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

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606 - 1669

The Circumcision

1661

oil on canvas
overall: 56.5 x 75 cm (22 1/4 x 29 1/2 in.)
framed: 81.3 x 99 x 8.2 cm (32 x 39 x 3 1/4 in.)
Inscription: lower right: Rembrandt. f. 1661
Widener Collection 1942.9.60

ENTRY

The only mention of the circumcision of Christ occurs in the Gospel of Luke, 2:15–22: “the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem.... And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.... And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus.” This cursory reference to this most significant event in the early childhood of Christ allowed artists throughout history a wide latitude in the way they represented the circumcision.[1]

The predominant Dutch pictorial tradition was to depict the scene as though it occurred within the temple, as, for example, in Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1558 - 1617)’ influential engraving of the *Circumcision of Christ*, 1594 [fig. 1].[2] In the Goltzius print, the *mohel* circumcises the Christ child, held by the high priest, as Mary and Joseph stand reverently to the side. Rembrandt largely followed this tradition in his two early etchings of the subject and in his 1646 painting of the *Circumcision* for Prince Frederik Hendrik (now lost).[3]

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The iconographic tradition of the circumcision occurring in the temple, which was almost certainly apocryphal, developed in the twelfth century to allow for a typological comparison between the Jewish rite of circumcision and the Christian rite of cleansing, or baptism. Integral to this tradition was the assumption that shortly after the circumcision, Christ was presented in the temple. A close reading of Saint Luke, however, reveals that a period of time lapsed between the two events. After Luke describes the naming of Jesus at the rite of circumcision, he continues: “And when the [forty] days of [Mary’s] purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord.” Rembrandt’s beautifully evocative painting, which places the scene before the stable, thus reflects far more accurately the circumstances of Christ’s circumcision than do representations of the event within the temple.

Rembrandt must have reassessed the iconography of the circumcision sometime between 1646 and 1654, the year in which he made his intimate etching *The Circumcision in the Stable* as part of a series of etchings of the life of the Christ child [fig. 2].[4] Rembrandt’s break from Dutch pictorial traditions may have resulted from a closer reading of the text or from discussions with Jewish scholars. It may also have been a conscious attempt to shift the theological implications of the story itself. Representations of the circumcision in the temple emphasized the importance of adherence to Jewish law. The circumcision was the ritual act that cleansed the sins of the parents and was the moment that a name was given to the child.[5] By depicting the scene in the humble surroundings of the stable, however, Rembrandt shifted the emphasis of the story to stress its implications for Christian beliefs.

In this painting of 1661 Rembrandt added a new component to his scene by having Mary, rather than Joseph or another male, hold the Christ child. In this way he suggests the fundamental association between the circumcision and Christ's final shedding of blood at his Crucifixion. Mary holds her son tenderly in her lap before the ladder of the stable, just as she will do some thirty-three years later near a ladder leaning against the cross. A canopy, placed over her head, reinforces the sacramental character of the scene and offers a further reminder of the significance of this, the first of Mary’s Seven Sorrows.[6]

The circumcision is performed by a *mohel*, dressed in yellow ceremonial robes, who kneels before the Christ child in a gesture of serving and obeisance. The features of the priest are closely connected to those of Rembrandt’s *Head of a Man in a Turban (Study for a Rabbi?)* in the Alfred and Isabel Bader Collection,

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Milwaukee [fig. 3].[7] Mary, who wears a red dress, gazes lovingly down at her son. Visually, her body and that of the *mohel* form a triangular shape that reinforces their shared sense of responsibility. While the bright colors of their clothing and centrally placed forms draw the viewer's attention to this sacred rite, the onlookers in the painting peer not at the Christ child but at the scribe who writes the name of the child in a large book he holds in his left hand. The excitement and anticipation of the onlookers who crane forward to learn the name of the young Messiah, however, places the scene within a Christian context. Joseph is almost certainly the bareheaded, bearded man who stands nearest the Virgin and child. Among the witnesses, on the far left, appears to be Rembrandt himself.[8]

