

Alfred Bader

RVF Related Correspondence

Bader's Correspondence: Shirley Thompson,  
1995 report of Bader collection

1995

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National Gallery  
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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

22 November 1995

The Honorable Michel Dupuy  
Minister of Canadian Heritage  
Jules Léger Building  
Terrasses de la Chaudière  
15 Eddy St., 2nd floor  
Hull (Quebec)  
K1A 0M5

Dear Mr. Minister:

At your request, I visited Dr. Alfred Bader, who has proposed to offer his collection of works of art to Queen's University, Kingston. I attach my report, and in brief, I recommend that steps be taken to accept Dr. Bader's offer. I would be pleased to discuss this with you in greater detail, at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

*Shirley L. Thomson*

Dr. Shirley L. Thomson  
Director

Encl.

cc: S. Hurtubise  
M. Tadros  
V. Rabinovitch  
D. McTavish  
M. Pantazzi

*Old master - Q. Area report grant*

<i>Wright of Derby</i>	<i>8 + 1/2</i>
<i>Michael Wright</i>	<i>7 - Bought</i>
<i>Kaulla</i>	<i>one bought</i>
<i>Flemish</i>	<i>2 - 2 stonew</i>
<i>S. van Ruyssdal</i>	<i>1 Segments</i>
<i>Stetin Altin</i>	<i>17 Export grant</i>
<i>R. Port. - loan</i>	<i>2 Segments</i>
<i>Richard Wilson</i>	<i>17 Export grant</i>
<i>Jacomy - replica</i>	<i>1 Q. Period</i>
<i>Daghet (Poussin)</i>	<i>2 ♂</i>
<i>James T. Brown</i>	<i>1 - gift</i>
<i>Officer (Contract)</i>	<i>1 - bought</i>
<i>Admiral Swanton</i>	<i>1 - Segments</i>

Canada

National Gallery  
Musée des beaux-arts  
du Canada



CONFIDENTIAL

REPORT PREPARED BY THE  
NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA  
ON THE COLLECTION OF  
DR. ALFRED BADER

PROPOSED AS A GIFT TO  
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, KINGSTON

SUBMITTED TO THE MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE  
THE HONORABLE MICHEL DUPUY

22 November 1995



REPORT ON THE COLLECTION  
OF DR. ALFRED BADER

At the request of the Minister, the Honourable Michel Dupuy, I travelled to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to see and examine the collection of Dr. Alfred Bader, proposed as a gift to Queen's University, Kingston. The visit, undertaken with a member of my staff, Michael Pantazzi, Associate Curator of European Art, took place on Monday, 30 October 1995. We spent the day at Dr. Bader's residence at 2951 North Shepherd Avenue, where the majority of the collection is housed, and also saw his office at 924, East Juneau Avenue, where some additional paintings were on view. Dr. Bader and his wife, Isabel Bader, guided us through the collection and commented on the works with the assistance of Dr. Volker Manuth, a professor at Queen's University and well-known Rembrandt specialist. In the afternoon, we took a few moments alone to see the collection at the Milwaukee Art Gallery to which Dr. Bader has donated a number of Dutch pictures over the years.

It must be said from the outset that Dr. Bader's collection is impressive and important in its implications for Queen's University and Canada. Chronologically, it covers the 17th century, the era commonly known as the Dutch Golden Age. It does not claim to tell the full history of Dutch art (only the collection in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, can do that) but consists of a remarkable and extremely interesting cross-section of most of the important currents in Dutch painting of the time. Dr. Bader has been unusually ambitious in documenting the power and complexity of the period and the collection reflects his predominant ideas and enthusiasms. His particular interest in Rembrandt and his circle gives the collection a particular, even unique character but he has broadened the field to include other major aspects of artistic expression of the period. Thus, earlier and contemporary artists in Amsterdam, Haarlem, Delft and Utrecht are included and form a context for the more focused part of the collection. In addition, there is a small number of Italian 17th century paintings, chiefly Bolognese, which relate to the Dutch examples.

