Alfred Bader

Alfred Boder Fire Arts Painting File

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ラント・巨匠とその周辺 1986-1987 ~

ヤーコゲード・カー Jacob Backer 前等での選札 The Baptism of the Emuch 結算シブルンヴァ A. 104 × 11 Åcm Mitmaken Dr. and Mrs. Att all first Bader Printed b Art Life Laft.



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ヤーコブ・バッカー Jacob Backer 電管の発札 The Baptism of the Eunuch 動影/カンヴァス 104.7×117.4cm





キーコブレベッカー Jacob Backer 原質の透視、The Baytsm of the Emuch 編製・カンサース 1847×11/4m Milleanke, Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader Protect by Art Life Life で





J.A.Backer?
Not in Bauch
Sagliah Art-Dealer, 1942.
Photo Netherl. Art Inst.L.no. 4888.
The Christeniag of the Sthionian Samuch.



H. Natwiner Famel, 76 x 74 cm. Furth decime (lift de Prov). Photo Hetherl, Art Inst.Lore. 0047.





08/200

Den Alfred,

Thank you so much for your Cetter. Again, you acquired some fine paintings, what a prity zondid The painting is by hier, and is a get the De Keyser. tenerne.

Justa few notes on your painties. The Baptisus of the Eunech, Yes, probables by Eacher. Could the painting originally have been larger?

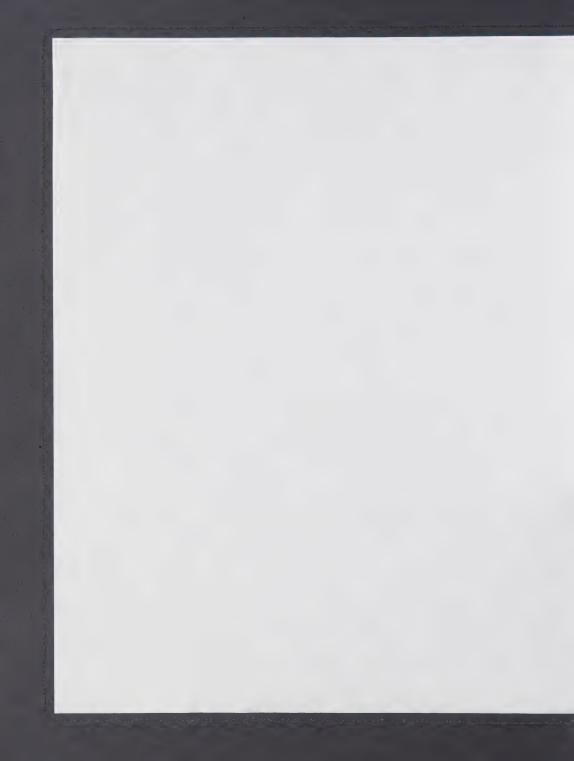
(Secriflet bollows corner).

The landrape with Haarley in the distance, I must confess, looks to me like a take. I am also inclined to think that the Hercules Segers like mountain landscape could be an initation of Segers. -Lovay! - did you obtain from the same source?

The strange painting of a man with book which you consider "French ?" I would think is German, probably painted in Italy Could be a really inportant painting. Cris it Scandina is as?

That is all for now. -

to write we. And I hope to see for here again. I do not see a trip to Milwankee in the near future. (I saw my North western son in Los Angeles, Le partiri pated in a con creues in Ventura; Best regards By best



113/8 × 46/1 Frame
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heler Alfred! Hab herældun Bruk fir Durien Brief. Die Ruse des Kammeren Rament nohl in einem and on Wheel beein-Jupten Kimstler & mi RKD Ntes J.A. Dacker (2) maschrieben 20 den o In fige eine Fotokopie mit Vergle holeignet this Von Blockmaert Pate No leder kein Foto Ah mufs mal sehen, of Affrides hard. Im Run handt, Billins von Run Canalts Este möchte ih noch einnal, im Original schen, bevor un da mein Urters abgelo. Gil mher kein ahlechter Kanf, dum es ump doch zohl in Dunhandts Wes kothett untstanden sein (+) siche Viet), zenn es mont un Run= brandt silht sein sollte. Auf jeden tall: Congulus lations!

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holage: leder Les au en Ardist mont des Foto Wom Jacobskaum. May 14, 1979

Ms. Stefanie Maison 7 Bryanston Square London WlH 7FF England

Dear Ms. Maison:

My good friend Mr. Ralph Emanuel, who incidentally also knew Dr. Schapiro, looked at the painting of the "Baptism of the Eunuch" the other day and I am happy to be able to tell you that he reports that the scratch on the photograph was just due to dust and there is no actual damage to the painting.

