

Alfred Bader

Alfred Bader Fine Arts - Painting File

Jordaens

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JULIUS S. HELD

Jordaens at Ottawa

THE exhibition in honour of Jacob Jordaens held at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa was a statistical triumph. The almost legendary exhibition of Jordaens's *œuvre* held in Antwerp in 1905 consisted of 171 items; the Brussels exhibition of 1928, unfortunately marred by dubious attributions, contained 151. There were 317 works on display in Ottawa. Among them were 158 drawings, thirty-five more than in the well-remembered exhibition held at Rotterdam and Antwerp in 1966-67, which was exclusively devoted to Jordaens's drawings. This show, therefore, was not only the largest, by far, ever dedicated to the master, but it was also accompanied by a catalogue that in sumptuousness has almost no equal among catalogues of exhibitions dedicated to a single master. Every item (except the few added after the catalogue had been printed) is reproduced, documented and discussed. Clearly a vast amount of industry, learning, and expense, too, has gone into the preparation of such a huge show and chief credit for whatever its achievements must go to Michael Jaffé who selected the works on display and wrote the catalogue. Yet many people whose help he acknowledges in the catalogue contributed to its success, and it is certainly due to the active support of Jean Sutherland Boggs, the director of the National Gallery, and through her, of the Canadian Government, that the grandiose plans were indeed realized.

It is perhaps not entirely out of place to ask: why Jordaens? Certainly, Jordaens has always been considered a major figure in Flemish art; in his best works he conveys a feeling of sheer animal vigour and sensuous exuberance that has often been hailed (and with more justification than Rubens's) as the most authentic expression of 'the genius of the Flemish people'. Yet it has been equally clear that despite his incredible productivity, his brilliant use of colour, his broad sense of humour, and his keen observation of the world in which he himself lived, Jordaens lacked something to permit his ranking among the truly great artists. That 'something' might be called a sense of artistic integrity or responsibility which in the greatest artists is the hidden drive compelling them to seek ever new formulations for felt truths, ever new solutions for fundamental problems. Jordaens began his career with works of astonishing boldness, in the mediums of both painting and drawing. For about three decades his art grew and changed: what it lost in sheer dramatic force, it gained in symphonic richness of colour and decorative splendour of design. This development came to its climax in some of his magnificent series of tapestries. But even during these years one can notice a tendency towards mere facility,

willingness to rely upon certain basic patterns, to proceed by improvisation rather than by plan and to overwhelm the viewer with the opulence of the feast rather than to please him with its careful preparation.

At the end of his long career – he died at the age of eighty-five – he produced works which can only be called embarrassing. The Ottawa exhibition, admirable though it was as an effort to present a total 'picture' of the artist did nothing to change this well-known image; there is no need for a re-appraisal.

Why then Jordaens? The immediate cause was obviously the acquisition, by the National Gallery of Canada, of one of Jordaens's most attractive pictures, the *Young Cavalier on Horseback, accompanied by Mars and Mercury*, from the Northwick Park Collection. It certainly makes good sense to provide, at least for a short period, a background against which the significance of a major acquisition can be measured. Although hung modestly in a less than prominent space, the picture fully justified both the effort of its purchase and the honour of a major exhibition assembled around it. While the Flemish section of the National Gallery is still a small one (its chief pride being an outstanding early Van Dyck), Jordaens's colourful canvas adds to it a work of distinction and true beauty.

The purchase itself, however, is an indication of a growing interest in Jordaens, reflected not least in the spectacular increase in prices paid for his works. To the degree that works of the greatest masters disappear from the market, their place is inevitably filled by those assigned to the next rank. The art market, like nature, abhors a vacuum. What has made Jordaens 'interesting' in dealers' eyes is the relative availability of authentic works; a prolific artist, his paintings and drawings are still in satisfactory, if less than abundant, supply.

Yet supply does not necessarily create demand. I believe there are other reasons why Jordaens now appeals more to collectors (institutions included) than he has done for a long time. He certainly profited from the general re-appraisal of baroque art. We have learned to see the most flamboyant creations of the period as the manifestations of an age – perhaps the last – when an outgoing and confident optimism seemed not only permissible but also warranted. The prosaic earthiness of some of Jordaens's creatures, resting on the ground with both feet, and occasionally their buttocks as well, exemplifies one aspect of the Baroque which can be traced from Caravaggio's illiterate evangelists to Ceruti's stolid peasants. Some of the themes treated by Jordaens



(several indeed still to be deciphered) offered grist to the mills of scholars interested in Iconology. The possible reflection of Jordaens's Calvinism on his art – clearly demonstrable in some of his later works – has proved a subject worthy of study. I do wonder, however, whether the more recent popularity of Jordaens is not to some extent tied to certain developments in the art of our own time. Less spiritual than El Greco's, less organized than Poussin's, less learned than Rubens's, less profound than Rembrandt's, Jordaens's art has a 'visceral' appeal, to use a fashionable term. We are apt to forget, looking at his unrestrained family festivities that they are rooted in traditional images for gluttony. What we do see are hearty eaters and hard drinkers, mothers cleaning their babies, men kissing smiling girls, others sick from over-indulgence. His frank and unvarnished sensualism may indeed – to use another modern expression – be more relevant to our times than the art of some of his contemporaries more purified by the traditions of the classical heritage. It may be less than accidental that the recent growth of interest in Jordaens's tangible if plain world has coincided with the acclaim given to the visceral vulgarities of pop art.

However that may be, it is safe to say that as an instrument of propaganda for the appreciation of Jordaens, the Ottawa exhibition was clearly too big. While Mr Jaffé succeeded in persuading the owners of some of Jordaens's finest accomplishments to part briefly with their treasures (the exhibition was dispersed after this one showing), and while students of Flemish art are greatly in his debt for having included a number of works whose normal abode are remote museums and virtually inaccessible private collections, he included also a rather high percentage of works which are repetitious and at best of marginal interest. It is understandable that a scholar who has worked in a particular field has a strong urge to present his observations, especially where he can claim, as Mr Jaffé does, to have been the first to make them. The question arises, however, whether an exhibition mounted at great cost, and aimed at a public which is largely unfamiliar with the artist concerned, should be made a vehicle to introduce new, often highly controversial attributions, or whether its catalogue should be burdened with so many fine points of scholarship that only specialists can follow its arguments. A smaller and more rigorously selected number of works, accompanied by a less analytical catalogue would probably have served the visiting public better.

Perhaps this was not the aim. Studying both the exhibition and the catalogue on repeated visits, I could not help feeling that the catalogue was not meant to serve the exhibition: the exhibition was used as a *raison d'être* for the publication of the catalogue. This is by no means a rare occurrence, nor should it necessarily be considered objectionable. It is the printed record, after all, that remains, when the exhibition is again dispersed. Only a relatively small number of people had the privilege of seeing the Ottawa show, but Mr Jaffé's catalogue will remain an important part of the Jordaens literature. No matter how much this writer may disagree with some of the individual entries, the catalogue is a major achievement, crowned by the almost unheard-of feat of being ready and available for the very opening of the show. It is attractive typographically, and contains many features

that will render it useful for future study of the master. Besides the critical listings proper, it has a general introduction and shorter essays at the beginning of each of the four sub-divisions, Paintings, Drawings, Tapestries, and Prints. It includes a seven-page synopsis of biographical data, translated (though this fact was not stated) from d'Hulst's catalogue of the 1966–67 exhibition.¹ Also helpful, and as far as I can see virtually complete, is a list of pertinent publications. (The only items I missed were Marian Donnelly's study 'Calvinism in the work of Jacob Jordaens', *The Art Quarterly*, XXII, 1959, p.356, and Zoege von Manteuffel's far from negligible entry in Thieme-Becker.) Moreover, besides the reproductions of all works exhibited, there is a section with forty-four reproductions of 'comparative material' bringing the illustrations to a grand total of 359! Unfortunately, as there is no index, it is impossible to know, short of leafing through the whole catalogue where a particular item of the comparative material is discussed.²

Among the 115 paintings in the show, were many of outstanding importance, particularly – and for good reason – from the master's early period: the *Family groups* from Leningrad (3) and Kassel (4), the huge *Allegory of Fruitfulness* from Munich (12), the *Adoration of the Shepherds* from Grenoble (11), the *Cecrops daughters* from Antwerp (14), the large double-portrait from London (44), the *Ulysses and Circe* from Ponce (58) and the *Family feasts* from Paris (64), Valenciennes (65) and Berlin (66). Welcome surprises were the *St Christopher* from Belfast (30), surely one of the most impressive pictures in the show, happily accompanied by a study for the Saint's head from the Lawrence A. Fleischman collection in New York (31); the little-known *Family Feast* from the collection of the Earl of Wemyss and March at Gosford House, Scotland (67), and the splendid if derivative picture of the *Four Doctors of the Latin Church* from Stonyhurst College (69). From the period after 1650 came the three extant *modelli* for the *Triumph of Frederik Hendrik of Orange* (100, 101, 102) and at least two other works of major interest: the *Holy Family in a Boat* from Skokloster, Sweden (105), and the so-called *Allegory of the Peace of Münster* from Oslo (108). (I am surprised that Mr Jaffé accepted without question the title that came with the picture, 'The Blessings Showered on the Seven Provinces by the Peace of Münster.' Not only is there no recognizable reference to the Seven Provinces or the Westphalian Peace, but the central emblem, a flaming heart on an altar decorated with the symbol of the holy Spirit, makes it more than likely that despite the presence of Mercury, Neptune, Occasio, and Time, pouring treasures from a horn of plenty, the central conceit of the picture is religious, all the more as the stork of Piety stands at the right and Divine Providence appears as the crowning figure above.)

¹ While Jaffé added two or three items to d'Hulst's data, students are well advised to check all information against the original publications of these records (van den Branden, Rooses, and others), as neither d'Hulst's nor Jaffé's accounts are complete, and the latter's regrettably contain some inaccuracies and errors in translation.

² A somewhat disconcerting feature of the catalogue, too, is the use of the phrase *Never exhibited* for works which had always been hung in the museums from which they came, such as the Prado, the Hermitage, the Brera, the Pitti, and the galleries of Grenoble, Antwerp, Ghent, Brunswick, Kassel, Munich, Detroit, Oberlin and others, but apparently had never been lent to temporary exhibitions.



