



**Peasants Merrymaking Outside an Inn
(Previously “Fair at Warmond”)**

Jan Steen
(Leiden 1626 – 1679 Leiden)

ca. 1676
oil on canvas
102.5 x 181.6 cm
signed in dark paint, lower center: “JSteen” (“JS”
in ligature)
JS-108

How to cite

Kloek, Wouter. “Peasants Merrymaking Outside an Inn (Previously “Fair at Warmond”)” (2017). In *The Leiden Collection Catalogue*, 4th ed. Edited by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. and Elizabeth Nogrady with Caroline Van Cauwenberge. New York, 2023-. <https://theleidencollection.com/artwork/peasants-merrymaking-outside-an-inn/> (accessed January 18, 2026).

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This large painting from the last years of Jan Steen's remarkable career is one of the master's most expansive depictions of a country fair. The merrymaking takes place beneath tall trees in front of an inn, to the right of which, at some remove, are market stalls and a castle gate. The flag hanging from the tower window of a distant church was a signal that a fair was being celebrated that very day. In the midst of the festivities are two intertwined couples dancing to the tunes of a young violinist and a hurdy-gurdy player who has climbed on top of a table. Other figures sit and relax smoking or drinking, while some revelers greet each other with smiles and the doffing of hats. Near the inn a man and a woman toast each other with unrestrained exuberance. Leaning out of a window from the building's second floor is a man helping his vomiting female companion, an indication that the gaiety will continue, perhaps to dubious ends.

A crown of flowers, attached to a rope strung between two trees, hangs above the dancers. Such crowns were hung up for festive occasions, including weddings and the celebration of the birthday of the Prince of Orange.^[1] The flag attached to the inn is a frequent feature in depictions of sixteenth-century fairs honoring saints' days by such artists as Pieter Bruegel the Elder (ca. 1525–69) and David Vinckboons (1576–ca. 1632). Such Catholic festivities, however, were not officially celebrated in protestant Holland and, as Steen provides no explicit clues as to the nature of the celebration, it is probable that he depicted a generic event and not a specific feast day.^[2]

Steen has portrayed a wide array of humanity in this country setting characters familiar from his earlier works. A particularly engaging figure is the woman with a low-cut dress who holds her sleeping young child close to her bosom with one hand while grasping a white earthenware bowl with the other. The bowl will soon be filled with shrimp being sold by the fishmonger once he is paid by the woman's husband.^[3] It has been suggested that the couple is Steen and his wife, although this identification is highly doubtful.^[4] The boy looking at her, probably their son, is eating cherries from his hat, clearly preferring fruit to shrimp.

Many of Steen's figural groups create scenarios that relate to popular sayings and proverbs. In the center of the painting one sees an unfolding courtship scene, where an older man takes the hand of a country lass, perhaps to invite her join in the dance. The man's attire is so outlandishly old-fashioned that even in Steen's day it must have been considered ridiculous. Just behind this man, Steen has depicted two dogs sniffing each other, suggesting the underlying baseness for his attentions to the young woman.^[5] This motif harkens back to one of Steen's first works with merrymaking peasants, *Peasants Dancing before an Inn* (fig 1).^[6] Near this group is a fisherman, recognizable as such by his blue woolen cap, who sits at a low table holding a clay

Comparative Figures



Fig 1. Jan Steen, *Peasants Dancing before an Inn*, ca. 1647, panel, 38.5 x 56.5 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague, inv. 553



Fig 2. Circle of Jan Beerstraaten, *The Church of Warmond*, ca. 1660, black chalk, gray wash, 175 x 225 mm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-T-1879-A-22

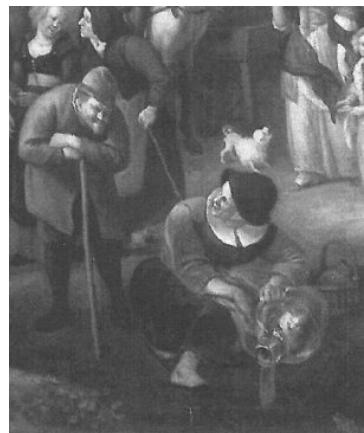


Fig 3. Detail before restoration, Jan Steen, *Peasants Merrymaking Outside an Inn*, JS-108 (photo courtesy of RKD (Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie/Netherlands Institute for Art History))



pipe in his hand. He smiles approvingly at a boy drinking from a large jug. Lying on the barrel near them are smokers' requisites and, presumably, dice. This little vignette is a visual reference to the saying "As the old sing, so twitter the young," a theme that Steen often depicted in his paintings.^[7]

