# **©** NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century



Frans Hals Dutch, c. 1582/1583 - 1666

# Willem Coymans

1645

oil on canvas

overall: 77 × 64 cm (30 5/16 × 25 3/16 in.)

framed:  $102.24 \times 89.85 \times 7.62$  cm  $(40 1/4 \times 35 3/8 \times 3 in.)$ 

Inscription: center right: AETA SVAE.22 (second 2 has been changed to a 6) / 1645

[1]

[1] The second numeral of the sitter's age has been changed to a six. Above the inscription is the sitter's coat of arms, consisting of three black cows' heads on a gold field.

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.69

#### **ENTRY**

With utmost casualness, Willem Coymans has turned to look out at the viewer while resting his right arm lightly on the back of his chair. He is dressed in an elaborately gold embroidered jacket with slit sleeves over a pleated white blouse. His oversized, flat, white linen collar and his modish, pom-pom-embellished black hat, which is pushed forward at a rakish angle, enframe a handsome face with an alert expression. Long wavy hair that reaches to his shoulders completes the impression of a man confident in himself and in his position in society.

This remarkable portrait, which carries so many of the dynamic qualities admired today in Hals' work, was rediscovered only at the end of the nineteenth century. The coat of arms in the right background was immediately recognized as that of the distinguished Coymans family, but the inscribed age of the sitter, twenty-two, did not correlate with any member of the family then known in genealogical studies. Perhaps to make the sitter's age consistent with that of one of the family's most prominent members, Balthasar Coymans, who was born March 15, 1618, the last digit of the age in the inscription was changed from two to six sometime between 1898 and 1907. [1] This identification was generally accepted in the literature from about 1909 until 1958, when Seymour Slive noted the changes in the inscription and concluded that the sitter could not be Balthasar. [2] The proper identification of the sitter as Willem was made only in 1970 by Katrina Taylor on the

# **©** NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

basis of documents in the archives of Amsterdam and Haarlem. [3]

Willem (Guilliam) Coymans was baptized in Amsterdam on August 20, 1623, and was buried in the Church of Saint Bavo in Haarlem on April 28, 1678. He was the son of Coenraet Coymans and Maria Scheryl van Walhorn, who had been married in Antwerp in 1614. Like other members of this large family, Coenraet immigrated to Amsterdam, perhaps to work in the successful family firm of Balthasar Coymans and Brothers. By the 1640s Coenraet seems to have moved to Haarlem, where he was buried in the Church of Saint Bavo on November 29, 1659. Even less is known about Willem's life, but his name appears on notarized business records in Amsterdam and Haarlem. [4] It seems improbable that he married, for his name is not included in a family genealogy that apparently was based on marriage rather than birth records. [5]

Hals had extensive connections with the Coymans family. In 1644 he painted portraits of Willem's enormously wealthy uncle Joseph Coymans (Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford) and his wife, Dorothea Berck (Baltimore Museum of Art). [6] In the early 1650s he painted striking portraits of Joseph's daughter Isabella (Baronne Edouard de Rothschild Collection, Paris) and her husband, Stephanus Geraerdts (Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts, Antwerp). [7] Finally, in 1660, along with Pieter Molijn (Dutch, 1595 - 1661), Hals appraised the paintings listed in the inventory of Coenraet Coymans' effects. [8]

The worldly success of the family is vividly evident in Willem Coymans' demeanor and French mode of dress. Hals utilizes these attributes to convey his sitter's personality and give his image immediacy. With rapid yet certain strokes of the brush he suggests the rich patterns and flickering light on the elegantly embroidered jacket. In perhaps an even greater tour de force he has captured the translucent qualities of the sleeve by applying dense white strokes of paint over layers of gray. A few firm slashes of black complete the modeling. As is characteristic of Hals, the face is more strongly modeled than is the costume; while the touch is firm and bold around the features, the skin on the nose and cheek is relatively smooth.

