

Alfred Bader

Writing - Talks by Bader

Detective's Eye - Slide List
[and slides]

[ca. 2010]

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES	
LOCATOR	5169
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FILE	1

THE DETECTIVE'S EYE

There are many different kinds of serious collectors of old master paintings. On the one hand are those who buy only from reputable dealers and major auction houses, concentrating on paintings in good condition with firm attributions.

On the other extreme are collectors like myself who love going to antique stores and minor auctions to buy dirty old paintings without attribution or an attribution I think is mistaken. It's the hunt, the puzzle and the challenge that excite me.

Luckily I have become good friends with two very able conservators in Wisconsin who have worked on many of our paintings to reveal the beauty I hoped they would find beneath dirt, darkened varnish and overpaint.

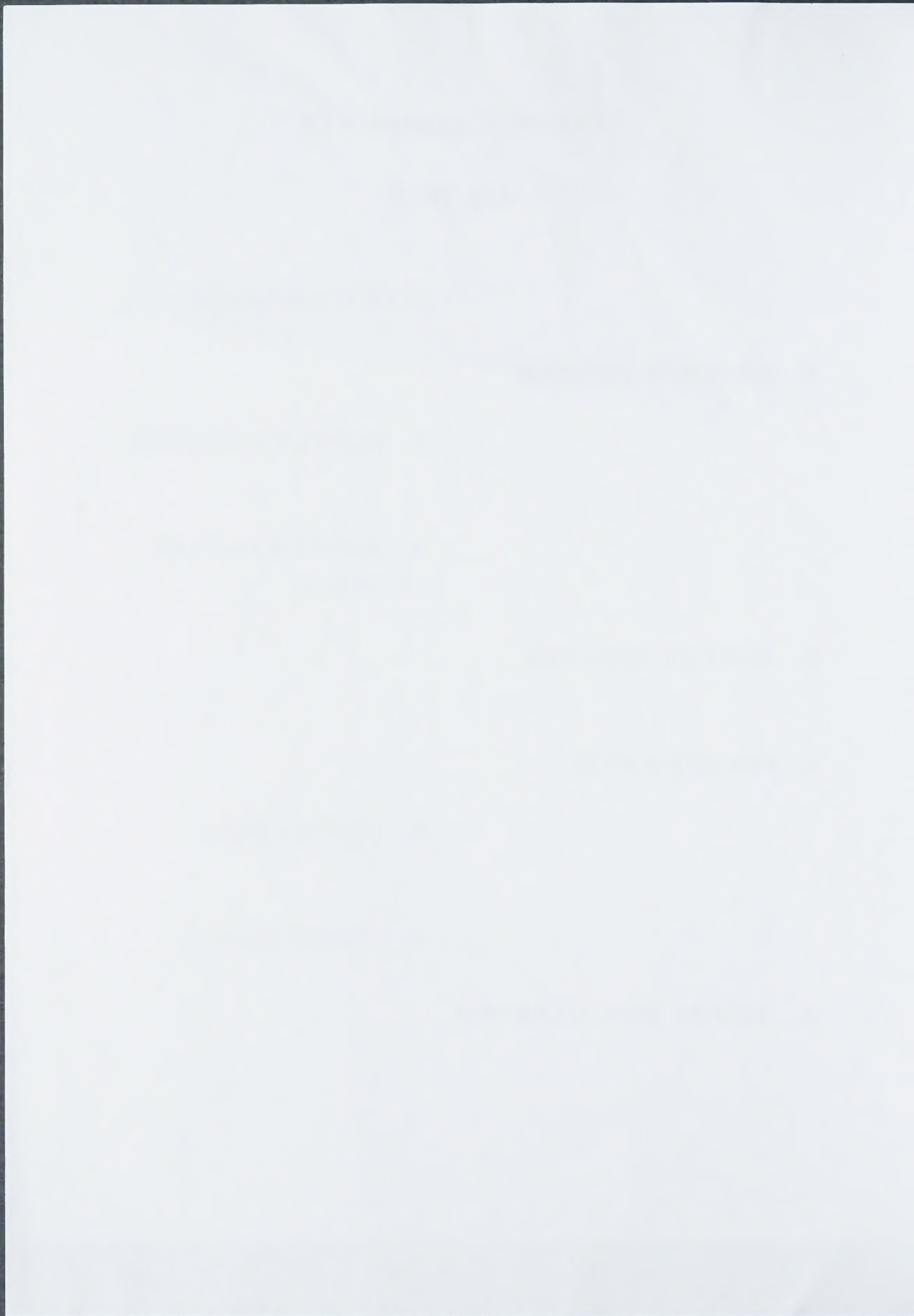
Today I will be talking about many such successful conservations. My mistakes I will keep quiet about.



THE DETECTIVE'S EYE

May 2010

1. FETI ORIGINAL
2. ORIGINAL ANGELS
3. PARTLY CLEANED
4. ANGELS PARTLY CLEANED
5. ANGELS CLEANED
6. FINISHED FETI
7. VIENNA FETI
8. FOGGY GIRL
9. FOGGY GIRL CLEANED



10. FOGGY GIRL COLOR

11. GUARDIAN ANGEL

12. VARNISH REMOVAL

13. HALF CLEANED

14. CLEANED

15. IR SPECTRUM

16. DOSSO BEFORE

17. DOSSO CLEANED

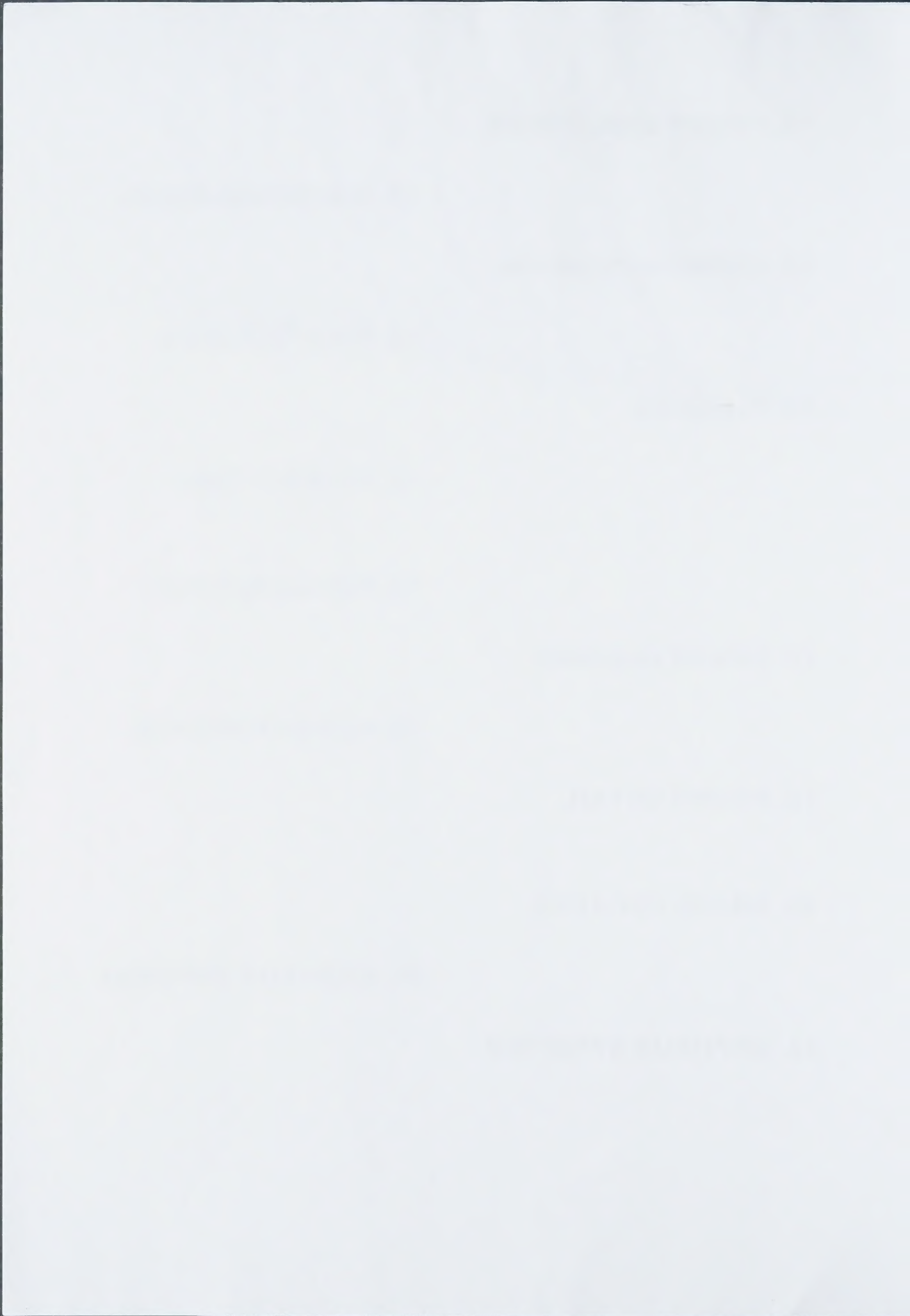
18. DOSSO FINISHED

19. DOSSO DETAIL

20. DOSSO ESCAPED

21. ORPHEUS ORIGINAL

22. ORPHEUS STRIPPED



23. ORPHEUS FINISHED

24. DECORATED COVER

25. HARPSICHORD SKETCH

26. VERMEER

27. VERMEER

28. ORIGINAL FLINCK

29. GREEK

30. DRAWING

31. FLINCK CLEANED

32. FLINCK FINISHED

33. FLINCK DETAIL

**34. COLLIER
BLACK/WHITE**

35. X-RAY

36. COLLIER COLOR



**37. SASSOFERATO
BEFORE**

**38. SASSOFERATO DURING
CLEANING**

**39. SASSOFERATO
DETAIL**

40. SASSOFERATO FINISHED

**41. SASSOFERATO
FRAMED**

42. VENUS BEFORE

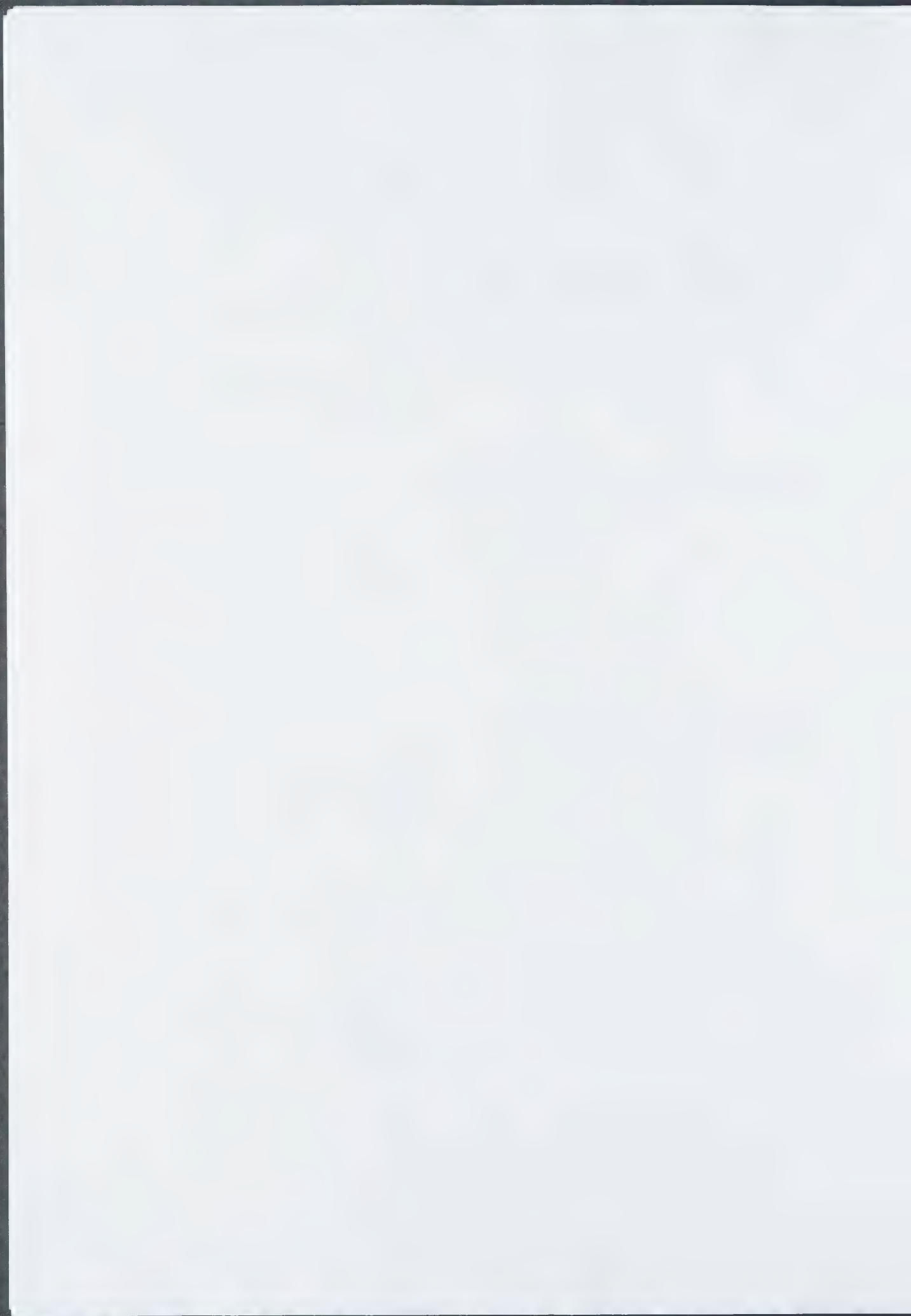
43. VENUS LOUVRE

**44. VENUS HALF
CLEANED DETAIL**

45. VENUS FINISHED

46. DETAIL

**47. VENUS DETAIL
EARRING**



48. ORIGINAL FUICK

49. FUICK FINISHED

50. FUICK SIGNATURE

**51. ORIGINAL
BLOEMAERT**

**52. PARTLY CLEANED
DETAIL**

53. BLOEMAERT CLEANED DETAIL

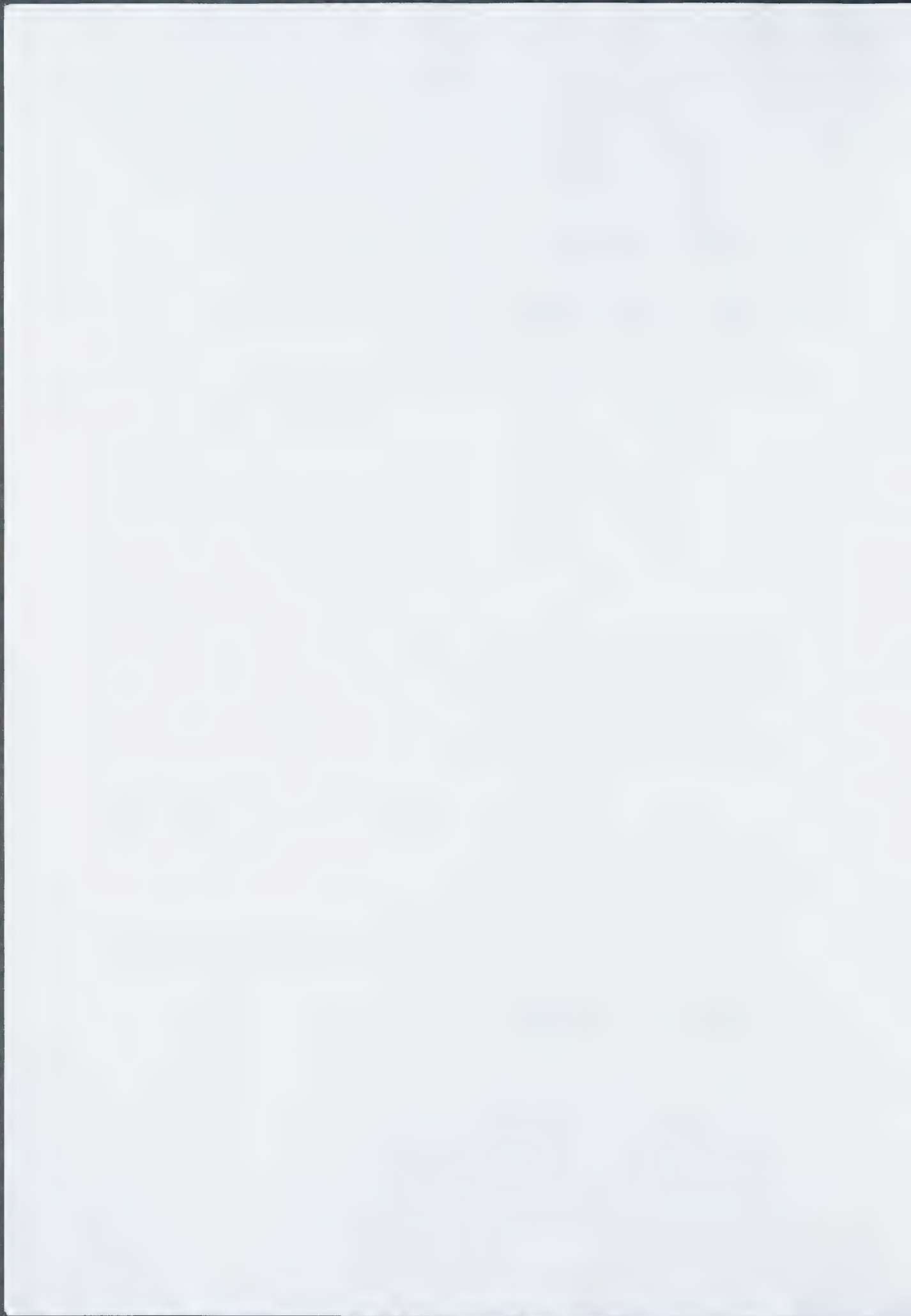
54. BLOEMAERT FINISHED

55. SWEERTS BEFORE

56. SWEERTS AFTER

57. SWEERTS OBERLIN

58. SWEERTS COLOR



DETECTIVE'S EYE SLIDE LIST

These numbers correspond to the numbers in the Detective's Eye catalogue.

- 1A. Dutch circa 1655
Portrait of Rembrandt
Oil on canvas
30 x 25"
Private collection

- 1B. European late 18th century
Portrait of Rembrandt
Oil on panel
16 1/2 x 13"
Private collection

- 1C. Matthew Powell American
Portrait of Rembrandt 1982
Graphite on paper
26 x 19"
Private collection

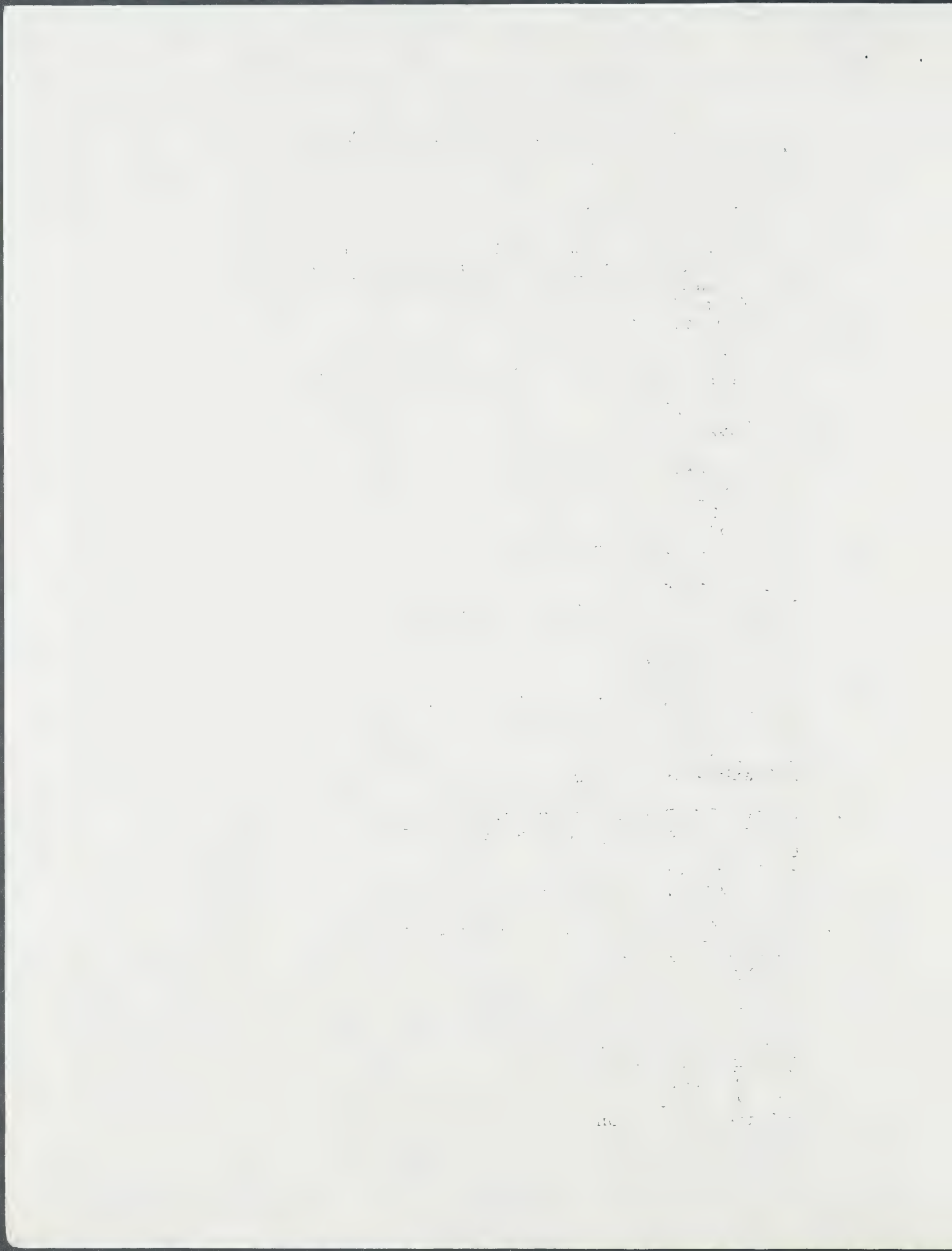
- 2A. Jacob van Ruisdael Dutch circa 1628-1682
Sunlit Landscape circa 1670
Oil on canvas
25 x 31"
Private collection

- 2B. Barand Cornelis Koekkoek Dutch 1803-1862
The Ahr River Valley
Oil on canvas
35 x 45"
Milwaukee Art Museum

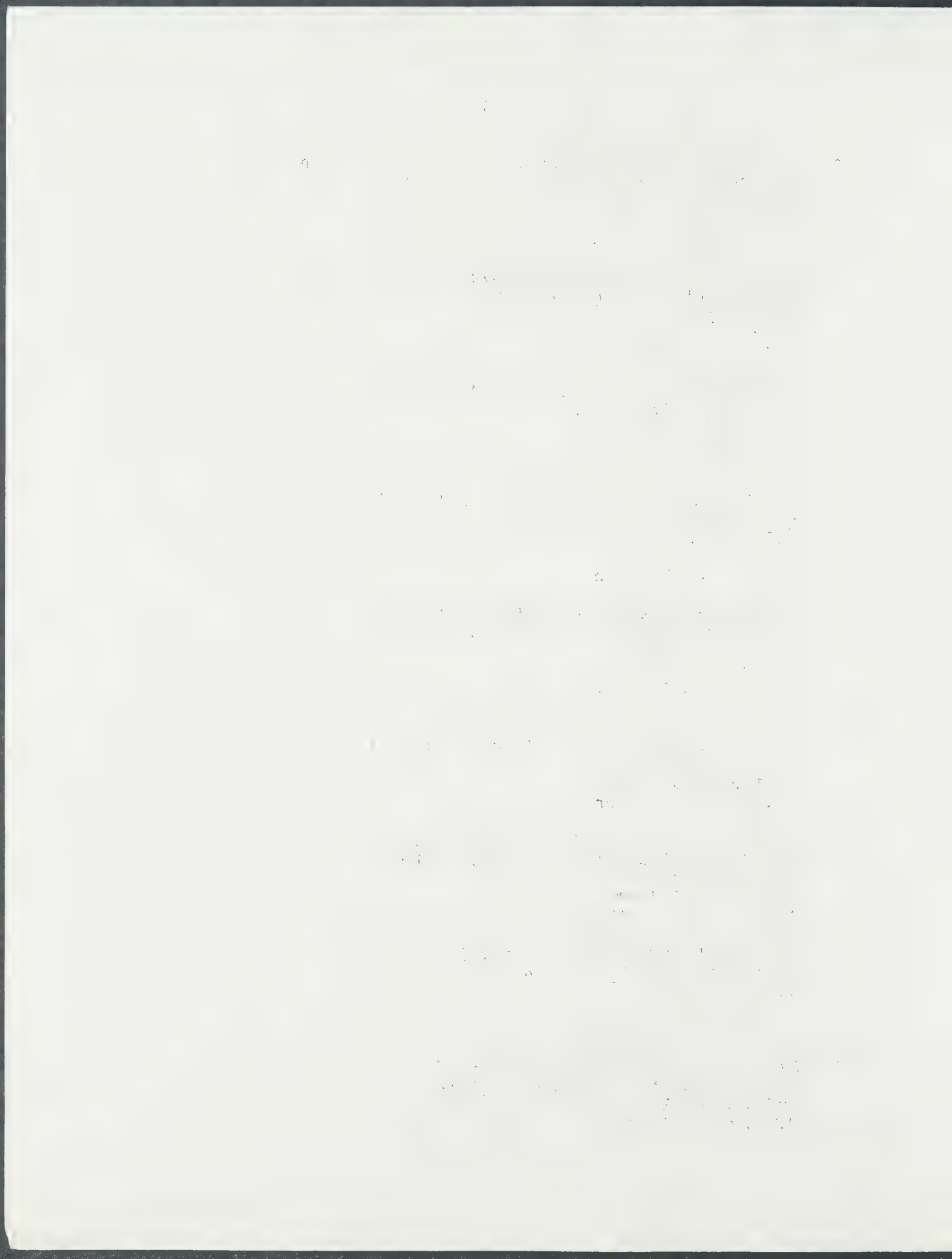
- 2C. Henry Vianden American 1814-1899
View of the Fox River, Wisconsin 1885-1888
Oil on canvas
26 1/8 x 31 1/4"
Milwaukee Art Museum

