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Portrait of a Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped

Rembrandt van Rijn
(Leiden 1606 – 1669 Amsterdam)

1660
oil on canvas
77.5 x 64.8 cm
signed and dated at center right: “Rembrandt f. 1660”
RR-113

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Rembrandt painted this powerfully expressive portrait of an elderly woman in 1660, at a time when he was exploring, as no artist had ever really done, the depth of the human soul. The woman's rugged face, with its pronounced cheekbones, forceful chin, and generous nose, has great strength of character, but Rembrandt reveals the fullness of her inner life through her furrowed brow and deeply sunken eyes, which gaze fixedly into the distance. With bold brushwork Rembrandt suggests the aged character of her skin, not through definition of wrinkles but through the irregularities of its surface. Strokes of all types and colors—ochers, pinks, whites—merge, blend, and overlay in ways that defy description, as he often used a wet-into-wet painting technique.[1] Seated alertly in an armchair in a darkened chamber with stark plaster walls, and with her hands in her lap, she is physically at rest but emotionally and spiritually engaged, alone with her thoughts.

During the last two decades of his life, Rembrandt turned increasingly to the half-length depiction of elderly figures.[2] He portrayed these figures in moments of contemplation, as with *Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped*, sometimes reflecting inner anxieties, and sometimes a quiet spirituality. They often lack any narrative context or accompanying attribute, making it difficult to determine, as in the slightly earlier *Old Woman in a Chair* **(fig 1)**,[3] whether they are portraits or depictions of historical, biblical, or mythological figures.[4] The aged men and women in these late paintings have the physical and emotional immediacy of figures painted from life, but they often occupy a realm between portraiture and character study. As one scholar has observed, with these works Rembrandt created a separate genre of painting.[5]

The sitter portrayed in *Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped* has not been identified, and, indeed, the painting is undoubtedly more a character study than a formal portrait.[6] Rembrandt captured her individuality in his depiction of her physical features—the slight cleft in her chin, small mouth, broad nose, and weathered hands. Her fur-trimmed jacket with its velvet sleeves and the black hood differ slightly from the clothing seen in Rembrandt's other portrayals of elderly women in the late 1650s and early 1660s.[7] In contrast to his vigorous modeling of the woman's face and hands, he only summarily indicates her costume. Loosely applied brushstrokes evoke the softness of the brown fur, while, with the exception of a golden yellow highlight on the trim at her wrist, her sleeves and skirt are more suggested than defined.[8]

Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped has a distinguished provenance that reaches back to the important English collector Sir Abraham Hume (1749–1838), and it was first catalogued as by Rembrandt in his collection in 1824.[9] The attribution of the painting to Rembrandt was confirmed by the German art historian Wilhelm von Bode

Comparative Figures



Fig 1. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Old Woman in a Chair*, 1654, oil on canvas, 109 x 84 cm, State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Scala / Art Resource, NY



Fig 2. Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Apostle Simon*, 1661, oil on canvas, 98.5 x 79 cm, Kunsthaus Zürich, Ruzicka-Foundation, 1949, © Kunsthaus Zürich



Fig 3. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of Margaretha de Geer, Wife of Jacob*

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when he published this painting as being by the master in 1900, and all subsequent published opinions have fully supported this attribution.[10] In recent decades, some scholars have privately expressed doubts about its attribution, suggesting that it was executed by one of Rembrandt's pupils, but these reservations are unfounded.[11]

Many stylistic and technical considerations with Rembrandt's paintings from around 1660 support the attribution to the master. In *The Apostle Simon* from 1661 **(fig 2)**, a work likely conceived as part of a series of apostles and evangelists that Rembrandt executed between 1657 and 1661, a muted, earth-toned palette and sweeping, loose brushwork convey a sober, moving image of this Christian martyr.[12] Head turned and eyes downcast, one hand grasping the handle of a large saw and the other resting on his lap, Simon focuses his attention elsewhere. But as in *Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped*, Rembrandt was able to make the figure remarkably present in his physical and emotional state. Technical examination of the Leiden Collection work has shown that Rembrandt built up the structure of the old woman's hands in a manner similar to that in *The Apostle Simon*, using horizontal, linear strokes of white paint, particularly in the fingers of the left hand.[13]

