

Alfred Bader

Alfred Bader Fine Art

Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader collection - The Foster
Gallery

1987

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Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader
COLLECTION

Selected
DRAWINGS & PAINTINGS



Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader Collection
Selected Drawings and Paintings

Exhibition Catalogue
compiled or authored by

Eugene Hood



The Foster Gallery
Fine Arts Center
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
Eau Claire, Wisconsin
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Sponsored by the Foster Gallery, Art Department, and
Chemistry Department of UW-Eau Claire

FOREWORD

The Foster Gallery is truly honored to host this exhibition of works selected from the collection of Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader. This group of art works represents only a small but important sample loaned from this internationally significant private collection. This group of paintings and drawings represents also something of a departure for the Foster, in that it is the first exhibit of a substantially art historical nature to be installed here. The very fine art of John Whalley should not be overlooked in making such a characterization. Whalley is a twentieth century artist whom Dr. Bader regards as a youthful master in his own time, quite worthy of a connoisseur's consideration. This living artist has kindly consented to lend six unsold works of his own to supplement the six of the Bader Collection. The exhibition displays a total of thirty works: six seventeenth century Dutch and Flemish masterpieces, twelve nineteenth century drawings by the Bohemian Anton Lewy, and the twelve works by John Whalley.

Dr. Bader is a man with a sickness. But it is a wonderful sickness: Alfred Bader loves art and is obsessed with collecting it. Fortunately for us Dr. Bader's other great love, chemistry, has afforded him the means to assuage his sickness and enjoy his obsession. It is also fortunate for us that Dr. Bader is a collector of excellent tastes with a connoisseur's un-failing eye. Our reactions of awe and wonder shall testify to the refinement of that eye.

Alfred Bader was born in 1924 in Vienna. He was brought up by a beloved aunt being orphaned from a very early age. His obsession with collecting art began at the age of ten, when he used some money given to him to purchase an Old Master drawing. In 1938 he was sent to England primarily to avoid Nazi recrimination for his Jewish heritage. In England young Alfred studied chemistry and indulged his other interests in art and the Bible. The British government in 1940, concerned about possible security risks, deported Alfred along with other German Jewish refugees to a camp near Montreal, Canada. The Canadian branch of his second surrogate family, the Wolffs of Montreal, fortunately secured a release from the camp and an admission for Alfred to Queens University in Ontario.

From Queens he earned a B.S. degree in chemical engineering in 1945, a B.A. in history in 1946, and a M.S. degree in 1947. Bader attended Harvard studying chemistry, receiving a doctorate in 1949. He founded the Aldrich Chemical Co. in 1951 in Milwaukee while still working for Pittsburgh Paint Glass. In 1954 Dr. Bader resigned his position with PPG in order to remain in Milwaukee and pursue full-time development of his Aldrich Chemical Co. Dr. Bader is not only an eminent chemist and entrepreneur, he is also a respected art historian and art restoration researcher. His scholarly writings on the Bible in Dutch art have made Dr. Bader a much sought after lecturer throughout the world.

Alfred Bader constantly confronts a serious dilemma. As a significant collector he is custodian and preserver of many true masterpieces of art; he must consequently be very cautious in lending such works. But Dr. Bader is also a profoundly generous man, and his love of great art is an unselfish love that extends to having his works seen and shared with as many people as possible. An example of Dr. Bader's altruism can be found even in the two-year preparation of this exhibition. In negotiating this exhibit Dr. Bader had originally planned to include a painting of Solomon praying by Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout (1621-1674). But preferring to unselfishly distribute parts of his collection to as wide an audience as possible, he lent the work to a Japanese exhibition which requested it and thereby has increased the world's enjoyment of his paintings.

Writing in the Introduction to a previous Bader Collection catalogue, *Selections from the Bader Collection* (Milwaukee, 1974) the world-renowned scholar on Dutch Baroque art and friend to Dr. Bader, Professor Wolfgang Stechow, praised Alfred Bader the man and the collector. I can do little more than echo his words: ". . . all art lovers are indebted to his zeal, his perspicacity and his often proven generosity in sharing his treasures with them." Wisconsin is indeed fortunate to claim Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader as citizens.

Eugene Hood



Jan Lievens could be considered Rembrandt's artistic best friend during their early years in Leiden. Lievens, younger and perhaps a bit more precocious than Rembrandt, studied with Pieter Lastman in Amsterdam from 1617 to 1619, five years before Rembrandt also studied with Lastman in Amsterdam. It is probable that the two artists worked together in Leiden in the later 1620's, and may have shared a studio. Lievens's works of the time bear the influence of Lastman and of the Utrecht Caravaggisti in their use of light and in the dramatic presentation of the action. He subsequently worked in England, Antwerp, The Hague, and repeatedly in Amsterdam.

This is a fragment of a larger composition which must have been one of Lievens's finest works. Sometime during the last hundred years, it was cropped at top and bottom, and the figures of Simeon holding the Baby were scraped off. The personal faith of Simeon (Luke 2) was a recurrent theme among northern, and particularly Dutch, artists of the 17th century. Lievens, Rembrandt, and Rembrandt's students depicted it time and again. Rembrandt left a version unfinished at his death. Perhaps this is the painting of Simeon and the baby Jesus mentioned in the 1632 inventory of the House of Orange, No. 64: "by Rembrandt or Lievens." The present work is of great historical interest as Rembrandt was so impressed by its composition that he used it in a dark etching done some twenty years later.

Dr. Bader faced the dilemma, some years ago when a London dealer offered him this fragment, of whether to purchase a painting that at one time had been a masterpiece, but what remained was a wreck. It was fortunate that the magnificently painted figures of the high priests were largely intact. An old photo showing the former splendor of this work before cropping made possible a reconstruction of the figures on the lower left of which only the halo remained.



JAN LIEVENS (1607-1674)
Simeon, c. 1631
Oil on canvas, 19 x 22 inches.



ornelis Bega was born in Haarlem and worked there for most of his life. He was, in all likelihood, a student of Adriaen van Ostade, the prolific Haarlem painter of the Dutch social scene. Bega traveled to Germany, Switzerland, and probably to Italy in 1653. After returning to Haarlem in 1654 he joined the painters guild.

Bega's painting of *The Alchemist* is fascinating for its depiction of a scene of scientific historical interest which is both finely detailed and beautifully painted. The alchemist's room is filled with the specialized accoutrements which are a necessary part of the subject's craft. The obvious interest in the effect of natural light entering through the window and the way in which it illuminates a limited area of the room is reminiscent of Ostade, and perhaps derived from the elder master.¹

Another slightly smaller version of this same picture exists on panel, undoubtedly in Bega's own hand. Formerly owned by the Fisher Scientific Company of Pittsburgh, it is now in the J. Paul Getty Museum. Dr. Bader has argued convincingly that the painting on panel is probably an "improved" replica of his picture.² One reason is that the alteration of several details in the work on panel clarifies the spatial illusion in the composition. Another logical reason for the precedence of Dr. Bader's painting is that if the panel work had come first the artist could have easily cut the canvas to the same smaller size of the panel to facilitate copying. A wooden panel was more expensive and of fixed dimensions, thus explaining the discrepancy in size.



CORNELIS BEGA (1631/32-1664)
The Alchemist, c. 1660
Oil on canvas, 16 1/4 x 15 inches.

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an de Corduba, also known as Johan de Cordua, was born in Brussels. He lived most of his mature years in central Europe, particularly Vienna where he was active from 1663 to 1702. Joachim von Sandrart, a contemporary artist and the author of the *Teutsch Akademie*, complimented Corduba for the "naturalism, clear rendering, and smooth surfaces" of his work. In addition to still-life paintings, Corduba also rendered genre pictures, biblical scenes, and portraits later in his career.