- 2D. Henry Vianden American 1814-1899
Portrait of a Tree
Oil on canvas
17 1/4 X 13 1/4"
Mr. and Mrs. Eckhart Grohmann

- 3. Reinier Nooms (called Zeeman) Dutch c.1623 - c.1667
Ships in the Amsterdam Harbor circa 1666
Oil on canvas
23 3/4 x 29 3/4"
Milwaukee Art Museum



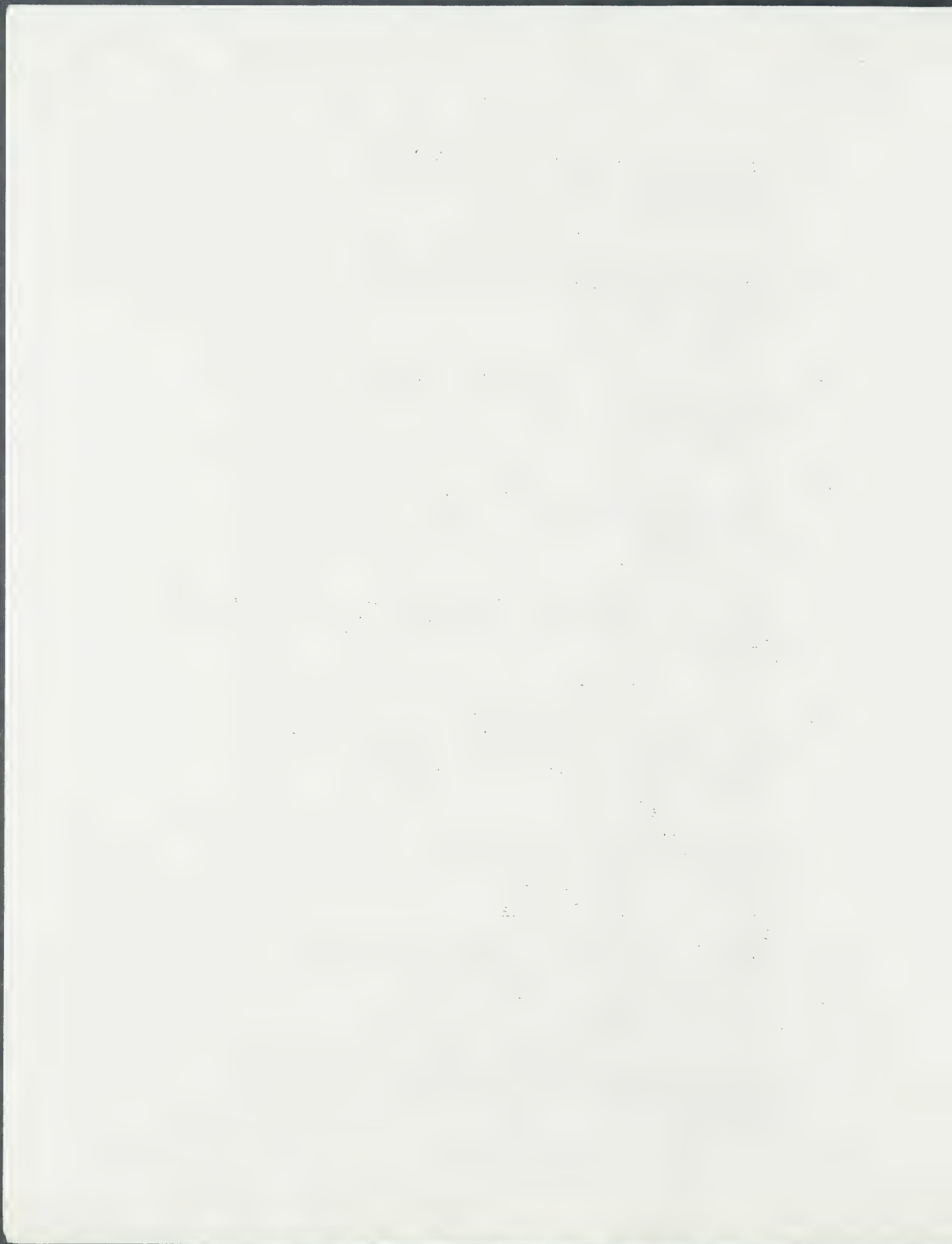
4. Nicolaes Berchem Dutch circa 1620-1683
Mercury, Juno and Io
Oil on panel
23 1/2 x 33"
Milwaukee Art Museum
5. Martin van der Fuick Dutch active c. 1660
Tobias and the Angel Cooking the Fish 1663
Oil on canvas
41 1/2 x 47"
Private collection
6. Lodewyk van der Helst Dutch 1642-after 1682
Self-Portrait
Oil on canvas
37 1/2 x 30 3/4"
Milwaukee Art Museum
7. Master active circa 1650
Two Men in an Interior 1649
Oil on panel
17 x 13"
Private collection
8. M C G active 1670
Noah's Sacrifice and the First Rainbow 1670
Oil on canvas
30 3/4 x 39 1/2"
Private collection
- 8B. Asher Durand American 1796-1886
In the Catskills 1857
Oil on canvas
24 1/2 x 36 3/8"
Milwaukee Art Museum
9. Master P L Dutch active c. 1679
The Return of the Prodigal Son 1679
Oil on canvas
31 1/2 x 24"
Mr. and Mrs. William Treul
10. Paulus de Lesire Dutch 1611-after 1656
The Quill-Cutter
Oil on panel
31 1/2 x 24"
Private collection
11. Dutch mid-17 century
Esther Before Ahasuerus (?)
Oil on panel
18 1/2 x 24 3/4"
Private collection



12. Attributed to Rembrandt van Rijn Dutch 1606-1669
Man Writing by Candlelight circa 1629
Oil on copper
5 x 5"
Private collection
13. Jan Lievens Dutch 1607-1674
Rembrandt's Mother circa 1629
Oil on panel
17 x 13 3/4"
Private collection
14. Jan Lievens Dutch 1607-1674
St. Paul circa 1625
Oil on panel
37 x 31"
Private collection
15. Jacob van Campen Dutch 1595/98-1657
Old Woman with Book
Oil on canvas
27 3/4 x 22"
Private collection
16. Govaert Flinck Dutch 1615-1660
A Father of the Church circa 1655
Oil on canvas
52 1/2 x 39"
Private collection
18. Nicolaes Maes Dutch 1634-1693
Abraham's Sacrafice of Isaac circa 1655
Oil on canvas
44 1/2 x 35 1/2"
Private collection
19. Adriaen van der Werff Dutch 1659-1722
The Incredulity of St. Thomas 1719
Oil on panel
24 7/8 x 18 7/8"
Milwaukee Art Milwaukee
20. Anthony Natus Dutch active 1658
Samson and Delilah 1658
Oil on panel
14 3/8 x 11 1/2"
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Bishop
21. Solomon de Bray Dutch 1597-1664
Hagar Brought to Abraham by Sarah 1650
Oil on panel
12 1/2 x 9 3/4"



- 22A. Dutch
The Ratcatcher circa 1635
 Oil on panel
 12 3/4 x 9 7/8"
 Mr. and Mrs. Eckhart Grohmann
- 22B. Rembrandt van Rijn Dutch 1606-1669
The Ratcatcher 1632
 Etching
 5 7/16 x 4 7/8"
 Milwaukee Art Museum
23. Attributed to Cornelis de Vos Flemish 1584-1651
Portrait of a Boy 1623
 Oil on canvas
 14 1/2 x 11 3/4"
 Private collection
24. Jacob van Ruisdael Dutch circa 1628-1682
Scandinavian Waterfall circa 1670
 Oil on canvas
 14 x 15 3/4"
 Milwaukee Art Museum
25. Dutch 17th century
Fragment of Abraham's Sacrafice ?
 Oil on canvas
 24 x 20"
 Private collection
26. Jan Lievens Dutch 1607-1674
The Presentation in the Temple circa 1630
 Oil on canvas
 19 x 22"
 Private collection
27. Northern European 16th century
Christ Mocked with St. Agatha
 Oil on panel
 15 1/4 x 24 1/2"
 Private collection
28. Cornelis Engelbrechtsz Dutch circa 1468-1533
 Fragment of The Holy Kinship
 Oil on panel
 10 x 8 1/2" with arched top
 Private collection
29. Jan Jansz. van Bronchorst Dutch 1626-circa 1651
Two Girls in an Arbor circa 1650
 Oil on canvas
 24 x 29"
 Mr. and Mrs. William Treul



30. Abraham Hondius Dutch 1625-1693
Daifilo 1669
Oil on canvas
34 1/2 x 36 3/4"
Milwaukee Art Musuem
- 31A. Netherlandish
Orpheus circa 1600
Oil on panel
19 3/4 x 31 3/4"
Private collection
- 31B. Cornelis Bisschop Dutch 1630-1674
Apollo and Marsyas
Oil on panel
18 1/2 x 16"
Private collection
32. Cornelis Bega Dutch 1630-1664
The Alchemist
Oil on canvas
16 1/4 x 15"
Private collection
34. Previously attributed to Ferdinand Bol Dutch 1616-1680
Hendrickje Stoffels as Venus with Cupid circa 1650
Oil on canvas
38 1/2 X 32 1/2"
Private collection
- 34A. Ferdinand Bol Dutch 1616-1680
Detail of Henrickje Stoffels as Venus with Cupid
35. Peter van Lint Flemish 1609-1691
The Pool of Bethesda
Oil on canvas
43 1/4 x 67"
Milwaukee Art Museum
36. Nineteenth-century Copy
Portrait of Laurent Coster
Oil on panel
12 3/4 x 9 1/2"
Private collection
37. Northern European circa 1645
Portrait of a Man
Oil on canvas
38 x 30 3/4"
Private collection



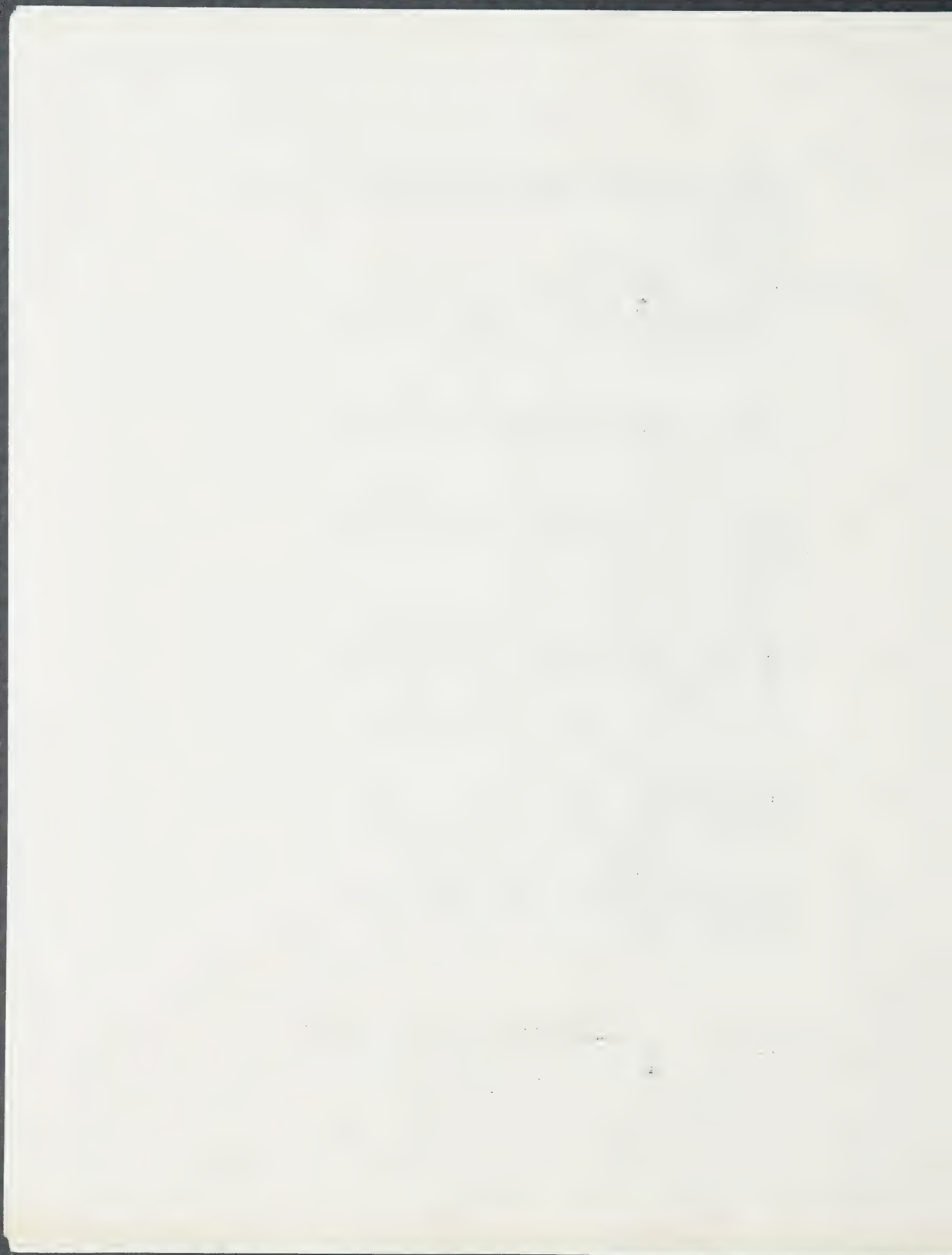
- 39A. Jan van der Venne Flemish active 1629-circa 1650
Village Musicians
Oil on panel
21 x 17 1/2"
Milwaukee Art Museum
- 39B. Jan van der Venne Flemish active 1629-circa 1650
Adoration of the Shepherds
Oil on panel
21 x 17 1/2"
Private collection
- 40A. Daniel Thievaert Dutch before 1613-before 1658
Manoah and his Wife with Angel
Oil on panel
11 3/4 x 17"
Professor and Mrs. Leonard Parker
- 40B. Daniel Thievaert Dutch before 1613-before 1658
The Queen of Sheba visiting King Solomon
Oil on canvas
18 1/2 x 23 1/2"
Private collection
41. Aert de Gelder Dutch 1645-1727
Elisha and the Widow circa 1670
Oil on canvas
25 1/2 x 33 1/2"
Private collection
42. Abraham van Dyck Dutch circa 1635-1672
The Widow Zarephath and her Son
Oil on canvas
45 1/2 x 37 3/4"
Private collection
43. Delft School
The Interior of the Oude Kerk, Delft circa 1670
Oil on canvas
36 x 42 1/2"
Mr. and Mrs. William Treul
44. Anonymous European
Figures on a Beach
Oil on panel
12 1/2 x 16 3/4"
Private collection
- 45A. Nicolaes Maes Dutch 1634-1693
Self-Portrait 1656
Oil on panel
18 x 15"
Private collection



- 45B. Dutch
Self-Portrait of an Artist circa 1680
Oil on canvas
21 x 16 3/4"
Private collection
- 46A. Michael Sweerts Netherlandish 1624-1664
Self-Portrait circa 1660
Oil on canvas
31 x 23 3/4"
Private collection
- 46B. Attributed to Pter Franchoys Flemish 1606-1654
Portrait of Michael Sweerts circa 1653
Oil on canvas laid down on panel
26 x 19 1/2"
47. Isaac Luttichuys Dutch 1616-1673
Portrait of Cornelis Danckerts 1657
Oil on canvas
39 x 32 1/4"
Private collection
48. Jacob Backer Dutch 1608-1651
The Baptism of the Eunuch circa 1630
Oil on canvas
41 x 46 1/2"
- 49A. Bolognese
The Meeting of Alexander the Great with Roxana circa 1700
Oil on canvas
32 1/2 x 26 1/2"
Private collection
- 49B. Richard LaBarre Goodwin American 1840-1910
Hunting Cabin Door circa 1889
Oil on canvas
52 x 32"
Milwaukee Art Museum
- 49C. Aaron Bohrod American 1907-
Pillar 1954
Oil on panel
30 x 18"
Milwaukee Art Museum
- 50A. Evert Collier Dutch active 1660-1707
Still Life with Jug, Wine Glass, Pipe and Broken
Brazier 1664
Oil on panel
17 1/2 x 13 1/2"
Private collection



- 50B. Dutch
Portrait of a Man circa 1640
(The reverse bears a Flemish landscape circa 1620)
Oil on copper
9 x 7"
Private collection
- 50C. Dutch
Flemish Landscape circa 1620 (Reverse of 50B)
Oil on copper
9 x 7"
51. Flemish
Portrait of Gaspar de Crayer circa 1670
Oil on panel
9 3/4 x 7 1/2"
Private collection
52. Hendrick Bloemaert Dutch circa 1601-1672
The Apple Seller 1624
Oil on canvas
28 x 23"
Milwaukee Art Museum
53. Attributed to Frans Pourbus the Younger
Flemish 1569/70-1622
Portrait of Marie de Medici circa 1609-22
Oil on canvas
43 x 33"
Milwaukee Art Museum
54. Italian or Dutch
Head of a Young Man
Oil on canvas
23 x 19"
Private collection
55. Dutch or Italian
Hagar and the Angel circa 1620-1630
Oil on canvas
41 1/2 x 52 1/4"



Reinier Nooms
Ships Amsterdam



3

Nicholaes Berchem
Mercury, Juno, Io



4



Paulus de Lesire
The Quill-Cutter

10



L. van der Helst
Self-Portrait

6



Jacob van Campen
Old Woman/Book

15



Govaert Flinck
Father of Church

16



Rembrandt van Rijn
Man Writing/Candle

12



Anthony Natus
Samson & Delilah

20



Dutch c.1635
The Ratcatcher

22A



Rembrandt van Rijn
The Ratcatcher

22B



A. van der Werff
Incrd./St. Thomas

19



Corn. de Vos
Portrait of a Boy

23

J. van Ruisdael
Scan. Waterfall



24



Dutch 17c.
Frag. Abraham Sac.

25

Jan Lievens
Presentation/Temple



26

N. European 16c.
Christ w/St. Agatha



27

28
C. Engelbrechtsz
The Holy Kinship

J J van Bronchorst
2 Girls in Arbor
29

30
Abraham Hondius
Daifilo

Cornelis Bisschop
Apollo & Marsyas
31B

32
Cornelis Bega
The Alchemist

34
D & C S
Ferdinand Bol
Venus w/Cupid

Peter van Lint
Pool of Bethesda
35

36
Nineteenth century
Port. L. Coster

37
Northern European
Portrait of Man

39A
Jan van der Venne
Village Musicians

39B
Jan van der Venne
Adoration/Shepherds

40A
Daniel Thievaert
Manoah/Wife w/Angel

40B
Daniel Thievaert
Q Sheba/K Solomon

42
Abraham van Dyck
Zarephath and Son

43
Delft School
Interior/Oude Kerk

44
Anonymous European
Figures on Beach

45A
Nicholaes Maes
Self-Portrait

45B
Dutch
Self-Portrait/Artist

46A
Michael Sweerts
Self-Portrait

46B
Pter Franchoys
Port. Mich. Sweerts

47
Isaac Luttichuys
Port. C. Danckerts

Jacob Backer
Baptism/Eunuch
48

49A
Bolognese
Alex. Great/Roxana

49B
R. LaBarre Goodwin
Hunting Cabin Door

49C
Aaron Bohrod
Pillar

50A
Evert Collier
Jug, Glass, Pipe

50B
Dutch
Portrait of a Man

Dutch
Flemish Landscape
50C

52
Hendrick Bloemaert
The Apple Seller

53
Frans Pourbus/Young
Port. M. de Medici

54
Italian or Dutch
Head of Young Man

DUTCH
2-sided picture
Original State

DUTCH
Original State, with
mineral spirits

DUTCH
Finished state

DUTCH
Finished, det.

DUTCH
Clean state

CLEAN STATE

D
Nineteenth Cent.?
Rembrandt
Original state, det.

Green frame

D
Nineteenth Cen.?
Rembrandt
Original State

THE DETECTIVE'S EYE

INVESTIGATING THE OLD MASTERS





THE DETECTIVE'S EYE
INVESTIGATING THE OLD MASTERS

MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM

MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM
January 20 - March 19, 1989

Cover:
3. Reinier Nooms (called Zeeman)
Ships in the Amsterdam Harbor; circa 1666
With magnified detail of artist's signature.

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

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FREQUENTLY CITED SOURCES



FOREWORD

It has been twelve years since Dr. Alfred Bader last served as guest curator for an exhibition of Old Master painting. That project, *The Bible Through Dutch Eyes*, was a testimonial to his Biblical as well as art historical scholarship. We are indeed fortunate to welcome Dr. Bader, joined this time by his wife Isabel, as guest curators for *The Detective's Eye*. Chief Curator James Mundy has worked with the Baders on the format of the exhibition and has overseen the production of the didactic materials for the exhibition.

Dr. Bader's commitment to the field of Old Master paintings and the many contributions he has prompted in regard to the scholarship of Dutch seventeenth-century art are recognized internationally. His association with the Milwaukee Art Museum dates back several decades. The permanent collection of the Art Museum has been enriched because of this association. Dr. Bader was directly or indirectly responsible for bringing several works in the exhibition into the art museum's holdings. We are delighted that the exhibition program will likewise benefit from the Baders' enthusiasm and dedication.

Russell Bowman
Director

PREFACE

It is no coincidence that both exhibitions involving Alfred Bader held at the Milwaukee Art Museum had the words "eye" or "eyes" in the title. As an insightful connoisseur, Dr. Bader knows the importance of the "educated" eye, the "responsive" eye, and the "dedicated" eye, and how necessary it is to trust the sometimes instantaneous reactions of those eyes. Eyes such as his have learned the tricks of the art trade and have learned to see through the grime of decades and recognize the potential in a work of art passed over by others. *The Detective's Eye: Investigating the Old Masters* becomes, then, an opportunity for Dr. Bader to commit to words spoken simply something of a manifesto for the collector and connoisseur. The distillation of a lifetime's experiences into the disarmingly simple and elegant language of the catalogue entries was certainly no easy matter, and Isabel Bader is to be congratulated for her deft rendering in language of what are impressions that sometimes defy translation.

The exhibition is itself a catalogue come to life — a step by step journey of visual discovery. The Baders' understanding of how easy it is to become overwhelmed by the sometimes intricate tangle of information found in an old painting becomes the viewer's or reader's support. The confidence to speak so plainly about works of art has come from years of working in trust with many of the finest scholars in the international art historical community. Dr. Bader is the first to acknowledge how much art historians, museum curators and knowledgeable art dealers have helped to hone his talents as a connoisseur and collector. Behind every entry stands the collective influence of Werner Sumowski, Wolfgang Stechow, Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann and other giants in the field of Dutch painting.

The Baders are great believers in what could be termed the democratization of art historical knowledge. They always have time for the curious person who would like to know more about the Old Masters as long as the interest is genuine and earnest. The elite art world of social pretensions means little to them. The search for truth and the thrill of discovery mean everything. All the vanities and trappings of art or intellectual fashion are clearly renounced in the presentation of this exhibition.

For the visitor to the show or the reader of the catalogue I offer one bit of advice — keep your eyes open and learn, but most of all, to use the Baders' favorite word, enjoy.

James Mundy
Chief Curator

INTRODUCTION

This exhibition is about authenticity and quality. How do you tell an original painting from a fake, the work of a student from that of a master, a wreck from a work in good condition? What did artists illustrate and what were their sources?