The *Portrait of Margaretha de Geer* **(fig 3)**, which was executed about the same time, evokes a familiar contrast of corporeal fragility with inner strength. Although Rembrandt approached this formally commissioned portrait in a more controlled fashion than he did *Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped*, he similarly applied grays, pinks, and yellows to animate the appearance of Margaretha's aging skin. He likewise defined her eyebrows and forehead with a series of short, diagonal brushstrokes, and left the cool gray underlayer visible around the eyes to enhance the appearance of shadows.[14] Rembrandt had already used this technique to create shadows around the eyes in his *Self-Portrait* of 1659 (Washington, National Gallery of Art), as well as in *A Young Man Seated at a Table (Possibly Govaert Flinck)* (Washington, National Gallery of Art, ca. 1660), though in a more restrained manner.[15] This latter painting, significantly, depicts the same unusual stone window ledge visible behind the woman in the Leiden Collection painting.[16]

Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped is the first work from Rembrandt's late career to enter The Leiden Collection, and hence expands its ability to present the full scope of this extraordinary master's career.[17] In particular, this painting's acquisition enables the collection to demonstrate how the depiction of aged sitters continued to captivate Rembrandt, from his early Leiden period in the late 1620s to the 1660s.[18] This interest is seen, for example, in *Study of a Woman in a White Cap* (RR-101, **(fig 4)**) from about 1640, where Rembrandt has similarly captured the effects of age in his depiction of wrinkles, loose skin, and heavy contours beneath the eyes.[19] As Joachim von Sandrart, Rembrandt's contemporary in Amsterdam, later

Trip, ca. 1661, oil on canvas, 130.5 x 97.5 cm, National Gallery, London, inv. no. NG1675, © National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY



Fig 4. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Study of a Woman in a White Cap*, RR-101

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wrote in 1675, “in the depiction of old people, particularly their hair and skin, [Rembrandt] showed great diligence, patience and practice … he indeed excels, not only grandly rendering the simplicity of nature but using natural forces to color, heighten and embellish it, particularly in his half-length pictures of old heads.”[20] In *Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped*, Rembrandt succeeded in capturing his sitter with an honest stillness and inner strength, where the unhesitating brushwork that defined his late career gave form to the effects of time’s passing.

- Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. and Lara Yeager-Crasselt, 2017

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Endnotes

1. A wet-into-wet technique is visible in the flesh tones, whereas wet-over-dry methods are present in larger areas of the composition. See the Technical Report written by Kristin deGhetaldi on file at The Leiden Collection.
2. For an overview of these works, many of which have been more recently attributed to Rembrandt's workshop, see Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings*, ed. Horst Gerson (London, 1969), nos. 270, 274, 282, 283, 285, 361, 371, 381, 383, 384, 385; Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt: All Paintings in Colour* (Antwerp, 1993), 299–307, nos. 142, 152, A43, A47, A52, A60, A61, A115; Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt, His Life, His Paintings: A New Biography with All Accessible Paintings Illustrated in Colour* (New York, 1985), 301–17. For an investigation into Rembrandt's late period, see Jonathan Bikker et al., *Rembrandt: The Late Works* (Exh. cat. London, National Gallery; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (London, 2014).
3. Fig 1 shows the painting without the later addition made to the bottom edge of the canvas (the work was also enlarged along both sides, it originally measured 89 x 76.5 cm). See Irina Sokolova and Emmanuel Starcky, eds., *Rembrandt et son école: Collections du Musée de l'Ermitage de Saint-Pétersbourg* (Exh. cat. Paris, Musée des beaux-arts de Dijon) (Paris, 2003), nos. 3, 89–91; Christiaan Vogelaar and Gerbrand Korevaar, eds., *Rembrandt's Mother: Myth and Reality* (Exh. cat. Leiden, Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal) (Leiden, 2005), nos. 30, 139–140. The same woman appears in several other paintings associated with Rembrandt's workshop from the mid-1650s, including *An Old Woman with a Hood*, 1654, oil on canvas, 74 x 63 cm, Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, inv. 2624, and *Half-Length Figure of an Old Woman*, ca. 1655, 75 x 65 cm, National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen, KMS3885. Rembrandt's *Old Woman Reading*, 1655, oil on canvas, 78.7 x 66 cm, Drumlanrig Castle is the only work related to this group whose attribution is widely accepted.
4. An exception is Rembrandt's series of religious portraits from the late 1650s and early 1660s, which depicts half-length biblical figures often with some form of identifying attribute. The use of the term "portrait" in this essay relies on the definition set forth by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. in his study of these religious portraits. Wheelock established that the qualities of immediacy of these figures, both physically and emotionally, deem them portraits, though they may differ in our conventional use of the term. See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Rembrandt's Apostles and Evangelists," in *Rembrandt's Late Religious Portraits*, ed. Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum) (Chicago, 2005), 13–37.
5. See Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt: All Paintings in Colour* (Antwerp, 1993), 299–303. Tümpel broadly calls them "historical figures." This characterization distinguishes these late paintings from the *tronies* that Rembrandt executed in Leiden in the 1620s and early 1630s, which were more closely associated with his studio practice. By this point, as Tümpel notes, these "studies of heads had long since lost their original function as preparatory material for history paintings, becoming a genre in their own

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right" (299). See also the discussion in Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt, His Life, His Paintings: A New Biography with All Accessible Paintings Illustrated in Colour* (New York, 1985), 304–15.