The drawing section, too, had some pleasant surprises: *The Arrest of Christ*, from the collection of Sidney E. Rolfe in New York (145) – once sold as a Castiglione! – is an important document for the contacts between Jordaens and the young Van Dyck (Fig.13). The large *modello* for the *Miracle of St Martin* of Tours, which Mr Oliver Millar identified in the collection of the late Duchess of Kent (172), permits us to trace the development of the great Brussels painting through three different stages. The study of a stockily built man with a broad-rimmed hat from Copenhagen (234), first recognized by Carlos van Hasselt, adds a delightful item to the small group of full-length studies from life. And Mr Jaffé is surely correct in maintaining – against R.-A. d'Hulst – the originality of the strikingly beautiful *Musical Party* from the Ashmolean Museum (218). Since I have pointed out elsewhere that d'Hulst's exclusion of a number of drawings from the canon of Jordaens's *œuvre* surely went too far, I was pleased to see that Mr Jaffé, too, had come to that conclusion. I concur gladly with his reclaiming for Jordaens Nos.149, 158, 161, 183, 190, 194, 195, 204, 233, 247, 257, 259, 272, and 273, in addition to 218 just mentioned. I think he is wrong with regard to Nos.117 and 152.

The most spectacular room of the exhibition was the one reserved for the tapestries. Large and high (in contrast to the other rooms, most of which suffered from lack of height), it was the ideal setting for a cheerful group of ten hangings which demonstrate convincingly that some of Jordaens's happiest inventions were made for works in this medium. Particularly welcome were two items lent from the Palazzo Quirinale in Rome, especially the striking *Ulysses* scene (284), and one from the *Alexander* series, lent by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, from Holyroodhouse (275). The importance of design for tapestry in Jordaens's work – correctly underscored by Mr Jaffé when he said that this activity 'occupied an even more important place in the *œuvre* of Jordaens than it did in that of Rubens' – was further demonstrated in the exhibition by a number of drawings for border designs and some of the splendid water-colour *modelli*, among them two justly famous examples of the scenes from rural life, from the British Museum, and the V. and A. (173, 174). Three little-known fragments from Besançon represented the cartoons which Jordaens – contrary to Rubens's practice – habitually executed on paper (265–267).

A small cabinet was devoted to prints, among them six of the master's etchings, all dated 1652; despite some technical flaws they prove that at this time Jordaens was still willing to experiment with new media; there were also some excellent impressions of engravings – most of them by engravers trained in Rubens's circle – after Jordaens's paintings.

It should be clear from the foregoing that the visit to the Jordaens exhibition was eminently worthwhile even for those who had more than passing acquaintance with the works of the master. If anything, it proved the truth of the German proverb: '*Wer vieles bringt, wird jedem etwas bringen.*' Nor is Mr Jaffé's contribution restricted to what he had to say about works actually exhibited. In his learned discourses he made innumerable statements referring to other works and it will take a long time for Jordaens students to digest these scattered morsels of information. Among them is one which I am accepting all the more eagerly as I had formed

the same opinion myself: the attribution to Jordaens of the *Portrait of a Young Lady* in the Oskar Reinhart Collection (Fig.1). This lovely picture, hitherto given to Rubens, is most assuredly a typical work of Jordaens – presumably painted around 1640. The little lapdog alone is virtually a signature. It occurs repeatedly in Jordaens's pictures, among them Nos.66, 107, and 109 of the exhibition, but never in Rubens's.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for many other works, both exhibited or referred to, as works of the master, in the catalogue. In fact, it could be argued that the knowledge of Jordaens, while enlarged by this exhibition, has also been obscured because of it. Many of the new attributions are unconvincing and some of the dates proposed by Mr Jaffé for undated works are hard to reconcile with the concept of a relatively consistent stylistic development – even if one is willing to accept a less than rigid standard with a master of Jordaens's stature. In making these statements, I find myself in a somewhat anomalous situation. Traditionally the burden of proof for new theories is with the scholar who proposes them. If they are presented as an *ipse dixit* (as is generally the case here), this burden is unfairly shifted to the critic who disagrees. The voice of authority, no matter how firmly expressed, is, after all, not infallible, but few people who have not made a thorough study of the material would dare to contradict it; thus, while many visitors to the exhibition may still have their doubts out of respect for the eminent scholar who arranged it, and while those who work only with the catalogue may wonder whether some items looked more persuasive in the context of the show itself, it is incumbent upon those who are familiar with the material, and also had the privilege of studying the exhibition, to speak up before too many of the questionable propositions have become firmly imbedded in the fabric of Jordaens scholarship.

These general remarks would be presumptuous if only a few items were concerned. By my count, however, there are about forty items which should be either questioned or rejected as works of the master. To begin with, there is a group of works which, according to Mr Jaffé, are copies by Jordaens after other masters. Three of these are in Mr Jaffé's own collection: No.144 'after Van Dyck'; No.159 'after Rubens'; No.185 'after Rubens'. To these should be added No.143 'after Rubens'; No.170 'after Pordenone'; No.229 'after Rubens'; and No.160 'after Rubens'. Moreover, among the plates of the Comparative Material, there are two more works representing even more complicated situations: No.II 'Jordaens, after Rubens's copy of part of Salviati's FASTI', and No.III 'Jordaens, after Rubens's copy of a section of a frieze . . . by Polidoro da Caravaggio, or in his manner'. In none of these drawings can Jordaens's hand be recognized with any degree of certainty, nor do they form a stylistically homogeneous group. Unless one is simply willing to take Mr Jaffé's word for it, the authorship of all these works should be placed in doubt.

Happily, there were relatively few school-pieces claimed to be originals. The most obvious case – revealed beyond any possibility of doubt in confrontation of the copy with the original – is the picture lent by Mme Henriette Stéfani, Paris (No.18) which, despite Mr Jaffé's praise, is clearly inferior to the magnificent picture at Brussels (No.17). The



point he makes is perfectly correct: Jordaens indeed occasionally repeated one of his own pictures. In this case, however, the copy is too far below the level of the master's early period to permit such an assumption. The *Holy Family* from the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection (34) came off badly in competition with the first-rate version sent by the San Francisco Museum (33). Despite the fact that there are some differences between the two, the Lugano picture qualifies as hardly more than a good school piece. The drawing of a young woman seen from the back (No.244) is probably a school copy of a lost original, and in the painting of *Meleager and Atalanta* (114), Jordaens appears to have enlarged a copy executed by an assistant – a fact Mr Jaffé, I believe correctly, assumes also for the large painting of *Moses Striking Water from the Rock* (115). The drawing of the *Adoration of the Shepherds* (137) may also be, at least in part, the work of another hand. A slightly different case is represented by the canvas of the *Adoration of the Shepherds* from Mainz (23). It is possible that it is simply a copy of a lost original; yet, while individual figures come clearly out of Jordaens's vocabulary, the wobbly composition, and the light, flowery colour make it more likely that we have here a pastiche, by a follower, of elements taken from various works of the master. Nor do I see any reason for Mr Jaffé's upgrading of the Copenhagen drawing of *Christ Calling St Peter and St Andrew* (132); it is surely what it has always been known to be, a mediocre piece, done by one of Jordaens's followers.

While the problems presented in these works are admittedly marginal, more serious issues are involved where works of undoubted artistic merit are concerned. Here the question 'Jordaens' or 'Not Jordaens' becomes crucial for, if these works are admitted, the whole concept of the artist's style and development will be affected. Fortunately, the very confrontation of these works with a large group of works of undoubted and generally accepted authenticity made it easy to see that they cannot be integrated into the canon of the master's *œuvre*; they remain 'Fremdkörper' and, indeed, often enough contradict each other. It is not without significance, too, that despite the fact that Jordaens was prone to making repeated use of his own inventions, no trace of these works can be found in his authentic productions.

The case of four sheets with studies of an elderly woman's head is one of the most instructive. One belongs to Mr Jaffé himself (154), while three others are respectively in Stockholm (152), Edinburgh (153, Fig.2), and the collection of Winslow Ames (Fig.3), the last one not exhibited but mentioned in the catalogue. Not only are these drawings clearly by the same hand, but they also portray the same woman – a woman with marvellously expressive if somewhat cantankerous features, made still more memorable by an obvious squint. Although differing from each other in the degree of finish, all faces are drawn with stress on sharply defined outlines and a methodical if somewhat schematic shading emphasizing the plastic volume. To these pieces can be added a young girl, in the museum of the Rhode Island School of Design (Fig.4). Besides the characteristic manner of shading and the sharp delineation of details such as the eyelids, the rendering of the hair in parallel strokes of the chalk is a particularly telling feature. It should suffice to compare this head with Jordaens's study of a young woman (d'Hulst No.119, Fig.159) to see the fundamentally different

method of drawing. Nor does any of these models appear in any of Jordaens's work (Mr Jaffé's suggestion that the old woman is the artist's mother-in-law is not convincing). We are clearly faced with an interesting artist whose identity is yet to be determined.

Mr Jaffé added to this group the drawing of a young man in Besançon (156). Frits Lugt associated this drawing with a group of three drawings in the Louvre (L.1384, 1385, 1386) and two others (Brussels and Dresden); indeed, no matter whether or not Lugt's tentative attribution to C. de Vos will stand the test of time, he was certainly correct in claiming the stylistic homogeneity of his group. Thus, if Mr Jaffé's attribution to Jordaens of the Besançon drawing is accepted, the other members of this group will have to be included, too – a conclusion which I should think Mr Jaffé himself would be reluctant to draw.

If the critique against these drawings is based on the notion that graphically they are too schematic and tight for Jordaens, the very opposite must be said about the drawing of a grinning satyr from Stockholm (231, Fig.5). Its very broad pictorial technique belongs to the eighteenth rather than the seventeenth century; it smacks of Fragonard rather than Jordaens.