On a personal note, I must say that it was remarkable to see in an agreeable domestic setting such an assembly of paintings, formed with a true passion and considerable personal involvement. Over the years, Dr. Bader has received advice from several distinguished personalities such as the late Anthony Clark, former director of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Benedict Nicolson, the 17th century specialist, and scholars of Dutch art of the calibre of Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann and Werner Sumowski. The collection is eloquent proof of the tenacity of his pursuit: I have noticed that already in 1974, in one of the exhibition catalogues of his collection, the great scholar Wolfgang Stechow wrote about him: "some of his trophies are of the kind that would justly make any museum director proud".



The great strengths of the collection are two fold: its remarkable unity and the strong individual representation of the more significant artists. The paintings remainder are invariably interesting and fall within an area that is part of contemporary art historical debate in the study of Rembrandt and his immediate circle. In contrast to the usual collector of Dutch landscapes, Dr. Bader has favoured subject pictures, scenes from the Bible and mythology. However, most of the other genres - portrait, landscape, still-life and interior scenes - are well represented in his collection. The paintings are iconographically rich and complex and, from the inevitably cursory inspection, the condition of the works appears good.

A brief survey of highlights of the collection gives a sense of its variety. The group of works directly connected with Rembrandt opens with examples by artists who influenced him: Adam Elsheimer, a German artist who worked in Rome and author of The Wrath of Ceres, superior to the version in the Prado Museum in Madrid; a fine panel by Pieter Lastman, Rembrandt's teacher; and Joseph accused by Potiphar's wife of 1629 by Jan Pynas, one of his mentors. These are followed by five paintings firmly attributed to Rembrandt until very recently but debated by the Rembrandt Committee. The Portrait of an old Man, first rejected by the Committee is now reconsidered as a Rembrandt and was recently published as such by a member of the Committee, Dr. Haverkamp-Begemann. The most dramatic of the paintings, the small but well-known Scholar by candlelight, on copper, has been re-attributed to Gerrit Dou. Another portrait of an old man, accepted by Bredius, is still debated while two more paintings, a Self-portrait and a Venus and Cupid are generally believed to be contemporary versions of lost Rembrandt originals. In the case of the Venus and Cupid, the Bader painting is known to be superior to the version owned by the Louvre. Rembrandt's major early associate, Jan Lievens, is represented by six paintings, the largest single group of his works in North America. This outstanding group includes a superb portrait of Rembrandt's mother and a St. Paul.

1997  
+  
15  
Old man

Q-2003

To Q2005  
14

Jacob's Dream - to Q. 2001

André & Jeanette to Q 2001

1997+1

man's  
to Q  
of the night  
Jacob's Dream  
2001

Among early followers, Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout figures with four paintings, among them a Rest on the Flight into Egypt, dated 1653, and Salomon Praying in the Temple; by Jacob Backer there are a Baptism of the Eunuch of c. 1630 and the very fine Democritus visited by Hippocrates formerly in the Grand-ducal Gallery in Oldenburg. There are, as well, two large works by Abraham van Dyck, of which The Widow of Zarephthah and Her Son is particularly moving; a Biblical scene by Ferdinand Bol, The Ghost of Samuel Appearing to King Saul; a beautiful small Salomon de Bray, Sarah Presenting Hagar to Abraham, and two surprising works by Jan van Noordt, Joseph Selling Grains to the Egyptians and Hagar in the Desert. To these are added fine portraits by Nicholas Maes and Lambert Doomer, the latter dated 1666; a figure in costume given to the still unstudied Willem Drost; three subject compositions by Willem de Poorter - perhaps a

1992/3  
gift to AE

4  
2  
1  
1  
2  
2  
4  
18

to Q  
1997

Cather - to Q 1991  
Veronica's Dream  
Sleep

(to Zooni

one to Q 1986  
The Solatary of .../3



1997 Lecture - additions - Rembrandt - Fox of Old Day

- Abraham Bloemaert

- Konick - Temple

- O. 1 - Ruysdael J.

