Alfred Bader fonds

Alfred Bader Fine Arts
- Correspondence

DeWitt, David (Queen's Univ.) 1993-2005

Subject: Provenance: Jacob de Wit, grisaille
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 18 Oct 2005 13:47:59 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

In 1987, we received from you and Isabel a roundel in grisaille which was called "Unknown Mythological Scene", and depicts a Maenad (a female satyr) and a baby satyr. It was given as attributed to Jacob de Wit, but is probably after a lost painting by that artist.

We have nothing in the file on the provenance of this work. Do you have any recollection of where it was acquired?

With all best wishes,
David

David A. de Witt
Bader Curator of European Art
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f. (613) 533 6765
e. 3dad5@post.queensu.ca

Subject: Re: auctions
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 25 Oct 2005 14:40:57 -0400
To: baderfa <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

I'm sure that some Belgians will be offended at the entry to lot 63, but the Beglians are no doubt thrilled at the recognition they are receiving.

I will ask Volker for his opinion lot 38. It is clearly not a candidate for the collection, but might have been if it were in better condition.

Lot 150 is only a little more attractive than that portrait of a man by Hoogstraten that last came up at auction, but it is still not very interesting or appealing. The search continues.

I will not be able to view the catalogue of the Herweg sale for quite some time, as we do not subscribe, and the online catalogs that are available only go as far as the middle of November. Could you give me a further reference to lot 131 and any other interesting pictures, or perhaps fax the pages to me? Perhaps there is a Sumowski number?

I am trying to complete the entry for the "Portrait of Rembrandt with a Sketchbook", but I really need the remaining pages of volume 4 of the Corpus, relating to all six versions.

The Milwaukee Art Museum tells me that my copies of the catalogue are on their way.

With all best wishes, as always,
David

At 12:11 PM 10/25/2005, you wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> I have now received Christie's Amsterdam November 16th catalog and Sotheby's Herweg London December 8th catalog but not yet the Sotheby's

Amsterdam catalog.

In the Christie's Amsterdam catalog the most interesting to me and also important for your entry is lot 38. Do you really think that this is a modello for my painting. I don't really think it is worth acquiring particularly because of its poor condition.

I wish I could see lot 43 which in the small picture really looks very interesting.

I wonder whether Christie's Belgian customers will be amused or offended by the entry for lot 63.

I would like to acquire a really good Samuel van Hoogstraten but lot 150, while genuine, does not look particularly attractive.

Lot 152, the Flinck, came up in New York some 15 years ago and then brought a lot of money. I missed the obvious relation to our earlier Flinck. To turn now to the Herweg catalog, that couple of collectors was really helped by Walther Bernt. Luckily we never collided because I was much more interested in figure paintings, particularly biblical, while they concentrated on landscapes. Of the many fine landscapes in that sale I like lot 131 the best and wonder whether I should try to acquire it. We can of course look at it together in London.

Best wishes,
Alfred

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Subject: Dietrich
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 25 Oct 2005 17:20:04 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

Franziska's response to that head of a man attributed to Dietrich was much more positive than the mine. Perhaps we should not dismiss it so readily.

With all best wishes, from us both,
David

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Subject: Re: Several
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 27 Sep 2005 16:07:43 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

I'm glad to hear about the response from Chicago, and I'm very curious to find out about the material on the back of the painting.

I have finally come to the conclusion that the still life in Vienna is not by Horst. Even though the tabletop and some aspects of the still life itself appear to agree with his paintings, the areas of fabric, and especially the composition have nothing to do with his work. It would be very difficult to argue that he suddenly changed his style, actually getting much better, in this one painting.

The painting at im Kinsky is not really a prospect. It looks to me like an Italian copy after the Rembrandt in Minneapolis, probably quite early.

I agree that the Van der Pluym is not worth pursuing. There really is no room for it in the collection.

With all best wishes,
David

At 01:18 PM 9/27/2005, you wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> I just had a call from Martha Wolff that she is sending the photograph.
>
> I also just spoke with Peter Wolf at the Dorotheum who told me that lot 170, the perhaps Horst, was offered at Lempertz in Cologne a couple years back as Horst, with an estimate of €80,000 and it did not sell. Wolf did not ask Sumowski but he asked the RKD and Fred Meijer replied that the painting is not Horst but should be described simply as a Dutch painter of the 17th century. It comes from the widow of a German banker. Until recently there was a figure in the upper left which came off with cleaning. He will be faxing me a condition report which I will forward to you.

Please have a look at the im Kinsky sale coming up on October 11th, lot 46. There is a portrait said to be by Drost, who is said to have lived until after 1680. The quite attractive portrait of a woman is said to be a portrait of Hendrijke Stoffels with an expertise by a Prof. Dr. Gerstenberg. Everything in this description is of course wrong, but the painting is not unattractive.

Do you think that there is any point making an offer for the van der Pluym at Sotheby's in NY? Frankly, I hate making offers and am not really enamoured by the painting. I much prefer our *Dismissal of Hagar*.

Best wishes,
Alfred

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Subject: Lievens ca. 1644; Pluym
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Mon, 26 Sep 2005 17:23:05 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

The letter looks good, but I would state that the Adoration is actually dated 1644, and that the Braunschweig painting copies an original that has also been dated to around 1645.

Too bad about the Van Loo, but it was not essential.

That painting at Sotheby's probably is by Van der Pluym, and is the lynchpin in my attribution of Joseph Explaining his Dreams (formerly attributed to Victors) to the same artist. It's a compelling image, if not a pretty one.

