œ

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century



Jakob Houbraken, Jan Davidsz. de Heem (detail), engraving in Arnold Houbraken, De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen (The Hague: J. Swart, C. Boucquet, en M. Gaillard, 1753), vol. 1, pl. K, National Gallery of Art Library, Gift of C. Dearhoff

BIOGRAPHY

Jan Davidsz de Heem was born in Utrecht to a Catholic family. In 1626 he moved to Leiden, where he married his first wife, Aletta van Weede, a native of Utrecht. Nearly a decade later, in 1635, De Heem moved to Antwerp and entered its Saint Luke's Guild. A year after the death of Aletta in 1643, the painter married Anna Ruckers, a native of Antwerp. Although he would spend many years in his wife's hometown, De Heem also spent periods of time in the north, including an extended stay in Utrecht in 1649. He also resided in Utrecht between 1667 and 1672, and he rejoined that city's painter's guild in 1669. Following the French invasion of Utrecht in 1672, De Heem returned to Antwerp, where he lived until his death in 1684.

The few works known from De Heem's first Utrecht period resemble those of the still-life painter Balthasar van der Ast (Dutch, 1593/1594 - 1657), who may have been his teacher. While active in Leiden, De Heem painted tonal still lifes with *vanitas* subjects—books, writing and smoking implements, musical instruments, skulls, and hourglasses—that relate to works by contemporary Leiden artists David Bailly (1584–1657) and Harmen Steenwijck (1612–after 1656). Following De Heem's

Heem, Jan Davidsz de

Dutch, 1606 - 1684

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS Distributions of the Summation the Contemport

 $Dutch\ Paintings\ of\ the\ Seventeenth\ Century$

move to Antwerp, the work of Flemish still-life painter Daniel Seghers (1590–1661) provided an important model. De Heem's compositions became more elaborate, and he depicted bouquets and garlands of flowers, baskets of fruit, and various motifs such as glasses, insects, and drapery with great illusionistic veracity. Occasionally he incorporated background views to a distant landscape or seascape.

During his long and productive career De Heem was especially admired for the realistic way he painted gold and silver. His paintings vary from small cabinet pieces to large banquet paintings containing luxurious decorative art objects. He is known to have collaborated with other painters, including Jan Lievens (Dutch, 1607 - 1674), whom he knew in Leiden and Antwerp. Among his many students and followers were Abraham Mignon (German, 1640 - 1679), Cerstiaen Luyckx (1623–after 1674), and Joris van Son (1623–1667).

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Houbraken, Arnold. De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen. 3 vols. in 1. The Hague, 1753 (Reprint: Amsterdam, 1976): 1:209-212.
- Bergström, Ingvar. Dutch Still-Life Painting in the Seventeenth Century.
 Translated by Christina Hedström and Gerald Taylor. London, 1956: 191-228.
- 1970 De Mirimonde, A. P. "Musique et symbolisme chez Jan Davidszoon de Heem, Cornleis Janszoon en Jan II Janszoon de Heem." *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (1970): 241-296.
- Bergström, Ingvar. "Another Look at De Heem's Early Dutch Period 1626-1635." *Mercury* 7 (1988): 37-50.
- 1988 Meijer, Fred G. "Jan Davidsz. de Heem's Earliest Paintings, 1626-1628." Mercury 7 (1988): 29-36.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

- 1988 Segal, Sam. A Prosperous Past: The Sumptuous Still Life in the Netherlands, 1600–1700. Edited by William B. Jordan. Translated by P.M. van Tongeren. Exh. cat. Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof, Delft; Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth. The Hague, 1988: 141-164.
- 1990 Bok, Martin Jan. "Jan Davidsz. de Heem's Birthplace and Family." Mercury 11 (1990): 48-52.
- 1991 Segal, Sam, and Liesbeth M. Helmus. "De Biographie van Jan Davidsz, Cornelis Jansz, Jan Jansz en David Cornelisz de Heem." In Jan Davidsz. de Heem en zijn Kring. Edited by Sam Segal. Exh. cat. Centraal Museum, Utrecht; Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig. The Hague, 1991: 55-68.
- 1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, D.C., 1995: 102-103.
- 2003 Willigen, Adriaan van der, and Fred G. Meijer. *A dictionary of Dutch and Flemish still-life painters working in oils, 1525-1725.* Leiden, 2003: 105-106.

To cite: Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Jan Davidsz de Heem," *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, NGA Online Editions, https://purl.org/nga/collection/constituent/1383 (accessed May 02, 2024).