6. The description of the sitter in the literature has oscillated between "Portrait of an Old Woman" and "Head of an Old Woman." While the former suggests a portrait of a specific individual, the latter accords more with the use of a study or *tronie*.

7. A number of the costumes worn by old women in Rembrandt's paintings from this late period share certain elements, such as the red velvet sleeves, white blouse beneath the jacket, and some form of black hood or headdress. This particular dress, however, remains distinctive within Rembrandt's oeuvre.

8. For a discussion of Rembrandt's brushwork and its reception at the end of his career, see Jonathan Bikker and Anna Krekeler, "Experimental Technique: The Paintings," in Jonathan Bikker et al., *Rembrandt: The Late Works* (Exh. cat. London, National Gallery; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (London, 2014), 132–51.

9. The painting was first exhibited as by Rembrandt in 1818 at the British Institution, London. It was subsequently published as by Rembrandt in *A descriptive catalogue of pictures belonging to Sir Abraham Hume* (London, 1824), 36, no. 113.

10. Wilhelm von Bode included RR-113 in his catalogue of Rembrandt's paintings in 1900, and it subsequently appeared in the Rembrandt studies published by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, Adolf Rosenberg, Abraham Bredius, Kurt Bauch, Horst Gerson, and Christopher Brown. Brown has recently reconfirmed his opinion about RR-113's full attribution to Rembrandt in personal correspondence with the authors. See References for full history.

11. The Leiden Collection painting has not been included in a number of recent Rembrandt publications, most notably, Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*; Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt, His Life, His Paintings: A New Biography with All Accessible Paintings Illustrated in Colour* (New York, 1985); Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt: All Paintings in Colour* (Antwerp, 1993); Jonathan Bikker et al., *Rembrandt: The Late Works* (Exh. cat. London, National Gallery; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (London, 2014). An unpublished essay by Martin Bijl from 2008 (kept on file at The Leiden Collection) notes that the painting was rejected by the Rembrandt Research Project on two occasions, both by the original team in the 1970s and later by Ernst van der Wetering in the late 1990s. Bijl's essay, written with the collaboration of Van der Wetering, rejects the attribution to Rembrandt based on what the authors cite as "the weak buildup of the face," as well as weak handling of the anatomy and rendering of textures. They attribute the work to a little-known pupil of Rembrandt, Johannes Raven (1634–1662). This attribution, however, has little to justify it. No painted works of Raven's survive, and only one signed drawing is associated with him. Bijl and Van de Wetering express doubts about the authenticity of the signature, yet recent technical analysis performed by Sotheby's has confirmed that both the signature and the date are integral to the original painting. Moreover, visual examination of the signature by Kristin deGhetaldi for The Leiden Collection indicates that thin remnants of a gray-brown paint layer extend over or alongside parts of the signature.

It is also important to note in this context that while Rembrandt ran a large workshop for much of his

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career, very little is known about the nature of his studio in the late 1650s and 1660s. For a discussion of the issues surrounding attribution to 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), https://www.nga.gov/research/online-editions/17th-century-dutch-paintings/essay-issues-attribution-rembrandt.html.

12. See Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., ed., *Rembrandt's Late Religious Portraits* (Exh. cat. Washington, National Gallery of Art; Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum) (Chicago, 2005), no. 10.

13. A close comparison of the X-rays of the two paintings indicates the similarities in the execution of the hands. See "Object Information: *The Apostle Simo*n," The Rembrandt Database, http://www.rembrandtdatabase.org/Rembrandt/painting/59313/the-apostle-simon (accessed October 16, 2017). Both works also contain chalk-based grounds, which have been associated with fourteen other works by Rembrandt from the 1650s and 1660s. See the Technical Report written by Kristin deGhetaldi on file at The Leiden Collection. The scientific analysis of the painting was performed by John Twilley. For a discussion of the use of chalk grounds in Rembrandt's workshop, see Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in *Paintings in the Laboratory: Scientific Examination for Art History and Conservation*, ed. Esther van Duijn (London, 2014), 21–49.