Hals used the same pose from the mid-1620s, when it first appeared in the portrait *Isaac Abrahamsz Massa* (Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto), [9] until the end of his career. Although this pose had been used in the Netherlands by the late sixteenth century in group portraits in which an artist was faced with the problem of representing figures seated around a table, Hals was the first to recognize its

# œ

#### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

potential for portraits of single figures. It was a perfect device for half-length, relatively informal portraits in which he wanted to project the sitter's personality as directly as possible. Aside from the implied movement in the pose, the man's gesture of resting his arm over the back of the chair allows the figure to seemingly break through the picture frame and enter into the viewer's world.

Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.

April 24, 2014

#### **NOTES**

- [1] The inscription reads "22" in Charles Sedelmeyer, *Illustrated Catalogue of 300 Paintings by Old Masters* . . . (Paris, 1898), 66, but "26" in Sedelmeyer, *Catalogue of Rudolf Kann Collection*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1907), 1:13. Ernest Wilhelm Moes, *Iconographia Batava*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1897–1905), 1:205, no. 1779, first identified the sitter as Balthasar, who was Lord of Streefkerk and Nieuw Lekkerland and town councillor of Haarlem. The biographical data on the Coymans family was first published by Johan E. Elias, *De vroedschap van Amsterdam*, 1578–1795, 2 vols. (Haarlem, 1903–1905), 2:762.
- [2] Seymour Slive, "Frans Hals' Portrait of Joseph Coymans," *Wadsworth Atheneum Bulletin* (Winter 1958): 20–21 note 7.
- [3] Katrina V. H. Taylor, "A Note on the Identity of a Member of the Coymans Family by Frans Hals," in *Report and Studies in the History of Art 1969* (Washington, DC, 1970), 106–108.
- [4] Katrina V. H. Taylor, "A Note on the Identity of a Member of the Coymans Family by Frans Hals," in *Report and Studies in the History of Art 1969* (Washington, DC, 1970), 107.
- [5] A. A. Vorsterman van Oijen, *Stam-en wapenboek van aanzienlijke Nederlandsche familiën* (Groningen, 1885).
- [6] For the portraits of Joseph Coymans and Dorothea Berck, see Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 2: pls. 243, 244; 3: nos. 160, 161. For information on the Coymans family, see Seymour Slive, "Frans Hals' Portrait of Joseph Coymans," *Wadsworth Atheneum Bulletin* (Winter 1958): 12–23.
- [7] For portraits of Stephanus Geraerdts and Isabella Coymans, see Seymour Slive, ed., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 2: pls. 290, 291; 3: nos. 188, 189.

# National Gallery of Art

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

- Abraham Bredius, "Archiefsprokkels betreffende Frans Hals," Oud-Holland 41, no. 1 (1923-1924): 27.
- Seymour Slive, ed., Frans Hals, 3 vols. (London, 1970–1974), 2: pl. 64; 3: no.

### **TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

The original support is a fine, tightly woven, plain-weave fabric with weave irregularities. It has been lined with the original tacking margins trimmed and the edges of the painting turned over to form the present tacking margins. The reduction in size appears minimal, as marked cusping is present on all sides.

A moderately thick tan ground layer lies under a light brown imprimatura layer. Paint was applied thinly, frequently exposing the imprimatura. Both low and high impasto articulate the sleeve and jacket brocade. Although the paint and ground are cupped, there are only minor flake losses, and abrasion is confined to the edges. The painting was treated in 1986.

### **PROVENANCE**

Coymans family, Haarlem. Mrs. Frederick Wollaston, London. (Sedelmeyer Gallery, Paris), before 1894; Rodolphe Kann [d. 1905], Paris, by 1897; purchased 1907 with the entire Kann collection by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); sold to Arabella D. [Mrs. Collis P.] Huntington [c. 1850-1924], New York; by inheritance to her son, Archer M. Huntington [1870-1955], New York; purchased 17 May 1928 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc.);[1] sold 7 May 1929 to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.; deeded 28 December 1934 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 322, box 467, folder 2 (copies in NGA curatorial files).