Judging by the number of studies from the nude included in the show, Mr Jaffé puts considerable weight on his contention that Jordaens made many more such studies than has been known hitherto. In fact, in the Antwerp–Rotterdam exhibition, d'Hulst included a few typical and completely convincing examples. The same cannot be said about the large number of the latest additions. The stylistic analogies are insufficient; nor can it be shown that Jordaens made use of any of these studies from life in his authentic work. Hence, all these studies (Nos.122, 124, 134, 135, 151, 212, 240, plus the drawings listed by Mr Jaffé in his text to No.122) must be considered highly questionable. Equally doubtful are Nos.116, 117, and 132.

For my opinion about the drawings of an *Entombment* I must refer the reader to my review of the Antwerp–Rotterdam exhibition in *Kunstchronik* (1967, No.4, p. 94 ff). I should like, however, to modify my position in the light of a newly discovered drawing (118). It is now clear to me that the notion of one master for all these drawings (be it Jordaens or a 'Meister der Grablegungen') is too simplistic. Seeing the large and free drawing from Boston (118) next to the cramped and awkward study from the Egmont Album (120), I find it impossible to credit them to the same artist. We are faced here, I think, with an interesting problem. In one way or another all of these drawings belong to Rubens's orbit. All (except the lost *Descent from the Cross* which Ever: labelled Rubens and d'Hulst Jordaens) render the *Entombment of Christ*. Could they be exercises by different pupils of Rubens, given the task of designing this subject? The question involves an area where we still grope in the dark, since we do not know yet the actual studio practices and methods of instruction. Caution, and a willingness to admit ignorance may in the long run pay off better than an over-confidence apt to block further questioning.

With Jordaens the problem of the artistic activity and degree of independence of his many students is also a difficult one, ignored in the literature. The most instructive case in the Ottawa exhibition is the well-known painting from the



Ghent Museum (15), here dated *c.* 1616 and called 'Sine Baccho et Cerere friget Venus' (although neither Bacchus nor Ceres nor the iconographically essential fire are present). Jaffé harshly dismisses as 'incorrect' the opinions of Dupuis and d'Hulst who called it a school piece. In this case, I fear his bluntness must be turned against himself. The picture is related to two distinct periods of the master. Jaffé saw correctly that there are analogies with early works in the figures (though Jordaens himself never designed so woodenly). The character of the landscape, however, and the design of the animals, correspond to those in the master's work since the 1630's; see for instance some of the *Ulysses* scenes in the exhibition (54 and 58). Such a combination of aspects from different periods (possibly based on drawings by the master, as Jaffé suggests) is typical of a follower; admitting such a work into the master's own *œuvre* plays havoc with any logic in his development. The portrait of a *Girl with her Pet Finch* (47, lent by the Trustees of the Warwick Castle Resettlement) is also the work of a pupil, possibly the same who painted a picture of the *Prodigal Son*, now in the Atheneum in Helsinki, Finland.

The percentage of paintings of questionable authenticity exhibited in Ottawa was much smaller than that of drawings, but besides those mentioned above, there were several others which clearly did not stand the test of confrontation with genuine works. One of these is a charming study of a young man (31) which may not even be a product of the school of Antwerp; I notice a closer connection with such masters as Jacob van Oost who included a similar youth in his delightful family group in Bruges. The portrait of Joannes de Marschalck from Kansas (37, Fig.6), characterized by a highly sophisticated colour-scheme and an enamel-like treatment of the skin never found in Jordaens's work, could well be an early work of Cossiers (*1600). In his text Mr Jaffé cites two additional portraits which he is the first to introduce as works of Jordaens of this period. Whoever was the painter of one of them (Fig.7), was hardly the painter of the De Marschalck portrait, let alone Jordaens. Although it has been rather sadly abraded, especially in the face, the picture is very close to Rubens to whom it was attributed in the art market. The second picture quoted by Mr Jaffé in this connection (and associated, like the preceding one, for reasons not clear to me, with a bland sales entry of 1761) is a portrait of a young woman last known to be in the collection of Charles F. Williams in Cincinnati (Fig.8). This picture differs considerably both from the Marschalck and the Koetser portraits. Thus, we have here three portraits lumped together as Jordaens's work, each one of which betrays a different hand, none that of Jordaens. Mr Jaffé went out of his way to claim for Jordaens the Dresden painting of *Christ on the Sea of Galilee*, a picture not included in the exhibition but reproduced on Pl. VIII. Suffice it to say that I find this attribution completely unacceptable.

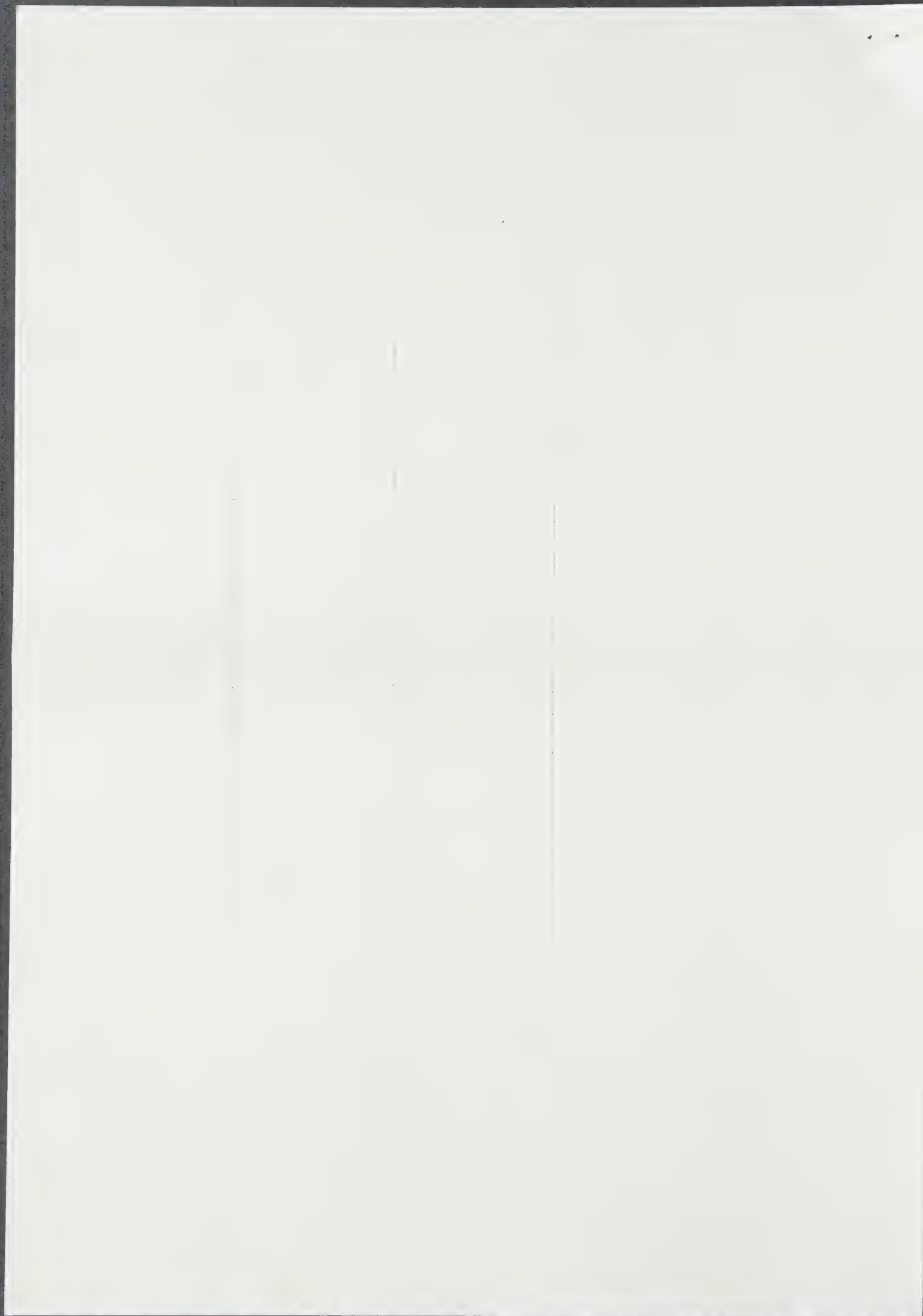
The confusion created by the introduction of questionable attributions is compounded by a number of cases where rather unlikely dates are assigned to undated works. The very first item in the show, a picture of Jupiter, from Mr Jaffé's own collection, is a case in point. Leaving aside the question of whether it is an original or a copy (a question not easy to answer since the other known version has been destroyed), it is very difficult to accept as one of Jordaens's

very first pictures, clearly implied by its place in a chronologically arranged show. To the best of our knowledge, Jordaens began painting in a rather smooth manner (a fact otherwise borne out by the exhibition), his palette, particularly in flesh-tones, dominated by an almost mannerist tendency to multi-coloured combinations (see Mr Jaffé's own comment on No.5). With its heavy impasto, its spotty brushwork, and its neutral colour-scheme, Mr Jaffé's picture is incompatible with any of the other works from the master's beginnings.

Although there are exceptions, in general Mr Jaffé tends to date Jordaens's works rather too early, thus telescoping the artist's development and creating unnecessary tensions between supposedly contemporary works.

This is especially true for works from the first period of Jordaens's activity, a period admittedly suffering from a dearth of dates. There are only three dated works before 1628 (1616, 1617, 1618) and it is precisely the absence of dated works for the crucial ten years from 1618 to 1628 that has tended to create difficulties for some scholars. This is not the place to unroll the entire problem; enough to say that '1615-16' is surely too early for the Raleigh *Visit of St John and his Parents to the Virgin and Christ* (9), as well as its variant in London, both being so much more spacious than the New York *Adoration of the Shepherds* of 1616 (10); the Kaplan (7) and Lille *Temptations of Mary Magdalene*, too, are better placed towards the end of the decade than '*c.* 1616'. Pictures which differ from each other as much as the *Satyr* from Warsaw (16), the Shickman Panels (19, 20) and the Columbus *St John* (21) are all dated close to each other ('1618-20', '*c.* 1618', '*c.* 1620' respectively), although only the last named can be that early. Too early, also, are the dates for Nos.22 ('*c.* 1620'), 28 (placed with works of the early 1620's), 32 (*c.* 1620-25) and 44. The last - the large double portrait from the London National Gallery - is dated '1628-29' on 'psychological and sartorial grounds'. Yet the lady's costume with the puffed-up sleeves held in by a ribbon at the elbow, rather than being 'well out of metropolitan fashion by the late 1620's', came into fashion precisely at that time and was still worn well into the 1630's. I don't know what Mr Jaffé considered the psychological grounds (he feels that the monstrously fat lady must be van Zerpelen's first wife, who died in 1629), but I wonder whether the man is really not older than thirty-five. On stylistic grounds the painting can hardly be placed earlier than the portraits in Vorselaer, dated 1635.