- Sketch - puzzle?

- Flowers #7 - H by 2007 - a?

- Liwens #7

Page 3

unique group in North America - and the beautiful if enigmatic Two men in an Interior signed by the "Master IS". Two paintings by Aert de Gelder, Rembrandt's last student, Elisha filling the pots of the widow of Obadiah and a late important work, Judah and Thamar, dated 1681, closed the series of works from Rembrandt's circle.

↳ to Q 2001

The Dutch pictures outside Rembrandt's sphere of influence cover a broad range of artists and subject-matter. From the earlier part of the century there is a St Jerome by Abraham Bloemaert and a rare Hendrick Terbruggen, Woman (Mary) praying, both from Utrecht; three compositions by Leonard Bramer, a Delft artist who lived in Rome, include Biblical scenes, Esther before Ahasuerus and a Presentation in the Temple. Portraiture is particularly well represented by a very varied group that features one of the very rare works by Jacob van Campen, Old Woman with a Book, the arresting Self-portrait with a skull by Michiel Sweerts, Pieter Nason's Portrait of Descartes, Joos van Craesbeck's study in expression, Surprise (Portrait of the painter Adrian Brouwer), a Portrait of a Gentleman by Isaac Luttichuys, dated 1657, Constantin Verhout's Portrait of Cornelis Graswinkel, depicted in an interior, and a lovely Portrait of a Girl attributed to Jan de Bray, one of several portraits of women.

Among landscapes there are two by Jacob van Ruysdael, the greatest of Dutch landscape painters, a Stormy Sea of c. 1640-45 by Simon de Vlieger, two landscapes with figures by Moses van Uyttenbroek, Jacob wrestling with the Angel and Narcissus, and a large Winter Landscape by Denis van Alsloot, from the well-known Harrach collection in Austria. Still-life include works by Pieter Claesz, a Still Life with Roemer, Shrimp and Roll dated 1646, and a Vanitas by Jan de Corduba dated 1667. Interestingly, there are also some fine interiors, such as de Witte's Interior of a Church, but also a group of interiors with scientist and alchemists at work (Dr. Bader is a chemist by profession), which includes dated paintings by David Ryckaert (1648), Cornelis Bega (1660), Hendrick Heershop (1671) and an undated work by Thomas Wyck. One may add that a number of the portraits contain, by inference, references to the emerging world of science or anatomy.

It should be noted that many of Dr. Bader's pictures have had substantial exposure or have been published. Some sixty-four of the paintings from the Rembrandt circle are catalogued and reproduced - some in colour - in Werner Sumowski's monumental Gemälde des Rembrandt-Schüler, 5 volumes, Landau: P.V.A., 1983. A number of paintings were lent to travelling exhibitions such as the memorable Rembrandt et ses élèves in 1969 at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Montréal, and the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; Gods, Saints and Heroes in 1980 at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, Detroit Institute of Arts and the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; and Rembrandt and the Bible in 1986-87 at Sogo, Yokohama, Fukuoka and Kyoto, in Japan. Various parts of the Bader collection were



shown in individual exhibitions, including a one at Queen's University in 1984: Alfred Bader Collection, 17th Century Dutch and Flemish Painting, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1967; Dutch Art of the 1600s, Paine Art Center, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, 1968; Selections from the Bader Collection, Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1974; The Bible Through Dutch Eyes, Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee, 1976; Baroque Painting in the Low Countries, Selections from the Bader Collection, Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, South Hadley, Massachusetts, 1979; Pictures from the Age of Rembrandt, Queen's University, Kingston, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 1984; and From Private Collection to Corporate Identity: Selections from the Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader, Purdue University Galleries, 1992.

