Alfred Bader fonds

Chemistry and Art
More Adventures of a Chemist Collector

Hofstra

A HORROR STORY PLAIN AND SIMPLE
(but with a happy ending)

Collectors, art dealers, galleries and museums frequently lend their paintings for special exhibitions being held at other galleries or museums. Paintings from my collection are on exhibit in different parts of the world several times a year. Exhibitions give art students an opportunity to study paintings otherwise unavailable to them and give the public a chance, albeit short, to enjoy them. This is a horror story about one museum exhibition in 1988.

The Emily Lowe Gallery of Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York borrowed seven of the very best paintings in my collection for their exhibit *"People at Work: Seventeenth Century Dutch Art"* scheduled from April 17 to June 15, 1988. On May 26 I received a cordial letter from the Director of the Hofstra Museum, Dr. Gail Gelburd, informing me that the exhibition was going so well that all previous attendance records were broken. She also informed me of minor damage to one of my paintings on exhibit -- a separation of the varnish in the top right corner of *The Alchemist* painted by Cornelis Bega. She reassured me that the damage was truly insignificant and could be taken care of easily by the museum's conservator; on June 2 Dr. Gelburd telephoned and spoke with my secretary, Ms. Marilyn Hassmann, (I was in England at the time) to request written authorization to proceed with the repair of the Bega and then mentioned additional

damages --"a slight scratch, only to the varnish of the Verhout" and damage to one of the frames, that of the Vrel. My secretary spoke with me, informed me of the additional problems--the scratch to the varnish of the Constantijn Verhout painting, the *Portrait of Cornelis Abrahamz Graswinckel*, and the damage to the Vrel frame, all described as minor by Dr. Gelburd. We faxed Dr. Gelburd written authorization to proceed that same day. Unfortunately, since I was led to believe that the damage was so slight as to be immaterial, I did not ask for photographs before the restoration.

The frame of the Jacobus Vrel (1634-1662) painting of an *Interior With a Woman Darning* was very badly banged up, but of course I did not want to make a fuss about a frame of no great consequence.

My very able conservator and friend, Charles Munch, came to my home for dinner in October of 1997 and of course our conversation turned to paintings and his excellent conserving. Quite happily I took down the Verhout painting, one of my very favorites, just to show him a pristine 17th century Dutch painting devoid of any restoration and requiring none. Anthony Clark, then Director of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, said of the portrait when it was exhibited in 1967 at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts that it "...is as beautiful a piece of still life painting, and as original, daring, and elegant a work of art as anything I know...It is utterly clean and fresh." The Verhout painting does indeed exemplify perfection which has endured the span of hundreds of years. It is a treasure, my treasure. Constantijn

Verhout is an exceedingly rare artist and I believe there are only three or four known works by him. His two best works are illustrated in Bernt. One is of a sleeping student, the other is mine.

Charles, however, always preferred to decide a painting's condition for himself and so proceeded to examine the Verhout under ultraviolet light. My beautiful Verhout, the portrait of a brewer, now had a sharp and 2" long scratch(Fig.1) across the face of the old man – very clear under UV, but not in ordinary light. I was so shocked I could not speak! And so the horror story which began in 1988 continued.

This painting had been at home in our collection since it was returned by the Hofstra Museum which had reported and repaired, almost ten years ago, "a slight scratch to the varnish." Clearly the damage had been much more severe. We were completely uninformed about the restoration, thinking only that the painting had received a fresh coat of varnish from the Museum's conservator.

As I mentioned before, many of the paintings in our collection have been made available for exhibitions for the past 50 years. Only once before was a painting damaged, and it was handled quite differently. I was informed that a painting by Peter Lastman, the teacher of Rembrandt, had split in two. The museum in Jerusalem informed me immediately, sent me detailed photographs and returned the painting in two pieces. Charles Munch glued the two panels together and the total cost of the damage,

covered by the museum's insurance, was about $300.00. As the painting had originally been on two panels glued together, there was no lasting damage and no claim for loss of value.

One painting damaged in 50 years of exhibitions, now two paintings and one frame damaged at a two month Hofstra exhibition.

Charles asked me to request the condition report from Hofstra Museum's conservator, giving details of the work performed with a photograph taken before the restoration was done. I requested this information on November 3, 1997 in a letter to Dr. Gail Gelburd, the Director of the Hofstra Museum.

The information we requested was sent to us by Ms. Mary Wakeford, Assistant to the Director. Mervin Honig, the conservator's report and recommendation was undated. A copy of his invoice dated June 24, 1988 leads me to believe that his recommendations for treatment were made available to the museum early that same month--recommendations to treat two of my paintings which were never provided to me verbally or otherwise. The conservator's recommendation "...The deeper part of the scratch as needed should be inpainted and varnished locally and where it might be necessary, filled with gesso putty...", if only it had been sent to me, I would have known immediately that the scratch was not only to the varnish, but was indeed more serious damage. If only it had been sent to me in 1988 I would have requested that my own conservator repair this damage and that

the museum's insurance company compensate me for the repair and for the obvious loss in value. If only things had been handled differently...but where do we go from here?

On January 14, 1998 I sent Ms. Wakeford a certified letter informing her that I intended to have the restoration removed and the filling and in-painting improved by my conservator, Charles Munch, at a cost estimated to be less than $500, at Hofstra's expense. I also intended to be compensated for the painting's loss of value by Hofstra's insurance company. If the insurance company would not honor a claim made nine years after damage occurred, I fully expected Hofstra to do the right thing. I requested authorization to proceed with the restoration

A month later I still hadn't the courtesy of a response. My attorney followed up with a letter on February 24, 1998.

His letter did elicit a response. On March 3 I received a letter from David C. Christman, Director of the Hofstra Museum. Mr. Christman informed me that the statute of limitations on my claim had expired. Further, he said, "we find no merit in your claim."

I was already feeling hurt that I was not informed of the damage to my Verhout; now Mr. Christman's reply really galled me.

On March 30 I sent copies of all correspondence to Mr. James Shuart, President of Hofstra University. No reply.

On March 30 I also replied to Mr. Christman challenging his statement about the statute of limitations having expired and informing him (as my attorney informed me) that it can be raised or waived. My attorney and I felt that in this case - involving non-disclosure of the damage at the time it occurred, the statute would be extended. As to my claim having no merit I asked Mr. Christman once again to review the facts and respond properly. If this response was not forthcoming, in addition to any other action I might decide to take, I would take it upon myself to inform the art community of my experience with the Hofstra Museum so that other collectors and lenders will not risk the danger of receiving the same treatment.

No response.

In May I wrote a short essay about the damages to my painting entitled "How Not To Handle an Accident In a Museum". I had 100 photographs made showing the gauge to my Verhout painting under UV. My secretary and I sent packets containing Hofstra correspondence, the essay and the photograph to museums, curators, collectors, galleries and dealers each day for close to six weeks. I sent a packet to David Christman on August 10 and asked him to advise me if it contained any mistakes.

One of these information packets was sent to Professor Donna Barnes at Hofstra University. She had been the guest curator of the exhibition in 1988. She was completely unaware of the damages to my paintings while at

Hofstra until she received my information. Professor Barnes met several times with Mr. Christman in an effort to resolve this horrendous situation.

My old friend, Dr. Ira Kukin also received an information packet. He pursued the matter with a Hofstra board member, Mr. Frank Zarb, who took up the matter with David Christman. The comment was made that Al Bader is riled up (if only they knew how much) and it would be best to settle the dispute. On June 16, 1998 David Christman offered me $300.00. Charles Munch was charging me $1150.00 to conserve the painting properly. The $300.00 offer was a slap in the face. We had another 100 photographs made to send along with the horror story.

Many of the art historians I contacted responded to me, some to Hofstra. The strongest and most helpful came from my old friend, Dr. William Robinson at Harvard who responded to Dr. Barnes' request for loans of paintings on July 20, 1999 as follows:

"This is no reflection on your work, but I have to tell you that I cannot recommend to Mr. and Mrs. Abrams that they grant loans to the Hofstra Museum in light of the museum's unprofessional handling of the damage to Dr. Bader's Verhout in the *People at Work* show. I have seen the correspondence on this matter. which records the museum's succession of mistakes, cover-ups, and evasion of responsibility from the time of the exhibition in 1988 until last year. It would be convenient if we could blame the old régime, but one of the worst documents in this exchange is a 1998

letter to Dr. Bader from David Christman. I feel sorry for you, because it was not in any way your responsibility, but the record of this incident is so appalling that I would not send Fogg drawings to Hofstra, nor could I recommend that the Abrams' drawings be exhibited there."

It was Professor Barnes who kept working on David Christman, Hofstra University and me. She surprised me by telling me that David Christman was actually a good human being. She told me that his response to my claim was at the direction of the University's lawyer, Emil Cianciulli, who said my claim had no merit. I accused David Christman of hiding behind Professor Barnes' skirts, for he never gave me the courtesy of a personal letter or a phone call or even a "we're sorry". I told Professor Barnes that after much thought I decided not to sue Hofstra for damages. Charles Munch had completed the restoration to my satisfaction and at my expense. While I enjoy a good fight, especially when I am unequivocally right, I preferred to keep sending the information packets cautioning art collectors rather than initiating a lengthy lawsuit.