Most fascinating is the case of the portrait from the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection (72) bearing the date 1641. Because of its pale colouring and thin application of paint, it is reminiscent of works of a later period. On closer inspection it can indeed be seen that the date has been changed; it appears to have been first 1647 or possibly even 1657! The correction is old and could have been made by Jordaens himself. The explanation may well be that it is a repetition by the master of an earlier portrait of 1641 and that for some reason (perhaps to accord with the given age of the sitter) he preferred to put on his copy the date of the original version. (D'Hulst, who called the Thyssen picture a replica, may be right after all.) Of genuine drawings dated too early by Jaffé I should like to mention the Copenhagen *Head of a Woman* (133) and especially the Brunswick *Purification of the Temple* (161,



'from the early 1620's'), where the general layout alone points to a much later period, surely not before the late 1630's, if then.

I have mentioned before two examples where the iconographic interpretation, as given in the catalogue, appears questionable. Mr Jaffé's main interests, indeed, have been questions of attribution, chronology, style, and possibly, historical documentation. Compared to the stupendous effort expended on these problems, his concern for iconographic questions was marginal and occasionally less than successful. After pondering in vain, for instance, the meaning of the 'Holy Family with God the Father and the Holy Ghost' as rendered in a drawing from Brussels (226) he concludes that it must reflect 'the cult of a special legend' about St Joseph. A glance at Mâle's section on St Joseph in Chapter VI of *L'Art religieux après le Concile de Trente* would have solved all his problems (including the so-called 'Madonna lilies' and crown of 'laurel'). Indeed, Murillo's painting (Mâle, Fig. 185) is the perfect parallel to Jordaens's Brussels drawing and the related painting in Ghent, being like those a typical product of Counter-reform iconography.

The relative novelty of the theme of 'The Holy Family Embarked' (105, 245) though not discussed, might have been worth a brief comment. Mâle pointed out that its first dated appearance is in a print by Marten de Vos (1582), a fact all the more interesting under the circumstances as the National Gallery of Canada owns a de Vos drawing of this very subject (Fig. 9). The majority of Italian and French examples of the seventeenth century (see Charles Mitchell, *Warburg Journal*, I, 1937-38, p. 340) depict the actual embarkation except for a version of the theme by Annibale Carracci which Jordaens probably knew from the etching by Willem van Haecht (Fig. 10) and from which he may have derived the idea of the billowing sail and the standing Christ Child.

Nor is it without interest that contrary to the interpretations given by Titian and Rubens, Jordaens reverted to the classical notion according to which Ariadne was asleep when Bacchus spied on her (97). Some subjects have slightly misleading titles: there is surely no choice suggested between Virtue and Vice in the fine drawing of an 'Allegory of Vanitas' that came from Oxford (232); the text of the proverb inscribed on one of the designs for tapestries (219) 'Het syn Goede Keersen Die voorLichten' makes no sense if translated 'They are good candles which throw light' since the gist of the sentence, and of the moral drawn from it, is that those which *light the way* are good candles. Jaffé did give a new interpretation of a drawing from the Lehman Col-

lection in New York (259) but, while he is surely right in suspecting a Calvinist meaning, the passage in the Acts referred to does not seem to cover the action portrayed. The healing of the lame was performed as Peter and John walked to the Temple. Here, we see only one man, and he is seated. Peter 'took him by the right hand and lifted him up'. Here, the seated man only gestures to the one apparently healed, and he is certainly not preaching. Since Jordaens's drawing evidently puts stress on the happiness of the large gathering of people, his drawing may well refer to Acts 8 : 7-8 where Philip is reported to have healed many 'that were taken with palsies, and that were lame' 'And there was great joy in that city' (Samaria).

An 'iconographic' problem of sorts is the identification of the model who posed for the *Studies of a Man's Head* from Ghent (25) with Abraham Grapheus. Grapheus was indeed a favourite artist's model, starting with Martin de Vos's *Madonna with St Luke* (Antwerp, 1602), where he is seen grinding colours for the evangelist. He was painted by Cornelis de Vos in a memorable portrait (1620) and appears in works of Van Dyck as well as Jordaens; see the striking study in Detroit (Fig. 11) not included in the Ottawa show. Yet, it is this multiple exposure of Grapheus's craggy features that prompts me to reject the contention that he also modelled for the Ghent study, and the works derived from it. It so happens that Jordaens painted another study of the same man, now in Montauban (Fig. 12), which proves, I believe, that we are dealing here with an individual other – and younger – than Grapheus.

The limited interest in meaning characteristic of the catalogue extends even to the recording of inscriptions. (I might mention in passing that the signature on the painting of *Neptune creating the Horse* was not recorded). Few of the inscriptions found on Jordaens's drawings have been transcribed correctly. I should like to single out only two: In the story of *Cavarrus and Euripia* (273) – another incident of which is illustrated and described in a drawing in Amsterdam, not mentioned by Jaffé – the words '2000 croonen waer op Cavarrus antwoorden' were not only omitted entirely, but the words 'huysvrouw[e]' and 'om' were read as 'huiswrou' and 'our' respectively. And though it may be no more than a case of 'even Homer nodding', the text inscribed on the drawing *The Death of Cleopatra* (250), which reads very clearly: 'Cleopatra laet haer stechen va[n] Een Slange om niet Te vallen In handen va[n] Pompeius' (Cleopatra lets herself be stung by a serpent so as not to fall into the hands of Pompey) was transcribed untranslatably: 'Cleopatra Laer haer szecken vo[n] een slange om niet Te vall is gande vo[n] Pompeius'.





FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15213

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS

September 28, 1972

Mr. L. Piso
829 Barracks Street
New Orleans, La. 70116

Dear Mr. Piso:

I acknowledge with thanks your letter of the beginning of the month. Having since moved, for the current academic year, to Pittsburgh, I have been slightly delayed in my answer.

I have once more looked into the problem and am now absolutely certain that your picture was painted by the same artist who did a similar head of a youth, in the same technique, oil on paper, measuring $9 \frac{5}{8} \times 9 \frac{7}{16}$ inches, and now preserved in the museum of the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Vienna Austria. The Vienna picture has traditionally been attributed to Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678) and indeed was exhibited as a work of Jordaens in the large Jordaens Exhibition held in 1968-69 in the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

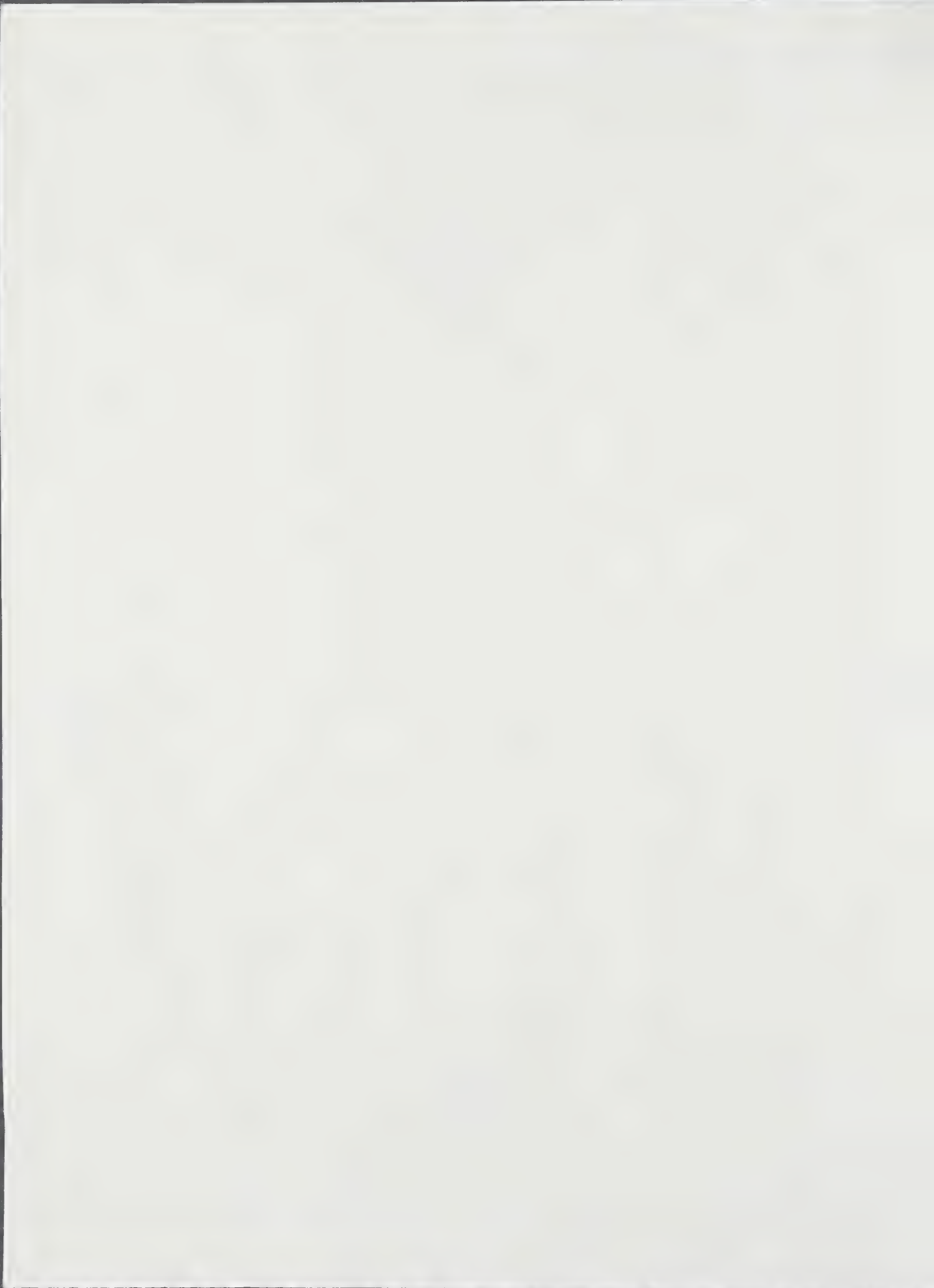
If the Vienna picture were indeed a work of Jordaens, as the organizer of the exhibition, Prof. Michael Jaffé, firmly believes, then one would have to conclude, that your picture would definitively be by the same master, i.e. a work of Jordaens. Unfortunately, in my long review of the Ottawa exhibition in The Burlington Magazine, vol.CXI, 1969, p.265 ff. I singled the Vienna picture out (on p.271) as one of the paintings in the show of which I could not accept the attribution to Jordaens. (It was listed as no. 31 in the exhibition, and is of course reproduced in the splendid catalogue of the exhibition which I am sure can be made accessible to you in the New Orleans Museum of Art; they may possibly have also the volume of the Burlington Magazine to which I refer).