A vanitas still-life is that type of still-life picture with religious and moralizing overtones which displays a particular collection of objects designed to remind the viewer of the transience and uncertainty of mortal life. The word in Latin literally means "emptiness". Such a work was probably derived from the related *momento mori* representations of St. Jerome popular in Utrecht, which would link Corduba back to Dutch art.

Dr. Bader's *Vanitas Still-Life* by Corduba contains numerous objects often included in vanitas images: musical instruments, books, playing cards, a watch, a globe, hourglass, and a skull. A likely interpretation would suggest that the work juxtaposes the two realms of time and music, with death acting as the ever-present background theme. The flute and violin, as well as the playing cards, are probably warnings against a lazy and sinful life. The watch, hourglass, and almanac are all literal means by which the passage of time and life is represented.



JAN DE CORDUBA (c. 1630-1702)
Vanitas Still-Life, 1667
Oil on canvas, 22 x 27 inches.

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Abraham Bloemaert was born in Gorinchem, but moved to Utrecht at an early age. He remained there for the remainder of his life except for working periods in Paris in the early 1580's and in Amsterdam in the early 1590's. Bloemaert was a student of Cornelius van Haarlem and Joos de Beer. Known for his history paintings in which landscape plays an important part, Bloemaert also painted scenes with a moralizing purport and several portraits.³ Stylistically, he was quite adaptable: embracing phases of Mannerism, Baroque Classicism, and even Caravaggesque tendencies transmitted through his pupil Gerald Honthorst. Bloemaert's other pupils included Hendrick Terbrugghen, Jan Both, Jan Baptist Weenix, and Jan van Bijlert.

The painting of St. Jerome has been known to art historians for many years, but only because the artist's son Cornelius made an engraving after its completion in the 1620's. The inscription on the engraving answers all iconographic questions: this is *St. Jerome Studying the Old Testament* which he was the first to translate competently into Latin. St. Jerome (c. 340-420) was one of those Latin church fathers to whom the title of Saint was given not for his saintliness, but for his erudition and scholarship.

The whereabouts of the original painting had been unknown for approximately 350 years, until Dr. Bader's expert eye and marvelous good fortune discovered it in an antique store in The Hague in 1974.



ABRAHAM BLOEMAERT (1564-1651)
St. Jerome, c. 1620's
Oil on canvas, 25 3/4 x 20 7/8 inches.

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Pieter Nason was born in Amsterdam and active there until 1638. He was probably the pupil of Jan van Ravestyn of The Hague, to where he moved and became a member of the Guild of St. Luke in 1639. Nason helped to found a new guild, The 'Pictura' Society, in The Hague in 1656. He is most famous for his portraits, particularly those of Charles II of England, Willem Frederik of Nassau, and that of the Great Elector of Berlin. He also did some rare still lifes in the style of Willem Claesz Heda.

René Descartes (1596-1650) was a Frenchman who is most well-known today as a philosopher, but he was also a soldier, mathematician, physicist, and teacher. Few great thinkers have been so versatile. He was the ultimate philosophical doubter of all things, even for a time, his own existence. His famous Latin phrase *Cogito ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am") is a household adage.

Descartes lived in Holland from 1629 to 1649, truly the Golden Age of Dutch painting. It is not at all surprising that he was the sitter for a number of important Dutch portraitists, Frans Hals and von Schooten among them. Descartes is depicted here with such spirit that it is likely to have been painted from life. In a letter to Dr. Bader, the eminent Harvard art historian, Seymour Slive, finds that the painting conveys some of the intellectual "toughness" and "blackness" one expects from this great doubter. Professor Slive also raised an intriguing question in aesthetics: "Why is a portrait vastly enhanced when we know that the subject is one of the great Western philosophers?"



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PIETER NASON (1612-c.1689)
Portrait of René Descartes, 1647
Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 inches.



Jacob van Oost I was born in Bruges and trained there by his brother Frans. He traveled to Rome around 1621 where he remained for about five years studying for a time with Annibale Carracci, before returning to Bruges. His early works show the influence of Rubens's color, to which he added an interest in the manipulation of light and shadow derived from Caravaggio. Jacob van Oost the Elder is most well known for his portraits with their vigorous realism, and his Caravaggesque religious paintings including *Madonna and Saints* (1648), *St. Sebastian* (1646), and the *Calling of St. Matthew* (1640).

This work, also called "Studyhead of a Young Man", was at one time rather ambitiously attributed to the great Jacob Jordaens, a contemporary of Rubens in Antwerp. This was done simply because a similar study now in the Akademie in Vienna is surely by the same hand, and that one has long been attributed to Jordaens. But neither of these two paintings truly resembles other established works by Jordaens. The present attribution to Jacob van Oost the Elder, while being quite plausible, has yet to be proved certain. This was suggested in a letter to Dr. Bader by the renowned scholar of Flemish art, Julius Held.

Dr. Bader cares about the attribution, not for himself, but for the sake of the painting. He values its beauty for being a delightful study of a serious boy, and for its captivating charm.



attributed to **JACOB VAN OOST the ELDER** (1601-1671)
Study of a Boy, c. 1620
Oil on paper, mounted on canvas, 10 3/4 x 9 3/4 inches.



Anton Lewy, a native of Bohemia, was active over the greater part of the latter nineteenth century. His specialties were landscapes and architectural views rendered on sojourns throughout central Europe. Most of Lewy's drawings charmingly depict villages and towns, churches and aristocratic homes. The particular regions he found most enticing were Moravia, Bohemia, (now parts of modern Czechoslovakia), and Germany, particularly Meissen and the environs of Berlin.

Reproduced here is *In the Old City*, one of the twelve Lewy drawings on exhibit. The old city is, of course, the old city of Prague, capital of both nineteenth-century Bohemia and present-day Czechoslovakia.

Dr. Bader collected Lewy's drawings in his youth in Vienna, and now owns what is probably the largest collection of which these twelve are but a sample. One can readily see that an individual talent and inherent quality of draftsmanship abound in the artist's work. The excellent taste of Alfred Bader as a collector, even at a very early age, was corroborated by the Albertina in Vienna. An exhibition there entitled *Menschen um die Jahrhundertwende* ("People at the Turn of the Century"), included some Lewy drawings and, indeed, they were among the best in that exhibition.



ANTON LEWY (1845-1897)
In The Old City, 1875
Ink and pencil on paper, 10 3/4 x 6 1/8 inches.



JOHN WHALLEY 1954

John Whalley was born in Brooklyn in 1954, but his family soon moved to a more rural area of New York state. From an early age he was encouraged by his parents to paint and draw, particularly by his mother who was herself a painter and art teacher. Whalley received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1976. He also married a fellow graduate of that school, Linda Hoffman, in that same year.

Whalley cites a number of artists as influences upon his work; among them are Vermeer, Rembrandt, Chardin, Durer, Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, and Andrew Wyeth. As a student Whalley did have his period of experimentation, trying notably assemblage, lithography, as well as oil and egg tempera.

The Whalley family has lived in Lima, New York, and Harrison Valley, Pennsylvania. In 1986, John and Linda Whalley returned to New England with their two sons Matthew and Benjamin to live in the small historic town of Standish, Maine.

John Whalley has exhibited works at the Rose Art Museum of Brandeis University, the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts, Gallery Atelier 696 in Rochester, New York, the Tremellan Galleries in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and at Gallery Zena in Boston. He has more

recently shown his work at the Woods Gerry Gallery of the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, the Zantman Galleries of Carmel, California, at the Society of Illustrators Gallery in New York City, and at the Purdue University Galleries.

Mr. Whalley has taught or lectured at the Brockton, Massachusetts Art Center and at Bridgewater State College.

