

Alfred Baker Fonds

Chemistry and Art
More Adventures of a Chemist Collector

Abraham + Angels

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A84 Abraham + Angels

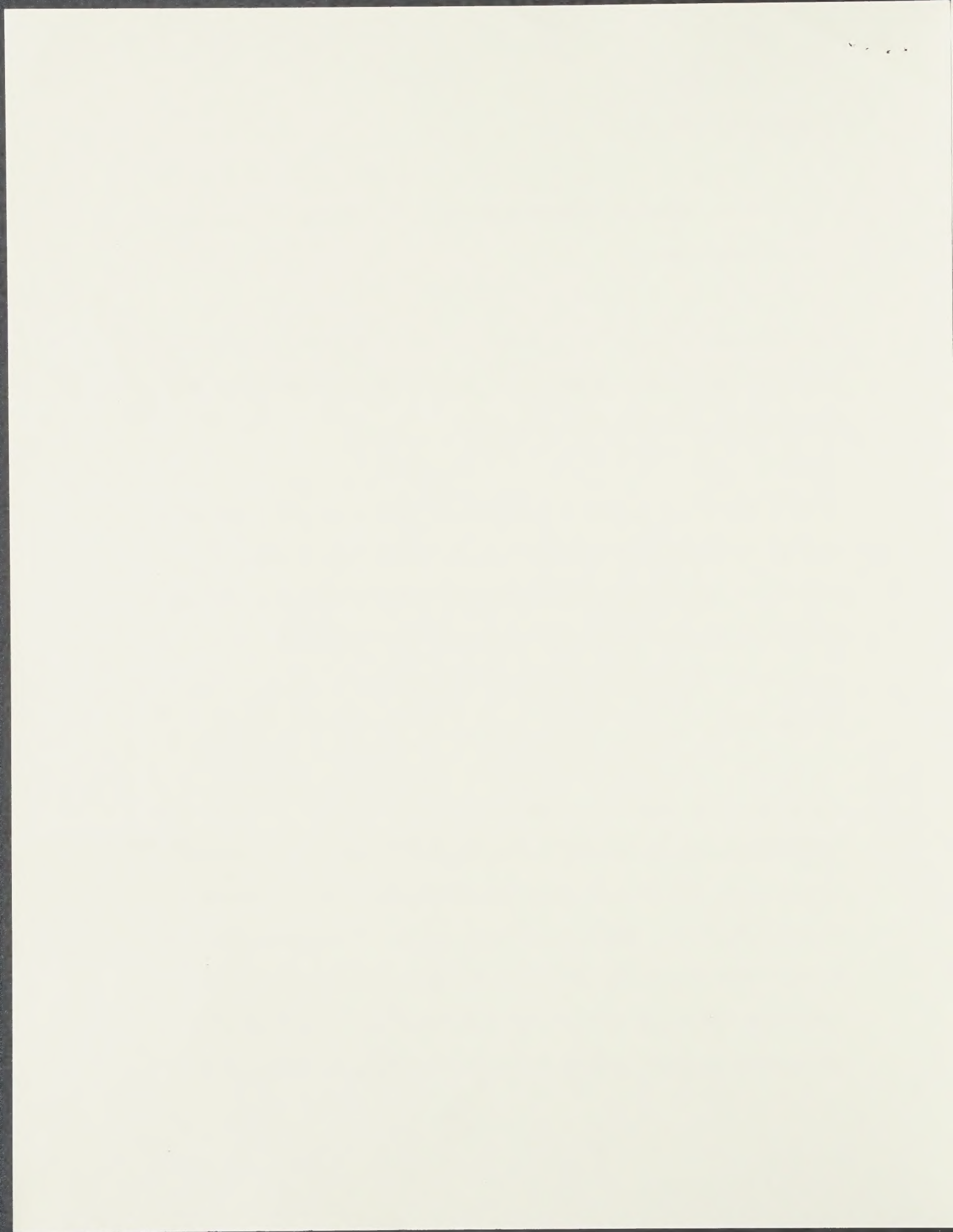
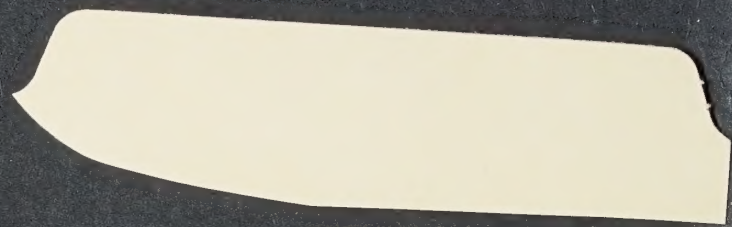
Bader letter 9-3-04 excerpt

That left the fine little sketch of Abraham and the Three Angels, signed and dated 1646, for careful consideration.

I discussed this with Otto Naumann, who knows Gerald Stiebel of ~~Rosenberg & Stiebel~~ **Stiebel, Ltd.**, who had arranged for the loan. Otto said that Stiebel was both able and straightforward and that he would speak to him.

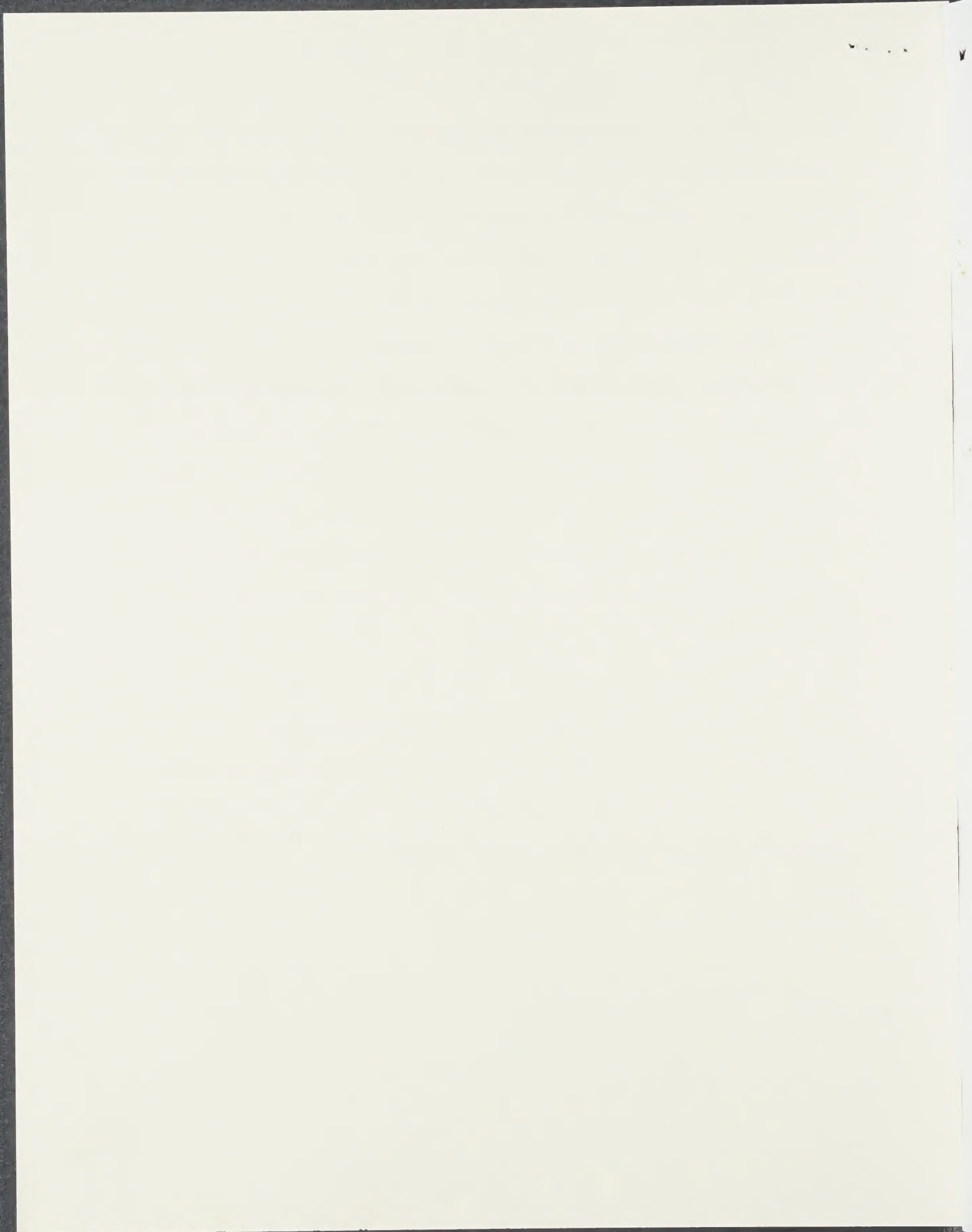
When he told me later ~~that~~ **what** he had offered ~~\$6 million~~ I said that this seemed very much too low and that he should go considerably higher, subject, of course, to our examining the painting very carefully. The answer **to the new offer** came back very quickly: The painting is yours at the price offered plus ~~one million dollars~~ **10%**, provided we can work out all the delivery details, with hand over after the exhibition ended in Chicago in May.

The provenance of the painting is most impressive. It had belonged to Ferdinand Bol, Rembrandt's student, and Jan Six in whose sale in 1702 it was lot 40. It had then belonged to Benjamin West and several well known English collectors, of these Sir Thomas Baring the best known. In 1923 it was acquired by Walter and Catalina von Pannwitz. Around 1950 Catalina von Pannwitz established the Aurora Trust and in 1986 the painting was placed into the Aurora Art ~~Trust~~ Fund. Thus, there was no concern whatever about where the painting had been during the last war. The



beneficiaries of the art fund ~~was owned by~~ **were descendants of Catalina von the**
Pannwitz ~~descendants~~, one of them in Argentina and ~~another the Earl of Chichester.~~ **the**
other in England. Barry Kessler, ~~the President of~~ **trustee of** the Aurora Art Fund in New
York, confirmed that Gerald Stibel, **as art advisor to the trust,** was authorized to sell
the painting. Where to transfer the painting became a bit complicated ~~for tax reasons~~
~~which I do not understand.~~ ~~It could not be in New York, the lawyer stipulated, and at~~
~~one point suggested that it would have to be flown to Switzerland to be turned over to~~
~~Otto there.~~ ~~This struck me as a waste of money and of Otto's time~~ and finally we
agreed that the invoice ~~which was~~ **would be** written 'CIF Chicago' **which** would allow
~~Otto to come to Chicago~~ **the painting to be picked up there** ~~This he did~~ on Monday,
May 10th, **the day after the exhibition ended and taken directly** ~~Having collected the~~
~~painting he flew it right back to New York to hand~~ to one of the country's best restorers,
Nancy Kreig.