I suggested as a possible alternate identification the name of Jacob van Oost, a Bruges master of the same period. I still believe that the Vienna picture - and by analogy also your painting - is a product of the Bruges school, but consider now also the name of Nicolas de Liemaker as a possibility. Both van Oost and Liemaker were very respectable artists even if their names are less familiar today than those of Jordaens or other Antwerp masters.

A good photo of the Vienna picture can be obtained from the museum of the Akademie (Inv. No. 608, Neg. no. 1). The title is "Studienkopf".

Sincerely yours,

James S. Held



JACOB VAN OOST THE ELDER
(BRUGES 1601-1671)

"STUDYHEAD OF A YOUNG MAN"

OIL ON PAPER, MOUNTED ON CANVAS.

10³/₄" x 9³/₄" (27¹/₂ x 25 CM)

VAN OOST WAS A FLEMISH PAINTER OF PORTRAITS, HISTORY AND GENRE. IN 1620 HE TRAVELLED IN ITALY FOR FIVE YEARS AND WORKED AFTERWARDS IN BRUGES. HIS EARLY WORK WAS UNDER INFLUENCE OF RUBENS, WHOM HE COPIED SEVERAL TIMES.

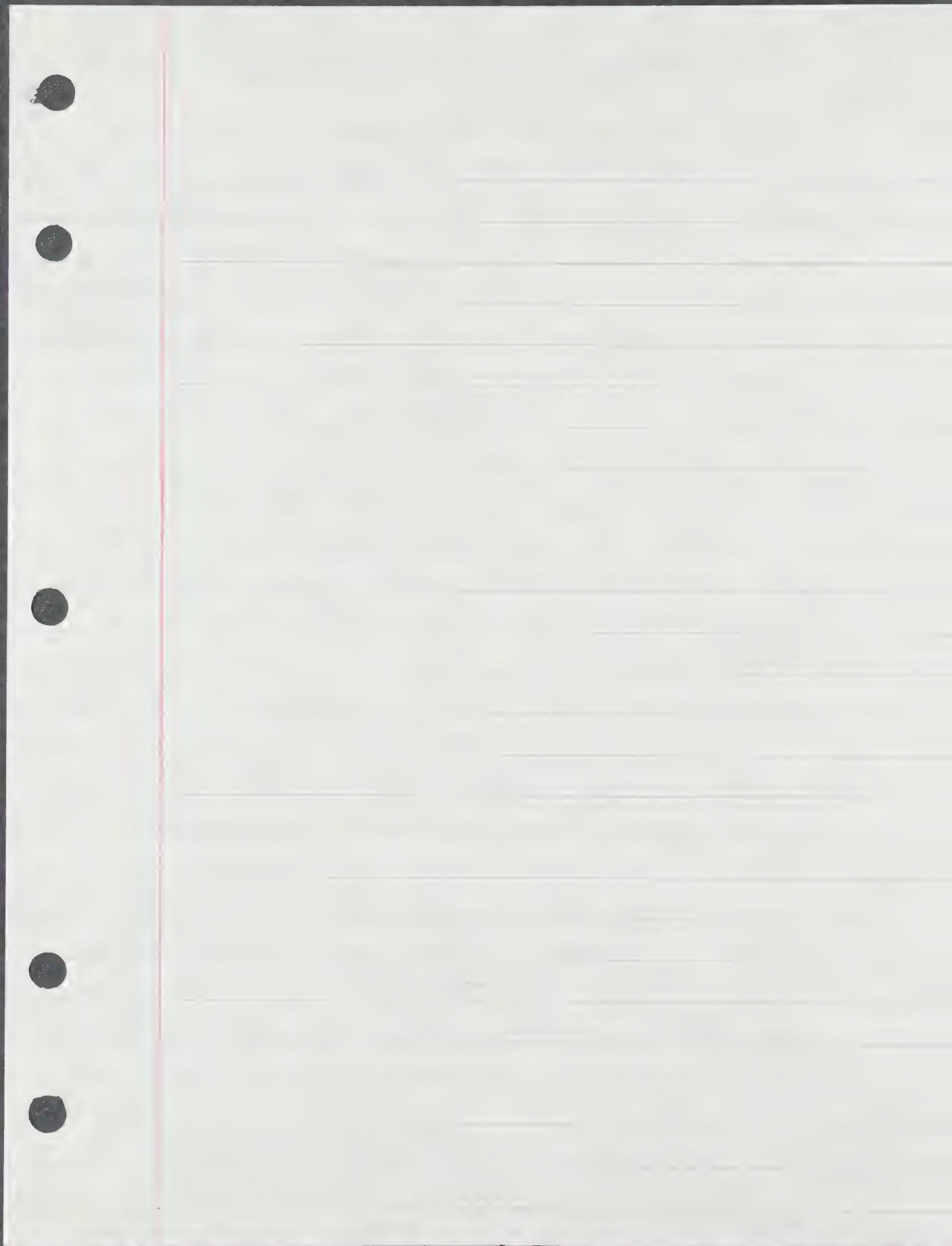
THE "ACADEMIE DER BILDENDEN KÜNSTE" IN VIENNA HAS A PICTURE OF A SIMILAR HEAD OF A YOUTH, IN THE SAME TECHNIQUE, OIL ON PAPER, MEASURING 9⁵/₈" x 9⁷/₁₆" WHICH TRADITIONALLY HAS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO JACOB JORDAENS (1593-1678), AND WAS EXHIBITED AS A WORK OF JORDAENS IN THE LARGE JORDAENS EXHIBITION HELD IN 1968-69 IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA, OTTAWA # 31.

PROF. JULIUS S. HELD HOWEVER IN HIS REVIEW OF THIS EXHIBITION IN THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE VOL. CXI 1969 P. 265 SINGLED THE VIENNA PICTURE OUT (ON P. 271) AS ONE OF THE PAINTINGS IN THE SHOW OF WHICH HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THE ATTRIBUTION TO JORDAENS AND SUGGESTED AS A POSSIBLE ALTERNATE THE NAME OF JACOB VAN OOST. HE BELIEVES THAT THE VIENNA PICTURE AND THIS PAINTING ARE BY THE SAME HAND AND PRODUCTS OF THE BRUGES SCHOOL.

PROVENANCE: GRAF SOLMS - BADEN BADEN

E. HIRSCHBERG - THE HAGUE.

ACQUISITION DATE: AUG. 12 1971





FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15213

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS

September 28, 1972

Mr. L. Piso
829 Barracks Street
New Orleans, La. 70116

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A good photo of the Vienna picture can be obtained from the museum of the Akademie (Inv. No. 608, Neg. no. 1). The title is "Studienkopf".

Sincerely yours,

Julius J. Held





FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
 UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
 PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15213

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS

September 28, 1972

Mr. L. Pisc
 829 Barracks
 1000 University Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15260

Dear Mr. Pisc:

I acknowledge with thanks your letter of the beginning of the month. Having since moved, for the calendar year, to Pittsburgh, I have been slightly delayed in my answer.

I have once more looked into the problem and am now absolutely certain that your picture was painted by the same artist who did a similar head of a youth, in the same technique, oil on paper, measuring 9 5/8 x 9 7/16 inches, and now preserved in the museum of the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Vienna, Austria. The Vienna picture has traditionally been attributed to Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678) and indeed was exhibited as a work of Jordaens in the large Jordaens Exhibition held in 1968-69 in the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