John Whalley expresses his aesthetic philosophy in a few sentences that reveal a great deal about his human, as well as his artistic personality. "I much more enjoy taking everyday unbeautiful things in the proper setting and painting them beautifully if I can, rather than taking a beautiful thing and painting it all right. I like to take something unbeautiful and bring out the beauty in it."

Whalley freely admits the pitfalls of his art, "Something I've always consciously had to be careful of is the temptation to make picturesque little pictures that border on being sentimental."

It is a narrow ground that John Whalley treads because the other extreme from sentimentality has its allure as well. "I struggle with the problem of being too literal. I constantly have to look at things more objectively, as other people would see them."

All of the works following are by this artist.





John Whalley considers a study to be an initial exploration of a visual scene. He finds that seeing it down on paper, in actuality, gives him more of an idea of what it can be than simply and only imagining it. "To imagine it into a painting, for me, it really helps to actually take it a step [in a study drawing] toward becoming a painting," he says. The study allows Whalley to literally see if what is before him and in his imagination is something that could "carry" into a painting.

Beyond the conceptual testing that a study allows, it is also where Whalley can "feel the textures, the light, and the composition." It permits him to deal with a formal composition, and to record the textures of the things seen. But drawing is not merely a means of study for Whalley; it is also a thing of joy in itself. Whalley is a draftsman, as well as a painter, who loves the monochromatic quality and the textures one gets with graphite. The artist reveals, "I always love the look of a drawing emerging out of the paper." When asked about the incomplete nature of this work Whalley admits that "had everything been developed fully, it would lose a certain kind of nice feeling it has."

The central portion of the tempera painting uses this study quite literally. The round forms in the crate are potatoes, unwashed, gotten right out of the ground. They have a dirt coating that affords them an unfamiliar texture and "wipes out their identity." The artist confesses he was "a little too literal on them," hence many viewers have been unable to recognize these forms as potatoes.



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
The Farm Scale (study), 1981
 Pencil on paper, 22 1/4 x 14 inches.





The setting for this painting is a friend's vegetable stand south of Boston, near the small, rural community of Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Whalley compressed the nicest elements of the long stand into what is seen here, taking the corn from the other end on the wall. He says that the viewer probably wouldn't recognize the original source from seeing his work. Indeed the deeper room on the left side of the picture was not there, but invented to give the composition "a nice dark area to balance things out a bit." The stand building ended on the left as it does in the pencil study, but Whalley preserves the field beyond and renders it through the openings of a window which was taken, in fact, from the artist's house at the time. He admits that "the composition [ending with that vertical line behind the scale itself] didn't work out too well." The field landscape is left loose and relatively unrefined in order to give the eye a rest from the great specificity of the foreground.

The dramatic illumination that enters the work from the right is late afternoon light at a shallow angle which Whalley says he recurrently enjoys. "Some of the moments that thrill me, that I like to put in paint, tend to happen, it seems, with morning or evening light." A small, formal detail is that of the leaf breaking the strong shadow line below the handle of the weighing basin. It is a contrived device, there to get your eye past that very hard line which is a trick, Whalley believes, he derived from Chardin.

Whalley also cites the Dutch masters of genre and still-life when referring to this work. "The Dutch had a real love for everyday objects and very simple settings. I would think that a lot of my work has elements in it that are very similar." The artist encourages us to investigate the color in this work, particularly in the shadow areas where the late afternoon light brings out the complementary hues, juxtaposing the warm and cool colors. With respect to color, Whalley again cites the seventeenth century Dutch masters indicating his admiration and affinity: "The Dutch really had a lot of browns and golden warm-type color — earth tones. Many of my paintings, I think, have had that."



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
The Farm Scale, 1982
Egg tempera on panel, 25 x 22 1/2 inches.





he paintbrush placed in the left-most can in the composition was not put there for symbolic purposes, according to the artist. It just happened to "be laying around," and helped to enhance the composition. The can in which the brush is placed is a "Cottolene" can Whalley picked up out of curiosity in a junk shop in Pennsylvania, and still has. The little can in the front and center has a blue that the artist says, "I just love in and of itself." Indeed, color seems to be an important ingredient, particularly in conjunction with light. Whalley finds the subtle greys and metallic colors in the picture, so difficult to describe in words, to be "a feast to the eyes." These were a major motivation for doing the painting: "the challenge was to translate these into paint."

Whalley also believes the work has a certain "glow" about it. The subject was arranged in a location that is one of the few places in Whalley's house where he gets a consistent light all day. The artist says, "this spot is almost set up naturally to be a little alcove for still-lives; the basic lighting on objects remains pretty steady during the day." Because of this constancy of illumination, the artist allowed himself to strive, herein, for a high contrast, a "big range of darks to lights." And in consequence "the work glows a lot," to use Whalley's words.

Whalley separates the crock from the other cylindrical forms of the still-life to slightly open up the total space occupied by all the objects, and to prevent the combined shadow from becoming "one big lump." The right side pitcher has been rotated to this particular orientation to point the viewer's eye into the composition, and to catch the nice shape of the handle forming that shadow.

The shelf upon which the still-life sits is made of marble, hence allowing some beautiful, loose, coloristic underpainting by the artist. But, in a fascinating aside, Whalley reveals a surprising fact for so careful an artist: "one of my favorite brushstrokes, it kind of happened by accident on the right side of the objects, is a kind of sweeping curlycue brushstroke."



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
Still-life with Crock, 1986
Oil on panel, 18 x 24 inches.

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Whalley states that in this work he was mainly interested in describing the fruit within and centered around the form of the bowl "in a little bit of a dramatic setting with the light sweeping sideways." The bowl is one the artist loves, warped with age and having an interesting, odd shape. Whalley places it on a marble countertop to contrast the diagonal edges of the flat surface with the horizontal curves and rounded edges of the bowl and its contents. The light Whalley mentions is a very warm reflected light that tends to generalize and delete the slight texture on the surface of the bowl. The peaches with their detailed, specific surface texture thus remain the elements of uncompromised interest.

In setting up this still-life, the artist has pulled out one peach for the sake of value and spatial contrast, but also to better connect the foreground with the background space. It is interesting that the central piece of fruit in the container is turned so that the stem becomes an intentional focal point; this is a device Whalley will use in another work. This out-turned stem is, in effect, a bullseye very close to the exact center of the picture, which invites the viewer into the composition.

The background pattern of the wallpaper does not recede into space as much as it could in spite of the change in value moving to the right, back corner. The artist, well aware of this, believes that again it was his striving for hard-edged accuracy which flattened out the patterned plane. He feels that perhaps a more successful spatial recession could have been achieved if the pattern had been more "suggested," and less accurately rendered, as the wall recedes in space.



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
Bowl of Peaches, 1986
Oil on panel, 16 x 24 inches.

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Whalley employs a compositional format in this work that, by now, may appear to be a common, recurring scheme. Near the lower middle of the picture is an orthogonal plane holding the main objects of the subject, above that is a vertical plane which acts as a background or backdrop. Sometimes Whalley complicates this scheme by adding several steps or ninety degree planar shifts, and sometimes he turns the first orthogonal plane to a diagonal, as he does here, and in *Still-life with Crock and Bowl of Peaches*. Here there is a further complication in that the lower vertical plane preceding the first orthogonal-diagonal one of the shelf, has open doors. Because these doors overlap and step-wise lead the eye from the foreground bottom up into the middle ground of the objects, the spatial retreat is more emphatic in this composition than in the other aforementioned works. Having these doors open also serves another purpose: the light catching the top of the left door with the dark shadow behind helps to break up the foreground area with the long, hard diagonal line of the countertop. The knife with its handle hanging over the edge of the counter also aids in this respect, but it too serves a secondary function. The knife, as well as the isolated egg and the metal pitcher encourage the viewer's eye to meander behind the objects before approaching them.