14. See the Technical Report written by Kristin deGhetaldi on file at The Leiden Collection. This approach is also evident in the *Small Margaretha de Geer* from 1661 (London, National Gallery), in which Rembrandt used a similar unblended, wet-into-wet painting technique to capture the texture and colors of Margaretha's aging skin.

15. The X-ray of RR-113 reveals, as in the *Self-Portrait*, that the brown lining of the fur trim was first painted with long, white brushstrokes that were later glazed over with semitransparent reddish-brown paint. The beret in the *Self-Portrait* also indicates white brushstrokes beneath the dark paint. These observations were made by Kristin deGhetaldi. For the National Gallery paintings, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Rembrandt van Rijn/*Self-Portrait*/1659" and "Rembrandt van Rijn/*A Young Man Seated at a Table (Possibly Govaert Flinck)*/c. 1660," in *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, NGA Online Editions, https://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/79 (accessed October 13, 2017).

16. For a discussion of this element in the painting in the National Gallery, see Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Rembrandt van Rijn/*A Young Man Seated at a Table (Possibly Govaert Flinck)*/c. 1660," in *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, NGA Online Editions, https://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/79 (accessed October 13, 2017). This unusual architectural element also appears in Rembrandt's 1655 etching of Thomas Jacobsz Haringh ("Old Haringh") (Graphische Sammlung, Albertina, Vienna). My thanks to Otto Naumann for pointing out this comparison

17. From the height of success in Amsterdam in the 1630s and 1640s, Rembrandt experienced great personal and financial difficulties toward the end of his life, which included his declaration of bankruptcy in 1656. While scholars have often seen Rembrandt's art in these years as intimately tied to his personal circumstances, his work should not be read as a direct biographical manifestation of his

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difficulties. The most recent exhibition to explore this period of the artist's career has shown that it was in many ways his most independent, free, and inventive. For Rembrandt's work in The Leiden Collection, see Perry H. Chapman, "Rembrandt and The Leiden Collection," in *The Leiden Collection Catalogue*, ed. Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. (New York, 2017), https://www.theleidencollection.com/archive/. For an examination of his late career, see Jonathan Bikker et al., *Rembrandt: The Late Works* (Exh. cat. London, National Gallery; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (London, 2014).

18. As a young artist, Rembrandt, along with Jan Lievens (1607–1674), often portrayed old men and women in paintings, prints, and drawings, whether as individual *tronies*, studies in preparation for larger history paintings, or in the guise of biblical figures. Two works in The Leiden Collection associated with Rembrandt's studio in the late 1620s, *Rembrandt's Mother* (JL-106) and *Bust of an Old Woman* (RR-122), provide yet another display of how artists sought to capture the physical and emotional effects of old age.
19. There is also a remarkable similarity in the way that Rembrandt handled the paint along the figures' jawlines, using a series of strong, fluid brushstrokes to articulate the structure of the face and the texture of the skin.
20. Joachim von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie der Edlen Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675: Lebem der berühmten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister*, ed. Arthur R. Peltzer, 4 vols. (Nuremburg, 1675–79, reprinted in Munich, 1925), 203.

Provenance

- Sir Abraham Hume (1749–1838), London, by 1818; probably by descent to his great-grandson, Adelbert Wellington Brownlow-Cust (1844–1921), 3rd Earl Brownlow, London, by 1899.
- [Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris, by 1900].
- Edward Fullerton Milliken, New York (sale, Christie's, London, 31 May 1902, no. 41 [to Sir George Donaldson for £5,775]).
- Sir George Donaldson (1845–1925), London [to F. Kleinberger].
- [F. Kleinberger, Paris, 11 June 1907 (to Friedrich Ludwig von Gans).]
- Friedrich Ludwig von Gans (1833–1920), Frankfurt, 8 December 1907 [probably to Bachtstitz Gallery].
- [Bachstitz Gallery, New York and The Hague, by 1920 (to Florence and Daniel Guggenheim)].
- Florence (1863–1944) and Daniel Guggenheim (1856–1930), New York; by descent to their daughter, Gladys Eleanor Guggenheim Straus (1895–1980), New York.
- Private collection, 1977 [with Agnews & Sons Ltd. London, by 1986]; (sale, Sotheby's New York, 25 January 2017, no. 26, withdrawn)]; [to Otto Naumann Ltd.]

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- [Otto Naumann Ltd., New York, 2017.]
- From whom acquired by the present owner in 2017.