On October 6, 1998 I sent one of my information packets to Dr. Gail Gelburd, the former Director of the Hofstra Museum, now the Executive Director for the Counsil for Creative Projects in Lee, Massachusetts. She responded on November 13, accusing me of professional libel and urging me to cease general dissemination of my complaints with her name immediately. She, as Director of the Hofstra Museum at the time of the damages, was only

an employee of Hofstra University, and my misfortunes were clearly a University matter, to be addressed and resolved by them. This was certainly not her problem.

It seemed like I might soon be on the brink of a lawsuit, but I was confident that all of my statements pertaining to the former Director were truthful, stating only the facts. I wrote Dr. Gelburd of my decision not to take Hofstra University to Court, but if she or any other party chose otherwise, I would respond with a full claim for damages.

Professor Donna Barnes ultimately prevailed upon David Christman and myself to put the situation right. David Christman wrote me on December 9, explained his response as directed by the University attorney, apologized for the damage to my Verhout and offered full reimbursement of the conservation fees I had paid Charles Munch, $1150.00, agreeing that it was the Museum's obligation to conserve the work in an agreeable manner.

It seems Professor Barnes was right about David Christman being a good human being after all. His extremely cordial letter unruffled my tailfeathers – it was time for both of us to end the nonsense.

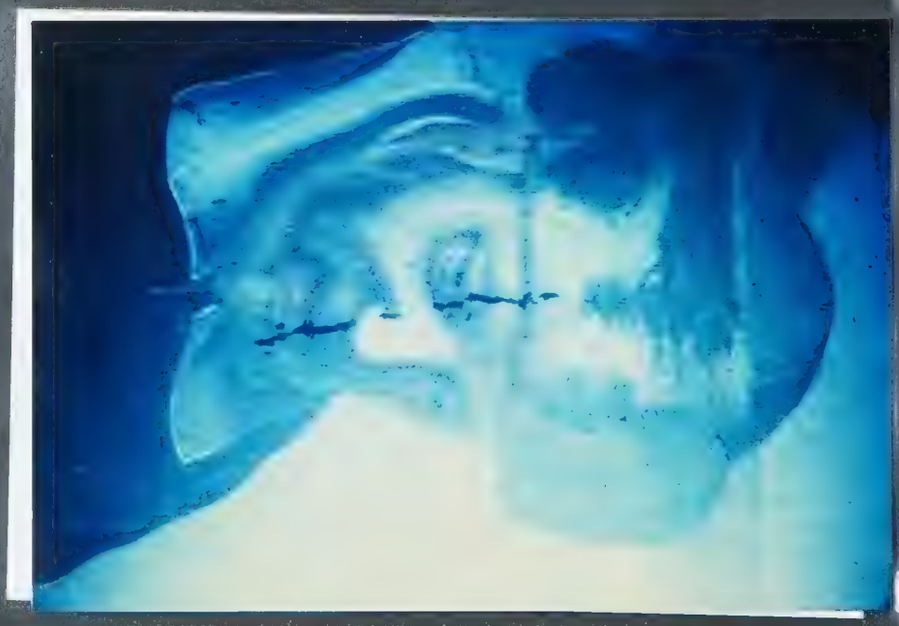
Actually, there was a real silver lining to this affair. Charles Munch found that Mervin Honig, Hofstra's conservator, had used too much gesso, so visible under UV. Now, properly restored, the scratch is no longer visible under UV. And now, with the entire painting cleaned, it looks far better than it had before. Charles pointed out that his charge of $1150.00 was for not

only the repair of the scratch, but also included the entire painting. And so I returned $500 to Hofstra University.

Naturally I informed the art historians to whom I had written about this happy ending.

Dr. Barnes later asked me to loan two of my paintings, a Pieter Claesz still life of 1642 and the now beautifully cleaned Verhout to an exhibition entitled *A Matter of Taste* at the Albany Museum of Art in 2001. Donna had visited us in Milwaukee in October 1999. We had become friends and of course I consented to the loan and told her that I would even loan my fine Jacob van Ruisdael winter landscape to a Hofstra University Dutch winter landscape exhibition if she would be responsible for that exhibition.

The Verhout looked beautiful in Albany though not in the really well written catalog because many of the color reproductions were way off color - the Verhout looked a sickly green. The catalog was printed in Singapore - museums can be pennywise and pound foolish - and museums are not alone.



VERHOUT

U.V. Photo

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Verh.

DR. FRIMA FOX HOFRICHTER
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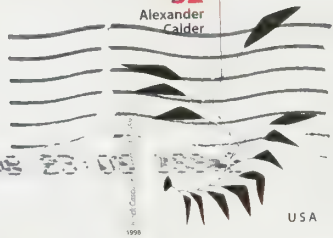

03-D1050 / Judith Leyster, 1609–1660
Self-Portrait (c. 1630)
oil on canvas, 72.3 x 65.3 cm (29⅛ x 25⅝ in.)
National Gallery of Art, Washington
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, 1949.6.1

Thank you for your very instructive packet. It's certainly a warning for us all. (Thank you, too, for the wonderful stamps — very much appreciated here)
All the best,
Frima

Dr. Alfred Bader
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Milwaukee, WI
53211-3435

In a 'Gilded Year' for University Presidents, Pay Moved Closer to the Board Room Level

By KAREN W. ARENSON

University presidents still do not come close to basketball players or venture capitalists when it comes to earnings, but a growing number have compensation packages in the half-million dollar range once thought of as the preserve of corporate executives.

Three university presidents — at Rockefeller University, Vanderbilt and the University of Pennsylvania — received pay and benefit packages greater than $500,000 in the 1996-97 school year, according to a study by The Chronicle of Higher Education in this week's issue.

Ten more universities, including four in the New York area — Columbia, New York University, Yale and Hofstra — paid their presidents between $400,000 and $500,000, and 33 more paid between $300,000 and $400,000, The Chronicle said, making it the "most gilded" year since it started reporting executive pay six years ago.

Forty-six top executives at private universities were paid more than $300,000 in 1996-97, up from 38 the previous academic year.

Other universities in the New York region whose total presidential compensation exceeded $300,000 in 1996-97 included Long Island University and Dowling College on Long Island, Princeton University, and Ithaca College.

"It is striking how many are earning at that level," said Scott Jaschik, the Chronicle's managing editor. "It's been going up even though a few of the biggies are gone," he added, referring to Peter Diamandopoulos, the former president of Adelphi University, and John R. Silber, the former president of Boston University, whose compensation packages of more than $500,000 made them the previous kings of the Chronicle's compensation survey and the targets of faculty anger.

It was the disclosure of Mr. Diamandopoulos's rich compensation — in 1995-96 he received $523,636 in salary and deferred bonuses — that helped set in motion the New York Board of Regents investigation that removed him from office.

The presidential salaries have generally increased faster than faculty salaries. Although some faculty members, particularly in areas like business and medicine, have six-figure salaries, the average salary and compensation for a full-time faculty member at a private institution in 1996-97 was $74,132, according to the American Association of University Professors.

In general, university officials defended the pay packages, citing the demands of the university president's job.

"Some of these people run $2 billion operations with 15,000 employees, that are really major corporations, though they are nonprofit," said Morton O. Schapiro, an economist who studies higher education and is a dean at the University of Southern California.

Many officials also pointed to the signs of robust health of their institutions — rising student applications, hefty fund-raising, strong research and successful faculty recruitment — as signs of their chief executives' prowess.

Richard M. Furlaud, the former chairman of the board of trustees at Rockefeller University, said the university had been in "bad shape" when it asked Torsten N. Wiesel, a Nobel laureate and chairman of its faculty, to take over when David Baltimore resigned as president in 1991. "We were running a substantial deficit and had a lot of problems," he said. "He did so rather reluctantly," Mr. Furlaud added, "but he did an absolutely spectacular job."

Although Rockefeller's board could not persuade Dr. Wiesel to accept a raise during most of his tenure, Mr. Furlaud said, it finally pushed him into taking a $50,000 raise (to $350,000) and a $133,333 bonus. With other benefits, that raised his total compensation to $546,966, making him No. 1 on the Chronicle's list. Dr. Wiesel steps down as president next month.

John R. Hall, chairman of the Vanderbilt board, told The Chronicle that the university's reputation and endowment had bloomed under Joe B. Wyatt's chancellorship. His $525,496 in compensation put him second in the Chronicle survey.

And P. Roy Vagelos, the chairman of the University of Pennsylvania's trustees, said Judith Rodin, Penn's president, was "one of the top five" presidents in the country and had fully earned her compensation, the Chronicle said. Her $514,878 compensation placed her third on the Chronicle list.

Martin Lipton, chairman of the trustees at New York University, said L. Jay Oliva, N.Y.U.'s president, was "a principal architect" of the university's transformation from a "regional university to a prestigious national research institution." Dr. Oliva received a salary of $428,469 and $23,174 in benefits.