The strong light silhouette of the window also has several functions: it gives the artist the opportunity to backlight some of the objects, it balances the attractive, partially illuminated metal pitcher, and it serves as contrast to the wallpaper in shadow on the right. It also visually tells the story of where the light is coming from.



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
Bowl of Eggs, 1986
Watercolor on paper, 16 1/2 x 23 1/2 inches.

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Whalley was, in this work, again exploring for a possible painting, a painting of the basket and the woodpile. As the work evolved it became a study of the basket that was a drawing in and of itself. And it is a finished work. Whalley feels no obligation to complete every square inch or every object begun.

The front left rim of the basket fades to white, not only because of the harsh light striking it, but also because rendering every last detail of its surface seemed unimportant to the artist. The woodpile, the ground, and other object surfaces fade into the white of the paper because for this artist it is not how much of something you draw, but how you draw it. "It leaves a little bit of mystery to it if you leave some things hanging — unfinished. Sometimes you really kill a drawing by putting every little thing in there."

The sticks in the basket were arranged so a few that had interesting textures would catch the light in a certain way. The rest fell in a random manner. Most of the work concentrates on linear, woodgrain textures, but there is a bit of grass or straw underneath the basket that manifests a different texture all its own. This different visual element was placed there to anchor the composition to the ground in a subtle yet interesting way.

In addition to the obvious interest in play of light and texture, the work also shows a marvelous value variety of greys and rich blacks. This quality holds much of the allure of drawing for John Whalley. He says, "Drawing is a relief in that you don't have to worry about color; it just seems like the perfect amount of concerns to worry about. The beauty of graphite to me is the complete, subtle range of greys you can get and the fact that you can approach them very gradually."



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
The Woodpile, 1986
Pencil on paper, 13 1/4 x 19 1/2 inches.

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his work was done in the early Fall of 1986, a time when Whalley was pushing himself to break through his self-imposed boundaries in his use of color. The fact that the medium is oil instead of tempera necessarily allowed the artist a greater richness of color. Whalley recalls that the subject, the whole scene incorporating flowers and apples about which he got very excited, also dictated the color. In another area, the metal of the cans, Whalley experimented with exaggerating the color and then softening the effect: "during the process of the painting it was much brighter and I toned it down considerably."

The oil paint medium also allows this artist to loosen up the surface texture of the painting — to let the brushstrokes show, more so than in the majority of his works. Whalley says, "in this one I didn't worry about keeping the surface smooth."

There are some marvelous details to be noticed in this painting, particularly in the use of light: the tiny holes in the basket affording droplets of light to shine through, those little touches of illumination on the leaves on the right, and the subtle modelling that rounds the basket so naturally. Within that basket are those very realistic apples with the stem of one, again as in *Bowl of Peaches* turned up toward the viewer. The illumination of the late sun on the flowers is so high that they tend to break down into areas of paint, whereas the spherical volumes of the apples are wonderfully convincing. Whalley is also most convincing in the delicate, flimsy stiffness of the leaves, which even in their translucency and perched aspect, are marvelously caught.

A seeming oddity in the painting and in Whalley's oeuvre is the flat spade placed in the upper left, very close to the corner. This kind of compositional placement is uncommon for Whalley and he admits that the spade "moved around a lot as I painted, and kind of settled into that space." This is one of the few times there is an actual object cut off by the edge of the picture.



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
Late Sun, 1986
Oil on panel, 24 x 36 inches.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to express my personal gratitude to Lisa Ferlic, art director of this exhibition catalogue, for her diligence and hard work. We would both like to thank the members of the exhibition catalogue team: Paul Earney, Sue Hanlon, and Dan Adamson. We all wish to state our appreciation for the support of John Lawler and Charles Campbell, members of the UW-EC Art Department faculty, and Phyllis Nanstad, departmental secretary. The Foster Gallery and the Art Department wish to gratefully acknowledge the assistance and co-sponsorship of the Chemistry Department of UW-EC, particularly the efforts of Professors Al Denio and Leo Ochrymowycz. Lisa has asked me to thank Mari Jo Janke and Roy Massoth of the UW-EC Publications Office for their kind and expert advice in helping her to prepare this catalogue.

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E.M.H.

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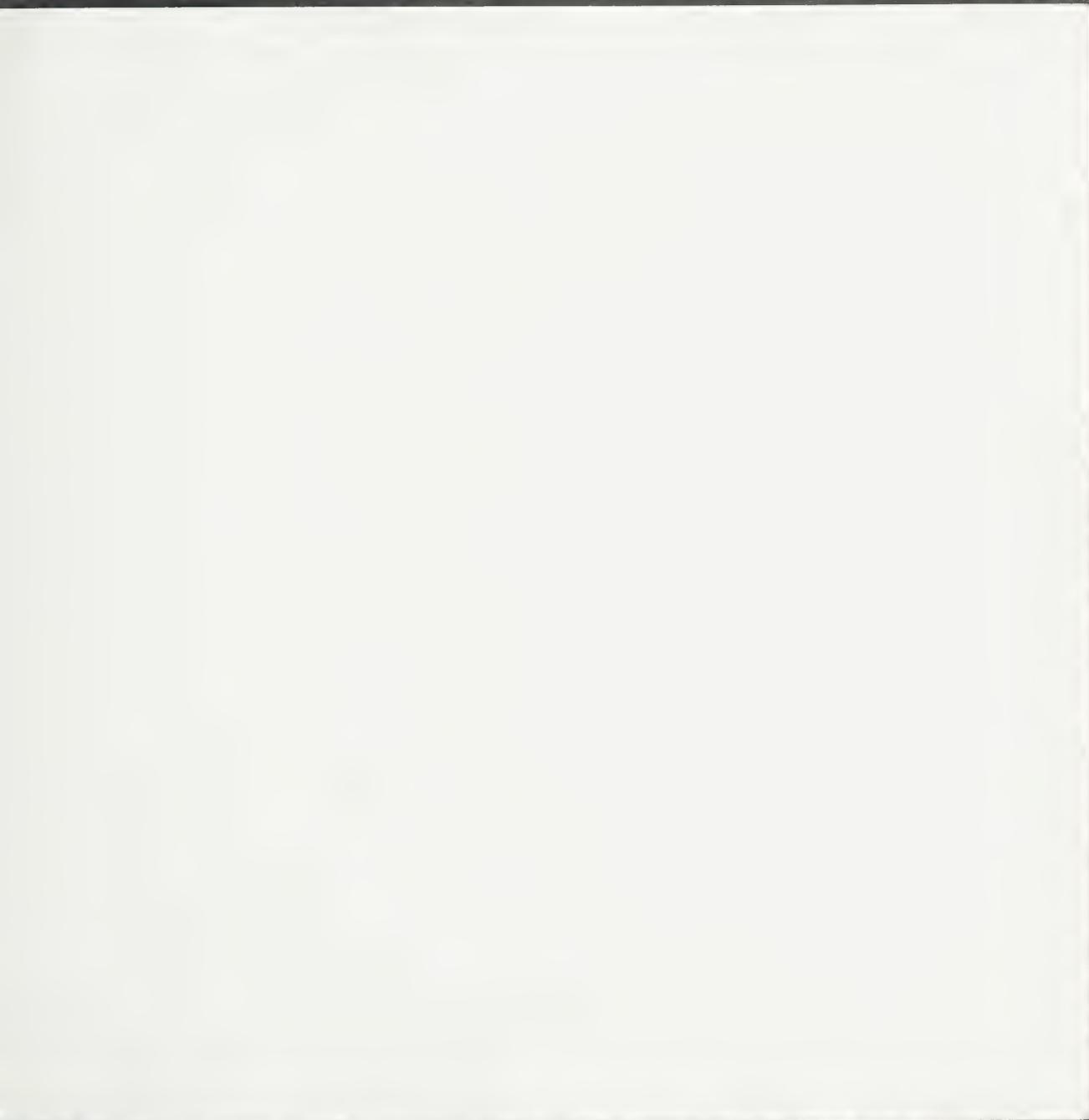
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³Albert Blankert et.al., *Gods, Saints & Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1980), p. 86.