Exhibition History

- London, British Institution, 1818, no. 121 [lent by Sir Abraham Hume].
- London, Royal Academy, “Winter Exhibition: Works by Rembrandt,” 1899, no. 78 [lent by Adelbert Wellington Brownlow-Cust].
- Paris, Sedelmeyer Gallery, 1900, no. 29.
- London, Royal Academy, “Old Masters, deceased masters of the British School, watercolours & chalk drawings,” 1907, no. 56 [lent by Sir George Donaldson].
- New York, World’s Fair, “Masterpieces of Art,” May–October 1939, no. 10 [lent by Gladys Eleanor Guggenheim Straus].
- Yokohama, Fukuoka and Kyoto, “Rembrandt and the Bible”, 1986-87, no. 10 [lent by Agnews & Sons Ltd.].
- Beijing, National Museum of China, “Rembrandt and His Time: Masterpieces from The Leiden Collection,” 17 June–3 September 2017, no. 74 [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, no. 58 [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, no. 58 [lent by the present owner].
- Abu Dhabi, Louvre Abu Dhabi, “Rembrandt, Vermeer and the Dutch Golden Age. Masterpieces from The Leiden Collection and the Musée du Louvre,” 14 February–18 May 2019, no. 33 [lent by the present owner].
- Amsterdam, H’ART Museum, “From Rembrandt to Vermeer: Masterpieces from The Leiden Collection,” 9 April–24 August, 2025 [lent by the present owner].
- West Palm Beach, Norton Museum of Art, “Art and Life in Rembrandt’s Time: Masterpieces from The Leiden Collection,” 25 October 2025–29 March, 2026 [lent by the present owner].

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Versions

1. After Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of an Old Woman*, n.d, oil on grey cardboard, dimensions unknown, Claude E. De Coen Collection, Saint Cezaire sur Saigne, France.
2. After Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait*, 19th century, oil on canvas, 47 x 40 cm, previous sale, Henry’s Auktionshaus, Mutterstadt, 27 August, 2017.
3. After Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of an Old Woman*, n.d, oil on canvas, dimensions unknown, previously, Frau Söhle, Hamburg.

Technical Summary

The original fabric support is a medium-weight, plain-weave canvas that has been lined onto a plain-weave canvas of slightly heavier weight. Along all four edges, traces of the original canvas extend approximately half an inch over the existing tacking margins. Examination of the X-radiograph reveals pronounced cusping patterns only along the proper right edge, suggesting that the proper left, top, and bottom edges may have been slightly cut down during a previous restoration campaign.

Scientific analysis of paint cross-sections revealed that the ground consists primarily of chalk;[1] at least fourteen works associated with Rembrandt dating to the 1650s and 1660s possess grounds containing chalk.[2] There is a cool gray-colored underlayer visible in sections of the flesh; however, based on the samples that were collected from the painting, it is difficult to confirm whether this layer is in fact a second ground layer.[3] No underdrawing can be detected, although a dark brown underpainting can be seen in some areas of the picture, most noticeably along the proper left edge in the background, along the contours of the hands, and around the periphery of the face.[4]

The oil paint has been applied using both wet-into-wet techniques (as can be seen in the flesh tones) and wet-over-dry methods in larger sections of the composition (such as in the background). The highlights in the clothing, flesh tones, and fur lining of the costume are more thickly painted; opaque, broad brushstrokes are visible in these sections and are often associated with subtle impasto. Thinner applications were used to build up the darker sections of the sitter’s clothing as well as the background. The paint stratigraphy in the section containing the signature is not straightforward; thin remnants of a gray-brown paint layer can be seen extending over and/or alongside sections of the signature.[5]

The painting is covered by a number of coats of slightly discolored varnish, which are uneven in sheen/gloss.

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Overall the support, ground, and paint layers are stable and in good condition. There is scattered retouching throughout and a pronounced craquelure pattern appears throughout the entire picture, particularly in darker passages and in the woman's sleeve.

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

Technical Summary Endnotes

1. John Twilley performed the scientific analysis of the painting. The primary analytical techniques used were cross-sectional microscopy, polarized light microscopy (for dispersed pigment/ground samples), and scanning electron microscopy (email correspondence with John Twilley, 10 July 2017).
2. Karin Groen, "Grounds in Rembrandt's Workshop and in Paintings by His Contemporaries," in *Paintings in the Laboratory: Scientific Examination for Art History and Conservation*, ed. Esther van Duijn (London, 2014), 37.
3. It would be atypical for paintings associated with Rembrandt and his workshop for this gray layer to be applied locally rather than covering the entire lower ground. Additional information relating to the possible second ground layer was obtained via email correspondence with John Twilley on 18 July 2017.
4. Infrared reflectography may reveal the presence of a carbon black–containing preparatory oil sketch and/or imprimatura.
5. Cross-sectional analysis may help to clarify why the signature appears to be partially obscured.

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