Willem Coymans

4

# œ

#### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

#### **EXHIBITION HISTORY**

1909 The Hudson-Fulton Celebration, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909, no. 37, as Balthasar Coymans.[1]

1928 1928 International Exhibition of Antiques and Art, Olympia, London, 1928, no. X22, as Portrait of Young Koeymanszoon van Ablasserdam.

1939 Masterworks of Five Centuries, The Golden-Gate International Exposition, San Francisco, 1939, no. 80a, repro., as Portrait of Balthasar Coymans, Alderman of Haarlem.

1989 Frans Hals, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, 1989-1990, no. 61, repro.

2000 Like Father, Like Son? Portraits by Frans Hals and Jan Hals, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, 2000, pl. 1.

2003 Loan for display with permanent collection, The National Gallery, London, 2003-2004.

2007 Dutch Portraits: The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals, The National Gallery, London; Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague, 2007-2008, no. 24, repro.

### **EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES**

[1] Wilhelm R.Valentiner, Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Old Dutch Masters Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Connection with the Hudson-Fulton Celebration (New York, 1910), 1:38, notes that the "identification of the person is uncertain."

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- 1897 Moes, Ernst Wilhelm. *Iconographia Batava*. 2 vols. Amsterdam, 1897-1905: 1(1897):205, no. 1779, as *Balthasar Coymans*.
- 1898 Sedelmeyer, Charles. Illustrated Catalogue of 300 Paintings by Old
  Masters of the Dutch, Flemish, Italian, French, and English schools,
  being some of the principal pictures which have at various time formed

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

	part of the Sedelmeyer Gallery. Paris, 1898: 66, no. 54, repro., as
	Koeymanszoon van Ablasserdam.
1900	Bode, Wilhelm von. Gemälde-sammlung des Herrn Rudolf Kann in Paris.
	Vienna, 1900: xviji, pl. 49. as Koeymanszoon van Ablasserdam.

- 1907 Hofstede de Groot, Cornelis. A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century. 8 vols. Translated by Edward G. Hawke. London, 1907-1927: 3(1910):53, no. 168.
- 1907 Sedelmeyer, Charles. Catalogue of Rodolphe Kann Collection. 2 vols. Paris, 1907: 1:13, 42, no. 40, repro., as Portrait of Young Koeijmanszoon van Ablasserdam.
- 1908 Grant, J. Kirby. "Mrs. Collis P. Huntington's Collection." The Connoisseur 20 (January 1908): 3 fig. 1, 4, as Young Koeijmanszoon van Ablasserdam.
- 1908 Holmes, Charles John. "Recent Acquisitions by Mrs. C. P. Huntington from the Kann Collection." The Burlington Magazine 12 (January 1908): 195-205, repro., as Young Koeijmanszoon of Ablasserdam.
- Lennep, John C. van. "Portraits in the Kann Collection." The Burlington 1908 Magazine 13, no. 65 (August 1908): 293-294.
- 1909 "A Portrait by Hals at the Grafton Galleries." The Burlington Magazine 16 (October 1909): 109-110, as Johan Koeijmans.
- Moes, Ernst Wilhelm. Frans Hals: sa vie et son oeuvre. Translated by J. 1909 de Bosschere. Brussels, 1909: 101, no. 27.
- 1909 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. Catalogue of a collection of paintings by Dutch masters of the seventeenth century. The Hudson-Fulton Celebration 1. Exh. cat. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1909: xv, 38, no. 37, repro., 154, 159, as Balthasar Coymans, Alderman of Haarlem.
- Valentiner, Wilhelm R. Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Paintings by 1910 Old Dutch Masters Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Connection with the Hudson-Fulton Celebration. New York, 1910: 6, 145, no. 37, repro. 144., as Balthasar Coymans, Alderman of Haarlem.
- 1910 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. "Die Ausstellung holländischer Gemälde in New York." Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft 3 (1910): 6, 7 n. 5, as "not Joseph Coymans."
- Bode, Wilhelm von, and Moritz Julius Binder. Frans Hals: His Life and 1914 Work. 2 vols. Translated by Maurice W. Brockwell. Berlin, 1914: 2:19, no. 245, pl. 155a.
- 1914 Bode, Wilhelm von, and Moritz Julius Binder. Frans Hals: Sein Leben und seine Werke. 2 vols. Berlin, 1914: 2:65, no. 245, pl. 155a.
- 1921 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. Frans Hals: des meisters Gemälde in 318 Abbildungen. Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 28. Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921: 319, no. 212, repro.
- 1923 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. Frans Hals: des Meisters Gemälde in 322 Abbildungen. Klassiker der Kunst in Gesamtausgaben 28. 2nd ed. Stuttgart, Berlin, and Leipzig, 1923: 320, no. 225, repro.