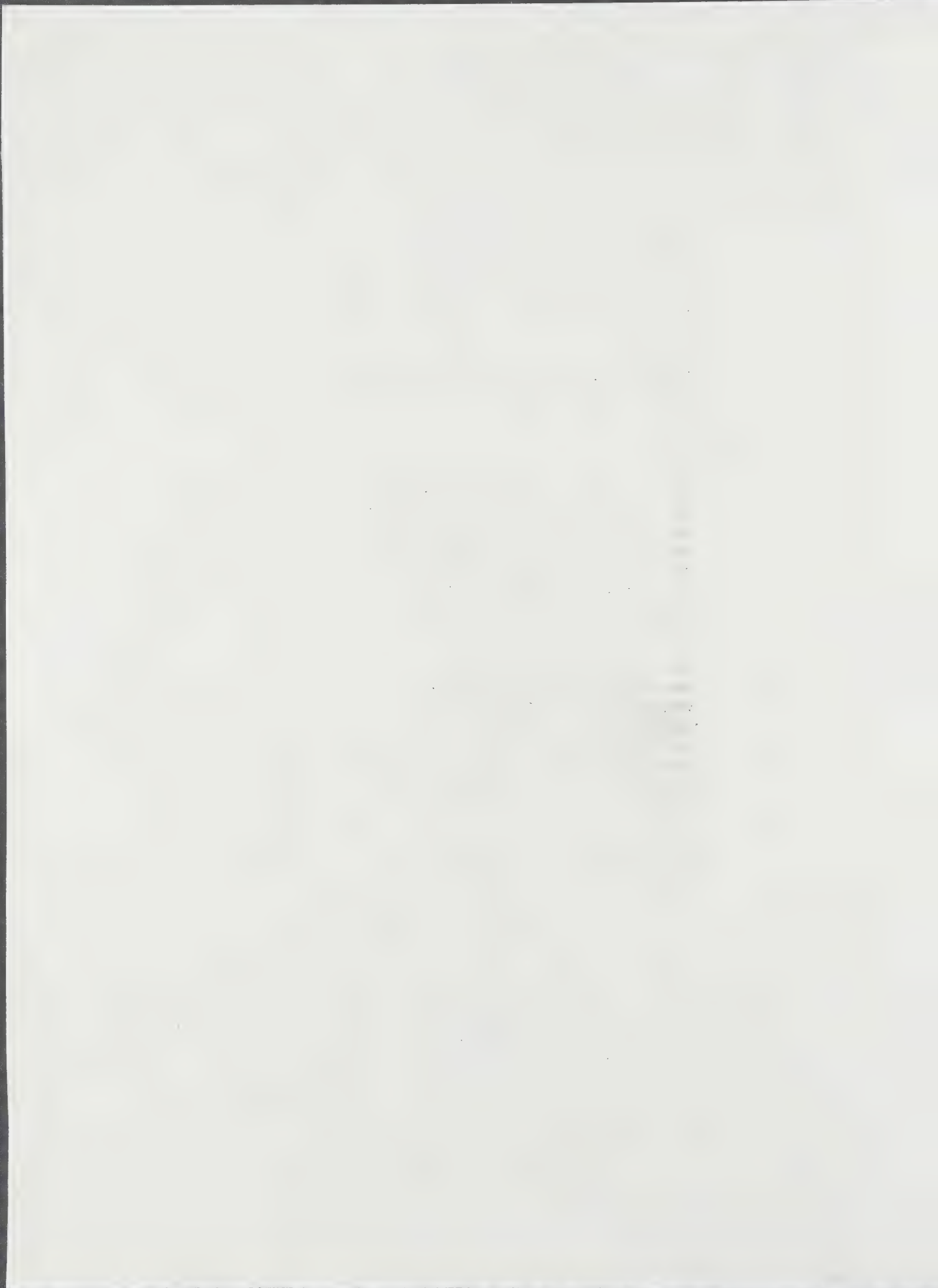
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I suggested as a possible alternate identification the name of Jacob van Oost, a Bruges master of the same period. I still believe that the Vienna picture - and by analogy also your painting - is a product of the school of the Bruges masters, and also the name of Nicolas de Liemaker as a possibility. Both van Oost and Liemaker were very respectable artists even if their names are less familiar today than those of Jordaens or other Antwerp masters.

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UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15213

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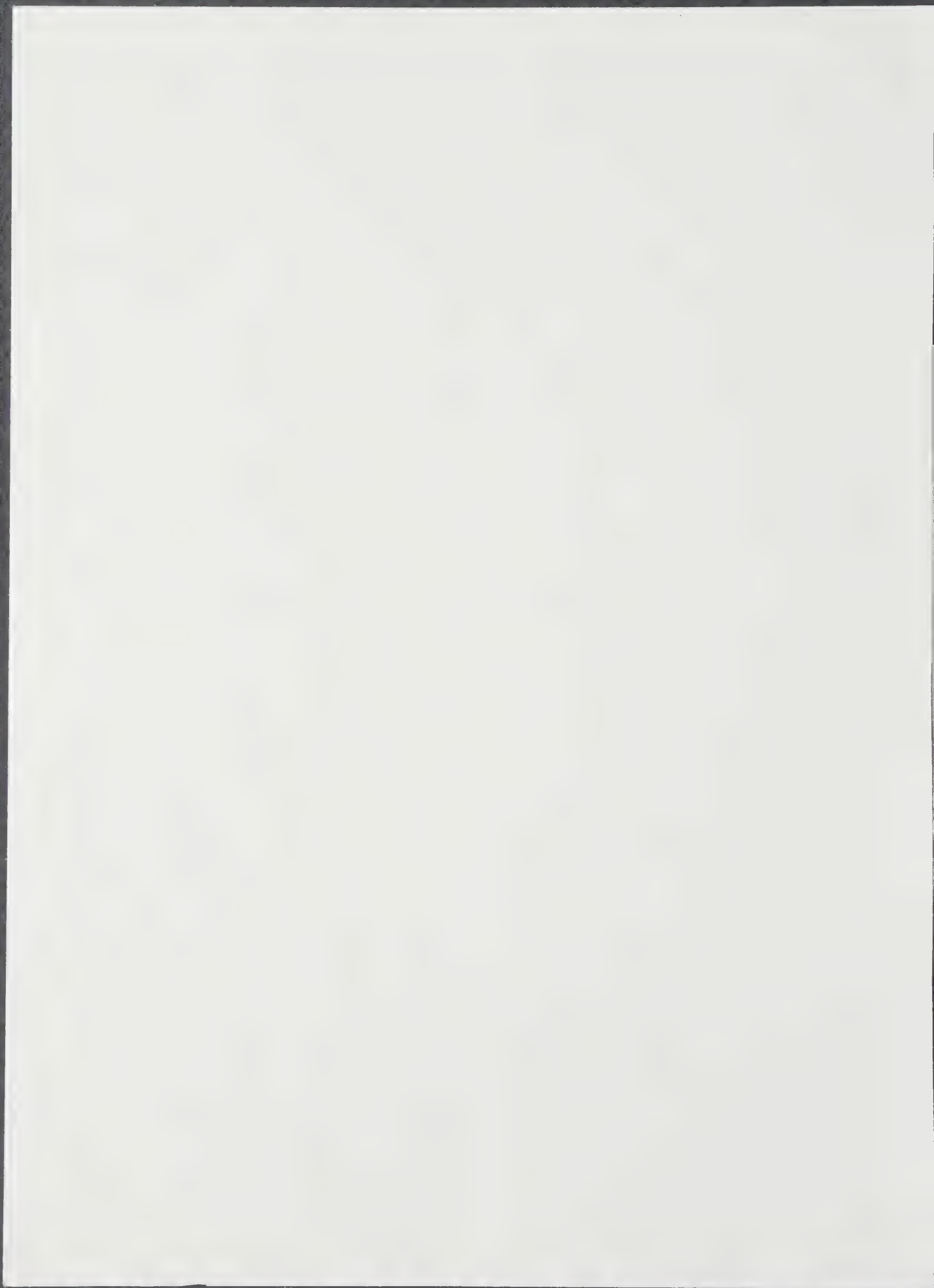
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Sincerely yours,

Julius S. Held



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PORTRAIT PACKAGE

WALL

3x5

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SPECIAL INST.

MAGNIFICATION _____

ROOM NO. _____

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JACOB VAN OOST
Colored + black + white

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| Cyan | O O O | O O O | Red |
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| Outdoors | O | O | Indoors |
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| Cyan | O O O | O O O | Red |
| Magenta | O O O | O O O | Green |
| Yellow | O O O | O O O | Blue |

O O O N O O O

1/1/10

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

Dear Robert:

I appreciate your help with the Rembrandt Research Project more than I can tell you.

Enclosed is photo (not a very good one) of a sketch of a boy, on paper, ca. 1650 but I ^{traced} bought this sketch in New Orleans.

It reminds me of a sketch in the Akademie in Vienna, here and by Jaffe in the Ottawa exhibition of 1965 given to Jordaens (No 31 - Le Oiseau volateur), but questioned by Julius Feld (Burlington of II, 271 (1969)) who refers an attribution to Jakob van West or some other Bruger rather than Antwerp master. I didn't trace it (for my Jan van Aken, 1650) because it's by his or his artist, but because I am so charmed by it - it's probably as close to Rubens as I will ever get.

Am off to London - as chemist, not art business - just for a few days - but who knows - maybe I will find a painting here.