Not everyone is convinced that the high level of pay is appropriate.

Saul B. Cohen, a member of the New York Board of Regents and a former president of Queens College, said he thought such salaries were "out of line."

"The notion that a university president should have salaries comparable to those in industry is fallacious," he said. "What it is reflecting is the professionalization of the university presidency, which I think is inappropriate."

But Tom Ingram, president of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, said, "There are top corporate executives who compare what they do with their university presidents and say they wouldn't trade jobs for a minute," he said.

The Chronicle said that only two presidents of private research universities — Norman Lamm of Yeshiva University and H. Patrick Swygert of Howard University — had total earnings of less than $200,000 in the 1996-97 year.

The Chronicle's survey of 475 private colleges and universities, which was based on filings with the Internal Revenue Service, did not include public universities, where pay is substantially lower and where about 80 percent of all college students are enrolled.

At the State University of New York, for example, which has 64 campuses and about 400,000 students, the chancellor's salary is $250,000. At the City University of New York, with 200,000 students, the chancellor's salary is $178,523.

Mr. Ingram, of the Association of Governing Boards, said he believed that the leaders of most public universities were "under-appreciated and under-compensated."

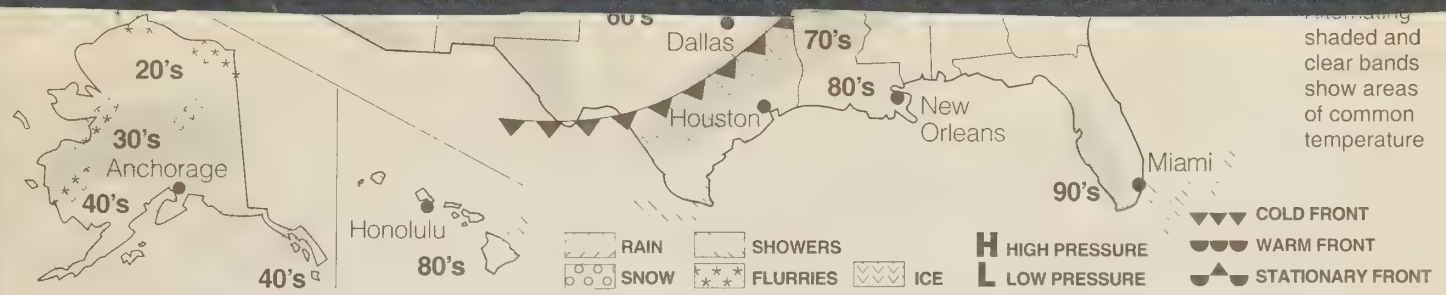
KEEPING TRACK

Top Jobs, Top Pay

According to a survey of 475 private colleges and universities, 46 chief executives made more than $300,000 in 1996-97, up from 25 in 1993-94. The 10 highest in salary, benefits and special payments:

CHIEF EXECUTIVES	UNIVERSITY	COMPENSATION
Torsten N. Wiesel	Rockefeller University	**$546,966**
Joe B. Wyatt	Vanderbilt University	**525,496**
Judith Rodin	University of Pennsylvania	**514,878**
George Rupp	Columbia University	**458,480**
L. Jay Oliva	New York University	**451,643**
Richard C. Levin	Yale University	**447,265**
James M. Shuart	Hofstra University	**438,554**
Robert Mehrabian	Carnegie Mellon University	**436,164**
William R. Brody	Johns Hopkins University	**435,592**
Stephen J. Trachtenberg	George Washington University	**425,041**

Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education



Alternating shaded and clear bands show areas of common temperature

National Forecast

A cold front from the central Great Lakes to eastern Texas will be accompanied by a band of clouds and areas of showers as it moves east during the day. Periods of rain and a few thunderstorms with gusty winds are expected across the northern Great Lakes this morning as a jet stream disturbance moves overhead. In the wake of the front, chilly breezes from the north will deliver drier air. Nevertheless, low clouds and a few sprinkles will linger over the northern Mississippi Valley. The northern and central Plains will be seasonably cool with ample sunshine in most areas.

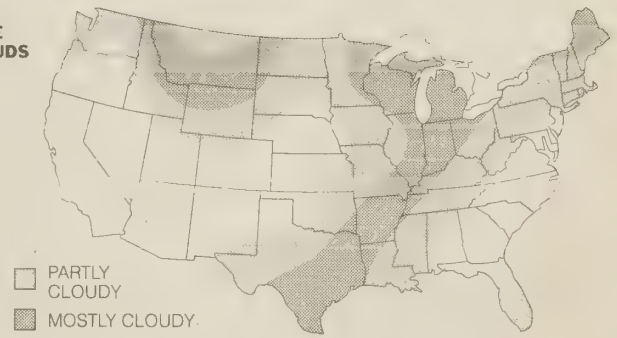
Most of the Eastern States will become unseasonably warm. After a cool dawn from the Appalachians to the Atlantic Seaboard, increasing winds from the southwest will promote rapidly rising temperatures. Wind gusts over 25 miles an hour will be common from the eastern Ohio Valley to New England. Clouds will increase this afternoon west of the Appalachians as the cold front approaches from the Middle West. A few showers will spread into the eastern parts of the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes during the afternoon.

Moist breezes from the east will be lifted over a cold front resulting in locally heavy rain and some flash flooding over parts of southern and eastern Texas. Otherwise, the southern Plains will be mainly dry and cool.

In the West, a weak front will bring broken clouds and showers to the northern Rockies. Meanwhile, offshore winds will favor abundant sunshine along most of the West Coast. The interior West will be cool and sunny.

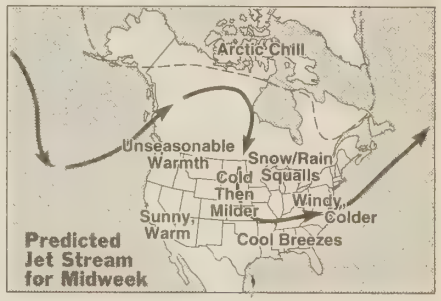
FOCUS: DESCENT INTO WINTER Winter comes quickly in Alaska. Daytime temperatures in Fairbanks in early October average in the lower 40's. By October 31, typical temperatures will be in the lower 20's with nighttime lows near 5 degrees. The lengthening nights which allow the ground to efficiently lose energy are an incubator for frigid air masses that will grip the 49th state in the months ahead. Fairbanks loses an average of seven minutes of possible sunlight for each day in October. The month begins with the sun above the horizon for over 11 hours and ends with only seven hours and 54 minutes of light.

TODAY'S SUNSHINE AND CLOUDS



WEATHER HIGHLIGHT

Cold air will surge across the Great Lakes into the East during midweek. Snow and rain showers will occur in the interior Northeast. The West will turn warm and dry.



Cleveland	70/52	0	71/58	PC	59/50	PC
Colo Springs	63/35	0	59/27	S	55/30	S
Columbia	77/46	0	80/49	S	82/52	S
Columbus	75/50	0	74/55	PC	62/46	PC
Concord	61/30	0	71/44	PC	69/47	PC
Dallas Ft Worth	88/73	.34	69/61	C	66/54	C
Denver	55/34	.05	60/28	S	56/32	S
Des Moines	75/61	.12	57/46	PC	52/35	S
Detroit	70/59	0	68/58	C	55/46	PC
El Paso	82/51	0	75/43	PC	72/46	C
Fairbanks	43/28	0	35/17	SS	32/20	C
Fargo	52/42	1.26	50/35	PC	45/33	PC
Hartford	64/36	0	75/48	PC	72/49	PC
Honolulu	88/75	0	84/75	PC	85/74	PC
Houston	90/77	0.23	83/74	T	72/65	T
Indianapolis	79/60	0	67/61	Sr	60/44	S
Jackson	88/57	0	82/61	PC	76/62	PC
Jacksonville	81/64	0	82/62	S	84/65	PC
Kansas City	79/61	0.87	60/47	S	61/42	S
Key West	88/75	0.02	86/78	PC	85/77	PC
Las Vegas	66/55	0	77/47	S	81/49	S
Lexington	79/55	0	76/57	PC	66/53	PC
Little Rock	82/72	0	74/65	T	69/52	C
Los Angeles	72/55	0	79/57	S	77/58	S
Louisville	82/60	0	75/59	C	67/54	PC
Lubbock	84/53	0	67/40	PC	64/41	PC
Memphis	84/64	0	78/67	Sr	72/54	PC
Miami	88/77	0.02	86/77	PC	86/76	PC
Milwaukee	72/63	0.16	59/56	W	54/43	PC
Minn -St Paul	66/60	1.16	59/51	C	46/35	PC
Mobile	84/61	0.01	84/64	PC	82/64	PC
Nashville	82/55	0	77/58	PC	71/54	PC
Newark	66/46	0	80/56	S	72/58	PC
New Orleans	84/73	0	85/70	PC	80/70	C
New York City	64/52	0	80/60	S	71/61	PC
Norfolk	64/46	0	80/50	S	75/59	PC
Oklahoma City	79/66	0.25	65/47	PC	62/45	PC
Omaha	72/63	0.31	57/39	S	54/35	S
Orlando	88/70	0	87/70	S	86/71	PC
Philadelphia	64/46	0	80/52	S	71/54	PC
Phoenix	77/51	0	87/57	S	89/62	S
Pittsburgh	68/43	0	74/50	PC	64/48	PC
Portland, Me.	59/39	0	73/46	PC	67/50	PC
Portland, Ore.	57/43	0	62/42	PC	67/41	S
Providence	64/39	0	77/49	PC	73/53	PC
Raleigh	73/43	0	80/50	S	79/55	PC
Reno	54/30	0	65/31	S	71/32	S
Richmond	70/43	0	81/46	S	74/55	PC
Rochester	61/39	0	74/53	PC	57/52	PC
Sacramento	75/45	0	80/50	S	82/51	S
St. Louis	81/66	0.62	68/59	PC	64/46	S
St. Thomas	89/79	0.38	91/79	Sr	89/78	PC
Salt Lake City	45/38	0	59/34	PC	63/37	S
San Antonio	88/73	0.47	74/66	T	69/58	T
San Diego	70/56	0	76/57	S	74/57	S
San Francisco	72/52	0	77/54	S	77/54	S
San Jose	74/50	0	80/49	S	80/50	S
San Juan	90/77	0.19	87/77	Sr	87/76	PC
Seattle	55/50	0	57/41	PC	60/42	S
Shreveport	88/71	0.12	75/70	T	68/60	C
Sioux Falls	66/50	1.37	53/38	PC	51/30	PC