Dr. Bader has already given the Agnes Etherington Art Centre some 100 old master paintings. These included Dutch, Flemish, Italian and French works and a group was shown in the exhibition Telling Images: Selections from the Bader gift of European paintings to Queen's University organized by the Agnes Etherington Art Centre in 1990 and circulated to several art galleries in Canada. Since 1990 Dr. Bader has given more paintings, among them Granida and Daifilo by Jacob Backer, in 1992 and the Portrait of a Man dated 1564 by Adriaen Thomas Key in 1993. In terms of the collection already formed by Queen's University, the size and focus of the Bader collection is significant: together, the group of Dutch pictures alone would offer a selection of over 200 works, certainly the most important such collection in Canada and one of the most substantial in North America. The implications for Queen's University as a focus for scholars and students are considerable.

Queen's University has the unique distinction in Canada of combining under one administration a Department of Art, a Programme in Conservation and Restoration and the Agnes Etherington Art Centre. The reputation of the Art department has always ranked high and the teaching staff has an internationally established reputation. Some members of staff have also held important curatorial positions in museums. The confluence of two teaching programmes and an art gallery have resulted in an ambient comparable to certain universities abroad, where students can learn from hands-on experience in the university museum, for instance Oberlin College, where there is a Conservation programme, or Harvard University which both rank high in collections and conservation.

If donated, the collection would form the largest single gift of old master paintings to any museum in Canada. There are few collectors of old masters in Canada and none have made a comparable commitment to supporting Canada's museums and scholarly community. One of the paintings by Lievens recently bought in London by Dr. Bader came from a Canadian collection. The near future is unlikely to produce a similar gift though perhaps the gesture might serve as an example to others. The more important aspect of the



proposed gift, however, is the merger of a major and challenging collection with a body of students and scholars as a living and working unit. Select masterpieces will always be on view in museums for the delight and instruction of the visitor. For the active student, the study of cultural history or the conventions and techniques which govern art depends on a broader base, a large body of works, and the necessary facilities to examine them. To be able to study Rembrandt in context, to analyze works by Lievens with a conservation laboratory within reach, to be able to explore an aspect of iconography through a century of art, is an education as near to the ideal proposed by the mandate of the University as one can hope.

Oct 31/98. - Baden - said his collection to come to Q. - 150/160 pictures  
5/6 Jan Lievens to add to 3 Q. box

Mar/02 - one Lievens to Queen

1997 - R. Kneller - from D. Stewart: The Conversion  
of Saul 1997

1993 - ✓ D. Stewart. Abraham Senior 1993

Esth Cate Eckhout Jacobi Dream - 1/2 Q.

2002 - Book - Siege of Gibraltar - Joseph Wright of Derby

2003 - Rembrandt to Q. - appraisal \$42.5 Cdn

Oct./03 P. From On presentation of "Portrait of Old Man with Cap" (Rembrandt)

To Come - Portrait of Old Man - see autography - R.  
- Portrait of a man R.

- " " Lally - Rembrandt School?

+ 120/150 more.

May/04 - Report to Q - 150 to Q so far, 130 to come, Q. owns 25

05 - Lievens - Rembrandt's sketches to Q 10 Lievens in total

Sept 07 - Total Lievens - 11 appraisal \$8 1/2 M Cdn  
- presented Rembrandt - man with Zouave  
- 3 Peter Konechno  
- 2 add El Greco to one



The first part of the report discusses the general situation of the country and the progress of the work done during the year. It also mentions the various committees and their work.

The second part of the report deals with the financial position of the country and the measures taken to improve it. It also mentions the various departments and their work.

The third part of the report discusses the social and economic conditions of the country and the measures taken to improve them. It also mentions the various departments and their work.

The fourth part of the report deals with the foreign relations of the country and the measures taken to improve them. It also mentions the various departments and their work.

The fifth part of the report discusses the various committees and their work. It also mentions the various departments and their work.