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Man with a Sword

Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop
(Leiden 1606 – 1669 Amsterdam)

1644
oil on canvas
102.23 x 88.9 cm
Signed and dated at lower right: “Rembrandt·f. 1644”
RR-114

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In this powerful and enigmatic painting, a man holding an ornamented Ottoman sword sits in the foreground of a dimly lit interior.[1] Portrayed half-length and in three-quarter view, he engages us with steady blue eyes and a muted expression. His restrained smile and focused gaze reflect little about his state of mind, yet somehow render him familiar and approachable. He wears old-fashioned clothing consisting of a purple jerkin over a white blouse with ruffled cuffs gathered tightly at the wrists. Beneath a plush purple beret, the man's long brown curls extend onto a black cape that envelops the side of the wooden chair. A gold chain and medallion hang prominently across his chest, with areas of impasto — as well as those on the silver and gold ornament on the sword — depicting the reflected light that descends from the painting's upper-left corner.

Man with a Sword, which is signed and dated 1644, has a complex and fascinating history, much of which has only come to light in recent years. After having been out of the public eye for nearly two decades, the painting reappeared on the art market in 2013.[2] Prior to its sale, it underwent a series of technical examinations in order to address questions regarding its attribution and dating.[3] Although nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars viewed the painting as an exceptional work by Rembrandt, by the second half of the twentieth century most scholars no longer accepted its attribution.[4] Horst Gerson was the first to raise doubt, remarking in 1968 that "to judge from the photograph, the attribution to Rembrandt is not very convincing."[5] In 1970, Bob Haak and Pieter van Thiel, then members of the Rembrandt Research Project, considered the work to be an eighteenth-century pastiche.[6] Subsequent proposals in the 1980s and 1990s that the painting should be attributed to Govaert Flinck and Ferdinand Bol never gained acceptance.[7]

Technical research undertaken in 2012/13 demonstrated a number of reasons why the attribution of this work had proved to be such a conundrum for Rembrandt scholars. The discovery of a quartz ground, which is consistent with and specific to Rembrandt and his workshop's practices starting with *The Night Watch* (ca. 1639–42), indicates that the painting must have originated in Rembrandt's workshop.[8] The signature and date, moreover, were also found to be integral to the underlying paint layers.[9] X-radiography, infrared reflectography (IRR) **(fig 1)**, and macro XRF scanning, however, revealed a number of compositional changes—particularly in the costume and position of the hands—that raise fascinating questions about the painting's conception and execution.

X-radiography and infrared images reveal that the man originally wore contemporary dress consisting of a white shirt with a high, horizontal neckline and collar, and unadorned cuffs at the wrists.[10] The beret was added in a second stage; a large

Comparative Figures



Fig 1. Infrared reflectography of *Man with a Sword*, 2013, Art Analysis & Research, London



Fig 2. XRF scan of iron (FeK), detail of face, *Man with a Sword*, Geert van der Snickt (University of Antwerp) and Joris Dik (Technical University of Delft)

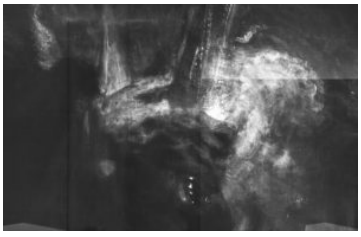


Fig 3. X-radiograph, detail of hands, *Man with a Sword*, Simon Howell, Shepherd Conservation, London

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plume, which was partly articulated with a series of rapid scratches into the wet paint, was also added. A medallion, which probably held the feather in place, was positioned near the brim of the beret **(fig 2)**. Both the feather and the medallion were thereafter overpainted.[11] The sitter's hands were also substantially reworked. While the sequence of brushwork on the sitter's left hand is not discernable in the X-radiograph, the changes to the right hand are evident **(fig 3)**. It appears originally to have been placed higher and further to the left, with the thumb raised, to accommodate the sitter's grip on either another object or a part of his dress.[12] In the background, a red curtain that hung in the upper right corner was also overpainted. Strikingly, X-radiographs indicate that during the second campaign, only minor adjustments were made to the sitter's face. It became somewhat rounder, the right nostril and nose were enlarged, and the bottom lip was slightly extended. The man's bangs replaced a center-parted hairline he had in the initial stage of the painting **(fig 4)**.