In the right foreground an old man leaning on his cane stares lasciviously at a woman relieving herself. She squats near a bridge crossing a small body of water, beyond which lies a boy eating turnips. The fact that the boy looks at the viewer suggests that Steen intended him to introduce a note of irony to the scene, perhaps based on the well-known saying "to pull the wool over someone's eyes," the Dutch equivalent of which, *iemand knollen voor citroenen verkopen*, literally means "to sell someone turnips for lemons."^[8]

In the middle distance, a horseman—to judge from his attire, an officer in the States army—gestures expansively toward the merrymakers as he addresses an elegantly dressed young woman. Between the horseman and the woman, a yelping poodle, most likely the woman's pet, begs for attention. The woman is accompanied by her children, a sumptuously dressed girl who clings to her mother's skirt and the girl's older brother. The boy's costume provides some indication of the painting's late date, for the cravat around his neck, a lace cloth tied with a bow, was a fashionable item of apparel first introduced around 1670. The handkerchief hanging nonchalantly from his coat pocket was also a costly article of clothing.^[9] This youth, who is accompanied by a greyhound, haggles with a peasant boy holding up a basket, undoubtedly containing a songbird. This elegant family may well have arrived at the country fair in the carriage stopped by the castle gate. The gentleman sitting in the carriage is presumably the woman's husband.

In numerous Dutch paintings and prints, town-dwellers are shown observing merrymaking peasants. "Aensiet dit boersche volk" (Look at these peasant folk) are the first words of the caption to an engraving by Willem van Swanenburgh after David Vinckboons. This motif also appears elsewhere in Steen's work, as in *Village Fair* of the early 1650s and *Winter Landscape* in Skokloster.^[10] Here, it seems likely that Steen simply wanted to present an array of people from different walks of life rather than highlighting the differences between townspeople and country folk.

In the eighteenth century the Leiden Collection painting was identified as *Fair at Warmond*, as is evident from a drawn copy by Leiden draughtsman Pieter Leonard Delfos made in 1789.^[11] Warmond is a village near Leiden where Steen lived in the late 1650s, but none of the buildings in this painting resemble those from that village. The church in Warmond, for example, had a quite different appearance. In 1573 a fire had destroyed the structure, and seventeenth-century worshippers gathered in the restored choir, which was connected to the still-existing tower by a completely



Fig 4. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Woman Urinating*, 1631, etching, 81 x 64 mm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-637



dilapidated nave. The situation is recorded in a drawing of around 1660 by an artist in the circle of Jan Beerstraaten (**fig 2**).^[12] Another argument against Warmond is that neither of the two castles in the area—Lokhorst, also known as Oud-Teilingen, or Warmond Castle—had this kind of gate.

A more likely source of inspiration for Steen than Warmond was Wassenaar, which had a church tower similar in shape to that in the painting. The nave of the Wassenaar church was flanked by a south aisle, which probably could not be distinguished from the nave when seen from a distance. Moreover, Ter Weer Castle, located near Wassenaar, had a gate that resembles that in Steen's painting.^[13] The similarities in its appearance were initially even greater, but Steen raised the height of the gate's roof during the painting's execution, as can be seen in changes in paint color in this area. Such topographical freedom is found in other late paintings by Jan Steen, as in *Garden Party of the Paets Family* of 1677, where Steen has depicted the family's home on the Rapenburg canal in Leiden as though it were in a spacious park landscape.^[14]