Caracas	86/ 75	0	88/ 77			
Casablanca	75/ 57	0	75/ 57			
Copenhagen	55/ 46	0	54/ 43			
Dakar	93/ 73	0	90/ 75			
Damascus	82/ 48	0	81/ 54			
Dublin	64/ 45	.24	57/ 45			
Edinburgh	48/ 45	.83	54/ 45			
Edmonton	43/ 32	0	52/ 27			
Frankfurt	57/ 54	0	57/ 45			
Geneva	66/ 54	0	57/ 45			
Guadalajara	73/ 57	0	79/ 55			
Havana	86/ 68	*	88/ 72			
Helsinki	43/ 36	0	46/ 37			
Hong Kong	88/ 75	0	81/ 73			
Istanbul	59/ 53	.08	68/ 55			
Jakarta	91/ 77	.01	88/ 73			
Jerusalem	79/ 64	.12	81/ 55			
Johannesburg	57/ 43	trc	77/ 54			
Kiev	59/ 37	0	54/ 41			
Kingston	84/ 81	0	88/ 75			
Lima	69/ 59	*	64/ 57			
Lisbon	66/ 57	0	72/ 57			
London	63/ 50	.31	57/ 45			
Madrid	77/ 45	0	68/ 48			
Manila	87/ 78	*	88/ 73			
Martinique	88/ 79	.01	88/ 73			
Mexico City	73/ 59	0	70/ 50			
Monterrey	86/ 72	0	81/ 64			
Montreal	57/ 36	.02	55/ 39			
Moscow	50/ 39	.12	46/ 37			
Nairobi	84/ 61	0	75/ 55			
Nassau	86/ 72	.28	84/ 73			
New Delhi	73/ 68	.43	93/ 64			
Nice	64/ 55	0	70/ 54			
Oslo	46/ 27	0	46/ 36			
Panama City	90/ 75	.02	88/ 73			
Paris	61/ 55	trc	61/ 46			
Prague	57/ 41	0	55/ 41			
Quebec City	55/ 36	0	52/ 36			
Rio de Janeiro	82/ 66	.12	77/ 66			
Riyadh	93/ 63	0	93/ 61			
Rome	70/ 55	0	72/ 55			
Santo Domingo	90/ 75	0	88/ 72			
Seoul	68/ 54	0	66/ 45			
Shanghai	70/ 64	0	72/ 57			
Singapore	82/ 77	.47	88/ 73			
Stockholm	48/ 35	*	48/ 39			
Sydney	70/ 55	0	72/ 55			
Taipei	77/ 68	2.36	81/ 66			
Tokyo	79/ 63	1.38	70/ 55			
Toronto	59/ 45	0	59/ 39			
Tunis	82/ 61	0	77/ 59			
Vancouver	54/ 48	.11	57/ 43			
Vienna	63/ 52	trc	59/ 43			
Warsaw	43/ 34	0	55/ 41			
Winnipeg	48/ 39	02	52/ 30			

Compiled by WSI from National Weather Service observations, forecasts and reports.

A HORROR STORY PLAIN AND SIMPLE
(but with a happy ending)

Collectors, art dealers, galleries and museums frequently lend their paintings for special exhibitions being held at other galleries or museums. Paintings from my collection are on exhibit in different parts of the world several times a year. Exhibitions give art students an opportunity to study paintings otherwise unavailable to them and give the public a chance, albeit short, to enjoy them. This is a horror story about one museum exhibition in 1988.

The Emily Lowe Gallery of Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York borrowed seven of the very best paintings in my collection for their exhibit *"People at Work: Seventeenth Century Dutch Art"* scheduled from April 17 to June 15, 1988. On May 26 I received a cordial letter from the Director of the Hofstra Museum, Dr. Gail Gelburd, informing me that the exhibition was going so well that all previous attendance records were broken. She also informed me of minor damage to one of my paintings on exhibit -- a separation of the varnish in the top right corner of *The Alchemist* painted by Cornelis Bega. She reassured me that the damage was truly insignificant and could be taken care of easily by the museum's conservator. On June 2 Dr. Gelburd telephoned and spoke with my secretary, Ms. Marilyn Hassmann (I was in England at the time) to request written authorization to proceed with the repair of the Bega and then mentioned additional damages -

-"a slight scratch, only to the varnish of the Verhout" and damage to one of the frames, that of the Vrel. My secretary phoned me in England to tell me of the additional problems--the scratch to the varnish of the Constantijn Verhout painting, the *Portrait of Cornelis Abrahamz Graswinckel*, and the damage to the Vrel frame, all described as minor by Dr. Gelburd. We faxed Dr. Gelburd written authorization to proceed that same day. Unfortunately, since I was led to believe that the damage was so slight as to be immaterial, I foolishly did not think to ask for photographs before giving permission for the restoration of the painting.

The frame of the Jacobus Vrel (1634-1662) painting of an *Interior with a Woman Darning* was so badly banged up when the painting was returned, that we threw it out, but I was relieved to see both paintings looking in fine condition. I was particularly pleased that the Verhout showed no signs of damage. Anthony Clark, then Director of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, had said of the portrait when it was exhibited in 1967 at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts that it "...is as beautiful a piece of still life painting, and as original, daring, and elegant a work of art as anything I know...It is utterly clean and fresh." The Verhout painting does indeed exemplify perfection that has endured the span of hundreds of years. It is a treasure, my treasure. Constantijn Verhout is an exceedingly rare artist and I believe there are only three or four known works by him. His two best works are illustrated in Bernt. One is of a sleeping student, the other is my portrait.

In October of 1997, almost ten years after the loan to Hofstra, my very able conservator, Charles Munch, visited us one evening, and naturally our conversation was of paintings and their conservation. I mentioned the Verhout and quite happily took it down, just to show him a pristine 17th century Dutch painting devoid of any restoration and requiring none. Charles, however, always preferred to decide a painting's condition for himself and so proceeded to examine the Verhout under ultraviolet light. My beautiful Verhout, the portrait of a brewer, now had a sharp 2" long scratch(Fig.1) across the face of the old man – very clear under UV, but not in ordinary light. I was so shocked I could not speak! And so the horror story which began in 1988 continued.

This painting had been at home in our collection since it was returned by the Museum which had reported and repaired "a slight scratch to the varnish." Clearly the damage had been much more severe. We had been completely uninformed about any restoration to the paint itself, believing that the painting had received just a fresh coat of varnish from the Museum's conservator.

As I have mentioned, many of the paintings in our collection have been made available for exhibitions for the past 50 years. Only once before was a painting damaged, and that incident was handled quite differently. I was informed that a painting by Peter Lastman, the teacher of Rembrandt, had split in two. The museum in Jerusalem told me immediately, sent me

detailed photographs and returned the painting in two pieces, as I requested. Charles Munch glued the two panels together, there was no paint loss, and the total cost of the damage, covered by the museum's insurance, was about $300.00. As the painting had originally been on two panels glued together, there was no lasting damage and no claim for loss of value.

One painting damaged in 50 years of exhibitions and then two paintings and one frame damaged at a two month exhibition at Hofstra.

Charles asked me to request the condition report from Hofstra Museum's conservator, giving details of the work performed with a photograph taken before the restoration was done. I requested this information on November 3, 1997 in a letter to Dr. Gail Gelburd, the Director of the Hofstra Museum. Ms. Mary Wakeford, her assistant sent Mervin Honig's museum conservator's undated report and recommendation. A copy of his invoice dated June 24, 1988 leads me to believe that his recommendations for treatment of my two paintings were made available to the museum early that same month, but were never provided to me verbally or otherwise. The conservator's recommendation "...The deeper part of the scratch as needed should be inpainted and varnished locally and where it might be necessary, filled with gesso putty..." If only this had been sent to me in 1988 I would have known immediately that the scratch was not only to the varnish, but was indeed more serious damage. I would then have requested that my own conservator repair this damage and that the

museum's insurance company compensate me for the repair and for the obvious loss in value. If only things had been handled differently...but where should we go from nearly a decade later.

