Pieter Lastman's *David and Uriah*: Storytelling and the Passions

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History paintings tell stories. They may depict episodes of confrontation, recognition, or reconciliation, or moments inciting fear, betrayal, or desire. Often driven by an individual's weakness, a deep passion, or an inner conflict, historical narratives have the potential to reveal either vice or virtue, to display a flawed moral character or an expression of unwavering faith. Capturing the complex relationship between the "movements of the soul" and their outward manifestation in gesture and expression constituted one of the greatest challenges for seventeenth-century Dutch artists.[1] One approach was to render history paintings, which were primarily drawn from the Bible, ancient history, and mythology, with great naturalism, so that beholders could understand—and even personally experience—the passions, or emotions, portrayed before them.[2] At the turn of the seventeenth century, Karel van Mander (1584–1606) called the passions "the kernel and soul of art," while Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627–78) considered them "the most noble [part of art]."[3] To achieve the lofty goal of depicting the passions meant that Dutch artists should not only "instruct and delight" the beholder but, above all, "stir our minds."[4]

The Amsterdam painter Pieter Lastman (1583–1633) was one of the most consequential Dutch history painters in the early seventeenth century.[5] The extraordinary aptitude for storytelling on view in his *David Gives Uriah a Letter for Joab* **(fig 1)**, a pivotal scene from the life of the Old Testament King David, situates this work at the nexus of The Leiden Collection, which features paintings of the human figure, not only portraits and *tronies*, but also historical, mythological, and genre subjects.[6] Lastman brought an erudition, innovation, and expressiveness to his depiction of historical themes that impacted a generation of artists in the Netherlands, most importantly in the work of his pupils Jan Lievens (1607–74) and Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–69), but also in paintings by Rembrandt's students, including Ferdinand Bol (1616–80), Govaert Flinck (1615–60), and Carel Fabritius (1622–54). Lastman's artistic heritage was likewise significant for artists working outside of Rembrandt's immediate circle, such as Frans van Mieris (1635–81) and Jan Steen (1626–79), who painted history scenes into the later seventeenth century.[7]

This essay explores key aspects of Lastman's approach to history painting through the lens of *David Gives Uriah a Letter for Joab*. It addresses some of Lastman's central concerns as a history painter in seventeenth-century Amsterdam as well as the pictorial implications his narrative and stylistic choices had for Dutch history painting.[8] More specifically, it examines the artist's interest in portraying a moment of intense inner conflict and

Fig 1. Pieter Lastman, *David Gives Uriah a Letter for Joab* , 1619, oil on panel, 42.8 x 63.3 cm, The Leiden Collection, New York, inv. no. PL-100.

Fig 2. Hans Holbein, *David and Uriah*, 1538, woodcut, 60 x 85 mm, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-4511S(R).

Fig 3. *David and Uriah*, 1556, woodcut, 59 x 85 mm, from *Den Bibel*, published by Hans de Laet, Antwerp, VU Amsterdam University Library, inv. no. XC.05058.

Fig 4. Pieter Lastman, *King David Handing the Letter to Uriah*, 1611, oil on panel, 51.1 × 61.3 cm, Detroit Institute of Arts, inv. no. 60.63, Detroit Institute of Arts, USA Founders Society

demonstrates how his knowledge of antique visual and textual sources, along with contemporary cultural and intellectual traditions, impacted his storytelling.[9] Exploring these issues provides insight into Lastman's ingenuity as a painter and offers a broader perspective on his place within The Leiden Collection.

Lastman and Religious History Painting in Early Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam

History painting held an important role in the artistic and cultural life of the Dutch Republic, and by the second quarter of the seventeenth century, Amsterdam had risen to become the genre's center.[10] While stories drawn from ancient histories and mythologies, such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Pliny's *Natural History*, and Virgil's *Aeneid* were popular among Dutch collectors, religious subjects from the Old and New Testaments flourished alongside them.[11] Despite the contentious role of religious imagery in the Calvinist Reformed Church, the official religion of the Republic, narrative biblical scenes were tolerated and even encouraged for the ways in which they could evoke moral themes and provide a source of emulation for people's daily lives.[12] Depictions of Old Testament patriarchs, kings, and prophets, apocryphal stories from the Book of Tobit and Book of Esther, and episodes from the life of Christ, the Apostles, and the Evangelists, could be seen in historical terms and provided models for human behavior, whether displayed in private homes or public, civic spaces.[13]

In a city like Amsterdam, which represented the multiconfessional nature of Dutch society, members of the different sects of the Reformed Church (predominantly Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants) lived alongside Roman Catholic and Jewish populations.[14] Artists, regardless of their own faith, negotiated these various belief systems.[15] Religious history paintings were therefore not strictly made along confessional lines, but rather could be viewed from within an individual's own set of beliefs.[16] As a Catholic artist, Lastman would have produced works for Protestant as well as Catholic households, and neither his religious convictions nor those of his collectors and patrons would necessarily have determined his choice of subject matter.[17] Yet, as Tico Seifert and others have observed, Lastman may have adapted the manner in which he approached certain biblical themes to reflect the faith of his patrons, many of whom came from the high end of the art market.[18]

These broader circumstances laid the groundwork for a new approach to

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Fig 5. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Judas Returning the Thirty Pieces of Silver*, 1629, oil on panel, 79 x 102.3 cm, Private Collection.

Fig 6. Ferdinand Bol, *Angel Appearing to Elijah*, ca. 1642, oil on canvas, 162.6 x 177.8 cm, The Leiden Collection, New York, FB-104.

Fig 7. Carel Fabritius, *Hagar and the Angel*, ca. 1645, oil on canvas, 157.5 x 136 cm, The Leiden Collection, New York, inv. no. CF-100.

history painting in the early decades of the seventeenth century. For Lastman, this meant turning away from the exaggerated expressions of Mannerism that had dominated history painting at the end of the sixteenth century—large-scale works, often with nude figures in active poses—and toward the depiction of biblical and profane themes with small, multifigure compositions, often set into landscapes, with "historical" details. Orientalizing motifs, for instance, were intended to situate biblical scenes in a context that resembled the holy land.[19] A group of contemporaries in Amsterdam, including Claes Cornelisz Moeyaert (1591–1655), Jan (1581/82–1630) and Jacob Pynas (1592/3–after 1650), François Venant (1590–1636), and Jan Tengnagel (1584–1635), followed Lastman's narrative approach and rendered their scenes with a similar clarity of form and historical consciousness.[20] Together, they helped to establish Amsterdam's new artistic tradition.[21]

Lastman emerged as the most innovative and erudite of his contemporaries.[22] His work was informed by a vast knowledge of literary and historical texts, as well as antique, Italian, and Netherlandish pictorial sources. Significant for his artistic development was the journey to Italy that he undertook between ca. 1602/3 and 1607, which likely included time in Venice, Padua, Florence, and Rome. He studied the work of Titian, Veronese, and Tintoretto in Venice and saw the paintings and sculptures of Raphael and Michelangelo in Rome alongside antique sculpture and architecture. Elements of these artists' works served as inspiration for Lastman and would later become part of his pictorial repertoire.[23] Among the contemporary artists in Rome, some of whom Lastman may have encountered directly, were Caravaggio (1578–1610), the Flemish artist Paul Bril (ca. 1553/54–1626), and the German artist Adam Elsheimer (1578–1610), whose small-scale figures, depictions of landscapes, and night scenes greatly impacted Lastman's handling of narrative and composition.[24]