Jan Steen painted over 30 scenes of merrymaking peasants at an inn, not including peasant weddings, skittle players, and brawling rustics. He was particularly interested in this subject in his younger years. Although this painting is not refined in every respect, it is among the most important works of Steen's last period and testifies to his great talent for composition. The artist has here distributed the various figures and vignettes over the canvas with great efficiency. The crowd seems immense, but the individual figures are clearly distinguishable. Similarly, Steen needed only a few tree trunks and some foliage to create the impression of a leafy place by an inn.^[15] In his later years he was sometimes unable to resist the temptation of painting a crowded scene of merrymaking peasants, as in *A Village Revel (Herberg 't Mis Verstant)* of 1673, in the British Royal Collection, but here he showed great restraint.^[16]

A not too surprising change was made to the painting in the past, probably at the end of the eighteenth century or early in the nineteenth century. The defecating woman was repainted so that her right hand was no longer wiping her bottom but placing a milk pail in the ditch (**fig 3**).^[17] The overpainting was removed only in 1970. For this motif Steen drew inspiration from Rembrandt's etching *Woman Urinating* (**fig 4**).^[18] He had used this motif earlier in his career (though evidently in a concealed way), in his *Peasant Fair* in the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem.^[19] Here, however, quite to the contrary, he quoted Rembrandt's model with alacrity.

The elegant young woman and two children at the right may be members of the patron's family. It should be noted, however, that the extravagant clothing of the two children seems more exaggerated than realistic (the girl's ermine collar is particularly over the top), so one must be careful about coming to that conclusion.^[20] The first



known owner of the painting is Willem van Heemskerck (1613–92), but whether he actually commissioned it is difficult to say. The four works by Steen from his collection differ greatly from each other and do not suggest that he had a systematic approach to his acquisitions of paintings. It is remarkable, however, that two important late works by Jan Steen (*Peasants Merrymaking* and JS-112) belonging to Van Heemskerck are once again united in the same collection.^[21]

- Wouter Kloek, 2017



Endnotes

1. On weddings, see, for example, Steen’s painting of 1667 in the Wellington Museum, London (Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* [Rotterdam, 1980], no. 284), or his *Wedding* of 1672 in the Rijksmuseum (Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* [Rotterdam, 1980], no. 349); regarding the celebration of *Prinsjesdag* (Princes’ Day), see the painting in the Rijksmuseum (Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* [Rotterdam, 1980], no. 276). The *Rhethoricians’ Festival* in Brussels (Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* [Rotterdam, 1980], no. 227) also features a crown of flowers.
2. Flags of this kind in compositions by Pieter Bruegel the Elder and David Vinckboons generally indicate that the celebration honors the name day of a specific saint, usually Saint George or Saint Martin (as, for example, in the engraving after Pieter Bruegel, *Fair of Saint George* [B. 207]). The Feast of Saint George is on 23 April, the Feast of Saint Martin on 11 November. Steen’s painting, however, cannot depict either of these occasions: the Feast of Saint Martin was held in the fall and not the summer, and archers were always present at the Feast of Saint George. Regarding the objections to such fairs in the protestant Dutch Republic, see G. D. J. Schotel, *Het Oud-Hollandsch huisgezin der zeventiende eeuw*, ed. H. C. Rogge (Arnhem, 1903), 348 (the faithful were warned every year “dat men zich had te onthouden van alle paepse formaliteiten en feesten, soo als Sinte Martijn, dryconighen, onnosele kynderkens, vastelavent ende andersins” [that one should refrain from all Catholic formalities and feasts, such as the Feasts of Saint Martin, the Three Kings, the Innocent Children, Shrove Tuesday, and others]).
3. Shrimp sellers occur in all shapes and sizes in Steen’s paintings. A well-known example is the shrimp seller in *The Garden Outside an Inn* in Berlin; see Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), no. 152; and H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido Jansen (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (New Haven and London, 1996), no. 17. Steen sometimes portrayed the shrimp seller as an independent subject; see Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), no. B-66.
4. Tobias van Westreene, *Jan Steen: Étude sur L’Art en Hollande* (The Hague, 1856), 120, no. 94; for the evocative story inspired by this painting, see also Anna Tummers, ed., *Celebrating in the Golden Age* (Exh. cat. Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum) (Rotterdam, 2011), 68.
5. A pair of sniffing dogs is frequently seen in Steen’s “village weddings.” See Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), nos. 40–41. This man is dressed as the old suitor in Steen’s *The Cock Fight*. See H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido Jansen (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (New Haven and London, 1996), 136, fig. 3, where a similar older man fights a young fellow for a peasant girl.
6. Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), no. 5; see also Ariane van Suchtelen, *Jan Steen in the Mauritshuis* (The Hague and Zwolle, 2011), 24–25. The motif of the man lying at the



left—Steen painted such figures on numerous occasions—can also be traced to this early painting, in which a similar figure, but sleeping and in reverse, was presumably first introduced by the artist.