On January 14 I sent Ms. Wakeford a certified letter informing her that I intended to have the restoration removed and the filling and in-painting improved by my conservator at a cost estimated to be less than $500, at Hofstra's expense. I also intended to seek compensation for the painting's loss of value from Hofstra's insurance company. If the insurance company would not honor a claim made nine years after damage occurred, I fully expected Hofstra to do the right thing. I requested authorization to proceed with the restoration

A month later I still hadn't had the courtesy of a reply. My attorney followed up with a letter on February 24. His letter did elicit a response. On March 3 I received a letter from David C. Christman, Dr.Gelburd's successor as Director of the Hofstra Museum who informed me that the statute of limitations on my claim had expired, and added that "we find no merit in your claim."

I was already feeling hurt that I had not been informed of the damage to my Verhout; Mr. Christman's reply really galled me. On March 30 I sent copies of all correspondence to Mr. James Shuart, President of Hofstra University. I also wrote to Mr. Christman challenging his statement about the statute of limitations having expired and informing him (as my attorney

advised me) that it can be raised or waived. My attorney and I felt that in this case - involving non-disclosure of the damage at the time it occurred, the statute would be extended. As to my claim having no merit I asked Mr. Christman once again to review the facts and respond properly. If this response was not forthcoming, in addition to any other action I might decide on, I would take it upon myself to inform the art community of my experience with the Hofstra Museum so that other collectors and lenders would not risk the danger of receiving the same treatment. I received no reply from either the President of the University of the Director of the Museum.

In May I wrote a short essay about the damages to my painting entitled "How No To Handle an Accident In a Museum". I had 100 photographs made showing the gouge to my Verhout painting under UV (fig 1) My secretary and I sent packets containing the Hofstra correspondence, the essay and the photograph to museums, curators, collectors, galleries and dealers, a few each day for close to six weeks. I sent a packet to David Christman on August 10 and asked him to advise me if it contained any mistakes.

One of these information packets was sent to Professor Donna Barnes at Hofstra University. She had been the guest curator of the exhibition in 1988. Until she received the information from me, she had been completely unaware of the damage to my paintings while at Hofstra. In an effort to resolve this situation, she met several times with Mr. Christman.

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Collectors, art dealers, galleries and museums frequently lend their paintings for special exhibitions being held at other galleries or museums. Paintings from my collection are on exhibit in different parts of the world several times a year. Exhibitions give art students an opportunity to study paintings otherwise unavailable to them and give the public a chance, albeit short, to enjoy them. This is a horror story about one museum exhibition in 1988.

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The frame of the Jacobus Vrel (1634-1662) painting of an *Interior With a Woman Darning* was very badly banged up, but of course I did not want to make a fuss about a frame of no great consequence.

My very able conservator and friend, Charles Munch, came to my home for dinner in October of 1997 and of course our conversation turned to paintings and his excellent conserving. Quite happily I took down the Verhout painting, one of my very favorites, just to show him a pristine 17th century Dutch painting devoid of any restoration and requiring none. Anthony Clark, then Director of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, said of the portrait when it was exhibited in 1967 at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts that it "...is as beautiful a piece of still life painting, and as original, daring, and elegant a work of art as anything I know...It is utterly clean and fresh." The Verhout painting does indeed exemplify perfection which has endured the span of hundreds of years. It is a treasure, my treasure. Constantijn

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This painting had been at home in our collection since it was returned by the Hofstra Museum which had reported and repaired, almost ten years ago, "a slight scratch to the varnish." Clearly the damage had been much more severe. We were completely uninformed about the restoration, thinking only that the painting had received a fresh coat of varnish from the Museum's conservator.

As I mentioned before, many of the paintings in our collection have been made available for exhibitions for the past 50 years. Only once before was a painting damaged, and it was handled quite differently. I was informed that a painting by Peter Lastman, the teacher of Rembrandt, had split in two. The museum in Jerusalem informed me immediately, sent me detailed photographs and returned the painting in two pieces. Charles Munch glued the two panels together and the total cost of the damage,

covered by the museum's insurance, was about $300.00. As the painting had originally been on two panels glued together, there was no lasting damage and no claim for loss of value.

One painting damaged in 50 years of exhibitions, now two paintings and one frame damaged at a two month Hofstra exhibition.

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The information we requested was sent to us by Ms. Mary Wakeford, Assistant to the Director. Mervin Honig,.the conservator's report and recommendation was undated. A copy of his invoice dated June 24, 1988 leads me to believe that his recommendations for treatment were made available to the museum early that same month--recommendations to treat two of my paintings which were never provided to me verbally or otherwise. The conservator's recommendation "...The deeper part of the scratch as needed should be inpainted and varnished locally and where it might be necessary, filled with gesso putty...", if only it had been sent to me, I would have known immediately that the scratch was not only to the varnish, but was indeed more serious damage. If only it had been sent to me in 1988 I would have requested that my own conservator repair this damage and that

the museum's insurance company compensate me for the repair and for the obvious loss in value. If only things had been handled differently...but where do we go from here?

On January 14, 1998 I sent Ms. Wakeford a certified letter informing her that I intended to have the restoration removed and the filling and in-painting improved by my conservator, Charles Munch, at a cost estimated to be less than $500, at Hofstra's expense. I also intended to be compensated for the painting's loss of value by Hofstra's insurance company. If the insurance company would not honor a claim made nine years after damage occurred, I fully expected Hofstra to do the right thing. I requested authorization to proceed with the restoration

A month later I still hadn't the courtesy of a response. My attorney followed up with a letter on February 24, 1998.

His letter did elicit a response. On March 3 I received a letter from David C. Christman, Director of the Hofstra Museum. Mr. Christman informed me that the statute of limitations on my claim had expired. Further, he said, "we find no merit in your claim."

I was already feeling hurt that I was not informed of the damage to my Verhout; now Mr. Christman's reply really galled me.

On March 30 I sent copies of all correspondence to Mr. James Shuart, President of Hofstra University. No reply.

On March 30 I also replied to Mr. Christman challenging his statement about the statute of limitations having expired and informing him (as my attorney informed me) that it can be raised or waived. My attorney and I felt that in this case - involving non-disclosure of the damage at the time it occurred, the statute would be extended. As to my claim having no merit I asked Mr. Christman once again to review the facts and respond properly. If this response was not forthcoming, in addition to any other action I might decide to take, I would take it upon myself to inform the art community of my experience with the Hofstra Museum so that other collectors and lenders will not risk the danger of receiving the same treatment.

No response.

In May I wrote a short essay about the damages to my painting entitled "How Not To Handle an Accident In a Museum". I had 100 photographs made showing the gauge to my Verhout painting under UV. My secretary and I sent packets containing Hofstra correspondence, the essay and the photograph to museums, curators, collectors, galleries and dealers each day for close to six weeks. I sent a packet to David Christman on August 10 and asked him to advise me if it contained any mistakes.

One of these information packets was sent to Professor Donna Barnes at Hofstra University. She had been the guest curator of the exhibition in 1988. She was completely unaware of the damages to my paintings while at

Hofstra until she received my information. Professor Barnes met several times with Mr. Christman in an effort to resolve this horrendous situation.

My old friend, Dr. Ira Kukin also received an information packet. He pursued the matter with a Hofstra board member, Mr. Frank Zarb, who took up the matter with David Christman. The comment was made that Al Bader is riled up (if only they knew how much) and it would be best to settle the dispute. On June 16, 1998 David Christman offered me $300.00. Charles Munch was charging me $1150.00 to conserve the painting properly. The $300.00 offer was a slap in the face. We had another 100 photographs made to send along with the horror story.

Many of the art historians I contacted responded to me, some to Hofstra. The strongest and most helpful came from my old friend, Dr. William Robinson at Harvard who responded to Dr. Barnes' request for loans of paintings on July 20, 1999 as follows:

"This is no reflection on your work, but I have to tell you that I cannot recommend to Mr. and Mrs. Abrams that they grant loans to the Hofstra Museum in light of the museum's unprofessional handling of the damage to Dr. Bader's Verhout in the *People at Work* show. I have seen the correspondence on this matter. which records the museum's succession of mistakes, cover-ups, and evasion of responsibility from the time of the exhibition in 1988 until last year. It would be convenient if we could blame the old régime, but one of the worst documents in this exchange is a 1998

letter to Dr. Bader from David Christman. I feel sorry for you, because it was not in any way your responsibility, but the record of this incident is so appalling that I would not send Fogg drawings to Hofstra, nor could I recommend that the Abrams' drawings be exhibited there."