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

- 1930 Dülberg, Franz. Frans Hals: Ein Leben und ein Werk. Stuttgart, 1930: 178-
- 1936 Valentiner, Wilhelm R. Frans Hals Paintings in America. Westport, Connecticut, 1936: no. 82, repro.
- 1937 Cortissoz, Royal. An Introduction to the Mellon Collection. Boston, 1937:
- Golden Gate International Exposition. Masterworks of Five Centuries. 1939 Exh. cat. Golden Gate International Exposition, San Francisco, 1939: no. 80a, repro., as Portrait of Balthasar Coymans, Alderman of Haarlem.
- 1941 Duveen Brothers. Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America. New York, 1941: no. 194, repro., as Portrait of Balthasar Coymans.
- 1941 Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1941: 95, no. 69, as Balthasar Coymans.
- 1942 National Gallery of Art. Book of illustrations. 2nd ed. Washington, 1942: 69, repro. 24, 240, as Balthasar Coymans.
- 1944 Cairns, Huntington, and John Walker, eds. Masterpieces of Painting from the National Gallery of Art. Translated. New York, 1944: 96, color repro., as Balthasar Coyman.
- 1949 National Gallery of Art. Paintings and Sculpture from the Mellon Collection. Washington, 1949 (reprinted 1953 and 1958): 77, repro., as Balthasar Coymans.
- 1956 Walker, John. National Gallery of Art, Washington. New York, 1956: 44, repro.. as Balthasar Coymans.
- Slive, Seymour. "Frans Hals' Portrait of Joseph Coymans." Wadsworth 1958 Atheneum Bulletin 4 (Winter 1958): 13-23, fig. 10.
- 1960 The National Gallery of Art and Its Collections. Foreword by Perry B. Cott and notes by Otto Stelzer. National Gallery of Art, Washington (undated, 1960s): 20, as Balthasar Coymans.
- 1963 Beeren, Willem. Frans Hals. New York, 1963: 89, no. 49, repro.
- Walker, John. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. New York, 1963 1963 (reprinted 1964 in French, German, and Spanish): 178, repro.
- 1965 National Gallery of Art. Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture. Washington, 1965: 65, as Balthasar Coymans.
- 1966 Cairns, Huntington, and John Walker, eds. A Pageant of Painting from the National Gallery of Art. 2 vols. New York, 1966: 1: 216, color repro., as Balthasar Coymans.
- 1968 National Gallery of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture, Illustrations. Washington, 1968: 57, repro., as Balthasar Coymans.
- Taylor, Katrina V. H. "A note on the identity of a member of the Coymans 1969 family by Frans Hals." Report and Studies in the History of Art 3 (1969): 106-108, fig. 1.
- 1970 Slive, Seymour. Frans Hals. 3 vols. National Gallery of Art Kress Foundation Studies in the History of European Art. London, 1970–1974: 1(1970):160, 185; 2(1970):pls. 253, 255; 3(1974):85-86, no. 166.