Hence, as promised, please find enclosed my draft for L4000, made payable to the Trustees of the Estate of the late Dr. E. Schapiro.

Could you please arrange to have Mr. Emanuel (telephone 435-9969) take possession of this painting.

I plan to be in London the first week of July and I will then take the liberty of contacting you and Mrs. Lepsius to ask whether other paintings might be available for purchase.

Best personal regards.

Sincerely,

Alfred Bader (Dictated by Dr. Bader, but signed in his absence.) AB/lsm

Enclosure

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ARREST SERVICE

FIRST BANK (NA) - MIDLAND

201 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, Wis. 53203

DATE May 15, 1979

ь4,000.00

PAY TO THE

ORDER OF -----Trustees of Estate of Late Dr. E. Schapiro-----

-----Four thousand and 00/100 Pounds Sterling---

PAYABLE AT THE DRAWEES BUYING RATE FOR CHECKS ON NEW YORK (AMOUNT IN WO

TO

Barclays Bank International Ltd. 168 Fenchurch Street London EC3P 3HP

England

Len Thabla

AN AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE







Dr. Alfred R. Bader

April 4, 1979

Ms. Stefanie Maison 7 Bryanston Square London WlH 7FF England

Dear Ms. Maison:

Thank you so much for your kind letter of March 27, received today.

The painting is indeed the painting which I remember so well. However I am greatly concerned because it appears from the photograph that the face of the Eunuch has been deeply marred. This was certainly not so when I saw it in Dr. Shapiro's living room.

There are three possibilities:

A. This could just be a flaw in the photograph and no mark on the painting at all; or

B. It could be just a scrape in the varnish without touching the painted film: or

C. It could be quite serious damage to the Eunuch's face.

Could you please let me know which of these alternatives it is. Of course I very much hope that it is A, in which case I will send you my check by return mail. If perhaps you cannot tell the difference between B and C, would you permit me to ask a friend of mine to look at it for me? Alternately, could the purchase wait until I am in London at the end of June?

I do hope that you will not say, "What an ungrateful guy this fellow Bader is. Here I offer him a fine painting at the appraised value, and he is so fussy". I do hope that you know that I hope to buy this painting for my personal collection and to me condition is important.

With many thanks for your thoughtfulness, I remain,

Yours sincerely, Alfred Bader

Midwich Chambool Commons, me.

940 West St. Paul Ave Milwaukee Wisconsin 53233 USA Telephone (414) 273-3850 Cable Aldrichem TWX 910-262-3052 Telex 26-843 AB/lsm



M&I Marshall & Ilsley Bank
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

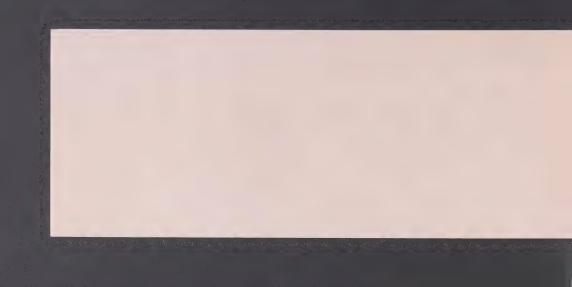
Remitter
Alfred Bader
Date
Alfred Bader
Drawn
To the order of

ALDRICH CHEMICAL CO. LTD.

Cashier's Check
Customer Copy
12-5
750

S. 258.00

Non-Negotiable



March 28, 1979

Ms. Stefanie Maison 7 Bryanston Square London WlH 7FF England

Dear Ms. Maison:

Just a postscript to my last letter which was in response to your kind letter of March 7. There is really no need to send me a good photograph of the "Baptism of the Eunuch"; a polaroid would suffice to exclude the possibility of our talkin g about two different paintings. As soon as I have that snapshot, I will send you my check as directed in your letter of March 7, provided only that we are talking about the same painting.

With best regards to you and Mrs. Lepsius, I remain

Yours sincerely,

Alfred Bader

AB/lsm



7 BRYANSTON SQUARE, LONDON WIH 7FF o1-262 8697 March 7, 1979 Bader cal Company, Inc.

Dr Alfred R. Bader Aldrich Chemical Company, Inc. 940 West St. Paul Ave Milwaukee Wisconsin 53233 USA

Dear Dr Bader,

Many thanks for your letter of February 26. Mrs Lepsius is at present in Paris, but I have spoken to her on the telephone and have her complete agreement in all matters mentioned in this letter.

