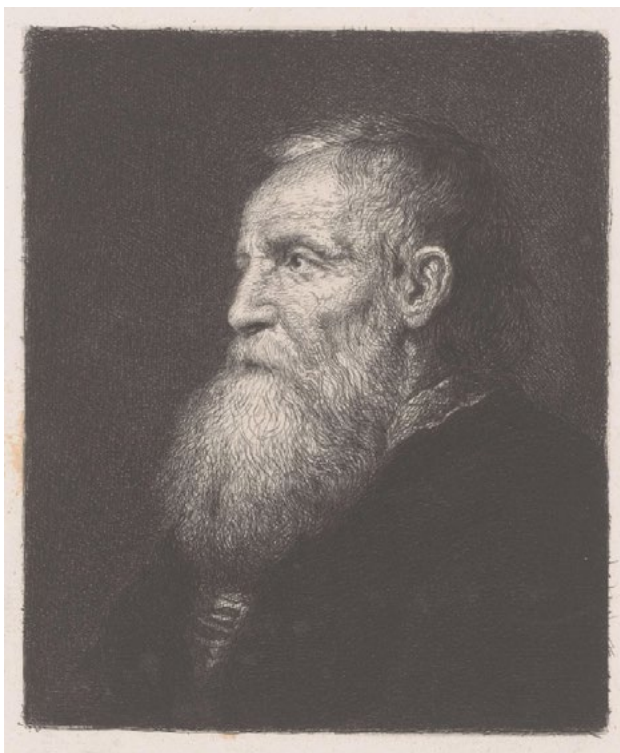


Fig. 6 Nikolay Semyonovich Mosolov after Jan Lievens, *Old Man with Beard*, 1872, 19.5 x 15.4 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



Fig. 7 Jan Lievens, *Portrait of an Old Bearded Man Wearing a Beret*, c. 1631/32, oil on panel, 61 x 47 cm., Portland (OR), private collection



Fig. 8 Jan Lievens, *Portrait of an Old Bearded Man Wearing a Beret*, c. 1631/32, oil on panel, 60.1 x 47.8 cm., private collection

greys, various pinks and red, all adding to a dazzling unity – and a phenomenal paint handling with short individual strokes that drape the wrinkles and the sinuous veins around the glimmering black eye (fig. 9). The effect in the Hermitage painting is equally impressive but rather different, as the paint structure seems to mimic a more parchment-like skin surface (fig. 10). The man's frown in the present work seems deeper than in the Hermitage painting, his stare more intense and his mouth more agape, as if he's about to speak; his beard is long and straight, emphasized by the thick scratches into the wet paint, whereas the many thinner scratches visible in the Hermitage

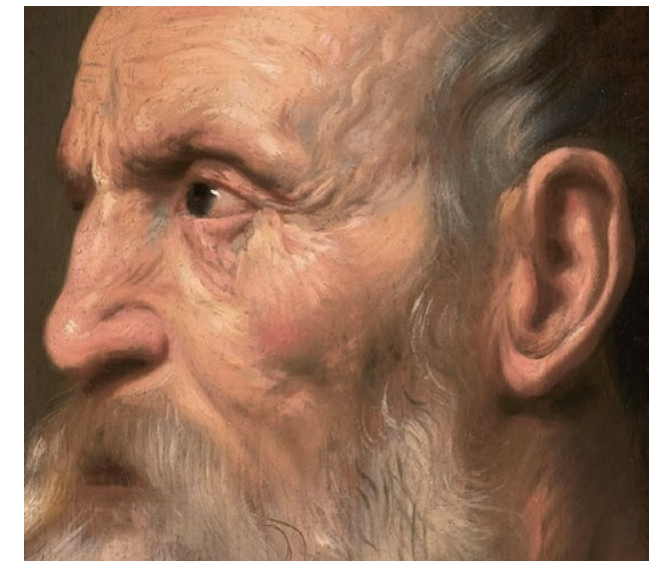


Fig. 9 Cat. no. 2, detail of the face

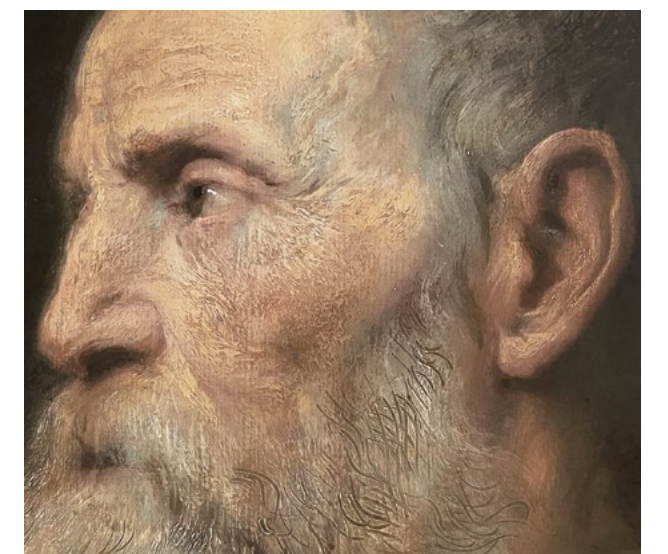


Fig. 10 Detail of fig. 1



painting give it a woollier impression. Such are the differences, that we can safely conclude that Lievens varied all of this on purpose, pursuing different ideas in both works, leaving the overall impression that in the present painting he endeavoured to convey the sitter as alert and energetic, in the Hermitage painting as more tranquil, sedate. Extravert versus introvert, the *vita activa* versus the *vita contemplativa*, as it were.

### Dating

Clearly, these works emerged from the spur of creativity generated by the artistic competition between Lievens and Rembrandt, the latter himself likewise experimenting frantically with representations of old age, varying countenances, light and dark contrasts, and paint handling to express different modes of human temperament.<sup>10</sup> Within this context, Rembrandt's *Head of an Old Man in a Cap* datable to c. 1630 in Kingston (fig. 11) is a fine example of how these young artists fed off each other's production, its introvert qualities and compositional scheme reflecting paintings such as Lievens' *Old Bearded Man Looking Down* in Schwerin of c. 1629/30 (fig. 12), its virtuoso patchy technique alluding to the daring execution found in works by Lievens such as the present one.<sup>11</sup> That said, in the painted *tronies*-of-bearded-old-men-department Lievens from the outset took the absolute lead, producing a startling variety of such busts that together reflect his ongoing investigation into subject, shape, colour and mood. Lievens, thus, before all reacted to Lievens. While some works datable prior to and around 1630, such as the *Bust of a Man Holding a Quill* of c. 1627 in Pau (fig. 13, cf. the veins), the Schwerin *Old Bearded Man Looking Down* (fig. 12), or the *Bust of a Man with a Cap* in Kassel (c.1629/30) herald the present work in tonality and/or execution, an especially apt comparison is found in a recently surfaced *Head of a Bearded Man* of c. 1631 now in a private collection, which shows similarly adventurous paint handling (fig. 14).<sup>12</sup>

Frustratingly, Lievens almost never dated his works, the Lilian and Hermitage paintings being no exceptions. Dendrochronological analysis of the present panel has brought about a plausible year for the creation of the painting from 1628 on,



Fig. 11 Rembrandt, *Head of an Old Man with a Cap*, c. 1630, oil on panel, 24.3 x 20.3 cm., Kingston, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, gift of Alfred and Isabel Bader

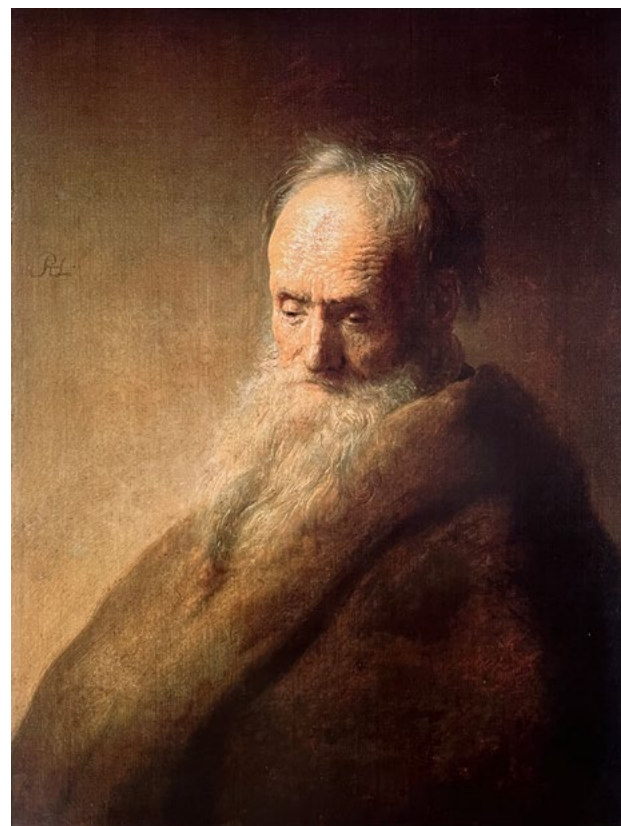


Fig. 12 Jan Lievens, *Old Bearded Man Looking Down*, c. 1629/30, oil on panel, 62.2 x 52.7 cm., Schwerin, Staatliches Museum

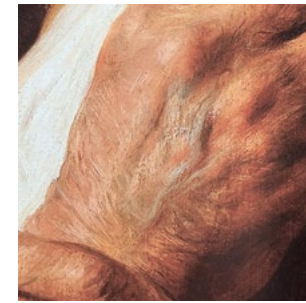


Fig. 13 Jan Lievens, *Bust of a Man Holding a Quill*, c. 1627, oil on panel, 60.5 x 45 cm., Pau, Musée des Beaux-Arts, detail

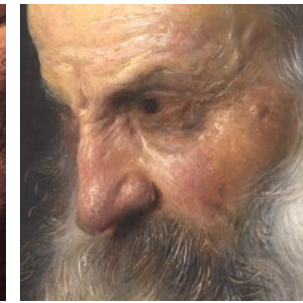


Fig. 14 Jan Lievens, *Head of a Bearded Man*, c. 1631, oil on panel, 57.5 x 45.5 cm., Europe, private collection, detail

which fits its stylistic dating around 1630/32.<sup>13</sup> Technical research on the Hermitage painting lacks, though. While one might instinctively feel that the connection of the present work with Lievens' production of c. 1630 implies a creation before the Hermitage painting, evidence concerning these works' mutual chronology remains circumstantial. A signed etching by Lievens, datable to c. 1631, might provide further substance.<sup>14</sup> Lievens rendered the old man in this etching – without any doubt our model, sporting the exact same nose, nose bridge, eyebrow and cheekbone – in perfect profile, much akin to the present work (fig. 15, in reverse). Likewise corresponding is the remarkable alert stare also encountered in our painting, which prompts the suspicion that painting and etching were created in close analogy to one another. If one considers this evident but hitherto unnoticed kinship on the one hand to the weaker connection with the Hermitage painting on the other, one can plausibly argue that the Lilian painting and the etching were done first, after which Lievens later revisited the composition, rather than vice versa. Moreover, the existence of an autograph small-scale variation of the etching that shows the model – coincidentally or not – in a more sedate fashion, likewise points in that direction (fig. 16, in reverse).<sup>15</sup> Given these observations, a dating of the present work c. 1630/31 is proposed here, followed by a dating c. 1631/32 for the Hermitage painting.

JH



Fig. 15 Jan Lievens, *Bust of an Old Man in Profile*, c. 1631, etching, 12.3 x 10.2 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (image reversed)



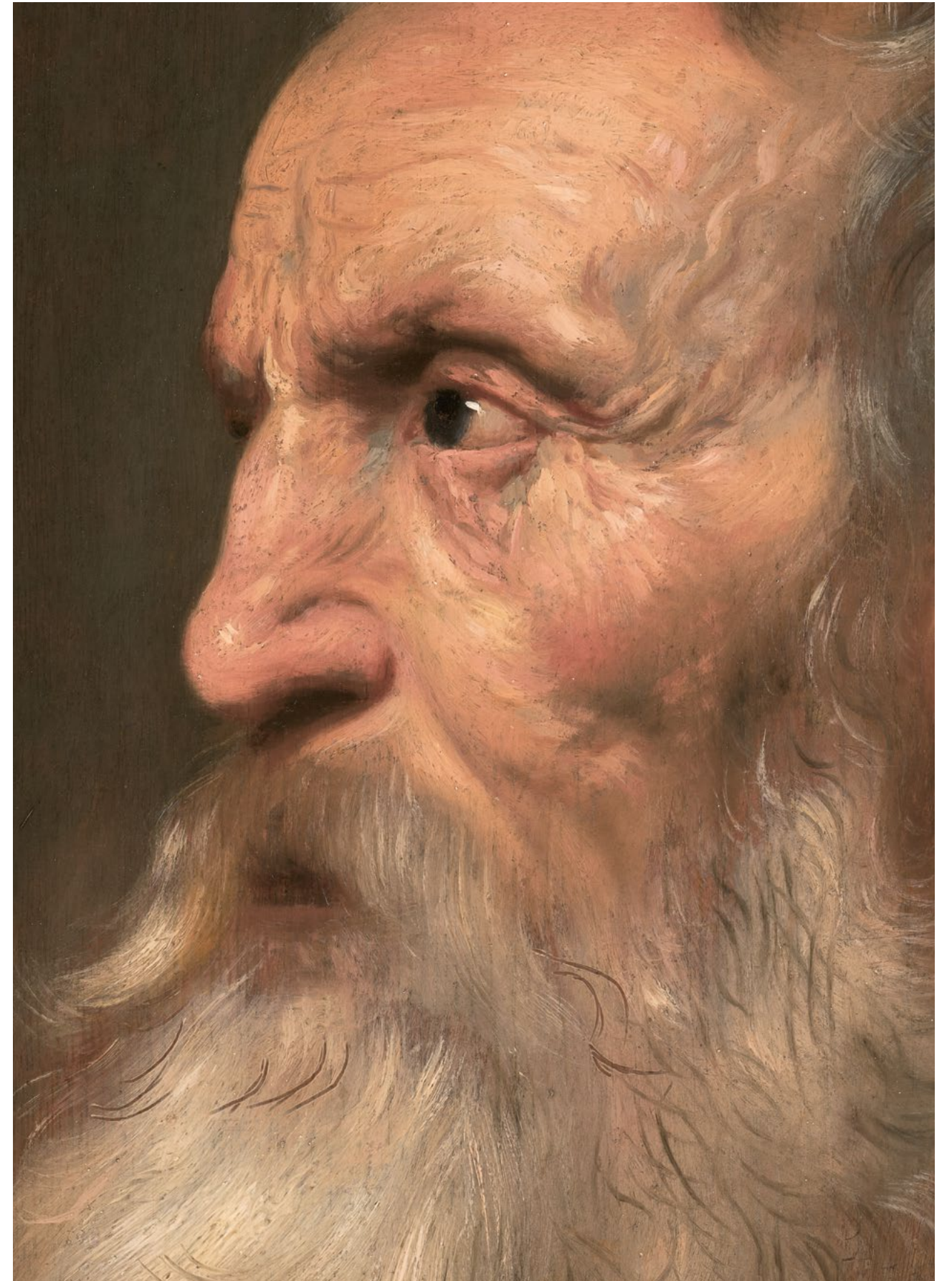
Fig. 16 Jan Lievens, *Bust of an Old Man in Profile*, c. 1631, etching, 6.1 x 5.2 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (image reversed)



## Notes

- 1 According to Schneider 1932 (see Literature).
- 2 Sokolova 2017, 2, p. 308, under cat. no. 686 mentions a third ‘copy’ in Donetsk (Ukraine) in the 1960s, apparently deemed the ‘original by Rubens’ (support and measurements not given). A copy after the Hermitage painting by the French artist Léon Bonnat (1833-1922) was auctioned in New York, Christie’s, 24 May 1985, lot 160, aptly titled *The Philosopher*.
- 3 Biography based on A.K. Wheelock, Jr., ‘Bringing New Light to an Old Master’, in: Wheelock et al., *Jan Lievens : A Dutch Master Rediscovered*, exh. cat. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Milwaukee, Milwaukee Art Museum, Amsterdam, Rembrandthuis 2008-2009, pp. 1-27; P. Bakker, ‘Jan Lievens’ (2017), in: *The Leiden Collection Catalogue* (4th ed., A.K. Wheelock Jr., E. Nogrady, C. van Cauwenberge, eds.), New York 2023–. <https://theleidencollection.com/artists/jan-lievens/> (accessed 19 January 2025).
- 4 Wheelock, in: Washington/Milwaukee/Amsterdam 2008-2009, pp. 6-8 alludes to the possibility of such an apprenticeship.
- 5 See <https://rkd.nl/imageslite/244258> (website assessed January 2025). The caption makes mention of the year 1922, probably the year the RKD received the photo from Paul Esch. From 1915 until 1930 Schneider worked at the Mauritshuis, The Hague. I thank the previous owner of the present painting for once more confirming that the work is identical to the painting in the Esch collection.
- 6 Sokolova 2017, 2, pp. 307-308, cat. no. 686 (Hermitage inv. no. 816). G.F. Waagen, *Die Gemäldesammlung in der Kaiserlichen Eremitage zu St. Petersburg : Nebst Bemerkungen über andere dortige Kunstsammlungen*, Munich 1864 (2nd. ed. 1870), p. 182, cat. no. 816, praises the work, but doubts about the attribution to Rembrandt (‘Ungewöhnlich edel im Character und in einem wahren und hellen Ton gehalten. In diesen Stücken weicht dieses Bild so sehr von Rembrandt ab, das ich einige Zweifel nicht unterdrücken kann.’). Waagen does not attribute the work to Lievens, though, as stated by Sokolova (p. 307). A. Somof, *Ermitage impérial : catalogue de la galerie des tableaux*, 3 vols., St. Petersburg 1899-1903, 2 (1901), p. 200, ill., includes the work as by Lievens. In addition to the prints depicted here, Sokolova mentions prints by V.E. Gromanin, 1787 and A.L. Sergeev, 1853 (lithograph).
- 7 Schneider does not specify where the (false) Rembrandt signature and date 1631 were found. No trace of them remains, and neither signature nor date are visible in the old photo.
- 8 D. de Witt, *The Bader Collection : Dutch and Flemish Paintings*, Kingston 2008, pp. 190-195, cat. nos. 114, 115; Schnackenburg 2016, cat. nos. 8, 108; 76-78; 109, 149; 143, 144; 171-192; 167, 168, 191, 192; 199, 200 (here figs. 7 and 8); 204, 205. In addition, an autograph version of cat. no. 193 recently surfaced (see our fig. 14 and note 12). Many of these versions had previously been disregarded unjustified as copies by previous scholars.
- 9 Schnackenburg’s written Gutachten (14 November 2022), in which he proposes a date c. 1631/32, is available on request. David de Witt inspected the painting firsthand in Amsterdam, January 2025, in the presence of the present author and Salomon Lilian. His estimation