STUDENT DESIGNERS: DAN ADAMSON, PAUL EARNEY, LISA FERJIC, SUE HANLON



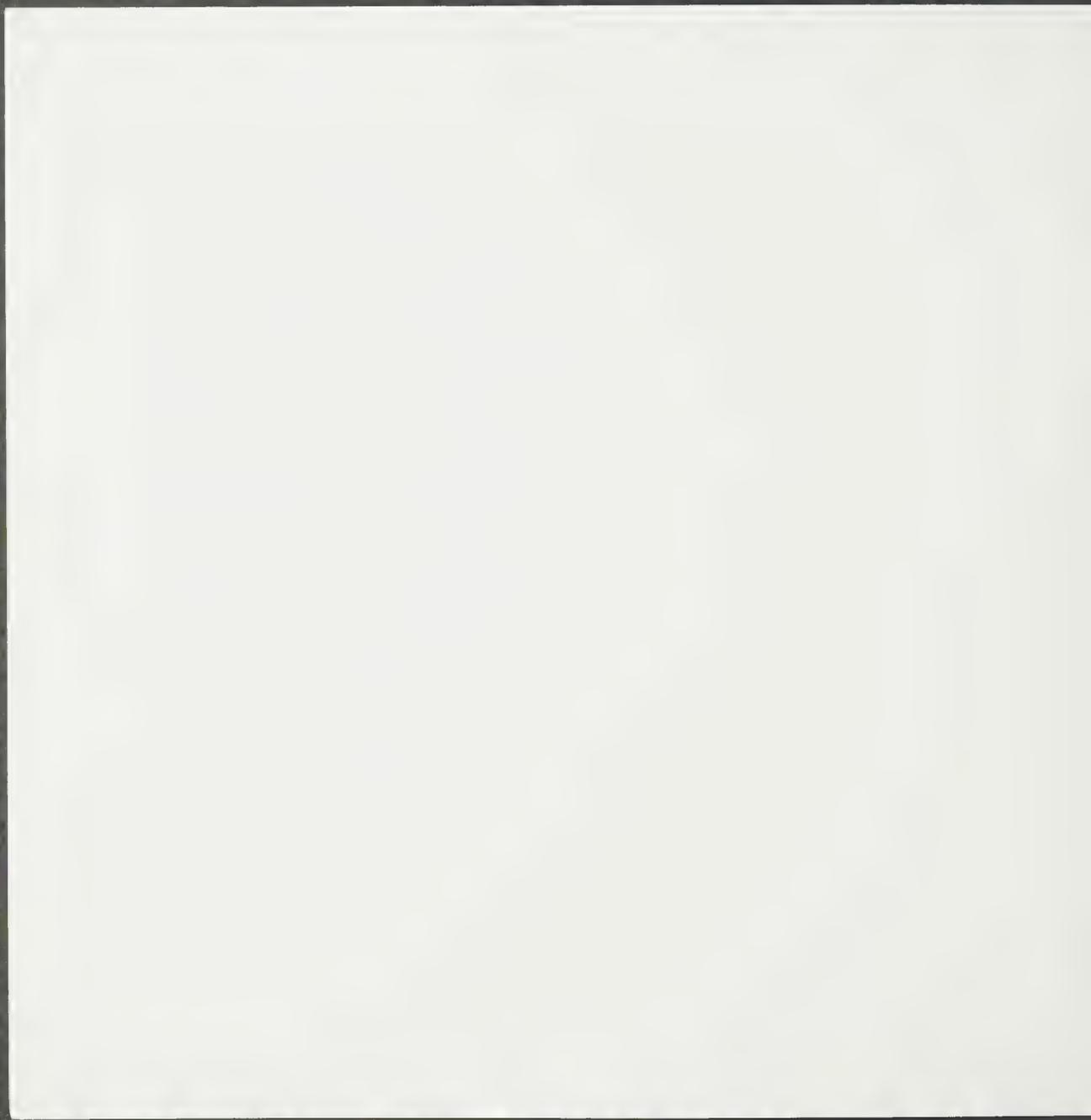
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Exhibition Catalogue
compiled or authored by

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Sponsored by the Foster Gallery, Art Department, and
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FOREWORD

The Foster Gallery is truly honored to host this exhibition of works selected from the collection of Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader. This group of art works represents only a small but important sample loaned from this internationally significant private collection. This group of paintings and drawings represents also something of a departure for the Foster, in that it is the first exhibit of a substantially art historical nature to be installed here. The very fine art of John Whalley should not be overlooked in making such a characterization. Whalley is a twentieth century artist whom Dr. Bader regards as a youthful master in his own time, quite worthy of a connoisseur's consideration. This living artist has kindly consented to lend six unsold works of his own to supplement the six of the Bader Collection. The exhibition displays a total of thirty works: six seventeenth century Dutch and Flemish masterpieces, twelve nineteenth century drawings by the Bohemian Anton Lewy, and the twelve works by John Whalley.

Dr. Bader is a man with a sickness. But it is a wonderful sickness: Alfred Bader loves art and is obsessed with collecting it. Fortunately for us Dr. Bader's other great love, chemistry, has afforded him the means to assuage his sickness and enjoy his obsession. It is also fortunate for us that Dr. Bader is a collector of excellent tastes with a connoisseur's un-failing eye. Our reactions of awe and wonder shall testify to the refinement of that eye.

Alfred Bader was born in 1924 in Vienna. He was brought up by a beloved aunt being orphaned from a very early age. His obsession with collecting art began at the age of ten, when he used some money given to him to purchase an Old Master drawing. In 1938 he was sent to England primarily to avoid Nazi recrimination for his Jewish heritage. In England young Alfred studied chemistry and indulged his other interests in art and the Bible. The British government in 1940, concerned about possible security risks, deported Alfred along with other German Jewish refugees to a camp near Montreal, Canada. The Canadian branch of his second surrogate family, the Wolffs of Montreal, fortunately secured a release from the camp and an admission for Alfred to Queens University in Ontario.

From Queens he earned a B.S. degree in chemical engineering in 1945, a B.A. in history in 1946, and a M.S. degree in 1947. Bader attended Harvard studying chemistry, receiving a doctorate in 1949. He founded the Aldrich Chemical Co. in 1951 in Milwaukee while still working for Pittsburgh Paint Glass. In 1954 Dr. Bader resigned his position with PPG in order to remain in Milwaukee and pursue full-time development of his Aldrich Chemical Co. Dr. Bader is not only an eminent chemist and entrepreneur, he is also a respected art historian and art restoration researcher. His scholarly writings on the Bible in Dutch art have made Dr. Bader a much sought after lecturer throughout the world.

Alfred Bader constantly confronts a serious dilemma. As a significant collector he is custodian and preserver of many true masterpieces of art; he must consequently be very cautious in lending such works. But Dr. Bader is also a profoundly generous man, and his love of great art is an unselfish love that extends to having his works seen and shared with as many people as possible. An example of Dr. Bader's altruism can be found even in the two-year preparation of this exhibition. In negotiating this exhibit Dr. Bader had originally planned to include a painting of Solomon praying by Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout (1621-1674). But preferring to unselfishly distribute parts of his collection to as wide an audience as possible, he lent the work to a Japanese exhibition which requested it and thereby has increased the world's enjoyment of his paintings.