I still have to examine Rembrandt's Mother. I hope to get a chance in the coming days. I have always found it impressive and compelling. We'll see if I get any new ideas about it after taking a closer look.

With all best wishes,
David

At 04:35 PM 9/26/2005, you wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> Attached is a draft of my letter to Arthur Wheelock which I plan to send tomorrow, after I have your agreement.
>
> Ann was bidding on the telephone on the Jakob van Loo in Chicago yesterday and was the underbidder. It went to $17,000.
>
> What do you think about that poor image from Sotheby's in NY of the painting that may be by van der Pluym?
>
> We were so busy yesterday that I forgot to ask you whether you have had a chance to examine the small *Rembrandt's Mother* really carefully. I really like

that painting.

All the best,
Alfred

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Subject: Re: Two
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Thu, 25 Aug 2005 17:08:03 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

It was very encouraging to read what Dr. Bonehill wrote, although he did not give us many specifics. I hope there will be a way of bringing him to Kingston to see the painting.

I have not yet received a photo of the Weenix from Chicago; I hope you have better luck with Martha Wolff.

With all best wishes,
David

At 04:17 PM 8/25/2005, you wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> You will surely have been interested in Dr. Bonehill's interesting e-mail.
>
> If you have still not received the Weenix portrait photograph from Chicago, then I will write to Martha Wolff and ask her for one.
>
> Best wishes,
> Alfred

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Subject: Re: Several
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Wed, 31 Aug 2005 14:13:20 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

I think he made the right decision in letting that panel go.

The Pynas would have sold in Dutch guilders. I don't recall any wartime auction sale in the Netherlands conducted in German currency.

I will indeed take your small panel of Rembrandt's Mother along with the Lievens, from here, on my next trip to The Netherlands.

With all best wishes,
David

At 01:28 PM 8/30/2005, you wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> I have decided against bidding on that dark early German panel simply because I am put off by the tiny head of the baby. Time and again in my life I have been reminded of what Professor Middeldorf taught me: when looking at an old master check first of all whether it is drawn well. This is not.
>
> Thank you for sending me the sales information of our Jan Pynas. Did this sell for Hfl 5,000 in Rotterdam or was German currency used? Also, when next you are at the RKD could you please make a Xerox copy of the illustration of this painting in that catalog.
>
> Many thanks,
> Alfred

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Subject: Gibraltar essay for the autobiography
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Thu, 08 Sep 2005 17:31:27 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

I didn't spot any problems in your essay on deaccessioning, including your discussion of the Gibraltar. I think you nicely hint at the real reason for deaccessioning: a director who simply doesn't like a particular painting, partly because he specializes in another area; he even foregoes a lot of potential income, just to be rid of the painting. But you diplomatically avoid coming out and saying it.

Barb Klempan just responded that a visit on the Friday will be fine; I haven't heard from Judith. Barb assures us she will do her best to make progress on the work during the semester.

With all best wishes,
David

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Subject: autobiography passages
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 06 Sep 2005 15:39:18 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

You bring a very interesting debate - that of Nazi era provenance - into your autobiography, and rightly so, as it is an important question. The only thing you need to change is the spelling of Goudstikker's name, which you have as Gendstikker. ✓ Changed

On the passage on Sumowski's letter, I think you have gone far enough to use your own words rather than Sumowski's. The rest is personal preference; I would myself have gone farther in stating the situation in a general way, but I'm a bit of a softie sometimes. I would have phrased it thus:

"Sumowski had attended a Lievens symposium in Braunschweig, and had been very disappointed in Van de Wetering and Bruyn. He was harshly critical of their methods in dismissing paintings, and he felt completely alienated as a scholar, even referring to himself as a "fossil". All this he expressed in his typically pungent style."

Again, in my view your passage is perfectly acceptable, but my own tendency towards greater caution.

Perhaps this is because of my experience with the Houbraken book; my collaborator Horn was very critical of others in many passages, and this hampered the open and balanced reception of the book.

With all best wishes,
David

At 02:51 PM 9/6/2005, you wrote:

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Dr. David de Witt
Department of Art
Ontario Hall
Queen's University
Kingston, ON K7L 3N6

3 September 2000

Alfred Bader
Suite 622
924 East Juneau Ave.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

Dear Alfred,

Two weeks ago I left Volker and Marieke behind in Amsterdam, to return to Kingston and take up the teaching of Volker's undergraduate courses, which begin soon. My *Doktorvater* was relaxed and happy to be able to devote himself to the Van den Eeckhout monograph. I hope he will be able to complete his magnum opus before returning to Kingston in a year.

The accompanying article was one of my few distractions while completing the dissertation on Van Noordt. Since it is about Lievens, I thought it might interest you. Volker encouraged me to write it, after I came up with the identification of the subject matter of the Berlin *Soothsayer* in a conversation. The only corrigendum is in the reference to a depiction of *Het Spaens Heydinnetje* in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (note 17). It should actually be attributed to Jacob Backer, and dated to the years before his death in 1653 (perhaps the date they report, 1673, should instead be read as 1653?). A few weeks ago the Amsterdam art historian Robert Schillemans, who knows Sumowski very well, showed me a good photograph, and thus convinced me to reconsider the traditional attribution of the Boston painting to Abraham van den Tempel, which is based on a worn signature and date.