The innovative and subtle interpretation Rembrandt has given to the scene has confused observers in the past. Hofstede de Groot, for example, believed that Rembrandt initially portrayed the Adoration of the Magi. He argued that during the course of execution Rembrandt changed one of the Magi into the priest performing the circumcision. He also suggested that Rembrandt changed the priest's retinue into the observing crowd. Alternatively, he argued, the scribe might have originally been Zacharias and the scene initially the circumcision of John the Baptist.[9] While Hofstede de Groot's theories did not receive widespread acceptance, a number of writers in ensuing years have used his ideas as a point of departure for assessing Rembrandt's interpretation of the circumcision in this painting.[10]

Hofstede de Groot might have been mistaken in the types of changes he believed Rembrandt had made in this work, but X-radiographs [see X-radiography] have revealed a notable pentimento [see Pentimenti]: the yellow cloak of the high priest performing the circumcision was enlarged and given a bolder form at some point during the course of the work [fig. 4]. This change, which enhances the prominence and stateliness of the figures, is compositionally significant. Historically it is of even greater interest, however, for it confirms that this painting is one of two works, the other a *Nativity*, acquired from Rembrandt for 600 guilders by the Amsterdam collector and art dealer Lodewijk van Ludick. In a document dated August 28, 1662, Van Ludick stated that he was returning *The Circumcision* to Rembrandt to have him "repaint the circumciser."[11] Since Van Ludick referred to his painting as being on a small panel (*bortie*), some have questioned whether the Gallery's *Circumcision*, which is on canvas, was the painting in his possession.[12] The discovery of the alterations to the robes of the circumciser, however, should dispel all doubts. The small scale of this work, which is comparable to that of a panel painting, may well have created the confusion in Van Ludick's mind.

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This document also raises the question as to whether the *Nativity* and *The Circumcision* Rembrandt sold to Van Ludick were pendants. One price is listed for both works. One could imagine that the quiet, reverential mood of the scene in *The Circumcision* might have been consciously conceived to complement a depiction of this thematically related episode from Christ's life.[13] Nevertheless, technical evidence indicating that Rembrandt reduced the size of *The Circumcision* on all four sides makes it unlikely that he initially composed this work as a pendant to another composition.[14] How much the canvas was reduced is not certain, but the absence of distortions in the weave of the canvas on all sides suggests it was a substantial amount.[15]

The broadly expressive, painterly character of this intimate scene has long been admired, but questions have been raised as to whether the work was actually executed by Rembrandt.[16] Both Schwartz and Tümpel have doubted the attribution, with Schwartz proposing that Rembrandt's assistant at that time, Aert de Gelder (1645–1727), may have painted the scene.[17] The splotchy character of the paint on many of the figures' faces (particularly that of the scribe), the poor articulation of hands, and the general lack of firm structure evident in many areas of the painting are, indeed, reminiscent of De Gelder's later manner of painting. Associations between *The Circumcision* and De Gelder are not new. In 1883 Bode noted that "in the cursory treatment, in the bright colors (the bright robe of the priest in front of Mary) and in the carelessness of expression the painting very much recalls Rembrandt's student at that time Aert de Gelder."[18]

De Gelder, who is well known as the only Rembrandt pupil to continue in the master's style into the early eighteenth century, was born in Dordrecht in 1645. Houbraken relates that after having been grounded in the fundamentals of art by Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch, 1627 - 1678), De Gelder studied with Rembrandt in Amsterdam for two years.[19] The exact dates that he was with Rembrandt are not known, but because of stylistic and thematic connections with Rembrandt's works during the early 1660s, it seems probable that he was in the workshop between 1661 and 1663.[20] It is, in any event, highly unlikely that this recently arrived sixteen-year-old student would have been entrusted with the execution of a painting for a patron who knew Rembrandt's work so well.[21]

Judging this work on the basis of the manner of execution, however, is extremely difficult because of the painting's poor state of preservation.[22] Indeed, much of the apparently free handling of paint is a direct result of the severe abrasion and

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pronounced craquelure that covers the surface. The area surrounding the Virgin, for example, is quite worn, perhaps because a strong solvent was at one time used to clean this area. Large portions of the background, particularly on the right, are extremely thin and almost impossible to read properly. Complicating a critical evaluation of the quality of execution are the old overpaints that have muddied certain forms, such as the Virgin's canopy, and have made a spatial reading even more difficult.

The conservation treatment of the early 1990s, while greatly improving the appearance of the painting, revealed that the paint had been severely flattened when too much heat and pressure were applied during an earlier lining.[23] In certain areas, as for example in the head of the scribe and the figures near him, it also appears that the heat has softened the black underlying layer, causing it to ooze out around the overlying flesh tones. Even with careful technical analysis, it has proven impossible to determine the original appearance of the paint surface.

