

Player (Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood, London, datable about 1672).

18. The thinness of the execution on the figure's proper right shoulder and arm is probably indicative of the level to which the painting was initially brought.

19. I am grateful to Melanie Gifford for suggesting this possible explanation.

References

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1932 Hind: 91, repro.
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1939 Plietzsch: 29, 63 no. 39, repro. no. 29 (also 1948

- English ed.: 40, 89–90, pl. 21).
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1974 Grimme: 61, no. 22, repro.
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Joachim Anthonisz. Wtewael

c. 1566–1638

BORN IN ABOUT 1566, this artist (whose surname is also recorded in such variant forms as Wttewael, Uytewael, Utenwael, and Wtenwael) was the son of Anthonisz Jansz. Wtewael, an Utrecht glass painter. Van Mander records that Joachim worked for his father until the age of eighteen, when he began to study oil painting with the Utrecht artist Joos de Beer (d. 1591). Abraham Bloemaert (1564–1651) was also a pupil of De Beer, whose works were influenced

by both the Italianate Flemish and Fontainebleau schools of painting.

In 1586, after two years with De Beer, Wtewael traveled to Italy in the retinue of Charles de Bourgneuf de Cucé, bishop of Saint Malo. He worked for the bishop for the next four years—two of them in Padua and two in France—before returning to Utrecht. In 1592 he joined the city's Saddlers' Guild, because at that time Utrecht had no artists'

guild. When one was established in 1611, Wtewael was a founding member. He was also active in various spheres unrelated to the arts, notably local politics, serving on Utrecht's city council in 1610, and again from 1632 to 1636. A Calvinist and staunch patriot, he also assisted in 1618 in the overthrow of the Remonstrant magistracy of Utrecht and its replacement with a Calvinist administration loyal to the House of Orange. Other activities included running a flax and linen business—to which, Van Mander complained, Wtewael devoted more energy than he did to his art.

Nonetheless, as Van Mander acknowledged, he did find time to produce a considerable number of paintings. Surviving works range in date from the early 1590s to 1628 and vary considerably in size, support, and subject. Although the majority represent biblical and mythological subjects, Wtewael also executed portraits and genre scenes. Stylistically, he was influenced by a number of different schools, most notably Venetian, Tuscan, and Dutch (the Haarlem mannerists Hendrick Goltzius [1558–1617] and Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem [1562–1638]). He was one of the few Dutch artists who did not abandon mannerism after 1600, and his oeuvre demonstrates no clear stylistic evolution.

Wtewael died in Utrecht on 1 August 1638, having survived his wife, Christian van Halen, by nine years. He had four children, one of whom, Peter (1596–1660), was a painter who worked in his style.

Bibliography

- Van Mander 1604/1618: 296–297.
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1972.11.1 (2610)

Moses Striking the Rock

1624
Oil on oak, 44.6 x 66.7 (17⁵/₁₆ x 26¹/₄)
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund

Inscriptions

Signed and dated at lower left: *J Wt|wael fecit| Anno 1624*

Technical Notes: The support is a single, horizontally grained oak panel with narrow, oak edge strips attached to edges beveled on the back. Paint is applied over an exceedingly thin, smooth white ground in small, precise fluid strokes blended wet into wet, with slightly impasted high-

lights. A history of flaking has resulted in scattered small losses throughout the paint layer, particularly in the trees, distant and shadowed figures, and horse. Losses are re-touched and design elements are reinforced with later re-paint. No major conservation has been carried out since acquisition.

Provenance: H. C. Erhardt, Esq., London, by 1892; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 19–22 June 1892, no. 273, as by J. B. de Wael); “Leffer” or “Lepper.”¹ Francis Howard, Esq., Dorking, by 1955; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 25 November 1955, no. 52, as by J. B. de Wael); (Arcade Gallery, London);² Vincent Korda, London; (Arcade Gallery, London, in 1967); Vincent Korda, London; (Edward Speelman, London, in 1972).³

Exhibited: *A Loan Exhibition of Pictures*, Art Gallery of the Corporation of London, Guildhall, 1892, no. 99 (as by Jan Baptist de Wael). *Recent Acquisitions: Mannerist and Baroque Paintings*, Arcade Gallery, London, 1967, no. 23. *Gods, Saints, and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, National Gallery of Art, Washington; Detroit Institute of Arts; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1980 (only shown in Washington), 46–47.

THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL had found fault with Moses during their long exodus from Egypt because they had no water to drink. When Moses and his brother the High Priest Aaron appealed to the Lord for help, Moses was told to take the rod that he had used to part the waters of the Red Sea and strike the rock at Horeb. The Lord told him that he would be by him, and that when he struck the rock water would “come out of it, that the people may drink” (Exodus 17:6). “And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his rod twice, and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their cattle” (Numbers 20:11). This dramatic miracle, so instrumental to the successful outcome of the Israelites’ strenuous voyage to the Promised Land, is the central moment of this highly evocative painting by Joachim Wtewael. Moses, accompanied by Aaron, is in the process of striking the rock. The water streaming from it has already created deep pools from which the surrounding Israelites and their animals drink and refresh themselves.

Wtewael’s emphasis in this exquisitely refined painting, however, is not on the miraculous nature of the event, but rather on the life-sustaining character of the water that Moses and Aaron have released.⁴ Except for the agitated pose of a man in the background who directs a caravan to the pools of water, no one seems in the least astounded by the miracle. A woman in the left foreground lies languidly on her side while her child sips contentedly from a small cup. Most of the Israelites are intent on scooping up water from the ground with pails and pitchers: two