Otto called me the next day to tell me that Nancy Krieg had begun cleaning the
Abraham and that it was clear that it would be much improved. By Friday, the 14th, the
cleaning was complete, Otto had acquired a fine little frame and ~~was ready to offer it to~~
~~interested customers~~ **I was pleased indeed.**



Aktuell

Wahl IAA Hurrikan <Gast> Mein FAZ.NET Ticker

22. September 2005

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Alter Mann im Profil, 1661

Niederlande Vier Gemälde als echte Rembrandts identifiziert

22. September 2005 Vier Gemälde haben sich nach umfangreichen Untersuchungen in Amsterdam als echte Rembrandt-Werke herausgestellt. Dabei handelt es sich um Gemälde, die bisher als Kopien oder als Bilder von Schülern des berühmten holländischen Meisters (1606 - 1669) galten, berichtete die Tageszeitung „De Volkskrant“, am Donnerstag.

„Es sind Vorstudien zu großen bekannten Kompositionen von Rembrandt“, bestätigte der Leiter des Rembrandt Research Project, Prof. Ernst van de Wetering, in Amsterdam. Er kam der Entdeckung bei der Restaurierung des Gemäldes „Studie einer Frau mit weißer Mütze“ auf die Spur.

Von diesem Gemälde wurde bisher angenommen, daß es aus dem 18. oder 19. Jahrhundert stammt. Nach der Restauration sei deutlich, so van de Wetering, daß es bereits 1640 gemalt wurde. Die drei anderen Ölbilder - sie zeigen einen alten Mann im Profil und mit Bart sowie eine weinende Frau - galten als Werke von Rembrandt-Schülern oder Kopien. Van de Wetering ist jedoch überzeugt, daß es vier Studien sind zur Vorbereitung größerer Werke des Meisters. Dabei wollte Rembrandt ausprobieren, wie ein Kopf bei unterschiedlichem Lichteinfall aussieht. „Es ist faszinierend, daß man wieder ein Stück von Rembrandts Art zu arbeiten verstehen lernt.“



Alter Mann mit Bart, 1659

Dienstmädchenkleidung unterm Pelzmantel

Vor gut zwei Jahren schickte das Auktionshaus Sothebys dem Rembrandt-Experten ein Foto der Studie der Frau mit weißer Mütze. Er ließ das Werk in Amsterdam untersuchen

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und stellte mit dem Restaurator fest, daß die weiße Dienstmädchenhaube nicht zu der Pelzjacke paßte, die die Frau auf dem Gemälde trug. Röntgenfotos zeigten, daß unter dem Pelzmantel Dienstmädchenkleidung aus dem 17. Jahrhundert verborgen war. Die Pelzjacke, so van de Wetering, war erst im späten 18. Jahrhundert darüber gemalt worden.



Professor van de Wetering neben der "Studie einer Frau mit weißer Mütze"

Das Holzpaneel des Originalgemäldes muß den Untersuchungen zufolge aus dem selben Baum gesägt worden sein wie andere Gemälde, die in Rembrandts Atelier entstanden. Das Rembrandt Research Project untersucht seit seiner Gründung 1968 Gemälde mit wissenschaftlichen Methoden wie Röntgenstrahlen, Infrarot und Farbanalyse. Die vier Gemälde sind seit Donnerstag im Amsterdamer Rembrandthaus zu sehen.

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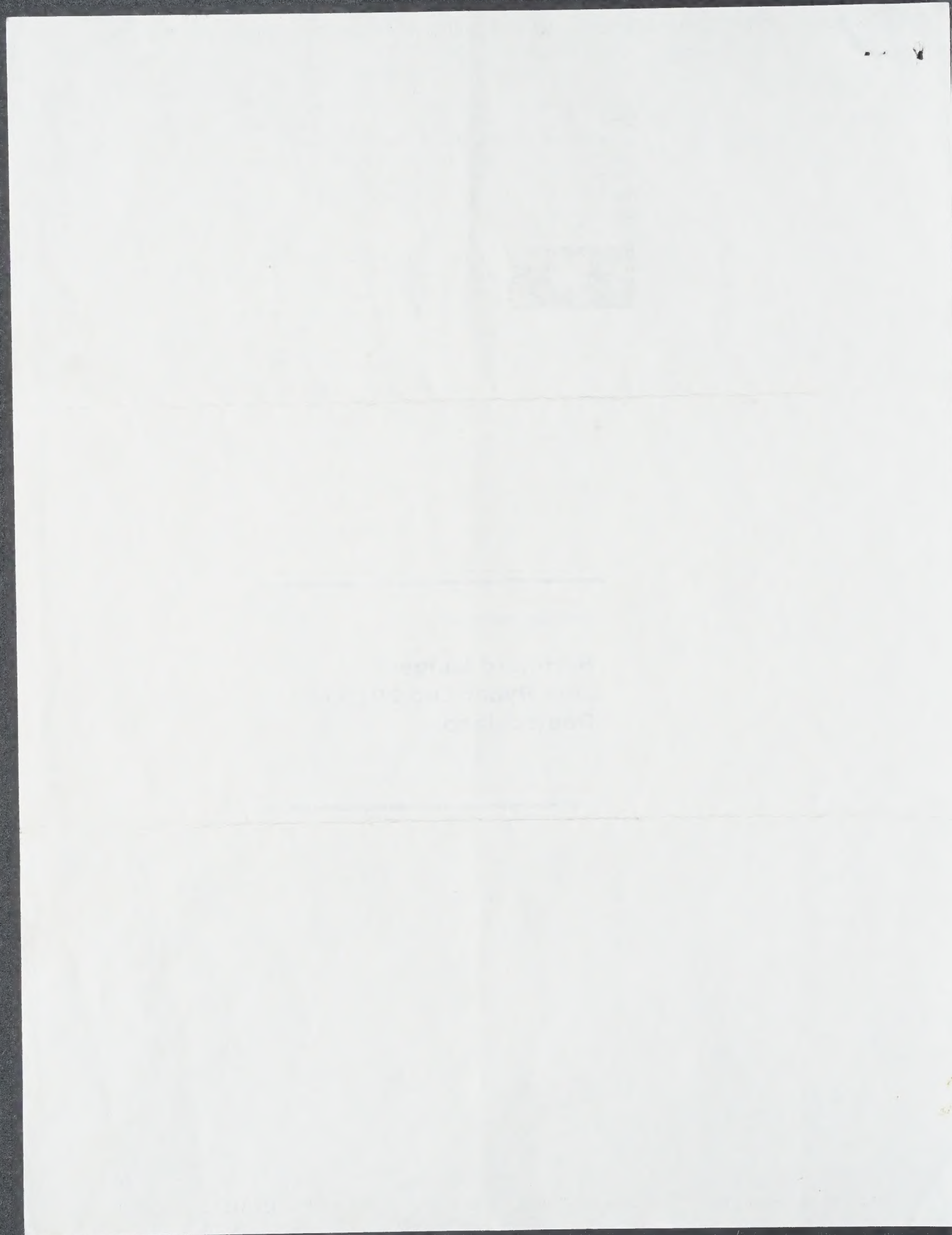
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- Vier schilderijen van Rembrandt ontdekt

<http://www.volkskrant.nl/kunst/1127279277264.html>

Dit schilderij is samen met Studie van een wenende vrouw (uit het Detroit Institute of Arts), Studie van een oude man in profiel en Studie van een oude man met baard (beide uit de privé-collecties van de familie Bader in de VS) vanaf vandaag in het Rembrandthuis in Amsterdam te zien.

Van Studie van een vrouw met witte muts werd algemeen verondersteld dat het een 18de- of 19de-eeuws werk was. Het blijkt uit 1640 te zijn. Van de andere drie werd tot nu toe gedacht dat het kopieën door leerlingen van Rembrandt waren.

Volgens Van de Wetering zijn het olieverfstudies die Rembrandt maakte ter voorbereiding op bekende grote schilderijen, alleen om te zien hoe het hoofd van een persoon er in ongewone belichting precies uitziet.

Van de Wetering kreeg ruim twee jaar geleden door het veilinghuis Sotheby's een foto toegestuurd van het schilderij dat nu Belichtingsstudie van een vrouw met witte muts wordt genoemd. Hij liet het werk overkomen in het atelier van Martin Bijl, vaste restaurator van het RRP.

Uit kostuumonderzoek bleek dat de muts en de bontmantel niet met elkaar corresponderen: de muts bleek een werkstersmutsje, terwijl de bontmantel te chic is voor een werkster. De bontmantel bleek pas laat in de 18de eeuw over de oorspronkelijke voorstelling geschilderd.

Dendrochronologisch onderzoek (het tellen en meten van jaarringen om tot een datering te komen) wees uit dat het originele paneel van het schilderij uit dezelfde boom is gezaagd als vier andere schilderijen die in Rembrandts atelier ontstonden, waaronder Rembrandts Zelfportret uit 1633 in het Louvre. Röntgenstralen legden bovendien onder de mantel een los geschilderd 17de-eeuws werksterskostuum bloot. Na een ingrijpende restauratie is dat nu weer zichtbaar.

Sinds de oprichting van het RRP in 1968 worden schilderijen onderzocht met wetenschappelijke methoden zoals dendrochronologisch onderzoek, röntgen- en infraroodonderzoek (waarmee onderschilderingen zichtbaar gemaakt kunnen worden) en onderzoek naar verfmonsters, waarmee onder meer kan worden bepaald of in latere eeuwen extra lagen verf zijn aangebracht. Tot 1968 werden toeschrijvingen alleen gedaan op basis van onderzoek naar de stijl van schilderen.