Fig 4. X-radiograph, detail of face, *Man with a Sword*, Simon Howell, Shepherd Conservation, London

These technical examinations have raised the fundamental question of whether Rembrandt originally conceived the painting as a formal portrait before it was changed into a generic depiction of man with a sword. Ernst van de Wetering, who attributed the original concept for the painting and the underlying portrait to Rembrandt, reached this conclusion, but also proposed that a member of the artist's workshop overpainted and modified significant portions of the composition.[13] He suggested that Rembrandt may have left the so-called original portrait unfinished, or that the patron rejected it, a circumstance known to have occurred with other paintings by Rembrandt.[14]



Fig 5. Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop, *Man with a Hawk*, 1643, oil on canvas, 114 x 97.3 cm, Private Collection/Bridgeman Images

Differences in handling between the modeling of the face and the figure's costume and sword reinforce Van de Wetering's assessment of this work. He concluded that the head and hair ("largely unaltered"), the shaded parts of the left hand, parts of the black cape ("raw, bravura brushwork"), and the signature and date were by Rembrandt, while a member of the workshop was responsible for the second stage of the painting's execution.[15] Indeed, the smoothly blended and well-modeled brushwork on the face, with areas of warm, pink flesh tones, is entirely characteristic of Rembrandt, while the modeling of the purple jerkin, collar, and chain is rather superficial in character. Finally, impastos on the medallion and on the ornamental features of the sword do not convincingly convey, as Rembrandt would have done, the three-dimensionality of these pictorial elements.



Fig 6. Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop, *Woman with a Fan*, 1643, oil on canvas, 114.5 x 98 cm, Private Collection/Bridgeman Images

Questions of workshop participation related to *Man with a Sword* are analogous to those related to a few other Rembrandt paintings from this period. For example, *Man with a Hawk* **(fig 5)**, signed and dated 1643, and its pendant, *Woman with a Fan* **(fig 6)**, were recently reattributed to Rembrandt and workshop. Much as with *Man with a Sword*, changes made to *Man with a Hawk* during a second campaign were

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concentrated in the man's costume and the position of his arm.[16] As with the Leiden Collection painting, the figure's face, executed with smooth, thin brushwork and "fluent transitions and a slight sfumato" in a manner consistent with Rembrandt's style, was left largely intact and not overpainted.[17] The execution of *Woman with a Fan* reflects some of these same stylistic characteristics. As Van de Wetering has suggested, the woman's face and necklace "could have been painted by Rembrandt," whereas her costume was likely executed by a member of the workshop. The artist responsible for the woman's costume may have been the same one responsible for the revisions in *Man with a Hawk*.[18]

Could the artist who was involved in the production of these pendants also be the same artist responsible for the alterations in *Man with a Sword*? The similar patterns of revisions in *Man with a Hawk* and *Man with a Sword* are striking.[19] However, an important difference in the genesis of these works merits mention: neither of the portrait pendants was transformed from a formal portrait featuring contemporary dress into a *tronie*-like image with fanciful costume, as was done with *Man with a Sword*. Rather, the *Man with a Hawk* and the *Woman with a Fan* were intended from the beginning as *portraits historiés* (sitters portrayed in the guise of historicizing costume).