Back in his native Amsterdam in 1607, Lastman increasingly looked to sixteenth-century prints and biblical illustrations, incorporating their subjects and motifs into his paintings. Biblical prints by Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574) and Maarten de Vos (1532–1603), for example, which brought an historical vantage point deeply informed by antiquity to their depictions of Old Testament scenes, supplied Lastman with subject matter that had never before—or rarely—been depicted in paintings. With this visual inspiration he combined his vast knowledge of literary sources.[25] He was familiar with ancient Greek and Roman texts, stretching from Euripides, Herodotus, and Ovid to Livy, and with contemporary sources like Karel van Mander's *Het Schilderboeck*, Guillaume du Choul's *Discours de la religion des anciens*

romains, as well as sixteenth- and seventeenth-century emblem books.[26] By combining a range of pictorial models and multiple textual sources in the depiction of a single subject, Lastman imbued his scenes with their narrative and historical authenticity.[27] Such erudite paintings would have appealed to Amsterdam *liefhebbers* (art lovers), who—as the diplomat and poet Balthasar Gerbier (1592–1663) noted in his monumental poem of 1620, *Eeer ende Claght-Dicht Ter Eeren van den Lofweerdighen Constrijcken ende Gheleerden Henricus Goltizus*—would have gazed upon Lastman's paintings with pleasure.[28]

Lastman's iconographic choices, careful selection of authentic details, handling of paint, and modeling of forms were not the only aspects of his work that distinguished him in the early seventeenth century. He also understood the significance of selecting a precise narrative moment. Lastman favored scenes from the Old Testament in which the "hero" is shown in a moment of great conflict, particularly one that represented a change in the individual's fate. Such episodes—meetings, encounters, and appearances of the divine—affected the expressive potential of the story and placed the protagonist at a crossroads.[29] Lastman could achieve this expressiveness in his work by representing dramatic physical action, but also by capturing the character's inner struggles, passions, and strengths, thereby portraying the essence of an emotional moment.

Lastman's David and Uriah: Moving the Passions

In Lastman's *David and Uriah*, which depicts a story from the Book of Samuel (2 Samuel 11), a youthful King David sits on a dais between two large columns placed slightly off center. He grasps a letter that he will give to Uriah, a document that is tantamount to a death warrant as it orders the soldier to be sent to the front line of battle.[30] Though David's bearing is powerful, his furrowed brow and twisted body language bespeak the moral ambiguity of his position.[31] Uriah, in contrast, kneels beside the throne forthrightly, his right hand outstretched to receive the letter, the other placed resolutely on his thigh. The young scribe looks on incredulously; his hand hovers in space as if frozen in time. Bystanders in the background—even the dog beside the throne—gaze upon the exchange between David and Uriah with anticipation, heightening the composition's emotional and psychological tension.

The well-informed viewer would have recognized what preceded and followed Lastman's scene: David had committed adultery with Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, while her husband was away serving in the king's army, and she

had become pregnant with his child. In an attempt to conceal his act, David recalled Uriah on a pretense and tried to send him to Bathsheba, but Uriah's loyalty to his fellow soldiers prevented him from lying with his wife. David's letter to Joab, the commander of his forces, essentially condemns Uriah to be killed at the front, allowing David to marry Bathsheba.

Although Lastman's depiction of this biblical narrative had few pictorial precedents, sixteenth-century prints provided him with important models for the representation of the exchange between the two men. In a woodcut by Hans Holbein (1497/98–1543), which first appeared in the 1538 edition of the *Biblia Utriusque Testamenti iuxta Vulgatam Translationem* **(fig 2)**, David's outstretched hand and pointed finger pass on the command, creating a physically charged encounter with Uriah.[32] Hans de Laet's (1524?–66) slightly later woodcut, published in Antwerp in 1556 **(fig 3)**, depicts Uriah kneeling obediently by David's side as he accepts the letter.[33] In each of these examples, the balance of power is absolute. In his painting, however, Lastman presents an earlier moment in the story: David has not yet handed over the letter that will seal Uriah's fate. The compositional structure and expressive poses of the figures thus present a more visually and emotionally complex relationship between the men and underscore David's compromised position.[34]

The narrative moment reflected in Lastman's painting belongs to the classical Greek tradition of *peripeteia* (turnaround) that Aristotle described in his *Poetics. Peripeteia* signifies the plot's reversal, or transformation, resulting in a significant change or resolution in the lives of the story's characters.[35] Germane to its development is the act of recognition, *agnitio*, or what Aristotle called "a change from ignorance to knowledge," and from which the most intense and uncertain moment of the narrative emerges.[36] Lastman's challenge in *David and Uriah* was to portray David's betrayal in progress—at the cusp of the plot's transformation—for the viewer to witness as it unfolds. *David and Uriah* represents a dramatic reversal of events not through physical means, but by stirring the conflicting passions of loyalty, betrayal, and desire that shaped this moment of *peripeteia*.

In the 1640s, the playwright and author Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679), who was keenly interested in the visual arts and in Lastman's work, described the role of *peripeteia* for contemporary theater, calling it *staetveranderinge* ("change of state").[37] Vondel explained how "both principal rules of embellishment, called by the ancients *peripeteia* and *agnitio* / or pivotal moment and recognition, function together."[38] Their representation—in the

visual arts or theater, in this case—was intended to produce the greatest narrative tension. While Vondel's concepts only became crucial for theater in the second half of the seventeenth century, as Amy Golahny and others have noted, they had already gained currency in intellectual and artistic circles in the 1610s, when Daniel Heinsius (1580–1655) first introduced Aristotle's text into the Netherlands.[39] A poet, scholar, and Leiden University professor, Heinsius published his influential edition of Aristotle's *Poetics* in 1610, followed by his commentary *De Tragoediae constitutione*, in 1611.[40] Heinsius discussed *peripeteia* and *agnitio* and their role in stirring the passions, following Aristotle's explanation of the modes of recognition, and similarly emphasized the principle one as being when "the recognition gradually arises from the very subject matter."[41] Lastman was familiar with Heinsius, and likely also with Aristotle.[42] Whether or not he sought to demonstrate these authors' precepts of dramatic theory directly, his command of storytelling and poignant evocation of a crucial turning point in *David and Uriah* indicates that he was receptive to such ideas and applied them to his own history paintings.