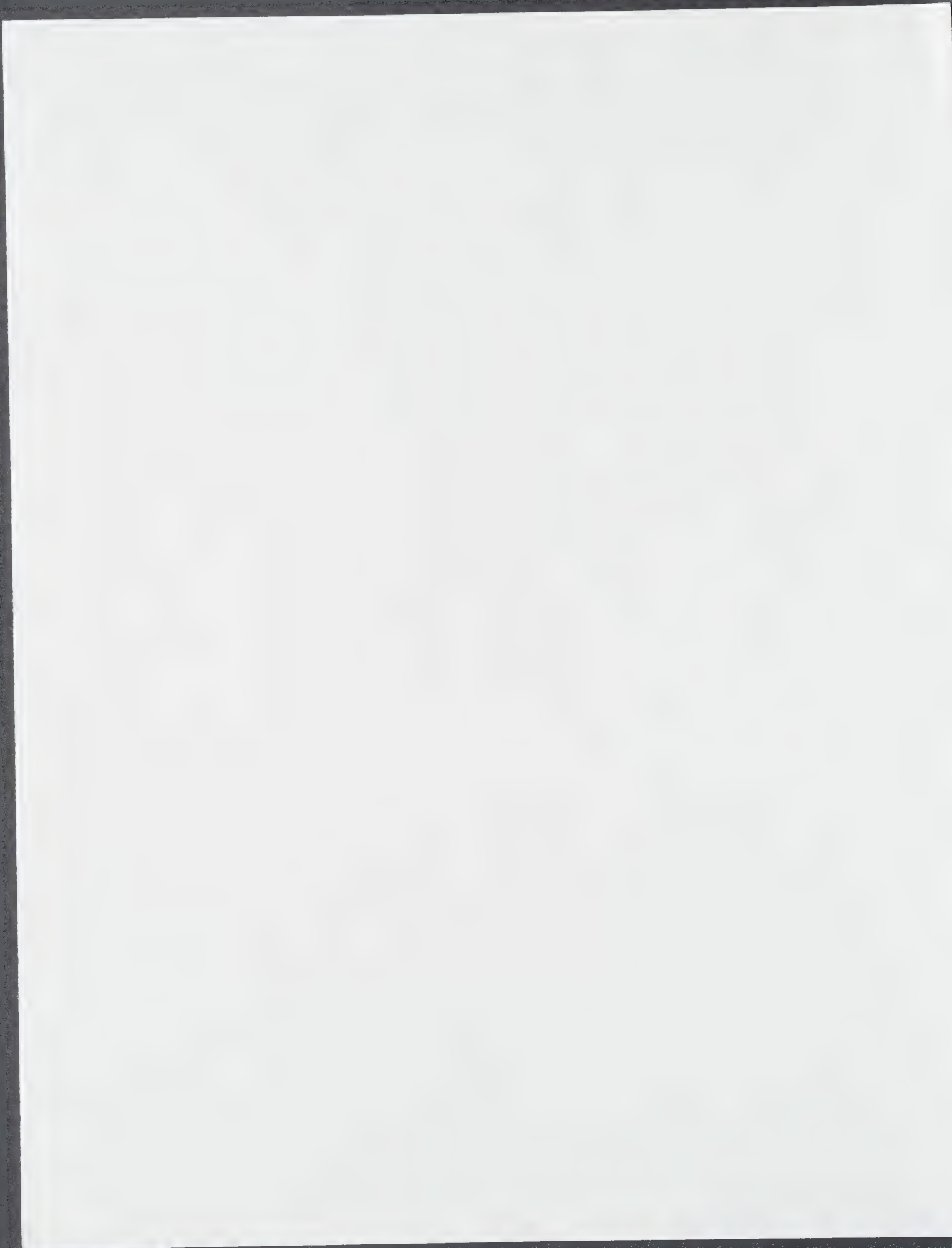
De Studie van een vrouw met witte muts werd in 1931 voor het laatst door een kunsthistoricus als een echte Rembrandt geaccepteerd. Geroemde onderzoekers zoals Abraham Bredius en Werner Sumowski namen het schilderij daarna niet op in hun catalogi van het Rembrandt-oeuvre.

Van de Wetering is verheugd: 'Het is zo fascinerend weer een nieuw deel van Rembrandts manier van werken te leren begrijpen.'



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Vier echte Rembrandts in Amsterdam identifiziert



Vier echte Rembrandts in Amsterdam identifiziert
 Ein neuer Rembrandt wird begutachtet.

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Vor gut zwei Jahren schickte das Auktionshaus Sotheby's dem Rembrandt-Experten ein Foto der Studie der Frau mit weißer Mütze. Er ließ das Werk in Amsterdam untersuchen und stellte mit dem Restaurator fest, dass die weiße Dienstmädchenhaube nicht zu der Pelzjacke passte, die die Frau auf dem Gemälde trug. Röntgenfotos zeigten, dass unter dem Pelzmantel Dienstmädchenkleidung aus dem 17. Jahrhundert verborgen war. Die Pelzjacke, so van de Wetering, war erst im späten 18. Jahrhundert darüber gemalt worden.

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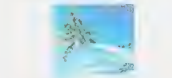
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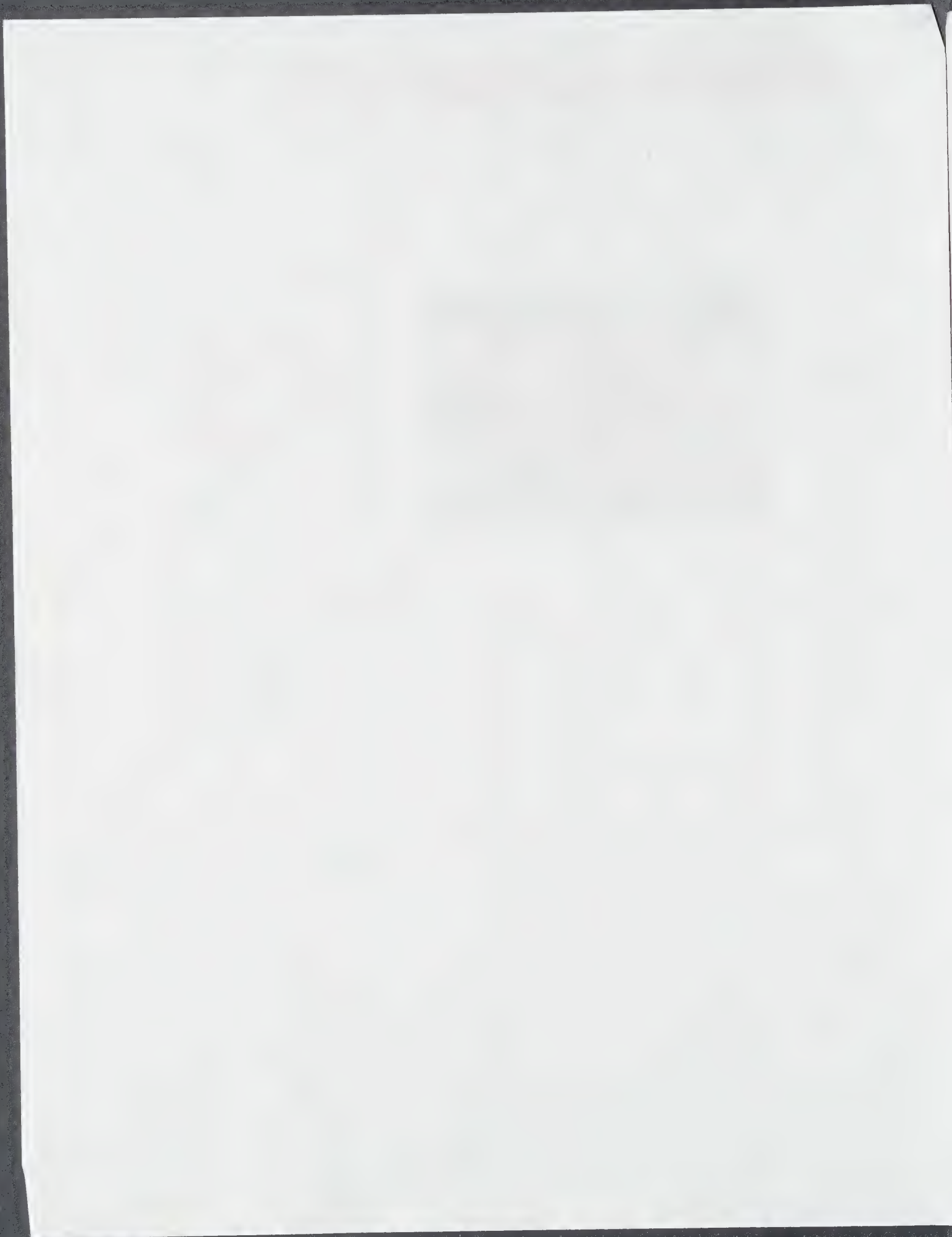
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Inside Art

Carol Vogel

New Rembrandt, 'Abraham,' at Met

Placed centrally in one of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's four galleries of Dutch paintings is a custom-built case displaying the newest loan: Rembrandt's "Abraham and the Three Angels." A tiny panel (6 1/2 by 8 3/8 inches), it depicts a scene from the book of Genesis in which Abraham, the biblical patriarch invites three strangers he has met on the road to his house for a meal. One of them turns out to be God, who promises that Abraham's aged wife, Sarah, will bear a son, Isaac. God is shown as an illuminated angel in the center of the painting, with Abraham to his left, kneeling and holding a bowl. At the right is Sarah, peering out from an open door.

"The Met's collection of Rembrandts is so dominated by portraits and other single-figure paintings that this picture allows us to show another aspect of the artist's work," said Walter Liedtke, a curator of European paintings at the museum.

The painting was last seen in 2003-4 in "Rembrandt's Journey: Painter, Draftsman, Etcher," an exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Art Institute of Chicago. Until then it was known to scholars but seldom seen by the public.

The painting, to be on view at the Met through 2007, has been lent by an anonymous New Jersey collector who bought it from Otto Naumann, a Manhattan dealer. The asking price was \$22 million, and the final price is believed to be just under \$20 million.