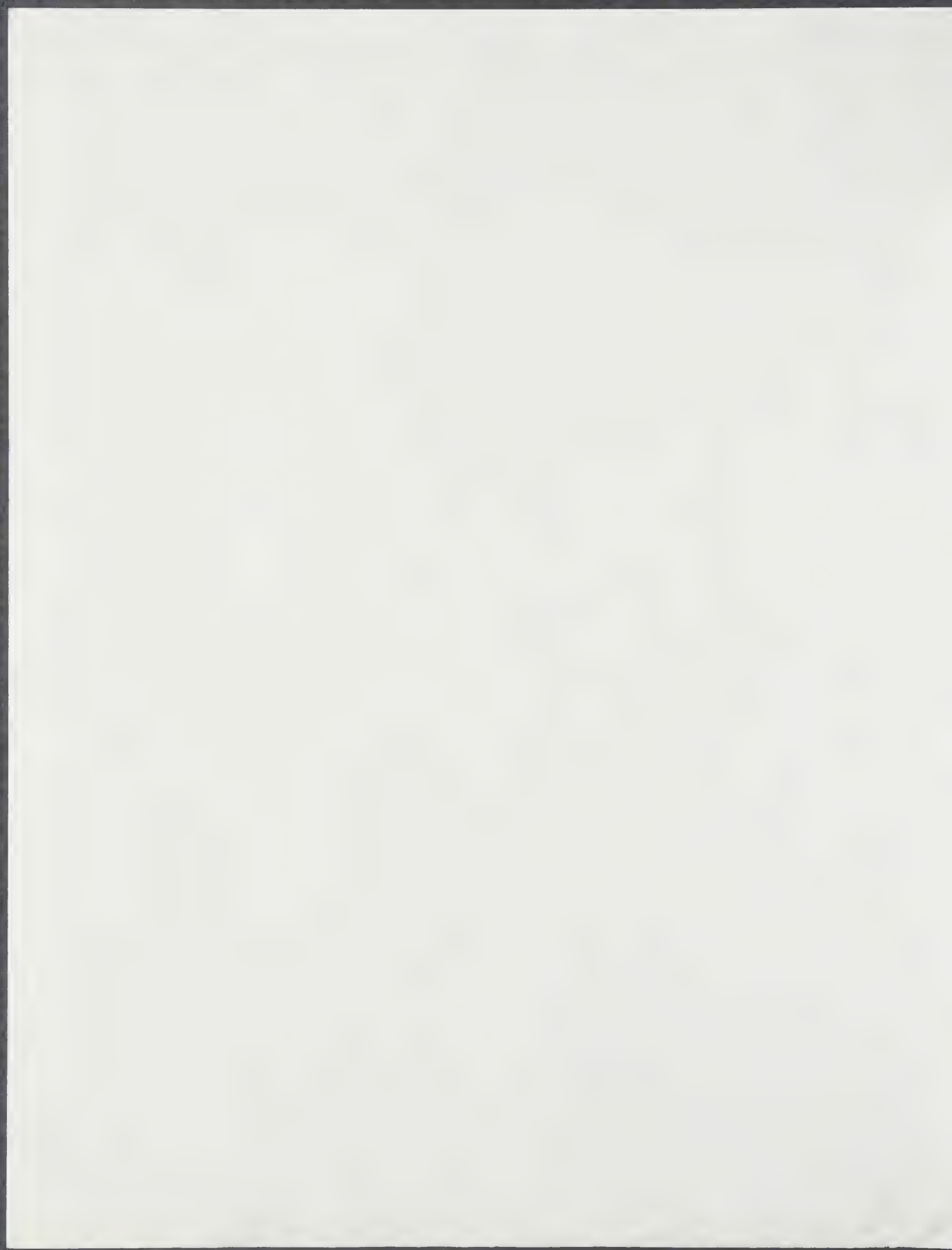
Again, many, many thanks

P.S. I did not know
about Prof de Gelly

15 III. 81.

Sincerely

Alfred





New York University
A private university in the public service

Institute of Fine Arts
1 East 78th Street
New York, N.Y. 10021
Telephone: (212) 988-5550

26.12.81

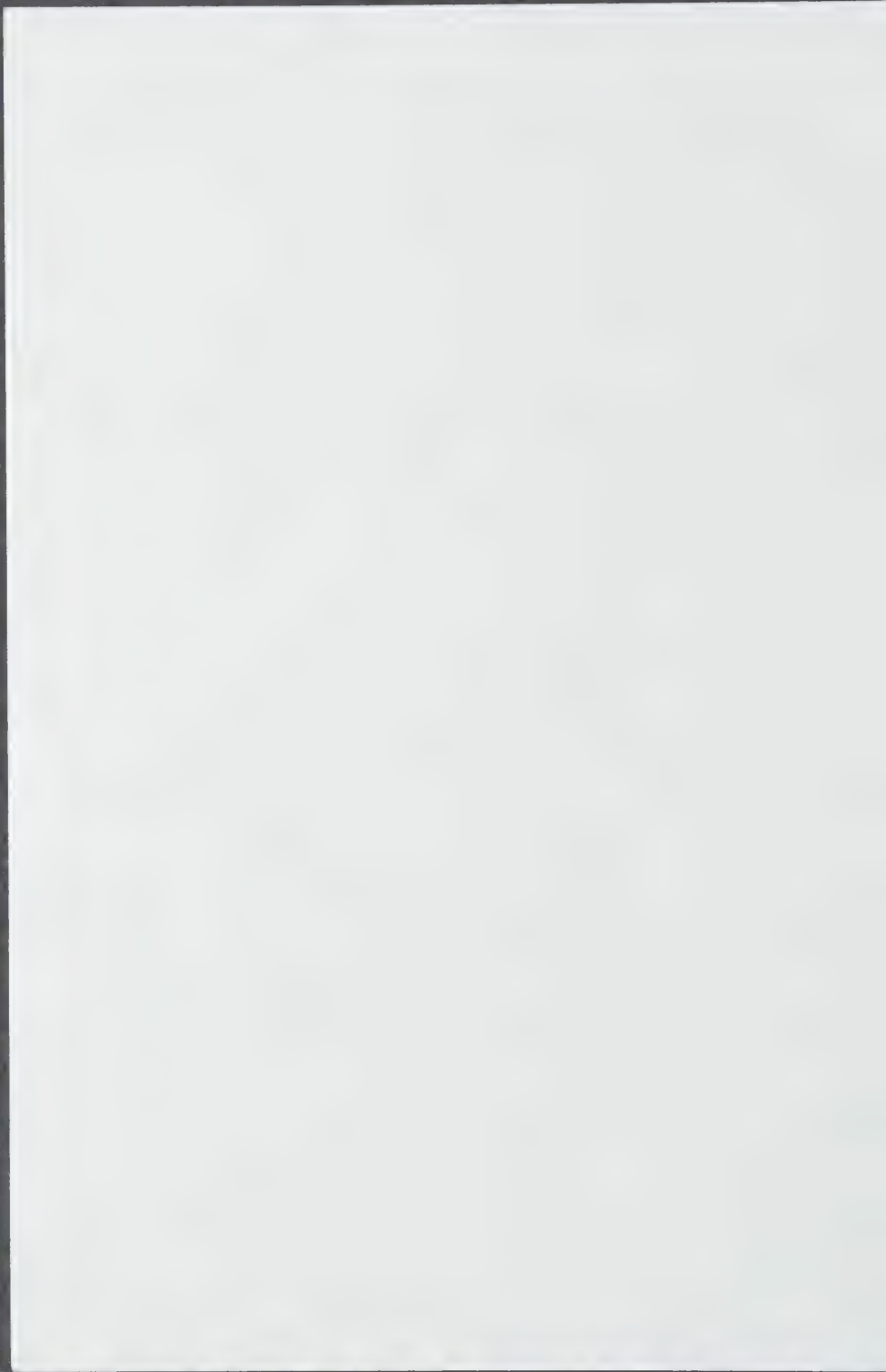
Dear Alfred,

Thank you for your letter of
March 15.

The Head of a Young Man
looks very beautiful. It certainly
is similar to the painting in the
Akademie in Vienna that you
mention. It reminds me even more
of Pieter van Mol. Could it be by him?

Sincerely,

E. J. Hart





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D-8 München 40, Mollatstr. 13, am 10. Juni 87

Sehr geehrte Herr Doktor Radde, hoffe
sich haben Sie noch Freunde am Rittman, je
sich so in München, welche sind gut
Königsplatz, bitte grüßen Sie Ihre
liebe Frau.
Zunächst habe ich nur die recht
denn komponiert, denn Kate ich nicht
Kypen, auch nur mit schwarzen Scher-
ben. Als ich wollte doch schnell
meine Versprechen mit der Ablichte
zurück!
Herzlich Ellen Bredt

Und trotz Schmerzen etwas anfügen;

Das Dammhildchen von Lesire hielt ich wegen der
äußerlich grossen Ähnlichkeit früher für Westb. Basse
aber als ich vor einiger Zeit wieder nach Lesire
befehrte, schien mir die Bauweise sehr
ein gleiches Fracht, Friseur u. Dichtung des Kopfes
zu zeigen, Ausdruck u. Behandlung des Haares
passt mir A. nach jetzt besser zu. Lesire.

Wenn ich mir die abgebildete Bauweise von Prague
ansieht, könnte ich mir doch vorstellen, dass das
Mouft auf dem Kopf aus dem selben Stoff
stehen könnte, jedoch falls viel aber, als aus
Lesire, müsste sie nicht auch?

Die Todessgrube Krebserkrankung mit
sein J. v. Bos? Beide hätte ich keine x. al von dem
Ich habe den Kopf auch nicht gut in Erinnerung, aber das
eine Lage hätte mich wie wenn es auf dem
Cossins? Aber: damals Schmerzen u. jetzt noch
mehr, das kostet auf dem Kopf.

Jetzt fiel mir der Name ein, immer noch zu wenig
Material! Aber ich hoffe, dass Sie wieder kommen
werden. Ich würde mir vorstellen, dass die Bauweise



Photo B - ~~8/16~~ 8/16
7⁷/₁₆ to 6



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KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT

FLORENZ

- Der Direktor -

44, VIA G. GIUSTI
TELEFON 575957
FLORENZ, ITALIEN

5. August 1965
UM:cb

Herrn
Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee 11, Wisconsin
U. S. A.

Lieber Alfred ~~Bader~~,

herzlichen Dank für Ihren Brief. Ihr Besuch war wie immer ein grosses Vergnügen, nur allzu kurz.

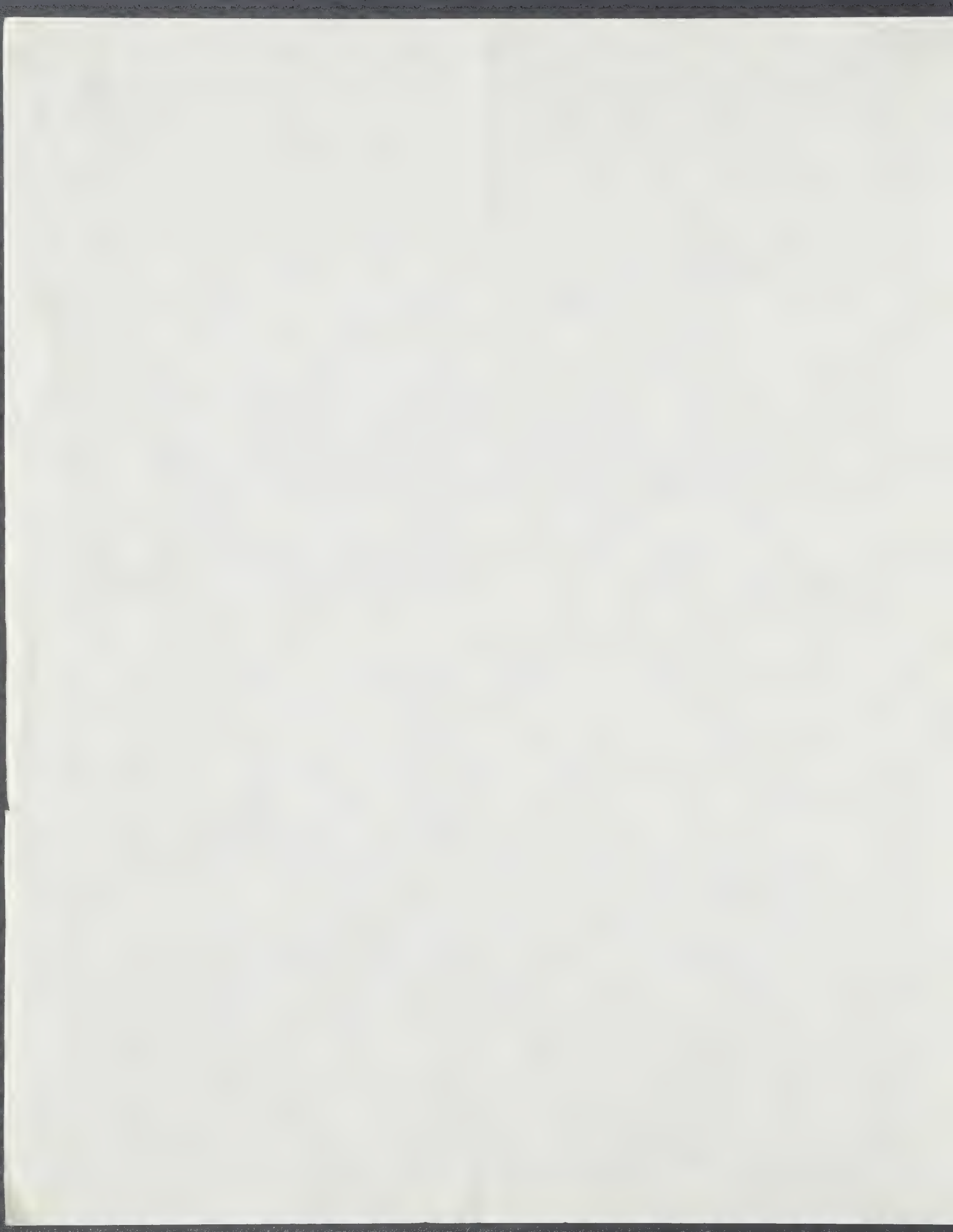
Ich bin auf die Fotos der Bilder, die Sie in Zürich gekauft haben, neugierig. Der Katalog der Versteigerung kam am Tag nach Ihrem Besuch an. Das Bild von Hans Jordaens gefällt mir sehr gut. Es ist anscheinend gut erhalten, ist signiert und das Sujet ist ganz lustig.

