

AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY

QUARTERLY

Number Thirty-Two 1964

ABRAHAM BLOEMAERT



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EDITORIAL

This issue of the Quarterly is devoted to works of the Dutch and Flemish schools from the collection: a painting, recently presented to the Gallery, and some prints and drawings.

A SUMMARY CATALOGUE, with brief artists' biographies, listing all works of European and other schools (excluding the New Zealand school, which is to be separately catalogued) normally on exhibition in the Gallery, has now been completed and is expected to be on sale at the Gallery before Christmas (price, 7/6d.: mail orders plus postage). This is the first catalogue made of the collection for a number of years, and it includes an illustrations section of seventy-five oils, sculpture, watercolours and drawings of the various schools.

ABRAHAM BLOEMAERT 1564—1651 Dutch
NATIVITY ACCORDING TO SAINT BRIDGET (COVER)
Pen and brown wash, heightened with white
5½ x 8 inches
The Mackelvie Collection

In this Nativity according to the vision of the mystic, Bridget of Sweden, Bloemaert has combined the group of Mary with the Child, and Saint Bridget, in the middle ground, at a moment of ecstatic contemplation of the revelation. The *Revelations* of Saint Bridget, founder of the Brigittine Order (d 1373), were translated into a number of languages and exercised, a considerable influence, more especially in the North, on the representation of various religious subjects such as the Nativity.

Bloemaert's composition, brilliantly lit from

the open door-way of the stable, makes Saint Bridget the virtual centre of the drawing, with Mary and her companion, and Joseph, relegated to the dimmer lighting of the foreground; though the subtly contrived arrangement of figures leads the eye from the luminous figure of the angel in a narrow triangle to the group with the Virgin.

Abraham Bloemaert was born at Gorinchem in 1564, the son of a sculptor, architect and engineer. He began his art training under his father's directions, copying drawings by Frans Floris, and later worked with Hieronymus Francken, who was also a disciple of Floris. Like Cornelis of Haarlem he never went to Italy, but again like Cornelis, he made one journey to France. For the rest, he lived, worked and died in Utrecht. —R.D.F.

DIRCK SANTVOORT 1610/11—1680 Dutch
PORTRAIT OF A LADY
Oil on panel 47½ x 35½ inches
Signed *dd Santvoort fe 1637 aeta Sua 27*
Presented by Mr P. A. N. Nathan 1963

This portrait can almost certainly be identified with that cited by Stechow (following Wurzbach) *Thieme-Becker Lexicon XXIX*, 1935, in the Sanderson collection, Edinburgh, dated 1637, for there is an Edinburgh frame-maker's label on the Auckland work. Two portraits by Santvoort from this collection were sold by Knight, Frank and Rutley in 1911 (16th June, lots 607, 608). Our portrait was probably lot 607, described as 'Lady in black with fan', although the measurements of lot 608 are nearer those here.



Dirck Santvoort was born in Amsterdam. He was probably a pupil of his father Dirck Bon-tapaert (Santvoort was an adopted name) and was a member of the Amsterdam Guild in 1636. He appears to have lived all his life in Amsterdam. He was primarily a portrait painter and followed the traditional style estab-

lished by van der Voort and Elias, although at times he shows the influence of Rembrandt.

The painting is obviously a betrothal portrait, for the ring is prominently displayed on the left hand. It is in the hands and the fan that one may see the particular influence of Rembrandt.

—P.A.T.



REMBRANDT VAN RIJN 1606—1669 Dutch
REMBRANDT IN A FUR CAP SEEN FULL FACE
(1631)

Etching B.16 H.56

Purchased 1961

ANTHONY VAN DYCK 1599—16451 Flemish
PORTRAIT OF PIETER BRUEGHEL THE YOUNGER

Etching

Purchased 1956

A high point in the art of portraiture was reached in the Seventeenth Century, and the artists of the Netherlands in particular were successful in portraying the subtlest complexities of the human character. In the field of portrait etching Rembrandt and Van Dyck both made original prints during the early part of this century; a comparison of the two — probably the greatest artists to produce portraits in the medium — is interesting and revealing. From the point of view of technique, Van Dyck's was the purest and most direct approach, utilizing an open, linear method in contrast with the more painterly manner of Rembrandt, with its emphasised chiaroscuro achieved by means of a mesh of close, many-directed lines. On the other hand Rembrandt's genius — its deep psychological insight into the individual — is unique and displays itself in the slightest of his intimate portrait plates.