"This painting is one of the most extensively documented I've ever encountered," Mr. Naumann said. "It was recorded the year after it was made." The artist signed the work and dated it 1646. Records show that on March 28, 1647, Marten van der Broeck, a Dutch entrepreneur, traded it, along with diamonds, silver, pearls and cloth, to Andries Ackersloot, a supplier of shipping equipment, for masts, iron bars and poles.

At one point, the painting was owned by Benjamin West, the Ameri-



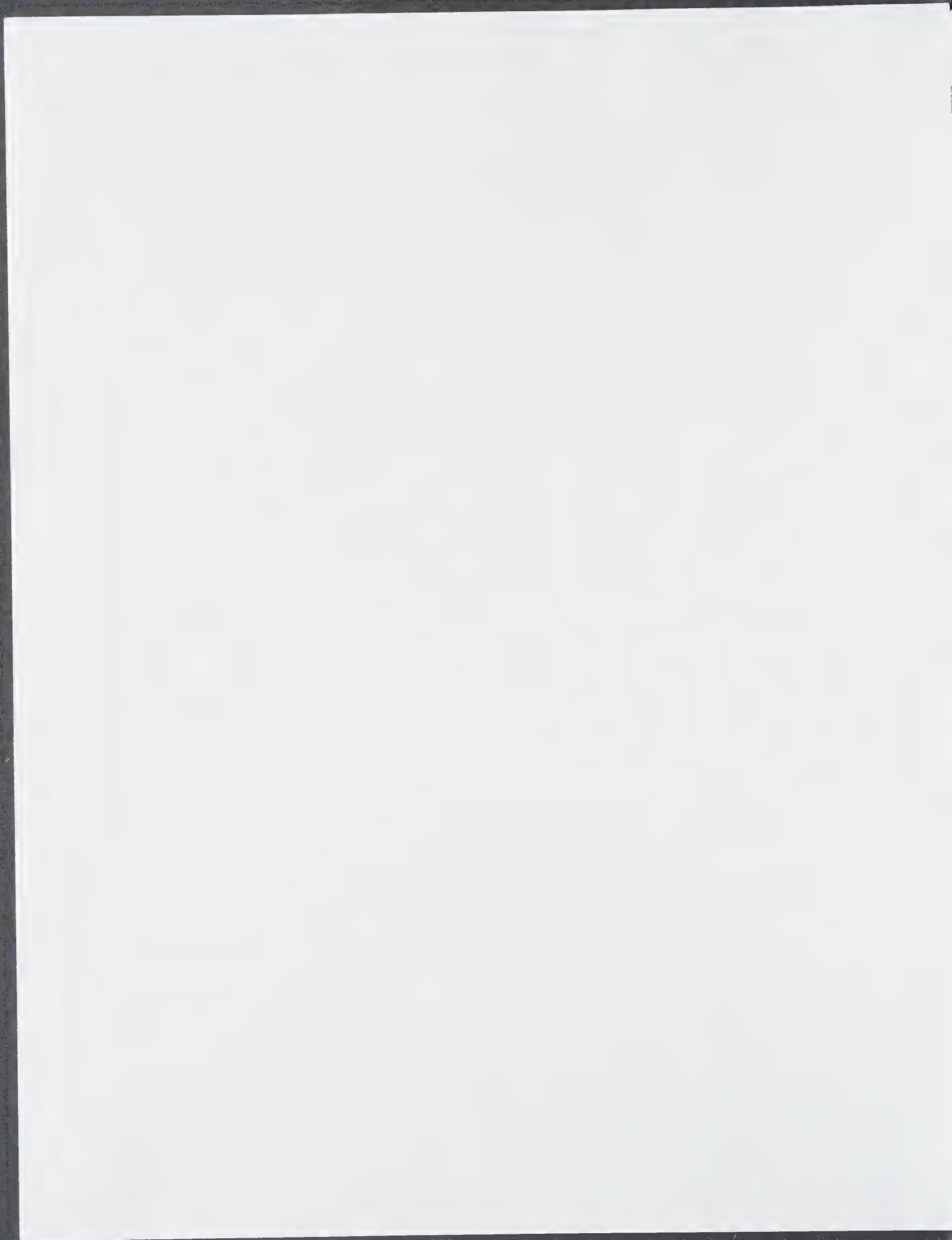
Metropolitan Museum of Art

A detail from "Abraham and the Three Angels," a small panel of a biblical scene by Rembrandt, at the Met now through 2007. One of the angels turns out to be God.

can painter, who lived in England. West's estate tried unsuccessfully to sell it at Christie's in 1820, but four years later, the auction house managed to sell it. By the mid-19th century, it had another well-known owner, Thomas Baring, Earl of Northbrook, a celebrated collector and banker.

Mr. Naumann bought the painting from the descendants of Catalina von Pannwitz, a Berlin collector. Mr. Liedtke called "Abraham and the Three Angels" an important example of Rembrandt's biblical works.

"It also shows how Rembrandt's paintings, drawings and prints are so intimately related," he said. "In this case he is doing a painting in the scale of a print inspired by his own earlier etchings of two different Abraham stories."





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Lost Rembrandt works discovered

Four oil paintings have been discovered to be the work of 17th-Century Dutch master Rembrandt.

The works, which were thought to have been painted by Rembrandt's pupils, have been put on show at the Amsterdam museum dedicated to the artist.

They were identified as being by the artist during the preparatory work on an exhibition at the Rembrandthuis.

Experts say the paintings are of the artist's quality and have his characteristic unusual lighting.

It is believed they may have been studies for figures in some of Rembrandt's larger compositions.

Painting auction

Two of the paintings, Study of an Old Man in Profile and Study of an Old Man with a Beard, are from a US private collection.

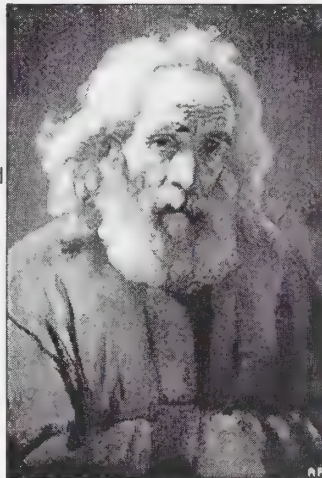
The Detroit Institute of Arts owns one entitled Study of a Weeping Woman.

The fourth picture, Portrait of an Elderly Woman in a White Bonnet, was painted in 1640 and is currently owned by a private collector.

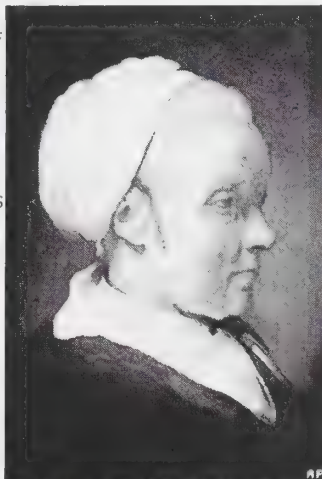
It will go on sale at Sotheby's New York on 26 January and is estimated to be worth up to \$4m (£2.2m).

The paintings are on show in the Rembrandthuis until 4 December.

The exhibition comes after a self-portrait by Rembrandt, worth an estimated £34m, was recovered by Danish



Study of an Old Man with a Beard is from a private collection



Study of a Woman in a White Cap was painted in 1640

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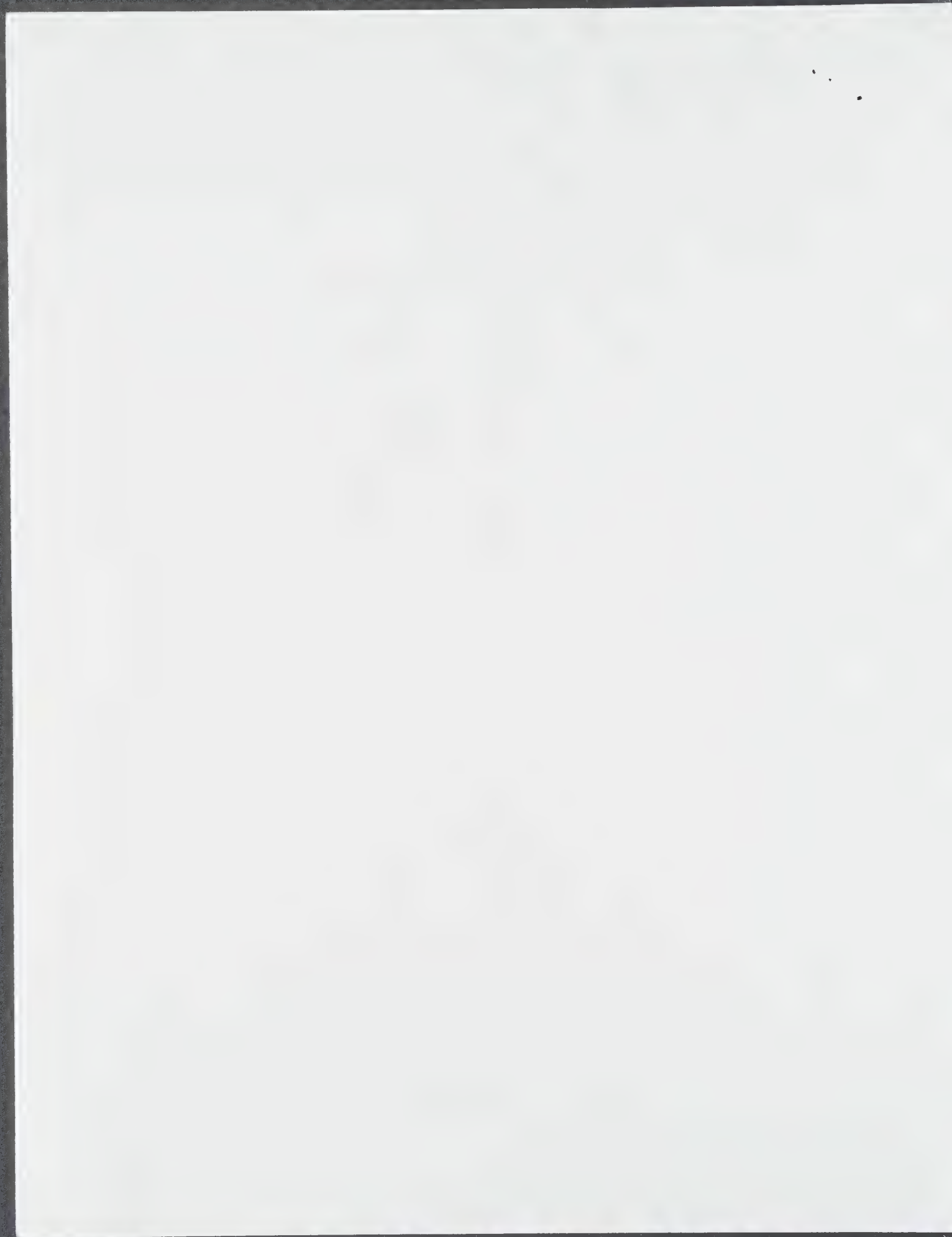
Rembrandthuis