The imaginative alteration of *Man with a Sword*'s attire links this work to the pictorial tradition of historicizing *tronie*s that Rembrandt executed over the course of his career. Combinations of a beret or bonnet, jerkin, cape, and gold chain, which are derived from sixteenth-century fashions, already appeared in Rembrandt's work in the 1620s.[20] He used these motifs again in his self-portraits in the early 1640s, such as the *Self-Portrait* at the National Gallery in London from 1640 **(fig 7)**, and the *Self-Portrait* at Windsor Castle from 1642 **(fig 8)**. Although *Man with a Sword* does not portray Rembrandt himself—despite the assertions of many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars—its strong similarities with the exotic character of his *tronies* provide compelling visual evidence for his close involvement in stages of its production.[21]

Understanding the period of Rembrandt's career in which *Man with a Sword* was executed presents numerous challenges, largely because we know relatively little about how his workshop functioned during the mid-1640s. After he completed *The Night Watch* in 1642, Rembrandt's artistic production slowed; he received fewer commissions for portraits, and almost turned away from self-portraiture until the 1650s.[22] Did the workshop at this moment function similarly to the model of the late 1630s, when it has been understood that "Rembrandt worked together with pupils and assistants on the same compositions" and developed "an integrated approach to workshop production"?[23] Were collaborations of this nature,



Fig 7. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait at Age 34*, 1640, oil on canvas, 102 x 80 cm, National Gallery, London, inv. no. NG672, © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY



Fig 8. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait in a Flat Cap*, 1642, 70.4 x 58.8 cm, inv. no. RCIN 404120, Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2018

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which may have taken various forms, or the overpainting of Rembrandt's works by his pupils commonplace?[24]

Technical examinations and careful stylistic assessments of *Man with a Sword* indicate that this painting's distinctive character was the result of a complex creative process involving Rembrandt and his workshop. While Rembrandt initiated, signed, and dated the work, it appears that Rembrandt engaged a student or assistant to amend his initial concept.[25] The hand of the other artist involved in that process has not been identified, but the painting's quality and visual power indicate that Rembrandt must have guided its transformation while it was in his studio.[26] Although the reasons for this reworking are unknown, *Man with a Sword* provides insights into the character of Rembrandt's workshop in the mid-1640s. Its transformation and reappearance after years of obscurity also offer a fascinating demonstration of how insights into a work of art change over time, depending on the availability of the work itself, as well as on the evolution of research techniques.

- Leonore van Sloten and Lara Yeager-Crasselt, 2017

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Endnotes

1. The identification of the object held by the man has been the subject of debate. Early scholars believed it represented a Torah or scroll, but it has since been correctly identified as a sword or dagger, resembling one of an Ottoman sort. Its distinctive rounded, knob-like handle and deep red sheath with elaborate ornamentation are unlike swords depicted in other works by Rembrandt, such as his etching *Self-Portrait with a Sword* from 1634. He may have owned a similar object, as the 1656 inventory of his insolvent estate lists "20 stucks helbaerden, slachswaerden [. . .]" [Fol. 38, no. 339] (25–26 July 1656). Thanks to Alexa McCarthy for assisting in researching the identification of the object. Jaap Polak (Polak Works of Art, Amsterdam) confirmed that it must be of Ottoman origin (oral statement to Leonore van Sloten, September 2018).
2. After its sale in 1996, the painting disappeared into a private collection and received little or no scholarly attention. Ernst van de Wetering published *Man with a Sword* in *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 6: *Rembrandt's Paintings Revisited: A Complete Survey*, Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project (Dordrecht, 2014), but he did not give it an individual catalogue number. It serves as a comparative illustration under nos. 191a/191b, Rembrandt and workshop, *Man with a Hawk* (fig 5), and Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Woman with a Fan* (fig 6), both 1643.
3. Jilleen Nadolny and Nicholas Eastaugh at Art Analysis & Research in London performed the technical investigations in 2012 on behalf of Christie's. (The technical report is kept on file at The Leiden Collection.) Ernst van de Wetering and Martin Bijl also studied the painting thoroughly, and macro XRF scanning was performed at the Amsterdam Museum in 2012 by Geert van der Snickt from the University of Antwerp and Joris Dik from the Technical University of Delft.
4. The work was first recorded as by Rembrandt in the collection of a Henry Isaacs in 1765, and was reproduced in a mezzotint by the German artist Johann Gottfried Haid that same year (see Versions). In the mid-nineteenth century, it entered the celebrated British collection of Robert Stayner Holford (1808–92), where Gustav Waagen described its "extraordinary power and depth of tone." Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collections of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, Illuminated Mss., etc.*, trans. Elizabeth Eastlake, 3 vols. (London, 1854–57), 2: 200. In 1898, the painting was part of the first monographic exhibition on Rembrandt, at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, where it was presented as a genuine work by the master. See References and Exhibition History for an overview of opinions and descriptions of the painting.
5. Horst Gerson, *Rembrandt: Paintings* (Amsterdam, 1968), no. 244. Gerson admitted to having never seen the painting in person.
6. Bob Haak and Pieter van Thiel saw the painting while it was on loan to the Bowdoin College Museum of Art in 1970. Their views were never published, and there is no extant record of the arguments that underlay their opinion.