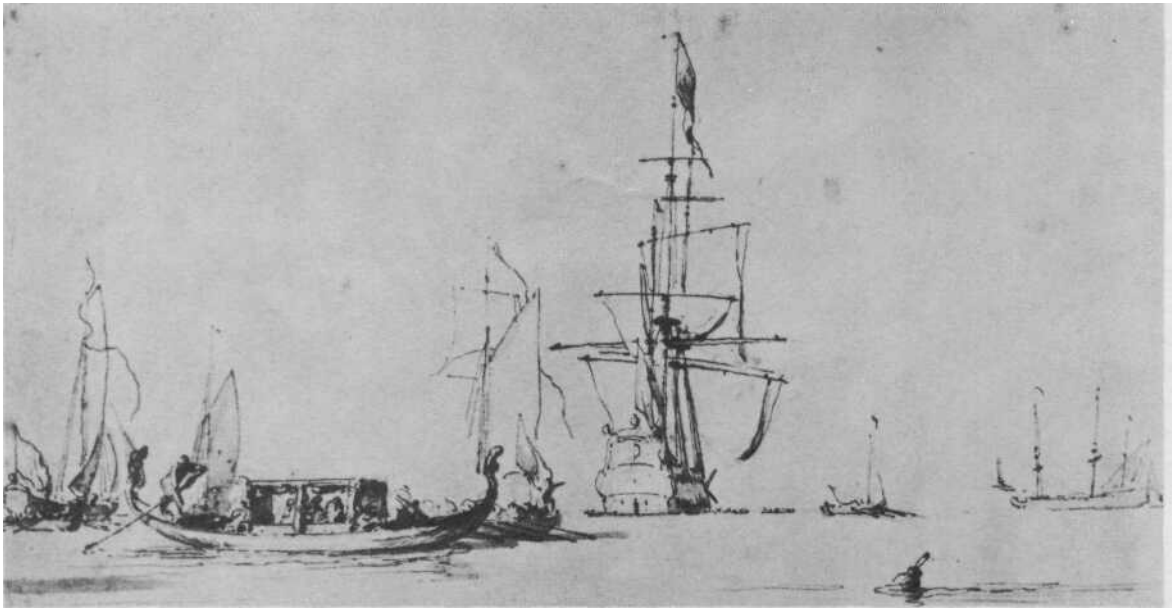
Rembrandt in a fur cap belongs to the group

of etched self-portraits, many of them quite small, made mainly in the years 1630-31, which are especially studies in expression aiming to fix passing moods and emotions. Among the group are to be found his master-pieces in the genre. Many of the plates were considerably added to and altered over the course of printings and exist in a number of states, but there is only one known state of our print.

The series known as the Iconography was a projected collection of etched portraits of Van Dyck's famous contemporaries. He himself etched eighteen plates for this project, but for most of the portraits he merely made drawings in chalk and grisaille. The work of finishing the etchings in line, or engraving the drawings was done by various artists amongst the followers of Rubens. It is probable that the scheme was initiated by Van Dyck soon after his return from Italy in 1626. The work was first issued as a corpus by Gilles Hendricx in 1645 under the title: *Incones Principum Viro-*



PETRVS BREVVEL



rum Doctorum Pictorum Chalcographorum Statuariae nunc non amatorum pictoriae artis numero centum ab Antonio van Dyck pictore ad vivum expressae eiusque sumptibus aeri incisae. This 'hundred' included fifteen of the original etchings, the Iconography proper of eighty engraved plates, and five other newly engraved subjects after Van Dyck. (Hind)

Our portrait of Pieter Brueghel is one of the five in this series which, in the early edition at least, are entirely from the hand of Van Dyck, remaining untouched by the engraver.

WILLEM VAN DE VELDE THE YOUNGER
(1633—1707) Dutch

A HARBOUR SCENE WITH A STATE BARGE

Pen, brown ink, and grey wash 5 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches
Mackelvie Trust 1886

This wash drawing belongs to a group of old master drawings which were included in the original Mackelvie Gift. Two other drawings by the same artist were published in *Quarterly 1*.

Willem was a pupil of his father, van de Velde the Elder, and also of Simon de Vlioger,

an eminent marine painter. By 1652 Willem II had settled in Amsterdam and probably lived there until 1671. In 1672, the French invaded the Netherlands and father and son decided to emigrate to England to find a better living. They arrived in London in late 1672 or early 1673. In 1674 they were both employed by Charles II. The father very rarely painted in oils, so that most of the paintings are by the son. However, their drawings are generally the more admired, since it is only in his Dutch period that Willem II achieves a similar spontaneity in his oils.