- concerning the dating is c. 1630/31. Lievens expert Lloyd de Witt, has seen photographs of the work and fully endorses the attribution to Lievens. The painting will be included in his forthcoming Lievens catalogue raisonné.
- 10 Famous among many examples is that of Rembrandt’s *Laughing Soldier* (Mauritshuis, The Hague), his *Self-portrait*, (Nationalmuseum Stockholm, dated 1630) and the *Old Woman at Prayer* (Salzburg, Salzburger Landessammlungen, Residenzgalerie), in which he demonstrates on three identical sized goldleafed copper plates varying painting modes connected to different human affects. See J. Lange, in: E. van de Wetering, B. Schnackenburg, *The Mystery of the Young Rembrandt*, exh. cat. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Schloss Wilhelmshöhe, Amsterdam, Rembrandthuis, pp. 366-369, cat. no. 79; E. van de Wetering, in: E. van de Wetering et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings IV : The Self Portraits*, Dordrecht 2005, pp. 166-171; J. Hillegers, in: A. Tummers et al., *Frans Hals : Eye to Eye with Rembrandt, Rubens and Titian*, exh. cat. Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum 2013, p. 105, cat. no. 9. On the phenomenon of adapting painting styles to subjects, see A. Tummers, *The eye of the connoisseur : authenticating paintings by Rembrandt and his contemporaries*, Los Angeles 2011, chapter 4.
  - 11 On Rembrandt’s *Head of an Old Man* in Kingston, see De Witt 2008, pp. 261-265, cat. no. 161. For Lievens’ *Old Man Looking Down* in Schwerin, see: Schnackenburg 2016, pp. 313-314, cat. no. 133.
  - 12 See Schnackenburg 2016, cat. nos. 43 (Pau) and 105 (Kassel). The recently surfaced *Head of an Old Man*, auctioned in London, Christie’s, 8 July 2021, lot 24 (where dated c. 1631, referencing a dendrochronological report and expressing gratitude to Lloyd de Witt and Bernard Schnackenburg for independently confirming the attribution to Jan Lievens), now in a European private collection, is an autograph version of Schnackenburg’s cat. no. 193.
  - 13 Dendrochronological report by Prof. Dr. Peter Klein, Universität Hamburg, Fakultät für Mathematik, Informatik und Naturwissenschaften, Zentrum Holzwirtschaft, dd. 27 March 2023. The panel exists of three planks from the same tree. The youngest growth ring stems from the year 1614. That following, an absolute earliest dating for creation of the painting is 1625, the more likely dating being from 1628 on. Report available on request.
  - 14 Schneider 1932, p. 265 (Rov. 35), no dating; R. van Straten, *Young Rembrandt : the Leiden years*, 1606-1632, Leiden 2005, p. 184, fig. 313, spring of 1631; Schnackenburg 2016, p. 419, cat. no. 230, as c. 1631/32. Since the present Lilian painting has not been previously published as Lievens, and was never previously depicted, the evident proximity between print and painting has gone unnoticed so far.
  - 15 Schneider 1932, p. 266 (Rov. 54), unjustly considered this replica etching, although signed ‘IL’ and in the same direction as the other version, not to be by Lievens.



Detail of cat. no. 2



**Peter Paul Rubens**

Siegen 1577 – 1640 Antwerp

*The Virgin and Child of the Rosary*

Oil on panel

42.8 x 34.3 cm.

**Provenance:**<sup>1</sup>

Probably sale London, Henry Phillips, 2-3 February 1804, lot 149 (this lot: 3 February)<sup>2</sup>

Paris, Galerie Sedelmeyer, by 1897<sup>3</sup>, by whom sold to

New York, collection Edward Rathbone Bacon (1848-1915)

Paris, art dealer Eugène Fischhof (1853-1926)<sup>4</sup>

The Hague, collection Dorus van Gerssen (1871-1931) / Galerie Huys van Johan de Witt, until 1930<sup>5</sup>

New York, art dealer Julius H. Weitzner (1896-1984), by 1930, at least until 1936<sup>6</sup>

Princeton, collection Edward Leavitt Howe (1870-1952), bought from the above in 1942 (on consignment with Schaeffer & Brandt, Inc. between 1943 and November 1945); by descent to his wife, Adelaide Foster Howe (1901-1991), Princeton (NJ)

Sale New York, Christie's, 18 January 1984, lot 163

United States, private collection, until 2024

**Literature:**

M. Rooses, *Rubens' leven en werken*, Amsterdam/Antwerp/Ghent 1903, p. 543 (French ed., Paris 1903, idem.)

J.B. Townsend, W. Stanton Howard, J. Getz, *Memorial catalogue of paintings by old and modern masters collected by Edward R. Bacon*, New York 1919, p. 144, cat. no. 179

W.R. Valentiner, *An exhibition of sixty paintings and drawings by Rubens*, exh. cat. Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts 1936, n.p., cat. no. 50 (loaned by Julius H. Weitzner, New York)

*A selection of paintings*, exh. cat. Julius H. Weitzner, Inc., New York 1936, n.p., cat. no. 8, ill.

L.M. Nash, *Peter Paul Rubens : Loan Exhibition for the Benefit of the United Hospital Fund of New York*, exh. cat. New York, Schaeffer & Brandt, Inc. 1942, n.p., cat. no. 22

W.R. Valentiner, 'Rubens Paintings in America', in: *The Art Quarterly* 9 (1946), pp. 153-168, p. 163, no. 92

J.-A. Goris, J.S. Held, *Rubens in America*, New York 1947, p. 34, cat. no. 55

E. Larsen, *P.P. Rubens : with a complete catalogue of his works in America*, Antwerp 1952, pp. 217-218, cat. no. 72

J.S. Held, *The Oil Sketches of Peter Paul Rubens : A Critical Catalogue*, 2 vols., Princeton 1980, 1, pp. 522-523, cat. no. 386; 2, pl. 377





L.J. van Nueten, R. van Wassenhove, *Catharina van Siëna 1380-1980*, Leuven 1980, p. 169  
 J.S. Held, 'New Oil Sketches by Peter Paul Rubens', in: *The Burlington Magazine* 129 (1987), pp. 572-583, pp. 573, 583 (Appendix)  
 M. Jaffé, *Catalogo Completo : Rubens*, Milan 1989, p. 328, cat. no. 1050, ill.  
 M. Mees, 'Van Kluis naar Hermitage : Het Rozenkransschilderij van P.P. Rubens uit de Kluizekerk van Lier', in: *Lira Elegans : Jaarboek Liers Genootschap voor Geschiedenis* 1 (1991), pp. 109-154, pp. 124-126, fig. 4  
 F. Healy (B. Vanoppen, ed.), *The Holy Trinity, The Life of the Virgin, Madonnas and The Holy Family : 1. The Holy Trinity and The Life of the Virgin (Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard IV/1)*, 2 vols., London/Turnhout 2024, 1, pp. 287, 288; 2, fig. 334  
 To be included in B. Vanoppen, *The Holy Trinity, The Life of the Virgin, Madonnas and The Holy Family: The Holy Family (Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard IV/3)*

#### Exhibited:

Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts, *An Exhibition of Sixty Paintings and Drawings by Rubens*, 1936, no. 50  
 New York, Schaeffer & Brandt, Inc., *Peter Paul Rubens : Loan Exhibition for the Benefit of the United Hospital Fund of New York*, 1942, no. 22 (loaned by Howe)

By the time Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) painted the present oil sketch around 1630/32, he was well over fifty years old, The western world's undisputed number one painter, an international diplomat with a stellar reputation frequenting the royal courts of Europe, the personal friend of the continent's rulers, who endowed him with tremendous commissions. Rubens did suffer from gout attacks and melancholy, but since his marriage in December 1630 – after having been a widower for four years – to the sixteen-year-old Hélène Fourment (1614-1673) we don't hear so much about them for a while. Rubens was thus at the height of his powers.

#### A sketch and an altar piece

The recently surfaced painting here under discussion, last seen in public over forty years ago, is Peter Paul Rubens' autograph oil sketch done in preparation for a large altar piece with the same composition executed by Rubens and his workshop, which is kept in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow since 1924

(fig. 1).<sup>7</sup> Both sketch and altar piece depict the Virgin Mary, with the Christ child standing on her lap, presenting a rosary to St Dominic and other saints. The fine, balanced composition exudes grandeur but maintains a sense of intimacy. Executed with admirable economy, using only red, ochre, black and white over a swift brown outline, and painted directly on the well visible imprimatura, the oil sketch – for such models Rubens himself used the Italian and Dutch terms 'dissegno colorito' and 'schetsen'<sup>8</sup> – lays down all the essential parts of the larger painting. The final work deviates from its design in details, such as the slightly altered position of the Virgin Mary, who stands in the sketch while she seems seated in the altar piece, the likewise adjusted pose of the Christ child, and a few added attributes and elaborations. Given these differences, an engraving by Adriaen Lommelin (c. 1620-c. 1673) was surely done after the sketch, rather than after the altar piece (fig. 2).<sup>9</sup> The small panel served as the 'canvas' for Rubens' creative process, as the scale model that he could



Fig. 1 Peter Paul Rubens, *The Virgin and Child of the Rosary*, oil on canvas (transferred from panel), 42.8 x 34.3 cm., 207 x 155 cm., Moscow, Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts

show to his patrons, and as the basis for him and his assistants in the creation of the larger work, which was originally made for the Kluizekerk (church of the Cell, or Hermitage), the Dominican church in Lier, about fifteen kilometers southwest of Antwerp.<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately, details about the commission to Rubens and the altar piece's early history lack. It is only recorded for the first time in 1763, when it is described as standing on the Kluizekerk's high altar.<sup>11</sup> Soon after, the altar piece was sold to the Count of Cobenzl (1712-1770), from whom it was bought, in 1768, by Catherine the Great (1729-1796) for the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.<sup>12</sup> After the Russian Revolution, the painting was transferred to the Pushkin Museum.

#### The Holy Rosary

While no contract between Rubens and the Dominican friars of Lier survives, contacts might well have been established through Rubens' close friendship with the prominent Antwerp Dominicans Michael



Fig. 2 Adriaen Lommelin after Peter Paul Rubens, *The Virgin and Child of the Rosary*, engraving, 47.2 x 35.7 cm., London, British Museum

Ophovius (1570-1637) and Joannes Boucquet (1575-1640), patrons of Rubens who were both personally involved in the founding of the Dominican cloister in Lier in 1605, the latter even consecrating the cloister in 1612, reading the first mass in the Kluizekerk.<sup>13</sup> At any rate the theme of the Madonna with the Rosary was particularly Dominican. According to a fifteenth century legend that was introduced by the Dominican monk Alanus de Rupe (1428-1475), the order's founder, the Castilian priest St Dominic de Guzmán (1170-1221) around the year 1208 experienced a vision of the Holy Virgin Mary at the Monastery of Our Lady of Prouille in the south of France. During this apparition Mary handed St Dominic a rosary, teaching him the associated prayers as a powerful devotional aid. The rosary, a necklace consisting of prayer beads with a cross, was to be used as an abacus for the reciting in set order of the Holy Rosary, a collection of devotional meditative prayers and hymns, Hail Mary's, Our Father's, Glory Be's interspersed with fifteen mysteries, meditations





Fig. 3 Caravaggio, *The Madonna of the Rosary*, c. 1603, oil on canvas, 364.5 x 249.5 cm., Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

on episodes in the life and death of Christ. The veneration of the Virgin Mary, the cult of the Holy Rosary, and its promoting among the faithful formed essential aspects of Dominican life, at the core of their spiritual existence. With Dominican communities spreading over Europe, the adoration of the Virgin of the Rosary became an emblematic theme in the art of the Counter-Reformation.<sup>14</sup>

#### Rubens and Caravaggio

Not surprisingly, most of the figures surrounding the Holy Virgin and Child in the sketch and the altar piece are, judging from their clothing, recognizable as Dominicans. Before addressing their possible identities, it is important to point out that Rubens had a special affinity with the theme, beyond its importance to the Counter-Reformation. Around 1617-1619 he and a group of 'liefhebbers', a.o. the painters Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568-1625) and Hendrick van Balen (1573-1632), had spearheaded

a successful effort to ascertain for Antwerp a masterpiece by Caravaggio (1571-1610), the *Madonna of the Rosary* now in Vienna (fig. 3). Bought by Rubens *cum suis* for 1800 florins from the painter Abraham Vinck (1574-1619) in Amsterdam, the painting was donated to the Antwerp Dominicans' St. Paul's Church.<sup>15</sup> There it became the proud capstone of a recently completed cycle of fifteen paintings by a number of Antwerp masters, including Rubens, Van Balen and Frans Francken the Younger (1581-1642), each depicting one of the fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary, as seen in a painting of the church's interior by Pieter Neeffs the Elder (c. 1578/90-1656/61) where Rubens' *Flagellation* hangs second to the right of the Caravaggio (fig. 4).<sup>16</sup> Caravaggio's painting depicts the Holy Virgin Mary with the Christ child on her left knee, as she instructs St. Dominic to distribute rosaries among the clamoring faithful. To the left, the Dominican friar St. Peter Martyr, a head wound as his attribute, points out the origin of all grace, the infant Jesus. Rubens must have felt great satisfaction about his achievement of getting the Caravaggio to Antwerp. And clearly, he took inspiration from it, as is evidenced by his now lost *Madonna of the Rosary with the Archdukes* altar piece, executed c. 1621 for the royal chapel of the Dominican church in Brussels. Rubens' original painting was lost in the fires of the French bombardment of Brussels in 1695, but its appearance – showing Mary handing out the rosary to St. Dominic and a group of saints, among them the Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas (to St. Dominic's left), and to the right St. Francis of Assisi and Catherine of the, recognizable from her attributes, the thorned crown and the heart – is known from copies (fig. 5).<sup>17</sup>

#### Who's who

The lasting impact of Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary* on Rubens is likewise palpable in the present oil sketch, with its strongly related subject and evident compositional parallels. As did Caravaggio, Rubens' construed a triangular composition with saints grouped around either side of the enthroned Virgin and Child, adding dynamic by positioning Mary half seated, half standing on her right leg.<sup>18</sup> The chosen setting, though, deviates from Caravaggio's,



Fig. 4 Pieter Neeffs the Elder, *Interior view of the Dominican St. Paul's church in Antwerp*, 1636, oil on panel, 68 x 105.5 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



Fig. 5 After Peter Paul Rubens, *The Madonna of the Rosary with the Archdukes*, oil on canvas, 67.5 x 52 cm., sale Vienna, Dorotheum, 25 October 2023, lot 52 (courtesy of Dorotheum)

as Rubens renders the scene, in accordance to St. Dominic's legend, as a divine celestial apparition. The radiant Mary, whose soft and serene face echoes Rubens' brilliant drawing *Young Woman Looking Down* of about 1628 (fig. 6), holds the Christ child standing on her knee, as she descends to St. Dominic and his entourage with a fluttering filmy scarf on a heavenly cloud.<sup>19</sup> As St. Dominic, holding a gospel book in his left hand, gracefully accepts the rosary, another friar behind him, also wearing a Dominican habit, reaches out in worship. He must be St. Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274), who likewise stood behind St. Dominic in Rubens' *Madonna of the Rosary with the Archdukes* (fig. 4). No doubt the most distinguished Dominican besides St. Dominic himself, Thomas Aquinas was considered one of the western world's greatest theologians. To accentuate the divine light of his intellect, he was often depicted with a star or sun frontally on his capuche. Clearly visible in the Moscow altar piece, Rubens in the sketch merely hinted at it at the top of Thomas' fingers.



