

picture is known to me only from a photograph, and I am not entirely convinced of its authenticity.⁴ Kurt Bauch subsequently rejected it, as did Horst Gerson.⁵ Jakob Rosenberg is the only modern Rembrandt scholar to accept it as authentic.⁶ The National Gallery changed its attribution to "Style of Rembrandt" in 1984.

This painting is one of a large number of rapidly executed oil sketches that Valentiner introduced into Rembrandt's oeuvre in the early years of the twentieth century. Most of these attributions have now been rejected. Indeed, the painting has only the vaguest resemblance to Rembrandt's work. The figure type is uncharacteristic for Rembrandt; the anatomy of the head is not understood; and the superficial modeling of the skin and hair is foreign to Rembrandt's style.

A date of execution for the painting is difficult to establish. Dendrochronological examination has determined that the tree from which the panel was made was felled in 1666 plus or minus five years.⁷ The head, however, is painted over another painting of a head of a man. This figure, visible in an x-ray, is seen in profile and wears a hat (fig. 1). Since the handling of paint in this figure is quite different from that in the surface image it seems unlikely that both heads were painted by the same artist. Almost certainly, the head we see today was executed on an old panel after Rembrandt's death, in emulation, or imitation, of the master's work.

Notes

1. Dendrochronology by Dr. Josef Bauch, Universität Hamburg, 29 November 1977.

2. Cross-sections and pigment analysis of paint and ground layers are available in the conservation laboratory's files. Pigments identified in the upper painting were available during the seventeenth century.

3. Widener 1913–1916, no. 32.

4. Martin 1921, 34; Bredius 1935, 11.

5. Bauch 1966, 47; Gerson/Bredius 1969, 568.

6. Rosenberg 1948, 1: 244, in his concordance of paintings agrees with the conclusion reached by Bredius in the 1942 New York edition of Bredius 1935 (no. 243). Rosenberg had not changed his opinion in the 1964 rev. ed., 371, of his monograph.

7. Report from Dr. Josef Bauch of the Ordinariat für Holzbiologie, Universität Hamburg, 29 November 1977 (in NGA curatorial files).

References

- 1907–1927 HdG, 6 (1916): 233, no. 448.
 1908 Widener (typescript) 2: 173.
 1909 Hofstede de Groot: 173–183, 179, 180, fig. 5.
 1913–1916 Widener: intro., no. 32, repro.
 1914 Valentiner: 246, no. 52.
 1921b Valentiner: xx, 49, no. 53, repro. (also 1923 ed.: xxiv, 56, no. 61, repro.).
 1923 Widener: unpaginated, repro.
 1931 Widener: 96–97, repro..
 1931 Valentiner: no. 95, repro.
 1935 Bredius: 11, 243, repro. (also 1936 English ed.: 11, 243, repro.).
 1942 Widener: 6, no. 659.
 1948 Widener: unpaginated, repro.
 1948 Rosenberg: 1: 242 (also 1964 rev. ed.: 371).
 1959 Widener: 37, repro.
 1963 Walker: 312, repro.
 1965 NGA: 110, no. 659.
 1966 Bauch: 47, no. 243.
 1968 NGA: 98, no. 659, repro.
 1969 Gerson/Bredius: 568, no. 243, repro.
 1969 Washington: no. 7.
 1975 NGA: 288–289, no. 659, repro.
 1985 NGA: 334, 479, no. 659, repro.

Jacob van Ruisdael

c. 1628/1629–1682

THE EXACT DATE of Jacob van Ruisdael's birth is not known, but a document from June 1661 gives his age as thirty-two. His father, Isaack, was born in Naarden in about 1599, at which time his family's surname was De Goyer. Isaack's brother Jacob (born c. 1594) adopted the name Ruysdael, possibly because his father had lived in the castle of Ruisdael (or Ruisschendael) near Blaricum. Only later did Isaack (d. 1677) and his younger brother, the landscape

painter Salomon van Ruysdael (1600/1603–1670), begin to use this surname, while a fourth brother, Pieter (born c. 1596), always called himself De Goyer.