Writing in the Introduction to a previous Bader Collection catalogue, *Selections from the Bader Collection* (Milwaukee, 1974) the world-renowned scholar on Dutch Baroque art and friend to Dr. Bader, Professor Wolfgang Stechow, praised Alfred Bader the man and the collector. I can do little more than echo his words: ". . . all art lovers are indebted to his zeal, his perspicacity and his often proven generosity in sharing his treasures with them." Wisconsin is indeed fortunate to claim Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader as citizens.

Eugene Hood



Jan Lievens could be considered Rembrandt's artistic best friend during their early years in Leiden. Lievens, younger and perhaps a bit more precocious than Rembrandt, studied with Pieter Lastman in Amsterdam from 1617 to 1619, five years before Rembrandt also studied with Lastman in Amsterdam. It is probable that the two artists worked together in Leiden in the later 1620's, and may have shared a studio. Lievens's works of the time bear the influence of Lastman and of the Utrecht Caravaggisti in their use of light and in the dramatic presentation of the action. He subsequently worked in England, Antwerp, The Hague, and repeatedly in Amsterdam.

This is a fragment of a larger composition which must have been one of Lievens's finest works. Sometime during the last hundred years, it was cropped at top and bottom, and the figures of Simeon holding the Baby were scraped off. The personal faith of Simeon (Luke 2) was a recurrent theme among northern, and particularly Dutch, artists of the 17th century. Lievens, Rembrandt, and Rembrandt's students depicted it time and again. Rembrandt left a version unfinished at his death. Perhaps this is the painting of Simeon and the baby Jesus mentioned in the 1632 inventory of the House of Orange, No. 64: "by Rembrandt or Lievens." The present work is of great historical interest as Rembrandt was so impressed by its composition that he used it in a dark etching done some twenty years later.

Dr. Bader faced the dilemma, some years ago when a London dealer offered him this fragment, of whether to purchase a painting that at one time had been a masterpiece, but what remained was a wreck. It was fortunate that the magnificently painted figures of the high priests were largely intact. An old photo showing the former splendor of this work before cropping made possible a reconstruction of the figures on the lower left of which only the halo remained.



JAN LIEVENS (1607-1674)
Simeon, c. 1631
Oil on canvas, 19 x 22 inches.



Cornelis Bega was born in Haarlem and worked there for most of his life. He was, in all likelihood, a student of Adriaen van Ostade, the prolific Haarlem painter of the Dutch social scene. Bega traveled to Germany, Switzerland, and probably to Italy in 1653. After returning to Haarlem in 1654 he joined the painters guild.

Bega's painting of *The Alchemist* is fascinating for its depiction of a scene of scientific historical interest which is both finely detailed and beautifully painted. The alchemist's room is filled with the specialized accoutrements which are a necessary part of the subject's craft. The obvious interest in the effect of natural light entering through the window and the way in which it illuminates a limited area of the room is reminiscent of Ostade, and perhaps derived from the elder master.¹

Another slightly smaller version of this same picture exists on panel, undoubtedly in Bega's own hand. Formerly owned by the Fisher Scientific Company of Pittsburgh, it is now in the J. Paul Getty Museum. Dr. Bader has argued convincingly that the painting on panel is probably an "improved" replica of his picture.² One reason is that the alteration of several details in the work on panel clarifies the spatial illusion in the composition. Another logical reason for the precedence of Dr. Bader's painting is that if the panel work had come first the artist could have easily cut the canvas to the same smaller size of the panel to facilitate copying. A wooden panel was more expensive and of fixed dimensions, thus explaining the discrepancy in size.



CORNELIS BEGA (1631/32-1664)
The Alchemist, c. 1660
Oil on canvas, 16 1/4 x 15 inches.

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an de Corduba, also known as Johan de Cordua, was born in Brussels. He lived most of his mature years in central Europe, particularly Vienna where he was active from 1663 to 1702. Joachim von Sandrart, a contemporary artist and the author of the *Teutsch Akademie*, complimented Corduba for the "naturalism, clear rendering, and smooth surfaces" of his work. In addition to still-life paintings, Corduba also rendered genre pictures, biblical scenes, and portraits later in his career.

A vanitas still-life is that type of still-life picture with religious and moralizing overtones which displays a particular collection of objects designed to remind the viewer of the transience and uncertainty of mortal life. The word in Latin literally means "emptiness". Such a work was probably derived from the related *momento mori* representations of St. Jerome popular in Utrecht, which would link Corduba back to Dutch art.

Dr. Bader's *Vanitas Still-Life* by Corduba contains numerous objects often included in vanitas images: musical instruments, books, playing cards, a watch, a globe, hourglass, and a skull. A likely interpretation would suggest that the work juxtaposes the two realms of time and music, with death acting as the ever-present background theme. The flute and violin, as well as the playing cards, are probably warnings against a lazy and sinful life. The watch, hourglass, and almanac are all literal means by which the passage of time and life is represented.



JAN DE CORDUBA (c. 1630-1702)
Vanitas Still-Life, 1667
Oil on canvas, 22 x 27 inches.

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Abraham Bloemaert was born in Gorinchem, but moved to Utrecht at an early age. He remained there for the remainder of his life except for working periods in Paris in the early 1580's and in Amsterdam in the early 1590's. Bloemaert was a student of Cornelius van Haarlem and Joos de Beer. Known for his history paintings in which landscape plays an important part, Bloemaert also painted scenes with a moralizing purport and several portraits.³ Stylistically, he was quite adaptable: embracing phases of Mannerism, Baroque Classicism, and even Caravaggesque tendencies transmitted through his pupil Gerald Honthorst. Bloemaert's other pupils included Hendrick Terbrugghen, Jan Both, Jan Baptist Weenix, and Jan van Bijlert.

The painting of St. Jerome has been known to art historians for many years, but only because the artist's son Cornelius made an engraving after its completion in the 1620's. The inscription on the engraving answers all iconographic questions: this is *St. Jerome Studying the Old Testament* which he was the first to translate competently into Latin. St. Jerome (c. 340-420) was one of those Latin church fathers to whom the title of Saint was given not for his saintliness, but for his erudition and scholarship.

The whereabouts of the original painting had been unknown for approximately 350 years, until Dr. Bader's expert eye and marvelous good fortune discovered it in an antique store in The Hague in 1974.



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ABRAHAM BLOEMAERT (1564-1651)
St. Jerome, c. 1620's
Oil on canvas, 25 3/4 x 20 7/8 inches.



Pieter Nason was born in Amsterdam and active there until 1638. He was probably the pupil of Jan van Ravestyn of The Hague, to where he moved and became a member of the Guild of St. Luke in 1639. Nason helped to found a new guild, The 'Pictura' Society, in The Hague in 1656. He is most famous for his portraits, particularly those of Charles II of England, Willem Frederik of Nassau, and that of the Great Elector of Berlin. He also did some rare still lifes in the style of Willem Claesz Heda.

René Descartes (1596-1650) was a Frenchman who is most well-known today as a philosopher, but he was also a soldier, mathematician, physicist, and teacher. Few great thinkers have been so versatile. He was the ultimate philosophical doubter of all things, even for a time, his own existence. His famous Latin phrase *Cogito ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am") is a household adage.

Descartes lived in Holland from 1629 to 1649, truly the Golden Age of Dutch painting. It is not at all surprising that he was the sitter for a number of important Dutch portraitists, Frans Hals and von Schooten among them. Descartes is depicted here with such spirit that it is likely to have been painted from life. In a letter to Dr. Bader, the eminent Harvard art historian, Seymour Slive, finds that the painting conveys some of the intellectual "toughness" and "blackness" one expects from this great doubter. Professor Slive also raised an intriguing question in aesthetics: "Why is a portrait vastly enhanced when we know that the subject is one of the great Western philosophers?"