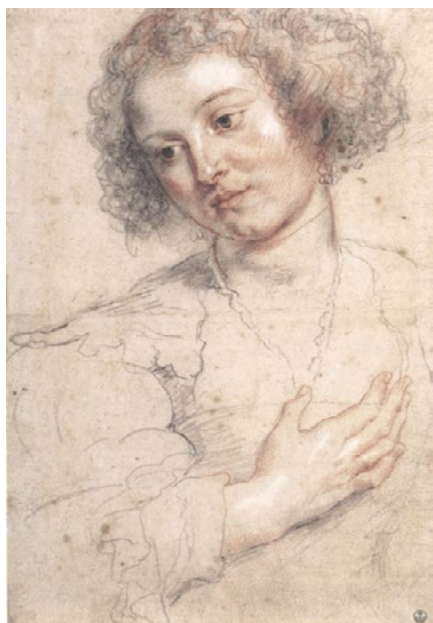


Fig. 6  
Peter Paul Rubens, *Young Woman Looking Down*, c. 1628, black and red chalk, heightened with white, retouched with pen and brown ink on paper, 41.4 x 28.7 cm., Florence, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi

The kneeling man looking up with his hands spread in grace must be a pope, given the papal tiara in front of him. Waagen, the first to present an identification of the figures in 1864, incorrectly assumed him to be Gregory the Great (c. 540-604), but since Rooses (1886) he has always been identified as the Dominican Pope Pius V (1504-1572).<sup>20</sup> Pius' papacy was known for its strong stance against heresy and its restoring of discipline and morality in the Catholic Church. As such, he became synonymous with the Counter-Reformation. Pius' dedication of the victory of the Holy League (a coalition of Catholic powers arranged by him) against the Ottoman Empire in the infamous Battle of Lepanto (1571) – a major moral and symbolic triumph for the Roman-Catholic world – to the Virgin of the Rosary, and his subsequent establishment of the Feast of Our Lady of the Victory, soon renamed Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

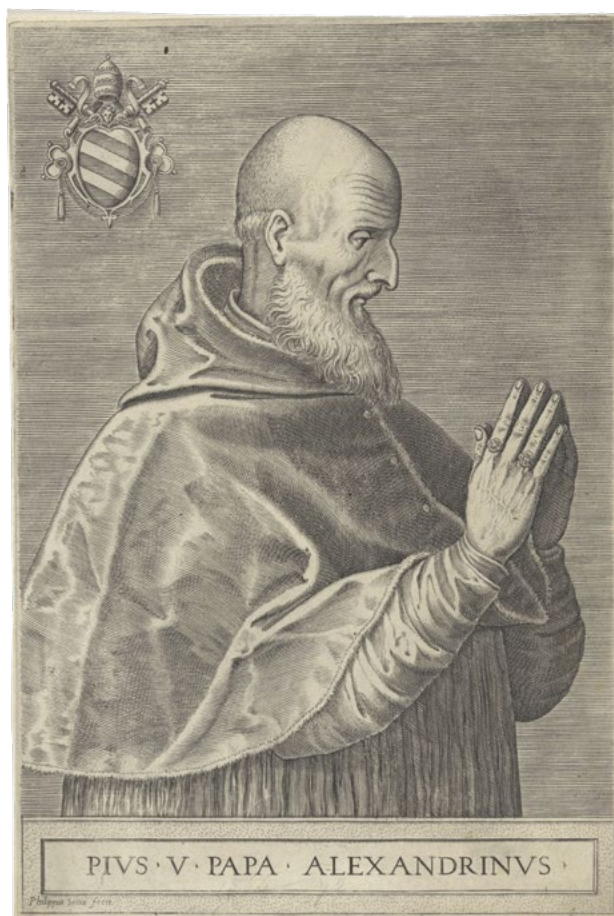


Fig. 7 Philippe de Soye, *Portrait of Pius V*, 1568, engraving, 24.5 x 16.3 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



Fig. 8 Cat. no. 3, detail of Pope Pius V

(7 October), explains his presence. Pius' characteristic facial profile, a bald head with pronounced forehead wrinkles and a hooked nose, was rendered by Rubens with flawless accuracy and vivacity (figs. 7, 8). Kneeling next to Pius while embracing the rosary and Mary's left foot is a female saint, recognized by Waagen as the Carmelite nun and mystic St. Teresa (1515-1582), but otherwise unanimously identified as the lay Dominican St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380), one of the great mystics of her time, who experienced visions of the Virgin Mary. In the altar piece she wears one of her identifying attributes, the thorned crown. Regularly encountered among the saints receiving the rosary within the theme's pictorial tradition – e.g. the *Madonna of the Rosary with the Archdukes* – Rubens depicted her blissful adoration here with barely more than a few brushstrokes, far more striking in comparison to the final altar piece (fig. 9).

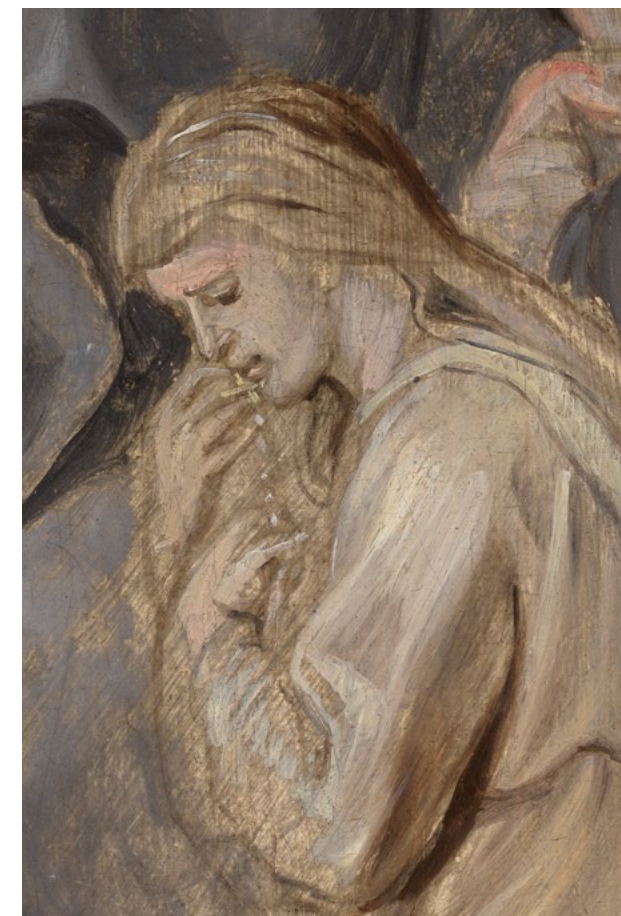


Fig. 9 Cat. no. 3, detail of St. Catherine of Siena

The identity of the three saints grouped to the right has been disputed. The bearded Dominican keeping his hand at his chest, his right arm stretched towards the Virgin and Child, has been said to be the Dominican friar St. Peter Martyr (1205-1252).<sup>21</sup> Despite a lack of attributes, Mees in 1991 alternatively proposed to identify him as the above mentioned Alanus de Rupe (1428-1478), the friar responsible for spreading the legend of St. Dominic's apparition.<sup>22</sup> Alanus founded the first Fraternity of the Holy Rosary, in Douai, making him a quintessential figure in disseminating the worship of the Virgin of the Holy Rosary in northern France and the Netherlands. While the suggestion is attractive – the Dominicans in Lier would have certainly felt strong adherence towards Alanus – and should not be disregarded, the pictorial tradition consistently depicts Alanus beardless (figs. 10, 11). Moreover, given Rubens' reliance on Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary*, and the similar right-sided position in that painting of St. Peter Martyr, who likewise has a beard and stretches his right arm to the Virgin and the Christ Child, might argue in favor of the traditional identification.

The bearded man on the far right, leaning on a stick and dressed in an ermine cloak, a cuirass and embroidered tunic – not a Dominican – is often thought to be a king. Waagen perceived him as 'Ferdinand', presumably Ferdinand III of Castile (c. 1200-1252), Knipping in 1974 suggested St. Louis IX of France (1214-1270).<sup>23</sup> Rooses (1886), and others in his slipstream, assumed he was St. Ladislaus, king of Hungary (c. 1040-1095), 'known for his devotion to the rosary'.<sup>24</sup> In the company of the Dominican saints, though, the inclusion of Ladislaus seems random. A convincing alternative was put forward in 1980, when it was stated that the man was, in fact, St. Gummarus (664-c. 714).<sup>25</sup> In contrast to the other saints depicted, Gummarus did not have a connection to the rosary. He was, however, the patron saint of Lier, and as such he did have a unique relationship with the city, and the Kluizekerk, specifically.<sup>26</sup> A Lier native, Gummarus





Fig. 10 Hendrik Snyers after Gerard Seghers (?), *The Mystical Marriage between the Virgin and Alan de Rupe*, 1636, engraving, 34.3 x 22.1 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

lived for a time as a knight – hence his clothing – and later retired as a hermit. A notably evocative episode in Gummarus' life was the so-called miracle of the tree.<sup>27</sup> When Gummarus and his suite once spent the night in a field, he decided to cut down a tree that stood in the way. This severely angered the farmer who owned the tree. Admitting his error, Gummarus had the tree placed back on the stump, took off his girdle and bound it around the trunk. The next day the tree appeared unscathed, to the amazement of the joyous owner. At the location of this miracle a hermitage was built (in Dutch: kluis), in time becoming Lie's Kluizekerk, its choir constructed on the exact spot where once the tree had grown. To commemorate the miracle, a wrought-iron tree with Gummarus on top was placed in the

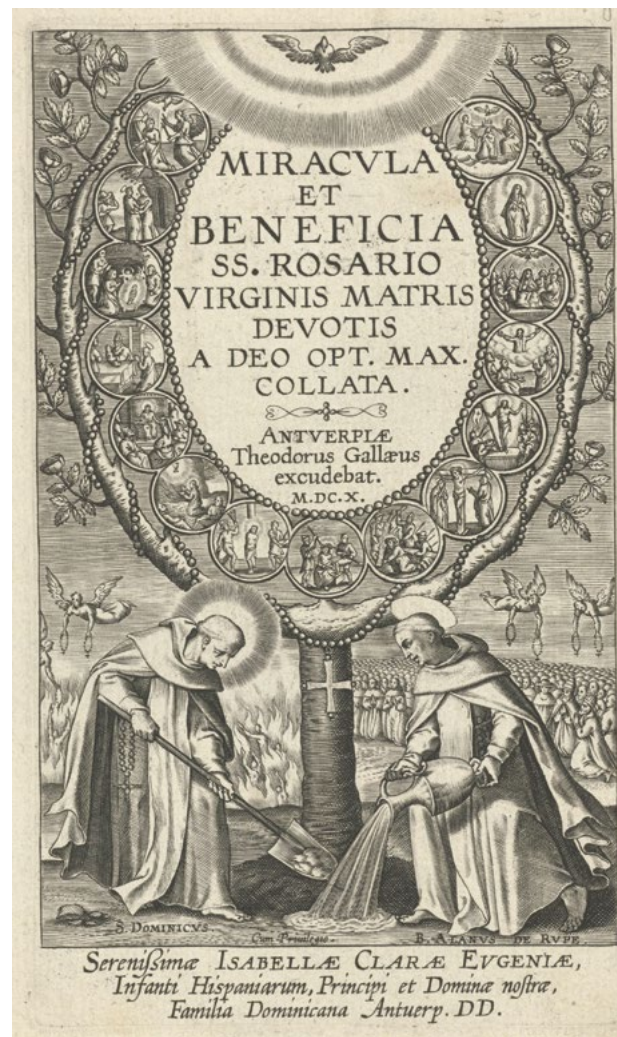


Fig. 11 Attributed to Theodoor Galle, *Title Print for Miracula et Beneficia SS. Rosario*, Antwerp 1610, engraving, 15.5 x 9.2 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

choir around 1475 (fig. 12).<sup>28</sup> Rubens' inclusion of St. Gummarus in his sketch and altar piece was thus completely justified, and geared towards the specific location. A painting by Rubens' Antwerp colleague Frans Francken the Younger, painted in 1627 for Lie's nearby St. Gummarus Church, depicts Gummarus performing his miracle (fig. 13). Given the resemblances in Gummarus' pose and clothing, Francken's effort might have well served Rubens for inspiration.

The last to be identified is the saint standing between the Holy Virgin and St. Gummarus, holding a crozier, his position and tilted head echoing Caravaggio's St Peter Martyr (with whom he clearly is not identifiable). At least since Roose



Fig. 12 Wrought-iron Gummarus tree, c. 1470/75, Lie, St. Gummarus Church (relocated from the Kluizekerk, 1994)



Fig. 13 Frans Francken the Elder, *St. Gummarus and the Miracle of the Tree*, 1627, oil on panel, 190 x 157 cm., Lie, Gummarus Church

(1886) he been recognized by most authors as St. Isidore of Seville (560-636).<sup>29</sup> In 1940 Knipping, as an exception, presented him as St. Antoninus of Florence (1389-1459), revered Dominican bishop of Florence, an identification embraced by Mees, who pointed out the tonsure, supposedly making him a likely Dominican, whereas Isidore of Seville had nothing to do with this order.<sup>30</sup> Although presumably a better fit, the inclusion of Florence's bishop nonetheless seems arbitrary. A possible alternative is proposed here. The saint with the crozier could be the hermit St. Rumbold (d. c. 655), patron saint of nearby Mechelen and St. Gummarus' dearest friend.<sup>31</sup> After one especially inspired meeting on the border of their mutual lands, the befriended neighbor saints planted their staffs into a dead tree, after which the tree came back to life and twigs and leaves miraculously started to sprout from their staffs.<sup>32</sup> We come across a depiction of this wondrous meeting in a painting attributed to



Fig. 14 Studio of Colijn de Coter, *The Miraculous Meeting of St. Rumbold and St. Gummarus*, oil on panel, 110 x 73 cm., Mechelen, St. Rumbold Cathedral





Fig. 15 Studio of Colijn de Coter, *St. Rumbold's Departure from the Pope*, oil on panel, 112 x 72.5 cm., Mechelen, St. Rumbold Cathedral



Fig. 16 Cat. no. 3, detail of St. Rumbold and St. Gummarus

Colijn de Coter (c. 1450-1539/40) in Mechelen's St. Rumbold Cathedral (fig. 14). One of a cycle of 25 paintings, other works belonging to this cycle depict St. Rumbold wearing a tonsure and carrying a staff (fig. 15), just as the saint in the present sketch and the Moscow altar piece. The argument gains further weight considering the undeniably intentional glance of the saint with the staff – both in the sketch and in the altar piece – at St. Gummarus (figs. 16, 17). Never addressed until now, this glance must emphasize a connection. All considering, the crozier saint's presence might in fact be motivated not so much by his devotion to the rosary (as is the case with the other saints, Gummarus excepted), but rather by his profound friendship with his neighbor, Lie's patron saint Gummarus, the reason that he looks at him instead of at the Madonna and Child, as all the others do. Moreover, the miracle of the dead tree coming back to life and the leaf-growing staffs – arguably referenced by the crozier – closely resembles, and could comfortably be merged with, the miracle of the tree growing back performed by Gummarus, the very foundation of the Kluizekerk, the main reason for Gummarus' presence in the group.



Fig. 17 Detail of fig. 1, St. Rumbold and St. Gummarus

### Treatment and dating

Until the surfacing of our oil sketch in 2024, the work had not been restored for at least a near century (fig. 18).<sup>33</sup> Rubens expert Julius Held (1905-2002) knew the painting firsthand, at the latest since 1942, the year of the Schaeffer & Brandt exhibition for which he, a New York professor of art history since 1937, wrote the introduction. Having published the work in 1947, Held, in his seminal *The Oil Sketches of Peter Paul Rubens : A Critical Catalogue* (1980) again underlined Rubens' authorship, but

observed areas of old overpainting around the face of the Virgin, the Christ child, and the face of saint Rumbold. Most of all, thick layers of dirt and old, yellowed varnish seriously impeded the view (fig. 19). The recent treatment was thus long due, and effected a transformation, the painting's fatigued appearance giving way to its once intended clarity. As noted by Held, the face of the saint with the crozier (Rumbold), in particular, turned out to be covered by disturbing ochre overpaint by a later hand, the removal revealing the plain quality of



Fig. 18 Cat. no. 3 before treatment





Fig. 19 Cat. no. 3, varnish removal



Fig. 20 Cat. no. 3, ochre overpaint in the face of Rumbold

Rubens' outlines (fig. 20, cf. fig. 16). The result allows us, for the first time since the work's recorded history, to fully appreciate Rubens' crisp tonality, his light-fingered brushstrokes, and the velocity and efficiency of his creative process.

The Moscow altar piece must have been painted soon after the creation of the sketch. As proposed by Rooses in 1886, both works are usually dated around 1630/32.<sup>34</sup> Affinity with other oil sketches from the period, likewise done in preparation for altar pieces, such as the *Assumption of the Virgin* in the Yale Art Gallery (fig. 21), datable somewhat later to 1635/38, or the *Coronation of the Virgin* oil sketch in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, datable to c. 1630/33 (fig. 22), indeed point to a creation in the early 1630s.<sup>35</sup>

JH



Fig. 21 Peter Paul Rubens, *The Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1635/38, oil on panel, 56 x 40.5 cm., New Haven, Yale Art Gallery



Fig. 22 Peter Paul Rubens, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, c. 1630/33, oil on panel, 49.8 x 40.6 cm., New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

#### Notes

- 1 On the parquet on the reverse of the panel, one finds an unidentified sticker with the handwritten number 483, no doubt an inventory number. The same sticker with the same number is found on the former frame, underneath a partly teared sticker of Schaeffer Galleries, New York.
- 2 'Rubens. The Virgin presenting the rosary, a beautiful sketch, in his finest manner'. Alternatively, the painting mentioned in the 1804 Phillips sale could, theoretically, be one of the two versions of the *Madonna of the Rosary with the Archdukes*, both small-scale copies after a lost Rubens altar piece, the version on panel once in the Marlborough collection, Blenheim Palace (sale London, Christie's, 16 December 1988, lot 119), the version on canvas (our fig. 4) recently in a sale in Vienna (Dorotheum, 25 October 2023, lot 52). While both versions are in fact detailed small-scale copies, the Marlborough painting was long thought to be a study by Rubens for the lost altar piece. The Phillips sale description notably does not refer to the archdukes, an otherwise significant aspect of the composition, worth mentioning.
- 3 According to Rooses 1903, p. 543.
- 4 Following Fischhof's red wax seal on the reverse of the panel.
- 5 According to the information on the mounts at the RKD (<https://rkd.nl/imageslite/49729>) and the Witt Library (sheet name: Courtauld\_038781\_Witt\_078664\_0025). The painting is not included in: H. de Boer, *Huys van Jan de Witt : collectie Dorus Hermsen, Kneuterdijk sGravenhage*

: voortdurende tentoonstelling van schilderijen der oude Hollandsche school, The Hague c. 1927.