Volker told me that David McTavish will soon be placing an advertisement for the curatorship at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre. I am glad that this will happen while I am in Kingston, and can best represent myself. But before then we may have had the chance to talk again, if you and Isabel will be making your traditional Fall visit to Queen's. I hope this letter finds both of you in good health.

With best wishes,

Subject: Koller comments
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Thu, 15 Feb 2007 14:05:03 -0500
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

The Van der Pluym at Koller is actually quite impressive, but still not a necessity for the collection. It can be seen online on their website. Also in the sale is a presumed Hoogstraten (it quite possibly is) portrait (3036), and an unrecognized Vaillant (3035). The Vaillant is quite cute, more commercial than for the collection.

The Sacchi of Jerome, no. 3019, is worth a look.

All best wishes,
David

At 10:21 AM 2/15/2007, you wrote:

What do you think?

-------- Original Message --------
Subject: rembrandt school
Date: Mon, 12 Feb 2007 18:45:34 +0000
From: Edward Clark <ed@whitfieldfineart.com>
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred

I have been offered this - the owner thinks it is Rembrandt - have you come across it before?

I am back in the office in London on Wednesday

Kind Regards

Edward

Whitfield Fine Art Limited
180 New Bond Street
London W1S 4RL

--

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Subject: Almost a good Victors
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 30 Sep 2003 11:47:31 -0400
To: Alfred Bader <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

Just a comment on the Dorotheum sale: the Victors is not bad, for Victors. There's still something naive about it, and it's thinly handled as well. It's certainly not in the league of the pair in the Milwaukee Art Museum. Also, I'm not sure that Victors is essential to the collection. Seghers yes...

With all best wishes,
David

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e. 3dad5@post.queensu.ca

Subject: Re: Your thoughts
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Thu, 16 Oct 2003 12:18:25 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

It's clear that not everyone, and especially not that journalist, understands philanthropy or generosity. I hope that you will be able to see the many benefits of this gift to Queen's and Kingston in your remaining years with us.

The article did not appear in today's Whig-Standard, and we anticipate it will appear tomorrow. We heard that the painting's value had become a topic, and this will likely reshape their focus. We had been hoping that this would not happen, as it puts more stress on our security, but perhaps it was inevitable. Monetary value seems to interest many people more than art itself.

I looked at the "I.S." picture under a magnifying glass, and the vaguely-readable monograph does indeed resemble that of the artist we know and love, as does the manner of dating. This could be an "early work" produced in Haarlem or Amsterdam, before the Master I.S. returned to his Scandinavian homeland. There is not much evidence that that he is actually Jan Spanjaert. It is nonetheless a leap from this work to the other works with this monogram. The only connections I can draw are with the solid, careful description, the open spaces in the composition, and the monochromatic colour scheme. It would be helpful to secure a better reproduction.

Best wishes,
David

At 10:40 AM 16/10/2003 -0500, you wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> I had a long telephone conversation with a reporter from the Kingston Whig Standard who certainly did not know much about paintings. He just could not understand why I would want to give the Rembrandt to Queen's now and not wait until I am dead. The last time a *Whig Standard* reporter interviewed me, there were a great many mistakes and this is not likely to be different. Please fax me a copy of today's article.
>
> Yesterday I received Christie's Amsterdam catalog.
>
> I do not like lot 14 called "Rembrandt school" at all, nor do I like lot 44, the Victors. They don't even know how to spell Sumowski's first name. It is very strange that they relate lot 40 to the Master IS, one of my favorite Rembrandt students. Do you understand the connection?
>
> Best wishes,
> Alfred
>
> David de Witt wrote:
>
> > Dear Alfred,

Lot 14 at Christie's in Amsterdam doesn't look like a very well-painted picture. It's interesting because of the strong expression, but the man looks a little brutish, and his funny hat seems to have nothing to do with the fact that he is carrying a flute.

I don't have access to the Olympia catalogue, unfortunately. A genuine Pynacker is always interesting. I hope the catalogue appears online soon.

We are of course looking forward to your visit next weekend. Perhaps you could bring the Olympia catalogue along, just to make sure we can suitably discuss the possible Pynacker, along with our other topics.

With all best wishes,
David0

At 11:48 AM 15/10/2003 -0500, you wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> What do you think of lot 14 in Christie's Amsterdam sale on November 5? I have not yet seen the catalog but a friend has brought it to my attention.
>
> And what do you think of lot 80 in Sotheby's Olympia October 30th catalogue? It is called "manner of Pynacker" but looks very good.
>
> Best wishes,
> Alfred

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David A. de Witt
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Queen's University

Subject: Re: Sumowski
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 14 Oct 2003 16:16:27 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

I had a chance to compare the photo of the old man with the Pot in Sumowski again, and it looks very thickly painted, with much more impasto than the Sumowski painting. It relates more to Rembrandt of ca. 1655-60, than to Pot. The figure shows some similarities, though.

The Sotheby's Amsterdam sale is an Adriaen van de Venne bonanza, but has little of real interest to us.