Über den "Gericault" kann ich nichts sagen. Den Aufsatz von Benesch habe ich nicht finden können. Dass das Bild Napoleon vorstellt, kann ich mir nicht denken. Das Bild scheint ganz gut gemalt zu sein, aber irgend etwas stimmt da nicht. Für 20.000 sFr. würde ich die Finger davon lassen, es sei denn, dass das Bild von allen Experten anerkannt würde. Mir gefällt es auch gar nicht.

Herzliche Grüsse an Sie und die Ihren von uns allen

stets Ihr

(Prof. Dr. Ulrich Middeldorf)





Kunsthistorisch instituut

Drift 25
3512 BR Utrecht
Telefoon 030-332212

Dr Alfred Bader
2961 N. Shepard
MILWAUKEE (Wisconsin 53211)

Datum 1/10/1984

Uw kenmerk

Ons kenmerk

Onderwerp

Dear Dr Bader,

Thank you very much for your letters of August 9 and September 5, 1984 and for your interest. The Hans Jordaens is a very fine work, but *helas*, from the hand of the Antwerp and not of the 'Dutch' Hans Jordaens.

I found the catalogue 'The Bible through Dutch Eyes' several times mentioned in the literature, but there is no copy of it in the library of the Institute; I ask myself, whether this catalogue is important for my study about the art around 1600 in the Northern Netherlands. Possibly you can give me some information, especially about the time (1580-1630).

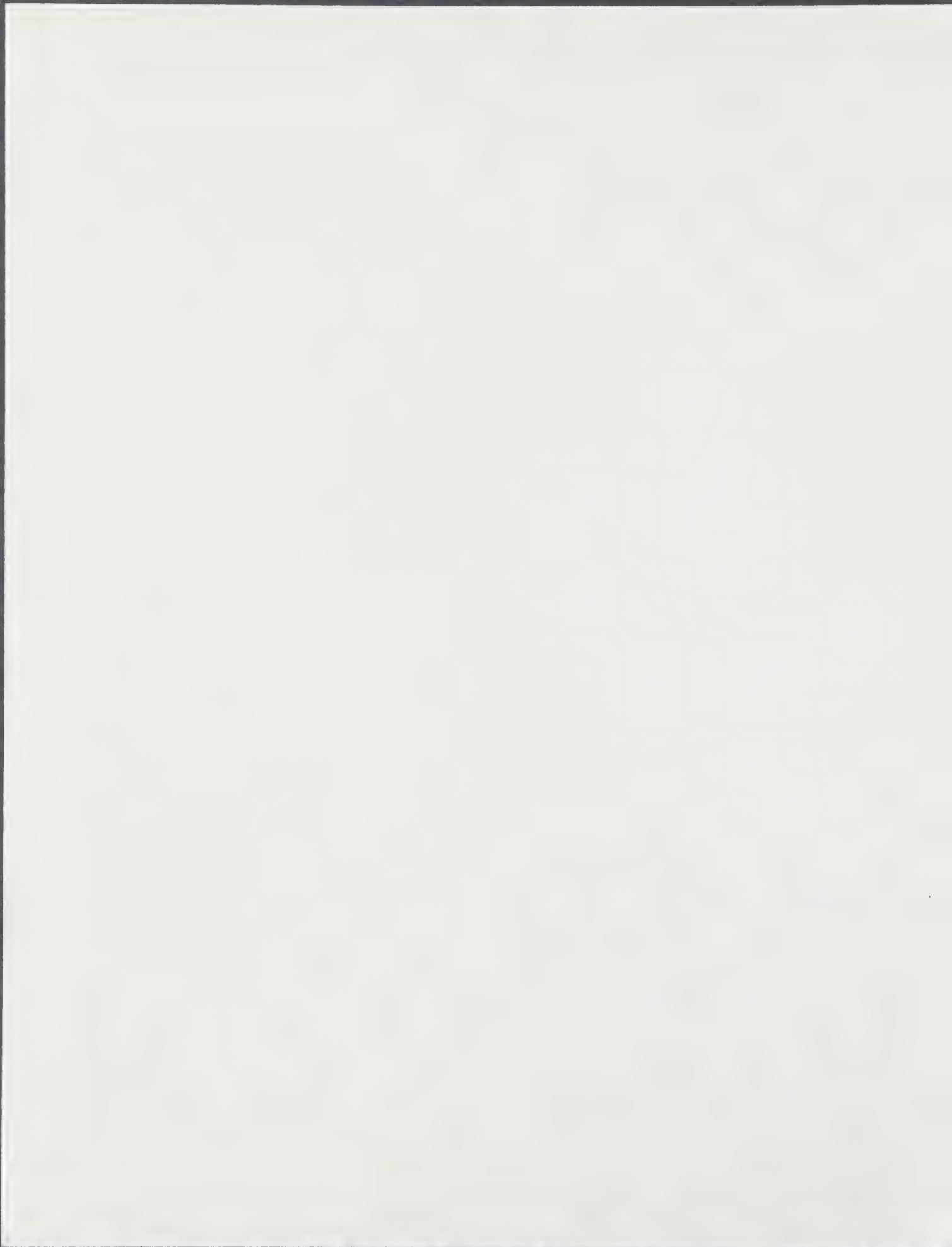
Then your second letter with a photograph of an 'Orpheus', which seem to be important, being the style to be dated 1600-1610. Attributions are very difficult, being my experience through my study, that there have been working a great deal of artists, from which nothing is known. Looking at this picture, I think the 'stoffage' is certainly, in my opinion, of the Antwerp-Amsterdam painter ADRIAEN VAN NIEULANDT, of which up until now little if nothing is said in the literature. The landscape is from the Coninxloo-school, and could be from the hand of WILLEM VAN DEN BUNDEL, if not from NIEULANDT himself, but from this painter I do not know another landscape in the same style.

It is possible, that I could use this painting for my study, because of the combination of landscape, Orpheus and musical instrument (clavichord); the photo was fairly damaged when it reached me.

I am very happy, finding you interested in my research; and I will keep you in touch with the progress of it. Should you meet something of importance, I will be very pleased to hear something.

With kind regards and very Sincerely Yours,


Dr Jan Briels



München, am 13. August 1965.

Mottlstrasse 13.

Lieber Herr Doktor Bader!

Wir gratulieren Ihnen herzlich zu Ihren Neuerwerbungen, von denen wir die bei Fischer-Luzern ja gut kennen. Heusch und Vlieger sind ganz einwandfreie und klare Werke von sehr guter Erhaltung und das spanische Stilleben ist von sehr guter Qualität, wobei es nichts ausmacht, dass man heute die Künstlernamen für diese Stilleben noch nicht kennt.

Den Hans Jordaens finden wir beide besonders schön innerhalb seines Werkes, in unserem Material haben wir keine andere Fassung gefunden, die es sonst bei diesem Künstler manchmal gibt. Die grossen Figuren im Mittelgrund sind so gut und doch von Francken und Rubens abweichend, dass ich der Eigenhändigkeit ganz sicher bin.

Dürfen wir das Photo für unser Material behalten?

Für heute mit allen
guten Wünschen
Ihre ergetreuen

Berut²⁴.





11/22/21

HET KONSTKABINET

BANKRELATIES:

DE TWENTSCHE BANK N.V.
KANTOOR DEN HAAG, TOURNOOIVELD 5
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LONDON, E.C. 2, 54-56 THREADNEEDLE STR.

(Oprichtster Mevr. C. Jüngeling-Tuininga)

*In- en verkoop van Antiquiteiten
en Kunst uit alle Tijdperken*

IMPORT

EXPORT

NOORDEINDE 159
DEN HAAG
TELEFOON (070) 113490
POSTREKENING 107555

Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee 11, Wisconsin, U.S.A.

DEN HAAG, July 2nd 1965

1 seventeenth century painting on panel
by Hans Jordaens
(in wooden frame)

f 3500,--

Received with thanks
three thousand five hundred guilders



MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

DATE: 10/10/50

TO: SAC, NEW YORK

FROM: SAC, NEW YORK

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

RE: [Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

0 / paper / canvas $10\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$ "

David dellyth 5 August 2002

~~Dr. BMDEN~~
V
over 2004
FOR DAEN 26