- 6 According to Ludwig Burchard's personal notes (Antwerp, Centrum Rubenianum, file LB 238; photos 1-3), the painting was with Weitzner in New York dd. 24 July 1930, while he (Burchard) personally inspected it in Berlin on 24 July 1931. Burchard had already given his Gutachten based on photos received from Weitzner in September 1930. The painting was published by Weitzner in 1936 (see Literature).
- 7 For the Moscow work, see a.o. G.P. Mensaert, *Le peintre amateur et curieux [...]*, Brussels 1763, p. 271; G. Waagen, *Die Gemäldesammlung in der kaiserlichen Ermitage zu St. Petersburg : nebst Bemerkungen über andere dortige Kunstsammlungen*, Munich 1864, p. 136, cat. no. 540; M. Rooses, *L'oeuvre de P.P. Rubens*, 5 vols., Antwerp 1886-1892, I (1886), pp. 283-284, cat. no. 211; A. Somof, *Ermitage Impérial : catalogue de la galerie des tableaux : deuxième volume : écoles néerlandaises et école allemande*, St. Petersburg 1895 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), pp. 307-308, cat. no. 540; Jaffé 1989, p. 328, cat. no. 1051; Mees 1991; Healy 2024, I, pp. 289-290, note 15. To be catalogued in vol. IV/3 of the *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard*). The altar piece was painted on panel but transferred onto canvas in 1892 (Mees 1991, p. 138).
- 8 See F. Lammertse, A. Vergara, *Rubens: Painter of Sketches*, exh. cat. Madrid, Museo del Prado, Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen 2018-2019, pp. 18, 31, note 60, where the authors address the a-historical but widespread use of the word 'modello', which they therefore prefer to avoid (see also p. 142). Rubens uses the term 'dissegno colorito'
- 9 See Mees 1991, pp. 126-130, who identifies two states of the engraving. Held 1980, p. 523, under cat. no. 386, mentions a state of the engraving in the Albertina, Vienna, dated 1639. This seems a misreading, as the print he refers to is the second state, dated 1663 (photo in London, Courtauld Institute, Witt Library, sheet name: Courtauld\_038876\_Witt\_078940\_0005). See also Mees 1991, p. 129, fig. 6. The later state depicts both St. Dominic and the kneeling saint to the right without beard.
- 10 Mees 1991, esp. pp. 109-116.
- 11 Mensaert 1763, p. 271: 'L'Eglise dite de l'Hermitage. Sur le maître-Autel [...] de la main de Rubens [...] peint avec une précision & une délicatesse de pinceau qui surpasse l'imagination.'
- 12 Mees 1991, pp. 131-139. Following the Russian revolution the painting was transferred to Moscow in 1924.
- 13 See Mees 1991, pp. 109-116; A. Sammut, *Rubens and the Dominican church in Antwerp : art and political economy in an age of religious conflict*, Leiden/Boston 2023, pp. 134-142. Boucquet was born in Lier, Ophovius died there. The churches and cloisters of Lier harbored four paintings by Rubens.
- 14 See for an overview of the rosary in the Netherlands, G. Stam, 'De rozenkrans, richtsnoer bij het gebed', in: G. Stam et al., *Vroomheid per dozijn*, exh. cat. Utrecht, Rijksmuseum Het Catharijneconvent 1982, pp. 22-27.
- 15 On this painting and its acquisition by the Antwerp consortium, see: W. Prohaska, 'Untersuchungen zur "Rosenkranzmadonna" Carravaggios', in: *Jahrbuch*



- der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien 76 (1980), pp. 111-132; M. Osnabrugge, The Neapolitan lives and careers of Netherlandish immigrant painters (1575-1655), Amsterdam 2019, chapter 2, pp. 63-122, esp. pp. 110-111; A. Sammut, 'With a little help from his friends : Rubens and the acquisition of Caravaggio's Rosary Madonna for the Dominican church in Antwerp', in: H.P. Chapman et al. (eds.), *Ars Amicitiae : The Art of Friendship in the Early Modern Netherlands* (*Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 70 (2020)), pp. 119-160; Sammut 2023, part II (*Caravaggio's Rosary Madonna, c.1603-51*), pp. 177-282, esp. chapter 3, pp. 186-232.
- 16 See for this cycle: Sammut 2023, 'Introduction' and Part I (The Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary Cycle 1568-1671), pp. 1-176.
- 17 See H. Vlieghe, 'Over de betekenis van een verloren Rubenstekening', in: F.de Nave (ed.), *Liber Amicorum Leon Voet (De Gulden Passer 61/63 (1983/85))*, pp. 613-627. Another copy on panel was long thought to be an original by Rubens. See note 2.
- 18 Held 1987, p. 573 calls the present oil sketch' composition 'surprisingly symmetrical'. Healy 2024, p. 288, commenting on Held, points out 'the dynamism created in the *modello* for the *Madonna of the Rosary* through the division of the saints into two groups of unequal numbers and the elevated position of the Virgin and Child'.
- 19 See A.-M. Logan, M.C. Plomp, *Peter Paul Rubens : the drawings*, exh. cat. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art 2005, pp. 210-211, cat. no. 68. The drawing in Florence is a preliminary study for St. Apollonia in Rubens' 1628 *Virgin and Child Adored by Saints*, for the Augustinian Church in Antwerp, now in the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in in Antwerp (Jaffé 1989, cat. no. 902, 1628). Closely related as well (in reverse) is Rubens' famous drawing *Young Woman with Folded Hands*, c. 1630/31, black and red chalk, heightened with white, 47.3 x 35.4 cm., Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, accession no. V 81 (PK). The Rotterdam drawing has been associated with several paintings from the period.
- 20 Waagen 1864, p. 136, cat. no. 540, in his description of the altar piece, then in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg. Rooses 1886, pp. 283-284, cat. no. 211.
- 21 Waagen 1864 identifies him as St. Augustine, but often he remains unnamed. The identification as St. Peter Martyr seems first proposed by Lili M. Nash in New York 1942, cat. no. 22, and was adopted by Held/Goris 1947 and Held 1980. N.B.: Waagen 1864 does identify a St Peter Martyr, but it concerns one of the standing saints, although it remains unclear which one ('Ihm [Dominicus] gegenüber der heilige Petrus Martyr, ausserdem, stehend, die heiligen Isidor und Ferdinand [...]').
- 22 Mees 1991, pp. 120-121.
- 23 J.B. Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter reformation in the Netherlands : Heaven on Earth*, 2 vols. Nieuwkoop/Leiden 1974, 2, p. 280; Mees 1991, pp. 121, 146, note 41.
- 24 Mees 1991, p. 146, note 46, assumes that the identification as the eastern European Ladislaus started in Russia, where the altar piece had been since the 1768, referring to Somof 1899 (=1901) as the earliest source for this identification. However, Rooses 1886 already proposes the Hungarian ruler: '[...] un roi portant la cuirasse sous un manteau rouge à pelerine d'hermine. [...] Le prince debout à droite est St. Ladislas, roi de Hongrie, connu par sa devotion pour le rosaire.'
- 25 Van Nueten/Van Wassenhove 1980, p. 169. See also Mees 1991, pp. 121-124, who convincingly elaborates on the identification.
- 26 For Gummarus' life and his connection with Lier, see: T. Vieren, *Gummarus van Lier : Heilige in de tijd*, Averbode 2011. Gummarus' life (*Vita*) is recorded in various manuscripts in Latin and Middle Dutch, that all go back to the *Hagiologium Brabantinorum* manuscript, kept in the Austrian National Library, Vienna, see Vieren 2011, pp. 13-25.
- 27 Vieren 2011, chapter 1, pp. 28-42.
- 28 Vieren 2011, pp. 39-42. In 1994 the tree was relocated to the St. Gummarus Church.
- 29 Waagen 1864 is unclear about the standing figures. See note 21. Rooses 1886 presents him as 'debout un évêque, St Isidore, tenant sa crosse'.
- 30 Knipping 1974, 2, p. 280 (prev. publ. in Dutch, 2 vols. Hilversum 1939-1940, 2, p. 55); Mees 1991, pp. 121, 146, note 41. Both authors primarily discussed the Moscow altar piece.
- 31 For St. Gummarus' friendship with St. Rumbold, see A.B. Mulder-Bakker, M. Carasso-Kok (eds.), *Gouden legenden : heiligenlevens en heiligenverering in de Nederlanden*, Hilversum 1997, pp. 144-145; Vieren 2011, chapter 4, pp. 75-89. The initial suggestion was first proposed by Salomon Lilian.
- 32 Mulder-Bakker/Carasso-Kok 1997, pp. 145.
- 33 Following a comparison with the image in New York 1936 (Julius H. Weitzner). See further London, Courtauld Institute, Witt Library (sheet name: Courtauld\_038781\_Witt\_078664\_0025). The latter photo has the name of the Schaeffer gallery on it, who had the painting during the 1940s. The painting appears identically in the 2024 photo.
- 34 Rooses 1886, who also introduced the idea that the altar piece – in contrast with the autograph model – was to a considerable degree executed by studio assistants, supposedly Abraham van Diepenbeeck or Erasmus Quellinus. Waagen 1864 merely states that the altar piece is from Rubens' middle period. Valentiner, in Detroit 1936, dates the present oil sketch c. 1630, but later (Valentiner 1946) as c. 1627. Larsen 1952 dates our sketch as c. 1626.
- 35 Held 1980, I, pp. 517-518, cat. nos. 379 (Yale Art Gallery, as c. 1636/38, referencing other suggested dates: Oldenbourg, c. 1630/35; Haverkamp-Begemann, c. 1635; Rooses, c. 1638) and 381 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, c. 1632/33, referencing other suggested dates: Rooses, c. 1630; Valentiner, Oldenbourg and Held himself, 'early 1630s'). The Yale sketch is the preparation for Rubens' *Assumption of the Virgin* altar piece now in the Liechtenstein collection (it is noteworthy that the Yale sketch' kneeling apostles stretching out their arms seem modelled on the suppliants in Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary*). The New York sketch is a study for an altar piece destroyed in Berlin in 1945.



Detail of cat. no. 3



cat. no. 4

**Jan Steen**

1626 – Leiden – 1679

*The Merry Homecoming*

Signed on the boat: JSteen

Oil on canvas

86.3 x 118 cm.

**Provenance:**

London, Collection Sir Robert Townsend Farquhar, 1st Baronet (1776-1830)

His deceased sale, London, Christie's, 26 March 1831 (Lugt no. 12611), lot 58, to

Berlin, collection Edward Solly (1776-1844)

His sale, London, Foster & Sons, 31 May 1837 (Lugt no. 14736), lot 49, to Norton  
(460 florins)

France, private collection, until 2024

**Literature:**

J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French painters*, 9 vols., London 1829-1842, 9 (1842, *Supplement*), p. 491, cat. no. 48

T. van Westrheene, *Jan Steen : étude sur l'Art en Hollande*, The Hague 1856, p. 154, no. 303

C. Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke des hervorragenden holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols., Esslingen 1907-1928, 1 (1907), p. 155, cat. no. 642a; p. 190, cat. no. 755 (English ed., London 1908, p. 167, cat. no. 642a; pp. 202-203, cat. no. 755)

K. Braun, *Alle tot nu toe bekende schilderijen van Jan Steen*, Rotterdam 1980, p. 154, cat. no. A-443

The present painting showcases Steen's characteristic humor and moral commentary on human folly. In this scene, we witness a chaotic group, appearing in various states of drunkenness and merriment, demonstrating how the effect of over indulging in wine leads people to unrestrained behavior. While the jovial party have already embarked, a hopelessly inebriated young woman is being helped into the boat on their return home from a tavern in the right background, late in the afternoon. Jan Steen's portrayal captures a range of emotions and interactions, with figures engaged in animated gestures, some singing, others laughing, and even

passed out—a true illustration of 'wine's mockery.' The boat evokes older Netherlandish representations of the 'ship of fools', with its drunken passengers and a pig embodying stupidity, mankind's most shocking weakness.<sup>1</sup> The pig often symbolized gluttony or uncleanness in seventeenth-century Dutch culture, serving as a critique of the human tendency to indulge in vices. The equally animated group gathered on the shore, are seemingly engaged in a spirited exchange. The tavern is one of the favourite settings in *rederijker* farces and morality plays. The blazon, the lozenge-shaped shield coat-of-arms of a guild, hanging from a wooden post outside the tavern indicates that the





feast was organised for the rhetoricians, who were members of amateur dramatic and literary societies called 'Rederijkerskamers'. That the building in the present painting was also a stage for music and other performances, is shown by the musical instruments as well as two performers peering out of the window. The interpretations of Jan Steen's *rederijker* paintings diverge widely. Although there is no direct documentary evidence, Albert Heppner has asserted that Steen was himself a *rederijker*. According to Heppner, Jan Steen drew living inspiration from the performances of the *rederijkers* which were for him a bridge between nature and fantasy.<sup>2</sup> Heppner pointed at Steen's accurate representation of the *blazoenen* and the mottos of the chambers of rhetoric in Holland. He argued that although the scenes are humorous, they are never truly mocking or condescending. Therefore, he concluded that the chambers of rhetoric themselves may well have commissioned the paintings. Steen expert Mariët Westermann, on the other hand, has defended the opposite position. She claims that Jan Steen belonged to a bourgeois cultural élite that looked down upon the popular entertainment of the old-fashioned *rederijkers*.<sup>3</sup> In the second half of the seventeenth century the chambers of rhetoric had become a thing of the past, which provoked both a feeling of nostalgia and distaste. So, according to Westermann's interpretation the *rederijkers* were no



Fig. 1 Jan Steen, *Wine is a Mocker*, oil on canvas, 87.3 x 104.8 cm., Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum

longer the subject of a civilizing offensive but its object: they had become the laughing stock of the educated bourgeois. While Steen is celebrated for his moralistic and humorous depictions of excess, it can be suggested that he himself had a complex relationship with such behavior. He briefly owned a tavern in Leiden and managed a brewery in Delft. In the present painting, the overcrowded ferry scene with its drunken passengers and pig symbolize this ambivalence. The ferry can be seen as a metaphor for life's journey, in which people succumb to their vices and participate in the chaos.

The present painting is 'one of the artist's dexterously painted pictures', according to Cornelis Hofstede de Groot. The painting can be dated to the later period of Steen's career, around 1670, when he focused on moralistic themes with lively, complex compositions. This piece has a notable provenance, having belonged to prestigious collections including those of the British aristocrat, member of parliament and colonial governor Sir Robert Townsend Farquhar (1776-1830) and the English merchant Edward Solly (1776-1844). Between 1815 and 1820 Solly lived in Berlin and collected thousands of paintings, above all from Italy, Germany and the Netherlands. Many of the works were by artists little known at the time but who subsequently came to be greatly appreciated and are still renowned today. His collection formed the foundation of the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin.<sup>4</sup> The present painting has been in Solly's collection until 1837, when it was sold at auction in London, together with another painting from his collection by Jan Steen, *Wine is a Mocker*, now in the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena (fig. 1).<sup>5</sup> The inscription above the door in this painting is from Proverbs 20:1, which reads: "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."<sup>6</sup> A similar painting by the artist, *A Pig belongs in the Sty*, in the collection of the Mauritshuis, The Hague, shows a similar detailed rendering of the figures (fig. 2). Here, Steen portrayed a proverb which also relates to uncivilized behaviour.<sup>7</sup>

WB



Fig. 2 Jan Steen, *A Pig Belongs in the Sty*, signed, oil on canvas, 85.8 x 72.1 cm., The Hague, Mauritshuis

#### Notes

- 1 A.-L. van Bruaene, S. van Bouchaute, 'Rederijkers, Kannenkijkers, Drinking and Drunkenness in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Low Countries', in: *Early Modern Low Countries* 1 (2017), pp. 1-29, p. 8. In the regulations of 1539 for the rhetorician's chamber *Mozes Doorn* in 's-Hertogenbosch it is stipulated that a *droncken verken* ('drunken pig') dishonours the chamber.
- 2 A. Heppner, 'The Popular Theatre of the Rederijkers in the Work of Jan Steen and his Contemporaries', in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 3 (1939-1940) pp. 22-48, p. 25.

- 3 Van Bruaene/Van Bouchaute 2017, p. 21.
- 4 See: R. Skwirblies (ed.), *The Solly Collection 1821-2021 : founding the Berlin Gemäldegalerie*, exh. cat. Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie 2021-2022.
- 5 Sale London, Foster & Sons, 31 May 1837, lot 268.
- 6 H.P. Chapman, in: H.P. Chapman, W.Th. Kloek, A.K. Wheelock, Jr., *Jan Steen : painter and storyteller*, exh. cat. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum 1996-1997, pp. 222-224, cat. no. 38.
- 7 A. van Suchtelen, Q. Buvelot, *Genre Painting in the Mauritshuis*, The Hague/Zwolle 2016, pp. 268-272, cat. no. 48.