Lastman's powerful portrayal of human passions in *David and Uriah* was the result of a masterful combination of elements: a clear, structured composition with a bright palette, even lighting, and carefully selected details that reflected his knowledge of various literary and pictorial sources. As Christian Tümpel first demonstrated, Lastman consulted both the biblical account and Flavius Josephus's *Antiquity of the Jews* (book 7, chapter 7), a record of the Jewish people written in the first century AD.[43] Lastman included details only found in Josephus's text, namely the red seal on the letter, signifying lawful authority. He also added other pictorial elements, such as the scribe, which are not mentioned by Josephus or in the Bible.[44] At the same time, Lastman incorporated antique motifs and architectural elements in order to suggest the scene's historical authenticity, including a dome resembling St. Peter's, which was intended to evoke Jerusalem, and Uriah's helmet, which he based on an Italian helmet *all'antica* that he had seen in Amsterdam.[45]

Lastman had treated the subject of *David and Uriah* eight years earlier **(fig 4)**.[46] While the episode represented in the two works is nearly identical—the handing over of the letter—Lastman initially depicted a later moment from the narrative, when Uriah has already accepted the letter and thus his fate. In the first painting, Lastman arranged the figures in a more tightly organized vertical composition than the expansive, stage-like space he would utilize in the Leiden Collection work. The former scene is more closely related to De Laet's sixteenth-century woodcut **(fig 3)** in the expression of power dynamics between the figures. When Lastman revisited the subject in 1619, he

introduced more storytelling to the scene and situated his figures parallel to the picture plane, encouraging the beholder to "read" the narrative as if played out before him. By expanding the space between the figures and allowing the exchange of glances to reveal itself slowly, Lastman instilled the composition with greater expressive and emotional anticipation. With this evolved approach almost a decade later, Lastman composed his story so that it could resonate more directly with the viewer, thereby fulfilling the aim of stirring the mind, and the heart.[47]

From Lastman to Rembrandt and His Pupils

In 1629, Constantijn Huygens, the secretary to the Stadholder Frederick Hendrik (1584–1647), art lover and poet, visited the studios of Lievens and Rembrandt in Leiden and observed how "Rembrandt was superior . . . in his sure touch and liveliness of emotions," qualities that were essential for painting expressive history scenes.[48] Both men had studied with Lastman, with Lievens spending several years with the master from 1617 to 1621, and Rembrandt six months in 1625. Lievens and Rembrandt would have learned the key principles of history painting from Lastman, from the arrangement of figure groupings within a composition to portraying emotion through action and expression. Lastman would have showed both pupils the essence of storytelling, demonstrating how gestures and glances, body language and composition, could contribute to depicting deeply moving episodes of the human experience.[49] Nevertheless, Rembrandt, more than Lievens, excelled in capturing the "movements of the soul."[50]

In his unpublished autobiography written between 1629 and 1631, Huygens summarized Rembrandt's depiction of the passions in *Judas Returning the Thirty Pieces of Silver* **(fig 5)**:

> Rembrandt devotes all his loving concentration to a small painting. . . . The gesture of the single man, the despairing Judas . . . wailing, begging for forgiveness, and at the same time completely without hope, preserving no trace of hope in his expression, the horrible face, the torn-out hair, the ripped garment, the twisted arms, his hands clenched to the point of being bloody, lying prone and on his knees because of some dark impulse, the whole body wracked by some horrific misery. . . . I maintain that it did not occur to Protogenes, Apelles, or Parrhasios, nor could it occur to them, were they to return to earth, that a youth, a Dutchman, a beardless miller, could put so much into one human figure and depict it all.[51]

Huygens's ekphrastic account of Rembrandt's painting revealed his admiration for the young artist's ability to represent a complex range of emotions in a single figure, qualities that reflect a critical aspect of Lastman's teachings. Rembrandt had successfully transformed Judas's inner despair into its outward expression, evoking for the viewer by naturalistic and forceful means the truthfulness of his emotions.

Lastman's sophisticated approach to history painting, defined by its attention to narrative and historical detail and a wide range of pictorial and textual sources, continued to exert an impact on Rembrandt and his circle into the mid-1630s and beyond.[52] Two paintings in The Leiden Collection by Rembrandt's pupils Ferdinand Bol (1616–80) and Carel Fabritius (1622–54), display some of the ways in which Lastman's narrative choices and understanding of dramatic concepts like *peripeteia* resonated in the work of later Amsterdam artists.[53] Both Bol's *Angel Appearing to Elijah* **(fig 6)** and Fabritius's *Hagar and the Angel* **(fig 7)** depict biblical subjects of divine intervention at their most pivotal moments.[54] In Bol's painting (1 Kings 16:29–34 and chapters 17–19), Elijah will soon be awoken and saved by the angel who exhorts him to "arise and eat."[55] In Fabritius's moving scene (Genesis 21:15–19), the angel's appearance to Hagar, who grasps her hands in prayer and has begun to weep, will result in Hagar and her son Ishmael's salvation.[56] Each painting portrays the narrative moment just prior to when the characters' lives will change. Bol's and Fabritius's large-scale works, which were rendered with earth-toned palettes and contrasts of light and dark, differ from Lastman's paintings in form, style, and in their precise attention to historical specificity. Yet the manner in which these artists sought to capture the inner struggles of the main protagonists at a pivotal and as yet unresolved point in the narrative—a strategy dependent upon the viewer's knowledge of the story and its consequences—is consistent with Lastman's treatment of historical subjects and the evocation of their human element.

Pieter Lastman was a seminal figure in establishing the character of Dutch history painting. His rich knowledge of various visual and textual sources and motifs, erudition, and familiarity with dramatic theater shaped his sophisticated approach to the representation of historical themes. At the core of this achievement was the depiction of the passions and his ability to kindle for the beholder the inner motions of the mind and soul, often stirred by *peripeteia*. Lastman impacted painters well into the seventeenth century, his work offering artists a model for rendering this noble genre of painting. His powerful, nuanced representation of the human experience in *David and Uriah* makes this work enduringly compelling and aptly reflects Vondel's

characterization of the artist as the "Apelles of our Age."[57]

- Lara Yeager-Crasselt, 2020

Endnotes

1. Samuel van Hoogstraten described Rembrandt's mastery in representing "the movements of the soul" in his *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole de schilderkonst: Anders der zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam, 1678), 75. Dutch art theorists such as Karel van Mander, Franciscus Junius, and Van Hoogstraten discussed the importance of representing the passions in their respective treatises. For further discussion, see Thijs Weststeijn, "Between Mind and Body: Painting the Inner Movements According to Samuel van Hoogstraten and Franciscus Junius," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 263–83.
2. While the emergence of a hierarchy of subject matter only developed in the later seventeenth century, history paintings were long considered the highest form of art because they dealt with subjects of great moral consequence. For a broad discussion of history painting, see Albert Blankert, "Introduction," in *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Albert Blankert et al. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (Washington, D.C., 1980), 14–33.