With all best wishes,
David

At 11:43 AM 09/10/2003 -0500, you wrote:
> Dear David,
>
> I called Susanin's in Chicago and they told me that the painting itself without the frame measures 36" x 30". This, it is not the painting that was with David Koetser in Zurich in 1971. That is illustrated quite well as Sumowski #1594 on p. 2376.
>
> While you look at that volume, please also look at the Pot on p. 2405 which is the painting I had in mind when I suggested Pot for the painting of which I sent you a photograph. What do you think?
>
> Best wishes,
> Alfred

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Subject: C22 and Rembrandt's father
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 07 Oct 2003 17:29:24 -0400
To: Alfred Bader <baderfa@execpc.com>
CC: Janet Brooke <brookej@post.queensu.ca>

Dear Alfred,

Janet asked me to respond to your e-mail to her on C22 and the identity of the sitter. We've had a few discussions about this before, and I thought I had persuaded you that the sitter is most likely an anonymous invented type, consistent with Rembrandt's use of the tronie. We see this old man, or someone who looks a lot like him, in several of Rembrandt's early history paintings, including the lost Baptism of the Eunuch (reproduced in Van Vliet's print) and the Jeremiah in Amsterdam. His function here is to play a yet-to-be-determined role as a sad old man. I speculate that such tronies functioned to show potential patrons that the artist could ably fulfil commissions for history paintings, mastering the greatest challenge, the depiction of emotional expression.

The argument against the identification as Rembrandt's father is based on a close comparison with the Ashmolean drawing with the inscription, which shows someone with rounder, puffier features and a very neatly trimmed beard, such as we would expect of a well-to-do burgher. Subsequent scholars have not accepted Held's idea, and have consistently published this picture simply as the "Head of an Old Man". Held interprets the sitter in C22 as being blind, incorrectly: his eyes are open and his pupils are fixed in a stare, off to the side, legibly expressing sadness. One could in a stretch argue that the figure in C22 was perhaps derived in part from Rembrandt's father, but that would not take away from the fact that he is in the end still an anonymous figure, relating more to studies for history paintings than to portraits.

I hope I am not scaring you with my explanation, and welcome the opportunity to discuss it further.

With all best wishes,
David

X-Mailer: QUALCOMM Windows Eudora Version 5.2.1
Date: Tue, 07 Oct 2003 16:33:13 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>
From: "Janet M. Brooke" <brookej@post.queensu.ca>
Subject: Re: Your letter
Cc: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>

Dear Alfred,

Now I'm scared too: I have forwarded this email to David, who I hope will explain the title he uses for the work: Head of an Old Man in a Cap, which I understand to be the current one.

Sincerely,

Janet

At 03:13 PM 2003-10-07 -0500, you wrote:

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your fax of today which scares me: what is the erroneous title on the Rembrandt reproduction? I hope we will not get into an argument over that. Personally I do believe that your painting depicts *Rembrandt's Father* as Julius Held has explained so carefully.

Anyway, I will bring some reproductions and some of the Aldrich catalog covers along. I am having lunch on Friday with Victor Snieckus and his students and they will certainly be interested in those covers.

Best wishes,
Alfred

Janet M. Brooke,
Director,
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phone: (613) 533-6000 ext. 77055
fax: (613) 533-6765
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Subject: Re: Your thoughts
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Wed, 15 Oct 2003 16:16:33 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

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With all best wishes,
David0

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> Best wishes,
> Alfred

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Dear David,

The Dorotheum auction on October 5th contains some interesting Rembrandt school paintings. Unfortunately I will not be able to bid by telephone because I have to leave for Vancouver. But I could of course leave some bids.

Lot 170 looks very close to the still lives by Horst. Sumowski illustrates some such still lives and it is amazing that an artist who painted our *Tobias* painted such still lives.

Lot 197 is a Codde, and I am looking for a good early Codde, but this I do not like.

Lot 260 looks like a genuine and unattractive Paudiss. The painting is close to Sumowski No. 1569, lot 1596 as given in the Dorotheum catalog. Of course I am writing to Marianne Baumann-Engels to alert her to this painting.

I would very much like to have an attractive Paudiss.

I do not quite know what to make ~~with~~ lot 356 which of course reminds to the Cintas non-Rembrandt, Bredius 379. Do you like this?

Best wishes,
Alfred

Subject: Your e-mails
From: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>
Date: Fri, 19 Aug 2005 14:02:45 -0500
To: David A Dewitt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>

Dear David,

Thank you for your many e-mail messages.

Yes, I have a copy of the Frankfurter Allgemeine of June 17th.

How interesting that our Jan Pynas was sold for Hfl 5,000 on February 25-26, 1943, attributed to Rembrandt. You wrote that it was signed and dated 1641. Was it signed Rembrandt? For Hfl 5,000 I could have bought several much better paintings at that time.

The material from Kiev is most interesting. We have searched the internet "Lost Art" database maintained by the Ministry of Culture of Sachsen-Anhalt, www.lostart.de and are happy to know that it does not include our Breenbergh.

I am not terribly worried about the paintings that have to be photographed. After all, it is relatively few and somehow we will manage.

Best wishes,
Alfred

Dr. Alfred Bader <baderfa@execpc.com>
President
Alfred Bader Fine Arts

Allnd re: Breenbergh David

Most of the works, especially the older ones, belonged to the large collection of Jelena Stefanović-Sakelarides, which was purchased in 1949 for the Graphic Arts Cabinet. During the 1950s some smaller series were purchased, also from private collections. The works of the avant-garde artists are part of the legacy of Ljubomir Micić, the leader of the avant-garde movement in Yugoslavia, which was presented to the National Museum in 1980.