Many people love old paintings and enjoy visiting museums, yet they could get a great deal more from a visit if they knew a little more about how a connoisseur looks at paintings. The more you know about any subject the more you can appreciate it. When confronted with a work of art, every connoisseur, whether he is a professional art historian, a curator, a dealer or a collector, must begin by exploring the object itself. He must look and look again and gradually train his eye, and he must also know how and where to search in the literature for some of the answers to his questions.

In this exhibition there are 55 entries illustrating some of the questions we should ask so that we can be more than passive viewers. Solving the problem of authorship can be a real challenge made easier or more difficult by signatures — genuine or false, monograms, or the lack of these. This exhibition attempts to investigate some of the puzzles that arise in this area.

It takes a good eye and experience to recognize quality, and some of the paintings illustrate the beauty that may be found under dirt and discolored varnish.

We present the question of variants, replicas and copies, the plague of all connoisseurs, and finally try to show how the questions of the subject of the painting, the dating and the origin can be tackled.

We must tell you that this exhibition is a copy, of sorts. In 1985 we chanced on an exhibition in Toronto, "Eye Spy: The Search for Quality in Art," mounted by David Wistow and his colleagues in Adult Programs at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Sadly we only had half an hour before having to leave for the airport, but that half hour was among the most enjoyable of our lives. David Wistow had assembled some 50 works, mainly from the holdings of the Gallery, ranging from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, to illustrate all sorts of problems of authenticity, condition, and style.

Why not have a similar exhibition in Milwaukee? As our interests are mainly in works from the Netherlands in the seventeenth century, we excluded modern works, except for comparison, and relied on paintings from the Milwaukee Art Museum, the Chicago Art Institute and private collections in Milwaukee.

For the rest of our lives we will look at this or that painting, with interesting problems of attribution or iconography or condition, and we'll say, "If only we had had that painting in the 1989 Detective Show!" That is life, and the silver lining is that it would be quite easy, ten or twenty years from now, for an art historian to build on this exhibition in Milwaukee or elsewhere, and to extend it; perhaps to include modern paintings, or other works such as sculpture or drawings, and to extend problems involving technical investigations.

We have really enjoyed putting this show together, and hope that you will have almost as much fun looking at it as we have had from its assembly. It is not a scholarly show; the academic paraphernalia, provenances, literary references, etc. are almost entirely absent. It is not for the scholar but for the lover and potential lover of Old Master paintings. We hope that as you work your way through this exhibition you will begin to look at paintings with new eyes, and that every future visit to any museum will be a little better because of what you experience here. And we are sure that there are many of you who have never realized that it is still possible for a private person to collect fine Old Masters. The good paintings are not all in museums; they are not far beyond the reach of the potential collector. With patience and the help of museum professionals, it is still possible to acquire fine works, often for surprisingly little. Our one recommendation is to purchase on quality and condition only. Really fine works without a name are often remarkably inexpensive, and in time a good name will come. And attributions to great artists, Rembrandt for instance, are often transitory, and do not change the quality, only the dealer's price.

It is true that in our lifetime collecting art has changed, very much for the worse. Thirty years ago it was still possible for a knowledgeable collector to go to many a small auction and purchase fine paintings for a few hundred dollars. This has changed since investors discovered that art appreciates in value. Auction houses now spend millions touting their auctions and encouraging investment in art. A Japanese insurance company spent twenty-five million pounds sterling for a van Gogh painting of sunflowers in far from perfect condition; many major museums feel deprived because they can't raise the one or five or ten million dollars to acquire this or that masterpiece. The world of art has gone mad. But we need not despair.

How do we defend ourselves? First, through understanding what has caused this madness, and secondly, through knowledge of how it might be overcome.

The function of art is to lift our spirits, to make us feel better. It is as untrue to believe that a ten million dollar painting is automatically better art, and more likely to lift our spirits than a work selling for a small fraction of that, as it is untrue to believe that a man whose income is a million a year is automatically a better, more valuable person than a man who earns far less. Large and expensive is not necessarily better.

Thousands of works of art change hands every year, and among these are some unrecognized masterpieces waiting to be discovered.

Over the years, many collectors have gained valuable guidance and encouragement from museum curators and art historians who were also working to build up their own museum collections. Professor Wolfgang Stechow, whose help is mentioned time and again in this catalogue, is a wonderful example of an art historian and what he can do. He probably never suggested to anyone that he spend a million dollars to purchase a master-

piece, but through his great knowledge he helped many collectors as well as his museum at Oberlin College to acquire great works of art. Nor was Professor Stechow an isolated phenomenon. Anthony Clark in Minneapolis, Wilhelm Valentiner at no less than three American museums: Detroit, Los Angeles and Raleigh, Jakob Rosenberg and Seymour Slive at Harvard are but a few of the many examples that come to mind. It wouldn't surprise us if the combined holdings of the Fogg Museum at Harvard, comprised largely of gifts from grateful collectors, exceeded in market value today the material value of all of the rest of the University taken together. President Kennedy's dictum, that one man can make a difference and every man should try, applies most eminently to the museum field.

If museums stopped buying art at greatly inflated prices and concentrated on educating collectors, this would have a double benefit: art prices would come down, and many grateful collectors would help their museums.

What does it take to become a connoisseur of Old Master paintings? To begin with of course, a real interest, a desire to collect. It is a great help if there is a museum such as ours, with a curator you can talk to, and libraries such as our public and university libraries with good art historical literature for study. You will also need patience. Unless you have substantial funds that allow you to buy at the great commercial galleries or auctions, patience is essential. Old paintings come up at our Milwaukee auctions quite regularly, but you cannot count on finding a masterpiece often. This applies also to antique stores. Get to know local collectors. Most serious collectors love to have other serious collectors to talk to, and once certain of your sincerity, are bound to want to help. Most important, be prepared for failures. Not every dirty old painting will turn out to be a great work of art. Any collector who tells you that he has never made a mistake is either a fool or a liar. Some museums with princely sums to spend have made some terrible mistakes. Of course mistakes need not be the end of collecting. You can always send the mistake to the nearest auction, and if you have bought cautiously, you will get more for the cleaned painting than you paid for the dirty one. Get to know a good restorer. Avoid charlatans who will not tell you what they plan to do, and what it is likely to cost. Just be prepared for one problem: you will become addicted to collecting. As one great collector put it: it is better to have paintings without walls, than walls without paintings. You will not buy because the painting is pretty or matches your curtains. You will look down on pseudo-collectors who buy art for investment. You will buy for what the painting does to you, or for what you hope it will do to you when cleaned. There is no cure for this addiction, but what fun you will have with this fascinating hobby!

We would like to thank the many art historians who have helped us. To name all would be an impossible task and would sound like name-dropping, but we must

acknowledge the tremendous help of Professor Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, Mrs. Ellen Bernt, Dr. William Robinson, and Professor Werner Sumowski, who have generously shared their knowledge with us over many years. We have had great pleasure and learnt much from the advice and many discussions we have had with Dr. Christopher Brown, Dr. David McTavish, Dr. Volker Manuth, Professor Seymour Slive, Professor Richard Spear, Dr. Astrid Tümpel, Professor Christian Tümpel, and Dr. Martha Wolff who graciously helped us with the loans from the Chicago Art Institute and wrote entry No. 33, the portrait very close to if not by Pontormo.

Ever since we met Jane Furchgott and Charles Munch, our restorer friends, our lives have been changed. Knowing that we could count on their help, we have dared to acquire many more paintings needing their skills. We are very grateful that Charles Munch wrote entry No. 53, the Medici portrait by Pourbus, for he and Jane Furchgott cleaned and restored it, and it was they who had the excitement of discovering the identity of the sitter.

An exhibition like this is not prepared in a few months but is years in incubation, particularly as we have other full-time occupations. Love of art history is essential for the preparation, but is no substitute for time. And so we must acknowledge the help of some very great art historians who, sadly, are no longer with us: Dr. Walther Bernt, whom we first met in 1952, and who was always helpful, Anthony Clark, with his infectious enthusiasm for art, Ulrich Middeldorf who taught so much to so many, Benedict Nicolson, the finest wordsmith we have known, and of course that human masterpiece, Wolfgang Stechow, whose encyclopedic knowledge is referred to many times in this catalogue. We would give a great deal to have them critique this exhibition.

And of course we want to thank Russell Bowman, the director of our Art Museum, and Dr. James Mundy, its chief curator, for their steady help and advice. We have spent many hours with Dr. Mundy and this exhibition is much better for his cooperation.

This exhibition is primarily educational, and Barbara Brown Lee has done a wonderful job in making sure that everything is understandable. Gene Felsch and John Irion have supervised the preparation of the catalogue and the installation of the exhibition and we want to thank them and their associates most sincerely.

Isabel and Alfred Bader
Guest Curators

FOR STARTERS

1

Based on your "first impression," which of these three portraits of Rembrandt was painted in the seventeenth century; which is by an eighteenth-century copyist; and which is by a Milwaukee art student in the 1980s? Connoisseurs often have to make quick decisions about works of art.

If you think the work on the left is seventeenth century, you are well on the way to connoisseurship, but can you defend your choice? Connoisseurs have to.

And who painted it? It is a portrait of Rembrandt, but is it a genuine self-portrait? If not, who did paint it? We do not know. There are at least three other versions. One is in the deYoung Museum in San Francisco (fig. 1), one is in the museum in Dresden (fig. 2), and a third is in a private collection in England (fig. 3). Each has at one time been considered the original Rembrandt self-portrait. Compare the photographs of these three with each other and with our painting. The problem is complicated by the unfinished hands in our painting. Spend a moment trying to decide which of these versions you like best.

Rembrandt was so admired by artists that there are scores of copies of his various self-portraits. "Such multiplication of a popular image can prove a nightmare for the connoisseur." (Wistow)

A German art historian has suggested that Rembrandt's original composition was a pair to a portrait of Hendrickje Stoffels, also at a window (fig. 4). Originally the canvases may have been the same size, and if intended as companion-pieces, were meant to show how the two cared for each other: Rembrandt looking up, sketching

his model who gazes at him from another window.

You have now entered the maze of Rembrandt scholarship...just don't miss the forest for the trees. Our seventeenth-century portrait is a moving work, whoever painted it.

1A. Dutch circa 1655
Portrait of Rembrandt
Oil on canvas
30 × 25"
Private collection

References:
McTavish, no. 9
Bredius, nos. 46, 47, 47A

1B. European late 18th century
Portrait of Rembrandt
Oil on panel
16½ × 13"
Private collection

1C. Matthew Powell
American
Portrait of Rembrandt 1982
Graphite on paper
26 × 19"
Private collection



1A. Dutch circa 1655, *Portrait of Rembrandt*, Private collection



1B. European late 18th century, *Portrait of Rembrandt*, Private collection



1C. Matthew Powell, *Portrait of Rembrandt 1982*, Private collection



1A. Dutch circa 1655, *Portrait of Rembrandt*, Private collection



FIG. 4 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of Hendrickje Stoffels*, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin-Dahlem



FIG. 1 Attributed to Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait*, M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco



FIG. 2 Attributed to Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait*, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden



FIG. 3 Attributed to Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait*, Private collection, England

2

"Just as no two people speak or write in the same way, no two artists paint in the same way. How an artist renders different textures, space, colour or light creates an artistic "personality". This is called style."
(Wistow)

Just what is style? Surely you have heard people speaking about the style of an artist. It is not at all easily explained with words, but is much more easily understood by studying the actual paintings.

Look at these three landscapes. 'A' is by Jacob van Ruisdael, one of Holland's greatest landscape painters of the seventeenth century; 'B' is by a well-known Dutch nineteenth-century artist, Barend Cornelis Koekkoek; and 'C', also nineteenth century, is by the first really able artist to paint in Milwaukee, Henry Vianden. All of these paintings might be called portraits of trees. How do these works differ stylistically?

There are many ways, and art historians have all sorts of ways of describing the differences. But look carefully yourself, and then look at 'D', again a portrait of a tree. Who do you believe painted this work, Ruisdael, Koekkoek or Vianden?

If you have decided it is by Vianden, you understand something about style.

- 2A. Jacob van Ruisdael
Dutch circa 1628-1682
Sunlit Landscape circa 1670
Oil on canvas
25 x 31"
Private collection

References:
McTavish, no. 34
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 6, no. 2

- 2B. Barend Cornelis Koekkoek
Dutch 1803-1862
The Abr River Valley
Oil on canvas
35 x 45"
Milwaukee Art Museum

- 2C. Henry Vianden
American 1814-1899
View of the Fox River, Wisconsin 1885-1888
Oil on canvas
26 1/8 x 31 1/4"
Milwaukee Art Museum

Reference:
Goldstein, p. 107

- 2D. Henry Vianden
American 1814-1899
Portrait of a Tree
Oil on canvas
17 1/4 x 13 1/4"
Mr. & Mrs. Eckhart Grohmann



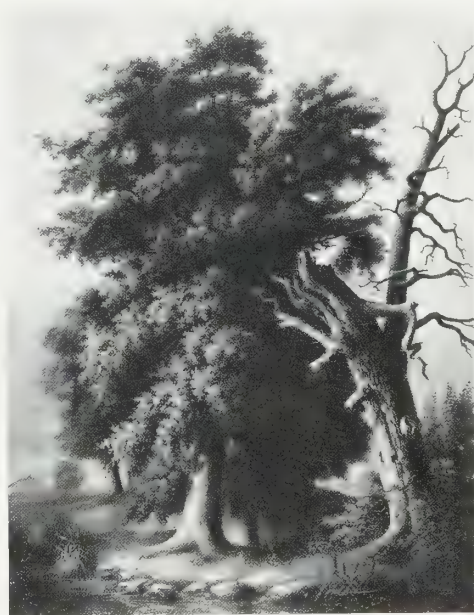
2A. Jacob van Ruisdael, *Sunlit Landscape* circa 1670, Private collection



2B. Barend Cornelis Koekkoek, *The Abr River Valley*, Milwaukee Art Museum



2C. Henry Vianden, *View of the Fox River, Wisconsin* 1885-1888, Milwaukee Art Museum



2D. Henry Vianden, *Portrait of a Tree*, Mr. and Mrs. Eckhart Grohmann

WHAT'S IN A NAME

3

Is it signed? One of the things a connoisseur does when he first sees a painting is to look for a signature. This may not be easy, for even when a painting is signed, the signature may be very difficult to see. If he does find one, he still must decide whether he should believe what he sees.

Reinier Nooms, the artist of this fine seascape, was greatly influenced by one of Holland's most famous painters of ship scenes, Willem van de Velde, his contemporary. Van de Velde's paintings are far more valuable than those by Nooms, and so someone painted a false 'Van de Velde' signature and the date, 1670, on the plank at the bottom right of this painting. The restorer removed this signature and date during a recent cleaning of the painting.

Whoever added this 'evidence' did not look at the painting very carefully. If he had, he would have seen that it was already signed on one of the flags by the artist Reinier Nooms, using his nickname 'Zeeman' (seaman), probably acquired because he painted many seascapes. The signature is small but clearly visible. Can you find it? (fig. 1)

The paint film of the real signature is 'hard', polymerized, and is quite insoluble in the usual cleaning solvents. The false 'Van de Velde' signature, put on later, was quite soluble and was easily removed during the cleaning.

There are all sorts of traps for the unwary in the study of Old Master paintings. If the connoisseur is deceived, he may well pay far too much for the 'name' and regret his mistake when it is too late. We must remember, however, that a misattribution does not alter the beauty of the painting.

3. Reinier Nooms (called Zeeman)
Dutch circa 1623-circa 1667
Ships in the Amsterdam Harbor
circa 1666
Oil on canvas
23 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 29 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
Milwaukee Art Museum

Reference:
Goldstein, p. 41



FIG. 1 Detail of signature



3. Reinier Nooms (called Zeeman), *Ships in the Amsterdam Harbor* circa 1666, Milwaukee Art Museum

4

Can you find the signature? This painting depicts a mythological story told by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*. You may not know this story in which Jupiter sent Mercury to save his beloved Io, whom he had transformed into a cow, to protect her from the jealousy of his wife Juno. These mythological stories are very involved, and yet many Baroque artists loved to depict them. This painting shows the winged Mercury approaching Juno who is feeding the peacocks, which are a symbol of jealousy. The lumbering cow, Io transformed, presents the second focus in the painting.

When this painting came to Milwaukee some twenty years ago, it was attributed to Jacob de Wet, an artist who painted in the mid-seventeenth century and who was influenced by Rembrandt. We found the signature (fig. 1), which looks nothing like that of de Wet. But whose signature is it?

Through a happy coincidence, the late Professor Wolfgang Stechow at Oberlin College, one of the great experts on Dutch seventeenth-century paintings, saw a photograph

and said that it looked like an early work of Nicolaes Berchem, the great Dutch landscape artist. We then sent the painting to Oberlin, and Professor Stechow confirmed that the signature was genuine and that this was an early work of Berchem, who signed his early works as in fig. 2.

An artist signs his painting last, and signatures are often completely or partly removed in harsh cleaning. Here, part was removed, but enough remains to convince us that it bears Berchem's genuine signature.

4. Nicolaes Berchem
Dutch 1620-1683
Mercury, Juno and Io
Oil on panel
23½ × 33"
Milwaukee Art Museum

Reference:
Bernt, nos. 88-93

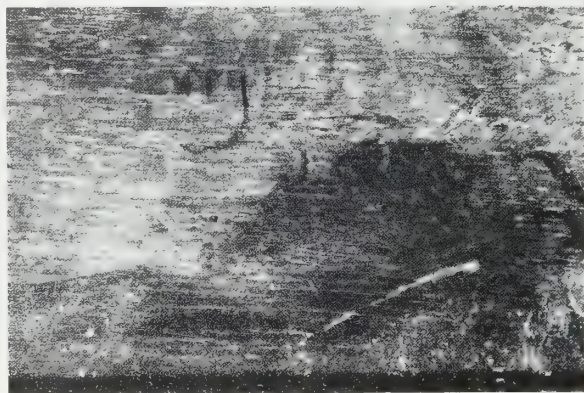


FIG. 1 Detail of signature

Berchem. 1650

FIG. 2 Signature of Berchem



4. Nicolaes Berchem, *Mercury, Juno and Io*, Milwaukee Art Museum

5

The first thing art historians and collectors do when studying a painting is to check the literature: what have other art historians thought and written about that work? Often this is instructive and helpful, but it is not always reliable.

Consider the case of this "Tobias and the Angel." It bears a large signature. Can you make out the name of the artist?

Before the painting was cleaned, one of Holland's ablest art historians, Professor Horst Gerson, wrote a monograph on Philips Koninck, a Rembrandt student who specialized in creating beautiful long-view landscapes — some of the finest landscapes of the Golden Age of Holland. But Koninck also painted some portraits as well as genre and biblical paintings, and Professor Gerson believed this "Tobias" to be a work of Koninck and listed it as No. 119 in his monograph.

Cleaning showed that this was not correct. The painting is signed 'M. Fuick' and dated 1663 in the lower right, but the signature, while large, is quite hard to read. Figure 1 shows the signature as copied from the painting. And who was M. Fuick?

We know almost nothing about the artist, Martin van der Fuick, and only one other work by him has been identified, a painting of militiamen of the small Dutch town Den Briel, done in 1660. In fact, the names of about 3000 Dutch seventeenth-century artists are recorded, but art historians have identified works by only some thousand of these! Martin van der Fuick is on the borderline with two works recognized, but surely others are to be found. An artist who painted with such imagination must have done other works, as yet unidentified. The hope of making further discoveries of this sort makes the efforts of an art historian really exciting, and the more paintings he can examine carefully, the more chance there is of a 'lucky find'.

5. Martin van der Fuick
Dutch active circa 1660
Tobias and the Angel Cooking the Fish 1663
Oil on canvas
41½ × 47"
Private Collection

Reference:

Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 21, no. 1

FIG. 1 Signature and date reproduced from painting

M: FVICK. 1663



5. Martin van der Fuick, *Tobias and the Angel Cooking the Fish* 1663, Private collection

6

What happens when you cannot find the signature? When this portrait came to our museum, it was believed to be a self-portrait by Bartholomeus van der Helst, the mid-seventeenth-century Amsterdam portraitist.

Most self-portraits share one feature. The eyes seem to gaze at the viewer. This is partly because the artist looks so keenly at his own image in the mirror while he is painting. Compare this with the other self-portraits in our exhibition: No. 46, and perhaps Nos. 1 and 45.

When this painting was cleaned recently, the restorer examined it with ultraviolet light and discovered a signature, in monogram, in the lower right hand corner (fig. 1). This is almost invisible in normal light, because it is only slightly lighter than the brown background. It is always exciting to find a signature, and particularly so in this case, since we know the identity of the artist who used this monogram. It is a Van der Helst, but not Bartholomeus. This is the monogram of Lodewyk van der

Helst, the son and pupil of Bartholomeus in whose studio he worked.

"Everyone, even a museum expert, makes mistakes. Part of a museum's function is to continually reassess past judgments on the collection, and, as a result, attributions which have been considered correct for many years change in the light of new evidence." (Wistow)

6. Lodewyk van der Helst
Dutch 1642 after 1682
Self-portrait
Oil on canvas
37½ × 30¾"
Milwaukee Art Museum

Reference:
Bernt, no. 543

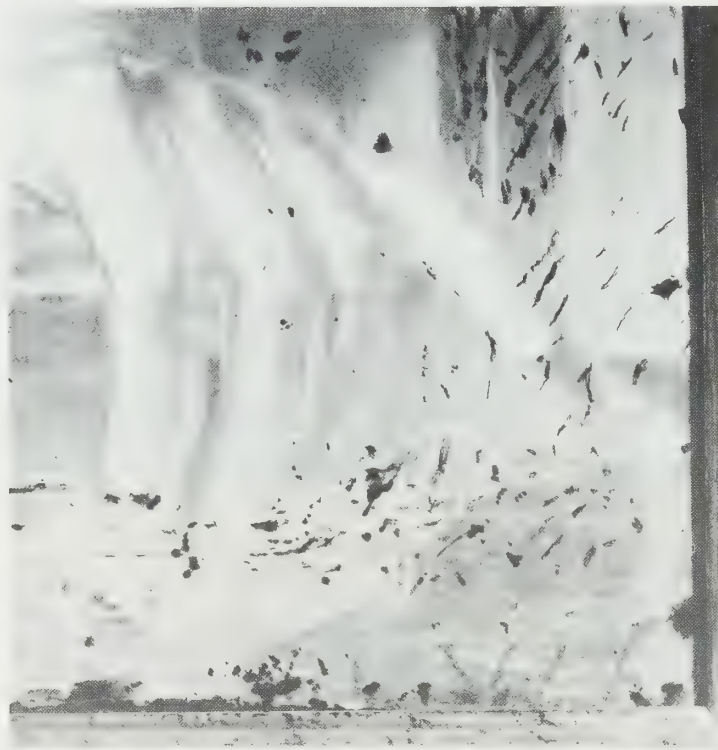


FIG. 1 Monogram photographed under ultraviolet light



6. Lodewyk van der Helst, *Self portrait*, Milwaukee Art Museum

Can you see the intertwined "I S" and the date, 1649, on the lower left of this subtle and mysterious painting?

Some dozen works by the same hand are known. All are monogrammed "I S" and usually dated in the 1640s and '50s. The best-known of these, dated 1651, is a beautiful study of an old woman in the museum in Vienna. (fig. 1)

Who was this Master "I.S."? A great deal has been written about him, but no one has yet identified him firmly. He was probably a student of Rembrandt, perhaps from Scandinavia or Poland. You may have noticed that the costumes, the long cloaks and fur hats of the two men in earnest discussion, look Eastern European, as do the costumes in several other of his paintings.

What is the subject of their discussion? It provides a puzzle within a puzzle, heightened by the mysteriousness of that large room and the subtle color accents: the cinnabar of the chair, the purple and gold of the cloak of

the man with the fur hat. Perhaps this is a biblical subject; the older man may be conferring authority on the younger one.

The Master "I.S.": a monogram in search of a name.

7. Master I. S.
Active circa 1650
Two Men in an Interior 1649
Oil on panel
17 x 13"
Private collection

References:
Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 4
Bernt, nos. 854-856
McTavish, no. 14
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 16, no. 1



FIG. 1 Master I.S., *Portrait of an Old Woman*, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



7 Master I.S., *Two Men in an Interior* 1649, Private collection

8

Some Old Master paintings have authentic signatures. Painting 'A' has a monogram and a date, but can you find them? You'll have to look hard. We know that connoisseurs always look for signatures or monograms and dates on their acquisitions and hope that, when they have found them, they will know the identity of the artist and the puzzle will be solved.

Look at the rock a few inches above the figures of the women on the right, and if you have good eyes you will see the letters 'M C G', and below the monogram, the date, 1670.

So far so good, but in this case the puzzle is not solved, because we still have to discover the identity of 'M C G', and as yet we have had no success in our efforts. We don't even know where this was painted. Was 'M C G' Flemish, Dutch, French or German?