We much regret that the Jan van Noordt "The Massacre of the Innocents" is not available and shall certainly keep you informed of any possible change in this situation.

As to the Pieter de Grebber "Baptism of the Eunuch", we have consulted our lawyers and they see no objection to our selling this painting to you. In order to eliminate any possible errors, I am sending you a photograph herewith. It is certainly almost square; the measurements are: $31\frac{1}{2} \times 35$ inches. The price, to which you have agreed, is £4.000. Kindly make your payment in £ sterling and your draft payable to:-

Personal Representatives of E.I. Schapiro deceased and please send the draft to me at the above address.

In order to meet the tax requirements which will arise in the Estate of the late Dr Schapiro, there will indeed be certain paintings for sale, and we shall be pleased if you will pay us a visit when you are in London later this spring or summer. Please give us notice before you arrive, because both Mrs Lepsius and I travel quite a lot.

I look forward to hearing from you again -

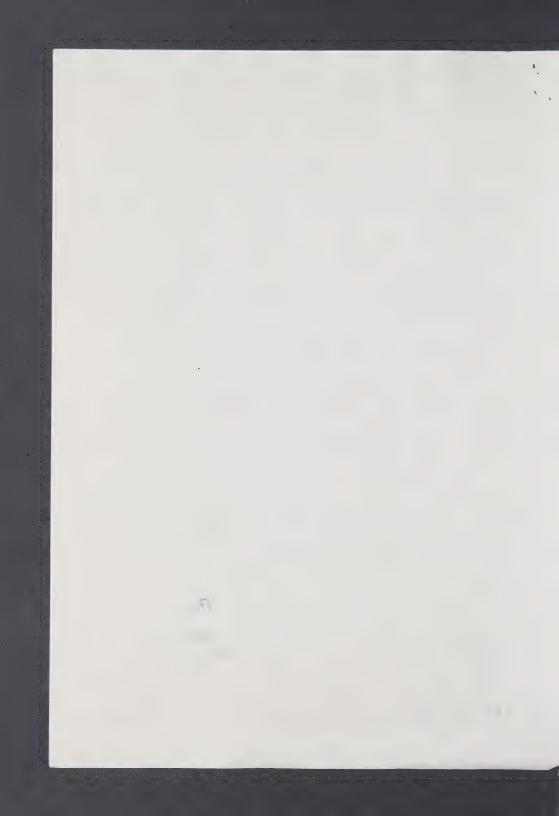
With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Stefanie Maison

MAR 1 2 1979
ALDRICH CHEMICAL CO., INC.

P.S. The photograph will follow as soon as possible SM



Dr. Alfred R. Bader President



February 26, 1979

Mrs. Susanne Lepsius Mrs. Stefanie Maison 7 Bryanston Square London W1H 7FF England

Dear Mrs. Lepsius and Dear Mrs. Maison:

Thank you so much for your thoughtful letter of February 18.

The Jacob Pynas which I am particularly interested in is a small painting on copper and I enclose a Xerox copy and its description.

I am particularly sorry that the Jan van Noordt of The Massacre of the Innocents' is not available because this is a pair to a painting in my collection of which I enclose a description. If perchance there should ever be a change in your plans regarding this, I would be most interested.

I would also be interested in purchasing the Baptism of the Eunuch attributed by Christie's to Pieter de Grebber. I can see Dr. Schapiro shaking his head at the attribution to Pieter de Grebber and saying that Pieter de Grebber is so often an Aushilfsname. I am interested in the painting not because of an attribution, of which I have known, but because like the painting. To make sure that we are talking about the same painting; it is almost square, mainly red in color and hung high in the main living room at 37 Arundel Gardens, at the right as you entered the living room.

I gather from the availability of another Jacob Pynas that there are a number of good paintings which might be purchased. Would you be interested in selling either all of these or a number of these in one package? If so I would be happy to visit with you when next I come to London this summer. If time is of the essence I could arrange to fly to London for a day or two earlier.

Regarding the Baptism of the Eunuch, are you willing to sell this to me for L4000? If so I would gladly make arrangements immediately to send you the funds and have the painting picked up. Best personal regards.

Aldrich Chemical Company, Inc.

940 West St Paul Ave Milwaukee Wisconsin 53233 USA Telephone (414) 273-3850 Cable Aldrichem TWX 910-262-3052 Telex 26-843

A B / 1 s m

7 BRYANSTON SQUARE, LONDON WIH 7FF 01-262 8697

February 18, 1979

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

Dear Dr Bader.