7. See especially the painting of 1668 in the Rijksmuseum; Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), no. 295. See also Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), nos. 188, 200–2; and H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido Jansen (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (New Haven, 1996), no. 23.
8. This boy serves the same purpose as the sleeping boy who has just eaten a turnip in the center foreground of Steen's *Village School* in Edinburgh; see H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido Jansen (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (New Haven, 1996), no. 41. Another possibility is the proverb "Elck is om raepen uyt" (Everyone is out to steal). See Walter Gibson, *Figures of Speech: Picturing Proverbs in Renaissance Netherlands* (Berkeley, 2010), 75–77, who discusses a painting with that inscription by Adriaen van de Venne. The double meaning of *rapen* (meaning both "turnips" and "to steal") is essential to that proverb, and therefore does not seem readily applicable to the present painting, unless the saying depicted is actually "elkeen probeert zijn aandeel te bemachtigen" (everyone tries to lay his hands on his fair share), in which case it may well be of significance to this work.
9. See Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw: Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Zwolle, 1986), 112. See also S. Rietveld, "Schilderij met zakdoek," *Halszaken* 10 (2011): 6–7, no. 30, which discusses *Interior with a Wedding Feast* by Anthonie Palamedesz. (1601–73) of 1640, in which the mother of the bride, Liesbeth van de Waert, holds a handkerchief that still exists.
10. See Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), nos. 75 and 11; H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido Jansen (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (New Haven and London, 1996), 102, fig. 2, and cat. no 1; and Mariet Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen: Comic Painting in the Seventeenth Century* (Zwolle, 1997), 144, fig. 10.
11. Pieter Leonard Delfos after Jan Steen, *The Fair at Warmond*, black chalk on paper, 45.3 x 63.5 cm, Atlas van Stolk, Rotterdam. Inscribed on the verso: "De Warmondze Kermis."
12. The dilapidated state of the nave is also easily discernible in prints by Rademaker and Spilman. Steen did occasionally produce topographically correct depictions, as in his *Fair at Oegstgeest*, a painting from the mid-1650s that is now in the Detroit Institute of Arts. The church in the background of that painting is the so-called Green Church at Oegstgeest. The detailed rendering of the tower of that church, which was flanked on the south side by a small chapel, rules out the possibility that the Leiden Collection painting depicts Oegstgeest, as written on a photograph of the painting in the RKD (Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie/Netherlands Institute for Art History) in The Hague. The photo had been in the possession of Dr. Hans Schneider, then director of the RKD (Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie/Netherlands Institute for Art History), who had presumably been inspired by Wilhelm R. Valentiner's article, "The Fair at Oegstgeest by Jan Steen," *Bulletin of the Detroit*



Institute of Arts 19 (1940): 66–69.