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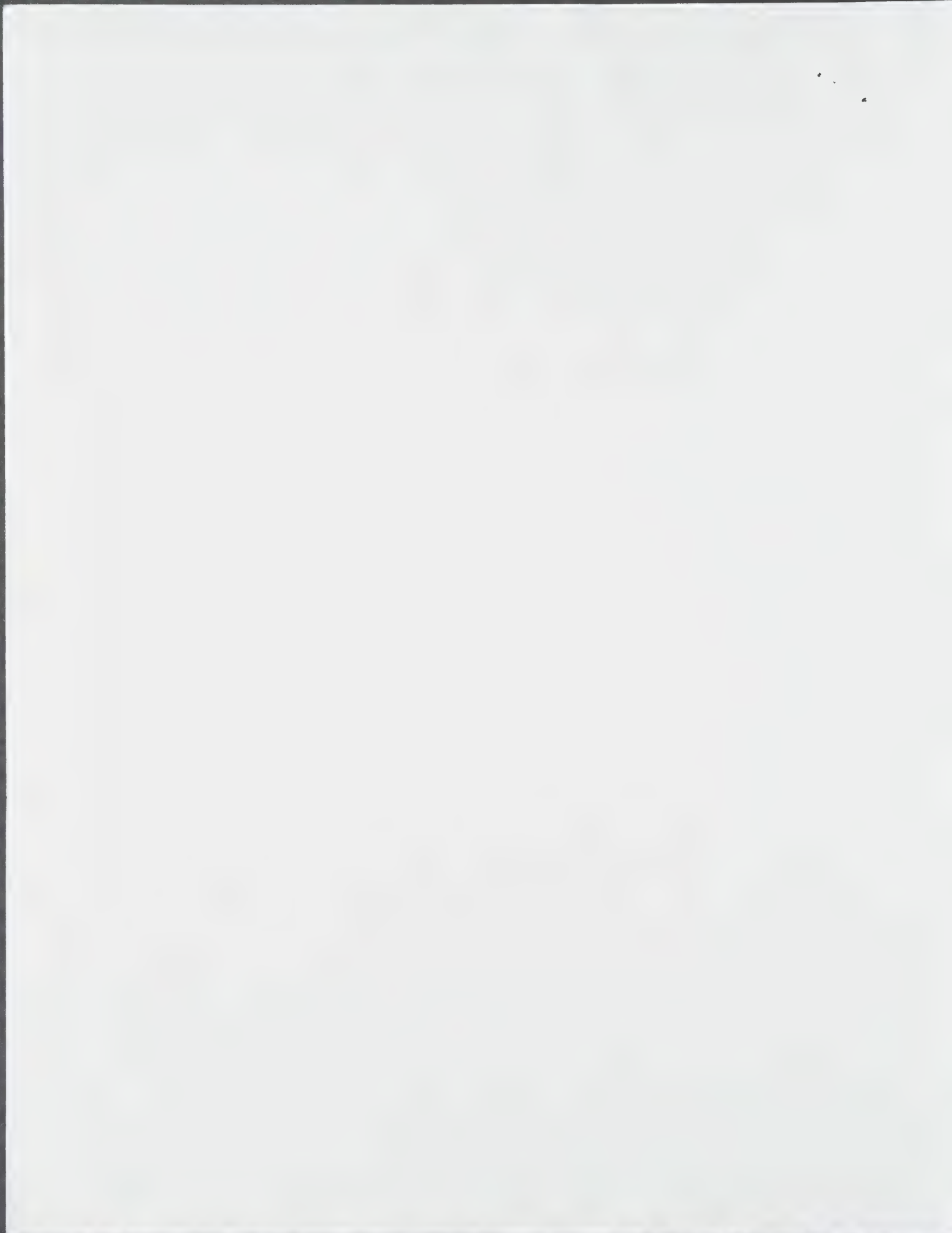
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Alter Mann im Profil
1861

Niederlande Vier Gemälde als echte Rembrandts identifiziert

22. September 2005 Vier Gemälde haben sich nach umfangreichen Untersuchungen in Amsterdam als echte Rembrandt-Werke herausgestellt. Dabei handelt es sich um Gemälde, die bisher als Kopien oder als Bilder von Schülern des berühmten holländischen Meisters (1606 - 1669) galten, berichtete die Tageszeitung „De Volkskrant“, am Donnerstag.

„Es sind Vorstudien zu großen bekannten Kompositionen von Rembrandt“, bestätigte der Leiter des Rembrandt Research Project, Prof. Ernst van de Wetering, in Amsterdam. Er kam der Entdeckung bei der Restaurierung des Gemäldes „Studie einer Frau mit weißer Mütze“ auf die Spur.

Von diesem Gemälde wurde bisher angenommen, daß es aus dem 18. oder 19. Jahrhundert stammt. Nach der Restauration sei deutlich, so van de Wetering, daß es bereits 1640 gemalt wurde. Die drei anderen Ölbilder - sie zeigen einen alten Mann im Profil und mit Bart sowie eine weinende Frau - galten als Werke von Rembrandt-Schülern oder Kopien. Van de Wetering ist jedoch überzeugt, daß es vier Studien sind zur Vorbereitung größerer Werke des Meisters. Dabei wollte Rembrandt ausprobieren, wie ein Kopf bei unterschiedlichem Lichteinfall aussieht. „Es ist faszinierend, daß man wieder ein Stück von Rembrandts Art zu arbeiten verstehen lernt.“



Studie einer Frau mit weißer Mütze
1640

Dienstmädchenkleidung unterm Pelzmantel

Vor gut zwei Jahren schickte das Auktionshaus Sothebys dem Rembrandt-Experten ein Foto der Studie der Frau mit weißer Mütze. Er ließ das Werk in Amsterdam untersuchen

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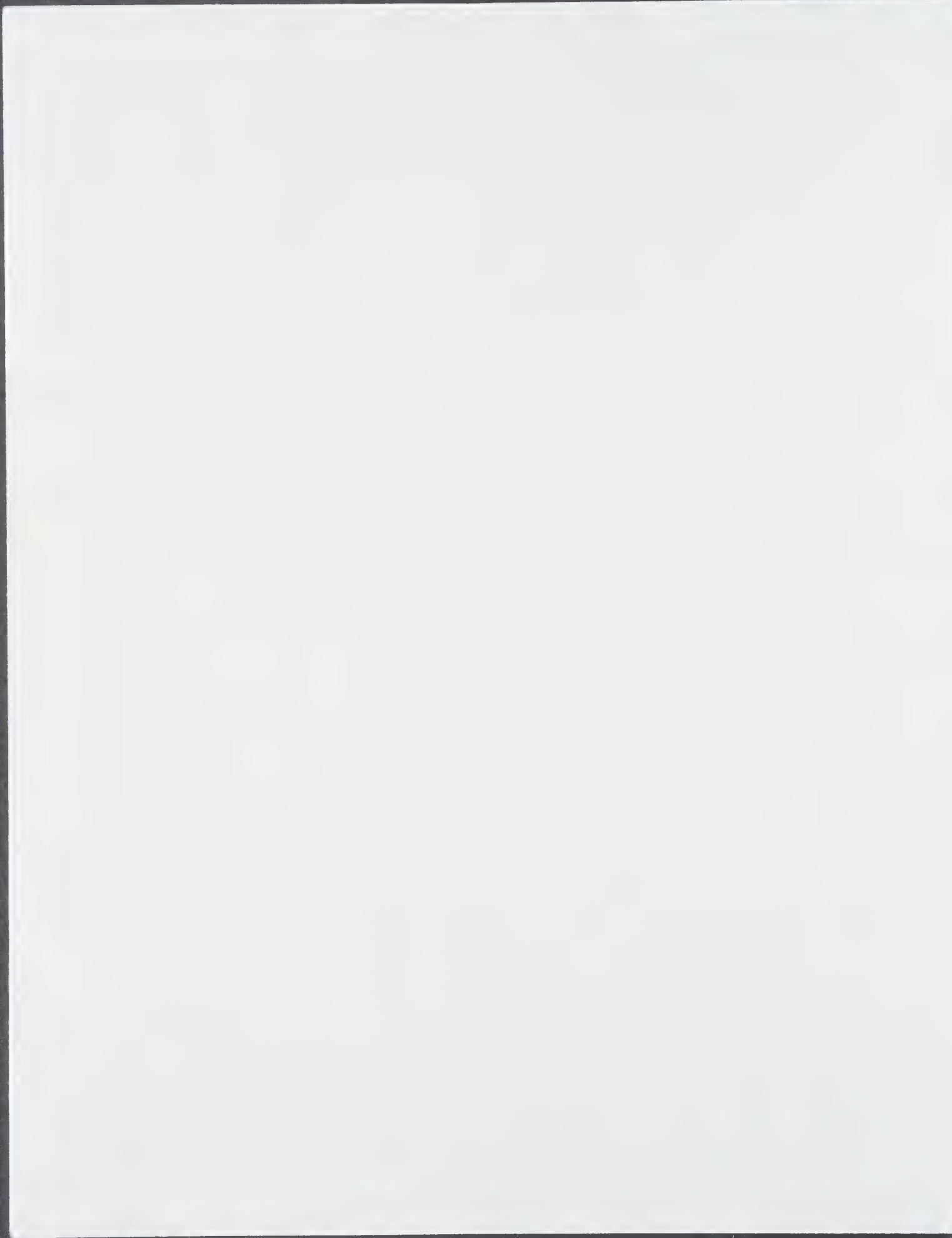
Prinz Eisenherz