PIETER NASON (1612-c.1689)
Portrait of René Descartes, 1647
Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 inches.





Jacob van Oost I was born in Bruges and trained there by his brother Frans. He traveled to Rome around 1621 where he remained for about five years studying for a time with Annibale Carracci, before returning to Bruges. His early works show the influence of Rubens's color, to which he added an interest in the manipulation of light and shadow derived from Caravaggio. Jacob van Oost the Elder is most well known for his portraits with their vigorous realism, and his Caravaggesque religious paintings including *Madonna and Saints* (1648), *St. Sebastian* (1646), and the *Calling of St. Matthew* (1640).

This work, also called "Studyhead of a Young Man", was at one time rather ambitiously attributed to the great Jacob Jordaens, a contemporary of Rubens in Antwerp. This was done simply because a similar study now in the Akademie in Vienna is surely by the same hand, and that one has long been attributed to Jordaens. But neither of these two paintings truly resembles other established works by Jordaens. The present attribution to Jacob van Oost the Elder, while being quite plausible, has yet to be proved certain. This was suggested in a letter to Dr. Bader by the renowned scholar of Flemish art, Julius Held.

Dr. Bader cares about the attribution, not for himself, but for the sake of the painting. He values its beauty for being a delightful study of a serious boy, and for its captivating charm.



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attributed to **JACOB VAN OOST** the **ELDER** (1601-1671)
Study of a Boy, c. 1620
Oil on paper, mounted on canvas, 10 3/4 x 9 3/4 inches.



Anton Lewy, a native of Bohemia, was active over the greater part of the latter nineteenth century. His specialties were landscapes and architectural views rendered on sojourns throughout central Europe. Most of Lewy's drawings charmingly depict villages and towns, churches and aristocratic homes. The particular regions he found most enticing were Moravia, Bohemia, (now parts of modern Czechoslovakia), and Germany, particularly Meissen and the environs of Berlin.

Reproduced here is *In the Old City*, one of the twelve Lewy drawings on exhibit. The old city is, of course, the old city of Prague, capital of both nineteenth-century Bohemia and present-day Czechoslovakia.

Dr. Bader collected Lewy's drawings in his youth in Vienna, and now owns what is probably the largest collection of which these twelve are but a sample. One can readily see that an individual talent and inherent quality of draftsmanship abound in the artist's work. The excellent taste of Alfred Bader as a collector, even at a very early age, was corroborated by the Albertina in Vienna. An exhibition there entitled *Menschen um die Jahrhundertwende* ("People at the Turn of the Century"), included some Lewy drawings and, indeed, they were among the best in that exhibition.



ANTON LEWY (1845-1897)
In The Old City, 1875
 Ink and pencil on paper, 10 3/4 x 6 1/8 inches.

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JOHN WHALLEY (1954)

John Whalley was born in Brooklyn in 1954, but his family soon moved to a more rural area of New York state. From an early age he was encouraged by his parents to paint and draw, particularly by his mother who was herself a painter and art teacher. Whalley received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1976. He also married a fellow graduate of that school, Linda Hoffman, in that same year.

Whalley cites a number of artists as influences upon his work; among them are Vermeer, Rembrandt, Chardin, Durer, Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, and Andrew Wyeth. As a student Whalley did have his period of experimentation, trying notably assemblage, lithography, as well as oil and egg tempera.

The Whalley family has lived in Lima, New York, and Harrison Valley, Pennsylvania. In 1986, John and Linda Whalley returned to New England with their two sons Matthew and Benjamin to live in the small historic town of Standish, Maine.

John Whalley has exhibited works at the Rose Art Museum of Brandeis University, the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts, Gallery Atelier 696 in Rochester, New York, the Tremellan Galleries in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and at Gallery Zena in Boston. He has more

recently shown his work at the Woods Gerry Gallery of the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, the Zantman Galleries of Carmel, California, at the Society of Illustrators Gallery in New York City, and at the Purdue University Galleries.

Mr. Whalley has taught or lectured at the Brockton, Massachusetts Art Center and at Bridgewater State College.

John Whalley expresses his aesthetic philosophy in a few sentences that reveal a great deal about his human, as well as his artistic personality. "I much more enjoy taking everyday unbeautiful things in the proper setting and painting them beautifully if I can, rather than taking a beautiful thing and painting it all right. I like to take something unbeautiful and bring out the beauty in it."

Whalley freely admits the pitfalls of his art, "Something I've always consciously had to be careful of is the temptation to make picturesque little pictures that border on being sentimental."

It is a narrow ground that John Whalley treads because the other extreme from sentimentality has its allure as well. "I struggle with the problem of being too literal. I constantly have to look at things more objectively, as other people would see them."

All of the works following are by this artist.





John Whalley considers a study to be an initial exploration of a visual scene. He finds that seeing it down on paper, in actuality, gives him more of an idea of what it can be than simply and only imagining it. "To imagine it into a painting, for me, it really helps to actually take it a step [in a study drawing] toward becoming a painting," he says. The study allows Whalley to literally see if what is before him and in his imagination is something that could "carry" into a painting.

Beyond the conceptual testing that a study allows, it is also where Whalley can "feel the textures, the light, and the composition." It permits him to deal with a formal composition, and to record the textures of the things seen. But drawing is not merely a means of study for Whalley; it is also a thing of joy in itself. Whalley is a draftsman, as well as a painter, who loves the monochromatic quality and the textures one gets with graphite. The artist reveals, "I always love the look of a drawing emerging out of the paper." When asked about the incomplete nature of this work Whalley admits that "had everything been developed fully, it would lose a certain kind of nice feeling it has."

The central portion of the tempera painting uses this study quite literally. The round forms in the crate are potatoes, unwashed, gotten right out of the ground. They have a dirt coating that affords them an unfamiliar texture and "wipes out their identity." The artist confesses he was "a little too literal on them," hence many viewers have been unable to recognize these forms as potatoes.



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
The Farm Scale (study), 1981
 Pencil on paper, 22 1/4 x 14 inches.

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The setting for this painting is a friend's vegetable stand south of Boston, near the small, rural community of Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Whalley compressed the nicest elements of the long stand into what is seen here, taking the corn from the other end on the wall. He says that the viewer probably wouldn't recognize the original source from seeing his work. Indeed the deeper room on the left side of the picture was not there, but invented to give the composition "a nice dark area to balance things out a bit." The stand building ended on the left as it does in the pencil study, but Whalley preserves the field beyond and renders it through the openings of a window which was taken, in fact, from the artist's house at the time. He admits that "the composition [ending with that vertical line behind the scale itself] didn't work out too well." The field landscape is left loose and relatively unrefined in order to give the eye a rest from the great specificity of the foreground.

The dramatic illumination that enters the work from the right is late afternoon light at a shallow angle which Whalley says he recurrently enjoys. "Some of the moments that thrill me, that I like to put in paint, tend to happen, it seems, with morning or evening light." A small, formal detail is that of the leaf breaking the strong shadow line below the handle of the weighing basin. It is a contrived device, there to get your eye past that very hard line which is a trick, Whalley believes, he derived from Chardin.

Whalley also cites the Dutch masters of genre and still-life when referring to this work. "The Dutch had a real love for everyday objects and very simple settings. I would think that a lot of my work has elements in it that are very similar." The artist encourages us to investigate the color in this work, particularly in the shadow areas where the late afternoon light brings out the complementary hues, juxtaposing the warm and cool colors. With respect to color, Whalley again cites the seventeenth-century Dutch masters indicating his admiration and affinity: "The Dutch really had a lot of browns and golden warm-type color — earth tones. Many of my paintings, I think, have had that."