13. On Ter Weer, see S. J. Fockema Andreae et al., *Kastelen, ridderhofsteden en buitenplaatsen in Rijnland* (Leiden, 1952), 93–94. The appearance of the gate is known from a drawing by Roelant Roghman (Roelant Roghman, *Ter Weer House, Seen from the Entrance Gate*, ca. 1647, black chalk, gray wash, 290 x 459 mm, present whereabouts unknown): see H. W. M. van der Wyck and J. W. Niemeijer, *De kasteeltekeningen van Roelant Roghman* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1989), 1: 224, no. 205
14. Karel Braun, *Alle tot nu toe bekende schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), no. 1980, no. 373; H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido Jansen (Exh. cat. Washington, National Gallery of Art; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (New Haven, 1996) no. 49. In fact, the profile of the woman with a child on her lap in the left foreground in the painting discussed here is almost identical to the woman in the right foreground of *Garden Party*.
15. This restraint is particularly evident when one considers his earlier fairs, such as *Fair at the River*, ca. 1653 (Karel Braun, *Alle tot nu toe bekende schilderijen van Jan Steen* [Rotterdam, 1980], no. 75) and *Fair at Oegstgeest* from the mid-1650s (Karel Braun, *Alle tot nu toe bekende schilderijen van Jan Steen* [Rotterdam, 1980], no. 74); see also H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido Jansen (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (New Haven, 1996), 176.
16. Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), no. 354; see also H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido Jansen (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (New Haven, 1996), no. 46. The execution of this painting was largely the work of one of Steen's assistants. Another painting with many figures is Steen's *Fair with "Neuzenslijper"* (Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* [Rotterdam, 1980], no. 366).
17. Cornelis Hofstede de Groot writes: "On the bank of a stream a milkmaid empties her copper jug," *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century Based on the Work of John Smith*, ed. and trans. Edward G. Hawke, 1: 170–71, no. 652, 8 vols. (London, 1907–27), originally published as *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 10 vols. (Esslingen and Paris, 1907–28) ("Am Ufer eines Baches leert ein Milchmädchen ihren kupferen Krug"). There is no overpainting on Delfos's drawing of 1789. In the 1842 catalogue of the Higginson collection, the woman is described as holding a milk jug.
18. In the drawing made after the painting, Delfos depicted a stream of urine that is not, or at least is no longer, seen in the painting. Delfos, too, may have been thinking of Rembrandt here.
19. Karel Braun, *Alle schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980), no. 165.
20. An analogous case is the painting by Esaias van de Velde (1587–1630), *The Visit of Prince Maurits to the New Stables at Rijswijk* of 1624 (Six Collection, Amsterdam), a painting that contains a large number of recognizable people and a great deal of existing architecture, though it sometimes falls back on standard



formulas from the pictorial tradition of rendering fairs. See K. Zandvliet, *Maurits, Prins van Oranje* (Amsterdam, 2000), 311–14. See also M. Dominicus-van Soest, “De kermis in de beeldende kunst,” in *Kennis, kunstjes en kunnen: Kermis; De wondere wereld van glans en glitter*, ed. Johanna Jacobs (Amsterdam, 2002), 41.

21. For a more detailed discussion of Van Heemskerck as the possible patron, see JS-112.

Provenance

- Willem Jacobsz van Heemskerk (1613–92), Leiden, until 1692; by descent to Willem Willemsz van Heemskerck (1648–95), Leiden, until 1695; by descent to Johanna van Sorgen (1646–1729), Leiden, until 1729; by descent to Leonard van Heemskerk (1689–1771), Leiden, until 1771 (his sale, Leiden, Delfos, 2 September 1771, no. 9 [for 525 guilders to Hieronimus David Gaubius]).
- Hieronimus David Gaubius (d. 1780), Leiden, until 1780; by descent to Constantia Gaubius (d. 1782), Leiden, until 1782; by descent to Maria Amalia Gaubius (1744–88) and Hendrick Twent (1743–88), Leiden, until 1789 (his sale, Leiden, Delfos, 11 August 1789, no. 28 [for 300 guilders to either A. P. or H. J. Delfos]).
- Chaplin, London, by 1836.
- Edmund Higginson, Esq., Saltmarsh Castle, Herefordshire, purchased on his behalf by W. Artaria by 1842 (his sale, London, Christie's, 4 June 1846, no. 159 [for £210 to Chaplin]).
- Chaplin, London, by 1846.
- Robert Field, London (his sale, Christie and Manson, London, 3–6 June 1856, no. 525 [for £106]).
- (Anonymous sale, London, 1864, no. 20, bought in).
- C. J. Nieuwenhuys, Brussels (his sale, Brussels, Le Roy, 4 May 1883, no. 19).
- Charles T. Yerkes (1837–1905), New York (his sale, New York, American Art Association, Mendelssohn Hall, 5–8 April 1910, no. 140 [to E. Brandus]).
- E. Brandus, New York, by 1910.
- John W. Gates, New York.
- [F. Kleinberger & Cie, Paris, by 1921].
- Angell-Norris Collection, Chicago, by 1923; by descent to Lavern Norris Gaynor by 1981; by whom given to Northwestern University, Chicago; from whom acquired by Elizabeth Lindsay Corbett.
- Elizabeth Lindsay Corbett, by 1989 (sale, Christie's, New York, 31 May 1989, no. 124, unsold; sale, Sotheby's, New York, 28 January 1999, no. 231, unsold; sale, Sotheby's, London, 5 July 2006, no. 29; [Johnny van Haeften Ltd., London]).
- From whom acquired by the present owner in 2006.