**Michael Sweerts**

Brussels 1618 – 1664 Goa

*The Virgin at Prayer with Self-Portrait*

Oil on canvas

45.1 x 34.3 cm.

A label with handwritten inv. no. 167 (or 164?) on the reverse

**Provenance:**

Possibly London, collection William van Huls (after 1649-1722)

Possibly his deceased sale, London, 5 August 1722, lot 166<sup>1</sup>

Possibly Haarlem, collection François Constantijn Druyvesteyn (1729-1767)

His deceased sale, Haarlem, Jelgersma and Van der Vinne, 26 April 1768 (Lugt no. 1678)<sup>2</sup>

Austria, private collection, since at least the first half of the twentieth century, by inheritance until 2023

Sale London, Christie's, 7 December 2023, lot 10

**Literature:**

Possibly R. Kultzen, *Michael Sweerts : Brussels 1618 – Goa 1664*, Ghent 1996, p.

144, cat. no. 11 ('Lost pictures / Pictures known only from sales and inventories'), with reference to the Druyvesteyn sale, 1768

**Introduction: A Reassessment of Michael Sweerts'**  
*The Virgin at Prayer with Self-Portrait*

This remarkably original composition by Michael Sweerts (1618-1664), unpublished and known only through archival sources until its appearance at auction in 2023, represents a significant discovery within the artist's oeuvre. Praised for his originality and innovative compositions, Sweerts is known as a complex and intriguing character who defies easy categorization. The following essay highlights critical aspects of *The Virgin at Prayer with Self-Portrait*, examining new findings from a detailed technical analysis and subsequent restoration, which underscore the painting's importance within the artist's oeuvre, and which clarify some misconceptions that were proposed earlier about the artwork.<sup>3</sup>

The painting blends religious devotion with personal introspection and provides a unique insight into the artist's life at that moment. The artistic milieu in Rome in the 1640s had made an unmistakable impression on Sweert's work: the Bentvueghels, the Accademia di San Luca, the echo of Caravaggio (1571-1610), the works of Sassoferrato (1609-1685) and Diego Velázquez (1599-1660); these influences and many more have been explored in several detailed publications. This frame of reference, along with information gleaned from the analysis and treatment of the artwork, suggests a logical date of 1650-1651 for the creation of the painting.

By the mid-17th century, Sweerts had established himself as a prominent figure in the artistic community of Rome. In 1646 he is documented





living with a group of Northern artists in the parish of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome and collecting fees for the Accademia di San Luca, signifying a position of considerable responsibility. Between 1648-1652, the artist was engaged in work for Prince Camillo Pamphili (1622-1666), the influential nephew of Pope Innocent X (Giovanni Battista Pamphili, 1574-1655). About this time, Sweerts must have painted the portrait of Camillo, which is mentioned in an inventory of 1650.<sup>4</sup> It was also during these years, under the papacy of Innocent X, 1644-1655, that the Pamphili family was at the height of its powers. Camillo was a noted collector of paintings by artists such as Carravaggio, Raphael, Claude Lorrain and Northern artists such as Hans Memling and Jan van Scorel to name but a few in a collection of what would grow to approximately 1,400 paintings.

Precisely in 1650 as well, Sweerts was awarded a Knighthood in the Order of the Golden Spur by Innocent X, which thereafter granted him the title of *Cavaliere* (Knight); a title which was given to Sweerts for 'birth, as well as for being excellent in the Science of Painting' and that was used by him in the ensuing years.<sup>5</sup> This knighthood was a more prestigious honor commonly reserved for nobles, in contrast to the Knights of Christ, which was a more usual honorary title for artists bestowed by the Pope. Adrea de Marchi and Claudio Seccaroni persuasively argue that by 1650 that Sweerts had become 'a noble, successful artist, singularly detached from the dynamics of his cultural context. It is clear that he lived and painted differently from the *clichés* of the time, displaying unparalleled attention to the real life of the subjects of the different classes that he depicted.'<sup>6</sup>

Under these various conditions, Sweerts painted *The Virgin at Prayer with Self-Portrait*, which serves simultaneously as a devotional work as well as a reference to his relationship with the Pamphili family, who were his most important patrons at the time. The proposed relationship between this painting and the Pamphili family will be discussed below. What also sets this painting apart is its overt religious tone. In general, there is a paucity of religious themes in

paintings by Sweerts, with *The Seven Acts of Mercy* from 1648/49 and a *Lamentation* known from a print being the exceptions, as well as this painting.<sup>7</sup>

### Revealing the Original Composition

The small format of the painting belies its enormous visual impact. The composition depicts the artist holding or presenting a painting of the Virgin Mary at Prayer, with his shadowed figure peering out from behind the framed image. The assumption that the figure is Sweerts is based on several points: the visage works as a conceivable self-portrait and the age of the man is consistent with Sweerts' age at the time. Furthermore, the depicted Virgin is his concept of the Virgin at prayer, that is his own composition and rendering, not a copy after another artist. In fact, such a painting by Sweerts is mentioned in two auctions, in 1722 and 1768.<sup>8</sup>

Sweerts has depicted himself wearing a red velvet doublet, discreet and refined, which perfectly symbolises his status as a recently knighted Cavaliere of the Golden Spur.<sup>9</sup> Red was an easily recognized symbol of wealth and power in Roman society during the Renaissance and Baroque periods in Italy. He appears to be a relatively young man, so 32 years (his age in 1650) is plausible. What is so extraordinary about this composition is his own placement tangential to a religious portrayal. The figure holding the painting is set against a pastel-colored sky with pink, blue and purple clouds. There is no horizon, creating an ethereal quality that pervades the entire painting. The figure looks out to the viewer, literally and seemingly figuratively, in the shadow of the Virgin.

The Virgin is depicted as a youthful figure, almost still a girl; she stands out starkly against the enframed dark background. She is wearing a simple but intensely white tunic, symbolizing her purity, complemented by an ultramarine sash tied around her slim waist; the blue being a traditional iconographic marker for the Virgin. Additionally, her head is adorned with a warm golden-colored headdress, further enhancing her divine, yet modest representation. This use of a head covering with warm golden tones can



Fig. 1 Cat. no. 5 before the restoration procedure. Image Redivivus. The background is completely overpainted



Fig. 2 Cat. no. 5 after the restoration procedure

be found in earlier depictions of the Virgin in the seventeenth century in Rome; it adds a distinctive, radiant element to the composition, contributing to the overall spiritual quality of the work.

The frame that surrounds the painting of the Virgin is delicate in both form and color; the full design of this frame emerged during the restoration (figs. 1, 2). Interestingly, the frame appears to be a metal construction, as the difference between the narrow frame and the relatively large corner ornamentation would only be possible with a strong material such as metal. This idea is further strengthened by the highlights and fine shadows of the fleur-de-lis in the composition (fig. 3). Its appearance suggests that Sweerts was probably inspired by contemporaneous frame designs with prominent ornamentation, made specifically for smaller artworks. A group of closely related examples are the silver frames designed by Alessandro Algardi (1598-1651) and made by Francesco Perone for 27 paintings commissioned by Innocent X between 1648-1652.<sup>10</sup> The fleur-de-lis

Fig. 3 Cat. no. 5, detail of the corner element in the shape of fleur-de-lis of the frame surrounding the painting of the Virgin



finials must be a reference to Sweerts' relationship with the Papal family as it was a well-known element in the Papal coat of arms of the Pamphili family, and used by Innocent X, as seen in his bust sculpted by Alessandro Algardi of c. 1647/48 now in the Palazzo Venezia (fig. 4, 5). Given the surrounding context, the employment of this symbol cannot be seen as casual, and its use would be unlikely for those outside of the Papal family, considering the socio-political dominance of the Papal States in Rome at the time.





Fig. 4 Alessandro Algardi, *Bust of Pope Innocent X*, 1647-1648, Rome, Palazzo Venezia



Fig. 5 Detail of fig. 4, fleur-de-lis ornament in Alessandro Algardi, *Bust of Pope Innocent X*, 1647-1648, Rome, Palazzo Venezia

Like many Flemish artists of the period, Sweerts was deeply influenced by the Catholic Counter-Reformation and the church's efforts to maintain religious influence through art. In certain elements, it appears that Sweerts draws not only on Renaissance masters such as Raphael, but also upon the influence of Italian masterworks that were in the Pamphili collection at the time. For example, the humble attire of the Sweerts' Virgin recalls the realism of Caravaggio's *Penitent Magdalene* from the Doria Pamphili Collection (fig. 6). There is little doubt as well that Sweerts was influenced by the very popular depictions of the Virgin at Prayer by Sassoferatto (fig. 7), who was still working in Rome at the time Sweerts was there, though the porcelain

perfection of the Virgin's skin and clothing is clearly not what Sweerts was aiming for. While Sweerts' Virgin's cloth headscarf and the dark background on the painting of the Virgin can be linked to Sassoferatto's compositions, which would have certainly been known by Sweerts, it is probably more the sense of personal piety that appealed to him. His depiction of the Virgin Mary visibly heightened against a dark background clearly calls to mind these representations, which had their roots in sixteenth century Catholic reforms aimed at generating a more personal approach to worship and encouraging individual devotion. Simon Schama aptly described Sweerts' approach to painting as seeking to "marry the physical monumentality of the great Italian art with the common humanity of the north," a synthesis that is evident in this painting's combination of grand spiritual themes and tangible human emotion.<sup>11</sup>

The Virgin Mary at prayer, accepting her fate as bestowed by God, begs the question of whether the artist, in presenting himself in the shadow of her, is also reflecting on and accepting his own destiny, which within the decade of this painting would lead him to missionary work for the Paris Foreign Missionary Society. The seeds of the new missionary society were planted when the Jesuit missionary Alexandre de Rhodes (1593-1660) was recalled to Rome in 1648 and subsequently published his book in 1650 in Rome on the missionary work he carried out in Vietnam as well as several other influential publications in the ensuing



Fig. 6 Caravaggio, *Penitent Magdalene*, 1594/95, oil on canvas, 122.5 x 98.5 cm., Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphili



Fig. 7 Sassoferatto, *The Virgin at Prayer*, 1640/50, oil on canvas, 73 x 58 cm., London, National Gallery

years. Possibly through Alexandre de Rhodes, Sweerts received an introduction to Marie Madeleine de Vignerot (1604-1675), best known as the Duchess de'Anguillon, niece to Cardinal Richelieu. She and Sweerts had established a friendship that has been noted in letters, although it is unclear how they met.<sup>12</sup> De Rhodes also obtained encouragement from Innocent X to found the Foreign Missionary Society Paris, of which Vignerot was a principal financier; this new organization would allow lay missionaries to accompany clergy to establish Catholic missions abroad.

All this information represents new connections about the artwork that were only made possible by our thorough investigation and exhaustive restoration that revealed the original paint layers. When it was first examined by the Redivivus team in the spring of 2024, approximately 60% of the painting had been overpainted (fig. 1); microscopic assessment, testing of solvent sensitivity of the various paint layers, and cross-sectional analysis were conducted to safely identify and assess the feasibility of removing the aged layers of overpainting. The process ensured minimal interference with the underlying composition while allowing us to remove the overpaint and reveal the full depth of the artist's composition (fig. 2). This complex and challenging treatment was thus successful in restoring the artwork's intended composition and palette, taking into consideration its age of 375 years.

### Understanding the Artist's Intention Through Technical Investigation and Restoration

The arrival of the artwork at Redivivus, the sixth painting by Sweerts to be investigated and treated at the studio over the last 8 years, provided an additional opportunity for a technical investigation that would both guide the restoration process and further enhance our understanding of Sweerts' techniques and the dating of the artwork. Since the painting has only recently come to light, it is even more important to consider its new status, post-restoration. Why the composition had been changed so drastically in the past is unknown. One theory to speculate on could be that the fleur-de-lis may have been covered to eradicate the reference to the Pamphili family or

perhaps it was perceived as a reference to France, also commonly symbolized by the fleur-de-lis. The discovery of these previously hidden details is crucial for correctly understanding the painting's significance. Since most paintings by Sweerts are not dated, it is essential to rely on the documented materials and comparative technical data to establish a timeline of the typical material characteristics of his oeuvre, as was begun in 2002 for the exhibition at the Rijksmuseum.<sup>13</sup> A full investigation was carried out over the course of restoration of the *Virgin Mary with Self-Portrait*; in each part we uncovered small details about the materials used and the specific techniques Sweerts applied in this painting that refer precisely to the proposed time period.

### Textile Support

The artwork currently consists of multiple textile supports, resulting from at least two lining procedures during previous conservation campaigns. The original textile support was thoroughly assessed using high magnification and polarising microscopy, which confirmed that the material is flax bast fibers (linen). The weave was identified as a simple or plain weave, consisting of interlacing horizontal and vertical threads. The inconsistent thickness and rotation of the threads, as well as some other irregularities on the textile indicate a combination of the handmade labor used for spinning the threads and hand-operated loom production.

At present, the artwork now appears larger in the vertical direction than intended. The true measurements of the image are 43cm x 34 cm. This matches quite a few of Sweert's Roman period canvases, such as the group of paintings of *The Old Woman Spinning Yarn*.<sup>14</sup>

To document the textile, microscopic images were captured alongside X-radiography and polarising microscopy of the fibers. The first lining support was found to be a twill weave, applied with a lead white paste visible in the X-ray image (fig 8). Interestingly, the twill structure has left slight marks on the painting's surface, likely caused by the temperatures used during the lining process.



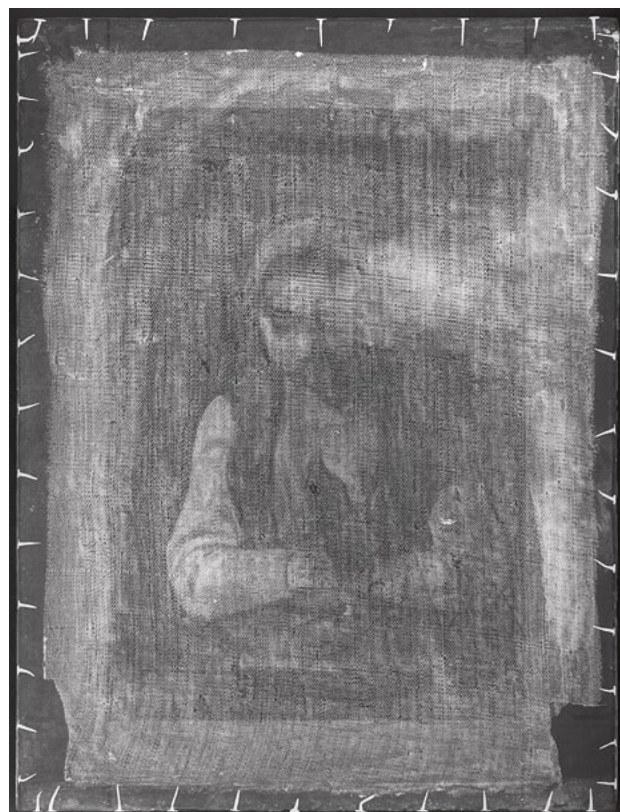


Fig. 8 Cat. no. 5, X-radiograph. Image Redivivus

### Preparatory Layers

The textile is prepared with a reddish brown ground layer which is relatively transparent in the X-ray imaging.<sup>15</sup> Analysis of cross-section samples confirmed that the ground is a single red colored layer composed of fine particles of what appears to be natural iron oxide and larger particles of silica based materials (fig. 9). The outlines of the larger siliceous particles are more clearly seen when examined under UV light (fig. 10).