It was Professor Barnes who kept working on David Christman, Hofstra University and me. She surprised me by telling me that David Christman was actually a good human being. She told me that his response to my claim was at the direction of the University's lawyer, Emil Cianciulli, who said my claim had no merit. I accused David Christman of hiding behind Professor Barnes' skirts, for he never gave me the courtesy of a personal letter or a phone call or even a "we're sorry". I told Professor Barnes that after much thought I decided not to sue Hofstra for damages. Charles Munch had completed the restoration to my satisfaction and at my expense. While I enjoy a good fight, especially when I am unequivocally right, I preferred to keep sending the information packets cautioning art collectors rather than initiating a lengthy lawsuit.

On October 6, 1998 I sent one of my information packets to Dr. Gail Gelburd, the former Director of the Hofstra Museum, now the Executive Director for the Counsil for Creative Projects in Lee, Massachusetts. She responded on November 13, accusing me of professional libel and urging me to cease general dissemination of my complaints with her name immediately. She, as Director of the Hofstra Museum at the time of the damages, was only

an employee of Hofstra University, and my misfortunes were clearly a University matter, to be addressed and resolved by them. This was certainly not her problem.

It seemed like I might soon be on the brink of a lawsuit, but I was confident that all of my statements pertaining to the former Director were truthful, stating only the facts. I wrote Dr. Gelburd of my decision not to take Hofstra University to Court, but if she or any other party chose otherwise, I would respond with a full claim for damages.

Professor Donna Barnes ultimately prevailed upon David Christman and myself to put the situation right. David Christman wrote me on December 9, explained his response as directed by the University attorney, apologized for the damage to my Verhout and offered full reimbursement of the conservation fees I had paid Charles Munch, $1150.00, agreeing that it was the Museum's obligation to conserve the work in an agreeable manner.

It seems Professor Barnes was right about David Christman being a good human being after all. His extremely cordial letter unruffled my tailfeathers – it was time for both of us to end the nonsense.

Actually, there was a real silver lining to this affair. Charles Munch found that Mervin Honig, Hofstra's conservator, had used too much gesso, so visible under UV. Now, properly restored, the scratch is no longer visible under UV. And now, with the entire painting cleaned, it looks far better than it had before. Charles pointed out that his charge of $1150.00 was for not

only the repair of the scratch, but also included the entire painting. And so I returned $500 to Hofstra University.

Naturally I informed the art historians to whom I had written about this happy ending.

Dr. Barnes later asked me to loan two of my paintings, a Pieter Claesz still life of 1642 and the now beautifully cleaned Verhout to an exhibition entitled *A Matter of Taste* at the Albany Museum of Art in 2001. Donna had visited us in Milwaukee in October 1999. We had become friends and of course I consented to the loan and told her that I would even loan my fine Jacob van Ruisdael winter landscape to a Hofstra University Dutch winter landscape exhibition if she would be responsible for that exhibition.

The Verhout looked beautiful in Albany though not in the really well written catalog because many of the color reproductions were way off color - the Verhout looked a sickly green. The catalog was printed in Singapore - museums can be pennywise and pound foolish - and museums are not alone.

How Not To Handle an Accident In A Museum

In 1988 The Hofstra Museum of Hofstra University mounted an exhibition entitled "People at Work: Seventeenth Century Dutch Art" which included 26 oil paintings, seven of which were borrowed from my collection.

On May 26, 1988, the Museum's Director, Dr. Gail Gelburd, wrote a long letter describing in detail a very slight problem with the varnish of one painting, the Alchemist by Cornelis Bega. Nothing in that letter was said about damage to any other painting.

On June 2, Dr. Gelburd telephoned, again mentioning the problem with the Bega varnish and adding that there was also a slight scratch, only to the varnish, of another painting, the portrait of a brewer by Constantijn Verhout, described in the Hofstra catalog entry enclosed. My secretary confirmed by fax that the Museum's conservator could proceed with the repair of the Bega varnish and the "slight scratch, only to the varnish of the Verhout".

In October 1997, my conservator, Charles Munch, examined some newly acquired paintings under ultraviolet light. Wanting to show him one painting in really good condition, I took down the Verhout and was shocked to see a deep scratch right across the brewer's face (photo under ultraviolet light enclosed). This was not visible without ultraviolet light.

I wrote to the Museum to ask for details of the Verhout restoration and I was promptly sent the conservator's report and invoice, enclosed. This was the first

time I had seen either. Had I been shown that, I would have known that the Verhout was deeply scratched, (it was not "a slight scratch" and not "only to the varnish") and I would have requested that my own conservator repair this damage and that the insurance company compensate me for the repair and for the obvious loss in value. I wrote to the Museum's Director, now David C. Christman, pointing out that I had not before been sent the conservator's report nor the invoice, both of which detailed the extent of restoration required. Clearly, damage to the face of the brewer has considerably devalued the painting.

Mr. Christman replied curtly that the statute of limitations on my claim has expired and, "we find no merit in your claim." That I found the most galling.

Surprisingly, I have had no reply from Dr. James Shuart, the President of Hofstra University, to whom I sent the entire correspondence last March.

Now I wish that the guest curator of the exhibition, Professor Donna Barnes, had been involved in this from the very beginning. She did not learn of the damage until September 1998, when I sent her the details. She was very taken aback and spoke to Mr. Christman who has since written to me, much more kindly, explaining that his first response ("we find no merit in your claim") was shaped by the University's lawyer. Mr. Christman also offered to pay for my conservator's restoration which has much improved the scratch.

My attorney advised me that the statute of limitations does not expire when a Museum fails to disclose the extent of damage, as is the case here. Nevertheless, I would rather not sue the Museum, but I think it is important that other museums,

collectors, and art historians know how the Hofstra Museum has handled this matter.

If Professor Barnes had known of this in 1988, none of this would have happened. She would have told me of the deep scratch, my conservators would have restored it very differently and no lawyer would have given wrong advice.

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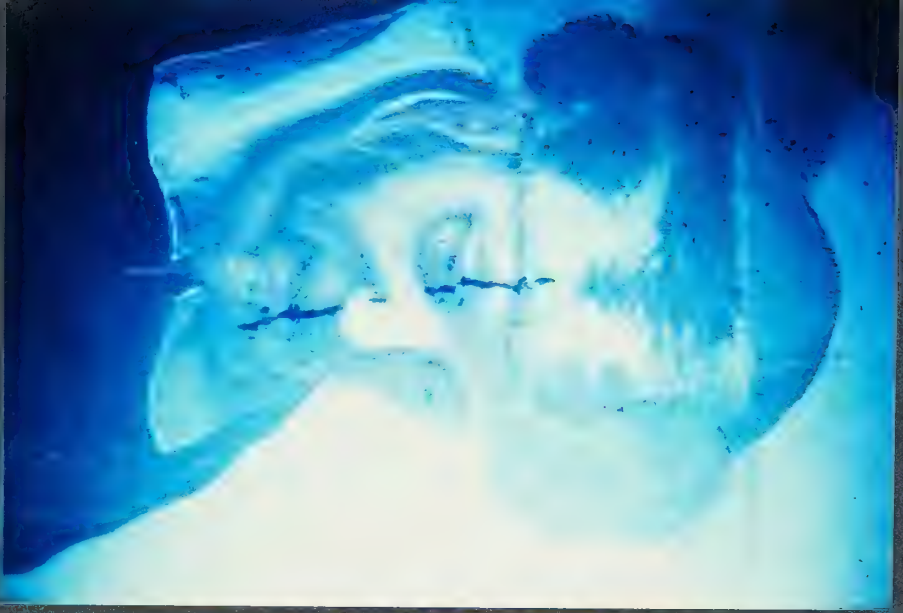

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The undated conservator's report and recommendation for treatment must have been available to the Museum in June 1988, for the invoice for the completed work is dated June 24, 1988: Had I seen the recommendation ". . . The deeper part of the scratch as needed should be inpainted and varnished locally and where it might be necessary, filled with gesso putty . . .", I would have known that this was not a scratch to the varnish only.

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How Not To Handle an Accident In A Museum

In 1988 The Hofstra Museum of Hofstra University mounted an exhibition entitled "People at Work: Seventeenth Century Dutch Art" which included 26 oil paintings, seven of which were borrowed from my collection.

On May 26, 1988, the Museum's Director, Dr. Gail Gelburd, wrote a long letter describing in detail a very slight problem with the varnish of one painting, the Alchemist by Cornelis Bega. Nothing in that letter was said about damage to any other painting.

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Mr. Christman replied curtly that the statute of limitations on my claim has expired and, "we find no merit in your claim." That I found the most galling.