Because of the poor condition of the painting, judgments of attribution cannot be based primarily on questions of technique. Nevertheless, in certain areas, particularly in the modeling of the priest's robes, the surety of Rembrandt's touch is evident. Comparison of technique can also be made between the figures of witnesses to the event, particularly the young woman at the upper left, and the small-scale figures in Rembrandt's *Anna and Tobit*, 1659 [fig. 5]. Iconographic, compositional, and documentary evidence, moreover, all point strongly to Rembrandt's authorship. The unusual and evocative iconography was clearly conceived by someone conversant with both Jewish and Christian traditions. Compositionally, the juxtaposition of the quiet group performing the rite of circumcision and the expressive energy of the crowd peering at the book is persuasively conceived in a manner that enriches the meaning of the story. Finally, the fact that a substantial amount of money was paid for this painting by a dealer who knew Rembrandt's work well, and who was in the midst of complex financial arrangements with him, makes it virtually certain that *The Circumcision* was executed by the master and not by a member of his workshop.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Hendrick Goltzius, *Circumcision of Christ*, 1594, engraving, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Buitenhof, The Hague

fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Circumcision in the Stable*, 1654, etching, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection

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fig. 3 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Head of a Man in a Turban (Study for a Rabbi?)*, around 1661, oil on oak panel, Collection of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Alfred and Isabel Bader Collection, 50-001

fig. 4 Detail of high priest, X-radiograph composite, Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Circumcision*, 1661, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection, 1942.9.60

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fig. 5 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Tobit and Anna*, 1659, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Photo: Studio Tromp, Rotterdam

NOTES

[1] I am greatly indebted to Judith K. Lyon, a former University of Maryland graduate student, for the extensive research she undertook on this painting, which has provided the foundations for this entry.

[2] Goltzius' composition derives from Albrecht Dürer's woodcut *The Circumcision*, 1504 (Adam Bartsch, *Le Peintre-graveur*, 21 vols. [Vienna, 1803–1821], 86), which was part of his series devoted to the *Life of the Virgin*.

[3] Although the arrangements of the protagonist vary in all three representations, they share a common tradition in that the Christ Child is held by a male figure rather than by Mary. In his 1626 etching (Ludwig Münz, *A Critical Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings*, 2 vols. [London, 1952], 2: no. 187, pl. 208), Rembrandt depicted the high priest performing the operation; in his etching of c. 1630 (Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt*..., 2 vols. (Vienna, 1797), 1: no. 48) he represented the priest as standing behind the altar; and in his 1646 painting, as can be judged in a workshop replica in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig (inv. no. 241), the priest holds the Christ child.

[4] Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt*..., 2 vols. (Vienna, 1797), 1: no. 47.

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[5] Hans Aurenhammer, *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* (Vienna, 1959), 356, indicates that this textually incorrect interpretation of the circumcision in the temple was forbidden during the Counter-Reformation.

[6] Judith K. Lyon has stressed in her research that a medieval tradition exists in which Mary is shown holding the Christ child while the priest or *mohel*, either bending or kneeling, performs the rite. Two primary examples are found in the *Nicholas of Verdun* altarpiece, Klosterneuberg Monastery (completed 1181), and in an illumination by the Master of the Berthold Sacramentary, from the Benedictine Abbey of Weingarten. A fifteenth-century example of this tradition is in a Book of Hours by the Master of Mary of Burgundy (see J. J. G. Alexander, *The Master of the Mary of Burgundy* [New York, 1970], no. 78). Whether Rembrandt knew of this tradition is not certain, but highly probable.

[7] David de Witt, *The Bader Collection: Dutch and Flemish Paintings* (Kingston, 2008), 267–269, echoes the suggestion by Ernst van de Wetering that Rembrandt painted the Bader panel as a study for *The Circumcision*. See Ernst van de Wetering, *Rembrandt: Quest of a Genius* (Amsterdam and Berlin, 2006), 182–185.

[8] In this respect Rembrandt follows Goltzius, who likewise depicted himself in the background in his 1594 engraving of the same subject (see fig. 1).