   Artists sought to represent the passions across all genres. For an introduction to the role of the passions in the art of the early modern Netherlands, as well as additional literature, see Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, "Introduction: The Motions of the Mind," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 6–16. Dickey and Roodenburg note that no "unified concept of 'emotion'" existed in this period, and "the (sensual) 'passions' were distinguished from the (intellectual) 'affections' with various shades of meaning." They use the terms "passions" and "emotions" interchangeably in their edited volume, a usage that this essay follows.
3. "*Kern en ziel van de kunst*," as described by Karel van Mander in "*Wtbeeldinghe der Affecten/passien/begeerlijckheden/en lijdens der Menschen* (The representation of the affects, passions, desires, and sorrows of men)," in Karel van Mander, *Den grondt der edel vrij Schilder-konst*, ed. Hessel Miedema (Utrecht, 1973), 6: 55, f. 27r. Van Mander's *Grondt* was primarily directed at history painters (or figure painters). Van Hoogstraten referred to the passions as "*alleredelste deel der kunst*." Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole de schilderkonst: Anders der zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam, 1678), 109; Thijs Weststeijn, "Between Mind and Body: Painting the Inner Movements According to Samuel van Hoogstraten and Franciscus Junius," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 264.
4. In his treatise *The Painting of the Ancients*, which was published in Latin in 1637 and in Dutch

in 1641, Franciscus Junius summarized the artists' duty as akin to that of orators or ancient rhetoricians. Citing Cicero's *De optimo genere oratorum*, Junius wrote, "It is [the artists'] duty . . . that they should teach; it is for their owne credit that they should delight; it is altogether requisite that they should move and stirre our minde." See Franciscus Junius, *The Literature of Classical Art. 1. The Painting of the Ancients: De picture veterum, According to the English Translation (1638)* (Berkeley, 1991), 297, 330; and Thijs Weststeijn, "Between Mind and Body: Painting the Inner Movements According to Samuel van Hoogstraten and Franciscus Junius," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 280n20.

5. Cities across the Republic boasted respective traditions of history painting in the early seventeenth century, including the work of Hendrick Goltzius and Cornelis van Haarlem in Haarlem, for example, and of Abraham Bloemaert, Joachim Wttewael, Hendrick ter Brugghen, Gerrit van Honthorst, and Dirck van Baburen in Utrecht. For history painting in Amsterdam, see note 10, and for Lastman, see Christian T. Seifert, "Pieter Lastman, Constrijcken history Schilder tot Amsterdam—kunstreicher Historienmaler zu Amsterdam," in *Pieter Lastman: in Rembrandts Schatten?*, ed. Martina Sitt (Exh. cat. Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle) (Munich, 2006), 14–24.
6. At present, The Leiden Collection does not include any landscapes, and includes only one still life.
7. Little attention has been paid in the scholarship to the development of the treatment of histories by genre painters, many of whom turned to historical subjects in the second half of the seventeenth century. For further discussion, see Susan Kuretsky, "Independents and Eccentrics," in *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Albert Blankert et al. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (Washington, D.C., 1980), 253–89; for Frans van Mieris's historical themes, see Quentin Buvelot, ed., *Frans van Mieris 1635–1681* (Exh. cat. The Hague, Mauritshuis; Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art) (New Haven, 2005), nos. 44 and 47; and Otto Naumann, *Frans van Mieris (1635–1681) the Elder* (Doornspijk, 1981), 1: 89–91; 2: nos. 85, 97, 121. For Jan Steen as a history painter, see Lyckle de Vries, "Jan Steen zwischen Genre- und Historienmalerei," *Niederdeutsch Beitragen zur Kunstgeschichte* 22 (1982): 113–28; Ariane van Suchtelen, ed., *Jan Steen's Histories* (Exh. cat. The Hague, Mauritshuis) (Zwolle, 2018). The investigation of the history paintings of the Leiden *fijnschilders* as well as those of Jan Steen will be explored in future essays in *The Leiden Collection Catalogue*.
8. Dutch history painting in the seventeenth century has long been relegated to a minor role in the scholarship. In the decades following *Gods, Saints and Heroes*, 1980, the first major exhibition to treat the subject, thematic exhibitions on aspects of history painting and

publications on individual artists have appeared sporadically. See, for example: Christian Tümpel, ed., *Het Oude testament in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw* (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Joods Historisch Museum; Jerusalem, Israel Museum) (Zwolle, 1991); Albert Blankert et al., *Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth-Century Painting* (Exh. cat. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen; Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut) (Rotterdam, 1999); Peter Schoon et al., *Greek Gods and Heroes in the Age of Rubens and Rembrandt* (Exh. cat. Athens, National Gallery / Alexandros Soutzos Museum and Netherlands Institute; Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum) (Dordrecht, 2000); Eric Jan Sluijter, *Rembrandt and the Female Nude* (Amsterdam, 2006); Eric Jan Sluijter, *Rembrandt's Rivals: History Painting in Amsterdam 1630–1650* (Amsterdam, 2017); Ariane van Suchtelen, ed., *Jan Steen's Histories* (Exh. cat. The Hague, Mauritshuis) (Zwolle, 2018). The subject of history painting is conspicuously absent in the more recent assessment of the field in Wayne Franits, ed., *The Ashgate Research Companion to Dutch Art of the Seventeenth Century* (Burlington, Vt., 2016).

9. This essay builds upon the wide-ranging scholarship on Lastman's painting, particularly the more recent contributions made by Amy Golahny, but takes a new perspective by focusing on Lastman's strategies for depicting a dramatic narrative and evoking the passions as a central means of storytelling. See Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman: Moments of Recognition," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 179–201; and Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman's Paintings of David's Death Sentence for Uriah, 1611 and 1619," in *The Primacy of the Image in Northern European Art, Essays in Honor of Larry Silver*, ed. Debra Taylor Cashion, Henry Luttikhuizen, and Ashley D. West (Leiden, 2017), 500–514. For full references to *David Gives Uriah a Letter for Joab*, see the entry in this catalogue.
10. For a recent discussion regarding Amsterdam's role as a new center for history painting spurred by a confluence of wealth, trade, and a growing merchant class, see Eric Jan Sluijter, *Rembrandt's Rivals: History Painting in Amsterdam 1630–1650* (Amsterdam, 2017). Sluijter notes that "history painting had developed into an Amsterdam specialty. Not only in absolute numbers but also the percentage of artists making history paintings in Amsterdam, from the mid-1620s until the late 1660s, was considerably higher than in the next two largest centers of painting production, Haarlem and The Hague" (14). For Amsterdam as a center for Old Testament subject matter, see Christian Tümpel, "Die Alttestamentliche Historienmalerei im Zeitalter Rembrandts," in *Im Lichte Rembrandts: Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der niederländischen Kunst*, ed. Christian Tümpel (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Joods Historisch Museum; Jerusalem, Israel Museum; Münster, Westfälischen Landesmuseum) (Munich, 1994), 16–19.
11. As John Michael Montias observed in his extensive examination of seventeenth-century Amsterdam inventories, this could also be meant literally: religious and secular works could

often be found displayed beside one other in private homes. See John Michael Montias, "Works of Art in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam: An Analysis of Subjects and Attributions," in *Art in History, History in Art: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Culture*, ed. David Freedberg and Jan de Vries (Chicago, 1991), 331–72, especially 337–40; and John Loughman and John Michael Montias, *Public and Private Spaces: Works of Art in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Houses* (Zwolle, 2000). For an overview of historical subject matter popular in the Dutch Republic, see Albert Blankert, "Introduction," in *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Albert Blankert et al. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (Washington, D.C., 1980), 18–26. For mythological subjects, see Eric Jan Sluijter, *De "Heydense fabulen" in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw: Schilderijen met verhalende onderwerpen uit de klassieke mythologie in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, circa 1590–1670* (Leiden, 2000); and for Old Testament subject matter, see Christian Tümpel, ed., *Im Lichte Rembrandts: Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der niederländischen Kunst* (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Joods Historisch Museum; Jerusalem, Israel Museum; Münster, Westfälischen Landesmuseum) (Munich, 1994).