What is certain is that the artist who created this "Noah's Sacrifice and the First Rainbow" in 1670 was an excellent artist. In spirit he is not unlike the American Romantics two hundred years later, such as 'B', Asher Durand's long view, *In the Catskills*, painted in 1857. The figures in the painting by 'M C G' look much earlier, and are reminiscent of the figures of the Pre-Rembrandtists, for instance Jan and Jacob Pynas. Figure 1 shows a painting by Jacob Pynas, *Abraham and Isaac Leaving for Mount Moriah*, painted about half a century earlier. Note the similarity in the figures.

Surely 'M C G' did not produce just this one painting. In time, this artist too will be identified and appreciated, but perhaps not in our lifetime.

- 8A. Master M C G
active 1670
Noah's Sacrifice and the First Rainbow 1670
Oil on canvas
30 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 39 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Private collection

Reference:
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 16, no. 4

- 8B. Asher Durand
American 1796 1886
In the Catskills 1857
Oil on Canvas
24 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 36 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
Milwaukee Art Museum

Reference:
Goldstein, p. 104



FIG. 1 Jacob Pynas, *Abraham and Isaac Leaving for Mount Moriah*, Formerly collection of Dr. E. Schapiro, London



8A. Master M.C.G., *Noah's Sacrifice and the First Rainbow* 1670, Private collection



8B. Asher Durand, *In the Catskills* 1857, Milwaukee Art Museum

9

What fun the artist must have had painting some of the details of this delightful *Return of the Prodigal Son*. Look for instance at the son's dirty feet. Who was the artist? Can you find the monogram and date?

Surely you can see the intertwined 'P L' and the date, 1679, in the lower left. What more could you want to identify the artist? By now, however, you realize that there are still many painters whose identity we do not yet know.

This artist was Dutch, a 'follower' of Rembrandt, influenced by the master's *Return of the Prodigal Son* (fig. 1). We know of a sketch for our painting similarly monogrammed 'P L', at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. (fig. 2) There the sketch had been attributed to Pieter

Lastman, Rembrandt's teacher, but as Lastman died in 1633, that attribution is impossible. Perhaps Pieter Lastman had a grandson, another Pieter, or Paulus Lastman, who also painted. Some day we will know; collectors need patience.

9. Master P L
Dutch active circa 1679
The Return of the Prodigal Son 1679
Oil on canvas
31½ × 24"
Mr. and Mrs. William Treul



FIG. 1 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, Hermitage, Leningrad

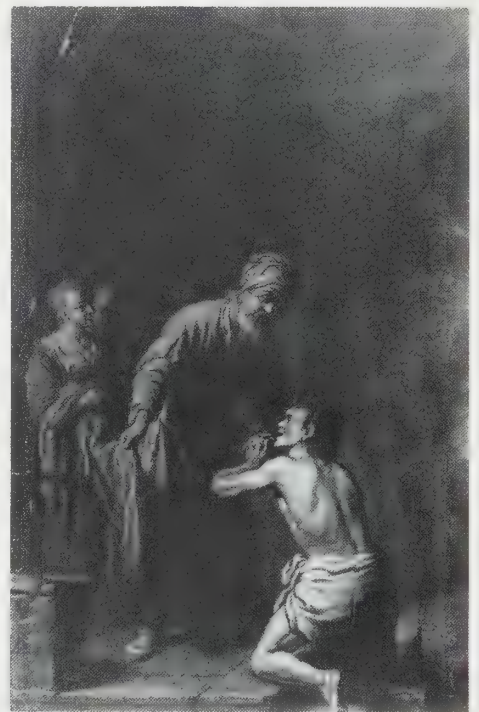


FIG. 2 Master P. L., *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford



9. Master P. L., *The Return of the Prodigal Son* 1679, Mr. and Mrs. William Treul

10

Can you find the monogram on this painting, *The Quill Cutter*?

It is on the little notebook, 'P D L', again intertwined, the monogram of a little-known Rembrandt student, Paulus de Lesire. Unscrupulous art dealers dislike monograms and signatures of minor artists whose works are hard to sell. So they often have these overpainted or — even worse — erased.

This monogram had been overpainted (see fig. 1, the detail of the notebook before cleaning), and four of the most eminent art historians of their day, Abraham Bredius, Wilhelm Valentiner, Max Friedländer and Herman Voss wrote expertises certifying the painting as an early work of Rembrandt. You may be interested to read these. However, the great art historian, Ulrich Middeldorf, gave very sound advice when he said that expertises are generally worthless, because a fine painting does not

need one, and a mediocre one is not improved by one. Yet the experienced and the inexperienced have always sought the opinions of scholars. We must realize, however, that they are not infallible.

This painting is in fine condition. When the restorer examined it under ultraviolet light, it was clear that only the little notebook had been overpainted. This overpaint was easily removed, and there was the monogram!

10. Paulus de Lesire
Dutch 1611-after 1656
The Quill-Cutter
Oil on panel
31½ × 24"
Private collection

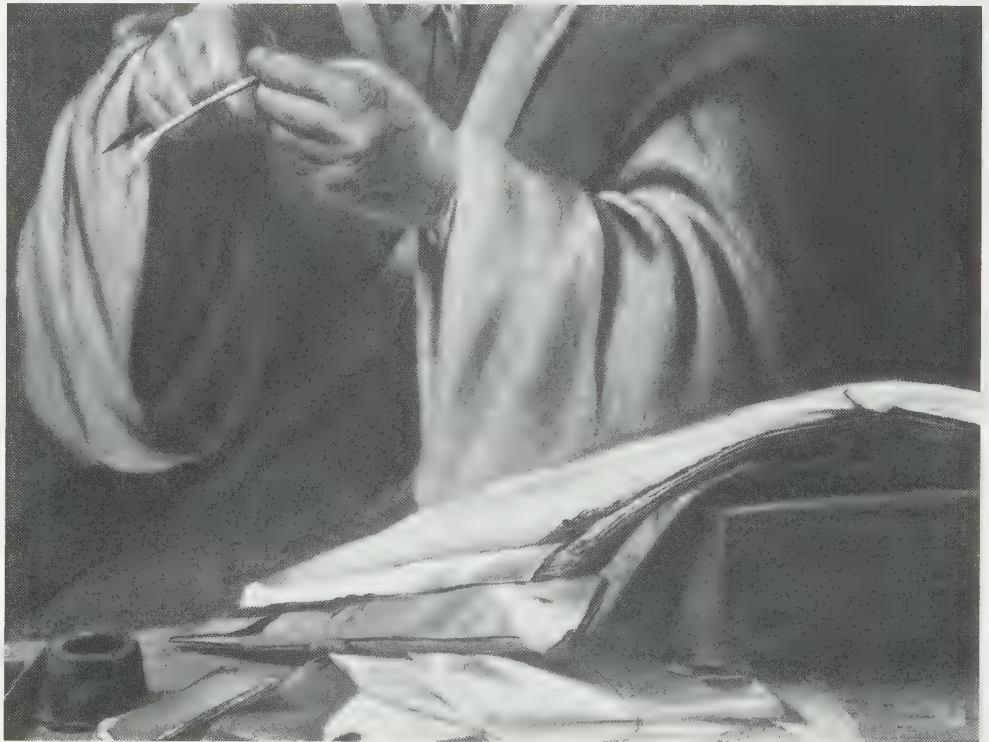


FIG. 1 Detail before cleaning



10. Paulus de Lesire, *The Quill-Cutter*, Private collection

Look at this biblical painting, signed at the lower right. Can you tell what the subject is, and who signed it?

If you cannot be certain, you are not alone. When it was published in the catalogue of the Milwaukee Art Museum's exhibition, "The Bible through Dutch Eyes" in 1976, it was believed to be one of Aert de Gelder's earliest works, depicting *Esther Before Abasuerus* (Esther 5, 1-2). De Gelder was Rembrandt's last student, one of whose works you can see as No. 41. The attribution to de Gelder was based on the studies of Dr. David van Fossen who had written his Ph.D. thesis on de Gelder at Harvard University.

Since then, we have had second thoughts. There is not a single other work of de Gelder's which is painted in this manner and accepted by scholars other than van Fossen. Also, two restorers examined the signature carefully and concluded that it had been strengthened to make it look like "de Gelder".

Strengthening of signatures is a common practice, done in good faith to make a genuine signature clearer to read, or in order to deceive by changing a genuine signature of a little known artist to that of a more famous one. And sometimes the borderline between the two is fuzzy.

In any case, this signature is old, and reads: "...elaer", but someone altered the 'a' to a 'd'.

Now we are looking for an artist with a name ending in "...elaer": 'Gyselaer or Vosselaer perhaps, at any rate an artist who was a great colorist, painting about 1640.

And what about the subject? That may pose the more difficult question really. The artist will certainly be identified in time, but the subject may always be a puzzle, unless we find a contemporary drawing or print related to this painting and inscribed, "Queen Vashti Refusing to Dance Naked", or "Esther Coming to the King".

11. Dutch mid 17th century
Esther Before Abasuerus (?)
Oil on panel
18½ × 24¾"
Private collection

References:

- Bader, no. 58
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 11, no. 1
Varriano, no. 6



11. Dutch mid-17th century, *Esther Before Abasuerus (?)*, Private collection

Can you see a difference between this little painting on copper and figure 1, a photograph taken before a recent quick restoration? There is something in the photograph which is missing on the painting.

The only difference is the monogram, 'G D F', which was removed in less than a minute using a very mild solvent, petroleum ether. The monogram had been "floating" on top of the varnish, which was not removed during the slight cleaning.

This monogram 'G D F' looked like that of Rembrandt's first student in Leiden in the late 1620s, Gerard Dou — 'G D F', *Gerard Dou fecit* (Gerard Dou made it).

Late in the 18th century, this painting belonged to a Paris dealer and collector, J.B.P. Le Brun, who amassed a wonderful collection during the French Revolution. He was proud of his paintings and had his best works engraved (fig. 2). Note that the engraving of 1790 does not show the 'G D F', and that Le Brun believed this work to be by Rembrandt.

Thus the monogram must have been put on after 1790, but why? In the early nineteenth century, Dou's works were very popular, more so than Rembrandt's, so someone added the monogram to assure us that this was by Dou, not by Rembrandt.

Who really did paint this? We aren't certain. Some of the ablest scholars have accepted it as an early work of Rembrandt; others believe it is by Dou. The attribution doesn't affect the luminous qualities of this little work.

12. Attributed to Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch 1606-1669
Man Writing by Candlelight circa 1629
Oil on copper
5 x 5"
Private collection

References:
McTavish, no. 7
Bredius, no. 425
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 6, no. 3

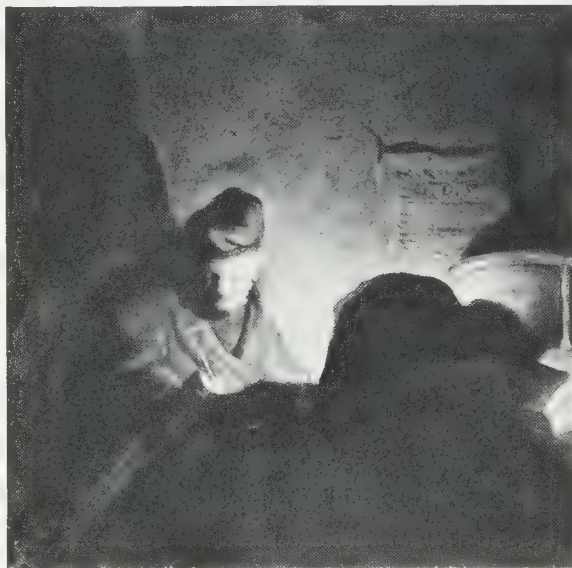


FIG. 1 Photograph before removal of monogram

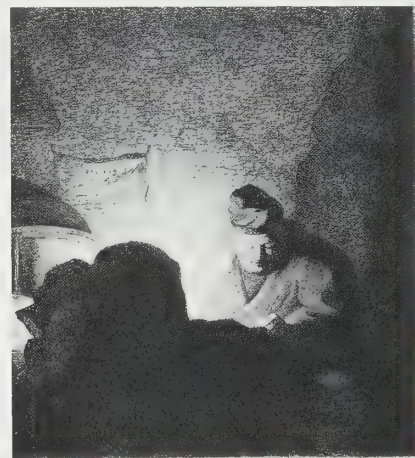


FIG. 2 Le Brun's engraving of 1790



12. Attributed to Rembrandt van Rijn, *Man Writing by Candlelight* circa 1629, Private collection

Have a good look at this portrait of an old woman believed to be Rembrandt's mother. Can you see the large monogram 'R H L', with the letters intertwined, on the upper right?

Whoever drew this, whether in good faith or not, wanted it to look like Rembrandt's monogram, Rembrandt Harmensz. of Leiden, the way Rembrandt signed his early paintings. Should we trust such a monogram?

When the style of the painting makes us believe that it is by that artist, and the monogram looks contemporary with the painting, then it is probably right. In this case the monogram is certainly old, and for a very long time, until just a few years ago, it was considered to be genuine. That belief was strengthened because it belonged to a famous Italian collector, Cardinal Fesch, who owned several genuine Rembrandts and believed this one to be genuine also.

While Rembrandt and his friend, Jan Lievens were working together, their styles were very similar (see also Nos. 14 and 26). Both were great artists, and if they had stopped painting in the early 1630s, both would have been considered comparably able artists. Rembrandt went from strength to strength, however, and his last paintings are his most moving. Lievens continued with competent works, but his later works are not really as good as his masterpieces of the late 1620s and early 1630s.

This portrait of an old woman is really by Lievens, done about 1629-30, at the height of his power. Look at the wonderful way the artist depicts the color and trans-

parency of the kerchief; there is nothing quite like it in Rembrandt's known work.

The difficulties of this problem of distinguishing between Rembrandt's and Lievens' works of that period can be seen from scholars' investigations of another portrait of Rembrandt's mother (fig. 1), owned by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. It was a gift to Charles I before 1639, when it was called a Rembrandt. For the past twenty years a group of Dutch scholars has been working on the Rembrandt Research Project, studying all the possible works by Rembrandt around the world. At first they accepted the Queen's painting as a Rembrandt, but have recently changed their minds and now think it is by Lievens. This doesn't change the beauty of the work one bit, just its perceived value.

Look once again at the marvelous, delicate transparency of the headscarf. What a wonderful artist Lievens was!

13. Jan Lievens
Dutch 1607-1674
Rembrandt's Mother circa 1629
Oil on panel
17 x 13³/₄"
Private collection

Reference:
Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 2, no. 1261



FIG. 1 Jan Lievens, *Rembrandt's Mother*, Collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



13. Jan Lievens, *Rembrandt's Mother* circa 1629, Private collection

If a famous art historian publishes a painting, particularly a signed painting, in a book on that artist, the attribution is likely to be correct — right?

Usually, yes. But not always. With attributions, as with everything else in life, it is good to remember that it is possible to be convinced **and** mistaken. Do you recall the expertises attributing No. 10 to Rembrandt?

Dr. Wilhelm Valentiner was one of the world's most famous art historians in the first half of this century, who built up several great museum collections in America. He published a great deal on Rembrandt, including a book *Rembrandt: Wiedergefundene Gemälde* (Rembrandt: Rediscovered Paintings), published in 1921. Figure 1 shows a photograph of this painting as it appeared in that book. Can you see the one important difference between the painting as it is now and as it was when the photograph was taken?

Did you find the fake Rembrandt signature, incorrectly spelled, at the bottom of the letter? This is how the painting looked when Valentiner knew it. That signature came off easily in a recent cleaning. Notice the two letters below the pseudo-Hebrew on the book in the lower left. They may be "J L". In fact the painting is another early work by Jan Lievens, one year Rembrandt's junior. The two may have shared a studio in the late 1620s when this 'St. Paul' was painted. They greatly influenced each other, but it was an influence between friends, not a teacher-student relationship.

It is interesting to study Constantijn Huygens' comments about Lievens and Rembrandt, written shortly after Lievens had completed this work. Huygens, secretary to Prince Frederick Hendrick, the Stadholder of Holland, was a

keen art critic who considered these young men, then in their early twenties, to be among the ablest artists ever. "Rembrandt is superior to Lievens in judgment, and in the liveliness of emotion. Lievens surpasses him in inventiveness and the loftiness of his daring themes and forms." Rembrandt's work never peaked; his last are his best. Lievens' early works are his best, and so today he is considered a painter in the shadow of Rembrandt. For two other works by Jan Lievens, see Nos. 13 and 26.

An important factor that has changed in the last 30 or 40 years is the increase in published scholarship. There are many new monographs of previously little-known Rembrandt students and their circle. With each new work, with better photography and the increased possibility of studying and comparing paintings, the art historian's understanding of an artist's work increases and clarifies. When an art historian makes a well-supported attribution of a painting previously unattributed, or mistakenly attributed, others tend to say, "Of course!" and wish they had made the discovery. When he makes a mistake, as we all do occasionally, it is remembered for a long time.

14. Jan Lievens Dutch 1607-1674
St. Paul circa 1625
 Oil on panel
 37 x 31"
 Private collection

Reference:
 Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 3, no. 1229

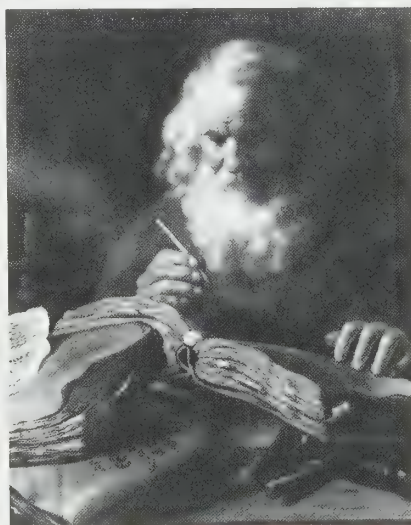
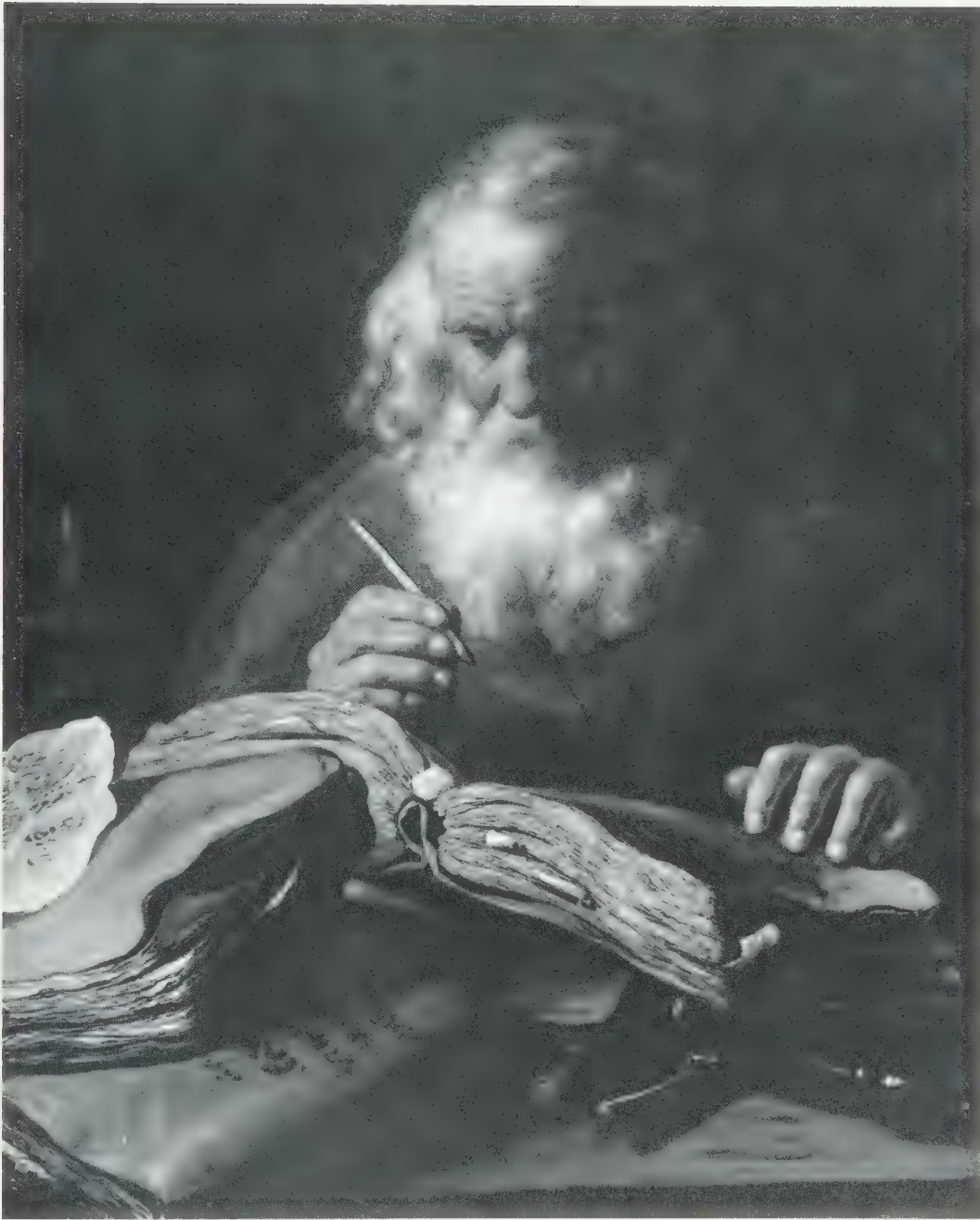


FIG. 1 Jan Lievens, *St. Paul*, before cleaning



14. Jan Lievens, *St. Paul* circa 1625, Private collection

15

Many paintings are completely unsigned, but there are other ways of establishing a firm attribution. Can you think of any?

Sometimes prints can help us to identify the artist. Look at the photograph of the print (fig. 1). It is inscribed with the name of the artist. Compare the print with the painting. Does it lead you to any conclusion as to the author of the painting?

When the painting of this iron-jawed woman was purchased in London some years ago, it was nameless. An exhibition at Mount Holyoke College illustrated this puzzle. As luck would have it, a great Dutch art historian, Professor J. G. van Gelder, saw the catalogue of that exhibition and connected this painting with a print which he knew. Most prints identify the artist and so did this one: "I. V. campen pinx" (I. V. Campen painted it). I and J

are interchangeable in Dutch. Jacob van Campen was an architect whose work is referred to again in No. 36. His paintings are very rare, and without this print, identification of the painting would have been very difficult.

15. Jacob van Campen
Dutch 1595/98-1657
Old Woman with Book
Oil on canvas
27³/₄ × 22"
Private collection

Reference:
Varriano, no. 21



FIG. 1 Jan Matham after Jacob van Campen, Engraving of *Old Woman with Book*, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



15. Jacob van Campen, *Old Woman with Book*, Private collection

DRAWINGS AND OTHER SOURCES FOR PAINTINGS

16

Have a look at this painting of a Father of the Church. What ails it? How many types of damage can you identify?

There are plenty of condition problems here. First of all it is very dirty, disfigured by an old, yellowed varnish. There are all sorts of scratches, particularly on the lower left. Notice the discolored restoration showing up as dark patches. There is also some lifting of the paint in various places, slightly loose paint that needs re-attachment.

Most interesting, look carefully at the white garment with the Maltese cross. This is "new" paint, put on long after the portrait was finished. There are traces of the thickly painted gold band which is covered by the white. Some of the original paint can actually be seen peeking through the overpaint. The conservator, who will clean the entire painting after this exhibition, has removed two narrow strips of overpaint including some of the Maltese cross, revealing the original velvet garment underneath.

Why would anyone paint over the original like that? We don't really know. Perhaps in order to make an unidentified sitter into a specific person.

Look also at the Greek inscription on the book. It begins with 'Theophania', 'the Manifestation of God', and a quotation from John, 1, 14, 'The Word was made flesh', followed by an explanation. Probably this writing was also put on later to connect the figure with St. John the Evangelist.

The artist almost certainly did not depict St. John the Evangelist, because John is usually shown as a beardless young man, often with an eagle. The owner who commissioned the restoration may not have known that, or may have seen this bearded figure as a Greek Father of the Church writing a commentary on the Gospel of St. John.

The connoisseur has to be able to recognize how a painting has suffered, to see beyond that to what it may have looked like when it was painted and to what it might look like if it were restored. Then he must decide whether it is worth restoring.

Would you consider it worthwhile to restore such a large painting as this? We think so, particularly as we believe that it is an impressive work by one of Rembrandt's able students, Govaert Flinck, whose work you may know from a pair of portraits of 1648 in our museum.

This painting came to us from Sweden via a London gallery where it was attributed to Jan van Noordt, an Amsterdam painter of the middle of the seventeenth century.

So what makes us think it is by Flinck? Memory and experience play an important role. Professor Werner Sumowski has pointed out that there is a counterproof drawing (fig. 1) for this portrait, signed by Flinck. Artists sometimes did a chalk drawing and then made a counterproof, a copy in reverse, by pressing the original down hard onto another piece of paper so that the image was transferred. Two drawings for the effort of one!