[9] See Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Die Rembrandt-Ausstellungen zu Amsterdam (September–October 1898) und zu London (January–March 1899)," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 22 (1899): 159–166, no. 5; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 6:68, no. 82.

[10] Douglas Lewis in *Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art* (Washington, 1969), 31, no. 22, emphasizes Rembrandt's departure from artistic convention by placing the scene in the stable at Bethlehem. He notes as well that Rembrandt's 1654 etching of the same subject (fig. 2) also represents the scene as having taken place in the stable. Finally, he suggests that Rembrandt may have been inspired to give such prominence to the scribe through the description of the circumcision of John the Baptist in Luke 1:59–63. Christian Tümpel, "Rembrandt, die Bildtradition und der Text," in *Ars Auro Prior: Studia Ioanni di Bialostocki Sexagenario Bicata* (Warsaw, 1981), 431–433, gives the best critique of Hofstede de Groot's assessment and correctly argues that Rembrandt had always intended to depict the circumcision of Christ in this work. Not only does he point out the close reading of the biblical text evident in Rembrandt's painting, he also traces the evolution of the imagery and iconography of Christ's circumcision.

[11] Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*

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(New York, 1979), doc. 1662/6, 499–502. The circumstances concerning Rembrandt and Van Ludick's financial arrangements are quite complicated. *The Circumcision*, along with a *Nativity*, was acquired by Van Ludick as part of an arrangement to satisfy debts that Rembrandt had incurred with the art dealer-collector. The translation of the relevant passage is as follows: "Furthermore, they also settled and canceled the completion and delivery of two [other] paintings, a 'Nativity' and a 'Circumcision,' which van Rhijn had sold to van Ludick for 600 guilders in exchange for prints and small pictures, which were delivered to van Rhijn personally after he had purchased them at van Ludick's [Dutch] auction. However, with the proviso that van Rhijn is to receive 118 guilders; this being the difference between 600 guilders and the sum of his purchase, but van Rhijn shall be obliged to repaint the circumciser in the aforementioned panel and improve it as is proper."

[12] Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Edward G. Hawke, 8 vols. (London, 1907–1927), 6:68, no. 82, for example, did not believe that this painting was the "Circumcision" listed in this document because it was allegedly on panel.

[13] There is strong evidence that the two episodes from the life of Christ were connected in Rembrandt's mind. In 1646 Rembrandt delivered to Prince Frederik Hendrik an *Adoration of the Shepherds* and a *Circumcision* as part of his Passion series. In 1654 he included both scenes in a loose cycle of six etchings illustrating scenes from the childhood of Christ (Adam Bartsch, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt*..., 2 vols. (Vienna, 1797), 1: nos. 45, 47).

[14] It could well be that the *Nativity* was painted as a pendant to this work in its reduced format.

[15] Craquelure [see Craquelure] conforming to what must have been a vertically placed stretcher bar can be found to the right of the center. This information suggests that the canvas may have been cut at the right more than at the left.

[16] John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, 9 vols. (London, 1829–1842), 7:28, no. 69, called it "an admirably finished study, remarkably brilliant and effective"; Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Works of Art and Artists in England*, 3 vols. (London, 1838), 3:336, considered it: "Very spirited, and of striking effect"; Wilhelm von Bode, assisted by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *The Complete Work of Rembrandt*, trans. Florence Simonds, 8 vols. (Paris, 1897–1906), 7:13, mentioned its "sketchy handling"; and Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, revised by Horst Gerson (London, 1969), 611, no. 596, wrote that "Rembrandt's picture is a superb example of

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his late style, when he was turning away from a too emphatic and powerful construction of form to a looser, more sensuous, even picturesque rendering of the subject."

[17] Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings* (New York, 1985), 324, no. 376; Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt*, Translated by Jacques and Jean Duvernet, Léon Karlson, and Patrick Grilli (Paris, 1986), 420, A12, removes this work from Rembrandt's oeuvre and lists it as "Atelier de Rembrandt."

[18] Wilhelm von Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei* (Braunschweig, 1883), 525: "in der weichen, flüchtigen Behandlung, in der hellen Färbung (der Priester vor der Maria trägt ein hellgelbes Kleid) und der Vernachlässigung im Ausdruck errinnert das Bild sehr an Rembrandt's damaligen Schüler A. de Gelder." Bode, however, never questioned the attribution to Rembrandt. It is interesting to note that when Aert de Gelder turned to the theme of Christ's circumcision (*Circumcision of Christ*, c. 1700–1710, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna), he followed the tradition found in the composition Rembrandt painted for Frederik Hendrik (see note 12). Therefore it is unlikely that De Gelder had anything to do with the execution of the Gallery's painting.