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7. When the painting came up for auction in 1989, and again in 1996, it was attributed to Govaert Flinck, largely based on its comparison with *Portrait of a Man with a Steel Gorget*, 1644 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), whose own attribution remains disputed. In the *Rembrandt / Not Rembrandt* exhibition held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1996, Walter Liedtke attributed the Met painting to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, whereas Hubert von Sonnenburg gave it to Govaert Flinck. In Ernst van de Wetering et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 6: *Rembrandt's Paintings Revisited: A Complete Survey*, Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project (Dordrecht, 2014), Van de Wetering reattributed *Portrait of a Man with a Steel Gorget* to Rembrandt. This attribution history bears consideration in regard to the Leiden Collection painting, which at auction in 2013 was claimed to be by the same hand (Christie's, London, catalogue, 3 December 2013, no. 16). Alternatively, Werner Sumowski argued for an attribution to Ferdinand Bol in 1994, citing similarities with Bol's self-portraits in Springfield and Gouda from the second half of the 1640s. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler* (Landau and Pfalz, 1983–94), 6: 3695, 3697, no. 2207.
8. The quartz ground in the Leiden Collection painting consists of a mixture of river clay, sand, and oil. Karin Groen's exhaustive research on this subject has shown that the use of quartz ground was specific and unique to Rembrandt's workshop in the period after 1640. Evidence of its use first appears in *The Night Watch*. Groen's study of a sample of sixty canvases prepared by Rembrandt's contemporaries in the period 1640 to 1669 found no other application of quartz ground. This research strongly supports the suggestion that works containing a quartz ground were produced in the Master's workshop. See Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in Ernst van de Wetering et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 4: *Self-Portraits*, Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project (Dordrecht, 2005), 4: 318–34, 660–77; Karin Groen, "Earth Matters: The Origin of the Material Used for the Preparation of *The Night Watch* and Many Other Canvases in Rembrandt's Workshop after 1640," *Art Matters: Netherlands Technical Studies in Art* 3 (2005): 138–54.
9. No cross section was taken in this area of the painting, but there are no indications that this part of the painting has been reworked. The inscription is in opaque black paint and is thoroughly traversed by the craquelure of the underlying and surrounding paint layer.
10. Also visible in the X-ray is a different contour of the cape and a large triangular shape on the man's chest, which should be understood as a part of the shirt appearing where the man's vest was open. Pigment analysis revealed that the robe was originally rendered in blue as azurite, rather than its present purple color.
11. The plume is visible in the IR image, as well as in the XRF scans. The copper map (CuK) shows the extent of the rapid brushwork and scratching into the paint. In Nicholas Eastaugh's research, a sample taken from the area of the feather showed a thin layer of red lake. This led to the conclusion that the plume had been red. The copper map from the macro XRF scan implies a blue pigment as well, which may indicate that the plume might have looked purple; the lines scratched into the wet paint with the back of the brush show a self-assured hand. Further research into other painted feathers would be

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needed to come to a better understanding of this observation. The medallion, which has not been noted before, is best seen in the iron map (FeK). The quill of the feather seems to have been stuck into the medallion, as is the case, for example, in the painting of the *Woman with a Fan* (fig 6).