There is another version of our painting in the museum in Potsdam (fig. 2) — note that this does not have the white garment or the cross. If it is a copy, then it was done before the overpaint was applied to our painting. Comparison between the two is difficult because the one in Potsdam is truly a wreck, in condition much worse than ours, yet what remains looks good. Perhaps Flinck painted two versions.

Now of course you will ask, what makes us so certain that our painting is an original? Copyists copy precisely and often unimaginatively. They cannot know exactly how the artist built up layers of paint to produce his finished work, because they are looking at the top layer of paint. Notice how the paint fairly oozed out of the brush as the artist worked on this piece. He really enjoyed himself. This shows an assurance and bravado which a copyist probably could not achieve.

Compare this with No. 17, a copy after Flinck's *St. Paul*, the original of which is now in Vienna. Notice how freely this *Father of the Church*, here, is painted. The comparison may raise another question in your mind: could Flinck have done our painting and the original in Vienna as a pair, or as two of a series of apostles or evangelists?

Possibly, but the Vienna painting is believed to be one of Flinck's early works, whereas this looks like one of his mature works. With luck, the restorers will find that it is signed and dated: hope springs eternal.

16. Govaert Flinck
Dutch 1615-1660
A Father of the Church circa 1655
Oil on canvas
52½ × 39"
Private collection

References:
Sumowski, *Drawings*, vol. 4, no. 891, fig. 67
Bernt, nos. 406-409
Goldstein, p. 36



16. Govaert Flinck, *A Father of the Church* circa 1655,
Private collection



FIG. 1 Govaert Flinck, *A Father of the Church*,
Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg



FIG. 2 Govaert Flinck, *A Father of the Church*,
Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten, Potsdam

How can one tell whether a painting is by the master or by a student, or whether it is a copy after a better original? This may sound like an easy question, and yet the answer is often very difficult.

When this large painting came to the Chicago Art Institute, it was believed to be a painting of St. Paul by Rembrandt. Later it was downgraded to Govaert Flinck, one of Rembrandt's able students, and later still it was realized that it is an old copy after Flinck's original (fig. 1) in the museum in Vienna.

Scores of books and hundreds of scholarly articles have been written on these questions as they relate to the works of just one master, Rembrandt, and his students. And there is yet no consensus on the first part of the question, though we are coming close to it through the studies of the Rembrandt Research Project. The second part of the question is easier to answer, particularly since the original is known. It also was at one time attributed to Rembrandt, as was our No. 14. The painting in Vienna

bears a Rembrandt signature and a date, Rem...163..., but many works by Rembrandt students done in his studio bear Rembrandt signatures.

At first sight the Chicago painting is an impressive picture. It is old, perhaps late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, but it is painted rather mechanically, painstakingly. Compare the handling of paint with that of the Flinck portraits of husband and wife in our museum, or of the original Flinck, No. 16. That painting, though very dirty and overpainted with a white shirt and cross, shows all the earmarks of an original. This one does not.

17. Copy after Govaert Flinck
Dutch 1615-1660
St. Paul
Oil on canvas
46¾ × 38½"
The Art Institute of Chicago

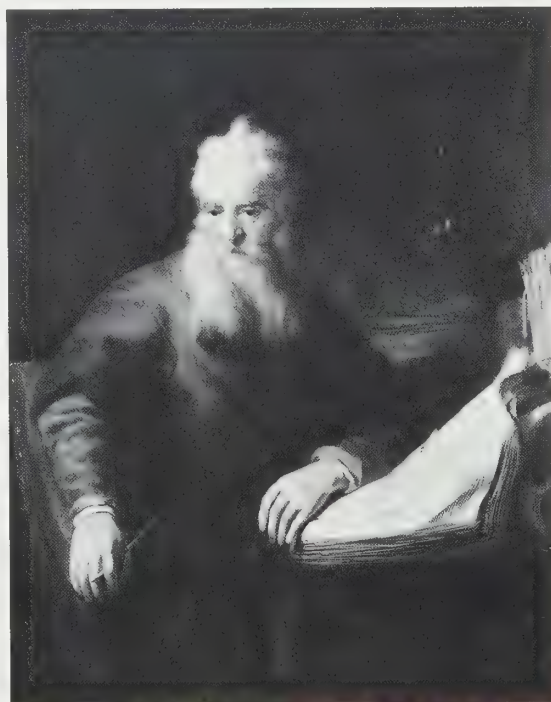


FIG. 1 Govaert Flinck, *St. Paul*, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



17. Copy after Govaert Flinck, *St. Paul the Apostle*, The Art Institute of Chicago

There are many sources for works of art: contemporary works, paintings, drawings, prints, works by older masters. You can see several examples in this exhibition.

The most immediate expression of an artist's inspiration is his own drawings, done while he is thinking about how the finished painting should look.

Look at the photographs of the pen and brown ink drawings in figures 1-5, and compare these with the powerful painting we have here, *Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac*. Often the artist's draughtsmanship, his style of drawing, is more easily identifiable than his style of painting.

These five drawings have long been accepted as by one of Rembrandt's ablest students, Nicolaes Maes. The painting was sold twice recently, once by Christie's in London in 1969, then attributed to the Rembrandt student, Barent Fabritius, and then again by Christie's in New York in 1981, attributed to Jan Victors. Fabritius and Victors were strongly influenced by Rembrandt — but Fabritius drew quite differently, and no Victors drawings are known. Clearly these drawings are preparatory sketches for the painting, which must also be by Nicolaes Maes.

If you would like to read more about this detective work, see Dr. William Robinson's paper in the *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 126, (1984) pp. 540-544.

But the painting presents another puzzle. Look at the angel's face. This is not an idealized face but that of a real person. The Dutch in the seventeenth century identified closely with the people of the Bible because they

saw a parallel between the struggles of the ancient Jews to gain freedom from Egypt and their own struggle to free themselves from Spain. For this reason they depicted biblical figures very much as they saw themselves, and saw no harm in actually portraying themselves and their friends as biblical figures, even as angels.

Look again at the face of the angel in our painting, and then look at figure 6, one of Maes' finest works, *Jesus Blessing the Children*, in the National Gallery in London. Do you see that same face (fig. 7) on the left observing the scene? It may well be Maes' friend, Samuel van Hoogstraten. A comparison of the angel with self-portraits of Hoogstraten, for instance figure 8, seems to confirm this. And compare the face of the angel with our No. 38, the *Youth Wearing a Turban*. That painting was probably done in the early 1640s, ten or fifteen years before this one. Is this also Samuel van Hoogstraten? Perhaps.

18. Nicolaes Maes
Dutch 1634-1693
Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac circa 1655
Oil on canvas
44½ × 35½"
Private collection

References:

- Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 3, no. 1316
McTavish, no. 21
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 15, no. 2



18. Nicolaes Maes, *Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac* circa 1655, Private collection

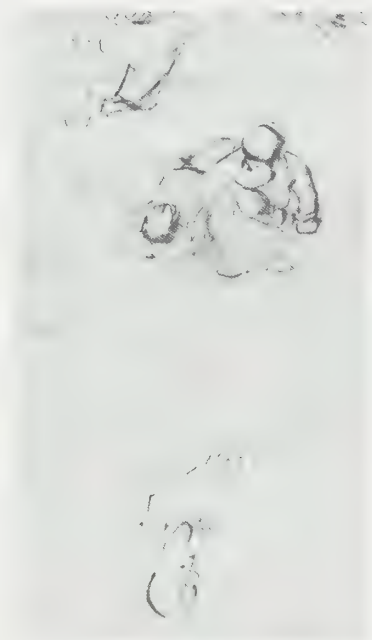


FIG. 1 Nicolaes Maes, *Study for the Sacrifice of Isaac*, Private collection



FIG. 2 Nicolaes Maes, *Study for the Sacrifice of Isaac*, Musée du Louvre, Paris



FIG. 3 Nicolaes Maes, *Study for Abraham*, Private collection, Amsterdam



FIG. 4 Nicolaes Maes, *Study for the Angel*, Musée du Louvre, Paris



FIG. 5 Nicolaes Maes, *Study for Isaac*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London



FIG. 6 Nicolaes Maes, *Jesus Blessing the Children*, National Gallery, London



FIG. 7 Detail from *Jesus Blessing the Children*, National Gallery, London



FIG. 8 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Self-Portrait*, Museum Mr. Simon van Gijn, Dordrecht

19

Drawings, like paintings, come in all shapes, sizes and styles. You would expect a Rembrandt student to make rapid sketches like his master, just ideas on paper, as you see in the five sketches for No. 18.

Later in the century, painters became much more fastidious, taking great care over every detail. And as you might expect, their drawings were much more carefully done as well.

Look at the drawing (fig. 1), of the *Doubting Thomas* in the Albertina in Vienna. It is by an artist who was considered by his contemporaries to be one of the greatest artists ever, Adriaen van der Werff. It is a carefully finished drawing for the painting in our museum.

Notice the finish and great attention to minute detail in the painting. It is one of Van der Werff's finest works, from the celebrated Hope collection. The body of Jesus

looks as if it were carved of ivory — perfect and yet coldly impersonal.

Which do you prefer — the Van der Werff or the Rembrandt student? That is a matter of taste.

19. Adriaen van der Werff
Dutch 1659-1722
The Incredulity of St. Thomas 1719
Oil on panel
24 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
Milwaukee Art Museum

Reference:
Goldstein, p. 50



FIG. 1 Adriaen van der Werff, *The Doubting Thomas*, Albertina, Vienna



19. Adriaen van der Werff, *The Incredulity of St. Thomas* 1719, Milwaukee Art Museum

20

What is happening in this scene? Compare our painting with the drawing (fig. 1) in the museum in Darmstadt.

What a curiously agitated scene, not of a ballet, but of *Samson and Delilah* (Judges 16:19-20). Samson's wife Delilah, was persuaded by the Philistine lords to find out from her husband where his great strength lay. And as a result of her constant urging, he finally confided to her that it was because his head had never been shaven. She took money from the Philistines and when Samson lay sleeping, called a man to shave off his hair.

You have seen that artists based their works on their own drawings, sometimes quite sketchy as in No. 18, and sometimes on finished drawings as in No. 19.

But sometimes they were so impressed by the drawings of other artists, such as this sixteenth-century drawing by Joos van Winghe, that they based their paintings on these.

20. Anthony Natus
Dutch active 1658
Samson and Delilah 1658
Oil on panel
14 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Bishop

Reference:
Bader, no. 38



FIG. 1 Joos van Winghe, *Samson and Delilah*, Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt



20. Anthony Natus, *Samson and Delilah* 1658, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Bishop

This painting shows a rather unusual subject, *Hagar Brought to Abraham by Sarah* (Genesis 16 1-3). Sarah was childless, and when Abraham was 85 years old, she brought her maid, Hagar, to him in the hope that Hagar might have a child.

What is the most unusual feature of this small panel?

Surely the depiction of the back view of the naked Hagar. Artists are always influenced by other artists. Solomon de Bray had worked on large paintings in The Hague with Jacob Jordaens, the well-known Flemish artist, and was probably familiar with the main figure of Jordaens' *Allegory of Fertility* now in Brussels (fig. 1).

Jordaens in turn took that view from Claes Cornelisz. Moeyaert's *Mercury and Hesperes* in the Mauritshuis (fig. 2), and Moeyaert took it — perhaps through other artists — from an antique Greek statue of the goddess Aphrodite (fig. 3).

The saying that there is nothing new under the sun, does not apply to all paintings — abstract art is really

new — but it does apply to a good many, as you can see from this specific depiction of a woman transmitted from the antique through a Pre-Rembrandtist to Jacob Jordaens to Solomon de Bray.

21. Solomon de Bray
Dutch 1597-1664
Hagar Brought to Abraham by Sarah 1650
Oil on panel
12½ × 9¾"
Private collection

References:

- Bernt, no. 196
McTavish, no. 15
Bader, no. 5
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 13, no. 1



FIG. 1 Jacob Jordaens, *Allegory of Fertility*, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels



FIG. 2 C.C. Moeyaert, *Mercury and Hesperes*, Mauritshuis, The Hague



FIG. 3 Greek, 2nd Century B.C., *Aphrodite of Syracuse*



21. Solomon de Bray, *Hagar Brought to Abraham by Sarah* 1650, Private collection

22

Few artists have painted without inspiration from other art. Sometimes the inspiration, the "source", is obscure; sometimes the source is very clear.

This Dutch seventeenth-century painting depicts a ratcatcher. Rats were a terrible scourge in earlier ages. They spread the plague. You may recall the Black Death which wiped out between one-third and half the population of Europe in the fourteenth century. And certainly you will remember the story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, who not only led all the rats to the River Weser where they perished, but who continued piping and led all the children of the town through the mountains where they disappeared.

Do you know the source for this particular painting? You may, in fact, have seen it on exhibition in this art museum.

The "inspiration" is owned by our museum, a well-known etching by Rembrandt done about 1632. We are sure, however, that the painting was not done by Rembrandt. Why do we say this? The etching indicates a more skillful hand than we see in the painting where the drawing is less expressive and the forms are smoother and more generalized. Although Rembrandt made greater use of color in his paintings of this period than he did later, he also made more use of light and shade than we see here. This painting is more evenly lit than a genuine Rembrandt.

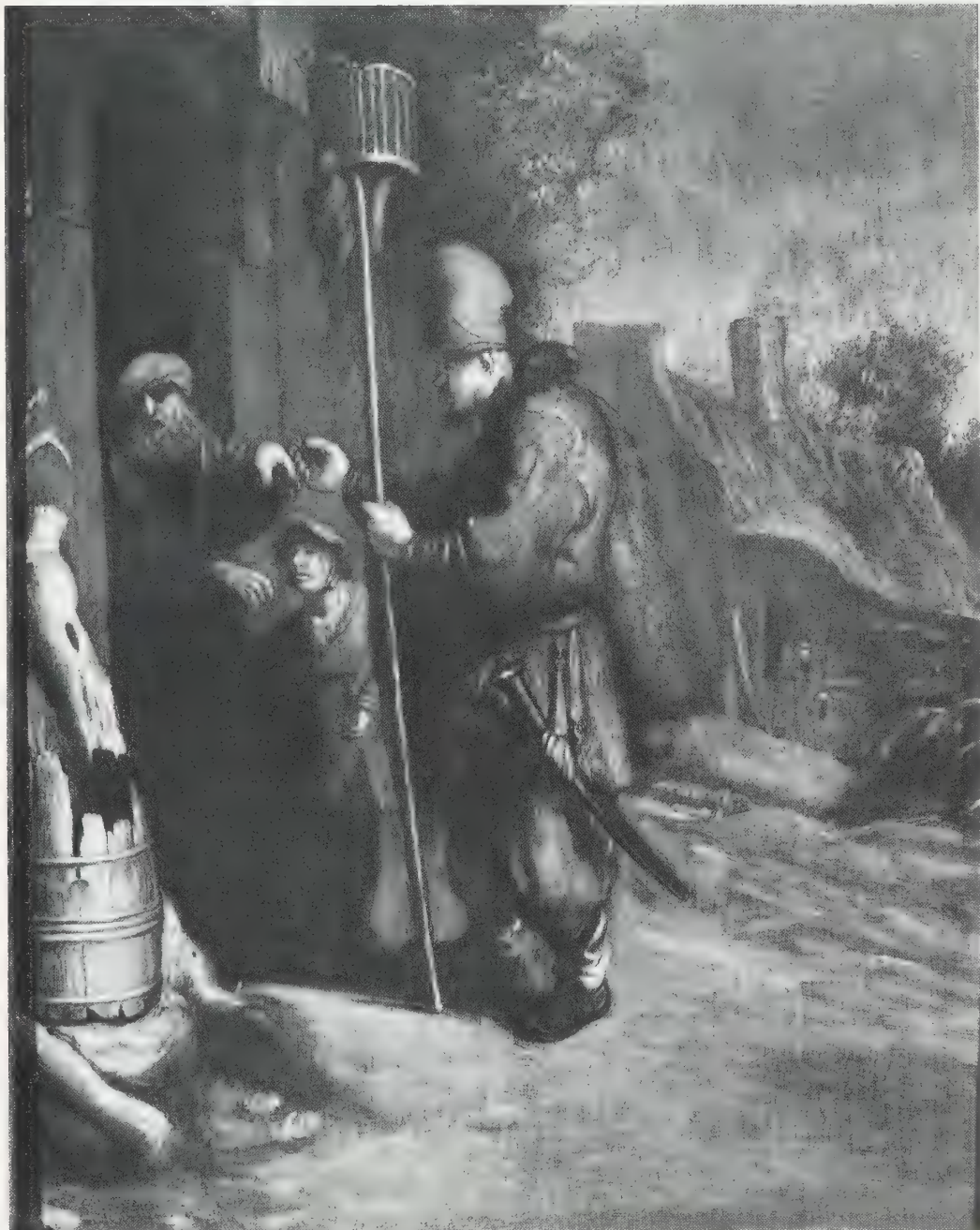
How can we determine the artist? Rembrandt had many students. Some, like Flinck, Bol, Maes and Victors, whose works are in this museum, became very competent artists, and for many years some of their paintings were believed to have been done by the master himself. Most probably one of his students painted this piece based on Rembrandt's etching. When the name of the artist is unknown, these works are called "studio of" or "workshop of" Rembrandt. Only now are we beginning to separate the many works of these different artists of the Rembrandt School, and eventually the identity of the author of this painting may be determined.

22A. Dutch
The Ratcatcher circa 1635
Oil on panel
12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
Mr. and Mrs. Eckhart Grohmann

22B. Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch 1606-1669
The Ratcatcher 1632
Etching
5 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
Milwaukee Art Museum



22B. Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Ratcatcher* 1632, Milwaukee Art Museum



22A. Dutch, *The Ratcatcher* circa 1635, Mr. and Mrs. Eckhart Grohmann

WRECKS AND RECLAMATIONS

23

Appearances can be deceiving. Look at this charming portrait of a boy of 16, painted by a Flemish artist, probably Cornelis de Vos, in 1623. Notice the inscription in reddish paint in the upper left hand corner, "An: 1623, AEtat. 16" — painted in 1623, age sixteen.

The painting seems to be in fine condition, but is it?

Turn on the ultraviolet light, and all at once you wonder whether the boy has measles. Ultraviolet light can often show recent restoration. The new paint shows up quite clearly, because new paint fluoresces differently from old paint. You would be amazed if you could wander through this, and every other art museum, with an ultra-violet light, and see the extensive retouching on most old paintings.

The last restorer of this painting touched it up very extensively, perhaps more than was necessary.

Does this mean that this painting is a wreck? Certainly not, but it is not in mint condition either.

23. Attributed to Cornelis de Vos
Flemish 1584-1651
Portrait of a Boy 1623
Oil on canvas
14½ × 11¾"
Private collection

Reference:

Bernt, nos. 1415, 1416



FIG. 1 Photograph taken under ultraviolet light



23. Attributed to Cornelis de Vos, *Portrait of a Boy* 1623, Private collection

Do you like this little waterfall?

It is by one of the great landscape artists of Holland in the seventeenth century, Jacob van Ruisdael, who loved to paint such Scandinavian scenes. They are so realistic that you could easily be convinced that Ruisdael must have seen these wild streams himself. In fact he never visited any of the Scandinavian countries, and never saw these scenes in nature. He was inspired by the work of a contemporary Dutch artist, Allart van Everdingen, who had visited Sweden and Norway, and it was his depictions of these northern landscapes which so impressed Ruisdael that he painted scores of them from the early 1660s onward.

What, if anything, is wrong with this painting?

The only thing wrong with it is its condition. Some years ago it was overcleaned. A little of the paint film was removed, and so it looks "skinned". If you look at the sky you will notice the ground, the layer between the

canvas and the paint film, which has become visible.

Poor restoration, in particular harsh cleaning with strong solvents, has damaged a great many paintings. This is just one of many thousands of examples.

This little landscape is of such high quality and painted so much like other Ruisdael waterfalls, that we believe it is genuine, and certainly worth careful restoration.

24. Jacob van Ruisdael
Dutch circa 1628-1682
Scandinavian Waterfall circa 1670
Oil on canvas
14 × 15¾"
Milwaukee Art Museum
References:
Bernt, nos. 1056-1062
Goldstein, p. 41



24. Jacob van Ruisdael, *Scandinavian Waterfall* circa 1670, Milwaukee Art Museum

25

What do you think happened to this painting? Why is it now just a fragment?

When it was sold at auction recently, it appeared to be just a single head and was called *A Hermit Saint* (fig. 1). Cleaning revealed that it is really a fragment, and surely neither a hermit nor a saint, because a hermit would not wear such rich garments and there is no indication that he is a saint, no halo for instance. We asked the restorer to stop cleaning half way and to complete the work after this show.

Today, large well-painted Old Master works, even by lesser known artists, are much in demand, particularly by museums. But earlier in this century large canvases were hard to sell because there were fewer museums, and they were looking for the great masters. Older people tend to move from large houses to apartments where wall space is at a premium. So, in the past, dealers were

able to buy large canvases cheaply, and then cut them up — three or four studies of heads were easier to sell than one large painting with several figures.

What did the original painting depict? We aren't sure. Perhaps Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. Then the angel was overpainted so that the fragment would seem to be simply the head of an old man.

Who painted this? Again, we do not know. Certainly an excellent northern artist in the middle of the seventeenth century. Perhaps cleaning of the second half will reveal a signature, or a scholar may find a preparatory drawing.

25. Dutch 17th century
Fragment of Abraham's Sacrifice (?)
Oil on canvas
24 × 20"
Private collection

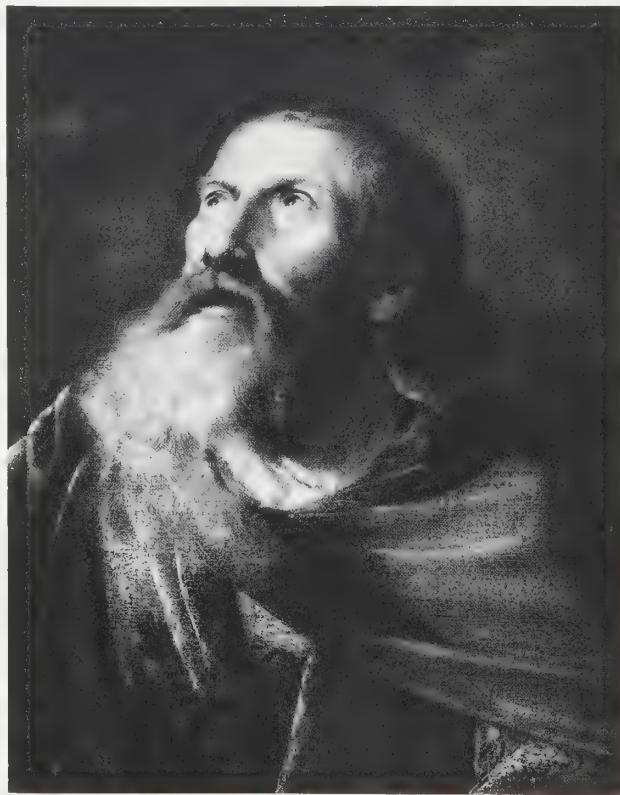


FIG. 1. Painting before cleaning



25. Dutch 17th century, fragment of *Abraham's Sacrifice*, Private collection

The last painting, No. 25, was a fragment. Is this a complete painting? Why are the figures in the lower left cropped? Do you know what the subject is?

A few years ago this painting was sold in London as a "wreck" (fig. 1). The immediate question that came to mind was: "What are the High Priests looking at?" Luckily an art historian had a photograph of the full painting as it looked many years ago (fig. 2). Clearly our painting has been cut on three sides. The subject is *The Presentation in the Temple*, (Luke 2, 25-34).

Do you see any other interesting aspects? Look carefully at the paint surface. Connoisseurs always scan each work to determine whether it was painted by one artist or by two. If by two, did they work together, or has something been added later?

Compare the figures of Simon and the baby Jesus with those of the high priests, and you will note that the paint films look quite different. That of the priests has the fine craquelure, the crackle-pattern, often seen in Old Master paintings. The figures in the lower left look as though they were painted recently — as indeed they were.

Now we can put the facts together and conclude that the original painting was damaged by water or fire. When it was cut down, the paint was scraped off the figures of Simon and Jesus, right down to the canvas (fig. 3). Only the halo around the baby's head remained. No wonder it looked a wreck!

After the restorer had cleaned the fragment, the question was, whether to cover the remains of the figures in the lower left once again, or to try to reconstruct them. There were points in favor of each possibility. It is best to do as little inpainting as possible, but as you can see, he decided to reconstruct the figures. They are obviously newly done. No one is deceived, but we now have a better idea of the original subject, "The Presentation in the Temple", and can better enjoy the beauty of what remains of the original. What a wonderful feeling of texture there is in the gold cloth!

This once beautiful painting was done by Jan Lievens about 1630 when he worked with Rembrandt, who must have been impressed by the composition, for some twenty years later, he based an etching on it (fig. 4).