War and its attendant displacements have erased the traces of many works in the collection. Thus, for example, we do not know how our Jan Toorop prints entered the collection. There are many other dilemmas. To which cycle of a particular artist's opus do certain works belong? Are they originals or later editions? Were the prints bearing Rembrandt's engraved signature produced in his workshop? Who were the authors of the sheets that we only suspect belong to the Dutch and Flemish schools, based on certain iconographic and thematic models? Our search for answers to these and many other questions confronts us once more with a fundamental problem: the lack of a true museological research tradition.

To make things worse, there is no specialized literature in Serbia for the study of Dutch and Flemish graphic art. Given this lack, we are incapable of doing anything more with our prints and drawings than conserving them at the most basic level. For this reason, most of our collection has never been published or exhibited. Nor is it being augmented. During the past two decades, the contact with private collectors that was essential to the formation of the print room has been lost. This fact, as well as the non-existence of public sales of graphic art in Serbia, stands in the way of making new acquisitions. In the collection of Dutch and Flemish graphic art at the National Museum in Belgrade, time has stopped.

For all these reasons, contact with CODART and the experts working within it offers us hope that this first, brief glance will initiate deeper, more detailed observations, allowing us to perform an expert analysis of our collection of Dutch and Flemish graphic art, thereby giving it a new lease on life

UKRAINE

Introducing the collection of the Bogdan and Varvara Khanenko Museum of Art in Kiev

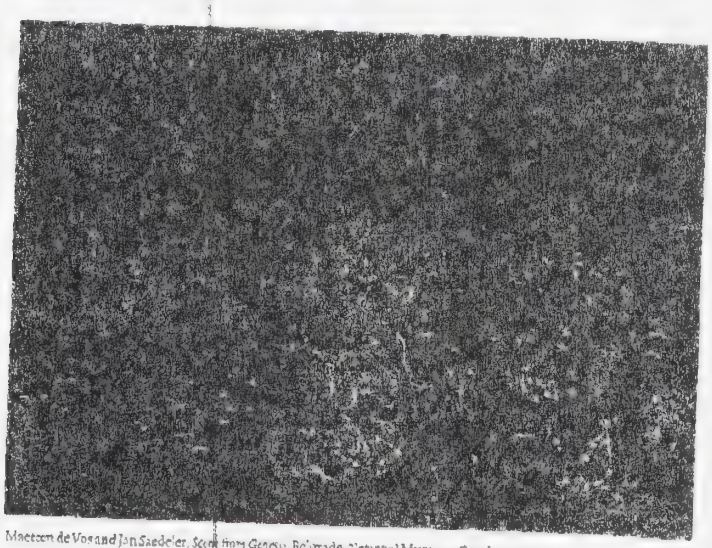
Olena Zhivkova

At present, the collection of the Bogdan and Varvara Khanenko Museum of Art in Kiev runs to 24,000 works of western and oriental art from antiquity to the 20th century. The most important part of the collection (approximately 16%) is on permanent display. Although our exhibition hall is rather small, the wealth of storage gives us an opportunity to organize valuable temporary exhibitions.

The museum is based on the private collection of Bogdan and Varvara Khanenko (1849–1917 and 1852–1922, respectively). Bogdan Khanenko was a member of an old aristocratic family. By profession he was a lawyer, by vocation a connoisseur and patron of the arts. For more than 40 years, from the 1870s to the 1910s, he collected numerous European Old Masters, Egyptian, Greek and Roman antiquities, objects of oriental art, Russian and Byzantine icons and other precious items. All were purchased at antique shops and from private collections in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Paris, Rome, Berlin and elsewhere. Paintings and prints of the Netherlandish, Dutch and Flemish schools as well as objects of applied arts from the Low Countries made up a valuable part of Khanenko's collection.

In order to show his collection to the public, Bogdan Khanenko built a small mansion in the very center of Kiev. The interiors were designed in various historical styles, from Gothic to Rococo, in keeping with the period of the objects displayed in each room. Before his death in May 1917, Bogdan Khanenko bequeathed the mansion and the collection to the city of Kiev in his will.

The museum received official status in 1919 in accordance with the government decree on the nationalization of private collections. In 1924, breaking Khanenko's will, the museum was renamed and its collection was distributed between several museums. During the Soviet period, the institution was known as Kiev's Museum of Western and Oriental Art. At the same time, the collection grew more than thirteen-fold in size. It was enriched with many objects from the State Museum Foundation and some other nationalized private collections, as well as by donations and purchases by the state. One particularly valuable addition to the collection were the works left to the city of Kiev in 1925 by the testament of Vasilij Schavinskij (1868–1924), a St. Petersburg collector who was Ukrainian by birth. Schavinskij's



Maetsen de Vos and Jan Saedeler, *Scene from Genesis*, Belgrade, National Museum, Graphic Arts Cabinet

Vincent van Gogh, *Writer at his desk*, Belgrade National Museum, Graphic Arts Cabinet

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Leytens, Davi
Aisloot, Kersti
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Coques, Marte
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Evercingen, J
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Adam Kruiser
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collection was mostly composed of Dutch and Flemish paintings and prints.

Unfortunately, the museum suffered considerably during the Second World War. The most valuable holdings were evacuated, but the bulk of the collection, which remained in Kiev during Nazi occupation, was lost. This included numerous paintings from the Schavinskij collection. Because some of the museum inventories, documentation and photo archives were lost as well, it is difficult to verify the losses precisely. In his *Catalogue of works of Western European painters lost during the Second World War* (Kiev 1998), O. Roslavets lists and reproduces 474 missing paintings, including 184 works by artists from the Low Countries. These entries can be consulted on the Lost Art Internet Database maintained by the Ministry of Culture of Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany (www.lostart.de). As far as we know, the majority of these works were stolen by the Nazis and destroyed in a fire in Königsberg in 1943. However, we have reason to believe that some of the art survived. We would greatly appreciate any information about the present location of these works.