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

- 1972 Grimm, Claus. Frans Hals: Entwicklung, Werkanalyse, Gesamtkatolog. Berlin, 1972: 17, no. 130, figs. 145, 148.
- 1974 Montagni, E.C. L'opera completa di Frans Hals. Classici dell'Arte. Milan, 1974: 104, no. 167, repro., color repro. 51, and cover.
- 1975 European Paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1975: 170, repro., as Balthasar Coymans.
- Walker, John. National Gallery of Art, Washington. New York, 1975: 266-1975 267, no. 349, repro.
- 1976 Montagni, E.C. Tout l'oeuvre peint de Frans Hals. Translated by Simone Darses. Les classiques de l'art. Paris, 1976: no. 167, repro.
- 1978 Haverkamp-Begemann, Egbert, ed. The Netherlands and the Germanspeaking countries, fifteenth-nineteenth centuries. Wadsworth Atheneum paintings catalogue 1. Hartford, 1978: 148.
- 1981 Baard, H. P. Frans Hals. New York, 1981: fig. 66.
- Walker, John. National Gallery of Art, Washington. Rev. ed. New York, 1984 1984: 266, no. 343, color repro.
- 1985 European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1985: 196, repro.
- 1985 Pelfrey, Robert H., and Mary Hall-Pelfrey. Art and Mass Media. New York, 1985: 98, repro.
- 1986 Sutton, Peter C. A Guide to Dutch Art in America. Grand Rapids and Kampen, 1986: 308, fig. 460.
- 1989 Slive, Seymour. Frans Hals. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem. London, 1989: no. 61.
- 1990 Grimm, Claus. Frans Hals: The Complete Work. Translated by Jürgen Riehle. New York, 1990: 95, color fig. 15a, 186, color fig. 66, 193-194, 288, no. 127, repro.
- 1995 Wheelock, Arthur K., Jr. Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue. Washington, 1995: 76-79, color repro. 77.
- Tansey, Richard G. and Fred S. Kleiner. Gardner's Art Through the Ages. 1996 10th ed. Fort Worth, 1996: 855, color fig. 24.45.
- Weller, Dennis P. Like Father, Like Son? Portraits by Frans Hals and Jan 2000 Hals. Exh. cat. North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, 2000: pl. 1.
- 2002 Beyer, Andreas. Das Porträt in der Malerei. Munich, 2002: 199-200, repro.
- Dehne, Bernd, Helmuth Kern, and Erika Kern. Mensch, Kunst!. Basisreihe 2002 Kunst 4. Leipzig, 2002: 118, repro.
- 2003 Atkins, Christopher. "Frans Hals's Virtuoso Brushwork." Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek (2003): 296, repro.
- 2004 Hand, John Oliver. National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection. Washington and New York, 2004: 188, no. 148, color repro.
- 2005 Duffy-Zeballos, Lisa. "Frans Hals' Willem Coymans." Archives of Facial

## **©** NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

	Plastic Surgery 7, no. 2 (March/April 2005): 152-153, color repro.
2007	Ekkart, Rudolf E.O., and Quentin Buvelot. Dutch portraits: the age of
	Rembrandt and Frans Hals. Translated by Beverly Jackson. Exh. cat.
	National Gallery, London; Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague.
	London, 2007: 130-131, no. 24, repro.
2008	Buvelot, Quentin. "El retrato holandés." Numen 2 (2008): 11-12, repro.
2012	Atkins, Christopher D.M. The Signature Style of Frans Hals: Painting,
	Subjectivity, and the Market in Early Modernity. Amsterdam, 2012: 105-
	106, 292, color fig. 71.
2013	Bennett, Shelly M. The Art of Weath: The Huntingtons in the Gilded
	Age. San Marino, 2013: 156, 161-161, 163, 177, 267-268, 270, color fig.
	3.24.

To cite: Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Frans Hals/Willem Coymans/1645," Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century, NGA Online Editions, https://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/76 (accessed April 24, 2024).