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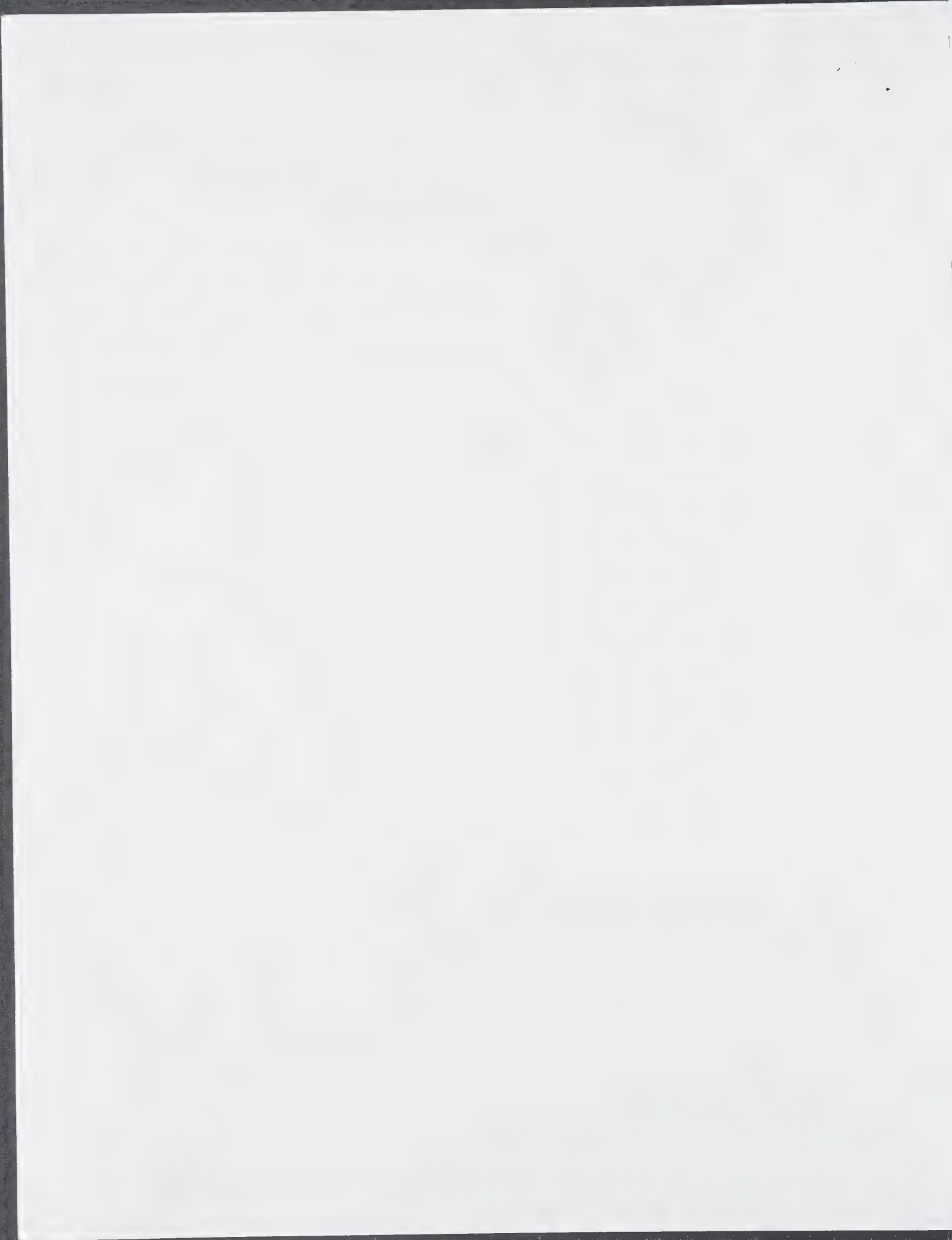
From October 2003 to May 2004 the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Art Institute of Chicago had an important exhibition entitled *Rembrandt's Journey* showing many works by Rembrandt the painter, the draftsman and the etcher.

Whenever I look at catalogs of Rembrandt exhibitions I check who the lenders are. Museums are unlikely to sell their works of art; individual lenders might.

There were three individually owned paintings in this great exhibition. The first, No. 31, I knew well. It is the bust of an old man of 1633, a tiny oil on paper, laid down on panel, RRP A-74. Richard Feigen, the well-known New York dealer, had sold it to Saul Steinberg in New York in 1986 and then it came up at Sotheby's New York sale in January 1997 where it was bought by a collector in Japan. It is a tiny painting, perfectly genuine, but I believe not as attractive as the painting of an old man, RRP C-22, that I had just given to Queen's University.

The second privately owned painting was a small sketch, only 16 x 21 cms., oil on panel, Bredius 515, to be described in RRP Vol. IV. That painting was owned by the Aurora Art Fund and was certainly of such beauty that it was worth considering carefully.

The third painting, owned, I believe, by a collector in Boston, was the last painting in the exhibition, No. 216, the Apostle James, signed and dated Rembrandt f. 1661. In the exhibition it hung close to the second last



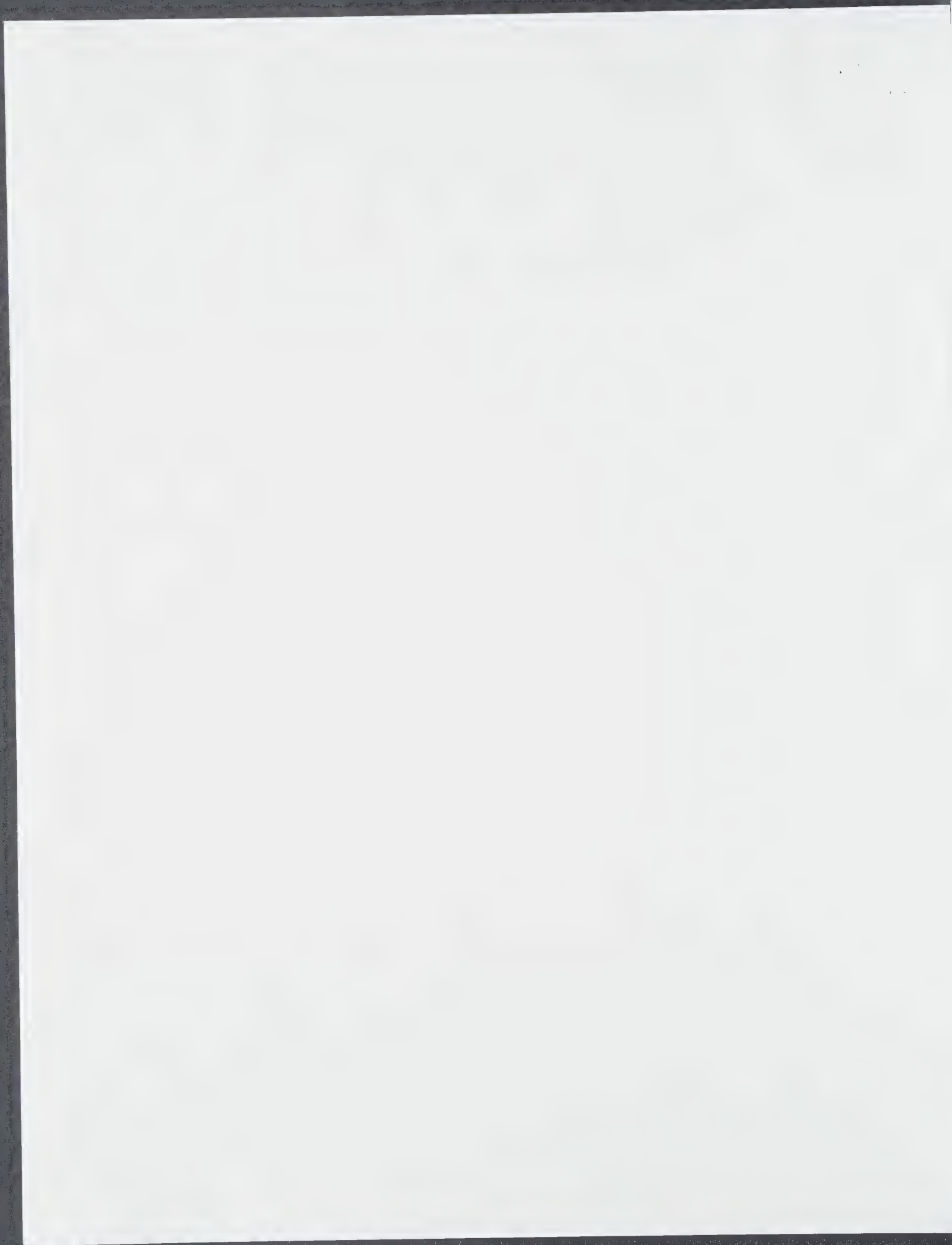
painting, a Rembrandt self portrait of 1659, in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, perhaps the finest painting in the exhibition, and the comparison was very hard on the Apostle James. I had seen that painting several times before and I simply do not like it.

That left the fine little sketch of Abraham and the Three Angels, signed and dated 1646, for careful consideration.

I discussed this with Otto Naumann, who knows Gerald Stiebel of Rosenberg and Stiebel, who had arranged for the loan. Otto said that Stiebel was both able and straightforward and that he would speak to him.

When he told me later that he had offered \$6 million I said that this seemed very much too low and that he should go considerably higher, subject of course to our examining the painting very carefully. The answer came back very quickly: The painting is yours at the price offered plus one million dollars, provided we can work out all the delivery details, with hand over after the exhibition ended in Chicago in May.