On 12 November 1628, Isaack van Ruysdael, by then a widower, was married for the second time, to Maycken Cornelisdr. His son Jacob may have been the child of this marriage. In addition to his documented activities as a picture dealer and a maker of

ebony frames, Isaack van Ruysdael was also a painter. Jacob van Ruisdael's earliest works, dated 1646, were made when he was only seventeen or eighteen. He entered the Haarlem painters' guild in 1648. It is not known who his early teachers were, but he probably learned painting from his father and his uncle Salomon van Ruysdael. Some of the dunescapes that he produced during the late 1640s clearly draw on works by Salomon, while his wooded landscapes of these years suggest he also had contact with the Haarlem artist Cornelis Vroom (c. 1591–1661).

Houbraken writes that Ruisdael learned Latin at the request of his father, and that he later studied medicine, becoming a famous surgeon in Amsterdam. Two documents are cited by later authors in support of the latter claim, the first being a register of Amsterdam doctors that states that a "Jacobus Ruijsdael" received a medical degree from the University of Caen, in Normandy, on 15 October 1676. This entry in the register has been crossed out—it is not clear when—and it seems unlikely that in his late maturity, Ruisdael the successful painter would have gone to France to get a medical degree. Nonetheless, a landscape with a waterfall was sold in 1720 as the work of "Doctor Jacob Ruisdael"; thus the possibility that the artist Jacob van Ruisdael was also a practicing doctor cannot be entirely dismissed.

During the early 1650s, Ruisdael traveled to Westphalia near the Dutch-German border with Nicolaes Pietersz. Berchem (q.v.), whom Houbraken identifies as "een groot vrient" [a great friend] of Ruisdael. Among the sites they visited was the castle Bentheim, which appears in both artists' work from this period.

About 1656 Ruisdael settled in Amsterdam, where on 14 July 1657 he was baptized into the Reformed Church (he had been brought up a Mennonite). In 1659 he was granted citizenship in Amsterdam, and his name appears again in the records the next year when he testified on 8 July that Meindert Lubbertsz., who subsequently adopted the name Hobbema (q.v.), had been his pupil. In Amsterdam, Ruisdael must have known the work of Allart van Everdingen (1621–1675) who resided in that city from about 1652. Everdingen had traveled to Scandinavia in the 1640s and painted views of pine forests and rocky waterfalls, subjects that Ruisdael explored in the mid-1660s. From about 1670 until his death, Ruisdael lived over the shop of the Amsterdam art and book dealer Hieronymous Sweerts, located just off the Dam, Amsterdam's main public square. He was buried in his birthplace

of Haarlem on 14 March 1682, but may well have died in Amsterdam, where he is recorded in January of that year.

One of the greatest and most influential Dutch artists of the seventeenth century, Ruisdael was also the most versatile of landscapists, painting virtually every type of landscape subject. His works are characterized by a combination of almost scientific observation with a monumental and even heroic compositional vision, whether his subject is a dramatic forest scene or a panoramic view of Haarlem. Early in his career he also worked as an etcher. Thirteen of his prints have survived, along with a considerable number of drawings.

In addition to Ruisdael's numerous followers, most important of which were Meindert Hobbema and Jan van Kessel (1641/1642–1680), the names of several other artists are associated with him by virtue of their having contributed figures to his landscapes. Among these are Berchem, Philips Wouwerman (1619–1668), Adriaen van de Velde (1636–1672), and Johannes Lingelbach (c. 1624–1674).

Bibliography

- Houbraken 1753, 3: 65–66.
Smith 1829–1842, 6 (1835): 1–107; 9 (1842): 680–718.
Michel 1890a.
HdG 1907–1927, 4 (1912): 1–349.
Rosenberg 1928.
Simon 1930.
Wiegand 1971.
Giltay 1980.
Schmidt 1981.
The Hague 1981.
Amsterdam 1987: 437–465.
Walford 1991.
Brown/MacLaren 1992: 379.

1942.9.80 (676)

Forest Scene

c. 1655
Oil on canvas, 105.5 x 123.4 (41 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 52 $\frac{1}{8}$)
Widener Collection

Inscriptions

At lower right: *J v Ruisdael* (JvR in ligature)

Technical Notes: The picture support is a moderate-weight fabric from which all tacking margins have been removed in the process of lining. The fabric was prepared with a thin, cream-colored ground over which a grayish brown imprimatura, sparsely pigmented and transparent, was laid. The landscape is modeled with paint applied in moderately thick layers, with slight impasto. The picture is in good condition.