12. For an excellent discussion of the religious landscape of the United Provinces in this period, see Shelley Perlove and Larry Silver, *Rembrandt's Faith: Church and Temple in the Dutch Golden Age* (University Park, Penn., 2009), 17–67.

13. Blankert noted how biblical subjects were understood as historical events by seventeenth-century artists and patrons, though he did not reflect on the display of religious art within Catholic households or hidden churches in cities like Amsterdam and Haarlem—works that were intended for devotional purposes. The availability of the Bible in translation and the popularization of illustrated editions contributed significantly to the popularization of biblical imagery. See discussions in Albert Blankert, "Introduction," in *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Albert Blankert et al. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (Washington, D.C., 1980), 18–26; Christian Tümpel, "Religious History Painting," in *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Albert Blankert et al. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (Washington, D.C., 1980), 45–54; Christian Tümpel, "Die Ikonographie der Amsterdamer Historienmalerei in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts und die Reformation," *Jahrbuch des deutschen Bibel-Archivs Hamburg* 2 (1980): 127–58; Christian Tümpel, ed., *Im Lichte Rembrandts. Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der niederländischen Kunst* (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Joods Historisch Museum; Jerusalem, Israel Museum; Münster, Westfälischen Landesmuseum) (Munich, 1994). For the display of biblical paintings in private homes and public spaces, see Gabriël Pastor, "Biblische Historienbilder im Goldene Zeitalter in Privatbesitz," in *Im Lichte Rembrandts: Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der niederländischen Kunst*, ed. Christian Tümpel (Exh. cat. Amsterdam,

Joods Historisch Museum; Jerusalem, Israel Museum; Münster, Westfälischen Landesmuseum) (Munich, 1994), 122–33; and Marloes Huiskamp, "Öffentlicher Unterricht in Geschichte und Moral: Das Alte Testament in Rathäusern und anderen öffentlichen Gebäuden," in *Im Lichte Rembrandts: Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der niederländischen Kunst*, ed. Christian Tümpel (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Joods Historisch Museum; Jerusalem, Israel Museum; Münster, Westfälischen Landesmuseum) (Munich, 1994), 134–55.

14. Although Calvinism was the official religion of the Dutch Republic, the Dutch were not forced to become members of the denomination, and adherents of many other sects were tolerated, including not only Catholics and Jews but also Mennonites (Anabaptists), Lutherans, Socinians, Collegiants, and Quakers. Catholic worship was outlawed in Amsterdam in 1581, but the ban was not actively enforced, and Catholics continued to practice in secret. See Xander van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor: Painting for the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic* (Zwolle, 2008); and Shelley Perlove and Larry Silver, *Rembrandt's Faith: Church and Temple in the Dutch Golden Age* (University Park, Penn., 2009), 45–61.

15. Christian Tümpel, "Religious History Painting," in *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Albert Blankert et al. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (Washington, D.C., 1980), 52; and Volker Manuth, "Denomination and Iconography: The Choice of Subject Matter in the Biblical Painting of the Rembrandt Circle," *Simiolus* 22, no. 4 (1993–94): 235–52.

16. Gabriël Pastor notes how, within the private space of the home, people could have understood and interpreted biblical themes in a variety of ways outside of their religious convictions. Other factors that would have contributed to their understanding of religious subject matter included education, intellectual interests, and social and personal backgrounds. For further discussion, see Gabriël Pastor, "Biblische Historienbilder im Goldene Zeitalter in Privatbesitz," in *Im Lichte Rembrandts: Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der niederländischen Kunst*, ed. Christian Tümpel (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Joods Historisch Museum; Jerusalem, Israel Museum; Münster, Westfälischen Landesmuseum) (Munich, 1994), 122–33; John Michael Montias, "Works of Art in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam: An Analysis of Subjects and Attributions," in *Art in History, History in Art: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Culture*, ed. David Freedberg and Jan de Vries (Chicago, 1991), 331–72; and John Michael Montias, *Art at Auction in 17th Century Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 2002), passim.

17. The possible early provenance of *David and Uriah*, for example, which has been long overlooked in the scholarship, provides some insight into these dynamics. A series of auction sales published by John Michael Montias several decades ago shows the ownership of a painting of "David and Uriah" changing hands over a short period of time. In the sale of the possessions of Elbert Symonsz. Pool, a butter merchant in Amsterdam, on 4 December 1620,

was a painting described as "a little piece by Lastman of David and Uriah." What is presumed to be the same painting appears for a second time in the sale of the possessions of Pieter Claesz. Codde, a ropemaker, also from Amsterdam, on 30 October 1624. Both men were members of the Reformed Church, though some members of their families were Roman Catholic. In the latter sale, the painting is simply described as "David and Uriah" without an attribution. In both instances, the work appears with a pendant, described in the 1620 sale as "a painting of Bersabe [Bathsheba] by Pijnas," and in 1624 as "a little painting of Bersabe washing herself." The paintings sold as a pair in the respective sales of 1620 and 1624 to members of the sellers' families. The prices they fetched in each sale were so similar that the two auction lists must refer to the same painting. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine whether the "David and Uriah" in the possession of Pool or Codde can be identified with the Leiden Collection painting or Lastman's other version of this subject from 1611, now in Detroit (see fig 4). No painting of Bathsheba by Jan or Jacob Pynas is known.

Montias points out that it would have been unusual for men of Pool or Codde's social standing to own history paintings by artists of the caliber of Lastman and Pynas, and he suggests that their ownership of these works may have been the result of a personal connection with the artist. Pieter Claesz. Codde had served as a witness at the signing of the marriage contract of the Roman Catholic jeweler Zeger Pietersz., Lastman's brother, on 1 September 1601, with the artist present. However, the number of Lastman's paintings that subsequently appear in the inventories of members of the merchant class in Amsterdam reflects a wealthier and more intellectual class of *liefhebbers* that was beginning to take shape in the city. In this light, it seems less surprising that either Pool or Codde would have been early owners of the painting. See further discussion below and in John Michael Montias, "Trois ventes de tableaux aux enchères à Amsterdam vers 1620," in *Curiosité: Études d'histoire de l'art en l'honneur d'Antoine Schnapper*, ed. Olivier Bonfait (Paris, 1998), 285–95; John Michael Montias, *Art at Auction in 17th Century Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 2002), 226–33; and Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011), 128–33.