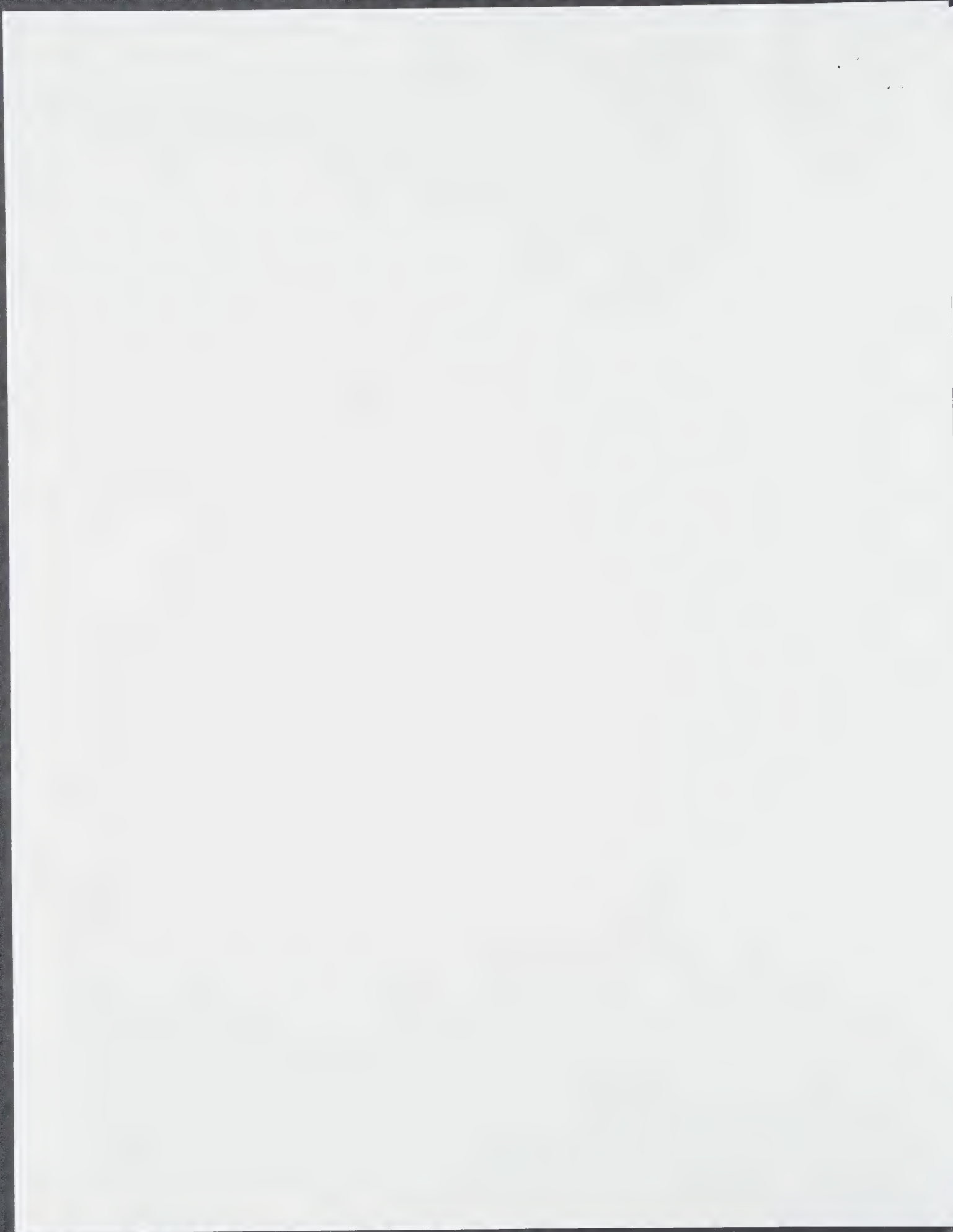
The provenance of the painting is most impressive. It had belonged to Ferdinand Bol, Rembrandt's student, and to Jan Six in whose sale in 1702 it was lot 40. It had then belonged to Benjamin West and several well known English collectors, of these Sir Thomas Baring the best known. In 1923 it was acquired by Walter and Catalina von Pannwitz. Around 1950 Catalina von Pannwitz established the Aurora Trust and in 1986 the painting was placed into the Aurora Art Trust Fund. Thus, there was no concern whatever



about where the painting had been during the last war. The Art Fund was owned by the Pannwitz descendants, one of them in Argentina and another the Earl of Chichester. Barry Kessler, the President of the Aurora Art Fund in New York, confirmed that Gerald Stibel was authorized to sell the painting. Where to transfer the painting became a bit complicated, for tax reasons which I did not understand. It could not be in New York, the lawyer stipulated, and at one point suggested that it would have to be flown to Switzerland to be turned over to Otto there. This struck me as a waste of money and of Otto's time and finally we agreed that the invoice which was written 'CIF Chicago' would allow Otto to come to Chicago. This he did on Monday, May 10th. Having collected the painting he flew it right back to New York to hand to one of the country's best restorers, Nancy Krieg.

Otto called me the next day to tell me that Nancy Krieg had begun cleaning the *Abraham* and that it was clear that it would be much improved. By Friday, the 14th, the cleaning was complete, Otto had acquired a fine little frame and was ready to offer it to interested customers.

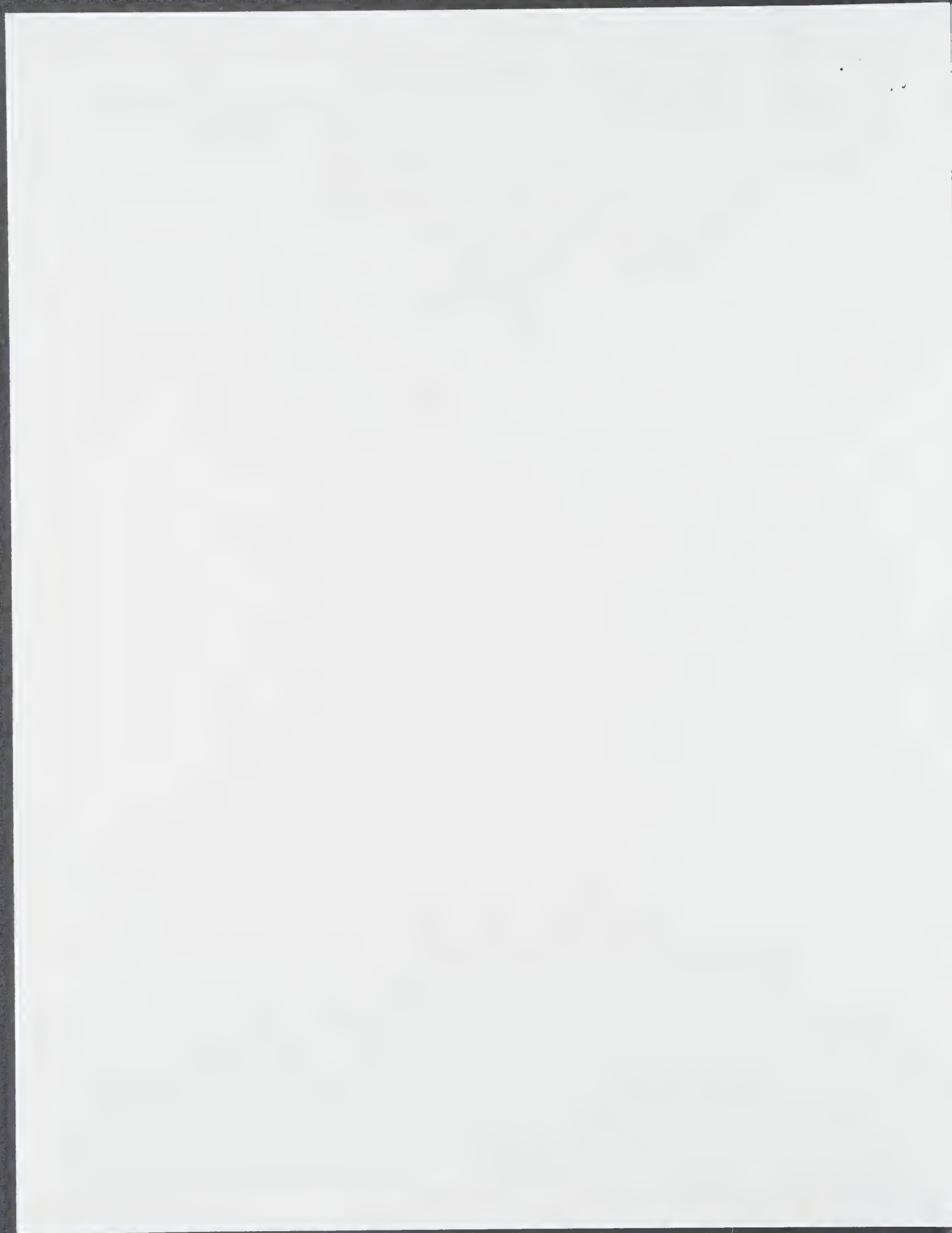
Isabel and I first saw the painting in Chicago, together with David de Witt and Janet Brooke, the Director of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, on Sunday, March 14th. Before that I had of course discussed the quality of the painting with Otto Naumann and Bill Robinson (at Harvard), both of whom liked it immensely. So did I, realizing how much improved the painting was likely to be when cleaned and placed in a fitting frame.



Rembrandt's vision of the visit to Abraham was very different from mine. I always thought of the three angels as being messengers from God, but Rembrandt depicted the central angel from whom light emanates so wonderfully, as God himself. While the painting is tiny in scale it is executed very freely and really looks like a finished work. Traditionally the scene has always been placed during the middle of the day, but surprisingly here it is just at sunset, almost in darkness. That makes the light from the central figure appear all the more stunning.