I'm sorry I have not answered your letter of December 1 before now.

I don't know whether you realise that Mrs Stefanie Maison (on whose notepaper we are now writing to you) is my co-executrix of Dr Schapiro's Estate. We went through your letter very carefully, and we are afraid we cannot give you very good news.

Four of the pictures in which you are interested are not for sale, i.e.

Salomon de Bray: Sarah presenting Hagar to Abraham

Salomon de Bray: Abraham's Sacrifice

Pieter Lastman: Manoah

Jan van Noordt: The Massacre of the Innocents

As to the two remaining pictures, Christie's in their Probate Valuation catalogues the Baptism of the Eunuch as Pieter de Grebber, and we wonder whether we have correctly identified the last picture you mention, i.e. Jacob Pynas "Abraham and Isaac leaving for Moriah" as:

Jacob Pynas: A mountainous landscape with a traveller, signed and dated 1628, on panel, 19 x 243 in

The Pynas was valued by Christie's at £8.000, and the Pieter de Grebber for £4.000 - and as you know, Probate Valuations are always on the low side.

Should you be interested in the purchase of these pictures, please contact us and address your reply to Mrs Maison at the above address.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Lepsius Stefanie Maison
Susanne Lepsius and Stefanie Maison

7 BRYANSTON SQUARE, LONDON WIH 7FF

01-262 8697

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Jacob Pynas: A mountainous landscape with a traveller, signed and dated 1628, on panel, 19 x 24½ in

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With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Lepsius Stefanie Maison



7 BRYANSTON SQUARE, LONDON WIH 7FF

o₁₋₂₆₂ 8697 May 23, 1979

Dr Alfred R. Bader Aldrich Chemical Company, Inc. 940 West St. Paul Ave Milwaukee Wisconsin 53233

Dear Dr Bader,

many thanks for your letter of May 14, which arrived to-day, with your cheque for £4.000 in full payment of the painting "the Baptism of the Eunuch". Mrs Lepsius has already been in touch with Mr Emanuel, who will be collecting the picture from Christie's.

As to the other paintings in which you expressed interest, we are happy to be able to tell you that one of them is now available for sale:-

Jan van Noordt: Massacre of the Innocents, valued at £3.000

This picture is hanging at the house of Mr and Mrs Randall, and Mrs Lepsius has given Mr Emanuel their address and telephonenumber. so that you can see the picture when you come to London.

With many thanks - and we both look forward to hearing from you when you are in London -

Yours sincerely,

Stefanie Maison

(Mrs) Stefanie Maison

1181.8 I BIB



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

Jeen geekiler, lieber Hen Rofesson Jumowski Beiligena, wie verppochen, das Exeachron und sie Schwarzwijs gholo der Toufe des Ennechair. Bet Dr. Johapiro hieu en einfach Rembrandepihnes - ich pehwanke zwinchen Bocker und den Tanger. Per 4. Man don rochts - noben dem blanden Buhen - M doch Dicher ein helbet gorbait. Komm die der Meiter bestrumen. Bei blum Bemerkungen über Aboris denke ich an Siob, Kapita Z: Jollan wir nur das Coute nehmen tou Got, ma wicht dan pehlechte? . Her eight Bound Theor gropher weekers ist wirklich pohlecht gedrucke; die nochesten zwie recht que. Par lengische ich im Gromm und Ganzon recht que und Klar. Aben as M' ein enormes werk, fir der nochte Yaluhumant den Wert der Zechnungen der Neubrandt pehule. Es sounder wich - und ich bin apulibar, dans Abaux die aufeage akunommen har Troby der hohen Preizer, Kanne das doch Kein Berchäft" Nein, dem wisside jeder Bander Kann Akarip sukan fon. Ich pohätze höchsterp 500, denn pellett gopte diblioketer

haben hauxe Budgepargen.

Mr hoben die 3 Bonde grope frende bereite, withreme der vielen Abende in welchen ich pie gelegen habe, und woch diel bereit werde. Herzeichen Jank für Shrewwarderbere arheit.

De Ne Priper son Span zu Span.

750

Gef. a Boar

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BAPTISM OF THE EUNUCH

We have asked our chemist-collector what the cirteria are for the inclusion of a given painting in his collection, and he has told us that he prefers Dutch 17th century portraits and "histories", preferably Biblical and of the school of Rembrandt, well-drawn and strong in color. He had first seen this large (oil on canvas, inches) <u>Baptism of the Eunuch</u> (Acts 8) many years ago in the living room of a great collector in England, Dr. Efim Schapiro, who had simply called "Rembrandt school". The most stunning feature of this "history" is its colors, the contrast between the cherry red of the little boy's dress and the shining gold of the eunuch's coat. Charming also is the blue Delft dish held by the little boy, a charm enhanced by the incongruity of a Delft dish in a New Testament story.