The consistency of this ground is similar to the preparation layers documented on other works Sweerts made in Rome. Analysis by Arie Wallert, in the Rijksmuseum catalogue proved that Sweerts used local grounds that were prepared with mixtures of clay materials.<sup>16</sup> Inclusion of a long thin particle on the right side of the sample above is similar to the plate-like materials characteristic of this locally sourced material. Wallert documents similar preparatory layers on Sweerts' *Portrait of Joseph Deutz*, the *Seven Acts of Mercy* series, the *Painter's Studio*, and *The Card Players*, all works that fit to

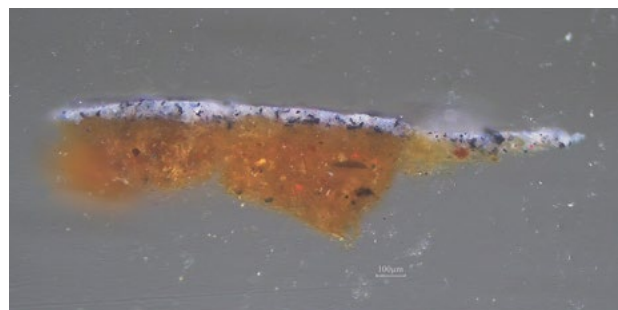


Fig. 9 Cross section taken from blue sky area in cat. no. 5 in normal light viewed at 20X magnification. Image Redivivus

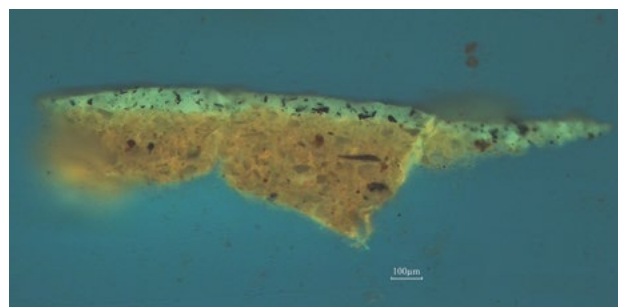


Fig. 10 Cross section taken from blue sky area in cat. no. 5 in UV light viewed at 20X magnification. Image Redivivus

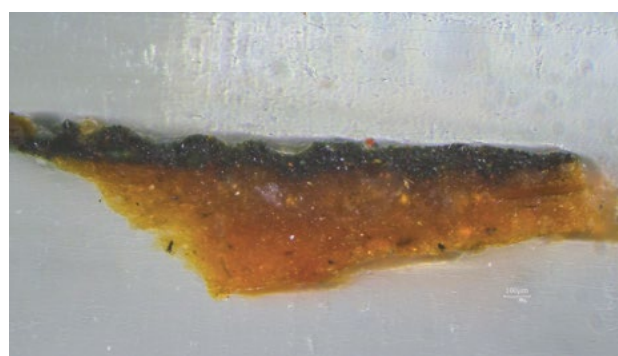


Fig. 11 Cross section from dark background in Sweerts' *A Game of Backgammon* in normal light viewed at 20X magnification. Image Redivivus

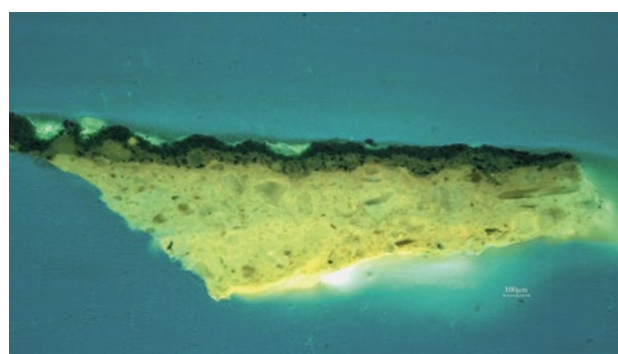


Fig. 12 Cross section from dark background in Sweerts' *A Game of Backgammon* in UV light viewed at 20X magnification. Image Redivivus



Fig. 13 Cat. no. 5, detail of the Virgin's hands in IRR to show the thin and thick contour lines of the underdrawing and further underpainting under the arms. Image Redivivus

the proposed time period. At Redivivus we have documented a similar ground on Sweerts' painting, *A Game of Backgammon* (figs. 11, 12) which is approximately dated to the same period.<sup>17</sup> Upon his return to Brussels, Sweerts resumed working on a double layered, grey-toned ground more typical of Southern Netherlandish practice. This rules out speculations that this picture would date any later than 1655, when Sweerts is recorded working again in Brussels.

### Underdrawing and Underpainting

In order to visualize preparatory layers, Infrared Reflectography (IRR) was employed to measure the varied transmission, absorption, and reflection of the artist's materials. Preparatory sketches, which may include underdrawings and underpaintings, often absorb infrared radiation due to their high content of carbon, manganese, or other earth pigments. IRR can also help identify variations in the thickness of paint layers, which is useful for understanding the artist's technique.<sup>18</sup>

Revealing underdrawings on an earth-based ground, such as in this artwork, is challenging. However, IRR images of the Virgin's hands show visible sketch lines. The artist used both thick and fine carbon-based dry mediums to outline the figures, contours, and creases. For example, a fine line marking the fold of the wrists and the curve where they join is clearly visible in the IRR image (fig. 13) but not on



Fig. 14 Cat. no. 5, detail of the Virgin's hand in normal light to show the thin paint layers

the painted surface (fig. 14), suggesting it served as a placement mark and guide for shading. Thicker sketch lines are also visible in her hands, possibly indicating the use of different tools or pressures. Below the hands a fluid dark line is seen locating the forms of the sleeves.

The dark background behind the Virgin, which appears uniform to the naked eye (fig. 15), reveals subtle variations under IRR. These differences highlight the artist's compositional planning and gradual buildup of the dark paint layers. When the IRR image is purposefully over-exposed, a thinner layer of paint around the Virgin becomes visible (fig. 16). This suggests that the artist delineated a reserve in the background before continuing to fill in the figure and finish the background. When finalizing the Virgin, he then carefully painted over this area to create precise contours and enhance the dimensionality of the figure within the frame.

Infrared imaging of the painting also revealed evidence of underpainting. After the initial sketching with carbon-based dry mediums, the artist applied broad, loosely defined brushstrokes that are below the final paint layers. This suggests rapid execution during an underpainting phase, as well as adjustments made later, which are visible in the final surface. See for instance the vertical drapery of the Virgin's headdress that is first underpainted with fluid brushstrokes in a carbon containing medium (fig. 16).





Fig. 15 Cat. no. 5, detail of the Virgin in normal light



Fig. 16 Cat. no. 5, detail of the Virgin in IRR composite image with exposure increased in background. Brightening the image reveals brushstrokes surrounding the figure's outlines, indicating the artist's careful planning. On the lower right side of the headdress loose underpainting of the drapery can be seen. Image Redivivus

The underpainting appears to involve a technique known as *brunaille*, a monochromatic layer, likely in shades of brown, used to establish depth, define shadows, and create a tonal foundation for the subsequent layers. This approach can be observed in works across Sweerts' oeuvre, despite differences in materials and date. For example, a later work assessed and treated at Redivivus, the *Portrait of a Young Man Reading*<sup>19</sup> exhibits a similar underpainting when examined with IRR. A striking comparison can be made between the hand from this self-portrait (fig. 17, 18) and the hands from the *Portrait of a Young*

*Man Reading* (fig. 19, 20); the segments of the hand and fingers that appear in shadow received a strong dark outline in the underpainting while highlighted forms do not have underdrawing, this makes sense as Sweerts left blank the areas that did not need deep shadow.

In conclusion, IRR reveals various aspects of Sweerts' preparations and the consistency of his technique across paintings is notable. The composition was first sketched using fine and thick lines made with a carbon-based dry medium. The artist then likely applied an underpainting in *brunaille* to build volume and depth, as seen in the hands and other details across both artworks. Lastly, after completing the Virgin, he painted over the reserved areas around the figure to define its contours with precision.

### Painting Technique

Sweerts was also a singular artist in his innovative manipulation of paints and his expert craftsmanship. His distinctive techniques such as scratching fine lines and dragging brushes through wet paint to impart directionality have been noted by de Marchi and Seccaroni to imply textured fabric.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, we have noted very specific techniques in this painting, such as Sweerts' extraordinary use of the costly lapis lazuli pigment throughout the painting: the sky, the white tunic, the dark folds in the tunic and of course, and the blue sash.

Sweerts used this pigment in order to create a very particular three-dimensionality for the figure of the Virgin. He employed the *chiaroscuro* technique, the use of strong contrasts between light and dark affecting the entire composition to achieve a sense of volume in modelling three-dimensional objects and figures. In the face, hands, and headscarf of the Virgin, working in the non-academic manner, Sweerts created a quick three dimensionality by working up the lights and darks, while leaving the thinly covered ground to serve as the middle tone. However, the reddish brown ground has darkened over time which inevitably has caused darkening of the composition, particularly in the shadows. This is especially true of the headdress (fig. 21) where the

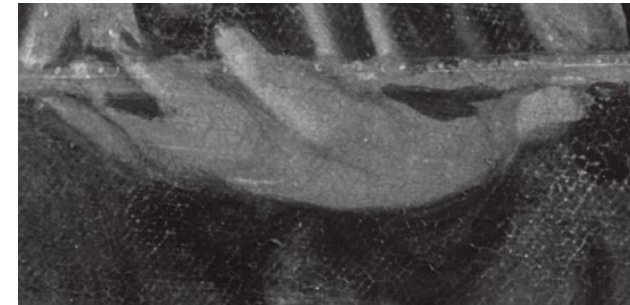


Fig. 17 Cat. no. 5, detail of the portrait's hand in IRR. Image Redivivus



Fig. 18 Cat. no. 5, detail of the portrait's hand in normal light



Fig. 19 Detail of *Portrait of a Young Man Reading*, Michael Sweerts, in IRR. Image Redivivus



Fig. 20 Detail of *Portrait of a Young Man Reading*, Michael Sweerts, in normal light. Image Redivivus

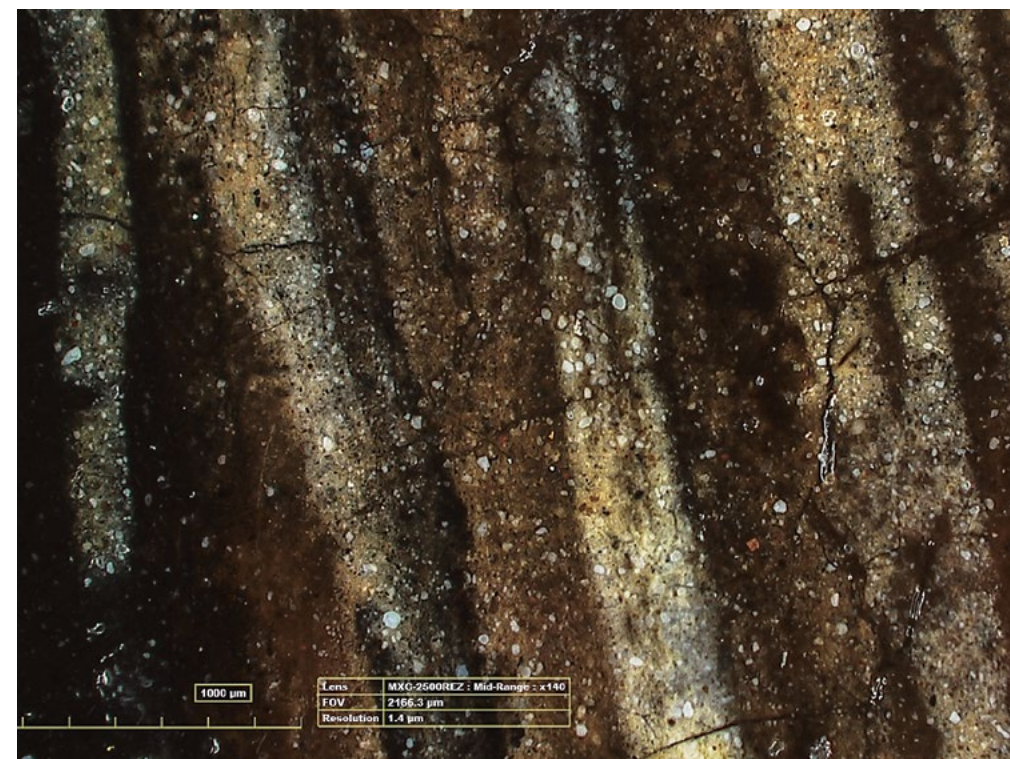


Fig. 21 Cat. no. 5, microscopic image at 140x magnification using Hirox digital microscope. White dots indicate formation of lead soaps in the paint matrix. Image Redivivus



lead tin yellow paint has increased in transparency due to the formation of metal soap aggregates.<sup>21</sup> We expect that the yellow cloth originally had a more solid appearance.

Remarkable attention has been paid to the fine details of the Virgin's dress by Sweerts. The whites of the dress were first laid in over the sketched forms. Here the artist applied the white highlights and used the technique of passing a brush over the still slightly wet paint to impart directional textures. Raking light photography under a microscope demonstrates this method is used in all highlights of the blouse, even the finest folds of the sleeve (fig. 22, 23).



Fig. 22 Cat. no. 5, microscopic image of the paint surface with raking light angle at 35x magnification using Hirox digital microscope. Image Redivivus



Fig. 23 Cat. no. 5, microscopic image of the paint surface with raking light angle at 35x magnification using Hirox digital microscope. Image Redivivus

Close examination of the paint surface shows that lapis lazuli blue was intentionally included in the paint mixtures of both the whites and darks of the Virgin's dress (fig. 24). The medium tones were applied last to the reserved areas, defining and sharpening the forms. Remarkably, these shadows are made with a substantial amount of ultramarine mixed with fine black particles (fig. 25). This complex heightening and brightening of the contrast by the use of ultramarine is very distinctive in this work. The blues of the sky also include substantial amounts of ultramarine, rather than the more common employment of optical blues that often contain mostly white, black pigments, smalt or other less expensive blue pigments such as azurite.

Notably, the artist's attire was found to be composed of red lake pigment, employed both as a relatively thick glaze as well as mixed with lead-white for the parts of his sleeve in the direct light.

### Conclusion

The restoration of this painting has helped to define its importance within Sweerts' oeuvre. Through both art historical as well as technical investigation, the artist's intentions, influences, and historical context have been illuminated. This painting, a profound testament to devotion and piety, underscores Sweerts' genius and his enduring legacy. Furthermore, the now recovered fleur-de-lis ornaments suggest a narrative connection to Sweerts' most significant patron from 1648-1652, the Papal Pamphili family. These elements, combined with the youthful depiction of the artist, position the painting as a synthesis of his artistic and personal journey between 1650-1651.

GBJ, KF, MEM

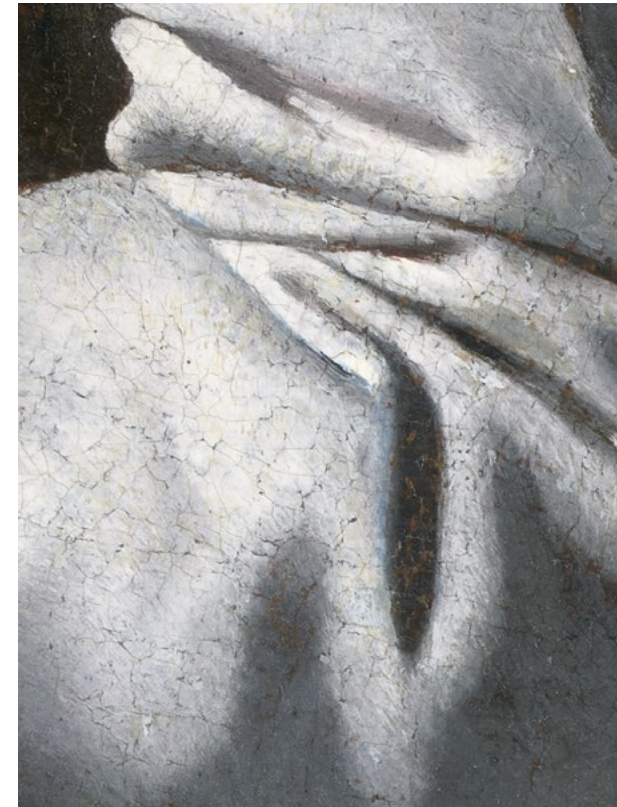


Fig. 24 Cat. no. 5, detail of fold in the proper left sleeve of the Virgin's tunic

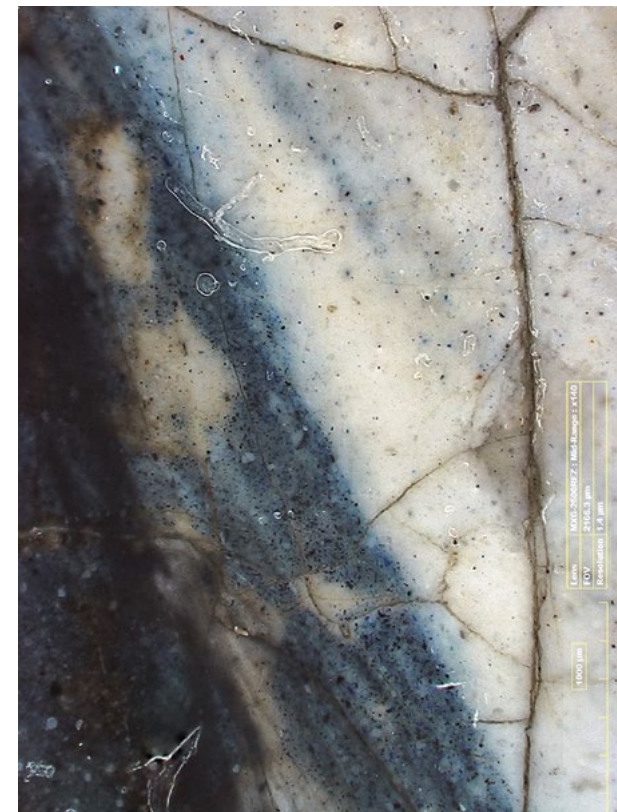


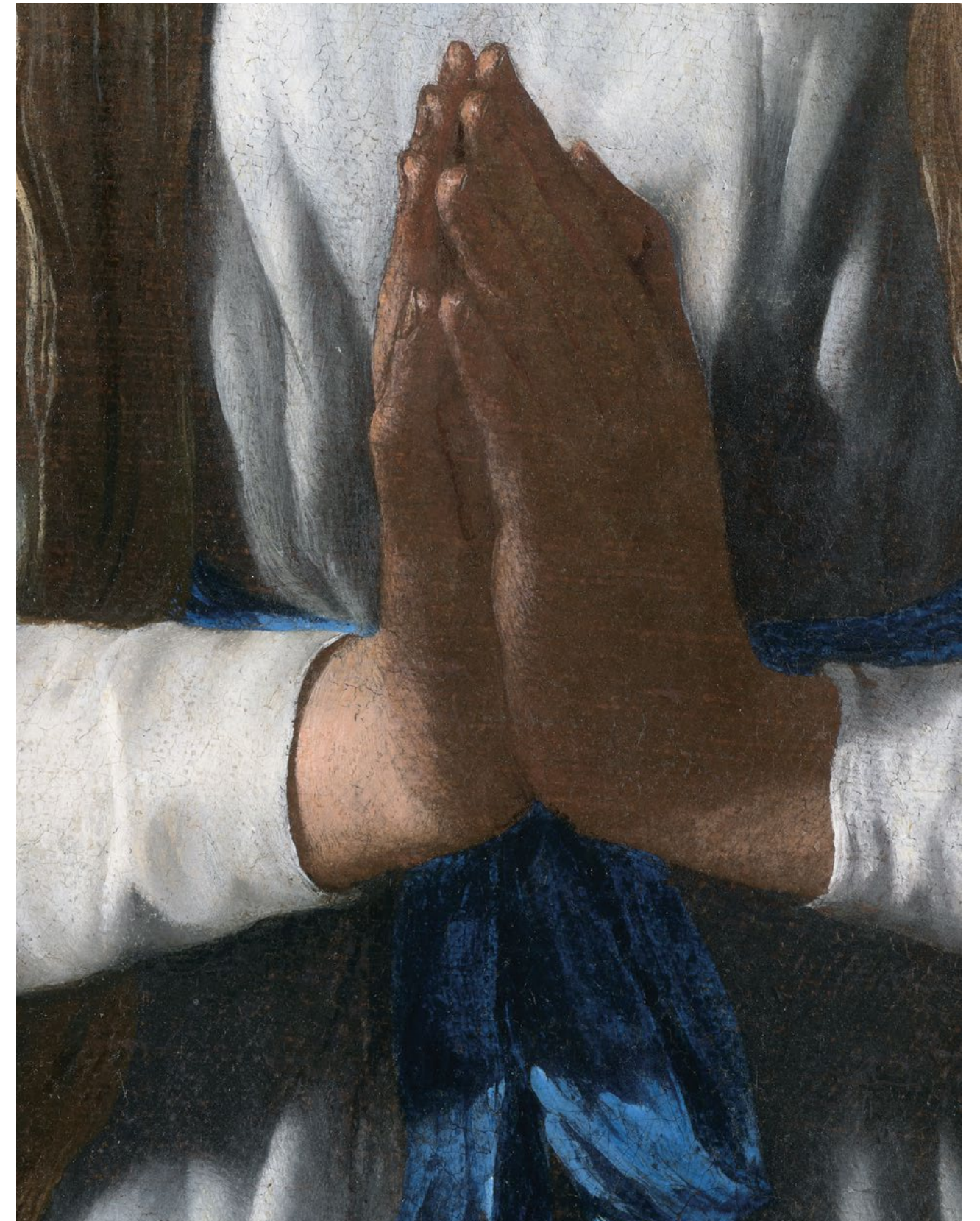
Fig. 25 Hirox microscope image at 140x showing the subtle use of blue to create a cool shadow that is still bright due to the whitening effect of the blue on top of the white pigment. Image Redivivus