26. Jan Lievens
Dutch 1607-1674
The Presentation in the Temple circa 1630
Oil on canvas
19 x 22"
Private collection
Reference:
Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 3, no. 1190



FIG. 1 Jan Lievens, *The Presentation in the Temple*, before restoration



FIG. 2 Painting in its original state as owned by Sir Lionel Cust



26. Jan Lievens, *The Presentation in the Temple* circa 1630, Private collection

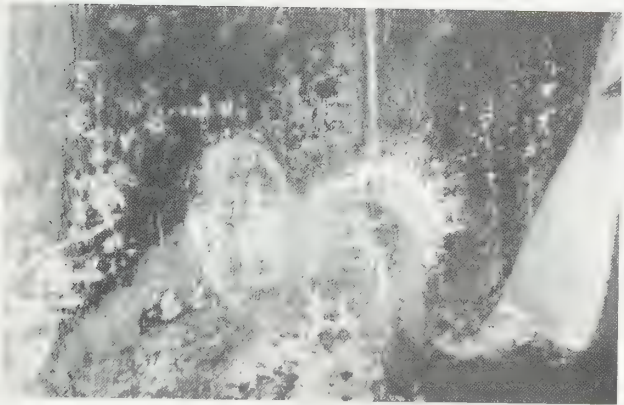


FIG. 3 Detail of lower left of painting, after removal of overpaint



FIG. 4 Rembrandt, *Presentation in the Temple*, circa 1652

27

Have you ever seen a mess like this? What do you think happened?

We aren't sure. Apparently a very old painting was cut up and completely overpainted. The quality of what we see underneath is high — probably a sixteenth-century fragment. For comparison, see figure 1.

The greyish depiction of a church interior painted in the nineteenth century is much poorer quality, but is extremely difficult to remove.

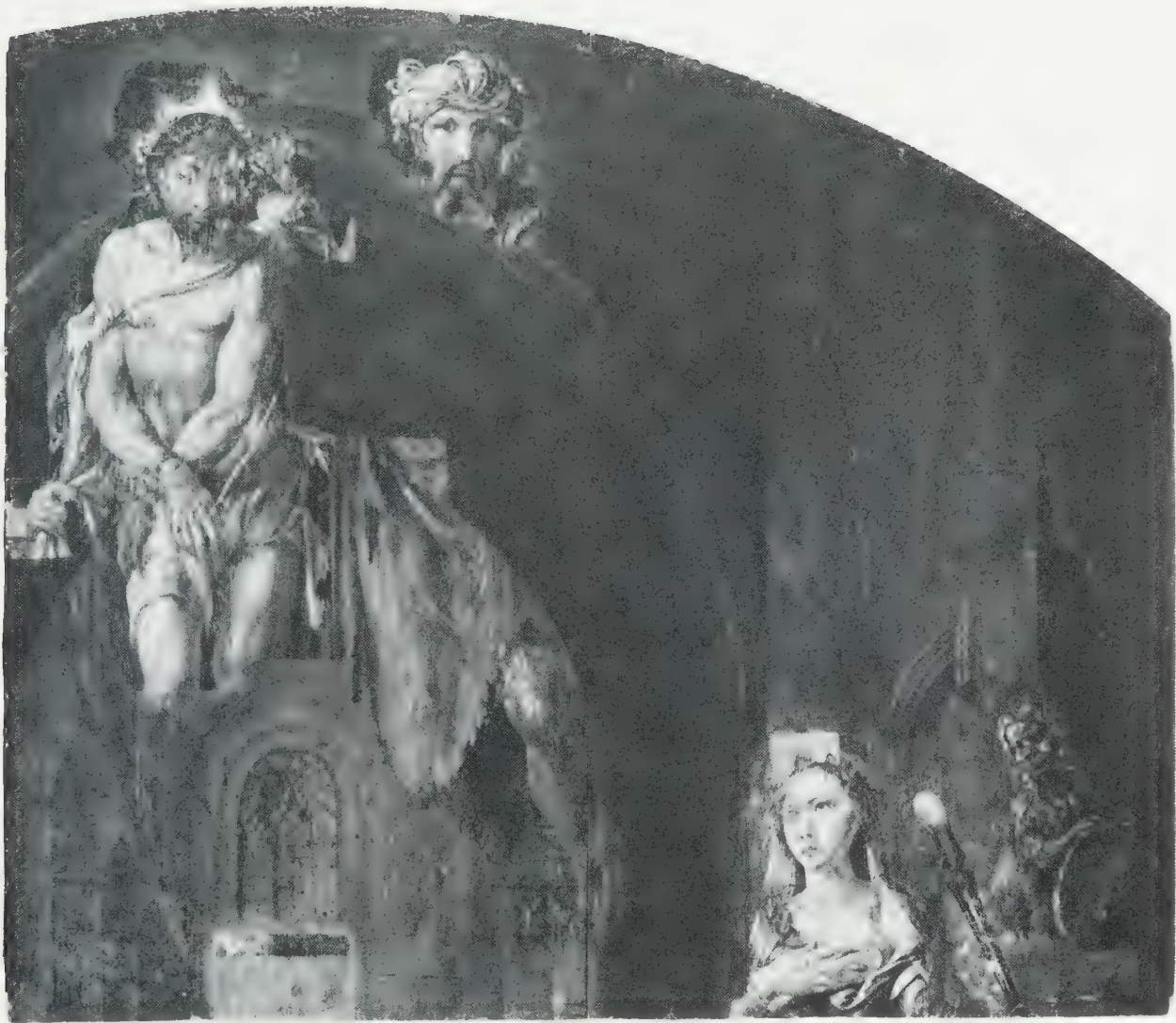
What does the painting underneath depict? It is a real

challenge to the imagination. The fragment on the left probably depicts the mocking or the scourging of Jesus, and the fragment on the right shows St. Agatha, whose breasts were cut off by her torturers.

27. Northern European 16th century
Christ Mocked, with St. Agatha
Oil on panel
15¼ × 24½"
Private collection



FIG. 1 Maerten van Heemskerck, *The Crowning with Thorns*, Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem



27. Northern European 16th century, *Christ Mocked, with St. Agatha*, Private collection

When this painting was sold recently it seemed to be a little gem, and yet there was something oddly disturbing about the composition.

Take a moment to study the painting as it looked at that time (fig. 1), when it appeared to be a complete painting. What do you think is the subject? There are five figures. Who do you think they are?

It looked like an unconventional depiction of the Virgin and Child with saints. But doesn't the Virgin seem much older than she is usually depicted? And what is she looking at, surely not the child? Why do all the figures seem to be looking in different directions?

Cleaning showed that there is part of a sixth figure at the far left edge, a woman whose head had been completely painted out and whose garments had been partially taken over by the man behind her. This woman, who is younger and is dressed in the Virgin's customary

blue, is obviously Mary. But who are the other people? This odd composition is explained by the fact that the picture is a fragment of a much larger one that must have illustrated the *Holy Kinship*, which is a sort of dramatization of the genealogy of Jesus.

The painting by Quentin Massys (fig. 2) of the same subject painted about the same time shows what the composition of our painting may have looked like in its entirety.

28. Cornelis Engelbrechtsz.
Dutch circa 1468-1533
Fragment of *The Holy Kinship*
Oil on panel
10 × 8½" with arched top
Private collection



FIG. 1 Painting before cleaning



FIG. 2 Quentin Massys, *The Holy Kinship*, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels



28. Cornelis Engelbrechtsz, fragment of *The Holy Kinship*, Private collection

29

Study this picture for a moment and try to decide whether or not it is in good condition.

This is one of the first questions serious collectors ask. You may recall that one of the best clues to condition is the evenness of the craquelure, the fine crackle pattern that should be visible all over the painting. If that is broken, or disappears completely, it probably indicates restoration in that area. Sometimes, however, restorers, repaint the craquelure to hide their restoration!

Look carefully at the craquelure in this painting. Note how evenly it extends all over, except in one area. Can you find that?

If you have discovered that it does not extend through the vine leaves, you are truly observant.

Yes, the vine leaves are new, painted long after the original was finished. Why do you suppose the leaves were added? Can you visualize how the painting would look without them? What do they add to the composition?

We are again dealing with a fragment, and we know what the complete composition by the Utrecht artist, Jan Jansz. van Bronchorst looked like (fig. 1). Whoever cut the painting, perhaps early in this century, felt that the

fragment looked too obviously like a fragment, and skillfully added the leaves to make a much more balanced composition.

Should one collect such fragments? Of course, why not? This is a delightful painting which would fit into many homes that just couldn't accommodate the large original. And if you found such a large original, should you cut it down? No, please don't! That is vandalism. Buy it and give it to a museum that will appreciate it despite its size.

29. Jan Jansz. van Bronchorst
Dutch 1626-circa 1651
Two Girls in an Arbor circa 1650
Oil on canvas
24 x 29"
Mr. and Mrs. William Treul

Reference:
Varriano, no. 20



FIG. 1 Jan Jansz. van Bronchorst, *Two Girls in an Arbor*



29. Jan Jansz. van Bronchorst, fragment of *Two Girls in an Arbor* circa 1650, Mr. and Mrs. William Treul

The signature and date on this painting are clearly visible on the jug in the lower right — Abraham Hondius, 1669, but what is the story?

The answer becomes easier once we realize that this is likely to be half a painting, the right half. It illustrates the first pastoral play in the Dutch language, *Granida* by P.C. Hooft, published in 1605. It tells the story of Granida, the daughter of the King of Persia who lost her way while hunting. She met a shepherd and shepherdess, Daifilo and Dorotea. Daifilo offered her water in a shell and fell in love with her at first sight. After various adventures he was made a prince and he and Granida married.

The play was a great success and the subject was depicted by many Dutch artists. Sometimes only Granida and Daifilo are shown, and sometimes Dorotea is included; see for instance, figure 1, a painting with all three figures done by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, one of Rembrandt's ablest students, in 1669, the same year our frag-

ment was painted. Note that in Eeckhout's painting, Granida has accepted the shell.

The other half of our painting must depict Granida, and it would be such fun to find it. It is probably not attributed to Hondius, for his signature was on the right half, and the dealer who cut the painting apart may well have thought of a more saleable name.

30. Abraham Hondius
Dutch 1625-1693
Daifilo 1669
Oil on canvas
34½ × 36¾"
Milwaukee Art Museum

Reference:
Bernt, no. 574



FIG. 1 Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Granida and Daifilo* 1669, Formerly Collection Neumann, Brussels



30. Abraham Hondius, *Daifilo* 1669, Milwaukee Art Museum

VARIANTS, REPLICAS AND COPIES

31

Sometimes we see a framed painting which was not originally produced as a painting to hang on a wall.

Look carefully at this *Orpheus* done by a Flemish artist about 1600. Do you see anything curious? Note particularly the upper right hand corner. Why is there a piece of the sky missing? And why do you suppose the artist painted such a large tree but left the top of the tree off?

Why should the back of the painting be decorated like this (fig. 1)?

Here again we are dealing with a fragment, but in this case it is a fragment of a piece of furniture, a musical instrument, probably a clavichord or a harpsichord. How can we be so sure?

The proof of this was provided through the diligence of the restorer who recently cleaned the painting, front and back. She realized that the back of the work had been painted grey long after 1600, and the removal of the grey overpaint revealed this rather intriguing pattern, the same age as the *Orpheus* on the front. This kind of pattern was used on pieces of furniture, and we know that the covers of musical instruments were often adorned with paintings inside. Look at figures 2 and 3 — two paintings by Vermeer showing just such open covers.

Of course the story of Orpheus, the mythical musician who played the harp so beautifully that all the animals came to listen to him, is a most fitting subject for the cover of a clavichord.

We are sure this is the explanation for the odd upper right hand corner and the missing top of the tree. Originally the cover was triangular. Then the upper part was cut off — exactly why we do not know — perhaps because of damage to the instrument or a preference for a painting rather than the instrument. The little missing

piece of sky in the top right corner is in fact part of a border that went right round the edge of the cover. Notice that the border can still be seen along the bottom of the picture. Originally the cover must have looked very much as drawn in the sketch (fig. 4).

Many musical instruments were decorated with paintings. Another example is this depiction by Cornelis Bisschop of the *Apollo and Marsyas*, again a mythological story taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Notice the decoration on the back of this panel (fig. 5).

Even more common has been the removal of paintings which were done on the drawers of chests of drawers. Many of these have been cut apart and framed, and their original form is not easy to prove.

31A. Netherlandish
Orpheus circa 1600
Oil on panel
19¾ × 31¾"
Private collection

31B. Cornelis Bisschop
Dutch 1630-1674
Apollo and Marsyas
Oil on panel
18½ × 16"
Private collection

References:
Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 3, p. 1988
Bernt, nos. 120, 121



31A. Netherlandish, *Orpheus*, Private collection



31B. Cornelis Bisschop, *Apollo and Marsyas*, Private collection

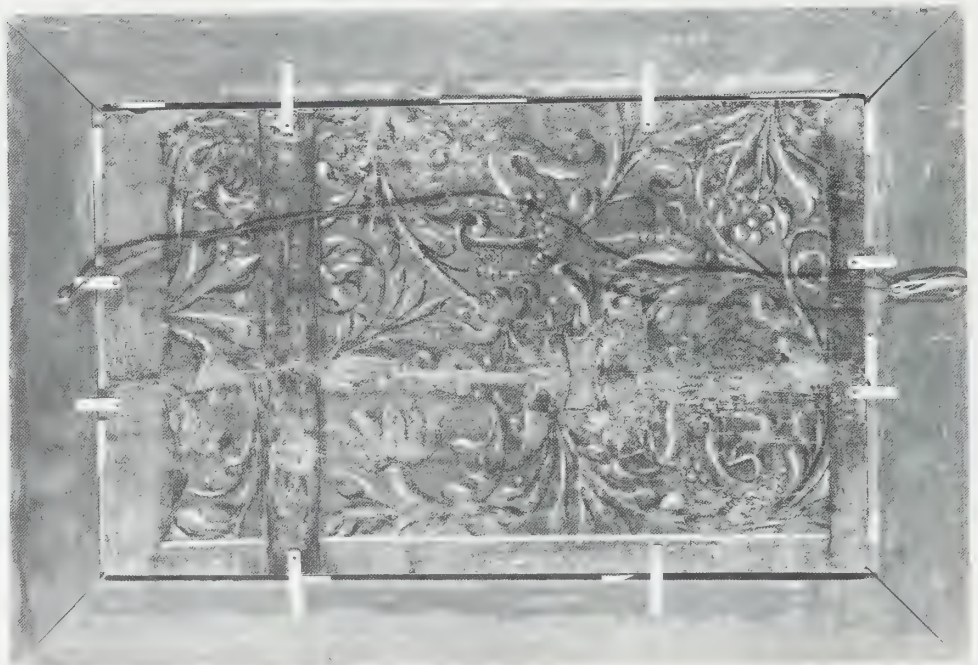


FIG. 1 Reverse of *Orpheus* fragment



FIG. 2 Jan Vermeer, *The Concert*,
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston



FIG. 3 Jan Vermeer, *Lady Seated at a Virginal*,
National Gallery, London



FIG. 4 Diagram of harpsichord cover

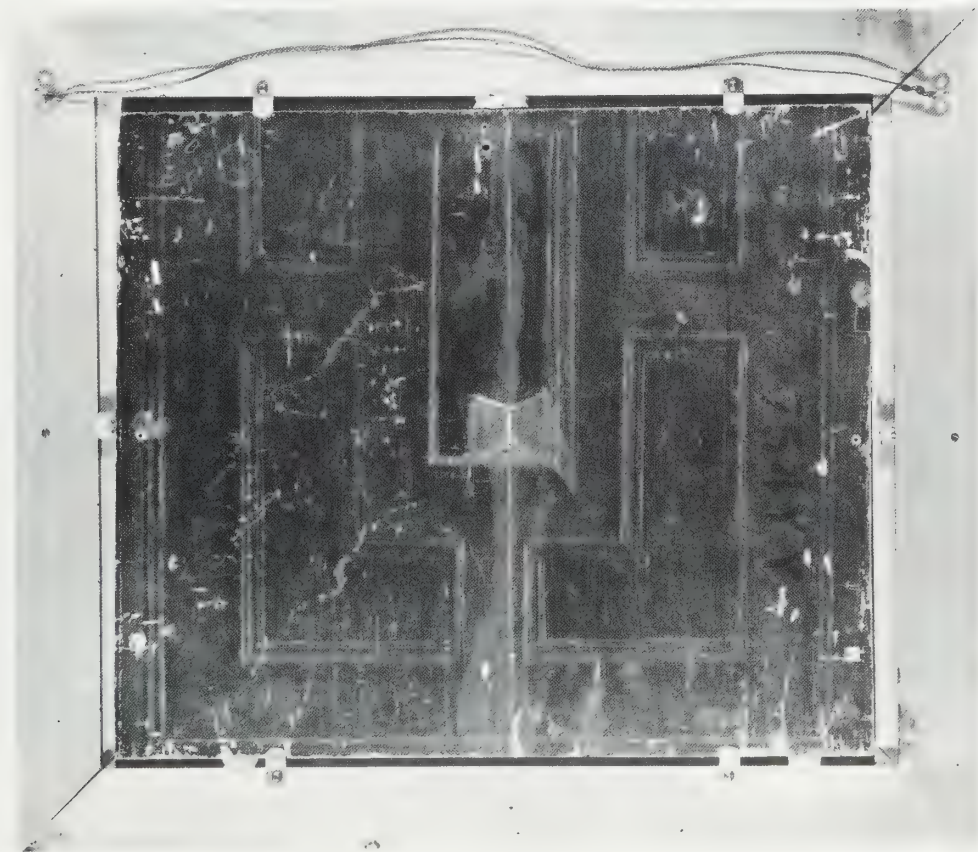


FIG. 5 Reverse of *Apollo and Marsyas* fragment

Why are there two very similar paintings depicting alchemists, both signed by Cornelis Bega, the Haarlem genre painter? Look at the original here, and the reproduction of the other original (fig. 1), which was previously owned by the Fisher Scientific Company and is now in the Getty Museum. Both paintings are signed: the painting here at the lower right, the Getty painting on the letter in the center. Do these paintings look exactly alike?

If your immediate reaction was "Yes", be careful. This reminds us of those puzzles we used to be shown of two similar drawings, where we were asked to find the ten or even twenty differences. Look carefully and you may find more than that!

What probably happened is that Bega painted one of these; it was admired and sold, and then someone else admired it and asked Bega to paint another version. A copyist would copy precisely and unimaginatively; an artist would probably try to improve on his first version.

With that in mind, which do you think is Bega's first and which his second version?

There are at least two pieces of evidence, both pointing to the same conclusion. One involves the position of the pestle on the floor of the laboratory.

Look at the details (figs. 2 and 3). In the Milwaukee painting, the pestle lies completely visible on the floor to the left of the two steps. But you can't be quite certain that these are two steps. In the Getty painting, the artist has moved the pestle to the right, so that the tip is hidden by the lower step, and you can now be certain that there are two steps. This is just the kind of improvement an artist would make.

The other piece of evidence involves size and support. The Getty painting is smaller ($14\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{8}$ " versus $16\frac{1}{4} \times 15$ ") and is on panel, whereas ours is on canvas. When Bega painted these about 1660, canvas was relatively inexpensive, and it can, of course, be cut to any size. Panels were more expensive. They were bevelled at the back edges and so were of fixed size. If Bega had done the panel painting first, he could easily have cut the canvas to the same size as the panel. But what if the second customer preferred a panel painting and Bega only had a slightly smaller panel? That would explain why the painting on canvas shows the entire sketch of a laboratory oven on the wall on the right, and the Getty painting shows only a part. We can conclude that most probably the Milwaukee painting is the first version.

The fact that there are two original versions of a painting does not involve a question of value, commercial or artistic. Both are really beautiful and quite different, in color, size, support and many details. It is simply fun to try to decide which was painted first.

32. Cornelis Bega
Dutch 1630-1664
The Alchemist
Oil on canvas
 $16\frac{1}{4} \times 15$ "
Private collection

References:
McTavish, no. 29
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 4, no. 2



32. Fig. 1 *The Alchemist* 1663, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu



32. Cornelis Bega, *The Alchemist*, Private collection



32. Fig. 2 Detail of pestle in Milwaukee painting.



32 Fig. 3 Detail of pestle in Getty painting

Do you think that this portrait is a copy or an original? This small haunting portrait depicts Alessandro de' Medici (1511/1512-1537), the first member of his family to rule Florence as duke. He was created duke by Emperor Charles V and by his kinsman (and perhaps father) Pope Clement VII, but in 1537 was murdered by a jealous cousin. Some of the uneasy spirit of his time seems to be reflected in the sidelong glance and warily furrowed brow of this portrait.

The portrait has sometimes been considered one of several copies after Jacopo Pontormo, but there are some good reasons for accepting it as a work by Pontormo himself. Most important is the high quality of the soft modelling of the features and the sensitive observation of character. The artist seems to be searching for the correct contours of lips, nose, and eyes, as evident from the slight changes in relation to the underdrawn contours now visible through the paint layers. This is not characteristic of a copy. Furthermore, the dark form parallel to the left side of the duke's face corresponds to the streamers on the cap he wears in a documented portrait in the Johnson Collection, Philadelphia (fig. 1). In the Philadelphia painting Alessandro wears a dark cloak and sombre cap as mourning for Pope Clement VII. In the portrait exhibited here, the cap (visible under the microscope) has been covered by a curly mop of hair and the dark cloak has been overpainted with chainmail and the

collar of a doublet. The streamers appear as *pentimenti*, now visible through the paint layers of the background made more transparent by time and by the action of past restorers.

It is not clear why these changes were made to the head study. Alessandro wearing armor and bareheaded following the type of this portrait (in its altered state) is repeated in a copy from the workshop of Bronzino painted after 1553 and still in Florence, so the changes must be very old. Could it be that the head exhibited here is Pontormo's preliminary study for the portrait now in Philadelphia? This possibility is all the more intriguing since Vasari, the first great historian of Italian art and, with Pontormo, a recipient of Medici patronage, records that Pontormo first painted Alessandro's likeness on a small panel, for the sake of convenience using it as the model for the large portrait now in Philadelphia. Vasari gives high praise to Pontormo's small portrait, which has been assumed to be lost.

33. Jacopo Pontormo (?)
Italian circa 1493-circa 1557
Alessandro de' Medici between 1533-37
Oil on panel
13 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
The Art Institute of Chicago



FIG. 1 Jacopo Pontormo, *Alessandro de' Medici*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, John G. Johnson Collection



33. Jacopo Pontormo (?), *Alessandro de' Medici* 1533-37, The Art Institute of Chicago

Should you ever buy a painting described by an experienced auction house as a copy after a well-known painting?

Generally, no. Auction houses employ very competent professionals, who want to describe their works as optimistically as possible, to encourage bidding. However, they look at thousands of works each year, and occasionally miss real gems.

This painting was sold at Sotheby's in New York last year, described as "a copy of a work in the Louvre, formerly attributed to Rembrandt (see A. Bredius, rev. by H. Gerson, *Rembrandt*, 1969, p. 117)". The entry was illustrated by a mediocre black and white photograph, one of the few black and white illustrations in the lavishly produced catalogue. Serious collectors were unlikely to give such an entry a second thought.

This painting illustrates two interesting points of great potential value to connoisseurs.

If you see an attractive photograph of a painting, and then are disappointed on seeing the original, the painting is not likely to be a great work of art. If, on the other hand, the original looks much better than the photograph — as was the case here — look again. It may be a good painting. The collector who bought this painting, in fact the only bidder, had looked at the original before the sale.

The second point concerns first impressions. To the real connoisseur, first impressions are most important. Potential buyers are offered all sorts of paintings, through auctions or by dealers, often accompanied by glowing descriptions. If the first impression is bad, and the connoisseur has to convince himself that the painting must be a fine one because of its illustrious previous owners and because it has been illustrated in many books, he is probably making a mistake.

In this case, the collector was surprised when he saw the painting; his first impression was excellent. Although the painting was covered by a thick, discolored varnish, enough of the fine, even craquelure was visible to assure him that it was a seventeenth-century painting. It looked cut-down on all sides, and a copy of an old auction catalogue entry affixed to the back stated that it was signed but that the signature was hard to read, and the painting was 122 × 100 cms. (The present size is 98.5 × 83 cms.)

This information was not mentioned in the Sotheby's catalogue.

Dr. Volker Manuth has told us that this painting was sold twice in Berlin auctions in 1933, as by Ferdinand Bol. The paper affixed to the back came from the second auction catalogue, of November 21, 1933. So the painting must have been cut down after that, perhaps to facilitate getting it out of Germany.

The painting has been partially cleaned in preparation for this exhibition. Figure 1 is a photograph taken before this partial cleaning. Figure 2 shows the painting in the Louvre.

What do you think? Does the painting now seem better or worse to you than the photographs?