18. The lack of documentation about Lastman's early patrons or commissions makes it difficult to assess fully the relationship between the iconography of his paintings and the religious convictions of his patrons. The only two known commissions of Lastman's concern three no longer extant scenes from the Life of Christ, which were executed for the Oratory at Frederiksborg Castle for the Danish king, Christian IV (Lastman was selected along with several other history painters, including Adriaen van Nieulandt and Jan Pynas, to complete the series of 23 paintings), in 1619, and a painting of *Jonah and the Whale* (Düsseldorf, Museum Kunstpalast) for an Amsterdam merchant, Isaac Bodens, in 1621. There is no indication that Lastman worked exclusively for one religious denomination, and like many of his contemporaries, he must have taken advantage of—and adapted to—the wealthy clientele

and burgeoning art market in Amsterdam (see additional discussion in note 17 and further below). For discussion of Lastman's patrons, see Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011), 44–45, 66, 133–39.

19. Christian Tümpel, ed., *Het Oude testament in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw* (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Joods Historisch Museum; Jerusalem, Israel Museum) (Zwolle, 1991), 10–13.

20. These artists have long been referred to as the "Pre-Rembrandtists" because of their significance as Rembrandt's "precursors," but this nomenclature does not accurately reflect their contribution to seventeenth-century painting. See Astrid Tümpel, ed., *The Pre-Rembrandtists* (Exh. cat., Sacramento, E.B. Crocker Art Gallery) (Sacramento, 1974); Christian Tümpel, "The Iconography of the Pre-Rembrandtists," in *The Pre-Rembrandtists*, ed. Astrid Tümpel (Exh. cat., Sacramento, E.B. Crocker Art Gallery) (Sacramento, 1974), 127–50; and Astrid Tümpel, "The Pre-Rembrandtists," in *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed., Albert Blankert et al. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (Washington, D.C., 1980), 123–35. Eric Jan Sluijter has recently discussed how Lastman, by painting in a novel style and developing a new type of biblical painting, encouraged a group of likeminded artists to gather around him and follow his approach. He describes this notion as "clustering," by which artists "cluster" around a successful painter and give shape to a distinctive specialization in painting. He credits Lastman with spurring the tradition of history painting in Amsterdam, which later came to include Rembrandt and his pupils. Eric Jan Sluijter, *Rembrandt's Rivals: History Painting in Amsterdam 1630–1650* (Amsterdam, 2017), 14–19.

21. This tradition was largely defined by a predilection to depict Old Testament subject matter. See Christian Tümpel, "The Iconography of the Pre-Rembrandtists," in *The Pre-Rembrandtists*, ed. Astrid Tümpel (Exh. cat., Sacramento, E.B. Crocker Art Gallery) (Sacramento, 1974), 127–50; Christian Tümpel, ed., *Het Oude testament in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw* (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Joods Historisch Museum; Jerusalem, Israel Museum) (Zwolle, 1991), 10–13.

22. For Lastman, see Astrid Tümpel and Peter Schatborn, *Pieter Lastman: Leermeester van Rembrandt: The Man Who Taught Rembrandt* (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Museum het Rembrandthuis) (Zwolle, 1991); Martina Sitt, ed., *Pieter Lastman: In Rembrandts Schatten?* (Exh. cat. Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle) (Munich, 2006); and Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011).

23. For further discussion of Lastman's Italian sojourn, which may have included several other cities, see Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem*

kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie (Petersberg, 2011), 30–36, 145–54. Lastman's period in Venice is documented by the drawn copy (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum) he made ca. 1603 after Veronese's *Adoration of the Shepherds* in the Cappella dei Setaioli der Chiesa dei Crociferi. While in Rome, Lastman also went on sketching trips in the countryside; see his drawing *View of the Palatinate*, 1606 (Private Collection, Germany). In *David and Uriah*, for example, Amy Golahny has shown how Lastman incorporated motifs and poses from Michelangelo's angel in Bologna and sculpture of Giuliano de'Medici in Florence for the pose of David. See Amy Golahny, "Reflections on Caravaggio, Lastman, and Rembrandt," in *Culture figurative a confronto tra Fiandre e Italia dal XV al XVII secolo: Atti del convegno internazionale Nord/Sud: Ricezioni fiamminghe al di qua delle Alpi: Prospettive di studio e indagini tecniche*, ed. Anna De Floriani and Maria Clelia Galassi (Milan, 2008), 157–65.

24. For Lastman's relationship to Caravaggio, Bril, and Elsheimer, see Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011), 33, 45–47, 149, 152–53, and 155–62. Seifert points out that Elsheimer had achieved "monumentality in a miniature format" in his works, which were conceived with a close eye to their textual sources, qualities that would be important for Lastman's painting.

25. Astrid Tümpel, ed., *The Pre-Rembrandtists* (Exh. cat., Sacramento, E.B. Crocker Art Gallery) (Sacramento, 1974), 132–38, 142–46; Christian Tümpel, "Die Ikonographie der Amsterdamer Historienmalerei in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts und die Reformation," *Jahrbuch des deutschen Bibel-Archivs Hamburg* 2 (1980): 135–40, 146–52; and Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011), 162–76.

26. Lastman's vast literary interests have been widely recognized. Upon his death in 1633, the artist's library contained around 150 books, an exceptional number for the time. Although the titles were not indicated in the inventory, Golahny and Seifert have suggested a probable list of ancient and contemporary texts based on Lastman's works and likely education in a Latin school, where he would have first encountered this wide range of ancient texts. With the exception of Euripides, Herodotus, and Lucian, nearly all of the other ancient texts would have been available in Dutch translation. See Amy Golahny, *Rembrandt's Reading: The Artist's Bookshelf of Ancient Poetry and History* (Amsterdam, 2003), 71; Christian T. Seifert, "Pieter Lastman, Constrijcken history Schilder tot Amsterdam—kunstreicher Historienmaler zu Amsterdam," in *Pieter Lastman: In Rembrandts Schatten?*, ed. Martina Sitt (Exh. cat. Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle) (Munich, 2006), 17; and Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011), 71–72, 97–111, 119–21.

27. Kurt Bauch first called Lastman's tendency for exacting historical and narrative details

a "*monströse Sachlichkeit*." See the discussion in Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011), 139–44.

28. Written in 1618, though only published in 1620, Gerbier's poem was a tribute to Hendrick Goltzius and included an imagined procession of the most famous artists gathered to celebrate him. Lastman was singled out for high praise in Gerbier's lines: "*Lastman, d'eer d'Amstels voet, die wil ick hier aen voeghen, Op wiens Const 'tweeld' rigst oogh moest sterren met genoege Liefhebbers sit vry neer, en met aendacht eens siet Oft niet der Consten mergh Pictura u dar biet.*" By the time Gerbier composed the poem, Lastman was already well known in the Netherlands. See Otto Hirschmann, "Balthasar Gerbiers eer ende Claeght-Dight ter eeren van Henricus Goltius," *Oud Holland* 38 (1920): 104–25; David Freedberg, "Fame, Convention and Insight: On the Relevance of Fornebergh and Gerbier," in *The Ringling Museum of Art Journal: Papers Presented at the International Rubens Symposium, 1982* (1983): 236–59; and Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011), 65–67. For discussion of the early provenance of Lastman's painting, see note 17.

29. Christian Tümpel, "Religious History Painting," in *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Albert Blankert et al. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (Washington, D.C., 1980), 48; Astrid Tümpel and Peter Schatborn, *Pieter Lastman: leermeester van Rembrandt: The Man Who Taught Rembrandt* (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Museum het Rembrandthuis) (Zwolle, 1991); and Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman: Moments of Recognition," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 179–202.