### Notes

- 1 Lot 166 'Caveller Swarts : The Virgin Mary'.
- 2 See Kultzen 1996, p. 144, cat. no. 11 (Lost pictures / Pictures known only from sales and inventories): 'Een biddende Maria, borststuck met twee handen, teder en kragtig – door chevalier Swarts'. Kultzen does not give the lot number. According to Art Sales Catalogues Online the only known copy of the catalogue is in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes et de la Photographie.
- 3 L. Yeager-Crasselt, catalogue entry sale London, Christie's, 7 December 2023, lot 10 (see: <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-6458275>).
- 4 A. de Marchi, C. Seccaroni, *Michael Sweerts – Realities and mysteries in seventeenth-century Rome*, exh. cat. Rome, Accademia Nazionale di San Luca 2024-2025, pp.180-181.
- 5 Rome 2024-2025, p. 190-192, description of the Vatican archive document. This was a papal order also called the Knights of the Golden Spur or the *Militia Aurata*. From a document dated September 1650 in the Vatican archives.
- 6 Rome 2024-2025, p. 178. Simon Schama also clearly delineated these differences in his article 'Another Dimension', in: *The New Yorker*, 28 October 2002, pp. 85-91. Sweerts doesn't succumb to the overly sweet depictions of the poor nor the heavily classiscised versions.
- 7 For the *Seven Acts of Mercy*, see Kultzen 1996, pp. 33-35, 101-104, cat. nos. 47-53; G. Jansen, in: G. Jansen, P.C. Sutton, *Michael Sweerts (1618-1664)*, exh. cat. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, San Francisco, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art 2002, pp. 80-93, cat. nos. 5A-G. For the *Lamentation*, see Kultzen 1996, p. 128, cat. no. E1.; Amsterdam/San Francisco/Hartford 2002, p. 168, cat. no. P1. Interestingly, 'The Virgin Mary' by 'Cavaller Swarts' was auctioned in London 1722. A 'praying Mary, bust, with two hands, tender and powerful' was auctioned in Haarlem in 1678 (see Provenance, and notes 1 and 2 for both). If these references concern the present painting, or possibly the painting held up in the present work, remains unclear.
- 8 See Provenance, and notes 1, 2 and 7.
- 9 Rome 2024-2025, p. 190.
- 10 J. Gash, J. Montagu, 'Algardi, Gentile and Innocent X: A rediscovered painting and its frame', in: *The Burlington Magazine* 122 (1980), pp. 55-60, 63. This article documents the concurrent commission from Louis Cousin (Luigi Gentile) for 27 paintings on copper with the designs of the frames by highly acclaimed Roman sculptor Alessandro Algardi, and the manufacture of the silver frames by Francesco Perone. An interesting example of metal frames being ordered for paintings by Pope Innocent X that dates from the same period as this painting, 1648-1652. Only one is known today, in the collection of The Museum of Saint John in London, which is engraved on the back with the Papal coat of arms, including the fleur-de-lis.
- 11 Schama 2002.
- 12 According to a letter dating 6 July 1662 from Bishop Francois Pallu to the Directors of the Seminary Foreign Missions Society Paris, (MEP) she was responsible for sending Sweerts on the Foreign Missionary Society journey to Persia with the eventual goal of Asia. See B. McShea, *La Duchesse*, New York 2023, p. 344, note 23.



- 13 Already in 2016, technical investigations and restorations were carried out for the Sweerts exhibition at the Rijksmuseum had shed light on his working practices in Rome, Brussels, and Amsterdam. The data assembled in the chapter on technique and materials has been very useful for this study. See A. Wallert, W. de Ridder, 'The Materials and Methods of Sweert's Paintings', in: Amsterdam/San Francisco/Hartford 2002, pp. 37-48.
- 14 Kultzen 1996, cat. nos. 9, 11, 25, 29, 30, 31, 65; J. Hillegers, in: J. Hillegers et al., *Salomon Lilian : Old Masters 2019*, Amsterdam 2019, pp. 102-107, cat. no. 19.
- 15 The transparency of this ground in the X-ray is the reason that the original textile support is much less visible than the lining textile, which had been applied using a lead paint mixture.
- 16 Their red color comes from naturally occurring iron oxide deposits inside the source clay. Wallert identifies this as Maliss clay, composed of halloysite, muscovite, quartz, and calcite, and iron oxide that was from a local source, in Rome near Saint Peter's and at Monte Spertoli near Florence, as documented by the Volpato manuscript in 1649. Wallert, de Ridder, 'The Materials and Methods,' in G. Jansen, P.C. Sutton, *Michael Sweerts (1618-1664)*, 2002, 39.
- 17 Kultzen 1996, p. 31, 100, cat. no. 44; J. Hillegers, in: J. Hillegers et al., *Salomon Lilian : Old Masters 2022*, Amsterdam 2019, pp. 112-117, cat. no. 17.
- 18 The infrared reflectographic images were captured using a standard lens from the Apollo Infrared Reflectography Camera (IRR) and illuminated with the LAMPA all-in-one lighting system from Xpectraltec. The histogram curves and sharpness of the images were adjusted to enhance the visibility of details.
- 19 Kultzen 1996, pp. 63, 70-71, 117, cat. no. 91. The painting was sold by the Salomon Lilian gallery in October 2021 to a private collector.
- 20 See Rome 2024-2025, p. 145.
- 21 A. van Loon, *Color Change and Chemical Reactivity in Seventeenth Century Oil Paintings*, diss. University of Amsterdam 2008, pp. 210-212.



Detail of cat. no. 5



# David Teniers the Younger

Antwerp 1610 – 1690 Brussels

*A Grand Palace Kitchen Interior, with a Falconer Preparing for a Hunt*

Signed lower right: D. TENIERS. FEC

Dated on the drawing above the fireplace: A. 1674

Oil on canvas

174 x 162.2 cm.

## Provenance:

Copenhagen, Count Adam Gottlob Moltke (1710-1792), by 1780, thence by family descent

Copenhagen, Count Joachim Godske Moltke (1746-1818)

Copenhagen, Count Adam Wilhelm Moltke (1785-1864)

Copenhagen, Count Frederik Georg Julius Moltke (1825-1875)

Copenhagen, Count Frederik Christian Moltke (1854-1936)

His sale, Copenhagen, V. Winkel & Magnussen, 1-2 June 1931, lot 125, to 'Mr. Smith' on behalf of Carl Salomonsen, probably thence by family descent

by whom probably sold, London, Christie's, 14 May 1965, lot 89, to Dewitt

Sale London, Christie's, 6 July 1990, lot 107

London, Johnny van Haeften, Ltd., 1990

from whom acquired by the previous owner

## Literature:

N.L. Høyen, *Fortegnelse over den Moltkeske Malerisamling*, Copenhagen 1841, cat. no. 16

N.L. Høyen, *Fortegnelse over den Moltkeske Malerisamling*, Copenhagen 1874, pp. 4, 14-15, cat. no. 16

N.L. Høyen, *Fortegnelse over den Moltkeske Malerisamling*, Copenhagen 1879, pp. 4, 13-14, 86

N.L. Høyen, F.C. Kiærskou, *Catalogue des tableaux de la collection du comte de Moltke*, Copenhagen 1885, pp. 4, 13-14, cat. no. 16 (ed. 1913, idem.)

N.L. Høyen, K. Madsen, *Fortegnelse over den Moltkeske Malerisamling*, Copenhagen 1900, p. 14, cat. no. 16 (ed. 1905, idem.)

A. Somof, *Ermitage Impérial : catalogue de la galerie des tableaux*, 3 vols., St. Petersburg 1899-1903, 2e partie : écoles néerlandaises et école allemande (1901), p. 421, under cat. no. 698

A. von Wurzbach, *Niederländisches Künstler-Lexikon : auf Grund archivalischer Forschungen bearbeitet : mit mehr als 3000 Monogrammen*, 3 vols., Vienna, Leipzig 1904-1911, 2 (1910), p. 696

A. Fugl, 'Den Moltkeske Malerisamling', in: *Samleren: kunstitidsskrift* 8/4 (1931), pp. 49-58, pp. 51, 55, ill.

J. De Maere, M. Wabbes, *Illustrated Dictionary of 17th Century Flemish Painters*, 3 vols., Brussels 1994, 3, pp. 1075, 1154, ill.

N. Babina, in: C. Corsiglia (ed.), *Rubens and his age : treasures from the Hermitage*





*Museum, Russia*, exh. cat. Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario 2001, p. 131, under cat. no. 84

D. Lüdke, in: M. Klinge, D. Lüdke, *David Teniers der Jüngere 1610-1690 : Alltag und Vergnügen in Flandern*, exh. cat. Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe 2005-2006, pp. 310-311, cat. no. 102, ill.

N. Babina, in: N. Gritsay, N. Babina, *State Hermitage Museum catalogue : Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Flemish painting*, New Haven/London 2008, p. 371, under cat. no. 447 (Russian ed., 2005, p. 473, under cat. no. 454)

A. Van Suchtelen, in: A. van Suchtelen, Q. Buvelot, *Genre Paintings in the Mauritshuis*, Zwolle 2016, p. 280, note 12, under cat. no. 50

#### Exhibited:

Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, *David Teniers der Jüngere 1610–1690 : Alltag und Vergnügen in Flandern*, 2005-2006, no. 102

#### David Teniers the Younger

On 15 December 1610, David Teniers the Younger, the son of his eponymous father, the painter David Teniers the Elder (1582-1649) and his wife Dymphna Cornelissen De Wilde, was baptised in Antwerp's St. Jacob's Church.<sup>1</sup> Taught by his father, with whom he is said to have collaborated, David the Younger became a member of the Guild in 1632/33. In 1637 he married Anna Brueghel, daughter of Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568-1625) and moved into the house *Meerminne* (Mermaid) in Lange Nieuwstraat (no. 107), formerly owned by Brueghel. When in 1638 a son was born, David's father and Hélène Fourment, the wife of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) acted as witness. At the time Teniers was making name for himself, initially as a painter of small-scale histories like his father's, but soon he became most renowned for his cabinet sized genre paintings, that showed remarkable affinity with the satirical depictions of peasants in the Bruegelian tradition by Adriaen Brouwer (1603/05-1638). Teniers, though, developed a distinctly personal style. Instantly recognisable, it remained a constant trademark throughout his career. In time, the prolific Teniers broadened the range of his subjects, expanding to brighter and more agreeable portrayals of country life – large outside peasant feasts and honourable scenes of peasants conversing or smoking a pipe – and to sophisticated

depictions of high life and nobility. Likewise, he ventured into depictions of alchemists, professions, witchcraft, history and landscape, as well as paintings of picture galleries and the occasional portrait.

In 1644/45 Teniers became the Dean of the Antwerp Guild of St. Luke. Such was his reputation that by 1647 he was working for Archduke Leopold Wilhelm (1614-1662), whose court painter he became in 1651, causing a move to Brussels. When in 1656 Anna Brueghel died, barely a year after the birth of their seventh child, Teniers that same year remarried the highly positioned, much younger Isabella De Fren, with whom he would have four more children. During these years Teniers was working on the *Theatrum Pictorium* project, a print album including all the Archduke's 246 Italian paintings, for which Teniers painted small replicas of the works, to be reproduced by engravers. Teniers' success and international prestige were considerable. Among others Queen Christina of Sweden (1626-1689) and King Philip IV of Spain (1605-1665) were avid collectors of his work. Due to his climbing of the social ladder, Teniers adopted an aristocratic lifestyle, bought the country estate 'Drye Torrens' (Three Towers) in Perk near Brussels, and requested to be elevated to nobility, a status he achieved in 1663. Indicative of his influential position and excellent relations, Teniers'

Antwerp colleagues in 1664 successfully requested his advocacy in getting the support of Philip IV for the founding of an Art Academy in Antwerp. While a strife with the children from his first marriage, which was settled in 1683, and the subsequent passing of his wife Isabella around 1686/89 must have severely affected Teniers, his art became increasingly arcadian, underlining a harmony between humanity and nature. Teniers did not outlive Isabella for very long, as he died, according to the artist biographer Jean-Baptiste Descamps (1714-1791), on 26 April 1690 in Brussels.<sup>2</sup>

#### Bustling activity

A feast for the eyes, the present, impressively large and monumental *Palace Kitchen Interior*, which formed part of the famous collection of the counts of Moltke in Copenhagen from before 1780 until 1931, was painted by Teniers in 1674, when he was 63 years old.<sup>3</sup> The vast kitchen space with its high ceiling is foremost determined by a heavy overarching barrel vault that simultaneously emphasises the scene's central character, the lord of the mansion, presumably preparing for a falcon hunt, (rather than returning from the hunt, as both the dogs and he himself look rather clean). Impeccably dressed in fashionable hunting gear, he stands self-assured on a raised platform, right in front of the vault's pier. The atmosphere in the kitchen is industrious. Right next to the lord a cook is prominently operating a brazier, thus drawing attention to the kitchen's main utilitarian use, preparing food. From a rack above him two plucked turkeys hang down, as well as a large turbot. On the floor in front of the lord we see an abundant amount of food and drink – onions, carrots, parsnips, green and red cabbages, artichokes, cauliflowers, turnips, grapes, pears and prunes, huge pieces of meat, a dead peacock, quails, ducks, snipes, a lark, a hare, and fine wine bottles in a large cooler – all appetizingly displayed and ready to be cooked and consumed. While a servant boy behind the lord takes care of the hunting dogs, three fishermen walk into the kitchen, guided by a farmer carrying a spade over his shoulder, who escorts them to the stage, so that they can personally present to the lord their catch of the day. In the background,

more cooks are preparing the food. One is chopping meat on a woodblock, another, in front of a huge fireplace, pours gravy over the poultry at the spit, which is operated by a young assistant. In the upper left corner, an old woman leans out of a window, as she observes the bustling activity below her.

#### The Four Elements

As has been pointed out, our painting is closely connected to the theme of the Four Elements, Fire, Earth, Water and Air.<sup>4</sup> From antiquity on, it was generally assumed that these Four Elements formed the basic substance of all matter. Together with other natural phenomena such as the Four Seasons, the Five Senses, the Four Temperaments, the Planets and the Times of the Day, the Elements were all thought to be part of a unified, organised structure or arrangement underlying the divine functioning of the universe. In typical analogy, the human body itself was likewise thought to exist of these four elements as remarked, for example, by the Dutch doctor and author Johan van Beverwijck (1594-1647) in his hugely popular and widely read medicine handbook *Schat der gesontheyt* (1636):

'The human body [...] exists of these four: Earth, Water, Air and Fire, and originates from them. And even though these four Elements are from different and contradictory capacities, they are nonetheless brought to harmony by a mutual confrontation, not differently than the diverse voices and musical instruments in Music. [...] With these four Elements correspond the four Humours of our body: Blood with Air, Yellow Bile with Fire, Phlegm with Water, and Melancholy or Black Bile with Earth. These Humours, which are all together in the Veins, and are also known under the general name Blood, find their origin in the Liver from the food that we eat. Whichever it may be, either Meat, Fish, or crops, all are at one point comprised of a mixture of the [four] Elements'.<sup>5</sup>

If the universe was the macrocosm, the body was regarded as the microcosm, subject to the same order. Analogies with society likewise existed along parallel lines. In the early modern period this systemic world view was reflected, among others, in the great popularity of programmatic sets





Fig. 1 Joachim Beuckelaer, *The Four Elements: Fire*, 1570, oil on canvas, 158.2 x 215.4 cm., London, National Gallery



Fig. 2 Workshop of Johan Theodor de Bry after Hendrick Goltzius, *The Element Fire*, engraving, 18.1 x 12.3 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

and series rendering these concepts, which were produced in many varieties, in paintings and in prints.<sup>6</sup> Initially depicting strictly allegorical figures, in time such representations developed into genre scenes.<sup>7</sup> Concerning the Four Elements, specifically, paintings such as Joachim Beuckelaer's (1534-c. 1574) benchmark *Elements* cycle of 1570 now in the National Gallery, London, were crucial in the theme's development, and no doubt known to Teniers. That the Beuckelaer set's *Fire* (fig. 1) depicts a kitchen interior with all kinds of food representing the other three elements, underlines that not only the kitchen was conceptually associated with the element Fire, but moreover, that it was specifically in the kitchen that the four elements, the components of humanity's food supply and temperament, were assembled, processed and 'harmonised' into a meal. The caption underneath a print after Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617), one of a set of the Four Elements, depicting *Fire* represented by a cook, again stresses this idea (fig. 2). Amidst a dead hare, fish on the ground, and a burning stove behind him, the cook serves a bird pie while saying: 'Fish [Water], birds [Air] and animals [Earth] I prepare on the fire [Fire], all of these are necessary to live here.'