It is interesting to know that Harmen Becker, a serious collector and Rembrandt's creditor, owned many paintings, including a Venus, a Juno, and a Minerva, all believed to be by Rembrandt. Becker liked classical figures! The inventory of his estate drawn up in 1678, lists a Venus and Cupid by Rembrandt (hanging in the living room) and a Venus and Cupid after Rembrandt (hanging in the back hallway). How many other copies existed?

The attribution of the Louvre painting to Rembrandt has been questioned for some time, and Ferdinand Bol, Rembrandt's student, has been suggested as its author.

The quality of the cleaned portion of the painting here is high — just look at the face and the earring — and we shall know more after a complete cleaning. We only hope that the signature was not cut off when the painting was cut down. Even without a signature this is an intriguing work, and unlikely to be a copy after the Louvre painting.

34. Previously attributed to Ferdinand Bol
Dutch 1616-1680
Hendrickje Stoffels as Venus with Cupid
circa 1650
Oil on canvas
38½ × 32½"
Private collection

Reference:
Bredius, no. 117



34. Attributed to Ferdinand Bol, *Hendrickje Stoffels as Venus with Cupid* circa 1650, Private collection



FIG. 1 Attributed to F. Bol, *Hendrickje Stoffels as Venus with Cupid*, before cleaning



FIG. 2 Attributed to Rembrandt, *Venus and Cupid*, Musée du Louvre, Paris

Look at this large ($43\frac{1}{4} \times 67$ ") depiction of *The Pool of Bethesda* (John 5, 1-9), painted by a Flemish artist, Peter van Lint (1609-1690).

Compare this with a photograph of a much smaller painting ($19\frac{3}{4} \times 32$ ") now in the museum in Vienna (fig. 1) and of a much larger painting ($68\frac{1}{2} \times 95\frac{1}{4}$ ") signed by van Lint and dated 1642 (fig. 2), now in the museum in Brussels.

Can you see the many differences? Note particularly the woman kneeling in the center of the painting in Vienna, absent in the Brussels and Milwaukee versions. Look also at the figures on the far left, similar in the Vienna and Milwaukee versions, but so different in the Brussels painting.

Now look at figure 3, a painting in the museum in Poznan, Poland. Can you see the many similarities?

What do you think is the relationship among these four paintings?

We cannot be certain, of course. All artists are influenced by the works of others. Sometimes the influence is very clear; sometimes it is more subtle. A copyist usually tries to repeat the original very carefully. But sometimes artists like their own work so much that they repeat themselves, often making substantial variations. Or perhaps a customer likes a work that he has seen but which is not for sale, and he asks the artist to do a second or even a third version.

A plausible explanation of the three paintings by van Lint of *The Pool of Bethesda* is this: the first version is the huge painting in Brussels dated 1642, commissioned as an altarpiece by the family whose three elegant heads we see on the left. It was very customary to include portraits of the donors in altarpieces.

The Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, a great collector, may have seen and liked this large painting, and may have asked the painter to do a much smaller version for his private collection. Of course he would not want those three heads of the donors included in his picture, so that

would account for their omission. We know that this smaller painting, now in Vienna, was listed in the Archduke's inventory of 1659.

The Milwaukee painting was probably commissioned for another church. The size would be determined by the size of the altar, and of course the donors of the first version would again be left out.

All this sounds plausible enough, but is it correct? Art historians love just such puzzles, and more information — church records perhaps — may confirm or refute this explanation.

The mystery deepens when we look at the fourth painting (fig. 3). It also is huge ($65 \times 88\frac{1}{2}$ "); it also was at one time attributed to Peter van Lint. Stylistically, however, it looks much earlier — late sixteenth rather than seventeenth century — and it is now attributed to Otto van Veen (1556-1629), the teacher of Rubens.

Did Peter van Lint see this earlier work? Surely the similarities of composition and of the main figures are so striking that we are right to assume that he must have seen this or another related painting.

What is the condition of our painting? It is not as bad as it looks. A previous restorer used a faulty white pigment which later blanched. This is rather unsightly, but could easily be put right. However, the restoration of a painting this size is a big job.

35. Peter van Lint
Flemish 1609-1691
The Pool of Bethesda
Oil on canvas
 $43\frac{1}{4} \times 67$ "
Milwaukee Art Museum

References:
Bernt, no. 740
Wilenski, vol. 2, no. 676



FIG. 1 Peter van Lint, *Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda*, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



FIG. 2 Peter van Lint, *Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda*, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels



35. Peter van Lint, *The Pool of Bethesda*, Milwaukee Art Museum



FIG. 3 Otto van Veen, *Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda*, Muzeum Narodowe, Poznan, Poland

What do you think of this little panel? It looks like a fifteenth-century painting, but unfortunately the panel is not old, and we suspect that it was painted some time in the nineteenth century with deception in mind.

Look at the print of Laurent Coster (fig. 1) which appeared in a "Description of the City of Haarlem in Holland" printed in 1628. You will notice that this print is based on a painting by the great architect, Jacob van Campen, who designed some of Holland's finest buildings early in the seventeenth century and was also a competent painter (see No. 15). Laurent Coster was one of the first typographers, about 1440, so presumably van Campen based his painting of Laurent Coster on an earlier model.

We have neither the fifteenth-century model nor van Campen's painting, but we have been lucky; a friend found the print, the source of our fake. This little panel is a nineteenth-century copy of a seventeenth-century painting based on a fifteenth-century model.

Copies abound. Many were painted in good faith — just watch the art students copying the Old Masters in almost any great museum. There are art classes in our own museum where students come specifically to practice copying older paintings, for this has long been one of the main ways to learn how to paint. Such copies are not intended to be fakes. Nor is it only art students who copy. Many of the great masters tried their hand at copying great paintings of times past: Rubens copied Titian, David Teniers made many small copies of works in the gallery of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in Antwerp. And copies were not always looked down on. There are even references to artists making copies which were considered superior to the originals!

Many copies, however, were made to deceive. Fakes. And what happened to all those copies by art students?

Many were later sold as originals by unscrupulous dealers.

Can you tell the difference between an original and a copy? What clues would you look for?

Often this is not at all easy. Basically there are two approaches: the one technical, the other stylistic.

The technical study determines the pigments used, age of the support, hardness of the paint film. A "seventeenth-century work" painted with Prussian Blue must be a fake; Prussian Blue was not invented until the eighteenth century. But fakers, alas, also study, and take great care not to be found out. This can provide a battle of the wits.

The stylistic approach is more difficult to describe, yet, used by an able art historian, is very effective. Originals are spontaneous works, copies are often labored. Exceptions to this general rule are the works of great artists: Rubens, Rembrandt, Fragonard, for instance. As David Wistow explained, "It might be done for the sheer pleasure of it or as a gesture of respect; to broaden the copyist's skill or to demonstrate virtuosity; or finally to compile a notebook of ideas. But more often than not with these works, the result isn't an exact copy but rather an interpretive one — evidence of a creative meeting of two formidable artistic powers." But there is little danger of deception in such cases. When Rembrandt 'copies' Titian, he produced a Titian composition in Rembrandt's style (figs. 2 and 3).

36. Nineteenth-century Copy
Portrait of Laurent Coster
Oil on panel
12¾ × 9½"
Private collection

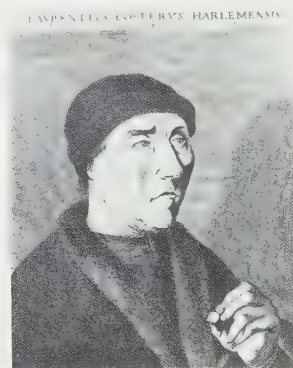
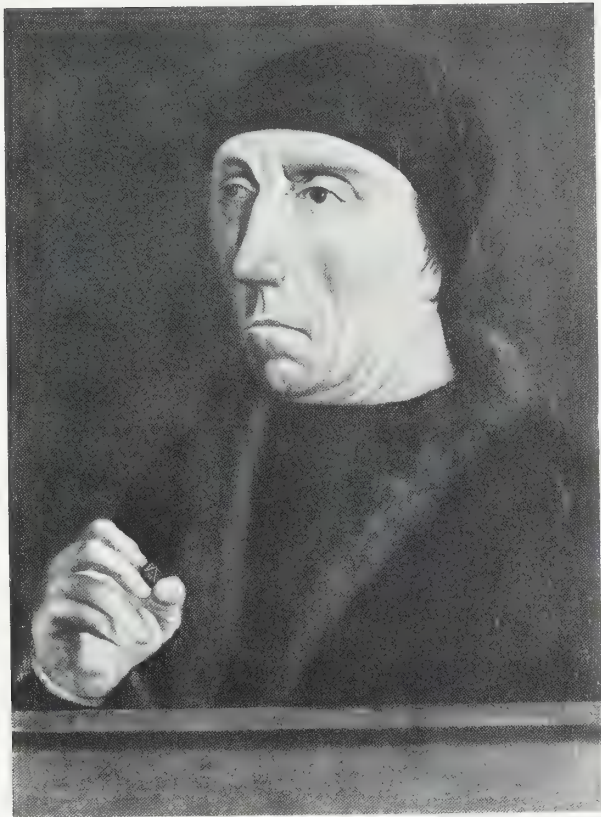


FIG. 1 Engraving of Laurent Coster after Jacob van Campen



36. Unknown 19th century, *Portrait of Laurent Coster*, Private collection



FIG. 2 Titian, *Portrait of a Man*, National Gallery, London



FIG. 3 Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait*, National Gallery, London

Compare this painting with figure 1, the well-known portrait of Lucas van Uffel by Anthony van Dyck in the Metropolitan Museum. Can you see the striking similarities?

The Van Dyck portrait was probably painted in Venice in 1622. The clothes of the man in our painting, particularly the white collar and tassel, suggest a date at least twenty years later. Van Uffel died in Amsterdam in 1637 and many of his possessions were sold at auctions there. Perhaps the northern artist of this painting saw the Van Dyck portrait then. In any case, although the details and the handling of paint are quite different, the "spirit" of the two paintings is so close that it seems certain that the unknown artist must have seen the Van Uffel portrait.

Note that in each painting, the sensitive sitter has been interrupted in his work. He is depicted as just rising, one hand on the chair, the other on or near the table, which is covered with a Turkish carpet, and he faces us in part profile. The objects lying on the tables surely relate to the sitters, and the curtains in the backgrounds are quite similar in both paintings.

Despite all the objects on the table in our painting — the bust of Seneca, the engraving and the book of music — which must relate to the sitter, he has not yet been

identified. The previous owners wrote a lengthy and interesting essay attributing this portrait to the great Franco-Flemish portraitist Philippe de Champaigne. Yet his handling of paint, which you can see for instance in his great "Moses with the Tablets of the Law" in our museum, seems quite different.

Other able Flemish and Dutch artists, Karel Dujardin, Pieter Franchoys and Wallerant Vaillant, for instance, have been suggested, none as yet conclusively. In time, art historians will agree on the artist, but again, it may take years. Our knowledge is not yet sufficient to identify either the sitter or the artist, but that does not put the very great quality of this work into question.

37. Northern European circa 1645
Portrait of a Man
 Oil on canvas
 38 × 30¾"
 Private collection

Reference:
 McTavish, no. 28



FIG. 1 Anthony van Dyck, *Portrait of a Man said to be Lucas van Uffel*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



37. Northern European circa 1645, *Portrait of a Man*, Private collection

WHO, WHAT AND WHERE?

38

Two of the ablest art historians earlier in this century, Abraham Bredius and Wilhelm Valentiner considered this striking portrait of a "Youth wearing a Turban" to be by Rembrandt.

Just a year ago, we had part of the collection of paintings formed by Abraham Bredius on exhibit in our Museum. Among the paintings was one believed to be a self-portrait of one of Rembrandt's students, Samuel van Hoogstraten (fig. 1).

Can you see the similarities?

Note the handling of the faces — so similar that you wonder whether both are self-portraits — not of Rembrandt but of Hoogstraten.

Rembrandt loved to dress himself and his sitters in oriental garb, and his students followed their master. What probably misled Bredius and Valentiner about the por-

trait here was not the rather thinly painted face, but the thickly painted turban. Hoogstraten found it much easier to come close to Rembrandt's handling of a turban than of the face.

38. Samuel van Hoogstraten
Dutch 1626-1678
Youth wearing a Turban circa 1642
Oil on panel
22 × 18½"
The Art Institute of Chicago

References:

Sumowski, no. 2, no. 844
Bredius, no. 316



FIG. 1 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Self Portrait*,
Bredius Museum, The Hague



38. Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Youth Wearing a Turban* circa 1642, The Art Institute of Chicago

39

Do you think that these paintings, so different in subject, are by the same artist?

Notice the great similarity in style of "The Village Musicians" and "The Adoration of the Shepherds". Compare the almost grotesque faces, the rather strange lighting in both paintings, the similar handling of cloth.

Over the years art historians assembled lists of quite a few paintings with all these same characteristics, and dubbed the artist "the Pseudo van der Venne", because they resembled, though not very closely, the works by a Dutch artist, Adriaen Pietersz. van der Venne.

Many art historians speculated about the identity of this artist. Some thought he came from Utrecht; one identified him with Simon de Vlieger, the famous Dutch painter of seascapes; others thought him Flemish, early seventeenth century. All this speculation ceased when a French art historian, Jacques Foucart, working at the Louvre, discovered a painting by this artist in the cathedral of Besancon, where there was contemporary documentation that a Flemish artist, Jan van der Venne, had been commissioned to paint *The Miracle of Saint Theodule* for the cathedral.

What a delightful discovery — the Pseudo van der Venne was really Jan van der Venne — and what a coincidence! — so easy to remember.

If only someone like Jacques Foucart were to discover that a Swedish or Polish artist, I.S., came to study with

Rembrandt in the early 1640's, the identity of the painter of our No. 7 would be revealed.

39A. Jan van der Venne
Flemish active 1629-circa 1650
Village Musicians
Oil on panel
21 × 17½"
Milwaukee Art Museum
Reference:
Bernt, no. 1336

39B. Jan van der Venne
Flemish active 1629-circa 1650
Adoration of the Shepherds
Oil on panel
17½ × 22"
Private collection
Reference:
Bernt, no. 1336



39A. Jan van der Venne, *Village Musicians*, Milwaukee Art Museum



39B. Jan van der Venne, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, Private collection

If you have come this far in the exhibition, you have read a fair amount about style and attribution. And yet, you may still be in doubt about just how attributions are made.

Two paintings are worth a thousand words.

Look at the little panel depicting the meeting between *Manoah and his Wife with the Angel*, announcing the birth of Samson. When the Milwaukee collectors acquired this some years ago, they knew that it was seventeenth-century Dutch, but did not know the name of the artist.

Now look at the canvas *The Queen of Sheba visiting King Solomon*. What a delightful Amazon society — even King Solomon on the left looks feminine!

Now compare: both paintings are what are called “grisailles”, monochromous works, usually in grey or brown. Many artists, including Rembrandt, did grisaille sketches.

But look further. Compare, for instance, the head of Manoah's wife with the head of the tall woman standing in the Queen's entourage. Or compare the angel's robe with that of the child sitting on the step, facing the Queen. And notice the similar positions of the angel and the seated boy — odd to see an angel sitting down. You will find other similarities.

The same hand? Of course. And probably done at about the same time in the artist's life.

Luckily the larger painting is monogrammed, **D T** — known to be the monogram of Daniel Thievaert, an Amsterdam artist contemporary with Rembrandt.

Thievaert did a number of grisailles; another version of the “Queen of Sheba” is in the museum in Berlin-Dahlem (fig. 1). But he also did beautiful, large works full of color; the Boston Museum of Fine Arts recently acquired a large canvas of the story in Judges 19, 29, of the Levite and his wife looking for shelter (fig. 2).

We don't know a great deal about Thievaert except, now, how his grisailles look, and that he knew the Bible.

40A. Daniel Thievaert
Dutch before 1613-before 1658
Manoah and his Wife with the Angel
Oil on panel
11¾ × 17" (obtain size)
Professor and Mrs. Leonard Parker

Reference:
Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 4

40B. Daniel Thievaert
Dutch before 1613-before 1658
The Queen of Sheba visiting King Solomon
Oil on canvas
18½ × 23½"
Private collection

Reference:
Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 4



FIG. 1 Daniel Thievaert, *The Queen of Sheba*,
Gemäldegalerie, Berlin-Dahlem



FIG. 2 Daniel Thievaert, *The Levite and his Wife Looking for Shelter*,
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



40A. Daniel Thievaert, *Manoah and his Wife with the Angel*, Professor and Mrs. Leonard Parker



40B. Daniel Thievaert, *The Queen of Sheba Visiting King Solomon*, Private collection

41

Do you think that the man is selling wine to the old woman? When this painting was last sold, at Christie's in London in 1969, it was called "The Wine Seller".

If this were a nineteenth-century Munich School painting of which we have such fine examples in our von Schleinitz collection, it could well be a genre painting, an old woman paying for her purchase. But this painting is a signed work by Rembrandt's last student, Aert de Gelder, who continued Rembrandt's tradition until well into the eighteenth century, over fifty years after Rembrandt's death. As far as we know, de Gelder never did any genre paintings.

Many Dutch artists so identified with the people of the Bible that they depicted them as if they were their next-door neighbors. Perhaps this is the story of Elisha and the widow (not to be confused with the story of Elijah and the widow, shown in No. 42) told in 2. Kings 4.

The widow's husband had died penniless because he had helped so many righteous prophets attacked by King Ahab. The creditors were about to take the widow's sons into slavery to satisfy her husband's debts, so she went to the prophet Elisha. He helped by filling the widow's pots with oil which she then sold.

Notice how the artist has shown a feeling of love and care between these old people — hardly an ordinary commercial transaction. And does the liquid being poured not look more like oil than wine?

Can we be sure? No. If you have a better explanation, please let us know.

41. Aert de Gelder
Dutch 1645-1727
Elisha and the Widow circa 1670
Oil on canvas
25½ × 33½"
Private collection

References:

Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 2, no. 763

Bernt, nos. 441-443

Bader, no. 53

Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 3, no. 3



41. Aert de Gelder, *Elisha and the Widow* circa 1670, Private collection

This painting is by a little-known Rembrandt student, Abraham van Dyck. For many years it was called "Grace before Meal", quite a common subject in seventeenth-century Holland. It was attributed to Nicolaes Maes, a much better-known student, until a recent cleaning revealed Abraham van Dyck's signature.

Could it illustrate more than grace before a meal? Could it be from a biblical story?

Dutch artists often took biblical scenes involving several people and illustrated just one or two of the characters. The art historian, Professor Christian Tümpel, has used a German word for this, "Herauslösung", a cutting-out, an excerpt which shows just a few people from a larger scene.

Abraham van Dyck must have loved the story of "Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath" told in 1. Kings 17. Elijah came to the starving widow and her son who were just preparing what they thought was their last meal. There is a painting in the museum in Copenhagen (fig. 1) showing the entire scene. Clearly our painting is a 'Herauslösung', showing only the widow and her son.

The Haggerty Museum at Marquette University recently showed a collection of Dutch paintings from the Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation in Houston, Texas. It included a painting (fig. 2), called "Elisha and the Widow", attributed to another Rembrandt student, Barent Fabritius. The handling of paint is so similar to that of our painting here, that we are confident that the Sarah

Campbell Blaffer painting is also by Abraham van Dyck and that it depicts Elijah, not Elisha. Many Dutch in the seventeenth century knew their Bible better than we do.

42. Abraham van Dyck
Dutch circa 1635-1672
The Widow of Zarephath and her Son
Oil on canvas
45½ × 37¾"
Private collection

References:
Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 1, no. 363
Bernt, no. 375
McTavish, no. 22
Bader, no. 50
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 4, no. 4



FIG. 1 Abraham van Dyck, *Elijah with the Widow of Zarephath and her Son*, Statens Museum For Kunst, Copenhagen



FIG. 2 Abraham van Dyck, *Elijah with the Widow of Zarephath and her Son*, Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, Houston



42. Abraham van Dyck, *The Widow of Zarephath and her Son*, Private collection

Look carefully at this church interior and ask yourself what, if anything, appears special to you.

Many artists in seventeenth-century Holland loved to paint church interiors, and some of the greatest artists of the Golden Age specialized in these. We all know how different sunsets can look; Dutch artists realized how very differently light can play in churches — their visits were not limited to Sunday mornings.

Collectors looking at church interiors ask the usual questions: who painted this, what is the condition, but they also ask some unusual questions: is this a known church or are there perchance elements of different churches combined, and is anything special going on?

When a photograph of this was published some years ago, specialists in two very different areas wrote to the owner, who did not then know whether this depicted a real or an imaginary church, and referred to their own very particular interests.

Some were musicians, organists, who pointed out that the organ was unique. It had been built in the Oude Kerk, the Old Church, in Delft in 1545, probably by the famous organ builder, Hendrik Niehoff. This organ was changed in 1633, dismantled and replaced by a modern organ in 1855. Each writer expressed regret that the wonderful old organ no longer existed.

The other correspondents were brass rubbing enthusiasts. There is very little proof that brass and stone rubbings were taken before the nineteenth century, but this painting and two church interiors by Hendrijk van Vliet, a seventeenth-century Delft artist, prove beyond a doubt that such rubbings were made.

We are not certain who painted this monumental work. It had been attributed to Job Berkheyde, but perhaps it is really by van Vliet, the artist who painted the other two church interiors which show people making brass rubbings.

Studying old paintings opens many doors: to organs and brass rubbings among many others.

43. Delft School
The Interior of the Oude Kerk, Delft circa 1670
 Oil on canvas
 36 × 42½"
 Mr. and Mrs. William Treul

References:
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 11, no. 3
 Varriano, no. 23



43. Delft School, *The Interior of the Oude Kerk, Delft* circa 1670, Mr. and Mrs. William Treul

Look at this painting and enjoy! It is such a happy picture. But what does it show? And where and when was it painted?

If you think that it is seventeenth or eighteenth or nineteenth century, you may be right. And if you think that it is Dutch or French or Italian, you may also be right!

But how can that be? Well, we have consulted some of the world's greatest art historians, and have received such diverse opinions, all the way from late seventeenth-century Dutch to early nineteenth-century Italian or French. Clearly these cannot all be right, but how can one decide?

The coastline looks Dutch, and in fact just such a tower appears in many paintings of the coast near Scheveningen. One able Dutch art historian believes that this is the work of Augustinus Stomer, a late seventeenth-century artist who worked in Utrecht. But his works are very rare and in out-of-the-way places, and we have not yet been able to make a comparison.

And what about the subject? Is it just a genre painting of some happy fisherfolk dancing on the shore? Perhaps so. But many artists depicted biblical scenes in the guise of genre. Could the bare-footed central figure sitting on the rock be Jesus at Capernaum, and the happy people around him some of his disciples who were fishermen? We may never know.

44. Anonymous European
Figures on a Beach
Oil on panel
12½ × 16¾"
Private collection

Reference:
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 20, no. 3



44. Anonymous European, *Figures on a Beach*, Private collection

PORTRAITS — SELF AND OTHERS

45

Portrait "A" seems to present no problems. It is signed by Nicolaes Maes, the Rembrandt student whose work you saw in No. 18, and is dated 1656, when Maes was 22. But who is the man depicted?

Clearly this was not a commissioned portrait, for Dutch burghers liked to see themselves as serious, substantial, worthy citizens, much as captains of industry do today. Compare this portrait with No. 47, and you will see what we mean. The man here is dressed casually, so that leaves two possibilities. It may be the portrait of one of Maes' friends, or perhaps it is a self-portrait. Which do you think it is?

Frankly, we don't know. There is a self-portrait of Maes (fig. 1) in the museum of his birthplace, Dordrecht, but that was done some thirty years later, and you know how much people can change in thirty years. And the fashionable wig he is wearing in the later picture makes comparison even more difficult.

Perhaps some day we will find an early self-portrait drawing which will help us to decide. In the meantime, we look at that direct gaze, so typical of a self-portrait, and wonder.

Unfortunately many artists did not sign their works as Maes did, and so they failed to help us. Consider portrait "B" of a young man in similarly casual dress, almost certainly a self-portrait. The technique looks Italian, and perhaps thirty or forty years later than Maes' portrait of

1656. By technique we mean the handling of paint, here on a canvas which is quite coarse, used in Italy. Perhaps this is a self-portrait of a northern artist painting in Italy—in time we will find out. Most artists painted themselves more than once—Rembrandt painted himself many times, Maes perhaps just twice.

45A. Nicolaes Maes Dutch 1634-1693
Self-Portrait? 1656
Oil on panel
18 × 15"
Private collection

References:
Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 4
Bernt, nos. 756-769
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 20, no. 2

45B. Northern European
Self-Portrait of an Artist circa 1680
Oil on canvas
21 × 16¾"
Private collection



FIG. 1 Nicolaes Maes, *Self-Portrait*, Dordrechts Museum, Dordrecht



45A. Nicolaes Maes, *Self-Portrait* (?) 1656, Private collection



45B. Northern European, *Self-Portrait of an Artist* circa 1680, Private collection

Compare this intense portrait with the photograph of the painting before cleaning (fig. 1). Notice that in the photograph the man seems to be pointing into space, perhaps at the sea. The dealer who sold the picture thought that the sitter might be a shipowner or the captain of a ship, but if that were so, why was there no ship?