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
The Farm Scale, 1982
Egg tempera on panel, 25 x 22 1/2 inches.





The paintbrush placed in the left-most can in the composition was not put there for symbolic purposes, according to the artist. It just happened to "be laying around," and helped to enhance the composition. The can in which the brush is placed is a "Cottolene" can Whalley picked up out of curiosity in a junk shop in Pennsylvania, and still has. The little can in the front and center has a blue that the artist says, "I just love in and of itself." Indeed, color seems to be an important ingredient, particularly in conjunction with light. Whalley finds the subtle greys and metallic colors in the picture, so difficult to describe in words, to be "a feast to the eyes." These were a major motivation for doing the painting: "the challenge was to translate these into paint."

Whalley also believes the work has a certain "glow" about it. The subject was arranged in a location that is one of the few places in Whalley's house where he gets a consistent light all day. The artist says, "this spot is almost set up naturally to be a little alcove for still-lives; the basic lighting on objects remains pretty steady during the day." Because of this constancy of illumination, the artist allowed himself to strive, herein, for a high contrast, a "big range of darks to lights." And in consequence "the work glows a lot," to use Whalley's words.

Whalley separates the crock from the other cylindrical forms of the still-life to slightly open up the total space occupied by all the objects, and to prevent the combined shadow from becoming "one big lump." The right side pitcher has been rotated to this particular orientation to point the viewer's eye into the composition, and to catch the nice shape of the handle forming that shadow.

The shelf upon which the still-life sits is made of marble, hence allowing some beautiful, loose, coloristic underpainting by the artist. But, in a fascinating aside, Whalley reveals a surprising fact for so careful an artist: "one of my favorite brushstrokes, it kind of happened by accident on the right side of the objects, is a kind of sweeping curlycue brushstroke."



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
Still-life with Crock, 1986
Oil on panel, 18 x 24 inches.

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Whalley states that in this work he was mainly interested in describing the fruit within and centered around the form of the bowl "in a little bit of a dramatic setting with the light sweeping sideways." The bowl is one the artist loves, warped with age and having an interesting, odd shape. Whalley places it on a marble countertop to contrast the diagonal edges of the flat surface with the horizontal curves and rounded edges of the bowl and its contents. The light Whalley mentions is a very warm reflected light that tends to generalize and delete the slight texture on the surface of the bowl. The peaches with their detailed, specific surface texture thus remain the elements of uncompromised interest.

In setting up this still-life, the artist has pulled out one peach for the sake of value and spatial contrast, but also to better connect the foreground with the background space. It is interesting that the central piece of fruit in the container is turned so that the stem becomes an intentional focal point; this is a device Whalley will use in another work. This out-turned stem is, in effect, a bullseye very close to the exact center of the picture, which invites the viewer into the composition.

The background pattern of the wallpaper does not recede into space as much as it could in spite of the change in value moving to the right, back corner. The artist, well aware of this, believes that again it was his striving for hard-edged accuracy which flattened out the patterned plane. He feels that perhaps a more successful spatial recession could have been achieved if the pattern had been more "suggested," and less accurately rendered, as the wall recedes in space.



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
Bowl of Peaches, 1986
Oil on panel, 16 x 24 inches.

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Whalley employs a compositional format in this work that, by now, may appear to be a common, recurring scheme. Near the lower middle of the picture is an orthogonal plane holding the main objects of the subject, above that is a vertical plane which acts as a background or backdrop. Sometimes Whalley complicates this scheme by adding several steps or ninety degree planar shifts, and sometimes he turns the first orthogonal plane to a diagonal, as he does here, and in *Still-life with Crock* and *Bowl of Peaches*. Here there is a further complication in that the lower vertical plane preceding the first orthogonal-diagonal one of the shelf, has open doors. Because these doors overlap and step-wise lead the eye from the foreground bottom up into the middle ground of the objects, the spatial retreat is more emphatic in this composition than in the other aforementioned works. Having these doors open also serves another purpose: the light catching the top of the left door with the dark shadow behind helps to break up the foreground area with the long, hard diagonal line of the countertop. The knife with its handle hanging over the edge of the counter also aids in this respect, but it too serves a secondary function. The knife, as well as the isolated egg and the metal pitcher encourage the viewer's eye to meander behind the objects before approaching them.

The strong light silhouette of the window also has several functions: it gives the artist the opportunity to backlight some of the objects, it balances the attractive, partially illuminated metal pitcher, and it serves as contrast to the wallpaper in shadow on the right. It also visually tells the story of where the light is coming from.



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
Bowl of Eggs, 1986
Watercolor on paper, 16 1/2 x 23 1/2 inches.

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Whalley was, in this work, again exploring for a possible painting, a painting of the basket and the woodpile. As the work evolved it became a study of the basket that was a drawing in and of itself. And it is a finished work. Whalley feels no obligation to complete every square inch or every object begun.

The front left rim of the basket fades to white, not only because of the harsh light striking it, but also because rendering every last detail of its surface seemed unimportant to the artist. The woodpile, the ground, and other object surfaces fade into the white of the paper because for this artist it is not how much of something you draw, but how you draw it. "It leaves a little bit of mystery to it if you leave some things hanging — unfinished. Sometimes you really kill a drawing by putting every little thing in there."

The sticks in the basket were arranged so a few that had interesting textures would catch the light in a certain way. The rest fell in a random manner. Most of the work concentrates on linear, woodgrain textures, but there is a bit of grass or straw underneath the basket that manifests a different texture all its own. This different visual element was placed there to anchor the composition to the ground in a subtle yet interesting way.

In addition to the obvious interest in play of light and texture, the work also shows a marvelous value variety of greys and rich blacks. This quality holds much of the allure of drawing for John Whalley. He says, "Drawing is a relief in that you don't have to worry about color; it just seems like the perfect amount of concerns to worry about. The beauty of graphite to me is the complete, subtle range of greys you can get and the fact that you can approach them very gradually."



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
The Woodpile, 1986
Pencil on paper, 13 1/4 x 19 1/2 inches.

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his work was done in the early Fall of 1986, a time when Whalley was pushing himself to break through his self-imposed boundaries in his use of color. The fact that the medium is oil instead of tempera necessarily allowed the artist a greater richness of color. Whalley recalls that the subject, the whole scene incorporating flowers and apples about which he got very excited, also dictated the color. In another area, the metal of the cans, Whalley experimented with exaggerating the color and then softening the effect: "during the process of the painting it was much brighter and I toned it down considerably."

The oil paint medium also allows this artist to loosen up the surface texture of the painting — to let the brushstrokes show, more so than in the majority of his works. Whalley says, "in this one I didn't worry about keeping the surface smooth."

There are some marvelous details to be noticed in this painting, particularly in the use of light: the tiny holes in the basket affording droplets of light to shine through, those little touches of illumination on the leaves on the right, and the subtle modelling that rounds the basket so naturally. Within that basket are those very realistic apples with the stem of one, again as in *Bowl of Peaches* turned up toward the viewer. The illumination of the late sun on the flowers is so high that they tend to break down into areas of paint, whereas the spherical volumes of the apples are wonderfully convincing. Whalley is also most convincing in the delicate, flimsy stiffness of the leaves, which even in their translucency and perched aspect, are marvelously caught.

A seeming oddity in the painting and in Whalley's oeuvre is the flat spade placed in the upper left, very close to the corner. This kind of compositional placement is uncommon for Whalley and he admits that the spade "moved around a lot as I painted, and kind of settled into that space." This is one of the few times there is an actual object cut off by the edge of the picture.



JOHN WHALLEY (1954-)
Late Sun, 1986
Oil on panel, 24 x 36 inches.

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E.M.H.

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**The Foster Gallery
Fine Arts Center
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