30. David's letter commanded that Uriah be placed on the front lines of battle "so that he may be struck down and die" (2 Samuel 11:15).

31. Infrared imaging revealed that David originally looked Uriah in the eye. Lastman made this compositional and narrative change. See the entry and technical summary in this catalogue.

32. Holbein's woodcut was influential for a number of late sixteenth-century Bibles. See Erika Michael, "The Iconographic History of Hans Holbein the Younger's *Icones* and Their Reception in the Later Sixteenth Century," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 3, no. 3 (1992): 28–47. For Holbein's woodcut and other illustrations of this subject, see Bart Rosier, *The Bible in Print: Netherlandish Bible Illustration in the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden, 1997), 1: 37, 65; 2: fig. 275, 282. In 1638, Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–77) executed a more elaborate print of David giving the letter to Uriah, after a drawing by Holbein.

33. Bart Rosier, *The Bible in Print: Netherlandish Bible Illustration in the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden, 1997), 2: fig. 297. At least one painting of the subject, from ca. 1560 by Hans

Vredeman de Vries (1527–ca. 1606) and Gilles Mostart (1528–1598), is known, as is an anonymous tapestry in the Musée de la Renaissance, Paris. For an overview of the painting's iconographic precedents, see Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman's Paintings of David's Death Sentence for Uriah, 1611 and 1619," in *The Primacy of the Image in Northern European Art, Essays in Honor of Larry Silver*, ed. Taylor Cashion, Henry Luttikhuizen, and Ashley D. West (Leiden, 2017), 500–514.

34. For discussion of King David, including John Calvin's commentary on his moral shortcomings that led to "self-awareness and deep feelings that provided him with true knowledge of the heart," see Shelley Perlove and Larry Silver, *Rembrandt's Faith: Church and Temple in the Dutch Golden Age* (University Park, Penn., 2009), 120–26. For an alternative reading of the painting, which takes into account its potential political dimension, see the entry in this catalogue.

35. Aristotle, *Poetics* XI: 1–4, cited in Samuel Henry Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, with a Critical Text and Translation of 'The Poetics'* (New York, 1951), 41. Albert Blankert first argued that the concept of *peripeteia* was an important narrative tool used by Ferdinand Bol and within Rembrandt's larger circle. He called attention to these artists' preference for representing moments of revelation or the appearance of the divine. Amy Golahny and Eric Jan Sluijter have taken up more recent and nuanced discussions of the use of this term in the work of Lastman and Rembrandt, which have helped to shape my discussion. See Albert Blankert, *Ferdinand Bol (1616–1680), Rembrandt's Pupil* (Doornspijk, 1982), 34–36; Albert Blankert, "Introduction," in *Gods, Saints and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Albert Blankert et al. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (Washington, D.C., 1980), 26; Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman: Moments of Recognition," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 179–202; Eric Jan Sluijter, "Rembrandt's Portrayal of the Passions and Vondel's '*staetveranderinge*,'" in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, eds. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 60 (Leiden, 2010): 283–301. For discussion of *peripeteia* in the context of depictions of Cimon and Pero (or Roman Charity) in the seventeenth century, see Michiko Fukaya, "Aristotelian *Peripeteia*? The Backward Gaze in Depictions of Cimon and Pero in the Early Seventeenth-Century Netherlands," in *Aspects of Narrative in Art History: Proceedings of the International Workshop for Young Researchers, Held at the Graduate School of Letters, Kyoto University, Kyoto, 2–3 December 2013*, ed. Kayo Hirakawa (Kyoto, 2014), 47–60.

36. When recognition is combined with reversal, as Aristotle stated, it "will produce either pity or fear; and actions producing these effects are those which, by our definition, Tragedy represents." Aristotle, *Poetics* XI: 1–4, cited in Samuel Henry Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of*

Poetry and Fine Art, with a Critical Text and Translation of 'The Poetics' (New York, 1951), 41.

37. Vondel first translated this term in the preface to his play *Jephta* of 1640/59. It would become a key concept of his late tragedies. See Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman: Moments of Recognition," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 181–83. Golahny has suggested that Lastman's paintings may have impacted Vondel himself.

38. Vondel, as quoted in Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman: Moments of Recognition," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 183n8.

39. A number of Lastman's works indicate that he enjoyed a long engagement with contemporary theater in Amsterdam, often combining ancient sources with seventeenth-century drama. For Lastman's relationship to contemporary theater, see Kurt Bauch, *Der frühe Rembrandt und seine Zeit, Studien zur geschichtlichen Bedeutung seines Frühstils* (Berlin, 1960), 68–75; Christian Tümpel, "The Iconography of the Pre-Rembrandtists," in *The Pre-Rembrandtists*, ed. Astrid Tümpel (Exh. cat. Sacramento, E.B. Crocker Art Gallery) (Sacramento, 1974), 146; Christian Tico Seifert, "Pieter Lastman, Constrijcken history Schilder tot Amsterdam—kunstreicher Historienmaler zu Amsterdam," in *Pieter Lastman: in Rembrandts Schatten?*, ed. Martina Sitt (Exh. cat. Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle) (Munich, 2006): 16–17; and Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011), 111–17. Lastman also knew a number of Amsterdam playwrights personally, including Gerbrand Adriaensz Bredero (1585–1618) and Joost von den Vondel.

40. Heinsius's translation and commentaries were well known across Europe and had a significant impact on contemporaries such as Vondel and Hugo Grotius. Daniel Heinsius, *De Tragoediae constitutione: On Plot in Tragedy*, trans. Paul R. Sellin and John J. McManmon (Northridge, 1971).

41. Aristotle lists the different modes of recognition that relate to tragedy, including from the token, or inanimate object, which was the least inventive, to memory, reasoning, and so forth, but he states that the best kind of recognition derives from the events themselves. Both Aristotle and Heinsius cite ancient narratives in which these modes of recognition may be observed, such as Iphigenia recognizing Orestes and Pylades or Ulysses in Homer's *Odyssey*. Aristotle, *Poetics* XVI, cited in Samuel Henry Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, with a Critical Text and Translation of 'The Poetics'* (New York, 1951), 57–61; and Daniel Heinsius, *De Tragoediae constitutione: On Plot in Tragedy*, trans. Paul R. Sellin and John J. McManmon (Northridge, 1971), chapter 6, 39–42.

42. On multiple occasions, Lastman referred to ancient narrative examples mentioned by

Heinsius, such as in *Iphigenia Recognizing Orestes and Pylades*, 1614 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) and *Ulysses Meeting Nausicaa*, 1619 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich). For Lastman's use of Heinsius, see Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman: Moments of Recognition," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 183; Christian Tico Seifert, *Pieter Lastman: Studien zu Leben und Werk: Mit einem kritischen Verzeichnis der Werke mit Themen aus der antiken Mythologie und Historie* (Petersberg, 2011), 78, 84, 296; Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman's Paintings of David's Death Sentence for Uriah, 1611 and 1619," in *The Primacy of the Image in Northern European Art, Essays in Honor of Larry Silver*, ed. Taylor Cashion, Henry Luttikhuizen, and Ashley D. West (Leiden, 2017), 505–6.