The museum building was closed for renovation from 1989 to 1998. Today, the permanent exhibition displays the classical European schools in chronological order and by region. The largest hall is devoted to Netherlandish, Dutch and Flemish painting of the 15th–17th centuries. Currently, there are 49 paintings on display. We are working on creating a new Oriental art exposition in a separate building.

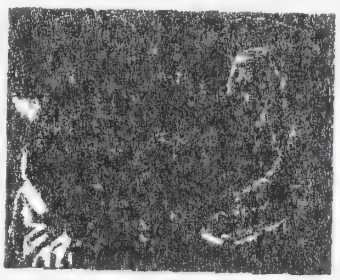
The entire collection includes 160 paintings from the 15th to the 19th centuries that are attributed to masters from the Low Countries. At the moment, this is the only collection of its kind in Ukraine. Among the most important works are a 15th-century *Adoration of the Magi* by an artist named after the painting, the Master of the Khanenko Adoration of the Magi; and work by Quentin Massys, Cornelis Ketel, Pieter Brueghel the Younger, Gijsbrecht Leytens, David Vinckboons, Denijs van Alsloot, Kerstiaen de Keuninck, Sebastiaen Vrancx, Rubens, Jordaens, van Dyck, Gonzales Coques, Marten Pepyn, Gaspar Verbruggen the Younger, Jacob van Ruisdael, Allaert van Everdingen, Nicolaus Knüpfer, Leonaert Bramer, Jan Weenix, and a long *et cetera* of other well-known names. The 19th century is represented by a few paintings by Jan Adam Kruseman and Hendrik Mesdag. In storage, there are several important medieval sculptures and a number of copies, fakes and primitive works.

In spite of wartime losses, the museum retains an important collection of Netherlandish, Dutch and Flemish prints, nearly 700 in all, including 34 prints by Lucas van Leyden, several by Rembrandt, and others by Hendrick Goltzius, Adriaen van Ostade, Hendrick van Avercamp, Roelant Savery, Karel Dujardin and Abraham Bloemaert. The curator of our print collection is Elena Schostak.

Among the works of applied art from the Low Countries in the Bogdan and Varvara Khanenko Museum of Art are 53 faience objects, some furniture and a series of 18th-century Flemish tapestries. (Curators: Olena Kramareva and Irina Musatova).

The most recent scholarly catalogue of the European collection of the museum was published in 1961 in Russian. In the near future we will conduct intensive research in preparation for a new catalogue. Our aims are to review the traditional attributions; determine the authorship and iconography of some poorly understood works, establish reliable dates; find comparative examples; study the art-historical context of our paintings; and prepare digitized images. We wish to summarize the results of this campaign in a new scholarly publication. We propose to conduct the research and publish the catalogue as a joint Dutch-Ukrainian project. Such a project would enable us to renew the tradition of systematic study of the art of the Low Countries in Ukraine. It will place a significant number of artworks in their proper international context, and make this part of Ukrainian cultural heritage more accessible.

We hope that the newly elected Ukrainian government will support the study of European culture in Ukrainian museums. In addition, we would be very grateful for any assistance that might be forthcoming from European cultural organizations. In this regard, we wish to express our gratitude to the government of the Netherlands, which made the first step in this direction by giving us the opportunity to participate in a MATRA project of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Master of the Khanenko Adoration of the Magi, *Adoration of the Magi*, Kiev, Bogdan and Varvara Khanenko Museum of Art

USA

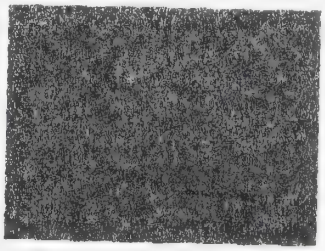
An exhibition project on Jan Provoost

Ron Spronk

This exhibition project aims to bring together some 30–35 works by Jan Provoost (ca. 1465–1529), a leading painter in Bruges during the first three decades of the 16th century. The exhibition will be organized for the Groeningemuseum in Bruges, which houses six key works by this master, possibly in collaboration with an American museum. A final date for the exhibition has not yet been set.

The city of Antwerp became increasingly important as the leading economic and artistic center of the Low Countries during Jan Provoost's lifetime, challenging Bruges's centuries-long dominance. In a parallel development, the open art market was also growing rapidly, which triggered significant changes in the traditional production methods for paintings. The first quarter of the 16th century has long been regarded as a period of rapid and steep economic and artistic decline for the town on the river Zwin. More recently, however, this notion has been fundamentally revised, since Bruges's economic downturn occurred more slowly and gradually than previously assumed.

The increasing competition from Antwerp triggered a brief but passionate local humanistic movement. Contradicting macroeconomic developments, art production in Bruges showed a remarkable increase rather than a decline in the first quarter of the 16th century, as was illustrated in the 1998 exhibition *Bruges and the Renaissance from Memling to Fourbus*. In an attempt to turn the political and economic tide, the local authorities invested heavily in the arts. Painters, sculptors, architects and rhetoricians



Gijsbrecht Leytens, *Winter landscape*, Kiev, Bogdan and Varvara Khanenko Museum of Art

www.lostart.de

LOST ART INTERNET DATABASE

Start | Suche | Forum | Publikationen | Links | Über uns | Kontakt

Lost Art Internet Database

ist ein gemeinsames Projekt des Bundes und der Länder der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur Erfassung von Kulturgütern, die infolge der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft und der Ereignisse des Zweiten Weltkriegs verbracht, verlagert oder – insbesondere jüdischen Eigentümern – verfolgungsbedingt entzogen wurden.