A recent cleaning provided the answer: some squeamish Victorian had the skull overpainted, perhaps just because it was a skull (although skulls were common in Dutch vanitas still lifes), or perhaps because this is no ordinary depiction of a skull. The man is actually poking his finger into the nasal cavity! Would you want this in your dining room?

Now compare this painting with a self-portrait of a well-known artist, Michael Sweerts, in the museum of Oberlin College (fig. 2), and with the other portrait here, "B". Can you see the similarities and the differences?

Direct comparison between the portrait with the skull and the portrait in Oberlin has confirmed the identity of painter and subject, despite the completely different moods of the sitter. In the Oberlin painting, he appears as a self-confident bourgeois artist to whom everything is possible. In "A", he is a mystic contemplating the end of life. We know that Sweerts was a religious mystic, suffering from deep depressions.

The paint handling and the reddish underpaint in both the Oberlin portrait and our painting with the skull are the same, as are the man's features. When the late Professor Wolfgang Stechow saw the two paintings side by side at Oberlin, he was convinced that both are self-portraits by Michael Sweerts and that, in fact, the portrait with the skull is closer to the better-known and characteristic works of the artist.

And now compare the two portraits shown here. Are

they of the same person? Probably. What are the differences?

The differences are really quite subtle. The portrait with the skull is a self-portrait, and the artist has looked at himself through slightly rosy glasses — as most of us do — despite the pessimistic implication of the skull. The other portrait, believed to be of Michael Sweerts, by a Flemish artist, Pieter Franchois, is harder, more realistic. It is difficult to see yourself as you really are: even Michael Sweerts had that problem.

- 46A. Michael Sweerts
Netherlandish 1624-1664
Self-Portrait circa 1660
Oil on canvas
31 × 23¾"
Private collection

References:
Bernt, nos. 1231-1233
McTavish, no. 26
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 2, no. 1
Varriano, no. 16

- 46B. Attributed to Pieter Franchois
Flemish 1606-1654
Portrait of Michael Sweerts circa 1653
Oil on canvas laid down on panel
26 × 19½"
Private collection

Reference:
Varriano, no. 15



FIG. 1 Michael Sweerts, *Self-Portrait*, before cleaning

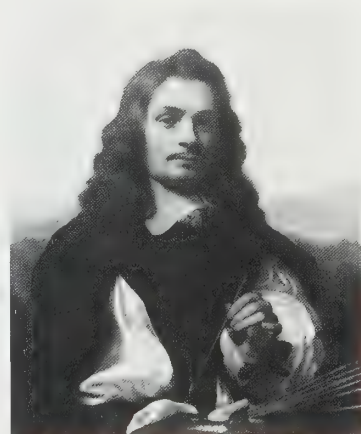
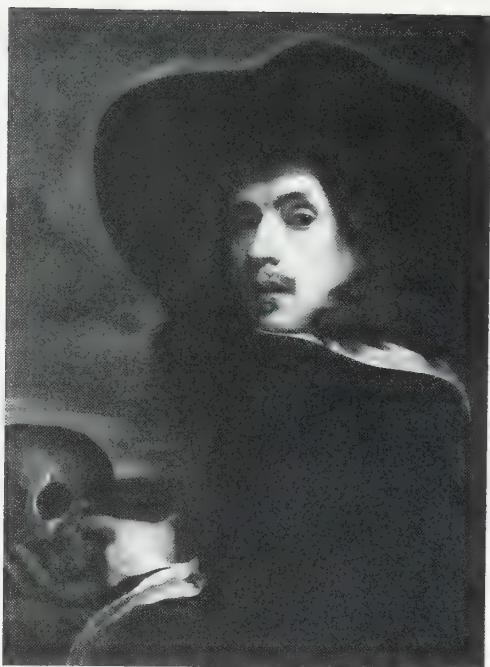
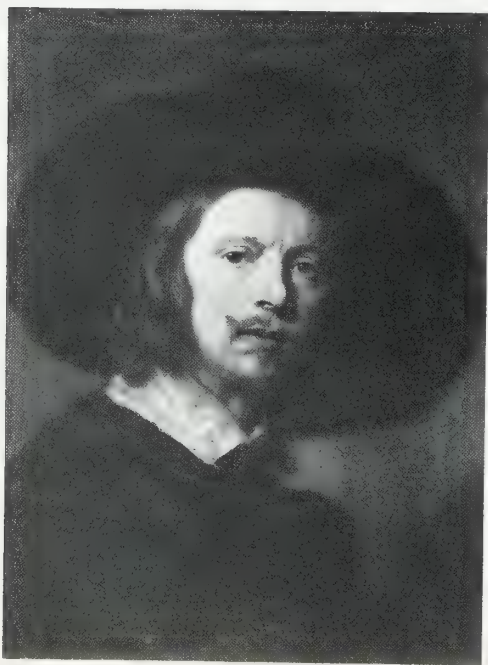


FIG. 2 Michael Sweerts, *Self-Portrait*, Allen Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio



46A. Michael Sweerts, *Self-Portrait* circa 1660, Private collection



46B. Attributed to Peter Franchois, *Portrait of Michael Sweerts* circa 1653, Private collection

47

Portraits range from the informal — look at our No. 45 — to the formal, often meant to tell us something about the sitter's interests and profession.

What do you think was the profession of the man depicted here?

It will help you to know that the book shown is Vesalius' "Anatomy," and the curious print is one of a "Muscle Man holding his own Skin" that had first appeared in a medical book a hundred years earlier.

Andreas Vesalius was the first modern anatomist. His textbook, first published in 1543, was republished many times, and the edition you see here, identified by the print, is Cornelis Danckerts' Amsterdam edition of 1647. With these facts to guide us we can conclude that most probably this portrait depicts Cornelis Danckerts who was a publisher of books and a maker of globes. Notice the globe behind the book.

The portrait is signed by the artist, Isaac Luttichuys, and dated 1657, but the signature and date are impossi-

ble to see in ordinary light. Either by mistake or in order to deceive, the signature has been cleaned off with solvents. But because the paint of the signature covered the background paint for 200 years or so, it created a fluorescent shadow that remains visible even after the signature itself is gone. Figure 1 shows a copy of the signature and date as seen under ultraviolet light.

47. Isaac Luttichuys
Dutch 1616-1673
Portrait of Cornelis Danckerts 1657
Oil on canvas
39 × 32¼"
Private collection

References:
Bernt, nos. 754, 755
McTavish, no. 25

I Luttichuys Fecit
© Anno 1657

47. FIG 1 Copy of signature and date



47. Isaac Luttichuys, *Portrait of Cornelis Danckerts* 1657, Private collection

There are all sorts of ways of "signing" a painting — full signatures, monograms, devices of all kinds. The artist Pieter de Ring, for example, just included a ring in many still lifes he painted.

One of the most interesting ways of signing a painting is to put a self-portrait into the painting. Just as Alfred Hitchcock appeared in some small part in each of his films, some artists have done the same.

Look at this "Baptism of the Eunuch" and see if you can find anything rather strange in this painting.

Actually there are several oddities, the seventeenth-century blue Delft bowl in a New Testament story, for instance. And where is the young man, next to the negro boy on the right, standing? In a ditch? But concentrate on that young man who seems so out of place in this story. All the other figures are wearing some sort of Oriental clothing, but he is dressed so differently.

You may have seen his face before, in the self-portrait of Jacob Backer (fig. 1). The face in our painting is a young face. This must be an early work, beautiful in color, but rather clumsy in execution. A mature artist would not have painted himself like that, in a ditch.

48. Jacob Backer
Dutch 1608-1651
The Baptism of the Eunuch circa 1630
Oil on canvas
41 × 46½"

References:
Sumowski, *Paintings*, vol. 1, no. 4
Bernt, nos. 43, 44
McTavish, no. 10
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 14, no. 2

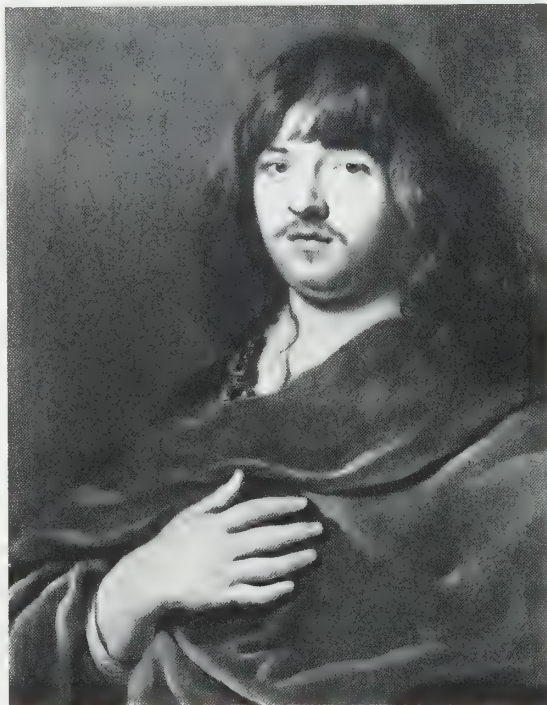


FIG. 1 Jacob Backer, *Self-Portrait*, Mauritshuis, The Hague



48. Jacob Backer, *The Baptism of the Eunuch* circa 1630, Private collection

FOOLING THE EYE

49

'Fool-the-Eye' paintings have been popular for a very long time. Renaissance and Baroque artists knew the stories of ancient Greek painters depicting fruit so realistically that even birds were fooled. But paintings with curtains such as here, practically inviting the onlooker to remove the curtain, are relatively rare.

One of the earliest of the curtain pictures is Titian's portrait of Filippo Archinto in Philadelphia (fig. 1), where the curtain may indicate that the portrait is posthumous. Among the most beautiful is Van der Spelt's flowerpiece in Chicago (fig. 2), with its blue curtain waiting to be pushed aside. Another is Raphaelle Peale's masterpiece in Kansas City (fig. 3). There is an apocryphal story that Peale's wife was very angry when she saw the painting, because she thought that a naked woman was hidden by the sheet.

Do you think that our curtain is meant to appear to be covering an actual scene, or the painting of a scene?

If you look carefully you will see that the curtain casts its shadow — clearly visible in the upper right — on a flat surface, that is, on a painting. That is why the owners have not found a suitable frame, for how could you frame the painting and not the curtain? This depicts the meeting of Alexander the Great and Roxana, the daughter of the Bactrian King — a delicate meeting leading to a marriage of convenience — and so it is covered by a veil.

The painting had belonged to the King of Saxony and was sold by his museum in Dresden in the nineteenth century, because they did not know who painted it — a poor reason for a sale if there ever was one!

Fool-the-eye paintings have been really popular from the seventeenth century on. For comparison, look at Richard Goodwin's nineteenth-century work, and Wisconsin's Aaron Bohrod's twentieth-century fantasy.

- 49A. Bolognese
The Meeting of Alexander the Great with Roxana
circa 1700
Oil on canvas
32½ × 26½"
Private collection

Reference:
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 10, no. 1

- 49B. Richard LaBarre Goodwin
American 1840-1910
Hunting Cabin Door circa 1889
Oil on canvas
52 × 32"
Milwaukee Art Museum

Reference:
Goldstein, p. 111

- 49C. Aaron Bohrod
American 1907-
Pillar 1954
Oil on panel
30 × 18"
Milwaukee Art Museum



FIG. 1 Titian, *Filippo Archinto*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, John G. Johnson Collection

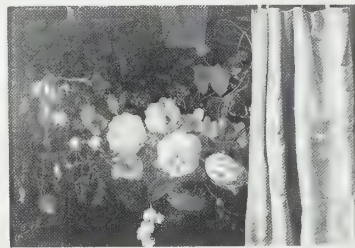


FIG. 2 Adriaen van der Spelt, *Flower Piece* 1658, The Art Institute of Chicago



FIG. 3 Raphaelle Peale, *Venus Rising from the Sea - A Deception* 1822, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City



49A. Bolognese, *The Meeting of Alexander the Great with Roxana* circa 1700, Private collection



49B. Richard LaBarre Goodwin, *Hunting Cabin Door* circa 1889, Milwaukee Art Museum



49C. Aaron Bohrod, *Pillar* 1954, Milwaukee Art Museum

Can you see any evidence of another painting underneath this simple still life "A", painted in Amsterdam in 1664 by an artist who specialized in still life? Perhaps even the outline of a face under the white jug with the crest of Amsterdam? Do you see the vertical ridges in the bottom third of the painting? Why are they there?

An X-ray (fig. 1) reveals all. Under this still life is the portrait of a man, complete with a white ruff, in which the first artist used a lot of lead white paint which shows up particularly well in the X-ray.

Artists' materials are quite expensive and in earlier centuries were even more so. Pigments had to be ground by hand, and wooden panels had to be bevelled and cured, and so it is not surprising that panels and canvases were re-used. Even Rembrandt painted some of his works on top of others. Usually it takes an X-ray to see what is underneath, but not always. Sometimes the paint underneath is so thick that you can see the outline through the final work.

Clearly Collier didn't think much of this portrait, done some fifty years earlier, and merrily painted his still life on top. Frankly, we prefer the still life also.

This re-use of older paintings is quite common, and an X-ray is not always necessary to show the first painting. Sometimes it is sufficient just to turn the painting over, as

for instance with this little mid-seventeenth-century portrait on copper, "B", painted on the reverse of a Flemish landscape (fig. 2), done several decades earlier.

- 50A. Evert Collier
Dutch active 1660-1707
Still life with Jug, Wine Glass, Pipe and Broken Brazier 1664
Oil on panel
17½ × 13½"
Private collection

References:
Bernt, nos. 263, 264
McTavish, no. 31
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 21, no. 4

- 50B. Dutch
Portrait of a Man circa 1640
(The reverse bears a Flemish landscape circa 1620)
Oil on copper
9 × 7"
Private collection

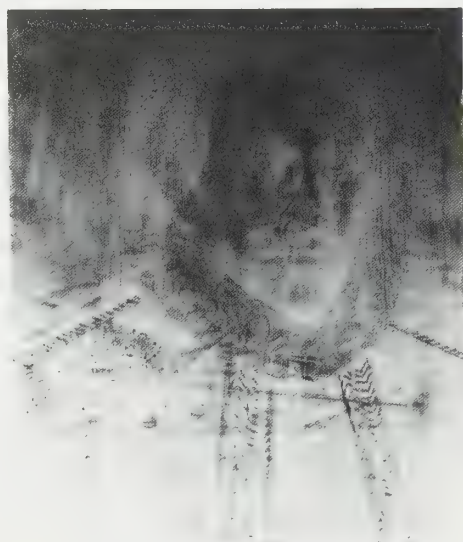


FIG. 1 X-ray of Collier painting



FIG. 2 Reverse of *Portrait of a Man*



50A. Evert Collier, *Still Life with Jug, Wine Glass, Pipe and Broken Brazier* 1664, Private collection



50B. Dutch, *Portrait of a Man* circa 1640, Private collection

51

Do you see anything strange about this painting, other than that it is standing on its head?

The previous owner had lived with it for many years without noticing the eyes underneath the portrait.

Like the still life, No. 50, this was painted on top of a portrait of a man, but the still life was painted on a complete portrait, whereas this is on a small part of a portrait. That's a pity, because we might just prefer the portrait underneath and have the one on top removed. With No. 50, we much prefer the simple still life to the painting underneath.

The painting on top here is a studio replica — a genteel term for a copy — of a portrait of a well-known painter, Gaspar de Crayer, by Anthony Van Dyck. The original grisaille is in the collection of the Duke of Buccleuch, and is well known through Paul du Pont's print (fig. 1).

51. Flemish
Portrait of Gaspar de Crayer circa 1670
Oil on panel
9¾ x 7½"
Private collection



GASPAR DE CRAVER
ANTWERPIENSIS HUMANARVM FRVRARVM MAIORVM
PICTOR ET CARDINALIS FERDINANDI HISPANIARVM
INFANTIS DOMESTICVS BRVXELLIS

FIG. 1 Engraving by Paul du Pont after Anthony van Dyck



52. Hendrick Bloemaert, *The Apple Seller* 1624, Milwaukee Art Museum

What's wrong with this grand lady? Spend a moment looking very carefully at the photograph of the large painting taken before recent restoration (fig. 1).

The dress shown in this portrait recently given to the Milwaukee Art Museum is boldly styled — typical of the late sixteenth century. The face and hands, by contrast, are insipid and characterless, resembling an early twentieth-century, candy-box beauty, and they suggest a slender figure that is drowning in her massive black dress.

Visible even in a photograph, the patchy shadows between her ear and chin hint at a solution to the problem. Closer examination confirmed that the face and hands, as well as the brown curtain, were entirely painted over.

Why had the original paint been covered by clumsy overpaint?

Perhaps the face was so badly damaged that the only way to save it was by totally repainting it. Perhaps a small area of damage inspired a restorer to start painting, and he couldn't stop. Or perhaps there was no damage at all, just a face someone disliked and wanted to improve.

Tiny test areas of dirty varnish and overpaint were removed with solvents to get a view of the original paint underneath (fig. 2). The good condition of the paint revealed in the tests inspired the museum to have X-rays taken (fig. 3).

The X-ray is a shadow image cast by the lead in lead-white paint which the sixteenth-century artist used to create the light parts of the face. The twentieth-century restorer used a different white pigment, so the later image doesn't show up on the X-ray.

Compare the X-ray face with the face in fig. 1. The X-ray shows an older, plumper woman with very different features. The drawing is quite skillful and — most important of all — the powerful characterization creates a portrait of a specific woman, rather than an imaginary "beauty".

Aside from the tiny spot to the right of her nose, the X-ray revealed no significant paint damage at all. On the strength of this encouraging information, all the yellowed varnish and clumsy repainting were removed, damaged areas carefully painted in, and new varnish applied. The final result is the large painting you see here.

The face has changed significantly, but what else has changed besides the face?

The curtain is boldly patterned and dramatically agitated. The lady's hair, now powdered grey, has an added layer on top.

Why were all these changes made in the first place? One can only guess that the portrait fell victim to an early twentieth century taste for houses that looked like Elizabethan mansions and were furnished as such with blandly decorative "ancestral" portraits. Our lady had too much personality to blend in with the decor, so she was altered.

Only one question remains: who is she? There are two wonderful clues hidden within the picture itself. Can you spot them?

Hint: look for letters of the alphabet.

The lace collar includes a repeated pattern of a monogram of "H" and "M" surrounded by olive branches and a crown, alternating with fleurs-de-lis and a crown. The links of the chain attached at her waist form a similar "HM" monogram.

The costume, jewels and crown suggest royalty c.1600; the fleurs-de-lis suggest France; and the monogram suggests Henry and Marie. In 1600 King Henry IV of France cemented a political alliance with the Italian grand duke of Tuscany by marrying the Duke's daughter, Marie de Medici.

The identification is confirmed by the existence of a well-known portrait of Marie de Medici attributed to Frans Pourbus the Younger (fig. 4). The similarity of style, as well as likeness, between that portrait and ours suggests that they not only depict the same sitter but are by the same artist. Even more — the other Pourbus painting gives us the intriguing idea that ours once showed the full length of the voluminous skirt — another casualty to twentieth-century taste, this time unrestorable. The bottom of the canvas has been cut off.

53. Attributed to Frans Pourbus the Younger
Flemish 1569/70-1622
Portrait of Marie de' Medici circa 1609-22
Oil on canvas
43 x 33"
Milwaukee Art Museum

Reference:
Goldstein, p. 33



53. Attributed to Frans Pourbus the Younger, *Portrait of Marie de' Medici* circa 1609-22, Milwaukee Art Museum



FIG. 1 Painting before restoration



FIG. 2 Painting during restoration



FIG. 3 X-ray of painting

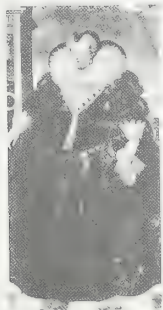


FIG. 4 Attributed to Frans Pourbus the Younger, *Marie de' Medici*, Prado, Madrid

LAST QUESTIONS

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It is often so much easier to tell what a painting is not than to decide what it is.

After the previous Milwaukee owner of this portrait of a boy purchased it in an antique store in Vienna in 1926, he was told that it was by the famous Dutch artist, Frans Hals. (See the Milwaukee Journal article in fig. 1). We do not have a painting by Hals to show you, but you may have seen one of the many reproductions of Hals' works, such as "The Laughing Cavalier" (fig. 2). Look at the way Hals uses paint in bold patches to produce the texture and color of skin and cloth. Then look at our painting. Do you think our painting looks like a work by Frans Hals?

Of course not. Frans Hals is much more impressionistic in style. Slapdash is not the right word, but once you have looked at some of his works, you will know what we mean.

This painting is in excellent condition and so intriguing, for who did paint it, and where and when?

Many of the world's ablest art historians have tried to solve this particular puzzle and have come up with many different solutions, none generally accepted. Some have suggested that it is Italian, Bolognese, perhaps by Annibale Carracci or one of his brothers, about 1580 or 1590. Another eminent art historian was convinced that it is by the Bolognese artist, Guercino, painted a little later, while

another scholar suggested that it is Roman, between Vouet and Bernini.

Then there is a group of art historians who don't think that it is Italian at all, but Dutch, perhaps a Dutch artist working in Italy about the middle of the seventeenth century.

What a wonderful puzzle. Will it ever be solved? Yes, of course, though perhaps not in our lifetime. Some day an art historian will look at it and point to another, signed work by the artist, painted in exactly the same manner. That will greatly enhance its commercial value but not its beauty. And even now it is clear that the previous owner got a great bargain in Vienna when he bought this for \$500, even though \$500 was worth a great deal more in 1926 than it is now.

54. Italian or Dutch
Head of a Young Man
Oil on canvas
23 x 19"
Private collection

Reference:
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 10, no. 2

'Old Masters' Found in Milwaukee Homes



FIG. 1 Page from the *Milwaukee Journal*, October 14, 1928



FIG. 2 Frans Hals, *The Laughing Cavalier*, Wallace Collection, London



54. Italian or Dutch 17th century, *Head of a Young Man*, Private collection

55

If you have looked at many old paintings, you have met angels like this before, usually angels as in fig. 1, telling Mary that she is with child. But this is a different story. Do you know what it is?

This shows the first appearance of an angel described in the Bible, the angel telling Hagar to return to Abraham (Genesis 16, 7-14). It is interesting that the first angel to appear to a human spoke not to some powerful man like a king or a general, or even to Abraham, but to a runaway Egyptian slave. Angels are not elitist.

We do not know who painted this beautiful picture, nor, as in No. 54, do we know whether it was painted by an Italian artist fairly early in the seventeenth century, or by a Dutch artist strongly influenced by Italian art. Or it might possibly be by two hands, the Dutch landscape by a northern artist and the figures by an Italian.

This painting was brought to England by the second Earl of Sunderland about 1660, and since that time, until

very recently, hung at Althorp, the home of the Earls Spencer. There it was attributed to Domenico Fetti. As with the non-Frans Hals boy, No. 54, it is easier to say what a painting is not — and it is certainly not by Fetti — than to say what it is. In time we will find out which artist(s) painted this masterpiece, and until then we can just enjoy its beauty without the benefit of a label.

55. Dutch or Italian
Hagar and the Angel circa 1620-1630
 Oil on canvas
 41½ x 52¼"
 Private collection

Reference:
Aldrichimica Acta, vol. 21, no. 3

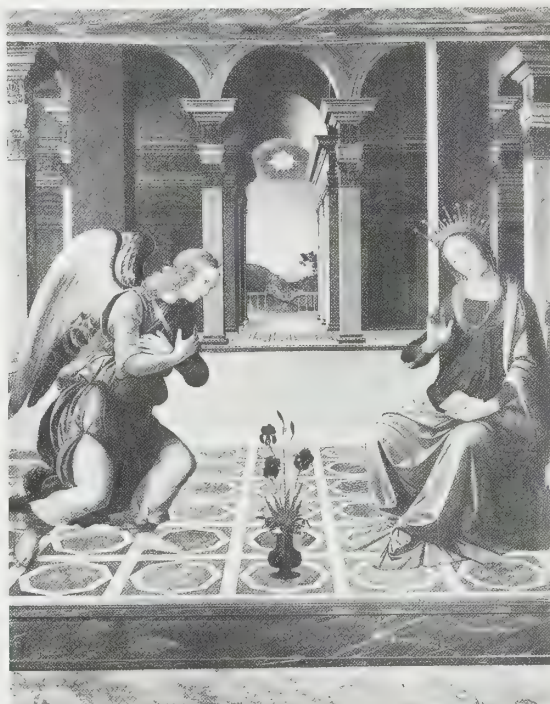


FIG. 1 Florentine, 15th Century, *The Annunciation*



55. Dutch or Italian, *Hagar and the Angel* circa 1620-1630, Private collection

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