12. Long, vertical brushworks visible in the X-ray indicate that at one point the man had been holding another object, a part of his dress, or—as Martin Bijl suggested in conversation—a belt that was running over the sitter's body. The mercury map of the macro XRF scan shows a puzzling form: it looks like a rope that ends in a loop where the initial thumb was located.

13. Ernst van de Wetering shared these ideas with Christie's in 2013, and subsequently in a letter dated 27 October 2014, kept on file at The Leiden Collection. Further discussion is in Ernst van de Wetering et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 6: *Rembrandt's Paintings Revisited: A Complete Survey,* Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project (Dordrecht, 2014), 6: 59, 580. Van de Wetering refers to this painting as belonging to a category of "superimposed" paintings, which have been altered (or overpainted) after a composition conceived by the Master himself.

14. Ernst van de Wetering suggests that the patron either may have died before the painting was done, was unable to pay, or simply changed his mind. In 1642, for instance, Andries de Graeff had refused to pay for his portrait, and in 1654 the Portuguese merchant Diego d'Andrade complained about a portrait he commissioned for a befriended lady. See further discussion in note 25.

15. See Christie's, London, catalogue, 3 December 2013, no. 16, and the letter kept on file at The Leiden Collection.

16. During this stage, the banister and game bag were also added.

17. Ernst van de Wetering et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 6: *Rembrandt's Paintings Revisited: A Complete Survey* Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project (Dordrecht, 2014), 6: no. 191a, 579–81. These changes were noted as a result of X-ray and infrared examinations, and analysis of paint samples done in the Hamilton Kerr Institute.

18. Ernst van de Wetering et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 6: *Rembrandt's Paintings Revisited: A Complete Survey,* Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project (Dordrecht, 2014), 6: no. 191b, 580–81.

19. It is worth noting that the overall palette of *Man with a Sword* is similar to *Woman with a Fan*, as is the handling of certain details, such as the ruffs.

20. These costume elements were typically associated with ideas of learning, honor, and ambition. For Rembrandt's use of these motifs, see, for instance, *Self-Portrait, Age 23*, 1629 (Isabella Stewart Gardener Museum, Boston) and *Old Man with Black Cap and Chain*, 1631 (Art Institute of Chicago). See H. Perry Chapman, *Rembrandt's Self-Portraits* (Princeton, 1990), 45–54; Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. "Rembrandt Inventing Himself," in *Rembrandt Creates Rembrandt: Art and Ambition in Leiden, 1629–1631*, ed. Alan Chong (Exh. cat. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum) (Zwolle, 2000), 13–23; Marieke de Winkel, "Costume in Rembrandt's Self Portraits," in *Rembrandt by Himself* (Exh. cat. London, National Gallery; The Hague, Mauritshuis) (London, 1999), 60–74.

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21. Scholars such as Émile Michel, Wilhelm von Bode, Robert Benson, and Seymour de Ricci described this work as a self-portrait, and it was exhibited as such in the major Rembrandt exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in 1898. See References and Exhibition History.

22. Gary Schwartz cites only a handful of generally accepted history paintings from the first half of the 1640s, including the *Dismissal of Hagar*, the *Visitation*, the *Holy Family*, and *Christ Taken in Adultery*, also dated to 1644. The number of portraits and self-portraits that Rembrandt produced, done with such vigor in the preceding decades, declined from the mid-1640s until around 1650. Ernst van de Wetering cites *Portrait of a Man with a Steel Gorget*, signed and dated to 1644 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), as the only fully autograph portrait from this period.