Willem II remained in England until his death except for the occasional visit to Holland. He was the principal influence in Eighteenth Century marine painting in England. The drawing here, depicting a ceremonial barge, raises a problem, since at first sight it looks like a Venetian gondola, but Willem II was never in Venice. Neither is it one of the English state barges, for although they had canopied cabins and a high stern, the bow was low. It is, no doubt, some nobleman's private barge, built on a Venetian model. —P.A.T.



COUNT HENDRICK GOUDT 1585—1630 Dutch
TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL (after Elsheimer) 1613
Engraving 74 x 10J inches
Purchased 1956

This is the large plate of the subject, which Goudt had engraved earlier (1608) in a smaller format (4 x 7). It seems (Puyvelde, *The Dutch Drawings at Windsor Castle*, Phaidon 1944, p 29) that the large plate was made from a version by Adam Elsheimer which is now lost. For the versions in The National Gallery, London (1924) and that at Copenhagen differ in detail. Puyvelde also suggests that this engraving served as a model for one of the same subject by Hercules Seghers, and that Rembrandt, who had bought six of Seghers' etched plates at the sale of effects after the latter's death, reworked the Seghers *Tobias* plate for his own engraving

of *The Flight into Egypt* (H.266).

There is still not much known about Goudt. He was born in Utrecht in 1585, of noble parents; but according to Reitlinger (*Print Collector's Quarterly*, Vol 8, No 3, 1921, p 231 ff) nothing is known of the origins of the family. By 1608, he was in Rome and already closely associated with Adam Elsheimer. He seems to have acquired many of Elsheimer's paintings, both for engraving and pleasure. Goudt's technique of engraving closely parallel lines in the darks produces the effect of mezzotint, which was not invented until thirty years later. The accomplishment of the seven engravings, which is Goudt's total *oeuvre*, is quite remarkable for an artist who was twenty-seven when he completed his last plates in 1613. After the death of Elsheimer in 1610, Goudt returned to Utrecht, for he is registered

in the Guild there in 1611. According to Sandrart in his *Academia Todesca*, Goudt lost his reason after drinking some potion. Sandrart saw him last in 1626. Adam Elsheimer, as is well known, had a wide influence in Italy and in the North on the development of landscape painting; but it is also true, as Hind wrote (*Print Collector's Quarterly*, Vol 12, No 3, 1925, p 246) ' . . . that he attained a far wider circle through the engravings of Hendrik Goudt.'

—P.A.T.

CORNELIS CORT 1533/36—1578 Dutch
DIANA AND CALLISTO (after Titian)
Engraving 17 x 14 inches
Dated 1566
Purchased 1957

Although Cort made a number of engravings in Holland, it is his Italian period which has given him his reputation.

Cort arrived in Venice in 1565. Almost immediately he was engaged by Titian to make engravings of the paintings which the latter had done for Charles v and Philip n. The originals, of course, were in Spain, so Cort worked from drawings, modelli or versions. Titian must have been pleased with Cort's work, for not only did he send engravings to many of his patrons, but about 1566, Titian granted Cort the privilege of engraving his works for fifteen years.

The engraving here records the painting (75 x 81) sent by Titian to Philip n in 1599, and which is now on loan from The Earl of Ellesmere to the National Gallery of Scotland. However, the engraving differs in many details from the Ellesmere picture, as it does also from the version at Vienna (72 x 79i, Kunsthistorisches 723). It has been suggested (*Kunsthistorisches Katalog*, 1960, p 144) following Stix, that the Cort plate is after a third version, now lost. This is reasonable enough considering that the engraving's composition is quite different in proportion, while the landscape setting is quite unlike the Vienna or Edinburgh versions. These two existing versions are the same in proportion, and while

they differ in detail, the differences are what one might call painterly alterations, since the preliminary painting in the Vienna version corresponds entirely to the Ellesmere work. It seems, therefore, that it is much more likely that the engraving, rather than being made from another full version, is from a modello or sketch done *prior* to the Ellesmere painting, since it is difficult to imagine that Titian would have gone back from the successful Ellesmere composition to the engraved one, where the dramatic action is diminished by the over large area of sky and landscape. (The suggestion that the engraved version came *after* the Ellesmere work was made in the catalogue note, *Art Treasures from Vienna*, Arts Council, London, 1949, p 71.)

Cort left Venice in 1568 and went to Rome, where he set up an engraving studio. He was principally engaged in reproducing the work of the international group of artists working there.

—P.A.T.



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