Our chemist believes this to have been painted by Jacob Backer who is generallythought to have been a Rembrandt student in Amsterdam in the early 1630's. There is no definite proof of this, although Backer and Rembrandt occasionally used the same models. Thus, the head of Democritus in Backer's painting of Democritus Visited by Hippocrates (Fig. 1) which we had used on the cover of our biochemical catalog is of the same model used by Rembrandt for St. Paul in his painting of St. Peter and St. Paul in Discussion (Fig. 2) of 1628, now in Melbourne.

This <u>Baptism of the Eunuch</u> is not particularly "Rembrandtesque" and so may be an early work, before Backer became influenced by Rembrandt. The fourth figure from the right, the young man who looks so out of place in this New Testament story, may be a self-portrait of the artist.



. Louis to the state of the sta

Prof. Dr. Werner Sumowski Hessenwiesenstrasse 4 7000 Stuttgart - Rohr

"Lieber Merr Dekter Bader,

herzlichen Dank für Ihren Brief vom 26. Januar und für das vorzügliche Ektachrom der "Taufe des Kämmerers". Es ist ein herrliches Bild, koloristisch ein Meisterwerk. Die Einordnung in die Richtung von Backer wird zutreffen. Für Backer selbst ist mir die Qualität zu gut. Ich muss, was den Auter betrifft, nech tüchtig grübeln. Das Selbstporträt rechts kann hoffentlich weiterführen.

mentagging to the first of the control of the contr

Thr Hiob-Zitat in Bezug auf Abaris ist sicher berechtigt. Was Sie mir sagen, sage ich mir häufig selbst. Aber der Umgang mit Herrn St.ist so unerquicklich wie eben mit der personifizierten Unzuverlässigkeit, und da schaffe ich mir dann jammernd Luft. Das andere Projekt macht mir bis jetzt Freude, Allerdings gibt es manche Schwierigkeiten bei der Fotobeschaffung aus den Ostbleckstaaten.Dort sind vor allem Ektachrome unerreichbare Dinge aus einem Wunderland, Ich könnte, mehrfach im Stich gelassen und mit meinen Berechnungen durcheinandergeraten, nech weitere Bilder aus Threr Sammlung in Farben reproduzieren, falls Ektachrome erhältlich wären; das Format lo x 15 cm würde genügen. Ich denke an Drost (Frau? im Prefil), Dou (Orientale mit Stab) und Doomer (Esther?) . Wenn ich sagen sollte, was mir hier am wichtigsten ist, würde ich Doomer nennen, weil seine Gemälde so selten sind und weil man kaum eine Verstellung von seiner Farbe geben kann.

Noch zwei Sachen: Hatten Sie nicht auf eine Ausstellung mit Bildern aus Ihrem Besitz hinweisen wollen? Ich wäre Ihnen für Xerographien der Texte zu Ihren Leihgaben dankbar.

Zweitens erwähnt Emile Wolf in einem Brief an das hie-

sige Museum - ohne weitere Angaben - eine Ausstellung "Gods, Saints and Heroes in the Age of Rembrandt".

Sie wissen sicher, um welches Unternehmen es sich handelt.

Könnten Sie mir bitte einen Katalog mit Rechnung auf meinen Namen bestellen?

Mit nochmaligem Dank und mit besten Wünschen und Grüssen, auch von Frau Kropp,

Thr

Wann werden Sie wieder in Deutschland sein?