23. For an excellent summary of these issues and the types of collaboration that could have existed in Rembrandt's workshop, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Issues of Attribution in the Rembrandt Workshop," in *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, NGA Online Editions (Washington, 2014). For differing assessments, see Ernst van de Wetering, "More Than One Hand in Paintings by Rembrandt," in *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 5, *Small-Scale History Paintings*, ed. Ernst van de Wetering (Dordrecht, 2011), 311–21; Josua Bruyn, "Rembrandt's Workshop: Its Function and Production," in *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop*, ed. Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and P.J.J. van Thiel (Exh. cat. Berlin, Altes Museum; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum; London, National Gallery) (New Haven, 1991), 68–89.

24. Paintings such as the *Sybille* (Wright Gallery, Los Angeles) and *Eli and Samuel* (Getty Museum, Los Angeles), both from the 1630s, were modified in subject or form. The Leiden Collection's own *Self-Portrait* from 1634, which was overpainted by another hand (and only restored to its original state in 2000), is further evidence of this practice. See Ernst van de Wetering et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 4: *Self-Portraits* Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project (Dordrecht, 2005), 59; for the *Sybille*, see Josua Bruyn et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3, *1635–1642* (The Hague, Boston, and London, 1989), C 15; for Eli and Samuel, see Ernst van de Wetering and Bernard Schnackenburg, eds., *The Mystery of Young Rembrandt* (Exh. cat. Kassel, Staatliche Museen Kassel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Schloss Wilhelmshöhe; Amsterdam, Museum Het Rembrandthuis) (Wolfratshausen, 2001), no. 66, 324–31. For discussion about another painting from Rembrandt's workshop that underwent transformation, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Rembrandt van Rijn, Dutch 17th Century, Govaert Flinck / *Man in Oriental Costume* / c. 1635," *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, NGA Online Editions, https://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/572 (accessed October 5, 2018).

25. In this particular case, the drastic change may have resulted from the loss of a formal commission—for whatever reason—and the need to turn the painting into a sellable object for the free market. The complaint of Diego d'Andrade bears mentioning here. This Portuguese merchant requested a portrait of a lady. He paid Rembrandt an initial fee, but on 23 February 1654, he complained about the likeness of the portrait. He demanded that Rembrandt change it. Rembrandt responded that he would not do so unless the governors of the St. Lucas Guild agreed about the lack of likeness. Otherwise he would try to sell the painting himself. See document/remdoc/e1661. We do not know which portrait was subject of

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this dispute, nor how it ended—whether Rembrandt did something to change the work into a sellable *tronie*. But the anecdote shows how a conflict with a sitter could potentially result in a failed commission. The painter would then need to find a way to earn money for the work already done and to recoup the cost of materials used.

26. Although it is not possible to identify the other artist's hand in this work, Ernst van de Wetering has suggested that Carel Fabritius was involved in the execution of a number of portraits in Rembrandt's workshop in the early 1640s. Shortly after his marriage in September 1641, Fabritius entered Rembrandt's workshop and remained there until 1643. Before June 1643 Fabritius moved to Middenbeemster. Yet, given the short distance to Amsterdam, it is not unthinkable that he remained in contact with Rembrandt. See Frederik J. Duparc, *Carel Fabritius 1622–1654* (Exh. cat. The Hague, Mauritshuis; Schwerin, National Museum) (Zwolle, 2005), 18–19. With the exception of Fabritius's *Portrait of Abraham de Potter* in 1649, no known portraits are securely attributed to the artist; for the group of portraits Van de Wetering attributes to Fabritius, see Ernst van de Wetering et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 6: *Rembrandt's Paintings Revisited: A Complete Survey*, Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project (Dordrecht, 2014), 6: 580–81, figs. 6–9. Interestingly enough, the features of the man holding a sword are very close to those of Carel Fabritius, when compared with his self-portraits in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (inv. no. 1205 OK), and the National Gallery, London (inv. no. NG4042). Other artists who studied and worked in Rembrandt's workshop in 1643/44 were Samuel van Hoogstraten, Abraham Furnerius, Reynier van Gherwen, and Bernhard Keil.