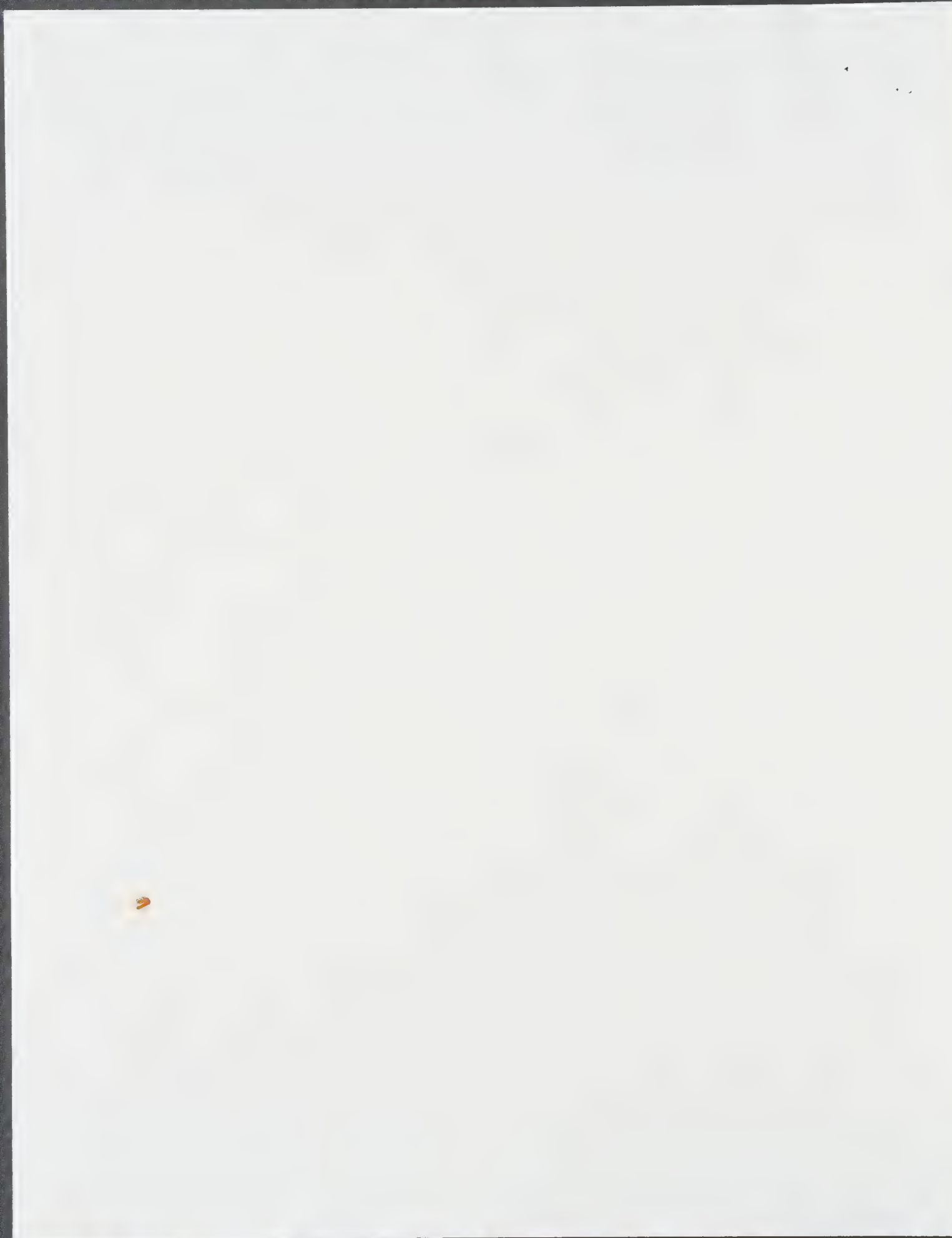
The Rembrandt Research Project examined the painting in August of 1971 and then again in May of 1992. On January 15, 1999 Professor Ernst van de Wetering, the remaining member of the original RRP, sent Gerald Stiebel a 22 page report which was to become the entry for No. 33 in RRP Corpus, Vol. IV. In that letter Professor van de Wetering wrote, "This is to enable them [the owners] to propose corrections or additions for which we will be grateful and to react on our opinions." In the report, Ernst van de Wetering had some reservations, particularly about the condition, stating "Condition: good insofar as can be assessed through the thick varnish layer. No clear paint loss can be observed." Now of course, with the painting cleaned, we can see so clearly how excellent the condition is.

Otto had a business trip planned, flying from New York to Amsterdam on Saturday, May 15th and returning on May 21st. We considered his taking the painting with him to show to Professor van de Wetering, but Otto



decided that he should not incur the extra insurance costs, but simply send good photographs and Nancy Krieg's condition report to Professor van de Wetering and hope that these would suffice to convince him of the authenticity and the condition of the work.

On May 27, 2004 Otto e-mailed me "This painting is the most precious and beautiful object I have EVER handled."





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September 23, 2004

Alfred Bader
914 East Juneau Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

Dear Alfred,

First of all, best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year.

Thank you for your letter of September 3. It has taken me a while to respond because I have been away and also I wanted to see the Rembrandt cleaned and in its new frame. I have now done so and must say that it has greatly improved. It is so nice to be able to see not only the signature but Sarah standing in the doorway.

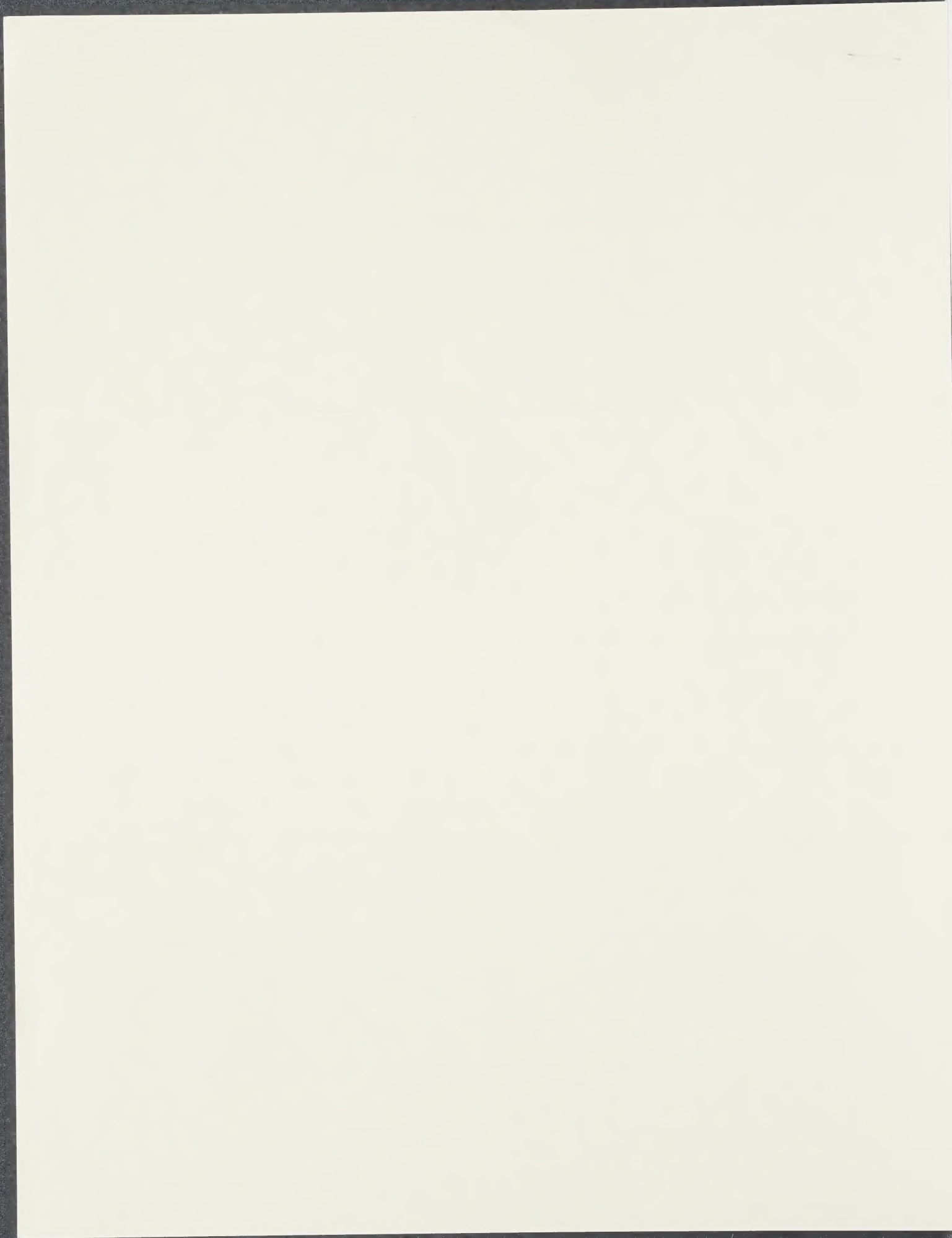
I read your manuscript and I think it is wonderful that you are recording not only your acquisitions but also the process involved. Going through your piece I have corrected a few minor inaccuracies. As you can imagine I am also very concerned about how this will be perceived both by the trustee for the trust and the von Pannwitz family. It is in everybody's interest to be able to go back to the well, and I am afraid recording too much detail may make this difficult, if not impossible.

The issues that the Trust has about taxes are none of our business: we should no more bring up their tax issues than yours. Regarding the sale of the Rembrandt, I understood when the initial offer was made that you would be keeping the painting and it would probably not be for sale. If anyone on the seller's side had thought that the picture would be immediately on the market that would have been the end of the negotiations. Further it is my understanding that there is still the possibility that you will keep the Rembrandt in your collection. I think for all our sakes it would be best not to mention its resale potential.

I have attached the part of the manuscript that I am concerned about with my suggestions. What is in black are your words with cross out where I felt necessary and in red my suggestions for other words.

I do hope that you will take my concerns to heart.

Thank you and best regards,





ALFRED BADER FINE ARTS

DR. ALFRED BADER

www.alfredbader.com

ESTABLISHED 1961

October 4, 2004

Mr. Gerald Stiebel
Stiebel, Ltd.
252 E. 68th Street
New York, NY 10021

Dear Gerald,

Thank you for your letter of September 23rd and your suggestions for changes in what is now just an Aide Memoire. Naturally I will make all the factual corrections such as your pointing out that you are with Stiebel, Ltd. and not with Rosenberg and Stiebel.

It will be a long time before my next book is published and by that time the story will have ended either with Otto having sold the painting or with my having taken it into my own collection. Now that it has been so expertly cleaned I understand Otto saying to me that it is the finest work that he has ever handled and I realize that it is one of the best Rembrandts I have ever seen.

I do not know where you got the impression that Otto would not try and sell the painting; neither Otto nor I tried to give you that impression.

And I wonder whether you have ever had a major customer like me, who gave you so few problems and paid so promptly.

With best wishes I remain

Yours sincerely,

Alfred Bader
AB/az
C: Dr. Otto Naumann

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