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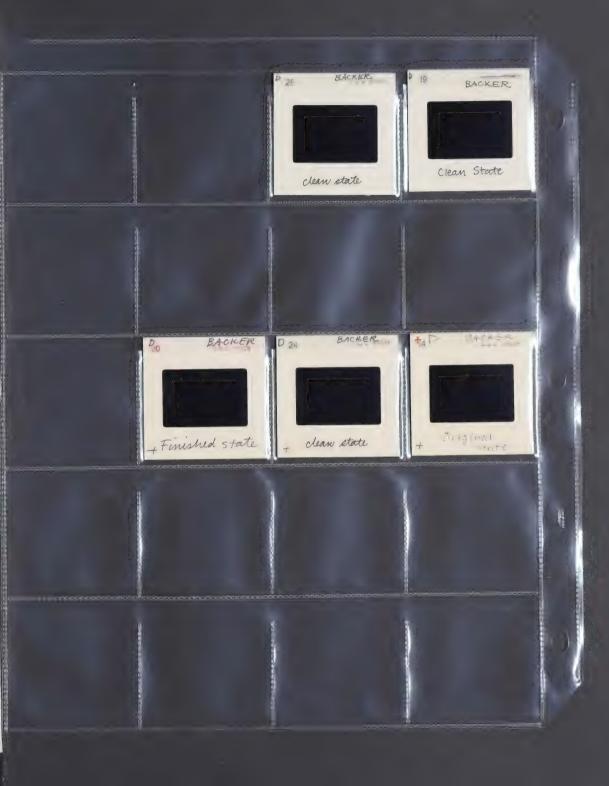
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DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS

THE MOUND, EDINBURGH EH2 2EL

TELEPHONE: 031-556 8921

Dr Alfred R Bader 2961 North Shepard Avenue Milwaukee Wisconsin 53211 USA

17 February 1981

Dear Dr Bader

Your touching faith in my abilities is I am afraid quite misplaced for I have nothing positive to tell you about the three photographs you have sent me. The <u>Guardian Angel</u> is quite impossible as Rottenhammer but may well be by a German working in Italy but I do not recognise this hand. It seems to me somewhere around Matthias Kager (c 1575-1634) but I doubt whether it is actually by him. Who this strange figure in the roundels is I have no idea. In the one in the top left corner he looks to me Roman rather than a church dignatory. Is it possible that this is in fact Valerian who was visited by an angel and converted although normally there should be a St Cecilia present as well.

The <u>Baptism of the Eunuch</u> is as you say very near Backer and I am sure you are right in seeing in the figure between the two children the self-portrait, but it is a very strange composition. Finally the <u>Samaritan Woman</u> is a real puzzle. It looks back to the pre-Rembrandtists (especially in the landscape) and forward as far as Pieter de Grebber. Is it possible that this is someone like Joris van Schooten!

As you see I am tapping in the dark and none of my suggestions seem to me very inpired.

Kindest regards also to your wife.

Yours sincerely

her fule.

Keith K Andrews Keeper



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Kindest regards also to your wife.

Yours sincerely

hen Anden.

Keith K Andrews Keeper



25 July 1984

Dr. Alfred Bader 2961 N. Shepard Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53211

Dear Dr. Bader:

For the past twenty years Menil Foundation has been conducting and publishing research on the representations of black Africans in Western art. (See the enclosed brochure for a brief description of the scope of our efforts and of our publications.) In connection with this research we would like to order $\underline{\text{four}}$ (4) black and white, 8 x 10 in. photographs of the following work in your collection:

Jacob Adriaensz. BACKER (1608-1651)
PAINTING. Baptism of the Eunuch. ca. 1630
Canvas. 104.7 x 117.4 cm.

REFERENCE: Werner SUMOWSKI, Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler in vier Bänden (Landau, 1983-?), vol. I, <u>J. A. Backer - A. van Dijck</u>, no. 4 and color plate.

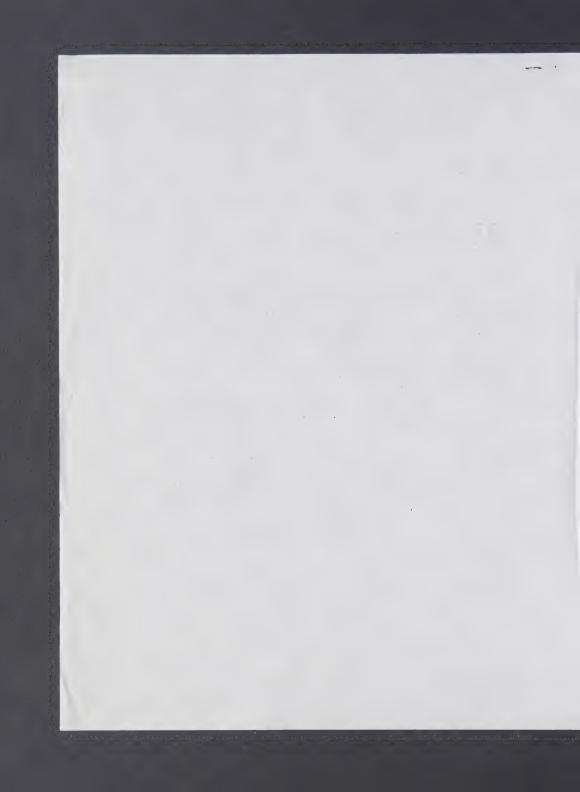
Would you be so kind as to confirm or correct the above-stated information and to include your inventory number for this work.