43. Christian Tümpel, "Die Rezeption der Jüdischen Altertümer des Flavius Josephus in den holländischen Historiendarstellungen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts," in *Wort und Bild in der niederländischen Kunst und Literatur des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Herman Vekeman and Justus Müller-Hofstede (Erfstadt, 1984); and Astrid Tümpel and Peter Schatborn, *Pieter Lastman: Leermeester van Rembrandt: The Man Who Taught Rembrandt* (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Museum het Rembrandthuis) (Zwolle, 1991), 108–9.

44. Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman's Paintings of David's Death Sentence for Uriah, 1611 and 1619," in *The Primacy of the Image in Northern European Art, Essays in Honor of Larry Silver*, ed. Taylor Cashion, Henry Luttikhuizen, and Ashley D. West (Leiden, 2017), 509, suggests that another source may still come to light to explain Lastman's inclusion of the scribe, whether another text or evidence of a Latin school play that he may have seen.

45. The helmet is a parade burgonet *all'antica*, which was made by Filippo Negroli (ca. 1510–1579) in Milan sometime around the early 1530s. Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) acquired the helmet in 1628, but not before it had been seen and copied by several artists in Amsterdam. Jeremy Wood characterized Lastman's representation of the helmet in *David and Uriah* as a "free version." See Jeremy Wood, *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard.* Part 26, *Copies and Adaptations from Renaissance and Later Artists, Italian Artists.* Vol. 3, *Artists Working in Central Italy and France* (London, 2011), 1: 399–400, no. 247.

46. Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman's Paintings of David's Death Sentence for Uriah, 1611 and 1619," in *The Primacy of the Image in Northern European Art, Essays in Honor of Larry Silver*, ed. Taylor Cashion, Henry Luttikhuizen, and Ashley D. West (Leiden, 2017), 500–514.

47. Lastman revised his approach to the depiction of historical subjects on other occasions. For instance, he depicted the story of *Ulysses Meeting Nausicaa* in 1609 (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig) and again in 1619 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich).

48. Alan Chong, ed., *Rembrandt Creates Rembrandt: Art and Ambition in Leiden, 1629–1631* (Exh. cat. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum) (Zwolle, 2000), appendix, 135–36. Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. made the latter observation about Huygens's statement in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Jan Lievens: Bringing New Light to an Old Master," in *Jan Lievens: A Dutch*

Master Rediscovered, ed. Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. (Exh. cat. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; Milwaukee, Milwaukee Art Museum; Amsterdam, Museum Het Rembrandthuis) (New Haven, 2008), 10. Huygens's praise for Rembrandt's painting also distinguished him from Lievens, who, Huygens believed, was better suited to painting on a large scale.

49. For some discussion of this topic, see, Wolfgang Stechow, "Some Observations on Lastman and Rembrandt," *Oud Holland* 84, nos. 2–3 (1969): 148–62; Amy Golahny, "Pieter Lastman: Moments of Recognition," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 196–98.

50. This may have been because Lastman's own understanding of how to paint a history painting had evolved by the time Rembrandt arrived in his studio. Lievens's and Rembrandt's training with Lastman would have also included an introduction to graphic traditions and a range of ancient and literary sources. See, for example, Christian Tümpel, "Pieter Lastman and Rembrandt," in *Pieter Lastman: Leermeester van Rembrandt: The Man Who Taught Rembrandt*, ed. Astrid Tümpel and Peter Schatborn (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Museum het Rembrandthuis) (Zwolle, 1991), 54–84. For Rembrandt's depictions of the passions, especially in his self-portraits, see H. Perry Chapman, "Reclaiming the Inner Rembrandt: Passion and the Early Self-Portraits," in *The Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands*, ed. Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg, Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 60 (Leiden, 2010): 232–61.

51. Alan Chong, ed., *Rembrandt Creates Rembrandt: Art and Ambition in Leiden, 1629–1631*. (Exh. cat. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum) (Zwolle, 2000), appendix, 135–36.

52. There was a "Lastman revival" in Amsterdam in the mid-1630s at the time of the master's death, and Rembrandt continued to be inspired by his work. He made a number of copies after Lastman's works and painted his own versions of certain subjects: Pieter Lastman, *The Expulsion of Hagar*, 1612 (Hamburger Kunsthalle) / Rembrandt, *The Expulsion of Hagar*, 1637, etching and drypoint (Museum het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam); Pieter Lastman, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1614 (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) / Rembrandt after Pieter Lastman, *Susanna and the Elders*, ca. 1637, red chalk (Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin); Pieter Lastman, *Paul and Barnabas at Lystra*, 1614 (present whereabouts unknown) / Rembrandt after Pieter Lastman, *Paul and Barnabas at Lystra*, ca. 1637, red chalk (Musée Bonnat, Bayonne); and Pieter Lastman, *Joseph Distributing Corn in Egypt*, 1612 (National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin) / Rembrandt after Pieter Lastman, *Paul and Barnabas at Lystra*, black chalk (Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna). Thus, Lastman's ideas continued in Rembrandt's own teaching and practice well beyond his training with the master in 1625. For further discussion, see Christian Tümpel, "Pieter Lastman and Rembrandt," in *Pieter Lastman: Leermeester van Rembrandt: The Man Who Taught Rembrandt*, ed. Astrid Tümpel and Peter Schatborn (Exh. cat. Amsterdam, Museum het Rembrandthuis) (Zwolle, 1991), 65–84; Martina Sitt, "Pieter

Lastman und Rembrandt—von der stummen Sprache des Körpers zur Verdichtung von Emotion," in *Pieter Lastman: In Rembrandts Schatten?*, ed. Martina Sitt (Exh. cat. Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle) (Munich, 2006), 72–85.

53. Albert Blankert, *Ferdinand Bol (1616–1680), Rembrandt's Pupil* (Doornspijk, 1982), 34–36.

54. Lastman depicted episodes in the life of Hagar on several occasions: *The Dismissal of Hagar*, 1612 (Hamburger Kunsthalle); *Hagar and the Angel*, 1614 (Los Angeles County Museum of Art); and *Hagar and the Angel in the Desert*, 1621 (The Israel Museum, Jerusalem). Rembrandt treated the subject in a drawing from around 1650: *The Angel Appears to Hagar and Ishmael in the Wilderness*, reed pen with touches of opaque white (Hamburger Kunsthalle). He depicted "Hagar's Dismissal" in several drawings and etchings in the late 1630s and into the 1650s. For example: Rembrandt, *Abraham Casting Out Hagar and Ishmael*, 1637, etching and drypoint (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

55. See the entry in this catalogue.

56. See the entry in this catalogue.

57. Vondel expressed this in a poem that he wrote on Thomas de Keyser's portrait of Lastman, which is now lost. Vondel compared Lastman not only to Apelles, but also to Rubens. Joost van den Vondel, "Op d'afbeeldinge van Peter Lastman, den Apelles onzer eeuwe," in *Hollantsch Parnas, of verscheide gedichten*, ed. T. van Domselaar (Amsterdam, 1660), 151.