Provenance

- Henry Isaac, Esq. (d. ca. 1773), London, 1765.
- Pieter Locquet, Amsterdam (his sale, Van der Schley, Amsterdam, 22–24 September 1783, no. 322, as by Rembrandt [to Fouquet for 210 florins]).
- Sir James Carnegie (1799–1849), 5th Bt., 8th Earl of Southesk; by descent to his son, Sir James Carnegie (1827–1905), 9th Earl of Southesk, Kinnaird Castle, Brechin, Angus [to Robert Stayner Holford].
- Robert Stayner Holford (1808–92), Dorchester House, London, and Westonbirt, Gloucestershire, by 1854; by descent to his son, Sir George Lindsay Holford (1860–1926) (his sale, Christie's, London, 17 May 1928, no. 36, as by Rembrandt [to M. Knoedler & Co. for 48,000 guineas]).[1]
- [M. Knoedler & Co., London (to Sir Harry Oakes).]
- Sir Harry Oakes (1873–1943) and Lady Eunice MacIntyre Oakes (1898–1981), Toronto and Nassau, Bahamas, 1935; by descent (sale, Sotheby's, New York, 12 January 1989, no. 42, as by Govaert Flinck).
- (Sale, Sotheby's, New York, 11 January 1996, no. 145, as by Govaert Flinck; to private collection.)
- Private collection (sale, Christie's, London, 3 December 2013, no. 16, as by Rembrandt and studio).

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- Private collection, England (private sale, Christie's, London, 2017).
- From whom acquired by the present owner in 2017.

Provenance Notes

1. Frans van Mieris's *Traveler at Rest*, now in The Leiden Collection, was also formerly in the collection of Sir Robert Stayner Holford and Sir George Lindsay Holford, and was sold in the latter's sale in 1928.

Exhibition History

- London, Royal Academy, "Winter Exhibition," 1893, no. 108 [lent by Sir George Lindsay Holford].
- Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, "De Rembrandt Tentoonstelling te Amsterdam," 8 September–31 October 1898, no. 61 [lent by Sir George Lindsay Holford].
- London, Royal Academy, "Exhibition of Works by Rembrandt," 1899, no. 73 [lent by Sir George Lindsay Holford].
- London, Burlington Fine Arts Club, "Exhibition of the Holford Collection," 1921–22, no. 31 [lent by Sir George Lindsay Holford].
- Paris, Musée du Louvre, "Exposition Hollandaise," April–May 1921, no. 43 [lent by Sir George Lindsay Holford].
- London, Royal Academy, "Exhibition of Dutch Art," 1929, no. 118. [lent by to M. Knoedler & Co.]
- Providence, Rhode Island, on loan with the permanent collection, Rhode Island School of Design, 6–27 March 1932 [lent by to M. Knoedler & Co.].
- New York, M. Knoedler & Co., "Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Rembrandt: Held for the Benefit of the Adopt-a-Family Committee of the Emergency Unemployment Relief Fund," April 1933, no. 5.
- Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, "Rembrandt Tentoonstelling: Ter herdenking van de plechtige opening van het Rijksmuseum op 13 Juli 1885," 13 July–13 October 1935, no. 10 [lent by Sir Harry Oakes].
- Brunswick, Me., Bowdoin College Museum of Fine Arts, on loan with the permanent collection, 1938–1973 [lent by Sir Harry Oakes].
- Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, "Frans Hals [and] Rembrandt," 18 November–31 December 1947, no. 17 [lent by Lady Eunice MacIntyre Oakes].
- Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art, "Rembrandt and His Pupils," 16 November–30 December 1956, no. 16 [lent by Lady Oakes].
- Mexico City, Instituto Anglo-Mexicano de Cultura, "Pintura Britanica en Mexico: Siglos XVI al XIX," November–December 1963.
- Hong Kong, Christie's exhibition at the Hong Kong Convention Centre, "The Loaded Brush: A Curated Exhibition of Masterpieces from Private Collections," 24–27 November 2017.