[19] Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1980), 3:206–207. Houbraken mistakenly wrote that De Gelder came to Rembrandt in 1645 (the year of his birth), so it is impossible to pinpoint his date of arrival in Amsterdam.

[20] One particularly telling bit of evidence that De Gelder was in Amsterdam in 1663 is that he made a free adaptation of Rembrandt's *Homer*, 1663 (Mauritshuis, The Hague, inv. no. 584), many years later (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, inv. no. 39.45). Since Rembrandt's painting was sent to Messina after its completion, De Gelder would not have had a chance to see it at a later date. It is unlikely that De Gelder based his painting on Rembrandt's preliminary drawing for *Homer* (Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, inv. no. 1677/1875 [Otto Bensch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt (A Critical and Chronological Catalogue)* 6 vols. (London, 1954–1957) 5: no. 1066] as Rembrandt had presumably sent the drawing to his patron in Messina, Antonio Ruffo, for approval. For a discussion of the drawing's early history in Italy, see Börje Magnusson's catalogue entry in *Rembrandt och Hans Tid* (Stockholm, 1992), 361, no. 160.

[21] Josua Bruyn, "Rembrandt's Workshop: Its Function and Production," in Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and Pieter van Thiel, *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop: Paintings* (New Haven and London, 1991), 85, notes that De Gelder's hand has not been identified with any painting from Rembrandt's workshop during the early 1660s, with the possible exception

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of one portrait of Rembrandt.

[22] The poor state of preservation was already remarked upon by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Die Rembrandt-Ausstellungen zu Amsterdam (September–October 1898) und zu London (January–March 1899)," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 22 (1899): 163.

[23] I am greatly indebted to Sarah Fisher from the Gallery's Conservation department, Michael Palmer and Melanie Gifford from the Scientific Research department, and Karen Groen from the Rembrandt Research Project for their helpful observations about the complex paint layers in this work.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original support, a medium-weight, loosely woven, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins unevenly trimmed. The absence of cusping and the presence of old, off-center stretcher-bar creases suggest the dimensions may have been substantially reduced. The double ground consists of a dark brown lower layer and a lighter brown upper layer. Both layers contain quartz.[1] The upper layer is translucent and has a rough texture to give it "tooth." A nearly pure black imprimatura or underpainting lies under the main figural groups and the left side of the design. The extreme solubility of this imprimatura may have contributed to the overall degree of damage.

The paint is applied in richly mixed and swirled layers, blended both wet-into-wet and wet-over-dry as glazes and scumbles. A number of cross-sections have been made to identify and locate the many complicated paint layers.[2] The X-radiographs show changes in the upper paint layers to enlarge the circumciser's robe at the left, to expand the tent canopy horizontally, to alter the highlighting and positioning of the heads at the left, and to shade a once bright background area at the left.

The paint layers are quite damaged and areas of extensive repainting have been applied at various intervals. Old overpaint, which was not possible to remove during treatment of the painting in the early 1990s, is found over the circumciser's robe, the tent canopy, the heads and adjacent background of figures in the middle distance at left, Mary's headdress, and other areas of abrasion. The abraded portions include the shadows to the right of Mary and the Infant Jesus, much of the right side, the dark figures and shadows in the lower left, Mary's and the

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circumciser's draperies, and the heads of the figures at center left.

[1] The grounds were analyzed by Karin Groen using cross-sections and energy dispersive X-ray analysis (see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings. IV, the Self-Portraits, ed. Ernst van de Wetering and Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project [Dordrecht, 2005], 668–669).

[2] Pigment and medium analysis of paint and ground layers was performed by the Scientific Research department using cross-sections studied with scanning electron microscopy in conjunction with energy dispersive spectroscopy (see report dated December 3, 2008, in NGA Conservation files).