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Teniers, a Flemish painter, had considerable influence on a number of his Dutch peers, especially those working Rotterdam, (see Schneeman, 1982). He was a master of rural genre scenes

21 Constantijn Verhout
Portrait of Cornelis Abrahamsz. Graswinckel, 166(?)
oil on panel
13 1/2 x 11 in
signed, C Verhout
Isabel and Alfred Bader Collection

Graswinckel (1582-1664) owned the brewery *De Drie Ackeren* in the Voorstraat in Delft He also served as *kerkmeester* at both the Oude Kerk and Nieuwe Kerk in Delft. The identification of Graswinckel as the subject of this portrait has been made, in part, based on a portrait of Cornelis Abrahamsz. Graswinckel in the *Hofje van Gratie*, an old-aged women's pension house in Delft which the Graswinckel family supported The artist is not particularly well-known He is known to have lived in Gouda in 1666 and 1667 Only one other signed work by Verhout, a dated (1663) painting showing a sleeping student with a pile of books, is presently known; it is located at the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm

This portrait, with the brewer's calm eyes looking downward as he reflectively holds a stein of beer, is one of considerable beauty The texture of his beard, the fur on his hat, and the raised textures on the surface of the pottery stein are palpable Anthony Clark, then Director of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, said of the portrait when it was exhibited in 1967 at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts that it ". is as beautiful a piece of still life painting, and as original, daring, and elegant a work of art as anything I know... It is utterly clean and fresh"

HOFSTRA MUSEUM

May 26, 1988

Dr. Alfred Bader
Chairman
Aldrich Chemical Company
940 West Saint Paul Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

Dear Dr. Bader:

The exhibition at Hofstra is going extremely well, breaking all of our attendance records. I have enclosed some of the reviews that have come out in order to give you some additional insight about the exhibition.

However, I do have to also write about a small but important problem concerning one of your paintings. Our staff is well-trained to carefully observe all paintings in an exhibition constantly and note any and all changes. We noticed on"The Alchemist" by Cornelis Pietersz. Bega, a slight change in its condition. In an area of about 1/2" x 1/16" near the top right corner of the painting, the varnish is separating. Our conservator, who is on retainer, confirmed our opinions. He has suggested that this can happen from even slight environmental changes especially if the varnish is new. He has informed us that it is a minor task to restore it---application of a mild solvent in the area rebonds the varnish.

If you would like us to take care of it, we can do so immediately, but need permission from you in writing. If you have any questions the conservator, Mervin Honig, can be reached at (516) 334-6157 or of course, you can call me at (516) 560-5672.

We are truly sorry for any concern or anxiety this may evoke, but wish to reassure you that it is minor and can be taken care of easily.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Gail Gelburd
Director

No worries about the scratch!

OFFICES LOCATED AT THE EMILY LOWE GALLERY • HOFSTRA MUSEUM • HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY • HEMPSTEAD • NEW YORK 11550 • (516) 560-5672

Dutch

JUN 02 '88 15:39

ALDRICH-CHEMICAL-MIL
TELEX/FAX/MEMO

P01
516 560 6870

TO: Hofstra Museum

COUNTRY: U.S.A.

FROM: Dr. A. Bader

DATE: June 2, 1988

Gail Gelburd

You advised me today that there is a slight lifting problem with the BEGA and a slight scratch, only to the varnish of the Verhout. Please have your competent restorer proceed with the minor varnish repair.

Best regards
Alfred Bader

HOFSTRA MUSEUM

REPORT ON CONDITION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR TREATMENT

I was requested by Gail Gelburd, Director of the Hofstra Museum tok examine the following painting and submit a report as described above:

Title: Portrait of Cornelis Abrahamsz Graswinckel
Artist:. C. Verhout
Medium: oil on wood panel
Size: 13 1/2 x 11"

CONDITION: (PREVIOUS CONDITION)
The painting appears to be in good condition. The wood panel is sound without any visible checks or cracks. The paint film is in good condition as well. The varnish appears to be without discoloration. There are (as described in the initial report on receiving painting) 2 tiny indentations along the bottom center edge of the painting. There were several small indentations near edge of painting in the top and center left edges. The painting along its left edge appears to be away from the rabbet of the frame and not behind it. The painting is held in its frame by 3 metal brackets screwed into the frame exerting pressure on the back of the panel to secure the panel behind the rabbet of the frame. There are 3 nails with cork attached holding the panel in the other 3 positions.
(PRESENT CONDITION)
All conditions previously mentioned prevail with the exception of an irregular fine surface scratch which is visible on the face of the subject. It is 1 1/4" in length running vertically through the bottom of the fur hat over the inner part of the left eye through the left lobe of the nose across the lips ending at the edge of the beard to the right of the goatee. It is a surface scratch and portions of it are very shallow with only some parts affecting the paint film.

RECOMMENDATION FOR TREATMENT

The scratch should be treated by first returning varnish to the abraded areas to return the color there. The deeper part of the scratch as needed should be inpainted and varnished locally and where it might be necessary, filled with gesso putty and leveled to the surrounding area, inpainted with plastic pigments, varnished with synthetic acrylic resin by spraying to create an even final surface .
(TWO RECOMMENDED SUGGESTIONS FOR TREATMENT OF FRAMING CONTINGENT

OFFICES LOCATED AT THE EMILY LOWE GALLERY • HOFSTRA MUSEUM • HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY • HEMPSTEAD • NEW YORK 11550 • (516) 560-5672

NOT SENT TO ALFRED BADER UNTIL 1997 !

Sent to Alfred Bader in 1997!

Mervin Honig
Fine Art Conservation

64 Jane Court
Westbury, N. Y. 11590
516-334-6153

June 24, 1988

To: Hofstra University
Hempstead, N.Y. 11550

For Conservation Services Rendered:

1. ARTIST: CorneliusPieters Bega
   TITLE: The Alchemist (1660)
   MEDIUM: oil on canvas (glue-lined)
   SIZE: 16 1/4" x 15"

   Treatment: Reformed separated varnish and resurfaced entire painting to achieve even surface coat.

   Cost.....$225.00

2. ARTIST: Constantijn Verhout
   TITLE: Portrait of Cornelius Abrahamaz Graswinkel
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   SIZE: 13 1/2" x 11"

   Treatment: Repaired scratch, filled, inpainted area of scratch, filled and inpainted dent on bottom area of painting and resurfaced entire paiting for even coat.

   Cost.....$250.00 *

* Cost includes initial examination at Gallery, pickup and delivery

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

HOFSTRA MUSEUM

March 3, 1998

Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

Dear Dr. Bader;

I referred your January 14, 1998 letter to the Hofstra Museum about your loan of the Constantijn Verhout's "Portrait" in 1988 to the University Counsel. I am advised to inform you that the statute of limitations on your claim has expired. Further, we find no merit in your claim.

Sincerely,

David C. Christman
Director

c: Emil V. Cianciulli, Esq.

HOFSTRA MUSEUM ◆ EMILY LOWE GALLERY ◆ 112 HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY ◆ HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK 11549
PHONE: (516) 463-5672

How Not To Handle an Accident In A Museum

In 1988 The Hofstra Museum of Hofstra University mounted an exhibition entitled "People at Work: Seventeenth Century Dutch Art" which included 26 oil paintings, seven of which were borrowed from my collection.

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Dutch

JUN 02 '88 15:39

ALDRICH-CHEMICAL-MIL
TELEX/FAX/MEMO

P01
516 560 6870

FROM: Dr. A. Bader

TO: Hofstra Museum

DATE: June 2, 1988

COUNTRY: U.S.A.

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HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

HOFSTRA MUSEUM

March 3, 1998

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2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

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Sincerely,

David C. Christman
Director

c: Emil V. Cianciulli, Esq.

HOFSTRA MUSEUM ✦ EMILY LOWE GALLERY ✦ 112 HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY ✦ HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK 11549
PHONE: (516) 463-5672

Photo (1)
Essay (2)
Catalog descr. (3)
1988 Letter (4)
Response A (5)
Condition 1997 (6)
Invoice " (7)
"no Moir" (8)

HOFSTRA

Returns 12/26?

ALFRED BADER FINE ARTS

DR. ALFRED BADER

ESTABLISHED 1961

August 18, 1998

Dr. Kristin Lohse Belkin
Historians of Netherlandish Art
23 South Adelaide Avenue
Highland Park, NJ 08904

Dear Dr. Belkin,

Thank you so much for sending me the latest supplement to the membership. What I really would like to have is a membership list which I'm sure I had at one time, but have mislaid.

Could you please send me a copy and bill me if there is any charge.

I would like to share the enclosed story with members.

With many thanks for your help, I remain

Yours sincerely,

AB/az

enc.

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

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

HOFSTRA MUSEUM

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

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HOFSTRA MUSEUM ✦ EMILY LOWE GALLERY ✦ 112 HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY ✦ HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK 11549
PHONE: (516) 463-5672

Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

January 14, 1998

Ms. Mary Wakeford
Assistant to the Director
Hofstra Museum
1212 Hofstra University
Hempstead, NY 11549

Via: CERTIFIED MAIL ***Return Receipt Requested***

Dear Ms. Wakeford:

A trip to England and Spain in November and December has delayed my responding to your letter of November the 11th regarding the damage to two of my paintings in 1988.

I must tell you that I feel that your response now was professional but your museum's treatment of the damage to my paintings in 1988 was totally unprofessional and I am really shocked by your action at the time of the damage.

During the last 45 years I have made hundreds of loans to many museums around the world. Right now there are three of my paintings in the great "Rembrandt and His Impact" exhibition in Australia and one in the Walters Art Gallery.