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- Amsterdam, Museum Het Rembrandthuis, “A Special Visit,” 11 May–2 September 2018 [lent by the present owner].
- Amsterdam, Museum Het Rembrandthuis, on loan with the permanent collection, September 2018–January 2019 [lent by the present owner].
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Versions

Print

1. Johann Gottfried Haid (1714–76), after Rembrandt, *Portrait of a Man Seated, Holding a Dagger*, 1765, mezzotint, 506 x 355 mm.

Version

1. After Govaert Flinck, after Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Man with a Sword*, n.d., oil on panel, 87.5 x 70 cm, private collection, Switzerland.

Technical Summary

The painting was executed on a plain-weave canvas. It has been lined and mounted to a five-member stretcher with one wooden crossbar. Based on a stamp on the stretcher, the lining can be dated to the mid-nineteenth century.[1]

The canvas was prepared with a light-colored ground that contains quartz,[2] which Rembrandt and his workshop used after 1640. The paint was first applied wet-into-wet, with colors being blended into one another. Details and highlights were subsequently added wet-over-dry. The artist employed both glazes and impastos, as well as areas of scumbling. He also scratched into wet paint with the butt-end of his brush to define tendrils of hair. The pigments are typical for Rembrandt and the time period.[3]

Numerous changes are discernable in visible light and with x-radiography, infrared reflectography, and macro XRF scanning.[4] Originally the sitter's hat bore a plume and was cocked at more of an angle. His hair was parted in the middle and not as full. Changes were also made to his collar and ruff, as well as to the positions of his hands and sword. In addition, there was initially a curtain in the upper-right corner.

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Overall the painting is in good condition with minimal losses. The paint is somewhat thin in the sitter's cloak and right wrist, as well as in parts of the background, probably due to overly aggressive cleaning in the past. The pentimenti in the sitter's hands have been inpainted, as have the thin areas of the sitter's cloak.

The painting is signed and dated in the lower right. The signature is well preserved. Cracks running through the signature indicate that it is integral to the underlying and surrounding paint layers.[5]

Further technical information about this artwork is available in The Rembrandt Database.

Technical Summary Endnotes

1. The stamp says "F. Leedham, liner." This is the stamp of Francis Leedham, who worked as a picture liner in London between 1831 and 1858 ("Francis Leedham," *British picture restorers, 1600-1950 – L – National Portrait Gallery*, accessed 1 December 2018, https://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/directory-of-british-picture-restorers/british-picture-restorers-1600-1950-l). Charles Eastlake singles him out, writing, "Francis Leedham, whose skill in lining pictures and in transferring them from wood to cloth, is well known and appreciated." See Charles Lock Eastlake, *Materials for a History of Oil Painting* (London, 1847), 416.
2. Nicholas Eastaugh and Jilleen Nadolny, Analytical Report, 2 September 2012. The quartz ground consists of a mixture of river clay, sand, and oil.
3. The pigments were analyzed using polarised light microscopy (PLM), scanning electron microscopy-energy dispersive X-ray spectrometry (SEM-EDX), Raman microscopy, and UV-visible, near-infrared micro-spectrophotometry. See Nicholas Eastaugh and Jilleen Nadolny, Analytical Report, 2 September 2012.
4. Infrared reflectography was performed with an InGaAs infrared camera at 900 to 1700 nanometers. See Nicholas Eastaugh and Jilleen Nadolny, Analytical Report, 2 September 2012. Macro XRF scanning was performed by Geert van der Snickt, University of Amsterdam, and Joris Dik, Technical University of Delft.
5. This summary is based on an examination report by Simon Howell, R. M. S. Shepherd Associates, dated 29 November 2013, and an analytical report by Nicholas Eastaugh and Jilleen Nadolny, Art Access and Research, dated 3 September 2012.

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