Please bill Menil Foundation and send both your invoice and the photos to my attention at the above address. The photos will be used for study purposes only and will not be reproduced without your express written permission.

Thanking you in advance for your assistance with this request, I am

Sincerely yours,

Jane Horkel



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The Image of the Black in Western Art Ladislas Bugner, General Editor

Oty Code BUGIM1 From the Pharaphs to the Fall of theBUGLIA From the Demonic Threat to the BURGER Africans in the Christian Ordinance of the World

THE IMAGE OF THE **BLACK IN WESTERN ART**

A publication of Menil Foundation, Inc. Distributed by Harvard University Press

THE IMAGE OF THE **BLACK IN WESTERN ART**



"A project . . . remarkable for its range and scope, for the exalted nature of its ambitions and its beauty of presentation . . . The existing volumes are impressive on several counts. As books to look at, they bring forward an immense amount of material . . . from many parts of the world. As books to read, they forge way beyond the boundaries of art history."

THE IMAGE OF THE **BLACK IN WESTERN ART** Ladislas Bugner, General Editor

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Preface and Introduction by Ladislas Bugner "This handsomely illustrated book . . . investigating the iconography of blacks in Occidental art . . . virtually exhausts all possible resources, both

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From the Early Christian Era to the "Age of Discovery" Part 1: From the Demonic Threat to the Incarnation of Sainthood

Jean Devisse, with a preliminary essay by Jean Marie Courtes







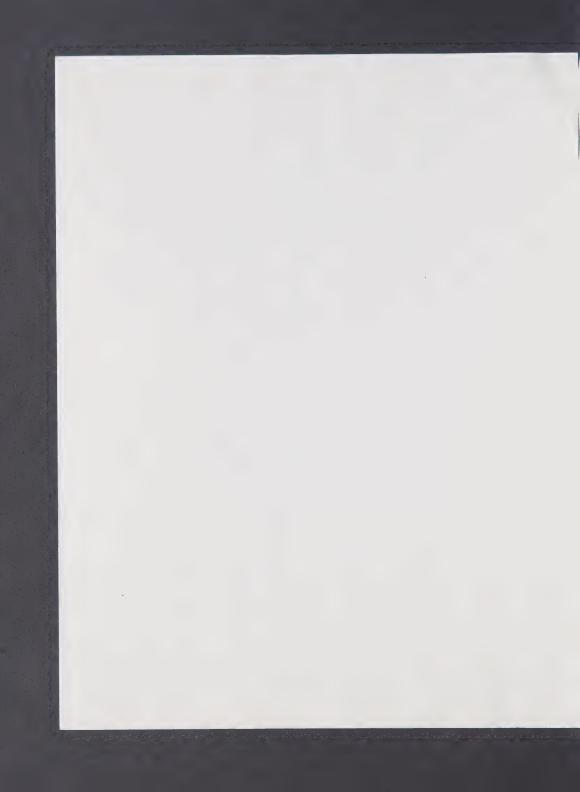
47 color 217 b/w halftones

From the Early Christian Era to the "Age of Discovery" Part 2: Africans in the Christian Ordinance of the World Jean Devisse and Michel Mollat

Africa and Africans gathered by merchants, missionaries, and others



I qui arrivera à le Cerge à mon fidile Sant sortiens que je vous accueillerai à la Conservation. ist muly - un bean (namer enfin again face note music, four notestrop petite et lacunaire se-Te Journeis même vous monther - out! l'homentale/quind Rembrandt print sa Verun'et l'amour (portin, dont le l'inite prime aprisons), Bit se peut + copie Rembrandt! - Votre 48 est de Blommen doll, je curi. Et comme j'aine ce mystères y Le 34: Bol at a excluse of autout 4 qu'il resoit terptent à cette Tim Rollandaire, Votu 37: j' avoin dit à Cohan pour cier. Puisque vons m'annonce



P. DR. CHRISTIAN TUMPFL SCHEFFELSTRASSE 22 D 2000 HAMBURG 60 TELEFON 040/27 45 05

'seles Alfred! Hat hersellen Bruk fir Durien Brief. Di Rufe des Kammeren Rament wohl in einem and in Whech beein-Justen Krinstler & mi RKD A es J.A. Backer (?) maschrilben 20 iden o in fige eine Fotokopie mit Verglerholespiettis Von Blockmaert hate in leder kein Foto Ah muip mal sehen, of Afford is hat. Im Run handt, Briding un Run Canolts Kets möchte ih noch einnal im Eiginal schur, bevor M da mein Urter l'algebr. En onher kein orblechter Kanf, dum es ump doch robl in Dembruotts Werk Statt entstanden sein (+) sich Viet), zem es mut un Run= brandt silht sein sollte. Ant jeden tall: Congulus lations!