Koordinierungsstelle für Kulturgutverluste

Turmschanzenstraße 32
39114 Magdeburg

Telefon: +49 (0) 3 91-567 3891
Telefax: +49 (0) 3 91-567 3899
E-Mail: lostart@mk.sachsen-anhalt.de

Restitution eines Gemäldes durch das Bundesamt zur Regelung offener Vermögensfragen aus dem "Restbestand CCP"

Suche nach Objekten:

Breenbergh Suchen

Sie möchten

- vermisstes Kulturgut melde
- aufgefundenes Kulturgut me
- zu vermissten oder aufgefur Kulturgütern recherchieren, möglicherweise speziell zum genannten "Restbestand CC
- Hinweise zu Kulturgütern ge in der Lostart-Datenbank ve sind?
- die Liste der Publikationen z Problematik „Raub- und Beu einsehen?
- persönlich Kontakt aufnehm
- einen Antrag an die „Berate Kommission" stellen?
- noch weitere Fragen zur Nut Lostart-Datenbank stellen?

Appell der Bundesregierung Länder und der kommunalen Spitzen Suche nach NS-verfolgungsbe entzogenen Kulturgütern in öffe Einrichtungen in Deutschland, 2

Gemeinsame Presseerklä

Presseerklärung

Subject: Re: [Fwd: picture]
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 21 Oct 2003 15:56:50 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

It looks very impressive, but I cannot immediately put the finger on which pupil it would be. Is it being presented as a Rembrandt?

All best wishes,
David

At 11:59 AM 21/10/2003 -0500, you wrote:

David, Do you like this? Alfred

-------- Original Message --------
Subject: picture
Date: Tue, 21 Oct 2003 18:04:20 +0100
From: "Edward Clark" <ed@whitfieldfineart.com>
To: <baderfa@execpc.com>

dear anne/alfred;
for simplicity i have put three images of the painting on our website.
they can be viewed at this address:

http://www.whitfieldfineart.com/rembrandt.htm

yours Edward

This message scanned for viruses by CoreComm

David A. de Witt
Bader Curator of European Art
Agnes Etherington Art Centre
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6
t. (613) 533 6000 x75100
f. (613) 533 6765
e. 3dad5@post.queensu.ca

Subject: Program for 26 October
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Mon, 25 Aug 2003 11:50:09 -0400
To: Alfred Bader <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

Your letter with the photographs have arrived, and I will pass them on to Douglas. Your note mentioned Van Dyck, but I take it you meant Jordaens, whom we have already singled out as the likely candidate for artist.

David McTavish will visit us this Thursday for a meeting, and we will show him the Solimena at that time. I hope to bring Sebastian in sooner, if possible.

In your letter you asked about the program for 26 October. Your talk is scheduled for 1:00 pm in Ellis Hall, and we are holding our reception in the Atrium at 2:00. After that, I have agreed to give a tour of the exhibition and the Bader Gallery for a group coming in from Toronto. I trust that this will not conflict with any of your plans. Judith Browne has been in touch concerning your visit, which she is organizing.

It looks like I will be away from my office from 5-15 September, on a courier trip to bring the Flinck and the Renesse to Tokyo, and then to give a paper there on De Gelder and Houbraken.

With all best wishes,
David

David A. de Witt
Bader Curator of European Art
Agnes Etherington Art Centre
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6
t. (613) 533 6000 x75100
f. (613) 533 6765
e. 3dad5@post.queensu.ca

~~Gitlene Storie~~ ~~Keep back~~
~~GA directors~~ EJC
M Juillard
Otto N.
E Elliot

Subject: Re: Bredius 25
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Fri, 29 Aug 2003 15:17:29 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

I would be keen to see a good colour reproduction of it. It looks like it could be an early Flinck, and it is definitely an interesting painting: such an all-out costume! But it is definitely not worth more than, say, $150-200,000 (then only if in superb condition). With such ambitions, the owner is unlikely to be willing to bargain realistically.

It looks like Barb Klempan is willing to revisit her proposal substantially, in response to our concerns. This makes me optimistic that we can revive the Wright of Derby as a teaching project. I expect to receive something from her next week.

With all best wishes,
David

P.S. I will be at home on Monday, as it is a holiday.

At 01:28 PM 29/08/2003 -0500, you wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> A friendly Austrian dealer whom I know well has offered me Bredius 25 now owned by a Jordanian aristocrat. The owner obtained a $6 million appraisal from a very dubious character in Florida.
>
> I find it quite an interesting painting which will, I presume, be described in Vol. IV. What do you think of it? Certainly not Rembrandt.
>
> Best wishes,
> Alfred

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Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6
t. (613) 533 6000 x75100
f. (613) 533 6765
e. 3dad5@post.queensu.ca

Subject: Rembrandt school Man in a Hat
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 26 Aug 2003 15:33:06 -0400
To: Alfred Bader <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

The transparency of the Man in a Hat arrived today, with Sumowski's expertise, in which he compares it to several pictures attributed to Rembrandt.