Exhibition History

- Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, "Paintings from the Collection of R. F. Angell, Mr. and Mrs. William Cresner, Mr. and Mrs. Max Epstein, Martin A. Ryerson," Summer–Fall 1923 [lent by the Angell-Norris Collection].
- Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, long-term loan, May 1923–January 1965 [lent by the Angell-Norris Collection].
- Chicago, The Renaissance Society at The University of Chicago, "Know What You See," 6 October–7 November 1970 [lent by the Angell-Norris Collection].
- Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, November 2009–September 2010, temporary loan [lent by the present owner].
- Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum, "Celebrating in the Golden Age," 11 November 2011–6 May 2012, no. 8 [lent by the present owner].
- Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, on loan with the permanent collection, May 2012–May 2015 [lent by the present owner].
- Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Class Distinctions: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt and Vermeer," 11 October 2015–18 January 2016; Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum, 24 February–29 May 2016, no. 67 [lent by the present owner].
- Beijing, National Museum of China, "Rembrandt and His Time: Masterpieces from The Leiden Collection," 17 June–3 September 2017 [lent by the present owner].
- Shanghai, Long Museum, West Bund, "Rembrandt, Vermeer and Hals in the Dutch Golden Age: Masterpieces from The Leiden Collection," 23 September 2017–25 February 2018 [lent by the present owner].
- Moscow, The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, "The Age of Rembrandt and Vermeer: Masterpieces of The Leiden Collection," 28 March 2018–22 July 2018 [lent by the present owner].
- St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum, "The Age of Rembrandt and Vermeer: Masterpieces of The Leiden Collection," 5 September 2018–13 January 2019 [lent by the present owner].
- Albany, Albany Institute of History & Art, "Delights of the Senses: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art and Life. Featuring Paintings from The Leiden Collection," 14 September–31 December 2024, no. 18 [lent by the present owner].

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- *A Guide to the Paintings in the Permanent Collection: The Art Institute of Chicago.* Chicago, 1925; rev. ed., 1932, 190.
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Versions Drawing

1. Pieter Leonard Delfos after Jan Steen, *The Fair at Warmond*, black chalk on paper, 45.3 x 63.5 cm. On the *verso* annotated 'De Warmondze Kermis.'

Technical Summary

The support, a single piece of medium weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined. All four tacking margins have been almost entirely removed, although a remnant of primed canvas along the upper edge remains. Broad cusping along the upper and lower edges and slight cusping along the vertical edges indicates that the support dimensions have not been significantly altered. There is one paper label and two numerical inscriptions, but no wax seals, import stamps or stencils along the lining or stretcher.

A dark red-brown ground has been thinly and evenly applied. The oil paint has been thinly applied allowing the canvas weave to remain visible across much of the surface. Low ridges of impasto and soft brushmarks indicate a paint mixture rich in medium or diluted to the point that the paint flowed and leveled as it came



off the brush. Pentimenti indicate changes in positions of the dog and the figure's leg along the far right holding the bird cage, and a possible adjustment in the area of the extended arm of the woman at the lower left holding a baby.

No underdrawing is readily apparent in infrared images captured at 780–1000 nanometers. Two minor compositional changes visible in the images heighten the gaiety of the scene. Originally, the man on the right of the encircled dancers had his head bowed forward rather than thrown back, with an open mouth conveying exuberance; additionally the blond girl being appraised by the man with his back turned to the viewer at the center of the composition had a less revealing décolletage.

The painting is signed in dark paint along the lower center but undated.

The painting has not undergone conservation treatment since its acquisition in 2007 and remains in a good state of preservation.^[1]

Technical Summary Endnotes

1. Entry based on a 2011 examination report by Terry Lignelli, associate paintings conservator, Philadelphia Museum of Art.