

teristics of the somewhat later style of the Carter painting are that the bouquet rests on an ornately shaped stone ledge and is situated in an outdoor setting.<sup>4</sup>

Van Huysum's lasting fame has centered on his technical virtuosity and his precise observations of flowers and fruit. He could convey both the varied rhythms of the petal of a striped tulip, for example, and the glistening sheen of its variegated surface. Just how he achieved these effects has never been determined because he was a secretive artist who isolated himself from the world. Nevertheless, it would seem that in some measure he achieved these effects by painting from life rather than from models. In a letter to one patron in 1742, he complained that he could not complete a still life that included a yellow rose until it blossomed the following spring.<sup>5</sup> The rose in question was presumably similar to the hybrid known as *Rosa huysumiana* seen in the left center of this painting. Indeed, certain of his paintings have dates from consecutive years.<sup>6</sup> While it is not known whether Van Huysum painted this work over an extended period of time, a number of pentimenti do exist, particularly near the poppies at the top of the bouquet, indicating that he made significant changes in the arrangement of these compositional elements.

#### Notes

1. See Houbraken 1753, 209–211.

2. For Duquesnoy's relief sculpture see Fransolet 1942. John Walsh and Cynthia P. Schneider in Los Angeles 1981, 66, believe that although the figures were inspired by Duquesnoy, the vases were actually designed by Van Huysum himself.

3. Lauts 1966, cat. 380, ill.

4. Walsh and Schneider, in Los Angeles 1981, 66, note 9, have determined that the first dated painting by Van Huysum with an outdoor background is 1720.



Fig. 1. Jan van Huysum, *Bouquet of Flowers in an Urn*, 1724, oil on panel, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Edward William Carter

5. Schlie 1900, 141. The letter, dated 17 July 1742, was written to A. N. van Haften, agent for the Duke of Mecklenburg.

6. Grant 1954, cat. 19, *Vase of Flowers*, 1723/ 1724; cat. 162, *Fruits and Flowers*, 1732/ 1733.

#### References

1954 Grant: no. 3.  
1985 NGA: 208, repro.

## Willem Kalf

1619–1693

WILLEM KALF, baptized in Rotterdam on 3 November 1619, was one of the foremost still-life painters of the seventeenth century. His father, Jan Jansz. Calff (Kalf), was a well-to-do textile merchant and town council member who died in 1625. Shortly after the death of his mother, Machtelt Gerrits., in 1638, Kalf settled in Paris, where he was active as a

painter until his return to Rotterdam in 1646. Five years later his name appears in the marriage book for the city of Hoorn: "Willem Jansz. Kalf, bachelor of Rotterdam, and Cornelia Pluvier, girl of Vollenhoven, both living at Hoorn, on 22 October 1651." Not long after his marriage he is mentioned as a member of the Saint Luke's Guild in Amsterdam.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Kalf spent his lifetime in comfortable circumstances. He seems to have stopped painting around 1680 to concentrate his energies on being an art dealer. He died in Amsterdam on 31 July 1693 and was buried on 3 August in the Zuiderkerk.

Houbraken stated that Hendrik Gerritsz. Pot (c. 1585–1657) was Kalf's teacher, but there is little in Kalf's early work to suggest such a relationship. Because of the stylistic and coloristic resemblance between the work of François Rijckhals (d. 1647) and Kalf's early peasant kitchen interiors and *pronk* still lifes, it seems that this Rotterdam artist was an important influence on the young artist.

Kalf's mature work developed during the 1650s, after his move to Amsterdam. In these works he focused on a few objects that he organized with great restraint against a dark background. He delighted in depicting the sheen of silver, the translucency of glass, and the rich textures of intricately patterned oriental rugs. His luminous manner of painting highlights has often been compared to that of Johannes Vermeer (q.v.), and it is entirely possible that his work influenced the Delft master.

Although Kalf probably had pupils who made replicas of his work, none are documented. His most successful follower was Jurriaen van Streeck (c. 1622–1683).

#### Bibliography

- De Lairese 1740: 266–268.  
Houbraken 1753, 2: 218–219.  
Van Gelder 1941.  
Van Gelder 1942.  
Bergström 1956: 260–290.  
Grisebach 1974.  
Delft 1988: 180–196.  
Brown/MacLaren 1992: 213.

1943.7.8 (745)

### *Still Life*

c. 1660  
Oil on canvas, 64.4 x 53.8 (25<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 21<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub>)  
Chester Dale Collection

**Technical Notes:** The support, a fine-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. The x-radiograph shows broad cusping along the top edge. A very large complex tear is present in the upper right quadrant. The double ground consists of a red lower layer and an opaque light gray upper layer. Both thin layers are brush applied and leave the weave pattern prominent.

Paint handling varies according to the surface texture being rendered, from thin opaque layers to richly textured pastes, with glazes confined to carpet details and the dark background.<sup>1</sup> Abrasion is minimal. Scattered small losses are found overall, with a larger loss in the center of the Seville orange. The tear edges have been retouched and the orange rind heavily overpainted. No major treatment has been carried out since acquisition.

**Provenance:** Possibly Jos. Dan. Böhm, Vienna; (possibly sale, Alexandre Posonyi, Vienna, 4 December 1865, no. 1682).<sup>2</sup> (Cottier & Co., New York); sold 1889 to Mrs. Henry Osborne Havemeyer [née Louise Waldron Elder] [1855–1929], New York; (sale, American Art Association, Anderson Galleries, New York, 10 April 1930, no. 46); Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

NESTLED in a luxurious and exotic oriental carpet is a restrained arrangement of sumptuous objects brought to life by the delicate play of light across their surfaces.<sup>3</sup> With deft touches of his brush Kalf invokes the soft texture of wool, the vitreous gleam of Chinese porcelain, the dense rind of lemon, and the transparent sheen of an elegantly wrought Venetian-style goblet. Viewed individually the objects have no logical relationship to each other, yet orchestrated as they are through Kalf's unerring sense of composition, these and the other objects he depicted come together as a harmonious whole, the rationale for which one does not even question.

As is evident from examining the full extent of his oeuvre, Kalf's style developed in quite distinct phases that parallel, to a certain extent, his periods of residence in Rotterdam, Paris, and Amsterdam. Within each phase a precise chronology is difficult to determine as he dated only a few of his paintings. Because Kalf favored a few compositional types and tended to use many of the same objects in various combinations, however, one can often arrive at an approximate chronology.

This painting, with its pyramidal composition set off-center, is one of the purest examples of a compositional format used by Kalf in Amsterdam in the late 1650s and early 1660s.<sup>4</sup> Also characteristic of this type is the presence of the Chinese porcelain fruit bowl tipped at an angle to reveal its decorated interior. This Wan-Li bowl was a favorite of Kalf's, possibly because the blues and creamy whites of the interior played off so well against the oranges, yellows, and reds of the fruit.<sup>5</sup> The tall Venetian-style goblet surmounted by a glass bird with spread wings, however, does not appear in other of his paintings. As can be frequently demonstrated, Kalf was not always scrupulously accurate in his representation of objects and varied their character to