### Harmony

That Teniers was interested in the subject appears from his 1644 dated *Kitchen Interior* now in the Mauritshuis (fig. 3).<sup>8</sup> Here he shows us the kitchen as the gathering hub for all the elements, Air being represented by the dead fowl, the fish symbolising Water, the fruit, vegetables and the dead game referencing Earth, and the kook at his fireplace depicting Fire. Amidst this abundance Teniers painted his wife Anna Brueghel and his son David Teniers III, in peaceful harmony with the elements, a clear projection of his social pretention.<sup>9</sup> A similar sense of harmony recurs in Teniers' *Kitchen* of two years later, now in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, which shows a large kitchen with twelve figures, most of them labouring in some capacity (fig. 4).<sup>10</sup> The central position of mother and child amidst the elements in the Mauritshuis painting has here been taken by one of the cooks. Holding the hand of a fisherman with a large fish, this cook leads him and another fisherman up onto a wooden stage (in front of which we see a huge assemblage of vegetables, meat and fowl), to introduce them to the lord of the mansion, who is dressed for the hunt, a falcon resting on his gloved hand. As the operator of the kitchen,



Fig. 3 David Teniers the Younger, *Kitchen Interior*, 1644, oil on copper, 55.5 x 77.5 cm., The Hague, Mauritshuis

the cook (Fire) thus connects the other elements, the lord with his falcon (Air), the vegetables and meat (Earth) and the fishermen (Water). He is the 'conductor' (following Beverwijck's musical analogy) of the kitchen in which the food is gathered and prepared into a balanced, harmonious meal.

In the Hermitage *Kitchen* we of course immediately recognise the direct blueprint for the present work, which is, as it were, a grandiose reprise of that work, painted 28 years later. Many motifs and pictorial elements seen in the Hermitage *Kitchen* recur one-on-one in the present painting, which suggests that Teniers still had access to the Hermitage composition all these years later. Teniers made a few notable shifts in emphasis, though. Significantly, he changed the format and tightened the composition, thus creating a more focused, concentrated narrative. Moreover, it's no longer the cook, but the lord of the mansion, the falconer, who is the at centre of our attention. The



Fig. 4 David Teniers the Younger, *Kitchen*, 1646, oil on canvas, 171 x 237 cm., St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum





Fig. 5  
Attributed to Zacharias Dolendo  
after Jacques de Gheyn II, *Aer* (*The  
Element Air*), 1595/97, engraving,  
17.7 x 13.8 cm., Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum



Fig. 6  
Detail of cat. no. 6,  
the falconer



Fig. 7  
Attributed to Zacharias Dolendo  
after Jacques de Gheyn II, *Aqua*  
(*The Element Water*), 1595/97,  
engraving, 17.5 x 13.6 cm.,  
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



Fig. 8  
Detail of cat. no. 6, the  
fisherman



Fig. 9  
Attributed to Zacharias Dolendo  
after Jacques de Gheyn II, *Terra*  
(*The Element Earth*), 1595/97,  
engraving, 17.3 x 13.7 cm.,  
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



Fig. 10  
Detail of cat. no. 6, the  
farmer



Fig. 12  
Attributed to Zacharias  
Dolendo after Jacques de  
Gheyn II, *Ignis* (*The Element  
Fire*), 1595/97, engraving,  
17.7 x 13.8 cm., Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum



Fig. 13  
Detail of cat. no. 6,  
cooks

cook's role and position in the Hermitage painting have, in fact, been taken by the farmer with his spade, who instead guides the fishermen to the lord.

It has rightly been noted before that Teniers based the lord in the Hermitage painting on a falconer representing the element *Air* (Aer) in an engraving after Jacques de Gheyn II (1565-1629) (fig. 5).<sup>11</sup> Naturally, this observation extends to the lord with his falcon in the present painting, who thus also represents *Air* (fig. 6). Not surprisingly, De Gheyn's *Air* is part of a set of engravings depicting the Four Elements as four allegorical genre figures. In our painting, Teniers' reference to De Gheyn's *Elements*-set extends to these other figures as well. De Gheyn's *Water* (Aqua), depicted as a fisherman carrying a huge fish and holding his hand in its gills (fig. 7), is echoed in Teniers' fisherman, who drags a big sturgeon by its gills (fig. 8). De Gheyn's *Earth* (Terra) is shown as a hunter carrying a club over his shoulder from which a dead hare hangs down (fig. 9). Teniers reshaped this figure into the farmer, switching the club for a spade (fig. 10), an idea he no doubt picked up from the representation of *Earth* in an alternative set of the Four Elements by Nicolaes Jansz Clock (c. 1576-in or after 1602) (fig. 11). *Fire*, finally, is represented by a cook in front of a table with food, holding a spit with meat skewered on it, a



Fig. 11 Nicolaes Jansz Clock, *Terra* (*The Element Earth*),  
1597, engraving, 18.8 x 12.8 cm., Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum (image reversed)

fireplace in the background (fig. 12). These combined motifs recur more or less verbatim in the cook and his brazier (note the table with meat that Teniers positioned in front of the cook), and the fireplace in the kitchen's background (fig. 13). The painting thus depicts a unified, well organised world in which the four elements are presented harmoniously alongside each other. This allegorical concept is presented as a genre narrative, in the form of an efficiently functioning palace kitchen interior.

### Recalibration

What might have been the idea behind Teniers' recalibration? For one, the later painting seems conceptually more consequent. With sacrificing one of the cooks for a farmer representing Earth, all four elements are now depicted by a human figure, whereas in the earlier painting the element Earth lacked such a figure (being represented by vegetables and meat, only). Moreover, shifting emphasis away from the cook as the 'conductor' of the elements did not subvert the painting's allegorical meaning, as the kitchen in itself already sufficiently refers to the element Fire and its overarching, binding role, as do the two remaining cooks. On the contrary, it gave way to a more coherent reading of the painting as a genre piece, and its accompanying social

implications. After all, the increased emphasis on the lord with his falcon, servant and dogs, standing on the elevated platform as the ruler of the mansion (instead of the cook as the conductor of the kitchen) stresses the analogies between the harmony of the four elements, the harmony of the well-functioning kitchen and the harmony of a stable social hierarchy, more so than in the earlier work, which was less socially programmatic, more anecdotal and casual in its intent. The palace kitchen presented, thus, as a social microcosm, as a *pars pro toto* for God's universe, in which each contributes his logical (and God given) part, the lord taking in the highest position. It seems a reflection of Teniers' worldview, and his aristocratic aspirations. It also raises the question if the painting might have been commissioned, and if so, if the lord with his falcon might, in fact, be a portrait.<sup>12</sup>

JH



## Notes

- 1 For Teniers' biography, see: K. Simillion, 'Levensschets van David Teniers, den jonge, bekroond in den pryskamp door de regering der stad Antwerpen uitgeschreven, ter gelegenheid van het tweehonderdjarig bestaen der koninklyke Akademie van Schoone Kunsten', in: *De Vlaemsche School* 10 (1864), pp. 173-188; H. Vlieghe, 'Teniers, David, II', in: *Grove Art Online* (<https://doi-org.access.authkb.kb.nl/10.1093/0ao/9781884446054.013.90000372627>), 2003.
- 2 J.B. Descamps, *La vie des peintres flamands, allemands et hollandais*, 4 vols., Paris 1753-1664, 2 (1754), p. 396.
- 3 According to Danish art historian Niels Laurits Høyen's (1798-1870) foreword to the 1841 Moltke collection catalogue, which was reprinted in subsequent editions (see Literature), the present painting entered the collection between 1756, when an inventory was drawn up in which the painting does not appear, and 1780, when a new inventory was drawn up in which the work is mentioned, as one of a number of 'most remarkable acquisitions' during that period.
- 4 See D. Lüdke, in: Karlsruhe 2005-2006.
- 5 J. van Beverwijck, *Schat der gesontheit* (first published Dordrecht 1636), in: J. van Beverwijck, *Alle de wercken*, Amsterdam 1660, p. 16. See also the unpublished dissertation by Zoran Kwak, 'Proeft de kost en kauwtse met uw' oogen'. *Beeldtraditie, betekenis en functie van het Noord-Nederlandse keukentafereel (ca. 1590-1650)*, diss. Universiteit van Amsterdam 2014, chapter 3, on programmatic cycles of the Elements, the months and the seasons.
- 6 See ao. C. Klemm, 'Weltdeutung – Allegorien und Symbole in Stilleben', in: G. Langemeyer et al., *Stilleben in Europa*, exh. cat. Münster, Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Baden-Baden, Staatliche Kunsthalle 1979-1980, pp. 140-218, esp. pp. 140-152.
- 7 See about this process in the development of Hendrick Goltzius' allegorical print cycles I. Veldman, 'Goltzius' Zintuigen, Seizoenen, Elementen, Planeten en Vier tijden van de dag: van allegorie naar genre-voorstelling', in: R. Falkenburg, J.P. Filedt Kok, H. Leeftang (eds.), *Goltzius Studies: Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617) : Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 42/43 (1991-1992)*, pp. 307-336.
- 8 M. Klinge, *David Teniers de Jonge : schilderijen, tekeningen*, exh. cat. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen 1991, pp. 120-121, cat. no. 36; Van Suchtelen 2016, pp. 277-281, cat. no. 50.
- 9 See Van Suchtelen 2016, pp. 277-281, fig. 50d, who rightly draws a parallel with the specific depiction of the abundance of food and other pictorial elements in an *Allegory of Taste* by Teniers' father-in-law Jan Brueghel the Elder (although he was dead long before Teniers married his daughter Anna) and Rubens, now in the Prado, Madrid inv. no. P001397, and part of a series of the Five Senses.
- 10 M. Klinge, in: Antwerp 1991, pp. 154-155, cat. no. 49; N. Babina, in: Toronto 2001, cat. no. 84; Babina 2008, pp. 370-371, cat. no. 447.
- 11 Babina 2001 and Babina 2008.
- 12 Babina 2008, p. 370, who notes that the falconer in the Hermitage *Kitchen* has always been identified as David Teniers himself. Only Klinge, in Antwerp 1991, cat. 49, considers the falconer's facial features 'too blurry' to be sure.



Detail of cat. no. 6



cat. no. 7

**Catharina Ykens II<sup>1</sup>**

1659 – Antwerp – 1688 or later

*A pair of still lifes of flowers in white vases with blue floral decorations, both upon a stone table. The first bouquet includes, among other flowers, two bulbous pink roses and a rose bud, lily of the valley, auriculas, double narcissus, honeysuckle, and hyacinth. The second bouquet also includes two bulbous pink roses, narcissus, orange blossom, jasmine, and garden nasturtium<sup>2</sup>*

Both signed lower centre: Catharina van Ykens filia Devot fe

Both oil on panel

Both 23.2 x 17.2 cm.

**Provenance:**

France, private collection

**Literature:**

Unpublished

This pair of charming small floral still lifes was painted by the pious painter Catharina Ykens II and signed as such with the addition ‘filia devot[a]’. Catharina was a member of an artistic Antwerp family and related to various artists. As is the case with various seventeenth-century female painters, her main subject, as far as we can tell, was the floral still life.<sup>3</sup>

Catharina Ykens II was baptised on 24 February 1659 in the Antwerp church of St. Andrew, daughter of the sculptor and painter Johannes Ykens (1613-1680) and his second wife Barbara Brekevelt. She probably received painting lessons from her father.

Her apprenticeship, as far as can be traced, was not recorded by the Antwerp guild. She was the younger sister of the figure painter Peter Ykens (1648- 1695/96), and a niece of the still-life painter Frans Ykens (1601-1692). The addition of the Roman number II to her name distinguishes her from the eponymous painter of flowers and fruit, Catarina Ykens I (1598-after 1665), the wife of Frans Ykens.<sup>4</sup> When in 1687 or 1688 she was admitted to the Antwerp guild of St. Luke as a painter, recorded as ‘wijnmeester’ (i.e. child of a master), it was annotated that she was a ‘geestelijcke dochter’.<sup>5</sup> This term was used for unmarried women who devoted their lives to the catholic faith, often living in a convent





or associated community, doing lay duties. As such, she probably lived in seclusion, so nothing of her personal life after 1688 is known.

Very few paintings by Catharina Ykens II are recorded, in fact the present pair constitutes half of her oeuvre as it was known thus far. A signed and dated pot of roses from 1687 is known (fig. 1), thus it was probably painted just before her admission to the guild. It is interesting to note that at that time she was already about 28 years of age. The roses on that larger canvas are extremely similar to those in the present pair of bouquets, which most likely date from around the same time. From the following year dates a small octagonal panel which is also fully signed and dated 'Catharina Ykens filia devota fe 1688' (fig. 2).<sup>6</sup> Its subject is intriguing: on a table is a bust of a woman wearing a pearl necklace. The head, however, has been substituted with a skull with a full set of teeth, wearing a grey wig adorned with an arrangement of flowers, which again includes one of Catharina's 'signature' pink roses, above a large earring on a blue ribbon. On the chest, the bust



Fig. 1 Catharina Ykens II, signed and dated 1687, oil on canvas, 55.5 x 44.5 cm., location unknown



Fig. 2 Catharina Ykens II, signed and dated 1688, oil on panel, 21 x 21 cm. (octagonal), Antwerp, Phoebus Foundation

wears a sprig of orange blossom and small, unripe oranges, at which a bird, sitting on the left shoulder, is aiming. This is a highly original type of 'memento mori', or vanitas image, which one would perhaps not immediately associate with the pious lay sister that Catharina Ykens II was.

This pair of flower pieces leads to the attribution of two previously unrecognized cartouche still lifes by Catharina Ykens II, which include several of the same flowers and in which the rendering of the bowls with fruit and flowers fully matches the vases in the pair discussed here (figs. 3, 4).<sup>7</sup> Thus, they allow a more complete impression of the artist's abilities, showing that occasionally she also painted fruit.

While Catharina Ykens II clearly was a pious woman, these two still lifes of flowers, as well as her work shown in figures 1, 3 and 4 do not appear to convey any profound religious messages. Of course, as in almost all seventeenth-century flower paintings, due to the inevitable withering of the flowers, there is a vanitas notion, but otherwise Catharina's work mainly appears to have a decorative purpose, and at best celebrates the products of God's creation.

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Fig. 3 Here attributed to Catharina Ykens II, oil on canvas, 59 x 40.4 cm., Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, as anonymous (1700-1800)



Fig. 4 Here attributed to Catharina Ykens II, oil on canvas, 58 x 38 cm., location unknown

#### Notes

- 1 The authoritative online database RKDartists calls the artist Catarina Ykens, but her few known works are signed Catharina (with h), in fact, she signed 'van Ykens', while the family name was Ykens, without 'van'.
- 2 The decoration of the vases was probably painted with the blue pigment smalt, which tends to discolour to grey.
- 3 There is mention of an Adoration by Catharina Ykens II, dated 1737, in Aix-en-Provence, but I have not found that painting which would seem to be of an extremely late date for her (in 1737 she would have been 78), and a much too ambitious subject.
- 4 Catarina Ykens I was born as Catarina Floquet, in 1598, the daughter of Lucas Floquet (1578-1635). She married Frans Ykens on 27 February 1635 and painted still-life subjects in his style. Marie Louise Hairs, in her *Les peintres Flamands de fleurs au XVIIe siècle* (1985 and earlier editions) erroneously attributed the oeuvre of Catarina Ykens I to Catharina Ykens II.

- 5 The administrative year of the Antwerp guild ran from September to September.
- 6 See also K. van Cauteren et al., *The bold and the beautiful in Flemish portraits*, exh. cat. Antwerp, Snijders & Rockoxhuis 2020, pp. 55, 62, ill.
- 7 Both were at one time attributed to Daniel Seghers (1590-1661). The first, in the collection of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam (inv. no. 2504), was included in my catalogue *Stillevenen uit de Gouden Eeuw, eigen collectie Museum Boijmans van Beuningen*, Rotterdam 1989, p. 135, as Flemish school, 17th century (or later). With its pendant, it was included in an auction at Venduehuis der Notarissen, The Hague, 21 October 1941, lot 271, sold to A.J. Boer, The Hague, who sold the first to C.H. Kraaijveld Jzn, who bequeathed it to Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in 1955.



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