In all those years only three of my paintings were damaged, two of these at your museum, and I cannot help but contrast the way the damages were handled at the two museums involved. At the other museum a painting by Peter Lastman, the teacher of Rembrandt, split in two. The museum informed me immediately, sent me detailed photographs, returned the painting in two pieces and I had my very competent conservator glue the two panels together and the total cost, covered by the museum's insurance, was about $300. As the painting had originally been on two pieces glued together, there was no lasting damage and no claim for loss of value.

Your museum, on the other hand, did *not* inform me of the damage, sent me no photographs, and did not allow my conservator to repair the damages.

To turn now to the two damages involved:

(1) I do not really know what happened to the painting of *An Alchemist* by Bega - incidentally one of Bega's most famous works - but examination of the painting now does not indicate any permanent damage and so, of course, there is no claim.

(2) The situation with the Verhout is entirely different.

When you received the painting it was in absolutely mint condition, one of the favourite works in my collection.

Please note what Anthony Clark, the director of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, wrote about this wonderful work, on page 18 of the enclosed.

How highly I think of this painting you can see from the enclosed essay that accompanied reproductions of this work when the Aldrich Chemical Company used it on a catalogue cover.

Looking at the painting now under ultraviolet light, you see a 2-inch streak of restoration, right through the face of the man, and see further restoration at the bottom of the painting. Your conservator described a 1-1/4 inch scratch; the restoration is two inches in length. The polaroid photo you sent is useless: It does not even show the whole painting and may have been taken *after* restoration!

The conservator Mervin Honig, one of the earliest members of the AIC and surely now retired, was certainly not incompetent in his work, because visually the restoration is not glaring and only very close examination suggests that the gesso filling was not very well done.

Two matters must be addressed: (A) I plan to have the restoration removed by my conservator Mr. Charles Munch who assures me that this can be done, and the filling and in-painting improved, at a cost that will not exceed $500.

Naturally I expect you to be responsible for the cost. (B) There is a substantial difference in value between a painting in absolutely mint condition, as this work was when you received it, and a painting with a scratch through the most important part of the painting - the face of the sitter - even when that is well restored. I plan to take professional advice by how much the commercial value of this painting has been decreased and expect reimbursement from you.

Please inform your insurance company immediately of this claim. They will advise you whether they will honour a claim made nine years after the damage occurred, but this clearly is your problem. Had you informed me of the damage and treated me as fairly in 1988 as you did last November, I would have made the claim immediately.

Please send me copies of the insurance certificate and the loan form.

You will understand from this that I am deeply hurt by your action in 1988. Verhout is an exceedingly rare artist and I believe there are only three or four known works by him. His two best works are illustrated in Bernt. One is of a sleeping student, in Stockholm; the other is mine.

I sense from your prompt response to my letter of November 4th that you understand how unprofessionally your museum acted in 1988, and you will understand my dismay.

Please send me your authorization to proceed with the improved restoration and I will send you the details of my claim for loss in value shortly.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

c: Marvin Klitsner, Esq., Foley & Lardner

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

HOFSTRA MUSEUM

November 11, 1997

Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

Dear Dr. Bader:

I am in receipt of your letter of November 4 regarding a request for information on the conservation of Constantijn Verhout's *Portrait of Cornelius Abrahamaz Graswinkel*.

Enclosed is a typed copy taken from the conservator's handwritten assessment and a copy of his invoice. The only photograph we can supply is the accompanying Polaroid (with magnification the scratch can be seen).

If there is anything more about which I can be of assistance do not hesitate to call at 516 463-5672 or fax 516 463-4832.

Sincerely,

Mary Wakeford

Mary Wakeford
Assistant to Director

Encs.

HOFSTRA MUSEUM ✦ EMILY LOWE GALLERY ✦ 112 HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY ✦ HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK 11549
PHONE: (516) 463-5672

Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

November 3, 1997

Dr. Gail Gelburd
Director
Hofstra Museum
Hofstra University
Hempstead, NY 11550

Dear Dr. Gelburd:

In 1988 you had an exhibition entitled People at Work: Seventeenth Century Dutch Art which was held from April 17-June 15.

Unfortunately I was not able to visit the exhibition because I had to be in Europe at the time.

I loaned you seven of my paintings, some of these among the very best in my collection.

During my stay in Europe, my secretary Ms. Marilyn Hassman, was informed by your museum that there had been, what was described as, very slight damage to two of my paintings and one of the frames, but that this was so slight that it would be professionally and carefully restored at your museum.

Unfortunately I did not ask for photographs before the restoration as I thought that the damage must be so slight as to be immaterial. On my return I was so overworked that I did not have a chance to examine the paintings under UV.

One of the frames, that of the Vrel, was very badly banged up but of course I did not want to make a fuss about a frame of no great consequence.

Recently my conservator, Mr. Charles Munch, examined a number of paintings in my collection and on looking at the painting, No. 21 in your exhibition, the work by Constantijn Verhout, it is clear on UV inspection that the face of the old man has a sharp and long scratch which is very clear under UV, but not in ordinary light.

My conservator has asked me to request from you the condition report from your conservator, giving the details of the work done and a photograph taken before the restoration was done.

I look forward to hearing from you, and remain,

Yours sincerely,

AB/nik

HOFSTRA MUSEUM

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Dear Dr. Bader:

The exhibition at Hofstra is going extremely well, breaking all of our attendance records. I have enclosed some of the reviews that have come out in order to give you some additional insight about the exhibition.

However, I do have to also write about a small but important problem concerning one of your paintings. Our staff is well-trained to carefully observe all paintings in an exhibition constantly and note any and all changes. We noticed on"The Alchemist" by Cornelis Pietersz. Bega, a slight change in its condition. In an area of about 1/2" x 1/16" near the top right corner of the painting, the varnish is separating. Our conservator, who is on retainer, confirmed our opinions. He has suggested that this can happen from even slight environmental changes especially if the varnish is new. He has informed us that it is a minor task to restore it---application of a mild solvent in the area rebonds the varnish.

If you would like us to take care of it, we can do so immediately, but need permission from you in writing. If you have any questions the conservator, Mervin Honig, can be reached at (516) 334-6157 or of course, you can call me at (516) 560-5672.

We are truly sorry for any concern or anxiety this may evoke, but wish to reassure you that it is minor and can be taken care of easily.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Gail Gelburd
Director

No worries about the scratch!

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HOFSTRA MUSEUM

REPORT ON CONDITION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR TREATMENT

I was requested by Gail Gelburd, Director of the Hofstra Museum tok examine the following painting and submit a report as described above:

Title: Portrait of Cornelis Abrahamsz Graswinckel
Artist:. C. Verhout
Medium: oil on wood panel
Size: 13 1/2 x 11"

CONDITION: (PREVIOUS CONDITION)
The painting appears to be in good condition. The wood panel is sound without any visible checks or cracks. The paint film is in good condition as well. The varnish appears to be without discoloration. There are (as described in the initial report on receiving painting) 2 tiny indentations along the bottom center edge of the painting. There were several small indentations near edge of painting in the top and center left edges. The painting along its left edge appears to be away from the rabbet of the frame and not behind it. The painting is held in its frame by 3 metal brackets screwed into the frame exerting pressure on the back of the panel to secure the panel behind the rabbet of the frame. There are 3 nails with cork attached holding the panel in the other 3 positions.
(PRESENT CONDITION)
All conditions previously mentioned prevail with the exception of an irregular fine surface scratch which is visible on the face of the subject. It is 1 1/4" in length running vertically through the bottom of the fur hat over the inner part of the left eye through the left lobe of the nose across the lips ending at the edge of the beard to the right of the goatee. It is a surface scratch and portions of it are very shallow with only some parts affecting the paint film.

RECOMMENDATION FOR TREATMENT

The scratch should be treated by first returning varnish to the abraded areas to return the color there. The deeper part of the scratch as needed should be inpainted and varnished locally and where it might be necessary, filled with gesso putty and leveled to the surrounding area, inpainted with plastic pigments, varnished with synthetic acrylic resin by spraying to create an even final surface .
(TWO RECOMMENDED SUGGESTIONS FOR TREATMENT OF FRAMING CONTINGENT

Not part to me until Nov 97 !

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Mervin Honig
Fine Art Conservation

64 Jane Court
Westbury, N. Y. 11590
516-334-6153

June 24, 1988

To: Hofstra University
Hempstead, N.Y. 11550

For Conservation Services Rendered:

1. ARTIST: CorneliusPieters Bega
TITLE: The Alchemist (1660)
MEDIUM: oil on canvas (glue-lined)
SIZE: 16 1/4" x 15"

Treatment: Reformed separated varnish and resurfaced entire painting to achieve even surface coat.

Cost.....$225.00

2. ARTIST: Constantijn Verhout
TITLE: Portrait of Cornelius Abrahamaz Graswinkel
MEDIUM: oil on wood panel
SIZE: 13 1/2" x 11"

Treatment: Repaired scratch, filled, inpainted area of scratch, filled and inpainted dent on bottom area of painting and resurfaced entire paiting for even coat.

Cost .....$250.00 *

* Cost includes initial examination at Gallery, pickup and delivery.