The only name that comes up for me is Van der Pluym. It seems to connect with the artist's spry energy, loose handling, and brownish colouration. It is a modest work, though, especially in the context of the more sophisticated pieces in Milwaukee and Kingston (Van der Pluym's *Hagar*, for instance).

With all best wishes,
David

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Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6
t. (613) 533 6000 x75100
f. (613) 533 6765
e. 3dad5@post.queensu.ca

Subject: Re: (no subject)
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 16 Sep 2003 10:38:18 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

The high level of organization of the exhibition, and the politeness of the Japanese, made the trip go very well. My only regret is that I did not allocate an extra day to Kyoto, which is very rich in cultural treasures, having been spared during the war.

Eric's picture is interesting, but unfortunately not very good in quality. It strikes me as being later, and perhaps not Dutch. The colours are especially surprising, and having me thinking late 18th century. I take it there is no evidence about the date.

With all best wishes,
David

At 10:01 AM 15/09/2003 -0500, you wrote:
> Dear David,
>
> I hope that you had a great time in Japan. How did you like the exhibition overall?
>
> What do you think of Eric Markowitz' tiny pastiche after the Queen's Rembrandt? Should we ask him to bring the painting to Queen's on the Sunday of my talk or perhaps bring it to the airport on Thursday evening and let me take it to Queen's?
>
> Best wishes,
> Alfred

David A. de Witt
Bader Curator of European Art
Agnes Etherington Art Centre
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6
t. (613) 533 6000 x75100
f. (613) 533 6765
e. 3dad5@post.queensu.ca

Subject: Re: (no subject)
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Tue, 16 Sep 2003 10:43:16 -0400
To: Alfred Bader Fine Arts <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

Jetlag is evidently affecting me, as I did not answer most of your questions. The exhibition was very impressive, although not very important from an art historical point of view. With the help of the Rijksmuseum, they avoided misattributions or speculation, and put together a solid exhibition on quite a large scale.

As for Eric's picture, I wonder if it would be worth it to have him bring it up on that weekend. If he plans to come anyway, then why not, I would say. But his picture is also not close enough to the Rembrandt to be a telling comparison.

All best wishes,
David

At 10:01 AM 15/09/2003 -0500, you wrote:
Dear David,

> I hope that you had a great time in Japan. How did you like the exhibition overall?
>
> What do you think of Eric Markowitz' tiny pastiche after the Queen's Rembrandt? Should we ask him to bring the painting to Queen's on the Sunday of my talk or perhaps bring it to the airport on Thursday evening and let me take it to Queen's?
>
> Best wishes,
> Alfred

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ALFRED BADER FINE ARTS

DR. ALFRED BADER

ESTABLISHED 1961

July 28, 1993

Mr. David A. de Witt
9 Balaclava Street, Apt. #3
Kingston, Ontario
Canada K7K 1J4

Dear David:

Isabel and I were in Europe until Monday, and so I can reply to your interesting letter of the 16th of June only now.

So many art historians have asked me for a photograph of the Jacob Wrestling with the Angel that I have none left, even though I routinely ask for return of the photographs after publication. With this heat and humidity, I am reluctant to take panel pictures to the photographer.

Kilgore's painting of the Levite and His Concubine was for sale at Christie's in London some years ago, and it brought only £9000 or so. But, I did not like it well enough to bid on it.

I have been invited to speak at the Art Institute of Chicago on August 10th and will then look at the Portrait of a Woman given to van Noordt by Sumowski, and will let you know.

I finally tracked down the owner of the paining of the Baptism of Jesus which was offered for sale in the Dorotheum. I like the painting very much and purchased it by telephone. It is now being kept for me by a friend in Vienna. The enclosed description from the Dorotheum catalog No. 278 will remind you of the details.

As soon as the Queen's Ph.D. program is in place, there will be a number of Bader Fellowships to allow Ph.D. students to spend time in Europe. I so very much hope that Professor Manuth will come to Queen's, but in the meantime, do discuss the availability of these fellowships with Professor McTavish.

Sincerely,

By Appointment Only
ASTOR HOTEL SUITE 622
924 EAST JUNEAU AVENUE
MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN USA 53202
TEL 414 277-0730 FAX 414 277-0709

277
Joos van Cleve (Antwerpen geb., um 1510 tätig) **Nachfolger**
Das Jesuskind mit dem Johannesknaben in einer blumigen Wiese sitzend, Öl auf Holz, 38 x 53 cm, ger., (Wo). *50.000–70.000*

Das Gemälde geht auf die spiegelbildliche Originalzeichnung von Leonardo da Vinci in der königlichen Sammlung Windsor Castle zurück. Nach Leonardos Prototyp gibt es zahlreiche andere Versionen, u. a. in den Museen von Brüssel, Neapel und Wien.

278
Rembrandt (1606–1669) **Nachfolger**
Die Taufe Christi, Öl auf Leinwand, 69 x 85,5 cm, ger., (Wo). *40.000–60.00*

Gutachten: Schriftliche Mitteilung Dr. Wer Sumowski: „Die Qualität ist offenbar hervor gend ... Vielleicht könnte ich das schöne Ge mälde in meinem 6. Band berücksichtigen

279
Salomon Koninck (An 1609–1656)
Sitzender alter Mann r Leinwand, 60 x 50 cm (Wo).

Gutachten: Prof. Dr. We 25. Juni 1991, als Werk v 1640er Jahre.