PROVENANCE

Lodewijck van Ludick [1607-1669], Amsterdam, by 1662.[1] Probably Ferdinand Bol [1616-1680], by 1669.[2] Probably Isaak van den Blooken, The Netherlands, by 1707; (his sale, Jan Pietersz. Zomer, Amsterdam, 11 May 1707, no. 1). Duke of Ancaster; (his sale, March 1724, no.18); Andrew Hay; (his sale, Cock, London, 14-15 February 1745, no. 47);[3] John Spencer, 1st earl Spencer [1734-1783], Althorp, Northamptonshire; by inheritance through the earls Spencer to John Poyntz, 5th earl Spencer [1835-1910], Althorp;[4] (Arthur J. Sulley & Co., London); Peter A.B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, by 1912; inheritance from Estate of Peter A.B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; gift 1942 to NGA.

[1] On 18 August 1662 Rembrandt and Van Ludick drew up a contract to address the artist's debts, in the second part of which is revealed that sometime earlier Rembrandt had sold the painting to Van Ludick. See: Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*, New York, 1979: doc. 1662/6, 499–502; Paul Crenshaw, *Rembrandt's bankruptcy: the artist, his patrons, and the art market in the seventeenth-century*, Cambridge and New York, 2006: 30, 84, 107, 179 n. 200.

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[2] Albert Blankert, *Ferdinand Bol (1616-1680): Rembrandt's Pupil*, translated by Ina Rike, Doornspijk, 1982: 76-77, no. 14 in an inventory of 8 October 1669.

[3] For the Ancaster and Hay sales, see Frank Simpson, "Dutch Paintings in England before 1760," *The Burlington Magazine* 95 (January 1953): 41. The Duke of Ancaster who sold the painting in 1724 would have been Peregrine Bertie, 2nd duke of Ancaster and Kesteven (1686-1742); it is possible he was selling paintings that had been in the collection of his father, Robert Bertie, the 1st duke, who had died the year before (he lived 1660-1723).

[4] The painting is listed in Spencer collection catalogues and inventories in 1746, 1802, and 1822, and was lent by the earls Spencer to exhibitions in 1868, 1898, and 1899.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1868 National Exhibition of Works of Art, Leeds Art Gallery, England, 1868, no. 735.

1898 Rembrandt: Schilderijen Bijeengebracht ter Gelegenheid van de Inhuldiging van Hare Majesteit Koningin Wilhelmina, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1898, no. 115.

1899 Exhibition of Works by Rembrandt. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1899, no. 5.

1969 Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art [Commemorating the Tercentenary of the Artist's Death], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1969, no. 22, repro.

1986 Rembrandt and the Bible, Sogo Museum of Art, Yokohoma; Fukuoka Art Museum; National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, 1986-1987, no. 11 (shown only in Fukuoka and Kyoto, 1987).

1998 A Collector's Cabinet, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998, no. 46, repro.

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2004 Rembrandt, Albertina, Vienna, 2004, no. 134, repro.

2006 Rembrandt - Quest of a Genius [Rembrandt - Zoektocht van een Genie] [Rembrandt - Genie auf der Suche], Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam; Kulturforum, Berlin, 2006, fig. 209 in Amsterdam catalogue (not in Berlin catalogue).

2008 Rembrandt: Pintor de Historias [Rembrandt: Painter of History], Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2008-2009, no. 39, repro.

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1868 Vosmaer, Carel. *Rembrandt Harmens van Rijn, sa vie et ses œuvres*. The Hague, 1868: 311, 496.

1877 Vosmaer, Carel. *Rembrandt Harmens van Rijn: sa vie et ses oeuvres*. 2nd ed. The Hague, 1877: 361, 562.

1879 Mollett, John W. *Rembrandt*. Illustrated biographies of the great artists. London, 1879: 73.

1883 Bode, Wilhelm von. *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*. Braunschweig, 1883: 525, 578, no. 137.

1883 Dutuit, Eugène. *L'oeuvre complet de Rembrandt: catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes du maître accompagné de leur reproduction en facsimili de la granden des originaux*. Paris, 1883: 48, no. 53.

1884 Roever, Nicolaas de "Rembrandt: Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van zijn laatste levensjaren." *Oud Holland* 2 (1884): 81-105.

1885 Dutuit, Eugène. *Tableaux et dessins de Rembrandt: catalogue historique et descriptif; supplément à l'Oeuvre complet de Rembrandt*. Paris, 1885: 48, 59, no. 53.

1893 Michel, Émile. *Rembrandt: Sa vie, son oeuvre et son temps*. Paris, 1893: 462-463, 555.

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