Jeinen Kataloz habe Ah an vovovo

geschicht. Manischen Al dhi aneith

Antlage des kleinen Bondlein

erschienen. Ih zude Dah dat anmelden

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B und ah bitte clann um eine Kopie!

Andra falls findet Dir die Angalen

im Port-scription.

Herslike frispe anch wh strid und dans, drin artin Tumper

hologi: led Les auch Ardid mont des Foto Vom Jacobskaum. Bartor calseriptic Kunstgeschiedenis

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12. DOOP VAN DE KAMERLING (afb. XII)
Milwaukee, Collectie Dr. Alfred Badder
Doek, 104,7 x 117,4 cm.

Herkomst

Dr. E. Schapiro, Londen

Literatuur

Sumowski 1983, p. 193

Foucart 1983, p. 369, noot 29 (als Blommendael)

Toeschrijving

Door Sumowski is het schilderij bij Backer opgenomen. De toeschrijving in het RKD aan Blommendael, welke overgenomen is door Foucart, wordt door hem wel vermeld, maar verworpen.

Een neger gekleed in een kostbare gele jas knielt op een kussen voor een oude grijze man die water over zijn hoofd sprenkelt. Een jongetje houdt de kom met water in zijn handen. Enkele toeschouwers, onder wie een soldaat, kijken toe. Het landschap op de achtergrond is rotsachtig en kaal. Het moet erg warm zijn, want door één van de toeschbuwers wordt een parasol vastgehouden, die als attribuut ook te zien is op enkele versies van Lastman en Rembrandt.

In Handelingen 8: 26-40 wordt de ontmoeting beschreven tussen de diaken Filippus en een kamerling van de koningin der Ethiopiërs op de weg tussen Jeruzalem en Gaza. Als Filippus hoort dat de Ethiopiër in zijn reiskoets uit Jesaja leest, vraagt hij of hij de tekst begrijpt. De eunuch antwoordt: "Hoe zou ik dat kunnen, als niemand mij daarin behulpzaam is?" Filippus geeft daarop uitleg. Als de koets bij water komt, vraagt de eunuch of hij gedoopt kan worden en aldus geschiedt.

Het thema komt in de Nederlanden voor het eerst voor in de

zestiende eeuw om in de zeventiende eeuw een grote populariteit te krijgen. Volgens Defour houdt deze populariteit verband met de vestiging van de reformatie in Noord-Nederland. Volgens de Rooms-Katholieke leer vormde het ontvangen van het sacgament van de doop voorwaarde voor toekomstig zieleheil en diende daarom onmiddellijk na de geboorte plaats te hebben. In zijn commentaar op de Handelingen der Apostelen stelde Calvijn daarentegen i.v.m. met het verhaal van de doop van de kamerling, dat niemand gedoopt kon worden zonder geloof in de Bijbel en dat de doop slechts plaats kon vinden na bijbeluitleg en ten overstaan van de gemeente. De geschiedenis van de doop van de kamerling moet derhalve voor protestanten een speciale betekenis hebben gehad.

Hoewel met name Philippus Blommendael-trekken vertoont, lijkt een toeschrijving aan Blommendael mij twijfelachtig. Het kleurgebruik is m.i. veel harder dan op de gesigneerde en toegeschreven werken (voor zover dat mogelijk was om te zien), maar vooral waar het de uitbeelding van het verhaal betreft De combinatie van realistische zijn er verschillen. werkelijkheid en religieus gebeuren, zoals te zien bij Mozes slaat water uit de rots en Christus op de Olijfberg is op dit schilderij afwezig. De bijbeltekst is slechts de aanleiding tot de voorstelling, maar kennelijk niet een bron van inspiratie. De reiskoets is nergens te zien en het water waar de eunuch in afdaalt om zich te laten dopen, is afkomstig uit een schaal. Op de andere religieuze historiën heeft Blommendael zich duidelijk laten leiden door de betreffende bijbelteksten. Mede op grond hiervan meen ik dat dit werk dan ook niet door Blommendael geschilderd is. 84

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Bovenstaande gegevens ontleend aan Defoer 1977, pp. 21-24.



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